

Concepts of *Prydeindod* (Britishness) in 18th century Anglo-Welsh writing; with special reference to the works of Lewis Morris, Evan Evans, and Edward Williams.

Bethan Mair Jenkins

**Trinity College
University of Oxford**

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Abstract

Bethan Mair Jenkins.

Trinity College

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This thesis presents an analysis of the English-language work of three Welsh writers during the eighteenth century, spanning the period of the 1750s to 1794. During this period, the British state consolidated its power following the last of the significant internal uprisings in 1745, and attempted to create a British nation with internal unity. Such a unity entailed a renegotiation of older national identities as subjects attempted to partake of multiple identities simultaneously. In Wales, the manifestation of multiple identities was especially clear, as the language of the state did not accord with the mother tongue of the majority of Welshmen. Though Welsh literati had written in English since before the Act of Union (1536), choosing to write in English becomes more interesting for the critic during such a time of change. Previously, these works have been treated as aberrations, or literary curiosities less worthy of note than the Welsh-language productions of the same authors. This thesis argues that, instead, they should be analysed as offering an insight into these authors' conception of Britain, and their place within the state and the new nation, both in the choice of language and the topics considered. As a theoretical basis for these analyses, I consider the concept of *Prydeindod* from the work of philosopher J.R. Jones, as distinct from the idea of Britishness, and as a way of complicating Anglocentric or

binary discussions of Britishness. This in turn informs readings of the English-language productions of Welsh writers in the eighteenth century, and shows that their negotiations of new identities are not as forthright as has previously been assumed.

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Introduction

i

Few terms in the history of the literature of Wales have caused such debate and controversy as the term “Anglo-Welsh.” It is first seen in print in the preface to Evan Evans’ (1731-1788) poem of 1772, *On the Love of Our Country*, referring “not to poets, but to prelates.”¹ Evans is concerned, as we shall see, with eliminating the “Anglo-Welsh Prelates” from the land because of the linguistic and spiritual harm they do in Wales, due to their inability to communicate with a monoglot Welsh flock:

[The love of my country] shall likewise be my plea for the disagreeable truths I have advanced in the close of my Poem, concerning Anglo-Welsh Prelates, which otherwise might appear too bold and presuming. It is certainly their business to see how well it suits with their character as Protestant Bishops, as well as honest men, to confer Welsh benefices on persons that do not understand the Welsh language.²

By the twentieth century, the term Anglo-Welsh had come to be used in relation to poetry from Wales written in English. The pejorative nature of the original coinage, intended to indicate a complete ignorance of the Welsh language and a lack of any natural connection to Wales, has lingered, and this has led to considerable resistance to the term from modern Welsh writers in English. In the eighteenth-century context, however, the term is of a piece with other expressions of British hybridity – Cambro-Briton, North Briton, Hiberno-Briton, Scoto-Briton, and so on. These hyphenated designations reflect the complexity of negotiating personal and national identities in an era where the new state of Britain was struggling to form a coherent whole from

¹ R. Garlick, *An Introduction to Anglo-Welsh Literature* (Cardiff, 1972), p. 9.

² E. Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir* (Caernarfon, 1876), p. 132.

disparate parts. The drive towards unification in the eighteenth century was the culmination of a long process stretching back to the thirteenth century.

The most distinctive of the disparate parts of the new Britain were its two furthest reaches, northern Scotland, and Wales. With regard to Wales, this difference was largely despite rather than because of the actions of the state after the Acts of Union (1536, 1542). As the language of the conqueror, and subsequently of the dominant political elite, English gradually gained ground as the prestige tongue in Wales. This was reinforced by the punitive laws of Henry IV, passed following the revolt of Owain Glyndŵr, which relegated the status of the Welsh to that of “a subjugated and disenfranchised people [...] the hated statutes [...] restricting the rights of the native Welsh to acquire property or office, to congregate or to bear arms”.³ The language accordingly held the same subordinate status.

Henry IV’s stick was eventually replaced with Henry VIII’s carrot, in the form of the Act of Union of 1536, sometimes termed the Act of Incorporation. Conceived by Thomas Cromwell, the Act brought parity with the English people in the eyes of the law. Rather than raise the status of the language, it effectively encouraged its abandonment, as that parity was conditional upon subjects adopting the state language, English. The now-infamous ‘language clause’ laid out the reasons for the desirability of unity in language:

[T]he people of the same dominion [Wales] have and do daily use a speche nothing like ne consonaunt to the naturall mother tonge used within this Realme [...] his highnes therefore of a singuler love and favour that he beareth towards his subiectes of his said dominion of Wales munding and entending to reduce them to the perfecte order notice and knowlege of the lawes of this his Realme and utterly to extirpe alle and singuler the sinister usages and

³ P. Schwyzer, *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Wales* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 27.

customs differing from the same and to bring his said subjects of this his Realme and of his said dominion of Wales to an amiable concord[...]⁴

In this clause lies the root of many of the problems of Welsh identity up to the present day. Branding the language unnatural whilst offering the gentry classes an opportunity to participate fully in the English-language machinery of the state accelerated the pace of linguistic change, as well as creating the conditions for a psychological rift. Though Welsh was not banned, the provision that no-one could hold state office “unless he or they use and exercise the English speech or language” had the result of raising the status of English at the expense of Welsh.

These Acts did away with the distinction between England and Wales, incorporating Wales as “part of an expanded England or Greater Britain.”⁵ The attempt at “extirping” the language that was the one distinction left between the two countries was a deliberate act of colonial imposition, the actions of a state seeking to make efficient its rule and guard against sedition. They resulted in English gradually becoming the means of polite, educated and Ecclesiastical communication, and proficiency in that language was required for social acceptability in court and gentry society. One need only look at the stock Welsh caricatures in English drama to see the derision heaped upon Welsh English.⁶ Enshrining the relative status of each language in law brings the process of denigrating Welsh to the fore, and perhaps begins the

⁴ W. Rees, *The Union of England and Wales* (Cardiff, 1939), p. 81.

⁵ C. Williams, 'Problematizing Wales', in J. Aaron and C. Williams (ed.), *Postcolonial Wales* (Cardiff, 2005), p. 5.

⁶ M. Dearnley, *Distant Fields : Eighteenth-Century Fictions of Wales* (Cardiff, 2001), J.O. Bartley, *Teague, Shenkin and Sawney : Being an Historical Study of the Earliest Irish, Welsh and Scottish Characters in English Plays* (Cork, Eire, 1954).

tendency, often noted by Welsh-language authors, of the Welsh to debase their own language:

[P]an fo dyn yn dweud rhywbeth o bwys, neu'n datgan barn ystyriol neu'n mynnu tynnu haen o swyngyfaredd dros ffeithiau digon syml, rhaid wrth iaith ddwysach a mwy anghyffredin na Chymraeg er i hynny olygu trychu'r frawddeg Gymraeg yn gwbl anystyriol [...] Effaith hyn yn y man [...] oedd peri i Gymry feddwl nad mewn Cymraeg y lleferid pethau gwir bwysig mewn gwirionedd; y pethau tyngedfennol sy'n llywio bywyd ac yn arbennig bywyd dinesig. Cam bychan sydd o'r arddull hanner-a-hanner hon i drafod pob pwnc ond Cymraeg ei hun [...] yn gyfangwbl yn Saesneg.

[When a man says something important, or declares a considered opinion, or wishes to pull a veil of sorcery over fairly simple facts, he needs must have a denser and more unusual language than Welsh, even though this cuts the Welsh sentence completely recklessly. The effect of this [...] was to cause the Welsh to believe that the truly important things were not spoken in Welsh; those fatal things which steer life, and civic life in particular. It is a small step from this half-and-half style to discussing every subject except Welsh itself [...] completely in English.]⁷

Below gentry level, Anglicisation was a far slower process, although increasingly trade links with England (mainly through the movements of the drovers) ensured that it was likely that at least one English speaker could be found in any village – but the greater part of Wales remained monoglot Welsh-speaking. *Fig 1* shows the general linguistic distribution by c. 1750, with the bilingual pockets mainly in the urban centres, around ports and along the marches. These are pockets of *bilingualism*, rather than a wholesale monoglot abandonment of the language. Whilst the history of the language is generally represented as one of steady and continual decline, this was by no means rapid until the twentieth century. Geraint H. Jenkins writes that “Possibly as many as 70 per cent of the inhabitants were still monoglot

⁷ D.T. Lloyd, 'Tu Ôl i Ddrych Rhai Amseroedd', *Barn*, Vol. 1 (1963), p. 148.

Welsh by 1800".⁸ Linda Colley notes, in the surprised tones appropriate to her Anglocentric viewpoint, that Welsh was

a language that three out of four of them [the Welsh people] spoke out of choice as late as the 1880s [...] amongst themselves, most Welshmen and women below gentry level spoke only their own language. And for much of the time – though not for all of the time – they seem to have regarded the English as a different people.⁹

The full impact of the language clause was only truly realised in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Lewis Morris, who, as we shall see, supported the Union, wrote in 1754:

Our Chief Men here have forgot their Native Tongue, to their Shame and Dishonour be it spoken.¹⁰

Other Welsh writers also recognised the importance of the language in the fields of identity and autonomy. Jeremy Owen writes in 1717 that

'Tis hardly known but that the Language of a People is lost with their Liberty; the Conquest of a Land has generally issu'd (in process of Time) in the Conquest of the Language: The Conquerors have given Law to Words as well as Actions, and to the Tongue as well as to the Customs and Manners of the Nation conquer'd.¹¹

Such statements abound in Welsh prefaces and sermons of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries;¹² the inclusion of such a sentiment in an English-language

⁸ G.H. Jenkins, *The Welsh and their Language in a British Context* (St. Petersburg, 1997), pp 48.

⁹ L. Colley, *Britons : Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, 2nd edition edn (London, 2003), p. 13.

¹⁰ L. Morris, R. Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)* (London, 1947), pp. 254, 440.

¹¹ J. Owen, *The Goodness and Severity of God in His Dispensations, with Respect Unto the Ancient Britains, Display'd: In a Sermon ... Wherein is Contain'd a Brief Historical Account of that Ancient People and the several Revolutions they Underwent from their Origin Down to these Present Times* (London, 1717), p. 9.

¹² *Rhagymadroddion : 1547-1659*, ed. G. H. Hughes (Caerdydd, 1951), p. 166.

loyal sermon of the eighteenth century is a more delicate matter. Earlier in the same sermon, Owen writes of the inclusion of Wales into the wider state apparatus:

And in the time of *Henry VIII* of the *British* Blood, we were completely incorporated in to the *English* Nation, and enjoy'd thenceforth the same laws and Privileges with themselves. And tho' there had been such Contention and shedding of Blood, yet from thenceforward no Subjects more peaceable, or made more easy. Neither have we any separate Interest from theirs; nor are we to reckon ourselves as Two distinct Bodies, but as one and the same Body Politick with the *English*.¹³

Owen's peaceable, quietly subservient and servile Welshmen have been subsumed into the *English* body politic. Owen and other sermon writers of this early part of the century protest Welsh loyalty to the crown almost too much, as the Jacobite Rebellions of the time created an even greater climate of suspicion of the non-English in the realm. The need to prove loyalty conflicts with an awareness of linguistic and racial differences. Such conflicts explain the dualities present in work such as Owen's, where declarations of unstinting loyalty force the repression of those differences, which leak out elsewhere in the texts in references to conquered countries and languages. The choice of language itself is a major factor in such repression, both for political and psychological reasons.¹⁴

¹³ Owen, *The Goodness and Severity of God*, p. 15.

¹⁴ Edward Lhuyd, Evan Evans (Ieuan Fardd) and Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) are all excellent examples of writers who are able to speak their minds more plainly in a language the authorities do not understand, and are far less radical in their English writing. See G. Lewis, 'Eighteenth-Century Literary Forgeries, with Special Reference to the Work of Iolo Morganwg' (University of Oxford DPhil, 1991), p. 148, G.H. Jenkins, *'Perish Kings and Emperors, but Let the Bard of Liberty Live'* (Aberystwyth, 2006), p. 26. and further the section on psychological impacts of Prydeindod below.

The map originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

*Fig 1*¹⁵

¹⁵ *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution*, ed. Anonymous (Cardiff, 1997), p. 49.

ii

Despite formal legal absorption into the British Nation in the acts of 1536 and 1542, the Welsh were seen to be a different people from the English. The notion that the English and Welsh were two separate races was a mainstream view in the eighteenth century, a theory supported by Biblical origin myths, as well as linguistic and antiquarian research.¹⁶ The two cultures saw themselves as distinctly and essentially different, whether or not one also accepts Colley's thesis that by the end of the eighteenth century, most inhabitants of the British Isles also, first and foremost, saw themselves as Britons.'

In an article in the *English Historical Review*, Bryan Ward-Perkins states that

[H]istorians have tended to assume that [...] Anglo-Saxon groups would share one important thing in common, namely a sense that they were different from the native 'Celtic' population of southern Britain, the Britons[...]¹⁷

The standard historical outlook, in the eighteenth century as well as our own, has been that the Saxons and the Welsh were not only racially and linguistically different, but that they kept themselves separated in this manner, any cultural traffic being decidedly one-sided, from the conquerors to the conquered. Ward-Perkins argues

¹⁶ See eg C. Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism : Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, 1999), R. Sweet, *Antiquaries : The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 2004), C. Davies, *Adfeilion Babel : Agweddau Ar Syniadaeth Ieithyddol y Ddeunawfed Ganrif* (Caerdydd, 2000). This is not to say that all the myths of the origins of the Ancient Britons were accepted unquestioningly – Polydore Vergil, and others before him, had cast a sceptical eye over the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth in the sixteenth century, and myths of descent from Brutus of Troy were by the eighteenth century widely ridiculed

¹⁷ B. Ward-Perkins, 'Why did the Anglo-Saxons Not Become More British?', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 115 (No. 462, 2000), p. 513.

convincingly that there was in fact considerable mingling between the two races, which historians of both sides have chosen to disregard or gloss over.

[I]t is likely that the self-evident ‘Anglo-Saxonness’ of the English is in fact rooted in a cultural choice, and not in an immutable fact of race and biology [...] it may be even more unsettling for some in modern Wales to accept that vast numbers of early medieval Britons, when subjected to Anglo-Saxon rule, fairly rapidly abandoned their Britishness and thoroughly Anglo-Saxonized themselves.¹⁸

This situation is repeated under the Tudor polity.

Matthew Arnold, writing at a time which saw the fullest blossoming of the racial theories of the British Isles, speaks of the Celts “conquering their conquerors” by allowing “the greater delicacy and spirituality of the Celtic peoples who are blended with us[...] to make itself prized and honoured.”¹⁹ A similar hope was expressed from the Welsh perspective by Sir William Vaughan in 1630:

I reioyce, that the memoriall of *Offaes Ditch* is extinguished with loue and Charitie; that our greene *Leekes*, sometimes offensive to your daintie nostrils, are now tempred with your fragrant *Roses*: that (like the *Gibeonites*) we are vnited and graffed into *Israel*.²⁰

Arnold’s “greater delicacy and spirituality” is that ethereal mysticism associated with the Celt from the time of Gray’s *Bard* (1757) and the publication of the Ossian fragments (1760 onwards), and which reached its zenith in the Celtic Twilight pseudo-mysticism of Yeats’ time, the ‘feminine dimension’ that tames and contains the Celt,²¹ the cloying sentimentality of the Romantic image of the Celtic as site of a living melancholy past.

¹⁸ *ibid.* p. 523.

¹⁹ M. Arnold, *The Study of Celtic Literature* (London, 1900), p. x.

²⁰ W. Vaughan, *The Arraignment of Slander Periury Blasphemy, and Other Malicious Sinnes* (London, 1630), p. 323.

²¹ M. Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image* (Manchester, 1999) ch. 2.

The position of commentators such as Arnold, recognising the difference between the two peoples, yet hoping to create an amalgam of the better parts of the two, may be explained by the adherence to a notion of the need for progress, and the “cult of improvement” which Paul Langford identifies:

[England had] a growing faith in progress in general and the progress of Britain in particular. The cult of ‘improvement’ was a more satisfying question than ‘enlightenment’, to the extent that it emphasized moral and material progress rather than an intellectual state.²²

Locating national identity as the intersection of the linguistic and territorial axes raises the main question upon which this thesis is founded:

Eithr y mae un broblem. Bydd yn eglur i’r craff y rhoddais le i godi un cwestiwn dreiniog iawn ynghylch y Gymru gyfoes, sef, os yw iaith Pobl, yn ogystal a’u tir, yn elfen mor anhebgor yn ffurfiad eu gwahanrwydd, beth am y Cymro a gollodd ei Gymraeg? A beidiodd ef â bod yn Gymro? Achoswyd mynydd o boendod a thramgwydd yng Nghymru o ddiffyg offer dirnadol i drafod y cwestiwn hwn ar wastad digon dwfn.

[However, there is one problem. It will be clear to the astute that I left space to raise one very thorny question about the modern Wales, to wit, if a People’s language, as well as their territory, is such an indispensable element in the formation of their otherness, what about the Welshman who lost his Welsh? Did he cease to be a Welshman? A mountain of torment and offence has been caused in Wales because of the lack of conceptual tools to discuss this question on a deep enough level.]²³

The main factor in the abandonment of a Welsh native culture is one that holds true to this day; namely, the perceived higher worth of the culture of their conquerors. The Anglicised Welshman, a Dic-Sion-Dafydd,²⁴ has become a proverbial character in

²² P. Langford and M. Rowson, *Englishness Identified : Manners and Character, 1650-1850* (Oxford, 2000), p. 4.

²³ J.R. Jones, *Prydeindod* (Llandybie (Carm.), 1966), p. 15.

²⁴ A satirical character invented by Jac Glan-y-Gors in his 1799 ballad of the same name, relating the story of a Welshman trying to succeed in English life. J. Aaron, 'Bardic Anti-Colonialism', in J. Aaron and C. Williams (ed.), *Postcolonial Wales* (Cardiff, 2005) 138-58., Jac Glan-y-Gors, *Cerddi Jac Glan-y-Gors* (Abertawe :, 2003), p. 148.

Welsh culture, reinforcing the linguistic difference and animosity between English and Welsh cultures, and above all their separateness. Elis Wynne consigns to his Hell those Welshmen whom he accuses of *ucheldremio ar wychder y Saeson* [gazing aloft at the wondrousness of the English].²⁵ With this in mind, the position of a Welsh writer writing in English, especially when that writer can speak Welsh, is a precarious one, not merely writing in another language, but that the language of the conquering Other. Stephen Barbour points to the importance and divisiveness of language as a marker of national identity in Wales, and suggests that:

[Of the countries of the United Kingdom] [o]nly in Wales [...]is language a potent symbol of national identity, albeit a sometimes divisive one, alienating people who are monoglot English speakers, but who nevertheless feel themselves to be Welsh[...] It is perhaps justified to postulate two indigenous ethnic groups in Wales: English-speakers and bilinguals.²⁶

Translation today is an issue because of the perceived need to protect the language from the encroachment of a global Anglosphere; in the eighteenth century it was an issue because of the prevalence of Welsh.

iii

It was this prevalence which gave rise to a second important piece of Tudor legislation, whose results were also still to be seen in the eighteenth century. The passing of the act 5 Elizabeth I, c.28 “for the translating of the Bible and the Divine Service into the Welsh Tongue” (1563) is often credited with rescuing the language from probable ruin. This followed William Salesbury’s translations of the Gospels

²⁵ E. Wynne, *Gweledigaethu y Bardd Cwsg : Y Rhan Gyntaf* (Llandysul, 1998), p. 147.

²⁶ S. Barbour, 'Language and Nationalism: Britain and Ireland, and the German-Speaking Area', in M. M. Parry, W. V. Davies, et al. (ed.), *The Changing Voices of Europe : Social and Political Changes and their Linguistic Repercussions, Past, Present and Future : Papers in Honour of Professor Glanville Price* (Cardiff, 1994), p. 329.

and Epistles in *Kynniver Llith a Ban* (1561), and a concerted campaign of petitioning by Welsh humanists conscious that the business of saving souls could not wait until the people had been thoroughly Anglicised.²⁷ The Book of Common Prayer was translated by 1567, and Bishop William Morgan's masterful translation of the Bible finally came to press in 1588. The benefit to the Welsh language was an unintentional consequence – the bibles were to be put side-by-side with English language bibles, so that the Welsh could learn English the faster.

The same impetus to save souls faster than the people could be taught English lay behind the explosion in Welsh-language publishing, and the establishment of popular schooling systems in Wales in the eighteenth century. Schools under the auspices of the Welsh Trust, established by Thomas Gouge in 1674, gave instruction in English, apparently a deliberate policy intended to promote the language in the country.²⁸ For this reason, the schools had little impact among the people. Following the Trust's demise, schooling was provided by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge; as the medium was again English, the impact was equally slight. The real explosion in Welsh literacy came with the advent of the circulating schools established by Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, which taught a narrow syllabus of reading (though not writing) and the catechism effectively in a very short space of time. Jones pragmatically estimated that a child could be taught to read Welsh in a matter of months, where to teach him to read in English would take years. By the

²⁷ P. R. Roberts, 'Tudor Legislation and the Political Status of 'the British Tongue'', in Anonymous (ed.), *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution* (Cardiff, 1997), p. 455.

²⁸ See also Eryn M. White, 'Popular Schooling and the Welsh Language, 1650-1800', in Anonymous (ed.), *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution* (Cardiff, 1997), p. 455, M.G. Jones, *The Charity School Movement : A Study of Eighteenth Century Puritanism in Action* (London, 1964).

time of his death in 1761, it has been estimated that out of a total population of 480,000, the circulating schools had brought literacy to 200,000 adults and children.

Prior to the founding of these schools, acquiring literacy was a haphazard affair, as William Morris acknowledged to his brother Richard:

[...] clywais fy nhad yn dywedyd nad ydoedd Ymhlwy Llanfihangel tre'r Bardd a fedrai ddarllen yr hen iaith gyffredin onid un gwr gwreng y sef Sion Edwart y Cowper, at yr hwn y byddai'n myned lanciau'r plwyf i ddyscu darllain [...] Pwy a wyr na bu'sech chwi a minneu yn anllythrennog oni buasai ir hen gorphyn o Glorach [...] addyscu i nhad, ag felly rhoddi cychwyn i'r dawn bendigaid hwnnw.

[I heard my father say that there was not in the parish of Llanfihangel Tre'r Beirdd anyone who could read the common old language but one common man viz Sion Edwards the Cooper, to whom the parish lads would go to learn to read [...] Who knows but that you and I would be illiterate were it not that that old fellow from Clorach [...] taught our father, and thus gave a start to that blessed gift.]²⁹

The Morris brothers, Lewis, William, Richard and Sion, along with the rest of their circle of correspondents, benefitted from a better standard of education. Lewis was schooled at Beaumaris Grammar, William and Richard at a school in Penrhosllugwy, and all three were taught English and Latin at these establishments. Evan Evans studied at the grammar school of Edward Richards, Ystradmeurig (another of the Morris Circle), and succeeding in coming up to Merton College, Oxford, in 1750 to study for the priesthood. Edward Richard was himself taught by his Oxford-educated older brother at Carmarthen grammar school, and then under a “Greek scholar of repute,” Mr. Pugh of Portygido.³⁰ All those of this educational status would have been taught Latin and English, and in some cases Greek. Within the specific circle of

²⁹ L. Morris, R. Morris, et al., *The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William and John Morris of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid Mon) 1728-1765* (Aberystwyth, 1907), p. 198.

³⁰ S. Lewis, *A School of Welsh Augustans : Being a Study in English Influences on Welsh Literature during Part of the 18th Century* (Wrexham London, 1924), p, 56.

the Morrisians, Edward Richard was the chief vehicle for the study of the Classics. His library at Ystradmeurig had over 700 books on the literature of Greece and Rome. Letters between him and Lewis Morris are filled with the recommendation of the Classics on the one side, and rebukes that Richard is overly classicised on the other – “You understand the ancient Greeks and Romans better than the ancient Celtae and Britons.”³¹ What Lewis Morris advocated to leaven Richard’s weighty learning was that which was not taught in the schools, to wit, an education in Welsh literature. In Evans’ case, it can be said that he had two educations, a classical one under Edward Richard, and in Welsh antiquities and literature under Lewis Morris.

Two streams of education both helped and hindered these authors. On the one hand, Evans could learn the disciplines and standards of good scholarship which were unavailable to the autodidact Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) who flourished later in the century. Yet the fact that any education in Welsh antiquities was conducted outside a formal school environment shows that it did not hold such a high status as classical learning. Above the working classes, Welsh continued to be seen by all but an enlightened few as the language of the hearth rather than a language of learning. The lack of any institutions of higher education in Wales also meant that Welsh literature could not develop the sort of status that came to be afforded to Scottish writing in English by the time of Hugh Blair.³² It also meant that the most intelligent and promising Welsh scholars would move from Wales to centres of learning in England, more often than not never to return.

³¹ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrisians of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 516.

³² See R. Crawford, *The Scottish Invention of English Literature* (Cambridge, 1998)

The shift from an oral to a chirographic culture had less of an effect on Welsh literature than might be expected. Oral forms, such as *cynganedd* and *penillion* [folk verses] remained strong, making use of new methods of transmission. *Cannwyll y Cymry* [The Candle of the Welsh], one of the best sellers of eighteenth-century Wales, contained religious verses in the style of the *penillion*, designed to be memorised easily from the book, and transmitted and recited much as folk verses would have been. Though the old bardic ways died out,³³ *cynganedd* persisted through both manuscript and print transmission, gaining a wider currency than it had previously enjoyed under the closed learning of the guilds. Even the literacy promoted by Griffith Jones' circulating schools had a strong oral component, with an emphasis on catechising the students and learning by rote.³⁴ By the end of the eighteenth century, Wales had one of the highest literacy rates in Europe, and this rise complemented, rather than destroyed, the local oral culture. Reading religious texts was neither a solitary nor a quiet act, and the proliferation of books encouraged the spread of carols, *dyriau*, and other religious verses further than the originator's square mile.

iv

Conflicting traditions are reflected, as previously noted, in the hyphenated markers of identity which proliferated in the eighteenth century. Although coined in relation to prelates rather than to poets, the term Anglo-Welsh, in its name and its history, seems to sum up the difficulties of bilingual authors in placing themselves in a newly-emergent Britain.

³³ See C. W. Lewis, 'The Decline of Professional Poetry', in R. Geraint Gruffydd (ed.), *A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1530-1700*, Rev edn (Cardiff, 1992)

³⁴ Richard Sugget and Eryn M. White, 'Language, Literacy and Aspects of Identity in Early Modern Wales', in Adam Fox and D. R. Woolf (ed.), *The Spoken Word : Oral Culture in Britain, 1500-1850* (Manchester, 2002), pp. 52-83.

In using it to refer to writers in the eighteenth century we encounter the problem of whether the term is anachronistic; and, related to that question, whether one can speak of an Anglo-Welsh tradition in any meaningful sense. H. Idris Bell discussed “what I may call the Anglo-Welsh movement” as a new phenomenon in 1922,³⁵ and despite Garlick and Mathias’s comprehensive anthology of *Anglo-Welsh Poetry 1480-1990*, the argument that there is no Anglo-Welsh tradition before the twentieth century, and that few “Anglo-Welsh” writers are aware of those who came before them, retains a great deal of force. Bobi Jones states that

[...] anthologists and literary critics [...] try to persuade us that Anglo-Welsh literature is old (older than American literature) and has a tradition of its own – which it certainly has not: there is no continuity at all in the Anglo-Welsh literary heritage as such (even if there *is* a recurrence of pattern)[...]³⁶

The term Anglo-Welsh seems self-explanatory, a linguistic nicety which sums up the notion that a writer is Welsh, but is not writing in that language. But when seen in comparison with other Anglo hyphenations, the reality appears more complex. To use the two examples cited by Saunders Lewis in *Is there an Anglo-Welsh Literature?* (1939), if we compare the phrase with "Anglo-Irish" and "Anglo-Indian" several problems arise. Initially, “Anglo” is defined as "English and; English in connexion with[...]" (*OED* 2). In this sense it is often used in combinations such as Anglo-French, Anglo-Russian, used as a marker indicating a relationship with both countries in combination. This is complicated when we look at the term “*Anglo-Irish*,” for which *OED* definition B states :

Collectively, persons of English descent born or resident in Ireland, or descendants of mixed English and Irish parentage.

³⁵ *The Welsh Outlook*, August 1922, quoted in Garlick, *An Introduction to Anglo-Welsh Literature*, p. 11.

³⁶ B. Jones, 'Anglo-Welsh: More Definition', *Planet*, No. 1, 1979), pp. 11-23.

This marks a clear ethnic element in the term, and it is generally used to denote a specific part of Irish society in the eighteenth century (that is, those landowning Irish descended from the Norman, Old English, or Cromwellian rulers) - in this case it is primarily the person that is "Anglo", and his location that is "Irish".

The same is true for the second *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of Anglo-Indian, that is "A person of British birth resident, or once resident, in India." The first definition, "Of, pertaining to, or characteristic of India under British rule, or the English in India" is the definition that Saunders Lewis has in mind in his discussion:

Anglo-Welsh literature seems to me to bear a relationship to Welsh life nearer akin to the relationship of Anglo-Indian literature to India than to the relationship Yeats in his letters established with Ireland. At its best it is imaginative and interpretative, and it enriches the English imagination and literary sensibil[ity]. When it is more ordinary it is regional and picturesque, or perhaps merely sociological.³⁷

In the light of such definitions, it is unsurprising that he can ask:

Is there an Anglo-Welsh nation which has its own literature in its own language? It is unlikely that anyone would answer that question with a 'Yes' [...]³⁸

The term "Anglo-Welsh," it seems, is an anomaly in the list of Anglo-hyphenations, in being used specifically as a cultural (and, more narrowly still, literary) rather than racial signifier. This is not to say that race does not play a part in its usage – it is generally accepted that an English-born writer writing about Wales is not an Anglo-Welsh writer, for instance:

Another distinction that may be made can be illustrated by referring to Gerard Manley Hopkins. He was an Englishman who learned Welsh and adopted

³⁷ S. Lewis, *Is there an Anglo-Welsh Literature?* (Caerdydd, 1939), p. 12.

³⁸ *ibid.* p. 1.

certain Welsh prosodic techniques in his verse [...] This certainly does not make him Anglo-Welsh, any more than a Welshman who learns Japanese and adopts certain Japanese characteristics in his Welsh writings would be Cymric-Japanese. Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote unhyphenated English literature with foreign influences [...] ³⁹

A recent draft entry for “*Anglo-Welsh*” in the *OED*⁴⁰ seems to concur. Definitions A and 2 read as follows:

- A. English-speaking Welsh people, considered collectively; (also) people of mixed English and Welsh descent.
[...]
- 2. Of or belonging to the English language as used by Welsh speakers or writers.⁴¹

To say as G.O. Jones does that Welsh writing in English is a literature “effectively about seventy years old” ⁴² is untrue - Tony Conran and Raymond Garlick date the earliest extant example of Welsh writing in English at 1480 (Ieuan ap Hywel Swardwal’s *Hymn to the Virgin*, written whilst a student at Oxford). Saunders Lewis has shown in *A School of Welsh Augustans* that the Welsh poetry and literary ideology of the Morrisian circle was influenced greatly by the Augustan school in England, as much as by their awareness of a tradition of Welsh writing in English dating back to the fifteenth century:

I still maintain correspondence with Mr. Percy, and find that the Northern Scalds had a kind of *Cynghanedd*, not unlike ours, in their poetry. I sent him Swardwal’s poem upon Our Lady, but my copy was very corrupt[...] ⁴³

³⁹ Jones, *Anglo-Welsh: More Definition*, p. 13.

⁴⁰ *OED*, online edition, draft entry September 2008

⁴¹ *OED* online edition, accessed 17/08/09

⁴² G.O. Jones, 'Wales, Welsh, Anglo-Welsh', *New Wales Review*, Vol. 1 (1988), pp. 56-60.

⁴³ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 183.

This poem by Ieuan ap Hywel Swrdwal (*fl.* 1430-1480), “an extraordinary document of colonization,”⁴⁴ is the first and earliest poem in Garlick and Mathias’s collection of Anglo-Welsh poetry. It is written in English with *cynghanedd*, and in the form of an *englyn*.

O michti ladi, owr leding / tw haf
 at hefn owr abeiding:
 yntw ddy ffest efrlesting
 i set a braents ws tw bring.
 [O mighty lady, our leading / to have
 at heaven our abiding:
 to bring us unto the everlasting feast
 ye planted a branch.]⁴⁵

The offhand manner of the comment by Evans in this letter to Lewis Morris shows that it was a work familiar to them, and presumably to the Morrisian Circle as a whole. Two copies of the work in Evans’s hand are in the National Library of Wales (Panton MSS 33 and 42). E.J. Dobson says that Panton 33 was written “before 1772,”⁴⁶ and we can date it earlier, to before May 1764. Evans certainly knew it by then, and the work was familiar enough to Lewis Morris to be understood by a brief reference, showing an awareness of Welsh writing in English in previous centuries. The poem is indeed a *jeu d’esprit*, but it is also an important precedent in that it was composed as a riposte to English students who claimed that Welsh scholars were inferior to the English. Evans’s MS version has the extended version of the prologue to the poem,⁴⁷ telling the story of the challenge and how Swrdwal answered it. Not

⁴⁴ *Welsh Writing in English*, ed. A.O.H. Jarman (A Guide to Welsh Literature, Cardiff, 2003), p. 1.

⁴⁵ ed. Anonymous (Bridgend, 1993), pp. 45-7.

⁴⁶ E.J. Dobson, *The Hymn to the Virgin* (1955), p. 70.

⁴⁷ See Dobson, *ibid.*

only does it excel in form and metre, it is in an unashamedly Welsh dialect of English. This is an awareness of a tradition, not merely “a recurrence of pattern,” and it is common both to the Morrisian circle, and the circle of Iolo Morganwg later in the century.

Despite this evidence, the debate over “Anglo-Welsh literature” remains firmly rooted in the twentieth century, as P. M. Smith writes :

The Anglo-Welsh tradition is a young idea, a post-war invention, for all its five hundred years of history. Conceived of the Anglo-Welsh periodicals, it has been praised by many [...] and reviled by many: Harri Webb saw it as investing ‘the Anglicisation of Wales’ with ‘respectability,’ and he has been far from alone in sensing that the tradition has made respectable the use of English to the detriment of Welsh.⁴⁸

From the outset, the hyphenation has been pejorative, implying an intrusion and hostile occupation, a bastard miscegenation which has only negative connotations. The stuffing of English and English-speaking Bishops into the Church of England in Wales which occasioned the invention of the term is commonly cited as one of the most important factors in the meteoric rise of Methodism in the eighteenth century. Wyn Griffith writes tellingly, employing the language of guilt and blame with regard to whether or not he is an Anglo-Welsh writer:

[...]the present writer has been accused – and rightly – of being coy in his use of the term. It is only because he cannot recognize himself as ‘Anglo-Welsh’, being entirely innocent of English blood [...] But [...] convenience wins in the long run.⁴⁹

The contention is, as Tony Conran argues, that “Against all precedent, ‘Anglo’ was supposed to refer solely to the language, while ‘Welsh’ referred solely to the tribe. An Anglo-Welsh writer was therefore a Welshman or Welshwoman who did his or her

⁴⁸ P.M. Smith, 'The Making of the Anglo-Welsh Tradition', *New Wales Review*, Vol. 1 (1988)

⁴⁹ Quoted in Jones, *Wales, Welsh, Anglo-Welsh*, p. 59.

writing in English.”⁵⁰ We have seen the precedent in the usages of Anglo-Irish and Anglo-Indian, both of which have racial overtones, and imply foreign and unwelcome occupation. Those who would have themselves not guilty of being English are wary of the connotations of betrayal in the hyphen, a sort of linguistic collaborationism.

Evan Evans and Richard Morris were heavily involved in the case of Dr. Thomas Bowles, the monoglot rector of Trefdraeth and Llangwyfan in Anglesey, and both campaigned stridently against nepotistic preferment to those who had no linguistic (and by extension, spiritual) connection with their flocks.⁵¹ As the Anglican church regarded Britain as one country, it saw no need to make a distinction between Wales and England in the matter of language. The subtitle of Evans’ unpublished tract *The Grievances of the Principality of Wales in the Church* lays out all the faults of the established religion in the country, and the language issue heads the list :

Want of Pastors who understand the language : Want of Sufficient Maintenance for the Clergy: and Want of proper discipline, which occasion great offence and umbrage to sectaries : together with an earnest exhortation to the Inhabitants to apply for a speedy redress.⁵²

Most of these grievances were not specific to Wales, but all would be exacerbated by the first and, to Evans’ mind, gravest of them. He writes:

Ni wiw sôn am ddaioni yng Nghymru, ac ni wiw i ni ddisgwyl am nodedd a bendith yr Hollalluog, tra y goddefom y cyfryw ffeiddgar lygredigaethau, ag y mae’r Esgyb Eing a’r tô [*sic*] presennol o Offeiriaid graddol yn euog ohonynt [...]

[It is of no use to speak of good in Wales, and there is no use for us to expect the protection and the blessing of the Almighty, whilst we tolerate such

⁵⁰ A. Conran, 'Anglo-Welsh' Revisited', *Planet*, Vol. No. 1 (Aug./Sept. 1970)- (1970), p., 28.

⁵¹ G.H. Jenkins, 'Horrid Unintelligible Jargon': The Case of Dr. Thomas Bowles', *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 15 (1991), pp. 494-523.

⁵² Panton MS 40

abominable corruptions, which the Anglo-Welsh Bishops and the current crop of Priests are guilty of [...]⁵³

The Anglo-Welsh in this context are something to be cleared from the country, both for Christian reasons and for reasons of linguistic purity. The Morris circle of correspondents would not have seen themselves as Anglo-Welsh, or even as effecting any kind of betrayal in writing in English. The meaning of the term has shifted in the twentieth century, although it has not necessarily lost all pejorative connotations; Raymond Garlick, writing in 1972, calls the epithet

a convenient shorthand for ‘writing in the English language by Welshmen’: a linguistic distinction, implying no reflection upon the Welshness of the writers in question [...] a terminological exactitude – the embodiment in a convenient epithet (since reference to Anglo-Welsh Literature implies that there exists something else to which the term Welsh Literature is properly reserved) of the bilingual nature of literary activity in Wales.⁵⁴

Not all would agree with this “terminological exactitude”, of course, preferring to preserve some of the original force of Evans’ phrase. R. S. Thomas is particularly harsh on such writers, saying “Pechasant yn erbyn eu cenedl eu hunain.” [They sinned against their own nation].⁵⁵ He goes further to say “ni all Cymro o’r iawn ryw edrych ar y Saesneg ond fel modd i ailennyn diddordeb yn y diwylliant Cymraeg ac i arwain pobl yn ôl i’r famiaith” [a true Welshman cannot look upon English except as a means to rekindle interest in Welsh culture and to lead people back to the mother tongue].⁵⁶ This is reminiscent of Evan Evans’ reasons for writing in English, two hundred years earlier – “I have done it in English verse, in order that men of learning, in both

⁵³ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 209.

⁵⁴ Garlick, *An Introduction to Anglo-Welsh Literature*, p. 9.

⁵⁵ R. S. Thomas, 'Llenyddiaeth Eingl-Gymreig', in T. Brown and B. L. Jones (ed.), *Pe Medrwn Yr Iaith : Ac Ysgrifau Eraill* (Abertawe, 1988), p. 50.

⁵⁶ *ibid.* p. 51.

nations, may understand it”⁵⁷ – and is certainly the primary reasoning behind *Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards* (1764); but it does not allow for the legitimacy of such literature in its own right. Dafydd Glyn Jones is perspicacious in noting that the literature of Wales in the eighteenth century is bilingual; and that the English literature of the time is essentially multi-national – “tynnwch y Gwyddyl a’r Albanwyr ohoni ac fe welwch y tyllau a fydd ar ôl” [Take the Irish and the Scots out of it and you will see the holes that are left].⁵⁸

Many of the problems surrounding the term Anglo-Welsh stem from the use of English in discussing the subject. In Welsh, there is no need to use the term, as it is possible to distinguish between *llenyddiaeth Gymraeg*, literature in the Welsh language, and *llenyddiaeth Gymreig*, literature about, of, or from Wales, not necessarily in Welsh. When Evans wrote of the Anglo-Welsh parsons in Welsh, the term he used was not a hyphenated direct translation (*Eingl-Gymraeg*, cognate with *Eingl-Saesoneg*, Anglo-Saxon), but *personiaid Eingl*, Anglo or English parsons. This points to the potentially destabilising effect writing in a foreign tongue might have on an author. There is less space for doubt in an unified identity, as opposed to a hyphenated one. A *llenor Cymreig* might still participate in artistic life in any language, without losing his grounding in a solid identity; but an Anglo-Welsh writer must negotiate two names and two identities, with the possibility that they might never be reconciled.

There is also a question of register. *What* was discussed in or appropriate to each language?

⁵⁷ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 132.

⁵⁸ D.G. Jones, *Letter* (Bangor, 2001)

Cymraeg oedd iaith y mwyafrif llethol o bobl yng Nghymru yn y ddeunawfed ganrif, ac er bod y Saesneg yn treiddio yn araf ond yn sicr i mewn i'r wlad, nid oedd sefyllfa'r Gymraeg fel cyfrwng beunyddiol naturiol trwch y boblogaeth o dan fygythiad [...] Diddorol yw nodi i'r brodyr [Morris], at ei gilydd, ddefnyddio'r Saesneg fel cyfrwng trafod materion dysgedig, ac iddynt gynnwys dyfyniadau yn y Gymraeg bob hyn a hyn, fel y byddai rhywun yn dyfynnu'n facaronig o ieithoedd hynafol fel Lladin neu Roeg [...] [Welsh was the language of the vast majority of people in Wales in the eighteenth century, and although English was penetrating slowly but surely into the country, the situation of Welsh as the natural everyday medium of the majority of the population was not under threat...it is interesting to note that the [Morris] brothers, to each other, used English as the medium for discussing learned matters, and that they included quotations in Welsh every now and then, as one would quote macaronically from ancient languages such as Latin or Greek[...]]⁵⁹

English is the language of scholarly debate, although the Morrisians are more than competent at discussing Welsh literature in Welsh. Using English gives them access to the wider republic of letters, as English came gradually to replace Latin as the lingua franca of scholarly discussion through the eighteenth century⁶⁰. As the century progressed, grammarians (as well as Iolo Morganwg) coined new words, whether they acknowledged them as such or not, to fill the gap for these terms in Welsh⁶¹ – yet although the ability to produce critical literature in Welsh increased (as did the volume of that literature), 'Anglo-Welsh writing' itself did not decrease. Again, in the eighteenth century it is mainly interpretative work, translating outwards to a dominant culture that cannot understand the literature of what is to it a minority culture.

In the letters of the Morris brothers and their circle, switches between English and Welsh occur often within sentences and within paragraphs. Between themselves, there is little demarcation between the two languages. What is sought is the most

⁵⁹ A.R. Jones, 'Wawch! Wala Hai! - Tafodau Llac y Morrisiaid', *Tu Chwith : Llenyddiaeth Gyfoes*, No. 2, 1997), pp. 47-9.

⁶⁰ Sweet, *Antiquaries : The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain*

⁶¹ G.J. Williams, *Iolo Morganwg* (Caerdydd Wales, 1956), pp. 106, 140.

appropriate expression for the purpose in either language. Simon Dentith, discussing the Bakhtinian concept of heteroglossia, writes:

[...]if you are an English speaker in Wales, Scotland or Ireland[...] you will know the sharp and sometimes bitterly conflictual tensions that surround every word you speak. But you may also know the pleasures that come from negotiating the heteroglossia in which you find yourself: the pleasures of solidarity and self-assertion that can come from the proud use of stigmatised forms, and the heady pleasures that can come from switching from one language to another so that none is permitted the final say.⁶²

The latter part of Dentith's statement, on the pleasure of heteroglossia, could have been written to describe the letters of the Morris brothers and their circle.⁶³ The dynamic tension between Welsh and English in the letters is a literary mirror of the interplay between Wales and the London Welsh. Any words the Anglo-Welsh writer uses are

entangled, shot through with shared thoughts, points of view, alien value judgements and accents, [the word] weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group: and all this may crucially shape discourse, may leave a trace in all its semantic layers, may complicate its expression and influence its entire stylistic profile.⁶⁴

As Dentith points out, these forces are "not simply linguistic ones; they are produced by historical forces that are external to language but which act partly in language".

Each utterance realises itself in relation to the national language as well as to the living heteroglossia, existing sometimes in both states at once, which accounts for the tension in language, especially in the authors we will consider.

The English-language literary productions of the Morrisian circle, discounting official documents and correspondence with the Government departments for whom

⁶² S. Dentith, *Bakhtinian Thought : An Introductory Reader* (London, 1995), p. 265.

⁶³ Jones, *Wawch! Wala Hai! - Tafodau Llac y Morrisiaid*, pp. 47-9.

⁶⁴ M.M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination : Four Essays* (Austin, 1981), p. 276.

some of the brothers worked, is considerably less than that of Iolo Morganwg later in the century. Although English was the language of his father's hearth,⁶⁵ Iolo was in the main seen as distinctly anti-establishment (notwithstanding a vein of desire to be accepted by the establishment which runs through his work), and he was vocal in his criticism of the language clause:

About the time when Wales was incorporated with England, government seems to have entertained an idea that it was not safe or politic to suffer the Welsh language to live: the use of it was discouraged, and all that could decently, and with saving-appearances, be done, was attempted, to suppress and annihilate it [...] The Bible was translated – and well translated – was printed, and brought into use, but not at the expense of government, which had given profuse encouragements to the English translators of it [...] we trust that, however hostile the politics of this country were once towards our language, they have so far ceased, as to become absolutely in different [*sic*] about the matter.⁶⁶

The complexity of reactions to the language clause and subsequent inexorable expansion of English into Wales betray a similar complexity with regard to national identity as bound up with language. Much worry about the state of the language betrays the class of the writer; as Geraint H. Jenkins notes, it belonged mainly to the educated middling sort, not the working-class monoglot Welsh speaker, for whom the place of the language in everyday life must have seemed very secure.⁶⁷ Of major importance in the question of these authors of the middling sort is the answer to Joan-Lluis Marfany's recent question about minority language authors:

[...]a far more important question to ask of those people who wrote literature in a minority language is, did they use the native tongue across the whole range of social transactions? Did they keep their account books and their

⁶⁵ I. Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams* (London, 1794), p. xv.

⁶⁶ *The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales*, ed. W. O. Pughe, E. Williams, O. Jones, (Denbigh, 1870), pp. ix-x.

⁶⁷ Jenkins, *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution*, pp. 1-2.

personal diaries in it, did they write to their families, friends, lovers in it? And did they speak it outside the domestic circle or with people other than socially inferior monoglots, did they converse in it in select social gatherings, in the drawing room, the college, the academy?⁶⁸

In the cases discussed below, the answer is yes. For the majority of these authors, their English-language literary output is secondary to the Welsh. In applying his criteria to the Morris Circle, Marfany is being unfair. They did indeed correspond with those who could be called their social superiors through the medium of English; but often these correspondents were English antiquarians, poets, and academics. Those without Welsh, but belonging to a wider republic of letters that did not exist in Wales, and which was denied to those who were monoglot Welsh in any event – though the circulating schools taught them to read, they rarely taught them to write. English, though the language of the dominant elite, was, as we have seen, the minority language in Wales in terms of numbers.

Anglo-Welsh literature in the eighteenth century is a minority literature, and has always been treated as such, these authors' English-language works being ignored in favour of their Welsh-language literature. Lewis Morris certainly treated his Welsh poetry as his serious work, regarding his English works as trifles. Most of Evans' work is in Welsh *cyghanedd*; Iolo Morganwg is the only author in this study who made a serious essay at becoming an established English-language author.

The craft and discipline of *cyghanedd*, where certain syllables within a line must correspond, and certain rhymes are prohibited, along with their consciousness of the weight of the historical precedent of their forbears' work, contributes to this feeling of seriousness. Goronwy Owen often refers to *cyghanedd* as “shackles” and

⁶⁸ J.-. Marfany, 'Minority' Languages and Literary Revivals', *Past and Present*, No. 18, 2004), pp. 137-67.

“gingling rhymes,” pointing to the difficulty of writing in the strict metres, as opposed to the relative freedom of writing in English. Welsh free metre verse was seen as the province of the folk verses, ballads and interludes, not of serious poetry. Owen – whose extant poetry is in Welsh and Latin – implies that the metre of one language does not fit with the other; “the shortness of the measures in our language makes me almost despair of success”⁶⁹ he writes:

Our language, I am certain, is not inferior for copiousness, pithiness, and significancy [...] to any other, ancient or modern [...] there is such a very great (I had almost said, irreconcilable) difference between the properties and Idioms of two Languages, as confessedly there is between our’s and the English. [...] [In Welsh] we are tied to find out, and range in order, letters and Syllables : What an exquisite nicety is required in this literal Muster [...] you very well know [...] Perhaps it were wished that the Rules of Poetry in our Language were less nice and accurate : we should then undoubtedly have more writers, but perhaps fewer good ones. I would never wish to see our Poetry reduced to the English Standard, for I can see nothing in *That* that should entitle it to the Name of *Poetry*, but only the number of Syllables (which yet is never scrupulously observved) and a choice of *uncommon*, or if you please *Poetick* words, and a wretched Rhyme, some times at the end, and in Blank Verse, i.e. the best kind of English Poetry.⁷⁰

The implication is that these authors were speaking in a borrowed language and a borrowed idiom, especially in the case of poets – the criticism of Iolo Morganwg’s poetry in *The Critical Review* later in the century was that it was not Welsh *enough*. Nor does *cynganedd* work in English as very much more than the sort of *jeu d’esprit* seen in Ieuan ap Hywel Swardwal’s work above – somehow the constraints of the metre rob the English works of any seriousness.⁷¹ Eighteenth-century Anglo-Welsh writers seemingly cannot manage a synthesis of two traditions, nor do they seem

⁶⁹ Quoted in Lewis, *A School of Welsh Augustans : Being a Study in English Influences on Welsh Literature during Part of the 18th Century*, p. 119.

⁷⁰ G. Owen, *The Letters of Goronwy Owen (1723-1769)* (Cardiff, 1924), pp. 25-6.

⁷¹ See for instance Harri Webb, *Cywydd o Fawl*, in Garlick and Mathias, p. 220.

entirely able to create a new one to encompass both cultures, despite Iolo Morganwg's protestations that this is precisely what he is doing.

By the 1790s, reception of the literatures of the Celtic countries of Britain had changed. Far from being wholly derided, Gray's Welsh work and the success of Macpherson's *Ossian* had led poets and antiquaries to hope for greater prizes in Welsh literature. Iolo Morganwg saw in the subsequent Celtic vogue and Druidomania an opportunity to attempt in poetry a synthesis in poetry similar to the synthesis in nation attempted with the Tudor myth. It is widely acknowledged that he failed in this goal.

Joan-Lluis Marfany questions Prys Morgan's apparent sadness at Iolo's poetical style:

[W]henver explicit reference is made to the output in the other language, it is to dismiss it as disappointingly conventional in its subjection to the fashions of the time [...] the trouble with [the English-language poems] of 'Iolo Morganwg' [...] is that 'in English he tries to make himself out to be a model English poet.' [...]⁷²

Iolo's contemporary reviewers bemoaned the same thing –his shepherds had classical names, when giving them Welsh names would have been of more interest⁷³. The tension between the Welsh author apparently desperate to appeal to the establishment or, in Iolo's case, the English literary market, and the English market, newly aware of the Celtic nations thanks to the primitivist and the Ossianic vogue, wanting to see a distinctive and different literature, is palpable. Iolo does indeed, as I discuss in a later chapter, understand that this is what the literary public want, and announces proudly in many of his footnotes that this is what he will do – yet, when it comes down to the production of the poetry, such Welsh interest is conspicuously absent, beyond certain

⁷² Marfany, *'Minority' Languages and Literary Revivals*, pp. 150-151.

⁷³ See Anonymous, 'Art IX, 'Poems, Lyric and Pastoral' - Review', *The Monthly Review*, Vol. 13 (NS) (1794), pp. 405-14.

superficialities. There is little or nothing in Iolo's pastorals that marks them out as any more Welsh than Theocritus' or Shenstone's generic models:

STREPHON
 Through thickets with Chloris I walk;
 I fondle with Phillis the fair;
 Amynta can mirthfully talk,
 How charming her shape and her air;
 I, chief of the musical swains,
 Could I wish to be fetter'd for life;
 Might cull from the nymphs of our plains
 The fairest of all for my wife.⁷⁴

Iolo's is the most conspicuous attempt to woo the literary establishment and buying public, as, by and large, other Anglo-Welsh works did not have such lofty ambitions as *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, or, as in the case of Price, were not read or intended to be read in an Anglo-Welsh context. Yet it is not difficult to find traces of this need for approval and recognition from both cultures, particularly in the earlier Morris Circle. Both Lewis and Richard were employed by the government, Richard as a civil servant, Lewis as a marine surveyor and as a crown representative. Lewis especially was very keen to be elected to the Royal Society, and it has been suggested that it was his failure to gain entry to this elite establishment society that led to him forming the Cymmrodorion. He certainly envisaged it as a "Welsh equivalent of the Society of Antiquaries or even the Royal Society."⁷⁵ Evan Evans, who remained a curate for his whole career, was repeatedly denied preferment in favour of monoglot English clergy; many commentators ascribe his venom towards his "Anglo-Welsh Prelates" to this lack of preferment, which in itself implies a degree of wishing to be

⁷⁴ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p. 128.

⁷⁵ G.H. Jenkins, 'Lewis Morris: "the Fat Man of Cardiganshire"', *Ceredigion*, Vol. XIV (2002), p. 17.

accepted and employed by them. The constant, and confusing, refrain is one of a split identity: knowing themselves to be Ancient Britons; wanting their equal share, supposedly granted them in law, in the modern British identity; and trying to assert their Cymric identity, independence, and status through the whole. Identity is less a matter of switching with each different situation, as wearing all opposing points of view at one and the same time.

Eighteenth-century Welshmen often sported dual, sometimes triple, identities, and although Lewis Morris knew how to pander to rich English patrons he could also put blundering English writers to the sword.⁷⁶

The Anglo-Welsh writer is a Punchinello – he may choose to display one side, or another, or he may choose to face the front and show his parti-colouring to the world. In the side-on state, the viewer is briefly fooled into believing he is seeing the whole, when half is still concealed. Facing forward, he displays his contradictions for all to see, and in the end belongs to neither part outright, nor even, perhaps, to himself.

Forging a nation, formulating an identity

The subsuming of the Four Nations into the modern nation-state of Britain has tended to be seen as inevitable, both by those formulating policies throughout the centuries, and by historians such as Linda Colley, following the publication of *Britons* – *Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, in which she argues that too much emphasis has been placed on divisions within society, rather than looking at that which united the island in the eighteenth century:

There were always dissenting voices [...] But we should not let them drown out the other, *apparently* more conventional voices of those Britons who, for many different reasons, supported these successive war efforts [against the

⁷⁶ *ibid.* p. 15.

French]. What follows is partly an attempt to rescue these people, the seeming conformists, from the condescension of posterity [...]”⁷⁷

Such standpoints rely on viewing the assimilation of small nations into one whole larger nation under a centralised state apparatus as normative, part of the inevitable progress and improvement described by Langford, the functions of governments whose purpose is to increase the reach of their own power by that centralisation. Such historico-political processes, however, are complicated when viewed from the standpoint of those being subsumed, and Britishness, the process of “forging the nation” (in Colley’s terms) is not always seen as uncritically progressive.

Colley’s stated intention in *Britons* is to chart the forging – in all senses of the word – of one nation, Great Britain, from its three component parts (excluding Ireland) through the eighteenth century. The thrust of her argument is that after the 1707 Treaty of Union between England and Scotland, a unified nation was forged through shared experiences of Protestantism and near-constant war with France. This has become a popular viewpoint among many researchers into Britishness.⁷⁸

Dissenters against the British orthodoxy, Colley argues, are the vocal minority, rather than the silent, accepting majority of people, and history has privileged their voices over others unheard. Colley’s end product, at the opening of the nineteenth century, is a proud, unified United Kingdom, facing the years of Empire with the confidence of a

⁷⁷ Colley, *Britons : Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, pp. 4-5.

⁷⁸ M. Baer, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 98 (No. 1, 1993), pp. 119-21., E.H. Gould, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 50 (No. 4, 1993), pp. 822-5., L.E. Klein, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 25 (No. 3, 1995), pp. 474-6., B.P. Lenman, 'Political Identities and the Languages of Liberty in the Eighteenth Century', *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 35 (No. 3, 1996), pp. 408-13., G. Newman, 'Nationalism Revisited', *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 35 (No. 1, 1996), pp. 118-27., S. Pincus, *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 67 (No. 1, 1995), pp. 132-6., P.D.G. Thomas, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 108 (No. 427, 1993), pp. 403-5., Newman, *Nationalism Revisited*, pp. 118-27.

one-nation vision. Her Britons are as one people against the Catholic threat, under a ruling elite from all three kingdoms, intermarrying and mingling their respective estates across the whole country, a pan-British gentry with pan-British properties.⁷⁹

Colley's analysis holds within the volume, as long as the reader accepts her assumptions. These are of an Anglocentric persuasion; the Britain of Colley's vision is that of an English Britain, with eccentric peripheries which must be cajoled or humoured into co-operation. In seeing things thus, Colley mistakes the state for the nation. As will be seen later, language is the major binding force between a state and its people, and a major alienating force where a people does not share the language of the state. Colley's unquestioning and unstated assumptions leap out of the page once one knows to look for them – statements such as “Welsh was a language that three out of four of [the Welsh] still spoke out of choice as late as the 1880s”, and “Wales was a more aloof and distinctive country even than Scotland” employ the language of normativity and deviance apparently unconsciously.⁸⁰ Having established such a difference, it is then apparently disregarded; Scotland emerges as the most alien (and threatening) force against the new Union, and the experience – one might say the enigma – of loyalism through a language entirely alien to that of the state barely seems to cross the author's mind.⁸¹

All such gaps in *Britons* have the same root: the inability to recognise the fundamental difference in nature between the 1536 Act of Union and the 1707 Treaty

⁷⁹ Colley, *Britons : Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, pp. 155-164.

⁸⁰ *ibid.* p. 13.

⁸¹ It should be noted also that the treatment of Scotland focuses largely on that of the Lowland Scots, despite the attribution of Highland trappings to them in popular culture, ignoring the experience of the similarly linguistically alienated Gael.

of Union; and the subsequent failure to understand and delineate the idea of Britishness which it must be assumed that the state embodied. The experience of union in Wales in 1536 was, essentially, one of annexation; old laws, customs and differences were effaced, with the English law replacing the piecemeal and fragmentary application of old Welsh laws and baronial privilege – the language, as we have already seen, was not destroyed, though the desirability of doing so was enshrined in the statute books. The 1707 union was altogether a different animal, presented by many, though by no means all, as a marriage of equals between England and Scotland. Scotland's legal and religious differences were never totally effaced – Jacobitism, though it possessed a religious character, was a dynastic struggle to which the trappings of religion had been attached; much, it must be said, as Protestantism was to the Anglo-British antagonism with France. English anxieties over this union, as Colley shows convincingly, were at fever pitch, with the Scots envisioned as rapacious incomers, desperate for the spoils that the new alliance would provide⁸². It is difficult indeed to see how the Treaty can have been portrayed as providing any positive benefit to English eyes.

Neither the English nor the Welsh can be said to have betrayed such intense anxiety in 1536.⁸³ Wales was annexed with barely a whimper from either side, and not even the bards complained. On the English side, the status of the Welsh as a conquered people was never seriously in doubt, even when they were nominally raised to an equal status with the English. The Welsh reaction is a good deal more complex, and to analyse it in the depth it deserves is beyond the remit of this work.

⁸² See also Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image* ch.1.

⁸³ See G.H. Jenkins, *A Concise History of Wales* (Cambridge, 2007) ch.5.

Nevertheless, it must at least be sketched, as it provides a vital background to the writers with whom I will deal in later chapters. Although ‘The Tudor Myth’ has been all but banished from modern history and literature textbooks, yet its real force is undeniable when discussing the identity choices of the people of the time. The myth of the *mab darogan*, the son of destiny, consciously exploited by Henry Tudor (not least in the naming of his first son Arthur) combined with the force of a particular permutation of Britishness present in the Welsh to fashion a loyal Principality. This particular sort of Britishness was the belief that the Welsh were the descendants of the original inhabitants of the whole island, banished to the extremities by a combination of a vengeful God and the Saxons as the instrument of His wrath against the sinning Britons. Poets retreated into prophecy, keeping alive the myth and hope of a divine redeemer who would come again to bring the heirs of the Britons back into possession of the island. Dafydd Glyn Jones names this mythical attachment *Brytaniaeth*, which we might translate perhaps as *Britonism*, in his essay on what he calls ‘the secret of the island of Britain’.⁸⁴ “Dros bont Brytaniaeth,” he writes, “y cerddodd y Cymry i garchar tywyll Prydeindod” [Over the bridge of Britonism, the Welsh walked into the dark gaol of Britishness.]⁸⁵

To identify what Dafydd Glyn Jones and others speak of as *Prydeindod*, and to define how I will use it within the terms of this essay, we must turn to the works of the philosopher, J. R. Jones.

Prydeindod – Britishness : a nationality, or a philosophical problem?

⁸⁴ D. G. Jones, 'Cyfrinach Ynys Brydain', in Anonymous (ed.), *Agoriad Yr Oes : Erthyglau Ar Lén, Hanes a Gwleidyddiaeth Cymru* (Talybont, 2001), pp. 94-110.

⁸⁵ *ibid.* pp. 94-110

J. R. Jones' philosophical text *Prydeindod* [Britishness] (1966) was written as a discussion of the problems of Welsh identity within a British state, and as a response to Alwyn D. Rees' article in the magazine *Barn* (1965), *Cenedl Ddauddyblyg ei Meddwl* [A nation with a twofold mind]. The burden of Rees' article was that the 'Britishness' condemned by many nationalistic Welsh in their compatriots was in fact, psychologically speaking, a projection of that Britishness they refused to acknowledge in themselves. Those same nationalists pour their money and energies into fighting pointless and losing battles on behalf of their language and country in order to disguise that same Britishness. Rees' summation is that the Welshman should recognise, and perhaps embrace, his Britishness, acknowledging in the process the four hundred years of shared history the English and Welsh have on the island:

Mae'n amlwg nad yw [Prydain] yn genedl yn yr ystyr y mae Ffrainc neu'r Almaen yn genedl, ond ni ellir anwybyddu dylanwad pedair canrif o gydhanes. Bu tipyn o wrthdaro a chasineb rhwng Cymru a Lloegr yn ystod yr hanes hwnnw; dyna oedd mynegiant a chynhaliaeth ein arwahanrwydd. Ond bu hefyd lawer o gyd-dynnu a chyd-daro, cyd-ddioddef a chydalaru, chydgywilyddio, cyd-ymfalchïo a chydlawenhau. Yr ymwybyddiaeth o gymundod a ddeillia o'r cefn-fyd hwn, a'r gagendor rhyngom a'r cynfyd pan oeddem yn Bobl annibynnol, sy'n ein rhwystro i fod yn genedl Gymreig, na Chymraeg, yn llawn ystyr y gair [...] Y Cymro, adnebydd dy Brydeindod. [It is obvious that [Britain] is not a nation in the sense that France or Germany is a nation, but one cannot ignore the influence of four hundred years of shared history. There has been a good deal of conflict and hatred between Wales and England during that history; that was the expression and maintenance of our otherness. But there has also been much working in harmony, mutual suffering and mutual grief, mutual shame, mutual pride and mutual rejoicing. The consciousness of fellowship which springs from this background, and the chasm between us and the antiquity when we were an independent People, is what stops us from being a Welsh nation, nor a Welsh-speaking nation, in the full sense of the word... Welshman, acknowledge your Britishness.]⁸⁶

To Rees, there is no escape from Welshness, but neither is it possible to give oneself completely over to it. The guilty conscience which protests too much its Welshness is

⁸⁶ A.D. Rees, 'Cenedl Ddauddyblyg Ei Meddwl', *Barn*, 1965), p. 129.

assuaged through nationalistic gestures and attacks on those seen as not Welsh enough, but Britishness is an important and intrinsic part of the putative national consciousness that Rees sees it as folly to ignore. Equally, J. R. Jones seeks to recognise this Britishness; not, however, as an intrinsic part of modern Welsh identity, but as the enemy within. Indeed, throughout his text he posits that *Prydeindod* is in fact an ideology masquerading as a nationality.⁸⁷ The basis of national memory, and thus national identity, he asserts, is the fact that a people can know they are part of an imagined community “without having to think about it.” The basis of the Welsh identity crisis is that, increasingly, they can no longer do that.

J. R. Jones’ book is divided into four sections. The first is provocatively entitled “Prydain, y Genedl Seisnig a’r Bobl Gymreig”, “Britain, the English *Nation* and the Welsh *People*” (my emphasis). The first notion tackled is the twofold identity of Britain. In one formulation, Britain is the state, “y drefn lywodraethol, gyfreithiol a gweinyddol y gosodwyd holl drigolion yr Ynys hon dan ei hawdurdod” [the governing, legal and administrative order under whose authority all the inhabitants of this island are placed]⁸⁸ The second identity is that of Britain as a nation, living under one state. This “new, compound nation” is the new Britain of Linda Colley’s book.

In order to develop his analysis, J. R. Jones posits that human communities (such as nations) are definable by the “irreducible minimum of bonds which are necessary for their formation and its survival.” These are simplified to three main

⁸⁷ For clarity, I will refer to the composite British identity such as that described by Linda Colley as “Britishness”, and the potentially detrimental idea/pseudo-national-identity discussed by J. R. Jones as *Prydeindod*.

⁸⁸ Jones, *Prydeindod*, p. 9.

bonds which are necessary to bind people into a national community (*cymuned genedligol*):

- 1) a defined territory
- 2) a national language (*prïod iaith*) or languages
- 3) the encapsulation of that territory under one sovereign state.

He notes that all three of these elemental bonds must be present in order to ensure a *nation*; where only a defined territory and a national language are present, such a bi-ligatured bond would constitute rather a *people*. The root of these formations, he goes on to explain, is the interpenetration between one language and one territory. The creation of a people is dependent on the interpenetration of these two bonds of space (physical and temporal) and language (*cydymdreiddiad tir ac iaith*), that “life has been lived in Welsh on this territory for generations.”⁸⁹

This latter statement shows that the identity of a nation, or even of a people must, if it is to exist, exist temporally, rather than merely physically. The language interpenetrates with the physical space precisely because it has existed there in the temporal dimension for a significant length of time. The flooding of the village of Capel Celyn to become the Tryweryn reservoir, in order to provide water for the Corporation of Liverpool, is emblematic for many (including J. R. Jones) of an absence of self-determination – ownership, distribution (and re-distribution) of land is controlled by central government, which, for its own self-preservation, views and treats “Britain” as one unit. If Wales is as “British” as Liverpool, then the outrage of those who are deprived of their land on nationalist or ethnic grounds is essentially

⁸⁹ *ibid.* pp. 13-14.

meaningless. It is for this reason that J. R. Jones denies the name of “Nation” to Wales.

Nations exist in the language and the memory of the language – this was known by those who advocated the relegation of Welsh to the dump of quaint history; the rhetoric of progress and modernity beguiled many into complicity with the slow death of the language, and the elimination of the potential for nationhood that went with it. J. R. Jones says of the Cornish “Fe’u Prydeiniwyd nhw allan o fod” [They were Britished out of existence]; and William Sharp (writing in the guise of Fiona Macleod) wrote in 1895 that

The Breton’s eyes are slowly turning from the sea, and slowly his ears are forgetting the whisper of the wind around Menhir and Dolmen. The Cornishman has lost his language, *and there is now no bond between him and his ancient kin.*⁹⁰

In the eighteenth century and earlier, the drive for progress detailed by Langford manifested itself in calls not for blending of differences, but for their eradication and a subsequent shift in the speaker from barbarity to civility – morality was inextricably linked to language. Englishing the Welsh out of Wales is seen as a mainstay of the linguistic aspect of improvement, both economic and moral, a process with its official beginnings in the 1536 Act of Union, reaching its ultimate expression in the so-called Treason of the Blue Books,⁹¹ and whose effects are still to be felt to the present day, both in current policy-making and the psychological effects on the nation:

⁹⁰ Quoted in *Celticism*, ed. Anonymous (Amsterdam, 1996), p. vii.. My emphasis.

⁹¹ As the Reports of the Commissioners of Enquiry into the State of Education in Wales of 1847 are known to this day. See e.g. P. Morgan, 'From Long Knives to Blue Books', in R. R. Davies (ed.), *Welsh Society and Nationhood : Historical Essays Presented to Glanmor Williams* (Cardiff, 1984), pp. 199-215., G.T. Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books : The Perfect Instrument of Empire* (Cardiff, 1998)

Lingen (writer of the first part of the report) attacked the language as a force keeping the Welsh always ‘under the hatches’, isolating the common folk from the upper portion of society; Symons (writer of the second part of the report) said, ‘the Welsh language is a vast drawback to Wales, and a manifold barrier to the moral progress and the commercial prosperity of the people’. Johnson (who wrote the third part of the report, on North Wales) said much the same thing, and commented in a marginal note which reveals their attitude to the Welsh in the race for progress, ‘Imperfect civilisation as seen in the Welsh language’.⁹²

Such things as the memory, feelings, and sentimental attachment of nationhood are necessarily vague, related as they are to the spiritual side of human nature; Jones follows Fichte in his analysis, quoting the author on the “thousand secret bonds” between those who speak the same language.⁹³ “Yn y cof, nid yn y gwythiennau y rhed ei hymglymiad” [Its bonds run in the memory, not in the veins].⁹⁴ It is perhaps impossible to come to any sort of rational conclusion regarding the formation of national identities, for though one may discuss them logically and rationally, all the assumptions on which they are built are irrational and intangible. J. R. Jones notes that people have two formal bonds, the one being an external bond, formed temporally from the generations who have lived in the same territory, and the other being an internal bond, a spiritual bond of linguistic continuity. In effect, J. R. Jones wishes to ally nationality and national identity with the memetic, rather than the genetic.

But what, then of the putative British nation? A double-ligatured formation is necessary to create a people; a triple-ligatured formation is necessary to create a

⁹² P. Morgan, 'Early Victorian Wales and its Crisis of Identity', in L. W. B. Brockliss (ed.), *A Union of Multiple Identities : The British Isles, c.1750-c.1850* (Manchester, 1997), p. 100.

⁹³ Jones, *Prydeindod*, p. 11.

⁹⁴ *ibid.* p. 11.

nation. It follows then that there is only one true nation, that of the English, who share the language of their land with the language of the state, and that the Welsh are in the position of outsiders governed by an alien polity.⁹⁵ So enshrined is this in the consciousness surrounding the British state that even a decade after devolution, a sitting MP can say, “If you don't speak English, you can't participate fully in national life.”⁹⁶ For Wales as a country stripped of political autonomy and power, language becomes symbolic (and perhaps even over-symbolic) of national identity. The British state is in itself a bond, rather than a community, which ties the English and the Welsh (and their respective territories) together on one level only. Despite the considerable economic benefits such a bond confers, it does not constitute a nation in itself. As the language and location of that state is English, J. R. Jones argues that it can only interpenetrate fully with that country, leaving Wales as only a partial participant in it. Only one formal bond is shared between the English and Welsh, which is their relationship as subjects of the same state. Because of this the relationship remains on the functional plane alone.

The moral and economic implications of Welsh separatism are the most often-quoted reasons to attempt an annihilation of the language - Jones follows Arnold in identifying linguistic difference as the barrier to Wales taking its full place within Britain (though he by no means agrees that this is a desirable option), and goes further to state that a British nation cannot exist until that linguistic difference ceases to exist.⁹⁷ *The Report of the commissioners of enquiry into the state of education in*

⁹⁵ *ibid.* p. 19.

⁹⁶ David Cameron MP, speech to the Foreign Policy Institute, August 24th 2005

⁹⁷ *ibid.* p. 27.

Wales (see above) asserted that the Welsh were morally degenerate, and that this state was created and perpetuated by the Welsh language and Methodism – in other words, the only way of “curing” such an outrage was the promulgation of English and Anglicanism. As both Prys Morgan and Hywel Teifi Edwards have made plain,⁹⁸ these reports prompted a huge upsurge in activities which poured fuel on the fires of Prydeindod. The more the Welsh elite became outraged and defensive regarding the findings of the enquiry, the more they became concerned with proving themselves to the English establishment.

Essentially, the constituents of nationhood in J. R. Jones’ philosophy make a monothetic class – that is, in order to be a nation, all three of his elements *must* be present. Because the Welsh have a *dichonoldeb cenedl*, the potential and feeling of nationhood, due to their historic otherness, they attempt to make up for the shortfall in this monothetic class by co-opting the third component of nationhood from the Anglo-British nation. However, this co-opting, on some level, *reinforces* the knowledge of the original deficiency, and it becomes easier to internalise the *status quo*.

Ironically, the apparently rediscovered connection between the Welsh and the Ancient Britons in the eighteenth century actually helped cement Prydeindod’s mesmerising effect over the Britonised Welsh. Chris Williams characterises this as the ‘ambivalence’ discussed in postcolonial theory, noting manifestations such as

the admiration of many Welsh people for England, English culture and the English language, the historic complicity of Welsh people with the structures of the British state, the endorsement of the idea of Britain and the devotion to the British royal family.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Morgan, *From Long Knives to Blue Books*, pp. 199-215., H.T. Edwards, *Gŵyl Gwalia : Yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Yn Oes Aur Victoria 1858-1868* (Llandysul, 1980).

⁹⁹ Williams, *Problematizing Wales*, p. 13.

The idea of *Prydeindod* has several notable effects, working differently in different people. It is apparent in the sycophantic praise for the British state by those who would attempt to gain Wales an equal status in the national life of the whole island, as seen above. It is seen in the often vicious attacks on the country and the language by Welsh people angry at an apparently perverse insistence on quasi-national differences, and from some Anglo-British for the same reason, as this same insistence gives the lie to the notion that Britain is a nation.¹⁰⁰

The ambiguity of the word “British” lies at the root of many of these problems. That ambiguity was used by the Tudors as part of the justification for establishing (or re-establishing, in that myth) the “Ancient British” pre-Roman Protestant church, and persists into the eighteenth century, being a useful tool for the State in the conditioning of the Welsh to accept their status quo.¹⁰¹ In an extension of the Tudor myth, and simultaneously co-opting the British foundation myths of the primacy of the Welsh, this single word becomes the crucial term on which the vexed question of Welsh identity and the Welsh place within the state turns.

Whether a writer genuinely believes the myths of original ownership or not (and I would argue that these authors have only a sentimental attachment to the myth, rather than an implicit belief that they would reclaim the island), the fact of the myth itself is enough to run a vein of insecurity through Welsh identity. R. Gerallt Jones terms it *seicoleg cardota*, the psychology of beggary, [c]*ancr cynyddol sy'n lledaenu trwy ymwybyddiaeth cenedl* [a growing cancer which spreads throughout the

¹⁰⁰ Jones, *Prydeindod*, p. 43.

¹⁰¹ See for instance Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism : Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800*.

consciousness of a nation].¹⁰² Welsh-language poetry has always “lived on alms”, from the days of the patronage of the princes to those of the Arts’ Council grant; and not least in the eighteenth century, the days of the mercantile patron and the subscription list. Welsh-language literature other than the oral culture of the *gwerin* survived on the good will of the rapidly declining numbers of the Welsh-speaking gentry, and more so on the literati and antiquarians – many of whom were living in London, and earning a living away from Wales. The cost of printing the literature was vast compared with the remuneration that could be expected. Lewis Morris’ Welsh journal, *Tlysau’r Hen Oesoedd* (1735), lasted one edition, and Owen Jones (Owen Myfyr) was several times nearly bankrupted by the costs of publishing rediscovered Welsh poetry. Any existence the printed literature has is only because the more powerful culture (English in this case) has benevolently allowed this to be the case, or at least slackened its efforts to destroy the language because of a more overwhelming need to keep the United Kingdom united; and certainly during the wars with the French, the need to tolerate Welsh in order to retain some measure of loyalty was stronger than the need to extirpate the language. The psychological effects of the inferior position of Wales and the Welsh language can, according to Bobi Jones, easily be traced in Welsh-language poetry, but they are most especially visible in Anglo-Welsh literature, which embodies this confused psychology in its very existence, all ultimately stemming from the myth of *Prydeindod*. The divide is not one of simple terms such as Welsh-speaking and non-Welsh speaking, or Welsh and English, or even Wales and England:

The divide is not basically geographical at all. Our Offa's Dyke, linguistically and psychologically, runs through a heartland within every Welsh personality

¹⁰² R.G. Jones, *Seicoleg Cardota* (Caernarfon, 1989), p. 164.

without exception, whether he or she lives in Cwmbran or Llanuwchllyn, whether first-language or second-language Welsh. It is a personal unifying divide.¹⁰³

This dislocation is carried to its extreme in the behaviour of many of the gentry class post-1536. Many abandoned their native culture, embracing their new Britishness and the privileges that came with it by being more English. For this they were often criticised heavily in print by their fellow countrymen, often writing in the persona of the language herself:

E fydd weithiau'n dostur fynghalon wrth weled llawer a anwyd ag a fagwyd im doedyd, yn ddiystr gentynt amdanaf, tan geissio ymwrthod a mi, ag ymgystlwnag ag astroniaith cyn adnabod ddim honi. Canys chwi a gewch rai yn gytrym ag y gweland afon Hafren, ne glochdai ymwithig, a chlowed sais yn doedyd unwaith good morow, a ddechreuant ollwng i cymraeg tros gof, ai doedyd yn fawr i llediaith: i cymraeg a fydd saesnigaidd, ai saesneg (dyw a wyr) yn rhy gymreigaidd. A hyn sy'n dyfod naill ai o wir pholder, yntau o goeg falchder a gorwagryydd. Canys ni welir fyth yn ddyn cyweithas, rhinweddol mo'r neb a wado nai dad, nai fam, nai wlad, nai iaith [...]
[Sometimes my heart feels pity when I see many, who were born and bred to speak me, speaking unmindfully about me, even trying to reject me and flirting with a foreign tongue before knowing her at all properly. For you find some as soon as they spy the River Severn or the spires of Shrewsbury town, and hear an Englishman saying once "Good Morrow" beginning to forget their Welsh and pronounce it with an affected accent: their Welsh becomes anglicised, and their English (God knows) is too Welshified. And this arises either out of sheer coquetry, or from a false pride and vanity, for one would never see a virtuous balanced man denying his own father and mother and country and language [...]]¹⁰⁴

Yet those aspiring to English nationhood are not allowed to fit into the English establishment either, as the sheer volume of anti-Welsh chapbook literature clearly

¹⁰³ B. Jones, 'Three Names, One Tradition: Bobi Jones', *Transcript: European Internet Review of Books and Writing*, No. 14, 2004)

¹⁰⁴ Gruffydd Robert, *Dosbarth Byrr Ar Y Rhann Gyntaf i Ramadeg Cymraeg* (1567) in Hughes, *Rhagymadroddion : 1547-1659* 47. (translation by Bobi Jones in B. Jones, 'The Roots of Welsh Inferiority', *Planet*, 1974), pp. 53-72.)

attests.¹⁰⁵ And so we see side-by-side with a pride in the Welsh language, and a clear anti-English bias, a genuine parallel belief that England and the English are the agents of progress, and that the Act of Union has conferred unalloyed benefits on the Welsh.

David Aers notes of a very different time and character (Chaucer's Wife of Bath) that

Subordinate groups or individuals may so internalize the assumptions and practices of their oppressors that not only their daily strategies of survival but their very acts of rebellion may perpetuate the outlook against which they rebel.¹⁰⁶

The Britishness displayed not only by the gentry classes (who could reasonably be expected to attempt to reap the benefits of union with a larger and more powerful neighbour), but by otherwise fervently patriotic writers becomes clearer in the light of such analysis. The use of the myth of Britonism in order to perpetuate the subordinate status of the Welsh, who are made complicit with the preservation of the status quo under the stupefying assumption that they will one day reclaim the island of Britain, is the cause of their apparent docility, born of the assumption of the inevitability of political unity.

The internalisation of a potentially destructive trope is identified by Bobi Jones in his essay *The Roots of Welsh Inferiority*. The nexus of attitudes centred on Welsh identity is necessarily difficult to analyse because responses are emotional and subjective. The greater strength of England in the union, coupled with the certainty of Welsh seniority in the island as "The Ancient Britons" and awareness of its since-humbled status as very much a junior partner in the union cause internal division and confusion over identity, especially as the new nation of Britain took its name from the ancestors of the Welsh. It is possible to interpret many (if not all) of these responses

¹⁰⁵ Dearnley, *Distant Fields : Eighteenth-Century Fictions of Wales*, p. 246.

¹⁰⁶ D. Aers, *Chaucer, Langland and the Creative Imagination* (London, 1980), p. 236.

as varieties of that inferiority of which Bobi Jones writes. The gentry, as we have seen, tended to abandon Welsh for the seemingly more progressive language of England; literary responses to and against this take a tone of national self-flagellation:

Eithr ninheu y Cymry (mal gweision gwychion) rhai o honon' ynn myned morr ddiflas, ac morr fursennaidd, ac (yn amgênach nog vn bobl arall o'r byd) morr benhoeden; ac y daw brîth gywilydd arnam gynnyg adrodd a dywêdud eyn hiaith eynhûnain [...] a chymrud arnam ddarfod inni o gwbl abergôfi y Gymráec, a medru weithion [...] ddoydud Saesnec, a Phrangec, ac Italieith, neu ryw iaith alltûdaidd arall parywbynnac a fô honno oddieithr Cymraec [...] [However we the Welsh (like good servants) some of us are become so distasteful, and so affected, and (worse than any other people on earth) so hoyden-headed; and a vague shame comes upon us in speaking our own language... and we pretend that we have completely forgotten Welsh, and that we can... speak English, and French, and Italian, or any other foreign language whatever apart from Welsh[...]]¹⁰⁷

Wrth weled beunydd (y Kymro glan) gwyr n gwlad ni yn ymhel ag ymofyn am ystoriau y Groegwyr, Rhifeinwyd, a helyntiau pellenigion kynhedlaethay anghredadyn eraill ymhob lle, pa mor gyfarwydd tuhwnt i r more ag i mynid, a chartref yn i gwlad i hunain, lle i r oedd reittia vddvnt wybod hanes a chyfarwyddyd, yn ddeillion gwbl ag yn anhysbusion, heb wybod dim a berthynau iddynt i hunain [...] [Whilst daily seeing (fair Welshman) the men of our country asking for the stories of the Greeks, Romans, and the faraway escapades of the nations of other unbelievers in every place, everyone so familiar with what is beyond sea and mountain, than their own country, which it is more proper for them to know the histories and stories, who are unknowing blind men [...]]¹⁰⁸

The unnaturalness of the Welsh in behaving this way is emphasised – no other people in the world, according to these commentators, disparage and abandon their language and traditions. Whatever the reality of historical language change, the perception of Welsh humanists was that it was an aberration.

Jeremy Owen, writing in the early years of the eighteenth century, takes a more pragmatic historical view of language loss in conquered nations, noting that it is

¹⁰⁷ Siôn Dafydd Rhys, in Hughes, *Rhagymadroddion : 1547-1659*, p. 64.

¹⁰⁸ Ifan Llwyd ap Dafydd, in *ibid.* p. 103.

only natural that a nation should take on the language of the conquerors once conquered; yet also being boldly proud that the Welsh have kept their language so long, whilst acknowledging that the Welsh are likely to abandon their language entirely in time:

'Tis seldom that the Conquer'd for a long time maintain a Dominion in expressing their Sentiments in their own way, which has ever been familiar to them. But Dr. *Fuller* observes, that the *Romans* were so far from making the *Britains* do, that they could not make them speak as they would have them. The same thing may be said with respect to the *Saxons* and them; notwithstanding all the Losses sustained by them, and the several Changes and Revolutions that have happen'd in the State of Things, through the Course of so many Ages, the Remnant of them that inhabit the aforesaid Principality, have entirely retain'd their Language, some way or other, very Providentially. In this one only thing they have maintain'd their Dominion, and of this only (it might be said) they have continued Masters. All the several Periods of Time which has affected them with other Nations in every thing else, has no way affected them in this. And therefore it is that I can't admire the Wisdom of such that would not have Christian Knowledge propagated among the *Welsh*, (nor the small number of Books they have a little multiplied) in their Mother Tongue, from some foresight they have (though no Prophets, neither the Sons of Prophets) that they will sometime or other universally entertain the Speech of the Conquerors.¹⁰⁹

This passage suggests just how complex the issues surrounding Welsh integration into Britain are. A common feature in these essays on the language is the writing of contradictory views of the Welsh into the texts, simultaneously proudly defiant and despairing of the future of the language. Owen refers to liberty at the beginning of this passage, calling to attention a central idea in the forging of the English/Anglo-British identity. To cite liberty in the context of Saxon conquest is to acknowledge that Wales does not possess the same liberty which belongs to the freeborn Englishman. Despite Owen's stand against English-language policy in Wales, still referring to the English as "conquerors", his tone overall is quietist rather than

¹⁰⁹ Owen, *The Goodness and Severity of God*, p. 9.

revolutionary – he barely questions the rightness of the conquest and union itself, merely its manifestations; any preservation of the language is a by-product of a Protestant Christian zeal for salvation through vernacular writings, in a similar vein to the theological preoccupations of Evan Evans. Patriotism is never a matter of simple nationalism in eighteenth century Wales; the basic status quo of Union is accepted, but only the manifestations and operations of its government questioned – and such questioning was as (if not more) likely to be prompted by pastoral concerns as by patriotism.

Much of the discussion regarding *Prydeindod* is more binary than is usual in discussions of national identity. J. R. Jones believes that, as they stand, *Prydeindod* and Welshness are incompatible. This has, however, not meant that the two have been mutually exclusive. Whatever the flaws in Colley's *Britons*, she is perspicacious in her assertion on identities in general:

I am not suggesting for one moment that the growing sense of Britishness in this period supplanted and obliterated other loyalties. It did not. Identities are not like hats. Human beings can and do put on several at a time. Great Britain did not emerge by way of a 'blending' of the different regional or older national cultures contained within its boundaries as is sometimes maintained.¹¹⁰

However, she goes on to say :

nor is its genesis to be explained primarily in terms of an English 'core' imposing its cultural and political hegemony on a helpless and defrauded Celtic periphery. As even the briefest acquaintance with Great Britain will confirm, the Welsh, the Scottish and the English remain in many ways distinct people in cultural terms, just as all three countries continue to be conspicuously sub-divided into different regions [...] Britishness was superimposed over an array of internal differences in response to contact with the Other, and above all in response to conflict with the Other.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Colley, *Britons : Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, p. 6.

¹¹¹ *ibid.* p. 6.

Here Colley misunderstands the influence of *Prydeindod* in the form of Britishness as an identity; indeed, she fails to recognise the impact that the language of Britishness – that is, English – might have even in the mere fact of its existence. *Prydeindod* has been expressed in languages other than English, in poetry and song praising the monarchy and the unions, but all these expressions lead back ultimately to the English language, as they must do in order to prove loyalty to the state. As we have also seen, the character of Britishness is essentially English (and the English of a specific English region, the consequences of which is damaging to other Englishes as it is to “the Celtic periphery”). British identity was not entirely imposed in the sense of a specific top-down edict, but the conditions were created for people to choose other identities. Holding multiple cultural identities at once was possible, because national identity is multi-valent in form, and is a polythetic class; thus, an individual does not have to possess each aspect of what is generally accepted as a particular nation’s identifying characteristics to hold a particular national identity. However, various concepts, ideas, or practices which define a nation or culture tend to support each other; if one has a patriotic attachment to one of these elements then one is much more likely to approve of the others, and if some are lost then it is more difficult - thought not impossible - for the rest to remain coherent without this mutual support, and the whole is greatly weakened. Each part of the structure of national identity – language, cultural memory, land – reinforces the other, so that when one support dies, the demise of the whole structure is hastened, though not destroyed in its entirety until all the parts of which it is composed die. This is analogous to genetics – by itself a single gene is not necessarily useful, but it may co-exist and work in tandem with another gene or set of genes which make it evolutionarily advantageous. Extract one

gene from this genome, and the others are weakened, and may no longer be fit for their task, which leaves them vulnerable to competition and ultimately ousting by another, fitter genome. The idea of *Prydeindod*, on this model, contains tropes which compete with those in what we might call for current purposes *Cymreictod*, Welshness. The notion that the English language (and correspondingly its culture) is modern and progressive contains the implication that Welsh is a backward language with a similarly backward culture

If national identity consisted merely of a single part, then we would expect the death of a language to lead instantly to the eradication of the identity linked to that language. However, it is observable that a people does not lose its identity in one fell swoop with the loss of the language, but that identity is like layers in sedimented rock.¹¹² Where the Welsh language is in abeyance, it is still possible to observe the signs and symbols of national identity, manifesting itself in flags, allegiances to the national sporting teams and so on.¹¹³ As Chris Williams notes, after the Acts of Union Wales was barely mentioned as a separate entity in law, because it no longer existed as a separate entity:

After the Acts of Union all legislation that applied to England applied also to Wales. The border between the two countries[...]largely ceased to have any meaning[...]Neither the Tudor state nor the Stuart state nor the Hanoverian state were particularly interested in forcing cultural assimilation on Wales and so, notwithstanding certain pejorative attitudes towards the Welsh as a poor, ill-educated, coarse, shifty, garrulous and untrustworthy people [...]Wales became a junior partner in the expanding British state.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Jones, *Prydeindod*, pp. 16-17.

¹¹³ P. Morgan, 'Keeping the Legends Alive', in T. Curtis (ed.), *Wales : The Imagined Nation : Studies in Cultural and National Identity* (Bridgend, 1986), pp. 19-41.

¹¹⁴ Williams, *Problematizing Wales*, p. 5.

The state's largely *laissez-faire* attitude towards the Welsh language proves possibly the best evidence yet of a strongly memetic component to national identity. It is not necessarily forced upon the inhabitants of a country to become like their larger neighbour, but the conditions are such that to adopt the alternative identity is made an attractive or advantageous prospect. The phenomenon of Welsh-speaking intellectuals whose children are unable to speak the language is well-known, from Goronwy Owen to the present day.¹¹⁵ Though the British state created favourable conditions for the Anglo-British identity to flourish, the Welsh, in accepting the particular identity offered by *Prydeindod*, have chosen one over the other themselves. The psychological effects of *Prydeindod* and self-reproach are severe. The success of the eighteenth-century forging of the British nation is, essentially, the success of the subterfuge of substituting the state for the nation in national consciousness. By fostering loyalty to the state in the guise of an unified national identity, the Anglo-British polity seeks legitimacy by causing patriotic sentiment to be displaced from the nation onto the state.

The further investigations in this thesis will all be based on the relations between, and manifestations of, the idea of *Prydeindod* in three Anglo-Welsh authors of the eighteenth century, and J. R. Jones' "thorny question" of what becomes of one's identity when writing in a language not one's own. I have chosen to focus on the eighteenth century for a number of reasons. This was the period when the state consolidated its power, and during which it is generally agreed that the concept of Great Britain crystallised. From a Welsh point of view, this century saw a simultaneous increase in literacy rates, in the historiography and literature of the

¹¹⁵ See D.G. Jones, *Problewm Prifysgol a Phapurau Eraill* (Llanrwst, 2003), pp. 134 onwards.

country, and in the penetration of the English language into the country. For the three writers on whom I focus, travelling between England and Wales was a frequent occurrence, bringing them into closer contact with the world of English literature than might otherwise have been the case, and providing conditions for the interplay of the two cultures their work, especially their English-language productions.

Chapter one will focus on the oldest of the Morris brothers of Anglesey, Lewis Morris, and in particular on his satirical prose work, *Dialogue Between a Highland Welshman newly come to London and a Citizen, upon the situation of affairs in Britain*. Lewis Morris is the subject in this study most comfortable with the idea of Great Britain, and he straddles English and Welsh cultures and languages with ease. As he can look on the union between the two countries as of equals, he can negotiate fruitfully the gaps and the similarities between them, and take an unconventional view of contemporary British political events and concerns. His confidence is reflected in his literary output. and I will argue that his is the most robustly healthy response to the new dynamic of union.

In chapter two, the subject is Lewis' bardic student, Evan Evans. Evans had the greatest influence of any Welshman of his day on English literature and the study of antiquities. Looking at his original poetry and his seminal collection and translation of old Welsh poetry, I will argue that, although he was loyal to the union and to the Anglican established church, he had considerable difficulty in reconciling his Welsh and his British identities. This is reflected in the intertextuality and imitation in his English-language poetry, and his refusal to conform in his translations to English expectations and tastes.

Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) features in the third chapter. Writing at the end of the century, he benefitted from the renewed English post-Evans interest in Welshness, Celticism, primitivism, and Druidism. The two languages of Iolo's writing constitute the most complete example of bilingualism of these three authors. He was an adept forger of Welsh textual history, and his talent for imitation had differing results in each language, with a corresponding impact on his ability to bridge the two cultures to which he had access. In trying to make a name for himself in the world of English letters, he adopted multiple personæ, with which, I argue, he attempted to reconcile conflicting identities and reforge Britishness with a more significant Welsh element, moving towards a restoration of Britishness as a bardic-druidic inflected Britonism.

In conclusion, I will briefly survey notions of translation in connection with ideas of Britain, looking especially at the interface between Welsh and English, and its relation with other forms of translation. This thesis ends with an assessment of the place of Anglo-Welsh literature in the eighteenth-century context, and of the place of these authors in the broader Anglo-Welsh literary tradition.

Chapter 1 – Lewis Morris

i – Introduction

During one of his visits to London to wrangle with officials at the Navy Office, Lewis Morris, elder statesman of the so-called Morrisian Circle of Anglesey, wrote to his brother William:

I have a kind of spirit that cannot bend, and now they call me here about ye offices the *proud hot Welshman*, oblegid er my mod yn Llundain er dechreu Chwefror, nid eis i etto i ymddangos nag i ymostwng i un o wyr y Treasury, er cymmaint ydynt. [for though I have been in London since the beginning of February, yet I have not yet shown myself nor abased myself to the men of the Treasury, however great they be.]¹¹⁶

This passage not only exemplifies the characteristic Morrisian shift between languages, but his conflicting political viewpoints. Lewis, like his brothers, was “Whig in politics, loyal to the Hanoverian kings,”¹¹⁷ yet, as the extract above shows, he had a vein of pride and independence which he connected specifically with his Welsh identity. He saw no contradiction between being a proud Welshman and being a loyal Briton, both ancient and modern. In this, he is the embodiment of that Britishness identified by Linda Colley, which becomes increasingly problematic in the work of those who come after him.

Today, Lewis Morris is best known for his Welsh-language poetry, both in *cynghanedd* and in free metre verse. A ‘Philomath’, as he termed himself,¹¹⁸ he drew his influences from both English and Welsh literature, and in turn himself influenced

¹¹⁶ Morris, Morris, et al., *The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William and John Morris of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid Mon) 1728-1765*, p. 346.

¹¹⁷ Lewis, *A School of Welsh Augustans : Being a Study in English Influences on Welsh Literature during Part of the 18th Century*, p. 18.

¹¹⁸ B. Jarvis, 'Lewis Morris, y 'Philomath' Ymarferol', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl X : Ysgrifau Ar Hanes Cymru* (Llandysul, 1995), pp. 61-89.

and became an intellectual patron to many of the next generation of Welsh and Anglo-Welsh scholars and poets. He was also well known as a scholar and antiquary, though his magnum opus, the *Celtic Remains*, remained unpublished during his lifetime. English antiquaries such as Samuel Pegge and Samuel Carte, the poet and historian Thomas Warton, and Bishop Robert Lowth, consulted him on matters relating to the history of Wales, and he was instrumental in introducing several members of the aristocracy to the literature of their own country. The virtual academy of letters created by the Morrisian Circle, a Welsh neighbourhood which extended from Anglesey to London, meant not only that those Welshmen who lived in England were able to retain their Welshness, but that the Morrisians could influence, and be influenced in their turn, by English learning, literature and antiquaries. Lewis Morris' intellectual reach was thus extensive, into the best libraries in the country and in company with the finest minds of his age. Whilst proselytising on the genius and antiquity of the Welsh language and manuscripts, he was also imbibing English influences and incorporating them into his Welsh- and English-language productions.

Despite his loyalty to Britain, his distaste for English treatment of Welsh history and the ignorance of the English antiquaries with regard to the ancient history of the island knew no bounds:

Let this History be translated into English from the Welsh original and taken in its true light, making some small allowances for the British phrase, which like the Eastern Languages is too pompous for the English tast[...] Many passages in this ancient History may be Corroborated by ancient MSS., Inscriptions & coins, of which English writers know very little or nothing.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrisians of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 452.

It is the same scorn of the stereotypical English inability to learn foreign languages that lies behind Edward Lhuyd's reasoning in the Welsh preface (*At y Kymry*) to his *Archaeologia Britannica* (1707), where he defends his use of Greek letters to replace some of the Welsh ones:

Kanys mae λauer o uyr diskedig truy *Loegar* a τirnas *Fraingk*, ag ym mhlít ir *Elhmyrn*, a guir *Aιχλυν* in uιλισγαρ i uybod kissondeb i *Gimraeg* a ιειτοεδ eriλ; er bod in ó anoð gantynt ðisky (val Plant) i Guyðor o neuýð gan govio'n uastad sain neuidiol i λιτρενε.

[For there are many learned men throughout England and the kingdom of France, and amongst the Germans, and men of Scandinavia who are desirous to know the consistency of Welsh with other languages; although it is rather difficult for them to learn (like children) an alphabet from scratch whilst remembering the changing sounds of its letters.]¹²⁰

Morris was not, however, blindly uncritical of his own people. Although he and his brothers appreciated the *penillion telyn* (folk or harp verses) as both a living tradition and as remnants of older, possibly druidic, learning, Lewis shows “a kind of spirit that cannot bend”, either to the English or the Welsh, as he makes plain in a preface written in 1729:

Attochwí y rhai sy'n deall natur y byd, sef philosophyddion, yr anrhegaf fy llyfr, ag nid at gyffredin werinos y wlad. Oblegid ni bydde hynny namyn taflu porthiant dan draed anifeiliaid anllywodraethus.

[It is to you who understand the nature of the world, viz philosophers, I present my book, and not to the common folk of the country. For that would be but throwing sustenance under the feet of unruly animals]¹²¹

These “unruly animals” were to be important in maintaining a living Welsh tradition, more so than the cultural nationalists of the eighteenth century. Sir Thomas Parry

¹²⁰ E. Lhuyd, *Archæologia Britannica, Giving some Account Additional to what has been Hitherto Publish'd, of the Languages, Histories and Customs of the Original Inhabitants of Great Britain: ... by Edward Lhuyd ... Vol. I. Containing Tit. I. A Comparative Etymology; Or, Remarks on the Alteration of Languages. ... Tit. X. an Irish-English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1707), sig. d.2.

¹²¹ L. Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765* (Anglesey, 1951), p. 328.

tells us that the Morris brothers ‘felt themselves far higher than the “common people.”’¹²² This was Lewis’s especial failure of vision; as Alun R. Jones puts it:

Lewis himself hurled many insults at members of the populist movement of his day[...] In criticising in this way, the members of the Morrissian circle missed the boat without really wishing to know there was one to catch.¹²³

It is clear that such dismissal, when directed at contemporary popular writers, stemmed from the envious suspicion that ‘meer scriblers’ had a wider audience than did the Morris brothers themselves.¹²⁴ When Dafydd Jones of Trefriw included in *Blodeugerdd y Cymru* (1759) alongside Lewis’ poetry the work of poets Morris considered inferior, Jones lost all the favour he had previously earned:

Dewi Fardd has made but a cursed lame piece of work of his book, having stuffed into it some of his own productions with those of others as low or lower than himself, people that understand no language in the world, and not fit to wipe the shoes of Hugh Morris whose place they fill up. Blindness, ignorance and folly to the last degree. [...] I am sorry to see two pieces of Mr. Wiliam Wynn, and a Cywydd Ieuan Fardd in the company of such balder[d] ash stuff [...] Mr. Wynn is fonder of fame than I should be, when got through such mean channels.¹²⁵

The Morrises were caught in the world of the social climber; on the one hand, unappreciated by those they thought of as inferior to their intellectual abilities, but also unappreciated by their social betters because of their middling status, and, often, their nationality. Lewis Morris’ *Dialogue of a Highland Welshman* reveals many facets of his negotiation of multiple national identities.

ii - The *Dialogue of a Highland Welshman*

¹²² *Baledi'r Ddeunawfed Ganrif*, ed. Anonymous (Caerdydd, 1986), p. 9.

¹²³ A.R. Jones, 'A Critical Study of the Literary Works of Lewis Morris, 1701-1765' (University of Oxford DPhil, 1997), p. 38.

¹²⁴ *ibid.* p. 38.

¹²⁵ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, pp. 414-5.

Perhaps because Lewis could easily be identified with the personification of the English satirists' conception of "Taffy" – an excitable, temperamental Celt with a fiery passion for his apparently backward nation, taking every opportunity to introduce Wales to the topic in hand and defend it or make it spuriously relevant – it was inevitable that he would turn his considerable satirical powers to the chap-book Taffy as he appeared to the English reading public.¹²⁶ In his prose satire, *Dialogue Between a Highland Welshman newly come to London and a Citizen, upon the situation of affairs in Britain*, Lewis Morris deals explicitly with problems of conceptualising Britain in terms of the different nationalities it comprises, in terms of its history, and in terms of centre and periphery. In his re-examination of relations between the English and the Welsh in Britain, he takes the familiar anti-Welsh satire, and inverts it, at once satirising the English, legitimising the Welsh, and creating an arena in which both cultures might explore their historical differences in the context of contemporary relations with the continent.

Dafydd Wyn Wiliam dates the work to c.1756,¹²⁷ and gives particular contextual reasons for Morris's use at that time of the perennial theme of the luxury and vice of the city:

Fel y sylwyd, prif nodweddion bywyd y ddinas yn y cyfnod yn ôl Lewis oedd cymysgedd o lygredigaeth a moethusrwydd. Erbyn 1756 dirywiodd bywyd y ddinas fwyfwy a thrwch y boblogaeth yn mynegi eu hanniddigrwydd oherwydd colli ynys Minorca i'r Ffrancwyr yn Mai y flwyddyn honno[...] 'Roedd Lewis yn llygad-dyst i gynddaredd pobl Llundain oherwydd sigo eu balchder a chafwyd terfysgoedd a chythrwfl nid bychan yno. Dyna, felly, thema'r sgwrs a grym Prydain fel pe bai'n darfod fel cŵyr o flaen tân.

¹²⁶ See e.g. Bartley, *Teague, Shenkin and Sawney : Being an Historical Study of the Earliest Irish, Welsh and Scottish Characters in English Plays*.

¹²⁷ The work is undated in Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*.

[As noted, the main characteristics of the life of the city according to Lewis were a mixture of sin and luxury. By 1756 the life of the city had degraded more and more and the majority of the population were expressing their displeasure because of the loss of the island of Minorca to the French in May of that year[...]Lewis was an eye-witness to the fury of the people of London because of the sapping of their pride and there was not inconsiderable rioting and unrest there. That, then, is the theme of the discussion with the might of Britain melting like wax in front of a flame.”]¹²⁸

War had broken out in Europe in 1754, pitting Britain, Prussia, and some of the smaller German states against an alliance which included Austria, France, Sweden, Russia and Saxony. In 1756, the most contentious episode of the war for the English occurred, the failure of Admiral Byng to defend the British-owned island of Minorca from the French fleet. The loss of Minorca is the immediate stimulus for the *Dialogue*, as well as providing the impetus for the actions and conversation within it.

The piece has no clearly defined sections, but for ease of discussion might be divided as follows : i. Introduction – to f. 92 (BM Addl. MS. 14929)/p. 63 (in *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris*); ii. History – to f. 93/p/ 64; iii. Exposition – to f. 93/p. 66; iv. Prophecy – f. 94/p. 66 to end. Section i introduces the titular Highland Welshman, Mr. Tudor, and his London acquaintance, Mr. Shonson. The names indicate that each of the characters stands synecdochically for his respective country. Mr. Tudor represents the house of Tudor, which in the Welsh popular imagination took back the British crown which rightfully belonged to them. Mr. Shonson – the Welshman’s corruption and cymricisation of Johnson – seems intended to represent Dr. Samuel Johnson. Here, he stands for London (which, in its own turn, is often made to stand for England as a whole), much as James Boswell would later in the

¹²⁸ D.W. Wiliam, *Cofiant Lewis Morris 1742-65* (Llangefni, 2001), pp. 13-18

century declare him as emblematic of London as St. Paul's.¹²⁹ Both names are used to mark the characters as archetypes, not merely as English and Welsh, but as John Bull and Ancient Briton, everyman representations of the past, present, and future of both nations.

Morris has his characters enact symbolically the convergence of the Angle and the Briton on an unnamed territory in London – perhaps Gwynfryn, the Tower of London (where Richard Morris lived), burial place of the head of Bendigeidfran, king of Britain, at the end of the second branch of the mabinogi. The disclosure of Bendigeidfran's head was said to be one of the three unfortunate disclosures, as no peril would come to the island from invaders whilst his head remained covered.¹³⁰ The letters of the Morrises around this time were filled with rumour and gossip about the latest threat of French invasion, and even in Anglesey it was a very real fear. As well as being the capital city of England, and often standing in literature for the country, London was the unofficial intellectual and economic capital of Wales in the eighteenth century – there was a large seasonal migration to London, and many important figures in the Welsh intelligentsia were based there.¹³¹ Primrose Hill was a reminder of London's historical centrality to Wales and the Ancient Britons, flowing through into Morris' own time. Centre and periphery meet as the Welshman, Mr.

¹²⁹ S. Johnson and J. Boswell, *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (London, 1984), p. 374.

¹³⁰ *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi : Allan o Lyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*, ed. Parry-Williams (Caerdydd, 1951), pp. 44-7.

¹³¹ D.G. Jones, *Agoriad Yr Oes* (Talybont, 2001) v., G.H. Jenkins, *Literature, Religion and Society in Wales, 1660-1730* (Cardiff, 1978), R.T. Jenkins and H.M.J. Ramage, *A History of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion and of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies, 1751-1951* (London, 1951), G.H. Jenkins, *The Foundations of Modern Wales : Wales, 1642-1780* (Oxford, 1993).

Tudor, travels to London, employing a familiar figure of anti-Welsh satire of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, as described by Moira Dearnley:

Along the road out of Wales, on a route which almost always leads to London in eighteenth-century novels, there occasionally walks an identifiable descendant of the chapbook Taffy, poor, naïve and cunning[...]possessing] features of the national temperament pilloried in seventeenth-century popular literature – the Welshman’s obsession with genealogy, his peculiar language, hot temper and quarrelsome nature, his patriotism and peculiar way of calculating time and distance[...]¹³²

Morris takes the chap-book stereotype of the naïve Welshman in Wales and uses it to lampoon the English instead. Many of the chapbook Taffy’s characteristics are to be found in Mr. Tudor – all his talk is of ‘shîps’ and wool, and his speech is distinctly Welsh and awkward. But Morris is careful with his language. Dearnley notes that in the anti-Welsh satires,

the humour is based on an extreme dislocation of the English language, with gobbledegook substituted for Welsh[...]the use of ‘her’ for ‘he’ and ‘his’[...]’¹³³

and so on. At first sight, Morris’s Welshman appears to be cut of the same cloth:

Welshman: No, no, Mr. Shonson, you cannot, I heer he is after Listing on the board of a *mainy war*, and in swearing that he will not pay a farthing to no body, and there is upon him great money in that neighbourhood to many poor pibble, that cannot ford to lose upon his hands. But pray sir, *Chwat is all this main y war busness that you have in Lonon*, our shepherds are after running here every head to be sailors[...]

Mr. Tudor has come to London chasing a defaulter on a debt – possibly a Welshing Taffy-thief (although there is nothing to suggest that it is not an Englishman who has defrauded Mr. Tudor and his compatriots). Recalling the case of the Hanoverian soldier at Maidstone, we are told that the thief is after “Listing in a *Mainy War*”, so

¹³² Dearnley, *Distant Fields : Eighteenth-Century Fictions of Wales*, p. 1.

¹³³ *ibid.* p. 4.

that he will not have to answer for his misdeeds. Here then are all the ingredients of a classic anti-Welsh satire, not to mention the aristocratic name of our Welsh protagonist. In fact, contrary to the usual representations of Welsh and ‘Wenglish’¹³⁴ in English satire, the eye-dialect and Welsh-influenced English are extremely accurate. As this is a “Highland” Welshman, it is certain that the phonetic representation of Mr. Tudor’s speech reflects faithfully the accent of Lewis Morris’s birthplace (Anglesey), given his interest in linguistics and quirks of language. The syntax and choice of words are almost direct syntactical and idiomatic translations from the Welsh. The preposition *on* in the phrase “a price reasonable on the wool” is the translation of that used in Welsh. “There is upon him great money” is *mae arno ef lawer o arian*, i.e. he owes a lot of money; “running here every head” is *rhedeg yma bob pen*. The double negative of “No I don’t think that neither” is direct from the Welsh *Dydw i ddim yn meddwl hynny ychwaith*; the unnecessary pluralisation (such as *shîps* and *moneys*) is likewise from the Welsh. This is an accuracy one would rarely see from a non-Welshman attempting to notate Anglo-Welsh dialect – Ben Jonson’s accurate Welsh in his masque *For the Honour of Wales* (1618) is a rare exception – and would perhaps alert the linguistically aware reader that there is something out of the ordinary to be had in the piece.

Here we see how the tension between the central language and that of the periphery plays itself out within the speech of one person. At first, the reader expects the usual linguistic gobbledegook of old Taffy, who doesn’t understand what a *mainy*

¹³⁴ A term coined by John Edwards in his humorous study, J. Edwards, *Talk Tidy : The Art of Speaking Wenglish* (Cowbridge, 1985). The term as Edwards uses it refers specifically to South Wales English, but it can be employed for North Wales English as a convenient shorthand for this particular dialect, much of which involves straight idiomatic translations from Welsh.

war is. This expectation is swiftly confounded, as Mr. Shonson has little trouble understanding Mr. Tudor. Indeed, Mr. Tudor rapidly cymricises the Englishman, first by calling him “Shonson” (son of Siôn), and later, by instructing him in the history of his island, teaching the Englishman *Brytaniaeth* (Britonism) rather than *Prydeindod* (Britishness). The majority of the “translated” phrases spoken by Mr. Tudor occur in roughly the first third of the piece. Morris sets up the defining linguistic register in Tudor’s opening speech, then lets it slip very carefully, without the loss of the peculiar (to English eyes) jarring note, as Tudor’s function in the piece shifts from chap-book stereotype to prophet of the nation’s future. From sentences such as “*Chwat is all this main y war busness*” there is a gradual, almost imperceptible move to sections of weight and gravitas as Mr Tudor is given vatic, proverbial speech.

This visual shift shows how the Englishman’s ear is becoming accustomed to Mr. Tudor’s speech patterns, as is the reader’s eye. The stereotypical speech is gradually dropped in favour of a standardised English (although not necessarily an entirely standardised spelling or eye-dialect pronunciation) and lends a blending effect to the two characters, and by extension to their respective nationalities. Although the Englishman does not follow Dafydd Glyn Jones’s rule for Britishness to the letter (that in order to be truly British the Englishman must also learn Welsh, as well as the Welshman learning English¹³⁵), the Englishman in a sense learns the Welshman’s speech (shown to the reader by its increasing standardisation, mimicking Shonson’s ear as it accustoms itself to the strange Wenglish), thus coming to a better understanding of his own country. In this sense, they really do gain a common speech, united by their common enemy. But the English people’s failure to rise to the

¹³⁵ D. G. Jones, 'Prydeindod Piau Hi o Hyd', in Anonymous (ed.), *Agoriad Yr Oes* (Talybont, 2001), pp. 234-40.

challenge of the war with the French mean that Mr Tudor's speech is indeed different from the common rhetoric of the English politicians.

Morris also shows the extreme fluidity of naming in this period, not only in Mr Tudor's reappropriation of 'pre-Saxon' pronunciations, cymricising Mr. Johnson's name, for instance, but also in the remarkable number of ways he names the country and its various inhabitants, as well as continental names. It is common throughout the piece for Mr Tudor to give something its Welsh name, and then add 'that is, which you English call – X'. The English are variously 'Saeson', 'Saxons', and English; England is Lloegr as well as England; Welsh are Britains and Britons; 'Britain' is, variously, Britain, "Gr–Br", and "Cornwall, Engl. & Wales". Despite this apparent inclusivity, Morris compounds the irony of the English/Saxons inviting the Hessians in to defend them by showing that this was the way they gained the land in the first place. Naming is important; it seems that the war with France is caused by "being so Impidant as to call our *Shors* King of Gr–Br, & France". Alun R. Jones notes Morris's use of "non-obfuscating dashes" in reference to his bawdy works, such as "Llywelyn Ddu to the Buttonhole," where the reader is given the dashes for the sake of propriety; it is assumed he would know well enough what the obscured word actually is, a function of the coterie manuscript transmission nature of Morris's poems. It is also occasionally used in his letters:

What can you expect from Bis-ps or any officers ignorant of a Language which they get their living by[...]a Sc-t or a Sax-n is above Correction[...]¹³⁶

It seems to be used in this latter case on an occasion when Lewis's passion overruns him. It is intriguing to find the same used here, with "Mounsier P–" as well

¹³⁶ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 623.

as “Gr–Br”. Used for the name of the Frenchman, it performs the function commonly found in novels of the eighteenth century in hiding the real identity of the character; or, if the name is intended to be a bawdy pun on a stereotypical French name, to obscure the improper language; or even to imply that the French are so much hated that they shouldn’t be mentioned. This has implications for the term “Gr–Br” – is it a swear word to everyone, to Lewis Morris, or just to the French? “France” is not obscured in this way. The question is left deliberately ambiguous, mirroring the ambiguous view of Britain as somewhat of a hotch-potch of nationalities evinced throughout the *Dialogue*.

Shonson/Johnson’s inclusion in the narrative serves also to introduce the idea of the city, as opposed to Tudor’s country. The latter makes the contrast stark early in the work.

[...] on my way to *Lonon* there was neither man nor woman which I met with but Gnashd their teeth with fury against ye great pippl of *Lonon* because they did not make honestly to leave the old men in ye Ile of Norca without enough of men, of arms and of vittles [...] ¹³⁷

According to Lewis’ nephew, Sion Owen, the elder man threw himself with gusto into the licentiousness of the great city, carousing with friends and cavorting with whores. He composed several poems to prostitutes, including several to one Sarah Frome, whom he nick-named Haras or Haerwen. In common with many others, however, this did not prevent him from disdaining London as a capital of vice. John Owen, in a famous passage, notes Lewis’ views on everyone in the city – except, of course, himself.

¹³⁷ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn)*, 1701-1765, pp. 62-3.

Myn D—l mae yn bur wir ichwi ei fod ers dyddiau wedi bod yn llettyfa dipyn or dref mewn ty hen gymraes, a rhyw noswaith maen debygol e gyttunodd ar forwyn am ei neges, ar Bore dranoeth efo a hithau a godasant o boitti pump or gloch [...] ac atti hi yr aed gan osod y lodesig ar draws rhyw fwrdd oedd yn y ty, ond yn rhywfodd fal yr oedd anlwc iddynt yr oedd yn llettyfa yn yr un ty ddyn arall yr hwn a ddigwyddodd godi ynghynt na phob amser, ac aeth i lawr y grisiau ac ai daliodd yn ei gweithio hi yn dingrych. [B]id a fyddno nid aeth y dyn ddim iw rhwystro ond ar ol edrych tippyn arnynt fe aeth allan ir drws arall heb iddynt hwy oll ei weled [...] dyna hen anlladwr onide? [A]c nid oes neb arall ond efe yn onest, hwrs, Putteiniaid, lladron &c yw yr holl fyd[...]

[By the D—I it is quite true to you that he has been some days since lodging a little way from the town in the house of an old Welshwoman, and some evening it seems that he agreed with the maid for his message, and the next morning he and she arose around five o'clock [...] and he went to it, putting the girl across some table which was in the house, but somehow unluckily for them it happened that there was another man also lodging in the house who happened to get up earlier than ever before, and went downstairs and caught him working her all quivering-arsed. [W]hatever for that, the man did nothing to stop them but after looking at them some while he went out through the other door without them seeing him [...] there's an old lech, eh? [A]nd there's no-one honest but him, whores, prostitutes, thieves &c are the whole world [...] ¹³⁸

As well as being a ferment of exciting experiences, time in the city in the poetic imagination often serves to enhance the attractiveness of the country as a place of purity and quiet. Johnson, in his *London* (1738), encapsulates the draw of rural retreat in comparison with the city.

Resolved at length, from Vice and London far,
To breathe in distant Fields a purer Air,
And, fix'd on Cambria's solitary shore,
Give to St. David one *true Briton* more.
[...]
LONDON! the needy Villain's gen'ral Home,
The Common Shore of *Paris* and of *Rome*;
With eager Thirst, by Folly or by Fate,
Sucks in the Dregs of each corrupted State.
Forgive my Transports on a Theme like this,
I cannot bear a *French* metropolis."¹³⁹

¹³⁸ T. Jones, *Y Llew a'i Deulu*, Arg cyntaf edn (Talybont, Ceredigion, 1982), p. 67.

¹³⁹ S. Johnson, *The Poems of Samuel Johnson* (Oxford, 1974), p. 496.

Internecline strife is enacted within the poem on an individual level, the speaker left behind whilst his friend escapes to Wales. Such is the emotional bond between the speaker and Thales, it is as though the former becomes divided from himself – an apt metaphor for a country which remained troubled even as it moved towards a surface unity.

While Johnson's model is Juvenal's *Satire Three*, Lewis Morris can also draw on Welsh precedent. Contained among his papers are *The Works of Thomas Prys of Plas Iolyn* (B.M. Add. MS. 14872). A poet and buccaneer of the time of Elizabeth I, he is best known for the poem *Kowydd i ddangos mae uffern yw Llvndain* (Cywydd to show that London is hell). Wales is a rural idyll of natural pursuits:

[...]a'n hyfrydwch, nid trwch trin,
 yn wych wrthiav, dan chwerthin,
 yw hela, vwch heolydd,
 kwn a gweilch, lle kawn y gwydd,
 a chanv a savthv saeth,
 a hwylio ysport yn helaeth;
 ag edrych, *fowrwyh* fyrian,
 ofer iach liw, ar ferch lan,
 a chwaraav, nid yn chwerwaidd,
 yn ddiddig, evrddedig wraidd[...]

[[...]our delight, pastime not sad / splendid marvels in merriment / is hunting across fields / with dogs and hawks, where we take to the woods / and singing and shooting arrows, / and pursuing sport broadly; / and looking, splendid marian, / frivolous, carefree fair one, at a pure maiden, / and playing, not cruelly, / contentedly, golden haired one[...]]¹⁴⁰

This is in stark contrast to London, which Prys paints as 'ten hells in one,' full of whores, vagabonds, gamblers, and loveless families.

mae yn Llvndain, mewn llowndaith,
 ddeg yn vn, ddigon o waith,

¹⁴⁰ D.H. Evans and T. Prys, 'Cywydd i Ddangos Mai Uffern Yw Llundain', *Ysgrifau Beirniadol*, Vol. XIV (1988), p. 134. - tr. P.K. Ford

lle mae einioes llym enyd,
 a chnafri a bawdri y byd:
 lle mae alltvd llv melltith,
 llawn kwyno a chogio chwith;
 lle anianol, llawn yni,
 lle Iddewon ynt y'n lladd ni:
 lle oer dig, a llawer diawl,
 lle ffyrnig, llv vfferawl;
 lle nis da, llv nos a dydd,
 lle gelyn oll y'w gylydd:
 lle anvdon i llonaid,
 lle brwnt i ynill heb raid;
 lle'r fam a'r ferch, heb serch sydd,
 a'r chwaer ni char i chwiorydd:
 lle ni chred, yn anwedig,
 y brawd i'r llall, deall dig.

[it is in London, in the long run / ten hells in one, enough work, / where a lifetime is sharply curtailed, / and the knavery and bawdry of the world are; / where an accursed crowd sits in exile, / full of moaning and loaded dice, / a carnal place, bustling, / where there are Jews to hurt us; / place of miserable grief, and many a devil, / fierce place, hellish host, / no good place, tumult night and day, / place of endless enemies / place full of falsehood, / place to find filth without effort, / where mother and daughter are without love, / and sister loves not her sisters, / where, especially, brother believes not / another, fearing treachery.]¹⁴¹

In the 1750s, however, debates about manliness, luxury and effeminacy went further than the classical model of country versus city. The Seven Years' War, Admiral Byng's failed campaign at Minorca, and the necessity of stationing Hanoverian and Hessian auxiliary soldiers in England to defend the country from potential French invasion all provided a real and immediate focal point for such issues.

Byng's case was the biggest news event of 1756-7; M. John Cardwell has called the number of pamphlets, poems and books produced on the subject

¹⁴¹ *ibid.* I here use P.K. Ford's translation; however, the word 'kill' is a more accurate translation than 'hurt' in the ninth line of this extract.

“unprecedented”.¹⁴² Lewis, residing in London at the time, witnessed first hand the popular response to the incident, and reported to his brother William:

Last Thursday the people of London shewd a spirit on Tower Hill, i.e. raised a devil which will not be easily laid. About a thousand people met, and there upon a high gibbett hang'd ye effigy of Admiral Byng, dressed in ye naval uniform, and his face painted to ye life – shot at him, etc., and at last burnt [him]. This was done against ye Lord Mayor's door, and shews ye nature of ye people; a small matter will drive them to extreams.¹⁴³

This “fury” of the people of London had erupted into all-out rioting, which occurred in urban centres throughout the country, after the loss of Minorca, and Byng's subsequent court-martial and execution by firing squad.¹⁴⁴ Byng was burned in effigy in almost every major urban centre in England,¹⁴⁵ and even William Morris, the stay-at-home brother, was desperate for information from London:

Er cariad ar ddyn a oes dim newydd oddiwrth Fyng; ai cachgi ydyw yntau rhyfelwr pen sych mal ei dad? Gerwin y chwedlau sydd gan boblach yn ei gylch o, ai gwmni, nid oes bosibl na wyr y mawrion yna yr holl hanes. [For the love of man, is there no news from Byng; is he a coward or a hard-headed warrior like his father? Harsh the stories that the rabble have about him, and his company, it isn't possible that the worthies know not the whole story.]¹⁴⁶

Despite calling it a “small matter”, Lewis Morris evidently saw the significance of the underlying worries which found their focal point in the Byng case. He has his Welshman in the *Dialogue* comment on the popular reaction to the admiral's failure:

¹⁴² J. Cardwell, *Arts and Arms : Literature, Politics and Patriotism during the Seven Years War* (Manchester, 2004), p. 51.

¹⁴³ Morris, Morris, et al., *The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William and John Morris of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid Mon) 1728-1765*, p. 426.

¹⁴⁴ B. Tunstall, *Admiral Byng and the Loss of Minorca* (London, 1928), p. 293.

¹⁴⁵ Cardwell, *Arts and Arms : Literature, Politics and Patriotism during the Seven Years War*, p. 65.

¹⁴⁶ Morris, Morris, et al., *The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William and John Morris of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid Mon) 1728-1765*, p. 414.

I see the poor (poor Indeed) singing songs in your streets to expose your *amrels* [Admirals] and sea officers. The singers I am sure have more occasion to cry than to sing, and so have you too.¹⁴⁷

Such widely-reported events as Byng's trial serve to highlight divisions in different parts of the country, where they exist; they can also show up national unity. In this case, over and above the arguments about Byng's actions, and what blame should be attached to the government, that naval failure struck at the heart of gender debates of the time, as John Cardwell and Matthew McCormack have shown.¹⁴⁸ Both Byng's failure at Minorca and the affair of the Hanoverian soldier¹⁴⁹ became the theatre for the debate, and a shorthand way of referring to a specific set of issues about masculinity.

Luxury and vice were seen by many commentators as the products of the age, contrasting with a mythical "natural[...] manly and victorious"¹⁵⁰ golden age from which Britons had since fallen. This was encouraged by a corrupt and nepotistic government – "the moral bankruptcy of a selfish, effeminate, corrupt aristocracy, which had degenerated from its forefathers"¹⁵¹ – that had mismanaged the affairs of war. This feeling was exacerbated by multiple defeats in the House of Lords of the

¹⁴⁷ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 67.

¹⁴⁸ Cardwell, *Arts and Arms : Literature, Politics and Patriotism during the Seven Years War, Public Men : Masculinity and Politics in Modern Britain*, ed. Anonymous (Basingstoke, 2007).

¹⁴⁹ See M. McCormack, 'Citizenship, Nationhood and Masculinity in the Affair of the Hanoverian Soldier, 1756', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 49 (No. 4, 2006), pp. 971-93.

¹⁵⁰ G. Silver, 'Paradoxes of Defence', in Matthey (ed.), *The Works of George Silver : Comprising "Paradoxes of Defence" and "Bref Instructions Vpon My Paradoxes of Defence"*, Matthey, C.G.R. edn (London, 1898), p. 1.

¹⁵¹ Cardwell, *Arts and Arms : Literature, Politics and Patriotism during the Seven Years War*, p. 59.

Militia Act in the period 1755-9. Repeated rejection of this act had the effect of necessitating the stationing of German troops in the country (and particularly Kent) as the threat of French invasion became more and more pressing.¹⁵² This was widely taken to be as good as an admission of defeat, and “was denounced as tantamount to a national slander of cowardice.”¹⁵³

This was not entirely an idle worry of moral commentators; nor indeed was it new. Concern about creeping effeminacy tended to erupt at times of war, when the country was under threat from malign powers. English Masters of Defence frequently complained in manuals that fashionable foreign styles of fighting were being adopted to the detriment not only of the English/British Art, but to the vigour of the nation as a whole. Writing in 1599, George Silver complains of the fashion for Italian rapier play, an imperfect style whose use encourages the flower of English male youth to duel using an inferior and unsafe art, dying in the process, and weakening the nation by their loss. The receptiveness of the English to foreign schools also comes under scrutiny:

And for as much as this noble and most mightie nation of Englishmen, of their good natures, are alwayes most louing, verie credulous, & readie to cherish & protect strangers: yet that through their good natures they neuer more by strangers or false teachers may be deceiued, once againe I am most humbly to admonish them, or such as shal find in themselues a disposition or desire to learne their weapons of them, that from henceforth as strangers shall take vpon them to come hither to teach this noble & most valiant, & victorious nation to fight, that first, they cause a sufficient triall of them to be made[...] ¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² J.R. Western, *The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century; the Story of a Political Issue, 1660-1802* (1965).

¹⁵³ Cardwell, *Arts and Arms : Literature, Politics and Patriotism during the Seven Years War*, p. 115.

¹⁵⁴ Silver, *Paradoxes of Defence*, pp. 2-3.

This criticism would be transferred during later centuries to be applied to whatever foreign style or weapon had become fashionable at the time – the French transitional rapier style of the 1660s, for example. The English masters revelled in the high martial reputation of their fellow countrymen besting foreign soldiers when they used traditional techniques, although significantly their anecdotes tend to be of former golden ages of martial vigour, and betray high anxiety at possible feminisation from foreign contamination.

Contemporary voice was given to these anxieties by John Brown in his *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757). In writing *Of the national Spirit of Defence* (Part II, Sect. III), he notes that

The national Spirit of Defence then, to speak with Precision, will always be compounded of the national bodily *Strength, Hardiness, Courage* and *Principle*.

The *common People* of this Nation seem possessed of the *three* first of these four Qualities, in a Degree sufficient to form an effectual national Spirit of Defence. [...] But if we rise, or rather *descend*, to an impartial View of those who are called the *better Sort*, we shall find such a general Defect in the Spirit of *Defence*, as would alarm any People who were not lost to all Sense of *Danger*. [...] How far these general Reasonings are confirmed by a series of *Recent Events*, the World is left to judge. It is not the Writer's Intention to make personal Applications, but to trace acknowledged *Facts* to their *Principles* and *Consequences*.¹⁵⁵

Morris and his acquaintances were more explicit still in their criticisms of the higher echelons of society, especially of Byng and the government which had failed him so badly. Hugh Hughes, known by his bardic name of Y Bardd Coch o Fôn (The Red Bard of Anglesey) wrote a *Cywydd Marwnad am Ynys Minorca* (Elegy for the island of Minorca) in the Welsh elegiac tradition which pleased Lewis greatly:

¹⁵⁵ J. Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times.*, The seco edn (London, 1757), pp. 82-102.

A gwrda'r Bardd Coch; dyma'r peth goreu a ganodd ef erioed. There is humor and sense in it, and a sharp sting not to be often met with in *Barddoniaeth y Dispyddiad*. "By gad, I'd rather be gon," is infinitely the best of ye three. Mend another line, "rhyw ddynion di-ddaioni" [some men without any good] ... Llawer Byng sy'n llywio'r byd. [Many a Byng conns the world]¹⁵⁶

This was the only poem of Hugh Hughes' which was included in Hugh Jones of Llangwm's poetical miscellany, *Dewisiol Ganiadau yr Oes Hwn* (1759), where it appeared alongside numerous of Lewis Morris' works. The full title as printed in the miscellany is *Cywydd Galarnad am ynys Minorca, a Phorthladd St. Philip a gollwyd trwy lyfrdra a ffalster Admiral Bung, 1756* [Elegy for the isle of Minorca, and the Port of St. Phillip, which were lost through the cowardice and falseness of Admiral Byng, 1756]. The piece opens with an apostrophe to an injured Great Britain (O! Brydain fawr briw dan f'ais [O! great Britain, bruise under my rib]), and describes how the poet grieves for seeing her parlous state (Dy gyflwr diau go-flin [Your undoubtedly bad condition]). This state is caused by the "Fath ddynion di ddaioni" [Such bad men] who are in command. We then move from the general to the specific, the action moving to the conduct of the various parties in the recent conflict. The Englishman, that is, Byng, is given a couplet in his own language, highlighting the difference between the timid English and the implied valour of the Welsh:

Steer from hence there the *ffrens-mon*
By God I'd rather be gon.¹⁵⁷

The poet declares that 'the guilty deserve to be hanged' (Haedde'r euog eu Crogi) – not just Byng, but those at the ministry as well – before going on to compare Byng's actions with those of General Blakeney's at Port Mahon. As M. John Cardwell has

¹⁵⁶ Morris, Morris, et al., *The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William and John Morris of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid Mon) 1728-1765*, p. 424. September 6th 1756

¹⁵⁷ *Dewisiol Ganiadau Yr Oes Hon, a Gasglwyd Ac a Gynfansoddwyd Gan H. Jones*, ed. Anonymous (Mwythig, 1759), p. 86.

shown, after the loss of Minorca and at Byng's trial, unfavourable comparisons with Blakeney's defence of the port were a commonplace. However, in this cywydd, Hugh Hughes foregrounds Blakeney's nationality in explaining his heroism, and consequently Byng's in explaining his cowardice:

A'r *Gwyddel* ddiogel ddawn
 A gafwyd yno'n gyfiawn;
 O'i foddion y rhyfeddais
 A Sel yn rhagory Sais [...]
 [And the *Irishman* of sure power / Was there found Just; / I was astounded at
 his means, / And his zeal surpasses the Englishman [...]]¹⁵⁸

In closing, the poet moves back again from the particular to the general, reflecting that the situation in Minorca mirrors that at home, in the lines particularly commended by Lewis Morris:

Gwiliwn gartref rai hefyd
 Llawer *Bung* yn llywio'r Byd,
 [...]
 D'wedodd rhyw *Fardd* godidawg
 Lloegr hen yn llygru y rhawg.
 Pa lygriad yw 'rhanniad hwn
 O ddolur a feddyliwn?
 Llygriad Bydol reolaeth;
 Yn wir nid oes lygriad waeth.
 [At home we also see some / Many a Byng conning the world [...] / Some
 illustrious Bard said / Old England corrupts for a long time. / What corruption
 is our portion / Of this pain do we think? / The corruption of worldly
 governance; / Truly there is no worse corruption.]¹⁵⁹

Hugh Hughes, then, produces a poem where the Irishman (Blakeney) is contrasted with the Englishman (Byng), effeminised through his Francophilia; the rapacious French through this weakness are able to dominate at sea (traditionally the stronghold

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.* p. 86.

¹⁵⁹ *ibid.* p. 87.

of the British navy); and the Welshman stands outside watching aghast at the corruption of the world.

Paradoxically, the French too are seen as highly threatening as well as being weak and effeminate. Drawing on a rich vein of anti-Catholic satire, Morris can make explicit both the religious and the sexual threat of French invasion:

[...] and you shall have the Pope of Rome over your Church who is a Prince with 3 Crowns, and you shall have the Inquisition too to punish y^e enemies of y^e Church [...] Your Closets & Bedchambers shall be frequented by brawny Gaulish priests, and your wives & daughters shall own their sins and weaknesses to them in y^e Francs tongue, and shall be relieved.¹⁶⁰

Lewis makes great play on the ambiguousness of the phrase “Y^e Francs tongue”, possibly as a reference to cunnilingus, again coupling licentiousness with the French and the French language. The bawdy here is more subtle than much of his other erotic Welsh *cywyddau*, some of which were even printed in his lifetime, such as *Cywydd y Bais* (The Petticoat *cywydd*) and *Cywydd i Gwd Cardottyn* (Cywydd to a Beggar’s Sack).¹⁶¹ Most of his obscene works were written for exclusively male company, particularly that of William Vaughan, Corsygedol. Letters between the two were full of scabrous poetry, and satire on female sex and sexuality was a favourite subject. Poems with titles such as “Englynnion i Buttain Dlawd yn Charing Cross am iddi ddangos C-t fudr” (*Englynion* to a poor prostitute in Charing Cross because of her showing a dirty c-nt) and “Llywelyn to the Buttonhole” exemplify the kind of ribaldry enjoyed by the two, notably often centred around London prostitutes.

Pethes front yw c—t mewn Cwm, mewn oedran
yn Edrych yn dinllwm

¹⁶⁰ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 65.

¹⁶¹ See Jenkins, *Lewis Morris: "the Fat Man of Cardiganshire" 1-23.*, A.R. Jones, 'Diddanwch Teuluaidd', *Barn*, pp. 70-1.

fflwp, fflwp, fflott llun twll Bottwm,
 cwrr oi mant yn Crio mwm.
 [A filthy thing is a c--nt in a valley, in old age
 Looking sorry-arsed,
 Flop, flop, flot, the picture of a button hole,
 The edge of her robe, her crying mum.]¹⁶²

Morris ensures in the *Dialogue* that the lewdness associated with the French cannot possibly be missed. Readers of Ellis Wynne's *Gweledigaethu y Bardd Cwsg* [Visions of the Sleeping Bard] (1703) would be familiar with the kind of 'relief' offered to wives and daughters by French priests:

[...] dyma'r forwyn yn dyfod ymlaen i draethu'i chyffes hithau.
 'Eich pardwn, 'y nhad cyffeswr,' ebr hi, 'mi a feichiogais, ac a leddais fy mhlentyn.'
 'Teg iawn yn wir!' ebr y cyffeswr, 'A phwy oedd y tad?'
 'Yn wir, un o'ch mynachod chwi,' ebr hi.
 'Ust, ust!' eb ef. 'Dim anair i wŷr yr Eglwys. P'le mae'r iawn i'r Eglwys sy gennyh?'
 'Dyma,' ebr hithau, ac a estynnodd iddo euryrn.
 'Rhaid i chwi edifarhau; a'ch penyd yw gwylid wrth fy ngwely i heno,' ebr ef, tan gilwenu arni hi.
 [[...]the maiden came forward to tell her confession.
 'Your pardon, father confessor,' she said, 'I became pregnant, and killed my child.'
 'Fair indeed!' said the confessor, 'And who was the father?'
 'One of your monks, truly,' she said.
 'Hush! Hush! No bad words of the men of the Church! Where is your compensation to the Church?'
 'Here,' she said, and gave him some gold.
 'You must repent, and your penance will be to sit and watch by my bed tonight,' he said, smiling slyly at her.]¹⁶³

French is the language of sex, licentiousness, and of Catholicism, and Morris uses his bawdy double-entendres to hammer this message home. The image of the three-crowned Pope, "Y Goron Driphlyg a'r Cleddyfau a'r 'Goriadau'n Groesion"[The

¹⁶² E.G. Jones, 'Llythyrau Lewis Morris at William Vaughan, Corsygedol', *Llên Cymru*, Vol. X (1968), p. 9.

¹⁶³ Wynne, *Gweledigaethu y Bardd Cwsg : Y Rhan Gyntaf*, p. 163.

Triple Crown and the Swords and the Keys Crossed],¹⁶⁴ identified with the Beast and Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth from Revelation 17, is a familiar one in anti-Papist satire.

Gweledigaethu y Bardd Cwsg was the most influential satire, indeed, the most influential prose work in Welsh in the eighteenth century apart from the Bible, and we know that Lewis Morris owned “Bardd Cwsg. 1703. 12^{mo}.”¹⁶⁵ However, whereas Wynne concentrates on the state of the soul arising from moral and political corruption, Morris’s satirical dart is firmly aimed at the worldly and political consequences of moral laxity. Just as histories such as Theophilus Evans’ *Drych y Prif Oesoedd* blamed the moral degeneration of the Welsh for their loss of Britain (personified in Vortigern’s lust for Alis Rhonwen, an outside influence bringing internal corruption to the fore), so the English are seen to be encountering the same degeneration brought to the fore by the French influence. The dilemma for the British is how to deal with it, and who should do so. The country as a whole is deprived of the invigorating influence of a militia, thereby becoming degenerate and weak like their political masters. The Welsh are deprived of any active political power because of their former “folly” and “weackness”, and having sinned have lost the island. It would seem the English, having not learned from history, are condemned to repeat it, leaving us with the paradoxical situation where the older, apparently backward, nation provides a warning from history to the progressive and improving nation.

Along with these two old stereotypes of the French, famine victim and licentious fat Catholic priest, we are given two stereotypes of the English – John Bull,

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 803.

who “fills his belly with ox-flesh & ale”, and the Frenchified Englishman “in the main effeminated, and tamd mere cowards, by corruption and voluptuousness.” The Francophilia of the aristocratic classes, and the mistrust it engendered, have been well documented:

As long as British patricians spoke French among themselves, the claim went, as long as they favoured French clothes, employed French hairdressers and valets, and haunted Parisian salons on the Grand Tour, as long as the taste for French cultural and luxury imports was allowed to put native artists, traders and manufacturers out of business, national distinction would be eroded and national fibre relaxed.¹⁶⁶

Our Welshman agrees:

You shall have French fashions without travelling to France or being in danger of drowning in ye channel. [...] Shoemakers and Tanners shall be no more for you shall have wooden French shoes and you shall have French Taylors if you have Cloth.¹⁶⁷

Michèle Cohen, in *Fashioning Masculinity* (1996), posits that, during the eighteenth century, the French language in itself came to represent effeminacy and foppery, whilst the English came to represent directness and masculinity.¹⁶⁸ This is paralleled in the discussions of the Celts and their languages where the Celt is gendered as feminine.¹⁶⁹ English steadfastness is contrasted with a fey weak Celticism, whose high-watermark would come only a few years later with the publication of the Ossian fragments. Later writers, such as Matthew Arnold, would

¹⁶⁶ L. Colley, *Britons : Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven ; London, 1992) p. 88. See also R.D.E. Eagles, *Francophilia in English Society, 1748-1815* (Basingstoke, 2000), M. Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity : National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1996).

¹⁶⁷ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 65.

¹⁶⁸ Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity : National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 177.

¹⁶⁹ See Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image*, p. 180.

suggest a judicious mixing of the “greater delicacy and spirituality of the Celtic people” with the Philistinism of the Teutonic races.¹⁷⁰ Such leavening of English roughness was in Morris’ time to be achieved by commerce with the feminine, both from conversation with women, and association with the more refined French. Yet too much contact with the French leads to linguistic and subsequently moral contamination and effeminacy. These are the charges levelled at Admiral Byng, whose Francophilia seems to have intensified the people’s anger against him. The latter’s reputation as a gourmand is recalled in Tudor’s catalogue of the fruits of French conquest.[...]you shall have French Bishops and French abbots, and who will have French wines in great plenty. In the place of Porter, Burgundy, In ye place of ale, champaign.

Lewis Morris’ Welshman in the *Dialogue* takes a far more active part in the politico-moral discussion than Hugh Hughes in his *cywydd*. He analyses the problem with the battle in simple terms by analogy with his own experiences:

Would I or any body have sent 12 men to Catch 12 Thieves that I was informd came to steal my sheep, would I not have sent 24 men if I had them? and perhaps little enough against thieves in full arms

And would I or any other fool stay for ye 12 Thiefs to go to my sheepfold before I sent any to meet them, and I knowing they were coming there? No old woman would have been Gilty [*sic*] of such stupidity!¹⁷¹

Morris uses one of the butts of anti-Welsh satire, the Welshman’s sheep, and turns it into a tool to show the stupidity of the tactics of Byng and the government, whilst also reminding the reader of the ambiguity between sheep/shîps in the initial paragraphs. In the second section, Morris introduces warnings from history to the

¹⁷⁰ Arnold, *The Study of Celtic Literature*, p. x.

¹⁷¹ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 63.

English in respect of the current political situation. Whilst there remained no standing army, and the Militia Bill failed to become law, Hanoverian and Hessian auxiliary troops were stationed in England in order to bolster the defences of the nation. The unease caused by the presence of these foreign auxiliaries erupted during the Maidstone affair (see McCormack). Morris sees obvious parallels with past disasters:

[...] did you ever hear say, that there came any good in the world of sending for armed strangers to keep Great Britain.

Remember *Iul Caesar* [Julius Caesar] that came here to assist the sons of *Lludd* against their uncle *Caswallon* when he had got their lands by force. What was ye event? slavery to a Brave people for 500 years. No sooner was that over, But Gwrtheyrn (who you English call Vortigern I think) who was a South Wales man got the crown of *Lonon* on his head, by a Trick, and to keep it there sent for some strangers from the mountains of Almain, (which you call Germania) who hey called Saxonians & Hessians I think, who after they had fastend the Crown on his head by killing his subjects, the Picts & Scots & disaffected Britons tarded their Poleaxes against him that Invited them.¹⁷²

Morris is not the only writer in that year to draw an explicit comparison between the case of the Ancient Britons hiring Saxon mercenaries, and the government's use of Hanoverian mercenaries to defend the nation. The broadside *England's Alarum-Bell, or a Choak-Pear for the H---ns* (1756) following the Maidstone affair offers the following parallel between the current polity and ancient history:

In *Vortigern's* Days,
Our History Says,
The Britons both stupid and senseless,
By Luxury wasted,
And Brib'ry debased,
Sent for *Saxons* to guard them, defenceless.
Ye Britons! &c.

IV.
But when the rough *German*

¹⁷² *ibid.* p. 63.

Set Foot on *East Britain*,
 A Country so fine and so fertile,
 The Whelp swore by his Gods,
 That with Whips and with Rods,
 The Britons he'd drive into Exile.
Ye Britons! &c.

V.
 The proud *Saxon* Lord,
 Was not worse than his Word,
 He first seiz'd on their Wives and their Daughters
 The Ravishers then
 Drove all the poor Men
 Link'd together like Sheep to the Slaughter.
*Ye Britons! &c.*¹⁷³

German Cruelty, a prose work of 1756, quotes Gildas, Bede and other historians at great length to illustrate the parallels between Vortigern and his councillors' foolishness and the possible outcome of George II and his current parliament's course of action. In this, the author is partaking in a tradition which reaches back to Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi*; Gildas' story of Vortigern and the Saxons becomes an archetype for political incompetence.¹⁷⁴ The pamphleteer is not above tweaking the apparent facts of Vortigern's case in order to make the parallel even more explicit:

Another Sage of seemingly greater Gravity than the rest, who had been many Years a Proficient in Court-craft, might possibly stand up, and, with a Calmness, and Reservedness peculiar to him, say in a decretorial Way, That for his Part, he should not be against arming the People, and enabling them to fight in their own Defence, but for the Service of God and the Salvation of Souls, which was of the highest Moment, and to be considered before all other Things in the World : Now, as the *Britons* in general were employed in some Sort of Business or other, they could not spare Time to learn the Use and Exercise of Arms, but in those Hours set apart for religious Duties; therefore arming of them would, in all Probability, greatly obstruct the due Service of the Almighty, and be a Means of sending many hundred Thousand Souls into

¹⁷³ *England's Alarum Bell*, BL – 1867.f.1. (157.) B2 – 5- 371

¹⁷⁴ Wulfstan, *The Homilies of Wulfstan* (Oxford, 1957), p. 279.

everlasting Perdition; the very Althoughts of which must be shocking to all *pious* and *good* Christians.¹⁷⁵

The preceding argument concerns the detrimental effect to the economy of drafting able-bodied men into the militia; both are a paraphrase (and a parody) of Hardwicke's arguments in the House of Commons, which killed the Militia Bill. The majority of historical parallels drawn at this time were classical – Greece and Rome at the sunset of their empires¹⁷⁶ – and a comparison with the Saxon invaders seems rare. Morris's letters amply testify to his great knowledge of British antiquities and history, and it is in character for him to draw a British, rather than a classical, analogue.

Tudor claims George II for Wales and the Welsh in a manner that might be expected of a chap-book Taffy:

Let not God suffer such an accident at present, for *Shors*, God stand with his Grace, king of the Welsh and the English is of our Family of the Tudors and is my cousin as I can prove it out of a Hundred books of Pedigrees. He came from H[enry] 7 and Owen Tudor, and is to be sure the best king, and Honestest man, as ever ruled over us and is of ye best family. But it is natural for all our family to be too good, that is too honest and they believe other people are so.¹⁷⁷

The Hanoverians made great play of legitimising their claim to the throne by tracing their descent from the Tudors.¹⁷⁸ At the beginning of the century, they were careful to sponsor St. David's Day celebrations, whose date conveniently co-incided with Princess (later Queen) Caroline's birthday. It was said that this marked her out for a

¹⁷⁵ Anon., *German Cruelty: A Fair Warning to the People of Great-Britain* (Lond., 1756), pp. 8-9.

¹⁷⁶ Cardwell, *Arts and Arms : Literature, Politics and Patriotism during the Seven Years War*, p. 306.

¹⁷⁷ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 63.

¹⁷⁸ See E. Jay, 'Caroline, Queen Consort of George II, and British Literary Culture' (2004), pp. 290-328.

sort of spiritual Welshness, and was a portent that she should become princess of Wales.¹⁷⁹ Welsh encomia upon the occasion abound, as well as elegies to various members of the Royal family. In *Dewisol Ganiadau yr Oes Hon* we find two elegies for Frederick, Prince of Wales, and one for Queen Caroline. In the *Diddanwch Teuluaidd* of 1763 there are two *cywyddau* for Frederick, Prince of Wales, an elegy for Queen Caroline, and one for George II. In the latter, written by Hugh Hughes, George's son and heir is praised as

Brutwn gwiwlan pan ganed,
Dull a Gras, didwyll ei gred,
Brutwn enwog arfogaeth,
Frawd un fam o *Frydain* faeth.

[A fair, worthy Briton when he was born / With form and grace, guileless his belief, / A Briton famed in arms, / A Maternal Brother nourished by Britannia.]¹⁸⁰

Works such as Nehemiah Griffith's *The Leek* (1717) and Jane Brereton's poems to the monarchy (pub. 1744) posit a Welsh line of descent as an alternative to the claims of Saxon descent propagated by English authors, for example in Sir Richard Blackmore's *Alfred* (1723). Jeremy Owen in *The Goodness and Severity of God* notes in relation to George I that

We find flowing in his Veins the Blood of the Tudors, derived from our own Ancient Stock, that we may justly triumph in him as one from among ourselves, by far the most worthy of any that could be found to bear rule over us.¹⁸¹

These sermons and poems were produced under the auspices of the Society of Ancient Britons, whose founding mission in 1714 was to prove the loyalty of the Welsh to the

¹⁷⁹ Jenkins and Ramage, *A History of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion and of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies, 1751-1951*, pp. 10-15.

¹⁸⁰ *Diddanwch Teuluaidd; y Llyfr Cyntaf. O Gasgliad H. Jones*, ed. Jones (Llundain, 1763), p. 249.

¹⁸¹ Owen, *The Goodness and Severity of God*, p. [2].

Crown, and deny any imputation of Jacobitism or Catholicism that could be levelled at Welshmen. It is therefore to be expected that the productions of members would stress loyalty and unity under the Hanoverians. Yet the wider circulation of these sermons beyond the society, and the ubiquity of the trope throughout the century shows that it was a myth widely accepted as a means of reconciling potentially conflicted loyalties. It would appear that the Hanoverians were able to deploy multiple foundation and descent myths which would appeal to the various ethnicities among their subjects, who could focus on the version most congenial – or most hostile – to them.¹⁸² Aligning themselves with the Tudors, Arthur and Merlin on the one side, and with Alfred and the relation of the Saxons to the Germans on the other, strengthened a precarious succession into an ancient hereditary right.

Lewis was aware of the fallacy of such claims. In his *Cofrestr o Frenhinoedd a Thywysogion Cymru &c* [Registers of the Kings and Princes of Wales &c], a distinct line is drawn after Llywelyn's murder in 1282, whereupon he lists "Princes of Wales, of the Blood Royal of England (1291-1762)". This appears no reason for disloyalty, however. Welsh bards of former ages, in their capacities as official genealogists and remembrancers, frequently traced family trees – *hel achau* – to such extremes as "ap Gomer ap Japhet ap Noah ap Adda ap Duw" [son of Gomer son of Japhet son of Noah son of Adam son of God]. Bards were there to give legitimacy and lasting fame to a king. This is not the blinkered self-deception of other satirised Welshmen who think

¹⁸² See Jay, *Caroline, Queen Consort of George II, and British Literary Culture*, p. 105, H. Smith, *Georgian Monarchy: Politics and Culture, 1714-1760* (Cambridge, 2006), S. Prescott, "'what Foes More Dang'Rous than Too Strong Allies?'" Anglo-Welsh Relations in Eighteenth-Century London', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 69 (No. 4, 2006), pp. 535-54., S. Prescott, 'The Cambrian Muse: Welsh Identity and Hanoverian Loyalty in the Poems of Jane Brereton (1685-1740)', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 38 (No. 4, 2005), pp. 587-603.

themselves rich and descended from the great worthies via Noah's offspring, or Brutus of Troy, proven "out of a hundred books of pedigrees". Rather, it is the self-assuredness of knowing one's identity, and having a grasp on events far outside the normal temporal space. The following verses, probably by Lewis Morris, appear among his manuscripts, and illustrate the function of a bard even in the eighteenth century:

Verses to George II.

Thrice Happy George! who to rehearse
 Thy vict'ries o'er thy Foes
 hast Cibber ready with his verse
 & Carteret with his prose.

Vain are th'achievements of ye guard
 to raise a Lasting name
 unless some able pen record
 tis but precarious fame.¹⁸³

Lewis' loyalty to the Union was largely facilitated through the medium of the Crown. In contrast with the British State, a crown descended from the Tudors implied that interpenetration of land and language so necessary for the creation of a successful and stable national identity. It was during this period that the distinction between Crown and state grew at a more rapid pace than previously, so that it was not difficult for Lewis to support the state in the guise of the Crown, even whilst he spent much time and money battling obstructive government bureaucrats. The Crown (nominally, at least) provided much more stability than the government, and as government employees, the Morris brothers could easily be robbed of their jobs by changes in

¹⁸³ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 195.

regime.¹⁸⁴ The Morris brothers frequently write praise-poems to the monarchy, and Lewis revels in his appointment as a Crown servant, such that he uses this title to boast to the Treasury in order to win moneys for his survey:

You may depend on me in any thing you entrust me with, having hitherto spent most of my time in various offices in his Majesty's service[...]¹⁸⁵

It is clear that Lewis thought of himself as an employee of the Crown, as mediated via the government. Indeed, in a letter to his brother William, he states explicitly that he sees no conflict between his Welsh patriotism and his loyalty to the Crown:

It has been the continual blind complaint of some uneasy men [...] that the preserving of the Welsh & the other Northern Languages is keeping up a discord between the subjects of the Monarchs of Great Britain etc; if so, God forbid we should ever talk Welsh or Scotch. But other grave thinking men, who consider the thing in its true Light will tell us, that amity & concord amongst men doth not consist in the Language they speak or because they were born in the same Country, but in the congruency (similarity) of their opinions in Religion & Politicks. Who will deny that there is more amity between the English & the Welsh Protestants, than between the English Protestants & the English Papists?¹⁸⁶

The Morris brothers were staunchly Anglican, despising both the Methodist enthusiasts and the superstitious Catholics, and they exemplify the unity in religion across ethnic divides which characterises Colley's Britain. It is noticeable in the passage above that Lewis is able to impute any notion of discord through multiple languages to "uneasy men", rather than to the monarch himself. It is advisors and ministers who draw up legislation; monarchs such as Morris' sainted Elizabeth I who order the word of God to be translated into the languages of their subjects.

¹⁸⁴ "I was a considerable loser in the Admiralty in the last change of ye Ministry, by trusting to ye generosity of their Lordships and was like to lose all." Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 129.

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.* p. 164. It is noticeable that Lewis, in his letters, blames his losses on the government, but dedicates his loyalty to the Crown.

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.* p. 39.

The division between Crown and State for Morris reached its height when he was a Crown Agent in Ceredigion, looking after Crown interests in lead mining. In a letter to William Corbett, he writes of difficulties he will engage with for the Crown regarding the Esgair Mwyn lead mines, which he would not do for a lesser body:

[...]my certain fate here will be Insults and enmity if I do Justice to the Crown
[...] I am now in peace and Quietness with all the country about me, but this survey when I must appear strenuously for the king's right, must of course create me many enemies which I would not have for a Trifle.¹⁸⁷

Morris wrote an account of the Esgair Mwyn fiasco in a quasi-scriptural work entitled “The First Book of the Chronicles of y^e Mines”, a work described by J. H. Davies as “verg[ing] upon blasphemy in places”. In it, Morris describes himself as “the king’s servant”, and it does not seem as if he has any criticism of the status quo:

1. And in those days George the son of George had mine eskar in the mountains of Gomer in his possession.
2. And his grandson George was prince of the people of the Land of Gomer, and was Lord of many manors among them.¹⁸⁸

The result is that Morris is represented as the loyalist, whilst the rebellious landowners are seen to be against the king. He had a double reason to dislike the minor gentry. Not only were they against him in his capacity as the “king’s servant”, but they were blamed by many for the decline in the bardic system, and for utterly disregarding the history and antiquities of Wales.¹⁸⁹ The truth is that by looking to London for preferment and status, Lewis pursued a course barely distinguishable from that for which he castigated the anglicised post-Union gentry, on whose part it was

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, pp. 53-4.

¹⁸⁹ See e.g. G.H. Jenkins, *Hanes Cymru Yn y Cyfnod Modern Cynnar, 1530-1760* (Caerdydd, 1983), pp. 126-8.

considered a betrayal. His rationalisation was to believe that he would bring more glory to Wales by being part of the establishment than by fighting it. The incentive was not so much wealth (although he wished for it, spending huge amounts of time and money in the courts fighting the government), but status. He internalised that which, as an historian and antiquarian, he knew was a lie. The distinction between fealty to the Crown and betrayal by the nobility is encapsulated by his bardic pupil, Evan Evans:

[...] yn amser [...] Harri'r Wythfed, a'r Frenhines Elisabeth, y rhai a hanoeddynt o waed Cymreig, i cawsant [y beirdd] gynhwysiadau i gynnal Eisteddfodau : ond ni pharhaodd hynny ond ennyd fechan, o herwydd Bonedd Cymru a ymroesant i fod yn Saeson, fel i maent yn parhau gan mwyaf hyd heddiw.

[in the time [...] of Henry the Eighth and the Queen Elizabeth, those who were of Welsh blood, they [the bards] had permission to hold Eisteddfods : but that persisted only for a short while, for the Gentry of Wales had given themselves over to being Englishmen, as they persist mostly to this day.]¹⁹⁰

The implication in the *Dialogue* is that if Bards were to perform their traditional – that is, their Welsh – function, of recording history as genealogy, kings would be in touch with their own ancestry, and less likely to fall prey to false advisors in the shape of government ministers and civil servants.

But I am afraid there is some advisers about my Couzin *Shors* God bless him, that do mean better for themselves than for him, they are perhaps the bloud of ye *northmens* or some other bad blood, and they will sell his Ilands one by one to the *Francmen* to get money into their own *pocceds*¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ E. Evans, *Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards* (London, 1764), p. 107.

¹⁹¹ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, pp. 63-4.

The ‘northmens’ are the Norman French, whose conquest of the Saxons had become a byword for oppression in the eighteenth century.¹⁹² Here they appear as fifth columnists in King George’s household, a parcel of rogues ready to sell their sovereign and his country to their cousins the French. Tudor restates the parallel with British history:

You have sent for the Hussians to keep your land from the *Gauls* you say, and at ye same time you hinder your own people to carry guns to defend their country. Is it better that strangers can fight for you, than you can fight your selves for your wives and children. How do you know that it will not strike in ye heads of such warlike people as those to turn you out of your warm houses when they see you such unarmd, hanging artd, unhearted pipple. Chwat better usage do you deserve, when you chuse drunkenness & feasting and taking bribes before fighting for your country. This is the very Humor we Welsh men were in when the Saxons took *Lloegr* from us (that is, now England) and we were served very right like a parcel of Inf[l]ated proud silly fools.¹⁹³

The resemblance to Gildas’ *De Excidio Britannica* is especially strong in this passage.

In the respite from devastation, the island was so flooded with abundance of goods that no previous age had known the like of it. Alongside there grew luxury [...] And this was true not merely of worldly men; the flock of the Lord and his shepherds [...] lay about, most of them, in drunken stupor, as though sodden in wine. They were a prey to swelling hatreds, contentious quarrels, the greedy talons of envy, judgement that made no distinction between good and evil [...]¹⁹⁴

Tudor continues the analogy by reference to the so-called *Brad y Cyllyll Hirion* [Treason of the Long Knives], implying that fear of reprisals prevents the senate from rectifying the situation “while the sword of ye Stranger is ready to be drawn out of ye Sheath against you?” Popular Welsh histories of the time, such as Theophilus Evan’s

¹⁹² Sweet, *Antiquaries : The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 194.

¹⁹³ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 64.

¹⁹⁴ Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain, and Other Works* (London, 1978), p. 24-5.

best-selling *Drych y Prif Oesoedd* [Mirror of the Chief Ages] (1716, 2nd edition 1743)

kept alive the story of Hengist's treason at Stonehenge in the Welsh imagination.

Ac a'r y dydd 'pwyntiedig cyfarfod a wnaethant yn heddychlon ac yn gariadus, ac a eisteddasant *Frittwn* a *Sais* blith draphlith o amgylch y byrddau: Ond wedi eu myned yn llawen, cododd *Hengist* a'r ei draed, ac a waeddodd *Nemet eour Saxes*. Ac yn ddiattreg hwy a dynnasant eu cyllill hirion allan, ac a laddasant ynchylch tri chant o bendefigion y deyrnas yn dosturus iawn. [And on the appointed day they met peacefully and lovingly, and sat *Briton* and *Saxon* intermixed around the tables; But after happy greetings, *Hengist* rose to his feet, and shouted *Nemet eour Saxes*. And without pause they pulled out their long knives, and sadly killed around three hundred of the heads of the kingdom.]¹⁹⁵

Raising the subject of Saxon versus British origins complicates works which are unionist in tone. In contrast to the mutual harmony implied in the restatement of the Tudor myth as Hanoverian history, the initial Saxon conquest is a story of betrayal and rapine. Rather than legitimising the current descent of the monarchy, it calls the entire post-Tudor succession into question. As Sarah Prescott notes, the Saxon conquest appears and re-appears in Anglo-Welsh poems and sermons for the London St. David's day celebrations.¹⁹⁶ Ostensibly, as with Theophilus Evans in the above extract, its purpose is to remind the Welsh that they lost the crown of the island through their own sin, and that the Saxon rapine was ordained as a punishment from God. But the mere act of referring to the story implies disharmony, and 'intermix [ing]' Briton and Saxon becomes a recipe for catastrophe. Also implicit is the subsequent Saxon fall into sin, and the coming of the Normans as a similar scourge of God. These references to a past "that obviously still rankles in the Welsh national

¹⁹⁵ T. Evans, *Drych y Prif Oesoedd : Yn Ôl Yr Argraffiad Cyntaf, 1716* (Caerdydd Wales, 1961), p. 77.

¹⁹⁶ Prescott, "what Foes More Dang'Rous than Too Strong Allies?" *Anglo-Welsh Relations in Eighteenth-Century London*, pp. 535-54.

consciousness”¹⁹⁷ can be seen as the involuntary eruptions of a consciousness of ethnic difference largely sublimated by an internalised Britishness. However, the purported Welsh descent of the Hanoverians means that the monarch is seen as more legitimately British than the more recent settlers, the Saxons, and their modern-day English descendants.

As well as the threat of conquest, Morris notes the danger of failure inherent in employing auxiliaries.

[...] did these soldiers ever fly out of the field of Battle, or are they Invincible? If ever they flew in fighting for their own nation, they may fly here when the Francs come.¹⁹⁸

The unpredictability of troops who fight for pay alone, rather than to protect their own, was another facet of the argument for a home militia. Tudor points out that the ships of the English could not fight “no more than our 4 footed ships upon ye mountain, did they not run away the other day,”¹⁹⁹ another reference to Byng’s ignominious retreat. Byng’s ships become timid sheep following the retreating leader, much as sheep are said to follow each other.

In the final phase of the piece, Tudor takes on the vatic mantle of his bardic lineage.

Engl. [...] I begin to see something in your discourse that is more like a prophecy than a common speech [...]
Welshman. I cannot say but that I have taken some of these words out of an old book of ye druids that I have at home, that is to say the prophecys of ye Iland, about things that have happened here already, and may happen again; our Family of the Tudors were very carifull [*sic*] for keeping such old books. My *Great Great Great* Grandfather Shone Tudor in ye time of Queen Elsbeth

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.* p. 539.

¹⁹⁸ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 64.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.* p. 64.

was a poet and a piece of a Prophet himself like ye old Bards formerly, was it not he that made the Great Prognostication? which he took out of the books of Abaris and Orion?²⁰⁰

“Shone Tudor” (Siôn Tudur) was a Welsh Elizabethan who wrote in “rollicking, Cervantesque humour”, in Saunders Lewis’ phrase: an apt literary ancestor for this literary incarnation of Lewis Morris as Mr. Tudor. Lewis Morris creates a character much the same as the one Iolo Morganwg would present of himself to the English literary establishment later in the century: both rustic and vatic, remembrancer of the country’s forgotten pasts. The Englishman’s perspective is limited not only to England, but to his own locality, London, and he assumes that the whole of the country is plagued with the same afflictions he sees there. But London’s corruption is unique, and “publicly known thro the whole kingdom”, and where the head is poisoned, the body (politic) is sure to fail. As the heads of government are “witched” so too are the people below corrupted, showing the physical symptoms of moral degeneration:

One part of your People are daily poisoning the others with *Dzin* [gin]. I cannot pronounce it as you do, and it would have been happy for you all if you had never pronounced it. I have seen a nurse give her child on ye breasts a glassful of it to suck. Are these the children that you bring up to fight the Gauls? poor betiwchd generation! Your women sit in ye open streets to drink these venomous [*sic*] spirits, and they have gone over the head of their shame [...]²⁰¹

Morris attempts to paint Hogarth’s *Gin Lane* (1751) in prose, and the reader is surely to make the connection with the earlier comparison between porter/champaign, and indeed *Gin Lane*’s companion piece, *Beer Street*. The description of the ill effects of gin, in particular the nurse in the foreground, make it likely that this passage is taken

²⁰⁰ *ibid.* pp. 65-6.

²⁰¹ *ibid.* p. 67.

directly from Hogarth's print, as much as from that which Morris might have seen around him in London. Brown's *Estimate* also makes explicit the problems of a people weakened by gin:

[...] an Army taken from the Villages, with equal Commanders, Arms, and Discipline, would drive the same Number of debilitated Gin-drinkers like a Flock of Geese before them.

[...] And all good Men hope, that the Time will come, when this infernal Potion will be laid under such Discouragements as may amount to a general Prohibition. The Necessity of such a Reformation grows greater every Day, not only in *London*, but throughout the kingdom. For in some Villages in *England* there is now a greater quantity of *Gin* consumed than of Ale.²⁰²

The conclusion to the *Dialogue* is somewhat of a peculiar anticlimax following the vehemence of the preceding discussion. Indeed, it avoids the implication through much of the work that, in order to raise themselves out of the morass, Englishmen should become true Britons. Moving from the sweeping temporality of "Empires rise & fall like Familys", Morris provides an oddly practical solution to the ills of the country.

Call a new Senate yearly, or at least every 3d year, and youll see that none of these will traffick in ye souls of Burgesses any more. But there are some of the well meaning men who oppose these Corrupters that are guilty of the same Crimes, and they buy Burough [*sic*] towns and the souls of drunken fellows like the other side. That may be. Is it not prudent to fight the d—l with his own weapons. [...] Tho' this is not honest it is yet Politic, and if you can save the nation by foul means, it is better than to let it sink.²⁰³

In a crisis of such a scale, every man has his solution, and Morris is no different. The main plank of his reform is to remove the advisors who come between the King and the people.

²⁰² Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, pp. 189-90.

²⁰³ Morris, *The Life and Works of Lewis Morris (Llewelyn Ddu o Fôn), 1701-1765*, p. 67.

Your Government which should be maintaind between the whole of ye People and the King, had fallen into ye hands of ye kings servants, that is the servants of his house, and from them to their servants, and so there is a servant to my servant and my servant sits, and these have got hold of the keys of ye chest where the money is kept [...] ²⁰⁴

As exemplified in numerous poems written to the house of Hanover, the Morrisians' loyalty to the unified country of Britain resides in the persons of the King and his household. Government is legitimate only as it mediates the voice of the people to their monarch, and where it has failed, then it is the failure of those corrupted by power rather than a failure of God's ordained monarch. This is all reconciled by the supposed descent of the monarch from the Welsh house of Tudor.

The Morrises, and Lewis in particular, were the most comfortable with their apparently conflicting identities. Assuming the mantle of Ancient Britons, the *Cymmrodorion* – *Cyn-frodorion*, earliest inhabitants – allowed Lewis to share in an identity superior in age and prestige to the modern identity being forged under the same name. But the use of that name, and the Tudor/Hanoverian myth of Welsh descent, allowed him also to share in the new Britain. Welsh and English remained two separate, often antagonistic, neighbouring nationalities, but two which shared enough common history and future aims to ally under one state and, subsequently, a nation. These identities would become more problematic for his bardic pupil, Evan Evans.

Chapter 2 – Evan Evans

i – Introduction

²⁰⁴ *ibid.* p. 66.

After dinner, the talk was of preserving the Welsh language – I offered them a scheme – Poor Evan Evans was mentioned, as being incorrigibly addicted to strong drink.²⁰⁵

This short sentence is the second and final recorded opinion of Samuel Johnson on Evan Evans, dealing in a few words both with the language question, and with the greatest Welsh scholar of the age. Despite his fall into alcoholism and destitution, Evan Evans (1731-1788) – also known by his bardic pseudonyms of Ieuan Fardd and Ieuan Brydydd Hir - was without doubt the most influential member of the Morrissian circle outside Wales. He provided much of the historical and pseudo-historical detail for Gray's *Bard*²⁰⁶ (1757), published Wales' best riposte to Macpherson's *Ossian* in the form of *Some Specimens of the Antient Welsh Bards* (1764), and corresponded for many years with Thomas Percy. Evans' life and career contrast starkly with those of his Episcopal correspondent. Both clerics were concerned to present the antiquities of their respective countries to the modern reader. But where Percy received preferments and encouragement from his influential friends and patrons, Evans was left to wander in rags²⁰⁷ through many cures in England and Wales, frequently

²⁰⁵ S. Johnson and H.L. Piozzi, *Dr Johnson & Mrs Thrale's Tour in North Wales 1774* (Wrexham, 1995), p. 42.

²⁰⁶ See A. Lewis, 'Ieuan Fardd a'r Llenorion Saesneg', *Llên Cymru*, Vol. II (No. 3, 1962), pp. 172-92., A. Johnston, 'Gray's use of the Gorchest y Beirdd in 'the Bard'', *Modern Language Review*, Vol. LIX (1964), pp. 335-8.

²⁰⁷ Although in this he was not alone by any means – Eryn M. White notes that “It is no great surprise that ‘as ragged as a Welsh curate’ became a popular gibe during this period.” E. M. White, 'A 'Poor, Benighted Church'? Church and Society in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Wales', in R. R. Davies and G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *From Medieval to Modern Wales : Historical Essays in Honour of Kenneth O. Morgan and Ralph A. Griffiths* (Cardiff, 2004), p. 124.

starving and gravely ill.²⁰⁸ Evans was arguably a more honest scholar than Percy, according to modern lights, admitting in the Preface to the *Specimens* that

I have been obliged to leave blanks in some places, where I did not understand the meaning in the original, as I had but one copy by me, which might be faulty. When I have an opportunity to collate it with other copies, I may clear these obscure passages.²⁰⁹

He himself was in no doubt as to why he should be left in such an impoverished condition:

[T]o complete my misfortune, our Bishops look upon me, I believe in my conscience, with an evil eye, because I dare have any affection for my country, language, and antiquities, which, in their opinion, had better been lost and forgotten, and which some of them have had the front to maintain in their sermons: so that, all things considered, I am encompassed with a multiplicity of discouraging circumstances.²¹⁰

Notwithstanding his frequent misadventures with alcohol, which undoubtedly hindered his preferment (as they did that of his fellow clergy-poet, Goronwy Owen²¹¹), there is a good deal of truth to this statement. Percy's *Reliques* provided a safe, nostalgic form of antiquarianism, reinforcing the idea of an Anglo-centric Britain

²⁰⁸ For a few days in 1768, Evans even enlisted in the 34th Regiment of Foot in an attempt to scrape a living – being a county regiment, it is likely that only the very poorest would have served there (see Lewis, *A School of Welsh Augustans : Being a Study in English Influences on Welsh Literature during Part of the 18th Century*); Richard Morris' wife took pity on his ragged vestments and mended them when his case passed through the Morrises' hands in 1767 (see Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 702..

²⁰⁹ Evans, *Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards*, p. v.

²¹⁰ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 182.

²¹¹ see Branwen Jarvis, 'Goronwy Owen : Neoclassical Poet and Critic', in Branwen Jarvis (ed.), *A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1700 - 1800*, Rev. edn (Cardiff, 1992), p. 83., Gerald Morgan, 'The Morris Brothers', in Branwen Jarvis (ed.), *A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1700-1800* (Cardiff, 2000), p. 74., A. Llwyd, *Gronwy Ddiabael, Gronwy Ddu : Cofiant Goronwy Owen 1723-1769* (1997), pp. 97, 128-9, 177-8, 184, 319-20, 332-3. and also Alan Llwyd, 'Owen, Goronwy (1723–1769)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/viefw/article/21001>, accessed 20 Aug 2007]

with a golden age, belonging to no particular historical time. In contrast, Evans' *Specimens* reiterated and reinterpreted an alternative, Cambro-British past. This was not the antique melancholy of the Ossianic Highlands, effectively rendered intangible by Macpherson's Romantic prose-poetical translation, narrated by debilitated warriors and impotent bards.²¹² Nor was it the world of the border skirmishes which Percy's editing would do so much to make appear less fragmentary, and therefore less threateningly volatile to the notion of an unified Britain.²¹³ This was a past of real armed struggle, with elegies for real people, elegies whose language could not be entirely comprehended, even by Evans:

As to the genuineness of these poems, I think there can be no doubt; but although we may vie with the Scottish nation in this particular, yet there is another point, in which we must yield to them undoubtedly. The language of their oldest poets, it seems, is still perfectly intelligible, which is by no means our case [...]²¹⁴

[mi] a gyfieithais bum awdl o waith yr henfeirdd yn Saesoneg yr un modd ag i gwnaeth Maccwy'r person i'w Ossian; ag i ddangos rhyw ragor rhyngof i ag yntau llyma fi yn danfon yr *originals*, y peth ir wyf yn ei ammau pa un ai maidd ef ei wneuthur ai peidio.

[[I] translated five poems of the work of the ancient poets to English the same way as the Parson's Page [that is, Macpherson] did to his Ossian; and to show some greater difference between him and me here I send the originals, a thing that I doubt whether he dare or no]²¹⁵

The presence of the "originals" on the printed page provided concrete evidence for any English reader of an alien tongue within the Island of Britain, a language believed

²¹² See J. Macpherson, *The Poems of Ossian : And Related Works* (Edinburgh, 1996)

²¹³ "[...] the model of dangerous and incendiary popular verse [...] become the vehicle of an antiquarian rusticophilia and the favoured form of Romantic pastoral." N. Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques* (Oxford, 1999), p. 26.

²¹⁴ Evans, *Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards*, pp. 162,[2].

²¹⁵ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrisises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 576.

by informed opinions of the time to be the oldest language in the British Isles,²¹⁶ alive before the English invasion, and not eradicated, despite years of conquest and hostile legislation.

Evans' obsession with what he termed the "Anglo-Welsh Prelates" also challenged the conception of a united kingdom of one people under one church. Absenteeism, plurality, and monoglot English-speaking priests were perceived to be particular problems in Wales in the eighteenth century. Evans pointed out time and time again (in terms which shocked the more politically conservative Morris brothers²¹⁷) that one language would not and could not serve for the whole of Britain; and, whilst the established church clung to its one language, the vernacular heresy of the Methodists could flourish in Wales as a direct consequence of Anglican deficiency:

[...] myfi a glywais hefyd ddywedyd yn ddiweddar fod dau Sais arall yn Sir Drefaldwyn [...] yn darllen Seisoneg yn gyfan gyfrdro drwy gydol y flwyddyn, er nad oes mo hanner y plwyfoliion yn deall nac yn dirnad dim a draethir ganddynt [...] Y mae'r Ymwahanyddion o'r achos yma yn taenu yn frith ac yn aml dros holl wyneb Cymru. Ac y mae'r Methodistiaid wedi cynyddu yn ddirfawr yn ddiweddar yn Neheudir Cymru, ac yn y wlad hon hefyd, yn gyfagos i'r Personiaid Eingl uchod[...] Gresyn yw fod yr annrhefn yma wedi tyfu oddi wrth y gwŷr eglwysig eiu hunain, y rhai, llawer o naddynt, ni fedrant na ddarllen na phregethu, chweithach iawn ysgrifenu yr iaith y maent yn cael eu bywoliaeth oddi wrthi.

[[...] I also heard tell lately that two other Englishmen are in Montgomeryshire [...] reading nothing but English throughout the whole year, even although not half the parishioners understand nor comprehend anything uttered by them[...] The Dissenters for this reason are spreading thickly and frequently over the

²¹⁶ If not the oldest in the world, closely related to Greek and Hebrew – see Davies, *Adfeilion Babel : Agweddau Ar Synidaeth Ieithyddol y Ddeunawfed Ganrif*

²¹⁷ Mae'r traethawd yn erbyn yr Esgyb Eingl i'm tyb i yn rhy finiog; rhaid pylu ychydig ar y mân; rhag iddo droi yn erbyn yr awdwr, a'i dorri'n ddeuddarn. [The essay against the Anglo-Welsh Bishops is, to my mind, too sharp; the edge must be made a little duller, lest it turn against the author, and break him in twain.] Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morris of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 713.

whole face of Wales. And the Methodists have increased greatly recently in Southern Wales, and in this country too, adjacent to these Anglo-Welsh Parsons [...] It is a great shame that this disorder has grown from the ecclesiastical men themselves, those who, many of them, cannot either read or preach, much less write the language from which they get their livelihood.] ²¹⁸

In places where the word of God could not be understood by the congregation, Dissent, Methodism, and Enthusiasm flourished.²¹⁹ Union of religion and the union of Britain are threatened, rather than strengthened, by the state religion's inability to respond to the multiplicity of languages within the country. Evans notes above that the surge in Methodism happens immediately adjacent to parishes where such priests have been stationed. Such a situation, he posits, will bring a danger to the union much like the danger recently posed by Scotland.

[...]But in spite of Common sense as well as Religion, an Union of Language as well as government has been proposed and recommended to us, although it be in the nature of things impossible and absurd. Preferments in the Church have been conferred on persons that do not understand the Language [Welsh] in such places as very few of the congregation understand it [English][...]The Consequence of this was that the inhabitants have run riot to all sorts and modes of Enthusiasm that have from time to time made their ghastly appearance[?]s among them, and of late they are all commenced Methodists, and are by far more numerous than the established Church, and bid fair in time of becoming a distinct Church as the Kirk of Scotland, and perhaps may occasion as many troubles to the Church and State of England, as that has done.²²⁰

²¹⁸ *ibid.* p. 918

²¹⁹ On 'dangerous enthusiasm', see eg *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age : British Culture, 1776-1832*, ed. Iain McCalman (Oxford, 1999) 498., J. Mee, *Dangerous Enthusiasm : William Blake and the Culture of Radicalism in the 1790s* (Oxford, 1992), J. Mee, *Romanticism, Enthusiasm, and Regulation : Poetics and the Policing of Culture in the Romantic Period* (Oxford, 2003). For Methodism in Wales, see G.H. Jenkins, "Peth Erchyll Iawn' Oedd Methodistiaeth', *Llên Cymru*, Vol. 17 (1994), pp. 195-204.

²²⁰ Evan Evans, (Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Panton Ms. 40), pp. 7, 13.

Evans is playing politics in the last sentence, using the common English conflation of Britain/England in order to highlight, rather than elide, the differences between England and Wales; coupled with a none-too-veiled threat to the (English) rulers of Church and State that their inflexibility about the language issue could cause a rift dangerous to the soul of the nation as well as to the body politic.

Despite this, Evans displays the contradictions seen in all the writers in this study. On the one hand, Saunders Lewis can write of him

Evan Evans alone, in certain verses and letters and in his attack on the Anglican bishops, shows any passionate sense of racial difference, although there are hints of it in Goronwy Owen [...]²²¹

Yet he himself can write:

When a person seriously considers what an especial act of divine favour it was for the Welsh nation after so many hardships and brave struggles for liberty to be united with the imperial Crown of Great Britain by Princes descended of their own blood, and also the many instances of kindness they have received from the English nation since, especially the help they administered towards the first translation of God's word into their native language, and also the generous contributions they have afforded since towards the several impressions of the Welsh Bible for the use of private families [...] he cannot but be amazed at the wonderful kindness of Providence to our State and Nation.²²²

Such doublethink can partly be explained as flattery in an attempt to win concessions for his language within the church, by reminding the English leaders of the church of the spiritual help that country had given to the Welsh in the past. However, Evans never advocates anything other than the basic status quo of the Union; rather, he wants a change in the implementation of that system, resembling something more like federalism within the Anglican Church. In this, he is similar to his contemporaries,

²²¹ Lewis, *A School of Welsh Augustans : Being a Study in English Influences on Welsh Literature during Part of the 18th Century*, p. 181.

²²² Evans, p. 47.

seeing no serious contrast between writing of “brave struggles for liberty” in works which also praise the Union. However, Gerald Morgan notes:

Lle mae Ieuan yn arloeswr yw yn ei feirniadaeth chwyrn, nid ar y gyfundrefn fel y cyfryw ond ar wendidau'r gyfundrefn, sef y budrelwa ar swyddi eglwysig a phenodi estroniaid i swyddi eglwysig yng Nghymru.
[Where Ieuan is a pioneer is in his severe criticism, not of the system as such, but of the weaknesses of the system, the corrupt profit from ecclesiastical positions and the appointment of foreigners to ecclesiastical posts in Wales.]²²³

“Beth yw hyn ond dwyn drachefn gaddug Pabyddiaeth ar y wlad? [What is this but bringing the darkness of Papacy again to the country?]"²²⁴ Equating the Anglican church's behaviour with the bogeyman of Catholicism was a very grave charge indeed. Evans' lack of success within the church meant that he would turn to outside sources for moral, if not financial, support.

ii – Lewis Morris and Evan Evans - Patronage.

The ancient system of bardic patronage had died out in the seventeenth century, with the death of Siôn Dafydd Las, the last professional family bard, in 1694. Few of the modern Welsh gentry sponsored poets, preferring to look to England for their literature.²²⁵ Lewis Morris and Evan Evans were born into this post-bardic age, and poet and pupil had to renegotiate a new model of patronage, balanced between the old Welsh paradigm and the rapidly changing eighteenth-century English model.

Morris' relations with Evans were not simply friendly interactions between two scholars and poets. Morris took on the role of poetical tutor in a model of the ancient bardic system, correcting Evans' *cynghanedd*:

²²³ G. Morgan, *Ieuan Fardd* (Caernarfon, 1988), p. 38.

²²⁴ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrisises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 682.

²²⁵ See Lewis, *The Decline of Professional Poetry*, P. Morgan, *The Eighteenth Century Renaissance* (Llandybïe, Dyfed, 1981), p. 174.

“Let me have a short *Cywydd* from you now & then, and I’ll send you my observations upon them which may be of no disservice to you. That sent in your last, I here return you, with a few corrections[...]²²⁶

In former ages, it was customary for a young poet to be apprenticed to an older one in order to be taught the 24 metres, become fully conversant in *cynganedd* and so forth.

In Evans’s *Dissertatio de Bardis*, he notes that

Caesar observed that it was the custom of the Druid to teach his pupils poems ‘when they are said to learn off by heart a great many verses. For this reason some of them spend twenty years in training, and think it wrong to commit those verses to writing[...]They seem to have decided this for two reasons; first, because they do not wish their lore to be widely known, and secondly because they do not want their pupils, when they study, to place more reliance on written records than on their memory; usually what happens is that men give up their careful learning by heart and make a prop of written documents instead.’²²⁷

The elder poet’s task was to set and correct the exercises performed by his apprentice.

With the passing of the professional bards, this practice died out formally, but *cynganedd* continued to be taught on an informal basis by local poets, and poetical grammars were published in the eighteenth century for the interested amateur to teach himself. The letters of the Morris brothers, particularly those between Lewis Morris and Evan Evans, comprise a poetic academy unlike any seen before, as, due to the distances between the correspondents, all this tuition was written – poetic training was traditionally undertaken orally. Many letters survive between the two poets containing highly detailed criticism and corrections of Evans’s *cynganedd*.²²⁸ This virtual academy was important for exchanging information and correcting poetry, and

²²⁶ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 207.

²²⁷ C. Johnston, 'Evan Evans: *Dissertatio De Bardis* ', *National Library of Wales Journal*, Vol. 22 (1982), p. 84.

²²⁸ See e.g. Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 293.

allowed for the greater movement of the correspondents than did the traditional poetic academy of former ages. Previously, in order to learn *cynghanedd* from a poetical master, the pupil would have had to train in person with him. However, the easier communication of the eighteenth century, along with the publication of manuals which had previously only been available in manuscript, meant that this limiting model was no longer the only way to master the craft. Evans moved parishes on a regular basis, Richard lived in London, Lewis travelled all over Wales, so physical contact between them was rare. This model also allowed an extraordinarily flexible bilingualism within the letters, and so the circle of this academy extended to scholars and poets from England – Samuel Pegge, Thomas Percy and Thomas Gray among them.

Whilst Lewis Morris was able to provide intellectual patronage, and an epistolary milieu in which Evans could develop and flourish, he could neither keep him, nor provide Evans with financial patronage. In 1760, Lewis Morris writes to Edward Richard:

It is a pity that some Britain [*sic*] with a heavy purse did not assist him, anodd yw pobi heb flawd. Ef a ellir yfed yr afon, ond nid ellir bwytta mor dorlan; [it is difficult to bake without flour. He could drink the river, but he cannot eat the riverbank;] and these kind of studies require a clear head void of all cares for sustenance of life.

O bishops, O princes, O ye fat men of the land, why suffer ye that man to starve?²²⁹

The hunt was on to find a patron who could free Evans from the “mundane cares of life”, and allow his poetic and scholarly talent to flourish, a patron in the manner of the Lords of the Middle Ages, who provided a kind of “live-in” patronage, with the poet attached to the house or court. Amongst the earliest correspondence we have

²²⁹ *ibid.* p. 461.

between Lewis Morris and Evan Evans, in Panton MS 74, is a letter in which Lewis Morris details how one should behave in a patron's house (in this case, at the house of William Vaughan, Corsygedol):

INSTRUCTIONS FOR IEUAN AP SIANCYN IEUAN

As you have been but little conversant with mankind, and that it is certain that a mere scholar is a mere ass, it may not be improper for you as you are now to go to a Gentleman's house, to observe the following rules.

1. Go as cleanly as you can in your dress, and follow the manner of persons of your own Station as near as possible, for singularity is odious.
2. When you hear a person who pretends to be of better judgement than your self give his opinion of an author or the like, never shew an Immediate admiration, or consent; but consider & weigh, and at last when you are askd, give your opinion modestly.
3. When you produce any thing of your own composition, never say I have done it in an Hour or a piece of a day; for that doth not argue that you could have done it better in a twelve month, for it will be said, if you could have done it better, you ought to have done it better and not like a bitch bring forth your whelps blind.
4. Never be forward in going into the company of your betters, till you are called, nor peep into the actions of your Superiors, but keep a proper Distance, and never affect to know more than him that is your master.
5. You may be as forward as you please in repeating or shewing any production of your own, in the Welsh, if you hit upon a new tune or a new subject, and in case Clergymen or Scholars are present, any Quotation out of the Classics likewise; Especially if you can translate it into Welsh which is the Language admired there; and this will shew your Tact & judgement and it is the Awen [muse] & not you that Speaks.
6. When you want the loan of a Book, or if you want wearing apparell, or money, or whatever else you may want; you must ask it in an Englyn or a Cywydd, and deliver it into your master's hand.
7. Let your chief subjects be the praise of some of the family, the Hospitality of the House, the agreeable situation, the plenty of the Country, the Innocence of the Inhabitants and their other Good Qualifications, and I would have you try to translate or Imitate some of the most natural things in Theocritus, but take care that your Shepherds have Welsh names.

8. As I apprehend your chief Employment at first will be copying old Welsh manuscripts, If you meet with any dark passages or bad poetry, you have best leave blanks till you can compare it with other manuscripts, or write with a black lead pencil. Let your Letters be very strong & distinct in your copy. A small matter well wrote is better than much Ill wrote.

9. Write your name to your Welsh productions Ieuan ap Siancyn Ieuan, but to your English Evan Evans.²³⁰

Morris's instructions to Evans adapt the tradition of bardic patronage to eighteenth century life. Requesting food and clothing in the form of a poem (*cerdd gofyn*²³¹) was a tradition stretching back to the heyday of bardic patronage, and the household poet was expected to produce praise poems, request poems, elegies and entertainments in order to keep his place in the house. Evans was well aware of this tradition, and one of his earliest extant poems is a *cywydd* requesting a bible of Richard Morris (Lewis's brother). However, points 4 and 7 indicate the subservient nature of the bard in the house – he is not to be too forward, is to “dress to his station”, and so on. W. J.

Christmas comments that:

Poetry held an interesting paradoxical position in this period of English literary history: it was the highest generic form [...] and it was considered an important mass medium. As an eighteenth-century art form, poetry was both highbrow and popular [...]²³²

Inevitably, this is further complicated when it is combined, as Evans and Morris combine it, with Welsh literary history. The dual nature of household poet is shown – he may have better skill with words than those around him, but this does not give him a higher status than his patron, to whom he must always be grateful in verse and

²³⁰ *ibid.* pp. 158-60.

²³¹ See *Y Canu Gofyn a Diolch, c. 1350-c. 1630*, ed. Anonymous (Caerdydd, 1998), p. 272.

²³² W.J. Christmas, *The Lab'Ring Muses : Work, Writing, and the Social Order in English Plebeian Poetry, 1730-1830* (Newark and London, 2001), pp. 24-5.

manner. We may recall Johnson's embittered definition of a patron in his *Dictionary*, referring implicitly to his dealings with Chesterton:

One who countenances, supports or protects. Commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid in flattery.²³³

This is the dilemma of the intellectual superior who is financially dependent. Evans evidently chafed under this sort of subservience. As Paul Korshin notes

The need for pecuniary advancement and feelings of indebtedness are deeply imprinted upon the consciousness of all persons whose individual wealth is insufficient for their needs, and who must rely upon the generosity of others for their livelihood.²³⁴

Lewis's letters constantly suggest avenues of research or subjects for poems.

We get a sense of Evans's impatience with these demands from Lewis's occasional asides to his brothers – complaining that Evans has still not produced such-and-such an elegy for a deceased relative or brother poet – “ai anniolchowgrwydd ydyw yn yr hirfardd? [is it ingratitude in the long bard?]”. Even the Morrises' help was not given without expectation of return.

Point 8 of the above letter introduces a new element in this notion of patronage, one that derives from the English antiquarian boom of the eighteenth century. Most Welsh manuscripts at this time were held in private collections, so a scholar had to rely on the generosity of the owner in order to use them. This generosity was not always forthcoming, for a manuscript would lose some of its value for being copied and printed; therefore the scholar would have to beg for access to

²³³ S. Johnson, *Samuel Johnson's Dictionary : Selections from the 1755 Work that Defined the English Language* (London, 2004), p. 382.

²³⁴ P.J. Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 7 (1974), pp. 453-73.

libraries. The scholar-poet had to appease the owners of libraries in much the same way that the family poet had to appease his lord.

As can be seen in Dustin Griffin's study, literary patronage in the eighteenth century also extended to gifts of jobs;²³⁵ there were jobs on the civil list which were awarded to writers, and some offices in the gift of a few noblemen. Lewis Morris's brother, Richard, although working at the Navy Office and an important point of contact for Welshmen in London, could not arrange any patronage for Evans. Constantly failing to secure patronage within the church, Evans frequently returns in his letters and prose writings to the theme of his need to get a living, and his anger that the church in Wales is being filled with monoglot English clergy. Lewis Morris says of Evans's continuing lack of professional patronage:

What can you expect from Bis- - ps or any officers ignorant of a Language which they get their living by, and which they ought to Cultivate instead of proudly despising. If an Indian acted thus, we would be apt to Call him Barbarous. But a Sc-t or a Sax-n is above Correction.²³⁶

Dealing with the reality of his failure to live within the patronage system, Evans also cherishes an ideal notion of the patron, in the figure of Ifor Hael, Ivor the Generous, the patron of the medieval poet Dafydd ap Gwilym. Ifor had long been used as a paradigm— the phrase “a second Ifor” is used as a metaphor for generosity in many poems – and he becomes an important figure for the Romantic movement in England and Wales later in the century, as detailed in Damian Walford Davies's *Presences that Disturb*.²³⁷ Other than the praise poems left us by Dafydd ap Gwilym, there is little

²³⁵ D.H. Griffin, *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 317.

²³⁶ Korshin, *Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage*, pp. 453-73.

²³⁷ D.W. Davies, *Presences that Disturb : Models of Romantic Identity in the Literature and Culture of the 1790s* (Cardiff, 2002), pp. 158-9, 187-9.

concrete historical evidence of Ifor's life. Gwyn Thomas calls Dafydd a beneficiary of the "new patronage" of the fourteenth century:

It seems that this new patronage was not a patronage of dutiful obligation, but a lively patronage. Indeed, the interest of some noblemen in the strict metres was so lively that they set to writing poetry themselves.²³⁸

Here then is the ideal – a patron with understanding which can come from also being a poet. Evans's most famous poem, *Llys Ifor Hael* (The Court of Ivor the Generous) (1778), is an *ubi sunt* lament for the passing of this type of noble patronage. Evans also translated the work into English couplets:

Amidst its alders Ivor's palace lies
In heaps of ruins to my wondering eyes;
Where greatness dwelt in pomp, now thistles reign,
And prickly thorns assert their wide doman.

No longer Bards inspired thy tables grace,
No hospitable deeds adorn the place;
No more the generous owner gives his gold
To modest merit, as to Bards of old.

In plaintive verse his Ivor, Gwilym moans,
His patron lost, the pensive poet groans:
What mighty loss, that Ivor's lofty hall
Should now with screeching owls rehearse its fall!

Attend, ye great, and hear the solemn sound,
How short your greatness this proclaims around;
Strange that such pride should fill the human breast,
Yon mouldering walls the vanity attest.²³⁹

Curiously, in this poem, Evans does not offer comfort for the passing of this court by stressing the timelessness of Dafydd's praise poetry, a traditional ending for a poem lamenting the passing of a patron. This also passes – a pessimistic view informed by Evans's modern knowledge of the parlous state of Welsh manuscripts, and the

²³⁸ G. Thomas, *Y Traddodiad Barddol* (Caerdydd, 1976), p. 240.

²³⁹ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 52.

difficulties involved in reaching them in order to make copies. In this, it echoes some of the earlier poetry of the *Cynfeirdd*, particularly *Ystafell Cynddylan* or *Canu Heledd*. It does not have the apocalyptic air of Gryffudd ab yr Ynad Coch's lament for Prince Llywelyn, the most famous poem of this kind in Welsh. Rather, it takes its cue from a mixture of the earlier *canu*, and the poetry of Gray and Goldsmith. Poems to ruins abounded in this era, such as Warton's *Written at Vale-Royal Abbey in Cheshire*; closer to home was the Anglo-Welsh poet John Dyer's *Grongar Hill* (1726):

'Tis now the raven's bleak abode;
'Tis now th'apartment of the toad;
And there the fox securely feeds;
And there the poisonous adder breeds,
Concealed in ruins, moss and weeds²⁴⁰

As well as echoing the so-called graveyard school of poetry and the mournful elegiac notes of the *Cynfeirdd*, the mood closely resembles that of much of Macpherson's work. Much as Evans decried what he felt was the latter's lack of authenticity, it does suggest that even he was not immune to the poetic mood of the time.

Evans' ambivalence towards Ifor as patron is evident, especially in his description of Dafydd's feelings of grief – patronage is all very well, but what happens to the poet when that comes to an end? The answer is not a comforting one, the “chilling” grief (*oer ofid*) recalling the outcasts of the Old English “Wanderer” and “Seafarer” fragments, that chill mingling with the literal, physical cold of banishment from the Lord or patron's hearth.

Evan Evans enjoyed an intellectually profitable Welsh literary patronage, but failed to negotiate pecuniary patronage in an English context, either for his scholarly

²⁴⁰ Dyer, *Grongar Hill*, in Garlick and Mathias, p. 377.

studies or in his ecclesiastical career. Patronage from traditional Welsh sources is not adequate to keep body and soul together in the eighteenth century, whilst English career-related patronage, often extended to literary figures, ignores what it sees as a marginal culture and language. The modest pension he received from the second Sir Watkin Williams Wynn was withdrawn because of Evans' inability to remain sufficiently quiescent and grateful. Paul Panton's financial support at the end of Evans' life was given in exchange for his collection of manuscripts. Independence from patronage is not an option, either financially or, consequently, intellectually.

iii – Evans' Wales

The Wales Evans saw was one of schism fomented by the implacable anglicisation of the Welsh branch of the established Church, whose flock was falling under the spell of a vernacular enthusiastic heresy.²⁴¹ This disaster was further encouraged by the *Cymry Seisoneg*, the Anglicised Welsh who did nothing to promote either the vernacular creative arts or the Welsh-language pastoral care of their tenants as their forebears had previously done.

I cannot without the utmost indignation observe the unnatural behaviour of the modern Welsh clergy and gentlemen of the principality of Wales. They have neither zeal for religion nor the interest of their country at heart. They glory in wearing the badge of their vassalage, by adopting the language of their conquerors, which is a mark of the most despicable meanness of spirit, and a mind lost to all that is noble and generous [...]²⁴²

²⁴¹ see eg White, *A 'Poor, Benighted Church'? Church and Society in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Wales*, pp. 123-41.

²⁴² E. Evans, *Casgliad o Bregethau, Wedi Eu Cyfieithu o Waith Yr Awduron Gorau Yn Saesoneg; Gan E. Evans. at Ba Rai i Chwanegwyd, Annerch i Benteulu, Ynghylch y Ddyledswydd Bwysfawr o Addoliad-Teuluaid, a Ffurf Weddi i Deulu, o Waith P. Doddridge. 2 Lyfrau* (Mwythig, 1776)

Welsh society was, in effect, breaking down, native culture and social structures changing to be more modern, more progressive – more English.²⁴³ This hit Evans particularly hard, both as poet and scholar. In a former age, he might have found earlier that patronage he enjoyed only at the end of his life, from Paul Panton of Plas Gwyn. Evans' obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of October 1788 notes that

Mr. Evans would latterly have experienced much distress, had he not been annually relieved by the humanity of a few gentlemen [...]²⁴⁴

As detailed above, Lewis Morris attempted to fashion Evans into a poet in the old patronal mode, but social changes made this all but impossible; and so Evans, like the other subjects of this study, had to attempt to balance working for his living with his antiquarian researches. In contrast with that of the Morrises, though, Evans' salary was barely enough to live on, let alone fund library visits and printing costs.

The advocates of Dr. Bowles, during the famous court case against his appointment to the practically monoglot Welsh parish of Trefdraeth,²⁴⁵ certainly did not view either Wales or Britain as Evans would have wished.

Wales is a conquered country, it is proper to introduce the English language, and it is the duty of the bishops to promote the English, in order to introduce the language.²⁴⁶

²⁴³ See Morgan, *The Eighteenth Century Renaissance*, Jenkins, *The Foundations of Modern Wales : Wales, 1642-1780*, Jenkins, *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution*.

²⁴⁴ *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVIII, Part 2, October 1788, p. 934

²⁴⁵ Jenkins, '*Horrid Unintelligible Jargon*': *The Case of Dr. Thomas Bowles*, pp. 494-523.

²⁴⁶ Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (London England), *The Depositions, Arguments and Judgement in the Cause of the Church-Wardens of Trefdraeth ... Against Dr. Bowles; Adjudged by the Worshipful G. Hay ... Instituted to Remedy the Grievance of Preferring Persons Unacquainted with the British Language, to Livings in Wales. to which is Prefixed, an Address to the Bishops of Hereford, Bangor, ... Published by the Society of Cymmrodorion* (London, 1773), p. 59.

Gone is the obfuscating veneer of *Prydeindod*. In its stead, when the English status quo is threatened, naked conquest is revealed. Wales was always, as T. H. Parry-Williams puts it in his famous poem on the Welsh condition, *yn dipyn o boendod i'r rhai sy'n credu mewn trefn* [a bit of a nuisance for those who believe in order];²⁴⁷ to impose the English language is to impose order, and to tolerate Welsh is to admit difference and chaos. Evans' criticisms of the Church are all the more scathing in that they are almost exactly the criticisms made of the Catholic church at the time of the Reformation a mere two hundred years previously.

Am danom ni yn yr Esgobawd yma [Llanelwy], y mae'r Escob yn cael gwneuthur a fyno yn ddiwarafun; sef y mae, megys Pab arall, wedi derchafu tri neu pedwar o neiaint i'r lleoedd goreu, lle yr oedd Cymry cynhenid gynt yn gweinyddu, ac ni chaiff y curadiaid danynt ddarllen mo'r Gymraeg[...] [As for us in this Diocese [of St. Asaph], the Bishop may do as he pleases unforbidden; and he, like another Pope, raises three or four of his nephews to the best places, where formerly native Welsh served, and the curates beneath them are not permitted to read Welsh[...]]²⁴⁸

We have already seen how reviled Catholicism was, in Morris' *Dialogue* and Wynne's *Gweledigaethu y Bardd Cwsc*, so it is no wonder that the Morris brothers all thought Evans' criticism beyond the pale, couched as it was in the language of genuine righteous anger:

Pray what is depriving us of the word of God in our own language, and averring it to be our interest, better than a lying and a poisonous doctrine, which some late Prelates have advanced?²⁴⁹

Diau yw mai rhy flaenllym yw'r traethawd yn erbyn yr *Esgyb Eingl*; a bychan fyddai ganddynt fy nhorri yn ddeu-ddarn, ie fy malu yn chwilfriw. Ond mewn

²⁴⁷ Hon, T. H. Parry-Williams, in *The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse*, ed. Parry (Oxford, 1962), p. 455.

²⁴⁸ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrisises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 666.

²⁴⁹ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p.144n.

achos mor iawn ir wyf yn meddwl i meiddiwn ofyn y gwaethaf a ddichon gallu dynawl ei wneuthur.

[It is likely that my essay against the Anglo-Welsh Bishops is too pointed; and it would be a little matter for them to break me in twain, yea to smash me to smithereens. But in such a righteous cause I think I could dare ask the worst that human ability may do.]²⁵⁰

It is, he argues, a betrayal of one of the central tenets of Protestantism; that the common people should have the word of God in their own language. It is also a betrayal by the English state of the promise inherent in Queen Elizabeth's Act for the Translation of the Scriptures into Welsh (1563), fulfilled by William Morgan whose Welsh Bible was published in 1588. Betraying the legacy of this iconic volume, in many respects a symbol of nationhood for the conquered Welsh, betrays the entire foundation of a Reformation imposed in its first instance by the English state. It is a further irony that the provision of the Bible in Welsh was originally a thinly-disguised response to the fear of residual Catholicism in Tudor Wales by "associating the Reformation with the emotive patriotic and literary inheritance of Wales."²⁵¹ In rejecting the concessions of a former age, the Anglican church is leaving itself open to such criticisms as Evans'. Anglican Episcopal linguistic authoritarianism mirrors the heresy imposed on the Welsh in the Reformation myth of the Celtic church forced into Roman heresy by the invading Saxons,²⁵² and the more the church hierarchy attempts

²⁵⁰ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 714. (Evan Evans to Richard Morris)

²⁵¹ G. Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality in Wales : Historical Essays* (Cardiff, 1979), p. 134.

²⁵² *ibid.* p. 18.

to impose uniformity, the more it foments singularity and difference.²⁵³ Another facet of Evans' view of Wales is that his social status renders him an outsider, not only to the Morrisians, but to those gentry whose libraries and manuscripts he valued so much. In the letter quoted above, Lewis Morris attempts to fashion the poet into one in the old Welsh mode – a social inferior reliant on patronage, begging boons and thanking favours with a *cywydd* or an *englyn*, speaking only when spoken to and showing a becoming humility at all times.

Evans was a South Walian amongst a North Walian intellectual elite; and, like Edward Williams after him, frequently outshone the others in his circle. Lewis Morris, although himself a correspondent of such luminaries as Pegge and Carte, was envious of Evans' connections, and between themselves the brothers frequently made scathing comments on Evans' figure on the English literary scene. The brothers were also dismissive of South Walian Welsh, calling it *gibberish* and *hottentotice*, and they perceived an ecclesiastical distinction between the North and the South, figuring the South as inferior with regard to religion :

Vavasor Powel and other hot-headed enthusiasts at that time [of the Civil War] commenced Itinerant Preachers to replant the Gospel, but found no success in North Wales, there being a decent reputable set of clergy with good salaries; but here [Mabwys] the clergy were such ignorant wretches, and because they were poor, made such a despicable appearance in the eyes of the vulgar, that they very soon quitted the Established Church, and are never likely to return to it.²⁵⁴

²⁵³ Although, in some respects, Evans is overly harsh on his masters; as Eryn M. White has recently noted (White, *A 'Poor, Benighted Church'? Church and Society in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Wales*, p. 131.), the matter is complicated by the need for the Anglican church to minister bilingually in Wales where even one parishioner spoke English. In theory, bilingual services could be arranged in a parish, but plurality, poor pay, and poor education often hampered this.

²⁵⁴ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrisies of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 689.

Recent scholarship has cast some doubt on this perception of the eighteenth-century Anglican Church in Wales, as well as on the perception that Methodism spread like wildfire because of the abuses of the church.²⁵⁵ The view that Methodism succeeded because of the failure of Anglicanism is history as written by the acknowledged mouthpiece of Welsh Methodism, William Williams Pantycelyn.²⁵⁶ However, it was a contemporary view with which Evans and the Morrissian circle broadly agreed.

Evans shows an outsider's view of Wales in Britain represented as Israel in Babylon in his *Paraphrase of Psalm CXXXVII*.²⁵⁷ This was a popular theme in literature and sermons of the time, and the Psalm itself, *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down*, was a popular one for translators.²⁵⁸ It is as though Wales is in exile in its own land, usurped by a conquering power. Even the poem itself, written in English, is exiled from its own people. The work figures the Welsh as the conquered Hebrews:

What! shall the Saxons hear us sing,
Or their dull vales with Cambrian music ring?
No – let old Conway cease to flow,
Back to her source Sabrina go;
Let huge Plinlimmon hide his head,
Or let the tyrant strike me dead,
If I attempt to raise a song,

²⁵⁵ See Jenkins, '*Peth Erchyll Iawn*' *Oedd Methodistiaeth* 195-204., White, *A 'Poor, Benighted Church'? Church and Society in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Wales*, pp. 123-41.

²⁵⁶ Derec Llwyd Morgan, 'Williams, William (1717-1791)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29556>]

²⁵⁷ The poem is undated, appearing in print long after Evans' death. For more discussion of the date of this work, see S. Prescott, *Eighteenth-Century Writing from Wales : Bards and Britons* (Cardiff, 2008), p. 177.

²⁵⁸ Amongst many others, it was translated by Bacon, George Sandys, William Cowper, Willie Hamilton, and Dr. Hammond.

Unmindful of my country's wrong!
 What! shall a haughty king command
 Cambrians' free strain on Saxon land?
 May this right arm first wither'd be
 Ere I may touch one string for thee,
 Proud monarch; nay, may instant death
 Arrest my tongue and stop my breath,
 If I attempt to weave a song,
 Regardless of my country's wrong!²⁵⁹

The *Paraphrase* is far more of an abstract, emotionally conceived piece than is the *Love of Our Country*. Even although it has a framework (the original psalm), it alludes to only one episode of history (and a fictional one at that), and it is a *cri de coeur* – Evans calls it an “effusion”. He also notes that “The reader of English Poetry will discover a few imitations in this effusion”.²⁶⁰ Milton, Goldsmith, Dryden and Gray are imitated – Evans even names the Druidic figure at the close of the poem “Gray’s pale spectre” – sometimes their lines are borrowed outright, as Gray’s, and sometimes they are Cymricised. Thus, Dryden’s “Softly sweet in Lydian measures” becomes “Softly sweet in Cambrian measures.” The text is, in effect, translated several times over – from the original Hebrew to the King James version of the Bible; then into verse; but it is also a translation through the filters both of Welsh history and English poetry. Evans follows the Cockney school of translating in the same way his mentor Lewis Morris did so successfully earlier in the century, in the Welsh setting, but also in the use of the words of English poets. The equation of the Welsh with the Israelites and the English with the Babylonians, whilst old, especially highlights here the historical tensions between two countries, which in Evans’ time are supposedly part of the same newly-forged nation of Britain. Despite London being the *de facto*

²⁵⁹ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 127.

²⁶⁰ *ibid.* p. 126.

intellectual capital of Wales in this period, the “willowy Thames” is “inhospitable”; the poem is written from an exile’s point of view, more than likely sharing Evans’ own real distress from his peripatetic years in English curacies.

It is instructive to compare this poem with Evans’ *Cywydd Hiraeth y Bardd am ei Wlad* [*Cywydd of the Poet’s Longing for his Country*] (c. 1756). Careful reading of the *cywydd* shows that Evans’ facility for quotation and paraphrase is not confined to his English-language productions alone. Rather than betray a lack of originality, this intertextuality deepens the poem – one of the expectations of a poet in the Welsh tradition would be his ability to incorporate and respond to the best of his predecessors. The opening of Evans’ poem is a conscious inversion of the opening of Dafydd ap Gwilym’s *Trafferth Mewn Tafarn* [Trouble in a Tavern]. “Gwamal a fûm heb gymar” [Fickle was I without a partner] foregrounds Evans’ solitariness in England, where Dafydd arrives “A’m hardd wreangyn i’m hôl” [With my fair page behind me]. More explicit still is Evans’ line “Daethym i fro nid ethol” [I came to an inferior area], directly inverting the earlier work’s “Daethum i ddinas dethol” [We came to a select city], and borrowing its *cynghanedd*. He goes on to mention Dafydd ap Gwilym explicitly – “Gwlad Ddafydd, ganiedydd gwych, / Gwilym, harddwiw y’i gwelych” [The country of Dafydd, excellent singer, / Gwilym, beautiful and meet it appears] – as the poetical genius representative of Ceredigion, Evans’ native county. Evans’ influences in his English verse are in the main English; in his Welsh verse, he is influenced mainly by Welsh predecessors. In the *Paraphrase*, then, his influences sit less comfortably than in his *cywyddau*, and are far less integrated into the text.

By adopting a text familiar to his audience, Evans makes even more explicit the historical enmity between the two sides in a way not usually immediately

accessible within the tale of the Last Bards, and as such more uncomfortable for the reader. The Saxons are unequivocally in the wrong. It is impossible to decide whether the English reader would have recognised and identified with this description of his ancestors. Despite the revival in interest in the Saxons, and the recognition of England's Gothic past,²⁶¹ Saxon treachery and warmongering could be overlooked when it suited, as we have seen for instance in the tracts dealing with the Minorca crisis, or in the sensible enjoyment of the Ossianic tragedies. A reader could perfectly well feel for the oppressed Celt in these works, inevitably engaged against the Saxons, without feeling any lessening of the English sense of superiority in the island and in the new nation.

The *Paraphrase* is, however, more complex than a simple “manifesto for a new nationalist literature.”²⁶² Katie Trumpener is right to note that

To play for their Saxon captors, as they [the Welsh bards] have been ordered, would be to surrender their nation's last cultural treasures along with its political sovereignty, and to allow a eulogistic poetry rooted in the landscape and culture of Wales to adorn the “dull vales” of England.²⁶³

Yet, although it is acknowledged that the narration of the poem is by poets who have outlived Edward I's alleged ‘bardicide’, and who have changed their lays to “poems of execration against the conquerors,”²⁶⁴ Trumpener does not discuss the implication of the *Paraphrase* when weighed with Evans's *On the Love of Our Country*. Professor Prys Morgan notes that the *Specimens* was “in part a book for the English market,”²⁶⁵

²⁶¹ See Sweet, *Antiquaries : The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain*

²⁶² K. Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism : The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton, 1997), p. 4.

²⁶³ *ibid.* pp. 3-4.

²⁶⁴ *ibid.* p. 8.

²⁶⁵ Morgan, *The Eighteenth Century Renaissance*, p. 81.

and Professor M. Wynn Thomas, following Ned Thomas's phraseology, says that "hidden in such scholarly researches was a commitment to contributionism: in other words, a dutiful emphasis on what Wales could offer Britain."²⁶⁶ This "contributionism" is recognisable as a facet of what we have earlier called *Prydeindod*, and M. Wynn Thomas's comment on Tony Conran's translations of Welsh poetry could equally well be descriptive of Evans's efforts:

a volume[...] of successful translations may assume [...] the grim aspect of a veritable series of Welsh poets' heads triumphantly mounted, like Llywelyn's, on the victorious towers of English culture.²⁶⁷

How successful Evans's translations were is debatable – Wilkes's derogatory comments on the volume are well known,²⁶⁸ and the poems of Gray which were inspired by the text (*Conan*, *Caradoc* and *The Death of Hoel*) read as poetry, where Evans's works are translations "as literal as that wherewith the Greek poets are commonly rendered into Latin" (both in English and Latin).²⁶⁹ The crux of the *Paraphrase* is the second section, corresponding to the third verse of the psalm, which deals with the act of performing literature for another country's enjoyment:

‘Resume your harps.’ the Saxons cry,
 ‘And change your grief to songs of joy;
 Such strains as old Taliesin sang,
 What time your native mountains rang
 With his wild notes, and all around,

²⁶⁶ M.W. Thomas, *Corresponding Cultures : The Two Literatures of Wales* (Cardiff, 1999), p. 118.

²⁶⁷ *ibid.* p. 111.

²⁶⁸ J. Wilkes and L.I. Bredvold, 'The Contributions of John Wilkes to the Gazette Littéraire De l'Europe', *The University of Michigan Contributions in Modern Philology*, Vol. 15 (1950)

²⁶⁹ E. Evans and T. Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans* (5vols., Baton Rouge, 1944) 6.Johnston, *Evan Evans: Dissertatio De Bardis*, p. 71.

Seas, rivers, woods, return'd the sound.'²⁷⁰

This is reminiscent of the clamour of the reading public for Welsh works in a similar vein to Macpherson's. As we will see below, Thomas Percy, recognising the qualities which made the Ossian poems so commercially successful, encouraged Evans to work his translations in a similar mode. In refusing to "Ossianize" his translations, that is, to make them palatable to the current fashionable taste of the English market, Evans is enacting his bards' refusal to sing "songs of joy" for their captors. M. Wynn Thomas's comment above recalls the section of the Llywarch Hen cycle (as it was considered at the time), *Penn a borthaf*, I bear a head;²⁷¹ the speaker bears the decapitated head of his lord upon his sword, and upon his shoulder. But, importantly, he also recalls that *Pen a borthaf a'm porthes*, I bear a head which bore me – *porthes* may also be translated as "fed me" or "supported me". The Lord's head carried by the poet once supported, fed, and nurtured him, and the same may be said both of Evans's relation to the remnants of Welsh poetry, and of the English poets who drew new inspiration from the publication of the *Specimens*.²⁷² Indeed, it seems at times that the search for Welsh antiquities from "a regard for [his] native country" was all that sustained Evans in spite of his many hardships; where he could fall into the deepest fathoms of despair (his *coler du*, black choler), the discovery of a new manuscript

²⁷⁰ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 126.

²⁷¹ *Pen Urien* (Urien's Head) as it is known in Thomas Parry's edition; Parry, *The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse*, p. 11.

²⁷² Ffion Llywelyn Jenkins, 'Celticism and Pre-Romanticism : Evan Evans', in Branwen Jarvis (ed.), *A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1700-1800* (Cardiff, 2000), p. 104.

would render him “as happy as ever Alexander thought himself after a conquest”.²⁷³

Trumpener notes that

In keeping with its overall emphasis on rhetorical gestures and on literary utterances as the real sites of political power, Evans’s poem ends [...] with the suicidal leap and dying curse of the last bard. The violence of cultural annihilation is here internalized, to destroy the poet himself.

Again, this is characteristic of the psychological effects of *Prydeindod*; the pressure of bearing dual and incompatible identities causes this violent internalisation. Bridging the gap between two incompatible viewpoints is impossible, and the only escape is through death. Michael Franklin also gestures towards the duality in the work, noting that the bards’

refusal to be culturally appropriated by the dominant power is admired but not imitated by Evans, writing in English and supplying footnoted allusions to Milton, Dryden, and Goldsmith; their Druidic defiance is ventriloquised by Gray[...]²⁷⁴

Thus the culturally nationalist becomes politically neutral; indeed, it must be, lest the fracture between the two positions become so obvious as to be mentally, as well as politically, unsustainable. Both the *Specimens* and the *Paraphrase* encapsulate the paradoxes of Evans’s situation, stressing as they do an historical disjunction as well as historical continuity (the breaking of the bardic tradition, as well as the links to it), and inscribing a concern for the future so deep, that Evans must vocalise it through the words of other poets, rather than speak it directly.

The *Specimens* is not a simple act of translation, a mere case of movement from a poem in the source language to a single target language. Each poem appears

²⁷³ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 349.

²⁷⁴ Michael J. Franklin, 'Sir William Jones, the Celtic Revival and the Oriental Renaissance', in G. Carruthers and A. Rawes (ed.), *English Romanticism and the Celtic World* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 17.

in three incarnations – the Welsh original, and an English translation (suggested by Percy) in the sections dedicated to the poetry, and in Latin versions or glosses (more fragmentary) in the *Dissertatio de Bardis*. It is these Latin verses which are generally missing from discussions of the volume. Yet they provide a further potential audience for the work, over and above their more obvious function as a presentation of Welsh poetry to the English, “a model of multi-levelled and international appeal” as Michael J. Franklin terms them.²⁷⁵ Charlotte Johnston noted that “Evans published in Latin, for European scholars.”²⁷⁶ He is also cited as providing “a model of multi-levelled and international appeal” to Sir William Jones in his use of three languages.²⁷⁷ In this use of Latin, he was following the humanist models of the Welsh scholars of previous centuries, and also reaching beyond the frontiers of England, the dominant culture and language in Britain. In this context, Latin provided an apolitical, neutral voice for the works of the *Cynfeirdd*, simultaneously providing a durability that English and Welsh were perceived to lack; in essence, future-proofing the works, and creating a monument in which their continued survival was assured. In doing this, he also links the poetry and the history of the Bards with the commentaries of Cæsar and Tacitus, further reminding the reader of a Welsh bardic history beyond modern English-language histories.

Evans can also record the history of the Ancient Britons relatively dispassionately. His introduction to *A Short View of the State of Britain* (1785) states that

²⁷⁵ *ibid.* p. 27.

²⁷⁶ Johnston, *Evan Evans: Dissertatio De Bardis*, p. 67.

²⁷⁷ Franklin, *Sir William Jones, the Celtic Revival and the Oriental Renaissance*, p. 17.

A regard for my native country, and zeal for its welfare and prosperity, induced me to study its language and antiquities; and although there is, in general, no great encouragement for such pursuits in our days, yet there are some few generous persons left among us, who still continue to follow the steps of their ancestors, and are ready to assist any efforts made to preserve the few gleanings we have left of ancient British literature.²⁷⁸

The work that follows is in English, giving a history of the British and the numerous conquests of them in a more scholarly light than had been applied hitherto in a popular history, but with none of the religious and moral slant that we are given in Theophilus Evans's *Drych y Prif Oesoedd* and similar works; that is, the conquests of the Romans and the Saxon 'night of the long knives' are not punishments from God, but part of the story of history. The Saxons' betrayal is recorded dispassionately:

The principal men of each nation[...]were to meet at a place now called *Stone-Henge*, on Salisbury Plain, to settle the matter in dispute between them. The Saxon noblemen and officers, to secure themselves (as is pretended), came all armed with knives under their cloaks; but the British nobles had not that foresight, as they suspected no evil designs. At this negotiation they were, by consent, seated[...]alternately, for every Saxon a Briton; and it being contrived to have a quarrel, a warm dispute arose, and a watchword was given by the Saxons, 'Ne met eour Saxes, i.e. draw your knives;' so each Saxon stabbed his Briton, and most of the Britons in the place were killed[...]²⁷⁹

There is only the occasional phrase which betrays to which side the author might be biased – “as is pretended” (that is, claimed), “evil designs”, “contrived”. His description is almost the same as Theophilus Evans' description of the same event in *Drych y Prif Oesoedd* (1716, 2nd edition 1740), excepting that Theophilus Evans has his Hengist speak in the first person:

Hengist a aeth rhago gan ddywedyd, *Dydd calan-mai* nessaf yr ŷm yn cyfarfod y Brutaniaid tan rith i heddychu a hwy, ond mywn gwirionedd i'w lladd [...] Ond i affeithio hyn o orchwyl yn gyfrwys, Dygwch bob un o honoch gyllell

²⁷⁸ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, pp. 259-60.

²⁷⁹ *ibid.* pp. 293-4.

awch-lem flaen-fain (megis cyllill y cigyddion) yn ei lawes; A phan ddywedaf i wrthy ch *Nemet eour Saxes* lladded pawb y nessaf atto [...]
 [*Hengist* went forth saying, Next May-day we are to meet the Britons under guise of making peace with them, but in truth to kill them[...]But to effect this task secretly, Each one of you must bring a sharp-edged slender-pointed knife (like the butchers' knives) in his sleeve; And when I say to you *Nemet eour Saxes* everyone should kill the person next to him [...]]²⁸⁰

Evans wrote of *Drych*:

I have got *Drych y Prif Oesoedd* by me, but I don't admire it, tho' I regard the Author for his good will: nobody else having done so much as he. *Brenin yw yr unllygeidiog yngwlad y deilliaid*. [in the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed man is king.]²⁸¹

Written in English, rather than Welsh, to remedy what Evans obviously perceived as a significant omission in the Welsh book market, Evans' study frequently shifts between *Britains*, *Britons*, *Saxons*, *England*, *Loegria*, and so forth, betraying Evans' shifting notions about the country to which he owes his allegiance.

iv – Evans' Britain – the love of whose country?

In the dedicatory letter to *A Short View of the State of Britain*, Evans writes that he has “compiled the History of Britain and Wales from our own ancient records,”²⁸² suggesting a distinction in his mind between the two states. Like the rest of the writers in this selection, Evans routinely refers to Welsh as “the ancient British language”, and in the index to *The Additional Letters of the Morrisises of Anglesey* references “British language” with “see Welsh language.”²⁸³ Evans' patriotism does not reveal to him that *Cyfrinach Ynys Prydain*, the secret of the Island of Britain – the

²⁸⁰ T. Evans, *Drych y Prif Oesoedd : Yn Ôl Yr Argraffiad Cyntaf, 1716*, pp. 77-8.

²⁸¹ *ibid.* p. v.

²⁸² Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 255.

²⁸³ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrisises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 844.

Welsh claim to be the original inhabitants of the island – is no longer valid in a political context.

The view of history in *The Love of Our Country* is different from that expounded in *The State of Britain*, mirroring the difference between Evans's conception of the scholarly work and the literary one. There is tension between the emotional need to cling to Welsh origin myths and the myth of their primacy in the Island on the one hand, and on the other the scholarly understanding that these myths leave something to be desired as history. *The Love of Our Country* deals with a larger span of history, and is subtitled "A Poem, With Historical Notes."²⁸⁴ The numerous "historical notes", in English, Latin, and Greek (as well as the occasional Welsh word and explanations of Welsh proverbs and phrases), serve to put the erudition of the work plainly on the page for all to see (a tactic employed by Iolo Morganwg twenty years later), and are intended as a barrier to any attack – although a "Curate from Snowdon" might easily be discredited, Tacitus, Diodorus Siculus and Asser are relatively (although not completely) safe from such assaults. The poem draws comparisons between ancient, venerated societies of classical antiquity and Wales:

Nor did this genius shine in Greece alone,
In other nations equally it shone,
Witness the Bards that grac'd the Celtic clime,
Whose images were bold and thoughts sublime [...]²⁸⁵

This could be seen as an iteration of the driving force behind Primitivism as it stands opposed to the Augustan ethic, asserting the status of Celtic poets and poetry as equal to the classical. Evans is inclusive in his statements of primitivism as they relate to *gwladgarwch*, patriotism or (literally) love of country. A Welshman's proverbial

²⁸⁴ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 29.

²⁸⁵ *ibid.* p. 135.

patriotism was one of the sticks used to chastise the Welsh in the English satirical tradition, and in London St. David's Day, with its conspicuous display of Welsh national pride, was a visible site at which such attacks (both verbal and physical) congregated.²⁸⁶ Evans' task in this poem is to prove that patriotism is natural, and that the unnatural course is to not love one's country. But whose country? Welsh patriotism is a problem for the English, deserving of scorn and derision, not because the English themselves were unpatriotic, but because the Welsh were being loyal to the *wrong* country by showing loyalty to a Wales officially deemed not to exist since 1536, rather than to the newly-forged (and forging ahead) Britain. Phillip Schwyzer argues that during the Tudor monarchy, the English had a greater distance to cross than the Welsh in order to accept a British identity as their own. It could be argued that a latent sense of injustice at a lost English nationalism lay behind frustration at the recalcitrant Welsh insistence on clinging to a redundant language and nationality. Welsh patriotism, like the Welsh themselves, is characterised as anachronistic and backward-looking. The English understand what the Welsh do not, and Evans does not, namely that they cannot be Welsh patriots as well as British patriots in the same way they the English can elide England with Britain and be patriotic to both simultaneously. The Welsh simply do not figure in any stereotypical composite image of the British, except perhaps as "Ancient Britons." It is debatable whether the Scots figure either; whilst Colley argues a strong case for Scottish involvement in the forging of Britain and the Empire in *Britons*, the image called to mind when thinking of Britain was (and is) still essentially an English figure, standing synecdochically for, and instead of, the four nations.

²⁸⁶ Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality in Wales : Historical Essays*, p. 119, Dearnley, *Distant Fields : Eighteenth-Century Fictions of Wales*, p. 246.

Yet because of their descent from the ancient Britons, the Welsh, Evans among them, believe that they may and must be incorporated into the British picture. Deep down, Evans realises that the only way to become a modern Briton is to become English, the *Cymry Seisnigaid* whom he despises so much, and who he feels despise him.²⁸⁷ Sarah Prescott maintains that

It would seem [...] that Evans's love of country is firmly Welsh and does not include any sense of "British" inclusiveness with either England or Scotland.²⁸⁸

To radicalise Evans' patriotism to such a degree is to ignore the frames of reference he shares with the English. In his Anglicanism, his poems to the monarchy, and occasional verse on common British themes, such as his *Awdl i Frenin Prwsia* [Ode to the King of Prussia], he shows repeatedly that he partakes of the same worldview as the English.²⁸⁹

"What have I, who am a Welshman, to do with English Poetry?" asks Evans, in his introduction "To the Reader." His answer is that his "first performance in the English tongue" (an exaggeration) is interpretative, to bring Welsh history to the English reader, and the distinction he makes here between English and Welsh (rather than "British") is telling. At some level, he is aware of the fallacy of *Prydeindod*; whereas Iolo Morganwg speaks of creating a new kind of synthesised British poetry

²⁸⁷ Richard Morris writes to Evan Evans: *chwedl chwithau mae mwy o goegni a mursendod ffaidd yn perthyn i'n pobl ein hun na'r gwaethaf o blant Alis. Gwendid hyll hwn!* [In your words, our own people have more spite and affectation than the worst of Alice [Rowena]'s children [the English]. This is an ugly weakness!] Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 428.

²⁸⁸ S. Prescott, "'Gray's Pale Spectre' : Evan Evans, Thomas Gray, and the Rise of Welsh Bardic Nationalism", *Modern Philology*, Vol. 104 (No. 1, 2006), p. 77.

²⁸⁹ For poems to Frederick the Great, see C. Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole : Politics, Poetry, and National Myth, 1725-1742* (Oxford, 1994)

in *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, when Evans speaks of British poetry, he means the Ancient British, i.e. the Welsh. No true synthesis is possible with two entirely different languages. He presents himself as contrasting with a classic example of the sycophancy to the English to be found in many Welshmen:

[Giraldus Cambrensis] could not better, as he thought, pay his compliment to the courtiers, and the English nation in general, than by traducing his countrymen by his mother's side, by representing them in such a light as would make them look ridiculous [...] Unluckily for Giraldus and his lordship [Lord Lyttelton] they must be contented, like the Bat in the fable, to be despised by both nations, for their unnatural behaviour, although it is possible they thought to have acquitted themselves entirely to the satisfaction of at least one party.²⁹⁰

Love of Country, *gwladgarwch*, for Evans is a natural instinct, as opposed to the unnatural inclinations of Giraldus, Lyttelton, and any man who traduces his country in order to win favour with another, more powerful one. Evans seems to enter into debate with Lyttelton on what is "natural". In his *History of the Life of King Henry II*, the attachment of the Welsh to their "natural" native princes is, paradoxically, presented as an unnatural perversion²⁹¹. Following a teleological "Whiggish" interpretation of history through the "Welch Chronicle", the natural barbarism and moral degeneracy of the Welsh must be subdued by increasing incursion and settlement by the Normans, Flemish, and successive English Kings. By contrast, Evans asserts that an attachment to one's country and, implicitly, an unwillingness to be subject to another country, is in fact a force of nature instilled by God:

Whatever clime we travel or explore,

²⁹⁰ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, pp. 131-2.

²⁹¹ G. Lyttelton, *The History of the Life of King Henry the Second, and of the Age in which He Lived, in Five Books: : To which is Prefixed, a History of the Revolutions of England from the Death of Edward the Confessor to the Birth of Henry the Second* :, The second . edn (London, 1772), p. 55.

To love our country still is nature's lore[...]
 So will'd the wise Creator; and his will
 Is nature's law, and men obey it still[...]
 For what more just than to embrace that earth,
 That like a second mother gave us birth?²⁹²

He is scathing about those Welshmen who abandon their country, and the ruin they will bring:

[...] ond y mae gwyr Cymru, mal y gwyddoch, wedi ymroi i fod yn Seison; am hyny y mae arnaf ofn wedi'r cwbl yr ä'r din rhwn y ddau ystôl i'r llawr. [[...] but the men of Wales, as you know, have given themselves over to being Englishmen; because of that I am afraid that in spite of everything the arse will go through the two stools to the floor]²⁹³

Yet for all this, the very fact that Evans goes to an effort to interpret Welsh literature and history for an English-language audience highlights the power imbalance between the two nations within the overarching nation/notion of "Britain." The drive to explain argues a need for acceptance from a dominant partner, despite Evans' bluster:

I have done it in English verse, in order that men of learning, in both nations, may understand it. As for myself, I must fairly own that I prefer the ancient British bards before the best English poets, and the ancient British verse as more manly and heroic than the wretched rhymes of the English. In short, to give no offence, I value the English nation as a brave sensible people, and am sorry that a few individuals have made it necessary for me to draw my pen in defence of my own, which has been so barbarously insulted of late, without any provocation whatsoever.

I hope it will convince such malevolent writers, for the future, that we can upon occasion retort, and that we do not want either spirit or abilities to shew a becoming resentment on receiving ill usage, let it come from what quarter it will.²⁹⁴

²⁹² Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, pp. 133-4.

²⁹³ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 723.

²⁹⁴ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 132.

Compare this with the preface to ap Swrddwal's *Hymn to the Virgin*, a copy of which Evans had as early as 1764, and another dating 1772 (the year of the publication of *Love of Our Country*):

Yna y kododd y Kymro ardderchawc ac a safodd ar i draet, ac yna a ddywedodd mal hynn: "Nid wyf vi ond ysgolhaic disas herwydd vy ysgolheictod, nac im kyffelybu i lawer o ysgolheigion dysgedig ardderchogion o Gymru y rhai nid ydwy vi addas i arwain ei llyru yn ei hol. Etto er hyn i gyd llesg vydde gennyf na alle ysgolaic gwael disas o Gymro ymgystadly ar Sais goreu i ysgolheictod am wneuthyr mydr ac am lawer o bwyntieu eraill. Ond nid yw yn ysgolheigion goreu ni kimint i maswedd ac mor over, a am roi i pennau ai meddwl i amrysson ac i ymgomi ar Saesson boksachus[...]Minneu a wnaaf vydyr yn y Saesnac, yn ych iaith ych hun[...]

[Then an excellent Welshman arose and stood on his feet and spoke as follows: 'I am only a poor scholar as regards my scholarship and am not to be compared with many learned and distinguished scholars from Wales, whose steps I am not competent to follow. But nevertheless it would be weakness in me if a poor unaccomplished Welshman could not compete with the most learned Englishman in poetic composition and many other points. But our best scholars are not so frivolous and worthless as to apply their minds and thought to disputing and quarrelling with the bragging English [...]. I shall compose a poem in English, in your own tongue [...]'²⁹⁵

Where Lewis Morris works within the satirical mode, Evan Evans seeks to redress the balance by providing a scholarly approach to deflect criticism, and show that his country is on an equal literary footing with Scotland and England. Both authors attempt to play the English at their own game and in their own modes, as Swrddwal does in the fifteenth century. Again, the bravery and manliness of the English verse is called into question, much as Lewis Morris did in his *Dialogue*, in comparison with the bravery of the Welsh and the early British poetry. As poetry was considered the earliest form of literature by all contemporary critics, "transmitting to posterity genuine delineations of life in its simplest stages,"²⁹⁶ it was naturally linked with the

²⁹⁵ Dobson, *The Hymn to the Virgin*, p. 70.

²⁹⁶ See Christmas, *The Lab'Ring Muses : Work, Writing, and the Social Order in English Plebeian Poetry, 1730-1830*, p. 24.

earlier, warrior culture. “Brave” is therefore a word used frequently throughout the course of the poem, a verbal tic shading into a comment on national character. The poets themselves were warriors, and inspired others to war:

This noble principle, at length refin'd,
 Invented arts to polish rude mankind;
 And Poetry the first of all the train,
 That sung brave actions in immortal strain.
 What theme more noble could the Muse have thought,
 Than those who bravely for their Country fought?
 Hence Bards were honour'd, and their sacred song
 Inspir'd with noble deeds the list'ning throng.
 Their Country's love they sung, and in its cause
 To die was glorious, glorious its applause.²⁹⁷

In reaction to Lyttelton's treatment of the Welsh, Evans produces in *The Love of Our Country* a species of prospect-poem. This was by no means the first or only prospect poem inspired by Lyttelton; James Thomson's *Spring* from his cycle *The Seasons* figures Lyttelton in his Hagley Park, whose improved and ordered prospect mirrors an ideal order of society, presided over by benevolent landed classes.²⁹⁸ Where a benign, orderly Anglo-British polity is represented by Thomson (and others) by the “solemn oak” (*Spring*, l. 915), Evans subtly alters the “British” tree by repositioning it within the druidic tradition. The oak mistletoe, as “sacred bough” for the Welsh, becomes emblematic of Wales grafted on to England. Its parasitism is not alluded to, but instead its ability to impart sacred hidden truths is emphasised. In this way, studying rather than ignoring the history of the original inhabitants of the island can be shown to illuminate or recapture lost truths, as the Celticist pre-Romantics maintained,

²⁹⁷ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 134.

²⁹⁸ Tim Fulford, "'Nature' Poetry", in John Sitter (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 111.

revivifying the voice of British poetry by harking back to ancient native, rather than classical, tradition. Lewis Morris had written to Evans in 1756:

As for your sheltering under Horace's wings, I mind it as nothing. He was a stranger to our methods, handed down to us by his masters, the Druidical bards, who knew how to sing before Rome had a name. So never hereafter mention such moderns as Horace & Virgil, when you talk of British Poetry, Llywarch Hen, Aneurin, and the followers of the Druids, are our men and Nature our Rule.²⁹⁹

Yet within this metaphor for Wales's adornment of the English oak lies a darker subtext, containing the seeds of the arguments of the nineteenth century Celticists such as Matthew Arnold. For in order to gain the insight from the sacred plant, it must be cut from its place of growth in such a way as to preserve it undamaged – yet prevented from further growth. The culture consumed in that way is therefore made politically safe by its very antiquity.

Their Country's love they sung, and in its cause
To die was glorious, glorious its applause.³⁰⁰

Evans compares the Welsh bards with the Greek Tyrtæus in their ability to stir up patriotic fighting devotion in their listeners; they are also figured as being able to stir peace in the breasts of their enemies. The latter they do not seem to do often, however, in the historical vision of the poem, and in general it is the martial prowess of Evans's heroes which is emphasised. One by one, the stories of each of these heroes are retold from a different perspective from Lyttelton's; where Lyttelton sees treachery and internecine warfare as products of Welsh weakness of character and legal framework (especially the backward Welsh gavelkind, as it stands opposed to the inherently civilised and stabilising effect of English primogeniture), Evans instead

²⁹⁹ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 29.

³⁰⁰ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 134.

identifies individual weaknesses as the causes of Welsh failure. Gwrthëyrn alone is responsible for the Saxon rapine; “Base Iestin” betrays Rhys ap Tewdwr, and no motive for that is given, but it is left to the reader to infer that it is merely from his “base” character. Where this is impossible (for instance, at the final loss of Welsh independence at the fall of Llywelyn), the actual loss itself is barely mentioned, Evans preferring to concentrate then on instances of heroism in spite of a difficult situation. A similar pattern is seen in the treatment of the English kings – he attempts to blame the faults of individual kings, rather than the English nation as a whole, for the oppression of the Welsh:

When cruel Edward heavy burdens laid,
 And like a vulture on his subjects prey'd;
 Britons incens'd the tyrant's fetter's [*sic*] broke,
 And would no longer bear the slavish yoke[...]
 When under heavier pressures still they lay,
 And bold usurping Henry bore the sway,
 The great Glyndwr no longer could contain,
 But, like a furious lion, burst the chain[...]³⁰¹

Despite his caution in this regard, an element of Anglophobia slips through in such expressions as “[t]he coward English” and “[t]he English galling yoke”, and he reserves his most fulsome praise for the Tudor monarchs “who govern'd Britons with the mildest sway.”³⁰² In Evans's version of this founding myth of *Prydeindod*, the benevolent rule of the *mab darogan* (son of prophecy) is intimately bound up with Protestantism, which in itself made use of the myth of the pre-Roman patriarchal religion of the Druids as part of the justification for the Reformation split from

³⁰¹ *ibid.* pp. 141-2.

³⁰² *ibid.* p. 143.

Rome.³⁰³ True patriotism relies on the successful marriage not only of the Welsh monarchs' "regaining" of their British throne, but also on an Anglicanism rooted in the Druidic past and using the Welsh language in Welsh parishes:

Or who, Eliza, sing thy golden reign,
When pastors fed their flocks on Cambria's plain,
And drove them to their fold with faithful care,
And taught th'unwary stragglers to beware.
Great was your Country's Love, ye studious few,
Who brought to light what Bards initiate knew[...]³⁰⁴

The Welsh lexicographers are held in similar esteem to those such as Morgan and Salesbury who translated the Bible into Welsh – all in the Elizabethan age viewed as a golden age by the Morrisian circle. As it is represented in the General Heads for Discussion of the Cymmrodorion Society:

Of the Decline of *Welsh* Poetry upon the Death of Queen *Elizabeth*: not one Poem having been well wrote since, till the present Age: with a Guess at the Reason of it.³⁰⁵

This zenith of Welsh-language learning and "happy union with the valorous English" contrasts so sharply with Evans's contemporary experience of the state of Welsh learning and Church anti-Welsh bias, that the suppressed rage of the earlier sections of the poem spills over by the end of the poem into a full-blown attack on the Anglo-Welsh prelates, who become "strangers" intruding into the Welsh fold. The prospect that Evans has attempted to view, using a landscape genre to take in a vista of history,

³⁰³ See e.g. Scott Mandelbrote, 'The Bible and National Identity in the British Isles, c. 1650-1750', in Tony Claydon and Ian McBride (ed.), *Protestantism and National Identity : Britain and Ireland, c.1650-c.1850* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 157.

³⁰⁴ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 143.

³⁰⁵ Jenkins and Ramage, *A History of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion and of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies, 1751-1951*, p. 242.

and written in English in an attempt to link the whole, disintegrates into an anguished strain of complaint:

Mourn, Cambria! mourn, thy wretched state deplore –
 Those golden days, alas! are now no more;
 Like Israel's hapless sons, in plaintive strain,
 Of sore captivity to Heaven complain –
 Thy sheep for want of shepherds go astray,
 And grievous wolves upon thy mountains prey.³⁰⁶

The comparison with the earlier *Paraphrase* is plain, and undermines the author's commitment to the Anglican as a (pan-) British church. Any perceived internal coherence in Evans's *Prydeindod* cannot survive the clash with the truth of the situation, resulting in the seeming disjoint between the final two sections of the work and the rest of the poem. The "Tudor myth" is the point where the whole breaks down, as those monarchs who might have been thought to fulfil the prophecies of reclamation of the island instead, in the main, fuelled the Anglicisation of the gentry, and subsequently, despite the Welsh-language Bible, the church. The centre of the belief in *Prydeindod* cannot hold under these circumstances, and Evans is left, both in his life and his attempts at English-language poetry, fractured and unpatronised.

v – Thomas Percy and Evan Evans – correspondence

The correspondence of Thomas Percy (1729–1811), later Bishop of Dromore, and Evan Evans, between 1761 and 1776, illuminates particular aspects of Evans' thought on his conception of his country. Percy's correspondence with Evans was often that of equals, as Evans held knowledge to which Percy had no other access.

Tho' I have not the happiness to understand, yet I have a great veneration for, the ancient Language of this Island; and have always had a great desire to see some of the most early and original productions in it :- I could never yet obtain

³⁰⁶ Evans, *Gwaith y Parchedig Evan Evans, Ieuan Brydydd Hir*, p. 144.

a proper gratification of this desire : for to their shame be it spoken, most of your countrymen instead of vindicating their ancient and truly venerable mother-tongue from that contempt which is only the result of ignorance, rather encourage it, by endeavouring to forget it themselves.³⁰⁷

Percy had been introduced into correspondence with Evans via Rice Williams (c. 1723-91), then Rector of Weston-under-Lizard, Staffordshire, in connection with a planned project to “exhibit specimens of the poetry of various nations in a series of literal translations.”³⁰⁸ This was to be a series of literal translations of the poetry of languages little known to the general public, such as Arabic, East-Indian, Peruvian and Scandinavian, and he initially desired that Welsh be included in this scheme.

Evans and Percy’s relationship was not straightforward. On the one hand, Evans was the leading authority on the ancient Welsh poetry, and could supply information on that subject to Percy with complete confidence. This is in marked contrast to Evans' correspondence with the Morris brothers and their circle. They were older and had been students of antiquities for longer, and took the role of intellectual and bardic patrons to him, such that he as the younger scholar would have frequently to justify himself to them, intellectually and morally. Lewis had too many projects ongoing to be able to finish his *magnum opus*, and the younger bard soon outstripped his mentor. The relationship between the two never changed as a result of this, however, and Lewis continued to talk of and to Evans as if to one of his unruly “blockheaded” sons. Thus his correspondence with Percy must have been a liberating experience for the young bard. Whereas he himself would only very rarely criticise those who appeared above him in the circle, Percy had no need to feel such constraint,

³⁰⁷ Evans and Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, p. 1.

³⁰⁸ *ibid.* p. v. See also D.E. Williams, 'Rice Williams : The Contact between Thomas Percy and Evan Evans', *National Library of Wales Journal*, Vol. XVII (No. 3, 1972)

and was consequently free to take issue with Goronwy Owen's poetical criticism, sent to him by Evans, for example.³⁰⁹ The Morrisians, and Lewis especially, came in their turn to be deeply envious of Evans' connections with the great and good of English letters.

On the other hand, such was the disparity in their social stations and situations that Evans would often send letters begging Percy to use his influence with the church hierarchy to procure him a better living, or introductions to influential patrons. Their only meeting was recorded by Percy in his Journal on May 23rd, 1767 – "Evan Evans the Welsh author called on me in the evening and borrowed five Guineas."³¹⁰ No mention is ever made of the guineas being returned. In many ways, their relationship mirrors the equivocal relations between Wales and England during the heyday of the antiquarian movement. For the Welsh, in the personæ of the Ancient Britons, were seen as the original inhabitants of the island, and therefore held a position of venerable elders of the isle in the eyes of many antiquarians. Wales' star had, however, dwindled politically since the Saxon invasion, and, as we have already seen, the Welsh were ridiculed as the social inferiors of the English. This attitude to the Welsh and their history culminated in Matthew Arnold's later essays on Celtic

Literature:

For all modern purposes [...] let the Welshman speak English, and, if he is an author, let him write English. [...] What it *has* been, what it *has* done, let [Wales] ask us to attend to that, as a matter of science and history [...] if it can get itself thoroughly known as an object of science, it may count for a good deal [...] as a spiritual power.³¹¹

³⁰⁹ Evans and Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, p. 13.

³¹⁰ Quoted in *ibid.* p. xxv.

³¹¹ Arnold, *The Study of Celtic Literature*, p. 11-13.

As can be seen in the initial quotation from their correspondence above, Percy lit immediately on a formulation that was guaranteed to elicit Evans' sympathies, and therefore his interest in the project: that of the neglect of the Welsh language by those who had in ages past helped sustain it. In his reply, Evans concurs.

[S]eeing that our poetry and antiquities have been so undeservedly disregarded by our own countrymen, tis no wonder that strangers have been so rude to us as to deny and call in question all our antient monuments.³¹²

The neglect of antiquities by the Welsh nobility was a well-worn topic in the Morrisian letters, but it must have been unusually noteworthy in a letter from an English antiquary. Further to sweeten his '*voluntier* Letter', Percy satirises the forward Scots, who are

everywhere recommending the antiquities of their country to public notice, vindicating it's history, setting off it's poetry, and by constant attention to their grand national concern have prevailed so far as to have the Dialect they speak to be considered as the most proper language for our pastoral poetry.³¹³

In the early 1760s, Macpherson published a series of works which he claimed to be his translations of the works of the ancient poet Ossian. Beginning with *Fragments of Poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland* (1760), these works took the literary world by storm for their primitive sublimity, but also unleashed controversy as readers debated whether these works were genuine or new-minted. The Morrisians despised the works of Macpherson, his admirers and imitators, dismissing it as an arrant fraud almost from its first appearance.³¹⁴ As has already been seen, Evans' decision to include the originals of his texts in the *Specimens* was a direct response to the Ossian

³¹² Evans and Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, p. 9.

³¹³ *ibid.* p. 2.

³¹⁴ See M. -A Constantine, 'Ossian in Wales and Brittany', in H. Gaskill (ed.), *The Reception of Ossian in Europe, the Athlone Critical Traditions Series. the Reception of British Authors in Europe ; v. 5* (London, 2004)

poems, though the collection had been planned before Macpherson's arrival in the world of letters. It is certain that a good deal of the derision poured on the head of *Maccwy'r Person* (the parson's page, a pun on Macpherson's name) stemmed from envy of the general popularity of the antiquities of Scotland. Crucially, Percy shies away from outright condemnation of this popularity, but instead suggests that the Welsh join in as a way of beating the Scots at their own game:

Far from blaming this attention in the Scotch, I think it much to their credit, and am sorry that a large class of our fellow subjects, with whom we were united in the most intimate Union for many ages before Scotland ceased to be our inveterate enemy, have not shewn the same respect to the peculiarities of their own Country, but by supineness and neglect, have suffered a foolish and inveterate prejudice to root itself in the minds of their *com-patriotes* the English.³¹⁵

There is enough ambiguity here as to who is to blame for the "neglect" of Welsh antiquities that it was difficult for Evans to disagree, as we have already seen. Percy acknowledges the prejudice of the English against the Welsh, but owns that it is itself the fault of the Welsh. He does not investigate the possible causes for such neglect from the traditional guardians of Welsh culture, but glosses over any conflict between them and the English by invoking the earlier "intimate Union" of the two countries. It is indicative of the conflict of identities which was to fuel Evans' eventual downfall that he could accept without question the advantageousness of the Tudor incorporation of Wales, in common with the rest of the Morrisians, whilst lamenting the problems caused by the anglicisation of the country which was the side-effect of Union. In Percy's second letter, he ventures to state more boldly how far the two countries are united.

³¹⁵ Evans and Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, p. 2.

Your nation and ours is now happily consolidated in one firm indissoluble mass, and it is of very little importance, whether *Llewellen* or *Edward* had the advantage in such a particular encounter, at least very few (even learned and inquisitive) readers will interest themselves in such an inquiry.³¹⁶

In other words, the facts of the past are so much history; of more importance are the “productions of Genius” in and of themselves, not as they throw light on historic events.

Even curious and inquisitive, as you are yourself, into Historical Facts, let me ask you, if you would be willing to read 800 pages in folio, in a barbarous literal Latin version, concerning the exploits of King *Haquin Jarli* [...] and of twenty other valiant barbarians.

Yet when you come to read the native, undenied poetic descriptions of the ancient Runic Bards [...] I defy the most torpid reader not to be animated and affected. [...] In like manner, with regard to your own *Owain Gwynedd*: without intending the least disrespect to so valiant a prince; I believe few readers will desire to know any farther of his History, than as it will serve for Comment to *Gwalchmai*'s very sublime and animated Ode concerning him.³¹⁷

Evans' rejoinder is that the Bards “acted the part of historians as well as poets,”³¹⁸ citing classical – and therefore irrefutable – authorities for this view. In effect, the poems require the historical context in order to be properly understood, as the poetry and the history are indissoluble.

What does emerge through the course of the correspondence is a dialogue between the two poetical antiquaries as to the nature of British poetical history. Percy had contemplated writing the history of British poetry, a task which was ultimately undertaken by Thomas Warton, the Poet Laureate, in his three-volume *The History of English Poetry* (1774-81). Percy and Evans' correspondence enacts in miniature the contemporary debate over the primacy of the Goths and Saxons on the one hand, and

³¹⁶ *ibid.* p. 16.

³¹⁷ *ibid.* p. 17.

³¹⁸ *ibid.* p. 25.

the Ancient Britons on the other, in shaping the poetical Genius of Britain. For Evans and Percy, this boils down to debating the origins of consonantal alliteration. In trading pieces of Welsh and Runic poetry between each other, Evans remarks that they “very much resemble [...] some of the most ancient pieces we have in our language.”³¹⁹ Percy concurs:

I observe, with you, a remarkable similarity between the Old Runic and your British pieces.³²⁰

By 1764, Evans’ *Specimens* was at the press. Evans by now evidently felt confident enough to be more forceful in his assertions of the primacy of consonantal alliteration in the Welsh over the Scaldic or the English. The close resemblance of the earlier letter gives way to a more equivocal criticism.

I find a faint resemblance of our *cynghanedd* or *symphonia consonantica*. And as you say it is the prosody of the ancient Scaldi of the North, it is to me I own a discovery. For I always thought that method of writing peculiar to our nation and the *Irish*, who seem to have it in some measure. That the *English* had it very early I am persuaded by a passage in *Giraldus Cambrensis*[...] ³²¹

He continues in this letter to explain *cynghanedd* by example, using Hywel Swrdwal’s English-language ode detailed in the Introduction, above, saying that “It will give you a truer Idea of our prosody than any thing I can say upon the subject.” Percy’s rejoinder is, however, to suggest that the Welsh brought their alliteration from the Scalds:

[...] this makes me suspect that your old poets formed their prosody after the Model of Scandrian Scalds; men, who if we may believe the Northern

³¹⁹ *ibid.* p. 28.

³²⁰ *ibid.* p. 30.

³²¹ *ibid.* pp. 56-7.

Histories were sought for and carressed [sic] by the *British* as well as the *Saxon* Princes of this Island.³²²

Percy attempts tactfully to suggest, not the primacy of the Saxon poesy over the Welsh, but that both in fact received it from another, outside, and older, source. Evans refutes this unequivocally in his response, in a passage Percy marked for particular attention and included in his *Northern Antiquities* of 1770.

I can by no means think that our Bards have borrowed their Alliteration from the Scalds of the North, for there are traces of it in some very old pieces of the Druids still extant, which I am persuaded are older than the introduction of Christianity and before we had any commerce or intercourse with any of the inhabitants of Scandinavia or any branch of the Gothic race whatsoever.³²³

Unwilling to concede his point in its totality, in his response Percy again suggests a reading of *Wormij Literatura Runica*, being “well assured it would throw great light on your ancient British Metre, whether you consider the *Scalds*, as the originals or copyists only.”³²⁴ In the *Northern Antiquities* he is more forthright on this point.

I am led to think that the latter Welsh BARDS might possibly have been excited to cultivate the alliterative versification more strictly, from the example of the Icelandic SCALDS, and their imitators the Anglo-Saxon Poets; because the more ancient British Bards were nothing near so exact and strict in their alliterations, as those of the middle and latter ages; [...] whereas some centuries before this, the Icelandic metre had been brought to the highest pitch of alliterative exactness. This conjecture, however, that the Welsh Bards borrowed any thing from the Poets of any other country, will hardly be allowed me by the British Antiquaries, who, from a laudable partiality, are jealous of the honour of their countrymen.³²⁵

³²² *ibid.* p. 64.

³²³ *ibid.* pp. 64-5.

³²⁴ *ibid.* p. 73.

³²⁵ P.H. Mallet, T. Percy, et al., *Northern Antiquities: Or, A Description of the Manners, Customs, Religion and Laws of the Ancient Danes, and Other Northern Nations; Including those of our Own Saxon Ancestors : With a Translation of the Edda, Or System of Runic Mythology, and Other Pieces, from the Ancient Icelandic Tongue. in Two Volumes.* (London:, 1770), pp. 197-8.

The tone of this passage seems to damn with faint praise the “laudable partiality” of Welsh antiquaries, presumably with the specific case of Evans in mind here. Four pages of his letter of March 8th, 1764 (quoted above) go to defending the Celtic races “now extant viz the British Irish Armoric Cornish and Manks”³²⁶ against the charge of borrowing their *cynganedd* from the Scalds, citing Dr. John Davies Mallwyd and Edward Lhuyd in his defence, as well as noting that Percy himself in his *Runic Poetry* had allowed that the Scalds took their word for poet from the Celts. Following this tour de force of evidence, he declares a sonnet by the fifteenth-century Earl Rivers, sent with the previous letter, to be “composed on the British model” of *Huppynt hir* as a casual comment, and recommends Lewis Morris’ preface to the *Diddanwch Teuluaidd* wherein Percy might learn more. Neither side is willing to concede the point – though Evans agrees to an emendation of Sion Dafydd Rhys’ assertion in *Linguae Cymricae Institutiones Accurate* that “alliteration was peculiar to the Welsh only.” He compares the metres to that of *Piers Plowman*, and finally declares that

They [the metres and alliteration] are past all doubt borrowed from the old Scalds, who in all probability borrowed it from the Celtic Bards, for it is still in use in all the branches of the Celtic language extant, but carried by none to that refined pitch that the Welsh Bards have done.³²⁷

This tussle continues between the two until the close of their correspondence; Percy producing evidence for the primacy of the Scaldic alliteration, Evans denying the primacy of any but the Celtic Bards. Each attempts to lay claim to the origin and the genealogy of British poetry, the Gothic faction represented by Percy versus the Aboriginal Briton faction represented by Evans. This represented a refinement on previous writers on the subject, such as Mallet, who referred to all the European

³²⁶ Evans and Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, p. 67.

³²⁷ *ibid.* p. 82.

peoples as Goths – Percy was to correct this assumption, under Evans’ influence, in his translation of the *Northern Antiquities*. But who engendered the poetic genius of the island was not a question easily settled, and the Welsh did not gain the upper hand in this battle until the Druidomania of the 1790s, and the fertile brain of Iolo Morganwg, as we will see.

vi – “Names enough to choak you”³²⁸

Elsewhere in the correspondence, Percy offers strange counsel to Evans, inspired by his reading of *Ossian*.

[...]if you would not think it too great an innovation, I could wish you would accommodate some of your ancient British names, somewhat more to our English pronunciation : This is what the Erse translator has done, and I think with great judgment. The word might be a little smoothed and liquidated in the text, and the original spelling retained in the margin. Thus Macpherson has converted *Lambhdearg* into *Lamderg*, *Gealchossack*, a woman’s name, into the soft word *Gealcossa &c, &c, &c*. This is a liberty assumed in all languages and indeed without it, it would not be possible for the inhabitants of one nation to pronounce the proper names of another.³²⁹

This provides a contrast to Lewis Morris’ thoughts on proper nouns in the pastoral.

Where Morris advised cymricising the classical names of shepherds and shepherdesses, Percy advises further accommodations to cater to the public – and specifically the English public – taste. Of course, anglicising Celtic names was no innovation, as can be seen by considering for instance Camden’s *Britannia* of a century and a half earlier, and Edward Lhuyd’s response to it at the end of the seventeenth century.

Percy here shows shrewdness in his knowledge of the marketplace and the taste of the (English) reading public. It is a pragmatic recommendation, born of the

³²⁸ T. Gray, *Correspondence of Thomas Gray* (Oxford, 1971; 1935), pp. 501-2.

³²⁹ Evans and Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, pp. 32-3.

need to win the recognition that Evans and the poetry he had rescued deserved. Yet the “lamentable tendency,” in Gwyn Alf Williams’ phrase, of the English to deride as foreign anything in a language they do not understand is also present in the request for a more acceptably polite pronunciation. There is an unwillingness to accept unchanged any foreign names and places; they have to be subservient to English spellings and pronunciations. Percy is guileful in suggesting that this is a folly on the part of the English, as the public simply would not accept unchanged the presence of linguistic markers of difference within the new Britain. In spite of Percy’s assertion that “our most polite Ladies warble Scottish Airs,”³³⁰ such Scotticisms were only acceptable if Anglicised. As the teaching of Belles Lettres in Edinburgh showed, Scotland had to re-invent itself as a polite version of itself in certain respects for the eyes of the English before becoming accepted. During the course of Percy’s and Evans’ correspondence, Sheridan’s *Course of Lectures on Elocution* and Home’s *Elements of Criticism* (1762) were published, a defining moment in the development of the degree courses in Edinburgh. In the wake of Scottish concern with becoming fully involved with Britain after the Jacobite rebellion, the emphasis was on adopting English forms and rejecting dialect in order to improve and advance within the emerging empire.³³¹

Wales and the Welsh never did this to the same extent – Evans left the proper nouns in his *Specimens* exactly as they were – and never to the same extent and duration as *Ossian* captured the popular imagination. Such liquefaction arguably facilitated the sweeping success of Macpherson’s *Ossian* volumes, being foreign

³³⁰ *ibid.* p. 2.

³³¹ R. Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Edinburgh, 2000), Crawford, *The Scottish Invention of English Literature*

enough to provide a pleasing exoticism, but English enough not to discourage its readers. Indeed, it has been argued that it was conceived as an English piece in its epic form, with its Gaelic oral fragments grafted onto it *post facto*.³³² Evans was a conscientious scholar, “honest and guileless”,³³³ faithful to Lewis Morris’ advice that “a small matter well wrote is better than a great matter ill wrote.” Copying and collating, leaving lacunae where the matter was dark to him, he refused to bow to the pressure of populism. This is in stark contrast with Iolo Morganwg later in the century, who was popular and flashy (as Lewis Morris said of Macpherson), but whose poetry and histories were almost entirely fabricated to appeal to the public taste. Although he, like the rest of the Morrisians, needed the approval and recognition of the English in order to validate the Welsh position in Britain – both the modern nation, and the historic community of British poets – Evans did the least in practical terms to conform to an Anglo-British identity.

Throughout the correspondence, it is clear that Evans and Percy are discussing at cross-purposes. That is to say, the volume that Percy is encouraging Evans to write is not the volume that Evans himself has in mind. The public taste being Percy’s area of expertise, he attempts to form the putative *Specimens* into a volume lying somewhere between Macpherson’s *Fragments* and his own *Reliques*.

You have probably heard what a favourable reception the public has given to an English version of some *Erse* Fragments imported from the Highlands of Scotland [...] -- I am verily persuaded an elegant translation of some curious

³³² M. Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain : Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685-1789* (Basingstoke, 1997)

³³³ “Myfyriwr gonest, didwyll” - G.J. Williams, *Agweddau Ar Hanes Dysg Gymraeg : Detholiad o Ddarlithiau G.J. Williams* (Caerdydd Cardiff, 1969), p. 106.

pieces of ancient British Poetry would be as well received, if executed in the same manner.³³⁴

He also suggests publishing the Welsh poems as part of a series of penny pamphlets, along with his poetry of other lands, which could be bound as one “when their time has passed.” Percy then goes on to recommend his own publisher, Dodsley, and promise an introduction. However, he was not Evans’ first or only confidant on the matter of the *De Bardis Dissertatio*, the Latin essay on the history of the Welsh bards which appeared in the *Specimens*. Evans had long been in contact with Daines Barrington (1727-1800), and had shown him the *Dissertatio*. It was Barrington who had encouraged Evans’ Latin translations of the Henfeirdd and shown them to Gray, from whom Percy had also heard regarding the Welsh poetry.³³⁵ Evans had also shown the *Dissertatio* to Richard Morris, Lewis’ brother, and offered it him to publish under the auspices of the Cymmrodorion society for the price of eight or ten pounds for his ‘pains in compiling it.’ This offer prompted a characteristically sour response from a piqued and envious Lewis, and was ultimately rejected.³³⁶ The costs of printing were ultimately borne by Richard Morris and Daines Barrington in the first instance, and not long after, Evans sold the copyright of his magnum opus to Robert Dodsley, the bookseller, for a meagre sum that was soon spent. Dodsley, it would appear, agreed to publish the *Specimens* through the mediation, and with the financial

³³⁴ Evans and Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, p. 2-3. Final emphasis mine.

³³⁵ See Lewis, *Ieuan Fardd a'r Llenorion Saesneg*, pp. 172-92.

³³⁶ Morris, Morris, et al., *The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William and John Morris of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid Mon) 1728-1765*, p. 344.

backing of, Daines Barrington, rather than Thomas Percy.³³⁷ Percy himself was, at the time, in protracted discussions with Dodsley as to the title and the contents of his proposed *Reliques*. Dodsley remained the most obvious place to issue Evans' *Specimens*, notwithstanding the protracted tussle over the *Reliques*.³³⁸ Having published all of Percy's previous works from different countries, including the Chinese *Hau Kiou Chouaan* (1761) and the *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* (1763), the Dodsley imprint was sure to lend a the *Specimens* a more favourable aspect as a work in a series than it might otherwise have held. This is not to say that Percy had no influence on the *Specimens*, or that Evans ignored all his advice. Charlotte Johnston notes that

[...] Barrington's advice to provide literal Latin glosses was overruled by Percy's insistence that the translations of the Welsh originals in the *Specimens* should be into English. In the *Dissertatio* only the Latin glosses are given, in keeping with Evans' aim to reach a scholarly rather than a wide audience, a European rather than an English circle.³³⁹

Specimens has far more in common with Edward Lhuyd's *Archaeologia Britannica* than it does with Percy's *Reliques*. Indeed, had Moses Williams managed to publish his projected volume of middle Welsh prose romances,³⁴⁰ the trilogy which would have resulted from them would have far surpassed the flawed *Myvyrian Archaeology* of the next century. Conceptually, they are of a piece, and it appears that

³³⁷ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrisises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 601.

³³⁸ H.M. Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley : Creating the New Age of Print* (Carbondale, 1996), pp.244-6.

³³⁹ Johnston, *Evan Evans: Dissertatio De Bardis*, pp. 64-91. See also Evans and Percy, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, pp. 160-1.

³⁴⁰ See Williams, *Agweddu Ar Hanes Dysg Gymraeg : Detholiad o Ddarlithiau G.J. Williams*, pp. 97-100.

Evans was looking far more to the *Archaeologia* than the *Reliques*, for his bent was more towards the scholarly than the popular. From the expensive physical appearance of the volume – it was known colloquially in Welsh as *y bais wen*, the white petticoat, for the generous margins around the text – to the content, Lhuyd’s influence is clear. The tripartite linguistic construction (English, Welsh, Latin) is the most obvious legacy of the *Archaeologia*, and as Charlotte Johnston notes above, in this it is the heir to the Renaissance Welsh humanist tradition, which looked more to Europe than to England. Evans presents, as Lhuyd does, three introductions to the poetry of the Henfeirdd, one in English, the Latin *Dissertatio*, and a Welsh-language section with the same title as Lhuyd’s Welsh preface, *At y Kymry/Cymry*. And like Lhuyd, Evans feels freer to speak more plainly about the inspiration behind the volume, his opinions on the English, and about the Ossian controversy. Lhuyd uses his Welsh preface to castigate the English writers Humphrey Wanley and Dr. Hicks for denying that the Ancient Britons had the use of letters first, and that the Saxons received the skill from St. Augustine, adding:

Ni chrybwylles am hyn in i rhagymadrodd Seisnig, rhag kinhirvy muy bar a llid nag a dele’r vath chuiuleidrad; ond mi a gihoedder i baub, gan ddangos i nod, i buy a perthine’r da.

[I have not mentioned this in my English preface, lest it should raise more indignation and rage than such a petty larceny was worth; but I have published to all, by showing the marks, to whom the goods belong.]³⁴¹

It is implied that the English are just as partisan as they claim the Celts to be, loving their country better than truth. By publishing the linguistic remains, much as he published fossilised remains in his *Lithophylacii* (1699), he put the evidence in the public domain in a fashion he hoped could not be denied. Similarly, in the Welsh

³⁴¹ Lhuyd, *Archaeologia Britannica*, sig. d.3.

preface, Evans is stronger in his complaints about Macpherson than he ever was in English. Percy noted that he was too self-effacing on this topic, a criticism reiterated by modern critics such as Thomas Curley.³⁴² Yet had his critics been able to read Welsh, they would have found Evans a trenchant critic of the Erse poems. Like Lhuyd, though, Evans hoped that publishing the evidence would lead his readers to the inevitable conclusion.

Lhuyd also defends himself against English critics who declared that such a work about the Celtic languages was of little interest or use, noting

Nid oes gen i bellach faur i achuanegy, ond bod in angenrheidiol ribiddio'r darllynydd nad idyu neb yn rhumedig i thal rhyly ar varn in i byd in erbyn i llivyr ima, oni bydd i gwr ai gogano, in deall heblau Lladin a Saesneg, naill ai Kymraeg, ai Llidaueg, ai iaith Kerniu, ai Guyddeleg. Mi ai k'nigies i amryu o Livruyr Llynden, os guelent in dda i gihoeddi. Ond gan na chimerent mo hono, mi ai hargraffes ar inghost vi hynan. [...] A minych a cluir nid in inig in i Llivirday, eithyr heblau hini meun imbell Goffdy, uyr in dirmigy llivre, er na ddeallant nai histyr, nai guasaneth, Ni ddichon neb on naill ai Guyr o Gimry, ai o Ycheldir ir Alban, ai o'r 'Uerddon vod varnur kivaddas ar i llivyr ima: Ag urth varnaskolheigion i gu'edydd hiny, os imarverant a iaith i bro, heblau Ieithoedd erill, ir iduy'n vodlon i sefill : Ond am ri rhai erill ai kentho, pob gur a garo buyll a chiviounder, a givaddev nad oes na rhaid nag achos yu gurando. [I have now but little to add, but that 'tis necessary to caution the Reader that no Man is obliged to regard any Censure against this Book, unless the Gentleman that offers it, understands, beside English and Latin, either Welsh, Armoric, British, Cornish or Irish. I offered it to several of the London Booksellers for them to publish, if they thought fit. But as they would not undertake it, I have printed it at my own expense. [...] Indeed, it is very common not only in some Booksellers' shops, but also in some coffee-houses to hear men disparage new Books, though they neither understand the nature nor the use of them. None can be competent judges of this, but Gentlemen of Wales or the highlands of Scotland or of Ireland; and in the censure of scholars that are natives of those countries, provided that besides their knowledge of other languages, they continue masters of their own. But for others that pretend to find fault themselves, or to offer the objections of absent people, all

³⁴² T.M. Curley, *Samuel Johnson, the Ossian Fraud and the Celtic Revival in Great Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2009)

lovers of reason and justice acknowledge that there is no reason to listen to them.]³⁴³

In a similar manner, Evans' Welsh preface is concerned with the primacy of literature (rather than with the practice of letters) in the British Isles. His nemeses in the 1760s are the English critics, and Macpherson. As with Lhuyd above, the majority of those who criticise are noted to be speaking of what they do not know. The water is further muddied for these ignorant critics by Evans' suspicions that Macpherson was not all he appeared:

Ond gan i'r Saeson daeru, na feddwn ddim mewn prydyddiaeth a dal ei ddangos; mi a wnaethum fy ngorau er cyfieithu y Casgliad bychan yma, i fwrw heibio, os yw bossibl, y gogan hwnnw [...] Heblaw hyn oll, i mae hyn o waith yn dyfod i'r byd, mewn amser anghyfaddas i ymddangos mewn dim prydfferthwch; o herwydd i mae un o drigolion Uch Alban, gwedi gosod allan ddau lyfr o waith Ossian ; hen Fardd, meddai ef, cyn dyfod Cristianogaeth i'w plith. Ac i mae'r llyfrau hyn mewn rhagorbarch gan foneddigion dysgedig y Saeson. A rhaid addef eu bod wedi eu cyfieithu yn odidog : ond i mae arnafi ofn, wedi'r cwbl, fod yr Ysgodog yn bwrw hug ar lygaid dynion, ac nad ydynt mor hen ag i mae ef yn taeru eu bod.

[But because the English swear, that we have nothing in poetry which is worth showing; I did my best in translating this small collection, to knock aside, if possible, that defamation [...] Besides all of this, this much work comes into the world, at a time when it is impossible for it to appear with any beauty; for one of the inhabitants of the Scottish Highlands, has brought out two books of the works of Ossian; an old Bard, he says, before the arrival of Christianity in their midst. These two books are held in great esteem by the learned Gentlemen of England. And it must be confessed that they have been translated magnificently: but I fear, after all, that the Scot is throwing a cape over people's eyes, and that they are not as old as he claims them to be.]³⁴⁴

The preoccupations of Welsh authors presenting the history and literature of their country to outside eyes barely changes in the half century between Lhuyd's work and Evans'. Certainly, both Evans and Lhuyd produced work of significant scholarly merit, but not of great public popularity. Evans characterises Macpherson's

³⁴³ Lhuyd, *Archæologia Britannica*, sig. e.3.

³⁴⁴ Evans, *Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards*, p. 104.

translation as *llathraidd*, bright, but also meaning smooth. This certainly echoes Percy's instructions to liquefy the language, but implies far more censure than Percy, who is certainly one of the 'learned gentlemen' referred to above. Evans uses the same phrase earlier in the Welsh preface when speaking of those who encouraged him to publish the *Specimens*. This is, I believe, a deliberate echo, intended to highlight the discrepancy in attitude towards the two countries' antiquities. For though Percy, Gray, and Barrington encouraged Evans' studies, the former two were set "agog after the Welsh" to see if it had "anything equal" to the Scots.³⁴⁵ For the general public and the majority of antiquaries, the attitude was that Wales had nothing to contribute to the sum total of human knowledge regarding the history of the new state of Britain. The *Specimens* failed to change this attitude wholesale; as Percy had implied, polite society wanted a Welsh Ossian, a thing which Evans was too conscientious to give it. He did, however, preserve a great deal of fragile material, raise awareness of Wales, and pave the way for Iolo Morganwg's efforts to provide England with the "flashing translations" which Evans' publication lacked.

³⁴⁵ Morris, Morris, et al., *The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William and John Morris of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid Mon) 1728-1765*, p. 547.

Chapter 3 – Edward Williams

i – Introduction

Iolo Morgannwg [*sic*] [...] one of the most radical of Welsh writers at the end of the eighteenth century, routinely referred to Welsh and English as being his two *native* languages. He was binational just as he was bilingual.³⁴⁶

Linda Colley's assertion of Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg)'s binationality is based on the knowledge of his bilingualism. Yet it is necessary to be cautious in making such assumptions about his national and political identifications. His bilingualism and ability to shift between languages are closely linked to the multiple personæ that he carefully constructed for himself.³⁴⁷ Far from straddling his binationality comfortably, as the Morrisians were able to do, this self-division is a source of perpetual internal conflict, culminating in his greatest mental crisis in the early 1790s.

Iolo Morganwg is the only major Welsh literary figure in this study whose first language was not Welsh, although Prys Morgan informs us that Welsh was “the language of his literary awakening.”³⁴⁸ Iolo admits as much in his autobiographical preface to his 1794 collection, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, writing

My first attempts in Poetry were in Welsh, that being the country *vernaculum*, though English was the language of my father's house.

As with all Iolo's autobiographical assertions, he shapes his persona according to the needs of his audience; in this case, an English audience who looked for the works of a

³⁴⁶ Colley, *Britons : Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, p. 373.

³⁴⁷ For a consideration of Iolo's personæ and multiple self-fashionings, see D.C. Jones, 'Fictional Selves in the Life and Writings of Edward Williams ('Iolo Morgannwg', 1747-1826)', *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 24 (No. 1, 2008), pp. 29-51.

³⁴⁸ Prys Morgan, 'Williams, Edward (1747-1826)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29498>, accessed 17 Feb 2005]

Welsh bard. However, in Elijah Waring's *Recollections and Anecdotes of Edward Williams* (1850), it is stated that "Welsh was the language of his father's house."³⁴⁹ This would seem to suggest a true bilingualism, perhaps leading to the assertion made by Glanmor Williams, followed by Colley above, that these were both his "native" languages. It is certain, in spite of this ambiguity, that his early literary companions were strict-metre Welsh language poets, and his Welsh poetry shows a greater technical skill than does his English.³⁵⁰ For a time during the 1790s, in the "wilderness'd business" of publishing his volumes, he made a concerted effort to succeed as an English-language lyrical poet.³⁵¹ This episode in his life is often seen as a strange aberration, abandoned almost as soon as it was begun; yet from the beginning of his poetical career, Iolo wrote English verse alongside his Welsh. His first poem published in England was an ode to "The Cuckoo", which appeared in an edition of the *Town and Country Magazine* of 1775, and scattered throughout his papers in the National Library of Wales are English-language poems and squibs spanning his entire literary career, as well as many English-language reports, essays, and draft, unpublished prose works. The majority of his correspondence is in English, and his use of the language led some of his correspondents to chastise him for not writing in "pure, shining Welsh."³⁵²

³⁴⁹ E. Waring, *Recollections and Anecdotes of Edward Williams the Bard of Glamorgan; Or, Iolo Morganwg* (Lond. &c., 1850), p. 25.

³⁵⁰ See G.J. Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (Caerdydd, 1948).

³⁵¹ Mary-Ann Constantine, "this Wilderness'd Business of Publication': The Making of Poems, Lyric and Pastoral (1794)", in Jenkins (ed.), *A Rattleskull Genius: The Many Faces of Iolo Morganwg* ([1] vols., Cardiff, 2005), pp. 123-45.

³⁵² I. Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff, 2007), p. 241.

There is evidence of an early interest in the English tradition in Wales in an early letter (April 1779) to Evan Evans, of which only a fragment has survived. It appears that Evans had given an account of Welsh histories to Iolo, who returns with the question

Are any of them in the English language, for this language was spoken of pretty generally in many parts of Wales so far back as the 13th century.³⁵³

He further enquires:

Can you inform me when the English language began [--] popularly spoken in Wales? In north Wales it was spok[en] [--] the common people in the time of Edward the First, as it appears in [--] papers in the Tower. It was so early spoken I believe in Pembrokeshire, and in Gower in Glamorganshire.³⁵⁴

Iolo also mentions several historical Welsh figures who wrote in English, including Adam Davy (fl. 1308) and Hywel Swrðwal (see above, Introduction and ch.2). One of the more remarkable aspects of this letter is Iolo's continued use of the phrase "your language" to Evans, in relation to Welsh. Correspondingly, he refers to "our modern English ([...] one of the best of modern languages)." He presents himself to Evans as someone with a nearer affinity with English writing than with Welsh (it has already been noted that the majority of his letters are in English). It is at this same time that he begins fabricating poems attributed to Dafydd ap Gwilym. The awareness of the continuity of an English tradition in Wales is unfeigned, however. Iolo's arguments for the Englishness of Wales attempt to reposition a reciprocal cross-border Britishness before the Acts of Union. There is no judgement made regarding the historical place of English in Wales, though it is noted that the language appeared in Wales around the time of Edward I's conquest. Rather, bilingualism seems an

³⁵³ *ibid.* p. 140.

³⁵⁴ *ibid.* p. 142.

accepted norm, according with Iolo's description of his upbringing in the preface to his poetry.

Although they have received some recent attention in the works of Gwyneth Lewis (1992) and Mary-Ann Constantine (2006-8), the *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* have largely been overlooked: if they are not dismissed as an aberration, they are read as the works of a labouring-class poet,³⁵⁵ or as Iolo's mechanical and sycophantic attempts to be accepted by the London literati. Joan-Lluis Marfany finds such dismissals indicative of the treatment of dominant-language output by minority-language writers:

Unfortunately, historians of minority-language literatures make a habit of ignoring the existence, in the relevant region, of any literature in the dominant language, even when written by the very authors they study. Or, if they do mention it, it is only in passing, as if of no consequence [...] Of Welsh and Scottish 'bards' too it is only in an incidental way that we are informed, if at all, that they also wrote in English. And wherever explicit reference is made to the output in another language, it is to dismiss it as disappointingly conventional in its subjection to the fashions of the time[...]the trouble with [the writings] of 'Iolo Morganwg' [...] is that 'in English he tries to make himself out to be a model English poet'. But that, precisely, is the point: when rising to the patrician cultural expectations of the day, such men turned to French or English[...] 'If our countrymen write anything that is good, they are sure to do it in English', admitted the Welsh 'bard' Goronwy Owen[...]³⁵⁶

Iolo's personæ are often so contradictory that critics have been led to concentrate on one aspect of his life and work to the exclusion of the contrary positions Iolo holds elsewhere. I suggest that it is these contradictions that hold the key to Iolo's conception of his nation and his identity.

ii – Two literary traditions

³⁵⁵ See, for instance, *Eighteenth-Century English Labouring-Class Poets 1700-1800*, ed. Christmas et. al. (London, 2003)

³⁵⁶ Marfany, *'Minority' Languages and Literary Revivals*, pp. 50-1.

When he went into England in the early 1790s to publish his volumes of English-language poetry, two Iolos were presented to the public. One was the last of the ancient British Bards, Iolo Morganwg, final remaining descendant of an ancient lineage of Bardo-Druids, keeper of ancient mysteries of poetry, metempsychotic theology, and mythological rites of the Island of Britain. The second was Edward Williams, “absolutely self-taught... sober, and industrious” plebeian poet in the mould of Stephen Duck and Anne Yearsley. Both Iolos were introduced to the English literary world in the almost-certainly pseudonymous, highly exaggerated letter of ‘J.D.’ to the *Gentleman’s Magazine* of November, 1789, and both vie for supremacy in the collection. This is the root of the confusedness of the volume, which careers from pastoral lyric to Jacobinical verse, via excursions into Druidical history and Welsh etymology, liberally peppered with “king-flogging notes” and personal attacks on perceived enemies. This diversity perhaps enacts the confused relation of the Anglo-Welsh writer to the dominant culture with which he attempts to engage.

In *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* (1794), Iolo Morganwg – as Edward Williams – begins by consciously marketing himself as a “labouring-class poet”. Christmas notes that

following [Stephen] Duck’s unprecedented success, the status of laborer served as a form of symbolic capital in the literary marketplace.³⁵⁷

We know from recent critical works, such as those by Christmas and Goodridge, that plebeian poetry and publishing constituted a phenomenon throughout the eighteenth century, from Duck through to Clare in the 1820s, rather than the occasional once-a-decade flash in the pan suggested by the overwhelming successes of those few poets,

³⁵⁷ Christmas, *The Lab’Ring Muses : Work, Writing, and the Social Order in English Plebeian Poetry, 1730-1830*, p. 65.

Duck, Yearsley, and Clare. Horace Walpole's famous comment to Hannah More, that "when the late Queen patronized Stephen Duck [...] twenty artisans and labourers turned poets and starved,"³⁵⁸ lends weight to this modern view of the continuity of plebeian publishing history. The literati and public alike were well used to plebeian poets, for whom Duck provides the paradigm, and their continued success and frequent appearances on the pages of such journals as the *Gentleman's Magazine* (of which Iolo was a regular reader) suggests that the public appetite for such productions never completely died out, and perhaps benefited from a growing familiarity with the genre. Certainly publishers sought to create more plebeian poetic phenomena in order to feed the public appetite – over a thousand between 1700 and 1900.³⁵⁹

Gwyneth Lewis, however, argues that Iolo is presenting himself as a novelty:

Iolo's emphasis on the unconventionality of his background for a new English poet stemmed not only from his desire to market himself as a literary novelty, but from a conviction that 'uneducated' writers like himself were making an exciting aesthetic contribution to the exhausted academic tradition in English poetry.³⁶⁰

Yet, as we have noted above, in contrast to the advice Lewis Morris gives to the young Evan Evans, Iolo's pastoral abounds with Strephons and Dorindas, and the scenery is more akin to a weary Arcadia than to the contemporary Wales which might have enlivened the poetry. It is plain that his intent and his execution did not quite match:

³⁵⁸ *ibid.* p. 18.

³⁵⁹ John Goodridge and Bridget Keegan, 'Clare and the Traditions of Labouring-Class Verse', in John Sitter (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 280.

³⁶⁰ Lewis, *Eighteenth-Century Literary Forgeries, with Special Reference to the Work of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 141.

The Author thinks Pastoral a species of Poetry that admits of as great a variety of subjects as any other whatever; and that it is not necessary, in the manner of modern Poets, to confine it solely to Love, and make his *whining swains* ring perpetual changes on the names of

Hard-hearted Phillis,
And cold Amarillis, &c. &c.³⁶¹

But this seems to be precisely what he does do, for the greater part. The *Monthly Review*'s review of the volume laments its use of conventional classical names for the various shepherds and nymphs, noting with puzzlement the gap between Iolo's ambition and his execution:

‘The Holiday Prize’ is no unfavourable specimen of our author’s pastorals. Of the *theory* of bucolic poetry he seems to have a very just idea, from the various passages in his notes relative to that subject. It is strange that, with so rational a dislike to the borrowed forms, recollected terms, and artificial manners, of Pope’s rustics, he should not have given us Welsh or English names instead of Strephon and Phillis; and that he should not have made his shepherds sing for a wager instead of a prize.³⁶²

Iolo's manuscript deliberations on his predecessors in the labouring-class genre imply that he is consciously emulating these poets, and Burns in particular, rather than striving for complete originality:

[...]in the very best of our learned Poets we find a prodigious number of their best thoughts pilfer'd from Virgil, Horace, and many others. let these Geniuses no longer strut about like the Jack daw in borrowed plumes, let them restore to every bird his feathers, and then we shall see them kick the beam when weigh'd against the Bristol Milkwoman or even poor Stephen Duck, Shakespear and the Scotch Plow-man will come terrible Giants to this field of Battle[...]³⁶³

³⁶¹ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p. 173.

³⁶² Anonymous, *Monthly Review, Art IX, 'Poems, Lyric and Pastoral' – Review*, p. 410.

³⁶³ NLW MS 21419E, f. 24

Yet even a cursory glance through the collection reveals that a ‘prodigious number’ of Iolo’s poems borrowed their themes and characters from Virgil and Theocritus. It is probable that these were consulted in the original, as Elijah Waring notes that “his appetite for knowledge” could not be appeased

till he had mastered the rudiments of French, Latin and Greek. With the two former languages he soon became sufficiently familiar, to enable him to consult any French or Latin author with satisfaction.³⁶⁴

In *The Horrors of War*, we are given a version of Virgil’s first Eclogue, wherein a soldier and a shepherd are in dialogue; shepherds compete in verse for *The Holiday Prize*. Iolo is the great emulator, as he proves in his Welsh forgeries, which for many years were taken for the genuine works of other poets (most notably Dafydd ap Gwilym³⁶⁵); his English works are also, unthreateningly, of a piece with traditional pastoral lyric:

Generally speaking[...] Iolo’s English poetry – published in 1794 but in many cases composed much earlier – was heavily influenced by the more learned and literary works of Shenstone, Collins and other pre-Romantics of the mid-eighteenth century. The two volumes of *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, with their curious mix of pastoral rusticity, political radicalism and Iolo’s own brand of druidism, were meant to forge his literary reputation in fashionable London as the Welsh ‘Bard of Liberty’. The Welsh-language poet, on the other hand, had different ambitions, and rarely strived for any great originality of theme or imagery.³⁶⁶

Iolo wears his own “borrowed plumes” in his self-fashioning as a rustic bard. The reviewer for the *Critical Review* noted that “Those who have read Beattie’s *Minstrel*,

³⁶⁴ Waring, *Recollections and Anecdotes of Edward Williams the Bard of Glamorgan; Or, Iolo Morganwg*, p. 25.

³⁶⁵ See G.J. Williams, *Iolo Morganwg a Chywyddau'r Ychwanegiad* (Llundain, 1926)

³⁶⁶ H. M. Edwards, 'A Multitude of Voices: The Free-Metre Poetry of Iolo Morganwg', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *A Rattleskull Genius : The Many Faces of Iolo Morganwg; Iolo Morganwg and the Romantic Tradition in Wales* (Cardiff, 2005), p. 100.

will be struck with the similarity between young Edwin and our rustic poet”,³⁶⁷

perhaps having in mind particularly ll. 140-44 :

Silent when glad; affectionate, though shy;
And now his look was most demurely sad;
And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why.
The neighbours star'd and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad :
Some deem'd him wond'rous wise, and some believed him mad.³⁶⁸

Iolo describes himself as a youth as “very pensive, melancholy, and very stupid, as all but my mother thought; when a cheerful fit occurred, it was wild extravagance generally.” Everard King has detailed *The Minstrel's* effect on Romantic autobiographical self-fashioning; Dorothy Wordsworth quoted the above passage in lieu of describing her brother William, and Beattie's idea of a physical journey of poetical self-discovery influenced many other poems about the making of the poet, such as the *Prelude*.³⁶⁹ It seems clear that the poem – published during Iolo's first sojourn in Kent – provided a model on which to base part of his autobiographical preface. Far from rambling alone during this period, Iolo enjoyed convivial relations in London, and was employed at various hard labouring jobs. Yet following Beattie, he rewrites this episode in his life to conform to an expectation of the lonely, romantic poet, as well as highlighting his unstable temperament as inherently poetical.

In a similar way to John Clare twenty years later, Iolo rewrites his cultural situation to match his readers' expectations. “Artful Artlessness” characterises writers

³⁶⁷ *Critical Review*, Vol. 11, June 1794, p. 70

³⁶⁸ J. Beattie, *The Minstrel; Or, the Progress of Genius : A Poem.*, The fourth edn (London:, 1774) ll. 140-44

³⁶⁹ See E.H. King, *James Beattie's the Minstrel and the Origins of Romantic Autobiography* (Lewiston ; Lampeter, 1992)

such as Burns, Clare and other peasant poets, who must mask their wit and grasp of poetical technique to conform to the expectation that the poetry of a peasant would be more direct because more primitive.³⁷⁰ “Mastering the idioms of the dominant culture,” as Bridget Keegan puts it, has a double resonance for the poet whose language, as well as his class, is seen as subservient.³⁷¹ Unlike Burns, Ramsay and the Scots poets, Iolo had no recognizably exotic Anglo-Welsh dialect in which to create a new versification for his collection. Even the English versions of Welsh texts are hobbled by their translation into high-style English idiom. This is one reason his poems seem frustratingly conventional to modern readers. Originality was not a major concern for Iolo, in either language, but for differing reasons – in Welsh, he attempted to pass off his productions as the work of other poets; in English, his radical ideas had to be smuggled into subscribers’ parlours under the veneer of conventional diction. This was a conscious move on Iolo’s part, for before he published *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* he was already contributing poems to the *Gentleman’s Magazine* and others, in varying styles. The imitation of the *Gododdin* printed along with his introductory letter in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* of 1789, far from being the type of a peasant poet, is a blood-soaked piece full of heightened Ossianic diction:

War’s rapid havock roll’d along,
 Impell’d by Valour’s ardent flame;
 She led the death-denouncing throng,
 Daughter of EUDAF, glorious name!
 Her breast more white than driven snow, –
 That breast receives the deadly blow;
 Well-aim’d the Saxon flung his dart:

³⁷⁰ M. Gorji, *John Clare and the Place of Poetry* (Liverpool, 2008), pp. 15-31.

³⁷¹ Bridget Keegan, 'Rural Poetry and the Self-Taught Tradition', in Christine Gerrard (ed.), *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (Oxford, 2006), ch. 2.

The peerless BRADWEN breathes no more;
Behold her bosom drench'd in gore!
The last warm drop forsakes her heart.
Madden'd we view the rage-inspiring sight,
Her eyes untimely clos'd in Death's eternal night.³⁷²

Different work is given to the public, depending on which persona Iolo is most desirous of emphasising; the J.D. letter, though stressing his bashful, hermit-like nature, also foregrounds his supposed bardic heritage, and it is this that the poem seeks to substantiate.

The majority of labouring-class poetry of the eighteenth century does not seek openly to challenge poetic conventions; the exceptions are the most celebrated precisely because they are exceptions. Much relies on the titillation and novelty value of a poet who has apparently not had access to high-culture education performing in a high style voice. Wales and the Welsh language, in many senses, were seen as far more alien to British culture than were many aspects of Scottish culture. Iolo himself notes that “the Welsh language is viewed in a light similar to that wherein they [the English] would view the Cherokee language.”³⁷³ Scots had joined enthusiastically (too enthusiastically for some Englishmen – see M.G.H. Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image*, chapter 2) in the business of Britain, in government, philosophy, and literature, and thus poems “in the Scottish dialect” or apparent translations from the Gaelic, such as Macpherson’s fragments, were by the 1770s (when Iolo was in Kent) well-known to the public. Whilst the latter had become more acceptable to English tastes, there was still a risk inherent in attempting to portray an Anglo-Welsh dialect, of inviting ridicule and comparisons with hated stage-Welsh stereotypes. The

³⁷² *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 59, November 1789, p. 1035.

³⁷³ NLW MS 13121B, p. 486.

language therefore had to be scrupulously divested of anything that could be labelled “barbarous” or “Hottentotice”. In doing so it appears to modern readers to be shorn of that which would make it interesting; yet, like many of his peers in the labouring-class genre, Iolo’s poetry is presented in such a way as to succeed on equal terms with standard English literature. Fashioning the author in the plebeian genre could, however, entail other problems with acceptance, as the review of *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* in the *Critical Review* of 1794 suggests:

As we have expressed our warm approbation of the high tones of liberty, and enlarged sentiments of philanthropy, which are to be met with in these Poems, we hope the author will allow us to wish that he would retrench from any future edition, those strokes of petulant sarcasm which greatly blemish the general tenor of his productions. He does not possess any talent for humour. Neither does it well become a writer, on his first appearance before the public, to speak contemptuously of men, or classes of men, who have long been in possession of its admiration or reverence. We are sorry, likewise, that he indulges in his Preface a strain of querulous complaint, in which his readers cannot sympathize, as he has not stated to them the injuries to which he seems so sensible; nor, if he had, could they probably have judged of them. We fear, indeed, that a wounded sensibility is the tax which genius, rising above its situations and connections in life, is too generally forced to pay. [...]As our Cambrian bard tells us many of his best pieces are yet unpublished, we hope he will be induced, from the reception of these, to give them to the world, and in return we will give him a triad. Respect the public, speak sparingly of thyself, and despise not criticism.³⁷⁴

This patronising attitude towards the “productions” is inevitably encouraged by the self-fashioning in the autobiographical preface, even though Iolo intended to transcend – and potentially transform – the genre of labouring-class poetry. He himself calls his poems productions, implying a lower sphere than poetry, “since ‘productions’ suggests a wide category of made things [...] and, in this context, the word carries the association of ‘labour’”.³⁷⁵ Even though he states that it is “of no

³⁷⁴ *Critical Review*, Vol. 11, June 1794, p. 175

³⁷⁵ Gorji, *John Clare and the Place of Poetry*, p. 4.

importance to anyone to know how many stones I have hewed”, such circumstantial detail was valued in artisan biographies. This paralipsis points to Iolo’s discomfort at the part he is playing. The preface’s disjointedness is linked to his attempts to negotiate the two stereotypes – last bard and artisan poet – he has chosen. However, as the latter stereotype is the most recognisable to the majority of his audience, it is the one that sets up the framework for criticism of his work. Iolo is therefore censured most when the reviewer feels he has overstepped the bounds of his professed station in life.

On first hearing the CUCKOO appeared in the *Town and Country Magazine* for August 1775 (though it is, according to Iolo, not the oldest piece in the collection). A nine-stanza piece, with each stanza comprising three pairs of rhyming couplets, it presages both in theme and style the voice Iolo was to adopt in his later collection, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* (1794).

I.

Hail, lovely harbinger of spring,
 Sweet herald of the blooming May,
 O! how I’m charm’d to hear thee sing,
 Dear songster of the flow’ry spray;
 Nature enraptur’d hears thy voice,
 The groves are charm’d, the smiling vales rejoice.
 [...]

V.

Say, lovely guest, oh! wilt thou stay!
 Nor leave Britannia’s favour’d isle,
 So shall each joyful month be May,
 Our landscapes wear the eternal smile:
 Gladness still hail the new-born day,
 And love shall bear an universal sway.
 [...]

IX.

Let me employ the present hour,
 In works of sweet benevolence,
 So may I hail that heav’nly pow’r,
 That Angel sent to call me hence:

My raptur'd soul shall wing its way,
To those blest climes where ev'ry month is May.³⁷⁶

It is a conventional poem, using high-style diction and ellipses to fit its words to the metre, and in form is similar to Gray's Pindarics. The subject, an extended apostrophe to a bird, is one Iolo presents as peculiar to Welsh poetry, and especially mediæval Welsh poetry, of which his idol, Dafydd ap Gwilym, was the chief exponent. Usually the birds apostrophised in these poems are *llateion*, love-messengers, used by the poet to carry messages to and from his lady.³⁷⁷ These poems frequently contain a figure called *dyfalu*, description by comparison, wherein a series of metaphors and comparisons is used to describe the object of the poem indirectly. Iolo employs such metaphor in his *Cuckoo*, most especially in the first two couplets of the opening stanza. Its inclusion is not out of keeping with the style of the rest of the poem, recalling as it does metaphorical descriptions which would come to be seen by early twentieth-century critics as indicative of what has been termed the periphrastic style.

In the preface to his *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, Iolo gives a short account of his life at the time of this composition:

In 1773, I went into *Kent*, where I stayed for near four years. I had been two or three years in *London, Bristol &c.* a return to rural objects had a pleasing and powerful effect on my mind. This, and meeting with DR. AIKIN'S *Essays on Song-Writing*, which gave me much pleasure, revived my poetical taste, and I wrote many of the pieces contained in these volumes in *Kent*.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁶ *Town and Country Magazine*, August 1775, p. 382

³⁷⁷ *Cydymaith i Lenyddiaeth Cymru*, ed. Anonymous, Arg. newydd edn (Caerdydd, 1997) 449. *Llateion* can be other creatures, or even objects in nature, such as the sun or the wind; most often they are birds. Several of Iolo's most famous Dafydd ap Gwilym forgeries are *llatai* poems.

³⁷⁸ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, pp. xvi-xvii.

This encounter with Aikin's *Essays* (1772) left traceable marks not just on Iolo's "poetical taste" as it extends to his English-language compositions, but also on his theories of poetry as described in the *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*. The theory that pastoral was one of the most ancient and pure forms of poetry had a long history even in the 1770s. Johnson, in his first *Rambler* essay on Pastoral Poetry (Saturday, July 21, 1750), could deal with this assumption in a few lines, so commonplace had it become:

It has been maintained by some who love to talk of what they do not know that pastoral is the most ancient poetry; and, indeed, since it is probable that poetry is nearly of the same antiquity with rational nature, and since the life of the first men was certainly rural, we may reasonably conjecture that, as their ideas would necessarily be borrowed from those objects with which they were acquainted, their composures [...] were pastoral hymns [...]³⁷⁹

Johnson is a shadowy figure whose presence is felt at intervals throughout the *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, as well as in Iolo's life and letters.³⁸⁰ The famous anecdote of their alleged brief encounter in a London bookseller's shop illustrates the emblematic aspect that Johnson holds for Iolo. According to his biographer, the young Iolo – then plain Edward Williams – had heard that Johnson would often frequent a particular bookshop, and resolved to visit the same shop in the hope of meeting him. The day came when Johnson and Iolo were in the shop at the same time, and Iolo sought a reason to strike up conversation with the famous doctor.

The Bard, who had an eager wish to hear Johnson converse, had provided himself with an apology for addressing so awful a potentate, by asking the

³⁷⁹ S. Johnson, *Samuel Johnson : The Major Works* (Oxford, 2000), p. 190.

³⁸⁰ For more on Iolo and Johnson, see Mary-Ann Constantine, "Viewing most Things Thro' False Mediums': Iolo Morganwg (1747-1826) and English Perceptions of Wales", in Claire Lamont and Michael Rossington (ed.), *Romanticism's Debatable Lands* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 27-38.

bookseller for a good English grammar; and several, by different authors, were placed before him. Selecting three of these grammars, he walked boldly up to Johnson, introducing himself, as he said, “with his best bow,” but also with habitual frankness, as a poor Welsh mechanic smitten with the love of learning, and particularly anxious to become a proficient in the English language. He then presented his three grammars, soliciting the favour of Dr. Johnson’s advice which of them to choose; observing that the judgment of such a masterly writer, must be the most valuable he could possibly obtain. Johnson either disregarded this really graceful compliment to him as a model author, or was in an ungracious temper – no uncommon condition with him – for taking the volumes into his hands, he cast an equivocal look, between a glance and a scowl, at the humble stranger before him, hastily turned over the several title pages, then surveyed him from head to foot, with an expression rather contemptuous than inquisitive; and thrusting back the grammars in his huge fist, rather *at* the inquirer than towards him, delivered this oracular reply, “*Either of them will do for you, young man.*” The emphatic *you* was a spark upon tinder – “I felt,” said the Bard, “my Welsh blood mount to my forehead, thinking he meant to insult my humble station, and my poverty; so I retorted with some asperity, as I took back the grammars, *Then, Sir, to make sure of having the best, I will buy them all;* and turning to my good friend the bookseller, I demanded the price, paid the money, though at the time I could ill spare it, and quitted the shop, far less pleased with Dr. Johnson than with his writings.” The three grammars remained in the Bard’s possession till he died, and when consulting either of them, he would often say “Aye! this is one of *the Dr. Johnson grammars.*”³⁸¹

Johnson seems to represent to Iolo academic learning, the literary establishment and England itself. All three are institutions from which he craves acceptance, but that at the same time he loathes and scorns. This mirrors the dynamic at work in the collection. As a whole, it is influenced by Johnson’s views on pastoral, and it would appear that the poem ‘Stanzas written in London in the year 1773’ is in direct dialogue with Johnson’s ‘London’ (1738). In Iolo’s own copy of the *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* marked up for an intended – but never published – second edition (NLW Wb 904-5), he marks ll. 5-8 of ‘London’ as an epigraph for his own ‘Stanzas’.

³⁸¹ Waring, *Recollections and Anecdotes of Edward Williams the Bard of Glamorgan; Or, Iolo Morganwg*, pp. 27-28 .

These stanzas are twenty-two in number, and make a standard comparison between the vices of the city and the virtues of the countryside left behind.

There are enough similarities between the *Essay* and the *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* to hazard that Iolo was using Aikin's text when writing the notes on poetry which feature throughout his volumes. In particular, the comments on simplicity and closeness to nature seem to have caught Iolo's imagination. Aikin writes:

Hitherto, all is simple and natural, and poetry so far from being the art of fiction, is the faithful copyist of external objects and real emotions.³⁸²

[...]

In general, whatever is designed to move the passions cannot be too natural and simple. It is also evident that when the professed design of the poet is to paint the beauties of nature and the rural landscape of pastoral life, he must give as great an air of reality as possible to his piece, since a bad imitation necessarily produces disgust.³⁸³

[...]

It is unpardonable in a poet to borrow these [natural objects] from any fountain but nature herself, and thereby he will most certainly avoid the mistakes and incongruity of imagery, which they are so apt to fall into who describe from ideas gained by reading rather than observation.³⁸⁴

The emphasis is on nature, genuineness, and first-hand experience rather than second-hand impressions from books. Far from being fictionalisers barred from Plato's Republic, true Poets are pastoral poets, and the mouthpieces of nature. In essence, this trope denies agency to the plebeian poets, and as much as Iolo attempts to regain this, by tracing his descent from Taliesin, or denying the veracity of *poeta nascitur, non fit*, Iolo becomes again entangled in his own self-fashioning.

There are some Critics "*who* (as Dr. Johnson observes, and the cap often fits his own head) *love to talk of what they don't know,*" that affect to ridicule

³⁸² J. Aikin, *Essays on Song-Writing: With a Collection of such English Songs as are most Eminent for Poetical Merit. to which are Added, some Original Pieces* (London, 1772), p. 6.

³⁸³ *ibid.* pp. 7-8.

³⁸⁴ *ibid.* p. 35.

Pastoral Poetry: their misconceptions of its nature are, most probably, occasioned by the absurd and unnatural rhapsodies that many have given us under the name of Pastoral; the sentiments highly fantastical, with descriptions of what no climate of this globe affords but that of *Grub-street*; where, among many rare things, are to be seen, the violet of March and the rose of June blowing at the same time [...]

That this passage is directly influenced by Aikin's essay is clear. Although Bridget Keegan reminds us that "Polite poets presumably went outside too," warning against the assumption that labouring-class origins entail closeness to Nature, this is precisely the territory Iolo attempts to stake out for himself.³⁸⁵ Reviewers picked up on this identification of his "natural" voice with the natural world as part of his situation in life, noting that

We are here presented with the poems of a genuine Welsh bard, an original genius, who derives his poetical descent from Taliessin, and his inspiration from nature, for his situation in life is no higher than that of a working stone-mason.

One seems to flow of necessity from the other. Iolo's active encouragement of this view is shown by the foregrounding of the most famous of his "Aphoristical Triads" in a footnote to the poem.

The three primary and indispensable requisites of poetic genius are,
 An eye that can see Nature;
 A heart that can feel Nature;
 And a resolution that dares follow Nature.
Quære? Have any of the great *Manufacturers* of Poets, from the days of *Aristotle* to the present time, ever said any thing more to the purpose?³⁸⁶

This triad is remarkably similar in its import to ll. 68-73 of Pope's *Essay on Criticism*:

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
 By her just standard, which is still the same:

³⁸⁵ B. Keegan, *British Labouring-Class Nature Poetry, 1730-1837* (Basingstoke, 2008), p. 7.

³⁸⁶ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p. 176.

Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright,
 One clear, unchang'd and universal light,
 Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
 At once the source, and end, and test of Art.³⁸⁷

In using the pastoral form, Iolo attempts to identify those strands of poetry common both to Welsh literature and the classical tradition. Whilst these shepherd-poets are, as previously noted, conventional figures derived from Theocritus and Virgil, there is also a long tradition of genuine rural poets in Wales. Those poets around whom Iolo grew up and who taught him the strict metres would have been living examples of rustic versifiers, composing poetry in their spare time. The formal responsiveness of the singing contest in poems such as “The Holiday Prize” has its parallel in Wales as well as in Theocritus. Not only does it echo such impromptu-versifying rituals as the *Mari Lwyd*, but also the strict metre *Ymryson* of medieval poets, and the poetry contests of the *Eisteddfodau*, which took firmer and more formalised root during Iolo’s time, thanks to the interventions of the London Welsh societies. By the last three decades of the eighteenth century, the star of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, established by Lewis Morris in the 1750s, had dwindled. It had failed to fulfil many of the lofty aims drafted in its constitution, and the way was clear for a new generation of London Welsh to begin other societies. Societies for expatriates of many regions flourished in this age, and it was into this *milieu* that Cymdeithas y Gwyneddigion, the Men of Gwynedd Society, was born in 1770. It shouldered the cultural mantle abandoned by the Cymmrodorion, and succeeded in publishing far more than its predecessor. Its most significant achievement was the sponsorship and formalisation of the *Eisteddfod*, which itself

³⁸⁷ A. Pope, *Pastoral Poetry, and, an Essay on Criticism* (London, 1961), p. 498.

had dwindled into public house poetical gatherings since the great *Eisteddfodau* of Elizabeth I's time. The Gwyneddigion provided prizes and medals (one engraved by the engraver to the French Revolutionary Government), and sealed the place of the *Eisteddfod* as one of the primary pillars on which a sense of Welsh nationhood came to rest.³⁸⁸

G. J. Williams traces Iolo's movements to London and Kent at this time, either as a result of a falling-out with his father, or as a result of legal proceedings against him by "Persons of no Consciences," possibly a case of assault.³⁸⁹ Iolo's romanticised version of his life alleges that at this time, he had wandered to England heartbroken at the loss of his "best of mothers" in 1770.³⁹⁰ It is unlikely that his whole London experience was that of heartbreak and *hiraeth* (melancholy longing for home), as his letters show that he fell into company with the convivial Gwyneddigion society, which was founded in those years, and intense, though often fragile, friendships with its leading lights, William Owen (Pughe)³⁹¹, David Samuel (Dafydd Ddu Feddyg, Captain Cook's surgeon)³⁹², and the great philanthropist of Welsh

³⁸⁸ See G. Bowen and Z. Bowen, *Hanes Gorsedd y Beirdd* (S.L., 1991), Jenkins and Ramage, *A History of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion and of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies, 1751-1951*.

³⁸⁹ Williams, *Iolo Morganwg*, pp. 188-9.; see also Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*

³⁹⁰ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p. xvi.

³⁹¹ J. E. Lloyd, 'Pughe, William Owen (1759–1835)', rev. Glenda Carr, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/22867>, accessed 11 Aug 2008]

³⁹² Geraint Phillips, 'Samwell, David (1751–1798)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2007 [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/24608>, accessed 11 Aug 2008]

letters, Owen Jones (Owain Myfyr),³⁹³ the wealthy furrier. His time with them appears to have been one of many convivial nights in public houses and meeting-places, and stimulating rounds of scurrilous and ribald poetic duels (*ymrysonau*).

The idea of pastoral as Nature poetry and love poetry has its parallel in the work of Iolo's fourteenth-century idol, Dafydd ap Gwilym; and the *llatai* (the singular of *llateion*) is used, for example, in "The Swain of the Mountains":

Far down in this dale, the first morning in June,
I mournfully walk'd near the murmuring rill,
The Thrush in wild melody warbled his tune,
From a gay-blooming bush of the copse-cover'd hill.
Sweet Thrush, wilt thou leave thy green haunts in the grove,
And fly, quickly fly, with my dolorous tale
To the pride of the Lowlands, the fair one I love?
I'll wait thy return here alone in the vale.³⁹⁴

'Winter Incidents' blends all these strands particularly well. Its setting recalls to English readers the Winter incidents in Thomson's *Winter* from *The Seasons* (1726) and in Duck's *The Thresher's Labour* (1730). The passage on the mournful birds recalls Thomson's

The Fowls of Heaven,
Tam'd by the cruel Season, croud around
The winnowing Store, and claim the little Boon
Which PROVIDENCE assigns them.³⁹⁵

as well as Dafydd ap Gwilym's extensive use of birds in his poetry. Birds had an important place in the Welsh tradition as the metaphoric personifications of real poets – a tradition which Iolo elaborates fantastically:

³⁹³ Geraint Phillips, 'Jones, Owen (1741–1814)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/15065>, accessed 11 Aug 2008]

³⁹⁴ *ibid.* p. 93.

³⁹⁵ J. Thomson, *The Seasons* (Oxford New York, 1981), p. 214.

“The ancient Welsh pastoral Epistles, still preserved in abundance in our old MSS, were absolutely real epistles, and in an age when few or none could either read or write, it was usual for a Bard either for himself or for another according to dictates, to compose a song or Poem, this was taught to a Clerwr, (whose profession it was chiefly to go on messages) who went and repeating the verses to the Person to whom he was sent, received another song in Answer, with which he return’d, the Clerwr was often a Bard, and frequently the composer of those poetical Epistles for both parties – these were more certainly and exactly retained in the Clerwr’s memory than any prose discourse could possibly be.

These Epistles were often fictitiously sent by nightingales Blackbirds &c and some Clerorion bore the names of Shion Eos, Rhys y Fwyalchen, Eos Dyfed, Ceiliog Myngrudd. – Bedo Philyp Bach. Bedo Aeddren – Bwynllys &c”

It is perhaps particularly apt that the only bird named by Iolo in the titles of the poems is the Cuckoo, mirroring Iolo’s attempts to inhabit multiple poetical nests, and to father forged poems on other poets.

Iolo makes the pastoral epistle central to the Welsh tradition, and incorporates in this discussion of its early function, the notion of answering songs. This incorporates both the tradition of the *llatai* and the *ymryson*, where poets answer each other in verse. Again, this dynamic interaction between pastoral poetry and the Welsh tradition draws together the different poetic voices Iolo is attempting to blend in his lyric pastoral.

Very few of the poems which Iolo subtitles “in the Welsh manner” have anything recognisably Welsh about them. Rather, he is manipulating his readers’ expectations, pointing up certain poems as having a peculiarly Welsh style that would otherwise appear of standard English style. In this, he begins to lay the foundations of his own attempt to redefine the genealogy of Anglo-British poetry. His strange footnote to the one poem that may be said to possess a Welsh versification in English reads as follows:

This little piece, which was written about the year 1770, is one of the author's first attempts in English Poetry, attempting also to try what effect a mode of versification much used by the *Welsh Poets* would have in the *English* language. This *peculiarity* consists in making the fourth syllable, whereon the pause lies, of the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth, lines of the stanza, rhyme to the last syllable of the first, third, fifth, and seventh, lines, instead of making the last syllables of the first and third lines, &c. rhyme together: this, perhaps, may not *please*; it may, possibly, *displease*, an *English* ear: but the reader of *Welsh* Poetry very much admires it in his *own*, and, I believe, no less in the *English* language.—The fundamental charm, perhaps, in the poetry of all languages, is no more than a certain *something* which, by general custom and frequent usage, has been familiarized *to*, and is, consequently, expected or sought after *by*, the ear. Many of the most approved and harmonious kinds of WELSH verse would be found very *strange*, and far from *agreeable* to an ENGLISHMAN; the same thing, I believe, may be said of the *Greek* and *Roman* modes of versification when attempted in the *English* language: and may not very similar observations be made on *national* music?³⁹⁶

In many ways, this is a denial of all that Iolo has asserted previously, both in the *Poems* and in his manuscript notes. Each language has a genius and a sound peculiar to its own poetry, and attempts to graft these onto another language are awkward. The final sentence recalls the initial responses to Pindaric Odes earlier in the century. It is also noticeable in the English-Welsh translations of other authors in this work, that poems which began life as *cywyddau* (seven syllable couplets) tend to translate into eight or ten syllable couplets in English. The Welsh language does not lend itself to iambs in the same way as English, and so works translated into high style couplets tend either to sound stilted, or like doggerel (see for example Evan Evans' translation of *Llys Ifor Hael*, supra). Iolo's justification for this must be aligned with classical precedent, for what is often deemed an acceptable disjunct between Greek or Latin and English is, when taken in the Welsh context, accepted as evidence of inferiority.

³⁹⁶ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, pp. 155-6.

Elsewhere, Iolo is similarly vague about what he has taken from the Welsh tradition:

In this piece many of the peculiarities of the common songs of Wales are designedly introduced, as a specimen of the old national manner of the Welsh in their Poems, and particularly in their *Love-songs*. Strong metaphors, wild and sudden transitions, strange, and sometimes fantastical, personifications, are amongst the characteristics of the Poetry of ancient and modern Welsh Bards.³⁹⁷

His inexactitude here is a product of the linguistic register he adopts; Iolo seems to be using the language of Ossianic criticism in order to describe the verse, borrowing the fashionable sublime discourse and applying it to his own writing. “Strong metaphors, wild and sudden transitions” could easily have been applied to Macpherson’s creations, and seem curiously out of context with *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*.

iii – Inventing traditions

Iolo’s translations of Welsh poems in the collection lend some weight to the accusation that his English poems are products of secondary importance in his *œuvre*. His apparent inability to resist embellishing in order to fit poems to his own view of history leaves Dafydd ap Gwilym’s *Cywydd i Ddiolch am fenig i Ifor Hael* (Cywydd of thanks for gloves to Ivor the Generous) more as a vehicle for bardism and Ioloic history than a translation of the original. This is in itself indicative of Iolo’s literary engagement with the Welsh tradition, both inasmuch as these introduce more obviously Welsh themes in the collection, with little need for signposting, and to entrance Welsh readers who might be less ready to engage with Iolo the peasant poet. The translation grows to 76 lines, from the original’s 60, and includes several

³⁹⁷ *ibid.*

interpolations. The initial apostrophe to Ivor as one “from whose court no finger would leave without gold” becomes

Thou Ivor, darling of the Muse,
Who through the world thy fame pursues,
Proclaims thy worth in ev’ry clime,
Whilst rapture fills the lay sublime [...] ³⁹⁸

The two poems continue in a similar vein of praise- and thanks-giving for several couplets, until once more Iolo interpolates:

The gifts of NUDD could not excel
The gloves that to my portion fell;
Surpassing MORDAF’s boon of old,
For both my gloves were crammed with gold;
And RHYDDERCH’s hand could not reward
With nobler meeds his tuneful Bard. ³⁹⁹

The gloves are stuffed with money in the original, but no mention is made of Nudd, Mordaf and Rhydderch. Instead, Iolo uses this as an opportunity to add in a reference to the Bardic Triads. The Triads are genuine old Welsh aphorisms, often preserving groups of exemplars of particular traits.⁴⁰⁰ Lewis Morris considered them the remains of Druidical learning, and Iolo Morganwg not only accepted this potential explanation, but also fabricated a huge corpus of extra Triads to forge a full curriculum of knowledge for what was essentially a bardic University of a far greater age than the “blockheaded”, “book-learned” universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Many of these were published in the second volume of *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, and more still were presented to the public in the third volume of the *Myvyrian Archaeology* (1807).

³⁹⁸ *ibid.* pp. 192-3.

³⁹⁹ *ibid.* p. 194.

⁴⁰⁰ See R. Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein : The Welsh Triads* (Cardiff, 1978)

[I]n addition to *Song*, the *Bards* invented a variety of *aphoristical forms*, on fixed, regular, and unalterable principles, that were obvious to the understanding, easily learned and remembered, it was necessary that these should not be capable of assuming any other form, or materially different form of verblivity, than that in which they were originally delivered. Aphorisms constructed on such fixed principles could be learned with ease, and with ease be retained in the memory; they would, with nearly, if not quite, as much facility as *Song*, become *widely diffused over a large extent of Place and Time*: in *Songs* and in *Aphorisms* of this description were the *Theological, Ethical, and Scientifical, Maxims* of the *Ancient Bards of Britain* delivered, and these were easily retained by the public memory.⁴⁰¹

As G. J. Williams explains,

Mynnai edrych ar y manion hynny a welir ar chwâl yma a thraw yn yr hen lawysgrifau [...] fel rhan o'r ddysg farddol, ac ymroes i'w hailysgrifennu, gan eu llenwi â'i syniadau ac â'i ffurfiau ef ei hun [...] Mynnai eu gwneuthur yn rhan hanfodol o fywyd barddol yr oesau a fu, ac un o'i brif orchwyllion oedd eu newid a'u hystumio, a llunio llu enfawr o gyfresi newydd a'u priodoli, lawer iawn ohonynt, i'r hen feirdd.

[He insisted on looking on these scraps seen scattered here and there in the old manuscripts [...] as part of the bardic lore, and he set to rewriting them, filling them with his own forms and ideas [...] He insisted on making them an intrinsic part of the bardic life of past ages, and one of his chief employments was to change and nuance them, and to forge a great legion of new series' and to attribute many of them to the old poets.]⁴⁰²

Nudd Hael, Mordaf Hael and Rhydderch Hael belong to a genuine Triad, that of the three generous princes of Britain; however, there can be no reason for the interpolation here other than an attempt on Iolo's part to connect Dafydd ap Gwilym with the pseudo-druidic learning he was at that time synthesising.

The next of Iolo's interpolations transforms the couplet "Despite asking for them, no girl/no more than any man, shall have my gloves" into another veiled bardo-druidic aside:

The Warrior draws his blade in vain,

⁴⁰¹ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, pp. 219-20.

⁴⁰² Williams, *Iolo Morganwg*, pp. 282-3.

My gloves he never can obtain;
 Great IVOR's friendship shall inspire
 His bard with ARTHUR's martial fire;
 His grateful bard, who dares advance
 Unarm'd, against that warrior's lance [...]⁴⁰³

The latter couplet is a further attempt to give the poem a druidic tinge. In the Ioloic conception of bardism, no bard might bear arms, and it was unlawful to bear a naked weapon in a bard's presence on any pretext.⁴⁰⁴ He elaborates on the brief footnote to this couplet in a longer footnote in Volume II, as part of his *Ode to the British Muse*, reinforcing the bard's commitment to peace and his legal immunity, both to party in battle and from violence. Again, this reflects a state of affairs that Iolo wishes to bring into existence – allegedly for a second time – the immunity that a bard would have to criticise rulers and not to fear reprisals. Iolo is said to have been once questioned by Pitt, and was on numerous occasions in danger of his life from mobs and spies due to his radical sympathies.

The reference to King Arthur serves to allow Iolo a footnote disparaging the history of Geoffrey of Monmouth, whom elsewhere he calls “Galfrid gelwydd têtg” [Geoffrey of the fair lie].⁴⁰⁵ Iolo was not above lifting minor characters such as Dyfnwal Moelmud (Dunwallus Molmutius) from the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and embroidering their scant biographical facts to provide credible poets on whom to father many of his forgeries; but on the whole, Geoffrey's History was an irritation to him. As his imagined history and mythology differed greatly from Geoffrey's, it was

⁴⁰³ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, pp. 194-5.

⁴⁰⁴ C. Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles : National, Regional and Personal Identity in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff, 2007), p. 176.

⁴⁰⁵ Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 447.

necessary for Iolo to traduce him wherever possible. Geoffrey came to stand for the monkish priestcraft which overtook druidism and sent it underground, and for a manuscript tradition which, paradoxically, Iolo needed to discredit. Thanks to the Macpherson and Chatterton affairs, which highlighted the scholarly need for manuscript originals, Iolo's discernment of the oral background of *cynganedd* led him to formulate a theory of transmission that held that manuscript transmission was inherently more open to error than its oral counterpart. "If a manuscript has a little of the mould of age upon it," he writes, "we admit blindly more of what it says as *truth* than becomes a wise man."⁴⁰⁶ Though Iolo provided copies of manuscripts he had supposedly visited in closed libraries (interspersed with genuine copies), the primacy of orality is never questioned. His theory is based on the notion that *cynganedd*, due to its heavily intricate forms of alliteration, can only be passed down unaltered, due to the difficulty of error creeping in without marring the alliterative pattern. William Owen (Pughe), heavily under Iolo's influence, writes that

So exact is this system of versification, and so interwoven in all its parts, that if words were lost in a verse, the particular accented letters in such a blank are always unquestionably known from the context or pretext, and consequently a great probability of replacing the very words of the original composition. And it was the opinion of our learned countryman, the late Lewis Morris, Esq., that the bards, by means of these intricate letters, though they might have clogged their genius, yet they unalterably preserved the pronunciation and etymology of the language; as not a single sound, or letter, could be changed by any means, without confounding the whole structure.⁴⁰⁷

Following his usual practice, Iolo takes a kernel of historical and literary truth, and fabricates a whole system around it. The concatenation of syllables is the starting

⁴⁰⁶ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p. 221.

⁴⁰⁷ G. Dafydd ap, *Barddoniaeth Dafydd Ab Gwilym. O Grynhoad Owen Jones, a William Owen* (Llundain, 1789), pp. xxvii-xxviii.

that he had in reconciling his king-flogging, radical republican nature with the realities of negotiating patronage. Though Dustin Griffin has recently deconstructed Romantic myths of patronage in the eighteenth century, there is plenty of evidence that Iolo genuinely chafed under the constraints of the institution.⁴¹¹ He found the constant waiting on gentlefolk in order to secure subscriptions in the main tedious and humiliating, and numerous drafts exist of fawning letters which turn into snarling radical declarations of independence. The drafts of the Prince of Wales's dedication begin floridly, and end after multiple revisions with a frustrated dedication to "Mr. Nobody [...] the only patron of poor poets in this age of the world."⁴¹² All that survives in the final published version, having 'exhausted all the arts of pleasing,' is a single sentence of dedication, a far cry from the sort of *cywydd* of praise Iolo presents elsewhere in the collection. He states his views on the shackles of patronage more clearly in a letter to his wife, Peggy:

[...] in short, you will pretty soon be convinced that it is much better for every author to write for the public, who in consequence of that, will buy his books for ages, than to write what will only gratify the vanities and abet the causes of great men who, after all that flattery can do, will never reward the flatterer. The common mode of rewarding pimping servile writers is by promising them places which have been already promised to twenty persons at least and which may happen to come to his turn when he is too old to enjoy it. Do you remember Dryden who spent all his life in flattering the great; Gay who wrote for the court died in a prison; Savage, who flattered Queen Ann for twelve years, died in a prison. Very fine places had been promised to every one of these gentlemen, but Pope, Swift, Churchil and others who wrote for the public at large made ample fortunes.⁴¹³

⁴¹¹ Griffin, *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800* 317., Geraint Phillips, 'Forgery and Patronage : Iolo Morganwg and Owain Myfyr', in Jenkins (ed.), *A Rattleskull Genius : The Many Faces of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff, 2005), pp. 403-23.

⁴¹² Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 494.

⁴¹³ *ibid.* p. 642.

This view of patronage is in stark contrast to the vision of noble and reciprocal patronage he creates in his writing on the relationship between Dafydd ap Gwilym, and his patron, Ifor Hael (Ivor the Generous). Where Evan Evans laments the loss of Ivor's court in his famous stanzas (see above, ch. 3), Iolo's response to being confronted with the same ruin – visited, according to Iolo, in company with Evan Evans on the same trip – is to create it anew in a glorious pageant. The now-infamous *Cywyddau'r Ychwanegiad* (the poems of the Addendum) in William Owen (Pughe)'s 1789 edition of *Barddoniaeth Dafydd ab Gwilym* (The Poems of Dafydd ap Gwilym) were created to lend historical legitimacy to his vision of history. Like Chatterton before him, by whose shade he became increasingly haunted during his time in London,⁴¹⁴ in his frustration at a perceived lack of patronage, Iolo sought refuge in an idealised past, and embellished the historical Ifor of Basaleg into an ideal patron to bless the life of his best of poets.⁴¹⁵ In the preface to the *Barddoniaeth*, largely the brainchild of Iolo, we are told that Ifor's court was

always a safe retreat for [Dafydd] from every misfortune. [...] our bard experienced the greatest kindness from his generous patron, and all his family in every respect; and his bosom, in return, glowed with unfeigned gratitude.⁴¹⁶ As long as his other friend, Ifor, survived, his house was a retreat to our Bard from all oppressions – there he was like the three Free Guests in the court of Arthur.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁴ See G. Phillips, 'Math o Wallgofrwydd: Iolo Morganwg, Opiwm a Thomas Chatterton', *National Library of Wales Journal*, Vol. 29 (No. 4, 1996), pp. 391-410., M.-. Constantine, *The Truth Against the World : Iolo Morganwg and Romantic Forgery* (Cardiff, 2007).

⁴¹⁵ Lewis, *Eighteenth-Century Literary Forgeries, with Special Reference to the Work of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 147.

⁴¹⁶ Dafydd ap, *Barddoniaeth Dafydd Ab Gwilym. O Grynhoad Owen Jones, a William Owen*, p. ix.

⁴¹⁷ *ibid.* p. xx.

Ifor's generosity continues even after Dafydd has fallen in love with his patron's daughter, and followed her to a convent in Anglesey to which Ifor has sent her to avoid his amorous bard's advances. To Iolo, who spent a soul-destroying year (1786-7) in Cardiff debtors' gaol, to his mind abandoned by his friends and patrons, Owen Jones and William Owen (Pughe), the vision of Ifor was simultaneously a refuge in times of crisis, and a bitter disappointment when juxtaposed with his reality.⁴¹⁸ Iolo makes a half-hearted attempt during the founding of the *Gorsedd* to court the Prince of Wales and to fashion him into a prince of Wales in the ancient mode:

George,

The Bards of the Island of Britain have for a long time discontinued the ancient and good usage of advertising the princes of Britain of the times and places whereon they, the bards, meet. At a meeting of the last vernal equinox on Primrose Hill, it was resolved that the spirit and circumstances of the times required the most scrupulous observance of the anciently established usages, of which, and of the time and place of our next meeting, thou art hereby informed.

Edward of

Glamorgan.⁴¹⁹

This letter attempts a dual purpose; first, to try to deflect accusations of sedition, to which the (admittedly Jacobinical) *Gorsedd* was vulnerable by virtue of its meetings being held in Welsh. Secondly, in using the familiar mode of address in opening, and closing with his bardic title, Iolo declares himself no longer the Edward Williams who asks

⁴¹⁸ Such is Iolo's identification with Dafydd ap Gwilym, that he invents for him an imprisonment for an inability to pay a fine, from where he is released by the generosity of his countrymen, rather than his patron. See *ibid.* p. xvii.

⁴¹⁹ Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 681.

Pardon [of] my presumption [...] whilst I humbly ask if your R. H. will be pleased to permit me to prefix to my little publication such a dedication your R. H. will find here inclosed.⁴²⁰

Rather, he is now Iolo Morganwg, Edward of Glamorgan, *Bardd wrth Ffrait a Defod Beirdd Ynys Prydain* (Bard by the Privilege and Rites of the Bards of the Island of Britain). As such, he may walk onto the field of battle with impunity, and address Princes and Kings as an equal. Later, in one of his versions of the History of the Bards, Iolo elaborates on the perquisites that a Bard should be able to expect from kings and princes:

A poet is entitled to a perquisite from every royal nuptials, and from every wedding of persons genteelly descended, – that is, of every Cambrian pair of aboriginal genealogy, as a remuneration for keeping their family traditions and pedigrees, so as to protect their native rights.⁴²¹

In spite of Iolo's mediævalised romanticising of the relationship between poet and patron, he simultaneously professed a thoroughly modern dislike of patronage. In many respects, his life exemplifies Johnson's 'scholar's ills' – 'Toil, envy, want, the Patron, and the jail.' Even when he was the recipient of patronage, it is almost as though he cannot help sabotaging the relationship. Given generous subsidies by Owen Jones (Myfyr), he often failed to provide the goods for which the monies were paid, vanishing for months at a time on his travels to discover manuscripts for the *Archaiology*, and never finished his 'History of the Ancient British Bards and Druids' for which he received money from the Royal Literary Fund. Nor did he return with ease the thanks that such patrons thought their due – David Williams had to write to

⁴²⁰ *ibid.* p. 442.

⁴²¹ Williams and Williams, *Iolo Manuscripts: A Selection of Ancient Welsh Mss. from the Collection made by E. Williams, with Tr. and Notes by T. Williams*, p. 442.

Iolo to extract a letter of thanks for the Literary Fund's gift.⁴²² When patronage was subsequently withdrawn, Iolo would fly into rages at the evils of patrons who would withhold money on a whim, as it were toying with the scholar-poet. Many subscribers were alienated after the publication of the *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* when they discovered that Iolo's depiction of himself as a "truly blameless" individual did not entirely square with the radicalism in the volume:

Had Mrs. Nicholl then known Edward Williams's principles, she would not have subscribed to any of his writings, for she would not purchase poetry as fine as Homer's were it written by a republican. And her inducements to put her name to his verses were the accounts she had formerly heard of Edward Williams's morality & general good character, not his merit as a poet, which [...] she knew to be very small.⁴²³

Iolo desired patronage without obligation, as well as the leisure to write without continuing at his manual labours.

Amongst Iolo's subscribers were two who have come to exemplify the difficulties of patronage in the context of labouring-class poetics, Hannah More and Ann Yearsley. Where he decorously desires "a little of Lactilla's milk" in addressing Yearsley, in a letter to More, he has the temerity to discuss patronage in far plainer terms, and mentions Yearsley by name in order to highlight his own difficulties in overcoming the obstructions of low birth and poverty:

I never had the good fortune of Mrs Yearsley, whose business of procuring subscribers and collecting the money was done all by others, and by those whose influence precluded disappointment. Creech the bookseller in Edinburgh, and others in Scotland did the same for Burns. I observe that those of the higher classes grant much to the requests of each other [...] How many hours have I shivered at the doors of great and opulent names, waiting for the paltry sum of four shillings and, after many of these waitings, I have not

⁴²² Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 759.

⁴²³ *ibid.* p. 669.

unfrequently been dismissed with: ‘surely you must have received it long ago’ [...]⁴²⁴

Since the split with Yearsley, More had become all the more vocal in her conservative Christian belief that the poor should remain in the place allotted them by Providence. If Mrs. Nicholl could discern Iolo’s radicalism through the veil of pastoral, it is unlikely More would have failed to notice his similarity to her own Painite mason, Tom Hod, from *Village Politics* (1793). His *Preface* also at times bears uncomfortable resemblances to Yearsley’s *Narrative* which prefaced the fourth edition of *Poems, on Several Occasions* (1786). Contemporary reviewers noted and censured the “querulous strains” of ingratitude which permeated sections of the autobiographical sketch. It is possible that the generally positive response to Yearsley’s vindication of her conduct encouraged Iolo to present his own difficulties in front of the public in this manner. However, without quite such an obvious foil for his barbs, other than vague censure of hidden whispers and scurrilous gossip, Iolo’s fails in his apologia to carry the day as successfully as the Bristol Milkwoman’s.

For all Iolo praises the virtues of knowing one’s place in his pastoral – “we’ll with this be content / Never wishing for more”⁴²⁵ – he chafes at the acknowledgement of superiority implicit in accepting patronage. Bringing up a poet with whom Hannah More had had such a public and famous argument a decade earlier, as well as the radical Burns, is unlikely to have induced the patroness to look favourably on Iolo. He consistently identifies with poets for whom patronage has not been an unalloyed success, if not a total disaster – Chatterton, Yearsley, Duck. Here, perhaps, is one

⁴²⁴ *ibid.* pp. 753-4.

⁴²⁵ ‘A Song, written in 1785, for the use of a little select society of Journeyman-Masons,’ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p. 83.

reason for his passing forgeries through the hands of Owen Jones and his fellows. Whoever could create ‘lost’ poems apparently belonging to Wales’ greatest poet and pass them off undetected would prove himself to be a superior writer. He cannot have been unaware of the irony implicit in complaining of a lack of patronage to a figure who had, in Yearsley’s eyes, deliberately withheld profits in order to confine her protégée to her proper sphere.⁴²⁶ The latter also had to contend with charges of having her poems improved, a charge Iolo would also have to refute after receiving the attention of Christopher Anstey, author of *The New Bath Guide* (1766). As Mary-Ann Constantine has recently shown, Iolo was meticulous in noting and rejecting Anstey’s interpolations,⁴²⁷ and in writing his autobiographical preface, strongly asserted that he was giving the public “the real unsophisticated productions of the *self-tutored Journeyman Mason*.”⁴²⁸

Conspicuously, Iolo never refers to himself as *untutored*, or unlettered or unlearned in the volume; rather he is “self-tutored,” and “utterly self-taught” in “J.D.’s” letter to the *Gentleman’s Magazine* (1789), an artisan, rather than a peasant, poet. He thus seeks to sidestep the tension inherent in the works of poets who received no formal education, yet who must write in the high style in order to render their work acceptable to the public, and aligning himself with the natural and original. Contradicting himself, in his Preface he decisively rejects the concept of *poeta nascitur, non fit*, which W.J. Christmas remarks is the “primary ideological

⁴²⁶ A. Yearsley, *Poems, on several Occasions. by Ann Yearsley, ...*, The fourth edn (London, 1786)

⁴²⁷ Constantine, *The Truth Against the World : Iolo Morganwg and Romantic Forgery*, pp. 53-8.

⁴²⁸ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p. xii.

component” of the labouring-class genre of poetic self-fashioning, the notion that poetry might spring, Cædmon-like, from the virtuous swain.⁴²⁹ Instead, it is “th’unletter’d swain,” a figure this time outside himself, who allegedly encourages Iolo’s poetic endeavour in the beginning, he asserts in ‘Stanzas written in London’. As G. J. Williams has proven, Iolo’s compatriots in his early years in Glamorgan were hardly “unletter’d”, comprising the circle of the celebrated lexicographer John Walters, and many poets skilled in *cynghanedd*. This is one of the disparate links connecting the two apparently disjointed voices in the book, and one of the clues which allowed contemporary readers to view the book as either the work of Edward Williams, peasant poet, or Iolo Morganwg, Bard of the Island of Britain. Southey, notably, saw the latter – Iolo is not mentioned in his essay *The Lives and Works of the Uneducated Poets* (1829), but he is given a cameo appearance as a sage healer versed in herb-lore in the poem *Madoc* (1805, 1812). It is a paradox of the peasant poet genre that works written in conspicuously artful ways tend to be the most acceptable as evidence of the genuine voices of natural genius.

v – Language and nationality

For Iolo, the language itself was a nation’s memory; more than a repository, the language is in and of itself an entity which retains the impressions of history in its living self:

[Yr] Iaith Gymraeg, yn ei llawn dyfiant cyn Amser Inachus, yn cofio Llong Nefydd Naf Neifion, yn cofio’r Greadgaeth, yn cofio ei hun yng Ngwlad yr Haf Deffrobani [...] yn cofio ei hun yn y lle y mae Constantinoblis yn awr, yn cofio ei phlant yn Llychlyn yn amser Urb ab Erin [...] wedi Gweled

⁴²⁹ Christmas, *The Lab’Ring Muses : Work, Writing, and the Social Order in English Plebeian Poetry, 1730-1830*, p. 364.

ymerodraethau Cynteifion a mwyaf er hynny hyd yr Awr hon a fu yn y Byd [...]

[The] Welsh Language, in full growth since before the time of Inachus, remembering the Ship of Nefydd Naf Neifion, remembering the Creation, remembering herself in the Summer Country of Deffrobani [...] remembering herself in the place where Constantinople is now, remembering her children in Scandinavia in the time of Urb son of Erin [...] has seen the first and largest empires in the world from then until now [...]⁴³⁰

Rapidly-increasing industrialization and its attendant Anglicisation severely threatened the interpenetration of land and language in Iolo's locality. In his attempts to introduce a Welsh (or Ancient British) element into English letters, he seeks to neutralise and naturalise creeping Britishness. If Britishness can be cymricised sufficiently, as it has already been scotticised, then the process can be reversed or slowed down. Throughout the *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* Iolo is at pains to show the various ways in which Wales is historically more civilized than England, both by the influence of the Roman civilization, and by the "self-civilization" of Bardism and the Welsh language.⁴³¹ In his letter to Evan Evans, Iolo compares the state of the English language with Welsh:

I lament the loss of the Saxon language. Had it underwent [*sic*] the gradual self culture of time it would have become a most noble and powerfully significant language, much superior to our modern English [...] because (like your Welsh language, according to your account of it) its words would have been all from roots of its own which would have been popularly understood by the common people, which our present English never will, never can be. It will experience, sooner or later, the fate of the Rom[an] Latin which was a powerful language, but too artificial.⁴³²

⁴³⁰ NLW 13120B, p. 393

⁴³¹ Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles : National, Regional and Personal Identity in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg* xvi, 296., ch. 3

⁴³² Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 142.

It is the accretion of different languages into English which has increased its copiousness, but has also divorced the people from the roots of the language and its civilising influence, and which will ultimately lead to its decline.

As Gwyneth Lewis notes, Iolo's professed attempt is to make a British verse which is a synthesis of the English and Welsh. The form he identifies as containing the two main themes of Dafydd ap Gwilym's poetry, love and nature, as well as being broad enough to contain political observations (as it does in Theocritus and Virgil), is also the form best adapted to break into the English literary market, following the precedent of Duck and his successors. Lewis writes:

In a note to his 'Ode to the British Muse' [...] Iolo claimed that Taliesin had "very much enriched the Welsh poetry by introducing into it the Roman versification." Because Iolo believed that the sixth-century poet had introduced the Latin metres into Welsh poetry, the Taliesin whom he admired was a figure who, like Dafydd ap Gwilym, was able to combine two different literary traditions in his work. In the same note [...] Iolo exclaimed, "O! for another *Taliesin* to teach the *sublime English Muse* those truly musical and majestic numbers!" [...] The implication is clear. Iolo, the ancient British bard, was going to introduce the wealth of Celtic literature to English letters and, in his mingling of the two traditions, was going to be the Taliesin of the eighteenth century.⁴³³

The "Roman versification" is "unknown to every other modern tongue", presumably including English. Not only does Iolo claim to be introducing native British strains, but they are already a classical hybrid not used in the English language, thus implicitly giving Welsh poetry a status it might otherwise lack in the eyes of the English poetic establishment; and, of course, there is no-one in England who could credibly show how flimsy his assertion was.⁴³⁴ Similarly, Dafydd ap

⁴³³ Lewis, *Eighteenth-Century Literary Forgeries, with Special Reference to the Work of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 165.

⁴³⁴ See C. W. Lewis, 'Iolo Morganwg', in Branwen Jarvis (ed.), *A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1700-1800* (Cardiff, 2000), p. 141.

Gwilym is an appropriate model for Iolo's verse, through his revivification of the *cywydd* form by using words and traditions belonging to English poetry, and the ballads of the French troubadours.⁴³⁵ Yet, simultaneously, Iolo attempts to prove that Welsh pastoral is the authentic product of a native soil, rather than something transplanted to it as classical literature has been to England:

The Roman learning appears to have been a cometary thing a thing of powerful blaze sudden appears, and as suddenly almost disappearing, it sprang from the Greek learning, it was not a native that originally sprung from their own soil and grew up to a natural magnitude it was an exotic that flourished during a summer, but propagated itself but weakly. Similar to it is the present English literature. a splending [sic] mass of art. with very little of nature.⁴³⁶

In a letter to an unknown correspondent of 1792, he writes "by Britons, we the Welsh always mean ourselves."⁴³⁷ It would appear that Iolo wishes to synthesise a Britishness based more on the Welsh history of the island, as opposed to the Macphersonian or Pinkertonian versions of Britishness which held greater sway at the time. As with Evan Evans, the appearance of Ossian and the subsequent histories of Macpherson provided one animus for a defensive assertion of the primacy of Welsh experience in Britain. Pinkerton's essays on the History of Britain in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which raised the Scottish at the expense of the Welsh, likewise inflamed Iolo's ire.⁴³⁸ In a letter to William Owen (Pughe) in 1801, he accuses Pinkerton of an ulterior motive in his work:

⁴³⁵ R. Bromwich, *Tradition and Innovation in the Poetry of Dafydd Ap Gwilym* (Cardiff, 1967), p. 51.

⁴³⁶ NLW MS 21419E 18 r

⁴³⁷ Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 499.

⁴³⁸ See Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles : National, Regional and Personal Identity in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg*, pp. 54-7.

Pe bai llawer un yn ein ynys o'r un yspryd a'r 'Scotyn coegfalch, adennynid yr hen elyniaeth rhwng y ddwy genedl. [...] Nid chwilio'n ddiuedd am wirionedd y mae Pinkerton ai gyffelyb, ond ymffyrnigaw gan elyniaeth at y Cymry, heb wybod yn y byd baham. Aed hyd yn eithaf ei wŷn; ar fydd iawn ai cywilyddier gan wirioneddau mawrion ein cenedl, a ddeudant yn gadarn yn ei erbyn yn gynt nag y dymunai.

[Were there many in our island of the same spirit as the arrogant Scot, the old hostility between the two nations would be rekindled.[...] Pinkerton and his like do not search impartially for truth, but are enraged by enmity towards the Welsh, not knowing in the world for what reason. Let him follow his wrath to the extreme; very soon he will be put to shame by the great truths of our nation, which will come firmly against him sooner than he would wish.]⁴³⁹

Negotiating problems of Britishness involves fighting over the historical territory of country and literature with the Scots, as well as with the English.

In the Ode, Iolo debates many of the problems relating to Britishness in an attempt to reappropriate and reposition the place of the Ancient Briton within the emerging nationality. The stanzaic form he chooses for this piece takes its rhyme scheme from Gray's earlier Horatian odes, such as the 'Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College.' Following the scheme *ababccdeed*, he uses the same octosyllabic structure, with the single difference that the second, fourth and tenth lines are not shortened to six syllables, remaining the same length as the rest of the stanza. Iolo takes as his subject the more Pindaric concern of investigating a national poetic. As "the pre-eminent medium for investigating the nature and role of poetic vocation in the modern state,"⁴⁴⁰ the piece is both a commentary on, and a riposte to, Gray's 1757 Pindarics 'On the Progress of Poesy' and 'The Bard'. To Iolo's mind, Gray's Bard was barbarously "Skaldic" and Pinkertonian in tone, and betrayed a complete lack of

⁴³⁹ Morganwg, *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, p. 362.

⁴⁴⁰ McCalman, *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture, 1776-1832*, p. 626.

understanding of true Bardism. Traducing Gray and Pinkerton upheld Iolo's position as the ultimate authority on Bardism.

Gray's Bard, has been very generally, and extravagantly praised, but, notwithstanding ~~in spite~~ of all that has been said, I think it a very inferior thing; its mythology is borrowed from the fatal sisters, and in that most essential article of fine poetry, wants originality; it is the barbarous Scandinavian mythology, as inferior to the Bardic as the Nadir is to the Zenith, and in this the ode is destitute of mythological truth its fictitious names of Bards also vitiate historic Truth, for of that period we have the real names, as well as the work, of Great Bards [...]⁴⁴¹

As in Gray's 1768 edition of his *Poems*, where the 'Progress of Poesy' and 'The Bard' were heavily footnoted to explain their often obscure allusions, Iolo footnotes his 'Ode to the British Muse.' Often the footnotes threaten to overwhelm the entire poem in their attempt to foreground his view of Bardism, rather than Pinkerton's or Gray's.

The piece begins with an apparently standard apostrophe to a personified Muse. Instantly, however, the apparent national unity of the poem is undermined, as this muse is 'of Britannia's favour'd land,' introducing the notion that Britannia itself is not a single, homogeneous entity. In l. 8, the poet explicitly states that he is seeking poetic retreat in 'Walia's rural shades,' both touching on the theme of rusticity and access to the genuine voice of nature evinced throughout the collection, and Gray's rustic moralizing in works such as 'Ode to the Spring' and the 'Elegy'. The British Muse is peculiarly the 'guardian of celestial truth' (l. 4), which allows Iolo to elaborate on the inherent truthfulness of poetry in the first of his long footnotes. Bardism is a way of reclaiming poetry as part of the republic of letters from which Plato had long since banished it for propagating falsehood. Iolo realizes that the

⁴⁴¹ Llanover C72, NLW MS 13159A, f. 156

ancient poets were the historians and remembrancers of their time, and that in the absence of written records, poetry carried the burden of history. Thus, as we have seen above, he privileges poetry over monkish romance, claiming that “contrary to the practice of all other nations, the most authentic histories of the *Welsh* are in *verse*, and all their *fabulous* writings in *prose*.”⁴⁴² Welsh historians who allow “blind national vanity” to cloud their judgement regarding the supposed Trojan origins of the Welsh come under specific censure. It is likely that Iolo had Lewis Morris – whom he detested – in mind above all others here. These “unwarrantable assertions” have the added misfortune of bringing authentic Welsh manuscripts under the same suspicion as attended the Ossianic fragments – that, if they existed at all, they were likely to be fakes.⁴⁴³ By contrast, criticism of “all other nations” is allowed to stand without other explanation. Thus Iolo attempts to sidestep potential criticism of his own excessive partiality, not only by criticizing other Welsh theorists, but in the way that he fails to highlight the North-South divisions in which he engages elsewhere.⁴⁴⁴ To those outside Wales, the country seemed merely one curious entity, with no distinction between the residents of one part or another. Playing on this inability to distinguish between one ‘foreigner’ and another allows Iolo to attack one part of the country and raise up another without apparently indulging in regional partiality.

vi – Bard of the Island of Britain

⁴⁴² Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p.2.

⁴⁴³ See *The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales* (London, 1801) 3 v24 cm. The editors are identified on p.viii of vol. 1 as Owen Jones, Edward Williams, and William Owen Pughe; they are fully identified on the t.p. of the reprint of 1870.

⁴⁴⁴ See C. Charnell-White, *Barbarism and Bardism : North Wales Versus South Wales in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg* (Aberystwyth, 2004), Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles : National, Regional and Personal Identity in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg*.

Contrary to the progress of poetry described in Gray's ode (from Greece, to Rome, to Britain), Iolo clearly locates poetic imagination in Britain itself, "the native grandeur of thy song" (l. 9). His bards are "Bards that Britain call'd her own" (l. 13), and, unlike Gray's poets "beyond the solar road" ('Progress', l. 54), are civilized; they teach the "laws angelic peace" and in their poetry have the power to enact the peace they sing by causing battle to cease around them. The footnote to this section contains a thinly-veiled criticism of Gray (and possibly also Macpherson) who have apparently mystified bardism by preferring the "romantic fable" of bardic poetry containing enchantment ("Mordred, whose magic song/Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-top'd head"), counter to the rational bardism Iolo is trying to promote. This is further elaborated in a footnote to the fifth stanza discussing Merlin's supposed "preceptor," Meugant:

[...] from those pieces we clearly perceive, that they [Meugant and Merlin] were neither *prophets* nor *conjurors* [...] they were honest *Welsh Bards*, who recorded in verse the occurrences of their own times, never troubling themselves with futurity[...]

This is far from the image of the bard propagated in Gray's poem, whose "Master's hand, and Prophet's fire" had aroused such interest in the reading public. As if to reinforce this, none of the bards described by Iolo is mentioned in Gray. The latter's sublimity is rejected by Iolo :

Some indeed have thought (oddly enough in my opinion,) that the very character of the sublime required something mysterious and out of the reach of common understandings; to whom we may thus answer, to common understandings that cannot comprehend such ideas or mysteries, there is nothing more than mere nonsense; to those who are able to comprehend the meaning it is no longer a mystery, of course no longer sublimity⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴⁵ Llanover C72, NLW MS 13159A, f. 157

The North Walian Bard of Gray's imagination ("down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side"), accompanied by such sublime vocabulary as "haggard", "aweful", "gore" and "ghastly" has no place in the whitewashed cots of Glamorgan. To Iolo, "Nature, deck'd in all her charms" should "Shine [...] radiant through the lay sublime," sublimity coming from mirroring nature rather than mystifying it ("And bold Simplicity retains/ Her beauties in thy rhyme." ll 49-50).

Iolo acknowledges the origins of Welsh poetry in the commemoration of battle in the second stanza, but asserts that in fact poets were able to call a halt to war by virtue of their poetry, "a virtuous band/to still the raging storm" (ll. 19-20). Gray's bellicosity offended Iolo's pacifist sensibilities, and in a time when Britishness was apparently being forged in the crucible of the shared experience of war with France, such pacifism carried a radical edge. By re-imagining the bard as a herald of peace, he strengthened his suggestion that Gray's bard was of Scandinavian, rather than Welsh, origin.

A roll-call of the three primitive bards follows (Alawn, Goron and Rhuawn, supposedly the protégés of Tydain Tad Awen), along with their apparent specialties, representing three important requisites for poetry. Alawn represents the eighteenth-century fancy, or imagination, with "varied note" and "numbers bold" (l. 23) appropriate to the ode form. Goron represents art or polish, with which such wild bardism is 'softened' and is able to speak to the heart as well as the reason. Rhuawn represents the civilizing influence of bardism and is emblematic of the pastoral bard's closeness to nature. This pastoral naturalism is yoked to a freedom which belongs to the "British Swain" through the agency of Welsh bardic poetry.

In the sixth stanza, having established civilized Welsh bardism as distinct from a savage primitivism, the notion of Druidism in bardism is introduced. A footnote later in the poem states that the two are interchangeable:

The *Bardic*, or, which is the same thing, the *Druidic*, institution, originated in Britain [...] ⁴⁴⁶

Taliesin is introduced as a Druid conversant with the doctrine of metempsychosis, a theory which can apparently be proved through the conflation of the historical poet Taliesin with the character of Taliesin in the legend of Ceridwen and Afagddu. The witch Ceridwen's assistant Gwion inadvertently drinks a potion of prophecy meant for Ceridwen's hideous son, and the tale then tells of Gwion's transformation into numerous animals in order to escape Ceridwen's wrath. Finally he becomes a seed which is eaten by Ceridwen in the shape of a hen, and is eventually reborn as Taliesin. Ceridwen is presented in early sources as "the owner of the cauldron (*peir*) which was the source of poetic inspiration (*awen*)," ⁴⁴⁷ and the conflation of the two Taliesins, the historical and the legendary, allows Iolo to conflate bardism and druidism under this umbrella. Taliesin's protean aspect is seen to extend to "enrich[ing] the Welsh poetry by introducing into it the Roman versification," alleging that Latin forms such as the "hexameter, pentameter, sapphic [*sic*]" are "unknown to every other *modern tongue*." The latter is certainly an unusual assertion, as it is easily disproved – the Sapphic was an unusual and difficult metre, but it was used in English by poets in the sixteenth century (such as Sidney) and in the eighteenth century (notably Isaac Watts and William Cowper). These allegations are

⁴⁴⁶ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁴⁷ Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein : The Welsh Triads*, p. 309.

repeated in Iolo's later *Cyfrinach Beirdd Ynys Prydain* (*The Secret of the Bards of the Island of Britain*, published posthumously 1829), where Taliesin is represented as the "first who understood" several measures, some genuine, some of Iolo's own devising. His inexactness as to whether the Latin or the Welsh was the older metre – in some places Taliesin introduced Roman learning to Welsh verse, in others he seems to create new verse-forms – allows a degree of latitude when placing Welsh verse in apparent opposition to the classical inheritance of English literature. It may thus be posited as an alternative to Greek and Latin influence, whilst simultaneously claiming an equally privileged position in literary history. ("Well-taught by thee, the *Cimbric* song / In sound majestic rolls along, / Tunes high the bold *Virgilian* strain" ll. 55-7) Indeed, in the *Poems*, Iolo eventually bypasses the English tradition altogether in the genealogy of verse:

[Taliesin] very much enriched the Welsh poetry by introducing into it the Roman versification, the hexameter, pentameter, saphic, and other metre, till then strangers to the *Welsh language*. — These [...] are, I believe, unknown to every other *modern tongue*. O! for another *Taliesin* to teach the *sublime English Muse* those truly musical and majestic numbers! Surely this may be done!⁴⁴⁸

The final two stanzas repeat the truism common to both the English and the Welsh tradition that the golden age of literature had passed. Shakespeare and Milton, whose literary afterlives had been as protean as the mythical Taliesin, are finally adduced as the latest of the pre-eminent bards. Both Shakespeare and Milton hold important places in the self-fashioning narratives of the self-taught tradition, the former in his guise as "fancies childe,"⁴⁴⁹ the latter as the exemplar of high style

⁴⁴⁸ Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral. in Two Volumes. by Edward Williams*, p. 7.

⁴⁴⁹ 'L' Allegro,' in J. Milton, *Complete Shorter Poems [of] John Milton*, Carey, J. (ed) (Harlow, 1971), p. 34.

emulated by the labouring-class poets. Re-positioning them as beneficiaries of the same *awen*, or muse, as the poets in the Welsh tradition has multiple functions. It frees the poet from the classical tradition, a project attempted by many of the labouring-class poets, and also allows Iolo to claim an inheritance from two branches of native tradition, the English and the Welsh, all the while tracing their ancestry back to a single *British* – that is, an ancient primitive *Welsh* – root.

To Iolo, only one language had interpenetrated completely with the land and history of Britain.

It has always struck me forcibly that the knowledge of Nature and of its appearances in the Island and climate of Britain is strongly and prominently impressed on the Welsh Language [...] but nothing of this appears in the character of the English language, a language that was never properly educated in the School of Nature, a language that is, comparatively speaking, but of yesterday, nurtured up and formed in schools of art [...]⁴⁵⁰

The nation and the country are as indelibly stamped on the language as the language itself is on the country. This includes England, even after centuries of what could be perceived in these contexts as occupation. Vestiges of the interpenetration of land and language can still be traced through the poetry of the Ancient Britons, even after they have mostly been Englished out of existence on the ground. The re-appearance of poems recording ancient battles in Welsh on what is now English soil marks the pre-English history of the land just as Iolo saw druidic history marked by stone circles.

As Howard Weinbrot makes plain in *Britannia's Issue* (1993), the Pindaric ode in the eighteenth century was a mode which was supposed to speak for the nation.⁴⁵¹ It was used to remake the lineages of modern British cultural heritage by including

⁴⁵⁰ NLW MS 13103B, f. 47

⁴⁵¹ H.D. Weinbrot, *Britannia's Issue : The Rise of British Literature from Dryden to Ossian* (Cambridge, 1993) 625. Part III, pp.334-358

and superseding classical heroes and allusions, allowing both a frame of reference for national pride (by comparison with the ancients) and a way of breaking free from the burden of past ages. The ode progressed from Greek and Roman allusion, to allusion to a British past, via Gray and Macpherson. It is unsurprising, then, that Iolo also uses the form to reposition British history as Welsh-inflected, as a response to and critique of Gray and Macpherson's own historical and poetical reimaginings.

The question of Iolo's national allegiances is more complex than it is for either of the other subjects of this study. He is widely credited as one of the earliest Welsh writers to display a kind of nationalism recognizable to modern nationalists. Certainly he was the first to identify the linguistic genocide inherent in the Tudor language clause.⁴⁵² This has tended to obscure, or lead to a denial of, Iolo's Britishness; both of the modern Britishness he wished to create, and the historical Britonism which he attempted to rehabilitate from the error of Galfridian prose.

If we accept, as J.R. Jones argues, that Britishness is cognate with Englishness due to the interpenetration of its land, language, and state, then several consequences necessarily flow from that in terms of our view of Iolo's work. The first and most serious in its implications is the level of "contributionism" (see above, ch. 2) inherent in the mere act of collating and publishing the *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*.⁴⁵³ Acknowledging that Iolo genuinely wanted to be accepted as an English-language poet means we can no longer view him simply as a Welsh nationalist. English was simultaneously a threatening stronger neighbour, and a language with a rich heritage whose poetry Iolo could not resist. This tension is obvious throughout the collection,

⁴⁵² See his Introduction, Jones, Iolo, et al., *The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales*.

⁴⁵³ Ned Thomas, 'Images of Ourselves', in John Osmond (ed.), *The National Question again : Welsh Political Identity in the 1980s* (Llandysul, Dyfed, 1985), pp. 306-19.

and I would argue is the principal reason the footnotes and the poetry disagree so radically. The former is the creation of the proud nationalist whose “Welsh blood” rises to his head at the contempt of the Englishman as personified by Johnson. The latter, however successful it is judged as poetry, is the product of a poet fascinated by language in and of itself, who along with writing English-language poetry coins hundreds of Welsh words in an attempt to compete with the supposed copiousness of the English language. In its inability to break free from the standard diction and conventions of the eighteenth-century pastoral, it betrays the desperation to be accepted exhibited by figures as diverse as the anglicised Welsh gentry and labouring-class poets.

Conclusion

I wish Evans would give us some translations such as Nennius, Myrddin Wyllt, Taliesin, which no man else in the world can do, and leave such a common piece of drudgery, as translating modern English books to some heavy brother of the Church, that is fit for nothing else. No ship-builder puts his best caulcer to pitch oakum.⁴⁵⁴

In his statements on what he felt was worth translating, Lewis Morris conceded that his views and that of his correspondent, Edward Richard, did not “always tally.”

Richard was keen for Evans to translate some improving works, such as *Stanhope's Christian Directory*, rather than bringing the *Gododdin* to the light of day.

Translation was not a uni-directional act, interpreting Welsh culture for English consumers, but involved bringing English culture into a Welsh context. The Morrises' letters show their flexibility in translations between the two languages in their daily context, but Lewis Morris also translated poetry and prose into Welsh from English.

In modern translation studies, much has been made of power relations. Using post-colonial theories, critics often discuss translated texts in terms of violence done to texts in the transition to a higher status language, interpretation as colonization, control, and sometimes even cannibalism.⁴⁵⁵ In the eighteenth century, similarly, the act of translation was discussed in terms of metaphors. These included viewing the translator as an exile, a child, or a slave, and the act of translation as trade, sexual congress, or metamorphosis.⁴⁵⁶ We have seen in this study how authors have

⁴⁵⁴ Morris, Morris, et al., *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735-1786)*, p. 422.

⁴⁵⁵ See e.g. *Post-Colonial Translation : Theory and Practice*, ed. S. Bassnett (Translation Studies, London, 1999)

⁴⁵⁶ P. Davis, *Translation and the Poet's Life : The Ethics of Translating in English Culture, 1646-1726* (Oxford, 2008).

variously responded to and resisted “the Saxons’ cry” to “resume the harp.”

Negotiations of stereotypes, resistance to English aesthetics, and re-imagined histories all challenge the potential for cultural appropriation inherent in writing in English.

But the question remains, what cultural negotiations happen when English works are translated into Welsh?

Lewis Morris’ instructions to Evan Evans on being a bard also reflect his attitudes to translation. It appears that he prefers free translation, such as Dryden’s imitation, updating the original so that it is applicable to his time and place. His advice to Evans, that his shepherds should have Welsh names, refers as much to translations into Welsh as to original compositions. In a note appended to a translation of Matthew Prior’s “The Despairing Shepherd,” he writes:

In this translation I have taken ye scope which is usually allowd to translators of verse viz. changing ye persons represented; a shepherd being too mean a character for a lover in our Country &c.⁴⁵⁷

Evidently, Lewis saw latitude as the norm when translating. He had for his model not only the ideas of John Denham and Dryden, but Ellis Wynne’s *Gweledigaethu y Bardd Cwsg*. Wynne borrowed his pattern from Quevedo’s *Dreams*, but created a thoroughly Welsh work with characters, situations and places which spoke directly to the Welsh reader. In the translation of Prior, Alexis and Clorinda become Gronw and Gwenhwyfar, and the nymphs and shepherds, young lads and lasses of the village. In the manuscript, Prior’s poem and Lewis’ translation sit side-by-side, with Lewis’ superscribed “The Same in British.” This surtitle implies not just that the poem has been cymricised in terms of language, but that the whole matter is more British than are the contents of the original. Lewis’ lads and lasses belong to Britain far more

⁴⁵⁷ BM 14934, 198a

easily than do Prior's classical swains and nymphs. The verses in English are in high-style diction, full of elisions and classical allusions; Lewis' version contains alliteration similar to *cynganedd*, and has an altogether less forced diction. These are changes common to all Lewis' verse translations into Welsh, even where he has written both source text and translation.⁴⁵⁸

Morris also created free prose translations, sometimes elaborating on a source text, sometimes taking the starting point only, with the rest of the work being largely original. One of these, *Ystori Doctor y Bendro*, a free translation of *De Medico qui Insanos curabat*, appears in print in the single edition of *Tlysau'r Hen Oesoedd* (1735).⁴⁵⁹ This is a bilingual pamphlet containing the above work (presented as an ancient piece, rather than a modern translation), along with several exemplary genuine old poems. Lewis states in a short preface "To the English Reader," that his aim is to publish

quarterly, with English explanatory Notes and Critical observations, and also a Dissertation upon our Poetry and Language; Things, which very few English Readers have any knowledge of [...]⁴⁶⁰

Had the journal continued beyond its sole edition, the story of the Celtic revival of the eighteenth century might have been different. Perhaps key to its failure is Lewis' remarkable refusal to translate the poetry contained therein. In the familiar pattern of bilingual prefaces, Lewis is more forthcoming in the Welsh preface about his reasons for adopting this format :

⁴⁵⁸ See A.R. Jones, "Put it in a Welsh Dress': Poetical Translations by Lewis Morris", *National Library of Wales Journal*, 2000)

⁴⁵⁹ For a discussion of the differences between the source text and the translation, see A.R. Jones, 'Traethiadau Lewis Morris', *Taliesin*, 1999), pp. 64-83.

⁴⁶⁰ L. Morris, *Tlysau Yr Hen Oesoedd* [Ed. by L. Morris. Facs. Repr.] ([Lerpwl, 1902), p. 2.

Er mwyn dénu'r Cymru Seisnigaidd i ddarllen Cymrâeg, ag i graffu ar beth na chlywsant erioed braidd son am dân, [sef, bod dysg a gwybodaeth gynt ynghymru,] rhoddais i y cynwysiadau yn Saesonaeg; Na ddigiwch gan hynny [...]

[In order to attract the anglicised Welsh to read in Welsh, and to look at that of which they have hardly heard [viz, that there was learning and knowledge previously in Wales,] I gave the contents in English; be not wrathful for that [...]]⁴⁶¹

Lewis has a specific audience in mind, the anglicised Welshmen who have not heard of the antiquities of their own country. If these people are dislocated from their heritage and language, then there is little hope of persuading those outside Wales that such remains are worth preserving. But if the translations are presented, instead of or as well as the originals, his suspicion seems to be that readers would not read the originals. His stated aim is to attract his readers to read in Welsh, supplying interpretative notes, rather than to give English renditions of the texts themselves, as Evan Evans was to do later. In this lies the implication that true Britishness must comprise both languages. Lewis goes on to discuss Pope and Cowley's favourable criticisms of Homer, Virgil, and Pindar, and argues that Dafydd ap Gwilym, "our Welch Ovid", is their equal, inviting readers to consider *Cywydd y Daran* (*Cywydd of the thunder*).

Those that are not over partial to the School Languages and proper Judges of Ours, let them compare this Poem in its Sound and the Loftiness of its Metaphors, with the best Passages of this kind in the above Authors, and don't doubt but they'll conclude this Boldness in the Comparison, Excusable, let Homer's Character be ever so sacred.⁴⁶²

Evidently, Lewis hoped that such praise would encourage those to whom Welsh was as much a dead language as Latin and Greek to come to a comparable appreciation of

⁴⁶¹ *ibid.* p. 3.

⁴⁶² *ibid.* p. 6.

its merits. However, the danger inherent in such a comparison, consigning the language to a venerable literary mausoleum, remained throughout the century. Subscription lists show that, along with many of the Welsh-speaking middling orders, gentry who did not know or use the language felt “it was noble to have an ancient British heritage.”⁴⁶³

Morris was not wholly uncritical of translation. Neither he nor his brothers were impressed with Evans’ English and Latin translations of the ancients, criticised as lacking poetry, whilst Macpherson’s assertions that he could provide the originals of his Ossianic fragments was greeted with the riposte that “a man who is capable of making a flashing translation, is capable, and more than capable, of making a flashing original where he is not tied down with fetters.”⁴⁶⁴ But translation continued to be vital in the Welsh publishing trade, as original Welsh works could not be produced in great enough numbers to feed the appetite of the highly literate Welsh public. These were overwhelmingly translations of religious books, from *Taith y Pererin* (The Pilgrim’s Progress) and *Coll Gwynfa* (Paradise Lost) through to translations of sermons by English divines such as Philip Doddridge by scores of named and unnamed clergy, including Evan Evans. There is clearly a material difference between what was translated from English into Welsh and from Welsh into English, and between the audiences for each. On the whole, Welsh-language publications were concerned with the present lives of their audience and their spiritual welfare, where

⁴⁶³ J. Kerrigan, *Archipelagic English : Literature, History, and Politics 1603-1707* (Oxford, 2008).

⁴⁶⁴ Morris, Morris, et al., *The Letters of Lewis, Richard, William and John Morris of Anglesey, (Morrisiaid Mon) 1728-1765*, vol. II, p. 242.

English translations of Welsh texts concentrated on ancient literature for the entertainment of the intellectual classes.

Translation also played a part in revivifying the language, “to keep pace with the Spirit of other improvements,” as John Walters explains in his *English-Welsh Dictionary* of 1794.⁴⁶⁵ He is writing here of the origins of languages and their increase in vocabulary as, following Locke, they move from explaining simple concepts to more complex ones. But recent work on the papers of Iolo Morganwg reveal that he coined many hundreds of words in response to Walters’ request for him to collect examples of regional dialects whilst on his travels. Many of the coinages that were preserved in the dictionary were intended to fill specific gaps in the language created by new technologies. It was Iolo who invented the word *tanysgrifio* for ‘to subscribe,’ a word still in use today, in response to the use of subscription lists in publishing, and a direct translation of the English. Walters was open about the probability of the dictionary sustaining the language:

If it should be objected to the present Undertaking, that it hath a tendency to revive the WELSH language, or at least to suspend it’s [*sic*] fate and prolong its existence, the Author begs leave to express his concern at finding that very thing imputed as a fault, and converted to dispraise, which he has long been used to consider as an excellence and a recommendation.⁴⁶⁶

He goes on to recommend the dictionary both to historians and antiquaries dealing with Britain’s past, but also to the “Divine... the Physician and the Lawyer,”⁴⁶⁷ an indication of the language’s continued contemporary usage :

⁴⁶⁵ J. Walters, *An English-Welsh Dictionary* (London, 1794), p. iv.

⁴⁶⁶ *ibid.* pp. viii-ix.

⁴⁶⁷ *ibid.* p. ix.

It was once the language of BRITAIN – once the language of EUROPE – is *still* the *native* language of WALES, and hath uninterruptedly been so from the first peopling of the *Island* to this day.⁴⁶⁸

This dictionary functions not only for those to whom Welsh is a foreign language, but also for those who have access to the more modern culture of England to find words with which to express new ideas and discuss new technologies in the ancient language. Other lexicographers, such as William Owen (Pughe), argued that this copiousness was inherent in the roots of the language, and that all Welsh words could be reduced to atomic particles which could then be arranged and rearranged to express any notion. This gave rise to enormous words, for example *gogoelgrefyddusedd* (a degree of superstition), and a notion of linguistic copiousness and flexibility to rival English, which “hath learned the art to make itself thus fine with the spoils of other languages,” wearing false feathers like “the Jackdaw in the fable.”⁴⁶⁹ Welsh contained all the elements with which to express the whole of human experience, past, present, and future, within itself alone. As Johnson moved from a wish to fix the language to an acknowledgement that a dictionary could only record ever-changing usage,⁴⁷⁰ so the Welsh lexicographers took a further step, from recording to influencing the course of the language.

A deft leap of faith in following the theories of the wilder etymologists of the eighteenth century transformed Welsh translators from occupying a subservient position to the English, to holding a position of greater historical power. Far from

⁴⁶⁸ *ibid.* p. ix.

⁴⁶⁹ J. Walters, *A Dissertation on the Welsh Language, : Pointing Out its Antiquity, Copiousness, Grammatical Perfection, with Remarks on its Poetry; and Other Articles Not Foreign to the Subject.* (Cowbridge:, 1771), p. 27.

⁴⁷⁰ Johnson, *Samuel Johnson : The Major Works*, p. 324.

being open to accusations of having to take words from other languages in order to express modern ideas, and thus weakening the foundations of arguments in favour of retaining the living language, Welsh could be shown as purer and as more linguistically sophisticated than English. This greater linguistic confidence was reflected in the appearance of longer-running Welsh-language journals and newspapers, many of which contained mixtures of historical and pseudo-historical texts, contemporary literature, and reports from Wales and the wider world.

* * *

The whole work of the Anglo-Welsh writer is, in essence, translation. All three of the subjects in this study spent time in England as well as Wales, crossing borders physically as well textually. As we have moved through from the 1750s to the end of the century, so Evan Evans' question remains : "What have I, a Welshman, to do with English poetry?" As we have discovered, in order to participate fully in national administrative life, the state language must be adopted. The same is true of participation in the literary life of the nation. Whatever the interest in work from other nations within the British state, in order to win their place these works must be interpreted in the medium of English, according to the tastes of the day. Failure to do so could draw criticism such as Wilkes' comment on the *Specimens* that "none but a thorough *Welchman* could love them." Yet failure to show sufficient difference to titillate the English reading public also brought censure, as with the criticism of *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*. Constant interpretation exacerbated the divisions within

the writers and their works, which themselves mirrored the problems of forming the unified modern state of Britain.

The bilingual self-division of the Anglo-Welsh writer seems to increase throughout our period. Lewis Morris' supreme confidence in his multiple identities gives way to Evan Evans' inability to bridge England and Wales sufficiently even to earn a living. These fractured identities break down completely when we turn to Iolo Morganwg, when each identity becomes a separate performance for multiple audiences, subsequently dissolving into his laudanum dreams of Bardism.

Key to all of this is the notion of Britain, and these writers' successful or unsuccessful negotiations of what it means to them to be British. Morris' self-identification as a *Cymmrodor*, or earliest inhabitant, and heir to the oldest sort of Britishness was mediated in the first instance by what we earlier termed *Britonism*. This allowed him to partake unapologetically of both cultures to which he had access, and he felt little need to prove the virtues of his native culture.

Evan Evans, by contrast, in his identification of the "Anglo-Welsh" within the church, gave form to the division between the two cultures which he ultimately had to live out. Having spent most of his life in English cures, away from any who spoke his native language or shared his zeal for its antiquities, as he complained, his nervous complaints and feelings of alienation worsened. When it came to displaying the Welsh literary heritage in print, he resisted the impulse from his English correspondents to translate according to the public taste, and suffered for this in poor sales, and unfavourable comparisons to Gray's own versions of the same texts.

Iolo Morganwg, in his choice of the pastoral lyric and the plebeian mode, attempted to identify a literature which contained common ground between Welsh and

English literature. Using these as his starting point, he went on to fashion his own invented traditions as a historical background to inform his poetry and introduce the colourful pageant of Bardism into both English and Welsh culture. It was this Bardic-Druidism which caught the public imagination, as opposed to his Shenstonian pastoral, providing the exoticism which many had found lacking in Evans' *Specimens*. His retreat from English literature after the publication of *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* suggests a failure to integrate Wales and England within his own vision of Britain.

This thesis has argued that the English-language works of Welsh-speaking writers in the eighteenth century are both a site for and a symptom of negotiations between various parts of the emerging British identity. When “languages are the pedigree of nations,”⁴⁷¹ changes in the linguistic make-up of a country reflect changes in the wider make-up of that country or state. “[A] word here and there being the same will not do,” Johnson comments further, to prove a historical relation between two languages; but the long standing relationship between Wales and England meant that, though the two peoples and the two languages were not related, their literatures grew to share some commonalities. It was these commonalities that could be exploited in an attempt to create a more truly British literature. Due to the dominance of English within the state, the most prominent effect of this was the broadening of non-English influences on English literature.⁴⁷² But, as we have seen, there was also a reciprocal effect on Welsh and Anglo-Welsh literature of the period. Whilst promoting the ancient literature of Wales, writers could profit from its increased

⁴⁷¹ Johnson and Boswell, *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, p. 293.

⁴⁷² See E.D. Snyder, *The Celtic Revival in English Literature, 1760-1800* (Cambridge, 1923), Weinbrot, *Britannia's Issue : The Rise of British Literature from Dryden to Ossian*.

prestige in England to gain a wider audience for their works, and also felt able to deploy English literary influences with a greater confidence. This balancing act was not always successful, and there was a continual danger that, “like the Bat in the fable,” these authors would “be despised by both nations, for their unnatural behaviour, though it is possible they thought to have acquitted themselves entirely to the satisfaction of at least one party.”⁴⁷³ The English works of these writers were not always successful in their various aims; but they are, I contend, more noteworthy and interesting than they have hitherto been considered. Their English poetry and prose, rather than being aberrations, form an important body of commentary on Welsh literary productions, and on the often contradictory facets of Cambro-British national identity in the eighteenth century.

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