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Keeping up with the Neighbours: Cultural Emulation, Integration and Change in Southeast Wales c.1050 - c.1350.

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Keeping up with the Neighbours: Cultural Emulation, Integration and Change in Southeast Wales c.1050 – c.1350

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PhD History

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February 2022


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Declaration

'I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. All other sources are acknowledged by bibliographic references. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree unless, as agreed by the University, for approved dual awards.

I confirm that I am submitting this work with the agreement of my Supervisor(s).'



'Yr wyf drwy hyn yn datgan mai canlyniad fy ymchwil fy hun yw'r thesis hwn, ac eithrio lle nodir yn wahanol. Caiff ffynonellau eraill eu cydnabod gan droednodiadau yn rhoi cyfeiriadau eglur. Nid yw sylwedd y gwaith hwn wedi cael ei dderbyn o'r blaen ar gyfer unrhyw radd, ac nid yw'n cael ei gyflwyno ar yr un pryd mewn ymgeisiaeth am unrhyw radd oni bai ei fod, fel y cytunwyd gan y Brifysgol, am gymwysterau deuol cymeradwy.

Rwy'n cadarnhau fy mod yn cyflwyno'r gwaith hwn gyda chytundeb fy Ngoruchwyliwr (Goruchwylwyr)

Abstract

Throughout history, people have made a conscious choice to imitate their neighbours, and this could be an important facet of cultural change. This thesis explores how and how far the Welsh imitated their neighbours, which neighbours, and why was this the case.

While historians have explored this in the context of Europe, Britain or major Welsh principalities, few have paid attention to southeast Wales, a region where Welsh, English and Norman coexisted side-by-side for over two centuries. This study seeks to redress that balance by exploring how far members of the Welsh princely dynasties and gentry families of the region imitated, emulated and integrated with their neighbours, and consider their motives for doing so, and argues that conscious imitation could be demonstrated in the image such individuals presented to others, telling us much about cultural identities.

A review of the historical perspectives on cultural change and medieval Wales (Chapter 1) is followed by an analysis of the sources used, including genealogies, poetry, chronicles, charters, seals, heraldry, and castles, and records of the English exchequer (Chapter 2). The study then goes on to explore in turn areas where imitation has been identified and explores some of the motives behind it. Chapter 3 considers Welsh marriage and naming conventions; Chapter 4, the presentation of image through charters, seals and other forms of the written and spoken word: this is complemented in chapter 5 by a study of visual representative means. Chapter 6 considers castle construction as an area adopted by the Welsh. Having explored in each how far the Welsh imitated their neighbours in these various aspects and their reasoning for doing so, Chapter 7 explores how far this emulation translated into wider involvement with their neighbours.

The Welsh showed a remarkable variety in the way they imitated their neighbours, both Welsh and Anglo-Norman. Families increasingly adopted seals, heraldry, titles and castles on Anglo-Norman model, intermarried and cooperated with their neighbours. This indicates a change in the way cultural identities were expressed, changes driven by varying considerations of survival, ambition and the complexity of neighbourly relations in the Welsh marches. Through our study of the lesser gentry, we can see these changes gradually filtering through society.

The case of the princely dynasties of southeast Wales demonstrate they were at the forefront of cultural change in Wales and can be seen as a microcosm for cultural imitation, emulation and integration in Wales, Britain and Europe.

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Tom Davies, February 2022

Chapter 1: Introduction and Historiography

Rationale

Wales between 1050 and 1350 was a society in transition, and one which changed dramatically between the arrival of the Normans in the eleventh century and the Edwardian Conquest of 1282-3. The Anglo-Normans certainly had a role in stimulating this change. As a region where the interplay of neighbouring cultures had a profound effect on its history, medieval Wales has long attracted the attention of scholars of identity and cultural change, but few have explored in detail the extent to which the Welsh consciously imitated their Anglo-Norman neighbours. The rationale for this study revolves around the question of how, and how far, did the Welsh imitate, emulate, or integrate with their neighbours?

We can also ask subsidiary questions: who among their neighbours did they imitate, and why? Are their motives visible in the image they presented to others? Did they imitate in order to foster good relationships, to survive, or in the case of princes, to legitimise their lordship? What audiences did they have in mind - their Welsh peers, dependants or their Anglo-Norman neighbours? This can lead us to a better understanding of neighbours in the marches. Did imitation, emulation and integration go hand in hand? The time period of 1050 to 1350 has been deliberately chosen to straddle the period from the eve of the Norman Conquest until after the Edwardian Conquest, to understand how these changes occurred over time without adhering too closely to the dates that so often bracket studies of medieval Wales: 1066 and 1282-3. As we shall see over the course of this chapter, historical studies have mostly concentrated on the greater Welsh princes of Gwynedd, Powys or Deheubarth or the marcher lords, for whom sources are most plentiful. Very little work has explored the native Welsh in the marches, especially in southeast Wales. Here, while the Normans arrived early, Welsh lordships endured into the thirteenth century and beyond: such a region, where Normans, English and Welsh coexisted for a long period of time, is thus prime for a study of emulation, integration and change.

Over the course of the next chapter, we explore the perspective of existing historical studies on the subject of imitation, identity and cultural change in medieval Wales. This is essential to identify gaps in existing research and avenues for further enquiry. Historians often raise similar themes, ask similar questions and highlight similar challenges in their analyses. The wide variety of primary sources with their associated challenges and opportunities are explored in the second chapter. As some historians have focused their attention on specific

Chapter 1: Introduction and Historiography

source types Those historical studies whose attention is mostly or entirely concerned with specific source types, are explored in the second chapter as they are fundamental to our understanding of the primary sources: the current chapter will focus on the approaches that historians have taken to concepts of cultural change, emulation and integration and commonly recurring themes within them.

Concepts and Terminology

At the outset, it is vital to place the study within its wider conceptual context, exploring the existing approaches that have been taken to studies of cultural interaction in medieval Wales, and indeed of cross-cultural studies more generally. As many terms appear frequently in studies of cultural interaction or of medieval Wales, it is helpful to understand the concepts and terminology around cultural exchange and establish a terminology to use and a methodology to follow.

Emulation, Imitation and Integration

It is essential at the outset to examine some of the concepts and terminology used in studies of cultural exchange. As we shall see, a concept often approached by cultural historians is the relationship between change imposed, through methods such as conquest, and changes which occurred voluntarily. The latter is the main focus of this thesis, and historians have used the titular terms of this thesis, ‘emulation’, ‘imitation’ and ‘integration’ to explore the voluntary transfer of ideas from one culture to another. Before going further, then, what exactly do these terms mean, and how have historians used them?

Emulation is defined as ‘to strive to equal or rival (a person, his achievements or qualities); to copy or imitate with the object of equalling or excelling’¹ Unlike imitation, emulation implies a conscious and competitive element. Tekippe argues that Charlemagne emulated Roman practices in his construction of churches, through the symbolism employed, and that Charlemagne was one example where an individual used imperial monuments to link themselves to historical figures or events.²

Watt, whose thesis explores architectural emulation in Reconquista Spain, argues that architecture on the Spanish frontier was consciously designed in a way to emphasise legitimacy during the Reconquista, and that one method of doing so was to employ ‘architectural forms

¹ ‘Emulate, v.’, *Oxford English Dictionary*, online edn, <http://oed.com/view/Entry/61459> (Accessed 12/11/2022)

² R.W. Tekippe, ‘Copying Power: Emulation, Appropriation and Borrowing for Royal Political Purposes’, *Visual Resources* 20, 2, 3, (2004), pp.143-59.

associated with both the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the elite of Al-Andalus, Leon-Castile and Aragon'.³ In this case, Watt suggests emulation of pre-Islamic practices, creating links with the past through architectural symbolism and the use of earlier sacred sites, to transform territorial expansion into Reconquista.

Both examples use emulation in the context of emphasising associations with earlier peoples. In both cases emulation was used to present an image: Charlemagne as a Roman-style emperor; in the case of Spain, the image of a Reconquista, a reclaiming of the lands and turning back the clock to pre-Islamic Spain. In this thesis, this relationship with the past is important, but is only one strand. We explore not only the emulation of earlier practices but also of one's contemporaries and neighbours.

Wales is often seen through the context of frontiers or of core and periphery, with Wales firmly on the periphery in relation both to Europe and the British Isles and is a core feature of the Europeanisation paradigm of Robert Bartlett, which we explore shortly. If we follow these paradigms, we would expect it to be unlikely that emulation, in the context of exceeding the achievements or designs of one's neighbours, was usually an aim of individuals considering the disparity of scale of some of the individuals involved. It is unlikely that minor Welsh rulers would expect to outdo the English monarchy, though they might in the context of some of their opposite numbers in the Anglo-Norman marches. Indeed, a study of these practices is useful in understanding the nature of relationships between Welsh and Anglo-Norman individuals in the march and is a key part of the thesis.

Emulation might be more usefully considered in the context of matching the achievements of others, *as far as possible through limited means*, an idea which tallies with Davies's assertion that European ideas were reflected, 'albeit belatedly and often dimly' in Wales.⁴ Given emulation's loaded meaning it is difficult to employ where the motives around the adoption of an instance are difficult to discern. In these cases, where matching or exceeding the achievements of others (even if at scale), is not evident a term such as imitation (the action of using something as a model) or adoption, is perhaps more useful. Imitation is often more frequently used by historians to describe voluntary cultural borrowing.⁵ Other terms such as

³ K.L. Watt, *Medieval Churches on the Spanish frontier: how elite emulation in architecture contributed to the transformation of a territorial expansion into Reconquista*, (PhD diss. University of Louisville, 2011), p.18.

⁴ See also for example, R.R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063 – 1415* (Oxford, 2000); pp.210, 252; H. Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and European Change c.1100 - 1282', in H Pryce and J. Watts (eds.), *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in memory of Rees Davies* (Oxford, 2007), p.38.

⁵ Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and European Change', p.38.

‘cultural appropriation’, are not suitable for our discussion as in modern parlance they are often associated with negative borrowings by majority cultures.

Integration, by contrast, is the idea of an individual or people becoming part of or fully engaged with another social group. In our case, we explore how far native Welsh elites participated in activities within Anglo-Norman circles, such as presence at Anglo-Norman courts or within their retinues, or within wider English society. As this concept differs somewhat from that of emulation, this discussion will be explored in most detail in Chapter 7.

Culture and Cultural Identity: Welsh, Anglo-Norman and English

An oft-recurring concept in historical studies, including this thesis, is that of culture and cultural identities. We cannot consider the transfer of ideas between cultures without considering what cultures mean. Culture is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as ‘the distinctive ideas, customs, social behaviour, products or way of life of a particular nation, society, people or period.’⁶

However, historians often mean subtly different things when they talk of ‘culture.’ For example, the approach taken in McKitterick’s *Carolingian Culture* frames cultural activity in terms of teaching and religious learning, theological debate, the production of books, charters, and art.⁷ A similar approach is used by Barker in relation to the cultural tradition of medieval Normandy: ‘What I mean by culture...I look for in a study of manuscripts, libraries, theology, historical writing, arts, liturgical scholarship, political theory and letters.’⁸ In this way, culture can be equated with learning and religion. However, Bartlett talks of culture being defined by customs, language and law and R.R. Davies talks of both aristocratic and ecclesiastical culture, with the ‘native cultures profoundly different from [Anglo-Norman culture] in their economic configuration, political assumptions, ecclesiastical norms, social customs and literary and artistic traditions.’⁹ Our study, which focuses on the native Welsh dynasties, uses this definition of the culture of peoples and their customs and society, and hence we use the terms ‘Welsh’,

⁶ ‘Culture, n.’, *Oxford English Dictionary*, online edn, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/45746> (Accessed 13/12/2022).

⁷ G. Brown, ‘Introduction, the Carolingian Renaissance’, in R. McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: emulation and innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), p.34; G. Henderson, ‘Emulation and Invention in Carolingian Art’, in McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture*, pp.248-73.

⁸ L.K. Barker, ‘Ivo of Chartres and the Anglo-Norman Cultural Tradition’, in M. Chibnall (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies: XIII Proceedings of the Battle Conference 1990* (Woodbridge, 1990), pp.15-34.

⁹ R. Davies, ‘Frontier Arrangements in Fragmented Societies: Ireland and Wales’, in R. Bartlett and A. MacKay (eds.), *Medieval Frontier Societies* (Oxford, 1989), p.77; R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950 – 1350* (London, 1994), p.197.

and ‘Anglo-Norman’ or ‘English’, although aspects such as charter production and poetry will form part of our analysis, as we shall see.

Given the malleability of culture, the simplicity of the terms ‘English’, ‘Welsh’, ‘Anglo-Norman’ and ‘French’, ubiquitous as they are in any history of medieval Wales, bely their complexity of definition. They are especially challenging to define in light of change over time. For example, we might refer to ‘English’ and ‘Norman’ separately prior to 1066, while following the Norman conquest we can refer to an ‘Anglo-Norman’ culture, blending elements from English and Norman cultures and espoused as a concept by Chibnall and Barker) but by the thirteenth century we refer to the ‘English’ again.¹⁰ Contemporary sources such as *the Brut y Tywysogion* use widely different terms: referring to the Anglo-Normans as the French, for example.¹¹ The complexity is suggestive of an ambiguity in cultural relations central to our study.

The terms ‘Welsh’, ‘English’, ‘Anglo-Norman’ and ‘French’ are, of course, terms in use during the medieval period to define peoples. The differences in culture were discussed by early historians in terms of developing nationality and sometimes in terms of race or ethnicity. While culture could be based partly on descent, historians such as Bartlett point out that other aspects of culture were malleable and thus ‘to a point, therefore, medieval ethnicity was a social construct rather than a biological datum.’¹² This point is also raised by other historians who argue that culture could change over time through neighbouring influences and intermingling as well as through intermarriage.¹³ This is essential to our study of concepts such as imitation and integration because it is the figures that engaged with and adopted elements of other cultures that are most interesting to study.

One of the main points of this study is to highlight the overly simplistic nature of these cultural definitions and the need to understand the ambiguity indicated by cultural imitation, emulation and integration. Trying to discuss this concept without using such terms, however, is very difficult and would be over-laborious. For simplicity, the terms we use in this study are ‘Anglo-Norman’ for the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and ‘English’ for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, while ‘Welsh’ is considered throughout the period (despite, for example,

¹⁰ M. Chibnall, *Anglo-Norman England 1066 – 1166* (Oxford, 1987), p.5; Barker, ‘Ivo of Chartres and the Anglo-Norman Cultural Tradition’, pp.16-17.

¹¹ T. Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion or the Chronicle of the Princes, Peniarth Ms.20 Version* (Aberystwyth, 1952).

¹² Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.197.

¹³ D. Walker, ‘Cultural Survival in an Age of Conquest’, in R.R. Davies et al (eds.), *Welsh Society and Nationhood: Historical essays presented to Glanmor Williams* (Cardiff, 1984), p.46; D. Stephenson, *Medieval Wales c.1050 – 1332: Centuries of Ambiguity* (Cardiff 2019), pp.61-83.

a tendency for native sources to refer to the inhabitants of Wales as the ‘Britons’ at the start of our period).¹⁴ In each case, defining an individual’s cultural origin relies partly on descent (where they, or their families, originate from), and upon their customs or those of their predecessors. This is, of course, distinct from their own culture as individuals displaying different names or making use of cross-cultural elements can be seen as subject to cultural change.

Approaches to Cultural Exchange in Medieval Wales

The engagement between cultures has long been a part of historical studies. Most studies of medieval Wales have necessarily approached Anglo-Welsh relations as an essential part of the political narrative. However, these approaches have varied considerably.

Many studies have focused purely on the political narrative, rather than wider questions of cultural exchange or related questions. In the case of Wales, studies concentrated on political relations between the English monarchy and the most powerful Welsh princes, such as Llywelyn ap Gruffudd of Gwynedd (d.1282). This is to an extent where history is seen as the personal relationship between the most powerful Welsh individuals and the English kings, such as that between Llywelyn ap Gruffudd and Edward I.

This approach began early with antiquarians such as Humphrey Llwyd and David Powel who charted the political narrative of the Welsh princes up to the conquest of 1282.¹⁵ Others, such as Rice Merrick, considered the political history of the marcher lordships in similar terms, in this case, Glamorgan in south-east Wales.¹⁶ This approach towards the personal relationship is emphasised in J.E. Lloyd’s seminal *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*, often seen as the first definitive history of medieval Wales conforming to modern scholarly conventions.¹⁷ Lloyd’s work devoted whole chapters to discussing individual princes such as the Lord Rhys, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. His approach is nicely summarised in his treatment of the later thirteenth century, for which Lloyd wrote:

At no [other] period is the interest of the story more personal; for from beginning to end the tale of these twenty-six years centres in the doings of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd,

¹⁴ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon Peniarth Ms.20 Version*, p.19.

¹⁵ H. Pryce, ‘The Normans in Welsh History’, *Anglo Norman Studies XXX. The Proceedings of the Battle Conference* (2007), p.4.

¹⁶ R. Merrick, *A Booke of Glamorganshire Antiquities*, ed. J. A. Corbett (Barry, 1972).

¹⁷ J.E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*, 2 vols. (London, 1911).

who is not only the foremost of the princes of Wales, but also the single force which is of any account in Welsh politics.¹⁸

This approach leaves limited opportunities for exploring wider impacts of culture, beyond the relationship between two individuals. Lloyd's narrative has formed the basis of most subsequent studies, and the political narrative remains the main focus of these works, especially in general overviews of Welsh medieval history.¹⁹ Modern studies of the princes abound - Roger Turvey's *The Welsh Princes*, or Kari Maund's *The Welsh Kings* for example,²⁰ and individual princes have become the subject of innumerable articles.²¹

However, unlike his antiquarian predecessors, Lloyd 'sought 'to integrate that narrative [of kings and princes] with analysis of ecclesiastical, literary, social and institutional topics in order to present a coherent account of the formation of the Welsh people.'²² Lloyd began exploring concepts which we today understand as social and economic history, and saw little change in the culture of medieval Wales, writing that 'Wales still retained its ancient social structure'.²³ However, he also noted the challenges of dealing with such a topic, particularly a dearth of source material. Of the thirteenth century, he wrote that 'the domestic history of the period is almost a blank,' while for the rule of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd – amongst the most well attested of Welsh princes - 'Little light is thrown by contemporary authorities upon the home policy of Llywelyn during this period.'²⁴ Given the limitations of the sources, it is unsurprising that Lloyd's spoke sparingly on cultural history.

Since Lloyd, more sources have come to light and been transcribed, translated or analysed, which has led more historians to consider aspects of cultural change in Welsh society. In 1972 T. Jones-Pierce explored societal change in Gwynedd from the perspective of state building in thirteenth-century Gwynedd, considering changing laws and customs (such as the abolition of *galanas*), changing terminology of rulership, the development of bureaucracy and governmental machinery including charters, deeds and increased record keeping.²⁵ In more recent years, studies of social and cultural aspects have become increasingly marked, with more

¹⁸ J.E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, pp.716.

¹⁹ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*; A.D. Carr, *Medieval Wales* (Houndmills, 1995); Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.7-33.

²⁰ R. Turvey, *The Welsh Princes: The Native Rulers of Wales 1063 – 1283* (Abingdon, 2013); K. Maund, *The Welsh Kings* (Stroud, 2006).

²¹ For example, D. Stephenson and C.O. Jones 'The date and context of the birth of Dafydd ap Llywelyn', *Flintshire Historical Society Journal*, 39, (2012), pp.21-32; R.R. Davies, 'Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, Prince of Wales', *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, 9 (1981 – 3), 264-77.

²² H. Pryce, *J.E. Lloyd and the Creation of Welsh History: Renewing a Nation's Past* (Cardiff, 2011), pp.151-2.

²³ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, p.605.

²⁴ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, pp.682, 742.

²⁵ T. Jones-Pierce, *Medieval Welsh Society: Selected Essays* ed. J.B. Smith (Cardiff, 1972), pp.19-38.

questions being asked concerning changes in society, economy and religion. Rees Davies' important 1987 history was entitled *Conquest, Coexistence and Change* (later republished as *the Age of Conquest*) which attests to this increased prominence,²⁶ and explorations of social and cultural elements have been integral to the more recent histories of A.D. Carr and David Stephenson, amongst many others.²⁷ Many recent studies have also sought to give increased prominence to specific aspects of cultural change and we will encounter many of these over the course of the work.

Even so, many modern histories focus their attention on the interaction between the largest native Welsh political units of Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth.²⁸ This is partly due to the nature of the source evidence: these were long-lasting polities, to which belonged some of the most powerful and influential Welsh princes, such as Madog ap Maredudd (d.1160), the Lord Rhys (d.1197) and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (d.1282). More of their castles, charters and seals survive, they are found most often in legends and folktales, and are most frequently mentioned in contemporary chronicles.²⁹ As the most colourful individuals about whom we can build the most detailed picture, they are naturally more attractive to historical study.³⁰ It is understandable that Lloyd, for example, focused his history on the most powerful individuals as his work considered the history of Wales through a prism of success or failure, the parameters of success being the prospects of continued Welsh (i.e. princely) independence in the face of Norman expansion, often with a nationalistic perspective. Key recurring themes in Lloyd's treatment of Welsh rulers was outlining the development of the Welsh nation, its prospects for survival and developing national consciousness.³¹ From this position, focusing on the major developments and polities is understandable. Nevertheless, we must be aware that cultural change affected people differently, each instance depending upon the unique set of circumstances, individual social position or the local, regional and national political context of the time. In this way, although a well-worn routine, the study of the careers of individuals remains relevant today, providing that we extend our discussion beyond the limitations of previous studies.

²⁶ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, originally published as *Conquest, Coexistence and Change*, (Oxford, 1987).

²⁷ Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and European Change c.1100 - 1282'; D. Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain 1000 - 1300* (London 1992); Carr, *Medieval Wales*; Stephenson *Medieval Wales*, pp.72-83.

²⁸ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*; A.D. Carr, *Medieval Wales*; R.R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest*; D. Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*; D. Stephenson, *Political Power in Medieval Gwynedd: Governance and the Welsh Princes*, (Cardiff, 2014).

²⁹ Turvey, *The Welsh Princes*; Maund, *The Welsh Kings*, pp. 1 - 12.

³⁰ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, p.1.

³¹ Pryce, *J.E. Lloyd and the Creation of Welsh History*, pp.154-68; p.174.

In his focus on the success or failure of native Welsh polities, Lloyd was not alone. Preoccupation with success and failure continue to permeate modern studies: for example, the survival of Powys following the Edwardian Conquest is often seen as a success story, under Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn in the guise of a Marcher Baron: elsewhere other dynasties were extinguished.³² If we are to usefully employ a study of individuals it is necessary to be aware of this preoccupation.

Cultural Change, Frontier Studies and Europeanisation

The concept of the frontier appears frequently in studies of cultural engagement, as frontier regions are often seen as prime examples of cultures coming together and existing side by side, and thus regions where exchange and cultural change can be more profitably studied. While the concept of frontier studies is not unique to the discipline of medieval history, it was first conceived as a historiographical idea in relation to the American west, but was later applied to parts of medieval Europe such as Iberia, Germany or Sicily. Wales is often considered as one of these frontier societies.³³

There are differences between Wales as a frontier region and other examples such as Iberia, the most obvious being the added religious dimension of Christian and Muslim in the latter.³⁴ That said, they share characteristics as a region of contact between two cultural groups. The nature of this contact has been subject to extensive debate. Frontiers are often seen as ‘a contact zone where an interchange of cultures was constantly taking place’.³⁵ Historians have emphasised their primarily military nature with some peaceful interaction, although this is often espoused in terms of arbitration and negotiation, with this coexistence seen as the exception rather than the rule.³⁶ Although some historians have sought to emphasise the elements of coexistence and cross-cultural contact they often return to the themes of conquest and ‘cultural clash’.³⁷

³² R. Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles 1100 – 1400*. (Oxford, 1995); D. Stephenson, *Medieval Powys: Kingdom, Principality and Lordships, 1132 – 1293* (Woodbridge, 2016); Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.361.

³³ N. Berend, ‘Preface’, in D. Abulafia and N. Berend (eds.), *Medieval Frontiers* (Cambridge, 2002), p.xi; Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.197; Watt, *Medieval Churches on the Spanish frontier*, p.18; M. Griffiths, ‘Native Society on the Anglo-Norman Frontier: The Evidence of the Margam Charters’, *Welsh History Review*, 14, 2 (1988), pp.179-216.

³⁴ D. Abulafia, ‘Introduction: Seven Types of Ambiguity, c.1100 – c.1500’, in Abulafia and Berend (eds.), *Medieval Frontiers* (Cambridge, 2002), p.2; Watt, *Medieval Churches on the Spanish frontier*, p.91.

³⁵ Berend, ‘Preface’, p.xi.

³⁶ R. Bartlett, ‘Colonial Societies of the High Middle Ages’, in R. Bartlett and A. MacKay (eds.), *Medieval Frontier Societies* (Oxford, 1989), p.28.

³⁷ L. Pick, *Conflict and Coexistence: Archbishop Rodrigo and the Muslims and Jews of Medieval Spain* (Bristol, 2004), pp.204-7; Bartlett and MacKay (eds.), *Medieval Frontier Societies* (Oxford, 1989), p.vi.

Bartlett and MacKay, amongst others, have argued that comparisons can be drawn between frontier societies in different parts of Europe, and argued that parallels can be drawn between different regions and emphasising the shared experiences and similarities of development within these regions. This has taken the form of parallels between two regions, such as Ireland and Wales. However, this has been taken furthest in Bartlett's Europeanisation paradigm.³⁸

Bartlett's paradigm traces cultural connectivity across Europe and places cultural developments in Wales alongside those from elsewhere including Scotland, Germany and Spain. The paradigm sees local cultural changes as part of wider European developments, with changes particularly travelling from the core to the periphery. Wales, Scotland and Ireland lay on the periphery of both Europe and England.³⁹

Bartlett's study has focused on colonisation and characterised frontier regions such as the Welsh marches as hostile places. However, he also highlighted similarities in the ways native rulers adapted to changing political circumstances, including through imitation. For example, he drew parallels between the Welsh princes and David I of Scotland who minted coins, embraced the new monastic orders, allowed the development of a new knightly class based on the immigrant Anglo-Normans, and the development of towns.⁴⁰ Bartlett pointed to the role of cordial relations between native and incomer, the adoption of new naming practices, the construction of castles and so on.⁴¹ Within this analysis of significant cultural change, the European context is key.

The view that cultural change and interaction in Wales reflected wider European cultural change has gained popularity in the last fifty years. Gwyn Alf Williams wrote:

The Normans made the Welsh a European people. They prised Wales out of the Celtic-Scandinavian world of the Irish Sea and incorporated it into Latin Europe. They brought feudalism, the baron and his knights, castles and manors; they brought the first truly large-scale farming, towns, trade and a money economy; they brought the European Church, European monasteries, Canterbury and the Pope; they brought chivalry and the literature of Europe.⁴²

³⁸ This paradigm is explored in greatest depth in Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp.269-81.

³⁹ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp.1-3.

⁴⁰ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.302.

⁴¹ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp.278; p. 310.

⁴² G.A. Williams, *When Was Wales?* (Harmondsworth, 1985), p.62.

Rees Davies was another notable proponent of placing Welsh cultural change in its European context, suggesting that the Welsh developed sophisticated cultural contacts with their neighbours, or else borrowed aspects of their mechanisms of power, governance and status:

Wales in these centuries [1063 – 1415] had also drawn closer culturally to England and to Europe. Its architecture and sculpture were largely derivative, often no more than late and mediocre reflections of those in England. Yet it preserved its pride in its linguistic unity and separateness, and it had in no way surrendered its own literary identity.⁴³

Davies emphasises how widely cultural influences could have pervaded Welsh society: They could extend ‘to a whole range of other matters, such as diet, dress, agricultural practices and commercial activities, architectural style and literary inspiration.’⁴⁴ Joshua Byron Smith notes literary exchange where Welsh characters ended in English and French literature, via the march as a border region where cultural exchange took place.⁴⁵ Huw Pryce, approaching the topic from the perspective of Welsh rulers and cultural change, highlights numerous instances where rulers were involved in cultural change and where these paralleled changes elsewhere in Europe.⁴⁶

More recently, Abulafia has pointed out that Bartlett’s paradigm of Europeanisation holds less strongly for southern Europe, Iberia, Sicily and the Crusader states in the Middle East than it does for the British Isles or Germany. Abulafia cautions against taking these broad comparisons too far and suggests that the experience of each individual region would have been different.⁴⁷ While this thesis will consider parallels to cultural exchange in medieval Wales, its unique aspects are an important part of the study. This argument does not preclude extensive European influence in Wales, but it is important to consider the unique Welsh aspects as well as reminding us to bear in mind the ambiguities within Welsh history and the unique experience of Welsh individuals.

Historians identify several forms ‘Europeanisation’ could take, but in the context of Welsh culture, the imitation of their neighbours is frequently mentioned. These could include military reforms (castle construction, development of siege techniques and use of armoured horses), imitation of the image of the ruler (through titles seals and heraldry), mechanisms of

⁴³ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.462.

⁴⁴ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.104.

⁴⁵ J.Byron Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain* (Philadelphia, 2017), pp.8-10.

⁴⁶ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change c.1100 – 1282’, pp.37-51.

⁴⁷ Abulafia, ‘Introduction: Seven Types of Ambiguity, c.1100 – c.1500’, pp.1-3.

governance and law (transition from payment in kind to cash renders, *galanas*, the development of new charter traditions) and patronage of religious houses on a continental model.⁴⁸ Many of these developments were on the level of the individual. Carr discussed the dissemination of the Arthurian tradition to continental Europe, and the assembly of poets and minstrels held by the Lord Rhys in 1176 – perhaps comparable to assemblies held by Eleanor of Aquitaine in France.⁴⁹ Crouch highlighted European influences on seals, heraldry and the image of the ruler.⁵⁰ On the development of the Welsh castle, Sean Davies wrote ‘The princes of Gwynedd had been increasingly drawn into the wider European world and their fortification policy was designed to raise their standing and prestige’; the wider political context of Powys and the marcher lords is essential to understanding his motives regarding castle construction.⁵¹ Thus many historians suggest the potential of European-influenced cultural change on Welsh society, and stress that considering Wales in its wider context is essential. Pryce admits that ‘we need to try and understand the circumstances facing Welsh rulers at home in order to assess the significance of what they were able to achieve, and, hence, of the part they played in a much wider, and highly diverse, process of European change.’⁵² Despite the advantages of a broad perspective and the importance of studying European influence on cultural change, there is only so far we can carry this comparison.

Even proponents of Europeanisation have been at pains to point out that, while we can see Welsh societal and cultural change in a European perspective, such changes often appear to have been of relatively limited nature in comparison to other regions. Partly this shares similarities with political historians’ preoccupation with success and failure: change equalled political survival, and survival equalled success. Bartlett suggests that rulers who adopted a flexible approach and embraced change prospered. In contrast to native rulers in Scotland, Pomerania and Mecklenburg:

other political units, like the Welsh principality of Gwynedd, were moving in the same direction, but with less favourable circumstances, too late and too slowly...in the reign of Edward I, while the gradually developing state of the Llywelyns went under to concentrated attack, the Scottish kingdom was strong enough to survive.⁵³

⁴⁸ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change c.1100 – 1282’, p.41.

⁴⁹ Carr, *Medieval Wales*, p.48.

⁵⁰ D. Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain 1000 – 1300*, (London, 1992), pp.35,186.

⁵¹ S. Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions 633 – 1283*. (Cardiff, 2004), p.206

⁵² Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.51.

⁵³ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.302; R. Bartlett, ‘The Celtic Lands of the British Isles’, in D. Abulafia (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History: Volume 5 c.1198 – c.1300* (Cambridge, 1999), pp.809 – 827.

Like Bartlett, other scholars have pointed to the *comparatively* limited change in Wales in comparison with other parts of Europe, with, for example, fewer foreign settlers, little ownership of English estates by Welsh lords, relatively low levels of documentary production, and lower numbers of native castles than their neighbours.⁵⁴ Pryce suggests to understand these limitations and the pattern of change we need to consider the local (Welsh) context of these changes. He also points out that even limited change had implications for Welsh society: ‘After all, even pale reflections of developments in the kingdoms of England or France may have had a significant impact on the principality of Gwynedd.’⁵⁵ Limited change did not necessarily mean ineffective Change: Stephenson **notes** the survival of Powys under Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn in the guise of a Marcher Baron, while elsewhere other dynasties were extinguished.⁵⁶

There are other challenges to the Europeanisation paradigm. One is the difficulty of pinpointing the where and how of cultural dissemination. Davies warns that ‘what it is impossible to determine is how far such influences were mediated through the Anglo-Norman settlers in Wales and how far they are manifestations of the general dominance of French culture in aristocratic, ecclesiastical, and academic circles in twelfth-century Europe, slowly, and often belatedly, percolating to Wales.’⁵⁷ Despite identifying great potential for European influence on cultural change, Davies highlights one of the main challenges with this interpretation: how can we pinpoint exactly where these influences are coming from; can we identify the method by which cultural change occurred in Wales or is it just possible to consider ‘European’ influence? This is a major challenge to any study which seeks to explore cultural change in Wales in anything more than circumstantial detail.

With the challenge of separating the origin of such cultural influences, some have sought to explore the dissemination of culture in a more localised context. Frame, for example, discusses Wales in a British context, drawing comparisons with Scotland and Ireland, and like many others, considering how successful Welsh rulers were in adapting to the new situation, and how much of an opportunity they were given to do so.⁵⁸ Others have narrowed the focus to Welsh and Anglo-Norman or English, as with the work of Carr, for example.⁵⁹ The high

⁵⁴ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, pp.42-44

⁵⁵ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, pp.43-44.

⁵⁶ R. Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles 1100 – 1400*. (Oxford, 1995); D. Stephenson, *Medieval Powys: Kingdom, Principality and Lordships, 1132 – 1293* (Woodbridge, 2016); Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.361.

⁵⁷ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.104.

⁵⁸ Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles*, p.117.

⁵⁹ Carr, *Medieval Wales*, p.47.

middle ages were a time, as Lieberman puts it, ‘when the people and culture of England were on the advance.’⁶⁰ In consequence, ‘Anglicisation’ has been considered by some historians ‘as the distinctively insular version of this process of Europeanization,’⁶¹ and as ‘a useful shorthand for some of the changes instigated by native rulers’,⁶² R.R. Davies focusing particularly on English colonisation, the construction of castles as instruments of power, language and law - issues which Bartlett has explored for Europe more generally and following a similar focus. Like Bartlett, Davies emphasises the role of political and military power in shaping cultural change: ‘Those who wield power in any society and in any period have the capacity...to compel others, consciously or otherwise, to inhabit their world and to borrow its idioms, customs and written formulae’⁶³ In this sense there is little difference between Europeanisation and Anglicisation, though a potential shortcoming of the latter interpretation is that it risks an assumption that all change automatically came through Anglo-Norman England; and that, while it’s likely that the many or most such influences did come via this route, we must not rule out the possibility that influences came by other routes as well. Lieberman, by contrast, uses the term Anglicisation differently. In this case, it is not taken to involve cultural change within native Welsh society, where it begins to look more like that of England, but instead defined by the influx of Anglo-Norman settlers into the marcher lordships, changing the character of regions as a whole.⁶⁴ This could be the difference between voluntary change in Welsh society and enforced change brought about by colonisation: itself an important facet of Bartlett’s argument.⁶⁵ This difference is also one of approach; the latter approach to Anglicisation considers the subject from the point of view of the marcher lordships; the former from the Welsh ruler.

Overall, despite differences in opinion, frontier studies in general and Europeanisation specifically consider Wales as one of a number of frontier regions where cultural contact and cultural change occurred, although historians have broadly seen comparatively limited change in relation to similar frontier zones elsewhere. Awareness of wider trends is essential to understanding the factors driving cultural change. But what form did this cultural change take, and what motives have historians identified for its occurrence?

⁶⁰ M. Lieberman, ‘Anglicization in High Medieval Wales: The Case of Glamorgan’, *The Welsh History Review*, 23, 1 (2006), pp.1-2.

⁶¹ R.R. Davies, *The First English Empire: Power and Identities in the British Isles 1093 – 1343*, (Oxford, 2000).

⁶² Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.39.

⁶³ Davies, *The First English Empire*, pp.142-71.

⁶⁴ Lieberman, ‘Anglicization in High Medieval Wales’, pp.2-3; B. Holden, *Lords of the Central Marches: English Aristocracy and Frontier Society 1087-1265* (Oxford, 2008), p.36.

⁶⁵ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp.301-2.

Forced or voluntary imitation?

As we have seen, opinions have differed on the main driver of cultural change. The adoption of such elements as new methods of image projection through seals and heraldry, new charter forms, or castle construction is noted by a number of historians, but there remains debate over how far such changes were imposed or voluntary.

Bartlett's paradigm and many frontier studies have emphasised the militarised, hostile nature of regions such as the Welsh march and have argued that change was brought about by alien colonisation.⁶⁶ There can be no doubt that Wales, like many medieval societies, was a place of violence. The chronicles are full of violent episodes portraying the struggle of Welsh and English, and an often recurring implication in many historical narratives is that cultural change must have been a product of this violent relationship, with change forced by the imposition of one culture over another.⁶⁷ The imposition of cultural developments by belligerent Normans, or Welsh reactions to the same, consequently feature in many studies by early historians, especially those with a nationalist agenda. Lloyd, for example, drawing upon Giraldus Cambrensis, saw very little change in Welsh society, but wrote that in its essentials:

Wales still retained its ancient social structure, remaining a tribal and pastoral economy in spite of the great wave of feudalism which beat upon its eastern flank and daily threatened to engulf the older social system.⁶⁸

Not only did Lloyd see limited changes in medieval Welsh society, but through the language used, he framed the developments of feudalism as an active aggressive force from Norman England.

Although modern interpretations, drawing upon a wider variety of sources, have suggested more extensive cultural change within Welsh society, the view of this as imposed or intrinsically part of a hostile relationship is one which persists. David Walker, using similarly provocative language to Lloyd, states that after the arrival of the Normans 'the clash of race and culture now occurred on a scale which was massive by comparison with pre-conquest existence.'⁶⁹ T. Jones-Pierce argued that the Welsh were forced into abandoning

⁶⁶ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.3; Bartlett, 'Colonial Societies of the High Middle Ages', pp.23-48; Lieberman, 'Anglicization in High Medieval Wales', pp.1-2.

⁶⁷ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.461; Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, p.764; Holden, *Lords of the Central Marches*, p.48.

⁶⁸ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, Vol.2, p.605.

⁶⁹ D. Walker, 'Cultural Survival in an Age of Conquest', in R.R. Davies et al (eds.), *Welsh Society and Nationhood: Historical essays presented to Glanmor Williams* (Cardiff, 1984), p.46.

concepts of kingship, though more recent interpretations challenge this assertion.⁷⁰ Max Lieberman, while discussing the ethnic frontier in Shropshire, mentions little cultural integration and change, but explores increasing segregation and animosity between English and Welsh, for example, Roger Lestrangle evicting a number of Welsh tenants following the conquest of 1282-3.⁷¹ Robert Bartlett focuses upon conquest, colonisation and cultural changes (as the title suggests) through the displacement of people, a cultural diaspora often driven by military confrontation, whether the Anglo-Normans in Wales, Scotland and Ireland, German expansion in Bohemia, Pomerania and other parts of Eastern Europe, or the Spanish Reconquista.⁷² There can be little doubt that hostility was indeed one of the defining features of Welsh history at this period, or that it affected the extent of cultural change.

More recent interpretations have suggested that violence and hostility had other, less direct, effects on cultural change, for example, by provoking reactionary changes from Welsh rulers. Huw Pryce discusses the writing of hagiography, poetry, *cyfarwyddyd* and law as a reaction to Norman pressure; others concur.⁷³ Rees Davies considers law as an element used by the Welsh to combat the Anglo-Norman advance, and thus a reaction to Anglo-Norman hostility, especially in the context of thirteenth-century Gwynedd.⁷⁴ Sean Davies, A.D. Carr and Frame highlight lessons learned by the Welsh in castle warfare, and the introduction of a new kind of military service, due to Norman military success against the Welsh and pressure to change their tactics.⁷⁵ Crouch suggests that the adoption of Norman naming practices was particularly prevalent at times when Norman power in Wales was at its strongest, such as during the reign of Henry I.⁷⁶

It is significant that these historians have also explored the importance of other aspects, such as cooperation and engagement as factors in cultural change (as we shall see). Coexistence and cooperation were an integral part of Rees Davies' work,⁷⁷ and David Stephenson, noted the high levels of violence and threat in medieval Wales, a fundamental

p.46.

⁷⁰ Jones-Pierce, 'The Age of the Princes', *Medieval Welsh Society*, pp.28-9; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.86.

⁷¹ M. Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales: The Creation and Perception of a Frontier 1066 - 1283* (Cambridge, 2010), p.45.

⁷² Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp.24-31.

⁷³ H. Pryce, 'The Origins and the Medieval Period', in P.H. Jones and E. Rees (eds.), *A Nation and Its Books: A History of the Book in Wales* (Aberystwyth, 1998), p.7; Carr, *Medieval Wales*, p.47.

⁷⁴ R.R. Davies, 'Law and National Identity in Thirteenth Century Wales', in Davies et. al. (eds.), *Welsh Society and Nationhood*, pp.51-69.

⁷⁵ Carr, *Medieval Wales*, p.47.

⁷⁶ D. Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship in Glamorgan, 1067 – 1158', *Morgannwg* xxix, (1985), p.32.

⁷⁷ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*.

aspect which ‘can hardly be denied. But again, it is not the whole story.’⁷⁸ If hostility and confrontation were just one facet of a complex picture of Welsh society, then we must consider how far cultural change, including imitation, emulation and integration, was voluntary.

Wherever new cultural elements appear in Wales – such as the construction of castles, new charter traditions, seals, heraldry and so forth, historians have postulated about their voluntary adoption,⁷⁹ and this was evident in the minds of contemporaries too. As Rees Davies notes of Anglicization:

Its apotheosis may be said to be the gleeful comment of Ranulf Higden at Chester on the Welsh of his day aping civilized English habits such as tilling gardens and fields, inhabiting towns, riding armed, wearing stockings and shoes, and even sleeping under sheets, “So they semeth now in mynde More Englische men than Walsche kynd.”⁸⁰

Historians suggest much of this cultural imitation was concerned with image and identity. Even Lloyd, who saw limited change in Welsh society, stated that the rebuilt Cardigan castle of Rhys ap Gruffudd of Deheubarth was ‘a visible emblem of the power of a prince who, with the keen insight into affairs which always distinguished him, was resolved henceforth to be recognised not only as a great Welsh chieftain but also as a great baron of the realm.’⁸¹ Lloyd also explored how Llywelyn ab Iorwerth adopted the titles ‘Prince of Aberffraw and Lord of Snowdon’, incorporating both Welsh and English elements to emphasise his primacy in Wales to both a Welsh and English audience, and saw Llywelyn ap Gruffudd using similar symbolism with the title ‘Prince of Wales’ in 1258.⁸² For a historian who considered limited cultural change, Lloyd was nonetheless aware that Welsh rulers were appropriating some cultural elements for their own use, especially where it related to their image in the eyes of their neighbours and dependents.

More recently, historians have explored numerous other ways in which Welsh rulers aped their neighbours, noting the use of imitated aspects to improve their image and cement their power in some way. Davies, for example, expands upon Lloyd’s assessment of the Lord Rhys, writing that Rhys :

hob-nobbed with the Anglo-Normans, aped their manners and customs, wooed them with matrimonial alliances – marrying two of his daughters to leading Norman lords of

⁷⁸ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, p.77.

⁷⁹ See the discussion of Europeanisation above. For summaries, see, Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’.

⁸⁰ Davies, *The First English Empire*, p.170.

⁸¹ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, p.542.

⁸² Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, p.682.

Cemais, so vital to the defence of his base at Cardigan, and, boldest stroke of all, betrothing his eldest son and designated heir, Gruffudd, to the daughter of the mightiest of the Marcher lords, William Braose, doubtless in the hope thereby of securing the eastern flank of his kingdom.⁸³

Davies makes similar claims for Owain Cyfeiliog of Powys, whom he describes as ‘a man who turned easily in the circles of English border society’ and whose descendants ‘followed his example, aping the manners and habits of the English, moving increasingly in English circles, and drawing pensions from the English court.’⁸⁴ This interpretation emphasises the importance of voluntary imitation as a strategy by Welsh rulers, alongside other forms of cross-cultural contact, as a means to legitimise their rule. We have already seen that Stephenson explores Owain’s patronage of Strata Marcella and his close ties with Henry II and that thus Owain ‘may have been seen as more of an agent of change’.⁸⁵ Stephenson also noted the same for the rulers of Gwynedd from the twelfth century onwards, who:

had been anxious not merely to impress their superior status upon their fellow rulers in Wales, but to gain recognition of this supremacy from a wider community of rulers. Their marriages into the English royal house and the Anglo-Norman aristocracy are a symptom of this desire, as are such matters as their adoption of personal styles intelligible to political society beyond Wales, and their attempts to set the political and constitutional problems of their principality into a wider European context.⁸⁶

Imitation is thus often discussed alongside political and marriage alliances with the English, and the clearest evidence, as might be expected, is for the most powerful individuals: this imitation ‘was taken furthest by the most powerful princes such as the Lord Rhys (d. 1197) in south-west Wales and, above all, Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (d. 1240) and his grandson Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (d. 1282), princes of Gwynedd in the north-west.’⁸⁷ These figures have understandably attracted most attention, but Stephenson notes that lesser aristocrats, often with links to the ruling house ‘were able to replicate some at least of the functions and characteristics of the ruler.’⁸⁸ In this way, a sequence of imitation was set in motion, with rulers aping their neighbours and themselves being copied by their dependents. This has implications for imitation across the social scale. Pryce meanwhile sees the adoption of Anglo-Norman culture (including military technology, image and heraldry) as: ‘part of a strategy of distinction

⁸³ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.222.

⁸⁴ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.233.

⁸⁵ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.206-7.

⁸⁶ Stephenson, *Political Power in Medieval Gwynedd*, p.193.

⁸⁷ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p. 40.

⁸⁸ Stephenson, *Political Power in Medieval Gwynedd*, p.183.

designed to elevate their status within native society'.⁸⁹ Cultural emulation in general is summed up by Bartlett: 'The thirteenth-century princes of Gwynedd built stone castles, fostered fledging boroughs and issued charters, so that, by the time of its final conquest in the 1280s, Gwynedd was more like the England it was facing, in terms of the political structure, than ever before.'⁹⁰

Scholars, therefore, have identified imitation as one method by which cultural change could occur, and have identified many specific cultural elements borrowed from their neighbours. Naming practices, for example, with Welshmen often giving their offspring Norman names such as Henry, and Roger Ymor (noted in the Margam chronicle as being killed by the sons of Iestyn ap Gwrgant in 1127).⁹¹ An extensive study of this has been conducted for Powys by Laura Radiker, who notes that 'the interactions between the lords of Powys and the Anglo-Normans were more varied and in many cases more voluntary than those between the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans.'⁹² Castle construction is another, explored in Richard Avent's work on the castles of the Welsh Princes, and with comparative studies of Welsh and Norman castles carried out by Swallow and others.⁹³ The introduction of Norman style charters 'which Native Welsh rulers and their subjects were swift to imitate', as a native 'Celtic' tradition declined, has been explored by Pryce, along with a proliferation of written material including letters and financial accounts.⁹⁴ A related development was the emulation of Anglo-Norman sealing practices alongside this new charter tradition,⁹⁵ and this has been explored in great depth for Europe by Brigitte Bedoz-Rezak, and for Wales by David Henry Williams, John McEwan, Elizabeth New and others.⁹⁶ Michael Siddons and David Crouch have highlighted the adoption of heraldry in a similar way.⁹⁷ As we can see, the areas where cultural change occurred appear to have been extensive.

⁸⁹ Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and European Change', p.45.

⁹⁰ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp.302, 310; see also Stephenson, *Political Power in Medieval Gwynedd*, p.193.

⁹¹ Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship', p.32; Pryce 'Welsh Rulers and European Change'; Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.278.

⁹² L. Radiker, 'Observations on Cross-Cultural Names and Naming Patterns in Medieval Wales and the March', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, 26/27 (2006/7), pp.195-6.

⁹³ R. Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', *Chateau Gaillard*, 16 (1994), pp.11-20; R. Swallow, 'Gateways to Power: The Castles of Ranulf III of Chester and Llywelyn the Great of Gwynedd', *The Archaeological Journal*, 171 (2014), pp.291-314.

⁹⁴ Pryce, 'The Origins and the Medieval Period', p.11; H. Pryce 'The Church of Trefeglwys and the End of the 'Celtic' Charter Tradition in Twelfth-Century Wales', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 25 (Summer 1993), pp.15-54; H. Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers 1120 – 1283* (Cardiff, 2005).

⁹⁵ Pryce 'Church of Trefeglwys', p.12.

⁹⁶ B.M. Bedoz-Rezak, *When Ego was Imago: Signs of Identity in the Middle Ages* (Boston 2011); E. New, *Seals and Sealing Practices* (London 2010); D.H. Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals* (Cardiff, 1982).

⁹⁷ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*; M.P. Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry: Volume II* (Aberystwyth, 1993); Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles*, pp.117-8.

However, as with many other studies of cultural change, most explored examples of cultural imitation concern Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth. While the subject appears to have been extensively studied, or at least referred to by a wide range of historians, very little has been written on other parts of Wales, and this suggests a particularly lucrative avenue of enquiry.

The wide variety of areas in which cultural imitation took place has led some to make bold statements as to the extent of cultural change it indicated; others have urged caution. Pryce writes that ‘the adoption of a comparative perspective does not necessarily require us to go to the opposite extreme and relegate those rulers to the role of poor relations struggling to catch up with supposedly more advanced developments elsewhere’.⁹⁸

If some studies have focused heavily on the military element and cultural change by force, or at least necessity, others have identified a much wider range of cultural changes which cannot be fully explained by force or colonisation, and have suggested that voluntary imitation was underway. It is worth noting that when talking of Welsh examples historians generally use such terms as aping or copying. In this sense the term imitation can be clearly used, but to go beyond this and consider concepts of emulation or integration we need to understand the motives behind voluntary cultural change.

Motives behind imitation

Historians who identify instances of voluntary cultural change have speculated further on the motives behind it and sought to explain its limitations in relation to other similar regions elsewhere. While cultural change has sometimes been seen as limited by the restricted power (political and economic) of some of these individuals (as highlighted in the context of Europeanisation), historians have sought to explain it in other terms. Foremost among them is the idea that the cultural change in Wales could be limited by competing influences upon rulers who sought both to modernise and retain traditional cultural elements.⁹⁹ This has in part sought to pinpoint the motives and priorities of individuals. Pryce suggests that limited change may have been a consequence not only of the small size of Welsh polities, but could also reflect limitations imposed by their own society and the interest of particular groups within it, thus highlighting the balance between satisfying traditional expectations and keeping up with trends in the presentation of image, methods of governance, and military technology.¹⁰⁰ Stephenson,

⁹⁸ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.44.

⁹⁹ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, pp.39;46;48; Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.83.

¹⁰⁰ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.46.

in his study of Powys, suggests that this balance defined the approach of rulers to new ideas: in the image they presented to the world, for example, they were torn between the need to incorporate traditional elements of kingship (the image of a war leader, generosity to their followers and hostility to the English) and new ideas during the twelfth century.¹⁰¹ He suggests that Madog ap Maredudd (d.1160), was a traditionalist, using a charter of the ‘Celtic’ tradition, with the archaic title *Rex Powissensium*, patronising the arts and the traditional *clas* church of Meifod. By contrast, his nephew, Owain Cyfeiliog, ‘may have been seen as more of an agent of change’ – patronising the Cistercian house of Strata Marcella, and with close English ties: he was ‘frequently found in alliance with the English, and was on conspicuously friendly terms with Henry II.’¹⁰²

Robin Frame gives a purely political example from Gwynedd – in a context where ‘modernisation’ is equated to the increased centralisation of power:

Amidst his vigorous claims to lordship, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd himself seems to have been aware of the delicate ground on which he was treading, and the need to show formal respect for the ancient equality of Welsh leaders. Some of his charters speak of “friendship” and “alliance”, and avoid the provocative language of domination.¹⁰³

After the conquest of 1282, Frame suggests that the need for balance continued, especially in the presentation of identity. With power firmly in the hands of Edward I, those Welsh elites who retained power after 1282 were swiftly assimilated into English society, but even so, they retained some distinct elements of Welsh culture – the most obvious being patronage of the bards, indicating an enduring Welsh identity associated with prophecy and the eventual defeat of the English.¹⁰⁴ This highlights the importance of political events to this balance, with cultural change being more pressing, but argues for the continuing importance of traditional elements in some circles.

An example of the complexity involved in the balance of ideas employed by Welsh rulers is the increase in literature produced from the eleventh century onwards, including saints’ lives, the development of a new charter writing tradition, the writing down of *Cyfarwyddyd* (traditional lore) and the writing down of the Welsh Laws.¹⁰⁵ While this might seem a case of modernisation, linked with the adoption of new charter forms, and Anglo-

¹⁰¹ Stephenson, *Medieval Powys*, pp.181-3.

¹⁰² Stephenson, *Medieval Powys*, pp.181-3.

¹⁰³ Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles*, p.123.

¹⁰⁴ Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles*, pp.206-212.

¹⁰⁵ Pryce, ‘The Origins and the Medieval Period’, pp.7-11; Davies, ‘Law and National Identity in Thirteenth Century Wales’, pp.51-69.

Norman style monastic patronage, Davies and Pryce view this as a reaction to Anglo-Norman incursions, thus driven by more ‘traditional’ elements, particularly a desire to preserve these aspects of culture while under Norman threat.¹⁰⁶

Of course, these nuances serve to demonstrate the subtle complexities that cultural change could entail and the inadequacies of studying cultural change in a two dimensional way. It also highlights the importance of individuals as a driver of cultural change and that individual preferences and motives had a big part to play in driving voluntary cultural exchange.

Diplomacy, Engagement and Integration into a wider world

As many of the above examples have shown, a theme often considered alongside cultural imitation is diplomatic manoeuvring and attempts to participate in Anglo-Norman society; the ‘hob-nobbing’ and marital alliances discussed by Davies, Crouch and others. Understanding integration into other cultures as related to cultural imitation is important as it can help us understand further motives and places the imitation in its wider context, and allows us to ask how far imitation and integration were related.

In one of the few studies dedicated to a Welsh ruler outside Gwynedd, Powys or Deheubarth, Crouch explored the career of Morgan ab Owain of Gwynllŵg (d.1158):

His activities show a deft and adaptable political master: fully at home amongst the personalities and power structure of the Southern March, and well aware of the problems and trends in the Anglo-Norman world.¹⁰⁷

Though not indicative of imitation or emulation in itself, the frequency with which political manoeuvring is discussed alongside topics of cultural change suggests that the two factors are related, with engagement perhaps an indicator of cultural change and conceivably demonstrating some of the reasoning behind it. Historians suggest this could range from informal diplomacy and alliances to a thorough involvement and engagement in the world of their neighbours, with much greater potential for cross-cultural contact. At one end of this scale, historians identify the Welsh and Normans working together in loose alliances. Further along the scale, Welsh individuals could be more deeply involved, with Welsh princes being given the responsibility for defending royal castles, as at Carmarthen in 1116.¹⁰⁸ The Lord

¹⁰⁶ Pryce ‘The Origins and the Medieval Period’, p.7.

¹⁰⁷ Crouch, ‘The Slow Death of Kingship in Glamorgan’, p.35.

¹⁰⁸ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.67.

Rhys had a stronger relationship with Henry II, as justiciar of south Wales this indicates a much more involved and developed relationship. At this end of the scale too, historians point to Welsh individuals travelling in England, serving in English armies beyond Wales and with appointments in England: Giraldus Cambrensis (though largely of Norman stock and often described as a Cambro-Norman) is one such example often mentioned by modern historians.¹⁰⁹

Diplomacy and engagement could be seen as an integral part of medieval high politics and it is unsurprising that historians refer to innumerable examples of Anglo-Welsh cooperation across our period. Llywelyn ap Gruffudd's relationship with the English crown, and its geopolitical ramifications is just one example. Maund highlights the alliance between Gruffudd ap Llywelyn (d.1063) and Aelfgar at the start of our period.¹¹⁰ Davies emphasises that cooperation and coexistence began early, with instances of Welshmen holding positions within the marcher lordships, such as castellan (at Carmarthen in 1116), and in Welsh knights fees in the Norman lordships of Usk and Chepstow.¹¹¹ Historians refer to ever increasing examples as the period progresses.¹¹² Crouch writes of Hywel ab Iorwerth of Gwynllŵg who from 1184: 'was one of the four justices entrusted by Henry II with the keeping of Glamorgan and Wentloog following the death of Earl William of Gloucester.'¹¹³ Lieberman notes royal grants of land in Shropshire to Welshmen such as Roger de Powis, given Whittington in 1165; other members of the same family received lands for acting as a translator and interpreter and for leading prisoners from Powys to Shrewsbury.¹¹⁴ Stephenson points to the case of Philip ap Goronwy, castellan of the Three Castles in Gwent in the 1270s, and Hywel ap Meurig of the middle march in the service of the Mortimers, as a royal negotiator in the 1260s, leading 2700 troops (most probably Welsh) against Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1277.¹¹⁵ Brock Holden notes that 300 Welsh tenants in Brecon were obliged to serve their De Bohun lords around 1299 in an obligation pre-dating the Norman conquest of the area.¹¹⁶ Historians have thus been well aware of the range of engagement that Welsh individuals could have with their neighbours and the importance of diplomacy.

Historians have pointed to a desire to increase power and stability as a motive for alliances and increased engagement. Lieberman suggests the Anglo-Normans sought to engage

¹⁰⁹ R. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales 1146 – 1223* (Oxford, 1982).

¹¹⁰ K. Maund, *Ireland, Wales and England in the Eleventh Century* (Woodbridge 1991), pp.132-3.

¹¹¹ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.67, 96.

¹¹² Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.77-83.

¹¹³ D. Crouch, 'The Transformation of Medieval Gwent', in R.A. Griffiths, T. Hopkins and R. Howell (eds.), *The Gwent County History Volume 2: The Age of the Marcher Lords c.1070 – 1536* (Cardiff, 2008), p.32.

¹¹⁴ Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales*, p.122.

¹¹⁵ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.79-80.

¹¹⁶ Holden, *Lords of the Central Marches*, p.58.

more with their Welsh neighbours when the latter were particularly stable (or the English crown and marcher lords particularly weak). For example, the early twelfth century, following Welsh resurgence, is a time when Anglo-Welsh cooperation appears more frequently. Picot de Sai of Clun created an alliance with Cadwgan ap Bleddyn by marrying his daughter to Cadwgan, and around the same time Gerald of Windsor married Nest ferch Rhys.¹¹⁷

Intermarriage which ‘went hand in hand with political and military alliances’,¹¹⁸ is one of the few areas where historians have considered how cordial relations may be linked to other forms of cross-cultural exchange or more substantial cultural integration. Stephenson writes:

Marcher marriages were accompanied by the development of sobriquets that appeared to reflect integration into an Anglo-Norman world: Owain Fychan ap Madog appears in English record sources as Owain de la Tour, and his brother, also Owain, is distinguished as Owain de Porkington. From such origins developed family names [e.g. de la pole].¹¹⁹

In this context, Stephenson identifies intermarriage as leading to developments in naming practices and personal styles. He has suggested that the reason behind such marriages and integration was ‘not merely to impress their superior status upon their fellow rulers in Wales, but to gain recognition of this supremacy from a wider community of rulers.’¹²⁰

Beyond marriage, scholars have tended to urge caution in reflecting on how far the Welsh became integrated into a wider cultural network. Even those that emphasise the opportunities for engagement suggest they did not translate into widespread integration into or in-depth involvement with, for example, the wider Anglo-Norman world. Pryce, for example, notes that while Welsh princes and lords ‘embraced aspects of Anglo-Norman and French culture’, this did not lead to ‘substantial participation in English political society’ – landholding in England was on a relatively small scale, limiting their social and political opportunities in English circles, and they did not introduce foreign settlers to their lands ‘who could have acted as catalysts for further assimilation of Anglo-Norman or English institutions, norms, and practices.’¹²¹ Others see very little integration at all. Brock Holden and Max Lieberman both explore the concept of integration in the context of the middle march, and how far Welsh tenants and officials were absorbed into the marcher administration. Holden mentions the

¹¹⁷ Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales*, p.113.

¹¹⁸ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.74; 76.

¹¹⁹ Stephenson, *Medieval Powys*, pp.283-4.

¹²⁰ Stephenson, *Political Power in Medieval Gwynedd*, p.193.

¹²¹ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.42.

Welsh of Brycheiniog and their obligations to their marcher lords,¹²² and others have highlighted similar instances of Welsh officials in marcher lordships,¹²³ but the discussion is largely concerned with the Anglo-Normans, with only occasional mention of the Welsh. Lieberman refers to Welsh communities in Shropshire considering how far they were integrated within the local manorial system,¹²⁴ but Lieberman concludes that the Welsh and English communities were largely separate. Both Lieberman and Holden focus on the political history of the marcher lordships and their administration, but they make little reference to cultural influence on the Welsh, and this may itself be significant. Indeed, Lieberman's discussion of Anglicization in Glamorgan is similarly concerned with English migration and administration; while he does explore the case of Cynaethwy son of Herbert son of Godwin, perhaps an English settler integrating into Welsh culture and adopting a Welsh identity,¹²⁵ Lieberman sees Anglo-Welsh cultural integration in Glamorgan as the exception, rather than the rule:

It is a fascinating possibility that alien lordship acted to preserve ethnic identities in twelfth-century Glamorgan. It is certainly worth discussing further whether this, rather than the political fragmentation of Wales, may have been the main reason why there seem to be so few exceptions to the rule that the Welsh 'absorbed no one'.¹²⁶

In general, therefore, not only have few studies considered integration into a wider Anglo-Norman world, but those that have considered the topic have played down integration due to the relative limitations in comparison with other examples from Scotland and elsewhere in Europe. As these limitations have been highlighted in even those studies which see the strongest case for cultural exchange,¹²⁷ it is hard to escape the conclusion that little wider integration took place, though it still behoves us to explore the possibility further. If relatively little integration took place, what does this tell us about the few examples where it did occur, and the relative relationships between the individuals involved?

Regional Studies

Perhaps one of the most prominent recurring features is the regional bias in studies of cultural change, in the same way as is present in general political histories. This is undoubtedly related

¹²² Holden, *Lords of the Central Marches*, p.58.

¹²³ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, p.79.

¹²⁴ Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales*, pp.42-44.

¹²⁵ Lieberman, 'Anglicization in High Medieval Wales', pp.19-20.

¹²⁶ Lieberman, 'Anglicization in High Medieval Wales', p.20.

¹²⁷ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.302.

to the preoccupation with the major princes: The Lord Rhys (Deheubarth), Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (Gwynedd) are most frequently mentioned. The most powerful individuals not only had the opportunity to take cultural change the furthest,¹²⁸ but as they feature so prominently in both the medieval source material and modern historical studies, they are the most accessible, and the ones about whom we can write in the greatest detail. They thus provide a particularly interesting avenue for enquiry. It is arguable that the primacy of Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth is a fundamental feature of Welsh historiography, if not Welsh history itself,¹²⁹ and thus this, too, is particularly hard to get away from.

For students of cultural change outside Gwynedd and Deheubarth, therefore, there are gaps in our knowledge which are worth exploring. Gaps in the historiography have been partly addressed through regional studies. Stephenson's work on Medieval Powys, in particular, has explored many of the concepts mentioned above, supported by studies of individual elements, such as Radiker's study of Powysian naming practices.¹³⁰ The middle march has been considered through the perspective of the marcher lords, but more remains to be done. The southern marches, Gwent and Glamorgan have been subject to studies of individual rulers, particularly within the *Gwent County History* and *Glamorgan County History*.¹³¹ These are mostly concerned with establishing a history of these figures in general, rather than studies dedicated to cultural imitation or Europeanisation, for example. David Crouch's work on Gwent in particular, including the early twelfth-century rulers of Gwynllŵg, has been particularly useful.¹³² Of course, regional studies have also been conducted for Gwynedd (Stephenson's *Governance of Gwynedd*, for example), and these too enrich our knowledge of these regions. There is still scope, however, to consider a study of southeast Wales purely from the point of view of the concepts of cultural change highlighted here.

Difficulties with the Sources

An final oft recurring theme in studies of cultural change in Wales, one which has significant implications for the way we approach the topic, is the difficulties associated with the source material. Lloyd, writing of the thirteenth century, noted that 'the domestic history of the period

¹²⁸ Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and Cultural Change', p.40.

¹²⁹ For example, see the chapter 'Aberffraw, Dinefwr and Mathrafal' in J. Davies, *A History of Wales* (London 1990).

¹³⁰ Stephenson, *Medieval Powys*; Radiker, 'Observations on Cross-Cultural Names and Naming Patterns in Medieval Wales and the March'.

¹³¹ See various chapters within Griffiths, Hopkins and Howell (eds). *The Gwent County History: Volume II*, particularly Crouch's chapter 'The Transformation of Medieval Gwent', pp.1-45.

¹³² Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship in Glamorgan', pp.20-41.

is almost a blank.’¹³³ Even for Llywelyn ap Gruffudd’s rule, he notes that ‘Little light is thrown by contemporary authorities upon the home policy of Llywelyn during this period.’¹³⁴ Whilst more sources have come to light, allowing later historians to dispute this interpretation, difficulties continue to hamper studies of medieval Wales. This can even, in part, be seen as a symptom of limited cultural change: Pryce notes that documentary production in Wales (one possible indicator of cultural change) remained relatively low;¹³⁵ and this had the knock on effect of leaving relatively little documentary material to discuss. However, Historians of cultural change (and especially imitation and emulation) have employed a wide variety of source types to understand the bigger picture. To some extent, this is a reflection of the discipline of medieval history as a whole, and thus our study, like the others before us, will employ this wide ranging approach to synthesise the information that does survive. As the nature of the source material is a vital part of our discussion, an analysis of the characteristics and shortcomings of sources, as well as how they can be used and how scholars have so far treated them, form the basis of our next chapter.

The Religious Element

As we have seen in the case of Iberia, Normandy and others, religion has a big part to play in many studies of cultural imitation and emulation: written documents, learning (including theological dispute) and art are all areas strongly associated with religious figures and religious houses; religious houses were part of international institutions, and indeed one of the shared experiences of ‘Europeanisation’ was the belonging to Christendom.¹³⁶ There can be no doubt that the religious element is important and any history of the period cannot be wholly removed from religion. However, given the highlighted gap in studies of the secular Welsh dynasties of southeast Wales and their dependents, it would be the work of much more than a single thesis to do justice to a study of imitation, emulation and integration in the church in southeast Wales and its literature. The thesis will not explore the religious element, except in aspects which directly relate to the Welsh princely dynasties, such as charter production. Further work on this would be desirable in the future.

Conclusions: the ambiguities of cultural change

¹³³ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, p.682.

¹³⁴ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, p.742.

¹³⁵ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.43.

¹³⁶ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp.5-22.

Whatever the approach of historians to the period between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, their studies show recurring themes which appear again and again. The relationship between the Welsh and their neighbours forms an integral part of most studies, and clearly it was an important feature, shaping the history of the region.

Wales is one border region among many where historians have noted great potential for cultural change. Many studies have usually focused on the military nature of this contact and this raises questions of how far cultural changes were imposed or driven by need, or were voluntarily adopted. A range of historical studies have shown frontier regions in general and Wales in particular as regions where a variety of cultural contact was taking place and particularly demonstrates the potential for cross-cultural contact in ways belying the military and hostile nature of border regions. Essential to our study, therefore, is the complexity and ambiguity of cultural change and that imitation, emulation and integration were based on a set of circumstances unique to each case. A major theme of this thesis will be exploring this ambiguity.

Over the years, increasing attention has been given to issues of cultural interaction and cultural change, and paradigms have shifted from seeing Welsh culture as relatively static to one where change is more clearly understood. This has developed from a view of Welsh and English as a simple division to a greater understanding of the nuances and ambiguities that issues of cultural change offer. This is not to say cultural change is the main focus of every work: the political narrative of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, the Lord Rhys and similar dramatic figures (understandably) continues to dominate most studies of Medieval Wales, but it is now more frequently mentioned.

The complexities thrown up in the above paradigms highlight a common challenge in viewing cultural change in an oversimplified two-dimensional way. Cultural change is often presented in dual terms – the interplay between two factors – Welsh and English, tradition versus modernisation, or, in the context of frontier studies and Europeanisation, core and periphery.¹³⁷ It is hard to escape this two-dimensional mentality: at its most basic level, Welsh, English and the relationship between them occupy the medieval chronicler of the *Brut y Tywysogion*, sixteenth-century antiquarians and modern historians alike, and clearly it is fundamental to our understanding of this period.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and European Change', p. 39; Abulafia 'Introduction: Seven Types of Ambiguity c.1100 – c.1500', pp.1-35.

¹³⁸ For more detail on how medieval chroniclers treated Welsh and English, see J.B. Smith 'Historical Writing in Medieval Wales: The Composition of *Brenhinedd y Saesson*', *Studia Celtica*, 42 (2008), p.55.

The Europeanisation paradigm is useful in encouraging us to consider the wider implications of cultural change in medieval and. Taking such a wide approach, however, risks overstating the similarities between and within regions, distracting from the unique and complex series of factors which affected individuals.

While approaches have varied, historians tend to highlight the personal nature of the interaction between Welsh and Norman, with this varying on an individual basis, dependent upon the set of circumstances peculiar to each example. The types of interaction identified range from cordial working relationships, to intermarriage, perhaps some (limited) involvement in the lands of their neighbours, to the adoption of new ideas based on those of their neighbours. Depending on the individual, a combination of these elements could be at play. Within this context, historians have considered the question of how far change took place. They generally agree that the nature of cultural change in Wales was limited in comparison with other areas on the European periphery. It is vital for our study, therefore, to fully appreciate the ambiguities and concepts of cultural change in medieval Wales.

Some attempts have been made to answer why some of this cultural change took place. Power and identity are key themes, especially where the voluntary adoption of Anglo-Welsh cultural elements is concerned. Presenting an image and extending or holding on to power are identified as possible reasons behind some of this change.

Nevertheless, it is clear that studies of cultural emulation in Wales have remained patchy in several ways. The general focus on the most prominent Welsh princes, and associated regional focus on major polities is perhaps the most obvious symptom of this, as has been consistently highlighted over the course of the analysis. While unsurprising in light of the nature of the evidence, this has led to comparatively little study of other individuals and regions. Southeast Wales and the middle march are two such areas – existing studies of these areas tend to consider the marcher lords, with little attention on the Welsh princes there: Crouch's study of Gwynllŵg up to 1158 is an exception, but it highlights the piecemeal nature of such studies. We know that, although these regions were some of the first to come into contact with the Normans, and where the marcher lords made early inroads, some Welsh rulers continued to retain some form of power through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: in southeast Wales, native dynasties were established at Afan in west Glamorgan, in Senghennydd, and in Gwynllŵg; other lords are hinted at in contemporary chronicles and charters.¹³⁹ There is clearly an opportunity here to explore cultural change within these regions,

¹³⁹ Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship in Glamorgan', p.31.

synthesising existing historical studies and visiting the evidence to see whether developments in the march mirrored those elsewhere in Wales.

The greatest potential challenge to such a synthesis is the nature of the source material. However, the existing studies have utilised a wide variety of source types, even if, by doing so, they have been relatively broad overviews. Using a variety of source types may, therefore, help to overcome challenges with the source material, and to draw more detailed conclusions than those that have already been reached.

The focus on greater rulers has also led to little discussion of the wider social implications of cultural change: Davies highlighted the potential for cultural changes across society; Crouch more positively suggested the percolation of ideas to the lesser nobility, and perhaps beyond. This is another area which is worth exploring, though here the lack of source material threatens to be a greater impediment. The aristocracy are the ones that appear in chronicles, that built castles, commissioned poetry and genealogies; minor landholders appear occasionally in charters, but almost everyone else is invisible. It is worth considering how feasible such a study may be, and how far the assertions of Davies and Crouch of wide-ranging, society-wide change may be true. At least we can consider how far emulation may have extended from the lesser princes to their dependants and members of the *Uchelwyr*: see the following chapter on source material.

Likewise, the limited discussions on native rulers in the march has precluded analysis of regional variations in cultural change. Analysis of the Welsh rulers in the march provides an opportunity to undertake a regional comparison, to understand how such influences may have spread and what differences are visible compared with Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, for example. As much of this depends on the nature of the contemporary source material available to us, it is to the source material itself that we shortly turn our attention. Before this, however, it is necessary to outline the history of southeast Wales during this period and, in light of the often personal nature of cultural change, introduce some of the cast of characters that will be important throughout the thesis.

The proposed discussion provides us with a wide variety of opportunities, therefore, to explore the nature of cultural change in Wales, considering a relatively understudied region, placing it within the wider contexts of Welsh and British history as well as in the field of cultural change and identities.

An Introduction to the ‘Princely’ dynasties

Politically, southeast Wales before the coming of the Normans was the province of several competing dynasties, whose bounds were continually shifting and changing: some polities vanished or appeared as the political situation shifted.¹⁴⁰ The name of the sixth and seventh-century kingdom of Gwent, for example, survived in the later medieval cantrefs of *Gwent Uwch Coed* and *Gwent Is Coed*, and as a wider regional name into modern times, and is thus often mentioned by contemporaries and later scholars. The lands further west formed part of the early medieval kingdom of Glywysing; from the tenth century, under the leadership of Morgan Hen, it became known as Gwlad Morgan (Glamorgan) or Morgannwg.¹⁴¹ Periodically one dynasty dominated the whole region, with smaller dynasties retaining influence within smaller regions, such as individual commotes (*cymydau*).

While the shifting power and influence – especially following the appearance of the Normans in the later eleventh century – make it hard to precisely define the princely dynasties, we are talking about families with particularly significant power or influence, strongly visible in a particularly wide range of sources, and who had some form of lordly authority over a region, and a large following of dependents.¹⁴² They were usually descended from a pre-Norman royal house and had authority at least on a commotal level. For example, the 1262 Extent of Glamorgan notes, amongst Anglo-Norman families such as the de Turberville, de Sully and de Barri families, several Welsh lords holding commotes in the same way as their Marcher counterparts held honours or knight's fees;¹⁴³ genealogies such as the ABT note 'the descent of Morgannwg, the Descent of Senghenydd and the Descent of Gwent'.¹⁴⁴ Historians generally agree that in southeast Wales (the regions of Glamorgan and Gwent), there were three such dynasties from the later eleventh century into the thirteenth: Glamorgan (alternatively Morgannwg or Afan), Gwynllŵg (or Caerleon) and Senghennydd, the former two at least claiming some association with the pre-Norman kings of Morgannwg.¹⁴⁵ The names Gwynllŵg and Senghennydd come from the respective cantrefs where these dynasties were based, while Afan comes from a commote within the cantref of Gorfynydd.¹⁴⁶ Other families or cadet

¹⁴⁰ T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350 – 1064*, (Oxford, 2013), pp.14-19; W. Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages*, (Leicester 1982), pp.91-94.

¹⁴¹ Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages*, pp.90-94; Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship', pp.21-3.

¹⁴² Although the terminology behind such authority was not standardized and subject to change across the period – see Chapter 4.

¹⁴³ G.T. Clark, *Cartae alia munimenta quae ad dominum de Glamorgancia pertinent*, Vol. 2 (2nd Edition), p.651. Note that as two editions of Clark's work exist, with four and six volumes respectively, the editions are included in the references for clarity.

¹⁴⁴ P.C. Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts* (Cardiff 1966), pp.102-105.

¹⁴⁵ H. Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers 1120 – 1283* (Cardiff, 2005), pp.18-21; 34-36; 45-47; Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship', pp.20-41.

¹⁴⁶ W. Rees, *An Historical Atlas of Wales from Early to Modern Times* (Cardiff, 1951), Plate 28.

branches of the main dynasties at times held enough power to be considered alongside the main dynasties, these are the three main examples.¹⁴⁷ In each case, a genealogical table has been included in the appendix.

Gwynllŵg and Caerleon

The easternmost of the three dynasties was based on the cantref of Gwynllŵg and claimed descent from Caradog ap Gruffudd (d.1081), the last pre-Norman ruler of Morgannwg. Caradog is referred to as King of Glamorgan in *Liber Landavensis* and the life of St Gwynllyw, and was on good terms with at least some of his Norman neighbours, until his death at the battle of Mynydd Carn in 1081.¹⁴⁸ Whilst, following Caradog's death, the subsequent history of the region is often seen as being dominated by the Anglo-Normans who consolidated their gains, his descendants retained some of their power. In particular, following the death of Henry I in 1135 and subsequent political anarchy in England, the dynasty's fortunes revived, with Morgan and Iorwerth ab Owain (Caradog's grandsons) capturing the castles of Usk and Caerleon c.1136-7, and later supporting Robert of Gloucester and Matilda in the Anarchy.¹⁴⁹ The *Brut y Tywysogion* tells us that Morgan died in 1158 in a dispute with his neighbour in Senghennydd, and Iorwerth subsequently ruled the lordship before being succeeded (by 1184), by his son, Hywel. Although Usk castle was lost before 1169, Caerleon was held until c.1217, shortly after Hywel's death: as we will see in Chapter 4, the family's associations with Caerleon were strong.¹⁵⁰

Hywel's son, another Morgan, attempted to regain Caerleon but was ultimately unsuccessful, and the dynasty's influence dwindled over the course of the thirteenth century. After Morgan's death in 1248, leadership of the dynasty passed to a Maredudd ap Gruffudd, possibly Morgan's grandson, although cousin has also been suggested. They were dispossessed of their last castle, at Machen, and lands in Edeligion and Llebenydd in 1270: later members of the family participated in the 1294-5 revolt but remained loyal to the crown during Llywelyn

¹⁴⁷ For example, Hywel ap Maredudd of Meisgyn in Glynrhondda and Meisgyn until 1246, or Seisyll ap Dyfnwal in Gwent Uwch Coed before the 1170s. See Clark, *Cartae*, Vol.2 (2nd Edition), p.651; T. Jones (ed and trans). *Brut y Tywysogion or the Chronicle of the Princes, Peniarth Ms.20 Version* (Aberystwyth, 1952), pp.70-1.

¹⁴⁸ Jones (ed and trans), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth Ms.20 Version*, p.17; Crouch, 'Slow Death of Kingship', p.24; J. Knight, *South Wales From the Romans to the Normans: Christianity, Literacy and Lordship*, (Stroud, 2013), p.131.

¹⁴⁹ See also chapter 7 for more detail on this.

¹⁵⁰ D. Crouch, 'Iorwerth ab Owain', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-48555?rskey=vsNZ0m&result=1> (Accessed 16/12/2021); Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.216-7; 274-5; See also Chapter 6 on Caerleon Castle.

Bren's rebellion in 1315-16. A mid-fourteenth century, descendant of the family was Ifor Hael, described in the poetry of the famous Dafydd ap Gwylim.¹⁵¹

Glamorgan, Morgannwg and Afan

The westernmost of the three main dynasties was Glamorgan, based within the cantref of Gorfynydd, although their control extended, at times, into neighbouring Penychen. This family traced their descent from Iestyn ap Gwrgant, a follower of Caradog ap Gruffudd.¹⁵² Following the late eleventh century Norman advances in lowland Glamorgan, this dynasty were primarily confined to the uplands, and the narrow coastal strip between the rivers Ogmere and Nedd. Iestyn seems to have been succeeded by his three sons (Gruffudd, Caradog and Grono) by 1127,¹⁵³ and a fourth son, Rhys is evidenced by mentions of two (now lost) charters.¹⁵⁴ Caradog is the son for whom we have the most information: his wife, Gwladus, was a daughter of Rhys ap Tewdwr of Deheubarth, and although their four sons shared their father's inheritance, according to Gerald of Wales, Morgan seems to have been preeminent, succeeding to the lands in the commote of Afan and exercising some overlordship over his brothers, Cadwallon, Maredudd and Owain. Though the sons of Cadwallon and Maredudd succeeded to the commotes of Glynrhondda and Meisgyn respectively, these were lost to Richard de Clare in 1246.¹⁵⁵ We know so much about the sons of Caradog ab Iestyn not only through chronicle and genealogical evidence but also they also appear in royal service in the Pipe Rolls, and particularly within the Penrice and Margam charters.¹⁵⁶ as we have seen in Chapter 2, these are amongst the most extensive in Wales, and Morgan and his descendants feature heavily. Morgan's eldest son, Lleision, succeeded to Afan on his father's death c.1208, although he had been succeeded by his brother, Morgan (Gam) by 1217. Morgan came into conflict with his overlord, Gilbert de Clare, and fought alongside Llywelyn ab Iorwerth of Gwynedd in the latter's campaigns against the English in 1231 and 1232. Morgan was in turn succeeded by his sons Lleision on his death in 1241, and later Morgan Fychan, 'under whom Afan was subjected to the authority of the lord of Glamorgan and increasingly integrated into neighbouring

¹⁵¹ R. Geraint Gruffydd, 'Ifor ap Llywelyn [Called Ifor Hael]', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14505?rskey=1qWT4g> (Accessed 06/02.2022).

¹⁵² Crouch 'The Slow Death of Kingship', pp.30-1; Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.18-21.

¹⁵³ Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship', p.32; H. Luard (ed.), 'Annals de Margam', *Annales Monastici*, Vol 1 (London 1864), p.12.

¹⁵⁴ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.257.

¹⁵⁵ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.19.

¹⁵⁶ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.48-58.

Marcher society.¹⁵⁷ Morgan Fychan's son was succeeded by another Lleision, for whom we have evidence of adopting the title 'Lord of Avene', heraldic devices, and other indicators of integration. This was the only Welsh lordship to survive with extensive lands into the fourteenth century, Lleision's son, John, and grandson, Thomas, becoming lords of Afan, Cilfai and Sully, attested in charters of the 1340s and early 1350s.¹⁵⁸ Their survival and inheritance of these lordships are arguably a product of a policy of integration which began with marriages into the de Sully family. As a particularly well evidenced dynasty showing signs of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century anglicisation – whether emulation, integration or change, they are a prime case study.

Senghenydd

The dynasty of Senghennydd was focused on the eponymous cantref between the lands of Gwynllŵg to the east and Glamorgan to the west. Although members of this dynasty are mentioned in the *Brut y Tywysogion*, by Gerald of Wales, and in a few other sources, the evidence is scanty in comparison with the other two dynasties, and thus we generally know less about them.¹⁵⁹

The genealogies within '*Achau Brenhinoedd a Thywysogion Cymru*' (ABT), label the earliest identifiable member of this dynasty as Meurig Fychan, described as 'mab vchelwyr o Sainhenydd': son of an *uchelwyr* of Senghenydd.¹⁶⁰ However, the first individual attested in any detail is Meurig's son, Ifor, known as Ifor Bach (d. by c.1174).¹⁶¹ Ifor's fame largely comes from a single event described by Gerald of Wales, where Ifor, around 1158, was embroiled in a land dispute with William, Earl of Gloucester (Ifor is described by Gerald as one of William's feudal dependants). This dispute culminated in a daring raid by Ifor on Cardiff castle, kidnapping William and his family and holding them until, in the words of Gerald of Wales 'he had recovered everything that had been taken from him unjustly, and a little more.'¹⁶² The *Brut y Tywysogion* also notes the death of Morgan ab Owain of Gwynllŵg in a quarrel with

¹⁵⁷ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.21.

¹⁵⁸ John, and his mother Margaret, are evidenced in charters of 1341 (NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.207; Ch.217; Ch.218; Ch.219), Thomas in a charter (NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.222) of c.1349-50.

¹⁵⁹ L. Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *Gerald of Wales: The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales* (London 1978), p.122.

¹⁶⁰ Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.105. For more on this manuscript source see the 'Genealogies' section in the preceding chapter. P.C. Bartrum's *Welsh Genealogies* 8 vols (Cardiff, 1974), identify earlier ancestors of Meurig, (using later genealogical manuscripts), but as these ancestors appear nowhere else, we cannot ascertain their existence with confidence.

¹⁶¹ For the date of Ifor's death, see Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.46.

¹⁶² Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales/The Description of Wales*. pp.122-3

Ifor in the same year.¹⁶³ Ifor was succeeded by his son, Gruffudd, for who we have three charters, and from the pipe rolls and other sources we know that Ifor had a daughter, Gwenllian, and two other sons, Cadwallon and Maredudd, although the charters suggest Gruffudd may have had primacy. Gruffudd was succeeded by his son, Rhys, who died in 1256 and was succeeded by his son, another Gruffudd: it was during his tenure that Senghenydd's status became a contentious point between Llywelyn ap Gruffudd of Gwynedd and Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester: De Clare captured Gruffudd in 1267 and seized Senghenydd. Gruffudd's family retained some lands and influence, however, as his son, Llywelyn, led a rebellion in 1316; the sources are quite voluble on this.¹⁶⁴ Llywelyn was executed shortly afterwards, although some of his lands were later restored to his sons, the cohesion of the family was split.¹⁶⁵

Upper Gwent

One lordship for which we have tenuous evidence is that of upper Gwent, and we can piece together a tenuous picture of this dynasty. The best source of this dynasty is the *Brut y Tywysogion*. An entry for 1175 describes the Lord Rhys meeting King Henry II at Gloucester 'taking with him all the princes of Wales who had incurred the King's displeasure' – including 'Seisyll ab Dyfnwal of Higher Gwent, the man to whom Gwladus, Rhys' sister, was then married.' Seisyll is mentioned alongside the rulers of Gwynllŵg, Glamorgan, Senghenydd, Maelienydd, Elfael, and Gwerthrynion,¹⁶⁶ although the emphasis of this passage is upon the familial relationship of most of these princes to the Lord Rhys. This suggests some sort of 'shadowy lordship of upper Gwent', as Crouch puts it, existed.¹⁶⁷ However, the most dramatic event is this family's destruction, as related by the *Brut* in the immediate aftermath of the 1175 conference:

And immediately after that, Seisyll ap Dyfnwal was slain through treachery in the castle of Abergavenny by the lord of Brycheiniog. And along with him Geoffrey, his son, and the best men of Gwent were slain. And the French made for Seisyll's court; and after seizing Gwladus, his wife, they slew Cadwaladr, his son. And on that day there befell a pitiful massacre in Gwent. And from that time forth, after that treachery, none of the Welsh dared place trust in the French.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ Jones (ed. and trans.). *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth Ms.20 Version*, p.60

¹⁶⁴ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.45-7; 813-5; J.B. Smith 'The Rebellion of Llywelyn Bren', *The Glamorgan County History, Volume III: The Age of the Marcher Lords* (Cardiff 1971), pp.72-86.

¹⁶⁵ Smith 'The Rebellion of Llywelyn Bren', pp.85-6.

¹⁶⁶ Jones (ed. and trans), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.70-1.

¹⁶⁷ Crouch 'The Slow Death of Kingship', p.31.

¹⁶⁸ Jones (ed. and trans), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version* p71.

Evidence of the dynasty in the source material is short lived. However, it is indicative of a site at Castell Arnallt has been tentatively identified as Seisyll's court (See chapter 6).

These dynasties, of course, are not the only individuals that we will discuss. We can also consider members of the *uchelwyr* or lesser gentry who were dependents and supporters of the major dynasties, which appear more rarely in chronicle evidence but more plentifully in genealogical and charter evidence. These include the dependants of Morgan ap Caradog of Glamorgan. We will explore their careers over the course of this analysis.

Having explored the wider historiographical context and established the terminology and focus of the thesis, we turn now to consider the nature of the source material, how it can be used and its importance for our analysis.

Chapter 2: The Sources

Introduction

So far we have explored scholarly approaches to cultural change in medieval Wales, and outlined several areas where the nature and extent of Anglo-Welsh cultural exchange may be traced. We have also seen that the most detailed studies have tended to deploy a particularly wide variety of source material, essential to provide a broad overview and to understand the bigger picture. This is even more relevant in the context of southeast Wales, as the limited attention cultural exchange has received in scholarly studies may stem, at least in part, from the limited detail given to the affairs of southeast Wales in contemporary source material.

Time and time again, historical studies highlight the same source types as particularly useful and naturally these form an important part of our study. Many of these sources will be employed in multiple chapters, when dealing with differing themes. Understanding their origins, context and scope is necessary to understand how we can use them for studying cultural exchange in the context of southeast Wales. The following chapter introduces the major sources and explores their character, including the challenges and opportunities that they provide, leaving later chapters free to explore themes while avoiding excessive repetition.

The sources fall into several distinct genres, which differ considerably in terms of their layout, date, provenance and chronological span. Written sources are the largest body of material, which can be divided into chronicles and annals, narrative sources (such as the writings of Gerald of Wales), literary texts (prose tales or poetry), genealogies, charters and other administrative records, such as the Court Rolls, Pipe Rolls and so on. In addition to the written sources, there are visual and iconographic sources, designed primarily to be seen: these include seals (which often go hand in hand with charters) and heraldry (usually now evidenced through seals and documentary sources). Archaeological sources are defined more by the way in which they have come to us today rather than their original function: the remains of sites, such as castles, are examples.

We shortly turn to explore the unique characteristics of each source type in detail, considering their unique characteristics, the opportunities and challenges they provide, and how scholars approach them. At the outset, it must be remembered that the majority of sources do not cover society evenly. Whether in charters, seals, genealogies, chronicles or anything else, most material relates to the upper echelons of society – the kings, princes and marcher lords. These are the individuals which feature in the chronicles, those that built castles, used seals,

issued charters, about whom poetry was written or genealogies compiled. This varies depending on the prominence of the individual, which has a knock on regional effect: for example, the Gwynllŵg dynasty of southeast Wales features much less commonly than, say, the rulers of Gwynedd. Even so, if the Gwynllŵg dynasty feature comparatively rarely in sources, outside the ruling dynasties the picture is much less clear. The *uchelwyr* (lesser Welsh gentry) might issue the occasional charter, own a seal and feature in genealogies, but they are much less visible in the historical record – although as there were more of them we gain a broader but shallower picture of them. Few sources directly relate to individuals at all outside the nobility: direct sources are so essential for our study, and thus our discussion on cultural change must be confined to members of the aristocracy.

Genealogies

Historians of cross-cultural naming practices and those exploring familial relations often use genealogies to consider interpersonal relationships or trace dynasties for whom little other information survives.¹⁶⁹ Genealogies record the names and lineages of individuals, and as the words of Gerald of Wales in the twelfth century and John Leland in the sixteenth suggest, knowledge of one's lineage was important to the inhabitants of Wales.¹⁷⁰

While brief references to family and lineage for the period c.1050-1350 can be found within many sources, narrative or administrative, our concern here is with more extensive pedigrees listing multiple generations. These are usually found within dedicated genealogical manuscripts, within some poetry and literature. Isolated genealogies appear from the eighth and ninth centuries in the *Historia Brittonum* and the inscription on the Pillar of Eliseg.¹⁷¹ Welsh court poetry of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries 'often invoked the prestigious ancestors of their patrons in order to personalise their eulogies and draw attention to the distinction of their patrons' lineages.'¹⁷² Pedigrees in dedicated genealogical manuscripts began to appear at this period, reliant upon the patronage of the Welsh princes, although, following the Edwardian Conquest and extinction of most of these dynasties, increasing patronage came from members of the lesser Welsh gentry or *uchelwyr*. The heyday of Welsh

¹⁶⁹ B. Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy: An Introduction and Contextual Study: Studies in Celtic History XLII* (Woodbridge, 2020), pp.48-9; for their importance as a source for understanding cross-cultural naming practices, see F. V. Veach 'Anglicization in medieval Ireland, was there a Gaelic Irish 'middle nation'?', in S. Duffy and S. Foran (eds) *The English Isles: Cultural transmission and political conflict in Britain and Ireland 1100 – 1500* (Dublin, 2013), p.122; Radiker, 'Observations on Cross-Cultural Names and Naming Patterns in Medieval Wales and the March', pp.160-162.

¹⁷⁰ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.251.

¹⁷¹ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.39.

¹⁷² Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.33

genealogy, however, came in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the gentry became increasingly interested in documenting their family history, often as a method of enhancing their prestige. This late interest resulted in the copying of many earlier manuscripts – it is from the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries that most of our surviving material comes, with only a few earlier manuscripts.¹⁷³

The medieval manuscripts can be grouped into three major collections: the Harleian Genealogies, those within Jesus College MS 20, and a third collection termed by Guy as the ‘Llywelyn ab Iorwerth’ genealogies.¹⁷⁴ Each contains a number of genealogies primarily relating to the Welsh princes. The manuscripts range in date from the early twelfth century (as with Harleian 3859),¹⁷⁵ to the Mostyn genealogies contained within the early fourteenth century Mostyn 117 (NLW 3036B), and the Jesus 20 genealogies which were copied around 1400, perhaps from pre-thirteenth century material.¹⁷⁶ The later medieval and early modern fashion for genealogy is reflected in the larger numbers of surviving manuscripts (including copies) from about 1460 onwards.¹⁷⁷

Of the earlier genealogies, Jesus College MS20 shows a particular interest in southeast Wales and Morgannwg, with a section concerning Brychan Brycheiniog, and an elaborate pedigree of Morgan ab Owain, suggesting it was produced in that region.¹⁷⁸ Bartrum writes that although it shows similarities with other sources including the Life of St Cadog and *De Situ Brecheniauc*, much of the south Welsh material appears unique.¹⁷⁹ A second relevant manuscript concerning the native dynasties of Morgannwg and Gwent was Hengwrt MS 33, dated to c.1400, which contained *Achau Brenhinoedd a Thywysogion Cymru* amongst other genealogical tracts, poetry, chronicles and other prose: while it deals with princes throughout Wales, it includes sections on Morgannwg, Senghennydd and Gwent. While this manuscript was lost by the early nineteenth century, some of its material was copied into later manuscripts and its example provides an interesting case study into their context. Those which copied parts of Hengwrt MS 33 include Llanstephan MS 28 (Gutun Owain, c.1475), Peniarth MS 182 (Hugh Pennant, c.1514) and Cardiff MS 25 (John Jones of Gelli Llyfdy, 1640). Bartrum argues that some of the material in Cardiff MS 25 came from another now lost manuscript, and that both

¹⁷³ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, pp.3-32.

¹⁷⁴ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.3.

¹⁷⁵ Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.5.

¹⁷⁶ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.44; Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.41.

¹⁷⁷ For a summary of the development of the fifteenth and sixteenth century genealogical tradition, see Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, pp.43-46.

¹⁷⁸ Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.41.

¹⁷⁹ Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.41; B. Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.101.

Hengwrt MS 33 and this lost manuscript ('Y'), were based on thirteenth century material.¹⁸⁰ The later genealogies were particularly numerous, to the point that 'literary genealogy became something of a cottage industry in sixteenth-century Wales.'¹⁸¹

Concerned as we are with the princes and *uchelwyr* of southeast Wales between 1050 and 1350, how relevant are these manuscripts and their contents, and most importantly, how far can we rely on genealogies to accurately identify people of interest to our study? In general, historians have been wary, if not outright dismissive, of their reliability. Van Caenegem writes that: 'No source is less trustworthy, especially in the oldest parts, where the important thing was to arrive at a royal line, or some famous or holy personage. Later falsifications are also numerous.'¹⁸² True, one of their chief functions was to enhance their prestige by tracing the descent of an individual back to a particularly illustrious ancestor: many invoked legendary figures such as Brutus or Arthur, and the frequent appearance of such figures shows that they were not necessarily designed as rigorous, watertight family histories: however, this itself is useful in understanding the sort of connections that were being stressed.

There is uncertainty whether genealogies were recited aloud, and while Bartrum suggests that the earlier ones were probably passed down orally, Guy suggests that most genealogies would not have lent themselves well to recitation.¹⁸³ However, the relatively large amount of material relating to the princes would conceivably make the more recent entries in such pedigrees less prone to inaccuracies or fabrication. These would be more likely with the lesser gentry and *uchelwyr*. As historians, too, we are more able to cross reference pedigrees of the princes with other sources, while the *uchelwyr* rarely appear in other sources – making it harder to corroborate genealogical information on them. Paradoxically, of course, the fact that they appear so rarely elsewhere makes genealogies more important for understanding these individuals, especially if our discussion is to range beyond the princely dynasties.

Recently historians have suggested that genealogies are more reliable than previously thought: enough to be used as sources alongside the likes of chronicles and annals. This began with F. Jones, who argued 'The Welsh pedigree was public property, and it was accurate simply because it had to be': genealogical knowledge was vital to marriage practices, as 'this tribal aristocracy of blood led to some exclusiveness. Marriages within the tribe were encouraged

¹⁸⁰ Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, pp.76-8; 105.

¹⁸¹ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.46.

¹⁸² R.C. Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History* (Amsterdam, 1978), pp.37-8.

¹⁸³ Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.vii; Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.39.

since it was of economic advantage'.¹⁸⁴ Although such views of Wales as a tribal aristocracy carry outdated connotations and have fallen out of favour since the mid twentieth century, Jones' work influenced later historians including Peter Bartrum. Bartrum, whilst acknowledging that the upper reaches of genealogies often strayed into legend, argued that:

One gets the general impression that the early [fifteenth and early sixteenth century] genealogies are remarkably reliable when allowance is made for accidental mistakes, mainly due to carelessness or ignorance. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that no single pedigree can be safely accepted without critical examination.¹⁸⁵

Bartrum contrasts this with the later sixteenth and seventeenth century manuscripts, which often perpetuated earlier errors, their compilers using the most recent manuscripts rather than cross-referencing with earlier versions. He freely admits that 'disagreement between even the best authorities is proof (if any were needed) that there are errors in the genealogies.'¹⁸⁶

Guy has further explored the concept of genealogies as viable sources when used cautiously. Guy stresses the importance of considering genealogies in their wider context, the collections in which they survive and their later history. He notes that the medieval genealogies 'underwent processes of diachronic development. Collections were re-redacted in several stages over time, and genealogies were sometimes reworked in order to accommodate changes in political circumstances or cultural discourse.'¹⁸⁷

Despite questions over its reliability, these manuscripts have been made more accessible by the attentions of modern scholars. Early attempts to make genealogies accessible to historians were made in the nineteenth century with the publication of several genealogies by Egerton Phillimore and Arthur Wade-Evans.¹⁸⁸ However, the most ground-breaking work on the genealogies was undertaken by Peter Bartrum, with his publication of *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts* published in 1966. Additionally, Bartrum sought to collate all the pedigrees and other disparate genealogical references into a single collection of family trees, concerning the individuals mentioned in the texts from AD300 – 1500. This huge work was published in twenty-six volumes, eight of which (published in 1974) concern the period 300 – 1400: in Bartrum's words, 'it is believed that they give a tolerably complete account of the

¹⁸⁴ F. Jones, 'An Approach to Welsh Genealogy', *The Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1948 (London, 1949), pp.316-318.

¹⁸⁵ P.C. Bartrum, 'Notes on the Welsh Genealogical Manuscripts', *The Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1968 Part 1 (London, 1969), pp. 63 – 98.

¹⁸⁶ P.C. Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, 8 vols (Cardiff, 1974), see particularly Vol 1, p.4.

¹⁸⁷ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.49.

¹⁸⁸ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, pp.46-7.

contents of these manuscripts up to the generation born A.D.1400'.¹⁸⁹ The corpus excludes most of the Anglo-Norman families which settled in Wales, except those who later adopted Welsh surnames.¹⁹⁰ The size of the corpus and extensive later additions and corrections to the series demonstrates the complexity of compiling such a large selection of material.¹⁹¹ Bartrum's work remains at the forefront of genealogical studies and has been extensively used by historians of cultural integration and cross-cultural naming practices.¹⁹²

As already mentioned, an important reanalysis of the medieval genealogies has recently been undertaken by Ben Guy, exploring the context and use of genealogies along with the textual history of the manuscripts and collections, going beyond Bartrum's synthesis.¹⁹³

To conclude, genealogies provide a useful, and relatively accessible resource which has been by historians to draw out names and understand personal relationships. They are not without their problems, however, reliability being a key issue. Where possible, the information gleaned from genealogies need to be cross referenced with references in chronicles, charters, poetry and so forth to ensure accuracy. This approach is most plausible for members of the princely dynasties and most challenging for members of the *uchelwyr*.

Chronicles, Annals and Histories

Chronicles and annals are some of the most commonly used sources, providing the framework around which histories are structured. Defined by chronological lists of events, year by year, chronicle writing was prevalent across European monastic houses throughout the early-medieval and medieval periods.¹⁹⁴

The distinction between chronicles, annals and other narrative histories is often difficult to discern, and scholars disagree over their definitions. Given-Wilson describes the strict definition of a chronicle as 'a record or register of events in chronological order' though the subject matter was essentially historical in nature and could be quite detailed.¹⁹⁵ By contrast,

¹⁸⁹ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, 8 vols. A second, more extensive edition of genealogical tables is included for the period 1400 – 1500, but as these lie outside the scope of our period, Bartrum's corpus, henceforth *Welsh Genealogies*, refers to the AD300 – 1400 edition unless otherwise stated.

¹⁹⁰ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, Vol 1. p.2.

¹⁹¹ A full list of the manuscripts used by Bartrum is available Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, Vol.1. pp.10 – 18.

¹⁹² M.P. Siddons, 'Using Peter Bartrum's *Welsh Genealogies*.', in J. Rowlands and S. Rowlands (eds.), *Second Stages in Researching Welsh Ancestry* (Aberystwyth, 1999), pp.134 – 146; Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.48; Radiker, 'Observations on Cross-Cultural Names and Naming Patterns in Medieval Wales and the March', pp.160-198.

¹⁹³ Guy *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.3; p.49.

¹⁹⁴ Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, pp.18-22.

¹⁹⁵ C. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London, 2004), p.xix.

annals were usually ‘short, dry notes of fact in strict, annual succession.’¹⁹⁶ Histories were more synthetic and did not rely as heavily upon this chronological framework, though ‘yet to try to distinguish too precisely between ‘chronicle’ and ‘history’ can be, as Gervase of Canterbury discovered around 1200, a frustrating task.’¹⁹⁷

Chronicles, annals and histories are sources more concerned with major events and important individuals than any other. For our purposes they are most useful when discussing the princely dynasties or placing events in their wider context. These sources often had a strong regional interest, with their writers more likely to note events of local importance: this has been used to understand where they were written. Given their local interest chronicles local to southeast Wales perhaps of most interest to us. Chronicles and histories also provide a peculiarly third person viewpoint of events, although they were by no means impartial, telling us less about attitudes of Welsh Princes and Marcher lords to cultural change, than about the chronicler’s own views.

Several chronicles are known to have been compiled in Wales – although some owe much to sources of Anglo-Norman provenance. To understand how relevant and accurate they may be to our study of cultural change in medieval Wales, we must consider their wider context: where they were compiled, the interests of their compilers, and date.

The most famous Welsh chronicle is the *Brut y Tywysogion* (Chronicle of the Princes). The *Brut* exists in distinct versions, including within Peniarth MS 20, and within Oxford, Jesus College MS 111 (The Red Book of Hergest). Both were published as separate editions by Thomas Jones in the mid twentieth century, along with the closely related *Brenhinedd y Saesson* (The Kings of the Saxons) which is dependent upon both versions of the *Brut*.¹⁹⁸ The period covered by each version varies, Peniarth MS 20 being the most complete, covering the period 682 – 1332. The Red Book of Hergest version running until 1282, while the oldest manuscript of *Brenhinedd y Saesson* covers the period until 1198, with later material to 1461 added in several stages thereafter.¹⁹⁹ Scholars suggest all three texts derive from a now lost Latin original.²⁰⁰ Jones’ editions remain the most comprehensive and up to date versions of

¹⁹⁶ Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, p.30.

¹⁹⁷ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p.xix.

¹⁹⁸ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS. 20 Version*, Idem (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Or the Chronicle of the Princes, Red Book of Hergest Version*, (Cardiff, 1955). Note that Jones published two editions of the Peniarth MS 20 version of the *Brut*, a Welsh language version in 1941 and an English translation in 1952. The version given is the 1952 English translation unless specified in the citation.

¹⁹⁹ Smith ‘Historical Writing in Medieval Wales’, p.55; O.W. Jones, ‘Brenhinedd y Saesson’, <http://croniclau.bangor.ac.uk/saesson.php.en>, accessed 01/05/2019.

²⁰⁰ O.W. Jones, ‘Brut y Tywysogion: the History of the Princes and Twelfth-Century Cambro-Latin Historical Writing’, *The Haskins Society Journal*, 26 (2014), pp.209 –10.

these texts: only recently has there been more substantial discussion on the topic of the *Brut* and Welsh chronicle writing more generally.²⁰¹

Understanding where and when the *Brut* was written, and how far it relied on earlier sources, is vital to understanding how far it reflected contemporary views of the events it describes. Peniarth MS 20 is thought to have been completed in March 1282 or shortly after, with the material covering 1282 – 1332 added later. The regional interest in the chronicles suggests the *Brutiau* are dependent on material primarily from southwest Wales – St David’s, Llanbadarn and Strata Florida, but that some of the most important manuscripts (including Peniarth MS 20) were compiled in North Wales, probably at Valle Crucis Abbey. Indeed, Peniarth MS 20 is thought to have been finally compiled around 1330, changes in the hands for the final entries suggest they were written contemporaneously, or nearly so.²⁰²

T. Jones and J.E. Lloyd saw the *Brut* as a product of ‘literary elaboration’ of the Latin *Annales Cambriae*, (to which we turn shortly).²⁰³ More recent interpretations question this, Owain Jones and David Stephenson arguing that the additional detail within the *Brut* indicates a common reliance on a now lost Latin chronicle.²⁰⁴ David Stephenson suggests that entries the early twelfth century, showing an interest in Powys and Ceredigion, would suggest this source was connected to Llanbadarn Fawr.²⁰⁵

While the connections to Valle Crucis, St David’s, Llanbadarn and Strata Florida has led to the affairs of north and southwest Wales being documented in detail, references to southeast Wales are generally rare, with the exception of the careers of the rulers of Gwynllŵg in the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries which are noted in surprising detail, from the death of Morgan ab Owain in 1158, through changes in the ownership of Caerleon Castle until 1217. These sections may be based on a local source, and are of particular interest to our study.

Several chronicles have a distinct interest in Southeast Wales and may have been compiled there: they also often owe much to Anglo-Norman sources. The Cardiff Chronicle is one, contained in BL MS Royal 6 B XI. Georgia Henley’s recent work on this chronicle has

²⁰¹ B. Guy, G. Henley, O.W. Jones and R. Thomas (eds.), *The Chronicles of Medieval Wales and the March: New Contexts, Studies and Texts* (Cambridge, 2021).

²⁰² Smith ‘Historical Writing in Medieval Wales’; O.W. Jones, ‘Brenhinedd y Saesson’, <http://croniclau.bangor.ac.uk/saesson.php.en>, (accessed 01/05/2019).

²⁰³ Jones, ‘Brut y Tywysogion, the History of the Princes’, p.211.

²⁰⁴ Jones, ‘Brut y Tywysogion’ pp.212-13; D. Stephenson, ‘Welsh Chronicles’ Accounts of the mid-Twelfth Century’ *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 56 (2008), pp.54-7; D. Stephenson, ‘The “Resurgence” of Powys in the Late Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries’, *Anglo Norman Studies XXX: Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2007*, ed. C.P. Lewis (Woodbridge, 2008), pp.182-195.

²⁰⁵ Stephenson, ‘The Resurgence of Powys’, pp.184.

shown that its earlier section, from 1066 until approximately 1240, is essentially an abbreviation of the Annals of Tewkesbury. However, from 1240 until the final entry in 1272 it is independent, and more detailed concerning Welsh affairs, particularly those of the southeast. This geographical focus, as well as its interest in the De Clare Earls of Gloucester, is one reason why it is thought to have been compiled at Cardiff (although the Tewkesbury annals, too, have an interest in the De Clares). If so, this source is clearly of more relevance to our study, especially for the post 1240 period.²⁰⁶

The Breviate Annals, contained in TNA MS E164/1, are closely related to the Cardiff Chronicle. They are thought to have been compiled during the later thirteenth or early fourteenth century at Neath Abbey, a Cistercian house on the edge of Glamorgan, cover the period 1066 – 1298, and are thus of interest for most of our period of study. J.B. Smith suggests the annals are related to *Brenhinedd y Saesson*, the latter relying either upon the annals themselves or a source common to both. Edited by H. Longueville Jones in 1862, the Breviate Annals have been translated by Paul Remfry along with the collection of texts known as the *Annales Cambriae* (as labelled by Henry Petrie in 1848).²⁰⁷ It shows a particularly strong interest in Glamorgan and the affairs of surrounding princes, and Remfry suggests it was based upon the Margam and Tewkesbury annals, with local additions. It was probably compiled for William Braose and that ‘certainly the tone of the entries suggest a strongly Norman slant to the chronicle.’ – indeed, Remfry describes it as an ‘English chronicle’.²⁰⁸ As annals, the entries are generally brief and limited in detail for the whole period. Nevertheless, their focus on Glamorgan makes them pertinent for our study, even if some details, especially for the eleventh century, were written some time after the events described.

The Breviate Annals should not be confused with the Breviate Chronicle, more well known as the B-text of the *Annales Cambriae*. This is also contained in the Breviate of Domesday TNA MS E164/1 and therefore is also thought to have been compiled at Neath Abbey. This text covers the period from the Creation until 1286. Although edited in the nineteenth century by John Williams ab Ithel, a translation was only published (based on ab

²⁰⁶ G. Henley. ‘The Cardiff Chronicle in London, British Library, MS Royal 6 B XI’ in B. Guy, G. Henley, O.W. Jones and R. Thomas (eds.), *The Chronicles of Medieval Wales and the March: New Contexts, Studies and Texts* (Cambridge, 2021), pp.231-287; H. Luard (ed), *Annales Monastici I*, (London 1864).

²⁰⁷ Smith, ‘Historical Writing in Medieval Wales’, pp.67-8; J. Longueville Jones ‘Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century. MS Exchequer Domesday’, *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 3rd Series 8 (1862), pp.272-83; P. Remfry (ed. and trans.), *Annales Cambriae: A Translation of Harleian 3859; PRO E164/1: Cottonian Domitian, A1; Exeter Cathedral Library MS 3514 and MS Exchequer DB Neath*, *PRO E. 164/1* (Shrewsbury 2007), p.35; pp.29-259.

²⁰⁸ Remfry (ed. and trans.) *Annales Cambriae*, pp.35-6.

Ithel's text) by Paul Remfry in 2007; more recently in 2015 Henry Gough-Cooper provided an edition based on a new transcription of the original manuscript.²⁰⁹

The Breviate Chronicle is thought to have used a chronicle written at St David's as a basis for entries until 1202, as it shows a strong interest in events concerning the ecclesiastical community there, particularly after William I's 1081 visit to St David's.²¹⁰ Although it makes reference Remfry writes to political affairs in Deheubarth and Gwynedd, its interest in English affairs led Remfry to write 'the St David's Annales after 1081 was an Anglo-Norman-Cambrian Marcher and not a 'Welsh' chronicle.'²¹¹ The chronicle does mention the Welsh lords of Caerleon from 1033 until their dispossession in the early thirteenth century. Huws suggests that MS E164/1 as a whole, containing abbreviated versions of the Domesday Book as well as the chronicle and other material, was compiled for the administrative use of magnates.²¹² Marginalia noting De Braose holdings suggest they may have been the intended audience, with the Breviate Chronicle part of additional material designed to bolster De Braose claims to Gower, while registering the interests of Neath Abbey.²¹³ Kathleen Hughes has suggested that the entries of the Breviate Chronicle can be dated to between May 1300 and October 1304.²¹⁴ As it is mostly based on other sources, the additions pertinent to Glamorgan made during this final compilation at Neath are the most interesting and relevant part of this chronicle from our point of view.

The Margam Annals are thought to have been written at Margam Abbey, again in the western part of Glamorgan. They have attracted limited scholarly attention, largely because they survive only within a single manuscript (MS Trinity College, Cambridge, Gale, O). However, Colker has shown that a condensed adaptation of the chronicle visible in the Cambridge MS is present within a Dublin manuscript; Colker suggests both derived from a common source: and Patterson argues that this common source may also have been the ancestor of the Breviate Chronicle in E164/1.²¹⁵ Unlike the *Brut y Tywysogyon* and *Annales Cambriae*,

²⁰⁹ Remfry (ed. and trans.), *Annales Cambriae*; H. Gough-Cooper, 'Annales Cambriae: The B Text, from London, National Archives MS E164/1 (Bangor, 2015), pp.2-26.

²¹⁰ K. Hughes, 'The Welsh Latin chronicles: Annales Cambriae and related texts', in D. Dumville (ed.), *Celtic Britain in the Early Middle Ages* (Woodbridge 1980), pp.75-6.

²¹¹ Remfry (ed. and trans.), *Annales Cambriae*, p.11.

²¹² D. Huws, 'The Neath Abbey Breviate of Domesday', in R.A. Griffith and P.R. Schofield (eds.), *Wales and the Welsh in the Middle Ages: Essays presented to J. Beverley Smith* (Cardiff 2011), p.46.

²¹³ Huws 'The Neath Abbey Breviate of Domesday', p.49.

²¹⁴ Hughes, 'The Welsh Latin Chronicles', pp.81-2.

²¹⁵ M.L. Colker, 'The Margam Chronicle in a Dublin Manuscript' *The Haskins Society Journal*, 4 (1992), pp.123-148; R.B. Patterson, 'The Author of the 'Margam Annals': Early Thirteenth-century Margam Abbey's Compleat Scribe', in M. Chibnall (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies: XIV Proceedings of the Battle Conference 1991* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp.198-202.

the only comprehensive edition of the annals is within *Annales Monastici I*, alongside the Annals of Tewkesbury and Burton compiled in 1864 by Henry Luard.²¹⁶ Probably late thirteenth century in date, the Margam annals cover the period from the death of Edward the Confessor in 1066 until the quarrel between Henry III and Hubert de Burgh in 1232, the later leaves being lost.²¹⁷ Luard's analysis of the Margam annals is much shorter than his analysis of his other chronicles in *Annales Monastici*, possibly because it is based solely on the Cambridge manuscript. Luard suggests the annals relied on William of Malmesbury's history (see below), or from a source common to both, for its eleventh- and early twelfth-century material, which is not particularly concerned with Wales. References to Welsh affairs appear more frequently from the 1120s, and increase significantly after 1147, when Margam Abbey was founded by Robert, Earl of Gloucester: these are likely local additions and these entries become increasingly detailed as they get closer to the date of composition. The source is most useful for the period 1147 – 1232.²¹⁸

The final chronicle from Wales we mention here is the *Epitome Historiae Britanniae*, covering a period until the later fourteenth century. In addition to two full versions in BL Cotton Titus Dxxii (early fifteenth c.) and BL Cotton Nero A.iv., an abbreviated version has been identified by Diana Luft within another early fifteenth century MS, NLW Peniarth MS 32.²¹⁹ Luft argues that the earlier parts of the source are based on Geoffrey of Monmouth and Gerald of Wales, but the abridged version recounts events in Glamorgan from 1282 onwards much more fully than other sources, and was thus likely written in Glamorgan: Luft suggests Llantarnam Abbey, a Cistercian foundation by the Welsh Lords of Gwynllŵg, as a possible place of composition. This place of composition and coverage of fourteenth century events places it apart from other Welsh chronicles and makes it of particular interest to us.²²⁰

Overall, the interest of these sources in southeast Wales makes them useful in studying cultural exchange in the region. While many were compiled during the later middle ages, the relationship of the texts suggest they were based on earlier sources which are more likely to be accurate. The unique entries, often coming at the end of chronicles, are of greatest local interest. They provide a framework for understanding the careers of the princes, and allow us to place other sources in their wider context, vital when understanding the 'why' of cultural exchange when used alongside other sources.

²¹⁶ Luard (ed.), *Annales Monastici*, Vol.1 (London, 1864), pp.3-40.

²¹⁷ Luard, *Annales Monastici*, pp.xiii – xv.

²¹⁸ Patterson, 'The Author of the 'Margam Annals'', p.197.

²¹⁹ D. Luft, 'The NLW Peniarth 32 Latin Chronicle', *Studia Celtica*, 44 (2010), pp.47-70.

²²⁰ Luft 'The NLW Peniarth 32 Latin Chronicle', pp.47-61.

Anglo-Norman Chronicles and Histories

While a natural challenge inherent to historical sources is a limited focus on issues of interest to the reader, this is especially the case when dealing with sources originating from outside Wales, as Welsh affairs, quite naturally, were generally of less interest to their writers. Nonetheless, Anglo-Norman chronicles and histories are vital for placing events in their wider context. They are more numerous than their Welsh counterparts, and, while bound by similar limitations, some have an unusual interest in Welsh or marcher affairs. As there are numerous, I restrict my discussion here to those with a particular interest in southeast Wales.

The Tewkesbury Annals are one such source. They cover the period from the death of Edward the Confessor in 1066 until 1263, and are found only within one manuscript, Cottian Cleopatra A vii.²²¹ Whilst drawn upon by the Cardiff Chronicle for its earlier material, they also display occasional interest in the affairs of southeast Wales. Compiled at the eponymous English monastery, the Welsh interest could be explained by Tewkesbury's location, not far from Glamorgan, Gwent and Brycheiniog. However, Tewkesbury's associations with the Earls of Gloucester are also important.²²² The Earls were major patrons of the abbey and had extensive holdings and dealings in southeast Wales. Robert Fitz Hamon was traditionally credited with the conquest of lowland Glamorgan in the later eleventh century, and the thirteenth century De Clare earls sought to expand and consolidate their hold on the region.²²³ Many Wales entries in the annals directly concern the monks or their De Clare patrons: for example, in 1242 the Abbot of Tewkesbury was sent by Richard de Clare into Glamorgan 'to quiet the disturbances that had arisen there' and to assert the monastery's right to appoint a vicar at Llanblethian church.²²⁴ Tewkesbury's associations with the Earls led to them being granted significant Welsh holdings, which also explain the Welsh interest. They were published by Luard in 1864 but have attracted little modern attention. Apart from their influence on Welsh sources, the annals are useful for contextual information, especially concerning the earls of Gloucester.

There are a number of histories that contain an Anglo-Norman viewpoint on Welsh affairs, and blur the boundary between chronicles and narrative history.²²⁵ The first is the

²²¹ Luard, *Annales Monastici*, p.xv.

²²² P.R. Davis, *Three Chevrons Red: The Clares: A Marcher Dynasty in Wales, England and Ireland* (Logaston, 2013), pp.124-7.

²²³ Luard, *Annales Monastici*, pp.xv – xxvii.

²²⁴ Luard, *Annales Monastici*, p.xxi.

²²⁵ Given-Wilson *Chronicles*, p.xix.

Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis, completed shortly before the writer's death in 1141. Belying its title, it also contains an extensive account of the Norman conquest of England in 1066 and subsequent royal political affairs until 1141. Born around 1075, Orderic spent his early childhood near Shrewsbury, before entering the monastery of St Evroul in Normandy, and thus had tenuous links to the Anglo-Welsh borderland. While generally concerned with Anglo-Norman affairs, Orderic refers to north Wales several times in the late eleventh century: the Welsh usually appear when participating actively in English politics, such as with their associations with Robert of Belleme and attacks on Shrewsbury.²²⁶ Chibnall notes his value as a contemporary of the Norman Conquest,²²⁷ and his almost contemporaneous account of the Anarchy – including mentions of Welsh involvement – is of particular use to us: for example, his description of the Welsh at the Battle of Lincoln in 1141 as 'a fierce mob' led by Cadwaladr, brother of Owain Gwynedd, and Madog ap Maredudd of Powys.²²⁸ In common with chronicles, Orderic's history is useful in providing political context and Orderic's own viewpoint on affairs, but Wales was clearly of marginal interest to him, like many other Anglo-Norman writers. In the context of this marginality, any references to Welsh events may have been quite important to be included in their work. The Anglo-Norman perspective is essential to understanding the Anglo-Welsh relationship and hence cultural exchange.

The same arguments apply to William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, covering the period from the death of Bede in 735 to 1125, when it was completed.²²⁹ The *Gesta* influenced many sources – including the Margam Annals. Like Orderic's *Ecclesiastical History*, part of the account occurred within the writer's lifetime and it is this which has attracted historians. Welsh events are rarely noted, beyond a few incidents in the northern marches,²³⁰ and for our purposes the importance of Malmesbury's work lies in its contribution to other sources and eleventh and early twelfth century contextual material.

²²⁶ Walker, 'Cultural Survival in an Age of Conquest', p.47; J. Prestwich. 'Orderic Vitalis' (1075 – c.1142), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Online edn. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-20812?rskey=vn59I9&result=1> (Accessed 03/06/2019).

²²⁷ M. Chibnall (ed. and trans.), *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis, Volume II: Books III and IV* (Oxford, 1990), p.xxix - xxxix; M. Chibnall (ed. and trans.), *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis, Volume VI, Books XI, XII and XIII* (Oxford, 2002), p.xvii – xxv.

²²⁸ Chibnall (ed. and trans.) *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis, Volume VI*, p.542-3.

²²⁹ R.M. Thomson, 'Malmesbury, William of (b.c.1090, d. in or after 1142)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Online edn. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-29461> (Accessed 03/06/2019).

²³⁰ R.A.B Mynors, R.M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom (eds.), Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom (eds.), *William of Malmesbury: Gesta Regum Anglorum, Volume I* (Oxford, 1998), p.877.

Some Anglo-Norman/English historical works merit mention due to their discussion of Welsh events found in few – if any – other sources. Of course, understanding their reliability is key in these cases and should be treated with caution. The *Liber Eliensis* is one example. Written in Ely in the twelfth century, it documents the history of the local area and is thought to have been written in 1131x74.²³¹ Its importance to us lies almost solely in its mention of the Welsh presence at the Battle of Lincoln in 1141 (an important battle during the Anarchy).²³² Although Welsh contribution to the battle is also recorded by Orderic Vitalis, the *Liber Eliensis* mentions a King Morgan found nowhere else: David Crouch has argued may refer to Morgan ab Owain, a member of the princely dynasty of Gwynllŵg.²³³ Although included as an incidental detail, Morgan's involvement at Lincoln could tell us much about his relationship with his English neighbours (as discussed in chapter 7), although the differing accounts warn us to treat this entry with care.

Similarly, much of our information regarding the 1315 rebellion of Llywelyn Bren is contained within one source. The *Flores Historiarum* covers the period until 1327, although the entries up to the mid thirteenth century derive from Matthew Paris' *Chronica Majora* and was probably composed at St Albans: only those sections from 1265 onwards are completely independent. In this independent section it contains several consecutive entries relating to Llywelyn Bren's 1315 rebellion, and also for the 1321 war between the Barons and the Despensers (who held many of the former De Clare lands in Wales following the death of the last earl at the 1314 Battle of Bannockburn).²³⁴ As with the *Liber Eliensis* this short section makes it of greater use and value to our study, although it has attracted little modern scholarly attention.

The limited, incidental interest in Welsh affairs is characteristic of many Anglo-Norman or English sources, with Welsh affairs coming to the fore only when they impinge upon Anglo-Norman political affairs. Some of these references are of particular interest when they provide details not found elsewhere, but must be used with caution in the absence of corroborating evidence. Their main use, as with the Welsh chronicles, is in providing the wider context in which to conduct our research.

²³¹ Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, p.35.

²³² J. Fairweather (ed. and trans.), *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the seventh century to the twelfth*, (Woodbridge 2005), Book III, Chapter 72, p.395.

²³³ Crouch, 'The Slow Death of kingship in Glamorgan', p.35.

²³⁴ H.R. Luard, *Flores Historiarum*, 3 Vols. (London, 1890); Vol 3, pp.339 – 343.

Gerald of Wales and Walter Map

Narrative writing did not always take the form of chronicles or chronological histories and could take many other forms, although, like histories, most were written in an ecclesiastical context, and some included substantial historical sections. Often detailed (and opinionated), they provide snapshots of a particular moment.

Undoubtedly the best known corpus of narrative works from Wales is the collected writings of Giraldus Cambrensis, or Gerald of Wales (c.1146-1220x23).²³⁵ Descended from both Welsh and Anglo-Norman stock, Gerald authored several works describing his life and travels. As archdeacon of Brecon, the bishop elect of St David's, and a member of the Archbishop of Canterbury's expedition around Wales in 1188, his works are unique for the study of later twelfth-century Wales.²³⁶ Historians have made much use of Gerald's writings, and he has been the subject of a number of studies.²³⁷

Gerald's work includes the *Journey Through Wales*, written around 1191²³⁸ (and subsequently edited) relating to his 1188 circuit through Wales with Archbishop Baldwin, drumming up support for the Third Crusade. The *Journey* includes a clearly defined circuit around Wales, including a section on the southeast of particular interest to a student of this area in the later twelfth century.²³⁹ Another work, the *Description of Wales*, of around 1194, is a treatise on Welsh geography, customs and culture in which Gerald voices his opinions on the vices and virtues of the Welsh people, how a conquest of Wales should be carried out, and how the Welsh should resist.²⁴⁰ This perhaps most clearly demonstrates Gerald's uniquely ambiguous position as a member of the 'Cambro-Norman aristocracy', occupying a 'middle ground' between the Anglo-Norman and Welsh worlds.²⁴¹ This has encouraged lively historical debate over his identity, but the complexities and contradictions of Gerald's own position go beyond 'Norman', 'Welsh' or even 'Cambro-Norman'.²⁴²

²³⁵ R. Bartlett, 'Gerald of Wales [Giraldus Cambrensis, Gerald de Barry]', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-10769?rskey=Tcjohv> (Accessed 29/11/2021).

²³⁶ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*.

²³⁷ G. Henley and A.J. McMullen (eds.), *Gerald of Wales: New Perspectives on a Medieval Writer and Critic* (Cardiff 2018); R. Bartlett *Gerald of Wales 1146 – 1223* (Oxford 1982); C. Kightly, *A Mirror of Medieval Wales: Gerald of Wales and His Journey of 1188* (Cardiff 1988).

²³⁸ Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p.181.

²³⁹ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp. 80-136; *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, 8 vols (London, 1861-91).

²⁴⁰ Thorpe, (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp.211 – 274.

²⁴¹ Kightly, *A Mirror of Medieval Wales*, p.8.

²⁴² For a summary of views on Gerald's identity, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, pp.9-25.

Gerald was a prolific writer, and although the *Journey and Description* are his best known works on Wales, his other writings provide insights into his own viewpoint.²⁴³ These include Gerald's autobiography (*De rebus a se gestis*), lives of saints and other tracts.²⁴⁴ Indeed, the *De rebus* is particularly rich in detail in comparison with other source types as it gives extensive detail of Gerald's affairs (including on his journey through Wales, in other words than his other works). Gerald's opinions and bitterness demonstrate his motivations, which are vital to understanding his writings.²⁴⁵ We are fortunate that Gerald is such a prolific writer, as his works together provide exceptional detail on his life. Gerald's father was William de Barri, lord of Manorbier, and his mother was Angharad, daughter of Gerald of Windsor and Nest, daughter of Rhys ap Tewdwr, ruler of Deheubarth.²⁴⁶ Gerald was brought up at Manorbier and was educated first at St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, and later at the University of Paris before returning to Wales c.1174. He became archdeacon of Brecon around 1175 and later served in the court of Henry II. Gerald was well travelled, travelling to Ireland, France, and Rome on multiple occasions. Gerald was elected Bishop of St David's in 1199 but competing political influences meant he was never able to take up the post: the affair had a marked effect on his views and his latter writings reflect his embitterment.

While Gerald provides a view on the Welsh past before his day, it is his views of contemporary Wales that we are most interested. Embittered as Gerald is, some of his biases are immediately apparent, as with his complex battle for the bishopric of St David's, clearly visible in his later writings. Likewise, while his discussions of miracles and folklore clearly cannot be taken at face value, his works are, nevertheless, a fascinating window on a single moment of Welsh history and provided we are aware of the origins of his opinions there is little reason to doubt the veracity of his accounts of events in his own day, and particularly those he was personally involved in.

Historians' positions on Gerald have also changed, from focusing on his writings on Wales and Ireland from a nationalistic perspective, to a focus on Gerald himself and his own background, and, most recently, to understanding Gerald's viewpoint through bringing together his entire corpus of works.²⁴⁷ These works have been published in separate editions. Lewis Thorpe's 1978 translations of the *Journey and Description* within a single volume are

²⁴³ Thorpe, *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp.9-23.

²⁴⁴ Henley and McMullen, *Gerald of Wales: New Perspectives*, 27.7.

²⁴⁵ H.E. Butler (ed. and trans.), *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp.98-109.

²⁴⁶ Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p.14.

²⁴⁷ Henley and McMullen (eds). *Gerald of Wales: New Perspectives*, p.65

the most recent.²⁴⁸ Gerald's *Topography of Ireland* was published by John O'Meara in 1951.²⁴⁹ An autobiography of Gerald was published in 1937. It transcribed and collated several of Gerald's works into one narrative, mainly employing *De rebus a se gestis* with excerpts from *De iure et statu Meneuensis Ecclesiae*, *Invectiones*, *Symbolum Electorum*, *De Principis Instructione* and *Speculum Ecclesiae*. It was reprinted with notes in 2005.²⁵⁰ However, the only published versions of the other works are in the later nineteenth century Rolls Series: these remain the go-to versions for many of Gerald's works, despite their age.²⁵¹

Walter Map is a second writer who may have occupied a position between the Anglo-Norman and Welsh worlds. A contemporary of Gerald, Map was a secular clerk who lived c.1130 – 1209x10.²⁵² He served Gilbert Foliot, the bishop of Hereford (and later London), and King Henry II, until the latter's death in 1189. Map eventually rose to become archdeacon of Oxford. M.R. James, describing Map's origin, states that: 'He came from the border of England and Wales; he was a marcher by descent; he was a Welshman'.²⁵³ Such a position may have resulted in complex identities: Map himself describes the Welsh as '*Compatriote nostri Walenses*' – 'My compatriots the Welsh', and his surname may derive from '*Vab*', '*Mab*' or '*ap*' – 'son of'. However, Giraldus Cambrensis described Map as originating from England ('*ab Anglia oriundus*'), and Map's often virulent language used when describing the Welsh suggest that he may have distanced himself from them: perhaps Map came from a marcher family of mixed Welsh and Anglo-Norman descent. His familiarity with the southern march, the existence of several possible relatives in witness lists, suggests the family came from southern Herefordshire. Map's writings, in his *De Nugis Curialium*, make copious reference to the Welsh and their manners, although most of these instances involve historical or quasi-historical figures of much earlier periods, such as Gruffudd ap Llywelyn, Saint Cadog and Brychan Brycheiniog. Joshua Byron Smith has explored Map's work as an intermediary for the circulation of Welsh characters into Anglo-Norman and French literature.²⁵⁴ Smith argues that Map was involved with St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, a liminal place where cultural exchange could take place, on a very personal level for Walter.²⁵⁵ In general, Map's writings

²⁴⁸ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*.

²⁴⁹ J. O'Meara (ed. and trans.), *The First Version of the Topography of Ireland* (Dundalk, 1951).

²⁵⁰ Butler (ed. and trans.), *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*.

²⁵¹ J.S. Brewer J.F. Dimock and G.F. Warner (eds), *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, 8 vols (London 1861-91).

²⁵² C.N.L. Brooke, 'Map, Walter', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-18015?rskey=McELfj&result=1> (Accessed 26/03/2019).

²⁵³ M.R. James (ed. and trans.), *Walter Map: De Nugis Curialium: Courtier's Trifles* (Oxford 1983), p.xiii.

²⁵⁴ Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain*, pp.9-10.

²⁵⁵ Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain*, pp.107-8.

are of more limited use to our topic than Gerald's writings of his own times.²⁵⁶ The careers of Gerald and Map feature in Chapter 7.

Poetry

Poetry was an important method of projecting image and identity, and thus important to consider in the context of cultural exchange. Welsh poetry is often seen as one of the defining aspects of Welsh culture throughout the early medieval and medieval periods.

While poetry could take many forms, praise poetry, literally poems written in praise of a patron, is of interest for the purpose of studying members of the princely dynasties and *uchelwyr*. Until the Edwardian Conquest, the patrons were often members of the princely dynasties, and the poets of this era are known as the *Gogynfeirdd*, to distinguish them from the earlier *Cynfeirdd*.²⁵⁷ There may be correlation between the strength of a ruler's position and the poetry addressed to him: poetry concerning powerful individuals such as Owain Gwynedd and Madog ap Maredudd are plentiful in contrast to a weak and divided Deheubarth, from where 'the poetry is sparse, unambitious and lacking in self-confidence.'²⁵⁸

Following the destruction of most princely dynasties in the thirteenth century, this vacuum was filled by the *uchelwyr*.²⁵⁹ Arguably the late medieval period was the heyday of Welsh poetry: Dafydd ap Gwylim, Iolo Goch and Guto'r Glyn are amongst the best known.²⁶⁰ Most surviving poems date from this period allowing comparatively detailed discussion.

Praise poetry by its very nature was intended to flatter patrons in hope of favour. In heaping praise and in describing the virtues of their patrons they painted an embellished, highly idealised picture of these individuals. This picture must have been one the patron wanted to see, or at least be pleased by. Of course, while we cannot take them at face value, the portrayals are of great interest to us in showing how they were keen to be seen through this medium.

Poems followed a similar career to genealogy. Both looked to the past to build the prestige of an individual or family: Welsh praise poets commonly 'invoked the prestigious ancestors of their patrons in order to personalise their eulogies and draw attention to the

²⁵⁶ James (ed. and trans.), *De Nugis Curialium*, pp.xiv - xxvi; 188-201.

²⁵⁷ A. Breeze, *Medieval Welsh Literature* (Dublin, 1997), p.28.

²⁵⁸ R. Geraint Gruffydd, 'The Early Court Poetry of South West Wales', *Studia Celtica* 14-15 (1979-80), p.103.

²⁵⁹ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.44.

²⁶⁰ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.419; Breeze, *Medieval Welsh Literature*, R. Bromwich, *Dafydd ap Gwylim*, (Cardiff, 1974), pp.1-5.

distinction of their patrons' lineages.'²⁶¹ Guy draws attention to the similar changes they underwent in the aftermath of the conquests of the thirteenth century, where both turned to the new class of Welsh gentry for patronage.²⁶²

The corpus of poems for southeast Wales is relatively small. There are several oblique references to poets of the princes (such as Beddig, poet of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn, mentioned in Domesday and the *Liber Landavensis*, or Gwrgan ap Rhys, described by the Brut y Tywysogion as the 'Best of Poets', slain alongside Morgan ab Owain in 1158).²⁶³ These references suggest we have lost many poems that once existed, although perhaps the limited power and uncertain nature of Welsh polities in the region contributed to low numbers. The only poem certainly identified to a member of the native dynasties in the southeast before the fourteenth century is a poem in praise of Gwenllïan, daughter of Hywel ab Iorwerth of Caerleon, by Llywarch ap Llywelyn (Prydydd y Moch), contained within NLW 6680B (the Hendregadredd Manuscript c.1300) and Jesus College MS 111 (The Red Book of Hergest c.1425).²⁶⁴ The number of poems remained low in the early fourteenth century: the next extant examples being the praise poetry of Casnodyn, a native of Ceredigion, to Llywelyn ap Cynwrig, who appears in contemporary records as lord of Llantriddyd and Radyr, and Madog Fychan of Coetref, Llangynwyd.²⁶⁵ We also have seven praise poems of Dafydd ap Gwilym to Ifor Hael, a member of the *uchelwyr* at Bassaleg and a descendant of the dynasty of Hywel ab Iorwerth. Dafydd's authorship of these poems were once doubted by scholars such as Thomas Parry, but the discovery of earlier manuscripts attesting to Dafydd's association with Ifor Hael and Morgannwg within a century of Dafydd's lifetime, have left historians little reason to doubt it. Although details around his life remain uncertain, historians argue a *flourit* around 1350. The subject of Dafydd's poems suggest he travelled widely.²⁶⁶ Although few in number, they can tell us the way the poets were portraying these individuals in at this time, after the upheavals of the previous century.

²⁶¹ Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, p.32.

²⁶² Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, pp.44-5.

²⁶³ D.F. Evans. "'Talm o wentoedd'", *The Welsh Language and its Literature*, in Griffiths, Hopkins and Howell (eds.), *The Gwent County History, Volume II*, p.285; Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, The Red Book of Hergest Version*, pp.136-7.

²⁶⁴ E.M. Jones and N.A. Jones (eds.), *Gwaith Llywarch ap Llywelyn 'Prydydd Y Moch: Cyfres Beirdd y Tywysogion: Cyfrol 5* (Caerdydd, 1991), pp.137-145; Evans. "'Talm o wentoedd'", p.286.

²⁶⁵ C. W. Lewis, 'The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg down to the middle of the Sixteenth Century', in T.B. Pugh (ed.), *The Glamorgan County History Volume 3: The Middle Ages, the Marcher Lordships of Glamorgan and Morgannwg and Gower and Kilvey from the Norman Conquest to the act of Union of England and Wales* (Cardiff 1971), pp.482-3.

²⁶⁶ G. Thomas (ed.), *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems* (Cardiff, 2001), pp.xii – xix; R. Bromwich, *Aspects of the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym*, (New York, 1986), p.22.

Of course, while praise poetry presents an image of an individual, these depictions would have employed standard motifs: exploring which ones were used and their parallels elsewhere help us place the poetic image in its wider context. On Dafydd ap Gwylim's poetry, for example, historians have extensively explored European parallels and foreign literary influences on the motifs employed.²⁶⁷ However, while literary sparring between Dafydd and his contemporary Gruffudd Gryg suggest that the former's poetry brought in many new elements – aspects such as courtly love, found in the French model. Bromwich also notes the continued use of epithets within poetry which were part of an old fashioned tradition.²⁶⁸ The comparative use of 'old' and 'new' elements in poetry – and the sort of image they portrayed – is particularly interesting from our point of view.

Poetry thus provides another point of reference when dealing with both princes, and especially *uchelwyr*, considering how infrequently the latter appear in other sources. Poetry can be seen as incorporating both traditional and modernising elements. Their usefulness in a discussion of how cultural change manifested on an individual level is interesting – and it remains a pertinent source for wider discussions of cultural change.

Administrative Documents:

Historians often make a distinction between narrative and administrative sources: 'The former have been written for posterity and are concerned with ideas, the latter are documents that arose in the course of administration and business and are concerned with action.'²⁶⁹

While medieval administrative documents vary widely, several types are relevant to Wales. These include records produced by the royal administration: the Pipe Rolls, Patent Rolls and so on. Charters, recording the acquisition or confirmation of a right,²⁷⁰ were produced as part of royal administration, the church and secular individuals. Seals were often used to authenticate such documents. As they existed to record financial transactions and land grants, they provide a very different viewpoint – and different opportunities and challenges for the historian - compared to their narrative counterparts.

Pipe Rolls

²⁶⁷ Bromwich summarizes the late nineteenth and early twentieth century attempts to trace European influences on Dafydd's poetry in *Aspects of the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwylim*, pp.57-8.

²⁶⁸ Bromwich, *Aspects of the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwylim*, pp.62-9.

²⁶⁹ Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, (Amsterdam, 1978), p.16.

²⁷⁰ Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, p.62.

We begin with the Pipe Rolls, a series of financial accounts recording annual debts owed to the crown as well as expenditure on behalf of the crown by royal officials, especially the sheriffs, the crown's local representatives in the various shires.²⁷¹ Their value to discussions of cultural exchange lies in their records of the various ways in which individuals were engaged with the royal administration.

While Pipe Rolls are not the only financial records relating to the English crown during our period, they are amongst the earliest: fragments of rolls dating to 1123 and 1124 are known, and the first complete surviving roll dates to the year ending Michelmas 1130.²⁷² This is the earliest royal expenditure record in Britain – and one of the earliest detailed ones in Europe.²⁷³ With the exception of an occasional hiatus (such as, for example, during the last few years of King John's reign and the early years of Henry III), the rolls form a continuous sequence from 1155 onwards (with the accession of Henry II),²⁷⁴ providing a large body of source material at a regular interval. This makes them invaluable for analysing long term changes.

The pipe rolls largely follow the same format year after year, and it is worth outlining the various sections here. They are arranged by county: Shropshire, Gloucestershire and so on. In each case, the county account opens with the 'farm' – a fixed sum owed by the county's sheriff, expected from royal demesne lands and payments from county courts, for example. However, the royal demesne shrank as lands were granted away, and the rolls had to account for the reduced expectations in revenue. Thus the farm is usually followed by *terre date* entries, listing the lands that had been granted and the amount by which the expected income from the farm should be reduced. Various other debts are noted under *De Oblatis*, (a record of unpaid debts from the previous year) and *De Nova Oblata* (new debts), which often included more detail on the debts themselves.²⁷⁵

In addition to debts owed to the crown, the pipe rolls also note expenditure by royal officials. Some were fixed recurring payments, (*elemosina constituta*), others were one-off payments, theoretically recorded in the liberate rolls but, in fact, noted in the pipe rolls. Other

²⁷¹ R. Cassidy, 'What is a Pipe Roll?', *An introduction to Pipe Rolls*, available on the Pipe Roll Society website, <https://piperollsociety.co.uk/what-is-a-pipe-roll%3F> (Accessed 01/09/2021); Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, p.109.

²⁷² Cassidy, 'What is a Pipe Roll?', *An introduction to Pipe Rolls*, available on the Pipe Roll Society Website, <https://piperollsociety.co.uk/what-is-a-pipe-roll%3F> (Accessed 01/09/2021); Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, (Amsterdam 1978).

²⁷³ Pipe Roll Society, *Introduction to the Study of the Pipe Rolls*: Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 3 (London, 1884).

²⁷⁴ The Pipe Roll Society, *Introduction to the Study of Pipe Rolls*.

²⁷⁵ R. Cassidy, 'The farm and terre date', *An introduction to Pipe Rolls*, <https://piperollsociety.co.uk/the-farm-and-terre-date> (Accessed 01/09/2021).

payments unrelated to the county accounts were often included at the beginning or end of the roll, under the title *rotulus compotorum*. Regardless of whether the money was paid by or to the crown, the details included on individuals provide insight on the exact relationship of individuals with the crown – or at least its local representative.²⁷⁶

While theoretically simple, the organisation by county presents a challenge to the researcher of medieval Wales, as no counties existed in Wales at this period. Sections devoted specifically to Wales are rarely included within the rolls. Instead, Welsh material is usually contained within the accounts of neighbouring English counties, notably Shropshire (*Salopescira*), Herefordshire (*Herefordscira in Wallia*: Note the suffix ‘In Wales’), or Gloucestershire (*Glocesterescira*).²⁷⁷ The last two are most relevant for southeast Wales, which is close geographically, and much of which came under the control (however tenuously) of the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford.²⁷⁸

There are occasional exceptions: Carmarthen appears in the 1130 roll and a section devoted to Glamorgan (the title written in a later hand) appears in 1184-85, for example. However, also in 1184-5, expenditure relating to the garrisoning of Pembroke and Carmarthen castles, and appeared under *Terra Comitis Glocestr*’: while this had been carried out by the Earl of Gloucester, he had extensive lands in Glamorgan.²⁷⁹ These inconsistencies make analysis more challenging, especially with one-off payments, which, not being repetitive, are less easy to find than their counterparts in *terra date*, for example.

These rolls have received rather uneven treatment by historians, but transcription was undertaken by the Pipe Roll Society in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and has been sporadically continued in the last twenty years. The transcriptions begin with 1155 and continues, in a more or less continuous series, to 1224, (with a few later rolls of Henry III).²⁸⁰ The most recent Pipe Roll Society editions include the rolls for 1223 and 1224, the earliest complete example from 1130, and rolls relating to Normandy.²⁸¹ From the mid

²⁷⁶ R. Cassidy, ‘Sheriff’s expenditure’, *An introduction to Pipe Rolls*, <https://piperollsociety.co.uk/sheriff-s-expenditure> (Accessed 01/09/2021).

²⁷⁷ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Twentieth Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD 1173-1174*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 21, (London, 1896), for an example of the organisational structure of these documents. The spellings of these counties could vary from year to year, presumably indicating that different scribes were used in the writing process.

²⁷⁸ D. Crouch, ‘The Marcher Lordships’, in Griffiths (ed.), *The Gwent County History: Volume II*, pp.47-69.

²⁷⁹ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Thirty First Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD 1184-1185*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 34 (London, 1913), p.154.

²⁸⁰ The Pipe Roll Society, *Introduction to the Study of Pipe Rolls*.

²⁸¹ J.A. Green (ed.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the thirty first year of the reign of King Henry I, Michaelmas 1130 (Pipe Roll I): a new edition with a translation and images from the original in the Public Record Office/ the National Archives*, Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, new series 57 (London, 2012).

thirteenth century onwards the pipe rolls only exist in their original, untranscribed form, although some have been digitised and are available online.²⁸²

The twelfth- and early thirteenth-century rolls are the easiest to access, although the long-drawn out process of transcription over more than a century has led to a long series of different transcribers, leading to a few differences in the way editors have presented the documents. The most notable change has been the inclusion of translations alongside transcriptions and increased use of indexes. In general, as the documents are generally very formulaic, the form of the transcriptions themselves remains fairly consistent.²⁸³

In covering the whole period, these sources provide a valuable long-term picture, and historians have made good use of them. Sean Davies and J.B. Smith, for example, both used them to highlight Welsh individuals in military service to the crown.²⁸⁴ For our purposes, the rolls are of particular interest when considering inter-personal relationships in the march, the relationship between individuals, the crown and its representatives. and we will explore their potential, expanding on the work of Davies and Smith, in chapter 7.

Charters and other *Acta*

The most numerous administrative source for the medieval period, and thus of great interest to us, is the charter. Clanchy estimates that as many as eight million may have been written in thirteenth century England alone.²⁸⁵ Charters are legal documents relating to the granting of lands or privileges from one individual or organisation to another,²⁸⁶ usually taking the form of a public letter issued by the donor.²⁸⁷ Charters can be very informative – naming the grantor (who granted the land), beneficiary (who received it), defining the land being granted, and often contain a list of witnesses present when the charter was drawn up: these not only tell us who was present, but the order in which the witnesses appear are indicators of social status and importance.²⁸⁸ Through each charter's individual context, structure, forms of address, the names of individual and places mentioned, we can chart cultural change and shed light on the nature of interaction between individuals.

²⁸² *Anglo-American Legal Tradition: Documents from Medieval and Early Modern England from the National Archives in London* <http://aalt.law.uh.edu/> (Accessed 14/07/2019).

²⁸³ Green (ed.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the thirty first year of the reign of King Henry I.*

²⁸⁴ Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, p.140; J.B. Smith 'The Kingdom of Morgannwg and the Norman Conquest of Glamorgan' in Pugh (ed.), *The Glamorgan County History, Volume III*, p.41.

²⁸⁵ M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066 – 1307* (Oxford 1993), p.2.

²⁸⁶ D. Stuart, *Latin for Local and Family Historians* (Chichester 1995), p.63.

²⁸⁷ Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp.84-5.

²⁸⁸ Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship in Glamorgan 1067 – 1158', p.36.

Charter form varied depending upon function, place and date of composition, but in other ways these documents were very formulaic: changes within this allow us to chart their development. For Wales, Wendy Davies and Patrick Sims-Williams explored the existence of a pre-Norman ‘Celtic’ charter tradition which transitioned during the eleventh and twelfth centuries to a Norman writ charter tradition: the existence of this tradition and the course of its change is generally accepted by scholars.²⁸⁹ The features which define the ‘Celtic’ charter tradition are a three part structure, consisting of a disposition, witness list and sanction, the use of the past tense, and the use of the third person.²⁹⁰ In contrast, Anglo-Norman style writ charters are often in the form of a notification, in the first person (For example, *Sciant omnes presenti et futuri quod ego...; Let all men present and future know that I...*), beginning with a title, address and salutation, and, unlike the ‘Celtic’ tradition, where witnesses appear in the middle, the witness clauses come last, preceded by corroboration and sealing clauses (seals also being an introduction at this time discussed in detail below).²⁹¹ This change took place throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries: for example, the charters contained within *Liber Landavensis*, which date from the early medieval period up until the beginning of the twelfth century, are of the ‘Celtic’ tradition. However, by the 1150s, almost all charters were of the Norman writ charter tradition, an exception being a charter of Madog ap Maredudd dated to 1132x51, the last known charter of this tradition and one Pryce suggests was made in special circumstances.²⁹²

Charters increased in number as the twelfth century progressed, and this increase continued throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.²⁹³ However, precisely dating the change from ‘Celtic’ to Norman traditions, is challenging, as for the early twelfth century there is a conspicuous gap in the Welsh charter record, a time of particular interest in light of the abrupt change in traditions, as well as Welsh resurgence during the anarchy.

Like other administrative sources, charters were primarily intended as records, a benefit to the historian, as ‘most practical documents were not intended to influence their readers but

²⁸⁹ W. Davies, ‘The Latin Charter-Tradition in Western Britain, Brittany and Ireland in the Early Medieval Period.’, in D. Whitelock et al. (eds.), *Ireland in Early Mediaeval Europe: Studies in Memory of Kathleen Hughes* (Cambridge, 1982) pp.258-80; Pryce, ‘The Church of Trefeglwys’, pp.15-54; M.T. Flanagan, ‘The Context and uses of the Latin Charter in twelfth-century Ireland.’, in H. Pryce (ed.), *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 117; P. Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaff as a Historical Source*, (Woodbridge, 2019), p.12.

²⁹⁰ Pryce, ‘The Church of Trefeglwys’, p.15.

²⁹¹ R. Patterson, *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters* (Oxford, 1973), p.21.

²⁹² Pryce, ‘The Church of Trefeglwys’, pp.25-30; Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.480, p.680

²⁹³ Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, p.15.

to ensure efficiency, and needed, therefore, above all, to be accurate.²⁹⁴ However, we must be wary of overconfidently assuming their accuracy, especially as some spurious charters were deliberately fabricated to push the rival claims of monastic establishments.²⁹⁵ For Wales, this is particularly demonstrated by the case of *Liber Landavensis* (The Book of Llandaff),²⁹⁶ which contains, amongst other material, a corpus of 159 charters, purporting to span the period from the fifth century to the twelfth. Historians agree that this work was compiled c.1132x34 under the auspices of Bishop Urban to push the claims of his diocese, Llandaff, which had recently lost much land to other dioceses including Hereford and St David's.²⁹⁷ However, they have disagreed over how far the twelfth-century compilers included genuine, modified, or entirely faked charters of their own creation.

Nineteenth century scholars were particularly sceptical of the charters' authenticity, after the first published translation in 1840.²⁹⁸ From the mid-twentieth century, however, historians began to revise this opinion: the work of Wendy Davies in particular has been important in this analysis. According to Davies, perhaps as much as 85% of the charters had some original basis, and recent work by Sims-Williams has largely supported this interpretation.²⁹⁹

This is not to say that all the details can be relied upon. The largely unchanging style and diplomatic of the charters suggest that most pre-Norman examples were doctored in the twelfth century, with the diplomatic unlikely to reflect its original message.³⁰⁰ Overall, Sims-Williams suggests:

Wherever *LL* [*Liber Landavensis*] can be tested, it seems to be reliable on the status of the persons mentioned. Several of the *LL* donors who are styled *reges* are so styled outside *LL*, for instance...two of the kings in Sequence iii in Asser's Life of King Alfred (c.80) (*Houel filiois Ris, Rex Gleguising*' and '*Brochmail fili[us] Mouric, Re[x] Guent*...the compilers may sometimes have added the title *rex* out of their own knowledge, of course, but they have not been detected in any errors.³⁰¹

²⁹⁴ Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, p.63; Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp.84-89.

²⁹⁵ Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, pp.70-1.

²⁹⁶ W. Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (Aberystwyth, 1979).

²⁹⁷ Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaff as a Historical Source*, pp.7-10.

²⁹⁸ Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaff as a Historical Source*, p.2.

²⁹⁹ P.C. Bartrum, 'Some Studies in Early Welsh History', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1948 (London, 1949), p.279; Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*; Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaff as a Historical Source*, p.27.

³⁰⁰ W. Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1982), pp.201-2.

³⁰¹ P. Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaff as a Historical Source*, p.59.

While these are early examples, the charters within our time period, from c.1050 (if genuine) were compiled within a century of *Liber Landavensis*' composition, and together this suggests that people's styles and statuses are likely to be genuinely reflected in the charters. This is particularly important from our point of view, as the Llandaff charters provide a viewpoint of the earliest part of our period: there are few other Welsh charters evidenced before the 1150s.

Many charters survive only as copies or summaries; cartularies, for example, are collections of charter summaries (often in roll format) copied at a later date by the beneficiaries (mostly monastic houses with large collections of such charters). Confirmation charters validate earlier grants, either by a dependent or the previous landowner: a particular form of this is a royal *inspeximus*. Such summaries usually contained the gist of the charter but lacked details such as witness lists seals and so on. Some charters are mentioned only in much later sources (the writings of antiquarians, for example): where the original or a copy has not survived, these are useful in revealing the existence of a charter and (sometimes) its subject.

Historians have categorised charters in several ways: a basic distinction is the issuing of charters of private individuals and through the administrations of the church and state.³⁰² These have tended to be treated separately, as royal charters are often contained within patent rolls and the like. Historians sometimes categorise charters geographically, or by beneficiary, but are most often listed by the grantor. Charters relating to medieval southeast Wales fall into distinct categories: those where the grantor is a member of the native princely dynasties (in our case, mainly members of the dynasties of Morgannwg, Gwynllŵg and Senghennydd);³⁰³ those where the grantor is an individual of Anglo-Norman origin but with a substantial interest in Wales (the marcher lords, for example);³⁰⁴ royal charters (pertaining to grants by the crown); ecclesiastical charters (grants by the church),³⁰⁵ and grants by other secular individuals of a lower social status than the princes or marcher lords.

The beneficiaries, by contrast, were overwhelmingly ecclesiastical institutions, including abbeys at Margam, Neath, Llantarnam, Tewkesbury or Gloucester, Goldcliff Priory.³⁰⁶ This is undoubtedly in part due to survival: charters generally survived well in the

³⁰² Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, p.63.

³⁰³ I have followed the dynastic terminology of Huw Pryce in *The Acts of Welsh Rulers 1120 – 1283* (Cardiff, 2005) for these dynasties, although the rulers of Morgannwg included several short lived cadet branches, at Meisgyn and Glynrhondda, and were the lords of Afan into the fourteenth century, where it lies beyond the scope of Pryce's work.

³⁰⁴ R. Patterson, *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*; D. Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford, 1095-1201', *Camden Fourth Series*, 1, (1964).

³⁰⁵ D. Crouch, (ed.), *Llandaff Episcopal Acta*, (Cardiff, 1989).

³⁰⁶ For example beneficiaries, see Patterson, *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*. Patterson's charters are grouped by beneficiary.

archives of such institutions, at least until the dissolution of the monasteries. Many were subsequently acquired by antiquarians and eventually made their way into modern libraries and archives. However, historians suggest charter development was bound up with church reform, and that ecclesiastical beneficiaries were a high proportion of the total. For Wales, Pryce suggested that so many twelfth-century Welsh charters conformed to Anglo-Norman forms because of the expectations of religious houses.³⁰⁷

We are fortunate that a large number of charters have survived relating to medieval southeast Wales. The majority of these (princely, Norman or otherwise) have survived within a single collection; the Penrice and Margam Collection. This collection mostly pertains to Margam Abbey (the abbey usually appearing as the beneficiary), and is now mostly held at the National Library of Wales.³⁰⁸ Surprisingly, comparatively little work has been done on these charters as a corpus, although Patterson's exploration of the role of Margam Abbey in the administration of Glamorgan, and Matthew Griffiths' article on native society in Glamorgan both relies heavily on them.³⁰⁹ Selections of the charters have also been included in studies of charters of the Welsh Princes and the Earls of Gloucester.³¹⁰ Much of the collection was published by G.T. Clark at the turn of the twentieth century, in his *Cartae et Alia Munimenta quae ad Dominum de Glamorgancia pertinent*, which included transcriptions of a wider range of secular and ecclesiastical charters relating to Glamorgan. Clark's *Cartae* was published in four volumes from 1885 onwards, with a second edition in the early twentieth century. In the earliest series, which has been digitised, Volume I covered the period from 1102 – 1350, and Volume II from 1350 onwards. The third and fourth volumes added further charters for the same period, overlapping in the thirteenth century.³¹¹ For those charters not relating to the Welsh princes before 1283, the Earls of Gloucester before 1217 or Hereford before 1201 (all of which have dedicated studies – see below), Clark's *Cartae* is the most comprehensive and up to date collection. Containing hundreds of charters, including witness lists and notes on attached seals where relevant, the *Cartae* remains an indispensable tool for accessing the charters, despite its age. It makes the broader collection of acta within the Penrice and Margam

³⁰⁷ H. Pryce, 'Culture, Power and the Charters of the Welsh Rulers' *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, ed. H. Pryce, (Cambridge 1998), p.188; Flanagan, 'The Context and uses of the Latin Charter in twelfth-century Ireland.', pp.114-117.

³⁰⁸ R. Patterson, *The Scriptorium of Margam Abbey and the scribes of Early Angevin Glamorgan: secretarial administration in a Welsh Marcher barony c.1150 – 1225*, (Woodbridge, 2002), pp.xxxiii – xxxiv.

³⁰⁹ R. Patterson, *The Scriptorium of Margam Abbey and the scribes of Early Angevin Glamorgan*; Griffiths, 'Native Society on the Anglo-Norman Frontier', pp.179-216.

³¹⁰ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*; Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*.

³¹¹ G.T. Clark, *Cartae et Alia Munimenta quae ad Dominum de Glamorgancia pertinent*. 1st edition, 4 vols (Talysarn, 1885-1893); 2nd edition, 6 vols (Dowlais, 1910).

collection accessible, and allows us to view a completely separate societal strata. Clark points out the importance of Welsh individuals in Glamorgan historical record: ‘When free tenants, their names appear in early extents and inquisitions, largely as donors of portions of land to Margam, as jurors and local officers, and on at least one occasion a pure Welshman occurs as sheriff.’³¹²

Charters relating to members of the princely dynasties of Gwynllŵg, Morgannwg and Senghennydd are particularly relevant to discussions of how these individuals emulated their neighbours. Modern editions of these charters are contained within Huw Pryce’s *The Acts of Welsh Rulers c.1120 – 1283*,³¹³ a synthesis of princely *acta* (charters as well as letters and other correspondence, see below) for native rulers throughout Wales. Pryce notes 18 charters covering Gwynllŵg, belonging to the period c.1136 – 1270, 71 from Glamorgan for c.1130 – 1246; and 3 from Senghennydd c.1158 – 1256.³¹⁴

The importance of the Penrice and Margam collection is even more evident when considering the striking imbalance of surviving charters from Gwynllŵg and Senghennydd in comparison with Morgannwg. This is thrown into even sharper relief when considering the form in which the charters have survived. Of the three Senghennydd charters, one survives as a mention only, one within a cartulary, and one as an original. Three of the eighteen Gwynllŵg charters survive as mentions only, thirteen from cartularies or rolls, with only two originals surviving. By contrast, of the 71 Glamorgan charters, eight survive as mentions only, nine within rolls or cartularies, and no fewer than fifty four as originals.

Dynasty	Number of Charters	Original	Within Cartularies, Rolls or similar	Mentions Only
Senghennydd	3	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)
Gwynllŵg	18	2 (11%)	13 (72%)	3 (17%)
Glamorgan	71	54 (76%)	9 (13%)	8 (11%)

Table 1: Charters of the native dynasties in southeast Wales

³¹² Clark, *Cartae*, Vol 1 (1st edition), p.xxiii.

³¹³ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers 1120 – 1283*.

³¹⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.257-320; 660 – 679; 813-815. Of these, 8 of the Glamorgan charters, 3 of the Gwynllŵg, and one of the Senghennydd charters survive as mentions only. Of the rest, only one of the Senghennydd charters and two of the Gwynllŵg charters survive as originals. Of the Glamorgan Charters, 54 of the original survive.

While the disparity in the number of charters as a whole identified from Glamorgan may in part reflect the relative sizes and power of the polities, the high proportion of original charters from Glamorgan suggests that we mainly have the survival of the Margam collection to thank: Margam Abbey, after all, lay adjacent to the lands of the lords of Glamorgan and Afan. All three Senghennydd grants were also related to Margam, while most of the Gwynllŵg grants were made to Goldcliff priory, a relatively local house, fewer of whose charters now survive. Iorwerth ab Owain of Gwynllŵg is known to have founded Llantarnam Abbey, and while we might expect several grants to such a house, no such grants survive.³¹⁵ This likewise suggests that the survival of the Margam charters is exceptional.

The number of charters remains small in comparison with the charters associated with dynasties elsewhere in Wales: 269 for Gwynedd and 135 for Powys.³¹⁶ However, the numbers from Gwynllŵg and Senghennydd compare similarly with small Welsh dynasties elsewhere: 7 from Cedwain, 15 from Elfael and Maelienydd. The numbers, especially from Glamorgan, appear favourable in comparison with some regions, such as Deheubarth, which, despite being a major polity, only a patchy collection of 80 charters survive – very few of some rulers, such as the Lord Rhys, have survived, for example. In this context, the picture for Glamorgan appears unusually detailed, and again seems most likely due to the survival of the Margam charters.

While Pryce's synthesis covers the period until the Edwardian Conquest in 1283, there are further charters relating to those Welsh dynasties which survived the conquest (although in some cases in a very different form to before). The Morgannwg/Afan dynasty are a particularly interesting example as a handful of charters relating to them survive in the Margam collection up until c.1350. Little work has been done on these documents, which appear in Clark's *Cartae*, and the originals of which are held in the National Library of Wales.³¹⁷ Using these charters in addition to the pre-1283 material is vital to give a balanced study beyond the Edwardian Conquest and how cultural emulation changed over time.

The charters of the marcher lords provide an alternative perspective. While there were many, the Earls of Gloucester were amongst the most powerful, active from c.1107 until 1314, and many of their charters survive.³¹⁸ They held extensive lands in Glamorgan and Gwent and

³¹⁵ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, ch.467, pp.665-666 (Cambridge, Trinity College MS R. 5. 33. Fo. 107. s.xiii – xiv).

³¹⁶ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.vii – xi.

³¹⁷ For example, NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.190; Ch.207; 217.

³¹⁸ Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, pp.3-9; Davis, *Three Chevrons Red*, p.214.

had some form of overlordship over the local Welsh rulers:³¹⁹ thus their charters are of particular interest to studies of the cultural relationship between Welsh and Anglo-Norman in the region. Charters of other lords, such as the Earls of Hereford, also survive and are likewise of interest.

Aside from the differences already mentioned regarding the Anglo-Norman and ‘Celtic’ charter traditions up to the twelfth century, in most ways, the form and function of Welsh and Anglo-Norman charters were similar throughout our period. Religious houses appear most frequently as the beneficiaries, and grants by both Welsh and Anglo-Norman lords to the same house was usual. Anglo-Norman and English charters are an integral part of the Penrice and Margam collection.³²⁰ How similar a picture do Anglo-Norman charters present of charter survival and the importance of individual collections?

Taking the Gloucester charters as a case study, Margam does appear as the most common recipient of lands in the surviving charters. For example, of 288 Gloucester charters identified by Patterson in the period up until 1217, the largest number (32) were granted to Margam Abbey. The next largest collections came from Tewkesbury (23) and St Augustine’s Abbey, Bristol (22), with substantial numbers from St James’ Priory (14) and St Peter’s Abbey, Gloucester (13). However, unlike Glamorgan and Senghennydd, where the vast majority of documents concerned Margam in some way, the picture from the Gloucester charters is much more varied: a much larger proportion of their charters were granted to individuals, or in small numbers to a wider variety of religious houses, grants to Margam making up only a small fraction of the whole. Indeed, as Margam Abbey was founded by Earl Robert of Gloucester in 1147, the large number from Margam is unsurprising. This may be indicative of the relatively localised grants by members of the Glamorgan and Senghennydd dynasties, in comparison with the Earls of Gloucester with much more extensive lands in Gloucester, Somerset and Normandy, as well as in Wales, and who thus granted more widely.

The Gloucester charters from the early twelfth to the early thirteenth century have been extensively edited by Robert Patterson, although only some relate to southeast Wales.³²¹ However, little work has been done on the charters of the later De Clare Earls of Gloucester from 1217 until 1314, and the most up to date transcriptions of these are, as with many of the later Welsh charters, contained within Clark’s *Cartae*.

³¹⁹ Overlordship is demonstrated in documents such as the Pipe Rolls, as well as in the writings of Gerald of Wales, see Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.122.

³²⁰ NLW Penrice and Margam Collection, <https://archives.library.wales/index.php/penrice-and-margam-estate-records>

³²¹ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*.

Other marcher charters have received patchy attention: one of the few modern syntheses of charters by family is an analysis undertaken on the charters of the Earl of Hereford from 1095 to 1201, by David Walker.³²² Outside these studies, individual charters of Anglo-Norman individuals have received very little editing, beyond inclusion in Clark's *Cartae* though many such examples exist within the Penrice and Margam collection. Intriguingly in Anglo-Norman charters, Welsh names are generally scarce³²³ – we explore the implications of this in Chapters 3, 4 and 7.

Charters with an ecclesiastical origin, such as the acta of the bishops of Llandaff, naturally have a different focus to those of secular origin. Because the subjects deal almost exclusively with ecclesiastical matters, their use mainly lies in discussing such affairs. However, they can include entries of secular interest, including on the sort of secular individuals that form part of this study. For example, one charter of the bishop of Llandaff (no.38) notes an agreement made at Llandaff between the monks of Margam Abbey and a number of Welshmen, whereby the Welshmen relinquished their claims on lands near Llancarfan.³²⁴ Entries like this help shed light on the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical, and as the church was a major landholder, can be useful in a similar way to grants by secular counterparts. Those charters which pertain to the bishopric of Llandaff from the period 1140 – 1287 have been edited and translated by David Crouch, making them particularly accessible.³²⁵ Ecclesiastical charters, like their secular counterparts, often contain witness lists, providing us with a cross section of the ecclesiastical community at places such as Llandaff. This can help us understand ecclesiastical influences on cultural change in comparison with the elite secular charters we consider elsewhere.

To return to charters proper, there is one final group which form a surprisingly large collection. These are those *not* belonging to the secular elites (Welsh Princes or Marcher Lords), or grants of the church. Such charters are particularly well represented in the Margam collection and many have received only cursory treatment by historians: once again, Clark's *Cartae* being the most comprehensive work in this area. The value of these to our study is incalculable, providing insight into another strata of society not particularly visible in the historical record. The sorts of people that most frequently appear are lesser landholders, some of whom specifically appear as feudal dependents of members of the princely dynasties: A gift

³²² D. Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford, 1095-1201', *Camden Fourth Series*, 1, (1964).

³²³ Walker, Charters of the Earldom of Hereford'; Patterson, *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*.

³²⁴ D. Crouch, (ed.), *Llandaff Episcopal Acta*, (Cardiff, 1989), No.38 p.36

³²⁵ Crouch, (ed.), *Llandaff Episcopal Acta*.

by Roger son of Wian 1175x1208, for example was given ‘with the consent of his lord Morgan.’³²⁶ Over a hundred such charters from the Margam collection include individuals with Welsh names or with confirmed links to Welsh individuals.³²⁷ Although compared with princely figures, the detail on such individuals is more limited, these charters give us the opportunity to draw comparisons with princely dynasties and other members of the *uchelwyr* and less prominent landholders, as well as draw comparisons with similar non-lordly charters from England.

Although different to the charter material, the ecclesiastical picture is supplemented by the taxations of 1254 and 1291. These were assessments of clerical incomes in English (and most Welsh) dioceses, to levy a tax for the papacy.³²⁸ These provide two snapshots of the clergy at every level at two points in the thirteenth century, they are useful in understanding naming practices, measuring change: as T.J. Pritchard pointed out in the case of Senghennydd, where the first valuation occurred at a time when the region was under a native ruler, Rhys ap Gruffudd, while the second occurred after its conquest by Gilbert de Clare.³²⁹

As the taxations proceeded by diocese, the material of interest to southeast Wales, the diocese of Llandaff, is grouped together. In the case of the 1254 valuation, although several manuscripts of the valuation are known, the entries for all three of the Welsh dioceses represented (Llandaff, St Asaph and Bangor), are known only from one manuscript, Cottonian Vitellus C X.³³⁰ For our purposes, personal names are perhaps amongst the most interesting markers of cultural change, and it is unfortunate that the 1254 taxation contains relatively few of them (being more concerned with churches themselves), which limits its usefulness. Sections of both valuations have been published: the entirety of the 1254 valuation was transcribed and published by Lunt in 1926, and parts of the 1291 valuation relating to Glamorgan were published by Clark in his *Cartae et alia munimenta de Glamorgan pertinent*, although Clark had also erroneously inserted material relating to the 1254 taxation in the belief they were all part of the same.³³¹ Despite this error, these publications make the taxations accessible, though modern editions might be valuable.

³²⁶ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.94.

³²⁷ A list of the Margam charters, as well as a finding aid, is viewable through the National Library of Wales, Available at: <https://archives.library.wales/index.php/margam-abbey-charters-and-cartulary-rolls> (Accessed 01/10/2021).

³²⁸ W.E. Lunt, *The Valuation of Norwich*, (Oxford 1926), pp.1; 53.

³²⁹ T.J. Pritchard, ‘The Church in Medieval Senghennydd’, *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, Vol 1(1984), pp.44-62.

³³⁰ Lunt, *The Valuation of Norwich*, p.314; BL Ms. Cotton Vitellus C. X folios 104v – 111.

³³¹ Lunt, *The Valuation of Norwich*, pp.176-8; Clark, *Cartae*, vol. 6 (2nd edition), pp.111-15.

Overall, the charters, whether of Welsh or Anglo-Norman, secular or ecclesiastical, together provide a body of material which has the potential to reveal information about the interaction between Welsh and Anglo-Norman individuals within areas controlled by Welsh dynasties and by Anglo-Norman marcher lords, and provide another perspective on cultural exchange.

Iconographic sources: Seals

The wax seal as a form of authentication became integral to many charters during the twelfth century. These are fascinating as not only do they provide vital contextual information about their parent documents,³³² but their choice of imagery and style tells us much about how individuals chose to be represented: as New writes: ‘The seal was and is a vehicle through which identity could be formulated and expressed.’³³³ Bedoz-Rezak notes that ‘seals were successful as objects denoting both identity and authority. They produced identity as a foundation for documentary authorship, authority and ultimately authentication’, and that they signified conformity to a group.³³⁴

Seals have been categorized using a number of characteristics, including size, shape, design and function. In size, they commonly varied from less than 20mm to 80mm in diameter, and came in many shapes, though round or lozenge were the most common.³³⁵ Most seals were single sided apart from those of the monarch and particularly powerful nobles. However, the iconography displayed on seals is their most attractive aspect, whether of an armoured knight on horseback, a churchman, flowers, religious motifs or heraldic devices, the choice of design was a particularly potent way of projecting an image.

That seal designs had cultural distinctions, or that the great variety of such designs could be down to the personal choice of the seal owner, has been argued by a number of historians.³³⁶ After all, they offered an unparalleled opportunity to present a visual image which could be tailored to suit the individual, reflecting the cultural aspirations of their owners.³³⁷

³³² Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, p.84; Van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, p.62.

³³³ E. New, ‘Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression: Seals and the Study of Medieval Wales.’, *Welsh History Review*, 26, 3 (2013), p.332.

³³⁴ B. Bedoz-Rezak, ‘Medieval Identity: A Sign and a Concept’, *The American Historical Review*, 105, 5 (2000), pp.1529-31.

³³⁵ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.242.

³³⁶ Such discussions are too numerous to list in their entirety, but for selections relating to Wales, see J. MacEwan and E. New, (ed.), *Seals in Context: Medieval Wales and the Welsh Marches* (Aberystwyth, 2012); A. Ailes, ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego: From Equestrian to Armorial Seal’, in N. Adams, J. Cherry and J. Robinson (ed.) *Good Impressions: Image and Authority in Medieval Seals* (London, 2008), p. 8.

³³⁷ Veach, ‘Anglicization in medieval Ireland, Was there a Gaelic Irish ‘middle nation’?’, p.124.

By looking at the combination of shape, size and design, we can often see patterns which correlate to the sort of person that used the seal. For example, very large (60 – 80mm), round seals depicting an armoured equestrian figure usually belonged to powerful nobles such as earls, dukes or kings (this being the archetypal ‘Great Seal’ classified by historians to distinguish them from the other forms of personal seal).³³⁸ In contrast, a lozenge shaped seal depicting a churchman usually belonged to an ecclesiastical figure, such an abbot or bishop; a lozenge with a female figure belonged to a noblewoman; smaller round seals with abstract designs of flowers were often the preserve of the lesser gentry and those freemen that had occasion to use seals. Such depictions could be highly idealised, of course, but historians such as Williams, MacEwan and New have argued that the human figures depicted were intended as direct representations of the individuals involved,³³⁹ and as such may be particularly pertinent to understanding how such individuals wanted to be seen.

We must be careful in carrying this too far, however, as many seal designs used designs without a human figure – weapons, flowers, animals and so forth – and not all those with human figures seem to have been depictions of their owners. A seal of Roger Sturmy, an Anglo-Norman nobleman from Glamorgan, depicts a huntsman, other seals depicted saints. Non-human designs included religious motifs (crosses, the *Agnus dei*), animals (deer, wolves), flowers (as mentioned above). A later development was the development of heraldic devices, which could incorporate a host of designs (and which we turn to below). Such designs may have been intended as metaphorical rather than literal representations of their owners, but the symbolism behind their design remained important.³⁴⁰

Similar influences may have driven seal design across Europe, as symbols such as the armoured equestrian figure were a motif common across Europe, as was the development of heraldic seals.³⁴¹ Understanding the similarities of Welsh seals to their British and European counterparts – as well as their differences, can help us understand the process of change.

Seals were undoubtedly an Anglo-Norman introduction into Wales, as the ‘Great Seal’ first appeared in Britain with Edward the Confessor (1042-66) and William I (1066-87), although they had been used by French Kings and German Emperors from the early eleventh century.³⁴² Both Edward and William used a depiction of the monarch enthroned, while

³³⁸ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.242; McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context* discusses numerous Great Seals throughout the work.

³³⁹ McEwan and New, (eds.), *Seals in Context*, pp.1-29; Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals*, p.13.

³⁴⁰ Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals*, pp.12-15.

³⁴¹ M. Keen, *Chivalry* (Yale, 2004), pp.126-7.

³⁴² Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.242; P. Harvey and A. McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London, 1996), pp.3-6; Ailes, ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego’, p.8; Bedoz-Rezak, ‘Medieval Identity’, p.1514.

William used a double sided seal with a distinct armed figure on horseback on the other. During the later eleventh century, seal use began to spread to other members of the Anglo-Norman aristocracy, who adopted a similar equestrian design (albeit single sided), and the first examples from Wales are the seals of such lords. The first example of a Welsh prince's seal is that of Cadell ap Gruffudd, the ruler of Deheubarth, appended to a charter of 1147x54, which also used a similar equestrian motif.³⁴³ Thereafter we have increasing evidence of seal use by most Welsh dynasties as well as by less prominent individuals – members of the *uchelwyr* and others: a similar phenomenon occurred in England as seals became important for administrative purposes. There can be little doubt either as to their continental origins or their subsequent spread across society. A comparative study of nuances in seal form and design, drawing upon examples from Wales, England, Normandy and elsewhere, is thus a potentially very fruitful area of enquiry in understanding competing cultural aspirations and influences on image and identity.

Like any other source, however, seals have their problems, among the most crucial being the issue of their survival: while one seal can tell us about the cultural aspirations of an individual, a collection over a period of time tells us much more about changing cultural influence and allow a more thorough analysis of changing trends and influences over time. It is also vital to have a large enough collection to make such comparisons. Seals are easily damaged by adverse storage conditions, and their location on documents – usually on a tag dangling from the bottom, makes them particularly vulnerable to accidental damage, especially around the edges.³⁴⁴ The collection of surviving seals is not fully representative of those which once existed: many charters that survive with tags or sealing clauses – but without a seal – attest to that. As they form a smaller body of evidence, detailed analysis is only possible for some individuals.

In the context of southeast Wales, we are fortunate that many seals have survived within the Margam Collection – not only have a relatively large number of such seals survived, but many relate to the lords of the Afan dynasty in the later twelfth, through the thirteenth and into the fourteenth centuries: in some cases we have multiple seals for the same individual. This allows us to undertake a particularly detailed study of this family and its changing priorities and cultural identity, even to how portrayals of a single individual changed over time: work on

³⁴³ D. Crouch, 'The Earliest Original Charter of a Welsh King' *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 36 (1989), pp.125-131.

³⁴⁴ McEwan and New (eds), *Seals in Context*, p.25-29.

Lleision ap Morgan, for example, has already been undertaken by New.³⁴⁵ Seals contained within the Margam collection form a large proportion of surviving seals from Wales, and as such feature prominently in studies by David Henry Williams, MacEwan and New, and others.³⁴⁶ Only Strata Marcella in Powys provides a collection of similar scope and depth where seals have survived in large numbers.

The Margam collection also contains many charters – with surviving seals – of the *uchelwyr*, many of whom had links to each other and to the Afan dynasty. The seals of those Anglo-Norman marcher lords and gentry who granted lands to Margam also survive within the collection, allowing a comparative study. Outside the Margam collection, however, far fewer seals survive: we have no examples from Senghennydd or Gwynllŵg, for example, although tags and sealing clauses indicate that they once existed.³⁴⁷ Our study must of necessity focus mostly on the Afan dynasty and *uchelwyr* of Glamorgan. Also of great use from a comparative perspective is the survival of a large number of Anglo-Norman charters and seals within this collection. The majority of seals within this corpus date from the later twelfth century, with a particularly substantial corpus for the period 1170x1250, with a number of late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth century seals taking the picture to the end of our period around 1350, although a smaller number of identifiably Welsh charters mean there are fewer seals to study.

How far the distribution of the corpus truly reflects trends in seal use is important to consider, but we are not limited to the seal itself as evidence: where seals have not survived, the tags upon which they would have been originally fastened, and sealing clauses within the text indicate where seals were used. Using this, it is clear that seals greatly increased in popularity during the twelfth century (in line with the development of charters), and that seals were almost ubiquitous in later-thirteenth and early-fourteenth century charters: this is in line with general trends in seal use across the medieval world.³⁴⁸ The seemingly lower numbers of later Welsh charters is in part thrown into sharp relief by the unusual survival of so many earlier charters within the Margam collection. However, it is also down to, at least in part, the difficulty in determining the cultural origin of charters in this period. As already mentioned – and as we shall see in more detail in the next chapter – using naming practices to identify Welsh grantors becomes increasingly difficult over the course of the period, as these practices evolved.

³⁴⁵ New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression', p.347.

³⁴⁶ Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals*; MacEwan and New (eds), *Seals in Context*.

³⁴⁷ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.660-679; 813-815.

³⁴⁸ Bedoz-Rezak, *When Ego was Imago*; Ailes, 'The Knight's Alter Ego', pp. 8-11; New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression', pp.332-338.

Identification thus must rely upon wider contextual information to understand the origin of a charter and its grantor, beyond simple naming practices.

Bedoz-Rezak cautions against studying seals in isolation, and suggests that a wider approach is vital to understanding their role in projecting identities: She writes that seals have too often been considered as:

raw material to be exploited within the paradigms established by modern disciplines in the humanities. The function, one might even say the personality of the twelfth-century seal, however, does not lend itself to being confined within the boundaries of modern disciplinary organization.³⁴⁹

Bedoz-Rezak suggests that we need to understand the whole process of seal development, from the circumstances surrounding the production of their attached charters, the performance associated with their use (i.e. the symbolism behind the act of sealing, charter witnessing, etc), and what they were intended for. She therefore encourages historians to think in the broadest possible terms.³⁵⁰ At the same time, however, it is impossible to fully separate ourselves from historical paradigms. For our purposes, a broad approach, understanding seals within the context of their charters and other sources is vital, considering, as we do, individuals who appear infrequently (at best) in the historical source material.

Iconographic Sources: Heraldry

Heraldry, the display of armorial devices such as coats of arms, has much in common with seals, providing many of the same opportunities and challenges. They both employed imagery more than words, both were intended to convey or affirm the user's identity. As already mentioned, later medieval seal design often incorporated heraldic devices: the crossover between the two is extensive. While much of the methodology of tackling seals also applies to heraldry, there are unique aspects to the latter which deserve mention.

Understanding the purpose of heraldry is integral to understanding its role in portraying an image. Maurice Keen suggests that heraldry developed as a method of identification on the battlefield and tourney ground, where the use of armour made it difficult to tell friend from foe.³⁵¹ This later developed beyond an individual badge of recognition into one associated with a family, becoming a method of displaying social status as well as family pride. Other historians

³⁴⁹ Bedoz-Rezak, *When Ego was Imago*, pp.1-5.

³⁵⁰ Bedoz-Rezak, *When Ego was Imago*, p.5.

³⁵¹ Keen, *Chivalry*, pp.125-6.

suggest the social aspect was integral from the start,³⁵² although contemporary references, rolls of arms and seal representations all suggest heraldry was mainly displayed through military apparel – particularly the shield, which became so closely associated with heraldry that ‘shield of arms’ entered the heraldic terminology, though heraldry also appeared on banners, horse caparisons and surcoats.³⁵³

The earliest convincing evidence of heraldry lies in northern France in the early twelfth century (although tentative eleventh century origins have been suggested).³⁵⁴ Nobles adopted a distinct symbol, displayed on coins, seals, banners and shields, which continued to be used by their successors (the wheatsheaf of the Candavène family of St Pol is an oft touted example).³⁵⁵ At what point these designs can be considered heraldry is open to debate: the early symbols are sometimes known as proto-heraldic or pre-heraldic devices.³⁵⁶ In England, Henry I (d.1135) may have used a lion device, although this interpretation is disputed.³⁵⁷ However, by the 1140s banners and shields of the great noble families in England and France began to display consistent devices.³⁵⁸ By the end of the twelfth century, the use of armorial devices had spread to the lesser nobility and knights (who, before this, may have displayed symbols of their benefactors), in order to ingratiate themselves with the Earls and Barons.³⁵⁹ Indeed, Ailes suggests that the adoption of the earliest purely armorial seals, rather than the equestrian designs most often favoured by the more powerful nobility, may have been a conscious choice by individuals who had not been on military campaigns or crusades – for whom the equestrian figure may have been too warlike – using a different method of portraying a lordly image. Ailes also suggests that heraldry may have been favoured to display marital connections where these were particularly prestigious.³⁶⁰ Ailes and Crouch both point to the adoption of heraldry as a conscious aping of their neighbours or social superiors as a method of enhancing their position in society.³⁶¹

Heraldry came late to Wales, the earliest examples of heraldic or proto-heraldic devices in Wales belonging to the marcher lords. One such example is the depiction of a lion on a seal

³⁵² Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.226-232; Ailes, ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego’ pp. 8-11.

³⁵³ Keen, *Chivalry*, p.126.

³⁵⁴ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.226.

³⁵⁵ Ailes, ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego’, p.8; Keen, *Chivalry*, p.127.

³⁵⁶ Ailes ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego’, p.8; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.226.

³⁵⁷ A. Ailes, *The Origin of the Royal Arms of England*, (Reading 1982), p.p.46-9; Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, pp.23-5; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.223-4.

³⁵⁸ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.228.

³⁵⁹ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.229.

³⁶⁰ Ailes, ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego’, pp.10-11.

³⁶¹ Ailes, ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego’, pp.8-11; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.232.

of William, Earl of Gloucester, dating to 1147x53. This may be a heraldic (or proto-heraldic) reference to Robert of Gloucester and his descent from Henry I.³⁶² By contrast, the earliest extant evidence of native Welsh heraldry occurs a full century later, with an armorial seal of Dafydd ap Llywelyn of Gwynedd (d.1246) – and his brother Gruffudd – using a quartered red and yellow shield with interchanged lions – Crouch suggests that their arms derived from their father, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and the pre-eminent Welsh prince of his day.³⁶³

While the most powerful Welsh rulers were taking the first tentative steps into using heraldry, the seal evidence, as well as the earliest English heraldic roll (c.1255), shows heraldry in widespread use by the English aristocracy, from Earls such as the de Clares, to lesser barons and knights.³⁶⁴ Only a handful of examples of Welsh heraldry exist before 1350 – the rulers of Gwynedd and Powys being the most prominent; in southeast Wales only a couple of native examples are reliably attested, the Ap Adam (Badam) and d’Avene families.³⁶⁵ The Welsh gentry were slow and reluctant to adopt heraldry, and analysing possible reasons why is an integral part of chapter 4. Only in the later fourteenth century does it seem to have spread more widely amongst the Welsh.³⁶⁶ Thus a particular challenge of using heraldry as a source is its comparative rarity. Unlike seals, which became widely used from the late twelfth century by all levels of the aristocracy, church officials and some freemen, and became essential for administrative purposes, heraldry was exclusively the preserve of aristocrats, and was thus never as widespread. The smaller source base from which to draw upon – and the particular dearth of Welsh heraldry at our period – necessitates a discussion to be limited to a few examples. As with others, it is essential to consider them alongside other source types: seals being a particularly pertinent example.

Heraldry usually survives through depictions on seals, within rolls of arms, or is occasionally mentioned in passing. Twelfth and early-thirteenth century lordly families often came to adapt their equestrian seals to show a horsemen using a heraldic shield, surcoat, banner and/or barding.³⁶⁷ Other armorial devices are known, including a simple shield design which became especially popular from the later thirteenth century. Seals, with their plethora of designs unique to the individual, particularly demonstrate the challenge of establishing what heraldic designs for which we need a well-documented sequence of seals – or another

³⁶² Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, p.24.

³⁶³ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.241; MacEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, pp.87-91. A de Clare seal of c.1230 is a particularly clear example of a combination of heraldic and equestrian design.

³⁶⁴ Keen, *Chivalry*, pp.127-9.

³⁶⁵ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry*; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.242.

³⁶⁶ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry*, pp.1-11; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.241-2.

³⁶⁷ For example, see the 1230s seal of the De Clares, MacEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, p.91.

corroborating source. Without this, we cannot be sure if a single design was intended to be heraldry in a strict sense or just a personal seal design.

Rolls of arms are sources whose *raison d'être* was the recording of heraldic devices, and thus do not have this disadvantage. However, they are only useful for the latter part of the period, as the earliest British example is Glover's Roll, dating to c.1250 – 1255.³⁶⁸ There are at least a dozen rolls of arms for the later thirteenth century, of which the St George's Roll of c.1280, Charles' Roll of c.1285 and the Parliamentary Roll of c.1312 are perhaps the most useful for our purposes, containing individuals with Welsh names.³⁶⁹ These manuscripts are useful in pinpointing heraldic devices but, should be used in conjunction with other sources to understand the context in which they were used.

Other manuscript sources contain references to heraldry, either mentions in passing, or, if we are fortunate, with illustrations - as with the works of Matthew Paris, for example, whose depiction is essential for the Princes of Gwynedd.³⁷⁰ Heraldic devices also often appear in late medieval and early modern genealogies, but these generally pose complications rather than clarity. They owe their existence to a gentry keen to enhance their own status by proving connections with illustrious families of the past: they were not above embellishment. They contain many examples of heraldry not found elsewhere, but many were clearly assigned retrospectively – not only to legendary figures such as King Arthur and Brutus, but to historical individuals who lived before the advent of heraldry. Often, where a late medieval family had a heraldic device, these devices were attributed to much earlier members of the family. An example from south Wales is the arms of the d'Avene family, first attested in the later thirteenth century, but attributed to Iestyn ap Gwrgant who lived in the eleventh. As Siddons writes this attribution of arms to an individual: 'does not imply that he actually bore it, even though such an attributed coat may subsequently have had consistent use...they may essentially be an expression of longstanding tradition.'³⁷¹ These references are thus generally more problematic than helpful in determining the actual use of heraldry during our period. While it is possible that some antiquarians may have had access to sources now lost, the general doubtful veracity of such references mean they cannot be relied upon without earlier sources to verify them.³⁷²

Overall, therefore, heraldry provided a visual method of representation inextricably intertwined with the image of nobility. Though the source base is relatively small, the general

³⁶⁸ Keen, *Chivalry*, p.129.

³⁶⁹ A list of these rolls is contained within Siddons' *Development of Welsh Heraldry*.

³⁷⁰ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.235.

³⁷¹ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry*, p.vii.

³⁷² Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry*, p.vii.

contrast between Welsh and English use of heraldry during our period is of particular interest to our study of identity and cultural appropriation. The adoption of heraldry – or lack of – has potential to tell us about the identities the individuals involved.

Archaeological Evidence: Castles

While the majority of evidence which we have so far considered has been either written or iconographic, we must not neglect other sources of information, amongst which archaeological sources are key. As we saw in the preceding chapter, historians consistently point to castle construction as indicative of Anglo-Norman cultural influence, as an Anglo-Norman introduction to Wales. As the origin of castles is generally well understood, historians agree that they were introduced to Wales by the Normans. Originating in France, spreading to Britain at the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066, and shortly afterwards, the Anglo-Norman marcher lords began to construct castles in Wales.³⁷³ However, the first documented reference to a Welsh castle is a little later: the *Brut y Tywysogion* records, in about 1111 that Cadwgan ap Bleddyn was murdered at Welshpool, where ‘he had thought to stay and make a castle’, although the Red Book of Hergest version suggests a ‘dwelling’ rather than a castle.³⁷⁴ Most of the earlier castles were constructed of wood, but many were later reconstructed in stone. A comparison of the earliest stone castles reveals the Anglo-Normans as far in advance of their Welsh counterparts. The earliest Norman stone castle in Wales is at Chepstow, of which the rectangular hall is possibly as early as 1067.³⁷⁵ By contrast, the earliest Welsh stone castle is Cardigan, rebuilt from a wooden castle by the Lord Rhys in 1171.

Historians also point to castles as instruments of power and prestige, instruments designed to present a particular image to their neighbours and dependents, and one which the Welsh were keen to adopt.³⁷⁶ The remains of these castles have the potential to tell us about the mindset of these Welsh individuals, and nuances within the architecture, suggest where these individuals may have been borrowing the idea from, thus improving our picture of the network of influences in the marches of southeast Wales. Swallow, for example, points to similarities between D-shaped towers constructed by Llywelyn ab Iorwerth of Gwynedd and Ranulf, Earl of Chester, suggesting where Llywelyn obtained his inspiration from and that good

³⁷³ RCAHMW *An Inventory of Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan: Volume III Part 1a: The Early Castles From the Norman Conquest to 1217*. (London, 1991).

³⁷⁴ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS. 20 Version*, p.35.

³⁷⁵ L. Evans, *The Castles of Wales: A Guide* (London, 1998), p.81.

³⁷⁶ For example, see Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.278; p.310; Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, p.306; Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.40.

relations between the two was an important part of this.³⁷⁷ These sorts of analysis rely on us being able to identify who built these castles: whether Llywelyn ab Iorwerth or simply ‘the Welsh’, or whether a castle had changed hands. This is vital to our analysis, but unfortunately attributing castles in this way is particularly challenging.

Historians use several methods to attribute a castle to an individual or cultural group. Written references in chronicles, charters, or administrative documents are perhaps the easiest. For example the 1236 entry in the *Brut y Tywysogion* referring to the capture of a castle of Morgan ap Hywel, in Machen, by Gilbert Marshal.³⁷⁸ This often not only tells us whether a castle was Welsh or Norman, but the identity of the owner and the date of construction. Such references to castles, however, are very rare. A second method is through architectural features and design, whereby certain features can be identified as particularly characteristics of one group: Swallow, Avent and Davis have argued that D-shaped towers, siting upon rocky promontories, strong ditches and an irregular plan were characteristic of Welsh castle design, with the former being particularly associated with the Gwynedd dynasty.³⁷⁹ This relies upon there being sufficient surviving architecture to study. While this may seem a circular argument –with Welsh castles being identified by their architecture, yet this architecture being borrowed from their Norman neighbours, it relies on nuances in building technique and other corroborating evidence – the provenance of the Gwynedd castles is generally well established.³⁸⁰

Where castles are too fragmentary, or come without corroborating documentary evidence, historians turn to their location to provide clues as to their origin: for example, some fragmentary stone or earthwork castles have been assigned a Welsh origin, as they lie within upland commotes known to have remained under Welsh control well into the thirteenth century. This is partially guesswork, and is based on the assumption that these dynasties had strong control over their lands, as well as being able to identify changing boundaries at this period. In some border regions where documentary evidence is sparse, and ownership may have fluctuated, this method for identifying who built a certain castle is less useful.³⁸¹ This method also does not help when dating a castle or identifying an owner, though this is often inferred through folk memory, place name evidence and so on.

³⁷⁷ Swallow, ‘Gateways to Power: The Castles of Ranulf III of Chester and Llywelyn the Great of Gwynedd’, p.304.

³⁷⁸ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS. 20 Version*, p.196.

³⁷⁹ Avent, ‘Castles of the Welsh Princes’, p.13; Swallow, ‘Gateways to Power’, pp.291–314.

³⁸⁰ Avent, ‘Castles of the Welsh Princes’, pp.12–13.

³⁸¹ See discussions on Castell Morgraig, constructed on the very boundary of Senghennydd, for the difficulties of attributing castles through this method. Castell Morgraig is discussed in Chapter 6.

The relative survival of both the castle and corroborating documentary sources is thus a vital element in being able to untangle the details of a castle's origin – and hence understand their function and what they tell us about Anglo-Welsh cultural exchange in the march. Unfortunately, while Wales has a large number of castles, most have not survived well. Most were wooden, and of these, usually only earthworks remain: of 427 extant castles identified by King, 319 are earthworks.³⁸² Without above-ground architectural details to date and identify them, we rely on excavation and documentary evidence to understand them.

Stone castles are more likely to have survived in better condition, although their state of preservation can vary widely. Some survive as little more than earthworks or piles of rubble, while others (such as those of Edward I) are very well preserved. The records suggest that this is often due to their history and later life: some fell out of use quickly and became derelict, others were made into comfortable homes for the gentry and endured in an adapted form; some were destroyed in warfare (the aftermath of the seventeenth century civil wars is blamed for the destruction of many a castle). Having survived, stone castles are more likely to have been documented either by contemporaries or by later antiquarians. Antiquarians and early historians can be particularly useful when it comes to archaeological evidence, as the sites were often in better condition when they wrote: towers and walls had yet to collapse, be subject to stone robbing or be destroyed completely by later construction.³⁸³ Their descriptions can be highly useful for architectural comparisons, for example.

With archaeological sites, we are often reliant upon excavations and surveys that have already been done to build up a picture of a site. What historical and archaeological work, therefore, has already been carried out on Welsh castles? A seminal work on British castles was David Cathcart-King's *Castellarium Anglicanum*, a study which aimed to list all castles of England and Wales.³⁸⁴ A particularly useful resource is the 'Gatehouse' website originally compiled by Philip Davis and which functions as a gazetteer of castle sites in England, Wales, the Isle of Man and Channel Islands.³⁸⁵ This points the reader towards the various records held by the RCAHMW (via the Coflein website), the Historic Environment Record, mapping data and including the books, articles and primary sources known to mention the site. Studies on

³⁸² Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.11.

³⁸³ For southeast Wales, for example, the attentions of many antiquaries are noted in J.A. Bradney *A History of Monmouthshire from the Coming of the Normans Down to the Present Time* 12 vols. (1904-1933).

³⁸⁴ D.J.C. King, *Castellarium Anglicanum: an index and bibliography of the castles in England, Wales and the Islands, Vols. I and II* (Millwood, 1983).

³⁸⁵ *Gatehouse: A comprehensive gazetteer and bibliography of the medieval castles, fortifications and palaces of England, Wales and the Islands* <http://www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info/home.html> (Accessed 24/11/2021).

Welsh castles as a group are more limited, but summaries of a number of Welsh examples have been carried out by Richard Avent and Paul Davis.

To turn to the castles of southeast Wales in detail, we are fortunate that, for Glamorgan, at least, the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales (RCAHMW) has provided a detailed synthesis of information on all known castles from the area, including excavations, along with architectural studies and plans of their layout, where this is possible.³⁸⁶ No such RCAHMW work exists for those in Gwynllŵg or the rest of Gwent, for which we are reliant upon Cathcart-King, Paul Davis' *Castles of the Welsh Princes* and *Forgotten Castles of Wales* and Philip Davis' Gatehouse gazetteer website, as well as individual surveys and excavations.³⁸⁷ Copies of the surveys and excavation reports themselves are usually held by the local Historic Environment Record; in the case of southeast Wales, the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

Despite all these efforts, comparatively few castles have been securely dated (only 85 out of Cathcart-King's 427) – of these 85, only 11 have been positively identified as Welsh castles, with a further 25 possible, but uncertain, attributions. In southeast Wales, only Plas Baglan (Port Talbot), and Castell Meredydd (Machen), have been positively identified as Welsh stone castles, although there are several other possible candidates.³⁸⁸ Both castles survive in poor condition with very little upstanding masonry, though their plan can be determined; both are thought to be late twelfth or early thirteenth-century constructions, and contemporary documentary evidence links them with members of the native dynasties. The other castles are less well evidenced, although earthworks at Castell Bolan, Twyn Castell, Castell Nos, Castell Arnallt and Hen Gastell are probable candidates due to their siting and location.³⁸⁹ A number of other candidates, such as Castell Taliorum and Castell Morgraig, have been suggested as Welsh in origin but have divided opinion.³⁹⁰ While we discuss these examples and the evidence for their origin in detail in chapter 6, the point here is that we have

³⁸⁶ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*.

³⁸⁷ P.R. Davis, *Castles of the Welsh Princes* (Swansea, 1988); P. Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales* (Logaston 2011).

³⁸⁸ Davis, *Castles of the Welsh Princes*, pp.79-91; RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.149-152; K.L. Dallimore, 'An Archaeological Survey of the Machen Ridge', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* Vol.28. (1980) pp.501-2.

³⁸⁹ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.139-147; King, *Castellarium Anglicanum*, p.284; N. Phillips, 'Castell Arnallt – A Topographical Survey', *Gwent Local History: Journal of the Gwent Local History Council*, 90 (2001), pp.8 – 11.

³⁹⁰ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.18; Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, pp.121-5; 149-50; RCAHMW *An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan: Volume III, Part 1b: Medieval Secular Monuments, The Later Castles from 1217 to the Present* (Aberystwyth, 2000), pp.197-9.

only a small sample size to work with, and that the condition of these sites is generally very poor.

To mitigate their shortcomings, a discussion of the southeast Wales sites therefore needs to draw parallels with the work that has already been done on the more numerous Welsh castles in the north and west, as well as with Anglo-Norman castles in Wales and elsewhere. The larger number of identifiably Anglo-Norman castles mean that, although many share the same problems, more survive in better condition. There is plenty of evidence with which we can make comparison, therefore.

Castles are just one type of archaeological source. Are there other archaeological or architectural resources that we can use to study cultural exchange in Wales from our point of view of the native dynasties and *uchelwyr*? Historians point to these individuals patronising new styles of monastic house – especially Benedictine and Cistercian houses – on a new, Anglo-Norman model. Apart from the fact itself, is this visible in the archaeological record? Architectural styles changed dramatically at this time, which have even been described as an ‘architectural revolution’.³⁹¹ Discussion of the introduction of new architectural forms through these new monastic establishments could be undertaken. However, we face many of the same difficulties as with castles, in that we would need sufficient architectural evidence to discuss. We know, for example, that Llantarnam Abbey was established by the Gwynllŵg dynasty.³⁹² The establishment of religious houses is generally better understood than castles (largely due to the latter as being home to the production of many documentary sources). There remains the question, however, of how far members of the native dynasties or *uchelwyr* would have had influence over the design of religious houses – far more likely the incoming monks would have brought their own designs. Likewise while the case is possible with secular churches constructed in the region, it has been suggested that these changes, the emphasis has been on construction by the Normans, with little evidence for the Welsh.³⁹³ The involvement (or lack thereof) of Welsh individuals in this is something for which there is great potential for further exploration.

Finally, there are other fascinating questions associated with cultural emulation and material culture. In the case of the princely dynasties or *uchelwyr*, for instance, can we tell through the items they had how far they were embracing aspects of Anglo-Norman culture? Were their homes (and castles) decorated in the same way? What about their personal effects,

³⁹¹ Knight, *South Wales from the Romans to the Normans*, pp.154-6.

³⁹² Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.467, pp.665-6.

³⁹³ Knight, *South Wales from the Romans to the Normans*, pp.154-6.

clothing, food and so forth? How far were they aping the customs of their neighbours in everyday life? While fascinating questions, they pose vast challenges, and I raise this to highlight the limitations of the archaeological resource in this context. Archaeologically, if it is difficult to associate sites with individuals, it is virtually impossible to associate material culture. Not only has very little excavation occurred on such sites, but the vast majority of everyday items were made of material which does not survive well in the ground – particularly in Welsh acidic soils. For identifying and associating such items, documentary references are more usual, but references to everyday items in the detail we would require to understand their origin is seldom found: for military items we have seal depictions, there may be passing references within poetry, and from southeast Wales we have a single reference of interest concerning the death of Llywelyn Bren in 1315, following which his possessions were seized and listed. This, however, is the exception rather than the rule, and thus, in general, until extensive excavation of well preserved and firmly associated sites is carried out, these questions will remain unanswered.

Conclusions

In conclusion, there are many sources relevant to cultural change and integration in southeast Wales for the period 1050 – 1350. While the nature of this evidence is not as rich and detailed as the evidence that exists for England, or for other parts of Wales, enough survives to undertake an analysis of cultural exchange in the region. Some sources seem particularly useful to discussions of different elements: intermarriage as a method of cross-cultural integration, for example, is particularly well evidenced in genealogies. However, while our discussion will naturally gravitate to use some sources in particular, focusing too heavily upon them risks leading to a one-dimensional analysis. We must therefore draw these sources together to overcome their limitations.

While sources for the eleventh and early twelfth centuries are scarce, confined mostly to chronicles and a few charters, a particularly detailed body of source material exists for the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, for which we have an extensive collection of Welsh and Norman charters and seals from the Margam Collection, as well as the appearance of the earliest Welsh masonry castles, and the appearance of regular royal records in the Pipe Rolls, which for this period are amongst the most accessible to a historian. The greater overlap goes some way towards mitigating the shortcomings of individual sources. The later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries sees the first identifiably Welsh heraldry, more surviving poetry,

Chapter 2: The Sources

genealogies and in general a greater abundance of sources, providing greater variety and a much wider picture than is visible at the beginning of the period.

Having explored the scholarly approach to Anglo-Welsh cultural exchange, we turn now to consider how these individuals made use of sources characteristic of these sources, we turn to consider how far the Welsh aristocracy in southeast Wales imitated their neighbours, and the sort of identity that they sought to project. In order to do so, however, we need to consider the thorny problem of ‘Welsh’, ‘Anglo-Norman’ and ‘English’ – where better to begin, than with naming practices

Chapter 3: What's in a Name? Marriage, the Family and Naming Practices

Introduction

As we turn to consider the forms that cultural exchange, imitation and emulation could take in Medieval Wales, where better to begin than with naming practices and the connections that were formed through marriages, to introduce some of the figures and families that feature prominently in our study. Likewise, this is also an opportunity for us to discuss the fundamental question of definition and terminology: what do we mean by 'Norman', 'Welsh' and 'English'?

As we have seen, historians have pointed to the use of cross-cultural names as an indicator of cultural exchange, and an important benchmark of identity. Bartlett charted the development of naming practices across Europe, particularly noting Scotland and

Mecklenburg, whose nobles chose to borrow the names of their powerful neighbours in England and Germany.³⁹⁴ Veach explored the concept of intermarriage and the adoption of foreign first names amongst the Irish as part of a wider discussion of Anglicisation amongst the Irish.³⁹⁵ For Wales, Radiker has explored cross-cultural naming practices for Powys, and for southeast Wales others have pointed to individual examples of cultural emulation of naming practices as part of wider discussions.³⁹⁶ By contrast, Pryce notes the general use of an established stock of dynastic names for sons, perhaps reflecting a 'cultivation of the traditional'.³⁹⁷

Marriage too forms a prominent part of the political narrative of Anglo-Welsh relations. In the context of the princely dynasties, or *uchelwyr* families, whether a Welsh individual chose to marry into another Welsh dynasty, or into an Anglo-Norman one can tell us much about their priorities, and personal and diplomatic links in the region.

As a fundamental part of human existence, names appear in most sources, and thus we can use a wide variety of sources to study them. Sources which mention familial and marital relationships are of course most useful. While genealogies are the most obvious, such references appear occasionally in chronicles, charters and so on.

³⁹⁴ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.277.

³⁹⁵ Veach, 'Anglicization in medieval Ireland, was there a Gaelic Irish "middle nation"?', p.122.

³⁹⁶ Radiker, 'Observations on Cross-Cultural Names and Naming Patterns in Medieval Wales and the March'; Lieberman, 'Anglicization in High Medieval Wales', p.13; p.20; M. Griffiths, 'Native Society on the Anglo-Norman frontier: the evidence of the Margam charters', pp.181-4.

³⁹⁷ Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and European Change', p.49.

Genealogies, for which recording names and family relationships are key, are amongst the most useful, and in the words of Gerald of Wales:

The Welsh value distinguished birth and noble descent more than anything else in the world...even the common people know their family-tree by heart and can readily recite from memory a list of their grandfathers, great-grandfathers great-great-grandfathers, back to the sixth or seventh generation.³⁹⁸

Gerald was also an early commentator on marriage in Wales, writing in less than favourable terms on the subject in the *Description of Wales*:

Incest is extremely common among the Welsh...they have no hesitation or shame in marrying women related to them in the fourth or fifth degree, and sometimes even third cousins. Their usual excuse for abusing the ordinances of the church in this way is their wish to put an end to some family quarrel or other...Another reason given for their marrying women of their own family is their great respect for noble descent, which means so much to them. They are most unwilling to marry anyone of another family, who, in their arrogance, they think may be their inferior in descent and blood.³⁹⁹

From Gerald's highly critical viewpoint, one might expect a large degree of marriage within the same families, perhaps of a conservative, highly localised nature. We could also expect status to be a significant factor in a marital match. Gerald himself was born of a cross-cultural marriage between the Norman knight William de Barri and Angharad, the daughter of Nest ferch Rhys ap Tewdwr of Deheubarth, and he clearly distanced himself from his Welsh connections in this case.⁴⁰⁰ While such generalisations cannot be taken at face value, it is important to bear them in mind, and we consider the truth of Gerald's words at the end of the chapter.

Gerald's words throw into relief the challenge of understanding why a marriage occurred or a name was chosen. While we can draw inferences from contextual information such as where individuals lived, their status, local and wider political situations at the time and so on, it is often impossible to determine all the factors involved: as A.J. Roderick has noted, the underlying emotional considerations behind medieval marriages are usually invisible in the sources, and hence our understanding of these motives will be, at best, incomplete.⁴⁰¹ This

³⁹⁸ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.251.

³⁹⁹ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp.262-3.

⁴⁰⁰ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.9.

⁴⁰¹ A.J. Roderick, 'Marriage and Politics in Wales, 1066 – 1282', *Welsh History Review*, 4, 1 (June, 1968), pp.3 – 20.

reasoning could also be extended to naming practices: while we can identify names and familial relationships, it is not explicitly stated why such names were chosen. However, the *fact* of marriages between particular individuals or the use of certain names is indisputable (at least as far as we can rely upon the sources to accurately record them). As such our conclusions must sadly leave the emotional element to one side.

As mentioned in chapter 1, defining cultural groups such as ‘Welsh’, ‘Norman’ and ‘English’ is problematic, especially as intermarriage and the use of cross-cultural naming practices can be expected to lead to a blending of cultures. However, such terminology is frequently used by both contemporaries and historians, regardless of the blending of culture and the fact that what it meant to be Welsh, English or Norman changed considerably over the course of the period. A core theme of this chapter is establishing exactly what these changes may have looked like. For convenience, I use similar terms, with ‘native’ or ‘Welsh’ referring to those families mostly descended from pre-Norman dynasties/families from Wales, and ‘Anglo-Norman’ or ‘English’ referring to the incomers.

For simplicity, our study here primarily categorises the families using the family groups in Bartrum’s *Welsh Genealogies*,⁴⁰² which has been discussed in detail in the previous chapter. As the genealogies are not perfect, we supplement them by the use of other sources – charters, chronicle entries and so forth. As they usually concern well known princely individuals, discrepancies are generally rare. We deal with each family in turn, beginning with the predominant ‘princely’ dynasties before turning to other, less prominent, families which we might consider as part of the *uchelwyr*.⁴⁰³ Where relevant, we compare this with the evidence of the Marcher lords and other incoming families.

In each case, we begin with a summary of the family as known from source evidence, before turning to a discussion of marriage, and a consideration of naming practices. I later draw together some of the broader trends including geographical spread and consider some of the potential reasons behind it.

⁴⁰² Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, 8 vols.

⁴⁰³ As mentioned elsewhere, I follow Pryce’s terminology for these three dynasties in the *Acts of Welsh Rulers*. For a twelfth-century summary of the three prominent dynasties, see Crouch, ‘The Slow Death of Kingship in Glamorgan, 1067 – 1158’, p.30. For members of the *uchelwyr*, I largely follow the groupings made in Bartrum’s *Welsh Genealogies*; for those which just appear in other sources (such as charters), I name them using the most prominent member of the family in the source material.

Gwynllŵg and Caerleon

Many references in the sources, including the *Brut y Tywysogion* make the careers of the major figures of this dynasty relatively easy to trace. This group feature in Bartrum's compilation of the Welsh genealogies under the descendants of Rhydderch ab Iestyn.⁴⁰⁴

In general, most of the names are culturally Welsh. Morgan is one name which features prominently in the main members of this dynasty: four instances are noted over five generations, beginning with Morgan ab Owain (d.1158) and his son Morgan ap Morgan (d.c.1186). The son of Hywel ap Iorwerth was also called Morgan (d.1248). The fourth instance is Morgan ap Maredudd (d.1331), the grandson of Morgan ap Hywel. This suggests the name was particularly popular.

The sources show that there were several instances of intermarriage between members of the Gwynllŵg dynasty and their Anglo-Norman neighbours. The earliest is a marriage between Elen, a great-granddaughter of Rhydderch ab Iestyn, to Stephen Perrot, c.1100; their son was Sir Andrew Perrot. Bartrum also suggests that Sir Andrew Perrot's daughter was given a Welsh name, Catrin, and married her fourth cousin, Caradog of Newton. The choice of name, presumably by Perrot and his wife, could be a reference to his mother's culture, but we cannot say for certain. Later, at the end of the twelfth century, Hywel ab Iorwerth's daughter, Gwerful, is also noted as having married into the Turberville family, although the names of her sons, Hugh, Adam and Thomas are more commonly found names of continental origin.⁴⁰⁵

A more interesting and well attested case of intermarriage in this dynasty was that of Nest,⁴⁰⁶ daughter of Iorwerth ab Owain, to Ralph Bloet, a leading retainer of the de Clare lords of Striguil [Chepstow] (who also held the fee of Raglan from the lords of Usk) sometime before 1175. The choice of match may have been politically motivated, as Bloet was a close neighbour of Iorwerth with his lands and influence in the region just to the east of Iorwerth's own.

They had several sons, Ralph, Thomas, Roland and William, and a daughter, Petronilla.⁴⁰⁷ There is no hint of cross-cultural naming practices here, suggesting perhaps that

⁴⁰⁴ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 - 1400*, vol. 4, pp.758 - 761

⁴⁰⁵ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 - 1400*, vol. 4 pp.758 – 761. For more on the Turberville family, see later in this chapter, and Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 - 1400*, vol. 4, pp.922-927.

⁴⁰⁶ Nest was the daughter of Iorwerth ab Owain and Angharad, daughter of Uthred, bishop of Llandaff. Although Uthred's name is northern English, Crouch suggests he may have been a Welshman and a member of the *Claswr*, Welsh priestly families. See D. Crouch, 'Uthred [Uchtryd, Uchtredu]', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-27971?rskey=eCs4v3&result=1> (Accessed 16/12/2021).

⁴⁰⁷ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.84-5; D. Crouch, 'Bloet, Nest [Nest of Wales, Nest the Welshwoman]', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-47222?rskey=cy1DiH&result=1> (Accessed 16/12/2021).

she had little say in the matter. This is particularly interesting as Nest was also a mistress of King Henry II;⁴⁰⁸ their affair produced an illegitimate son, named Morgan Bloet.⁴⁰⁹ As Morgan's name is not only Welsh but also favoured by his family (Nest's uncle, nephew and cousin all also being named Morgan), this was clearly her choice. We can only assume that the Bloets had no interest in adopting Welsh naming practices.

The vast majority of marriages of members of the Gwynllŵg dynasty, however, seem to have been into other Welsh families: political motivations likely ranked high in such marriages as Iorwerth ab Owain to the daughter of Uthred (alternatively Uchtrud), Bishop of Llandaff. Iorwerth's son, Hywel, married Gwerful, the daughter of Owain Cyfeiliog, ruler of southern Powys.⁴¹⁰ We are reminded of Gerald of Wales' words of the importance of a marriage into a family of sufficiently noble status: with marriages to descendants of Bleddyn ap Cynfyn and Rhys ap Tewdwr, for example. However, the majority of marriages seem to have been to neighbouring families, and it seems likely that the importance of good ties with one's neighbours were a consideration.⁴¹¹ The genealogies, uncertain as they are, point to several of Hywel ab Iorwerth's children supposedly marrying into local families including, the Senghennydd dynasty, 'ab Adam' family (the family of Hywel's *distain* (hereditary steward) or seneschal)⁴¹² and the descendants of 'Gwaithfoed of Gwent', 'Cynwrig ab Y Cor' and 'Ynryr Gwent', all families in the local region (these are discussed further below).⁴¹³ Fostering good local relations amongst neighbours and dependents would have been important.

With the great majority of marriages being between individuals with Welsh names, it is unsurprising that Welsh names were almost exclusively given to their children, and these seem to have come from a similar stock of names often used by the dynasty. Hywel ab Iorwerth's sons were called Owain and Morgan, and his daughter Gwenllïan;⁴¹⁴ we have already seen the large number of Morgans that appear in the dynasty, the naming practices seem traditional, in line with marriages.

Senghennydd

⁴⁰⁸ Nest should not be confused with her earlier namesake, a daughter of Rhys ap Tewdwr of Deheubarth and mistress of Henry I.

⁴⁰⁹ F. Barlow (ed.), *Durham annals and documents of the thirteenth century*, Publications of the Surtees Society, 155 (Durham, 1945), pp.1, 2, 203.

⁴¹⁰ Stephenson, *Medieval Powys*, p.20; Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.105.

⁴¹¹ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, vol. 4 pp.758 – 761.

⁴¹² Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.473, pp.669 – 673.

⁴¹³ See 'Adam ab Ifor' in Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, vol.4.

⁴¹⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.671-3; Jones and Jones (ed.), *Gwaith Llywarch ap Llywelyn 'Prydydd y Moch'*, p.137.

As with Gwynllŵg, enough references survive to piece together a picture of the marriages and naming practices of Senghenydd. The dramatic feud between Ifor Bach and Earl William around 1158, where Ifor kidnapped William and his family and holding them for ransom, suggests the relationship between Ifor and his Norman neighbours was an antagonistic one.⁴¹⁵ Furthermore, Ifor is known to have married Nest, a sister of Rhys ap Gruffudd (The Lord Rhys) of Deheubarth and a grandson of Rhys ap Tewdwr.⁴¹⁶ This may reflect an attempt by Ifor to cultivate connections with the dynasty of Deheubarth, to reinforce his position in the face of a sometimes difficult relationship with his liege lord. Alternatively, marrying into the Deheubarth dynasty could also reflect a desire for prestige. Not only was the Lord Rhys amongst the most powerful rulers of native Wales, but eleventh century kings of Glamorgan such as Gruffudd ap Rhydderch and his son Caradog once had (sometimes successful) political ambitions in Deheubarth.⁴¹⁷ However, this also begs the question of how much influence the rulers of Deheubarth had over the match, and it is likely also to reflect attempts by the Lord Rhys to strengthen his influence over the Welsh lords in the southeast.⁴¹⁸ Rhys was linked by marriage to many Welsh dynasties in the marches, including Maelienydd, Elfael, Gwerthrynion, Glamorgan (Afan), and Gwent Uwch Coed, as explicitly stated in the *Brut y Tywysogion*.⁴¹⁹ The match would have been beneficial for both parties concerned. As Crouch writes: ‘It is some measure of Ifor's political success that he was courted by the Lord Rhys of Deheubarth, and had a marriage arranged between him and Rhys's sister, Nest ferch Gruffudd ap Rhys.’⁴²⁰

However, this picture is complicated when one considers Ifor's son, Gruffudd, who married into the family of the Earls of Gloucester. Clark notes that Gruffudd married Mabel, an illegitimate daughter of Earl Robert of Gloucester (and thus sister to William, with whom Ifor had such trouble), a claim repeated by Patterson, although Bartrum's genealogies instead suggest Gruffudd married an unnamed daughter of William in 1158 – the same year as the dramatic dispute.⁴²¹ With even the identity of Gruffudd's wife in doubt, it cannot be ascertained

⁴¹⁵ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp.122-3.

⁴¹⁶ Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.105; Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion*, *Peniarth Ms.20 Version*, pp.70-1.

⁴¹⁷ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.220-222; Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages*, pp.102-4.

⁴¹⁸ Roderick, ‘Marriage and Politics in Wales, 1066 – 1282’, pp.11-12.

⁴¹⁹ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion*, *Peniarth Ms.20 Version*, pp.70-1.

⁴²⁰ D. Crouch, ‘Ifor ap Meurig [called Ifor Bach] (fl.1158)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-48549?rskey=d0D7nu> (Accessed 27/12/2021).

⁴²¹ Clark, *Cartae* Vol. 1 (2nd edition), p.149n; Patterson, *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, p.115; Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 2, pp.208 – 215.

whether the marriage was made at the instigation of Gruffudd, his father, Ifor, or from the Gloucester side. An attractive, if unlikely, scenario is to see this as a direct consequence of Ifor's hard-handed diplomacy. Perhaps even the marriage was the 'little more' Gerald mentions Ifor acquiring: why else would a humiliated Gloucester dynasty be willing to marry the rulers of Senghenydd? Far more likely, perhaps, is that Ifor's relationship with the Gloucester dynasty was stronger than Gerald leads us to believe (this dispute notwithstanding). Certainly, Gruffudd's later relationship with Earl William was less hostile: the Earl confirmed a grant of land by Gruffudd to Margam Abbey sometime between 1158 and 1183,⁴²² his brothers had earlier served in the armies of Henry II and Gruffudd served in King John's army in Normandy; Cadwallon held lands in Cornwall of the crown – these all indicate a close relationship with the Earls of Gloucester and the English Crown, with intermarriage being a key factor, regardless of whether it came about as a result of, or despite, the events described by Gerald. Incidentally, the exploits of Gruffudd's brothers are of particular interest to our study and are explored in chapter 7.⁴²³

In light of Gruffudd's marriage, the names and marriages of his children are likewise an interesting study. Four daughters and two sons are noted by Bartrum, but sadly most of these individuals are only known from the genealogies – for some, we lack even a name. All the recorded names are Welsh – hence there is no evidence of cross-cultural naming practices being employed.⁴²⁴ Bartrum notes three of the daughters marrying Welshmen, with a fourth (unnamed) daughter marrying into the Maelog family, who were lords of Cibwr, of mixed Anglo-Norman and Welsh descent.⁴²⁵ Cibwr was the southernmost commote within the Cantref of Senghenydd, in the region of Cardiff, and was thus an area where Norman lordship was strong.⁴²⁶ Similarly, one of Gruffudd's sons, Hywel Felyn married Sara, the daughter of Sir Mayo le Sore of St Fagans: these matches with local families would have strengthened their position and suggests a good working relationship with their Norman neighbours. The lack of detail – and the fact that they are only found in the genealogies – makes this difficult to corroborate.

Although we know more about Gruffudd's other son, Rhys, who inherited the lordship on his father's death in 1211, and for whom a charter survives, the details of his marriage

⁴²² Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Charter No. 616. pp.813-4

⁴²³ Crouch, 'Ifor ap Meurig [Called Ifor Bach]', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn.

⁴²⁴ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, Vol.2, pp. 208 - 215

⁴²⁵ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, Vol.3, p.660

⁴²⁶ Rees, *An Historical Atlas of Wales*, Plate 28.

remain hazy.⁴²⁷ The genealogies note Rhys marrying an unnamed daughter of Hywel ab Iorwerth of Gwynllŵg: if so, this would be a match with another prominent princely dynasty, good for prestige.⁴²⁸ Although Morgan ab Owain of Gwynllŵg had been killed by Ifor Bach's men in 1158, the relationship may have been better by the 1170s. However, Hywel was ordered to fortify *Castrum Cadwalan* – presumably Cadwallon, Rhys' uncle, on orders of the crown, during a period when Cadwallon was time when Cadwallon was leading Welsh contingent in Normandy.⁴²⁹ The marriage could also reflect the changing relationship between the two dynasties, and perhaps the changing political situation of the period as well.

This is not all, however: Rhys' daughter, Joan, married her first cousin, Sir Ralph Maelog, the son of William Maelog. Two matches with the Maelog family in succeeding generations suggests a strong relationship (or the desire for one) between the two families. Bartrum's tables are confused on the matter, Crouch suggests that there was at least one other son, Gruffudd Bychan, who may have controlled the western parts of Glamorgan under the overlordship of his brother Rhys, and who, according to Crouch, married a daughter of Roger Sturmi, receiving a portion of Stormy Down, near Kenfig: Crouch writes that Gruffudd Bychan became 'integrated into lowland society' and died in 1234.⁴³⁰

It is interesting to contrast this picture with later marriages, most of which were to individuals with Welsh names, although as we reach the end of the period, with Gruffudd ap Rhys' great and great-great grandchildren, a few marriages to individuals with English names are noted.⁴³¹ Of course, the picture, relying so heavily on the genealogical material, is incomplete. The flurry of marriages to individuals of Anglo-Norman origin in the later twelfth and early thirteenth century suggests the Senghennydd dynasty had a brief and localised interest in marrying into Anglo-Norman families, presumably to bolster their position, though in general the majority of marriages throughout the period were to other Welsh individuals.

Geographically, most marriages of the Senghennydd dynasty were to individuals of relatively local origin – this supports the idea that neighbourly connections were important; we must not forget that local marriages would be more likely between neighbours who had regular contact, as well as the political considerations. Fostering ties with neighbouring lords – whether of Welsh or Anglo-Norman origin, was important. An exception to the local rule is found in

⁴²⁷ Jones (ed and trans.). *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth Ms.20 Version*, p.86.

⁴²⁸ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.216-7; 274-5

⁴²⁹ RCAHMS, *The Early Castles*, pp.70-1.

⁴³⁰ Crouch, 'Ifor ap Meurig [Called Ifor Bach]', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn.

⁴³¹ For example, Hywel Felyn's granddaughter, Catrin, married Henry Keney of Brecon, while his great grandson, Rhys, married Margared, daughter of Thomas Basset of St Hilary. See Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 2, pp. 208 – 215

Ifor Bach's marriage to Nest ferch Gruffudd of Deheubarth. This perhaps reflects a conscious effort by the Lord Rhys to foster ties with the native rulers of the southeast: the *Brut y Tywysogyon* demonstrates that Rhys secured many such marriage connections to native Welsh dynasties in the march.⁴³² While such a marriage may have bolstered Ifor's prestige and secured a political ally, the other local marriages of the Senghennydd dynasty to prominent families would have done the same.

Turning to the naming practices of the Senghennydd dynasty, we find very few recorded instances of individuals being given Anglo-Norman names, even following intermarriage: for example, according to Bartrum, Hywel Felyn's marriage to Sara, the daughter of Sir Mayo le Sore, resulted in six children, of whom only one, Roger, was given an English name, the others (Nest, Llywelyn, Meu, Madog and Dafydd) are all certainly Welsh.⁴³³ Whilst the source material reveals only an incomplete picture, the continuing prominence of Welsh names throughout the period is very marked across all branches of the family well into the fourteenth century.⁴³⁴ Intermarriage did not necessarily lead to the adoption of cross-cultural naming practices.

Glamorgan, Morgannwg and Afan

As with the Gwynllŵg and Senghenydd dynasties, most of the marriages of the Glamorgan dynasty appear to have been between individuals with Welsh names. Marriages into Anglo-Norman families were generally the exception rather than the rule.⁴³⁵ As such, those that did occur are of particular interest in what they tell us about the attitudes of these families towards their neighbours. Maredudd ap Caradog – brother of Morgan – married Joan, the daughter of Emerod Turberville. Although it is unclear when this union took place, their son, Hywel of Meisgyn is known to have been alive between 1231 and 1246; thus a later twelfth-century date seems likely. Hywel of Meisgyn and his sister Gwenllian both married into Welsh families, as did Hywel's children, despite their father's mixed parentage. Local politics and a desire to foster good relationships with the neighbours likely played a role. Morgan ap Caradog himself married Gwladus, a sister of the Lord Rhys, in yet another match between the native marcher dynasties and the ruler of Deheubarth. Connections with powerful Welsh dynasties were

⁴³² Roderick, 'Marriage and Politics in Wales, 1066 – 1282', pp.11-12; Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.70-1.

⁴³³ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 2, pp. 208 - 215

⁴³⁴ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 2, pp. 208 - 215.

⁴³⁵ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 2, pp. 542 – 567.

paramount; engagement with one's Anglo-Norman neighbours was, for the most part, secondary.⁴³⁶

The few instances of intermarriage noted in the twelfth century are in marked contrast to the situation in the thirteenth. Of particular interest are the children of Morgan Gam (d.1241).⁴³⁷ According to the genealogies, while Morgan married twice, both to Welshwomen, at least two of his children married into Anglo-Norman families. Morgan Fychan (who eventually inherited the lordship), initially married Sibyl, daughter of Walter de Sully,⁴³⁸ while his sister, Mallt (or Matilda), married Gilbert II Turberville.⁴³⁹ Compared to the earlier marriages of this dynasty, and with wider marriage trends, this suggests an unusual tendency in marrying into Norman families. This trend would become even more pronounced in the following decades. Morgan Fychan's son, Sir Lleision de Avene (d.1328), married Margaret, a daughter of Edward Sully: his brother, Rhys' second wife was supposedly Mawd, another of Sir Edward Sully's children. Lleision's son, John, married Isabella, according to the genealogies a daughter of Thomas de Barry; his brother Thomas married Maude de Sully.⁴⁴⁰

The dangers of spurious entries are ever present, Rhys de Avene's marriage to Mawd may be an error for his nephew Thomas. Thomas, John and Lleision's marriages are all supported by charter evidence; for Rhys we have no such corroborating evidence. This may be an error by a later scribe vaguely familiar with the family's de Sully connections. A similar, earlier example is Payn I Turberville's supposed marriage to Sara, Iestyn ap Gwrgant's great-niece, mentioned in some genealogies despite the well evidenced marriage to Sibyl de Londres of Ogmores.⁴⁴¹ Bartrum notes this as a fictitious entry and suggests it likely reflects the later medieval fashion for retrospective association with prominent dynasties, although in this case too it could reflect a later distorted awareness of marriage bonds between the Glamorgan dynasty and the Turbervilles also prominent in the thirteenth century. Nonetheless, the

⁴³⁶ Jones (ed. and trans), *Brut y Tywysogyon Peniarth Ms.20 Version*, pp.70-1; Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies, AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 3, pp. 542 – 567.

⁴³⁷ Morgan ap Morgan ap Caradog.

⁴³⁸ He later married Elen ferch Gronwy, presumably on the death of his first wife.

⁴³⁹ Crouch notes the existence of lawsuits concerning Gilbert's father, Payn and Walter de Sully over a knight's fee at Newton and Coychurch between 1199-1201. D. Crouch 'Turberville [De Turberville] family', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-48657?rskey=WOffOf> (Accessed 01/01/2022).

⁴⁴⁰ Clark, *Cartae*, vol 1 (1st edition), No.273, pp.302-3. According to Bartrum he later married Elen ferch Gronwy, presumably after the death of his first wife.

⁴⁴¹ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 - 1400*, Vol. 3, pp. 542 – 567; Crouch 'Turberville [De Turberville] family'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn.

confirmed marriages all back up the picture of an unusually high proportion of cross-cultural marriages in this branch of the dynasty, even excluding uncorroborated entries.

Both genealogies and charters suggest this family showed a particularly strong, and increasing, propensity to marry into marcher families. Three matches within the Sully family within three generations suggests that good relations between the families were considered very important. Materially, these connections seem to have paid off in favour of the Glamorgan dynasty, as the male de Sully line died out shortly afterwards, and John is described in several charters as lord of Afan, Cilfai and Sully.⁴⁴² It is impossible to say how far the lords of Afan (as we must now call them) cultivated the Sully family with an eye to the lordship, or how far this reflected an earlier closeness between the families. Nevertheless, the increased cases of Anglo-Welsh marriages suggest a changing attitude on the part of the Glamorgan dynasty towards their neighbours in the thirteenth century, suggesting a desire to integrate which could be reflected by emulating them in other ways.⁴⁴³

The sudden popularity of marriage into marcher families could be explained by the local political context. The earlier marriages of this dynasty, down to Morgan Gam, had been mostly to Welsh individuals – and these make political sense - Morgan Gam, for example, lost control of Newcastle during the reign of King John - he subsequently sought to distance himself from the Anglo-Norman Lords of Glamorgan and joined Llywelyn ab Iorwerth in campaigns at Neath in 1231 and Kenfig in 1232.⁴⁴⁴ Within this context, Morgan's marriages into other Welsh families make sense. By contrast, historians point to several ways in which the dynasty under Morgan's son (Morgan Fychan) and his successors used a conscious policy of Anglicisation⁴⁴⁵ - as we shall see in subsequent chapters - and marriages into Anglo-Norman families make sense in this context. The drivers behind this policy could well be the specific political context of Morgan Gam's failure to regain Newcastle, or as a reflection of the advance of marcher families elsewhere – particularly the de Clare Earls of Gloucester in Glynrhondda and Meisgyn c.1246 (and later Senghennydd and Gwynllŵg). Marrying into marcher families would have been more advantageous in such a political situation.

How far marriage reflects a desire on the part of these families to integrate (or merely keeping on the good side of their neighbours for political expediency) is largely the subject of

⁴⁴² Clark, *Cartae*, Vol 1 (1st edition), No.261, pp.282-3.

⁴⁴³ See chapters 4, 5 and 6

⁴⁴⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*. pp.20-21

⁴⁴⁵ D. Crouch, 'Iestyn ap Gwrgant', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14357?result=1&rskey=8ahR6i#odnb-9780198614128-e-14357-headword-4> (accessed 23/05/2018); Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*. pp.20-21

later chapters, but one possible indicator of relevance in this chapter are naming practices of the family. Until the late thirteenth century, Welsh names predominated, even where marcher marriages are noted. The genealogies suggest the offspring of Maredudd and Joan, the daughter of Emerod Turberville, were all given Welsh names. Morgan Fychan's children were all similarly given Welsh names, despite their evidently close links with other marcher families. Likewise, similar names predominated: Morgan, Lleision, for example, suggesting that they were drawing upon a stock of names used by this dynasty. However, almost all of Sir Lleision's descendants up to the end of our period had names like John, Thomas and William.⁴⁴⁶ This corresponds to the marcher marriages, and could reflect the influence of Lleision's wife, Margaret, or indeed a desire by Lleision and his descendants to fit in with their marcher neighbours by using similar names. Conversely, the children of Sir Lleision's brother Rhys all had Welsh names, even though he too married into the Sully family. The contrast between the two branches is particularly evident. Naming practices seem to have been a matter of personal choice which Sir Lleision's descendants chose to adopt, while his brother did not. Of course, the lack of corroborating evidence for Rhys' marriage to Mawd suggests we perhaps should not draw too many conclusions from this.

Equally telling, from Sir Lleision onwards, the patronymic was dropped in favour of the distinctly French sounding 'de Avene' or 'Davene'. This was derived from 'of Afan' and was visible in numerous charters.⁴⁴⁷ This is in contrast to the forms of address used in previous charters and by Gwynllŵg and Senghennydd (with the exception of Hywel ab Iorwerth, who for a time used the title 'dominus de Caerleon').⁴⁴⁸ However, both of these other dynasties were in sharp decline by the later thirteenth century, losing much of their land to the Marshals and later the de Clare family.⁴⁴⁹

Taken together, the changes in naming practices and increase in cross-cultural marriages appear to have occurred at broadly similar times, in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, and occurred particularly under the auspices of Sir Lleision. These correspond with other changes undergone by the remnants of the Glamorgan dynasty (as we will see in later chapters), by which the dynasty 'rapidly became indistinguishable from the regular Anglo-Norman aristocracy within the lordship'.⁴⁵⁰ This likely reflects the declining

⁴⁴⁶ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 3, pp. 542 - 567

⁴⁴⁷ M. Altschul, 'The Lordship of Glamorgan and Morgannwg, 1217 – 1317', in Pugh (ed.), *The Glamorgan County History, Volume III*, pp.51-2.

⁴⁴⁸ We explore this further in Chapter 4 on titles. For examples within the charters, see Clark, *Cartae*, Vol.1 (1st edition) no.123, p.84.

⁴⁴⁹ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.36; pp.46-7; Davis, *Three Chevrans Red*, p.202

⁴⁵⁰ Altschul, 'The Lordship of Glamorgan and Morgannwg, 1217 – 1317.' p.52.

power of Welsh ruling families both in the local region and throughout Wales generally, which the house of Afan would have been all too aware of.

Geographically, most of the marriages were local in nature, following the same pattern already seen in Senghennydd and Gwent. While the Sully and de Barry families were located in other parts of Glamorgan, the Turbervilles of Coity were neighbours. The marriage of Morgan ap Caradog to a sister of the Lord Rhys is not that surprising considering the proximity of Deheubarth – perhaps more surprising is the number of marriages of the Lord Rhys' family members to other native dynasties, further east.⁴⁵¹ These together are indicative of the Lord Rhys' policies in southeast Wales, and the opportunities for such prestigious connections – in light of Gerald's words on the touchiness of the Welsh about their status – would likely have been welcomed by the rulers of Glamorgan and Senghennydd.

The *Uchelwyr*: Other Families in Glamorgan and Gwent

While there were three most prominent native Welsh dynasties in southeast Wales, there were a plethora of lesser families which also appear in the source material. These would have been less prominent landholders, dependants of the major dynasties – or indeed, of the marcher lords, depending upon where they found themselves.⁴⁵² These are most often referred to in contemporary sources as the *uchelwyr*.⁴⁵³ As mentioned, the line between these and the princely dynasties are sometimes blurred: Ifor Bach's grandfather is said to have been 'an Uchelwyr of Senghennydd', while, occasionally, smaller lords such as Seisyll ap Dyfnwal in Gwent Uwch Coed were prominent enough to be counted alongside the greater dynasties for a time. Many *uchelwyr* can be traced to cadet branches of the princely dynasties or were related to them by marriage. The trouble with such dynasties, of course, is that they appear so infrequently in the sources that we have only a brief glimpse of them. The picture of marriages and naming practices of these families is heavily reliant upon the genealogies, occasionally corroborated by charter or rolls evidence.

Upper Gwent

⁴⁵¹ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon Peniarth Ms.20 Version*, pp.70-1.

⁴⁵² For example, charters were often given 'with the consent of their lord', e.g. Clark, *Cartae*, Vol 2, (2nd edition), pp.393, 394, 447.

⁴⁵³ For examples of the use of the term, see Jones (ed and trans). *Brut y Tywysogyon*, (on *uchwelyr* of Gwent), or Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.221. Gerald uses the term 'local chieftains'. The term also appears in genealogies, for example, 'Uchelwyr o Sainhenydd' in *Achau Brenhinoedd a Thywysogion Cymru*. See Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, p.105.

One lordship for which we have tenuous evidence is that of upper Gwent, and we can piece together a tenuous picture of this dynasty. The best source of this dynasty is the *Brut y Tywysogion*. An entry for 1175 describes the Lord Rhys meeting King Henry II at Gloucester ‘taking with him all the princes of Wales who had incurred the King’s displeasure’ – including ‘Seisyll ab Dyfnwal of Higher Gwent, the man to whom Gwladus, Rhys’ sister, was then married.’ Seisyll is mentioned alongside the rulers of Gwynllŵg, Glamorgan, Senghenydd, Maelienydd, Elfael, and Gwerthrynion,⁴⁵⁴ although the emphasis of this passage is upon the familial relationship of most of these princes to the Lord Rhys. This suggests some sort of ‘shadowy lordship of upper Gwent’, as Crouch puts it, existed.⁴⁵⁵ However, the most dramatic event is this family’s destruction, as related by the *Brut* in the immediate aftermath of the 1175 conference:

And immediately after that, Seisyll ap Dyfnwal was slain through treachery in the castle of Abergavenny by the lord of Brycheiniog. And along with him Geoffrey, his son, and the best men of Gwent were slain. And the French made for Seisyll’s court; and after seizing Gwladus, his wife, they slew Cadwaladr, his son. And on that day there befell a pitiful massacre in Gwent. And from that time forth, after that treachery, none of the Welsh dared place trust in the French.⁴⁵⁶

Evidence of the dynasty in the source material is short lived. However, it is indicative of a site at Castell Arnallt has been tentatively identified as Seisyll’s court (See chapter 6).

An earlier entry in the *Brut* for 1171 suggests Seisyll had a son, Morgan, by Ddyddgu, daughter of Owain Wan, and was thus Iorwerth ab Owain’s brother in law. The entry suggests Morgan joined his uncle Iorwerth in attacking Caerleon, which had just been taken away from the Gwynllŵg dynasty.⁴⁵⁷ This matches Bartrum’s genealogies, which refer to Ddyddgu but not Gwladus. The phrase used by the chronicler for 1175 – ‘was then married’, may suggest Ddyddgu was Seisyll’s first wife (probably married before 1155 if their son Morgan took part in the 1171 attack on Caerleon) and that he later married Gwladus. Two other sons, Geoffrey and Cadwaladr, are mentioned in relation to the family’s destruction: this may imply they were sons of Gwladus, but we cannot be sure of this.

In terms of naming practices, the only name that stands out as being of Norman character is Geoffrey, though we cannot be sure of the inspiration for this. Seisyll’s marriages,

⁴⁵⁴ Jones (ed. and trans), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.70-1.

⁴⁵⁵ Crouch ‘The Slow Death of Kingship’, p.31.

⁴⁵⁶ Jones (ed. and trans), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version* p71.

⁴⁵⁷ Jones (ed. and trans), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version* p.66.

however, are more telling: assuming that Seisyll's son, Morgan, was born in wedlock. Both were to princely dynasties, rather than members of the *uchelwyr*. The first, to Dyddgu, would have established a connection with the ruling dynasty of Gwynllŵg, and, assuming that Seisyll's son, Morgan, would have been at least a teenager when assisting Iorwerth in his assault on Caerleon, this connection would have been during the tenure of Morgan ab Owain, a particularly influential figure (as we will see in Chapter 4), and the last of the dynasty to use the title *rex*.⁴⁵⁸ This would have been a useful match. The second marriage, to Gwerful, was a marriage into the pre-eminent Welsh dynasty of the day under the Lord Rhys, and this would have been, even more, perhaps, a feather in his cap. In light of the dramatic events of 1175, it is easy to believe that these matches may well have been designed to bring Seisyll allies against the machinations of the lords of Abergavenny.

The Dependents of Morgan ap Caradog

Another group for whom we can best build up a pedigree from sources other than the genealogies are the dependents of Morgan ap Caradog of Afan, in the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. The Margam charters show several generations of *uchelwyr*, descended from two brothers, John Du and Caradog Du, linked by marriages and owning lands next door to each other. The charters make it clear that they were dependents of Morgan ap Caradog, as many of these grants were made with his express permission.⁴⁵⁹ Family members and neighbouring members of the *uchelwyr* often appear as witnesses in their charters – and they often witnessed charters of their neighbours, in turn.⁴⁶⁰ Together they formed part of a network bound together in a complex web of relationships; a snapshot of the system which likely underpinned all the major princely dynasties.

The corroboration provided by the charters suggest that marriages and naming practices are reliably attested. There is little evidence of cross-cultural marriages, with Welsh names predominating, although the use of biblical names such as John are unusual and may indicate a continental influence from an early date. Gistellard too is an unusual name and together this could suggest connections to an Anglo-Norman family, although the limited information makes this impossible to ascertain. The use of the epithet 'Du' in this family: like the use of 'Coch' or 'Gam', is an alternative to the patronymic 'ap' sometimes observed in Welsh naming

⁴⁵⁸ Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship', p.35 – see also Chapter 4.

⁴⁵⁹ Clark, *Cartae*, Vol 2 (2nd Edition), p.184 and n. Clark includes a pedigree based on the charter evidence in the notes.

⁴⁶⁰ See Clark, *Cartae* Vol 2 (2nd Edition); W. Birch, *A History of Margam Abbey*, (London, 1897), pp.141-143.

practices. The marriages cemented ties to other local *uchelwyr* families (for example – Tatherech ferch Ketherech Du to Iorwerth ab Gistellard), again demonstrating the importance of local connections.

The ‘Ap Adam’ or Badam family

Several generations of the Ap Adam or Badam family served as stewards or seneschals of the lords of Machen and Caerleon in Gwent. *Crad(oco) dapifero* witnessed a charter of Morgan and Iorwerth ab Owain 1154x8, and *Cradoco senescallo* is also noted in a charter of Iorwerth's son Hywel, 1184x1217.⁴⁶¹ Caradog was succeeded as steward by his son Iorwerth, and a charter of 1184x1217 indicates that Iorwerth held considerable lands in Goldcliff and Caerleon.⁴⁶² His son, Adam, in turn succeeded as steward to Hywel's heir, Morgan, and is noted in a confirmation of 1246.⁴⁶³ *Senescallus* is the latinised form of the office of *Distain*, which, by the thirteenth century ‘was the prince's chief governmental officer, exercising a wide range of administrative, diplomatic and judicial duties. He was drawn from one of the premier families of the ruler's dominions.’⁴⁶⁴

Although Adam's marriage is not recorded, Bartrum, based on Joseph Bradney's *History of Monmouthshire*, suggests he had at least three sons: Adam Fychan, Nicholas, and Reginald, all three of whom were alive in 1246.⁴⁶⁵ Bradney's information ‘is largely from the papers of the late Mr Wakeman, and, though perhaps not altogether to be relied upon, is indicative of the descent of the families claiming from Adam Gwent.’⁴⁶⁶ The thirteenth and early-fourteenth century descendants of Adam ab Iorwerth are attested through sources such as the Calendar of Patent Rolls.⁴⁶⁷

The names Reginald, Nicholas and Adam may suggest at least some link with the Anglo-Normans, quite possibly entailing marriage of one of Adam's forbears into an Anglo-Norman family. Sadly, with no marriages recorded for the earlier members of this genealogy, this remains speculative. However, from Reginald onwards, the family consistently married into Anglo-Norman families. Reginald married Joan de Knoville, while his son, Sir John (d.1311),

⁴⁶¹ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.663-668.

⁴⁶² Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.473, pp.671-2.

⁴⁶³ *Calendar of the Charter Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office*, Vol.1 (London 1903), p.294; Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies, AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 1, p.4.

⁴⁶⁴ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.262-3.

⁴⁶⁵ J.A. Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire from the coming of the Normans into Wales down to the Present Time: Volume III – Part II: The Hundred of Usk* (London, 1923), pp.218; Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 - 1400*, Vol. 1, p.4.

⁴⁶⁶ Bradney, *The Hundred of Usk*, p.218.

⁴⁶⁷ Bradney, *The Hundred of Usk*, p.219.

married Elizabeth, daughter of John de Gurney of Beverstone Castle, Gloucestershire: John became a banneret and the lord of said castle, and he was summoned to Parliament in 1297.⁴⁶⁸ John's son, Sir Thomas (who died before 1342/3) married twice, first Margery, and later Joan, the daughter of Sir John Inge of Somerset.⁴⁶⁹

Apart from the proliferation of Anglo-Norman names in this family, the most obvious naming practice is the adoption of 'ab Adam' as a suffix, in a similar way to the adoption of 'de Avene' by the Glamorgan dynasty. Bradney writes that 'ab Adam' eventually became shorted to 'Badam', and he notes many descendants with both used as a suffix.⁴⁷⁰ Crouch and Bartrum both put this adoption with Sir John, presumably in the last few decades of the thirteenth century.⁴⁷¹ Clearly Adam ab Iorwerth was a major figure in this family's consciousness. The use of 'Abadam' is particularly interesting as, while being used in a similar way to English and continental family names, it harks back to a member of the dynasty who served as the stewards of the lords of Caerleon and Machen – presenting a seemingly contradictory image harking back to the native connections of their house while presenting a new English or continental style image. Although this family, for whom we have early evidence of heraldry and who Crouch describes (along with the de Avenes) as 'enthusiastic Anglicisers', the status of their connections with prominent native dynasties remained an important part of their identity.

It is interesting that the changes in naming practice date to the period after 1246, when the Lords of Machen and Caerleon, were in sharp decline,⁴⁷² and it is easy to imagine that the declining fortunes of this dynasty may have influenced this change in the Abadams. The location of their lands, not only near Caerleon but also further east near Chepstow and Beachley, may suggest another reason for their marriages in eastern Gwent and Gloucestershire, safeguarding their lands and improving their position with their immediate neighbours.⁴⁷³

Other Native *Uchelwyr*

There are a number of other families which appear mostly in the genealogies: for convenience, we will consider these together. The descendants of such families as those of Adam ab Ifor,

⁴⁶⁸ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.162.

⁴⁶⁹ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, Vol. 1 p.4.

⁴⁷⁰ Bradney, *The Hundred of Usk*, pp.218-219.

⁴⁷¹ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.162; Bradney, *The Hundred of Usk*, pp.218-219.

⁴⁷² D. Crouch, 'The Transformation of Medieval Gwent', p.33; P. Courtney, 'The Marcher Lordships', in Griffiths, Hopkins and Howell (eds.), *The Gwent County History Volume 2*, pp.50-1.

⁴⁷³ Bradney, *The Hundred of Usk*, pp.218-219.

Gwaithfoed of Gwent and Ynyr Gwent (as categorised by Bartrum), are several such, and they largely follow the pattern we see in the other families. Welsh names, and marriages to other individuals with Welsh names, predominate throughout our period. Cross-cultural marriages are occasionally noted, as are connections with more powerful dynasties (Adam ab Ifor, for example supposedly married Goleddydd, a daughter of Hywel Caerleon and was given 'Cwmwd Adam' as a dowry).⁴⁷⁴

Some branches of these families show a marked tendency for cross-cultural marriages. For example, some descendants of Ynyr Gwent (an uncle of Iestyn ap Gwrgant), married extensively into Norman families, and using names of continental or Anglo-Norman stock: Thomas, Charles, William, John, in marked contrast to other branches of this family.⁴⁷⁵ In the descendants of Gwaithfoed of Gwent, Philip Fychan of Christchurch married an unnamed daughter of Robert Calamor, and their daughter Catrin married Humphrey, the son of Ralph Langley.⁴⁷⁶ This family were based in eastern Gwent and this could explain the relatively high number of cross-cultural marriages.⁴⁷⁷

Anglo-Norman and 'Marcher' families

While, so far, we have introduced some of the Welsh families and examined their marriage and naming practices, concepts of cross-cultural marriages and naming practices have two sides. It's worth, here, introducing some of the marcher families, and considering the pattern – not only will this provide us with a point of comparison, but also allow us to understand of marriage and naming practices from an Anglo-Norman point of view.

The Earls of Gloucester and the de Clares

The Earls of Gloucester were amongst the most important and influential marcher lords in southeast Wales for the majority of this period. Robert Fitzhamon, who had been granted the barony of Gloucester by William II, is traditionally credited with the conquest of Glamorgan, largely down to a sixteenth century account of Sir Edward Stradling.⁴⁷⁸ Historians have since questioned the extent of Fitzhamon's conquests, but the barony later passed to his son-in-law, Robert of Gloucester (a natural son of Henry I); in 1121/2, he was made the first Earl of

⁴⁷⁴ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 - 1400*, Vol. 1 pp. 1 – 3.

⁴⁷⁵ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 4, pp.936 - 943

⁴⁷⁶ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 2, pp. 469-475

⁴⁷⁷ Bartrum notes many more such families showing similar trends – descendants of Cydifor Fawr, Einon ap Gollwn and Einon ap Rhiwallon amongst others.

⁴⁷⁸ Pryce, 'The Normans in Welsh History', pp.6-7.

Gloucester.⁴⁷⁹ Robert was the most prominent supporter of his sister Matilda during the anarchy, and died in 1147; he was succeeded by his son, Earl William (d.1183) – the earl who had troubles with Ifor Bach of Senghenydd. Earl William's daughters, Mabel, Amicia and Isabel, married Count Amaury, Richard de Clare, and John, Count of Mortain (later King John) respectively. After his death, the revenues of the earldom passed between the daughters and their husbands, until the de Clare right to the earldom was established in 1217. The Clares had gained extensive lands in England following the Norman conquest, and had held lands in Ceredigion during the twelfth century. One branch under Gilbert Strongbow, became Earls of Pembroke and lords of Netherwent.⁴⁸⁰ The Earldom of Gloucester added further interests in southeast Wales. The family retained their control for a century, until the death of the last Earl, Gilbert, at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

As major landholders of the realm, the Earls of Gloucester (whether descendants of Robert of Gloucester or members of the de Clare family), married primarily into other powerful families of Anglo-Norman origin. However, many of the matches reflect strong interests outside of Wales, especially in the case of the Clares, for whom their Welsh lands were just one aspect. Such matches include to the Lacy and Marshal families, the De Bruces (from whom was descended Robert the Bruce, king of Scotland), De Burgh and many others).⁴⁸¹ Cross-cultural marriages were not unknown, however. William of Gloucester's illegitimate daughter, Mabel, is thought to have married Gruffudd ab Ifor of Senghenydd.⁴⁸² We are on firmer ground with the later de Clares, Matilda (d.1234), marrying Rhys Gryg (son of the Lord Rhys) of Deheubarth. This was a relatively high profile match and is unsurprising considering the interests of the family in both southeast and west Wales.

Turberville

The Turberville family are first mentioned in Wales as followers of Robert, Earl of Gloucester in the early twelfth century.⁴⁸³ While their main holding in Glamorgan was the lordship of Coity, they also obtained lands in Ogmore by the marriage of Payn I into the De Londres family.⁴⁸⁴ This marriage is not recorded by Bartrum, who notes only the (possibly fictitious) marriage of Payn I to Sara ferch Morgan (granddaughter of Iestyn ap Gwrgan's brother).⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁹ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, p.3.

⁴⁸⁰ Davis, *Three Chevrons Red*, pp.26-33; 49-78; 123-131.

⁴⁸¹ Davis, *Three Chevrons Red*, p.viii.

⁴⁸² Clark, *Cartae* Vol 1 (2nd edition, 1910), p.149n; Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, p.115.

⁴⁸³ Crouch, 'Turberville [De Turberville] family', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online edn.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁵ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol.3, pp.542 – 567; Vol. 4, pp. 922 – 927.

The Turbervilles were amongst the most prominent marchers in southeast Wales, behind the Earls of Gloucester: they held lands in Dorset and Devon, as well as in Glamorgan, and Payn (iii) was keeper of Glamorgan after the death of Gilbert de Clare in 1314, until his removal in 1316 amidst Welsh unrest.⁴⁸⁶ They continued to hold the honour of Coity until at least 1366, although cadet branches of the family survived into the sixteenth century.⁴⁸⁷

In stark contrast to the Earls of Gloucester, the Turberville family are known to have extensively married into Welsh families.⁴⁸⁸ In addition to Payn I's marriage to Sara ferch Morgan, his great-grandson Gilbert II married Mallt, the daughter of Morgan Gam of Afan. Gilbert's nephew Robert (or Roger) married Gwerful, the daughter of Hywel Caerllion, whilst two of his sisters also married Welshmen. Robert's grandsons were given Welsh names such as Seisyll Fychan and Gruffudd.⁴⁸⁹ As with native Welsh families, some branches were more given to cross-cultural marriages than others, and, in contrast to the Welsh, the main branch of the family were most given to marrying into other Norman families (and more likely to marry further afield geographically); cadet branches were far more likely to marry into Welsh families. This inversion of Welsh practice (where the main branches were more likely to marry into Norman families),⁴⁹⁰ suggests that on all levels, marriage into Norman families was a boost to their status; cadet branches, with less influence, may have had more to gain from marriages into Welsh families, conceivably securing their position in local society.

Naming practices of this family are an interesting case study. Payn (iii) married Gwenllian, the daughter of Richard Talbot, another family of mixed heritage. Of their offspring, sons were given Anglo-Norman or continental names, such as Gilbert or Richard, and the daughters given Welsh names (or Cambricised forms of names) such as Catrin or Sara. In such cross-cultural marriages, influence on naming practices came from both sides, but seemingly sons were more likely to be given Anglo-Norman names if their father was Norman, while daughters were more likely to be given Welsh names if their mother was Welsh. The recurring use of names such as Gilbert and Payn, suggest a distinct pool of names were drawn upon, in a similar way to other dynasties – both marcher and Welsh.

As a marcher family they may have been integrated into a wider Anglo-Norman world, but the large number of relatively local marriages shows a similar pattern to the Welsh families

⁴⁸⁶ Clark, *Cartae* Vol 2 (2nd edition 1910), pp.305n; 649-54.

⁴⁸⁷ Crouch, 'Turberville [De Turberville] family', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online edn.

⁴⁸⁸ Clark, *Cartae* Vol 2 (2nd edition 1910), p.305n.

⁴⁸⁹ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 4, pp. 922 – 927.

⁴⁹⁰ For example, Gilbert IV to Cecily the daughter of John, Lord Beauchamp of Mache, see Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 4, pp. 922 – 927.

already seen, and the high proportion of such marriages, which may have been important in consolidating their position in Glamorgan. Cadet branches of the family (in which Welsh marriage and naming practices were most common) spread throughout the southeast to appear at Crycywel, Abergaveny and Ewyas amongst other places.⁴⁹¹

Lacy

The Lacy family originated in Normandy and, following the Norman conquest of England, was given land in the South Wales marches by William I.⁴⁹² Alongside being major landholders elsewhere in England and Ireland, they remained a significant marcher family in the marches, centred on Weobley, Herefordshire, into the thirteenth century. Colin Veach writes that the family:

Chose increasingly to eschew the traditional closed frontier identity by fashioning marriage alliances that were truly ecumenical. Hugh and Walter de Lacy contracted marriages for themselves or their children with members of every region they touched: English, Norman, Irish (colonist and native), Welsh (marcher and native) and, of course, with families who held in several realms.⁴⁹³

Hugh de Lacy (d.1186), married Rose of Monmouth, a daughter of Baderon, the lord of Monmouth, and Rose de Clare, in doing so linking the Lacy family to two prominent families of the southern Welsh marches.⁴⁹⁴ However, in 1171 Hugh accompanied Henry II to Ireland, and was granted the kingdom of Meath (Mide). His second marriage was to a daughter of Ruaidri, the king of Connaught and high king of Ireland, suggesting his priorities lay in consolidating his new position there.⁴⁹⁵

Cross-cultural marriages between the Lacy family and the Welsh are occasionally evidenced. An unnamed daughter of Hugh and Rose of Monmouth married Madog ap Gruffudd of Powys, whilst William 'Gorm', the son of Hugh and his second wife, married Gwenllïan, daughter of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth of Gwynedd. Hugh's granddaughter, Juliana, married

⁴⁹¹ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 4, pp. 922 – 927.

⁴⁹² C.P. Lewis, 'Walter de Lacy', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* Online edn. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-15863?rskey=uBRdw7&result=1> (Accessed 24/05/2018).

⁴⁹³ C. Veach, *Lordship in Four Realms: The Lacy Family, 1166 – 1241* (Manchester 2014), p.266

⁴⁹⁴ Veach, *Lordship in Four Realms*, p. 266

⁴⁹⁵ Veach, *Lordship in Four Realms*, p.267

Maredudd ap Rhobert (d.1244), the ruler of Cedewain, described in the *Brut* as ‘most eminent counsellor of Wales.’⁴⁹⁶

In short, the Lacy family used marriages to enhance their position in the march, with connections to the Lords of Monmouth and de Clare. Most of the marriages (including to Welsh individuals) were concerned with the middle march, indicate that this family sought to establish connections with the most powerful individuals with a wider focus than some of their counterparts. The connections with Powys, Cedwain and the Gwynedd of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth (who himself had interests in the middle march), all reinforce this.

Others

There are many other examples of marcher families with considerable marriage ties, and which follow a similar pattern to those we have already discussed, and as such, we deal with them more swiftly. Smaller families of (at least initial) Anglo-Norman origin, their holdings in the marches were from the outset central parts of their lands. They occupied a similar position to the lesser Welsh princely dynasties or more powerful of the *uchelwyr*. The Grant, Wynston, Bennet and Bredwardine families are all examples.⁴⁹⁷ As far as marriage practices went, marriages into other, similar families seem to have been most common, with occasional marriages into the top tier of marcher dynasties.⁴⁹⁸ The Grant family, for example, were constables of Montgomery but became prominent in southeast Wales, marrying into the Clare and Maelog families.⁴⁹⁹ Marriages into Welsh families was occasional, but concentrations of them – along with changing naming practices – suggest some branches of certain families integrated extensively. A branch of the Grant family married into an *uchelwyr* family of Glynedd,⁵⁰⁰ and subsequently many further marriages into Welsh families are recorded around the early fourteenth century – along with a corresponding rise in the use of Welsh names.⁵⁰¹ This shows parallels with Lleision de Avene’s branch of the Glamorgan dynasty: albeit from the opposite direction.

The changes in the marriages of these dynasties reflect their local priorities, and changes in naming practice suggest that their identity became increasingly ambiguous. In many

⁴⁹⁶ Jones (ed. and trans), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, p.106; Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.5-6.

⁴⁹⁷ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 3, p.25, p.137, p.307, pp.439-442, pp.933-4.

⁴⁹⁸ Sir Gilbert Wynston’s marriage to the daughter of William de Valence, Earl of Pembroke. Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 4, pp.933-934

⁴⁹⁹ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 3, pp.439-442

⁵⁰⁰ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 3, p.307.

⁵⁰¹ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 3, pp.439-442

ways, this is exemplified through the case of the Maelog family. They occupied a particularly ambiguous position. The earliest reference is to Sir Ralph Maelog, lord of Llystalybont, probably in the later eleventh or early twelfth century – although this is only noted by ‘the Welsh genealogists, with their usual neglect of dates or evidences’, suggesting such entries could be apocryphal.⁵⁰² However, they were certainly important later on: the extent of 1262 shows William Maelog holding half a knight’s fee.⁵⁰³ ‘Sir Ralph’ – both the knighthood and name, would suggest Anglo-Norman connections, and his descendants would use continental style names, which frequently repeated, such as Ralph, Roger, Richard and William.⁵⁰⁴ This suggests they drew upon a discrete pool of names in a similar way to other families. However, Sir Ralph’s daughter supposedly married into a Welsh family, a practice repeated in the thirteenth century, suggesting strong connections with their Welsh counterparts, particularly the Welsh families of Senghenydd: William Maelog (fl.1264), married his cousin, a daughter of Rhys ap Gruffudd of Senghennydd: their daughter married Llywelyn ap Cynfrig, a landholder of Senghenydd who stayed loyal to the king during the 1316 rebellion of Llywelyn Bren, possibly known as the lord of Llantriddyd and Radyr, who may have later hosted the poet Casnodyn.⁵⁰⁵ Additionally, marriages into the Grant and Cantilupe families were recorded, amongst others.⁵⁰⁶ While some of the entries may reflect retrospective connections made by later genealogists, a similar pattern is repeated in other evidence.

This family’s position somewhere between the native Welsh and marcher lords is also exemplified by the charter evidence. One Ralph Maelog, an ecclesiastic and canon of Llandaff of the early thirteenth century, witnessed many charters, of both native Welsh and Anglo-Norman marcher lords, including members of the Glamorgan dynasty (Morgan ap Caradog, Lleision ap Morgan, Morgan Gam, and Morgan ab Owain), Isabella, Countess of Gloucester, Robert de Boneville, David Scurlage and others.⁵⁰⁷ This may have more to do with the involvement of the chapter Llandaff in such matters, than Ralph’s influence itself, but indicates how churchmen could bridge this gap: usually, charters of Welsh individuals were witnessed by individuals with Welsh names, and those of Anglo-Norman individuals witnessed by

⁵⁰² G.T. Clark, ‘Contribution towards a Cartulary of Margam’, *Archaeologia Cambrensis Third Series* 53 (1868), pp.49-51.

⁵⁰³ Clark, *Cartae*, Vol.2 (2nd edition), p.651.

⁵⁰⁴ Clark, ‘Contribution towards a Cartulary of Margam’, pp.49-51.

⁵⁰⁵ Clark, ‘Contribution towards a Cartulary of Margam’, pp.49-51; Lewis, ‘The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg down to the middle of the Sixteenth Century’, pp.482-3; Smith ‘The Rebellion of Llywelyn Bren’, pp.84-86; Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 – 1400*, Vol. 3, p.660

⁵⁰⁶ Clark, ‘Contribution towards a Cartulary of Margam’, pp.49-51.

⁵⁰⁷ Clark, *Cartae*, Vol 2 (2nd edition 1910), p.434; Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.289-315; Birch, *A History of Margam Abbey*, p.125-151.

individuals with Anglo-Norman names.⁵⁰⁸ Furthermore, in the extent of 1262 the family appear at the end of the list of Anglo-Norman lords and immediately before the Welsh lords of Senghenydd, Gwynllŵg and Glamorgan.⁵⁰⁹ These factors all suggest that the Maelog family occupied a position somewhere between that of Welsh and Anglo-Norman lords, and that their identity may have been equally ambiguous; something which marriages and naming practices suggest, commonly occurred (albeit to different extents), in many of the families of the march.

Conclusion

The combined genealogical, charter, chronicle and other evidence, has shown a number of consistently apparent trends in marriage and naming practices. The first is that while there are plentiful references to cross-cultural marriages, most individuals with Welsh names tended to marry other individuals with Welsh names, and the same held true for their Anglo-Norman counterparts. This is true regardless of the importance of the families in question. This being the case, cross-cultural marriages can tell us more about the local situation. The evidence suggests a general increase in cross-cultural marriages and naming practices over the course of the period, indicating increased integration, they did not necessarily follow on from each other.

The naming patterns suggest the culture of the father and mother was a significant factor in determining the name of offspring. In a cross-cultural marriage between an Anglo-Norman man and a Welsh woman, Anglo-Norman names predominated for male offspring, while female offspring were more likely to have Welsh names. In a reverse situation, with a Welsh man and Anglo-Norman woman, the situation is less clear cut: the children of Sir Lleision de Avene and Margaret Sully were given Anglo-Norman names. This suggests correlation between Welsh rulers participating in cross-cultural marriages and a desire to integrate, although this family could well be exceptional. Perhaps more startling is the parallel situation in some branches of marcher families, such as Turberville and Grant, where offspring were given Welsh names.

Perhaps the most striking trend is the distinct clusters of cross-cultural marriages within single branches of families, or at a certain period in a family's history, often over several consecutive generations. Certain branches such as the Avene or Abadam families extensively intermarried, in contrast to other branches, and in such cases were also likely to use Anglo-Norman naming practices. We must view this from the perspective of both their ambitions and,

⁵⁰⁸ See also Chapter 7.

⁵⁰⁹ Clark, *Cartae*, Vol 2 (2nd edition), p.651.

the changing political geography. The disinheritance of most of the princely dynasties in southeast Wales – as well as the involvement of some of the leading *uchelwyr* clans in the rebellions of 1294-5 and 1316 – must have affected this. It is tempting to link this with a general decline in native political power in the later thirteenth century with the Edwardian campaigns in north Wales, but this was a process which was already underway in the 1240s in the south. A change in the demographics – with the decline in status of some native families – coupled with a renewed incentive to marry into marcher families – could explain this. Marriages could also lay the groundwork for the development of further connections between families as the complex web holding them together deepened. In families of Anglo-Norman origin too, cross-cultural marriages were more common: the Turbervilles, Bennets and Bredwardins, for example.

Another distinct trend is the geographical pattern of marriages. While the distances involved in southeast Wales are not very great, marriages to relatively local individuals appear to have been the most common. This is likely to reflect the importance of good relations between neighbours. This may also show that fostering these local ties may have been an important priority: it is easy to envisage that such marriages would have tangible results. Likewise, from an emotional perspective, there would conceivably have been the greatest opportunity for contact between neighbours. The more powerful marcher lords and princely dynasties were more likely to marry further afield, reflecting their wider political ambitions, as well as (for the marcher lords at least), that this region was just one interest of several. The marriages of the greater families were to families of similar status, and where this entailed intermarriage, their Welsh counterparts were particularly prominent: Rhys Gryg of Deheubarth or Llywelyn ab Iorwerth of Gwynedd, for example.⁵¹⁰

Additionally, families of eastern Gwent (especially those whose lands were along the borders with Gloucestershire and Herefordshire), appear to have had a greater tendency to marry into Anglo-Norman families than their counterparts further west: this may be explained as another reflection of the predominately local nature of family connections: a higher proportion of Anglo-Norman neighbours leading to more Anglo-Norman and Welsh marriages in the area. The Abadam family are an excellent example.

The political ambitions of the native dynasties led them to make not only marriage alliances with their Anglo-Norman neighbours, but also with other native dynasties elsewhere

⁵¹⁰ Matilda de Clare to Rhys Gryg of Deheubarth or William 'Gorm' (Lacy) to Gwenllïan ferch Llywelyn ab Iorwerth.

in Wales. are one example, or the many connections to the female kin of Rhys ap Gruffudd of Deheubarth. The latter examples are particularly striking and clearly reflected the ambitions of the Lord Rhys in respect of his own position, not only in southeast Wales, but more widely as well. A further example - Hywel Caerleon's match with Gwerful, daughter of Owain Cyfeiliog, is interesting as both Hywel and Owain worked closely with the English for much of their careers,⁵¹¹ and it interesting to speculate whether their similar political allegiances was a factor in the match.

A New Approach?

As can be seen, cross-cultural intermarriage and naming practices – alongside other changes which we explore in the following chapters – makes it increasingly difficult to sustain a binary division into families of 'Welsh' and 'Anglo-Norman' origin as the period progresses, while at the same time it is very hard as a historian to get away from such terms. Historians have attempted to use 'marcher' or 'Cambro-Norman' or 'Anglo-Welsh' to reconcile this, and studies of other regions, such as Ireland, have sought to define this middle ground.⁵¹² However, families with both Welsh and Anglo-Norman origins did not form a single homogenous group halfway between two extremes, instead their characteristics vary widely, and each chose to intermarry and choose Anglo-Norman or continental names to a differing extent. This all begs the question: should we be considering a new approach to this issue, and how can we define it?

Perhaps we can consider these families as occupying a place on a sliding cultural scale, with 'Welsh' at one end and 'Anglo-Norman' at the other – and instead of speaking of origins, of we can perhaps divine their priorities by seeing at which point along this scale they might lie. As Bartlett suggests, descent can only take us so far in defining culture; choices are more telling.⁵¹³ Even so, we cannot assign a permanent place on this scale to each family – as their circumstances and priorities changed over time, so their marriage and naming practices changed. Whilst such a scale is highly subjective, in light of the evidence and is not a perfect way of presenting this, it does illustrate the complexity of the situation. A challenge with this is that it still provides a two-dimensional view between Norman and Welsh. Alternatively we could consider a scale with extensive cross-cultural borrowing at one end, and little cultural borrowing at the other: this could reflect any form of cultural borrowing.

⁵¹¹ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.102-3;

⁵¹² Veach 'Anglicization in medieval Ireland, was there a Gaelic Irish 'middle nation'?' pp.118 -138.

⁵¹³ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.197.

At one extreme of this scale we have families who forged extensive cross-cultural links, including marriages, and the extensive imitation of Anglo-Norman or English naming practices: families who borrowed from, emulated and integrated with their neighbours. The De Avene family are a good example, with their marriages into the Sully family, the adoption of characteristically English and continental names such as John and Thomas, and the adoption of the suffix 'de Avene (or Davene) itself. We can view in a similar light the Abadam family with their marriages to neighbours and interests in eastern Gwent and Gloucestershire, and their adoption of the 'Abadam' suffix as a surname. This is a pattern mirrored in some branches of the Turberville and Maelog families that extensively integrated into local society. This is not to say that the circumstances surrounding the families were the same, especially as families of Anglo-Norman origin had more extensive interests beyond Wales, and it is thus important that we consider them on a case by case basis; their position is still highly subjective.

We could place other families further along the scale, from those where there were some cross-cultural marriages and cross-cultural naming practices were employed, but to a lesser extent, such as the 'Gwirfaeth' family, or, from an originally Anglo-Norman perspective, the Grants, Bredwardines and many others. At the other end of the scale we have families for which there is less evidence of cross-cultural marriages or the use of cross-cultural names, where changes in naming practices appear to have been adopted much more slowly. This includes the other major dynasties of Gwynllŵg and Senghennydd, the cadet branches of the Glamorgan dynasty that did not become the de Avenes. The greater marcher lords, such as the Lacy and Clare families, are at the far end of the scale, with just a few recorded instances of cross-cultural marriages, and those to the most powerful Welsh dynasties of Gwynedd and Deheubarth.

Of course, there are many further families about which we simply have too little information to understand their marital connections with any certainty. Our reliance on the genealogies makes this particularly difficult. Nevertheless, marriage and naming practices are notable for their variety. Marriages could provide opportunities, whether forging good local relationships with neighbours, as part of a wider political move to secure a position or gain more lands, or increase social standing – as well, of course, as emotional considerations, they were an important part of life and culture. Gerald of Wales's assessment, overblown as it may, contained more than just a kernel of truth: to the Welsh status was important, and family and marriages were certainly a part of that: and would be into the early modern period, if the sheer amount of genealogical material is anything to go by. But this, too, could equally apply to the marcher lords. But far and away the most striking is through cross-cultural marriages and

Chapter 3: What's in a Name? Marriage, the Family and Naming Practices

naming practices we can see the blurring of the boundaries of what it meant to be 'Welsh' and 'Norman', to a point where this becomes a distinction difficult to sustain. How far this extended to other areas of life, and especially other methods of projecting an identity, we turn to in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4: Image and Perception, the Written and Spoken Word

Introduction

In the previous chapter we introduced members of the Welsh ruling dynasties and *uchelwyr* alongside their Anglo-Norman counterparts, and explored how marriages and naming practices could be used to understand cultural change, including conscious attempts at imitating and integrating with their neighbours, and their importance in projecting the cultural identity of an individual or dynasty. Here, we consider charters and other forms of written (and sometimes spoken) evidence showing evidence of imitation and emulation which could be used to project a cultural identity, and hence understand the motives behind this imitation and to understand levels of Anglo-Welsh integration. For example, we explore how members of the princely dynasties and *uchelwyr* used words to project an identity, whether the image presented through words was any different to visual one, and the audience for which these forms of representation were intended. How far did individuals from southeast Wales imitate their neighbours in the way they utilised charters, did they conform to forms of representation evident in pre-Norman Wales, and how far did they base their projected identity on Anglo-Norman or English forms of representation? What were these projected identities intended to convey?

Words, whether written or spoken, provide many ways for people to express their identities. Their use could be very brief, as with formal titles, where just one or two words could be laden with meaning, conveying much about an individual's cultural identity in a way designed to be perceived and interpreted quickly. Equally, whole phrases or entire documents could be used to portray allegiances and demonstrate varying cultural influences: for this we shall focus upon the diplomatic used in charters, letters and other official documents, where we can compare terminology, form and layout for clues as to an individual's cultural identity, especially signs of cultural emulation and how they integrated with their neighbours. Beyond such official documents, poetry or tales, (often commissioned by the princes themselves or intended for their own ears) used words to portray an image of an individual.

As an interesting counterpoint to such documents, we have those which provide an outside viewpoint of how individuals were perceived by others, rather than how they wanted to be seen. While charters and poetry were often written directly for the people involved, other sources provide an 'outside' viewpoint. Chronicles or exchequer records are such sources, often written far away from the individuals involved or by people with only a marginal interest

in the area. As well as providing an image of how individuals were perceived by others, they also provide contextual information.

Drawing together disparate source types is important: titles within charters, for example, provide the ruler's intended image, while chronicles show whether this was how they were actually perceived. As seen in Chapter 2, the Margam collection of charters makes them especially important. For poetry, while examples from southeast Wales are rare at this period, we can supplement them with references from other sources. Finally, for how Welsh individuals were perceived by others, we have not only chronicle and charter evidence of both Welsh and Anglo-Norman origin, but the close and pipe rolls, which survive in increasing numbers from the thirteenth century onwards, and also charters issued by Anglo-Norman kings and lords, which may indicate how Welsh individuals were seen in English circles.

Input, Audience and Reliability

Vital to any discussion of how far individuals in Wales projected their identity through words, we need to consider how far these individuals had influence over the form of the words that went into the sources, whether charters, prose or poetry. It is also important to understand the audience for which they were intended. This helps us understand the documents' usefulness.

These answers vary depending upon the unique context of each source. The primary motivation behind charter writing, for example, was to record land grants: the written word was recognised in medieval societies (to various degrees) as proof of ownership.⁵¹⁴ The written charter provided proof which could be used years or centuries after the event, should a dispute arise. As such, scholars argue that the writing down of such documents were driven primarily by the beneficiaries, rather than the grantor.⁵¹⁵ Furthermore, as most beneficiaries of surviving documents were ecclesiastical institutions (especially large monastic establishments), then the conventions of charter writing itself was likely driven by their needs too.⁵¹⁶ This was true in Wales as everywhere else. Indeed, Welsh monastic houses were the beneficiaries of the vast majority of surviving charters by the native Welsh dynasties. It is often for this reason that they have survived.⁵¹⁷ While a secretarial administration slowly burgeoned in association with the English Chancery and, to a lesser extent, the Earldom of Gloucester and other marcher

⁵¹⁴ W. Davies 'Charter-writing and its uses in early medieval Celtic societies', in Pryce, (ed.), *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, pp.102-104.

⁵¹⁵ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.138-9; C. Insley, 'Kings, Lords, Charters, and the Political Culture of Twelfth Century Wales', in C.P. Lewis (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies: XXX Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2007* (Woodbridge, 2008), p.143.

⁵¹⁶ Davies, 'Charter-writing', pp.102-104; Flanagan 'The context and uses of the Latin Charter', p.117.

⁵¹⁷ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers 1120 – 1283*, p.55.

lordships, most of the evidence points to the Church, and especially monastic houses of Margam, as the main place of writing, including charter production.⁵¹⁸ The members of the native Welsh dynasties and *uchelwyr* in which we are interested usually appear as the donors.

If charters were drawn up by the beneficiaries, a fundamental question is how much input grantors had in their creation – and thus how far individuals used them to present an image or project notions of their own authority. In general, there is evidence that the grantors did have influence over what went into a document, at least as far as titles and certain formulae went. Marie Therese Flanagan has written that, in the context of twelfth-century Ireland, the Latin charter was introduced as part of the ‘reform movement which dominated the western church from about 1050 onwards...one of the by-products of the church reform movement was the promotion of an international culture.’⁵¹⁹ While largely driven by the ecclesiastical beneficiaries, Flanagan suggests that the charters were ‘clearly the product of collaboration between Irish kings and ecclesiastics’, with secular Irish rulers, such as Diarmait Mac Murchada, using the charters ‘as a vehicle of self-proclamation and self-aggrandizement’.⁵²⁰ Through the format of the charters, the use of royal titles, and conversely the omission of titles to other Irish kings mentioned in some of these charters, Diarmait, writes Flanagan, was using it as a method to ‘emphasize Mac Murchada’s claims as overking of Leinster and were very deliberate choices on the part of the drafter.’⁵²¹

For Wales, historians suggest that titles employed within charters reflected the form in which native rulers sought to display their authority. Crouch writes: ‘The writers of charters were men attentive to the pretensions of those for whom they wrote. The style of the issuer of the charter carried a message to its reader or auditor, it stated his dignity and pretensions.’⁵²² Insley and Pryce suggest the notion of sealing and authentication implies a measure of control: the grantors (or their representatives), ‘would surely have had an interest in making sure that what went out under the seal was acceptable.’⁵²³ This is reinforced by the fact that charters to different beneficiaries nevertheless used the same style when referring to a particular ruler. For example, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth of Gwynedd used *Lewelinus princeps Norwallie* in grants to Haughmond Priory, Strata Marcella Abbey (amongst many others), and in letters to Henry III and Philip Augustus of France: the same pattern is seen with his later title *Princeps Aberfrau*,

⁵¹⁸ Patterson, *The Scriptorium of Margam Abbey and the Scribes of Early Angevin Glamorgan*, pp.20-42.

⁵¹⁹ Flanagan, ‘The context and uses of the Latin Charter’, p.114.

⁵²⁰ Flanagan, ‘The context and uses of the Latin Charter’, p.118.

⁵²¹ Flanagan, ‘The context and uses of the Latin Charter’, pp.117-8.

⁵²² Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.89.

⁵²³ Insley, ‘Kings, Lords, Charters’, p.144.

dominus Snawdini. In southeast Wales, Hywel ab Iorwerth of Gwynllŵg (d.c.1216) was referred to as *dominus Hywel de Caerleon* in charters to both Goldcliff Priory, Llantarnam Abbey and in a grant to Iorwerth son of Caradog the seneschal.⁵²⁴

A separate question is how far native rulers had influence over charter diplomatic. Insley writes that: ‘It is very likely that beneficiary diplomatic dominated charter production in twelfth-century Wales, although it is equally likely that correspondence was drafted by clerks working for a princely or lordly household on a permanent or, perhaps more likely, ad hoc basis.’⁵²⁵ This would be particularly true for letters and letters patent (and where ecclesiastical institutions were not the beneficiaries). Furthermore, Pryce suggests that variations in diplomatic and forms of address within charters issued to the same religious house, may indicate that some documents were drawn up by clerks working for the grantor: he gives the example of the phrase *has litteras visuris vel audituris* of charters of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth of Gwynedd. However, he cautions that this is difficult to establish, and that this is only visible in thirteenth-century Gwynedd. The charter collection for Gwynedd is not only the largest from the native dynasties but also more complex, with many more letters and letters patent, and this, alongside other indications, suggest the development of some form of princely secretariat.⁵²⁶ In southeast Wales, by contrast, only one example exists of a cleric noted in service to a native ruler (Hywel ab Iorwerth of Gwynllŵg), who may, very tentatively, be associated with the production of a charter.⁵²⁷ This stands in contrast with the development of a baronial secretariat and especially in contrast to the well-developed administrations of the monastic houses, which makes it likely that they would have dominated charter production.⁵²⁸ While grantor input over styles is most convincing, their influence over diplomatic remains unclear. As such, our discussion will focus on titles.

Titles, the Patronymic and Toponymic in southeast Wales

We begin our case study by considering titles. As a way in which a single word can be laden with meaning concerning the pretensions, ambitions and status of an individual, they have attracted attention from scholars concerned with the projection of power.⁵²⁹ Most scholars highlight a change in the use of titles over the course of the period, from ‘kingly’ titles such as

⁵²⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.344-445, 671-6.

⁵²⁵ Insley, ‘Kings, Lords, Charters’, p.143; Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.133.

⁵²⁶ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.133-141.

⁵²⁷ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.119; p.133.

⁵²⁸ Patterson, *The Scriptorium of Margam Abbey and the Scribes of Early Angevin Glamorgan*, pp.20-42.

⁵²⁹ Insley, ‘Kings, Lords, Charters’, pp.145 – 148;

Rex to the use of alternative titles, such as lord (*dominus*) or prince (*princeps*). The context and use of these titles have been subject to debate by many historians, with the Princes of Gwynedd and Deheubarth being particularly discussed.⁵³⁰ David Stephenson charts this change in particular for the rulers of Powys.⁵³¹ While this change was once seen as something which was forced upon them, more recent interpretations suggest that this could have been a conscious choice by the Welsh.⁵³² On the other hand, Crouch also suggests that the rulers of Powys changed their titles from ‘prince’ to ‘lord’ (*Dominus, arglwydd*) under pressure from the rulers of Gwynedd in the 1260s, suggesting that outside pressures could also have been a factor.⁵³³ Though this conscious adoption of new titles may have been in imitation of others, it is suggested that this may have been an attempt to reinvent their identities – to differentiate rather than imitate or integrate, and given the variety of terms used, the motivation for this change clearly depended on individual circumstances. We will revisit some examples from Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth later, in comparison with southeast Wales and Anglo-Norman practice.

For southeast Wales, discussions on this topic have been more limited, Crouch charts the decline of ‘kingship’ in the Gwynllŵg dynasty in the later eleventh and early twelfth centuries,⁵³⁴ and other historians have mentioned how individuals from southeast Wales may have used titles, albeit briefly in comparison with other parts of Wales.⁵³⁵ Kingship in pre-Norman Wales did not necessarily conform to later English and French notions of kingship: such kings could be relatively minor powers, the titles without any connotations of rule over a single people, and many Welsh kings would have coexisted contemporaneously.⁵³⁶ For our purposes, we reanalyse the findings of historians from the perspective of the southeast, comparing practices within the native dynasties, the marcher lords and practices further afield. It is also important to compare the practices of the native dynasties with the *uchelwyr*, and in this we revisit some themes from the previous chapter on naming practices.

The Patronymic

A brief glance at the sources, including the ‘first hand’ evidence of charters for the period and the ‘outside’ view of chronicles, suggests that the most common form of address used by

⁵³⁰ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, p.682; Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p. 221-239; D. Carpenter, *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066 – 1284*, (London, 2004), pp.214-5.

⁵³¹ Stephenson, *Medieval Powys*.

⁵³² Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.86; cf. Jones-Pierce, ‘The Age of the Princes’, pp.28-9.

⁵³³ Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, p.94.

⁵³⁴ Crouch, ‘The Slow Death of Kingship’, pp.20-41

⁵³⁵ Insley, ‘Kings, Lords, Charters’, pp.146-7; Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.116-7.

⁵³⁶ Crouch, ‘Slow Death of Kingship’, pp.20-1.

individuals from Welsh families at this period was the patronymic – the ‘x son of y’ (or more rarely x daughter of y) formula, usually without any embellishment or title.⁵³⁷ Other forms of address, such as the toponymic (of x), the use of titles and other epithets were much less common. While it is impracticable to name every example – it is much easier to mention the exceptions than the rule – but we can mention a few.

Liber Landavensis displays this formula from charters purportedly belonging to the sixth century, all the way through until the later eleventh century. Even members of royal dynasties were referred to using this simple method.⁵³⁸ While the authenticity of the grants in *Liber Landavensis* have been questioned,⁵³⁹ the general use of this formula is backed up by other sources. Throughout the early medieval period, the epigraphic evidence from across Wales uses similar formulae.⁵⁴⁰ The *Brut y Tywysogion* likewise usually refers to Welsh individuals using the patronymic, throughout the period covered by the chronicle. For example, Gruffudd ap Rhydderch (1056) (*ruffudd vab rhydderch*) and Morgan ab Hywel (1244), (*Morgant vab Hywel*), from two centuries apart, are referred to identically.⁵⁴¹ Later charters, which due to their abundance from the mid-twelfth century are especially important, display a similar trend. To give just a few examples from the princely dynasties, for the Afan dynasty we have *Morganus filius Caradoci*, for a charter of 1169x1199; *Morganus filius Morgani* for his son 1217x1241.⁵⁴² This simple formula was exactly the same one used by members of the lesser nobility, or *uchelwyr*: a contemporary of Morgan ap Caradog, *Gruffudd ap Kaderoth*, is mentioned in a charter of 1175 – 1208. Gerald of Wales himself commented upon the proclivity of the Welsh for stressing their familial associations,⁵⁴³ and use of the patronymic fits well within this viewpoint.

That the patronymic was the usual form of address for Welsh individuals is reinforced by outside sources, which usually also refer to Welsh individuals in this way. In one of the few references to individuals from our study area, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle mentions Caradog ap Gruffudd of Glamorgan (Caradoc son of Griffin), without any additional title.⁵⁴⁴ Within

⁵³⁷ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.96-7.

⁵³⁸ W.J. Rees (ed.), *Liber Landavensis* (Llandoverly, 1840).

⁵³⁹ See Chapter 2 for the reliability of *Liber Landavensis*.

⁵⁴⁰ The ‘x filius y’ (or ‘x maqi y’) formulae appear in numerous examples. See M. Redknap and J.M. Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stone and Stone Sculpture: Volume I, Southeast Wales* (Cardiff, 2007), p.132; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp.116-173.

⁵⁴¹ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, (Caerdydd, 1941), pp.14, 18, 106, 200.

⁵⁴² NLW Penrice and Margam Roll 2090/3; Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No. 465, pp.664-5; NLW Penrice and Margam Roll 543/20.

⁵⁴³ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.251. See also Chapter 3 of this thesis.

⁵⁴⁴ J. Ingram (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1912), p. 155.

charters of the Earldom of Hereford, witnesses with English names are usually referred to using the toponymic (see below), while Welsh individuals are noted using the patronymic.⁵⁴⁵ This not only suggests the existence of a distinct Welsh naming culture, but also reinforces the concept of the patronymic being the default form of naming practice.

This is not to say that the patronymic was separate, however, and it could feature alongside titles, toponyms and other epithets. The point here is that if the patronymic was the normal form of address for members of the native Welsh then any exceptions are thrown into even sharper relief. These are perhaps the most interesting examples in highlighting how individuals tried to make themselves stand out from the crowd.

Anglo-Norman Usage, The Toponymic and Epithets

Before considering titles proper, it is worth mentioning the toponymic and the use of epithets. The toponymic, or use of a place name as a suffix (usually in an 'x of y' format), is occasionally noted with individuals with Welsh names, but was far more common in Anglo-Norman usage. The toponymic was the most common method of referring to Anglo-Norman individuals within the charters of the Earls of Hereford and Gloucester, for example (*Willelmo de Clamey*, *Waltero de Clifford*, *Roberto de Candos*, etc).⁵⁴⁶

By contrast, there are just a few instances of the toponymic suffix in use by a Welsh individual in the twelfth century. For example *Enauhin* son of *Reherid Briavel* was the grantor of a charter of 1175x1203, gifting lands in the region of Cornelly to Margam Abbey. *Briavel* could be a toponymic surname referring to St Briavel's in Gloucestershire.⁵⁴⁷ Perhaps he was an *uchelwyr* of Welsh descent, surrounded by individuals of Anglo-Norman stock, and it is easy to imagine *Reherid* borrowing the toponymic from his neighbours. A more interesting example from around the same time involved Hywel ab Iorwerth of the Gwynllŵg dynasty, who became known as Hywel 'de Caerleon' in a number of charters.⁵⁴⁸ However, Hywel often used this in combination with a title, which it was probably intended to emphasise, and so we discuss Hywel's case in more detail later in the chapter.

If we equate use of the toponymic as an indicator of Anglo-Norman or English influence, we could expect examples of this to increase over the course of the period, and, in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the combination of Welsh names and the

⁵⁴⁵ D. Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford, 1095-1201', *Camden Fourth Series*, 1, (1964) pp.32-3.

⁵⁴⁶ Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford', p.13; No.36 p.28; No.48 pp.32-3.

⁵⁴⁷ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.1952.

⁵⁴⁸ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.660-676.

toponymic does appear a little more frequently, although the patronymic remained the dominant form of address. Examples include *Res ap Madoch Vydor of Landevodoch* in a deed of obligation of 1291, which was witnessed by *William ap Yoruarth de Tyiarth*, and *Traharn ap Rhys de Tyiarth* in an abjuration of rents in Newcastle, in 1305.⁵⁴⁹ These were members of the *uchelwyr*, but the most widely acknowledged example comes from the remnants of the Glamorgan dynasty, who (as we saw in Chapter 3), adopted the epithet ‘de Avene’, visible in charters, genealogies and rolls of arms.⁵⁵⁰ As with Hywel ab Iorwerth, this was often used in combination with the title ‘dominus’, and we discuss both examples together shortly.

Titles and Status

There is surprisingly little direct evidence of the titles used by Welsh individuals in the immediate pre-Norman period. Naturally we could expect the strongest evidence to come from sources which the ruling dynasties had a hand in creating, such as charters and letters, and where the choice of title is more likely to reflect the preferences of the individual concerned. However, such sources are comparatively scarce before the mid-twelfth century, only the charters within *Liber Landavensis* surviving in any number.⁵⁵¹ Although the authenticity of these charters has been questioned (see Chapter 3), *Liber Landavensis* makes copious reference to Welsh kings in pre-Norman Wales, and Davies and Sims-Williams are confident that their kingly status was accurately recorded, as they are corroborated by other sources.⁵⁵² The status and form of Welsh kingship was not on the scale that we, or English and French contemporaries, might expect, with many small kingdoms coexisting, their number and borders fluctuating with shifts in local political power.⁵⁵³

Despite differences in scale, all sources attest to a well-established pre-Norman tradition of kingship. For southeast Wales, the most significant was the kingdom of Glamorgan or Morgannwg,⁵⁵⁴ from Morgan Hen in the tenth century to ‘Rhydderch son of Iestyn, King of Glamorgan, indeed of all Wales, except the isle of Euonia’, Meurig son of Hywel ‘King of Glamorgan’, and Meurig’s son, Cadwgan, in the eleventh.⁵⁵⁵ We also hear of rulers of Gwent,

⁵⁴⁹ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2064, 191

⁵⁵⁰ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.190, 207, 222; Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry, Vol.II*, p.13.

⁵⁵¹ Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaff as a Historical Source*, pp.7-10.

⁵⁵² Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaff as a Historical Source*, p.59.

⁵⁵³ Crouch, ‘The Slow Death of Kingship’, pp.20-1; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.85-6; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp.314-339; Rees, *An Historical Atlas of Wales*, p.25.

⁵⁵⁴ Rees (ed.), *Liber Landavensis*, pp.358-385; Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages*, pp.121 – 131.

⁵⁵⁵ Rees (ed.), *Liber Landavensis*, p.519; p.523.

including Edwyn son of Gwriad ‘King of Gwent Is-Coed’, and, for a few short years before 1063, all of Wales was brought under the rule of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn.⁵⁵⁶

The coming of the Normans, appears to have brought about little change in the use of ‘king’ as a title. During bishop Herewald’s tenure of Llandaff (c.1056 – 1104), *Liber Landavensis* refers to ‘*Caratocus rex Morcannuc*’ (presumably Caradog ap Gruffudd) – in the same way as his predecessors before the hegemony of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn, suggesting continuity with pre-Norman practice, and goes on to state:

Quando Rex Willelmus conquisivit Angliam, tenebat Hergualdus Episcopus episcopatum Landavensis ecclesiae, ab ostio Guy usque flumen Tyui, cum omni episcopali dignitate, et subiectione. In cujus tempore regnabat Catguacaun filius Mourici Regis in Glatmorcant usque ad vadum Trunci super Tyui; Caradocus vero Rex regnabat in Ystraty, Guent uchcoit, Gunnnliuuc; Riderch vero in Euyas, et Guent iscoit. Qui regen praenominati servierunt Regi Willelmo, et in tempore illius fuerunt defuncti.

When King William conquered England, Bishop Herewald held the Bishopric of Llandaff from the mouth of the Wye to the river Towy, with all episcopal dignity and subjection. In which time Cadwgan son of King Meurig reigned in Glamorgan as far as the ford of the Trunk on Towy, and King Caradog reigned in Ystradyw, Gwent Uwchcoed and Gwynllŵg, Rhydderch indeed in Ewyas and Gwent Iscoed. These aforementioned kings were subject to King William, and died in his time.⁵⁵⁷

Liber Landavensis here refers to three Welsh kings within our study area, even if their holdings were small in comparison with other Welsh and English rulers. Although Llandaff may have been keen to promote their claim to many of the churches mentioned -for which a royal grantor would have been useful - there is no particular reason to doubt their use of a ‘kingly’ title. Caradog is referred to in the life of St Gwynllyw as *regem Gulatmorganensium*, for example.⁵⁵⁸ In each case, the title is associated, either directly or indirectly, with a region – for example, Glamorgan or Morgannwg for Caradog. The *Liber Landavensis* notes where each king ruled, likely to emphasise their rule over the region.

It is worth noting that titles are not consistently mentioned in every source. Caradog, for example, is merely Caradog ap Gruffudd in both the *Brut y Tywysogion* and the Anglo-Saxon chronicle.⁵⁵⁹ The *Brut* sometimes makes indirect references to kingship without using a title. It notes the kingdom of Gwynedd was ruled by Trahaearn, son of Caradog, in 1075, while

⁵⁵⁶ Rees (ed.), *Liber Landavensis*, p. 539.

⁵⁵⁷ Rees (ed.), *Liber Landavensis*, pp.266-7, 543, 550-551.

⁵⁵⁸ Crouch, ‘Slow Death of Kingship’, p.24.

⁵⁵⁹ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.16, 51; Ingram (ed.) *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, p. 155.

in Deheubarth Rhys ap Tewdwr was ‘expelled from his territory and his kingdom’ in 1088.⁵⁶⁰ This is a pattern seen in other parts of Wales. Pryce notes a similar occurrence for charters of Hywel ab Ieuaf of Arwystli (d.1185) and Gwenwynwyn ab Owain of southern Powys: ‘the absence of a royal title need not have implied a denial on the ruler’s part that his authority was royal or princely. Perhaps all we can safely conclude is that it was not considered necessary to consistently express Hywel’s authority in explicitly royal terms.’⁵⁶¹ The oblique references to kingship in the *Brut* could reflect the argument that kingship was commonplace rather than exceptional, and the implications taken for granted: where there were kingdoms, there were kings, and the chronicler of the *Brut* (or the writer of its Latin forebear)⁵⁶² deemed it unnecessary to elaborate with the addition of a title. By contrast, Anglo-Saxon or Norman individuals are often noted with the title ‘King’ or ‘Earl’, perhaps because the audience were less familiar with these particular titles.

A turning point for the use of ‘king’ as a title is suggested by the *Brut* on the death of Rhys ap Tewdwr of Deheubarth, ‘King of South Wales’, in 1093, the *Brut* lamenting ‘then fell the kingdom of the Britons’.⁵⁶³ Probably drawing on the *Brut*’s Latin predecessor, Florence of Worcester wrote that ‘from that day kings ceased to reign in Wales’.⁵⁶⁴ While this dramatic statement is belied by the *Brut* itself giving examples of some Welsh kings into the twelfth century, thereafter references to Welsh kings are comparatively few, and the individuals themselves are usually particularly prominent: Morgan ab Owain of Gwynllŵg, Madog ap Maredudd of Powys, Hywel ab Ieuaf of Arwystli, Cadell ap Gruffudd of Deheubarth (1147x54), and Owain Fawr of Gwynedd (before 1165, and by early 1166 he used ‘*Waliarum Princeps*’).⁵⁶⁵ At the same time, other titles began to appear. Furthermore, the *Brut* mentions only one king with power in Wales in the early years of the twelfth century – Henry I himself. Between the years 1093 and 1135, any references to a ‘king’ invariably refer to Henry, and are often used without elaboration, as if the reader would know which king was being referred to without the need for any specification: simply put, Henry was *the* king.⁵⁶⁶ Kingship was

⁵⁶⁰ Jones (ed and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.16-18, 55.

⁵⁶¹ Pryce, ‘The Church of Trefeglwys’, pp.44-5.

⁵⁶² See Chapter 2. And Jones (ed and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, p.x.

⁵⁶³ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, p.19

⁵⁶⁴ T. Forester (ed.), *The Chronicle of Florence of Worcester* (London, 1854), p.195; P. McGurk (ed. and trans.), *The Chronicle of John of Worcester: Volume III, The Annals from 1067 to 1140 with the Gloucester Interpolations and the Continuation to 1141* (Oxford, 1998), p.xxxii.

⁵⁶⁵ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, p.35; Crouch, ‘The Slow Death of Kingship’, pp.35-6; Crouch, ‘The Earliest Original Charter of a Welsh King’, pp.125-131; H. Pryce, ‘Owain Gwynedd and Louis VII: The Franco-Welsh Diplomacy of the First Prince of Wales’, *Welsh History Review*, Vol.19 (1998), pp.4-11.

⁵⁶⁶ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth Ms 20. Version*, pp. 19 – 85.

shifting to associations with greater power and responsibility — more in line with English and continental norms.

How far such titles were used to emphasise the status of an individual is debatable, but the contrast of their limited use in the *Brut* and more extensive use in the Llandaff charters is striking. The use of titles would have benefited both the rulers themselves, in emphasising their own status, but this would also have furthered Llandaff's own political agenda. If we follow Sims-Williams, and the titles were genuinely used by the rulers, rather than being added later, but titles would have been useful in both cases, both for the emphasis of the rulers' status and strengthening Llandaff's own claims. In light of the decline in the use of the title, and the general use of the patronymic, continuing use of the title would have been intended to emphasise status and suggests a conservative identity harking back to pre-Norman traditions.

Rex and the status of Kingship: Morgan ab Owain

In southeast Wales, there is little evidence of the title 'king' being used by the local ruling dynasties after Caradog ap Gruffudd, and the best evidence concerns Caradog's grandson, Morgan ab Owain, in the second quarter of the twelfth century. Morgan was a successful ruler, taking advantage of the death of Henry I and the subsequent anarchy to capture Usk and Caerleon in the late 1130's, before supporting Robert of Gloucester against King Stephen. The earliest reference to Morgan as a king appears in the *Liber Eliensis*. Although a history of Ely, the work describes the battle of Lincoln in 1141, where Robert of Gloucester was supported by a substantial contingent of Welsh troops. The *Liber Eliensis* lists the leaders involved in the battle, including 'King Morgar of Wales' [*regem Morgarum Waloniae*],⁵⁶⁷ who Crouch identifies as Morgan ab Owain.⁵⁶⁸ Moreover, a *Morganno rege* or 'Morgan the King', witnessed a grant of Earl Roger of Hereford to Llanthony Secunda 1143x1155 (Crouch suggests between 1147 and 1154).⁵⁶⁹ Morgan is thus the only figure from Glamorgan for whom we have evidence of twelfth-century kingship.

Why did Morgan favour this title, and to what audience was he appealing? There are several possible influences here. It seems most likely that Morgan was emphasising links to his grandfather, Caradog, the last member of the dynasty for which a kingly title is noted.⁵⁷⁰ Caradog may have retained his power and lands when the Normans first appeared, and so his

⁵⁶⁷ Fairweather (ed. and trans.), *Liber Eliensis*, p.395.

⁵⁶⁸ Crouch, 'The Transformation of Medieval Gwent', p.11; p.35.

⁵⁶⁹ Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford', Ch.36, p.28; Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship', p.35.

⁵⁷⁰ Rees (ed.), *Liber Landavensis*, pp.266-7.

example may have been attractive for Morgan to emulate – especially in contrast with his father, Owain Wan, during whose tenure much land in southeast Wales had been lost to the Anglo-Normans.⁵⁷¹ As well as reflecting Morgan's recent successes, it could be that it was only with weakened Anglo-Norman authority that Morgan felt confident enough to use the title *Rex*: furthermore not only were the Anglo-Normans distracted by civil war, but the Welsh were now potentially useful allies to both sides.⁵⁷² Indeed, Orderic Vitalis notes 'Morgan the Welshman' amongst a list of rebels against King Stephen, a fact reinforced by Morgan's subsequent presence at the Battle of Lincoln in 1141.⁵⁷³ Morgan's choice of the title *Rex* was thus product of several considerations, providing a connection with the past, and reflecting his increased power and status during the anarchy.

A further insight into the status Morgan aspired to is provided by Earl Roger of Hereford's charter to Llanthony Secunda. Morgan is the first named witness, coming before *William de Caisneto, William de Berchelai* and *Osbert de Wesberi*.⁵⁷⁴ The first is likely William de Chesny, an important baron during this period, and hence Morgan must have been a prominent figure in local society, perhaps particularly in the eyes of Earl Roger.⁵⁷⁵ Earl Roger was amongst the most prominent supporters of Matilda and the Angevins during the anarchy, especially after the death of Robert of Gloucester in 1147, and it may be that Earl Roger was willing to afford him a position of prominence in order to cultivate his ally – it would have suited both Morgan's own security and Roger's own cause to do so.⁵⁷⁶ Morgan and his brother Iorwerth also appear alongside Earl Roger as witnesses to a notification by Bishop Nicholas of Llandaff to the Church of St Mary, Caldicot.⁵⁷⁷ Roger is the first named witness, and they come immediately after. Morgan's association with Robert and Gloucester and Roger of Hereford seems to have paid off, as from 1155 the Pipe Rolls record him being paid an annual pension

⁵⁷¹ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.9-11; Knight, *South Wales from the Romans to the Normans*, pp.131-2; Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship', pp.24-6.

⁵⁷² Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.45-7.

⁵⁷³ Chibnall (ed. and trans.), *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis, Volume VI*, pp.518-9; Fairweather (ed. and trans.), *Liber Eliensis*, p.395. Orderic's omission of the title *rex* for Morgan is not unusual, as he gives no titles to the other (Anglo-Norman) rebels.

⁵⁷⁴ Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford', Ch.36, p.28.

⁵⁷⁵ Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship', p.35.

⁵⁷⁶ Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford', p.5; D. Crouch, 'Roger [Roger fitz Miles], earl of Hereford', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-47203#odnb-9780198614128-e-47203> (Accessed 16/02/2022)

⁵⁷⁷ Crouch, *Llandaff Episcopal Acta*, pp.5-6.

of 40s.⁵⁷⁸ Other rulers such as Owain Gwynedd and Madog ap Maredudd are two contemporaries who took advantage of the confusion to bolster their own positions.⁵⁷⁹

By contrast, to both his position in the charters and the practice of his contemporaries, Morgan is not known to have employed the title in any of his own charters, of which three survive fully. The stark contrast with the titles in the Llanthony Secunda charter and the *Liber Eliensis* begs the question why. Beneficiary influence on the charter is one possibility, but perhaps more significantly, all three charters were joint grants of Morgan and his brother, Iorwerth.⁵⁸⁰ Did this influence the way Morgan presented himself and explain the lack of the title? In all three charters, Morgan and Iorwerth are portrayed in a similar fashion: the earliest (probably 1147x48) refers to *Morganus et Iereuert filii Oni*; the other two (both 1154x58) afford slightly more prominence to Morgan, with Iorwerth referred to as *frater meus* or *frater eius*.⁵⁸¹ It is possible that the changing tone, placing subtle emphasis on Morgan, may reflect growing pre-eminence over his brother, and perhaps a title was omitted to emphasise the grants' joint nature: the inclusion of a title such as *Rex* might have worked against this.

Morgan and Iorwerth are portrayed working together in the death of Richard de Clare in 1136 and in their subsequent campaign in Gwent, but worked together until Morgan's death in 1158, upon which Iorwerth inherited the lordship.⁵⁸² All three charters post-date the *Liber Eliensis*' mention of *regem Morgarum Waloniae* around 1141 and may post-date the Llanthony Secunda charter (1143x55),⁵⁸³ and perhaps it was in this early period, with the Anglo-Normans, that Morgan was keen to emphasise his status.

Morgan was the last ruler from southeast Wales known to use the title *rex* and this (as well as his lack of use of such titles in his charters) follows a pattern generally seen throughout Wales. Only a handful of individuals are referred to using the title of *rex* in the twelfth century: Gruffudd ap Cynan, his two sons, Madog ap Maredudd of Powys and Owain Gwynedd.⁵⁸⁴ At the same time, alternative terms (such as *arglwyd*), began to appear. Owain Gwynedd used *Rex* and *Rex Wallie* in letters to the King of France and Archbishop of Canterbury, as late as 1165,

⁵⁷⁸ J. Hunter (ed.), *The Great Rolls of the Pipe for the Second, Third and Fourth Years of the Reign of King Henry II* (London, 1844).

⁵⁷⁹ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.48-50; Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, p.35.

⁵⁸⁰ One charter as to the church of St John the Baptist and Rumney and the other two to Goldcliff Priory. See Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos. 461 – 464, pp.660-664.

⁵⁸¹ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos. 461 – 464, pp.660-664.

⁵⁸² Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, p.51; p.60; Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp.108-9.

⁵⁸³ For the dating of these charters, see Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.660-664; Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford', p.28; Crouch 'The Slow Death of Kingship', pp.35-6.

⁵⁸⁴ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.35-6.

but in a letter shortly afterwards (identified by Pryce as after Henry II's disastrous 1165 campaign, when Owain was perhaps at the height of his power), he used the title *Waliarum princeps*.⁵⁸⁵ The *Brut* instead describes him as *dywyssawc gwyned* in entries for 1148 and 1156: on his death (in 1170), he is referred to as *ywein vab gruffud ap kyan tywyssawc gwyned*.⁵⁸⁶ His son Dafydd may have reverted to *Rex* and *Rex Norwallie* but later used *Princeps Norwallie*.⁵⁸⁷ Similarly, Madog ap Maredudd of Powys used *Rex Powissensium* in a charter before 1151, while he was variously described in the *Brut*, as *brenhin powys* (1148) and *arglywyd powys* (1156).⁵⁸⁸ In Deheubarth, Cadell ap Gruffudd used the title *Cadellus filius Grifini regis* in a charter of 1146x51, (and the *Brut* refers to his kingdom, *deyrnas*)⁵⁸⁹ but his brother, Rhys, later used *Princeps Walliae*, *Waliarum princeps* and *Sudwallie propretarius princeps*, (the last two in the same charter), while being referred to as *Tywyssawc deheubarth*, and *Arglywydd Rys* by the *Brut*.⁵⁹⁰ There can be no doubt that there was a dramatic shift in titles during the twelfth century.

Changing titles may suggest a change in identity, the mixture of titles from the mid twelfth century, and inconsistencies even within the same charters, suggest the Welsh were still in the process of inventing it. That said, the Welsh terms in the *Brut* generally correspond with the Latin titles used in the charters, probably drawn from the *Brut's* Latin ancestor. This demonstrates correlation between how the princes projected an identity in charters and how they were seen by chroniclers.

This change, by powerful rulers at a time of great Welsh success, was a conscious Welsh decision, and has been argued as part of 'a drive to create a single Welsh polity'.⁵⁹¹ The abandonment of *rex* may reflect a growing association of kingship with the English kings, evident in the *Brut's* attitude to Henry I. This process of abandonment seems to have been completed by the end of Henry II's reign. The identity of kingship – and thus of the Welsh dynasties – was itself changing. The weakening of royal authority during the second quarter of the twelfth century may have allowed 'kingly' to endure a little longer, driven by local success and a desire to live up to their forebears, even as other terms began to be used. It is to these terms that we now turn.

⁵⁸⁵ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos. 192-196, pp.322-329.

⁵⁸⁶ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS.20 Version*, pp.98, 114-115.

⁵⁸⁷ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.35-6; Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.331-334.

⁵⁸⁸ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.480, pp.680-1; Jones (ed. and trans.) *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS.20 Version*, pp.98-99, 103.

⁵⁸⁹ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS.20 Version*, p.99.

⁵⁹⁰ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos. 22, 26, 28. pp. 165-175; Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS.20*, p.138.

⁵⁹¹ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, p.36; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.86.

Princeps and Dominus

The new titles most commonly found were Prince (Latin: *Princeps*, Welsh: *Tywysog*) and Lord (Latin: *Dominus*, Welsh: *Arglywydd*), as we have seen for Owain Gwynedd and the Lord Rhys, while references to Welsh kings declined outside poetry, Dafydd ab Owain Gwynedd being the last to use *Rex* in a charter of 1177x90.⁵⁹² The earliest alternative titles appeared in the mid twelfth century, and the *Brut* mentions *agoreugwyr* (translated perhaps as ‘Chieftains’) for an 1175 entry.⁵⁹³ In the thirteenth century *Princeps* would be used more commonly, especially by the rulers of Gwynedd, where their use of variations has been subject to particular study.⁵⁹⁴ The increased association of *rex* with the English monarchy necessitated replacements of suitable social stature. As Crouch writes, ‘At the beginning of the twelfth century these were vague descriptions, but carried the implication of greater power than an English baron.’⁵⁹⁵

In southeast Wales, the term *Princeps* featured in no charters of the dynasties there, although the *Brut* refers to the Lord Rhys taking *holl dywysogyon Kymry*, to Gloucester in 1175, including members of all the princely dynasties (see Chapter 3).⁵⁹⁶ Examples of *Dominus*, do exist, with Hywel ab Iorwerth using *dominus de Caerleon* in three late-twelfth or early thirteenth-century charters, and the rulers of Afan *Dominus de Avene* in the late thirteenth and fourteenth.⁵⁹⁷ In both cases the title was tied with the toponymic, in a way designed to emphasise their lordship over that area.

Dominus was found far more in an indirect sense throughout Wales at this period – grants often being made with the consent of ‘his lord, their lord,’ etc. While this use stresses the relative social hierarchy and status of individuals, it is more ambiguous, and does not necessarily mean that the individuals involved used the title ‘lord’. Instead, it lent weight to the grant or transaction, by stating that it was made with the consent of a particularly important witness. For example, a grant by Roger Cole to Margam was made with ‘*consilio et consensu domini mei Morgani* (ap Caradog)’.⁵⁹⁸

At this period, while *dominus* was an uncommon term in the native dynasties, it was considerably more common in Anglo-Norman circles. The Earls of Gloucester and Hereford

⁵⁹² Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.35-6; Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.331-334.

⁵⁹³ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS.20 Version*, p.127.

⁵⁹⁴ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.88-95.

⁵⁹⁵ Crouch, ‘Slow Death of Kingship’, p.30.

⁵⁹⁶ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, p.126.

⁵⁹⁷ Clark (ed.), *Cartae*, Vol.3 (1st edition), No.843, p.979; Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.673.

⁵⁹⁸ Clark (ed.), *Cartae*, Vol 2 (1st edition), No.399, p.393.

invariably used consistent titles in their charters: *Willelmus comes Gloucestrie*, or *Hawysia comitissa Glocestrie*, *Rogerus comes Hereford* etc.⁵⁹⁹ John de Braose, for example was *Dominus de Gouher* before 1231.⁶⁰⁰ That said, titles were not always used: the 1262 Extent of the County of Glamorgan, for example, lists no titles, referring to individuals either using toponymic epithets (in the case of Marcher lords), or patronymic ones, in the case of the few Welsh individuals.⁶⁰¹ Nevertheless, they were so frequently used, especially by the greater marcher lords, that they were an integral part of their identity.

The Gwynllŵg Dynasty under Hywel ab Iorwerth c.1184 – 1216

Hywel is referred to using the toponymic in all but one of the surviving charters, of which there are nine. Four use the toponymic alone, referring to him as Hywel of Caerleon: *Hoelus de Karliun* (or a variant spelling) – four others use the toponymic in conjunction with a title, such as *Hoelus dominus de Carlyon*. The exceptional charter, where Hywel did *not* use the toponymic, was the earliest (1179x84).⁶⁰² This was made during his father, Iorwerth's time, as the grant states explicitly that it was made with his father's consent. Only the later charters append *Karliun*, seemingly after Hywel succeeded to the lordship.

The consistent use of *de Caerleon*, and later use of *dominus*, combine to emphasize Hywel's connection with Caerleon and presumably his right to the lordship. This is the only such example from twelfth-century southeast Wales, and is thus even more striking. Through the use of title and toponymic, Hywel's image appears far more similar to Anglo-Norman counterparts such as the Earls of Gloucester, in a way that rulers of the larger Welsh dynasties were only beginning to do. Was this an attempt by Hywel to align himself with these neighbours, or instead to enhance his status in contrast to his Welsh peers in neighbouring Afan or Senghenydd?

Perhaps Hywel's choice of title and toponymic was deliberately chosen with both Anglo-Norman and Welsh audiences in mind, using elements designed to appeal to both demographics. Practical considerations of recent political developments, Hywel's relationship with his predecessors, symbolic and mythological elements all had a role. One answer to why Hywel chose *dominus de Caerleon* may lie in the Gwynllŵg dynasty's peculiar political situation in the later twelfth century. The dynasty's tenure of Caerleon was far from secure. It

⁵⁹⁹ Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*; Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford', pp.1 – 75.

⁶⁰⁰ Clark (ed.), *Cartae*, Vol 2 (1st edition), p.447.

⁶⁰¹ Clark (ed.), *Cartae*, Vol 2 (1st edition), No.615, pp.649 – 654.

⁶⁰² Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, nos.467-476, pp.665-676.

had been under Anglo-Norman control prior to the death of Henry I in 1135, following which Hywel's father, Iorwerth, and his uncle, Morgan, led a campaign resulting in its capture.⁶⁰³ Morgan later fought alongside Earl Robert of Gloucester against King Stephen, and in 1155, following the accession of Henry II, was officially granted Caerleon, presumably as a reward for loyal service.⁶⁰⁴ The dynasty's control over Caerleon, however, remained tenuous. In 1171, Henry II captured Caerleon from Iorwerth, who had taken over the lordship on his brother's death in 1158. Iorwerth promptly responded by launching a damaging counter attack against the town and castle.⁶⁰⁵ Raids continued, Iorwerth briefly recapturing Caerleon in 1173, before losing it once more in 1175. Later the same year, following a peace conference at Gloucester attended by the Lord Rhys of Deheubarth in conjunction with all the dynasties of southeast Wales, Caerleon was restored to Iorwerth.⁶⁰⁶ Nevertheless, within the space of four short years, Iorwerth had twice lost Caerleon to the English king and regained it. The Gwynllŵg dynasty's insecure hold on Caerleon may be a reason why Hywel, who succeeded his father by 1184,⁶⁰⁷ began to use the toponymic in his charters, hoping that, by stressing his links with Caerleon, to bolster his claim and retain it during a period of uncertainty.

This uncertainty likely existed in the days of Hywel's predecessors. His uncle Morgan's cultivation of links with Robert of Gloucester and Roger of Hereford were likely part of a strategy to secure his newfound position, following his capture of Usk and Caerleon.⁶⁰⁸ His association with Caerleon is noted in the Pipe Rolls, as his pension was paid *in Carliun*.⁶⁰⁹ Iorwerth, Morgan's brother and successor (and Hywel's father), is mentioned in the *Brut* as either 'of Caerleon' (*o gaerllion*) or in the Peniarth 213 MS 'of Gwynllŵg and Caerleon' (*o Wavnlwc a Chaerllion*). The 1175 entry detailing the princes who accompanied the Lord Rhys to Gloucester, to meet Henry II, mention individuals by region (of Glamorgan, of Elfael, of Gwent Uwchcoed etc), except for Iorwerth, who is specifically stated as being 'of Caerleon'.⁶¹⁰ Caerleon clearly loomed large in the consciousness of the members of this dynasty, even before Hywel's day. In part, this could have been a reminder that Caerleon had been granted to Morgan

⁶⁰³ Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship in Glamorgan', p.33; Jones (ed. and trans.) *Brut y Tywysogyon Peniarth MS 20 Version*, p.86.

⁶⁰⁴ Hunter (ed.), *The Great Rolls of the Pipe for the Second, Third and Fourth Years of the Reign of King Henry II*.

⁶⁰⁵ Jones (ed and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.104; 117-8.

⁶⁰⁶ Jones (ed and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.118-127.

⁶⁰⁷ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.35.

⁶⁰⁸ Fairweather (ed.), *Liber Eliensis*, p.395; Walker, 'Charters of the Earldom of Hereford', Ch.36, p.28.

⁶⁰⁹ Hunter (ed.), *The Great Rolls of the Pipe for the Second, Third and Fourth Years of the Reign of King Henry II*. For more on this, see Chapter 7.

⁶¹⁰ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.124-126.

by Henry II, either out of pride, or, perhaps more likely, to legitimize their control in an Anglo-Norman fashion. The choice of *dominus* and the fact that the dynasty's hold over Caerleon was most at risk from their Anglo-Norman, rather than Welsh, neighbours, suggests an Anglo-Norman audience was intended. By adopting an Anglo-Norman style title, Hywel's representation in charters can be seen as the culmination of a long drawn out process, though he certainly went further than either his father or uncle in connecting himself with Caerleon, as demonstrated through his consistent use of the toponymic in his charters.

Hywel's desire to be associated with Caerleon is shown in particular detail in the *Brut y Tywysogion* entry for 1175, which describes how Hywel captured, blinded and castrated his uncle, Owain Pencarn, to rid himself of potential competition for the lordship of Caerleon:

Hywel, son of Iorwerth, of Caerleon, seized Owain Pencarwn, his uncle, unknown to his father, and after taking his eyes out of his head, he caused him to be castrated, lest he should beget issue to govern, for he would be the rightful heir to Caerleon after that.⁶¹¹

Apart from a desire to gain or maintain hold of the lordship, there are reasons why associations with Caerleon, in particular, were attractive for members of the Gwynllŵg dynasty to cultivate. The mythical element is one: Caerleon appeared as the site of King Arthur's court in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regnum Britanniae*, which appeared in the 1130s, around the same time that Morgan and Iorwerth had captured the town.⁶¹² The crowning of Arthur at his court at Caerleon is often seen as the climax of the *Historia*, and the mythological significance of Caerleon would have been clear to an individual familiar with the work. The symbolic significance of this would not have been lost on the rulers of Gwynllŵg. Crouch suggests the adoption of *de Karliun* was 'something which was very unusual for Welshmen to do, and they would not have done it at all unless there were a measure of prestige to be drawn from associations with the place.'⁶¹³

Apart from the *Historia*, the Roman ruins there were very visible at this period and provided a tangible link to the past. Gerald of Wales makes it clear that much of the Roman ruins were still standing at the time of his 1188 journey through Wales, mentioning 'immense palaces', hot baths and an amphitheatre: clearly, Gerald was familiar with the town – as well as with Geoffrey's *Historia*.⁶¹⁴ The Roman past may have also inspired Hywel's choice of

⁶¹¹ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, p.125.

⁶¹² L. Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain*, (London, 1966), p.9

⁶¹³ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, p.9; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.48.

⁶¹⁴ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp.114 -115.

toponymic. Providing a connection with a historical, as well as mythical, past would also enhance his status amongst his connections in southeast Wales. The Welsh were fond of drawing connections with the Roman past, with Roman figures featuring in genealogies, the prose tale *Breudwyd Maxen Wledic* and *Historia Brittonum*, often as key ancestors of later dynasties in attempts to demonstrate a link with this Roman past.⁶¹⁵

It is even possible that Caerleon loomed large in the *Historia* precisely because of Morgan and Iorwerth's capture of the town in Geoffrey's own day, encouraging Geoffrey to give prominence to Caerleon and suggest a fascination with or celebration of the capture by Morgan ab Owain: 'to someone with Geoffrey of Monmouth's background and interests there can have been no place of greater, or more dramatic, possibly portentous political interest in 1136 – 7 than Caerleon.'⁶¹⁶ Perhaps the exploits of the Gwynllŵg dynasty inspired Geoffrey, whose work, in turn, inspired later members of the dynasty to further cultivate an association with Caerleon. For the Gwynllŵg dynasty, the *Historia* would have provided an almost ready-made method for enhancing their status amongst their neighbours.

If by demonstrating their links with Caerleon the Gwynllŵg dynasty were also linking themselves with a mythological past, then to what audience may they have been appealing? Arthur, of course, was a hero of the Welsh, and it can easily be imagined that a link between the Gwynllŵg dynasty and Arthur's court would strengthen the kudos of the dynasty in the eyes of their Welsh contemporaries, not least because the dynasty was responsible for its recapture from the Anglo-Normans. The Anglo-Normans, too, would also have been familiar with Geoffrey's work and may themselves have been the intended audience.

Hywel's portrayal in these charters may have been deliberately designed to incorporate all these elements. Imitating his Norman neighbours was integral to this strategy of enhancing his legitimacy and control of the lordship. In adopting an Anglo-Norman style title and toponymic, he appealed to his Anglo-Norman neighbours, and especially those that most threatened his hegemony, in a way which they would have understood, emphasizing that he held his lands of the crown. Beneath this may have lain other considerations of enhancing his prestige, augmenting the image built by his predecessors, and utilizing both the historical and mythological connections of Caerleon to bolster his relationship with Anglo-Norman and Welsh neighbours alike. Personal pride too, probably played its part. In doing so, Hywel's

⁶¹⁵ B. Guy, 'Constantine, Helena, Maximus: On the Appropriation of Roman History in Medieval Wales c.800 – 1250', *Journal of Medieval History*, 44, 4 (2018), pp.381-405.

⁶¹⁶ J. Gillingham, 'The Context and Purposes of the History of the Kings of Britain', in Chibnall (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies: XIII*, pp.114 – 116.

choice of title and toponymic shows a desire not only to emulate his neighbours, but also a sensitivity to their perceptions of him. We can frame Hywel's use of the title and toponymic as a form of emulation, in that he sought to match or exceed the methods used by other individuals to present himself as the ruler of Caerleon at a time of great uncertainty.

Hywel's efforts at emulating his neighbours paid off, as he seems to have succeeded in getting his contemporaries to acknowledge his association with Caerleon. When, in 1184-5, Hywel was entrusted with the defence of several castles in south Wales (along with several marcher lords), he is referred to as *Hoel[us] de Carliun*.⁶¹⁷ *Hoelus de Caerliun* is also noted as owing a debt of 250 marks in 1218-24, albeit after his death c.1216.⁶¹⁸ Even if merely noting continued debts or reflecting a delay in updating the records, Hywel's association with the lordship of Caerleon endured after his death, quite unlike his Welsh contemporaries.

While Hywel died c.1216 and Caerleon was shortly afterwards captured by the Marshal family, Hywel's son, Morgan, also used *de Caerleon*. After the loss of Caerleon, Morgan entered a legal struggle with William Marshal (II) to regain control of the castle, an effort which, although ongoing through the early 1220s, would ultimately prove in vain. Only two of Morgan's acta survive: the first a grant of Caerleon to William Marshal (II) of 1227x30, in which he is referred to as *Morganus filius Hoelis*. As a grant of Caerleon, it is unsurprising that Morgan did not use the title. However, Morgan saw an opportunity in the rebellion of Richard Marshal in 1233: in a Letter Patent pledging his support to the king, he used *Morganus de Carleon*.⁶¹⁹ He was the only Welsh lord of south Wales to support the king, in hope of regaining Caerleon, and likely included *de Carleon* to remind the king of his claims. The case was heard again following the rebellion and seems to have gone in Morgan's favour, but the castle was never restored.⁶²⁰ Nevertheless, Morgan was another rare exception of a Welsh individual using the toponymic title, a conscious imitation of his father's Anglo-Norman style title, to stress his claim to the lordship.

The use of *Dominus* and the toponymic as a method of representation was not to be seen again in southeast Wales for almost a century, by which time both Gwynllŵg and Senghenydd had ceased to be significant landowners – only the Afan dynasty survived.

⁶¹⁷ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Thirty-First Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD 1184-1185*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 34, (London, 1913), p.7.

⁶¹⁸ D.M. Stenton et al. (eds.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Second Year of the Reign of King Henry III AD 1218-1219*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 39 (London, 1972).

⁶¹⁹ Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*. No.478, pp.678-9.

⁶²⁰ D. Walker, 'The Supporters of Richard Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, in the Rebellion of 1233-1234', *Welsh History Review*, 17, 1 (1994), pp.64-5.

The Lords of Afan c.1304 - 1350

The twelfth and early-thirteenth century members of the Glamorgan dynasty had used the patronymic (for example *Morganus filius Cradoci*), without any title.⁶²¹ By the end of the thirteenth century, members of the family began using the epithet *de Avene*, and the title *dominus* in their charters – exactly as Hywel ab Iorwerth had a century before. We find the earliest example, *Dominus Lleision de Avene*, in 1304.⁶²² The few surviving charters of the family after this date show the title had become the norm, appearing again in a quitclaim of 1330 ('John Davene Lord Davene of Kiluei and Sully'), in a confirmation of 1344 by Hugh le Despenser, and in an agreement with Margam Abbey in 1349-50.⁶²³

As with Hywel Caerleon, *dominus* combined with the toponymic *De Avene* seems to have been aimed at their English (as we must call them by the later thirteenth century) neighbours, adopted specifically to present the members of this dynasty as members of the English elite. Other evidence supports this impression: they were among the first Welsh families to adopt a heraldic device - evident (along with the *de Avene* epithet), in Charles' Roll of 1285 and used heraldic wax seals (see also chapter 5).⁶²⁴ They extensively intermarried into English marcher families, (through these marriages gaining control of Kiluei and Sully, hitherto held by marcher families) and Lleision was knighted.⁶²⁵ Clearly, the image they projected in charters was only part of a wider attempt to fit into English marcher society, involving a change in the presentation of image compared with their predecessors, and in more far reaching way than anything Hywel ab Iorwerth had done.

As with Hywel, the probable motivation behind the presentation of such an image was to bolster their claim to Afan at a time of great uncertainty. Although the lack of source material from the 1240's onwards makes it impossible to determine exactly when changes in style and the adoption of titles occurred, it was around this time, in the 1260s and 1270s, that the de Clare family were extending their own authority over the lands of the Senghenydd and Gwynllŵg dynasties, dispossessing them of the vast majority of their lands, relegating their surviving members to the ranks of the *uchelwyr*; on a wider scale, of course, this was the period of Edward I's conquest of Gwynedd. It is possible that by imitating their neighbours and presenting a highly Anglicized image the Afan dynasty hoped to avoid a similar fate.

⁶²¹ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.257-320.

⁶²² NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.190.

⁶²³ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.207; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.221; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.222.

⁶²⁴ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry, Vol.II*, p.13.

⁶²⁵ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD 300 - 1400*, 3, pp. 542 – 567.

The way titles were used clearly depended on the audience and this is visible in acts of the Glamorgan/Afan dynasty's contemporaries throughout Wales, most notably Owain ap Llywelyn, *dominus de Mechain*, who began using similar titles around the same time. Owain, interestingly, used this title only in letters to Edward I in 1277, after Edward's campaign and the reduction of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd's influence in the area – in a letter patent concerning Llywelyn ap Gruffudd the previous year he was simply Owain son of Llywelyn (though as this was a joint letter with his brother, Maredudd, the title may have been omitted to emphasise its joint nature).⁶²⁶ Owain's letters to Edward are concerned with interference in his lands by Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn of Powys, who took advantage of Llywelyn's reduction in power. In this case, the combination of title and toponymic seem to emphasize that the land was held of Edward directly, and thus lend weight to his plea for Edward's intervention on his behalf. As with twelfth-century Caerleon and thirteenth-century Afan, the adoption took place at a time when Owain's lordship was under threat, in this case by a rival Welsh dynasty, and when Edward I's power was in the ascendancy. Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn himself used *dominus de Keueillyoc* from as early as 1241, and Powys Wenwynwyn too underwent a process of anglicization in naming practices, marriage, heraldry and other elements, around the same time as the Afan dynasty in Glamorgan.⁶²⁷ In each case, during the middle to late thirteenth century, members of these Welsh dynasties consciously imitated English title practices, emulating them in the sense of trying to match their image to bolster their hold over their lands.

Survival was not the only possible motive for changing image. The adoption of the new English style titles may reflect ambition, a desire for social advancement, and a realization that aligning themselves more firmly with English marcher lords would provide new opportunities. John de Avene's use of 'Lord Davene of Kilvei and Sully' in 1330 is a case in point – as well as stressing his control of Afan, it emphasised his control of Cilfai and Sully which had formerly been held by marcher families but acquired through marriage.⁶²⁸ As this was long after the threat of de Clare expansion, this more likely was intended to advance his status in marcher society. We must not forget that this was the last 'native' dynasty in the region, and by this time most comparable landholders in southeast Wales were of English extraction – the change in tone may simply reflect that the Afan family had a different set of neighbours than during the previous century. Without neighbours of the same social standing belonging to the

⁶²⁶ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos.612 – 615, pp.809-812. See also the discussion of Morgan and Iorwerth ab Owain of Gwynllŵg earlier in this chapter.

⁶²⁷ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos.593-602, pp.785-795 ; Stephenson, *Medieval Powys*.

⁶²⁸ Clark, *Cartae*, Vol 1 (1st edition), no.261, pp.282-3. See also Chapter 3 above.

old native dynasties, perhaps there would be little point in presenting a ‘Welsh’ image, and this fostered a need to adapt, to appeal in different ways, in an effort to keep up in local society.

The adoption of English style titles and toponymic was a conscious emulation of their neighbours, designed with the same neighbours in mind and driven by a desire to integrate with them. Twelfth-century changes in identity were fostered by late-thirteenth century political uncertainty and a need to survive: adopting a similar image to one’s neighbour was one way to do so. By the fourteenth century, these needs had given way to ambition, in a different political landscape. While the Afan family most likely obtained inspiration for their title from their marcher neighbours, they would also have had the earlier examples of Gwynllŵg, Gwynedd or Deheubarth, and the contemporary examples of Mechain and Powys, to follow.

Titles and Epithets: Conclusion

It is clear from the available evidence that the titles used by individuals belonging to the native dynasties of the southeast largely followed the pattern seen elsewhere in Wales from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. While the use of titles was rare, the twelfth-century shift from *Rex* to *Dominus* mirrored developments elsewhere in Wales, and reflected a change in the identity of rulers – at least the one that they wanted other to see. The native dynasties of the southeast were in many ways at the forefront of this: Hywel ab Iorwerth (and to a lesser extent his predecessors) cultivated a relationship with their Anglo-Norman neighbours, imitating – or indeed emulating - their titles and presenting an image in a way which would only become commonplace a century later. The Glamorgan dynasty followed this by a substantial reinvention of their identity, of which their newly adopted titles played an integral part.

While titles were integral to status, the motivation behind their adoption, and the image they chose to portray, varied. The Gwynllŵg dynasty was most concerned with reinforcing (or re-establishing) their claim to Caerleon. Hywel ab Iorwerth’s image was very like an Anglo-Norman marcher lord, although the connection with the successes of his father and uncle, as well as more distant historical association with the Roman past and mythological association with King Arthur would also have appealed to a Welsh audience. Several generations later, the De Avene family used similar titles to project a more unambiguous image, even more like their marcher neighbours, signalling, perhaps, the fullest integration into marcher society.

For all that these titles represented changes, there appears to have been little difference in the way most individuals represented themselves to others. For members of the *uchelwyr*, the image conveyed by their titles in the fourteenth century was largely the same as that in the twelfth, using the patronymic. The glimpse of a few individuals by 1350 using toponymic

surnames (in a similar way to the princely dynasties several generations earlier), suggest that the image they were being to present began to change.

Poetry

Charters, of course, are just one type of written source, and rather formal, official documents at that. As much of this chapter has explored the presentation of personal identities and the importance of imitation and emulation, we turn now to consider how individuals were seen through other forms of the written – and spoken – word, especially the medium of poetry, with its very different language, context and audience. As a source for exploring personal identities poetry has much to recommend it. While it could take many forms, praise poetry, composed in admiration of a patron, presented an idealized image of individual people. Additionally, we know that poetry spanned the whole period and has attracted considerable attention from scholars. The sort of identity that they suggest could be expected to be radically different from charters, although as the poets' success relied upon the gratefulness of their patrons, the image presented through such poems were clearly intended to appeal to their sensitivities.⁶²⁹

As we saw in chapter 2, the small size of the corpus of poems from southeast Wales are the greatest challenge. However, enough survive to undertake a comparative case study with poems from elsewhere in Wales, and for convenience, we approach them chronologically.

While there are references to poets plying their trade in southeast Wales from the beginning of our period,⁶³⁰ the first surviving poem which we can associate with the native aristocracy of the region is a praise poem to Gwenllïan, the daughter of Hywel ab Iorwerth of Gwynllŵg. The poem was composed by Llywarch ap Llywelyn (otherwise known as Prydydd y Moch, fl.1174 - 1220), probably in the late 1180s, and is extant in several fourteenth century manuscripts, including the Hendregadredd Ms (NLW MS6680B), the Red Book of Hergest and Peniarth Ms118D.⁶³¹ Llywarch is best known for his poetry on subjects in North Wales, especially Llywelyn ab Iorwerth of Gwynedd, but Andrews suggests the connection between Llywarch and the court of Caerleon may stem from Hywel ab Iorwerth's marriage to Gwerful,

⁶²⁹ For Ireland, that poems were 'tailor made to reflect the individual patron's preoccupations' is discussed in K. Simms, 'Bards and Barons: The Anglo-Irish Aristocracy and the Native Culture', in Bartlett and MacKay (eds.), *Medieval Frontier Societies*, pp.177-198.

⁶³⁰ See chapter 2, of this thesis, as well as Evans. "'Talm o wentoedd'", p.285; Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, The Red Book of Hergest Version*, pp.136-7.

⁶³¹ R.M. Andrews (ed.), *Welsh Court Poems* (Cardiff, 2007), p.xxxvi, pp.30, pp.124-128.

Jones and Jones (eds.), *Gwaith Llywarch ap Llywelyn 'Prydydd Y Moch'*, pp.137-145; Evans, "'Talm o wentoedd'", p.286.

daughter of Owain Cyfeiliog and his wife, also called Gwenllian, the daughter of Owain Gwynedd.⁶³²

The poem is of a warrior's journey to Caerleon, from Llywarch's own perspective. The first half of the poem is given to describing the journey itself, but many hints throughout construe a warrior's campaign with that of a lover. The description and praise of Gwenllian appears in the latter half of the poem. Her connections to Gwynllŵg are prominent: the poet's destination is 'the forts of Gwenllian of the men of Gwynllŵg'. She is described as beautiful and approachable, as 'the light of the frontier', and the poet's longing for her is strongly emphasised.⁶³³ Also of interest in this poem is the mixture of love tropes with the martial element of a warrior. Llywarch is described as a warrior destroying the men of England.⁶³⁴ The final lines of the poem suggest Llywarch's true purpose, to present praise, as well as a gift of horses, to Gwenllian.

While subject to the poet's own perspective and often utilising common tropes, the influence of the patron on the sort of image presented remained important, although less direct perhaps than charters, where the grantors often had a hand in the sort of image presented. Flattery was a primary aim and one would hope that the words would have been chosen with care, knowing something about the subject and what they would find pleasing. Llywarch was not a resident poet in the southeast, having travelled from North Wales, where his patrons, the rulers of Gwynedd, resided. Andrews suggests that Llywarch travelled to Caerleon at the end of his period as court poet to Rhodri ab Owain Gwynedd (c.1175-90), who was Gwenllian's great-uncle. The occasion may have been Gwenllian's marriage, but it is possible that the poem immediately preceding this one in the manuscripts may have also been composed during his time in southeast Wales, as it refers to legal procedures unusual in native society but more common in the march.⁶³⁵ The image of a beautiful and approachable woman itself is common in poetry.

There is a significant gap in our poetic knowledge until the fourteenth century, the next earliest poem being an early fourteenth century *Awdl* by Casnodyn, to Madog Fychan of Coetref, Llangynwyd. Casnodyn may have been a native of Cilfai, between the rivers Nedd and Tawe, and was subject to a satirical poem by a contemporary, Hywel Ystrom.⁶³⁶ Lewis

⁶³² Jones and Jones (eds.), *Gwaith Llywarch ap Llyweylln*, pp.137-138; Andrews (ed.), *Welsh Court Poems*, pp.124-5.

⁶³³ Evans, "'Talm o wentoedd'", p.286.

⁶³⁴ Jones and Jones (eds.), *Gwaith Llywarch ap Llyweylln*, pp.137-145

⁶³⁵ Evans, "'Talm o wentoedd'", p.286.

⁶³⁶ Lewis, 'The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg down to the middle of the Sixteenth Century', pp.482.

suggests this poem may have been composed at the court of Llywelyn ap Cynwrig, a member of the gentry of Senghenydd. Lewis suggests that: ‘Although he was obviously highly esteemed by the Norman lords of Morgannwg, Llywelyn ap Cynwrig seems to not have been unmindful of the literary patronage for which his own ancestors and their peers had been so rightly famed...he regularly extended a generous hospitality to the visiting bards who called at his noble household from time to time.’ This is a contrast suggesting that patronage of the bards was something identified with the native Welsh.

To return to the subject of Casnodyn’s own poem, Madog Fychan was also an *uchelwr* of Senghenydd, with solid connections to the marcher lords: he was steward of Tir Iarll under the lord of Glamorgan. Lewis suggests that Casnodyn’s own viewpoint was more conservative than many contemporaries, critical of the new society being shaped in the aftermath of the Edwardian Conquest: ‘it is doubtless a significant indication of his deep contempt for the alien influences which he felt were in the process of undermining the old closely-knit native society of his day – and with it so many of those traditional values which the professional bards always cherished so dearly, that he took as his ideal the traditional old-type gentleman who was blissfully ignorant of English’.⁶³⁷ This would seemingly be at odds with Madog’s connections with this English and marcher neighbours, but reminds us that the poet, like the historian, could not be removed entirely from his own agenda. It may also suggest that such a viewpoint, harking on Madog’s ancestry and emphasising ‘traditional’ elements, must have appealed to even an individual such as Madog, perhaps especially in light of this rapidly changing society.

The final series of poems to which we turn was composed by the most famous of Welsh poets at this period, Dafydd ap Gwilym. Dafydd, a native of Ceredigion, whose *flourit* is thought to have been around the second quarter of the fourteenth century, has been subject to many analyses by scholars.⁶³⁸ Dafydd composed seven praise poems for a patron in southeast Wales, Ifor ap Llywelyn (fl. c.1320 -1380). Ifor was a member of the *uchelwyr* and a descendant of the (by now largely dispossessed) dynasty of Gwynllŵg.⁶³⁹ Interestingly, while the continental influences on Dafydd’s poems have been explored by historians, with Dafydd unafraid to bring in courtly love and other elements familiar in French poetry, Bromwich

⁶³⁷ Lewis, ‘The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg down to the middle of the Sixteenth Century’, pp.484.

⁶³⁸ In 1952 Sir Thomas Parry argued a *flourit* of 1340-70, although more recently, Geraint Gruffydd argued for fl.1315x50; Thomas (ed.), *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems*, p.xi.

⁶³⁹ Ifor was the son of Llywelyn ab Ifor and Angharad, daughter of Morgan ap Maredudd, a leader of the 1294-5 rebellion in Glamorgan, but who remained loyal to the crown during Llywelyn Bren’s 1316 rebellion; R. Geraint Gruffydd, ‘Ifor ap Llywelyn [Called Ifor Hael]’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. Ifor’s mother Angharad and grandfather Morgan are mentioned briefly in a short poem ‘I Fam Ifor Hael’, No.167 in Swansea University’s Dafydd ap Gwilym project, Available at <http://dafyddapgwilym.net> (Accessed 13/11/2022).

suggests that 'it is in terms of one of the *penceirddiaid* in the old society, addressing his princely patron, that Dafydd envisages himself in these poems.'⁶⁴⁰ Despite Dafydd's innovation – which placed him at odds with some of his contemporaries – this viewpoint suggests praise poetry itself was a medium associated with presenting a traditional image.

In these seven poems, several recurring themes are emphasised during Dafydd's praise of Ifor and his wife which build up an idealised picture of them. The first is generosity: Dafydd ascribes to Ifor the epithet *Hael* – 'The generous', and he is called 'lord of favour and reward', and 'For liberality [he's] my lord, my Nudd, my golden fortress', in another he refers to a gift of gloves Dafydd receives from Ifor.⁶⁴¹ This recurs throughout the poems and is unsurprising from one who looks to receive patronage, but is also a traditional quality associated with Welsh warlords.⁶⁴²

Another oft recurring theme is prowess in warfare. His strength and martial abilities are constantly mentioned. For example: 'For might, my strong man, tough of wrists...', 'for bravery [with] bustling sword...and skill to make an army ebb; For great [and for] flowing attack, my golden fortress,' or 'my lord is like Fulke for mettle, [He's] a wall supporting Morgannwg'.⁶⁴³ This image of him as a powerful warrior is central. In a shared mock elegy to Ifor and his wife, Nest, his compliments for Ifor are all military: 'Fort-breaking leaders, in battle not feeble: In a tournament he'd face up to nine thousand'.⁶⁴⁴

Often this military theme is tied in with an image of Ifor as being a stout opponent of the English. As well as being the 'wall supporting Morgannwg', Ifor is portrayed as 'Angle scattering', 'laying on biers the men of Deira'.⁶⁴⁵ Associations with the Angles and especially Deira – an archaic euphemism for the English employed by Dafydd throughout his poems to Ifor – equate this success in warfare as being against the English: patently an idealised vision considering the composition during the mid-fourteenth century. Dafydd compares Ifor to his English neighbours in less military terms as well, always to Ifor's advantage: 'For wisdom, no Norman's nearer to him than France is near to Manaw...no three are worthy compared with Ifor'; 'Undying stag, can't bear Deirans': even the gloves with which Ifor gifts Dafydd are 'not like a Saxon's Saxon gloves'.⁶⁴⁶

⁶⁴⁰ Bromwich, *Aspects of the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym*, p.20.

⁶⁴¹ Thomas (ed.), *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems*, Poems 5, 6 and 9, pp.8-13. In particular see Poem 6 'Englynion i Ifor Hael', line 1.

⁶⁴² Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, pp.40-46.

⁶⁴³ Thomas (ed.), *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems*, Poem 6, 'Englynion i Ifor Hael', lines 1-8, 21-24, 37-8, p.9.

⁶⁴⁴ Thomas (ed.), *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems*, Poem 12, 'Marwnad Ifor a Nest', lines 37-8, p.15.

⁶⁴⁵ Thomas (ed.), *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems*, Poem 12 'Marwnad Ifor a Nest', lines 9-10, p.15.

⁶⁴⁶ Thomas (ed.), *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems*, Poem 6, 'Englynion i Ifor Hael', lines 9-12, p.9, Poem 9, 'Diolch am Fenig', line 56, p.12.

Dafydd often compares Ifor with classical or mythological figures: ‘to Arthur’s pride, or Hector’s, a fair response, proverbial door’, or ‘Of the mighty nature of splendid Hercules, in purple cape [and] shining armour.’, ‘an Ovid in battle who’ll challenge the mighty’, or compared to Llŷr, Rhydderch and Fulk le Fitz Warin.⁶⁴⁷ While this shows Dafydd’s own familiarity with both Welsh and classical mythology, we must assume that Ifor would have been familiar with at least some of the figures mentioned, and be pleased by the comparison. This was a curious method combining the traditional Welsh elements with incoming continental ones.

There are several other recurring themes. Lineage is one: ‘your lineage was refined and good’, or alternatively ‘He’s a man of a line of splendid lords, of worthy folk, gold helmeted, most kind’, and eloquence in speaking is also mentioned.

A theme which is notable by its general absence is piety: although Dafydd asks for God’s support of Ifor, and although Christian motifs are common, direct references to Ifor’s own piety are few. This is in marked contrast to some of Dafydd’s other poems: as we might expect, one to the Dean of Bangor is full of references to the subject’s piety. While unsurprising, it does show that Dafydd was adept at changing his style to suit his audience, and we can assume that a warrior image was much more attractive to a secular patron than a pious one.

Many of the virtues attributed to Ifor are not unique in Dafydd’s poetry. Dafydd’s poem to Llywelyn ap Gwilym uses similar associations: the welcoming court, royal lineage, nobility and might are used, as are associations with mythological figures – although in this case, figures from Welsh mythology dominate. How far this was Dafydd tailoring his poetry to suit his audience is an intriguing question, but it was likely a conscious choice on some level.

The sort of image presented through this poetry is clearly one of an individual following the ‘old ways’. The emphasis on military prowess, lineage and generosity fits in well with what we know of as traditional values of the pre-Edwardian conquest Welsh Princes, as emphasised by their own court poets, or indeed, by observers such as Gerald of Wales or the Chroniclers.⁶⁴⁸ Indeed, the portrayal as enemies of the English was commonly used by the *beirdd y Tywysogion*, even those, such as Iorwerth Goch of Powys, who clearly had an excellent working relationship with the English Kings.⁶⁴⁹ The fact that this stood in sharp contrast to

⁶⁴⁷ Thomas (ed.), *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems*, Poem 5, ‘Awdl i Ifor Hael’, Line 10, p.8, Poem 7, ‘Cywydd Mawl i Ifor Hael’, line 14, p.10, Poem 12 ‘Marwnad Ifor a Nest’, Line 43, p.15.

⁶⁴⁸ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.60-1.

⁶⁴⁹ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, p.61.

actual practice may be immaterial, the fact that this was an image which would have appealed to individuals such as Ifor (and, of course, poets such as Dafydd). For all his innovation and introduction of continental elements, this was an image that appealed to Dafydd and presumably to Ifor as his patron. One can imagine this particularly appealing to a ruler such as Ifor in the fourteenth century, with an illustrious native heritage, even if his relationship with his English neighbours was rather different in reality. Overall, by this time, this was generally in contrast to the sort of image presented through charters and titles.

Overall, a similar image was portrayed in the poems of the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. Ifor Hael is depicted as a generous English-fighting warrior of good lineage, in the same way that earlier poets, Casnodyn and Prydydd y Moch, had done. This image stood in marked contrast to the way individuals were portrayed in charters which could entail more overt imitation of the English and engagement with them. This is undoubtedly due to the differences in audience, as poetry was composed for the patron, using flowery language, and not the Anglo-Normans, who were one possible audience in many of the princely acts. In this way, poetry appealed to the traditional aesthetic of the Welsh princely dynasties. Rather than emulating their Norman neighbours, poetry, in a way, sought to present an image emulating that of their Welsh forbears. While not indicative of imitation or emulation of the Normans directly, the numerous classical references within the work of Dafydd ap Gwilym is indicative of the poet's own engagement with the wider world.

While poetry was just one element of literature of import in medieval Wales, a discussion of cultural borrowings and appropriation in literature have been well studied, concerned as we are with individuals from southeast Wales emulated and imitated their neighbours, a discussion of other forms of literature, while fascinating, lie beyond the scope of this work.

Conclusion

Words provided a number of ways for individuals to be represented. While charters were written with ruler's input, and praise poetry was written with their patronage in mind, the contrast between the two is striking. The native dynasties employment of titles, uncommon as it was, was a method of projecting an identity in a similar way to their Anglo-Norman neighbours. Their adoption was a direct imitation of the Anglo-Normans, and we can see this as emulation, where individuals sought to match their Norman counterparts in establishing their claim to lands, particularly in the cases of Hywel Caerleon and the lords of Afan, where their extent and use far exceeded that of their Welsh contemporaries. By contrast, poetry presented

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a dramatized vision of a ruler in which traditional concepts of generosity, warfare, and lineage were prominent. Imitation or emulation of their Anglo-Norman or English neighbours is less evident, and indeed the tone of many poems suggest an anti-English stance. Poetry instead presented an image emulating their Welsh forebears and shows the importance of audience. The changing imagery employed reflected the dynasties' changing political and social position. A mixture of imported elements from the Anglo-Normans, cultivating links with their Anglo-Norman neighbours, while at the same time stressing links with their own forebears and harking back to the past – whether real or imagined – show the complex nature of a changing cultural identity at this time. Words, however, provide just one of the ways in which identity could be expressed. In the following chapter we explore the visual alternative: methods of representation intended to be seen, rather than read or heard.

Chapter 5: Image and Perception, Visual Representations

Introduction

While in the previous chapter we considered how the written and spoken could be used to project an identity, often using elements borrowed from the Anglo-Normans, image and cultural identity did not only rest on these forms of expression. Individuals in Medieval Wales could also use visual methods of projecting an identity, through such mediums as seals and heraldry, to influence how others saw them. These included two features which historians agree were introduced to Wales by the Anglo-Normans: seals and heraldry.⁶⁵⁰ These visual methods stood in contrast with written methods in particular as they were not necessarily designed to be read, but to be seen: both seals and heraldry each bore a unique design relating to their owner, and would have been instantly recognisable.⁶⁵¹ While we explored some of the implications surrounding the use of seals and heraldry as sources in chapter 2, to understand the sort of image that the seals of Welsh individuals presented, and how far they was influenced by or for the benefit of, their neighbours it is essential to understand exactly how seals could be used to express identity.

This debate centres around how far variations in design were influenced by their owners and how far these designs reflected different cultural influences. Seals were designed to determine ownership, authenticating documents and designating identity.⁶⁵² Seals often contained anthropomorphic imagery which historians have argued were intended as direct representations of their owners.⁶⁵³ Bedoz-Rezak argues that they were not intended to be realistic portraits, rather it was the symbolism behind the design that was important, demonstrating membership of a particular social group: ‘Kings were shown in royal garb and posture, nobles as warriors and bishops in Episcopal array.’ This could be used to project social status.⁶⁵⁴

Bedoz-Rezak suggests that the belonging to a social grouping was the most important image projected, as she notes the iconic types of design displayed on seals as ‘a severely limited, barely differentiated repertoire’. By their repetitive nature, ‘seals tended less to designate singularity than generic conformity to a group; indeed, they functioned as an index

⁶⁵⁰ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.242.

⁶⁵¹ McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*; Ailes, ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego’, p. 8

⁶⁵² Bedoz-Rezak, *When Ego was Imago*, pp.1-3.

⁶⁵³ McEwan and New, (eds.), *Seals in Context*; Ailes, ‘The Knight’s Alter Ego’, p. 8

⁶⁵⁴ Bedoz-Rezak, ‘Medieval Identity’, pp.1529-1532.

of shared membership in specific groups.’⁶⁵⁵ This is not to say that seals could not display nuances indicative of their cultural origin, or that these nuances could not be used by individuals to present an image based upon the elements most important to them. Welsh equestrian seals, in particular, have been acknowledged as a distinct group.⁶⁵⁶ Bedoz-Rezak notes that ‘it was through seals that the morality and the standards of the [aristocracy] – eschatological concerns, warfare, penitential needs, spiritual intentions, accountability, kindred – came to be expressed.’⁶⁵⁷

Despite Bedoz-Rezak’s claim, there was considerable variety in seal design in examples from southeast Wales,⁶⁵⁸ which allowed for some of these areas to be emphasised, and hence for some form of individual identity to be projected, even within a wider framework of social groupings and status. Seals were designed to be distinguishable from those of other people, and this could lead to small but significant differences, even if they utilised similar themes.⁶⁵⁹ Thus for our purposes, we can use seals both to understand how individuals wanted to be seen individually and part of cultural or status groups.

Seal development: an overview

The imitation of the seal design of one’s neighbours has been acknowledged in a number of studies of cross-cultural emulation across Europe.⁶⁶⁰ The diffusion of seals from continental Europe to the British Isles, and dissemination from kings to other elites, has been discussed in Chapter 2, but it is important to reiterate that this diffusion seems to have been driven by elites keen to imitate the king, and outline some of the designs here.

Some seal designs had lasting influence: the double sided seal of William the Conqueror, with an image of the monarch enthroned on one side and an armoured figure on horseback on the other, was widely copied by other (non-English) kings, and the equestrian design (usually in an adapted, single-sided form) by the nobility.⁶⁶¹ They usually entailed a legend around the edge, naming the grantor.

The equestrian design was very popular from its first appearance in the later eleventh century until the second half of the twelfth century and its inspiration probably derived directly

⁶⁵⁵ Bedoz-Rezak, ‘Medieval Identity’, p.1529.

⁶⁵⁶ Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, p.6; M.P. Siddons ‘Welsh Equestrian Seals’, *The National Library of Wales Journal*, 23, 3 (Summer 1984), pp.292-318.

⁶⁵⁷ Bedoz-Rezak, ‘Medieval Identity’, p.1532.

⁶⁵⁸ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.112.

⁶⁵⁹ Williams, *Welsh History through Seals*, p.19.

⁶⁶⁰ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.303; Veach, ‘Anglicization in medieval Ireland, was there a Gaelic Irish ‘middle nation’?’, pp.122-4; Pryce (ed.), ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.40.

⁶⁶¹ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.242; Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, p.43.

from the seal of William I. From the later twelfth century onwards designs became more varied, and some heraldry – or proto-heraldic designs – were incorporated. The equestrian figure was sometimes adapted to display such devices, or a heraldic device added on the seal's reverse.⁶⁶² In other cases, the equestrian design was dropped entirely in favour of an armorial seal (although some of these motifs appear only in rolls of arms many years after their first appearance on a seal). Ailes suggests that this may have been popular among the lesser nobility who may not have been as avid military campaigners or crusaders as nobility of the highest rank, and who may have been less comfortable with the equestrian figure, which would not only present them in a way equal to the highest in the land, but also in an overtly military fashion. Regardless, it is clear that such seals began to be used in increasing numbers,⁶⁶³ becoming increasingly popular during the thirteenth century while the popularity of the equestrian seal gradually declined: it was eventually retained only in royal circles.⁶⁶⁴ The final development in British medieval seals was the move towards seals without a legend around the edge: this began in the later thirteenth century and became increasingly popular in the fourteenth.

Starting in the later twelfth century, seals were slowly adopted by individuals who were recognisably not members of the nobility at all. Such seals took a multitude of forms, utilising flower or star motifs, or featuring a token of their craft (such as a barrel for a brewer) in the centre. Some appear to have been hastily made for a specific occasion: there is evidence on some seals that a single engraver may have made seals for multiple individuals who witnessed the same deeds. Harvey and McGuiness suggest that this spread may have been driven by monasteries, keen to keep diligent records of land transactions of which they were the beneficiaries, and requiring ever increasing numbers of landholders requiring a seal.⁶⁶⁵ They also came to be used by institutions such as boroughs or monasteries.⁶⁶⁶

The Earliest Welsh Seals 1100 – 1160.

There is a respectable body of evidence for the use of seals in medieval Wales, from both 'native' Welsh and Anglo-Norman (or later English), contexts. The earliest known Welsh seal is that of Cadell ap Gruffudd of Deheubarth, dating to 1147x54. The style of this seal clearly

⁶⁶² Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, p.43.

⁶⁶³ Ailes, 'The Knight's Alter Ego', pp. 8-11.

⁶⁶⁴ Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp.88-93.

⁶⁶⁵ Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp.52-88.

⁶⁶⁶ Williams, *Welsh History through Seals*, pp.22-30.

follows the Anglo-Norman norm of a fully equipped Norman knight.⁶⁶⁷ Crouch reminds us that: ‘Needless to say, the seal effigy of Cadell is not to be taken as an exact portrait of him riding to war; what is significant is that this was the image of power by which a Welsh king chose to be glorified to his men and neighbours in the mid-twelfth century.’⁶⁶⁸ Through this he projected an image of power in the same style as his Anglo-Norman neighbours.

The date of this first seal is much later than the seals of the Anglo-Norman elites, who began adopting seals towards the end of the eleventh century, although the inclusion of sealing clauses in some Welsh charters from the 1140s suggests they appeared earlier, though they have not survived. The apparent hiatus between the first Anglo-Norman and Welsh seals may be misleading: there is a conspicuous gap in the charter record for the later eleventh and early twelfth century in Wales, possibly due to a loss of sources.⁶⁶⁹ This makes it very hard to determine just when Welsh individuals began using seals in the same way as their Anglo-Norman counterparts. An episode in Gerald of Wales suggests that the Welsh were familiar with the seals of their Anglo-Norman counterparts as early as the 1090’s: in one tale, one of Gerald’s Norman ancestors, Gerald of Windsor, left faked documents to mislead their Welsh enemies, who recognised the seals and were thus satisfied as to their authenticity. Of course, this was written a century after the purported events, and Gerald was hardly an unbiased commentator in this incident involving his ancestor. However, it remains possible that the Welsh may have understood Anglo-Norman seal use by the 1090’s – they certainly were familiar by Gerald’s day.⁶⁷⁰

On the other hand, while sealing had caught on by the 1140s, there are a few later charters had no indication of ever having seals, either through a sealing clause or the physical inclusion of a tag. If some Welsh individuals adopted them early, then others continued without them. That Welsh seal development was influenced by Anglo-Norman trends, is something we can be fairly confident about.⁶⁷¹

Seals in southeast Wales, 1158 – 1191

⁶⁶⁷ Crouch, ‘The Earliest Original Charter of a Welsh King’, pp.125-131, Plate 1 p.315.

⁶⁶⁸ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain*, p.156.

⁶⁶⁹ H. Pryce, ‘Culture, Power, and the Charters of Welsh Rulers,’ in M.T. Flanagan and J.A. Green (eds.), *Charters and Charter Scholarship in Britain and Ireland*, (Houndmills, 2005), p.187; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.246-7.

⁶⁷⁰ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.188-9; Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp.148-9.

⁶⁷¹ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.246-7; Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals*, p.22.

In southeast Wales, we are fortunate in the survival of the collection of charters of Margam Abbey – by far the largest in Wales – which also include a considerable proportion of surviving seals. As we have seen, charters were often granted by local individuals,⁶⁷² and in this case, including the rulers of Glamorgan, as well as numerous marcher lords great and small. This gives us a substantial body of evidence of how individuals may have represented themselves, and this may have developed over time. Sadly we have no comparable well-preserved cluster of charters from Goldcliff priory or Llantarnam Abbey (both patronised by the Gwynllŵg dynasty),⁶⁷³ or other houses further east: the corpus of acta from these houses are more fragmentary and no seals survive, and thus our viewpoint is heavily skewed towards individuals local to Margam. On the other hand, we have an unparalleled view of the Glamorgan dynasty and members of the local *uchelwyr*: the corpus of seals becomes much more substantial from the later twelfth century, and we have a series of seals of the Glamorgan (and later Afan) dynasties from the late twelfth century to the mid fourteenth, allowing us to see changes in how this family were represented over time.

Establishing the earliest use of a seal by a Welsh individual in southeast Wales is difficult: the earliest evidence that we have are sealing clauses, although the seals no longer survive. As we are unable to precisely date many of these early charters, there are several contenders for the earliest use of seals by the Welsh in southeast Wales: all belonged to important individuals within the native dynasties of southeast Wales.

Contenders for the earliest Welsh seal user in southeast Wales include Morgan ap Morgan, of Gwynllŵg, who included a sealing clause in a charter of 1158x86: '*Et ut donatio mea et patris mei rata et irrefragabilis perseveret, donationem patris mei et meam carta mea et Sigillo meo impressa confrimavi etc.*'⁶⁷⁴ Pryce suggests that it may have been issued shortly after his father's death in 1158: this would make it one of the earliest Welsh examples, though sadly the seal itself has not survived. Sealing clauses and tags show that Hywel ab Iorwerth (fl.1184x1217) also used seals in several acta, as did his son, Morgan.⁶⁷⁵ In light of the family's associations with Caerleon and Hywel's adoption of an Anglo-Norman style title that we saw in Chapter 3, adopting a seal was another element borrowed from the Anglo-Normans and we can only speculate as its importance in complementing these other elements in projecting an image like a marcher lord.

⁶⁷² See chapters 2 and 7 for more on this.

⁶⁷³ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.660-679.

⁶⁷⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.465, p.664; TNA PRO, C 150/1 fo. 146r. s. xiv.

⁶⁷⁵ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.469, 472, 474 – 478; pp.667 – 678.

The Glamorgan dynasty were also relatively early users of seals, and in this case, there is much more surviving material to help us determine what sort of image they presented. The earliest is of Morgan ap Caradog (d.1208), appended to an act of 1158x91, although Pryce suggests a date of 1183x91, as it mentions Morgan's brothers Cadwallon and Maredudd, but omits a third brother, Owain, who had died by 1183. The charter also includes a sealing clause '*Hanc terram predictis fratribus a Caradoco U(er)beis in pereptuam datam elemosinam ut libera inperpetuum maneat et quieta sigilli nostri atestatione sanctimus et confirmamus.*' There are two versions of this grant to Caradoc Uerbeis surviving:⁶⁷⁶ One version contains two seals: both were of red wax and originally circular, each depicting an armed equestrian figure facing right, with a legend around the periphery: the legends, although now only partially legible, were of the format 'the seal of x son of y'.⁶⁷⁷ The two seals may have been intended to emphasise this was a joint grant. The second charter includes a single equestrian seal of Morgan ap Caradog (Figure 2).⁶⁷⁸ The significance of Morgan's seal on Caradog Uerbeis' grant is one to which we shall return in due course (See 'Seals of the *Uchelwyr*' below). In light of the dates, it seems likely that they adopted seals later than their Gwynllŵg counterparts, but this is still one of the earliest examples of seals from Wales as a whole.

A rather different example of early Welsh seal use is a grant by Ketherech ap John Du to Margam Abbey of 1166x93. Unlike the other grants mentioned above, this grant, a bequest, entailed the use of the seal of the prior of Ewenny, rather than the seal of Ketherech ap John Du himself.⁶⁷⁹ While likely to be later than the (now lost) seal of Morgan ap Morgan of Gwynllŵg, it does raise an interesting possibility – that Ketherech had no seal of his own, and thus the bequest had to be made using the seal of the prior of Ewenny. This would correspond well with contemporary developments elsewhere in Britain, where seals were not held by everyone (and there are references to other objects being pressed into wax in lieu of seals at this time). This could be explained by the relative social status of Ketherech, a member of the *uchelwyr* and dependant of Morgan ap Caradog (see chapter 3). The prior's seal is representative of ecclesiastical seals at this period in Wales and beyond:⁶⁸⁰ a pointed oval with a standing figure – clearly a churchman – at its centre (Figure 2). Of course, seals were in

⁶⁷⁶ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.54; BL Harl. Ch 75 B 29. Pryce's 'A' text of this charter has been taken from the latter. Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.121, pp.258-9.

⁶⁷⁷ BL Harl. Ch 75 B 29.

⁶⁷⁸ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.54.

⁶⁷⁹ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.17; McEwan and New, (eds.), *Seals in Context*, p.35, Fig 13.

⁶⁸⁰ Bedoz-Rezak, 'Medieval Identity', p.1529.

regular use by ecclesiastical institutions and Anglo-Norman marcher figures alike in southeast Wales by the time we have the first definitive evidence for ‘native’ seal use in the region.⁶⁸¹

While these examples are rather late in comparison with other parts of Britain, they show that seal use in southeast Wales fits neatly into the wider pattern, beginning with individuals at the top of society, and gradually disseminating to others. In light of the early twelfth-century dearth of charters, it is quite possible that seals were in common use by the most prominent native Welsh individuals before this. As Crouch writes: ‘The native Welsh were also by no means slow to adopt seals.’⁶⁸²



*Figure 1: Early seals of southeast Wales: Morgan ap Caradog, 1158-91 (left), The Prior of Ewenny 1166-91 (right), affixed because Ketherech ap John Du had no seal of his own.*⁶⁸³

Morgan ap Caradog, Glamorgan and Afan: A Case Study.

From our first glimpse of Welsh seals in the third quarter of the twelfth century, what can we tell about the intentions of Welsh seal users:, what considerations did they have when choosing the design of their seal, what sort of image were they presenting, were they emulating their neighbours and if so, whom? For this, I evaluate Morgan ap Caradog in a little more detail.

Over twenty examples of Morgan’s seal survive, all showing an equestrian figure, facing to the right of the viewer, armed with sword and shield, possibly with a helmet and surcoat, and with a legend around the periphery (Figures 1 and 2).⁶⁸⁴ The shield is held in front of the body, and the sword held out behind, so the figure is visible.

⁶⁸¹ The Earls of Gloucester are a case in point: for these, see Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, No.120, p.115 for an example of Earl William of Gloucester before 1153.

⁶⁸² Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.188-9.

⁶⁸³ Reproduced from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.54; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.17, by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

⁶⁸⁴ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.54; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.95

Where might Morgan have obtained inspiration for the design of his seal? The ubiquitous nature of the equestrian seal at the time makes this challenging, but the most obvious possibility is that Morgan was familiar with the seals of his contemporaries – possibly his neighbours who had lands nearby and made grants to the same religious houses such as Margam Abbey. Many of these neighbours were members of the Anglo-Norman aristocracy and thus one possible source of influence worth exploring. As historians generally agree that major Anglo-Norman landholders based the designs of their seals upon those of their superiors – especially the monarchy – in the latter half of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries,⁶⁸⁵ might we see a similar effect in twelfth-century Wales, where the ‘native’ dynasties of southeast Wales were at least nominally subject to the Earls of Gloucester, who also granted lands to Margam? If we wished to consider the possibility of a Welsh individual emulating their Anglo-Norman overlord,⁶⁸⁶ we could start here.

A glance at the seals of Morgan’s neighbours throws this scenario into doubt, as by the later twelfth century, Anglo-Norman seals had begun to move away from the equestrian design, many members of the aristocracy (apart from the most powerful, such as royalty) choosing alternatives such as animals, flowers and hunting motifs. The contrast of Morgan’s seal with those of the earl of Gloucester before 1191 is more striking than the similarities. William’s seal used the image of a lion passant from at least 1153.⁶⁸⁷ The design is utterly unlike Morgan’s seal, and therefore cannot have been the source of inspiration for Morgan. William was survived only by daughters following his death, and until 1189, charters were issued in the name of Countess Isabella, who used a pointed oval seal showing a female figure in a commonly used design;⁶⁸⁸ only after 1189, when Isabella married John, Count of Mortain (later King John), were acta issued under an equestrian seal once again, though it included complex elements – such as a counterseal on the reverse – which were not used by Morgan.⁶⁸⁹ Given the dating, it seems unlikely that Morgan obtained inspiration for his design here, given he must have adopted the design evident in NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.54 before 1191.⁶⁹⁰

⁶⁸⁵ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.242 – 3; Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, p.43.

⁶⁸⁶ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.122.

⁶⁸⁷ Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, No.120 p.115; McEwan and New, *Seals in Context*, Fig. 36, pp.86-7.

⁶⁸⁸ Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, pp.5-7.

⁶⁸⁹ Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, pp.5-7, No.74 p.80; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.1947; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2046.

⁶⁹⁰ Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, No.120 p.115; McEwan and New, *Seals in Context*, Fig. 36, pp.86-7.

Several other Anglo-Norman landholders had a prominent stake in the area too, but again their seals bear little resemblance to Morgan's. Roger Sturmi, for example, used a lion design in a charter of 1166x93, while both his father and son used a motif of a standing spearman with helmet.⁶⁹¹ A neighbour that did use an equestrian seal was Payn (III) Turberville, lord of Coity, but his equestrian seal also diverges from the norm: the figure is shown hunting, holding a branch and horn, rather than in war regalia.⁶⁹² The contrast between the design of Morgan's seal and those of his Anglo-Norman contemporaries is stark, and we must look elsewhere for influence on Morgan's seal design.

By contrast, a comparison between Morgan and the few seals of his Welsh contemporaries show striking similarities: in Powys, Maredudd ap Hywel used an equestrian seal in green wax on a grant to Strata Marcella of 1176; Elise ap Madog sealed another deed to Strata Marcella in 1183.⁶⁹³ Both included an armed equestrian figure, similarly dressed with sword, shield, helmet and surcoat. A few other deeds, including those of Morgan's counterparts in Gwynllŵg, clearly contained seals, but as the seals have been lost, we cannot ascertain the design. By contrast, no surviving seal of the princes of Gwynedd is known before 1205 (Figure 3).⁶⁹⁴ These examples are of prominent Welsh individuals of the princely dynasties, mostly of greater status than Morgan, and the similarities suggest that Morgan obtained the idea from other Welsh princes, rather than the Anglo-Normans.

An attractive possibility is that Morgan obtained inspiration from the closest large Welsh polity, Deheubarth. In Morgan's day, Deheubarth was ruled by the Lord Rhys (d.1197), who had wide ranging interests in southeast Wales. Rhys was related to most of the minor dynasties of the march: Morgan ap Caradog of Afan and Gruffudd ab Ifor of Senghenydd were both nephews of his, and Rhys led a contingent of these princes to a peace conference with Henry II at Gloucester in 1175.⁶⁹⁵ Rhys was also a ruler who constructed an image based upon the Anglo-Normans, serving as Henry II's justiciar for south Wales, and his diplomatic relations with the king of England have been the focus of many studies.⁶⁹⁶ Might it be possible, therefore, that Morgan was imitating his powerful uncle – who also had strong connections with the English monarchy?

⁶⁹¹ McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, Figs 31, 32 and 33 pp.78-9.

⁶⁹² New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression' Fig 2 p.335; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch. 41.

⁶⁹³ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos.482 and 483 pp.682 – 684.

⁶⁹⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.226 p.376; McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, Fig 18 p.42.

⁶⁹⁵ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version* (Caerdydd, 1941), p.223.

⁶⁹⁶ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.219-336.

Attractive as this possibility may be, few original charters – and no seals – of the Lord Rhys have survived to compare with those of Morgan, and though later charters relating to the rulers of Deheubarth include sealing clauses, none of the seals of Rhys' successors survive either. The only surviving seal from Deheubarth is that of Rhys' brother, Cadell: as mentioned, his seal is the earliest extant Welsh example (1147x54). Cadell, another of Morgan's uncles, was an influential figure in mid twelfth-century Deheubarth, described as king, *Cadellus filius Grifini Regis*, in this charter and as *Gatel Rex Sudwallie* in an acta of Bishop Meurig of Bangor of 1143x51, and although badly damaged, his seal also depicted an equestrian figure, with sword and shield.⁶⁹⁷ The design and early date of Cadell's show that members of Deheubarth used equestrian seals, and it seems very likely that Morgan based his seal on those of his influential kinsmen – either Cadell himself or the Lord Rhys a little later. The design, date and differences when compared with contemporary Anglo-Norman seals are particularly convincing.

Of course, the similarities with other Welsh seals do not completely rule out the possibility that Morgan chose to directly copy a seal from elsewhere – such as directly from the English kings, as Anglo-Norman aristocrats had done the previous century. In comparison with the varied seals in use among the later twelfth-century Anglo-Norman aristocracy, the similarities in the Welsh equestrian seals are striking enough that they have been categorized as a distinct group, resistant to changes in design, that have been described as 'naïve':⁶⁹⁸ their form appears more similar to the earliest Anglo-Norman seals. Were the Welsh simply behind the newest fashions? In the context of the southern Welsh march, where their close Anglo-Norman neighbours were using such a variety of seals, it seems hard to believe that the Welsh would not have been exposed to these.⁶⁹⁹

Another hypothesis is that the portrayal of an armed equestrian figure may have been particularly attractive to the Welsh psyche and far from being a delay in fashions, they could actively have chosen to be represented in this way. There could be several reasons for this: first is the strikingly militaristic symbolism contained within the seal. It is possible that this was also intended on some level to represent how Morgan would actually have gone to war. Around this time, Morgan's brother Maredudd, his son Lleision and other members of the native

⁶⁹⁷ Crouch, 'The Earliest Original Charter of a Welsh King', p.127.

⁶⁹⁸ Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, p.6; Siddons 'Welsh Equestrian Seals', pp.292-318.

⁶⁹⁹ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.188-9.

dynasties led military forces which contained contingents of horsemen (see chapter 7),⁷⁰⁰ so it is quite possible that Morgan would have ridden to war like this. Nonetheless, the symbolic importance of the equestrian design may also be important: it was the most common design throughout both the British Isles and Europe in the twelfth century,⁷⁰¹ used by both Anglo-Norman elites and the Welsh princes, and based ultimately upon the seals of the kings of England. Through the use of an equestrian seal, therefore, Morgan was showing himself on a par with other powerful elites – both Welsh and Anglo-Norman, signifying his membership of this social group, and portraying himself in a way which his contemporaries – Welsh or Norman – would clearly understand – emulating them by matching their representation. In this, Morgan was following the conventions of the period which would have been familiar across Europe, and demonstrating conformity to the norms of European knighthood.⁷⁰²

Additionally, although changing fashions led many members of the aristocracy to abandon the equestrian seal, the fact that this was a symbol that was still in use by the most important magnates – the monarchy in particular – could have been a powerful incentive for the Welsh to adopt this kind of seal. In doing so, they may have been trying to portray themselves as the equals of other great magnates – princes, earls and even kings – in a way instantly recognizable to their peers and subordinates. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the earliest of Welsh seals was associated with someone who styled himself as a king.



Figure 2: Equestrian seals of Wales and the Marches. Morgan ap Caradog's first and second seals (left and centre) in comparison with Payn de Turberville (right).⁷⁰³

⁷⁰⁰ D.M. Stenton et al. (eds.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Sixth Year of the Reign of King John, Michelmas 1204*. The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 17 (London 1940), p.146; Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, p.140.

⁷⁰¹ New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression', pp.332-338.

⁷⁰² Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and European Change', p.40; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.155-162.

⁷⁰³ Reproduced from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.54; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.95; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.41 by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales. Other examples of equestrian seals for comparison can be found in Siddons *Welsh Equestrian Seals*, Fig. A.II p.314, Fig. A.XIII.2. p.317, Fig. B.VII. p.318; Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals*, Fig.37 p.19; Crouch, 'The Earliest Original Charter of a Welsh King', Plate 1 p.131; McEwan and New, *Seals in Context*, Fig.37, p.91.

The Equestrian Motif as a Marker of Lordship, 1200 – 1241.

In the case of the Glamorgan dynasty, there is also evidence that seals held an additional layer of symbolism: they not only reflected their status in society generally, but status and authority within their family as well.⁷⁰⁴ Morgan ap Caradog had several sons, who used a variety of seal designs. New argues that the equestrian seal may have been adopted by Morgan's sons in turn, either as they inherited the lordship, or were about to do so: hence these seals would only belong to those sons who stood to be the primary inheritor of the lordship – in doing so, she suggests that the family may have favoured primogeniture.⁷⁰⁵ The eldest, Lleision, adopted an unusual seal showing figure kneeling before a religious individual – whether abbot, bishop or saint is unclear – perhaps taking an oath. Lleision had a second, equestrian, seal, possibly in use at the same time, perhaps made to conform more to the social norms expected in a seal – the religious motif was unusual, and painstaking efforts were made by the charter scribes to note which of Lleision's seals were being used, presumably as insurance against any challenge of the documents' authenticity and to avoid confusion.⁷⁰⁶ The second seal was in use at the same time as his father's, and Lleision's seal was the smaller of the two, perhaps consciously reflecting his status as Morgan's heir. The equestrian seal, too may have been adopted specifically for Lleision's military service in English circles in 1204;⁷⁰⁷ an equestrian seal would have been familiar to Anglo-Norman aristocrats, and would have projected an image suitable for the leader of a military contingent – but would not have been as impressive as his father's. Lleision later adopted a third seal, similar in size and design to his father's.⁷⁰⁸ This may have been used as early as 1205, issued alongside a grant of his father, and certainly was in use by 1207, shortly before his father's death.⁷⁰⁹ Perhaps the change reflected Lleision's growing authority in the lordship, and his status as Morgan's designated heir, or even may have been a method of enhancing his authority with an eye to the possibility of the vociferous squabbling often common in Welsh dynastic succession. In any case, Lleision appears to have been consciously emulating his father through his choice of seal design.

After Morgan ap Caradog's death, Lleision and his brother Owain both used equestrian seals at the same time: they issued at least two joint grants between 1208 and 1217, featuring

⁷⁰⁴ New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression'.

⁷⁰⁵ New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression', pp.347-8.

⁷⁰⁶ New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression', pp.347-8.

⁷⁰⁷ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Sixth Year of the Reign of King John, Michelmás 1204*, p.146.

⁷⁰⁸ New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression', pp.334; 346.

⁷⁰⁹ New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression', pp.347-8.; Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.153 and 154, pp.284-85.

the seals of both Lleision and Owain.⁷¹⁰ Owain had earlier used a seal of different design (a hand holding a banner), and his equestrian seal is noted only in grants of 1208 or later: the year his father died. It is tempting to see this as evidence of a shared inheritance, or shared responsibility – that Owain was keen to portray himself in the as the equal of his brother, and as his father had done before him. A younger brother, Morgan Gam, used a fleur-de-lys device, only adopting a large equestrian seal after 1218, by which time both Owain and Lleision seem to have died – and in this case it seems likely that an equestrian seal was adopted after he inherited the lordship.⁷¹¹ Morgan later adopted an unusual form of the equestrian design, which we shall examine shortly. It seems that the large equestrian seals may have been symbols of particular authority or responsibility associated with the tenure of the lordship itself, or at least, viewed as possible ways to bolster authority in the case of a disputed succession.

These possibilities are fascinating, if speculative, and all we can say with certainty is that equestrian seals were favoured by those who had a major stake in the lordship. The image of a warrior on horseback was a powerful image of authority and may have been intended to demonstrate the power and status of the individual. The adoption of equestrian seals by Lleision, and the similarity of seals used by Lleision and Owain after their father's death may also suggest that it was a recognised way in which authority was denoted, and used to increase their own claims during times of potential dispute.

While Anglo-Norman equestrian seals of this period displayed many variations, the design of the members of the Afan dynasty more closely reflected the seal of Morgan ap Caradog, perhaps choosing a continuity of expression of authority. This is not to say that the development of seals within the dynasty was static, and eventually, these seals too began to display variations – as evidenced by the youngest son, Morgan Gam (1217-1241). Immediately after succeeding his brothers to Afan, he used a circular seal with a fleur de lys device, but later used a larger round equestrian seal in the form of his predecessors.⁷¹² By 1234, however, on a judgement concerning Margam Abbey, Morgan was using an unusual seal, showing an armed equestrian figure in an unusual manner: on a smaller, pointed oval seal.⁷¹³ At least one other impression survives, dating to around 1230.⁷¹⁴ Thus the variations suggest the rulers of Gwynllŵg were receptive to changing ideas of seal design, even if the equestrian motif remained popular.

⁷¹⁰ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.161 p.291.

⁷¹¹ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.113; New, 'Lleision ap Morgan makes an impression', p.349.

⁷¹² Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No. 175, 181, pp.302-311.

⁷¹³ Pryce (ed.) *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.181, pp.309-10.

⁷¹⁴ Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals*, Fig.16 p.12.

Changing devices in the Glamorgan dynasty, 1200 – 1349.

By the early thirteenth century, the association of the equestrian seal with the ruling member of the Glamorgan dynasty in may indicate the start of a wider change in devices and hence a shift in the way individuals chose to represent themselves. This was similar to the changes in Anglo-Norman seal design evident from the middle of the twelfth century. For example, Lleision ap Morgan's first seal showed him kneeling before a religious figure: while the exact identity of the seated figure is uncertain, it may reflect an oath-taking, that Lleision's disputes with Margam abbey had recently been resolved, or simply a display of piety.⁷¹⁵ His brother, Owain's, seal was much more martial, showing a hand holding a banner.⁷¹⁶ As we have seen, both later adopted equestrian designs, probably reflecting their increased social status or responsibilities within the lordship, in imitation of Welsh and Anglo-Norman rulers elsewhere. These early designs could reflect how they wished to be seen at that moment – or reflect aspects particularly important to their self-image.

An often favoured design was the fleur-de-lys. Maredudd ap Caradog (d.1211) used a seal of this type.⁷¹⁷ We have no evidence that he had any other designs, and it is possible that as a secondary member of the dynasty his seal design remained consistent throughout his life. Morgan Gam, too, had a circular seal with a fleur-de-lys motif before obtaining an equestrian one, shortly after succeeding to the lordship.⁷¹⁸ At least one other impression survives, dating to around 1230.⁷¹⁹ Finally, Morgan ab Owain ap Caradog (1183-1246), used a similar seal and device from at least 1219 until 1246 – a long-lived family member and cousin of Morgan Gam, (his father being Morgan ap Caradog's brother), he made several grants using this seal, although he does not seem to have had a very prominent role in the lordship (Figure 3).⁷²⁰ Thus it seems to have been common for secondary members of this dynasty to use small circular seals with varying motifs. Ailes suggests that the fashion for other designs among the lesser aristocracy – and others – in Britain may have been because they were uncomfortable with the equestrian figure because of its overly military connotations – especially if they had not seen

⁷¹⁵ The development of the Equestrian seals of the Afan dynasty can be traced through the following documents. A pre-1191 example of Morgan ap Caradog is found in NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.54; A print of a contemporary example of his brother, Cadwallon can be found in Siddons *Welsh Equestrian Seals*, Fi. A.II. p.314. Lleision ap Morgan's pre-1217 seal and the unusual oval version of Morgan Gam, is shown in Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals*, Fig. 43 p.22; *ibid.* Fig. 16 p.12; see also New, 'Lleision ap Morgan Makes an Impression', pp.345-6.

⁷¹⁶ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.170 pp.298-9.

⁷¹⁷ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.150, pp.281-2.

⁷¹⁸ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos. 174 and 175 pp.302-304.

⁷¹⁹ Williams (ed.), *Welsh History Through Seals*, Fig.16, p.12.

⁷²⁰ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, Nos. 183, 185 and 187, pp.311-317; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.523.

military service themselves. Instead armorial or even heraldic devices came to be used.⁷²¹ By extension, this would imply that the equestrian motif was used primarily by individuals keen to emphasise their power in a military fashion.

Later-thirteenth century acts suggest a change in the way the Glamorgan family viewed their own status at this time. The equestrian seal gradually went out of favour in southeast Wales over the course of the thirteenth century. Morgan Gam dropped the large equestrian seal in favour of a smaller equestrian motif by 1230: his son, another Lleision, used a fleur-de-lys device in 1246.⁷²² Intriguingly, however, he reused an equestrian seal of his earlier namesake (the Lleision ap Morgan who had died by 1217) in 1247.⁷²³ It is possible that this was opportunistic recycling, or that his fleur-de-lys design of the year before was not available in 1247. This suggests a gradual move away from the militaristic image and a fundamental change in the self-image of this family. These seals are, in appearance, more like those of their dependents, members of the *uchelwyr*, than other princes, suggesting a gradual decline in the family's status. Their use is unusual, however: Harvey and McGuiness suggest that such a design may have been far from the norm in medieval Britain, with only 10% of male secular seals using a pointed oval device.⁷²⁴



Figure 3: Fleur-de-lys seals of Lleision ap Morgan Gam, 1246 (left), and Morgan ab Owain, 1215-1219 (right).⁷²⁵

⁷²¹ Ailes, 'The Knight's Alter Ego', pp. 8-11.

⁷²² NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.145.

⁷²³ Siddons 'Welsh Equestrian Seals', p.301.

⁷²⁴ Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp.79-80.

⁷²⁵ Reproduced from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.145 (Seal 3), 523, by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales

The number of charters associated with the Glamorgan dynasty tail off during the later thirteenth century, with a hiatus in surviving acta from 1247 until 1304; after this seal survival is patchy. It was during this hiatus that the family adopted the epithet 'de Avene' (see Chapter 4). The fourteenth-century seals indicate a fundamental change in the way they presented themselves, in a way that corresponds to the image the d'Avenes presented through the adoption of title and toponymic. By the 1330's, the family used heraldic seals: the seal of John d'Avene was small and round, in bright red wax, very different to those of their forebears, showing a shield with three chevrons, with a paschal lamb above – by this time the heraldic device of the family (Figure 4). A similar seal, along with one of his mother, Margaret, survives on a deed of 1341. Margaret's seal also showed an armorial shield: the left showing the three chevrons of her husband, the right side depicted other arms, probably those of the Sully Family (Figure 6).⁷²⁶ The conventions the family followed by this time were clearly very different to those that had gone before, and may reflect an extension of the developments of the 1230s and 1240s, turning away from militarised representations and towards heraldry, reflecting a wider reinvented identity visible in other forms of representation (see chapters 3, 4, 6 and 7). Historians have pointed to the similarity between these three chevrons and the arms of the de Clare family, Earls of Gloucester from 1217 until the death of Gilbert de Clare in 1314.⁷²⁷ As at least nominal overlords of the Welsh dynasties in the region, they were amongst the Glamorgan dynasty's most powerful neighbours, who consciously chose a heraldic device in imitation of them. That said, this took place long after the Anglo-Norman adoption of heraldic seals: Armorial or heraldic devices gained popularity in the later twelfth century: Geoffrey de Mandeville used an armorial device; Earl Amaury seems to have had both an equestrian seal, and a heraldic one showing a coat of arms (a shield bendy): both are evidenced in separate grants made by Earl Amaury to King Philip of France around 1200 and again in 1210.⁷²⁸ The de Clares had, during the 1220s, a heraldic equestrian seal (Figure 3) as well as an armorial counterseal.⁷²⁹ The Welsh do appear to have been much slower than their marcher neighbours in adopting new style of seal, while major marcher magnates more closely followed changing European fashions.⁷³⁰

⁷²⁶ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry, Volume II*, p.13; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch. 207, 217, 218 and 222.

⁷²⁷ Davis, *Three Chevrons Red*, pp.6-8.

⁷²⁸ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, Nos.79 and 80 pp.83-5.

⁷²⁹ J. McEwan and E. New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, pp.70-1 and Fig 28.

⁷³⁰ A. Ailes, 'The Knight's Alter Ego: From Equestrian to Armorial Seal' pp. 8-11.



*Figure 4: Seals of John and Margaret De Avene, 1341*⁷³¹

Gwellian ferch Morgan and Isabella, Countess of Gloucester: a Comparison

There is also at least one surviving seal of a female member of the Afan dynasty, other than Margaret de Avene. Sometime between 1208 and 1217 Gwenllian ferch Morgan, sister to Lleision, Owain, Cadwallon and Morgan Gam, quitclaimed her right to part of her land.⁷³² Her seal, on silk cords, rather than the usual tag, was of oval shape: sadly, the seal is so worn that the device and legend are no longer recoverable. However, a contemporary seal of Isabella, Countess of Gloucester comes from the marches. Isabella was a powerful woman, the daughter of Earl William of Gloucester (d.1183), and co-heiress to the lordship. She married several times – firstly to King John in 1189. Her seal was also a pointed oval, with a standing female figure in the centre.⁷³³ Indeed, as many as two thirds of women's seals were a pointed oval seal, often with the standing female figure.⁷³⁴ By using a similarly shaped seal to Isabella, Gwenllian was conforming to the type of seal used by women at the time, and, if we follow Bedoz-Rezak, proclaiming her membership of this cultural group.⁷³⁵ Although we cannot be sure of Gwenllian's seal design, it is possible that it also included a standing female figure

⁷³¹ Reproduced from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.218 by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

⁷³² Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, No.169, pp.297-298.

⁷³³ Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, No.148 and 149, pp.139-142.

⁷³⁴ Harvey and McGuiness, pp.79-80; McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, Fig 39, pp.95-97; Williams, *Welsh History Through Seals*, Fig 21 p.13.

⁷³⁵ Bedoz-Rezak, 'Medieval Identity', p.1529.

which was the most popular female representation across Britain, and she may thus have been imitating or seeking to emulate this important figure. On the other hand, Isabella's seal from 1216-17, like others, used a counterseal,⁷³⁶ whereas there is no evidence of this on Gwenllïan's seal. This parallels differences in the complexity of Welsh and Anglo-Norman equestrian seals.

Seals of the *Uchelwyr* 1190 - 1350

From the 1190's onwards, an increasingly large body of evidence exists for the seals of Welsh individuals who were not members of the ruling dynasties of Glamorgan or Gwynllŵg. From a Britain wide perspective, this is something that we might expect, as four-fifths of all surviving seals from medieval Britain were of this nature, rather than great seals of equestrian or heraldic design.⁷³⁷ If the Welsh of southeast Wales were part of this development, we could expect to see a large number of these seals from the later twelfth century onwards, and largely, it appears that this was the case. There are so many seals of this type, that it is impossible to consider every example here exhaustively, but we can highlight some of the most interesting examples.

Who were these individuals? We encountered some in Chapter 3, and the Margam charters contain information about many individuals who could form part of this social group, from the later twelfth century onwards. These charters are some of the best sources we have for the study of these people, containing information about their relationship with their neighbours, the lands they held and relative social status. They seem to have formed a close-knit group of landholders: their grants to Margam attest to their landholding status, and they often witnessed each others' charters, and those of their lords. Most of those visible in this source material appear to have been dependents of the rulers of Afan, as the latter are regularly mentioned.⁷³⁸ They were also more numerous than their counterparts at the very top of local society. Perhaps most importantly for our purposes, grants were made – or quitclaims issued – by several members of the same family, allowing us to build up a picture of how several generations of the same family chose to represent themselves. Although they may have held different amounts of land and have different levels of Welsh and Anglo-Norman ancestry, I refer to them here as the *uchelwyr*, for ease – a term often applied to members of the lesser Welsh aristocracy below the level of the princely dynasties.

Some of the earliest references to seals in grants of the *uchelwyr* suggest that they initially lacked seals of their own. We have already seen, for example, that a grant of Caradog

⁷³⁶ Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, No.148 and 149 pp.139-42.

⁷³⁷ Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, p.79.

⁷³⁸ Griffiths, 'Native Society on the Anglo-Norman Frontier', pp.179-214.

Ueberis, dated to between 1158 and 1191, was sealed by Morgan ap Caradog, rather than the grantor himself, because he had no seal of his own.⁷³⁹ Similarly, a bequest of Ketherech son of John Du, datable to between 1166 and 1193, states that, as he had no seal of his own, the Prior of Ewenny instead affixed his seal.⁷⁴⁰ We encountered these charters briefly earlier – but it can be no coincidence that among the earliest charters that we have, the *uchelwyr* lacked their own seals, instead relying upon their lords, or upon ecclesiastical individuals to append their seals to lend the documents authenticity: compared to these other classes, the *uchelwyr* seem to have been slower at adopting seals – these individuals in Wales seem to be following the same developments Harvey and McGuiness describe throughout Britain, that this social class adopted seals later than the greater magnates.

Seals of the Uchelwyr: Tatherech ferch Ketherech and Iorwerth ap Gistellard

By the 1190's, several seals belonging to Welsh individuals survive – including from the family of Ketherech, who had no seal of his own. Ketherech had a daughter, Tatherech, who inherited a claim to some of his lands, and who made at least two gifts to Margam Abbey in the 1190's; later, around 1225, she also quitclaimed some of the land.⁷⁴¹ She also had a husband, Iorwerth ap Gistellard, who also quitclaimed land to Margam in the early thirteenth century; quitclaims of Iorwerth and Tatherech's children also survive from between 1225 and 1250 (see chapter 3).⁷⁴²

Tatherech's seals are two of the few seals of a female Welsh figure surviving from medieval southeast Wales. She had at least two. That used in the 1190's was round, and with a floral design, with the legend around the periphery (Figure 5). In this, her seal appears very different from other contemporary women – though this device was amongst the most common in use by men during the later twelfth and early twelfth century. Indeed, a slightly later gift of her husband, between 1214 and 1216, also used a round seal of dark green wax with a similar floral design.⁷⁴³ The two were not completely identical, Iorwerth's seal lacking a division between the legend and motif, a development in other seals of the time (Figure 5). Although this instance of Iorwerth's seal is later, it is possible, perhaps, that the two seals were related. Whether Tatherech's seal was based on a design of Iorwerth – or indeed, the other way around, is uncertain. However, the design of Tatherech's first seal is similar to those of many lesser

⁷³⁹ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.54.

⁷⁴⁰ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.17.

⁷⁴¹ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.69, Ch.1976, Ch.2061.

⁷⁴² NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.70; 1967.

⁷⁴³ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.68.

nobles and freemen, and therefore it is possible that she obtained the design from those she was surrounded by. The differences between her seal and the more usual oval seal may suggest that she was unaware of these designs and based her seal on those which she was familiar with – perhaps seals of male neighbours or relatives. It is also possible that she had little input into the design, or that the seal was made specifically for these grants, by a craftsman using a standard design. Alternatively, she may have consciously chosen to have a seal of similar nature to that of her husband (if indeed he had a seal at this time).

Tatherech's second seal, from around 1225 – in shape at least – is more typical of those used by women. Like the seal of Gwenllian ferch Morgan, and Isabella, countess of Gloucester, it is oval, although the seal is very small. Although the device is worn and difficult to decipher, however, it does not appear to have depicted a female figure: one possibility is that it represents a fish (Figure 5). Her seal may have evolved to reflect some of the norms, of which she may have been more aware, or that she may have had more input over the design of the later one. Neither of Tatherech's seals could be considered completely standard, although their design suggests that they incorporate some usual elements, reflecting perhaps a growing consciousness of general trends.

A quitclaim (1225-50) of Tatherech and Iorwerth's children - Tudur, Cradoc, Knaithur, Alaithu and Gronw, includes a single seal of Tudur, the first mentioned. Tudur's seal was a pointed oval with fleur-de-lys – as we have seen, unusual for a secular noble of this period. Tudur's seal, however, may reflect the use of oval seals by other Welsh individuals at this time, such as Morgan Gam, Morgan ap Cadwallon or Lleision de Avene – all of whom used oval seals with fleur-de-lys devices. It is quite possible, therefore, that as dependants of the Afan family, Tudur may have based the design upon those of the Afan seals. Alternatively, it could have been in imitation of his peers, as this design became popular in the early thirteenth century.



Figure 5 Seals of Tatherech ferch Ketherech 1190s (left) and 1225 (centre), and her husband, Iorwerth ap Gistellard, 1214-16 (Right).⁷⁴⁴

The *Uchelwyr*: Early-Thirteenth Century Motifs

A grant of 1208 indicates several forms of iconography in use by Welsh members of the *uchelwyr* at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and is interesting in the light it sheds on the relationship between the *uchelwyr* and the Afan family.⁷⁴⁵ The grant was made by Roger and Kenewrec, sons of Wian, with the assent of Morgan ap Caradog. The iconography of the seals is particularly striking: Roger used a pointed oval seal, with a fleur-de-lys device. This looks remarkably like some of the other pointed oval seals noted above, although this seal is of an earlier date. Morgan ap Caradog's equestrian seal has been discussed above, but it is worth mentioning that in this document, his seal took pride of place in the centre, and was larger than those of Roger or Kenewrec, emphasising his power. Kenewrec's seal, finally, was a round seal, showing a hand holding a banner (Figure 6). McEwan and New suggest that this motif may reflect individuals with status, but not nobility of the greatest power, presenting themselves in a military way, but without using an equestrian seal, thereby emphasising the difference in status between the two: if so, then it would imply that the equestrian seal was purely the preserve of the elites.⁷⁴⁶ We have seen, above, that Owain ap Morgan ap Caradog used a seal depicting a similar banner device and it is possible that similar considerations may have been on Owain's mind.

⁷⁴⁴ Reproduced in the order noted in the caption from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2061, Ch.69, Ch.68 by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

⁷⁴⁵ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.95.

⁷⁴⁶ McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, Fig 17 pp.40-1.



Figure 6: Banner and weapon motifs in southeast Wales: Banner motif of Espus ap Caradog (left), Banner motif of Kenewrec son of Wian (right).⁷⁴⁷

There are other examples of the banner motif in the context of the *uchelwyr* of Glamorgan. Espus ap Caradog, a member of another kin group, issued a grant to Margam between 1203 and 1208. Like Kenewrec ap Wian, and Owain ap Morgan, his seal depicts a hand holding a banner (Figure 6).⁷⁴⁸ Indeed, of the two, the seal most closely reflects that of Owain ap Morgan, being the same shape, colour and size. Espus ap Caradog used this seal on later grants, between 1207 and 1216.⁷⁴⁹ While this may be a way in which several individuals of this class represented themselves, it would be very different to the non-military forms of representation, in the form of flower or star devices, or even heraldry. If the designs reflect the attitudes of these individuals, then perhaps we might associate military motifs with individuals who fought or had military power, as New has suggested for the members of the Afan dynasty.

His son, Iorvard (Iorwerth) ab Espus, also made a grant, between 1225 and 1250,⁷⁵⁰ but perhaps the most interesting of these seals are those of four brothers, Espus' grandchildren, who made a joint grant to Margam: although it has not been dated with certainty, it is thought that the grant belongs to the period before 1250. The four brothers were William, Madoc, Espus and Iorwerth Fychan, and their seals are almost identical: round, in green wax, each showing a banner with four chevrons, with nine pellets behind the banner. These appear very different to the banner of their grandfather Espus in his seal, earlier in the century (Figure 6). Could these be proto-heraldic motifs – a melding of both military and non-military forms of representation?

⁷⁴⁷ Reproduced from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2038, 95 by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales. For similar examples from Madoc ab Iorwerth ab Espus and Hugh of Hereford, see McEwan and New, *Seals in Context*, Fig 14 and Fig 35, pp.37, 82.

⁷⁴⁸ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2037.

⁷⁴⁹ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2038, Ch.2039.

⁷⁵⁰ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2040

The similarities between the four suggest that the same craftsmen made them, possibly as part of a set.⁷⁵¹ As McEwan and New suggest, the similarities would emphasise the co-operative nature of such a joint grant. It is also possible that the four were made the purposes of a particular grant for which a joint affirmation would be needed. The four seals are less overtly military than those of their grandfather, perhaps suggesting that a new way of representation, based on armorial devices instead, may have been favoured – something which would also correspond with the increased use of non-military armorial devices at all levels. At the same time, by retaining the banner, they may have reflected some similarity with the seals of their forbears, although they appear very different, making this, perhaps, less likely.

A third familial group worth mentioning are Alaithu ap Ythenard and his descendants. Alaithu made several grants in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, although they have not been more securely dated than this. Alaithu's seal is of a standard design, depicting an eight petalled flower (Figure 9).⁷⁵² In this, Alaithu's seal used one of the most common seal designs at the time. We also have a sequence of grants by his brother and his children. His sons made a grant in the early thirteenth century, before 1231, and made a concord with Margam Abbey in 1246.⁷⁵³ This latter grant must have been particularly important, as six seals were affixed to this document: it was witnessed by figures including the bishop of Llandaff, the prior of Margam, and Lleision ap Morgan Gam: the remaining seals are of three of the sons of Alaithu – Owain, Rhys and Caradog. All three are of moderate size, in green wax: Owain's seal shows a fleur de lys design, the others, variations on the flower theme (Figures 7 and 9): similar in general form to those of their grandfather, but not identical. While it is possible that this may reflect a conscious emulation of a design used by their grandfather, the differences are great enough to make it likely to reflect general norms: only Rhys and Caradog - the sons named second and third on the grant – used this design.

⁷⁵¹ McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, p.83.

⁷⁵² NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.1954.

⁷⁵³ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.1960; 116; 2056; 145.



Figure 7: Fleur-de-lys seals of the uchelwyr and marchers: Walter Luuel (Luvel), 1253 (top left), Tudur ap Iorwerth ab Gistellard, 1225-1250 (top right), Owain ap Aliathur, 1246 (bottom left), Gruffudd ap Morgan ap Howeyn, 1316 (bottom right)⁷⁵⁴.

Although these are just a few examples of Welsh individuals, we turn now to compare them with their marcher counterparts. A larger number of deeds – and seals – of these individuals survive, and hence they make a comparison relatively easy. The striking thing is that the seals of the lesser marcher lords of Glamorgan are very similar to those of their Welsh neighbours: (if not to the lords of Afan). A grant of 1202 includes a round seal of David Scurlage, with an eight petalled flower: similar to the Welsh flower designs of Alaithu ap Ythenard and his son Rhys and Caradoc (Figure 9).⁷⁵⁵ The variation is a little more marked, however: A letter of Nicholas Poniz of 1218 includes a seal with a design similar to a fleur-de-lys, but showing a plant being held in a hand (Figure 8).⁷⁵⁶ Similarities to the weapon design are also evident in the seal of Hugh of Hereford, whose round red seal is similar to that of Kenewrec ap Wion in size and shape: Hugh's seal shows a sword design, while Kenewrec shows a banner: New

⁷⁵⁴ Reproduced in the order noted in the caption from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch. 2057, Ch.70, Ch.145 (seal 4), Ch. 197 by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

⁷⁵⁵ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.61.

⁷⁵⁶ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2049.

suggests that Hugh's seal, too, may reflect a status below a great magnate, but important, and wishing to be portrayed in a military way.⁷⁵⁷ There is also evidence of heraldic or proto-heraldic devices in the seals of the lesser marcher magnates: for example, a seal of Raymund de Sully from before 1231 shows a shield, possibly showing three bars, although the device is difficult to decipher (Figure 10).⁷⁵⁸



Figure 8: Seal of Nicholas Poinz, 1218 (left), and Raymund de Sully, 1200-1231 (right).⁷⁵⁹

Looking beyond the marches to Britain as a whole, we see many of the same devices appearing frequently: the fleur-de-lis and star or flower device were common throughout medieval Britain.⁷⁶⁰ At the same time, however, the complexity of some of these seals – and their variety of mottos, are in stark contrast to those used by the *uchelwyr*, which always noted the name of the bearer – and usually their father's name in the 'x child of y' format.

⁷⁵⁷ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.33; McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, pp.36-7. Fig 14.

⁷⁵⁸ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2054; Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*, p.535.

⁷⁵⁹ Reproduced in the order noted in the caption from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2049, Ch.2054, by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

⁷⁶⁰ J.H. Bloom, *English Seals*, (London, 1906), pp.177-185.



Figure 9: Flower and Star motifs of the *uchelwyr* and marchers: Alaithu son of Ythenard 1175 1225 (top left), Rhys ab Aliathu, 1246 (top centre), Iorwerth ap Tudur Cham, 1205 (top right), Caradoc ab Aliathu, 1246 (bottom left), David Scurlage, 1202 (bottom right).⁷⁶¹

While the similarities between the seals are interesting, there are distinct differences, which suggest that conscious choices were being made over the exact form these seals could take – and the variations on standard designs appear to be more common in marcher circles: as well as Poniz’s variation on the fleur-de-lys, for example, some members of the Sturmy family in the later twelfth and early thirteenth century used pointed oval seals showing a standing man,⁷⁶² a symbol not found among other Welsh seals that we have seen above, and which McEwan and New suggest may have been a personal choice. One of these seals, that of Geoffrey Sturmy, was dated to before 1175, while the equivalent pointed oval seals known of Welsh individuals date to the turn of the thirteenth century.⁷⁶³

Overall, when looking at the seals of the *uchelwyr* and their marcher counterparts, we are struck both by the similarities, and the differences. Clearly, some of the similarities in the designs used suggest that, by and large, the seals of the *uchelwyr* conformed to the same norms

⁷⁶¹ Reproduced in the order noted in the caption from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.1954, Ch.145 (seals 5), Ch.77; Ch.145 (Seal 6), Ch.61, by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

⁷⁶² NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.1978, Ch.1986; McEwan and New (eds.) *Seals in Context*, Figs 31 and 33, pp.78-9.

⁷⁶³ McEwan and New, *Seals in Context*, pp.78-9.

as the seals of the lesser marcher lords, and to seals elsewhere in Britain, and that they must have been imitating their peers. Even at the level of society below that of the princely dynasties, people were conscious of general design trends. While this may sound obvious, it suggests that Anglo-Norman influences on Welsh society did not just affect the highest classes. More can be inferred from the date of these seals: evidence for Welsh seals appears slightly later than it does for their Anglo-Norman / English counterparts. The *uchelwyr*, it appears, adopted their seals a little while after the greater Welsh magnates – in a pattern which seems like those of the Anglo-Norman marcher lords – just a few years later. The variations employed by the marcher lords in their seal designs, in comparison with the Welsh seals, may suggest that the marchers were more used to seals, and were at a comparatively more advanced state of their use.

Other Seals

Finally, we turn now to consider other seals: scholars of British seals have highlighted the intriguing possibility that, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, seals spread to be used by every part of society: not only the nobles and most important freemen, but many merchants, lesser freemen, and even villeins may have had seals in certain circumstances.⁷⁶⁴ If this is the case, then how does this picture compare in southeast Wales?

In the sources we have seen, all the evidence belongs to Welsh individuals who held at least some land: there does not appear to be any evidence of other Welsh individuals using seals at this period. There are several possible factors why this might be. Firstly, and most optimistically, we could say that a lack of these seals could indicate that it was not adopted by this level of society: that these were disinterested in such matters, and that these individuals therefore were less keen on adopting these sorts of cultural aspects – perhaps because there was less of a use for them – it could equally be that it took longer to be adopted at this level of society. However, without any evidence at all, this remains speculative.

Within the same collection, there is a lack of similar seals with English names either within the source material. Perhaps the most convincing explanation is simply the nature of the sources that survive from southeast Wales: almost all surviving sources were preserved at Margam Abbey – and naturally, these concern monastic rights to land. Therefore, the types of documents we see here – and the individuals involved – must have had enough land to spare for the monastery. Therefore, we can only expect to see the more important individuals, rather than lesser freemen or villeins, who would not have been granting lands in this way. All we

⁷⁶⁴ Harvey and McGuiness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp.52-88.

can say with certainty, is that there is a lack of evidence for seals of this type from southeast Wales at our period. More in depth work needs to be done on this, to determine if there are any seals of English individuals from southeast Wales, for a comparison to be made.

Seals: Conclusions.

Throughout the course of this chapter, we have encountered many seals of the Welsh princely dynasty of Glamorgan, the *uchelwyr*, and their marcher counterparts both great and small. From these, what can we tell of how far seals reflected cultural imitation or emulation of the Anglo-Normans or English, what does this tell us about the way they wanted to be seen, and hence can explain the motives behind the level of cultural imitation?

In general, we have seen that the earliest seals in Britain occur in an Anglo-Norman context, and similarities in design suggest that Welsh seals ultimately derive from this source. At the most basic level, therefore, the Welsh were clearly quite happy to adopt seals from their Anglo-Norman counterparts; we have seen numerous examples of Welsh men (and more rarely women), who did so, from the later twelfth century onwards. While numbers of Welsh seals were lower than those of their contemporaries, there is enough evidence to determine that seal use was common, not only for the greater Welsh magnates of Glamorgan, but also for the lesser nobility or leading freemen (and women) who held land: these seals outnumbered those of the nobility. In this, they followed the pattern visible elsewhere in the British Isles.

The timing of the adoption of these seals, at both levels, seems to have been later than we find in the context of the English or marcher lords: in both cases, seals seem to have been first adopted by the most powerful individuals (such as Morgan ap Morgan before 1186, or Morgan ap Caradog before 1191), only later trickling down to other levels of society (such as Espus ap Caradog Du in the 1190's). It is clear that the Welsh were fairly enthusiastic adopters of the seal as a means of visual representation and authentication, although the later date of adoption by the Welsh could be explained by the need to become familiar with seals, before the idea could be implemented: if we expect the Welsh to imitate the seals of their neighbours, we could expect some delay while they became familiar with how their neighbours used it. Gerald of Wales' episode suggesting that the Welsh were familiar with Anglo-Norman seal use in the 1090's is a case in point – a time when the Welsh were not using seals, but aware of them. Of course, Gerald's story, set at a time when seals were only just beginning to be used by the Anglo-Normans, may be an anachronism on Gerald's part, but it does illustrate how such a delay between the exposure to new cultural influences, and their adoption, may have worked.

The seals of the Welsh magnates show a uniformity of design: the Afan dynasty – the only one for which direct evidence survives – were keen users of seals, and the most prominent individuals tended to use the equestrian motif: as family members died, other members began using the same motif, suggesting they sought to emulate their predecessors. In this, too the Welsh magnates were projecting an image familiar throughout Western Europe, presenting themselves in the same fashion as the greatest Norman or English magnates, and ultimately in imitation of them. However, in the details of the design, Welsh equestrian seals form a homogenous group, with more in common with each other than with their neighbours. They appear simpler, more akin to the earliest Anglo-Norman seals, such as that of William I. This may indicate that the Afan dynasty based their seals directly upon early Anglo-Norman seals, or, perhaps more likely, else that they were based on the seals of other Welshmen, such as Cadell ap Gruffudd of Deheubarth or the rulers of Powys. The uniformity in design suggests that Welsh seals as a whole may have had similar priorities in the way they presented themselves, highlighting military ideals while aping the power of the great Anglo-Norman magnates. The designs may also reflect a compromise in the way that they chose to represent themselves: using a mechanism of the Anglo-Normans, but with designs that more closely reflect their Welsh peers – presenting themselves in a way that could be interpreted by both audiences.

The members of the Afan dynasty may have sought to portray themselves as the equals of the other Welsh princely dynasties through seal imitation: perhaps these seals, with their associations with powerful magnates, came to be indicative too of their descent from Welsh kingly dynasties. The military representation continued to be favoured by the Welsh as other changes began to be used by their Anglo-Norman and English neighbours, but seal use was not completely static, and the changes in the later seals of this dynasty, to common devices in use by non-noble individuals and thence to heraldic motifs, may suggest a change in the way they saw themselves: from a Welsh princely dynasty to one more closely modelled on the marcher lords. This is something which occurred in parallel with other developments in naming practices, for example, which supports this hypothesis. These changes also show that seal use was not static, and eventually came to develop in the same way as seals elsewhere in Britain.

The designs of the seals of the *uchelwyr* also follow the same pattern, and many of the same motifs were used by both Welsh and Anglo-Norman individuals. Clearly, the *uchelwyr* were familiar with general seal designs used across Britain, and eventually adopted them in large numbers. This is particularly important, as it indicates that the developments in sealing were not confined to the greater magnates: evidently this form of expression was one that was

adopted enthusiastically across Welsh society. The change in the designs used may reflect similar changes to those at a dynastic level: in the 1190's military motifs were used alongside more universal flower and star motifs, but these disappeared as the thirteenth century progressed: some heraldic or proto-heraldic designs also came to be used, perhaps reflecting the increased use of heraldry by the marcher lords. It is to heraldry that we now turn our attention.

Heraldry

We have already seen that heraldry was another element adopted directly from the Anglo-Normans and had much in common with seals as a method of portraying image: indeed, seals were often a method of transmission of heraldry. Like seals, it may serve as a snapshot of how far Welsh individuals portrayed themselves visually, how far this was in a way similar to their Anglo-Norman and Welsh counterparts and can promote discussions on why they chose to represent themselves in this way. As a visual method of display heraldry has much in common with seals, which goes beyond the symbolism of design: the individuals they represented, the intended audiences, and the problems surrounding the use of sources by historians are all similar, and we have explored these in Chapter 2.

Heraldry in Wales: The *Advena*

There are at least a score of individuals known to have used heraldry in southeast Wales before the middle of the fourteenth century, of which the vast majority are individuals with non-Welsh names. The earliest evidence for heraldic or proto-heraldic devices undoubtedly comes from the most powerful Anglo-Norman families. An early user of a proto-heraldic device was William, Earl of Gloucester, who (as mentioned earlier in the chapter), used a seal depicting a lion rather than the more usual equestrian motif, from as early as 1147, and certainly by 1153.⁷⁶⁵ The de Clare family – which held estates in Hertford, Ireland and Ceredigion before developing their stake in southeast Wales during the thirteenth century – are some of the earliest identified users of heraldry (as opposed to proto-heraldic devices) in Britain, using a crest of three chevrons as early as the 1140's or 1150's.⁷⁶⁶ (Figures 3 and 12). Likewise, heraldic evidence for the Turberville family, lords of Coity in Glamorgan, exists on seals from the early thirteenth

⁷⁶⁵ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.224; Patterson (ed.), *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, Nos.120, 122, 135, pp.115-124.

⁷⁶⁶ McEwan and New, *Seals in Context*, Figs. 36 and 37 pp.87-91.

century, with heraldic manuscripts noting their coats of arms in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.⁷⁶⁷

There is a relative abundance of evidence for the *advenae* or families of Anglo-Norman or English origin, in contemporary or near contemporary sources. Other examples include the De Sullys (evidenced on seals from 1230, 1249 and 1302) and Cantelupes (Evidenced on a tomb in Abergavenny in 1256 and in later medieval heraldic rolls). Other *advenae* families were less prolific users of heraldry, with just one or two examples known. The Pauncefortes (on a thirteenth century seal and in later additions to a Parliamentary Roll of 1312), or Scurlages (on seals of 1312 and 1323).⁷⁶⁸ Finally, there are some individuals who are known only from a single mention in a document concerned with heraldry, or else by the design of a seal – such as Roger Sturmi's twelfth-century lion,⁷⁶⁹ Sir Herbert ap Quintin of Tal-y-Fan, Glamorgan in 1299, or Sir Simon de Raleigh, Sherriff of Glamorgan in 1331.⁷⁷⁰ It is appropriate to ask at this point whether this merely reflects the visibility of these larger individuals in the source material: if they were included in more heraldic rolls, and if they issued more charters (with attached seals) than their counterparts, this may suggest that heraldry was employed more consistently by the greater families, suggesting a positive correlation between the power of the family and their use of heraldry. It could also be due to source survival. Either way, it is possible to suggest that heraldry may have been used most by those highest up the social scale, with these individuals of English or Anglo-Norman descent being the most prominent for southeast Wales.

Welsh Heraldry: The d'Avene's

When we turn to consider individuals with Welsh names, we see a similar pattern, albeit on a much-reduced scale. Far less contemporary evidence exists for individuals with Welsh names using heraldry: although there are many instances of heraldry noted in later manuscripts, which seem to be retrospectively assigned in a later period, and consequently of less interest to us.

The Welsh lords of Afan, who we have already seen were enthusiastic imitators of their Norman neighbours, were one of the few families for which heraldry is well attested in the contemporary source material. The earliest evidence of their heraldry (and their adopted name d'Avene according to Siddons), is Sir Lleision ap Morgan Fychan, who died in 1328. Their

⁷⁶⁷ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.169.

⁷⁶⁸ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*.

⁷⁶⁹ McEwan and New, *Seals in Context*, Fig.32 p.78.

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid.

arms are evidenced in Charles' Roll of c.1285, and later in the parliamentary roll for 1312. Llesion may have borne a heraldic seal, on a deed which is now no longer extant, but supposedly dated before 1313; sadly on another deed of 1304 the seal has been lost.⁷⁷¹ The earliest surviving heraldic seal of this family dates to May 1330, and belonged to John de Avene, who by this time was lord of Afan, Cilfai and Sully: a similar seal, along with one of his wife, survives on a deed of May 1341 (Figure 10).⁷⁷² The symbolism behind the arms borne by this family is particularly interesting, and it is worth going into a little more detail: in the somewhat flowery heraldic language, their arms were 'Gules, three chevronels argent' (three white chevrons on a red background). Many historians have demonstrated the similarities between these arms and those of the de Clare family, as powerful marcher lords, and suggested that: 'It is very probable that this coat of three chevronels is based on that of the Clare family (three red chevrons on a golden background), and that it was later taken to be the coat of Iestyn ap Gwrgan and his descendants.'⁷⁷³ Chevrons were a fairly common heraldic device, although single chevrons were more common than using three, and there were a host of other possible ones to choose from. The use of such similar arms, therefore, is one which, I think it would be hard to discount as mere coincidence. The adoption of similar arms may have been a way in which this family was seeking to project an image not only in a similar way to the de Clares, but in a way which was directly copying their coat of arms, suggesting that the d'Avene family were consciously attempting to project power in the same way and using the same methods, thus emulating them. It is worth remembering too that seals would have been the colour of the wax, and thus a seal bearing the three chevrons of Avene must have appeared even more similar to the Clare Arms. This would not have been entirely unusual, as other, predominantly Anglo-Norman aristocratic families, such as Montfichet, Monmuth, Fitzwalter and others, related to the family by marriage, also adapted the de Clare design for their own shields of arms.⁷⁷⁴

This possibility is particularly interesting when we consider that the Clares, as Earls of Gloucester, were the predominant marcher lords in southeast Wales, and as feudal overlords of the d'Avene family, we can see why, perhaps, the d'Avenes might have wanted to imitate these arms. By doing so, it may have been a way to increase their own authority and legitimacy in their own lands, if this authority was projected in a similar way to their overlords. However, as

⁷⁷¹ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*, p.13; G.T. Clark, 'The Lords of Afan and the Blood of Iestyn', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 3rd series, 13, (1867), pp.25-6; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.190.

⁷⁷² Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*, p.13; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.207, Ch.217, Ch.218 and Ch.222.

⁷⁷³ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*, p.13; McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, pp.80-1; Davis, *Three Chevrons Red*, pp.6-8.

⁷⁷⁴ Based on those found in Davis, *Three Chevrons Red*, pp.6-8.

the family had ruled the lordship of Afan for centuries before this, perhaps the likeliest audience for such projections of power were, instead, their peers, other lords in the region (whether coming of more Welsh or English stock), which may have been aimed at improving their status, or signalling their aspirations to a ‘marcher’ status. A third, alternative hypothesis may have been that they were projecting this image to others, more widely afield – whether the major marcher magnates (including, perhaps, the Clares themselves), or even the English crown. The period at which their heraldry is first noted in c.1285 coincides with the increase in authority of the marcher lords: the time of the Clare conquest of Senghennydd and Gwynllŵg in the 1260s and 1270s, and the Edwardian Conquest elsewhere in Wales.⁷⁷⁵ It could therefore have been as a visual token of allegiance to the English, at a period of great Anglo-Welsh tension.

John de Avene’s mother, Margaret, was a member of the de Sully family by birth, and had the d’Avene arms halved with another set of arms (a fess between six roses), which Siddons identifies as the Sully arms (visible on her seal of 1341, Figure 10),⁷⁷⁶ which suggests that she used the heraldry belonging to both her husband and her paternal family: using both like this may indicate that she wanted to be represented clearly as being descended from both families. At the same time, it is suggestive that the complexities of heraldry, the halving and quartering of arms, was known by Margaret, and that she was well aware of these fashions. Equally, John d’Avene’s seal is represented on a shield supported by two wyverns and using the crest of the Paschal lamb: again, the increased complexity suggests that the d’Avenes may have been keeping up with the latest heraldic trends.

For the vast majority of minor princely dynasties of southeast Wales which we have encountered in other parts of our discussion, however, there is no contemporary evidence at all for the use of heraldry – though plenty of evidence of the retrospective assigning of coats to prominent individuals of these dynasties, such as Hywel ab Iorwerth of Caerleon, and Ifor Bach of Senghennydd: coats of arms for these individuals appear in sixteenth-century manuscripts, and perhaps this tells us more about the gentry of the sixteenth century and their eagerness for demonstrating family connections with prominent pre-conquest Welsh figures than it does to the figures themselves.

⁷⁷⁵ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.36, 47.

⁷⁷⁶ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.218.



Figure 10: The seals of John (left) and Margaret (right) d'Avene. Note the three chevrons on John's seal, with the Paschal lamb above, and the three chevrons opposite another arms - probably of Sully.⁷⁷⁷

Other Evidence for Welsh Heraldry

Other individuals with Welsh names for which there is contemporary use of heraldry fit into a similar profile to the d'Avene family, and some, indeed, were closely associated with them. For example, John Lovel was the seneschal of Afan, and was evidenced in seals from 1344 and 1354 which have been interpreted as heraldic, the device being a saltire between four pheons.⁷⁷⁸ That said, earlier members of the family used a variety of designs on their seals, such as Walter Luvel, who used a seal bearing a wolf in the thirteenth century, and Walter Lovel the younger, who used a fleur de lys seal.⁷⁷⁹ Walter Luvel was the nephew of David Scurlage, and lord of Upper Cornelly, and plainly had strong connections to the *Advenae*, although Walter had a Welsh wife, Angharad.⁷⁸⁰ As seneschals of Afan, it is possible that John Lovel was familiar with the heraldry used by both the d'Avene family and the Scurlage family, which may have encouraged him to gain a device of his own to convey his status and social aspirations.

⁷⁷⁷ Reproduced from NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.218 by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

⁷⁷⁸ Siddons, *Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*, p.348; NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.227.

⁷⁷⁹ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.81.

⁷⁸⁰ NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2057.

Others who may have used heraldic or proto-heraldic devices include the descendants of Espus ap Caradog, whose seals we have seen earlier in the chapter. A mid-thirteenth century grant includes four seals, those of Iorwerth, William, Madog and Espus ap Iorwerth (although Siddons identifies Iorwerth as the father).⁷⁸¹ On each seal was a banner with four chevrons, and a legend containing the name of each individual around the periphery.⁷⁸² The four chevrons may be similar to the crests of both the de Clares and the d'Avene family: Siddons actively wonders whether these arms were derived directly from either of these sources:⁷⁸³ in either case, this would suggest a direct emulation of heraldry, especially if Iorwerth and his sons were dependants of the lords of Afan, seeking to match their overlords in the methods of presentation. However, this mid thirteenth century date seems much too early to be a direct emulation of the d'Avenes, unless is there is much earlier evidence which we are missing (and surviving seals of the Afan family in the 1240's used non-heraldic motifs): we have already seen that the earliest evidence for the d'Avene arms is contained within a manuscript of 1285. Likewise, the banners are only a small part of the seal, unlike some others where a large central shield proudly and unmistakably displayed the heraldry. In this case, being based upon the de Clare arms – with differentiation - is perhaps more likely. It is possible that a small banner was adopted as a concession to their lower social status than the Clares or d'Avene's: It could also reflect the fact that a banner motif had been used by their grandfather Espus on his seal – as discussed earlier. It may even be that these seals do not reflect any heraldic pretensions at all on the part of Iorwerth and his sons, and instead may reflect a design chosen by the manufacturer, who may have made them all the same for ease of production, and to convey a joint message on a particular charter – the design may have been of secondary consideration. If so, however, we might expect a simpler design to have been used – a fleur-de-lys or flower, for example. If we are to consider our arguments on the role of the equestrian seal as a symbol of authority, these similar seals may imply that the brothers each had similar (or equal) responsibility for the land grants, something which New has taken to be indicative of partible inheritance.⁷⁸⁴ How far this may have reflected true aspirations to heraldry is highly debatable, but it may indicate an awareness of such heraldry and loosely imitated it for a particular purpose.

⁷⁸¹ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*, p.272.

⁷⁸² McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, Fig 35 pp.82-3.

⁷⁸³ Siddons, *The Development of Welsh Heraldry Volume II*, p.272.

⁷⁸⁴ McEwan and New (eds.), *Seals in Context*, p.89.

There is one other example of heraldry being used by individuals of predominantly Welsh descent during the period under study. The ap Adam family, descended from Adam ab Iorwerth, the lords of Llanllywel, near Usk, and once lords of Beachley. There is a reference in the Falkirk Roll of 1298 to a Sir John Badeham, who bore the arms: Argent, on a cross Gules five mullets Or: John ap Adam is thought to have been born before 1267 and died in 1311: this heraldry is also noted in early fifteenth century manuscripts. A second possible instance from the same region is Adam ap David, who used a seal bearing a bend in a mid-fourteenth century deed.⁷⁸⁵ This family were descended from the steward of Hywel Caerleon of the Gwynllŵg dynasty, but clearly had Anglocentric tendencies, as ‘Badam’ and its variants (for ap Adam), were adopted in a way similar to d’Avene.

Other than these few examples, there are almost no contemporary evidence of heraldry surviving – only in the later fourteenth century does any more concrete evidence exist. This is in marked contrast to the situation of individuals with non-Welsh names, who appear to have used heraldry more frequently and are well evidenced from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century onwards.

It is also worth comparing this pattern with other instances of ‘native’ heraldry found elsewhere in Wales during the same period. The princes of Gwynedd are undoubtedly the most famous. Matthew Paris’ mention of Dafydd ap Llywelyn’s heraldry is the earliest recorded use of this heraldry in a ‘native’ Welsh context, although it is possible that it was borne by his father, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth. Dafydd was not only a much more powerful prince, but had strong familial links to the English crown (his mother, Joan, being king John’s illegitimate daughter): we have seen, too, that he was gifted a great seal by his uncle, Henry III.⁷⁸⁶ However, there is also evidence of heraldry from other houses, notably Powys Wenwynwyn, who, like the d’Avene family, adopted a distinctly French name of ‘De la Pole’, around the same time.⁷⁸⁷ This suggests that the development of heraldry in southeast Wales was on a par with the development elsewhere in Wales, albeit a little behind the princes of Gwynedd. It is tempting to see the anglicisation of the Powys Wenwynwyn dynasty as a reaction to political events between the princes of Gwynedd and the English crown, and has often been suggested by historians, and it is tempting too, to see the similar development of the d’Avene’s in the same light – whether in reaction to events in north Wales, or more locally on their doorstep as royal and marcher authority was strengthened: perhaps these families sought to present themselves

⁷⁸⁵ NLW Tredegar MS. 58/4.

⁷⁸⁶ Siddons ‘Welsh Equestrian Seals’, p.294.

⁷⁸⁷ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, p.94; Stephenson, *Medieval Powys*.

in a way more like their marcher counterparts was a way to avoid dispossession: the fate of the Senghennydd or Gwynllŵg dynasties in the 1260s and 1270s.

Heraldry in Wales: A Conclusion

The picture of heraldry was more complex than seals: unlike the former, the Welsh do not seem to have been as interested in adopting heraldic devices as they were in adopting seals: the lack of surviving sources strongly suggests this. Only in a few, very specific contexts did Welsh families adopt heraldry – and the most convincing of these are known to have been enthusiastic Anglicisers from other sources. Where heraldry was adopted, it appeared much later than in a marcher or English context. Heraldry can be seen as a method of display which acts as an identifier, much more unequivocally than seals, that individuals were particularly keen on anglicisation. Where evidence of design exists, imitation is clearly visible, with the designs based on those of their neighbours. The case of the Afan dynasty, whose device was very similar to that of the prestigious de Clare family, is a case in point, where emulation is clear.

Visual Representations of Identity: A Conclusion

Finally, where does this leave us in relation to the question, how far were visual sources an example of Welsh individuals imitating or emulating their neighbours, and what can we discern regarding their motives through how the Welsh were keen to present themselves?

It is clear that, in the way they visually presented themselves, the pattern we see in the native Welsh of southeast Wales is similar to that seen elsewhere in the British Isles and northern Europe, if on a more limited scale. Both seals and heraldry were methods of display which were adopted by the Welsh from their Anglo-Norman and Marcher neighbours: the influences of both phenomena ultimately came from England into Wales. Seals were enthusiastically adopted by the upper classes, heraldry only by the most powerful native magnates, and at a comparatively late date. Anglo-Norman cultural influences therefore must have been fairly strong, with many Welsh individuals keen to present themselves in a similar visual way to their peers elsewhere. The lack of evidence for individuals other than the princes and *uchelwyr* may suggest that these were only adopted in the upper part of society, although the limitations of the source material makes this difficult to state with complete certainty. These individuals may have been less interested – or had less need – to present themselves in this way.

There are also clear instances where people took inspiration from their Anglo-Norman or English neighbours, imitating the designs of their neighbours, and these are most common

in cases where anglicisation is clear in other areas, too. The Glamorgan or Afan (later d'Avene) family, were among the earliest Welsh users of seals and heraldry, and the later anglicisation which was so marked could be seen as a natural extension of a process which had begun much earlier. Yet the earliest seal designs they used seemed to be a compromise between Anglo-Norman and Welsh influences, highlighting their descent from Welsh kings and their belonging to the group of native princely dynasties, just as much, or if not more, than their conformation to the Anglo-Norman or European norm. In this way, this family were certainly emulating their neighbours – both Welsh and Anglo-Norman, and we can classify this as emulation in the sense that their seal use was developed to match or surpass many of their contemporaries, the relatively small size and nature of the polity notwithstanding.

The d'Avene heraldry was more clearly based upon English models, particularly the de Clare family. What is also striking about this family was their ambitions, which are clearly reflected in equestrian seals more commonly used by powerful magnates – in the grand scheme of things, this family were a relatively minor dynasty compared to those in England or other parts of Wales, yet they portrayed themselves in the same way as their most powerful neighbours. Perhaps this was also a conscious reflection of their descent from the more powerful pre-Norman rulers of Glamorgan, thus seeking to emulate their forebears in new ways.

It would be interesting to see whether this would be the case, too, with the other princely dynasties of southeast Wales, of Senghennydd and Gwynllŵg, had they survived beyond the 1270s. Although hypothetical, it seems likely that some elements would have been adopted: the Ap Adam family, dependents of the Gwynllŵg dynasty, adopted a surname and were one of the few users of heraldry. We know the Gwynllŵg dynasty used seals, though none now survive, but one can imagine them, too, keen to portray themselves in a way intelligible to their Anglo-Norman neighbours while proclaiming their status among the other 'royal' dynasties of Wales: this would fit in with their use of Norman style titles in their charters.

Members of Welsh society clearly gradually became increasingly happy to visually present themselves in the same way as their neighbours, and their visual representations began to appear more and more like those of their English counterparts. This was done through a conscious imitation of these neighbours, which also hints at increased integration into their society. On a more local level, the developments in southeast Wales seem to have occurred largely in parallel with developments elsewhere in Wales, as well as other parts of the British

Isles and northern Europe.⁷⁸⁸ The growing similarity between Welsh and English methods of visual representation seem to suggest that they were functioning in a similar way to their European counterparts. While some of these changes were slower than England, it is clear that the Welsh were imitating their neighbours, a symptom of wider voluntary cultural change.

⁷⁸⁸ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp.269-291.

Chapter 6: Castles, Emulation and Identity

Introduction

While charters and seals provide insights into the extent to which the Welsh imitated their neighbours, and especially changes in the portrayal of image in Wales over the course of the medieval period, another area consistently touted by historians as a measure of cultural emulation is architecture – and particularly the construction of castles. Bartlett suggests that the copying of castle building can be seen across Europe, and that castles could be used as a tool to increase social standing: ‘anyone willing to take advantage of the new form of fortification might be able to outstrip rivals, to pull himself above his peers, to win or expand his lordship.’⁷⁸⁹ Bartlett particularly highlights the adoption of castles by the princes of Gwynedd as an indicator of cultural change and as examples of individuals who consciously embraced this change, probably as a way to maintain their position in the face of the threat of the Anglo-Normans.⁷⁹⁰

Many other historians have highlighted the adoption of castles from the perspective of cultural imitation and, indeed, Europeanisation. Pryce, for example, observes the importance of Anglo-Norman influences on castle construction, noting that the Welsh began following Anglo-Norman practice in castle building from the early twelfth century, with the earliest Welsh stone castles dating from c.1170.⁷⁹¹ This had been mooted from the days of J.E Lloyd, and has been explored by individuals such as David Crouch and others.⁷⁹² Norman influence on castle construction in Wales – and the fact that the Welsh were imitating the Anglo-Normans in the design of their castles, is thus generally accepted.⁷⁹³

Studies which focus specifically on Welsh castle building have suggested that the Norman influence on Welsh castle building took several forms. Firstly, as highlighted by the general studies, they suggest that castle building itself was something borrowed from the Anglo-Normans: just the existence of Welsh-built castles are indicative of Norman influence, just as castle building itself spread outwards from France and Germany. King wrote that ‘The

⁷⁸⁹ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.68.

⁷⁹⁰ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.78, pp.301-2.

⁷⁹¹ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, p.40.

⁷⁹² Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, p.542; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.257-284; Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles 1100 – 1400*, pp.71-2; Carr, *Medieval Wales*, p.47; Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.67.

⁷⁹³ See chapters 1 and 2 for more on this.

marchers' great weapon was the castle...the Welsh soon learned to build castles and deal with those of their enemies.'⁷⁹⁴

Historians suggest that more overt Anglo-Norman influence is visible in the architectural style used by Welsh castles. This depends upon our being able to identify castles as distinctively Welsh, in order to compare architectural elements, and this in itself is often a particular challenge. Historians suggest that Welsh-built castles had distinct characteristics which make them more identifiable, such as siting on a natural hill which dictates an irregular, haphazard plan, often poorly thought out from a defensive point of view, rock cut ditches, and D-shaped towers.⁷⁹⁵ This has been the basis for comparative studies, including those by Richard Avent, Rachel Swallow, Paul R. Davis and L. Butler, all of whom highlight these architectural elements.⁷⁹⁶ Swallow, in particular, discusses the possibility that the gateways flanked by D-shaped towers used in some of the castles of the Princes of Gwynedd may display borrowings from the castles of Ranulf of Chester.⁷⁹⁷

A further aspect highlighted by historians comparing Welsh and Anglo-Norman castle building practices is the siting of the castles, which could indicate how these castles were being used, and can form the basis of a discussion of whether Welsh castles emulated the functions of their Anglo-Norman counterparts. Avent, for example, points out that Welsh (stone) castles were often sited in prominent positions, such as on hills or rocky outcrops,⁷⁹⁸ which would suggest that these castles were built to dominate the surrounding landscape and could, perhaps, point to a defensive function. More importantly, perhaps, Avent compares the siting of Welsh and Anglo-Norman castles, noting that:

Wherever possible, the policy of the Normans had been to plant their castles beside the centre of a cantref or commote and to dominate physically the undefended Welsh court or *llys*. By contrast the Welsh princes almost invariably made a distinction between the location of a castle and that of a *llys*.⁷⁹⁹

Avent's summary above points to the detailed work by J.G. Edwards on the siting of castles in Ceredigion. Edwards notes that eleven castles were constructed by the Normans in the earliest years of the Norman conquest, and notes that these castles were evenly distributed among the

⁷⁹⁴ D.C. King, 'The Defence of Wales 1067 – 1283: The Other Side of the Hill', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 126 (1977), pp.4-5.

⁷⁹⁵ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.13.

⁷⁹⁶ Swallow, 'Gateways to Power', pp.291–314.

⁷⁹⁷ Swallow, 'Gateways to Power', p.304.

⁷⁹⁸ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.27.

⁷⁹⁹ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.29.

ten commotes in Ceredigion, with two in Iscoed – the southernmost commote containing Cardigan, from where the Norman conquest of Ceredigion began.⁸⁰⁰ This all may point to Welsh castles having different functions in comparison with their Anglo-Norman counterparts. If there was a difference in the location of Welsh castles and *llysoedd* (courts), then this suggests that their administrative functions may have been less important than other symbolic or defensive functions.

These three elements – the adoption of castle building as a whole, the borrowing of architectural features of their design, and the way in which these castles were used, in their function and siting, may tell us much about how and how far the Welsh adopted Anglo-Norman cultural aspects, and particularly how far, and why, they imitated or emulated the design of their neighbours, and if they were being employed in a similar way. This chapter, therefore, will consider how far each of these elements can be applied to the princes of southeast Wales.

The Problem of Identification

There are particular challenges to a study of imitation and emulation in the context of castles. As already mentioned, this discussion is reliant on being able to positively identify castles constructed by the Welsh, and thus it is important to outline the different approaches historians have used to identify such castles and how confidently we can assert that a castle belonged to the Welsh.

The first and simplest method is through written references in chronicles, such as the *Brut y Tywysogion*, or within administrative documents such as the Pipe Rolls. These sometimes refer to the building of such castles, or else to the takeover of existing Norman castles by the Welsh. Such references to castles, however, are very rare. A 1236 entry in the *Brut* refers to the capture of a castle of Morgan ap Hywel, in Machen (Castell Meredydd) by Gilbert Marshal.⁸⁰¹ By contrast, the pipe rolls refer to a *Castrum Cadwallon* being held by the crown in 1196-7.⁸⁰² As such entries are rare – and include little detail, the identification of such sites is often backed up by other methods below. This method can also be used to identify Norman castles which later fell into Welsh hands, such as Caerleon, Usk or Newcastle.

A second method historians have used to identify castles is through architectural features and design. As already mentioned, historians have suggested that Welsh castles often

⁸⁰⁰ J. G. Edwards, *The Normans and the Welsh March* (London, 1956), pp.164-168.

⁸⁰¹ Jones (ed. and trans), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS 20 Version* (Caerdydd 1941), p.196.

⁸⁰² D.M. Stenton (ed.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the ninth year of the reign of King Richard I Michaelmas 1197*, Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 46 (1931), p. xxiv.

had particular architectural features such as D-Shaped towers, strong ditches, siting on hills, and an irregular plan.⁸⁰³ While this is helpful with some stone constructions, the remains of many castles are so fragmentary as to retain no such identifiable features, and this is especially true of the many earth and timber constructions. This method has particularly been used in North Wales to identify castles of the princes of Gwynedd. Castles with D-shaped towers mentioned earlier form a distinct group associated with the dynasty of Gwynedd.⁸⁰⁴ – as there are a distinct group of castles associated with this dynasty that used D-shaped towers, for example.

A third method that has been used to identify castles is through their location – for example, with fragmentary stone or earthwork castles which existed in upland commotes which are known to have remained under Welsh control well into the thirteenth century. These castles can be tentatively associated with the ruling native dynasty. This is by far the most common method of identification of most castles, especially in a fragmentary state, and is often used in conjunction with other means of identification: Plas Baglan, Twyn Castell, Castell Nos, Castell Bolan and Castell Meredydd are all examples from southeast Wales.⁸⁰⁵

In terms of numbers, King, in his *Castellarium Anglicanum* identified 427 extant castles in Wales – of which 319 are earthworks and the rest stone constructions. However, there is dating evidence for only 85 of these castles, and of these 85, only 11 can be definitively identified as Welsh, with another 25 possible stone castles.⁸⁰⁶ Of these castles, only a handful are within our study area of southeast Wales. These examples do not fit neatly into one or two categories: some are masonry, some earthwork. Some can be more confidently associated with the Welsh than others, and the interpretation of still others as castles is itself open to interpretation. Before going any further, it is worth considering the evidence that we have for the provenance of these examples, to judge how useful they are likely to be for this discussion.

There are two masonry castles that we can confidently associate with the Welsh in southeast Wales: Plas Baglan, which has fourteenth century associations with the Afan dynasty, as well as its siting, while the architectural style pushes its origin back before the firmer documentary associations, to the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries.⁸⁰⁷ The second

⁸⁰³ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.13.

⁸⁰⁴ Swallow, 'Gateways to Power:', pp.291-314.

⁸⁰⁵ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.139-152; Dallimore, 'An Archaeological Survey of the Machen Ridge', pp.469 – 503.

⁸⁰⁶ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.11.

⁸⁰⁷ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.149-152.

masonry castle, Castell Meredydd, is associated with the Gwynllŵg dynasty through references in the *Brut y Tywysogion* in 1236 as well as through its location in Gwynllŵg.⁸⁰⁸

There are several earthwork castles for which we have more circumstantial evidence, mainly concerning siting, with indirect references in the written source material. Castell Bolan (hazily identified as a castle which belonged to Morgan Gam in a later thirteenth century reference and Twyn Castell (perhaps the Castell Cadwallon referred to in the Pipe Rolls) are two such examples. Hen Gastell (Briton Ferry) and Castell Nos have also been identified as Welsh castles due to their location.⁸⁰⁹

Hen Gastell is also an example of a site whose status as a castle is in doubt. Although one of the few sites to be excavated, the exact nature of the site is in some doubt, whether a castle proper, a *Llys* or some other form of site, perhaps for controlling the Briton Ferry crossing.⁸¹⁰ Castell Arnallt is another such example – while included in King's *Castellarium Anglicanum*, perhaps this site would be better described as a *Llys* or fortified manor than as a castle.⁸¹¹

Castell Taliorum and Castell Morgraig are two masonry castles ascribed to the Welsh due to their odd collection of architectural details, fitting into the stereotype of Welsh castles mentioned earlier. However, the lack of historical evidence, as well as their location, may argue for an Anglo-Norman foundation. Historians have been divided over the provenance of these castles; Avent suggests that both castles could be Welsh.⁸¹² However, others, such as Paul R. Davis, have argued against this, and yet others remained on the fence.⁸¹³ The most recent consensus has tended to regard both castles as of Anglo-Norman origin, and this seems most likely: both the round keep and cruciform tower at Castell Taliorum were complex architectural features, large and particularly sturdy, the former being larger and thicker than many Welsh examples, such as Dolbadarn and Dinefwr,⁸¹⁴ and the latter including complex twin embrasures as well as much finely dressed ashlar, all in contrast to the general characteristics of Welsh castles.⁸¹⁵ Its location, on the edge of the lordship of Abergavenny, would also argue for an Anglo-Norman origin. Likewise, Castell Morgraig, the more controversial of the two, has been

⁸⁰⁸ Dallimore, 'An Archaeological Survey of the Machen Ridge', pp.501-2.

⁸⁰⁹ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.139-147.

⁸¹⁰ P.F. Wilkinson et al. 'Excavations at Hen Gastell, Briton Ferry, West Glamorgan, 1991 – 92', *Medieval Archaeology*, 39 (1995), pp.1 – 50.

⁸¹¹ King, *Castellarium Anglicanum*, p.284; Phillips, 'Castell Arnallt – A Topographical Survey', pp.8 – 11.

⁸¹² Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.18.

⁸¹³ Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, pp.121-5, 149-50; RCAHMW, *The Later Castles*, pp.197-9.

⁸¹⁴ D.F. Renn, 'The Round Keeps of the Brecon Region', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 110 (1961), p.143.

⁸¹⁵ T. Lewis, 'Excavations at Castell Taliorum, St Illtud, Llanhilleth, Monmouthshire', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 80 (1925), pp.372 – 380.

tentatively suggested to have been constructed by Gruffudd ap Rhys, the final Welsh lord of Senghenydd before his lordship was overrun by the de Clares in 1267. King argues that the construction of a castle by Gruffudd may have been a provocative act which precipitated the de Clare conquest.⁸¹⁶ Rachel Swallow has argued that the mural towers of Morgraig show similarities with D-shaped towers in North Wales, and Davis and the RCAHMW, while suspecting an English origin more likely, have accepted the possibility that the castle could have been constructed with the support of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, the Prince of Gwynedd, who was in a running dispute with de Clare over the status of the upland lords, with both parties trying to extend their influence over the region. Morgraig is sited just within the border of Senghenydd, includes an incongruous mix of old-fashioned rectangular keep and more modern (but ill thought out) flanking mural towers, which bear some resemblance to D-shaped Welsh towers in North Wales. This could point to a Welsh origin, but, as Davis points out, this castle appears ‘a remarkably ambitious structure and one that the petty ruler of an impoverished upland tract would have lacked the resources to build.’⁸¹⁷ The design of Morgraig is utterly unlike any other Welsh castle, and its relative complexity, the use of Sutton stone for quoins, and its location – provocatively close to Cardiff for a Welsh castle - have led the RCAHMW to feel the castle is most likely English. Both Davis and the RCAHMW include caveats, however, suggesting that if the castle was constructed after Earl Richard de Clare’s death in 1262 – when Llywelyn was arguably at his height, and able perhaps to provide more significant political and perhaps material support to Senghenydd – then a Welsh origin could be plausible. However, the D-shaped towers in this castle are used in a far more radical way than in any other Welsh castle, as flanking mural towers – this layout was more common in English castles of the period, such as at Grosmont.⁸¹⁸ The English origin, therefore, seems to be the most likely.

As Castell Morgraig and Castell Taliorum are most likely English in origin, any discussion of Welsh masonry castles must of necessity concentrate on Plas Baglan and Castell Meredydd.

The Adoption of Castle Building

The first part of this chapter will consider the borrowing of castle building itself. The earliest references to castle building in Wales is in an Anglo-Norman context. The *Brut y Tywysogion* mentions the French fortifying [i.e. building] castles in Dyfed and Ceredigion after the death

⁸¹⁶ King, ‘The Defence of Wales 1067-1283’, p.14.

⁸¹⁷ Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, p.125.

⁸¹⁸ J.R. Kenyon, *The Medieval Castles of Wales* (Cardiff, 2010), p.144.

of Rhys ap Tewdwr in 1093.⁸¹⁹ On an archaeological level, the Normans are known to have constructed castles from their earliest arrival in Wales. Construction is thought to have begun on the earliest stone castle, at Chepstow, in 1067.⁸²⁰ Meanwhile, the earliest known reference to Welsh castle construction comes from 1111: the *Brut y Tywysogion* refers to Cadwgan ap Bleddyn's intention to build a castle in Powys: the earliest reference to such a castle being actually built comes from 1116 when a castle was built at Cymer.⁸²¹ The heyday of Welsh castle building, however, was undoubtedly the first half of the thirteenth century, as it is from this period that most of the Welsh masonry castles of Gwynedd and Deheubarth date.

We are not so fortunate in being able to date the construction of the earliest Welsh castle in southeast Wales, however, as references within historical sources are scarce in comparison with their cousins elsewhere, and little excavation has been taken of those sites we can definitively attribute to the Welsh. We know that the Welsh came into possession of a number of Norman castles following the Welsh resurgence in 1135 – 6, although we have no direct evidence of them constructing them in southeast Wales before this, early constructions here cannot be ruled out. The architectural style at Plas Baglan suggests it may have been a late-twelfth or early-thirteenth century construction, and excavations at Hen Gastell also suggest later-twelfth century occupation on the site.⁸²² In the absence of other firm dating evidence, most of the other sites have also been assigned to the later twelfth century, either by typology or by loose historical associations. Castell Meredydd, for example, has been attributed by Dallimore to the later twelfth century, due to antiquarian associations with Meredydd Gethin, one of the sons of the Lord Rhys, who married Gwerful, daughter of Hywel ab Iorwerth.⁸²³ A *castrum cadwalan* is mentioned in the pipe roll for 1197-8, and this has been tentatively identified as Twyn Castell at Gelligaer.⁸²⁴ The lack of datable material for other sites makes the date of their construction uncertain, but it seems reasonable to assign them to the same period.

By contrast, there is extensive early evidence for the construction of Norman castles throughout southeast Wales. While many of the earthwork castles share the same problems as their Welsh counterparts in terms of dating, there is extensive documentary evidence to suggest the existence of a number of Norman castles before the end of the eleventh century. In addition

⁸¹⁹ Jones (ed. and trans.) *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS20 Version* (Caerdydd 1941), p.25.

⁸²⁰ J.R. Kenyon, 'Fluctuating Frontiers: Normanno-Welsh Castle Warfare c.1075 to 1240', *Chateau Gaillard*, 17 (1996), p.119.

⁸²¹ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.11.

⁸²² Wilkinson et al. 'Excavations at Hen Gastell, Briton Ferry, p.27.

⁸²³ Dallimore, 'An Archaeological Survey of the Machen Ridge', p.502.

⁸²⁴ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.70-1.

to Chepstow (1067), others were soon established, including Cardiff, supposedly established by William the Conqueror in 1081.⁸²⁵

The presence of Welsh castles in southeast Wales does indicate that they began to borrow the practice of castle building from the Normans, although the direct evidence for this adoption is a little late in comparison with their counterparts elsewhere in Wales. This may be a reflection on the relative status of these individuals, and their capability of bringing together enough resources to build such castles, as well as the time it may have taken to trickle down to them – much as with the adoption of charter forms and seals, which, as we have seen, trickled down through the aristocracy. The new Norman castles would have been very visible symbols of their authority, and, if the *Brut y Tywysogion* is to be believed, may have posed a challenge to Welsh attempts at resurgence prior to the death of Henry I in 1135. After this date, however, at least two castles were captured by the Welsh and retained for several years,⁸²⁶ and this, combined with the particularly unstable political situation in England and the marches, may have driven castle building. The castle building tradition seems to have been well established by 1200. On its simplest level, therefore, in beginning to build castles, the Welsh were clearly emulating their Anglo-Norman neighbours.

Imitation of design (architectural elements and function)

Beyond the adoption of castle building itself, to more clearly understand how the Welsh used these castles – and what this might tell us about the role of castles in Welsh identity and cultural emulation - we must look in more detail at the architecture and siting of such castles.

There is considerable debate in castle studies over the functions that castles had. Architecture and the siting of the castle within the landscape is the evidence that is most commonly used to discern the function of such castles, as well as the date at which they were built. Were they defensive or residences? Statements of power or administrative hubs? This may have differed on a case by case basis. This section, therefore, considers the functions of these castles in light of the surviving architectural evidence, and compare it with Anglo-Norman castles. We know that the Welsh adopted castles, but were they using them in the same way, and how far were they using them to project an image like those of their neighbours?

The greatest challenge to such a discussion is the survival of the evidence. We are dependent upon the survival of enough architectural evidence to make a meaningful

⁸²⁵ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.162.

⁸²⁶ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS20 Version* (Caerdydd 1941), p.127.

comparison. Therefore, while it may be possible to compare the general layout of some earthwork castles, only those which are very well preserved can be compared with their Anglo-Norman counterparts, and this also depends on our being able to accurately identify the builders of such castles. Equally, many such earthwork castles have been altered significantly over later centuries. Architectural discussions must therefore inevitably fall back upon the masonry castles of southeast Wales, although even for these, the surviving remains are scarce. We will begin with the two can be most confidently identified as Welsh castles: Plas Baglan and Castell Meredydd, and at this point, it is worth summarizing the main features of these castles, before comparing them with other castles of Welsh and Norman origin.

Plas Baglan is located just to the east of Baglan within the commote of Afan, and this location, along with its proximity to the church of St Baglan, has led to it being associated with the native Welsh rulers of Afan. The *Plas* placename, coupled with antiquarian literary associations, led it to being considered as a late medieval manor, but more recent analysis has identified it as an earlier castle.⁸²⁷ The castle occupied a platform at the edge of a ravine, and while little masonry survives, the layout of the site is relatively clear: this was a rectangular site of twenty-one square metres, with a masonry wall and ditch around the perimeter of a square platform. At the western side of this rectangular enclosure, there is evidence of a rectangular tower, or first-floor hall; some fragments suggest a smaller masonry building at the eastern end of the enclosure.⁸²⁸ It has been suggested that there would have been a small, simple gateway between the two buildings. Analysis by the RCAHMW of some of the stone blocks at the site suggests a late twelfth century date; King suggested an early thirteenth century date, and it has been judged most likely that Plas Baglan was the site from which the lords of Afan administered their lordship.⁸²⁹

Castell Meredydd, by contrast, is located near Machen and was built upon a rock outcrop. The castle was built to take advantage of two rocky knolls which formed part of this outcrop. Like Plas Baglan, it is located above a steep natural slope, although the castle is overlooked by higher ground to the north. Although very little of the masonry now remains, irregular banks indicate the line of collapsed walls, and the extent of the castle is also denoted by a ditch on its north and east sides. These indications suggest a substantial castle of an irregular polygonal shape measuring 56m east-west by between 30m and 56m north-south.⁸³⁰

⁸²⁷ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.151.

⁸²⁸ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.149.

⁸²⁹ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.151.

⁸³⁰ Dallimore, 'An Archaeological Survey of the Machen Ridge', pp.483-488.

The surviving masonry indicates the existence of a round tower, measuring 10m externally, and with walls 2m thick, on the easternmost of the two outcrops. The western outcrop is level, and the slight remains of walls here have been interpreted as a hall block or rectangular tower, although there is confusion over the size of such a building: the RCAHMW suggesting a building 18m by 10m, CADW suggesting the outcrop measures 12m by 7m.⁸³¹ It is possible that various recorders have confused the remains here with the remains of a further irregular rectilinear building further east, measuring 8m by 6.8m. Paul R. Davis suggests that this may have been a further tower, though a later cottage is also mentioned and this could also conceivably be that building. The scanty remains of walling between the outcrops suggest all three features were connected by a curtain wall and hence that they formed part of the castle perimeter.⁸³² The ruler who first constructed the castle is often quoted as Maredudd Gethin, a son of the lord Rhys and husband to Gwenllïan, the daughter of Hywel ab Iorwerth of Caerleon. This association was made by Bradney in the early twentieth century and is sometimes quoted today. While there are several references to Castell Meredydd in the contemporary source material, none mention Maredudd Gethin. The *Brut y Tywysogion* mentions how the castle, which was held by Morgan ap Hywel, was captured and subsequently fortified by William Marshal in 1236. However, the Brut notes how the castle was returned to Morgan shortly afterwards ‘for fear of the Lord Llywelyn’.⁸³³ It later passed to Maredudd ap Gruffudd, until its capture by Gilbert de Clare in 1266, and was noted amongst the property of his son, following the death of the latter at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.⁸³⁴

These are two very different castles in terms of size and layout, but they show a number of similarities: they both seem to have contained rectangular towers or halls which, although now fragmentary, could have been very similar in function or appearance. Both castles were constructed to take advantage of the natural landscape in a locally prominent position on the edge of a ridge: they were located at the top of slopes but were overlooked by higher ground. These are trends that we can compare with Welsh and Anglo-Norman examples to understand in what ways they may have reflected wider trends in design, and where the influences were coming from. Architecturally, very little has been done to compare Plas Baglan and Castell Meredydd with other castles in the region, possibly due to the fragmentary nature of the

⁸³¹ RCAHMW ‘Castell Meredydd’, *Coflein* online database <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/307828/> (Accessed 26/03/2021).

⁸³² Dallimore, ‘An Archaeological Survey of the Machen Ridge, Monmouthshire’, pp.483-488.

⁸³³ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS20 Version* (Caerdydd 1941), p.196.

⁸³⁴ Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, p.147.

remains. It is to comparing the castles of Plas Baglan and Castell Meredydd with those of their Anglo-Norman counterparts that we next turn our attention.

Architectural Inspiration: Size and Layout

The most striking aspect when comparing the two Welsh examples that we have already seen with their Norman counterparts is the scale. Not only are there far more Anglo-Norman castles known from southeast Wales, but most were considerably larger and more sophisticated than their Welsh counterparts. Plas Baglan, for example, measures approximately 21m by 21m: this is smaller than all other masonry castles in Glamorgan except one (Llanquian, to which we return shortly).⁸³⁵ Indeed, this is smaller than the majority of earthwork castles as well, the mean size of castle-ringworks in Glamorgan being 37m in diameter; and those which were later constructed in stone, such as Coity, Ogmore and Rumney, were even larger. Castell Meredydd, by contrast, at 30m by 56m, was much closer in size to many Norman examples, although some, such as Chepstow, could be significantly larger. Earthwork castles follow a similar pattern: the few Welsh examples that have been identified (due to their location), are amongst the smallest examples of their type.⁸³⁶ The motte at Twyn Castell, for example, measures 18m in diameter.⁸³⁷ While a few other small mottes of comparable size are thought to be Norman in origin, most would have been larger, 20m or more in diameter. Likewise, most, if not all, the ringworks in Glamorgan are thought to be Norman in origin, and the only contenders for Welsh castles are amongst the smallest of these sites.⁸³⁸

While there are a plethora of Norman castles known from southeast Wales, the Norman castles have themselves been described as ‘unimportant, and a great many Glamorgan Castles were of no great strength or significance.’⁸³⁹ King contrasts this with the high number of castles, noting that their small size may have been due to extensive infeudation, leading to relatively small estates – and hence the construction of castles by relatively minor individuals with limited castle building means.⁸⁴⁰ Even so, few are as small as Plas Baglan. Llanquian and Loughor are two exceptions. Both derived from ringworks, as did many Norman castles of the region, and their polygonal layout reflects these origins, quite unlike the sub-rectangular shape of Plas Baglan. Llanquian measured c.19m in diameter and Loughor 22m.⁸⁴¹ Apart from the

⁸³⁵ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.263.

⁸³⁶ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.52.

⁸³⁷ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.70-1.

⁸³⁸ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.81.

⁸³⁹ King, *Castellarium Anglicanum*, p.159.

⁸⁴⁰ King, *Castellarium Anglicanum*, p.159.

⁸⁴¹ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.80.

size, it is difficult to see true resemblances between these castles and Plas Baglan. A terraced platform below Plas Baglan may have been scarped to serve as a bailey, though no traces of structures exist – this would give the castle a layout ‘vaguely reflecting a motte and bailey plan’.⁸⁴² This may hint at an earlier earthwork origin, although there is no trace of such a motte at Plas Baglan. Another enigmatic castle of comparable rectangular plan with a hall at one end seems to have been Hen Gastell, Llangattock, although this site, too, is ruinous, and has not been excavated to fully understand its plan; Davis suggests it could have, instead, been ‘a fortified house, or moated dwelling, built by someone of less prominent social standing at any time between the thirteenth or fifteenth centuries.’⁸⁴³ Nevertheless, its shape and size is one of the few such parallels for Plas Baglan, and may suggest that the rulers of Afan looked to the smallest castles of their neighbours for inspiration.

The Welsh castles of north and west Wales show few similarities in size and layout in comparison with Plas Baglan and Castell Meredydd, beyond their unusual plan. The smaller Welsh castles in the North, at Carndochan and Castell Prysor, for example, are considerably larger overall than their southern Welsh counterparts, measuring 40m or more in size.⁸⁴⁴ The layout of the castles of North Wales appear considerably more complex than Plas Baglan. Castell Meredydd appears more of a parallel in size and in complexity to other castles of Welsh Princes – especially the use of rocky knolls as ‘natural mottes’ upon which to site towers, and that the castle layout was dictated by the local topography. However, some of the castles of the Princes of Gwynedd and Deheubarth were larger and more complex – considerably more so in the case of Degannwy and Castell y Bere.⁸⁴⁵ In terms of general size and layout then, Plas Baglan appears more akin to the smallest Norman castles in southeast Wales, than to their north Welsh counterparts. Castell Meredydd is more complex, and the unusual collection of construction on two rocky knolls mirrors Welsh construction elsewhere. The greatest similarities between the Welsh castles is, in fact, their very irregularity of layout and design, especially in taking advantage of the landscape.

It is easy to imagine that this difference in scale visible at Plas Baglan, in particular, could be due to the comparatively limited resources of the native Welsh dynasties in comparison with their Norman counterparts, or even with their more prominent peers elsewhere in Wales. The greatest similarities in scale seem to be with castles of the lesser Norman lords,

⁸⁴² RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.152.

⁸⁴³ P.R. Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales* (Logaston 2011), pp.93-5.

⁸⁴⁴ RCAHMW, ‘Castell Prysor’, *Coflein*, <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/308964?term=Castell%20Prysor> (Accessed 14/04/2021).

⁸⁴⁵ Kenyon, *The Medieval Castles of Wales*, pp.19-30.

rather than the great families of Marshal and Clare. While it is possible that the modest size of Plas Baglan could reflect limited social aspirations, this stands at odds with other evidence of image that we have seen, where members of Afan and Gwynllŵg often chose to ape the customs of powerful marcher families. On the contrary, building castles, even if of modest size, would proclaim ambitions to be seen as more important than the ranks of the *uchelwyr*. Castles, even if on a modest scale, could be used to proclaim their status. Far more likely, the small size of Plas Baglan reflects limited resources. Unlike seals and charters, castles would have been an expensive and time consuming method of projecting power, and clearly these dynasties could not expect to compete economically with the de Clares or Marshals, who held lands across England, Wales and Ireland and with the resources to construct substantial castles such as Pembroke and Caerphilly. The larger size of Castell Meredydd – not so different from other Anglo-Norman castles, could be explained by the *Brut y Tywysogion*'s entry for 1236, that states that William Marshal captured the castle and fortified it. The fortification usually associated with this construction is usually considered to be the curtain wall which defines the castle limits; it has also been suggested that the round tower belongs to this period of construction, a point to which we will return later. If partially built by the marcher lords, the larger size and scale would be explained.

It is worth remembering, also, that the stone construction of both Plas Baglan and Castell Meredydd could itself be seen as a statement of their authority on an Anglo-Norman model, given the rarity of Welsh construction in stone in the southeast. This would set themselves apart from the *uchelwyr* and show themselves to be part of Anglo-Norman society.

While size and complexity may be a poor indicator of castle construction, individual architectural components may be more helpful in determining the extent of cultural emulation in castle construction.

Architectural Inspiration: Rectangular Halls and Keeps

We turn now to consider some of the specific architectural details at these Welsh castles, especially in comparison with their Norman counterparts. The first of these is the rectangular hall or tower, something which was evident at both Plas Baglan and at Castell Meredydd, although interpretations of the latter have also suggested the rectangular structure there could be a very small bailey.⁸⁴⁶ As one of the few identifiable features – and perhaps the only one in common between the two castles - it is worth considering this feature in its wider context. As

⁸⁴⁶ Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, pp.140 - 148.

so little of the structure at Castell Meredydd survives, our discussion will concentrate on that at Plas Baglan.

The comparatively large rectangular tower or hall dominates Plas Baglan, measuring 17m by 10m, with walls 1.5m thick, and taking up the entire western section of the castle. It is perhaps easier to compare this individual element with comparable features elsewhere in Wales. Unfortunately, the walls survive only to a maximum of 1.5m, making it impossible to ascertain the nature of the building – whether hall or tower – but the relatively thin walls may suggest that it would be unlikely to have been more than two stories high. A rectangular projection at the north west side has been interpreted as a garderobe discharging from the first floor.

The rectangular structure at Castell Meredydd is more fragmentary than that at Plas Baglan, but is thought to measure approximately 18m by 10m according to the RCAHMW.⁸⁴⁷ The Historic Environment Record, by contrast, notes the size of the western outcrop as 12m by 7m.⁸⁴⁸ As the only extant remains of this structure are on the west side of the outcrop, it seems unlikely that it formed part of the curtain wall, which, in light of the other remnants of walling, would have followed the southern side of this outcrop. A hall or rectangular bailey seems, therefore, most likely. King rather ambiguously refers to a bailey in front of the round tower, and it may be the structure on the western knoll to which he is referring.⁸⁴⁹ All this really serves to demonstrate is that the nature of this structure is too fragmentary to be certain as to its nature. In light of the very small nature the outcrop encloses – and considering the surrounding curtain wall, a first floor hall or rectangular tower would make the most sense, and, if the measurements of the RCAHMW are accepted, it would have been much of a size with that at Plas Baglan. If this was a feature at both castles, from where did the builders obtain their inspiration from?

Rectangular keeps of two or three storeys were fairly common features of Norman castles, and were particularly prevalent in the Welsh marches. Amongst the earliest and most impressive was that at Chepstow (1067). However, similar keeps were soon established in the later eleventh and early twelfth century at Ogmere, Sully, Kenfig, Llanquian, Dinas Powys and elsewhere.⁸⁵⁰ These varied in size and proportion, and some are more likely to have been towers proper. Notably, almost all of the examples at the castle above had considerably thicker walls

⁸⁴⁷ RCAHMW 'Castell Meredydd' *Coflein*, <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/307828/> (Accessed 16/04/2021).

⁸⁴⁸ Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 'Castell Meredydd', *The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record*, <https://archwilio.org.uk/arch/query/page.php?watprn=GGAT00028g&dbname=ggat&tname=core&sessid=CHI2ghy59ws&queryid=Q105560001618561569> (Accessed 16/04/2021).

⁸⁴⁹ King, *Castellarium Anglicanum*, p.285.

⁸⁵⁰ Kenyon, *The Medieval Castles of Wales*, p.96 – 129; RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.307-347.

than Plas Baglan's 1.5m thick masonry, with the exception being at Llanquian (its walls varying in thickness between 0.8 and 2m), but Llanquian, as the smallest known masonry castle in Glamorgan is unsurprising in its exceptionality.⁸⁵¹

Perhaps the best surviving architectural parallel for Plas Baglan – and conceivably a source of inspiration for its design – is the rectangular keep at Ogmore. This has been dated to the early twelfth century, and would originally have been a first floor hall, with a second floor added later. It measured 14m by 9.7m and with walls of 1.8m thick above the batter. The projecting turret at the NW corner has been interpreted as a latrine,⁸⁵² and typologically there are parallels for this at other keeps or first floor halls in Glamorgan, such as at Dinas Powys and Sully.⁸⁵³ Ogmore is located less than 20km away from Plas Baglan, and only 3km away from Newcastle, which was held by the Afan dynasty during the later twelfth century.⁸⁵⁴ Ogmore, as a neighbouring castle, would have been an obvious source of inspiration to the nearby Welsh dynasty, and the hall at Ogmore would have dominated the entrance to the castle.

A particularly enigmatic castle that seems to be a parallel for the layout of Plas Baglan, with a rectangular hall block at one end of a rectangular enclosure is Hen Gastell, Llangatock.⁸⁵⁵ Sadly, this castle has not been excavated, and very little remains above ground, the similarities are merely suggestive.

While the general layout of these rectangular keeps are similar, the fine details of the first floor halls at Ogmore, Chepstow and Plas Baglan, however, suggest considerable differences, especially in decoration. Much of the ashlar at Plas Baglan was Oolitic limestone or Pennant sandstone, including door and window dressings. These were crudely worked with plain chamfered edges.⁸⁵⁶ By comparison, at Ogmore, Sutton stone was used for the quoins and for window and fireplace dressing on the first floor. The decoration at Ogmore is correspondingly finer – though the quarries for Sutton Stone were only 2.5km distant.⁸⁵⁷ Though larger, the plain chamfers and relatively crude tooling at Plas Baglan suggests the owners had relatively limited resources, in comparison with their counterparts at Ogmore. This would fit with the notion of the Welsh lords of upland Glamorgan being relatively impoverished and unable to afford finer and more expensive elements for decoration; it could

⁸⁵¹ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.264.

⁸⁵² RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.149.

⁸⁵³ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.307-314, 343-347.

⁸⁵⁴ Kenyon, *The Medieval Castles of Wales*, pp. 97, 129.

⁸⁵⁵ Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, pp.93-5.

⁸⁵⁶ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, p.149.

⁸⁵⁷ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.279-80.

also suggest that decoration was a less important aspect for the Welsh rulers of Afan and Gwynllŵg – which could hint at the intended functions of these castles.

Rectangular keeps have been highlighted as a recurring feature of some castles of the Welsh princes. Avent notes the construction of rectangular keeps or towers at Dinas Bran, Dolforwyn and Dolwyddelan, as well as in Deheubarth at Nevern.⁸⁵⁸ However, if Plas Baglan does date to the late twelfth or very early thirteenth century, as has been suggested, this would make it a very early example of a castle amongst its Welsh peers: many of these towers were thought to have been thirteenth-century constructions. Additionally, it is possible that these constructions may have been towers proper, rather than first floor halls as is likely the case at Plas Baglan.⁸⁵⁹ While Welsh influence on Plas Baglan's design is possible, therefore, the similarities in design to Anglo-Norman first floor halls appears much more striking.

That being said, the simple decoration at Plas Baglan was mirrored at Welsh castles elsewhere: in very few instances were there elaborate decorative features. Dolbadarn, Dolwyddelan, and Dinefwr, for example, all included relatively simple decoration. A notable exception is Degannwy, where an elaborate corbel has been tentatively identified as depicting Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, and where finer ashlar is known – although this could also belong to English phases of occupation.⁸⁶⁰ In this sense, the simple decoration at Plas Baglan seems in keeping with Welsh castles elsewhere. While the lack of decoration could be explained by limited financial resources of the Welsh Princes, it may also suggest that decoration may have been a less important consideration than practical considerations of defence at Welsh castles generally.

One of the few other identifiable architectural features at Plas Baglan is the inclusion of narrow splayed embrasures in the North and West (exterior) walls of the castle, on the ground floor. This is a feature not found at Ogmere, although it can be found at Dinas Powys, and Kenfig, although the Kenfig examples are thought to be mid-thirteenth century additions to twelfth-century fabric, possibly in response to attacks by the Welsh in 1232 and 1243.⁸⁶¹ This may indicate that Plas Baglan was designed with a military function in mind. No such embrasures have been found at Castell Meredydd, although the fragmentary nature of the castle certainly does not preclude their existence.

⁸⁵⁸ Avent, 'The Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.14.

⁸⁵⁹ Avent, 'The Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.14.

⁸⁶⁰ Kenyon, *The Medieval Castles of Wales*, p.30.

⁸⁶¹ RCAHMW, *The Early Castles*, pp.320-323.

Round Keeps

At Castell Meredydd, the other main architectural feature which can be discussed is the round tower. Round towers have been highlighted as a feature of Welsh castles by Richard Avent. ‘Round towers were used in Welsh castles both as free-standing towers and as those which stood on the line of the curtain wall...acting as specific strong points within the castle.’⁸⁶² Examples of Welsh constructed round towers exist at Dolbadarn, Dinefwr, Ewloe, Dolforwyn, Castell y Bere and Dryslwyn, to name just a few.⁸⁶³ Indeed, this was a particularly prevalent feature amongst the castles of the Welsh Princes. Kenyon writes ‘where we do see Welsh building on a par with the English is in the great circular keeps of the first half of the thirteenth century.’⁸⁶⁴ Kenyon notes that round keeps are most commonly found in south Wales: with a few in North Wales and elsewhere, and emphasises that this was an Anglo-Norman characteristic perhaps linked ‘to the threat to the marcher lords from the rise of the house of Gwynedd under Llywelyn the Great.’⁸⁶⁵ Round keeps in an Anglo-Norman context are particularly common in south Wales, with examples at Pembroke, Skenfrith, Tretower, Bronllys and Caldicot; Pembroke is often seen as the archetype upon which the others was based, though itself it derived from late-twelfth century round keeps built by Philip Augustus in France.⁸⁶⁶ The round keep at Castell Meredydd, therefore, seems likely to be contemporary with these examples, which date to the early thirteenth century. It is possible that it, too, is based on the Pembroke design.

The problem when discussing the implications of the architectural features at Castell Meredydd is the uncertainty over who may have constructed them, and perhaps ironically, this uncertainty stems from the one solid reference in contemporary source material. The *Brut* states that, in 1236:

Yny vlwydyn hono y kauas gilbert yarll penvro drwy dwyll kastell morgant vab hywel y hwn a elwir machein agwedy gwneuthur kedernyt mawr yn y gylch ytalawd y kastell dracheuyn rac ouyn yr arglwyd lywelyn⁸⁶⁷

And that year Gilbert Earl of Pembroke obtained through treachery, the castle of Morgan ab Hywel in Machen and after he had made a large fortification around it, he gave it back for fear of the lord Llywelyn.

⁸⁶² Avent, ‘Castles of the Welsh Princes’, p.15.

⁸⁶³ Avent, ‘Castles of the Welsh Princes’, p.14.

⁸⁶⁴ Kenyon, *The Medieval Castles of Wales*, p.6.

⁸⁶⁵ Kenyon, *The Medieval Castles of Wales*, p.6

⁸⁶⁶ Kenyon, *The Medieval Castles of Wales*, pp.6, 98, 107-8, 143, 146; Avent, ‘Castles of the Welsh Princes’, p.14.

⁸⁶⁷ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Bryt y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version* (Caerdydd 1941), p.196.

As Gilbert held the castle and added to its fortifications, it is possible that the round tower could have been constructed either by the Gwynllŵg dynasty or the Marshal family: this is central to our discussion, as it affects whether we can tell anything at all about the influences at play, and hence how useful it may be to our debate surrounding cultural emulation and wider European change.

The Marshal family are known to have been particularly active proponents of castle building, including round towers; Pembroke Castle came into William Marshal's possession in 1189 and the great rebuilding work which resulted in the construction of the particularly large and impressive keep there;⁸⁶⁸ William Marshall had also captured Caerleon castle from the Gwynllŵg dynasty c.1217 and constructed a tower on top of the motte there – this now vanished tower may have been a round tower or shell keep.⁸⁶⁹ He was also known for rebuilding work at Chepstow, although that work did not involve a round keep.⁸⁷⁰ On the face of it, therefore, the case for William Marshal constructing a round keep at Castell Meredydd is a strong one.

The wording of the 1236 entry in the *Brut*, however, suggests that the fortification was built around the castle. This most plausibly might refer to the curtain wall. It is also implied that the castle was rather swiftly returned to Morgan, and a the construction of a round tower would likely have been a time consuming undertaking. Unfortunately, the remains are too fragmentary without excavation to prove whether the chronological relationship between the curtain wall and the round keep to establish which came first: only excavation would be able to establish this with certainty.

What is the best parallel for the keep at Castell Meredydd? The round tower seems to have been constructed as a freestanding keep, rather than a mural tower, measuring 10m across externally, with walls 2m thick; the interior diameter of the tower appears to have been 3.8m.⁸⁷¹ In terms of both general size and wall thickness, this seems to have been on the smaller size of average for such keeps – both those of Welsh and Anglo-Norman origin. For example, at Dolbadarn, too, the walls were around 2m thick, but the diameter of the tower itself was around 12m externally.⁸⁷² Dinefwr was around 12.5m across, with walls 2.5m thick. Skenfrith too was

⁸⁶⁸ S. Rees, *A Guide to Ancient and Historic Wales: Dyfed* (London 1992), pp.140-2.

⁸⁶⁹ Rees, *A Guide to Ancient and Historic Wales*, p.191; J.R. Kenyon, 'Masonry Castles and Castle Building', in Griffiths, Hopkins and Howell (eds.), *The Gwent County History, Volume II*, p.101.

⁸⁷⁰ T. Ashbridge, *The Greatest Knight* (London, 2015), pp.217-8.

⁸⁷¹ Dallimore, 'An Archaeological Survey of the Machen Ridge, Monmouthshire' p.483; Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, pp.146-7.

⁸⁷² Renn, 'The Round Keeps of the Brecon Region', p.143.

a little over 10m in diameter, with walls of c.1.8m thick; Tretower was of similar diameter, but with walls c.2.7m thick. However, many Anglo-Norman examples were evidently much more substantial than this. Castell Taliorum measured approximately 19m across, with walls 3.9m thick and perhaps a central plinth to support a vaulted basement ceiling; the interior diameter of this tower was around 9m.⁸⁷³ Pembroke Castle, perhaps the most famous and another massive example of these round keeps, was around 17m in diameter.⁸⁷⁴

The keep at Castell Meredydd appears rather small in comparison with the examples of its neighbours – especially the Anglo-Norman examples. In general, Welsh round towers were smaller in size than their Anglo-Norman counterparts, and as such it is closer to other Welsh examples in size, although it is possible that the size of the tower was limited by the rock outcrop on which it was built.

We cannot definitively state whether the round keep was first constructed by the Gwynllŵg or Marshal families, although perhaps a Welsh origin is likely given the small nature of the keep, its siting on a rocky outcrop and the short time that Marshal presumably held the castle. This uncertainty has been echoed by historians, although most also favour a Welsh origin, Davis suggesting that the round keep may have existed before Gilbert's capture of the site; Avent and Salter also assign the construction to the Welsh.⁸⁷⁵

It seems most likely, therefore, that the round keep at Castell Meredydd may have been constructed by Morgan ap Hywel. If this was the case, and if the tower pre-dated Gilbert's take over, then it would suggest that the Welsh builders must have gotten the idea from their neighbours. But which neighbours? The size of the keep is similar to those of Welsh examples elsewhere, and most of these examples date to the period after 1220: Dinefwr thought to date between 1220 and 1240, and Dryslwyn 1230 – 1272; Dolbadarn is around the same date.⁸⁷⁶

A date of construction in the 1220s or early 1230s is particularly attractive, as, prior to 1217, the main base of this dynasty had been at Caerleon: Hywel ab Iorwerth (and Morgan), both used the title 'de Caerleon', which, as has been explained elsewhere, suggests that the site was particularly important to their prestige, and was their main seat. Following the loss of Caerleon to the Marshals in 1217, Castell Meredydd presumably became much more important to the family.

⁸⁷³ Lewis, 'Excavations at Castell Taliorum', pp.372 – 380; Renn, 'The Round Keeps of the Brecon Region', p.143.

⁸⁷⁴ Rees, *A Guide to Ancient and Historic Wales: Dyfed*, p.141.

⁸⁷⁵ Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, p.148; Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.15; M. Salter, *The Castles of Gwent, Glamorgan and Gower* (Malvern, 1991), p.14.

⁸⁷⁶ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', pp.11-20.

Morgan's castle at Castell Meredydd is likely to have been of similar date, especially as from c.1217 his dynasty had lost Caerleon – after this event, Castell Meredydd (if it was already in existence) would have become much more important to the family's fortunes. The construction of a stone tower would therefore have been a way to improve the dynasty's fortunes and prestige, having lost their main castle. We have little evidence of the castle's origin, apart from the hazy link to Maredudd Gethin,⁸⁷⁷ and it is possible that the castle only came into existence following the loss of Caerleon. A date of around 1220 – 1230 for the construction (or reconstruction in stone) of Castell Meredydd is therefore particularly attractive. Even if the castle was already in existence, Morgan would have had several reasons for building in stone at Castell Meredydd. The first of these is defence: after Caerleon's capture, having a well-fortified seat would have been important to safeguarding his lordship over the region. Symbolically, constructing a stone castle would have been a way of regaining some of the prestige lost at Caerleon.

As to the influences behind Morgan's choice of architectural style, both Welsh and Anglo-Norman influence is plausible. As we have seen, there were a plethora of round towers built by lords in the southern marches, including at Caerleon, Caldicot, and Castell Taliorum all a relatively short distance away, as well as a little further afield at Skenfrith, Tretower and Bronllys.⁸⁷⁸ These were held by Morgan's neighbours and it is easy to imagine him having ample opportunity to become familiar with them.

Welsh influence is also possible, especially as Morgan was on good terms with Llywelyn ab Iorwerth – Llywelyn supported Morgan in his legal attempts to regain Caerleon, and the *Brut* entry for 1236 again suggests Llywelyn lent Morgan political support.⁸⁷⁹ It is conceivable that Morgan was familiar with the construction of castles such as Dolbadarn through his relationship with Llywelyn and even, perhaps, that Morgan had a helping hand from a Llywelyn at the height of his influence, keen to project his power into the southern marches and aware of the advantages of establishing an image as the pre-eminent Welsh ruler. This, however, depends on the chronology of the two castles, which cannot firmly be established: it is equally possible that Llywelyn himself could have obtained inspiration for his round keep design from familiarity of the Anglo-Norman round keeps of the marches. On balance, it seems most likely that the round tower at Castell Meredydd was based upon those of his immediate Anglo-Norman neighbours, perhaps with an awareness that the construction

⁸⁷⁷ Davis, *The Forgotten Castles of Wales*, p.146.

⁸⁷⁸ Avent, 'Castles of the Welsh Princes', p.14.

⁸⁷⁹ *Calendar of Close Rolls Henry III, 2, 1231-1234* (London 1905), pp.321-323, 594-5.

of round towers was also being undertaken by other Welsh princes, and thereby boosting his control over his lands, the defensibility of his lordship, and his prestige in the eyes of both Anglo-Norman and Welsh neighbours.

This mix of Anglo-Norman influences, with a peculiar Welsh twist, seems to have been a recurring theme at Castell Meredydd and Plas Baglan that goes beyond round keeps. The use of rectangular keeps is very similar to the other Anglo-Norman first floor halls throughout south Wales, and clearly suggests that the Welsh were imitating the Anglo-Norman design. However, the general lack of decorative features, and relative simplicity, suggest that the motives for castle building in the dynasties of Afan and Gwynllŵg may have been similar to their Welsh counterparts in North and West Wales. Simplicity in design was also a feature of the smallest Norman castles built by the smaller marcher families, such as Hen Gastell and Llanquian, and perhaps may be explained by the limited economic power available to these dynasties, in a similar fashion to the Afan and Gwynllŵg dynasties. Nevertheless, the construction of such castles clearly show their pretensions to power and suggest that they sought to emulate their neighbours.

The Importance of Castles

In light of the mixture of influences on Plas Baglan and Castell Meredydd, we must consider what their builders hoped to achieve by the construction of these castles, and how exactly they used them. Did they imitate their neighbours in function as well as form, and how important were these castles to their builders?

The lack of decorative features, combined with the embrasures at Plas Baglan and the defensive ditches, may suggest that a defensive or military function may have been particularly important to the Welsh dynasties to whom these castles belonged. Perhaps this is unsurprising, as the Welsh chronicles are filled with accounts of attacks on castles – and both dynasties were involved in a number of attacks on castles during the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Morgan ap Caradog, for example, conducted campaigns in 1183-4 against Neath and Kenfig; his son, Morgan Gam, attacked these castles in alliance with Llywelyn ab Iorwerth in 1231-2.⁸⁸⁰ As well as the Gwynllŵg dynasty's initial attacks in the 1130s, Caerleon itself switched hands several times in the 1170s, before its final loss to William Marshal in 1217.⁸⁸¹ The

⁸⁸⁰ D. Crouch, 'Iestyn ap Gwrgant', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-14357#odnb-9780198614128-e-14357-headword-3> (Accessed 15/04/2021).

⁸⁸¹ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon Peniarth MS 20 Version* (Caerdydd 1941), p.179.

defensive functions would therefore likely have been at the forefront of their minds when they constructed these castles.

The symbolic aspect would also have been important for these castles. As we have seen, the construction of castles was a way to boost their prestige. This would especially have been the case where dynasties had control of castles but later lost them. This was the case for both the Afan dynasty – which gained control of Newcastle around 1184 – and Gwynllŵg, which lost Caerleon in 1217. An intriguing possibility is that through control of castles of Norman origin, they may have gained architectural inspiration for their castles elsewhere. Equally, the loss of these Norman-built castles may have prompted the dynasties to build, or reinforce, masonry castles of their own. Debates over the function of Anglo-Norman first floor halls suggest that one reason for constructing these buildings was to impress those outside the castle, something which could be exaggerated by siting in locally prominent positions: ‘height has long been connected with prestige, as well as providing spectacular views’.⁸⁸²

The castles would also have had a residential function. The presence of garderobes also suggest that the major buildings at both Castell Meredydd and Plas Baglan would have been the residential apartments in these castles: There has been some debate over how far first-floor halls may have had residential or symbolic functions,⁸⁸³ but clearly in the case of Plas Baglan, it could hardly have been otherwise, considering the small size of the site. The general consensus is that both residential and symbolic functions would have been important, especially at the larger halls at castles such as Chepstow. It is also possible, of course, that residential functions could have been located in now lost timber buildings in the case of Castell Meredydd. This is not to say that these castles were the only residences of these dynasties: clearly they held lands and it is possible that they had residences elsewhere: this is known in the case of the princes of Gwynedd and Deheubarth, for example, which held several castles as well as *Llysoedd*: The same was true for the greater Anglo-Norman magnates.

Extensive work has been done on the role of Norman castles in the administration of newly conquered territory, and historians generally agree that Anglo-Norman castles were significant local administrative centres, a function which traditionally, in Wales, had been associated with *Llys* sites.⁸⁸⁴ Melville Richards has undertaken work on locating the *llysoedd* as administrative centres within the commotal structure, and work on discussing the role of

⁸⁸² N. Hill and M. Gardiner, ‘The English Medieval First-Floor Hall: Part 2 – The Evidence from the Eleventh to Early Thirteenth Century’, *The Archaeological Journal*, 175, 1 (2017), p.32.

⁸⁸³ Hill and Gardiner, ‘The English Medieval First-Floor Hall’, p.32.

⁸⁸⁴ Edwards, *The Normans and the Welsh March*, p.169.

castles in this context has been undertaken by J.G. Edwards, who has studied the pattern of Norman castle building within Ceredigion, as a microcosm for Wales as a whole.⁸⁸⁵ Edwards found a regular pattern, whereby castles could be used as the administrative centres for the regions which they controlled. Following the Norman conquest of Ceredigion, for example, castles were placed centrally within each commote, suggesting that ‘in Ceredigion, as in north-east and south-east Wales, the Norman “unit of penetration” was the commote...by adopting the procedure of seizing commotes, the Normans were acquiring more than land: they were acquiring “Lordship”’.⁸⁸⁶

There are numerous mentions of castles as administrative centres for newly captured commotes, for example in 1246, the bailiffs of Neath and Llantrisant castles were instructed to ensure a Morgan ab Owain observed terms agreed with Margam Abbey.⁸⁸⁷ We know, too, that coins were minted at Cardiff Castle following its establishment in the later eleventh century: Cardiff Castle, as the *caput* of Glamorgan, housed the county court, exchequer and chancery of the lordship.⁸⁸⁸ If the Normans were using their castles as administrative centres, and if this administration was based on the commotal structure, as Edwards suggests, were the Welsh builders of castles emulating their neighbours in this also?

A glance at their locations suggest that this was not the case. Welsh castles were not rigidly placed as their Norman counterparts. Unlike the Norman castles, which seem to have been built close to centres of population or at least within the central part of the lordship, topography seems to have been more important when determining the siting of Welsh castles. In Gwynedd for example, new Welsh castles were not constructed on the site of their commotal *Llys*, with the exception of Degannwy, an important early-medieval site.⁸⁸⁹ It is possible that the regular day to day administration may have continued to be undertaken from these *Llysoedd*, and these may have continued to fulfil ceremonial and residential functions as well.

Llys sites are difficult to identify, and in the case of southeast Wales, very little work has been done on identifying them.⁸⁹⁰ The only *Llys* sites that have been tentatively identified in southeast Wales are Castell Arnallt (Gwent Uwch Coed), associated by Bradney with Seisyll ap Dyfnwal’s manor before his death in 1175. Another possible such *Llys* site from the later medieval period is at Gwern y Cleppa (Gwynllŵg), associated with Ifor Hael in the fourteenth

⁸⁸⁵ Edwards *The Normans and the Welsh March*, pp.164-8.

⁸⁸⁶ Edwards *The Normans and the Welsh March*, pp.168-170.

⁸⁸⁷ RCAHMW, *The Later Castles*, p.186.

⁸⁸⁸ RCAHMW, *The Later Castles*, p.164.

⁸⁸⁹ Avent, ‘Castles of the Welsh Princes’, p.12.

⁸⁹⁰ Rees, *A Historical Atlas of Wales*, Plate 48.

century, but there is no proof to link these associations with either site: only excavation could reveal enough to understand their roles fully. Identifying such sites is vital to our ability to discuss their relationship to castles.

One indication that administration may not have taken place at Welsh castles is their irregular distribution. In Afan, Castell Bolan, Plas Baglan and Hen Gastell have all been attributed to the Afan dynasty: they existed in close proximity which suggests that they could not all be commotal centres and hence likely had different functions. In the case of Hen Gastell, its location on a rocky eminence adjacent to the River Nedd strongly suggests that it may have been used to control crossing of the river, possibly to collect tolls.⁸⁹¹

While it is possible that castles recaptured from the Normans may have continued with their administrative functions, it is very difficult to determine. Although the Welsh rulers of Caerleon made constant reference to the castle and town in their charters, this seems to have been imitation of Anglo-Norman style titles to enhance status and legitimacy. With their pains to associate themselves with the town, it was likely their main residence and hence may have had administrative functions, although Gerald of Wales, whose journey through Wales took him through Caerleon during the period when it was held by Hywel ab Iorwerth, mentions nothing to suggest administration, nor does he write much about the Welsh involvement in the town at all.⁸⁹² On the other hand, it has been suggested that the lords of Afan used Plas Baglan as an administrative centre of their lordship from the early thirteenth century. It has also been suggested that at the beginning of the fourteenth century, they may have switched the centre of administration to Aberafan castle, around the time that they established a new borough there.⁸⁹³ If this is the case, then it is possible that the Welsh of southeast Wales were using castles as administrative centres – even if these castles were located away from traditional *Llys* sites. This is in contrast to Avent's argument and could reflect changing priorities over the period. In the case of Afan, defensive functions became less important and administrative functions considerably more so: this perhaps could be expected in light of the changing political circumstances following the Edwardian Conquest in Wales as a whole and the de Clare conquests in southeast Wales more specifically. The Welsh may have eventually imitated their neighbours in the way in which they used castles. However, clearly, defensive and perhaps symbolic functions were initially more important elements. The extent to which the Welsh

⁸⁹¹ Wilkinson et al. 'Excavations at Hen Gastell', pp.1 – 50.

⁸⁹² Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, pp.114-121.

⁸⁹³ RCAHMS, *The Early Castles*, p.152.

administered their lands from centres such as Caerleon, Plas Baglan and Castell Meredydd remains unknown in light of current evidence, and requires further research.

Conclusions

How far then, did the Welsh imitate and emulate their neighbours through castle construction, and why? The members of the dynasties of southeast Wales constructed castles, just like their peers in north and west Wales. The castles they built clearly formed part of a wider Welsh castle building tradition, deriving ultimately from the Anglo-Normans. Just by building such castles, they were clearly emulating their Norman counterparts, seeking to match them.

When we look at the castles in more detail, it is clear that the castles had architectural similarities to both other Welsh and Anglo-Norman examples. The castles of southeast Wales appear rather small and irregular in plan, in the same tradition as Welsh princes elsewhere. However, the specific architectural elements present, such as the round tower at Castell Meredydd and first floor hall at both Castell Meredydd and Plas Baglan, suggest that Anglo-Norman influences were particularly important, and it seems most likely that the Welsh obtained the inspiration for such castles from the Anglo-Norman neighbours, imitating the architectural elements.

The influences on Welsh castle building could have come from Welsh familiarity with the castles of their Norman neighbours, but it is also possible that it could have been influenced by Anglo-Norman castles that the Welsh had come into possession of. The gain – and later loss – of Newcastle for the Afan dynasty and Caerleon for the Gwynllŵg dynasty are both cases in point. This would have given these dynasties ample opportunity to become familiar with their form and architectural style which they could then replicate elsewhere. However, first-floor halls and round keeps are both commonly found in the castles of other Welsh princes as well as in Anglo-Norman contexts in the march. The Welsh of southeast Wales need not have been imitating only their Norman or Welsh neighbours, but likely were seeking to emulate both, in the sense of matching their neighbours to the best of their limited financial means. This is evidence, again, of the importance of considering the rich and complex cultural interchange in this region of the march.

This does not explain the existence of other earthwork castles, of course, as at Twyn Gaer in Senghenydd, but it seems likely that members of the Senghenydd dynasty would also have become familiar with the castles of their Norman neighbours through various means. While the number of Welsh castles in the region were never large, and much fewer than their Anglo-Norman counterparts, clearly the Welsh were no strangers to adopting this new idea.

The heyday of Welsh castle building was the later twelfth and early thirteenth century, but in most cases may have been cut short or limited by the takeover of their lands. It is possible that continued development would have presented a very different picture.

The reasons behind the construction of these castles seems more complex. Military functions were likely an important consideration, in light of the architectural features found and considering the relationship of these dynasties with castles as portrayed in contemporary sources. It was probably in a military context that Welsh individuals first became aware of castles through the Anglo-Normans. However, prestige probably was another major consideration. It seems likely that castles became part of the way in which Welsh lordship was projected, just as it featured in Gwynedd and Deheubarth. Castles were, after all, being constructed by relatively minor marcher lords as well as the greater magnates. In this, the Welsh of southeast Wales were following the same pattern as their counterparts in north and west Wales.

Chapter 7: Engagement, Integration and Involvement in the Wider Anglo-Norman World.

Introduction

Throughout the study so far, we have explored various methods by which members of the native princely dynasties and *uchelwyr* of southeast Wales imitated, and in some cases emulated, their neighbours. We have seen the importance of interpersonal networks in the march, and that the sort of image which these individuals sought to project through many newly adopted elements was aimed at their neighbours, whether Anglo-Norman or Welsh. For this final chapter, we go beyond this, considering how far this translated into other forms of engagement with their neighbours and involvement in the wider Anglo-Norman world, to understand how far they were integrated into Anglo-Norman society, particularly beyond the geographical constraints of southeast Wales.

A major question is how far we see Welsh individuals acting in the service of powerful magnates, such as the Earls of Gloucester or the King of England, and how far such service may have taken them outside their local area. For example, are there instances of Welsh individuals from Glamorgan, Senghennydd or Gwynllŵg at English royal or baronial courts, or becoming involved in the machinations of courtly politics? Likewise, do we see native Welsh individuals engaged in military activity or owning land elsewhere in Wales, England, Ireland and France? Our study is, of course, mostly concerned with secular individuals, although it must be noted that the church could be a major facilitator of wider engagement, even if a full discussion of this lies beyond the scope of the work.

Such a discussion immediately raises myriad questions. If we see engagement, how much of this engagement took place on a local level and how much beyond it? Indeed, what was a 'local' area for these individuals? How far were these individuals involved in other parts of Wales, in England and beyond? Do individuals from different positions in society display different tendencies, can we change over time, and, perhaps most fundamentally, was there correlation between propensity for imitating their neighbours and actually engaging with them?

Forms of Engagement

From the context of the Welsh princely dynasties, historians have pointed out a number of ways in which they could engage with their neighbours and various motivations for doing so: as usual most examples are noted from Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth. Pryce writes that

‘Welsh rulers had opportunities to rub shoulders with Marcher lords or the English royal court through marriage and diplomacy’. Nelson suggested that ‘peaceable contact with the Normans brought them [the Welsh] knowledge of new techniques in military and political affairs’, while Davies argued that Owain Cyfeiliog was ‘a man who turned easily in the circles of English border society: he was fluent of speech and quick of wit; he exchanged pleasantries – and jibes – with Henry II, over dinner at Shrewsbury’.⁸⁹⁴ Historians have pointed to the grants of land to Welsh magnates in Powys and Gwynedd, such as such Ellesmere in Shropshire, Ashford in Derbyshire, or Whittington in Shropshire to Roger de Powis, suggesting some level of incorporation into royal and baronial infrastructure and administration, something also suggested by the granting of pensions to Welsh individuals by the English crown.⁸⁹⁵ They have also pointed to attendance at the English court, such as the presence of Welsh rulers from southeast Wales at the conference between the Lord Rhys and Henry II at Gloucester in 1175,⁸⁹⁶ or the appearance of Welsh individuals in charter witness lists of English nobles as evidence of movement in Anglo-Norman circles.⁸⁹⁷

Historians have also pointed out numerous instances of military cooperation. This ranged from service in English armies, both in Wales, against fellow Welshmen, and further afield, as with contingents from Glamorgan serving in Normandy in 1204 or the Welsh contingents serving in Edward I’s Scottish campaigns.⁸⁹⁸ This could also take the form of alliances with and military support for English factions during political crises, whether during the anarchy of the twelfth century, the Baron’s war, or opposition to the Despensers.⁸⁹⁹ Such military engagement spanned the whole period. The military element also raises the possibility of how far the Welsh adopted military technologies as well as abstract concepts such as chivalry, featuring in discussions by Brock Holden, Sean Davies and John Gillingham.⁹⁰⁰

Thus historians generally agree that Welsh rulers were gradually drawn into the Anglo-Norman orbit, identifying and alluding to (if only in passing), many methods of engagement

⁸⁹⁴ Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, pp.40-42; L.H. Nelson, *The Normans in South Wales: 1070 – 1171* (Austin, 1966), p.124; Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.233.

⁸⁹⁵ Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales*, p.122; Pryce, ‘Welsh Rulers and European Change’, pp.40-42; Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.233.

⁸⁹⁶ Crouch, ‘The Transformation of Medieval Gwent’, pp.1-46.

⁸⁹⁷ Clark, *Cartae* 6 Vols; Walker, ‘Charters of the Earldom of Hereford’ 1095 – 1201’, pp. 28, 33.

⁸⁹⁸ Clark, *Cartae*, 2 (2nd edition, 1910), p.290.

⁸⁹⁹ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp.403-406; Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.31-33; Crouch, ‘The Slow Death of Kingship’, p.34.

⁹⁰⁰ Holden, *Lords of the Central Marches*, pp.50 – 51; Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, pp.230-232; J. Gillingham, ‘Conquering the Barbarians: War and Chivalry in Twelfth Century Britain’, in J. Gillingham (ed.) *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity and political values* (Rochester, 1999), pp.41-58.

on an individual level, such as involvement in landholding, attendance at court, or diplomacy between these polities and their neighbours. There are, therefore, many potentially profitable avenues of enquiry for us.

Charter production and local engagement

Our first port of call is to consider how far the Welsh engaged with their neighbours on a local level. The term ‘local’ is subjective, but from the perspective of the native dynasties, for our purposes, we can consider as within or adjacent to their own lands. Therefore, how much engagement of individuals with their neighbours is visible in the source material?

A glance at the twelfth-century charter evidence suggests that Welsh individuals were generally not witnessing the charters of their Anglo-Norman neighbours. The charters of the marcher lords were most often witnessed by Anglo-Norman individuals, usually tenants, officials and occasionally neighbours.⁹⁰¹ Occasional Welsh individuals are noted, but in very small numbers: one charter of Roger of Hereford was witnessed by Iestyn Trahern; another was witnessed by the French, English and Welsh of the earl’s curia at Brecon (*Testibus Francigenis, Anglicis et Wallicis Curie mee de Brechonia*).⁹⁰² When they do appear, they usually feature towards the end of the witness lists: Morgan ab Owain’s witnessing of a charter of Earl Roger of Hereford (which we saw in Chapter 4), and appearing at the start of the witness lists, is a rare exception.⁹⁰³

By contrast, while Welsh charters were mostly witnessed by Welsh individuals, Anglo-Norman witnesses also frequently appear. Gilbert de Turberville, William de Cantelupe, and others members of marcher aristocracy sometimes witnessed charters of Llesion ap Morgan to Margam abbey, for example. Many witnesses were clearly members of the clergy (made clear by the use of the terms *clerico*, *decano*, *presbitero* etc), presumably associated with the monastic or ecclesiastical beneficiary.⁹⁰⁴ Thus while there was some Anglo-Norman engagement with the administration of the native Welsh rulers in southeast Wales, there was comparatively little Welsh involvement in the other direction. Of course, not all Anglo-Norman charters were concerned with Wales or Welsh religious houses, and not all contain surviving witness lists, but the pattern is consistent. We consider just a few examples here.

⁹⁰¹ Patterson, *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, contains numerous examples of Anglo-Norman charters witnessed by Anglo-Normans. Welsh individuals appear only where directly connected to the grant (as with a confirmation), or as members of the clergy. For example, see p.115.

⁹⁰² Walker, ‘Charters of the Earldom of Hereford’, p.33; R.W. Banks, ‘Cartularium Prioratus S. Johannis Evang, de Brecon (continued)’, *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 14, Fourth Series (1883), pp.147-49.

⁹⁰³ Walker, ‘Charters of the Earldom of Hereford’, p.28.

⁹⁰⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.282-298.

One example is a charter of Earl William of Gloucester to Margam Abbey, confirming a grant by Gruffudd ab Ifor of Senghennydd (c.1150x53). Gruffudd had given the land by the hand of his kinsman, Meilyr Awenet (*per manum fratris Meileri Awenet*), the first leader of the Margam community. The kinship suggests a strong Welsh connection to the abbey, and the named lands clearly lay within Senghennydd. It is endorsed '*Donatio comitis Griffini de Meiler*'.⁹⁰⁵ This charter demonstrates a multi layered connection between Senghennydd and Earl William, Gruffudd supposedly having married the daughter of William, Earl of Gloucester (see chapter 3). Despite its associations with Senghennydd, there were no contributions of Welsh individuals, all witnesses appear to be Anglo-Norman or English.⁹⁰⁶

There are other examples of Welsh individuals being mentioned in the context of earlier land grants within the Gloucester charters. A sequence of closely related confirmation grants to Margam Abbey mention earlier gifts of land by both Welsh and Anglo-Norman individuals. The Welsh names are Iorwerth (*Iorvarth/Iorvach*), Maredudd (*Moreduh, Mareduth*), Morgan ab Owain (*Morgani filii Oweni*), and Morgan ap Caradog (*Morgani filii Caradoci*). The earliest charter, 137, dates to the decade before 1199, the others to 1216-17.⁹⁰⁷ Morgan ap Caradog was the ruler of the Glamorgan dynasty, Maredudd was probably his brother, and Morgan ab Owain their nephew.⁹⁰⁸ Iorwerth ab Iestyn is an elusive figure, and intriguingly the charter actually uses '*Iorvarth ab Iustini*' instead of the Latin *filius*. In light of the small gift of two acres, he was likely a modest Glamorgan landowner, a member of the *uchelwyr*.⁹⁰⁹ Despite their prominence, and the fact that the first three were all alive before 1208,⁹¹⁰ no Welsh individual appears as a witness to these charters, for which all the witness lists survive.

A few individuals with ambiguous names (suggesting they were members of Anglicised Welsh families or marcher families with some Welsh connection), appear in charters. For example, in the Earldom of Gloucester charters an *Engelranno Walensi* appears in a witness list in 1150x66, and a *Ricardo Walensi* appears as a witness in March 1193; both were grants to Margam Abbey.⁹¹¹ The epithet *Walensis* suggests they were either descended from Welsh individuals or were considered to be Welsh, despite their first names. A mid-twelfth century confirmation charter of a grant in Bristol, refers to *de domo et terra Hug(onis) Morgan*, who

⁹⁰⁵ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, Charter 120, p.115.

⁹⁰⁶ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, p.115. The witnesses were *Hawisia comitissa, Hamone de Valoniis, Alexandro de Ticeseia, Widone de Rupe, Willelmo de la Mare, magistro Ernesio, Osberto clerico*.

⁹⁰⁷ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, Charters 137, 139, 140, 144, 145, 148, 149, pp.126-142. For more on the grants themselves, see Pryce, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.19.

⁹⁰⁸ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.19.

⁹⁰⁹ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, pp.126-142.

⁹¹⁰ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.18-21.

⁹¹¹ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, Charters 125 and 138, pp.117-8, p.127.

may have been a Welshman or person of Welsh descent, living in the town: Morgan, after all, was a commonly used name in southeast Wales at this time.⁹¹²

Intriguingly, the charters of the Earls of Gloucester include one grant (1147x83) directly to individuals with Welsh names. The recipient is ‘*Kenaithuro filio Herberti*’ and his brothers. As such an unusual charter, the text, and a translation, has been included below.⁹¹³

W(illelmus) comes Gloec(estrie) dapifero suo et vicecomiti suo de Glamorg(an) et omnibus baronibus suis et hominibus de Glamorgan Francis et Angl(is) atque Walensib(us), salutem. Sciatis me concessisse Kenaithuro filio Herb(er)ti filii Godwinet et Blethein et Will(el)mo et Keinwrec et Rigered fratribus suis filiis H(er)b(er)ti terram de Kelleculu(m) quan H(er)b(er)t(us) pater suus tenuit et terram arabilem de Treikic inter terram Luarch filii Merewith et aquam de Baidan tenendas de me et de heredibus meis sibi det heredibus suis ita libere et quiete et honorifice et per simile servitium sicut H(er)b(er)t(us) pater suus tenuit terram suam de Kelleculu(m). T(estibus) Ric(ardo) de Cardi dapifero, Ham(one) de Valon(iis), W(illelmo) de Bosco, W(illelmo) de Actona, Luarch filio Merewith, Carad(oc) filio Ioh(annis) Du, Herv(eo) cleric qui presential conscripsit.⁹¹⁴

William, Earl of Gloucester, to his steward and his sheriff of Glamorgan and all his magnates and men of Glamorgan, French and English and Welsh, greeting. Know that I have granted to Cynaethwy son of Herbert son of Godwin, and Bleddyn and William and Cynwrig and Rigered(?), his brothers, sons of Herbert, the land of Kelleculum that Herbert, their father, held, and the arable land of Terikic between the land of Luarch ap Maredudd and the water of Baidan, to be held of me and of my heirs, to him and his heirs, so freely, peacefully and honourably, and by similar service that Herbert, their father, held his land of Kelleculum. Witnesses: Richard of Cardiff, steward, Hamon de Valognes, William de Bosco, William de Acton, Luarch ap Maredudd, Caradoc ap John Du, Herveus, the clerk who personally wrote (this).

This is a unique example among the Gloucester charters in including both beneficiaries and witnesses with Welsh names. However, Cynaethwy’s family appear to have been among the first wave of Anglo-Norman immigrants, and following a Welsh resurgence, became assimilated into local Welsh culture, adopting Welsh names, in a reversal of the changes we have seen Welsh families, such as the Glamorgan dynasty, later underwent.⁹¹⁵ The Anglo-Norman roots of the family may explain the exceptional nature of the grant. The two Welsh witnesses included in this charter are Luarch ap Maredudd, whose lands evidently lay adjacent to those subject to the grant, and Caradoc ap John Du, who is noted in several other charters and was likely a member of the *uchelwyr*, a dependant of Morgan ap Caradog (see Chapter 3).

⁹¹² Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, Charter 77, p.82.

⁹¹³ Expansions of abbreviations or conjectural endings are contained in brackets.

⁹¹⁴ Patterson (ed.), *The Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, Charter 75, pp.80-81.

⁹¹⁵ Griffiths, ‘Native society on the Anglo-Norman frontier’, pp.179-216.

These individuals appear after all other individuals except the scribe, including the steward, Richard of Cardiff, and Hamon de Valognes, who is known to have served as constable of Earl William and later as justiciar of Ireland, and William de Acton.⁹¹⁶ The appearance of these individuals at the end of the grant suggest they were seen to be of lesser importance; this could explain why Welsh individuals appear so infrequently in witness lists. Regardless, the distinct cultural divide in witnesses indicates relatively little cultural engagement with the administration of their neighbours, and likely a reliance upon their own followers as witnesses.

For Wales as a whole, Stephenson suggests that this situation changed over time, citing a number of Welsh witnesses of Roger Mortimer's 1199 charter to Cwm Hir.⁹¹⁷ This was the case in southeast Wales, with occasional identifiably Welsh individuals acting as witnesses to a number of charters, although individuals with Welsh names continued to be found most often in Welsh charters.⁹¹⁸ The grants suggest that the act of preparing charters, which as mentioned in Chapter 4 was mainly driven by the beneficiaries, suggests another method by which engagement could occur, and it is easy to imagine neighbours coming together at institutions such as Margam when these charters were produced. This may particularly have been the case for the *uchelwyr* who were, perhaps, less likely to have the ability to produce such charters themselves.

The beneficiaries themselves also give a clue to the limited extent of engagement. The majority of (surviving) charters of the Glamorgan dynasty, for example, were grants to Margam; the same is the case for Senghennydd. By contrast, no charters from Gwynllŵg to Margam are known; instead granting lands to Goldcliff and Llantarnam. This suggests that charter granting was generally a local affair. Of course the most powerful lords such as the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford, with their extensive, widely placed lands, were more likely to make grants to beneficiaries further afield.

In its wider context, the distinct division where individuals with Welsh names only rarely witnessed Anglo-Norman or English charters, is paralleled in Ireland. Bartlett has noted a similar division and suggests that either the Irish were considered unsuitable for witnessing Anglo-Norman charters due to their 'relatively charter-less society', or that:

⁹¹⁶ C.A. Empey, 'Valognes, Hamo de [Hamo fitz Geoffrey] (d.1202/3)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-50032?rskey=pTwqru&result=1> (accessed 15/03/2019).

⁹¹⁷ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, p.77-9.

⁹¹⁸ For some early fourteenth century examples, see Clark, *Cartae*, Vol 3 (2nd edition, 1910), pp.1014-1030.

perhaps the exclusion went beyond this and really does reflect a world in which the immediate entourage of the Anglo-Norman landholder would be entirely Anglo-Norman or immigrant and the native Irish, with the exception of the occasional ecclesiastic, would figure only as auxiliary troops, labouring bondsmen, or barbarous allies – not groups one would wish to act as witnesses to the most formal transactions.⁹¹⁹

Given that we have ample evidence of members of the Welsh princely dynasties and *uchelwyr* producing charters in reasonable numbers, the argument of unsuitability seems unlikely in the case of Wales. We are left to consider the second, of a strong societal divide between Welsh and Anglo-Norman visible in the witness lists. This argument risks overemphasising the binary and divisive nature of Anglo-Welsh society. The moderate numbers of Anglo-Norman witnesses in Welsh charters suggest that cross-cultural charter witnessing could, and did occur, while the and relatively few Welsh witnesses to Anglo-Norman charters suggest that prestige and politics was a factor.

Presence at the English Court, Diplomacy, and Legal Proceedings

Welsh engagement with their English neighbours could also take the form of presence at English courts, but references are few and far between. On one level this is suggested from the charter evidence, with the occasional witnessing of a charter: Morgan ab Owain's witnessing of Roger de Hereford's charter, for example.⁹²⁰ Crouch notes the presence of Gruffudd and Cadwallon, sons of Iorwerth ab Owain, and brothers of Hywel Caerleon, at King John's court at St Briavels in 1207.⁹²¹ Such courts were not static, and moved around. Iorwerth and Cadwgan ap Bleddyn for example were noted at the English court in 1110.⁹²² In 1172 Owain ab Iorwerth of Gwynllŵg was killed on his way to the king, who was travelling towards England from Laugharne: he was killed by the Earl of Bristol's (i.e. the Earl of Gloucester's) men coming from Cardiff, presumably in eastern Glamorgan or southern Gwent.⁹²³

However, sometimes such meetings with the English king could be of greater prominence: an example is the 1175 meeting at Gloucester between King Henry II and Rhys ap Gruffudd of Deheubarth.⁹²⁴ On his journey to Gloucester, Rhys:

took with him all the princes of Wales who had incurred the king's displeasure, namely: Cadwallon ap Madog, his first cousin, of Maelienydd, Einion Clud, his son in law, of

⁹¹⁹ Bartlett, 'Colonial Societies of the High Middle Ages', p.39.

⁹²⁰ See Chapter 4.

⁹²¹ Crouch 'Iorwerth ab Owain' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn.

⁹²² Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.37-8.

⁹²³ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, p.68.

⁹²⁴ See Chapter 3 for more detail on this meeting and its implications.

Elfael, Einion ap Rhys, his other son-in-law, of Gwerthrynion, Morgan ap Caradog ap Iestyn of Glamorgan his nephew by Gwladus, his sister, Gruffudd ab Ifor ap Meurig of Senghennydd, his nephew by Nest, his sister, Iorwerth ab Owain of Caerleon, Seisyll ab Dyfnwal of Higher Gwent, the man to whom Gwladus, Rhys' sister, was then married. All those returned along with Rhys, having obtained peace, to their own lands, yielding Caerleon to Iorwerth ab Owain.⁹²⁵

Clearly, the members of all the princely dynasties of southeast Wales were willing to engage in diplomacy with the Anglo-Normans, and this could involve some travel. The context of this meeting as a peace conference (and its extensive description in the *Brut*) suggests that these were not the norm and were probably exceptional. This entry stresses the familial relationship between Rhys and the Welsh rulers of the march, suggesting that his influence over these rulers were significant.⁹²⁶ Such family connections may have been a factor in Rhys persuading them to accompany Rhys to Gloucester and make peace with the king. Rhys' prestige as the pre-eminent figure in south Wales, his role as king's Justiciar and a possible desire for peace with Henry II are also likely to have been factors – especially if all their Welsh neighbours and co-belligerents were also going. Gloucester, too, was relatively close by for most of these individuals. Rhys likely used this meeting for his own ends: stamping his authority over these minor princelings was a way in which to keep in favour with Henry II, while equally, his support of these princelings 'shored up their tenuous authority and contained the power of the Norman lords of the March.'⁹²⁷

Other meetings also occurred; at Geddington and Oxford in 1177, Henry summoned Welsh princes to exact oaths of fealty, in attempts to intensify royal overlordship of Welsh and Marcher lords; a formalisation of royal authority similar to other accords with rulers in Scotland and Ireland.⁹²⁸ Unlike the meeting at Gloucester, these did not take place in the Welsh borders but well within England itself, and may have been symbolic in the rulers travelling to him. Lloyd writes that at Oxford the company 'included nearly every Welsh prince bearing rule at the time in the country', although he lists individuals representing 'the three provinces of Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth', including the Lord Rhys, Dafydd ab Owain Gwynedd, Owain Cyfeiliog and Gruffudd of Bromfield.⁹²⁹ There are no direct evidence of individuals from southeast Wales being present at this second meeting.

⁹²⁵ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS 20 Version*, pp.70-1.

⁹²⁶ Roderick, 'Marriage and Politics in Wales, 1066 – 1282', pp.11-12; Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.222.

⁹²⁷ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.222.

⁹²⁸ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.290-291.

⁹²⁹ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, pp.544-546, 552 – 554.

The nature of these conferences seem to have taken place in exceptional circumstances, but Welsh individuals were clearly open to engagement with the English king that could entail extensive travel when needed. While presence at court or at diplomatic meetings did occur, such references within both charters and other sources are generally few, and thus this form of involvement seems to have been infrequent.

This period also sees some Welsh individuals choosing to pursue their claim on lands through legal proceedings in the English courts. Following the capture of Caerleon by the Marshal family c.1217, Morgan ap Hywel of Gwynllŵg sought to reclaim the lordship. The legal proceedings dragged out through the 1220s and into the 1230s, although he also tried diplomatic and military means to regain Caerleon, (siding at various times, with Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, and King Henry III).⁹³⁰ Morgan was willing to be judged by the English courts if he thought it would be to his advantage. Later, more Welsh individuals would attempt to seek redress for grievances through legal, rather than military channels. From the same dynasty, Morgan ap Maredudd issued a legal challenge to Gilbert de Clare in 1279 concerning the loss of lands, specifically Edlogan and Llebenydd (presumably taken in 1270 along with Castell Meredydd), although he was ultimately unsuccessful and was found amongst the leaders of the 1294-5 rebellion in Glamorgan.⁹³¹ While both were unsuccessful, and ultimately pursued other options, they demonstrate the growing receptivity of Welsh individuals to other channels and suggest a growing incorporation into the English system of redress.

Military Involvement in English affairs

However, while everyday administrative involvement with their marcher neighbours may have been limited, references to Welsh military involvement in the affairs of their neighbours in England are common from the very beginning of our period onwards. While some of these involved raids and warfare against the English, they could often involve alliances with English figures too.

The instances of Welsh individuals taking an interest in wider affairs during the early years of the period, from 1045 until 1109, are almost exclusively military in character. The Anglo-Saxon chronicle records an Irish fleet sailing up the River Usk in Gwent, ‘and did damage in those parts with the help of Griffith, the Welsh king’; Florence of Worcester suggests this was Gruffudd ap Rhydderch, a ruler (with his brother) of Morgannwg in the 1040’s and after c.1047

⁹³⁰ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.677; Walker, ‘The Supporters of Richard Marshal’ pp.63-4.

⁹³¹ J.C. Davies, *The Welsh Assize Roll 1277 – 1284* (Cardiff, 1940), p.176 and n.

the ruler of Deheubarth too.⁹³² The Irish and Gruffudd crossed the river Wye, burned Tidenham and fought a force consisting of levies from Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, with Aldred, the bishop of Worcester.⁹³³ The connection with Irish affairs is evident in that Rhys ap Tewdwr of Deheubarth and Gruffudd ap Cynan used Irish and Scandinavian support in campaigns to claim their lands.⁹³⁴

Military involvement in England is evidenced by the raids by Gruffudd ap Llywelyn into England in 1056 and 1058. The *Brut* entry for 1056 states: 'Gruffudd ap Llywelyn slew Gruffudd ap Rhydderch. And after that, Gruffudd ap Llywelyn moved a host against the Saxons, and he arrayed his army at Hereford', while the Anglo Saxon Chronicle mentions both the battle and Leofric, the bishop of Hereford's, campaigns against the Welsh.⁹³⁵

Soon enough, however, alliances between the Welsh and their neighbours began to appear which often entailed an active Welsh involvement in English affairs where these individuals could wield considerable influence. Amongst the earliest instances was Gruffudd ap Llywelyn's alliance with Aelfgar, the exiled son of Leofric, the Earl of Mercia.⁹³⁶ A twelfth-century example of which we are already aware is the involvement of Welsh rulers in the Anarchy. As we saw in chapter 4, Morgan ab Owain of Gwynllŵg was a known supporter of Earl Robert of Gloucester, and after his death, Roger of Hereford, both leading figures in the Angevin cause. The *Liber Eliensis* notes the presence of a Welsh contingent at the Battle of Lincoln in 1141, when a force led by Ranulf of Chester and Robert of Gloucester fought King Stephen. One of the other leaders opposing Stephen is noted as *regem Morgarum Waloniae*, who, we have seen, has been identified as Morgan ab Owain.⁹³⁷ Another account of the battle, by Orderic Vitalis, omits any mention of Morgan, instead describing the Welsh as 'a fierce mob of Welshmen, led by the two brothers Maredudd and Cadwaladr' (of Gwynedd). Cadwaladr in particular was opposed to his brother, Owain Gwynedd, and cultivated good relations with the marcher lords as a consequence.⁹³⁸ Welsh involvement is also suggested by Henry of Huntingdon, who includes an (embellished or constructed) speech of Baldwin Fitz Gilbert de Clare's speech on behalf of King Stephen at the opening of the battle, as 'no more

⁹³² Maund, *The Welsh Kings*, pp.89-90.

⁹³³ D. Whitelock, D.C. Douglas and S.I. Tucker (eds.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, (London, 1961), pp.114-115.

⁹³⁴ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.25.

⁹³⁵ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS. 20 Version*; Whitelock, Douglas and Tucker (eds.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, pp.130-132.

⁹³⁶ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p.101.

⁹³⁷ Fairweather (ed.), *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the seventh century to the twelfth*, p.395; Crouch, 'The Transformation of Medieval Gwent', p.11, p.35.

⁹³⁸ Chibnall (ed. and trans.) *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis, Volume VI*, p.542-3.

than objects of scorn to you, for they prefer unarmed boldness to battle and lacking both skill and experience in warfare, they charge like cattle towards the hunting-spears.’⁹³⁹ Although Orderic Vitalis doesn’t note Morgan’s presence at Lincoln, he does include reference to him as among the supporters of Robert of Gloucester:

First Geoffrey Talbot took possession of the town of Hereford and, assembling his unscrupulous confederates, rebelled against the king. Walchelin Maminot held Dover....Morgan the Welshman, Usk.⁹⁴⁰

These sources together suggest that Welsh involvement in the civil war was quite widespread, and that Morgan’s contribution was significant, both within southeast Wales and further afield. It is notable that Orderic and Henry of Huntingdon viewed the battle very much from the perspective of King Stephen. Morgan’s prominence as a witness of a charter of Earl Roger of Hereford to Llanthony Secunda (discussed in Chapter 4), may also suggest that he was seen as a valuable ally, worth cultivating. This instance falls into a wider pattern of Welsh individuals getting involved in English affairs, especially at times of English political turmoil, although few involved engagement on the scale as the Anarchy.

Military Cooperation in Wales

Another form of Welsh engagement with their Anglo-Norman neighbours, which suggests cordial relations is military cooperation within Wales itself, often against other Welshmen. Owain ap Cadwgan of Powys is mentioned serving Henry I alongside his brother Morgan, against Gruffudd ap Rhys of Deheubarth, and was killed in 1116.⁹⁴¹ No doubt in these cases political rivalries often played their part. An early example is of Owain ap Caradog (Owain Wan) of Gwynllŵg, who, according to the *Brut y Tywysogion*, was amongst a number of Welsh princes entrusted with the defence of Carmarthen, by King Henry I in 1116. Owain was killed defending the town against Welsh raiders. Owain’s appearance at Carmarthen, much further west than in his lands in Gwynllŵg, could reflect ongoing interests in Deheubarth: his father, Caradog, had pushed his claims in the region and was ultimately killed in battle at Mynydd Carn in 1081.⁹⁴² Clearly it was possible for Welsh individuals to be involved quite far afield.

⁹³⁹ D. Greenway (ed. and trans.) *Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon: Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People* (Oxford, 1996), pp.412-4, pp.726-7, pp.734-7.

⁹⁴⁰ M. Chibnall (ed.), *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, pp.518-9. For other instances of Welsh involvement, see pp.20-4; 26; 494.

⁹⁴¹ Jones (ed.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth MS20 Version* (Caerdydd, 1941), p.78.

⁹⁴² Crouch, ‘The Transformation of Medieval Gwent’, p.9; D. Crouch, ‘Caradog ap Gruffudd ap Rhydderch’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn.

<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-48539#odnb-9780198614128-e-48539> (Accessed on 25/02/2022).

The strength of the connections between the regions may explain his appearance there, but may be just part of the story, clearly demonstrating the cooperative nature of the relationship between this dynasty and their English neighbours at this time, an attitude which would often recur throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁹⁴³

A later example of a Welsh individual being entrusted with castle defence is Hywel Caerleon in 1184. Following the death of William, Earl of Gloucester, in 1183, the Margam Annals talk of Welsh attacks on Glamorgan, including besieging the castle of Neath, and attacks on Kenfig and Cardiff.⁹⁴⁴ These attacks were probably led by Morgan ap Caradog of Glamorgan.⁹⁴⁵ In the pipe roll for this year (which unusually contains a section devoted specifically to Glamorgan), there are number of entries concerning payments to charter ships to carry arms to Neath Castle, and payments for the custody of Welsh prisoners, and among them, appears Hywel Caerleon of Gwynllŵg:

In liberatione ccc. Servientum peditum et Willelmi Le Sor et Walteri de Lagees et Walteri Luuel et Pagani de Turbervill' et Reginaldi filii Simonis et Hoel' de Carliun, custodum predictorum servientum, qui fuerunt ad custodiam iiij castellorum, scilicet Neth et Noui Castelli et Cardif et Noui Burgi c. et x l. et iijs et iiijd per breve regis.⁹⁴⁶

In delivery of 300 foot soldiers and William Le Sor, and Walter of Lageles and Walter Luuel and Pagan de Turberville and Reginald son of Simon and Hywel of Caerleon, keepers of the aforesaid soldiers, who were to guard 4 castles, certainly Neath and New Castle and Cardiff and Newport. £102 3s 4d by the king's writ.

This section is interesting as it indicates that Hywel of Caerleon was acting in concert with other marcher lords of Glamorgan, in defence of these four castles, and he clearly remained loyal to the crown, despite the possible opposition of the other native dynasties in the region. The reference to Hywel (and Hywel Caerleon), also suggests that Hywel had (probably fairly recently) inherited the lordship from his father.⁹⁴⁷

A few other Welshmen are listed in the same entry: *Cradoc* and *Kederec* were gifted 1 mark, and references to a number of individuals in the king's service, including '*et cuidam servienti Walensi qui facit summonitiones vjs de mercede sua de anno et dimidio*' (and to a certain Welsh servant who made summons, 6s as his recompense for a year and a half).⁹⁴⁸

⁹⁴³ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.463.

⁹⁴⁴ Luard (ed.), *Annales Monastici*, 1, pp.17-18.

⁹⁴⁵ J.B. Smith, 'The Kingdom of Morgannwg and the Norman Conquest of Glamorgan', pp.38-9.

⁹⁴⁶ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Thirty-First Year of the Reign of King Henry II*, p.7.

⁹⁴⁷ D. Crouch, 'Iorwerth ab Owain', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn.

⁹⁴⁸ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Thirty-First Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD 1184-1185*, p.7.

Later military cooperation between members of these dynasties and their marcher neighbours – or English crown – is noted throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Morgan ap Hywel pledged his support to Henry III in a Letter Patent of 1233 during Richard Marshal's rebellion: the King received Morgan into his service, doubtless in an attempt to regain the castle of Caerleon.⁹⁴⁹ Later, during the rebellion of Llywelyn Bren, Morgan ap Maredudd (the descendant of the Gwynllŵg dynasty who had rebelled in 1294-5) and Lleision de Avene remained loyal to the crown, as did members of the *uchelwyr* of Senghennydd: Cynfrig ap Hywel and his son Llywelyn.⁹⁵⁰

Llywelyn Bren himself is an interesting character, as, although a rebel, he appears to have been highly integrated into English society: Llywelyn was executed following the rebellion, and his death caused outrage in both Welsh and Anglo-Norman circles: he was evidently a cultured man as his collections of books in Welsh and the copy of *le Roman de la Rose*, suggests.⁹⁵¹

Of course, while military cooperation between the rulers of southeast Wales and the Anglo-Normans was undoubtedly an important element, this was punctuated by periods of antagonism, even with individuals who were otherwise on good terms with their neighbours. Morgan ap Caradog's campaign in 1184-5, Hywel Caerleon and his son Morgan in 1215-7, Hywel ap Maredudd's opposition to the de Clares in the 1240s,⁹⁵² the capture of Gruffudd ap Rhys of Senghennydd in the 1260s, Morgan ap Maredudd in 1294-5, and Llywelyn Bren in 1315.⁹⁵³

Military Service Abroad

As well as military cooperation or military service within southeast Wales, Welsh individuals are found leading contingents of troops abroad. An early example of an individual in the direct service of the English King is Owain ap Cadwgan of Powys in 1114: following a reconciliation between Henry I and several Welsh individuals, the king:

said to Owain, "Come with me and I will reward thee as may be fitting. And this I will tell thee: I am going to Normandy, and if thou wilt come with me, I will fulfil to thee everything

⁹⁴⁹ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.678.

⁹⁵⁰ Smith, 'The Rebellion of Llywelyn Bren', p.84.

⁹⁵¹ Smith, 'The Rebellion of Llywelyn Bren', p.85.

⁹⁵² Altschul 'The Lordship of Glamorgan', p.50.

⁹⁵³ Stephenson, *Medieval Wales*, pp.30-1.

that I have promised thee. And I will make thee a knight.” And he went with him and went across the sea with him. And the king fulfilled to him everything that he had promised him.⁹⁵⁴ This is a clear instance of a Welsh individual in English royal service, and that from an early date this involvement extended to Normandy. all this clearly indicates engagement with the wider Anglo-Norman world. Owain, however, may have been an isolated case: the first Welsh individual we know of to be knighted, and the detail in which this episode is related may indicate the unusual nature of this situation for the early twelfth century.

That said, in the later twelfth century we find increasing numbers of Welsh individuals in service to the Anglo-Norman aristocracy. Hywel, the son of the Lord Rhys of Deheubarth, went ‘beyond the sea’ to serve Henry II in 1173, presumably suggesting service in Normandy or other parts of France.⁹⁵⁵ There were a particularly high number of instances from southeast Wales,⁹⁵⁶ beginning in 1187-8 with Maredudd ap Caradog:

Et Mereduco filio Caddoci et duodecim servientibus cum binis equis et xvij serventibus cum singulis equis et trescentis serventibus peditibus xij l. et vj s. et viij d. ad se sustentandos a Gloecr’ usque Lond’ per breve regis.⁹⁵⁷

And to Maredudd son of Caradog and to twelve soldiers with pairs of horses, and eighteen soldiers with single horses, and 300 soldiers on foot, £13, 6s 8d. towards sustenance from Gloucester to London, by the writ of the king.

This entry reveals a number of important aspects. Maredudd, the brother of Morgan ap Caradog of the Glamorgan dynasty, travelled to London, presumably from there to serve in Normandy, a long way from his own locality. It also tells us about the scale of involvement: Maredudd’s forces totalled 330 men: the twelve with two horses each were presumably individuals with enough private resources to own two horses, perhaps members of the *uchelwyr*, and who may have the equivalent, perhaps, of knights (although without the attached terminology).⁹⁵⁸ Eighteen further horsemen and 300 foot suggest a sizeable contingent. They also served beyond the bounds of Wales where their local knowledge may have been useful.

Furthermore, Maredudd was not the only member of the princely dynasties to serve the English king in this year:

⁹⁵⁴ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon: Peniarth MS. 20 Version*, p.38.

⁹⁵⁵ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Peniarth Ms.20 Version*.

⁹⁵⁶ Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, p.140.

⁹⁵⁷ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Thirty-Fourth Year of the Reign of King Henry the Second AD1187-1188*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 38 (London, 1925), p.106.

⁹⁵⁸ Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp.158-9; Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, p.140.

Et Meriaduoch filio Yvor et Wrennou filio Nicholai cum c serventibus peditibus c et ijs et xd. A Gloecr usque Lond' ad transfretandum in servitio regis per idem breve. Et item Wrennocho Bibiet cum xij serventibus equitibus et c et xx peditibus qui secuti sunt Meriaduch filium Yuor dominum suum versus Lond' iiij l. et xvjs. Per idem breve. Et Cadewalland' filio Yuor Parvi cum xxxv hominibus equitibus et cc et lxxiiij hominibus peditibus usque Lond' xiiij l. et iiij s. et viij d. per idem breve. Et Hoelo filio Resi c s. de dono ad parandum se ad transfretadum in servitio regis per breve Randulfi de Glanuill.⁹⁵⁹

And Maredudd son of Ifor, and Wrennou son of Nicholas, with 100 soldiers on foot, 100 and 2s 10d. From Gloucester all the way to London to pass over the sea in the service of the king, by the same writ. And also to Wrennoch Bibiet with 12 mounted soldiers, and 120 on foot who follow Maredudd son of Ifor, their lord, in the direction of London, £4 16s. By the same writ. And Cadwallon son of Ifor the small with 35 horsemen and 274 men on foot all the way to London £14 4s 8d by the same writ. And to Hywel son of Rhys 100s as a gift to prepare himself to pass over the sea in the service of the king by the writ of Randulf de Glauill.

Maredudd and Cadwallon, were undoubtedly the sons of Ifor Bach of Senghennydd, J.B. Smith suggested that these sons may have been members of the Senghennydd dynasty.⁹⁶⁰ Wrennoch/Wrennou were likely members of the *Uchelwyr* dependants of Maredudd ab Ifor or the Senghennydd dynasty.

This was not an isolated incident and Cadwallon was later encountered in Normandy by Gerald of Wales, returning from his third visit to Rome in 1203-4 to petition for Pope Innocent III's support his election for the bishopric of St David's. In his *De Iure et Statu*, Gerald writes (in the third person) of his arrival at King John's court at Rouen in Normandy to discuss the election:

Now at Rouen the Archdeacon [Gerald] found a youth, Cadwallon ab Ifor, his kinsman, then serving the king as a soldier in his wars, who entertained him generously at his own expense so long as he was in those parts, lent him money to pay his debts and even provided for his expenses as far as Wales.⁹⁶¹

Cadwallon's service is noted in the roll for 1204 alongside a 'Leisiani Walensis':

⁹⁵⁹ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Thirty-Fourth Year of the Reign of King Henry the Second AD1187-1188*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 38 (London 1925), p.106.

⁹⁶⁰ Smith, 'The Kingdom of Morgannwg and the Norman Conquest of Glamorgan', p.35.

⁹⁶¹ H.E. Butler, (ed.), *The Autobiography of Giraldus Cambrensis* (London, 1937), p.325.

Et Cadwalano Walensi x. m. ad preparandum se ad transfretandum in seruitium regis per breve eiusdem. Et Willelmo de Braiosa x m. ad opus Leisani Walensis qui uenit in seruitum regis cum cc Walensibus per breve Regis⁹⁶²

And to Cadwallon the Welshman 10 marks to prepare him to pass over the sea in the service of the king, by the writ of the same. And to William de Braose, 10 marks on behalf of Lleision the Welshman who is come in the service of the king with 200 Welshmen, by the writ of the king.

This Lleision has been identified as Lleision ap Morgan, and again served with 200 Welshmen, likely in Normandy alongside Cadwallon.⁹⁶³ The payment to William de Braose for the use of Lleision is also recorded in the Liberate rolls.⁹⁶⁴ Clearly, members of the Welsh princely dynasties in southeast Wales were well used to serving in English armies and that it was not uncommon for them to serve as far afield as Normandy. The motivations behind their service are less clear. J.B. Smith argued that Cadwallon and Maredudd ab Ifor Bach may have been impoverished sons, excluded from the succession and desperate to earn money by taking service with the king. Sean Davies, however, points out the large number of troops (including horsemen) involved, and Cadwallon's generosity towards Gerald of Wales in 1204, noting that 'some of these men do not seem like impoverished lords.'⁹⁶⁵

The numbers indicate the scale of this involvement was significant. Maredudd ap Caradog fielded at least 330 troops, Maredudd ab Ifor 134 (possibly 234 if Wrennoch was in his service with the additional soldiers), Cadwallon ab Ifor 309, and Lleision ap Morgan 200. Retaining the services of such a number of retainers would not be the easy for disinherited sons and suggests they had substantial resources to draw upon, or that their service was supported or at least condoned by the leader of the lordship. These numbers compare similarly with Ireland. Robin Frame has noted that Gaelic lords served with significant numbers of their own troops in Anglo-Norman campaigns, with one chieftain, O'More of Leix, serving with on three occasions with 180, 284 and, 505 men.⁹⁶⁶ While the figure of 505 is rather larger than the numbers provided by members of the Welsh princely dynasties, the other numbers are comparable and provides an interesting parallel. By contrast, however, the Irish troops served

⁹⁶² *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Sixth Year of the Reign of King John, Michelmas 1204*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 17 (London 1940), p.146.

⁹⁶³ Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, p.140.

⁹⁶⁴ Clark (ed.), *Cartae*, 2 (2nd edition 1910), p.290.

⁹⁶⁵ Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, p.140.

⁹⁶⁶ R. Frame, 'Military Service in the Lordship of Ireland 1290 – 1360: Institutions and Society on the Anglo-Gaelic Frontier', in Bartlett and MacKay (eds.), *Medieval Frontier Societies*, pp.120-121.

largely within their own region, while the Welsh contingents are notable for serving in Normandy.⁹⁶⁷

The familial relationship is also striking: although marriages between dynasties were common (see chapter 1), it is interesting that Maredudd and Cadwallon ab Ifor, Maredudd ap Caradog and Lleision ap Morgan were all related: Maredudd and Cadwallon's sister, Gwenllïan ferch Ifor, was married to Morgan ap Caradog, the brother of Maredudd and the father of Lleision. Morgan was the pre-eminent ruler of the Glamorgan dynasty until his death c.1208, and Morgan must have been aware in 1187-8 that his brother and brothers in law all served the English king, although it was just a few short years after his campaign against Kenfig, Neath and Cardiff. Perhaps Maredudd's involvement was a conscious part of Morgan's strategy to ingratiate himself with the English, or even an act of solidarity with his brothers in law; likewise, with Lleision 1204/5, perhaps the troops were sent with the agreement of Morgan.

Welsh troops also played a significant role in the armies of Edward I at the end of the thirteenth century: the Patent Rolls and Court Rolls note the importance of the Welsh contingent. For the campaign in Flanders in 1297, 900 troops are known to have come from Glamorgan, out of a total from Wales of 5528,⁹⁶⁸ although Prestwich points out that only one Welsh individual from Glamorgan, Rhys ap Morgan, had a barded horse, compared to seventeen from North Wales.⁹⁶⁹ This suggests the most of these troops would have been on foot, and that, as Davies suggests 'the *uchelwyr* in Glamorgan could not afford the trappings of knighthood'.⁹⁷⁰ This sort of service thus continued throughout our period, and the *uchelwyr* were quite literally following in the footsteps of the native dynasties, although their limited resources may have affected the level of emulation they could achieve.

The military involvement of members of the princely dynasties and *uchelwyr* also extended to the crusades: Gerald of Wales, on his tour around Wales in 1188 to raise support for the Third Crusade, estimated that three thousand men took the cross, 'all of them highly skilled in the use of the spear and the arrow, most experienced in military affairs and only too keen to attack the enemies of our faith at the first opportunity.'⁹⁷¹ While we cannot be sure how many actually set out, or ultimately made it to the Holy Land, it demonstrates that Wales was fully part of this Anglo-Norman world. As for Gerald himself, we know that he set out and

⁹⁶⁷ Frame 'Military Service in the Lordship of Ireland', p.121.

⁹⁶⁸ M. Prestwich, 'Welsh Infantry in Flanders in 1297', in Griffiths and Schofield (eds.), *Wales and the Welsh in the Middle Ages*, pp.56-69.

⁹⁶⁹ Prestwich 'Welsh Infantry in Flanders', p.61.

⁹⁷⁰ Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions*, p.140.

⁹⁷¹ Thorpe (ed.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.204

travelled as far as France, but then returned to Britain on the death of Henry II.⁹⁷² Kathryn Hurlock suggests that Welsh were well aware of the crusades and that:

The increase in the detail and number of references to crusading and crusade linked activity in the period after 1200 was also a reflection of the level of Anglo-Norman penetration into Wales by that time...the connections between England and Wales had been increasing in such a way that influences from England were felt, even in those areas where the Welsh held power. Intermarriages...fostered the spread of ideas between the lands of Wales and England, and the Welsh mercenaries used in the king's armies no doubt transmitted information about conflict in the holy land.⁹⁷³

Hurlock notes that while 'the Welsh' in general are noted on crusade, there is very little detail on the specifics: a Thomas de Glamorgan may have participated in the First Crusade, Aeddan ab Aeddan, 'a powerful chieftain of Gwent' in the genealogy of the Earls of Llandaff, supposedly participated in the Third Crusade; an individual named Ieuan Ddu ap Gwilym of Grosmost is also named as taking the cross from archbishop Baldwin in a *Pedigree of the Ancient Family of Dolau Cothi*.⁹⁷⁴ However, these instances are often only noted in early modern sources of dubious reliability, but 'Thomas de Glamorgan', and Ieuan Ddu's location at Grosmont suggest that, if they did exist, we can speculate that these were individuals from within the Norman lordships rather than the native dynasties, perhaps particularly well integrated into local society.

There were, therefore, plentiful instances of Welsh individuals engaging with their neighbours through military service, which, as well as involving service in parts of Wales, could also entail more extensive service abroad in Normandy, or (through the context of the crusades), even further afield. These individuals would have been exposed to Anglo-Norman influences, although there is little evidence to suggest that this engagement translated into other forms of integration.

Pensions and Grants

The direct granting of pensions or lands is a major indicator of engagement with the Anglo-Normans, but one which does not necessarily entail much involvement outside their own lands. The Pipe Rolls, for which we have a more or less continuous sequence from 1155 onwards (see Chapter 2), record payments by and debts due to the crown, which include various payments. Pensions or grants to a few Welsh individuals are recorded, such as to Owain Cyfeiliog of

⁹⁷² Thorpe (ed.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p. 16.

⁹⁷³ K. Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades c.1095 – 1291* (Cardiff, 2011), pp.55-6.

⁹⁷⁴ Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades*, pp.94-102.

southern Powys (fl.1160-1197), and his sons⁹⁷⁵ a Hywel ab Owain, in 1159, the sons of Madog, and one Morgan (ap Hywel) appears in 1164-6,⁹⁷⁶ or Maredudd son of Roger de Powis in 1186-7.⁹⁷⁷ These appear as *terre date* entries, where a given sum is deducted from the expected county taxation, usually for lands granted away from the demesne but sometimes noted as gifts. For Hywel ab Owain this sum was £36, for Maredudd, £14, for Morgan, 10s, for example.

For southeast Wales, we have a single recurring example of a Welsh individual being granted a pension in this way, concerning the rulers of Gwynllŵg. First appearing in 1155 accounts under the county of Gloucestershire, it notes '*Et Morgan xl.s in blancorum. In Carliun.*'⁹⁷⁸ This Morgan, 'In Carliun' can be none other than Morgan ab Owain, who, we know, had captured Caerleon in 1136; the same Morgan who participated in the Battle of Lincoln in 1141 and was described in *Liber Eliensis* as '*regem Morgarum Waloniae*'.⁹⁷⁹ *The Brut y Tywysogion* tells us that Morgan died in 1158 at the hands of Gruffudd ab Ifor Bach of neighbouring Senghennydd,⁹⁸⁰ and is this reflected in the pipe roll entries: Morgan appears in 1156-7, but the 1158 entry instead notes '*Et Filio Morgani xl. s. Blancorum. In Carliun.*',⁹⁸¹ this son is described in later rolls as *Morgano filio Morgan*.⁹⁸²

It is interesting that this payment continued to be made to Morgan ap Morgan, rather than Morgan ab Owain's brother, Iorwerth, who inherited the lordship.⁹⁸³ We know of Morgan through a single charter,⁹⁸⁴ but the payment of this pension to him is accepted by Crouch.⁹⁸⁵ Why the payment continued to Morgan ap Morgan is now difficult to establish, but there are several possibilities. It could have been hereditary, separate from the lordship of Caerleon itself. The complex political relationship between Iorwerth on the one hand and Henry II, the

⁹⁷⁵ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p.233; *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Sixth Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD1158-9*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 2 (London, 1884), p.26.

⁹⁷⁶ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Eleventh Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD1164-5*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 8 (London, 1887), p.90.

⁹⁷⁷ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Fifth Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD1158-9*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 1 (London, 1884), p.62; *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Thirty-third Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD1186-7*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 37 (London, 1915), p.63.

⁹⁷⁸ J. Hunter (ed.), *The Great Rolls of the Pipe for the Second, Third and Fourth Years of the Reign of King Henry II AD 1155-1157*, (London, 1844).

⁹⁷⁹ Fairweather (ed.), *Liber Eliensis*, p.395.

⁹⁸⁰ Crouch, 'Iorwerth ab Owain', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn; Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Red Book of Hergest Version*, p.137.

⁹⁸¹ Hunter (ed.), *The Great Rolls of the Pipe for the Second, Third and Fourth Years of the Reign of King Henry II.*

⁹⁸² *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Twenty Seventh Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD 1180-1181*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 30 (London, 1909), p.118.

⁹⁸³ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion, Red Book of Hergest Version*, p.137.

⁹⁸⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.664-5.

⁹⁸⁵ D. Crouch, 'The March and the Welsh Kings', in E. King (ed.), *The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign* (Oxford, 1994), pp.255-89.

Marcher Lords and Rhys ap Gruffudd on the other, may suggest another possibility. Iorwerth was a consistent opponent to the Marcher lords: according to Giraldus Cambrensis, it was Iorwerth and his followers who ambushed Richard de Clare of Ceredigion in 1136, and he had worked closely with his brother during the campaigns in Gwent during 1136-7 that led to the capture of Caerleon and Usk.⁹⁸⁶ In 1169, during Iorwerth's control of the lordship, Usk was recaptured by Richard de Clare, and Caerleon was taken by Henry II and Rhys ap Gruffudd in 1171. Warfare between the two continued until 1175, when the parties were reconciled and Caerleon was restored to Iorwerth.⁹⁸⁷ Payments to Morgan continued throughout these periods of hostility until 1186, presumably on his death. This hostility, and the potential advantages of cultivating Iorwerth's nephew as an ally, may explain the reasons why Morgan ap Morgan was the one to receive this payment.

Alternative hypotheses are that the payment was unrelated to the lordship of Caerleon and instead always intended to be inherited by Morgan; this would explain why the payments continued to be made even when Caerleon was in royal hands. This may also explain the entry of 1185-6: when the roll records payments instead to '*Hoelo filio Morgani xl s. blancorum in Carlion*.'⁹⁸⁸ Pryce suggests that this linear transfer of the payment from father to son may have been the case, with Hywel being an otherwise unknown son of Morgan.⁹⁸⁹

However, I suggest here that the Hywel mentioned here may instead have been Hywel ab Iorwerth (better known as Hywel Caerleon). The date of Iorwerth's death is uncertain, but was probably between 1179 and 1184: A grant of Hywel ab Iorwerth, made with his father's consent, refers to the Cistercian Abbey of Llantarnam, which the *Brut y Tywysogion* states was founded in 1179.⁹⁹⁰ A reference to *Hoel de Carliun* being entrusted with the defence of several castles in 1184 (see later in this chapter), may suggest he had succeeded to the lordship by this time. With the payment of 40s changing to 'Hywel ap Morgan' just the following year, it is possible that this instead referred to Hywel ab Iorwerth, with the discrepancy in name explained by a scribal error. Hywel ap Morgan is known only in this single context, we have extensive evidence for Hywel ab Iorwerth.

⁹⁸⁶ Thorpe (ed. and trans.), *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales*, p.108.

⁹⁸⁷ Crouch, 'Iorwerth ab Owain', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn.

⁹⁸⁸ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Thirty Second Year of the Reign of King Henry II AD 1185-6*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, 36 (London, 1914), p.118.

⁹⁸⁹ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, pp.664-5.

⁹⁹⁰ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogion: Red Book of Hergest Version*, pp.168-9.

Payments to Hywel continued annually until 1214,⁹⁹¹ after which there is a hiatus in the pipe roll sequence: the 1215 roll is considerably shorter, and does not include material relating to either Gloucestershire or Somerset.⁹⁹² There is a two year gap, resuming only in 1218 (Henry III, year 2). This, of course, was a time of great political upheaval in England, which probably affected the rolls' production. By the time the rolls resume, Hywel's name no longer appears in the rolls.⁹⁹³ Hywel died during these upheavals, according to exchequer records, while the History of William Marshal notes that it was from Hywel's son, Morgan, that Caerleon was taken in October 1217.⁹⁹⁴ This timing corresponds with the change in the pipe rolls and is further possible evidence that these payments were made, in fact, to Hywel ab Iorwerth.

The 40 shilling payment resumed from 1221, although without any name: indeed, for this year there is a blank where a name appears to have been erased. It is easy to imagine that Hywel's name being belatedly deleted after his death.⁹⁹⁵ A reference in the Herefordshire section of the rolls refers to a continuing debt owed by Hywel: '*Hoelus de Caerliun debet cc et l. m. ut habeat filium suum et domum suam.*'⁹⁹⁶ In this case there is no doubt that these entries referred to Hywel, and may reflect backlash from the war. This appears continually in subsequent rolls, although Hywel had been dead for several years.⁹⁹⁷

The significance of regular pensions or confirmed grants of land lies in the fact that it is the only such recorded instance that we can link with a Welsh dynasty in southeast Wales, and thus stresses the generally friendly diplomatic relationship between the two. It is probable that the pension was originally granted to Morgan ab Owain because of his extensive support for the Angevin cause during the anarchy. The continuing payments may have been a matter of political expediency; and in general, apart from the conflict over Usk and Caerleon from 1169 to 1175 (and Hywel ab Iorwerth's stance c.1215), this family were generally useful supporters of the English crown. It is especially interesting from the perspective of Gwynllŵg's policies towards emulation, as we have seen in chapters 4, 5 and 6; they emphasised their connection with Caerleon, adopted Anglo-Norman style titles and seals, and constructed

⁹⁹¹ D.M. Stenton et al. (eds.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Sixteenth Year of the Reign of King John: Michaelmas 1214*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 35 (London, 1962), p.118.

⁹⁹² D.M. Stenton et al. (eds.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Seventeenth Year of the Reign of King John: Michaelmas 1215*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 37 (London, 1962).

⁹⁹³ D. M. Stenton et al. (eds.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Second Year of the Reign of King Henry III AD 1218-1219*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 39 (London, 1972).

⁹⁹⁴ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.36.

⁹⁹⁵ *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Fifth Year of the Reign of King Henry III AD 1221-1222*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 49 (London, 1990), p.233 and n.

⁹⁹⁶ Stenton et al. (eds.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Second Year of the Reign of King Henry III*, p.91.

⁹⁹⁷ D. M. Stenton et al. (eds.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Eighth Year of the Reign of King Henry III AD Michaelmas 1224*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 54 (London, 2005), p.248.

castles; in short, there seems to have been correlation between their relationship with their neighbours and their desire to emulate them.

Other grants to Welshmen include to an individual named Cadwallon in 1202 and 1203: ‘*Et Cadwalano Walensi lx s. in Meredin.*’ (And to Cadwallon the Welshman 60s. in Merthen). Under the county heading for Cornwall within the Pipe Rolls, this has been identified with Cadwallon ab Ifor Bach: the same Cadwallon that served the English kings in Normandy: these lands were confiscated by King John in 1211 (which may be explained by the raiding of English territories) and restored the following year.⁹⁹⁸ This is supported through the pipe roll evidence for the year until Michaelmas 1212, which talk about Cadwallon’s lands in the past tense.⁹⁹⁹ Landholding in regions as far afield as this suggest that members of the princely dynasties could be drawn into involvement in the wider English realm as landholders. Cadwallon, with his record of extensive overseas service to the English crown, may be an exceptional case, but it is certainly suggestive.

Case studies: Gerald of Wales and Walter Map.

Religion was of course a major consideration during this period, and Wales was part of a wider ecclesiastical community across Europe.¹⁰⁰⁰ This often facilitated engagement between the Welsh and their Anglo-Norman neighbours or integration into the wider world of Christendom. While a detailed study of imitation and emulation in a religious context lies beyond the scope of this work, religion did impact cultural imitation and integration by secular Welsh individuals. As we have seen in chapter 4, the spread of Anglo-Norman style charters and seals occurred in a religious context, through grants to monastic houses, and some individuals also went on crusade. This could extend beyond military service, however: Morgan ap Cadwgan of Powys, for example, travelled to Jerusalem in 1128 and died during the return journey.¹⁰⁰¹

While our main focus is upon members of the princely dynasties and *uchelwyr*, it is worth remembering that the careers of ecclesiastics often took them into an Anglo-Norman orbit or led to extensive involvement with the outside world, whether for their education, personal careers, or for matters relating to Church administration.¹⁰⁰² Joseph ‘Teilio’s bishop’,

⁹⁹⁸ Pryce (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers*, p.46; Davies, *A History of Wales*, p.137.

⁹⁹⁹ D.M. Stenton et al. (eds.), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Fourteenth Year of the Reign of King John, Michelmas 1212*, The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society, New Series 30 (London, 1954), pp.68-9.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, p.274.

¹⁰⁰¹ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon: Peniarth MS. 20 Version*, p.50.

¹⁰⁰² G. Usher, ‘Welsh Students at Oxford in the Middle Ages’, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 16 (1954-6), pp.193-8; R.W. Hays, ‘Welsh Students at Oxford and Cambridge Universities in the Middle Ages’, *Welsh History Review*, 4 (1968-9), pp.325-61.

died at Rome in 1045.¹⁰⁰³ Gerald of Wales was one such cleric whose origins and career themselves indicate extensive participation on the Anglo-Norman and wider European stage. Whilst born at Manorbier in Pembrokeshire, Gerald received an education in England (St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester) and France (Paris). Furthermore, we know that he held ecclesiastical benefices in both England and Wales.¹⁰⁰⁴ Whilst Gerald was a Cambro-Norman of a marcher family, and thence not fully representative of all individuals from southeast Wales, his circumstances do serve to illustrate the point that Gerald, at least, certainly had a part to play in the wider Anglo-Norman world. For example, we know that Gerald himself, outside of his studies, served as chaplain at the court of Henry II and made three trips to Rome whilst trying to secure the bishopric of St David's.¹⁰⁰⁵ Similarly, Urban, Bishop of Llandaff, is known to have spent time at Worcester before his consecration.¹⁰⁰⁶

Walter Map, c.1130 – 1209/10,¹⁰⁰⁷ was a cleric from Herefordshire, and has been described as a Welshman by his use of '*Compatriote nostril Walenses*' – 'My compatriots the Welsh', and his surname may derive from '*Vab*', '*Mab*' or '*ap*' – 'son of', although his use of virulent language towards the Welsh suggest that he was a member of a mixed Anglo-Welsh family.¹⁰⁰⁸ Map himself, however, as a potential product of this hybrid Anglo-Welsh class in the southern marches, is an example of a well-travelled individual: Map was probably initially educated at Gloucester abbey, but was studying in Paris by 1154, and in his later service to Gilbert Foliot and Henry II travelled not just around England, but also abroad: he was one of the king's representatives at the Third Lateran Council in 1177, and was at Saumur when Henry, the eldest son of the king, died in 1183.¹⁰⁰⁹ As Joshua Byron Smith argues, Gloucester's 'position as a border town also begot cultural exchange between the Welsh and the English'.¹⁰¹⁰ St Peter's Abbey in Gloucester collected Welsh manuscripts, which played its part in the wider dissemination of Welsh tales and saints lives to England, and are indicative of wider links transcending boundaries within the ecclesiastical network.¹⁰¹¹

¹⁰⁰³ Jones (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Tywysogyon, Peniarth MS. 20 Version*, p.14.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Thorpe (ed.), *The Journey Through Wales and The Description of Wales*, pp.10-12.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Thorpe (ed.), *The Journey Through Wales and The Description of Wales*, p.15; p.20.

¹⁰⁰⁶ H. Pryce, 'A Cross Border Career: Giraldus Cambrensis between Wales and England', in R. Schneider (ed.) *Grenzgänger* (Saarbrücken 1998), p.48.

¹⁰⁰⁷ C.N.L. Brooke, 'Map, Walter', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-18015?rskey=McELfj&result=1> (Accessed 26/03/2019).

¹⁰⁰⁸ James (ed. and trans.), *De Nugis Curialium*, p.xiii.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, pp.xiv - xxvi.

¹⁰¹⁰ Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain*, p.109.

¹⁰¹¹ Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain*, pp.144-6.

As Anglo-Welsh ecclesiastics born into fairly prominent families, belonging, perhaps, to a hybrid Anglo-Welsh society, the careers of both Giraldus Cambrensis and Walter Map demonstrate many individual opportunities for participation in the wider Anglo-Norman world, and in the wider world of Christendom. Pryce writes that:

Giraldus was not unique, of course, as an example of a cleric from Wales who received an education in England (and in his case crucially also France)...throughout the Middle Ages, Welsh students in search of an advanced education had to go to England or the continent. That they were numerous by 1169 is suggested by Henry II's punitive audience of that year expelling 'all the Welsh in the schools in England'¹⁰¹²

Ecclesiastical reasons for travelling beyond the local areas is one which appears time and again in the source material, and thus a reason for engagement between Welsh and Anglo-Norman. Important members of the ecclesiastical establishment in southeast Wales were often drawn from the hybrid Welsh-Marcher families of some status, and were perhaps more likely to engage with their neighbours. Examples abound, including not only Gerald of Wales and Walter Map, but also Urban (or Gwrgan) bishop of Llandaff, and Uthred, his successor to the bishopric, whose daughter married Iorwerth ab Owain of the Gwynllŵg dynasty).¹⁰¹³ Their involvement in the wider religious network and wider engagement with the Anglo-Norman world would have likely affected the secular families to which they belonged. While beyond the scope of this work, a more detailed discussion of religious engagement would be desirable.

Conclusions

In conclusion then, how did the Welsh engage with their neighbours, how did this compare with instances of imitation and emulation and did this lead to integration? The combined evidence of the sources suggest that the Welsh of southeast Wales appear to have had an interesting and varied attitude to involvement in the wider Anglo-Norman world.

In terms of engagement, the Welsh were clearly interested in becoming involved in Anglo-Norman military affairs. While this could take the form of cross-border raids, such as the eleventh-century examples from the likes of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn, members of the Welsh dynasties clearly saw the benefit in allying with their Norman counterparts from an early period: as the careers of Caradog ap Gruffudd and Morgan ab Owain of Gwynllŵg show. The career of Morgan ab Owain in Gwynllŵg suggests a canny individual who took advantage of

¹⁰¹² Pryce, 'A Cross Border Career', pp.48-9.

¹⁰¹³ Crouch (ed.), *Llandaff Episcopal Acta* 1140 – 1287, p.xi.

Anglo-Norman distraction to consolidate his position through military action against his neighbours, and then took advantage of their need for allies to enhance his own status and position: the nature of his involvement was a more eastward looking one than that of his father and grandfather whose good relations with the Anglo-Normans took them further west. This was a policy also pursued by his successors, his brother Iorwerth and nephew Hywel. The granting of a pension to this dynasty is particularly interesting considering its rarity and likely represents a reward for Morgan's involvement in the Anarchy.

In general there is strong evidence of Anglo-Welsh cooperation and diplomatic and military alignment throughout our period. Personal links with neighbours were important. Gerald of Wales' references to Cadwallon ab Ifor as his kinsman and the generosity shown suggest this. William de Braose's role in Lleision ap Morgan's military service also suggests some connection or cordial relations.

Perhaps the most startling evidence lies in the numbers of Welsh individuals in military service of the crown in the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, both within Wales and further afield. Glamorgan, Senghennydd and Gwynllŵg all served the crown in some capacity, the former two in Normandy. The scale of the involvement may suggest that these were not disgruntled, excluded sons who turned to the Anglo-Normans for support, but with considerable resources at their disposal. This would have affected not only the members of the princely dynasties, but members of the *uchelwyr* and the troops themselves, though it is impossible to determine its extent.

Welsh engagement with their neighbours in areas other than military service seems to have been less common. While a few Welsh individuals are recorded as witnessing charters of Norman individuals, the general lack of evidence suggests the Welsh were rarely involved in Anglo-Norman charter issue except where they were directly affected. This could reflect limited involvement in Anglo-Norman courts, and is clearly not an issue of survival given the large number of charters which we have. Perhaps this reflects Welsh disinterest in the workings of the households of the marcher lords: or possibly that Welsh individuals were generally not important enough to feature in witness lists. On the other hand, comparatively greater number of Anglo-Norman witnesses in Welsh charters suggest the Normans did engage with their Welsh counterparts in this way. In this context, the few examples of Welsh engagement in other areas: such as the conference between Henry II and the Lord Rhys at Gloucester in 1175, were clearly products of exceptional circumstances.

The presence of an occasional Welshman at Bristol or Cadwallon ab Ifor's landholding in Cornwall, coupled with occasional cross-border marriages in Gloucester and Herefordshire

(see chapter 3), suggest a general low-level local engagement between the Welsh and their Anglo-Norman neighbours, even if this did not extend to regular involvement at Anglo-Norman noble courts. The careers of Gerald of Wales and Walter Map suggest the clergy was an exception to these rules and a conduit for further engagement and Anglo-Norman influence.

Is there a correlation between individuals engaging in activity with the Anglo-Normans, and those who imitated or emulated them? Perhaps, to a limited extent. Members of all three of the main Welsh princely dynasties in southeast Wales served in English armies, though the one which appears to have done so the most, Senghennydd, is the one for which we have the least evidence of imitation of seal and charter practices at the same period, largely due to the limitations of the source material. For Glamorgan, Lleision ap Morgan's seal use may have been linked to his English military service. To turn to integration, in most cases increased engagement did not correspond to increased integration into Anglo-Norman society. Good relations with the neighbours may have been desirable, and the Welsh may have been happy to serve militarily or have Anglo-Norman charter witnesses, but members of the Welsh princely dynasties and *uchelwyr* largely retained their distinct identity, suggesting integration was limited.

It follows that while many of these dynasties emulated their neighbours in the way they used titles, seals, in naming practices and so forth, this did not necessarily translate to extensive engagement or integration with the Anglo-Normans, unless it suited them in the moment. Even for the Afan dynasty, emulating English style naming practices, titles, seals and castles, there is only limited evidence of engagement. That said, there can be no doubt that Anglo-Norman influences were beginning to affect the way the Welsh went about things, as well as the way they presented an image. Morgan ap Hywel's appeals through the English courts, while part of desperate attempts to reclaim Caerleon, were an alternative to military measures. The extensive military engagement with the Normans, at home and further afield, would have played its part in drawing the Welsh, slowly, but surely, into the Anglo-Norman orbit.

Epilogue

At the outset, we set out to explore how, and how far, the Welsh imitated, emulated and integrated with their neighbours, their motivations for doing so, and what this tells us about cultural identities and cultural change. We chose to explore this from the context of the native Welsh dynasties and *uchelwyr* of southeast Wales and their interpersonal relationships, to understand the drivers behind the desire to emulate or imitate their neighbours, including through the sorts of identities they projected. While this is only part of a wider topic on cultural change and integration, this focus was chosen to keep it manageable.

Furthermore, we explored whether these individuals fit into the patterns identified in existing scholarly studies, exploring the scope of frontier studies, Bartlett's Europeanisation paradigm and other historians' attitudes to cultural change in medieval Wales in Chapter 1. We also drew upon a wide variety of source material, exploring the opportunities and challenges associated with them in Chapter 2, before the succeeding chapters explored, in turn, some of the areas in which the Welsh emulated or imitated their neighbours, particularly in the methods they used to project a personal identity.

The Welsh borrowed myriad elements from their neighbours and show a remarkable range of attitudes towards engagement with them. The complexity of this picture comes up time and time again. While for some families there is extensive evidence of cross-cultural borrowing, in the adoption of naming practices, Anglo-Norman styles and titles, seals and so on, for others there is very little such evidence. Individuals often chose to imitate both their Anglo-Norman and Welsh neighbours, demonstrating the intricacy of cultural relations in the march. Imitation could, in some cases, be considered emulation and could in turn lead to extensive integration, for the Afan dynasty and some members of the *uchelwyr*. However, it was not always the case and other families showed less overt indicators of integration. Crucially, the differing levels to which these elements were adopted suggests that cultural identity was determined by more than just descent. Cultural change remained a conscious choice, as evidenced by other families who did not follow the same path.

While there was undoubtedly tension in the region throughout the period (whether between Welsh and Anglo-Norman, between Welsh dynasties, or between the marcher lords themselves), we can overwhelmingly see that cooperation and engagement with ones neighbours was also extensive. This belies the oft noted point of view that cultural change in the march was driven by warfare and hostility. Welsh figures made common cause with leading

marcher figures, serving in English armies in Wales and further afield, being entrusted with the defence of castles or engaging in cross-cultural marriages. This went hand in hand with the extensive movement of cultural ideas, that was often driven by imitation and emulation and came to be expressed in the way individuals chose to represent themselves. In the case of a few families, this utterly transformed the identities that they projected.

Cultural exchange affected some families disproportionately, and those families that borrowed extensively from their neighbours were more likely to integrate with them. The motivations behind may have varied, but likely tried to appeal to more than one audience, with webs of complex, seemingly contradictory elements designed to appeal to both Anglo-Norman and Welsh neighbours. This suggests that identities were undergoing a period of intense change which mirrored that of Welsh society as a whole.

Imitating or emulating ones neighbours suggests that good relations with these same neighbours were important considerations for members of the native dynasties and *uchelwyr*. These were sometimes tied to considerations of survival and ambition, which were due, at least in part, to the rapidly changing political situation of the later thirteenth century. It cannot be a coincidence that the only princely dynasty in southeast Wales to survive the turmoil of the thirteenth century was the Glamorgan dynasty, in their reinvented form as the de Avenes, who extensively aped the English aristocracy. The changes underwent by the Glamorgan dynasty occurred during, and immediately after, a period of growing power and ambitions of their English neighbours: the de Clare annexations of Glynrhondda and Mesigyn in 1246, of Senghenydd in 1268, Gwynllŵg in 1270, and the Edwardian Conquest of 1277 and 1282-3. The symbolic element of prestige and status – and of looking like one's neighbour – certainly played a role in this.

How far this reinvented identity helped their survival – or occurred because of it – is very hard to answer, especially as we cannot be certain exactly when the Glamorgan dynasty adopted the De Avene epithet, married into the Sully family and imitated the de Clare heraldry. The heraldry is first evidenced in 1285, the title '*dominus de Avene*' only later. It seems likely that while initial changes were a response to political threat, opportunity would have been another factor, and this may have driven further changes. It is possible that had other princely dynasties retained their grip on power for longer, they too may have undergone similar changes. The location of Gwynllŵg and Senghenydd left them more vulnerable and they were caught up in the competing ambitions of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, the de Clares and the English crown, and thus they were perhaps unlikely to survive in the circumstances.

If we are to consider our findings in the context of the historiography, it is clear that in borrowing cultural elements, the Welsh were following a pattern seen elsewhere in Britain and Europe. That much has already been explored by historians. Our study, however, has gone beyond this, both in considering these individuals beyond the confines of a discussion ending with the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1282, beyond studies of *Pura Wallia*, and brought together elements previously only considered in isolation. Whilst studies of the native rulers in southeast Wales and the marches in general have been limited, we can definitively say that southeast Wales generally fits this pattern.

That being the case, we can see that cross-cultural borrowing was surprisingly strong in southeast Wales. The attitude of Welsh individuals in the marches (as difficult as they can be to see at times), is a vital and illuminating area of study. While historians have generally identified developments in Wales as limited and on a smaller scale than elsewhere in Europe, in many ways the dynasties of Glamorgan, Gwynllŵg and Senghennydd can, from a Welsh perspective, be seen as leading the way in embracing new ideas and in reinventing their cultural identity through the imitation and emulation of their neighbours. The Anglo-Norman style of titles used by Hywel ab Iorwerth, the equestrian seals used by Morgan ap Caradog and the heraldry of Lleision de Avene were amongst the earliest Welsh examples of their type. The Afan dynasty underwent significant changes at the same time as the Powysian dynasty further north. Southeast Wales can be seen as a microcosm of cultural change which was underway, at varying pace, elsewhere in Wales.

While the late-thirteenth century changes are interesting, the earlier developments of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries are arguably just as important. The adoption of seals, construction of castles and use of titles occurred at least as early as they did elsewhere in Wales, and this arguably laid the groundwork for later changes. Members of the Gwynllŵg, Glamorgan and Senghennydd dynasties were receptive to change from an early date, and this did not take place against such a background of English expansion as the thirteenth century. This lends impetus to the theory that survival was not the only motivator for cultural change and that it remained a voluntary choice. The Welsh adopted new ideas not only in emulation of their neighbours and peers, but also as a way to emulate their forbears, providing connections to the past, whether real or mythical. Hywel ap Iorwerth's imitation of Anglo-Norman titles through *dominus de Caerleon* enhanced his status by evoking the Roman and Arthurian past, while new seal designs and titles may have sought to present a kingly image, thus recalling (and emulating) the achievements of their forebears.

This study has also, of course, gone beyond considering the rulers in isolation and sought to discuss the *uchelwyr* wherever possible. The *uchelwyr* displayed a similar tendency to imitate their neighbours as their princely counterparts - and just like them, the levels of cultural integration varied considerably from individual to individual. Despite their infrequent appearances in the source material, we know they formed a complex interpersonal network, issued charters and seals, served in English armies, and engaged in cross-cultural marriages, albeit in less obvious ways and later on. By and large, these individuals were following a path first trodden by their lords. That said, the similarity of their seals with their Anglo-Norman contemporaries and the exceptional careers of the Apadam family indicate that there was scope for them to forge their own path, perhaps directly emulating their peers and contemporaries. and that some influences were coming directly from England.

On a wider level, the imitation and emulation of their neighbours by prince and *uchelwr* alike signified their belonging to a wider social group in conventional ways seen across Europe. The drive, however, remained local, a desire to keep up with their neighbours.

One finding which has been particularly difficult to get away from is the fact that, in some cases, the cross-cultural marriages, extensive cultural borrowings and cultural integration, is so pervasive that it becomes very hard to define an individual as 'Welsh' and 'English' by the end of our period. It is even harder to get away from using these terms as a cultural historian. In the case of the Afan or Powysian dynasties or the Abadam family, extensive imitation of the Anglo-Normans and English had transformed their projected image so much as to be virtually indistinguishable from those of their neighbours who mostly came from Anglo-Norman stock: members of the marcher families, too, had married into Welsh families. How can we differentiate these individuals? Here, at the end, it is worth re-raising the point made in chapter 3, of whether we need a new approach. The terms 'Cambro-Norman' and 'Anglo-Welsh', while reflecting integration, do not do justice to the complexity of the differing levels of integration. In Ireland the term 'middle nation' has been used, but again, this simply reflects a static middle-ground, whereas the reality was rather more complex. Only on a case-by-case basis can we unravel individual identities, though such a method leaves us without a convenient label to assign them. This study will have served its purpose if it provokes thought on how we tackle this in the future.

During the course of this research, several further avenues of enquiry have emerged. In exploring the charters of the Margam collection we came across some members of the *uchelwyr* who were dependants of Morgan ap Caradog in the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries and revealed a glimpse of the network of interpersonal relationships that underpinned the native

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rulers of Glamorgan at this period, something hinted at in the charters of Hywel Caerleon. Had time and length constraints allowed, it would be fascinating to explore this network of interpersonal relationships more fully and understand their relationship with both Welsh and Anglo-Norman neighbours. Existing studies of the march have explored the networks underpinning the marcher lordships, but similar work could be undertaken for these Welsh dynasties, to build upon the work here and to understand their relationship with their neighbours in greater detail.

It is hoped that, through exploring the careers of the Welsh princes and *uchelwyr* of southeast Wales and through studying the many ways in which they imitated, emulated and, in some cases, integrated with their neighbours, we have highlighted the importance of considering these individuals as part both of the wider European sphere and the complexities of cross-cultural and interpersonal relations in the march of Wales.

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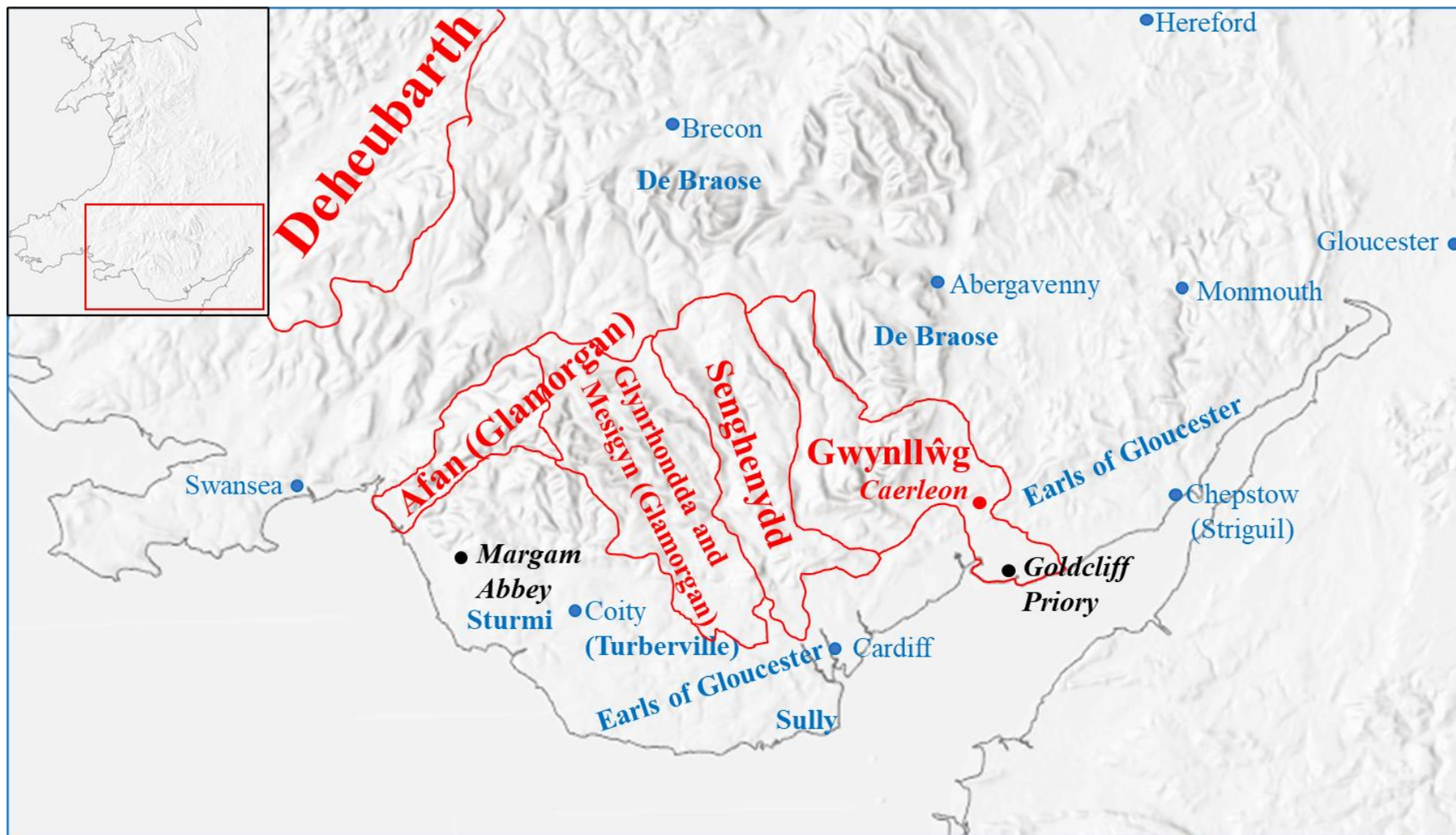
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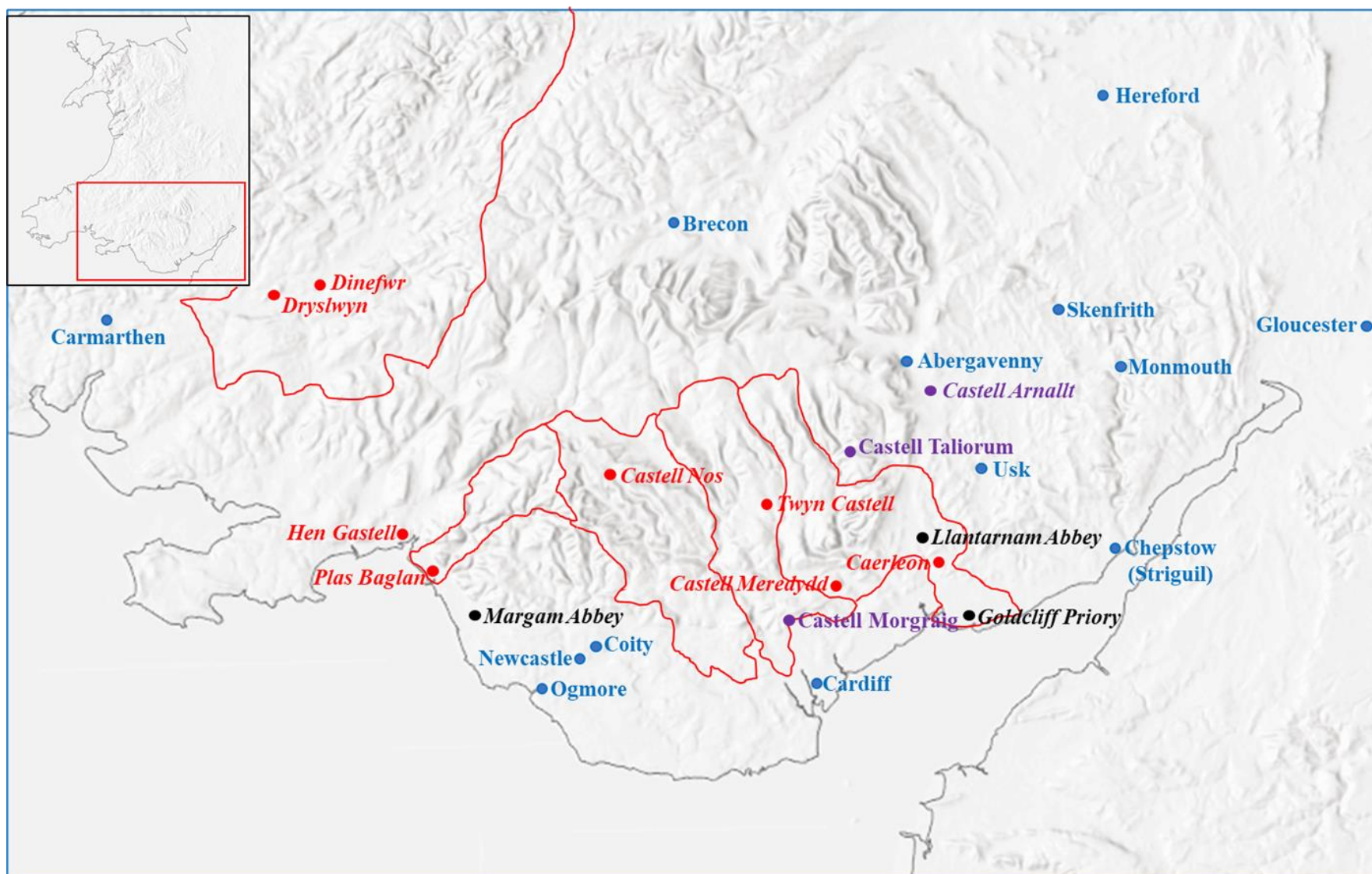
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NLW Penrice and Margam Ch. 2046.
NLW Penrice and Margam Ch. 2049.
NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2052.
NLW Penrice and Margam Ch. 2054.
NLW Penrice and Margam Ch. 2056.
NLW Penrice and Margam Ch.2057.
NLW Penrice and Margam Ch. 2061.
NLW Penrice and Margam Roll 543/20.
NLW Penrice and Margam Roll 2090/3.
NLW Tredegar MS. 58/4.

Maps



Map 1 Southeast Wales c.1200, showing the main princely dynasties and their lands in red, marcher lords in blue, with some significant locations. Boundaries based upon W. Rees, *A Historical Atlas of Wales from Early to Modern Times* (Cardiff 1951). Plates 28 and 36.

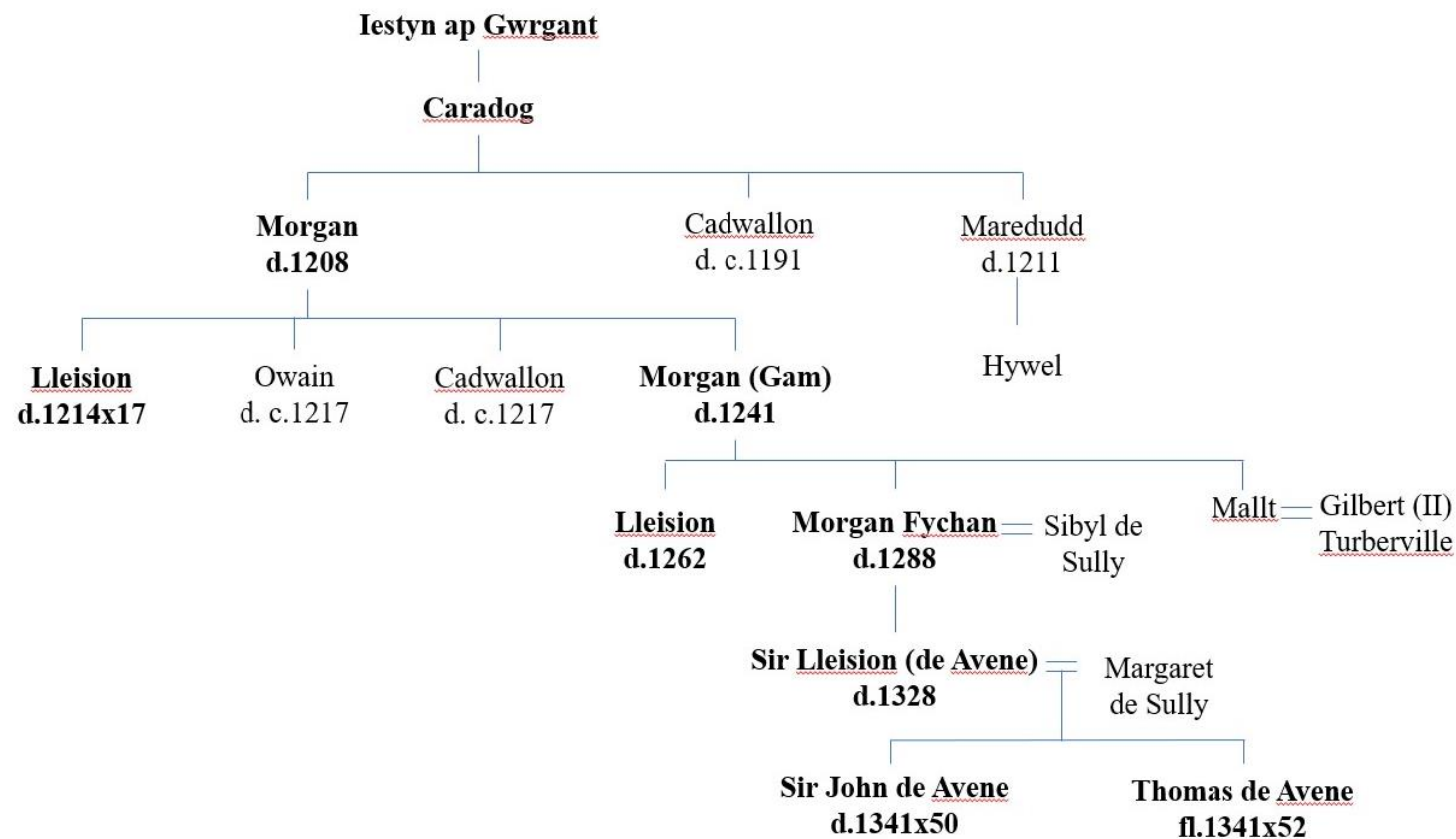
Maps

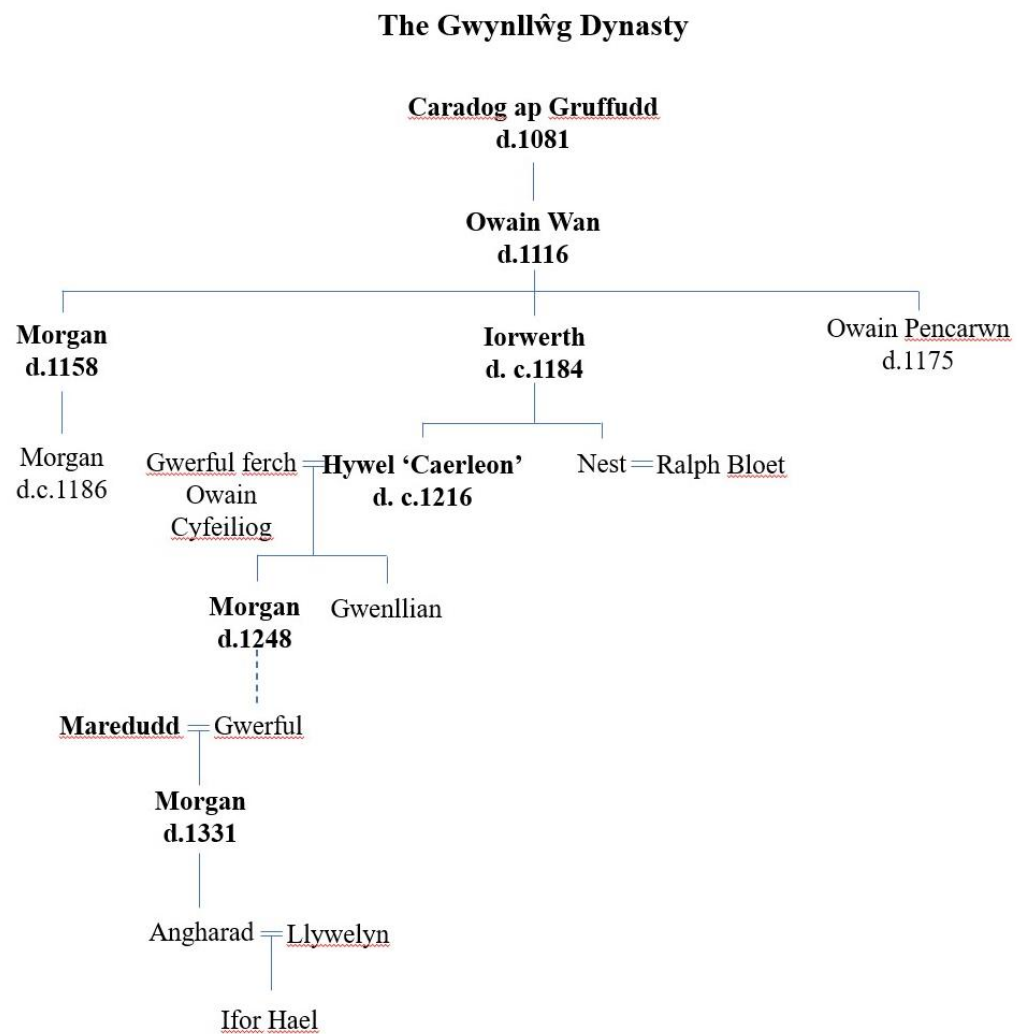


Map 2: Towns, castles and monasteries mentioned in the text, c.1200. Welsh sites are noted in red, Anglo-Norman in blue, uncertain or debated in purple, and monasteries in black. Boundaries based upon W. Rees, *A Historical Atlas of Wales from Early to Modern Times* (Cardiff 1951). Plates 28 and 36.

Genealogical Tables

The Glamorgan or Afan Dynasty





The Senghennydd Dynasty

