themselves are remarkably consistent. The common native trees, viz. oak, crab-apple, yew, elder, ash, willow, and hazel, which all occurred naturally throughout Wales, were given identical or very similar values in the 'Venedotian', 'Dimetian', and 'Gwentian' classes of lawbooks. The one great exception to this consistent pattern is beech.

Beech does not occur in any of Aneurin Owen's eight 'Venedotian' versions A-H. In the twelve 'Dimetian' versions I-T, beech is absent from three (I, J, S) but is consistently valued at 60 pence in the others. In the 'Gwentian' versions U-Z, beech is valued at 60 pence in U, but in W also in the Bodorgan manuscript it is valued at 120 pence. Beech is not mentioned in the Latin redactions A, B, and E, but it does appear in redactions C and D where it is valued at 60 pence; D is a redaction with a Deheubarth bias and closely related to Blegwyryd.1

The presence or absence of beech and the differences in its value form a significant and fairly consistent pattern. Owen's 'Venedotian' versions make no mention of beech whatsoever, presumably for the very practical reason that it was thought pointless or unnecessary to include a tree species which did not occur in north Wales. Most of the 'Dimetian' versions, one of the 'Gwentian', and Latin redactions C and D value beech at 60 pence, i.e. only half the value of an oak tree but still substantially more valuable than any other woodland tree species. This would tend to suggest areas of south, mid, and east Wales where beech occurred naturally, or more westerly areas close enough for beech to be familiar and worth entering in the tree-lists in the lawbooks.

Only two versions of the Welsh Laws value beech at 120 pence, i.e. equal to oak which throughout Wales was the most important forest tree, producing valuable mast and tannark as well as excellent timber. These two versions are W (the 'Liber Cardiff de consuetudinibus Walliae', B.M. Cotton Cleopatra A xiv) and the Bodorgan manuscript. The readings are: ethyr fanydwy, Heno sauzeineit in W. and fanydwy - awkangaint in Bodorgan.2 These uniquely high valuations, presumably neither scribal errors nor arbitrary alterations, would accord well with a location in the heart of the natural area of distribution of beech in south-east Wales, i.e. where beech was a common tree, comparable in frequency and quality to oak. Only here would it make legal and practical sense to equate beech and oak in value. This can be illustrated by the actual use of wood in the building of castles. Throughout Wales, oak was the species exclusively used for castle-building, but in south-east Wales, and only here, beech too was used for this special purpose, e.g. at Lanwygy in 1236/7.3

K and the Latin redaction C are apparent inconsistencies. K is a manuscript which Owen erroneously classed as 'Dimetian' instead of 'Venedotian',4 and which does include beech, but although the text is 'Venedotian', it is a late fifteenth-century copy made by Lewis Glynn Cothi, perhaps for the lord of Cefnllwyd (Radnorshire) and therefore within or very close to the area of natural beech. The defective Latin redaction C includes beech

3 Bodorgan (88, 13–14).

(framed) but otherwise appears to have been written from a Gnweidd stand point; the values of the trees may, however, be in a different hand from the rest of C.1

Although the evidence of beech should not be taken in isolation, in general the occurrence and relative values of beech in the Laws appear quite accurately to reflect both the natural distribution and importance of the species in medieval Wales, and therefore may contribute towards indicating, even if only approximately, the areas of application of the various law books.

I am greatly indebted to Morfydd Owen and Professor Dafydd Jenkins for valuable discussion of drafts of this note.

Welsh Folk Museum

Sylwadau ar y 'Suresit'


Yn yr ymgyrchau'r enfawr, er ei hyn y mae’n eu colliaru yn hytrach na dim sydd yn yr ysgrifau Cyfrifiad eu hunain; ond nid wyf am fanylion ar yr wedd honno ar ei ymdrianniaeth. Esialau edrych ar ei gasgliad terfyll sydd arno, yn ysgyt, ac yna wneud awgrym am ystyra rhwng yr o' r cofnod Suresit.

Cymeren yn fan cynhwyn ddwy frawddeg oll ymdriannath Mac Cana’r testun arbenigennydd.

Gwyddys mai traddodiad y gyfraith a sgrifennwyd gyfaint mewn llawer o’r cymdeithas cynnar: yn Iwerddon dehureddy reiciro rywbudd yn y chweched ganrif. Felly, o gofo pa mor gyffin y mae’r ymgwyf y cofnod a pha mor o’n ei chael aseiriau fwr., hwyra yn fddai ym anhwy caled nad oedd frfl srifenedig ar ryddiaeth wedi ei daflwyd grafich y’r hanner eto fel celfyfwng i adrodd lans a chwelid.3

Gwir mai traddodiad y gyfraith a sgrifennwyd gyfaint mewn llawer gwlad; ond nid "traddodiad y gyfraith" sydd yr ymdri - nid datganiodd o rheolau gyfraith, ond cofnod am drafodaeth yr ymgyrchwr, peth sy’n bur wahanol, fel y caf bywlycianio’n fuin.

Gwir hefyd fod trethodau cyfreithiol a’i wenu ’sgrifennu i mi Yweddol rywbudd yn y chweched ganrif. Fe wytom hynny, nid o fod gennym lawysgrifiau gyfraith Gwyddyd o’r chweched ganrif, ond am i wr ymgyrch cefnogwy i Iwerddon ddal i goipio'r testunau cysegredig (gan ychwanegu atyn hawb ac esboniadaeth sy’n chwebydd o testunau’n ddiflawr) drwy’r cannioc. Ond (chweith Binchy) ‘i’r Welsh mediaeval jurists were far

2 ‘Rhyddhau Gymraeg’, Yfgrawr Beirniadol, x, 80–1.
3 The Mahonog (Cynedlydd, 1977), 72.
5 Yfgrawr Beirniadol, x, 82.
Ni fyddai gennym le i synu petai yng Nghymru'r wythyd ganrif hefyd draddodiad Lladin (ar gyfer dogfennau cyfreithiol) wrth ochr traddodiad Cymraeg (ar gyfer traddodiad Lladin, dros dro, i o gyflog yr wythnos). Fel y dywedodd Mac Cana ei hun, yr oedd 'y Gymraeg y wye hogyn dinogol i dir achosion cyfreithiol cyn idd ei gaad si yr hifnuun: mac 'r holl dysiof- laeth y dengau' hynny, a gellir cryf Surenit yn rhan o'r dysiofoel. Ni ddyliw ychwanig ddifyrwch symudol mynegiant y cofnod: bu bain o'r cofiof o ddarllen cofion null gyflog, a llyfrwngau nwyddogion ym mwn gan ddyn o ddywyliog ar y llwyd draddodiad canrann. Efalai, gydag y bydd manlyog ar un wrawfodd gan yr y cofnod yn foddio i awgrymu ym mwyllodol y tu teir y lli. Gwaedog?

Mac brawddeg bwysicaf y cofnod yn datgen canlyniad y drafodaeth a hir am achos: 'ho duced disprotron gener gyfred y gair'. At aeth 'they do possess the son-in-law of Tuffr by law'; ond fe awgrymwn ymhen heb newid cyfreithiol

Mac's sefod fferi weithiau'n golygu 'cryfath', e.e. yn y rheol 'Tref amyt no goir', ac er gwasteith Llloyd-Jones a Geriarech Prifysgol Cymru, mac'n amheus gennyf ac y bythin gan y golygu 'hawl, hawl cryfathiol, gofyn, cais' (sef ystyr (iv) Lloyd-Jones), neu 'hawl, hawl cryfathiol fel yr wynt cerffychno (sy'n gymal y byth (b) Cynghraill). Wrth gwrs mae perthnas agos rheung cryfath a hawd: mae dwey ystyr Reicty o Almancyn y tu tystio i hynny, ac mac Lloyd-Jones ymchwilir gan y byth gan yr ystyr (iv) gan agos iawn ar ei ystyr (iii), sef 'iauder, cryfiauia, yr hyn y byd y gofyn a thad gan y hyn, hwn gan yr gofyn bell o'r 'Tref amyt no goir' a rhi hengreithiau eraill sy'r unr mor glir yn y byth gan yr ystyr cryfath (nas hoff yngol Llloyd-Jones), megis 'aerog yth gydf ydai gan yr gofyn'. Ma'r werth ystyr wrth gwaith yr ymhystyr ar cryfathnder, a dychon mae ymdeimlo â pherthnas cryfath a chlybiau a barodd ddefnyddio'r ddau air cryfath a cryfath gyda'i gyfrifon ym Llyfr Ddauol: Efach mae sawl ymdeimlo a ddyfryn gan Llloyd-Jones ym llawer grymusalos o hoff yr ystyr cryfath a gair. Er enghraifft:

llwyd ystyr gair a thrin ynyf trefad Llith. Hafodredd 45. 15

Ibíd. 52. 14

ac yn enwedig

boed dy wir ar dir tormenâsce dyet can mlyniwn yn set ynt hydylac

Ibíd. 214. 21-2

— sy'n awgrymu mai cryfath sy'n sierchudd heb chwe gwlwyd. Wrth gwrs byddai’r ystyr

1 Yn Llloyd yma o dogfennau negis Rhôl Gruffydd rhwng Ab Aeron, sy'n ceidwai cryfath gan ei drafodaeth tir ym Môn, mes. ym llyfr ym wedwardir ganrif ar dde. 2 Y Gomer (222v (Taliesin), 270. 3 WML, 8g. 13. 4 Goefia Barddorionn Cymry Gymroig, d.g. 5 Geriarech Prifysgol Cymru, d.g. 6 Llyfr Blaengar, 74. 11-16. 7 Gw. Wendy Davies, 'Bratell Teilo', BBCS xvi (1973), 135.
A Note on Cyfranc Lludd a Llefftyn

To Brynley Roberts’s full and important textual notes to Cyfranc Lludd a Llefftyn, I would add the following conjecture.

Roberts points out in his note to line 31 of his text that the reading of the ‘Mabinogion’ version of Cyfranc differs from the version in MS. Llanstephan 1, the earliest version of this narrative. Roberts’s text, based on the White Book, reads, ‘...ar ny welsi oher o’r ymynedd gynt ...’ and the Llanstephan 1 version has ‘... ar ny ry klywsewy nep o’r hen oesood gynt ...’. Roberts comments on the grammatical function of ar as a demonstrative pronoun, but does not elaborate when it comes to the interesting variation ymynedd/hen oesood.

These readings may be the result of differing treatments of a common ancestor, or(h)enoesit or or(h)enoesit or the like, i.e. in modern orthography o’r hen oesoedd ('of the ancient times'). In other words, the phrase which the Llanstephan 1 version renders correctly in this instance has been misinterpreted in the tradition of the ‘Mabinogion’ version. The o’r ymynedd there would be the MW. equivalent of the phrase truncated from the archetype, or enesit or or inesit. In OW, as in most other early medieval languages, orthographic h- was unfixed (cf. as only one example, edil for the modern Welsh haedd in the tenth-century glosses in the Osseomion psalter). A sequence like (h)en- or (h)im- in OW. must have been liable, quite easily, to the kind of prosodic alteration that led to the variant reading of the ‘Mabinogion’ version. Some of the other illustrations Roberts cites in his notes to line 31 show confusion elsewhere between singular forms of ymyn and oes. Here, the conjectured OW, or(h)enoesit can provide us with a base from which grew the divergent readings in the plural.

Certainly, ymynedd, though it is the lectio difficilior of the two major versions (‘literary’ and ‘historical’) in which this text appears, is strained a bit further than most such readings, for it is hard to make sense of a reference to islandh here. This is especially true when one considers that all other references to Ymys Prydein in this text are in the singular. Not once, apart from the passage under consideration here, does Cyfranc make mention of more than one island. The implications of the text are really that the three oppressions amount to a phenomenon so unique that even the experience of the elders, those ‘of the ancient times’, did not include anything equivalent to it. At any rate, it is certain that the text was difficult for other, more contemporary, readers as well, for the entire passage was dropped altogether from the fourteenth-century chronicle version of Cyfranc Lludd a Llefftyn which exists in MS. Cotton Cleopatra B. v, edited and translated by J. J. Parry (Brut y Brenhinedd, p. 69). There we read simply ‘... ny ry welsi gynt ...’.

Richard Gordon Newhauser

Language and Literature