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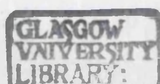
DEVELOPMENTS IN LOVE POETRY IN IRISH, WELSH, AND SCOTTISH GAELIC, BEFORE 1650

HELEN JANE THERESA O'SULLIVAN

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LETTERS,
GLASGOW UNIVERSITY.

CELTIC DEPARTMENT, JULY, 1976.



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// A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

I owe a particular debt to my supervisor, Professor Derick Thomson, for suggesting topics for study and items for reading, and to Donald Meek (of Glasgow University) and William Gillies (of Edinburgh University) for their considerable help in elucidating the Book of the Dean of Lismore. Other people who have helped by answering queries or supplying references are Professor James Carney, Professor Kenneth Jackson, Ronald Black, Dr. Peter Davies, Dr. Colm Ó Baoill, and Allison Whyte, as well as the staffs of the Department of Celtic in the University of Glasgow and of the Department of Modern Irish in University College, Dublin. I am also grateful to the three typists, Carey Brett-Holt, Janet Mason and Esther Daly, and to Josephine Bisacre, for their help.

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SUMMARY

This thesis looks for evidence of continuity and of change in love poetry in the Celtic languages of the British Isles before 1650.The items studied are generally first-person statements of love.Poetry that is clearly intended as bardic panegyric or as elegy,as proverbial description of women's failings,or that adopts a sharply satirical or abusive attitude to women in general,is not made the subject of detailed discussion or analysis,although occasionally I have found it necessary to refer to such poetry.

Chapter One looks at the surviving poetry on themes of love and attraction from eighth to twelfth century Ireland and suggests that the separate traditions of monastic and pre-monastic Ireland can be identified.

Chapter Two shows that the type of beauty praised in Irish and Scottish classical poetry before 1400 is dependent on conventions that were already established in the Old and Middle Irish period.

It then looks at the content of poems composed before 1400.All but one of the poems described are by Gearóid Iarla (died 1398),some of them from an unedited Scottish manuscript source.I find that Gearóid's tone when writing of women is generally ironic,or openly unflattering.Although his poems and the other one mentioned show some differences from the poems described in the first chapter,they do not enable one to decide whether foreign love poetry was being imitated in the classical metres during the fourteenth century.

Chapter Three looks at a group of edited and unedited poems from an early sixteenth century Scottish manuscript, and shows that their chosen themes are women,love and sexual fantasy.Attention is focused on a group of poems that I identify as love poems.Their possible background in Irish and

other literatures is discussed,and it is suggested that they provide evidence of new fashions in the syllabic poetry of fifteenth century Ireland,fashions closer to those of the continent.

Poems for which there are grounds for thinking that they were composed before 1630 form the next group discussed,in Chapter Four.It is shown that while some of the new topoi found in them might be expected to arise within any tradition of love poetryothers have characteristics that align them specifically with European writing.One can however distinguish a distinctively Irish treatment of most of the themes,and possible explanations for this are put forward.

It is argued that a further group of poems surviving in manuscripts of the late seventeenth century were probably composed at the same time as,or shortly after,the first group.

Finally the distinctive characteristics of the earliest surviving Scottish Gaelic folksongs are noted,and it is suggested that they belong to traditions of composition that predate the absorption of foreign styles into Irish and Scottish writing.

Chapter Five looks at the earliest surviving Welsh love poetry ,i.e.,that written by the bards in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,and at the prose of the same period.As a result of this study I discount the possibility that Welsh love poetry is already heavily influenced by foreign styles at this date.

Chapter Six studies the work of Dafydd ap Gwilym(c.1320-c.1380),and sets out the ways in which his love poetry resembles and differs from earlier Welsh models.It is suggested that he disregards earlier conventions in order to extend the emotional and intellectual range of Welsh love poetry.Little evidence is found to show that he knew of,or imitated,foreign styles of love poetry.

Chapter Seven looks at other writers in the strict metres of the post-bardic period,and finds that their chief inspiration is the work of Dafydd and the bards.

I conclude with a study of the surviving verse in the "free metres"(i.e.ones that lack or make little useof the traditional ornament of Welsh verse),and set out the reasons for regarding it as heavily influenced by sixteenth century English composition.A debt to traditional Welsh styles of poetry is also clearly apparent,and is probably the result of knowledge of recent poetry in the formal metres.

PART ONE:

THE IRISH AND SCOTTISH TRADITIONS

C H A P T E R O N E :

The Old and Middle Irish Period

A.Lyric,Reflective and Dramatic Poetry

B.Early Irish Concepts of Beauty and Lovesickness

CHAPTER ONE: THE OLD AND MIDDLE IRISH PERIOD

A. LYRIC, REFLECTIVE AND DRAMATIC LOVE POETRY

Love-poetry in the early period is usually found in the setting of a prose tale. The only other sources are stray quatrains, and one long poem which, as it has survived to us at least, is not attached to any prose tale or cycle of tales, and which makes use of themes of sexual attraction, faithfulness and desertion - although whether it is, as its prose introduction says, about a woman and her past loves has been challenged.

The quatrains can be described as representative of 'lyric' love poetry. They conform to the requirements of lyric poetry that it should be brief and that it should encapsulate one thought or emotion, experienced at the moment of speaking.

The long poem I have referred to, and some examples of the poetry in the tales, are better described as 'reflective'. The speakers here contrast past and present, meditate, like the Hag of Beare, on the fluctuation of the world, the ebb tide that follows flood in one's life, or like Líadan, on the impossibility of foreseeing the consequences of one's actions.

Other poems give us the reactions of opposing speakers in a drama. They tell us something we had not realised about the personality of a character in an action, precipitate further developments in a plot, and provoke response from others present. The Irish writers of these poems give us the nearest we have in this period to verse drama.

I shall now give some examples of what I understand by these different descriptions.

i) Lyric Poetry

The quatrains have survived by chance in the margins of manuscripts, or as examples in metrical and grammatical treatises. I have collected here all the ones possibly relevant to love that I have seen in printed form - a mere handful. Whether there are more in the manuscripts, as yet unedited, I do not know.

One cannot be certain whether these quatrains were all intended to stand on their own; but usually they make perfectly good sense in this way, and I suggest that they were written as single units.

A quatrain that needs no expansion is printed by Greene and O'Connor in A Golden Treasury, p.202. Their source is the Book of Leinster, folio 121a, margin:

Gel cech nua - sásad nglé!
utmall álcha ócduine,
 áilli bretha bíte im sheirc,
 millsi bríathra fir thochmairc.

They translate: Everything new is neat - cheers! A Young man is changeable in his desires, lovely are decisions about love and sweet the words or a man who comes wooing.

The phrase 'gel cech nua' is proverbial: in the Tecosca Cormaic (ed. Meyer, p.24) it is stated that an aspect of foolish behaviour is to hold every new thing fine. It is in this spirit that Emer uses the phrase in Serglige Con Culainn, Sect.43;[1] however, the composer of this quatrain wants to defy proverbial wisdom and to assert the satisfaction of giving oneself up to things that are

new, and to fickle love. In a quatrain the message is complete.

Similarly self-contained are two other light-hearted quatrains:

Cride hé	He's my heart
daire cnó,	my grove of nuts;
ócán é,	he's my boy,
pócán dó.	here's my kiss for him. [2]

Díambad messe in banmaccán
no cechrainn cach felmaccán,
fer nád fintar co cluinter,
slánchéill chéin duib, a muinter.

If I were the girl
I would love every student
-a man you can't know till you hear him talk
-a long farewell to you, my family! [3]

Those three quatrains tell only of the happy side of love and courtship. Others hint at the difficulties lovers must overcome, or are clearly elegiac.

Céin-mair 'na luing indfhota
oca mbíat a lennata
oc imram ard allata
íar n-ingnais a mennata.

Happy those who have their sweethearts in a long-prowed boat, rowing off high and proud, having abandoned their country. [4]

Fil duine
frismbad buide lemm díuterc,
ara tabrainn in mbith mbuide
uile, uile, cid díupert.

There's a man I would wish to see, for whom I would give the golden earth, all, all, though it were an empty bargain. [5]

The language of the quatrain is ninth or tenth century, and the mss.

introduce it with the comment 'Thus spoke Gráinne... to Finn.' No tale of telling of Gráinne's love for Diarmait survives in language of that date; but this quatrain must have been part of some lost early version of the story. I would think it to have been spoken by Gráinne after she hears of Diarmait's death: Irish lovers in the tales rarely speak with such emphasis until they have lost what was theirs.

In another brief lament, quoted in the Annals of Ulster after the record of the death of Áed mac Ainmirech, King of Tara, the poet uses the form of the triad, a mnemonic device, used for preserving legal and proverbial knowledge. Its origins are well concealed here:

Bata inmuini trí toíb
  frisná fresciu aitherrech,
tóebán Temro, toíb Taillten,
  toíb Aedo maicc Ainmirech.

Beloved were three sides
I cannot hope to see again
side of Tara, side of Tailltiu,
side of Áed mac Ainmirech. [6]

There remains a quatrain in which a similarity to later folksong may be seen, in detail of setting, season and dramatis personnae. Are these lines the beginning of a story, or do they tell all that the poet wishes to say?

Mac ríg Muaide mid samraid
  fuair i fid uaine ingin;
tuc dó mess ndub a draignib,
  tuc airgib sub for sibnib.

The son of the King of the Moy at Midsummer
found a girl in the greenwood;
she gave him black sloes from thornbushes,
she gave him armfuls of strawberries on rushes. [7]

The significance of these quatrains is not merely that of amusing or wistful lines to interest a latter-day reader. The first three I quoted are quite different in spirit from the type of love-poetry that forms part of prose tales. There is no suspicion here of the strange love-sickness which is the stock-in-trade of the tales; and neither the girls nor the young men have anything of the Otherworld about them - whereas in the tales one or other of the lovers is frequently of fairy origin. These are quatrains that depend on no special concept of love, no special vocabulary of desire or admiration, and they might have been written in any language at any time. It seems that all or almost all Old and Middle Irish literature in the form in which it has survived to us is a version prepared by Christian monks. Within this body of literature, scholars have attempted to identify those strata that the monks took over from the native men of learning, the *filí*, and those that reflect the Christian, Latin or personal interests of the monks. The origins of Irish nature poetry have been debated, and Professor Jackson has shown clearly that much of this poetry grows from the personal experiences of the monks.[8] The love poetry has less often been considered as a body of work on its own, or studied for marks of clerical or bardic literary style, but I consider that it too has something to contribute to this discusssion.

I have mentioned that the characteristics of the quatrains are different from those of the tales about love. I see the latter, with their strange love-sickness and their Otherworld visitors, as giving us some idea of the content of Irish romantic literature before the coming of Christianity and of writing. The *filí*, those experts in history, genealogy and law, are probably less likely tellers of such tales than the lower grades of bard (cf. Professor Mac Cana's list of the lower grades: 'popular and semi-learned

entertainers, comprising rhymesters, storytellers, musicians, jugglers, lampooners, and so on'); [9] but from some type of native literary class the clerics learnt these themes, and expanded, adapted or modified them to give us the tales we now have. By contrast, I see the quatrains that I have quoted as more representative of the literary compositions of the monks when they were not drawing on the arcane conventions of the native literature. They may have been partly inspired by a knowledge of Latin-lyrics: I do not see any parallels indicating imitation of the Latin poets, but a familiarity with even a little of the work of Ovid, Catullus, Tibullus or Propertius would have encouraged experiment with personal styles of expression on the theme of love. An unknown factor is the extent to which any of the lower grades of bard may have provided monks with a tradition of brief lyric statement of love. Professor Mac Cana has drawn attention to the continuity of a 'lyrical-romantic-elegiac' tradition in Irish poetry from the seventh or eighth century down to the modern period. Modern folk-songs, he suggests, can be seen as the artistic successors of Old Irish lyric in their 'intensity, vivid colour and dramatic simplicity'. [10] A native talent for lyrical composition so strong that it reappears at different stages over a thousand years might well have antecedents before the monastic period. Irish folksong as it survives to us shows so many traits of continental song that it is virtually impossible for us to learn anything from it about the content of Irish popular song before it was blended with the work of other European languages; and the Old and Middle Irish quatrains themselves are too disparate to be satisfactory evidence for the existence of another coherent body of work on which the writers of the surviving poems could be presumed to draw. The quatrain that

comes closest to suggesting a lost tradition of song isthe one about the son of the King of the Moy: the emphasis on the fruits of mid-summer may derive from seasonal poetry, and the whole poem may have developed from some popular form of song in which encounters betwean men and women were linked with description of the earth when it is giving proof of its fertility. Usually, however, it is satisfactory to regard the content of these lyrics as the independent compositions of monks in the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries. This is how I present them: as a reminder that the concepts of love seen in the tales and longer poems did not pervade all forms of early Irish writing.

ii) Reflective poetry

I offer two examples as evidence of the skills of Irish writers in this type of poetry: the Hag of Beare's poem, and Líadan's soliloquy when she knows she is separated from Cuirithir for ever. Poems in this tone do not usually occur until the end of a tale; it is not until the tragic sequence of events has unfolded that a character stands back, and reflects on or expresses the emotions that have causedthe events of a tale. This has the effect of putting the experience of love into high relief before the tale ends, and may be the result of a conscious aesthetic decision by the writer to structure his tale in this way. As a result, many of the finest poems are a lament for a love that is past or a lover who is dead.

The Hag of Beare's poem is not one of these poems that occur in a tale but it is a lament - a lament for youth. In the manuscripts,[11] this is described as thepoem of an old woman ('Sentainne Bérri cecinit íarna senad don chríni'/The Old Woman of Beare sang this when she had aged with the passage of time).

The Hag of Beare herself was apparently a mother-goddess from pagan Irish mythology.[12] From a heading such as the one I have quoted it would be easy to suppose that the poem is an eighth or ninth century poet's attempt to recreate the feelings of someone who, like the Hag of Beare, had outlived all husbands and lovers; but in recent years Professor Carney has suggested a radically different interpretation.[13] He suggests that we read the opening lines as a comparison between the poet and the Hag of Beare; and that the reason for that comparison may be that the poet is someone who has been a court bard and who is reflecting on past relationships with patrons, his 'king-lovers'. In his own eyes, he is a cast-off harlot. This interpretation makes the poem an even more complex statement of feelings and values than does the other view of it as an old woman's meditation, and sets it in a wider context than that of love-poetry. I have nonetheless chosen to refer to it here because whatever the poet's purpose he does make use of themes of passion and rejection, and of the contrast between youth's sexuality and the enforced asceticism of old age. To this extent, he provides styles for later writers of love-poetry to draw on, as well as giving an indication of the range of writing on these themes in the early period.

The poem could inspire an extended essay in commentary. But I single out for mention the way that images from the natural and visible world are used to convey feelings and experiences. This is in keeping with the standards of early Irish writing, which draws repeatedly on the natural world to express abstract concepts - that of beauty, for example. In this particular poem they have the effect of giving the speaker the world-embracing, mythological status the Old Woman of Beare is supposed once to have had. The image that holds the whole poem together is that of ebbing, stated at the

beginning of the poem and developed at length in the final section: the speaker has shores like the land, and has known full tide and now ebb:

> Tonn tuili
> ocus ind í aithbí áin,
> a ndo-beir tonn tuili dait
> beirid tonn aithbi as do láim.
>
> Great wave of flood
> and wave of ebb and lack.
> What flooding tide brings in
> the ebbing tide takes back.
>
> Tonn tuili
> ocus ind aile aithbi,
> dom-áncatar-sa uili
> conda éola a n-aithgni.
>
> Great wave of flood
> and wave of ebbing sea,
> the two of them I know
> for both have washed on me. [14]

Even when she admits that humans are not like the elements, this image is not put aside, only limited: what a pity it is, she says, that men do not survive their ebb as they do their flood. In an almost blasphemous stanza, Christ, the Redeemer, is said to redeem too soon the flood tide she received on loan. The final image is of the speaker watching the tide ebb away for the last time: to use the poem's own way of speaking, her shores will never be wet again.

Briefer, but equally striking in its equation of the human speaker with the seemingly ageless world, is the stanza that wonders why the cheeks of the stones are not weathered; and another that cries out against the fact that the plain of Feimen is old but still produces a yellow crop, whereas she, the speaker, is withered, skin

and hair grey. More usual, to the modern reader at least, are references to youth's sea, to the seasons of life, to the speaker's feeling that she resembles an old tree decaying. The combined effect of all these images is that the poem reads as a statement about the nature of whole countrysides, landscapes, seasons. Its figures are heroic and mythical as well as identifiably human. The whole poem is evidence of the way Irish writers could broaden out from themes of youth, love and attractiveness to reflections on the final shape of love-affairs and of life.

Líadan's reflections on past love and present loss are less wide-ranging than those of the speaker in the last poem; but they provide another example of an Irish poet seeing into the mind of a lover. Are things the way they are now because of what I did, she asks? Could I have behaved differently from the way I did? In her present turmoil she reverts to what she is certain of: that she loved Cuirithir, and that her time with him was happy. Once again, awareness of the behaviour of the natural world is inextricably part of the lover's memory of her own emotions: when she was with Cuirithir she heard the music of the forest and the noisy sea. This stanza could be read simply as a statement that they were together out-of-doors; but from its placing in the poem it seems to be intended also to convey that when she was with Cuirithir everything was right and appropriate, the natural world made the sounds that we know and expect from it - and, as she says in the next stanza, it seemed that nothing she could do would interrupt the harmony of their relationship and its fitting place in the world. But now as she speaks she must face the knowledge with which she began the poem: 'an ro carus ro cráidius' / the one I loved I have tormented. According to the prose story she had cut herself off from Cuirithir by becoming a nun; Cuirithir himself then renounced the world by becoming a monk.

Now she admits to herself and to the whole world that whether she knew it before or not she loved Cuirithir and cannot survive without him. The poem ends with an image of destruction: the old unity and harmony will never be known again.

Deilm ndega
ro thethainn mo chridese;
ro-fess, nicon bía cena.

A roar of fire has split my heart, without him for certain it will not live.[15]

The poem seizes the attention not only by its insight and emotional clarity, but by its technique. Past and present are sharply juxtaposed, as are confident statement and despairing cry. The speaker's mind flickers as quickly as memory does, as dramatically as her fortunes in the world. The joy and pain of the story of Líadan and Cuirithir are encapsulated in this brief poem, which, like Tristan und Isolde, acknowledges human emotions only in their most extreme form.

iii) Dramatic poetry

I have reserved this heading for those passages of poetry that advance the action of a plot. They are likely also to reveal character, as did the ones in the last group; but in these there is more stress on the interaction between characters as they speak.

Serglige Con Culainn provides good examples. Sections 41-3 consist of a prose conversation between Cu Chulainn and his wife Emer. She reproaches him for having publicly dishonoured her by giving his protection to Fand, and wonders whether he would gain anything by leaving her. He replies that he thinks she might allow

him his time of dalliance with women especially when the woman he wants to be with is a fitting companion for him. In the words that follow, the prose has the precision and tension of those examples of Irish poetry that I have been quoting, and is worth recording here.

'Bés,' ar Emer, 'nocon err in ben dia lenai. Acht chena is álaind cech nderg, is gel cach núa, is caín cech ard, is serb cach gnáth. Caid cech n-ecmais, is faill cech n-aichnid, co festar cach n-éolas. A gillai', ar sí, 'ro bámarni fecht co cátaid acut, 7 no bemmis dorisi diambad ail duitsiu', Ocus robo dograch furri. 'Dar ar mbréthir trá', ar sé, 'isatt áilsiu damsa 7 bidat áil hi céin bat béo. [16]

It may be, said Emer, that the woman you follow is not better (than I). But besides, everything red is beautiful, everything new is bright, everything high is lovely, everything familiar is bitter. Everything that is missing is revered, everything known is neglected, until knowledge is complete. Lad, she said, I was once with you, in honour, and I would be again, if you wanted it. And she was grieved.' 'On my word, then,' he said, 'I want you, and I will want you as long as you live.'

This is followed by a speech from Fand which both takes forward the story and gives her personality a human credibility that previous mention of her (as the Otherworld visitor known from so many stories) had not hinted at. Although she still loves Cu Chulainn, although she feels ashamed to be returning to her people so soon, she will leave him.

Sect.44 Ocus is amlaid ro boí oc dogru 7 doróni in laíd sea:

A Emer, is lat in fer
7 ro mela, a deigben:
aní ná roich lám cidacht
is écen dam a dúthracht.

Mairg dobeir seirc do duni,
menes tarda dia airi:
is ferr do neoch a chor ass,
mane charthar mar charas. [17]

Emer, the man is yours, and may you have use of him, fine woman:
what my hand does not reach now, I must long for it.

It is sad for the one who gives love to another, unless it is heeded. It is better for one to be put aside, unless one is loved where one loves.

By distinguishing these three categories I hope I have drawn attention to the range of Old and Middle Irish writing about love between men and women. The brief quatrains could evidently be used for the expression of any thought, whether witty, cynical or tender; and in the tales, although the effects of love on the characters and the type of beauty praised conform to stock patterns, poets gave subtle expression to individual situations and feelings. Instead of limiting what they could say, the conventions of Irish tales evidently provided them with a sure context within which they could explore different ways of writing about the emotions of love. As later chapters will show, the same range does not exist in the surviving poetry of the Early Modern period. What survives from the twelfth century onwards may not be typical of bardic output; and what was written by those on the borders of bardic culture or wholly outside it we can only guess at. The work by Gearóid Iarla and by the gentlemen amateurs of the Dean of Lismore's Book is idiosyncratic enough to make one wonder what else was written by people who were part of the bardic tradition but not involved in a poet-patron relationship. However, what comments one makes can only be based on what has survived; and when one compares what we possess from the classical period with what we know was written before then it is noticeable that the writers of the later period do not strive for the lyricism, the broad human interest, or the tragic heightening of expression to be seen in various of the poems I have quoted. Proinsias Mac Cana and Seán Ó Tuama have both adverted to the possibility that an

oral tradition continued some of this lyricism;[18] but many aspects of Old and Middle Irish style were probably peculiar to that period. Professor Mac Cana has spoken of a 'closed climate of thought' being invaded, in the seventh century or earlier, 'by a new spirit, emanating from the monasteries'.[19] This provided, he says, 'an element of enlightened amateurism which was to prove immensely fruitful'. The monks wrote from choice, on the subjects and in the styles that interested them; and their tendency, as newcomers, to give a personal interpretation to what they found in Irish literature, will have been reinforced, Mac Cana suggests, by the fact that they belonged to a church that spoke and thought of people as individuals, all entitled to special consideration, all able to be saved. According to this, very persuasive, reading of what happened in the seventh and succeeding centuries, it is the monks who are responsible for the emphasis on lyrical and personal statement in early Irish literature. It would not then be surprising if later literature were to lack the special qualities that the conditions of the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries produced. One can expect to see further interesting things when other new cultures impinged on native Irish tradition; but the pressures that led to so many individual studies of stock story-telling situations many never again have been so strong. In particular, the monks' religious training may account for the special interest in the tales in problems of conscience and in conflicts between an individual's desires and his circumstances. Much of later love poetry is simply a witty statement of paradoxes with no attempt to push their expression into the realms of tragedy; and what does not fall into this category is likely to be a straightforward statement of admiration or despondency. A particular desire to revolve the grit of human incompleteness and capacity for disappointment until a pearl such as the Hag of Beare's poem has been formed is missing.

B. EARLY IRISH CONCEPTS OF BEAUTY AND OF LOVE-SICKNESS

Perhaps because there is almost a complete dearth of love poetry from the early centuries of the classical period there is a tendency not to mention points of continuity between the dánta grádha of the fifteenth - seventeenth centuries and earlier writing. I have already referred in passing to the fact that there are some subjects not tackled by the later writers, some styles that they do not attempt. Nonetheless, there are points of contact - with the prose content of the tales rather than with the individual poems. The most noticeable of these is that the type of beauty praised in a seventeenth century poem is almost identical with that praised in an Old or Middle Irish tale. It is also true that this pattern of beauty is found in historical, political or religious poems. The similarity of description in all these poems suggests that it was something learnt in the course of bardic training; and its occurrence in earlier work is a further indication that this was so. I have decided to set out here the early Irish pattern of beauty so that later one can mark both the continuity with and the rare divergence from this ideal.

A further point of continuity between Old and Middle Irish work and sixteenth - seventeenth century poems is in the concept of love-sickness. The similarity here is not so close as to lead immediately to the conclusion the later writers are imitating the earlier ones; but it is clear that there was available in Irish literature an idea of love-sickness that later poets could modify or expand. To describe it here will enable us later to see how writers diverge from it.

i) Description of beauty

The standard for physical beauty in Old and Middle Irish consists of curling yellow hair, black eyebrows, eyelids or eyelashes, blue-grey eyes, reddish-purple cheeks, thin red lips, gleaming white teeth and white skin. These features can be seen in a whole range of the texts that I have consulted (they are listed at the end of this chapter). Some variation is seen in the sources for the comparisons used; since these comparisons are what make Irish literature distinctive, and enable us to relate later Irish poems to these models rather than to any foreign ones, I have set out examples of them here. One example of any comparison is regarded as sufficient to establish the style of Irish writers.

HAIR: Irish writers often compare with gold; less often with primroses, flag-irises, and with cotton-grass.

Ba cosmail leó dath ind fhoiltsin fri barr n-ailestair hi samrad nó fri dergór íar ndénam a datha. TBDD, Sect.1

The colour of her hair seemed to them like the flower of the water-flag in summer, or like red gold that has been polished.

Is barr sobairci folt and. TE III, Sect.10

Hair there is like the top of the primrose.

The cotton-grass comparison is rare in a description of hair, but it is interesting to note it at this early date since in classical Irish and in Scots Gaelic it is frequently used to praise the whiteness of skin.

Findithir canach slébe cach finda ásas triana chend. TBDD, Sect.109

Fair as mountain cotton-grass / bog-cotton is each hair that grows through his head.

Hair in Irish is usually said to be curling.

CHEEKS: Irish writers regularly compare with foxgloves:

Breicdeirgithir sían a ngrúad. TBDD, Sect.97

His cheek as speckled-red as the foxglove.

LIPS: Irish writers compare with partaing - which probably refers to the red dye that the Parthians used for leather.[20]

Níamdai a béoil partuing-deirg. LMU, Sect.4

Bright her partaing-red lips.

If they elaborate any further, Irish writers are likely to say that the lips are thin:

Béoil deirg thanaide leiss. TBC, 4425

He had thin red lips.

SKIN: A comparison with snow is standard, but foam and lime are also mentioned.

Ba gilithir úan tuindi in taeb seng. TBDD, Sect.2

Her slender side was as white as the foam of the wave.

A dath amar dath in aíl. EIL, p.142(from the peom beginning 'Turus acam Día hAíne')

Her colour is as the colour of lime.

EYES: Irish writers almost always say that eyes are 'glas' (a blue-grey colour probably), and they compare them with 'buga' - a blue flower, possibly the bluebell.

Batar glasithir buga na dí súil. TBDD, Sect.2

Her two eyes were as blue-grey as the bluebell.

EYEBROWS: I say 'eyebrows', but in fact the words for eyebrows, eyelids, and eyelashes are almost interchangeable, and in some cases the writer may have simply meant the area around the eye (this semantic confusion is apparently usual in languages when the eye area is being described).[21] The colour associated with all three

words for the eyebrow, eyelash, etc. is black. The comparison is always 'beetleblack':

Dubai a brai / black the brows. TE III, Sect.10

Badar duibithir druimne daeil na dá malaich.
TBDD, Sect.2

Her two eyebrows were as black as a beetle's back.

In both these instances, the hair of the person being described is said to be yellow - a point I shall return to later.

TEETH: Finally, I mention teeth. They were important in the Old and Middle Irish descriptions, and provide a final colour contrast in the stock pattern for beauty. Sometimes they are simply said to be white; but if another adjective is employed it is usually 'nemanda', which editors always translate as 'pearly'.

Déitgen némanda fo lí
Amal sóer-dath snechtaidi LMU, Sect.18

Teeth pearly in colour, like the noble colour of snow.

When, later in the thesis, I refer to Welsh patterns of description, it will be seen that in many ways they resemble the Irish ones. This encourages one to speculate on a common Celtic inheritance (transmitted presumably at the level of story-telling rather than that of court poetry, since in Welsh and Irish it is in the stories that it first appears). In most cultures one would say that aesthetics of beauty were so likely to vary over the centuries that it was unwise to make inferences about the tastes of earlier unrecorded ages. However, these standards of beauty are so constant in Irish and Welsh that it would not be surprising if they had a history in each literature longer than that known to us. To move from that to saying they go back to common Celtic times is something I am more reluctant to do.

There is also an outline similarity with description in late Latin panegyrics and epithalamia. The Latin style seems to have been created by Claudian (d.c.405 A.D.); and Venantius Fortunatus (writing in the mid-sixth century) and Sedulius Scottus (writing in the mid-ninth century) are easily seen to be writing in the same patterns. I studied the Latin material closely to see whether the resemblance was close enough to warrant speculation about Latin influence on Irish; but found that the Irish writing contained far more detail than the Latin, sometimes differed from it on important details (e.g. thin lips instead of slightly swelling ones) and drew its comparisons from quite different sources. One is left with a basic agreement in the praise of fair hair, white skin, cheeks with red in them (though the Latin writers tend to stress that red and white are found equally in the cheeks), and, sometimes, black eyebrows (these are mentioned once, in the early sixth century, by Maxmian, and not again, so far as I have found, until the twelfth century - I therefore concluded that the resemblance was coincidental). This does not seem to me to be enough to rest a case for borrowing on. Furthermore, it is quite reasonable to assume that patterns for beauty were conventionalised, along with much else in the tales, well before the earliest dates for the surviving texts. Irish writers in their comparisions consistently draw on things that they will have seen around them (primrose, flag-iris, bog-cotton, beetle, etc.) This interest in relating human appearance to the natural world is consistent with other traits in Irish writing, and sharply distinguishes it from late Latin. It could well have been a characteristic of Irish composition in the unrecorded centuries.

ii) Love-sickness

Love-sickness or love-longing, as presented in the tales,

is something experienced by men when they fall in love with women who seem unobtainable - usually these are fairy-women who are confined, except for rare visits, to an Otherworld. For Conla and Oengus (in Echtra Conli and Aislinge Óengusso) one sight of the woman is enough to arouse love and to result in sickness. Cu Chulainn's sickness, in Serglige Con Culainn, is associated with a visit from fairy-women who beat him with whips; Emer (Sect.30) says this sickness is the sickness that results from love of a woman. Later in the story, Cu Chulainn is sick again - this time it is because his fairy-love, Fand, has left him. In Tochmarc Étaíne II the woman Ailill falls in love with, Étaíne, is unobtainable because she is his brother's wife. There is no mention here of this being instant, the result of a look; but there is no need for it to be when they are both living in the one household. Like the others Ailill is sick for the conventional period of a year; and like the others he finds no benefit in the treatment of physicians, wise men or druids. He is expected to die. Cu Chulainn's second sickness is the only one the druids are able to help: when he is mad for the loss of Fand, roaming the hills, taking no food or drink, the druids give him a drink of forgetfulness (dig ndermait) and all is well. This is obviously necessary artistically, as the story would otherwise not be able to end. In addition, his final sickness is different from his first one; that, like the sicknesses of Conla, Oengus, and Ailill, is a wasting-sickness (serglige), a general debility that keeps a man weak and in his bed, apparently asleep. When Cu Chulainn wakes at the end of a year it is as though he had come out of a coma:

Atraig Cu Chulaind ina ṡudi íarom 7 labrais iar sin. "Bá mithig ém" ol Ulaid "aní sin". / Cu Chulainn sat up then and spoke. It was high time, said the Ulaid.

The only complete cure for such a sickness is union with the woman desired; but recovery can begin with the promise of a meeting. Ailill begins to recover when he admits his love to Étaíne and she does not reject it. Thereafter he improves under her care; but complete recovery, he says, can only come after a secret tryst with her.

This wasting sickness, or coma-like state, is what differentiates the Irish sickness from that which I have seen described in any other literature (not even Welsh can provide parallels for this year-long coma), and in particular from Ovidian love-sickness. The Ovidian lover enters a state of hyper-activity when struck by Cupid: he pants, sighs, his heart and pulse beat more quickly, he finds himself crying and blushing, and at night he cannot sleep. The points that Irish love-sickness has in common with Ovid - the lover is in danger of death, physicians are unable to help him - arise from the fact that the different love-sicknesses have a common result: the lover is enfeebled.

It will be seen that for later Irish writers this distinguishing mark of Irish love is less important.

NOTE: Tales consulted when working on Section B above. The editions used are given, and the generally accepted dates for the language of the tales and for the manuscripts in which they occur. Abbreviations used in the text for tales are explained here.

TBF	Táin Bó Fraích	ed. Meid, Dublin, 1967
EC	Echtra Conli	ed. Pokorny, ZCP XVII, 1928
SCC	Serglige Con Culainn	ed. Dillon, Dublin, 1953
LMU	Longes Mac nUislenn	ed. Hull, New York, 1949
TBDD	Togail Bruidne Dá Derga	ed. Knott, Dublin, 1936 & 1963
TBC	Táin Bó Cúalnge	ed. O'Rahilly, Dublin, 1966
FB	Fled Bricrenn	ed. Henderson, Dublin 1899
TE	Tochmarc Étaíne	ed. Bergin & Best, ÉRIU XII, 1938
LC	Líadain ocus Cuirithir	ed. Meyer, London, 1902
AO	Aisling Óengusso	ed. Müller, RC III, 1876-8
IB	Imram Brain	ed. Van Hamel, Dublin, 1941
ICMD	Immram Curaig Maíle Dúin	ed. Oskamp, Netherlands, 1970

MSS from which the above editions are taken, and the dates that have been suggested for the language of the tales:

TALE	MS	DATE OF MS	DATE OF LANG. OF TALE
TBF	Book of Leinster	c.1160-80	Ninth century
EC	chiefly from Lebor na hUidre and Harl.5280	poss.pre-1106 Sixteenth cent.	c.725 (Pokorny)
SCC	Lebor na hUidre	poss.pre-1106	9th & 11th cent. strata
LMU	Book of Leinster	c.1160-80	8-9th cent. archetype revised c.1000 (Hull)
TBDD	Yellow Book of Lecan &	late fourteenth cent.	mainly 9th cent. (Murphy)
	Lebor na hUidre	poss.pre-1106	Compiled by 11th cent. redactor from two 9th cent.texts (Thurneysen)
TBC	Book of Leinster	c.1160-80	c.1100
FB	Lebor na hUidre & others	poss.pre-1106	8th or early 9th cent.
TE	Yellow Book of Lecan	late 14th cent.	9th cent.(Murphy) 9th cent.in a retelling of the second half of 11th cent.(Thurneysen)
LC	Harl.5280 and	16th cent.	9th or early 10th cent. (Meyer)
	H.3.18	16th cent.	c.875 (Murphy-Early Ir. Lyrics)

TALE	MS	DATE OF MS	DATE OF LANG. OF TALE
AO	Egerton 1782	15-16th cent.	8th cent.
IB	Rawlinson B.512	14-15th cent.	8th cent.
ICMD	Yellow Book of Lecan	mid-14th cent. section	9th cent.

Except where stated otherwise, the dates given for the language are those suggested by Murphy in "Saga and Myth in Ancient Ireland" Dublin, 1961, 1971.

C H A P T E R T W O :

1200-1400

A.The Ideal of Physical Beauty in Classical Poetry 1200-1400

B.Gearóid Iarla

C.'I mbrat an bhrollaigh ghil-se'

CHAPTER TWO: 1200 - 1400

In this chapter Ihave tried to establish whether there are any love poems surviving from the period 1200 - 1400; and I have also set out the ways in which the Old and Middle Irish ideal of beauty is developed, and adapted to the setting of Classical Irish poetry.

In both exercises I have confined myself to poems for which there is some external evidence that they were composed before 1400. Since there survive no manuscript collections of relevant poetry compiled before this date I have had to look for poems ascribed to poets known to have been at work in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. Of the various poets whose name is known, Gearóid Iarla is the one who comes nearest to giving us a love poem. Since his name is often mentioned in connection with love poetry while his poems are rarely quoted I have given an extended account of his work, in order to provide a context within which to view those poems about women that are attributed to him. After Gearóid's poems there is only one other relevant poem for which a fourteenth century date has been claimed. This poem is described below.

Because of the lack of love poetry in the period my examples of the ideal of beauty have been drawn from other types of poetry: eulogy and elegy, poems on historical and religious topics. Many of the poems quoted are by Muireadhach Ó Dálaigh, who lived and wrote in the first part of the thirteenth century. Brian Ó Cuív has recently[1] wondered whether at least some of the poems attributed to Muireadhach may not be the creations of a later poet 'interested in the history of the early part of the thirteenth century'. As Professor Ó Cuív says, scholars have in the past accepted the

attribution to Muireadhach, and I have decided to follow the conservative view in this matter, and to quote the poems as examples of bardic usage in the thirteenth century. The doubts raised are worth remembering however. They should at least prevent one from being dogmatic about the century in which a particular word or style became fashionable. Another of the poems I quote is attributed to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, c.1178-1244, an attribution repeated, with a query, by Fr.McKenna in his edition of the poem.[2] The detailed description of beauty that appears in it is not typical of his work as it appears in Dán Dé, and it may be one of the many late poems to which his name became attached. Despite the reservations about the dates of these poems, they nonetheless seem adequate for my general purpose of showing the ways in which classical bardic writers took up earlier concepts of beauty and stylised them still further. I doubt however, if their stylistic traits can be related to a particular decade or quarter-century.

A. THE IDEAL OF PHYSICAL BEAUTY IN CLASSICAL POETRY 1200 - 1400

The type of physical beauty described is based on that found in Old and Middle Irish literature, but the range of comparisons used to define that beauty is not always the same as in earlier writings. Bardic poets may at times be contributing something of their own, and at others drawing on earlier texts that I have not seen, or that have been lost. I have selected those examples of description that seemed to me to be the most interesting for any attempt to show that there is a continuous line of development from early Irish writing to the late bardic poetry of the dánta grádha; and to show the gradual straying from early patterns.

HAIR is still yellow and curling, repeatedly compared with gold, as in the anonymous poem Folt Eimhire ar inghin mBriain[3]. A new comparison is that with saffron, which occurs in this poem and in Muireadhach Ó Dálaigh's Créd agaibh aoidhigh a gcéin:

St.18 A Riocard oig an fhuinn ghloin,
ó nach mair Uilliam t'athair,
do ghiall Clann Uilliam uile
dod bharr chruinnfhiar chróchbhuidhe.

O young Richard of the bright land, since thy father William lives not, all Clanwilliam has obeyed they round curling saffron-yellow locks.[4]

Another apparently new comparison occurs in Muireadhach's Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh[5]:

St.19 buidhe th'urla iona an t-ubhall

yellower your hair than the apple.

And in Ór na mban baincheann nimhe, attributed to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, we find:

Combuidhe é 's an t-ómra
bairrfhiar am fhuilt fhorórdha

It is as yellow as amber, the curling crop of the gold-tipped hair.[6] I have found two instances where hair is described as 'donn'-brown or dark in colour. One of them is in Muireadhach's poem to his dead wife[7] where, accuracy may have triumphed over convention; the second is in the anonymous poem Bean ós mhnáibh cáich Cailleach Dé.[8] In the latter instance it is possible that 'donn means 'deep in colour, dark yellow', which is the significance it sometimes has in Muireadhach's work. There are no references to black hair; however the writer of Folt Eimhire... reveals that women had to work to live up to the convention of yellow hair: other women use saffron-dye, he says, you do not need to. (St.11)

CHEEKS are still red: in Muireadhach's poems, in Folt Eimhire and in Bean ós mhnáibh. Two new elements occur in the comparisons in the last mentioned poem:

St.2 A leaca mhin réidh mar rós /her smooth gentle rose-like cheek

St.10 gne na subh / colour of wild strawberries / raspberries [9]

'Subh' (which is the commonest comparison for the colour of cheeks in the Dánta Grádha) I take to be another native Irish comparison drawn from natural surroundings, like the ones listed in the previous chapter. 'Rós' I regard as the first definite sign of influence from a foreign literature on eulogistic description in Irish. McKenna says of the poem in which it occurs: 'It is likely... that this poem was written before the middle of the thirteenth century'.[10] One could supply plenty of parallels for the comparison with roses from Latin poetry of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and slightly fewer from the poetry of the preceding centuries. The comparison with French is more difficult since less material has survived from

the pre-1250 period. I doubt whether one can decide conclusively in favour of French or of Latin as the source of this comparison; but since we know that the bards studied Latin, and cannot be sure of the extent to which they listened to compositions in Norman French, Latin has a strong claim to consideration.

LIPS continue to be praised as 'thin' and 'red' - the reference to 'partaing' in '<u>Folt Eimhire...</u>' (St.25) is a reminder of the bards dependence on earlier Irish literature. A new comparison 'A béal coimhdhearg re snuadh subh'/ 'her lips as red as the wild strawberries' in the poem attributed to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh.[11]

EYES are 'glas' or 'gorm' (grey-blue or blue) as before; but comparisons with something else are now rare. Instead, the bards stress some more abstrac quality in the eye and in the person, using the untranslatable words 'mall' and 'corr': 'mall' perhaps 'slow-glancing, steady, gentle' and 'corr' : 'round, smooth'. These epithets for eyes become standard in all bardic poetry, including poems in the <u>Dánta Grádha</u>. I note 'súil... uaine' (a green eye) in one of Muireadhach's poems.[12] This is not usual; and Bergin chooses to translate it as 'blue' presumably feeling that the poet intends to convey the same picture as in other poems, but has chosen 'uaine' for the sake of assonance with 'súil'. Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh speaks of an eye as 'as pale grey as crystal' (A rosg comhghlas re criosdal).[13] This seems to be new, and is more typical of sixteenth century composition.[14]

EYEBROWS / EYELASHES: The words 'mala' and 'abhra' continue to be matched with words for black and dark. An apparently new development is the stress on brows being slender or arched:

St.9 os a malaigh caoil / above her slender brow (<u>Folt Eimhire</u>)
St.24 ar mhalaigh as camdhubh gcuilg / in her brow with its curling dark crest (<u>Folt Eimhire</u>)

St.35 a Mhuire na malach seang / o Mary of the slender brows[15]

This is the way that bards continue to describe brows, in eulogy of chiefs and in love-poems. It is found frequently in the *Dánta Grádha*. Seen there, it reminds one of the convention of beauty in other European languages, that brows should be sleek and arched - seen for example, in the descriptions of women in *Le Roman de la Rose* and in the Harley Lyrics. The first part of *Le Roman*, in which these descriptions occur, was written between 1225 and 1230. Before this period references to curved brows are less frequent; they occur in Giraldus Cambrensis' *Descriptio cuiusdam puellae* written in the 1160s:

prodit in arcum / Forma supercilii
the shape of her brows shows as an arch.[16]

In a description written c.1210 by Geoffrey of Vinsauf, the woman's eyebrows are 'geminos... arcus'[17] - twin arcs. Similarly in a description[18] by Matthew of Vendôme, writing before 1175. If, as it seems, this detail was current in Latin description of the late twelfth century, it could have reached Muireadhach, writing in the first part of the thirteenth century, from Latin. On the other hand, it is not impossible that the Irish should have independently developed the habit of praising slender, arched eyebrows. It is a feature that reminds one of the possibility of foreign influence without proving it.

SKIN: Only a little is added to the earlier description of white skin. There is Muireadhach's comparison with whitethorn, in his poem to his dead wife:

St.8 a dreach mar an droighean bán / her face like the whitethorn[19]

Again, the comparison is taken from nature.[20] In *Táin Bó Fraích*, Sect.9, linen material was said to be 'as white as the plumage of

swans' / 'gilidir fúan ngéssa'. This image is now used for Our Lady's appearance:

Siad coimhgheal le clúimh eala
A troighthe, a taoibh glégheala

They are as white as the plumage of swans, her feet, her very-white side.[21]

TEETH: These are as white as limestone in Ór na mban:

'A tirmdhéad chombán re caile'[22]

This idea, though not the same word, was previously used for skin. Now it replaces 'nemanda', and remains popular until the end of the classical period.

My conclusion from my reading of these early bardic poems is that the bards took their pattern and their vocabulary for the description of beauty from the prose literature of Old and Middle Irish. In the late twelfth, early thirteenth centuries, at the same time that the rules for the use of metre and ornament in metre were being made strict, a vocabulary of eulogy was being formalised. Based on the references in earlier literature (and in the Middle Irish period these references are already following a standard pattern: if more story-texts survived from the Old Irish period one might be able to say the same for that stage) it both modified and extended them. Modification occurs when description and comparison are fitted to the dán díreach metres: a comparison can rarely be fitted into a half-line and not always into a whole line; yet the half-line and the line (as we print them) are the units of composition for the bard. As a result, comparisons of colour with some object possessing that colour are far less frequent in bardic literature than in the earlier works (hence the lack of appeal for some of us in bardic description). Exceptions occur when a poem is given over

to description of beauty. Most of the 38 stanzas of Folt Eimhire are filled with comparisons for curling hair and for yellow hair; and many of the poets whose work is included in the Dánta Grádha can construct a poem from repeated praise of beauty (see e.g. Nos. 24 & 99).

Earlier description is extended so that almost any part of the body can represent ideal beauty. The sole of the foot, knee, thigh, arm, hand, finger, neck - when matched with adjectives for white, soft, smooth, any of these can be proof of perfection. These features were either not mentioned or mentioned only rarely in earlier literature: attention there was usually focused on the face. In bardic poetry it is as customary to refer to the rest of the body as to the face. Poems in the Dánta Grádha exemplify this:

an ghéag bhonnbhán bhinn gan locht
the sweet-voiced, faultless, white-soled branch (DG No 23)

Mairg duine do-rala im riocht,
dá bhfuighe a n-amharc an-ocht,
an chiabh cham, an tiomghlún tearc
Pity the man that happened to be in my state, if he were to get sight of them tonight, the curling hair, the tender small knee.
(DG No. 67)

Do mhala chaol, t'fholt mar ór,
do rún geanmnaidh, do ghlór leasg,
do shál chruinn, do cholpa réidh,--
ní mhuirbhfeadh siad acht duine leamh.
Your slender brow, your hair like gold, your modest love, your measured voice, your round heel, your smooth calf, - they will kill only a foolish man. (DG No. 99)

One might think, seeing these descriptions in the _Dánta Grádha_, that they were borrowed from other mediaeval literatures: similar details occur in the English Harley Lyrics (probably composed in the early fourteenth century) and in French, German and Latin love-poetry of earlier periods. However, consideration of the earlier bardic poetry shows that the descriptions in the love-poems are in a direct line of descent from an earlier stage of the literature. These details, which surprise the English or French reader of mediaeval poetry in his own language, are commonplaces of bardic description.

There are other points of description that remain unchanged from the early bardic period until the late _dánta grádha_: the use of 'géag, slat, stuagh' (branch, wand, arch) when addressing someone admired; and the habit of calling a woman a swan: Muireadhach calls the Virgin Mary 'a ghéis ghlan', and this is paralleled in _Folt Eimhire_ and in the Cailleach Dé poem. This is perhaps a development from the comparison, already current in Middle Irish (see _Immram Curaig Máele Dúin_, Sections 12 & 17, and _Táin Bó Fraích_, Sect. 9), of something white with the colour or plumage of a swan. The writer of DG 99 probably took his image from earlier classical writing:

Ní bhfuighe mise bás duit,
a bhean úd an chuirp mar ghéis;
I shall not die for you, o woman with the swan-like body.[23]

Since the type of vocabulary I have been discussing in this section is so much a characteristic of the work of trained bards, I think one has some grounds for saying that lack of it characterises the amateur or non-professional. There is very little of it in Gearóid Iarla's poems, often only a half-line in a

poem; and even less of it in the poetry of the Scottish amateurs preserved in the early sixteenth century Book of the Dean of Lismore - people like the Earl and Countess of Argyll. It is true that not every trained bard makes use of this vocabulary. Two religious poets, Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh and Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn[24] scarcely use it at all - presumably they did not want to waste any half-lines which could be used to express religious truths and advice; but wherever description occurs, whether of Our Lady, a saint, or a patron, it is according to the pattern that I have set out. I see the study of this vocabulary as part of the long bardic training that professional poets underwent: studying and practising how to fit these significant details to the metre and content of the rest of the poem. While not every trained bard made use of such vocabulary I think it unlikely that any amateur could achieve the fluency of a Muireadhach Albanach or a Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn. This may, therefore, be a way of distinguishing the work of professional from that of amateur poets.

Gearóid Iarla, for example, uses little of this vocabulary; but the details he does use show he must have been familiar with earlier literature or with the work of his contemporaries. In a lament for Diarmaid Mac Carrthaigh he says:

St 6 gile ná cubhar a chorp,
duibhe a fholt dath cacha daoil.

Whiter than foam his body, blacker his hair than the colour of any beetle.[25]

Black hair is not the standard, but both the comparisons derive from earlier literature (see the previous chapter). This mixture of old and new is characteristic of Gearóid.

B. GEARÓID IARLA (d.1398)

Ascription to Gearóid

Since any arguments advanced in this section depend on the assumption that Gearóid Iarla wrote the poems ascribed to him in the Book of Fermoy and in the Book of the Dean of Lismore, it is as well to consider the evidence for this assumption before going any further.

Of the authenticity of the poems preserved in the Book of Fermoy, a mid-fifteenth century manuscript, no-one seems to be in any doubt. They contain various references to events in Gearóid's life, for example his imprisonment, for which there is corroboration from other sources.

Those who have transcribed and transliterated the poems attributed to Gearóid in the early sixteenth century Dean's Book (Thomas McLauchlan, Alexander Cameron, E.C. Quiggin, and Gerard Murphy) have all repeated the ascription given in the manuscript without comment. T.F.O'Rahilly, who prints in Dánta Grádha[26] a poem which is a conflation of a text in the Dean's Book and one in a much later Irish manuscript, was evidently convinced of Gearóid's authorship since he prints it over Gearóid's name instead of leaving it anonymous as it is in the Irish manuscript. However, in an article to be published in Scottish Studies 20 (1976), William Gillies challenges this orthodoxy:

> "Gerald's presence (in the Dean's manuscript) amongst a group of poets who hail from Argyll or Perthshire in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century raises complex questions."

He does not have scope in his article to discuss the problem but notes that there are three possibilities: the first that the

ascription to Gearóid is correct; the second, that it is "a 'courtesy' ascription", i.e. a tribute to his reputation as a poet; the third, that the writers or collectors of these poems regarded them as the type of composition Gearóid might have written, and headed them with his name in order to point up the connection. There is some thing to be said for each of these possibilities. For the purposes of this thesis I am assuming that Gearóid wrote all the poems ascribed to him in the Dean's manuscripts, and that the Dean's text is to be preferred to any alternatives, where they exist; but this is chiefly because I think the discussion must be developed much further before one can feel confident about rejecting an ascription to Gearóid. For the present, there are some arguments that one can advance in favour of Gearóid's authorship, and these I attempt to give.

I can see three possible grounds for doubting an ascription to Gearóid: the first, linguistic; the second, the content of the poems; the third, the likelihood or unlikelihood of a manuscript of Gearóid's poems reaching the Dean. The first of these questions cannot, I think, be settled until an agreed transcript and transliteration of all the poems ascribed to Gearóid in the Dean's Book has been published. This has not yet been done. Judgements on grounds of content I regard as unreliable; it is difficult enough to predict of any poet what he will write about; and with a non-professional poet like Gearóid, given to writing about almost anything, or so one deduces from the poems in the Book of Fermoy, the task is even more doubtful. A further complication is that the poems in the Dean's Book are usually very brief, possibly even fragmentary, which gives one even less scope for deciding anything. Finally, the varied travels of manuscripts can be surprising; and when one is concerned with a collector of manuscripts (or borrower?),

as the compiler of the Dean's Book evidently was, the possibilities for manuscripts reaching him become quite indefinable. However, I do have some doubts as to whether the poems of an amateur like Gearóid would have existed in enough manuscripts for widespread circulation to be likely. A possible answer to this would be that his poems may have been very popular - they may even have circulated in different versions, which would raise further problems.

A poem which demands that one consider all these possibilities is Mairg adeir olc. Why is it ascribed to Gearóid only in the Dean's text? Why does the Dean's text contain more quatrains than any other version? Why is the content of the Dean's text more anti-feminist than the poems in the Dublin mss? The Dublin manuscripts are late - 18th and 19th century - and they do not ascribe the poem to anyone. Is one to assume that Gearóid's poem, whatever its original text may have been, became so popular that it was copied and varied by people who had no idea who its original author was? Or that the poem was never by Gearóid at all, but was attached to his name because he had become a figure of romance, noted for involvement with women? I am encouraged to believe that Gearóid wrote Mairg adeir olc, with its regular regrain, by noting the fondness he shows for refrains in the Book of Fermoy poems; on the other hand its semi-proverbial character makes it suitable for attaching to the name of any well-known poet.[27] Whether the Dean's text gives us the poem as first written is yet another subject for discussion. It is evident that the text as we have it is incomplete, since one quatrain consists of six lines, leading one to suppose that a couplet, almost certainly containing the refrain that begins or ends every

other quatrain, was omitted by the copyist.[28] In the present state of evidence, I see no clear grounds for deciding against Gearóid's authorship of the text as we have it in the Dean's book, and have therefore chosen to regard the whole poem as by him. It may be that this point, like so many others, would be clarified by a complete edition of the Dean's book.

Content of the poems: i) Poems in the Book of Fermoy

Of the thirty poems preserved in the Fermoy manuscript, eight are addressed to or are about women. In some of these, Gearóid suggests that he is in love or has been in love; others have no connection with such themes; but I will give a brief account of each as there has been no printed discussion of them since their appearance in Studia Hibernica in 1963.

VI is to an old woman involved in guarding Gearóid while he was in captivity. She has fallen asleep while on duty and Gearóid finds himself wondering why the young heroes of Ireland's past were always confronted by "cailleacha"/"old women". This is only one of many instances where Gearóid creates a mock-heroic situation by comparing himself with figures from story.

In XI he complains that a woman has made a laughing-stock of him - we are not told why, for the object of the poem is simply to say that a man should not be treated in this way. Since one of the parallels he offers is that of Fionn when his wife Gráinne eloped with Diarmaid, and another is the case of Cú Chulainn and his wife (perhaps a variant of the story of Cú Raoí - see Duanaire Finn, p.190), one is led to speculate that Gearóid is writing about an elopement. My reading of the poem, in the context of his other work, is that in it he is

complaining about some real or fancied grievance and using examples from native Irish storytelling to give it mock-heroic importance (compare the tone in poems VI and XXV).

In XIV he says that he has seen a vision of beautiful women. There is no mention of love for them, nor does he awake thinking he holds a phantom visitor in his arms. This vision is closer to the strange sights seen by Máel Dúin and his companions in Irish voyage literature than are any of the later Irish poems of love-visions.

XV again seems to have reference to ill-treatment by a woman: he assures a girl that he only wants the sharpest of sharp gifts from her, and MacNiocaill in his notes to the poem wonders whether one should connect this with the piseogue that the giving of a sharp/pointed gift breaks a friendship. Gearóid is presumably saying: our friendship is over - the sharpest of gifts cannot destroy it further. The statement in St.5 that Fionn is hardly likely to have loved Gráinne better after she had eloped with Diarmait parallels Poem XI in setting up expectations of a story of desertion by a woman. The flattering descriptions - 'ó mhnaoi an fhuilt ghinn,' 'ón deighinghin is caomh cruth' 'ris an mhnaoi mhaith' - are presumably sarcastic.

Poem XXI is a straightforward statement of regret that his wife should have been taken from him while he still lives. He pleads to Heaven for mercy on his soul and hers. The poem begins with reference to seeing a vision while unable to sleep: perhaps a vision of his dead wife - nothing further is said about it.

In Poem XXV Gearóid again compares himself to heroes of

the past who have been betrayed by women - in his case, a woman he was in love with has stolen his well-decorated purse and given it to another man. This should discourage one from giving too serious an interpretation to poems XI and XV. Here as in poem XV flattering language is contradicted by the sense of the poem.

Poem XXVI addresses a kinswoman. He uses their relationship as grounds for a request for her intercession on his behalf.

Poem XXIX sets up again the situation of the dissatisfied husband, Fionn, and the young lovers, Diarmaid and Gráinne: messages were carried between them, and Fionn was hardly pleased. This reverberates against Gearóid's own situation in the poem, sending a messenger to a woman. Gearóid ends by saying that his messenger will get every thing he asks from Our Lady, with the implication that this is not the case when one sends a messenger to an earthly woman.

It is clear from these poems that Gearóid enjoyed writing ironically about women and about himself. What is less clear is whether he is imitating anyone when he writes in this style: the question arises because Gearóid is often spoken of as an example of an Irish writer imitating foreign styles. Although this reputation is based on a poem in the Dean's Book it seems appropriate to look at these poems for evidence of new, perhaps foreign, styles in Irish writing. The ironic manner is not on its own proof of any foreign borrowing: it may reflect only a personal choice of style by Gearóid. There is the further possibility that the trained bards wrote works in a more frivolous style than those that have survived, and that Gearóid was drawing primarily on them in choosing the tone of his poems. Finally one comes to

the possibility that Gearóid was making use of popular styles of writing current in fourteenth century Ireland, whether in Irish, English or Anglo-Norman. A taste for parody or mockery might well have been learnt from such sources: popular and semi-popular poetry in any language is likely to have afforded more examples of frivolity and the mock-heroic than the serious office of the court bard gave rise to. However, there is only a little in the subject-matter or choice of detail in these poems to make one turn one's attention to popular poetry. One of the clearest points is the use of a refrain (in poems XI, XII, XIII, XXII and XXV): there is no evidence that this was used in Irish before Gearóid. It would have seemed a crude form of poetic deooration to those writers who worked with complicated systems of assonance, alliteration and metrical patterning and I suggest that Gearóid borrowed it from popular song. One cannot be sure that this popular song was English or Norman rather than Irish.

In another poem (No.XX) Gearóid has lines reminiscent of popular drinking songs:

Is mé féin an t-iarla óg
do-gheibh póg ó mhnáibh ag ól (St.4)

I am the young earl who gets kisses from women when drinking. Drinking songs direct one more firmly towards continental poetry: there are the secular Latin songs of the Codex Buranus[30] and other collections of twelfth and thirteenth century Latin poetry by the Goliardi to provide examples of songs praising the pleasures of drink. French writers took up the theme, both to praise and complain about the effects of drinking (see for example the work of Rutebeuf, fl.1248-77). Gearóid may have been playing with the conventions of such poems, known to him perhaps in Norman French.

Otherwise, material to support a theory that Gearóid imitated popular styles is lacking. Nor is there clear evidence that he was imitating sophisticated poetry in other languages. On the other hand, his many references to the themes of Irish story-telling, and his use of bardic conventions, link him with known Irish traditions. On their own, the poems in the Book of Fermoy indicate only a limited movement away from traditional bardic themes and styles.

Content of the Poems: ii) Poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore

The Book of the Dean of Lismore is a manuscript anthology, apparently compiled between 1512 and 1529 by the Dean of Lismore and his brother.[31] It is written in the 'pre-secretary' hand, i.e. not the usual script in which Irish poems were preserved, and the system of spelling used is not in accord with that used by Irish scribes. These are two among various reasons for thinking that it was written primarily for the compilers' private use. Nine poems are attributed to Gearóid in this manuscript, occurring scattered throughout it.

Three of the poems, Ní fhuil an t-éag[32] (lines on death); Tar isteach a dhreóláin bhig[33] (a conversation with a wren); and Failleagán beag, failleagán[34] (a nonsense rhyme?) are not concerned with women. The others are, and I shall give a brief account of them.

The first of these to be printed from the Dean's text was Mairg do léimas thar a each[35], published in McLauchlan's selections from the Dean's Book in 1862. This poem shows the characteristic Geraldine preference for a refrain - 'ni fheil

feidhm beith ris na mnáibh'[36]. This gives the poem what continuity it has, since it is a string of aphorisms that read as though they were proverbial when the poem was first put together. One of them, the statement that if a woman sees a young man she won't run but leap, recurs in several poems preserved in Scottish manuscripts. (These poems seem to be much later in date and will be mentioned in the next chapter.) The message of the poem, or compilation, is that it is best to stay single: women are of little use; they ignore their husbands, thus provoking them to anger; they are on their best behaviour with anyone else, and run to the company of young men; young women share their kisses too freely; the sacrament of marriage doesn't do them any good - so one might as well leave them alone. This is all fairly mild, and could be paralleled countless times in literature from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, in Latin, French, English, and other languages. Juvenal's Sixth Satire was a constant inspiration; but probably the most influential work on this theme was the twelfth or thirteenth century _De Coniuge Non Ducenda_[37]. Whether this was written in England or on the continent one cannot say; English, French and Scottish writers all translated and imitated it.

It gives a vivid picture of the unmanageable wife - I quote a fifteenth century English translation of two of its lines:

Shrewed wyfes, rayne, and smokes blake,
Makith husbondes there howses to forsake.[38]

This poem, or this type of writing could well have inspired _Mairg do léimeas thar a each_. The element of _De Coniuge_ that _Mairg do léimas_ lacks, the claim that women are sexually insatiable and that this destroys any hope that they will be faithful, was omitted by many of the Latin poem's translators so that its

absence here does not separate Mairg do léimas from the mainstream of European writing on women. Of course, one must consider the possibility that writing of this sort in Irish was an indigenous development, owing little or nothing to foreign literatures. Comparison is made more difficult than usual by the fact that much of these writings sounds proverbial in any language. The whole question requires another thesis for its discussion; but some mention of it seems relevant here, since it raises the problem of whether continental, or English, literature was imitated in Irish in the thirteenth century. A significant difference between writings in Irish of earlier centuries and this poem attributed to Gearóid is that the latter poem is notinterested in discriminating between good and bad women, whereas the earlier gnomic writings are.[39] I suggest that the style of composition that says 'Women/wives are this, that or the other' depends on the upsurge of writings against women found in Latin and various vernaculars from the twelfth century onwards.[40] People who wrote in this style did so knowing that their work would be seen as examples of a literary fashion, not as personal statements or as the distillation of common experience (as the triads were). Hence the inclusion of so much that is trivial, and so much else that is exaggerated, obscuring the core of truthful comment that marriages can be unhappy and that the choice of a wife needs careful thought. Comments on the shrewishness of wives and the flirtatiousness of young girls had rapidly become the stock-in-trade of these poems and required inclusion in a new work to define its genre[41].

A poem like Mairg adeir olc ris na mnáibh[42] is written in specific opposition to this type of poetry - and then scores doubly by showing in its ending that the author is on the side of the

critics, and that all statements to the contrary are ironic. In the text as we have it in the Dean's manuscript the poet begins by praising women and openly disagreeing with those who have said differently: 'dom aithne ní iad do thuill' - 'to my knowledge they did not deserve it'. This theme is given specifically Irish associations in the third quatrain:

Ní dhéanaid fionghal ná feall
ná ní ar a mbeith greann no gráine,
nocha sáraighid cill no clog
mairg adeir olc ris na mnáibh.

They do not engage in kin-slaying or treachery, or anything defiant or shameful; they do not violate church or church-bell - shame on him that speaks evil of women.
Kin-slaying - an offence especially loathful in the eyes of a society like the Irish, based on family units; and frequently singled out for criticism in Irish writings. Sacking of churches- often mentioned in Irish annals, the work of the Irish themselves and of Norse invaders. If the theme of defence of women is foreign, it is being rapidly assimilated to an Irish situation.

By the fifth quatrain we have reached the already familiar theme that a woman prefers a young man; and this takes over for the second half of the poem, although the refrain, asserting the praiseworthiness of women, continues. An old man, says the poet, is no good to them, even if he is rich. The goods of the world are not enough - what they desire is sexual pleasure and nothing else. Thus a poem that began by contradicting the prevailing fashion ends with a conclusionthat repeats the argument of De Coniuge Non Ducenda. The first half of the poem is seen as a rhetorical device for emphasising the eventual criticism - the poem is better constructed than most of its kind.

Mairg a chuirfeadh geall a mnaoi[43] tells how easily women are led into adultery - they'll steal away with a visiting musician. The poet says he'd send his curse with such a woman. Thus instead of the claim that women seek only their sexual desires there is an episode evidencing it.

A bhean na dtrí mbo[44] cannot be assimilated to this pattern; it belongs rather to the traditional Irish and Gaelic practice of satire: straightforward abuse which backed by poetic authority will bring misfortune in the future.

Two poems remain, both of them exercises in double entendre, if I have understood them correctly. In Ní fhéadaim Cobhlaith do ghléas[45] the poet tells us that he can't tune Cobhlaith although his tuning-key would work on plenty of strings. The sexual implication is obvious:[46] Mairg a dhiúltas comhairle chóir[47] makes use of the terminology of a board game, and the need for a player to get 'home'[48]. A further item of special vocabulary used in Mairg a dhiúltas is in the line: 'Dá shaoil féin ghabh gu gort' (St.3) To get into the garden or field (gort) has the same significance here as it has in the French, Irish, and English folksong, namely, to get sexual access to a girl.[49]

As I have indicated, these poems are on themes for which there are no earlier parallels in Irish - and very few counterparts of a later date until one comes to the anonymous, and thus undateable poems in the Dean's Book, and to the work of the known fifteenth and early sixteenth century writers preserved there. This is not on its own sufficient evidence that Gearóid or some unknown contemporary of his, introduced new themes into Irish. Nonetheless, the similarity in tone, already mentioned, between

poems and others in Latin, French, English and Scots creates a strong supposition that Gearóid was imitating a style of writing which first reached Ireland in Latin, French or English. The subject of the origins and influence of writings attacking women is a complex one, and I shall not go into it here. I mention it chiefly because if one accepts that these poems are in a foreign style, it is one of the very few pieces of evidence for the idea that writers of syllabic verse in fourteenth century Ireland knew of , and imitated, foreign poetry. It does not of course immediately follow that among the poems they imitated were ones by Norman French trouvères, or by English lyricists, lamenting ahopeless love, describing the torments of loving unrewarded, or the unresponsiveness of some beautiful woman. Certainly I find it surprising that if Gearóid imitated this type of poetry nothing of it should have been preserved among the variety of poems that have survived with his name attached to them. It has been claimed[50] that Gearóid's poems are to be regarded as love-poems, belonging with(as an 'poetical antithesis') a style of love poetry that originated in Provence. This claim errs partly because it regards the late Irish texts of Gearóid's poem Mairg adeir olc ris na mnáibh as the correct ones, and discounts the text in the Dean's Book, which is much further removed from love poetry; and partly in supposing that poems abusing women arose in reply to 'courtly Love' poetry. F.L. Utley has shown that the attack and defence of women is a separate genre, going back to at least the classical period; he regards the poetry of courtly love as one of the factors that contributed to its flourishing in mediaeval times.[51] It is possible that syllabic writers in fourteenth century Ireland knew of poetry attacking and defending women primarily from Latin sources,[52] and that they did not imitate any poetry of 'fin amour' or of the lover who is constant but

unrewarded.

Against this possibility one must set David Greene's suggestion that at least one poem of *double-entendre* uses a theme that was originally Provençal(see footnote 47). The author that Greene quotes as the earliest literary source for the theme,Guilhem IX,also wrote poems of idealised love.One might argue that French channels of transmission might also have brought his love poetry to Ireland. However,I think a bawdy joke is more likely to pass from one language into another than is a specialised form of love poetry.This example reminds us that French themes were being taken into Irish without settling the question of what those themes were.

Thus,the hypothesis that syllabic writers,whether trained bards or noblemen like Gearóid,were in the fourteenth century imitating poetry that praised women in an exaggerated fashion or that contained incredible statements of their own sufferings(i.e.that they were writing in the fashion of the sixteenth and seventeenth century *dánta grádha*) is not one that can be satisfyingly proved or disproved from Gearóid's poetry.There is rather more to encourage one to believe that Gearóid imitated some types of foreign poetry,Latin,French and English attacks on women,for example,and Norman-French *fabliaux* (tales of the escapades of wives,husbands and lovers). Even here one must admit that we do not know to what extent, if at all,these themes had become naturalised in Irish verse before Gearóid wrote about them.

C.'I MBRAT AN BHROLLAIGH GHIL-SE'

One Irish poem remains for mention:'I mbrat an bhrollaigh ghil-se'(Dánta Grádha No.14).The earliest manuscript source for any part of this poem is a Brussels MS described by Kuno Meyer as belonging to the first half of the seventeenth century.[53] It contains one quatrain from the poem, scribbled on the inside of the cover.The earliest manuscript sources for the full poem are RIA MS 23 A 45(written by Muiris Mac Gorman in 1745) and British Museum MS Egerton 146(written in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries).[54]Professor Kenneth Jackson has however printed the poem with thedescription 'fourteenth century' in his anthology for the general reader,A Celtic Miscellany.[55] This dating,he has let me know, is based on the ascription of the poem in some manuscripts (none of them from before the late eighteenth century)[56]to Fearchar Ó Maoil Chiaráin.Fearchar is a poet of whom we know nothing except what we learn from an elegy apparently written for him by his father('Tugadh oirnn easbaidh mhór').[57] It is not possible to date Fearchar's career from this elegy,beyond saying that he lived at a time when Irish and Scottish families travelled and fought in each other's countries,and thus probably before the end of the sixteenth century.O'Reilly,on unknown evidence, says that Fearchar's father flourished at the end of the fourteenth century;[58] and Professor Jackson has said that he is following O'Reilly in giving this date for 'I mbrat an bhrollaigh ghil-se'.

If the poem does indeed belong to the fourteenth century it provides even less influence for the influence of continental styles on Irish poetry than do Gearóid's poems, and also less evidence for any widening of poetic subject matter.It praises the girl for her beauty,as in any bardic eulogy:'an bhrollaigh ghil-se'/of the white breast;'a Mhór bhéildearg bhinn'/sweet red-lipped Mór;'a ghruaidh dhearg'/

lag ar lí an ómra'/o smooth hair colour of amber.Apart from this it aims only to express affection and admiration.This it does,very successfully;but this means that it is very close in expression to a poem addressed to a patroness - the poem,mentioned in the previous chapter,to a lady's yellow hair,for example.

The only points that make me think it may be intended as a love poem are its brevity(five quatrains only) and its quiet tenderness and lyricism.I suspect that it may be an address to a very young girl,one too young to have had any lovers,and that this is the force of the line:

'a stuaigh chobhsaidh nár chealg fear'/o steadfast graceful girl that has deceived no man.

The poem does not make use of any specialised vocabulary of love,or of the persona of the despairing lover.If a love poem,it shows that at least one strand of Irish love poetry in the fourteenth century was quiet and restrained ,and apparently native in origin.

C H A P T E R T H R E E :

1400-1525

A.The Book of the Dean of Lismore: Love Poems and Others

B.The Love Poems: Content

C.The Love Poems: Background

D.Two Poems of Doubtful Authorship and Date

CHAPTER THREE: 1400-1525

As far as I can find, there are no Irish manuscripts of the fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries containing love poems; nor can one date to this period any of the people to whom poems are ascribed in the _Dánta Grádha_. Discussion in this chapter is therefore confined to poems preserved in Scottish manuscripts: those in the important early sixteenth century Scottish source, the Book of the Dean of Lismore, referred to in the previous chapter; and two poems preserved in later Scottish manuscripts but with ascriptions that raise the possibility that they were written before 1525.

A. THE BOOK OF THE DEAN OF LISMORE: LOVE POEMS AND OTHERS

Apart from the Ossianic ballads, the historical and religious works by Irish and Scottish bards, and the poems of purely Scottish interest (these categories form the bulk of its contents), the manuscript contains many poems, flattering and unflattering, about women. These are the object of my study in this chapter.

Among them I wish to distinguish several categories. Only the first of these consists of poems I call love poems; but I shall briefly describe all of them in order to establish the basis on which I have distinguished love poems from others, and also in order to set out what they show about the origins of various types of unofficial verse in the Dean's Book. Scarcely any of these poems have been edited, or printed in any form but the Dean's own spelling. Presumably for this reason there has been very little discussion of the content or background of these poems [1] and I therefore decided to set out here my own understanding of their subject-matter before moving to any discussion of their literary origins.

a. The first category is a group of seven poems in which the poet imagines a relationship between himself and one other person, and describes this relationship as Love. In five of these the speaker is a man; in two, both attributed to Iseabal Ní Mheic Cailéin, the speaker is a woman. Only one of these poems is completely anonymous; another is ascribed to 'Fer eiggin surreycht' /'A certain suitor', which may mean the scribe did not

know who wrote it, or it may be intended to conceal an identity known to the Dean and his friends. The remaining five are ascribed to Scottish authors: Iseabal Ní Mheic Cailéin; Mac Cailéin, Earl of Argyll; Donnchadh Mac Cailéin, and Eóin Mac Mhuirich. All of these are contemporaries of the Dean and his brother. Professor Watson has made suggestions as to the identities of the three Campbells mentioned[2]; and Eoin Mac Mhuirich is generally thought to be the Johannes MacMurich whose name occurs repeatedly in Kintyre records between 1505 and 1541.[3] This grouping of Scottish authors encourages the thought that the two anonymous poems may also be from Scotland.

The poems in this group are:

A bhean dá dtugas-sa grádh: Mac Cailéin, Iarla Earraghàidheal[4]

Atá fleasgach ar mo thí: Iseabal Ní Mheic Cailéin[5]

Fada atú i n-easbhaidh aoibhnis: Anon[6]

Is mairg dan galar an grádh: Iseabal Ní Mheic Cailéin[7]

Námha dhomh an dán: Eóin Mac Mhuirich[8]

Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin: Donnchadh Mac Cailéin[9]

Thugas ró-ghrádh do mhnaoi fir: Fear éigin suirgheacht[10]

These poems are discussed in detail later in the chapter.

b. In this category I place poems that generalise about women and their behaviour - often with the specific complaint that women have no time for men who are too old to satisfy them sexually. This group shares some of the assumptions about woemen seen in

poems in other categories, but is more wide-ranging and unpredictable in subject-matter.

None of the poems in these category is completely anonymous. Six of them are ascribed to people with clearly Scottish names: Eóin Mac Mhuirich, Donnchadh Mac Cailéin, Ailéin Mac Dhubhghaill Bháin and Donnchadh Mac Kermont. The remaining one is ascribed to An Pearsún/The Parson, which suggests a cleric in the Dean's circle of friends.

These names show that a group of people in Perthshire-Argyllshire (the area associated with the Dean's own career)[11] were in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries interested in composing anti-feminist poems. The closest parallels known to me within classical Irish are ones by Gearóid Iarlà, referred to in the previous chapter; and this lack of evidence for a consistent and continuing Irish tradition may lead one to wonder whether the Scottish writers were following some other stronger tradition - that of contemporary Middle Scots for example, or mediaeval Latin.

In considering this question several things are to be noted. It is obvious that the preferences of scribes and the purpose for which a manuscript was written, will have played some part in determining what was preserved out of Irish literary tradition. Were there to have been preserved in Ireland any personal anthology of early classical poetry such as the Dean's Book seems to have been there would be a greater chance of finding in it poems that reflected the literary interests of people who were not practising

bards, or that provided evidence of ephemeral literary fashions followed by bards and amateurs. The argument from silence can be used in different ways.

Furthermore, traditions of attacking women in this way are common to almost every European Literature, deriving from perennial interests in the sex war and from the specific influence of different works in Latin. A.M. Kingborn points this out when discussing Dunbar's "Tretis of the Twa Mariit Wemen and the Wedo":

'The Poet's attitude is akin to that of mediaeval clerics in the tradition of St. Jerome, who condemned women for their supposedly insatiable sensuality. There is, moreover, a strong 'literary' ring about the poem, which burlesques the romances by making the women spiritual heirs to the Wife of Bath, in her own turn one of a long line of predatory females whose ultimate source is Ovid - eg Anus in the twelfth century Latin play Pamphilus, De Amore; la Vieille in Le Roman de la Rose; Ghismonda in Boccaccio's Decamerone (1st story, 4th day); the six old women in Les Evangiles des Quenouilles (c. 1450); la Belle Hèaulmiére in Villon's Testament; Celestina in de Rojas' Spanish tragedy. The lines contain many echoes from ballad, proverbial and romance sources as well as the deliberate taking-off of rhetorical formulas ...'[12]

It is not necessary that Ireland followed European fashion in this respect; but it would be surprising if she did not, when so much of the basic material circulated wherever Latin was read (some Latin items on the theme appear on p. 219 of the Dean's Book).

Having noted that more may have been written in Irish than has been preserved, I return to more certain ground in mentioning the material that exists in Middle Scots for comparison. The half century before the compilation of the Dean's Book produced several compositions criticising women, often in very bitter terms. The 'Tretis of the Twa Mariit Wemen and the Wedo' by Dunbar (c. 1460-c.1513)[13] shows women as uninterested in anything but sexual pleasure, and never satisfied; the 'Testament of Cresseid' by Henryson (c. 1420-c.1490) is pessimistic about the chances of finding a faithful woman. The last mentioned poem, and several others more clearly against women than Henryson, is quoted in the Dean's Book[14]; the compilers of the manuscript were evidently aware of the Middle Scots writings - although they may have known oft-quoted tags rather than whole poems - and if, as seems possible, some of the Gaelic poets I have named were their friends, these poets may have known of the same writings. Possibilities of cultural interchange between powerful Gaelic families and the Scottish court or Lowland Scots speakers have been little investigated; but if any family was well placed to take advantage of non-Gaelic culture it was the Campbells, who frequently held office under the Scottish King and were therefore involved in the life of Edinburgh and Lowland Scotland (Colin, 2nd Earl of Argyll was Master of the Household to James V, as his father was to James IV). Those writers who, like the compilers of the Dean's Book, the MacGregors, were clerics will also have had more than usual opportunities for studying, and keeping in touch with, life outside the Highlands. The usual problems of whether material comparable in content is strictly comparable in date remain.

Many of the Scots items are anonymous, and preserved in a manuscript

somewhat later in date than the Dean's Book - the Bannatyne Manuscript, compiled by George Bannatyne in Edinburgh in 1568.[15] For the period in which the Gaelic writers seem to have been composing, the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Dunbar and Henryson are almost the only Scots anti-feminist writers that can be named. However, the quotations in the Dean's Book provide some evidence that other much less highly skilled poets were at work on the same theme.[16] I conclude that the Gaelic writers may have been aware of Scots writings against women, and may have thought of themselves as contributing to this type of poetry.

This possibility does not contradict a hypothesis such as I want to put forward, that their primary inspiration was in Gaelic writing. It is obvious that the language and poetic techniques are those of the common Irish-Scottish literary tradition; but the references that create some of the poems are also Irish, and the tone of all of them is closer to known Irish styles than to anything in Scots or in other mediaeval European writings about women.

One of the poems, Maith do chuid, a charbaid mhaoil, is by Eóin Mac Mhuirich. The Mac Mhuirichs were a family of trained hereditary bards, with close and constant Irish connections.[17] If any of the poets mentioned in this chapter is likely to have known of bardic literary interests, and to have imitated them, it is Eóin Mac Mhuirich; and in proof of this I find in his poem a line that might belong to bardic eulogy:

iomhaigh gheal 7 béal dearg/white face and red mouth
(St. 8b)

His love poem, Námha dhomh an dán, to be described in detail later, gives further evidence of bardic training. It is this writer who has a poem here complaining that old men have no chance with women. Maith do chuid seems to be a conversation between an old man and a young one. The old man envies the younger his ability to make conquests: the young man can be 'póg ri póg is slios ri slios' (kiss to kiss and side to side) with a woman. The young man points out, using examples from Irish hero-tales and romances, that only the young and active win success. The opposition of age and youth in women's eyes is thus given a wholly Irish colouring. For the reflective tone, and the emphasis that the world belongs to the young and beautiful, one might compare some of the dialogues between Patrick and Oisín, or the Hag of Beare's soliloquy. There is nothing in this poem to make one think it has progenitors outside Irish literary tradition.

Two of the poems in this group refer to Eve, the prototype of troublesome women. Although the preoccupations of these poets are different from those of the writer of the Middle Irish poem Mé Éba ben Ádaim uill,[18] the poems in the Dean's Book lack also the vindictiveness of most mediaeval European writings on Eve. Donnchadh Mac Cailéin's Fada ó mhalluigh Dia na mná is an exuberant composition on the theme that at all times and in all places women are cursed; and in Créad fá seachainn-sa suirghe An Pearsún offers a series of examples, from the Bible, from classical antiquity, and from Irish story, showing how women have been unkind, even treacherous, to men - none of which is going to stop him from trying

his own wiles against them, he says. Both these poems show the Irish fondness for accumulating parallels until they form the main content of the poem; and I note that An Pearsún uses the bardic descriptive style:

a luchd nan bán-chneas bréige St. 6b

a bhanntracht an fhoilt fhiar bhuige St. 12b

'people of the lying white skin' and 'women of the soft ruffled hair'. ('Fiar' can also mean 'wicked/perverse', and this sense too may be in the poet's mind, as a mocking undertone to his description).

Both these poems are chiding, rueful, rather than stern or abusive; which suggests a closer connection with Irish traditions than with Middle Scots.

The remaining poems are less obviously linked to items of Irish writing; but all appeal to the reader's sense of humour, and all represent sophisticated exercises on the theme of women versus men. One poet expresses different viewpoints in the form of a dialogue between husband and wife (Sgéal beag agam ar na mnáibh); another poet claims he is the husband whose wife has lost interest in him now he cannot satisfy her sexually (Mairg ó ndeachaidh a léim lúith), and Tuig gura feargach an t-éad looks at jealousy as it is seen in general categories: the old man with a young wife, the old wife with a young husband, the rich, the poor, the noble, the peasant. Atá adhbhar fá na mnáibh is the experienced man's statement about the ways of women. The writers expect that readers will be familiar with their themes, and that they will appreciate

varieties of treatment. This suggests that they are working within an established tradition in the Irish literary language, not that they are introducing foreign ways of writing, and struggling to adapt them to Irish conventions. Unknown is the extent to which themes favoured by writers in Scotland had diverged from those of Ireland. Special factors may have made anti-feminist writing particularly popular in late fifteenth century Argyllshire and Perthshire; but the indications are that it was flourishing in Irish before then.

The poems I have placed in this category are:

Atá adhbhar fá na mnáibh: Donnchadh Mac Cailein [19]
Créad fá seachainn-sa suirghe: An Pearsún [20]
Fada ó mhalluigh Dia na mná: Donnchadh Mac Cailéin [21]
Mairg ó ndeachaidh a léim lúith: Donnchadh Mac Cailéin [22]
Maith do chuid, a charbaid mhaoil: Eóin Mac Mhuirich [23]
Sgéal beag agam ar na mnáibh: Ailéin Mac Dhubhghaill Bháin [24]
Tuig gura feargach an t-éad: Donnchadh Mac Kermont [25]

c. The lack of any humorous intention is the qualifying characteristic of the poems in this next category, which also criticise women but do not refer to the commonplaces of the sex war. Two of them are ascribed to the same man, An Bard Mac an tSaoir, of whom nothing is known except what can be learnt from his poems. These show that he had Perthshire connections; and that he was able to write in the manner of a stern preacher. Nothing but quotation can do justice to the densely-packed nature of his poems:

Cread é an lucht úd san luing dhuibh
'gá tarraing idir tonnaibh?
an lucht gan chaidreabh gan chéill,
bantracht an aigne aimhréidh.
Buidhean bhrosgalach bhruidhneach
labhar dhuanach dhíochuimhneach
shiorrach chonasach chíocrach
ghionach dhona dhroichíotach.
Drochlorg as labhrach fá leann,
cóisreach cleamhnánach coitcheann;
fleasg a gcomhrádha gan chonn,
measgach amhránach éadtrom.

... Bean mhaith ní lamhadh san luing,
lughaide a h-éigean againn:
bíd na mná as measa ar an mhuir
feasta gan chách 'gá gcabhair.

... Fágmaid ar an sruth síonach
an long dhona dhroichdhíonach
's a lán do bhantracht na mbéad
san sál gan salm gan sáilchréad.

What is yon crew in the black ship, pulling her among the waves? - A crew without fellowship, without sense, a woman-band of mind disordered.

A band loud-voiced and talkative, loquacious, chanting, negligent; flighty, quarrelsome, greedy, ravenous, evil, of ill desires.

A bad stock, wordy over ale, given to feasting, matchmaking, and common; the thread of their discourse is without sense, they are drunken, songful, light-headed.

... A good woman would not venture into the ship - the less, methinks, her danger; the worst of women are ever on the sea, with none other helping them.

... Let us leave on the stormy stream the evil leaky ship, and its load of noxious women, in the brine, without psalm or sea-creed.[26]

He overwhelms his audience with examples of the vices found in women, and in this shows some resemblance to the early Irish gnomic writings (<u>Fuath liom bheith anmoch ag triall</u>, the third poem that I have grouped here, is the closest parallel in the Dean's Book to that style of writing; the Scotsman who wrote it adds some more contemporary and localised examples of things hateful to him, but accepts a structure for his poem that is scarcely changed from the time the Triads were compiled). The structure of the Bard Macintyre's poems leads comparison in another direction, towards continental writing. In both <u>Créad í an long-sa</u> and <u>Tánaig long ar Loch Raithneach</u> the poet is visualising a ship full of bad women, seen on a Scottish loch. No reason is given for their coming there: this is the direct attack on an audience's senses and imagination commonly used by a preacher - evil is near at hand, evil may be seen any day, <u>you</u> or <u>you</u> may have witnessed what I am about to describe'. The obvious literary parallel is with Sebastian Brant's <u>Das Narrenschiff</u> (first published in Basle in 1494).[27] This work uses the allegorical idea of a ship full of different types of

fool as the structure for a poem criticising foolishness and viciousness of various sorts, and was much imitated. A writer in Scotland in the early sixteenth century might have known one of several French imitations (these began to be made in the late fifteenth century) or the English versions of Alexander Barclay (The Shyp of folys of the worlde, late 1508 or early 1509) or Henry Watson (The Shyppe of Fooles, 1509). Other translations or adaptations were made into Latin, German, Dutch and Flemish, and the Latin translation in particular ensured that the work rapidly became known and admired. While the idea of isolating wicked people on a ship in order to write an attack on them was known before Brant's time[28] and need not be dependent on him, some very powerful literary fashion, such as that created by the publication of Brant's book, was probably necessary to make a Scottish poet of the fifteenth or early sixteenth century write in this style when the much more obvious model for him to follow, if he wanted to recount women's vices, was that of the Triads and Sayings of Cormac.

These two poems then are among those that provide strong suggestion that writers in syllabic verse in the period before 1525 were introducing foreign cultural fashions into the Scottish branch of Gaelic literature.

The poems mentioned here are:

Créad í an long-sa ar Loch Inse: An Bard Mac an tSaoir[29]
Fuath liom bheith anmoch ag triall: Anon[30]
Tánaig long ar Loch Raithneach: An Bard Mac an tSaoir[31]

d. In this category I place poems of sexual fantasy, ones whose humour is based on some aspect of, or some way of describing, sexual activity. For several of them the basic joke is that priests should be presented as mong the most sexually active people in society. The most mild-spoken of these is a quatrain in which the poet complains that he went to the monastery yesterday and was not allowed in because his 'wife' was not with him (*Do chuaidh mise, Roibeart féin*). Another claims to be a flattering description by the Countess Isabella of the sexual powers of her chaplain (*Eistibh, a lucht an tighe-se*); and another imagines all the Church's representatives as exacting their sexual dues from the faithful (*Mairg bean nach bí ag aon sagart*). These poems are not at all vindictive; they do not display the fervour of the moral or social reformer; and for this reason I have not put them in any separate category of anti-clerical verse. Their aim is simply to entertain. They are the product of a society in which priests are important, but not one which wishes to be rid of them.

Other poems set out to amuse in different ways. *Bod brioghmhar atá ag Donnchadh* is an adjectival tour-de-force in praise of Donnchadh's penis (it is by Donnchadh Mac Cailéin - the poet is here presumably his own hero). *Mór tubaist na táiblisge* recounts a meeting between the poet and an unknown beautiful woman. As in the best sexual fantasies, she offers herself to the poet unasked; and their intercourse is described in the terms of a game of backgammon or 'tables'.

For most of these poems I see no point in looking for literary relationships. John Fox says of a poem by the Provençal poet Guilhem IX that it shows "the sexually obsessed bawdiness of

an essentially male milieu without the slightest pretension to refinement or courtly behaviour"[32] (Guilhem's poem is about a man who pretends to be dumb for a week so as to persuade two women that if they take him as a sexual partner he will not gossip afterwards). Guilhem's poem and John Fox's comment are reminders that poems of sexual fantasy may be written at any time, in any language, and may have little to do with the particular literary fashions that the poet follows in the rest of his work. They depend chiefly on individual quirks of taste and on confidence in a ready-to-hand appreciative audience. It is interesting that, so far as I know, nothing quite like these poems is preserved in classical Irish manuscripts in Ireland; but I do not regard this as conclusive proof that the Scottish poets were following non-Irish traditions. Instead there are a few points that suggest that these poems represent yet another aspect of Irish bardic literary history, one which because of scribal prejudice was not preserved in Ireland. First of all there is the resemblance between the preoccupations of these poems and some of those by Gearóid Iarla, mentioned in the last chapter. Secondly, the poem _Mór tubaist na táiblisge_ has details that link it with Irish tradition. It is set in Ireland (St. 2: Lá éigin dá rabhassa/ag siubhal críche Fódla - One day as I was traversing Ireland); and it uses the bardic vocabulary for physical description (Stt. 3a, 10c, 11d). One of its stanzas consists of a riddle based on Irish names for the letters of the alphabet, the answer to be the girl's name - David Greene has deciphered it as Róis. This type of riddle occurs in several of the _dánta grádha_, and in a poem from the Dean's Book by a member of a bardic family. I regard it as an essentially Irish and Bardic feature. It seems quite possible that it was

composed in Ireland and that like Gearóid's poems it was preserved in the Dean's Book rather than anywhere else because it appealed to the manuscript's compilers. Thirdly, the first line of the quatrain D'fhiosraigh inghean an fhuilt fhinn contains another reference to the fair-haired woman of convention. Such vocabulary could of course be introduced by someone who was familiar with it into any type of poetry; but it is as possible that its appearance here means that writers were accustomed to mixing bawdy themes and bardic conventions.[33]

There is thus the possibility that in this instance the Dean's Book preserves aspects of Irish tradition not known from other sources -a point that is relevant to any consideration of the love poetry in the manuscript. The poems also could be seen as evidence that the poets in the Dean's circle were more ready than many to write on frivolous themes, and to adapt those themes to their own social circumstances (as in the poems about priests, chaplains, etc). This too raises interesting questions for an assessment of the love poetry.

The poems in this category are:

A shagairt na h-aonphóige: Donnchadh Mac Cailéin [34]
Bod brioghmhar atá ag Donnchadh: Donnchadh Mac Cailéin [35]
D'fhiosraigh inghean an fhuilt fhinn: Anon [36]
Do chuaidh mise Roibeard féin: Anon [37]

Eistibh, a lucht an tighe-se: Iseabal Ní Mheic Cailéin [38]

Lá do bhí an sionnach cian uaidh: Anon [39]

Mairg bean nach bí ag aon sagart: Donnchadh mac Dhubhghaill Mhaoil [40]

Mór tubaist na táiblisge: Anon [41]

I have not included in this brief account all of the secular and unofficial poems about women that appear in the Dean's Book. Some of the remainder are quatrains or brief items on women known to the writers. They tell us something about attitudes to women and ways of writing about them but are not of major importance in the discussion as I have conducted it. A poem which stands on its own is Domhnall Liath Mac Ghriogóir's Tá triúr cailín as grinn glór[42], a satire (in the Celtic sense of a poem of abuse) on three named women. There are others that I have not managed to decipher; but as far as I am aware I have not omitted anything that could be called a love poem or which would alter the balance of the material I have presented.

B. THE LOVE POEMS: CONTENT

a. <u>A bhean dá dtugus-sa grádh</u>

This poem, expressing a more untroubled state of mind than any of the others in this group, is ascribed to Mac Cailéin, Earl of Argyll ('Autor Mac Callein erle of Ergyle' says the manuscript). Unfortunately this is not sufficient to date the poem any more closely than to the period 1455-1525. The first Earl was Colin, from 1457 to 1493. Since it is thought that it was his wife who composed three other poems in the Dean's Book,[43] two of them love poems, he deserves consideration as a possible author. The second Earl, Archibald, 1493-1513, is probably the earl referred to elsewhere in the manuscript in a poem which urges that only skilful poems be shown to Mac Cailéin.[44] Professor Watson interprets this as praise of Mac Cailéin as 'a shrewd and competent critic of poetry' (<u>SVBD</u>, p. xvii), which I feel may be reading too much into the lines. Mac Cailéin's status would surely demand that only the best was shown to him in any sphere. At the very least the lines indicate a man who could appreciate poetry in the syllabic metres - and thus who might also have written in them. The dates of the third Earl, Colin, 1513-1533, mean that he must also be a candidate for authorship.

The content of the poem is clear: a man addresses a woman, a woman to whom he has given love (a bhean dá dtugus-sa grádh), and puts a question to her. Thus we are asked to imagine two lovers, talking freely: this gives a certain piquancy to the question, which is 'Do you prefer a man who is impotent, but yours forever;

or someone who can satisfy you sexually, but leaves you every morning?' The girl says she would like to have both: the man's love, _and_ sexual pleasure. The questioner is not satisfied; he repeats his question more concisely: 'which is it to be, love or sex?' The girl disposes of the problem by saying one cannot have love without sex (Cead aobhar an ghráidh an bod /Sexual desire is the first cause of love. 5d). The first speaker is not displeased: he asks for the blessing of the poets (cleir 6d), and of Mary on her, and gives her his own blessing.

The whole poem is a private _jeu d'esprit_, in which the male speaker is shown, not as criticising the woman, but as sharing her attitude - we deduce from the unruffled ending that he puts himself into the category of lovers who can give satisfaction. The reader, an eavesdropper, never addressed directly, is drawn into a private conversation, not a public debate. In this the poem differs markedly from the earlier _Mairg adeir olc ris na mmáibh._ Some things are taken for granted, notably the idea that lovers may pledge themselves to a woman; but we do not know whether this is intended to refer to the relationship of a marriage contract or to mere protestations of devotion. It would not be out of keeping with the tone of many of the poems in the manuscript if the poet were opposing the situation of husband and lover.

A bhean dá dtugus-sa grádh suggests, particularly in its elliptical relationship to the reader, a writer who is confident of being understood and appreciated. This may be because he was conscious of being one of a group of people writing for each other; but I think a diachronic continuity is manifest as well as a synchronic one. If poetry defining one's relationship with a woman

was appreciated it was because writer and audience were familiar with earlier examples - in the language and metre of the present poem, and not merely with suggestions for composition in other languages or in vernacular song. The other examples of love poetry that I am about to mention also suggest a sophisticated, practised, tradition of poetry, not the uncertainties or abruptnesses of a period of major innovation (some of the poems ascribed to Gearóid Iarla have more of the latter characteristics).

Aspects of A bhean dá dtugus-sa grádh that are echoed in some of the other examples are the humorous accents in the poet's voice; and the stress on physical longing/physical satisfaction as part of a relationship between lovers.

b. Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin

Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin is a soft-spoken presentation of a tricky situation: the speaker has sent his close friend as a messenger to the woman he loves - and the friend has not returned. We are told that instead of being an intermediary he became the actor: his lips met hers, he had the chance to do all that the writer would have promised to do. The speaker is something less than heartbroken. He compares his friend with the bird that went out from the ark and did not return, a comparison whose unexpectedness in a love-poem suggests the wit rather than the passionate lover. He ends by telling himself that he will have to meditate on Christ's sufferings; but this is not a victory for the religious over the secular frame of mind, for it is only till Judgement Day (Lá Luain 7a) that he sees the need for this. It is his friend's sins rather than his own that trouble him.

The sober conclusion is only another way of deflating the whole situation, reducing the pretensions of lover and messenger: one is reminded of Gearóid's essays in the mock-heroic.

The poem is ascribed to Donnchadh Mac Cailéin, elsewhere called An Ridire Math, and identified by Watson[45] as Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy, 1443-1513. Possible dates for the poem's composition are thus much the same as for the first one mentioned - ?1465-1513. Whereas only one other poem is ascribed to the Earl of Argyll, several are ascribed to Sir Duncan, some of them mentioned already in this chapter; another is edited by Watson[46]. Taken as a whole they suggest someone confident of his ability to handle in syllabic metres any topic that appealed to him - someone who was presumably familiar with a range of syllabic poetry: and who experiments with different styles of writing.

The atmosphere evoked by the poem is similar to that of the first one: a relaxed ambience in which one has time to send envoys, and reflect on their failure to return. Love is a relaxation, not a torment.

c. Thugas ro-ghrádh do mhnaoi fir

The remaining poems offer different views; left unrewarded, the poet finds himself openly asking for our sympathy 'Nach truagh atá mé? 'Am I not to be pitied?', he asks in the poem now under consideration (St. 1d); and this is a theme developed in two further poems. The present speaker tells us that he has given love

to a married woman and that it is the worst thing possible under the sun. The poem is brief, three quatrains only, and he does not elaborate on his situation, as do those later Irish poets who tell us of their sleepless nights, failing appetite; nor does he suggest that his devotion gives him any claim on the woman, either now or in the future. Instead he sums up the impossibility that his love will ever come to anything: he cannot mention it to her (1c), he dare not name her (2d), she is not his (3d); and his only appeal is to the twelve Apostles. If anything he regrets his love (3d). The poem does not depend for its appreciation on a knowledge of solely poetic conventions: all the ideas expressed in it arise from the initial premise, accepted at most times and places, that love for a woman who is already married to someone else causes problems. What one might deduce from it is that such impossible love was regarded as a suitable subject for poetic composition.

The poem is ascribed only to 'Fer eiggin surreycht'/A certain suitor. Since the speaker is telling us that he can never become a suitor of the woman he loves, this heading sounds like a wry comment on the nature of the poem. It gives no help as to dating.

d. Fada atú i n-easbhadh aoibhnis

This is another anonymous poem about a hopeless love. This time we are not told anything about who the woman is or why the speaker's situation is so unsatisfactory. His interest is in elaborating the paradoxes of his state. He cannot call himself alive or dead (3d); his body is alive but his soul has parted from him (4cd); he cannot hear anyone around him, or see any-

thing, whether likeable or dislikeable (5a-d); he cannot see anyone he prefers to the chosen one, and he does not like anyone he sees (6a-c); there is no hope or protection for him (cha dúil is cha díon domhsa 6d). All he can do is make his plea in the final stanza to Mary and St Catherine to help him (7a-c). He has been long without pleasure/gladness (7d).

This was the idea with which he opened - pleasure evades him and he thinks himself a long way off from it (1 ab). Like the previous writer he appeals to us: 'Cá bhfuil cunnradh as cruaidhe?' Where is there a worse situation between two people? (1 d). Later he speaks of his sickness - and its uniqueness (4 ab); but this is not a poem of self-pity or gloom any more than the previous one was. Its aim is to entertain us with the professed paradoxes of the lover's situation, and to use language wittily. He plays with 'aon-neach' ('any-one' and 'everyone' but not the 'one person' who has caused all this) as Eóin Mac Mhuirich plays with 'dán' in the next poem. He does not, as do some of the writers in the Dánta Grádha, give the impression that his paradoxes are already conventional; but this may be as much a matter of his skill as of their fresh appearance in syllabic poetry.

e. Námha dhomh an dán

The clear statement in the last poem that unsatisfied love is like a sickness is amplified in this poem, by Eóin Mac Mhuirich. Earlier I referred to the identification of this poet with the Johannes McMurich who held land in South Kintyre, 1505-1541. In the 1541 record he is referred to as McMurech Albany, which

Professor Thomson interprets as an indication that he was 'the chief living poet, the <u>ollamh</u>, of his family' at the time[47]. These dates suggest that the poem was composed in the first quarter of the sixteenth century; but as the records from which this information is taken do not exist before 1505 Johannes McMurich may have been 'flourishing' well before this time, McLauchlan (p. 112) suggests that a quatrain by Eóin (<u>Fir Alban 's ní h-iad amháin</u>)[48] belongs to 'about the middle of the fifteenth century'; but this is fairly conjectural.

According to this identification, Eóin Mac Mhuirich was a trained bard. The vocabulary of his poem bears this out. In St. 2 he plays with the senses of the word 'dán' poem/fate, and in so doing lets us know that he attended a bardic school:

> Beag a shaoil an sgoil,
> mo dhán a dhol fo bhéim;
> An dán tarla ruinn,
> is é do mhill mé.

Little thought the school that my poem/fate would be flawed; the fate/poem that has chanced on me, that's what has destroyed me (and also, probably, 'that's what I have destroyed', continuing the pun on 'dán').

His poem is the only one in this category to use the bardic vocabulary of description. The girl whose memory now torments him, had 'skin like the foam of the waves' (cneas mar chobhar tonn 4c); her hand was rounded (glac chorr 4d) her cheeks were red (gruaidh dearg 4d); and her lips the colour of wild

strawberries (Béal ar dath na subh 5a). This picture is wholly in keeping with the descriptions listed from the period before 1400, and adds nothing to them.

The poet's sad state seems to originate in a vision of a woman while he was asleep the previous night:

ó chodlus-sa a-réir
truagh, a Dhé, mo chor.

Since I went sleep last night, sad, O God, my plight 5cd

He thought she was beside him, although she was not; when he woke at daybreak and found she was not there, sorrow took hold of him (6a-d). He would rather have her than anything else the poets have praised (8-10).

As a result, he is destroyed (2d), suffering pain (1d), (possibly) wasting away (5d); he is sorrowful (6d), he is angry and resentful (4b); and it is interesting to note that he complains, not of the woman's treatment of him, but of Fate's. The woman's existence is solely that of a beautiful vision.

St. 7 consists of a riddle giving the woman's name in the form of letters from the Irish alphabet - an as yet undeciphered riddle. This instance and the one in Mór tubaist na táiblisge are the two earliest occurrences known to me of the device; but it seems from this poem that it was already conventional - its inclusion here has no great relevance to the poem's theme of

suffering and deprivation, but it was evidently something that in bardic composition went with the vocabulary of beauty and visions of beautiful women. Riddles with letters seem to have appealed to writers in syllabic metres: one is printed by O'Rahilly as Dánfhocail, No. 93, taken from RIA MSS, and some more are printed by O'Grady in the British Museum Catalogue I, p. 611. Two more occur in NLS 72.1.36 fol. 115a. Often they have nothing to do with women's names; so I regard the appearance of the riddle in love-poetry as just one of the many uses to which it was put. It was an aspect of Irish fondness for word-play; and one that was probably particularly favoured by the bards, who liked showing-off with words.

Of all the poems in this category, this is the one that suggests most clearly the existence of a corpus of such poetry, from which conventions are borrowed. Unfortunately, very little ascribed to Eóin Mac Mhuirich has survived and one cannot be sure that the poet is in each case the same man. There is Maith do chuid, a charbaid mhaoil, discussed above; a quatrain in praise of Alexander Mac Gregor (Fir Alban). Possibly additions to a canon of his poetry are the poem by the Dean of Knoydart attacking Angus Og's murderer; and an elegy for the Clanranald chief, Alan and Ranald[49]. Thus one has no other chance to see these themes in his own poetry. But the implication of his stylised and witty treatment of a lover's dismay is that it was an accepted and established theme, to which a bard might try to give his own colouring.

f. Is mairg dá ngalar an grádh & Atá fleasgach ar mo thí

These final two poems differ in tone, though not in content, from most of the others discussed. They are closest to Thugas roghrádh do mhnaoi fir, in that they are both simple expositions of unhappy situations, by someone interested in the sharp delineation of emotions, not in wit or word-play. In both the speaker is a woman. Is mairg dá ngalar an grádh is a quick sketch of the problem of a love that must be secret. The speaker refers to her sickness (1a), her sad plight (1d); her bloom will fade if no relief comes (2cd); she fears being made to suffer (mental) pain (3cd). We have seen this vocabulary already in Eóin Mac Mhuirich's poem; but it manages to seem new-minted here. 'Biaidh mo bhláth go tana truagh' (2d) is not a cliche of this sort of poetry; and the phrase 'my bloom, my flowering' is particularly appropriate in a woman's mouth. The reference to pain has its own individual note - 'if he, the man I love, puts me in pain, may he have a hundred times my cause for grieving'. 'Péin' is not just a word with the appropriate connotations for a description in poetry, it is vividly imagined and wished on another. These are the touches that make the poem seem freshly thought-out, not dependent on other people's boundaries of poetic meaning. A fresh imaginative effort has been made in each of the poems I have described in this group.

In Is mairg ... we are not told why the love must not be spoken of aloud; in Atá fleasgach ar mo thí we are not told why the lovers are separated; but physical distance there is:

... ní éadtrom gan a luing,

... esan soir is mise siar,

mar nach dtig ar riar a rís (3acd)

It is not easy unless his ship come ... he is east and I am west, so that our mutual desire comes not to pass again.[50]

The amount left unsaid defines the sort of poem the poet wants to write: an expressive lyric, not a poem that incorporates description or narration. As did the utterances of Liadáin and Cuirithir, this implies a sophisticated tradition of love-poetry, one no longer dependent on the primary interest of plot or dialogue.

There is no obscurity about what the speaker wants: physical contact, satisfaction of our desire/what we want to happen (ar riar 3d).

Atá fleasgach ar mo thí,
a Rí na ríogh go rí leis!
a bheith sínte ré mo bhroinn
agus a choim ré mo chneis!

There is a youth intent upon me; King of Kings, may he come to fortune! (1 a-d) Would that he were stretched by my body, his breast to my breast! [51]

The word-play with 'rí' in the second line of that quatrain reminds us that this is a writer making full use of the words she

chooses. And the repetition there is balanced, made more effective, by the variation in the next lines from 'broinn'/ breast to 'coim'/breast to 'cneis'/skin.

Both poems are attributed to Iseabal Ní Mhic Cailéin, whom John Carmichael Watson[52] has identified as Isabel Stewart, the wife of the first Earl of Argyll, and aunt to Donnchadh Mac Cailéin, to whom so many poems are attributed. As J. C. Watson says, Isabel might also refer to the daughter of the first Earl, or to the daughter of the second Earl, both of whom were called Isabel, and might have been writing in time for their poems to be included in the Dean's Book. If the identification with the first Earl's wife is accepted, the poems will have been written some time in the second half of the fifteenth century - Colin was Earl of Argyll from 1457 to 1493.

C. THE LOVE POEMS: BACKGROUND

These are the first poems to survive in Early Modern Irish that I feel can be described, without argument, as love poems. I have stressed, in my presentation of their content, the probability that they belong to a sophisticated literary tradition. The question arises: where did that tradition come from? Who, if anyone, were these Scottish poets imitating?

There are general reasons for thinking that whatever appears in syllabic verse in Scotland has come at some earlier date from Ireland. The connection between the bardic systems in the two countries is known to have been strong: bards travelled in each other's territories, wrote poems in each other's countries, addressed to, or about, the chieftain of the area they were in. The ruling families of Gaelic Scotland and of the north of Ireland intermarried and took part in each other's feuds - which might mean that a Scottish chieftain could be found fighting in the south of Ireland. A common culture was inherited and subsequently shared; and one of the results of this was the survival of a common literary language, ie Early Modern Irish syllabic verse, from the south of Ireland to the west of Scotland. It is not just a linguistic medium that was shared: literary themes, poetic structures, social codes and a complete cosmogony were held in common. Any study of bardic eulogies and elegies surviving from Scotland will show that their authors observed centuries-old conventions as fiercely as in Ireland; some Scottish poets seem to have done part of their bardic training in Ireland.

The specific topic of love poetry gives scope for consideration in relation to other traditions as well as the Irish. Unlike eulogy, elegy and satire it is not a ritualistic or ceremonial mode. It is more likely to vary from century to century and from country to country, even when the language in which it is written is shared, for when writing it the poet is not tied to past forms and formulae as he is by his relationship with his patron and the social structure they are both part of when writing a eulogy. A bardic reputation is not won or lost by the writing of love poetry. The fact that only one of the authors of the love poems in the Dean's Book belonged to a bardic family provides a further reason why the content and tone of those love poems might have diverged from anything being written in Ireland, or even elsewhere in Scotland, at the same time. Poets who had not undergone bardic training will have felt less compulsion to imitate the matter or the manner of bardic writing. On the other hand, if amateur poets, the chieftains of important families for example, were writing love poetry in Ireland the intermarriage and constant contact between Scottish and Irish families could lead to literary patterns passing from one country to the other without the need for bardic mediation. This would also mean that those patterns were more likely to be modified than if they had been passed from bard to bard. Thus when looking at the love poems preserved in the Book of the Dean one cannot initially rule out the possibility that material read or heard in languages other than Irish (Lowland Scots or vernacular Scottish Gaelic are the main contenders, with the French and English items that reached the Scottish King's court as more distant possibilities) may have contributed to them; nor that the character and interests of individual poets, as well

as their particular social circumstances, may have freely modified anything that they borrowed.

Having made these general points, the reservation must be made that lack of surviving material in any of the languages mentioned means that it will probably never be possible for us to do justice to the traditions available to a late fifteenth century Scottish poet writing in a form of classical Irish.

Much, probably the majority of, fifteenth century Scots love lyric has been lost. As Professor MacQueen says in the preface to his anthology of fifteenth and sixteenth courtly love lyric, Ballattis of Luve,[53] a 'detached, moralising approach' characterises what survives from the later fifteenth century. Such poetry obviously contributed little to the love poems I have described in this chapter. It may however be significant for our purposes that he sees traces in what does survive of Middle English and French conventions of love poetry: notably, the poet who writes 'to assuage the pangs of love'; the linked themes of May, the revival of Nature, the lover's hopeless passion; the dream vision convention; the bird as messenger to a lover; love lyrics cast as letters; stress on long service and devotion.[54] Scots poetry is thus a possible channel by which the dream vision may have reached Eóin Mac Mhuirich (the fact that Eóin knows when he awakes that his visitor was imaginary and will not return differentiates his use of the vision theme from that in Old and Middle Irish; Old Irish heroes when they saw a beautiful woman in

a dream assumed that she was alive somewhere and began a search for her - the vision was not a poetic end in itself). It may also lie behind Donnchadh Mac Cailéin's use of a (human) messenger, and behind the repeated stress on the pains of love. The connection between poetry in the two languages is slight; but it need not be ignored entirely.

The nature and content of vernacular Scots Gaelic love poetry in the late fifteenth century can only be guessed at from what survives from a later date. Nothing can be confidently assigned to a period before the late sixteenth century. It is obvious from what does survive that the norm for Scottish Gaelic love songs (whether expressions of affection or of passion) is that they should be addressed by a woman to a man; on the other hand Iseabal Ní Mheic Cailéin's love songs are exceptional, if not unique, among classical Irish love poems in being spoken by a woman. I suggest that they spring from a cultural background shared with the vernacular Gaelic speakers around her. They are not imitations of folk-songs but they share the viewpoint of the woman speaker in so many of them: the woman left alone, not knowning when she will see her lover (or husband or brother) again; often unable to get in touch with him because the relationship is frowned upon by the family. The directness with which Isabella speaks is often paralleled in the older folksongs; her wish that any lover that rejects her may come to harm himself could easily be part of other vehement utterances by women in the surviving songs. As a woman she will have had more opportunities than the other poets for learning the women's songs of Scottish Gaelic tradition.

No love songs from Ireland survive that can be dated to the fifteenth century. The evidence for a debt owed to Irish tradition by these poems is of various sorts and requires juggling with if one is to create any pattern from it. I drew attention when describing Eóin Mac Mhuirich's poem Námha dhomh an dán to the points in it that indicate bardic training: the word-play, the vocabulary of description, the riddle concealing a girl's name. That it should be possible to write a love poem so infused with bardic features of style suggests that other love poems had been written by bards before him; his membership of a family that had close connections with Ireland makes it possible that in this poem he is imitating a literary fashion current in Ireland. He uses, it will be remembered, the topoi of love as a painful state and of detailed description of an unknown woman seen in a dream. These are themes that recur in the sixteenth and seventeenth century dánta grádha (described in the next chapter), which encourages the thought that they were already known in Ireland when Eóin was writing, and that it was from there that he took them. The paradoxes of the anonymous poem Fada atú i n-easbhadh aoibhnis also have their parallels in the later Irish poems; and the decision to write a poem about an impossible love, which the poet will not, cannot, give up (seen in Fada atú and in Thugas ro-ghrádh do mhnaoi fir) is also made by many of the later poets - it appears as the norm in the later period. These are strong reasons for assuming that love poetry was written in fifteenth century Ireland and that in the points I have mentioned it resembles the Scottish poems. The humorous and self-aware tone of many of the Scottish poems is also in accord with what is known of Irish tradition - Gearóid Iarla's poems are good examples of the development of the ironic and mock-

heroic tone in Irish poetry. Donnchadh Mac Cailéin's <u>Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin</u> is easily placed in this Irish tradition: It is scarcely imaginable in Scots.

Earlier I mentioned that love poetry may have been being composed in Ireland by amateurs as well as by trained poets. It is obviously not possible to decide from the available evidence whether the Scottish poets were imitating the work of amateurs rather than that of bards; but their own amateur status (excluding Eóin Mac Mhuirich) is a reminder that love poetry may have had more interest for amateurs than for bards, and may have been developed more by them. The great variation amongst these Scottish poems may be the result of their being written by amateurs: it would be unwise to assume that everything in these poems derives from some older tradition or some Irish source.

Nor can one tell at what date any of the details that are thought to have been borrowed came to Scotland from Ireland. Given the fluidity of relationships, literary, political and social, between the two countries, the attempt may seem scarcely worth making. There are two points that I wish to make. The first is that traffic in themes and styles need not have been in one direction only. Love poems such as these, written on the Scottish mainland, may have contributed to the making of a literary tradition of love poetry in Ireland, for they could have been transmitted by interested amateurs as easily as by bards. The second is that because of the tendency of Scotland to cling to aspects of Irish tradition after they had been abandoned in Ireland (a tendency matched by any colony in its cultural relationship with its mother-country) we may be seeing in these Scottish love poems evidence of

literary fashions brought into Scotland by an earlier generation and subsequently developed in Scotland. Thus, Eóin Mac Mhuirich may not have been the first Scottish bard to write a love poem in the Irish style.

Having set out my reasons for referring these Scottish poems to an Irish tradition I now wish to return to my earlier reservations about the variations possible in styles of love poetry. Essentially, what these poems tell us is how love poetry was written by a small group of people in Perthshire and Argyllshire in the late fifteenth or very early sixteenth centuries (the anonymous poems may of course be earlier, but there is no reason why they should be much earlier). They do a great deal to fill the gap in our knowledge of the history of literary love poetry in Ireland; but they cannot be regarded as a pattern to be directly transferred to fourteenth or fifteenth century Ireland. I have mentioned similarities between these poems and later ones: but there are also important differences of texture and design. These are a reminder of the possible divergencies from century to century in Irish love poetry.

There is little evidence in this poetry for any clear continuity between the love poetry of the Old and Middle Irish period and that of the late fifteenth century. The ideal of beauty persists, but that has survived via a bardic pattern for description in eulogistic statements. The descriptions of love as a sickness have their counterparts in earlier writings, but there is nothing here of the wasting-sickness, or the coma-like state of inaction, which was the norm in the earlier period. Iseabal says that if she

must persist in her state of thwarted love her good looks will disappear (Is mairg dá ngalar an grádh 2d) but this is related to a state of anxiety and tension, caused by secret love, not to a magically induced decline. The stress in her poem and in Eóin Mac Mhuirich's Námha dhomh an dán is on the pain experienced by someone who is very much awake and alive. The life-in-death paradoxes with which the author of Fada atú i n-easbhadh aoibhnis defines his sickness are a further departure from earlier tradition. His is an intellectual dissociation from the world around him, not a physical one. The beautiful woman seen in a dream in Eóin Mac Mhuirich's poem has earlier counterparts, but as I have said, I find that the poem is closer to foreign compositions than to Irish ones.

The emphasis on love which for some unspoken reason must be kept secret, or which is forever doomed to be hopeless (Eóin Mac Mhuirich's for his unknown dream-visitant; the poet of Thugas ro-ghrádh do mhnaoi fir for a married woman; the poet of Fada atú for reasons never explained) is also out-of-keeping with earlier writing. The point of the Old and Middle Irish stories was that love should at sm some stage be shown to be mutual and able to be consummated, even if it is subsequently to be renounced. A lover like Cuirithir, who said to Liadáin: Cid ná dénaim-ni óentaid, a Liadain? Ropud án ar mac ar ndis (Why should not we two unite, Liadain? A son of us two would be famous)[55] would not have understood the world of these speakers. Partly it is that love has been socialised, removed from the specialised, quasi-heroic world of the earlier stories and set into the devotional Catholicism, the dynastic marriages and the militarily-protected calm of the households of ruling families in fifteenth century Scotland. There seems also to have been a conscious specialisation in poems of unrewarded love: sufficient to make me

think it was part of a literary fashion. The writing of lyrics which recount a conversation or narrate an episode in which the poet has an interest (as A bhean dá dtugus-sa grádh and Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin) is a further development from the type of lyric, usually the expression of one person's thoughts, that I described in Chapter One.

I shall consider the implications of these new elements in Irish love poetry in the next chapter. They do not rule out all possibility that there was some sort of continuing tradition of love poetry in Irish after the Middle Irish period. The wit, strength and subtlety of the Scottish poems may be a tribute to previously developed high standards of writing. However, while a possible continuity in a tradition of love poetry is unsurprising within the general context of Irish literature, the divergences are more significant, particularly the divergences from poems preserved in later manuscripts. Looking ahead to the conclusions of the next chapter, I suggest that these Scottish poems show that the fifteenth century poets made more discriminating and varied use of continental motifs of love-description than did those of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and that of the various reasons that may account for this, one of the most plausible is that the earlier poets were in closer touch with what foreign traditions had come into the Gaelic-speaking world. This handful of early poems is more important for any attempt to assess the quality of classical Irish love poetry, or to decide on its origins, than a score of the later ones.

D. TWO POEMS OF DOUBTFUL AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

There are two more poems for which it has been claimed that they are examples of Scottish love-poetry from before 1525.

a. 'S luaithneach mo chadal a'nochd

The first of these is 'S luaithneach mo chadal a'nochd, the earliest Scottish source of which is the MacDiarmid MS, p. 51 (a manuscript bearing the date 1770).[56] A text taken from the MacDiarmid MS or from an identical source[57] appeared in the anthology published by the Perth bookseller Eoin Gillies in 1786 (p. 278). In MacDiarmid and in Gillies the poem is anonymous.

An ascription first occurs in the Killearnan MS, p. 180 - a collection of Gaelic poetry taken from various sources by the Revd. A.MacDonald of Killearnan and written out in 1895. He gives his source for this poem as ' J.N.MacDonald' - presumably John Norman MacDonald, a minister in Harris who provided the Revd. A.MacDonald with much material from his own collection. It is presumably from J.N.MacDonald that the ascription derives: the poem is headed 'Oran Gaoil do Nighean Mhic Dhomhnuill, Chinntire, le duin' uasail de Chlann Ghilleathain'.

In 1911 the Revd. A.MacDonald of Killearnan and a fellow minister in Kiltarlity published The MacDonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry, and on p. 30 our poem appears, with a text as in the Killearnan MS. The ascription, however, has been made more detailed. On p. ix the editors write: 'This love-song was composed by MacLean of Duart to a daughter of MacDonald,

evidently of Dunnyveg. It is one of the few surviving love-songs of the 16th century ... Mary, daughter of Alastair Mac Iain Chathanaich of Dunnyveg, married Hector Mor MacLean of Duart, and it was no doubt in her praise the chief composed this beautiful song. 'The only mention I have found of this marriage is in the Clan Donald History compiled by the Revv. A & A MacDonald themselves:[58] there they say that Alastair Mac Iain Chathanaich was chief of his clan, the MacDonalds of Dunnyveg and the Glens, 1499-1538 and that he had two daughters, Meve, who married Hector MacLean of Coll, and Mary, who married Hector Mor MacLean of Duart. If this is correct, the marriage must have taken place in the late fifteenth century, since Hector Mor MacLean, 5th chief of the MacLeans of Duart, died some time between 1495 and 1502.[59] This would make the poem itself a late fifteenth century composition. However, I think the ascription is of little value: it probably derives more from a desire to create a setting for a stray poem, one whose content provides no clues as to place or circumstances of composition, than from a genuine historical tradition. As mentioned earlier, the poem is anonymous in its earliest source; and when an ascription does appear it is one of extreme vagueness, which is not typical of the way oral tradition records the circumstances of a poem.

An important point for any consideration of the poem is that each of its stanzas can be paralleled in a series of anonymous, and often erratically worded, items in the MacLagan MSS (a collection made from 1755 onwards).[60]

The fact that there are several different groupings of these stanzas and that within each quatrain at least one line is likely to vary from version to version, sometimes because just one word has been substituted for another, and sometimes because a whole phrase or sense-unit has been altered, is, I think, related to the point I am about to make, ie that the poem may have come to the eighteenth century collectors, MacLagan and MacDiarmid, from Ireland and at a much later date have been given a Scottish ascription to account for its appearing in Scottish manuscripts.

A poem almost line for line the same as that in the MacDiarmid and Killearnan MSS. appears in an Irish manuscript, one consisting of miscellaneous papers and parts of manuscripts, written at various dates between 1713 and 1879 according to its RIA cataloguer.[61] It lasts for 27 lines (the MacDiarmid version has 28). ~~and is unfortunately incomplete here - the next page bound into the manuscript contains completely different material, and the rest of the poem seems to be lost. If the rest could be found I would expect it to provide an Irish parallel to those Scottish stanzas that are associated with ones from 'S luaithneach mo chadal a'nochd in the MacLagan MSS.~~

I have studied the Irish and Scottish texts, and find that the Irish text is the one that gives the most consistent sense - which leads to the idea that the Irish text is the closest to the original poem.

The language of the poem has various Irish characteristics, just as that of the versions preserved in Scottish manuscripts has Scottish Gaelic characteristics. Only a couple of words in it seem to be part of Scottish usage rather than Irish, and these may derive from the Irish of Northern Ireland. There seems to be no linguistic reason for saying the poem could not have been composed in Ireland and subsequently turned into vernacular Scottish Gaelic by one or more people in Scotland. Some of the strange readings in the Scottish versions could be explained as the result of the writer's inability to understand an original that he is working from, and this could be because the original is in the Irish script or the Irish language or both. Not all the variations of the Scottish versions from the Irish one can be explained thus. In some cases the Scottish author seems to have expanded his text, and produced 'variations on a theme' - notably in the description of the girl. Other stanzas may simply have been attracted to the poem by a vague similarity of content. I note that three of the quatrains in one of the MacLagan versions, where the lover describes his sickness, are in another MacLagan poem spoken by a woman. ~~If the Irish poem existed in a complete text discussion of these problems would be aided; but~~ On the basis of the present evidence I suggest that it is largely due to Scottish alterations that the poem was preserved in a different form

in Scottish manuscripts from that of an Irish original (if one accepts that the poem was originally Irish one does not have to regard the version in RIA 24 C 55 as the original text; ~~truncated;~~ but I suggest that it is closer to the original than any of the Scottish versions).

Whether the poem is Scottish or Irish, I think there are no good grounds for giving it an early date. It contains praise of a girl's beauty, and a brief statement of the lover's own unhappiness, all expressed in sentimental terms that are closer to items in Irish stressed metre poetry and to eighteenth century Scottish Gaelic works by the literate middle classes than to anything preserved in proper syllabic metre. As far as I can see, nothing in the vocabulary or grammar suggests that it was originally composed according to bardic conventions and subsequently adapted to current speech patterns (whereas the Ossianic ballads, for example, do show examples of earlier grammar mixed with later forms). The rhythm of the poem is closer to modern stressed metres than to syllabic forms. I suggest that the original poem and its variants were all put together between 1650 and 1750.

b. Tha bean an crìch Albainn fhuar

A second poem for which an early date of composition has been claimed is Tha bean an crìch Albainn fhuar. It is also the case for this poem that several of its stanzas occur in other contexts;[62] but for the whole poem there is only one source, the third volume of the Dornie MS (a collection made by Captain Alexander Matheson of Dornie,died 1897).[63]

It has been edited from this source by William Matheson, He reproduces the ascription as given in the manuscript: 'The following song is said to have been composed by Admiral Sir Alexander Matheson, in the reign of James IV of Scotland'; and supplies the information that Alasdair Mac Ruaidhri (Alexander Matheson) 'was apparently chief of his clan at the time of the rebellion of the Islesmen under Domhnall Dubh' (1505-6). There are several points that discourage one from accepting this ascription. First of all, several stanzas in the poem seem to have been common property, to be used by anyone writing a complaint against women. They recur in two poems in the eighteenth century MacLagan MSS; and at least one of them is in an Irish manuscript - O'Rahilly prints it as <u>Dańfhocail</u> No. 88, taken from an RIA MS. Such proverbial stanzas may well be attributed to historical figures: in Ireland stanzas against women are often attached to the name of Piaras Feiritéar; but they usually have no demonstrable connection with their suggested authors. In each district they are likely to be attributed to someone with a local name: thus in the north-west of Scotland they become associated with a Matheson. Secondly, the poem as it stands in the Dornie MS is not very coherent: the impression given is that stanzas from several different sources have been combined, because of a dimly perceived similarity between them. This is not unusual at a late stage in manuscript and oral tradition; but it casts doubt on the value of the ascription.

The stanzas themselves, and the poem they occur in, are usually straightforward criticisms of women, describing them as perverse, stubborn or fickle. The only point that brings <u>Tha bean</u>

an crìch Albainn fhuar away from the category of simply anti-feminist poetry and towards the more complex category of love poetry is that in it the poet speaks of being 'pierced' with love. This shows that it is contemporaneous with, or postdates, the fashion for poems that claim the state of live is akin to that of being wounded or murdered (and in this it differs from the anti-feminist poems attributed to Gearóid Iarla). Since this poetry was being written until at least the middle of the seventeenth century it does not guarantee an early date either for Tha bean an crìch Albainn fhuar or for the originals that lie behind this somewhat disordered poem.

The ascription to Alasdair Mac Ruaidhri is interesting as an indication that the tradition in the nineteenth century was that earlier chieftains had composed poetry in the bardic style; but because of the doubtful text and the uncertainty as to date I think it would be difficult to claim for this poem that it can tell us anything useful about styles of love-poetry. As an example of anti-feminist poetry it requires to be considered in conjunction with a group of poems on this theme that are preserved in eighteenth and nineteenth century manuscripts,[65] and with the poems attributed to Gearóid Iarla in the Dean's Book. The themes of this poetry are so consistent that little or nothing can be said about their dates.

CHAPTER FOUR:

1525-1630

A.A Poem Attributed to an Earl of Argyll: 'Marrin uainn gu dun nan naomh-gheal'; and Another Attributed to Bishop Carswell

B.Poems in the Book of the O Conor Don; and others apparently composed before 1630

C.Scottish Gaelic Folksong

A. A POEM ATTRIBUTED TO AN EARL OF ARGYLL: MARRIN UAINN GU DUN NAN NAOMH-GHEAL; AND ANOTHER ATTRIBUTED TO BISHOP CARSWELL

Ia) Date and Authorship

The earliest source for the poem Marrin uainn gu dun nan Naomh-gheal is GUL MS Gen. 1042 (i.e. the MacLagan MS), item 172. This is a collection of songs and poems gathered from various sources by the Rev. James MacLagan, and was begun about 1755. A text, taken either from MacLagan or from an identical source, was printed in the Eigg Collection (Edinburgh, 1776), p.347. A closely similar text, probably deriving originally from the Eigg Collection, was published by MacLean Sinclair in Gaelic Bards, 1411-1715 (Charlottetown, 1890), p.3 - he omits the last two lines of the amhrán, which was printed as two quatrains in the Eigg Collection. A text - taken I think from MacLagan - appears in James Munro's An t-Ailleagan (Edinburgh 1830).

Thus on manuscript evidence we have no authority for the poem's existence before the middle of the eighteenth century. However in the MacLagan collection it bears the title 'A love-song by Argyle to a Daughter of McDonald of Islay'; and this attribution was repeated by each of its subsequent editors. The Eigg Collection adds the statement that Argyll was staying at Dunnyveg when he composed the poem. This was presumably inferred from the content of the poem (the poet's farewell to a lady he has been visiting) and from the title the poem had already acquired: Dunnyveg castle in Islay was the seat of the MacDonalds of Islay and Kintyre, also known as the MacDonalds of Dunnyveg and the Glens. MacLean Sinclair was the first person to hazard a guess as to

which Earl of Argyll was the author: he suggests 'Archibald, fourth Earl of Argyll. He succeeded his father in 1530, and died in 1580'; but he gives no reason for choosing the fourth rather than any other Earl(n.b. Archibald's dates as Earl are nowadays accepted as 1529-1558). MacKinnon was perhaps misremembering MacLean Sinclair when he wrote of the MacLagan text that it was an 'Ode by MacCailein (probably Colin , 4th Earl) to the daughter of MacDonald of Dun naomhaig'. On its own his suggestion is of little value - Colin was not the 4th but the 3rd Earl, who died in 1529[2]; we are thus left uncertain as to which Earl he is referring to.

The ascription on its first occurrence in the MacLagan MS is so late and so vague as to give little hope for identifying historical characters from it. The poem itself gives no information as to authorship or as to the name of the lady addressed. The poet does say that he is leaving by sea; which might suggest that he is leaving an island; but might also mean anywhere on the mainland coast. He bids farewell to the 'home/fortress of the white saints' (dun nan Naomh-gheal); and this might be read as a play on the place-name Dun Naomháig (Dunnyveg). If one chooses to believe, on the basis of these indications, that the poem is connected with Dunnyveg then it follows that it was composed before, probably well before, 1608, for in that year the MacDonald chief handed the castle over to the King's Lieutenant and never regularly occupied it again.

The form of the poem - six stanzas in the classical metre, _séadna_, followed by a ceangal in _amhrán_ metre - offers rather firmer grounds for dating; but here again there is a problem: it seems to be the case in Irish manuscripts that an _amhrán_ stanza is occasionally added to an older poem. The stanza at the end of

Marrin uainn is neither demonstrably at odds with the rest of the poem nor incontrovertibly linked with it. Any suggestions offered here for dating depend on the premise that the poem was originally written as one with an *amhrán* ending.

Robin Flower tells us that 'the practice....of attaching a stanza in song metre to a poem in strict measure' was 'common in the 17th century';[4] but no-one seems to have written on the subject of when it began. The problem is connected with the question of when the *amhrán* metres themselves were first used. Poems using them cannot usually be dated any earlier than the end of the sixteenth century, says Bergin;[5] but Bergin himself suggested that 'an investigation into the origin of the modern stress metres would take us back some centuries earlier than the sixteenth'.[6] More recently Professor Carney has said of the stressed metres that they'after an underground existence of some centuries, supplanted syllabic versification in the seventeenth century'.[7] The overlap between metrical fashions, when a poem might contain both stressed metre and syllabic metre stanzas, may have been longer than the manuscript evidence suggests.

Of the poems that exist using a stanza of *amhrán* metre to end a composition, several have been edited by Professor T.F. O'Rahilly in *Dánta Grádha* and in *Measgra Dánta*. The earliest date that one can offer with certainty for any of the ones in *Dánta Grádha* is for *A Dhuine chodlas go sáimh*. This first line occurs in the index of the Book of the O'Conor Don, written in Ostend in 1631. Since the text of the poem is missing from the manuscript, one cannot be sure it originally contained a final *amhrán* stanza or indeed that this is the same poem. However the content of the final stanza is very closely linked to that of the preceding ones and I think it fairly certain that it was always

part of the poem. The text itself first occurs in a manuscript which has been dated by O'Rahilly as "c.1700?". This manuscript, RIA 23 I 40, contains a group of love-poems, some of which can be dated to the sixteenth century. I think it possible that the anonymous poems, including A dhuine chodlas go sáimh, also belong to that period, and that they were copied as a group from an earlier manuscript.

Some more definite dates appear from the poems in Measgra Dánta. Three of the poems in this style are attributed to Muiris (mac Dháibhi Dhuibh) Mac Gearailt, born c. 1550, died c.1612. If one acceptsthat he wrote the poems with their final amhrán stanzas, this style of composition must have been in use before 1612. O'Rahilly thinks that in each case the amhrán stanza is a later addition: the manuscripts are not unanimous in making such stanzas part of the poems. Another, anonymous, poem he dates to the 'early 17th Century'.

On this information I am reluctant to say that Marrin uainn gu dun nan Naomh-gheal belongs to a period before the end of the sixteenth century; with the caveat that this style of composition may have begun earlier than the manuscriptevidence allows. Knowledge of amhrán metre in Scotland as early as 1603 is proved by the occurrence of three stanzas in this metre in a Scottish manuscript for which the folio containing these stanzas has been dated c. 1603 by Ronald Black[8].

b) Content[9]

The poem shows several differences from those preserved in the Book of the Dean of Lismore, as a brief paraphrase of its contents will make clear.

The poet praises the 'home of the white-skinned saints', its setting, and the women in it. He is sad to be leaving one with curled golden hair- sighs and tears are carried from him as he thinks of her great beauty. He asks the calm red-lipped one whether she is pleased with his state; and compares himself with Fionn's hound Bran for faithfulness. In the fourth stanza he speaks of himself on board his hip, but makes the ship seem a metaphor for his own state when he says it is directionless and in danger of sinking. He envies the small dog that is permitted to stay in the woman's company all the time, even at night: if he were to be hanged for it he would like to be there with her tonight. In the final amhrán stanza he sends his farewell to the girl whose long curling hair reaches her shoe; and prays to Christ and to Saints Peter and Paul that he could be stretched out with her on a bed of satin.

The poem is thus a protestation of devotion and faithfulness, a topic which evidently had little interest for the poets in the Dean's Book. Devotion is stressed by talk of sighs and tears, which does not occur in the earlier poems; and by exaggerated statements where the poet says he would risk hanging for the sake of a night with the woman he loves, and that he envies the small animals that are allowed near her. Such themes and examples occur in French love-poetry; but their immediate source here is probably in Irish poetry, syllabic or stressed. Sighs and tears are frequently mentioned in poems in the Dánta Grádha, some of which can be dated to the sixteenth century. The syllabic poems also contain some exaggerated statements of what the poet would renounce for the girl's sake. The detail of risking hanging occurs in Soraidh slán do n-oidhche aréir (DG 38; before 1630); while the envy of the small dog may have an unknown syllabic

of stressed metre source. One might compare Aoibhinn a leabhráin (DG 1), which envies a book travelling to the girl.[10]

The description of the girl's beauty is obviously dependent on the bardic tradition (earlier seen represented in Eóin Mac Mhuirich's poem); but, as with so many of the poems in the Dánta Grádha, description of the girl is subordinate to another theme, namely the poet's own thoughts and feelings at being apart from her.

c) Irish or Scottish?

The poem is accomplished and evidently the work of someone closely in touch with Irish tradition, although he imitates different aspects of it from those used by Eóin Mac Mhuirich. In its choice of metre and of vocabulary, and in its content, it could as easily have been written in Ireland as in Scotland. The language of the poem as it has been preserved shows various Scottish Gaelic forms; but these could be the result of scribal alteration. It presumably reached MacLagan from a manuscript source, and such a source might derive, ultimately, from Ireland. Against this is the ascription; and the fact that the poem does not occur in any of the catalogued collections of Irish manuscripts. On the present evidence, I feel justified in regarding it as another example of how closely-linked the Scottish poetic tradition was with that in Ireland.

II a) Manuscript Sources

The poem Na maoidh h-uaisle orm féin presents some problems that are typical of the poems preserved in later Scottish manuscripts. In its earliest source, NLS 72 1 36,fol.85a (written 1690-91) it has the first line 'Na maoi huaisle oruim fein' and consists of 8 quatrains; it is anonymous. It next appears in MS 30 of the MacLagan collection, written 1755 onwards. Here its first line is 'Treig tUaisle 's na bith rinn' (which is close to line 5 of the 1690 version) and it lasts for 6½ qtt.; however,only 15 of its 26 lines have any counterparts in the first version. Two of its quatrains are almost identical with two in Cia thú féin, a mhacaoimh mná (DG 101),a poem whose earliest source is the missing NLS 72 1 35; their language, like that of the rest of the poem, has been adapted to conform with vernacular Scots Gaelic. In the course of the poem, spaces are left for a further 1½ qtt.; one presumes that the scribe was copying from something which he could not fully understand, or else was unable to vernacularise properly. Two words are omitted from the final quatrain: these can be supplied from the earliest version of the poem. Evidently the eighteenth century scribe regarded them as too indecent for inclusion. The whole poem has obviously been much modified and adapted in transmission; which leaves one uncertain as to how much value one should place on the attribution to Bishop Carswell of Argyll (c.1520-1572) which heads the MacLagan copy: 'Le Easpuig Carswell Earraghaël'. The scribe evidently had a source which in some ways was close to the 1690 version of the poem; if one thought the ascription came from there,this would give it a strong claim to consideration. On the other hand, it may be that Carswell's name had, by the eighteenth century, become associated with Cia thú féin, a mhacaoimh mná, and then transferred to a poem which had taken in stanzas from the latter one.

One cannot be certain whether the poem was written in the sixteenth or the seventeenth century, or indeed whether it was written in Scotland: the manuscript containing it, NLS 72 1 36, contains several love poems that are also preserved in Irish manuscripts, and which may be by Irish or Scottish authors.

b) Content and background

The poem itself (I use the 1690 version as my source) differs both from Marrin uainn gu dun nan Naomh-gheal and from the poems that I am about to describe, in the Book of the O Conor Don. The writer tells a woman not to boast of her nobility: his own ancestry is as good; nor of her sexual appeal: he can perform well himself. If she can embroider, he can write: if she can sing, he can recite tales. She makes too much of her honour and nobility: he entreats her to give up boasting. This has some points in common with the poems that O'Rahilly places at the end of the Dánta Grádha; but unlike them it does not advise the woman to turn her mind to spiritual affairs. The message is 'I am as good as you', not 'all human life is unimportant'.

It might be seen as a response to the production of unrealistic love poems; a poem perhaps by an amateur who knew of the type of fantastic love poetry being produced in Ireland (and possibly in Scotland) in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and who deliberately wished to flout its conventions of theme and tone.

I would however like to suggest that its individuality is particularly due to its being written by an amateur, probably a Scottish poet. Just as the love poems in the Book of the Dean are not quite the same as anything known to have been produced in Ireland, so this poem creates a category for itself. The poet is evidently familiar with bardic poetry: the phrases used to describe the woman's appearance are those that might be found in any professional eulogy, and the poem observes the convention of dúnadh, i.e., of ending the poem with

the words that began it. He writes on a theme which interests and and amuses him, and which he has not tried to elaborate with bardic exempla or set-pieces of description. He shares with the Scottish amateurs I mentioned earlier a capacity to go his own way, is keen to follow certain rules for the writing of poetry, but able to produce his own themes. It is not necessary,I think, to relate his work to particular Irish literary fashions.

I am not confident that Carswell was the author of this poem; but I think there are good grounds for saying it is the work of a Scottish amateur,writing before 1690.

B: POEMS IN THE BOOK OF THE O CONOR DON AND OTHERS APPARENTLY COMPOSED BEFORE 1630

The Book of the O Conor Don has been described by Douglas Hyde in ÉRIU VIII, pp. 78ff. It was written at Ostend in 1631, and was evidently based on manuscripts from the north of Ireland. The named poets are almost all members of bardic families, but a handful, including Maghnus Ó Dómhnaill, are apparently amateurs. One section of the manuscript is devoted to love-poetry. Since the next collection of love-poetry appears in a manuscript written at an unknown date before 1681 (RIA 23 D 4), the Book of the O Conor Don is our most reliable source for love-poetry of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Of the love-poets named in the manuscript, none can be dated earlier than Maghnus Ó Dómhnaill, who became chief of his clan in 1537, married Eleanor McCarthy, sister of the Earl of Kildare, in 1538, and died in 1563. Most of them flourished at the end of the sixteenth and in the early seventeenth centuries. This distribution reflects the dates of most of the poets represented in the manuscript: scarcely any of them lived before the sixteenth century. I suggest therefore that one may reasonably assume that the anonymous love-poems in this collection belong to the sixteenth century.

Use of the Book of the O Conor Don as a guide for dating poems presents one special problem. The manuscript possesses an Index, apparently made at the same time as the collection, which gives the first lines of the poems contained in it. Since the index was made, some of the folios have disappeared, one of them being folio 26, which apparently contained solely love-poetry. When

one finds a poem in a later manuscript with the same first line, one cannot be sure that it is the same poem that was originally contained in the Book of the O Conor Don: there are two instances in the Dánta Grádha of an identical first line leading into two differing poems (see DG Nos. 17 & 42 and 45 & 54). In each case where I have found a poem in a later manuscript with the same first line as one missing from the Book of the O Conor Don, I have, perhaps erroneously, assumed that it is the same poem.

Almost all the poems discussed in this section are dated from their occurrence in the Book of the O Conor Don; a few are included because they occur alongside love-poems attributed to sixteenth century poets in a manuscript of c.1700 (RIA 23 I 40); and several more because they are attributed to people known to have been writing before 1630. If any poem being discussed is not one of those dated from the Book of the O Conor Don, its source will be given.

In order to simplify discussion of their content, I have divided these poems into two groups: those whose dominant theme is the idea that love causes sickness, wounding or death; and those where the poet presents some other aspect of being in love.[11]

a) Content of the poems: themes other than love-sickness

The 23 poems[12] that I place in this group are:

A bhean chroidhe chompánta (DG 96A)	Eochaidh Ó hEóghusa, c.1568 - c.1612
A bhean fuair an falachán (DG 13)	Anon
A bhean lán do stuaim (DG 100, and ND 13)	Geoffrey Keating c.1580 - c.1644
A bhean na lurgan luime (DG 97)	Mac-Con Ó Cléirigh, d. 1595
A fhir chroidhe charaim-se (DG 96B)	Eochaidh Ó hEóghusa
A fhir do-ní an t-éad (DG 94)	Anon
Aisling thruagh do-mhear mise (DG 44)	Dómhnall Mac Carrthaigh Mór 1518-96

Aithreach damh mo dhíochoisge (DG 61)	Anon
An gcluine mé, a mhacaoimh mná (DG 39)	Anon
An tusa an bhean do bhí sunn (*Tadhg Dall* I p.268)	Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, 1550-1591
Cara agus eascara in fhearg (*Bergin*, p.167)	Anon
Croidhe lán do smuaintighthibh (DG 52)	Maghnus Ó Dómhnaill, d. 1563
Dobeirim seal re saobhnós (DG 6)	Laoiseach Mac an Bhaird fl. 1600
Dochuaidh mo shúil tar mo chuid (DG 88)	Eochaidh Ó hEóghusa
Goirt anocht deireadh mo sgéal (DG 53)	Maghnus Ó Dómhnaill
Mairg do-bheir grádh leatromach (DG 51)	idem
Mairg duine bhíos antuigseach (DG 75)	Anon
Mairg duine bhraitheas é féin (DG 86)	Dómhnall Mac Dáire Mhic Bruaideadha, fl. c.1570
Ná bí dom buaidhredh, a bhean (DG 17)	Anon
Neall mná síthe sunn aréir (*Tadhg Dall I*, p. 264)	Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn
Soraidh slán don oidhche aréir (DG 38)	?Niall Mór Mac Mhuirich,[13] late 16th, early 17th century
Truagh do bheatha, a bhean aréir (DG 73)	Anon
Tugas grádh don fhuath (DG 90)	Anon

The themes of these poems are varied, and indicate the poet's fondness for juggling with words as often as his skill at creating a situation or expressing private thoughts. A poem in which a man accuses a woman of deceit is matched by one, in almost identical language, where the same charge is brought against the man; and both are ascribed to the bardic poet, Eochaidh Ó hEóghusa (DG 96A & B). A jealous husband is told that no-one is likely to want to steal his wife from him (DG 94). A poet declares that hate has advantages over love, since one can give up hate, but not love (DG 90). Another poet mocks a woman who pretends to have been wronged by saying that she looks as miserable as a man in love (DG 73). Mac Con Ó Cléirigh tells a woman she is too thin to attract him (DG 97). A poet writes a series of puns using the name of his beloved, Gráinne (DG 6); and Maghnus Ó Dómhnaill plays with the conceit that hearts can be given and lost (DG 51). One lover complains that the woman of his choice will not look at him (DG 61); another complains of the frustration of seeing someone one cannot possess (DG 75). In three of the poems the poet claims that a vision of a beautiful woman while

asleep has left him bewildered or discontented (DG 44 and the two poems by Tadhg Dall). A poet claims that a quarrel between lovers only cements their affection (Bergin, p.167). In poems whose language is more vehement, Dómhnall Mac Dáire says there is no point at all in a man who reveals his love expecting it to be returned (DG 88). Maghnus Ó Dómhnaill writes evocatively and concisely of the sorrow of parting (after desertion or death?) (DG 52,53). A poet devotes five stanzas to punning descriptions of a woman's hair (DG 13); and in a final group of poems the poet brings two people to life before us: Keating tells a woman not to think of him as a lover since he is too old to satisfy her (DG 100); while another poet says 'Let me into your bed - give up every man for me as I have given up every woman for you' (DG 17); a poet enjoins secrecy on his beloved, for there is a man around whose jealousy might be inflamed (DG 39); and the poet of DG 38 speaks, not verbally, but with looks, to the girl he was with last night. The scandal-mongers will learn nothing from his conversation, he says.

Most of these themes might be expected to arise within any tradition of love-poetry; the claim that lovers' anger brings them closer, the rejection or encouragement of advances from others, etc. Others are particularly closely tied to Irish tradition: the poem in praise of a girl's hair (DG 13), and the ones full of word-play. The description of beauty always conforms with past tradition. Often one is given no idea at all of the setting, or of the public lives of the people involved; but where such details are given, as in Cara agus eascara or Soraidh slán, they are those of a chief's household, be it in Scotlandor Ireland. I think that where the poet makes no mention of setting he and his audience imagine the love -affair as acted out in the surroundings of their own lives. This is very much poetry written for

an audience: people who will appreciate the jokes and word-play, who will applaud the skilful use of words in describing a woman or a meeting, and who will be amused by the account of the irrational behaviour of lovers. This suggests the same aristocratic audience that other types of bardic poetry were addressed to. Significantly, there are few examples of poems where passion or tenderness are directly expressed towards another person; and two of the more moving ones are by someone who was not a professional bard and who has been supposed to have been writing out of his own experience - Maghnus Ó Dómhnaill. The poet writing to divert and entertain will feel little incentive to write in this style: his talent and imagination are expressed less lyrically.

b) <u>Content of the poems - lovesickness</u>

Twenty-six[14] poems form the second group, those that talk of love as the cause of sickness, wounding, and death. These are:

Poem	Author
A dhuine chodlas go sáimh (DG 34)	Anon
A mhac-alla dheas (DG 19)	Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh c. 1597-c.1630
An sgitheach tú, a mhacaoimh mná (DG 70)	Gofraidh Mac an Bhaird fl.c.1610[15]
Aoibhinn an galar é an grádh (<u>Rel.Celt.</u>II, p.288)	?Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird fl.c.1570-c.1616[16]
Aoibhinn duit, a dhuine dhoill (DG 28)	Anon
Ar mbeannacht mar dhlighim dhuit (DG 33)	Anon
Atá grádh nach admhaim oirn (DG 31)	Tadhg Mac Diarmada Uí Dhálaigh fl.early 17c.
Beag liom mo bheannacht don mbás (DG 10)	Anon
Cá h-ainm atá ar Fearghal Óg (NLS 72 1 34, p. 39)	Anon
Cia thú a mhacaoimh mhná (DG 48)	Anon
Corrach do chodlas aréir (DG 69)	Tadhg Ó Cobhthaigh fl. 1550
Croidhe so dá ghoid uainne (DG 49)	Maghnus Ó Dómhnaill, d.1563
Dar liom is galar é an grádh (DG 50)	idem
Deacair teacht ó ghalar ghráidh (DG 66 and <u>ND</u> 24)	?Piaras Feiritéar c. 1610-1653/Cathal Mac Mhuirich fl.c.1618-c.1661[17]

Fada ar gcothrom ó chéile (DG 58)	?Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh[18]
Féach orm, a inghean Eóghain (DG 16)	Ó Géaráin (perh. Maolmuire Bacach Ó Géaráin, fl. early 16th cent.)[19]
Léig dhíot, th'airm, a mhacaoimh mná (DG26 and ND22)	?Piaras Feiritéar[20]
Maith gach ní ón easurradh (DG 57)	Anon
Mór mhilleas an mheanma bhaoth (DG 63)	Anon
Neimhthinn an galar é an grádh (DG 8)	Cú Chonnacht Ó Cléirigh, 16th cent.
Ní mhair séan do ghnáth (DG 79)	Anon
Ní mé bhar n-aithne, a aos gráidh (Bergin, p.133)	?Eochaidh Ó hEóghusa c.1568-c.1612/?Cú Chonnacht Ó Cléirigh[21]
Ní taobhtha damhsa riom féin (DG 46)	Anon
Ní tinn galar acht grádh rúin (DG 65)	Anon
Och, och, a Mhuire bhúidh (DG 30)	Dómhnall Mac Carrthaigh Mór, d. 1596
Tuirseach sin, a mhacaoimh mná (DG 11)	Laoiseach Mac an Bhaird fl. 1600

The clearest indication that talk of strange sickness was a well-known theme in love-poetry before 1630 comes from a poem, Neimhthinn an galar é an grádh, in which the poet says that although he is in love he suffers from none of the symptoms that other people complain of: in fact it is love that keeps him well. He does not weep, he has no doubt about his being alive and in good health; he eats a great deal, sleeps soundly, and his interest in music is unimpaired. He does not rush around giddily, his body maintains a normal temperature, his speech is rational. The elements have their normal effect on him; he is not losing weight - in fact, his appetite for food and drink is quite usual. He can tell day from night, a boat from a ship, black from white, etc. He ends with a riddle giving the woman's name, and praises her love.

Evidently, the author, Cú Chonnacht Ó Cléirigh, is parodying conventional statements from love-poetry. Several of them are seen in one of the earliest dateable poems in this group, Corrach do chodlas aréir. There, Tadhg Ó Cobhthaigh complains of being sick and sleepless from thoughts of a beautiful woman. She has

taken away his desire for gaming and drinking; he has lost his senses; desire hotter than fire destroys his heart from within - he is wounded. Like the people Ó Cléirigh mocks, he cannot tell bronze from gold, water from wine.

There are several poems in which the poet says he is wounded (see DG 31, 65, 66, 69); but usually he ignores this stage and declares that he is dead, killed by the woman (16, 28, 30, 31, 33, 46, 48); or else that she has killed another man (see Cá h-ainm), perhaps all the men in Ireland (DG 26, 57, 70, 79). The Irish and Scottish writers seem to have been particularly fond of taking the basic image of love as pain or sickness and instead of producing some colourless paean of self-pity they exaggerate it to the point where the old image becomes outrageous and new again. Such a poem is DG 26, Léig dhíot th'airm, where the poet tells the girl that although she may think her knee and palm are blunt they wound men as effectively as if she were carrying a shield and spear. Without a knife or an axe, glances from her eyes have killed all around her. The poet of DG 46, Ní taobhtha dhamhsa, says he cannot believe he has not spent a while in the grave; while the poet of DG 47, Ní mé bhar n-aithne, tells us, in a fine series of tongue-in-cheek verses, that since he knows he has been killed by a vision of a creature from heaven, it must be his ghost talking to us now. Instead of telling him he is alive, people should be giving alms for his soul. Two lives, one after the other, would be remarkable - if his hearers think he is alive, he must have been canonised in recognition of his resurrection from the dead. But for all that they cast doubt on it, he can remember the day of his death.

Such poems bear some resemblance to poems from the Dean's Book. As in those, the early Irish idea that love causes a strange

wasting-sickness is ignored. Instead, the poets come closer to the Ovidian idea of love as a fever, and to the Provençal description of it as a form of madness. All other literatures, however, stop short of the fantasy of DG 26,46 or 47. These poems cannot be accounted for simply as imitations of foreign literary fashions. Their background seems to be complex, and as with the poems in the Dean's Book we may no longer be in a position to elucidate it. I reserve further comment on it for later in the chapter.

c) The ideal of beauty

In previous chapters I showed that the type of beauty praised in Irish literature was already formalised in the early prose tales, and reappeared, scarcely varied, in classical poetry. These sixteenth and early seventeenth century poems observe the same conventions when praising beauty. A few comparisons from the past disappear; old but little-used ones gain in popularity; and some apparently new ones are seen, raising thoughts of foreign borrowing.

Although 'red like strawberries/raspberries' remains popular in description of lips and cheeks, 'red like partaing' is not used at all, probably because by now it was quite unintelligible. In this informal verse poets felt ready to ignore a possible obligation to past usage, and to turn to comparisons with other forms of redness, for all of which there are occasional parallels in earlier Irish literature. Perhaps the most popular is 'red like embers' ('gruadh mar ghrís'/cheek like embers DG 31).[22] 'A gruaidh shíodh

tré choir crú'/o fairy-like cheek on which blood trespassed' says Ó Dálaigh, DG 31; 'bile mar rós'/'lip like rose' is MacCarrthaigh's choice, DG 30. 'Ní dearg deirge an ghuail/i ngar dod ghruaidh ghil'/'Not red the redness of coal beside your bright cheek' is the way a girl is praised in DG 48; and a comparison that becomes as popular as the one with embers uses rowan-berries to stress colour: 'a dá ghruaidh ar ghné na gcaor'/'her two cheeks the colour of rowan berries' DG 66.

The comparison with lime for whiteness of the body becomes very popular. It was noted in Middle Irish (see Chapter One) and it occurs occasionally from then onwards.[23] We find it in DG 17, 26, 30, 48, 66. Praise of breasts as lily-white occurs in DG 30, but this comparison with the lily never became popular in syllabic verse. More in keeping with the Irish taste for comparisons where the colour of the object is isolated and all its other qualities or associations are forgotten is the choice of ivory for whiteness: 'Gnúis déadbhán'/'Ivory-white face' DG 31.

This attitude of mind is characteristic of bardic composition, where the most disparate objects are often brought together in a comparison, one that shows itself in the bards' hands to have much to justify it. The choice of balsam and incense as comparisons for sweetness of breath seems to me wholly typical of bardic style. The mention of balsam comes in the poem attributed to the unknown Ó Géaráin (DG 16, qt.12d). I have not found it elsewhere in bardic poetry, but there may well be examples; Ó Géaráin's membership of a bardic family encourages thoughts of a bardic source for it. Incense occurs in DG 30(9b) by Dómhnaill Mac Carrthaigh, not himself a bard; but it was already associated with breath

(for its healing powers) in the fourteenth century.[24] To remind us that the comparison was not the whim of one poet alone, it reappears in DG 45,6d.

Eyes are praised now, not for their colour, but for being 'smooth as glass' (DG 16, qt.14a - Ó Géaráin's poem), or crystal-like (DG 13, qt.3c). For Ó Cobhthaigh in DG 69, they are full of stars (qt. 12b of O'Rahilly's text). And it is Ó Cobhthaigh who compares the sound of the girl's voice to the music of an organ (qt. 7d). Ó Cobhthaigh, like Ó Géaráin, is a member of a bardic family: which means he was probably using phrases current in bardic composition.

Some of these phrases are quoted by Ó Tuama[25] as typical of folksong in Irish, and of love-composition in French: reference to the rose, the crystal, to stars, the the lily. Others here that he does not mention, ivory and incense, are also occasionally found in European poetry.[26]

If one felt that many of the comparisons in these sixteenth-seventeenth century poems derived, directly or indirectly, from foreign models,this would have implications for any discussion of the literary origins of the themes of the poems. I feel however that the majority of them, even those for which there is no continuous history in bardic poetry, derive from earlier literature; and that while they may have entered the earlier literature from some unknown foreign source this does not determine the provenance of the themes. A phrase such as 'eyes like crystal' appears first in Irish, so far as I can find, in a religious poem.[27] It is possible that it was not used in love poetry until the time of the example that I gave earlier (DG 13, a poem from the Book of the O Conor Don); in which case it would be rash to link it with a

borrowing of themes which is supposed to have taken place much earlier.

A few poems are full of apparently new types of comparison; others contain none of them. I have explained some of the new phrases as borrowed from prevailing bardic practice, basing this suggestion on the authorship of the poems. For the group attributed to Dómhnaill Mac Carrthaigh there may be a different answer. As an amateur, he can be expected to be more eclectic in his choice of people to imitate, or styles to follow. His choice of comparisons with roses and with lilies in DG 30 may indicate lack of interest in the stock patterns (he is evidently not wholly ignorant of them, since elsewhere he speaks of 'white as lime'). They may also be the result of familiarity with

popular song in Irish. It is interesting that Dómhnaill's poems raise the same questions as did those of that other amateur, Gearóid Iarla, who also seems to have combined old and new. Dómhnaill's comparisons are not taken up by other syllabic love poets. There is no discernible shift of emphasis in the comparisons used from those poems that probably belong to the mid-sixteenth century to those that may be of the mid-seventeenth century, nor from the poems in the Book of the O Conor Don to those in later manuscripts.

d) A context for classical love poetry

It is singularly difficult to relate the content of most of the poems I have described in this chapter to any particular foreign tradition or concept of love poetry.

Indirect dependence on Provençal love poetry has been claimed

for these poems by Seán Ó Tuama.[28] As he says, actual knowledge of Provençal in Ireland is unlikely; the themes of its poetry must have reached Ireland through Norman French.[29]

There was indeed a specialised treatment of the theme of unrequited love favoured in the poetry of Northern France from the late twelfth century onwards. Of those sophisticated trouveres whose names we know, one may mention Gace Brulé and Jacques d'Autun in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Guillaume de Machaut in the fourteenth, and Charles d'Orléans in the fifteenth. All of these poets wrote of love-sickness, of dejection, and of the frustration of being separated from the woman one loves. Anonymous French song of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries contains a slightly wider range of themes, in which self-pity and dejection mix with more aggressive and more hopeful attitudes. Seán Ó Tuama has set out in detail the evidence as he sees it for the dependence of modern Irish folksong on mediaeval European, especially French, poetry,[30] and I do not intend to go over again here the ground he has covered. One should recognise however that the antecedents of syllabic Irish love poetry need not be the same as those of folksong in Irish. As Ó Tuama himself points out, the poems edited by O'Rahilly show far fewer detailed similarities to continental writing than do the folksongs.[31] Any account of the origins of classical love poetry that ties them to French literary fashions must take account of this disparity, and of the fact that the Irish emphasis on paradox, on being dead when seeming alive, and on being wounded when no weapons have been used, is largely missing from French poetry. French poets sigh, grieve, and lament their misfortune; they weep and feel feeble; they do not compose epigrams upon their resurrection from their dead. Their interest in the imagery of warfare ceases when they have mentioned

Cupid's arrows. Ó Tuama has himself drawn attention to the fact that the _dánta grádha_ lack the vocabulary of what is sometimes called 'the religion of love' evolved in southern France.[32] I do not find this as surprising as he does, since it is missing from almost all northern French poetry as well. Northern French poetry retains talk of homage and service, and of long-continued devotion; but even this is missing from the _dánta grádha_. A time-scale is rarely offered us by the Irish poets; sometimes it seems that everything described has happened within the previous twenty-four hours. The nearest that the Irish poets come to the French poets' protestations of eternal devotion is in the _aislingthe_, where the poet is likely to say that he will never forget the vision he has seen.

Ó Tuama has also pointed out the lack of references to nature and natural settings in the _dánta grádha_.[33] The Irish poet does not wish to compare, or to contrast, his state with that of the birds, or to claim that spring is the season above all others in which a man may suffer from the torments of love. He does not wander mad in the countryside, or, sane, go out in the hope that he will meet a beautiful country-girl.

I do not think I have yet reached a wholly satisfactory account of why Irish classical love poetry is so individual; but I shall briefly review the possible explanations as I see them, indicating which ones seem the more fruitful for future work.

First of all, a proposal that does not seem to have much to second its consideration, at least as far as the period before 1650 is concerned. Robin Flower has suggested that 'in the later stages (i.e., of the development of Irish love poetry) an English influence is certainly to be reckoned with'.[34]

He quotes Surrey and Wyatt for comparison with the Irish poems, and seems to be thinking of English influence in the sixteenth century. There are, as he says, similarities of subject-matter between the poems of the two countries; and it is not impossible that English court poetry should have reached Dublin, or other posts of English culture, in manuscript form. Campion, Raleigh, and Spenser are three English poets who spent some time in Ireland. However, what evidence there is does not support the supposition that English was understood in sixteenth century Ireland by either nobelmen or bards. It is highly unlikely therefore that Irish poets would have been interested in getting hold of English poems or in imitating them.[35] Even in earlier centuries English seems never to have become well established, and the chances that it could have functioned as a channel of transmission for English literary fashions are slim.[36] If one shifts one's attention to the seventeenth century, and the end of the bardic period, one finds that knowledge of English is growing; but the evidence is fragmentary and in some ways contradictory.[37] I think it safe to claim that love poetry in the syllabic metres was not affected by English styles.

A stronger possibility is Seán Ó Tuama's suggestion that goliardic poetry (i.e., satirical Latin poetry of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) is an explanation for the Irish classical poets' attitude to love.[38] I think it plausible that Irish writers should have known of and imitated mediaeval fashions in Latin writing. At least one Irish manuscript (a historical, not literary one) contains a Latin poem against women, its date unknown.[39] Knowledge of Latin by the bards is unquestioned, and reading Latin is a skill that educated noblemen are also likely to have studied. Even without the evidence of the one poem I have

mentioned one would have expected the sub-culture of Latin study to have reached Ireländ at the same time as manuscript texts of and glosses on classical and mediaeval Latin writers, grammarians, theologians, etc.

The gap between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when Latin poetry abusing or mocking women, or describing short-lived love affairs, might be expected to have reached Ireland, if it had not already done so, and the sixteenth century, when Irish writers wrote in an extravagant manner about the danger that women presented to men, is not easily bridged. Ó Tuama assumes that, as seems to have happened with Irish folksong, certain themes once absorbed were preserved in the aspic of Irish convention, and were still appearing unmodified centuries later. There may well be some truth in this. Some themes, notably the poet's wish that he had lost his sight before this woman ever came near him, are easily memorised and repeated, and because of the ease with which they gain their effect in a poem become favourites with poets (DG 18, 29, 32, 36, and 37 use this theme).

Any attempt to study possible relationships between Irish and Latin poetry must face the question of which Latin poems are to be used for comparison with the Irish, i.e., those preserved in the manuscripts of which country and of which century. If one regards all Latin poems written over a period of two or more centuries as suitable for consideration, one risks drawing on so wide a range of poetry that one's conclusions are of little value; and not being able to prove that any of the apparently relevant ones were ever known in Ireland. The problem exists in any comparison of Irish and the literature of another country; but with regard to Latin one cannot even depend on national boundaries to limit the

scope of one's studies. The gap that I have referred to between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries means that if any case is to be made out for Latin-Irish borrowing it will have to make much use of speculation about continuity of theme and tone from century to century and from country to country.

Ó Tuama in _An Grá_ quotes French, not Latin, examples of 'semi-popular' poetry that plays with paradoxes or protests extravagantly of the pain of being in love; and it is on the basis of resemblance with these that he describes the poems of the _Dánta Grádha_ as belonging to a stream of 'goliárdach' poetry.[40] The French poems that he quotes are of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and he also cites for comparison two English poems that are probably from the fifteenth century. He seems to see this type of writing as beginning in Irish syllabic verse with the poem _Mairg adeir olc ris na mnáibh_ by Gearóid Iarla, i.e., in the fourteenth century. Thus here too arguments are dependent on the assumption that themes of one period can be used to fill a gap in knowledge of an earlier period and of a different country. I have already explained why I do not regard _Mairg adeir olc_ as an adequate indication that something like the _dánta grádha_ of the sixteenth century was being written in the fourteenth century. However, Ó Tuama's suggestion does not depend on his use of _Mairg adeir olc_. The foreign examples that he quotes are so apposite that his argument deserves further detailed study. Some juggling with centuries will be necessary in any further investigations, and will require caution if any valuable conclusions are to be gained.

Neither the Latin nor the French goliardic hypothesis accounts fully for the differences between Irish sixteenth century love poetry and the accepted themes of French and Latin writing, e.g., the loss in Irish of the references to nature. Other theories may have some-

thing to contemplate.

A possibility, not previously mentioned, so far as I know, by any writer on the subject, is that there was a fresh acquaintance with Ovid's works in the sixteenth century, when there were more and more editions of his works circulating in Europe,[41] and that this encouraged experiment with some of his themes in Irish - ones that were new, and ones that had already become known via French poetry. There is evidence that sixteenth and early seventeenth century writers knew of Ovid's work.[42] I have not been able to establish how early one can assume a knowledge of Ovid among Irish bards, and thus at how early a date one can feel justified in speculating about Irish imitations of his work. The Metamorphoses were popular in much of Europe early in the Middle Ages;[43] the Ars Amatoria was being imitated in French in the twelfth century and remained popular thereafter;[44] but as Rachel Bromwich says, the Amores were 'apparently among the less well-known of Ovid's works in the Middle Ages, for no early vernacular translations of it appear to have come down.'[45] In Dorothy Robathan's account of 'Ovid in the Middle Ages' references to the Amores are rare; but she cites a thirteenth century French romance writer, Petrarch and Chaucer as three writers whose work shows knowledge of the Amores.[46] It is known that Ovid was studied in the Latin schools from the time of the late Empire onwards, sometimes in quotation, sometimes in complete texts. The monastery of St. Gall, which had close connections with Ireland, is quoted as a place where Ovid's work was being studied in the ninth century.[47] In view of the keen interest that Irish scholars took in the study of Latin, they may be expected to have shared the interest of the fifth-twelfth centuries in Ovid, to have studied him in the continental schools, and perhaps to have brought manuscripts of his work back to Ireland. If so, one might expect early classical Irish poets to be familiar

with Ovid's work, including the _Amores_, in the original, and to have passed on a knowledge of his central themes.

Since we read in Ovid, notably in the _Amores_ and _Ars Amatoria_, of Cupid's arrows wounding the lover, of the lover's heart on fire, of sleeplessness at night, of the jealous husband who guards his wife, of the scandal-mongers who watch for signs of illicit love; of complaints against deceitful women, and of occasions when the man shows himself as devious as any woman that he cries against; and since these themes all have parallels in the _dánta grádha_ (all except for Cupid and his arrows - I have found no mention of them) it would obviously be interesting to establish the extent of knowledge of Ovid in mediaeval Ireland.

Even when we know more about the debt of classical Irish writers to foreign love poets, and to their own writers of popular song, (it may never be possible to prove it, but it seems not improbable that some French literary motifs were adopted first of all in popular Irish composition, and that from that source they made their way into the more sophisticated metres of the bards) there are likely to be many aspects of classical love poetry that cannot be accounted for in terms of foreign borrowing.

The chance that the contribution of the Irish poets themselves goes well beyond the choice of metre, and the use of a specialised eulogistic vocabulary should not be ruled out. The diversity of types of love poetry that I have described, beginning perhaps with Fearchar Ó Maoilchiaráin's poem, and including those in the Book of the Dean of Lismore, and those ascribed to an Earl of Argyll and to Bishop Carswell, as well as those included in section B here, show that one cannot find one formula and derive all Irish or Scottish poetry from it. I have been speculating as to how much

in the work of the earlier poets represents adherence to a tradition and how much is the contribution of the individual writer; and I have stressed the point that love poetry is more likely to vary from generation to generation and from place to place than the other forms of poetry practised in syllabic metres. In looking at the poems in the Book of the O Conor Don one may wonder whether the fanciful tone and note of mockery heard in so many of them is not the particular development of the sixteenth century. It would not be fair to relate it to the tastes of Captain Sorley MacDonnell for whom the collection was made, since the other manuscript collections from later in the century show the same preponderance of poems that depend on exaggeration and mockery of self and others. Nor does it seem to have been confined to a particular part of Ireland. The known poets come from a wide variety of territories in northern and southern Ireland; while the surviving manuscript collections are also, to judge by their cataloguers' estimates of their spelling, the product of a range of areas in the north, the south and the midlands.

The work of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could be seen as the culmination, and over-sophistication, of a tradition of love poetry that had earlier contained many divergent elements. For these poets, and presumably for their audience, the interest of these poems is not usually in their themes, but in the poet's treatment of them. This is characteristic of a late stage in the development of any literary movement. It is a matter for regret that Irish poets of this late period do not seem to have wanted to extend concepts of love or affection, or the range of themes that love poetry treated of; to give, except in very rare instances, to their fabrications the interest of drama or narrative, or the complexity of tragedy or attempts at self-analysis. That they did not has probably something to do with a diminishing energy, confidence

and inventiveness in bardic culture in the late sixteenth century. The love-poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore exist to remind us of what could be achieved while working within bardic conventions of style and language. The existence of bardic schools, in which poets learnt to write on set themes in set styles, may have encouraged the fossilisation of certain kinds of love poetry at the expense of others. But the gap between the work of known bards and of known amateurs is not large enough to justify attributing the limited range of late love poetry solely to the influence of the schools. The decline of interest in creating new ways of talking about love within the conventions of *dán díreach* must have gone wider than the schools.

If one bears these thoughts in mind, one should not expect to find any one foreign tradition closely paralleling the sixteenth and seventeenth century Irish poems; and it would be unwise to make too much of a similarity of tone between these poems and French or Latin ones of earlier centuries. Poems like *Marrin uainn gu dun nan Naomh-gheal*, *Soraidh slán don oidhche aréir*, and the two attributed to Iseabal Ní Mheic Cailéin, cannot be shown to be dependent on a satirical tradition of love poetry; and the indications given by the first two poems mentioned that they have borrowed, by as yet undetermined channels, motifs from wholly lyrical and passionate forms of French composition (I refer to details of envy of the small dog, vow to risk hanging, etc.) may prove to be more important in elucidating the origins of classical Irish love poetry than the emphasis on mock-emotion and mock-outrage in the Book of the O Conor Don.

c) How long did this poetry last?

Only ten[48] of the poems in O'Rahilly's anthology do not have manuscript authority, or the evidence of an ascription, for their existence before 1691. I have already referred to half of them, those that can be dated to before 1630. The remainder exist in a group of manuscripts from the decade 1680-1690[49] (with two exceptions that come from a manuscript of 1654-1655)

Nothing sharply distinguishes the poems found in these late manuscripts from the ones that I have described.

There is nothing quite as consistently outrageous as Ní mé bhar n-aithne, a aos gráidh, but fantasy and exaggeration inspire most of the poems. The poet of DG 59 tells the girl who has killed him that she will be in danger on Judgement Day because she did not love her neighbour, ie. the poet, properly. Another lover says he will be happy to die if, after his burial in Scotland, his mistress will write his epitaph:'This is the one I killed' (DG 27). The poet of DG 43 tells us that the vision he saw was much too beautiful for a ghost, she must have been an angel. On several occasions a poet claims that he would rather be without his sight than be so tormented by the appearance of a woman (DG 29,32, 36,37).

Other poems refute such fantasies, as did Cú Chonnacht Ó Cléirigh in a poem studied earlier. 'I will not die for you', says the poet of DG 99, 'I am too sensible for such nonsense'. The authors of DG 2,3,9, tell us that, contrary to what others may say, love is pleasant, and women are fine creatures. Even more heretically, the poet in DG 5 professes not to mind whether a girl conforms to the bardic ideal of beauty of not.

The proportion of poems where the poet is not obviously speaking 'tongue-in-cheek' is minute in this group. 'Do not come between me and love of God', he says in DG 42. 'Once you loved me and slept with me, now you hate me though I do not understand why' is the message of DG 85. A few poems are straightforward statements about the fickleness of men or women (DG 76, 80, 84, 95). (Probably the most serious poems in the whole collection are those where the young girl or her lover is told to think of Death, Judgement, and the corruption of the body. -DG 98, 101-106; they make a fine ending to O'Rahilly's book and are perhaps a response to the production of a great many love-poems such as the ones I have described, where no thought is given by the lovers to the salvation of their souls. Otherwise, their links are with moral and didactically religious poetry and I have not included any detailed analysis of them in this account of love-poetry).

I mentioned that there was no change in the type of beauty praised; and it is equally difficult to find any metrical differences. Three of them (DG 3, 37, 74), consist of several dán díreach stanzas followed by a ceangal in amhrán metre: a form which, as I mentioned earlier, was apparently being used at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Four others are more obviously late: they use the trí rainn 7 amhrán form which Flower regards as a particular feature of the late 17th, early 18th century, and which Ó Cuív says was 'developed, as far as we know, in East Ulster early in the seventeenth century'.[50] These are DG 12, 77, 84, 91 - and even two of these can be dated as before 1688.

What is known of a Scottish manuscript now missing encourages the thought that the majority of this poetry was written before 1650. NLS 72 1 35 is now lost, but was described by two scholars who saw it in the nineteenth century as bearing the dates 1654,

1655. It contained, they said, Irish poetry of comparatively modern date - poems which Donald Smith described as 'Sonnets, Odes, and Epistles'. This makes them sound like love-poems; and in fact all three of the poems MacKinnon[51] quotes as specimens of the manuscript's contents are of this sort. Two are included by O'Rahilly in his anthology, Dánta Grádha, while the third is, like Tadhg Dall's poems, a vision of a beautiful woman.

It is not surprising that the end of this poetry should coincide with the end of the bardic schools in Ireland: 1650 is the date usually given for this closure.[52]

The schools in Scotland are thought to have lasted for longer; but we do not find love poems of any sort attributed to those Scottish poets who kept up the techniques of bardic poetry into the eighteenth century. It may be significant that one of the ten poems I referred to above is found solely (so far as I can establish) in a manuscript written c.1715 in Scotland.[53] This poem (DG 76) has as its theme the fickleness and giddiness of women, and is closer to the semi-proverbial style of various Scottish poems not in strict metres than anything else O'Rahilly prints. It is quite possible that it was written at the end of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century in Scotland. Apart from this, the Scottish manuscripts after 1690 show almost nothing that might be called syllabic-metre love-poetry. Instead one finds poems using a little of the bardic style and vocabulary in 4-line or 8-line stanzas based on regular stresses rather than on syllable-count. It may be that these were originally strictly syllabic and that their vocabulary once conformed with the classical literary language but was 'vernacularised' in transmission. However, unlike the poems in the sixteenth and seventeenth century manuscripts they rarely contain anything more than a description of the girl's

beauty, and a statement that the poet is tormented by love for her. I think it probable that they are the work of untrained poets of a later date; poets who continue to use something of the bardic material they have inherited, but who are no longer in close touch with any bardic school, or impelled by anything more than the wish to create pretty verses in a genteel style. Is luaineach mo cholladh anocht/'S luaithneach mo chadal a'nochd, mentioned earlier, is one of this group.

C. SCOTTISH GAELIC FOLKSONG

In order to provide myself with a further basis for deciding what is borrowed and what is native in Irish and Scottish love composition I looked at Scottish Gaelic folksong.

There are no Irish folksongs for which one can confidently claim that they were composed before 1600. Seán Ó Tuama's thesis is that the modern songs are descended from, and closely resemble, ones composed under French influence before 1400; but on verbal and metrical criteria one cannot show that any of the surviving songs belong to a date before the seventeenth century. The vast majority belong to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This limits their usefulness in any argument about what was being composed in Ireland or Scotland while the syllabic metres were being practised.

Scottish Gaelic folksong, on the other hand, does contain items which, on the basis of the historical references they contain, can be placed in the sixteenth century; and, using these as a starting-point, one can identify a metrical form, the strophic paragraph, which ceases to be the usual one for composition after the early seventeenth century. This would be of little help if Scottish Gaelic folksong were as uniformly permeated by apparently foreign elements as is Irish song. However, it became clear while studying them that the songs for which an early date, i.e., one in the sixteenth or early seventeenth century, could be proposed tended to contain nothing that would align them with continental song. In this they differed from the Scottish Gaelic songs of later centuries. Studying them makes clear the extent to which syllabic omposition in Scotland differed from a major stream of vernacular song (I have already drawn attention, when discussing the work of Iseabal Ní

Mhcic Cailéin, to one similarity that I see), and thus supports suggestions that syllabic verse contains elements taken over from Ireland or elsewhere. I set out briefly here what I have found in the early Gaelic songs.

The songs that can be dated to the sixteenth century by the references to historical people and events they contain are almost always laments for a dead chief or foster-son, husband or brother: 'S daor a phaigh mi 'm Fonn Ileach, for instance;[54] 'N an cuimhne leibh[55] or Chaidh mis' a dh'eubhal imprig.[56] A very few songs that we can date to the sixteenth or early seventeenth century are addressed to living men, and these are in praise of a chief or intended as a lullaby for a child: Tàladh Dhòmhnaill Ghuirm[57] or B'fhearr leam gun scribhteadh dhuit fearann.[58]

When looking for examples of early love-song I have had to be satisfied with items that are generally regarded as sixteenth century compositions on account of their structure (verse paragraphs of varying length, held together by a rhyme in the disyllabic word that ends each line) and their choice of vocabulary. Such songs are Aithnich fhéin a'chraobh tha leamsa[59] and Héman Dubh.[60] By looking at these and at those passages in laments or praise poems where love and devotion are expressed I have gained an impression of the treatment of love in the earliest surviving songs.

None of the conventions of love-sickness, wounding in the heart, death from a glance or a vision, sleeplessness or loss of one's rational faculties appear here. Love is a matter of shared feeling giving delight to all aspects of life. To express the strength of her feeling the girl describes, not what she cannot do, but what she would do and did do. I would go with you through the

woods, over the tops of the mountains, over the waves, I would be alone with you on a rock in the sea, I would travel whole countries with you; I would sleep wrapped in a corner of your plaid, on a bed of heather or in the sea-spray; I would wash your shirt in a moorland pool and dry it on the branches of a bush; I would keep you close to me, between my breasts, between my skin and my linen tunic; I would ransom you from death with everything I possessed, I would drink up your blood from the ground - these are the phrases that occur again and again in the early waulking songs; and it seems likely that any song in which they occur is in part at least a sixteenth century composition. The themes themselves, as opposed to the songs, may be older than this: the theme of spending a night on a sea-rock with one's lover is reminiscent of Gearóid Iarla's statement that he would willingly be alone on an island in the sea with his friend Diarmuid. Such statements may be a very old Gaelic way of expressing love, and faithfulness that defies all obstacles.

A theme that appears in Héman Dubh and which becomes frequent in seventeenth century song is that true love and a young lover are all that matters, money, goods and status are unimportant. The older songwriters probably regarded this as implicit in their own statements; but when it is openly expressed, as it is in so many couplet and triplet songs, it suggests that the songs are being composed at a different social level from before: these are no longer chiefs' wives and daughters but dowryless women from the clan.

A song for which a date in the first half of the seventeenth century has been suggested is Alasdair Oig Mhic 'ic Neacail.[61] In this, the girl expresses her love for Alasdair by saying she would like to bear him a son, five or six or seven sons. Equally direct

are the words of the speaker in Coisich a rùin:[62] if I were to hear that another was flirting with you I would tear out my hair from its root, my nose would spurt blood, my breath would be like a green mist, and I would fall to the ground. The girl in Chunna mise mo leannan [63] begins by saying that her lover went by and did not recognise her; but this is not made the excuse for self-pity or reproach - instead she praises the fine appearance and fighting skills of the soldiers he was with. The speaker in Tha mulad, tha mulad, tha liunn dubh orm fhéin [64] expresses more distress at being deserted by her lover, but the phrases she uses are ones found in laments (e.g.Her step is heavy when out climbing the hills),not those of Irish folk-song or of bardic love poetry. She channels her emotion into a denial of allegations made against her and her family.

The song 'S tric mo shùil air an linne[65] can be dated to the period before 1605, and probably to the years 1585-9, from internal references. Written in couplets, a form apparently later in popularity than the verse paragraphs, much of its content is evidently derived from the older songs. Their themes are being taken up and used in a more abbreviated form, one more suited to the restraint and brevity of the couplet structure, The girl who speaks says she is looking out on the water, to where her lover sailed away from her. Although he would not allow her to go with him,she wishes him well. She remembers that they used to be together in the woods, and that he would take her by the hand: it was not hatred for her that made him reject her, but her own concern for her honour. She wishes She wishes that the woman he has gone to see should be found cold after drowning, and that every other woman that might love him should be dead and in her grave; only the two of them alive and well, and on their own in the wild places or on an island together. She prays to God to keep him out of his enemies' hands, and safe from the elements: would that her own clothes were with him to keep him

dry, for it was often his plaid kept the cold and rain away from her on the hills.

Other elements that often occur in the early songs are praise of a man as generous in tavern or at home; or as a good fighter or hunter. This recurs in the couplets and triplets of the seventeenth century; and there may be combined with praise of curling hair and white skin - details that surely indicate the influence of composition in the syllabic metres on people writing in the vernacular (perhaps through the oral transmission of bardic poetry or of specialised items like Ossianic ballads). An example of this tendency is Soraidh no dha le durachd bhuam, a song dated by Allison Whyte to the years 1613-43.[66]

Among the songs for which dates before 1650 have, with any degree of likelihood, been proposed, I have found only two that bear any resemblance to any type of Irish love poetry. One of these is An raoir bhruadair mi'n aisling.[67] As can be seen from its first line, it uses the convention of the aisling, favoured by Irish bardic and vernacular poets for introducing a description of a beautiful woman, perhaps not mortal. In the Scottish poem, all resemblance with this type of poetry ceases after the first two lines, for the speaker is a girl, and the man she dreams of is someone known to her. She praises him in the traditional manner as a good drinker, a good marksman, and as related to the best clans in Scotland. Thus at this stage of the borrowing it is only the convention of an aisling opening that is taken. Sometime after the last years of the seventeenth century a poem is written that is a full imitation of the Irish love-aisling as found in the stressed metres: this is An aisling chunna mi 'm chadal,[68] by the Reverend John MacLean (c.1680-1756).

The other Scottish poem that resembles Irish material, Chailin og a'stiuir thu mi,[69] is one that is generally accepted as having reached Scotland from Ireland, almost certainly before 1700, and perhaps

as early as 1600.

One finds in the different versions of this song various lines that make brief reference to a love-sickness that resembles both the Old Irish coma and the Early Modern Irish 'sickness of the heart':

(when the girl tells the speaker she will never stretch out beside him unless he will first perform impossible deeds):

Nuair chuala mi na briathran gàbhaidh
Chaidh mi dhachaidh am mi-shlàinte
'S thug mi 'm laighe bliadhn' ach ràidhe;
Thainig a'chailin air an là sin
...Dh'fharraid i ciod e mar bhà mi:
"Cha'n'eil mi ach tursach cràiteach..."

When I heard the distressing words I went home in bad spirits and spent a year all but three months lying sick in bed; the girl came on that day...she asked how I was."I am wholly sad and vexed with pain..."

(he gets up,goes out,and meets the girl):

Dh'aithnich mi gu'm b'i mo ghràdh-s'i
Mheall i mo chridhe le a blath-shùil[70]

I could tell she was my love; she beguiled my heart with her warm glance

(from a different version: after he has married the girl he falls sick);

Cha b'fhada fhuair mi mo shlàinte
Nuair ghabh mi fiaras gràinneil.
Thug mi bliadhna mhór is ràith' ann.
... Thainig i an ceann nan cóig ràithean
..."Fhir ud tha stoigh,cé mar thà thu?"
"Tha mi fhìn gu tìnn bochd cràdhteach,
Olc le m'charaid 's math le m'nàmhaid"[71]

It wasn't long I had my health when I was seized with a hateful fever. I spent a year and three months more thus...At the end of fifteen months she came..."O man inside the house,how are you?"

"I am sick and wretched, vexed with pain. My friend would not be pleased at my condition, and my enemy would delight in it."

I conclude from this material that the earliest Gaelic folksongs, those of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries show us what non-bardic love poetry in a Gaelic language was like before the absorption of themes of love sickness and fancied death. Unlike the surviving Irish folksongs, none of which seems to have been composed before continental love-themes had suffused their style, the Gaelic corpus of song can be didvided into songs that antedate the new themes and others that imitate them. The latter date from the seventeenth century but are not found plentifully before the end of that century.

No one has ever made a systematic study of the themes of Gaelic folksong, as Ó Tuama has done for Irish song; but my own researches have shown me that the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century vernacular Gaelic poems and songs (the literary poems to a greater extent than the songs, it seems) contained far more continental love-motifs than do the syllabic poems of either Scotland or Ireland. This is something that deserves investigation, for any conclusions about how these motifs reached the late seventeenth/early eighteenth century writers would have interesting implications for Irish and Scottish literary history.

One possibility is that these motifs travelled from Ireland to Scotland at a late date, i.e., in the seventeenth century. In support of this, one may point to the history of <u>Chailin og a'stiuir thu mi</u>, and to the possibly Irish background for <u>'S luaithneach mo chadal a' nochd</u>. A thorough study of seventeenth and eighteenth century literature should produce further examples of the transmission of texts from Ireland to Scotland; I have myself noticed poems in Irish script in the MacLagan collection, and each of them looks as though

it was composed in Ireland. Since Irish folksong and stressed metre poetry also contains more continental motifs than does syllabic poetry, borrowing from this source would account for their appearance in Scottish poetry.

The obvious other possibility is that these themes reached Scotland at a much earlier date, that they were part of the Scottish tradition of composition in the syllabic metres, and from there were carried over into vernacular Gaelic writing, but that as a result of accidents of preservation no examples of them survive from before the seventeenth century. My earlier remarks on the closer relationship with continental composition of certain poems that have Scottish associations are relevant here. The earlier poems I am referring to, Marrin uainn gu dun nan Naomh-gheal for example, do not show the same range of themes and details as do the later ones; but they are straws in the wind. Without them, one would feel much less confidence in a hypothesis that claimed many themes had been used in Scotland before the seventeenth century but that the poems containing them had been lost.

If one accepts this hypothesis, the question raised earlier, when discussing the poems from the Book of the Dean of Lismore, of whether the most acceptable explanation of how these themes should have reached Scottish poets is that they came from Ireland reappears. The possible contribution of non-Gaelic writing in Scotland is tantalising; but in view of the heavy penetration of Irish folksong by French themes and details, and Seán Ó Tuama's not unreasonable proposition that these themes were first absorbed into Irish writing before 1400, when French influence in Ireland seems to have been at its strongest, one has considerable encouragement for believing that any continental themes in Scottish writing came primarily, if not solely, from Ireland. These considerations provide further support for my earlier suggestion that the poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore give an

indication of what the literary fashions in the love poetry of fifteenth century Ireland were. It is not axiomatic that if continental themes were absorbed into some stream of Irish writing before 1400 this stream consisted of syllabic metre writing, or that after prior absorption by stressed metre singers they were rapidly adopted by the writers of syllabic metre poetry. On these issues one would need to draw more material into the argument than has yet been quoted before one's speculative judgements could become satisfactory history. It may be that a manuscript such as the Book of the Dean of Lismore, and particularly the poems in it attributed to Gearóid Iarla, will eventually provide that material. Meanwhile I am content with the proposition that already in fifteenth century Ireland and Scotland writers of dán díreach were using continental love-motifs; that these probably were used in Ireland first by stressed-metre writers who were borrowing from French folksong current in Ireland; and that their late appearance in vernacular Gaelic comes after two or more centuries of use in syllabic and stressed metre poetry in Ireland, and after a similarly long period of use in Scottish syllabic metre poetry, but that they followed on a very recent entry of these themes into Scottish folksong. Borrowing from Ireland probably took place in each century up to and including the eighteenth, although one can rarely say what came in in which century. A corollary of these claims is that the syllabic love poems preserved in seventeenth century manuscripts such as the Book of the O Conor Don and the collections of the 1680s are only the tail end of a tradition. The extent to which syllabic poetry may once have rivalled the folksongs for range of foreign motifs is still unclear. I do not think one need assume that every detail that appears in vernacular Irish or Gaelic was once part of a syllabic metre tradition. Too little is known about the extent to which the vernaculars had their own channels of transmission. I offer this more as a reservation

regarding attempts to find a close parallel to the style of the later classical poems. More attention should be given to finding parallels for some of the poems for which there exist only one or two examples in Scotland or Ireland; the last word has not been said on the early _aisling_ poems; and the possible special tastes of the sixteenth century (e.g.,for Ovid?) could be investigated further. More work with the manuscripts of both countries is certain to elucidate further the many issues that I have drawn attention to.

PART TWO:

THE WELSH TRADITIONS

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This account of love-poetry in Welsh in the twelfth and succeeding centuries is deliberately restricted in scope to a description of those themes and details that enable one to talk about continuity and discontinuity in the Welsh traditions. Initially I have tried to describe what one finds in Welsh love-poetry at its earliest appearance, and to estimate the extent to which there is, already established by 1200, a basically Welsh poetic treatment of love. Subsequently I have tried to show the ways in which later poets diverged from the available models of love-poetry. This has led me at times into discussion of the possibility of foreign influence on Welsh writing - a topic that it would, in fact, have been difficult to avoid, since so much previous writing on Welsh love-poems has concentrated on this topic. However, I have not attempted to make a detailed comparison of love-poetry in Welsh with that in other literatures: a study of that sort is of more value, I feel, the more comprehensive it is, and my own work here does not go to the limits of comprehensivness. Nine out of ten foreign items may be irrelevant but the tenth of great interest, and in my examination of foreign sources, necessarily curtailed by time limits and the availability of texts, there is the possibility that I have stopped at the sixth or seventh item. Nonetheless, I am satisfied that I have looked at a wide range of representative material, and that the conclusions I have reached are ones that would not easily be overturned by different texts from the ones I have seen or quoted.

In order to gain a better idea of how love is described in the earlier examples of Welsh literature I have looked at Welsh prose texts, and have extracted from them some material that I thought relevant to a consideration of the poetry. My section on the 'Early Prose' makes no claim to be a study of the prose tales as a whole, although my conclusions about the nativeness or exoticism of love-description in individual tales should be relevant to the overall question of whether these tales are largely composed of native or of borrowed material.

It may seem that within the field of Celtic Studies a possible topic for study should be a comparison of Welsh and Irish love-poetry, and an investigation of possible relationships between the literatures. However, any study of this sort must consider the possibility of a common Celtic heritage. Any example of a Welsh parallel with Irish can be explained as easily by a common tradition as by borrowing from Irish. I decided it would not be rewarding to look for examples of Irish influence; and that a study of the indications of a common Celtic tradition would need to be differently oriented from the present one. Some of the aspects of love-poetry that I have discussed here suggest interesting possibilities for thoughts of a common tradition; but I have probably not drawn attention to every type of resemblance between the two traditions. A separate study remains to be written on this point. Meanwhile, the resemblances and differences between the two literatures speak for themselves in the descriptions and quotations that I give.

I begin with the Gogynfeirdd.

C H A P T E R F I V E :

T H E E A R L Y P E R I O D

A.The Gogynfeirdd c.1100-c.1350

B.Early Prose

CHAPTER FIVE: THE EARLY PERIOD

A. THE GOGYNFEIRDD c.1100- c.1350

No love-poetry survives from the period of the Cynfeirdd. It would be rash to presume from this that none was written. Quite possibly, the early transmitters of tradition and copyists did not see fit to preserve anything so trivial, unrelated to the history of tribe or country. When wondering what may have been lost it would be simple if one could assume that whatever existed in early Irish literature existed also in Welsh; but the differences between early Welsh and Irish nature poetry (set out by Professor Jackson in Early Celtic Nature Poetry, Cambridge, 1935) warn one against making this assumption. I prefer not to give time here to speculation on the earliest period, but to move directly to an account of the earliest surviving love poems, those written by the Gogynfeirdd - poets who held honoured places in the homes of Welsh princes, or who were themselves noblemen.

The various poems that might be regarded as examples of love-poetry from the period of the Gogynfeirdd may be divided as they were by J.E.C.Williams in his article 'Beirdd y Tywysogion:Arolwg' (Llên Cymru, 11,1970-1), into two groups: rhieingerddi and gorhoffeddau.

Of the 'gorhoffeddau', or 'boasts', we have two examples: one by Gwalchmai ap Meilyr (fl.1130-80) and the other by Hywel ap Owain Gwynedd (fl.1140-70). It has been claimed, e.g. by Professor Clancy,[1] that Hywel's poem should be read as two distinct compositions; and Lloyd-Jones sees it as 'a fusion of two distinct and independent poems, one in praise of country and the other a forthright love-poem'.[2]

However, as J.E.C. Williams shows, the poem makes good sense when read as one unit: there therefore seems to be no need to abandon the traditional manuscript presentation of it as one poem, or the title it is given of 'Gorhoffedd'.

J.E.C.Williams shows convincingly (op.cit.pp.83-6) that the two gorhoffeddau we possess are best seen as examples of a specific type of literature, for which parallels can be found in many other countries, from Russia to France and further. In it the speaker boasts of exploits, deeds of valour or deeds of love, that he claims to have performed. He expects his audience to see his words not as autobiographical, but as ways of fulfilling the needs of the convention: that one should vaunt oneself in as skilful and artistic a manner as possible. The section of Hywel's poem, then, where he praises his own success with women, should be read, not as 'a forthright love-poem' as Lloyd-Jones suggested, but as an exercise in exaggeration for the purpose of claiming pride of place among all men in every manly activity. His words 'keueify bun... keueify dwy... keueify deir a phedeir... keueif bymp o rei...keueify chwech heb odech pechawd' (H.p.318) etc.(I had a girl... I had two... I had three and four... I had five of them... I had six without refraining from sin) are to be placed beside lines such as those in Gwalchmai's poem:

> dybryffeif ynneu yn aroloet y eigyl
> dyurydet yn lloegyr rac llwybyr vy llaw
> Derllytid uyn detyf uyn dewiffa6
> yg gadellig uro dy ffiliaw. (H.,p.20)

It was I who routed the Angles' ranks, Anguish in England from my hand's path. My mettle made me worth the choosing, In Cadell's line, Tysilio's country. (trans. Clancy, 1970, p.122)
where the speaker makes no attempt to be objective in the presentation of his deeds.

Gwalchmai's gorhoffedd uses a different structure from Hywel's: instead of a clear separation of his different themes he makes them complement each other throughout the poem. Mention of himself as a lover therefore recurs several times without its always being clear whether it is one girl or several that he loves. He makes his source of delight seem to be less in the pleasure of conquest (which was Hywel's theme) than in the very sensation of being in love. The coming of May, of spring and summer, the sound of the nightingale that keeps him awake at night - these bring thoughts of love and these are the experiences he celebrates. The satisfaction of that love is to come after the poem's end and after his journey's end: if God is good, that girl will sleep beside him tonight. No less than Hywel then, it is as a fortunate lover that he claims our attention.

The way in which the poet says he experiences love is similar in these two poems to its presentation in the rhieingerddi: there were evidently conventions established before the middle of the twelfth century for conveying love's effect. Hywel speaks of secret sighs, of anxiety and longing, in his gorhoffedd; Gwalchmai of sleeplessness and yearning for the absent one. Both link thoughts of love with thoughts of the approaching greenness of summer. There is nothing in their handling of these ideas to make one think that they are anything but native Welsh ways of expressing emotional turbulence or distress.

Rhieingerddi

5 of Hywel's 7 surviving awdlau are meditations on a relationship with a particular girl. The characteristics of girl and of lover vary little from poem to poem: the girl is fair, quiet, gentle, all that the poet desires womanhood to be. The poet is always

remote from her: outside a fort that she is within, or a journey's distance from her. Only in 'Uyn dewisy riein uirein ueindec' is physical distance not mentioned: and there the girl is shown as silent, mute even, in response to the poet's statement that she is his choice. She is perhaps as far away from him mentally as are the others. In 'Ass6sis6ny heddiw 6arch gloyw liw glas' he says he is hateful to the girl, which momentarily suggests a slightly more active relationship than in the other poems. Within the context of the poem, however, it has significance chiefly as another way of saying that the poet is not allowed to be with her. The aim of these poems is not to give a dramatic account of a relationship, or of incidents in the history of a love-affair, but to express in poetry the experience of love-longing and yearning, and to combine it with choice terms of praise for the girl. Hywel begs, petitions, for a meeting (H.p. 318) 'adwyfy yn anuedιet o yn uydιwyt caru' (I become helpless on account of the madness of loving), he says (H.p. 318): memories of a girl's appearance trouble his sleep (H.p.319): he thinks continually of a girl although she does not want him with her - 'kyn addef goddef g6ay ui nam llas' (Alas that I was not killed before experiencing suffering), (H.p.320); he would like to go to see her so that she could restore his pleasure in life, but his life has gone, he becomes weak; on account of his longing he is a second Garwy Hir (H.p.319).

In all of these poems the poet's tone is quite serious: not for him the wilful frivolity of the Dánta Grádha. His poem is a wholehearted tribute to the girl he admires, not a sardonic acknowledgement of her charms; and his mention of his own suffering is, he persuades us, only the merest hint of what he feels - usually the impossibility of his situation is made explicit only in a couple of lines from each poem.

It seems possible that such poetry may have developed from a tradition of praise-poetry addressed to women as well as to men - to the wives and daughters of noble families. Hywel's poems are no longer straightforward eulogies, nor even expressions of amicitia (see Dronke, Med.Latin I,pp.192-220, on the courtoisie of friendship as a theme for poetry). Lines like:

> pei chwaerei y but yr barddoni
> neba6d nossweith y byddwn nessaf iddi (H.p.320)

If it chanced that the composing of poetry was rewarded (i.e. if she were to reward my song), not a night but I would be beside her.

show that he intends his poems as ones expressing sexual longing, not solely the admiration of an onlooker or the flattery of a friend. Such lines are rare however; often he might be speaking to a daughter, or writing a compliment for a friend, as he praises the girl's soft, white beauty or describes the joyful effect of her company. This restraint could be seen as the legacy of poetry of praise of noble women. J.E.C.Williams, (op.cit.,pp.69-72) gives some examples of such poetry outside Welsh, as does Dronke, ref.cit.

The weakness and pain that Hywel claims to experience may belong with a native Welsh concept of the nature of love: if Irish literature could create a distinctive treatment of love, Welsh, at a similar stage of development, may have had its own traditions, expressed in prose or verse that has not survived. Hywel's comparison of himself in one of the awdlau to Garwy Hir implies that at least one character was known from previous history or romance as epitomising the sufferings of lovers - we know of Garwy Hir only through the references of later poets. A line in Hywel's Gorhoffedd contains a possible reference to Ovid (ked bwysy karyada6c kerted ouyt - H.p.316), a poet whose Ars Amatoria was known in Wales as early as the ninth century.[3] The association of love with a troubled mind and

sleeplessness might derive ultimately from Ovid; but if so the borrowing took place at some considerable remove from Hywel's time, for his poems have very little in common with anything written by the Roman poet. Some of Ovid's successors, such as the writers of mediaeval Latin lyric, provide closer parallels for the quiet, wistful tone of the awdlau; but little survives in this style before the twelfth century (Dronke holds, with others, that the twelfth century was a 'flowering' of Latin lyric: thus it would be unwise to assume that the lost manuscripts of earlier centuries contained material directly comparable to that in the early thirteenth century manuscript of Benediktbeuern, the source of the 'Carmina Burana'). Since Hywel was writing in the mid-twelfth century it is doubtful whether he would have known of contemporary writings in Latin from the continent. Admitting the possibility of classical and mediaeval Latin influence on Hywel's compositions I nonetheless feel that there is little to discourage one from regarding his poems as examples of a native Welsh type of love-poetry, of which he may or may not have been an early practitioner. Dronke has shown (Med.Latin I,pp.9-46) that concepts of love-yearning and love-sickness occur in widely-scattered and unconnected literatures: there would be nothing unlikely therefore in Welsh providing further parallels, and further evidence that the passions of love were not first recognised in Provence. The possibility of French influence on Hywel I discount: I see no evidence for, and no likelihood of, Provençal being known in South Wales; and the Northern French, who transmitted some Provençal ideas, did not start imitating Provençal literature until the second half of the twelfth century, too late to be relevant to Hywel's biography.[4] One writer, Lloyd-Jones, sees Hywel's poems, and others like them, as 'mainly the product of the pervasive and permeating spirit of that literary movement of which the poetry of the wandering

scholar, the troubadour, and the trouvère were the outstanding expression on the Continent' (CPWP,p.192). Whether there ever was such a 'pervasive...spirit' is uncertain: the relationships between twelfth century literatures can usually be shown to derive, in part at least, from a direct literary knowledge by accomplished poets of work in another language. I prefer to look, as J.E.C.Williams does, at developments within Wales to explain the Welsh literary achievements of the twelfth century.

The poetry of the next generation of poets shows two poets, Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr (fl.1155-1200) and Prydydd y Moch (Llywarch ap Llywelyn) (fl.1173-1220) handling love-themes in the same way as Hywel and Gwalchmai.

Cynddelw's fragment 'I Ferch' describes a girl like the ones that caused Hywel's anguish - she is beloved and deserving of praise, she is the colour of waves, of foam and of frost, but the poet does not find favour with her. Her rejection of him is more positive than in the poems previously mentioned:

Ni mad gyrchawdd gwen gwely Eiddig (Oxbook,No.31)
(Not fortunate: the fair one sought Eiddig's bed)
This is the first known mention in Welsh literature of a character who became very popular with the cywyddwyr: Eiddig, the Jealous Husband. Jealous husbands occur in continental fabliaux and chansons; but no other characters from those sources appear in the poetry of the Gogynfeirdd - the pert wife, for instance, or the clever clerk, or the self-seeking friar. Eiddig is more probably a native Welsh creation.

Cynddelw's 'Rhieingerdd Efa' and Prydydd y Moch's 'Rhieingerdd Gwenlliant' praise noble and remote princesses. Both poets address horses: in one case the poet seems to be remaining

behind while the horse travels to the girl who has won his admiration. J.E.C.Williams suggests (op.cit.pp.64-5) that this theme has as much to do with the convention of sending horses as gifts in heroic society as with any borrowed literary detail of love-messengers. Neither Cynddelw nor Prydydd y Moch claims to have received any reward from his love for the beautiful girl he praises. In fact Cynddelw says he seeks no reward, his love prevents him from complaining. He is sleepless, restless, his senses disturbed, no one has ever known the pain he endures. He asks for a kind response and proclaims his worth. Prydydd has some other details, stressing the extremity of his passion: he is coming closer to the exaggeration of the Irish poems. His sighs rise to the sky, his cheeks have lost their colour, his love is a fever his heart is blazing like a bonfire. The details of pale cheeks and feverish love are paralleled in Ovid: but here they may arise simply as variations on the previous descriptions of love-yearning.

As J.E.C.Williams says (op.cit.p.66), there is no need to suppose that the bards historically paid their addresses to the women of ruling families, and hoped for marriage. Like Hywel's awdlau, these are examples of poetry describing unrewarded love: here linked with something of the self-vaunting seen in the gorhoffeddau:

> llywarch ym gelwir ...
> lloegyr distry6...
> ...dyfnant ysgarant gwae6 oe hasgre (H.p.290)

Llywarch I am called... England's destruction... my enemies know what it is for blood to flow from their breasts. (from Prydydd y Moch's'Rhieingerdd Gwenlliant')

The association of early summer (here specifically Whitsunday 'Duw sul gwynn') with thoughts of love also reappears in the 'Rhieingerdd Gwenlliant'. Cynddelw strays less often from praise of his princess, Efa. The sense of the sea and hills in his poem derives from his many

metaphors for the girl's beauty:

> kym//ra6d ewyn d6fyr ae dyruiw gwynt
> kymraec laesdec o lys dyfrynt
> kyfleuer g6a6r dyt pan dwyre hynt
> kyfliw eiry goɩwynn goɩwyt epynt (H.p.121)

match for foam on water the wind has stirred, soft and lovely Welsh from the court in the valley, light of the dawning day when it starts its course, colour of snow white on Gorwydd Epynt.

A century later Iorwerth Fychan's awdl for Gweirful repeats the substanceof these earlier poems. His heart is given to a princess who deserves all praise, for beauty, for virtue, for breeding; and she has rejected him so that he is racked by sorrow and pain. Gruffydd ap Dafydd ap Tudur's awdl'Gwyl fun a dry hun drwy hud cur ortho' (Anwyl p.206) is in many ways a reworking of Hywel's poems: he pleads with a graceful girl who will not answer him, he begs for a meeting, claims that no sorrow or grief was ever like what he knows now. She is within a fortress and he without; but, claims the poet, once they were together, and it is yearning to be with her again that keeps him awake now. When he says that the girl avoids him deliberately in order to madden or anger him, he may be giving a new twist to the relationship of passionately loving poet and unresponsive girl; but Cynddelw's girl that preferred Eiddig's bed is not dissimilar to this one. To end the poem Gruffydd finds new ways of stating his case: ever since Adam and Eve men and women have loved each other, and the two of them could do so as well, out under the May covering of the woods. This is the first time in Gogynfeirdd poetry that we have seen a lovers' meeting imagined out of doors, in the woods: the reason for its appearance now is probably the disappearance of the princes and their courts, and with them of the courtly setting for love-poetry. Other mediaeval languages can parallel Gruffydd's words but need not have inspired them, since in any language the shade and secrecy of the woods are the natural alternative to indoor trysts.

Other Gogynfeirdd ended their poems with mention of the skill and trouble that went into the making of their verses, verses that would give honour to the girl, and expressed the hope that their craftsmanship would be rewarded. Gruffydd has the same idea: let the girl put aside all deviousness and reward him before death overtakes them.

Iorwerth and Gruffydd were both writing at the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth centuries. Hywel ab Einion Llygliw's floruit is c.1330; but his love-poem for Myfanwy is still wholly consistent with the love-poetry of the previous two centuries. Myfanwy ignores him and he wastes away like Garwy Hir. For this beautiful girl within her fortress he works at putting words together until he has a praise-poem formed for her; to her he sends a horse. His poem is a web of past ideas, testimony to the continuing literary interest in a style of poetry first seen in the twelfth century and which in the intervening centuries has shown no great change. Sincere and passionate love for a noble and beautiful girl, but one who, alas, lives her life unheeding the poet: this is a pattern which in the next chapter will be seen to be broken, but for the two centuries or so that it lasted it was extraordinarily consistent. This suggests to me that there was a strong native tradition feeding it, and for this reason my next section looks at the evidence from Welsh prose for a native vocabulary of love-description. But it is of course also in part the result of the very tight organisation of poets in mediaeval Wales. The impression given, both by the surviving literature, and by the poetic handbooks, is that the highest order of poets, the Gogynfeirdd, would only permit themselves to write on certain themes, and in certain styles. They were trained to prefer one word to another when composing a description, and to prefer one sequence of details to another in a narrative. In such an aesthetic, innovation is

inappropriate, and one would not expect to see major changes in the content of Welsh love-poetry until the cohesion of this order of poets had been broken - as happened in the social disruption of fourteenth-century Wales.

B. EARLY PROSE

a) Current critical opinion is that the surviving written versions of the four tales known as the Mabinogi date from, at the latest, the second half of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth.[5] It is likely then that any descriptions they contain of the experience of love will chiefly reflect native Welsh literary traditions, with the possibility of influence from Irish or Latin - but not from French, unless one allows for the possibility of the exchange of themes between the continent and Wales: the Norman presence in Wales at the end of the eleventh century was minimal, (Professor Morgan Watkin, in La Civilisation française dans les Mabinogion, Paris, 1963, sees the Mabinogi as permeated by French influence; but his views depend upon, among other things, a late date of composition for the surviving written versions of the tales, and this late date has not found general acceptance).

In three of the tales unreturned love is not a theme: we read of faithful married love in Pwyll, and of Pwyll's immediate love for Rhiannon, who tells him she already loves him. In the stories of Branwen and of Manawydan scenes of love or courtship play no part. It is in the story of Math vab Mathonwy that we find a situation where a young man feels great love for a girl - but dares not admit it. The lover is Gilfaethwy, and he dares not acknowledge that he is in love with Goewin, for she is the young woman that his lord, Math, keeps with him always. The effect on Gilfaethwy of his state of frustrated love is the same as that described by Hywel, Gwalchmai, and later poets:

Ac ynteu giluaeth6y uab don a dodes yuryt ar y uoꝛ6yn ay charu hyt na 6ydat beth a6nay ymdanei. Ac nachaf yli6 ay 6ed ay anfa6d yn atueila6 oy charyat hyt nat oed ha6d y adnabot.

(White Book, col.82)

And Gilfaethwy son of Don set his heart on the maiden and loved her so that he knew not what to do because of her; and lo, his colour

and his face and his form wasting away for love of her, so that it was not easy to know him.

(Trans. Jones & Jones, p.55)

This suggests that the idea of the lover who loses colour and health and happiness because he cannot satisfy his love was a concept known in eleventh century Wales and perhaps well before then - it may have been a detail familiar in popular story-telling, to which the Mabinogi are thought to be closely connected. This type of love-longing is not that described in the Irish tales, so an Irish source for this detail seems unlikely. The relation with Ovid's writings is slight: he prefers more vehement details of torture and a pierced heart, Cupid's arrow wounding and causing fever, although the effect is the same as that seen in Gilfaethwy's case - the lover is weakened (see Amores, Books One and Two). The probable provenance of the Mabinogi in Welsh story-telling, and the particular form of Gilfaethwy's malaise make it likely that this is a Welsh concept of love, and that it is on traditional themes that the Gogynfeirdd are drawing when they write their poems of unrequited love.

This detail does not reappear in any of the 'Four Independent Native Tales': Breuddwyd Maxen Wledic, Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys, Breuddwyd Ronabwy, and Kulhwch ac Olwen, nor in another tale for which a date before the mid-twelfth century has been suggested, Owein.[6] The only one of these tales in which a description of a troubled lover might have occurred is Breuddwyd Macsen, which tells the story of an Emperor who falls asleep and sees in his dream a beautiful girl. When he awakes every part of him is filled with love for her, but the effect on him of this experience is to make him want to be always asleep, (so that he can see her again), not to make him colourless and half-crazed as the Gogynfeirdd claim to be. Since his situation is different from theirs - he has not been rejected or scorned by the girl - one would not expect to find the same symptoms.

b) The prose tales are of interest in another way, in that three of them provide instances of colour comparisons for a woman's beauty that are not found in the poetry of the Gogynfeirdd. Every love-poem by one of the Gogynfeirdd contains a description of the girl's appearance in terms of light or of things that are white or of extreme paleness: snow, foam, frost, daylight, dawn, apple-blossom, gossamer, the colour of the wave, especially when it is breaking into foam.[7] A possible exception is when Hywel says of Gwladus in his Gorhoffedd: 'mi ae ma6l a melyn eithin' (H.p.317) - I will praise her as yellow gorse. The poet may wish us to think solely of the brightness of gorse; given his other metaphors this seems the most likely explanation; but it may be that he wishes us to imagine yellow hair. It is in the later Gogynfeirdd that we find mention of a contrasting colour, black: Myfanwy, praised by Hywel ab Einion Llygliw, has jet-black brows - 'muchudd ael' (*Anwyl*,p.220); and Gruffudd ap Maredudd praises the blackbird-coloured brows of the dead Gwenhwyfar - 'Mwyalchliw ddwyael' (*R.*p.109).

The three tales in which further descriptions of beauty appear are: *Kulhwch ac Olwen*, *Breuddwyt* and *Peredur*, (the other tales provide no more than references to yellow or yellow-red hair, a detail whose frequency in Welsh literature as well as in Irish suggests that it has a long history in Celtic description). *Kulhwch ac Olwen* has a description of Olwen:

> Oed melynach y fenn no blodeu y banadyl. Oed gwynnach y chna6d no distrych y donn. Oed gvynnach y falueu ae byssed no chanawon godr6yth o blith man grayan fynha6n fynhonus. Na gol6c heba6c mut na gol6c g6alch trimut nyd oed ol6c tegach noꝛ eidi. No bꝛonn alarch g6ynn oed g6ynach y d6y uron. Oed kochach y deu rud noꝛ fion.
>
> (*White Book*, col.476)

Her head was yellower than the flowers of the broom; her flesh was whiter than the foam of the wave; her palms and fingers were whiter

than the flowers of the melilot among the small pebbles of a gushing spring. No eye was fairer than hers, not even the eye of the mewed hawk nor the eye of the thrice-mewed falcon. Whiter than the breast of a white swan were her two breasts; redder than the foxglove were her cheeks.
(Trans.Professor Jackson in A Celtic Miscellany, London, 1951,1971 p.182)

In its emphasis on whiteness this passage obviously resembles the work of the Gogynfeirdd. It is probable that the Gogynfeirdd aesthetic of beauty derives from traditional descriptions of beauty like this one; but that details of yellow hair, red cheeks, were considered by them as too brightly coloured, perhaps too vulgar, too closely connected with popular storytelling, to gain inclusion in their own strictly-ordered poetry. The image of red cheeks is specifically contradicted by Gwalchmai in his Gorhoffedd, when he says he loves the slow glances of a girl with long-white cheeks:

caraf...
a golygon hwyr hirwyn y grut. (H.p.18)

It is thought that the surviving written version of Kulhwch ac Olwen belongs to the eleventh century;[8] Peredur perhaps belongs to the twelfth century; and it contains a different ideal of beauty. The woman that Peredur loves has skin whiter than flowers of whitest crystal (g6ynach oed no bla6t y crissant g6ynhaf - White Book, col.133) but hair and eyebrows blacker than jet (duach oedynt no muchyd- idem); presumably then it is from a Welsh source like this one that Gruffudd ap Maredudd and Hywel ab Einion Llygliw, both writing in the fourteenth century, derive their details of black eyebrows. Later in the tale Peredur compares the woman's black hair to the blackness of a raven, her skin to the whiteness of snow, and the red spots in her cheeks to spots of blood in white snow - the last comparison, red as blood, is also used for the colour of clothing in Breuddwyt Ronabwy.

Breuddwyt Ronabwy is the latest of these three tales: it cannot be earlier than the latter part of the twelfth century, and its editor suggests 1220-5 as a date for its composition.[9] In it we find mention of a young man with white face, red cheeks, hawk-like eyes, (White Book, col.215); and of another with face white as ivory, eyebrows black as jet, and the skin of his wrist whiter than the water-lily, (White Book, col.207). His hair is auburn or brown - 'gwineu'. Earlier traditions of description are evidently still being reworked; with the late date of the tale reflected in the choice of ivory, (literally 'elephant-bone' here: the writer is not borrowing the French word) for whiteness instead of a more traditional image from familiar Welsh landscapes.

CHAPTER SIX:

DAFYDD AP GWILYM

A. Resemblances between Dafydd's poetry and that of the Gogynfeirdd

B. Divergences from Gogynfeirdd tradition

CHAPTER SIX: DAFYDD AP GWILYM

Dafydd ap Gwilym (c.1320 - c.1380) is sometimes spoken of as the pre-eminent love-poet in Welsh, an estimate deserved as much on account of the quality of his poems as of the central position of themes of love and rejection in his verse. Partly because of this pre-eminence, and partly because he seems to have established a style of love-poetry that other poets imitated, discussion of the possibility that elements in cywyddwyr love-poetry were of foreign origin has centred on a discussion of Dafydd's poetry. This essay is no exception to that pattern: I describe some aspects of Dafydd's work before mentioning any other cywyddwyr because firstly, his work is distinctive enough to merit discussion on its own; and secondly, because it seems possible that he was the first person, in the history of cynghanedd-ornamented verse, to diverge from the patterns of love-poetry used by theGogynfeirdd.

A. RESEMBLANCES BETWEEN DAFYDD'S POETRY AND THAT OF THE GOGYNFEIRDD

Almost every poem of Dafydd's provides evidence of one debt to earlier writers: his use of epithets for beauty that are the same as those used by the Gogynfeirdd. The women he praises are the colour of light, of sunshine, of snow, of foam on water.[1] Very occasionally he introduces a term that seems to be new; a comparison with the whiteness of paper, (Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym 137, line 22), of chalk (GDG 53, line 31), or of lime (GDG 42, line 19). These need not be inventions by Dafydd: they may have been current in Welsh prose or verse without having gained acceptance for bardic use (in Irish, comparisons with lime and chalk go back to before 1200; which raises the possibility that they have an equally long history in Welsh, and perhaps derive from some common Celtic inheritance of modes of eulogising beauty). Morfudd, the girl who plays the most prominent

part in Dafydd's poetry, is, like Olwen, fair-haired: many poems describe her as 'f'eurchwaer' (my gold darling) (GDG 81, line 1), as 'f'eurferch' (my gold woman) (GDG 117, line 48), or speak of her hair as 'tefyll aur' (gold strands (GDG 53, line 2). Dyddgu, to whom a smaller number of poems are addressed, is dark-haired, and to describe this darkness Dafydd uses the same images as were noted in the work of the Gogynfeirdd:

> Duach yw'r gwallt, diochr gŵydd,
> No mwyalch neu gae mywydd. (GDG 45, lines 29-30)

Blacker her hair, straight forest, than blackbird or brooch of jet.

In the same poem he specifically says that her beauty is like that admired by Peredur: smooth and white as snow her forehead, black her brows like a blackbird's wings, cheeks like the blackbird's blood in the snow. This is one item of evidence that he was drawing on Welsh traditions that had been preserved in prose as well as on the compositions of the Gogynfeirdd; and some others of his images may have a source in prose styles of description. The description of the blackbird in the snow differs slightly from Peredur's words in the version of his story that has survived to us (cf. my quotation from the story in the previous chapter); possibly the account of Peredur's vision of beauty had become proverbial, and Dafydd was drawing on some such popular statement of it.

Moving from the description of outward beauty to the accounts Dafydd gives of his relationships with the women he praises, his references to Dyddgu suggest that he is in a similar relation to her as Hywel was to the girls he praised in his awdlau (a point already noted by Professor Parry and by Rachel Bromwich).[2] He speaks of her as chaste and unattainable (GDG 45), gifted, accomplished, virtuous (GDG 79 and 119); he cannot sleep, fever attacks him, he is

sorrowful, he asks is it worth being alive (all motifs from GDG 45); he invites her to go with him to the forest (GDG 119 - cf. the poem by Gruffydd ap Dafydd ap Tudur referred to earlier); but we never hear that he has gained her love. Probably GDG 79 sums up the nature of his relationship with her: compared with Morfudd, she seems to be in some ways a better choice as a woman to love; he declares that he would choose her but that he wonders if she is to be won; it is his regret that he did not know her before she became someone else's wife. His relationship with Morfudd is of a different sort, diverging from this pattern of admiration at a distance.

It will be noted from the above references to GDG 45 that Dafydd claims to suffer in the same way as did the Gogynfeirdd from the frustration of his love. The ways in which he adds to the concept of the afflicted lover will be discussed later.

A further point of similarity is in the building of a poem around an address to a love-messenger or 'llatai', Cynddelw addressed a horse, an animal that one might naturally associate with the carrying of a messenger or of a message. By Dafydd's time the theme had evidently become a convention: he addresses animals that could be messengers only in fantasy - wild birds (the skylark, GDG 114; the woodcock, GDG 115; the seagull, GDG 118;), a stag (GDG 116); and, the ultimate in untameability, the wind (GDG 117). In descriptions of his messengers, Dafydd has scope for exercising his skill with words; but his motives in using this convention may extend beyond the desire for technical challenge: his messengers are unlikely choices in naturalistic terms, but may symbolise the freedom denied to Dafydd (cf. Rachel Bromwich's comments on the cywydd to the wind, Bromwich 1974, pp.46-8).

Eiddig / The Jealous One, mentioned earlier by Cynddelw, appears several times in Dafydd's poems (see GDG 40, 59, 70, 72, 76, 77 etc.). The comparative frequency of the occurrence of his name at this point in the history of Welsh poetry may have something to do with the possibility that Morfudd was a real character, and married.[3]

Like the Gogynfeirdd, Dafydd refers to characters from the Old Testament (cf. Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur) and from Welsh story-telling.[4] Dafydd refers to Indeg in GDG 43, 54, 71, 79, 94, 96, 103; Tegau in GDG 53, 56, 65, 92, 110; Luned in GDG 43, 86, 133; Esyllt in GDG 33, 45, 86, 111, 130; Branwen verch Llyr in GDG 40; Cai in GDG 114; Creirwy in GDG 123; Garwy Hir in GDG 48; and Eigr in GDG 30, 50, 54, 56, 58, 66, 77, 81, 87, 88, 99, 118. As a result of her investigation of the surviving remains of Welsh story-themes, Rachel Bromwich is able to say that at times Dafydd produces "a fragment of narrative which cannot be directly related to any known literary source and which is evidently based on the popular orally-preserved tradition of the chwedlau" (TYP, pp. lxxvii, lxxxii, 512).

These references to men and women from Welsh story are only one aspect of the way Dafydd gives a Welsh tone and setting to his poems. The Gogynfeirdd referred solely to places within the Welsh sphere of influence, past or present, to Welsh military heroes, and to people who can, in some manner, be traced in Welsh prose (cf. introduction to TYP); Dafydd is similarly Welsh-oriented, but in subtly different ways. He refers to places not for their military or legendary associations, but because he has visited them, seen beautiful girls there, been struck by love in the parish church; he names people whose social status is not always noble; and he calls on Welsh saints (GDG 21, 78, 81, 94, 116) as one might in conversation. Something else that gives the flavour of the local and temporal to Dafydd's verse is his use of the Welsh countryside. The Gogynfeirdd refer

to the changing appearance of the landscape in order to date an event, or to provide a counterpoint to their words elsewhere in a poem (cf. J.Lloyd-Jones' comments on nature settings in CPWP, pp.185-190). Dafydd makes the bog, mist, swollen river, the rain that drips from the eaves of a house, into subjects for poetry on the grounds that he personally has experienced their hazards, not because they are obviously suited to poetic description or because they are connected with any public event.

A final point of resemblance is that Dafydd, like earlier poets, speaks of his poetry as a public tribute, for which the woman should feel honoured - in GDG 85 he complains that he has laboured at composing songs in Morfudd's honour, but has received nothing but pain and trouble in return. Similarly in GDG 137: he tells the Grey Friar that although he has praised a certain maiden throughout Wales he has never won her to his bed. In GDG 98 he contrasts the many gifts he has received from Elen Nordd for his songs with the nothing he has received from Dyddgu. Further instances of the theme are found in GDG 34 and 84, (cf. Bromwich 1967, pp.19-20).

B. DIVERGENCES FROM GOGYNFEIRDD TRADITION

An aspect of Dafydd's poetry that drew ridicule from his contemporary Gruffudd Gryg was his use of the imagery of warfare in his description of the effect of love. Spears, arrows, darts, bolts, these are the weapons that seem to strike the lover, bringing him near to death:

Ef aeth ei drem...
...Drwy 'mron a'm calon a'm corff,
Mal ydd âi...
Gronsaeth drwy ysgub grinsofl. (GDG 78, lines 41,44-6)

Sight of her went through my breast and heart and body as an arrow

goes through the scrapings of withered stubble.

Gwewyr serch...
A gefais... (GDG 84, lines 17-18)

Spears of love I received.

Gwewyr..
A â'n wân trywan trwof (GDG 100, lines 1-2)

Spears that stab and thrust through me.

Â seithochr wayw y'm saethawdd,
...Gwenwyn awch, gwn fy nychu
...I mewn y galon y mae (GDG 111, lines 11,13,16)

A seven-sided spear shot through me. In my heart is a poisoned barb - I know that I am suffering.

Gruffudd summarises the situation in the first cywydd of his ymryson with Dafydd - he probably bases his comments chiefly on the cywydd GDG 111 (cf. Eurys Rowlands' comments in Llên Cymru VIII, pp.110-111) but his comments are representative of several of Dafydd's cywyddau:

Eres i Ddafydd oeryn
...Gwewyr ganwaith a'i gwywawdd.
Hefyd y mab anhyfaeth
Yn llochi cerdd, yn llech caeth.
Maith, eiddilwaith, ei ddolef,
Ym Mam Dduw, y mae, medd ef,
Artaith druan ar Gymro;
Eres yw ei fyw efô.
...Gwewyr rif y sŷr y sydd
Yn difa holl gorff Dafydd.
...Mae arfau, meistr gweau gwawd,
Yn gadarn yn ei geudawd.
...Dafydd a ddywawd, wawd wiw,
Fod yntho grant ond antur
O arfau...
O saethau, (GDG 147, lines 1-29)

A marvel is poor Dafydd..a hundred spears have enfeebled him.
Still the incorrigible lad plays with poetry, faints, a captive.
Protracted-feeble work-his cry. By the Mother of God, he says,
wretched end for a Welshman. It's amazing that he's still alive...
Pains to the number of the stars are comsuming, wholly, Dafydd's
body...Weapons-master at weaving song-unyielding in his breast...
Dafydd has said that, fit composition, just about a hundred weapons
...arrows, are within him.

Gruffudd solemnly points out that the great military hero, Arthur, would not have survived a month with all these wounds; how then could an enfeebled servant of love like Dafydd survive even an hour. He must be lying.

Certainly, Dafydd's use of this imagery is worthy of notice. There are no references by the Gogynfeirdd to spears, arrows or other weaponry of love, any more than one finds talk of wounds or of arrows lodged in the heart. Dafydd appears to have introduced a new theme to Welsh love-poetry. The closest parallel to his work in earlier poetry is a line in a poem by Gruffud ap Dafydd ap Tudur (fl.1300). His poem to the silent girl, mentioned in the discussion of the Gogynfeirdd above, contains the line: 'Tu a'i gwan a'i hepgor' / She stabs my side and then avoids me / spares me. The image is not developed further. It may be intended to link with the earlier lines where the poet says that no pain, anxiety or trouble reduced him to this sad state until the girl that is in Eittun did so. A text of the poem is in Anwyl, pp.206-7.

For Rachel Bromwich, this imagery suggests a link between Dafydd's poetry and that of the troubadours. The latter, she says, 'developed the idea of Love's warfare by frequent references to the spears and arrows with which it was waged' (Bromwich, 1967, p.21).

Later she speaks of 'spears and arrows' as being 'among the commonplaces of Courtly Love' (Bromwich, 1967, p.29). It is indeed true that there are a few (very rare) references to the spears and arrows of love among the twelfth and early thirteenth century troubadours; but where they occur, they are not being used in images of the same sort as Dafydd's. They are part of extended metaphors of war, not brief descriptions of the effect of a lady's glance. The closest parallel to anything by Dafydd is found in a poem by the Italian troubadour, Sordello, writing in the first half of the thirteen century. His poem 'Aitant, ses plus, viu hom quan viu jauzens'[5] contains the lines:

> Tan mi distreing lo dartz don sui feritz
> Al cor d'amor, per qe. l mortz m'es ayzida,
> Car il non es tot eissamen ferida.

So much does Love's dart, by which I'm stricken in heart, torment me that death is near, because she is not by it likewise stricken.

(Press, p.241)

The differences between this poem and ones by Dafydd are the same ones that will be seen between his work and that of the late thirteenth and fourteenth century French writers, and the work of the man who inspired all imagery of this type in Provençal, French and Italian writers, the Latin writer, Ovid. Sordello is struck by a dart shot by Love / Amor - this is the name that Cupid has in Provençal and French poetry. Dafydd never refers to any third party, acting as archer or marksman. When he is hurt it is because Dyddgu or Morfudd has released spears, arrows, etc. at him: see e.g. GDG 95, line 43; GDG 111, line 29; and GDG 147, lines 57-8, where Gruffudd Gryg refers to Morfudd's weapons ('arfau Morfudd') as responsible for Dafydd's state. The girl is not always specifically named as the marksman - sometimes Dafydd says 'a dart went through me'; but this is always associated with sight of the girl, and Dafydd holds her responsible. In GDG 80, both Dafydd

and the girl shoot at each other, with happy result:

> Saethais drwy'r mur, gur gywain,
> Saethau serch at y ferch fain.
> Saethodd hon o'i gloywfron glau
> Serch ymannerch â minnau. (GDG 80, lines 51-4)

I shot throught the wall, carrying pain, arrows of love to the slender girl; and she shot swiftly from her bright breast love, greeting me.

When arrows or spears strike Dafydd they cause pain, irritation; the continual pain enfeebles him, his looks betray his torment, he thinks he is in danger of death (see e.g. GDG 111). For all the artificiality of the idea that one can survive a long while with an arrow in one's side, his description of his pain is closer to an account of a wound received in warfare than is Ovid's account of a wound from one of Cupid's arrows. Cupid's arrows bring to the lover the feeling that he is on fire; the effect is that a flame or fever - for examples of Cupid shooting arrows see _Amores_ I, i, ii; II, i, v, ix, ixb; and _Ars Amatoria_ I, lines 165-170, line 261; III, lines 515-6. These are the associations that Love's arrows have when they reappear in French poetry.[6] Also different is the effect of arrows from Amour on the dreamer in _Le Roman de la Rose_: the first arrow makes the dreamer feel cold and shiver; all of them make him sigh and swoon, like the typical lover in Northern French poetry. This episode occurs in the section of _Le Roman_ written by Guillaume de Lorris during the years 1225-30;[7] a manuscript of this poem is known to have existed in early fourteenth century South Wales [8] - but the gap between the allegorical arrows of Beauté, Simplece, Franchise, Compagnie, Beau Semblant, released by the God of Love at the dreamer, and the everyday arrows of Dafydd's poetry seems to me too great for one to want to connect the French poem and the Welsh writings.

The reasons that make one doubtful about any connection between Dafydd's work and French poetry also hinder the development of any theory that Dafydd was directly imitating Ovid's poems. Ovid's marksman is always Cupid; the arrows come when Cupid chooses to send them, and need not have anything to do with the girl's presence; their effect is to make the lover feel feverishly hot and cold. Furthermore, although Dafydd mentions Ovid's name occasionally, one cannot feel certain that he actually read the Roman poet. His references are vague and may indicate solely that Ovid's name had become synonymous with love-poetry:

> Nid gwas, lle bo gwyrddlas gŵydd,
> Llwfr wyf ar waith llyfr Ofydd. (GDG 58, lines 19-20)

No way reluctant am I, place where the woods are green, for the work of Ovid's book.

> Ni lefys dyn hael Ofydd,
> Ei brawd wyf, i'w bro y dydd. (GDG 70, lines 9-10)

Ovid's generous man, her love an I, ventures not in her direction by day.

or, describing his own poetry:

> Cywair ddelw, cywir ddolef,
> Cywydd gwiw Ofydd, gwae ef. (GDG 148, lines 7-8)

Perfect image, true cry, a fine cywydd in Ovid's style, woe for him.

(Although this may be an instance where 'ofydd' is a lenited form of 'gofydd' / 'affiction, grief'. cf. J. Lloyd-Jones' study of 'Dofydd' and 'gofydd', <u>BBCS</u> XV, pp.198-200)

Rachel Bromwich sees close parallels between four of Dafydd's poems (GDG 39, 58, 71 and 80) and lines by Ovid (<u>Amores</u> III, v; III, viii; III, vi; and I, vi, II xii, respectively).[9] Each of these parallels could be explained as coincidence, the same theme

(interpretation of a dream; contrasting of a soldier's claim to a girl's affection with that of a non-combatant; the hazard of a swollen river that interrupts one's journey; the heavy door and unhelpful porter barring the way to a chosen girl) arising from the similar circumstances of separate societies. Indeed, the porter may be descended from those porters in early Irish and Welsh prose tales who bar the way to a chief's court - compare for example the account of the arrival of Cei and Culhwch at the court of Wrnach the Giant in <u>Culhwch ac Olwen</u>. These parallels do not provide conclusive proof that Dafydd had read Ovid.

When Dafydd refers to classical (usually Trojan) heroes or heroines his knowledge of them is gained from the Triads (as in GDG 51: see GDG, p.487 and <u>TYP</u>, pp. 129-130) or from some Welsh version of the supposedly Roman and Trojan ancestry of the kings of Britain (the story of the Trojan ancestry existed in Welsh at least as early as the first half of the thirteenth century).[10] There is no evidence therefore, beyond his mention of Ovid's name, that his classical knowledge was any greater than that of the Gogynfeirdd, of whom Rachel Bromwich says (<u>TYP</u>, p.lxxix): 'no evidence has come down which can prove that prior to the time of Einion Offeiriad in the mid- 14th century, Welsh bards had more than a very imperfect knowledge of Latin, derived primarily from the Church services, and from some acquaintance with the life of the monasteries.'

If the foreign parallels for Dafydd's imagery of weaponry leave one doubtful about their relevance, is there anything to support the possibility that the initial idea was Dafydd's own?

Earlier I referred to Gruffudd Gryg's cywydd mocking this excessive stress on the lover's pains. It seems to me significant that

Gruffudd nowhere suggests that the imagery is anything but Dafydd's own. If, for a fourteenth century Welshman, talk of a lover as someone wounded in battle was associated with Ovid, or with French chansons or with some form of popular verse in Welsh, would not Gruffudd have used this as a further basis for criticism of Dafydd? The charge of borrowing from foreign literatures, of from some poorly-regarded level of Welsh composition, would have fitted easily into Gruffudd's series of accusations that Dafydd's poetry is absurd exaggeration, and that his audience have tired of hearing his plaints. If Dafydd had merely been expressing in formal poetry something that could have been heard any day in unskilled song, Gruffudd would surely have had less cause for commenting on its oddity. Instead, throughout this cywydd, Gruffudd writes as though Dafydd were the only poet ever to have claimed that the pangs of unrewarded love were comparable to being pierced by arrows, spears, or lances.

Dafydd was writing in the fourteenth century, a century in which arrows, and weapons such as the lance or pike, were still primary constituents of warfare. When, in GDG 106, he visualises Death, it is as an archer with a crossbow, and the heavy arrows that were used with this bow: 'Angau a'i chwarelau chwyrn' / 'Death with his swift-moving bolts' (line 8). In anticipation of this end to his life, he hopes that the Trinity and Our Lady will pardon him. So close was the connection in his mind between arrows and the way a man's life could be ended that in GDG 75, where he is hoping that Eiddig will be drowned on a journey he is about to undertake, he speaks of the arrows of the sea; 'Saethffrwd aig, trywanwraig trai' / Arrow of the sea's stream, ebb, stabbing home' (line 37). Later in the poem he calls on the crossbow-man to wound and kill Eiddig (lines 47-56).

In GDG 114, he fears that an archer will shoot at his skylark-messenger; and in GDG 154 (lines 1ff.) he mocks Gruffudd Gryg as a crossbowman, shooting inaccurately. If the imagery of warfare was so prominent in his thoughts it should not be surprising that in a few of his cywyddau he takes the idea that the lover is unhappy or uncomfortable and describes the state of pain as thought it were the result of a contemporary assassination. It should be remembered that his ability to find new and startling images is one of his excellences as a poet (a point made by Rachel Bromwich herself in Bromwich, 1967, pp.41-7; and by Professor Parry in Poetry Wales, 1973, pp.39-43). He was as capable of finding new words for an old disease as was Ovid. There may then be no need to account for the differences between his work and that of French or Latin writers by saying that he used only a little of what he found in a French work[11] or by postulating various intermediaries at a popular level.[12] It is possible that the imagery derives from his own interests, and awareness of contemporary events. Certainly, his vivid account in GDG 111 of the shaft, the poisoned barb, the stake, the bradawl that seem to twist within his body does not suggest a man writing in imitation of others. Dafydd may have known the line in Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur's poem where the poet says the girl stabs his side, and spares him (Anwyl, p.207, line 6) and his imagination may have built upon this idea; or, one might use Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur's poem as an example of the way the image of stabbing may occur to a poet independently of the mythology of Cupid and of the details of Ovidian love; and suggest that Dafydd ap Gwilym was similarly independent of other European traditions.

A second divergence from Gogynfeirdd tradition is noticed when one studies the varied narrative structures of Dafydd's poems. The Gogynfeirdd wrote poems that may be categorised as pleas or boasts

whereas many of Dafydd's poems have a narrative content; several are dialogues. This has also led people to postulate foreign influence on his poetry. The thesis of Sir Ifor Williams' article in THSC, 1913-14, pp.83-204, was that there was a connection between the poetry of the clerici vagantes and of Dafydd, evidenced in their interest in episodes of love as well as in their linking of outdoor scenes with talk of love, and in lines that mention the lover's subjection to the lady. In particular he compared GDG 41, 89, 129 with certain structures seen in Provençal poetry - the pastorela, serenade, and alba respectively. As Rachel Bromwich says, Bromwich, 1967, p.49, 'Direct influence seems extremely doubtful in all cases'. In fact, one might maintain scepticism about there being any connection at all between Dafydd's work and foreign models. The theme of a lover outside a house, addressing himself to a lady within, who perhaps is not even listening to him may occur in any society, especially in the context of courtship of a married woman, for then the poet will not be welcome within the house. There are many differences between GDG 41 and the content of pastorela or pastourelle: it is not a chance encounter with an unknown girl, of lower social status than the poet. The girl seems to be waiting for the poet, to be someone that he already knows. This is perhaps a pre-arranged meeting. Nor does the poet have his way with the girl, as does the narrator of the usual pastourelle: a tryst is arranged for the following Sunday; but the girl fails to arrive and there is no suggestion that this is anything but her own choice. The closest parallel is between GDG 129 and the alba. In Dafydd's poem, the two lovers argue over whether dawn has come, and thus whether it is time for Dafydd to leave. Dafydd is insisting that he has no need to hurry. This may be compared with Professor Hatto's account of the alba, in EOS, p.31: 'The distinguishing features of the alba are its constant theme of

separation, its preference for dialogue, its almost obligatory refrain containing the word alba and the regular inclusion of a third figure, the watchman, who announces the coming of dawn but who may say more'. Dafydd's poem deals, in dialogue form, with the theme of separation at dawn. For the omission of any reference to a watchman, one may compare Northern French lyric versions of the theme (see EOS, p.32).

Rachel Bromwich herself compares GDG 63 with the type of the reverdie.[13] There is a resemblance between the Latin and Provençal poems that she mentions and Dafydd's poem contrasting his hopeless state with the productive life of the birds; but his bitter dialogue with the magpie suggests that there is as much of Celtic satirical tradition in his poem as of continental lyricism.

Rachel Bromwich's conclusions are that these possible parallels may be dependent on 'indeterminate influences which could have reached him orally through songs and poetry current in Latin, French, English, and even Welsh' (Bromwich, 1967, p.49). Except in the case of GDG 129 I feel there may have been no foreign borrowing at all. And if borrowing took place it does not seem to have been at the level of Dafydd's poetry: it lacks close verbal or thematic similarities to representative compositions by Latin or French writers, and the genre similarities that appear may reflect independent poetic styles. It may be that a stage of literary history, when continental themes were taken up by Welsh singers or writers, has been lost to us. On its own, Dafydd's poetry is unsatisfactory evidence of a foreign influence in Welsh.

D.J. Bowen takes a completely different view and says that Dafydd was consciously imitating the style of the troubadours and the

conventions of 'amour courtois' (see his articles in Llên Cymru VI, pp.36-45 and Llên Cymru VIII, pp.1-32). But unless one believes that Dafydd had direct access to Provençal literature I cannot see that this view is tenable. The evidence of the surviving literature continually contradicts the idea that every motif used by the troubadours found its way into Northern French and thence to the British Isles. Many of the ideas and expressions that we regard as characteristic of the troubadours are missing from the foreign literatures that it is reasonable to assume Dafydd was in contact with, namely fourteenth century Norman and English poetry. Where parallels occur between Dafydd's work and that of the troubadours, for example the exaggerated praise of a woman's beauty and power, one may wish to assume that many stages of transmission have been lost; but it is more straightforward to regard them as coincidental. I feel that not enough credit has been given to the possibility that Welsh love-poets were able to create and extend their own traditions, independently of developments in other languages.

As an example of the way that critics of this century have concentrated on foreign explanations for what they found in Welsh one may cite their discussion of the narrative content of Dafydd's poems. For some time it has been regarded as something to be explained wholly as a matter of borrowed literary conventions.[13] In recent years some writers, in particular Eurys Rowlands, have been arguing that there may be much of truth in Dafydd's account of his relationship with Morfudd.[14] If one accepts this - and the critical reading by Mr. Rowlands and Mrs. Bromwich of certain poems by Dafydd is in favour of this thesis: the disagreements over Morfudd's place of residence are immaterial to the central argument that there was a real person whose background is to be elucidated - some details of

Dafydd's work that are often compared with continental writings may be read as Dafydd's own attempt to convey the reality of his situation: the mention of the need for secrecy (in GDG 74 and 78, for instance) and the frequent references to Eiddig (see above). Attempts to see Morfudd when she was a married woman, and Dafydd a proscribed visitor, would require secrecy; and Dafydd would naturally find himself thinking of, and cursing, her husband. The narrative content of this poems (which have been compared with the fabliau)[15] may have much to do with Dafydd's own experiences. He need not have made every journey that he describes, or engaged in every conversation that he recounts: a sequence of love-poems, begun as an attempt to record private memories, can lead the poet to attempt to assimilate other men's themes to his own experience, or to the imaginative expansion of moments half-experienced, half-anticipated. Dafydd's account of a love-relationship leads him into a defence of his own poetry (see his debate with the grey friar GDG 137); and at other times perhaps into an examination of all his attitudes to life. In elaborating on these themes he will have used any image or allegory that seemed to him to convey his meaning. He may never have waited in the rain outside Morfudd's house (see GDG 89) or attempted to creep into Eiddig's house (see GDG 80); but by means of these scenes he can establish that love is a driving force for his deeds; and that only his love's refusal of him, not any precautions by Eiddig, can prevent their being together. His account of Eiddig may owe something to popular song: lacking any popular song from before the sixteenth century we can only conjecture on this; it seems unlikely that it owes anything to continental fabliaux - Dafydd's work lacks the characteristic salaciousness of the fabliau, and the existence of the lover-woman-jealous husband triangle need not be dependent on a foreign model. Eurys Rowlands says when discussing the question of the truthfulness of Dafydd's account of his relationship

with Morfudd: 'tybiaf mai teg cymryd fod bardd o ddifri, neu'n dweud y gwir hyd nes y profir nad yw ond yn cellwair ac yn dychmygu' (Llên Cymru VI, p.106) (I think it fair to regard the poet as being in earnest, or telling the truth, until it is proved that he is merely joking or inventing things). This could be relevant to an assessment of his accounts of broken appointments, foolish incidents, and of his complaints that the girl he loves is heartless and fickle. If one reads these poems as deriving from experience of loving a woman who eventually marries someone else (his account of Morfudd) one will feel less inclined to call these 'foreign elements' in this work. I suggest that one may not be doing any injustice to Dafydd's poetry if one attempts to read it as the product of Welsh traditions, fertilised by the experiences and poetic skills of Dafydd himself.

A possibility about which one can say little is that there may have been another tradition of love-poetry in Wales apart from that evidenced in the work of the Gogynfeirdd. It is known that metres were being used other than these favoured by the Gogynfeirdd; one of them, the traethodl, was taken over by Dafydd and his contemporaries; what the content was of poems in these less complicated metres we do not know. It has been suggested that the sixteenth century canu rhydd may give some indication of the content of earlier poems in these metres;[16] my own studies[17] suggest that most of the content of these poems can be traced to contemporary and near-contemporary poems in Welsh and English and that it is unnecessary to postulate a long unrecorded tradition of poems in the same style as the sixteenth century free metre ones. However, among the canu rhydd there are some poems for which there are few parallels anywhere, and these include a group of poems where the poet engages in debate with a bird. Rachel Bromwich has drawn attention to these, and has compared them with

three poems by Dafydd in which a bird gives advice to him. In GDG 36 the cockthrush recommends to Dafydd that he should throw off his gloom and enjoy the long days of May, out in the birchwoods. Contrary advice is given in GDG 63: the magpie tells Dafydd it would be better for him to leave the woods, where he is thinking about his hopeless love, and to return to the warmth of a fire. He abuses the magpie, but she has the last word: he might as well become a hermit as think of love. She evidently considers him too old and impotent to have any chance of success ('Ofer i ti, gweini gŵyd, / Llwyd anfalch gleirch lled ynfyd' - It's in vain for you to be in lust's service, a grey-haired feeble old man, in his dotage - lines 45-6). The woodcock in GDG 115 is equally discouraging, though for different reasons. Dafydd wants him to go as a love-messenger but the woodcock refuses: it is too late in the year, too cold, and the girl is untrue anyway.

The relevant canu rhydd poems (C.Rh.C. I vi; 33; 34; 35; and 36) contain conversations of a similar sort usually between a plaintive lover and a bird who claims to know better than the poet the facts of the case and the course of action that should be followed. Rachel Bromwich's suggestion is that the later poems provide strong indications that Dafydd was making use of a form already established in Welsh popular poetry. She notes that 'the wisdom of birds is proverbial in folk-poetry',[18] and that there are 'a number of precedents in Welsh, as elsewhere, for talking birds; whether prophetic, or didactic, or endowed with the wisdom which comes with great age, like the Eagle, the Owl and the Blackbird, who are classed among the Oldest Animals in Culhwch ac Olwen.'[19] She draws attention to the possible influence of French bird-debates;[20] but her own testimony as to the substantial Welsh precedents makes it as likely that the basic source was a Welsh one.

The question of the origin and development in Welsh of the theme of conversation with a knowledgeable bird requires further investigation. Meanwhile, I think one can comment on the relationship between Dafydd's poems and those in the *canu rhydd*. My own suggestionis that the sixteenth century poets were imitating Dafydd and perhaps drawing on less sophisticated treatment, in prose or verse, in English perhaps, as well as Welsh, of the theme of a bird rebuking a man. I do not regard the later poems as products of an independent tradition on which, at an earlier stage, Dafydd was able to draw, and in this I differ from Rachel Bromwich. Popular poetry there may well have been in Dafydd's time, and as Rachel Bromwich suggests, he may have borrowed this theme and others from such a source; but the sixteenth century love-poems in the free metres are not popular - by which I mean there is no evidence that they were written by uneducated poets, unaware of Wales' sophisticated literary traditions - and I do not think that one can deduce from them the content of earlier free metre poetry.

There are other ways of approaching the question of Dafydd's debt to popular poetry. Rachel Bromwich points to a similarity between the nature englynion that were composed in earlier centuries, and Dafydd's poems, in their attitude to the natural world (*Poetry Wales*, 1973, p.49); and Eurys Rowlands has shown the close connection between Dafydd's cywydd to May (GDG 23) and earlier Celtic ideas about the changing seasons, ideas that were probably expressed in popular verse; in the same article he argues that Dafydd was probably the first to incorporate the pun, a device used by the *beirdd teulu*, in strict-metre poetry (*Llên Cymru* VI, pp.1-25). Further close study might suggest more connections of this sort. The few I have mentioned are a reminder that some of the strengths of Dafydd's poetry, its variety and directness for example, may derive from well-developed traditions in Welsh.

English Influence

I have in this chapter said nothing about the possibility that Dafydd borrowed from English poetry. It is quite credible that Dafydd heard items of popular English song, although it would be unwise to assume that he had any knowledge of what we now think of as the English masterpieces of the fourteenth century - the work of Chaucer, or of the alliterative poets. Unfortunately, fourteenth century secular English lyric is something of which little has survived.[21] The century is represented chiefly by two groups of poems, the Harley Lyrics[22] and the Rawlinson Lyrics,[23] all of them anonymous. The type of authorship and the circulation of these poems are matters on which various scholars have speculated. One of the authorities on this period, Rosemary Woolf, has recently said that the authors of the Harley Lyrics may well have been 'in religious orders';[24] since so few people at this period would have had means of recording anything they composed, a clerical authorship may be suggested for almost all surviving thirteenth and early fourteenth century lyric. This leaves one uncertain about the circulation of these poems: was it only within monasteries and abbeys that they were known, or would lay people get to hear and imitate them? In either case, is circulation likely to have reached North and South Wales, or will it have been confined to a small geographical area?

When one looks at the content of these poems it is only the Harley Lyrics that give rise to thoughts of a connection between Welsh and English poetry. The Rawlinson Lyrics, and others that survive in manuscripts of the first half of the fourteenth century, are brief statements of praise, pleasure or regret, and are not concerned with details of a lover's feelings, or with the progress of a relationship. The Harley Lyrics are longer poems, in which the lover does sometimes give attention to detailed description - of

landscape, of feelings, of beauty; but as Rosemary Woolf says, 'Comparatively little of the Harley Lyrics is given to analysis of the lover's feelings: tears, sighs, sleeplessness, longing for death with protestations of unending but hopeless service, never form the sole substance of the lyrics as they do in so many of their French counterparts and English successors'.[25] They are not on their own an adequate source for those details of despair and depression that Gruffydd Gryg mocked Dafydd for using. Nonetheless, there is some mention of the pains of love, and of the lover being wounded: I shall quote a few instances in order to give the flavour of the poems.

There are extreme statements of the lover's unhappiness:

'With longyng Y am lad,
On molde Y waxe mad-
A maide marreth me.
Y grede, Y grone vnglad,
For selden Y am sad
That semly forte se.
...To dethe thou hauest me diht-
Y deȝe longe er my day.'[26]

and this may be combined with mention of wounding (reference to spears or arrows, as in Dafydd, does not occur):

'Hou shal that lefly syng
That thus is marred in mournyng?
Heo me wol to dethe bryng
Longe er my day.
...Hire heȝe haueth wounded me, ywisse,
...Ich vnne hire wel ant heo me wo;
Ych am hire frend ant heo my fo
Me thuncheth min herte wol breke atwo
For sorewe ant syke.'[27]

Beyond this the poets of this collection do not go. Dafydd's vivid imagery of the weapons of warfare is not paralleled here, nor his descriptions of the agonies, torments, undergone by the wounded lover.

The poets of the Harley Lyrics are interested in the possible paradoxes of love ('I am her friend, she is my foe'[28] and 'My death I love, my life I hate'[29] or 'No fire in Hell burns hotter than the man that dare not tell his love'[30]) and at times the persona of a lover who sorrows, sighs, weeps, grows faint. They parallel only a few of the newly-stressed elements in Dafydd's work.

There is then a little scope for comparing English with Welsh work; but as a result of the uncertainty about the circulation of these poems and the extent to which they reflect any widespread patterns of composition I have chosen not to develop any theory of borrowing by Dafydd from English poems that might resemble the Harley Lyrics. It should be mentioned however, that one scholar, R.H.Robbins, thinks it would not be unreasonable to imagine a 'continuity of ME courtly lyrics from 1200 through 1568',[31] even though the evidence for this from before 1300 is almost non-existent, and after 1300 is haphazard in its survival. R.H. Robbins' suggestion does raise the possibility that some of the conventions of the Harley Lyrics, of Chaucerian poetry, and of almost all fifteenth century love poetry, were well enough established in English before 1300 for them to have reached Wales, and to have affected English, and perhaps even Welsh, popular poetry before the time that Dafydd was writing. Because of the lack of evidence on which to base an argument I have not explored this suggestion further; but as the scraps of fourteenth century lyric accumulate it may eventually be possible to be less cautious about this. English is certainly one of the more credible ways in which new ideas for poetry may have reached Dafydd, and his poetry could well be sifted more finely for traces of English speech and verse.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

AFTER DAFYDD

A. Some Other Cywyddwyr c.1330-c.1520

B. After 1520: The 'Free Verse' Tradition

CHAPTER SEVEN: AFTER DAFYDD

A. SOME OTHER CYWYDDWYR c.1330 - c.1520

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, most poets wrote at least a few cywyddau in which they spoke of themselves as suitors or praised a woman's beauty. Those whose work I have consulted are, in the fourteenth century, Gruffudd ap Adda (fl.1340-70), Madog Benfras (c.1320 - 1360), Gruffudd Gryg (c.1360-1410), Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen (c.1360-90) and Iolo Goch (c.1340-98); and, in the fifteenth century, Dafydd Nanmor (c.1450-80), Dafydd ab Edmwnd (c.1450-80), Gutun Owain (fl.c.1470), Dafydd Llwyd of Mathafarn (fl.c.1480) and Tudur Aled (c.1480-1525). Many anonymous cywyddau have also survived (sometimes with attributions to Dafydd ap Gwilym); some of these I have seen and used.

Because Dafydd seems to have been writing before any of them (and it may have been he that was responsible for the remaking of the _traethodl_ metre by the sophisticated poets)[1] these writers are usually said to have been imitating Dafydd's type of poetry. The situation is likely to be more complicated than this, as from time to time one sees in their work themes and motifs not paralleled in Dafydd (in so far as the canon of his work has been established by Professor Parry). There are some ways in which they move further from known Welsh tradition than does Dafydd. This should not be surprising, given the length of time between Dafydd's floruit and that of a late writer like Tudur Aled. The Gogynfeirdd maintained consistency of style and content over a longer period; but the forces that enabled them to do so, for example the self-sufficiency of Welsh culture and society, were no longer present at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Many aspects of Dafydd's poetry are rarely found in, or are absent from, the work of these other writers: e.g. references to May or springtime, use of outdoor settings (there are no conversations with birds), a narrative or dramatic element - such as might be provided by a confrontation with the girl or with a jealous husband (mention of Eiddig is rare). A possible conclusion is that some of these details, the interest in natural description and in recounting personal situations for example, derive from Dafydd's own imagination and experience rather than from any strand of poetry current at his time, signs of which one might expect to find in the work of his contemporaries as well. To some extent the difference between Dafydd and other writers must be accounted for by their not possessing his skill with words, his flair for imagery that does not just decorate but conveys some of the message of the poem, and his interest in love-poetry as a way of expressing a poetic credo and a version of life. For no other writer does love-poetry form the bulk of his poetic output.

These poets are also less good at making their poems appear to be about Welshmen and -women, resident in some recognisable part of Wales. Their starting-point is often patently literary, which doubtless accounts for their fondness for cataloguing, in a standard manner, details of a woman's appearance, or for writing pseudo-elegies.

Their strength is in their technical skill. They developed the use of cynghanedd in cywyddau; and by means of elaborate detail they built the subordinate matter of love-poetry into complete poems.

An example of an aspect of love-poetry that appealed to them was the love-messenger convention: new and more exotic messengers are sought - and found. There are anonymous cywyddau to a swan (BYU 28)

and to a salmon (DGG XXIX). Dafydd Nanmor addresses a peacock (DN XXVI), and, exemplifying the way these poets built on each other's work, Rhys Goch Eryri instructs a fox to intercept the peacock (CIG CIX). Another literary device that pleased them was that of refusing to name the girl who has inspired their poem. Girls in Dafydd's cywyddau are often left unnamed, but in only three poems does he draw attention to this - GDG 30,40,98. Dafydd ap Edmwnd makes this the theme of a whole poem (GDE XXIX), providing an example of the way later writers take up a detail from earlier cywyddau and elaborate upon it until a whole poem has been constructed. Gruffudd Gryg, Dafydd's contemporary, is closer to Dafydd's style in his brief refusal to give a girl's name (DGG LXXII, lines 37-42). The habit of using letters to spell out a girl's name (BYU 28, lines 43-6), or to indicate part of the name without revealing all of it (DN XXXIII, lines 43-4), may be a development from the refusal to give a name; or it may represent a separate tradition (closer to the riddles and puns of popular poetry?) for which Dafydd was not the authority.

It is in the work of these writers, but not in poems by Dafydd that we find lines praising a series of beautiful features seen in the girl. This contrasts with the Gogynfeirdd habit of praising the girl as 'colour of foam' etc., without confining the epithet to any one feature; and with Dafydd's poems, where in one a girl's hair is mentioned, in another her arms, and another her brows, but where a list of points of beauty never appears. Of the poems in this style that I have seen, the earliest datable ones are by Iolo Goch and Gruffudd Gryg, both contemporaries of Dafydd's. The absence of this detail from Dafydd's poems may mean then, not that it is a later development, but that he was not interested in writing in this way.

The girl praised by Iolo Goch (CIGE I) has cheeks like coral, or rowan-berries (Cwrelrudd criawalryw - line 2); hair of primrose or gold (Tâl ag aur mâl gorau mold, / Brialluwallt bre lliwold - lines 21-2); a slender dark brow, like Mary's (Du ael fain megis delw Fair - line 24); eye like a precious jewel (llygad fal glain caead coeth Tebyg i faen y Tiboeth - lines 25-6); a generous smile, white nose, small teeth, lovely lip, long throat (lines 27-32). After this he praises the rest of the body: breast, arm, hand, fingers, fingernails, side and thigh, leg, ankle and foot (lines 33-44). The epithets he chooses stress softness, smoothness, and whiteness; occasionally there is a specific comparison with appleblossom (for her breast) or a snowy hillside path (for the whiteness of her leg). The Gogynfeirdd could with such comparisons evoke much of the beauty of the outdoor world; but here, mixed with description of the girl's clothing, and of her activities indoors - pouring mead, sipping wine, counting the beads of a rosary, the words seem to put a frame around the appleblossom and the snow, making them as artificial as the jewels or furs. The comparisons are on their way to losing all active meaning. The effect of the girl's beauty on the poet is no longer an important theme; nor is her appearance made to reflect the gentleness of her nature and purity of her soul, as in most of the awdlau. Instead we are almost reading an auctioneer's catalogue of attractions.

Similarly detailed are poems by Gruffudd Gryg (DGG LXXII); Dafydd Nanmor (DN XXXIII) and Dafydd ap Edmwnd (BYU 38 and 39); as well as two poems of unknown authorship, BYU 35 and DGG XXIX. Yet more poems refer to six or seven features, but do not produce lists as extensive as Iolo Goch's: the anonymous poem BYU 34, for example. All these writers mix phrases that belong to the tradition of the Gogynfeirdd (comparison with snow, frost,or gossamer) with others that

may have existed in popular prose or poetry (hair like primroses, cheeks like rowanberries - the Irish parallels are thought-provoking) and with further ones that are probably the invention of the poet himself - the poem Y ferch a wnaeth gwayw dan f'ais (BYU 35) is particularly rich in these: the poet compares the girl's hair to a tongue of gold, her breasts to full balls of knitting yarn, her cheeks to scarlet, her brows to London black, and her eyes to bright brooches. The fact that 'pappes rounde as any ball' occurs in a poem in an early sixteenth century English manuscript (MS Rawlinson C.813, poems from which are printed in Anglia 31, pp.309-397; this phrase occurs in a poem printed on p.315) makes me wonder whether English styles of description are infiltrating Welsh poetry. But one would need to collect a great many such details to be satisfied of this; and that in turn would require a very close examination of published and unpublished material.

Gilbert E. Ruddock's article in Llên Cymru XI, pp.140-175 gives a detailed list of the ways in which fifteenth century cywyddwyr praised the women of their poems. He points to the continuity between the fifteenth century type of beauty and that seen in the poetry of the Gogynfeirdd or of the earlier cywyddwyr; and he also draws attention to parallels with continental and English writing. For him the resemblances are explained by the theory that continental poetry was an influence on Welsh poetry from the time of the Gogynfeirdd onwards. As I have said earlier I do not accept that Gogynfeirdd love-poetry was inspired by foreign traditions. However, it may be that these fourteenth and fifteenth centry cywyddau, which go into so much greater detail regarding appearance and which favour a catalogue style, represent a conflation of older Welsh traditions and newer ones - acquired from English or French

poetry or from French prose romances. Further detailed studies are required to establish the extent of Welsh resemblance to foreign styles of description at this period: one might then be able to distinguish between the catalogue structure, and its content; and between those elements in Welsh for which Irish parallels suggest an unrecorded history, and those that are likely to be the creation of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

It was earlier mentioned that people have speculated on a connection between Dafydd's poems and the French fabliaux. There is a poem by one of his contemporaries, Madog Benfras (fl.1340-70, in Denbighshire), which comes much closer than anything by Dafydd to the tone and content of the fabliau. This is 'Yr Halaenwr' (DGG LXXX and Oxbook 48), in which the poet recounts how he disguised himself as a saltman in order to fool a jealous husband and reach his wife. The plot itself may be the poet's own invention; but variations of this theme are often the basis of fabliaux: the poet was probably inspired by tales or jokes current in Wales at his time, some of which may once have derived from a fabliau plot.

The anonymous cywydd in which the poet gives directions for his burial in the woods after he has died of love has interesting French parallels (this poem used to be attributed to Dafydd, but Professor Parry thinks it is probably not by him - see GDG, first edition, p. clxxxviii; a text of the poem is in DGG 19, and Oxbook 61), where Professor Parry dates it as fifteenth century).

In the cywydd, the poet says that if he dies it will be the fault of the girl he loves; assuming his death he describes his burial, to take place the following day. The green birch trees will officiate; his winding sheet will be of clover, his coffin of

green leaves; woodland flowers for a pall, eight branches for a bier. Seagulls will carry his bier, trees will accompany it; and the church that they carry him to will be a woodland clearing. For statues, two nightingales; altars of twigs; the floor a speckled one (of flowers and plants, presumably); a choir of birds in their grey cowls; the hayfield will provide the organ (the wind whistling in the grasses?); and there, in the church dedicated to the nightingale, the cuckoo will sing the daily office. In summer, when lovers visit the woods, masses will be said for his soul. May God receive his soul in Paradise.

A much less detailed description of an anticipated burial in the woods occurs in the canu rhydd (C.Rh.C.30). This raises the question of whether the theme was a traditional one in Welsh, on which both the cywydd-writer and the free-metre poet were drawing; or whether the free-metre poet was simply imitating this cywydd or one like it. This is one that it is difficult to resolve. The cywydd is considerably more elaborate than the free-metre poem: in the latter there is no mention of love or of a heartless girl, and almost all of the details of the funeral service are absent. The poet says he would like to sleep wrapped in the feathers of cuckoos, in a hazel wood; if he is not able to, he would like to be buried in a woodland clearing, covered by birch-leaves and wild flowers. It seems difficult to imagine this theme occurring on its own and then being combined with the 'death from love' theme, and made more elaborate; but I may be wrong in this (this problem is resolved if one understands the fourth line of C.Rh.C.30 as 'unless I get the girl, I will die', rather than 'unless I can sleepthere, I will die'. There is no overt mention of a girl's existence in the poem; perhaps the poet regarded the theme as so well known as not to require explicit treatment?). A different approach would be to suggest that the theme first appeared in Welsh in a form such as we have it in the cywydd;

but that only the detail of the burial amid flowers appealed to the imagination of the free-metre poet. The latter explanation would be in accord with my other findings on the subject of free-metre love-poetry - that it is eclectic and chooses what it fancies from other traditions.

There are problems in the face of accepting Rachel Bromwich's suggestion that the original inspiration for a Welsh poem on the subject came from French. The three parallels she suggests are Blanchefleur et Florence; Li Fablel dou Dieu d'Amors; and De Venus, La Déesse d'Amors.[2] In Blanchefleur et Florence, Blanchefleur dies suddenly, when her cause in the love-debate is lost: this is a poem in which birds play an important part, and outdoor settings are often referred to, but there is obviously a considerable gap between this brief reference and the Welsh poem. In Li Fablel the narrator finds a grave, in an outdoor setting, with birds singing over it; and is told that it is the grave of a young man who has died for love of a girl. De Venus is a more elaborate version of Li Fablel, and includes the same details of birds singing over a lover's grave. This obviously has points of resemblance to the cywydd I have described; but the details that make the Welsh poem distinctive - the lover giving directions for his own funeral, the substitution of birds and trees and flowers for celebrant, mourners, burial clothes, altar, etc. - are missing. If the Welsh poet had imagination enough for all these details, why not for the basic idea that a lover who says he is dying of love may well die and require burial? Rachel Bromwich also mentions Jean de Condé's early fourteenth century poem La Messe des Oiseaux (ed.J. Ribard, Geneva, 1970), in which birds celebrate a mass; which may be a link between the early French poems and the late Welsh one. Even if one assumes that Jean de Condé's poem, or something like it, was known in Wales, and that at some stage the

mass became a requiem, and trees and flowers were included as participants, problems remain. Professor Parry thinks the cywydd is fifteenth century (he does not suggest any particular part of the century); knowledge of the French poems would have come at a much earlier date; could the themes have been borrowed then and kept alive in Welsh verse without in some way appearing in the surviving poetry? Perhaps anything is possible with regard to Welsh verse at this date; but the case for French influence on this cywydd seems in the present state of knowledge to be an interesting possibility rather than a probability.

Finally, a detail in these late poems that may result from English influence. It concerns the nightingale. In the poems by the Gogynfeirdd, the nightingale's song is associated with summer and with thoughts of love - e.g. in Gwalchmai's Gorhoffedd, where it is one of the signs of summer that make him think of a girl he loves; and later in the poem he links the ideas again, saying that he loves the nightingale that disturbs one's sleep in May, just as he loves the looks he receives from a gentle girl. For Dafydd the nightingale's associations are no different: the bird's burst of song is simply one of the many things that please him in the woods - see e.g. GDG 63, lines 1-16; and GDG 18, where Gruffudd ap Adda is said to have been the nightingale of his land on account of his lyric verse. Other cywyddwyr take up the theme of the sleepless bird: 'Ni chysgaf tra vo haf hir / Vwy nog eos vain gywir' - While long summer lasts I sleep no more than does the slim true nightingale (DN XXXI, lines 41-2). In only one of them have I found a reference to the belief that the nightingale sang because it was in pain, its breast pressing against a thorn. This is in a poem by Tudur Aled: 'Yr wyf ar ddraen yr eos' - I am (like) the nightingale on a thorn (TA CXXX, line 5),

he says, describing his pain. This is a frequent image in the canu rhydd, but all the references there are probably later than Tudur Aled's poem. As usual, one cannot tell whether the image is one that has a history in Welsh before this appearance; but there is a possibility that it was borrowed from English, where it was proverbial. Several entries are given in The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, third edition, Oxford 1970, under 'Nightingale with a thorn against one's breast, To sit like a'. The earliest of these is from an English song dated c.1510, and thus may be contemporaneous with Tudur Aled's poem. English borrowing would not be surprising since from the late fifteenth century onwards the Welsh gentry became increasingly anglicised; and there were increasing contacts between Welshmen and the English court, the English army, and English noblemen (one may find examples of this in D.J. Bowen's article in THSC 1969, pp.284-335). Even without the movement of Welshmen into England, a knowledge of English styles might have come from English poems being composed in Wales. There is in the National Library of Wales a manuscript written c.1475-1500, i.e. during the period in which Tudur Aled was writing, that contains an English song about the nightingale. Its four lines do not refer to a thorn against the breast, but they provide a context in which such a line might have appeared:

'the nyghtyngale synges
that all the wod rynges
Scho singyth in hire song
that the nyght is to long' MS Peniarth 356,p.196[3]

It will be seen in the next chapter that in the sixteenth century, there is increasing evidence that poets are drawing on English. Tudur Aled's poem provides an early indication of the trend.

B. AFTER 1520: THE 'FREE VERSE' TRADITION

In order to continue the story of the love-lyric in Welsh it now becomes necessary to look at the canu rhydd that survive in the manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A few poets of the sixteenth century wrote love-poems in strict metre: of these, only Siôn Phylip (?1543-1620) seems to have regarded this type of poetry as a major genre to be cultivated - twenty-six love cywyddau attributed to him survive. Of the others, Wiliam Llŷn (1534/5-1580), Wiliam Cynwal (fl.1560-85) and Simwnt Fychan (c.1530-1606) are each credited with a few love-poems. Of these, only Wiliam Llŷn has had his poems collected and edited.[4] This makes discussion of the work of these poets difficult. I have not attempted to give an account of their work based on the few poems that have found their way into print and instead have concentrated attention on the canu rhydd. I think a detailed study of published and unpublished cywyddau serch of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries might produce interesting information about how soon and to what extent these writers drew on English and Renaissance culture, while continuing to imitate past Welsh models in the structure and ethos of their work; but I am not able to undertake that study here. I simply note the continuation of past conventions and the intrusion of classical references suggesting an English background.

Problems in Discussing the Canu Rhydd

The canu rhydd provide a wide range of points for discussion; but they also raise special problems which curtail my discussion of them. The first problem concerns the unknown quantity of relevant material in manuscript. Several volumes containing free-metre love-poems have appeared,[5] but it is apparent from a study

of manuscript catalogues that many poems of this sort remain unedited. Any discussion of the characteristics of canu rhydd love-poetry that confines itself to printed sources risks being based on an unrepresentative selection; but the problems of editing the remaining poems are too great for the task to be attempted as part of this thesis - at least 25 manuscripts, located in London, Cardiff, Aberystwyth and Oxford, would need to be consulted.

The printed material is on its own substantial: from the printed sources referred to above I have been able to draw 86 poems ranging in length from 16 lines to several hundred, whose theme is love between the sexes. This figure omits poems such as those by Edmwnd Prys (1544-1623) that are apparently written to fit the tunes of songs current at the time: the verbal style as well as the metrical pattern of these poems suggests their modernity, and I felt that they diverged sufficiently from past Welsh traditions to justify their being treated as a different type of poetry from the canu rhydd, and excluded from this discussion. I have not thought it worth including a separate discussion on them because from their content they are to be aligned with encomia rather than with love-poems. There remain the 86 poems mentioned above: it would obviously aid discussion if different categories could be distinguished among them on the basis of date or authorship, but this is where one has to face the existence of certain further problems.

These 86 poems are ones that I think one can reasonably say were written before 1650, or at about that date, but in many cases one cannot offer the date of the manuscript in support of this. The manuscript in some cases belongs to the seventeenth or eighteenth century, but contains poetry that has been judged by its cataloguers or editors to belong to the sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries.

This judgement is based on the linguistic similarities between these poems and those to which an author can be assigned, or which are contained in earlier manuscripts, and I feel happy about accepting it, but it does not enable one to be at all precise about dating. A poem that is dated by this method as 'before 1650', may have been written as early as 1550, if not earlier, or as late as 1649. Because of the existence of this substantial amount of only loosely datable material there seems to be no point in trying to establish chronological divisions among the poems. Instead I offer the suggestion that the majority belong to the period 1580-1620, which is the period to which the handful that can be dated belong. This suggestion arises from a study of the manuscript catalogues; these give the impression that the relevant late sixteenth and early seventeenth century manuscripts are personal anthologies, commonplace books, where the compiler has recorded contemporary poems as they reached him. Where it is possible to identify the person named as author of a poem in one of these manuscripts, he is almost always found to have been writing at the end of the sixteenth or at the beginning of the seventeenth century. I move from this to the inference that the anonymous poems in these earlier manuscripts are also contemporaneous with the compiling of the manuscripts, and that those authors, the majority, of whom nothing is now known were people known to the compiler, and perhaps known only within a small area. The evidence that those poems preserved in later manuscripts were also written within the period 1580-1620 is thus wholly inferential: I argue that because there is nothing to clearly distinguish them from the poems in earlier manuscripts they can be held to have been written at the same period. It may be that some of the poems in either group are much earlier or much later than the majority, but there is no evidence that would enable one to decide which poems these are. One cannot therefore trace the rise or

the decline of styles within canu rhydd love-poetry, and I propose to talk about all of these poems as though they belonged to the same period, loosely defined as 1550-1650. The cut-off date of 1550 is chosen as a convenient round number, and not for any significance of its own. No manuscript containing love-poems can confidently be dated earlier than 1585: the earliest is MS Llanover B5, described by the Rep.W.MSS as 'written between 1585 and 1593' (a poem from it is printed in C.Rh.C.,p.87). The only writer that may have been writing before 1585 is Llywelyn ap Hwlcyn/Llywelyn ap Hywel (J.H.Davies suggests that these names refer to the same person. HGS, p.17).[6]

I have briefly referred above to the unhelpfulness of the ascriptions. Of the 86 poems only 20 occur with attributions, and for only a handful of these can one attach any biography to the name. Richard Hughes of Cefn Llanfair (fl.1596, died 1618) is the writer in this group of whom most is known[7]; for some others one can supply dates; but in most cases we know little or nothing. This seems to be because the writers in question did not also attempt the strict metres: had they done so they would have formed part of a wide network of literary friendships and relationships, and would have been more easily traceable. The presumption is that they were amateur and unknown writers: they may have had a wide acquaintance with Welsh and other literatures, but they were not attempting to become part of any literary establishment. It is of course relevant that in this period, the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, what literary establishment had existed was rapidly disappearing. It was no longer the practicefor households to support a trained bard; and even educated writers like Edmwnd Prys were choosing to write in non-traditional metres, and to introduce ideas new to Welsh poetry. It seems to me there will have been less incentive for anyone wishing to write in Welsh to make the effort to learn the techniques of strict

metre poetry. An alternative existed, the unadorned metres of canu rhydd (see Parry, Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg, pp.128-131, on the antiquity of these metres), and it may be that their sudden appearance in manuscripts of the late sixteenth century is explained by a marked increase in their popularity at this period. When I describe the content of these poems it will be seen that some of them give evidence that their writers were men who had read widely; there is a strong indication in the vocabulary that these men were familiar with the work of the cywyddwyr; yet their chosen medium is one that has no known literary status. Strong forces are likely to have compelled their choice of the free metres. If use of the free metres is indeed a direct response to the declining interest of Welsh gentlemen in traditional Welsh culture, and the declining status of strict metre composition, it would not be surprising if their period of wide popularity were brief, perhaps as brief as 1500-1620 or 1650: as the changed situation became the accepted norm, other responses to it will have suggested themselves - the use of song metres, of English metres, or indeed the composition of poetry in English.

If date and authorship do not provide structures from which one could work towards a detailed examination and comparison of these poems, it may be suggested that metrical choice would do so. I have not made a full study of the metres of these poems; but a preliminary study does not show to me any correlation between metre and content. A thorough study might provide some more substantial comments; I note only that some of the most artistically pleasing poems are in the least frequently seen metres - C.Rh.C.2 vii, for example, and C.Rh.C.30. In these the choice of metre was probably as important to the poet as his phrasing. In many others the commonest metre, a four-lined stanza, seems to have been chosen precisely because it was the commonest.

Lacking these other structures, I based my study of _canu rhydd_ love poetry on an examination of their content, and of some of the details that they use to express their themes. This study led me to the conclusion that the background to these poems was very complex, and that a full account of them must attempt to do justice to possible relationships with several different styles of poetry, some of them not previously mentioned in this thesis. Poems by the Gogynfeirdd, and the cywyddwyr of several centuries; English poems preserved in the song-books and manuscript collections of the courts of Henry VII and Henry VIII; other poems, known as broadside or black-letter ballads, in circulation throughout the sixteenth century and, it is thought, already popular in the fifteenth century;[8] and the court literature of the Elizabethan period: all of these have something to contribute to the discussion. Obviously there is a great deal of material here: in Welsh there are hundreds of relevant poems, not all of them edited, while in English my (non-exhaustive) check of printed sources provides me with more than a thousand items for consideration. It does not seem to me to be possible to accurately summarise the scope of these literatures, and to give a complete description of their possible connections with the _canu rhydd_, within the context of this thesis. Instead I have confined myself to some general remarks indicating why I think these different literatures are relevant, and I have followed this with a description of some of the more noticeable and interesting characteristics of the _canu rhydd_. This description does not aim to be comprehensive, and occasionally I feel it necessary to make further reservations about the scope of my remarks. At this stage I shall point out that all of my examples of _canu rhydd_ are drawn from T.H.Parry-Williams' collection _Canu Rhydd Cynnar_. This is because Parry-Williams' presentation of the texts

leaves one confident that they accurately represent their manuscript sources (whereas Lloyd-Jenkins prints his texts in normalised orthography and, where he chooses, abbreviated) and because he conveniently provides a selection of the material J.H.Davies edited - 55 of the 86 poems whose existence I have referred to are found in _Canu Rhydd Cynnar_.

A Debt to Other Literatures

First of all, a general statement of my reasons for suggesting debts by the _canu rhydd_ to earlier Welsh and to other literatures. I have mentioned a link with strict metre poetry: this shows itself chiefly in details of vocabulary, particularly in the eulogistic descriptions of a woman's beauty. Sometimes the legendary references in these poems are Welsh; and sometimes there are sub-themes or structural details that I regard as borrowed from fifteenth or sixteenth century cywyddau. Less incontrovertibly Welsh than a phrase such as 'colour of fresh foam on a pebbly stream' but distinctly reminiscent of earlier Welsh poetry is the dominant image in _canu rhydd_ love-poetry of the maddened, ailing, or wounded lover.

A connection with early Tudor poems and songs is suggested both by general features, such as the pessimistic, self-pitying tone of many of the poems, and by details such as the image of the nightingale on thorns. The framework that the poet gives his poem sometimes seems to me to be probably borrowed from English: the death-bed lament, the farewell to friends, the dialogue between lover and girl, and the giving of advice by a bird to a human.

It is difficult to be precise about the stage at which any of these points or others were borrowed from English. I have above specified the early Tudor period because this is when they appear in

the surviving manuscripts for the first time, and when they are widely popular. For some of these details one can cite examples from the later Tudor period as well. There are only a few points for which parallels are more plentiful in the later than in the earlier sixteenth century, and this encourages me to think that most of the borrowing took place early in the century, was subsequently reinforced by continued familiarity with English compositions, and that Welsh poets were still borrowing at the end of the century. The nature of the later English parallels suggests that borrowing at this stage had become more conscious and literary: the points of resemblance at this period are the extensive use of names from Greek and Roman mythology and heroic tale, and the allegorical structure that one Welsh love poet uses. Some details that occur in Richard Hughes' poems were more probably borrowed in the Elizabethan period than earlier.

I shall now cite some of the evidence that has led me to suppose borrowing from Welsh and English sources.

The Continuity with Earlier Welsh Writing

The continuity in the description of women from the time of the Gogynfeirdd to that of the canu rhydd writers is clear. Colour of the snow, of the lily, of flowers, of dawn on a summer's day, of fresh foam on a pebbly stream, of apple-blossom, of fair weather, of foam, of flour, of the stars: these are the phrases that one can list after studying the 55 songs or fragments of songs on love-themes in Canu Rhydd Cynnar. An example of one of these occurs in almost every poem, rendering quotation needless. The commonest comparison is also one of the oldest and most conventional: 'colour of the snow'. This occurs in various forms: 'deiliw'r'od' (C.Rh.C. 1 ii), line 13); 'gwen lliwr manod' (C.Rh.C. 1 vii) line 41); 'liw'r'eira' (C.Rh.C.3, line 4); 'gwen lliwr eira' (C.Rh.C. 14, line 16); 'vn lliw ar manod'

(C.Rh.C. 15, line 4), and other variations. These quotations indicate the pattern of all comparisons: they occur as brief fillers in a line, and use stock constructions into which the chosen noun is inserted. Typical lines are:

'mi a wnawn foliane i liw r od
o ran i bod mor berphaith' (C.Rh.C.5,lines 67-8)

I would praise one colour of the snow, because she is so perfect.

and:

'vo vaged lliw r hinon
ynghanol banks Helicon' (C.Rh.C.6,lines29-30)

One colour of fair weather was nurtured by the banks of Helicon.

Of the list of comparisons that I gave, only the last two 'colour of stars' ('liw r ser', C.Rh.C.4, line 66) and 'colour of flour' ('dau liwr can', C.Rh.C.1, vii, line 47 and 'deuliw'r Can', C.Rh.C.22, line 2) cannot be paralleled in T.Gwynn Jones' list of vocabularly used by the Gogynfeirdd.[9] This gap is partially filled by Dafydd's poetry. He uses 'deuliw'r ser' / 'colour of the stars' in GDG 49, line 34; and in GDG 93, line 18 addresses Morfudd as 'Seren oleuwen o liw' / 'shining white star in colour'; but I have not found an instance of his using'colour of flour'. My account of Dafydd and the other cywyddwyr pointed out the persistence of this vocabulary after a new poetic form, the cywydd, had been developed. Evidently, even the shift of attention from strict metre to free metre did not discourage its use.

Another feature reminiscent of earlier poetry is that of addressing a woman as a gem or jewel, and as a shoot or sapling. 'Gem ar Gymrv' / 'Gem of Wales' (C.Rh.C.2 v, line 18), 'i mae yn debig pvr i bron/i avr ysgayn ne ros gwynion' / 'the pure-breasted one is like fine gold or white roses' (C.Rh.C.3, lines 51-2), and

'dan venws i ganed tlws i modd
Juno ai magodd em eigir sad' (C.Rh.C.10,lines 25-6)

Under Venus was born the one, jewel in her ways, Juno nurtured her, gem, virgin / Eigyr (?), discreet

are some of the admittedly not very frequent gem references. T.Gwynn Jones (op.cit., pp.29-30) shows the popularity of 'gem and 'aur' in Gogynfeirdd poetry; and in the fourteenth century Dafydd addresses girls to whom he is writing as 'jewel' or 'gem'. The girl from Eithinfynydd is 'Fy nillyn' / 'my jewel' (GDG 57,line 11), and he uses the same term of endearment in GDG 33, line 38 and GDG 82,line 30. In at least five other poems the word chosen is 'Gem' / 'gem, jewel',[10]

'Cangen' /'branch' and 'impin' /'shoot' appear frequently in the canu rhydd:

'hon sydd eglvr iraidd gangen' /'she who is a bright fresh branch'
C.Rh.C.3, line 2

and:

'an gangen dwyllodrus' /'and my deceitful branch'
C.Rh.C.4, line 21

are two of the examples. I have found four instances of 'impin' / 'shoot' in the Canu Rhydd Cynnar, and it is interesting to note that in each case the speaker is a woman describing a man. One cannot be sure that the distinction is conscious, since women's poems also use the term 'cangen'.

The Gogynfeirdd were fond of addressing a woman as 'twf' / 'growth' (see T. Gwynn Jones, op.cit.,p.31) and Dafydd used both 'twf' and 'cangen'.[11]

At one time I wondered whether this similarity of vocabulary indicated some sort of continuity of love-composition in the free-metres from the time of the Gogynfeirdd down to the early seventeenth century; but having studied the love-cywyddau being

written in the intervening centuries I now think it most probable that these free metre poets were drawing items of vocabulary from the cywyddau of their contemporaries, or of the generations immediately preceding them. The vocabulary of beauty provides one of the most striking instances of continuity within strict metre Welsh love-poetry, so that its use in a poem cannot immediately date it or identify the poem's models. Its particular characteristic when it appears in the canu rhydd is that of simplicity: unlike the late cywyddwyr these writers do not attempt to create images that are ever odder and odder. Instead they happily repeat the same unadorned phrase several times in a poem. In most cases these phrases are useful to them in building up a love-poem: in only a minority of poems do they contribute to the fabric. I suggest therefore that their plainness is a function of the way they are used, not evidence that they belong to an independent tradition from that seen in the cywyddau.

Welsh references in these poems are few (the Greek and Roman references are much more numerous and varied). Only Indeg, Eigyr, and Esyllt are mentioned, (C.Rh.C. I i , line 63; 5, line 7; 10, lines 14 and 26): these are the three people whose names are most commonly associated with love in strict metre poetry; but it may be that their names were proverbial and would have been used by people unfamiliar with the work of the bards. Eiddig (the jealous man) is also mentioned in the canu rhydd (C.Rh.C. 1 vi), line 43; 12, line 48; and 22, line 34). It is not known whether this name was proverbial when it first appeared, in a poem by Cynddelw, but it seems to me not unreasonable to regard its use in these late poems as the result of a knowledge of earlier, famous ones.

There are poetic conventions in these poems that suggest a familiarity with other Welsh writing: that of making a riddling

reference to the girl's name (C.Rh.C. 3, line 33; 10,lines 57-60; 19,lines 1-8; and 31 i), lines 29-32), and that of listing a girl's physical features - the majority of the poems in Canu Rhydd Cynnar refer to at least one feature, and some of them give detailed lists (C.Rh.C. 2 viii), 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 15 and 20). These lists usually give less evidence of skill and thought in their compilation than did the poems by the cywyddwyr. A possible inference is that these free metre poets were aware that the catalogue of beauties was a usual element in love poetry and therefore attempted to incorporate it in their own work, but lacked the skill or experience to give it any sort of poetic credibility. However, one must note that English poetry is a confusing factor here. English poets had been using the catalogue-motif since at least the time of the Harley Lyrics (early fourteenth century); and one can find in the early sixteenth century manuscript collections poems that are disjointed or banal as the Welsh ones, as well as others that are more artistic. Some late examples of the catalogue-device being handled fairly competently in English are found in F.M. Padelford's collection of poems from a manuscript probably written 1520-40, printed in Anglia 31 - see poems Nos. 4, 13 and 32. Nonetheless, given the other reasons for acknowledging a link between Welsh strict metre and free metre poetry I suggest that the canu rhydd writers took the catalogue theme from cywyddau. English traditions may here, as elsewhere, have reinforced Welsh ones.

What has been said about justifications for placing the canu rhydd in a Welsh or an English context could be repeated as an introduction to the problem of a source for the canu rhydd theme of the sick lover. If there were no Welsh evidence one might happily accept the theory that canu rhydd poets were imitating English work; and conversely, lacking English parallels, a solely Welsh explanation

would seem the correct one.

Almost every free-metre love-poem is a complaint against the behaviour of the beloved, usually linked with a description of the lover's sufferings. He is almostout of his mind with love, he endures pain and sickness, he has been wounded, he thinks he will die if his love is not rewarded: any page of Canu Rhydd Cynnar will provide phrases like this. Specific quotations show that some of the basic statements are unchanged from the time of Hywel or Gwalchmai:

'maen gryddlasv wrth i charv' / cheeks turning pale from loving her

(C.Rh.C. 2 vii),lines 13-14)

'nos a dydd anifyr fael
heb fedry kael mor gorrfwys'

night and day-miserable failing-without being able to get any rest

(C.Rh.C. 4, lines 51-2)

'fo ddarfv im gwawr fyngado' / my colour has left me

(C.Rh.C. 4, line 56)

'i fyw yn wastad nos a dydd
mewn medwl prvdd hiraüthüs'

alive, wasting away night and day in sad yearning thought

(C.Rh.C. 9, lines 27-8)

Dafydd ap Gwilym added to Welsh tradition the vocabulary of spears and arrows, of military warfare. This too appears in the free-metre poems:

'fo avth dy gariad fal briw ffon
o dan fy mron yn ddvglais'

your love went like a wound from a spear into my breast with a vivid bruise

(C.Rh.C.1 vii) lines 15-16)

'Drylliodd cariad glwyde fais' / love shattered the gates of my ribs

(C.Rh.C.2 i), line 8)

'Klwv kaeth val saeth aeth dan fase
Mae klais dan yr ais gwn glwvf ysig'

a biting wound like an arrow went under my ribs; there is a mark on my ribs, I know I am bruised.

(C.Rh.C. 2 v), lines 15-16)

Such quotations would appear to be satisfactory evidence that the free metre poets were drawing on the commonplaces of love cywyddau. Dafydd's poems may have been still circulating orally,[12] and judging by the evidence of the manuscripts some of the later cywyddau were equally widely known. Any of them may have been known to the free metre poets, some of whom are known to have attempted the strict metres themselves - Richard Hughes and Ifan Llwyd Sieffre for example. The most sensible conclusion from the resemblances between free metre and strict metre verse seems to me to be that free metre poets were familiar with strict metre poetry. What is unknown is the extent to which one free metre poet imitated another: not enough is known about the dates and authorship of the surviving poems to judge this. The possibility that this happened complicates analysis.

There are, on the other hand, points that distinguish the treatment of sorrowing love in these poems from the way it is presented in the cywyddau. These I shall now mention in support of the suggestion that English influence is evident.

English Influence

Greek and Roman mythology is widely used as colouring for the tale of love: of the 55 poems in Canu Rhydd Cynnar 17 contain a classical reference of some sort. The earlier poet compared his madness with that of Indeg, a hero from Welsh legend. The free metre poet may imitate this (as in C.Rh.C. 1 i), line 63), or he may

say:

'rydwy mewn adfyd fel troelws am gresvd' / I am mad as Toilus was for Cressid

(C.Rh.C. 10, line 37)

The power of a woman's glance was stressed by Dafydd ap Gwilym: Dic Hughes uses the images of Achilles' spear to indicate how little hope one has of escaping unharmed. Like Dafydd he has an unproductive conversation with a bird: Dafydd ended by threatening to destroy the magpie's nest, Dic by saying he is not surprised the nightingale's brother Tereus tore out her tongue (C.Rh.C. 1 vi)). In such ways the humanist learning that had come into English shows itself in Welsh. Sometimes the writer is so full of his learning that he writes a poem that seems to be a catalogue of all the names he can remember from Greek and Roman mythology or heroic tale, mingled indiscriminately with Welsh and Biblical ones - such a poem is C.Rh.C. 6. Canu Rhydd Cynnar 5, 10, 17 and 25 show that it is not just well-known names that had reached Welsh poets; and in C.Rh.C. 31 i) the writer's knowledge extends as far as the letters of the Greek alphabet and some schoolboy Latin. The most significant classical name to appear in these poems is that of Cupid, the blind boy shooting arrows at the unsuspecting lover. His name never appears in Dafydd or the other cywyddwyr, something that makes one doubtful about any debt on their part to Ovid; but in four poems in Canu Rhydd Cynnar he is held responsible for the arrows that pierce the lover (C.Rh.C. 1 vi), line 10; 3, line 10; 23, lines 17-20; and 31 i), line 19). Another of Ovid's ideas that appears now is the conceit that the lover is Cupid's prisoner:

'Yr owan r wy mewn karchar
gida Chvwpyd ddichellgar'

now I am in prison with cunning Cupid

(C.Rh.C. 6, lines 225-6)

Whether these Welsh writers had direct knowledge of Ovid's work or were simply incorporating what they had picked up from English translations and poems cannot be settled; but one can say that there is nothing in these references that could not have been learnt from English poetry. A manuscript containing late fifteenth century material and itself written at the beginning of the sixteenth century (see Anglia 26, p.94) shows that English poets at that time were already versifying classical tales, both historical and romantic in content (see Anglia 26, pp.96-7, 101-4). The early sixteenth century manuscripts in Anglia 12 and Anglia 31 provide several examples of references to Venus and to Cupid.[13] References to other gods and goddesses are much less frequent in these early sixteenth century collections of anonymous work than in the writings of known Tudor, especially Elizabethan, poets. Wyatt and Surrey, for example, two poets who wrote in the first half of the sixteenth century, show familiartiy with much of classical literature and history. Such poets were able to read Latin and Greek, and often made translations of classical authors: Surrey, for example, translated Books Two and Four of the Aeneid. Later Tudor poets, Sidney, Spenser and Marlowe, to name only three, continued this tradition of incorporating humanist learning in one's poetry. As classical tales became better-known in sophisticated English poetry, they spread into more popular forms of writing as well. It is from the latter, the long ballads on the story of Paris or Troilus or Damon (see Anglia 31, pp.385-393, for the story of Paris) that I would expect the Welsh poets to have borrowed. Nonetheless, there were Welsh poets present at Elizabeth's court or in her service, (Richard Hughes and Tomas Prys, for example) and it is possible that they learnt first of the English fashion, from the court writing that they heard, and that they transmitted it to Wales. As in other cases, it is difficult to estimate whether individual free-metre poets were

copying directly from English, were imitating each other, or were following the lead of strict metre poets. A cywydd by Tomas Prys, for example, uses classical names with the same readiness as C.Rh.C. 6 to praise a woman's beauty.[14] Prys' dates are c.1564-1634, the same period as that during which most of the surviving free verse seems to have been written; thus both he and the free metre poets show the same trend in Welsh poetry, and I am as yet uncertain as to which type of poetry was in the vanguard in adopting the fashion. Quite possibly it was, during this period, dependent upon the chance of a poet's acquaintance with English, and the metre he was writing in was not the determining factor in the choice. Both strict and free metre poets may have known some Latin and Greek, and yet have required the stimulus of seeing classical names used in English verse before they could bring themselves to break so sharply with the tradition of earlier centuries.

The frequency with which classical names appear in free metre love poetry is easily noticed. Less obvious on a first reading are the lines where the poet says 'As I was out walking', 'As I was in a certain place', 'As I was one autumn night', etc;[15] but Brinley Rees has shown convincingly in chapter Two of Dulliau'r Canu Rhydd (Cardiff, 1952) that they are very important for any attempts at uncovering the traditions behind the canu rhydd. The two commonest tags, 'Fal yr oeddwyn' and 'A m'fi', occur in Welsh cywyddau as early as the fourteenth century (DCR, p.40), but are particularly plentiful in the canu rhydd: Brinley Rees has found them in 50 of the surviving canu rhydd that seem to have been composed before 1650 or soon afterwards. The poems in which they occur usually follow a certain pattern: the poet is out walking, often on a pleasant spring morning, or he is sitting under a tree, or he is in his bed and dreaming (DCR, p.41). This is shown to resemble the chanson d'aventure and particularly the

English version of that form (DCR, pp.41-54). There is a clear indication that both the tags, and the form of poem that they introduce, were borrowed from English.

Since the chanson d'aventure was popular for several centuries in England the mere use of the tags does not on its own enable us to date the canu rhydd to a particular period. It does however suggest that one should look to English poetry, and in particular to English poetry containing these tags, for other parallels to the canu rhydd. This Brinley Rees has done for certain types of poem: satires on women, prophecies and prognostications, poems on contemporary events, and moral and regligious songs. He has found many indications that these Welsh poems are drawing on English compositions of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries. Their sources are not the well-known and sophisticated works of the sixteenth century, but long ballads that seem to have circulated widely, sometimes orally, sometimes in manuscript, sometimes in printed form as broadside or blackletter ballads. When studying the love-poetry I found only a few indications that broadside ballads contributed to Welsh styles or forms; but Brinley Rees' findings encouraged me to look at anonymous Tudor poetry of other sorts for similarities to Welsh, and the results of my work are set out in the following pages. The most fertile sources for parallels were manuscript collections of long poems and brief lyrics, made at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and containing fifteenth and early sixteenth century work.[16] Some of these collections are closely connected with the Tudor court, others less so. Some Welshmen will have been in close contact, even if only for a brief period, with the English court, or with London, and this provides one way in which English styles could have become known to them. The fact that the same style of song, and sometimes the same song, reappears in different manuscripts, suggests that these

songs were not just the preserve of a handful of writers, and that they circulated beyond the court. Welshmen who went to Oxford or Cambridge may also have heard or read these lyrics and long poems; and some details that we see in these poems, the epistolary style for example, and the chanson d'aventure structure, were probably practised as far from London as the Welsh Marches (I say this because they were already by 1500 well established in English and the fashion will have had time to make itself known over much of the country).

Some of the points that I shall mention have already had attention drawn to them by Brinley Rees (see esp. DCR, pp.35-7), but he chose not to give any detailed account of free metre love-poetry because of the difficulty in distinguishing between what was borrowed and what was inherited in their content and style. I think that the number of points I have accumulated will show that it is possible to discuss the question of a debt by canu rhydd love-poets to English poetry, even though so much of what they say seems to be common currency for love-poetry in any language. I have not tried to do an historical study and establish the ways in which Welshmen and Englishmen came into contact. This would obviously be useful; but at present it seems important enough to establish that there is a debt.

Earlier Statements of a Debt to English

Apart from Brinley Rees, Professor Parry, Anthony Conran and Gwyn Williams, are three of the people who have in recent years drawn attention to the possibility that free verse love-poetry reflects English styles. Professor Parry mentions Richard Hughes' stay at the Elizabethan court, and says English poetry probably had an effect on him but he does not attempt to specify any of the ways

in which English influence can be seen.[17] Professor Parry also wonders whether some of the free verse is in fact translated or adapted from English work (Hanes, pp.134-5). Brinley Rees has found that some of the poems he studied depend clearly on English originals, but I have not found, after extensive searching in a variety of types of sixteenth and early seventeenth century English poetry, anything to indicate that the free verse love-poets were consciously adapting English poems. The borrowing is at the level of details that decorate a poem, and sometimes the overall framework. The basic inspiration for the poem seems always to have been the poet's own. Not even C.Rh.C.25, which seems to have borrowed the allegorical structure and the image of the ship in danger, from English, has a model that I can trace. I have found that Professor Parry is right in thinking that it is the unfamiliar items of English poetry that one should look at for parallels to the canu rhydd. The work of acknowledged poets provided little of interest for the discussion. The anonymous poetry, being more light-weight in tone, was probably more easily assimilated by the Welshmen.

Anthony Conran's comments occur in his introduction to 'The Penguin Book of Welsh Verse' (London, 1967 - see p.66). In his view the free verse love-poets constituted 'an elegant school of courtly love-poets' whose subject is 'the rather decadent pastoralism of the Elizabethan lyricists'. Further research in the manuscripts may yet show whether there were sufficient links beteen the poets for them to be considered as a school. It is not impossible. The appropriateness of the word 'courtly' is more doubtful. As a description of the poetry it is inaccurate; if intended as a description of the poets, it cannot be disproved, but it must be acknowledged that we only know for certain of one free verse love-poet, Richard Hughes, attached to an English court.

One of the poems Anthony Conran prints, 'O the Jewels', on p.192 of his anthology, provides some support for his view that canu rhydd and Elizabethan lyric have in common a 'rather decadent pastoralism' (the Welsh poem is C.Rh.C. 2 vii), also printed as poem 107 in Professor Parry's Oxford Book of Welsh Verse, Oxford, 1972). There the poet refers to himself as having to keep sheep. The poet as shepherd is not something for which one can find precedent in Welsh verse, and the idea is almost certainly borrowed from English.[18] On the whole however the outdoor settings used by some of the canu rhydd seem to me to have antecedents in Welsh poetry as least as far back as Dafydd ap Gwilym. Details such as that of the shepherd are rare.

Gwyn Williams' comments, in chapter Eight of his book An Introduction to Welsh Poetry, London 1953, are among the more helpful ones on this subject. He mentions three precise points of resemblance between Richard Hughes' work and that of Elizabethan writers (op.cit., pp.224-5): the use of the dying swan image, the association of the cuckoo with cuckoldry, and the use of an echo effect for a bird's song. Each of these details can also be found in English poetry of the early sixteenth century, and may have entered canu rhydd poetry before Richard Hughes' time. However, since he is known to have been present at Elizabeth's court, the presumption that this is where he learnt them is the simplest one. I am unconvinced that the poem he quotes, 'Gwrandewch ganmol brig y don'[19] owes anything to Elizabethan lyric. It seems to me to be closer, in spirit and content, to the work of Dafydd ap Gwilym and other cywyddwyr.

Statements about the influence of Elizabethan lyric were made earlier in the century by J.H.Davies[20] and H.I.Bell.[21] The latter makes no attempt to specify the Elizabethan and the Welsh poems that he regards as evidence for this, but J.H.Davies is more

helpful. In his article in Y Cymmrodor he says that the poem 'Myfi ywr merthyr tostur lef' by Llewelyn ab Hwlcyn (C.Rh.C. 2 i)) and those by Richard Hughes 'represent an attempt to import into Welsh poetry the style and the delicate conceits of the Elizabethan lyric writers'. As Brinley Rees says when commenting on this claim, lyricism and delicate conceits have a long history in Welsh literature. Their appearance in the canu rhydd probably owes more to native tradition than to English borrowing. Nonetheless, some of the details in 'Myfi ywr merthyr' suggest English influence (Ishall be referring to them later in the chapter): J.H.Davies' claim is not unwarranted. In his introduction to Caniadau yn y Mesurau Rhyddion he defines his position more closely. There he specifies Thomas Campion, Sir Philip Sidney, Michael Drayton and Thomas Lodge as the lyricists in whose work we shall find similarities to Welsh; and says that Richard Hughes' desire to give an unexpected turn to his songs, his cynicism,and something about his stanzas expressing a lover's hopes and emotions, reflect knowledge of English work.

Since we know that Richard Hughes was present at the Elizabethan, and subsequently at the Jacobean, court it is not unlikely that his work owes something to the English compositions of the time. In some cases it does seem to be possible to trace the tone or mood of one of his poems ('Bywyd y Bugail', referred to in an earlier footnote, for example) to English fashions. But on the whole I have been reluctant to base my argument for English borrowing on questions as hard to describe or define as lyricism or cynicism. Earlier Welsh poetry offers parallels, and Richard Hughes' own personality may have been the chief spur towards writing in any of the ways that J.H.Davies mentions. I have chosen instead to look for precise details of similarity between English and Welsh poems;and have found that when one does so the work of Elizabethan court poets like Sidney(1554-86) or

Lodge (c. 1558-1625) is of less importance than anonymous long poems from an earlier Tudor period. Richard Hughes may well have borrowed from the Elizabethans (both song-writers and broadside ballad composers) but this is only one stage in a history of borrowing from English.

Resemblance with English: i) Points of Detail

Once one has started to see a relationship between English and Welsh poems, some tiny points become interesting. For example, it was a habit in sixteenth century English poetry to speak of a woman as a star. Some early examples of this are found in the collection from an early sixteenth century manuscript printed in Anglia 31, pp.309-397 (see poems Nos. 13, 14 and 15 in the collection). This image, known in earlier Welsh writing, occurs several times in the canu rhydd - C.Rh.C. 2 i), line 9; 6, lines 80, 142ff, and 183; 10, lines 16-17; 13, line 19, and 20, line 27. Two quotations will show the resemblances between the two languages:

> 'Drylliodd cariad glwyde fais
> am seren gwrtais amlwg'

Love for a courteous prominent star shattered the gates of my ribs
(C.Rh.C.2 i), lines 8-9)

> 'O my swet lady, the good perfytt sterre
> of my true hart, take ye now petye'
>
> (Anglia 31, pp.330)

The poem entitled 'Cwynfan Gŵr mewn Cariad' (C.Rh.C.25) is particularly useful in any discussion of this sort because it shows a clear debt to English, and there is a date attached to it in the manuscript. In the three lines that introduce the poem in the manuscript it is called an allegorical song, and these lines are perhaps the poet's own description of his work, since the poem itself

is very conscious of being allegorical and spells out each stage. The lover is like a merchant, trafficking on the seas, the commissioned journey is to the Court of Venus: the ship is of the Oak of Fancy, nails of Love are in it; and the allegory is pursued until the writer has to tell us how the ship capsized in a wave of despair. At the end of the poem we learn that Dafydd Llwyd Sybylltir composed it, 1610. The allegorical structure will have come directly from English[22] - this was probably one of the first poems in Welsh to imitate that style; and the image of the capsizing ship may also have come from that source. Both Wyatt (1503-42) and Surrey (1517-54)[23] translated a sonnet from Petrarch in which the lover complains that he is a rudderless ship, in danger of sinking, if he cannot reach port. As Joost Daalder says in his recent edition of Wyatt 'the conceit used was frequent both in Italian and in English verse'.[24] I have found an early example of it in an English poem from a manuscript of c.1500, where the poet speaks of 'My wofull hart... Full lyk to drowne in wavis of dystres' (John Stevens, Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court, London, 1961, p.353). Another statement of the theme is found in C.Rh.C.2 i), lines 3-4:

'Megis llong rhwng ton a chraig
o gariad gwraig rwy n kirio'

Like a ship between wave and rock, from love of a woman I am languishing.

These lines I see as a further indication that at some stage the English image became known to Welsh poets. They do not enable us to set the date for borrowing as any earlier than 1610: there is disagreement over the identity of the author, so that we cannot be sure that the poem is any older than the section of the manuscript in which it occurs - and this has been dated as 1637-8.[25]

Particularly frequent in the early Tudor period are poems

where the speaker recounts seeing the woman he loves in a dream, and waking, sometimes tearfully, to the knowledge that she has disappeared. There are examples of this in poems Nos. 13, 28, 29 and 38 in the collection in Anglia 31. This theme occurs in Canu Rhydd Cynnar 6, lines 201-8. I suggest an English origin rather than a Welsh one for it because the poet here, as in two of the English poems, says he saw in a dream a woman he already knew, the woman he loves. The pattern in Welsh and Irish vision literature is for the poet to see in a dream or vision a woman unknown to him, with whom he then falls in love (see e.g. Breuddwyd Macsen Wledig).

A point where strict and free metre poems coincide is in the detail of the nightingale on thorns. I mentioned in the previous chapter that a cywydd by Tudur Aled(c.1480-1525)contains this reference, and that it can be paralleled in an English song from the beginning of the sixteenth century. It is used several times in the canu rhydd: C.Rh.C.9, lines 7-8; 10, lines 43-4; 24, lines 37-8; 27, line 34; 32, line 17. Despite the detail's early appearance in a strict metre poem, I still think it probable that some at least of the free verse poets are drawing directly on English. They expand the reference somewhat beyond Tudur Aled's brief line; and the much greater number of occasions on which it occurs in free verse than in strict metre suggest that it became in the sixteenth century very popular. The cause for this is likely to have been its popularity in English - many examples can be found from the beginning of the sixteenth until the seventeenth centuries.[26] Borrowing could have occurred on repeated occasions by Welsh writers during the century; but it may also be that it rapidly established itself in free verse as a stock element in descriptions of disheartened love.

A detail that, like that of the nightingale on thorns, acquired proverbial status in English writing, is the image of the

swan that sings for the first time immediately before dying. The first instance that I have found of it in Welsh is in a poem by Richard Hughes (fl.1596,d.1618):

> 'O wir drymder kanv ir wy
> nid o nwy na maswedd,
> ond yn modd ar alarch gwyn
> yn chwynfan cyn i ddiwedd:'

C.Rh.C. 1 ii), lines5-8

I am singing out of true unhappiness, not out of high spirits or mirth, but in the manner of the white swan, lamenting before his death.

Gwyn Williams, quoting this poem, says that this was 'a favourite image of the Elizabethans' (An Introduction to Welsh Poetry, pp.224-5). Elizabethan poetry may well have been Richard Hughes' source for the idea; but it is worth noting that it was already in use in the early Tudor period. Thomas Wyatt uses it - see the poem 'Lyke as the Swanne towardis her dethe' on p.60 of Joost Daalder's edition. Daalder notes that the image was traditional in Italian poetry, and proverbial.

Richard Hughes' use of repetition to convey a bird's song (C.Rh.C.1 vi), lines 17-20) is also probably an imitation of styles of writing he became familiar with in London (see for example the poem quoted by Brinley Rees, DCR, p.71 where this point is made by Rees himself; cf. Gwyn Williams, An Introduction to Welsh Poetry,p.225).

An indication of a different sort that English poems probably contributed to the canu rhydd is given by those poems in which English-sounding vocables occur - C.Rh.C.2 vii, for example, a poem that I have already said probably borrows from English its choice of the shepherd as the hero. In this poem the refrain incorporates the sound 'ow ow', and later the words 'a thylili Tylili: Tylili fabli'. The very device of a refrain is foreign to

Welsh literature, so far as we can judge from the centuries before the sixteenth. The examples in Canu Rhydd Cynnar (2 i); 2 vii); 26, and 27 are the first that we see. Several English ballads or lyrics with meaningless vocables could be quoted. One of them, printed in Anglia 12, p.264, has a line with sounds partly similar to those in the Welsh poem: 'Than dyry cum dawn dyry cum dyry cum dyry', followed by 'cum dyry cum dyry cum dawn hey how'.

Resemblance with English: ii) Structure

Almost all that I have said so far has related to points of detail within the poems. Finally I shall mention some types of poem where it is the overall framework that seems to have been borrowed from English. These are: macaronic poems, one in the form of a letter, another in that of a warning to women to be careful about their choice of bedfellow; poems of farewell, and conversation poems. I have already mentioned the allegorical structure in C.Rh.C.25.

a) Two of the poems in Canu Rhydd Cynnar are English-Welsh macaronic ones, and both the form and content of these suggest that the Welsh writers had knowledge of English poems. 'Comendacions dygon ffyddlon', C.Rh.C.31 i), imitates a common fifteenth and sixteenth century type, the epistolary poem, many examples of which can be found in the manuscript collection printed in Anglia 31. A poem with a similar opening line is No.3 in the collection. It begins: 'I recommende me to yow with harte & mynde'. C.Rh.C.31 ii), 'Harmless harmless was the fellow', warns against marrying a man who shows no signs of being eager for love-making. This was a common theme in broadside ballads from their first known appearance; and it is noteworthy that the very tone of this Welsh poem is similar to that of broadside ballads. An example thought to be from the seventeenth century is printed in 'The Common Muse', pp.500-502, and has a

refrain with the same content as the Welsh poem: 'he nothing at all would do'.

The macaronic form itself was popular in fifteenth and sixteenth century England. Many early examples were carols, with religious themes; but a late fifteenth or early sixteenth century poem, printed by John Stevens in Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court, London 1961, pp.348-9, is wholly frivolous and secular in tone, like the Welsh examples. It begins:

> 'Up Y arose in verno tempore
> And found a maydyn sub quadam arbore,
> That dyd complayne in suo pectore,
> Sayng, 'Y fele puerum movere'; '

An anti-clerical poem from a manuscript of the first decade of the sixteenth century uses the same mixture of half-lines and lines in two languages (Latin and English again) as do the Welsh poems (see Anglia 12, pp.268-269). One should mention here a long poem, in cywydd form, by Tomas Prys (c.1564-1634) which mixes Welsh and English, although not as regularly as do the free verse poems I mentioned.[28] It is a further indication of an interest in macaronic experiments by Welsh poets of the sixteenth century. J.Glyn Davies refers, in Anglia 36, p.126, to yet another macaronic poem in a late sixteenth century manuscript. It uses a strict metre and Davies thinks that it may belong to fifteenth century. The fact that it mixes Welsh and Latin, not Welsh and English, may well indicate an early date. This poem and that by Tomas Prys are a reminder that free verse uses many of the same devices as strict metre poetry. Both evidently drew much of their inspiration in the sixteenth century from English; and free metre poets will have felt encouraged in their experiments by the freedom with which their strict metre contemporaries were beginning to write.

b) The cywyddau occasionally contain a line in which the lover says farewell to the world; and the cywydd in which the poet gives directions for his future burial (referred to earlier in this chapter) could be regarded as an extension of this theme. The free metre poems go beyond this. To say farewell seems to have become as stock a theme as praising a woman's beauty; and within a poem the words of farewell may be repeated again and again. It becomes a device for linking the different parts of a poem - for example in C.Rh.C.1 iii) and C.Rh.C. 8; or it provides the structure of the whole poem, as in C.Rh.C.2 i); 2; 7; 23; 24; and 25. In the last-mentioned poems the usual pattern is that the lover has decided there is no point in remaining alive any longer, or that he is not able to survive, and he writes a poem in which he describes what has caused this and says farewell to the world and his friends. A parallel to this is seen in an English poem printed in Anglia 26, p.198, and belonging, its editor thinks, to the late fifteenth century. The poem begins 'Ffarewell this world, I take my leve for ever', and later the line occurs 'ffarewell, my ffrendes, the tide abidith no man'. The whole poem is one of farewell to the world; but the tone is religious. The poet makes no attempt to link the death that he sees as imminent with cruelty on a woman's part. Closer to the Welsh style is another poem in Anglia 26 - poem No.23 in the collection. Here the poet complains that love's dart has wounded him so sorely that he is sure to die. He says farewell to his 'swet-harte', to his friends, and to the world; and, as in C.Rh.C.1 iii) and 8, the word farewell is repeated manytimes to link different lines. Poem No.35 in the same collection is occupied wholly by the theme of farewell: 28 of the 32 lines in the poem begin with the word. The lover says 'I take my leve agaynst my wyll' and one may infer that it is the lady's

unresponsiveness to his protestations of love that causes the parting. Another variation is seen in poem No.14 of this collection. The poet says farewell to joy and pleasure: unrewarded love has made him melancholy. The resemblances are not close enough to make presumption of English borrowing unavoidable; but it does seem that the farewell theme became suddenly popular in Wales in the sixteenth century, and that knowledge of English poems is a possible reason for this. C.Rh. C. 2 ii) is a reminder that there were ways of expressing hopeless love that were closer to the Welsh lyrical tradition. In this brief poem the poet says: I am waiting for the nightingale, which is to bring me a message from my love. If the nightingale does not come by May-day keep vigil over me - in other words, wake my corpse. This is one of the free poems that cannot be accounted for in terms of borrowings from this tradition or that. It uses the metre and language of the *canu rhydd* to create something that is so finished and independent that any strict metre poet would have been proud of it. Beside it the sometimes long and clumsy farewell poems seem more obviously dependent on a taste for a foreign literary fashion.

Conversation poems are rare in strict metre poetry, but there are several among the *canu rhydd*. Some of them are between the poet and a bird (C.Rh.C.1 vi); 33; 34; 35, and 36) and for these one can point both to the precedent of Dafydd ap Gwilym's poems and to the English parallels that Brinley Rees has found. As Brinley Rees points out, (DCR p.70) Dafydd, when recounting any conversation with a bird, devoted much of his time to description of the bird, especially to comparisons. The *canu rhydd* poets are uninterested in the appearance or behaviour of the bird, only in what it has to contribute to the conversation, and in this they resemble the few English poets who write of asking birds for information or advice. Sometimes the English poet does not even specify which bird he is talking to,

and Brinley Rees has found an unpublished Welsh song of which this is also true (DCR p.69). If, as I suspect, there was a continuing Welsh folk tradition of asking birds for advice, birds in this tradition may have been as sparely described as in the canu rhydd; but the examples Brinley Rees has collected, from fifteenth and sixteenth century poetry in England and Scotland, are strongly suggestive of influence from outside Wales on these particular free verse poems (see DCR pp.65-73 for Rees' full discussion of the English and Welsh similarities).

Other conversations are between a lover and girl (C.Rh.C. 1 i); 1 vii), and 22). These also have some characteristics that suggest non-Welsh traditions. In C.Rh.C. 1 i) and 22 the stanzas are spoken alternately by girl and boy and in C.Rh.C. 1 vii) groups of two or more stanzas are spoken by girl and by boy. The alternation of single stanzas is seen also in C.Rh.C. 1 vi), the conversation between poet and nightingale already referred to. This structure can be paralleled in English but not in Welsh. The Welsh habit was to give a reported conversation with occasional words or sentences quoted from either speaker - C.Rh.C.2 ii) and 12 continue this style. The English practice can be seen in poems 40, 42 and 43 from the early sixteenth century collection printed in Anglia 31. In these lover and girl alternate in speaking one, two or more quatrains. Almost any Tudor manuscript collection of anonymous long poems will provide further examples of this structure. As in the free verse, it is not only in conversations between lovers that it is used: it also appears in religious and didactic poems. Borrowing at some stage of the sixteenth century seems likely.

C.Rh.C. 1 vi) claims to be an account of a conversation overheard by the poet out walking one day. This too is an unusual

structure in Welsh, but can be found in sixteenth century English Chansons d'aventure, and in Elizabethan and Stuart broadside ballads (see Dulliau'r Canu Rhydd, pp.47, 63-5, for a few examples).

All these indications of English influence on the canu rhydd complicate one's assessment of where it was that the free verse writers found their theme of hopeless love. If Cupid's name and his arrows were borrowed from English, then details of lovesickness may also have been. I have made the attempt to distinguish between Welsh sighs and English sighs at this period, English pains and Welsh ones, and have decided that it is an unrewarding task, not worth repeating here. My conclusion is that it would be perverse to disregard the evidence, mentioned earlier, of a debt to traditional Welsh ways of writing and say that the Welsh poets took their account of love from English writing. Instead I think it is chiefly if not wholly derived from familiarity with strict metre writing, and that knowledge of English poems will have acted to confirm already existing Welsh conventions.

An Independent Tradition

As I said when referring to the poem where the poet hopes for the nightingale's return (C.Rh.C.2 ii)), not every free verse poem can be explained as a combination of traits from Welsh cywyddau and from English sources; but those that hint at any separate canu rhydd tradition are very few. What characterises them is restraint, economy of words, and concern for details of the natural world. C.Rh.C.2 ii) where the poet recounts an earlier conversation with a nightingale I have referred to; and also 30 'Carol Claddu'r Bardd', where the poet describes burial in the woods beneath wild flowers. Another such poem

is C.Rh.C.105, 'Carol i Glanmai'. In this the poet mentions all those signs of spring and summer that have passed, and ends each stanza saying 'surely May-day cannot be far off'. The implication is probably that May-day has indeed gone by, but that it did not bring the speaker what he hoped for (tokens of love, the return of someone missed) and he is therefore trying to persuade himself that although he sees the signs of summer May-day has not really come, and he can still hope. C.Rh.C.28 is wholly on its own among Welsh love-songs: a girl speaks, saying she was washing clothes under the bridge of Aberteifi, a golden washing-stick in her hand, and her lover's shirt beneath it. A man rode up to her, a proud broad-shouldered man, and asked her for how much she would sell the shirt of her lover. Not at all would she sell it, she replied, not for a hundred pounds, or a hundred packs, not for two hillsides of white sheep, or two fields of oxen, or two meadows of trampled herbs. And thus she preserved the shirt of her lover. This poem has been compared, by Ifor Williams[29] and others following him, with the pastourelle - a type of poem in which the speaker, usually an educated man, propositions a young woman he has met by chance in the countryside. Usually he is initially repulsed, but eventually has his way, (cf. Brinley Rees' definition of the pastourelle in DCR. p.43). It is evident that the points of resemblance between that style of writing and this poem are few. I suggest that it hasnothing to do with continental genres such as the pastourelle, and is instead a version of a folktale motif, where the woman magically defends her lover or his belongings from those that pursue him. Its antecedents in verse may be older than the sixteenth century. Brinley Rees (DCR p.78) compares the poem with the 'chanson d'aventure' genre, a more fluid form than the pastourelle; but even here I am unconvinced. It seems to be crucial to the 'chanson d'aventure' that the poet

himself, the first-person speaker, should be the wanderer, the traveller who overhears a conversation or encounters another person. This is not the case in C.Rh.C.28.

The last few poems Ihave mentioned make one wonder whether one is seeing the products of an established tradition of love-poetry in the free metres; there are others that also insist on being placed in categories on their own, but their distinctiveness suggests to me the breakdown of a tradition, not the survival of old styles. Such poems are the ones in Canu Rhydd Cynnar where the speaker, and quite possibly the writer, is a woman. I exclude from this group the already-mentioned C.Rh.C.28, because its content suggests a different explanation of its origin from that of these others; and instead I include C.Rh.C. 11, 21, 23, 24, and 29. One of these, C.Rh.C.23, has a woman's name attached to it: in the manuscript it says that Elen Gwdmon wrote it in 1609 (the manuscript has been dated as c.1730); and I think it quite probable that the other four poems were written by women. If true, this suggests that a wide range of people, not just those who would in previous centuries have become strict metre poets, and not just educated gentlemen with a knowledge of English literary fashions, were making use of the free metres (it should not then be surprising that it is so difficult to generalise about the content of these poems). Regardless of authorship, the content and style of this group of five poems represents something unprecedented in Welsh poetry, for all of them deploy the traditional themes and conceits of a type of poetry in which a man told a woman how much he longed for her, how much he admired her beauty, in a poem addressed to a man. These are the first poems in Welsh where a man is the love-object, and a woman is the one attacked by love-longing. The writers of these poems probably regarded themselves as experimenters: the scope of a woman's poem is being tentatively explored, and it is

noticeable that the language of admiration is more restrained than in poems where a man addresses a woman. There is less emphasis on physical characteristics or sexual attractiveness, and more on generalised 'beauty' or 'amiability'. C.Rh.C.11 is a straightforward imitation of those poems where a man praises a woman, and C.Rh.C.24 of those poems that express the frustration of unrequited love; in C.Rh.C.23 a young woman laments a young man she loved who has died; but in C.Rh.C.21 and 29 something rather more unusual is attempted. C.Rh.C.29 expresses the love of an aunt for her nephew, using language that even in a man's poem would seem strong:

> 'mi a rown drossoch i waed ynghalon
> am korff i yn fyw iw gladdv
> pwy o estron a wnai hyny' lines 10-12

I would give for you blood of my heart, and my body alive for burial: what stranger would do that?

It is difficult to imagine in what context this poem was written: whether it is someone's attempt to express a real situation, or whether it is intended as an original variation on an old theme that outsiders, slanderers, do not understand the feelings of lovers. Since it avoids the clichés of hopeless or impossible love it may be by an amateur poet with little knowledge of the traditional content of strict metre verse. The poem as it stands is certainly an interesting one; and I suggest that it is late in date.

C.Rh.C.21 has something of the unusual lyricism and lightness of touch of an extract from the Mabinogion. A girl says she has lost one 'fine of his hand and eye'. She asks the seasons, she asks the sun and the moon, she goes through all landscapes, asking this question, where can she find the one 'fine of his hand and eye'? She speaks to various birds, and they give her encouragement in her search; the poem perhaps breaks off unfinished, as she praises the man 'fine of his hand and eye'. The unusual narrative structure of this

poem, and the attractive use of a descriptive phrase as a refrain at the end of each stanza, make it seem like the work of someone experimenting with existing styles and forms. The manuscript in which it occurs is dated as belonging to 1609, and I suggest that the poem is not much older than the manuscript.

The variety of poems that I have mentioned by now should give some idea of the range within the canu rhydd from one poem to another. It is also noteworthy that within a poem several different strata of vocabulary may be used: the language of cywyddau, of broadside ballads, of colloquial Welsh, and of classical borrowing may all be found in one poem. C.Rh.C. 31 i), for example, mingles the old phrases 'lliw r ewyn'/ colour of foam and 'lywr lili'/ colour of the lily with the unusual elements of a line in Latin and two lines of Greek letters; and the poems attributed to Richard Hughes regularly combine the traditional vocabulary of cywyddwyr with tags from ballads, with examples of humanist learning, and with lines that seem to be proverbial expressions of wisdom. Pursuing the English connection, I note that a fondness for mixing proverbial phrases with straightforward statements of ill-usage by a beloved is seen also in some of the early sixteenth century English poems, - poem No.45 in Anglia 32 pp.382-4, for example:

> To yow, mastres, whyche have be-longe
> a feynyd lover & now un-trewe,
> yff ye well fare ye have more wrong;
> suche hope may fall ye shall yt rewe,
> God sende yow drynke suche as ye brewe;
> for lyttle rest ys ther or non,
> by exsperyense, as ytt doethe shewe,
> hwer many dogges be att on bone. lines 1-8

English poets may have offered Welsh poets their model for this practice. C.Rh.C.16 in particular is, like the English poem, built

on proverbs. Less significant probably, since the Triads already offered to Welsh writers a precedent for mixing classical and biblical names, in the example of this habit seen in _Anglia_ 26,p.142.

It is probable that the more detailed one's study of the _canu rhydd_, and the wider the range of comparative material looked at, the more there would be of interest to say about them. Further study could look not only at the literary history of motifs used but also at the many English loan-words that appear (Professor Parry has already drawn attention to this feature of free verse composition in _Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg hyd 1900_, p.133). Comparative study of their appearance in English, in free verse, and in strict metre poetry might be of use for dating these poems. It might also be possible to learn more from surviving manuscripts and records about the education and biographies of those free verse poets whose names survive. Any information about contacts between these poets would be valuable. And, of course, more free verse poems could be brought into the discussion. My own attempt at analysing them has, I hope, cleared a little more ground for future study.

CONCLUSIONS

This account of Welsh love-poetry has shown that there are many indications of continuity from the twelfth to the sixteenth century in choice of vocabulary and situation, in the type of personality or beauty described, and in the use of the formal structure of a man praising a woman. The strongest break with past tradition is made by those who are writing in the free metres; and even they do not reject past styles but simply add to them from a wide range of sources in English.

These sixteenth century writers, and some of their contemporaries using strict metres, are the first for whom there is indisputable evidence that they are imitating work in a foreign language. Unless one believes that the early Gogynferidd, Hywel and Gwalchmai, were in direct contact with Provence they cannot have been influenced by the work of eleventh and twelfth century troubadours, and any resemblances between the two literatures at this stage are coincidental. Early Welsh prose provides useful supporting evidence for the idea that the Welsh had their own concept of sudden love, and of the torments of loving unrewarded. In the period of the cywyddwyr there is the possibility that Welsh writers knew of developments in Norman French and English; but I am as yet unconvinced by claims that Dafydd ap Gwilym, one of the first cywyddwyr, was directly imitating French, English or Latin styles when writing a love-poem. The possibility that foreign material had already, by the time of Dafydd, become assimilated into Welsh and had lost any distinguishing marks of its origin, remains for conjecture. If this happened, the stages of assimilation before or alongside Dafydd have been lost. I do not think they can be reconstituted by studying the sixteenth century _canu rhydd_, for I find that the latter draw primarily on recent Welsh

literary traditions and on English writing. It is not impossible that older Welsh traditions are also present; but where these coincide with sixteenth century English or Welsh there is no way of distinguishing them.

As an alternative to the theory that the differences between Dafydd's work and that of the Gogynfeirdd are largely the result of a new awareness of foreign styles, Eurys Rowlands' argument that Dafydd was making use of his own experiences, and that these provoked new ways of writing, deserves attention.

When reading the work of cywyddwyr later than Dafydd, I find clearer suggestions of foreign influence, specifically from England; but more work needs to be done to establish the extent of the borrowing, and the nature of the English sources. The indications are that it is linked with the growing interest of Welshmen in London, because of the presence of a Tudor court there, but knowledge of English lyric in Wales before the accession of Henry Tudor in 1485 may have been more widespread than is usually thought. A stray quatrain preserved in a Welsh manuscript of the late fifteenth century is a twig with which one could start building an argument of this sort.

The Gogynfeirdd seem to have acted consciously to exclude foreign styles and details from their work: the fourteenth century followers of Hywel and Cynddelw must have been aware of styles of writing other than the traditional ones, but they chose to ignore them. They consciously limit their audience to those in sympathy with bardic standards. The cywyddwyr are less elitist, and provide rather more of the stuff of contemporary life in their love-poems; and by the time that free verse appears in the manuscripts its poets

seem to be addressing the widest audience yet in the history of Welsh love-poetry. Their poems assume little special knowledge, whether of Welsh or any other literature, and usually are self-explanatory. Probably any educated Welsh gentleman or gentlewoman would have appreciated them. They are the poetry of Wales' middle-class as opposed to its aristocracy; and their survival in manuscripts from the late sixteenth century onwards probably reflects the growing importance of that class, who were now able to record the sort of poetry that they liked.

These free metre love poets use much of the vocabulary of strict metre love-poems, and probably take their theme of the ailing lover from that source too. English influence shows itself in the details they choose for expressing their themes, and in the structures in which the poems are cast; and it is interesting to note that some of the points of detail are also found in strict metre poems, although less frequently. Both types of poetry apparently drew on English, but the canu rhydd poets did so more freely. Their sources seem to have been the anonymous poetry that was fashionable at the Tudor court and in London, in particular the poetry of the first half of the sixteenth century, but that of Elizabeth's court also contributed something to the detail and shape of these poems. Printed ballads probably made some English styles of writing popular among Welshmen, but I have not found them to be as helpful as the manuscript collections. Almost always, canu rhydd poets who borrow at all are drawing on very ephemeral forms of English poetry, and what they produce was probably intended to be equally short-lived: a response to the fashions of the day. Nonetheless, their poems can still appeal, sometimes by their ingenuity and wit, at others by their simplicity of style and theme, and at others by the brevity with which they describe a situation, capture a moment of drama, or evoke a feeling. Although differing in

so many ways from earlier Welsh love-poetry, they show that their poets benefited from the work of centuries of poets in evolving ways of talking about love.

FOOTNOTES

PART ONE: THE IRISH AND SCOTTISH TRADITIONS

Chapter One: The Old and Middle Irish Period

1. See the quotation in 'Dramatic poetry' below.

2. Text and translations in A Golden Treasury of Irish Poetry A.D. 600-1200, ed. David Greene and Frank O'Connor, London, 1967, pp.112, 113. Carney, Mediaeval Irish Lyrics, Dublin, 1967, p.98, notes that the poem is ninth or tenth century. Greene and O'Connor give their source as Irische Texte III, p.100. A text is also printed in Bruchstücke, p.69.

3. Text and translation in A Golden Treasury, pp.112, 114. The editors give their source as Auraicept na nÉces, ed. George Calder, Edinburgh, 1917, 533-6.

4. Text and translation in A Golden Treasury, pp.112, 114. Source: Bruchstücke, p.69.

5. Text and translation in A Golden Treasury, pp.112, 114. Source: Lebor na hUidre, 514-7. See Murphy, EIL, p.236 for other manuscript sources.

6. Text and translation in MIL, pp.24, 25. Source: Bruchstücke, p.37. Carney notes that the language is probably eighth century, and the poem was presumably composed then, although in the Annals it is put into the mouth of the dead King's wife - Áed was slain in 598. See MIL, p.98

7. Quoted and translated, as a 'fragment of Old Irish song, preserved only in a metrical tract', in Irish Kings and High-Kings, Francis John Byrne, London, 1973, pp.238-9. It was earlier included in Bruchstücke, p.69

8. See Chapter One of Early Celtic Nature Poetry, Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson, Cambridge, 1935.

9. A View of the Irish Language, ed. Brian Ó Cuív, Dublin, 1969,p.37.

10. idem, p.41

11. See EIL, pp.74, 206

12. See EIL, p.206; MIL, p.xxiv, and Irish Kings and High Kings, p.166.

13. MIL, pp.xxiv-v, and The Irish Bardic Poet, James Carney, Dublin, 1967.

14. Text and translation from MIL, pp.38, 39. All subsequent references to the content of the poem are based on the textual readings and translation provided by Professor Carney in this edition. His edition was preferred because it did more to make sense of individual parts of the poem and of the poem as a whole than any other I have seen.

15. Text and translation from EIL, pp.84, 85.

16. Serglige Con Culainn, ed. Myles Dillon, Dublin, 1953.

17. idem.

18. A View of the Irish Language, p.41; and Chapter X of An Grá in Amhráin na nDaoine, Seán Ó Tuama, Dublin, 1960.

19. A View of the Irish Language, p.39.

20. See Whitley Stokes' explanation in Irische Texte III, p.222. I am surprised that this comparison should diverge so strongly from the pattern of comparisons with flowers and other naturally occurring objects; but I note that no-one else has challenged this explanation.

21. See C.D. Buck, A Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages, Chicago, 1949, under 'Eyebrow'.

Chapter Two:1200-1400

1.Pp.258-262 of his lecture 'Literary Creation and the Irish Historical tradition',Proceedings of the British Academy 1963,London, pp.233-262.

2.'Ór na mban baincheann nimhe',ed.Lambert McKenna,Dioghluim Dána, Dublin,1938,Poem No.49.

3.Published Studies XXX,1941,p.121,and reprinted as No.IX in Lambert McKenna's edition of the Book of Magauran,Dublin,1947.This poem was perhaps written in 1305,the year that the husband of the woman addressed died.

4.Text and translation in Bergin,pp.88-92,252-4.

5.Bergin,pp.108-112,261-3.

6.Dioghluim Dána 49.9.Seán Ó Tuama(An Grá,p.272)offers 'amber hair' as an example of metaphors found in folksongwhich may have come from overseas.The word itself,'ómra',certainly seems to have been borrowed;see Études Celtiques XIV,p.84,where Henry Risk derives it from Anglo-Norman *aumre.This does not mean that the image of amber-coloured hair must have been borrowed.It fits easily into the pattern of Irish descriptionand may have been borrowed by folksong writers from a more literary level of composition in Irish.Seán Ó Tuama gives no examples of its use in other languages.

7.Bergin,pp.101-3,257-8.

8.Aithdioghluim Dána,ed.Lambert McKenna,Dublin,2 vols.,1939,1940, Poem No.1.

9.S.v.RIA Contribb. 'sub'.

10.Aithdioghluim Dána,Poem No.1,notes..

11.Dioghluim Dána 49.8.

12.Bergin,p.107.

13.Dioghluim Dána 49.8.

14.See Dánta Grádha No.13,3c.

15.Bergin,p.99.

16.Giraldus Cambrensis:Opera,vol.I,ed.J.S.Brewer,London,1861,p.349.

17.Faral,p.214.

18.Text in Faral,p.129,

19.Bergin,p.102.

20.That is,unless one believes it belongs with mention of hawthorn and sloe blossom,which Seán Ó Tuama regards as indicating French borrowing(An Grá,p.127).I think it probable that for some of these comparisons with nature continental and Irish practice coincided.

21.Dioghluim Dána 49.9.

22.Idem.

23.Seán Ó Tuama has said that he regards comparisons with the

whiteness of a swan in Irish folksong as evidence of foreign borrowing(An Grá,pp.127,129-130).Here also,I think native and continental practice coincided.

24.For texts,see Dán Dé,ed.Lambert McKenna,Dublin,no date(1922).

25.Studia Hibernica 3(1963),p.43.

26.See Dánta Grádha No.4,and contrast the text in The Book of the Dean of Lismore,p.307.The Dean's text is transcribed by Quiggin,pp.75-6. There are three Irish sources for the poem,the earliest dated 1778-9(RIA MS 23 B 38).The last-mentioned text is the one that O'Rahilly says he chiefly drew on for his printed text(see Scottish Gaelic Studies IV,p.47).The poem is anonymous in all the Irish sources.

27.Cf.the semi-proverbial poem 'Fuaith liomsa fuatha Chormaic'. This is ascribed to Gearóid in one manuscript(RIA MS 23 E 29,p.122) and is anonymous in ten other RIA manuscripts.It is generally agreed that the author is unknown.

28.In using the word 'copyist' I depend on unpublished conclusions reached by Donald Meek of Glasgow University regarding the transmission of the Ossianic ballads in the manuscript.He feels that the poem under discussion shows characteristics indicating copying.

29.The poems attributed to Gearóid in The Book of Fermoy have been edited by Gearóid MacNiocaill in Studia Hibernica 3(1963),pp.7-59. All references are to the text printed there.

30.This is a collection of German and Latin songs made in Benediktbeuern,Bavaria,either in the early thirteenth or early fourteenth century(opinions differ - see Dronke,Med.Latin,vol.I,p.35).For texts,see Carmina Burana,ed.A.Hilka and O.Schumann,1930-41.

31.See SVBD ,p.xi.

32.Dean's Book,p.128;Reliquiae Celticae I,p.106.There is uncertainty as to whether this page of the manuscript contains two poems or one.I have treated it here as containing two poems,the first of them being the one noted here(cf.SGS IV,p.49,where O'Rahilly shows that

he thinks there are two poems).

33.*Dean's Book*,p.11;Quiggin,p.82.

34.*Dean's Book*,p.5;Quiggin,p.84.

35.*Dean's Book*,pp.68-9;*McLauchlan*,pp.78,79,105.

36.I quote from the manuscript reading given by William Gillies in his forthcoming article 'Courtly and Satiric Poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore',*Scottish Studies* 20(1976).

37.*The Latin Poems attributed to Walter Mapes*,ed.Thomas Wright, London,1841,pp.77-85.

38.Idem,p.297.

39.See *The Triads of Ireland*,ed.Kuno Meyer,Dublin,1906(Nos.72,73,75, 76,88,180,181,185);and *Tecosca Cormaic*,ed.Kuno Meyer,Dublin,1909 (Section 16ff. - at the beginning of this passage Cormac says he does not distinguish different types of women,but at the end of it he says that it is bad women who are the source of all trouble). Further instances of discrimination between good and bad women are quoted in *Tecosca Cormaic*,p.54,and *Revue Celtique* XLVII,pp.30-32.

40.See *The Crooked Rib*,Francis Lee Utley,Columbus,Ohio,1944,for an account of the movement,based on English and Scots writings.

41.These poems are quite different in tone and effect from the Middle Irish 'Mé Éba,ben Ádaim uill'(text in *EIL*,pp.50-52).That poem speaks of Eve as the first sinner;as a result of her deeds Paradise was lost,Christ was crucified,mankind knows hunger,want and cold, and women 'will not cease from folly as long as they live'.No examples of women's present folly are given.The poem is a meditation on what has been lost,not an attack on women.

42.*Dean's Book*,p.307;*Quiggin*,pp.75-6.

43.*Dean's Book*,pp.303-4;*Quiggin*,pp.76-7.

44.*Dean's Book*,p.88;*Quiggin*,pp.78,79;*Éigse* II,p.64.

45.*Dean's Book*,pp.279-280;*Reliquiae Celticae* I,p.109.

46.The same metaphor is used in a vernacular Scots Gaelic poem,

'A Rìgh,gur cruaidh mo sgeul',by the Blind Harper,who wrote in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.See *The Blind Harper*,ed.William Matheson,Edinburgh,1970,p.12.F.L.Utley lists as No.209 in *The Crooked Rib* a poem beginning 'My mistres is in Musik passing skilful'.This is described as 'A satire on his lady's insatiability,under the cover of musical terminology'.

47.*Dean's Book*,p.144;*Reliquiae Celticae* I,p.107.

48.The same theme,with the game specified as that of 'táiplis' or 'tables',is used in another poem in the Dean's Book,'Mór tubaist na táiplisge'.See *Dean's Book*,p.57 and the edition of the poem by David Greene in *Ériu* 17,pp.8-9.David Greene suggests a foreign model for Irish poems and tales using the language of 'táiplis' to describe sexual activity.He has found a parallel for this type of writing in a poem by the twelfth century troubadour Guilhem IX, and he concludes:'this type of *jeu d'esprit* presumably arose in either France or Provence,based on a pun between the two meanings 'playing board' and 'apron' which O.Fr. *tablier* and O.Prov. *taulier* possessed.In view of the very early date of the Guilhem IX poem,the type may well have been imported at the same time as the game' (*Ériu* 17,p.15).*Mór tubaist* is anonymous and will therefore be included in the next chapter;but as far as I can see,it might as easily belong to the thirteenth or fourteenth century as to the fifteenth.

49.See *An Grá*,pp.88-90,144-5.

50.See Seán Ó Tuama's essay 'The New Love Poetry' in *Seven Centuries of Irish Learning 1000-1700*,ed.Brian Ó Cuív,Dublin,1961, pp.87-102.Seán Ó Tuama refers only to one poem by Gearóid Iarla, *Mairg adeir olc*,and describes this as a 'love poem of continental origin' and as 'a common sort of poem refuting the goliardic attitude'and therefore 'part of the international love-movement' (*op.cit.*,pp.87,97-8).Robin Flower also regards *Mairg adeir olc* as a love poem,and as evidence that the matter of French love

poetry entered Irish poetry in the fourteenth century(Dánta Grádha, Introduction,pp.xii-xiii,xxi.

51.See his book,The Crooked Rib,pp.3-90.Pp.30-34 discuss the effect of courtly love poetry on the genre.His comments on 'the mingled tone of many satires',and on the merging of different traditions after the twelfth century are a reminder of the difficulty of categorising these poems.

52.Cf.Seán Ó Tuama's comment on the possibility of Latin influence in Seven Centuries of Irish Learning,p.98.A Latin poem against women(perhaps fourteenth century in date?)which was preserved in a manuscript from Ireland is quoted in Anglo-Irish Literature 1200-1582,St.John D.Seymour,Cambridge,1929,pp.116-7.

53.See his description of the manuscript,MS 6131-33 in the Bibliothèque Royale at Brussels,in Ériu IV(1910),pp.183-190.

54.The text of the Egerton manuscript is printed by Kuno Meyer (op.cit.,p.190).From this it appears to be faulty in at least one place:at the beginning of the third quatrain it has 'A gruaidh lag ar lí an ómra'/'O smooth cheek colour of amber'.A reference to hair would suit the context better(cf.the example quoted earlier in this chapter);and that is what O'Rahilly prints in his edition of the poem in Dánta Grádha.

55.A Celtic Miscellany,ed.K.H.Jackson,London,1951,revised 1971, Poem No.54.

56.See RIA MSS 23 G 20,p.177;E v 5,p.354;F vi 2,p.575.In all the other manuscripts the poem is anonymous:Brussels MS 6131-33;B.Mus. MSS Eg.127,fol.16;Eg.146,fol.13b;Eg.161,fol.21;Add.18749,fol.18; and RIA MSS F v 3,p.186 and 23 A 45,p.6.

57.Edited in part by Eleanor Knott in Irish Syllabic Poetry 1200 -1600,2nd ed.,revised,Dublin,1966,pp.45-6.See also the text printed by Standish Hayes O'Grady in his description of B.Mus.Eg.111,fol. 34,in B.Mus.Catalogue Irish Manuscripts,vol.I,London,1926.

58.Transactions of the Iberno-Celtic Society for 1820,Vol.I,Part I: A Chronological account of nearly 400 Irish writers down to 1750, by Edward O'Reilly,Dublin,1820,p.cx.

Chapter Three: 1400-1525

1.E.C.Quiggin's comments on pp.127-8 of his lecture "Prolegomena to the study of the later Irish Bards",Proceedings of the British Academy 1911-12,London,1913,pp.89-143,are helpful. David Greene edits and discusses one poem in Ériu 17 (1955),pp.7-15;and two others are edited in Éigse II,p.64, and Éigse V,pp.156-7. A handful of others are edited or described in W.J.Watson's Scottish Verse from the Book of the Dean of Lismore,Edinburgh,1937,pp.vii,307-8,and Nos.XXIV, XXIX and XXX. Otherwise one can only learn of the contents of these poems from the brief,sometimes misleading,headings given in catalogues or poem-lists of the manuscript: McLauchlan,pp.xci-xcvi; MacKinnon,pp.241-6; and T.F.O'Rahilly's 'Index of Initial Lines',published in Scottish Gaelic Studies IV,pp.35-53. A forthcoming article by William Gillies in Scottish Studies 20 (1976) will be a major contribution to the subject.

2.SVBD,pp.260,303,307-8.

3.SVBD,p.vii; TGSI XLIII (1960-63),pp.292,297 (part of an article by Derick S.Thomson entitled 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family').

4.Dean's Book,pp.72,73;Quiggin,p.81.

5.Dean's Book,p.285;Quiggin,p.77;edited in SVBD,pp.307-8.

6.Dean's Book,p.161;Quiggin,p.68.

7.Dean's Book,p.292;McLauchlan,p.118;edited in SVBD,p.234.

8.Dean's Book,p.61; McLauchlan,pp.82-3.

9.Dean's Book,p.149;Quiggin,p.67.

10.Dean's Book,p.225; Quiggin,p.79.

11.The Perthshire-Argyllshire connections of most of these poets are set out in SVBD,pp.xiv-xvii, and on p.74 of 'Gaelic Learned

Orders and Literati in Mediaeval Scotland', Derick S.Thomson,Scottish Studies 12 (1968),pp.57-78.

12.The Middle Scots Poets,ed.A.M.Kinghorn,London,1970,p.18.

13.The dates given here for Dunbar and Henryson are those given recently by Professor John MacQueen in his anthology A Choice of Scottish Verse 1470-1570. They differ from those that have been given by past writers,and represent the latest state of knowledge about these poets.

14.The Scots fragments quoted in the Dean's Book are:

i)Gyf that zour wyf be deid mac nothir chayr nor sorrow,Dean's Book,p.144;MacKechnie I,p.184.

ii)He menit treuth, and sche wes wariabill,Dean's Book,p.219; Leabhar na Féinne,ed.J.F.Campbell,London,1872,p.xiv.

iii)Luffaris be war and tak gwd heid,Dean's Book,p.92+2.Part of Henryson's The Testament of Cresseid: see lines 561-7 of the edition of the poem in Robert Henryson's Poems,ed.Charles Elliott, Oxford,1963,p.106.

iv)Richt as ye biche in jolying in her raige,Dean's Book,p.77; Leabhar na Féinne,ed.J.F.Campbell,London,1872,p.xiii;The Crooked Rib, Francis Lee Utley,Columbus,Ohio,1944,No.282. Part of a poem sometimes attributed to Dunbar.

v)Quhat alyt ye man to ved a vyf,Dean's Book,p.48.

vi) A fragment of dialogue between 'Dalyda' and 'Sampsoun', Dean's Book,p.184.

Latin items on the same theme occur on p.219 of the amnuscript.

15.See The Bannatyne Manuscript,edited by W.Tod Ritchie for the Scottish Texts Society,4 vols.,Edinburgh and London,1928-34.

16.See footnote 14 above,and The Crooked Rib,Francis Lee Utley, Columbus,Ohio,1944,pp.62-6,where the surviving Scots material is briefly discussed.

17.For the evidence for this,see 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family', Derick S.Thomson,TGSI XLIII (1960-63),pp.276-304,and pp.72-4 of

Thomson,*Scottish Studies* 12 (1968),pp.57-78.

18.See the text and translation in *EIL*,pp.50-53,and footnote 40 to Chapter Two,above.

19.*Dean's Book*,p.225;*Quiggin*,p.79.

20.*Dean's Book*,p.267;*Quiggin*,p.74.

21.*Dean's Book*,p.10;*Quiggin*,p.70.

22.*Dean's Book*,p.202;*Quiggin*,p.83.

23.*Dean's Book*,p.49;*Quiggin*,p.68.

24.*Dean's Book*,p.71;*Quiggin*,p.80.

25.*Dean's Book*,p.106;*Quiggin*,p.72.

26.*SVBD*,No.XXIX.

27.The possibilty of a relationship between the two poems was first mentioned by Quiggin in "Prolegomena to the Study of the Later Irish Bards 1200-1500",*Proceedings of the British Academy 1911-12*,London, 1913,p.128.

28.*The Ship of Fools*,trans.Edwin Zeydel,New York,1944,p.12.

29.*Dean's Book*,p.70;*McLauchlan*,p.80;*SVBD*,No.XXIX.

30.*Dean's Book*,p.68;*McLauchlan*,p.78;*Reliquiae Celticae* I,p.94;*SVBD* No.XXXIV.

31.*Dean's Book*,p.266;*Quiggin*,p.71;*SVBD* No.XXX.

32.*A Literary History of France*,John Fox,London,1974,p.107.

33.A cryptic comment by Eleanor Knott says of the Irish classical poet: 'A small number of examples in the manuscripts show that he could also be,on occasion,extremely indecorous,in quite a stately style'(*Irish Classical Poetry*,Eleanor Knott,second ed.,revised,Dublin, 1966,p.36). This comment occurs in a footnote,and she does not give any examples.David Greene prints some Irish material for comparison with *Mór tubaist na táiblisge* in *Ériu* 17 (1955),pp.7-15;and some Irish and Scottish manuscripts contain quatrains that play with the first letters of words to give 'bod' or some similar message (see e.g. NLS MS 72 1 36,fol.115a). Otherwise,Irish poetry that treats sex as

to what extent it exists in the manuscripts.

34.Dean's Book,p.251;Quiggin,p.78.

35.Dean's Book,pp.37,157;Quiggin,pp.77,92.

36.Dean's Book,p.90;Quiggin,p.98.

37.Dean's Book,p.58;McLauchlan,pp.78,79.

38.Dean's Book,p.251;Quiggin,p.78.

39.Dean's Book,p.128;Reliquiae Celticae I,p.106 (a transcription of the first six quatrains only),

40.Dean's Book,p.223;Reliquiae Celticae I,p.107 (a transcription of the first three-and-a-half quatrains only);Quiggin,p.80.

41.Dean's Book,p.57;Quiggin,p.62;edited in Ériu 17,p.8.

42.Dean's Book,p.199;Quiggin,p.73.

43.See SVBD,p.307.

44.See the poem 'Duanaire na Sracaire'(Dean's Book,p.143,edited in SVBD,No.1);it is by Finlay Mac Nab,who died 1525(SVBD,p.xvi) and is addressed to Dugall Mac Gregor,who died after 1511(SVBD,p.xiv).From these dates it seems probable that the second Earl is the one addressed;cf.SVBD,p.vii.

45.SVBD,p.260.

46.SVBD,p.14.

47.TGSI XLIII(1960-63),p.292(from the article 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family',Derick S.Thomson,pp.276-304.).

48.Dean's Book,p.88;McLauchlan,p.84.

49.See TGSI XLIII (1960-63),p.296.

50.Text and translation from SVBD,p.308.

51.Text and translation from SVBD,pp.307-8.

52.SVBD,p.307.

53.Ballatis of Luve,ed.John MacQueen,Edinburgh,1970,p.xxi.

54.Idem,pp.xxii-xxviii.

55.Text and translation from Comrac Liadaine ocus Cuirithir,ed.Kuno Meyer,London,1902,pp.12-13.

56.It is in the possession of the Celtic Dept.,University of Glasgow.

57.The main eighteenth century collectors,MacDiarmid,MacNicol,and MacLagan,seem to have exchanged material or used the same sources, since what remains of their respective collections shows a great deal of material held in common.

58.Published in three volumes, Inverness, 1896-1900.See vol.3,p.377.

59.See A History of the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, Donald Gregory,2nd ed.,Edinburgh,1881,pp.91,97.

60.See MacLagan MS 137: Chualas mar gu cualas ann (19 qtt.);
MacLagan MS 216: Chualas mar gun duaras ann (19 qtt.);
MacLagan MS 235: Ar leabai' chaoil chleithe re mo shlios (3 qtt.);
idem : A nian og a chùil dhrimneich (8 qtt.).

61.RIA MS 24 C 55,p.287.The poem's first line in this version is "Is luaineach mo cholladh a nocht". It is anonymous,but headed 'Moladh Mná', and is written in Irish script.

62.See MacLagan MS 129A: Chunnaic mis' is cian o'n uair (11 qtt.);
MacLagan MS 135B: Is beudbhar comhairle gach mná (133 qtt.).
Both these poems are anonymous,and share the majority of their stanzas with Tha bean an crìch Albainn fhuar.

63.Item LXXIV,scribe's own numbering. The third volume exists only in the form of a copy made in 1909,now in the possession of the School of Scottish Studies,Edinburgh.

64.TGSI XLV (1965),p.278.

65.Examples are:

B'aithne dhomhsa bean aon uair (printed in the Highland Monthly II, p.430: a text taken from the now lost MacColl MS of the early nineteenth century).

Ceithir nithe gu'n tug mi fuath (MacLagan MS 145).

Chi mi ceo a tigh na hInnse (NLS 50 1 12,ff,13a-21b: a poem collected by J.F.Campbell in Islay,1862).

Chunnaic mis' is cian o'n uair (MacLagan MS 129A).

Dh'éirich mise moch an diugh (Craig,p.40).

Is beudbhar comhairle gach mná (MacLagan MS 135B).

Luaineach ged a gheobh thu 'ghaodh (Highland Monthly II,p.429.Taken from the MacColl MS).

Mar fado tinne fuidh loch (earliest Scottish source: NLS 72 1 36,fol. 95b,written 1690-1;reappears in many 18th and 19th century Scottish manuscripts,as a single quatrain,and combined with others;also appears in many Irish manuscripts).

Na tri eoin chruinne-gheala dhonn (Tolmie,p.185; EUL (CW) 244:177b. This Edinburgh MS,possibly written by Alexander Carmichael,may have been the source for the version that appears in The MacDonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry,ed.Angus J. & Archibald MacDonald,Inverness, 1911,p.332).

'S miann le bradan an struth bras (EUL (CW) 244: 177a.This poem, like many others,contains a quatrain beginning Cha thrummaid a loch an lach,a quatrain which also occurs in collections of proverbial stanzas that do not set out to be poems against women,e.g.,the Seanfhacail agus Comhadan attributed to Donnchadh Loudin,c.1730-c. 1812,printed in Bardachd Ghàidhlig,W.J.Watson,3rd ed.,Stirling,1959, pp.29-37. This quatrain appears frequently in Irish manuscripts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

These references show how widespread was the popularity of poems criticising women for their stubbornness,fickleness,etc.Lines from this sort of poetry even found their way into nurses' songs (as Tolmie,p.185, records) and into the waulking song tradition (see Craig,p.40). All of these poems have some stanzas in common with others;individual quatrains appear in manuscripts in Dublin and the British Museum.It therefore seems unlikely that any of the ascriptions accompanying individual poems are to be trusted.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER FOUR: 1525-1630

1. See his A Descriptive Catalogue of Gaelic Manuscripts in the Advocates' library and elsewhere in Scotland, Edinburgh, 1912, p. 304.

2. See The Scottish Nation, ed. Gordon Menzies, London, 1972, p. 81.

3. See History of the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, Donald Gregory, 2nd ed. Edinburgh 1881, reprinted Edinburgh 1975.

4. British Museum Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts, II, London, 1926, p. 50.

5. 'On the origin of Modern Irish Rhythmical Verse', Acta Jutlandica, vol. 9, (1937), pp. 280-2.

6. Idem, p. 280; cf. his article in ÉRIU VIII, p. 161.

7. MIL, p. xiv.

8. See NLS 72.2.2. fol. 7a. Ronald Black's dating of this manuscript has not yet been published.

9. All references are to the MacLagan MS source, which offers the earliest and most coherent text - the only problem of interpretation it presents is in line 3 of the third quatrain, where the apparent reference to a pure jewel (air Ghlan-leug) is not easily reconciled with the rest of the quatrain.

10. Somewhat closer in spirit to the Scottish poem are the lines:

Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,
A bounting other a lavercok,
Swetė brid!
Bitwene hir curtel and hir smok
I wolde been hid.

The Oxford Book of Mediaeval English Verse, ed. Celia and Kenneth Sisam, Oxford, 1970, p. 120

from the (probably) early fourteenth century Harley Lyric 'A wale whyt as whalles bon'.

11. I have used printed sources for my texts, except for one unedited poem which occurs in a Scottish manuscript, Cá h-ainm atá ar Fearghal Óg.

12. The poems here that occur in manuscripts later than the book of O Conor Don are: DG 44, 52, 53, 97, 100, and Cara agus eascara in fhearg. All but the last one are ascribed to sixteenth or early seventeenth century poets; and the last one occurs alongside sixteenth century poems in RIA 23 I 40.

13. I query, hesitantly, the attribution of DG 38 to Niall Mór Mac Mhuirich. We do not know whether the poem was anonymous in the Book of O Conor Don, since its text is on one of the missing folios; but it is anonymous in RIA 23 D 4, a manuscript written at some stage before 1681, and in NLS 72 1 36, written 1690-1. The ascription to Niall Mór Mac Mhuirich occurs only in the Red Book of Clanranald, in a section written by Niall Mac Mhuirich (c. 1636-1726). Another poem in the Red Book, Deacair teacht ón ghalar ghráidh, is ascribed there to a Mac Mhuirich, but in Irish manuscripts is ascribed to an Irish poet. I am therefore uncertain about Soraidh slán. Niall Mór appears to have been writing in the late sixteenth, early seventeenth century, which is compatible with the poem's occurrence in a manuscript of 1631 (see TGSI XLIII, p. 218 where the evidence for Niall's dates is given by Professor Thomson).

14. Several of these poems do not occur in the Book of the O Conor Don, and are dated pre-1630 on the basis of their possible authorship. These are: DG 11, 16, 19, 26, 31, 49, 50, 58, 66, 70, and Aoibhinn an galar. Two of them, DG 63 and 65, are

included because they occur with sixteenth century poems in RIA 23 I 40; and one of them, Cá h-ainm atá ar Fearghal Óg, because it occurs in a Scottish manuscript of c. 1603. Thus for nearly half of the poems in this group there is no manuscript authority for their existence before 1630; but I do not think I am obscuring any lines of argument by including them here since it is apparent from the remaining poems that the poetry of love-sickness was well established before 1631.

15. O'Rahilly prints An sgitheach tú as anonymous; but in the only text of the poem that I have found, RIA 23 D 4, p. 215, it is ascribed to Gofraidh Mac an Bhaird.

16. Aoibhinn an galar is anonymous in its only source, the Red Book of Clanranald, but it occurs there with a group of poems from before 1630; and its editor, Cameron, has suggested that it is by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird.

17. Deacair teacht is ascribed to Piaras Feiritéar in Irish manuscripts, but to Cathal Mac Mhuirich in its earliest, though incomplete, source, the Red Book of Clanranald.

18. Fada ar gcothrom is ascribed to Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh in one source, but is anonymous in two others - all three manuscripts are late.

19. Féach orm is ascribed to an Ó Géaráin in all eight of its manuscript sources; but only one of them, RIA 23 B 35, written 1820, gives any suggestion as to the poet's first name. It attributes the poem to M. Ó Gíaráin, who is perhaps to be identified with Maolmuire Bacach Ó Géaráin. According to O'Grady, British Museum Catalogue I, London 1926, p.344, the Ó Géaráin family of poets were from Co. Mayo. The poem shows many bardic characteristics,

and there can be little doubt that it was written in the sixteenth century while bardic schools were still flourishing.

20. Léig dhíot th'airm is anonymous in its earliest source but is ascribed to Piaras Feiritéar in a late group of manuscripts (all written by members of the O Longáin family).

21. Ní mé bhar n-aithne is ascribed to Eochaidh Ó hEóghusa in the Book of the O Conor Don, but is anonymous in another seventeenth century manuscript. Bergin thinks the riddle in the last quatrain gives the poet's name as Cú Chonnacht.

22. "Grisainech"/'with ruddy face' occurs in Táin Bó Cúalnge, ed. Cecile O'Rahilly, Dublin, 1969, line 3186.

23. A fifteenth century example is seen in a poem from the Book of the Dean, 'Cóir feitheamh ar uaislibh Alban', edited SVBD, p. 184.

24. See quatrain 30c of the poem 'A Ghearóid, déana mo dháil' by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh, Dioghluim Dána, p. 201

25. See An Grá, pp. 121-130.

26. See 'The Ideal of feminine beauty in Mediaeval Literature', Derek S. Brewer, Modern Languages Review 50 (1955), p. 258.

27. See Chapter Two, Section A, above, under 'EYES', and the accompanying footnote (13). The poem is addressed to Our Lady.

28. Seven Centuries of Irish Learning 1000-1700, ed. Brian Ó Cuív, Dublin, 1961, pp. 88-93, 98-102. Robin Flower earlier sketched out this argument in Dánta Grádha, Introduction, pp. xi-xvii, xxiii.

29. Seven Centuries, pp. 91-2, 99. Cf. Flower, Dánta Grádha, pp. xiii, xv-xvii, xxxii.

30. An Grá, passim.

31. Seven Centuries, p. 99. An Grá, pp. 108-112, 172-3

32. *Seven Centuries*, pp. 89, 93.

33. *An Grá*, pp. 108-112, 173

34. *Dánta Grádha*, Introduction, p. xxxii. On page xxvii he says that Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh's echo-song reminds him of Elizabethan and Jacobean work; but he does not say that he thinks Ó Dálaigh in fact borrowed the motif.

35. Brian Ó Cuív has looked at the evidence for knowledge of the English language in the sixteenth century, and concludes: 'all the evidence available goes to show that, with the exception of a small number in parts of Leinster and in certain urban areas, the people of Ireland were Irish-speaking and Irish-speaking only' (*Irish Dialects and Irish-Speaking Districts*, Three Lectures by Brian Ó Cuív, Dublin, 1951, reprinted 1971, p. 14). His evidence is set out on pages 10-14 of the publication.

36. I quote Brian Ó Cuív: 'Professor Hogan in *The English Language in Ireland* states that during the thirteenth century "English established itself as the language of a great part of the country", but this can hardly be true. Except in the towns, where undoubtedly Irish was not the dominant language, the areas where English was the common language must have been comparatively small. In the succeeding century English did not even hold its own in such areas' (*idem*, p. 9). Of the fifteenth century he says: 'the next century saw little or no advance by the English language, although various efforts were made to force it on the people' (*idem*, p. 10). He provides examples to support his conclusions.

37. *Idem*, pp. 15-19

38. *Seven Centuries*, pp. 97-8. Cf. *An Grá*, pp. 163-6

39. See *Anglo-Irish Literature 1200-1582*, St. John D. Seymour, Cambridge, 1929, pp. 116-117. The poem condemns all women, and is blunter than any of the *Dánta Grádha*.

40. An Grá, pp. 163-6.

41. Ovid, ed. J. W. Binns, London, 1973, pp. 210-211 (from the chapter 'Ovid in the Sixteenth Century', by Caroline Jameson.

42. Eochaidh Ó hEóghusa (c. 1568-c. 1612) knew of Ovid's Metamorphoses, as is seen from his unpublished poem Mór theasda d'obair Óibhid (this reference was kindly supplied for me by Professor Carney). Another poem, Dioghluim Dána 78, suggests that the Amores were also known in sixteenth century Ireland. This poem, attributed to Gofraidh mac Briain mac an Bhaird (fl. 1600), specifically refers to Cupid's darts and arrows. Given the present lack of evidence for the circulation of English literature in Ireland, knowledge of the Latin original, rather than of English translations, is probably more likely.

Another type of reference to Ovid shows that he had, like Solomon and Alexander, become an example of wise or learned men who were beguiled by women.
The poem A bhean na gcíoch gcorrsholus, edited by O'Rahilly in Gadelica I (1913), pp. 239-243 (he printed an edited version of this poem, lacking the classical references, as DG 32) uses this triad of classical figures to make a point about the impossibility of escaping a woman's charms (lines 61-8). A reference such as this is probably not evidence for first-hand knowledge of Ovid's writings. I note that O'Rahilly says, Gadelica I (1913), p. 243, that he thinks the poem was composed "not earlier than the seventeenth century".

Work needs to be done to bring together the scattered references in late bardic poetry to classical Latin poets or to their writings, and to consider the degree of knowledge of Latin Literature that these references show.

43. See Ovid, ed. J. W. Binns, London, 1973, pp. 191, 194, 198, 199 Cf. Bromwich 1967, p. 28.

44. Ovid, ed. J. W. Binns, pp. 194, 196, 199. Cf. Bromwich 1967 pp. 25-6.

45. Bromwich 1967, pp. 27-8.

46. Ovid, ed. J. W. Binns, pp. 199-200, 204, 205.

47. Idem, p. 193.

48. These ten exist in manuscripts written at varying dates between 1714 and 1840. There are also three poems (DG 15, 43 and 64) for which I have not yet identified O'Rahilly's manuscript source.

49. RIA 23 D 4 (written before 1681); TCD H 5 9 (written 1684); Giessen MS 1267 (written 1685); B. Mus. Egerton 187 (written 1686 or earlier); RIA 23 D 38 (written 1688); B. Mus. Add. 40766 (written before 1691); NLS 72 1 36 (written 1690-1); Rouen MS 1678 (written late seventeenth century). A slightly later manuscript is TCD H 5 3 (written 1698),

50. See B. Mus. Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts, II, ed. Robin Flower, London, 1926, p. 50. Professor Ó Cuív's comments occur in Seven Centuries, p. 127.

51. See MacKinnon, pp. 221ff. for MacKinnon's description of the manuscript, and the texts of three poems from it.

52. Cf. The Bardic Poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, Eleanor Knott, vol. I, London, 1922, p. xxxviii.

53. If the Scottish manuscript was indeed O'Rahilly's source he probably found the text in Reliquiae Celticae I, Inverness, 1892, pp. 123-4, where it is edited by Alexander Cameron from its source in NLS 72 I 48, fol. 4.

54. Text in MacLagan MS 141c. For each folksong I have cited the text that seems to me to show least editorial interference or corruption in late stages of transmission out of all of those that

are available in print or easily accessible manuscript collections. I have looked for coherence in the song viewed as a whole, clarity in the individual sections of the text, and freedom from sentimental expansions that suggest the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Greatly abbreviated texts such as those in Tolmie have not been quoted where a more substantial, and apparently reliable, alternative existed, even though I regard the Tolmie texts as valuable for their lack of editorial 'tidying-up'.

55. Text in Tolmie, p. 200

56. Text in Carmina Gadelica V, Alexander Carmichael, Edinburgh, 1954, p. 10.

57. Text in Bardachd Ghàidhlig, ed. W. J. Watson, 3rd ed., Stirling, 1959, p. 246.

58. Text in Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, XII, p. 212.

59. The best texts are in Carmina Gadelica V, pp. 2-4, 6-8, and Hebridean Folksongs, A Collection of Waulking Songs, Made by Donald MacCormick in Kilphedir, South Uist, 1893, ed. J. L. Campbell and Francis Collinson, Oxford, 1969, p. 144.

60. The least corrupt text seems to be that in TGSI XLI, p. 348.

61. Good texts of the song are in TGSI XXVII, p. 395 (taken from a now lost paper of the 18th century MacNicol collection), and, combined with another song, in Craig, p. 8. Professor Derick Thomson has suggested, in an unpublished paper, that it was composed before 1650.

62. A good text is in Tolmie, p. 211. This is another song for which Professor Thomson has suggested a date of composition before 1650.

63. The best texts are in MacLagan MS 87c and MacDiarmid MS, p. 75. References in the song suggest that it was composed during

the Montrose Wars of 1645-7.

64. The best text is in Craig, p. 117; John Lorne Campbell thinks this song may be addressed to Ruairi Og MacNeil of Barra, who died in 1594. See Scottish Gaelic Studies XI, p. 189.

65. The best text is in MacLagan MS 99. For the suggestion that it can be dated to the years 1585-9, see the unpublished thesis by Allison Whyte, Scottish Gaelic Folksong 1500-1800, presented to Glasgow University in 1971, pp. 320-2.

66. Texts of the song are in Orannaigh Gaidhealach (known as the Eigg Collection) ed. Raonuill MacDomhnuill, Edinburgh, 1776, p. 315, and in TGSI XXVI, p. 235. For its dating, see Allison Whyte's thesis, pp. 316-9.

67. The earliest source for this poem is in Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach ed. John MacLean, 1818, p. 184. It is dated to 1620-43 in Allison Whyte's thesis, p. 207.

68. For a copy of this poem taken from John MacLean's MS of c. 1815 I am grateful to Colm Ó Baoill of Aberdeen University. A text taken from the same manuscript source is printed in Na Baird Leathanach (The MacLean Bards) I, ed. Rev. A. MacLean Sinclair, Charlottetown, 1898, p. 231.

69. Good texts of the Scottish version of the poem are in Craig, p. 62 and TGSI XXVII, pp. 60-62. For dating, see most recently Alan Bruford in Éigse Cheol Tíre I, pp. 4-7.

70. Gaelic text in these two quotations from TGSI XXVII, pp. 60-61.

71. Gaelic text from Craig, p. 62.

FOOTNOTES:

PART TWO: THE WELSH TRADITIONS

Chapter Five: The Early Period

1. The Earliest Welsh Poetry, Joseph P. Clancy, London, 1970, pp.208-9.
2. 'Court Poets of the Welsh Princes', J.Lloyd-Jones, Proceedings of the British Academy 1948, London, 1949, p.188
3. See Bromwich, 1967, pp.24-5, and BBCS V, pp.1-8, BBCS VI, pp.112-5.
4. See The Mediaeval Lyric, Peter Dronke, London, 1968, pp.126ff & A Literary History of France: The Middle Ages, John Fox, London, 1974, pp.121ff. Anthony Conran reaches the same conclusion as to the 'Welshness' of Gogynfeirdd love-poetry in his Penguin Book of Welsh Verse, London 1967, pp.57-9. Rachel Bromwich holds the opposite view: see her recent essay, Dafydd ap Gwilym, Cardiff, 1974, p.69.
5. See e.g. R.L.Thomson's introduction to Pwyll, Dublin, 1957; chapter VIII of Professor MacCana's Branwen, Daughter of Llyr, Cardiff, 1958; and J.E.C.Williams, op.cit, pp.7-9.
6. See R.L.Thomson's introduction to his edition, Owein, Dublin, 1968.
7. See Rhieingerddi'r Gogynfeirdd, T.Gwynn Jones, Denbigh, 1915, pp. 27-9, for a series of examples of bardic usage.
8. See Arthurian Legend in the Middle Ages, R.S.Loomis, Oxford, 1959, pp.38-9, where Professor Idris Foster discusses the tale; and cf. Trioedd Ynys Prydain, Rachel Bromwich, Cardiff, 1961,p.lxxxv.
9. See Breudwyt Ronabwy, ed. Melville Richards, Cardiff, 1948, pp. xxxvii-xli.

Chapter Six: Dafydd ap Gwilym

1. cf. Bromwich, 1967, p.18.
2. See Yorkshire Celtic Studies V, p.26; Bromwich, 1967, p.20; and Bromwich, 1974, p.40.
3. For discussion of Morfudd's origins and identity, see David Jenkins: 'Enwau Personau a Lleoedd yng Nghywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym' BBCS VIII, p.40; GDG, 2nd ed. pp.xxvi-xxxiii; Bromwich , 1974, p.42; D.J. Bowen's article 'Dafydd ap Gwilym a Morgannwg' in Llên Cymru V (1958-9), pp.164-173; and Eurys Rowlands' comments on theories of

a Morgannwg connection in Llên Cymru VI, pp. 105-7 and Llên Cymru VIII (1964-5), pp.107-112.

4. For an account of references by the Gogynfeirdd to characters from the Triads or the various early prose tales, see T.Gwynn Jones 'Bardism and Romance', THSC, 1913-14, pp.275-8; and pp. lxx-lxxxiii of Rachel Bromwich's introduction to her edition of the Triads, Trioedd Ynys Prydain, Cardiff, 1961.

5. Text in the edition of his poetry by M.Boni: Sordello, Le Poesie, Bologna, 1954, poem No.2; and in A.R.Press's Anthology of Troubadour Lyric Poetry, Edinburgh, 1971, p.240.

6. Cf. A Literary History of France: The Middle Ages, John Fox, London, 1974, p.300

7. See lines 1679-1878 of the text, edited in three volumes by F. Lecoy, Paris, 1965.

8. See Chotzen, p.110; G.J.Williams: Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg, Cardiff, 1948, p.146; and Bromwich 1967, p.29.

9. See Bromwich 1967, pp.26-7.

10. See Brut y Brenhinedd, Brynley F.Roberts, Dublin, 1971, pp. xxiv-xxxix.

11. See Bromwich 1967, p.40

12. See Bromwich 1967, pp.49-50

13. See, for example, Sir Ifor Williams' article in THSC (1913-14), pp.83-204, and the references he gives there to other discussions of Dafydd's work; and the references in Chotzen.

14. See Llên Cymru VI, pp.105-8 and Llên Cymru VIII, pp.107-112; cf. Rachel Bromwich's comments in Bromwich 1974, pp.41-8.

15. See most recently Bromwich 1967, p.17.

16. See Bromwich 1967, p.48

17. See Chapter Seven below.

18. See Bromwich 1967, p.38.

19. See Bromwich 1967, pp.37-8. Mrs. Bromwich mentions in particular two Welsh examples that were apparently earlier in dated than any of the French bird-debates: the Ymddiddan Arthur a'r Eryr (BBCS II, pp.272ff) and the englyn Chwerdit mwyalch mewn celli. She repeats the point that influence from Welsh tradition is probable in her later article on Dafydd in Poetry Wales, 1973, pp.49-50.

20. See Bromwich 1967, pp.34-8.

21. Cf. R.H. Robbins' remarks in Anglia 83, (1965) pp.46-7.

22. Opinion on the probable date of the manuscript containing the Harley Lyrics (MS Harley 2253, British Museum) and of the poems themselves has changed in the course of this century. Carleton Brown speaks of it as 'compiled shortly after the beginning of the fourteenth century', not earlier than 'circa 1320', and thinks that the bulk of the contents 'consists of thirteenth century material' (see English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, Carleton Brown, Oxford, 1932, pp.xxxv,xl). J.A.W.Bennett and G.V.Smithers appear to follow him, since they include secular lyrics from the Harley MS in their anthology of Early Middle English Verse and Prose,(London, 1st ed.1966, 2nd ed.1968). However, recently this early date has been challenged: this, as well as other problems connected with the Harley MS is discussed by R.H. Robbins in Anglia 82, pp.505-513; Celia Sisam in The Oxford Book of Mediaeval English Verse, Oxford, 1970, p.575 gives the date of the MS as c.1340, thus tacitly accepting the argument for a later date. A date of c.1340 for the manuscript makes it less likely that the secular lyrics reflect the fashions of the 14th century.

23. MS Rawlinson D, Bodleian Library, Oxford is dated by Celia Sisam (op.cit., p.578) c. 1325-1350. The contents most probably belong to the early fourteenth century.

24. Sphere History of Literature in the English Language, Vol. One, The Middle Ages, ed. W.F.Bolton, p.288, London, 1970.

25. The Middle Ages, ed.W.F.Bolton, p.286

26. Early Middle English Verse and Prose, ed. J.A.W. Bennett and G.V.Smithers, London, 1968, pp.111-112.

27. idem, pp.118-9.

28. From the poem beginning 'A wayle whyt ase whalles bon'.

29. From the poem with this first line - 'My deth Y loue, my lyfe Ich hate, for a leuedy shene'.

30. see note 28.

31. Anglia 83, (1965), p.47; cf. his remarks in Anglia 82 pp.505-513.

Chapter Seven: After Dafydd

1. See Eurys Rowlands, Llên Cymru, VII, pp.217-243 and Ysgrifau Beirniadol II, pp.36-57; and D.J.Bowen, Llên Cymru IX, pp.46-73, and Ysgrifau Beirniadol VII, pp.22-56.

2. Texts of the first two are in Charles Oulmont's Les Débats du Clerc et du Chevalier, Paris, 1911; and Oulmont gives a detailed summary of the third, with quotations. He dates all of them to the thirteenth century the latest, De Venus, being perhaps mid-thirteenth century - see Oulmont, p.74

3. The four lines are edited for the first time by R.H.Robbins in Anglia 83, p.46; and reprinted, with normalised orthography, in The Oxford Book of Mediaeval English Verse, ed. Celia and Kenneth Sisam, Oxford, 1970, p.567. Miss Sisam gives the date that I quoted for the manuscript. I have not managed to see any account of where the manuscript was written.

4. Barddoniaeth Wiliam Llŷn, ed.J.C.Morrice, Bangor, 1908.

5. Carolau Richard Hughes, ed.J.H.Davies, Cardiff, 1900; Hen Ganiadau Serch, ed. J.H.Davies, Cardiff, 1902; Caniadau yn y Mesurau Rhyddion, ed.J.H.Davies, Cardiff, 1905; Cerddi Rhydd Cynnar, ed. D.Lloyd-Jenkins, Llandysul, no date; Canu Rhydd Cynnar, ed. T.H.Parry-Williams, Cardiff, 1932, and Dulliau'r Canu Rhydd, Brinley Rees, Cardiff, 1952, where a few previously unpublished love-poems are found in Atodiad B.

6. J.H. Davies says that a Llywelyn ap Hwlcyn flourished 1540-70; but there is no certainty that this is the same man as the writer of the poems in B.Mus.MS Add.14,974. Davies' suggestion is made in the introduction to Hen Ganiadau Serch, pp.17-20. Further discussion of the point occurs in G.J.Williams' Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg, Cardiff, 1948.

7. See the entry for him in The Dictionary of Welsh Biography, London 1959.

8. A brief description of their history is given in the introduction to The Common Muse, ed. V. de Sola Pinto and A.E.Rodway, London, 1957 and 1965.

9. Rhieingerddi'r Gogynfeirdd, T.Gwynn Jones, Denbigh, 1915, pp. 26-31.

10. See GDG 53, lines 27 and 34; 58, line 6; 67, line 18; 75, line 46, and 80, line 26.

11. Dafydd uses 'cangen' in GDG 41, line 5; and 'twf' in GDG 43, line 43, 53, line 1, and 144, line 14. In GDG 137, line 43 he says a woman is the fairest blossom in the world (Merch sydd decaf blodeuyn/Yn y nef).

12. The oldest MS containing Dafydd's poems has been dated as c.1550 - Peniarth MS 48 in the National Library of Wales. His poems may still have been circulating orally when this was written; see Bromwich 1974 p.25.

13. See e.g. Anglia 12, pp.243, line 12; 248, line 26, 259, line 25, and 269, line 32; Anglia 31, pp.327, line 32; 332, line 144; 334, line 46; 336, line 94; 340, line 92.

14. A text and translation of the poems are in The Burning Tree, Gwyn Williams, London, 1956, pp.204-5.

15. C.Rh.C.1 v) vi) vii); 22; 29; 33, and 36 begin with 'Fal yr oeddwn' or 'A m'fi'; and some others begin with phrases that suggest the first lines of broadside ballads, in which the writer addresses a wide public - see C.Rh.C. 3; 8; 14; 15, and 35.

16. See the collections printed in Anglia 12, pp.225-272, 585-597, Anglia 26, pp.94-285, Anglia 31, pp.309-397, Archiv für das Studium de Neueren Sprachen und Litteraturen, 106, pp.279-285, Archiv 107 pp.48-61, and John Stevens, Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court, London, 1961, pp.337-425. John Stevens says that the three song-books he edits in these pages can be regarded as representative of early Tudor secular music.

17. Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg hyd 1900, Thomas Parry, Cardiff, 1944, p.138. His views are unchanged in the English edition of 1955.

18. The two parallels that I know of are both in free verse, one belonging to the sixteenth century and the other more probably to the early seventeenth century. These are 'Araith Ddychan i'r Gwragedd' (C.Rh.C. 37) and 'Bywyd y Bugail' (the full text of this poem is given in The Pepys Ballads, ed.H.E. Rollins, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1929, pp.195-9; three of its seven stanzas, taken from an incomplete manuscript source, are printed in Caniadau yn y Mesurau Rhyddion, J.H. Davies, Cardiff, 1905, pp.49-50, and reprinted in The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse, Thomas Parry, Oxford, 1962, pp.236-7). The first is a satire on women - the poet claims he heard it from shepherds. The second is a description of the shepherd's way of life that moves from idealised pastoralism

to double-entendre. Its editor, H.E. Rollins, states that it is a translation of an English ballad, now lost. This seems wholly probable, given its resemblance to other ballads in English printed by Rollins. Whether translation or not, it is clearly an imitation of prevailing English styles in popular ballad.

19. Full text in Hen Ganiadau Serch, pp.43-4, reprinted, with normalised spelling, in Y Flodeugerdd Gymraeg, W.J.Gruffydd, Cardiff, 1931, pp.30-32. Extracts, with translation, appear in The Rent that's due to Love, Gwyn Williams, London, 1950, pp.76-77.

20. See 'A Welsh Love Song of the 16th Century', J.H. Davies, Y Cymmrodor XIV (1901) pp. 98-100; Caniadau yn y Mesurau Rhyddion, ed. J.H. Davies, Cardiff, 1905, pp.21-4.

21. See The Development of Welsh Poetry, H.I.Bell, Oxford, 1936, p.111.

22. I quote Brinley Rees' examples of English parallels, given in DCR, p.36, note 4: The Phoenix Nest, 1953, ed.H.E.Rollins, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1931, pp.65,163; A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions, 1578, ed. H.E.Rollins, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1926, p.31; A Poetical Rhapsody, 1602-1621, ed.H.E.Rollins, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1931-2, pp.71, 115.

23. See Sir Thomas Wyatt: Collected Poems, ed.Joost Daalder, Oxford, 1975, p.25, where the poem 'My galy charged with forgetfulnes' is edited; and Surrey: Poems, ed. Emrys Jones, Oxford, 1964, pp.6-7 and p.112. Surrey's poem begins 'The sonne hath twyse brought forthe the tender grene'.

24. Joost Daalder, op.cit., p.237.

25. See Hen Ganiadau Serch, pp.12, 49; cf. also the same editor's comments in 'A Welsh Love Song of the 16th Century', Y Cymmrodor XIV (1901), p.98. There, J.H.Davies notes that the poetry immediately preceding and following the song was xomposed before 1637.

26. The earliest undeniable example of it that I have found is from a manuscript belonging to the first decade of the sixteenth century - see Anglia 12, p.264. This is the reference, given by The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, that I mentioned in Chapter Six. Another reference, almost as clear, is in the same manuscript - see Anglia 12, p.263; and there is another that I think derives from the nightingale image in a manuscript of similar date - see

Anglia 12, p.251. The Oxford Dictionary provides several more examples from poems and plays written in the second half of the century.

27. See 'The Scolding Wives Vindication', taken from 'The Douce Collection of Original Broadsides', and printed in The Common Muse, ed. V.de Sola Pinto and A.E. Rodway, London, 1957 and 1965, pp.500-502.

28. A text and translation of Tomas Prys' poem are in The Burning Tree, Gwyn Williams, London, 1956, pp.198-203.

29. See pp.118-121 of his article 'Dafydd ap Gwilym a'r Glêr', THSC, 1913-14.

ABBREVIATIONS

Manuscript References

B.Mus.:British Museum.

Book of Fermoy:Royal Irish Academy MS 23 E 29.

Book of the Dean of Lismore:Advocates MS 72 1 37,National Library of Scotland.

Book of the O Conor Don:Manuscript in private ownership in Ireland.

Dean's Book:See Book of the Dean of Lismore

Dornie MS:Manuscript collection made by Captain Matheson of Dornie. Held by the School of Scottish Studies,Edinburgh.

EUL:Edinburgh University Library.

GUL:Glasgow University Library.

Killearnan MS:Edinburgh University Library MS Carmichael Watson Collection 135.

MacColl MS:Early nineteenth century MS collection,in private ownership in Canada at the end of the last century.Present whereabouts unknown.

MacDiarmid MS:Mid-eighteenth century MS collection,held in the Department of Celtic,Glasgow University.

MacLagan MS:MS collection from the second half of the eighteenth century,held in Glasgow University Library.

MacNicol MS:MS collection from the second half of the eighteenth century.What survives of it is held in the National Library of Scotland.Some of the now missing items were printed in TGSI XXVII(1908-1911),pp.340-409.

NLS:National Library of Scotland.

RIA:Royal Irish Academy.

TCD:Trinity College,Dublin.

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BBCS:The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies,periodical.

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BYU:'Barddoniaeth yr Uchelwyr',ed.D.J.Bowen,Cardiff,1959.

Chotzen:'Recherches sur la poésie de Dafydd ap Gwilym',Theodore Chotzen,Amsterdam,1927.

CIG:'Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill',ed.Henry Lewis,Thomas Roberts, and Ifor Williams,2nd ed.Cardiff,1937.

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Dánfhocail:'Dánfhocail',ed.Thomas F.O'Rahilly,Dublin,1921.

Dánta Grádha:'Dánta Grádha',ed.Thomas F.O'Rahilly,2nd ed.,Dublin and Cork,1926.

DCR:'Dulliau'r Canu Rhydd',Brinley Rees,Cardiff,1952.

DG:See Dánta Grádha.

DGG:'Cywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym a'i Gyfoeswyr',ed.Thomas Roberts and Ifor Williams,Cardiff,1935(2nd ed.).

Dioghluim Dána:'Dioghluim Dána',ed.Lambert McKenna,Dublin,1938.

DN:'The Poetical Works of Dafydd Nanmor',ed.Thomas Roberts,Cardiff and London,1923.

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Dronke,Med.Latin:'Mediaeval Latin and the rise of European

Love-Lyric',Peter Dronke,2nd ed.,London,1968.

Duanaire Finn:'Duanaire Finn',vol.III,ed.Gerard Murphy,Dublin,1953.

EIL:'Early Irish Lyrics',ed.Gerard Murphy,Oxford,1956,reprinted with corrections,1962,1970.

Faral:'Les Arts Poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle',Edmond Faral,Paris,1924.

GDE:'Gwaith Dafydd ab Edmwnd',ed.Thomas Roberts,Bangor,1914.

GDG:'Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym',ed.Thomas Parry,1st ed.,Cardiff, 1952,2nd ed.,Cardiff,1963.References are to the 2nd ed. except where otherwise stated.

H:'Llawysgrif Hendregadredd',ed.J.Morris-Jones and T.H.Parry-Williams,Cardiff,1933.

HGS:'Hen Ganiadau Serch',ed.J.H.Davies,Cardiff,1902.

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McLauchlan:'The Dean of Lismore's Book',ed.Thomas McLauchlan, Edinburgh,1862.

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R:'The Poetry in the Red Book of Hergest',reproduced by J. Gwenogvryn Evans,Llanbedrog,1911 and 1926.

RC:Revue Celtique,periodical,published Paris.

Reliquiae Celticae:'Reliquiae Celticae',Alexander Cameron(ed.

Alexander MacBain and John Kennedy),2 vols.,Inverness,1892,1894.

Rep.W.MSS.:'Report on MSS in the Welsh Language',J.Gwenogvryn Evans,London,1899-1905.

RIA Contribb.:'Contributions to a Dictionary of the Irish Language', Royal Irish Academy,Dublin,1939-1975.

SGS:*Scottish Gaelic Studies*,periodical,published Oxford.

SVBD:'Scottish Verse from the Book of the Dean of Lismore',ed.W.J. Watson,Edinburgh,1937.

Tadhg Dall:'Bardic Poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn',ed.Eleanor Knott,vol.I,London,1922.

TGSI:*Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*,periodical, published Inverness.

THSC:*Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, periodical.

Tolmie:Frances Tolmie Collection of Gaelic Folksongs,published in *The Journal of the Folk Song Society*,vol.4(1911),pp.143-275,(London).

TYP:'Trioedd Ynys Prydein',ed.Rachel Bromwich,Cardiff,1961.

White Book:'White Book Mabinogion',ed.J.Gwenogvryn Evans,Pwllheli,1907.

ZCP:*Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*,periodical,published Halle.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

The aims of this bibliography vary with the different sections. In my lists of texts consulted in various languages I have attempted to be comprehensive; but my list of secondary and critical works used is selective, in an attempt to keep this book-list to manageable proportions. The items included are those that are more rather than less pertinent to the subjects of this thesis and the arguments advanced in it.

The date and place of publication given for entries are, as far as I am aware, those of first publication, unless otherwise stated.

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