Figurative Harmony: Convergences and Tensions among Metaphors and Metonyms for the Heroic Society in Early Welsh Poetry[1]

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I INTRODUCTION

Early medieval Welsh poetry is a tightly woven web, full of close and interlocking cultural meaning connections. The web I shall trace today is an interweaving of tropes referring to elegised heroes, who are elegised in the *Canu Aneirin* corpus as an epitomization of the Old North, the pre-Saxon-conquest British kingdoms which were looked back on by early medieval Wales as a heroic past. I shall argue that examining these poetic tropes not only helps us understand the poetry and it surrounding culture, but is also an illuminating case study of the ways in which poetic and cultural systems are built up and maintained.

Recent work on oral literature and literature based on oral traditions has made it clear that traditional form and traditional content are woven together in a single tight-knit fabric: the medium is part of the message, and vice versa. This is of course not true only of oral traditional literature: another scholar may read this work in a radically different way depending on whether I choose to call the linguistic structures I am talking about *tropes, formulae, topoi* or conventional *metaphors*, and whether or not I refer to cultural as well as linguistic constructs as *texts*. But it is certainly saliently true of oral literature.[2]

1 For Pat, poetic hero in my mythos since my first reading of *Canu Llywarch Hen*. Here I am trying to understand some of your favorite poetic heroes – with thanks to you and Aneirin for a great deal of *awen*, at every step of the way. And added thanks to George Lakoff, hero among metaphor analysts. Any errors herein are of course all my own, and unconnected with these inspirations. 2 The opposite effect has been studied as well. As Parry and Lord (see Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960]) were among the first to notice, the presence of certain *content* is sometimes inextricably tied to the structure of an oral literary work. (To cite a modern example, the hero doesn't ride away into the sunset with the heroine at the *start* of the Western.) Examples of how the study of formulaic *topoi* can help us to understand the structures of older texts

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My topic here is a group of formulaic metaphors in Welsh medieval poetry. It has long been recognized that such poetic formulae exist in Welsh and Irish, the Celtic counterparts of Norse kennings, with other parallels in Anglo-Saxon and other Indo-European traditions. These metaphors form a stock repertory for use in particular functions related to a heroic traditional literature: eulogy, prophecy, heroic tale-telling, and so forth. They both determine and are determined by the tradition of which they are a part. But, I shall argue, they also manifest some interesting crosscultural patterns which are not restricted either to the Heroic North nor even to the Indo-European cultural tradition.

I shall begin by mentioning and setting aside the early Welsh poets' metaphors for poetry, poets, and poetic composition. The famous poem from the *Gododdin* corpus where Aneirin appears to portray himself as ritually buried and composing underground is one example of a text which seems to show the broader and well-recognized Indo-European motif of the poet as spiritual visionary. Poetic inspiration is vision (when it is not breath, as in *vates/fáith*). More generally, mental activity is metaphorically described in terms of physical visual activity throughout the Indo-European language family. And, for that matter, outside it too: few are the languages where one cannot find some immediate evidence for a metaphor of intellection as vision, and of possessors of knowledge and wisdom as visionaries, seers, and possessors of insight.[3]

But returning to the poets' treatment of their heroic subject-matter per se, there are interesting generalizations which are perhaps less well recognized. I shall discuss three groups of metaphors here: those which treat the hero as an animal of some kind, those which treat him as a barrier, and those involving a hall or dwelling structure.

Traditional analysis of figurative language distinguishes metaphor from metonymy. In the last couple of decades of work on metaphor, the usual way of labeling this distinction has been to talk about metaphor as being a map-

can be found in the work of Alain Renoir on Anglo-Saxon (*A Key to Old Poems: Oral-Formulaic Approach to the Interpretation of West-Germanic Verse* [University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988]), and specific examples of such *topoi* in Welsh have been studied as well – cf. Mary Niepokuj, 'Shining Objects and Liminality in Germanic and Celtic' (paper presented at the 1987 University of California Celtic Studies Conference at the University of California, Berkeley), and Eve E. Sweetser, '"Advantage and Disadvantage": a Middle Welsh Prose Formula with an Irish Parallel' (paper presented at the 1988 meeting of the Modern Language Association in New Orleans). Studies of Irish motifs are too numerous to cite, but Brendan P. O Hehir, 'The Christian Version of *Eachtra Airt Meic Cuind ocus Tochmarc Delbchaime Ingine Morgain*', in *Celtic Folklore and Christianity*, ed. Patrick K. Ford (Santa Barbara: McNally and Loftin, 1983), pp. 159–79, is a relevant example, linking plot developments in a later Christian Irish text to the presence of earlier motifs connected with sovereignty. 3 Cf. Eve E. Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), passim.

ping between two domains, while metonymy is an association between elements in the same domain. It is thus metaphoric to refer to a hero as a *lion* or an unemotional person as a *block of ice*, and metonymic to refer to businessman as a *suit* or to a restaurant customer by the label for an associated food order ('*The BLT* wants another coke').

However, an analyst approaching early medieval Welsh poetry is immediately struck by the difficulty of maintaining this dichotomy in classifying the tropes encountered. Heroes are lions, but they are also spears, swords, shields, horses, and halls. A hero might be said to be metonymically associated with his sword or shield; even in English, metonymic usages such as *four hundred swords/spears*, or *a hired gun* make sense as a way of talking about fighters equipped with such weapons. But when a hero is called a 'battle-wall' or 'the shield of the people', there seems a clear metaphoric mapping between physical protective gear and the heroic military role. The hero is to the rest of the army as a shield is to the body of the wearer.

Metaphoric and metonymic links, I shall argue, play different roles in meaning-construction. The pairing of these two kinds of links is part of what gives early Welsh traditional poetry its depth of cultural resonances, and its 'tight-woven' character of interconnections.

2 CULTURAL FRAMES: THE 'LITERAL' CONSTRUCTION OF A POETIC HERO AND HIS SOCIETY

We should start with the basic cultural knowledge evoked and represented by these tropes. The following might be a summary of some conventional knowledge about noble warriors – knowledge which we think all of the original audience had about the social structure of a traditional heroic past, and brought to bear in listening to early medieval heroic poetry:

- A **ruler** has **noble followers**, who are warriors loyal to him, and who in their turn have **retinues** of faithful warriors. A leader gives his followers **mead** and **wealth**; they **'earn their mead'** by following him bravely in battle. The site of gathering followers for mead-feasting is the leader's **hall**. Many warriors die in battle, and are eaten by predators such as **eagles, ravens and wolves**. **Bards** praise and record the heroes' exploits and pass on tradition.
- The lord-retainer relationship is **asymmetric but reciprocal**: the lord gives maintenance, the retainer gives his fighting ability and that of his own retainers. A noble retainer of a king will himself have a retinue, and will thus simultaneously fulfill 'upwards-directed' duties to his king, and 'downwards-directed' social responsibilities to his own retainers.

- Any noble/warrior is likely to have certain possessions which a peasant or other non-warrior will not have: **sword, spear, shield, gold jewelry (cloak-brooch, torc),** and so on. He will also own **cattle** as a basic part of his wealth, and will own **horses** and **hounds** as part of his battle and hunting 'gear'.

This knowledge constitutes a cultural *frame*, in Charles J. Fillmore's sense: it is a structured scenario of how things work in the world, which is understood as a whole.[4] Mention of any part may evoke the whole; and this becomes more likely, the fewer the frames in which a particular element participates. Thus a reference to a retinue or a sword might necessarily evoke the whole frame mentioned above, since retinues don't occur in any other frame. Cattle or hounds or wolves might possibly occur in other frames (farming and herding and protecting one's herd from predators, for example). However, in the right poetic genre, hounds and wolves are unmistakable references to warriors, evoking this frame fully and completely.

A *frame* is schematic: that is, it fits many particular instances. The frame of heroic warrior social status presumably applies to any particular hero being praised. We thus know, upon mention of such a hero, that he will have a retinue, a hall, a sword, a torc, a cloak-brooch, a horse, hounds, and so on. Mention of any one part of the frame, by bringing up the whole, brings up the other parts of the frame. The frame is further structured by sub-frames: salient among these are (1) a **Battle frame** (with slots for enemy troops, swords, shields, helmets, and horses), and (2) a **Hall frame** or heroic feasting frame (which has slots for mead, goblets, tables, servers, musical entertainment, and gift-giving to retainers). In the Battle frame, the retinue fills the role of supporting fighters; in the Hall frame, the leader's retinue (and their retinues) are the feasters.

In addition, as Fillmore comments, a frame has gestalt characteristics: that is, the whole is not simply the additive sum of the parts, but has a character of its own and may be primary in giving meaning to the parts. In our data, it is the whole frame of warrior social status that determines what a torc, or a retinue, 'is' for the relevant society. Outside of that frame, a torc is just a metal object, not a mark of status; a retinue is just a group of people.

We may thus venture to predict that it will be not just easy, but unavoidable, for poets to exploit metonymic linkages between elements within a closely structured frame with tightly structured sub-frames, such as the cultural frames of the Heroic Society which underlie this Early Welsh elegiac corpus.

4 'Frame Semantics', in *Linguistics in the Morning Calm* (Seoul: Hanshin, 1982), pp. 111–37; 'Frames and the Semantics of Understanding', *Quaderni di Semantica*, 6/2 (1985), 222–54.

3 THE METAPHORIC AND METONYMIC CONSTRUCTION OF A POETIC HERO AND HIS SOCIETY

Now, how do the relevant frames serve to access our poetic heroes, both metonymically and metaphorically? In the *Gododdin* poems, heroes are regularly referred to by references to the cultural structures of heroism in varying ways. Among these are (1) heroic **animals** (wild ones such as wolves and eagles, domesticated ones such as horses and hounds), (2) heroic **equipment** and accoutrements (e.g., swords, shields, torcs), and (3) **halls** and buildings (e.g., fortresses, mead halls). Below are some of the actual references in which a hero is called a 'bear' or a 'shield' or a 'mead-hall'.

3.1. Metaphoric Beasts in Battle

Heroes are both named after wild animals, and metaphorically described as wild animals in the poetry. Personal names such as *Bleidvan* (from *bleidd* 'wolf'), *Bran* ('raven'), or *Catlew* ('battle-lion') make it less surprising to find metaphors such as the description of Merin as *arth arwynawl*[5] 'a fearsome bear', of Gwydyen as an *eryr*[6] 'eagle', or other heroes as wild boars and ravens and even serpents.

Marchlew and Catlew, two names which seem to have been taken by the Gododdin poet as references to lions, of course go back to an older Brittonic formation in fact. Marchlew surely originally meant 'Lug's horse', not the rather paradoxical sounding 'lion-horse'. We can see the same process going on in the *Math*, in Lleu Llaw Gyffes' reinterpreted name, which originally meant not 'skilful-handed lion', but 'skilful-handed Lug'; the reinterpretation of the name is justified in the story by Lleu's mother saying 'the young lion has a skilful hand' when Lleu succeeds in a difficult shot.[7]

bear (Merin is *arth arwynawl*[8] 'a fearsome bear')
lion (*Marchlew, Catlew*[9]; cf. Lleu Llaw Gyffes' reinterpreted name)
wolf (*Bleidvan*[10])
boar (Caradawc is *mal baed coet*[11] 'like a wild boar' in battle; Catvannan is a *twrch*,[12] 'wild boar')
eagle (Gwydyen is *eryr*[13])
serpent (*sarf/sarph*[14])
raven (Bran's name; Owein's ravens/warriors; and see below the motif of feeding ravens)

5 *Canu Aneirin (CA)*, ed. Ifor Williams (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1938), stanza LXIIIA. 6 *CA* XLIII A. 7 *Ys llaw gyffes y medrwys y lleu ef* (*Math uab Mathonwy*, ed. Patrick K. Ford [Belmont, MA: Ford and Bailie], p. 11). 8 See above. 9 *CA* XXVIA. 10 *CA* XXIV; cf. CA IV. 11 *CA* XXX. 12 *CA* XLII; cf. XCII. 13 See above; cf. *CA* III, LXXXVI. 14 *CA* XVIII, LXIIIA.

The frames which bring up such connections include totemic connections involved in clan identity: it seems that Celtic warriors and clans may well have identified with totemic bears (cf. Arthur's name, if that really is connected with the Indo-European word for 'bear' manifested in Welsh *arth*). These in turn were connected to everyday beliefs about these animals as being dangerous, violent, strong, predatory. A particular metaphor which is pervasive in the early heroic poetry is that of fighting men as ravens. Owein's host of ravens (are they literal or metaphoric ravens?) battle Arthur's squires in the famous scene in *Breudwyt Ronabwy*.[15]

In one particular elaboration, any warrior in battle is seen as metaphorically giving sustenance to a metaphoric host of warrior followers. As lords give food to followers, so warriors (both by killing and by dying themselves) give food to wolves, eagles, and ravens. 'Feeding the ravens' or 'feeding the wolves by his hand' are heroic actions of killing the enemy; being 'food for ravens' is the end fate expected of such a hero.

bwyt e eryr erysmygei,[16] 'he made food for eagles'
kynt y vwyt y vrein,[17] 'sooner to the raven's feast'
bu bwyt brein bu bud e vran,[18] 'he was food for ravens, he was benefit to the crow'
ef llithyei wydgwn oe anghat,[19] 'he fed the wolves by his hand'

Certain domesticated animals also loom large in the epithets and names of early Welsh poetic heroes. Horses and hounds, both animals associated with noble pursuits such as warfare and hunting, are themselves valued for strength and fighting ability – and like followers, they are the lord's responsibility to maintain and nourish. Bulls have apparently been a central cultural icon in Celtic societies for many centuries, not surprising in a culture which valued cattle as one of the most important economic resources; the various early Irish 'cattle-raid' stories are among the manifestations of this importance.

Possibly totemic 'hound' personal names, based on the roots *cyn-* and *ki*, are pervasive in early Welsh nomenclature. In the *Gododdin* poems, Cynri, Cynon, and Cynrein (elsewhere mentioned) are presumably the *dau gatki Aeron a chenon* ('two battlehounds of Aeron and Cynon') referred to elsewhere in this corpus.[20] Warriors are also generally called 'hounds' and 'battlehounds'. Marchlew, our only 'horse' personal name in the *Gododdin* corpus, would not lead us to postulate such a rich metaphoric relation between horses and heroes. However, it does seem a real one: his name means 'Lug's steed', and the poem says specifically that nobody's horses could outrun him.[21] This heroic ability to outrace real horses is not attributed to other elegised heroes,

15 Ed. Melville Richards (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1948), pp. 12–8. 16 *CA* XIX. 17 *CA* I. 18 *CA* XXIV. 19 *CA* XXX. 20 *CA* XXI. Bleidgi, whose name apparently means 'wolfhound', appears in *CA* XXIIIB. 21 *CA* XXVIA.

only to Marchlew. Irish parallels reinforce the meaningfulness of this name: Macha, who outraced horses and gave birth at the finish line,[22] or Fergus mac Roich, Medb's lover, whose name means 'manly virility, son of stallion'.

horse (*Marchlew*)[23]
bull (Caradawc is *tarw bedin en trin*[24] 'bull of the host in battle'; Eithinyn is *tarw trin*[25] 'battle- bull'; Cadvannan is *ych eurdorchawr*[26] 'a gold-torqued ox')
hound: warriors called *aergwn, aergi*[27] (sg.) 'battlehound(s)'; *trychwn a thrychant*[28] '303 hounds'; *Cyn-ri, Cyn-on* and *Cyn-rein*,[29] (i.e., *the dau gatki Aeron a chenon*[30] '2 battlehounds of Aeron and Cynon'); *Bleidgi*[31]

Horses and hounds fight in battle with the hero: they are understood as being strong, brave, and loyal. Once again, as with ravens and wolves, the hero's relationship to hounds and horses is metaphorically that of a lord to his retainers. So his retainers in turn may metaphorically be hounds, ravens, or wolves.

It is at this point that we might see a metonymic, as well as a metaphoric connection, between the animal and the hero. Horses and hounds and bulls are accepted parts of the noble's entourage and equipment; as possessions, they signify wealth and nobility. While seeing a hero as a lion or a bear metaphorically does not seem to build on basic frame-connections in literal experience, seeing a hero metaphorically as a stallion, a bull, or a battle-hound involves using some of his metonymic correlates as the source domain for the metaphoric construal.

3.2. Equipment/Weapons

The early Welsh poetry calls heroes 'swords' and 'shields' metaphorically and metonymically; metonymically they are also insistently called 'brooch-wearing' and 'gold-torqued'. The metonymic frame-associations here are evident; weapons and shields would be the central accoutrements of the warrior class when performing their warrior function. Gold brooches and torcs would identify the nobleman's status. All of these objects are found in Celtic burial sites, showing the value associated with them.

Metaphorically, we can also see why heroes are themselves seen as swords and shields: for their king, they are primary vehicles of offensive and defensive warfare, just as the sword and the shield are actual physical instruments of offense and defense in combat. The king's army is metaphorically a warrior; a battle is a one-to-one combat; and the hero is the 'sword' or 'shield' of the army.

22 *The Book of Leinster*, vol. 2, ed. R.I Best and M.A. O'Brien (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1956), pp. 467–8. 23 *CA* XXVIA. 24 *CA* XXX. 25 *CA* XXXIXA; cf. LXXIV, LXXVB. 26 *CA* XLII. 27 *CA* IX, LXXVI. 28 *CA* XVIII. 29 *CA* XVIII. 30 *CA* XXI. 31 *CA* XXIII B.

sword, spear (Tyngyr is *porthloed lain*[32] 'blade of the haven'); in general, however, full metaphoric use of weapon terms for heroes is rare. The heroes' swords and spears are mentioned often (*cledyf, gwaew, palad(y)r* are common words), and are clearly metonymic for the heroes, who are described in terms of their weapon use (e.g., Issac is eulogized with the statement that 'his sword resounded in the heads of mothers'[33]).
shield: the hero is *scwyt dan wodef*[34], 'a shield under attack'
(gold) **brooch**: *kaeawc (kynhorawc)*[35] 'brooch-wearing (in the front rank)'; but heroes are not metaphorically called 'brooches'
(gold) **torc**: heroes are *eurdorchawc*[36]

Metaphoric references to war as navigation apparently motivate some added references to heroes as **'anchor'**; [37] similarly, Tutvwlch may be a *liuidur (llywiadur)*,[38] **'helmsman'**, and Tygyr is *porthloed vedin*[39] **'haven** of the host'. And at least equally interesting are treatments of the warrior as **'reaper'** *medelwr;* enemies fall before Cynon *mal brwyn*,[40] 'like rushes'. I will pass over these particular metaphors in this paper, to concentrate on some of the more pervasive patterns, but helmsmen and (grim) reaper metaphors are doubtless worthy of investigation in their own right.

3.3. Halls and Buildings

Lords have halls, or fortresses which contain halls; these are the scene of the Hall frame, wherein lords maintain their retinues by feasting. Within this frame, mead and wine are metonymic for the general sustenance given to a retinue; a fine host is described as *veduaeth ueddwn*[41] 'a mead-nourished host'. The heroes, in fighting for their lords, are thus said to be engaging in *talu medd* 'earning their mead'; the Gododdin heroes' fall is 'the price of the mead (or wine) in the hall among the hosts'.[42]

As well as this established metonymic association, heroes are also frequently described metaphorically as *being* halls, fortresses, and as parts of such strong defensive buildings: walls or pillars. 'Battle-wall' seems to have been a standard metaphor for a fighter. And the *Gododdin* corpus contains a whole sequence of poems where heroes are elegised by saying 'Never was built a more perfect hall than Hero X'. Cynddylan's empty hall in *Canu Heledd*, likewise, seems both metonymic for its now-dead lords, and metaphoric for their bodies, now empty of life.[43]

32 *CA* LXXXIV. 33 *CA* XXVII. 34 *CA* XCIII; cf. also XXIX. 35 *CA* II–V, and elsewhere. 36 *CA* passim. 37 E.g. Merin and Tutvwlch in *CA* LXIII A–D. 38 *CA* LXIII E. 39 *CA* LXXXIV. 40 *CA* XXXVII. 41 *CA* IX. 42 *CA* V, *gwerth med eg kynted gan lliwedawr*, *CA* IV, *gwerth gwin*. 43 *Canu Llywarch Hen*, ed. Ifor Williams (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1935), pp.

fortresses: Morien is *dinas e lu ovnawc*[44] 'a fortress for a frightened host'; *dinas e vedin ae cretei*[45] 'a fortress to an army that trusted him'
pillars: Rheithfyw is *colovyn glyw*[46] 'pillar of battle'; cf. rocks: Gwid is as immovable in battle as *carrec vyr vawr y chyhadvan*,[47] a rock of huge circumference
walls: *mur greit oed moleit ef mab gwydnau*,[48] 'battle-wall, the son of Gwyddnau was praised'; Eithinyn is *mur greit*;[49] Merin is *mur catuilet*[50] 'wall of the battle-host'.
halls: *Ny wnaethpwyt neuad mor ADJ*,[51] 'never was such a [adjective] hall built' seems to refer to the hero praised in each poem ('never was such a perfect hall built as Cynon', and so on); Cynddylan's empty hall in *Canu Heledd*

These metaphors and metonymies evoke frames of (1) the hall as a community dwelling, and the activities in it, especially mead-feasting, and (2) halls, castles, fortresses, walls, and havens as safe refuges against enemy troops and the forces of nature – or rocks and pillars and walls as immovable barriers to (enemy) attack.

At first glance one might see apparently conflicting metaphoric models in the collection presented here. A wall stands immovable, a wolf or a bear is highly mobile and aggressive. A horse is a vehicle for fast travel; a hall is a stable residence. But the answer is simple (as so often in early Irish tales): These are metaphors for different aspects of noble warriors' behavior. Combat necessarily has defensive and aggressive aspects; metaphorically construing the warrior as wall or shield focuses on the former, while wolf or sword focuses on the latter. Similarly, the noble's role has various sub-frames, including governing and defending a local community (some of whom would be protected in a stable structure, his Hall), and being prepared for war expeditions (wherein the leader is attacking, riding on horseback to participate in the Battle frame). The protective lord is a hall, the attacking leader is a wolf or a war-horse.

3.4. Metaphoric Patterns – and Ambiguities

The overall patterns we have seen are clear: warriors are construed metaphorically primarily as fighting animals, weapons, defensive structures, and lordly social abodes. These metaphoric patterns reflect the roles of the warrior class as offensive warriors, defenders of their subordinates, and community leaders in peace time.

The asymmetry of social roles in early medieval society is vividly presented in the dual uses of some of these metaphors. A hero is not just a metaphoric 'raven' or 'wolf' but a metaphoric 'feeder of ravens/wolves'. He is a literal master of real war-hounds – and a metaphoric 'battle-hound' of

33–52. **44** *CA* XXXV. **45** *CA* XLVI. **46** *CA* VII. **47** *CA* XXXIV. **48** *CA* XXVII. **49** *CA* XXXIX A. **50** *CA* LXIII A. **51** *CA* XXXIV–XXXVII.

his lord. These two diametrically opposed metaphors represent the dual social roles of a noble as a retainer of a king or higher noble, and as lord and protector of his own retinue and subjects. The recursive nature of asymmetric social authority relations is manifested poetically in seeing a warrior as both eater and feeder, hound and master, vassal and lord.

In another major case of ambiguity, construing a hero as a hall brings up a wide class of metaphors which Mark Johnson and others[52] have called Container metaphors. Throughout Indo-European culture (and in many other cultures as well), it is routine to construe the abstract Self as a container, and also to construe Society as a container. When an English speaker talks about 'opening up' to another person, or 'letting out' feelings, the Self is being understood as a container for emotions, feelings, and thoughts. On the other hand, when she talks about a person as being 'in' a social group, or 'outside' it, social structure is being understood in terms of containment. We can imagine both of these construals for Welsh heroes as halls. In *Canu Heledd*, Cynddylan's 'empty hall' may be a dead hero, if we understand the body as the container of the soul; but it may also be a society bereft of its core participants (the dead heroes being mourned), if we understand the community as the container of the individual. It may be worth adding one word of comparison with yet another 'hall' metaphor from a neighboring culture, Bede's metaphor of the bird flying through the hall and out into the cold and dark again, stated to be a metaphor for human life.[53] Here Life is the container-hall, and the living are people inside the hall.

It is important to contrast the ambiguity of animal metaphors with that of container metaphors. The raven or hound metaphors are ambiguous simply because the *same* set of metaphorical mappings may apply to different aspects of the warrior's situation and behavior: we map the elegised warrior onto the raven, or onto the raven-nourisher, depending on whether we are talking about his role as a retainer/fighter or as a lord. But the same metaphor is involved in both cases: raven as fighting retainer, and nourisher as the retainer's lord. Mention of a hall, on the other hand, may bring up metaphorical mappings of the Self, Society, or human Life onto container structure: the resulting inferences will be different, depending on the mappings. We need not choose between the readings, of course: for *Canu Heledd*, all of these mappings may be possible alternatives, and the interpretation of the text is enriched by the fact that all are simultaneously present and accessible.

52 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Johnson, *The Body in the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Eve Sweetser, '"The Suburbs of Your Good Pleasure": Cognition, Culture, and the Bases of Metaphoric Structure', forthcoming in the *Shakespeare International Yearbook*. **53** *Historia ecclesiastica*, Book 2, chapter 13.

4 METAPHOR AND METONYM: MAPPINGS THAT CONFLICT OR REINFORCE EACH OTHER?

The interaction of metaphor and metonymy in early Welsh heroic poetry is particularly lively and striking. Heroes have weapons (a metonymic association) and metaphorically 'are' weapons; have shields and 'are' shields; have horses and hounds and halls and 'are' horses, hounds and halls; feed eagles and wolves and 'are' eagles and wolves. The hero's retinue is metonymic for the whole heroic society (it is a literal part of that larger society), and also a metaphor for it. The hero's hall is metonymic both for the social unit housed in it, and for its heroic leader; but it is metaphoric for these two things as well, as we have seen, via the container metaphors for Self and Society. The hero's body is metonymic for the army he is a part of, but also metaphoric (as we shall see in a moment) for an army, as well as for a fortress or hall.

Traditional work on metaphor and metonymy has treated the two phenomena as entirely different in nature: metonymy relies on associative 'syntagmatic' relations within a domain, while metaphor is either inherently 'similarity'-based, or rooted in paradigmatic relations. Cognitive approaches to metaphor theory which have been developed in the last two decades, however, acknowledge a metonymic correlational basis for metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson note that the *experiential basis* for the MORE IS UP metaphorical mapping is correlation in experience.[54] In a container, the higher the level of the liquid, the more liquid we know there is. In a stack of books, the taller the stack, the more books we know there are. Of course, if the small child dumps the apple juice on the floor, then it may be hard to correlate height and quantity of juice, as the juice spreads out over the surface; but under the frequent and salient experiential conditions of being handed the juice in a familiar cup, the child can use the level of the liquid as a highly *valid cue* (in technical psychological terms) for the quantity of the liquid.[55] On this experiential basis is built a deep connection between height and quantity. Metaphor is a further extension of this connection, however: when an English speaker says *Prices rose* or *Taxes went down*, she is not referring to any actual correlation between increase in quantity and upwards motion, or decrease and downwards motion. Metaphor extends mappings between domains beyond the associations set up by metonymic relations in experience, allowing cognitive mapping of one domain onto another even in the absence of correlation between the domains.

54 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors: Philosophy in the Flesh* (New York: Basic Books, 1999). 55 Children tend in fact to overgeneralize such strongly valid cues: an important and much-mapped stage of cognitive development is the moment when children figure out that the same amount of liquid is still present when it is poured from a tall thin container (making a tall column

Given this understanding, that metaphor is often rooted in metonymic association but can by no means be identified with it, we might well expect metaphoric mappings and metonymic mappings to be brought up simultaneously in many cases. We would expect this particularly strongly when metaphoric mappings are made between sub-domains or sub-frames of a single larger domain or frame – e.g. between warriors and hounds, both parts of the larger domain of the heroic warrior society, and hence related by correlational contiguity as well as by metaphoric mappings.

The frames of lordship, rank, battle, defense, killing, feasting, etc. are in a sense separate, but are tightly bound together as part of a larger coherent whole. The models are clearly distinct: feasting is a very different activity from fighting, the general status of nobility is distinguishable from the particular role of a particular fighter, human feasting is different from ravens eating carrion, and a hall is not the same as a hero's body. Metaphoric mappings between these domains allow transfer of inferences between them, inferences which may well not have been present in the target domain of the mapping. (For example, if a hero is a wall or a fortress, then the host which he leads is protected from their enemies in a way which we would not normally understand an army to be protected.) However, the sub-domains are also tightly tied together into the model of the heroic society. Hence metonyms may readily evoke elements from a range of frames, for example, both *brooches* (which are not weapons) and *swords* may evoke both frames of battle and frames of rank or status.

This tightly knit use of metaphor and metonymy together has obvious advantages for the poet. Essentially, you can have your cake and eat it too. By referring to one part of a frame, you can evoke the whole metonymically; and by referring to a domain which is metaphoric for both the hero and the society (for example, the Hall), you can bring up all three domains (hero, society and hall) simultaneously as well. As Sarah Higley has so eloquently argued,[56] Welsh verse does not always *specify* the connections between domains: but the connections are often therefore both tighter and richer than they could be if they were more specified.

5 THE BROOCH ON THE BREAST OF THE ARMY: IMPLICIT AND EMERGENT METAPHORIC STRUCTURE

As mentioned above, one sequence of elegiac poems early in the *Gododdin* corpus begins with the phrase *kaeawc kynhorawc* 'brooched frontranked' or

of liquid) into a short wide container. 56 See her comparison of Welsh and Anglo-Saxon poetics in *Between Languages: The Uncooperative Text in Early Welsh and Old English Nature Poetry* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993).

'brooch-wearing, in the front rank'.[57] This seems a fitting description for any hero: being noble, he would be wearing a gold brooch on his cloak, and being a warrior hero, he must have been at the forefront of the army as it went into battle. We might, however, delve a little deeper here, and see a further possible metaphoric mapping implicitly set up by this literally ('front-ranked') and metonymically ('brooched') descriptive phrase.

A brooch, like a torc, was part of the gold personal jewelry which set apart a Brythonic noble warrior from a peasant. The brooch was worn on the warrior's chest or on the front of one shoulder, fastening his cloak. It was highly valued, could be ornate (as in some of the famous examples turned up in funeral goods), and was certainly intended to be seen and noticed. It was also therefore exposed, unprotected. The hero's relationship to the army might be understood here via what Johnson[58] and Lakoff and Mark Turner[59] have called an image-schematic mapping to the relationship between the brooch and the hero. This metaphoric relationship might be summarized as THE HERO IS THE BROOCH ON THE BREAST OF THE ARMY. The hero, out in the front line, is highly valued, saliently visible and even ornamental: he is handsome, and he and his horse are armored in heroically ornamented gear (gear described in loving detail in the heroic poetry). His presence confers status on the rest of the host. And he is simultaneously visible and dangerously exposed, by being at the front rather than the back of the host. This reading seems even more persuasive when we recall that the hero is, in other contexts, the army's metaphoric shield, sword, or wall.

Do we need to choose between these readings? I would say we don't. In fact, much of the same information is brought up by the two, via different routes. Mention of a gold brooch, as well as of position in the front rank, metonymically conjure up a heroic noble; the brooch brings up a noble by frame-metonymy, while the mention of the front rank brings up the leading role in the Battle frame. We now have a scene of an armed host, with a noble hero at the head of it (wearing a gold brooch). Alternatively, if told that the hero is the metaphoric brooch on the army's breast, this also brings up a Battle frame, and places our hero (via an image-schematic mapping of the FRONT of the army onto the FRONT of a warrior) in the front ranks – this is confirmed by the next word of the poem. (And of course, we will still assume that the hero is actually wearing a gold brooch as well as 'being' one – he would be, given the relevant cultural frames.)

If this is right, then the same words have two different cognitive routes – one metaphoric, the other metonymic – by which they may evoke much the

57 The related *CA* III also begins with *kaeawc*, 'brooched', as a description of the warrior. 58 *The Body in the Mind*. 59 *More Than Cool Reason: A Fieldguide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

same final imagined scene. Speaking as a metaphor analyst, that's not typical. Examining a modern everyday domain, we can find both metaphoric and metonymic references to humans via labels for kinds or portions of food. As mentioned above, restaurant serving employees (whose first job is to maintain the correct correlation between client and food, after all) refer metonymically to patrons by the names of the dishes they ordered (as in *The ham sandwich wants her check* or *The BLT is a lousy tipper*). But there don't seem to be any metaphoric mappings involved here: we do *not* find the bread in the sandwich mapping onto some aspect of the client's physical or social self, while the ham would map onto some other aspect of the person. Food can also be mapped metaphorically onto humans; but in this case there seem to be no obvious metonymic associations. For example, a usage such as *oreo* (a label for an African American who is perceived by African Americans as 'culturally White') shows clear metaphoric mappings: the interior of the food is the person's 'true essence' as a cultural entity, while the exterior is their more apparent ethnic affiliation. But there is no concomitant assumption that the person referred to is a regular eater of (or in any way metonymically associated with) oreos; nor, for example, do metaphorical human *honeybuns* necessarily eat, or bake, or otherwise associate with actual sweet rolls. The modern American metaphoric and metonymic associations between humans and edibles are not a single tight web, as are the associations we have just been examining in *Canu Aneirin*.

6 CONCLUSION

Early Welsh poetry at its best has an apparent simplicity, compared to metrically more complex high medieval verse. It has a seeming inevitability which only adds to its beauty; in a world where rhyme and alliteration signal links within such a tight web of meaning, we are rarely surprised by the basic outlines of form or content – though we may be deeply satisfied by the way the two are put together. It has long been recognized that the formal sound-structure of these poems is a complex and beautiful one – an aspect of this corpus which I have addressed at length elsewhere.[60] My argument here is that the apparent simplicity and inevitability of these complex works is achieved partly through the tight webs of metonymic association of content, interwoven with

60 Kathryn Klar, Brendan P. O Hehir, and Eve E. Sweetser, 'Welsh Poetics in the Indo-European Tradition', *Studia Celtica*, 17–19 (1983/84), 30–51; Sweetser and Klar, 'Remarks on the Development of Medieval Welsh Metrics', in Gordon W. MacLennan (ed.), *Proceedings of the First North American Congress of Celtic Studies* (Ottawa: Chair of Celtic Studies, University of Ottawa, 1988); Klar and Sweetser, 'Reading the Unreadable: "Gwarchan Maelderw" from the *Book of Aneirin*', in *A Celtic Florilegium: Studies in Memory of Brendan O Hehir*, ed. Klar, Sweetser, and Claire Thomas (Andover, MA: Celtic Studies Publications, 1996), pp. 78–103.

metaphoric structure. Metaphoric and metonymic links do not serve identical functions in this web; most notably, the asymmetric structure of metaphoric links is particularly suited to certain content (such as the asymmetric lord-retainer relationship).

A poetic system whose webs of reference are woven as tightly as those of *Canu Aneirin* would, I think, be impossible in a broader modern multicultural setting. It depends on a shared web of associations which are deep, implicit and pervasive. Perhaps these poems are better compared, not with modern 'literary' poetry, but with orally based traditions which are still rooted in particular ethnic and social communities (rapping might be a possible example).

Yet of course significant aspects of this unique cultural and poetic 'web' are shared with many other cultures. Self and Society are metaphorically seen as Containers in most medieval and modern societies, just to take one of the more obvious cases. However, the Hall sub-frame in the Heroic Society frame is much richer than the basic concept of a container; and therefore, the conceptualization of the hero and the heroic society as metaphoric Halls is more than 'just' a Container metaphor. Cynddylan's empty hall is not just empty of some random set of social structures, but of the rich idealized model of a Welsh heroic past. The balance between culture-specific and human cognitive patterns is one which can very fruitfully be studied using literary data.[61]

And of course, it is exactly a richly allusive poetics of this kind, rather than a more explicit one, which is bound to be called 'difficult' by readers from other cultures or other times. Unlike Bede, who comments explicitly on the comparison between the bird's short flight through the hall and human life, the authors or redactors of *Canu Heledd* and *Canu Aneirin* never say 'the hall is the hero' or 'the hall is the society' – any more than they say 'this hero is the brooch on the breast of the army'. So yes, a hero's status as a 'hall' could metaphorically refer to his bodily self (his armor and body's protection of his own life), to his personal physical protection of his followers in battle, or his general social protection of his retainers in peacetime (in the metonymically connected setting of his real hall). The result is that, by bringing together these domains, a poem may simultaneously be saying something about the tribe or social unit as a metaphoric 'body' or person, for example (since both a person and an abstract social group are metaphorically the contents of a hall-container). And by the time the poem has evoked all of that in one line, we can see that an entire world-view is enmeshed in every poem.

The formal simplicity is real. But in the context of the cognitive models they evoke, the apparent 'uncooperative' nature of these texts evaporates, and instead they emerge as potentially much richer than their more explicit counterparts.

61 Cf. Sweetser, '"Suburbs"'; Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*.

Sound and Sense: James Joyce's Aural Esthetics

MARIA TYMOCZKO

For more than a millennium, Irish literary tradition has been balanced between a keen sense of the written and the writerly, and an equally keen sense of the aural and the spoken. Largely an accident of history, this balance is the result of the accommodation of Christian Latin literacy by a strongly oral culture that included prestigious learned classes of oral literary practitoners. By the end of the fourth century, even before the Roman Empire had come to an end, Christianity reached Ireland, and Ireland became the first nation outside the Roman Empire to be converted to Christianity. The Irish became heirs not just of Christian scripture, but late classical learning as well: they were converted both to the Word and to the Book.

Because the Irish did not use spoken Latin as their native language, they related to Latin texts differently from those for whom the texts were associated with the spoken language. The Irish had to learn Latin as a second language, and they treated it differently from their predecessors in Western learning. They became assiduous grammarians, analytic in their approach to the language. Moreover, they apprehended Latin as much, if not more, by the eye than by the ear, relating to the language in a profoundly textual manner. This had enormous consequences not just for Irish culture, but for Latin learning in the Middle Ages. The Irish were leaders in abandoning the *scriptio continua* of late antiquity, breaking the flow of written language into 'words', isolating grammatical 'parts of speech', introducing *littera notabilior* (that is, capital letters or a diminuendo effect), and developing new marks of punctuation and new modes of page layout to indicate appropriate textual segmentation, including minor and major pauses, full stops, paragraphs, and chapters, that could help a reader apprehend and understand the written text. The Irish were also at the forefront of later medieval efforts to establish standard orthographical conventions for Latin, again accommodating language to the eye rather than the ear, reasserting the standards of Classical Latin over the Vulgar Latin of their contemporaries on the Continent. The result was what M.B. Parkes calls 'a grammar of legibility', a revolutionary advance in the written language and textual pragmatics.[1]

1 Parkes, in chapter two of *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West*

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