

Anthroponyms as Markers of ‘Celticity’ in Brittany, Cornwall and Wales¹

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Introduction

The theme which unifies this volume is the ‘Celticity’ of the Celtic Englishes. From a linguistic perspective, we may take this to mean the identification of phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical influences that extinct or extant Celtic languages have exercised in the past, or continue to exercise to this day, on the varieties of English where Celtic languages were once dominant. This, in fact, has been the focus of much of the research published in the first three volumes of the *Celtic Englishes*. However, for those in search of inherited, symbolically-weighted features of language within the Brythonic social, cultural and historical framework, it would be hard to imagine anything more revealing as beacons of ‘Celticity’ than the anthroponymic systems of these cultures, given that they are so intimately bound to the changing modes of enculturation that have distinguished them for the past two millennia. It is with this in mind that I seek to explore the Brythonic naming traditions as they have developed in Brittany, Cornwall and Wales.

¹ I wish to thank Mr Per Pondaven (of Landunvez, Léon, northern Finistère) for having lent me the manuscript of the forthcoming book he has co-authored with Mr Yann Riou and Mr Mikael Madec, *Leor Anoiou-Badeziant Bro Leon: hervez hengoun dre gomz ar brezonegerien (A Book of Christian Names from Bro Leon: Following the Oral Tradition of Native Breton-Speakers)*. It contains a list of several hundred Bretonised forenames of French origin and phonetic transcription. I should also like to thank him and Mr Christian Fagon (Plouzané, Léon, northern Finistère) for having read an earlier draft of this paper as well as for their helpful suggestions.

1. Objectives

My underlying hypothesis is that Brythonic-speaking societies once shared similar naming practices, many of which closely resemble those found in Goidealic-speaking countries (cf. Mac Mathúna's article in this volume). In this respect, I shall try to demonstrate that significant aspects of the anthroponymic systems of Celtic origin are not particularly 'Breton,' 'Cornish' or 'Welsh' at all but, in a fundamental way, the linguistic and cultural heritage of the "British Heroic Age" (Chadwick 1976), a period broadly spanning the 4th to the 9th centuries.

In a book almost entirely devoted to the 'Celtic Englishes,' it may thus come as a surprise that it is in Brittany, which was settled by the Brythons between the 4th and early 8th centuries, that the 'British' or 'Brythonic' naming system has displayed the most resilience and continuity.² For this reason, much of the evidence presented in this paper will revolve around Breton data. Considerable attention will thus be paid to the commonality of these three modern naming traditions and the manner in which they evolved from a single Brythonic source.³

2. Sociohistorical Background

2.1. The Cornish

The fate of the Breton, Cornish and Welsh aristocracies had a crucial impact on the development of their respective cultures. In the wake of the successive conquests of the Brythonic kingdoms by the Anglo-Saxons, which included the loss of Elmet, Gododdin, Rheged, Strathclyde and other regions whose names have been lost, the southwestern Brythons, too, were finally defeated, in 936, by Aethelstan, their most redoubtable opponent at that time. After the 'West Welsh' had been driven from Exeter, the border separating the English and Cornish was fixed at the Tamar (Ellis 1974: 26). As the territories in which Brythonic culture and language had once predominated were whittled away, more localised regional identities gradually arose, most notably in Brittany, Cornwall, Cumbria and Wales.

In the conquered areas, the Brythonic-speaking aristocracy was replaced by an Old English-speaking elite. Evidence of this process is revealed in the 10th

² There is obviously a large number of Breton surnames of French origin, *Martin, Richard, Thomas, Daniel* and *Gauthier* being among the most popular. Although very interesting in their own right, the study of non-Celtic names does not fall in within the scope of this article.

³ Armorica was almost certainly populated by Gaulish-speaking inhabitants when the first Brythons arrived (Falc'hun 1963, 1981; Fleuriot 1980) and there was probably a large-scale fusion of the two populations. Considering that the Gaulish and Brythonic languages and cultures were extremely close, it is not impossible that the original Armorican naming traditions may also have provided some input. Nevertheless, the immigrant Brythonic culture was by far the most dominant, as can be seen from both toponymic and anthroponymic evidence.

century Bodmin Manumissions, a document which shows that the majority of the manumitters mentioned in the document bore Anglo-Saxon names (Bice 1970: 5; Jones 2001), while 98 of 122 Cornish slaves carried Brythonic names of a kind still found in Brittany (see below p. 43, 56, Jones 2001 reference). A century later, however, the Normans conquered England provoking yet another power-shift and ... name-shift. As a result, by the 12th or 13th centuries, Brythonic and Anglo-Saxon names fell out of use among the general population. Only a couple of generations after Hastings, 44% of the male population of Cornwall bore four names – all of them Norman: *William, Robert, Richard* and *Ralph* (Bice 1970: 3). By 1327, 25% of the Cornish males cited in the *Lay Subsidy Rolls* for the western half of Cornwall were named *John*. Bice (*ibid.*) adds that the Cornish-language ‘surnames’ came into existence between 1250 and 1450, possibly to distinguish between so many individuals bearing the same forenames. These new surnames were often derived from nicknames, occupational names and, especially, place names and, as such, were rather ephemeral.

Significantly, the Norman-French influence on Cornwall appears to have been similar to that which was exerted on Anglo-Saxon England as a whole. Bice (1970: 3) states that, in England, Old English (fore)names were replaced by Norman ones within two or three generations after the Conquest, although he suspects that they may have lingered on a bit among the Old English-speaking peasantry. In a document known as the *Eyre of Kent* (1313-14), out of a total of 800 jurors and bailiffs only seven bear Anglo-Saxon names (*ibid.*). As in Cornwall, the rest are Norman: *William, Robert, Hugh, Richard, Walter, Ralph* and *Odo*, etc.

This is highly significant in demonstrating that the process of culture shift involving names and languages occurred without any significant population replacement. This is a point one should keep in mind when considering the linguistic implications of the ‘anglicisation’ of other formerly Brythonic regions of England.

2.2. *The Welsh*

Whereas the English and Cornish submitted rapidly to Norman authority after Hastings, this was not the case for Wales. The Welsh struggled against Anglo-Norman rule for generations and thus succeeded in preserving their culture, language and institutions for a much longer period (Davis 1993: 103). This is pertinent to my discussion because, although the acculturation of Wales intensified throughout the Middle Ages, it was part of a rather gradual process which, in social terms, seems to have occurred mainly from the top down.

One of the indirect consequences of the survival of the Welsh aristocratic elite in the centuries following the Norman Conquest was that Welshmen retained their traditional Brythonic names as well as their cultural traditions. This conservatism was encouraged by a class of professional poets whose *raison d'être* was to compose panegyric poetry for their noble patrons and to preserve the col-

lective cultural and historical memory, not only of the ‘Welsh’ but of all the Brythons.⁴ Indeed, most of the geographical regions mentioned in the *Canu Hengerdd* (Early Bardic Poetry), a body of Welsh-language poetry representing the oldest aspects of this tradition, lie outside Wales with most events taking place in the ‘Old North,’ that is, in formerly Brythonic regions which are today northern England and southern Scotland.

As Brinley Roberts (1975: xvif.) pointed out, the primary theme uniting traditional Welsh history for over a thousand years was the “violation of the sovereignty of Britain” by the *Saeson* (Saxons), the sovereignty of the island being symbolised by the crown of London. The ascension of Henry Tudor, the ‘Welshman,’ to the throne in 1485 was viewed by his Welsh followers as the realisation of ancient prophesies which had predicted the return of a messianic figure named *Arthur* (*Cynan* and *Cadwaladr* were two other candidates), who would reclaim the sovereignty of Britain on behalf of the Brythons.⁵ The result of this new pro-‘British’ climate was that Welsh noblemen were no longer excluded from positions of influence at the royal court. The *Acts of Union* of 1536 served as a catalyst that accelerated the anglicisation of the Welsh gentry. This development was to have dramatic consequences, since it was now the Welsh peasantry, or *gwerin*, who preserved the Welsh linguistic and cultural identity, an identity which increasingly revolved around their new Protestant faith. Nevertheless, as might be expected, the common people followed the trend set by the upper classes and took on secular Anglo-Norman and Biblical names of the same kind we have observed in England and Cornwall. Paradoxically, many of the names commonly considered as ‘typically Welsh’ today, such as *Williams*, *Roberts*, *Hughes*, *Humphreys*, *Thomas*, *Gwilym*, (< *Guillaume*), are of unambiguous Anglo-Norman origin. Even *Evans* and *Jones* are, in fact, merely variant forms of *John* (< *Ievan*, *Ieuan*). *Jenkins*, on the other hand, would be another form of *John*, from Welsh *Sioncin* or *Ionkyn* (Morgan and Morgan 1985: 137).

2.3. The Bretons

Humphreys (1991: 97) has contended that the Bretons were the victims of their own military success against the Franks and, later, the French and Normans.⁶ By pushing so far east and establishing their capital in Rennes (and later in Nantes), well within the Gallo-speaking zone, the aristocratic elite inevitably adopted the Old French language and culture. By the end of the 11th century, the process was largely complete. In spite of this, Breton remained the medium of communica-

⁴ It is important to recall that the Welsh (*Cymry*) and Cornish (*Kernowyon*) also described themselves ‘Brythons,’ the former until early modern times.

⁵ The Tudors and Stuarts exploited the prophesy of Arthur’s return for political purposes posing as the guarantors of British sovereignty in an attempt to legitimise their power.

⁶ Indeed, despite punitive raids by the Normans of the kind featured on the Bayeux tapestry, in the end, the Bretons defeated William the Conqueror and drove the Norman invaders from Brittany in 1086.

tion for significant numbers of petty noblemen, clergymen and all of the peasantry, west of a line stretching from Guérande to St Brieuc until the mid-twentieth century.

Although the relative independence of the Duchy until the end of the 15th century was instrumental in safeguarding the Breton language and culture, administrative policies of the French monarchy and the Catholic Church also played an important role in maintaining the Breton naming tradition. In 1406, for instance, a synod ordered that registers should be kept of the names of all the children who had been baptised, as well as their mothers, fathers, and godparents (Deshayes 1995: 15). In 1539, only seven years after the Treaty of Union between Brittany and France, François I signed the royal edict of Villers-Cotterêts making French the official language of all documents and registers. We can conclude that the recording of names in registers, whether in Latin or in French, must have had a profound effect in rendering names hereditary. Indeed, we see that the process was nearly complete by the 17th century, although Deshayes (*ibid.*, 14) shows that some instability remained in the system.⁷ Considering that the mass of the people were still linguistically, culturally and geographically isolated from France, a high percentage of Breton names of Celtic origin were now permanently fixed as official, hereditary family names. Meanwhile, in Cornwall, and especially in Wales, the de-Celticisation of the naming system proceeded. Note, however, that with the exception of a few Celtic saints' names, Breton first names were almost exclusively Christian, albeit in Bretonised form: *Marie* > *Mari*, *Mai*; *Catherine* > *Rin*, *Katell*; *Marguerite* > *Marc'harid*, *Margaid*, *Gaid*; *Jeanne* > *Chann*; *Jean* > *Yann*; *François* > *Seig*, *Siz*, *Fañch*; *Joseph* > *Jos*; *Jerôme* > *Jerm*; *Pierre* > *Per*; *Corentin* > *Kaour*, etc. (cf. German *fc.*).

3. Characteristics of the Brythonic Naming System

The Brythonic family names which have survived to the present day in Brittany, Cornwall and Wales can, in very broad terms, be divided into five categories.

Type 1 names: patronymic lineage

Type 2 names: place of origin

Type 3 names: occupation

Type 4 names: physical or moral characteristics (often nicknames)

Type 5 names: epithets related to warfare or extolling warlike virtues

⁷ He cites the example of an individual from Ergué-Armel whose name is given as *Alan Donnarz* 'dit *Guillou*' in 1625 and is recorded three years later as *Alan Guillou* 'dit *Donnarz*' (< *Doenerth* 'God's strength').

3.1. Type 1 Names: Patronymic Lineage

The earliest Brythonic sources show clear evidence of a patrilinear system which consists in naming a son or daughter after his/her father.

Y mab Z ('Y son of Z'); *X merch Z* ('X daughter of Z')

This can be seen on early 6th century stone inscriptions such as one in Western Cornwall: *Rialobrani Cunovali fili* ('*Rialobran* son of *Cunoval*'). The poetry of the *cynfeirdd* ('early bardic poets') provides further evidence. Williams (1975: xxxvi) gives the following example of Urien Rheged's genealogy preserved in B.M. Harley 3859 (MS British Library):

Urbgen map Cinmarc map Merchianum map Gurgust [map Ceneu] map Coilhen.

Female names such as

Rhiannon verch Hefeydd Hen
Branwen verch Llyr
Modron verch Avallach

also abound in Middle Welsh sources.⁸

Ironically, the disappearance of the indigenous Welsh name stock seems to result directly from the retention of this patronymic system which survived in Wales until the 17th and 18th centuries and, among the poorest elements of society, as late as the 19th century (Morgan and Morgan 1985: 18). In the 15th century, for instance, if a man named *Llewelyn ap Cadwgan* ('*Llewellyn* son of *Cadwgan*') had a son named *Owain*, the son was known as *Owain ap Llewelyn ap Cadwgan* ('*Owain* son of *Llewelyn* son of *Cadwgan*'). By the 17th century, as we have seen, Anglo-Norman names had now come into fashion and were fast replacing the Welsh ones. For example, if a man by the name of *James (ap Ievan) Evans* had a son named *William*, the son would be known as *William James*, not *William Evans*. By the time hereditary family names were established in Wales, it is these kinds of English names that had been adopted as permanent family names, leaving a mere handful of native Welsh names. Survivals of these include, *Blethyn (Bleiddyn)*, *Cadwalader* (< *Cadwaladr*), *Crad-dock (Caradog)*, *Griffith* (< *Gruffydd*), *Howell (Hywel)*, *Llewelyn* (< *Llewelyn*), *Lloyd/Floyd* (< *Llwyd*), *Maddox* (< *Madog*), *Morgan (Morgan/Morcant)*, *Owen* (< *Owain, Ewein*), *Rice* (< *Rhŷs*), *Roderick* (< *Rhodri or Rhydderch*), etc.⁹

⁸ Note that when feminine nouns and masculine or feminine Christian names are followed by a word (usually an adjective) beginning with the occlusives /p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/ or the bilabial nasal (historically weak) /m/, these consonants are generally lenited to /b/, /d/, /g/, /v/, /ð/ and /v/ respectively. Orthographic <m> is realised as either <v> or <u> in Middle Welsh texts (and <ſ> in Modern Welsh). Middle Welsh <v>, <u> and Modern Welsh <ſ> are all pronounced /v/.

⁹ Many of these names are used both as first and last names in Wales: *Evan Evans*, *Griffith Griffiths*, etc. The final <s> in *Evans* or *Griffiths* is the English genitive marker <'s> and is probably an echo of the original system signalling a paternal bond – *Evan* son of *Evan*, *Griffith* son of *Griffith*, etc.

Many similar names are still found in Cornwall: *Blythe*, *Cadwalader*, *Crad-dock/Craddick*, *Loze* (W. Lloyd, Br. Louet), *Howell*, *Maddock/Maddox*, *Morgan*, etc., as well as other old names that have since disappeared in Wales: *Biddock* (*Budoc*), *Maile/Male* (*Mael*), *Mabyn*, etc. (cf. Type 5 names below).

3.1.1. *Ap and Ach*

According to Ifor Williams (1975: 112), the Welsh word for ‘son,’ *map/mab/vab*, was reduced to *ap* in Welsh texts by the 12th century: [ab] before a vowel or voiced consonant, [ap] before a voiceless consonant. Morgan and Morgan (1985: 18) state that *ap* was still dominant in the 16th century which explains pairs such as *Evan* > *Bevan* (*ap Evan*), *Hugh* > *Pugh* (*ap Huw*), *Harry* > *Parry* (*ap Harri*), *Howell* > *Powell* (*ap Hywel*), *Owen* > *Bowen* (*ap Owain*), *Rice* > *Price* (*ap Rhŷs*), *Richard* > *Prichard* (*ap Rhitsiard*) and so on. The Cornish conserved a number of such names including *Powell*, *Prichard*, *Prynne* (< *ap Rynne*) (cf. Thompson 2003). It is also interesting to note that an identical evolution took place in the Léon region of northern Brittany, where many *ab* names have survived to this day: *Abalan* (*ab Alan*), *Abiven* (*ab Iven*), *Abriwallon* (*ab Riwallon*), *Abeguile* (*ab egile*, i.e. ‘son of the other one!’), etc. Given that the *ap/ab* forms are common to Breton, Cornish and Welsh, one is tempted to ask whether the reduction of *mab/vab* to *ab* may have been common in older Brythonic vernacular speech.

Eventually, <*ap*> was lost altogether. Although Morgan and Morgan (1985: 15) stress, that this evolution was part of a natural process, he also suggests that English administrative influence may have precipitated matters. English records provide evidence of this: ‘*William Evans*, alias *William ap Ievan*,’ ‘*Thomas Jones* of London alias *Thomas ap Ieuan ap ...*’ and so on. Likewise, in the Welsh system, *merch* (‘daughter’) was reduced to *ach* and was later also elided (*ibid.*): *Tanno verch David*, *Katherine verch Thomas*, but *Anne ach Richard*.

In the Léon region of rural northwestern Brittany, (Madec, Pondaven and Riou (Madec, et al., 2006: 6) have thoroughly explored the tradition of stringing names together to indicate patrilineal bonds (without *ap* or *merch*): for instance, *Lomm Yann Olier* (‘*Guillaume* son of *Jean* son of *Olivier*’). They also cite examples where ancestry is traced matrilineally with reference to mothers and grandmothers (cf. below): *Mari Gid Bi Louiz* meaning ‘*Marie* the daughter of *Marguerite*, the grand-daughter of *Jean-Marie*, great-grand-daughter of *Louis*’ (*ibid.*, 7). Once again the existence of this system implies that one cannot rule out the possibility that it may once have been used at the colloquial level among all the Brythons. Quite remarkably, Liam Mac Mathúna (this volume) also shows an identical system at work in Ireland suggesting the tradition could be very ancient indeed.¹⁰

¹⁰ Furthermore, the system functions the same way the Brythonic languages express genitival relationships (N + N); Breton *Ti Yann* ‘John’s house;’ *Ti Mamm Doue* ‘The house of the Mother of God,’ etc.

3.1.2. Other Ways of Expressing Paternal and Maternal Bonds

Another way of expressing one's relationship to one's father in Brittany is as follows. A man whose official French name is *Jean Manchec* and who bears the same name as his father is often known within his own family and by his friends as *Yann Bihan* ('Little *Jean*') so as to avoid confusion between the two. The father, on the other hand, would be known as *Yann Manchec koz* ('Old *Yann Manchec*'). This tradition has been carried over into French so that, today, when one speaks of *petit Jean*, everyone understands that he is the son of *Jean senior*.

A fascinating Welsh parallel to this system is recorded by Morgan and Morgan (1985: 59), where *Mareddydd Fychan ab yr Hen Fareddydd* (1350-1415) means literally '*Maredudd* the small son of the old *Maredudd*.' Just as in the Breton tradition, here *Bychan* ('small') does not have anything to do with the person's size – although it can in other contexts – but rather the person's relationship to his father. Paternity is marked by the adjective *Hên* ('old'). Similarly, *Dafydd Leia ap Dafydd Fychan ap Dafydd Ddu* is another interesting example: 'David least (i.e. 'grandson' of Dafydd Black) son of David Small 'son' of Dafydd Black' (Morgan and Morgan 1985: 59).

The diminutive/affective morpheme *//-ig//* (which corresponds closely to English *//-y//*: *Yannig-Johnny*, *Channig-Janey*, etc.) can also indicate parent-child relationships, although perhaps less frequently than the system just described. Yann Riou (2005: 12) offers the following example of three generations of men (son, father, grandfather) from Lampaul-Plouarzel, Léon, who had the same official French name: *François Elias*. In Breton, however, they were known as *Feñchig* (born 1891) son of *Saig* (born 1847) son of *Feñch* (born 1818). Note that both *Saig* and *Feñchig* are diminutive forms of *Feñch* ('François'). The morpheme *//-ig//* can thus indicate a parental bond and, indeed, this is may be how we could interpret the name *Budic Bud Berhouc*, one of the early 11th century lords of Cornouaille (see below fn. 16).

3.1.3. Husbands and Wives

In rural Brittany today, older men and women are still known by their spouses' first names, not necessarily by their official married names (Madec, et al., 2006: 7): *Gwillou Jofi* ('*Guillaume*, husband of *Joséphine*') and *Von Silver* ('*Yvonne*, wife of *Sylvain*,', *ibid.*, 8). The practice appears to be in use throughout Brittany: *Fin Secrétaire* ('*Joséphine* Secretary') because her husband was the assistant mayor (i.e. *secrétaire de mairie*); *Fin Albert* ('*Joséphine* wife of *Albert*'), also known as *Fin Sosis* ('*Joséphine* 'Sausage''), because she and her husband owned a *charcuterie* (German 2004 personal notes, Saint Yvi, Cornouaille).

A more elaborate version of this system is also encountered: (the woman's first name + *ti* (house) + the husband's first name). *Susanne Guiffant*, also of Saint Yvi, is better known locally as *Susanne Ti Viktor* ('*Susanne* of the house of *Viktor*,', her husband), while her neighbour *Yvonne Litybran* was known both

as *Von Vran* ('Yvonne the Raven'), the hypocoristic form of *Litybran* (lit. 'milk-house/dairy of the raven,' her official maiden name; Cornish *laiti* and Breton *letty*, § 3.2, p. 43 below), or as *Von Ti Per an Gall* ('Yvonne of the house of *Pierre Le Gall*,' her husband).¹¹

3.2. Type 2 Names: Geographic Origin or Place of Residence

Type 2 names are found in all Brythonic-speaking cultures. Here, men and women are named after their place of residence or origin. This is undoubtedly a very old feature and was common to both the aristocracy and peasantry. In the poetry of the *cynfeirdd* (early bardic poets), for instance, there are numerous references to warriors who are associated with their place of origin: *Brochfael Brolet*, *Urien Rheged*, *Cian Maen Gwyngwn*, *Cynddilig Aeron*, *Madog Elfed*, *Clydno Eidyn* ... (Williams 1975, 1978).

Morgan and Morgan (1985: 27) write that in Wales: "the usage of attaching a place-name to a personal name is very common *at the colloquial level* and always has been. It is probably the practice in all areas for farm-names to be used in this way: *Wil Cwmcyrnach*, *Llew'r Garth*, etc." They add (*ibid.*: 52) that although the 'colloquial' usage is prevalent, "place-names have become Welsh surnames only in very special conditions and the proportion of official surnames originating in place-names is very small." An example where a toponym is adopted as a second name for symbolic reasons is the case of John *Berwen*, originally Jones, of *Glyndyfrdwy*, one of those who led the Welsh expedition to Patagonia and who took on this name once he arrived there, "no doubt an assertion, and an overt sign, of his nationalism" (*ibid.*, 52).

The relative rarity of such names in Wales lies in stark contrast to the situation in Brittany and Cornwall, where they are often constructed around the following roots: *Tre(v)*- ('hamlet/farmstead'), *Lan*- ('hallowed ground'), *Plou* ('parish;' Cornish *plu*), *Poul*- ('pool;' Cornish *pol*), *Pen*- ('summit, end'), *Ros*- ('hillside, heathland'), and *Ker*- ('farmstead'). Here are some examples of Cornish family names: *Hendry*, ('old farmstead'), *Innis* ('island'), *Laity* ('dairy'), *Mendue* ('black mountain'), *Nance* ('valley'), *Pendennis* ('headland with a fort'), *Pender* ('end of the land'), *Pengilly* ('end of a grove'), *Penrose* ('end of a heath,' 'top of a hill'), *Pentreath* ('end of a beach'), *Polglaze* ('blue/green pool') *Trevean* ('small farm'), *Trengov* ('farm of the smith'), *Tremenheere* ('farm of the long stone'), etc. (Thompson 2003).

In Brittany hundreds of similar toponyms, often identical to the aforementioned ones, were adopted as official family names. They normally include reference to a man's name or some geographical feature. Here are a few examples:

¹¹ This woman's daughter, whose official French name was *Catherine Le Gall*, was also considered as 'belonging' to her father's household: *Rin Ti Per an Gall* ('*Rin* of the house of *Per an Gall*'). She was also known by the hamlet in which she lived: *Rin Keronsal* (cf. Type 2 names).

Tremadec ('Madec's hamlet'), *Lannurien* ('hallowed ground dedicated to *Urien*'), *Plougouven* ('parish of *Conven*'), *Penaneac'h* ('mountain summit'), *Rosconval* ('*Conval*'s Hill,' < *Cunoval*; cf. above reference to Cornish inscription *Rialobrani Cunovali fili*), *Kerguelen* ('holly farm'), *Kervabon* ('Mabon's farm'), *Guillygomarc'h* (< *Gwely Conmarch*, 'from the bed of *Conmarc'h*,' i.e. the descendant of *Conmarc'h*), *Creac'hcadic* ('Cadic's hill'), *Letty* (*Letty* < Old Breton *Laedti*, lit. 'milk-house, dairy'), *Breterc'h* ('boar mountain,' cf. *Bryntyrch*, *Caernarvon*), etc. (see Deshayes 1995: 324; Gourvil 1993).

In informal speech, post-posing the place of residence or origin after the person's baptismal name was and still is commonplace. Confusion can result between such informal names and official family names which started off as place names. Take for example several women in Saint Yvi: *Fin Ty an Douar* (official French name: '*Jospéhine Kerveant* of *Ty an Douar*'); *Louch Kerequel* (official French name: '*Louise Bleuzen* of *Kerequel* farm,' cf. Old Breton *Caer Iudhael*) and *Odile Kervren* (official French name: '*Odile Goarant* of *Kervren* farm;,' cf. Welsh *Caerfryn*).

The last people to actively use this system generally live in rural communities and are over the age of 60, but then again, this kind of assessment is often difficult to make and depends on whether one is within the subject's intimate sphere of social relations where such names are normally given.

A subcategory of this class is linked to ethnic origin: *Le Picard*, *Le Normand*, *Le Flamand* (the Fleming), *Le Gall* (the foreigner, the Frenchman) and *Le Saoz* (the Saxon). Jean Le Dû (1988) proposed an intriguing hypothesis in which he posits that *Le Saoz* names, three quarters of which are to be found in the Trégor region of northern Brittany, may have been introduced during the Brythonic colonisation of Armorica. The areal spread of this name corresponds closely to a number of linguistic features which are common to Cornish but unknown in other Breton dialects. Given the conservative nature of Breton anthroponyms, this idea is not as farfetched as it may first appear (cf. Tristram 1995; German 1996).

3.3. Type 3 Names: Occupational Activities (Generally Linked to Peasantry)

Morgan and Morgan (1985: 51) have gleaned examples of occupational names from Welsh records such as *Gwehydd Bergam* ('the bandy-legged weaver'). Nevertheless, few existing Welsh surnames originate from such sources nor are there many examples in Cornwall (examples: *Angove* 'the smith,' Breton *An Goff*; *Tyack* 'farmer'). This contrasts sharply with the situation in Brittany, where dozens have survived. The Breton evidence is extremely valuable in this respect in that it could provide us with precious insight into the kinds of occupations and names which the Brythonic peasantry must have carried prior to the anglicisation of Britain.

Here are some common examples of modern Breton family names derived from former occupational epithets: *Le Dorner* ('the thresher' < Breton *dorn* 'hand;,' *dorna* 'to strike, thresh'), *Le Falc'her* ('the reaper, mower;,' *falc'hi* 'to

reap, mow' < *falc'h* 'sythe'), *Baraer* ('the baker' < *bara* 'bread'), *Quiguer* ('the butcher' < *kig* 'meat;' Welsh *cig*), *Le Bosser* ('the butcher' < Fr. *boucher*), *Quéguiner* ('cook' < *kegin* 'kitchen;' Welsh *cegin*), *Le Gonidec* ('the farmer'), *Le Mao* ('the servant'), *Le Mevel* ('servant'), *Le Calvez* ('the carpenter'), *Quéméner* ('the tailor'), *Le Guyader* ('the weaver'), *Le Goff* ('the smith'), *Le Tiek* ('the farmer'), *L'Ozac'h* ('the head of the household/farm-owner'), etc.

Just as confusion can arise between unofficial and official names originating in place names, the same can occur with respect to occupational names. *Bosser*, meaning 'butcher,' can be either an official family name (*Le Bosser*) or, if the person is really a butcher, an epithet. Until the 1970s, for instance, there were two butchers in the village of Saint Yvi who were known locally as *an bosser braz* ('the big butcher') and *an bosser bihan* ('the little butcher').¹² The epithet was given because the *bosser braz*'s shop was inside the village. *Bosser bihan*'s was at the bottom of the hill leading into it. Likewise, *Per an Toer* and his son *Louis an Toer*, also of Saint Yvi, were so called because they were both roofers.¹³ Per Pondaven, (Saint Yvi, pc. 2004) informs me that he knew a *Marie an Toer* of Landunvez, Northern Finistère, who inherited her grandfather's occupational name. *Le Toer* also exists as an official family name.

Also tied to the labouring classes are a number of Breton names which provide some idea of the misery that reigned among the poor: *Droumaguet* < *droug-maget* ('badly-nourished'); *Naouennec* (< *naon* 'hunger'); *Toullec*, *Tollec* (< *toull* 'hole'), possibly referring to the pierced clothing of a vagabond, while *Crouan* probably means 'beggar,' or 'poor person.' *Le Déventec* is derived from *tavanteg* 'indigent, poor, in need.' *Diguer* probably means 'homeless' (Deshayes 1995: 221, 234f.).

3.4. Type 4 Names: Physical Characteristics, Moral Flaws

The difference in meaning between the English word 'surname' (family name) and the French word *surnom* ('nickname') provides us with a hint as to how family names were originally given and perceived. Most 'surnames' started off as highly personalised epithets. It is important to recall that these *surnoms* (i.e. 'nicknames') were generally not hereditary and disappeared when the individual passed away.

Among the Breton peasantry, nicknames (called *lezanoiou* 'half-names') are still a common method of identifying people. Until recently, in fact, they were by far the most used. It is still often the case that people are better known by their informal names than by their official surnames. As one 84-year-old informant from Pluzunet, Trégor, put it: "Everyone knew what his own (official) name was but, generally speaking, hardly anyone else did." Considering the high rate of illiteracy of the Breton peasantry until recent times, the dominant nature

¹² In this area, the definite article *an*, not *ar*, appears before bilabial and velar voiced stops.

¹³ No one I have interviewed remembers their official name.

of the oral tradition should come as no surprise. In my studies of the communal registers of Elliant, Saint Yvi and Melgven in southern Finistère, for instance, I have found that, until the last quarter of the 19th century, well over 95 per cent of the fathers (and their two witnesses) declaring their children's birth at the town hall were unable to sign their names.¹⁴

This unofficial naming tradition was thus the product of close-knit communities in which individuals were/are intimately aware, for better or for worse, of the slightest details of their neighbours' lives, not to mention those of their respective families, past and present. In such contexts, no mistake, humiliating or amusing incident, physical defect, character flaw, etc. ever went unnoticed and was rarely forgotten. Inevitably, all of these were translated into nicknames.

As a consequence, confusion sometimes arose between official family names (preserved in the town registers in writing) and oral epithets, a state of affairs that can still provoke embarrassing situations. One of my informants from the Trégor region of northern Brittany explains how she once addressed a friend of her father's as *Monsieur Denthir* ('long-teeth'), when it was, in fact, his nickname (he had very long teeth indeed!). Another informant, from Saint Yvi, Cornouaille, greeted an older woman as *Madame Toulli*. As it turned out, the woman was an alcoholic and this inglorious epithet ('sediment-hole'), known to all but her, was a reference to the dregs found in the bottom of a keg of hard cider (*toull* hole, *li* (Gaulish *liga*) 'sediment').

More colourful names were employed, such as *Paotr e hibil dir* (literally 'lad his peg of steel,' i.e. 'the lad with the steel penis'), which was given to a man from Bégard, Trégor, after he was surprised in bed with a woman on the morning of his wedding. She was not the future bride Another man, the local artificial inseminator, also in the Trégor region, was known as *Kwele Roc'h* ('the stud bull of La Roche Derrien').¹⁵ *Yann Troc'h-chakot* (John 'cut-pocket') of Trégunc, southern Finistère, was so called, because he was known to be a thief (German 2004, personal notes). Such names are legion (cf. Madec 1989).

Not all nicknames were negative, however. *An Heolig* ('the little sun') was the name by which the "prettiest girl in Elliant" was known (circa 1910). Often people had several nicknames. One young girl with reddish-blond hair was known variously as *Channig Ru(z)* (little Jane 'red-hair') or, more playfully, *Chann amann* ('Jane butter') (German 2003: 393).

Tanguy (1998: 53) points out that, in the Cartulary of Redon, one of the earliest sources for Breton names dating to the 9th century, there are 20 examples of epithets: *Cumahel Boric* ('the little fat one'), *Berran* ('the little short one'), *Co-ric* ('the little dwarf'); both epithets have survived as family names under the forms of (*Le*) *Bour* and *Couric*. Three of these ancient names deal with beards: *Barbatil* ('well-kept beard'), *Barbdifeith* ('unkempt beard'), *Henbarb* ('old

¹⁴ This also speaks volumes about the nature of French language acquisition in the region.

¹⁵ A nearly identical nickname is documented by MacKinnon (1977: 23) in his study of the Isle of Harris, where the local artificial inseminator was known as: *Tairbh an aide* ('the bull with a hat') and his wife as *Bean an tarbh* ('the bull's wife').

beard'). One also notes *Hacluuocon Sqrenic* (*Hacluuocon* 'who trembles') and *Riwallon an coent*, meaning *Riwallon* ('valorous-king') *an coent* ('the handsome,' from Old French and related to English *quaint*, also of French origin). Note that, once again, both *Riwallon* and (*Le*) *Coant* are still common family names today.¹⁶

Such evidence suggests that epithets describing individuals' physical or moral attributes must have been plentiful throughout pre-Anglo-Saxon Britain. Warriors mentioned in the *Canu Hengerdd* (Early Bardic Poetry) often bear them. If one takes the *Trawsganu Kynan Garwyn* ('Eulogy for Kynan Garwyn'), purportedly composed by the bard Taliesin in the late 6th century, one observes that the subject of the poem, *Kynan* (Breton and Cornish *Conan*), is known as *Kynan Garwyn* ('white leg') *son of Brochfael Ysgithrog* ('noble-badger (long) fang'). The name *Garwyn*, is still perfectly understandable to a modern Breton under the form *Garwen* and, although I have found no modern examples of it in Brittany, it certainly could exist. *Gargam* ('lame leg'), for instance, is very common. Morgan and Morgan (1985: 16, 60f.) show that a system closely resembling this one clearly survived in Wales until the anglicisation of the gentry in the 16th century and similar names are indicated: *Einion Bolledan* (*bol* + *ledan* 'wide-belly'), *Iuan Vechan Penbul* (Evan 'small block head,' early 15th c.), *Maredudd Benhir* ('long-head'), *Wion Pengam* ('bent-head'),¹⁷ *Iorwerth Penwyn* ('white-head'), *Gwehydd Bergam* ('weaver crooked-shank'), *Ellis Byddar* ('deaf Ellis,' 1611), *Dafydd tew/dew* ('fat Dafydd (David)'). *Dafydd Gam* ('cripple/limping David') and *Rhosier Fychan* (Roger *Vaughan* 'the small/son'), *Hywel Felyn* ('blond Howell'), *Gwladys wen* ('white/fair Gladys'), *Adda fras* ('thick/broad Adam'), *Einion Lygliw* ('mouse-coloured Einion'), *Ieuan ap y Brych Cadarn* ('*Ieuan* the son of the freckled-strong one').

Once again, Morgan and Morgan (*ibid.*, 25) points out that these kinds of epithets are still common in colloquial Welsh today: *Twm Mawr* ('big Tom'); *Twm Gwyllt* ('wild Tom'), etc. As a glance through any telephone directory of Finistère, Côtes-d'Armor and Morbihan will prove, such names still abound in Brittany. Note, however, that while in Welsh names the qualifier functions as an adjective, and is often lenited, in Breton it is often nominalised: *Tudfwlch Hir* as opposed to *Yann an Hir*, translated in French as *Jean Le Hir* ('John the tall'). Cornish family names function as in Breton: *Annear* (< *an hir* 'the tall'), *Angarrack* (< *an garrek* 'the rock'), *Angwin* (< *an gwin* 'the fair'), *Andean/Endean* (< *an den* 'the chief man') (Thompson 2003).

¹⁶ An early Breton genealogy of lords of Cornouaille conserved in the Cartulary of Landevennec, published by Chédeville and Guillotel (1984: 78), is interesting in that nearly all of the individuals listed have epithets: *Rivelen Mor Marthou* ('*Rivelen* of great miracles') *Daniel Dremm Rud* ('*Daniel* red-face'), *Iahan Reith* ('*Iahan* the just'), *Budic Bud Berhouc* (*Budic* ('Little Victor son of?'), *Bud* (Victor) 'short-neck'), *Gradlon Flam* ('*Gradlon* the flame/impetuous'), etc.

¹⁷ This probably meant, as it still does in Breton, that the person tends to tilt his/her head to the side, not that the person's head is deformed in any way.

The following are common Breton examples: *Berrhouc* ('short neck'), *Corf-dir* ('steel body,' perhaps a warrior's name), *Corfec* ('big body'), *Couric* ('little dwarf'), *Daoudal* ('two-foreheads,' i.e. large forehead), *Friec* ('big nose'), *Gargam* ('cripple leg'), *Lagadec* ('big eye'), *Le Bihan* ('the small,' Welsh *bychan*, anglicised as *Vaughan*; Cornish *Bain*, *Bean*), *Le Bour* ('the fat'), *Le Bouzar* ('the deaf'), *Le Bras* ('the big/thick'), *Le Cam* ('the cripple')¹⁸, *Le Corre* ('the dwarf')¹⁹, *Le Dantec* ('the big tooth'), *Le Du*, *Le Duff* ('the black'), *Le Garrec* ('the big leg'), *Le Meur* ('the big;' W. *Mawr*), *Le Guen* ('the fair'), *Le Moal* ('the bald'), *Le Quellec*, *Calloc'h* (< *kell* 'the big testicles'), *Le Teodec* ('the big tongue, talkative'), *Le Treut* ('the skinny'), *Le Teo* ('the fat'), *Morzadec* ('big thigh'), *Pennec* ('big head'), *Scouarnec* ('big ear'), *Tallec* ('big brow'), *Troadec* ('big foot').

This list is far from exhaustive but, once again, it does demonstrate that the Breton evidence offers broad insight into peasant culture. The fact that a few identical names can be found in the 10th century Cornish Bodmin Manumissions suggests that these name types are very archaic indeed: *Freoc* 'big nose' corresponds to Breton *Friec*. While Cornish *Talan* 'small brow' has no direct equivalent in modern Breton, one does still encounter similar names in Cornwall today such as *Tallack* ('big brow'). Note also *Bain/Bean* ('small'), *Moyle* ('bald'), etc. (cf. *Le Bihan*, *Le Moal*, *Le Tallec* above) (see Thompson 2003).

3.5. Type 5 Names: Epithets Relating to Character, Titles of Nobility, etc.

3.5.1. Background

The difference between the patronyms I have examined so far and those I am about to explore is that most of the preceding ones are still intelligible to modern Breton speakers. There is a large body of names, however, which is extremely ancient and whose meanings are generally opaque. Thanks to abundant early evidence offered by the Breton cartularies (9th-14th centuries), as well as parallel evidence found in the poetry of the *cynfeirdd* (Early Bardic Poets) and in Breton, Cornish and Welsh genealogies, these names belong to an unbroken tradition having its roots in the British Heroic Age. It is therefore likely that many of the names I shall study below were originally borne by the Brythons who migrated to Armorica between the 4th and 8th centuries.

Tanguy (1998: 52) points out that over 1,440 personal names appear in the Cartulary of Redon alone. Of these, 90% date to the 9th and 10th centuries. Most of the personal names cited herein are drawn from this source. I shall also cite a scattering of names from the cartularies of Quimperlé, Quimper and Landevennec.

¹⁸ Morgan and Morgan (1985: 67) give several names for the 17th century ex. *Dafydd Gam* of Breckonshire, *Thomas Cam* 1633. The English expression 'to have a *game leg*' looks like a Brythonic borrowing. Note also that in American slang of the 1930s 'gam(s)' meant 'legs:' "She has a nice pair of gams."

¹⁹ Triad 36 (Bromwich 1978) *Coraniaid*. See also Breton: *korriğan* (also Welsh: *Corgi*).

3.5.2. Epithets

Tanguy (*ibid.*, 53) points out that these names nearly always appear as compounds and that the most frequently occurring constituent in the Cartulary of Redon relates to 'iron.' Considering the relative scarcity of this precious metal, iron weapons were most probably reserved for elite warriors (§ 3.6.). References to it occur 95 times and appear under the forms *iarn*, usually prefixed, and *hoiarn* usually suffixed (see § 3.6., p. 52 below). One of the most remarkable survivals of Brythonic names containing *hoiarn* is the modern Breton family name *Talhounarn* ('iron brow' or 'iron front'), a name cognate with none other than *Talhaearn tad awen* (*Talhaearn* 'the father of poetic inspiration'), one of the chief bards of Britain during the 6th century who is mentioned alongside *Aneirin* and *Taliesin* in Nennius's *Historia Brittonum* (Williams 1975: xi).

The second and third most common terms are *cat* and *guethen* both meaning 'battle' and, by association, 'warrior.' There are 34 and 48 occurrences of these names respectively. Furthermore, there are 33 occurrences in which *hoiarn* is bound to either *cat* or *guethen* (*ibid.*). As I have already said, these are still well-known constituents of modern Breton names. It is not impossible that these references to iron were already ancient in the 9th century and may reach back into the *La Tène* period. Due to the scarcity of this precious metal and its association with weapons, it may have meant something like 'noble,' 'powerful' or 'courageous.'

The mass of these names thus reflects the values of the Brythonic warrior cast, values which dealt almost exclusively with heroism, steadfastness, ferocity, etc. of warriors and their chieftains in battle. As such, my working hypothesis is that these epithets were originally formulaic in nature and part and parcel of the bards' poetic inventory from the earliest times. An in-depth comparative analysis of the entire corpus of the earliest Breton names and the language of the *cynfeirdd* might therefore yield a few more precious bits of information about the nature of the language of heroic-age Brythonic poetry more generally.²⁰

3.5.3. Anthroponyms and the Brythonic Literary Tradition in Brittany and Wales

Turning once again to the *Trawsganu Kynan Garwyn* ('Eulogy for Kynan Garwyn,' Williams 1975), we have an example of how the Breton naming system ties into medieval Welsh literary tradition. In the very first line of this poem we encounter the following heroic epithet: *Kynan kat diffret*, (*Kynan* 'battle-refuge').²¹ The idea here is that the chieftain must provide protection to his fellow warriors on the battlefield, a central theme of the heroic warrior ethic. This

²⁰ For some insightful studies concerning the history and transmission of the *Gododdin*, *Gweith Gwen Ystrat* and the Northern Heroic Age of the Sixth Century, see Isaac (1998, 1999 a, 1999 b).

²¹ One is tempted to link this word to the modern Breton verb *difretañ*, meaning 'to fight or struggle (with someone who is trying to hold you down).'

concept appears again in another of Taliesin's poems dedicated to *Urien Rheged* to whom he refers as *kad gwortho* ('protector of warriors').²² Likewise, the Cartulary of Redon preserves a similar name under the 9th century form of *Catuuoret* and, in a more evolved form, *Catguoret* (< *Cad* 'battle' + *guoret* 'protection'). The modern form of the name, *Cadoret*, is a very widespread Breton family name today.

The use of heroic epithets of this type is perhaps most spectacular in the *Gododdin*, a collection of panegyric poems chronicling the deaths of the three hundred British chieftains who purportedly fell at the battle of Catterick (*Catraeth*) around the year 590 (Davis 1993). One concerns the hero *Tudfwlch* (B. 14) and is composed of a string of epithets extolling heroic virtues associated with the *comitatus*:

<i>Angor deor dain</i>	Anchor, scatterer of the men of Deira
<i>sarff saffwy graen</i>	serpent with the terrible sting
<i>anysgoget vaen</i>	immovable rock
<i>blaen bedin</i>	forefront of the army
<i>arall arlwy</i>	vigour in reinforcement
<i>treis tra chynnivyn.</i>	violence in great straits
<i>Rwy gobrwy</i>	Meritorious lord
<i>gordwy lain.</i>	force of spears.
<i>Enwir yt elwir oth gywir weithret</i>	For your loyal deeds truly are you called the ruler,
<i>rector rwyfyadur mvr pob kyuyeith.</i>	prince, rampart of every compatriot
<i>Tutfwlch treissic aer caer o dileith.</i>	<i>Tudfwlch</i> , forceful in slaughter, barrier of the fortress. ²³

Despite the fact that there is little concrete evidence proving that the Armorican Brythons preserved a similar body of bardic poetry after they arrived on the continent, a vital clue suggesting that they might have is to be found in an 11th century Latin poem in honour of King Iudicael of Brittany (who died in 639). Fleuriot (1971: 157-159) argues convincingly in favour of the idea that it is a literal translation of a Brythonic-language *gorchan* (i.e., a panegyric poem of about 50-80 lines). He identifies numerous formulas which are close to those found in the poems of the *cynfeirdd* (early bardic poetry; cf. footnotes 16-21). Not only are the themes and structure similar, but also the clipped, stark language.

The source of the poem is the *Chronique de Saint-Brieuc* (Bibliothèque Nationale, Latin ms n° 6003, fol. 49 verso, 14th century; ms n° 9888, fol. 52 verso, 15th century). The Latin poem is quoted in full by Fleuriot (1971: 157f.):

²² *Urien* is known by a series of heroic epithets such as *wledic gweithuudic* 'battle-victorious prince,' *gwarthegyld* 'cattle-raider,' *rwyf bedyd* 'leader of the baptised ones' (i.e. Christians), but also *Glyw Reged* ('brave-one of Rheged; cf. Breton *Gleu* under Type 5 names below), etc.

²³ My translation is a slightly simplified adaptation of K. Jackson's *Gododdin: The Earliest Scottish Poem* (1969: 104).

Multas hostium cateruas quibus circumfundebatur, ex agilibus et robustis manibus, prosternebat in quemcumque enim locum, ille armipotens strenue dimicans. (lines 1-6)

Uel, more inquilinorum in campo iactantium, Iudicaelus iactaret; ubicumque uoluisset ibi iaculum suum descendebat. (lines 7-12)

Et interea quoque more bellatorum in pugno robustorum contra aduersarios pergebat ad bellum. (lines 13-17)

Armigeri(s) eius post se leti exeuntes plurimos faleratos diuidebat equos. Et nonnulli hastecule qui post se ibant pedestres plurimas exuias inuenientes reuertentes domum ueniebant equites. (lines 18-26)

Et ex cadaveribus de post se super terram inhumatis iacentibus, canes, uulturi, (corui) milui, piceue, saturabantur. (lines 27-32)

Et plurimae super uicis in domibus ululantes uiduae manebant mulieres. (lines 33-35)

Quoniam sicut fortis taurus inter boues incognitos et robustus uerris inter porcos alienos aquilaque inter anseres, falco inter grues, yrundo inter apes ita Iudicaelus – rex Britonum Armoricanorum – uelox et agilis, durus bellator, in bellam hastabat inter inimicos in agonem contra se insurgentes. (lines 36-49)

Et precipue multas strages in Francos fecit et prouincias eorum multoties deuastauit, pro eo quod Franci uolebat Britanniam subuigare. (lines 50-56)

‘A host of enemy warriors surrounding him, with agile and robust hands, he cut them down where they stood.²⁴ This warrior, with powerful weapons, fought with ardour. Like a farmer sowing in the fields, Iudicael sowed spears. Wherever he wished them to strike, they found their mark.²⁵

And in the manner of robust warriors in battle, he went to war and confronted his adversaries.

With his young warriors (cf. *ceneu* below) marching joyfully²⁶ behind him, he shared many horses bearing rich trappings (*faleratos*, cf. Middle Welsh *tudet* in the Kynan Garwyn poem below). Several lancers following him brought back many spoils. They came as foot soldiers; they returned as horsemen (see reference below to *Uuiu-ho-march* ‘worthy of a good horse’ and the first lines of the *Kynan Garwyn* poem below).

After his passage dead bodies lay strewn over the earth. Dogs, vultures, ravens, kites and magpies were satiated.²⁷

Numerous were the widows dwelling in towns who wailed in their houses.²⁸

[He was] like a courageous bull among anonymous oxen, a robust boar among foreign swine, an eagle among geese, a falcon among cranes, a swallow among bees.²⁹ Thus, Iudicael, Iudicael King of the Armorican Brythons, supple and agile, a hard fighter in war, rushed into battle surrounded by the enemies who rose up against him;

He provoked great carnage, especially among the Franks and often devastated their provinces because the Franks sought to subjugate Brittany.’ (translation by G. German).

²⁴ *Canu Aneirin* (verse 60): *gwnaeth gwynnyeth gwreith y law* ‘the action of his hand caused a massacre.’

²⁵ *Canu Aneirin* (verses 262f.): *Heesit eis ... yg cat veru* ‘He sowed his spears in the battle of javelins.’

²⁶ *Canu Aneirin* (verse 420): *rieu ryuel chwerthin* ‘lords with warrior laughter.’ Note also the Breton name *Cadlaouen* ‘happy in battle.’

²⁷ *Canu Aneirin* (verse 218): *ermygei galaned* ‘He furnished dead bodies;’ (verse 205): *bwyf e eryr ysmgei* ‘He provided food for eagles;’ (verse 124): *Gochore brein du ar vur* ‘He nourished black ravens near the rampart,’ etc.

²⁸ *Canu Aneirin* (verse 265): *goruc wyr lludw / a gwraged gwydw kyn no e agheu* ‘Before he died, he transformed men into ash, and wives into widows.’

²⁹ *Canu Llywarch Hên* (XI, verse 7): *Kyndylan callon hebawc* ‘Cynddylan falcon heart;’ *Canu Taliesin* (III, verses 5-6): *Uryen Reget, greidyawl gafael eryr* ‘Urien Rheged, ardent like a claws of an eagle;’ *Canu Aneirin* (verse: 422): *tarw trin* ‘bull of battle.’

The theme of generosity, so important a part of the heroic ideal, is found in the king's name itself: *Iudic* 'Lord' and *hael* 'generous' and by extension 'noble.' Iudicael's willingness to give horses to his warriors is echoed in the introductory lines of *Trawsganu Kynan Garwyn* ('Eulogy for Kynan Garwyn') in which Taliesin lists the gifts that his lord, *Kynan*, has offered him, among which are horses:

<i>Kynan kat diffret</i> (Conan battle-defence)	<i>am anloffes ket.</i> (handed me gifts) ³⁰
<i>Kanyt geu gofyget</i> (Since it is not a lie to praise)	<i>gwrth heliwr trefbret.</i> (the hunter of the land)
<i>Kant gorwyd kyfret</i> (100 steeds of equal speed)	<i>aryant eu tudet</i> (with silver trappings)
<i>Cant llen echoec</i> (with 100 purple covers)	<i>o vn o vaen gyffret.</i> (of the same size)

(Williams 1975: 1, ll. 1-4)

Not only does Iudicael's *gorchan* suggest that a bardic poetic tradition survived in Brittany, but that the Breton naming system is an integral part of this tradition. There can be little doubt that the warlike patronyms listed below reflect the mindset and ideals of the Brythonic warrior caste of the early Middle Ages.³¹

³⁰ The first and second lines of this extract were emended by Ifor Williams (1975: 16) and L. Fleuriot (1981: 28) respectively.

³¹ William of Poitiers paints an eye-opening, if unflattering, picture of the Breton warrior aristocracy of his day in his 11th century *Life of William the Conqueror*. The similarity between the thematic content of Iudicael's *gorchan* and William's testimony is striking:

Homini acrioris naturae, fervidae aetatis, ministravit plurimum fiduciae regio longe lateque diffusa, milite, magis quam credible sit, referta.

Partibus equidem in illis miles unus quinquaginta generat, sortitus more barbaro denas aut amplius uxores: quod de Mauris veteribus refertur, legis divini atque pudici ritus ignaris. Ad hoc populositas ipsa armis et equis maxime, arborum culturae, aut morum, minime student. Uberrimo lacte, parcissimo pane, sese transigunt. Pinguia pabula gignunt percoribus loca vasta et ferme nescia segetum. Cum vacant a bello, rapinis, latrociniiis, caedibus domesticis aluntur, sive exercentur. Praelia cum ardenti alacritate ineunt; dum praeliantur, furibundi saeviunt. Pellere soliti, difficile cedunt. Victoria et laude pugnando parta nimium laetantur atque extolluntur: interemptorum spolia diripere, ut opus decorum voluptuosumque, amant.

This man (Conan, Duke of Brittany), violent in nature and hot-blooded, owing to his age, enjoyed the steadfast allegiance of a vast country which, more than it is possible to imagine, is populated by an incredible number of warriors.

For in this country, a single warrior will engender fifty others, by sharing, in the manner of the barbarians, ten women or more: this is a custom which goes back to the ancient Moors, a people ignorant of divine law and virtuous customs. This large population devotes itself principally to the warfare and horsemanship; they neglect the cultivation of fields and morality. They nourish themselves with abundant quantities of milk but eat very little bread. Fertile pasturelands nourish their herds, vast tracts of land where harvests are practically unknown. When not waging war (outside of their borders?), they live off what they

3.6. Epithets Containing References to Victory, War, Warriors, Weapons

This first section consists of names containing the following roots: *Bud-* ‘victory,’ *Cad-* ‘battle,’ *Cor-* ‘warband/warrior,’ *dron* ‘warband,’ *Guethen* ‘battle/warrior,’ *Uuicon* ‘warrior,’ *Iarn-/Hoiarn* ‘iron’ (one with iron weapons, i.e. noble; see § 3.5.2., p. 48 above). My translations are interpreted principally from the work of Fleuriot (1964), Fleuriot and Evans (1985) and Tanguy (1981, 1986, 1998).³²

Old Breton Source	Constituents	Literal Translation	Modern Breton Form
<i>Budoc</i>	<i>Bud-oc</i>	Victory-like/victorious	Beuzec ³³
<i>Budhoiarn</i>	<i>Bud-hoiarn</i>	Victory-iron	Bizouarn
<i>Butuuoreth</i>	<i>But-uouret</i>	Victory-protection	Buzoret ³⁴
<i>Cadoc</i>	<i>Cad-oc</i>	Battle-like	Cadec ³⁵
<i>Catuallon</i>	<i>Cat-uallon</i>	Battle-valorous	Cadoalen, Cadalen ³⁶
<i>Cadual</i>	<i>Cad-uual</i>	Battle-valorous	Cadol
<i>Cadiou</i>	<i>Cad-iou</i>	Of warlike nature	Cadiou ³⁷

have obtained through pillaging, plundering and domestic wars, or they engage in military training. They rush into battle with *joyous ardor and, when in combat, they fight savagely*. Since they are used to driving their enemies before them, it is difficult to make them yield. Victory and glory acquired in battle give rise to great rejoicing and excessive pride; *they enjoy looting the bodies of those they have slain. For them it is an honour and a pleasure*. (translation by G. German).

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Prof. Jean-Christophe Cassard (University of Brest) for having brought Foreville’s Latin-French edition to my attention (1952: 109-111).³² Deshayes’ (1995, 1999, 2000) painstaking work provides a very useful synthesis of huge numbers of these names, their possible sources and modern derivatives.

³³ Cf. Cornish *Biddock*.

³⁴ Near Coray, southern Finistère, there is a farm named Kerdreoret, possibly from **Caer* + *Trech-uouret* ‘victory-protection.’ That the name actually existed is confirmed by Fleuriot (1964: 399).

³⁵ *Caddick* and *Caddock* are Welsh equivalents.

³⁶ This is none other than the *Cadwallawn*, a well-known figure of Brythonic/Welsh tradition. The name is related to the *Catuvellauni*, the name of a famous Gaulish/British tribe.

³⁷ According to Fleuriot (1964: 80), the *-iou* suffix is related to **yugo* ‘yoke’ (cf. *Ver-iugodumnus*, Welsh *cyfiaw* ‘equality, friendship’). It possibly means something like ‘having the nature of:’ *Cadiou* (trisyllabic [ka’di-u]) ‘having the nature of a warrior, warlike;’ *Cariou* (trisyllabic [ka’ri-u]) ‘having the nature of a kinsman/friend;’ and *Riou* (disyllabic [ri-u]) ‘having the nature of a king,’ etc.

Old Breton Source	Constituents	Literal Translation	Modern Breton Form
<i>Catuoret</i>	<i>Cat-uuoret</i>	Battle-protection	Cadoret
<i>Cathoiarn</i>	<i>Cat-hoiarn</i>	Battle-iron	Catouarn ³⁸
<i>Catnemed</i>	<i>Cat-nemed</i>	Battle-sacred/venerated	Canevet ³⁹
<i>Corguethen</i>	<i>Cor-guethen</i>	Warband-warrior	Corvezec, Corven
<i>Druniou</i>	<i>Drun-iou</i>	Nature of the warband	Droniou ⁴⁰
<i>Euhoiarn</i>	<i>Eu-hoiarn</i>	Good-iron	Ehouarn, Nihouarn
<i>Guethenoc</i>	<i>Guethen-oc</i>	War(rior)-like	Guezec, Guézenec
<i>Guethengar</i>	<i>Guethen-car</i>	Warrior-friend/kinsman	Guézengar
<i>Hoiarnscoit</i>	<i>Hoiarn-scoit</i>	Iron-shield	Harscouet, Hascoet ⁴¹
<i>Haer-uuethen</i>	<i>Haer-uuethen</i>	Fearless/bold-warrior	Hervezen ⁴²
<i>Haelguethen</i>	<i>Hael-guethen</i>	Generous-warrior	Hélézen
<i>Hoiarmviu</i>	<i>Hoiarm-biu</i>	Iron-lively	St. Houarno, Hervé
<i>Iarnogan</i>	<i>Iarn-ogan < uuocan</i>	Iron-deed	Jarnigon, Hernigou
<i>Iarnhouuen</i>	<i>Iarn-houuen</i>	Iron-friendly	Jarnouen
<i>Kenguethen</i>	<i>Ken-guethen</i>	Handsome-warrior	Quenvén
<i>Loeshoiarn</i>	<i>Loes-hoiarn</i>	Hunt/expel (with) iron	Loussouarn
<i>Moruuethen</i>	<i>Mor-uuethen</i>	Great warrior	Morvézen, Morvéen

3.7. Epithets Containing References to Courage, Strength, Impetuousness and War-like Animals

Courage, strength and impetuousness were often expressed using the following epithets: *fram* ‘surging forward,’ ‘ardent,’ *gleu* ‘brave,’ *hitr/hedr/haer* ‘bold,’ ‘vigorous,’ *maen* ‘great,’ ‘powerful,’ *uual* ‘valour,’ ‘valorous,’ *uallon* ‘full of valour,’ *uuocan* ‘deed,’ ‘glory,’ *tan* ‘fire,’ ‘frenzy’ and so on. It is interesting that the emphasis is placed almost entirely on emotional or physical attributes rather than any reference to strategy or tactics.

³⁸ Morgan and Morgan (1985: 61) note that Welsh *Catharn* (ex. Henry Catharn 1533) may come from Welsh *Cadhaearn* (< Catihernus) and not *Cadarn*.

³⁹ *Nemed* here is related to *nemeton* meaning ‘sanctuary’ or ‘sacred place.’

⁴⁰ Fleuriet and Evans (1985, vol. 1: 152) ties Old Breton *drogn* to Old Irish *drong* ‘gathering, troop, warband.’ It would have the same root as Old English *dryht* meaning ‘people, army.’

⁴¹ Modern Cornish: *Arscoet*.

⁴² *Haer*, itself from older *hitr/hedr*, is found in the Welsh *Canu Hengerdd* (Early Bardic Poetry). The word exists in Modern Breton, *her*, and means ‘hardy, fearless or energetic.’

Old Breton Source	Constituents	Literal Translation	Modern Breton Form
<i>Arth</i>	<i>Arth</i>	Bear	Arzic, Narzic
<i>Arthmael</i>	<i>Arth-mael</i>	Bear-prince	Armel, Armelle
<i>Broch</i>	<i>Broch</i>	Badger	Broc'h, Broc'han ⁴³
<i>Brochfael</i>	<i>Broch-mael</i>	Badger-prince	Pronval
<i>Fram-uual</i>	<i>Fram-uual</i>	Ardent-valorous	Fraval, Fravallo
<i>Gleuhedr</i>	<i>Gleu-hedr</i>	Brave-bold/fearless one	Le Gléver
<i>Gleumaroc</i>	<i>Gleu-maroc</i>	Brave-horseman	Glémarec ⁴⁴
<i>Gleuethen</i>	<i>Gleu-uuethen</i>	Brave-warrior	Glévezén
<i>Gourgan</i>	<i>Gour-cant</i>	Warrior/man-perfection	Gourguen
<i>Gurgual</i>	<i>Gur-gual</i>	Warrior/man-valorous	Gurval ⁴⁵
<i>Guoidnou</i>	<i>Guoid-gnou</i>	War cry-renowned	Gouennou, Gouesnou
<i>Maenceneu</i>	<i>Maen-ceneu</i>	Powerful-warrior	Mainguéné ⁴⁶
<i>Maenuoret</i>	<i>Maen-uuoret</i>	Powerful-protection	Menoret
<i>Maengi</i>	<i>Maen-gi</i>	Powerful hound	Menguy, Mainguy
<i>Moruuan</i>	<i>Mor-uuan</i>	Great-assault	Morvan, Morvannou
<i>Tangi</i>	<i>Tan-gi</i>	Fire-hound	Tanguy ⁴⁷

3.8. Epithets Containing References to Honorific Titles, Noble Lineage, Social Status and Aristocratic Values

Anau ‘wealth,’ *bri* ‘power,’ ‘dignity,’ *car* ‘friend,’ ‘kinsman,’ *cant* ‘perfect-ion),’ *con* ‘elevated/illustrious’ or ‘hound,’ *drech* ‘appearance,’ *dumn* ‘world/deep’ (cf. Gaulish *dobno* ‘the world below,’ Delamarre 2003: 427), *eun* ‘straight,’ ‘honest,’ *-gen* ‘descendent of,’ *hael* ‘generous,’ *iud* ‘lord/prince,’ *iunet* ‘desired,’ *mael* ‘lord/prince,’ *monoc* ‘lord/prince,’ *pir* ‘lord/prince,’ *naf* ‘lord/prince,’ *ned* ‘sanctified’ or ‘venerated,’ *ri* ‘king,’ *roen/roeant* ‘of royal’ (lineage), *tiern*

⁴³ Modern Cornish: *Brock*.

⁴⁴ Modern Cornish: *Marrack*.

⁴⁵ In some of these examples, *gur* might represent Old Breton *uuor-* (Gaulish *ver-*) meaning ‘super’ which has survived in Modern Breton in words such as *gourdeiziou* ‘super-days’ (the last six days of the year and first six days of the following year) and *gournozañ* ‘to carouse all night long.’

⁴⁶ *Maen* ‘great, powerful’ from Latin *magnus* may very well have been confused with Breton *maen* meaning ‘stone.’ *Ceneu* ‘young warrior’ is found in modern *Quinou* and *Kerguinou*. *Quiniuou* could mean ‘having the nature of a young warrior.’ Deshayes (1995: 48) gives the name *Iunkeneu* (*iun* ‘desire’ + *keneu* ‘young warrior,’ *Cartulary of Redon* (C/R)) as the source of modern *Jinguéné*, *Junguené*, *Ginguené*.

⁴⁷ Modern Cornish: *Tangye*.

‘lord/prince,’ *uuere* ‘eminent,’ *uuuu* ‘worthy,’ *uuin* ‘blessed, pure’ (cf. Fleuriot 1964: 400; Tanguy 1998: 54).

Old Breton Source	Constituents	Literal Translation	Modern Breton Form
<i>Brioc</i>	<i>Brioc</i>	Dignified/powerful	Briec
<i>Brient</i>	<i>Brient</i>	Privilege, free man(?)	Brient
<i>Briuual</i>	<i>Bri-uual</i>	Powerful-valour	Brioual, Brivoal
<i>Conan</i>	<i>Con-an</i>	Little hound	Conan, Connan ⁴⁸
<i>Dumnuuallon</i>	<i>Dumn-uuallon</i>	World-valorous	Donval, Donal ⁴⁹
<i>Dumnuuoret</i>	<i>Dumn-uuoret</i>	World-protection	Donoret
<i>Drechanau</i>	<i>Drech-anau</i>	Appearance-rich	Dréanno, Le Drian
<i>Haelcomarch</i>	<i>Hael-comarch</i>	Generous-succour	Helgouarc’h
<i>Haelguethen</i>	<i>Hael-guethen</i>	Generous-warrior	Hélézen, Helguen
<i>Haeluuocan</i>	<i>Hael-uuocan</i>	Generous-deed	Hélégan
<i>Haelouuri</i>	<i>Hael-ouuri</i>	Generous-dignity	Hellouvry, Héléury
<i>Haeluoret</i>	<i>Hael-uuoret</i>	Generous-protection	Héloret
<i>Iudhael</i>	<i>Iud-hael</i>	Lord/prince-generous	Jéquel, Giquel, Juhel ⁵⁰
<i>Iedechael</i>	<i>Iedec-hael</i>	Lord/prince-generous	Jézequel
<i>Iudcum</i>	<i>Iud-cum</i>	Lord/prince-gentle	Kericuff
<i>Mael</i>	<i>Mael</i>	Prince	Le Mael/ Mel, Maelan
<i>Maeloc</i>	<i>Mael-oc</i>	Prince-like	Le Mellec ⁵¹
<i>Maelogon</i>	<i>Mael-ogon</i>	Prince-deed	Mélégan
<i>Maelscuet</i>	<i>Mael-scuet</i>	Prince-shield	Melscoet
<i>Uuormael</i>	<i>Uuor-mael</i>	Warrior/super?-prince	Gourmel Gorvel
<i>Gourmaeloc</i>	<i>Gour-mael-oc</i>	Super?-prince-like	Gorvellec
<i>Catamel</i>	<i>Cata-mel</i>	Battle prince	Canvel

⁴⁸ As in the Goidelic languages, *Con-* is an extremely common root and means ‘elevated,’ ‘eminent’ or ‘hound.’ The most common of these names in Brittany is *Conan*. The earliest reference to it is found in 835 in the *Cartulary of Redon*, where it appears 19 times. It was also borne by several Dukes of Brittany as well as by the traditional founder of Brittany, *Conan Meriadec*. *Meriadec* is now reappearing as a first name.

⁴⁹ This very old name already appears in 5th century Roman inscriptions as *Dumnovellaunos* (var. of *Dubnovellaunus*) and appears to come from *Dumn-* (‘world’ or *Dubn-* (‘deep’) + *uual* (‘valour’). This is an earlier form of *Dwfnwal* and is cognate with Irish *Domhnaill* (> Donald).

⁵⁰ Lambert (1994: 228) derives *iud* from Latin *iudex* with the meaning of ‘judge.’ *Iudhael* was introduced in England by Breton followers of William the Conqueror and took on the form *Jekyll*.

⁵¹ Modern Cornish: *Maile*.

Old Breton Source	Constituents	Literal Translation	Modern Breton Form
<i>Haermael</i>	<i>Haer-mael</i>	Bold-prince	Hervel
<i>Rimael</i>	<i>Ri-mael</i>	King-prince/great	Rimel, Kerivel
<i>Uurmonoc</i>	<i>Uur-monoc</i>	Super-prince	Gourvenec ⁵²
<i>Roennuallon</i>	<i>Roen-nuallon</i>	Noble-valorous	Ronvallon, Rouello
<i>Roenualoc</i>	<i>Roen-ualoc</i>	Noble-valorous	Roualec
<i>Roinoc</i>	<i>Roin-oc</i>	Noble-like	Ronec
<i>Roehael</i>	<i>Roen-hael</i>	Noble/generous lineage	Ronhel
<i>Altroen</i>	<i>Alt-roen</i>	High-lineage/nobility	Audren, Audran
<i>Uuiumarch</i>	<i>Uuiu-march</i>	Worthy-stallion	Guivarc'h, Guimarc'h
<i>Uuiuhomarch</i>	<i>Uuiu-ho-march</i>	Worthy-good-stallion	Guyomarc'h
<i>Riuual</i>	<i>Ri-uual</i>	King-valorous	Rivoal, Rivoallan ⁵³
<i>Uuinhael</i>	<i>Uuin-hael</i>	Blessed/pure-generous	Guinhael
<i>Guenn</i>	<i>Guenn</i>	Pure/blessed	St. Guen, Le Guen
<i>Uuinoc</i>	<i>Uuin-oc</i>	Pure/blessed-like	Le Guennec Guéneuc
<i>Uuincant</i>	<i>Uuin-cant</i>	Blessed-perfect(ion)	Guengant
<i>Uuincar</i>	<i>Uuin-car</i>	Blessed-friend/kinsman	Guengar, Guenguéno
<i>Uuinualoe</i>	<i>Uuin-uualoe</i>	Blessed-valorous	Gwenolé

As already mentioned, the Cornish *Bodmin Manumissions* manuscript contains a considerable number of Type 5 names proving that Cornish serfs still bore similar heroic epithets as late as the 10th century: *Beli*, *Bleidiud*, *Bleidcum*, *Brithael*, *Budic*, *Cantgueithen*, *Commonoc*, *Guentanet*, *Guentigirn*, *Gurguaret*, *Gurbodu*, *Gurcant*, *Gurlouen*, *Iarnguallon*, *Iudicael*, *Iudnerth*, *Maeloc*, *Morcant*, etc. (Jones 2001, see above p. 36).

3.8.1. Historical Figures

A number of Breton names comes from well-known historical figures of the British Dark Ages. I have already made numerous references to *Urien* (< *Urbgen*) which is still a common family name in Brittany and appears under the forms of *Urien*, *Irien* as well as *Lannurien*, etc. Morgan and Morgan (1985: 202) demonstrate that variants of *Urien* are also found in the northwestern counties of England and in Scotland under the spellings of *Urion*, *Uren* and *Youren*. The

⁵² Cf. *Vortigern* > *Gwrtheyrn* 'super-chieftain/ruler.'

⁵³ *Riwal* was an early 6th century king possessing lands in both Cornwall and in the North of Brittany (Domnonée).

question is whether this name is a survival from Brythonic times or a later importation from Brittany, Cornwall or Wales. How many other such Brythonic names exist in England or Scotland? Answers could provide us with some interesting insight into the anglicisation of Britain. Urien's son, *Owain* (in modern Welsh orthography), was also the subject of a number of panegyric poems attributed to Taliesin. *Ewen* is a modern Breton cognate and is currently making a come back as forename. Other forms, such as *Yvain*, *Yvin* are also well attested Breton family names.

Guorthigern (< *Uuortigern*), a title meaning 'super/over-lord,' is a modernised form of the *Vortigern* of Arthurian tradition. It appears today as a place name in several areas of Brittany (cf. Ile de Groix), under the form of *St. Gurthiern* (Middle Welsh *Gwrtheyrn*), and also as a patronym, *Gouziern* (Tanguy 1989). Note that *teyrn* (< **tigernos*) is also the second element of another family name *Mordiern* ('Great-Lord' < **Maro-Tigernos*).

Madec is a common Breton family name and corresponds to Welsh *Madog*, *Maddock/Maddox* being the English forms. *Caradec* is even more ancient. *Caratacus* was the Brythonic leader who led the Brythons against the Romans until his capture in 52 AD. The name is still heard in Wales and Cornwall under the anglicised form *Craddock/Craddock* and, more recently, as a neo-Brythonic forename, *Caradog*.

3.8.2. Mythological Characters

One might be surprised to encounter such family names as *Prédéry* (Welsh *Pryderi*, Old Breton *Pritiri* 'worry,' 'consternation'), one of the main characters of the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*, i.e. the son of *Pwyll* and *Rhiannon*. According to Fleuriet (1964: 399), *Billy* (*Bili*, recorded in the *Cartulary of Quimperlé* (C/Qé) in the year 1084), meaning 'brilliant,' has survived until the present day in a number of place names, such as *Lambili*, *Lanvily*, *Saint Bily*. Fleuriet (1985 a: 64) associates the name with *Bel-* of Old Irish *Beltene* and Gaulish *Belinus*. It occurs in the *Cartulary of Redon* under the form of *Uurbili*, which may mean 'very-brilliant' and could be linked to *Gourvili*, a toponym to the north of Quimper. It is probably also linked to *Beli* who appears as the father of both *Lludd* and *Caswallawn* in Welsh sources. There is a *Bili* who figures as one of the abbots of the Abbey of Redon and a *Bili* mentioned in the Cornish *Bodmin Manumissions*.

The parish of *Plougonvelin* near Brest contains the name *Convelin*, a modernised form of **Cunobelinos* (*Con* 'elevated' + *Belin* < *bel-* 'brilliant'), cognate with Welsh *Cynfelin* (Tanguy 1981: 137). Deshayes (1995: 35) postulates that *Riuvelin* (recorded in the *Cartulary of Redon* (C/R) in the year 863) also stems from **Rigobelinos* ('king Belin'), which has yielded modern family name *Rivélin* and is also the source of place names such as *Kervélen* < *Kerrivelen* in Eliant near Quimper (cf. fn. 16), concerning the 11th century *Rivelen Mor Martou*, Lord of Cornouaille).

Names associated with *Mabon* (*mab/map* ‘son’) are extremely numerous, mainly in toponyms such as *Kervabon*, *Runmabon*, *Creac’h-Mabon*, *Lesmabon*, etc. This name is identical to Welsh and Cornish *Mabon* (cf. Gaulish *Maponos* the ‘divine son’). Note that both *Mabon* and *Modron* (< *Matrona* ‘divine mother’) who gave her name to the river Marne (Mac Cana 1970: 33), are still found as Cornish family names (Thompson 2003).

Finally, there is the Breton patronym *Le Nuz*, first attested in the *Cartulary of Landevennec* for the year 1050 as *Nut*⁵⁴ and a century later in the *Cartulary of Quimperlé* as *Nud* (Le Menn 1993: 60f.). It is cognate with Welsh *Nudd* (*Nudd/Lludd Llaw Ereint* and Irish *Nuadha* (*airgedlamh* ‘silver hand’)) (Mac Cana 1970: 67-69).

4. Summary

This summary hopefully provides the reader with an idea of the abundance of type 5 names in Brittany today as well as their relationship with similar Cornish and Welsh names of Brythonic origin. In my view, the data presented above could suggest the following:

- a) Traces of the prestige of type 5 names may well have lingered on in Brittany until the late Middle Ages, even among the common people. Otherwise, given the ephemeral nature of the naming tradition of the time, one wonders why such names, whose meanings were probably no longer understood, would have been passed down.
- b) Although there are no texts proving that there ever existed a Breton poetic tradition of the kind preserved in the Welsh *Canu Hengerdd* (Early Bardic Poetry), given that many Old Breton type 5 names are often composed of constituents which are similar (when not identical) to vocabulary found in Middle Welsh heroic poetry, it is hard to believe that these Breton names are not the legacy of a similar caste of professional poets.
- c) The very existence of so many type 5 names informs us that the nature of the traditions and value systems of the Brythons who settled Armorica between the 4th and 8th centuries were not entirely peaceful. They highlight a blatantly warlike dimension of the Brythonic settlement of Brittany which suggests that a significant number of settlers may have been Brythonic *foederatii*, mercenaries, whose purpose was to defend the northwestern sector of the Roman Empire. This would lend credence to Welsh historical traditions found in the *Trioedd Ynys Prydein* (‘Triads of the Islands of Britain;’ Bromwich 1978) and the *Breuddwyd Macsen Wledic* (‘Dream of Macsen Wledig’). Nora Chadwick (1969: 191f.) was among the first to propose this hypothesis and the idea was also taken up by Fleuriet (1980). It therefore seems likely that the Brythons set-

⁵⁴ *Nut*, father of *Ydier*, also appears in the works of Chrétien de Troyes.

tled Armorica for a variety of complex reasons. The widely held theory that they were fleeing the Anglo-Saxons would appear to be overly simplistic.

Conclusion

I began this article discussing the concept of 'Celticity' and, more specifically, the manner in which the naming systems of Brittany, Wales and Cornwall reflect, each in its own way, the Brythonic cultural traditions of Celtic Britain. In so doing, I have attempted to sketch the way this Brythonic system has adapted over the centuries to sociocultural, economic and political pressures and influences both from within and from without their respective communities.

The supreme irony is that it is in Brittany, a French province with no official identity whatsoever, that the 'British' naming tradition has been most faithfully maintained. Moreover, as Fleuriot and Evans (1985, vol. 2: 1f.) point out, the Bretons are the only Brythonic-speaking people who still bear the name of the 'Brython.' Paradoxically, however, relatively few Bretons today have even the faintest understanding of their surnames or, except in the vaguest sense, any consciousness of the historical context in which they evolved (roughly 10% in informal polls I have conducted to date). This may be partly due to the fact that the names are so common that no one gives them much thought. A second reason is that only a minority of students choose to study either Breton language or history since they are not required school subjects.

I have also observed that, just as in Ireland, Scotland and Wales, two naming systems have co-existed in Brittany for generations. One is official and administrative, but originating from Brythonic naming practices, the other, is unofficial, oral and part of the intimate sphere of personal relationships characteristic of small rural communities. The latter most probably represents a continuance of the original Brythonic naming habits. We have also seen how the two systems can be confused by the uninitiated. This colloquial naming tradition certainly also flourished in Cornwall while Cornish remained a living language.

What I have not discussed in this article is the recent trend in all the Brythonic countries to give 'neo-Brythonic' *forenames* to children (*Awenna, Blodwen, Melle, Morwenna, Aneirin, Cadwgan, Gwendal, Taliesin, Tugdual*, etc.), a custom which was abandoned hundreds of years ago. What is perhaps most striking about this development is that, independently of one another, many Breton, Cornish and Welsh parents are once again bestowing the most venerable names of their respective traditions on their children. (The picture is more complex regarding celticised names of non-Brythonic origin). After centuries of steady cultural and linguistic acculturation, this change signals a radical about-face, even if it is only symbolic and limited to a relatively small proportion of these populations. In a sequel to this article (German *fc.*), I shall attempt to explain the rise of neo-Brythonic forenames in Brittany, Cornwall and Wales within the broader context of the 'Celtic ethnic revival(s)' and explore the social and linguistic implications of this process.

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