"llyn tawd rac kywilyd"

Shame in the Medieval Welsh Tale *Owein*

Charlotte Schuitemaker

3587886

BA eindwerkstuk

Juni 2014

Keltische Talen en Cultuur

Universiteit Utrecht

Eerste Begeleider: Ranke de Vries

Tweede Begeleider: Frank Brandsma

Contents

1.Plagiaatverklaring

Hierbij verklaar ik, Charlotte Schuitemaker, student Keltische Talen en Cultuur aan de Universiteit Utrecht, dat ik bij het schrijven van dit BA eindwerkstuk geen plagiaat gepleegd heb en dat deze BA eindwerkstuk het resultaat is van mijn eigen werk.

Naam: Charlotte Schuitemaker

Datum: 03-06-2014

Handtekening:

2. Introduction

In the medieval Welsh tale *Owein*, the knight Cynon tells a story. In his tale about the search for adventure he fights the Black Knight and fails miserably. He is knocked off his horse and the knight does not even take him seriously enough to unarm him. On his return he passes a man, who knows what happened to him and who ridicules him. After that Cynon says to Cai, one of the knights who is listening to his story, *"...a'm kyffes a dygaf ytti, Gei, may rywed na thodeis yn llyn tawd rac kywilyd..."*[1]("… and I confess to you, Cai, that it's surprising that I did not melt into a pool of liquid for shame…".[2]) This is an extraordinary scene in Welsh literature, for it seems uncommon for a knight in a Welsh tale to feel shame, let alone talk about it with his fellow knights. In *Yvain*, the French counterpart of *Owein* written in the 12th century by the author Chrétien de Troyes, the knight Calogrenant tells this same '*conte du honte'* ('tale of shame'). In this French tale, the emotion of shame appears many times. This sparks a question: could the shame present in *Owein* be influenced by French literature?

Last year, John Bollard wrote the article '*Meuyl ar uy Maryf*: Shame and Honour in *The Mabinogi*'. In this piece, he researches the occurrences of the words for shame, and those closely related to it, in the *Mabinogi*. In this essay, a similar analysis will be done of shame in *Owein*, with the difference that in this essay only the words that carry the literal meaning of shame are included. As an addition to this analysis, a comparison will be made with the French tale *Yvain*, to see if the use of shame in *Owein* could be influenced by French culture or literature.

The research question for this essay will therefore be: In what way do the medieval Welsh and French cultural notions concerning shame influence the representation of shame in *Owein*? To form an answer to this question, this essay will focus of the following sub-questions: Where and in what way is shame present in *Owein*?; What role did shame play in medieval Welsh literature and culture? And what are the similarities and differences between the representation of shame in *Owein* and *Yvain*?

[1] Thomson 1968: 9.
[2] Davies 2007: 121.

3 Theoretical and Methodological framework

3.1 Theoretical Framework

To answer the main question of this essay, a number of approaches and types of research will be used. The main subject of this thesis is the emotion of shame in a medieval Welsh text. This topic falls under Emotion Studies. This is a relatively new and popular area of research. Much research is being done in this area. An example is EMMA: a Research Program on Emotions in the Middle Ages. This is an international research program solely researching medieval emotions from different areas of research which started in 2006.[3]

Although this is a popular area of research, much research has been done on emotions in Celtic literature specifically. Especially scarce with regard to Celtic literature is research focussed on one single emotion in detail, how this emotion was triggered in medieval times and how it was used in literature. One of the few pieces written about emotions in medieval Welsh literature is John Bollard's 2013 article '*Meuyl ar uy Maryf*: Shame and Honour in *The Mabinogi*'.

In emotion research, it is important to know which words were used for a certain emotion and to understand the precise meaning they can carry. This is where semantic research comes into play. By looking at the etymology of the Welsh and French words for shame, and where and how they are used in literature, one may get a better grasp of the origin and meaning of these words and this emotion.

Finally, by comparing a French and a Welsh version of the same tale[4], which falls under intertextual research[5], the differences and similarities in the use of shame can become clear. Because both tales are similar, the outcome may give us some insight into the two different cultures the tales were written down in.

3.2 Methodological Framework

This essay starts off with a short piece about the main subject: the emotion of shame. For information about this emotion in general, Nico Frijda's book, *De Emoties: een overzicht van onderzoek en theorie,* and Nathan Rotenstreich's article, 'On Shame', are used. These are two texts that give clear information about the meaning of shame. After that, the focus turns on research on emotions in the Middle Ages with Carolyne Larrington's article 'The psychology of emotion and study of the medieval period'. Information is also given about the research that has already been done on shame in medieval Welsh and French society which is useful and is referred back to in the rest of this essay. This is done with the use of the following articles: Morfydd Owen's 'Shame and Reparation: a Woman's Place in the Kin' and David Hult's 'Lancelot's Shame'. By beginning this essay with this part, every reader has the same level of knowledge about shame that is expected for the rest of this essay.

After giving the necessary information about shame, the analysis of *Owein* starts. For this analysis, R.L. Thomson's edition of the Welsh text, titled *Owein* or *Chwedyl Iarlles y Ffynnawn* ('Owein' or 'The Lady of the Well') and Sioned Davies' translation in *The Mabinogion* are used. These two texts provide a good edition and translation of this medieval tale, and they are widely used.

First, information is given about the text using Thomson's introduction, including a summary of the tale. Then, the words that can mean 'shame' in Middle Welsh will be discussed. Shame is defined in H. Evans and W.O. Thomas' *Y Geiriadur Mawr: The*

---

[3] http://emma.hypotheses.org. (23-05-2014)

[4] It is not certain which tale was written first, the Welsh or the French, or if they had a common source. This is called the *Mabinogionfrage*. For more information see Edel 1996.

[5] For more information about intertextuality and intertextual research see Allen 2011. Especially chapter 6: 'Intertextuality Today'

Complete Welsh-English English-Welsh Dictionary, with the terms: *mevyl*, *kiwilyd* and *gwarth*. When searching for these words in the vocabulary in Thomson's edition, it became clear that only *mevyl* and *kywilyd* are used in *Owein*. After looking at these words and their contexts within the text, it is possible to give the reasons why there is shame present in those particular episodes. A difference of meaning between the words for shame was found and defined with the help of John Bollard's article '*Meuyl ar uy Maryf*: Shame and Honour in *The Mabinogi*' and Morfydd Owen's piece 'Shame and Reparation: a Woman's Place in the Kin'. The etymologies of these words were found in *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (in the case of the word *mevyl*) and in Peter Schrijver's *Studies in British Celtic Historical Phonology* (where *kywilyd* is discussed).

Then the focus turns to the presence of shame in medieval Welsh culture, by looking at texts that do not fall under saga literature (i.e., texts that can be considered to represent daily life rather than an ideal(ized) life as found in saga-tales). It began with looking at medieval Welsh legal texts, using Aled Rhys Wiliam's, *Llyfr Iorwerth: a Critical Text of the* Venedotian Code *of Medieval Welsh Law* and Arthur Wade-Evans'*Medieval Welsh Law: being a text of The Laws of Howel the Good*, which both include the original Middle Welsh texts. Dafydd Jenkins' *The Law of Hywel Dda: Law texts from Medieval Wales Translated and Edited* was also used. Two different versions of medieval Welsh law were used to get a more complete overview. William's book does not include a translation of the laws, which meant an own translation had to be made. For these translations *Y Geiradur Mawr* and Simon Evans' *A Grammar of Middle Welsh* were used. By looking at shame in laws it becomes clear what is legally seen as shameful and what the legal measures are when it occurs.

Another part of medieval Welsh culture, found while analysing the *Llyfr Coch Hergest* ('*The Red Book of Hergest'*), is the *Diarhebion*, a collection of hundreds of Medieval Welsh sayings, some of which include one of the words for shame.

Another part of Welsh literature, where it would seem logical to find the emotion of shame is poetry. Medieval Welsh poetry often describes emotions much more elaborately than the tales. This applies especially to the poems from the cycles *Canu Llywarch Hen* and *Canu Heledd*, which were written later than the epic poems like *Y Gododdin* and were the first poetry corpuses which included not only the actions , but also the emotions of the characters.[6] Jenny Rowland's *Early Welsh Saga Poetry: A Study and Edition of the* Englynion was used to analyse these poems. This book provides reliable editions and translations of the *englynion*, including *Canu Llywarch Hen* and *Canu Heledd*-corpus.

After finding just one mention of shame in these poetic cycles, a change of plans was needed. This started with the website http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk[7], on which one can search for particular words occurring in a collection of 54 manuscripts. With the size of this essay in mind, one manuscript was chosen for analysis: the *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. This manuscript seems the most obvious choice because the edition of *Owein* that is used in this essay is from this manuscript and it is one of the most famous and most widely studied medievalWelsh manuscripts. Finding all the occurrences of these words in the *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, created a good overview of the usage of *mevyl* and *kywilyd* in medieval Welsh literature.

Moving on from Welsh to French, the focus shifted to Chrétien de Troyes' *Yvain*. For this, David Hult's edition and translation into Modern French called *Chrétien de Troyes: Le Chevalier au Lion ou Le Roman d'Yvain* and William Kibler's English translation in *Chrétien de Troyes: Arthurian Romances* were used. After giving the basic information about this text and counting the amount of times *honte*, the French term for shame, is used in *Yvain,* it seemed best to create a table with a short mention of every time *honte* is used in *Yvain* with its

[6] Rowland 1990: 7.
[7] Consulted 23-05-2014.

line number, corresponding with Hult's edition, and whether shame is also mentioned in the same episode in *Owein*. This way, the reader gets a complete overview of shame in *Yvain* and the less relevant occurrences can be left out of the analysis.

After providing all the essential information about *Yvain*, the comparison of this tale with *Owein* is made. Seven episodes were chosen which either had a significant mention of shame or which also included shame in the Welsh tale. Per episode, the reason is given why shame is present in the French tale and compared with the reason why shame was or was not present in *Owein*.

In the conclusion, after having gone through all these steps, one should be able to form an answer to the research question: In what way do the medieval Welsh and French cultural notions concerning shame influence the representation of shame in *Owein*?

4. The Emotion of Shame

Throughout this essay, it is important to keep in mind that, as Carolyne Larrington mentions in her article 'The psychology of emotion and study of the medieval period', like in other cultures, in other times people could have had different ideas about and valuations for different emotions.[8] This means that one can never be one hundred percent sure what medieval people thought or felt.

At the beginning of his article 'On Shame', Nathan Rotenstreich tries to define the meaning of shame. He starts off by stating that:

> "…shame implies (a) both a painful emotion and an awareness that the source of that emotion is in one's own deeds or character, (b) the perception (even if dim) that the cause of that painful emotion is in one's own acts or state which, as such, are improper."[9]

In this quote, he implies that shame consists of two things: knowing that the emotion is caused by oneself and knowing the cause of it is something improper.

He continues his definition of this emotion by quoting other philosophers. He quotes Aristotle with the following:

> "Let shame then be defined as a kind of pain or uneasiness in respect of misdeeds past, present, or future, which seem to tend to bring dishonour; and shamelessness as contempt and indifference in regard to these same things."[10]

This is an interesting quote, because Aristotle mentions that shame is not an emotion that is only linked to the present. One can also feel shame for something he/she has done in the past or something he/she will or might do. He also implies that is could be better to be ashamed than to be shameless, because shamelessness could imply indifference to one's honour. This idea fits in with one of the notions of Spinoza which Rotenstreich refers to: "Spinoza considers shame to be "yet good," in so far as it shows that the feeler of shame is really imbued with the desire to live honorably."[11]

In the article 'Lancelot's Shame' David Hult discusses the French word for shame, *honte*, elaborately. Among other things, he discusses the origin and development of the meaning of *honte*:

> "It has been claimed (Jones 1963:48) that the word, recurring frequently in the *Chanson de Roland*, is the "opposite of *honur*" and is frequently synonymous with "defeat." Expanded from the narrow warrior ethic of the epic song, however, the word takes on wider and wider applications pertaining to the types of disapproval or dishonour with which society judges an individual, coming to refer to verbal *or* physical affronts as well as the conditions that result from them."[12]

With regard to medieval Celtic literature and culture, it is sometimes stated that shame is an emotion which is suitable for women, as Morfydd Owen does in the article 'Shame and reparation: a woman's place in the kin':

---

[8] Larrington 2001: 253.
[9] Rotenstreich 1965: 55.
[10] Rotenstreich 1965: 56.
[11] Roternstreich 1965: 68.
[12] Hult 1988: 32.

> "the attributes of this shame are blushing, timidity, shyness and modesty. These attributes are proper to a woman and can be evoked by events which necessarily expose her to sexual contact like the physical consummation of a marriage. This shame has no ethical connotations and does not imply loss of honour."[13]

Owen indicates that there is a difference between the emotion of shame concerning women and men. The female version seems to be no more than a physical reaction where the male version of shame indicates the loss of status and honour[14], which ties in closely with the original meaning of shame according to Hult.

Nico Frijda mentions in his book *De Emoties* that the external signs of shame, like bowing one's head and casting one's eyes to the ground, are signs of submissive behaviour.[15] This fits in with the female version of shame according to Owen. It would have been very normal, even expected, for a woman to show submissive behaviour, while this behaviour in a man would be considered shameful in the Middle Ages.

[13] Owen 1990: 45.
[14] Owen 1990: 45.
[15] Frijda 1993: 38.

5. Shame in *Owein*

5.1. The Text

Owein is a medieval Welsh tale which is also often named *The Lady of the Well.* It is part of the famous collection of Welsh tales called *The Mabinogion*.[16] This collection includes eleven tales of which the so called *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* are the most famous. *The Mabinogion* also includes five Arthurian tales: *Culhwch ac Olwen* (*How Culhwch won Olwen*)*,Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* (*Rhonabwy's dream*), *Owein, Peredur* and *Geraint fab Erbin* (*Geraint son of Erbin*). The last three tales are also known as *The three romances*. They carry this title because they all have a French counterpart in three well known romances by Chrétien de Troyes named: *Yvain ou le Chevalier au Lion, Perceval ou le Conte du Graal* and *Erec et Enide*. The complete tale of *Owein* is found in the late 14th century manuscript *Llyfr Coch Hergest* ('The Red Book of Hergest').[17] It is unknown when this tale was originally composed, but Thomson mentions that it is almost certain that there was already a written version of this tale by the middle of the 12th century.[18]

The tale *Owein* starts off at King Arthur's court. Before dinner, King Arthur decides to take a nap and asks the knights in the room, Owein, Cynon and Cai, to tell each other stories while he sleeps. Owein asks Cynon to tell the strangest story he knows, which he does. He starts telling the story of his search for adventure as a young knight. After travelling a long distance, he comes to a castle and finds hospitality there. The host tells him about a strange man who would know the way to an adventure. The next day Cynon finds the strange black-haired man, who turns out to be the keeper of the forest, who gives him directions to a well. When he arrives at the well he throws water onto the slab next to it and causes a great storm. After this storm, a Black Knight appears. He challenges Cynon to a fight and easily wins. After his defeat, Cynon is deeply ashamed and returns home.

After hearing Cynon's story, Owein decides it would be interesting to find this well and its Black Knight. Owein retraces Cynon's steps. He meets the keeper of the forest who eventually leads him to the well. Owein also throws water from the well onto the slab and after a big storm the Black Knight appears. They fight and Owein fatally wounds the knight, who flees.

Owein follows him and tries to enter the city ruled by the Black Knight, but he gets trapped between the two gates of the city. Eventually, he is saved by Lunet, a maid of the wife of the Black Knight, also called the lady of the well. She takes him to her chambers and takes care of him. When Owein looks out of the window, he sees the funeral procession for the, now dead, Black Knight. In the crowd, he sees a woman and falls deeply in love with her. This woman, as Lunet explains later on, is the lady of the well and now the widow of the knight. When Owein sleeps, Lunet decides to go to the lady of the well and starts courting her on Owein's behalf. Lunet and the lady of the well have a heated conversation, but eventually Lunet convinces her to marry Owein. They get married and Owein takes over the role of the protector of the well.

In the meantime, King Arthur misses Owein and decides to go and search for him. When they find him, they join Owein and his wife in a great feast. After the feast, Arthur invites Owein to accompany him for three months. He accepts this offer, but instead of three months, he accompanies him for three whole years. After those three years, a maiden of the lady of the well arrives at King Arthur's court. She insults Owein and demands that he give back her lady's ring. When Owein realises what he has done, he goes mad and flees to the

[16] This collection of tales has been edited many times, most recently by Davies (2007).
[17] Thomson 1968: ix.
[18] Thomson 1968: xxi.

woods. He eventually regains his sanity, has more adventures and ultimately reclaims the love of his wife.

5.2. Analysis

In *Owein*, there are two Welsh words used to refer to shame: *kywilyd* (in modern Welsh *cywilydd*) and *mevyl* (in modern Welsh *mefl*).

Kywilyd occurs twice in *Owein.* The first occurrence is in line 200, when Cynon has just lost the fight against the Black Knight. When he returns to the black-haired man, he ridicules Cynon for losing the fight. Cynon says that "*...May rywed na thodeis yn llyn tawd rac* ***kywilyd****..."*[19] ('…it's surprising that I did not melt into a pool of liquid for **shame**…'[20]). The shame Cynon is feeling must be fairly strong, if he even mentions he could dissolve into a pool of liquid from it. However, he does tell his story voluntarily. Why would he do this if it caused so much shame?

The source of his shame is, in this case, losing a fight and coming out of it unharmed. In medieval Wales it was better to not come back from a fight, than to come back a loser. An example of this can be found in the *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*: In triad 22, the names of the "Three Brave Men of the Island of Britain"[21] are mentioned, followed by the sentence "They would not return from battle except by their biers."[22] This indicated that the bravest men would not return from battle alive.

Kywilyd is used for the second time in line 597, when Owein finally wakes up from his bewildered state and realizes his wild, dirty and naked appearance. "*...a chymryt* ***kewilyd*** *yndaw e hun a oruc mor hagyr y gwelei y del wry oed arnaw."*[23] (…and he was **ashamed** to see how hideous his appearance was.[24]). He feels ashamed because of this, and he quickly puts some clothes on. It is safe to say that, like in modern times, it appears to be shameful to be naked in public. This is not common to appear in the wild man-motif of which this scene is an example. In these episodes, men and women run around trough the wilderness naked and do not feel ashamed of it.[25] Owein might also feel ashamed for the fact that he lost touch with reality and sanity, which made him go into this state of bewilderment. Despite the shame he feels for his appearance, he does not avoid people. In fact, he is glad when he meets a maiden who can help him.

The term *mevyl* appears three times in this text. It is used for the first time in line 401: "*A* ***mevyl*** *idi ohonam y gyntaf a yrro att y ggilyd, ae miui y adolwyn gwahawd itti, ae titheu y'm gwahawd inneu."*[26] (And **shame** on whichever of us first sends word to the other, whether it is I to beg an invitation of you, or you to invite me.[27]). This conversation takes place between Lunet and the Lady of the Well. This sentence implies that it is shameful to be the one who tries to reconcile a quarrel, suggesting that it could damage your honour to admit you were wrong.

The second time *mevyl* is used occurs in line 415-6, where, in the same conversation, Lunet states that shame will come upon her if she fails to find a worthy new husband for the Lady of the Well."*...a minneu a af,' heb y Lunet, 'hyt yn llys Arthur, a* ***mefyl*** *im,' heb hi, 'o deuaf odyno heb uilwr a gattwo y ffynnawn yn gystal neu yn wellno'r gwr a'e kedwis gynt.'"*[28]

---

[19] Thomson 1963: 9.
[20] Davies 2007:121.
[21] Bromwich 1961: 39.
[22] Bromwich 1961: 39.
[23] Thomson 1968: 22.
[24] Davies 2007: 132.
[25] For more information on the wild man-motif see Bartra 1994.
[26] Thomson 1968: 15.
[27] Davies 2007:126.
[28] Thomson 1968: 16.

(…and I will go,' said Lunet, 'to Arthur's court, and **shame** on me,' she said, 'if I do not return with a warrior who will defend it as well as or even better than the man who defended it before.'[29]). This implies that it is shameful not to keep ones promises, which, again, could be damaging to one's honour.

Mevyl is also used in line 570 in the expression: *"'...yr **meuyl** ar dy varyf!'"*[30] which means '**shame** on your beard!' Beards were tightly connected with the honour of the medieval Welsh man, which makes this expression a big insult. Michael Cichon even mentions in his article 'Insult and Redress in *Cyfraith Hywel Dda* and Welsh Arthurian Romance' that "Casting aspersions on one's beard has at its root the implication of impotence."[31] A maiden of the Lady of the Well says this to Owein, when he fails to come back to his wife for three years. When the maiden mentions this to Owein, he realises what he has done and probably feels ashamed of his neglect.

There seems to be a difference in meaning between *mevyl* and *kywilyd*, based on the preceding examples. *Kywilid* seems to carry the meaning of the real emotion of shame with its physical signs, like blushing and submissive body language; in other words, internal shame that manifests itself in the appearance or behaviour of the person feeling it. *Mevyl*, on the other hand, seems to be rather an external type of shame. This kind of shame can be imposed on a person. It can also be used conditionally: if one were to do/fail to do something, then, shame would come upon that person. This word seems less connected with someone's internal world and more with that person's external world, like the loss of honour or status. John Bollard also notices this in his article '*Meuyl ar uy Maryf*: Shame and Honour in *The Mabinogi*' and mentions the following:

> "Thus, while *meuyl* has a clear *semantic* relation to the contexts in which we find it, it does not carry much of the *thematic* burden, for it invokes a hypothetical (and generally unlikely) shame in the future, should the condition giving rise to the statement not be met."[32]

Also, to refer back to Morfydd Owen's article 'Shame and reparation: a woman's place in the kin', *mevyl* fits in with the male version of shame where *kywilyd* refers to the more female version. Although, *mevyl* is only used by women in this tale and *kywilyd* is only by or for a man. This seems to contradict.

[29] Davies 2007: 137.
[30] Thomson 1968: 21.
[31] Cichon 2000: 40.
[32] Bollard 2013: 130.

6. Shame in Medieval Welsh Culture and Literature

To get a clearer view of the medieval Welsh concept of shame, this essay will research two versions of medieval Welsh life: the real one and the literary one. It is impossible to know exactly what medieval people thought and felt, but by looking at the etymology of words and the laws it might be possible to get an indication of what role and how big a role shame played in medieval Welsh life. The literary life can be deduced from the medieval Welsh tales and poetry. The real and literary life must be handled separately, because one can not be sure that the writers of tales and poetry intended to give a realistic representation of the actions, thoughts and feelings of that time.

6.1. Etymology of *mevyl* and *kywilyd*

What is the origin of the words *mevyl* and *kywilyd*? The origin of these words could give more insight into the origin of shame in Welsh culture itself. If these words are originally Celtic, it could mean that shame has always been imbedded in the Welsh culture. If these words are loan words from, for example, Old French or Latin, it could mean that the emotion of shame was introduced by contact with another culture. This could make shame less common in Welsh culture and literature than more basic emotions like love and hate. The *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* gives the following etymology for *mevyl*:

> "Crn. C. *meul,* H. Wydd. *mebul*, Gwydd. Diw. *meabhal*, cf. H. Lyd. *meplaom*, gl. *confutari"*[33]

(Medieval Cornish *meul*, Old Irish *mebul*, Modern Irish *meabhal,* compare with old Breton *meploam*, gloss on *confutari*[34])

The *Geiriadur* gives no etymology for *kywilyd*, which Peter Schrijver also noticed while writing his book *Studies in British Celtic Historical Phonology*:

> "This item seems not yet to have received an etymology. A connection with MW *gwyl* 'modest, bashful', OIr. *fial* 'id.' < PCl. **u̯eilo-* seems attractive: **kom-u̯eil-iu̯o-* > **kouēlu̯io-* > LPBr. **Kðwilið* > W *cywilydd*. OIr. *féile* (f *iá*) 'modesty, that which causes shame' comes formally closest to *cywilydd*."[35]

This indicates that *mevyl* and *kywilyd* are both original Celtic words.

There is one other word to be found in the *Geiriadur* with the meaning of shame/insult, namely *gwarth* and Bollard also gives *gwaradwyd* as a word carrying the meaning of shame[36]. As these words does not occur in *Owein*, they will not be included in my research.

6.2. Shame in Medieval Welsh Culture

6.2.1. Laws

The medieval Welsh laws are said to have been constructed by the 10th century Welsh king Hywel Dda[37]. Later, the different regions of Wales adapted the laws to be more suitable for

[33] Bevan & Donovan 2003: under *mefl.*
[34] Own translation.
[35] Schrijver 1995: 242.
[36] Bollard 2013: 124.
[37] Jenkins 1986: xi-xii.

each specific region. Now, the laws can be divided in three groups: the Dimetian code, the Gwentian code and the Venedotian code (also called *Llyfr Iorwerth*).[38] For this essay, a version of the Gwentian code and the Venedotian code are analyzed.

In the Gwentian code there is only one mention of shame:
*"tri **chewilyd** kenedyl ynt: Ac o achaws gwreic ymaent ell tri: llathrudaw gwreic oe hanuod. Eil yw dwyn gwreic arall ary phen hitheu yr ty. Ae gyrru hitheu allan. Trydyd yw y hyspeilaw. bot yn well gantaw y hyspeilaw no bot genthi"*[39]

(the three **disgraces** of a kindred are, and on account of a woman the three occur: the violation of a woman against her will. The second is, bringing another woman to the house, supplanting [the wife] and driving her forth. The third is despoiling her, being more pleased to spoil her than to be connected with her.[40])

In the Venedotian code, there is no mention of *kywilyd*, but *mevyl* can be found three times. It is mentioned the first time in the paragraph concerning the rape of a woman. The paragraph states that, if a woman is raped but the man denies having done this, she must take his member in her left hand and the relics in her right and swear that he has committed rape on her, and that he *"rewneythur **meuel** a sarhaet ydy ac o'e kenedel ac o'e hargluyd*."[41] (has brought **shame** and insult to her and her kindred and her lord). This indicates that, if you bring shame to a woman, you also bring shame to her family and her lord.

Another paragraph in the Venedotian code discusses the three reasons why a man would be allowed to slap his wife. One of the reasons is the following: *"ac am unau **meuel** ar e uaryf*"[42] (and on account of making **shame** on his beard). The fact that it is legal to slap a woman for insulting a man's beard, makes the remark the maiden gives to Owein in line 570 much more powerful, as there could be real consequences for her saying that.

The term *mevyl* is also found in the sentence: "*Puybynnac a dywatto sarheat, try pung esyd yaun y wadu: na wnaeth na **meuyl** na sarhaet ydau nac y'u genedel nac y'u argluyd."*[43]*(*Whoever denies an insult, it is right for him to deny three subjects; not did he make **shame** nor insult to him nor to his kindred nor to his lord). This example shows that *sarhaet* (which means insult, or the compensation for that insult**)** and *mevyl* lie close together but are not the same. Shame must be a lesser version of insult, because there is no compensation for shame to be found in the laws. Another option is that shame is included in the insult. If this is the case, then there would have been no need to add shame to the insult, for it would have been self-evident.

Mevyl appears more often in law texts than *kywilyd*. This seems to go hand in hand with the earlier suggestion that *mevyl* carries the meaning of an external kind of shame that links in with one's honour and status. This seems fitting in official documents like legal texts.

6.2.2. Diarhebion

Another part of medieval Welsh culture are the *Diarhebion*, the Welsh proverbs. These are found in the *Llyft Coch Hergest* as a long alphabetical list with proverbs concerning all different kinds of subjects, including shame. There is little more known about these proverbs.

There are in total 23 proverbs about shame: 8 using *kywilyd* and 15 using *mevyl*. Many

[38] Wiliam 1960: xvii.
[39] Wade-Evans 1979: 126.
[40] Wade-Evans 1979: 269-70.
[41] Wiliam 1960: 28.
[42] Wiliam 1960: 28.
[43] Wiliam 1960: 74.

appear double or with some minor differences in the list. To give an overview of the different kind of proverbs including shame, here are some examples:

p241r "*Gwell goleith **meuyl**; no'e dial."* (It is better to avoid **shame** than to avenge it.)
p242r "*Ny moch dieil; **meuyl** meryd."* (One does not swiftly avenge slow **shame**.)
p242r "*Nyt ystyr karyat; **kywilyd**."* (There is no meaning to love: **shame**.)
p241v "*Hen bechawt; a wna **kewilyd** newyd."* (Old sins make new **shame**.)
p239v "*Ny chyngein **kewilyd**; gan gennat*." (**Shame** is not contained within the messenger.)
p239v "*Ny phyrth newyn; neb **gywilyd**."* (Hunger does not bear any **shame**.)[44]

When looking at the difference between the meaning of *mevyl* and that of *kywilyd*, it is hard to conclude anything from the *Diarhebion*. These proverbs do not seem to use these words as if they have a different meaning or are linked to a specific gender.

6.3. Shame in Medieval Welsh (saga) Literature

A type of text where one could expect shame to be mentioned is poetry. Welsh poetry focused much more on emotions, where the tales tend to focus on the heroic deeds of the characters. Medieval Welsh poetry is often written, not from the hero's point of view, who goes bravely into battle, but through the eyes of the ones who remain. Two of the most famous poem-collections are *Canu Heledd* (The song of Heledd) and *Canu Llywarch Hen* (The song of Llywarch the Old). *Mevyl* is mentioned once in *Canu Heledd*: *"**meuyl** barueu madeu hedyn"*[45] (**Shame** on their beards for failing Hedyn), other than that, no shame is mentioned in both poem-corpuses.

To get more results, the next step is to take an entire manuscript and look at all the occurrences of *mevyl* and *kywilyd*. One of the most famous medieval Welsh manuscripts is the *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. This manuscript was created in the late 14th century and includes many different texts, from the knight's tale *Owein* to medical texts.[46]

The most famous tales included in the *Llyfr Coch Hergest* are the four branches of the *Mabinogi*. In the first three branches of the *Mabinogi,* shortly called *Pwyll, Branwen* and *Manawydan*, shame is occasionally mentioned, most often in a conditional way, where shame would come upon someone if that person were to fail in doing something. There are six mentions of shame in these three tales, a form of *mevyl* is used five times and *kywilyd* once.[47] For example in *Manawydan*: *"**Meuyl** ymi heb ef pei as caffwn i oll wynt onys crogrwn."*[48] ('**Shame** on me,' he said, 'if I would not have hanged them all had I caught them.'[49]).

---

[44] Welsh text as found on http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/ (23-05-2014) adapted to modern spelling. For more elaborate translations see Appendix II.
[45] Rowland 1990: 441.
[46] http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/en/ms-home.php?ms=Jesus111 (23-05-2014).
[47] As found on http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/en/ (23-05-2014) adapted to modern spelling:
Pwyll:
p176r: ***Meuyl** im heb hi yr ys blwydyn y neithwyr o'r pan elem y n·yblic yn diwat gwely na digrifwch nac ymdidan nac ymchoelyt ohonat dy wyneb attaf i yn chwaethach a uei vwy no hynn o'r bu y·rom ni.*
Branwen:
p180v: *Os gwrthot hynny a wnelynt bot yn debygach gantunt kael **kewilid** a uei vwy.*
p182r: *A **meuyl** ym heb ef ony cheissaf\i waret rac hynn.*
p182v: ***Meuyl** ar uy maraf i heb ef onyt agoraf y drws.*
Manawydan:
p184v: ***Meuyl** ymi heb ef ony wylaf i heno. a'r neb aduc yr yt arall adaw ydwyr hwnn.*
p185r: ***Meuyl** ymi heb ef pei as caffwn i oll wynt onys crogrwn.*
[48] http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/en/ms-page.php?ms=Jesus111&page=185r&srch=meuyl+ymi+heb (23-05-2014).
[49] Davies 2007: 43.

The case is different in the fourth branch of the *Mabinogi*. In this tale *kywilyd* is used eight times and five different people, both male and female, are put to shame.[50] This makes this tale the most shame-filled tale in the *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. This is surprising, especially since it is usually considered to be part of a collection of tales. One would expect that the tales influenced by the continental customs and literature, which were overall filled with more emotion[51], would deal with more occurrences of shame than the more pure Celtic action and warrior focussed tales. Patrick Ford also notices this in his introduction to an edition of this tale[52], but unfortunately, he does not give any thoughts on reasons why this would be the case.

Without the use of *mevyl* in this tale, it is difficult to say something about the exact meaning of *kywilyd*. It seems to be the overall word for shame in this tale.

Of the three romances, *Geraint* and *Owein* both include five mentions of shame.[53] In *Gereint,kywilyd* is mentioned four times, everytime by a man. The one mention of *mevyl* is uttered by a woman. *Peredur* uses *mevyl* and *kywilyd* both only once.[54] They are both said by men and *mevyl* is again used in the saying '*mevyl ar … varyf*'. When comparing the amount of mentions of shame with their French counterparts, the Welsh versions' counts are very low. The smallest presence of shame in *Peredur* may be explained by the ignorance of the main character. Peredur is raised in an isolated forest, when, one day, the meets a knight and decides he wants to become one himself. Without any knowledge of the customs of the court and knightlyhood, he travels to King Arthur's court and encounters many adventures. Since he does not know the rules and customs of the knights of King Arthur's court, he can not feel ashamed if he does not follow or even contradicts them.

Can Rolan, the Welsh adaptation of the French *Chanson de Roland*, uses *kywilyd* four times[55], where the French version mentions it frequently.[56]

---

[50] As found on http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/en/ (23-05-2014) adapted to modern spelling:
p187r: *a threis arnaf a|orugant a* ***chewilyd*** *y titheu.*
p187r: *vyg* ***kewilid*** *ny ellwch chwi y dalu ymi heb agheu pryderi.*
p187v: *a* ***chewilyd*** *mawr a gawssawch.*
p187v: *Oi a wr pa doi arnat ti vyg* ***kewilydyaw*** *i.*
p187v: *a dilyt vyg* ***kewilyd*** *a'e gadw yn gyhyt a hynn.*
p187v: *Ony byd arnat ti* ***gewilyd*** *uwy no meithryn o·honaf i uab kystal a hwnn.*
p187v: *Ys bychan a beth vyd dy* ***gewilyd****.*
p.190r: *ac o achaws y* ***kewilyd*** *a wnaethost di y lew llaw gyffes.*
[51] Other tales that include more than three mentions of shame in the *Llyfr Coch Hergest* are *Gereint, Owein* and *Can Rolan*, which all are, to a certain degree, influenced by continental customs and literature.
[52] Ford 1999: xx.
[53] As found on http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/en/ (23-05-2014) adapted to modern spelling:
Owein: The occurrences can be found earlier in this essay.
Geraint:
p193v: *Wrth uot yn gymeint* ***gewilyd*** *itti arglwyd kyhyrdu* ***kewilyd*** *a miui ac a thy hun.*
p197v: *y keffy* ***gewilyd*** *a gwarthaet yn orulwng gallonnawcdic.*
p199r: ***Meuyl*** *y mi heb hi ot yfaf I diawt yny hyuo ynteu.*
p200r: *Cam oed itt wneuthur* ***kewilyd*** *kymeint a hwnnw imi a gwarthaet.*
[54] As found on http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/en/ (23-05-2014) adapted to modern spelling:
p162r: ac yny ymgaffwyf ac efo y dial vyg **kewilyd** a'm llit ny cheffy ditheu trigyaw dwy nos yn vn ty.
p166v: **mevyl** ar varyf vym porthawr.
[55] As found on http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/en/ (23-05-2014) adapted to modern spelling:
p111v: *ac nyt digewilyd ynn o|r gadwn a wnaeth o* ***gewilid*** *heb y dial.*
p112r: *a* ***chewilyd*** *yw bot gwr mor vygwl y ymadrawd a|hynny am vab.*
p112r: *ac yn eu dyrchauel wynteu y uynyd y deuth chwys idaw y bop aelawt rac* ***kewilyd*** *y uot mor vygwl a hynny.*
p113r: *A menegi idaw bot yn* ***gewilyd*** *idaw kodi kennat yny wypit cwbwl o'r ad wyettei yn digaentach.*
[56] Hult 1988: 32.

7. Shame in *Yvain*

7.1. The Text

Yvain, le Chevalier au Lion is one of the five Arthurian romances written by the French writer Chrétien de Troyes. It was composed somewhere in the late 1170s.[57] His other tales are called *Erec et Enide, Cligès; Lancelot; le Chevalier de la Charrette* and *Perceval, le Conte du Graal*.[58] *Yvain* is the French counterpart of *Owein*. These tales mainly follow the same story. The main differences between these two tales are the extra adventures Yvain has which Owein does not, and the fact that *Yvain* is written much more elaborately than *Owein*, which makes the French tale nearly four times longer than its Welsh counterpart.

The Old and Modern French word for shame is *honte*. *Honte* derives from the Frankish word ***haunita***.*[59] David Hult gives some synonyms and words associated with shame in his article 'Lancelot's shame', for example *leit, duel, agnois* and *blasme*[60], but none of these really carry the meaning of shame. *Honte,* or a version of it, appears 36 times in *Yvain*. Because of the multitude and the occurrences in the episodes which are not present in *Owein*, which make them less relevant for this essay, not all of the occurrences will be discussed here. However, in orderto give a complete overview of shame in *Yvain,* an appendix has been added to this essay which includes every occurrence of shame and whether or not it is also present in the parallel scene in the Welsh version (see appendix I).

7.2. Comparison *Yvain* with *Owein*

The first thing one notices when comparing the presence of shame in *Owein* and *Yvain* is the fact that the term for shame occurs much more frequently in *Yvain*. *Honte* is used 36 times in the French tale, where *mevyl* and *kywilyd* are used five times in total in the Welsh text. This lead to the second difference between these two texts: the French tale uses only one word to denote shame (*honte*) and the Welsh uses two (*mevyl* and *kywilyd*) which carry two different meanings. Another thing that is noticeable is the fact that shame appears in much more episodes in the French tale. Whereas shame is only present in four episodes in *Owein*, it is present through the entire text of *Yvain*.

The comparison will be made between the two tales in seven scenes: Calogrenant's tale, The appearance of the Black Knight, Calogrenant's Defeat, At the Enemy's Court, Conversation between Lunette and the Lady, The Broken Promise, Return to Sanity.

7.2.1. Calogrenant's Tale

The first time *honte* is used in *Yvain* is when Calogrenant (the French equivalent of Cynon) starts his tale. The narrator explicitly mentions that his tale is not one of his honour but of his shame:

> "*Et avec els Calogrenans,*
> *Unz chevaliers mout avenans,*
> *Qui lo rot commenchié .i. conte,*
> *Non de s'onnor, mais de sa* ***honte****."*[61]

[57] Kibler 1991: 8.
[58] Chrétien did not complete this tale, but there were continuations written by different authors to finish the tale. More information about the continuations can be found in Pickens, Busby, Williams 2006.
[59] Grimas 1968: under *honte.*
[60] Hult 1988: 33.
[61] Hult 1994: 52.

("… and with them was Calogrenant, a very handsome knight, who began telling them a tale, not of his honour but of his **disgrace**."[62])

It seems strange for a knight to tell his fellow knights the story of his shame instead of boasting about all his great achievements. However, a tale of shame does seem more believable that a tale of honour. One could easily create a tale about a great adventure he might of might not have had, but why would you make up a shameful one? Calogrenant seems to be aware of this himself, for, while telling his tale, he mentions to the internal audience[63]:

"*Par mi le voir, che saichiés bien,*
M'en vois pour ma ***honte*** *couvrir."*[64]

("I am telling you the truth, you must understand, to explain the cause of my **shame**."[65])

In *Owein* there is no mention of shame in this scene. Owein does, however, have a request for Cynon: *"'Dechreu di,' heb yr Owein, 'o'r hynn odidockaf a wypych.'"*[66] ("'*You* begin', said Owein, 'with the strangest story that you know.'"[67]). The story of Cynon's shame would definitely have been strange and surprising, because the event in his tale is apparently the one and only time when he has failed a quest.

Although the Welsh tale does not mention Cynon's tale as a tale of shame, it obviously is. The difference with the French tale seems to be that Calogrenant is more worried about his credibility than Cynon is, and therefore he puts more emphasis on the shamefulness of his story.

7.2.2. The appearance of the Black Knight

Honte is used for the third time when the Black Knight first enters the stage. By throwing water from the source onto the stone Cynon brings about a terrible storm on the land of the Black Knight which injures or kills any animal or human who is not indoors. Because of this, he angrily confronts Calogrenant :

"*De si haut comme il pot crier,*
Me commencha a deffier,
Et dit: "Vassaus, mout m'avés fait,
Sans deffianche, ***honte*** *et lait."*[68]

(" 'In his loudest voice he began to challenge me, saying: "vassal, you have greatly **shamed** and injured me by not offering a proper challenge."[69])

It is interesting that the Black Knight does not seem to be angry at Calogrenant for the fact that he just brought so much devastation to his kingdom, but rather because Calogrenant did not challenge him before he threw the water on the stone. This situation seems to be shameful for the Black Knight because he did not get the chance to defend his kingdom and honour.

---

[62] Kibler 1991: 295.
[63] The internal audience is the audience that listens to Calogrenant's tale inside the story of *Yvain*.
[64] Hult 1994: 82.
[65] Kibler 1991: 301.
[66] Thomson 1968: 2.
[67] Davies 2007: 116.
[68] Hult 1994: 78.
[69] Kibler 1991: 301.

In *Owein* the Black Knight is angry at Cynon because of the damage he has done to his kingdom:

> ""*Ha warchawc," heb ef, "beth a holut ti y mi? Pa drwc a digoneis i ytti pan wnelut titheu y mi ac y'm kyfoeth a wnaethost hediw? Pony wydut ti nat edewis y gawat hediw na dyn na llwdyn yn vyw y'm kyuoeth o'r gafas allan?""*[70]

(""Knight," it says, "what do you want of me? What harm have I done to you, that you should do what you have done to me and to my kingdom today? Don't you know that the shower today has left alive in my kingdom neither man nor beast that was out of doors?""[71])

Because of this, there is no reason why the Black Knight should feel any shame.

7.2.3. Calogrenant's defeat

When Calogrenant is left defeated by the Black Knight, he simply says: *"si m'en reving **honteusement**."*[72] ("…and I returned in **shame**."[73]). In this case, it seems that the Welsh tale mentions the knight's shame more elaborately than the French. Cynon mentions that "*...May rywed na thodeis yn llyn tawd rac **kywilyd**..."*[74] ('…it's surprising that I did not melt into a pool of liquid for **shame**…'[75]). This is reinforced when he says in lines 213-4 that: *"...nat adeuawd dyn arnaw e hun chwedyl vethedigach no hwnn eiryoet..."*[76] ("… no one ever before confessed to a story that brought so much discredit on himself…"[77]), where Calogrenant only mentions he did not want to ever tell this story[78].

Another difference between these two episodes is that it looks like Cynon's shame is only triggered when he passes the black-haired man on his return and he ridicules him for losing. It is clear that the source of Calogrenant's shame is the fact that he just lost a fight, but it less certain if that is also the case with Cynon. He could be ashamed of losing the fight, of the fact that someone knows that he lost a fight or he could feel shame for being ridiculed, or it could be a combination of these elements.

7.2.4. At the Enemy's Court

When Owein is in the kingdom of the late Black Knight, the only reason that seems to keep him there is the great love he feels for the knight's widow. With Yvain, there is another reason for him not to return to King Arthur's court which becomes clear in the following two passages:

> *"S'il n'en a tesmoing et garant*
> *Que moustrer puisse en aparant,*
> *Don't sui je **honnis** en travers."*[79]

("If he did not have some proof to show in the assembly, he would be thoroughly **shamed**."[80])

---

[70] Thomson 1968: 8-9.
[71] Davies 2007: 120.
[72] Hult 1994: 84.
[73] Kibler 1991: 302.
[74] Thomson 1968: 9.
[75] Davies 2007: 121.
[76] Thomson 1968: 10.
[77] Davies 2007: 121.
[78] Kibler 1991: 302.
[79] Hult 1994: 134.
[80] Kibler 1991: 311.

*"il est **honnis** së il s'en va,*
Que she ne quideroit nus ja
Qu'il eüst ainsi esploitié."[81]

("… if he left he would be **shamed**, for Kay and the other knights would never believe that he had accomplished what he had…"[82])

Yvain believes that, if he were to return to King Arthur's court without any evidence of him winning the battle against the Black Knight, he would suffer great shame, for the other knights would not believe he had won. When the body of the Black Knight is buried, he believes there is no evidence left of him winning the fight and thus that he can not return.

7.2.5. Conversation between Lunette and the Lady

During the conversation between Lunet/Lunette and the Lady of the Well, shame is mentioned in both tales but for different reasons. As mentioned previously in *Owein*, *mevyl* is used twice: once to denote that it is shameful to be the first one to try to reconcile a quarrel and once to make clear that it would be shameful to not keep a promise:
"*A **mevyl** idi ohonam y gyntaf a yrro att y ggilyd, ae miui y adolwyn gwahawd itti, ae titheu y'm gwahawd inneu."*[83] (And **shame** on whichever of us first sends word to the other, whether it is I to beg an invitation of you, or you to invite me.[84]) and "*...a minneu a af,' heb y Lunet, 'hyt yn llys Arthur, a **mefyl** im,' heb hi, 'o deuaf odyno heb uilwr a gattwo y ffynnawn yn gystal neu yn wellno'r gwr a'e kedwis gynt.'"*[85] (…and I will go,' said Lunet, 'to Arthur's court, and **shame** on me,' she said, 'if I do not return with a warrior who will defend it as well as or even better than the man who defended it before.'[86]).

In *Yvain*, shame is also mentioned twice:

"Pour Dieu, car vous en chastïés,
*Si laissiés sevaix non pour **honte**"*[87]

("For God's sake, compose yourself and cease this sorrow, if only out of **shame**…"[88])

"Et plus aime elle li que lui,
*Ne sa **honte** ne son annui*
Ne li loëroit elle mie,
Car trop est sa loiaus amie."[89]

("And she fully realised the damsel loved her more than him and would never give her advice that would bring her **shame** or trouble, for she was too loyal a friend to her."[90])

---

[81] Hult 1994: 144.
[82] Kibler 1991: 313.
[83] Thomson 1968: 15.
[84] Davies 2007:126.
[85] Thomson 1968: 16.
[86] Davies 2007: 137.
[87] Hult 1994: 152.
[88] Kibler 1991: 315.
[89] Hult 1994: 158.
[90] Kibler 1991: 316.

In these four cases, shame is mentioned but not really present. The first mention of *honte* in this episode is interesting none the less. Here, Lunette implies that it is shameful for a woman to feel sorrow for the loss of her husband for a long time. This contradicts with the often recurring episodes in French and Welsh tales, of women nearly going mad and maiming themselves out of grieve for the loss of their husband.

7.2.6. A Broken Promise

When Yvain is back at Arthur's court, it suddenly dawns on him that he has stayed there longer than he had promised to his wife and he immediately feels horrible because of it:

"A grant paine tenoit ses lermes,
*Mais **hontes** li faisoit tenir."*[91]

("With great difficulty he held back his tears, but **shame** forced him to repress them"[92])

This sentence can indicate two things: either Yvain feels ashamed for crying or he feels ashamed for not keeping his promise. The second would be comparable with the shame Owein is told he should be feeling by the maiden who comes to reclaim his wife's ring:

"*A hyt rac bron Owein y doeth a chymryt y vodrwy a oed ar*
y llaw; 'Val hyn,' heb hi, 'y gwneir y dwyllwr aghywir bradwr.
*Yr **meuy**l ar dy varyf!'*"[93]

("And she rode up to Owain and grabbed the ring that was on his finger. 'This,' she said, 'is what we do to a deceitful cheat and traitor - **shame** on your beard!'"[94])

7.2.7. Return to Sanity

The last scene to be discussed which includes shame is the scene where Owein/Yvain wakes up from his bewildered state and finds himself lying naked in the grass.

"Mais nus se voit com .i. yvoire,
*S'agrant **honte**, et plus grant eüst,*
Së il s'aventure seüst."[95]

("But then he saw that he was as naked as an ivory statue; he was **ashamed,** and would have been more so had he realised what had happened…"[96])

This scene in *Yvain* is very similar to the one in *Owein*: "*...a chymryt **kewilyd** yndaw e hun a oruc mor hagyr y gwelei y del wry oed arnaw.*"[97] (…and he was **ashamed** to see how hideous his appearance was.[98]). Both men quickly put on some clothes and are happy to find a maiden who can help him. Shame is here obviously triggered by being naked in public.

---

[91] Hult 1994: 216.
[92] Kibler 1991: 329.
[93] Thomson 1968: 21.
[94] Davies 2007: 131.
[95] Hult 1994: 236.
[96] Kibler 1991: 333.
[97] Thomson 1968: 22.
[98] Davies 2007: 132.

8. Conclusion

Returning to the questions asked in the introduction of this essay: Where and in what way is shame present in *Owein*?; What role did shame play in medieval Welsh literature and culture? And what are the similarities and differences between the representation of shame in *Owein* and *Yvain*?

A word carrying the meaning of shame is used five times in *Owein*. *Kywilyd* is used twice and *mevyl* three times. These occurrences can be organized in three categories: feeling ashamed because of the situation one's in; threatening with potential shame; shame used as part of a proverb, or saying. From the two occurrences of *kywilyd* which fit into the first category, it became clear that it was shameful to come back from a fight a loser and unscathed, and to appear naked in public. The two occurrences of *mevyl* that match with the second category imply that is would be shameful if one were to be the first one to try to make amends after a fight, as would it be not to keep one's promise. The third and final mention of *mevyl* takes place in the saying *"'...yr meuyl ar dy varyf!'"*[99] which translated as 'Shame on your beard!' This is said to Owein after he had not kept his promise, which, again, indicates that it is shameful not to keep one's promise.

There appeared to be a difference of meaning carried by the words *mevyl* and *kywilyd*. They both carry the meaning of shame but, when referring back to Morfydd Owen's article 'Shame and reparation: a woman's place in the kin', *mevyl* seems to fit in with the male and more static version of shame where *kywilyd* refers to the more female and emotional version. Although, *mevyl* seems to be used mainly by women where *kywilyd* is used by men. This seems to contradict.

Analyzing the role shame played in medieval Welsh literature and culture started off with looking at the law texts. In the laws, *mevyl* sporadically occurs and *kywilyd* only occurs once. The preference for *mevyl* seems to be logical, for *mevyl* might have a more external and formal meaning of the word shame than *kywilyd*. The word preferred over the two words that carry the meaning of shame, is *sarhaet,* which means insult. These words are, when it comes to their meaning, closely related, but definitely not the same. While shame is sporadically mentioned in the laws, it is a very popular theme in the *Diarhebion*.

In medieval Welsh literature, in seems like the more French influence there is included in the text, the more shame is mentioned, with the exception of *Math* which does not seem to have any French influence. From the very few mentions of shame, one can conclude that it was not the norm to include shame in the heroic deeds of the Welsh heroes.

The other Welsh texts do not offer much help when searching for the different meanings of *mevyl* and *kywilyd*. Only the laws confirm that *mevyl* seems to have a more static meaning and in *Peredur* the only mention of *kywilyd* in uttered by a man and the only mention of *mevyl* by a woman. This is similar to the use of shame in *Owein*. The other text do not show any difference between these two words.

There are some differences between *Owein* and *Yvain* which are easily noticed, for example the amount of times that shame is mentioned in the Welsh and French texts but there are also similarities to be found. A comparison was made.

In the first two scenes and the fourth scene, the Welsh and the French version included almost exactly the same scene. The one big difference is the fact that the Welsh writer left out the shame or the French writer added it. This seems to be done with the audience in mind. The Welsh audience seemed to be more focused on the heroic deeds of the characters than their feelings, especially the negative ones.

[99] Thomson 1968: 21.

Calogrenant and Cynon both feel ashamed when they are defeated by the Black Knight. An interesting difference between these two episodes is that it looks like Cynon's shame is only triggered when he passes the black-haired man on his return who ridicules him for losing, whereas Calogrenant immediately feels ashamed when he loses the fight. This could imply that, for the Welsh knight, defeat is not shameful as long as no one knows about it or even that the defeat is not shameful but the ridiculing of the black-haired man is.

The conversation scene between Lunette and the Lady is, when looking at shame, completely different. Although the conversation has the same motivation and a similar outcome, shame is mentioned for completely different reasons in the two tales. The Welsh tale uses two cases of hypothetical shame (for example: shame would come to Lunet if she were to fail to accomplish something) which is also popular in the *Mabinogion*.

The last two scenes which include shame in *Owein* are, with regard to shame, exactly the same in *Owein* and *Yvain*.

Finally, to return to the main question: In what way do the medieval Welsh and French cultural notions concerning shame influence the representation of shame in *Owein*? The amount of mentions of shame in *Owein* seems to be the result of some French influence. This became clear when comparing the original Welsh texts with the French translations/adaptations which involve many more mentions of shame.

The way shame is mentioned in *Owein* seems to be a mix. The three occurrences of *mevyl* seem to be standard Welsh mentions of shame; hypothetical shame and the expression 'shame on your beard!' can be found throughout medieval Welsh literature and culture.

The use of *kywilyd* when Owein wakes up naked in a garden after his state of bewilderment could be influenced by both cultures. There is no mention of shameful nudeness in other medieval Welsh literature. It even does contradict somewhat with the shameless nudeness of other wild men in the same motif which is found in more Welsh tales.

The remark "*...May rywed na thodeis yn llyn tawd rac kywilyd…"*[100] still looks odd in a Welsh tale. No comparable episodes have been found in medieval Welsh literature. This makes it likely that this remark was heavily influenced by French culture/literature.

It would be interesting to research shame in medieval Welsh texts on a bigger scale, it is hard to make any big conclusions on the detailed analysis of just one text. Another subject which would be interesting to do a follow up on is the difference between the meaning of *mevyl* and that of *kywilyd.*

For now, when it comes to shame, *Owein* seems to be a good balanced mix of Welsh and French cultural and literary influences.

[100] Thomson 1963: 9.

9. Bibliography

9.1. Books

Allen, Graham, *Intertextuality* (Abingdon 2011).

Bartra, Roger, Carl T. Berrisford (trans.), *Wild Men in the Looking Glass: The Mythic Origins of European Otherness* (Michigan 1994).

Bevan, Gareth A., Patrick J. Donovan, *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru: A Dictionary of the Welsh language* (Cardiff 2003).

Bromwich, Rachel, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Welsh Triads* (Cardiff 1961).

Davies, Sioned, *The Mabinogion* (Oxford 2007).

Evans, D. Simon, *A Grammar of Middle Welsh* (Dublin 2003).

Evans, H Meurig., W.O. Thomas, *Y Geiriadur Mawr: The Complete Welsh-English English-Welsh Dictionary* (Llandysul 1995).

Ford, Patrick K., *Math uab Mathonwy* (Belmont1999).

Frijda, Nico H., *De Emoties: een overzicht van onderzoek en theorie* (Amsterdam 1993).

Grimas, A.J., *Dictionaire de láincien Français: jusqu'au milieu du xiv^{e} siècle* (Paris 1968).

Hult, David F.(trans.), *Chrétien de Troyes: Le Chevalier au Lion ou Le Roman d'Yvain* (Québec 1994).

Jenkins, Dafydd, *The Law of Hywel Dda: Law texts from Medieval Wales Translated and Edited* (Llandysul 1986).

Kibler, William W., *Chrétien de Troyes: Arthurian Romances* (London 1991).

Rowland, Jenny, *Early Welsh Saga Poetry: A Study and Edition of the* Englynion (Cambridge 1990).

Schrijver, Peter, *Studies in British Celtic Historical Phonology* (Amsterdam 1995).

Thomson, R.L. (ed.), *Owein or Chwedyl Iarlles y Ffynnawn* (Dublin 1968).

Wade-Evans, Arthur W., *Medieval Welsh Law: being a text of The Laws of Howel the Good* (Oxford 1979).

Wiliam, Aled Rhys, *Llyfr Iorwerth: a Critical Text of the* Venedotian Code *of Medieval Welsh Law* (Cardiff 1960).

9.2. Articles

Bollard, John, '*Meuyl ar uy Maryf*: Shame and Honour in *The Mabinogi*', *Studia Celtica* 47 (2013) 123–147.

Cichon, Michael, 'Insult and Redress in "Cyfraith Hywel Dda" and Welsh Arthurian Romance', *Arthuriana* 10/3 (2000) 27-43.

Edel, Doris, 'The 'Mabinogionfrage': Arthurian Literature between Orality and Literacy', in *(Re)Oralisierung*, Tristram, Hildegard L.C. (Tübingen 1996) 311-33.

Hult, David F., 'Lancelot's Shame', *Romance Philology* 42/1 (1988) 30-50.

Larrington, Carolyne, 'The psychology of emotion and study of the medieval period', *Early Medieval Europe* 10/2 (2001) 251-6.

Owen, Morfydd E., 'Shame and Reparation: a Woman's Place in the Kin', in *The Welsh Law of Women,* Red. Dafydd Jenkins and Morfydd E. Owen (Cardiff 1990) 40-68.

Pickens Rupert T., Keith Busby and Andrea M. L. Williams, 'Perceval and the Grail: the Continuations, Robert de Boron and *Perlesvaus*', in *The Arthur of the French: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval French and Occitan Literature,* Red. Glyn S. Burgess and Karen Pratt (Cardiff 2006) 215-73.

Rotenstreich, Nathan, 'On Shame', *The Review of Metaphysics* 19/1 (1965) 55-86.

9.3. Digital resources

http://emma.hypotheses.org (consulted 23 May 2014).
http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk (consulted 23 May 2014).

10. Appendix I

	Yvain	*Owein*
1	L 60. Calogrenant will not tale a tale about his honour, but about his shame.	ø (The subject of the story is not mentioned. Owein asks Cynon to tell his 'strangest story'.)
2	L 266. Calogrenant mentions that it would be shameful to refuse an offer from his host	ø
3	L 490. the Black Knight says he is shamed and injured by Calogrenant throwing water on the stone next to the spring.	ø
4	L 525. Calogrenant mentions to the internal audience that he is telling the truth to explain the cause of his shame.	ø
5	L 540. Calogrenant is left shamed and defeated by the Black Knight.	ø
6	L 558. Calogrenant returns from the fight in shame.	L 200. The defeated Cynon passes the black-haired man on his return who ridicules him. After that, Cynon mentions that he could have melted into a pool of liquid out of shame.
7	L 587. Yvain proposes to find the Black Knight and to avenge Calogrenant's shame.	ø
8	L 719. Yvain does not want make his quest known to anyone before he has won great shame or great honour.	ø
9	L 1351. Yvain is sad that the Black Knight is buried, because his body was the only proof of him winning the fight against him. He believes that returning without proof will lead to great shame.	ø
10	L 1390. The writer comments that it is a shame that love tends to behave poorly.	ø
11	L 1401. the writer comments that love shames herself by venturing on low places.	ø
12	L 1533. When seeing the widow of the Black Knight, Yvain feels both love and shame	ø
13	L 1535. Yvain believes that he would be deeply shamed if he were to leave the court, for the same reason as in 9.	ø
14	L 1669. Lunette says to the countess that she must stop her grieving, if only out of the shame she receives from it.	ø
15	L 1746. the countess believes Lunette	ø

	loves her too much to bring her any shame.	
16	L 2242. Yvain would like the shame Kai.	ø
17	L 2282. Kai feels very ashamed when he realises Yvain did not run away from his quest.	ø
18	L 2487. Gawain thinks it is shameful for a man to settle down and stop fighting after he marries.	ø
19	L 2703. Yvain feels ashamed when he realises he broke his promise and stayed away too long from his wife	L 570. The maiden says to Owein that he should be ashamed of him staying away to long and breaking his promise.
20	L 3021. Yvain is ashamed of being naked and not knowing what happened.	L 597. When Owein wakes up, he is ashamed of being naked.
21	L 3176. The author mentions that a man with a weak heart can get a feeling of shame when they see a brave man do brave deeds. Which makes them do brave deeds as well.	ø
22	L 3242. The author mentions that if Yvain had a few good men like him at his side, the blackguard would leave in defeat of remain in shame.	ø
23	L 3983. Yvain says that he would be ashamed if an unwilling maiden would fall at his feet.	ø
24	L 4365. Women shame the man that causes a great loss to them.	ø
25	L 5113. People warn Yvain that he is directed to this place to cause him shame.	ø
26	L 5129. People warn Yvain that if he ever encountered someone who shamed him, the person who he is going to will do worse.	ø
27	L 5216. the porter says that Yvain will not leave until so much shame is done to him that he can never suffer more.	ø
28	L 5260. One of the maidens says to Yvain that all the maidens must now suffer shame without ever having deserved it.	ø
29	L 5263. The same maiden tells Yvain to expect great shame there.	ø
30	L 5288. the maiden says that, when a knight defeats the two demons, they would be free of their shame, labour and misery.	ø

31	L 5322. The maiden does not know what more to say. She says that they are so ashamed that they can not tell Yvain even a fifth of it.	ø
32	L 5427. The serving of a host's daughter is so diligent that he is ashamed and embarrassed	ø
33	L 5570. Two champions/demons charge Yvain with the intention to injure and shame him.	ø
34	L 5585. Yvain gets hit by the demons several times. This sparks shame and fear in him, which makes him defend himself with all his strength.	ø
35	L 5782. All the people who shamed Yvain before, now return to ask his forgiveness	ø
36	L 6016. the author explains that Yvain and Gawain hate and love each other at the same time. They hate each other because they want to chop each others heads off of at least shame them enough to ruin their reputation.	ø

Appendix II

Translations of *Diarhebion* used in this essay as found on http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/ on 23 may 2014. Adapted to modern spelling.

p241r *Gwell goleith* ***meuyl****; no'e dial*.
p265v *Gwell goleith* ***mevyl****. No dialwr.*

Gwell	adj.	better
goleith	verbal noun	to avoid
meuyl;	masc. noun	shame;
no'e	conj. + infixed pron. 3sg masc.	than him
dial.	verbal noun	to avenge

Translation: It is better to avoid shame than to avenge it.

p242r *Ny moch dieil;* ***meuyl*** *meryd.*
p268v *Ny moch dieil* ***meuyl*** *meryd.*

Ny	negation	not
moch	adv.	swiftly
dieil;	verb 3sg pres.	avenges
meuyl	masc noun	shame
meryd.	adj.	slow

Translation: He does not swiftly avenge slow shame.

p242r *Nyt ystyr karyat;* ***kywilyd****.*
p268r *Nyt ystyr karyat* ***kewilyd***
p269v *Ny ystyr karyat* ***kewilyd****.*

Nyt	negation + verb	there is not
ystyr	fem./masc. noun	meaning
karyat;	masc. noun	love
kywilyd.	masc. noun.	shame

Translation: There is no meaning to love: shame.

p241v *Hen bechawt; a wna* ***kewilyd*** *newyd.*
p266v *Hen bechawt a wna* ***kewilyd*** *newyd.*

Hen	adj.	old

bechawt;	masc. noun plural	sins
A	preverbal particle	
wna	verb 3sg pres. ‘gwneuthur’	makes
kewilyd	masc. noun	shame
newyd.	adj.	new

Translation: Old sins make new shame.

p239v *Ny chyngein **kewilyd**; gan gennat*.
p269r *Ny chynghein gan gennat **gewilyd**.*

Ny	negation	not
chyngein	verb 3sg. pres. ‘cynghenni’	it is contained in
kewilyd;	masc. Noun	shame
gan	prep.	with
gennat.	fem. noun.	messenger

Translation: Shame is not contained within the messenger.

p239v *Ny phyrth newyn; neb **gywilyd**.*

Ny	negation	not
phyrth	verb 3sg. pres. ‘porth’	bears
newyn;	masc. noun	hunger
neb	adj.	any
gywilyd.	masc. noun	shame

Translation: Hunger does not bear any shame.