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‘Gelert’: The Identification and Reception of a Narrative Adaption

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Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation

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Abstract

The tale of 'The Animal Killed in Haste' is one that can be traced to the beginning of literary records and is visible in the heritage of many cultures across several continents. The AT178a tale type motif remains true and identifiable in each version and the traceability of the motif continues up to its current recital in many folktale collections. The motif is best known in modern Wales as the tale of 'Gelert', the greyhound killed by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth. This adaptation is believed to have been composed around the end of the eighteenth century, inspired by several pre-existing tales and legends which were known in the parish.

The 'Gelert' narrative is set in a village at the foot of Snowdon called Beddgelert. The name translates to 'the grave of Gelert', whom or what the elusive Gelert may be remains an etymological mystery. The need to explain the name has led to several onomastic tales. Its claim of historical provenance was debated publicly in print, the vigour to which its historical and literary value was discussed can only attest to its relevance as a narrative composition and affirmation of cultural identity. Circumstances of time, location and personalities allowed for the composition of the 'Gelert' version.

The continued enjoyment of the tale has ensured its recital as a Welsh tale, despite an Indian origin. As a result of its perpetual consumption the narrative has developed, again adapting to suit a contemporary audience. This paper highlights the unique quality of the Gelert tale as a paragon of folk traditions. Not only can it be said to attest to the validity and relevance of the genre, but it also testifies to the life of a tale serving as a benchmark for future adaptations.

Literary review

The issue of ownership can be a vague concept when discussing folktales, traditions such as song, dance or tales can be associated to a culture, often defining an ethnicity. The question of how ownership of a tradition should be appointed is complex with no definitive rules on how to claim such rights; it has often been a case of tracing back through time for an original source. This issue of the intellectual copyright of motifs, narrative or the performance of a tradition is considered in a thought-provoking discussion entitled *Copyright and Folklore*.¹ This paper discusses issues of copyright in relation to safeguarding the traditions and folklore of poorer cultures against exploitation. Honko cites an anecdote in which Paul Simon's 'El Condor Pasa' was identified as a Bolivian folk song. Simon as the author of the song in the West received the revenue from its publication. The Bolivian government believed they should have received financial compensation as the original source. This discussion brings to light questions of intellectual ownership, and highlights the issue of whether folk traditions develop in parallel or are derived from the same source.²

In relation to folk tales the central motif or collection of motifs can be seen to occur many times in tales which span generations and continents. Developments within the narrative which surrounds the motif of a tale can then be viewed as cultural or localised adaptations. The AT178a is an extensively travelled motif;³ it is evident in many Eastern and European cultures whereby the narrative of each version differs with generation and location. The 'Gelert' version is a popular recital; some would argue its literary successes have fixed its narrative signifying a terminal point in the tale's development.⁴

The authenticity of the tale of 'Gelert' has been critiqued by some scholarly articles,⁵ despite remarks which question its authenticity as a native tale. Antiquarian writers have nevertheless included this version in their collections of Welsh tales. J. Jacobs is one such example who

¹ L. Honko, 'Copyright and Folklore' (2001), *Folklore fellows* (2009), [Online], available: <http://www.folklorefellows.fi/copyright-and-folklore/> < accessed 14 September 2017>

² Ibid.

³ The AT178a is the Aarne-Thompson reference code for the tale type motif of 'The Animal Killed in Haste': M.R. MacDonald, 'Aarne-Thompson-Uther Classification of Folktales', *Multilingual folk tale Database* (2016), [Online], available: <http://www.mftd.org/index.php?action=atu&act=select&atu=178> <accessed 16 July 2017>

⁴ S. Blackburn, 'The Brahmin and the Mongoose; the Narrative Context of a Well-Travelled Tail' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol.59, No3 (1996), p. 495. [Online], available: <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/stable/pdf/619805.pdf> <accessed 1 November 2017>

⁵ Antiquarian authors were quick to point out the Eastern origin of the motif which gave the tale an unauthentic or fake countenance.

recited the story in his collection,⁶ he then proceeds to explain its Eastern origin⁷ by drawing parallels between ancient texts. These similarities are also noted by S. Baring-Gould, who also lists a variety of different hero animal characters, and concludes his discussion by citing a number of tales with parallels in multiple locations thus gleefully disproving any trace of authenticity.⁸ Both these accounts are discussed at length and with some disdain by D.E. Jenkins.⁹

Jenkins's book collates historical, anecdotal and fictional stories concerned with the parish of Beddgelert. It is an invaluable source for the study of rural culture at the time and place of its publication. The chapter on 'The Legend of Gelert' discusses firstly the Welsh versions, then the Sanskrit parallel by the Rev. W. Pryse which the Welsh minister recognised whilst studying Hindu literature in India.¹⁰ Jenkins further elaborates by calling upon critics to recall the exposure of the legend in *Y Brython*¹¹ by an inhabitant of Beddgelert, which followed an earlier publication featuring the translation of Spencer's poem 'Beth-Gêlert'.¹² It was necessary for the larger audience to perceive the community as educated with only pockets of illiterates who may still conceive of the tale as historical evidence.¹³

Baring-Gould introduces the tale of 'The Dog Geller', by boasting of having destroyed one legend and now he intends to repeat the process. Jenkins's rebuttal takes a clear stance on the inability of an English author to understand Welsh culture due to the incorrect use of the Welsh language. He further criticises Baring-Gould's rendering of the tale by citing the oversimplified narrative as a reason for the reader to dismiss his opinions based on poor research or shoddy transcription. This is not an issue Jenkins finds with Jacobs who does provide the reader with evidence of research and an acceptable transcription of Spencer's poem into prose.¹⁴

⁶ J. Jacobs, *Celtic Fairy Tales* (London: D. Nutt, 1892), pp.192-4.

⁷ Ibid. pp.259-64

⁸ S. Baring-Gould, 'The Dog Gellert', *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1882), pp.142-3.

⁹ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert: Its Facts, Fairies and Folklore* (Porthmadog, 1899), pp.56-74.

¹⁰ W. Pryse, 'Llenyddiaeth Ddiweddar yr Hindwaid', *Y Traethodydd* (Treffynnon: P.M. Evans, 1860), pp.170-1. An English account is given of the Indian tale and the Rev.'s comments in D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp.60-1.

¹¹ Gwrneth Ergydlym, 'Bedd Gelert', *Y Brython*, Cyf. 2: (Ebrill 1859), p.91.

¹² M. Freeman, 'Poem. 1800, Beth-Gêlert, W. R. Spencer', *Early Tours in Wales, Sublime Wales* (2017), [Online], available: <https://sublimewales.wordpress.com/attractions/gelerts-grave-at-beddgelert/spencers-ballad/> <accessed 9 July 2017>

¹³ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.70.

¹⁴ Ibid. p.63-4.

Jacobs's notes consist not only of a catalogue of the available renditions in 1892 of both Welsh and International versions of 'The Animal killed in Haste' but also a discussion of the connection between the tale and the village of Beddgelert. The prior existence of a tale concerning Llywelyn's greyhound and a hart is also made along with references to heraldic symbolism and a Latin *fabula*.¹⁵

The *fabula* is presented in both a Latin transcription of the original,¹⁶ and a Welsh translation by Graham C.G. Thomas.¹⁷ Thomas's paper traces the early development of the 'Gelert' version, for which some of the *fabula*'s components, namely the characters and a greyhound called kill-hart are considered possible inspiration. An account of references to the *fabula* tale are also discussed, these include Browne Willis in 1721 and Nicholas Carlyle in 1811 which attest to its existence in the village before the first recorded version of the 'Gelert' tale as is known today. Thomas pays particular attention to the importance of the first published account by Edward Jones of the 'Gelert' tale published in the *Musical and Political Relicks* of 1794.¹⁸ The prose tale accompanied an *englyn* or verse which describes the death of a valiant hunting hound and formed part of the original Latin *fabula*. The *englyn* is printed without the anecdotal explanation of the tale in the first edition of the *Musical and Political Relicks* which appeared ten years earlier.¹⁹ The same *englyn* is also found in the works of Siôn Brwc o Fawddwy who was contemporary with the *fabula*. Thomas discusses the relationship between the *fabula*, *englyn* and folktale demonstrating a line of development from the sixteenth culminating in the nineteenth century with the connection of David Pritchard, who is credited with the creative manipulation of an existing motif that was prevalent in a tale from his native South Wales.

Several translations and interpretations can be found on the *Sublime Wales* web site which consists of an expansive selection of poems and prose dedicated to Llywelyn and his dog Gelert.²⁰ This site is an extended version of a 2015 article by Michael Freeman,²¹ included

¹⁵ J. Jacobs, *Celtic Fairy Tales*, pp.261-2.

¹⁶ Found amongst papers of Sir John Wynne, from the Gwydir estate, and dated to the end of the sixteenth century: London, British Library, add. MS 19713, fol.21.

¹⁷ Graham C.G. Thomas, 'Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol', *Llên Cymru*, 17:1-2 (1992), pp.5-10.

¹⁸ E. Jones, 'Englyn Upon the Celebrated Greyhound of Prince Llewelyn ap Iorwerth', *Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards* (London: 1794), p.75.

¹⁹ Graham C.G. Thomas, 'Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol', p.6.

²⁰ M. Freeman, 'Gelert's Grave at Beddgelert', *Early Tours in Wales, Sublime Wales* (2017), [Online], available: <https://sublimewales.wordpress.com/attractions/gelerts-grave-at-beddgelert/> <accessed 9 July 2017>

²¹ *Perceptions of Welshness: tourists' impressions of the material and traditional culture of Wales, 1750-1850*: M. Freeman, 'Home', *Early Tours in Wales, Sublime Wales* (2017), [Online], available: <https://sublimewales.wordpress.com/> <accessed 9 July 2017>

amongst the manuscript transcriptions are Edward Jones's English translations of the Medieval Latin *Fabula*.²²

The developments within folktale narratives have been documented in many studies, especially those which are concerned with tracing the origin and dispersal of tales. Linda Dégh's 'Some Questions of the Social Function of Storytelling',²³ provides a detailed insight into the dispersal and transmission of Eastern European folktales, her reasoning and explanations can be easily applied to the development and dispersal of tales in any cultural setting. W.A. Coulston's earlier essay 'Llewellyn and His Dog Gellert, or Killhart' acknowledges Baring-Gould's contribution before embarking on an investigation into an ancient origin for the tale.²⁴ Twenty pages are dedicated to variants from diverse cultural literature spanning from nineteenth century Wales to c. 235BC China.²⁵ Kenneth Jackson also discusses at length the diffusion over time and geographical location of a number of internationally known folktales. Included in this *repertoire* is the tale of 'Gelert' and its origin in India as theorised by Benfey.²⁶ Jackson's book,²⁷ documents the *Gregynog lectures* he gave in 1961, the first of which explores the characteristics of the international folktales.²⁸ The second considers the origin, diffusion and recital of these tales and discusses the theories of scholars such as Theodor Benfey, Andrew Lang, Max Müller, Sir John Rhys and the Grimm brothers to name a few.²⁹

The classification of Welsh tales using Antti Aarne, Stith Thompson³⁰ and Hans-Jörg Uther,³¹ are discussed in Juliette Wood's paper,³² which seeks to address some of the theoretical

²² M. Freeman, 'Fabula de Beth Kelhart', *Early Tours in Wales, Sublime Wales* (2017), [Online], available: <https://sublimewales.wordpress.com/attractions/gelerts-grave-at-beddgelert/fabula-de-beth-kelhart/> <accessed 9 July 2017>

²³ L. Dégh, 'Some questions of the Social Function of Storytelling', *Scientiarum Hungaricae: a Magyar Tudomnyos Akademia nprajzi kzelmyei* vol.6: (1957), (Budapest: Akadmiak Kiad, 1950-1990), pp.91-147.

²⁴ W.A. Coulston, 'Llewellyn and His Dog Gellert, or Killhart' *Popular Tales and Fictions* Vol. 2 (Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Son, 1887), pp.166-86.

²⁵ Ibid. pp.166-86.

²⁶ K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale and Early Welsh Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961), p.40.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid. pp.1-33.

²⁹ Ibid. pp.37-64.

³⁰ J.M. Wood, 'Classifying folk narrative using the type-motif method: a case study on Welsh material', *Folk Life*, 27 (1988-9), p.95.

³¹ H. Uther, 'The Third Revision of the Aarne-Thompson Tale Type Index', *folklore fellows* (2009), [Online], available: <http://www.folklorefellows.fi/the-third-revision-of-the-aarne-thompson-tale-type-index-ffc-184/> <accessed 20 October 2017>

³² J.M. Wood, 'Classifying folk narrative', pp.95-103.

problems within the ATU model in specific relation to Welsh folktales. Recognising the difficulties caused by the diversity of the material, Wood suggests that the model of classification offered by the ATU did not allow for cultural beliefs present in the Welsh narrative. Her paper discusses the formulating of the WFNI (Welsh Folk Narrative Index), which consists of around twelve thousand items of folk narrative classified by the existing index or by creating additional types or motifs.³³ From these comments we may deduce that for all the similarities between renditions of internationally familiar tales, a great deal of cultural influence occurred during transmission; some of which may evidence historical or societal data.

*Gwerthfawrogi'r Chwedlau*³⁴ by Rhiannon Ifans discusses further the importance of the international folktale in Wales, the relationship of the motif to early prose and oral transmission.³⁵ Ifans also discusses the prevalence of onomastic tales in Welsh culture, a selection of which are attached to the village of Beddgelert.³⁶

The historians Alan Bott and Margaret Dunn have accounted for the onomastic tales in their guide to *The Priory and Parish Church of St Mary Beddgelert*, which includes the history of the village and its monastic connection from prehistory to its current state.³⁷ The presence of ancient artefacts dating to the Roman and Iron Age may also have added to the community's penchant of collecting folktales, the ancient relics providing an ideal environment to nurture tales of old.³⁸

Where previous studies have embarked on a historical geographical focus or a search for an origin by comparing similarities within the recognisable motif, this study will concentrate on the narrative elements within the 'Gelert' version. It will be necessary to compare the Eastern versions for cultural variation and specific interpretation, for which Blackburn offers an extensive discussion on this topic which was a valuable point of cultural reference.³⁹

³³ Ibid. p.99.

³⁴ Rh. Ifans, *Gwerthfawrogi'r Chwedlau* (Aberystwyth:Prifysgol Cymru,1999).

³⁵ Ibid. p.34.

³⁶ There is an earlier englyn and fibula tale and various references made to the Ceile De or Keledei order of early Celtic monks and also to St. Celer: D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp.22-27.

³⁷ A. Bott, and M. Dunn, *A Guide to the Priory and Parish Church of St Mary Beddgelert, Gwynedd* (Surrey: Coastline Publications, 2004).

³⁸ The influence of the discipline of folklore and archaeology are discussed in a collection of essays edited by Amy Gazin-Schwartz and Cornelius J. Holtorf, *Archaeology and Folklore* contains some interesting content however its debates are slightly removed from this paper other than the general association of both disciplines on each which can be inferred by the erection of a cairn to Gelert: A. Gazin-Schwartz, & C.J. Holtorf, (eds), *Archaeology and Folklore* (London: Routledge, 1999).

³⁹ S. Blackburn, 'The Brahmin and the Mongoose', pp.494-507.

However this paper will attempt to highlight the authenticity of the ‘Gelert’ tale by distinguishing the differences within its composition to other versions. The importance of which is to validate the authenticity of a specific narrative by identifying its construction within a unique location and circumstance. This synchronic view will further develop the study of subsequent tales which have derived using the same narrative characteristics. The characteristics which form the composition will be shown to have originated in the valley which make it site specific and also that the community embraced the tale for its narrative value. Much of this discussion would have been impossible were it not for the correspondences recorded in *Y Brython*,⁴⁰ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*⁴¹ and the biographies of Edward Jones⁴² and Glasynys.⁴³ The recent composition of the ‘Gelert’ tale also make it uniquely placed to provide the academic with an understanding of the dynamics of its own construction and subsequent developments be they geographical, cultural, generational or societal.

⁴⁰ National Library of Wales, *Y Brython* (1858-1901), Available at: <https://journals.library.wales/view/2686334> <accessed 2 September 2017>

⁴¹ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg* vol. 1: 1797-1809, edited by G.H. Jenkins, Ff.M. Jones, D.C. Jones, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007).

⁴² T. Ellis, *Edward Jones, Bardd Y Brenin 1752-1824* (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1957).

⁴³ S. Lewis, *Straeon Glasynys* (Dinbych: Wasg Gee, 1943), pp.vii-xlvi.

Introduction

This paper will consider the concept of a folktales authenticity and adaptation through cultural adoption. The tale of ‘Gelert’, a version of the AT178a motif,⁴⁴ recognised worldwide as the ‘Animal Killed in Haste’. It follows a plot line of an animal loved by the whole family being left to care for an infant who is attacked by a wild animal. On return the parent witnessing the scene of carnage assumes the pet has killed the child and avenges the death without confirming the facts. Upon realisation of the mistake remorse is expressed which triggers a lesson or proverb.

Past scholarly investigations into the folktale have concentrated on the meaning, function and fundamentally the origin of the tales. The use of a diachronic method has focused on the similarities of tales to discover the motif’s source. In some cases this resulted in the authenticity of a tale being questioned despite its narrative difference from other tale versions which contain the same central motif. This was the case for the legend of ‘Gelert’ which was criticised by Baring-Gould amongst others.⁴⁵ The motif within this tale is ancient and its historic pedigree has been shown in many antiquarian and modern papers.⁴⁶ This investigation aims to show how the attachment of this motif to a locality through its individual narrative elements are what form part of its fundamental value. Despite its distant origin, which aligns it to countless other examples, it is the differences which anchor it to a specific time and place of shared cultural importance and recognition.

This paper will discuss the motif’s origin and dispersal, in order to briefly show the line of development traced by a diachronic historical geographical methodology. The primary reason for this is to show that different versions have developed in various locations, each culturally adapted and belonging to the literary heritage of that society. From the earliest Eastern version of the *Pananchantra* recognised as the ‘Bráham and the Mongoose’ cultural and generational differences within the narrative have meant that each version differs in its presentation. Each different adaptation contains familiar elements to its intended audience. These narrative variations were used to disguise moral lessons in the guise of entertaining and easily remembered stories.

The main objective of this paper is to consider the concept of folktale ownership through the adoption of local cultural characteristics. This is of value to the study of folktales as it considers the

⁴⁴ M.R. MacDonald, ‘Aarne-Thompson-Uther Classification of Folk Tales’, [Online].

⁴⁵ S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, p.132.

⁴⁶ Jackson, Jacobs, Baring–Gould, Blackburn and Coulston to name a few.

construction and reception of a tale. Observations can be made as to how different cultures adopt and adapt the narrative to suit the individual site or cultural need. Llywelyn and his dog Gelert are a reference point in both time and place to a specific version of the international folktale motif AT178a. Many versions are extant and the tale's popularity, longevity and geographical distribution which will be briefly discussed in chapter one, along with some of the differences between the versions which make them site specific. The ancient origin of the tale should be celebrated, not used as a proverbial stick against a rural community, its adoption by so many communities and over such a span of time can only reinforce its value to the structure of society and as a cautionary tale, to the moral instruction of the audience. The differences discussed attest to cultural and chronological variations which inform literary developments capable of creating a new synchronic version of the motif.

Chapter two will consider the historic and literary elements which inspired the formulation of the new version of the tale; in particular, why the locality lent itself to host such a conception. This will be done by discussing pre-existing tales found within the parish of Beddgelert to consider how certain narrative elements and motifs morphed and inspired the tale of 'Gelert' as it currently exists. Beddgelert's long-standing heritage steeped in folk tradition, offers folklorists a rare glimpse into the inspirational elements which may have been used to create a tale such as 'Gelert'.

Chapter three will focus on the adoption of the tale by the community, predominantly, but not exclusively, within the first century of its composition. A tale's interdependence on cultural behaviour and understanding should be of consideration. For this reason it is important to consider the reception of the tale within the locality at around the time of its conception. Although a popular rouse to attract tourist trade the 'Gelert' tale caused intellectual controversy, some of which, played out in local publications. The tale is still popular today with tourists and locals alike. It is recited in schools, included in tale collections and inspires artwork, dramas and film. Its relevance is further attested to in a recent social media thread concerning the tale of 'Gelert', where high volumes of posts still debated the authenticity and validity of the tale by a modern audience.⁴⁷ The AT178a tale motif is an example of a tradition which dates back further than records can show, the short time since the conception

⁴⁷ This video depicts the tale of 'Gelert' using the narrative of Glasynys' version which will be discussed in chapter 3. It currently has 1.8k likes, 399 comments and 2k shares 'The Legend of Beddgelert' *All Things Welsh*, (5 February 2018), [video], available at: <https://www.facebook.com/Allthingswales/videos/2025909827653108/> <accessed 7th February 2018>

of 'Gelert' can attest to the fluidity of the medium by the changes to the narrative evident in extant renditions. The development of the tale type and its longevity further support the value of folk tradition within society, and in particular the folktale in question. This paper will attempt to show that the international motif is a culturally relevant vehicle of transmission, with each variation rooted within its own geographic location. The 'Gelert' tale will therefore be considered by firstly discussing the embellishment of the central motif, secondly by asking what relevance the location itself played in the tales conception. Finally the adoption of the tale by the community will be considered to show that an ancient origin and authentic historical facts are not necessarily needed to anchor a tale to a culture or location.

Chapter 1: 'The Animal Killed in Haste', identifying the motif

Since its first appearance in 1794 the popular tale of Llywelyn and his dog Gelert has caused considerable debate and controversy regarding its authenticity.⁴⁸ The tale type AT178a⁴⁹ was known to academics at the time from the *Pananchantra* and its European translations such as 'The Seven Sages of Rome'.⁵⁰ At the time of 'Gelert's' conception contemporary criticism was raised against the historical provenance of the tale, especially in light of its onomastic claim. The issue in question lay with the use of dateable characters to enact the narrative of a tale known to be of an international origin. The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how the fluid elements within the tale of Gelert's narrative reinforce its unique identity as an authentic Welsh version, specific to its location. This will be done by considering how this version fits into the international array of tales which share its motif, AT178a, 'The Animal Killed in Haste'.⁵¹ Identifying the functional elements of the motif, or the structure which remains constant will be the first concern. Secondly the discussion will consider the changeable portion of the narrative, the elements which can be substituted to conform to localised expectations. A brief diachronic consideration will also be undertaken of the motif which will conclude with its arrival in Wales. The objectives aim to result in a demonstration of how different versions have developed to conform to specific cultural identities and thus distinguishing one from another despite a central international motif.

The development of folktales has been considered generational, depending on cultural change, whilst having an original source in the ancient past of human ancestry.⁵² Various methodologies have been employed to explore the meaning of folktales beyond a narrative expression, but have mainly centred on classification, dispersal and origin. A historical-geographical approach would investigate the life of the tale from its origin to current versions

⁴⁸ E. Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks*, (1794), p.75.

⁴⁹ The system was designed by Antti Aarne, and published in 1910, it was revised by Stith Thompson in 1928, and 1961. A further revision was undertaken by Hans-Jörg Uther in 2004 to allow for further expansion and the addition of international folktales from Asia and Africa. This latest revision is known as the ATU classification system: H. Uther, 'The Third Revision', [Online].

⁵⁰ These titles and the dispersal will be discussed below: K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale*.

⁵¹ The Faithful Animal killed in haste is a general description which can be used to include all of the variants of both human and animal characters found within the tale type 178A in any given example. Thompsons index of motifs lists Llywelyn and his dog as B331.2, B331 signifying helpful animals killed through misunderstanding: S. Thompson, *The Folktale* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1977), p.490.

⁵² A. Dundes, 'From Etic to Emic Units in the Structural Study of Folktales', *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 75, (no. 296): (1962), 95–105. p.95. Available at: www.jstor.org/stable/538171 <25 February 2018>

across a geographical and chronological path.⁵³ This method therefore considers the dispersal and compositional changes which the tale or motif encounters. This comparable method concentrates on the structural differences and not on finding an initial origin, which had been a focus of previous methods despite their diachronic approach.⁵⁴ Comparative methodology can be applied to both cultural and literary traditions and involves the identification and interpretation of the compositional elements within the material. Identification is an objective and empirical process of searching for similarities between texts, whilst interpretation requires a subjective and speculative delineation of differences.⁵⁵

In order to attempt to interpret the tale it is imperative that the elements are correctly identified; many motifs have multiple listings under the current cataloguing methods.⁵⁶ The diachronic study of folktales has focused on considering the evolution and development of a tale, rather than the study of any one version in one chronological presentation. Whilst this has proven an informative pursuit a synchronic study would include an in-depth consideration of the motif and the narrative elements with which a tale has been constructed. Therefore, identifying units of similarity and differences will facilitate an investigation, enabling useful comparisons which can be used to interpret a synchronic episode of a tale's narrative and the value attained by the audience.

During an investigation of Russian folktales using a synchronic approach Propp noticed that the characters and circumstances of a tale may change, whilst the function or actions did not.⁵⁷ These basic unchanging units are identifiable in all motifs despite any variations within the tale's narrative. The static components within the AT178a tale type are:

1. There is a vulnerable human.
2. There is an imminent threat by a wild animal.
3. The human is defended by a friendly animal.
4. The friendly animal is killed by mistake.
5. The moral of the tale.

Providing these features remain constant the narrative can be furnished with time or site specific characters and circumstances. The *Panchatantra* version of the tale has actors

⁵³ Ibid. p.95.

⁵⁴ Ibid. p.95.

⁵⁵ A. Dundes, 'The Study of Folklore in Literature and Culture: Identification and Interpretation', *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 78, (no. 308): (1965), 136–142. p.136. Available at: www.jstor.org/stable/538280 <25 February 2018>

⁵⁶ The AT index and Thompson tale type classifications were never intended as a conclusive presentation, rather a sorting device for folklorists to utilise during their investigations: Ibid. p.141.

⁵⁷ A. Dundes, 'From Etic to Emic Units in the Structural Study of Folktales', p.100.

which include a *Bráham*, his wife, a baby, a mongoose and a snake. By the time the tale is recited in Beddgelert there is a prince, his son, a wolf and a greyhound. The actors vary according to the cultural setting, as do the circumstances woven around the motif. The vulnerable human is predominantly a male infant, but not exclusively. In the ‘Culex’ the vulnerable human is a sleeping shepherd. The reasons for abandonment can also change from begging to hunting, tournaments and pure neglect. The moral value remains the same, a warning against rash action, but the declarations of remorsefulness can vary according to cultural variations. The differences observed are what tie each tale to a specific location, time or culture and are a valuable testament to a tale’s synchronic authenticity.

The motif of ‘The Animal Killed in Haste’ manifests in many forms and in countless locations, the Beddgelert version which contains the above mentioned static components was first published by Edward Jones in his second edition of the *Musical and Poetical Relicks*.⁵⁸

The structure can be seen to have been furnished with narrative elements unique to the location of its composition; the characters have cultural celebrity status, Llywelyn being a national heroic figure connected to the area. The popularity of the narrative was propelled by the publication of W.R. Spencer’s poem, ‘Beth-Gêlert; Or, The Grave of the Greyhound’, which made the tale and the village famous.⁵⁹ Scholars and folklorists were familiar with the motif of the tale and remarks were being made in journals of both Welsh⁶⁰ and visiting academics of similarities between this and other versions.⁶¹

The tale however had become popular with the public and adopted by the local community. The villagers reinforced the narrative by presenting tourists with physical evidence for the tale’s authenticity in the form of alleged archaeological evidence which served as a focal point anchoring the tale to the community. Several antiquarian commentators remarked on the transference of the motif, some with a tone which verged on accusing the villagers of

⁵⁸ ‘There is a general tradition in North Wales, that a wolf had entered the house of prince Llywelyn. Soon after the prince returned home, and, going into the nursery, he met his dog Kill-hart, all bloody, and wagging his tail at him; prince Llywelyn, on entering the room, found the cradle where his child lay overturned, and the floor flowing with blood; imagining that the greyhound had killed the child, he immediately drew his sword and stabbed it; then, turning up the cradle, found under it the child alive, and the wolf dead. This so grieved the prince, that he erected a tomb over his faithful dog’s grave; where afterwards the parish church was built, and goes by the name, Bedd Cilhart’: E. Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks*, (1794), p.75.

⁵⁹ M. Freeman, ‘Poem. 1800, Beth-Gêlert, W. R. Spencer’.

⁶⁰ W. Williams, *Observations on the Snowdon Mountains: with some account of the customs and manners of the inhabitants*. (Caernarvonshire: E. Williams, 1802), pp. 45-7.

⁶¹ M. Freeman, ‘Gelert Story Sceptics’, Early tourists in Wales, *Sublime Wales* [Online], available <https://sublimewales.wordpress.com/attractions/gelerts-grave-at-beddgelert/sceptics/> <accessed 5 February 2018>

deliberate deception or *naïve* gullibility.⁶² However this is not a unique incidence of such transference, as this motif's development is particularly well documented across many continents.⁶³

The tale type AT178a first appears as discussed in the *Panchatantra*, a collection of Indian Sanskrit stories, believed to be close to two thousand years old. The most frequently cited original form of the tale type is 'The Bráhmín and the Mongoose' which derives from India. In this telling the *Bráham* leaves the mongoose to watch over his human son whilst he goes out to beg, a snake is the protagonist which attacks the child and is defeated by the mongoose sibling. The faithful hero is killed by the wife and not the husband; this is a common occurrence in the early Eastern versions which contrast to the later Western narratives. The c. fifth century Sanskrit text names the *Bráham* Déra Sarmá, and states that his wife had a favourite ichneumon.⁶⁴ Having killed the animal she reproaches the husband for his greed, again in contrast with Western versions; 'The Seven Wise Masters' portrays the husband blaming himself for foolishly listening to his wife.⁶⁵ It is believed that an ichneumon was substituted for culturally suitable domesticated animals as the story dispersed; the examples consist of cats, weasels, mongooses, falcons, polecats and dogs.

The similarity between this story and the well-known tale of Llywelyn and Gelert were formulated during the latter nineteenth century when Benfey's work suggested a correlation between the history of the tale's longevity and its parallels in the Middle East, Asia and Europe. He implied its origin and meaning could be traced to early accounts of the Buddhist faith of India.⁶⁶ W.A. Clouston's work makes the case for a connection to Wales having discussed its diffusion from the earliest version he could find; a translation from the Chinese Buddhist texts *Vinaya Pitaka*, which date to c.412 and originate from an Indian text dating to c.235BC.⁶⁷ This tale is known as 'The Bráhman and the Nakula', in this version the husband kills the *Nakula*, a form of mongoose, who is believed to have killed his son whilst he was out begging for food and his wife was at the mill. This *Bráhman* kills the mongoose because he is in an agitated state with his wife, 'having expostulated with her'⁶⁸ for not obeying him

⁶² S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, pp.132-43.

⁶³ S. Blackburn, 'The Brahmin and the Mongoose', pp.494-507.

⁶⁴ Ichneumon is a type of mongoose.

⁶⁵ W.A. Clouston, *Popular Tales and Fictions*, p.175.

⁶⁶ Ibid. p.183.

⁶⁷ Ibid. p.186.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p.185.

and keeping the infant with her at all times. These examples demonstrate a difference in circumstance and character whilst both keeping to the tale type motif and similarities within the family dynamic.

The family is obviously an important element to the success of this motif, however the husband, wife and only human child, supplemented by an animal ‘sibling’ is not exclusive. The Persian 1373 *Sindibád Námá* describes a situation where the wife dies during child birth leaving the infant to be cared for by a nurse. In this version, the only early one where the mother dies, the hero animal is a cat which was loved by both the husband and his dead wife.⁶⁹ A contemporary film adaptation also portrays a dead mother; in this rendition Llywelyn’s grief is a factor in the abandonment.⁷⁰ A version contemporary with Clouston, one which he states was current in India, tells of a family with many children and a pet mongoose. The infant is fatally bitten by a snake which was attracted to bowls of water left by the infant’s side for his amusement whilst the mother performs her daily chores. The pet mongoose goes in search of an antidote and is hastily killed by the mother who then sees the antidote in its mouth and realises her folly. She vows ‘never to let her anger master her again’.⁷¹

The love for the animal sibling was considered a culturally acceptable concept in Eastern tales; the Tamil word *kīripillai* in the texts indicates a ‘mongoose-child’.⁷² The *Panchatantra* describes the mother breast feeding and caring for the animal like a son; whilst the *Bráhmaṇ* in the *Hitopadeśa* is depicted as having reared the mongoose as a son.⁷³ These are not concepts which travelled with the tale to Western Europe, where the love of a faithful family pet was a comparable sentiment; trust worthy enough to be responsible for the infant and able to convey a sense of loss and remorse by the parent. Returning to the early ‘*Bráhmaṇ* and the *Nakula*’, the animal on perceiving the danger to his little brother recites a ditty:

The poisonous snake and the *Nakula*,
The little (flying) bird and the hawk,
The Shaman and the *Bráhmaṇ*,
The step-mother and the child of a former wife-

⁶⁹ Ibid. pp. 174-5.

⁷⁰ ‘Beddgelert’, *Chwedlau- Legends Season*, S4C, (1 November 2017), 19.35-19.50.

⁷¹ W.A. Clouston, *Popular Tales and Fictions*, p.181.

⁷² S. Blackburn, ‘The Brahmin and the Mongoose’, p.499.

⁷³ Ibid. p.498.

All these are mutually opposed and at enmity,
And desire, as with poison, to destroy one another.⁷⁴

Such foes are evident in many folktales and may just be references to natural enemies; however they could also allude to variances of strong against weak, meek against mighty or good versus evil. These nuances would not necessarily be exclusively Christian sentiments given the early date and the Eastern origin. These few examples demonstrate the international nature of the tales and explain why so many cultures appreciate them. The longevity and endurance of folktale motifs demonstrate a relevance of their message which has transcended time and are still relevant to human behaviour and the good of society in modern times. It is therefore of no surprise that entertaining moral and cautionary tales became international and that a story first told in the Far East made its way to Wales where the oral tale was much revered.

The existence of folk narratives are therefore known worldwide from the earliest records of human civilization,⁷⁵ however their existence is only attested to in an incomplete and unsystematic manner which makes tracing clear lines of origin and diffusion complicated. Oral transmission means that no one source can be credited with authorship, or that each tale will follow a strict narrative pattern.⁷⁶ The abundance of material can be said to highlight a specific social need for such tales or the pursuit of their exchange. Welsh folklore in particular has a wealth of legendary material which may represent a sense of national pride.

It has been theorised that a function of the story telling process would be to reinforce cultural belief especially in the case of legendary tales.⁷⁷ It is imperative to consider the social setting of a tale when evaluating both its content and development. Wood suggests that the dramatic elements of a narrative can help reinforce the message of the tale and these elements could be tailored to the specific needs of the community.⁷⁸ Furthermore folktales cannot be imagined as abstracted compositions, they emanate from social experiences whereby changes in the narrative may mirror cultural fluxes.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ W.A. Clouston, *Popular Tales and Fictions*, p.185.

⁷⁵ L. Dégh, 'Some Questions of the Social Function of Storytelling', p.9.

⁷⁶ T. Jones, 'Y Stori Werin yng Nghymru', *Trafodion Cymdeithas Anrhydeddus y Cymmrodorion* (1970), p.17.

⁷⁷ J.M. Wood, 'Classifying folk narrative', p.97.

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.97.

⁷⁹ L. Dégh, 'Some Questions of the Social Function of Storytelling', p.91.

they [folktales] are affected by the nature of the land where they are current, by the linguistic and social contacts of its people, and by the lapse of the years and their accompanying historic changes.⁸⁰

In relation to the village of Beddgelert the tale initially served as a tourist attraction, the fable meaning was incidental, unlike the tale's purpose in its earlier renditions.⁸¹ Its subsequent adoption into the village's tradition made it part of the Welsh literary heritage.

The narrative development of international folktales is not unique to one tale type or motif, the process of reciting tales involved the skill of the storyteller in adapting the narrative to suit the audience and location. A wealth of evidence concerning the cautionary tale of 'The Animal Killed in Haste' can be seen to have adapted in this way.⁸² This again was not a process restricted to Wales or within the Celtic cultures, it was also an observation made in relation to classical and continental stories.⁸³ The more tales that were collected and studied, the more evident it became that patterns of similarities in the narrative were present. Stories that were considered to belong to a culture or locality were being evidenced in other cultures and across continents.⁸⁴

Benfey pointed out that many tales could be traced back to an early Sanskrit origin dating to c.AD 540 or earlier.⁸⁵ This collection was translated into Arabic c.AD754, Greek c.AD1080, Persian c.AD1150, and Hebrew c.AD1250 then Latin c.AD1270.⁸⁶ The *Book of Sindibad*, also of Indian origin is believed to have been similarly distributed and translated through the medieval European continent where it was known as 'The Seven Wise Masters', or 'The Seven Sages of Rome'. This collection in turn found its way to Wales where it appears in the *Red Book of Hergest* as 'Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein'.⁸⁷ The tale of 'The Animal killed in Haste' appears as part of a frame tale within this collection.

Traditionally the folktale is recognisably anonymous, places and characters are vague or generic, 'a land far away' or 'in the forest' and characters such as the prince, knight and

⁸⁰ S. Thompson, *The Folktale*, p.13.

⁸¹ Blackburn's paper discusses the meaning of the motif within different cultural instances. S. Blackburn, 'The Brahmin and the Mongoose'. pp.494-507.

⁸² J. Jacobs, (1892), 'Beth Cellert' *Sur la Lune Fairy Tales* (2008), [Online], available: <http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/authors/celtic/bethgellert.html> accessed 16/7/2017

⁸³ S. Thompson, *The Folktale*, p.13.

⁸⁴ K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale*, p.5.

⁸⁵ W.A. Clouston, *Popular Tales and Fictions*, p.182-3.

⁸⁶ Ibid. pp.181-3.

⁸⁷ K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale*, p.19.

witch for example are often used in place of the names of actual people. Legendary tales on the other hand do tend to name people which the community can identify with. Such stories will be located in a familiar environment, with renowned landmarks and historical figures. King Arthur is an excellent example of a British hero easily adapted to so many locations. For this investigation it is the historic figure of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth that becomes the familiar character in the legend.

In the case of the ‘Gelert’ tale the narrative depicts a credible scenario; however the historic records do not verify the events. ‘Gelert’ is clearly an onomastic tale, but only one of many.⁸⁸ The name Beddgelert would suggest the grave of Gelert, however medieval references made are to the valley of St Mary of Snowdon⁸⁹ or Dinas Emrys,⁹⁰ which does suggest the name came to the area in the thirteenth century.⁹¹ However without documentary or archaeological evidence this is impossible to verify. The tale origin must therefore adhere to the commonest theory, that of the cultural adaptation of an international folktale motif and stories such as these are theorised as having dispersed from a single origin.

Polygenesis may account for some single episode tales occurring, however many are so complicated that the duplication of identical tales would be highly unlikely because of their complex narratives.⁹² Edward Williams, better known by his bardic name Iolo Morganwg, also suggested the tale of ‘The Man Who Killed His Greyhound’ could have derived from obvious circumstances. Continuing Iolo observed that similarities in the proverbs found within the texts of the *Hëetōpādēes* and the Welsh could well attest to a derivation from one source, a race of people emanating from Babel.⁹³ The Grimm brothers also theorised that an early Indo-European source accounted for the multiple occurrences of tales.⁹⁴ Tale transmission patterns did not however coincide within the dialect dispersal of the Indo-

⁸⁸ A. Bott, and M. Dunn, *A Guide to the Priory and Parish Church of St Mary Beddgelert*, p.4.

⁸⁹ Gerald of Wales, *Speculum Ecclesiae*, chapter VIII, Appendix 1, c.1220: in Ibid. p. 1

⁹⁰ Walter Mapes composed the poem ‘Cambriæ Epitome’ c. 1140: W. Mapes, *The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes*, edited by T. Wright, (London: Camden Society, 1841). p.141.

⁹¹ The first documented account of the name being used is in 1258: A. Bott, and M. Dunn, *A Guide to the Priory and Parish Church of St Mary Beddgelert*, p.5.

⁹² Problems can also occur when attempting to verify a tale’s origin if an attempt is made to tie in all the motifs present in a narrative to find a common source K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale*, p.37.

⁹³ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, G.H. Jenkins et al, p.288-90.

⁹⁴ Many of the stories classified as folktales were comparatively modern, especially in relation to an Indo-European origin. Ibid. p.38.

European language tree.⁹⁵ Therefore oral transmission can be seen from this conclusion as the most likely path of dispersal.

The dispersal of ancient tales can be traced and documented, as mentioned above they are not only extant in the *Panchatantra* but also in other Sanskrit collections such as the *Hitopadeśa* and *Kathāsaritsāgara*. It also appears in the *Vinaya Pitaka*, a Chinese collection, ten other oral Chinese versions and eighteen South Asian renditions. Versions are also traced in Malaysia, Mongolia, Egypt, Morocco, Israel, Russia, Mexico, America and Europe hence the Celtic connection.⁹⁶ This is of course not an exclusive pattern, other tales also travel distances of geography and time.⁹⁷ These tales should also not be exclusively considered as old stories, stagnant in an antiquarian setting. Although new stories are described as urban myths rather than folktales some still have the air of earlier origins. A c.1992 version of the AT 178a appeared in a Brussels newspaper, where it is alleged that a man left his baby in a car with a dog whilst he was loading his supermarket shop. A rat emerging from a sack of potatoes became the protagonist and the dog was killed by the father.⁹⁸ This new version clearly underpins the value of the tale to contemporary audiences, and attests to the possibility of polygenesis.

Identifying the characteristics of tales highlighted a dispersal path which allowed the academic documentation of their diffusion and development from their earliest sources to the most modern versions on a global level.⁹⁹ There are thousands of motifs which occur both on their own and in conjunction with others which form the skeletal structure for the ensuing tale. Some tales may have several episodes which may indicate that motifs were memory aids for the narrator, much like the Welsh Triads.¹⁰⁰ Some of the more complex tales may also contain a variety of motifs which bind together to form a narrative, ‘Culhwch ac Olwen’ the oldest of the Welsh tales listed under the title of the *Mabinogion*, has for instance a cruel step mother, a proposed marriage to the ogres daughter and helpers who support the hero in

⁹⁵ K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale*, p.38.

⁹⁶ S. Blackburn, ‘The Brahmin and the Mongoose’, p.495.

⁹⁷ ‘The Tale of Two Brothers’ is a well-known example which has around eight hundred versions from different countries, sixty five of which are extant in German; twenty eight are in Czech and twenty seven in Italian. Versions also occur in Irish and Scottish Gaelic, the earliest version known is possibly ‘The Tale of Anupu and Bitiu’ found on an Egyptian papyrus dated 1250 BC; which would make it one of the earliest known folktales. K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale*, p.15.

⁹⁸ S. Blackburn, ‘The Brahmin and the Mongoose’, p.495.

⁹⁹ K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale*, p.15.

¹⁰⁰ A comprehensive study and list along with translation is available in: *Trioedd Ynys Prydein* edited by R. Bromwich (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014).

performing the impossible tasks who represent the motif of the six who travel the world.¹⁰¹ Included in this story are other episodes which could stand alone, ‘Chwedl yr Anifeiliaid Hynaf’ and ‘Hela’r Twrch Trwyth’.¹⁰² The modern narrative of the animal killed in haste is one which usually occurs in a single episode in modern telling, but its early incarnations appeared as part of a frame tale, the importance of which have been considered in the discussion of Blackburn’s essay.¹⁰³

There is an ancient tradition in Wales of storytelling that is passed down through generations.¹⁰⁴ This oral method of entertainment and instruction is much discussed and attested to.¹⁰⁵ Ifor Williams quotes testimony dating from c.1600 which records the Sunday activity of Welsh commoners sitting on a hillside singing folk songs and reciting stories of ancient legends of saints and heroes.¹⁰⁶ Earlier accounts of the *cyfarwydd* are also alluded to within the *Mabinogi*. However, this testimony is unfortunately limited and only described as part of the narrative. These accounts refer to the practice of storytelling as a pastime which was considered as important at the poorer end of society as it was in the courts of the *uchelwyr*.¹⁰⁷

Oral storytelling was a prose tradition where poetry was used to highlight passages of dialogue, emotion or eulogistic expressions.¹⁰⁸ *Englynion*, three to four lined poetic compositions often decorated passages of prose and examples can be found within the texts of medieval literature such as the *Mabinogi*. It is thought that poetry was committed to text long before prose due to the need to preserve the integrity of the poetic meter.¹⁰⁹ It was one such *englyn*, the ‘Englyn of Cilhart’¹¹⁰ associated to the village of Beddgelert, which was a likely inspiration for the adaptation of the South Walian tale of ‘The Man Who Killed His Greyhound’.¹¹¹ The well-known tale was so prevalent during the eighteenth century that it was the source of the proverbs: ‘as sorry as the man who killed his greyhound’, ‘a hasty act is

¹⁰¹ Rh. Ifans, *Gwerthfawrogi’r Chwedlau*, pp.49-51.

¹⁰² Ibid. pp.39-46.

¹⁰³ S.Blackburn, ‘The Brahmin and the Mongoose’, pp. 494-507.

¹⁰⁴ R. Gwyndaf, *Chwedlau Gwerin Cymru / Welsh Folk Tales* (Cardiff, 1989). p.12.

¹⁰⁵ Rh. Ifans, *Gwerthfawrogi’r Chwedlau*, p.28.

¹⁰⁶ J.E. Caerwyn Williams, *Y Storiwr Gwyddeleg a’i Chwedlau* (Caerdydd, 1972), p.3.

¹⁰⁷ Rh. Ifans, *Gwerthfawrogi’r Chwedlau*. p.28.

¹⁰⁸ B. Roberts, ‘From Traditional Tale to Literary Story: Middle Welsh Prose Narrative’, in L.A. Arrathoon, (ed.), *The Craft of Fiction: Essays in Medieval Poetics* (Rochester: Solaris Press, 1984), p.212.

¹⁰⁹ J.E. Caerwyn Williams, *Y Storiwr Gwyddeleg a’i Chwedlau*, p.5

¹¹⁰ Graham C.G. Thomas, ‘Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol’, p.6.

¹¹¹ M. Freeman, ‘The Abergarwan Story’, *Early tourists in Wales* (2017), [Online], available: <https://sublimewales.wordpress.com/attractions/gelerts-grave-at-beddgelert/the-abergarwan-story/> <accessed 12 July 2017>

not a prudent act; but like the man who killed his greyhound...’, ‘reflect twice before striking once’, and ‘before revenge, first know the cause’.¹¹²

‘The Man who killed His Greyhound’ is among ‘The Fables of Cattwg the Wise’ allegedly transcribed from an ancient manuscript by Iolo Morganwg. In this telling, sited at the now unknown location of Abergarwan, it is an anonymous man and wife with their only son who are featured. The wife attends to her devotions whilst the father is left to care for the child. The medieval tradition of claiming part of a hunt’s kill is employed as the ruse by which the father, lord of his land is lured from his son. The story continues in the usual vein, a wolf is the protagonist and the father kills the greyhound on his return. The fable is concluded with a passage explaining the lesson of the narrative and giving the above-mentioned proverbs.¹¹³ Cattwg the Wise is reputedly St Cadog, a c. fifth or sixth century Celtic saint. His fables allegedly transcribed from an ancient lost manuscript,¹¹⁴ would have anchored the tale firmly into the annals of ancient Welsh literature had their compiler not been the renowned forger Iolo Morganwg; who was well known for inventing Welsh histories and traditions, the *gorsedd* of the National Eisteddfod included.¹¹⁵ Iolo was familiar with the *Panchatantra*, a letter to Owen Myfyr attests to a comparison of the ‘*Bramin and the Jihneumon*’, and ‘*Y Gwr a Lladod ei Filgi*’.¹¹⁶ Iolo also comments on the similarities of the Braminical and druidic theologies.¹¹⁷ However similar tales were in circulation around the area of St David’s, G.W. Manby’s description of a house owned by the archdeacon of Brecon describes the disfigured design of arms above the door as having depicted figures representative of the fable whereby the child is killed by the serpent but the dog was blamed. This relief is accompanied by the inscription of the proverb ‘as sorry as the man who killed his greyhound’.¹¹⁸

The tale type may have first appeared in Wales as ‘The Seven Sages of Rome’, contained among the texts of the *Red Book of Hergest*.¹¹⁹ The Welsh tale known as ‘Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein’, as many of the international versions which preceded it contained a tale of

¹¹² *The Iolo Manuscripts: A selection of Ancient Welsh Manuscripts*, edited and translated by T. Williams, (Liverpool: I Foulks, 1888), p.561

¹¹³ Ibid. P.561.

¹¹⁴ M. Freeman, ‘The Abergarwan Story’.

¹¹⁵ University of Wales, *‘Iolo Morganwg’ Iolo Morganwg and the Romantic Tradition in Wales, 1740-1918 Project* (2008), [Online], available: <http://www.iolomorganwg.wales.ac.uk/index.php> <accessed 16 February 2018>

¹¹⁶ M. Freeman, ‘The Abergarwan Story’.

¹¹⁷ *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, edited by G.H. Jenkins et al, p.288.

¹¹⁸ This description appeared in G. W. Manby, *The history and antiquities of the parish of Saint David, South-Wales*, (London, 1801), pp.53-54: M. Freeman, ‘The Abergarwan Story’.

¹¹⁹ Written c.1400, it is one of only two complete versions of the *Mabinogion*.

the type. In this tale we are told of a knight who is called to a tournament in the city of Rome. The excitement and the noise of the frivolity are what caused the serpent to awake and attack the child. The mother on discovering the scene informs her husband the knight, of the carnage blaming the greyhound. He kills the dog but on discovering the truth is troubled by the way he was so easily led by a woman into killing the faithful dog.¹²⁰

It is evident from these last two examples how the narrative has been influenced by the culture and traditions of the time and location in which they are set. The motif and tale type are instantly recognisable but the *Bráham* has been replaced by a knight in the first and an anonymous man in the second. The calling away of the men are in keeping with their station, a tournament and to claim a share of the hunt. A presumption can be made that the contemporary audience would have been as familiar with these characters as they were with the hero animal and the protagonist. It is the location of the tale's retelling which has morphed the narrative not merely the effects of time and modernisation. Clouston's account of a contemporary tale current with his writing still refers to a snake and a mongoose as these animals would still be foes in India.¹²¹ What is evident is that the storyteller moulds the narrative to make it belong to a cultural setting and thus popular with his audience. Therefore, it can be argued that the tale need not be constructed at its source location, each version of the narrative that has attached to the central motif is specific to that location, culture and generation.

To conclude 'Gelert' not only conforms to AT178a tale type but would also appear to be the only known onomastic version. This ancient motif probably found its way to Wales during the Middle Ages in one of the popular literary collections such as the *Gesta Romanorum*. Although there is an abundance of evidence to support the argument that the tale type is not a Welsh original, there is also evidence which shows the way each associated culture has adapted and included the tale into its own heritage. The rooting of the narrative in the locality is evident in many versions, as the narrative of each variant is subtly altered to suit the local audience. Chronological differences in societal development can also be detected. It can be said that each version is specific to a location as the narrative is embedded into the vicinity. Therefore, the motif can be considered ancient and of an international origin, however the narrative elements of each version are site specific and so 'Gelert' belongs to Beddgelert as

¹²⁰ 'The Seven Sages of Rome', *Celtic Literature Collective*, edited by M. Jones, (2017), [Online], available: <http://www.maryjones.us/ctexts/seven.html> <accessed 10 June 2017>

¹²¹ W.A. Clouston, *Popular Tales and Fictions*, p.197.

much as any other adaptation belongs to its culture. This modern version is far removed from the Sanskrit origin; only the central motif remains to betray an international signature.

Chapter 2: Creating a site-specific narrative

The following discussion will consider how the tale of ‘The Animal Killed in Haste’ became connected to the village of Beddgelert. This will be done by investigating the inspirational forces which coloured the narrative of the tale or the modifiable elements that make the tale unique in its construction. Firstly, by briefly considering the historical connection of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth with the location and secondly by discussing the germination of the current tale with reference to an early literary example of a Latin *fabula*,¹²² also connected to the prince. This *fabula*’s central motif can further be traced in records of oral tales which are also rooted in the parish. This would suggest a diversification in the *fabula*’s narrative at an unknown earlier stage to suit a contemporary audience. Being rurally positioned the villagers maintained a traditional appreciation of folklore. Traditional folktales are extant in the locality which contains motifs found at several locations, therefore attesting to the popularity of such traditions within the community.¹²³

The simplicity of the tale has rendered its narrative elements easily interchangeable; this process is evident with the furnishing of different characters and locations to suit the audience. In the case of the protagonist, a wolf can be substituted for the original snake and the *Bráhma*n is replaced as the father figure by knight, lord and prince depending on the recital. Gelert the faithful hound who takes the place of the exotic mongoose, claims his name from the medieval hunting dog whose epitaph is heard in the *englyn* which accompanied a Latin *fabula*, ‘Fabula de Kil-Hart’.¹²⁴ An onomastic tale, the *fabula* presented an ideal explanation for the elusive Gelert to whom the village name pertains. The celebrated hound of the prince provided a literary influence which provided regal celebrity and an allusion to a heroic ‘golden age’.

The addition of Llywelyn and his dog Gelert is therefore not so unusual, the Welsh prince, a symbol of national heroic pride was a prime candidate, especially if it is accepted that this incarnation was inspired, in part by the St. David or the Abergarwan versions which features a medieval hunt. The St David’s version are recorded to have contained some slight variations; the child is killed by a serpent in Manby’s account and a wolf in Sykes’s telling.

¹²² Add. MS 19713 fol.21.

¹²³ ‘Fairy Bride’, ‘Rhita Gawr’, hidden treasure and Arthurian tales are amongst tales still current in the village traditions in the twenty first century: E. Maddern, *Snowdonia Folk Tales* (Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2017).

¹²⁴ Add. Ms 19713 fol.21.

The latter also depicts the father figure as a head of a Welsh tribe and is therefore clearly comparable to Llywelyn.¹²⁵

Historical connections between the village and the Welsh princes have been mainly concerned with the granting of support to the monastery.¹²⁶ Destruction through fires and the dissolution of the monasteries have made correct identification of such grants difficult, with some scholars suggesting there may be confusion as to which Llywelyn was represented in the medieval documents.¹²⁷ However some evidence does still exist to the patronage afforded the community of St Mary of Snowdon.¹²⁸ The monastery is said to be amongst the earliest in Wales, resulting in suggestions being made regarding the village name in connection with the sixth-century monk St Celer.¹²⁹ Gerald of Wales mentions the monastery in 1220 as does Anian the Bishop of Bangor in 1286, who states it is 'the senior religious house of all Wales except the Island of Saints, Bardsey'.¹³⁰

The village name first appears as Bekelert in a document of 1258¹³¹ however there are also references made to the area as the House of the Valley of St Mary of Snowdon. The various spellings of the village name Bekelert 1258, Bedkelerd 1286/9, Bethkellard 1291, Bethkelerd 1375, Bettkelerd 1432, Bethkilhart 1537, Bethkelert 1623 and Beddkelert in 1784, have led to a great deal of debate regarding the Etymology.¹³² Suggesting that the 'rt' at the end of Gelert rules out a word of Welsh origin,¹³³ Rhys supports the theory recorded in *Bonedd y Saint* that Kelert was a Saint with possible connections to Beddgelert and Llangeler.¹³⁴

¹²⁵ This tale is taken from the 1796 tour diary of Lady Sykes: M. Freeman, 'The Abergarwan Story'.

¹²⁶ J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales: From the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*, vol. II. (London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1954), pp.612-692.

¹²⁷ This paper discusses the potential conflict of interest between the Cistercian and Augustan orders and the allegiances of the princes. It also discusses the land grants lost during the fire after Llywelyn ap Gruffudd's death: P.M. Remfry, 'Llywelyn the Great: The Myth of Llywelyn Fawr', *Anglo Norman Castles* (2017), [Online], available: <http://www.castles99.uk/print.com/Essays/Llywleynabiorwerth.html> <accessed 18 July 2017>

¹²⁸ J. Burten, et al. 'Beddgelert: c.1200 Foundation', *Monastic Wales* [Online], available: <http://www.monasticwales.org/event/193> <accessed 18 September 2017>

¹²⁹ Llan Celer is in Carmarthenshire however Beddgelert may be his place of burial, there is no archaeological or documentary evidence for this A. Bott, and M. Dunn, *A Guide to the Priory and Parish Church of St Mary Beddgelert*, p.4.

¹³⁰ Ibid. p.1

¹³¹ Ibid. p.4

¹³² Ibid. p.5

¹³³ J. Rhys, 'Difficulties of The Folklorist', *Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx* vol. 2.

¹³⁴ O. Jones, W.O. Pugh, I. Morganwg, 'Bonedd Y Saint', *Myvyrian Archaeology* Vol 2, (London: S. Rousseau, 1901). p.36.

By the time Jenkins published his book, the tale of ‘Gelert’ had been established in the village of Beddgelert for approximately a hundred years.¹³⁵ Following its first publication in *The Musical Relicks*¹³⁶ the tale’s popularity was prompted by the composition of the poem ‘Beth-Gêlert; Or, The Grave of the Greyhound’ in 1800 by the Hon. William Robert Spencer.¹³⁷ It is thought that Spencer heard the tale from David Pritchard the Inn Keeper at the Royal Goat Hotel, when on a visit with W.A. Madocs at Dolmelynllyn in Dolgellau. Pritchard along with two other villagers were reported to have raised the stone cairn which represents the sepulchre of Gelert, to further tourist interest. Having hailed from South Wales it is also considered feasible that Pritchard would have been familiar with the tale of ‘The Animal Killed in Haste’ either from ‘Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein’, or Iolo Morganwg’s Abergarwan version as the tale was reputed to be well known in that area.¹³⁸

Iolo Morganwg and Edward Jones were rivals when it came to bardic publications.¹³⁹ Several correspondences attest to the animosity regarding authenticity and sources for the *Musical Relicks*.¹⁴⁰ Iolo Morganwg was particularly aggrieved with Jones for not citing the work of other authors and antiquarian collectors of Welsh histories and literature.¹⁴¹ It has always been assumed that Jones heard the tale referencing Llywelyn and Gelert from Pritchard, however given the avid collecting by scholars who were collaborating with each other to collate works of the ancient bardic literature,¹⁴² it could also be feasible that Jones acquired the tale from within this circle.¹⁴³ Whereby, upon hearing it from Jones, Pritchard used the narrative as an advertising feature to attract tourists to the village. Jacobs concluded that the

¹³⁵ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*.

¹³⁶ E. Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks*, (1794), p.75.

¹³⁷ M. Freeman, ‘Poem. 1800, Beth-Gêlert, W.R. Spencer’.

¹³⁸ A reference in footnote no.6 states that the tale of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth killing the dog of his wife Joan was well known in the village by the end of the sixteenth century. This can be assumed to be a typo intended to indicate eighteenth century or that the ‘Gelert’ tale had been confused with the Latin *Fabula* which was dated at the end of the sixteenth century: *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, edited by G.H. Jenkins et al. p.288.

¹³⁹ University of Wales, ‘Edward Jones’, *Iolo Morganwg and the Romantic Tradition in Wales, 1740-1918 Project* (2008), [Online], available <http://www.iolomorganwg.wales.ac.uk/pobl-edwardjones.php> <accessed 17 February 2018>

¹⁴⁰ Iolo’s letters to Edward Jones 1st January 1794 and to his wife Margret Williams 27th August 1794, are particularly relevant: University of Wales, ‘Iolo Morganwg’s Correspondence’, *Iolo Morganwg and the Romantic Tradition in Wales, 1740-1918 Project* (2008), [Online], available: <http://www.iolomorganwg.wales.ac.uk/gohebiaeth.php> <accessed 17 February 2018>

¹⁴¹ University of Wales, ‘Iolo Morganwg to Edward Jones, January 1794’, *Iolo Morganwg and the Romantic Tradition in Wales, 1740-1918 Project* (2008), [Online], available: <http://www.iolomorganwg.wales.ac.uk/lythyr-1022.php> <accessed 17 February 2018>

¹⁴² University of Wales, ‘Iolo Morganwg’s People’, *Iolo Morganwg and the Romantic Tradition in Wales, 1740-1918 Project* (2008), [Online], available: <http://www.iolomorganwg.wales.ac.uk/pobl.php> <accessed 17 February 2018>

¹⁴³ T. Ellis, *Edward Jones, Bardd Y Brenin, 1752-1824*, pp.20-50.

tale was a result of Jones's learning citing Carlisle's Topographical Dictionary entry and Spencer's use of the Anno Domini date.¹⁴⁴

The introduction of the 'Gelert' tale may have been eased due to a pre-existing, but not especially well known tale of a greyhound's tomb. G.C.G. Thomas suggests that an onomastic tale may have been in circulation pre-1800; this was most likely an oral version of the *fabula*¹⁴⁵ which depicts the death of a dog named Kil-hart,¹⁴⁶ this *fabula* connects Llywelyn, Joan the daughter of King John and a greyhound to the village in a literary form. The oldest written copy is a Latin text which is decorated with an *englyn*, in Welsh.¹⁴⁷ The *fabula* states that Johanna,¹⁴⁸ wife of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth and natural daughter of King John of England brought with her from England, an elegant white greyhound. Described as having the colour of snow or swans the animal was also gentle as a lamb, swift as a tiger and comparable to a lion in courage and bite.¹⁴⁹ It is said that on the first of August the dog known as Kilhart, named due to his proficiency to hunt, chased a hart from Caernarvon to Beddgelert where they were both mortally wounded. Saddened at the loss of her dog the Princess ordered Kilhart's burial, claiming that the tomb should be greater than the one erected for the gnat of Mantua. Hence the naming of the village Beth: kil: Hart, the author explains Beth being Welsh for tomb and killhart being the English, to kill a hart.¹⁵⁰ 'The Gnat of Mantua' is a translation of the 'Culex'¹⁵¹ accredited to Virgil, a Latin tale where the gnat saves the shepherd but is killed in haste.¹⁵² The *fabula* was further furnished with an *englyn*, thanks to the presence of a Welsh poet at the scene. It is this verse along with its English translation which first appears in Jones's publications.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁴ J.Jacobs, *Celtic Fairy Tales*, pp.262-3.

¹⁴⁵ add. Ms 19713 fol.21.

¹⁴⁶ Kilhart, Kil-hart or Cilhart the Welsh, English and Latin combination of spellings differ from author to author, the Latin transcription and a Welsh translation are available in Graham C.G. Thomas, 'Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol', pp.7-9. English translations are available by Edward Jones on: M. Freeman, 'Fabula de Beth Kelhart'.

¹⁴⁷ A traditional Welsh verse of 3 or 4 lines.

¹⁴⁸ The name appears differently depending on the text, she is known as Joan, Joanna, Jane and Siwan.

¹⁴⁹ Whilst common synonyms the lion and lamb are also used in Spencer's poem 'Beth Gelert', and may indicate that the *fabula* was known in the vicinity.

¹⁵⁰ A hart is a type deer or stag. The relevance of the stag in mythology are discussed at: Z. Evans, 'Mythical Beasts: The White Stag', *Under the influence*, (2014), [Online], available: <https://ztevetevans.wordpress.com/2014/04/26/mythical-beasts-the-white-stag/> <accessed 12 February 2018>

¹⁵¹ M. Freeman, 'The Gnat', Early Tours in Wales, *Sublime Wales* (2017), [Online], available: <https://sublimewales.wordpress.com/attractions/gelerts-grave-at-beddgelert/the-gnat/> <accessed 5 August 2017>

¹⁵² Graham C.G. Thomas, 'Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol', p.9.

¹⁵³ E. Jones, 'Englyn Upon the Greyhound of Prince Llywelyn ap Gruffudd ap Iorwerth', *Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards* (London: 1784), p.40.

It is to be found in the British library, and forms part of a collection of papers derived from the Gwydir estate.¹⁵⁴ The manuscript is believed to have been written or transcribed by Sir John Wynn at around 1590.¹⁵⁵ The collection also consist of various legal documents such as the Statute of Rhuddlan and a list of tenants of the estate who ‘wont to be biden to Gwedir to dynner in the Christmas holidays’, which is dated 1592.¹⁵⁶ The contents of the folios clearly span a number of centuries and were deemed important enough to be transcribed and preserved.

According to Jenkins the *fabula* tale was not in general circulation in the village at that time.¹⁵⁷ It was however known to Browne Willis in 1721, who writes ‘*Bedh significant sepulchrum, & Kilart canis neborphroni*’¹⁵⁸ to explain the name of the Village. It was also known to Jones, at least in part, in 1784, when he printed the *englyn*.¹⁵⁹ By 1794 Jones has revised his publication adding to the *englyn* the folktale version of ‘Gelert’.¹⁶⁰ Therefore the newly adapted version of the tale affords an explanation to the *englyn* which in turn authenticated the tale by its historical origin and language.

David Pritchard arrived at the village in 1793, having married the daughter of Bwlch Mwlchan farm¹⁶¹ and construction began of The Goat Hotel in 1800.¹⁶² Pritchard’s reputation as an astute businessman was conveyed by Jenkins, who comments both on his acumen as a hotelier and a storytelling enthusiast; popular in the village with both locals and tourists.¹⁶³ Jenkins was also keen to promote Pritchard as the source of the ‘Gelert’ tale, stating that it

¹⁵⁴ The British Library, ‘Collections Relating to Wales’, *Explore Archives and Manuscripts* (2017), [Online], available: [http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS032-002096363&vid=IAMS_VU2&indx=1&dym=false&dsent=1&onCampus=false&group=ALL&institution=BL&ct=search&vl\(freeText0\)=032-002096363](http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS032-002096363&vid=IAMS_VU2&indx=1&dym=false&dsent=1&onCampus=false&group=ALL&institution=BL&ct=search&vl(freeText0)=032-002096363) <accessed 20 December 2017>

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.66.

¹⁵⁸ This entry states ‘V. Beddcelert. St. May. Auguft 15’, the other churches dedicated to St. Mary on the same page are correctly spelt and as the dedication date is of Mary’s ascension we can assume this is a type error: B. Willis, *A Survey of The Cathedral Church of Bangor* (Bangor 1721), p.276.

¹⁵⁹ E. Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks*, (1784), p.40.

¹⁶⁰ It is assumed that during the ten years between editions, Jones may have visited the area, and been introduced to David Pritchard. Jones is known to have visited his brothers, sister and like-minded individuals to gain materials for his work: T. Ellis, *Edward Jones, Bardd Y Brenin*, p.29.

¹⁶¹ Bwlch Mwlchan is in Nantgwynant and the property is connected with the tale of ‘Owain Lawgoch’ which Jenkins records on pp. 258-63, and will be discussed later in this paper: D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.46.

¹⁶² The hotel is thought to have opened in 1802. The building was undertaken by the philanthropist Thomas Jones Esq. of Bryntirion, Bangor, reputedly intent on providing suitable tourist accommodation for the village. Thomas Jones is said to have acquired his fortune as a result of his wife’s family connection to Hengwrt: Ibid. pp. 43-4.

¹⁶³ Ibid. pp.47, 67.

was his embellishment of the Abergarwan version which inspired Jones's revision and not the other way around as suggested by Jacobs.¹⁶⁴

An assumption can be made that a tale of some form, connecting Gelert and Llywelyn, must have been circulating at some level within the village for Pritchard to feel that adapting the tale of 'The Man Who Killed His Greyhound' was a worthy way of anchoring the narrative to the locality. The onomastic *fabula* does provide the necessary inspiration even if the narrative differs. If as stated by Jenkins the story was not known in the locality before the 'Gelert' tale became famous, it remains unclear as to how such a connection was made. It must be assumed that the *fabula* tale was told to Pritchard by a visiting scholar, it may be feasible to consider its circulation may have originated via an ecclesiastical source, considering Browne Willis's comments regarding the onomastic relevance of the *fabula* or the significance of the tomb of a dog.¹⁶⁵

Nicholas Carlisle also published a brief account of this *fabula* along with Jones's Welsh and English translation of the *englyn* in 1811.¹⁶⁶ Thomas states that Carlisle mistakenly writes that the village is named after the grave of 'Celert', a greyhound belonging to Llywelyn the last Prince of Wales.¹⁶⁷ However it is worth noting here that Jones's first edition featuring the unexplained *englyn* also stated that the dog's master was Llywelyn ap Gruffudd ap Llywelyn and not Llywelyn ap Iorwerth as in the later editions. Carlisle may have heard the *fabula* tale and associated it with the *englyn* found in the 1784 edition of the *Musical Relicks* or there may have been another source for both men to have made this error, it is a point likely to remain unresolved.

One other manuscript source exists for the *englyn* alone, in a collection compiled by John Brooke which is dated 1590-2,¹⁶⁸ dates which closely coincide with those of the collation of the Gwydir papers. J. Gwenogvryn Evans's Report states that Brooke hails from Muckleswicke, co. Salop and of Mowddwy. The papers include genealogies, some of which were copied from the work of Gutyn Owain, descriptions of *cantrefs* and parishes, medical receipts and poetry and is dated 1590-1. It documents the *englyn* as recording the burial of '*fythiead ll'en ab Ier: drwyndrwn pan gladded ymedd kelerd*', indicating that the Brooke

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. p.67.

¹⁶⁵ Graham C.G. Thomas, 'Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol', p.7.

¹⁶⁶ M. Freeman, 'Fabula de Beth Kelhart'.

¹⁶⁷ Graham C.G. Thomas, 'Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol', p.10.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. p.7.

version appointed Llywelyn ap Iorwerth as the owner of the dog buried at Beddgelert.¹⁶⁹ However the last entry on the preceding page is a poem concerning the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, which may have added to any later confusion.

A close reading of the poems reveal that Brooke's version is spelt Kilhart, which is also the spelling used by Thomas in his transcription from the Gwydir manuscript. Jones uses Cylart in the 1784 publication but Cilhart in the following editions of the *englyn* and Kill-hart in the prose accompaniment. These could amount to phonetic inconsistencies but could also indicate different sources. The contemporary appearance of the Brooke and Gwydir manuscripts and the same spelling of Kilhart may be indicative of one source; however, the wording of the *englyn* is not the same in both transcriptions. Brooke's version reads:

Kladdwyd Kilhart Kelfydd/
Ymlyniad
Ymlaenav Eivionydd
Parod kinnio yw gynnydd
Parer dydd i heliar hydd¹⁷⁰

Whereas the Gwydir manuscript version¹⁷¹ and Thomas's transcription reads:

Kilhart a gladdwyd Kelvydd: ymlyniad
Ymlayne Evyonnydd
Parawd giniaw i gynnydd
Parai r dydd ir heliai r hydd¹⁷²

Jones's versions also differ from the above, and to each other; the 1784 *englyn* has a more modern reading and is fully punctuated:

Claddwyd Cylart Celfydd, (ymlyniad)
Ymlaenau Efionydd;
Parod ginio i'w gynnydd,

¹⁶⁹ J. Gwenogvryn. Evans, *Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language* vol. 2 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1898), p.355.

¹⁷⁰ The above *englyn* is copied from J. Gwenogvryn Evans, however the transcription of Brooke's *englyn* differs in spelling slightly in Graham C.G. Thomas' essay. Ibid. p.355.

¹⁷¹ add. Ms 19713 fol.2.

¹⁷² Graham C.G. Thomas, 'Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol', p.8.

Parai'r dydd, yr heliai Hŷdd!¹⁷³

The revised editions have a more antiquated feel, reverting to the use of 'v' for 'f' however still keeping the 'c' where other versions favour a 'k':

Claddwyd Cilhart Celvydd, ymlyniad

Y'mlaenau Eivionydd;

Parod ginio i'w gynnydd

Parai'r dydd, yr heliai Hydd!¹⁷⁴

Following the prose piece which accompanies the *englyn*, Jones discusses briefly the proverbs associated with the tale in the 'Cattwg the wise' or Abergarwan version and completes his rendition of the 'Gelert' tale by stating that the dog was a wedding gift for Llywelyn ap Iorwerth on his marriage to Joan, daughter of King John, by Agatha Ferrers,¹⁷⁵ around the year 1205. It is this reference which Jacobs claims as the proof that Spencer's poem was inspired by Jones, as the mention of the year is a feature in both compositions.¹⁷⁶ Despite the *Musical Relicks* being revised, with subsequent publications and a third volume, no further revisions are made to the 'Cilart' *englyn*, or the prose explanation even though the page content is changed. It would appear that the folktale version had superseded any need to add the *fabula* tale even though evidence at the National Library of Wales demonstrates that Jones was aware of the earlier narrative.¹⁷⁷

Four manuscript copies of the *fabula* are extant, the Gwydir manuscript,¹⁷⁸ a Latin copy in the hand of Edward Jones,¹⁷⁹ and two English translations on paper watermarked 1812.¹⁸⁰ The first is in the hand of Edward Jones and another in a different hand but with Jones's annotated notes which link the *fabula* to Llywelyn ap Iorwerth. It is not clear when Jones acquired or transcribed the Latin version, but as the literal English translation is not in his

¹⁷³ E. Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks*, (1784), p. 40.

¹⁷⁴ E. Jones *Musical and Poetical Relicks*, (1794), p. 75.

¹⁷⁵ Agatha Ferrers was the daughter of Robert Ferrers, the first Earl of Derby and one of the contenders for Joan's mother as no conclusive documentation exists to prove the matrilineal line.

¹⁷⁶ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.65.

¹⁷⁷ NLW MSS 168c, 169c: Freeman, M. 'Fabula de Beth Kelhart'.

¹⁷⁸ add. MS 19713D, f.21, transcribed and translated in Welsh: Graham C.G. Thomas, 'Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol', pp.7-9.

¹⁷⁹ The annotation to 168 c is of a historic nature noting 'Jane' not Joan, and her being the bastard of King John, her dowry of Elingsmore in the Marches is mentioned as was Llywelyn's reign. This note also mentions another source 'from another account Bedd Cilhart, Lle claddwyd bytheiad Llewelyn ab Iorwerth Drwyndwn, Tywysog Cymru. 1240'. This second source is not cited but does have the same spelling as seen in Jones's earlier publications. NLW MS 168c : M. Freeman, 'Fabula de Beth Kelhart'.

¹⁸⁰ NLW MS 169c pp217-9 and 235-7: Ibid.

hand it is possible to assume that he may have been in possession of the Latin copy early on when he first transcribed the *englyn*; leaving the prose translation for a much later date, hence the watermark on the manuscript paper. This was not an unusual practice; it was often customary to commit verses to text in order to preserve the poetic meter, and the *Musical Relicks* was a publication of bardic work.

The annotation to the literal translation states that it was transcribed from an old manuscript book found at Gwydir, which also contained the Statue of Rhuddlan and the Charter of Caernarvon amongst its pages. The inclusion amongst these papers would imply its value. Sir John Wynn of Gwydir was a keen collector of histories and literature producing amongst other accounts a history of his family.¹⁸¹ Considering the claims for royal descendents he made,¹⁸² it is not surprising to find a tale featuring the prince and princess within this collection.¹⁸³

No mention is made in any manuscripts version of Agatha Ferrers other than the annotated notes of Jones.¹⁸⁴ Agatha Ferrers is only one of several possible women who could have been Joan's birth mother;¹⁸⁵ her maternal line is a topic under much debate amongst historians.¹⁸⁶ However many genealogies do give Agatha as the mother¹⁸⁷ and she is of particular interest where the *fabula* is concerned as the heart and greyhounds appear in the Ferrers family heraldry.¹⁸⁸ The Greyhound also appears in the Tudor heraldry, featuring as supporters for Edmond Tudor the first Earl of Richmond.¹⁸⁹ References are made to an illustration of a

¹⁸¹ Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS 23289B.

¹⁸² *Heraldic Visitations of Wales and Part of the Marches: Between the Years 1586 and 1613, Under the Authority of Clarencieux and Norroy, Two Kings at Arms*, Vol. 2, (Ed.) L. Dwnn, (Llandovery: W. Rees, 1846). p.108.

¹⁸³ The British Library, 'Collections Relating to Wales'.

¹⁸⁴ M. Freeman, 'Fabula de Beth Kelhart'.

¹⁸⁵ S.K. Penman, 'The Mother of Joanna of Wales, wife of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth' (2009), [Online], available: <http://sharonkaypenman.com/blog/?p=88> <8 January 2018>

¹⁸⁶ The only contemporary record is at Tewksbury Cathedral on Joan's obituary entry where her parental line reads 'Obiit domina Johanna domina Walliae, uxor Lewelini filia regis Johannis et regina Clemencie, iii. kal. Aprilis.' T. Macabre, 'The Mother and Daughters of Joan of Wales' Plantagenesta, *LiveJournal* (2007), [Online], available: <http://plantagenesta.livejournal.com/53309.html> <accessed 12 December 2017>

¹⁸⁷ G. Lipscomb, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham* (London: J.W. Robins, 1847), p.329.

¹⁸⁸ European Heraldry, House of Devereux (2018), [Online], available: <http://www.europeanheraldry.org/united-kingdom/families/families-f/house-devereux/> <accessed 2 January 2018>

¹⁸⁹ D.A. Palgrave, 'The Queen's Beasts', *The Escutcheon*, vol. 3, *The Cambridge University Heraldic and Genealogical Society* (1993), [Online], available: <http://cuhags.soc.srcf.net/escutcheon/03-2.html#the-queen%E2%80%99s-beasts> <accessed 12 December 2017>

greyhound in a cradle¹⁹⁰ in the fifteenth century within the *Rous Rolls*.¹⁹¹ This icon is a representation of Wales showing the realms of Richard III.¹⁹² A direct connection to one definitive Welsh royal or era is difficult and beyond the remit of this paper, other than to mention the importance of symbolism within medieval culture.¹⁹³

The hart was also a symbolic motif, considered a venerable prey within medieval culture.¹⁹⁴ A white greyhound symbolised nobility, mottled colours were difficult to see and hence associated with hunters of a lower station.¹⁹⁵ Similarities can also be found when comparing the *fabula* tale with other early stories pertaining to the location of churches. A tale set at Llangar, originally known as Llan Garw Gwyn, references a site where the erection of the church was prophesied to be where the deer was slain. This Welsh example was one of many concerned with the locating of churches.¹⁹⁶ Therefore the *fabula* may be an earlier example of an embellished motif furnished with popular contemporary characters.

When considering the *fabula*'s motif similarities were suggested by Jenkins who tells of a similar tale from South Wales featuring a fox and a hound whereby both prey and hunter also die following a chase.¹⁹⁷ In addition, this motif can be found in a tale furnished with yet more legendary figures, set in the parish of Beddgelert, at the foot of Dinas Emrys. Here it is said that Owain Ffindu,¹⁹⁸ the brother of Emperor Constantine and St Peblig is buried having fought with Brynach Wyddel, an Irish chieftain.¹⁹⁹ Both die having been mortally wounded. Owain shoots an arrow and commands his men to bury him where it falls, effectively

¹⁹⁰ Jacobs considers the tale of the dog so well known as to colour heraldic representation of Wales, however the Tudors through the Richmond/ Beaufort line had Greyhound supporters: J. Jacobs, *Celtic Fairy Tales*, p.261.

¹⁹¹ London, British Library, Rous Roll add MS48976, fol. 1ar.

¹⁹² The *Rous Rolls* was completed before the conclusion of *The War of the Roses* and the forming of Henry VII's new standard which uses the dragon of Cadwalader and the greyhound as supporters. N. Amin, 'Ednyfed Fychan, Father of the Tudor Dynasty', Historic UK (2018), [Online], available: <http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofWales/Ednyfed-Fychan-father-of-the-Tudor-Dynasty/> <accessed 2 January 2018>

¹⁹³ Caroline Hicks' book is one of many examples which illustrate how iconography furnished the lives of medieval culture: C. Hicks, *The King's Glass: A Story of Tudor Power and Secret Art* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2010).

¹⁹⁴ The term referring to a mature stag and specifically a red deer: G. Jones, 'Forests and Chases in England and Wales c.1000–1850' *St John's College, Oxford* (2007), [Online], available: <http://info.sjc.ox.ac.uk/forests/glossary.htm> <accessed 2 January 2018>

¹⁹⁵ Greyhound History in the Middle Ages and The Renaissance, (n.d.) [Online], available: <http://www.gulfcoastgreyhounds.org/hist-mid-ren.html> <accessed 21 August 2017>

¹⁹⁶ The stag is a symbol which attests to Christian purity, therefore its association with a location or site could be considered to have divine meaning: D. Ross, 'LLangar Church' *Britain Express* (2017), [Online], available: <http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=599> <accessed 20 December 2017>

¹⁹⁷ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.67.

¹⁹⁸ Owain Ffindu (black lips) or Eugenius son of Macsen Wledig and Elen, c. 383- c. 400: Kessler Associates, 'Celtic Kingdoms of the British Isles', *The History Files* (2018), [Online], available: <http://www.historyfiles.co.uk/KingListsBritain/CymruGlywysing.htm> <accessed 6 January 2018>

¹⁹⁹ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.215.

between Dinas Emrys and Llyn Dinas.²⁰⁰ This story was attested to in the late fourteenth century,²⁰¹ references to its narrative are evident in a poem by the prominent local bard Rhys Goch Eryri:²⁰²

Dewrddryd Lywelyn daerddraig
Dyred taer grêd tair graig
Lle mae penn brawd Gystenin
Vendigaid lafn drafn y drin
Yngwyl derw angel daurudd
Ynghord pharaon ynghudd
Ar oer garreg Eryri.²⁰³

The area between the Lake and the mound of Dinas Emrys is now occupied by the A498, it is allegedly remembered within the parish that this was a burial site disrupted by the road's construction. Several variations of the tale are extant in relation to this site, the characters remain unchanged however differences are recited in the weaponry and method of fighting.²⁰⁴

Using contemporary characters to familiarise or interest the audience was not an unusual practice, especially within the remit of the oral storyteller. Jackson remarking on the tale which features King John and the Abbot of Canterbury points to its varied heritage with approximately six hundred versions.²⁰⁵ Llywelyn and his dog Gelert are similarly represented in both fable and *englyn*, as was customary during the middle ages.²⁰⁶ Devoid of a named

²⁰⁰ D.N. Ford, 'Owain Finddu', *Early British Kingdoms* (2001), [Online], available: <http://www.earlybritishkingdoms.com/bios/owaingg.html> <accessed 6 January 2018>

²⁰¹ Rhys Goch lived nearby at Hafod Lwyfog, Nantmor. He flourished c. 1385-1448, the poem is called *Secret* it opens 'Valliant Llewelyn, daring dragon, Come though of strong faith towards the rock, Where the head of Cystenyn Vendigaid's brother, Of the battle-controlling spear, Amongst the Oak of the wood of Faraon' [This line is noted as meaning Dinas Emrys], On the rock of Snowdon...': *The Iolo Manuscripts*, edited and translated by T. Williams, p.688.

²⁰² D. Johnston, 'Rhys Goch Eryri' (2004), *Oxford Index*, [Online], available: <http://oxfordindex.oup.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/23466> <accessed 2 January 2018>

²⁰³ *Cywydd Cyfrinach: The Iolo Manuscripts*, edited and translated by T. Williams, p.307.

This poem is also known as 'Ail Ateb Rhys Goch Eryri i Lywelyn Ab Y Moel': *Gwaith Rhys Goch Eryri*, edited by F.D. Evans (Aberystwyth: University of Wales Press, 2007). P.86-89.

²⁰⁴ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp.217-8.

²⁰⁵ The earliest is a Coptic rendition dating from c.AD850 Egypt; its motifs are repeated in versions which range from Asia, India, Ceylon, Siberia and Europe. 'The Ballad of King John' dates to the Sixteenth century and attests to the use of folktales within historic literary sources circulating amongst both the learned and common sectors of society. K. Jackson, *The International Popular Tale*, p.16.

²⁰⁶ The use of notable characters and heraldic symbolism was also a notable feature for Elizabethan writers who composed their literature full of discreet inferences recognisable to a contemporary audience aware of political and cultural issues: A.C. Hamilton, *The Spencer Encyclopedia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), pp.353-5.

author it is not possible to accredit the *fabula* with such meaning without risking injecting personal or modern supposition into the texts; this being a futile practice in the search of original meaning.²⁰⁷

Characters can be interjected into a narrative for many reasons, one being their popular appeal another that they are symbolic figures. A character may therefore be known in context for specific attributes or legendary deeds which allow the narrative to become specific to a location or time. The tale may also include a cautionary element when recited as a fable, providing the audience is familiar with the references it contains. The parish of Beddgelert hosts many tales which attest to the adoption of remodelled motifs and popular characters will often appear in various tale variations.²⁰⁸ King Arthur affiliated with Dinas Emrys in ‘Lludd and Llefelys’,²⁰⁹ is the most notorious; however, ‘Owain Lawgoch’ and ‘Rhita Gawr’ are also cited in the parish as well as several other locations.²¹⁰

Owain Lawgoch was a popular folktale figure, incidentally connected to David Pritchard with regards to his wife’s home at Bwlch Mwrchan.²¹¹ Owain was a giant covered in red hair who would steal produce from the farmhouses in the upper part of Nantgwynant.²¹² Upon seeking council from a magician, the villagers were advised to find a red greyhound of uniform colour with which to catch the thief.²¹³ The farmer’s wife at Ty’n yr Owallt had stayed home to keep vigil²¹⁴ when a red hairy hand came in through the window, she cut it off and the giant escaped to his cave and never returned.²¹⁵ Many topographical details are expressed in the tale which would anchor the narrative to the valley, creating a sense of ownership

²⁰⁷ Ifans quotes Elizabeth Cooks in briefly discussing hidden meanings: Rh. Ifans, *Gwerthfawrogi’r Chwedlau*, p.28.

²⁰⁸ Shape shifting witches changing into animals, bewitching of humans into insanity, Goblins and Lantern Jack to distract travellers from their path are motifs which along with giants and Devil tales have reoccurring motifs present in international tales and are extant in the parish: D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp.74-87.

²⁰⁹ Rh. Ifans, *Gwerthfawrogi’r Chwedlau*, pp. 150-4.

²¹⁰ J. Rhys, ‘Welsh Cave Legends’, *Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx* vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901), [Online], available: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/cfwm/cf202.htm> <accessed 3 February 2018>

²¹¹ A discussion of the various incidences of Owain Lawgoch’s appearances in tales can be found at: Ibid.

²¹² D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.258-61.

²¹³ The giant realising the danger he was in fled like a roe, leaping over the rocks. He was also so quick and elusive that only a greyhound could catch him, but no ordinary greyhound. This image of a red deer running from the greyhound can be said to echoes the *fabula* tale: Ibid. p.259.

²¹⁴ Edward Llwyd’s version of the tale described the farmer’s wife as in her confinement and the others had gone to church: Ibid. p.260.

²¹⁵ This motif is reminiscent of the hand which steals the foals of Teyrnion in the first branch of the *Mabinogi*: *The Mabinogion* ed. and trans. S. Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p18.

amongst the audience. A similar use of topographical detail can be seen in the poem ‘Llywelyn a’i Gi’ by Glasynys which will be discussed below.²¹⁶

The interconnection of tradition and history are as relevant to the construction of tales as topographical markers or popular characters. A relatively modern Celtic folktale book includes the tale; however, the story begins by retelling the tale of ‘Rita Gawr and how Snowdon was formed’.²¹⁷ The justification for this merger of tales was to establish Llywelyn’s genealogy. Iolo Morganwg also notes that proverbs relating to disgraced men could be found in Hindu text were comparable to references to the tale of ‘Rhita Gawr’.²¹⁸ The proverbs paralleled those in the Welsh and English which referred to a bedaubed bearded;²¹⁹ a sentiment also found in Irish literature.²²⁰ The Arthurian tale of Rhita the giant who collected the beards of his conquered foes is also to be found in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s history of the Kings of Britain where he is known as Ritho.²²¹ Therefore what is evident within the extended narrative is a development which attempts to age the relatively modern ‘Gelert’ tale by association with one which dates to the Middle Ages, thus offering authenticity.

In conclusion this brief compilation attests to the array of heroic and mythical tales which are connected with the locality. This discussion also demonstrates how characters and motifs merge and develop creating fitting scenarios as story tellers and collectors such as Jones, Pritchard and others adapt the tales to suit their audience. The ‘Gelert’ tale characters can be seen to have both historical and literary connections with the location which enabled the substitution of figures from previous versions of the AT178a motif. The celebrity of the characters used helped promote the narrative which was published in prose and poetic form. The extant tales present in the traditions of the parish attested to the possible development of this and other motifs found in local traditions. Both the characters of the ‘Gelert’ tale and the motif of the *fabula* were extant in the parish and pre-dated their current form. The

²¹⁶ O.W. Jones, (Glasynys), ‘Llywelyn a’i Gi’, *Yr Wyddfa* edited by R.O. Glaslyn, (Talysarn: P.M. Evans, 1878). pp. 40-9.

²¹⁷ P. Berresford Ellis, ‘Bedd Gellert’, *The Mammoth Book of Celtic Myths and Legends* (London: Robinson, 2002), p.363-70.

²¹⁸ ‘Rhitta’ is Iolo’s spelling: *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, p.289.

²¹⁹ *The Hēñtōpādēs of Vēšhnōō-sārmā*, translated by C. Wilkins, (Bath, 1787). p.194.

²²⁰ Mebd instructs the women to inform Cuchlain that worriers will not fight for him whilst he has no beard and so he dons a false beard ‘he bedaubed himself with a beard’: ‘The Slaying of Loch Son of Mofemis’ *The Cattle-Raid of Cooley (Táin Bó Cúalnge)*, edited by J. Dunn, (London: David Nutt, 1914).

²²¹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, (1138-9), *The History of the kings of Britain*, translated by S. Evans, revised translation by C.W. Dunn, (London: Everyman’s Library, 1975), p.214.

developments persisted into the modern era with continued endeavours at sudo-authentication as evident with the attempt to antique the tale by association. The development and popularity of the tale can be considered indebted to the specific circumstance of time and place which brought together the creative minds that inspired the narrative and cultivated the audience; this last point is a factor which warrants a closer inspection.

Chapter 3: The reception and development of narrative changes

The association of the dog known as Gelert with the village of Beddgelert is unequivocal to a modern, contemporary audience. The tale itself is substance enough to connect the location and the story without the need to authenticate its source. This could indicate that the time elapsed is adequate to embed the tradition or that the sentiments it portrays are relevant moral elements which resonate with any audience. The composition of the tale of 'Gelert' coincided with the arrival in Beddgelert of David Pritchard, the 1794 publication of the tale,²²² and the distribution of Spencer's poem. By establishing this time line, it is evident that a historical root for the narrative was not tangible. This chapter aims to consider the reception of the tale by a contemporary audience in order to establish how it was accepted and gained permanence, therefore it is necessary to evaluate the reception and subsequent adoption of the tale within the community during the early years of its composition. This discussion will consider the acceptability of the community to the adoption of a new tale. The discussion will also consider the public debates of the Welsh literary community found in *Y Brython* which were concerned with the elaboration or expansion of the prose narrative. These debates depict how changes to the narrative elements were considered, especially as supplementary meaning was seen to be interjected into the text. The additional messages which sit in the narrative elements unique to the time and location are site specific and give not only authenticity but also validity to the genre. Expressions of nationalistic pride and later emotive issues can be detected which demonstrate the relevance of the tale to audiences over several generations.

The narrative elements which have been adapted to mould the tale to the site were construed from selecting historic evidence and local legends as previously discussed. Like each cultural adaptation the location, setting and characters assume familiar guises. Similarly, the reason for abandoning the infant, method for killing the friendly animal and final sentiment become culturally apt. The use of a heroic figure and symbol of national pride is a significant cultural marker. The use of a 'distant past' is not always necessary to convey the moral of the motif, this can be seen in the Brussels adaptation of the incident in the supermarket car park, where the motif is expressed in a plausible modern scenario. The choice therefore of the composition's setting in the 'Golden Age' of the Welsh princes would suggest an underlying nationalistic theme.

²²² E. Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks*, (1794), p. 75.

The popularity of Celtic historic literature in the decades around the time of ‘Gelert’s’ composition witnessed the collection and publication of bardic works by many Welsh scholars;²²³ for which *The Musical Relicks* and the *Myvyrian Archaiology* were examples of this work.²²⁴ The location of Eryri offered many inspirational anecdotes and would have been an ideal location to gather such material. Literary and artistic tourism as well as general touring by the wealthier population brought business to the remote valleys of Wales. In particular Beddgelert located at the foot of Snowdon was well placed to build upon its historic reputation as a hostelry on the pilgrim route to Bardsey Island.²²⁵

The parish of Beddgelert is an area which boasts a high number of folk traditions which include tales of a historical, mythological and heroic nature as well as *märchen*.²²⁶ The village and the surrounding area are also littered with archaeological relics that date from the Iron Age and included the remains of the ruined monastery.²²⁷

Stories were traditionally told to justify the presence of unfamiliar objects, topographical or archaeological phenomenon or ancient place names. One example includes Bryn Beddau, a mound of the graves, which is near Gelert’s grave and the old ecclesiastic site.

Archaeological research carried out during the late eighteenth century suggests that no connection can be made with the site or any definitive building; both Llywelyn’s summer retreat and priory buildings were suggested and rejected.²²⁸ It was later theorised that the mound was a fourth century cairn connected to the Irish invaders who settled at Dinas Emrys, then known as Dinas Ffaraon.²²⁹ Genealogical data pertaining to the area show an Einion ap Celert listed, this Celert is yet another contender in the quest for an entomological explanation for the name of the village.²³⁰

The erecting of a cairn can be said to be inspired by both the memorial of Gelert and the *fabula* of Kill-hart, whereby a tomb surpassing the stature of the memorial to the gnat in the ‘Culex’ was envisaged.²³¹ William Jones writing around the end of the nineteenth century

²²³ Edward Jones, Owain Myfyr, Iolo Morganwg, John Walters, William Owen Pugh were a few who were involved in such pursuits which resulted in the publications of Welsh work.

²²⁴ T. Ellis, *Edward Jones, Bardd Y Brenin*, p.25.

²²⁵ A. Bott, and M. Dunn, *A Guide to the Priory and Parish Church of St Mary Beddgelert*, p.1.

²²⁶ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*.

²²⁷ A discussion of these archaeological remains can be found in: A. Bott, and M. Dunn, *A Guide to the Priory and Parish Church of St Mary Beddgelert*, pp.4-6.

²²⁸ Bryn Beddau translates to burial hill or mound: D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp.24-5.

²²⁹ *The Iolo Manuscript, edited and translated by* T. Williams, p.472.

²³⁰ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp.25-6.

²³¹ Graham C.G. Thomas, ‘Beddgelert: Y Chwedl Wreiddiol’, p.9.

claimed the cairn which represented the tomb of Gelert was constructed by Pritchard and two other men from the village, William Prichard, the parish clerk, and Richard Edward of Pen y Bont.²³² No date was given in relation to the erection of the tomb however no extant evidence exists to support its sighting pre 1811, however as the century advanced visitors claimed to have seen posters in the Goat hotel which directed tourists to the site of the cairn. By 1840 a railing had been placed around the monument which has been updated and preserved to date.²³³

Due to the diligence of the villagers in both reinforcing the tale of ‘Gelert’ with a physical monument and supporting its continued transmission, this version of the AT178a had surpassed in popularity all other onomastic tales relating to the village. However it has not always received unquestioned universal acceptance by the academic establishment.²³⁴ Issues arose concerning the claim of historical provenance of the tale which in turn instigated questions of academic integrity.²³⁵ The authenticity of the tale was fiercely debated in print within sixty years of its composition.²³⁶ This was a fraught debate as local scholars were aware that evidence existed which disputed the authenticity of the tale as a purely Welsh construct; evidence which English authors were keen to publicise.²³⁷ However two forces were at play, one was the undisputed impact the tale was having in promoting the village as a tourist destination and the other was that of national pride in traditional Welsh language literature.

The Gelert tale is first alluded to in *The Brython* in an article relating to Moel y Gest,²³⁸ the author when describing the area praises the renowned fifteenth century bards Dafydd Nanmor and Rhys Goch Eryri, both buried in Beddgelert. The connection is made when the author parallels the inability of local antiquarians to identify these graves and authenticate the tale of ‘Gelert’.²³⁹ Rhys Goch was a known supporter of Owain Glyndŵr and therefore had

²³² W. Jones, ‘Plwyf Beddgelert’, *Y Brython*, Cyf. 3: (Ebrill 1861), 129-36. p.134.

²³³ M. Freeman, ‘Gelert’s Grave at Beddgelert’.

²³⁴ W. Williams, *Observations on the Snowdon Mountains*, pp. 45-7.

²³⁵ Specifics of this instance will be discussed below. A discussion regarding the lower academic value of folktales can be found in: L. Dégh, ‘Some questions of the Social Function of Storytelling’, p. 96.

²³⁶ Several articles relating to the tale appeared in *Y Brython* each copy can be found: National Library of Wales, *Y Brython* (1858-1901).

²³⁷ The accounts of the tale origin in S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, pp. 132-43, and J. Jacobs, *Celtic Fairy Tales*, pp.259-64, are quite specific in their intent to distance the origin from a Welsh source.

²³⁸ No name is given in relation to authorship of this article: Anon. ‘Moel Y Gest’ *Y Brython*, Cyf. 1: (Mehefin 1858), 5-6. p.5.

²³⁹ Ibid. p.5.

nationalistic tendencies,²⁴⁰ the nature of which the author may have wished to equate with the historic elements of the ‘Gelert’ narrative. An explanation regarding the existence of other versions of the tale is noted by the editor who explains that many older versions exist with some modifications in both Europe and Asia; whereby he concludes by stating that ‘every culture has its bedd Gelert’.²⁴¹ The international motif was widely recognised and this last statement by the editor can be considered indicative of how the tale had been adopted by the various cultures in which it manifested. Each adaptation moulded to its specific characteristics continued to embed the tale within the cultural heritage of that society. The tales may display slight generational variances which reflect a living culture, yet the central international motif and the specific narrative elements are both recognisable and inherent to its composed location.

Following Spencer’s success, the content of his poem was translated by several local bards. Richard Griffiths, (Carneddog), had also translated Spencer’s poem into Welsh.²⁴² A native of the parish, he lived at Carneddi, Nantmor and was known to Jenkins who included an article on the history of Carneddi and accounts of the poets work in his book. However, omits to mention the translation in this section or the chapter on the ‘Gelert’ legend.²⁴³

Daniel Ddu’s translation was published along with a prologue in *Y Brython*.²⁴⁴ The narrative which elaborated on the poem gave some context to the verses, in much the same format as the *englyn* and prose narrative presented in his *Musical Relicks*.²⁴⁵ The characters are introduced along with the suggestion of the greyhound having been given to Llywelyn by King John. Spencer’s poem and therefore Daniel Ddu’s translation were more literary than the prose offered by Jones, the embellishment of Daniel Ddu’s prose offered an extended, exciting story attesting to a developing narrative as its elements became familiar to authors and their audiences. In its poetic form the tale’s historic value was not considered inherently relevant, however the narrative account was scrutinised, and questions of historic value and authenticity were raised as a result.

²⁴⁰ Barrow, G. *Wild Wales* (London: John Murray, 1907), Chapter XLVII. [Online], available: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/648/648-h/648-h.htm> <accessed 3 February 2018>

²⁴¹ An explanation follows from the (*) on page 5, this note is untitled and signed ‘Gol’ or editor who was at that time the Rev. Silvan Evans: S. Evans, *Y Brython*, Cyf. 1: (Mehefin 1858). p.6.

²⁴² R. Griffith ‘Carneddog’, ‘Gelert Ci Llywelyn’, *Ceinion y Cwm* (Tremadog: R. I. Jones, 1891), pp. 8-9.

²⁴³ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp. 346-7.

²⁴⁴ D. Evans, (Daniel Ddu o Geredigion), ‘Bedd Gelert’, *Y Brython*, Cyf. 2: (Chwefror 1859). pp 57-8.

²⁴⁵ E. Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks* (1794), p.75.

During all the correspondence the quality of all the poetic work is commended, the issue of contention amongst the readers is in the alluded authenticity of the prologue. Replies continued to further emphasise the ancient nature of the motif, giving examples of its Eastern sources. Questions were raised as to why the tale could not be appreciated for its value as a folktale rather than historic fact.²⁴⁶ One reader offers the suggestion that the moral lesson should be the defining factor in the relevance of the tale, whereby the narrative value should be considered as being one of entertainment. This author offers the tale of 'The Man Who Killed His Greyhound' for publication to further stress the dispersed nature of the motif.²⁴⁷ Similar calls in the same issue by a different author ask that the narrative be respected for its entertainment value and suggest that the grave be opened, presumably to establish the authenticity of any historical claims.²⁴⁸ From the general tone of the article the intention of discounting the physical evidence would remove the debate on authenticity and allow for literary discussion on the merits of the tale in its own rights.

The publicity afforded the tale continued to propel the public's interest, Glasynys publishes his own poetic and prose version²⁴⁹ following a request in a previous edition.²⁵⁰ There was high praise for the composition of the poetry but fierce opposition to the citation of the prose prologue being taken from an old manuscript.²⁵¹ There followed a stream of dialogue asking for proof pertaining to the citation,²⁵² which were met with rebuttals by Glasynys.²⁵³ The result of which encourage a further article questioning the valour of Welshmen who would cast doubt on the integrity of authors promoting Welsh history and literature.²⁵⁴ The defence of the narrative by Glasynys and others would also suggest an acceptance of the tale as a valued contribution to both local culture and Welsh literature in general, regardless of its historical authenticity.

'Llywelyn a'i Gi'²⁵⁵ is composed by a man who is clearly impassioned by the locality and its history, both literary and heroic.²⁵⁶ The theme and the motif remain recognisable; however,

²⁴⁶ Gwrnerth Ergydlym, 'Bedd Gelert', *Y Brython*, p.91.

²⁴⁷ Meilir o Went, 'Y Gwr a Laddwys ei Filgi', *Y Brython*, Cyf. 2: (Ebrill 1859), p.90.

²⁴⁸ Gwrnerth Ergydlym, 'Bedd Gelert', *Y Brython*, p.91.

²⁴⁹ Glasynys, 'Llywelyn a'i Gi' *Y Brython*, Cyf. 2: (Mai 1859), 110-11.

²⁵⁰ Dyfi, 'Y Chwedl', *Y Brython*, Cyf. 2: (Ebrill 1859), 91-2. p.92.

²⁵¹ Dyfrig Cynllaith, 'Llywelyn a'i Gi', *Y Brython*, Cyf. 2: (Rhagfyr 1859), p.220.

²⁵² Dyfrig Cynllaith, 'Llywelyn a'i Gi', *Y Brython*, Cyf. 3: (Ebrill 1860), 153-4.

²⁵³ Glasynys, 'Nod', *Y Brython*, Cyf. 3: (Mawrth 1860), p.114.

²⁵⁴ Mathonwy, 'Dyfrgi Cynllaith-', *Y Brython*, Cyf. 3: (Mai 1860), 191-2. p.192.

²⁵⁵ O.W. Jones, (Glasynys), *Yr Wyddfa*, pp. 40-49.

²⁵⁶ Glasynys was reputed to be devoutly nationalistic from an early age: S. Lewis, *Straeon Glasynys*, p. ix.

the narrative had been greatly expanded. The verses are separated into three sections which distinguish firstly the setting of the tale in its location with descriptive passages which convey the beauty of the rugged landscape. Eleven verses allude to past poets, Rhys Goch²⁵⁷ in particular and to the heroic and mythical legends which are attached to Dinas Emrys. The middle section composing of fourteen verses is dedicated to the hunt and the slaying of Gelert. One longer passage and four verses are then dedicated to the remembrance of Gelert and Llywelyn's remorse.

Spencer's poem 'Beth Gelert'²⁵⁸ is faster paced, a detail by detail account of the narrative where the poetic meter directs the excitement of the words. The poem begins with the call of the hunting horn and Llywelyn's realisation that Gelert was uncharacteristically missing from the pack where he excelled. Gelert is described as a faithful hound who doted on his master, a lion in the hunt but as gentle as a lamb at home.²⁵⁹ It is suggested that Llywelyn's mood is affected by the unfruitful hunt which may be a precursor to the following events.

In contrast Glasynys begins his composition with verses of admiration for the valley, and its bardic, mythological and heroic past. Where Spencer's verses are punchy Glasynys indulges in description, proving his awareness both with the locality and its heritage. The hunt is described with topographical familiarity as the author names farms and locations, ensuring the audience are aware that this is no generic scene. Allusions to the inspirational lure of artists and writers further promote the valleys cultural importance, as does the reference to Rhys Goch's chair.²⁶⁰ Glasynys is known to have spent time in the area and would have been familiar with many anecdotal tales.²⁶¹ His contribution to Welsh literature especially in regards to folklore is also mentioned by John Rhys, who cites Glasynys alongside William Jones as major contributors to this volume on Welsh folktales.²⁶² Glasynys was considered an admirer of Rhys Goch's work, Rhys comments on the similarities to be found within the

²⁵⁷ Glasynys is clearly inspired by Rhys Goch as seen in the similarity between lines of verse as discussed in Rhys: J. Rhys, 'Welsh Cave Legends'.

²⁵⁸ M. Freeman, 'Poem. 1800, Bedd-Gelert, W.R. Spencer'.

²⁵⁹ The descriptions are similar to those in the *Fabula Kill-hart*, as are lines 18 and 19 which read: 'In sooth he was a peerless hound, the gift of royal John': Ibid.

²⁶⁰ The bard is said to have sat in a stone chair on the crags of the *Gymmwynas*, a steep sided valley by the Aberglaslyn bridge: O.W. Jones, (Glasynys), *Yr Wyddfa*, p.42.

²⁶¹ S. Lewis, *Straeon Glasynys*, p.xxii.

²⁶² J. Rhys, *Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx*, vol. 1, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901), p.109.

thematic elements of both bards work, especially in relation to Snowdonia, its scenic and legendary prowess embedded with national pride.²⁶³

Glasynys states the princess was hunting with her husband at the time of the attack on the infant;²⁶⁴ the reference allowing the author to excuse the absent parents and blame an English nursemaid for the neglect of the child. The dishonour of the nursemaid is elaborated upon in the prose prologue to Glasynys's poem, here she is said to have gone up Moel Hebog to see a cave, probably in the company of a male servant. Glasynys is not vague in his referencing as the first published edition of the poem is accompanied with explanatory footnotes.²⁶⁵ The servant girl's nationality is omitted from Jenkins's translation, presumably as not to cause offence and discourage the booming tourist industry.²⁶⁶ However it may be surmised that the omission is more conspicuous for the deliberate highlighting of its absence: 'this is our rendering except for one sentence not worth mentioning.'²⁶⁷ Any bilingual reader would have been compelled to turn to Glasynys's original to view the absent text.²⁶⁸ Discreet jibes aimed at the English provided a natural source of amusement amongst the Welsh speakers.

Spencer's poem had elaborated on Jones's original narrative allowing details within the descriptive language to endear the greyhound to the public's imagination. This version offered more than a characterless moral fable set in an unrecognisable location.²⁶⁹ Both poems are explicit in Llywelyn's remorse which leads to the raising of the cairn and subsequent alleged naming of the village in its honour. The cairn itself became part of the tradition, a tangible memorial reminiscent of a pilgrimage site the audience were able to visit for themselves.²⁷⁰ No additional descriptive passages are present in Spencer's poem, nor does he make a reference to Joan within the verses. The composition narrates the story without the need to combine the tale of 'Gelert' with reference to other legends. However, anchoring the audience's thoughts within a recognisable heroic provenance can only be advantageous when laying the foundation for a relatively new tale. Jenkins's book was inspired in part by

²⁶³ Ibid. p.109.

²⁶⁴ Glasynys, 'Llywelyn a'i Gi' *Y Brython*, p.110.

²⁶⁵ Ibid. pp.110-11.

²⁶⁶ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.59.

²⁶⁷ Ibid. p.59.

²⁶⁸ Glasynys, 'Llywelyn a'i Gi' *Y Brython*, p.110.

²⁶⁹ The hunter is not identified and Abergarwan, also spelt Abergarvan and Abergarfan no longer exists: *The Iolo Manuscripts, edited and translated by T. Williams*, p.561.

²⁷⁰ Several discussions pertaining to relationship between archaeology and folktales can be found in: *Archaeology and Folklore* edited by A. Gazin-Schwartz, & C.J. Holtorf.

William Jones and in particular the prize winning²⁷¹ essays published in *Y Brython*.²⁷² Having extended and translated the text, the tale of ‘Gelert’ was separated to form a chapter dedicated to the history and various versions of the tale.²⁷³

Rhys wrote the preface and introduction for Jenkins which commends W. Jones’s work and details some of the spelling derivations of place names.²⁷⁴ The *Y Brython*²⁷⁵ article discusses at length the different relics found locally and how important the folk culture and in particular folktales have been to Welsh communities. W. Jones, who was born and bred in the village,²⁷⁶ stresses the value of anecdotes and folktales in the construction of a nation’s heritage, not just in Wales but internationally. Crucially he recognises the conflict between historical accuracy and entertainment value.²⁷⁷ The village being in a rural setting was in his opinion able to hold onto its traditions, such as the *noson lawen* where people could come together to recite tales.²⁷⁸ W. Jones explains that it is often useful to use folktales to explain or expand where historical facts are scant or lost, as a result any culture could be considered incomplete without the insight which folk tradition provides. For this reason, W. Jones states that such tales and traditions are included in the Beddgelert parish histories in the hope that if the academics are unsatisfied then they will at least be entertained.²⁷⁹

The relevance of the tale continues into contemporary culture, the narrative is regularly recited and included in new collections of Welsh folktales. The academic investigation of folktales in later years has been invaluable to the study of ethnographical, social and literary history. The development of a folktale can also demonstrate the changing beliefs and needs of a culture. The way the narrative changes around a central recognisable motif reflects relevant social issues, especially in a moral or cautionary tale. *Beddgelert*, one of the most recent adaptations of the ‘Gelert’ story is a dark and emotional film which highlights the despair of

²⁷¹ William Jones’ essay ‘Antiquities and Folk-Lore of Bedd Gelert’ shared the prize with Glasynys at the 1860 Beddgelert Eisteddfod: M. Freeman, ‘William Jones’, *Early Tours in Wales, Sublime Wales* (2017), [Online], available: <https://sublimewales.wordpress.com/attractions/gelerts-grave-at-beddgelert/william-jones/> <accessed 12 February 2018>

²⁷² W. Jones, ‘Plwyf Beddgelert,’ *Y Brython*, pp.129-36.

²⁷³ The passage on the origin of the Gelert story is reserved to be included in chapter 5, which is dedicated to the legend, D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp. 56-74.

²⁷⁴ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, pp. vii-xvi.

²⁷⁵ W. Jones, ‘Plwyf Beddgelert,’ *Y Brython*, pp. 129-36.

²⁷⁶ J. Rhys, *Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx* vol. 1. P. 75.

²⁷⁷ ‘... history itself sometimes requires explaining... consequently the history of no district or country can be complete without its folk-lore... even if they should not be parable to the careful historian, they may please the general reader’: D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.19.

²⁷⁸ J. Rhys, *Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx* vol. 1, p.76.

²⁷⁹ W. Jones, ‘Plwyf Beddgelert,’ *Y Brython*, p.131.

Llywelyn.²⁸⁰ The reason for the abandonment is Llywelyn's grief following the death of his wife. The sense of resentment he feels towards the child is offset by the voice of Siwan in his head urging him to return and care for the infant.²⁸¹ Upon his return he witnesses the scene of the upturned cradle covered in blood. In a break from the traditional plot Llywelyn stabs Gelert with his arrows and kills the wolf in a standoff having found it wounded but alive. Historically the narrative would not have followed the correct timeline of Siwan's death in relation to any known confinement.²⁸² Written in medieval Welsh the film provides the audience with a different perspective, again anchored to the past. The theme of grief and revenge are still central to the narrative; however, it could be argued that the need for Llywelyn to kill the wolf may vindicate his killing of Gelert in some small way to a modern audience, as it still posed a threat to the baby and himself.

The emotional content of the film can be seen to expand from the traditional remorse of killing the dog in haste, to more modern concerns regarding child abandonment as well as mental health issues; especially in relation to grief and the social acceptance of emotional gender equality. Both Glasynys and Spencer's composition described in poetic narrative the emotional impact of Llywelyn's actions, a factor missing from the matter of fact account given by Jones. It can be argued that it is this emotional response which attracted the tale to a contemporary audience and therefore continues its relevance. Consequently, as time passes the tale heightens the audience's awareness to issues of contemporary concerns, these are subtly narrated into a traditional motif of which its core value is cautionary. By viewing this modern adaptation, the value of folk tradition is evident. Not only can engaging stories resonate with the consciences of audiences from various social backgrounds during its contemporary performance but can also demonstrate cultural values or shifts in values to future observers.

The narrative elements demonstrate cultural concerns beyond the initial moral message of the central motif. The early versions of the tale type concentrated on the sin of greed, the *Panchatantra* version from India ends: 'You must now taste the bitterness of a son's death, the fruit of your own wickedness. Yes this is what happens to those blinded by greed...' ²⁸³

²⁸⁰ 'Beddgelert', *Chwedlau- Legends Season S4C*.

²⁸¹ Siwan is the Welsh for Joan.

²⁸² Dafydd, Joan and Llywelyn's only legitimate son and heir was an adult at the time of his mother's death in 1237. Joan/Siwan may have given birth to a child in 1231, but this is thought to have been a daughter: English Monarchs, 'Joan Lady of Wales' (2018). [Online], available:

http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/princes_wales_4.html <accessed 2 February 2018>

²⁸³ S. Blackburn, 'The Brahmin and the Mongoose', p.498.

the tales purpose as a cautionary fable is evident. The moral implication of its warning would have resonated with any audience, Eastern, medieval European and contemporary. Greed can also be seen to influence the decision of the landowner to abandon his child in favour of retrieving his portion of the kill in the Abergarwan tale.²⁸⁴ The hunt theme continues in the ‘Gelert’ version, greed is not a defining element within Llywelyn’s character, perhaps vanity could be sighted as his downfall, as his hunting prowess was knocked following the disappointment of not achieving the expected rewards. Spencer’s poem specifically mentions his disappointment at the poor result of the hunt²⁸⁵ whereas Glasynys describes his mood as furious for the failure of the kill.²⁸⁶ The human emotions explored or depicted by the tale are again what engage the modern audience to the film version, where the dynamics of the hunt are omitted, superfluous to current Western ideals.²⁸⁷

To conclude this chapter has shown that the tale of ‘Gelert’ continues in the tradition of the AT178a, a tale which develops to suit the environment and culture of its recital. The internationally recognisable motif is furnished with local characters which portray culturally apt sentiments. This tale has been shown to belong in many traditions from Eastern to Western cultures and its moral values are applicable to all sectors of a society.²⁸⁸ The popular reception of the tale with locals and tourists of Beddgelert confirmed its adoption into the heritage of the village tradition.²⁸⁹ This development in the narrative of the motif would have not been possible had it not have been for the imagination and entrepreneurial vision of David Pritchard, and those who inspired him to bring together the elements required to create the ‘Gelert’ tale.²⁹⁰ The question of authenticity that occupied the debate of the early years of its composition was fiercely defended.²⁹¹ The diachronic method of historical geographical study had centred on the origin of folktales which clouded the appreciation of some scholars, preferring to identify the motif’s international origin rather than celebrate the uniqueness of the narrative with which it was furnished. Nationalist sentiments prevented some commentators from admitting the literary construct of the tale, claiming that the narrative had

²⁸⁴ *The Iolo Manuscripts*, edited and translated by T. Williams, p.561.

²⁸⁵ M. Freeman, ‘Poem. 1800, Beth-Gêlert, W. R. Spencer’, (lines 25-9).

²⁸⁶ O.W. Jones, (Glasynys), ‘Llywelyn a’l Gi’, *Yr Wyddfa*, p.45

²⁸⁷ ‘Beddgelert’, *Chwedlau- Legends Season*, S4C.

²⁸⁸ S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, pp.132-43.

²⁸⁹ D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*, p.56.

²⁹⁰ W. Jones, ‘Plwyf Beddgelert,’ *Y Brython*, pp.129-36.

²⁹¹ Meilir o Went, ‘Y Gwr a Laddwys ei Filgi’, *Y Brython*, p.90.

been copied from an old manuscript.²⁹² Others appreciated the unrestrained virtue of folk traditions, heralding the genre and defending the tale as born of Welsh literary or poetic licence.²⁹³ Further developments of the tale in both the Brussels version and the newly adapted film *Beddgelert* explore contemporary themes. The former reiterates the moral of the motif in a modern setting, whilst the latter highlights modern issues in a historical setting. The continuing relevance of the tale and its motif attest to the value of folk traditions in general to human society despite any cultural differences highlighted by generational or political issues.

²⁹² Glasynys, 'Nod', *Y Brython*, p.114.

²⁹³ Mathonwy, 'Dyfrgi Cynllaith', *Y Brython*, p.192.

Conclusions

This paper has shown that the ‘Gelert’ tale has been constructed around the tale type motif AT178a, ‘The Animal Killed in Haste’. The motif structure has remained intact and is recognisable even though a site and culture specific narrative has furnished it. The motif is well documented as having originated in the East and can be traced back to an original Indian text which dates to 235 BC.²⁹⁴ The narrative elements have changed during the motifs life-span, for which many diachronic investigations can attest.²⁹⁵ For example, the early Eastern versions commonly referred to as ‘The Bráham and the Mongoose’ feature a child attacked by a snake and defended by a mongoose who is killed by either the mother or father. In the ‘Culex’ a gnat is killed for warning a sleeping shepherd of an impending attack by a snake.²⁹⁶ The ‘Gelert’ version features the hasty killing of a greyhound which saved a prince’s infant son from a wolf. One of the latest adaptation of the motif introduces the audience to a modern setting in a car park where the dog is again killed having defended a child from an attack, this time by a rat.²⁹⁷

The early Eastern versions can be seen to have culturally specific characters and animals with morally applicable sentiments. As the tale develops the motif remains true to its warning of not acting in haste, but the adaptations can provide the audience with different sentiments depending on the narrative and cultural setting. Greed is an influence in the Eastern versions whereas disappointment and grief are emotions which influence the characters in the ‘Gelert’ version.

The first chapter has shown how narrative diversity creates different versions, and that these versions are often site or culturally specific. It has been important to demonstrate that the differences within the narratives are what make each tale version unique, despite a shared central motif. The ‘Gelert’ tale is onomastic, which is the only version known to date. The composition time of the tale is also known, which provides folklorists with an opportunity to evaluate the developments as they arise. This late development in the motif’s narrative should be viewed as an authenticating factor not a sign of fakery or duplication; as it can be shown to belong to the parish its composition formed from remnants of pre-existing tales.

²⁹⁴ W.A. Coulston, *Popular Tales and Fictions*, p.186.

²⁹⁵ See Jacobs for a concise overview: J. Jacobs, *Celtic Fairy Tales*.

²⁹⁶ M. Freeman, ‘The Gnat’.

²⁹⁷ S. Blackburn, ‘The Brahmin and the Mongoose’, p. 495.

When the focus of folklorist lay within discovering the origin of a tale the claim of authenticity was denied to the 'Gelert' version, firstly because of its late composition and secondly because its central motif could be traced back to an international source. However, if the narrative becomes the focus of an investigation then the 'Gelert' tale becomes distinct in that the tale version can be viewed from its construction to its current manifestation. This is of particular interest to those folklorists who are concerned with societal changes. The 'Gelert' tale also offers the folklorist an opportunity to consider the origin of the tales narrative. Therefore the traceability of the changeable elements can be considered and evaluated. This is not always possible due to the age of most tales and therefore 'Gelert' affords the folklorist an opportunity to study the tale from its inspiration and as it evolves.

In the second chapter a local pre-existence of narrative elements is attested to by the consideration of some of the inspirational material which influenced 'Gelert's' composition. Being able to identify such inspiration is of some importance to the study of folklore as it attests to the malleability of the material and how it is best used and received by the contemporary audience. The village of Beddgelert is rurally placed and therefore remained accustom to the old traditions. Stories have been preserved in texts that were of oral origin, some contain internationally known motifs that have been coloured with local characters and topographical details.²⁹⁸ This familiarity would have eased the adoption of a new tale into the local psyche. Narrative changes can be detected in these tales as well as the 'Gelert' tale, which further attest to the malleability of a tale type motif and the interchangeable quality of narrative elements. The modern folklorist will need to fully appreciate the fluidity of this genre, as the narrative elements bend and change as time and location influences the storyteller and the audience.²⁹⁹ The authenticity of the 'Gelert' tale is attested to by the use of characters which have a historic connection to the parish, and despite historical inaccuracies being included within the narrative of the tale the effect is an anchoring to the location through association.

The issue regarding 'Gelert's' authenticity or lack of it, were largely due to the onomastic claim made at the end of both tale and poetry. The onomastic value did not hold if the tale was dependant on the 'Gelert' version of 'The Animal killed in Haste', due to its late composition. However, a connection with the prince's dog could prove a viable source,

²⁹⁸ A selection of fairy, anecdotal mythic and legendary tales are to be found in: D.E. Jenkins, *Bedd Gelert*.

²⁹⁹ *Archaeology and Folklore* eds. A. Gazin-Schwartz, & C.J. Holtorf, p.11.

should it be established that the *fabula* has some air of truth, as the first recorded account of the name Beddgelert³⁰⁰ occurred after the death of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth.³⁰¹ The relevance of the *fabula* can also be attested to by its reference to the ‘Culex’ a version of the AT178a motif. The central motif of the ‘Fabula de Kil-Hart’ is of two mutually opposed forces, the dog and the hart, which destroy each other. The motif appears in other tales associated with the area; of which variations occur both locally and nationally, one such example would Owain Finddu. The conflict of opposites is also referenced in the Eastern tale of ‘The Bráhmaṇ and the Nakula’ where the mongoose sibling recites a ditty reflecting this enmity.³⁰² The fable quality continues to work through the text and the motif can be seen to work equally as well in India as it does in Wales or a car park in Brussels, the different narrative contexts allow for the creation of individual tales specific and relevant to the site or culture to which its audience belongs.

The discussion in the third chapter considered the reception of the tale; it was evident that some folklorists and scholars were keen to accept the tale for its literary qualities whilst others felt the need to promote the narrative as historic fact or at least of ancient Welsh origin.³⁰³ The literary debate that followed was amongst those who collected tales and were aware of the motif in other older tale versions. Not wanting to appear un-learned they were keen to demonstrate that the original was not composed in Beddgelert, but in Asia. The tale’s popularity however triumphed and the narrative continued to be recited among the locals and visitors alike affording this version permanence amongst collections of Celtic tales.

The ‘Gelert’ tale has become established and well known both nationally and internationally. During the first flourish of the tale’s recital the issue of authenticity was not apparent, full advantage was taken to use its narrative to entice tourists to the area and provide an opportunity for a tangible monument and talking point. It was the allusions to history or truth which caused the controversy, firstly the onomastic claim, secondly the raising of the cairn which inferred an actual burial site and also the later declaration by Glasynys of discovering the tale in its current version within an old manuscript.³⁰⁴ The inclusion of the Welsh prince

³⁰⁰ The name appears with various forms of spelling, and with several onomastic explanations: A. Bott, and M. Dunn, *A Guide to the Priory and Parish Church of St Mary Beddgelert*, pp. 4-5.

³⁰¹ Llywelyn died in 1240.

³⁰² W.A. Coulston, *Popular Tales and Fictions*, p.185.

³⁰³ Gwrnerth Ergydlym, ‘Bedd Gelert’, *Y Brython*, p.91.

³⁰⁴ Glasynys, ‘Llywelyn a’i Gi’ *Y Brython*, p.110-11.

can be viewed as harking back to a ‘golden age’ which echoed nationalist sentiments, which were also evident within some of the developed versions of the ‘Gelert’ story.

This version has become a template for which narrative adaptations have since developed, attesting further to its successful reception and cultural relevance. The first a modern folklorist can observe is the Jones version,³⁰⁵ it gave a succinct account of the narrative which supported or explained an *englyn* which was originally associated with a different prose piece, the ‘Fabula de kil-Hart’.³⁰⁶ This narrative was expanded upon by Spencer’s poem ‘Beth Gelert’³⁰⁷ which propelled it to fame and led to many Welsh translations. One of these by Daniel Ddu was accompanied by a prose prologue which again expanded on the narrative developing the tale further.³⁰⁸ Soon after Glasynys’s own composition followed, a poem which not only told the tale of Gelert and Llywelyn but also embraced the typography, history and legends of the Parish. Glasynys included allusions to a heroic past by referencing patriotic bards in his verses. The prose which accompanied the poem caused some controversy for its claim of manuscript derivation. However, its signature nationalistic jibe regarding the English nurse maid is one that is traceable in subsequent recitals identifying it as a distinctly developed version of the ‘Gelert’ tale.³⁰⁹ The ability of the tale to continue to develop further as witnessed in the latest film version proves again how valuable the genre and this tale is.³¹⁰

The story of Gelert the faithful greyhound outshone Kil-hart the hunting hound whose memory disappeared into obscurity. The relevance of folktales in general and in particular this motif can be attested to by the continued development. It is suggested that tales with meaning will be re told with more accuracy and therefore may be able to inform a modern reader of past cultural practices and human behaviour.³¹¹ For this reason such tales will always be of relevance. Folktales can demonstrate the traditional elements within the community whereby the narrative expose elements of the culture to which it belongs. The continued investigation of this tale in particular can support the folklorist in evaluating the way a tale develops, evolves and is manipulated to suit the world in which it is placed; serving as a bench mark. The tale no longer relies on oral or local transmission, national

³⁰⁵ E. Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks* (1794), p.75.

³⁰⁶ add. Ms 19713 fol.21.

³⁰⁷ M. Freeman, ‘Poem. 1800, Beth-Gêlert, W.R. Spencer’.

³⁰⁸ D. Evans, (Daniel Ddu o Geredigion), ‘Bedd Gelert’, *Y Brython*, pp. 57-8.

³⁰⁹ ‘The Legend of Beddgelert’ *All Things Welsh*.

³¹⁰ ‘Beddgelert’, *Chwedllau- Legends Season*, S4C.

³¹¹ *Archaeology and Folklore* eds. A. Gazin-Schwartz, & C.J. Holtorf, p.11.

publications and performances are also somewhat redundant in the shadow of global communication networks. Considering the evolutionary path of this well-travelled tale, it will be interesting to observe further developments both to the AT178a motif and any new developments to the 'Gelert' version.

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