



## Introduction: the *Dunsæte Agreement* and daily life in the Welsh borderlands

Sometime in late Anglo-Saxon England, a territory called the Dunsæte was having problems with cattle theft. Men skilled at law from within this community sat down together and drew up a document outlining an agreement that addressed the situation. They thought about what ought to happen in a variety of circumstances. If a man sees the tracks of his stolen cattle leave his own property and cross into his neighbour's land, who is responsible for following the trail and trying to recover the animals at that point? What type of oath is sufficient to prove someone's innocence? What is the monetary value of the stolen cattle, or of other commonly pilfered animals such as horses, pigs, sheep or goats? Who in the community should arbitrate between the parties involved in these disputes? (The *Dunsæte Agreement* refers to *man/mon* and *men*, and it seems almost certain that those who wrote it down *were* men. However, *mon* can also mean 'anyone' and it is clear that the agreement applied to the whole community. If I write about a man tracking down his cattle, that is because it almost always *was* a man, but women too might have owned cattle and made use of the agreement.)

The types of problem faced by the men who wrote the *Dunsæte Agreement* were not unusual in early medieval Britain,<sup>1</sup> and neither were most of the solutions they decided upon.<sup>2</sup> What sets the *Dunsæte Agreement* apart from other Anglo-Saxon law codes grappling with cattle theft is that the men who created this document, and the community that it concerns, included both Anglo-Saxons and Welsh. The text's prologue states that 'Dis is seo gerædnes, þe Angelcynnes witan and Wealhþeode rædboran betweox Dunsetan gesetton' (this is the agreement which the advisers of the English and the counsellors of the Welsh put in place among the Dunsæte).<sup>3</sup>

We know nothing about this community apart from the information

in the *Dunsæte Agreement* itself, but the details it reveals are intriguing. The territory of the Dunsæte was centred on a river,<sup>4</sup> which cattle thieves seem to have been using to their advantage, to judge from the text's outlining of the proper procedure 'Gif mon trode bedrifð forstolenes yrfes of stæde on oðer' (if a man follows the track of stolen cattle from one riverbank to the other).<sup>5</sup> We know that the community's Welsh and Anglo-Saxon inhabitants lived on opposite banks of the river from the proviso that 'Nah naðer to farenne ne Wyliscman on Ængliscland ne Ænglisc on Wylisc þe ma, butan gesettan landmen, se hine sceal æt stæde underfon, and eft þær butan facne gebringan' (a Welshman is not allowed to travel into English territory, nor an Englishman into Welsh territory either, unless men who live in that territory are put in place who will receive him at the bank and bring him back without deceit).<sup>6</sup> Men living in these English and Welsh districts appear to have had few reservations about colluding with one another in cattle theft, as the document outlines the penalty for 'ælc þe gewita oððe gewryhta si, þær utlendisc man inlendiscan derie' (anyone who knows or engages when a stranger harms a native).<sup>7</sup> Finally, we can narrow down the approximate location of the Dunsæte territory (see Map 1) to the River Wye between Monmouth and Hereford,<sup>8</sup> from the *Agreement's* final clause stating that 'Hwilon Wentsæte hyrdon into Dunsætan, ac hit gebyrð rihtor into Westsexan' (at one point the people of Gwent belonged to the Dunsæte, but that territory belongs more rightly to the West Saxons).<sup>9</sup>

The *Dunsæte Agreement* raises intriguing questions. When so few historical documents from Anglo-Saxon England survive, how can we tell whether the circumstances of this mixed Welsh and Anglo-Saxon community were typical or extraordinary? What was everyday life like in the Dunsæte territory? What language did the 'Angelcynnes witan and Wealhpeode rædboran' use to communicate – Old English, Welsh, Latin or a *lingua franca*? For that matter, what language did they use to draft this document? The *Dunsæte Agreement* is preserved in one copy in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS, 383, an important early twelfth-century compilation of Anglo-Saxon legal material, and it later became one of the many Old English legal documents translated into Latin as part of the *Quadripartitus*.<sup>10</sup> Could there have been an original Latin copy of the *Dunsæte Agreement*, or perhaps a Welsh version parallel to the Old English? The *Agreement* describes how 'XII lahmen scylon riht tæcean Wealan and Ænglan, VI Engliscne and VI Wylisce' (twelve lawmen shall proclaim what is just for Welsh and English: six Englishmen and six Welshmen).<sup>11</sup> Who were these *lahmen*? The word is a Scandinavian borrowing known only from this text, although its Latin equivalent, *lagemanni*, appears in a few legal documents written after 1066.<sup>12</sup>

Were they the same people as the ‘Angelcynnnes witan and Wealhpeode rædboran’ who drafted the *Dunsæte Agreement*? It is unclear if the text implies any practical difference between the *witan* and *rædboran* – both terms were used throughout the Old English corpus to indicate counsellors, often legal ones, with *rædbora* glossing *jurisperitus*.<sup>13</sup> Could anyone living within the Dunsæte territory be a *lahmann*, or did these men hold permanent positions as legal advisers to their community?

These fascinating questions lead to deeper observations that challenge modern critical assumptions about the relationship between the Anglo-Saxon and Welsh peoples in early medieval Britain, which has been understood as one of warfare and mutual hostility. The community that we can glimpse through the *Dunsæte Agreement* is, of course, not a multicultural utopia – cattle theft appears rampant, there is distrust between neighbours, and provisions for the amount of *wergild* due ‘Gif Wealh Engliscne man ofslea’ (if a Welshman were to slay an Englishman) or vice versa hint at violence far darker than cattle rustling.<sup>14</sup> Yet at the same time, the *Dunsæte Agreement* reveals a community that worked together to solve its problems, had a system of legal rights and responsibilities for all its members, and possessed a functional level of both linguistic and legal comprehension between its Anglo-Saxon and Welsh inhabitants. Most significantly, even though the surviving text is written in Old English from the perspective of the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of this region, the *Dunsæte Agreement* reflects complete Anglo-Welsh equality at every turn – its penultimate clause, after laying out the procedure for warranty, takes care to emphasise that ‘Gelice þam Ænglisc sceal Wyliscan rihte wyrcean’ (likewise must an Englishman undertake what is right for a Welshman).<sup>15</sup> The Dunsæte territory was a community where Anglo-Saxons and Welsh lived together, treated one another as equals, and worked together to sustain peace.

This book explores communities in early medieval Britain like the territory of the Dunsæte that were part of a broader region where Anglo-Saxons and Welsh lived in close proximity for hundreds of years. This region has a different story to tell about the relationship between these peoples than most historical narratives from the Anglo-Saxon period, which were in large part written by educated elites, at a geographical and temporal remove from the events they described and with the benefit of hindsight. The arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain looks like a military conquest when viewed from the perspective of ninth-century Wessex, where the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was likely begun, or eighth-century Northumbria, where Bede wrote his *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*. But for those in the region inhabited by both Welsh and Anglo-Saxons for several centuries

– the western territories of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia and the eastern portions of the northern Welsh kingdoms of Gwynedd and Powys – warfare was not a daily reality. Even in those texts that have been understood to exhibit Anglo/Welsh conflict on a broad scale, this region – the Welsh borderlands – can be seen functioning differently.<sup>16</sup>

The *Dunsate Agreement* illustrates how the Welsh borderlands were different from other Anglo-Saxon and Welsh kingdoms in more ways than their reflection of Anglo-Welsh equality. As Michael Fordham and George Molyneaux have independently argued, this document places a high value on compromise and peacekeeping.<sup>17</sup> In so doing, the *Dunsate Agreement* distinguishes itself from contemporary Anglo-Saxon and Welsh law codes, lacking many of their common features. Another strikingly unique feature of this text is its fusion of Anglo-Saxon and Welsh legal customs. In its legal singularity, the *Dunsate Agreement* appears most analogous to the post-Conquest Law of the March of Wales, a hybrid system of frontier law. Within the *Dunsate Agreement*, we can see some of the qualities that made the Welsh borderlands region distinctive during the Anglo-Saxon period.

The *Dunsate Agreement* is an unofficial memorandum of understanding drawn up within a community, not an official royal law code. Nonetheless, its careful emphasis on Anglo-Welsh equality sets this text apart from other contemporary Anglo-Saxon legal practices.<sup>18</sup> We do not know precisely when the *Dunsate Agreement* was written. It has traditionally been dated to the first quarter of the tenth century by Felix Liebermann and most subsequent scholars, but George Molyneaux has recently made a convincing argument for a late tenth- or eleventh-century date instead.<sup>19</sup> Yet despite its origins in the late Anglo-Saxon period, the *Dunsate Agreement* shows no evidence of influence by Ine's laws, even though they were still valid in the tenth century via their preservation in Alfred's *domboc* and the *Nordleoda laga*.<sup>20</sup> Ine's laws are notorious for an ethnically tiered system of *wergilds*, in which Britons appear to be valued significantly less than their Anglo-Saxon counterparts in social rank. They are most often interpreted as casting the Britons in an 'inferior social position', creating a 'sense of ethnic superiority on the part of the Saxons' in which 'the "otherness" of the Britons' is emphasised 'in order to manufacture a more unified West Saxon society'.<sup>21</sup> The *Dunsate Agreement* is unlike contemporary Anglo-Saxon law codes influenced by Ine's laws in reflecting Anglo-Welsh equality, rather than disparate *wergilds* based on ethnicity. Indeed, the same holds true from a Welsh perspective, since the legal status of an *alltud* (alien or foreigner, literally 'someone of another people') was likewise distinguished from that of a native.<sup>22</sup> The distinctions between 'foreigners' and 'natives' in other

Welsh and Anglo-Saxon law codes and the lack of such differentiation in the *Dunsæte Agreement* set it outside evident contemporary legal norms.

The Anglo-Welsh equality in the *Dunsæte Agreement* is also one of several indications that this community placed a higher value on peaceful resolution of conflicts than on reaffirming social status. While it is easy to see how codified inequality like that of Ine's laws could lead to Anglo/Welsh resentment and conflict, the impartiality of the *Dunsæte Agreement* underscores the structure of this community as one of equitable coexistence. Further indication that the Dunsæte territory prioritised peacekeeping comes from the *Agreement's* 'deliberately modest'<sup>23</sup> penalties, which are significantly less than those in contemporary Anglo-Saxon and Welsh legal codes. Clause 4 of this document lays out a penalty for a failed defence that by its own admission is lighter than normal: 'Deah æt stætyhtlan lad teorie, Ængliscan oððe Wiliscan, gylde angyldes þæt he mid beled wæs. Þæs oðres gyldes nan þing, ne þæs wites þe ma' (Even when a defence against a charge of theft should fail, for an Englishman or for a Welshman, let him pay a single compensation for what he was charged with; there should be no additional payment at all, nor a penalty either).<sup>24</sup> The penalty for killing someone is also lighter than usual, regardless of the victim's social rank. The *Dunsæte Agreement* explains that, 'Gif Wealh Engliscne man ofslea, ne þearf he hine hidenofer buton be healfan were gyldan, ne Ænglisc Wylicscne geonofer þe ma, sy he þegenboren sy he ceorlboren; healf wer þær ætfeald' (If a Welshman were to slay an Englishman, there is no obligation on him to give hither [this bank] any more than half a *wergild*, nor an Englishman any more thither [opposite bank] for a Welshman; if he is born a thegn or if he is born a ceorl, half the *wergild* falls away).<sup>25</sup>

As Michael Fordham has argued, these provisos suggest that the *Dunsæte Agreement* was intended to facilitate the rapid resolution of disputes, because lighter penalties 'would have allowed for faster settlement, in that a lower *wergeld* price would be easier to raise'.<sup>26</sup> These equitably reduced penalties again distinguish the *Dunsæte Agreement* from contemporary Anglo-Saxon and Welsh legal traditions, in which social rank was what determined a person's *wergild* in Anglo-Saxon England or *galanas* in Wales.<sup>27</sup> Such unusually modest penalties driven by practical considerations reflect a community that prioritised peace over social status.

Those features of the *Dunsæte Agreement* which underscore its prioritisation of peacekeeping are legally distinctive. So too is what seems to be its mixture of Welsh and Anglo-Saxon legal customs. Molyneux has recently noted a likely 'degree of fusion between English and Welsh legal practices' in the *Dunsæte Agreement's* nine-day time limits,<sup>28</sup> a period of time which

is unusual in Anglo-Saxon laws but very common in Welsh ones.<sup>29</sup> T.M. Charles-Edwards has also pointed to the *Dunsate Agreement* as a ‘context in which English law might influence Welsh law’.<sup>30</sup> In blending Anglo-Saxon and Welsh legal practices, the *Dunsate Agreement* is analogous to the post-1066 law of the March of Wales. The most important defining feature of this region was its recognised status as legally exceptional<sup>31</sup> – even in Anglo-Norman literature, as Ralph Hanna has recently noted, the March is depicted as ‘cowboy country’ not because of lawlessness per se, but because of its ‘specific unique legal status’.<sup>32</sup> The law of the March was defined by its distinction from the laws of England and Wales, and in practice its singularity stemmed from its amalgamation of Welsh and English law.<sup>33</sup> The more that the legal anomalies in the *Dunsate Agreement* are explored, the more they resemble our understanding of how known frontier laws worked. As Rees Davies – the foremost historian of the March of Wales in the Anglo-Norman period – writes, ‘marcher law provided a series of local, working solutions to the problems of a frontier society ... where two peoples met and overlapped’.<sup>34</sup> The *Dunsate Agreement* reflects a parallel structure of compromise, flexibility and blending of Anglo-Saxon and Welsh legal customs in the Welsh borderlands during the Anglo-Saxon period. The glimpse of daily life in this region illuminated by the *Dunsate Agreement* helps us to understand its representation as culturally discrete in contemporary Anglo-Saxon and Welsh texts.

### Writing the Welsh borderlands in Anglo-Saxon England

Two deceptively simple questions stand at the heart of this book: what were interactions between the Anglo-Saxon and Welsh peoples in early medieval Britain like, and how are they depicted in the surviving textual record? There is no doubt that the answer to both questions often involved a great deal of violence. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entry for 473, ‘Her Hengest 7 Æsc gefuhton wiþ Walas 7 genamon unarimedlico herereaf, 7 þa Walas flugon þa Englan swa [þe] fyr’<sup>35</sup> (here Hengest and Æsc fought the Welsh and took innumerable spoil, and the Welsh fled the English like fire) and a line from the Middle Welsh prophetic poem *Armes Prydein*, ‘Saesson rac Brython gwae a genyn’ (the Saxons will sing their lamentation before the Britons)<sup>36</sup> are good illustrations of why the traditional critical narrative has been that ‘when they recorded their past, the Anglo-Saxons and the Britons presented themselves as races apart’.<sup>37</sup> Anglo-Saxon literature in particular has been seen to present an ‘unremittingly bellicose narrative’ of Anglo/Welsh relations.<sup>38</sup>

Yet recent work by historians and archaeologists has underscored the disparity between written records of a violent Anglo-Saxon ‘invasion’ or ‘conquest’ and the likely reality of a gradual, piecemeal migration, with fairly amicable Anglo/Welsh relations, in this early period;<sup>39</sup> and, in later Anglo-Saxon England, alliances between individual Welsh and Anglo-Saxon rulers have been long acknowledged.<sup>40</sup> This book brings these practical perspectives on quotidian relations between Anglo-Saxons and Welsh in early medieval Britain to bear on the textual record and discovers that moments like the *Dunsæte Agreement* of mixed Anglo-Welsh community are more widespread than has been recognised and significantly alter our current picture of Anglo/Welsh relations before the Norman Conquest. *Writing the Welsh Borderlands in Anglo-Saxon England* overturns the long-standing critical belief that Anglo/Welsh relations in the Anglo-Saxon period were predominantly contentious. The Welsh borderlands were a mixture of Anglo-Saxons and Welsh, and contemporary texts depicted the region as a highly distinctive place.

One of the reasons why this has not been previously elucidated is the lingering impact of a critical moment in which postcolonial theory was applied to medieval literature in very narrow ways.<sup>41</sup> While it is valuable to interrogate the inequalities potentially embedded within cultural difference, most postcolonial studies of Anglo/Welsh relations to date have begun from the premise that the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the late thirteenth century was a foregone conclusion. When Old English texts are seen to reflect the ‘formulation of Anglo-Saxon unity constructed against a British inferiority’, the Anglo-Saxons become singleminded conquerors while the Welsh are hopelessly subjugated, and both peoples are understood to have defined themselves antagonistically, through a very modern conceptualisation of ethnic difference.<sup>42</sup> Another problem for postcolonial readings of the early Anglo-Saxon period has been that the Welsh are cast as subaltern without an accompanying analysis of Welsh-language material,<sup>43</sup> meaning Anglo-Welsh relations are viewed solely from the perspective of Old English and Anglo-Latin texts.<sup>44</sup> A central premise of this book is that defining identity oppositionally within an Anglo/Welsh binary system results in an incomplete picture not only of Anglo-Welsh interactions in early medieval Britain, but also of the ways in which Anglo-Saxon texts depicted them. The Welsh are not always characterised as an enemy ‘other’ – or, at least, no more so than are those Anglo-Saxons with whom they shared a common culture in the borderlands.

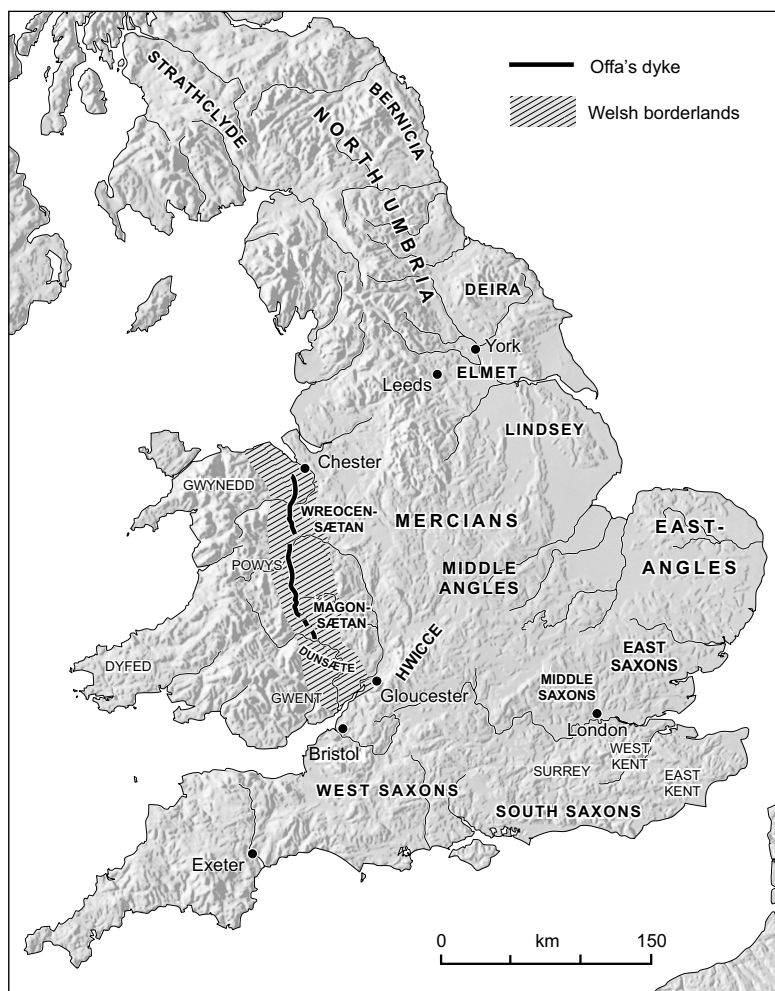
This book is about textual depictions of the Welsh borderlands, not the Welsh themselves, and so it does not catalogue every appearance of the

Welsh in Anglo-Saxon literary or historical records. Its focus is the Welsh borderlands alone and not frontiers between other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms or between England and Scotland. Although the Welsh and Scottish frontiers after 1066 shared some cultural similarities, as most frontier societies do, their histories were also very different because there was never a Norman military conquest of Scotland in the same way as was the case in Wales, and so the Scottish frontier did not experience the same type of violence as did Wales during this period. A comparison of the Welsh and Scottish borderlands in the Anglo-Saxon period would be a valuable study but a difficult undertaking because so little Anglo-Saxon material about the Scottish frontier survives, and it is unfortunately beyond the scope of the present book.<sup>45</sup>

Rather, this book's focus is the region in western Anglo-Saxon England and eastern Wales, at the feet of the Cambrian mountains, where the peoples who comprised the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia and the northern Welsh kingdoms of Gwynedd and Powys lived in close proximity to one another for centuries. This region encompassed some of the same geographical space as the March of Wales in the Anglo-Norman period<sup>46</sup> but, unlike that territory, it was not formally recognised as an entity by any Anglo-Saxon or Welsh kingdoms. While the post-1066 March of Wales was itself in many ways geographically nebulous, it was nonetheless a region defined by specific geographical, temporal and political conditions related to the Norman presence in England – Max Lieberman, for example, defines a march as 'a territory under the command of a select group of border lords'.<sup>47</sup> To avoid anachronism, I will not describe the region discussed in this book as a march. While the name of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia means 'the border/boundary people' and is the etymon of the later Anglo-Norman *marche*, there is also an important distinction to be drawn between this kingdom – a territory which at one point spanned the whole of the Midlands – and its western portion which shared cultural contact with the Welsh. For these reasons, I will use the phrase 'the Welsh borderlands' to refer to this amorphous territory at the foot of the Cambrian mountains where the Anglo-Saxons of western Mercia and the Welsh of eastern Gwynedd and Powys came together.

The concept of the 'borderlands', drawing on Gloria Anzaldúa's foundational work *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*,<sup>48</sup> aptly characterises this region in ways that other terminology cannot. Words like 'border' or 'boundary' imply lines on a map that did not exist in early medieval Britain, where kingdoms were centred around tribes and where territories shifted often. As many excellent recent studies have made clear, medieval frontiers





Map 1 The region of the Welsh borderlands<sup>49</sup>

were often places where cultures were not separated, but blended together in various ways.<sup>50</sup> In the introduction to his significant collection of essays, *Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis: Frontiers in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Florin Curta notes the crucial shift in recent decades of frontier scholarship away from the ‘frontier-as-barrier’ concept and towards an understanding of frontiers as important zones of cultural exchange.<sup>51</sup> The role

of medieval frontiers in creating rather than dividing cultures underlies Robert Bartlett's argument for the importance of hundreds of individual frontier zones in the eventual coalescence of western Europe.<sup>52</sup>

However, the word 'frontier' itself is an inadequate characterisation of the situation in the Anglo-Welsh borderlands prior to 1066. Medieval frontier societies could of course vary widely, as David Abulafia has usefully outlined in the introduction to his and Nora Berend's collection, *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*.<sup>53</sup> Yet, as Daniel Power explains in the introduction to his and Naomi Standen's important volume *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700-1700*, the term 'frontier' holds two distinct meanings in British and North American English. In British English, a frontier has been a 'political barrier between states or peoples, often militarised' while in North America the concept has come to mean 'not a barrier but a zone of passage and a land of opportunity, involving conflict with the natural environment rather than neighbours'.<sup>54</sup> Power helpfully relabels these concepts as 'political frontiers' and 'frontiers of settlement'.

The Welsh borderlands during the Anglo-Saxon period were closer to the North American concept of a 'frontier of settlement' than a political frontier in that the region was defined by no official military or political border. Yet it is important to bear in mind that the concept of a 'frontier of settlement' encompasses to some degree the myth that early American settlers moved west into an area that was largely wilderness, largely glossing over the Native Americans whose lands were consumed in the process. In early Britain, those Anglo-Saxons who came to inhabit the Welsh borderlands encountered not wilderness but another people. While indebted to a group of recent studies examining the ways in which medieval identities were often constructed in relationship to the landscapes people inhabited,<sup>55</sup> this book's focus is on both land and people. It explores the ways in which the particular region of the borderlands, where Anglo-Saxons and Welsh came together, produced a culture different from those around them.

The Welsh borderlands were not based on a kingdom or a tribe; they were a zone of mutual influence in which Anglo-Saxon and Welsh peoples both lived. This territory was neither a military frontier nor an economic hinterland to the rest of Anglo-Saxon England or medieval Wales – both of which, it must be remembered, did not yet exist as concepts. Rather, this was a region that looked both ways: it formed the borderlands between Anglo-Saxon and Welsh kingdoms, and between Welsh and Anglo-Saxon ones. The borderlands are the region that emerges when following Michiel Baud and Willem van Schendel's argument for 'a view from the periphery' rather than the centre(s).<sup>56</sup> The Welsh borderlands were a nebulous, unde-

finned territory whose geography shifted over time, yet the region retained its identity as a concept – a cultural zone where two peoples came together – for several hundred years over the course of the Anglo-Saxon period.

In this book, I define the Welsh borderlands as a cultural nexus. By this, I mean a region where two peoples and two cultures came together relatively equitably for a long period of time, and out of that region's role as a nexus between Welsh and Mercian cultures something new and distinctive emerged. Some terminological clarification is in order. In order to avoid anachronism, I am deliberately avoiding the use of words with modern political connotations, like 'diverse', 'multicultural' or 'melting pot', to describe the cultural qualities of this region. Neither would it be accurate to characterise the Welsh borderlands as a place of cultural syncretism or pluralism, as these terms imply a power imbalance between dominant and subordinate cultures which did not exist at this time. The postcolonial concept of hybridity developed by Homi K. Bhabha is an important one in understanding multicultural societies.<sup>57</sup> However, because the word 'hybrid' was used to signify monstrosity – either literally or for racist purposes – in medieval (and modern) writings, I will not be using it here. More importantly, Bhabha's reclaiming of this term is predicated upon the power imbalance of a society divided into coloniser and colonised, and requires a sense of self-awareness and agency on the part of the hybrid subaltern that did not exist in the Welsh borderlands. The region that this book describes was not formed as the result of a military conquest, and so the cultural hierarchy upon which Bhabha's concept of hybridity rests was not present at this time.

The Welsh borderlands during the Anglo-Saxon period were simply a place where two peoples came together. It can perhaps be best envisioned as a distinctive cultural estuary where Welsh influence flowed in from the west and Mercian from the east. As the balance of saltwater and freshwater in an estuary at any given moment ebbs and flows with the tide, so too did the degree of Welsh or Mercian influence in the region of the Welsh borderlands fluctuate over time with the rise and fall of individual tribes, families or rulers. Yet, like an estuary, some degree of cultural mixing was always at work in this region. Simon Meecham-Jones has coined the apt phrase 'the Welsh penumbra' to describe the similar zone of 'profound cultural contact' between English and Welsh that existed without any official designation in Anglo-Norman and later medieval England.<sup>58</sup> Crucially, Meecham-Jones's concept of the 'Welsh penumbra' both distinguishes a zone of cultural influence from one of military aggression and recognises that those inside this zone were in some ways distinct from the rest of late

medieval England. In early medieval Britain, the Welsh borderlands were uniquely a place where two peoples lived together relatively peacefully for a very long period of time. In its varying yet consistent drawing together of Welsh and Mercian influences, the region of the Welsh borderlands formed a singular nexus of Anglo-Welsh culture.

This book is a study of how the Welsh borderlands before 1066 were depicted in literary and historical texts from early medieval Britain. Its chapters draw together, in chronological order, the corpus of those Anglo-Saxon narrative works that contain the most sustained discussions of this region. By narrative texts as opposed to documentary material, I mean a category of writing which was in some way undertaken to tell a story intended for a broader audience rather than record a business transaction between two parties. Included in this definition are works of poetry, history and hagiography, whereas charters, wills and letters are omitted from this study, with the exception of the *Dunsate Agreement* discussed in this introduction as framework.

This distinction between narrative and documentary texts is admittedly somewhat artificial. Many narrative chronicles of monastic foundation consider documentary material such as charters and letters to be central to their stories, for instance, while charters and legal documents can encapsulate quite lively narratives indeed. Still, this book as a whole focuses on narrative rather than documentary texts for a few reasons. The first is that – while no other monograph focused on the region of the Anglo-Welsh borderlands has yet been written – individual studies by historians and archaeologists have reviewed the documentary material well enough to make clear the historical reality that this region was not a site of sustained warfare throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.<sup>59</sup> My interest in narrative texts is driven by the critical consensus among historians that there is nonetheless a significant disparity between the reality of Anglo/Welsh relations ‘on the ground’ in the border areas and the ways in which Anglo-Saxon texts depict those relations. A sustained focus on narrative texts from Anglo-Saxon England reveals that, when it comes to their depiction of the Welsh borderlands, these texts present a more accurate picture of the region than they have been given credit for.

The works studied in these chapters represent a range of genres – saints’ lives, historical chronicles, popular poetry – and each was created for a different purpose. However, these texts have some important characteristics in common. They were written and set in Anglo-Saxon England, have some sustained focus on Wales and have traditionally been interpreted as reflecting a clear, and adversarial, Anglo/Welsh divide. From this diverse

corpus emerges a picture of the Welsh borderlands as a nexus of Anglo-Welsh culture. These texts depict the borderlands differently from the rest of Wales: not as the site of Anglo/Welsh strife, but as a distinct region. Contemporary Welsh material represents this territory with the same singularity looking east as Anglo-Saxon works do looking west. I present this material in chronological order to show the region's persistence as a distinct cultural entity throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.

I begin with one of the earliest and most historically significant surviving Anglo-Saxon texts, Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*. Chapter Two argues that Bede's narrative of Anglo-Saxon religious and ethnic cohesion also depicts a distinct culture in the borderlands in the seventh century, shared between the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia and the Welsh kingdoms of Gwynedd and Powys, a cohesion formed in opposition to cultural changes brought about by the conversion of surrounding Anglo-Saxon kingdoms to Roman Christianity. Bede has long been understood as highly critical of both the heretical Britons and the heathen Mercians, but in his hostility he preserves important details about the life of King Penda of Mercia which provide a window into the culture of the borderlands as a region that stands apart from Bede's narrative of ethnic division between Anglo-Saxons and Britons. Several early Welsh poems reflect the same perspective from the west: the borderlands not as a site of strife, but as a nexus of Anglo-Welsh culture.

The book's third chapter moves forward in time to an eighth-century setting and shifts from history to hagiography, focusing on a corpus of Old English and Latin works about the popular Anglo-Saxon saint Guthlac of Crowland (673–714) whose Mercian youth and later career as a hermit in the Fens of eastern England link him indelibly to two of Britain's most nebulous geographical spaces. I argue first that the various *Lives* of Guthlac depict the borderlands as a locus of military advancement for Mercian and Welsh elites. As in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, this region is a place where a young Mercian warrior can advance his career by living among the British and leading a multi-ethnic war band, features of military life in the borderlands that are also evident in contemporary Welsh and Cambro-Latin texts. The geographically fluid nature of this region is also evident in this chapter's second significant argument: that, even within this Anglo-Saxon saint's life, the politics of land control are much less clear-cut than has been assumed. While St Guthlac's battles with demons have been understood to reflect Anglo/Welsh ethnic division, this chapter argues that the Old English poem *Guthlac A* is far more conflicted towards land ownership, reflecting the fluid boundaries of Mercia itself.

Chapter Four examines some depictions of the Welsh borderlands in anonymous, popular literary tradition, arguing that a group of Old English riddles located on the *mearc* (march or boundary) between Anglo-Saxon England and Wales reflect a common regional culture by depicting shared values of a warrior elite across the ostensible Anglo-Welsh divide. These riddles, which link the 'dark Welsh' to agricultural labour, have long been understood to depict the Welsh as slaves and thus reflect Anglo-Saxon awareness of both ethnic and social division. Drawing upon understudied Welsh legal material, this chapter argues that these riddles have a multilayered solution in which the Welsh are both slaves and slave traders, complicating readings of negative Anglo/Welsh relations. This polysemic solution reveals that the Welsh, like the Anglo-Saxons, were stratified by class into the enslaved and a warrior elite, with less distance between the two elites than has been understood. The location of these riddles on the *mearc* further characterises the Welsh borderlands in the early period as a distinctive region, which – like the later March of Wales – was notorious for cattle raiding. Coupled with archaeological evidence of drove roads, these riddles counter the common perception that the Welsh borderlands in Anglo-Saxon England were defined by Offa's Dyke, suggesting that this region is better understood as a space that both Anglo-Saxons and Welsh permeated in raiding or trading.

The last two main chapters of the book return to historical chronicles and explore the Welsh borderlands as a distinct region in the later Anglo-Saxon period. Chapter Five argues for a significant pattern of political alliance in the Welsh borderlands during this time, beginning in the tenth century, when half a dozen raids were carried out jointly by Mercian earls and northern Welsh rulers have gone unnoticed because they are recorded largely in Welsh sources. This pattern of political cohesion within the Welsh borderlands continues in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* throughout the eleventh century, both before and after the impact of 1066. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* represents the Welsh borderlands as a region which acted as an independent political force throughout the eleventh century.

Chapter Five also argues that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* represents the military culture of the Welsh borderlands in a distinctive way which aligns its inhabitants with outlaws. By the end of the eleventh century, this region had undergone a significant shift in representation from a distinct territory with a singular style of fighting to a place linked particularly with outlawry. Chapter Six explores the transitional moment between these conceptualisations of the borderlands through an extended study of the *Peterborough Chronicle*, the recension of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* continued

for the longest period after the Norman Conquest. This text marks the beginning of an important conceptual shift in which a culture of outlawry moved from the mixed Anglo-Welsh inhabitants of the borderlands to the Welsh alone by the end of the eleventh century, underscoring the impact of the Norman presence on the culture of this region.

I conclude with the Latin *Life of Harold Godwinson*, an understudied text set during the transition from Anglo-Saxon to Anglo-Norman England. The *Vita Haroldi* continues to depict the Welsh borderlands as a distinctive territory where two peoples came together across the temporal divide of the Norman Conquest. This work claims that Harold was not killed at the Battle of Hastings, but survived and lived for many years afterwards disguised as a hermit in the Welsh borderlands, a place of obscurity. Harold's curious *Vita* is a fitting microcosm of this book. The Welsh borderlands serve as the cultural intersection between Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England, the last place where English identity is preserved after the Norman arrival. Yet Harold, the last Anglo-Saxon, can survive only in the borderlands, a cultural nexus of Anglo-Saxon and Welsh. The *Vita Haroldi* underscores the reputation of the Welsh borderlands as a distinct region where two peoples came together, even from a perspective of longing for a lost English past after the Norman Conquest.

This book alters our understanding of how the Anglo-Saxons and Welsh interacted with one another in the centuries before the Normans arrived. Its conclusions also suggest that some of the singular characteristics of the region that would later become the March of Wales began to take shape during the Anglo-Saxon period. The March has traditionally been understood as a product of 'the character and chronology of the Anglo-Norman penetration and conquest of Wales',<sup>60</sup> created when necessity compelled the new rulers of England to grant a greater degree of legal and political autonomy to those lords living along its tumultuous western border.<sup>61</sup> A good deal of surviving documentary material from the Anglo-Norman period<sup>62</sup> makes clear that the March of Wales, 'a land which lay between Wales and England, attached to each of them but separate from both',<sup>63</sup> was a distinct territory, 'indeterminate in its status, laws, and governance', with 'its own recognizable and recognized habits and institutions'.<sup>64</sup> I am not suggesting that the 'March of Wales' as a legal entity existed before its designation by the Normans. However, I do think that both our comfort with 1066 as a historical, linguistic and disciplinary boundary and the comparative wealth of surviving texts from the Anglo-Norman period have obscured cultural commonalities between the Welsh borderlands in the Anglo-Saxon period and the later March of Wales.<sup>65</sup> A number of

Anglo-Saxon and Welsh texts written before the Norman arrival represent a similar geographical area in similar ways – as a region with both Anglo-Saxon and Welsh inhabitants which was somehow different from other Anglo-Saxon and Welsh kingdoms. The culture of the Welsh borderlands in the Anglo-Saxon period appears to have paved the way for some of the later cultural singularity of the March of Wales.

At the same time, the March of Wales in the Anglo-Norman period was no multicultural utopia either. It was formed as the direct result of a royal policy intended to encourage military aggression towards Wales which ‘had decisively altered the military balance of strength; after this a new intensification of the process of cultural invasion began’.<sup>66</sup> As Simon Meecham-Jones has argued, the story of Welsh conquest has been written as a foregone conclusion in both medieval and modern times: ‘the process of absorbing the land of Wales into an English political superstructure seems to have represented so obvious a conclusion, for English medieval writers, and for later historians and literary critics commenting on their work, that the lack of any reflection by medieval authors on the process of subjugation and colonization being undertaken in Wales has gone unremarked’.<sup>67</sup> Lost too in this silence of historical commentary on the Norman and Edwardian conquest of Wales is a sense of how much else vanished with the Norman arrival.

The existence of the Welsh borderlands in the Anglo-Saxon period evinces the full impact of the Norman Conquest and what else was erased in its wake apart from Englishness. The region of the Welsh borderlands was much more culturally coherent, and the impact of the Norman Conquest on it much greater, than has been realised. This background sharpens the contrast between England’s violence towards Wales in the later medieval period and the mixed culture that had been there before. Much scholarship on the Norman Conquest has focused on its destruction or suppression of English culture. This book articulates a discernible culture in the Welsh borderlands prior to 1066, revealing a new facet of the Norman impact on England. It was not just Englishness that was affected by the Norman arrival, but also a mixed Anglo-Welsh culture in the borderlands, suggesting that the damage done by the Conquest resulted in sharper divisions between English and Welsh after 1066 than had existed before.

## Notes

- 1 The text of the *Dunsate Agreement* is printed in Felix Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, 3 vols. (Halle: Niemeyer, 1903–16), I, 358–63, and all quota-



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- tions are from this edition by clause and line number (except for the prologue), cited as *Dunsæte*. This document is usually referred to as the *Dunsæte Ordinance* or *Ordinance concerning the Dunsæte*, but I am calling it the *Dunsæte Agreement* because ‘Ordinance’ gives the impression of an official law code when this was actually a memorandum of understanding drawn up within a community. The text is translated with facing-page facsimile in Frank Noble, *Offa’s Dyke Reviewed*, ed. Margaret Gelling, BAR, Brit. Ser. 114 (Oxford: BAR, 1983), 105–9, and translated and discussed by T. M. Charles-Edwards, ‘The three columns of law: a comparative perspective’, in *Tair Colofn Cyfraith: The Three Columns of Law in Medieval Wales: Homicide, Theft and Fire*, ed. T. M. Charles-Edwards and Paul Russell, Cymdeithas Hanes Cyfraith Cymru 5 (Bangor: Cymdeithas Hanes Cyfraith Cymru, 2005): 26–59 at 53–9.
- 2 See Carole Hough, ‘Cattle-tracking in the Fonthill letter’, *English Historical Review* 115 (2000): 864–92, for more on cattle rustling in Anglo-Saxon England. As she discusses, procedures for cattle-tracking are also outlined in the Anglo-Saxon law codes II Edward 4, V Æthelstan 2, III Edmund 6 and VI Æthelstan 8,4, with further continental parallels.
  - 3 *Dunsæte Prologue*. George Molyneux, ‘The Ordinance concerning the Dunsæte and the Welsh frontier in the late tenth and eleventh centuries’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 40 (2012): 249–72 at 268 notes that the word *gerædnes* ‘was used to refer to the London peace regulations of Æthelstan’s reign, the *Hundred Ordinance*, *Edward and Guthrum* and several legal texts in the names of Edgar, Æthelred and Cnut; by contrast, *Alfred and Guthrum* and *II Æthelred*, which were both agreed in response to conflicts, call themselves *frīð* (‘peace’) and *frīðmal* (‘agreement of peace’) respectively’.
  - 4 As Max Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales: The Creation and Perception of a Frontier, 1066–1283* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 26, notes of the post-Conquest March, ‘the importance of waterways in the medieval period meant that river drainage systems contributed towards providing communications within, and thereby unifying, regions’, citing R. R. Hilton, *A Medieval Society: The West Midlands at the End of the Thirteenth Century* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966), 10–13. See also Fiona Edmonds, ‘Barrier or unifying feature? Defining the nature of early medieval water transport in the North-West’, 21–36 and Della Hooke, ‘Uses of waterways in Anglo-Saxon England’, 37–54, in John Blair, ed., *Waterways and Canal-Building in Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
  - 5 *Dunsæte* 1,1.
  - 6 *Ibid.* 6,1.
  - 7 *Ibid.* 6,3.
  - 8 Charles-Edwards, ‘Comparative perspective’, 53.
  - 9 *Dunsæte* 9,1. There is a good discussion of the geography of this territory in Margaret Gelling, *The West Midlands in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 112–19. She concludes (118): ‘The district, place, or

- natural feature called *Dun*, from which the Dunsæte took their name, has defeated all attempts at identification. It is not likely to be the Welsh word meaning 'fort', as that would have given \**Din*. It is most probably the Old English word *dun*, modern down, perhaps used in the sense 'mountain'; but it would be very difficult to identify a suitable mountain'.
- 10 Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 228–44.
  - 11 *Dunsæte* 3,3.
  - 12 See George Molyneaux, 'The Ordinance concerning the Dunsæte and the Welsh frontier in the late tenth and eleventh centuries', *Anglo-Saxon England* 40 (2012): 249–72 at 262–5.
  - 13 See the entries for *wita* and *rædbora* in *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, Based on the Manuscript Collections of the Late Joseph Bosworth*, ed. T. Northcote Toller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898) and T. Northcote Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921).
  - 14 *Dunsæte* 5,1.
  - 15 *Ibid.* 8,4.
  - 16 For an analogous situation in a different time and place, see Jukka Kokkonen, 'Border peace agreements: local attempts to regulate early modern border conflicts', in *Imagined, Negotiated, Remembered: Constructing European Borders and Borderlands*, ed. Kimmo Katajala and Maria Lähteenmäki (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2012), 47–66.
  - 17 Michael Fordham, 'Peacekeeping and order on the Anglo-Welsh frontier in the early tenth century', *Midland History* 32 (2007): 1–18 and Molyneaux, 'The Ordinance concerning the Dunsæte'.
  - 18 On the disparities between written law codes and law as it was practised in Anglo-Saxon England, see Patrick Wormald, 'A handlist of Anglo-Saxon law-suits', *Anglo-Saxon England* 17 (1988): 247–81 and Elaine M. Treharne, 'A unique Old English formula for excommunication from Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303', *Anglo-Saxon England* 24 (1995): 185–211.
  - 19 See Wormald, *The Making of English Law*, 232–3, 381–2 and 388; Sarah Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 163–4; and Molyneaux, 'The Ordinance concerning the Dunsæte'.
  - 20 Charles-Edwards, 'Comparative perspective', 54.
  - 21 Martin Grimmer, 'Britons in Early Wessex: the evidence of the law code of Ine', in N. J. Higham, ed., *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*, Publications of the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies 7 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 2007), 102–14 at 104, 106 and 114. See further L. F. Rushbrook Williams, 'The status of the Welsh in the laws of Ine', *English Historical Review*, 30 (1915): 271–7; Margaret Lindsay Faull, 'The semantic development of Old English *Wealh*', *Leeds Studies in English* 8 (1975): 20–44; and Louis M. Alexander, 'The legal status of the native Britons in late seventh-century Wessex as reflected by the law code of Ine', *Haskins Society Journal* 7 (1995): 31–8.

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- 22 'The status of an *alltud* varied according to that of his lord, so that a king's *alltud* was worth twice an *uchelwr's alltud* ... an *alltud*, therefore, was assumed to have a lord and belonged among the broader category of persons of dependent status'; Charles-Edwards and Russell, *Tair Colofn Cyfraith*, 308; referencing *Llyfr Iorwerth*, ed. A. Rh. Wiliam (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1960); *E* 110/9–9a and *B* 110/14–15.
- 23 Charles-Edwards, 'Comparative perspective', 47.
- 24 *Dunsæte* 4,1–2.
- 25 *Ibid.* 5,1.
- 26 Fordham, 'Peacekeeping and order', 10.
- 27 For the Anglo-Saxon side of things, see Lisi Oliver, *The Body Legal in Barbarian Law* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 203–26, and for the Welsh, see Dafydd Jenkins (trans. Charles-Edwards), 'Crime and tort and the three columns of law', in *Tair Colofn Cyfraith*, ed. Charles-Edwards and Russell, 1–25 at 15–22.
- 28 *Dunsæte* 2,1.
- 29 Molyneaux, 'The Ordinance concerning the Dunsæte', 270.
- 30 Charles-Edwards, 'Comparative perspective', 45.
- 31 Rees Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence, and Change: Wales, 1063–1415* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 285; and see also Rees Davies, 'The Law of the March', *Welsh History Review* 5 (1970): 1–30.
- 32 Ralph Hanna, 'The matter of Fulk: romance and history in the Marches', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 110 (2011): 337–58 at 338.
- 33 Davies, 'The Law of the March'.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 23.
- 35 Janet M. Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, Volume 3, *MS A* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1986), 18.
- 36 Sir Ifor Williams, ed. and ann., and Rachel Bromwich, English trans., *Armes Prydein: The Prophecy of Britain*, Mediaeval and Modern Welsh Series, vol. 6 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, School of Celtic Studies, 2006), l. 90, pp. 8–9.
- 37 Bryan Ward-Perkins, 'Why did the Anglo-Saxons not become more British?', *English Historical Review* 115 (2000): 513–33 at 515.
- 38 Grimmer, 'Britons in early Wessex', 102.
- 39 See Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The settlement of England in Bede and the Chronicle', *Anglo-Saxon England* 12 (1983): 1–41; Steven Bassett, ed., *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms* (London: Leicester University Press, 1989); Barbara Yorke, *Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England* (London: Routledge 1990, repr. 1997); Steven Fanning, 'Bede, Imperium, and the Bretwaldas', *Speculum* 66 (1991): 1–26; Barbara Yorke, 'Fact or fiction? The written evidence for the fifth and sixth centuries AD', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 6 (1993): 45–50; Higham, ed., *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*; N. J. Higham, *The English Conquest: Gildas and Britain in the Fifth Century* (Manchester:

- Manchester University Press, 1994); Steven Bassett, 'How the West was won: the Anglo-Saxon takeover of the West Midlands', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 11 (2000): 107–18.
- 40 Damian J. Tyler, 'Early Mercia and the Britons', in *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Higham, 91–101 at 92. See further Damian J. Tyler, 'An early Mercian hegemony: Penda and overkingship in the seventh century', *Midland History* 30 (2005): 1–19; H. P. R. Finberg, 'Mercians and Welsh', in *Lucerna – Studies of Some Problems in the Early History of England* (London, 1964): 66–82; and Nicholas Brooks, 'The formation of the Mercian kingdom', in *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. Bassett, 159–70.
- 41 For overviews of postcolonial approaches to the Middle Ages, see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 'Épater les médiévistes', *History and Theory* 39 (2000): 243–50, Margreta de Grazia, 'The modern divide: from either side', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 37 (2007): 453–67, Lisa Lampert-Weissig, *Medieval Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), and Simon Gaunt, 'Can the Middle Ages be postcolonial?' *Comparative Literature* 61 (2009): 160–76.
- 42 Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Medieval Identity Machines*, *Medieval Cultures* 35 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 117. See also, for example, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, ed., *The Postcolonial Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Michelle R. Warren, *History on the Edge: Excalibur and the Borders of Britain, 1100–1300*, *Medieval Cultures* 22 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); Patricia Clare Ingham, *Sovereign Fantasies: Arthurian Romance and the Making of Britain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Alfred K. Siewers, 'Landscapes of conversion: Guthlac's mound and Grendel's mere as expressions of Anglo-Saxon nation building', *Viator* 34 (2003): 1–39; Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Hybridity, Identity and Monstrosity in Medieval Britain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).
- 43 See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the subaltern speak?' in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313.
- 44 As Gaunt, 'Can the Middle Ages be postcolonial?', 164, notes, such studies have created 'the unfortunate impression that the main thing a medievalist can learn about by adopting a postcolonial perspective is Englishness'.
- 45 On the Scottish frontier see Geoffrey Barrow, 'Frontier and settlement: which influenced which? England and Scotland, 1100–1300', 3–21 and Anthony Goodman, 'Religion and warfare in the Anglo-Scottish marches', 245–66 in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); and John Gillingham, 'The beginnings of English imperialism', 71–88 and Michael Brown, 'Lords and communities: political society in the thirteenth century', 123–47 in James Muldoon, ed., *The North Atlantic Frontier of Medieval Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).
- 46 For maps of the post-1066 March of Wales, see Max Lieberman, *The March of*

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- Wales, 1067–1300: *A Borderland of Medieval Britain* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), 129–37.
- 47 Lieberman, *Medieval March of Wales*, 56.
- 48 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lutte Books, 1987).
- 49 See also maps in Rees Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales, 1063–1415* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 5; David Hill, *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981); p. 4 map 5, ‘simplified soil geology’; p. 6 map 8, ‘relief’; and p. 7 map 9, ‘land quality’; and David Hill, ‘Mercians: the dwellers on the boundary’, in *Mercia: An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. Michelle P. Brown and Carol A. Farr. *Studies in the Early History of Europe* (London: Continuum, 2001), 173–82 at 174.
- 50 Some notable examples include Bartlett and MacKay, eds, *Medieval Frontier Societies*; Daniel Power and Naomi Standen, eds, *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700–1700* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999); David Abulafia and Nora Berend, eds, *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); Daniel Power, *The Norman Frontier in the Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Florin Curta, ed., *Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis: Frontiers in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005); Lud’a Klusáková and Steven G. Ellis, eds, *Frontiers and Identities: Exploring the Research Area* (Pisa: Edizioni Plus/Pisa University Press, 2006); Muldoon, ed., *The North Atlantic Frontier of Medieval Europe*; and Kimmo Katajala and Maria Lähteenmäki, eds, *Imagined, Negotiated, Remembered: Constructing European Borders and Borderlands* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2012).
- 51 Florin Curta, ‘Introduction’, in *Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis*, 1–9. Another good survey of the historiography of frontier studies is Nora Berend, ‘Preface’, in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. x–xv.
- 52 Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- 53 David Abulafia, ‘Introduction: seven types of ambiguity, c. 1100–c. 1500’, in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. Abulafia and Berend, 1–34.
- 54 Daniel Power, ‘Introduction: frontiers: terms, concepts, and the historians of medieval and early modern Europe’, in *Frontiers in Question*, ed. Power and Standen, 1–12 at 2–3. There is another useful discussion of terminology in Lud’a Klusáková and Steven Ellis, ‘Terms and concepts: “frontier” and “identity” in academic and popular usage’, in *Frontiers and Identities*, ed. Klusáková and Ellis, 1–15.
- 55 Catherine A. M. Clarke, *Literary Landscapes and the Idea of England, 700–1400* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2006); Clare A. Lees and Gillian R. Overing, eds, *A Place to Believe In: Locating Medieval Landscapes* (University Park PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006); Fabienne L. Michelet, *Creation, Migration, and Conquest: Imaginary Geography and Sense of Space in Old English*

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- Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); and Nicholas Howe, *Writing the Map of Anglo-Saxon England: Essays in Cultural Geography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), to which the title of this book is indebted.
- 56 Michiel Baud and Willem van Schendel, 'Toward a comparative history of borderlands', *Journal of World History* 8 (1997): 211–42 at 211.
- 57 Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).
- 58 Simon Meecham-Jones, 'Where was Wales? The erasure of Wales in medieval English culture', in *Authority and Subjugation in Writing of Medieval Wales*, ed. Ruth Kennedy and Simon Meecham-Jones (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 27–55 at 32.
- 59 For previous studies, see the works listed in nn. 39 and 40 above, and also T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons, 350–1064* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- 60 Rees Davies, 'Frontier arrangements in fragmented societies: Ireland and Wales', in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. Bartlett and MacKay, 77–100 at 81.
- 61 For example, Lieberman, *Medieval March of Wales*, 56, defines a march as 'a territory under the command of a select group of border lords'.
- 62 H. C. Darby, 'The March of Wales in 1086', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 11 (1986): 259–78 at 259, notes the presence of the phrase *Marcha de Wales* in the Domesday Book; and Lieberman, *Medieval March of Wales*, 6, charts its increasing prevalence during the 1160s.
- 63 Rees Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence, and Change*, 284–5.
- 64 Davies, 'Fragmented societies', 81.
- 65 Recent studies have found more cultural, textual and legal continuity across the 1066 divide than has traditionally been assumed. See in particular Wormald, *The Making of English Law*; John Hudson, *The Formation of the English Common Law: Law and Society in England from the Norman Conquest to Magna Carta* (New York: Longman Press, 1996); Bruce O'Brien, *God's Peace and the King's Peace: The Laws of Edward the Confessor* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999); Mary Swan and Elaine M. Treharne, eds, *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Elaine M. Treharne, *Living Through Conquest: The Politics of Early English, 1020–1220* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Martin Brett and David A. Woodman, eds, *The Long Twelfth Century View of the Anglo-Saxon Past* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).
- 66 Meecham-Jones, 'Where was Wales?', 27–8.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 28.