University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

ScholarWorks@UARK

Graduate Theses and Dissertations

5-2020

The Medieval British Legacy of the Founding Myth of Britain

Timothy J. Nelson
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Citation

The Medieval British Legacy of the Founding Myth of Britain

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in English

by

Timothy J. Nelson
University of Wisconsin-River Falls
Bachelor of Science in English-Literature, 2010
St. Mary's University of Minnesota
Master of Arts in Instruction, 2011
University of Arkansas
Master of Arts in English, 2014

May 2020
University of Arkansas

This dissertation is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

_____
Joshua Byron Smith, PhD
Dissertation Director

_____   _____
Mary Beth Long, PhD   William Quinn, PhD
Committee Member   Committee Member

ABSTRACT

"The Medieval British Legacy of the Founding Myth of Britain" examines the historiographical development of the founding myth of Britain between the 9th and 14th centuries. This study begins with an overview of the Latin, Anglo-Norman French, Middle English, and Middle Welsh texts that transmit this founding myth across medieval Britain. The stylistic features and the motivations of the authors who are adapting this myth are addressed but the main objective of this overview is to introduce the texts in question and to start establishing the intertextual relationships between these works. The textual examination of the historiographical development of the founding myth focuses on how the figures of Brutus and Corineus are manipulated within the narrative and to what effect. This analysis starts with Brutus who becomes the eponymous founder of Britain and attention is given to Brutus's legendary ancestry which is revised to give him a more prominent and legitimate position on the world stage. From here, the circumstances surrounding Brutus's conception, the prophecy of his life, his act of patricide, and subsequent exile from Italy are discussed to reveal how Brutus's legacy is gradually diminished over time by altering narrative details and omitting information. The conditions surrounding Brutus's rise to power and his motivations for joining the Trojan cause are the next topics of concern before attention shifts to his martial exploits, the prophecy that he receives from the goddess Diana, and the scarcity of details concerning Brutus's reign as the first king of Britain. An examination of Corineus and the role he plays in the founding myth of Britain follows starting with his introduction to the narrative and the nature of his relationship with Brutus. Corineus's martial exploits and his wrestling match with the giant Goemagog as are also addressed along with the circumstances surrounding the founding of Cornwall. Ultimately, this dissertation provides new insights into the transmission and development of the founding

myth of Britain and the intertextual relationships of the works that preserve and perpetuate this myth. These insights are the product of studying how the narratives surrounding the figures of Brutus and Corineus are manipulated by later adaptors and how the legacies of these men are used to shape the founding and construction of Britain.

DEDICATON

This dissertation is dedicated to my mom who has supported all of my academic pursuits, regardless of the oddity and obscurity, for these many years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Founding Myth of Britain

In the beginning there was an origin story but not all origin stories start at the beginning. It is not uncommon for origin stories to be fashioned generations, or even centuries, after the events in question occurred and these narratives are often created to explain how the current state of things came to be. Producing an origin story long after the events recorded therein is highly advantageous to those who are constructing this narrative seeing as they can shape said narrative to fit whatever agenda they want. The exposition of these stories has been used as a justification for sovereignty, social and political elevation, and even the creation of cultural identities and empires. All of these features can be found in the Trojan founding myth of Britain. This myth was created in the *Historia Brittonum* to explain how the island of Britain came to be inhabited. According to this narrative, Britain was eponymously named after Aeneas's grandson Brutus came to the island.[1] This legend would be expanded upon by later authors like Geoffrey of Monmouth who would proceeded to chronicle the life of Britain's first king who was exiled from Italy after committing an act of patricide, and who would go on to liberate the conquered Trojans from their Greek captors, receive a prophecy a new homeland for his Trojan followers from the goddess Diana, and found the city in Tours in Gaul en route to reaching the Island of Britain.[2] After making landfall, the Trojans proceed to eradicate the indigenous giants and settle the island that they now claim sovereignty over.[3] Over the next two hundred years, other authors would appropriate the founding myth found in Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britanniae* and advance their

---

[1] *Historia Brittonum: British History and The Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris (London: Phillimore, 1980), §10, 19. Hereafter cited as *Historia Brittonum*.

[2] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain: An Edition and Translation of the De gestis Britonum,* ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 2009), i.6-i.20. Hereafter cited as *Historia.*

[3] *Historia*, i.21-22.

own ideologies by manipulating the events and figures of this founding narrative. All of these

versions of the founding myth of Britain are not only used to explain how Britain became

inhabited but they are also used to legitimize the social and political standing of the earliest

Britons. Additionally, this myth is used to justifying their claims of sovereignty over the island

of Britain and its inhabitants. The different accounts of this myth also advance different notions

of kingship and political unity which shape the construction of Britain, the internal geopolitical

divisions of Cornwall, England, Scotland, and Wales.[4]

The development of the founding myth of Britain needs more attention as a whole and

would greatly benefit from a more substantive exploration of the intertextual relationships

between the works that promulgate this myth. The individual figures of Brutus and Corienus also

need more consideration in relation to the respective roles that they play in founding Britain and

how the manipulation of events within the founding myth impacts their legacies. This

dissertation aims to start these studies by analyzing how the original founding myth of Britain

from the *Historia Brittonum* is manipulated over the next few centuries. This study will provide a

greater understanding of the textual history of the founding myth of Britain and the relationships

between these texts that contain this myth. New insights will also be created into how these

narrative alterations affect the portrayals and subsequent legacies of Brutus and Corineus and

how the founding myth, as a whole, is revised to advance different agendas and ideologies.

Methodologically speaking, a selection of texts that contain versions of the founding myth of

---

[4] As discussed in greater length in chapter, Britain is divided into several smaller political
realms: Cornwall is given to Corienus by Brutus shortly after the Trojans assert control over the
island of Britain. After Brutus's death, Britain is divided between his three sons who give their
names to their respective territories: Locrine received Loegria which becomes England, Kamber
is given Kambria which becomes Wales, and Albanactus receives Albania which becomes
Scotland.

Britain will be examined in chronological order, as will the narrative elements within each chapter. Attention will be given to how each work relates to its predecessor(s), and how the narrative is changed in accordance to the stylistic features of the respective adaptors and their ambitions.

The major events of Brutus's life and Corineus's contributions to the founding of Britain will be the focal points of the textual analysis seeing as this narrative revolves around the life and exploits of Brutus, and Corineus to a much smaller degree. Examining the treatment of these figures will show how their legacies are manipulated to fit and advance the respective agendas of those adapting this founding myth. In many ways these founding fathers are portrayed at their apex in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* which is not surprising given that Geoffrey is fleshing out the itinerary of Brutus's life from the *Historia Brittonum* and literally creating Corienus for the origin of Cornwall.[5] In sum, the portrayal of these figures and their subsequent legacies are tarnished over time.

However, there is a fairly direct correlation between how well the figures of Brutus and Corineus are presented and the genre of the text that records their exploits. There is a marked decline in how favorably Brutus and Corineus are depicted in the literary works of Wace's *Roman de Brut*, and of Layamon's *Brut*. This regression, while present, is not as severe in the historical works of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*, and the *First Variant Version of the Historia regum Britanniae*. Furthermore, Brutus is presented more favorably in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s than he is in the earlier, non-Galfridian texts. However, Corineus does not fare as well in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* which will write him out of the

---

[5] Cornwall originally eponymously derived the name "Corineia" from Corineus before it was called "Cornwall" either by means of a corruption of the name "Corineia" or in reference to being Britain's horn. *Historia*, i.21.463-467.

narrative in some places. Brutus and Corineus are largely restored to, and occasionally elevated beyond, their Galfridian heights in *Brut y Brenhinedd* of the Cotton Cleopatra B.v manuscript.

The larger study will also show how the figure of Brutus is gradually portrayed in increasingly unfavorable terms from the *First Variant Version* of Geoffrey's *Historia* to Layamon's *Brut* by diminishing his virtuousness and increasing his violent tendencies. The later *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* halts these progressions while improving on general portrayal of Brutus in comparison to its predecessors in a few instances but not to the degree of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*. Corineus is also subjected to a diminishing depiction but the reversal of this diminishment is only present in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*. Not only is Corineus presented less favorably over time, but his exploits are also gradually appropriated by Brutus, if not written out of the narrative completely. Corineus's vital contributions to the founding of Britain are disproportional to the relatively small amount of narrative attention that he is given and this issue is compounded over time by the increased willingness of successive adaptors to diminish Corineus presence within the narrative. Britain is founded on the shoulders of these men who not only serve as exemplars of leadership, but they also embody the contemporary virtues of the authors whose alterations continually reshape the legacies of these men

CRITICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE TROJAN MYTH

The popularity of the Trojan myth in the medieval period is evidenced by the sheer number of times this legend has been adapted into literary and historical works and by the frequency and ferocity in which different groups self-identified with the Trojans to the point of claiming direct decent from Aeneas himself. The Romans are the most obvious example of a group superimposing a mythical Trojan narrative onto their own history as a way to gain prestige

and legitimacy as a people.[6] The Franks also claimed kinship to the Trojans, who escaped the

destruction of Troy but their claim(s) are potentially more plausible than that of the Romans.

However, their decision to claim Trojan descent though Francio, as opposed to Aeneas,

diminishes the general nobility and Trojan-ness of their claim.[7] According to medieval Frankish

legends, two groups of Trojans escaped the fall of Troy: those who would go with Aeneas and on

to Rome, and those who followed Priam.[8] It is worth mentioning that this is a different Priam

than King Priam who was killed during the sacking of Troy. These legends contend that the

followers of Priam bifurcated again and one group migrated to Macedonia and through this

particular line, the Franks also claim kinship to Philip and Alexander of Macedonia.[9] The other

---

[6] Caroline D. Eckhardt, "The Presence of Rome in the Middle English Chronicles of the Fourteenth Century," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 90, no. 2 (1991): 187-207, at 199-207; Francis Ingledew, The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia. Regum Britanniae," *Speculum* 69, no 3 (July 1994): 665-704, at 670-673; Julia Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History in the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle* (New York: Boydell and Brewer, 2017), pp. 33-34; Kellie Robertson, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 42-57, at 44-48; Richard Waswo, "The History that Literature Makes," *New Literary History* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1988): 541-564, at 543-554.

[7] Karl J. Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages," *Past & Present*, no. 137 (November 1992): 25-47, at 29. For father commentary on the Frankish claims to a Trojan Ancestry see: Christian Baier, "Homer's Cultural Children: The Myth of Troy and European Identity," *History & Memory* 29, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2017): 35- 62, at 46; Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History," 676, 681-688; Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages," 29-31; Richard. W. Southern, "The Classical Tradition from Einhard to Geoffrey of Monmouth," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 20 (1970):173-196, at 189-193; Elizabeth M. Tyler, "Trojans in Anglo-Saxon England: Precedent Without Descent," *Review of English Studies* 64, no. 263 (2013): 1-20, at 2-3.

[8] Southern, "The Classical Tradition from Einhard to Geoffrey of Monmouth," 190. These legends are contained in the *Chronicle of Fredegar* Widukind's *Res gestae saxonicae sive annalium libri tres* (*The Deeds of the Saxons, or Three Books of Annals*, and Dudo's *Historia Normanorum* (*History of the Normans*), Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early Middle and High Middle Ages, 29-30; Southern, "Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing I," 190-192.

[9] Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early Middle and High Middle Ages," 29; Southern, "Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing I," 190.

contingent elected Francio as their king and he "directed them from Asia into Europe and settled

them between the Rhine and the Danube."[10]

The Britons are the other primary group who claim Trojan descent, and the alterations

made to the mythical founding of Britain will be the primary subject that will be analyzed in

depth in this dissertation.[11] Stated very simplistically, the standard narrative of the mythical

founding of Britain is that after Brutus, Aeneas's grandson, is exiled from Rome, he liberates the

Trojans who are living in Greek captivity and leads them to the Island of Britain, which has been

promised to them, where they establish a New Troy. Up to this point, the critical commentary

surrounding this myth falls into serval broad categories that are frequently intertwined especially

when it comes to discussions about King Arthur: issues of genealogy, legitimacy, and

imperialism; comparisons to Rome; and debunking the historical narrative created by Geoffrey

of Monmouth and followed by his successors.

---

[10] Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early Middle and High Middle Ages," 29.

[11] Aside from the Romans, the Britons were arguably the most heavily invested in establishing a Trojan lineage. In Britain, the Trojan Myth was initially discussed in the *Historia Brittonum* which served as the primary source of information for Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* which expands the account of the Trojan Myth. Geoffrey's *Historia* was immensely popular on its own with some 225 extant manuscript copies, but also as a source for later authors to draw upon in regards to the Trojan Myth of Britain, Julia Crick, *The Historia regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth, vol. III: A Summary Catalogue of the Manuscripts*, Woodbridge, 1989; Jaakko Tahkokallio, "Early Manuscript Dissemination," in *A Companion to Geoffrey of Monmouth*, eds. Georgia Henley and Joshua Byron Smith (Boston: Leiden, forthcoming 2020). The Trojan founding myth of Britain is also briefly recorded in the *Historia Anglorum,* which has 45 extant manuscript copies, *Historia Anglorum*, lxvi; The Trojan founding myth of Britain was also very popular in more literary works which are ultimately derived from Geoffrey to varying capacities: There are 19 complete, or nearly complete, versions of Wace's *Roman de Brut* in addition to 12 fragments, *Roman de Brut,* xxviii-xxix;; There are two extant copies of Layamon's *Brut*, *Layamon xvii;* 180 extant copies of the *Prose Brut* also exist, Lister M. Matheson, *The Prose Brut: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle*, (Tempe: Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies: 1998), at 1-3. There are also about 60 extant copies of Geoffrey's *Historia* that have been translated into Welsh as the *Brut y Brenhinedd*, Daniel Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, (2000; repr., Aberystwyth: University of Wales Press and the National Library of Wales, 2002) pp, 58-63.

The founding myth of Britain is frequently used to establish the legitimacy of the earliest inhabitants of Britain, and their descendants, as a people of note.[12] Once this legitimacy has been established, the Trojan heritage of the Britons is then used to add prestige to the Britons in an attempt place them in a more favorable position within the social and imperial hierarchy of Europe. These endeavors are initially accomplished by determining that the Britons, as a people, have existed for generations albeit under a different name over the course of time, and thus have always been a people. Genealogy is a key component in determining the sustained existence of this people in that Britons will trace their lineage all the way back to Aeneas.[13]

These discussions will also note the similarities between this practice of genealogical tracking to those that trace a people back to Noah, or even Adam as a way to confirm and legitimize their existence.[14] Tracing their Trojan ancestry back to Aeneas allows the Britons to appropriate some of the same legitimacy and prestige of the Romans for their own betterment. However, one of the complications associated with this appropriation is that it creates constant comparisons with Rome that occasionally turn into points of contention, especially when it

---

[12] The identity of the Britons is somewhat complicated since this is an identity that has been assumed by various peoples of equally various ethnic backgrounds. In regard to the founding myth of Britain, the Britons are the earliest Trojan settlers who renamed themselves "Britons" after their leader Brutus. The Welsh see themselves as the descendants of the earliest Britons. Eventually, the descendants of Germanic peoples and the Normans that would come to inhabit the island of Britain and stylize themselves as "English" and are called "Britons" in reference to Britain being their homeland.

[13] Sylvia Federico, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Medieval Cultures, 2003), pp. ix-xxiv; Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History," 670-673; Anthony D. Smith, "National Identity and Myths of Ethnic Descent," *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 7 (1984): 95-130.

[14] David C. Fowler, "Some Biblical Influences on Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historiography," *Traditio* 14 (1958): 378-385; Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History," 670-673; Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages," 28-30; Smith, "National Identity," 95-130; Fiona Tolhurst, "The Britons as Hebrews, Romans and Normans: Geoffrey of Monmouth's British Epic and Reflections of Empress Matilda," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 69-87, at 69-72.

comes to imperial might and claims of sovereignty.[15] Other critical discussions that focus on

Trojan myth are concerned with tracing the narrative provenance of certain details in an attempt

to determine the source material used by a given author and how the deviations from the source

material reveal new authorial additions to the larger narrative. Most of these examinations are

preoccupied with determining what sources were actually used by Geoffrey as part of a larger

discussion on tracing the Galfridian influences on later works.[16]

   Critical engagements with the founding myth of Britain are often limited by scope in

terms of the number and the type of texts that are consulted. These examinations are usually

conducted by genre with texts falling either falling on the historical or literary side of the

narrative spectrum.[17] Geoffrey's *Historia* is the lone exception of this dichotomy due to the

---

[15] Eckhardt, "The Presence of Rome," 187-207; Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History," 677-678; Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 32-46; Robertson, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography," 44-46; Tolhurst, "The Britons as Hebrews, Romans, and Normans," 72-75; Jane Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*: The Ideological Transformation of the *Historia regum Britannie* in Twelfth Century Vernacular Chronicles," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 148-161, at 153-158.

[16] Examinations of Geoffrey of Monmouth as a source include: Robert A. Caldwell, Wace's Roman De Brut and the Variant Version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae," *Speculum* 31, no.4 (1956): 675-682; Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History," 700-703; W. Levinson, "A Combined Manuscript of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Henry of Huntingdon," *The English Historical Review* 58, no. 229 (January 1943): 41-51; Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 25-32; Leslie F. Smith, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and Orosius. At Third Hand?" *Modern Language Notes* 67, no. 8. (December 1952): 536-539; Southern, "The Classical Tradition from Einhard to Geoffrey of Monmouth," 194-195; J. P. S. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions* (1950; repr., New York: Gordian Press, 1994), 3-7, 392-396; Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*," 148-161. .

[17] Historically driven studies include: Acton Griscom, "The "Book of Basingwerk" and the Ms. Cotton Cleopatra B.V.," *Y Cymmrodor* 35 (1925): 49-116; Acton Griscom, "The "Book of Basingwerk" and the Ms. Cotton Cleopatra B.V.," *Y Cymmrodor* 36 (1926):1-33; Robert W. Hanning, The Vision of History in Early Britain from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966); Laura Keeler, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Late Latin Chroniclers, 1300-1500* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1946); Levinson, "A Combined Manuscript," 41-51; Brynley F. Roberts, "Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum*

complicated nature of its composition. Its narrative is largely fabricated which places it in the

literary camp, but the actual text is primarily written in observation of more standard historical

conventions which allows the *Historia* to be subject to historical studies. This hybridity

combined with the immense popularity of work results in all roads leading to Geoffrey. The

more textually comprehensive studies surrounding the usage the Trojan myth are also limited in

that only three or four texts are examined in depth.[18] These studies, regardless of genre or scope,

are largely preoccupied with analyzing why certain changes are made to the narrative and how

these alteration contribute to the larger commentaries about national legitimacy, competitions

with Rome, determining source material and the like.

My study deviates from the norm by considering a larger total number of texts in addition

to providing a more comprehensive study of the same larger episode that is present in every text.

Britanniae and *Brut y Brenhinedd*," in *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature*, ed. Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman, and Brynley F. Roberts (1991; repr., Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 97-116; Smith, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and Orosius," 536-539; Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*," 148-161. Literary Studies include: Caldwell, "Wace's Roman De Brut and the Variant Version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae," 675-682; Eckhardt, "The Presence of Rome," 187-207; Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 21-56; Fiona Tolhurst, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Feminist Origins of the Arthurian Legend* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Fiona Tolhurst, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)..

[18]Four texts (*De excidio et conquestu Britanniae, Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum, Historia Brittonum, Historia regum Britanniae*) are examined in Hanning, *The Vision of History*. Fiona Tolhurst navigates the texts of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, and Layamon in *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Feminist origins of the Arthurian Legend* and *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship*. Julia Marvin also negotiates three texts (The Oldest Version of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut,* Geoffrey's *Historia,* and Wace's *Roman de Brut* in *The Construction of Vernacular History*. Textual studies like those conducted by Edmund Reiss in "The Welsh Versions of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia," *Welsh History Review*, 4, no. 2 (1968): 97-127 and Laura Keeler's *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Late Latin Chroniclers, 1300-1500* handle more texts, 27 for Reiss and 33 for Keeler, but these studies are conducted by examining the relationships between small passages which does not allow for a more comprehensive examination to be conducted.

Moreover, all of these texts are links in a chain of direct textual transmission. My textual corpus is historiographical in nature and contains several representatives for the historical and literary sub-genres which creates a more thorough examination of how the Trojan founding myth of Britain evolves in medieval Britain. I am also more concerned with analyzing the narrative changes that are made and how these alterations influence the larger founding myth as a whole and the consequences thereof. This examination will ultimately contribute to the understanding of the textual development of the founding myth of Britain and how this narrative is modified to further different agendas. Aside from scope and scale, my study will deviate from earlier ones by concentrating on Brutus and Corineus, who also suffer from scholarly neglect. Focusing on these figures and their actions will allow for a greater commentary on the roles that they play in the founding myth of Britain and how their legacies are manipulated by narrative alterations.

SUMMARY CATALOGUE OF SOURCES

Before an examination of the development of the founding myth of Britain is conducted, a brief overview of the relevant texts is needed. This overview is designed to introduce the main texts that contain and perpetuate this myth in medieval Britain and briefly describe their treatment of the founding myth. The typical defining characteristics in terms of language, style, and genre will also be noted. Additionally, this overview will help to establish the relationships between these texts and to begin to show the transmission of certain notions of kingship and the evolution of the figures of Brutus and Corineus. The primary medieval British texts that propagate the founding myth of Britain in rough chronological order are as follows:

> • *Historia Brittonum*, *The History of the British*, Latin, c.1100 CE, Historical, 35 extant manuscripts, earliest extant copy dates to 828/9 CE.[19]

---

[19] *Historia Brittonum: British History and The Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris (London Phillimore, 1980), 1-2. Hereafter cited as *Historia Brittonum*. This edition is the same as L. Faral's *La Legende Arthurienne* Vol. 3, Paris 1929 which is based on the British Library MS

The *Historia Brittonum* provides the original narrative of the founding myth of Britain. This account is written in a straightforward manner that is largely devoid of details, especially after Brutus is exiled from Italy. The founding myth presented in the *Historia Brittonum* is designed to explain how the Island of Britain first became inhabited in addition to proving "that the Britons had a long and famous history comparable to the history of biblical peoples and of the Greeks and Romans."[20] Two explanations for this narrative are given—the first is said to have come from "the Annals of the Romans" and the second is a obtained from "the old books of our elders."[21] The latter of the two provides a detailed genealogy for Brutus that traces his ancestry back to Noah, but it does not provide any information about Brutus's life or his founding of Britain but such a detailed lineage helps to the legitimize the history of this account.[22] The first account provides the original founding myth of Britain which begins by establishing Brutus's Trojan lineage that originates Brutus's grandfather Aeneas. The events surrounding Brutus's conception and acts of parricide are recorded in detail before the narrative becomes a travel itinerary of sorts. After Brutus accidently kills his father in a hunting accident:

Harley 3859, with supplements from Theodor Mommsens' *Chronica Minora,* Berlin, 1892 edition. *Historia Brittonum*, "Introductory Note"; Keith J. Fitzpatrick-Matthews, "The *xxuiii ciuitates brittanie* of the *Historia Brittonum*: Antiquarian Speculation in Early Medieval Wales," *Journal of Literary Onomastics* 4, no. 1 (2015) 1-19, at 2. No original manuscript compilation of the *Historia Brittonum* survives, and all of the 35 extant manuscripts omit different material and add their own glosses and notes, *Historia Brittonum*, 1-2. Harley MS 3859 is the earliest extant manuscript of the *Historia Brittonum* and is a second edition that best preserves the original text from 829/8 even though it was produced between 1100 and 1130, David Dumville, "'Nennius' and the '*Historia Brittonum*'," *Studia Celtica* 10, (1975): 78-95, at 78; Ben Guy, "The Origins of the Compilation of the Welsh Historical Texts in Harley 3859," *Studia Celtica* 49 (2015): 21-56, at 1, 48-48, 55.

[20] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19; Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England I c.550 – c.1307,* (1996; repr., New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 10.

[21] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*annalibus autem Romanorum*" §10,60, *Historia Brittonum*, §17, 22: "…*ex veteribus libris veterum nostrorum*" *Historia Brittonum*, §17, 63.

[22] Grandsen, *Historical Writing in England I*, 11.

He was driven from Italy, and came to the islands of the Tyrrhene Sea, and was driven from Greece, because of the killing of Turnus, whom Aeneas had killed, and arrived in Gaul, where he founded the city of Tours, which is called Turnis; and later he came to this island, which is named Britannia from his name, and filled it with his race, and dwelt there. From that day, Britain has been inhabited until the present day.[23]

This is the entirety of the original founding myth of Britain from the *Historia Brittonum*. Later authors like Geoffrey of Monmouth will expand on the narrative outline provided here, and these expansions will grow into the larger legend that explains how Britain was founded by Brutus.

The Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum* opens with a preface noting that the *Historia Brittonum* was constructed as a means of "writ[ing] down some extracts that the stupidity of the British cast out."[24] This preface continues to state that that "the scholars of the island of Britain had no skill, and set down no record in books" which forced Nennius to make "a heap of all that [he] has found, both from the Annals of the Romans and from the Chronicles of the Holy Fathers, and from the writings of the Irish and the English, and out of the tradition of

---

[23] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*Et expulsus est ab Italia, et arminilis fuit, et venit ad insulas maris Tirreni,et expulsus est a Graecis causa occisionis Turni, quem Aeneas occiderat, et pervenit ad Gallos usque, et ibi condidit civitatem Turonorum, quae covatur Turnis. Et postea ad istam pervenit insulam, quae a nomine suo accepit nomen, id est Brittaniam, et inplevit eam cum suo genere, et habitavit ibi. Ab illo autem die habitata est Brittannia usque in hodiernum diem.*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[24] The Nennian recension is named after the Nennius who names himself as the scribe of the *Historia Brittonum* in the Preface of the text: "I, Nennius, pupil of the holy Elvodug, have undertaken to write down..." "*Ego Nennius Sancti Elbodugi discipulus aliqua excerpta scribere...*" *Historia Brittonum*, "Preface," 9, *Historia Brittonum*, "Praefatio," 50. *Historia Brittonum*, "Preface," 9: "*aliqua excerpta scribere curavi, quae hebitudo gentis Britanniae deiecerat*" *Historia Brittonum*, "Praefatio," 50. This Preface is one of the supplemental passages taken from Theodor Mommsen's edition of the *Historia Brittonum*, Mommsen, *Historia Brittonum*, 143. This preface belongs to the Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum* and is found in the following manuscripts: Corpus Christi College, Cambridge 139; The Burney Manuscript 310; Durham Cathedral MS. B. 2. 35; and Cambridge University Library MS. Ff. I. 27. For further information. For further information on the Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum* see: Dumville, "'Nennius' and the '*Historia Brittonum*'," 78-95.

[British] elders."[25] Consequently, it is difficult to discern what sources were used in the construction of the *Historia Brittonum* in respects to the passage where the founding myth of Britain is concerned.[26]

Regardless of what the actual sources were, the *Historia Brittonum*'s treatment of them is unique given that the scribe "copied the documents he found, of very different quality and kind, not continuously. He selected extracts from each source, and arranged them usually, in what he thought was their proper chronological order, sometimes grouped by subject matter; and in his preface he listed an outline bibliography of his main sources."[27] This methodology was a clear deviation from the majority of pre-modern historians who provided their own interpretations of sources and/or compiled annalistically chronicled events.[28] Even though the *Historia Brittonum* has been dismissed by many historians due to the errors, obscurities, and legends within its contents, it does present a unique truth that is the result of the author "narrat[ing] with uncritical diligence what he read, heard, and saw" as opposed to synthesizing his evidence.[29]

> • Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia regum Britanniae*, *History of the Kings of Britain*, Latin, c. 1136, Literary, 225 extant manuscripts.[30]

---

[25] *Historia Brittonum*, "Preface," 9: "*quia nullam peritiam habuerunt neque ullam commemorationem in libris posuerunt doctores illius insulae Britanniae. Ego autem coacervavi omne quod inveni tam de annalibus Romanorum quam de cronicis sanctorum patrum, et de scriptis scottorum Saxonumque et ex traditione veterum nostrorum.*" *Historia Brittonum*, "Praefatio," 50.

[26] For further information on the sources of the *Historia Brittonum* see: Grandsen, *Historical Writing in England I*, 6-7, 9-10.

[27] *Historia Brittonum*, 6.

[28] *Historia Brittonum*, 6.

[29] Grandsen, *Historical Writing in England I*, 9.

[30] Michael A. Faletra, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, translated and edited by Michael A. Faletra (Peterborough: Broadview, 2008), pp. 8-9; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain: An Edition and Translation of the De gestis Britonum*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 2009), p. vii. Hereafter cited as *Historia.* Crick, *A Summary Catalogue of the Manuscripts;* Tahkokallio, "Early Manuscript Dissemination."

Geoffrey's *Historia* is unique in that it has been viewed as a historical and a literary text at different points in time which helps to explain its popularity during the medieval period.[31] Geoffrey's text was also a controversial and was "dismissed as a pack of lies by other twelfth-century Latin historiographers such as William of Newburgh and Gerald of Wales, but eagerly embraced by English and Continental audiences."[32] Gildas's *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (*On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain*)*,* Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*Ecclesiastical History of the English People*), and the *Historia Brittonum* to provide a foundation from which Geoffrey's largely fabricated history is built.[33] There are also a few instances where Geoffrey derives material from Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* (*History of the English People*).[34] The *Historia Brittonum* was Geoffrey's primary source of material for his greatly expanded version of the founding myth of Britain.[35] Geoffrey's version of this myth presents the earliest Britons in an incredibly favorable light that allows Geoffrey to "stress Britain's unimpeachable position in the world of antiquity."[36] Later accounts of the founding myth of Britain are primarily derived from the *Historia regum Britanniae.*

---

[31] Geoffrey's *Historia* was widely regarded as a legitimate historical text shortly after its composition and did not lose its factual credibility until the eighteenth century despite earlier detractors like Gerald of Wales, Layamon, xiv.

[32] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 6.

[33] *Historia*, lvii-lix. For further commentary on Geoffrey's actual source material see: Faletra, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, 14-21; Griscom, "The "Book of Basingwerk" and the Ms. Cotton Cleopatra B.V," (1925), 49; Karen Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, (2010; repr., Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 13-21; Thomas Jones, "Historical Writing in Medieval Welsh," *Scottish Studies* 12 (1968): 15-27, at 16; Brynley F. Roberts, "Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae* and *Brut y Brenhinedd*," xv-xx.

[33] Henry of Huntingdon, Histor*ia Anglorum: The History of the English People,* ed. and trans. Diana Greenway, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), civ-cv. Hereafter cited as *Historia Anglorum*

[34] Henry of Huntingdon, Histor*ia Anglorum: The History of the English People,* ed. and trans. Diana Greenway, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), civ-cv. Hereafter cited as *Historia Anglorum.*

[35] Jankuluk, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 41.

[36] Jankuluk, *Geoffrey of Monmouth,* 43.

Geoffrey was interested in the distant events of British history that occurred before the arrival of the Germanic peoples who would go on to call themselves "English" and he set out to create "a British past that was every bit as sophisticated as the Roman or, by implication, Saxon or Norman past."[37] The main theme of Geoffrey work is "sovereignty, loss of sovereignty and hope of future regaining of sovereignty."[38] Even though he was fabricating many of the historical events of early, pre-Roman British history, "it was of central importance to Geoffrey that his tale be told in a suitably 'historical' fashion, without gaps and with properly believable characters and events."[39] Geoffrey's characters also served as exemplars that allowed him to express his "own opinions of government, law, and societal maintenance."[40] The *Historia regum Britanniae* incorporates some of the literary conventions of courtly romance with tales of heroism and love that, when combined with passing references to church affairs, results in a predominantly secular tone."[41] Geoffrey's preference for war over peace can also be seen in the vivid descriptions of battles that often contain imaginary speeches.[42]

> • Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, *History of the English People*, Latin, c. 1129/1154, Historical. 45 extant manuscripts that comprise six different editions of the text.[43]

---

[37] Jankuluk, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 3.
[38] Jankuluk, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 20.
[39] Jankuluk, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 103.
[40] Layamon, *Brut*, xvi
[41] Grandsen, *Historical Writing in England I*, 207.
[42] Grandsen, *Historical Writing in England I*, 208.
[43] *Historia Anglorum,* lxvi; cxvii-cxliv; Henry expands on the narrative and brings it current with each new edition after the second. The completion dates for the different editions is as follows: Versions 1 & 2, 1129; Version 3, 1138; Version 4, 1146; Version 5, 1149; Version 6, 1154, *Historia Anglorum,* lxvi. This edition aims to show all six versions of the text that were used to compose Books I-X of the *Historia Anglorum.* The manuscripts used by each version are as follows: Version 1: E1: Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MS 33.5.4; Version 2: H: Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth MS 382; Version 3: Ac: London, British Library, Additional MS 24061; C1: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 280; Eg1: London, British Library, Everton MS 3668; Version 4: Gg: Cambridge University Library MS Gg 2.21; Lc1:London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 327; R: Rouen, Bibliotheque

According to the Prologue, Henry of Huntingdon wrote to fulfill the command of Bishop

Alexander of Lincoln by undertaking the task of "narrat[ing] the history of this kingdom and the

origins of [their] people," namely, the English.[44] It is also worth noting that Bishop Alexander

was also one of Geoffrey of Monmouth's patrons.[45] The *Historia Anglorum* was "intended to

reach a wide audience" and "was therefore written in simple language, with a strong story-line

and plenty of dramatic incident."[46] Even though the *Historia Anglorum* is a mostly derivative

compilation, it is constructed in such a way that it has a "continuous narrative" that "is still very

much [Henry's] creation, serving his thematic view of history."[47]

　　Even though this is an Anglo-centric text, the founding myth of Britain is preserved in

two locations. The first account is recorded in the first book of the text and is rather faithful to

the narrative that was originally presented in the Vatican recension of the *Historia Brittonum*.[48]

The third version of the *Historia Anglorum* incorporated some minor revisions that were based

---

Municipale, MS 1177; Version 5: All extant manuscripts for this version are too corrupted to use for Books I-X; Version 6: Ea: Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MS 33.5.1; Rb: London, British Library, royal MS 13.B.vi; Ii: Cambridge, University Library, MS Ii.2.3; C2: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 280, *Historia Anglorum,* clxii-clxiii.

[44] *Historia Anglorum*, Prologue, 5-7: "*Hec ergo considerans, huius regni gesta et nostre gentis origines, issu tuo presul Alexander ... decurrenda suscepti.*

[45] The "Preface to the Prophecies of Merlin," contains a transcript of a letter that Geoffrey sent to Bishop Alexander of Lincoln as a way to explain the spreading news of the Prophecies of Merlin that Geoffrey was being pressed to publish. The Preface and the actual prophecies themselves comprise Book VII of the *Historia regum Britanniae.* Geoffrey's letter opens with an address to Bishop Alexander that reads: "'Alexander bishop of Lincoln, my love for your noble person compelled me to translate from British into Latin the prophecies of merlin, before completing the history which i had begun concerning the deeds of the kings of the British.'" "'*Coegit me, Alexander Lincolniensis praesul, nobilitatis tuae dilectio prophetias Merlini de Britannico in Latinum transferre antequam historiam perarassem quam de gestis regum Britannorum inceperam.*'" *Historia,* vii.110. 8-10.

[46] *Historia Anglorum*, lviii.

[47] *Historia Anglorum*, lxxxv. For further information on the sources of the *Historia Anglorum* see: *Historia Anglorum,* lxxxv-cvi

[48] *Historia Anglorum*, p. 25 n. 38; 1.9.25-27.

on material taken Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Brittanie*.[49] The influence of

Geoffrey's text is made apparent in Book VIII where Henry of Huntingdon constructs a *Letter to*

Warin the Breton that describes his discovery of a written account of the pre-Roman history of

Britain that was previously omitted from the *Historia Anglorum*, largely due to a scarcity of

sources.[50] This letter is a largely condensed account of the first book of Geoffrey of Monmouth's

Historia regum Britanniae and thus, the second version of the founding myth of Britain recorded

in the *Historia Anglorum*.[51] Granted, this highly condensed account is taken directly from

Geoffrey's *Historia*, but Henry alters details to suit his own ambitions. Henry's treatment of the

Historia regum Britanniae is notably different than any of his other sources.[52] The material is

presented in the same order but Henry "abbreviates drastically, omitting whole chapters-he

quotes from or uses only about half the chapters of the *HRB*. He jumps from chapter to chapter,

taking in two or three chapters in a single sentence."[53]

> • *Historia regum Brittanie: The First Variant Version*, *First Variant Version of the History of the Kings of Britain*, Latin, c.1138-1155, Historical, 10 extant manuscripts: 6 complete, 1 fragment, 1 set of eighteenth-century excerpts, and 2 manuscripts redactions, one that combines the first two variant versions, and the other conflates the First Variant with the Vulgate.[54]

---

[49] *Historia Anglorum*, ci.
[50] For more information on Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* see Neil Wright, "The Place of Henry of Huntingdon's *Epistola ad Warinum* in the Text-History of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*: A Preliminary Investigation," in *France and the British Isles in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Essays by Members of Girton College, Cambridge, in Memory of Ruth Morgan*, edited by Gillian Jondorf and David. N. Dumville, (Woodbridge, 1991), 71-113.
[50] *Historia Anglorum*, xviii, 1.559; xviii, 2.559-561.
[51] *Historia Anglorum*, xviii, 1.559; xviii, 2.559-561
[52] *Historia Anglorum*, ci-cii.
[53] *Historia Anglorum*, ci.
[54] Neil Wright, *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth II: The First Variant Version*, (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988), p. lxxvii; *The History of the Kings of Britain: The First Variant Version*, ed. and trans. David W. Burchmore (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 427. Hereafter cited as *First Variant Version*. This edition is based on Wright's edition and is not bound by the same manuscript preferences, *First Variant Version*, 430. Wright's edition is primarily based on manuscript R (Paris Bibliotheque de l'Arsenal, MS. 982 (7.H.L.))

As its title suggests, the *First Variant Version* is the first variant version of Geoffrey of

Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae.*[55] Geoffrey's *Historia* is greatly condensed in the *First*

Variant Version which "removes most of the passages in which Geoffrey expresses his personal

values" in addition to "some off the more rhetorically charged passages."[56] Abridgement is the

primary editorial practice of the adaptor of the *First Variant Version* who also omits the

descriptions of battles and other martial passages along with many speeches.[57] The speeches that

are retained often have a more moral tone than Geoffrey due to the adaptor's fondness for

biblical allusions.[58] The *First Variant Version* will also occasionally expand on the narrative as it

tries to "reconcile the Galfridian version of events with these more orthodox historical

authorities."[59]

> • Wace, *Roman de Brut, A History of the British,* Anglo-Norman French, c. 1155,
> Literary, 19 complete or nearly complete extant manuscripts, 12 fragments.[60]

Wace is writing for an Anglo-Norman audience that was very interested in the legends and

history of their new country and Wace begins his text by directly stating that "[w]hoever wishes

---

and includes portions from manuscript a (Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS. 13210) and H (London, British Library, MS. Harley 6358) when necessary due to manuscript corruptions and omissions. These additions are pulled from the First Variant portions of the correspond text and are used when their contents are supported by the D (Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 515 (E.5.12)) E (Exeter, Cathedral Library, MS. 3514) S (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS. Adv. 18.4.5) manuscript group which Wright prefers. Wright, *The First Variant Version*, cxv.

[55] For further information on the *First Variant Version* see: Wright, *First Variant Version*, xi-xvii; liv-lxxvii. For further information on the stylistic features of the *First Variant Version* see: Wright, *First Variant Version*, xvii-liv.

[56] Tolhurst, *Translating Female Kingship*, 135; Wright, *First Variant Version*, liii-liv.

[57] Wright, *First Variant Version*, xli; liii-liv; lxxi

[58] Wright, *First Variant Version*, viii; lxxi.

[59] Wright, *First Variant Version*, lxxi-lxxii.; viii

[60] Wace, *Roman de Brut: A History of the British*, ed and trans. Judith Weiss (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2009), xii; xxviii-xxix. Hereafter cited as *Roman de Brut.* This edition is a translation from two different manuscripts: MS P (BL. Add. 45103) up to line 11999, and MS D (Durham Cathedral C iv. 27 (I) lines 12000-end, *Roman de Brut,* xxv.

to hear and to know about the successive kings and their heirs who once upon a time were the

rulers of England—who they were, whence they came, what was their sequence, who came

earlier and who later—Master Wace has translated it and tells it truthfully."[61] Like Geoffrey of

Monmouth, Wace creatively expands upon his sources to fill in the historical gaps of early

British history.[62] The *First Variant Version of the Historia regum Britanniae* is the primary

source material for the *Roman de Brut* but Wace also incorporates material from William of

Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon.[63] Even though it is heavily based on the *First Variant*

Version, the *Roman de Brut* is to be viewed as its own text, due to the amount of textual of

textual variation and expansion it contains.[64]

Wace has a "lucid and straightforward" style that occasional explains more than

necessary, and he "has a fondness for word-play and for reiteration of phrases, sometimes to

press an ironic parallel; he is also happy to use proverbial wisdom."[65] Wace closely follows the

outline and details of his source material, but he "felt free to amplify and embellish his

chronicle," and these alterations reveal "Wace's own conception of the story and what was most

import to him" along with his own interests.[66] To this end, the narrative showcases Wace's

detailed knowledge of entertainments, which he is fond of describing. The detailed accounts of

these entertainments reveal Wace's interest in human emotions that are also displayed during

battles that prioritize the evocation of atmosphere and feeling over tactics.[67] These battles are

---

[61] *Roman de Brut*, xiii; 3.

[62] *Roman de Brut*, xiii.

[63] *Roman de Brut*, xviii.

[64] *Roman de Brut,* xviii-xxiv.

[65] *Roman de Brut*, xxiv. For further information on Wace's style see: *Roman de Brut*, pp. xviii-xxiv.

[66] *Roman de Brut*, xiii

[67] *Roman de Brut*, xix, xxii.

also "infused with the epic language and concepts characteristic of the twelfth-century *chansons de geste*" which "provides a bridge to the newer world of twelfth-century romance."[68] Furthermore, speeches and battles scenes are reconstructed in such a way where technical details are used to replace physical violence, especially when heroes are on the losing side of things "and comments that could reflect negatively on the favoured ethnic group are frequently deleted."[69]

> • Layamon, *Brut*, Middle English c. 1200, Literary, 2 extant manuscripts.[70]

Layamon's text is primarily derived from the *Roman de Brut* with some supplemental support from Bede.[71] As is the case with Wace, Layamon's text is to be seen as its own unique work that is more than just a revised adaptation of its primary source material.[72] Textual omission and contractions are a frequent narrative occurrence within Layamon's *Brut*. The majority of these types of textual alterations are connected with battles which is evidenced by the common removal of the technical descriptions of martial engagements and the toning down of particularly violent battle scenes via formulaic expressions.[73] Redundant and tangential material not directly relevant to plot, minor characters, and "excessively didactic passages" are also regularly excised throughout the narrative.[74] Layamon also modifies and expands on the material of his

---

[68] *Roman de Brut*, xxiii.

[69] Francoise Le Saux, *A Companion to Wace*, (Cambridge D. S. Brewer, 2005), p. 95.

[70] Layamon, *Brut*, ed, and trans. Rosamund Allen, (London: Everyman's Library, 1993), xvii; xx. Hereafter cited as Layamon. Allen's translation is based on Cotton Caligula A.ix & Cotton Otho C.xiii manuscripts, Layamon, ix. Layamon's Middle English is reproduced from the Caligula A.ix manuscript of Laȝamon, *Brut*, ed. G.L. Brook and R.F. Leslie, *Layamon: Brut. Edited from British Museum MS Cotton Caligula A ix and British Museum MS Otho C xiii*, vol 1., London, 1963, l. 131. Hereafter cited as *Brut*.

[71] Layamon, xxxi. For further information on Layamon's sources see Le Saux *Layamon's Brut*.

[72] For further information regarding Layamon's changes to Wace's text see Francoise Le Saux, *Layamon's Brut: The Poem and its Sources*, (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989), pp. 24-58.

[73] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 42, 33; Layamon, *Brut*, xxvi.

[74] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 33, 35, 36.

predecessors. and these alterations are caused by changes in language, a desire to redirect emphasis, and the introduction of new ideas and aesthetic preferences.[75]

Layamon is also more concerned "with the overall scheme of history rather than with individual episodes" and has a more solemn tone than his predecessors that can be seen as moralizing and judgmental."[76] This narrative voice stems from Layamon's "aggressively Christian and socially conservative values."[77] Formulaic expressions are frequently used in Layamon's *Brut*, especially in battle scenes which serve as a distancing device that conveys a tone of sadness and a "world-weary acknowledgement of the effects of human aggression."[78]

> • *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle*, Anglo-Norman French, c. 1300, Literary & Historical, 2 complete manuscripts, 3 fragments.[79]

The Oldest Version of the *Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* belongs to the extensive corpus of the *Prose Brut* which generally chronicles British history from Fall of Troy to the death of Henry III in 1272.[80] The ending points of the *Prose Brut* vary to a degree in that some continue to chronicle events into the fourteenth century.[81] The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* implements the Vulgate Version of Geoffrey's *Historia* for early parts of the narrative from the founding of

---

[75] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 42-43. For additional information about Layamon's style see: Layamon*, xiv-xxxiii; Francoise Le Saux, *Layamon's Brut: The Poem and its Sources*, (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989), pp. 24-58.

[76] Jankuluk, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 97; Layamon, *Brut*, xxiv-xxv; Tolhurst, *Translating Female Kingship*, 208.

[77] Tolhurst, *Translating Female Kingship*, 208.

[78] Layamon, *Brut*, xxvi.

[79] *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle*, ed. and trans. Julia Marvin, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), 40-41; 57. Hereafter cited as *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*. This edition is primarily based on British Library Additional 35092, but it has also been collated with manuscripts Bibliotheque Nationale MS f.f. 14640 (F); Bibliotheque Nationale MS n.a.f. 4267 (N); Bodleian Library MS Wood empt. 8 (W); Bodleian Library MS Douce 120 (D), *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut,* 73.

[80] There are approximately 180 extant manuscript copies of the *Prose Brut,* Matheson*, The Prose Brut*, 1-3.

[81] Matheson, 5.

Britain up to the death of Cadwallader but its primary source is Wace's *Roman de Brut*.[82]

Material is also taken from William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon.[83] The *Oldest*

Anglo-Norman Prose Brut is catering to an English audience and "deploys the recurrences of

similar events to develop and reiterate a set of lessons for the everyday contemporary world,

lessons about good and bad governance, the essential role of the baronage, and the social

responsibilities of the individual."[84] Stylistically speaking, the adaptor of the *Oldest Anglo-*

Norman Prose Brut revises their sources in "an unobtrusive, uniform style with a restricted

vocabulary" that also minimizes descriptive and figurative language.[85]

Abridgment is the main editorial tendency of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* which

is "achieved primarily by the omission of the detailed accounts of battle which Wace is so

fond.[86]" Most of the descriptions of warfare are omitted and truncated to the point where the

"account of battle typically consists of one sentence identifying the combatants, sometimes the

place, and the outcome, which are apparently all that is of interest."[87] The *Oldest Anglo-Norman*

Prose Brut also has a tendency to "celebrates homely virtues while eliminating exactly those

elements often through to have been most appeal to contemporary audiences – the individually

heroic, the marvelous, the glamorous, and the erotic."[88]

> • Cotton Cleopatra B.v. *Brut y Brenhinedd, History of the Kings of Britain*,
> Middle Welsh, c. 1330, Literary, 1 extant manuscript.[89]

---

[82] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 7; *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 20.
[83] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 20.
[84] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 6, 7.
[85] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 5. For further information on the stylistic features of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* see: Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 24-32; *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* 5-15.
[86] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 21.
[87] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 61; *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 10.
[88] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 15.
[89] Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 47

The Cotton Cleopatra *Brut y Brenhinedd* is one of some sixty extant manuscript copies of the different Welsh translations of Geoffrey's *Historia* that can be placed in several different manuscript families.[90] The Welsh translations of the *Historia* were copied from the middle of the twelfth century through the eighteenth.[91] Geoffrey's *Historia* is the primary source for the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut y Brenhinedd*, but this version also includes information that is taken from Welsh traditions. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* deviates from the norm in its blatant revision of different parts of the narrative.[92]

The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* "is the most thorough-going adaptation of any of the Welsh versions" that "attempts to harmonize the *Historia* and native history."[93]The adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* actively condenses material. Battle scenes and their details are frequently abbreviated, and most speeches are reduced to reportage, but the larger narrative of Geoffrey's *Historia* and its use of personal names are retained."[94] The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* adaptor will also expand material "that can add to the realism or vividness of the narrative."[95]

---

[90] Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 58-63; *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, x-xii; Brynley F. Roberts, ed., *Brut y Brenhinedd: Llanstephan MS. 1 Version* (1971; repr., Dublin: The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1984), pp. xxiv, xxviii.

[91] Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 58-63.

[92] For further information on how this version deviates from rest of the Welsh *Bruts* see: *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, xiv; Brynley F. Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd Ynys Brydeyn*: A Fourteenth-Century Welsh Brut," in *Narrative in Celtic Tradition: Essays in Honor of Edgar M. Slotkin* (CSANA Yearbook, 8-9), ed. Joseph F. Eska (Hamilton, NY: Colgate University Press, 2011): 215-227.

[93] Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd ynys Brydeyn,*" 221.

[94] Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd ynys Brydeyn,*" 223.

[95] Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd ynys Brydeyn,*" 224. For further information on the characteristics of the Cotton Cleopatra *Brut y Brenhinedd* see: *Brut y Brenhinedd*, xii-xviii; Timothy J. Nelson, "Welsh Manipulations of the Matter of Britain," master's thesis, University of Arkansas, 2014); Brynley F. Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd Ynys Brydeyn,*" 221-227.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

A Boy Name Brutus: This chapter examines how the narrative surrounding the early part of Brutus's life is manipulated and how these changes alter his legacy. I begin by focusing on how Brutus's Trojan lineage is presented before discussing how changes to this ancestry influence Brutus's legacy in addition to those who claim descent from him. From here, I look at the circumstances surrounding Brutus's conception and how alterations to this part of the narrative effect Brutus's standing within his maternal, Romano-Latin side of the family which will become a factor in how, and why, he is exiled from Italy. Next, I analyze the prophecy that is made about Brutus's life and how it is revised to Brutus's detriment over time. After this, I discuss the manner in which Brutus's fulfills the first part of this prophecy which foretells his act of patricide, and how the details of this event modified to diminish Brutus's culpability while also increasing its tragic nature. This discussion leads to a concluding section that concentrates on Brutus's expulsion from Italy and how it was changed from a private, family affair to a social decision made by the larger public.

Brutus, King of the Britons: This chapter is concerned with the second section of Brutus's life that occurs between his expulsion from Italy and founding a new Trojan homeland on the island of Britain. I begin by looking into how the prominence of Brutus's reputation is diminished and how his motivations for joining the Trojan cause become increasingly selfless. From here, I examine Brutus's martial exploits as a tactician and combatant as a part of a larger commentary on how Brutus lives up to his reputation and justifies his recent rise to power as the leader of the Trojans. Initially, Brutus's legacy is tarnished in this section as he becomes increasingly violent, as do his followers. However, this violent trend is broken by later adaptations whose stylistic tendencies result in the removal of many of the details from the battle

scenes. These omissions help to repair the image of Brutus and his Trojans to a degree but the previous damage to their legacy is still evident. The prophecy given to Brutus by the goddess Diana that foretells the Trojan founding of Britain is the next subject of inquiry which reveals an initial increase in the demonization of Diana that diminishes the validity of her prophecy. Eventually, the legitimacy of Diana and her prophecy are restored but to the detriment of the prominence of the Trojan standing on the world stage. I conclude this chapter by addressing the dearth of detail that pertains to Brutus's actual reign as the first King of the Britons which reinforces the need for further commentary on the pre-founding events of his life.

Cutting Down Corineus to Build Up Brutus: This chapter examines the figure of Corineus and the diminishment of his presence in the narrative and his contributions to the founding myth of Britain. I begin with Corineus's introduction to the narrative and examine how later adaptations will diminish his relationship with Brutus from a state of relative equality to one of subservient fealty. Corineus's martial exploits are then addressed in respect to how Brutus takes on a progressively important role in these endeavors to the detriment and betterment of their respective legacies. I also address how Corineus's legacy is altered by his wrestling match with the giant Goemagog, which is largely described in increasingly violent and religious rhetoric. This chapter is concluded with a commentary on the narrative revisions surrounding the establishment of Cornwall which was originally awarded to Corienus by Brutus. The manner in which Corineus receives his part of Britain, and the status of Cornwall in relation to the rest of Britain are then addressed as part of a larger commentary on how the Trojans become British as Britain is created.

A Boy Named Brutus

Broadly speaking, Brutus is the descendant of Aeneas who proceeds to liberate the fallen Trojans from Greek captivity and establishes a new civilization for the Trojans on the island that will be renamed "Britain." The Trojans who followed Brutus to their New Troy, and their descendants, decide to call themselves "Britons" and thus Brutus not only becomes the first British king, but the exploits that lead to this moment help establish a foundation of what it means to be British. There is much more to the story of Brutus and his legacy than his lineage and the actual founding of Britain, which are the primary focal points of any discussion surrounding him. This chapter aims to examine how the narratives surrounding Brutus's youth are altered within the founding myth of Britain and how these changes begin to shape the figure of Brutus and the events that create his legacy. This examination will focus on the beginning of Brutus's narrative and will address the alterations made to Brutus's ancestry, the events surrounding his conception and birth, his act of patricide, and the exile that follows shortly thereafter. This analysis will help to establish a larger commentary on how Brutus's origin story is manipulated over time and how these developments alter Brutus's character and provide the foundation for his legacy. This discussion will also facilitate the analysis of the following chapter that will address how Brutus's exploits are modified as he transitions from an individual in exile, to a leader with a following, to a general with an army, and finally to a king with a country.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite being the eponymous founder of Britain and first king of the Britons, Brutus's legacy is somewhat ignored within the confines of Britain's legendary history as most of the attention is directed towards Aurelius Ambrosius, Uther Pendragon, King Arthur, and even Vortigern. This discrepancy of interest is understandable given the levels of authorial detail and

attention that is given to these figures—all of which favors Brutus's later counterparts. This

disproportionate preference is also reflected in the amount of scholarship that has been devoted

to these figures.[1] Scholarship rarely focuses on Brutus, preferring instead to examine him in

relation to something else that takes precedence such as Brutus's lineage which is used to

facilitate a larger discussion that sets Britain and Rome in opposition due to their mutual claim to

a noble, Trojan ancestry.[2] The commentary surrounding Brutus's genealogy fixates on two

---

[1] Julia Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History in the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle* (New York: Boydell and Brewer, 2017), pp. 25-32, provides one of the most in-depth analyses of Brutus Marvin examines how Brutus is portrayed in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* in contrast to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* and Wace's *Roman de Brut.* Fiona Tolhurst offers another detailed commentary on Brutus focused on exploring the details surrounding Brutus's conception, his relationship with his wife Ignogen, and the prophesy of a now homeland given to him by the goddess Diana, in *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). For the discussion of Brutus's conception see: pp. 73-74, 158-159, 190. For the discussion of Brutus and Ignogen see: pp. 105-106, 136, 159-160, 190-191, 207, 232-234. For the discussion of Brutus and Diana see: pp. 106-107, 190, 221-222. Thea Summerfield's "Filling the Gap: Brutus in the *Historia Brittonum*, *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* MS F, and Geoffrey of Monmouth," *The Medieval Chronicle* 7, (2002): 85-102, quickly explores how the Brutus narrative from the *Historia Brittonum* was initially included in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* "F" Manuscript (British Library MS Cotton Domitian Aviii, ff. 30-70). Attention is given to how the narrative is abbreviated in this version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. From here, Summerfield proceeds to examine how the same narrative is utilized and expanded upon by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Summerfield briefly focuses on Geoffrey's alterations to the nature of the relationship of Brutus's parents, and the prophecy of Brutus's life before going offering a more detailed discussion of Brutus's life after being exiled. Summerfield "Filling the Gap," 90-92; 93-95.

[2] For extended commentary on Geoffrey's opposition to Roman historiography see Caroline D. Eckhardt, "The Presence of Rome in the Middle English Chronicles of the Fourteenth Century," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 90, no. 2 (1991): 187-207, at 194-199 and Kellie Robertson, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 42-57, at 42-47. For further information on the comparisons of Britain and Rome see: Eckhardt, "The Presence of Rome in the Middle English Chronicles of the Fourteenth Century," 194-207; Francis Ingledew, The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae," *Speculum* 69, no. 3 (July 1994): 665-704, at 669-670, 677-678; Karen Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, (2010; repr., Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 8-53; Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 32-46; Robertson, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography," 44-46; Fiona Tolhurst, "The Britons as Hebrews, Romans and Normans: Geoffrey of Monmouth's British Epic and Reflections of Empress

different components that are generated by the claim itself: the act of creating a noble lineage for the Britons that grants them a place on the larger international stage and to establish a degree of legitimacy that is analogous to Rome. The Britons are not alone in claiming to be the descendants of those who survived the Fall of Troy. The most well know example of making this sort of declaration belongs to the Romans, but the Franks, Turks, Normans and even the Saxons made similar claims Trojan descent.[3] Creating such a history was paramount given that "a people without a history was a contradiction in terms; only an unbroken history, preferably from Noah's or even Adam's day, could eventually demonstrate that a people was a people because it had always been a people" and the associations with a civilization as great, or famous as Troy only added to the legitimacy and prestige of said history.[4]

The familial relationships within Brutus's genealogy are not consistent from text to text, but a clear and direct biological link to the Aeneas is.[5] Discussions surrounding the actual lineage of Brutus revolve around the two different genealogical tracts that are presented in the *Historia*

Matilda," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 69-87, at 72-75; Jane Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*: The Ideological Transformation of the *Historia regum Britannie* in Twelfth Century Vernacular Chronicles," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 148-161, at 153-158.

[3] Christian Baier, "Homer's Cultural Children: The Myth of Troy and European Identity," *History & Memory* 29, no 2 (Fall/Winter 2017): 35- 62, at 46; Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History," 675; Karl J. Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages," *Past & Present*, no. 137 (November 1992): 25-47, at 29; Richard. W. Southern, "The Classical Tradition from Einhard to Geoffrey of Monmouth," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 20 (1970):173-196, at 190; Elizabeth M. Tyler, "Trojans in Anglo-Saxon England: Precedent Without Descent," *Review of English Studies* 64, no. 263 (2013): 1-20, at 2-3.

[4] R. R. Davies, "The Peoples of Britain and Ireland, 1100-1400: IV Language and Historical Mythology," 7 (1997): 1-24, at 20. For further commentary on the national use of the Trojan myth in the middle ages see Sylvia Federico, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Medieval Cultures, 2003), pp. ix-xxiv.

[5] Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 41.

Brittonum.[6] The first presents the most commonly known version that connects Brutus to Troy via Aeneas before matrilineally connecting Brutus to Saturn.[7] The second version is Biblically inspired and provides a direct line from Brutus to Jupiter, who is "of the race of Ham" thus linking Brutus to Noah.[8] It is also worth mentioning that the narrator of *Historia Brittonum* goes on to say that he has found another account that extends directly to Adam.[9] The actual lineage of Brutus, and the variation in its recounting, is not all that important, and thus Brutus's lineage is mentioned in passing but it is not discussed in length. The larger significance of Brutus's lineage is what it represents: a claim of nobility and legitimacy, and a direct link to Rome and all the privileges that accompany this association.

---

[6] Robert W. Hanning, The Vision of History in Early Britain from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), pp. 105-106.

[7] *Historia Brittonum: British History and The Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris (London Phillimore, 1980), §10, 19. Hereafter cited as *Historia Brittonum*.

[8] *Historia Brittonum*, §10+,22: "...Iupiter, de genere Cam..." *Historia Brittonum*, §10+,60. This is a supplemental passage that is taken from Theodor Mommsen's edition of the *Historia Brittonum*, Theodor Mommsen, "*Historia Brittonum,*" in *Chronica Minora saec. IV. V. VI. VII*, ed. Theodor Mommsen (Berlin: Monumenta Germaniae Historiaca, Auctores Antiquissimi, 13, 1898), 111-222, at 151. This passage occurs in the following manuscripts of the Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum*: Corpus Christi College, Cambridge 139; The Burney Manuscript 310; Durham Cathedral MS. B. 2. 35; and Cambridge University Library MS. Ff. I. 27; David Dumville, "'Nennius' and the '*Historia Brittonum*'," *Studia Celtica* 10, (1975): 78-95, at 78-79; Mommsen, 151, 112. For further information on the Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum* see: Dumville, "'Nennius' and the '*Historia Brittonum*',". For further information on the importance of having a Biblical heritage see: Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages," 28-30; Anthony D. Smith, "National Identity and Myths of Ethnic Descent," *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 7 (1984): 95-130; Summerfield, "Filling the Gap," 86-87; Tolhurst, "The Britons as Hebrews, Romans, and Normans," 69-72.

[9] *Historia Brittonum*, §, 22. For further commentary on the association of the Trojans as a biblically inspired "chosen people' see: Jeffery Jerome Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), pp. 32-35; David C. Fowler, "Some Biblical Influences on Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historiography," *Traditio* 14 (1958): 378-385, 379-380; Victor J. Scherb, "Assimilating Giants: The Appropriation of Gog and Magog in Medieval and Early Modern England," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32, no. 1 (2002): 59-84, at 61-62, 66.

THE TEXTUAL HISTORY OF THE FOUNDING MYTH OF BRITAIN

Brutus is the primary figure of the founding myth of Britain, but this legend and its central figure have not always been present, or represented that well, within discussions of the founding myth of Britain. This narrative and the figure of Brutus are completely excluded from some of the major works of British historiography like Gildas's *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (*On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain*), Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*Ecclesiastical History of the English People*), William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum Anglorum* (*Deeds of the Kings of the English*), and the various versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. These omissions could have been the result of the authors like Gildas and Bede not knowing the legend of Brutus, but the primary reason for the exclusion of this narrative is that the works in question are focused on Anglo-Saxon, or English, concerns. These authors begin their historical records with Roman Britain, its breakdown, and the arrival of the Germanic peoples who would eventually claim sovereignty over much of the Island of Britain and became "English."

Brutus initially appears in the *Historia Brittonum* which notes that the Britons were the first inhabitants of Britain who are from Brutus. Several different versions of Brutus's genealogy are given but they provide very little information about Brutus's life, most of which is constrained to the events that occur before he is sent into exile. From here, the major events in Brutus's life are listed in a direct, matter of fact type of way that comes across more as a list than a narrative. For instance, Brutus "was driven from Italy, and came to the islands of the Tyrrhene sea, and was driven from Greece…"[10] Henry of Huntington addresses the founding myth of

---

[10] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*et expulsus est ab Italia, et arminilis fuit, et venit ad insulas maris tirreni, et expulsus est a Graecis*" *Historia Brittonum*§10, 60.

Britain in two different books of the *Historia Anglorum*.[11] In the first book, Henry includes a

brief history of how the Britons came to inhabit the island of Britain. This history contains the

Brutus legend starting with his genealogy and ends with his colonization of the island and calling

it "Britain" after his own name.[12] The information presented here is primarily derived from the

Historia Brittonum but Henry expands on the narrative by adding a few details that are borrowed

from Geoffrey of Monmouth.[13]

Geoffrey of Monmouth is the first to provide a narrative to accompany Brutus's lineage,

and to extensively expand on the events of Brutus's life. Geoffrey's account is very detailed and

the overwhelming majority of the first book of the *Historia regum Britanniae* chronicles the

story of Brutus's life and the founding of Britain. Geoffrey's narrative became the foundation

that later authors would build their adaptions on.[14] The *First Variant Version* of the *Historia*

regum Britanniae largely preserves the narrative of Geoffrey's original, albeit in a condensed

manner, that starts to weaken the status of Brutus and his followers through the truncation of

passages and the omission of details.[15] Wace's *Roman de Brut* maintains the narrative

established by Geoffrey, but Wace starts to alter details that present a slightly more favorable

depiction of Brutus, and the Trojans who follow him, especially in martial matters.[16] Layamon's

---

[11] Henry of Huntingdon, Histor*ia Anglorum: The History of the English People,* ed. and trans. Diana Greenway, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997). Hereafter cited as *Historia Anglorum.*

[12] *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 25-27.

[13] *Historia Anglorum*, lxxii; lxxvii-lxxviii; xc-xci; ci-cii.

[14] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain: An Edition and Translation of the De gestis Britonum*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 2009). Hereafter cited as *Historia*.

[15] *The History of the Kings of Britain: The First Variant Version*, ed. and trans. David W. Burchmore (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), x. Hereafter cited as *First Variant Version*.

[16] Wace, *Roman de Brut: A History of the British*, ed and trans. Judith Weiss (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2009), pp. xviii-xxiv. Hereafter cited as *Roman de Brut*. For additional information about Wace's style and textual additions see Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 149-155.

Brut follows Wace's lead, both by building off of its predecessors (Wace and Geoffrey) and by tweaking the narrative to augment Brutus's legacy while ramping up the religious rhetoric, misogyny, and violence.[17] The *Brut y Brenhinedd* of the Cotton Cleopatra B.v. manuscript and the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* break the trend of expanding on the Brutus legend.[18] These texts are still derivative of Geoffrey and Wace, but they omit and truncate different parts of Brutus's narrative.[19] Despite the similarities of their style and the types of alterations made to the narrative, the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* and the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* are largely in opposition. The former will amend details to provide the most favorable account of Brutus and the earliest Britons whereas the latter is notably less flattering.

The textual corpus of the founding myth of Britain consists of two primary groups: those that stem from the *Historia Brittonum* and those that derive from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Brittanie.* Granted, Geoffrey's *Historia* owes its narrative structure to the *Historia Brittonum* but Geoffrey reworks and expands on his predecessor to the point that Geoffrey's text becomes a new cornerstone on which others will build .[20] The smaller, and

---

[17] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 202-212. Layamon, *Brut*, ed, and trans. Rosamund Allen, (London: Everyman's Library, 1993). Hereafter cited as Layamon.

[18] *Brut y Brenhinedd: Cotton Cleopatra Version*, ed. and trans. John J. Parry (Cambridge MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1937), x. Hereafter cited as *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*; *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle*, ed. and trans. Julia Marvin, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 40-41; 57. Hereafter cited as *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*.

[19] For further information on the characteristics of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* see: *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, xii-xviii; Timothy J. Nelson, "Welsh Manipulations of the Matter of Britain," master's thesis, University of Arkansas, 2014); Brynley F. Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd Ynys Brydeyn*: A Fourteenth-Century Welsh Brut," in *Narrative in Celtic Tradition: Essays in Honor of Edgar M. Slotkin* (CSANA Yearbook, 8-9), ed. Joseph F. Eska (Hamilton, NY: Colgate University Press, 2011), pp. 215-227, at 221-227. For further information on the stylistic features of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* see: Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 24-32; *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* 5-15.

[20] For further commentary on Geoffrey's actual source material see: Michael A. Faletra, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, translated and edited by Michael A. Faletra (Peterborough: Broadview, 2008), pp. 14-21; Acton Griscom, "The "Book of Basingwerk" and the Ms. Cotton

earlier, group is comprised of the *Historia Brittonum* and the first book of Henry of

Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*. Both texts are historical in nature and are concerned with

presenting a record of Britain's past that is generally favorable to the Britons. Britain's early

history is briefly mentioned in passing as both authors are more interested in more recent events

like the arrival of the Germanic peoples who would come to call themselves "English." For these

texts, the founding myth of Britain is used to explain who the earliest Britons were, and how they

came to inhabit the island of Britain. Brutus receives individualized attention for his role in

leading the Britons to their new home and as the king whose Trojan nobility is used to elevate

the standing of the Britons to such a height that only adds to the prestige that can be obtained by

subjugating them.

The second group consists of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Brittanie*, Henry

of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin the Breton* in Book Eight of the *Historia Anglorum*, Wace's

Roman de Brut, Layamon's *Brut*, *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, and the *Brut y*

Brenhinedd from the Cotton Cleopatra B.v manuscript. The Galfridian group is also more

successive than its counterpart in that Layamon's *Brut* is largely based on the *Roman de Brut*,

which is primarily derived from the *First Variant Version* of the *Historia regum Britanniae*

which is, just as it sounds, a variant version of Geoffrey's *Historia*. The *Oldest Anglo-Norman*

Prose Brut and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* are slight deviations from this progression. Wace's

---

Cleopatra B.V.," *Y Cymmrodor* 35 (1925): 49-116, at 49; Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 13-21; Thomas Jones, "Historical Writing in Medieval Welsh," *Scottish Studies* 12 (1968): 15-27, at 16; Brynley F. Roberts, "Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae* and *Brut y Brenhinedd*," in *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature*, ed. Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman, and Brynley F. Roberts (1991; repr., Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 97-116, at pp. 97-113; Brynley F. Roberts, ed., *Brut y Brenhinedd: Llanstephan MS. 1 Version* (1971; repr., Dublin: The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1984), pp. xv-xx.

Roman de Brut is the primary source utilized by the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, which
also incorporates material that is extracted from Geoffrey's *Historia* and Henry of Huntingdon's
Historia Anglorum.[21] The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* is mainly derived from Geoffrey's *Historia*, but
it also incorporates material from earlier Welsh traditions and contains episodes "that can be
paralleled elsewhere, including in Wace and Layamon, but not closely enough to suggest an
immediate source."[22]

In his *Historia*, Geoffrey produces a history of the kings of Britain from Brutus, Britain's
eponymous founder, to Caduallo's son Cadualadrus. This vast majority of this history is
fabricated by Geoffrey and is designed to fill a historical gap that is alluded to the *Historia*'s
Prologue when Geoffrey remarks that

> While my mind was often pondering many things in many ways, my thoughts
> turned to the history of the kings of Britain, and I was surprised that, among the
> references to the fine works of Gildas and Bede, I had found nothing concerning
> the kings who lived here before Christ's Incarnation, and nothing about Arthur
> and the many others who succeeded after it, even though their deeds were worthy
> of eternal praise and are proclaimed by many people as if they had been
> entertainingly and memorably written down.[23]

Geoffrey's political leanings are debatable given that he is pandering to several different
audiences but in the foundation myth of Britain, Geoffrey aims to establish a history for the
earliest Britons that grants them a noble, legitimate, and lengthy presence on the stage of global

---

[21] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 20.

[22] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, xiv; Brynley F. Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd Ynys Brydeyn*," 224.

[23] *Historia*, Prologue.1.1-7: "*Cum mecum multa et de multis saepius animo reuoluens in hystoriam regum Britanniae inciderem, in mirum contuli quod infra mentionem quam de eis Gildas et Beda luculento tractatu fecerant nichil de regibus qui ante incarnationem Christi inhabitauerant, nichil etiam de Arturo ceterisque compluribus qui post incarnationem successerunt reperissem, cum et gesta eorum Digna aeternitate laudis constarent a multis populis quasi inscripta iocunde et memoriter praedicentur.*"

history.[24] Geoffrey's narrative is incorporated into Book Eight of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* by means of a letter that was written to Warin the Breton. In this letter Henry "sets out to give some brief excerpts from the *H[istoria] R[egum] B[ritanniae]*" that "combines extensive omissions with large additions" to Geoffrey's narrative.[25]

The *First Variant Version* is an abridgement of Geoffrey's *Historia* produced between 1138 and 1155.[26] However, the *First Variant Version* "does not abbreviate its source slavishly, but often recasts the *Historia* freely in a manner quite different from that of Geoffrey himself."[27] The prefaces of Geoffrey's *Historia* and the *Prophetie Merlini* (Prophecies of Merlin) are omitted as are "most personal details, self-references, and statements of intention by the author; a considerable number of other, often rhetorical passages – chiefly speeches, descriptions, or emotive episodes."[28] These omissions produce a more coherent narrative structure that occasionally adds "fuller speeches, a more pious tone, an interest in pagan rites and some details

---

[24] For discussions concerning Geoffrey's political allegiances see: John Gillingham, "The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*," in *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity, and Political Values* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000), pp. 19-40; Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 4-12; Michael A. Faletra, "Narrating the Matter of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Norman Colonization of Wales," *The Chaucer Review* 35, no. 1 (2000): 60-85; J. P. S. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions* (1950; repr., New York: Gordian Press, 1994), pp. 396-402, and 422-432; Roberts, *Llanstephan Ms. 1 Version*, pp. ix-xi, xxiii-xxiv.

[25] *Historia Anglorum*, ci, cii. Greenway notes that "Generally Henry takes the material in the same order as the *HRB*, but he abbreviates drastically, omitting whole chapters– he quotes from or uses only about half the chapters of the *HRB*. He jumps from chapter to chapter, taking in two or three chapters in a single sentence" *Historia Anglorum*, ci. For more information on Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* see Neil Wright, "The Place of Henry of Huntingdon's *Epistola ad Warinum* in the Text-History of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*: A Preliminary Investigation," in *France and the British Isles in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Essays by Members of Girton College, Cambridge, in Memory of Ruth Morgan*, edited by Gillian Jondorf and David. N. Dumville, (Woodbridge, 1991), pp. 71-113.

[26] Wright, *First Variant Version*, lxxvii.

[27] Wright, *First Variant Version*, viii.

[28] Wright, *First Variant Version*, liii-liv.

from legendary Roman history."[29] Moreover, historical material that "tries to some extent to reconcile the vulgate account with other historical works" is also added by the adaptor of the *First Variant Version*. [30]

Wace is writing "for a Norman public which had a strong interest in the history and legends of their adopted country" which results in a generally favorable depiction of events as a way to praise the Normans who had obtained sovereignty over most of the Isle of Britain.[31] The *Roman de Brut* is primarily based on the *First Variant Version* of Geoffrey's *Historia* which "mostly made omissions but occasionally it added fuller speeches, a more pious tone, and interest in pagan rites, some details from legendary Roman history."[32] The stylistic characteristics of the *First Variant Version* are largely preserved by Wace who also adds details to reflect his interests in entertainment and human emotion.[33] The *Roman de Brut* provides the foundation for Layamon's *Brut*. Like Wace, Layamon is concerned with humanity but he directs his focus on people and the relationships between rulers and their subjects and how the authority of the former is derived from the approval of the latter.[34] Layamon follows his predecessors by embellishing parts of the narrative to reflect his own concerns and biases which are expressed in speeches and new episodes that renders the *Brut* "more emphatic, explicit and solemn than Wace's" *Roman de Brut*.[35] It is also worth noting that Layamon is a distinctively English author

---

[29] *Roman de Brut*, xviii; Wright, *First Variant Version*, xvi-lxxvi.

[30] Wright, *First Variant Version*, lxxi-lxxii.

[31] *Roman de Brut*, xiii.

[32] *Roman de Brut,* xiii. For further information on the First Variant Version of the *Historia regum Britanniae* see Neil Wright, *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth II: The First Variant Version*, (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988), pp. xi-cxiv.

[33] *Roman de Brut,* xx, xxii-xxiii.

[34] Layamon*,* xxvii-xxviii.

[35] Layamon*,* xxxii. For further information regarding Layamon's changes to Wace's text see Francoise Le Saux, *Layamon's Brut: The Poem and its Sources*, (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989), pp. 24-58.

who is catering to an English audience in their own language.[36] This pro-English bias is so strong that Francoise La Saux has stated that "Laȝamon's *Brut* reads as an attempt to create a new foundation myth that would give his countrymen both moral justification and the incentive to survive."[37]

The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* follows Layamon's example in using Wace's *Roman de Brut* for the majority of its source material. However, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s "main editorial tendency (as elsewhere) is abridgement, achieved primarily by the omission of the detailed accounts of battle of which Wace is so fond."[38] This abridgement is more than a stylistic convention that is modeled off of other historical texts to present a more straightforward and thus plausible account of events, it is an intentional editorial decision. For instance, there is a significant removal of Trojan aspects to create a larger dissociation from Rome.[39] Furthermore, it rationalizes the magical and sexual whenever possible and "celebrates homely virtues while eliminating exactly those elements often thought to have been most appealing to contemporary audiences – the individually heroic, the marvelous, the glamorous, and the erotic."[40] The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* is an Anglo centric text with a firm, English perspective.[41]

Meanwhile, the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* is unequivocally pro-Welsh and reflects the Welsh acceptance of "Geoffrey's history as the basis and proof of their national pride and superiority,"

---

[36] For further information on Layamon's English background and its influence on the *Brut* see La Saux, *Layamon's Brut: The Poem and Its Sources*, 184-227.
[37] La Saux, *Layamon's Brut: The Poem and Its Sources*, 230.
[38] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 21.
[39] Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 54-55.
[40] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 14, 15.
[41] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 12-13.

and ultimately shows the Britons to be an honorable race.[42] It is written in a more historical in style that truncates the authorial asides, extended speeches and letters that are present in Geoffrey's *Historia* and its later adaptations. Material that details martial strategy and combat is glossed over in addition to anything that can be considered superfluous or contradictory to the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut's* pro-Welsh sentiments. Material from a variety of sources is added to the narrative, but these additions are subject to the same type of truncation and glossing as the Galfridian material.[43]

Examining how Brutus and the role he plays in the founding myth of Britain are altered over time will provide greater insight into the development of the narrative as a whole and the separate agendas of the authors who are adapting this myth. Moreover, this study will reveal how vital the founding myth of Britain, and the appropriation of it, is to uniting all those who inhabit Britain as being "British." The analysis itself will focus on the modification of Brutus's character and the way he conducts himself in various roles. The narrative changes will be presented in chronological order in relation to the type of alteration being made to show how the narrative develops over time and to provide more insights into the textual relationships of the founding myth of Britain.

GENEAOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTIONS

It is rather fitting to start the discussion of Brutus with his lineage. Even though his family tree has been reshaped over time, the one constant is that Brutus is a direct descendant of

---

[42] *Brut y Brenhinedd: Llanstephan MS. 1 Version*, 62.

[43] For further information surrounding the textual variations of the Cotton Cleopatra *Brut y Brenhinedd* see: Timothy J. Nelson, "Welsh Manipulations of the Matter of Britain," master's thesis, University of Arkansas, 2014); John J. Parry, "The Welsh Texts of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*," *Speculum* 5, no. 4 (1930): 424-431, at 425; *Cotton Cleopatra Brut,*, xii-xviii; Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd Ynys Brydeyn*, 221-227.

Aeneas. This lineage established two primary goals for the Britons who claim kinship to Brutus: stating a direct relationship to Aeneas gives Brutus a cultural tie to the Trojans whom he liberates from Greek captivity, aiding his rise to prominence as their leader and eventual king. Secondly, explicitly naming Aeneas as a forefather extends some degree of nobility and prestige to Brutus and by extension, the other Britons. The *Historia Brittonum* aims to provide a historical record of how Britain become populated to more fully complete its description of the Island of Britain. After starting this description with the claim that "[t]he island of Britain is so called from one Brutus, a Roman consul," it is only logical that the *Historia Brittonum* would eventually explain who Brutus is and how he came to Britain.[44] The *Historia Brittonum* acknowledges the existence of two different versions of Brutus's lineage.[45] The inclusion of both accounts not only helps to strengthen the veracity of the *Historia Brittonum* as a historical text, but it also presents a more compelling claim for the actual exitance of Brutus. Presenting different versions of Brutus's lineage also allow for a more complete picture of Brutus that will be used to situate his historical prominence.

The first version of Brutus's genealogy is legendary in nature and is claimed to have come from "the Annals of the Romans" whereas the second version is Biblically orientated and comes from "the old books of our elders."[46] The first, Roman version claims that

> after the Trojan War Aeneas came to Italy with his son Ascanius, defeated Turnus and married Lavinia, daughter of Latinus, son of Faunus, son of Picus, son of Saturn; and after Latinus' death he acquired the kingdom of the Romans and the Latins. Aeneas founded Alba, and then married a wife, who bore him a son named

---

[44] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*In annalibus autem Romanorum sic scriptum est*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[45] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "If anyone wants to know when this island was inhabited after the Flood, I find two alternative explanations." "*Si quis scire voluerit quo tempore post diluvium habitata est haec insula, hoc experiment bifarie inventi*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[46] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*annalibus autem Romanorum*" §10,60, *Historia Brittonum*, §17, 22: "…*ex veteribus libris veterum nostrorum*" *Historia Brittonum*, §17, 63.

Silvius. Silvius married a wife, who became pregnant…and the boy was reared, and named Britto [Brutus].[47]

Aside from being the template for others, this account of Brutus's lineage is particularly important since it bestows a nobility from the gods themselves to Brutus from his maternal line in addition those derived from his paternal line. Having two separate and distinctive claims to divinity and nobility elevates the Brutus and the attendant prestige of his descendants and/or his subjects. It is worth noting that this version of Brutus's lineage is especially Roman in that it traces his maternal and Roman heritage back to Saturn. Simply starting the paternal line with Aeneas presumes some degree of audience familiarity with Aeneas's family tree, and emphases the unbroken Roman line of Brutus's heritage while simultaneously downplaying the Trojan associations that acquired "the kingdom of the Romans and Latins" through marriage and succession.[48] It is worth noting that the actual genealogy and subsequent prestige of Brutus's maternal line is somewhat in doubt given the statement that "Aeneas founded Alba, and then married a wife," who is Brutus's grandmother.[49] It is implied that this woman is the Lavinia that Aeneas was already noted to have married but the fact that this wife is unnamed allows for the possibility of Aeneas taking another wife who is Brutus's grandmother. Even if Aeneas took another wife after Lavinia, Brutus is in direct line for the Romano-Latin throne as Aeneas's direct grandson. Aeneas's marrying into the existing Romano-Latin nobility would likely result

---

[47] *Historia Brittonum,* §10, 19: "*Aeneas post Troianum bellum cum Ascanio filio suo venit ad Italiam et, superato Turno, accepit Laviniam, filiam Latini, filii Fauni, filii Saturni, in coniugium et, post mortem Latini, regnum obitnuit Romanorum vel Latinorum. Aeneas autem Albam condidit et postea uxorem duxit, et peperit ei filium nomine Silvium. Silvius autem duxit uxorem, et gravida fuit…et nutritus est filius, et vocatum est nomen eius Britto*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[48] *Historia Brittonum*, §10 19: "*regnum obitnuit Romanorum vel Latinorum*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10 60.

[49] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*Aeneas autem Albam condidit et postea uxorem duxit, et peperit ei filium nomine Silvium*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

in the offspring of that union creating the new royal line of succession that would exclude

Ascanius on the grounds that he is the son of an earlier, Trojan, and thus not Romano-Latin

mother.

The Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum* contains yet another alternative version

of Brutus's lineage that is primarily concerned with tracing the Brutus's paternal line, albeit in

less than favorable terms. According to this account:

> +This is the genealogy of that Brutus the Hateful, who has never been traced to
> us, when the Irish, who do not know their (?) origin, wished to be under him (?)
> This is how our noble elder Cuanu gathered the genealogy of the British from the
> Chronicles of the Romans. + Brutus was the son of Silvius, son of Ascanius, son
> of Aeneas, son of Anchises, son of Capen, son of Assaracus, son of Tros, son of
> Erectonius, son of Dardanus, son of Jupiter, of the race of Ham, the accursed son
> who saw his father Noah and mocked him. Tros had two sons, Ilius and
> Assaracus. Ilius first founded the city of Ilium, that is Troy, and begot Lamedon,
> who was the father of Priam. But Assaracus begot Capen, who was the father of
> Anchises. Anchises begot Aeneas, who was the father of Ascanius.+[50]

Referring to Brutus as "the hateful" and linking him to "the race of Ham, the accursed son" who

mocked his father does not do Brutus any favors and these references cast a shadow over his

legacy, no matter how noble his genealogy is.[51] Aside from tracing more of Brutus's family tree

---

[50] *Historia Brittonum*, §10+,19: "*Haec est genealogia istius Bruti exosi, nunquam ad se, nos id est Britones, ducti, quadoque volebant scotti, nescientes originis sui, ad istum dormari. Brutus vero fuit filius Silvii f. Aschanii f. enee f. Anchise f. Capen f. Asaraci f. Tros f. Erectonii f. Dardani filii Iupiter, de genere Cam filii maledicti videntis et ridentis patrem Noe. Tros vero duos filios habuit, Hiliu Asaracumque. Hilius condidit Hilium civitatem, id est Troiam, primp, genuitque Lamedon. Pise est pater Priami. Asaracus autem genuit Capen. Ipse est pater Anchise. Anchises genuit Eneam. Ipse Eneas pater Ascanii*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10+,60. This alternative genealogy accompanies the Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum*. As per the Introductory note of Morris's edition of the *Historia Brittonum*, textual supplements enclosed within the + symbols are taken from Mommsen's editions (*Chronica Minora*). Unless otherwise stated, the + enclosed textual supplements from Mommsen's edition are taken from the Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum*.

[51] *Historia Brittonum*, §10+, 19: "*Bruti exosi*", "*de genere Cam filii maledicti*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10+, 60. Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth* posits that "Brutus's epithet, 'hateful', may well derive from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* (early seventh century), which suggested that the British were so called because they were 'brutes' (Bk ix.2)," 39.

and firmly situating his partial divinity and claims to Trojan nobility, this version adds Biblical components which serve to satisfy the desires to demonstrate an even longer history of existence and a link to Noah himself. This genealogy, despite some of the negative connotations, achieves many of the same goals for Brutus that the initial, maternal genealogy does in terms of creating a divinity and nobility that will be used to augment the prestige of Brutus himself, and that of his followers. The key difference in this genealogy is the change in Brutus's connection to Aeneas. In this account, Aeneas is another generation removed from Brutus who is now the grandson of Ascanius. This alteration allows for Brutus to retain his Trojan nobility in addition to creating a natural division from Aeneas that allows Brutus to leave and form his own kingdom without disrupting the Roman line of succession that would likely stem from Aeneas and Lavinia.

The second explanation of Brutus and his heritage is both British and Biblically inspired. Robert W. Hanning notes that "the aim of this improbable series of genealogies is simply to emphasize the relationship among all men and connect them all to God."[52] Tracing the Biblical lineage of the Brutus also allows the *Historia Brittonum* to reinforce the legitimacy of the Britons, and their history, by linking them "not only to the Romans but to the founding ancestors of several other post-Roman European peoples."[53] This explanation for Brutus's genealogy was found "in the old books of our [British] elders" and starts with the tripartite division of the world between Noah's sons after the Flood.[54] This alternative explanation goes on to provide the Biblical lineage for several of the more prominent European peoples who belong to the lines of Japheth's sons. As it relates to Brutus's lineage:

---

[52] Hanning, *The Vision of History*, 106.
[53] Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 40.
[54] *Historia Brittonum*, §17, 22: "...ex veteribus libris veterum nostrorum" *Historia Brittonum*, §17, 63. Sem claims Asia, Ham claims Africa, and Japheth claims Europe, *Historia Brittonum*, §17, 22.

43

> The first man who came to Europe was Alanus, of the race of Japheth, with his
> three sons, whose names are Hessitio, Armenon, and Negue. Hessitio had four
> sons, Francus, Romans, Britto, and Albanus…From Hessitio derive four peoples,
> the Franks, the Latins, the Albans, and the British… Alanus is said to have been
> the son of Ferebir, son of Ougomun, son of Thous, son of Boib, son of Simeon,
> son of Mari, son of +Ethach, son of+Aurthach, son of +Ecthet, son of+ Oth, son
> of Abir, son of Rhea, son of Ezra, son of Izaru, son of Baath, son of Iobaath, son
> of Javan, son of Japheth, son of Noah, son of Lamech, son of Methuselah, son of
> Enoch, son of Jared, son of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan, son of Enos, son of Seth,
> son of Adam, son of the Living God. This learning I found in the tradition of our
> elders.[55]

From here, The *Historia Brittonum* provides the lineage of the British, who are from Brutus who

is directly linked back to Japheth, son of Noah:

> The first inhabitants of Britain were the British, from Brutus. Brutus was the son
> of Hessitio, Hessitio of Alanus. Alanus was the son of Rhea Silvia, daughter of
> Numa Pompilius, son of Ascanius, Ascanius was the son of Aeneas, son of
> Anchises, son of Trous, son of Dardanus, son of Elishah, son of Javan, son of
> Japheth.[56]

The first version is strictly Biblical in nature and is accompanied by all of the prestige,

legitimacy, and authority that comes with such an association.[57] Karen Jankulak notes that this

version "is unique in providing a greatly expanded context for this text, drawing in not only the

---

[55] *Historia Brittonum*, §17, 22: "*Primus homo venit ad Europam de genere Jafeth Alanus cum
tribus filiis suis, quorum nomina sunt Hessitio, Armeno, Negue. Hessitio autem habuit filios
quattor: hi sunt Francus, Romanus, Britto, Albanus… Ab Hisitione autem orate sunt quattuor
gentes: franci, Latini, Albani et Britti…Alanus autem, ut aiunt, filius fuit Fetebir, filii Ougomun,
filii Thoi, filii Boib, filii Simeon, filii Mair, filii + Ethach, filii. + Aurthach, filii + Ecthet, filii. +
Oth, filii Abir, filii Rea, filii Ezra, filii Izrau, filii Baath, filii Iobaath, filii Jovan, filii Jafeth, filii
Noe, filii Lamech, filii Matusalem, filii Enoch, filii jareth, filii Malaleel, filii caiman, filii Enos,
filii Seth, filii Adam, filii Dei vivi. Hanc peritiam inveni ex traditione veterum" Historia
Brittonum*, §17, 63.

[56] *Historia Brittonum*, §18, 22: "*Qui incolae in primo fuerunt Brittanniae. Brittones a Bruto.
Brutus filius Hisitionis, Histion Alanei; Alaneus filius Reae Silviae; Rea Silvia filia Numae
Pampilii, filii Ascanii; Ascanius filius Aeneae, filii Anchisae, filii Troi, filii Dardani, filii Flise,
filii Juvani, filii Jafeth." Historia Brittonum*, §18, 63.

[57] For further information on the importance of having a Biblical heritage see: Leyser, "Concepts
of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages," 28-30; Smith, "National Identity and the Myth of
Ethnic Descent"; Summerfield, "Filling the Gap," 86-87; Tolhurst, "The Britons as Hebrews,
Romans, and Normans," 69-72;

Trojans but also the sons of Noah."[58] Seamlessly incorporating the members of Brutus's family

who are associated with Classical legend like Ascanius, Aeneas, Trous, and Dardanius, into the

Biblical genealogy enhances the credibility of Brutus's noble pedigree by allowing him to

maintain his mythical heritage. The plausibility of this integration is aided by the removal of any

pagan deities from Brutus's lineage. Like the other Biblically inspired genealogy presented in the

Historia Brittonum, this alternative explanation connects Brutus to Aeneas through Ascanius.

This account also diminishes Brutus's Trojan ancestry by having five generations separating

Brutus from Aeneas as opposed to the one generation of the first genealogy and the two

generations from the second.

All of these accounts of Brutus's genealogy, Biblical or mythical, help to establish Brutus

and the Britons as a people with a longstanding, legitimate, and noble history that is comparable

to that of the Romans at minimum. Recording these genealogies in the *Historia Brittonum*

augments the prestige that comes with such a venerable lineage for Brutus since it allows the

Britons to actually trace their history as far as they can, as opposed to just claiming to be the

descendants of prominent figures. Moreover, the inclusion of the multiple accounts of Brutus's

lineage seems to be an intentional decision since these separate versions largely corroborate one

another which not only assists the credibility of the narrative as a whole but also that of the

Historia Brittonum as a legitimate historical texts that relies on multiple sources to create its

history.

In the *Historia regum Britanniae*, Geoffrey of Monmouth presents a genealogy for

Brutus that appears to be modeled on the genealogy of "Brutus the Hateful" that is found in the

---

[58] Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 40.

Historia Brittonum which also makes Brutus the grandson of Ascanius.[59] Geoffrey's version

contains more details concerning Brutus's mother and this Galfridian version will become the

template for the other versions of Brutus's lineage within the founding myth of Britain. In

Geoffrey's account Ascanius has a son named Silvius who "married a niece of Lavinia [Aeneas's

Latin wife] and made her pregnant…When the day of his birth came, the woman had the child,

and died while giving birth; the boy was entrusted to the midwife and given the name Brutus."[60]

The *First Variant Version*, Wace's *Roman de Brut*, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, and

the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* follow the Galfridian model by noting that Brutus's parents are

Ascanius's son Silvius, and Lavinia's niece.[61] In keeping with his penchant for marginalizing

feminine characters, Layamon slightly diminishes the prominence of Brutus's mother by saying

that she is "Lavinia's relative" as opposed to being Lavinia's niece.[62] In addition to creating a

possible complication within the chain of succession, this maternal nobility increases Brutus's

prestige by having clear claims to nobility from both of his parents. Moreover, Brutus's maternal

nobility connects him to the same royal line that would give rise to Rome, thus placing the

---

[59] Geoffrey of Monmouth and his successors remove the "hateful" epitaph. Summerfield, "Filling the Gaps," 93-95 briefly discuss how Brutus's actions transform him from being hated to being beloved. This transformation will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter.
[60] *Historia*, i.6.54-55 "*nupsit cuidam nepti Lauiniae eamque fecit praegnantem.*"; *Historia,* i.6.60-61: "*Nam ut dies partus accessit, edidit mulier puerum et in natiuitate eius mortua est; traditur autem ille obstetrici et uocatur Brutus.*"
[61] *First Variant Version*, i.6.4-5; *Roman de Brut*, 5; *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75; *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 6.
[62] Layamon*,* l. 131, "þeo was Lauine mawe." Layamon's Middle English is reproduced from the Caligula A.ix manuscript of Laȝamon, *Brut*, ed. G.L. Brook and R.F. Leslie, *Layamon: Brut. Edited from British Museum MS Cotton Caligula A ix and British Museum MS Otho C xiii*, vol 1., London, 1963, l. 131. Hereafter cited as *Brut*. For further information on Layamon's treatment of female figure see Tolhurst, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship*, 203-212 and 220-229.

Britons and Romans on more equal footing which will aid British claims to legitimacy and

status.

Even though he does not provide any details about Brutus's mother, Henry of

Huntingdon's version of Brutus's genealogy is initially derived from the *Historia Brittonum*, but

it is also influenced by Geoffrey of Monmouth over time. In the first book of the *Historia*

Anglorum Henry states that:

> What is not to be found in Bede I have learned from other authors.[63] They have
> written that the Britons descended originally from Dardanus. Now Dardanus was
> the father of Troius, who was the father of Priam and Anchises; and Anchises was
> the father of Aeneas, who was the father of Ascanius, who was the father of
> Silvius. When Silvius* had married and his wife had become pregnant…and
> when the son was born, he was named Bruto [Brutus].[64]

The loss of maternal nobility is partially diminished by overtly tracing Brutus's paternal ancestry

back to Dardanus which reinforces his Trojan nobility. In his *Letter to Warin the Breton*, Henry

of Huntingdon presents a very simplified version of Brutus's genealogy that simply states that

"Aeneas, the founder of the Roman race, fathered Ascanius. Ascanius fathered Silvius, and

Silvius Brutus."[65] Even in such a simplified style, this genealogy still provides Brutus with all of

the benefits that come from a direct line of descent to Aeneas. This particular account increases

---

[63] Diana Greenway notes that Henry is using the Vatican recension of the *Historia Brittonum* as
his non-Bedan source material, *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 25 n. 8.

[64] *Historia Anglorum* i.9, 25-27: "*Quod in Beda non inuentum in aliis auctoribus repperi.
Scripserunt enim a Dardano principium emanasse Britonum. Dardanus namque pater fuit troii,
Troius pater Priami et Anchise, Anchises pater Enee, Eneas pater Ascanii, Ascanius pater Siluii.
Siluius autem cum uxorem duxisset et pregnans esset, predixit magus quidam filium unde
pregnans erat interfecturum patrem suum. Occiso igitur mago pro uaticinatione illa, natus est
filius et uocatus est Bruto.*" Greenway also notes that in the Vatican recension of the *Historia
Brittonum* that Henry of Huntingdon is using, "the father of Bruto is Ascanius, which is the
reading in the first three versions of the *H*[*istoria*] *A*[*nglorum*]. The insertion in the fourth and
subsequent versions of Silvius as father of Bruto, making Ascanius the grandfather, doubtless
depends on *H*[*istoria*] *R*[*egum*] *B*[*ritanniae*]," *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, p. 25 n. 40.

[65] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*Eneas igitur Romani generis auctor genuit Ascanium.
Ascanius genuit Siluium, Siluius Brutum,*"

the prestige of Brutus's connection to Aeneas by naming his as "the founder of the Roman race" which, again, extends the same type of credibility and prominence to the Britons that is enjoyed by the Romans by creating a genealogical link to the same founding father.

COMPLICATING CONCEPTION

Brutus's genealogical significance is preserved in the narratives of the founding myth of Britain but complications to his legacy begin with the events surrounding his conception. The *Historia Brittonum* and the *Historia Anglorum* present simple and direct accounts that do not contain any information that negatively influences Brutus's legacy. The only version of Brutus's genealogy that contains any reference to his mother within the *Historia Brittonum* simply states that "Aeneas founded Alba, and then married a wife, who bore him a son named Silvius. Silvius married a wife, who became pregnant…and the boy was reared, and named Britto [Brutus]."[66] The most interesting thing about this account is that it is the one genealogy where Aeneas is Brutus's biological grandfather which strengthens the connection between the two by placing Brutus one generation closer to his mythical forefather. The other versions that exclude Brutus's mother note that Brutus is the son of Silvius, alternatively Hessitio, and continue to trace the family tree by repeating the phrase "son of" to connect generations.[67] Despite the later influence of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Book 1 of the *Historia Anglorum* preserves the direct version of Brutus's descent from the *Historia Brittonum* that does not contain any additional details about Brutus's mother aside from her being the wife of Silvius.[68]

---

[66] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: *Aeneas autem Albam condidit et postea uxorem duxit, et peperit ei filium nomine Silvium. Silvius autem duxit uxorem, et gravida fuit…et nutritus est filius, et vocatum est nomen eius Britto*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[67] *Historia Brittonum*, §10+,19, §17, 22, §18, 22; "*filii*" *Historia Brittonum*, §18, 63.

[68] *Historia Anglorum* i.9, 27.

The accounts of Brutus's conception that stem from the Galfridian tradition are noticeably more detailed, and these details create complications for Brutus's legacy.[69] Geoffrey's expansions provide more information about Brutus's parentage that augments Brutus's nobility by creating a claim to Latin nobility in addition to his legendary Trojan pedigree. According to Geoffrey's *Historia*, Ascanius's son Silvius "indulg[ed] a secret passion, married a niece of Lavinia and made her pregnant."[70] A slight shadow is cast over Brutus's conception due to the passion that lead to his parents' marriage was a secret passion that was indulged. Granted, it very well could have been that Silvius simply did not openly reveal his feelings for his eventual wife but the phrasing "indulging a secret passion" suggests that this was a passion that would not have been approved of which lead to its secretive nature.[71] The revelation that Brutus's mother was a "niece of Lavinia" is a possible explanation as to why their relationship might not have been approved of.[72] The fact that Brutus's parents were married prior to his conception prevents Brutus from being a bastard and thus legitimizes him. This observation is rather obvious, but it comes with added political implications given the nobility of Brutus's mother as a niece of Queen Lavinia.

In his *Letter to Warin*, Henry of Huntingdon is mainly concerned with reporting new information that is obtained from Geoffrey's *Historia* and this preoccupation explains the incredibly abbreviated account of Brutus's lineage that simply states that "Aeneas, the founder of the Roman race, fathered Ascanius. Ascanius fathered Silvius, and Silvius Brutus."[73] In stripping

---

[69] Summerfield, "Filling the Gaps," 93.

[70] *Historia*, 1.6.54-55: "*Hic, furtiuae ueneri indulgens, nupsit cuidam nepti.*"; Summerfield, "Filling the Gaps," 93.

[71] *Historia*, i.6.54: "*furtiuae ueneri indulgens*"

[72] *Historia,* i.6.54-55: "*nepti Lauiniae*"

[73] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*Eneas igitur Romani generis auctor genuit Ascanium. Ascanius genuit Siluium, Siluius Brutum,*"

away the Galfridian additions from Brutus's heritage, Henry undermines the prestige of Brutus which is in keeping with Henry's pro-English sentiments. Granted, the potential negative connotations surrounding Brutus's conception are removed by excluding the Galfridian additions of secret passion of Brutus's parents, but these omissions create new issues that continue to diminish Brutus's royal status. Removing Brutus's mother, and her connections to Lavinia, from the narrative eliminates Brutus's claims to Latin nobility.

The *First Variant Version* follows its predecessor by claiming that "[t]his boy [Silvius], indulging a secret passion, had married a certain niece of Lavinia, and made her pregnant."[74] Wace's *Roman de Brut* also takes its cue from Geoffrey's *Historia* but the nature of the relationship between Brutus's parents is complicated in such a way that could delegitimize Brutus. The Galfridian theme of domestic treachery frequently causing national disaster is incorporated and improved upon in the *Roman de Brut* and can be seen is the events surrounding Brutus's conception.[75] According to Wace "Ascanius had a son also called Silvius; he bore his uncle's name but lived and lasted only a short while. He secretly loved a girl, Lavinia's niece, lay with her and she conceived…her son was safely delivered and given the name of Brutus."[76] The basic details of Brutus's conceptions as established by Geoffrey are preserved. However, the removal of Silvius's marriage to Lavinia's niece reinforces the notion that such a union would not have been permissible. These small alterations to Brutus's conceptions suggest that Silvius is actually the one who is responsible the greatest degree of domestic treachery that could cause

---

[74] *First Variant Version*, i.6.5: "*Hic furtivae indulgens veneri, nupserat cuidam nepti Laviniae eamque fecerat praegnantem.*"

[75] *Roman de Brut*, xix.

[76] *Roman de Brut*, 5.

national disaster. His actions create complications within the royal family, and it is his tragic

death at the hands of his own son, that cause Brutus to be exiled by his own family.

The events surrounding Brutus's conception help to reveal Layamon's traditional and

misogynist stance on gender roles and his "tendency to judge his characters more harshly than

either Geoffrey or Wace."[77] This judgmental inclination continues to diminish Brutus's

prominence by altering details about Brutus's mother and her relationship with Silvius. Layamon

follows the established precedent of a secretive relationship between Brutus's parents by stating

that

> Just the one son had Ascanius who was also known as Silvius; …
> When this child was grown handsome he fell in love with a girl:
> She was Lavinia's relative – most covertly he loved her -;
> Things turned out there just as almost everywhere:
> That this same young woman was expecting a baby…
> They gave the child the name Brutus…[78]

Layamon's habit of marginalizing feminine characters results in a further obscuring of the exact

relationship between Brutus's mother and Lavinia.[79] The increased ambiguity surrounding

Brutus's mother still suggests that a relationship between her and Silvius was not permissible

which in turn lead to his covert love for her. The veiled matrilineal connection to Lavinia allows

Brutus's to maintain his connection to Latin nobility, but the exact extent of this noble heritage is

hard to determine which diminishes the prestige of such a claim. Brutus's conception as a whole

is somewhat underwhelming for a person of his stature given Layamon's observational aside that

"[t]hings turned out there just as almost everywhere: / That this same young woman was

---

[77] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 212.
[78] Layamon, ll. 127, 130-133, 151: "*Ænne sune heuede Asscanius. þe wes ihaten Siluius… / Þa þis child was feir muche. þa luuede he a maide. / þeo was Lauine mawe; mid darnscipe he heo luuede. / Hit iwerð þere; swa hit deð wel iwere. / þat þeos ʒunge wiman; iwerd hire mid childe… / Þat child was ihaten Brutus…*"; *Brut*, ll. 127, 130-133, 151.
[79] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 212.

expecting a baby."[80] Granted, this comment stems from Wace who notes that Silvius "lay with her and she conceived" but the dismissive nature of Layamon's remark is indicative of his penchant for suppressing "specific detail by using formulaic expression" and his "tendency to judge his characters more harshly" in a voice that "is more moralizing and judgmental" than his predecessors.[81]

The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut does not visibly moralize the stories that it presents, but it does "condemn those who break their word, put their own interests before the common good, or practice deceit."[82] Consequently, Brutus's conception is presented the least favorably in the Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut given the likelihood that Silvius is guilty on all three counts. In this version, "[w]hen he came of age, this Silven [Silvius], against the will of his father [Ascanius], secretly came to know a young woman who was Queen Laviane's [Lavinia] niece, and he made her pregnant."[83] Even though it is not directly stated, it is not hard to image a scenario where Silvius gives his word to obey Ascanius's wishes regarding his own interest in Lavinia's niece. However, it is apparent that Silvius practices deceit while also putting his own interest before the common good, by defying his father's wishes and by secretly coming to know and impregnating Lavinia's niece. The corruption that undermines the prestige of Brutus's heritage also extends to Ascanius. Stating that Silvius's actions defied his father's will carries the implication that Ascanius was aware of the situation, albeit to an unknown degree, but he was unable to prevent it which makes this a multigenerational issue. Even though the rationale behind Ascanius's disapproval for such a relationship remains unknown, Silvius's culpability in

---

[80] Layamon, ll. 132-133: "*Hit iwerð þere; swa hit deð wel iwere. / þat þeos ȝunge wiman; iwerd hire mid child…*" *Brut*, ll. 132-133.
[81] *Roman de Brut*, 5; Layamon, *Brut*, xxxi; Tolhurst, *Translating Female Kingship*, 212; 208.
[82] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 9, 10.
[83] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.

this transgression is magnified since he knowingly goes against his father's wishes. Moreover, Silvius's actions were committed when he was "of age" which not only suggest an element of maturity, but it also eliminates any possibility of his relationship with Lavinia's niece being the result of youthful naivety or an act of juvenile defiance. Again, Brutus is not conceived under ideal circumstances but the true damage to his legacy is caused by his father's actions which are described in such a way that are difficult to excuse.

Brutus is still the child of Silvius and Lavinia's niece in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut,* but this version presents the least damning version of Brutus's conception, comparatively speaking. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* manages to undo some of the damage that is inflicted on Brutus's legacy by omitting many of the details from earlier accounts that taint the events surrounding his conception. The youthful innocence that is denied to Silvius in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* is given to him in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* which maintains that "when he [Silvius] was able to walk and talk the boy was taken to the court of Lavinia to learn manners and morals. And there he got with child a niece of Lavinia."[84] Brutus's conception is also free of any taint caused by the secretive, illicit, or otherwise prohibited relationship between his parents that is present in the other accounts that are derivative of Geoffrey's *Historia*.

PROPHECTIC ISSUES

Prophesies are an important component to Brutus's legacy and shape his destiny at two pivotal points of his life: before he is born and when he is trying to find a new home for his Trojan followers who had recently been liberated from Greek captivity. The first prophecy has the greatest impact on shaping Brutus's life since the prophesy itself not only serves as the

---

[84] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 9: "*a phan yttoed yn gallu kerdet adywedud y ducpwyt y mab hyt yn llys lauinia ydysgu moes a mynud. ac yna y beichioges ef nith y lauinia.*"

catalyst that instigates Brutus's fate, but it also reveals elements Brutus's destiny. The *Historia Brittonum* provides the basic foundation for the prophecy of Brutus, but subsequent authors would expand on the portents of the prophecy itself and alter the details of who is making the prophecy, and why, to align with their respective agendas. The *Historia Brittonum* includes the prophecy of Brutus life in the account of how Britain came to be inhabited that is derived from Roman Annals.[85] The unflattering nature of this prophecy could be the result of the *Historia Brittonum* relying on Isadore of Seville's *Etymologies* "which suggested that the British were so called because they were 'brutes'."[86] Given that the *Historia Brittonum* acknowledges that the island of "Brittannia" gets its name from Brutus, it is possible that the *Historia Brittonum* is extending the brutish nature of the island's inhabitants to include the man who is responsible for filling the island "with his race."[87] According to the *Historia Brittonum*,

> … when Aeneas was told that his daughter-in-law- was pregnant, he sent word to his son Ascanius, to send a wizard to examine the wife, to discover what she had in the womb, whether it was male or female. The wizard examined the wife and returned, but he was killed by Ascanius because of his prophecy, for he told him that the woman had a male in her womb, who would be the child of death, for he would kill his father and his mother, and be hateful to all men.[88]

As a king who is presumably concerned with the extension of his issue, it is completely understandable for Aeneas to want to know the sex of his grandchild. It is interesting that Aeneas asked his son Ascanius to send a wizard to examine his daughter-in-law instead of summoning a

---

[85] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19.

[86] Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 39.

[87] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*... et inplevit eam cum suo genere...*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[88] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*et nuntiatum est Aeneae quod nurus sua gravida esset, et misit ad Ascanium filium suum, ut mitteret magum suum ad considerandam uxorem, ut exploraret quid haberet in utero, si sasculum vel feminam. Et magus consideravit uxorem et reversus est. Propter hanc vaticinationem magus occisus est ab Ascanio, quia dixit Ascanio quod masculum haberet in utero mulier et filius mortis erit, quia occident patrem suum et matrem suam et erit exosus omnibus hominibus*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

wizard himself suggests that there is something illicit about such an examination. The furtive

nature of this examination is emphasized by Ascanius killing the wizard for his prophecy. Even

though the contents of the prophecy are revealed, it is much more likely that Ascanius killed the

wizard was killed to prevent the prophecy from becoming public than Ascanius simply killing

the messenger bearing bad news. The contents of this prophecy are the most damaging to

Brutus's legacy given that he is the biological grandson of Aeneas and in line for the throne.

Also, being "the child of death" who will "be hateful to all men" is not exactly the type of

reputation that Brutus, or his Britons would be particularly proud to have.[89]

Brutus's prophecy and the manner in which it is made is notably altered in the first Book

of the *Historia Anglorum*. Primarily by means of omission, Henry of Huntingdon elevates

Brutus, and his parents, to a state of respectability as a way to restore the prestige of Brutus's

legacy and that of the English who were able to obtain sovereignty over the island that was

founded by Brutus. Henry beings the process of altering the narrative of the *Historia Brittonum*

by omitting the wizard's somewhat clandestine examination of Brutus's mother, and the

rationale for the examination. Instead, the *Historia Anglorum* reports that shortly after Silvius

and his wife are expecting "a soothsayer predicted that the son whom she was expecting would

kill his father. For this prophecy the soothsayer was put to death…"[90] In this version the

soothsayer is not called upon for consultation which makes Brutus's family the unfortunate

subjects of an unhappy prophecy instead of being the ones whose actions put the prophecy and

its delivery into motion. Despite altering their level of involvement with the prophecy, Brutus's

---

[89] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*filius mortis erit*" "*erit exosus omnibus hominibus*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.
[90] *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 25-27: "*…predixit magus quidam filium unde pregnans erat interfecturum patrem suum. Occiso igitur mago pro uaticinatione illa…*"

family is not entirely innocent in Henry's account since the one who made the prophecy is still executed. However, the unrequested appearance of the soothsayer and the contents of his prediction makes his death slightly more understandable the potential legitimacy of his words which come from a soothsayer, as opposed to a wizard. Henry's greatest act of improvement via omission occurs through the removal of Brutus being "the child of death" and "hateful to all men" lessens the magnitude of the prophesy as does the omission of the claim that Brutus will also be responsible for the death of his mother.

In his *Letter to Warin the Breton*, Henry of Huntingdon offers a similarly simplistic account of this prophesy by writing that "… Brutus, concerning whom a soothsayer's prediction—that he would kill his father and mother—accidentally came to pass" before providing the details of the fulfilment of said prediction.[91] This version of the prophesy is severely truncated recounting of the one presented by Geoffrey of Monmouth. The prophecy from the *Letter to Warin* restores Brutus's culpability in killing his mother, but the tragic nature of the soothsayer's prediction is partially diminished by noting the accidental nature of Brutus's parricide and by sparing the soothsayer from a similarly early demise.

Geoffrey of Monmouth is the first one to expand on the prophecy of Brutus contained in the *History Brittonum*. Geoffrey's concluding embellishments provide a larger glimpse of Brutus's destiny, which is also elevated through the addition of a promise of greatness that will overshadow the tragedies of Brutus's youth. Geoffrey's *Historia* sustains the essential elements of the *Historia Brittonum*'s version of the prophesy by also noting that after Ascanius found out about the pregnancy of Lavinia's niece "he ordered his magicians to discover what the sex of the

---

[91] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*Brutum, de quo cum magus predixisset quia interfecturus esset patrem et matrem, id casu euenit. Matrem namque nascens enecauit.*"

girl's child would be. Once they were certain, the magicians said that the girl was carrying a boy who would kill his father and mother, wander many lands in exile and in the end receive the highest honour."[92] Increasing the number of magicians who are ordered to determine the sex of the child adds a degree of credibility to their claim.[93] Also, there is also no mention of the magicians being killed which prevents the death toll associated with this prophecy from increasing. The tragedy of Brutus's parricide and subsequent exile is lessened by the inclusion of the final clause that claims that Brutus will "receive the highest honour."[94] The removal of Brutus's "hateful" epithet and the addition of a promise of his future greatness allow Geoffrey to raise Brutus to new heights. Furthermore, these alterations reflect the larger notion that English historiography "rested on the claim that the Britons were not 'brutes' but Trojans."[95] The circumstances surrounding this prophecy and its contains remain virtually unchanged in the *First Variant Version* aside from the truncation of some of Geoffrey wordier phrases.[96]

The prophecy as conceived in Geoffrey's *Historia* also essentially remains the same in the *Roman de Brut* but Wace includes details that reflect an interest in pagan rites in regard to

---

[92] *Historia*, i.6.55-59: "*Cumque id Ascanio patri compertu esset, praecepit magis suis explorare quem sexum puella concepisset. Certitudine ergo rei comperta, dixerunt magi ipsam grauidam esse puero qui patrem et matrem interficeret, pluribus quoque terries in exilium peragratis ad summum tandem culmen honoris perueniret.*"

[93] Summerfield, "Filling the Gap," 93.

[94] Summerfield, "Filling the Gap," 93; *Historia*, i.6.59: "*ad summum tandem culmen honoris perueniret.*"

[95] Joanna Bellis, "'When the world woxe old, it woxe warre old': History, Etymology, and National Identity, 1066-1337," by Joanna Bellis (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2016), 9-50 at 15.

[96] *First Variant Version*, i.6.5-6: "When his father Ascanius learned this, he sent his magicians to discover the sex of the child the girl had conceived. The magicians said that she was pregnant with a boy; who would kill his mother and father; having traveled in exile through any lands he would finally arrive at the highest pinnacle of honor." "*Cumque id Ascanio patri suo compertum esset, praecepit magis suis explorare quem sexum puella concepisset. Dixerunt magi ipsam gravidam esse puero qui et patrem et matrem interficeret; pluribus quoque terris in exilium peragratis ad summum tandem culmen honoris perveniret.*"

how the prophecy is created.[97] Wace's alterations to this episode augment Brutus's legacy by

augmenting the legitimacy of the prophecy itself which reinforces the notion that Brutus is

destined for great things. In the *Roman de Brut,* Ascanius:

> …summoned his soothsayers and his wise diviners: through them, he said, he
> wished to know what sort of child the lady would have. They predicted, and
> foresaw, and found in their divination that the son which the lady would have
> would kill his father and his mother and be sent into exile, but subsequently
> would achieve great honour.[98]

It is implied that Ascanius wants to know the sex of the child but the statement that Ascanius

wishes "to know what sort of child the lady would have" allows for the soothsayers and the wise

diviners to look into and reveal what is in the child's future.[99] This directive increases the

credibility of the prophesy given that the soothsayers and wise diviners were actively seeking out

this information and would have taken more care to discern the truth of their words before

revealing them to Ascanius. Brutus's legacy in nominally diminished by Wace who remarks that

Brutus will "achieve great honour" as opposed to "receiving the highest honour."[100]

Layamon's judgmental perspective is rampantly apparent in his version of the Brutus

prophecy. Brutus remains relatively unscathed, but his legacy is diminished by the sheer

contempt that Layamon has for those who discern Brutus's fate. Layamon's harsh

"condemn[ation for] all behavior that does not conform to his aggressively Christian and socially

conservative values" is revealed in his description of how Brutus's prophecy came to exist.[101]

According to Layamon's *Brut*:

> Then summoned Ascanius, the lord and the leader,
> Throughout all that land those who knew the witchcraft song,

---

[97] *Roman de Brut*, xviii.
[98] *Roman de Brut*, 5.
[99] *Roman de Brut*, 5.
[100] *Roman de Brut*, 5; *Historia*, i.6.59: "*ad summum tandem culmen honoris perueniret.*"
[101] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 208.

> He wished to work out, through those wicked agents,
> What sort of thing it would be the woman had in her womb.
> They cast in all their lots: the Devil was among them,
> And found by those evil arts songs of great anguish: [102]

Once he is finished undermining the authority of those divining the future and denigrating their practices, Layamon maintains the Galfridian structure and contents of the actual prophecy. The agents discern

> That the woman had conceived a son, it was a curious child,
> Who was destined to destroy both his father and his mother:
> Through him they were to die both, and undergo their deaths,
> And through his parents' death, he'd be driven from the land,
> And after long delay to reverence would attain.[103]

Brutus will still be a parricide who will be exiled before obtaining reverence, but the rhetoric deployed by Layman tarnishes this episode. Judgmental vitriol aside, Ascanius is still seeking information that any grandfather would want to know—pagan, Christian, or otherwise. Layamon's version is fashioned more from Wace than Geoffrey based on Ascanius wanting to know "what sort of thing it would be" and the undercutting of the level of prestige that Brutus will eventually attain.[104] To this end, John P. Brennan has even gone as so far as to argue that "and to say that Ascanius wants his sorcerers to discover what sort of 'thing' it is the woman caries in her womb suggests to my ear, and I would guess to Laȝamon's that the unborn child is

---

[102] Layamon, *Brut* ll. 136-141: "*Þa sende Asscanius; þe wes lauerd ⁊ dux. / after heom ȝend þat lond; þe cuþen dweomerlakes song. / witen he wolde; þurh þa wiþer-craftes. / wat þing hit were; þat þeo wimon hefde on wombe. / Heo wrpen heore leoten; þe Scucke wes bi-toweonen. / heo funden on þen crefte; carefule leoðes*" *Brut*, ll. 136-141.

[103] Layamon, ll. 142-146: "*þet þeo wimon was mid ane sune; þat wes a selcuð bearn / þat boa sculde fallen; fader ⁊ his moder. / þorh him heo sculden deiȝen; ⁊ þene deað þolien / ⁊ þurh his ealdren deð; idreuen out of londe. / ⁊ umben longne first; mid wrðscipe comen liðen.*" *Brut*, ll. 142-146.

[104] Layamon, l. 139: "*wat þing hit were*" *Brut*, l. 139.

some kind of monster or prodigy, like Rosemary's Baby or Damian."[105] Layamon's biases

diminish the authority of the prophecy by mentioning that the agents cast lots as part of their

practice which suggests an element of chance—the inclusion of the devil among them does not

help matters either. Once he actually reveals the prophecy, Layman explains that "…through his

parents' death, he'd be driven from the land" which helps to clarify why Brutus will exiled.[106]

This explanation for Brutus's exile is given more justification given the amount of attention

devoted to and repetition included in describing Brutus's parricide. The severity of dishonor

association with Brutus's actions creates a lower floor from him to start from which helps to

explain why he is only destined to attain an indeterminate amount of reverence in Layamon's

Brut.

    The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s penchant for pragmatism and rationalizing the

magical results in the most favorable depiction of those who discern Brutus's future but the

actual prophecy itself diminishes the level of honor that Brutus will eventually receive. Again,

Ascanius wants to know about his future grandchild but this time

> he inquired of wise scholars who were greatly learned in many arts as to whether
> this young woman would bear a son or a daughter. And when they had considered
> this matter well by means of their art, they said to the father that she would bear a
> son who would first kill his mother and then his father.[107]

The credibility of the prophesy is reestablished by Ascanius obtaining information from "wise

scholars who were greatly learned in many arts" and by these scholars thoroughly considering

things before revealing the knowledge obtained through their art.[108] The *Oldest Anglo-Norman*

---

[105] John P. Brennan, "Myth, Marriage, and Dynastic Crisis in Laȝamon's *Brut*," *Arthuriana* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 41-59, at 44.
[106] Layamon, l. 145: "ȝ þurh his ealdren deð; idreuen out of londe" *Brut*, l. 145.
[107] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.
[108] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.

Prose Brut deviates from the established norm by having these scholars reveal the second part of the prophesy to Silvius after Brutus is born and the death of his mother in childbirth. This part of the prophecy still acknowledges that Brutus will achieve great honor, but the distinction of this statement, and the heights that Brutus will reach are slightly undercut by the claim that Brutus will "do much harm in many lands…"[109] However, it is also worthwhile to mention that this prophecy does not actually state that Brutus will be an exile which is a small comfort considering the previously foretold filicide and the harm that he will do in many lands.[110] This deviation in the revelation of Brutus's prophecy gives more authority to the scholars who have already been proved correct in regards to Brutus killing his mother in childbirth. The accuracy of the scholars up to this point adds to the likelihood that their words will continue to be correct, which is unfortunate for Silvius, and recipients of the harm that Brutus will do in many lands, but a silver lining exists to all of this is that Brutus will still "come to great honor" despite his past.[111]

The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* presents the most simple and straightforward account of this event that presents the least amount of damage to Brutus's future legacy. After Brutus's mother becomes pregnant, "[a]nd then the soothsayers were sought, to know with what she was pregnant. And then it was announced that it was with a boy, and that this boy should kill his mother and his father, and at length rise to high things / in the kingdoms."[112] By not killing the soothsayers and omitting any details about Brutus becoming hated by all men, being sent into exile, or causing harm in many lands, minimizes the tragedy of Brutus's life to just include

---

[109] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.
[110] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.
[111] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 55.
[112] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut,* 9: "*ac yna ykeisiwd dewinion y wybot ar pabeth yd oed hi yn veichiawc. ac ymenegit pan yw ar vab. armab hwnnw aladei y vam ay dad ac yny diwed ef ymdrechauei yngorchelder teyrnassoed.*"

parricide, which is still very unfortunate. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* helps to contextualize the heights that Brutus will eventually rise to by claiming that he will "rise to high things / in the kingdoms" which implies that Brutus's actions, and subsequent fame, will be of an elevated and international magnitude.[113]

The inclusion of the prophecy within the founding myth of Britain is important since it helps to shape Brutus's legacy almost from conception. The details of the prophecy and the fulfilment of it provide an explanation as to why Brutus would go on to found Britain and to emphasize that belief that the Trojan founding of Britain was fated to be. Altering the details of this prophecy allows the different authors to begin to shape Brutus's legacy and how he will be received along the way. Even though this prophecy is deeply tragic, as evidenced and emphasized by his eventual act of patricide being the only constant throughout, it does not define Brutus, although it does shape him and set him on the path that will lead him to Britain. Moreover, the primary point of emphasis from the prophecy as it is altered over time is its conclusion: Brutus is destined for great things; things so great that they will eventual overshadow his parricide to the point where it is easy relegated to little more than a passing footnote.

PERFORMING PATRICIDE

Brutus's mother dies in childbirth in every version of the founding myth of Britain with the exception of the *Historia Anglorum* which completely excludes her from the prophecy.[114]

---

[113] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut,* 9: "*ac yny diwed ef ymdrechauei yngorchelder teyrnassoed.*"

[114] "So it [the prophesy] happened; for his mother died in his birth" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*Sic evenit: in nativitate illius mulier mortua est*" *Historia Brittonum,* §10, 60; the soothsayer's prediction "accidently came to pass. For at his birth he killed his mother." *Historia Anglorum,* viii.2, 559: "*id casu euenit. Matrem namque nascens enecauit.*"; "…the woman [Brutus's mother] had the child, and died while giving birth." *Historia*, i.6.60-61: "*edidit mulier puerum et in natiuitate eius mortua est; traditur autem ille*"; "...the woman [Brutus's mother] brought forh a boy but died in childbirth." *First Variant Version*, i.6.6: "*...edidit mulier puerum et mortua est pariendo.*"; "What they [the soothsayers and wise divers] said was true, and happened as they

While profoundly unfortunate, the circumstances surrounding the death of Brutus's mother alleviate him from any blame. As foreshadowed and foretold via prophecy, the defining moment of Brutus's early life is his act of patricide. By all accounts, Brutus kills his father by accidently shooting Silvius with an arrow. Over time, circumstances surrounding this event will be altered and the details used to describe it will be augmented in such a way that slowly diminishes Brutus's culpability as a means to preserve his legacy. It is one thing to murder one's father and another to manslaughter him.

As it has been foretold, Silvius must die. The *Historia Brittonum* stresses the accidental nature of Silvius's death by creating a narrative that diminishes Brutus's culpability by having Brutus making his fateful shot while at play. The death of Silvius in the *Historia Brittonum* occurs much later in Brutus's life and "when he [Brutus] was playing with others, he killed his father with an arrow shot, not on purpose, but by accident."[115] Here, the accidental nature of Silvius's shooting is emphasized.[116] While this sequence of events is entirely plausible, the lack of details and the element of Brutus playing with others, raises questions as to what exactly was Brutus and the others were doing that allowed for such a fatal accident.

---

promised, for at the moment of his birth, his mother died and he lived." *Roman de Brut*, 5; "…and so it came to pass. / When the time arrived and the infant boy was born, / In that fortress – the female passed away. / The child was delivered safely in his mother's distress." Layamon, ll. 147-150. "… ʒ swa hit al iwearð. / Þa þe time com. þat þe cnaue wes iboren; / in þere burhe. þa brude dead iwearð / þe child was iboren isund; to baluen his moder" *Brut*, ll. 147-150; "and so it [the prophecy] happened, for the other died in childbirth when the baby was born." *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75; "And when the time had come for the birth of the boy who was mentioned above [Brutus], the boy was born unharmed and his mother died in bearing him."*Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 9: "*a phan oed amser geni ymab a dywetpwyt vchot. y mab a anet yn diargywed ay vam a uu varw or beichiogi.*"

[115] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*…dum ipse ludebat cum aliis, ictu sagittae occidit patrem suum, non de industria, sed casu*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[116] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*non de industria, sed casu"* *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

This scenario is repeated, nearly verbatim, in the *Historia Anglorm* which notes that "[a]fter some time had passed, he [Brutus] was once playing with some boys, when he struck his father with an arrow and killed him, not purposely but by accident."[117] The same plausibility exists, as do the questions that are raised by this sequence of events. Henry of Huntingdon continues to advance this version of Silvius's death in his *Letter to Warin* which completely disregards Geoffrey of Monmouth's version that describes Silvius dying in a hunting accident. Sticking with the story advanced by the *Historia Brittonum* demonstrates Henry's willingness to alter Geoffrey's narrative, especially when it is so notably contradicted by earlier sources.[118] The *Letter to Warin* severely truncates the description of Silvius's death by simply stating that "as a young man at sport, he [Brutus] unintentionally struck his father with an arrow."[119] Brutus's responsibility is heighted in this account by virtue of being a "young man at sport" which removes innocence of youth that associated with playing with others.[120]

Geoffrey of Monmouth completely rewrites the circumstances of Brutus's patricide which is now the result of a hunting trip gone wrong.[121] Brutus's responsibility in his father's death is diminished in Geoffrey's *Historia* which increases the level of detail and plausibility of Silvius's death. In this version, "Fifteen years later, when the young Brutus was out hunting with his father, he inadvertently shot and killed him with an arrow; for while the beaters were driving

---

[117] *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 27: "*Post multum uero interuallum dum ipse luderet cum pueris, ictu sagitte occidit patrem non industria sed casu.*"

[118] *Historia Anglorum*, ci-cii; Wright, "The Place of Henry of Huntingdon's *Epistola ad Warinum*," 77.

[119] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*Postea iuuenis sagitta ludens patrem nesciens percussit.*"

[120] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*Postea iuuenis sagitta ludens.*"

[121] Michael Faletra notes that "Geoffrey's emphasis on the "hunting accident" would doubtless resonate with his contemporaries, since King William Rufus of England was also slain in a hunting accident in the New Forest in 1100" *The History of the Kings of Britain*, 44 n. 1.

stags towards them, Brutus aimed an arrow at them but struck his father in the chest."[122] The

amount of detail provided here highlights the accidental nature of Silvius death without fully

absolving Brutus from his role in Silvius's demise. For the first time Brutus's age is given. The

youthfulness of being 15 is again referenced by Geoffrey when he refers to Brutus as "young".[123]

Emphasizing Brutus's age is a built in defense since it shows that Brutus is still young enough to

be called "young" but presumably old enough to have some hunting experience that could have

been utilized to avoid this fateful outcome.

Details have been removed from this episode in the *First Variant Version* which is to be

expected given its predisposition for omitting "more rhetorically and emotionally charged

passages."[124] Here, it is simply stated that "when he [Brutus] was fifteen years of age, while

accompanying his father on a hunt, and aiming an arrow at the stags, he killed his father with an

unexpected blow from the arrow."[125] The removal of so much information does not work in

Brutus's favor. Granted, the unexpected nature and implied accidental nature of Silvius's death

remain, but the exclusion of details that describe the of the circumstances of this "unexpected

blow" raises unanswered questions as to how such a tragedy could have happened.[126]

Wace's affinity for describing entertainments in great detail continues to lessen Brutus's

guilt by means of altering the hunting strategy initially deployed in Geoffrey's *Historia*, and by

---

[122] *Historia*, 1.6-7.60-65: "*Postremo, cum ter quini anni emensi essent, comitabatur iuuenis patrem in uenando ipsumque inopino ictu sagittae interfecit; nam dum famuli ceruos in occursum eorum ducerent, Brutus, telum in ipsos dirigere affectans, genitorem sub pectore percussit.*"

[123] *Historia*, 1.6.62: "*iuuenis.*"

[124] Wright, *First Variant Version*, xli.

[125] *First Variant Version*, i.6.6: "*Et cum esset quindecim annorum, comitabatur patri in venatu sagittamque in cervos dirigens, inopino ictu sagittae patrem interfecit.*"

[126] *First Variant Version*, i.6.6: "*inopino ictu*".

reiterating the accidental nature of Silvius's death which was fated to happen. According to the

Roman de Brut, Brutus

> was fifteen, no more, when he went to the forest with his father, who took him there in an evil hour. In an evil hour they went off together and found a herd of stags. The father drove them towards his son, while the son clung to a tree-trunk: he shot at a stag which he saw, but the arrow passed it by. He struck and killed his father, but not by his own will.[127]

Silvius's death is the result of being in wrong place at the wrong time and Brutus simply had the

bad luck of missing his shot. Wace continues to suggest that the misfortune of Silvius's death is

unavoidable by including and repeating the phrase "evil hour" within the narrative. Wace also

reduces Brutus's liability by adding that Brutus unwillingly struck and killed Silvius.

Layamon builds on the Galfridian premise of a hunting accident gone awry and adds

information that heightens the tragedy of the situation by drawing attention to how easily

Silvius's death could have been avoided. Additionally, Layamon shifts the majority of the

burden of guilt from Brutus to Silvius. According to Layamon, Brutus sill goes on a fateful

hunting with his father at the age of fifteen, but after they find a heard of huge stags, Silvius went

around the stags

> – though there was no need –
> Driving them towards his son (to his own disaster):
> Brutus notched his arrow:
> He aimed towards the antlered deer – but what he hit was his own father,
> Right through the breast bone! Brutus was anguished at it:
> Anguished was he in life when his father lay in death.[128]

---

[127] *Roman de Brut*, 5.

[128] Layamon, ll. 156-161: "*þe fader heo bi-eode; to his aȝre unneode. / To his sune he heo draf; him-seolfue to balewe. Brutus sette on his flo; / he wende to sceoten þat hea der; ȝ ihitte his aȝene fader. / þurh-ut þere broste. wao wes Brutus þer-fore. / Wa wes him on lieu; þa þe fader wes on deaðe*" *Brut*, ll. 156-161.

Not only is Brutus relatively blameless given that Silvius's unnecessary movements placed him in harm's way, but Brutus is also presented more favorably due the Layamon's inclusion of the anguish felt by Brutus.

In keeping with its stylistic conventions to not moralize events, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* presents the most simplistic account of Brutus's patricide.[129] The severe reduction of details does not do anything to assuage Brutus's guilt or responsibility for Silvius's death. However, the accidental nature of Brutus's patricide is still noted in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* which merely states that when "Brut[us] was fifteen years old, he went hunting one day with his father. And just as this Brut[us] was about to shoot at a stag, his arrow slipped by mischance and killed his father."[130]

Silvius's death in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* uses the narrative established by Geoffrey of Monmouth as a base and incorporates several details that can be traced back to Layamon to present the least incriminating account of Brutus's patricide. In the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, when Brutus

> was fifteen years of age he came to visit his father. And one day, as they were hunting in the forest and the boy under one tree and his father under another tree, the deer came between them and the boy shot one of the deer with an arrow. And the arrow glanced from the back of one of the stags so that it lodged under his father's breast, and of this accidental shot his father died.[131]

As in Layamon's *Brut*, Silvius's death is largely caused by unfortunate positioning, however, both parties are guiltless since Brutus does not miss his shot. Even though Brutus actually

---

[129] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 6.

[130] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.

[131] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 9: "*Aphan yttoed y mab yn oedran pymthegmlwyd ydoeth ef y ymwelet ay dad. a diwyrnawt mal yr yttoedynt yn hely mewn forest. ar mab adan brenn. ay dad a dan brenn arall. ef adoeth yr hydgant ryngthunt yll deu. ac y byriawd y mab vn or hydgant a saeth. ac y neidiawt y saeth iargeuyn vn or keiriw yny vu adan vron y dad.*"

manages to hit the deer, the shot is not good enough and calamity ensues as the arrow proceeds

to ricochet off of a stag and under Silvius's breast. The accidental nature Brutus's patricide is

also stressed to alleviate Brutus's guilt.

EXPULSION AND EXILE

The series of unfortunate events that have surrounding Brutus's life from conception have

been building to a single moment that will serve as the catalyst that will lead to the Trojan

founding of Britain under Brutus. That moment is Brutus's exile. Even though it was an accident,

Silvius's death, in addition to Brutus's mother dying in childbirth, serves as the fulfillment of the

earlier prophesy and provides enough justification for sending Brutus in to exile. The *Historia*

Brittonum and the *Historia Anglorum* are largely uninterested in providing details about Brutus's

exploits from this point in the narrative and chronicle the major events of Brutus's life. This does

not present the most flattering portrayal of Brutus, but the direct, factually driven narrative is in

keeping with established historiographical conventions which does add to the plausibility of

Brutus's existence and legitimizes his legacy. Brutus's exile is reduced a few words in the

Historia Brittonum which simply states that Brutus "was driven from Italy."[132] The two versions

recorded in the *Historia Anglorum* follow suit by offering very few details in noting that "As a

consequence he [Brutus] was expelled from Italy" and the *Letter to Warin* alternatively records

that Brutus was "exiled from Italy on account of this (patricide)."[133]

Starting with Geoffrey's *Historia* the parties who actually send Brutus into exile are

named. More clarity as to why Brutus is banished is also given in the later accounts. Brutus's

---

[132] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*Et expulsus est ab Italia*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[133] *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 27: "*Quamobrem expulsus ab Italia…*"; *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*Exulatus igitur ex Italia….*"

expulsion is a family affair according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace and Layamon[134] The rift

between Brutus and his remaining family starts to sow the seeds of seemingly perpetual conflict

that will exist between Rome and Britain. In Geoffrey's *Historia*, "After Silvius's death, Brutus's

grandparents were angry that he had committed such a misdeed and exiled him from Italy" and

"Brutus was sent into exile by his outraged family" in the *First Variant Version*.[135] The *Roman*

de Brut reveals that Brutus's act of patricide "... angered all his kin and they drove Brutus from

the kingdom" whereas Layamon's *Brut* observes that "[w]hen news came to his kindred (whose

family he came from) / That it was he who'd loosed the shaft and slaughtered his own father, /

They drove him into exile out of that land."[136] The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* expands on

the anguish associated with Silvius's death to include "the people of the land were so grieved and

outraged that they drove Brut[us] out of the country and would not allow him among them."[137] In

the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* "[a]fter the wise men of the land of Rome had seen that such a terrible

thing as this had happened to him, they banished him from the island."[138]

 At various points within the narrative it becomes apparent that Brutus is the expendable

son which is fitting given the decision to make him a continuation of the Trojan line that runs

through Ascanius and not an extension of the new Romano-Trojan line that stems from Ascanius

and Lavinia. For Brutus, and those who will eventually become Britons, this expendability

---

[134] Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 26.

[135] *Historia*, 1.7.65-66: "*Quo mortuo, expulsus est ab Italia, indignantibus parentibus ipsum tantum facinus fecisse.*"; *First Variant Version*. i.7.1: "*Indignantibus ergo parentibus, in exilium pulsus est Brutus.*"

[136] *Roman de Brut*, 5; Layamon, ll.162-164: "*Þa þat iherde his kun; þe he of icumen wes. / þat he þe flo heuede idrawen; ꝫ his fader of-slawen. / heo hine flemden; out of þane londe*" *Brut*, ll. 162-164.

[137] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.

[138] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 9-10: "*Gwedy gwelet o doeth eon gwlat ruuein mor dybryt ydamchweineu ef ahynny. y alltudaw a orugant ef or ynys.*"

creates the plausible link that connects the Britons to their Roman and Trojan ancestors and all of

the legitimacy and prestige that comes from these associations. The presence of the new

Romano-Trojan line that stems from Aeneas and Lavinia is revealed through the existence of

Aeneas's son, Silvius Posthumous, at two different parts of the narrative.[139] The *Historia*

Brittonum and the *Historia Anglorum* do not make any reference to Silvius Posthumous until

after Brutus has founded Britain. Waiting until this point in the text to mention Silvius

Posthumous allows the narrative to remain focused on Brutus and his exploits. This unwavering

attention on Brutus elevates his status above his Roman counterpart as does relegating Silvius

Posthumous to an afterthought that is used as a temporal marker to help to legitimize and situate

British history with the larger world and Biblical historical records. At the conclusion of the

founding myth of Britain, the *Historia Brittonum* reveals that

> Aeneas reigned three years among the Latins, Ascanius reigned 37 years, and
> after him Silvius, son of Aeneas, reigned 12 years, [Silvius] Postumus 39 years;
> and from him the kings of the Albani are called Silvii; and Britto [Brutus] was his
> brother.
>   When Britto [Brutus] reigned in Britain, Eli the High Priest ruled in Israel,
> and then the Ark of the Covenant was taken by foreigners. Postumus, his brother,
> ruled among the Latins.[140]

Most of the same information is presented at the same narrative point in *Historia Anglorum* but

the length of each reign and Ascanius's regency is omitted: "When Bruto [Brutus] ruled in

Britain, Eli the priest was judge over Israel. And Postumus, or Silvius son of Aeneas, reigned

---

[139] Silvius is referred to as Silvius Posthumous since Lavinia gave birth to him shortly after
Aeneas's death or Silvius Aeneas to denote his paternity.

[140] *Historia Brittonum*, §11, 20: "*Aeneas autem regnavit tribus annis apud Latinos. Ascanius
regnavit annis XXXVII. Post quem Silvius, Aeneae filius, regnavit annis XII, Postumus annis
XXXIX. A quo Albanorum reges Silvii appellati sunt. Cuius frater erat Britto.*
       *Quando regnabat Britto in Brittannia, Heli sacerdos iudicabat in Israhel, et tunc arca
testament ab alienigenis possidebatur, Postumus, frater, eius, apud Latinos regnabat.*" *Historia
Brittonum*, §11, 61.

over the Latins: Bruto [Brutus] was his nephew."[141] In his *Letter to Warin*, Henry of Huntingdon

continues to truncate the narrative by merely noting that Brutus established the city of

Trinovantum, [i.e. London] "in the time of Eli the priest and Aeneas Silvius" which continues to

devalue Silvius's existence and prominence.[142] Geoffrey also mentions the existence of Silvius

Aeneas in temporal marker that accompanies the establishment of Brutus's city at the conclusion

of Brutus's narrative. The *Historia* notes that at this time "in Italy there ruled the third of the

Latins, Silvius Aeneas, the son of Aeneas and the uncle of Brutus."[143]

The *First Variant Version* is the first to deviate from the model established in the

Historia Brittonum by including Silvius Posthumous in the narrative before Brutus is even born.

This alteration announces a clear divide in this noble family that will give rise to the kingdoms of

Rome and Britain in addition to alluding to the constant comparisons and strife between the two.

After Aeneas's death, "the kingdom passed to Ascanius" who "raised his brother Silvius

Postumus, the son of Lavinia, with the greatest piety; and after he reigned for thirty-four years he

left the kingdom to Silvius."[144] Wace follows the *First Variant Version* in noting that Silvius

Posthumous inherits the Latin throne after Ascanius's death which reinforces Brutus's

expendability. Here, Wace remarks that Aeneas

> held wife and domain for four years. In the fourth year, as his end approached,
> Lavinia conceived, but did not yet bear the child; but it was not long before she
> gave birth to a son. Silvius was his own name and Postumus his surname.

---

[141] *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 27: "*Dicunt autem illi auctores quod quando Bruto regnabat in Britannia, Heli sacerdos iudicabat Israel. Et postumus siue Siluius filius Enee regnabat apud Latinos; cuis nepos erat Bruto.*"

[142] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 560: "*tempore Eli sacerdotis et Siluii Enee stabilata est.*"

[143] *Historia*, 1.22.508-509: "*Regnabat in Italia Siluius Aeneas, Aeneae filius, auunculus Bruti, Latinorum tercius.*"

[144] *First Variant Version*, i.6.2: "*Quo vita discedente regnum suscepit Ascanius...*"; i.6.3: "*Educabit Autem Ascanius summa pietate Postumum Silvium, fratrem suum ex lavinia procreatum, et cum triginta quatuor annis regnasset, Silvium reliquit heredem.*"

Ascanius, who had come from Troy with is father, brought Silvius up and held him very dear…This Ascanius held the domain for a long time after his father's death…When Ascanius died, the inheritance passed to his brother Silvius, born of Lavinia after Aeneas's death.[145]

Layamon follows suit and expands on Wace's narrative to include information about the type of ruler that Ascanius was. The nobility of Brutus's Trojan heritage is elevated by the additions made to Ascanius's legacy. Layamon claims that after Aeneas's death

Ascanius ruled this land of renown for many days and years
…Courageous Ascanius, who was in the king's place, /
For thirty-four long years ruled over that land /
And those who lived there, in content. /
Then came his life's ending, little though he liked it. /
To Silvius his brother, the son of Lavinia /
He bequeathed all that land which their father Aeneas had once held in hand.[146]

Ascanius's reign is somewhat undermined by Layamon reiterating the fact that Ascanius is a regent and the implication that Ascanius held onto the throne for the duration of his life instead of relinquishing it once Aeneas's heir came of age.

Ascanius's reign and Silvius Posthumous's succession in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* are modeled from the narrative put forth by Layamon. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* deviates from its stylistic norm by expanding on the narrative to add clarity to the chain of succession from Aeneas to Silvius Posthumous. These additions provide further insight as to the type of man Ascanius was which continue to elevate his legacy and that of the Trojan line which will be continue through Brutus. According to the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*

And then Lavinia conceived and bore a son who was called Silvius…and after Aeneas was dead and Lavinia could not govern the kingdom, Silvius was given to his brother Ascanius to foster, and the government of the kingdom with him, until

---

[145] *Roman de Brut*, 3-5.

[146] Layamon, ll. 110; 121-126: "*Asscanius heold þis drihliche lond; daiȝes ⁊ ȝeres … / … Asscanius þe kene; þe wes I kinges stude. / four ⁊ þritti winter he heold þat lond; / ⁊ þa leoden mid blissen. / Þa com his lifes ende; lað þah him were. / Siluium his broþer; þe wes Lauine sune. / he bitahte al þat lond. þat Eneas heore fader hefde on hond*" *Brut*, ll. 110; 121-126.

the boy should come of age…And Ascanius reigned in Italy thirty-three years, and then he left the government of the kingdom to his brother Silvius.[147]

Even though the reason(s) why Lavinia cannot govern the kingdom are not stated, the logical

explanation as to why Ascanius takes control of the kingdom is given. Noting that Ascanius is

fostering Silvius Posthumous and controlling the kingdom until Silvius Posthumous comes of

age reinforces the notions that Ascanius is a good and honorable man. Entrusting Ascanius with

these duties, instead of someone from the Latin side of the royal family, is somewhat remarkable

given that Ascanius is Aeneas's Trojan son from a previous marriage. Despite the marriage

between Aeneas and Lavinia, the Trojans are still relative newcomers who have only been in

Latium for nine years up to this point.[148]

The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* is the furthest outlier from the norm by removing

Silvius Aeneas/Posthumous from the entire narrative which downplays the importance of Rome

by keeping the focus on Brutus's line. Here, it is initially record that "[i]t came to pass that, when

---

[147] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 8-9: "*ac y beichioges lauinia ac agauas mab a elwyd siluius…A gwedy marw eneas ac na allei lauinia llywiaw ydyrnas. ef arodet siluius ar vaeth ar Ascanius y vraud allywodraet y deyrnas ganthaw. yny vythei oedran ar y mab…ac ascanus a wledychawd yn er eidial teirblynet ardec arugeint. ac yno yd edewis llywodraeth y dyrnas y siluius y vrawt.*"
[148] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 8: "And he [Aeneas] was co-ruler with Latinus King of Italy for five years, and then Latinus dies and Aeneas took the government of the kingdom into his own control…And / Aeneas reigned in Italy after Latinus four years." "*ac y buy n kyt wleduchu a latinus brenhin yr eidial pymp mlyned. ac yna y bu varw latinus. ac y kymyrth eneas llywodraeth ydyrnas yn eidaw ehun…ac y gwledychawt eneas en er eidial gwedy latinus pedeir blyned.*" The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* deviates from its source material with the duration of the Trojan presence in Latium. In the *Historia Brittonum*, only three years have passed between Aeneas's marriage to Lavinia and his death. "Aeneas reigned three years among the Latins" *Historia Brittonum*, §11, 20 "*Aeneas autem regnavit tribus annis apud Latinos.*" *Historia Brittonum*, §11, 61. This duration is extended to four years in the *First Variant Version*, the *Roman de Brut* and Layamon's *Brut*: *First Variant Version*, i.6.1: "*et regnavit Aeneas Latinis annis quatuor*"; *Roman de Brut*, 3: "He [Aeneas] held wife and domain for four years."; Layamon, l. 100: "After the fourth year passed he [Aeneas] had died…" *Brut*, l.100: "*after þa feourðe ȝere he was dead.*" The *Historia regum Britanniae*, the *Historia Anglorum*, and the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* do not provide any information that can be used to determine the duration of Aeneas's or Ascanius's reign.

God willed it, [A]Eneas died, an after his death Ascanius his son who came with him from Troy, received the land and held it at will all his life" before mentioning that "King Ascanius died when God willed it, and after his death Silvein [i.e. Silvius] received the land and made himself dearly loved by his people."[149] The omission of Silvius Posthumous heightens the severity of Brutus's patricide and subsequent exile. The grief and outrage of the people of that land is so great that they proceeded to drive Brutus "out of the country and would not allow him among them" which is quite astonishing given that Brutus is the presumptive heir to the throne.[150] The added emphasis on the social dynamics in this section reinforce the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s desire to demonstrate "the centrality of the people's support – and counsel – to Brut[us]'s success."[151]

Ascanius's regency contains a degree of uncertainty and political tension since the possibility exists for him to usurp his half-brother's throne, or to displace him with his own issue. Consequently, as the grandson of Ascanius, Brutus represents a potential, and predominantly Trojan, threat to the new Romano-Trojan line that is created by Aeneas and Lavinia. This threat is an active concern since Brutus's claim to the throne is strengthened through his mother's relation to Lavinia. The fear Brutus disrupting the chain of succession that comes from Aeneas and Lavinia can be seen as a political motivation behind Brutus's expulsion following the death of Brutus's father. Sending Brutus into exile is justified given his parricide in addition to being a political necessity that enables Silvius to claim his father's throne when he comes of age and allows Brutus the freedom to establish his own kingdom.

---

[149] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.
[150] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.
[151] Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 27.

The origin story of Brutus from the establishment of his genealogy of to his exile contains all of the requisites necessary for him to be the founding father of Britain. The establishment of his Biblical and Trojan heritage grants him, and his Britons by extension, the legitimacy comes from belonging to a people with an ancient and noble history. His Roman connections augment the prestige of his heritage and create a natural counterpart in Rome that can, and will, be used to elevate Britain's place in the world. The prophesy about Brutus reinforces the notions that Brutus is destined for great things and that he is fated to be the true son of Troy who will rise to greatness after experiencing tragedies that will put him on his path. Over time, the narrative of Brutus's origin story is altered every time the story is adapted by a new author and these changes reflect their respective agendas. Generally speaking, Geoffrey of Monmouth creates a new foundation for the narrative, Wace will make a few changes that put a more positive spin on events, while Layamon's additional details provide a clarity that is not always favorable. The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* compile information for their predecessors and present a more simplified and direct account but to very different ends where the former is more negative and critical and the latter will manipulate things in such a way that present the most favorable version of things.

Brutus, King of the Britons

In medieval Britain, Brutus is best known for being the descendant of Aeneas who goes on to become eponymous founder of Britain. This particular conceptualization of Brutus focuses on the destination of his destined path which makes it easy to forget or ignore the journey that led to this point. Scholarly discussions of Brutus contribute to this type of limited perception since these commentaries have a tendency to fixate on Brutus's lineage, the prophecies surrounding his fate, and the actual founding of Britain. Consequently, these preoccupations largely reduce Brutus's legacy down to the key components that can be used to glorify Britain, and the those who would become the first Britons, instead of reinforcing the prominence of the man who did so much more for this people than bestowing his name and nobility upon them and their new home. This chapter aims to highlight the events of Brutus's life that are often overlooked and examine how different authors alter the narrative of these events throughout the medieval period. Brutus's narrative is manipulated to reflect the personal agendas of the respective adaptors and these alterations ultimately dictate how the figure of Brutus is received by different audiences. This examination will focus on the events of Brutus's life after his patricide and subsequent exile from Italy. Particular attention will be given to specific moments that exemplify Brutus's rise to power growth as a leader, his martial and tactical acumen, and the prophecy that foretells the founding of Britain. This analysis will contribute to the larger discussion surrounding Brutus and how the details of his life are revised over time and how these alterations modify Brutus's character and subsequent legacy which are used to advance different notions of good kingship and the establishment of Britain. This discussion will also facilitate the analysis of the following chapter by establishing the figure of Brutus which will used to

demonstrate the contributions that Corineus makes to the founding on Britain while also serving as a foil that exemplifies the kingly and martial qualities of Brutus.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As the eponymous founder of Britain and the first king of the Britons, Brutus holds a special place within the legendary history of Britain that merits more attention and recognition than he has received thus far. Brutus is often dismissed, or flatly ignored in favor of the likes of, Aurelius Ambrosius, Uther Pendragon, and King Arthur, despite the fact that Brutus was the prototype for these other legendary kings. The affection for these later kings is reflected in the multitude of literary texts that preserve and expand the respective legends, and the seemingly unending scholarship that surrounds them. Brutus is bereft of such attention and he is largely remembered for what he gave the earliest Britons and their descendants: a new home, identity, and noble heritage. Consequently, the vast majority of the critical discussions surrounding Brutus focus on these elements that glorify Britain and the British by association, as opposed to the man himself. Examining the major events of Brutus life before founding Britain will reveal what type of man he actually was, how his actions will help to form Britain in addition to establishing the "British" identity that later generations will assume, and how these elements will be appropriated and manipulated for personal and political gain. Brutus's ancestry is a common avenue of inquiry since this ancestry is used to generate larger commentaries surrounding the rivalries between Britain and Rome that are based on a joint claim to noble, Trojan lineage.[1] Moreover,

---

[1] For further information on the comparisons of Britain and Rome see: Caroline D. Eckhardt, "The Presence of Rome in the Middle English Chronicles of the Fourteenth Century," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 90, no. 2 (1991): 187-207; Francis Ingledew, The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae," *Speculum* 69, no. 3 (July 1994): 665-704, at 669-670, 677-678; Karen Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, (2010; repr., Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 8-53; Julia Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History in the Anglo-*

discussions surrounding Brutus's Trojan ancestry also address issues of perceived prestige and legitimacy that accompany such claims of noble descent.[2] One of non-lineage based components of Brutus's life that has received a notable amount of critical attention is the prophecy given to Brutus by the goddess Diana.

One of the integral episodes of the founding myth of Britain occurs when Brutus receives a prophecy from Diana that foretells the location of a new homeland for the Trojans. After invoking Diana, Brutus takes on a secondary role as the messenger who initially receives Diana's message before relaying it to his followers. The power dynamics of this episode are reflected in the existing critical discussions that are predominantly focused on Diana. If Brutus is mentioned, it is in connection to Diana and is usually in reference to the ritual(s) he performs and/or the prayer where he states his request for guidance.

Norman Prose Brut Chronicle (New York: Boydell and Brewer, 2017), pp. 32-46; Kellie Robertson, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 42-57, at 44-46; Fiona Tolhurst, "The Britons as Hebrews, Romans and Normans: Geoffrey of Monmouth's British Epic and Reflections of Empress Matilda," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 69-87, at 72-75; Jane Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*: The Ideological Transformation of the *Historia regum Britannie* in Twelfth Century Vernacular Chronicles," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 148-161, at 153-158. For commentary on Geoffrey's opposition to Roman historiography see: Eckhardt, "The Presence of Rome," 194-199 and Robertson, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography," 42-47.

[2] The claim of being descended from the Trojans who survived the Fall of Troy is not a uniquely British, or Roman, endeavor since the Franks, Normans, Saxons, and Turks made similar assertions. For further information on historical claims of Trojan lineage for political purposes see: Christian Baier, "Homer's Cultural Children: The Myth of Troy and European Identity," *History & Memory* 29, no 2 (Fall/Winter 2017): 35- 62, at 46; Sylvia Federico, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Medieval Cultures, 2003), pp. ix-xxiv; Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History," 675; Karl J. Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages," *Past & Present*, no. 137 (November 1992): 25-47, at 29; Richard. W. Southern, "The Classical Tradition from Einhard to Geoffrey of Monmouth," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 20 (1970):173-196, at 190; Elizabeth M. Tyler, "Trojans in Anglo-Saxon England: Precedent Without Descent," *Review of English Studies* 64, no. 263 (2013): 1-20, at 2-3.

One of the integral episodes of the founding myth of Britain occurs when Brutus receives a prophecy from Diana that foretells the location of a new homeland for the Trojans. After invoking Diana, Brutus takes on a secondary role as the messenger who initially receives Diana's message before relaying it to his followers. The power dynamics of this episode are reflected in the existing critical discussions that are predominantly focused on Diana. If Brutus is mentioned, it is in connection to Diana and is usually in reference to the ritual(s) he performs and/or the prayer where he states his request for guidance. The most in-depth examinations of this part of the narrative revolve around the portrayal of Diana, and how she is presented in increasingly misogynistic terms as the larger narrative is adapted, and how this episode exemplifies the stylistic differences between several different authors.[3] The actual prophecy that Diana gives to Brutus has instigated several discussions on Diana's authority and the legitimacy of her prophecy, but these engagements are usually precursors to larger conversations about the giants inhabiting the island of Britain when Brutus and the Trojans arrive.[4] Again, the primary focus of the larger conversation surrounding Brutus and Diana is what this episode does for Brutus, and the Britons by extension, rather than what is altered in the different adaptations that include this part of the founding myth of Britain.

---

[3] Fiona Tolhurst, a examines Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, the *Roman de Brut*, and Layamon's *Brut* through a feminist lens in *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 106-107, 165, 190-191, 209, 221. For additional commentary on the stylistic differences in Diana's prophecy see Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 28.

[4] For further commentary on Diana's prophesy see: Jeffery Jerome Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 33-34; Tamar Drukker, "Vision and History: Prophecy in the Middle English Prose "Brut" Chronicle," *Arthuriana* 12, no.4 (Winter 2002), 25-49, at 28; Michael A. Faletra, "Narrating the Matter of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Norman Colonization of Wales," The Chaucer Review 35. No. 1 (2000): 60-85, at 71.

The other aspect of Brutus's life that has garnered a large amount of attention pertains to

the division of the island between Brutus's three sons and how this division has been used for

political purposes.[5] After his death, the island of Britain is divided into three, with each one of

Brutus's sons receiving a portion of the island that would also derive its name after its first king

in the same way that "Britain" stems from Brutus:

> Locrinus, the first-born, received the central part of the island, afterwards called Loegria after him; Kamber received the region across the river Severn, now known as Wales, which for a long time was named Kambria after him, and for this reason the inhabitants still call themselves Cymry in British; Albanactus, the youngest, received the region known today as Scotland, which he names Albania after himself.[6]

This portion of Britain's legendary history is of particular historical significance as Edward I

used it as part of his justification for marching on and trying to bring Scotland under English

control.[7] The historical use of the founding myth of Britain is the primary reason why this

particular part of the narrative has received as much attention as it has. And, here again, the focus

---

[5] For further information on the use of this division for political reasons see: Susan Reynolds, "Medieval Origines Gentium and the Community of the Realm," *History* 68, no. 224 (1983): 375-390; Gabrielle Spiegel, "Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historical Narrative," *History and Theory* 22, no. 1 (1983): 43-53.

[6] *Historia*, ii.23.5-11: "*Locrinus, qui primogenitus fuerat, possedit mediam partem insulae, quae postea de nomine suo appellata est Loegria; Kamber autem partem illam quae est ultra Sabrinum flumen, quae nunc Gualia uocatur, quae de nomine ipsius postmodum Kambria multo tempore dicta fuit, unde adhuc gens patriae lingua Britannica sese Kambro appellat; at Albanactus iunior possedit patriam quae lingua nostra his temporibus appellatur Scotia et nomen ei ex nomine suo Albania dedit.*" Geoffrey of Monmouth is the creator of this legend and his adaptors would make subtle changes to this regarding the order of the brothers, and the some of the phrasing for why a brother received which part of the island but all version maintain the same division, Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 42.

[7] For further information on Edward's use of the founding myth of Britain see: James P. Carley and Julia Crick, "Constructing Albion's Past: An Annotated Edition of *De Origine Gigantum*," *Arthurian Literature* 13 (1995): 41-144, at 54-68 and Katherine H. Terrell, "Subversive Histories: Strategies of Identity in Scottish Historiography," in *Cultural Diversity in the British Middle Ages: Archipelago, Island, England*, ed. Jeffery Jerome Cohen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008): 153-172.

is on what this episode does for the Britons and their successors as opposed to focusing on how these details effect Brutus and his legacy.

There are a few discussions surrounding Brutus that deviate from this tangential trend by focusing on the actual figure of Brutus and how alterations made to his narrative influence his legacy. Some attention has been given to the change in Brutus's epithets from Brutus the Hateful (*Bruti exosus)*, which is found in the *Historia Brittonum*, to Brutus the Fortunate (*Felix Brutus*) that is first implemented by Layamon and utilized by later authors like the Gawain Poet.[8] Even though they do not explicitly address the change in Brutus's epithet, several brief character studies of Brutus exist and help to explain how the figure of Brutus has been changed in such a way that explains why such a change in epithet is warranted.[9]

---

[8] Joanna Bellis, "'When the world woxe old, it woxe warre old': History, Etymology, and National Identity, 1066-1337," by Joanna Bellis (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2016), 9-50 at 325-326; Theodore Silverstein, ""Sir Gawain," Dear Brutus, and Britain's Fortunate Founding: A Study in Comedy and Convention," *Modern Philology* 62, no.3 (1965): 189-206, at 196-202; Thea Summerfield, "Filling the Gap: Brutus in the *Historia Brittonum*, *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* MS F, and Geoffrey of Monmouth," *The Medieval Chronicle* 7, (2002): 85-102, at 93-96; Carole Weinberg, "Þat kinewurðe bed [a bed fit for a king]: Thematic Wordplay in Lawman's "Brut,"" *Arthuriana* 8. no. 3 (1998): 33-45, at 40-42.

[9] Robert W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966) pp. 104-106 initially describes the figure of Brutus that is presented in the *Historia Brittonum* with a particular focus on the different genealogies that are provided for Brutus. Later, Hanning mentions how Geoffrey of Monmouth's Brutus is derived from the Brutus of the *Historia Brittonum* before noting some of the character alterations that were made by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Hanning, *The Vision of History*, 156-160. Julia Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History* presents one of the most detailed analyses of Brutus that concentrates on how Brutus is portrayed in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* in contrast to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* and Wace's *Roman de Brut* pp. 25-32. Lisa M. Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters: The Foundation of Albion* (New York: Cambria Press, 2013), pp. 20; 37-38; 51-53; 106-118, discuses the founding myth of Britain in comparison to the Albina myth by drawing parallels between the figures of Brutus and Albina, the settler narrative of both figure and their followers, and how these respective legends were used for political purposes. Thea Summerfield's "Filling the Gap" briefly examines the presence of the Brutus narrative, as derived from the *Historia Brittonum*, in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* "F" Manuscript (British Library MS Cotton Domitian Aviii, ff. 30-70). After noting the narrative abridgements in this version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Summerfield, addresses how the

BASICS OF THE BRUTUS NARRATIVE

       The founding myth of Britain revolves around the figure of Brutus who would go on to become the eponymous founder and first king of Britain. Despite this place of prominence, Brutus is frequently relegated placed in the periphery of discussions on the founding myth of Britain. Excluding Brutus is also a historiographical norm in that Brutus and his contributions to the founding of Britain are completely omitted from Gildas's *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (*On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain*), Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*Ecclesiastical History of the English People*), William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum Anglorum* (*Deeds of the Kings of the English*), and the various versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Brutus may have been excluded by authors like Gildas and Bede out of ignorance, but the main reason for Brutus's absence is that the works that exclude his narrative are focused on Early English matters. Moreover, much of Britain's early history, legendary or not, is disregarded by authors who begin their historical accounts with Roman Britain, its collapse, and the arrival of the Germanic peoples who became "English" and eventually claimed sovereignty over much of the Island of Britain.

---

same narrative is employed and augmented in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*. This analysis concentrates on how Geoffrey's *Historia* changes the nature of the relationship of Brutus parents and the prophecy of Brutus's life. From here, Summerfield, provides a more comprehensive study of Brutus's post-exile life. Summerfield "Filling the Gap," 90-92; 93-95. In *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship* Fiona Tolhurst also presents a more thorough analysis of Brutus. Tolhurst's analysis addresses how the details concerning Brutus's conception, his relationship with his wife Ignogen, and the prophecy given to Brutus by the goddess Diana that foretells of a new homeland are changed over time. For the discussion of Brutus's conception see: pp. 73-74, 158-159, 190. For the discussion of Brutus and Ignogen see: pp. 105-106, 136, 159-160, 190-191, 207, 232-234. For the discussion of Brutus and Diana see: pp. 106-107, 190, 221-222.

Brutus make his first appearance in the *Historia Brittonum* which goes on to note that the

first inhabitants of Britain are from Brutus.[10] The *Historia Brittonum* does not provide many

details about Brutus's life or the details surrounding the founding of Britain. What details are

provided, are presented in a direct, matter of fact fashion that is more list than narrative. These

stylistic choices are motivated by the *Historia Brittonum*'s desire to "prove that the Britons had a

long and famous history comparable to the history of biblical peoples and of the Greeks and

Romans" by constructing British history in a way that fits "into the history of the world as

conceived by Jerome and others."[11] Quoting the Brutus myth from the *Historia Brittonum* to

serve as an overview of the Brutus myth is worthwhile given that this narrative serves as the

foundation from which all subsequent renditions ultimately derive, and its relative brevity:

> Aeneas founded Alba, and then married a wife, who bore him a son named
> Silvius. Silvius married a wife, who became pregnant, he sent word to his son
> Ascanius, to send a wizard to examine the wife, to discover what she had in the
> womb, whether it was male for female. The wizard examined the wife and
> returned, but he was killed by Ascanius because of his prophecy, for he told him
> that the woman had a male in her womb, who would be the child of death, for he
> would kill his father and his mother, and be hateful to all men. So it happened; for
> his mother dies in his birth, and the boy was reared, and named Britto. Much later,
> according to the wizard's prophecy, when he was playing with others, he killed
> his father with an arrow shot, not on purpose, but by accident. He was driven from
> Italy, and came to the islands of the Tyrrhene Sea, and was driven from Greece,
> because of the killing of Turnus, whom Aeneas had killed, and arrived in Gaul,
> where he founded the city of Tours, which is called Turnis; and later he came to
> this island, which is named Britannia from his name, and filled it with his race,
> and dwelt there. From that day, Britain has been inhabited until the present day.[12]

---

[10] *Historia Brittonum: British History and The Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris (London Phillimore, 1980), §10, 19; §10, 60. Hereafter cited as *Historia Brittonum*.

[11] Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England I c.550 – c.1307,* (1996; repr., New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 10-11; 11.

[12] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*Aeneas autem Albam condidit et postea uxorem duxit, et peperit ei filium nomine Silvium. Silvius autem duxit Uxorem, et gravida fuit, et nuntiatum est Aeneae quod nursus sua gravida esset, et misit ad Ascanium filium suum, ut mitteret magum suum ad considerandam uxorem, ut exploraret quid haberet in utero, si masculum vel faminam. Et magus consideravit uxorem et reversus est. Propter hanc vaticinationem magus occisus est ab Ascanio, quia dixit Ascanio quod masculum haberet in utero mulier et filius mortis erit,quia occidet*

The other accounts of Brutus in the *Historia Brittonum* are genealogical in nature and do not contain any details about Brutus's life. [13]

The Brutus narrative of the founding myth of Britain that is presented in the *Historia Brittonum* is taken up and expanded upon to varying degrees by Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth. The first book of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* incorporates a Brutus narrative that is largely derived from the *Historia Brittonom* as a means of addressing how the Britons initially came to inhabit the Island of Britain.[14] This short account of Brutus's life also contain some narrative expansions that are taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth.[15] Geoffrey's influence on Henry of Huntingdon is more fully realized in a letter written to Warin the Breton in Book Eight of the *Historia Anglorum* where Henry "sets out to give some brief excerpts from the *H[istoria] R[egum] B[ritanniae]*" that "combines extensive omissions with large additions" to Geoffrey's narrative.[16]

---

patrem suum et matrem suam et erit exosus omnibus hominibus. Sic evenit: in nativitate illius mulier mortua est, et nutritus est filius, et vocatum est nomen eius Britto. Post multum intervallum, iuxta vaticinationem magi, dum ipse ludebat cum aliis, ictu sagittae occidit patrem suum, non de industria, sed casu. Et expulsus est ab Italia, et arminilis fuit, et venit ad insulas maris Tirreni,et expulsus est a Graecis causa occisionis Turni, quem Aeneas occiderat, et pervenit ad Gallos usque, et ibi condidit civitatem Turonorum, quae covatur Turnis. Et postea ad istam pervenit insulam, quae a nomine suo accepit nomen, id est Brittaniam, et inplevit eam cum suo genere, et habitavit ibi. Ab illo autem die habitata est Brittannia usque in hodiernum diem." Historia Brittonum, §10, 60.

[13] The first genealogy begins with Aeneas and the second traces Brutus all the way to Adam. Another genealogy that stems from Noah is also contained in the Nennius recension of the *Histoira Brittonum. Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: *Historia Brittonum,* §10, 60. For further information on these genealogies and their contents see the previous chapter.

[14] Henry of Huntingdon, Histor*ia Anglorum: The History of the English People,* ed. and trans. Diana Greenway, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997). Hereafter cited as *Historia Anglorum.*

[15] *Historia Anglorum*, lxxii; lxxvii-lxxviii; xc-xci; ci-cii.

[16] *Historia Anglorum*, ci, cii. Greenway notes that "Generally Henry takes the material in the same order as the *HRB*, but he abbreviates drastically, omitting whole chapters– he quotes from or uses only about half the chapters of the *HRB*. He jumps from chapter to chapter, taking in two or three chapters in a single sentence" *Historia Anglorum*, ci. For more information on Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* see Neil Wright, "The Place of Henry of Huntingdon's *Epistola ad*

The *Historia Brittonum* may have been the creator of the Brutus legend, but Geoffrey of Monmouth is its greatest developer seeing as he is the one who creates a narrative for Brutus's lineage and expansive details of Brutus's life. The Galfridian expansions to the Brutus legend are so extensive that the overwhelming majority of the opening book of the *Historia regum Britanniae* is devoted to chronicling Brutus's life and the founding of Britain.[17] The narrative changes instituted by Geoffrey are so pervasive that that all subsequent accounts of Brutus can be definitively traced back to Geoffrey. Put simply, the *Historia regum Britanniae* expands the details of Brutus's life post-exile. According to Geoffrey, and his successors to varying degrees, the basic outline of this portion of the Brutus myth is as follows: As an exile, Brutus travels to Greece, liberates the Trojans from captivity and proceeds to sail around the Mediterranean looking for a new homeland for his followers. During this search Brutus and the Trojans make landfall at an island that contains a temple to the goddess Diana who tells Brutus of an island where the Trojans can settle and turn into a New Troy. En route to this new island home, Brutus and the Trojans find and are joined by another contingent of Trojans who fled from Troy with Antenor. The Trojans make another landfall in Gaul to resupply. They are confronted by Goffar the Pict who proceeds to attack the Trojans. While in Gaul, Brutus defeats Goffar, and builds the city of Tours, before finally leading the Trojans to the Island of Britain. The Trojans eradicate the indigenous giants, claim sovereignty over and begin settling the island that is called Britain.

Warinum in the Text-History of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*: A Preliminary Investigation," in *France and the British Isles in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Essays by Members of Girton College, Cambridge, in Memory of Ruth Morgan*, edited by Gillian Jondorf and David. N. Dumville, (Woodbridge, 1991), pp. 71-113.

[17] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain: An Edition and Translation of the De gestis Britonum*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 2009). Hereafter cited as *Historia*.

Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britanniae* was quickly followed by a variant version that preserved the majority of the contents of its predecessor.[18] Narrative abridgment is one of the favorite editorial tools of the adaptor of the *First Variant Version* who also proceeds to omit "the prefaces, both to the *Historia* and to the *Prophetie Merlini*; most personal details, self-references, and statements of intention by the author; a considerable number of other, often rhetorical passages – chiefly speeches, descriptions, or emotive episodes."[19] The stylistic changes produce a more coherent narrative structure that occasionally adds "fuller speeches, a more pious tone, an interest in pagan rites and some details from legendary Roman history."[20] These alterations allow the *First Variant Version* to retell Geoffrey's narrative in its own style. As such, the majority of the *Historia*'s is preserved, but some of the narrative alterations result in a less positive portrayal of certain figures and events in comparison to its predecessor.

The *First Variant Version* may be the first large scale textual successor to Geoffrey's work but Wace's *Roman de Brut* "was the most influential of all the revisions and vernacular versions of Geoffrey's *Historia*."[21] Here, Wace begins to modify the details of Geoffrey's newly established narrative to render a somewhat more favorable portrayal of Brutus and his Trojan follows, particularly when it comes to martial endeavors.[22] Layamon's *Brut* continues the pattern of building off of its predecessors, namely Wace and Geoffrey) and altering the narrative by

---

[18] *The History of the Kings of Britain: The First Variant Version*, ed. and trans. David W. Burchmore (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), x. Hereafter cited as *First Variant Version*.
[19] Neil Wright, *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth II: The First Variant Version*, (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988), pp. liii-liv.
[20] *Roman de Brut*, xviii
[21] Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 96.
[22] *Roman de Brut: A History of the British*, ed and trans. Judith Weiss (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2009), pp. xviii-xxiv. Hereafter cited as *Roman de Brut*. For additional information about Wace's style and textual additions see Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 149-155.

increasing the levels of religious rhetoric, misogyny, and violence. [23] With a few exceptions, the

changes made by Layamon help to further enhance Brutus's legacy.[24] This practice of expanding

the Brutus legend is inverted by the *Brut y Brenhinedd* of the Cotton Cleopatra B.v. manuscript

and the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*.[25] The narratives presented by these texts are still

derived from Geoffrey and Wace, but they abridge and omit different parts of Brutus's narrative.

The Cotton Cleopatra *Brut y Brenhinedd* and the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* are in

disagreement with how favorable events are presented despite their stylistic and editorial

similarities. Details are amended by the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* to Brutus's greatest benefit

whereas the *Oldest Anglo-Norman prose Brut* is considerably less complementary. [26]

      Brutus's early exploits have largely been ignored to the detriment of Brutus's legacy.

These episodes not only reveal how Brutus comes to power and matures, but they also help to

establish the British ideal of kingship. Examining how the figure of Brutus and the larger details

of these episodes are changed will provide greater insight into the development of the narrative

as a whole and the agendas of the respective authors who are adapting this myth. Furthermore,

---

[23] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 202-212. Layamon, *Brut*, ed, and trans. Rosamund Allen, (London: Everyman's Library, 1993). Hereafter cited as Layamon.

[24] For additional information about Layamon's style see: Layamon*,* xiv-xxxiii; Francoise Le Saux, *Layamon's Brut: The Poem and its Sources*, (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989), pp. 24-58; Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 206-209.

[25] *Brut y Brenhinedd: Cotton Cleopatra Version*, ed. and trans. John J. Parry (Cambridge MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1937), x. Hereafter cited as *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*. *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle*, ed. and trans. Julia Marvin, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 40-41; 57. Hereafter cited as *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*.

[26] For further information on the characteristics of the Cotton Cleopatra *Brut y Brenhinedd* see: *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, xii-xviii; Timothy J. Nelson, "Welsh Manipulations of the Matter of Britain," master's thesis, University of Arkansas, 2014); Brynley F. Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd Ynys Brydeyn*: A Fourteenth-Century Welsh Brut," in *Narrative in Celtic Tradition: Essays in Honor of Edgar M. Slotkin* (CSANA Yearbook, 8-9), ed. Joseph F. Eska (Hamilton, NY: Colgate University Press, 2011), pp. 215-227, at 221-227. For further information on the stylistic features of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* see: Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 24-32; *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* 5-15.

this study will reinforce how important Brutus is for the founding myth of Britain and how alterations to the events that define his legacy contribute to and reshape the creation of Britain. Attention will be devoted to how Brutus is presented as a leader and as a martial figure in addition to the ramifications of altering the prophecy surrounding the actual founding of Britain. Narrative changes will be examined in chronological order to show how the figure and narrative of Brutus develop over time.

TAKING UP THE TROJAN CAUSE

Following his expulsion from Italy, Brutus makes his way to Greece where he finds the Trojans who are living under Greek subjugation following the Fall of Troy. Brutus chooses to live among his fellow Trojans. During this unspecified amount of time, Brutus learns and hones the skills that not only make him renowned throughout the region, but also make him worthy of leadership. Geoffrey's penchant for using his greatest figures as exemplars is on full display when he notes that Brutus "began to manifest so much soldierly prowess and virtue that their kings and chiefs loved him above all the youths in that country; to wise men he had displayed his wisdom, to warriors his aggression and, whenever he acquired gold, silver or ornaments, he used to present everything to his men."[27] The magnitude of Brutus's virtues will gradually be eroded into generalized qualities as the specifics of this narrative are stripped over time. That is not to

---

[27] Layamon, *Brut*, xvi; *Historia*, i.7.71-75: "*In tantum autem militia et probitate uigere coepit ita ut a regibus et principibus prae omni iuuentute patriae amaretur; erat enim inter sapientes sapiens, inter bellicosos bellicosus, et quicquid auri uel argenti siue ornamentorum adquirebat totum militibus erogabat.*" The virtues that Geoffrey bestows upon Brutus are reflective of the contemporary notions of the types of virtues that a good leader and/or king should possess which further demonstrates "the value of Geoffrey's work has as a historical source is as a mirror of his own times, not as a record of the past. It reflects contemporary ideas and institutions" Gransden, *Historical Writing in England I*, 206.

say that Brutus will no longer serve as a heroic ideal, but the golden sheen to his legacy will not shine as brightly.

Brutus's rise to power and liberation of the Trojans from Greek captivity is completely excluded in Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*. The opening book that describes how Britain first came to be inhabited follows the *Historia Brittonum*'s account of Brutus's life which excluded any mention of Greece and simply remarks that Brutus "... was expelled from Italy, and came into Gaul, where he founded the city of the Turoni, called Tours, and invaded the Armorican plain. From the Armorican plain he came here and laid claim to the southern parts of the large island which—after his own name—he called Britain."[28] Geoffrey of Monmouth's influence is barely present in this section of Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin*. After he is exiled from Italy, it is revealed that Brutus "traveled to many lands" before noting that "[h]e [Brutus] built the city of Tours in Gaul. At last, journeying in a far-off country, he offered a sacrifice and sought an oracle from Diana."[29] From this point on, the derivative structure of the narrative shifts from the *Historia Brittonum* to Geoffrey's *Historia*.

The *First Variant Version* also notes that Brutus settles in with the Trojans living in Greek captivity once he "recogniz[ed] their common family lineage."[30] After joining the Trojans, Brutus continues to rise to a place of prominence among given that "he began to flourish so in

---

[28] *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 27: "*Quamobrem expulsus ab Italia peruenit in Galliam, ibique condita ciuitate turonorum que uocatur Turnis, inuasit tractum Armoricanum. De tractu autem Armoricano huc adueniens, australes sibi partes insule ingentis uendicauit, et ex nomine suo Britanniam uocauit.*"

[29] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*...diuersas terras adiit.*"; *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559-561: "*Edificauit autem urbem Turonis in Gallia. Tandem in terram longinquam proficiscens, oblato sacrificio responsum petiit a Diana.*"

[30] *First Variant Version*, i.7.2: "*Agnita igitur Brutus suorum convivium prosapia, moratus est apud eos.*"

military spirit and prowess that he was greatly admired among all his compatriots."[31] In this

version, Brutus martial capabilities are accentuated at the cost of his Galfridian social graces of

wisdom, and generosity which subsequently leads to a portrayal where Brutus is a better

equipped to lead an army than a people. The reduction of Brutus's broader leadership qualities in

this description is reflective of the *First Variant Version*'s habit of removing details and passages

where "Geoffrey expresses his personal values."[32]

Wace expedites Brutus's rise to prominence in Greece and simply states that "Brutus had

not been there long before he won a great reputation for daring, bravery, wisdom and

generosity."[33] The qualities attributed to Brutus in the *Roman de Brut* are still admirable, but

their generality and the manner in which they are presented do not do much to elevate him that

far above his peers. Layamon follows Wace's lead in diminishing Brutus's heroic qualities and

proceeds to further tarnish Brutus's legacy by implying that Brutus's rise to power had more to

do with his agreeable disposition that it did with his demonstrable ability to lead. According to

Layamon, "Brutus had only been in that land [Greece] for just a little while / Before he was

popular with all the people and won a great deal of support, / For he was very amiable, able to

please all men, / he was very generous—on this depends allegiance— / And everybody liked him

there, whoever set eyes on him."[34]

---

[31] *First Variant Version*, 1.7.2: "*Ibique in tantum militia et probitate vigere coepit, ut inter omnes patriotas valde amaretur.*"

[32] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 135.

[33] *Roman de Brut*, 7.

[34] Layamon, ll. 174-178: "*Nes Brutus i Þon londe; bute lutel ane wile. / Þat alle monnen he wes leof; ʒ muchele monscipe biwon. / for cniht he was swiÞe god; Þan folke to queme. / he was mete-custi; Þat is monscipe steor. / Alle monnen he was leof; Þe him lokeden on*" *Brut*, ll.174-178. Layamon's Middle English is reproduced from the Caligula A.ix manuscript of Laʒamon, *Brut*, ed. G.L. Brook and R.F. Leslie, *Layamon: Brut. Edited from British Museum MS Cotton Caligula A ix and British Museum MS Otho C xiii*, vol 1., London, 1963, l. 131. Hereafter cited as *Brut*.

The figure of Brutus is fleshed out a little bit more in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut,* but his rise prominence is still rooted in congeniality. By the time Brutus arrives in Greece, he "was very strong and handsome, and well-grown for his age, and friendly to everyone, and worthy and stalwart of body, and he made himself beloved by all."[35] This characterization of Brutus is a reflection of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s removal of "the individually heroic, the marvelous, the glamorous, and the erotic" in favor of "homely virtues."[36] This type of preoccupation effectively reduces Brutus to being the prom-king of antiquity whose rise to power is predicated on his physical appearance and popularity. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* deviates from its editorial norm by expanding on the narrative, albeit slightly. According to the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, "Brutus went to Greece and devoted himself to arms, to jousts, and to tournaments, until his fame flew over the face of the kingdoms, for he was open-handed, and wise, and handsome, and comely, and strong, and brave, and agreeable, and loved by all; and all good things in the world that fell to him he would give to anyone who desired them."[37] These expansions not only reinvest Brutus with the ideal kingly virtues originally advanced by Geoffrey of Monmouth, but these Galfridian ideals are also amplified, in terms of quantity and the quality thereof.

Once his leadership qualities and/or magnetic personality have been established, Brutus agrees to lead the Trojans and liberate them from their Greek captors. The manner in which Brutus is offered this position of leadership, and the conditions on which he accepts, are altered

---

[35] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.

[36] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 15.

[37] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 10: "*Ac yna y kyrchawt brutus groec ac ymrodi a oruc ef y arueu. Y ymwaneu. Ac y tornemanneu. Yny yttoed y glod yn hehedec dros wyneb y teyrnassoed. Canys hael oed a doeth a thec athelediw. Achryf adewr. Adigryf acharedic gan bawb. A phop da or byd or adamchweeinei idaw. Ef ay rodei y bawb or ay mynney.*"

in different ways that result is some less than honorable portrayals of Brutus and those who would follow him. According to Geoffrey's *Historia*, when Brutus arrived in Greece "he discovered the descendants of Helenus, Priam's son, held in slavery under the power of the Greek king Pandrasus ... Once Brutus learned of their descent from his ancient countrymen, he lived among them."[38] This is a practical decision given Brutus's current status as an exile but choosing to live with his countrymen in their captivity makes Brutus a man of the people. The import of this decision is further compounded by Brutus's descent from Trojan nobility and all of the social comforts that were afforded to him before his exile. These features inattentional create a parallel between Brutus and his Biblical counterpart Moses.[39] Eventually, "[a]s Brutus' fame spread through every land, Trojans began to flock to him, asking that he be their leader and free them from their bondage to the Greeks; it would be a simple matter, they claimed, since their population in that land had now grown to seven thousand, not counting women and children."[40] The Trojan cause is also supported by a noble, Greek youth named Assaracus whose mother was Trojan. Assaracus is in possession of three castles that were gifted to him by his father as he lay on his deathbed. The Trojans have been helping Assaracus fend off Greek raids from lead by Assaracus's, half-brother who is disputing Assaracus's inheritance of the castles on the grounds

---

[38] *Historia*, i.7.66-68; 70-71: "*Exulatus ergo adiuit partes Graeciae et inuenit progeniem Heleni filii Priami, quae sub potestate Pandrasi regis Graecorum in seruitutem tenebatur...Agnita igitur ueterum conciuium prosapia, moratus est Brutus apud eos.*"

[39] For further information discussing the parallels between Brutus and Moses see: Donald L. Hoffman, The Third British Emperor," *Arthurian Interpretations* 15, no. 2 (Spring 1984): pp.1-10, at 3; Francis Ingledew, The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia. Regum Britanniae," *Speculum* 69, no 3 (July 1994): 665-704, at 679 n. 60; 698-698; Tolhurst, "The Britons as Hebrews, Romans, and Normans," 70-71.

[40] *Historia*, i.7.75-79: "*Diuulgata itaque per uniuersas naiones ipsius fama, Troiani coeperunt ad eum confluere, orantes ut ipso duce a seruitute Graecorum liberarentur, quod leuiter fieri asserebant, cum in tantum iam infra patriam multiplicati essent ita ut septem milia, exceptis paruulis et mulieribus, computarentur.*"

that he is Greek on both sides, unlike Assaracus whose mother was a Trojan concubine. The preexisting Trojan alliance with Assaracus influences Brutus's decision to accept the Trojan proposition. Brutus demonstrates the admirable ability to make calculated decisions when it is revealed that "Brutus felt confident enough to agree to their request" after "considering the Trojans' number and his ready access to Assaracus' three castles."[41]

Brutus's rise to power among his fellow Trojans is surprisingly militant in nature given the *First Variant Version*'s fondness for omitting "battle-descriptions and related passages" as part of a larger tendency of removing "more rhetorically and emotionally charged passages."[42] As was the case in Geoffrey's *Historia*, "once word of [Brutus's] virtue had spread throughout the land, all those of Trojan descent who lived there began to gather around him, asking to be freed from slavery to the Greeks if any way could be found to do this."[43] However, it becomes rampantly apparent that the Trojans are looking for a general and not a king when they inform Brutus that liberating them from the Greeks who had enslaved them "...if they had a leader to command their numbers valorously in battle against the Greeks."[44] The Trojans are in a relatively favorable position as far as assets are concerned given that "their people had multiplied so much in that land that they could now be reckoned as seven thousand in arms, excluding women and children."[45] Moreover, the Trojans cause is also supported by Assaracus whose

---

[41] *Historia*, i.7.86-87 "*Inspiciens ergo Brutus et uirorum multitudinem et Assaraci castella quae sibi patebant, securius petitioni illorum adquieuit.*"

[42] Wright, *First Variant Version*, xli.

[43] *First Variant Version*, 1.7.2: "*Divulgata itaque per universam terram fama probitatis ipsus, coeperunt ad eum confluere omnes qui de genere Troianorum ibidem morabantur, orantes ut si fieri posset a servitute Graecorum liberarentur.*"

[44] *First Variant Version*, i.7.2: "*Quod fieri posse asserebant, si ducem haberent, qui eorum multitudinem in bello contra Graecos gnaviter regere nosset.*"

[45] *First Variant Version*, i.7.3: "*In tantum enim infra patriam multiplicati erant ut septem milia cum armis, exceptis parvulis et mulieribus, computarentur.*"

Galfridian backstory is preserved along with his possession of the three castles he inherited from his father.[46] The Trojans are presented in a rather favorable light seeing as they are upcoming and forthright in stating their case and the assets at their disposal. It is implied that Brutus will become the leader of the Trojan forces, but the Trojans do not need to beg or bribe Brutus to join their side as later adaptors will attest. Another facet of Brutus character is revealed in recounting the motivations for his decision to assist the Trojans. Brutus demonstrates a measure of prudence by agreeing to the Trojan "request with greater confidence" after "considering both the number of their men and the availability of [Assaracus's] fortifications."[47]

Wace's interest in human emotion is present when he stresses the communal bonds and overall plight of the Trojans living in Greek captivity in an attempt to garner sympathy for them.[48] However, the increasingly transactional nature of their appeal to Brutus diminishes the magnanimity of Brutus and the fortitude of the Trojans. In the *Roman de Brut*, Brutus finds "many of his own family" being kept in servitude after being taken captive with many other Trojans following the destruction of Troy but there is no mention of Brutus's willingness to live with them as originally reported by Geoffrey of Monmouth.[49] It is to be understood that the Trojans are acting out of desperation, which is completely understandable given the circumstance, but the manner in which they petition for Brutus's assistance borders on bribery. After mentioning that Brutus "won a great reputation for daring, bravery, wisdom, and generosity," Wace immediately states that Brutus's "kin greatly honoured him and so did all the captives. They made him gifts and promises and very often told him that, if he dared, he could be

---

[46] *First Variant Version*, i.7.3-4.

[47] *First Variant Version*, i.7.4: "*Inspiciens ergo Brutus et virorum multitudinem et munitionum opportunitatem securius petitioni illorum acquievit.*"

[48] *Roman de Brut*, xxii; Layamon, *Brut*, xvi.

[49] *Roman de Brut,* 5.

the one to release them from slavery."[50] The Trojans continue to make their case by noting that "if they had a leader to support and teach them and to lead them in battle, he could easily deliver them from captivity" and mentioning that the Trojan contingent consisted of "a good seven thousand fine brave knights, besides foot-soldiers, servants, women and children."[51] The extent of the Trojans' desperation is on full display when Wace states that "they would willingly suffer great distress in order to live in peace, free from servitude: this was pleasing to one and all."[52] The Trojans continue to incentivize Brutus to accepting their offer by saying that "if he wished to lead them, they would raise him to a duke."[53]

The figure of Assaracus and the role he plays in this episode is manipulated by Wace to elevate and demonstrate the communal bonds of the Trojans and as another way to secure Brutus's support and eventual rise to power. Assaracus's situation regarding the dispute over his three castles, remains unchanged from its Galfridian origin. The *Roman de Brut* uses Assaracus to reinforce Trojan willingness to assist one another on the basis of a shared lineage and the direness of their current situation by stating that "Assaracus defended himself, held the land by force, and favoured the Trojans, because he belonged to their nation, nor did they have any support except him, throughout Greece."[54] Assaracus is also the one who manages to secure Brutus's support seeing as "it was through his advice and will they made Brutus their lord and through his counsel and help that Brutus assumed power over them."[55]

---

[50] *Roman de Brut*, 7.
[51] *Roman de Brut*, 7.
[52] *Roman de Brut*, 7.
[53] *Roman de Brut*, 7.
[54] *Roman de Brut*, 7.
[55] *Roman de Brut*, 7.

Wace's alterations are effective in heightening the precariousness of the Trojans which in turn helps to justify the lengths that they are willing to go to in order to secure Brutus as the leader who will hopefully raise them from persecution. The increased prominence of Assaracus in the *Roman de Brut* casts a small shadow on Brutus's legacy in that Assaracus appears to be the first person propositioned by the Trojans. This account also does not do Brutus many favors by presenting him as the reluctant mercenary of sorts whose allegiance is effectively bought through gifts, promises, and social position.

The narrative amendments made by Wace are adapted by Layamon who proceeds to make his own modifications that yield a more favorable account of all Trojan parties. Brutus continues to find his fellow Trojans, and many of his own family, living as slaves in Greece following the Fall of Troy. In a similar fashion, Assaracus is still the son of a Trojan concubine who is fighting his half-brother for control of the castles that Assaracus inherited from their father with "very much support from his mighty tribe / From the males of Troy-town related to his mother: / Because of their relationship love was strong between them."[56] The gift giving, suggested courses of action, the number of available fighters, the preexisting support and advise from Assaracus, the offer of a dukedom in exchange for help, and the willingness to endure many hardships in exchange for freedom that appear in in the *Roman de Brut* are still present but Layamon produces a more favorable account of the Trojans by diminishing the despondency that motivates their behavior. Layamon follows Wace's lead by claiming that initially, the Trojans "gave to him [Brutus] their treasure and treated him most kindly."[57] From here, Layamon

---

[56] Layamon, ll. 206-208: "*ah he hefde muchele strengþe; of meren his cunne. / of þan Troyscen monnen; þe weren his moder isib. / for þare sibe-laȝe; luue hem wes bi-tweonen*" *Brut*, ll. 206-208.

[57] Layamon, l. 179: "*heo him ȝeuen gersume; ⁊ feire hine gretten*" *Brut*, l. 179.

deviates from his predecessors by incorporating a secretive component to the manner in which

Brutus is being propositioned by the Trojans, which in turn adds an unprecedented level of

discretion. Instead of openly asking Brutus for assistance, or goading him into action, the Trojans

in Layamon's *Brut*

> ...said to him, as wise advice, and with secret whispers,
> That if he were so daring as to hard acting,
> And would then convey them out of that same country,
> Out of their slavery, so that they would be free,
> Then they would appoint him duke, and director of the people.[58]

The secretive nature of the Trojans is brought up again when "Assaracus gave counsel, in very

covert secrecy, / That the folk of Troy-town should firmly press forward, / And taking that knight

Brutus, should make him their Duke."[59] This type discretion demonstrates a greater sense of

Trojan unity and commitment to self-preservation that is rooted in practicality, all of which may

have helped to convince that Brutus that the Trojans where worth supporting on the basis of their

virtue, and potential for success as opposed to what they could offer him in exchange for his

services.

This episode is notably truncated in the *Oldest Version of the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*

which is not only in keeping with its stylistic tendencies, but it also allows Brutus to remain the

focal point of the narrative. When Brutus arrives in Greece, he finds "seven thousand men of

Trojan lineage, as the history says, besides women and children, who were all held in captivity

and servitude to King Pandras[us] of Greece."[60] This version of events maintains the core

---

[58] Layamon, ll. 180-184: "*heo seiden him mid rede; ⁊ mid stilliche runen. / ȝif he were swa þriste; ⁊ he hit don durste. / þat he heom wolde leaden; out of þane leoden. / out of þeowedome; freo þat heo weoren. / heo hine wolden maken duc; ⁊deme ofer his folke*" *Brut*, ll. 180-184.

[59] Layamon, ll. 209-211: "*Assaracus hit redde; mid diȝenliche runen. / þat þat Troynisce folc; mid his fulle fultume. / nomen þene cniht Brutun; ⁊ makeden hine to duke*" *Brut*, ll. 209-211.

[60] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.

elements of Brutus finding a large contingent of captive Trojans in Greece but the only thing that

Brutus has in common with these Trojans is a shared Trojan lineage that is diluted by the

absence of any Trojan who has a clear and direct filial relation to Brutus. In this account, Brutus

makes himself so beloved that "King Pandras[us] heard of [Brutus's] ways and his goodness and

had him come live with him, and he became the king's intimate and very much beloved by

him."[61] Brutus becoming intimate with the man who is keeping his fellow Trojans in captivity

appears to be the result of ignorance given that Brutus remains "with the king long enough that

the and the Trojans spoke together of their lineage and fellowship" which allows the Trojans to

complain to Brutus about "their suffering and servitude, and of the many humiliations that the

king visited on them."[62]

The Trojan plea for Brutus's assistance reflects the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s

desire to "emphasize the centrality of the people's support – and counsel – to Brut's success" by

making Brutus's Trojan heritage the foundation of this request for help.[63] In this account, the

Trojans

> said to Brut "You are a lord of our lineage, a strong and powerful man: be our
> sworn protector, our lord and our leader, and we will become your men and do
> your will and your command to the utmost in everything. And you will deliver us
> from our captivity and servitude, and we will fight the king, for by the grace of
> God we will defeat him. And we will make you a king of the land, and we will do
> you homage, and we will hold our land from you, and thus you will do honor to
> yourself and to your whole Trojan lineage."[64]

Brutus accepts out of "pity for them and their servitude."[65]

---

[61] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.
[62] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.
[63] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 27.
[64] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.
[65] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 75.

The directness of the Trojans, the severity of their plight, and the sincerity of their dealings elevates the standing of both parties in this account. The previous omission of Trojan nobility from those living in Greece and the exclusion of Assaracus from the entirety of the narrative weakens the bargaining position of the Trojans who do not have anything to offer Brutus aside from their fealty which Brutus could potential claim anyway. Brutus is also presented more compassionately in that his decision to help his fellow Trojans is based on sympathy and acknowledgement of a shared lineage as opposed to succumbing to flattery, gifts, and/or a position of leadership over a group whose preexisting assets create a higher potential for success.

In the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, the events surrounding Brutus's rise to power over the Trojan who he plans on assisting and liberating are consistent with those established in Geoffrey's *Historia* but their chronological sequence is altered along with the level of detail to present Brutus and the Trojans in the best possible light. The adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* deviates from their predecessors by allowing Brutus to rise to great heights in Greece without any assistance from the Trojans who are also in Greece. The Trojans do not even make an appearance until after Brutus's "fame flew over the face of the kingdom."[66] However, once the Trojans "saw that Brutus was so successful as he was, they came to him and allied themselves to him [because of] their descent form the same nation."[67] It is worth noting that it is only after Brutus and the Trojans have become allied on the basis of their shared lineage that the Trojans broached the subject of their subjugation. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* strengthens the resolve of the Trojans in this episode by claiming that proceeded to tell Brutus "how heavy were

---

[66] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 10: "*Yny yttoed y glod yn hehedec dros wyneb y teyrnassoed.*"
[67] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 10: "*...brutus mor lwydiannus ac ydoed. Dyuot a orugant attaw ac ymgystlwn ac ef ev hanuot or vn genedyl.*"

their servitude and their suffering under Pandrasus the Greek king, and they asked him for God's sake to try to deliver them from this servitude, for they would rather suffer the pain of death than remain in that servitude."[68] Brutus is also placed in a better light given that after he "understood their kinship with him and how great were their suffering and their affliction, he sympathized with them so that it was all one to him whether he lived or died."[69] Brutus's acknowledgement of his Trojan heritage and the level of sympathy he feels makes Brutus a kindred spirit to his kin.

The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut's* adapter continues to invert the sequence of events to the betterment of Brutus and his fellow Trojans by introducing the presence of Assaracus and his castles after Brutus agrees to help. After deliberating things with Brutus after he gives his assent, they sent word to Assaracus whose backstory remains unchanged.[70] Brutus and Assaracus confer and it is at this this point in the narrative that these two men take stock of the situation by deciding "to see how many fighting men could join them; and what they found was seven thousand good men, besides women and children."[71] Here, Brutus's legacy is strengthened by his willingness to assist his countrymen out of sympathy and acknowledgement of a shared ancestry. Moreover, the decision to make Brutus the leader of the Trojans is made well after their alliance was formed and the situation had been appraised by everyone involved seeing as "after these men had assembled and consulted together they decided to make Brutus prince over them and to

---

[68] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 10: "*a menegi meynt oed eu kaythiwet ac ev poen adan pandrassus vrenhin groec. Ac eruynneit yr duw keisiaw ohonaw ev dwyn or gaethiwet honno. Canys gwell oed ganthunt diodef gloes angheu no bod yn y geythiwet honno.*

[69] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 10: "*A gwedy dyall o brutus eu kerennyt ac ef. A meint oed eu poen ac eu gouyt. Kyt doluriaw ac wynt a oruc.hyt nad oed well ganthaw y vew no y varw.*"

[70] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 10-11

[71] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 11: "*a gwedy ymgynghor o brutus ac assaracus. Yn eu kynghor y cawssant edrych pa amkan o wyr ymlad y gellit dyuot ydaw. Sef y caffant o wyr da hep gwraged na meibion seith mil*"

fortify the three castles of Assaracus with men an arms and food and drink and engines of war."[72] The more deliberate nature of these Trojans is amplified to their benefit by waiting until this moment to elevate Brutus as their prince. In doing so, the Trojans have the time and opportunity to vet Brutus's leadership qualities before truly granting him with power over them.

During this episode, the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*'s proclivity for altering details to create a positive spin on things is on full display. The Trojans are still oppressed by the Greeks, but the desperation of the earlier adaptions has been changed to a hardened resolve that is derived from an intense desire for freedom. Brutus's assistance is secured on the understanding of a shared descent and sympathy that is utterly devoid of excessive flattery, bribes, or other promises that are tainted by the presence of *quid pro quo*. Brutus's decision is motivated by compassion for his kin which is reinforced by the post-agreement revelation of Trojan assets that were used in earlier accounts to sway or buy Brutus's support.

Brutus comes to power rather honestly in that his social elevation is merit based as opposed to marrying into the right family, usurping his predecessor, rigging an election, or claiming sovereignty through right of conquest. Some traces of Brutus's nobility contribute to his rise to a position of prominence over the Trojans, but the significance of his lineage has more to do with acknowledging him as a member of the Trojan community and strengthening those social bonds than it does with restoring the aristocracy with Brutus who is a scion of this royal family. As this narrative develops, the figure of Brutus is slowly diminished in regard to the how his initial reputation is built, and the reasons behind his decision to cast his lot in with the Trojans. Like their newly appointed leader, the depiction of the Trojans also fluctuates over time

---

[72]*Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 11: "*a gwedy dyuot ynny o wyr y gyd yn eu kyghor y caussant gwneithur brutus yn dywyssawc arnadunt. achadarnhau tri chastell assaracus o wyr ac arueu. a bwyd a diawt. ac ermygion ymlad.*"

and in some less than flattering ways. The earlier accounts have the Trojan population expanding and flourishing to an extent where they are in a position to entice Brutus with gifts and other forms of compensation, but the sheer transactional nature of this type agreement besmirches the legacy of everyone involved.[73] The dignity of the Trojans is directly inverted from their station in that the better off they are, the worse they are presented and vice versa. Incidentally, the relationship between the portrayal of Brutus and his Trojans is also inverted in a similar manner given that, as time progresses, Brutus's actions become more honorable as the Trojans become increasingly despondent. Even though it will take elements from all of its predecessors and deploy the same affinity for abridgment as its temporal contemporary, the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* is the outlier in this narrative development. This deviation is the predicated on the ambition of the text which is to present as favorable an account as plausibly possible.

---

[73] In Geoffrey's *Historia* the Trojan population had "grown to seven thousand, not counting women and children" "*cum in tantum iam infra patriam multiplicati essent ita ut septem milia, eceptis paruulis e mulieribus, computarentus.*" *Historia*, i.7.77-79; The *First Variant Version* records that "their people had multiplied so much in that land that they could now be reckoned as seven thousand in arms, excluding women and children." "*In tantum enim infra patriam multiplicati erant ut septem milia cum armis, exceptis parvulis et mulieribus, computarentur.*" *First Variant Version*, i.7.3; The Trojans in the *Roman de Brut* "had greatly multiplied...there were a good seven thousand fine brave knights, besides foot-soldiers, servants, women, and children..." *Roman de Brut*, 5-7; In Layamon's *Brut*, "Many years had gone by since his [Brutus's] arrive there: [in Greece] / The men had matured and the women grown gorgeous, / and their flocks were very fruitful..." and the Trojan population consisted of "...seven thousand sturdy warriors, / not counting women, who cannot handle weapons, / Children and herdsmen who are to keep [their] cattle." Layamon, ll. 171-173: "*Moni ȝer was agan; seo[ð]ðen his cun hider com. / þa wepmen weren iwexan; þa wimen wel iþowene. / ƺ heore nutene neotsume weren*" *Brut*, ll. 171-173; Layamon, ll. 185-187: "*We habbeð seoue þusun[d]; of gode cnihten. / wið-outen wifmen; þe noht ne cunnen of wepnen. / children ƺ hinen; þa ure nete sculen ȝemen*" *Brut*, ll. 185-187; in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* Brutus's finds "Seven thousand men of Trojan lineage, as the history says, besides women and children..."75; The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* notes that there are "seven thousand good men, besides women and children." "*Sef y caffant o wyr da hep gwraged na meibion seith mil.*" *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 11.

<u>MARTIAL MATTERS</u>

Brutus has done very little to justify the position of leadership that he has been elevated to by the Trojans. In these accounts Brutus's reputation proceeds him and garners the attention of the Trojans who approach and ask him for assistance. After Brutus agrees to support the Trojan cause, there are two moments where his actions validate his rise to power: the initial attack launched against the Greeks lead by King Pandrasus and the stratagem employed by Brutus that results in the capturing, and subsequent ransoming, of King Pandrasus which secures freedom for the Trojans. The former highlights Brutus's fighting ability while the latter showcases his tactical capabilities. These combative components help to shine a light on what type of King Brutus will become and the martial legacy the Trojans will create en route to rebuilding Troy.

The *Historia Brittonum* makes a fleeting reference to Brutus's time in Greece by stating that Brutus "was driven from Italy, and came to the islands of the Tyrrhene Sea, and was driven from Greece, because of the killing of Turnus, whom Aeneas had killed, and arrived in Gaul...."[74] Geoffrey of Monmouth provides a revisionist history for Brutus that is more dignified than being driven away on account of Aeneas's actions. In keeping with tradition, later adaptors of this myth will use Geoffrey's work as the basis for their own. In the *Historia regum Britanniae*, shortly after Brutus joins the Trojan cause he sends a letter to the Greek Pandrasus that reads:

> 'Brutus, leader of the survivors from Troy, sends greetings to Pandrasus, king of the Greeks. It was unjust that people descended from the famous stock of Dardanus should be treated in your kingdom otherwise than their serene nobility demanded, and so they have retired to the heart of the forest; in order to maintain their freedom, they preferred to eke out their lives eating meat and grass like wild beasts, rather than to enjoy every delicacy, while still enduring the yoke of slavery

---

[74] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*Et expulsus est ab Italia, et arminilis fuit, et venit ad insulas maris Tirreni, et expulsus est a Graecis causa occisionis Turni, quem Aeneas occiderat, et pervenit ad Gallos usque,*" *Historia Brittonum* §10, 60.

to you. If your highness' power is offended by this, you should not criticize but pardon them, since every captive will always wish to recover his former liberty. Taking pity on them, therefore, do not refuse to restore their lost freedom or forbid them to stay in the forest glades where they are seeking refuge from bondage. Otherwise, grant them permission to depart and join foreign nations.[75]

King Pandrasus is enraged by the contents of this missive to the point that he amasses an army to prevent Brutus and his Trojans from escaping.[76] This series of events leads to conflict where Brutus is able to put his martial prowess on display. Geoffrey's narrative structure is preserved by his inheritors who will augment the fighting capabilities of Brutus and his Trojans by increasing the violence of this engagement, turning the Trojan victory to a decisive one that ends the conflict, and by creating a new scenario that shines the brightest light on the Trojans.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, and Layamon describe Brutus preparing and springing an ambush on the Greeks after he hears of Pandrasus's pursuit.[77] Brutus also launches an ambush on the Greeks in the *First Variant Version* but there is no premeditative information for this maneuver. Instead, it is just recorded that after receiving Brutus's missive and gathering an army against the Trojans, Pandrasus "came at once to the city of Sparatinum, against which Brutus

---

[75] *Historia*, i.8.92-103: "*Pandraso regi Graecorum Brutus dux reliquiarum Troiae Salutem. Quia indignum fuerat gentem praeclaro denere Dardani ortam aliter in regno tuo tractari quam serenitas nobilitatis eius expeteret, sese infra abdita nemorum recepit; praeferebat namque ferino ritu, carnibus uidelicet et herbis, uitam cum libertate sustentare quam uniuersis deliciis refocillata diutius sub iugo seruitutis tuae permanere. Quod si celsitudinem potentiae tuae offendit, non est ei imputandum sed uenia adhibenda, cum cuiusque captiui communis sit intentio uelle ad pristinam dignitatem redire. Misericordia igitur super eam motus, amissam libertatem largiri digneris et saltus nemorum quos ut seruitutem diffugeret occupauit eam habitare permittas. Sin autem, concede ut ad aliarum terrarum nationes cum licentia tua abscedant.*"

[76] Brutus letter, its contents, and Pandrasus response are preserved in every adaptation of Geoffrey's *Historia* with the exception of the *Historia Anglorum* which completely omits Brutus's activities in Greece. It is also worth noting that the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* reduces Brutus's letter down to mere reportage by stating that the Trojans "sent word to King Pandras[us] that he should give them leave to pass freely out of his land, because they wished to remain no longer in subjection to him" 77. Each successive adaptor will elevate the plight of the Trojans and their desire for freedom as justifications for their actions.

[77] *Historia*, i.9.107-112; *Roman de Brut*, 9; Layamon's *Brut* lns. 257-268.

unexpectedly launched an attack with three thousand hardy Trojans, violently assaulting and inflicting great slaughter on the Greeks."[78] Here, the narrative is compressed in keeping with the *First Variant Version*'s penchant for abridging passages that related to battles, or descriptions thereof.[79] The tactics deployed by Brutus are unclear in *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, which is more concerned with the outcome of the battle than the memorable deeds exhibited in it.[80] This version simply remarks that "[t]he king [Pandrasus] was angered and swore that he would kill them all, and he mustered a very great army and a great force and went after them to do battle. But Brut and his men robustly defended themselves..."[81] The events of this engagement are revised almost to the point of inversion in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* in an attempt to highlight that the Greeks are instigating conflict thus justifying the actions of the Trojans who are acting in self-defense. In this version of events, when the Greeks reach the Trojans near the Akalon river, the Greeks "rushed into the river because of their anger and their vehemence. And after Brutus saw that they had got through the river, because of the notion that he could withstand them he fell among them, and his army with him..."[82]

Not only does this engagement allow Brutus to demonstrate his strategic inclinations but it also allows him to display his fighting prowess. Unsurprisingly, chaos ensues once Brutus springs the ambush on the unsuspecting Greeks. The *Historia regum Britanniae* and Layamon's *Brut* use this moment as an opportunity to exhibit the fighting prowess of Brutus and his Trojans

---

[78] *First Variant Version*, i.9.1: "*Oppidumque mox Sparatinum adiit, cui Brutus cum tribus milibus fortium Troianorum obvius ex inproviso invasit et irruptionem in Grecos et stragem magnam fecit.*"

[79] Wright, *First Variant Version*, lxxi.

[80] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 61.

[81] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 77.

[82] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 12: "*Kyrchu yr auon a orugant herwyd eu llit ac eu hangerd. A gwedy gwelet o brutus wynt gwedy eu dyuot drwot yr amkan y gallei ef ymerbynneit ac wynt. Krychu a oruc yn eu plith ay lu gyt ac ef....*"

in increasingly violent terms that do not place Brutus in the best light. The Trojans in Geoffrey's

Historia take their cue from Brutus in dispatching the Greeks without restraint:

> Thus the attack was launched and the Trojans charged in, making a bold effort to cut down the enemy. The Greeks were immediately thunderstruck, fled in all directions and, led by their king, rushed to cross the river Akalon, which flowed near by; but as they crossed, they were at the mercy of its swirling waters. Brutus pursued the fugitives, cutting down some in the water and some on the river-bank, and rejoicing to see them die in either fashion as he dashed from place to place[83]

The observation that "there is an element of sadism in Geoffrey's work" is on full display when

the *Historia* continues to note the savagery of the Trojans after Antigonius's counterattack fails

by stating that this counterattack:[84]

> had little or no effect; for the Trojans had the protection of their weapons whilst the Greeks were unarmed. Thus the Trojans fought all the more boldly, inflicting dreadful slaughter on their opponents and not relaxing their efforts until almost all the Greeks had been killed and Antigonus and his comrade Anacletus captured. [85]

There is no hiding the atrocity of war, but Brutus and his Trojans seem to relish in their

bloodshed. The opportunity to exact revenge on one's oppressor can explain such actions but not

to the magnitude that is described here, especially when it comes to Brutus himself who is seen

to be "rejoicing to see them die."[86] Ultimately, the Trojans are seen to be capable fighters, which

is to be respected, but their bloodlust is not.

---

[83] *Historia*, i.9.112-118: "*Impetu itaque facto, inuadunt acriter Troiani et stragem ingerere nituntur. Porro Graeci confestim stupefacti in omnes partes dilabuntur et rege suo praecedente fluuium Akalon, qui prope fluebat, transire festinant; at in transeundo infra uoraginem fluctus periclitantur. Quos diffugientes Grutus infestat, infestatos uero partim in undis partim super ripam prosternit, et nunc hac nunc illac discurrens duplicem necem ipsis ingestam esse laetatur.*"

[84] Gransden, *Historical Writing in England I*, 208.

[85] *Historia*, i.9.123-126: "*Sed parum uel minime profecit; nam troes armis muniti erant, ceteri uero inermes. Vnde audatiores insistentes caedem miserandam inferebant nec eos hoc modo infestare quieuerunt donec cunctis fere interfectis Antigonum et Anacletum eiusdem socium retinuerunt.*"

[86] *Historia*, i.9.116-117.

The violence that accompanies the battle scenes in Geoffrey's *Historia* is a frequent casualty of the *First Variant Version*'s desire to condense the narrative.[87] The details that survive this type of abridgement are also altered in an attempt to remove some of the emotionally charged rhetoric that is used when battles are described. Unlike Geoffrey's *Historia* where violence carries the day, the ambush itself proves to be the deciding factor in this encounter of the *First Variant Version* given that "the astonished Greeks, who were fearing no such thing, scattered in all directions and rushed to cross the River Akalon, which flowed nearby; many perished in the attempt."[88] Brutus still pursues "those who were fleeing, and with his sword he cut down some of them in the water and some on the banks of the river" which is far cry from the savagery exhibited Brutus's actions as recounted by Geoffrey of Monmouth.[89] Antigonus's counterattack also fails in this account and the rest of the battle is succinctly wrapped up when the *First Variant Version* relates that "...bravely pressing on, the Trojans completed the wretched slaughter and took Antigonus captive."[90] There is a brutal efficiency is this narrative style that allows the Trojans, and Brutus in particular, to maintain and display their martial prowess in such a way that does not exalt the atrocities of war.

Likewise, in describing the horrors of battle The *Roman de Brut* reveals restraint where Geoffrey's *Historia* parades indulgence. After launching his ambush, Brutus still makes "a great slaughter of the king's men" and "[t]he Greeks, who were unarmed, soon all turned to flee; a

---

[87] Wright, *First Variant Version*, xli.

[88] *First Variant Version*, i.9.2: "*Porro Graeci stupefacti, nil tale verentes, omnes in partes dilabuntur et fluvium Akalon qui prope fluebat transire festinant, in quo multi periclitati interierunt.*"

[89] *First Variant Versoin*, i.9.2: "*Quos diffugientes Brutus insequitur et partim in undis, partim super ripam ferro prosternit.*"

[90] *First Variant Version*, i.9.3: "*Troes vero audacter insistentes caedem miserandam peregerunt et Antigonum captum retinuerunt.*"

large number of them rushed into Achalon, a very big river. Brutus, pursuing from the rear,

trapped many in the water; he made them collapse on the banks and drown in the deep water. He

drowned and killed many and captured many alive."[91] Antigonus's counterattack still fails while

"[t]he Trojans pierced them through, killing and cutting down many."[92] Like their leader before

them, the Trojans show mercy to many Greeks who "were captured and gave their word not to

flee."[93] The willingness to take prisoners allows the Trojans to retain more of their dignity. There

is also a practicality to this endeavor since the Greek prisoners can serve as hostages that can be

ransomed and/or used as leverage. In this account, what the Trojans loose in cruelty, they gain in

respectability many times over.

Layamon's *Brut* is not one to shy away from violence nor are the figures it chronicles.

The viciousness of the Trojans is redirected to the rhetoric used to describe their actions. When

the ambush is revealed,

> Brutus attacked them with his grim assault-force,
> He sought out those Greeks with sharp steel-edged weapons:
> The Greeks were not altered to their own danger,
> And turning their backs, those fearful men fled.
> There was a stream called Achalon a short distance from them,
> They hurled themselves into it in many thousands.
> Brutus in pursuit of them was constantly pressing them;
> With sword and with spear-point he quite scattered that king's army:
> On land and on water he laid them down low.[94]

---

[91] *Roman de Brut*, 9.
[92] *Roman de Brut*, 9.
[93] *Roman de Brut*, 9.
[94] Layamon, ll. 269-277: "*Brutus heom smat on; mid his grime smite. / isowte he þe Grickes; mid his grim ræsen. / Þa Grickes neoren noht warre; of heore wensiðe. / wenden him þeo rugges; flowen haȝe men. / Achalon heite an flum; þe nes noht feor from he(o)m. / þider in iwenden; moni þusunde. / Brutus heom com æfter; ȝ æfer he heom leide on. / mid sweord ȝ mid spere; al he to-drof þes kinges here. / a londe ȝ a watere; he heom adun leaide*" *Brut*, ll. 269-277.

At this point Layamon's observes that "very many men were slaughtered there in many different ways" which would have been more than apropos.[95] Instead, Layamon vibrantly continues to recount the gory aftermath of Antigonius's doomed counterattack:

> Any onlooker present might well observe there
> Frequent disasters, downfalls a-plenty:
> Many a head, many a hand, falling to the feet;
> Many there were fighting, many seeking flight there;
> Many there were falling through their unfriendly actions.
> The Trojans went on striking all the Greek men who came near them.[96]

This account provides a larger commentary about the atrocities that occur in war than it is an indictment of Trojan cruelty.[97] It is also worth mentioning that Layamon is less concerned with capturing the Greeks than Wace, but he does not share Geoffrey's desire for dead Greeks.

As alluded to before, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* is more interested in the outcome of battle than the details thereof.[98] This aspiration for brevity is expressed in the account of this battle which simply states that

> The king was angered and swore that he would kill them all, and he mustered a very great army and a great force and went after them to do battle. But Brut and his men robustly defended themselves and killed all the king's men, so that not even one escaped, and they took the king and held him in prison and took counsel among themselves as to what they wished to do with him.[99]

The level of omission in this account is so extensive that is removes the siege Pandrasus erects around one of Assaracus's castles following his previous defeat at the river Akalon, the strategy that Brutus implements to lift the siege, and the night raid that leads to Pandrasus's capture in

---

[95] Layamon, l. 279: "*Muchel folc þer was of-sclawen; on moniare wisen*" *Brut*, l. 279.

[96] Layamon, ll. 286-291: "*Heo comen to-gadere; mid greatere heorte. / Þar he mihte bi-halden; þe bi-halues were. / moni wensiðes; wiþer-happes feol[e]. / moni heaued moni hond; fallen to foten. / monie þar fuhten; monie flæm makeden. / monie þar feollen; þurh heora feon-ðewæs*" *Brut*, ll. 286-291.

[97] Layamon, xxvi.

[98] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 10.

[99] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 77.

their entirety.[100] Granted, this short account still preserves the end result of this conflict and the

adaptor's lack of interest in glamorizing war but the level of truncation removes any real insights

that can be made into the martial prowess of Brutus to the detriment of his legacy.[101]

The adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* reverses the conditions of the initial

engagement between Brutus's Trojans and Pandrasus's Greeks for the betterment of the Trojans

who are now acting out of self-defense against a hostile aggressor. Brutus takes advantage of the

tactical blunder made by the Greeks who "rushed into the river because of their anger and their

vehemence."[102] At this point, the adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* channels their inner

Geoffrey by noting that Brutus "fell among them, and his army with him, like an insatiable lion

among a lot of sheep and with all his might he killed them without mercy. And those of them

who were not killed were driven to the river to be drowned."[103] Here, Brutus is not taking joy in

dispatching his enemies but the actions of the Trojans in this account are not entirely honorable

in that they killed the Greeks.

PROBLEMATIC PROPHECIES

Brutus proceeds to liberate the Trojans from Greek captivity by capturing and eventually

ransoming King Pandrasus. After leaving Greece, the Trojans sail around the Mediterranean and

eventually make landfall on the uninhabited island of Leogetia that contains a temple for the

goddess Diana. Brutus makes a sacrifice and prayer to Diana who responds by describing an

island to the west of Gaul where Brutus is to build a new homeland for the Trojans. Brutus relays

---

[100] Again, all of these events are created by Geoffrey of Monmouth and perpetuated with some variation by his narrative successors.

[101] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 32.

[102] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 12: "*Kyrchu yr auon a orugant herwyd eu llit ac eu hangerd.*"

[103] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 12: "*Krychu a oruc yn eu plith ay lu gyt ac ef megis llew diwal ymplith llawer odeueit. Ac oeu holl nerthoed eu llat yn olofrud. Ac ar ny las onadunt. Wynt a gymellwyt yr auon y eu bodi.*"

Diana's message to his companions who then leave and start sailing for their promised island.

This sequence of events is entirely devised by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Geoffrey's successors

incorporate this episode into their own narrative of the founding myth of Britain and the changes

that are made to this episode reflect the biases of the authors who are adapting this myth. As time

progresses more misogynistic and Christian rhetoric is added to disparage the figure of Diana,

which subsequently diminishes the legitimacy of Diana and her message. Brutus's pagan rituals

remain relatively unscathed by the increased proliferation in Christian rhetoric and sentiments

and Brutus legacy is augmented by his gradually rising levels of piety.

The original Galfridian details surrounding the Trojan arrival to and scouting of the

uninhabited island of Leogetia are reproduced with notable consistency by the adaptors of

Geoffrey's *Historia*.[104] Textual discrepancies begin to appear in the descriptions of Diana and

her temple. The *Historia regun Brittaniae* does not give any details about Diana or her temple

---

[104] There are some minor changes in the time that it takes the Trojans to reach Leogetia. Geoffrey of Monmouth, the adaptor of the *First Variant Version*, and Wace maintain that it took two days and a night to reach Leogetia, another night is added by Layamon, whereas the Trojans arrive on the third day in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and no timeframe is offered in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*: *Historia*, i.15.275-276; *First Variant Version*, i.16.1; *Roman de Brut*, 17; Layamon, ll. 559-560; *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut,* 77; *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16. Everyone finds the island to be deserted of its former inhabitants, but a few different explanations are offered. Leogetia is laid to waste by pirates in Geoffrey's *Historia*, the *First Variant Version*, and the *Roman de Brut,* while outlaws are to blame in Layamon's *Brut*. *Historia*, i.16.277-278; *First Variant Version*, i.16.1; *Roman de Brut*, 17, Layamon, ll. 561-564. No explanation is offered in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* or the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut,* 77, *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16. 300 armed men and spies are sent by Brutus to scout the island in the *Historia* and the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* respectively. The island is still explored in the *First Variant Version*, *Roman de Brut, Layamon's Brut*, and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* but there are no Trojans who are specifically given this task: *Historia*, i.16. 278-279; *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut,* 77; *First Variant Version*, i.16.1; *Roman de Brut*, 17; Layamon, ll. 564-565; *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16. Game is found and hunted in every text apart from the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* which provides very little information about the island and its contents in general. *Historia*, 1.16.279-280; *First Variant Version*, i.16.1; *Roman de Brut*, 17; Layamon, ll. 565-568; *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16; *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut,* 77.

aside from noting that the Trojans "came to an abandoned city in which they discovered a temple to Diana. In it was a statue of the goddess which answered questions posed to it."[105] This description is essentially preserved in the *First Variant Version* which notes that the Trojans came "... to a certain deserted city, they found in it a temple to Diana where a statue of that goddess gave answers to those who questioned her."[106] Wace also notes that the Trojans "found a deserted city and an ancient temple. The idol was that of a goddess, Diana, a prophetess."[107] This is where the misogynistic and anti-pagan Christian rhetoric surrounding Diana is initially introduced by Wace and expanded upon by Layamon.

"Wace profoundly changes the identities and functions of the many female figures that Geoffrey of Monmouth created" and Diana is no exception."[108]According to the *Roman de Brut*, Diana

> was a devil who deceived the people through sorcery, taking the appearance of a woman by which to delude them. She called herself Diana, claiming to be a goddess of the forest. When the land was inhabited, the idol was worshipped and greatly revered: the men of those days came there to ask and hear about the time to come. Diana replied to them through signs and visions.[109]

Some reverence to Diana is still present among Wace's disparaging remarks, namely that the idol to Diana was worshipped and greatly revered. This reverence implies an element of truth to the signs and visions that were received. If the devil disguising itself as Diana deceived and deluded people by sorcery, as Wace initially suggests, people would have stopped asking about the future in addition to ceasing their worship. The perceived truth to and authority behind the signs and

---

[105] *Historia*, i.16.280-282: "*Venerunt ad quandam ciuitatem desertam in qua templum Dianae reppererunt. In eodem imago deae responsa dabat si forte ab aliquo peteretur.*"
[106] *First Variant Version*, i.12.1-2: "*Venientes autem ad quandam desertam civitatem, templum Dianae in ea reperiunt ubi imago eiusdem deae responsa quarentibus dabat.*"
[107] *Roman de Brut*, 17.
[108] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 149.
[109]*Roman de Brut*, 17-19.

visions given by Diana are fully realized by having Brutus seek and receive advice from her, advice that would foretell the Trojan founding of Britain.

The discovery of Diana's temple in Layamon's *Brut* is in keeping with is sources but Layamon expands on the details. Here, the Trojans "discovered on the island a well-defended stronghold: / All the walls were tottering, the halls had tumbled down, / They found only one temple, made entirely of marble."[110] It is at this point when Layamon not only seizes Wace's misogynistic and Christian rhetorical descriptions of Diana and the worship of her, but he also runs with them. Layamon's tendency to harshly condemn "all behavior that does not conform to his aggressively Christian and socially conservative values" is articulated in his description of Diana and her temple: [111]

> Grandiose and glorious, and dedicated to the Devil;
> Inside it was an idol in the image of a woman,
> Beautiful and very high, and in a heathen style her name,
> Diana, was written; the Devil had adored her:
> She performed amazing feats (the Devil had assisted);
> She was queen of all the wood groves which grow upon this earth;
> In those heathen cults she was held as a high deity;
> Those who associated with her were especially clever men:
> Things which were to come to pass she'd make quite clear to them.
> By means of signs or else of dreams whilst they were all sleeping.
> While those on that island were dwelling as a tribe
> They worshipped at that idol and the Devil took the praise.[112]

---

[110] Layamon, ll. 569-571: "*Heo funden i þon eit-londe. ane burh swiðe stronge; / To-hælde weoren þe walles; weste weren hallen. / Temple heo funden þar ane; imaked of marme stæne*" *Brut*, ll. 569-571.

[111] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 208.

[112] Layamon, ll. 572-583: "*muchel ȝ mære; þe Wrse hit hafde to welden. / Þer-inne was an onlicnesse; a wifmonnes liche. / feier hit wes ȝ swiðe heih; an are hæitnesse nome. / Diana wes ihaten; þ Deouel heo luuede. / Heo dude wnder craftes; þe Scucke hire fulste. / Heo wes quen of alle wodes; þe weoxen on eorðen. / a þon heðene lawen; me heold heo for hehne godd. / To hire weoren iwoned; þa wnder-creftie men. / of þa [þ]ingen þa weren to kumen; heo heom wolde cuðen. / mid tacnen ȝ mid swefnen; þonne heo weren on slæpe. / Þe wile þeo on þan eit-londe; wes folc woniende. / heo wurðen þat anlicnes; þe Scucke hit on-feng*" *Brut*, ll. 572-583.

Elements of adoration are still present in the quality and beauty of the temple and its contents, and the acknowledgement that Diana was viewed as a "high deity."[113] This admission combined with the remark that "[t]hose who associated with her were especially clever men" allows Brutus's decision to make a sacrifice and consult Diana to be viewed as understandable and justified based on the heathenism of his day.[114] Like his predecessor Wace, Layamon will also walk back some of the vitriol spat at Diana by having Brutus consult with her in addition to justifying the contents and veracity of her words.

The *Oldest Anglo-Noman Prose Brut* breaks from the misogyny and religiousness of its predecessors by following its stylistic habit of minimizing descriptive and figurative language and simply stating that in the middle of the ancient, ruined, and abandoned city the Trojans "found an ancient temple of a beautiful lady who was called Diane the Goddess."[115] It is eventually revealed that "those who honored her by sacrifice she was accustomed to give a reply concerning whatever one asked her."[116] This type of narrative improvement via omission is also present in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, which merely notes that "[a]nd there they found an old temple that had been built in olden times in which to sacrifice to the goddess Diana."[117] The matter of fact manner in which this information is presented by these two texts adds to the normality of Brutus's sacrificial consultation and the lack of anything that is remotely suspect from this account enhances the authority of Diana's decree.

---

[113] Layamon, l. 578: "*hehne godd*" *Brut*, l. 578.

[114] Layamon, l. 579: "*To hire weoren iwoned; þa wnder-creftie men*" *Brut*, l. 579.

[115] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 5; *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 77.

[116] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 77.

[117] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16: "*ac yno y caffant hen demy ry daruoed y aberthu gynt y diana dwywes.*"

After the Trojans discover Diana's temple, Brutus goes to make an offering to Diana.

There are a few motivational variations behind this decision, but the general expansion of detail

used to describe Brutus's sacrifice enhances Brutus's legacy by making him more pious

overtime. Geoffrey of Monmouth establishes the narrative foundation of this episode by writing

that the Trojans

> suggested that their leader should visit the temple, offer sacrifices and ask the local goddess what land could offer them a safe and sure haven; when Brutus took the augur Gerio and twelve elders and visited the temple with everything necessary for a sacrifice. When they arrived, they bound garlands wound their foreheads and, at the temple's entrance, set up according to hallowed practice three altars to three gods, Jupiter, Mercury and Diana; to each they made a special offering. Brutus himself, standing before Diana's altar and holding in his right hand a sacrificial goblet filled with wine and the blood of a white hind, raised his eyes to her statue and broke the silence as follows:
>   'Mighty goddess of the forest, terror of woodland boars, / you who can travel through celestial orbits / and through the halls of death, unfold your earthly powers / and say in which lands you wish us to dwell. / Prophesy a sure home where I can worship you forever, / and where I can dedicate to you temples and choirs of Virgins'.
> After repeating this nine times and four times circling the altar, he poured the wine he held into its flames, lay down on the skin of the hind, which he had spread before the alter, and, closing his eyes, fell asleep at last."[118]

The piety displayed by Brutus is weakened slightly by the need for Brutus to be prompted to act

but Brutus redeems himself by his willingness to act, both in term of making the sacrifice that

---

[118] *Historia*, i.16. 284-302: "*Suggerunt duci templum adire atque latatis donis a numine loci inquirere quae patria eis sedem certae mansionis praeberet; communicatoque omnium assensu, assumpsit Brutus secum Gerionem augurem et duodecim maiores natu petiuitque templum cum omnibus quae ad sacrificium necessaria erant. Quo ubi uentum est, circundati timpora uittis ante aditum ueterrimo ritu tribus diis, Ioui uidelicet et Mercurio nec non est Dianae, tres focos statuerunt; singulis singula labamina dederunt. Ipse Brutus ante aram deae, uas sacrificii plenum uino et sanguine candidae ceruae dextra tenens, erecto uultu ad effigiem numinis silentium in haec uerba disoluit: 'Diua potens nemorum, terror siluestribus apris, / cui licet amfractus ire per aethereos / infernasque domos, terrestria iura reuolue / et dic quas terras nos habitare uelis. / Dic certam sedem qua te uenerabor in aeuum, / qua tibi uirgineis templa dicabo choris'. Haec ubi nouies dixit, circuiuit aram quater fuditque uinum quod tenebat in foco atque procubuit super pellem ceruae, quam ante aram extenderat, inuitatoque sompno tandem obdormiuit.*"

observes the hallowed practices and through the phrasing of his prayer. It is made clear that

Brutus's appeal is made on behalf of the Trojans as a whole and that he is seeking a land that will

provide them with a safe home. Moreover, this land will be used to build temples and choirs of

virgins that will then enable Brutus to worship Diana forever.

Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* uses some Galfridian information to flesh out he

basic narrative of the founding myth of Britain that was originally produced in the *Historia*

Brittonum. Brutus's consultation with Diana is included in the *Letter to Warin* but it is stripped

of everything but the most essential details. According to Henry of Huntingdon, Brutus

"journeying in a far-off country, he offered a sacrifice and sought an oracle from Diana, with

these words: 'O mighty goddess of the forest glades, terror of the woodland boars, / Tell me what

land you wish us to inhabit.'[119] Brutus retains some of his piety through the sheer act of offing a

sacrifice which seems to only have been conducted as payment for the oracle he wishes to

receive. Brutus is still looking out for the Trojans and desires to learn what land they are to

inhabit but the transactional nature of this meeting is also compounded by the fact that Brutus

just "built the city of Tours in Gaul."[120] This reference carries the implication that Brutus is

getting so desperate that he is willing to travel to a far-off country to obtain an oracle that will

(hopefully) contain the land that the Trojans are to inhabit. It is also worth noting that Brutus and

the Trojans visit Gaul and build the city *after* visiting Diana's island in every other account.

The details of the sacrifice given to Diana are altered in the *First Variant Version,* which

reveals "an interest in pagan rites."[121] There is also a more communal element to this sacrifice

---

[119] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 561: "*Tandem in terram longinquam proficiscens, oblato sacrificio responsum petiit a Diana, his uerbis: Diua potens nemorum, terror siluestribus apris, / Dic michi quas terras nos habitare uelis.*"
[120]*Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*Edificauit autem urbem Turonis in Gallia.*"
[121] Wright, *First Variant Version*, lii.

which augments the levels of community and piety displayed by the Trojans. According to this account, "once sacrifices had been offered, they asked the goddess for predictions about their future journey, and about which and what kind of country was destined to be their permanent home."[122] The more pious tone of the *First Variant Version* is also embodied by Brutus who proceeds to take on a more individualized role in the proceedings.[123] Here:

> By the common consent of all, Brutus entered the innermost precinct of the temple along with Gerion the augur and twelve most senior elders, with ribbons circling his brows. Standing before the most ancient shrine where the altar of the goddess had been set up, holding a consecrated vessel filled with wine and the blood of a white hind in his right hand, with his head upright, Brutus broke the silence with [his prayer][124]

After saying his prayer, Brutus continues to execute his priestlike duties by repeating the prayer nine times while he "circled the altar four times, and poured the wine he held upon the hearth, lit according to the custom of those making a sacrifice. After that he lay down upon the skin of the hind which he had spread before the altar, and fell into a deep sleep."[125] Brutus piety is also augmented by the nature of his prayer which largely preserves the contents of the Galfridian original which is slightly recast in a compressed form that states:

> "Mighty goddess of the forests, terror of the woodland boars, who can travel among the heavenly orbits and the infernal realms, unleash your earthly authority and tell us which lands you wish us to inhabit. Tell us of a settled home where we

---

[122] *First Variant Version*, i.16.2: "*Qui, mox litatis victimis, a numine futuri itineris praesagia requirunt: quae val qualis patria eis sedes certae mansionis debeatur.*"

[123] Wright, *First Variant Version*, l.

[124] *First Variant Version*, i.16.2: "*Communicatoque omnium assensu, assumpto Brutus seeum Gerione augure et duodecim maioribus natu, circumdatus tempora vittis, abdita templi penetrans, ante vetustissimum delubrum, ubi ara deae statuta fuerat, vas sacrificii vino plenum et saguine candidae vervae dextra tenens, erecto vultu ad effigiem numinis, silentium in haec verba disoluit:*"

[125] *First Variant Version*, i.16.4: "*Haec ubi novies dixit, circuivit aram quater fuditque vinum quod tenebat in foco iuxta morem litantium ibi accnso. Postea recubuit super pellem cervae, quam ante aram extenderat, invitatoque somno obdormivit.*"

can worship you forever, and where I shall dedicate temples to you with choirs of virgins."[126]

Brutus prayer conveys his desire to act on behalf of his followers by stressing that it is the Trojans who desire to know which lands Diana wants them to inhabit, a land where they can worship her forever.[127] Brutus waits until the final clause of his prayer to refer to his individual desires which are not only selfless in nature but they also reinforce his piety by stating his intention to dedicate temples, complete with virgin choirs, to Diana.[128] The alterations of this account accentuates the piety of Brutus and his Trojans in addition to reinforcing their communal nature.

Wace retains the narrative structure implemented by Geoffrey of Monmouth for Brutus's sacrifice but alters the details to remove Geoffrey's proclivity for speeches and Christianizes Brutus's actions. In the *Roman de Brut*, Brutus still takes a small retinue to make his sacrifice but there is a slight elevation of status of this retinue which now consists of twelve of the oldest, wisest and most righteous men and a priest of their religion, Gerion, with him to the idol in the cave" instead of the augur Gerio and twelve elders.[129] Wace augments Brutus's piousness by giving him a more centralized and priestly role by having Brutus do everything himself. Upon reaching their destination, Brutus

> leav[es] all the other people outside. In his right hand he had a vessel full of wine, and new milk from a white hind, as Diana required. He prostrated himself several times and begged the goddess to teach him by a reply, or show him by a sign,

---

[126] *First Variant Version*, i.16.3: "*Diva potens nemorum, terror silvestribus apris, / cui licet anfractus ire per aetheros / infernasque domos, terrestria iura resolve; / et dic quas terras no habitare velis. / Dic certam sedem, qua te venerabor in aevum, / qua tibi virgineis templa dicabo choris.*"

[127] *First Variant Version*, i.16.3: "*/ et dic quas terras no habitare velis. / Dic certam sedem, qua te venerabor in aevum,*"

[128] *First Variant Version*, i.16.3: "*qua tibi virgineis templa dicabo choris.*"

[129] *Roman de Brut*, 19; *Historia*, i.16.286-287: "*assumpsit Brutus secum Gerionem augurem et duodecim maiores*"

> where he could find a good peaceful land to dwell in. Nine times he made this prayer, with a low voice and humble face, nine times he kissed the altar and nine times he encircled it, carrying the goblet in his hand. Then he sprinkled it on the blazing fire which he had had lit before the idol, next to the altar. Then he took the skin of the hind which had been sacrificed, stretched it on the ground, lay on it and went to sleep.[130]

The ceremony performed by Brutus has several allusions to Christian behavioral norms of supplication that begins with the singular focus on Diana and includes Brutus prostrating himself several times, making his prayer "with a low voice and humble face," and kissing the altar.[131] Brutus still has the desire to learn where he can "find a good peaceful land to dwell in."[132] Even though it is not explicitly stated by Wace it is to be understood that Brutus is making this request on behalf of his followers. Brutus still demonstrates a willingness to pay homage to Diana for her assistance, but this is a largely transactional promise that is made *after* Brutus receives his prophecy. This deal is made when it is revealed that "[w]hen the vision ended and Brutus had faithfully committed it to memory, he gave thanks to the goddess and make her a vow and a promise that *if* he could have the land she promised him in the dream, he would make a temple and statue for her and always pay her honour."[133]

The retinue that accompanies Brutus is also altered by Layamon who notes that "Brutus took twelve wizards who were all his wisest men / And one priest of his own faith such as was found in heathen days: / Gerion was that priest's name and he came from noble stock."[134] The elevation of Gerion's background is curious given Layamon's tendency to condemn pagan

---

[130] *Roman de Brut*, 19.
[131] *Roman de Brut*, 19.
[132] *Roman de Brut*, 19.
[133] *Roman de Brut*, 19. Emphasis is mine.
[134] Layamon's Brut, ll. 586-588: "*Brutus nam twelf witiȝen; þe weren his wiseste men. / ⁊ enne preost of his lawen. þa weren on þan heðen dawen. / Gerion hehte þe preost; he was an hirede hæh*" *Brut*, ll. 586-588.

practices but if Brutus is going to travel with a heathen priest, it might as well be a noble,

heathen priest.[135] From this point on Layamon follows Wace's example of making Brutus the

sole practitioner of this Christian influenced religious rite:

> He went to the place in which Diana was positioned:
> Brutus went into the temple, and those twelve men with him,
> And he made all his men remain outside there.
> In his hand he bore a bowl, made of solid gold,
> There was milk in the bowl, and a little wine too:
> The milk had come from a white hind, shot by Brutus's own hand,
> On the altar he kindled there an admirable fire;
> Nine times around that altar fire he circled as the rites require:
> He called upon the lady for he loved her in his heart;
> With most placating words he summoned up her powers,
> Often kissing the altar with decorous gestures;
> He poured the milk into the fire with peaceable phrases:
> 'Lady Diana, beloved Diana, lofty Diana, help me in my need.
> Guide me and govern me through your vigorous skills
> As to where I can travel and take this tribe of mine
> To a splendid land where I could settle down
> And if I could conquer that land and my people possess it,
> I would erect in your name an excellent temple,
> And for you I will hallow it with the highest worship.'
> So Brutus spoke.
> Then he took the hide which came from the white hind,
> Before the altar he spread it out, as if preparing his couch.
> He went down to his knees on it and then he lay right down,
> And so began to slumber, and afterwards to sleep.[136]

---

[135] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 208-209.

[136] Layamon's Brut, ll. 589-613: "*he ferde to þere stowe. þar Diane inne stod. / Brutus ferde in-to þere temple; ᷥ þa twelfe mid mid him. / ᷥ lette al his folc; bilæuen þer-vte. / Ana scale he bear an honde; al of reade golde. / milc wes i þere scale; ᷥ win sume dale. / þa milc wæs of are wite hinde; þe Brutus sceat mid his honde. / He makede bi þon weofede; a swiðe wunsum fur. / Niȝen siðen he bi-eode; þat weofed for his neode. / He clepede to þere leuedi; heo wes him on heorten leof. / mid milden his worden; he ȝirnde hire mihten. / Ofte he custe þat weofed; mid wnsume lates. / he halde þa milc in þat fur; mid milden his worden. / Leafdi Diana; leoue Diana; heȝe Diana. help me to neode. / Wise m[e] ᷥ wite [m]e; þurh þine wihtful craft. / whuder ich mæi liðan; ᷥ ledan mine leoden. / to ane wnsume londe; þer ich mihte wunien. / ᷥ ȝif ich þat lond mai bi-ȝeten; ᷥ mi folc hit þurh-gengen. / makian ich wlle on þine nome; mæren ane stowe. / ᷥ ich þe wulle huren; mid wrhscipe hæȝan. / Þus spec Brutus; / Seo[ð]ðen he nam þe hude. þa wæs of þare hinde. / Bi-foren þan wefede he heo spradde; swlc he leie on bedde. / he cnelede þar-ufenan; ᷥ þer-æfter to slepen*" *Brut*, ll. 589-613.

The reverence showed by Brutus in this account is unusually intimate given that Brutus "called upon the lady for he loved her in his heart" and reveres to Diana as "beloved."[137] The motivation for Brutus's prayer are still motivated by the desire to find a land for his tribe which is seen when Brutus asks "where I can travel and take this tribe of mine / To a splendid land where I could settle down."[138] This desire also comes with conditions that contain new elements they display an overt interest in personal glory derived from conquest that is voiced by Brutus when he states that "[a]nd if I could conquer that land and my people possess it, / I would erect in your name an excellent temple, / And for you I will hallow it with the highest worship."[139] These promises of post-resettlement devotion are not as lavish as one would expect given that Brutus loved Diana in his heart and fall short of the standard held by Layamon's predecessors. Layamon does some damage control for Brutus's legacy by stating that after Brutus receives his prophecy:

> He thanked her profusely with most pleasant words,
> Vowing her a promise (and certainly performed it)
> That he would be attached to her and build for her a temple,
> With her likeness in bright gold, when he came to land,
> And all his whole life he would fulfil her wishes.[140]

Layamon is careful to emphasize that Brutus will make good on his word, which also guarantees Brutus's eventual success. Moreover, Diana's return on investment is elevated when Brutus

---

[137] Layamon, ll. 598, 602: "*mid milden his worden; he ȝirnde hire mihten.*" "*Wise m[e] ȝ wite [m]e; þurh þine wihtful craft*" *Brut*, ll. 598, 602.
[138] Layamon, ll. 603-604: "*whuder ich mæi liðan; ȝ ledan mine leoden. / to ane wnsume londe; þer ich mihte wunien*" *Brut*, ll. 603-604.
[139] Layamon, ll. 605-607: "*/ ȝ ȝif ich þat lond mai bi-ȝeten; ȝ mi folc hit þurh-gengen. / makian ich wlle on þine nome; mæren ane stowe. / ȝ ich þe wulle huren; mid wrhscipe hæȝan*" *Brut*, ll. 605-607.
[140] Layamon, ll. 633-637: "*He þonkede hire ȝeorne; mid liðfulle worden. / he bi-heihte hire biheste; ȝ he hit wel laste. / þat to hire he wolde teman; ȝ wrchen hire ane temple. / ȝ on licnesse of ræde golde; whenne he come to londe. / ȝ æ to his liue; hire willen idriȝen*" *Brut*, 633-637.

expands on the extravagance of the temple and idol that he plans on building in addition to the promise that "all his whole life he would fulfil her wishes."[141]

The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* is concerned with presenting things as historical fact which leads to the omission of many details that are deemed to be supernatural and/or superfluous.[142] These stylistic concerns result in a very stripped-down account that simply states that

> Brut went to this temple and made a sacrifice to this image and said, "Diane, noble goddess, lady with all in your power – winds, waters, woods, fields, and all the world and all the beasts in it – to you I make my prayer that you tell and advise me where and how I will have safe haven for me and for my people, and there I will make you a noble temple where you will always be honored."[143]

Even in such a truncated form, Brutus's piety and desire to act for the betterment of others remains intact. Again, he is petitioning on behalf of his subjects and he is searching for land that that will be a safe haven for the Trojans. Brutus's piety is still demonstrated by the sacrificial prayer and by his non-conditional intention build "a noble temple where [Diana] will always be honored."[144]

The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* preserves the Galfridian version of Brutus's sacrifice that contains a few added details. Again, Brutus needs a little prompting from his subjects who "asked him to go to pay homage to the gods before he went further."[145] Following this request,

> ... Brutus took with him Gerio the diviner and twelve of the elders and whatever was needful for the services. And after they had come to the temple, he twined a crown of laurel about his head before the door of the temple, as the custom of the old ritual was, and he lighted three blazes of fire to the three gods, Jupiter, Mercury, and Diana, and to each one of them he made an appropriate sacrifice.

---

[141] Layamon, l. 637 "ȝ æ to his liue; hire willen idriȝen" *Brut*, l. 637.
[142] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 14.
[143] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 77.
[144] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 77.
[145] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16 "*ac erchi idaw mynet y offrymhu yr dwyweu kyn mynet pellach hynn.*"

And then Brutus took in his right hand the vessel of the sacrifice, full of wine and the blood of the white hand and he raised his face towards the goddess and spoke in this manner, "is it thou, powerful goddess, terror of the woodland dwellers, to whom is given leave to walk the paths of air? Thou givest obligations to the earth and to heaven. Say what land thou wishest us to dwell in; tell of our certain seat from which I may honor thee forever and build to thee honorable temples of virgin choirs." And having said that nine times, he circled the altar four times, and he poured out the wine that was in his hand on the fire before the altar. And then he lay down on the skin of the white hind that he had spread out before the altar. And after he had been overcome by sleep he slept.[146]

The original Galfridian notions of piety are still produced by the sacrifice in and of itself, following "the custom of the old ritual," making appropriate sacrifices to Jupiter and Mercury, in addition to Diana, and desire to find land where he can forever honor Diana and build her honorable temples of virgin choirs."[147] The initial request that Brutus "go to pay homage to the gods before he went further" may seem like a partial slight against Brutus but this request is born out of the general piety of the Trojans as a whole as opposed to a lapse by Brutus.[148] This degree of Trojan piety is further demonstrated by the adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* who

---

[146] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16-17 "*Ac yna y kymyrth brutus gyd ac ef gerio dew[in] a deudengwyr o hynafgwyr ac a oed reid yr offrvm. Agwedy eu dyuot yr demyl troi coron o lawrwyden yg kyllch y ben rac bron drws y demmyl mal y gnottheit o hen deuawt. A chynneu teir kynneu o dan yr tri duw. Nyd amgen y iubiter [amer]curius. A diana. Ac y bob vn onadunt y gwnaeth aberth gwahanredawl. Ac yna y kymyrth brutus llestyr yr aberth yny llaw deheu idaw yn llawn o win a gwaet or ewic wen. A dyrchauel y wyneb yn erbyn ydwiwes a dywedud bal hyn. Ae tydy gyuoethawc dwiwes aruthret koedolyon ysyt ganyat yt kerdet llwybreu. Awyraul ti a ryd dylyet yr daer ac y uffern. Dywet pa daear avynnech y bresswyliau o honam. Dywet yn eistedus diamheu yth anrydedwif yn dragywyd ohonei. Ac y gwnelwif templu anrydedus ytt; o werynyaul goryeu. A gwedy dywedut hynny nauweith ohonaw. Kylchynu yr allawr a oruc pedeirgweith. A dineu y gwin a oed yny llaw rac bron yr allaur yny gynne. Ac odyna gorwed ar groen yr ewic wen. Rydynhassei rac bron yr allaur. Gwedy yorthrymu o hun kysgu a oruc.*"

[147] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16 "*mal y gnottheit o hen deuawt*"; *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 17 "*ac y gwnelwif temleu anrydedus ytt; o werynyaul goryeu.*"

[148] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 16 "*ac erchi idaw mynet y offrymhu yr dwyweu kyn mynet pellach hynn.*"

proceeds to mention that the Trojans proceeded to give thanks to the gods after Brutus relays his

vision to them and before they raised sail to head to their new promised homeland.[149]

The actual prophecy made by Diana has always been the focal point of this episode, and

rightly so since the contents thereof will not only name the island where the Trojans will rebuild

their home, but this information also serves as a justification for the eradication of the giants,

who are already on the island, and validity for the Trojan claim of sovereignty.[150] The relative

brevity of the prophecy is preserved in every account but later adaptations like the *Oldest Anglo-*

Norman Prose Brut and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* will still find ways to truncate Diana's

message. Every account contains a reference to where the island is located, information about the

contents of the island and the possible presence of giants, and the decree that the island is to be a

new troy. Variation exists in the sequence in which information is given, the amount of detail

that is provided, whether or not the giants exist, and the inclusion of a glimpse of destiny awaits

the Trojans.[151]

According to Geoffrey's *Historia*,

> It was around the third hour of the night, when our repose is sweetest. Then the
> goddess seem to stand before him and address him as follows: "Brutus, to the
> west, beyond the kingdoms of Gaul, lies an island of the ocean, surrounded by the

---

[149] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 17: "And after Brutus had arisen, he told his companions of the vision he had seen, and they sought their ships, giving thanks to the gods, and they hoisted their sails." "*Agwedy dyffroi brutus ef a venegis yw gedymeithion y weledigaeth ry welsei. Ac yna kyrchu eu llonghew a orugant dan diolch yr dwyweu. A dyrchauel hwylew.*"

[150] For further commentary on the justification of the eradication of the giants see: Cohen, *Of Giants,* 32-35; David C. Fowler, "Some Biblical Influences on Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historiography," *Tradito* 14 (1958) 379-380; Victor J. Scherb, "Assimilating Giants: The Appropriation of Gog and Magog in Medieval and Early Modern England," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (2002): 61-62, 66; Rupert T. Pickens, "Arthur's Channel Crossing: Courtesy and the Demonic in Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace's *Brut*," *Arthuriana* 7, no. 1 (1997).

[151] The problematic nature of Diana's prophecy regarding the potential existence of the giants who would vie for control of the island of Britain has been note by scholars like Faletra, "Narrating the Matter of Britain," 71 and Cohen, *Of Giants*, 1999), 33-34.

sea; an island of the ocean, where giants once lived, but now it is deserted and waiting for your people. Sail to it; it will be your home for ever. It will furnish your children with a new Troy. From your descendants will arise kings, who will be masters of the whole world." Awakened by this vision, the Trojan leader did not know whether he had experienced a dream, or the goddess had, with her own voice, foretold the land to which he would sail. At length he called his companions and recounted what had happened to him as he slept. They were filled with joy, urging him to return to the ships and, as soon as the wind was favourable, to sail with all speed towards the west and seek the land promised by the goddess.[152]

Geoffrey's account becomes the foundation that his successors will build from. Diana's message clearly establishes that Britain is to be a new home for the Trojans and that they will be justified in seizing it regardless of the whether or not the giants are still there.[153] This notion of justified ownership of Britain is reinforced with the clause that Britain will be their "home for ever."[154] Geoffrey is also careful in using Diana's prophecy as a way to validate the history that he creates for the rest of the *Historia* by stating that "From your descendants will arise kings, who / will be masters of the whole world."[155]

---

[152] *Historia*, i.16-17.302-318: "*Erat tun quasi tercia hora noctis, qua dulciore sopore mortales premuntur. Tunc uisum est illi deam astare ante ipsum et sese in hunc modum affari: 'Brute, sub occasu solis trans Gallica regna / insula in occeano est undique clausa mari; / insula in occeano est habitata gigantibus olim, / nunc deserta quidem, gentibus apta tuis. / Hanc pete; namque tibi sedes erit illa perhennis. / Hic fiet natis altera Troia tuis. / Hic de prole tua reges nascentur, et ipsis / tocius terrae subditus orbis erit'. Tali uisione expergefactus dux in dubio mansit an sompnus fuerat quem uidit an dea uiua uoce praedixerat patriam quam aditurus erat. Vocatis tandem sociis, indicauit per ordinem quod sibi dormienti contigerat. At illi, maximo gaudio fluctuantes, hortantur ut ad naues repedent et dum uentus secundus esset citissimis uelis uersus occasum eant ad inquirendum quod diua spoponderat.*"

[153] Describing Britain as a predestined island, or promised land, contributes to the preexisting notion that the Trojans are akin to the Israelites in that the Trojans are a chosen people who are to settle a land that is already preoccupied by giants that must be displaced. For further commentary on the association of the Trojans as a biblically inspired "chosen people" see Cohen, *Of Giants,* 32-35; Fowler, "Some Biblical Influences on Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historiography," 379-380; Scherb, "Assimilating Giants," 61-62, 66.

[154] *Historia*, i.16. 309: "*namque tibi sedes erit illa perhennis.*"

[155] *Historia*, i.16.311-312: "*Hic de prole tua reges nascentur, et ipsis / tocius terrae subditus orbis erit*"

Brutus's consultation of Diana is included in Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* but it is reduced to is bare essentials. This level of redaction marginalizes female figures which is reflected in the truncation of Diana's prophecy and its larger significance.[156] After making his prayer, Brutus receives a reply from Diana that states:

> Brutus, beneath the setting sun, beyond the realms of Gaul
> Lies an island in the ocean, completely surrounded by the sea.
> Go there: for it will be a perpetual dwelling-place for you;
> It will become for you and your sons a second Troy...[157]

Britain is still destined to become a "perpetual dwelling-place" that will become a "second Troy" for Brutus and his sons but gone is the promise of great things that concluded Diana's prophecy in Geoffrey's original narrative. These statements will be eventually be proven true by the historical record that is the *Historia Anglorum*—no matter what happens, Britain will be occupied by the descendants of the Trojans who settle with Brutus, and like their Trojan ancestors, they will eventually lose sovereignty over their homeland. It is also worth noting the complete erasure of the giants, alive or otherwise, from this account.

The circumstances surrounding the delivery and the contents of Diana's prophecy remain unchanged in the *First Variant Version*.[158] The only alterations that are made to this part of the

---

[156] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 190.

[157] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559-561: "*Brute, sub occasu solis, trans Gallica regna, / Insula in occeano est undique clausa mart. / Hanc pete: namque tibi sedes erit ista perhennis; / Hic fiet natis altera Troia tuis.*"

[158] *First Variant Version*, i.16.4-5: "It was then about the third hour of the night. Then the goddess seemed to stand before him and to address him in this manner: "Brutus, beneath the setting sun, beyond the kingdoms of Gaul, there is an island in the Ocean, surrounded on all sides by the sea: the island in the Ocean was formerly inhabited by giants, but now it is deserted, and suitable for your people. Seek it out: for it shall be your home forever. Here shall rise up a new Troy for your offspring Here kings shall be born from your descendants, and to them will be subjected the whole circle of the earth."" "*Eratque tunc quasi tertia noctis hora. Tunc visum est illi deam astare ante ipsum et sese sic affari: "Brute, sum occasu solis, trans Gallica regna / insula in Oceano est, undique clausa mari: / insula in Oceano est hibitata gigantibus olim, / nunc deserta quidem, gentibus apta tuis. / Hanc pete: namque tibi sedes erit ila perennis; / hic*

episode occur when Brutus awakes and relays his dream to his companions. The contents of this

scene are reduced to their essential elements when the *First Variant Version* notes that

"awakened by this vision, the duke summoned his comrades and told them exactly what had

happened to him while he slept."[159] From here, Brutus returns to his ships and sets sail. The joy

and happiness that is expressed in Geoffrey's *Historia* is removed as part of the larger agenda of

omitting emotionally charged passages.[160] Compressing the narrative in this manner portrays the

Trojans in a more driven light seeing as they do not waste time or energy celebrating things that,

while promised to them, have yet to become reality.

Diana's message expanded upon by Wace and her message is still conveyed to a sleeping

Brutus and

> It seemed to him, as he lay asleep, that the goddess said: 'Beyond France, far away in the sea towards the west, you can find a fine island, fit to live in and delectable to dwell in, whose ground is good for cultivation. Giants used to live there. Its name is Albion. This you shall have, and you will make a new Troy there. From you will spring a royal lineage esteemed throughout the world'[161]

Wace glorifies Albion the new Trojan homeland by noting its dwell-able delectability, how good

it is for cultivation, and the implication that the giants are dead, but there is no mention of how

long the Trojans will remain on, or in control of, their new home.[162] The prestige of Brutus's

royal line is also diminished from its Galfridian predecessor given that they will only be

"esteemed throughout the world" as opposed to being the masters of it. As he is wont to do,

---

fiet natis altera Troia tuis. / Hic de prole tua reges nascentur, et ipsis / totius terrae subditus orbis erit.'"
[159] *First Variant Version*, i.16.6: "*Tali visione dux expergefactus, covatis sociis, rem per ordinem narravit ut sibi dormienti contigerat.*"
[160] Wright, *First Variant Version*, xli.
[161] *Roman de Brut*, 19.
[162] Wace is the first to include Albion as the original name of Britain in Diana's prophecy, but this information is proved by Geoffrey when he describes the island right after the Trojans make landfall. *Historia,* i.21.453: "*Erat tunc nomen insulae Albion.*"

Layamon expands on the earlier additions of the *Roman de Brut*. Brutus receives Diana's

message in a dream, but Layamon's account continues to demonstrate a new level of intimacy

between Brutus and Diana in that as Brutus

> As he lay asleep there, in a dream he seemed to see
> That Diana his lady gazed lovingly towards him;
> With an attractive smile, she amicably promised,
> Graciously lying her hand on his head there,
> And spoke to him like this, as he lay asleep there:[163]

The contents of Diana's message retain the core elements established in Geoffrey's *Historia,* but

Layamon provides much more detail about the contents of Britain when Diana informs Brutus

that

> 'Beyond France, in the west, you'll find a welcome landfall:
> The sea surrounds that place; in it you shall be blest:
> Full of birds, full of fish, and the finest beasts live there,
> There is woodland and water, and extensive wilderness;
> The land is very welcoming, with wells of sweet water.
> Living in that country there are very powerful giants;
> Albion the land is called, but no men are living in it.
> There you will multiply and a new Troy you'll make there,
> And from your own race royal children will arise.
> Your glorious descendants will rule in that land,
> Throughout the world highly honored; and you'll be healthy and fit.[164]

Layamon's *Brut* echoes Wace's assertion that Brutus's descendants will be highly honored

throughout the world after reasserting Trojan sovereignty over their new homeland. Blatantly

---

[163] Layamon, ll. 613-617: "*Þa þuhte him on his swefne; þar he on slepe læi. / þat his lauedi Diana; hine leofliche biheolde. / mid wn-sume leahtren; wel heo him bi-hihte. / ȝ hendiliche hire hond; on his heued leide; / ȝ þus him to seide; þer he on slepe lai*" *Brut*, ll. 613-617.

[164] Layamon, ll. 618-628: "*Bi-ȝende France i þet west; þu scalt finden a wunsum lond. / þet lond is bi-urnan mid þære sæ; þar-on þu scalt wrþan sæl. / Þar is fuȝel þar is fisc; þer wuniað feire deor. / þar is wode þar is water; þar is wilderne muchel. / þet lond is swiþe wunsum; weallen þer beoð feire. / wuniað in þon londe; eotantes swiðe stronge. / Albion hatte þat lond; ah leode (ne) beoð þar nane. / Þer-to þu scalt teman; ȝ ane neowe Troye þar makian. / þer scal of þine cunne; kine-bearn arisen. / ȝ scal þin mære kun; wælden þ[a]s londes. / ȝeond þa weorld beon ihæȝed; ȝ þu beo hæl ȝ isund*" *Brut*, ll. 618-628.

stating that the Trojans will multiply and make a new Troy in a land that they will rule is

especially important due to the confirmed presence of the very powerful giants that are currently

living there. Diana's claim that "no men are living in" Albion is effectively stating that the island

is devoid of people which strips the remaining giants of any humanity that they may have and

thus relegates any giant to a bestial state whose lower state of existence is at the mercy of the

humans who have been placed over them in a position of complete authority.[165]

The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* presents a severely truncated account of Diana's

reply which simply states that

> When [Brutus] had finished his prayer, Diane replied in this manner: "Brut," she
> said "make your way right over the French sea in the west, and there you will find
> the island called Albion. It is completely surrounded by the sea, and no man may
> go there except by ship. In this land there used to be giants, but now it is
> abandoned and entirely deserted, and this land is appointed and destined to you
> for you and for your people.[166]

A small measure of comfort can be found in the knowledge that "in this land there used to be

giants, but now it is abandoned and entirely deserted."[167] There is very little for Brutus and his

Trojans to be optimistic about in this version aside from the assertion that a deserted Albion has

been destined for them especially since there is nothing to say how long this appointment will

last, or what further fate awaits the Trojans. A similarly abridged account of Diana's prophecy is

---

[165] Layamon, l. 624: "*ah leode (ne) beoð þar nane.*" The dehumanization and demonizing of
giants was commonplace in the middle ages and giants were considered to be a "species of non-
human monstrous races" and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen even notes that "envisioning the anterior
cultures as monsters justifies its displacement by making the act heroic." Cohen, *Of Giants,* 34;
Pickens, "Arthur's Channel Crossing," 9; Furthermore, the justification of the Trojan treatment
of the giants is inherently implied through Biblical associations. Given that the Trojans are
representative of a chosen people akin to the Israelites, the Trojan displacement of the giants is
essentially a rewriting of the Biblical account of the Israelites arriving in Canaan "whose
wildness must be gentrified in order for Israel to find a stable identity, in order for its nomadic
exile to cease. Cohen, *Of Giants, 52;* 36-37.
[166] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut,* 79.
[167] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut,* 79.

provided in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* which notes that in his sleep Brutus saw Diana "speaking to him in this fashion: "Brutus" she said, "beneath the west, beyond France, there is an island in the ocean that was inhabited of old by giants; now it is deserted except for twenty giants; and that will be suitable for you and for your nation to dwell in, and Albion is its name, that was in Welsh the White Island."[168] The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* does not provide any information about what will happen to the Trojans after they reach Albion or what heights they may rise to but the information about the giants will prove to be of great use. The Trojans will encounter giants when they reach Albion in every account except the *Historia Brittonum.* Layamon and the adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* are the only ones who actually confirm the existence of the giants. The Trojans are in a better position for success in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* because they know to expect twenty giants once they make landfall.

The relatively pious Brutus of Geoffrey's *Historia* is improved upon in later accounts of the founding myth of Britain. Brutus gradually becomes the focal point as the sole practitioner of the sacrifice to Diana that also becomes slightly more elaborate which elevates his piety. The devotion this scene is curbed by the caveat that Brutus into his prayer that notes what Brutus is willing to do to honor Diana in the future in exchange for the knowledge of where the Trojans are to settle and rebuild their homeland. These trends are revered in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* which remove the transactional component of Brutus's prayer while respectively maintaining and elevating Brutus's piety. Diana does not fare as well as her mortal counterpart in that she is quickly demonized by Wace and Layamon. Her

---

[168] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 17: "*ac ual am draean nos y gwelei ef srwy y hun yn dywedud urthaw ual hyn. Brutus heb hi a dan ygorllewin or tu hwnt y freinc ymae ynys yny mor. A uu gyuanned gynt gan kewri. A diffeith yw weithion onyd vgeint kawr. A honno a vyd adas ytti ac yth kenedyl ev gwledychu. Ac albion yw yhenw. Sef oed hynny y wen ynys yn gymraec.*"

divinity is restored by *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* at the cost of her eminence within this episode. The message that Brutus receives from Diana is similarly diminished given that the future of the Trojans falls from being masters of the world in Geoffrey's *Historia* to not even being mentioned. These alterations produce a narrative that is increasingly focused on Brutus and his actions, intent on Christianizing and reducing supernatural elements, and creating a founding myth that relegates the Trojans and their British descendants to less prominent positions on the world stage.

LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

The dearth of material concerning the Brutus's life is surprising given the unorthodox manner that Brutus first came to power and the obstacles that had to be cleared along the way. This issue is further compounded by the overt lack of textual attention given to Brutus's actual reign which makes the analysis of his life before the founding Britain all the more important. The *Historia Brittonum* acknowledges Brutus's reign as part of a larger system of temporal synchronizations and merely remarks that "[w]hen Britto reigned in Britain, Eli the High Priest ruled in Israel, and then the Ark of the Covenant was taken by foreigners. Postumus, his brother, ruled among the Latins."[169] This aside is designed to legitimize the historical narrative being advanced by the *Historia Brittonum* by placing it alongside the older, more prestigious and established Roman and Biblical historical records.[170]

In the *Historia* Geoffrey of Monmouth continues his habitual narrative expansions but he does not go into that much detail about Brutus's reign following the colonization of Britain.

---

[169] *Historia Brittonum*, §11, 20: *Quando regnabat Britto in Brittannia, Heli sacerdos iudicabat in Israhel, et tunc arca testamenti ab alienigenis possidebatur, Postumus, frater, eius, apud Latinos regnabat.*" *Historia Brittonum*, §11, 61
[170] Gransden, *Historical Writing in England I*, 10.

Geoffrey remarks that "Once the kingdom had been divided up, Brutus desired to build a city. To achieve his aim, he toured the whole extent of the country to find a suitable site. When he came to the river Thames, he walked its banks and found the very spot for his plans. There he founded a city which he called New Troy."[171] After a somewhat lengthy aside that discusses the history and expansion of this city, which would eventually be come to be called London, Geoffrey return to Brutus who has finished building the city and "furnished it with dwellers to inhabit it lawfully and established a code under which they could live in peace."[172] Here, Geoffrey is more concerned with utilizing Brutus to advance his own notions of good governance that include building cities, fortifying roads, creating laws, and maintain peace.[173] The length of Brutus's reign is the only other detail of Brutus's life that is provided in the *Historia* and even this remark is made is passing as the narrative shifts to Brutus's sons: "When their father passed away, twenty-four years after his landing, they buried him in the city he had founded and divided up the kingdom of Britain among them, each living in his own region."[174]

The same concepts of building the city of "New Troy" and having a quite reign are preserved in Henry of Huntington's *Letter to Warin* but this account, while more overtly praiseworthy of Brutus, is largely devoid of any actual detail as a means of "preserving its basic

---

[171] *Historia*, i.22.490-494: "*Diuiso tandem regno, affectauit Brutus ciuitatem aedificare. Affectum itaque suum exequens, circuiuit tocius patriae situm ut congruum locum inueniret. Perueniens ergo ad Tamensem fluuium, deambulauit littora locumque nactus est proposito suo perspicuum. Condidit itaque ciuitatem ibidem eamque Troiam Nouam uocauit.*"

[172] *Historia*, i.22.504-505 "*Postquam igitur praedictus dux praedictam urbem condidit, dedicauit eam ciuibus iure uicturis deditque legem qua pacifice tractarentur.*

[173] Layamon, xvi; Michael A. Faletra, *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination: The Matters of Britain in the Twelfth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 28.

[174] *Historia*, ii.23.2-5: "*Hii, postquam pater in .xx.iiii. anno aduentus sui ab hoc saeculo migrauit, sepelierunt eum infra urbem quam condiderat et diuiserunt regnum Britanniae inter se et secesserunt unusquisque in loco suo.*"

structure: a king-list that stories of selected rulers interrupt."[175] Brutus merely "founded

Trinovantum as an everlasting memorial, that is 'New Troy', which nowadays we call London"

and goes onto enjoy "a prosperous reign" before dying "gloriously."[176] The lack of information

surrounding Brutus's actual reign as king of the Britons reinforces the notion that the glory that

accompanies Brutus's death has more to do with what Brutus's legacy gives the Britons than it

does with how Brutus achieved his glory.

The Trojans also refrain from colonizing the island until the giants have been eradicated

in the *First Variant Version*. As is customary, this version compresses the narrative by removing

descriptive details which is again displayed by expediting the process of Brutus founding the city

of New Troy.[177] The *First Variant Version* initially deviates from its Galfridian predecessor by

keeping Brutus's new kingdom intact, as opposed to dividing it, before stating Brutus's desire to

build a city.[178] After stating Brutus's desire, the *First Variant Version* continues to relate that

"[s]earching for a suitable place to build, [Brutus] came to the River Thames and found the place

to be suitable for his purpose. He built a city there and called it New Troy,"[179] Instead of

providing a detailed history of the city and the changing of its name, the *First Variant Version*

---

[175] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 190.

[176] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 561: "*Edificauit proinde Trinouantum in memoriale sempiternum, id est Troiam nouam, quam nunc Lundoniam uocamus.*"; viii.2.561 "*Brutus autem, feliciter regnans, et gloriose decedens,*"

[177] Wright, *First Variant Version*, xxvi.

[178] *First Variant Version*, i.22.1: "Having won the kingdom, Brutus desired to construct a city" "*Potitus tandem regno Brutus affectavit civitatem aedificare.*"; *Historia*, i.22.490: "Once the kingdom had been divided up, Brutus desired to build a city" "*Diuiso tandem regno, affectauit Brutus ciuitatem aedificare.*

[179] *First Variant Version*, i.22.1: "*Ad quam aedificandam congruum quaerens locum pervenit ad Thamensem fluvium locumque nactus est proposito suo perspicuum. Condidit itaque ibidem civitatem eamque Novam Troiam vocat.*"

just notes that the city "... was later called Trinovantum through corruption of the name."[180] This portion of the narrative is abridged along with other passages where Geoffrey of Monmouth's authorial voice is present.[181] From here the *First Variant Version* reverts to closely following Geoffrey's *Historia* by noting that "[a]fter building the city, [Brutus] furnished it with citizens to live there by right and he gave them law so they could conduct their affairs peacefully."[182] Geoffrey's original narrative is followed, with some minor alterations in diction and syntax, in recording the events of Brutus reign which include the fathering of his three sons and his death. Here too, "when Brutus died in the twenty-fourth year after his arrival in Britain, his sons buried him beneath the city that he had founded, and divided the kingdom of Britain among themselves, each having his own part."[183] These alterations are largely negatable in that they serve to maintain a more coherent narrative that allows Brutus to remain the focus of the narrative. The main exception to this notion is the unified state of Britain which is something that will become an issue that will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter.

Non-substantive details are added to the narrative this section of Brutus's life in Wace's *Roman de Brut*. After settling his people, Brutus surveys the land, which allows Wace to incorporate a longer survey of the topographical features of Britain, Brutus sees "his people multiplying and the lands growing fertile. [Brutus] thought he would found a city and rebuild Troy. When he had chosen a suitable spot, convenient and delightful, he built his city on the

---

[180] *First Variant Version*, i.22.2: "*quae postmodum per corruptionem vocabuli Trinovantum dicta est.*"

[181] Wright, *First Variant Version*, xli.

[182] *First Variant Version*, i.22.2: "*Condita ergo civitate munivit eam civibus iure victuris deditque legem qua pacifice tractarentur.*"

[183] *First Variant Version*, 2.23.1: "*Mortuo autem Bruto, vicesimo quarto anno adventus sui in Britanniam, sepelierunt eum filii sui infra urbem quam condiderat et diviserunt regnum Britanniae inter se et habuit quisque partem suam.*"

Thames; it was well sited and very well made. In memory of his *ancestors* he had it called 'New Troy'.[184] Wace follows his predecessors by providing a detailed commentary on the different names that have been uses for the city, albeit with more extensive account complete with explanatory notes for these names and concluding with a temporal synchronization. These types of expansions were made to satiate the Norman appetite for the "history and legends of their adopted country."[185]

The *Roman de Brut* returns its narrative focus to the reign of Brutus but only as a means to describe the nature and duration of the reign. According to Wace "when Brutus had made his city, and attracted to it very many of the people, he installed in it citizens and burgesses and gave them mandates and laws, so that they would maintain peace and harmony and not on any account hurt each other."[186] Geoffrey's narrative fingerprints are evident, but the expansions implemented by Wace allow Brutus to have a slightly more active role is establishing the infrastructure that is designed to promote peace and harmony. However, the success and prosperity of Brutus work is somewhat undermined by Wace neglecting to mention anything else about Brutus's reign aside from the fact that "[h]e ruled Britain for twenty-four years..."[187]

Layamon's *Brut* continues to build on the Galfridian narrative of Brutus's reign as king of the Britons. These additions are mostly descriptive in nature and motivated by Layamon's primary interest in people.[188] There are a few bits of information within these expansion that create more insights into Brutus's actions. After giving an even longer topographical description of Britain than his predecessors, Layamon states that Brutus:

---

[184] *Roman de Brut*, 33.
[185] *Roman de Brut*, xiii.
[186] *Roman de Brut*, 33.
[187] *Roman de Brut*, 33.
[188] Layamon, *Brut*, xxvii.

...reflected on Troy-town where he tribe had suffered terrors.
    He continued round this country and he viewed the countryside:
He found one pleasant spot upon a stretch of water,
And there he erected a very rich city,
With living-rooms and halls and with high stone walls.
When the city was ready it looked really splendid,
The city was very well made: a ready name for it he had;
He gave it as its glorious name, great 'Troy the New',
To commemorate his kindred from whom he had come down.[189]

Again, a lengthy account of the different names for the city and their rationales is given before

the narrative returns to Brutus. As he did with expanding the narrative to include details into

what type of city was built by Brutus, Layamon goes on to describe the types of laws that are

created and implemented by Brutus:

[Brutus] entrusted the town to them and equipped it with the best,
And he gave them legislation in the form of good laws.
He instructed that it should be love which linked them together,
Each upholding the others' right, both by day and by night,
And if any refused, he was to be punished,
And for great crimes committed, a man must be hanged.
From such good edicts they developed great respect,
And became upright men, and love reasonable words.[190]

For Layamon, this is where the expansions end. Before moving on to Brutus's sons, Layamon

simply states that "[f]or twenty-four years this land lay in [Brutus's] hands."[191] The added

architectural and legislative details help to provide a better idea as to what kind of builder and

---

[189] Layamon, ll. 1010-1017: "*Þa bi- þohte he on Troyȝen; þer his cun teone þoleden. / and he li[ðd]e ȝeond þis lond; ȝ scæwede þea leoden. / He funde wunsum ane stude; uppen ane watere. / þær he gon aræren; riche ane burhe. / mid bouren ȝ mid hallen; mid hæȝe stan walle. / Þa þe burh wes i-maked; þa wes he swiðe mare. / þa burh wes swiðe wel idon; ȝ he hire sette name on. / he ȝef hire to hire (tir)fulne name; Troye þe Newe*" *Brut*, ll. 1010-1017.

[190] Layamon, ll. 1039-1046: "*He heom bi-tahte Þe bur; ȝ iȝearwed mid Þan beste. / ȝ he heom onleide; Þat weoren lawen gode. / He hehte Þat luue scolde; liðen heom bi-tweonen. / ælc halden oðren riht. ba bi daie ȝ bi nith. / ȝ wea-swa nolde; he sculde beon iwite. / ȝ swa vfele he mihte don; Þat hesculde beon ihon. / For swulchen ei3 gode; heo hefden muchele drede. / ȝ bi-comen riht-wise men; ȝ rædes heo Iuueden*" *Brut*, ll. 1010-1017.

[191] Layamon, l. 1147: "*Hæfde [Brutus] Þis lond; fower and twenti winter. on his hond*" *Brut*, l. 1147.

lawmaker Brutus was but ambiguity surrounds the remainder of Brutus's reign. The duration and

no evidence to the contrary implies that Brutus's reign was one of peace and prosperity but the

lack of information supports the notion that Brutus's legacy was established by the actions that

preceded his reign and thus are the ones worthy of further study.

The Oldest Version of the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut omits many of the descriptive

details that pervade its sources but it actually presents the fullest, and a rather favorable account

of Brutus's reign by altering the chronology of established events and by augmenting the amount

of affection that Brutus receives from his subjects. In this version of events:

> Brut[us] and his men went on and searched for land where they might find a good,
> suitable place to build a noble city for him and for his people, until they came
> upon a beautiful river, which is now called the Thames. And there he began to
> build a beautiful city, and he called it New Troy in memory of great Troy from
> which he and all his lineage had come.[192]

Removing the lengthy topographical descriptions of the island the entomological discussions of

the name of the city allows Brutus to maintain his position as the focal point of the narrative. The

length of Brutus's reign is comparable to the earlier accounts in that he "wore the crown in the

city of New Troy for twenty years and more after the city was built."[193] The present temporal

ambiguity works in Brutus's favor in that it allows the time it would have taken to build the city

to be added to the total duration of Brutus reign which is already vaguely longer than the earlier

accounts. In this account, Brutus still plays the part of lawmaker, but no information is given

about the specifics of these laws which appeared to have been well received given that Brutus

"gave out his laws, which the Britons kept. And Brut[us] was very greatly loved by all..."[194]

After this statement of adoration, the Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut mentions that Brutus

---

[192] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83
[193] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.
[194] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.

divided the Island of Britain between his three sons before noting Brutus death by mentioning

that "and when Brut has reigned twenty years and more, as has already been said, he died in the

city of New Troy..."[195] The division of the island between Brutus's sons is stated in every

account starting from Geoffrey, but this division occurs before Brutus death. The larger

significance of this chronological discrepancy lies in the fact that Brutus is the one who

determines the portion of land that each son will receive which in turn establishes clear lines of

succession and territorial supremacy that are accepted and preserved by Brutus's sons. The

reverence for Brutus's is again on display with the remark that Brutus's "sons buried him with

great honor."[196]

The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* presents a similarly terse account of Brutus's life once he

becomes king of Britain. There is no topographical description of Britain. Once the giants have

been fully eradicated with Goemagog's death, "Brutus and his army came along the shore of a

noble river—Thames was its name—and when he saw a place suitable for building he made a

city there and called it New Troy."[197] The only commentary on the name of the city is a simple

and direct statement that mentions how long the city kept it name and when it was changed the

first time. After the city has been built, Brutus proceeds to rule "in peace over the Isle of Britain

for twenty-four years" before he dies "and was buried with honor in the city which he himself

had built."[198] Even though there are no mentions of any laws in this account, it is still noted that

Brutus was able to rule in peace for twenty for years. Moreover, this peaceful reign lasted over

---

[195] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.

[196] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.

[197] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 23: "*Odena y doeth brutus ay lu hyt arlan avon bonhedic temys oed y henw. Agwedy gwelet lle adas y adeiliat. Ef a wnaeth dinas yna ac ay gelwys yn tro newyd.*"

[198] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 23: "*A gwedy gledychu o vrutus ar ynys brydein yn hedychawl pedeyr blyned arugeint y bu varw. Ac y cladpwyt ef yny gaer a adeiliassei ehunan yn anrydedus.*"

the "Isle of Britain" which carries the overt implication of complete sovereignty over the entirely

of the Island of Britain—something that is notably absent from the Cotton Cleopatra *Brut's*

counterparts.[199] Brutus revered status is still in place given his honorable burial.

---

[199] The notion of complete sovereignty over the entirety of the island of Britain was a key component of the Welsh historiographic tradition and is borrowed by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Brynley F. Roberts, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Welsh Historical Tradition," *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies* 20 (1976: 29-40, at 31-32. For further information on Geoffrey of Monmouth's use of Welsh historical traditions see Roberts, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Welsh Historical Tradition," 36-40.

Cutting Down Corineus to Build up Brutus

As evidenced by his position as the eponymous founder of Britain, Brutus is the single most important person in the founding myth of Britain. With Brutus as the focal point of this narrative it is easy to overlook Corineus and his contributions to the Trojan effort to locate and rebuild a New Troy. Corineus is generally neglected over time and the ease in which this erasure happens is a byproduct of the diminishment of his actions within the founding myth of Britain that only increase post-Geoffrey of Monmouth. Corineus's gradual decline of prominence eventually reaches the point where he is reduced to an afterthought within the narrative, save for his wresting match with Goemagog. However, the preservation of this event is not enough to cement Corineus's legacy within the founding of Britain. As it is wont to do, the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* reverses the trend of downgrading Corineus, but these efforts are not quite enough to restore Corineus to his Galfridian glory, though they do present him in a rather favorable light.

Corineus is not mentioned anywhere in the *Historia Brittonum* or any of Geoffrey of Monmouth's source material, and thus he is another product of Geoffrey's imagination. The narrative as set forth in Geoffrey's *Historia* serves as the foundation that later authors will build their adaptations from, and Geoffrey's version of events place Corineus in a favorable light that will gradually be diminished until the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* returns Corineus to a place of prominence. Corineus's contributions to the founding myth of Britain undergo two distinctive changes as the narrative evolves over time: Corineus becomes increasingly violent at the expense of his overall importance, and Corineus's eventual legacy is diminished by the increasing presence of Brutus and the expansion of Brutus's own martial exploits alongside Corineus's. It is worth noting that the alterations that result in Corineus's decline are largely in keeping with the

larger stylistic changes that successively expand on the narrative as a whole, and the degree of

violence therein.[1] Again, it is worth noting that the accounts presented in Henry of Huntingdon's

Historia Anglorum, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* are

anomalies in that they deviate so heavily from the established norm that they should be viewed

as extreme cases of adaptation and thus should not be viewed as continuations of the Galfridian

legacy in the same way as Wace and Layamon are.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The ease in which later authors of the founding myth of Britain neglect, or blatantly omit,

the figure of Corineus is carried over to scholarship. It is also somewhat fitting that the scholarly

treatment of Corineus reflects his textual treatment in that what little commentary that does exist

is either connected to Brutus in some way, or explicitly focuses on his wresting match with

Goemagog. When critics choose to comment on Corineus, they usually introduce him in relation

to Brutus which reinforces the hierarchy of the two men and widens the gap of their respective

stations as king and vessel. For instance, Robert Hanning initially introduces Corineus as

"Brutus' lieutenant" before referring to him as "Brutus' formidable companion" when discussing

the parallels between Corineus's wresting match with Goemagog with that of Arthur and the

giant of Mont St. Michelle.[2] Corineus is similarly reduced in status that is dependent on Brutus

for context when he is referenced as "Brut[us]'s right-hand man," "Brutus's champion," "the

---

[1] Wace, *Roman de Brut: A History of the British*, ed and trans. Judith Weiss (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2009), pp. xxii-xxiii. Hereafter cited as *Roman de Brut*. Fiona Tolhurst, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 206-207.

[2] Robert W. Hanning, The Vision of History in Early Britain from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), pp. 149; 150. The parallels between these two fights is also addressed by Sian Echard, "Geoffrey of Monmouth," in *The Arthur of Medieval Latin Literature: The Development and Dissemination of the Arthurian Legend in Medieval Latin*, ed. Sian Echard (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), 46-66, at 47, 56-57.

stoutest of Brutus' warriors."[3] As previously alluded to, Corineus's wrestling with Goemagog

has received significant critical attention. The majority of these discussions fall into two main

camps: commentaries about the giants as a whole, and/or Goemagog specifically, and

conversations about the geographic etymologies for "Cornwall" and "Goemagog's Leap."

    Corineus has been described as being "the prototypical English giant slayer, especially in

later, derivative literature" and his fight with Goemagog has been likened an imitation of the

biblical David.[4] The biblical associations of this episode are also a popular source of discussion.[5]

This conflict has also been used to discuss the martial prowess of Corineus and the Trojans on

individual and collective levels respectively.[6] Moreover, this episode is also used to further

larger commentaries on Wace's interest in entertainments, (post)-colonial discussions of the

---

[3] Julia Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History in the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle* (New York: Boydell and Brewer, 2017), p. 29; Echard, "Geoffrey of Monmouth," 47; John Spence, *Reimaging History in Anglo-Norman Prose Chronicles* (York: York Medieval Press, 2013), p. 64; Lisa M. Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters: The Foundation of Albion* (New York: Cambria Press, 2013), p. 37; John P. Brennan, "Myth, Marriage, and Dynastic Crisis in Laȝamon's *Brut*," *Arthuriana* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 41-59, at 45.

[4] Jeffery Jerome Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), pp. 35, 192.

[5] For further discussion of the Biblical associations of the giants from the founding myth of Britain see: David C. Fowler, "Some Biblical Influences on Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historiography," *Traditio* 14 (1958): 378-385, at 379-380; Ruch, *Albina and her Sisters,* 51-53; Victor J. Scherb, "Assimilating Giants: The Appropriation of Gog and Magog in Medieval and Early Modern England," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32, no. 1 (2002): 59-84, at 61-62, and 66.

[6] Laura D. Barefield, "From Trojan to Briton: Brutus's Masculinity an Lineage in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*," in *Courtly Arts and the Art of Courtliness: Selected Papers from the Eleventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 29 July - 4 August 2004*, eds. Keith Busby, and Christopher Kleinhenz, (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006), 193-201 at 198-199; Margaret Lamont, "Becoming English: Ronwenne's Wassail, Language, and National Identity in the Middle English Prose Brut," *Studies in Philology* 107, no. 3 (2010): 283-309, at 301; Ruch, *Albina and her Sisters,* 37; Thea Summerfield, "Filling the Gap: Brutus in the *Historia Brittonum*, *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* MS F, and Geoffrey of Monmouth," *The Medieval Chronicle* 7, (2002): 85-102, at 94-95; Michelle R. Warren, "Making Contact: Postcolonial Perspectives through Geoffrey of Monmouth's "Historia regum Britannie"," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 115-134, at 124.

Trojan settlement of Britain that also have biblical connotations.[7] Corineus is granted his own

parcel of land which takes its name of "Cornwall" from Corineus. This etymology has been a

source of interest and is occasionally addressed in scholarship that encompasses Geoffrey of

Monmouth's affinity for Cornwall.[8] Corineus and his exploits are also used as textual references

for various discussions surrounding the stylistic tendencies different authors. For instance, the

mid-battle speeches that Corineus gives, or the absence thereof, are used to comment on the

styles of Wace, Layamon, and the adaptor of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*.[9] The hunting

scene in which Corineus is confronted by Goffar's men is used as a vehicle to explore how

authors are making social commentaries of legal issues surrounding contemporary hunting

practices.[10] Lastly, Corineus is also brought up in discussions surrounding his daughter

---

[7] *Roman de Brut*, xx; Warren, "Making Contact," 124-125. For further commentary on the association of the Trojans as a biblically inspired "chosen people" see: Cohen, *Of Giants,* 32-35; Fowler, "Some Biblical Influences on Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historiography," 379-380; Scherb, "Assimilating Giants," 61-62, and 66.

[8] For commentaries surrounding the etymology and prominence of Cornwall in Geoffrey's *Historia* see: Brennan, "Myth, Marriage, and Dynastic Crisis in Laȝamon's *Brut*," 45; E. R. M. Ditmas, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Breton Families in Cornwall," *The Welsh History Review* 6 (1972-1973): 451-461; Echard, "Geoffrey of Monmouth," 46-48; Michael A. Faletra, *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination: The Matters of Britain in the Twelfth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 45-47; Karen Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, (2010; repr., Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 41, 49-51, and 70-73; O. J. Padel, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall," *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 8 (1984): 1-28; Susan M. Pearce, "The Cornish Elements in the Arthurian Tradition," *Folklore* 85, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 145-163; Mark Stoyle, "The Dissidence of Despair: Rebellion and Identity in Early Modern Cornwall," *Journal of British Studies* 38, no. 4 (1999): 423-444, at 426-429.

[9] Francoise Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut: The Poem and its Sources*, (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989), pp. 38; Francoise Le Saux, "Narrative Rhythm and Narrative Content in Laȝamon's *Brut*," *Paregon* 10, no. 1 (1992): 45-70, at 55-56.

[10] Scott Kleinman, "Frið and Fredom: Royal Forests and the English Jurisprudence of Laȝmon's Brut and Its Readers," *Modern Philology* 109, no.1 (2011):17-45 uses Corineus's hunting episode to discus Layamon's use of legal terminology and as a part of a larger commentary on the legal issues surrounding hunting but it not go into detail about the larger significance of this episode within the larger narrative of the Trojan founding myth of Britain. Corineus hunting issues brought up to begin a commentary on forest laws in relation to larger issues of the laws and customs of "Geoffrey's England or of Anglo-Norman policy" Hanning, *The Vision of*

Guendolena who was married to Brutus's eldest son Locrine.[11] Corineus is largely on the

periphery of this discourse and is mainly brought up as a point of comparison for Guendoloena's

actions and temperament.[12] Any close attention that Corienus receives in these commentaries

revolves around his speech and threats of physical violence.[13] While interesting, and worthy of

their own analysis, these events in Corineus's life are beyond the scope of this project.

NARRATIVE CONTEXT FOR CORINEUS

There is no mention of Corineus in the *Historia Brittonum*, and thus he is another product

of Geoffrey of Monmouth's imagination. Corineus aside, only the bare outline of Brutus's

journey to Britain provided in the *Historia Brittonum*. In this version, after Brutus is driven from

Greece, "arrived in Gaul, where he founded the city of Tours, which is called Turnis; and later he

---

History, 161. Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, attributes the absence of Corineus's hunting scene in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* as part of "its program of presenting Trojan violence as either justified self-liberation or justified self-defense. But it also fits into another, less obvious program undertaken by the writer of the Oldest Version: a shift in the relationship of Britain to Rome that flouts the expectations generated by typical scholarly readings of Galfridian tradition." 32-33.

[11] Locrine was promised to marry Corineus's daughter Guendoloena, but he became enamored with a foreign princess named Estrildis. Upon learning of this Corineus understandably became enraged, challenged Locrine and the two were eventually separated by their friends who also help Corineus to force Locrine to honor his agreement to marry Guendoloena. Locrine eventually puts aside Guendoloena in favor of Estrildis after Corineus's death which sparks a civil war that ends with Guendoloena's victory and fifteen-year regency until her son Maddan became of age. After crowning her son king, Guendoloena ruled over Cornwall until her death. *Historia* 2.24-26.

[12] For examples see: Brennan, "Myth, Marriage, and Dynastic Crisis in Laȝamon's *Brut*," 45-49 Lamont, "Becoming English," 301; Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 75-76, 78; Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 110-113, 122, 178-180, 197; Fiona Tolhurst, "The Britons as Hebrews, Romans and Normans: Geoffrey of Monmouth's British Epic and Reflections of Empress Matilda," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 69-87, at 79-81.
Jane Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*: The Ideological Transformation of the *Historia regum Britannie* in Twelfth Century Vernacular Chronicles," *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 148-161, at 151.

[13] Brennan, "Myth, Marriage, and Dynastic Crisis in Laȝamon's *Brut*," 45, 48; Hanning, *The Vision of History*, 150-151; Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 74-75; Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*," 151-152.

came to this island, which is named Britannia from his name, and filled it with his race, and

dwelt there."[14] Geoffrey of Monmouth fleshes out this travel itinerary from Greece, to Gaul, to

Britain and adds a few stops along the way. Geoffrey's expansions to this narrative include

Corineus who is a relatively late entry into the founding myth of Britain in that his first

appearance occurs about two-thirds of the way through the narrative. According to Geoffrey's

account, Corineus is not introduced until after Brutus and his Trojans have been sailing around

the Mediterranean for at least a month following their departure from Diana's temple on the

island of Leogetia.[15] From here Brutus and the Trojans make landfall and ravage the countryside

of Northern Africa, are beset by pirates who are defeated and looted, and are accosted by Sirens.

After escaping the Tyrrhenian sea, Brutus and his Trojans make landfall where they find another

contingent of Trojans who are led by Corineus.[16] The two Trojan leaders quickly become friends,

join forces under Brutus's command, and head to Aquitaine where trouble ensues. A fight breaks

out between Corineus and the locals regarding hunting rights. This disagreement results in the

death of Imbertus at Corineus's hands which instigates a full-scale conflict between the Trojans

---

[14] *Historia Brittonum: British History and The Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris (London: Phillimore, 1980), §10, 19: "*et pervenit ad Gallos usque, et ibi condidit civitatem Turonorum, quae covatur Turnis. Et postea ad istam pervenit insulam, quae a nomine suo accepit nomen, id est Brittaniam, et inplevit eam cum suo genere, et habitavit ibi.*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60. Hereafter cited as *Historia Brittonum*.

[15] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain: An Edition and Translation of the De gestis Britonum*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 2009), i.17.319-320: "They ploughed the waves for thirty days until they came to Africa, still unsure where to direct the ships' prows." "*Sulcantes aequora, cursu triginta dierum uenerunt ad Affricam, nescii adhuc quorsum proras uerterent.*" Hereafter cited as *Historia*.

[16] It has been noted that Brutus's journey across the Mediterranean is modeled on the path taken by the Scythians who made their way from Egypt to Ireland that is found in the *Historia Brittonum*. *The History of the Kings of Britain: The First Variant Version*, ed. and trans. David W. Burchmore (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), pp. 442-443 note 17.1. Hereafter cited as *First Variant Version*; *Roman de Brut*, 19 n.2; Layamon, *Brut*, ed, and trans. Rosamund Allen, (London: Everyman's Library, 1993), pp. 413 n.639. Hereafter cited as Layamon.

and the Aquitanians under the rule of Goffar the Pict. Goffar is defeated by the Trojans who take this victory as an opportunity to ravage the land and make camp where the city of Tours would eventually stand. Goffar returns with a large number of reinforcements from Gaul who drive the Trojans into their camp before besieging it. The siege is lifted due to an ambush planned and executed by Corineus. Due to the dwindling Trojan and swelling Gaulish numbers, Brutus decides to leave for the home that was promised to him by Diana. The Trojans quickly reach the island of Britain and make landfall at Totnes. From here, the indigenous giants are eradicated before the Trojans begin to colonize and settle the island that they now claim sovereignty over.[17]

Once he joins Brutus, Corineus plays a vital role in the events leading up to the founding of Britain. Not only is he the strongest Trojan soldier, but he also acts as Brutus's primary advisor and general. Corineus's martial prowess turns the tide of several battles against the Gauls and his victory over the giant Goemagog signifies the eradication of the giants who oppose the Trojans for sovereignty over Britain. Brutus rewards Corineus's contributions by granting him his own parcel of land to rule over, which is called Cornwall after Corineus. Over time, Corineus's relationship with Brutus becomes increasingly subservient and nearly all of Corineus's martial exploits are modified to shift the focus onto Brutus nearly to the point of Corineus's erasure from the narrative. This progression is halted by the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* which reelevates Corineus's to his Galfridian levels of important before continuing to elevate his legacy by omitting some of Geoffrey's violent tendencies which contribute to a rather bloodthirsty depiction of Corienus.

The gradual textual diminishment and erasure of Corineus has contributed to the general scholarly disinterest in him. These factors have reduced Corineus down to a marginalized figure

---

[17] *Historia*, i.17-22.336-489.

whose legacy is built on a single, shining moment that has been tarnished by neglect. The aim of this chapter is to analyze how the figure of Corineus has been altered and how his exploits have been transferred to Brutus as a way to augment the latter's legacy at the expense of the former. This study will demonstrate just how vital Corineus is to the founding myth of Britain despite Brutus bogarting his contributions. Attention will be given to the manner in which Corineus is introduced to the narrative and how this introduction establishes his relationship to Brutus and foreshadows his showdown with Goemagog. Corineus's martial exploits as a tactician and as a combatant will also be addressed in addition to his defeat of Goemagog which is his primary claim to fame. The analysis of Corineus, and his contributions, will conclude with an examination of the creation of Cornwall as a reward for Corineus's service. Narrative changes will be examined in chronological order to demonstrate how the figure of Corineus and the legacy of his involvement in the founding of Britain develops over time.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

After leaving the island of Leogetia and sailing for a month Brutus and his Trojans "came to the altars of the Philistines and the lake of Salinae and sailed between Russicade and the mountains of Azara" where they are attacked by pirates who are defeated and looted by the Trojans.[18] From here, "they passed the river Malva and landed in Mauritania" which is ravaged before the Trojans sail for the Pillars of Hercules where they are accosted by Sirens.[19] After

---

[18] *Historia*, i.17.320-321: "*Deinde uenerunt ad aras philistionorum et ad lacum Salinarum et nauigauerunt inter Russicadam et montes Azarae.*"

[19] *Historia*, i.17.324-328: "*Porro, flumen Maluae transeuntes, applicuerunt in Mauritaniam. Deinde, penuria civi et potus coacti, egressi sunt ex nauibus et dispositis turmis uastauerunt patriam a fine usque ad finem. Refertis uero nauibus, petierunt columpnas Herculis, ubi apparuerunt eis monstra maris uocata Sirenes, quae ambiendo naues fere ipsas obruerunt;*"

escaping the Tyrrhenian sea Brutus makes landfall where he meets another contingent of Trojans who are currently being led by Corineus.[20]

In every account where Corineus is present, he joins Brutus along with most of the other band of Trojans that he was leading.[21] However, the progressive devaluation of Corineus's role within the founding myth of Britain starts with the increasingly subservient positioning of Corineus during his initial meeting with Brutus. Again, the narrative put forth in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* serves as the exemplar that later adaptors will derive

---

[20] The journey made by Brutus after receiving Diana's prophecy is fundamentally the same in the *First Variant Version* i.17.1-2, the *Roman de Brut* 19-21, Layamon's *Brut* ll. 639-677, *Brut y Brenhinedd: Cotton Cleopatra Version*, ed. and trans. John J. Parry (Cambridge MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1937), pp. 17-18. Hereafter cited as *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*. The level of detail changes in these accounts especially in regard to the sirens who attack the Trojans. Wace starts this expansion and likens the sirens to mermaids which is the form that these creatures take in Layamon. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* reverts them to sirens while preserving many of the mermaid features. The journey is largely absent from the *Historia Anglorum* which strictly follows the original narrative of the *Historia Brittonum* which does not provide any information about the events that occur between the Trojans leaving Greece and arriving in Gaul. *Historia Brittonum* 1.10; Henry of Huntingdon, Histor*ia Anglorum: The History of the English People,* ed. and trans. Diana Greenway, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), i.9. Hereafter cited as *Historia Anglorum.* Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* also omits this portion of the Trojan journey and inverts the sequence by placing the arrival in Gaul and the founding of Tours before seeking Diana's guidance. *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2. *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle*, ed. and trans. Julia Marvin, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006) removes this portion of the Trojan voyage, and truncates the time that it takes them to reach the place where they find other Trojans by simply noting that "When Brut had heard this reply [from Diana], he weighed anchor as soon as he could and set out on the high sea, and when he had sailed for twenty days and more, by a seacoast they found three hundred men of Trojan lineage, and their lord and leader was named Corin[eus]" p. 79. Hereafter cited as *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*.

[21] As previously noted, Corienus is not present in the *Historia Brittonum* nor is he in the initial founding myth of Britain recorded in the *Historia Anglorum* which is not surprising given the fidelity that the latter follows the former. Corineus is also absent in Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* which is a bit curious given that the letter itself is an abridged summary of Geoffrey's *Historia,* Neil Wright, *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth II: The First Variant Version*, (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988), p. lxxi; *Historia Anglorum*, ci.

their own accounts from. According to Geoffrey's *Historia¸* Brutus comes to the Tyrrhenian Sea

and:

> There on the shore they found four generations descended from the Trojan exiles who had accompanied Antenor when he fled. Their leader was called Corineus, a just man and a good advisor, of great character and boldness; if he met a giant, Corineus could overcome him at once, as if he were fighting a child. When the Trojans realized their common ancestry, they took Corineus and his people with them.[22]

Corineus's introduction establishes him to be a man of good character, sound decision making,

and remarkable physical strength which is reflective of Geoffrey of Monmouth's preoccupation

with "the spectacle of human greatness."[23] All of these attributes elevate Corineus standing as a

leader which allows him to serve as another exemplar of "Geoffrey's own opinions of

government, law and the maintenance of society."[24] Furthermore, Corineus's virtues also help to

justify the decision to allow Corineus and his followers to join the Trojans under Brutus on a

greater basis than their shared ancestry. It is one thing to be related to someone and another one

to be related to a virtuous person. Corineus's introduction also reveals that the Trojans who

follow Corineus will eventually be "called Cornish after their chief" and more importantly, that

"in every battle [they] proved more helpful to Brutus than the rest."[25] This comment elevates the

Cornish, and Corineus by extension as their leader, to a unique position of prominence within the

combined forces of the Trojans. However, the decision for them to derive a name from their

---

[22] *Historia*, i.17.329-334: "*Ibi iuxta littora inuenerunt quatuor generationes de exulibus Troiae ortas quae Antenoris fugam comitatae erant. Erat eoru dux Corineus dictus, uir modestus, consilii optimus, magnae uirtutis et audaciae; qui si cum aliquo gigante congressum faceret, ilico obruebat eum ac si cum puero contenderet. Agnita itaque ueteris originis prosapia, associauerunt illum sibi nec non et populum cui praesidebat.*"

[23] Hanning, *The Vision of History*, 139.

[24] Layamon, xvi.

[25] *Historia,* i.17.334-336: "*Hic, de nomine ducis postmodum Cornubiensis uocatus, Bruto in omni decertatione prae ceteris auxilium praestabat.*"

leader Corineus, instead of being Britons like the rest of the Trojans under Brutus creates a division within this new Trojan coalition that will remain after the Trojans find their new homeland with the creation of a semi-independent Cornwall within Britain.

There is a slightly elevated level of specificity in that Corineus and his Trojans are found along the coast of Spain according to the *First Variant Version* of Geoffrey's *Historia* which also preserves Brutus's discovery of "four generations of Trojan exiles who had been Antenor's companions in flight" and that "[t]heir leader was called Corineus."[26] In keeping with the *First Variant Version*'s primary aim of abridgment, the description of Corineus is notably condensed to the detriment of Corineus and the Trojans he leads.[27] Corineus is simply "a man of great virtue and boldness" which not only deprives him of some of his original qualities, but it also strips away the foreshadowing of his match with Goemagog.[28] The *First Variant Version*'s compression of details also results in the alteration of details which is present with the diminishment the Trojans under Corineus.[29] A small element of disunity is introduced by the claim that "[h]aving mutually acknowledged their descent from an ancient lineage, they joined forces with him and the greater part of the people he ruled over" as opposed to the entirety of Corineus's Trojans which is implied by Geoffrey's account.[30] The removal of all additional commentary surrounding the Cornish as a whole, and the level of support they provide in comparison to their compatriots, continues the devaluing of Corineus and his Trojans.

---

[26] *First Variant Version*, i.17. 2-3: "*Elapsi tamen inde Hispaniae oras praetermeant ubi iuxta litora invenerunt quatuor generationes de exulibut Troianis quae Antenoris fugam comitate fuerant. Quorum dux Corineus dictus erat...*"

[27] Wright, *First Variant Version*, viii.

[28] *First Variant Version*, i.17.3: "*Quorum dux Corineus dictus erat, vir magnae virtutis et audaciae.*"

[29] Wright, *First Variant Version*, viii.

[30] *First Variant Version*, i.17.3: "*Agnita itaque invicem veteris originis prosapia associatus est eis cum maxima populi parte cui praesidebat.*"

Wace's version of Corineus's introduction to the narrative combines elements of Geoffrey's *Historia* and the *First Variant Version* which results in an account that restores Corineus's qualities and augments his personal relationship with Brutus at the expense of any discussion surrounding the Trojans who become Cornish. As is the case with earlier accounts, "four whole generations descended from the fugitives whom lord Antenor had brought from Troy when the Greeks had defeated them" are discovered on the coast of Spain by Brutus.[31] This second contingent of Trojans is also led by Corineus who is named as "their lord and duke, [who] governed them."[32] The act of naming Corineus as a governing lord and duke over his Trojans places him on equal footing with Brutus who was raised as a duke over his Trojans in exchange for his leadership.[33] Wace does not restore all of Corineus's Galfridian qualities but Corineus is still described as being "a very powerful man, bold and strong as a giant."[34] Wace interests in "personal motivation, in the importance of the individual as a catalyst in the great changes and developments of society" are displayed in the rationale as to why Corineus and his Trojans agree to join with Brutus.[35] According to the *Roman de Brut*, once Corineus "had heard and understood that these people, traveling in search of land where they might stay, were from Troy." Even though Corineus "was very glad of their coming and accompanied them" only "a large part of his people accompanied him" which does not speak that highly of Corineus's ability to lead seeing at a portion of his people chose to remain behind.[36] However, there are many other considerations aside from Corineus's leadership that could have influenced this decision to stay.

---

[31] *Roman de Brut*, 21.
[32] *Roman de Brut*, 21.
[33] *Roman de Brut*, 7.
[34] *Roman de Brut*, 21.
[35] Layamon, *Brut*, xvi
[36] *Roman de Brut,* 21

The primary concern here is that fewer and fewer Trojans are following Corienus in joining

Brutus with each narrative account which diminishes the eminence of the Trojans as a clearly

unified people. Even though the Trojans under Corineus are constantly devalued by Wace, the

Roman de Brut elevates Corineus to new heights by stating that "Brutus greatly loved and

cherished him, and found him to be a very good friend."[37] The affection that Brutus feels for

Corineus and the friendship between the two men is also a product of Wace's interest in human

emotion which far exceeds that of his predecessors.[38]

    Layamon deviates slightly from the account put forth by his predecessors in that Brutus

finds in Spain:

> ...pleasant people,
> Four tribes of them, totaling many thousands,
> Good warriors all, who were valiant in battle,
> And these were their relations; so much the better for them!
> These four tribes of men had all fled from Troy,
> With Antenor leading them, an elder in the nation,
> And he with these forces fled out of Troy."[39]

For the first time a more concreate account of the numbers of this collection of Trojans is given.

Changing "four generations" into "four tribes" also implies that the destruction of Troy may not

have been as severe since so many Trojans were able to flee from the city and avoid enslavement

by the Greeks. Layamon also builds up the quality of these Trojans by describing them as

---

[37] *Roman de Brut*, 21.

[38] *Roman de Brut*, xxii.

[39] Layamon, ll. 679-684: "*þer heo leof folc funden. / fouwer þrum ferden; þer weoren feola þusend. / gode knihtes; þa gode weoren to fihten. / Þeos weoren heora sibbe-men; hit wes þa beth mid heom. / Þeos feower ferden; from Troye weoren iflemed. / Atenor heom ledde; þe wes leode ælder.*" *Brut*, ll. 679-684. Unless otherwise noted, Layamon's Middle English is reproduced from the Caligula A.ix manuscript of Laȝamon, *Brut*, ed. G.L. Brook and R.F. Leslie, *Layamon: Brut. Edited from British Museum MS Cotton Caligula A ix and British Museum MS Otho C xiii*, vol 1., London, 1963, l. 131. Hereafter cited as *Brut*.

"[g]ood warriors all, who were valiant in battle."[40] Layamon follows his predecessors by naming

Corineus as the leader of this group of Trojans and imitates Wace by granting Corineus the title

of duke which, according to Layamon's *Brut*, occurred "when Antenor died."[41] From here

Layamon is largely in keeping with the *Roman de Brut*, by noting that "Corineus was a strong

man and he had massive bones, / He was as fierce, he was as strong, as if he were a giant."[42]

Layamon provides more detail of the actual meeting between the two Trojan leaders that creates

an element of subservience despite the affection displayed between Brutus and Corineus. In

Layamon's *Brut* when "[t]he message came to Corineus that Brutus had come there, / He was

quite delighted: he had never been so glad yet. / They approached each other and many times

they embraced."[43] After Brutus reveals that he is seeking a land "[w]hich he could colonize with

his comely people. / Corineus responded: 'I will come with you, indeed, / With my servants and

retainers, and go share in it with you, / And look to you as lord, and esteem you as leader.'"[44]

The praise that Layamon bestows upon Corienus reveals his primary interest in people and

"demonstrates his admiration for great leaders," which is also extended to Brutus on account of

Corineus's deference to Brutus's rule.[45] No explanation is provided as to why Corineus decides

to join Brutus outside of wanting to share such a land with other Trojans, nor the reason why

those who are joining Brutus are to "look at him as lord" or to "esteem him as leader."[46] There is

---

[40] Layamon, l. 681: "*gode knihtes; þa gode weoren to fihten*" *Brut*, l. 681.

[41] Layamon, l. 687: "*seðen Atenor was dea*" *Brut*, l. 687.

[42] Layamon, ll. 688-689: "*Corineus wes a strong mon; ʒ he heuede muchele ban. / he wes swa kene he wes swa strong; swilc hit weore an eotand*" *Brut*, ll. 688-689.

[43] Layamon, ll. 690-692: "*Þa tiðind com to Corineum; þat Brutus wes þider icomen. / wel wes him on liue; nes he neuer ær swa bliðe. / Heo comen to-gadere; ʒ ofte heo custen.*"

[44] Layamon, ll. 694-697: "*þer he mihte þurh-wunian; mid his wnfolke. / Corineus him answerede; ʒ ich þe wulle mid fare. / mid mine driht-folke; ʒ habben dale mid þe. / ʒ halden þe for herre; ʒ here þe for lauerd*" *Brut*, ll. 694-697.

[45] Layamon, *Brut*, xxvii.

[46] Layamon, l. 697: "*ʒ halden þe for herre; ʒ here þe for lauerd*" *Brut*, l. 697.

an element of this union being a social matter due to Layamon remarking that "the agreement was ratified and {rigorously kept}."[47] Again, there is no further mention of the Trojans under Corineus eventually being called "Cornish," their semi-autonomous existence under Corineus's leadership, or an opportunity for them to exercise their own discretion about whether or not to follow Brutus. Layamon's deviations are the product of his "certain reluctance to give too much importance to minor characters" and desire "to keep the focus on the main character of the episode."[48]

The devaluation of the Trojans who become Cornish and the subservience of Corineus reaches its nadir in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*. In keeping with its penchant for omitting details and disregarding secondary characters, the adaptor of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* simply states that following the departure from Leogetia, Brutus:

> when he had sailed for twenty days and more, by a sea coast they found three hundred men of Trojan lineage, and their lord and leader was named Corin[eus].
> When Brut heard this news, and who they were, he received them into his ships with great joy and took them along with him. This Corin[eus] became Brut[us]'s liegeman and did him homage and fealty.[49]

In this version there are only "three hundred men of Trojan lineage" are under Corineus's leadership.[50] Not only does the size of this force suggest that far fewer Trojans managed to escape the destruction of Troy and Greek enslavement but it also minimizes the level of strength that can be obtained by absorbing them. Corineus is devalued in a similar manner given the barren description of him that just notes his name and that he was the "lord and leader" of the three hundred Trojan men that Brutus stumbles across. Brutus is the one who is happy to find

---

[47] Layamon, l. 698: "*Þis feoreward was imaked; heo ferden to-somne*" *Brut*, l. 698.
[48] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 34-35, 35.
[49] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 24; *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79.
[50] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79

more Trojans which grants him the joyfulness that had previously been attributed to Corineus.

Moreover, it is made perfectly clear that Corineus and his three hundred Trojans are the ones

joining Brutus who heard the news about the other Trojans and "he received them into his ships

with great joy and took them along with him."[51] For what three hundred and one Trojan men are

worth, all of Corineus's men join Brutus. This act of unifying all of the Trojans is "part of a

program promoting the ideal of a cohesive community of the realm that extends across time and

population" and showcases the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s "aspiration to community."[52]

To varying degrees of clarity, the earlier accounts note that Corineus is throwing his lot in with

Brutus who is to be recognized as either the outright leader of all of the Trojans, or just the ones

that he liberated from Greece. Here, Brutus is the unequivocal leader of all of the Trojans,

including Corineus who not only joins Brutus, but he proceeds to go as so far as to become

Brutus's "liegeman and [do] him homage and fealty."[53] The concerted effort of placing Corineus

in a subservient role to Brutus reflects the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s "narrative choices

[that] continue to emphasize the centrality of the people's support – and counsel – to Brut[us]'s

success."[54]

The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* restores Corineus to a place of prominence that also places

him on more equal terms with Brutus. However, the narrative damage has been done to the

Trojans under Corineus who are still largely written out of the narrative along with their future

importance. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* initially imitates Layamon's *Brut* by stating that "four

tribes of the Trojan race, of those who earlier had fled with Antenor after the destruction of

---

[51] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79.
[52] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 57, 46.
[53] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79.
[54] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 27.

Troy" are discovered by Brutus on the side of the Tyrhenian Sea.[55] Both sets of Trojans

demonstrate a new level of discretion by making inquiries about and taking the time to get to

know one another before joining forces.[56] This feeling out process extends to Brutus and

Corineus who "had come to know each other."[57] Corineus is still not the "just man and good

advisor, of great character and boldness" that can overthrow a giant as if the giant were a child

that Geoffrey of Monmouth purports him to be. Instead, the Corienus of the *Cotton Cleopatra*

Brut is simply "the strongest man, and the bravest, in this world."[58] Reinforcing Corineus's

martial qualities restores the foreshadowing of his martial exploits in addition to allowing the

burden of leadership to fall upon Brutus in such a way that spares him from having to risk

himself unnecessarily in combat. Essentially, the adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* paves the

way for Corineus to become Brutus's martial equivalent. This account also contains a slight

elevation in Corineus's status in that he is also a "prince" or "*tywyssawc*" over the Trojans who

had fled with Antenor.[59] The most notable change in this introduction of Corineus is his

relationship with Brutus. In claiming that "[a]nd after he and Brutus had come to know each

other, they loved each other inseparably from that time on" the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*

establishes a more equal relationship that is built upon a mutual respect and affection as opposed

to one of acquiesced subservience or outright fealty.[60]

---

[55] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18: "*Ac ar ystlys y mor hvnnw wynt a doethant ym plith pedeir gweligord o genedyl tro or rei a foassei gyt ac antenor gwedy distriw caer dro.*"
[56] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18: "And after the two races had made inquiries (concerning each other) they knew each other." "*A gwedy ymouyn or dwy genedyl ymadnabot awnaethant.*"
[57] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18: "*A gwedy ymadnabot ef abrutus.*"
[58] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18: "*achryfaf gwr adewraf or byd oed hwnnw.*"
[59] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18: "*ac yna yd oed yn dywyssawc arnadunt corineus.*"
[60] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18: "*a gwedy ymadnabot ef abrutus. ymgaru aorugant yn diamadaw yr vn ae gilid onadunt o hynny allan.*"

The original treatment of the Trojans who are initially under Corineus's command in Geoffrey's *Historia* falls from a state of glory where they are Brutus's most dependable soldiers to a place of complete erasure very quickly. When they are mentioned in later adaptations it is in relation to the increasingly smaller amounts of them that actually accompany Corineus once he decides to join Brutus. Brutus's reliance on them is never to be spoken of beyond Geoffrey's *Historia* and their valor in battle is only referenced once by Layamon. These alterations ensure that the focus remains on Brutus and reinforce the idea that the Trojans under his command are the only ones of concern regardless of when, or how, they join his ranks. The notions of a unified Trojan force with a clear leadership that stems from Brutus alone are also strengthened through the diminishment of Corineus's virtues, especially those that do not pertain to his bravery and/or physical prowess. Corineus's legacy is built from a progressively lower foundation which also lowers the potential heights that it can climb to. This is a conscious decision by Geoffrey's successors to ensure that Brutus is the clear leader and the only Trojans that really matter are those who go on to follow him and become the first Britons.

MARTIAL PROWESS

The newly consolidated Trojan force heads towards Gaul shortly after Corineus and his Trojans join Brutus. Once in Gaul, Corineus's martial prowess is put on full display and his superiority as the greatest Trojan fighter quickly becomes apparent with an increase in the violence of his actions. Corineus's martial exploits in Gaul are designed to validate the leadership he held over his Trojans, which in turn elevates Brutus by having such a man under his command, reinforcing the fighting ability of the Trojans as a whole, establishing Corineus as a worthy opponent for Goemagog, and to alleviate some of martial responsibilities from Brutus. Later narratives will alter the devastation dealt by Corienus and manipulate events to reflect their

own agendas which also includes linking Brutus to Corineus's martial exploits. Placing Brutus

into the same fighting league as Corineus, albeit in a lower weight-class, ensure that Brutus is

still very much a part of the fight and not an armchair general which preserves Brutus's standing

and the justification thereof. More importantly, it allows Brutus to maintain command of the

Trojans without the explicit need of him risking himself unnecessarily in battle since Corineus

can, and will, draw most of the enemy's attention. Another component of linking the two leaders

in combative episodes is that it allows Brutus to display another facet of his magnanimity by his

willingness to place himself in harm's way by rushing to the rescue of his subordinates.

Corineus is somewhat complicit in instigating conflict between the Trojans and the locals

during a hunting excursion headed by Corineus. There are variations in the motivations behind

the meeting of Corineus and Imbertus, who is the emissary of the local king named Goffar the

Pict, and the source of conflict between the two parties, but the end result is the same: war.[61]

Corineus is built for combat and the first engagement between the Trojans and Goffar sets the

stage for Corineus to perform. Brutus learns of Goffar's approach and decides to engage him.

---

[61] In Geoffrey's *Historia*, the *First Variant Version*, the *Roman de Brut* and Layamon's *Brut* Goffar sends envoys to inquire about the Trojans and to determine whether or not they seek peace or war. These envoys headed by Imbertus meet Corineus while he is hunting and a dispute arises over hunting privileges where Corineus does not see the need to seek, or even have the king's permission to hunt. Corineus's response enrages Imbertus who shoots an arrow at Corineus who proceeds to dodge the arrow and brain Imbertus with his own bow. News of Imbertus's death is brought to Goffar who amasses an army to avenge Imbertus. *Historia,* i.18.339-350; *First Variant Version*, i.18.1-4; *Roman de Brut*, 23; Layamon, ll. 703-742. The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79 removes this entire episode and just relays that Goffar gathers an army to drive the Trojans from the land after learning that they had entered his land without permission. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* revises the early elements of this episode to place Corineus, and all of the Trojans, in the best light in that Goffar sends messengers to tell the Trojans to leave the area or be driven out. These messengers learn that Corineus is off hunting and they try to capture him. The narrative sequence, and its subsequent fallout is restored when Imbertus's misses Corineus with an arrow and is brained with his own bow. *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18-19. For further commentary on the hunting politics of this episode see: Kleinman, "Frið and Fredom," especially 34-36 and Hanning, *The Vision of History*, 161.

During this battle Corineus is responsible for breaking the stalemate and creating a chain of

events that leads to the Trojans routing Goffar's forces. Geoffrey of Monmouth establishes the

foundation of this narrative which allows Corineus to become progressively heroic amid

expandingly violent battles at the cost of his overall importance to the Trojan cause. The *Historia*

regum Britanniae offers a particularly favorable portrayal of Corineus in that he demonstrates

tactical acumen in addition to his overwhelming physical prowess. According to Geoffrey's

account:

> When at last battle was joined, there was fierce fighting on both sides: after they
> had spent most of the day amid such carnage, Corineus was ashamed that the
> Aquitanians were resisting so valiantly and cheating the Trojans of victory.
> Summoning his courage, he shifted his troops to the right wing, closed them up
> and made a swift charge against the enemy; the dense formation of his men
> allowed him to get among the enemy, where he cut them down without respite
> until he had broken their ranks and put them to flight. Having lost his sword, he
> chanced on an axe, with which he sliced down the middle anyone he met.[62]

Geoffrey shows Corineus as a prideful man who motivated by shame as a way of inserting

"properly believable characters and events" into his history.[63] However, Corineus does not let his

less virtuous characteristics lead to his downfall like many other epic heroes. Instead, Corineus

makes a tactical decision to charge the enemy's flank which enables him to start to turn the tide

of the battle once he can physically engage his opponents. It is worth noting that Geoffrey of

---

[62] *Historia*, i.18.354-362: "*Inito tandem certamine, dira pugna utrobique committitur; et cum
multum diei in agendo caedem consumpsissent, puduit Corineum Aequitanos tam audacter
resistere nec Troianos cum triumpho insistere. Vnde resumpta audatia seuocauit suos in
dexteram partem proelii et facto agmine celerem impetum in hostes fecit; et ut infra eorundem
turmas sese densa acie intromisit, non cessauit hostes prosternere donec penetrata cohorte
cunctos in fugam coegit. Fortuna ei amisso gladio bipennem amministrauerat, cum qua
quemcumque attingebat a summo usque ad imum disiungebat.*"
[63] Jankuluk, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 103.

Monmouth goes out of his way to praise Corineus by stating that "Corineus' boldness and

courage amazed Brutus and his comrades, and even the enemy."[64]

Abridgement is the primary aim of the *First Variant Version* of Geoffrey's *Historia* and

descriptions of battles are a frequent casualty of this type of editorial compression.[65] However,

the first battle between the Trojans and Goffar emerges relatively unscathed in the *First Variant*.

There a few changes in diction and syntax but the core of the episode remains intact along with

all of the details that shine the spotlight on Corineus and his martial legacy. In this account:

> The battle was joined, and both sides engaged in fierce fighting. When most of the
> day had been consumed in action, Corineus felt ashamed that the Aquitainians
> were resisting so boldly and the Trojans were not winning. Therefore, summoning
> his courage, he pulled his men to the right side of the battle and, forming a line,
> made a rapid assault against the enemy and cut them down to the left and the
> right. Having penetrated their line, he forced them all to flight. After he lost his
> sword, Fortune provided him with a battle-ax with which he split from top to
> bottom everyone he came near. Brutus was amazed, his companions were
> amazed, even the enemy was amazed by the boldness and the valor of the man.[66]

There is some weight to the relatively benign changes in this version such as the removal of

Geoffrey's sense of determinism given that here the "Trojans were not winning" as opposed to

being "cheated of victory".[67] The effectiveness of Corineus's charge in the *First Variant Version*

slightly detracts from his personal exploits in that his penetration of the enemy line "forced them

---

[64] *Historia*, i.18.362-363: "*Miratur Brutus, mirantur socii, mirantur etiam hostes audaciam uiri et uirtutem.*"

[65] Wright, *First Variant Version*, viii, xli, lxxi.

[66] *First Variant Version*, i.18.4-5: "*Initoque certamine dira pugna utrobique committitur. Et cum diei multum in agendo consumpsissent, puduit Corineum Aquitanos tam audacter in eos resistere, Troianos non triumphare. Unde, sumpta audacia, se vocavit in dextram partem proelii suos et, facto agmine, celerem impetum in hostes facit, ipsoque dextra laevaque caedit et penetrata cohorte cunctos in fugam coegit. Fortuna ei, amisso gladio, bipennem administravit qua cunctos, quos attingebat, a summo usque deorsum findebat. Miratur Brutus, mirantur socii, mirantur etiam hostes audaciam viri et virtutem.*"

[67] *First Variant Version*, i.18.4-5: *Troianos non triumphare.*"; *Historia*, i.18.356-357: "*nec Troianos cum triumpho insistere.*"

all to flight" which removes the need for him to "cut them down without respite until he had broken their ranks and put them to flight."[68] This minor detraction is rectified by the *First Variant Version* repeating the term "*mirantur*" (be amazed) to reemphasize the amazement felt by Brutus, his companions, and the enemy in response to Corineus's boldness and valor.[69]

Wace's interest in emotion is present in his account of this battle which is seen in the increase in the general violence of the fight and Corineus's martial prowess and brutality.[70] The alterations to the opening lines of the account of this engagement reveal Wace's preference to "evoke atmosphere and feeling."[71] According to the *Roman de Brut* "[a]nd the king [Goffar] came and the two sides joined battle, each striking great blows. The Poitevins [i.e. Aquitanians] attacked them hard, the Trojans fought back hard; for a long time they fought without either winning."[72] The additions of how hard both sides are fighting elevates the magnitude of the struggle and reinforces Wace's interest in personal motivations which are then revealed when Wace continues to note that "Corineus—of great value in the affair—felt great shame that the Poitevins were so strong they were neither defeated nor dead."[73] Corineus's role in this battle is initially elevated by the direct statement that he was "of great value in the affair" and further augmented by the violent details that accompany the description of the charge where "[h]e rallied his men towards the right and attacked the other side, breaking through the ranks and killing many to the right and the left. In the pursuit he lost his sword, but gained an axe, which by

---

[68] *First Variant Version*, i.18.5: "*...cunctos in fugam coegit.*"; *Historia*, i.18.358-360: "non *cessauit hostes prosternere donec penetrata cohorte cunctos in fugam coegit.*"
[69] *First Variant Version*, i.18.5: "*Miratur Brutus, mirantur socii, mirantur etiam hostes audaciam viri et virtutem.*"
[70] *Roman de Brut*, xxii.
[71] *Roman de Brut*, xxii.
[72] *Roman de Brut,* 23.
[73] Layamon, *Brut*, xvi; *Roman de Brut*, 23.

chance came to his hand."[74] This sequence is a rather faithful derivation of its predecessors until the moment where it becomes clear that Corineus is killing many of those that he is actively pursuing, as opposed forcing the enemy to flee in response to his attacks. Wace even takes the time to remark the added devastation that accompanies Corineus's axe acquisition when he notes that "[t]hus the fighting was even more brutal; everyone reached by the axe was split right down the body."[75] However, this may be an instance where Wace "takes it upon himself to explain more than seems warranted, and again this may have as much to do with his audience's needs as his own pedantry."[76] Corineus's exploits still create a sense of amazement to everyone else, but for the first time, Brutus's amazement is not singled out. Instead, the *Roman de Brut* notes that "[l]ooking at him, the Trojans and the other side both marveled at his great daring and his great blows" before stressing the import of Corineus actions in recording that "he completely routed the army; no one dared await him."[77]

Layamon's account is notably more violent than his predecessors. Corineus's fighting prowess is enhanced through the addition of descriptive details and the omission of any semblance of tactics. Corineus's portrayal is more in line with the conventions of an epic hero, but Layamon also humanizes Corineus by adding small speeches that are akin to personal pep-talks. Layamon uses the formulaic opening lines of this engagement as an opportunity to voice his "world-weary acknowledgment of the effects of human aggression" before shifting his attention to Corineus's actions:[78]

> So together they clashed, and boldly they attacked,
> There was very fierce fighting; those fated then fell.

---

[74] *Roman de Brut*, 23.
[75] *Roman de Brut*, 23.
[76] *Roman de Brut*, xxiv.
[77] *Roman de Brut,* 23.
[78] Layamon, *Brut*, xxvi.

> Many a strong man was struck through with steel;
> All day long lasted that fight: there fell many a good knight.
>   Corineus came collecting spoil and declared to himself:
> 'For shame, Corineus! Weren't you a special champion?
> Now show your own strength and your special power,
> And fell to the ground all these Poitevin [i.e. Aquitanian] folk!'[79]

Shame is still the source of motivation behind Corineus's actions, but his soliloquy suggests an internal shame of not doing enough on a personal level as opposed to an external feeling caused by the battle reaching a stalemate. Layamon alludes to Corineus's superior fighting abilities by referencing the "strength and special power" that makes Corineus a "special champion."[80] It is tempting to dismiss these comments as stemming from Corineus's arrogance or delusions of grandeur until Layamon starts to describe Corineus's subsequently brutal actions in vivid detail:

> Corineus rushed in on them like a rime-grey wolf
> Designing against sheep-flocks destruction to wreak.
> He drew with his right hand a sword both huge and very strong:
> Everything he hit with it fell down there in a heap;
> However strong the warrior, even in his war-mail,
> If he but touched him with that sword, never again did he stand up.[81]

Layamon's omission of any references to Corineus charge is reflective of his view that tactical details were not considered "as 'serious' historical data, and could therefore be reshaped to some extent."[82] Removing Corineus's decision to make a tactical maneuver in this situation diminishes

---

[79] Layamon, ll. 766-773: "*To-gadere heo comen; hardliche heo on-sloȝen. / þer wes swiðe strong feht; feollen þe feie. / þer wes moni steap mon; mid stele to-swngen. / Longe a dai leste þat feht; þer feol moni god cniht. / Corineus com quecchen; ȝ to him-seolf queð. / A-wæi Corineus; nere þu icoren kempa. / Cuð nu þine strengða; ȝ þina stepa main. / ȝ þisse Peytisce folc; fal to þe grunde*" *Brut*, ll. 766-773.

[80] Layamon, l. 771: "*Cuð nu þine strengða; ȝ þina stepa main.*"772; "*nere þu icoren kempa*" *Brut*, l. 771.

[81] Layamon, ll. 774-779: "*Corineus heom rasde to; swa þe rimie wulf. / þane he wule on scheapen; scaðe-werc wrchen. / Breid he mid swiðeren hond; a sweord muchel ȝ swie strong. / al þat he þer-mid hitte; al hit a-dun healde. / Neora þa bearn nea swa strong; þah he hefde brunie on. / ȝif he hine mid sweorde at-ran; nea ras he neuer-mare*" *Brut*, ll. 774-779.

[82] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 42.

his martial acumen as a strategist but this slight is more than counteracted by effectively

rendering Corineus a one man wrecking crew of epic proportions given that he "had hacked apart

two hundred with his sword, / [when] The sword snapped off there in his hand, right up against

the hilt."[83] At this point, Corienus obtains an axe, which follows the earlier narrative traditions,

but Layamon continues to make a few additions that reiterate Corineus's martial prowess. The

ambiguity of Fortune providing Corineus with an axe, or him obtaining it by chance is removed

by Layamon is spectacular fashion given that after breaking his sword:

> Corineus got worked up then, and cried out in these words:
> 'A curse upon whichever smith once with his hands you smithied!'
> Corineus started staring round; the soldier was storming now with rage
> And snatched from out of one man's hand a battle-axe most massive:
> All he came close to he crushed to pieces with it.[84]

It the chaos of combat is one thing to obtain an ax by chance and quite another to snatch a

massive ax away from another combatant. Layamon's narrative alterations are indicative of his

larger desire to "bring about a corresponding stress on the *issue* of the battles, the *result* of a

given tactical choice, the prowess of a given warrior rather than the fate of a whole army."[85]

Corineus's martial prowess is elevated to new heights despite the removal of his tactical acumen

especially since his seemingly single-handed actions forced Goffar to be "sent off in flight and

all his forces followed" a fact that still did not satiate Corienus who "... came after them most

courageously"[86] Corineus's brutality also elevates his social standing above his station seeing as

---

[83] Layamon, ll. 780-781: "*Þa he hefde twa hundred; mid sweorde to-hewen. / þa brac þat sweord in his hond; riht bi þere hilte*" *Brut*, ll. 780-781.

[84] Layamon, ll. 782-786: "*Þa wes wroð Corineus; ȝ þas word cleopede. / (Wa) wrðe auer þene smið; þa þe mid honden smeoðede. / Corineus abuten bi-heold; for þe bearn was abolȝen. / ȝ igrap of onnes monnes honde; ana wiæx swiðe stronge. / al þat he neh com; þer-mid he hit aquelde*" *Brut*, ll. 782-786.

[85] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 34.

[86] Layamon, ll. 787-788: "*Þe king sette to fleonne; ȝ al þa ferde eafter. / ȝ Corineus heom eafter com; kenliche swiðe*" *Brut*, ll. 787-788.

he is duke who has pledged fealty to another and he is treated as a king since "The most powerful indicator of the *Brut*'s violent aesthetic, however, is the extreme brutality of its kings of Britain in comparison to their Wacean and Galfridian counterparts."[87]

Based on the fact that *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s "main editorial tendency (as elsewhere) is abridgement, achieved primarily by the omission of the detailed accounts of battle" and its proclivity for minimizing descriptive and figurative language, the general lack of detail surrounding the first battle between the Trojans and Goffar's forces should come as no surprise.[88] What is alarming is the severity of truncation that accompanies this episode. "The Oldest Version's account of battle typically consists of one sentence identifying the combatants, sometimes the place, and the outcome, which are apparently all that is of interest" and this battle is no exception.[89] Here, "...[Goffar] mustered all his power to drive them [the Trojans] off and vanquish them. But he and his men were soon defeated and fled into France [i.e. Gaul] to seek help and aid."[90] The Trojans still maintain their status as the victor but whatever glory, individual or otherwise, that would normally accompany such a victory is reduced to the bare minimum. Corienus does not receive any specific attention in this episode since "the Oldest Version does not celebrate knighthood in the way that Wace does, with his lengthy, detailed accounts of the battles and exploits of his heroes."[91]

The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, like the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, is especially fond of removing details and truncating the larger narrative. However, the adaptor of *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* is not as heavy-handed as their omission-happy counterpart, nor is the narrative

---

[87] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 207.
[88] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 21; 5.
[89] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 10.
[90] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79.
[91] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 10.

as violently detailed as its predecessors. Corineus still remains the focal point of the battle and

his exploits ensure a Trojan victory and the establishment of his legacy as the greatest Trojan

fighter. Abridging this narrative alters the battle's sequence of events but the spotlight still

remains on Corineus. In every other account save the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*,

Corineus comes into to blows with Suhardus after chastising the enemy that he has just put to

flight.[92] Shuardus is a prominent figure within Goffar's army who responds to Corineus's taunts

---

[92] The gist of Corineus's original speech in Geoffrey's *Historia* remains the same in the *First Variant Version*, and the *Roman de Brut*. The main points of emphasis are that Corineus is shaming the enemy from running from a single man, but there is some, small comfort to be had in this given Corineus's prodigious strength which allows him to dispatch several giants at a time. *Historia*, i.18.366-370: Brandishing his axe among the fleeing cohorts, he shouted these menacing words: 'Cowards, sluggards, where are you fleeing to? Come back, come back and face Corineus. For Shame! Do you in your thousands flee from one man? Yet take solace for your flight from the fact that you flee before me, who have so often forced Tyrrhenian giants to run and send them down to hell three or four at a time' "*Qui bipennem inter fugientes cohortes librans timorem non minimum cum his uerbis inferebat: 'Quo fugitis timidi, quo fuitis segnes? Reuertimini, o reuertimini et congressum cum Corineo facite. Proh pudor! Tot milia me solum diffugitis? At tamen habetote solatium fugae uestrae quod ego uos insequor, qui tociens soleo Tyrrenos gigantes in fugam propellere, qui ternos atque quaternos ad Tartara detrudere'.*"; *First Variant Version*, i.18.5-6: "Brandishing the battle-ax after those in flight, he rebuked their cowardice with these words: "Where are you fleeing to, where are you going, you lay cowards? Come back, come back and do battle with Corineus. For shame! Do so many thousands of men run from one alone? But take comfort that this right arm was accustomed to drive away and strike down the Tyrrhenian giants and send them to Tartarus by threes and fours."" "*Qui, bipennem post fugientes librans, timorem illorum his verbis coercebat: "Quo fugitis, timidi, quo segnes abitis? Revertimini, o revertimini et congressum cum Corineo facite. Pro pudor! Tot milia hominum solum fugitis? Sed habete solacium quod dextra haec solebat Tyrrhenos gigantes et fugare et prosternere ac ternos atque quaternos ad Tartara trudere.*"; *Roman de Brut*, 25: "Corineus pursued them and behind their backs shouted: 'Cowards, why are you fleeing him you should fight? Why are you running away? Do you think you'll defeat me by flight ? Show me what you came for and defend your country. If you're just fleeing from me, your flight is most infamous. You must be more than a thousand, fleeing from one knight. You don't know where to flee without my killing you. But this will comfort you enormously; that you will die by this right hand, with which I've given many splendid blows, and killed many thousands of men, and cleft many giants in two, and sent many to hell. Three by three and four by four, come on, strike without delay!" Layamon deviates from his predecessors by truncating large portions of the speech and just focuses on Corineus's shaming the enemy for fleeing: "The king set off in flight and all his forces followed, / And Corineus came after them most courageously, / Calling out to them there, that keenest of champions: / 'Goffar and your forces, why are you seeking flight? /

with 300 men who are routed a second time after Corineus bisects Suhardus with his axe.[93] The

Cotton Cleopatra Brut starts the battle with Suhardus's presence:

---

you shouldn't dash away like that if its us you want to drive off! / You'll have to make a stronger fight before we run away in flight!'" Layamon, ll. 787-792: "*Þe king sette to fleonne; ȝ al þa ferde eafter. / ȝ Corineus heom eafter com; kenliche swiðe. / ȝ heom to clepede; þe unimete kempa / Goffar mid þire ferde; wi wolt þu fleam makian. / Ne miht þu na-wiht so fleon; ȝif þu us wlt heonne fleman. / þu most swiþer fehten; er we heonne iwenden*" *Brut*, ll. 787-792. This entire episode is omitted by the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and reduced to reportage in the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*: "they did not know that the whole army was not following them and killing them, until he called out to them and chided them because three hundred men fled before one man." "*ac ny wydeint wy na bei yr holl lu yn eu hymlid ac yn eu llad. yny ymorelwys ef ac wynt. ac eu hangthreiftiau am ffo o trichanwr rac vn gwr.*" *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 19-20. The treatment of Galfridian speeches by later adaptors is a popular topic within the larger discussions of the stylistic features of the texts in question. For further information on the stylistic differences of the *Historia Anglorum* see: *Historia Anglorum*, lxxii; lxxvii-lxxviii; xc-xci; ci-cii and Wright, *First Variant Version*, lxxi. For the *First Variant version see:* Wright, *The First Variant Version*, xi-cxiv. For Wace see: *Roman de Brut*, pp. xviii-xxiv; Robert A. Caldwell, Wace's Roman De Brut and the Variant Version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae," *Speculum* 31, no.4 (1956): 675-682, at 678; Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 149-155; Wyld, Henry Cecil, "Laȝamon as an English Poet," *The Review of English Studies* 6, no. 21 (1930): 1-30, at 5. For Layamon see: for Layamon see: Layamon*,* xiv-xxxiii; Le Saux, *Layamon's Brut*, 24-58; Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 206-209. For the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* see: Marvin, *Construction of Vernacular History*, 24-32; *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* 5-15. For the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* see: *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, xii-xviii; John J. Parry, "The Welsh Texts of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*," *Speculum* 5, no. 4 (1930): 424-431, at 425; Brynley F. Roberts, "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd Ynys Brydeyn*: A Fourteenth-Century Welsh Brut," in *Narrative in Celtic Tradition: Essays in Honor of Edgar M. Slotkin* (CSANA Yearbook, 8-9), ed. Joseph F. Eska (Hamilton, NY: Colgate University Press, 2011) 215-227, at 221-227.

[93] *Historia*, i.18.371-375: "In response to these taunts, an earl named Suhardus turned to attack him with three hundred knights. Corineus parried Suhardus' blow with his shield, then, remembering the axe in his hand, raised it and struck down through his helmet, cutting him completely in two" "*Ad haec uerba illius reuertitur quidam consul, uocabulo Suhardus, cum trecentis militibus et impetum fecit in eum. Cuius ictum Corineus praetenso clipeo excipiens non oblitus est bipennis quam tenebat sed erecta illa percussit eum in summitatem galeae percussumque a summo usque ad imum in ambas partes dissecuit.*";
First Variant Version, i.18.7 "At these words of Corineus, a certain consul named Suhardus assaulted Corineus with three hundred soldiers and surrounded him on all sides. But Corineus, not forgetting the battle-ax, swung it on high against the consul, and when he struck he split him in two from top to bottom." "*Ad haec verba Corinei quidam consul nomine Suhardus, cum trecentis militibus, impetum faciens Corineum undique circumdedit. At Corineus non oblitus bipennis in ipsum consulem erectam vibrat, percussumque a summo usque ad imum in duas partes dissecuit.*"; *Roman de Brut*, 25 "Suharz, [i.e. Suhardus] one of the king's men, heard his

> And then Goffar mustered his army and Brutus mustered his. (And) the leader of Goffar's first army was Seward [i.e. Suhardus], his high steward, and he was the strongest man in France. And against him came Corineus and his army, and then there was a mighty battle and a fierce, between the armies injuring each other; and then Seward was killed.[94]

Uncertainty surrounds the manner of Suhardus's death in this account, but it is clear that

Corineus and his eventual Cornishmen are responsible for felling such a prestigious opponent.

The rest of this battle follows the narrative of events that have already been recorded in the

earlier accounts and picks up where they left off with Corineus chiding those who flee before

him:

> And so closely were the armies mixed together that Corineus lost his sword. And he chanced upon a two-edged ax, and where he struck with it nothing stopped it until it reached the ground; and with this he put to flight the three hundred knights, and they did not know that the whole army was not following them and killing them until he called out to them and chided them because three hundred men fled before one man.[95]

---

proud cry and his great arrogance. With three hundred armed knights he turned towards Corineus. They ran at him from all sides, believing they had certainly defeated him. But Corineus rose, came towards Suharz [i.e. Suhardus], and gave him such a blow that he split him in two halves from the top of his head down to his feet."; Layamon, ll. 794-801: "The king had one servant, battle-hardened, who was known as Suard [i.e. Suhardus]; / He could see Corineus coming along after him: / Suard had as his companions three hundred cavaliers: / He returned immediately and unceasingly fought back. / But not for very long could Suard remain standing: / For Corineus beat him down with his battle-force. / He struck Suard on the head, sent him reeling groundwards, / and sliced him in the middle, in two pieces, by his ribs." *Brut*, 794-801: "Þe king hefde enne þein swiþe heard; he was i-haten Suard. / he bi-heold Corineum; þe heom after com. / Suard hefde to i-feren; þreo hundred ridearen. / he wende on-ȝean sone; ⁊ he ohtilche feaht. / Nes hit noht longe; þat Suard mihte stonde. / for Corineus him geinde to; mid his guð-strencðe. / he gurde Suard on þat hæfd; þat he grund sohte. / ⁊ he hine for-smat a-midden; a twa riht bi þon ribben."

[94] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 19: "*Ac yna bydinaw aoruc goffar y lu. A brutus yr eidaw yntev. yn llywyaw y vydyn gynthaf y goffar yd oyd siward y oruchel ystiward achryuaf gwr yn freinc oed. Ac yny erbin ynteu ydoeth corineus ay vydin. Ac yno y bu kyuaruot cadarn ac vn creulon rwng ybydinoed yn yadoydi. ac yna y llas siward.*"

[95] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 19-20: "*a rac tewet y bydinoed yn ymgymysgu y colles corineus y gledyf. ac y damchweiniawt idaw bwiall deu vinniawc. ar lle trawei ef a honno nys attalieu dim yny elei hyt y dayar. ac a honno y gyrrawt ef fo ar y trychant marchawc. ac ny wydeint wy na bei yr holl lu yn eu hymlid ac yn eu llad. yny ymorelwys ef ac wynt. ac eu hangthreiftiau am ffo o trichanwr rac vn gwr.*"

Corineus does not make any decisive tactical decisions but he is still responsible for turning the tide of battle. Moreover, he is spared from any feelings of shame that sparked his initial rampage in earlier accounts which grants him a greater degree of emotional stability. This battle showcases that gratuitous violence is not necessary to showcase someone's martial prowess and shortening the battle itself allows Corineus's martial exploits to be all the more decisive.

After splitting Suhardus in two, Corineus proceeds to go on another killing spree which reinforces his strength and fighting prowess. It is at this moment Brutus is reinserted into the narrative. Geoffrey of Monmouth uses this event to reiterate the genuine respect and affection that Brutus feels for his counterpart whereas later accounts will begin to place a larger degree of emphasis on Brutus's own martial capabilities and the contributions he makes en route to securing a decisive victory over Goffar. According to the *Historia regum Britanniae*, upon witnessing Corineus's slaughter fest following Suhardus's fall, "Brutus could not contain his love for the man and ran to his aid with a single company. Then shouts arose from the contending armies, blows were redoubled and there was terrible slaughter on both sides. Soon the Trojans were victorious and put [Goffar] and his Poitevins [i.e. Aquitanians] to flight."[96] In addition to reminding the audience of Brutus's fighting capabilities, Brutus's presence is also used to exemplify Geoffrey's notions of good kingship that clearly include participating in battle and, when need be, coming to the aid of one's supporters.

The emotional motivations for Brutus's actions are reduced in the *First Variant Version*, which notes that "Brutus, seeing this from afar and inspired by the valor of the man, hastened

---

[96] *Historia*, i.18.380-384: "*Quod Brutus aspiciens, motus amore uiri, cucurrit cum una turma ut ei auxilium subuectaret. Tunc oritur clamor inter diuersas gentes, tunc crebri ictus inferuntur, tunc in utraque parte fit caedes dirissima. Nec mora, uictoria potiuntur Troes et regem Goffarium cum Pictauensibus suis in fugam propellunt.*"

with a company of men and came to his aid" which follows the *First Variant Version*'s stylistic habit of removing emotive details and emotionally charged passages.[97] The habitual truncation of battle scenes is also present when the *First Variant Version* records that after Brutus comes to Corineus's aid, "There soon arose a tremendous clamor and the frequent blows were multiplied. Soon the Trojans had won the victory and they drove king Goffar into flight with his men."[98] Wace takes things a step further by removing all of the overt, emotional motivations behind Brutus's actions by merely stating that "Brutus with all his Trojans came to his [Corineus's] aid amidst the ranks."[99] Wace is more interested in emotions than his predecessors and he chooses to "evoke atmosphere and feeling" and "he tends to replace gore and severed limbs with technical military detail."[100] These tendencies combined with an active agenda of omitting the atrocities committed by the Trojans result in a particularly terse account of how this battle concludes: "Then the tumult and the slaughter increased, for he separated many a soul from its body. I will quickly tell you the outcome: the Poitevins [i.e. Aquitanians] were beaten."[101] These changes heighten Brutus's role in the battle given the claim that he "separated many a soul from its body."[102] However, it needs to be stressed that Brutus's reemergence in the narrative is not as stereotypical knight in shining armor riding in to save the day but rather as the latecomer who is going to bogart all of the credit.

---

[97] *First Variant Version*, i.18.9: "*Quod Brutus cernens a longe, motus probitate viri, cucurrit cum turma et auxilium ei subrogat.*"; Wright, *First Variant Version*, xli, lxxi.

[98] *First Variant Version*, i.18.9: "*Mox oritur ingens clamor et crebri ictus multiplicantur et fit caedes durissima. Nec mora, victoriam adepti sunt Troes et regem Gofarium cum suis in fugam vertunt.*"; Wright, *First Variant Version*, xli,

[99] *Roman de Brut*, 25.

[100] *Roman de Brut*, xxii.

[101] Companion to Wace 95, *Roman de Brut*, 25.

[102] *Roman de Brut*, 25.

Layamon manages to blend the two traditions of severely truncating the narrative and reintroducing Brutus in such a way that does not detract from Corineus's earlier exploits and overall glory. Here, when "[t]he forces fleeing Corineus then encountered Brutus, / And these two killed everyone that they came near to."[103] This revision allows both men to share the spotlight as Layamon implements formulaic expressions to "ton[e]down of slaughter scenes" of combat. [104] Layamon also appears "to have a marked aversion from delaying devices of any nature, especially in connection with battle-scenes. All details interfering with a swift outcome of the encounter are deleted or shifted" which explains why the remainder of the battle is recounted with the simple statement that "[w]hen Goffar understood he'd lost, he only just escaped / He fled from his land and left his liegemen behind..."[105] Like Layamon, the adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* also truncates the narrative in such a way that allows Corineus to retain his glory. In this version, after Corineus fells Suhardus and routes the 300 knights along with him, "they tried to turn about, and they had no success. And then Goffar the Pict and those of his men who escaped fled..."[106] The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* takes things a step further than its predecessors by omitting Brutus from the battle save for the initial reference that Brutus had mustered his army which just so happens to contain Corineus. These changes present the most favorable account of Corineus and the uninterrupted focus on his exploits allows him to justify the initial claim that he was "the strongest man, and the bravest, in this world."[107]

---

[103] Layamon, ll. 805-806: "*Þat folc þat flei Corineum; þat com to Brutun. / ꝣ alle heo slowen; þat heo neih comen*" *Brut*, ll. 806-806.

[104] Layamon, *Brut*, xxxi; Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 33.

[105] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 37; Layamon, ll. 807-808: "*Þe king Goffar iseih his burst; ꝣ unæðe him-seolf at-breac. / he fleih ut of his londe; ꝣ bi-læfde his leode*" *Brut,* ll. 807-808.

[106] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 20: "*ac yna y keisiassant ymchwelut. ac ny thygiawt vdunt. Ac yna yfoas goffar fichti ac adienghis oy wyr.*

[107] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18: "*achryfaf gwr adewraf or byd oed hwnnw.*"

Corineus is quickly and clearly established as the greatest Trojan fighter and his martial exploits allow the Trojans to secure victories over their enemies. However, this legacy is tainted overtime by increasing the violence of his actions, often at the expense of his tactical expertise. Brutus presence and gradually elevated martial endeavors also cast shadows over Corineus exploits and reinforce his secondary position within the larger narrative that revolves around Brutus. These types of narrative alterations, and the thematic effects thereof, will become more permanent fixtures to the episodes where Corineus is present.

TACTICAL ACUMEN

Corineus seems to be built for war based on his phenomenal strength and fighting capabilities. These qualities have led others to the conclusion that "Corineus, after all, was basically a violent bully whose rage was harnessed and exploited by Brutus in the conquest of Britain."[108] Admittedly, it is fairly easy to understand how this notion was reached in light of the narrative manipulations that increase Corineus's violent tendencies at the cost of his tactical acumen and relationship with Brutus that was originally built upon mutual respect and admiration between peers. However, Corineus is much more than Brutus's attack dog. It is also worth noting that Brutus is far from the emotionally stable leader who does not give in to rage. In fact, Brutus is the more worthy recipient of the title of "violent bully whose rage was harnessed and exploited in the conquest of Britain" given that the narratives that perpetuate this myth are constantly manipulated to ensure that Brutus remains the focal point who is the primary, if not sole, reason for ensuring Trojan military victories and their eventual conquest of their new homeland. The need for Brutus to remain the hero is so strong that many of Corineus's contributions are shifted over to Brutus when he is not written out of the narrative. This process

---

[108] Brennan, "Myth, Marriage, and Dynastic Crisis in Laȝamon's *Brut*," 46.

of Brutus receiving all of the credit while diminishing the role that Corienus plays is best seen

during the Siege of Tours that follows the initial Trojan victory over Goffar the Pict.

The *Historia Brittonum* is the original source that attests the Trojan origin of tours by

noting that Brutus "arrived in Gaul, where he founded the city of Tours, which is called Turnis"

but no additional information or explanation for this construction is provided until Geoffrey of

Monmouth fleshes out the narrative details in the *Historia regum Britanniae*.[109] Again

Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britanniae* provides the narrative foundation of this episode and later

authors will derive their work from his creation. According to Geoffrey's *Historia*, the

foundations of what will eventually be known as the city of Tours are initially laid when Brutus

"...came to the future site of the city of Tours, which, according to Homer, Brutus himself later

built on that spot. Having discovered this suitable place of refuge, he laid out a camp there, to

which he could retire if it became necessary."[110] Adaptors of the *Historia regum Britanniae*

maintain Brutus's role is founding Tours and slowly upgrade the original structure from a camp

to a castle.[111] Shortly after this fortification is erected, Brutus and the rest of the Trojans are

besieged by Goffar and his allies.

---

[109] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "*et pervenit ad Gallos usque, et ibi condidit civitatem Turonorum, quae covatur Turnis.*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60. This information is also preserved in Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* which makes a slight expansion to the narrative by noting that Brutus "came into Gaul, where he founded the city of the Turoni, called Tours, and invaded the Armorican plain." *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 27: "*... peruenit in Galliam, ibique condita ciuitate turonorum que uocatur Turnis, inuasit tractum Armoricanum.*" Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* also maintains that "He [Brutus] built the city of Tours in Gaul." *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559-561: "*Edificauit autem urbem Turonis in Gallia.*

[110] *Historia,* i.19.395-398 "*Ac dum tali clade totius fere Aequitaniae partes affecisset, uenit ad locum ubi nunc est ciuitas Turonorum, quam ut Omerus testatur ipse postmodum construxit. Vt igitur loca conuenientia refugio inspexit, metatus est ibi castra sua ut si opus accidisset sese infra ipsa reciperet.*"

[111] The *First Variant Version* closely follows Geoffrey's *Historia* by recording that Brutus "...came to the place where the city of the Turones is now, which, as Homer testifies, he himself first constructed. There he laid out his camp so that, if needed, he and his men could take refuge

It is at this moment where Corineus makes another notable contribution to the Trojan effort. At first, Corineus provides assistance as an advisor whose tactical suggestions shift the tide of battle in the favor of the Trojans. However, as this narrative is revised by later authors, Corineus is stripped of his role as an advisor and his suggestions become the brainchildren of other men as he is further reduced in status given that the is only needed for his physical prowess and his expendability. Corineus's tactical acumen has already been established in his execution of charging Goffar's flank which leads to the routing of his army during their first engagement.

Geoffrey reiterates Corineus's cunning, and Brutus's reliance upon him, during the siege of Tours after the Trojans are driven back into their stronghold due to overwhelming enemy numbers. The following night "Corineus laid a plan before Brutus: he would go out that night by a side-road and hide in a nearby wood until dawn; at daybreak Brutus was to come out to face the enemy, whilst he and his cohort would attack from the rear and slaughter them."[112] Geoffrey

---

inside." "...*venit ad locum ubi nunc est civitas Turonorum quam, ut Homerus testatur; ipse prior construxit atque ibidem castra metatus est ut, si necessitas urgeret, se suosque infra ipsa castra reciperet.*" *First Variant Version*, i. 19.3. Wace is the first to begin the building upgrading process when he states that the Trojans "stopped at a hill and on top of it built a fort; till then, it had never borne stronghold, city, town nor house, but , according to what we have read, it was by the labour of these people that Tours first came into being, the city of Tours." *Roman de Brut*, 25. Layamon is responsible for Tours originally being a castle when he notes that "As he [Brutus] advanced with his army he arrived at a hill, / it was lovely and lofty and he looked it over well; / He consulted all his men about constructing a castle there. / Once erected, there it stood: a fort impregnable and good..." Layamon, ll. 824-827. "*Swa he ferde mid his here; þat he on ænne hul bi-com. / He wes feir ȝ heih; ȝ he hine swiðe bi-heold. / He nom ræd æt his monnen; þat he wolde þar castel makian. / Þa þe castel vp stod; he wes strong ȝ swiðe god.*" *Brut*, ll. 824-827. The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* also maintain that Tours was originally a Trojan castle constructed by Brutus: "And he (Brut) found a very suitable place in that land, and there he speedily built a good, strong castle" *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79; "he had a castle made for him to guard against an attack of his enemies in a place where Homer built a city afterwards as he says himself." "*A gwedy gwybot o vrutus hynny y peris ef gwneithur ydaw castell rac ruthyr y elynnion yn lle ygwnaeth omir dinas gwedy hynny val y tystia ehvnan.*" *Cotton Cleopatra Brut,* 20.

[112] *Historia*, i.20.423-427: "*Sequenti interea nocte Corineus iniuit consilium cum Bruto: se uelle scilicet per quaedam diuorcia in eadem nocte egredi et infra nemus quod prope fuerat usque ad*

mentions that "Brutus was delighted with Corineus' plan" before proceeding to note that

Corineus plan was put into motion when Corineus, who is accompanied by three thousand men,

"cunningly sallied out, as he had said, and found a hiding-place in the wood" to wait until the

opportune moment to launch his ambush.[113] Corineus is made to look exemplary in a number of

ways: showing initiative by formulating the plan itself and bringing it to Brutus, being of further

assistance by volunteering to execute said plan, and displaying a supernatural level of

intelligence and/or stealth by managing to redeploy three thousand armed men behind enemy

lines to create an ambush despite being besieged by said enemy. The fact that Corineus is able to

position his forces according to plan also demonstrates a remarkable level of ineptitude by

Geoffar's forces for allowing such a thing to happen in the first place.

The *First Variant Version* retains the core elements of Geoffrey's narrative: The Trojans

being besieged by a much large force which had driven them into their fornication; formulating a

plan to have Corineus spring an ambush when the Trojans sally forth the next day; and having

Corineus sneak past the besiegers with his men. However, two changes are made that diminish

Corineus's level of prominence. The first alteration occurs with the formation of the plan for

Corineus's ambush. The *First Variant Version* states that:

> Thus besieged by the Gauls, in the quiet of the night the Trojans formed a plan, by which Corineus and his men would sneak out by a certain side road in the dead of night and hide until daylight in a nearby wood, so that, when Brutus emerged to fight with the Gaul at dawn, he and the cohort of his people could fall upon them unexpectedly from behind, and thus they could attack the astonished Gauls from both directions.[114]

---

diem delitere; et dum Brutus cum diluculo egressus cum hostibus dimicaret, ipse cum cohorte sua a dorso superueniret et facto impetu stragem ingereret. "

[113] *Historia*, i.20.427-429: "*Placuit itaque Bruto sententia Corinei; qui ut praedixerat callide egressus est cum tribus milibus occultaque nemorum petiuit.*"

[114] *First Variant Version*, i.20.3-4: "*Obsessi itaque a Gallis sub noctis silentio consilium inierunt, ut Corineus cum suis per quaedam divortia, intempesta nocte egrederetur et in nemore quod prope erat usque ad diem deliteret ut, cum Brutus diluculo egressus cum eis dimicaret, ipse*

Corineus is no longer the architect of the ambush that he is to lead. Ambiguity surrounds who

actually devised the plan which allows Corienus to retain some of his Galfridian cunning given

the possibility of his involvement with the decision making but the damage has been done by

failing to openly acknowledge his contribution to this idea. The *First Variant Version*'s fondness

for truncation, is the likeliest explanation for these alterations which is reinforced by the brevity

of the remainder of this episode.[115] Once the plan is described, the *First Variant Version* reveals

that "[a]nd so it happened" before staring the description of the battle that accompanies the

following dawn.[116] The absence of any additional details also detracts from Corineus's

capabilities especially since it is never made clear how many men accompany him in sneaking

out to lay an ambush.

The *Roman de Brut* closely follows the account put forth by the *First Variant Version* by

depriving Corienus of the credit for coming up with the ambush. Wace's interests in emotion and

exploring personal motivations is again displayed in describing the formulation of the ambush.[117]

According to this account:

> Inside the castle there was much distress. At midnight they decided threat
> Corineus would go out, taking his men with him, and hide in a wood close by, and
> when Brutus fought in the morning, Corineus would rush out. He would launch an
> attack behind the French [i.e. Gauls] and, between them, they would surround
> them. Thus they could destroy king Goffar and his empire.[118]

The Trojans, as a whole, are presented in a poorer light due to their distress which is also implied

to be the rationale behind their decision making as opposed to the earlier accounts that were

---

cum cohorte gentis suae inproisus a dorso superveniret et sic utrimque attonitos Gallos invaderent."
[115] Wright, *First Variant Version*, liii-liv.
[116] *First Variant Version*, i.20.4: "*Quod ita factum est.*"
[117] Layamon, *Brut*, xvi.
[118] *Roman de Brut*, 27.

devoid of such emotions. Again, Corineus is denied credit for creating this plan but the possibility of his involvement remains and is somewhat strengthened by the communal decision-making process that Wace describes. Wace reveals that "[t]hey [the Trojans] thought this decision was a good one" before commenting that "Corineus and all his men went out at cock-crow and were in the wood before daybreak."[119] Corineus's status is somewhat improved by this version given the shorter timeframe that he has to maneuver his troops. Even though Corienus is still successful in leading his men into position, the import of this accomplishment is lessened by the ambiguity surrounding the number of men that accompany him in this endeavor.

Layamon preserves the anxiety and communal elements implemented by Wace while severely truncating this episode by omitting most of its details. Layamon's concern for "the overall scheme of history rather than with individual episodes, as important as some of these episodes might have been" and his "apparent lack of interest in the technical aspects of warfare" can explain the brevity of this episode.[120] In this account, Layamon remarks that "[i]n the castle was consternation: at midnight they had consultation: / They wanted to send Corineus out into the woodland. / With all of the people that he had in his platoon:"[121] None of these alterations work in Corineus's favor seeing as he is still ostensibly removed from the decision-making process, and it appears that his actions are decided for him to a larger degree which can be attributed, again, to Layamon's "reluctance to give too much importance to minor characters."[122] Layamon also has a more "moralizing and judgmental voice" than his predecessors, especially

---

[119] *Roman de Brut*, 27.
[120] Jankuluk, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 97; Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 33.
[121] Layamon, ll. 843-845: "*I þon castle wes muchel dred; a þa mid-niht heo nomen read. / þat heo wolden Corineum; to þon wode senden. / mid alle þon folke; þat he hefde on his ferde*" *Brut*, ll. 843-845.
[122] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 34-35.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, which leads Layamon to casts some aspersions on Corineus's actions by stating that Corineus and his men "...slipped out as secretly as if they were going stealing, / Into a woodland thicket which was off to the west."[123] This description certainly does not evoke any heroic associations.[124]

This episode breaks many of the stylistic traditions of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* which is predominantly occupied with "celebrate[ing] homely virtues while eliminating exactly those elements often through to have been most appeal to contemporary audiences – the individually heroic, the marvelous, the glamorous, and the erotic" which is primarily achieved by abridgement and truncating details that accompany battles.[125] In comparison to its source material, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* presents a rather concise account. Despite the brevity, Corienus is presented rather favorably in that Brutus and Corineus "decided together that Corin[eus] would leave the castle secretly by a posterngate with half of his men, and they would hide themselves until the next day in a nearby wood. And in the morning, while Brut was fighting with his enemies, Corin[eus] would come from the other side to harass, hurt, and kill them."[126] Corineus is still not the sole creator of this plan, but in this account he is clearly involved with the planning. The absence of other potential planners allows the credit for this plan to be split between the two men which is far more than Corienus had been given by everyone aside from Geoffrey of Monmouth. Even though Corineus is built up by these changes, Brutus is the true recipient of a notable increase in standing. Staging the plan between just the two of them, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* is able to "continue to emphasize the centrality of the

---

[123] Layamon, ll. 846-847: "ᵹ ferden vt swa stille; swa heo stelen wolden. / in-to ane þicke wode; þa þer on uest wes" *Brut*, ll. 846-847.
[124] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 208.
[125] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 15, 21.
[126] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 81.

people's support – and counsel – to Brut[us]'s success" in addition to portraying Brutus as an ideal king who is first and foremost devoted to the wellbeing of his people, whose wisdom he respects.[127] No information is provided as to how Corineus is able to relocate his men behind the besiegers but it is a more realistic endeavor given that he is only taking half of the current remainder of what was originally 300 men.[128]

The adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* is also fond of abridgment and omitting descriptions from battles and this account manages to present Corienus rather favorably despite offering the fewest amount of information. According to the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, Corineus is a man of action who enjoys a significant amount of autonomy seeing as "... that night Corineus and three thousand armed men came secretly to a wooded glen and lay hid there until the next day."[129] That is it. There is no consultation with Brutus, or anyone else, Corineus only acts and seemingly does what he wants. The ability to do so reinforces the peerage between Corineus and Brutus and their respective forces which can operate and exist independently of one another, albeit to varying degrees. As was the case in the *Historia regum Britanniae*, Corineus has three thousand men at this command which speaks volumes about their ability to sneak past enemy lines, the ineptitude of those besieging the castle, or a combination of both.

Up to a point, Corineus is gradually reduced to being a general, or lieutenant, of sorts, for Brutus to command. Failing to give him credit for devising the ambush outright, or minimizing his role in its creation, denies Corineus the opportunity to display his tactical acumen which makes him far more valuable as a soldier. Instead, his usefulness is dictated by his expendability

---

[127] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 27, 32.
[128] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79.
[129] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 20: "*Ar nos honno ydaeth corineus artheyr mil o wyr aruawc ford dirgeledic hyt mewn glyn coydiawc a llechu yna hyt trannoeth.*"

in relation to Brutus, and his physical prowess. The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* make efforts to restore Corineus's prominence within this episode of the narrative but these exertions can only do so much to overwrite the earlier narrative that perpetuate the perception of Corineus "was basically a violent bully whose rage was harnessed and exploited by Brutus in the conquest of Britain."[130]

GIGANTICIDE

The core narrative of the founding myth of Britain maintains that after landing in Gaul and building the city of Tours, Brutus departs for the island that will be renamed "Britain" where he will build a New Troy for the Trojans. The *Historia Brittonum* is the original source of this narrative but it does not provide any additional details and the journey from Gaul to the island that will be renamed "Britain" is presented as an itinerary seeing as Brutus "arrived in Gaul, where he founded the city of Tours, which is called Turnis; and later he came to this island, which is named Britannia from his name, and filled it with his race, and dwelt there."[131] Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* preserves this journey and adds a few details to the earlier, minimalistic narrative by recording that Brutus "came into Gaul, where he founded the city of the Turoni, called Tours, and invaded the Armorican plain. From the Armorican plain he came here and laid claim to the southern parts of the large island which—after his own name—he called Britain."[132] Brutus's journey remains the same but it is placed in a different sequence in

---

[130] Brennan, "Myth, Marriage, and Dynastic Crisis in Laȝamon's *Brut*," 46.

[131] *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 19: "...*et pervenit ad Gallos usque, et ibi condidit civitatem Turonorum, quae covatur Turnis. Et postea ad istam pervenit insulam, quae a nomine suo accepit nomen, id est Brittaniam, et inplevit eam cum suo genere, et habitavit ibi.*" *Historia Brittonum*, §10, 60.

[132] *Historia Anglorum*, i.9, 27: "*Quamobrem expulsus ab Italia peruenit in Galliam, ibique condita ciuitate turonorum que uocatur Turnis, inuasit tractum Armoricanum. De tractu autem Armoricano huc adueniens, australes sibi partes insule ingentis uendicauit, et ex nomine suo Britanniam uocauit.*"

Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* which notes that after being exiled from Italy, Brutus "traveled to many lands. He built the city of Tours in Gaul. At last, journeying in a far-off country, he offered a sacrifice and sought an oracle from Diana."[133] After making a sacrifice and receiving Diana's prophecy "[t]rusting to the oracle, Brutus approached this island, which was named Albion.[134] As is the case with most of the narratives of the founding myth of Britain, Geoffrey of Monmouth's expansions to the narrative of the *Historia Brittonum* become the new standard that his adaptors will manipulate to their own ends. Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britanniae* does not make things easy for the Trojans who have to earn everything they obtain. Even though Diana promised the island to the Brutus so he can build a new homeland for the Trojans, they must wrest sovereignty of the island from the giants who are currently inhabiting it. This gigantic conflict allows Corineus to demonstrate his worth to the Trojan cause. Over time, Corineus's role in eliminating the giants is diminished in favor of propping up Brutus. Corineus's wrestling match with Goemagog also become more violent and difficult for which leads to mixed portrayals of Corineus exploits.

The manner in which the Trojans initially come into contact with the giants occupying the island is complicated by the narrative ambiguities surrounding the actual existence of the giants. The inevitable conflict between the two entities allows the prestige of the Trojans, especially Brutus and Corienus, to be augmented over time by elevating the levels of destructive violence and religious rhetoric to varying degrees. Based on Diana's earlier prophecy the Trojans are operating under the premise that the Island is currently deserted, or at the very least, that

---

[133] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559: "*...diuersas terras adiit.*"; *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559-561: "*Edificauit autem urbem Turonis in Gallia. Tandem in terram longinquam proficiscens, oblato sacrificio responsum petiit a Diana.*"

[134] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559-561: "*Hoc igitur Brutus responso fretus hanc insulam adiit, cui nomen Albion erat.*"

giants used to live there according to the *Historia regum Britanniae*, the *First Variant Version*,

the Roman de Brut and the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*.[135] There is no references to giants

in any capacity in the prophecy that Brutus receives in Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin*.[136]

Layamon's *Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* are the exceptions in that the Trojans are fully

aware of the giants' existence before they even reach their new homeland.[137] Regardless of

whether or not they were aware of the giants, the Trojans come into conflict with their gigantic

counterparts shortly after making landfall. The giants are driven into mountains and/or caves by

the newly arrived Trojans according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, the *First Variant Version*, and

Layamon.[138] Wace, on the other hand, notes that the giants "fled to the mountains and abandoned

---

[135] "an island of the ocean, where giants once lived, / but now it is deserted and waiting for your people" "*insula in occeano est habitata gigantibus olim, / nunc deserta quidem, gentibus apta tuis.*" *Historia*, i.16.307-308; "the island in the ocean was formerly inhabited by giants, but not it is deserted, and suitable for your people." "*insula in Oceano est habitata gigantibus olim, nunc deserta quidem, gentibus apta tuis.*" *First Variant Version*, i.16.4; "Giants used to live there." *Roman de Brut*, 19; "In this land there used to be giants, but now it is abandoned and entirely deserted." *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 79.

[136] "Brutus, beneath the setting sun, beyond the realms of Gaul / Lies an island in the ocean, completely surrounded by the sea. / Go there: for it will be a perpetual dwelling-place for you; / It will become for you and your sons a second Troy." "*Brute, sub occasu solis, trans Gallica regna, / Insula in occeano est undique clausa mart. / Hanc pete: namque tibi sedes erit ista perhennis; / Hic fiet natis altera Troia tuis.*" *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2, 559-561.

[137] "Living in that country there are very powerful giants;" Layamon, l. 623. "*wuniað in þon londe; eotantes swiðe stronge.*" *Brut*, l. 623; "there is an island in the ocean that was inhabited of old by giants; now it is deserted except for twenty giants." "*ymae ynys yny mor. A uu gyuanned gynt gan kewri. A diffeith yw weithion onyd vgeint kawr.*" *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 17.

[138] *Historia*, i.21.456-457: "After exploring its various territories and driving off to mountain caves any giants they came upon." "*Peragratis ergo quibusque prouinciis, repertos gigantes ad vauernas montium fugant,*"; *First Variant Version*, i.21.1 "... the Trojans encountered some giants whom they quickly chases away to caverns in the mountains." "*Diffusi itaque Troes per patriam gigantes reperiunt, quos statim ad cavernnas montium fugant.*"; Layamon, ll. 907-910: "Brutus and his doughty men detected all those demons [giants], / And dispatched their steel-tipped shafts straight towards those devils. / They did not like the arrows and they loped off to the mountains, / And in deserted places in hollow caves they dwelt." *Brut*, ll. 907-910: "*Brutus ꝫ his gode folc; under-ȝeten þeos feondes. / ꝫ heora stelane flon; fusden to þon feonden. / Þa flan heom weoren laðe; ꝫ heo liðden to þon munten. / ꝫ i þon wilderne; an hudlese wuneden.*"

the plains to the Trojans."[139] Henry of Huntingdon deviates from the narrative norm of the giants

retreating to the mountains by altering the entirety of this episode. Here the existence of the

giants is first mentioned at "Brutus approached this island, which was named Albion. It was

inhabited, except by giants" who are then described as being "amazingly tall and indescribably

strong, but extremely stupid."[140] Before the Trojans have the opportunity to make landfall and

drive the giants into the mountains the giants proceeded to showcase their stupidity by:

> Running into the sea to oppose Brutus' ships, they came to such deep water that
> they old neither reach Brutus nor easily go back, and were slaughtered with
> arrows and crossbows. After they had been overwhelmed and routed, he
> destroyed the remaining giants who had not been present, by nocturnal ambushes,
> using crossbows and other devices."[141]

The narrative is altered via truncation and omission by the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and

the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* which pick up the narrative when the giants decide to attack the

Trojans who are currently occupied with making sacrifices, throwing celebrations, and having

feasts in honor of reaching their new homeland.[142] During this attack all of the giants are killed

except for Goemagog who is captured and forced to wrestle with Corineus. Corineus's legacy as

a whole is largely associated with this event, which just so happens to be the thing that Corineus

is best, or only, remembered for. This wresting match becomes increasingly difficult for

Corineus and the details that are used to recorded it also become progressively violent which

only adds to his prestige for defeating Goemagog.

---

[139] *Roman de Brut*, 29.

[140] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2.561: "*Hoc igitur Brutus responso fretus hanc insulam adiit, cui nomen Albion erat. nec habitabaur nisi a gigantibus. Illi autem stature mirabilis et uigoris inenarrabilis erant, sed stolidissime mentis.*"

[141] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2.561: "*Cucurrerunt ergo contra naues Bruti in mare, et cum in tantam profunditatem peruenissent, quod nec in Brutum progredi nec facile regredi potuissent, sagittis et balistis occisi sunt. Obrutis autem eis et pulsis, ceteros gigantes, qui non affuerunt, noctibus et insidiis tam balistis quam aliis artificiis deleuit.*"

[142] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 81; *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 21-22.

The *Historia Brittonum* never mentions Corineus nor does the first book of the *Historia Anglorum* which is closely derived from the *Historia Brittonum*.[143] Corineus is mentioned in Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* but his wrestling match with Goemagog is written out of the narrative.[144] It is generally accepted that the quality of a hero directly corresponds to the challenge(s) that they overcome, and heroes can alco be measured by their villainous counterparts—Corineus is no exception. Geoffrey of Monmouth's portrayal of the giant Goemagog becomes the prototype that later adaptors will use a template for their subsequent versions. In Geoffrey's *Historia*, Goemagog is described in a somewhat minimalistic fashion that merely notes that "One of these Cornish giants was a monster called Goemagog, twelve cubits tall and so strong that he could loosen and uproot an oak tree as if it were a twig of hazel."[145] The *First Variant Version*'s fondness for abridgement extends to the point eliminating the Galfridian description of Goemagog who is now mentioned via reportage in that "Goemagog the Giant arrived with twenty other giants."[146] The *Roman de Brut* follows the model of the *First Variant Version* that removes any details from Goemagog's description but Wace elevates Goemagog who is proclaimed to be the leader of the giants "[b]ecause of his strength and size the others had made him their lord."[147] Wace's alterations are maintained by Layamon whose "aggressively Christian and socially conservative values" lead to the dehumanization and demonization of

---

[143] *Historia Brittonum*
[144] *Historia Anglorum*, viii.2.561.
[145] *Historia*, i.21.469-472: "*Erat ibi inter ceteros detestabilis quidam nomine Goemagog, staturae duodecim cubitorum, qui tantae uirtutis existens quercum semel excussam uelut uirgulam corili euellebat.*"
[146] Wright, *First Variant Version*, viii; *First Variant Version*, i.21.1: "*...superuenit Goemagog gigas cum aliss viginti gigantibus...*" Goemagog is also accompanied by twenty giants in Geoffrey's *Historia*. *Historia*, i.21.473-474: "*superuenit cum uiginti gigantibus atque dirissima caede Britones affecit.*
[147] *Roman de Brut*, 29.

Goemagog who is still "the one who was the chief" but now he also presented as "God's own adversary."[148] Layamon also proceeds to claim that "... the Evil One did love him."[149] The religiously charged rhetoric is omitted by the adaptor of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* who minimizes figurative and descriptive language as a way to rationalize the depiction of the magical. [150] Goemagog is still the master of the giants but these stylistic desires of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* produce a straightforward description of Goemagog who "was larger, stronger, and taller than any of Brut's men, who stood only waist-high to him."[151] The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* adaptor is also fond of abridgment and omitting descriptions but here they revert back to the descriptive model of Geoffrey's *Historia* in describing Goemagog. Here, Goemagog is noted to be "twelve cubits tall and four broad, and he was the strongest man in the world."[152] This particular giant is intentionally described in relatively vague terms to allow the respective audiences to fill in the details for themselves and thus a figure of their own devising.

Even though he is largely considered to be the largest, strongest, and most fearsome giant, Goemagog is captured by the Trojans and his life is spared by Brutus who desires to see him wrestle with Corineus. The rational for this decision is not one of mercy, but rather one of entertainment and curiosity given that Brutus wants to see a wrestling match with Corineus.[153] Ostensibly, this match is created to determine who is the stronger of the two combatants, but in reality, this contest is designed to establish who has the authority to rule the island of Britain

---

[148] Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 208; Layamon, l. 905: "*Geomagog ihaten; þat wes þe heihste*" *Brut*, l. 905; Layamon, l. 906: "*Godes wiðer-saka*" *Brut*, l. 906.

[149] Layamon, l. 906: "*...þe Wrse hine luuede*" *Brut*, l. 906.

[150] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 5, 14.

[151] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 81.

[152] *Cotton Cleopatra*, 22: "*a deudec kuvyd oed yny hyt. a phedwar yny led. achryfaf dyn or byd oed hwnnw.*"

[153] Brutus sparing Goemagog so that he can wrestle Corineus is present in every text aside from the *Historia Brittonum* and both narrative accounts of the *Historia Anglorum*.

with Corineus and Goemagog serving as champions for their respective races and civilizations. This wresting match is foreshadowed by the earlier references to Corineus's unnatural size, strength, and previous giant killing experience. Geoffrey's *Historia* notes that "if he met a giant, Corineus could overcome him at once, as if he were fighting a child," and Corineus claims that he had "often forced Tyrrhenian giants to run and sent them down to hell three or four at a time."[154] There is no mention of Corineus's ability to overcome giants as if they were small children but Corienus does make a similar claim in the *First Variant Version* when he states that his "right arm was accustomed to drive away and strike down the Tyrrhenian giants and send them to Tartarus by threes and fours"[155] In the *Roman de Brut,* Corineus is introduced as being "a very powerful man, bold and strong as a giant" and Corineus declares that he has "cleft many giants in two, and sent many to hell."[156] Layamon's *Brut* also remarks that Corineus "was a strong man, and he had great might, was so keen, he was so strong, as if he were a giant" but there is no mention of any prior giant fighting experience.[157] Most of the descriptive information is removed in the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* but it is noted that Corineus "was as large and strong as any of Brut[us]'s men, and even taller."[158] The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* also eschews many of the descriptive details of its predecessors and simply states that Corineus was "... the strongest man, and the bravest, in this world."[159]

---

[154] *Historia*, i.17.331-331: "*qui si cum aliquo gigante congressum faceret, ilico obruebat eum ac si cum puero contenderet*"; *Historia*, i.18.369-370: "*...qui tociens soleo Tyrrenos gigantes in fugam propellere, qui ternos atque quaternos ad Tartara detrudere.*"

[155] *First Variant Version*, i.18.6: "*Sed habete solacium quod dextra haec solebat Tyrrhenos gigantes et fugare et prosternere ac ternos atque quaternos ad Tartara trudere.*"

[156] *Roman de Brut*, 21; 25.

[157] Layamon, ll. 688-689: "*Corineus wes a strong mon; & he heuede muchele ban. / he wes swa kene he wes swa strong; swilc hit weore an eotand*" *Brut*, ll. 688-689.

[158] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 81.

[159] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 18: "*achryfaf gwr adewraf or byd oed hwnnw.*"

The similar strength of both combatants is presented to allow for a more even contest for supremacy and sovereignty. Goemagog's gigantic size gives him a clear advantage which only augments the heroic legacy of the Trojans in general, and Corineus specifically, when Goemagog is defeated by a man who literally does not measure up. This bout essentially follows the same sequence of Goemagog initially gaining supremacy by breaking several of Corineus's ribs and throwing him to the ground which only enrages Corineus to the point where he sizes Goemagog and carries him to the edge of a cliff before throwing the giant to his death on the rocky sea below. This fight also keeps with the established precedent of each narrative gradually elevating the level of violence until the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* remove such detail in favor of a more simple and straightforward account that accomplishes the same narrative objectives with different stylistic tactics.

Geoffrey of Monmouth's preoccupation with "the spectacle of human greatness" is on full display in his account of the wrestling match between Corineus and Goemagog.[160] The match as presented in the *Historia* will become the template that others will modify to achieve their own ambitions. According to version of events, upon learning that Goemagog was spared so that he could wrestled, an overjoyed:

> Corineus hitched up his tunic, threw his weapons aside and challenged the giant to wrestle. The bout began, both Corineus and the giant closing to encircle each other with their arms, whilst their panting breath disturbed the air. Goemagog swiftly gripped Corineus with all his strength and broke three of his ribs, two on the right side and one on the left. This goaded Corineus to fury and, summoning all his might, he lifted the giant on his shoulders and ran to the nearby shore as fast as his burden would allow. Coming to the edge of a high cliff, he hurled over the fearful monster he bore on his shoulders, casting him into the sea. As he fell down the rocky crag, the giant was torn into a thousand pieces and stained the sea

---

[160] Hanning, *The Vision of History*, 139.

red with his blood. The place took its name from the giant's plunge and is still called Goemagog's leap.[161]

The difficulty that Corineus overcomes is intentional and the audience is supposed to draw comparisons between this match and the Biblical parallel of Isaac wrestling with an angel. Corineus's legacy has largely been reduced to this conflict and this legacy is a lasting one, worth of praise and remembrance, that is connected to the land itself with providing the etymology for "Goemagog's Leap." This match is also a microcosm of the Trojans conquest of Britain: They arrive in an excited state ready to claim what was promised them, they encounter some difficulties that result in bodily harm before regrouping to eliminate their antagonists in decisive fashion, and they are now free to claim complete sovereignty now that any and all opposition has been eradicated. They also leave their mark on the land by renaming the island "Britain" after their leader.

The *First Variant Version* is fond of abridgement but it "does not abbreviate its source slavishly, but often recasts the *Historia* freely."[162] This stylistic tendency is present in this version of Corineus's match with Goemagog which is largely in keeping with its Galfridian source material but certain details are expanded upon and others are omitted. These alterations do not present Corineus as quite as heroically, but his victory retains all of the original narrative

---

[161] *Historia*, i.21.477-489: "*Itaque Corineus, maximo gaudio fluctuans, succinxit se et abiectis armis ipsum ad luctandum prouocat. Inito deinde certamine, instat Corineus, instat gigas, et alter alterum uinculis brachiorum adnectens crebris afflatibus aera uexant. Nec mora, Goemagog, Corineum maximis uiribus astringens, fregit ei tres costas, duas in dextro latere, unam uero in sinistro. Vnde Corineus compulsus in iram reuocauit uires suas et imposuit illum humeris suis et quantum uelocitas pro pondere sinebat ad proxima littora cucurrit. Deinde, summitatem excelsae rupis nactus, excussit se et praedictum letabile monstrum, quod super humeros suos ferebat, infra mare proiecit. At ille, per abrupta saxorum cadens, in mille frusta dilaceratus est et fluctus sanguine maculauit. Locus autem ille, nomen ex praecipitatione gigantis adeptus, Saltus Goemagog usque in praesentem diem uocatur.*

[162] Wright, *First Variant Version*, viii.

objectives. The earlier parts of this bout are expanded upon in the *First Variant Version* which states that "

> At the outset of the contest, Corineus stood on one side with his tunic bound up, the giant stood on the other ready to wrestle; each one approaching the other with arms outstretched, they joined together with their arms around each other's back, disturbing the air with their constant grunts.[163]

Up to this point, the *First Variant Version* adds details that heighten Corineus's struggles and thus his legacy by the magnitude of his opponent. In this account Goemagog still gains the upper hand in a similar fashion given that "[w]ithout delay; squeezing all the strength out of Corineus, Goemagog strongly crushed the other's chest with his own, and three of Corineus's ribs were broken.[164] Removing the location of the broken ribs is largely inconsequential, but it establishes a precedent were subsequent details are omitted with greater frequency and the remaining narrative is truncated as a whole to the detriment of Corineus's legacy. After his ribs break Corineus is "instantly, inflamed with rage, he recovered his strength and seizing Goemagog with all his power he dashed him upon the rocks of the nearby shore. Torn to pieces by smashing down upon the rocks, he died and stained the waves with is blood. [165] A broken ribbed Corineus still manages to defeat Goemagog by smashing him on the rocks of a nearby shore but it is notably less impressive than doing so after lifting up and carrying the giant at a run to the destination where he is dispatched. Corineus's legacy is also diminished a little further when the

---

[163] *First Variant Version*, i.21.2: "*Inito deinde certamine, hinc stat Corineus tunica succinctus, hinc stat gigas ad luctam paratus; et exsertis bracchiis alter in alterum tendens dorsa vinculis bracchiorum adnectunt crebris flatibus auras vexantes.*"

[164] *First Variant Version*, i.21.3: "*Nec mora, Goemagog Corineum totis viribus astringens, pectore pectus illius allisit fortiter tribus Corineo fractis costis.*"

[165] *First Variant Version*, i.21.3: "*Mox ille, in iram accensus, revocat vires et toto conamine amplexatus de litore proximo super rupes excussit. At ille, per abrupta silicum ruens, in frusta dilaceratus, expiravit fluctusque saguine maculavit.*"

First Variant Version fails to provide the name this location by remarking "[t]hat spot is named

after his fall even to the present day.[166]

The narrative embellishments made by Wace are primarily along the lines of providing a

more vivid description of the match which corresponds with displaying his specialist knowledge

and "fondness for describing entertainments."[167] Here:

> Corineus rolled up his sleeves, braced himself and flexed his muscles; he girded himself with the skirts of his tunic and slightly contracted his sides. Gogmagog in is turn prepared himself and made ready to wrestle. They seized each other by the arms, entwining them. There they were, one against the other, chest against chest, side against side; they squeezed each other behind their backs, angrily locking hands. There throw pitted against throw could be seen, strength against strength, feet forward, feet behind, and all manner of tricks, movements here and movements there. Each was strong and grew angry, pushing the other with his chest and splaying out his legs. Sometimes they came together so that they were on top of each other straight away. Then you could see them breathing hard, wrinkling their noses, with sweaty foreheads, blackening faces, rolling eyes, eyebrows raised and lowered, bared teeth, changed color, heads rubbing and bumping, pushing, pulling, prodding, raising, lifting, checking, bending, straightening, calculating, kicking and quickly turning. Many a throw was made using the hips, pulling up and dragging across. Each wanted to catch the other out and each wanted to be on his guard.[168]

The addition of so much detail provides the audience with a more vivid account of this wrestling

match which augments Corienus prestige, both in terms of displaying his wrestling skills and the

how difficult this match was. This notion is made evident when Wace continues to note that

"Gogmagog fought hard. He brought his arms close together, locked his hands, and dragged

Corineus towards him, breaking three of his ribs; he hurt him badly and he almost threw him

beneath him."[169] Even though Goemagog is putting up more of a challenge in this account,

---

[166] *First Variant Version*, i.21.3: "*Locus ergo ille nomen ex casu illius sortitus est usque in presentem diem.*"
[167] *Roman de Brut*, xix.
[168] *Roman de Brut*, 29-31.
[169] *Roman de Brut*, 31.

Corineus's following feat of strength is further is magnified when Wace claims in brutal detail that:

> Corineus, wounded, tried as hard as he could to get even and pulled the giant to him with such fury that he smashed his sides. He pulled him down a little way, raised him against his chest, and carried him, hardly conscious, in his harms to a cliff. He opened his hands, and let go with his arms. The giant was heavy and crashed so hard down the cliffs into the rocks that not a bone remained unbroken. All around, the sea reddened with the blood spilt from the body. [170]

These violent additions augment Corineus's legacy in that he is able to bring Goemagog to the brink of unconscious before carrying him to the cliffside. Dropping Goemagog to his death as opposed to throwing him is a bit anticlimactic but the description of Goemagog's impact makes up for any diminishing of Corineus's actions. Wace follows the example of the *First Variant Version* in acknowledging that "[t]he place then took the name, which it still has, of the giant who fell there" without actually naming the location as "Goemagog's Leap."[171]

Layamon normally records battles with set formulas that "operate as a distancing device: malice and mortality are an unvarying element in human history; the tone is one of sadness rather than exultation."[172] However, exceptions to not rejoicing in acts of martial heroism are made "where pagans or traitors are being finished off" and Goemagog's destruction certainly counts as the former.[173] The technical aspects of the wrestling match that are added by Wace are subsequently omitted by Layamon who removes details to "bring about a corresponding stress on the *issue* of the battles, the *result* of a given tactical choice, the prowess of a given warrior rather

---

[170] *Roman de Brut*, 31.
[171] *Roman de Brut*, 31.
[172] Layamon, *Brut*, xxvi.
[173] Layamon, *Brut*, xxvi.

than the fate of a whole army."[174] Layamon's *Brut* emphasizes the physical struggle between

Corineus and Goemagog by noting that the two combatants:

> ...wrapped arms round each other and got themselves ready,
> Breast against breast: then bones started cracking;
> They lunged out with their legs (the lads were really strong)
> Their skulls scraped together (spectators stared intently)
> Often they were leaning as if about to lie down,
> As often they leaped up as if about to dash off;
> Looks of deep loathing they let flash from their eyes;
> They were gnashing their teeth just like wild boars in fury;
> One moment they were blanched and breathing horrid frenzy
> The next they were florid, aggressively twisting,
> Each of the two concerned to conquer the other.
> By ruses and by rushed and by unrivaled powers.[175]

Goemagog presents the greatest challenge in this account. Up to this point the two wrestlers are

presented as very evenly matched until "Gogmagog devised a plan and pushed at Corineus, /

Forwards with his breast, bending him right back."[176] The outcome of this plan is recorded in

vicious detail as Layamon continues to state that as he bent Corineus, he "[broke] down the

backbone four of his ribs. / Gruesomely he crippled him, but no way did he complain / Hardly

anyone surmised Corineus would survive"[177] Not only does Corineus survive, but he counters

with a similar and better executed maneuver when Corineus "[g]ot his courage back again and

---

[174] Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut*, 34.

[175] Layamon, ll. 938-949: "*Heo ȝeokeden heora earmes; ⁊ ȝarweden heom-seoluan. / breoste wið breoste; banes þer crakeden. / Heo scuten heora sconken; þa scalkas weoren stronge. / Heo hurten heora hafden; hæleðes bi-heolden. / Ofte heo luten a-dun; alse heo wolden liggen. / ofte heo up lupan; alse heo fleon wolden. / laðliche læches; heo leite en mid eȝan. / Al was heora gristbatinge; al swa wilde bares eȝe. / Whil heo weoren blake; ⁊ ladliche ibu(r)ste. / whil heo weoren ræde; ⁊ hehliche wenden. / heora eiþer wilnada; oðer to wælden. / mid wiȝeleden mid wrenchen; mid wunderliche strengðen*" *Brut*, ll. 938-949.

[176] Layamon, ll. 950-951: "*Geomagog hine bi-þouhte; ⁊ þudde Corineum. / frommard his breoste; ⁊ breid eft on-ȝein*" *Brut*, 950-951.

[177] Layamon, ll. 952-954: "*brac him bi þon rugge; feower of his ribben. / vfele he hine mærde; ah na-wiht he hit ne mende. / Ful lutel þer wæs wone; þat Corineus nas ouer-come*" *Brut*, ll. 952-954.

straightened his arms, / And pulled at Gogmagog so his back snapped in pieces."[178] The rest of the fight follows the established sequence while highlighting Corineus's strength. It is worth retiring that Corineus was crippled by having the "backbone of four ribs broken" when he grabs Goemagog "...by his girdle and grimly heaved him up" and proceeds to throw "him downwards and thrust him off with force, / Headlong from the cliff-face so all his bones were crushed, / And the gremlin split apart before he reached ground level."[179] Corineus's legacy is reinforced with the implication that he is doing the world a favor when Layamon continues to state that "[a]nd so the hateful monster was hustled off to Hell" which also reveals Layamon's Christian values.[180] Layamon's *Brut* does mention the naming of this location by including that "

To this day, and so for ever, that cliff has always taken / Its name in every language from Gogmagog's great leap."[181]

In comparison to its predecessors, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* presents a notably short account of this wresting match which is motivated by an interest in the outcome of battles as opposed to the memorable deeds that other authors choose to accentuate.[182] The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* minimizes descriptive and figurative language and battles "typically consists of one sentence identifying the combatants, sometimes the place, and the outcome, which are apparently all that is of interest."[183] This penchant for brevity holds true when the

---

[178] Layamon, ll. 956-957: "*Nom him heorte to; ꝛ streahte his ærmes. / ꝛ breid Geomagog þat him þe for-berst*" *Brut*, ll. 956-957.

[179] Layamon, l. 958: " *igrap hine bi þon gurdle; ꝛ him grimliche heaf*" *Brut*, l. 958; Layamon, ll. 960-962: "*Corineus hine fælde; ꝛ hine fusde mid mæine. / aduneward þa clude; þat his ban to-cluuen. / þat al þe feond to-barst; ær he to folde come*" *Brut*, ll. 960-962.

[180] Layamon, l. 963: "*ꝛ þus þe hæȝe scaðe; ferde to helle*" *Brut*, l. 963; Tolhurst, *Translation of Female Kingship*, 208.

[181] Layamon, ll. 964-965: "*Nu ꝛ æuer-mare; haueð þat clif þare. / nome on ælche leode; þat weos Geomagoges lupe*" *Brut*, ll. 964-965.

[182] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 61.

[183] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 5, 10.

entirety of the wresting match between Corineus and Goemagog is reduced to its essential

elements. Here:

> Gogmagog and Corin[eus] took hold of each other and wrestled for a long time, but at last Gogmagog gripped Corin[eus] so hard that he broke two ribs, so that he was most terribly enraged and took Gogmagog in his arms and hurled him down onto a rock so that he was cut all into pieces and died. [184]

Corineus's legacy remains intact by the preservation of the essential details of their match even

though the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* "does not celebrate knighthood" and chooses to. the

"elements often through to have been most appeal to contemporary audiences – the individually

heroic, the marvelous, the glamorous, and the erotic."[185] The truncation of this episode lessens

the amount of prestige that Corineus can obtain by defeating Goemagog but the vague statement

that "Gogmagog and Corin[eus] took hold of each other and wrestled for a long time" allows the

audience to do most of the work in establishing the level of difficulty that Corineus overcomes

which minimizes the impact of omitting so many details. The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*

also helps to solidify the import of this episode by declaring that "And therefore the place is

called Gogmagog's leap."[186]

The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* also breaks from the pattern of embellishment by reverting to

a more direct and relatively unadorned narrative style that is very reminiscent of the original

narrative from Geoffrey's *Historia*. According to this account:

> And at the first touch the giant got him in a hand grasp under his two arms and squeezed him until he broke three of his ribs, one of the right side and two on the left. And then he lifted him up and struck him to the ground on his knees. And then Corineus got up quickly and angrily, and grasped the giant and squeezed him until he loosened all his grasp, and then he raised him on his shoulder and went with him to the shore of the sea, and from a height rock he threw him upon sharp

---

[184] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.
[185] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 15.
[186] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 82.

stones so that he was in pieces before he reached the sea, and the waves of the sea were reddened with his blood.[187]

The relative brevity and the swiftness of the narrative events of this version creates a notion of a rather short contest which works in Corineus favor by allowing him to dispatch such an opponent with this about of ease. Corineus's legacy in regard to this event is also cemented with the notation that "[a]nd from that day to this the place is called the Giant's leap."[188]

As the narrative develops over time Corineus's heroism is accentuated to magnify his position within the upper echelon of Britain's legendary heroes and ultimately serves to augment the glory of the earliest Britons that he is representing in combat. Corineus's legacy is largely tied to Goemagog and the level of difficulty that the presents. Adding technical and violent details help to augment this legacy but they are not essential as is proved by the comparatively unadorned accounts of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*. Corineus is deserving of more for his contributions to the founding myth of Britain but it is easy to see why later authors and their critical counterparts tend to focus on this episode which is Corineus's greatest claim to fame. This component of the narrative is also the only place where Corineus's actions, and the larger political import of them, cannot be diminished, or erased as is the case with Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin*, without irrevocably damaging the martial prowess of the Trojans and their claim to total sovereignty over the entirety of the Island of Britain.

---

[187] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 22: "*Ac yny kyhwrd kyntaf y cawr ay cafuas ef gauel ardwrn adan y deu vreich ay wasgu yny dorres teir assen yndaw. yn or ystlys deheu. a dwy or ystlys assu. ac yna y dyrchauel ay daraw ar dal y liny r llawr. ac yna kyuodi yn llym aoruc corineus ac yn llidiawc. ac ymauel yny cawr ay wagu vrthaw yny laysawd y holl gauayleu. ac yna y dyrchauel ar y ysgwyd achyrchu lan y mor ac ef aoruc. ac yar carrec vchel y uwrw dros ysgithir kerric yny uu yn dryllieu kyn dyuot yn mor. ac yny goches tonneu yr mor oy waed.*"

[188] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 22: "*ac yr hynny hyt hediw y gelwir y lle hwnnw llam y cawr. Sef oed hynny.*"

BUILDING BRITAIN WHILE CREATING CORNWALL

Corineus is tied to the land of Britain by his association with "Goemagog's Leap." This association helps to preserve his legacy, or at least the part of it that people tend to care about. However, Geoffrey of Monmouth creates another geographical link to permanently tether Corineus to Britain though the establishment of Cornwall and its etymology. This connection is somewhat fitting in light of its reflection of the relationship between Brutus and Corineus: Brutus gives his name to the kingdom, country, and island of Britain whose inhabitants are called British and the same is true for Cornwall and the Cornish. However, the larger presence of Brutus, Britain, and the British overshadows their smaller counterparts to the point where it is easy to overlook the Corineus, Cornwall, and the Cornish who are treated as possessions of the former more often than not. This was not always the case if Geoffrey of Monmouth and some of his successors are to be believed. According to this narrative, Cornwall was created as a parcel of land for Corineus to govern as a reward for all of that he had done to assist the Trojans in reaching and establishing their new homeland. As far as the *Historia regum Britanniae* is concerned, Cornwall exists "outside the threefold realm as originally taken by Brutus and ever afterwards it remained separate and distinctive: it is not always clear whether, for Geoffrey, it was part of the unified realm of Britain or not."[189] Cornwall also held a unique position within the larger political structure of a Norman ruled Britain. Cornwall "was largely Cornish-speaking in 1130, and thus, although administratively part of England, would have been just as 'Celtic' in culture as Wales and Brittany" despite the fact that it "had effectively been administered as an English county for some three hundred years by the time that Geoffrey was writing."[190]

---

[189] Padel, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall," 9.
[190] Padel, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall," 8.

Consequently, the degree of autonomy enjoyed by Corineus and his followers is ambiguous, and, in many regards, medieval Cornwall can be viewed as the prototype for Texas. Both had their own independence for a time, currently exist as part of a larger whole except when then do not want to be, and they claim that everything is bigger there.

The absence of Corineus from the narratives of the founding myth of Britain in the *Historia Brittonum*, *Historia Anglorum*, and Henry of Huntingdon's *Letter to Warin* also eliminates any commentary on the creation of Cornwall and its etymology. By now it should come as no surprise that Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* is the source of these legends which will be altered to suit the ambitions of later adaptors. The brotherly bond between Brutus and Corineus in Geoffrey's *Historia* creates a relationship that is largely peer-based but there is a clear hierarchy where Brutus is the king and Corineus serves as his chief baron. As the prototypical British king, Brutus embodies "Geoffrey's own opinions of government, law and the maintenance of society" and based on Brutus's actions, it can be concluded that one of the tenants of good kingship is the act of rewarding subjects for their service.[191] For Corineus, this reward is Cornwall. According to the *Historia regum Britanniae*, shortly after making landfall at Totnes, the Trojan explore the island and initially displace the aboriginal giants into mountain caves, "they portioned out the land, as their leader's invitation."[192] It is also at this point when "Brutus named the island Britain after himself and called his followers Britons.[193] The *Historia* continues to note that "Corineus followed his

---

[191] Layamon, *Brut*, xvi
[192] *Historia*, i.21.451-452: "Favoruable winds brought him to the promised isle, where he came ashore at Totnes." "*Prosperis quoque uentis promissam insulam exigens, in Totonesio littore applicuit*"; *Historia*, i.21.457-458: "*patriam donante duce sorciuntur,*"
[193] *Historia*, i.21.459-461: "*Denique Brutus de nomine suo insulam Britanniam appellat sociosque suos Britones.*"

leader's example by similarly calling the area of the kingdom allotted to him Corineia and his people Corineians, after himself."[194] Imitative flattery to Brutus aside, this account reinforces Corineus's prominent status by fulfilling the earlier foreshadowing of this event which is expressed when the *Historia* notes that the Trojans who followed Corineus in joining Brutus would later be "called Cornish after their chief."[195] However, the true deference given to Corineus is observed when Geoffrey states that Corineus "could have had his pick of the provinces before any other settler."[196] Corineus's status is undercut by the self-serving and ostensibly rash decision to choose his parcel based on his preference for "the region now called Cornwall, either after Britain's horn or through a corruption of the name Corineia" because "he loved to fight giants, and there were more of them to be found there than in any of the districts divided amongst his companions."[197] Even though Corineus's decision does not display the greatest amount of judgement there is something to be said about knowing what you want and having the moxie to seize that desire, whether it be a beer with an unfortunate name, or a giant-infested province. It is also worth noting that Brutus allows his subjects to divide up the island between themselves before he travels the countryside in search of a location to build the city of New Troy which would eventually be known as London.[198]

---

[194] *Historia*, i.21.462-465: "*At Corineus portionem regni quae sorti suae cesserat ab appellatione etiam sui nominis Corineiam uocat, populum quoque suum Corineiensem, exemplum ducis insecutus.*"

[195] *Historia*, i.17.334-335: "*Hic, de nomine ducis postmodum Cornubiensis uocatus,*"

[196] *Historia*, i.21.465-466: "*Qui cum prae omnibus qui aduenerant electionem prouinciarum posset habere,*"

[197] *Historia*, i.21.466-469: "*... maluit regionem illam quae nunc uel a cornu Britanniae uel per corruptionem praedicti nominis Cornubia appellatur.Delectabat enim eum contra gigantes dimicare, quorum copia plus ibidem habundabat quam in ulla prouinciarum quae consociis suis distributae fuerant.*"

[198] *Historia*, i.22.490-499.

The sequence of events is altered in the *First Variant Version* which also minimizes the amount of esteem that Brutus shows to Corineus. In this version, Brutus does not call "the island Britain from his own name, and his comrades Britons" until after the giants have been eradicated and Goemagog makes his leap.[199] *The First Variant Version*'s efforts in trying "to some extent to reconcile the vulgate account with other historical works" can be seen in how Corineus comes to have Cornwall which is to be understood as a part of a larger, sovereign Britain.[200] Instead of having his pick of provinces, Corineus has "been assigned the western portion of the realm," which carries the implication that his dominion over this domain is at Brutus's discretion which can also be seen as a form a punishment as opposed to a reward.[201] Corineus's subservient status to Brutus is made apparent but Corineus still calls this area Corinea "from the pronunciation of his own name" and "now it is called Cornubia (Cornwall), either from the horn of Britain (because that area extended into the sea just like a horn) or from a corruption of the former name.[202] This episode is still subject to *First Variant Version*'s penchant for compression but the alterations of this narrative instigates the devaluation of Corineus and his assertion to Cornwall while reinforcing the notion that the land itself is more important than the person it is named after.

Wace uses the same narrative sequence as the *First Variant Version* by having the Trojans refrain from colonizing their new home until after the giants have been eradicated. Wace make some explanatory additions to this episode to an audience consisting of "a Norman public

---

[199] *First Variant Version*, i.21.4: "*Postea Brutus de nomine suo insulam Britanniam appellat, sociosque suos Britones.*"
[200] Wright, *First Variant Version*, lxxi-lxxii.
[201] *First Variant Version*, 1.21.4: "*Corineus quoque, ad occidentem portionem regni sortitus*"
[202] *First Variant Version*, i.21.4: "*... ab appellatione nominis sui Corineiam vocat; quae nunc vel a cornu Britanniae quia ceu cornu ea para terrae in mari producta est, vel per corruptionem praedicti nominis Cornubia appellatur.*"

which had a strong interest in the history and legends of their adopted country."[203] Wace

reiterates that "the country was called Albion" before going on to add that "Brutus changed its

name calling it after his own, and he had it called Britain. He named the Trojans, his

companions, Britons after Brutus."[204] The *Roman de Brut* devalues Corineus by minimizing his

presence in this party of the founding myth of Britain. However, Corineus is granted a small

measure of autonomy with the revelation that he "chose part of the land for his own use, and

called this part Corinee, after Corineus."[205] This act of eponymous naming can be viewed as an

imitation of Brutus's example but the significance of it is undercut by Wace failing to note that

the inhabitants of this area also took the name of "Cornish" after their Corineus. This omission

reinforces the notion of a unified British people under Brutus. Wace also "sometimes takes it

upon himself to explain more than seems warranted, and again this may have as much to do with

his audience's needs as his own pedantry" which explains why he confesses that "[l]ater, I do not

know by what mistake, it was called Cornwall; it still bears the beginning of the name it had at

first."[206]

 Layamon deviates from his immediate predecessors and reverts to a Galfridian model that

praises Corineus and places him on more equal footing with Brutus, socially speaking. When

Corineus is introduced in Layamon's *Brut* he tells Brutus that "I will come with you, indeed, /

With my servants and retainers, and go share in it with you, / And look to you as lord, and

esteem you as leader.'"[207] This proclamation establishes Corineus as Brutus's subordinate.

---

[203] *Roman de Brut*, xiii.
[204] *Roman de Brut*, 31.
[205] *Roman de Brut*, 31.
[206] *Roman de Brut*, xxiv; 31.
[207] Layamon, ll. 695-697: "… ᵹ ich þe wulle mid fare. / mid mine driht-folke; ᵹ habben dale mid þe. / ᵹ halden þe for herre; ᵹ here þe for lauerd" *Brut*, ll. 695-697.

Layamon also waits until after the giants are defeated to begin the colonization process which

includes the renaming of the island and its inhabitants. Again:

> When Brutus arrived here this land was called Albion;
> Now Brutus was quite sure it should not be called that anymore,
> But settled a name on it based on himself:
> He was called Brutus ad this land he named 'Brutain',
> And the Trojan people who had taken him as leader
> After 'Brutain' called themselves "Brutons".
> And still the name has truck and in some places it lingers.[208]

At this point, Corineus's prominence and prior contributions to the founding of Britain are

recognized by Layamon via Brutus who:

> ...gave Corineus, who was his champion,
> One section of his lands and placed it in his hands:
> Its lord was called Corineus, and that land 'Corinee',
> Then through the habits of the later inhabitants
> They called it 'Cornwall' (Concerned as they were with folly).[209]

Brutus's land-grant makes it clear that he sees Corineus as a peer and that Cornwall and its

inhabitants exist independently from the rest of Britain and the British. Corineus is not afforded

the same Galfridian opportunity to select his new domain this is a small concession given the

autonomy that comes with the land. Moreover, the relative social equality of Brutus and

Corineus, and the division of their respective territories, is reiterated when Layamon states that:

> 'Brutain' went to Brutus and Cornwall to Corineus;
> Brutus took all his friends who came among his forces
> Endowed them all with land where they most of all desired it.
> Corineus summoned to him all his special followers:

---

[208] Layamon, ll. 975-981: "*Þis lond was ihaten Albion; þa Brutus cum her-on. / þa nolde Brutus na-mare; þat hit swa ihaten weore. / ah scupte him nome; æfter him-seluan. / He wes ihaten Brutus; þis lond he clepede Brutaine. / ʒ a Troinisce men; þa temden hine to hærre. / æfter Brutone; Brutuns heom cleopede./ ʒ ʒed þe nome læsteð; ʒ a summe stude cleoui faste*" *Brut*, ll. 975-981.

[209] Layamon, ll. 982-986: "*Brutus ʒef Corineum; þe wes his kempa de[or]a. / ana dala of his londa; ʒ sette hit him an honda. / Þe lauerd hehte Corineus; ʒ þat lond Corinee. / Seo[ð]ðen þurh þa i þon londa weoren. / heo clepeden hit Cornwaile; þurh heora sotliche cure*" *Brut*, ll. 982-986.

To all he gave lands where they especially liked.[210]

These discussions stem from Layamon's main interest in people and their "common interest in the land itself."[211] Corineus's social elevation is also presented as being comparable to Brutus's by mentioning that both men adhere to similar leadership styles that ensure that loyal subjects are richly rewarded.

Even though his contributions are not as prominent due to the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s affinity for omission and truncation, Corineus is still gifted Cornwall by Brutus. In keeping with the new standard set by the *First Variant Version*, Corineus is not rewarded until after Goemagog's death. After making reference to the establishment of "Goemagog's Leap" as a place name, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* continues by stating that "[a]nd then Brut[us] gave all that country to Corin[eus], and Corin[eus] called it Cornwall after himself, and he called his men Cornishmen, and so will the people of that country always be called."[212] The clause that the inhabitants of Cornwall will always be called Cornishmen reflects the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s program of "promoting the ideal of a cohesive community of the realm that extends across time and population."[213] The independence of Cornwall is also alluded to when this text remarks that "Corin[eus] remained there with his men, and they built houses and cities and dwelled freely in the land."[214] Corineus narrative prominence is further enhanced by the placement of this episode in relation to the renaming of Britain which does not occur until

---

[210] Layamon, ll. 994-998: "*Brutaine hefde Brutus; ⁊ Cornwaile Corineus. / Brutus nom alle his freond; þe comen in his ferde. / neh him he heom lænde; for heo him leofe weoren. / Corineus him cleopede to; alle his icorene. / alle he heom lænde; þer heom wes alre leofest*" *Brut*, ll. 994-998.

[211] Layamon, *Brut*, xxvii; xxxi.

[212] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.

[213] Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, 57.

[214] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.

after Cornwall has been established. Brutus and his men also take the time to traverse the rest of the land in search of a suitable location to build the city of New Troy. After construction starts on New Troy, Brutus proceeds to "...trees cut down and lands cultivated for sustenance for him and his people. And he divided the land among his people so that each one had more or less, and enough to live on."[215] It is at this point of the narrative where it is noted that "[a]nd Brut[us] then had the whole land called Britain, and he had the people called Britons" which may actually be in imitation of Corineus's example, instead of the reverse, given the chronology of these events.[216] The elements of colonization and civilization that accompany the establishment of Cornwall and Britain reflects the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*'s practice of deploying "the recurrences of similar events to develop and reiterate a set of lessons for the everyday contemporary world, lessons about good and bad governance, the essential role of the baronage, and the social responsibilities of the individual."[217]

Like Layamon, the adaptor of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* also adheres to the Galfridian notion of portraying Corineus as Brutus's social peer whose assistance is rewarded with a portion of the island of his own choosing to rule over. In the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, the division and renaming of land and people occurs shortly after Corineus disposes of Goemagog. Brutus status as the leader of the Trojans is observed by noting that "[a]nd then Brutus desired to do away with the name which the island had had before this—that was Albion—to call it after his own name so that the race thereafter might remember that Brutus was the first who governed it. And then he gave the island the name of Britain, and the race that of Britons from that day on."[218] From here,

---

[215] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.
[216] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 83.
[217] *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, 7.
[218] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 22-23: "*Ac yna y mynnws brutus dilehu yr henw a uuassei ar y ynys kyn no hyn ny sef oyd hynny albion. dodi henw arnei oy enw ehwn. mal ydelei cof yr genedil rac*

Brutus honors his companion when he "gave to Corineus the part of the island that he should choose."[219] Corineus's intelligence and pragmatism are displayed by making an informed decision as he "he chose the part that he had walked over and looked at" when he first went in search of the giants when Brutus made his sacrifice to the gods shortly after the Trojans had made landfall.[220] Corineus social status as Brutus's peer is supported when the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* establishes that "[a]nd then Corineus named his part of the island Cornwall after his own name, and the tribe Cornishmen from that day on" which reaffirms the political division between Britons of Britain and the Cornishmen of Cornwall.[221] Brutus proceeds to build New Troy on the Thames after giving Corineus his choice of land.

Corineus initially plays a vital role in the foundation narrative of Britain but his role is quickly diminished as his martial exploits are either shared or outright appropriated by Brutus's. This devaluation is done to make Brutus look better, especially in latter works, and/or as a reflection of the authors' ideology regarding narrative content, style, and cultural ideologies. However, the creation of Cornwall cements Corineus's place in the founding myth of Britain as do the etymologies for Cornwall and the Cornish which are eponymous derivations of Corineus. Geoffrey places a particular emphasis on Cornwall within the entirety of the *Historia regum Britanniae* and it is telling that Corienus, and the creation of his corner of the island, are still included in later adaptions of this narrative which are more than happy to remove and revise

---

llaw mae brutus kyntaf ay gwledychawt. ac yna y dodet ar y ynys henw brutayn. ac ar y genedil brutanyeit o hynny allan."

[219] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 23: "*ac yna ef arodes y corineus y ran y dewisei or ynys.*"

[220] *Cotton Cleopara Brut*, 23: "*ac y dewisawt ynteu y ran y buassei yn y rodiaw ac yn y hedrych.*"; "And while he [Brutus] was making sacrifice to the gods, Corineus went to seek the giants in Cornwall, for he had heard that they were there." "*a thra uu ef yn aberthu yr dwyweu: yd aeth corineus ygeisiaw yr kewri hyt yngherniw ganys yno y klywessi ef eu bod.*"

[221] *Cotton Cleopatra Brut*, 23: "*Ac yna ydodes corineus ar y ran ef or ynys oy henw ef ehun derniw. ac ar y genedil corneueit o hynny allan.*"

information. Corineus may not always enjoy a prominent role in some of the episodes, or a particularly favorable portrayal in the ones where he is present, but Britain could not have been founded without him. Brutus is still the narrative and critical favorite, but he does not deserve as much attention as he has received, especially when this consideration comes at Corineus's expense.

Concluding Remarks

The founding myth of Britain is much more than the story of how Britain became inhabited: it is the narrative that creates Britain while establishing the legacies of its founding fathers in Brutus and Corineus. For the earliest inhabitants, this story marks the culmination of Fortune's wheel coming full circle from the height of Troy, to the sacking of the city, to Greek captivity, to liberation, to establishing a new homeland with a promising future. The founding myth has also changed over time, usually to the detriment of the figures therewithin, but the core elements of the narrative are preserved. The texts that adapt and subsequently perpetuate this myth are modified in accordance to the agendas of their respective adaptors but the genre the adaptor writes in has the greatest influence on how the founding myth is manipulated. The *Historia Brittonum* is more concerned with recording events from later historical periods which helps to explain the skeletal nature of its version of the founding myth of Britain. The same can be said of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* which preserves the founding myth of Britain from the *Historia Brittonum* albeit with a few alterations. The adaptors of the *First Variant Version* of Geoffrey's *Historia*, the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, and the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* are stylistically similar to other historical works like the *Historia Brittonum* and the *Historia Anglorum* which present largely unadorned and straightforward narratives that are stripped of many emotive and descriptive details, authorial asides, and supernatural elements.

Geoffrey of Monmouth and his immediate successors represent the opposite side of the historical-literary spectrum that embraces narrative expansions, detailed descriptions of battles, and speeches. Geoffrey work is composed in the image of a historical chronicle which allows him to maintain solid footing with other historians, but there are plenty of literary conventions woven into the *Historia*, mainly in the form of the narrative expansions of Geoffrey's source

material. Wace's *Roman de Brut* and Layamon's *Brut* also adhere to more traditional literary conventions and editorial practices by expanding on the narrative of their predecessors, and by incorporating detailed descriptions of emotional, martial, and mystical episodes, adding religious and romantic rhetoric, and including information that caters to their respective interests and those of their intended audiences.

The narrative manipulations of the founding myth of Britain negatively impact Brutus, Corineus, and their legacies but the magnitude of this loss of status is far more detrimental to Corineus. Brutus enjoys the most preeminent position within the founding myth of Britain and the portrayal of this figure, and his legacy, is at its highest in the *Historia regum Britanniae*. Brutus, and his legacy, are slightly reduced in the *First Variant Version*, but the early literary works that adapt this narrative portray Brutus in a diminishing fashion that continues to tarnish his legacy to greater degrees. It needs to be understood that this decline is more akin to taking a few steps down a ladder as opposed to a fall from grace. The later historical texts that contain the founding myth of Britain stop this deterioration and manage to reelevate Brutus and his legacy, but they fall a bit sort of their Galfridian ideals.

Unlike his predecessor, the reduction of Corineus's place within the founding myth of Britain can be described as a fall from grace. To be fair, this fall is more in line with being stripped of several ranks than a complete expulsion. It is worth noting that the treatment of Corineus also differs from his counterpart in that Corineus's exploits gradually are transferred to Brutus when they are not reduced or omitted from the narrative. Furthermore, the decreasingly favorable portrayal of Corineus is a not confined to genre, but rather time. The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* is one of the last texts to adapt the founding myth and it presents the least prominent portrayal of Corineus whose legacy is severely reduced along with his presentence

within the narrative itself. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* is a rough contemporary of the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*, but it breaks the trend of downgrading Corineus by reverting to the exempla of Geoffrey's *Historia* in respect to Corineus's level of inclusion within the narrative. The *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* also deviates from the norm by presenting the most favorable depiction of Corineus.[1]

   As a whole, the founding myth of Britain deserve more critical attention than it has previously received, as do these founding figures, especially Corineus. Like Brutus, Corineus is the prototype of the (usually) Cornish leader who comes to the rescue of their British counterpart only to be given the shortest end of the stick by receiving a few passing mentions here and there in the larger discussions of Britain's legendary history, when they are included at all. Just as the founding of Britain would not have been possible without Corienus, the preservation of Britain would not have been possible without the Cornish. Further study into Brutus and Corineus, and those who follow their British king and corresponding Cornish duke archetype can reveal greater insights into the relationships between Britain and Cornwall at different points in time in addition to showing how these figures establish and maintain the cultural notions of what it means to be "British" and "Cornish." The founding myth is particularly important to the medieval Welsh who adopted Geoffrey's *Historia* as their history and viewed themselves as the descendants of the Trojans who became the earliest Britons. Consequently, it would be advantageous to trace how the founding myth of Britain was recorded in the understudied corpus of Middle Welsh translations of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae.* In addition to examining the

---

[1] Essentially, the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* is a pro-Welsh propaganda piece that has not qualms about manipulating details and rewriting its source material to advance its own political agenda. For further information about the political revising of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* see: Timothy J. Nelson, "Welsh Manipulations of the Matter of Britain," master's thesis, University of Arkansas, 2014).

development of particular narratives, these studies would also be immensely helpful with different avenues of research within the field of manuscript studies.

Moreover, additional intertextual studies are needed to explore the textual relationships between the narratives that contain the founding myth of Britain. Up to this point, intertextual studies of these texts generally revolve around determining the stylistic features and source material of the respective works, but very little attention has been given to how the narrative has shifted over time and to what consequence. These intertextual studies can also provide new understandings of the reception of these texts. Analyzing the narrative similarities between the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* and Layamon's *Brut* is particularly intriguing and could provide new insights into the larger reception of Layamon's work in particular. The study of the *Cotton Cleopatra Brut* and the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* would also be promising given that these texts are rough contemporaries of one another and utilize largely the same resources and employing the same editorial practices to produce radically different narratives due to their political agendas.

This dissertation can serve as a starting point for several different avenues of research in addition to those mentioned above. For instance, this study can lead to a more complete analysis of how the separate founding's of Britain, Cornwall, England, Scotland, and Wales contribute to the respective cultural identities of these regions. It would also be beneficial to more fully examine the founding myths of different peoples who would also come to inhabit the Island of Britain and to see how these myths are manipulated by the adaptors in question and in the works of their contemporaries.

Bibliography

PRIMARY SOURCES

Brut y Brenhinedd: Cotton Cleopatra Version. Edited and Translated by John J. Parry.
Cambridge, Mass: The Medieval Academy of America, 1937.

Geoffrey of Monmouth. *The History of the Kings of Britain: An Edition and Translation of the
De gestis Britonum*. Edited by Michael D. Reeve. Translated by Neil Wright.
Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2009. First published in 2007 by The Boydell Press.

Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People.* Edited and
Translated by Diana Greenway. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

Historia Brittonum: *British History and The Welsh Annals*. Edited and translated by John
Morris. London: Phillimore, 1980.

The History of the Kings of Britain: *The First Variant Version*. Edited and translated by David
W. Burchmore. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019.

Layamon. *Brut,* edited and translated by Rosamund Allen. London: Everyman' Library, 1993.

Laȝamon: *Brut*, edited by G. L. Brook and R. F. Leslie. *Layamon: Brut. Edited from British
Museum MS Cotton Caligula A ix and British Museum MS Otho C xiii,* vol.1., London,
1963.

The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle, edited and translated by Julia Marvin.
Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006.

Wace. *Roman de Brut: A History of the British.* Edited and Translated by Judith Weiss. Exeter:
University of Exeter Press, 2002. First Published in 1999 by the University of Exeter
Press.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Baier, Christian. "Homer's Cultural Children: The Myth of Troy and European Identity."
History & Memory 29, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2017): 35-62.

Barefield, Laura D. "From Trojan to Briton: Brutus's Masculinity an Lineage in Geoffrey of
Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*." In *Courtly Arts and the Art of Courtliness:
Selected Papers from the Eleventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly
Literature Society, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 29 July - 4 August 2004*, edited by
Keith Busby, and Christopher Kleinhenz, 193-201. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006.

Bellis, Joanna. "'When the world woxe old, it woxe warre old': History, Etymology, and National Identity, 1066-1337." In *The Hundred Years War in Literature, 1337-1600*, by Joanna Bellis, 9-50. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2016.

Brennan, John P. "Myth, Marriage, and Dynastic Crisis in Laȝamon's *Brut*." *Arthuriana* 26, no.1 (Spring 2016):41-59.

Caldwell, Robert A. "Wace's Roman De Brut and the Variant Version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae." *Speculum* 31, no.4 (1956): 675-682.

Carley, James P., and Crick, Julia. "Constructing Albion's Past: An Annotated Edition of *De Origine Gigantum*." *Arthurian Literature* 13 (1995), 41-114.

Crick, Julia. *The Historia regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth, vol. III: A Summary Catalogue of the Manuscripts*, Woodbridge, 1989.

Cohen, Jeffery Jerome. *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Davies, R. R. "The Peoples of Britain and Ireland, 1100-1400: IV Language and Historical Mythology." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 7 (1997): 1-24.

Ditmas, E. M. R. "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Breton Families in Cornwall." *The Welsh History Review* 6 (1972-1973): 451-461.

Drukker, Tamar. "Vision and History: Prophecy in the Middle English Prose "Brut" Chronicle." *Arthuriana* 12, no.4 (Winter 2002), 25-49.

Dumville, David. "'Nennius' and the '*Historia Brittonum*'." *Studia Celtica* 10, (1975): 78-95.

Echard, Sian. "Geoffrey of Monmouth." In *The Arthur of Medieval Latin Literature: The Development and Dissemination of the Arthurian Legend in Medieval Latin*, edited by Sian Echard, 46-66. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011.

Eckhardt, Caroline D. "The Presence of Rome in the Middle English Chronicles of the Fourteenth Century." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 90, no. 2 (1991): 187-207.

Faletra, Michael A. *The History of the Kings of Britain.* Translated and edited by Michael A. Faletra. Peterborough: Broadview, 2008.

---. "Narrating the Matter of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Norman Colonization of Wales." *The Chaucer Review* 35, no. 1 (2000): 60-85.

---. *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination: The Matters of Britain in the Twelfth Century*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Federico, Sylvia. *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages.* Minneapolis: Medieval Cultures, 2003.

Fitzpatrick-Matthews, Keith J. "The *xxuiii ciuitates brittannię* of the *Historia Brittonum*: Antiquarian Speculation in Early Medieval Wales." *Journal of Literary Onomastics* 4, no. 1 (2015): 1-19.

Fowler, David C. "Some Biblical Influences on Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historiography." *Traditio* 14 (1958): 378-385.

Gillingham, John. "The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*." In *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity, and Political Values*. 19-40. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000.

Gransden, Antonia. *Historical Writing in England I c.550 – c.1307*. New York: Routledge, 2010. First published in 1996 by Routledge (New York).

Griscom, Acton. "The "Book of Basingwerk" and Ms. Cotton Cleopatra B. V." *Y Cymmrodor* 35 (1925): 49-116.

---. "The "Book of Basingwerk" and Ms. Cotton Cleopatra B. V." *Y Cymmrodor* 36 (1926): 1-33.

Guy, Ben. "The Origins of the Compilation of the Welsh Historical Texts in Harley 3859." *Studia Celtica* 49 (2015): 21-56.

Hanning, Robert W. *The Vision of History in Early Britain From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.

Hoffman, Donald L. "The Third British Emperor." *Arthurian Interpretations* 15, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 1-10.

Huws, Daniel. *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts.* Aberystwyth: University of Wales Press and The National Library of Wales, 2002. First Published 2000 by University of Wales Press and The National Library of Wales (Aberystwyth).

Ingledew, Francis. "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia. Regum Britanniae." *Speculum* 69, no. 3 (July 1994): 665-704.

Jankulak, Karen. *Geoffrey of Monmouth*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011, First published 2010 by University of Wales Press (Cardiff).

Jones, Thomas. "Historical Writing in Medieval Welsh." *Scottish Studies* 12 (1968): 15-27.

Keeler, Laura. *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Late Latin Chroniclers, 1300-1500.* Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1946.

Kleinman, Scott. "Frið and Fredom: Royal Forests and the English Jurisprudence of Laȝmon's Brut and Its Readers." *Moern Philology* 109, no.1 (2011): 17-45.

Lamont, Margaret. "Becoming English: Ronwenne's Wassail, Language, and National Identity in the Middle English Prose Brut." *Studies in Philology* 107, no. 3 (2010): 283-309.

Levison, W. "A Combined manuscript of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Henry of Huntingdon." *The English Historical Review* 58, no. 229 (January 1943): 41-51.

Leyser, Karl J. "Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages." *Past & Present*, no. 137 (November 1992): 25-47.

Le Saux, Francoise. *A Companion to Wace*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005.

---. *Laȝamon's Brut: The Poem and its Sources*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989.

---. "Narrative rhythm and narrative content in Laȝamon's *Brut*." *Paregon* 10, no. 1 (1992): 45-70.

Marvin, Julia. *The Construction of Vernacular History in the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle*. New York: Boydell and Brewer, 2017.

Matheson, Lister M. *The Prose Brut: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle.* Tempe: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998.

Mommsen, Theodor. "*Historia Brittonum*" in *Chronica Minora saec. IV. V. VI. VII,* edited by Theodor Mommsen, 111-222. Vol. 3. of the Monumenta Germaniae Historiaca, Auctores Antiquissimi, 13. Berlin, 1898.

Nelson, Timothy J. "Welsh Manipulations of the Matter of Britain." Master's thesis, University of Arkansas, 2014.

Padel, O.J. "Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall." *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 8, (1984): 1-28.

Parry, John J. "The Welsh Texts of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*." *Speculum* 5, no. 4 (1930): 424-31.

Pearce, Susan M. "The Cornish Elements in the Arthurian Tradition." *Folklore* 85, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 145-163.

Pickens, Rupert T. "Arthur's Channel Crossing: Courtesy and the Demonic in Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace's *Brut*." *Arthuriana* 7, no. 3 (1997): 2-19.

Reiss, Edmund. "The Welsh Versions of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia." *Welsh History Review* 4, no. 2 (1968): 97-127.

Reynolds, Susan. "Medieval Origines Gentium and the Community of the Realm." *History* 68, no. 224 (1983): 375-390.

Roberts, Brynley F., ed. *Brut y Brenhinedd: Llanstephan MS. 1 Version.* Edited by Brynley F. Roberts. Dublin: The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1971. Reprint, 1984.

---. "Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae* and *Brut y Brenhinedd.*" In *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature*, edited by Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman, and Brynley F. Roberts, 97-116. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991. Reprint, 2013.

---. "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Welsh Historical Tradition." *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies* 20 (1976: 29-40.

---. "*Ystoriaeu Brenhinedd Ynys Brydeyn*: A Fourteenth-Century Welsh Brut." In *Narrative in Celtic Tradition: Essays in Honor of Edgar M. Slotkin* (CSANA Yearbook, 8-9), edited by Joseph F. Eska, 215-227. Hamilton, NY: Colgate University Press, 2011.

Robertson, Kellie. "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography." *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 42-57.

Ruch, Lisa M. *Albina and her Sisters: The Foundation of Albion*. New York: Cambria Press, 2013.

Scherb, Victor J. "Assimilating Giants: The Appropriation of Gog and Magog in Medieval and Early Modern England." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32, no. 1 (2002): 59-84.

Silverstein, Theodore. ""Sir Gawain," Dear Brutus, and Britain's Fortunate Founding: A Study in Comedy and Convention." *Modern Philology* 62, no.3 (1965): 189-206.

Smith, Anthony D. "National Identity and Myths of Ethnic Descent." *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 7 (1984): 95-130.

Smith, Leslie F. "Geoffrey of Monmouth and Orosius. At Third Hand?" *Modern Language Notes* 67, no. 8. (December 1952): 536-539.

Spence, John. *Reimagining History in Anglo-Norman Prose Chronicles*. York: York Medieval Press, 2013.

Spiegel, Gabrielle. "Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historical Narrative." *History and Theory* 22, no. 1 (1983): 43-53.

Southern, Richard. W. "The Classical Tradition from Einhard to Geoffrey of Monmouth." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 20, (1970): 173-196.

Stoyle, Mark. "The Dissidence of Despair: Rebellion and Identity in Early Modern Cornwall." *Journal of British Studies* 38, no. 4 (1999): 423-444.

Summerfield, Thea. "Filling the Gap: Brutus in the *Historia Brittonum*, *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* MS F, and Geoffrey of Monmouth." *The Medieval Chronicle* 7, (2011): 85-102.

Tahkokallio, Jaakko. "Early Manuscript Dissemination." In *A Companion to Geoffrey of Monmouth*, edited by Georgia Henley and Joshua Byron Smith. Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2020.

Tatlock, J. S. P. *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions.* New York: Gordian Press, 1974. First published by University of California Press, 1950.

Terrell, Katherine H. "Subversive Histories: Strategies of Identity in Scottish Historiography." In *Cultural Diversity in the British Middle Ages: Archipelago, Island, England*, edited by Jeffery Jerome Cohen, 153-172. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Tolhurst, Fiona. "The Britons as Hebrews, Romans, and Normans: Geoffrey of Monmouth's British Epic and Reflections of Empress Matilda." *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 69-87.

---. *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Feminist Origins of the Arthurian Legend*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

---. *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Tyler, Elizabeth M. "Trojans in Anglo-Saxon England: Precedent Without Descent." *Review of English Studies* 64, no. 263 (2013): 1-20.

Warren, Michelle, R. "Making Contact: Postcolonial Perspectives through Geoffrey of Monmouth's "Historia regum Britannie"." *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 115-134.

Waswo, Richard. "The History that Literature Makes." *New Literary History* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1988): 541-564.

Weinberg, Carole. "Þat kinewurðe bed [a bed fit for a king]: Thematic Wordplay in Lawman's "Brut."" *Arthuriana* 8. no. 3 (1998): 33-45.

Wright, Neil. *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth II: The First Variant Version*. Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1988.

---. "The Place of Henry of Huntingdon's *Epistola ad Warinum* in the Text-History of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*: A Preliminary Investigation," In *France and the British Isles in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Essays by Members of Girton College, Cambridge, in Memory of Ruth Morgan*, edited by Gillian Jondorf and David. N. Dumbille, 71-113. Woodbridge, 1991.

Wyld, Henry Cecil. "Laȝamon as an English Poet." *The Review of English Studies* 6, no. 21 (1930): 1-30.

Zatta, Jane. "Translating the *Historia*: The Ideological Transformation of the *Historia regum Britannie* in Twelfth Century Vernacular Chronicles." *Arthuriana* 8, no. 4 (1998): 148-161.