'ANOTHER TROY TO BURN': HISTORY, ORIGIN, AND THE POLITICS OF DESCENT IN TUDOR ENGLAND

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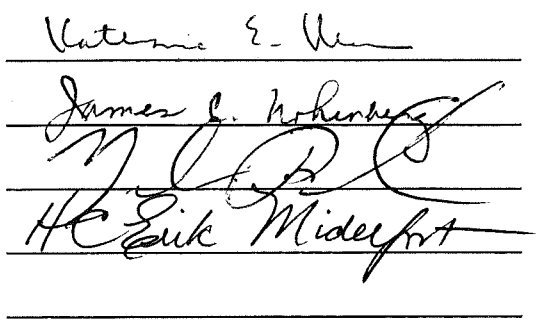

Abstract

The dissertation provides the first thorough analysis of Troy's central role in the development of historical thought and national self-definition in Renaissance England. Through readings of Geoffrey of Monmouth, various chroniclers, Spenser, and Shakespeare I demonstrate how representations of Troy and of the Trojan origin of the British, though designed to celebrate the English nation, problematize the politics of historiography for reader and writer alike. The debate about Trojan origin leads to advances in historical method which undermine Renaissance theories of history. The severing of the link between past and present makes it more difficult for the reader of history to find relevance in the Trojan past. Ultimately, the story of Troy becomes unreadable precisely because readers have attempted to translate it into their own histories.

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I Introduction--The Meanings of Troy

> A civilization discovered its cultural paths by the light behind it of a vast holocaust, and it used this mythical light as the principle of its own energy. It made its way through ruins by the effulgence cast in their destruction, finding in privation the secret of renewal, just as Aeneas, sailing westward from the ashes of his city, carried with him the flame that had consumed it burning before his Penates.[1]

What Thomas Greene takes as a metaphor for imitation, I take literally as the origin of British historical self-definition. The sack of Troy left not only light and ruins; it also left survivors, people like Aeneas who would found new cultures and empires. The migration or transferral here is not one of literary techniques but of lives and of a past that becomes history. Thus the flame that illumines the burning Troy corresponds to the bodies of men who have been shaped by their Trojan past. Genealogy becomes a version of imitation; the transmission of peoples through time takes place under the light, or shadow, of the origin's destruction. The losers of a catastrophic war become the startling survivors who, like Aeneas, set out to become founders.

This dissertation examines the meanings of Troy for the English Renaissance. Like most European nations, England

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[1] Thomas M. Greene, The Light in Troy (New Haven: Yale UP, 1982), 3.

had its own Trojan founder, Brutus, the great-grandson of Aeneas. This founder had been simultaneously "created" and enshrined by the twelfth-century historian Geoffrey of Monmouth. Geoffrey solved a historical and historiographical problem: where does British history begin? Once he filled the gap, later historians only had to retell the origin story he had told. Or, to come back to Greene's metaphor, the burning of Troy not only illumined but peopled the future, and both historians and poets kept the flame alive. During the Tudor reigns, however, the influence of humanism offered new perspectives on the past. Equipped with a sharpened sense of history and stricter criteria for the writing of history, some Tudor historians doubted the story of a Trojan origin for the British nation. Under the influence of this historically critical view, writers and historians re-present the stories of Brutus and of Troy itself with an increased awareness of the stories' value as history.

Troy was a "historical" city, from the Romans on, because so many founders of empires came from there. In the Christian Middle Ages, Troy provided a locus of origin for peoples. The Bible chronicles the course of man's history after the Flood. But as the city of origin, Troy allows

national, secular history to emerge.[2] Whereas the survivors of the Trojan war and their descendants peopled histories, Troy figured in poetry. Although the Middle Ages did not know Homer directly, they knew he was a poet, pro-Greek at that, and therefore less creditable than the supposed eyewitness accounts of Dares and Dictys.[3] The main line of transmission for the Troy story was the medieval epics, while the Trojan origin stories were handed down through histories.

In chronicles, then, the Trojan Brutus links Renaissance England with a foundation in the distant past; the story of the ancient and destroyed city itself, however, was available in a different genre, the medieval epics and retellings of the Troy story. While medieval and Renaissance history posit a continuous connection with Troy, the city itself, though oddly close, turns out to be oddly unhistorical. This literature had appropriated the ancient warriors to its own value system, chivalry. But "the

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[2] Of course, the various exodoi of Trojan heroes with their families or whole groups of Trojans are parallel to the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. Both peoples flee enemies and migrate towards a promised land. For a reading of the connections between the Judeo-Christian and classical-pagan ideas as they function in the conceptualization of Europe, see Denys Hay, Europe. The Emergence of an Idea (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1957).

[3] See, for example, Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition (New York: Oxford UP, 1949), 51.

corrosive of the concept of anachronism"[4] transformed this closeness into distance. From the Middle Ages, the Renaissance inherited historical personages who did not fit their own time-frame, but had been updated to reflect the values of chivalry in order to seem more relevant to the culture of the audience. In other words, the desire to create relevance through similarity had estranged the Trojan warriors from their origin. In turn, medieval epics de-historicized the Trojan heroes for a Renaissance audience who found in them not ancient heroes but often decadent knights. History's Troy was radically different from literature's Troy, but both purported to deal with the ancestors of the Elizabethans.[5] Because of this interrelatedness of history and literature Renaissance figurations of Troy and of Brutus inevitably betray uncertainties about the meaning of the origin for its

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[4] F. J. Levy, Tudor Historical Thought (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967), 124.

[5] This confusion of historical context is still visible in the Renaissance chronicles. John Stow, for example, repeatedly includes a traditional description of Brutus' arms in his chronicles: "**Iohn Harding** alleging **Giraldus Cambrencis**, his Topographie, and **Trogus Pompeius** his booke of all Stories, saieth that **Brute** bare of **Gules** two Lions golde rampants a contrarie, also a banner of vert, a Diane of gold sichele crouned and entronised that were **Eneas** armes when he entred the land of Latin." A Summarie of the Chronicles of England (London: 1570), 13-14. This is not necessarily an indication of Stow's naivete, but rather an expression of what Brutus meant for him: a noble founder.

latter-day descendants. Trojan warriors can certainly figure as ancestors, but not if they joust as medieval knights in front of Trojan city walls.

The close connection between history and the story of Troy constitutes the focus of my argument, because the stories of Troy and of Brutus derived their topicality from their acceptance as history.[6] I use the terms "history" and "Troy" rather loosely, so that I can take into account both the malleability of the term "history" in the Renaissance, and the implications of a Trojan origin that has as its background the story of the Trojan war and its aftermath. I read the literature as commentary on the meaning of these stories as history. And conversely, I read the historical writings as a literary critic; that is, for me historical accuracy takes a back seat to historical meaning. Reading Geoffrey of Monmouth, the Tudor historians, Spenser, and

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[6] See, for example, A. E. Parsons, "The Trojan Legend in England," Modern Language Review 24.3 (July 1929), 256. The tradition of King Arthur has, of course, the same relevance. Without Brutus there is no Arthur; in order to maintain Arthur as a historical personage, Brutus had to be proven first. However, the Arthur material, or even industry, has received more critical comment than the Brutus and Troy material. Despite their genealogical connection I consider Brutus and Arthur different kinds of stories: the first is a foundation myth that sets up the possibility for history and empire, whereas the second is something of an imperial fantasy that remains confined to its storyline. The story of Troy, like the Arthur story, is told innumerable times; unlike the Arthur story, it does not end because of its sequels, of which Arthur is one.

Shakespeare, I chronicle a second fall of Troy--out of history and into fiction, and thus out of truth and into myth.

I

Because the primary connection with Troy is through descent, genealogy becomes a crucial mode of historical self-definition and even of the making of history. The search for genealogical roots and origins shapes how a nation sees itself, how it views its rulers and their legitimacy and thus its politics. The line we can trace from the past to the present, our genealogies and our histories, affects our standing in the present and how we can project ourselves into the future. Such origins function in a number of ways: they describe a remote and often irrecuperable past; they ground nations in the heroic past and thus work against the ravages of time; they define and establish a nation's character; they retroactively validate tradition and belief systems; and they invest nations and individuals with a sense of destiny.[7] Genealogy represents a peculiar way of locating oneself and one's

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[7] On the relevance of origins for national self-definition see Anthony D. Smith, The Ethnic Origins of Nations (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986; rpt. 1991); for a discussion of these issues for the British see Hugh A. MacDougal, Racial Myth in English History (Montreal: Harvest House, 1982).

nation in history, because it simultaneously emphasizes temporal continuity and locates that continuity in particular individuals whose lineage joins the present with the past. But, paradoxically, genealogy is at once historical and anti-historical in its privileging of continuity over the vicissitudes of history. That is, genealogy tends to downplay, even deny, history.

Howard R. Bloch has argued that the rise of genealogy is intimately connected to, or even triggered by, the rise of a feudal society that consolidated land around families so that power and wealth could be maintained and increased, not fragmented and diminished. Bloch argues that the invention of historical chronology via genealogy took place in France in the tenth and eleventh centuries and was practiced by the Norman and Angevin nobles. With an extensive family tree comes not only "the prestige of lineage" but also a claim to territory, "a rooting of the family in its own soil."[8] This reshaping of a family into a dynasty is reflected in the epic cycle that "assumes, as a condition of its own possibility, a discursive progression in which the literary text and history function side by side" (98).

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[8] Etymologies and Genealogies (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983), 80. For another reading of these issues with an emphasis on history see, J. H. Plumb, The Death of the Past (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970).

Geoffrey of Monmouth, Henry VII, and Edmund Spenser capitalize on this strategy of linking history and lineage. Often the link is so tight that lineage is history, as in Geoffrey. All three, historian, monarch, and epic poet, use genealogy as a defense against the realities of both contemporary and ancient history. An essentially aristocratic method of historical definition and placement, genealogy becomes even more significant in times of political crisis. Geoffrey wrote during a succession crisis among the descendants of William the Conqueror, and he wrote for a country that had been invaded only seventy years earlier. In his History of the Kings of Britain, both a ruling dynasty and a whole nation are founded by Brutus and his companions, who fill three hundred and twenty ships. For Henry VII the absence of a sufficiently impressive lineage, and thus a legitimate claim to the English throne, had to be counterbalanced by recourse to bardic and historical material, mainly in the form of a celebration of his Welsh descent which would endow him with antiquity via a descent from Cadwallader and thus from Brutus.[9] Like most

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[9] Bernardus Andreas divides the new regent's claim to temporal and territorial legitimacy between his father and mother. Historia Regis Henrici Septimi, ed. James Gairdner (London: Longman, 1858), 9-12:

> Regiam utriusque parentis prosopiam longe nobilissimam ducens a Bruto cunctisque ab illo retroactis principibus ex parte patris, cui Edmundo Richemondiae comiti nomen fuit. Ex parte vero matris a Katherina

European monarchs, Henry solidified his claim to the throne by inserting himself into history. The sixteenth century witnessed a more general trend, even a "genealogical craze," that was geared toward strengthening "the authority of the ruling powers."[10] In Britomart's, and thus Elizabeth's case, the insertion of a ruler into history happens via epic. Spenser's epic, written toward the end of Elizabeth's reign when a succession crisis was developing, fills a genealogical gap for Elizabeth with the Trojan pedigree for Britomart. And he wrote at a time when people had started to rely more and more on their own merits rather than on nobility predicated on pedigree.

At the same time, however, genealogy constitutes a precarious method of writing and making history, because its continuity relies on a succession of deaths and births. Progeny is the dream and the nightmare of any dynasty. While Henry VII had a son to spare, so to speak, Henry VIII used up six wives to ensure a proper, male succession. Once a genealogical line fails, be that through the death of

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Franciae, Castellae, Lusitaniae, Scotiaeque regibus et plurimis Alemanniae imperatoribus descensus ejusdem nobilitatis praecellenti stemmate illustrissimus est. (9)

[10] Plumb, 35 and 38. For a fascinating reading of genealogy and the Troy material in the visual representations on the Habsburg monarchs see Mary Tanner, The Last Descendant of Aeneas (New Haven: Yale UP, 1993).

heirs or through an absence of ancestry in the first place, epics, and histories, have to refocus their trajectory into the distant past, as Bloch argues (107-108). The dangers of social change are shored up by a championing of the far-distant past over an inevitably inferior present. Thus "historic continuity had to be invented . . . by creating an ancient past beyond effective historical continuity,"[11] and beyond historical proof.

What links all three British applications of "the biopolitics of lineage," as Bloch terms it (70), is that they share the same material and its mode of transmission. In order to transmit the created origin, histories repeat its story. The transmission of the origin in histories, then, takes the form of a genealogy of texts, as I argue in chapter I. With the increase of historiographical self-consciousness in the sixteenth century, however, history, the once complicitous handmaid of genealogy, becomes its

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[11] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in The Invention of Tradition, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983), 7. Benedict Anderson, too, has argued that the method of creating antiquity to create and corroborate authority remains one of the favorite techniques of emerging nations to figure forth themselves as nations. See Imagined Communities (London: Verso, 2nd. ed., 1991), passim. The cultural currency of the Trojan origin affords us a borderline example: it is at once part of the cultural practices that Hobsbawm and Anderson discuss and calls them into question because historiographers begin to deny the origin's historicity and its traditional meaning.

critic. The reliance on texts for historical self-definition and continuity depends on a method of historical retrieval that is increasingly criticized during the sixteenth century. References to the British historical tradition do not carry the same weight as references to historically acceptable sources, like classical Roman sources. The written documents of Livy or Caesar do not corroborate Geoffrey's late origin story. John Rastell, Polydore Vergil, and William Camden, for example, juxtapose the British insular tradition of Geoffrey with the continental Latin texts of Livy and Caesar.

II

Most historians who deal with the Brutus story and its place in historiography regard these issues as either an embarrassment to an otherwise progressive era or as an indication of the era's backwardness. Among other things, T. D. Kendrick calls the story "a formidable deadweight," "embarrassing material," and "confused, fabulous nonsense."[12] Arthur Ferguson terms Brutus "Geoffrey of Monmouth's mischievous legacy" that excited "patriotic lunacy," and, paradoxically, a sharper historical

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[12] British Antiquity (London: Methuen, 1950), 18 and 78.

understanding.[13] With relief and exasperation critics rejoice over the final disappearance of the notorious story from serious history. In fact, the battle over the Trojan origin ushers in a historiography that evinces modern standards of history writing. As one reader of English historiography puts it: "modern historiography begins in the Renaissance."[14] The applications of the Troy and Brutus stories in Tudor literature reveal a struggle to find meaning in a past that had been undermined by humanist developments in historiography.

It is precisely the tension between a supposed backwardness and an incipient modernity that deserves more attention. Ironically, the Trojan descent was questioned during the reigns of the Tudors, who relied on its nobility and antiquity to enable their claim to the British throne. In the conflict between political and intellectual interests we can discover a crisis of historical self-definition. The critics of Brutus' verisimilitude proved that no classical author mentions the founder, and that, therefore, he never existed. But the British and Welsh traditions document his existence, though independently of the older, more reliable,

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[13] Clio Unbound (Durham: Duke UP, 1979), 105.

[14] See, for example, F. Smith Fussner, The Historical Revolution (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 8 and passim.

classical texts. What does it mean to be descended from Trojan exiles nobody else has ever heard of? On the other hand, if not Brutus and his companions, who else can figure as ancestors?[15] And, more importantly, how can a historian deal with the opposing claims of improved historical method and cherished, traditional belief?

Historians negotiated this bind by refraining, in general, from severe criticism of the Brutus story. Only the defenders of Brutus were called upon to carry the burden of proof. A more difficult problem lay in making the ancient story relevant to a contemporary audience. In order to achieve this relevance, they had to create a connection between the reader and their histories. Despite a genealogical origin's emphasis on the nobility of the ruling dynasty, the Trojan descent redounded to the greater glory of the whole English nation. The antiquity of the royal line also had a trickledown effect. The British subject could rest assured that his king was a member of an ancient

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[15] Even for a twentieth-century reader these stories still have a strong appeal. George Gordon goes so far as to find an almost democratic element in the Brutus story, because it allowed all readers to link themselves with their noble ancestry. In order to give England again a pre-history, and to have a history before the Roman conquest, he argues for a reinstitution of the Trojan Brutus into school textbooks. Moreover, this foundational connection with the Trojans would enable students to appreciate Homer and Virgil with a personal interest. "The Trojans in Britain," in The Discipline of Letters (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1946; rpt. from Essays and Studies 9 [1924]: 9-30), 35-37 and 58.

dynasty and therefore had a right to be king. Richard Grafton and John Stow included the Brutus origin, though in radically abbreviated form, in their popular and cheap pocket-size chronicles. Thus every British citizen could read about the nation's founding and peopling through the exiled Trojans. One should not forget that Brutus arrived with a fleet of Trojan ships--the whole island was populated by the Trojans.

If genealogy is one way to make this connection, exemplarity is another. John Rastell, for example, questions the historical veracity of the Brutus origin, but he nevertheless tells the story because it has a moral validity. In the Commentaries, the oldest written account of Britain, Caesar

> spekyth nothing of Brute nor al the serch that he made he cowd neuer come to the knowlege how this land was furst inhabytyd. . . . no writer of storis before [Geoffrey's] dais that euer wrot therof or spekith of this Brutus nor makith yerof no mecion but that not with stoding I will not deny that story of glafridus . . . because that in the same story reding a man may se many notable examples of diuers noble princes that wisely & vertuesly gouernid theire people which may be an example to princis now liuing to vse the same & also a man reding in the same shall see how that the stroke of god fell euer vppon the people.[16]

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[16] The Pastyme of People, ed. Albert J. Geritz (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985), 205-206. Rastell anticipates, at least in print, Polydore Vergil's famous argument that Britain had to have been inhabited long before Brutus because its coast is visible from the Continent (206). The Pastyme of People was first published in 1529, five years before the first edition of the Anglica Historia.

Rastell champions history's usefulness over its claim to truthfulness. Historically suspect stories are admissible if they can be used as examples for praiseworthy political behavior in princes.

The usefulness of history through its portrayal of exemplary characters goes back to a formulation of Cicero, its humanist locus classicus: "Historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia vetustatis."[17] The exemplary character mediates between the contemporary reader and the distant past, and teaches him (or her) lessons in public or private conduct. The reader, especially if he is a prince or man of politics, should then apply the lessons he has learned by reading histories to suit his own political circumstances.

The imitation of an exemplar involves what hermeneutic

Rastell casts Caesar not primarily as the conqueror of Britain, but as the conqueror of British history because he was the first to write about Britain and produced "y^{e} oldest writyng" (205). Antiquity alone does not suffice to claim authority, which has to come from writing. Such a redefinition of antiquity in combination with writing is the first step toward conducting historiography via a "writing of history writing" that William Camden practices in his disproof of the Brutus story.

[17] De oratore, ed. and trans. E. W. Sutton (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1942; rpt. 1988), II.ix.36. In Cicero, the honor of administering history belonged, of course, to the orator. In A Defence of Poetry, Sir Philip Sidney attributes this line to the historian. It is part of the historian's obnoxious table talk. Ed. J. A. Van Dorsten (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1966; rpt. 1986), 30.

> theory calls applicatio, the application of a text to action in the world. . . . The assumption of application is that past words and deeds embody a value which the modern reader can appropriate to guide practical action.[18]

However, exemplary characters do not have to be historical personages; they can be fictional. For Sir Philip Sidney, "the feigned Aeneas in Virgil [is more effective] than the right Aeneas in Dares Phrygius" (35). In fact, in Sidney's assessment of exemplarity, literature can perform the task of teaching the reader more successfully; the poet can embellish and enhance the exemplar, whereas the historian is hampered, because he is "bound to tell things as things were" (36). Sidney's perceived advantage of poetry over history turns the lives of ancient classical heroes into "narratives of appropriation" (8), as Hampton puts it. Such appropriation could only function, if the writer assumed a sameness in human nature. But the application of past to present, in itself a feat of historical criticism, opens up a dangerous pitfall: even if a sameness of human nature can, in a Christian scheme of things, be assumed, historical context cannot. That is, the questions of whether the past historical situation actually corresponds to the present one, whether past and present can be matched, and the

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[18] Timothy Hampton, Writing from History. The Rhetoric of Exemplarity in Renaissance Literature (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990), 10.

application executed, undermine the potential usefulness of exemplarity itself. In some ways, one already has to be a historian to read exemplarity correctly.

The heroes of the Trojan war furnish an abundance of historical examples. As both the distant ancestors of the Elizabethans, via Brutus, and the mortal enemies of those ancestors, Homer's heroes have a peculiar poignancy and relevance. The Trojan war serves as a chronicle of the creation of the values that shaped, and were shaped by, the people who would found Britain. The heroes of Troy became crucial examples for the Elizabethans, as evidenced by Sidney's frequent references to them. Earlier Sir Thomas Elyot cited them as providing historical precedent and experience:

> But if by reading the sage counsel of Nestor, the subtle persuasions of Ulysses, the compendious gravity of Menelaus, the imperial majesty of Agamemnon, the prowess of Achilles, and valiant courage of Hector, we may apprehend anything whereby our wits may be amended and our personages be more apt to serve our public weal and our prince, what forceth it us though Homer write leasings?[19]

Elyot's list of worthy examples reads like the cast of Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida. In my reading of the play, I concentrate on the characters' desire to become precisely those examples. At the end of Elizabeth's reign,

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[19] Sir Thomas Elyot, The Book named the Governor (London: Everyman's Library, 1962), 231. "Leasings" means "lies."

the problematics of exemplarity find their most acute expression in the life of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. He was compared to a vast number of classical heroes, including Hector and Achilles. But these comparisons reveal an inappropriateness that highlights the poor reading of history of both the comparer and compared.

III

Geoffrey's History of the Kings of Britain grounded British history and the British nation in an elaborate origin story. In my first chapter I argue that Geoffrey's Brutus story reveals more than simply the noble ancestry of the Britons. As an exile, Brutus inherits a peculiarly Trojan attitude toward the past: he insists on nobility and freedom from historical responsibility, repressing an awareness of the history of Troy itself. My reading of the first book of Geoffrey's history shows that Brutus makes British history by ignoring Trojan history. In order to achieve the Trojans' liberation from the Greeks, he excludes, or brackets, the war, the cause for Trojan subjection, and justifies the need for Trojan freedom with the antiquity of the people. In the process he nevertheless re-enacts the Trojan war in the liberation war. I trace the development of a historical consciousness through this origin story: a Trojan origin necessitates a relationship to

history that at once relies on and denies history's significance. Geoffrey's ambiguous casting of historical consciousness in the foundation story, however, represents a fitting ideology: the Britons have repeatedly denied the relevance of the past for present situations. Therefore, the perspective on history that enabled the founding of Britain repeats itself in the history of Britain.

In the sixteenth century, however, this attitude toward history constitutes the core of the debate about the historicity of the Brutus story. What does a Trojan pedigree mean for the Elizabethans? That is, the problem of historical perspective <u>within</u> the origin story becomes a problem <u>for</u> the origin story, because historians question its value as history. In response to Polydore Vergil's criticism of Brutus, Tudor chroniclers find themselves in a position where insistence on relevance replaces investigation of significance. I argue that the popularity of chronicles also contributes to the Brutus story's exodus from history: cheap and popular pocket-book histories cannot accommodate a lengthy narrative. In its curtailed form the story cannot explain an origin any more, it merely posits it. In other words, the chroniclers cannot make the Brutus story relevant for their own times.

The arguments of noble ancestry and ancient authority are becoming antiquated themselves. William Camden locates

the beginning of British history in the Roman conquest, because both archaeological and textual evidence make it fit to be history. But once "the idea of a Trojan origin had served the purposes of patriotism as well as filling in a conspicuous gap in the ancient history," it had to be replaced with something else.[20] I argue that in the search for this replacement, the encounter with the New World offered a new perspective on the past: historical evolution. John White's drawings of "Ancient Picts" fashioned after the Indians of Virginia introduced the notions of both historical decline and development along with the idea of savagery.

The literature of the sixteenth century betrays similar qualms about the historicity and historical value of the Troy material. Spenser's epic, though dependent upon and grounded in a foundation in history, cannot assimilate or overcome the problematic implications of the Troy and Brutus stories. As the only epic that features a separate chronicle, the Faerie Queene gestures outside its own generic boundaries to history. The events it narrates fill the well-known gap in the Trojan heritage. After all, when Gorboduc's sons, Ferrex and Porrex, fight over the right to rule, the slaughter of the royal family "ended **Brutus** sacred

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[20] Levy, 124.

progeny."

> Thenceforth this Realme was into factions rent,
> Whilest each of **Brutus** boasted to be borne,
> That in the end was left no moniment
> Of **Brutus**, nor of Britons glory auncient.[21]

Spenser makes the war for inheritance the destruction of the heirs. In Britomart he "fixes" the broken genealogical line of the Trojan founders. Spenser's epic casts itself as a history book.

But he cannot make that history obey the demands of epic. The intimate connection between history and epic that facilitated the rise of genealogies is severed. Arthur, in fact, cannot read Briton moniments, he does not understand it, while Britomart's historical awareness is equally hampered by her naive belief in the traditional reading of Troy. For these two protagonists of Spenser's epic, their history cannot furnish a grounding in history. I argue that their relationship to the Trojan history is tenuous at best, because they cannot connect themselves to Troy.

Shakespeare, in contrast to Spenser, does not investigate the meaning of Troy, but the processes of generating meaning in Troy. In Troilus and Cressida he creates a world that is trying to become the world known by tradition. The corruption and decay that characterize

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[21] Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene, ed. Thomas P. Roche (New Haven: Yale UP, 1981), II.x.36.

Shakespeare's ancient world evince an inability to find meaning in the source of one's own nation, and literature. The disillusionment with the source and its relevance for the present culture highlight the otherness of Troy. The search for ancient exemplars of heroism only unearths corruption and death. As a vehicle for historical self-definition and self-understanding, Troy inspires a historiography that cannot understand Troy, its own origin. To know the past, to know Troy, by a recreation of its world, only heightens its otherness and drains it of meaning. Humanism's attempt to recapture the values of antiquity has reached its limits, and the search for the untraceable almost destroys the significance of the source.

II Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Creation of a Historical Legacy

About 1136[1] Geoffrey of Monmouth completed his History of the Kings of Britain. This book inaugurated national history writing in England and influenced all subsequent historians. Unlike Bede in his Ecclesiastical History of the English People, Geoffrey provides a secular account of British history and thus a new outlook on the past; the histories of Bede and Gildas, two of Geoffrey's avowed sources, had been religious in their material and outlook. The early ninth century Historia Britonum of Nennius is exceptional in that it concentrates exclusively on secular British history; but it does not really have a coherent and continuous narrative, since Nennius compiled scraps from various sources. Conceptually and materially the histories of Gildas and Nennius are the most relevant to the early part of The History of the Kings of Britain. Geoffrey's history, however, offers a more comprehensive and extensive picture of the British past than his precursors did; he often paints detailed portraits of particular rulers, like Leir and, of course, Arthur and of the societies that flourished around them. The background for his British

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[1] For dating see J.S.P. Tatlock, The Legendary History of Britain (New York: Gordian Press, 1974), 433-437; Lewis Thorpe, "Introduction," History of the Kings of Britain (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966), 38; and Acton Griscom, ed., The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth (London: Longmans, 1929), 31-41.

history is equally embellished; Geoffrey begins the history with an elaborate story of origin in which he posits a great-grandson of Aeneas as the founder of the British race and nation.

The Brutus story represents Geoffrey's legacy to subsequent historians and to the British nation: the origin story provides defining elements for British history and simultaneously shapes British national and historical self-definition. As descendants of the Trojans the British have a claim to antiquity that rivals other established European nations. As a nation founded by Brutus they can claim independence and a historical unity that belies their real history as a repeatedly invaded and conquered nation. Medieval ideas about the story of Troy were shaped by the main known texts: Virgil, Dares, and Dictys.[2] In the pro-Trojan Middle Ages, and especially in the twelfth century, which witnessed a vogue for stories of Troy, a national origin derived from Trojans meant national nobility and an ancient authority that legitimized emerging nations. It also provided equality to, or independence from, the by now degenerate and fallen Rome. But beneath these surface meanings of national pride and legitimization, Geoffrey's

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[2] See Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (New York: Pageant Book Company, 1957), 7-11; Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition (New York: Oxford UP, 1976), 48-57; and Charles Homer Haskins, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1955), 104-107 and passim.

Brutus story reveals more problematic attitudes about the historical legacy of the Brutus story: to be derived from these Trojans implies that one also inherits a particular relation to history.

Geoffrey's desire to write his history stems from the considerable gaps in British history before and after the Incarnation. No historian has covered the early period. He intends to preserve information about the deeds of antiquity that exist "in oral tradition, just as if they had been committed to writing" ["quasi inscripta iocunde & memoriter predicarentur"].[3] Yet Archdeacon Walter has also provided written documentation in the form of "a certain very ancient book written in the British language" (51) ["quendam britannici sermonis librum uetustissimum" (219)]. His own book, Geoffrey claims, is merely a translation.[4] What is

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[3] Thorpe, 51 and Griscom, 219; Thorpe's "oral tradition" is a modern equivalent for Geoffrey's "a multis populis quasi inscripta iocunde & memoriter predicarentur." The adverbs "iocunde & memoriter" might imply a stronger claim for good story-telling and truthfulness than "oral tradition." More literally the phrase might be taken as an attempt to claim for "oral tradition" an authority equal to that of written sources; that is, the stories were not only told well ("iocunde") but also faithfully ("memoriter") and, hence, have equal claims as historical records ("quasi inscripta"). All Latin quotations refer to Griscom's edition, all English ones to Thorpe's, because the English translation from a Welsh MS in Griscom is often confusing. Where they are available, I have used either contemporary or modern translations. The original Latin will appear in the text.

[4] This fiction of a source had already been used in the earlier accounts of the Trojan war by Dictys and Dares. See The Trojan War, trans. and ed. R.M. Frazer, Jr. (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1966), 19 and 133.

more significant, however, is Geoffrey's comparison of oral tradition with writing. Cultural memory represents as reliable and authoritative a foundation as does writing. This implies that previous historians have not been responsible in their writing, because they have neglected to draw on "oral tradition."[5] His history is more complete because he makes use of both cultural memory and the obligatory written authority, the "uetustissimus liber." Even though the nature and existence of the book have been the subject of much critical debate,[6] this point is less interesting than his criticisms of other historians and his reliance on tradition. Geoffrey's claim to cultural memory, a quite striking innovation, grounds his material in an untapped and unrecorded authority that his own book will reify.

In the sixth-century De excidio et conquestu Britanniae Gildas, one of Geoffrey's predecessors, had already established some of the interpretative norms that many later historians repeat. The cowardliness, dissension, and

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[5] Of course, they also have not had the benefit of Walter's ancient book, as Geoffrey takes care to remind rival historians (Griscom, 535-6; Thorpe, 284).

[6] See Hans Matter, Englische Gründungssagen von Geoffrey of Monmouth bis zur Renaissance. Ein Versuch (Heidelberg, 1922), 11-34; J.S.P. Tatlock, The Legendary History of Britain, 3-6 and 432; Neil Wright, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and Bede," Arthurian Literature VI (1986):54-55; Robert W. Hanning, The Vision of History in Early Britain (New York: Columbia UP, 1966), 122 and 222; the most comprehensive account that favors the existence of a Welsh source, which probably has been lost, is in Griscom, 99-147.

immorality of the native Britons account for their subjugation by invaders.[7] In Gildas' eyes, these weaknesses constitute indigenous traits of the inhabitants.

> Ever since it was first inhabited, Britain has been ungratefully rebelling, stiff-necked and haughty, now against God, now against its own countrymen, sometimes even against kings from abroad and their subjects. (17)
>
> [Haec erecta cervice et mente, ex quo inhabitata est, nunc deo, interdum civibus, nonnumquam etiam transmarinis regibus et subiectis ingrata consurgit. (90)]

That is, these characteristics form a tradition in themselves, and are vouched for by foreign historians. In fact, British cowardliness not only invites but also results from the numerous invasions. Because of their godlessness the Britons are unable to maintain a peaceful state, so that "it became a mocking proverb far and wide that the British are neither strong in war nor faithful in peace" (18) ["in proverbium et derisum longe lateque efferretur quod Britanni nec in bello fortes sint nec in pace fideles" (91)]. For Gildas the invasions are God's just retribution for the depravity of the Britons. His picture of the British nation reveals an unfitness, an inability to be a nation in the first place. Therefore, invasion is followed by a brief peace which is broken by the Britons through civil war or disobedience. Once unrest and chaos ensue, "the foul hordes

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[7] Gildas. The Ruin of Britain and Other Works, ed. and trans. Michael Winterbottom (London: Phillimore, 1978). Unless otherwise noted all subsequent references are to this edition.

of Scots and Picts" (23) ["tetri Scottorum Pictorumque greges" (95)] are allowed to invade the land. The helpless state of the Britons forces them to call for foreign help, and the cycle continues.

Despite the despicable nature of his country, Gildas attempts to recover the national past and consciousness, or "to bring to light the ills she [Britain] suffered in the time of the Roman conquest and inflicted on other men" (17) ["conabor in medium quae temporibus imperatorum Romanorum et passa est et aliis intulit civibus" (90)]. His labor of retrieval is hindered by the absence of evidence:

> I shall do this as well as I can, using not so much literary remains of this country (which, such as they were, are not now available, having been burnt by enemies or removed by our countrymen when they went into exile) as foreign tradition: and that has frequent gaps to blur it. (17)
>
> [quantum tamen potuero, non tam ex scriptis patriae scriptorumve monimentis, quippe quae, vel si qua fuerint, aut ignibus hostium exusta aut civium exilii classe longius deportata non compareant, quam transmarina relatione, quae crebris inrupta intercapedinibus non satis claret. (90)]

The deplorable state of historical documentation can thus be blamed on the oppressors and the exile of the Britons, as well as the unreliability of foreign authorities.[8] The course of British history discouraged British history writing and destroyed the documents necessary for it. This

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[8] The absence or loss of documents will concern me below and in the next chapter on the Tudor historians. Gildas' critique of foreign historians parallels Renaissance accusations of his first sixteenth-century editor Polydore Vergil.

is as far as his historiographical analysis goes, because he is mainly interested in a religious and moral interpretation of the demise of the Britons. In order to render and remedy this sinfulness Gildas turns to the Bible for historical parallel, precedent, and exhortation. Gildas establishes "the British past firmly within the context of the history of salvation, i.e., of the guidance of history by divine providence."[9]

We can observe the first step toward a secularized view of history in Nennius' Historia Britonnum of around 820. Less hortatory in tone, more specific in detail, the Historia Britonnum represents a different picture from Gildas' and is the direct, though unnamed, precursor of Geoffrey. Nennius describes himself as a collector and compiler of information from numerous sources, secular and religious, Saxon and British. And he, like Gildas and later Geoffrey, writes his history to fill a gap, not of sources for the British, but of books about the British past. He ascribes the absence of British histories to "repeated pestilence or frequent military disasters" (9) ["mortalitates frequentissimas vel clades creberrimas bellorum" (50)]; in other words, he blames the historical circumstances for the absence of historical writing. The most significant innovation, however, is his incorporation of numerous origin stories--among them those of Brutus and

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[9] Hanning, 57.

Britto.

Nennius begins his description of the island with its name. "The island of Britain is so called from one Brutus, a Roman consul" (10) ["Britannia insula a quodam Bruto, consule Romano, dicta" (59)]. But when he tells his readers about the first inhabitants of the island, the name changes to Britto, because Nennius has found two different accounts. This Britto is the son of Silvius, Aeneas' grandson, who was exiled from Italy because he killed both his parents (his mother in childbirth, his father accidentally with an arrow);[10]

> 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. (19)
>
> [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. (60)]

On his travels in exile, Britto is not allowed to stay in Greece, because his great-grandfather slew Turnus. Nennius' abbreviated account does not explain why Turnus' death would cause Britto's expulsion. But in the Aeneid Queen Amata recounts Turnus' pedigree, one that eminently qualifies him to be Lavinia's husband, as opposed to the mere exile

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[10] The prophecy that reveals these events is similar to the one announcing Paris as the "firebrand" of Troy. Britto "would be the child of death, for he would kill his father and mother, and be hateful to all men" (19) ["filius mortis erit, quia occidet patrem suum et matrem suam et erit exosus omnibus hominibus" (60)].

Aeneas. Turnus is a descendant of Inachus and Acrisius, the ancient kings of Argos.[11] In expiation for Turnus' death Britto later founds the city of Tours in Gallia (19; 60). Thus the Britons descended from him are guilt-free, a new society outside the tradition of the Trojan war and its sequels.[12]

But then the neatness of the story collapses, because Nennius finds another tradition in the "old books of our elders" (22) ["ex veteribus libris veterum nostrorum" (63)] which offer yet another story of descent: a biblical

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[11] Britto's expulsion from Greece can be seen as an extension or continuation of the rivalry between Turnus and Aeneas in the Aeneid. When Queen Amata pleads Turnus' cause over Aeneas' to Latinus, she reminds her husband that Aeneas is another version of Paris who will carry off Lavinia/Helen. Turnus functions here as a version of Menelaus, both in terms of his position vis a vis dynastic politics and in regard to his descent. Thus Aeneas' rivalry with Turnus can be seen as yet another feud between Trojans and Greeks, carried out over many generations. This enmity between Greeks and Trojans is further enforced in Turnus' descent because his mother-city is Mycenae, twin-city of Argos and home of Agamemnon, who is also sometimes called king of Argos. As an indication of Turnus' identification with the Greeks, we should remember that he casts himself as another Achilles who will dispatch Aeneas to the underworld. See P. Vergili, Maronis Opera. Aeneidos, ed. R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1983), VII.359-371 and IX.740-741; Aeneid, trans. W. F. Jackson Knight (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1958), 186 and 248. Knight's translation will be cited as Aeneid.

[12] Aeneas, as the son of Anchises and Venus, is not implicated in the Laomedon tradition, because Anchises is only Laomedon's nephew (Aeneid, 366). His line did not participate in the various violations of hospitality, promises, and contracts in which Laomedon and Priam were involved. With his founding of Tours, Britto takes the last blemish off Aeneas, as Hanning has quite rightly remarked (105).

genealogy that goes back to Adam via Alan rivals the Trojan descent:

> The three sons of Noah divided the world into three parts after the Flood. Sem extended his boundaries in Asia, Ham in Africa, Japheth in Europe, enlarged.
>
> The first man to come to Europe was Alanus, of the race of Japheth, with his three sons, whose names are Hessitio, Armenon, Negue. Hessitio had four sons, Francus, Romanus, Britto, Albanus. . . . From Hessitio derive four peoples, the Franks, the Latins, the Albans and the British. (22)
>
> [Tres filii Noe diviserunt orbem in tres partes post diluvium. Sem in Asia, Cham in Africa, Jafeth in Europa dilataverunt terminos suos. Primus homo venit ad Europam de genera Jafeth Alanus cum tribus filiis suis, quorum nomina sunt Hessitio, Armeno, Negue. Hessitio autem habuit filios quattuor: hi sunt Francus, Romanus, Britto, Albanus. . . . Ab Hisitione autem ortae sunt quattuor gentes: Franci, Latini, Albani et Britti. (63)]

This is not the first Britto, son of Silvius, son of Ascanius, son of Aeneas? Or is he? To make matters even more complicated, Nennius offers yet another account that centers on the Brutus "from whom the consuls began to be" (42), the same Brutus who expelled Tarquin. His genealogy also intersects with Aeneas and is traced back to Japheth (44-45). This lineage combines the classical descent from Aeneas and the Trojans with a biblical descent from Noah. But we never learn how this Brutus could get to the island and place descendants there so that:

> 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 Elisha, son of Javan, son of Japheth. (22)

> [Qui incolae in primo fuerunt Brittanniae. Brittones a Bruto. Brutus filius Hisitionis, Hisition 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. (63)]

Brutus' descent is Roman and biblical, Britto's Trojan and biblical; both ultimately go back to the Old Testament. Given the inconsistencies in the spelling of proper names, Brutus here seems to pick up Britto's lineage, Hessitio/Hisitio and Alan/Alaneus, so that this account almost reads like a filler for the gap between Alan and Japheth. This similarity amounts to an invitation to collapse Britto and Brutus into one person. At the same time, however, by listing all these traditions, Nennius commits something like genealogical overkill. The Britons most certainly come from Aeneas' and Noah's descendants, regardless of their more immediate ancestors.

Nennius lets these names and descents stand next to each other without reconciling them. Why would two rival pedigrees be allowed to make their claims?[13] I think an answer to this question lies in the meanings behind the origins. Both the Brutus derivation and the Britto descent imply a new beginning that is commensurate with a compensation made for old transgressions. Thematically, Britto's honoring of the slain Turnus revises the Trojan

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13 Nennius quite explicitly says that he has found two accounts and gives only one complete foundation story, the one involving Britto. Brutus initially is only a name-giver.

family violations, while Brutus' consulship opposes tyranny and ushers in a new governmental era. Since Britto purifies himself from the slaughter of Turnus by Aeneas, his expiation retroactively erases the blemish on the whole Roman origin. Brutus rebels against unjust and greedy kings; the revolution is a retribution for a history of violations beginning from the rape of Lucretia. Ultimately, Brutus pays with his own life and the lives of his sons for the achieved Roman Republic.[14] The rootedness of both personages in the glories of the Roman world is emphasized, paradoxically, by the word "Welsh": in Anglo-Saxon "Welsh" (or "Wealh") meant Romano-Briton, that is Britons under Roman rule.[15] The account of the Roman conquest of the island follows these genealogies.

The place of these two genealogies that establish a source for the Britons in the Roman world is significant: they interrupt Nennius' account of the Roman conquest which he resumes once he has discussed the creation of the British nation through the founder Britto and has listed the descent

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[14] See Livy, The Early History of Rome, trans. Aubrey de Selincourt (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), 95-112. Nennius knew Livy through Jerome.

[15] A. W. Wade-Evans, ed. and trans., Nennius's "History of the Britons" (London: Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge, 1938), 35. "Welsh" also meant "strange" or "foreign," a meaning that would underlie Wade-Evans' "Romano-Briton" because the Romans are, after all, foreigners in the Britons' land. Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, ed. C. T. Onions (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1966), 999. This point will come up again below, when I discuss the fate of the Britons in Geoffrey.

of the alternative name-giver Brutus. Thus Nennius' narrative of genealogy and conquest counterbalances the parallelism of descent. Initially the Britons possessed the island all by themselves; they are the descendants of Britto. Brutus himself only serves as a chronological marker in Nennius' account of Ireland that follows the British history. Ireland was being peopled

> when Brutus was ruling among the Romans, with whom the Consuls began, and then the Tribunes for the Plebs and the Dictators. And then the Consuls held the State for 447 years, which had previously suffered the rule of Kings. (21)
>
> [in tempore quo regnabat Brutus apud Romanos, a quo consules esse coeperunt, deinde tribuni plebis ac dictatores. Et consules rursum rempublicam obtinerunt per annos CCCXLVII, quae prius regia dignitate damnata fuerat. (62)][16]

This passage gives Britto temporal and thus authoritative priority over the later Brutus. Nennius took the information about the consuls from Jerome with only slight variations; Jerome mentions that "Julius Caesar, who first seized sole rule," put an end to the rule of the consuls.[17] The veiled allusion to Caesar, as usurper of the consuls' right, makes the Roman conqueror appear an aberration in, or disruption of, Roman rule rather than the glorious fulfillment of empire. The Roman Brutus is important not

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[16] In the above translation I have altered Morris' "however" to "and then" for Latin "rursum" because there is no opposition implied, only a moving back to what Nennius mentioned before, that is the consuls.

[17] See Wade-Evans translation, 42.

only because, in one version, he exported his name to Britain, but also because he was the first consul and labored against tyrants. What seems here like a clumsy repetition and unnecessary confusion serves a thematic purpose: it is none other than the first consul after whom Britain is named. Thus Nennius first establishes the Britons as an independent nation with their own history before the Roman invasion; then they "were despotic and presumptuous" ["essent tyranni et tumidi" (63); my translation]. This is the first signal of the British degeneracy we have already encountered in Gildas.

Geoffrey combined and extended thematic material from Gildas and Nennius, who did the groundwork for historians dealing with the remote past. More importantly, he filled the gaps that his precursors found and left; more than Nennius, Geoffrey establishes links between founders and political ideals. The two genealogies in Nennius, different though compatible, are fused into one: Britto takes Brutus' name and Brutus takes Britto's history. This conflation of the founder's life with the consul's name unifies the early history of Britain.[18] Instead of two rival versions we have

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[18] It is not clear what other reasons Geoffrey might have had for combining Nennius' two accounts. Brutus is a more common and thus better known ancient Roman name; a founder with such a recognizable and established name is more creditable. Moreover, the eponymous etymology of Britto might seem too straightforward and obvious. The connection between Brutus and Britain involves more complicated etymological processes than the simple Britto to Britain. In his discussion of Geoffrey's debt to Nennius

an origin rooted in the life of one person. Geoffrey fleshes out the rather sketchy biography of Britto in Nennius, an extension that, next to his transformation of Nennius' rudimentary Arthur figure into a world conqueror, represents his major contribution to the history of early Britain. The result is a revision of the meaning of British history.

As with Nennius' Britto, Brutus' birth presages disaster for his family. But the prophecies for the unborn child differ and inaugurate Geoffrey's revision of the origin story. Unlike Britto, who "will be hateful to all men," Brutus "after he had wandered in exile through many lands . . . would eventually rise to the highest honour" (54) ["Pluribus quoque terris in exilium peragratis ad summum tandem culmen honoris perueniret" (223)]. During his exile, he wanders into Greece where he finds the descendants of Helenus, who live enslaved to the descendants of Pyrrhus. The outcome of the Trojan war has determined the fates of the three younger generations. Under his leadership the enslaved Trojans want to gain their liberty "from the subjection of the Greeks" (56) ["a seruitute grecorum liberarentur" (225)]. Once the Trojans have rallied around

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Griscom disregards the difference between the two names and treats both founders as one. However, his point is that Nennius represents only one possible source and not the "ancient book." In this book, he thinks, Geoffrey would have found one specific descent. If, on the contrary, Geoffrey made up his own genealogy, it is a patchwork from Virgil, Livy, Nennius and others (177-195).

Brutus and Assaracus, a slighted Greek noble of Trojan descent, Brutus sends a letter to Pandrasus, the king of the Greeks. His challenge, however, does not allude to the Trojan war. He bases his request for liberty on the noble descent of the Trojans from Dardanus:

> The people sprung from the illustrious line of Dardanus have withdrawn into the hidden depth of the forests, for they have found it intolerable that they should be treated in your kingdom otherwise than as the purity of their noble blood demands. . . . Rather you should pardon them, for it is the natural aim of everyone in captivity to strive to return to his former dignity. (56)
>
> [Quia indignum fuerat gentem preclaro genera dardani . . . . aliter in regno tuo tractari quam serenitas nobilitas eius expeteret sese infra abdita nemorum recepit. . . . set uenia adhibenda cum cuiusque captiui communis sit intentio uelle ad pristinam dignitatem redire. (226)]

Because of their origin they are entitled to freedom. The Trojans would even live like "wild beasts" ["ferino ritu"]. if only to live in freedom. If Pandrasus should refuse to allow them to live in freedom, they will "go off to join the peoples of other lands" (57) ["ad aliarum terrarum nationes . . . abscedant" (226-227)].

The ensuing battles prove Brutus a successful but merciless leader. The final conquest of the Greeks reenacts the fall of Troy in reverse. A traitor among the Greeks, like the Greek Sinon among the Trojans, enables Brutus' soldiers to slaughter the Greeks at night. After their formidable victory the Trojans finally decide to leave Greece, because they could not hope to be left in peace, as

Membritius explains to the vacillating Trojans. The desire for vengeance for their slain relatives would keep the Greeks in arms, while the departure of the Trojans would ensure safety and avoid a repetition of the Trojan fate. Thus the Trojans can break out of the cycle of conquest and retribution only by migration to new territory or by joining with other peoples. Brutus' marriage to Pandrasus' daughter Ignoge seals the pact worked out between him and the captured king. Three hundred and twenty-four ships depart from Greece.

This synopsis is enough to show that Geoffrey focuses on the Trojans' desire for liberty and freedom. Hanning quite rightly observes that

> This traditional theme of ancient historiography states rhetorically the way in which history is moral or at least meaningful: when a nation impairs the freedom of others, it encounters resistance and arouses its would-be subjects to great deeds in defense of liberty. (141)

In Aquitaine as well they encounter a tyrannical king and are forced to move on. After the war with the Gauls Brutus founds Tours, not for Turnus the slain enemy, but for his nephew who is slain by the Gauls. The motives of expiation for Turnus' slaughter and a desire for government free of tyrants in Nennius have been replaced with a single-minded drive for independence and liberty. The new motivation ignores the repercussions of the Trojan war while endorsing the government of a strong leader. This difference between redress of and retribution for wrongs leads to a vindication

of the Trojans.

The shift in emphasis toward a retribution for and re-institution of Troy can partially be attributed to the influence of the Aeneid. Though both Gildas and Nennius show traces of Virgil's influence, Geoffrey makes much more use of him, both in terms of story and theme. He capitalizes on the glories of empire, whose origins, however, he redirects. In Book III of the Aeneid Aeneas recounts Apollo's advice given at the Delphic oracle:

> O much enduring Dardans, the land of your ancestors whence you are sprung shall receive you on your return to her generous bosom. Seek out your ancient mother. And from this land the House of Aeneas, the sons of his sons, and all their descendants shall bear rule over earth's widest bounds. (78)

One of the problems for Virgil's Trojans is the discovery of the home of their ancestors; Anchises wrongly identifies it with Crete. Virgil's Trojans don't know their family history all that well.[19] Apollo, however, intends to send them, eventually, back to their origin in Italy, to the

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[19] Anchises explains his choice for Crete, because the island also has a Mount Ida and "is the cradle of our race" (III.105; 78). He also vaguely remembers that Teucer sailed to the Troad from Crete. But Teucer is only an ancillary ancestor, because he is the father of Dardanus' wife (Knight, 366). Another reason for Anchises' wrong interpretation of the oracle is that Dardanus is said to have been from Crete, so that one earlier origin is superimposed on another, older origin. Thus "two lines of descent from separate ancestors had been confused" (80; 180-181). In order to clarify the pedigree, the Trojan gods have to appear to Aeneas in a dream and tell him to go to Italy. Cassandra, however, is said to have known this true origin and goal all along (182-188; 80). The superimposition and accretion of potential origins will concern me below.

source of their lineage, Dardanus. In Geoffrey, however, Diana, is both less enigmatic and partially wrong; moreover, she sends Brutus to a new island that in turn will be a second Troy.

> Brutus, beyond the setting of the sun, past the realms of Gaul, there lies an island in the sea, once occupied by giants. Now it is empty and ready for your folk. Down the years this will prove an abode suited to you and to your people; and for your descendants it will be a second Troy. A race of kings will be born there from your stock and the round circle of the whole earth will be subject to them. (65)
>
> [Bruto sub occasu solis trans gallica regna;
> Insula in occeano est habitata gigantibus olim.
> Nunc deserta quidem gentibus apta tuis.
> . . . .
> Hec erit & natis altera troia tuis.
> Hic de prole tua reges nascentur. & ipsis.
> Totius terrae subditus orbis erit. (239)]

The gist of the prophecy is the reverse of Apollo's: the god directs the Trojans to their origin in the deep past, whereas Diana directs them to a place that will become an origin in the future. As I said above, Dardanus figures in the Aeneid as the goal of the quest, but in Brutus' letter to king Pandrasus Dardanus is the even remoter trigger or origin that enables the Trojans to claim the right to create a new origin. The Dardanus origin is in the past, while the new origin will be Britain, which only begins to materialize with Diana's prophecy. Brutus' letter is a prelude to the prophecy; both letter and prophecy constitute steps in creating an origin. The first origin in the past and in Dardanus cuts the Trojans loose from the Greeks, and the prophecy directs them toward what will become a new origin.

In some ways the claim to Dardanus is an attempt to get back to the original origin, so to speak;[20] Brutus seems to reinstate racial pride in the Trojans who still suffer from the aftermath of the Trojan war. Brutus uses origin politically and proleptically, as a justification for rebellion and liberation, which in turn amounts to a revision of a post-war political establishment after the Trojan war. His reminder directed to the Trojans of their own nobility parallels Geoffrey's own reminder for his readers: in the preface he mentions the antiquity of the British race and its history, both of which suffer from the effects of various invasions.

The geographical movement of Brutus in the Mediterranean amplifies these overlapping origins, because he journeys from origin to origin. He leaves Italy, the home of Dardanus and the new home of Aeneas' companions, then he comes to Greece, which is closer geographically to Troy, where he finds other survivors of the war, both Greeks and Trojans. Then, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, Brutus picks up another group of Trojans led by Corineus (66; 240-241). Thus Brutus has in his train the descendants of

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[20] That Dardanus orignally came from Italy and that Apollo sends the Trojans back to their "ancient mother" implies that Virgil's exiles are in fact homecomers. The future Rome will emerge as the true site of empire, whereas Troy ends up being something of a detour. In Geoffrey the emphasis is not on return but paradoxically on separation and recreation. In the Aeneid the origin is in the past, but in The History of the Kings of Britain the origin is for the future.

Helenus and Antenor, the other two known survivors of the Trojan war. He himself represents the last of Aeneas' descendants, at least in Geoffrey, who does not mention Iulus, only Silvius, Brutus' father (54; 223). In other words, there are no more Trojans left in Europe and Asia: they all join Brutus. In some ways this movement represents a reverse Völkerwanderung because it consolidates rather than disperses peoples.

This concentration of origins is necessary for the success of Geoffrey's story, because it at once distills and dilates the idea of origin itself. That is, Geoffrey combines the gathering of Trojan exiles with a deepening of their ancestral awareness; but at the same time he creates in Brutus, the future founder of Britain, a historical awareness that denies an intermediate origin--the origin in Troy. With Troy and the mythology that accrued to it, there is almost no specific originary moment; all potential origins, whether they be Dardanus, Tros, the end of the war, or Aeneas, point to origins underneath them, just like the numerous walls of the city that make it impossible, even for modern archaeologists, to find the real Troy. Unlike biblical, linear history, this proliferation of origins around secular Troy make it at once the most apt and the most flawed locus of origin. It is this layering of origins, or even this accretion of connected origins in an all-inclusive sweep, that furnishes the new beginning in

Britain. Brutus will make the home that is a replica of his ancestors' home. But the land itself is "ready for your folk"; in Diana's prophecy the home-making process is less prominent than the sense of already belonging to the land, because it is complicit in Diana's design. Thus Brutus will do what Virgil's Aeneas could never really accomplish: build a second Troy. In fact, after an initial exploration of the island, "they began to cultivate the fields and to build houses, so that in a short time you would have thought that the land had always been inhabited" (72; my emphasis) ["Agros incipiunt colere. domos edificare. ita ut breui tempore terram ab euo inhabitatem censeres" (249)]. Only now does Brutus name the land after himself, because "[h]is intention was that his memory should be perpetuated by the derivation of the name" (72) ["Volebat enim ex diriuatione nominis memoriam habere perpetuam" (249)].

But Diana's prophecy was incorrect in one regard. The land is not empty; there are still giants on the island. These giants are monsters who cannot be integrated into the newly established civilization. The giants only become a problem once they interfere with the rites (and rights) of culture. In fact, they are anti-cultural: they attack the Trojans while they are celebrating a religious feast commemorating their landing on the island. After the Trojans rally against the intruders and defeat all except one of them, Gogmagog, "a particularly repulsive one" (72)

["detestabilis" (250)], Brutus subsumes the surviving giant into cultural practices: he has him fight a wrestling match with Corineus. The Trojan wins, and hurls the giant out into the sea, where he shatters on the hidden rocks. It is the same place, Totnes, where the Trojans had landed and where later important landings, of Vespasian, Utherpendragon, and the Saxons, among others, will take place. The Trojans defeat the monsters in the giants' own wildness and unculturation; their conquest of nature is recontextualized into a gigantic olympiad, so to speak, and the giants are thus defeated under the auspices of cultural sanction as well. Even the geography of the land is made to testify to the importation and creation of culture.

Only then does Brutus build his city "Troia Nova" on the banks of the Thames (73; 252), whose name is corrupted to "Trinovantum," and finally to "Kaerlud, or Lud's City" after the builder of the city walls and towers. Brutus' labor as culture-bringer is complete when he hands over the city "to the citizens by right of inheritance, and gives them a code of laws by which they might live peacefully together" (74; 252). Thus he changes completely from exiled parricide to leader and liberator and finally to ruler and bestower of liberty. Hanning cogently analyses Brutus' status as founder of Britain:

> Insofar as Brutus is isolated--and expelled--from his Italian homeland, he assumes an individuality quite distinct from the framework of Christian or national destiny. But as an eponymous hero who both founds and

> gives his name to a new nation, Brutus is a typical figure embodying and originating an imagined set of national virtues. He partakes of both individual excellence and national ideals, and emerges as an ambivalent figure of a kind which has always troubled categorizing critics (the enigmatic Aeneas being the prime example of the type, though not himself eponymous). The close relationship between individual excellence and traditions of national glory has always figured in western considerations of the formation of nations. (217)

As the creator of Britain he gives more than his name to the country; he also instills values: generosity towards soldiers and citizens, military cunning, leadership and strength, a civilizing impulse, and, most importantly, the drive for independence and liberty. As Hanning puts it:

> The new Britons are Trojans reborn; a nation rises from the wreckage of a preexisting nation. The conditions for rebirth as Geoffrey presents them are the desire for freedom and a leader to implement this desire. (157)

The last two values even overshadow the need for civilization, when we recall that Brutus would have permanently opted for a life in the woods, if Pandrasus would not let the Trojans go free. According to Hanning, they "are clearly ready to live outside society indefinitely, if necessary. Moreover, Hanning also notes a negative example of life in the woods in Gildas, where it implies "punishment from God," and discusses Brutus' idea of renouncing society as one of the ambivalences in Brutus' character (158), because it implies the privileging of personal desires over societal needs. After all the inheritance struggle of Assaracus against Greek rivals

helped trigger the Trojans' rebellion. But as a response to violation by Greek society as a whole, the forest seems an appropriate refuge, not primarily an indication of a conflict between merely personal and greater societal interests. Since the emphasis in the confrontation with king Pandrasus is on gaining freedom, and on escaping slavery, Brutus' decision to renounce civilization makes sense, as he explains in the letter to the king:

> They have preferred to keep themselves alive on flesh and herbs, as though they were wild beasts, and have their liberty, rather than remain under the yoke of your slavery, even if pampered there by every kind of wealth. (56)
>
> [Preferebant namque ferino ritu carnibus uidelicet & herbis uitam cum libertate sustenare. quam uniuersis refocillata diuitiis sub iugo seruitutis tue permanere. (226)]

Brutus makes it quite clear that in this hierarchy of values liberty comes before the amenities of society. In fact, he says that living free in the wilderness is preferable to living in civilized slavery, which would preclude the existence of an independent Trojan society.

Yet the theme of liberation operates in conjunction with the history of Greek and Trojan civilization. After all, the Trojans' enslavement is a consequence of their losing the war. Being part of Greek society means being enslaved. Brutus' claim to liberty via savagery reorganizes the relationship between the Greeks and the Trojans. The workings of Greek society further justify his claim. Greek society is so corrupt and prejudiced that they do not honor

Assaracus' right to his inheritance, simply because he has Trojan blood on his mother's side (56).[21] The rebellion against Greek rule begins with the occupation of the three castles Assaracus inherited. To live in the forest would thus only mean to exchange one state of lawlessness for another, one acultural and the other culturally enforced.

Granted that the Trojans' circumstances provide more than sufficient prompting for rebellion and/or liberation, I think there is a significant ambiguity in the Trojan connection with Assaracus and the ensuing civil war. This ambiguity relates to the Trojans' self-definition and historical self-understanding. They react to their degradation by the Greeks, who can mistreat them because they are the losers. Assaracus is not enslaved, but by descent he is half-Trojan, which Geoffrey emphasizes as a reason for his mistreatment. The reason for the Trojan situation in Greece is the sack of Troy. In the letter to Pandrasus, Brutus skips over this background by looping back to Dardanus in justifying Trojan liberty. This denial amounts to a negation of Greek and Trojan history, even more so because Brutus styles himself "the leader of those who survived the fall of Troy" (56; my emphasis) ["dux reliquiarum troie" (226)]. Thus he recalls the war, but then proceeds to disregard its significance.

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[21] We may recall that Aeneas great-grandfather, Ilus' and Ganymede's brother, was called Assaracus. See "Royal Houses of Troy and Greece" in Aeneid, 366.

The war itself is then re-enacted in reverse: instead of the traitor Sinon, there is the traitor Anacletus who betrays the Greek sentinels to save his and Antigonus' lives.[22] Anacletus tells the guards that he knows where the king's brother Antigonus is hidden and asks them to come and help him carry the wounded Antigonus to the camp. The sentinels' subsequent questioning of Anacletus parallels the debate on the Trojan horse and Sinon's tale in the Aeneid.[23] The ruse enables the Trojans to move among the Greeks as the Greeks moved among the sleeping Trojans three generations before. This war represents a near undoing, of the Trojan war, because it undoes its consequences. However, through his emphasis on the sack of Troy by means of parallels and allusions, Geoffrey makes it hard to believe that the descendants can ever truly break free of the cycle, especially since the means to liberation repeat the original conflict and simultaneously deny its significance for the present.[24] Membritius, arguing for the need to leave Greece, seems aware of these dangers: if they "remain there among the descendants of Danaus" ["inter danaos manere"],

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[22] There is more personal as opposed to societal good at work in Anacletus than in Assaracus who has a legitimate case against the Greeks.

[23] See Aeneid, 52-57.

[24] In this light we might have to reconsider Brutus' marriage to Ignogen as a lawful version of Paris and Helen's affair, or of the still earlier kidnapping of Hesione and her subsequent betrothal to Ajax.

the descendants of Dardanus "will never enjoy lasting peace" ["numquam diuturna pace fruemini"], because vengeance and retribution will never end (62; 234). In contrast to Brutus' denial of the past, Membritius' speech evinces an awareness of the contingencies of history. The eternal enmity between Greeks and Trojans is conducted as violent reversal and repetition, of which the Trojans' recent victory is only another example.

But does that mean their removal from the Greeks will get the Trojans out of this kind of history? This is questionable. Unlike Aeneas, they rebuild Troy and name it Troia Nova, New Troy, which will become London. But can a replica furnish a new origin? In other words, there is an ambiguity in the very idea of this particularly elaborate story of Trojan origin. In Geoffrey's history, Trojan methods of history making remain the same, that is they repeat parts of the story that readers would know from Virgil, Dares, and Dictys. So how can anything new result as their legacy to British posterity? Obviously, their liberation and migration, the conquest of the giants, and the founding of a new civilization are impressive accomplishments. Geoffrey endows the Trojans with a determination to be their own nation, free and independent. Yet they achieve this goal in a problematic manner. The transformation of losers into winners via the revision of the Trojan war undermines the Trojans' potential breaking

out of their historical mold. Subsequent British history reveals that they never broke free. Structurally, Geoffrey's version of British history figures as recycled Trojan history.

In terms of nobility and antiquity the Trojans are unsurpassed, which is why they were so often claimed as ancestors.[25] With his version of Trojan origin Geoffrey would have pleased both rulers and ruled, the Normans and the British, "since patriotism attaches to the land as well as the race."[26] That particular form of patriotism, the one which looks to the past and encourages the writing of history, is present in various forms in all three medieval historians. Gildas wrote at a time when the Angles had invaded and subdued the island. His moralistic history focuses on the depravity and weaknesses of the inhabitants who are to blame for their subjugation. At the same time, his invectives function as incentives to remedy the decline

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[25] Tatlock (427-428) refers to an episode when Henry I visited the French court during his invasion of France in 1128. He "inquired about the origin and early history of that realm" and was told a Trojan origin story. Geoffrey must have been aware of this episode through Henry of Huntingdon. Thus shortly before Geoffrey completed his history the English court itself showed interest in Trojan ancestry, whether in order to equal their continental rivals or even to surpass them. Geoffrey's history certainly accomplished the latter goal (Tatlock, 432).

[26] Tatlock, 427.

of morality and culture in England.[27] Nennius, too, wrote during "a period of national revival," when there was "hope that the Saxons might at last be driven from the island of Britain."[28] His origin stories, with their precise dating of peoples and events, posit an indigenous and ancient culture over against the late-coming invaders.

Geoffrey's history was written during a succession crisis: Henry I died in 1135 without leaving a legitimate male heir. But he did leave a daughter, Matilda, and a nephew, Stephen, who fought over the succession. Matilda was championed by Geoffrey's patron, Robert of Gloucester, an illegitimate son of Henry's. This alliance helps account for the strong female rulers Geoffrey creates and for his emphasis on dynastic issues. But this dynastic crisis took place among the descendants of William the Conqueror.[29] It threatened to dissolve the hold the Normans had on the Britons. In general Geoffrey was pro-British, but he avoids the problems posed by his conflicting loyalties to patron and race by focusing on Britain as a nation and on its national character. His portrayal of the Britons, however, makes it clear that they deserved the invaders and

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[27] See Winterbottom's introduction, 2 and Hanning, 44-45.

[28] Hanning, 94-95.

[29] For a more detailed discussion of these issues see Tatlock, 286-8, 426-7, and 434-5; Griscom talks about the political background as it is relevant to the dating and selection of manuscripts, 42-98.

oppressors who have made them into exiles in their own land. Towards the end of the history, they become the Welsh, that is, they become exiles and strangers in their own land. With the change of name, Geoffrey implies, the Britons also lose their past, since it is not inscribed in their name any more. The new land bears the mark of the new owners of the land. Exile and refuge in a specific region, Wales, generate the old people's new name.[30] Geoffrey harps on the decimation and deracination of the true Britons. After the conquest by the Saxons,

> such Britons as remained sought refuge in the western parts of the kingdom: that is, in Cornwall and Wales. . . . For many years after this the Britons were deprived of the right to govern their own kingdom and were without sovereign power over their own land. (265)
>
> [Secesserunt itaque britonum reliquie in occidentalibus regni partibus cornubiam uidelicet atque gualias. . . . Amiserunt deinde britones regni diadema multis temporibus & insule monarchiam necnon & pristinam dignitatem recuperare nitebantur (507-508)]

Although the loss of their land and of the right to govern it primarily result from invasion, Geoffrey repeatedly makes the Britons themselves responsible for their demise, as in the following example:

> You foolish people, weighed down by the sheer burden of your own monstrous crimes, never happy but when you are fighting one another, why have you so far weakened yourselves in domestic upsets that you, who used to submit far-distant kingdoms to your own authority, are now like some fruitful vineyard which has gone sour and you cannot protect your own country, wives and children from your enemies? (264)

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[30] For the etymology of these words, see Onions, 999.

> [Quid ociosa gens pondere immanium scelerum oppressa. quid semper ciuilia prelia siciens tete domisticis in tantum debilitasti motibus. que cum prius longe posita regna potestati tue subdidisses. nunc uelut bona uinea degenerata in amaritudinem uersa. patriam. coniuges. liberos nequeas ab inimicis tueri? (505-506)]

Despite, or even with, their noble Trojan heritage, they have the same shortcomings already familiar from Gildas and Nennius. Given the realities of British history--a history of invasions and dissensions--none of these historians could alter the final picture. What they did do was explain it differently, or, in Geoffrey's case, put different emphases on the various stages of the British history.

The perspective on history in The History of the Kings of Britain is also influenced by Anglo-Norman historians who separated the history of kings from the history of Christian salvation, and thus re-oriented history toward the individual, or rather, toward "a polity independent of scriptural notions of the kingdom of God."[31] In the works of Henry of Huntingdon, William of Malmesbury, and Ordericus Vitalis, this refocusing was partially triggered simply by the sheer presence of noteworthy rulers and conquerors, like William and his descendants. In order to celebrate their achievements these Norman historians dwell on the character and psychology of the king. But they also have to admit that "the Normans are imperial repressors of English liberty," as Hanning observes (128). In light of these

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[31] See Hanning, 126-136 and 144. The phrasing has been suggested by Professor Nohrnberg.

developments, Geoffrey picks up on the new tradition but re-orients it toward the British past. In combination with his revision of the Aeneid, Geoffrey's appropriation of the victors' historiography to British purposes effectively rivals his competitors, William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon:[32] he endows the conquered Britons with a more glorious origin.

Although Geoffrey adopts these new techniques and applies them to the Britons, he cannot rewrite history. But his restructuring of a history of sin and degeneracy leads to a revision of the meaning of British history. Both the earlier British writers create texts that Hanning quite rightly calls "fall of Britain" texts. Destruction and decline of native culture, whether through invasion or corruption, were both the historical reality and the thematic focus for Gildas and Nennius. But Geoffrey allows his readers moments of British glory, not the least of which is the founding of Britain, in alternation with episodes of decline. For him British history shows a cyclical pattern of rise and fall caused respectively by man's control over

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[32] At the end of The History of the Kings of Britain Geoffrey snubs these two historians; they lose claim to historical accuracy because they do not have Geoffrey's knowledge of the British past (284). Henry of Huntingdon follows Nennius in his brief account of British origin. He extends British genealogy to Dardanus, who becomes the origin proper and from whom he traces Brutus, and thus combines Nennius with Virgil. The History of the English, ed. Thomas Arnold (Kraus Reprint, 1965), 13.

the forces of history and his loss of that control.[33] Particularly important in this context is Geoffrey's portrayal of the reasons for decline. Often internal dissension and corruption enable foreigners to attack Britain. Thus Geoffrey reworks Gildas' bleak version of history as caused by human sins: individuals, especially kings, have control over history insofar as they are not controlled by various corruptive passions. In the overall pattern, invaders do not figure primarily as just and divine retribution for human sins, but as external destroyers who prey on internal weakness. The image of the past that emerges is one of wasted opportunity and infinite potential.

Denys Hay has suggested "that behind the urge to recount heroic tales of kings and ancestors lie the emotional needs of emigrants." Völkerwanderungen, whether in the form of peaceful migrations or aggressive invasions, alienate both the conqueror and the conquered. They are both the cause of and the impetus for revisions of the past, and "produce a hunger for the old times, the old places and the old loyalties, satisfied by bards, later transmitted in the tales and 'histories.'"[34] In Hay's view, these histories are mainly written by the dispossessed, that is by the exiles or the subdued. Yet it seems to be an endeavor

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[33] See also Hanning, 137 and 139.

[34] Annalists and Historians (London: Methuen, 1977), 61.

that is shared by both sides, the conquerors and conquered alike; on the side of the vanquished there is the desire for historical retrieval or improvement by invention, on the side of the victors a need for assimilation and flattery. Geoffrey appeals to both sides through stories of an illustrious origin for the Britons and the impressive advances of their early civilization. He portrays the migration of the Trojans to Britain as a Völkerwanderung pooled from all the remnants of the war's survivors. By such means he voices the right of the Britons to their island, even though their subsequent behavior caused the loss of dominion. Because of the ambiguities in his story, British origin as generated by the Trojans yields at once a glorious and problematic heritage. As an origin story, the story of Brutus both explains the later trials and sets the pattern for them. After Brutus, the future of the Britons is often radically unlike what we might have expected, given the acts and characters of the founders; positive values dwindle and what stands out is the Britons' proneness to repeat the Trojan war in one form or another, as their founders did in a failed, because reinforcing, attempt to revise it. The alternations between rise and fall that characterized Troy's history, the many betrayals and internal weaknesses happen now on a national scale with the

whole island as the extended city.[35]

Because of the medieval desire for Trojan ancestors, however, Geoffrey's history was generally read in a more positive light than my reading of the Trojan origin suggests. Overall European attitudes toward the Trojans were influenced by the Aeneid, the anti-homeric tradition represented by Dictys and Dares, and the christianized readings of the Aeneid, that of Prudentius, for example.[36] The stories of Merlin and Arthur were criticized by William of Newburgh and Giraldus Cambrensis, but, since "the Middle Ages . . . were pro-Trojan,"[37] it is not surprising that the Brutus legend itself was not criticized. In the preface to his history, William of Newburgh praises Gildas for his impartiality, which is evident in his harsh criticisms of the Britons, while he neglects similar criticisms in Geoffrey who only intended to put the Britons on a par with the Macedonians and the Romans.[38] Since Arthur and Merlin

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[35] The idea that Britain itself corresponds to a city, complete with walls and siege, also occurs in Shakespeare's Richard II in John of Gaunt's speech in II.i.40-56. The Riverside Shakespeare, ed. G. Blakemore Evans et al. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), 813.

[36] For a more extensive discussion of these issues see, for example, Marie Tanner, The Last Descendant of Aeneas (New Haven: Yale UP, 1993), 23-35.

[37] Highet, The Classical Tradition, 54.

[38] Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I, ed. Richard Howlett (New York: Kraus Reprint, 1964), 11. That William would bother to address these

are his only targets, it is not clear what William thought about the Trojan origin. William's historiographical weapon against Geoffrey's Arthur are books, and he is the first to use what will become a fairly common criticism. How can the ancient historians have been silent about Arthur, if he is such a tremendous figure in European history?[39] Gerald of Wales complains about the very same lack of documentation for Arthur, but explains it by accusing Gildas of destroying the evidence for Arthur because Arthur had killed Gildas' brother.[40] Their critique, however, was to some degree personally and racially motivated and does not necessarily imply much historical sophistication. William echoes Bede's and Gildas' assessment of the Britons as weak and treacherous so it is no surprise if Geoffrey himself fits the barbarous mold of a liar.[41] In his anti-Welsh bias William repeats the same dichotomies that Dictys used to degrade the Trojans: "barbarian" implies not only cultural

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issues seems gratuitous, since he does not need to draw on Geoffrey for his own book which begins with the reign of Stephen.

[39] See Nancy Partner, Serious Entertainment (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1977) 65. I will come back to the question of books and absence later.

[40] Gerald of Wales, The Journey Through Wales/ The Description of Wales, trans. and ed. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978), 259.

[41] See Partner, 62-65; Kendrick, 12-13. Kendrick, who praises anybody critical of Geoffrey, styles William into the first great hero of English historiography. Unfortunately, William's "thunderclap of courageous and devastating criticism" was not heeded (13).

otherness (a race other than Greek, or Norman, for that matter), but an underdeveloped state of cultural sophistication.

In the meantime, Brutus enjoyed popularity and The History of the Kings of Britain was used for political leverage. Matter is quite right when he argues that Geoffrey's Brutus attained to the status of an Alexander or Julius Caesar as a conqueror and the founder of an empire (114). The imperialism implied in Diana's prophecy promises "freedom for Geoffrey's own race, domination of others."[42]

> Illa tibi fietque tuis locus aptus in aeuum.
> Hec erit & natis altera troia tuis.
> Hic de prole tua reges nascentur. & ipsis.
> Totis terrae subditus orbis erit.[43]
>
> [This island will become a place fit for you and yours for eternity.
> Here will be another Troy for your offspring.
> Here from your progeny kings will be born.
> The whole world will be subordinate to them.
> [my emphasis]

For Tatlock, "imperialism not only is their manifest

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[42] Tatlock, 305. Tatlock also alludes to the similarities between Arthur and Alexander in terms of conception and development (308, 312, 318-320).

[43] Griscom, 239. The following translation is mine. The Latin emphasizes what the island will mean for Brutus and his descendants in much stronger terms than the Welsh translation in Griscom's edition or the English one by Thorpe. The strong claim for possession for all eternity is only in the Cambridge MS, which, according to Griscom, is the oldest and thus the most trustworthy MS.

This daring prophecy falters because the predicted empire never really materializes, which might be why Geoffrey had to embellish Arthur. Ironically, Geoffrey's prophecy is realized with the beginnings of the British empire overseas in the sixteenth century. Even though Diana did not prophecy history by then any more, she was right.

destiny, but here [in the last two lines] would seem the chief reason for their birth" (305). This is clearly an echo of Virgil's "hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris/ et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis" (III.97-98). While Virgil, who has Apollo send the Trojans back to their "ancient mother" (Jackson, 78), focuses on the generations after Aeneas, Geoffrey focuses on the new land itself that will become a home base, so to speak, for world dominion. For Virgil, the prophecy was already a reality. The case is quite different for the British descendants of the Trojans. So far there is nothing in their history that would indicate lordship over the world.[44] Yet the promise remains.

Geoffrey's secular version of history, which focuses on rulers, enhances this worldly appeal so that it is no surprise that rulers turned to the history for their own political ends. The most notorious of these uses relates to the unity of the realm. In 1301 Edward I tried to claim sovereignty over Scotland by pointing out that under Brutus

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[44] One is tempted to think that this is the reason Geoffrey adumbrated Arthur and his conquests. With Arthur's short-lived empire Geoffrey realizes his own prophecy. Geoffrey seems to excel in making tantalizing prophecies, as Merlin's prediction concerning Arthur's return makes clear. Later rulers and historians find a bait here that encourages identification of the present with the past, which is precisely what some Tudor historians and propagandists did in their identification of the Tudor rulers with Arthur. Even the Stuarts boasted Arthurian reincarnation.

the realm was undivided.[45] The unity of the island under one ruler is at stake here. Though this is an extreme example, other rulers frequently used Geoffrey's history to legitimize traditions posthumously and align past events with the account in Geoffrey.[46] Obviously then, The History of the Kings of Britain turned out to be a dominating source throughout the later Middle Ages in England. In other words, Geoffrey's history can be seen as a legacy in two ways: as a legacy of descent and as a legacy of history. The former legacy is the Trojan genealogy of the British, while the latter affects the reading and writing of history. After Geoffrey, however, both legacies become fused: the Trojan descent constitutes British history and its writing. What remains to be seen, however, is its significance in the history of historiography and the fate of its ambiguous legacy.

Its complexity and completeness has prompted Matter to say that Geoffrey's origin story is more "artful" than its European counterparts, because it goes beyond the usually brief etymologies and geographical information (92). As secular and state history Geoffrey's History of the Kings of

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[45] For extended treatments of this episode see for example Matter, 467; and Laura Keeler, Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Late Latin Chroniclers, 1300-1500 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1946), 51.

[46] Matter, 444-446. Oddly enough the uses of the history resemble its method of explanation in this warped procedure that makes the past fit the present.

Britain was part of the twelfth-century revolution in learning,[47] and ushered in national history, not only as a genre, but as a possibility for history writing. With time and repetition, Geoffrey gained the authority of antiquity and an approbation merely by application. The adaptations and extensions of Wace and Layamon not only spread and popularized the material, but also facilitated its transformation into literature or fiction. In their wake, a whole new literary tradition emerged, Arthurian literature, which began in twelfth-century France and migrated back to England in the fourteenth century. The matter of Troy itself, now highlighted in a national origin story, furnished material for a new vogue in literature, as the numerous retellings of the story from Benoit and Guido to Lydgate prove. But whereas literature found a new hero and rediscovered old stories, history writing stagnated because of the demands and definitions of the genre of chronicle history. Another complication is the undefined borderlines between literature and history. "During the whole of the Middle Ages, history enjoyed many of the freedoms of fiction; and fiction, in turn, conventionally was cast as fact."[48] Amidst this proliferation of the Trojan material

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[47] See, for example, Hanning, 123-124 and 127.

[48] Partner, 3. Kendrick's harsh statement that medieval chroniclers had "no sense of historical propriety and an equally small regard for truth" (2) strikes one as unjust and anachronistic given this fluidity in the definition of genres.

throughout genres and centuries, new stories were added, Troilus for example, and the same material was interpreted differently.[49]

But the close connection between history and literature is only one aspect of history's definition and purpose in the Middle Ages. History, of course, also claimed truth and authority, which its close relationship with fiction did not really contradict. At times, fiction provided such an authority, be that in the form of Geoffrey's mysterious source or in the more serious forgery of the donation of Constantine. Because medieval historians relied on their sources, that is on previous histories, and often merely copied them, history writing reached an impasse: it could hardly get beyond what was already available. The main advances were merely annalistic: histories had to be updated, and get further along in their coverage of events and kings, as time passed. The old material became ingrained, because it was both believed and repeated:

> fourteenth-century Englishmen increasingly viewed their own society in the light of antiquity and its Arthurian sequel. The standards and values of a partly mythical past, mirrored in their histories, provided therefore, a reference point by which to judge the contemporary world.[50]

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[49] For a more extensive treatment of the literary legacy see for example David C. Benson, The History of Troy in Middle English Literature (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1980) and Pietro Boitani, ed., The European Tragedy of Troilus (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1989).

[50] John Taylor, English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon UP, 1987), 58.

In fact, Geoffrey's history was so successful that it became the national history, that is, it created and reified the making of what we could call a status quo in the meaning of history. As the "standard version of the British past" (Taylor, 113), the adaptations of Geoffrey's work acquired a name and genre of their own: the Brut. Along with the Polychronicon and the London chronicles, the Brut represents the main avenue of historical transmission for Geoffrey's history. French in origin, the Brut "was extensively copied with appropriate continuations" from the 1330s until 1480, when Caxton printed it. The Brut goes back to Wace and Layamon, whose verse adaptations introduced Geoffrey to France, where their epics were then turned back into history.[51] According to W. Garmon Jones who follows the New English Dictionary, this title "itself, a 'transferred use of Brutus,' meant originally a chronicle or history of the descendants of Brutus, and later simply a chronicle."[52] The Brut embodies what it signifies: name and story have become one.

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[51] Hay, 72. See also Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1913; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1962), 113-137. Wace's Roman de Brut, a twelfth-century verse version of Geoffrey in French, is the most influential adaptation. For more on the migration history of Geoffrey's work see Tatlock, 463-531 and Friedrich W.D. Brie, Geschichte und Quellen der mittelenglischen Prosachronik (Marburg, 1905), 10-13.

[52] W. Garmon Jones, "Welsh Nationalism and Henry Tudor," Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodion 1917-1918: 14.

But the unity of meaning implied by the Brut is complicated by an increasing disunity in the notions of genre. Chronicle and history are two rather different things. In Tatlock's view, Geoffrey himself wrote as

> a historian, not a chronicler, according to the highly interesting distinction between the two made a half-century later by Gervase of Canterbury; the latter being simple, condensed, modest, annalistic, the former expansive, decorative, soberly charming, life-like. This was Geoffrey's aim. (395)

Even if we might dispute Gervase's and Tatlock's choice of words, the point is well taken. Chronicles suffered from the chronological straight-jacket imposed on them, whereas "histories provided a more detailed narrative treating the subject matter more thoroughly." Taylor goes on to argue that the meanings of the words "chronicle" and "history" implied a difference between "any historical work" and "the deeds themselves" (38). Thus, by the fourteenth century, the past can only be history if it has become a chronicle, which sounds like a contradiction in terms.

This collapse and subsequent separation of terminology has implications for the Brutus story; the discourse of the chronicle would prevent Brutus from being history. What took Geoffrey a whole book to narrate is subsequently covered in a few pages and is thus reduced to a set piece, because the chroniclers do not have the space for a narrative that can endow the Brutus story with the kinds of meaning Geoffrey gave it.

The exception to this development is the Brut already

mentioned above. In terms of popularity it ranked as the national history. As the historiographical embodiment of the founder, the Brut maintains most of the narrative found in Geoffrey.[53] But there are some significant changes and omissions. We do not hear who the Trojan captives are, only that they "weren come of gret blod."[54] Once in Greece, Brutus is a close friend of the king and even lives with him. When he learns of the Trojans' fate, he pities them, secretly leaves the court and assembles all the Trojans in "wodes and Into Mounteynes" (7). This makes him look like a faithless friend, even a traitor, like Paris, who abused Greek hospitality with an abduction. The war starts because the king is enraged at the mutiny. Brutus simply demanded "he schulde geue hem leue safely for-to wende out of the londe, for thei nolde no lenger dwelle in his bondage" (7). Enslavement is enough justification: no ancestor is needed to justify a claim to liberty. In the narrative of the war, the Brut shortens the complicated pattern of revision and retribution that we found in Geoffrey; there is no echo of the Trojan war here and no reference to the ingrained enmity between two peoples. The whole ancestral background and

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[53] For more on the Brut see also Kingsford, 113-139. Prefaced to the account of Brutus is the prologue on the giants which I will discuss below.

[54] The Brut or the Chronicles of England, ed. Friedrich W.D. Brie (London: Oxford UP, 1906, for the Early English Text Society; rpt. Millwood: Kraus Reprint, 1987), 6. I have modernized the spelling.

thus the emphasis on origins as determining the present is lost. Moreover, the recovery of/from the past cannot function as a motif either.

For this streamlining of the narrative also transforms Geoffrey's notion of the cultivation of Britain. In Geoffrey the Trojans merely drive the giants into the caves and mountains, a locale they themselves threatened to inhabit in Greece, and begin the agricultural and building process which makes the land look as if it "had always been inhabited" (72), as if the Trojans had been indigenous. After Brutus names the land, the disturbance at the religious feast takes place, Gogmagog is captured and killed during the wrestling match. Only then does Brutus build Troia Nova and give laws to his subjects. The meaning of this curious process of culturation lies in the sequence of events: only after the Trojans have established civilization on the island do they also claim it verbally. Their right to and ownership of the land rests on cultivating fields and building houses. This activity in turn allows Brutus to name the land and the people, and thus to commemorate his share in their success. Their title is based on their achievements. Yet this established culture is interrupted by the original inhabitants, the giants, who, however, only seem to have the claim to a temporally earlier presence, not to culture. The Trojans' victory is both expressed and reified by the capital, which signals supremacy.

The giants' origin is not explained in Geoffrey, a gap that was filled by later chroniclers. Geoffrey's Diana had proclaimed the island empty now, though once inhabited by giants. At the time of discovery, "the island of Britain was called Albion. It was uninhabited except for a few giants" (72). Not only is Diana incorrect in her prophecy and promise, this is also the first time that the reader hears of an alternative or earlier name for the island. The puzzle, however, was solved by bridging the gap with Geoffrey's own method: chroniclers of the thirteenth century connected Albion and the giants via Albina, an earlier eponymous discoveress, and endowed her with her own story and genealogy.[55] In the Brut the history of Albina and the giants forms the prologue (1-4). Albina, the oldest of Dioclesian's thirty-three daughters, persuades her sisters

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[55] See also Matter, 304, and Keeler, 14 and 95. Both the Eulogium Historiarum (twelfth century) and Thomas Sprott's Chronica (thirteenth century) employ this story to explain the presence of the giants. According to Keeler, the story itself goes back to "the Latin prose legend, De Origine Gigantum" (94). The father's name and the number of the daughters vary in different accounts. In Sprott, for example, the father is "Cecrops, king of Greece," and there are only twenty-nine daughters (14). Regardless of these differences in detail, the gist of the story remains the same: women who disobey their husbands--because they will not brook their domination--are forced into exile and mate with devils. The fate of the women reads like a sinister or scandalous version of the Trojan revolt. The motives for rebellion and its outcome are similar in both cases: once the rebels act on their dissatisfaction with the status quo, the story follows the stages of pride, desire for liberty, exile, and new home. However, the difference in gender implies a difference in morals. For women to question their husbands' authority is a crime, but for the Trojans to question the victors' supremacy is heroic.

to slaughter their husbands, because the men, though heads of the families, are supposedly inferior to the women in power and intellect. The plan is foiled and the daughters sent into exile. They drift onto the shores of the island that Albina names after herself, Albion. Because they eat too much meat and become fat, they become lustful. The devil takes this opportunity to mate with the women and produce the giants. Transgression and depravity characterize the story. The women's initial rebellion against weak husbands finds its correlative in their own weakness (lust) and domination by the devil. Even though the story follows this moralistic pattern, the women and their offspring remain outside social and cultural codes. The children of the mating embody the seriousness of the mothers' sins in their size--they are giants. Life in caves and mountains, in total wilderness and wildness, seems an appropriate setting for their rebellion from patriarchal norms.

The altered sequence of events in the Brut responds to this development of the giant story. Whereas the culturation of, and thereby his claim to the country, defined Brutus' proceedings in Geoffrey, the Brut puts first things first: before culture can find footing in the land, the giants have to be routed. The Trojans' rooting can only succeed, so to speak, if it comes after the cleansing of the country. Considering the parallels between the Trojans' and

the women's rebellions, it seems as if the men can only settle down once their sinister, female counterparts have been eliminated. Thus agriculture as the primary means of territorial claim-making has been superseded by destruction and conquest; possession of the land results from strength rather than skill. The validation of conquest over civilization might well be a revision introduced by the early French chroniclers of the Brut, who wrote for the victors of the Norman Conquest. It implies that the native inhabitants, the Britons, find themselves in a position comparable to that of the giants as the first or original, but depraved (in both senses of the word) inhabitants. The process of culturation can only take place once the product of cultural and social violation has been eliminated. In the Brut, then, the naming of the country does not rest on a claim from cultivating the land and is thus not part of the process of civilizing and appropriation. The naming of the land, and not the city building, is the crowning achievement that merely puts a name to supremacy.

By shortening the events in Greece and shifting the events of discovery and culture-bringing, the Brut diminishes the ambiguity present in Geoffrey and introduces a new one. Troy and the Trojan war do not loom large as the backdrop and measure of history. Instead they have been replaced with the giants who figure as the products and agents of anything that is outside culture or anti-social.

In this context the Trojan founding of Britain represents a radical culturation. The omission of the ambiguities about the war in Greece represents the elimination of the cultural pitfalls Geoffrey's Trojans carried with them both into exile and into a new homeland. For the Brut emphasizes eradication of evil rather than a radical revision of the past that defines Geoffrey's Brutus' self-definition as a Trojan descendant. Geoffrey's ambiguous gathering of origins, which carries the seeds of the pattern of British history, is replaced with a clean slate and an importation, rather than creation, of history from the receding origin in Troy. The giants' purely moral and cultural significance does not yield an explanation of later history but enables a deus ex machina conquest. In some ways, then, the Brut ironically contributes to the reduction of the Trojan origin for Britain into a mere beginning.

This decline in meaning was further facilitated by the confluence of literature and history. The increase in learning that advanced history writing in Geoffrey's time now becomes a liability. As Taylor says about the Polychronicon,

> Classical history and classical legend were increasingly present in the literature of the fourteenth century. It was but a step, therefore, for an English monastic chronicler to reconstruct the story of antiquity and to associate the history of his own country with that of Troy. (98)

In contrast to Geoffrey's interpretative connection with Troy, Higden, the author of the Polychronicon, makes an

associative link between England and Troy on the basis of a veneration for classical literature and its availability. This kind of linkage generates a history grounded in texts and their status in society. By this time texts have replaced Geoffrey's cultural memory and his ancient but obscure book, versions of which exist now in writing, that is, in histories; Geoffrey as well is part of these new accumulated sources. The result of Higden's concern with antiquity is a curious melange of biblical, classical and medieval material.

With its encyclopedic ambition the Polychronicon was the second most popular history in the fourteenth century after the Brut. Trevisa translated it late in the century into English and thus made it accessible to a wider audience.[56] The scope of this universal history does not permit detailed accounts of individual events and rulers. An event as important as the founding of Britain takes up less space than Higden's discussion of Brutus' parentage. The parentage is uncertain because Silvius Posthumus does not appear in Roman sources, an omission which involves Higden in a debate similar to William of Newburgh's criticism of Arthur's existence. After accidentally slaying his father Brutus leaves for Greece

> ubi ope Trojanorum Pandrasum regem Graecorum devicit, filiamque regis Pandrasi Innogen desponsavit, Trojanos liberavit; deinde envigans, responso Dianae accepto,

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[56] See also Taylor, passim.

> Africam appulit. . . . prosperis velis insulam Britanniae apud Totonesium litus in Cornubia tenuit. In qua primus monarcha effectus gigantes incolas destruxit. Insulam a nomine sua Britanniam, sociosque suos Britones vocavit, Cornubiam Corineo tradidit, urbem Trinovantum, quasi Novam Trojam, quae nunc Londonia, super Thamisim fluvium construxit.[57]
>
> [ouercommenge Pandrasus, kynge of hit, thro the helpe of the Troianes, and did wedde Ymogen his doghter, and delyuerede the Troianes; whiche salyenge from that cuntre, hauenge an answere of Diana, londede at Affrike. . . . After that he . . . come to Briteyne, to Totenese in Cornewaile. In whom he, occupeinge the monarchye, destroyede gigantes that inhabite that cuntre, namenge that yle Briteyne, and his felawes Britones; giffenge to Corineus Cornewaile ; made a cite on the water of Thamys, callenge hit Urbs Trinouantum, as Newe Troye, callede now London. (445)

He also had children, and then he died, we might add. The complex narrative that occupied the first book in Geoffrey, now only takes up a handful of sentences. The style is additive, declarative, and paratactic. Such a style does not allow for explanation, motivation, or analysis. The sequence of events and geographical movements recounts only the bare minimum of "facts" which characterize a chronicle, as opposed to a history. Granted that the whole story is well-known and the genre of the Polychronicon works against any fuller amplification of significance, this account does not even maintain a narrative. Despite the familiarity of the story, the lack of narrative coherence is detrimental because the Polychronicon is an influential version of the British history. The chronicle's "failure to attain to full

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[57] Churchill Babington, ed., Polychronicon (London, 1865), vol. 2, 444.

narrativity of the events" exposes an "imperfect 'historicality.'"[58]

While we have to attribute the Polychronicon's failure as narrative and as history to its very scope, its narrative problems are common in the sixteenth-century histories that I will discuss in the next chapter. With a destroyed city and equally destroyed sources--because disappeared or lost--at and as the foundation of Britain, we have an absence at the origin that is filled with the story of Brutus which creates both an origin and a beginning for British history. Once established as history through historiography, the Brutus story's life in history writing loses much of its foundational function and is reduced to a mere beginning. Geoffrey's genealogy of a race engendered a genealogy of texts in whose reproduction the original traces were worn away through repetition, condensation, and simplification. Like Troy's walls, the significance of the origin story is eroded, while the Trojan war nevertheless looms as a precedent for the course of British history. The uncomfortable repetition of the Trojan war in history thus found its correlative in the writing of history.

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[58] Hayden White, The Content of the Form (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987), 4.

III Tudor Historians and the Fall of Brutus

The decline of the British origin story that began with universal chronicles and the Brut continues in the sixteenth century, but under different conditions. The advent of humanism, outspoken criticism of the British history, the Reformation, and political patriotism made Geoffrey's history contested cultural and historical territory. In addition, with the ascension of new rulers, Welsh outsiders, to the English throne, peace came to a land torn by civil war. Yet the Tudors' claims to legitimacy were not firmly established and caused them some unease. Simultaneously, England witnessed an increased interest in histories, thanks to the advent of printing and the emergence of a middle class eager for books about England's past.[1]

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[1] For background information and earlier readings of the Trojan theme I am indebted to the following studies: F. Smith Fussner, The Historical Revolution (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962); Levi Fox, ed., English Historical Scholarship in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (London: Oxford UP, 1956); T. D. Kendrick, British Antiquity (London: Methuen, 1950); F. J. Levy, Tudor Historical Thought (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967); Stuart Piggott, Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination (Thames & Hudson, 1989); Sydney Anglo, Images of Tudor Kingship (London: Seaby, 1992); Arthur B. Ferguson, Clio Unbound (Durham: Duke UP, 1979) and Utter Antiquity (Durham: Duke UP, 1993); Ernst Breisach, Historiography (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983); Eduard Fueter, Geschichte der neueren Historiographie (München: Oldenbourg, 1936); and S. K. Heninger, Jr., "The Tudor Myth of Troy-novant," South Atlantic Quarterly 61.3 (Summer, 1962): 378-387. Most of these historians are relieved and pleased by the debunking of the Trojans. As an episode in the development of historical thought the fall of the Trojans is a brief tale, but it deserves more attention than it has so far received. Because of its deceptively simple trajectory, it has not

After Polydore Vergil (1534) first voiced doubts about the historicity of Brutus, a debate ensued that was not really concluded at the end of the sixteenth century. The problem for historians was not only to dethrone the Trojans from their place in history but also to put something or someone in their place.[2] The Brutus story declined in importance; it became only a structuration device, as representations of cultural origin gave way to figurations of cultural evolution.

Where to begin? This question vexed the Tudor chroniclers. One could start with the Bible, the Roman or Norman conquests, and make one's way up to Henry VIII, Mary, or Elizabeth, as the case might be. Britain itself, however, did not really get going until--well, that was the problem. When did British history get started? With the giants, with Albina, with Brutus? With the Roman conquest, or the Norman conquest? With some mixture of these possibilities? Are these beginnings and "founders" conflicting options or different kinds of origins? For the Roman conquest documentary evidence was certainly available --in previous historians. But, then, the Romans were invaders, and they must have invaded not only a land but

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been treated as an interpretation of the changing meanings of history.

[2] See also Levy, 124. The issues of deplacement and replacement of the Trojans will concern me in the last section of this chapter.

someone's land. Who were the people whom they conquered? Did British history exist before the Roman conquest? And was there a Britain before documentation?

Thus the problem for the chroniclers is twofold: how to find a beginning for a narrative, and an origin for a people. These two issues are closely related: an origin constitutes a beginning, and a beginning implies that there must have been an origin. Although the two terms are similar, they differ conceptually. "Origin" implies both a merely temporal starting point and a genealogical source, whereas the notion of a beginning is restricted by the word's temporal meaning and mainly implies the starting point in a sequence of events, words, etc.[3] A genealogical source is much more than a simple beginning in time: it implies the life of a founder and thus his biography or story. The founder's biography creates the origin, or, to put it another way, an origin is constituted by a narrative. But a beginning is a fixed point in time and can at best only trigger a story.

In the preceding chapter I argued that Geoffrey constructs Brutus' founding of Britain by layering origins, and endows the founder with an antihistorical perspective on the Trojan war and thus on history. But the Trojan war and Troy's history always lurk underneath his character's attempts at denial or disregard. In other words, the origin

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[3] See The Oxford English Dictionary, s.v.

of Britain ultimately lies in the Trojan descent that Brutus carries. With this descent, however, the Britons have an origin that cannot be isolated as a particular and singular event. Rather, the origin has a history of its own which shapes the creation of the new origin. Both Brutus' origin and the origination of Britain happen as stories whose narratives give meaning to the event. Yet the explanatory power of the origin diminishes in an age that focused on genealogy and class, because the fact of the descent, its nobility and antiquity, becomes more important than the narrative surrounding it. Genealogy's tendency to downplay narratological causation and connection re-orients the process of creation to an emphasis on continuity. Thus genealogy, the vehicle for origins, vitiates the origin's historical meaning.

An ambiguous multiplicity of origins is present in the foundation story itself. The founding of Britain is figured as a series of events conducted by a specific originator. However, it is not clear where the origin begins. When precisely did the founding begin? With Brutus' exile and travels, or with the liberation of the Trojans from captivity? With the arrival of Brutus, with the tilling of the land, with the conquest of the giants, or the founding of London? And do the giants in fact represent a rival origin story that tells the same story with protagonists of a different gender and thus a different value system? In

most sixteenth-century chronicles the background stories for Brutus' travels and the story of the giants are omitted. British history begins with the arrival of Brutus in England. Thus the foundation story's ambiguity is resolved; in the sixteenth century, the opposition between origin and beginning is eliminated by reducing the origin to a temporal beginning.

Beginning and origin in British history have their doubles in British historiography. Historical evidence for a temporal beginning replaces the idea of an historical origin. Self-consciousness about the writing of British history starts with this very problem of British origin, with the historians' conceptualization and presentation of evidence or documentation for the first moments of British history. In this process what counts as evidence had to be reconceptualized as well. Mostly books qualified as evidence: these included both Geoffrey and the Roman writers Livy, Tacitus, and Caesar--to name only the most prominent. The Latin "documents" seemed, of course, to contradict Geoffrey. But they were problematic not so much because they clearly contradicted Geoffrey's version of the story, but because they did not really cover the same subject matter. Livy discusses the origins of Rome; Tacitus and Caesar discuss Britain under the Roman conquest and contain speculation rather than hard and fast evidence concerning its origins. So these sources still leave a considerable

gap precisely where Geoffrey's material had offered to provide information. The rethinking of the British past with the help of classical sources culminates in William Camden for whom British history per se begins with the Roman conquest and who uses not only the ancient Roman writers but also archeological evidence, such as coins. While the Romans merely conquered an island, the historians are conquering the past that congealed around that initial conquest.

Specific kinds or versions of origin trigger different versions of history; a history that begins with a conquest differs from a history that begins with the glories of foundation. The first version, for example, suggests subjection, dependence, and loss, but the second emphasizes independence, solidity, and strength. Yet conquest can also function as the method of founding, so that conquest is the glory of foundation. The ambivalence of foundation derives from the perspective of its authors, the founders and the founded, and their historians.[4] The differences lie as much

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[4] Gildas would be an example for the first version of foundation, because he is concerned with the creation of the British nation and British character through the inhabitants' interaction with invaders. The Aeneid is primarily a history of the translation of power and empire. Yet it, too, harbors an alternative version: we only have to imagine what the Aeneid would be like written from the perspective of Amata and Turnus, and their respective political camps and peoples. Moreover, we can also conceive of the Brutus story as a "secondary creation epic" in that it repeats the creation of the world in the smaller circumference of the nation. This point involves a difference between cosmogonies, like Hesiod's Theogony and

in the meanings of these histories for the people whose history is being described as in the different conceptual versions of history; they reveal the underlying motivations and commitments of the historian and the meanings of history itself. They also affect the reader of history and thus influence the reader's self-understanding as well as embodying the historian's idea not only of history, but also of destiny.

About 70 years after another conquest, that of the Normans, Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote his History of the Kings of Britain. Geoffrey's history creates a version of foundation that thrives on the ambivalences just described. The Norman invaders furnish the image the conquerors, an image that is transferred to the origin of the conquered nation. The effect is that his history flatters both the conquered and the conquerors. Geoffrey presents a story that chronicles the establishment of culture and civilization; his history gives the recently invaded country a sense of unity and independence through the fashioning of the remote past. But even in Geoffrey, conquest and internal conflict repeatedly cause the demise of the established culture. Geoffrey's story is a prime example of the conscious creation of a national identity. Brutus is the culture-bringer par excellence. Cultural origin happens with and as a definite and defining event; culture comes

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foundation epics, like the Aeneid.

fully blown, readily available, and without a sense of evolution. It celebrates the glories of an antique genealogy and the antiquity of a race--at least that is how it was read. Geoffrey's story also has epic overtones: his history is a version of Virgil's Aeneid[5]. Instead of Turnus and his Italic tribes, we have hostile, wild, and depraved giants; instead of survivors of the Trojan war, we have the last descendant of its most important survivor and all the Trojan remnants left in Europe; instead of a return to a remote origin, we have a journey towards a new beginning,

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[5] For Virgilian names in the History see J.S.P. Tatlock, The Legendary History of Britain (New York: Gordian, 1974, rpt.), 116. Aeneas' rivalry with Turnus receives the genealogical dimension in Nennius that I discussed in the preceding chapter. As yet another manifestation of enmity between Trojans and Greeks Nennius' Britto expiates his grandfather's killing of Turnus by building a city in his honor and commemoration. Geoffrey, however, tilts the rivalry in favor of the Trojans, as I have argued. This opposition between Trojan and Greek heritage finally determines the war between the Trojans and giants in England in John Hardyng's Chronicle. The father of the disobedient women is Danaus, who gave the Greeks one of their names--Danaans--and is the father of the 50 Danaids. Thus even the struggle for supremacy of the island is fought between the descendants of Dardanus and Danaus, whom Membritius had already placed as ur-fathers of the two races in Geoffrey. Not only are loss and victory redistributed among the original contenders, but their roles are reversed: the Trojans find themselves in the Greek position of invader and stranger on the shores of the island, whereas the Greek-descended giants have to defend their citadel in the form of the island. Hardyng's renaming of the grandfather of the giants--changing the name from Dioclesian to Danaus--functions as a finishing touch to the revision and reassignment of Trojan and Greek roles, which is part of Geoffrey's legacy. The Chronicle of John Hardyng, ed. Henry Ellis (London: 1812; rpt. New York: AMS P, 1974), 26-29.

toward a new-found land that is, however, already a home.[6] But we have no Dido figure, no problems with a conflict between god-ordained destiny and personal desires, no grieving and lost epic hero. Geoffrey's adaptation of the Aeneid to British history results in a blend of conquest history and foundation history that each make up half of the whole.

Historians and dramatists could pull almost any story from Geoffrey, who would furnish an example relevant to whatever political dilemma concerned them. Part of the appeal of Geoffrey's history lies in the multiplicity of meanings it carries: on the one hand it establishes noble origin, liberty and independence, culture, antiquity; on the other hand, it explains the causes of subsequent disaster, division of the land, succession problems, internal dissension and foreign invasion.

One of the most influential stories, which could serve different political functions--depending on how it was interpreted, concerns Brutus' three sons, Locrine, Albanact,

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[6] I analyzed these points in greater detail in chapter II. The structure of Geoffrey's history of Brutus, though simplified, is reminiscent of the wanderings of Aeneas. The outcome, the foundation of what will become an empire, the prophecies, even minor incidents like the sirens, are all similar. According to the oracle at Delphi Aeneas was supposed to go to a home before Troy. Anchises interprets this first as Crete, where they have distant ancestors. But the oracle referred to Dardanus, the founder of the Trojan race, who came from Italy. Brutus, however, is sent by Diana to a supposedly uninhabited island that awaits his coming.

and Camber. In Geoffrey the sons divide the land among themselves after Brutus' death. In the Brut, however, Brutus himself divides the land among his three sons, whose names become the names of the regions Loegria, Albany, and Cambria. These eponymous names were changed by later invaders to England, Scotland, and Wales, reflecting an etymological derivation not from the founders, but from the conquering peoples.[7] Brutus' first and sole rule over the whole island was used repeatedly to argue for an annexation of Scotland by England, first by Edward I in 1301, and later by the Tudors in the sixteenth century. These claims rest on the Trojan occupation and colonization of the island and on the ur-status of unity of the three regions, only later divided among the sons of the founder.[8]

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[7] See History of the Kings of Britain, ed. and trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987), 75; and The Brut or the Chronicles of England, ed. Friedrich W. D. Brie (Oxford: Early English Text Society, Original Series no. 131, 1906; rpt. Millwood: Kraus Reprint, 1987), 12. The history's obsession with division surfaced shortly before Gorboduc's reign in the Leir story that replays the Britons' inability to learn from their history with disastrous consequences. The Britons are even unable to learn from immediate history.

[8] See, for example, Laura Keeler, Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Late Latin Chroniclers 1300-1500 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1946), 51-52; Hans Matter, Englische Gründungssagen von Geoffrey of Monmouth bis zur Renaissance. Ein Versuch (Heidelberg, 1922), 474-498 and 521. In the sixteenth century Henry VIII based his claim to Scotland on the original unity of the island under Brutus, as did James Harryson, a Scotsman who argued for unity with England. See The Complaynt of Scotlande, ed. James A. H. Murray (Oxford: Early English Text Society, Extra Series nos. 17 and 18, 1872 and 1873; rpt. Millwood: Kraus Reprint, 1981), 199 and 214, for example. Henry IV tried to get the Scottish king

The division of the island among the sons of Brutus also has a different political message: a warning against divisiveness and ensuing civil war. It finds its most poignant expression in Gorboduc. King Gorbudoc's desire to split the kingdom between his two sons elicits contradictory advice from his counselors. Philander favors the king's plan, because the island had been large enough to accommodate three sons of Brutus; Eubulus, however, cites Brutus as the source of "sundered unity."[9] Civil wars, fought to repair the damage done and to reunite the kingdom, have racked the country ever since its foundation. Therefore Gorboduc should not divide the country between his two sons. For both Philander and Eubulus the division represents an interpretative problem. What will be the effects of the division? Philander answers this question by discussing the filial virtues of the sons Ferrex and Porrex and concludes that the splitting of the kingdom should not happen during their father's, the reigning king's, lifetime. Eubulus takes a different angle: he argues from history when he cites the course of British history after the first division.

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to recognize him after his ascension to Richard's throne with a similar claim for antiquity: "ab antiquissimis retroactis temporibus, videlicet a tempore Locrini filii Bruti." Quoted in Henry Ellis, "Preface," The Chronicle of John Hardyng, xiv.

[9] Drama of the English Renaissance. I: The Tudor Period, eds. Russell A. Fraser and Norman Rabkin (New York: Macmillan, 1976), I.ii.165-167 and 276.

Yet the warnings of the historical precedent go unheeded and Britain is plunged into a civil war that destroys "the noble line / Of famous Brute" (II.i.195-196). Philander and Gorboduc interpret the civil war as both a re-enactment and continuation of the Trojan war. Vengeful gods have not satisfied their thirst for Trojan blood, "Since mighty Ilion's fall not yet appeased / With these poor remnants of the Trojan name" (II.ii.76-77)." "[B]ut still continued rage / Pursues our lives and from the farthest seas / Doth chase the issues of destroyed Troy" (III.i.8-10). Because divine agents are held responsible for the course and curse of history, the political and historical disaster can only be stopped with the "end [of] the cursed line" (98). It seems as if the descendants of the Trojans, though very much aware of their historical heritage, conceive of their lives in history as a history of persecution. This enmity of the forces of history toward the Trojans, however, responds to a Trojan propensity for disastrous political and historical measures; the gods' blood thirst finds a correlative in the Trojans' bloodline, as the divinities' vengeance responds to an almost genetic deficiency. In Gorboduc the Trojans have to be eliminated to save the country they founded, because they cannot break out of the historical mold that makes them prone to repeat the original disaster of Troy. Sackville and Norton's reading of Geoffrey develops the warnings the historian

subtly voiced in his original origin story.

Even though Geoffrey's story had been successful in imposing itself, both as a story and as history, the Tudor chroniclers had immense problems with it. First of all, there was no proof, no documentary or corroborating evidence for his history. Yet chroniclers subscribed to the story and retold it innumerable times. But they did so in the face of increasing suspicion of their credibility. More often than not, it was clear they merely repeated an accepted credo to supply a stopgap for the gaps in British history. The meaning of this history also became questionable. What did a Trojan origin imply for the ruling dynasty, for the British nation, or for the historian? In other words, what meaning did this story have in relation to recorded history?

I

The indeterminacy of the generic borderline between history and literature allows both historians and artists to interpret the meaning of Geoffrey's legacy. Geoffrey's own history, of course, takes place precisely at this borderline and exploits the freedom this placement at an origin offers. The conflation of genres discussed in the preceding chapter finds its most pronounced expression in Caxton's work as printer and writer. As the publisher of both histories and romances he propagated the medieval

heritage which "did not seek to differentiate between romance and chronicle or between past and present." In the works he issued ancient heroes had become completely transformed into medieval knights, that is, they had been endowed with contemporary values and displaced from their own world.[10] Raoul le Fevre's Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes of 1475, The Descripcion of Britayne and The Chronicles of England (in fact, the Brut) of 1480, The Polychronicon of 1482, and Kyng Arthur of 1485 make up a fairly unified list of publications: they all have to do with the matter of Troy or with British history.[11] And Caxton's issue of the Brut or The Chronicles of England became standard for the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

For a nation that was still recovering from the turmoils of civil war, the Brut presents an impressively solid past. By its sheer length and antiquity, the

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[10] See Joseph M. Levine, Humanism and History (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1987), 11 and 48. For more on Caxton's relationship with the Galfridian material see John E. Housman, "Higden, Trevisa, Caxton, and the Beginnings of Arthurian Criticism," Review of English Studies 23.91 (July, 1947): 209-214 and Lister M. Matheson, "Printer and Scribe: Caxton, the Polychronicon, and the Brut," Speculum 60.3 (July, 1985): 593-614.

[11] This list doesn't cover all the books that relate to Troy and Brutus. See The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton, ed. W. J. B. Crotch (London: Oxford UP, 1928, EETS Original Series no. 176; rpt. Millwood: Kraus Reprint, 1978); and Friedrich W. D. Brie, Geschichte und Quellen der mittelenglischen Prosachronik (Marburg, 1905), 120-127. Brie also lists re-issues of the Brut in 1485, 1493, 1497/98, 1502, 1504 and so on (125-126).

narrative and tradition enshrined in its pages suggest a continuity and even occasional prosperity that clashed with recent political experiences. With the Tudors this positive projection became a potential reality; the new political dispensation could live up to the promise of past history. In order to capitalize on an emerging British nationalism,

> Tudor monarchs sponsored an unprecedented interest in England's cultural past. . . . Geoffrey's British history had become a point of national honor. It had contributed much to English nationalism--not only a reverend sense of antiquity and continuity, but also a line of heroes, a list of place names with patriotic connotations, and a vocabulary of praise by which to honor the nation as well as its monarch.[12]

But that does not mean the Tudors were fierce propagandists. Rather, they let other people do the work. During his early campaigns the future Henry VII left propaganda to Welsh bards, as W. Garmon Jones has argued.[13] A. E. Parsons makes an even stronger case:

> There is in England a deeply rooted instinct in favour of the hereditary principle and the validity of Henry VII's claim to the throne (a matter of considerable anxiety to himself) was greatly strengthened in the eyes of the populace by his Welsh blood. He was demonstrably of the line of Brut and he used this advantage to the utmost.[14]

Parsons overstates his case, because an ancient pedigree "may not seem much of a claim to the English throne [but]

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[12] Heninger, 378 and 381.

[13] "Welsh Nationalism and Henry Tudor," Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodion (1917-1918): 1-59.

[14] "The Trojan Legend in England," Modern Language Review 24.3 (July, 1929): 398.

the lineage had historical and emotional implications."[15] In fact, Henry VII and his son merely followed an established method of conducting politics via The History of the Kings of Britain. They especially applied Merlin's and Cadwallader's prophecies which promise the return of a powerful and true Welsh king who will restore the country to its traditional glory.[16] This method belongs to what Howard Bloch has termed "the biopolitics of lineage," which establishes claims to land or supremacy by "equat[ing] social status with antiquity." Geoffrey's History of the Kings of Britain presents a particularly compelling example of this technique because its appeal "resides in the region of a deep, though historically determined, mental structure that assumes power to be legitimated through recourse to origins."[17] At the end of the fifteenth century, Geoffrey's history received not only renewed attention, but also, and

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[15] Sydney Anglo, Images of Tudor Kingship, 40. The chapter in Anglo's book is a version of his earlier article "The British History in Early Tudor Propaganda," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 44.1 (September, 1961): 17-48.

[16] See for example, Anglo, 42-43; Alison Allan, "Yorkist propaganda: Pedigree, prophecy and the 'British History' in the Reign of Edward IV," in Patronage, Pedigree and Power, ed. Charles Ross (Totowa: Rowan & Littlefield, 1979): 171-192; Jones, "Welsh Nationalism and Henry Tudor," and Mary E. Giffin, "Cadwalader, Arthur, and Brutus in the Wigmore Manuscript," Speculum XVI (1941): 109-120.

[17] R. Howard Bloch, Etymologies and Genealogies (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983), 80-82. Fussner says that "Trojan genealogies were never more popular than in Tudor England"--unfortunately without substantiating his observation through specific examples (16).

more importantly, was crucial for the emerging self-definition of both monarch and realm. Henry VII went so far as to name his first-born son Arthur. The past became instrumental in the creation of a new state. After all, the "chronicle was the Ur-genre of national self-representation."[18]

This increasing awareness of England as a nation with a past had its effect also on the commission of royal histories. The most influential of these histories was written by the Italian Polydore Vergil, who first came to England as collector of the Peter's Pence in 1502. His history was not completed until 1555 when it appeared in its third and complete edition, long after the death of his patrons, Henry VII and Henry VIII. The intended audience for his work was continental; his aim, and that of his patrons, was to legitimize the Tudors in the eyes of other European monarchs. Readers of Renaissance historiography often praise Polydore for his critical acumen and, in particular, as an early and devastating critic of the story of Trojan origin. The dismantling of the legend is his main achievement.[19] As a foreigner, both in regard to

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[18] Richard Helgerson, Forms of Nationhood (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992), 11.

[19] Denys Hay, Polydore Vergil (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1952), 3 and 79; on his intended audience see for example Levy, 55. See also Levy, 53-68; Kingsford, 255-60; Fueter, 164-65. and Kendrick, 68-70 and 79-83. Levy qualifies Polydore's stature as heroic historian by arguing that this renown has to be credited to Polydore's enemies who made him

nationality and creed, Polydore was better equipped to be critical of British history than a native historian might have been. Of his treatment of the Brutus story Hay observes:

> Legends of antiquity can be made to afford concrete evidence for the historian, but their use in this way lay in the future. Before they could be adapted into the framework of genuine knowledge it was necessary that their sacrosanct quality should be destroyed, and that the heroic characters of such stories should be shown as types of a common pattern. It is one of the chief activities of Renaissance historians to turn their scepticism to this material, and to Vergil belongs the credit of first performing the task in England. (109)

For Polydore, the stories of genealogical origin were a cultural practice "to derive the beginninge of theire stocke from the Goddes (as especiallie the Romanes did), to thentent the original of there people and citties mighte bee the more princelie and prosperous."[20] With this astute observation Polydore proves himself to be an overreading reader of Livy who had prefaced his history with a similar, though more sympathetic, disclaimer. Both recognize in the stories of antiquity a desire to ground a culture's beginnings in a dignity which already reflects later achievements retroactively. But this scepticism turns out to be a bit disappointing; Polydore repeats William of

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into "a great debunker" (63). Fueter regards Polydore as a historian hampered by the yoke of his patrons who cherished their Welsh ancestry (164-5).

[20] Polydore Vergil's English History, ed. Sir Henry Ellis (London: Camden Society, 1846), 31.

Newburgh's old criticism of Arthur and transfers it to Brutus, who is not mentioned in the Latin classics that list the descendants of Aeneas. He prefers to rely on Bede and Gildas at the expense of Geoffrey, whom he "wished to demolish" as Levy puts it (57). But Polydore's reading of both the classics and of early British writers is, I think, problematic in that it does not demonstrate the degree of historical sophistication usually ascribed to him.

Gildas is crucial to Polydore's disproof of the Brutus origin. Polydore uses Gildas' opening sentence about the depravity of the Britons and extracts historical information from it:

> 'This nation (saiethe he), stiffe necked and highe minded sithe it was first a people, doothe somtimes stubbernelie rise againe Godd, somtime ther owne citizens, and somtimes foraine princes.' Here Gildas geevethe us a watchwoorde that the firste inhabitants of the region hadd the knowledge of Godd, of which sorte thei were which, after Noe's fludde, being great in nomber, replenished the erthe, and soe from the beginninge it hathe not wanted inhabitantes, as herafter shall apeare more largelie. (27-28)

Gildas' vague "sithe it was first a people" furnishes the claim that "this nation" (sic) "hadd the knowledge of Godd," and that therefore the island was repeopled after the flood, like the rest of the world. To ground the claim on the practice of religion is an attempt to concretize Gildas' vagueness. However, this procedure does not produce the desired effect. Gildas' rhetoric of depravity compels him to make his point about the British sins forcefully; to him the present situation seems so devastating that it must have

its roots in the past, or it must be part of the nature of the inhabitants of the island. The vagueness of such rhetoric does not substantiate Polydore's reading of the early British history.

Polydore credits Gildas with authority mainly because he is honest, as is shown by Gildas' bashing of his fellow countrymen. He accepts Gildas' negative image of the Britons as "neither . . . stoute in battayle nor faithfull in peace," a proverbial statement also repeated by Nennius and by Geoffrey (with slight variations), and rejects Geoffrey's more positive description of them, which was written

> to purge these defaultes of Brittaines, feininge of them thinges to be laughed at, [extolling] them aboove the noblenes of Romains and Macedonians, enhauncinge them with moste impudent lyeing. (29)

This is an echo of William of Newburgh whose critique I discussed in the preceding chapter. But Geoffrey's history does not in fact camouflage or disregard the fall of the Britons from political and national prosperity; often he is very harsh with them. This shows that his successors read him one-sidedly, as a chauvinistic British partisan: they did not take into account his own critique of the Britons, veiled or explicit. Instead they focused on Brutus and Arthur as the only two characters who gave the ancient Britons some stature, or rather, too much prestige since they seem "aboove the noblenes of Romains and Macedonians." Up to this point Polydore does not add anything new or

startling to his predecessors' criticism of Geoffrey, and he admits that he only rehearses what has been written before so that "there is noe man which justlie can be angrie with mee for this sainge (that thei were nether valiaunte in battaile nether true in leage)" (29).

A much more cogent criticism of the Brute legend is based on the ancient writers who actually dealt with the early Roman period:

> But yet nether Livie, nether Dionisius Halicarnaseus, who writt diligentlie of the Romane antiquities, nor divers other writers, did ever once make rehersall of this Brutus, neither could that bee notified bie the cronicles of the Brittons, sithe that longe agoe thei loste all the bookes of their monuments, as Gildas wittnesseth. (30)

In his list of kings succeeding Aeneas, Livy only mentions Silvius, Aeneas Silvius, and Latinus Silvius--there is no Brutus, only his supposed father, brother, and nephew.[21] Pointing out the absence of Brutus in the classical authorities is indeed a serious blow, even more so since there were no ancient British sources that could contradict them. It is precisely the gap in documentation that The History of the Kings of Britain tried to fill that now calls its status as history into question. Polydore adds to this

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[21] Livy, The Early History of Rome, trans. Aubrey de Selincourt (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1988), 37. With only slight variations the line of descent in Dionysius of Halicarnassus agrees with Livy; see The Roman Antiquities, ed. and trans. Earnest Cary (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1937), 228-233. Livy and Dionysius rather than Caesar and Tacitus are convincing authorities, because they wrote about the origin of Rome itself, whereas Caesar and Tacitus merely speculated about the inhabitants of a conquered country.

argument the commonsensical observation that because the island is visible from the opposing French shore, it can never have wanted inhabitants, nor was it "awayghting or intertaining the exiled or hurtfull roge runninge awaye owt of Spaince, Germanie, Fraunce, or Italie, as late Historience make report" (32). The result is a mixture of inhabitants made up out of European nations. As consolation he offers the British the idea that their antiquity itself lends their nation pride and authority.

> Wherfore this is the trew beginninge, which dothe not diminishe or abase the renowne of the Brittishe nation, but dothe greatlie augment, establishe, and adorne the same; for if (as wee are wont) wee do measure woorthines and nobilitee bie the continuance of time (levinge to speake of the other giftes and foelicitiees thereof) canne there bee enie thinge more auncient or honorable then even from the beginning to be borne in good and honeste place, and in the same to multiplie householde, stocke, and dominion allmoste for an infinite nombre of yeares? (32)

Mere antiquity is cause and occasion for national pride. This general notion of antiquity might be small comfort compared to an ancient pedigree. Its lack of specificity dissociates the reader and citizen from the concrete and individual characters who molded his national identity in the past. In answer to Polydore's rhetorical question about what would be more honorable than to inhabit and cultivate a place for a very long time, one might answer that to be Roman would be better.

For the Romans Polydore does affirm a Trojan origin.[22] In the preface to the fourth book of his history he explains "the destruction of the Brittishe kingdom" not only in Gildas' terms, but also in terms of the rise and fall of previous empires. His version of translatio imperii is embedded in the cycles of nature and man's mortality:

> at the lengthe it came to ruine, even as in auncient times the mightie dominions of the Assirians, Medes, Persians, Macedonians, and Romans, camme to desolation; suche is the fickel nature, and propensitee to deathe, bothe of menne and humaine affayres. (126)

Only in their fall can the Britons be equated with the Macedonians and Romans; they cannot rival their greatness. Thus only in terms of the pattern of rise and fall, and not literally in terms of descent, does the story of Troy apply to the Britons.

> Troye, as is well knowne, was raced and consumed, yeat the Troyans which escaped bylded Alba, of Alba sprange that puissant Rome. Even so, after the overthrowe of the Britons, leaste the riolme showlde seme destitute of fraunchise and imperie, the dominion of the Engleshemen, as a fresshe burden and ofspringe of nature, beeganne therein, and bie litel and littel aspired to great welthe and opulencie. (126)

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[22] Earlier Polydore criticized Geoffrey's version of the Roman conquest. He is at pains to establish a sharp differentiation between the Britons and any of their conquerors. Geoffrey had given Caesar a long speech that acknowledges the kinship between the Britons and the Romans. Even though the Britons lack the cultural superiority of the Romans they are of the same family stock and the Romans "must not shed the blood of our kinsmen, nor offend the ancient dignity of our common ancestor Priam" (107). What Caesar casts as a happy family reunion Cassivelanus takes as an affront to the Britons' "concept of liberty" and "freedom" (108). For the Britons the kinship with the Romans should mean "friendship . . . not slavery" (108).

Polydore's Britons lose their Trojan-derived place in history, and the Saxon invaders assume their function as Trojan-like and Roman-like rejuvenators of a country that has fallen like Troy. The rhetoric of rise and fall stems from Troy and Rome, which serve as origins, not of history itself, but of patterns that create history. Polydore cannot escape the rhetoric bequeathed by the discourse of Troy and the succession of empires, but he changes Geoffrey's emphasis on new beginnings to an emphasis on decline. Thus he does not get beyond Geoffrey's use of Troy as a legacy that is inscribed in British history.

Yet before Polydore even gets into the specifics of debunking Brutus he has a lengthy discussion of the Welsh. At the end of Geoffrey's history the Welsh were the last remnant of the Britons and thus of the Trojans. They had been driven into the extreme region of Wales, were renamed "Walshman [which] in the Saxon speeche Wallseman is nothinge ells but an aliente or straunger" and thus "loste bothe name and contrie together" (12). There the tradition of the Trojan descent flourishes to such an extent that the Welsh claim to speak a mixture of Greek and Trojan (13).[23] But their pretensions to antiquity differ sharply from their present situation, which resembles the one Geoffrey left

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[23] This idea goes back to Geoffrey who calls their language "Trojan or Crooked Greek" (72). This point about the Welsh language will concern me below.

them in; the survivors of the Britons hide in Wales

> usinge the opportunitie of the mountaynes, wooddes, and fennes (whereof that countrie is full) for their refuge and saftie, in which place as yet they continewe. . . . The fieldes of the countrie are for the moste parte barraine, yet so mutche the lesse fruitefull in that they lacke husbandinge and tilthe; wherebie it cometh to passe that the ruralles live hardelie, eatinge oaten breade, and drinckinge ther milke ether meddeled with water or ells whaye. (12-13)

In other words, they are reduced to a state of barbarity with only the barest rudiments of civilization, here, as in Geoffrey, indicated by agriculture. They are at the stage that Geoffrey left them in, which, however, is also the stage that Brutus threatened the Trojans would live in if Pandrasus did not let them go. More than anything else the tendency to live outside society and thus outside of history remains the most salient characteristic of post-Troy Trojans and pre-Saxon Britons. What was initially instrumental in defining "Trojaness," so to speak, continues to define their progeny. And what initially spurred their desire for creating their own history, becomes their mode of being history--outside of it, without culture and civilization, and in the no-man's-land of an historical wilderness.

II

Polydore's attack, if his critique really amounts to that, replaces the story of a glorious lineage that brought culture to the island with one of a culturally underdeveloped race that is exiled within its own, former

country. The decline of the Britons into the Welsh that occurred at the end of Geoffrey's History of the Kings of Britain, and that Geoffrey interpreted as a falling away from former greatness, becomes a status quo. In other words, Polydore makes the outcome of Geoffrey's history into the history per se. Life in the wilderness does not result from internal or external adversity, but represents a culture-specific way of life. The combination of lack of culture and of origin undoes the accepted history, which reflected a historical narrative via a genealogical line. A radical conclusion that could be drawn from this method of inversion would be that history is not the result of family succession but of cultural evolution. Polydore did not make this conceptual leap, perhaps because Welsh barbarity, both in terms of Welsh cultural life and historical perspective, deterred him. A more likely explanation would be that a concept of history that is not class-oriented and thus founded on res gestae had not been fully developed.[24]

A more immediate, and particular, conclusion was that ancient writers, whether they deal with the specific material of British or of Roman antiquity, did not corroborate the Brutus story. The only proof for the Trojan's existence comes from Geoffrey and, indirectly, from the knowledge that ancient British documents had been lost or destroyed. Polydore's successors found themselves

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[24] See Ferguson, 3-27.

confronted with the problem of deciding whether to begin their histories with the accepted origin or not. If so, just how was one to deal with it? If not, what else could one do?

Among the popularizers of histories Richard Grafton and John Stow are preeminent. They virtually created an industry of historical writing, Grafton as author and printer and Stow as author.[25] Both of them wrote and published pocket-size books that covered British history or even universal history in compact form, feats of condensation that contributed to the fall of the Trojans out of history.[26] Like most chronicles, they often revised and updated histories; they generally followed the accepted path of traditional accounts; and they tended "to stress continuity with the past and to reassert traditional values."[27] Though radically different as historians and

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[25] For the rivalry between Grafton and Stow see E. J. Devereux, "Empty Tuns and Unfruitful Grafts: Richard Grafton's Historical Publications," Sixteenth Century Journal 21.1 (Spring, 1990), 33-56; on Stow's relation to contemporary politics see Barrett L. Beer, "John Stow and the English Reformation, 1547-1559," Sixteenth Century Journal 16.2 (Summer, 1985): 257-271; on Stow's awareness of the changes in his own time see Emil Lucki, "John Stow and the Renaissance in Tudor England," Proceedings of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters 39 (1961-62): 138-146. For background information on the following section, see Kingsford, 265-71; Levy 186-195 and passim; and Fussner, 211-229.

[26] See Levy, 24 and 177. I will discuss this point below in greater detail.

[27] Fussner, 215.

citizens, the chronicles these two men wrote exhibit remarkably similar dealings with the remote British past. Fussner describes Stow as "an empirical historian [whose] works reflect something of the middle-class citizen's tastes and interests" (213). During the reign of Edward VI, Grafton was King's Printer. In 1543 he dedicated his publication of Hardyng's Chronicle to the Duke of Norfolk in commemoration of the Duke's invasion of Scotland. This timely publication was to reinforce the British claim to Scotland that Hardyng's rhymed chronicle had argued almost a century earlier.[28]

Because Stow and Grafton initially specialized in condensed histories, they were hampered by restrictions similar to those that affected Higden's Polychronicon, though for different reasons. They simply do not have enough space to create a historical narrative that meets our expectations in regard to explanation, causation, and the connections between events. The curtailing of the historical narrative leads to shorthand references that take the place of detailed, and thus meaningful, accounts. Grafton packs the origin story into a single sentence:

> Brute, after the common opinion, sonne of Siluius Posthumus, in this time [1108 B.C.] aryued in thys

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[28] Hardyng, 299. Edward I even turned to Pope Boniface for help by writing a letter to him in which he tried to prove his right to Scotland by means of the argument that Brutus had been sole ruler over the whole island at the time of the foundation. See also above on the naming the three sons.

> Islande, wherein he beganne fyrst reigne, and named it Britain which before was called Albion, and therein founded the noble citie of London, and called it Troynouaunt.[29]

Grafton omits both the narrative of Brutus' journey to the island and that of the conquest of the giants. What remains are cornerstone elements of the original narrative: descent, arrival in the island and rule over it, names of the island, and the foundation of a city--all "covered" in one sentence.

But another shorthand that replaces narrative also makes its way into the history of Britain: references to "common opinion," or "commune and best allowed opinion of the most ancient and best approued Authors."[30] Both Grafton and Stow rely on established structures of belief and ancient authority, that is, they rely on the very tradition that started with Geoffrey. Stow even writes a preface that introduces the reader to the issue of first inhabitants:

> I hope it shal bee sufficient in this Historie for the Brytaines times, to follow the authoritie of the recieued Brytish Historie, which Geffrey archdeacon of Monmouth translated out of the Brytishe tong about .400. yeares since, beginning with Brute, who after the progenie of Iapheth seemeth to be firste discouerer, namer, and Ruler in this land.[31]

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[29] Richard Grafton, An abridgement of the Chronicles of England (London, 1562), fol. 2r.

[30] John Stow, A Summarie of Englyshe chronicles (London, 1565), fol.9r.

[31] The Chronicles of England, from Brute unto this present yeare of Christ 1580 (London: 1580), 15. This preface re-appeared in most of Stow's chronicles; Stow also recycled his account of Brutus' founding of Britain; it is identical in the Chronicles and the Annales.

Brutus is seemingly privileged as first documented founder because Jean Luis Vives had proven Berosus' biblical, post-deluvian Samothes a forgery. Geoffrey's history, though only 400 years old, is then the first account historians have to go on for early Britain. His caution concerning Brutus who "seemeth to be first dscouerer, namer, and Ruler this land" (my emphasis) can be attributed to his increasing awareness of the nature of sources, if not to a growing skepticism about Geoffrey's origin story.[32] For the 1570 edition of his Summarye Stow adds a list of sources and discusses them individually. Of Geoffrey he says:

> Galfridus Monumentensis, his chronicle of the Britons is of some scornfully rejected: wherein they showe their great unthanckfulness, not to embrace him, who painfully for their behofe playeth only the part of an Interpretour, litle wisedom to condemme that, which they cannot amend, or if they can, not to consider the time wherein he lyued. The true Histories may of a skilful Reader be well decerned from the false and many things in him that seeme strauge are confirmed by the best writers of al Ages, hee lived in 1158. (fol. Biv^{v})

Stow tries to place Geoffrey himself in a historical context by telling his critics that Geoffrey was a product of his own times, which ought to be taken into account when his opponents condemn the "Interpretour" or translator. In

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[32] In A Survey of London Stow is much more reluctant to endorse Geoffrey's history and relies on Livy's formulation of the differnces between antique and more modern historiography. See A Survey of London, ed. Charles Lethbridge Kingsford (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1908) vol. 1, 1-2 and 81. This is only one of the many cases in which the historian appears to be paying lipservice to traditional beliefs.

other words, Stow sees Geoffrey as subject to the confines and constraints of the earlier historian's times. Geoffrey emerges as a historian who has had the thankless task of laying the groundwork, or even foundation, and who cannot be "amended" because he is "confirmed by the best writers of al Ages." Stow escapes the implications of his argument by leaving everything to the reader, who will have to distinguish between false and true histories for himself. He is not quite aware of where his analysis is headed. In the end he retreats to tradition and its authority, but only after having undermined its claim to authority.

However, Stow's provocative insight into the historically conditioned nature of historiography is atypical. The Brutus story lost its meaning as history, not only because of criticisms, but also because it lost its narrative character. Insistence on the proof and truth of the story, through reference to authority and antiquity, did not generate a fullness of meaning. This method of proof only yields circular arguments to begin with--an old story is true because it is old. Edmond Howes inserted "A briefe Proofe of **BRUTE**" between Stow's discussion "Of the first habitation of this **ILAND**" and "The race of the Kings of Brytaine after the common receiued opinion since Brute" in the 1631 reissue of Stow's Annales.[33] Howes reiterates all

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[33] To my knowledge "A briefe Proofe of **BRUTE**" did not make its first appearance until Howes' reissue of Stow's Annales; therefore it seems unlikely that Stow himself wrote

the arguments in favor of Brutus, which mainly come from Sir John Price's Historiae Brytannicae defensio.

> And the impugners of this ancient History, must not with so light a breath as they doe, seem to blow away the authority of so many graue testimonies, the succession of so many Princes, the founders of so many monuments and Lawes, an the ancient honors of the nations, that first with publike authority receiued Christianity. . . . For by such inferences, not onely our owne antiquities, but the Romane, and all other ancient Chronicles shall be rejected, seeing not one of them is free from such imputations. (6-7)

With the fall of Brutus all ancient pedigrees, including Polydore's own Roman ancestors, would also fall. Brutus' standing as a historical figure thus assumes the dimensions of a testcase par excellence: if the Britons cannot have their Brutus, nobody can have an ancient founder. The debate about Brutus turns into what has been called a "battle of the books"; his defenders and detractors cite from a limited set of texts to make their respective arguments about the sufficiency or defectiveness of his authority. While Polydore Vergil had pointed out the absence of Brutus from all classical texts, the defenders of Brutus argue that Polydore did not and could not know all the texts there were to know, and that earlier historians doubtless had more books which have since been lost or destroyed (7). To compound the problem, they say, Polydore did not know the British language. Howes lists all "the names of the learned men that affirme this History" (6).

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it.

Compared to that list of nineteen reputable historians, the few detractors come to a "measly" seven, all of whom are foreigners. Only by downplaying the English William Camden can Howes arrive at this nationalistic count that splits the defenders and detractors as natives and foreigners.[34]

Oddly enough, this replacement of historical narrative with historical proof results in the same "imperfect historicality" that Higden's chronicle showed.[35] The mere insistence on meaning does not create it, especially because, in Howes' case, the proof seems more pertinent than what is proven. Hayden White's chapter title "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality" points to a set of issues that surround the standing of Geoffrey's origin as history. Even though we are dealing with a fictitious tale, the truth value of Geoffrey's history was still intact. The narrative nature of the Brutus story endows it with meaning that makes it fit to function as a form of history. "It is the success of narrative in revealing the meaning, coherence, or significance of events that attests to the legitimacy of its practice in historiography" (54). With narrative as "a simulacrum of

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[34] See "An Historical Preface to this Booke," 2. Howes, of course, prefers to emphasize Camden's reluctance straightforwardly to criticize Brutus and Geoffrey: "Mr. **Camden** for his owne censure, doth not deny the person of **Brute**, but relating the opinions of others."

[35] Hayden White, The Content of the Form (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University P, 1987), 4.

the structure and processes of the real events" (27), historiography, even of Geoffrey's kind, can both claim to be and masquerade as the truth. It is precisely "the systems of meaning production (the modes of emplotment) that historiography shared with literature and myth" (44-45). In this manner the rise of chronicles as popularizers of history curtails the meaning of the Brutus story by curtailing its "narrativity."[36] Thus the recycling of Brutus through the generic and narrative constraints of annal, chronicle, and history, more than any outspoken or direct criticism, creates a legacy that both engrains Brutus as the originator of Britain and erodes his significance as a genuinely historical personage and an exemplum for the values and pitfalls of foundation.

III

Before the end of the sixteenth century historians were

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[36] For an interesting analysis of the development of chronicle writing and its concomitant decline see D. R. Woolf, "Genre into Artifact: the Decline of the English Chronicle in the Sixteenth Century," Sixteenth Century Journal 29.3 (Fall, 1988): 321-354. Woolf argues that it is precisely the popularity of the Stow and Grafton chronicles, whether in their early short or later expanded form, that "contributed to [the chronicle's] demise" (325). He even argues, convincingly I think, that Polydore Vergil's introduction of humanist tenets of historiography only led to a grafting of these new methods onto an old tradition (329). Annable Patterson has argued that both literary critics and historians need to rethink the significance of the Tudor chronicles. Certainly they represent more than "raw material on which [Shakespeare's] genius grew." "Rethinking Tudor Historiography," South Atlantic Quarterly 92.2 (Spring 1993): 187 and passim.

able to to avoid becoming embroiled in the Brutus debate: by simply referring to the debate itself and then by leaving it to the reader to decide the matter. According to Kendrick "getting rid of this embarrassing material was to ignore it" (78). Holinshed voices a cautious disclaimer concerning the embattled status of Brutus in historiography. Yet he goes on to tell the story anyway, much as Polydore did.[37] William Camden takes a slightly different route: he introduces archaeology and excavation to historical investigation. This innovation inevitably shifts the time frame for historical research, because archaeological remains were found mainly for the Romans.[38] The beginning of English historiography corresponds to an end of British origin. Even though Camden is careful to preface any potentially damning remarks about Brutus, he lets "euery man . . . judge as it pleaseth him."[39] He entrenches himself behind other historians' ideas so that his argument becomes a twenty-eight page-long discussion and list of various

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[37] "Preface," n.p. On Camden see Kendrick, 143-157 and passim; Levy, 148-161 and passim; and Fueter, 166-167. Undoubtedly, Camden is both Kendrick's and Levy's hero as the one historian who resembles them in his "modern" and "sophisticated" approach to history.

[38] Before Camden, John Leland had been the first to use his feet for historical research rather than his eyes, a practice that Stow shared. Archaeological finds feature mainly coins which are reproduced in the histories. For pre-Roman, and even more for pre-historical, Britain, however, Camden relies on books of previous historians or classical writers.

[39] Britain, trans. Philemon Holland (London, 1610), 6.

disproofs of and problems with the British History. But Camden does not offer that much new criticism of Brutus; he collects what has been said against Brutus before, from William of Newburgh to Jean Bodin. By substituting the debate itself for an origin account, Camden, the historian himself, becomes the hero and founder of history.

Much of the labor of the sixteenth century historian consisted in conquering the notion of Trojan descent and in putting something more "reasonable" in its place. Among the reasons for the obscurity of the far-distant past (other than its mere pastness) Thomas Cooper, like so many historians before him, cites the frequent invasions and conquests that England suffered during which many, if not all, records of antiquity were lost or destroyed. What motivated Geoffrey's narrative functions now as a reason for its dubiousness. However, Cooper says that one of the chief purposes of secular historiography is to "remember our creation, and know from whence we first came."[40] More and more the Celts or Gauls move into the place of the first inhabitants. Yet they too were compelled to settle in Britain, like the Trojans, because they were "flieng thither from the tyrannie of such as oppressed them."[41]

After Camden, we have to wait for John Speed to debunk

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[40] An Epitome of Cronicles (London: 1549), 32.

[41] Raphael Holinshed, Holinshed's Chronicles, ed. Vernon F. Snow (New York: AMS P, 1976), 4.

the Trojans. His ringing condemnation comes after a long discussion of the arguments for and against Brutus, most of which come from Camden. But he changes the terms of the debate: he declares the cherished pedigree a dishonor:

> To conclude; (by what destiny I know not) nations desire their originals from the Troians; yet certaine it is, that no honor from them can be brought, whose city and fame stood but for six descents, as under the raignes of Dardanus, Erithonius, Troos, Ilion, Laomdeon, and Priamus, during which time they were thrice vanquished; twice by Hercules in the daies of Laomedon, and the third time rased by the rage of the Grecians in the raigne of King Priamus, and the Troians themselues made as it were the scum of a conquered people. . . . so let BRITAINES likewise with them disclaime their BRUTE, that bringeth no honour to so renowned a Nation, but rather cloudeth their glorie in the murders of his parents, and imbaseth their descents, as sprung from Venus that lasciuious Adulteresse.[42]

The significance of Speed's argument lies not so much in its historical sophistication, as in its attack on one of the tenets of the Brutus defenders: the nobility of the origin. Speed knows the history of Troy very well and that knowledge serves him in his critique of the source of the British origin. He retrieves from Troy the history that Brutus chose to ignore; his peeling or unlayering of the origins

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[42] John Speed, The History of Great Britain (London: 1611), 166. This passage echoes Paridell's version of the fall of Troy in Spenser's Faerie Queene III.ix.33 thematically and more specifically in its use of the word "imbaseth" or "embaseth," as Speed and Spenser respectively spell this uncommon word. Paridell wonders "What boots it boast thy glorious descent,/ And fetch from heauen thy great Genealogie,/ Sith all thy worthy prayses being blent,/ Their of-spring hath embaste, and later glory shent" (III.ix.33). Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene, ed. Thomas P. Roche (New Haven: Yale UP, 1981). I will come back to this point in the next chapter.

reveal a history of conquest that he cannot condone. But Trojan history functioned in Geoffrey as one of the legacies of the founders, that is, British history was modelled on Trojan history through various conquests that repeat the conquests of Troy. The survivors of the conquered and destroyed culture break free of their yoke only to found a new culture that will suffer the same disasters. But for Speed this legacy is not one that constitutes the shape and explanation of British history, as in Geoffrey. Instead, it becomes a source of shame. In fact, England does not need its Trojan founders to enhance its glory, because it is famous and glorious in and of itself. This attitude toward the past would have been virtually unthinkable a century before Speed wrote.[43]

In Speed's reading of the origin, and the origin behind the origin, Troy was conquered and destroyed three times. This emphasis on the founders as losers, as members of a repeatedly conquered nation, replaces the emphasis on the nobility and independence of the same founders whose accomplishments counterbalanced the conquests of Britain in Geoffrey. The Trojan progeny, at least Aeneas' descendants, are tainted by their maternal "origin," Venus, who, very much unlike Spenser's Venus, reminds one of the devil-mating

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[43] That Brutus was an orphan (his mother died in childbirth, and he accidentally killed his father during a hunt) initially signalled the end of Aeneas' line in Geoffrey and was an attempt to preclude the further spawning of descendants.

daughters who produced the giants.[44]

To turn the tables on earlier chroniclers--as methodologically impure--Speed concludes that it is not invasions and conquests that obscured the past, but past historians who investigated

> our first beginnings, our antique Customes, behauiours, habits: the true Circumstances whereof are the more difficill to find, in that those things are not onely remote many degrees beyond the kenning of our Eye, (yea so manie Ages from the times wherein we liue), but are also shadowed and enwrapped in manifold vncertainties and contrarieties, wherewith euen those Writers haue perplexed our way, who vndertooke to be both our Guides and our Lights. (179)

Throughout the tradition of the Brutus story we have heard the familiar complaints that books have been destroyed or lost and that is the reason why the origin is obscure. Speed assumes something completely different: books, the vehicle for the discovery of the past, and historians, "our Guides and our Lights," have actually obstructed the truth-finding process.

With Speed a historical development culminates that more or less successfully displaces the Trojans (though they turn out to be stubbornly long-lived, surviving even into

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[44] Speed comes after a long line of transmissions of the Troy material that had turned the story into a mirror of decadence. The negative readings of Troy began, at the latest, with Dictys who constantly accuses the Trojans of faithlessness and lasciviousness. For a reading of the Trojan legends as decadent literature see Mark Lewis Richardson, "The Legends of Troy in the English Renaissance: A Study in Decadent Literature," diss., Emory University, 1980.

the nineteenth and twentieth centuries[45]). As a nation, Britain embodies such accomplishments and independence that it does not need noble founders; descent is no longer a necessity for establishing a nation's reputation or self-definition. The present itself proves that England, now united under James I, already is an established nation. So Speed offers "vnto the eye of our now glorious and gorgious Britaines, some generall draughts of our poore and rude Progenitors . . . so wee may remember that true British Nobilitie is more in Vertue then in Auncestors" (179). Personal values rather than class standing define "Nobilitie." By now historians were in the process of replacing the Trojans with someone else, and with another vision of the past.

IV

For England was now about to take its share in the possession of the New World--i.e. to become itself a "Brute" on the shores of a new domain. In 1590 historiographers got an idea that would help them solve the dilemma of origin, both conceptually and practically.[46] Appended to Thomas

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[45] See Hugh A. MacDougal, Racial Myth in English History (Montreal: Harvest House, 1982), 26-27.

[46] For other discussions of the impact of the New World on the British History see Kendrick, 121-125; Stuart Piggott, "Antiquarian Thought in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," English Historical Scholarship in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, ed. Levy Fox (London: Oxford UP, 1956), 101-103; and his Ancient Britons

Harriot's A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia is a series of engravings that Theodore de Bry fashioned after water colors by John White, who was a member of the 1585 Roanoke expedition that Sir Walter Ralegh had organized. These engravings are entitled "Som picture of the Picts" and "Neighbours of the Picts."[47] The artist claims to have found them "in a oolld English cronicle" (where else?), and included them in his report to "showe how that the Inhabitants of the great Bretannie have bin in times as safauuge as those of Virginia" (75). The

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and the Antiquarian Imagination (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), 54-86; and Ferguson, Utter Antiquity, 56-57, 77-79, and passim. Ferguson mainly discusses the American Indians as "evidence of a primitive mentality," since the "American Indians exemplified a childhood no less real for being historically retarded [sic]" (56-57). In this capacity they furnished material for a conceptualization of the "cave myth" which Ferguson lauds as a fairly advance mode of thinking about "utter antiquity" (62).

[47] For an easier reference I have used the following edition: Thomas Harriot, A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia, ed. Paul Hulton (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), 75-85. In an appendix to this chapter I have included photocopies of the original drawings and de Bry's engravings.

See also Frank Weitenkampf, "Early Pictures of North American Indians," Bulletin of the New York Public Library 53.12 (December 1949): 591-614. For reproductions of White's water colors I have used Paul Hulton, America 1585. The Complete Drawings of John White (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1984). For the Report de Bry altered White's original drawings to make the Picts look less savage; in the water colors the Picts' bodies are painted blue, in imitation of their use of woad to stain themselves. The demonic animal heads of lions and griffins, with their jaws and tongues, seem to jump out of the Pict's body at the viewer. De Bry also added another severed head which the Picts, when victorious in battle, carried away with them (76).

introductory caption for the pictures of the Picts and their neighbors indicates that its writer[48] perceived cultural otherness in terms of temporal remoteness and reads the "Indians" as a culturally earlier and less developed nation.

White's drawings constitute a curious encounter not only between cultures and concepts of culture, but also between past and present, and between the other and oneself. This does not mean that the discoverers first of all found themselves in the Indians.[49] White named his figures

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[48] It is not quite clear whether that writer was Harriot or de Bry. Yet on the basis of the at times halting and clumsy English it can conceivable be the Dutch printer.

[49] For example, Stephen Orgel, "Shakespeare and the Cannibals," Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce, ed. Marjorie Garber (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins P, 1987), 43-44. The emphasis is clearly on otherness and only on a temporal parallelism that does not mean that "the Europeans also saw themselves as versions of the Indians" (44). For the English historians and explorers only the Picts, the old enemy and invader of Britain, resembles the Indians. But that is precisely the point that will allow them to dissociate themselves from both "savagism" and "primitivism." Yet the use of analogical explication for the newness and strangeness of the New World draws a precarious borderline between the new and the old, and, methodologically, between comparison and substitution. In her Icon and Conquest (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1981) Bernadette Bucher has described this process:

> If, for example, the Indians of Virginia are compared to Picts because, like them, they decorate their bodies with designs and paintings, the only way to preserve the relation of comparison between the two is to tell in a caption why portraits of Picts should appear among engravings of Amerindians. De Bry explains that it is "to show that the inhabitants of Great Britain in the past were as savage as those of Virginia." As long as the textual commentary remains with the picture and is read, the juxtaposition of the two different peoples is metonymical, like the comparison in the text (they are partially comparable, from a certain aspect). But, if the explanatory text is omitted, the portraits of

"Picts," not "Ancient Britons." We cannot immediately infer a collapse of differentiation because readers of Harriot would have known the Picts as barbarous invaders, and thus as enemies, from the chronicles. The Picts he drew in imitation of the "Weroan or great Lorde of Virginia" (46) whose body paint constitutes the vehicle for this analogy. Thus the Indians are not cast primarily as earlier versions of the explorers' ancestors, but rather as visual relatives of fierce enemies of those ancestors. Caesar, Higden, Holinshed and their fellow historians presented the Picts as a violent, painted, and barbarous nation. They figured as an archetype of invaders. More ambiguous than the drawings and their captions is the prefatory note that claims the Indians resemble "the Inhabitants of the Great Bretannie," because it does not distinguish between the contested regions of the island but refers to the whole of the nation. De Bry does not differentiate between the Picts of the north and the "neigbour vnto the Pict" who could be a Scot or a

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> Picts become another way of portraying Indians. Thus a simple comparison becomes a substitution, pure and simple. (36)

However, the differences between the Indians and the Picts in both White's drawings and de Bry's versions of them seem sufficiently different to avoid this collapse of distinction. The Indians show geometrical patterns in the body paint, they have no mustaches, and they carry bows and arrows as weapons, while the Picts have wild beast, sun and stars, or flowers painted on their bodies, are bearded, and carry scimitars as weapons. Where the Indians represent a new culture, rendered in text and drawing, the Picts come from a long textual tradition that began with the Latin classics and determined their appearance and representation.

Briton. The figure of the neighbor lacks the body paint, wears clothes, and looks more "civilized," so to speak (82-85). The step toward identification of early Britons with Indians did not happen until the early seventeenth century, and even then the identification was not complete, because only labels changed: Speed used de Bry's engravings for his History and changed the title of the pictures from Pict to Ancient Briton.[50] Thus the Indians became an enabling pattern for picturing first the Picts and then the pattern along with the name was transferred to the early Britons. Alden T. Vaughan documents this increased identification of ancient Britons with Indians.[51] However, I do not quite agree with his reading of White's drawings. Vaughan argues that

> the implication is clear: henceforth the reader should think of the Indians of North America in terms of his or her own ancestors--those barbarous, heathen primitives who might have remained in idolatry and ignorance had not Roman soldiers introduced them to Christianity and European civility. (53)

Surely, Roman soldiers did not worship Christ, but the

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[50] It seems probable that Speed had access to the original plates on which de Bry worked or that he had copies of those original made. I have not found any explanation for this borrowing. In 1586 de Bry engraved Sir Philip Sidney's funeral and spent some time in England. Lady Mary Sidney and Sir Walter Ralegh were patrons of Jacques Le Moyne who participated in the French Florida voyage of 1563-65. Hulton, 8-17.

[51] "Early English Paradigms for New World Natives," Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society 102.1 (1992): 33-67. I am grateful to Professor Vaughan for sending me an off-print of his article.

emperor, and they did not bring Christianity to the island. It seems to me that this point is somewhat premature for the age; one can hardly think of the Elizabethans as eager to be lumped together with "barbarians" of whatever kind, historical or cultural, and to embrace the emerging ideas of cultural evolution. Toward the end of the sixteenth century, they were still thinking of themselves as the noble descendants of Brutus, and the emphasis on the Roman Conquest as the transforming event of early British history had not yet taken a firm hold, despite Camden's championing of the Romans. The "new paradigmatic trend" took over twenty years to find a hold over the English colonial and historical imaginations.[52]

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[52] Another trend in historical and anthropological patterning intervenes that, I think, facilitated the transition to identification: the cruel colonization of Ireland. The conundrum of connections among men who were patrons of historians and chroniclers, colonizers in Ireland, and venturers or even explorers of the New World is, however, too large a topic to be pursued here. The men involved in two or even all three areas include the Earl of Essex, Sir Walter Ralegh, Edmund Spenser, Sir John Davies, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Sir Ralph Lane, and Martin Frobisher. Both White and Harriot ended up in Ireland after the failed Roanoke venture. See for example, David Beers Quinn, The Elizabethans and the Irish (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1966); Vaughan; Nicholas P. Canny, "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America," William and Mary Quarterly 3rd ser. 30 (1973): 575-598; and James Muldoon, "The Indian as Irishman," Essex Institute Historical Collections 3.4 (October 1975): 267-289. For fascinating readings of the problematics inherent in English colonial ventures and how they rebounded onto the colonialist, see Jeffrey Knapp, An Empire Nowhere (Berkeley: U of California P, 1992). To my knowledge the role of history and theory of history in this set of issues has not been thoroughly investigated.

Unfortunately we do not know much about White and what might have motivated him to draw the Picts in the image of the Indians of Virginia. We can only speculate about a moment of historical epiphany, a moment that transposes the recognition of otherness to a historical perspective. Usually the comparisons between the Old and the New Worlds relied on classical texts that dealt with the Scythians or even "Greek and Roman customs."[53] Again, as with the chronicles, earlier books and texts furnished the foundation for comparison and analysis. The catalytic idea behind White's conceptual leap lies in the Indians' nakedness, their fierceness, and their body paint. Especially the use of woad among the Picts, known from texts as old as Caesar's Commentaries, made them ideal candidates for comparison because they were famous for just these characteristics. Despite the seeming originality of White's thinking, Indians were used before 1590 as a vehicle for imaging the first inhabitants of Britain or the Welsh. In 1568 (the original Latin dates from the 1530s) Humphrey Lhuyd (or Llwyd, another spelling of his name) takes recourse to "mexicani" to convey an idea of how to pronounce a Welsh LL or LH which the Mexicani use.

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[53] John H. Rowe, "Ethnography and Ethnology in the Sixteenth Century," Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers 30 (1964), 3-4. For an excellent discussion of anthropological thinking in the sixteenth century and beyond see Margaret T. Hodgen, Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1964).

> We haue also a peculiar Letter to our selues, whiche the ruder sort fashion lyke LL, but the better learned wryte with LH.
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> I am not ignorant, that the Spayniardes haue in use LL, and so haue the Germanes LH. . . . But neither of these expresseth ours, howbeit, I take it rather, that the Mexicani, whiche inhabite the newfounde worlde, do use that Letter.[54]

But Llwyd does not explain why the similarity between Welsh and "mexicani" would be significant. It seems to be more a matter of difference, that is, neither Spanish nor German can provide an analogue to the peculiarities of Welsh. We find another comparison between ancient Picts and Indians in Holinshed, that is in Abraham Fleming's "Historie of England." Fleming begins the conflation between Picts, a wild enemy people, and the Britons. The Picts painted their whole bodies, whereas the Britons only painted their faces "not for amiablenesse, but for terriblenesse." But the similarity in custom prompts Fleming to say "I seeno reason why they also should not be called Picts." The Indians have a similarly curious habit of adorning themselves:

> And here by the way, sithens we haue touched this follie in two seuerall people, let it not seeme tedious to read this one tricke of the Indians, among whom there is great plentie of precious stones, wherewith they adorne themselues." (441)

Even though this digression on the Indians reads as if

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[54] Humphrey Llwyd, The Breviary of Britayne, trans Thomas Twyne (London: 1573), fol. 2r. Llwyd's work was inspired by Abraham Ortelius who was a friend of Llwyd's. This text also defends the Brutus story against the archenemy Polydore Vergil. In his prefatory letter to Ortelius, Llwyd claims that it is the duty of Englishmen to write about Brutus and rescue the founder from oblivion which threatens to extinguish his fame (n.p.).

Fleming is trying to cram new observations into old stories; the passage indicates how popular the comparisons between ancient and new found world had become.

The collapse of distinction between Picts and ancient Britons was complete in Speed's History. White's Picts here make their first and most prominent recurrence--but renamed as "Ancient Britaines" and "the more civill Britaines." What were the Picts become the Ancient Britons, and the neighbors or Ancient Britons become the more civil Britons. This shift implies that he rereads White in terms of historical development. Speed's renaming makes the transference from New World inspiration to anthropological history complete. He comments that both of the original islanders resemble Adam, "the first beginning of the vniuersall prosemination of Mankind, when our first Parents innocencie walked in naked simplicitie." Their nakedness is a sign of their endurance "like the patience we find euen now not onely in the wilder Irish, and Virgineans, but in rogues and Wanderers of our owne Country" (179). Speed's attempt at recuperating both innocence and fierceness results in the assembly of an uneasie company: Irish, Virginians, Vagabonds--a cast of outsiders, outlaws, rebels, the unknown, the edenic and the threatening. Speed's uncertainty about reading innocence and fierceness stems from his comparisons between ancient Britons and these other peoples. In his attempts to negotiate these comparisons

Speed betrays his own discomfort about these resemblances. The need for difference, especially a difference that would guarantee an advanced stage and thus the superiority of the Britons, leads Speed to collapse his own distinctions: ultimately he relabels the painted Britons the Picts (181). Once he gets to "the more ciuill Britaines," who are not painted and who wear modest clothing, he refers to them as Britons (182).

Speed's conceptualization of an earlier cultural state is confused, partially because he compares the past to contemporary though different cultures. This straddling of times and contexts expresses the as yet underdeveloped notion of cultural evolution as well as the discomfort in pairing oneself with nations that were perceived as culturally inferior. This method results in a curious jumble of otherness that undermines Speeds' point about simplicity by turning it into a list of the victims and marginalized persons of society. Here another transition looms large: once the image of the Indians as vehicle for historical reconstruction served its turn, it is cast out into otherness. A perception of cultural superiority is based on a perception of historical development; that is, as a latter-day version of the Picts, the Indians represent a historically and culturally inferior people. The historical development of the English makes them superior. Thus antiquity's value changes: the closer a nation resembles

antiquity, the less "noble" it is, and the further away it is from antiquity, the more "noble."

In another version of the New World the ideas of evolution and otherness are fused in a different way: the Trojans and the New World have come full circle. In his New English Canaan[55] of 1637, Thomas Morton claims that the natives of America built houses like the Irish, that they have quite civilized habits of removing seasonally to their hunting grounds, and that their language consists of words resembling Greek and Latin. The absence of any writing leads him to assume that the natives have unlearned this ability "which time hath cancelled and worne out of use." In the chapter "Of the Originall of the Natives" he ventures the following conjecture:

But it may perhaps be granted that the Natives of this

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[55] I am grateful to my friend Marjorie Raley who brought this text to my attention. Thomas Morton seems to be the only writer who concocts a Trojan descent for the Indians. More common was the theory of the lost tribes of Israel (around 1567), or the theory of Tartar migrations (1511). Lee Eldrige Huddleston, Origins of the American Indians (Austin: U of Texas P, 1967), 6 and 34. Morton is a fascinating figure who has received no critical attention. He was affiliated with Sir Ferdinando Gorges, Essex's old secretary who survived his master by playing a dubious role during his trial. During his turbulent life in Massachusetts, where he ran the Mar-re-Mount Plantation whose maypole Hawthorne used in his story, Morton was expelled twice for living with Indians and for trading arms with them for furs. In his treatise, in which he argues for a revoking of "the Charter and the Kingdome of the Seperatists" (345), he casts Bradford and Endicott, along with the Puritan "conspirators" (284) as his enemies who are to blame for his unjust expulsion. See Charles Francis Adams, Jr., "Introduction," The New English Canaan (Boston: The Prince Society, 1883), 1-105.

> Country might originally come of the scattred Trojans: For after that Brutus, who was the forth from Aeneas, left Latium upon the conflict had with the Latines . . . this people were dispersed . . . And when Brutus did depart from Latium, we doe not finde that his whole number went with him at once, or arrived at one place; and being put to Sea might encounter with a storme, that would carry them out of sight of Land, and then they might sayle God knoweth whether, and so might be put upon this Coast, as well as any other. (126-127)

Morton obviously confuses Latium with Greece, but his chapter follows a convention that texts on the New World shared: the obligatory conjecture on the origin of the Indians. It was more typical to make the Indians derive from Ham, but the point is perhaps almost the same: in Morton's scenario the Britons would be colonizing their distant relatives.

Appendix--Illustrations

I have xeroxed White's original drawings from Hulton's edition. The de Bry engravings have been reproduced from microfilm copies of Harriot and Speed.

John White, Drawings

Indian
Pict
Pict
Ancient British Man
Ancient British Woman

Harriot, Report

Indian Lord
Indian Lord
Pictish Man
Pictish Woman
Young Pictish Woman
Neighbor unto the Picts
Woman Neighbor unto the Picts

Speed, History

Ancient Britons
More Civil Britons

Plate 48. Indian in Body Paint (26.3 x 15 cm. or 10⅜ x 5⅞ in.)

Plate 65. Pictish Man Holding a Human Head (24.3 x 16.9 cm. 9⅝ x 6⅝ in.)

Plate 66. Pictish Man (24.2 x 15.2 cm. or 9½ x 6 in.)

Plate 67. Pictish Woman (23 x 17.8 cm. or 9 x 7 in.)

Plate 68. Ancient British Man (23.6 x 15.4 cm. or 9¼ x 6 in.)

Plate 69. Ancient British Woman (22.1 x 15.3 cm. or 8¾ x 6 in.)

A weroan or great Lorde of Virginia. III.

THe Princes of Virginia are attyred in ſuche manner as is expreſſed in this figure. They weare the haire of their heades long and bynde opp the ende of theſame in a knot vnder thier eares. Yet they cutt the topp of their heades from the forehead to the nape of the necke in manner of a cokſcombe, ſtirkinge a faier lõge pecher of ſome berd att the Begininge of the creſte vppun their foreheads, and another ſhort one on bothe ſeides about their eares. They hange at their eares ether thicke pearles, or ſomwhat els, as the clawe of ſome great birde, as cometh in to their fanſye. Moreouer They ether pownes, or paynt their forehead, cheeks, chynne, bodye, armes, and leggs, yet in another ſorte then the inhabitantz of Florida. They weare a chaine about their necks of pearles or beades of copper, wich they muche eſtee me, and ther of wear they alſo braſelets ohn their armes. Vnder their breſts about their bellyes appeir certayne ſpotts, whear they vſe to lett them ſelues bloode, when they are ſicke. They hange before thẽ the ſkinne of ſome beaſte verye feinelye dreſſet in ſuche ſorte, that the tayle hangeth downe behynde. They carye a quiuer made of ſmall ruſhes holding their bowe readie bent in on hand, and an arrowe in the other, radie to defend themſelues. In this manner they goe to warr, or tho their ſolemne feaſts and banquetts. They take muche pleaſure in huntinge of deer wher of theris great ſtore in the contrye, for yt is fruit full, pleaſant, and full of Goodly woods. Yt hathe alſo ſtore of riuers full of diuers ſorts of fiſhe. When they go to battel they paynt their bodyes in the moſt terible manner that thei can deuiſe.

A cheiff Lorde of Roanoac. VII.

THe cheefe men of the yland and towne of Roanoac reace the haire of their crounes of theyr heades cutt like a cokes cõbe, as thes other doe. The reſt they wear lõge as woemen and truſs them opp in a knott in the nape of their necks. They hange pearles ſtringe copper a threed att their eares, and weare bracelets on their armes of pearles, or ſmall beades of copper or of ſmoothe bone called minſal, nether paintinge nor powncings of them ſelues, but in token of authoritye, and honor, they wear a chaine of great pearles, or copper beades or ſmoothe bones abowt their necks, and a plate of copper hinge vpon a ſtringe, from the nauel vnto the midds of their thighes. They couer themſelues before and behynde as the woemẽ doe with a deers skynne handſomley dreſſed, and fringed, More ouer they fold their armes together as they walke, or as they talke one wjth another in ſigne of wiſdome.

The yle of Roanoac is verye pleiſant, ond hath plaintie of fiſhe by reaſon of the Water that enuironeth theſame.


T B J

T B 2


TB


T B 3

Cha

Cæsar.

Plinie.

Cambd. in D
p. 14.
Mela.

Plinie.

See Chap. 2.

Picture.
What the P
were.

IV Troy's Unreadability:

Britomart's Reading of Origin and her Quest for History

Morton's peopling of the New World with Trojans scattered during Brutus' voyage to Britain implies a claim to the new territories because of the ancestral relationship between inhabitants and newcomers.[1] Where Morton quite literally lumped together the mysteries of the past and of America, Spenser establishes a more equivocating connection in the proem to Book II of The Faerie Queene. Fairyland is like antiquity in that it could be taken for "painted forgery / Rather then matter of just memory."[2] But both are like the New World, because nobody knew about them before they were discovered, made visible to the world. Antiquity, fairyland, and newly discovered countries are related: just because we cannot see them does not mean they are not there.

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[1] In another, of course, Welsh tradition the twelfth-century Lord Madoc discovered America and established a colony in "Terra Florida or thereabouts." This figure entered the scenes of both antiquity and discovery in the late sixteenth century, and is defended by the defenders of Brutus: John Dee, Humphrey Lhwyd and David Powell. See America from Concept to Discovery, ed. David B. Quinn (New York: Arno Press, 1979) vol. 1, 66-68. Morton's idea of the Indians as Trojans conflates two founding traditions: the biblical repeopling after the Flood through the sons of Noah and the secular peopling of the historical world through the descendants of Troy. As Morton's title, The New English Canaan, suggests, the new world is the new "land of pagan idolatry" of the Bible. See Hayden White, "The Forms of Wildness," Tropics of Discourse (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978), 161.

[2] The Faerie Queene, ed. Thomas P. Roche (New Haven: Yale UP, 1978), II.4-5. All further references are to this edition and will be cited in the text.

That the absence of proof does not prove non-existence is, of course, one of the main arguments in defense of Brutus. The similarities in Spenser's comparison between a time and two "countries" anticipates the conflation Morton practices.[3]

Yet Spenser treats the reading of the past much more rigorously. To my knowledge, The Faerie Queene is the only Renaissance epic that features a chronicle, or history book as a separate entity rather than a quoted, but not written, point of reference. He covers all of British history from Troy to Elizabeth in three generically different accounts: the chronicle, the prophecy, and the historical debate. As a source compiled by Eumnestes, the authority of the chamber of memory, Briton moniments carries authoritative weight and covers British history from the giants to Uther Pendragon. Merlin's prophecy to Britomart in Book III mentions Troy

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[3] In a fascinating article, Richard Waswo has argued that the Trojan origin story furnished the verbal and procedural terms for colonial ventures, from the Aeneid to The Faerie Queene to Reagan's star wars project. The negative descriptions of the giants as culturally and morally depraved were incorporated into justifications for the subjection of peoples who did not fit the Eurocentric agricultural practices. "The History that Literature Makes," New Literary History 19.3 (Spring 1988):541-564.

We find a different conflation Troy, England, and America in Iman Wilkens, Where Troy Once Stood. The Mystery of Homer's **Iliad** and **Odyssey** Revealed (New York: St. Martin's P, 1991). Wilkens argues that Troy was in England, a bit north of London; to be more precise, Troy stood on the Gog Magog Hills southeast of Cambridge. Odysseus' voyages took him to Africa (Lotus Eaters) and to Cuba (Laestrygonians). In detailed maps he transfers the Mediterranean geography onto the Atlantic.

briefly, but then hurries on to foretell British history up to Queen Elizabeth. Britomart and Paridell discuss the passage of Aeneas from Troy to Italy and of Brutus to Britain in Book III, Canto ix. The Brutus origin and the story of Troy each are told twice: Brutus in the chronicle and in the debate, Troy in the prophecy and the debate. What is potentially the most analytic discourse of history, the debate, concentrates on the origins of Britain and their meaning for the female protagonist. Spenser achieves an emphasis on the reading and understanding of history in his protagonists Britomart and Arthur that even allows one of them the luxury of reading time. Yet the characters' understanding of history is problematized in Spenser's three historical accounts.

The chronicle that Arthur reads in Book II derives in the main from Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain, as Carrie Anna Harper argued.[4] It follows Geoffrey's thematic emphasis closely and highlights "the establishment of national sovereignty; usurpers and foreign invaders crowd its pages, and the Roman power is among them."[5] The annotations of an early reader of Spenser's

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[4] The Sources of the British Chronicle History in Spenser's "Faerie Queene" (Philadelphia, 1910), passim.

[5] James Nohrnberg, The Analogy of **The Faerie Queene** (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980[2]), 368.

epic testify to the popularity of the material.[6] But for the innertextual reader, Arthur, all this history is quite new.

If Arthur's reading of Briton moniments is to facilitate the definition of his epic subjecthood, as Elizabeth Bellamy, for example, has argued, then the success of this project should register in his response to the chronicle.[7] But is it really possible for Arthur to respond adequately to the chronicle? He does not know that he is reading his country's history; instead he reads the history as a "foster Childe" and thus as someone who does not really have an immediate urgency in the relevance of the chronicle to his own life. Arthur's response shows this distance in his rather vague, though emotional, reaction. He

> Cryde out, Deare countrey, o how dearely deare
> Ought thy remembraunce, and perpetuall band
> Be to thy foster Childe, that from thy hand
> Did commun breath and nouriture receaue?
> How brutish is it not to vnderstand,
> How much to her we owe, that all vs gaue,

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[6] See Graham Hough, The First Commentary on **The Faerie Queene** (Privately Published, 1964), 11-14. Unfortunately the editor of the annotations does not include all the numerous comments John Dixon made in the margins of his 1590 copy. Dixon's knowledge of British history seems to have been thorough, though often the notes merely transcribe information from Spenser's text and give precise years of kings' reigns. From the notes selected by Hough, it seems as if Dixon did not notice Spenser's fabrication of additional etymological foundings and that the chronicle actually leaps ahead of itself, verges on the prophetic. See below.

[7] Translations of Power. Narcissism and the Unconscious in Epic History (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1992), 222-225.

That gaue vnto vs all, what euer good we haue.
(III.x.69; my emphasis)

Given the course of British history, the invasions, the civil wars, the human disasters, and the pain, Arthur's expression of woe for his foster country is appropriate. But his cry to the country overrides the chronicle's testimony to human and individual suffering. Arthur addresses his sympathy not to history but to the country that becomes a mother figure in the second half of the stanza. It seems as if he is trying to establish the connection with what he read through establishing himself as the sympathetic and remembering child of the country. His lack of self-knowledge, that is, that he does not know he is not a foster child, is at play in his reaction.

Yet can we find an understanding of British history in Arthur's response? He says that it is "brutish . . . not to vnderstand." But his voiced understanding resembles a testimony of his filial duty, a testimony that is poignant for him, because he does not know he is a true son of the country and its history. Ironically, he proves himself to be a truer son than he thinks through the word "brutish" which was by Spenser's time a common joke on Brute's name. Through this link of the founder's name with a primitive notion of history, Spenser implies that such is the understanding an uninitiated reader can derive from

Britain's national history.[8]

There is, however, a more significant instance of misrecognition that does not necessarily have to do with Arthur's unenlightened knowledge of himself. When Briton moniments covers the Roman conquest, the chronicle trips over its supposed frame of reference. After all it is an "auncient booke" (II.ix.59) and as such there is a limit to its extension in time; there are some things that it cannot, or should not, know, if it is an "auncient booke" proper. Once Caesar is victorious,

> . . . this land was tributarie mae
> T'ambitious **Rome**, and did their rule obay,
> Till **Arthur** all that reckoning did defray.
> (49; my emphasis)

Is the chronicle getting ahead of itself? Could it be that Eumnestes' and Phantastes' unnamed third companion had a hand in the writing of this history? The only Arthur in British history is the one reading these lines. Brennus and Belinus were the earlier conquerors who subdued all of Europe, including Rome (40).[9] Spenser does not record Arthur's reaction, if there was one, to seeing his name mentioned in the chronicle. Given Spenser's knowledge of history and his ability as a historian, it seems unlikely

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[8] Spenser's disbelief in Brutus is visible here. The reasons for his unorthodoxy in matters of national history will be discussed below.

[9] Unfortunately, Hough does not provide Dixon's commentary, if there was any, to this breach of temporal decorum and chronology.

that he made a mistake, that familiarity overcame context, even more so since he does overstep the temporal bounds of the chronicle again at its end, right before Arthur's response. The supposedly old book breaks off abruptly with **"Vther,"** Arthur's father. Of course, it has to break off, because, strictly speaking, the rest of the history still has to be made.

I

In Book III of The Faerie Queene Spenser crafts a Trojan pedigree for Britomart, Queen Elizabeth's ancestor; in A View of the Present State of Ireland, however, Spenser ridicules such a descent as national vanity.[10] Obviously the generic differences between Spenser's epic and the View account for this discrepancy, at least in part. According to Tasso, epic requires a grounding in history in order to be epic. The heroic poem needs "the authority which derives

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[10] Many readers of Spenser have noticed this opposition; apart from his editors some of these are Harper, 21; T. D. Kendrick, British Antiquity (London: Methuen, 1950), 128; Judith H. Anderson, "The Antiquities of Fairyland and Ireland," JEGP 86.2 (1987), 202; Heather Dubrow, "The Arraignment of Paridell: Tudor Historiography in The Faerie Queene, III.ix.," Studies in Philology 87 (1990), 326; David Lee Miller, The Poem's Two Bodies (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991), 197. For a discussion of the Trojan and imperial themes in Book III see, for example, Frances A. Yates, Astraea. The Imperial Theme in the sixteenth Century (London: Ark Paperbacks, rpt. 1985), 50-70. For a treatment of the Arthurian material in Spenser see, Charles Bowie Millican, Spenser and the Round Table (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1932. This list is by no means exhaustive; for a discussion of their explanations of Spenser's different attitudes see below.

from history or fame." Therefore "the argument of the best epic should be based on history, [it] should be drawn from true history."[11] Such history, however, is allowed the license of probability, "things that either happened or might have happened," like "the battles of the Trojan war, the wrath of Achilles, Aeneas' piety" (30). For this probability gives the poet the freedom to fashion and change his story:

> the story of an extremely remote century or nation seems a subject highly appropriate to the heroic poem, because, since such things are so nearly buried in antiquity that the feeblest, dimmest memory of them scarcely remains, the poet can change them over and over again and narrate them as he pleases. (40)

Yet Tasso is aware that such poetic license can turn into a disadvantage, because the poet should not fall prey to historical anachronism and portray ancient customs in a contemporary guise. History and poetic freedom, then, make uneasy companions: epic's historical foundations can become a stumbling-block in its poetical execution.

Spenser's use of the Trojan descent in The Faerie Queene does not show that he keeps the roles of poet and historian as neatly separate as some readers would think.[12]

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[11] Discourses on the Heroic Poem, trans. Mariella Cavalchini and Irene Samuel (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1973), 34 and 39.

[12] Notably Kendrick, 126-132. His indignation at Spenser's faux pas, however, does not prevent him from celebrating Spenser's historical naivete in his epic. See also Arthur Ferguson, Clio Unbound (Durham: Duke UP, 1979), 36.

As a "self-styled antiquary"[13] and a friend of Camden's, Spenser was well-versed in contemporary historical thought. Spenser the historian, anthropologist, and politician has a more critical perspective on what history actually is. He cannot deny his own grounding in actual history even as he celebrates Britomart's and Elizabeth's genealogies in his epic. Therefore Spenser's versions of Brutus and Troy in the two Britomart episodes problematize the usefulness of this material for Britomart's education and self-definition. Britomart first hears about her Trojan descent from Merlin and then quarrels with Paridell over the right reading of the Trojan War and its aftermath. In the first episode Britomart is confronted with and learns about history. More importantly she is placed in history. At the same time, however, she is enmeshed in her quest for Artegall; that is, she herself is involved in making the very history Merlin just told her as if it were all already a matter of record. Her understanding of history will define her actions.

It is precisely this occurrence of the Troy and Brutus stories at the juncture of reading and making history that is crucial for Spenser's notion of history in The Faerie Queene. I would argue that his critique of the Brutus legend as national and epic history reaches well beyond the confines of The Faerie Queene to his own contemporaries and

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[13] Ferguson, 83.

reveals how debilitating this cultural memory becomes.[14] On the surface Spenser indeed glorifies the Tudors and expresses "a philosophy of history, . . . a conception of British destiny"[15] by means of the Trojan origin. Indeed Merlin explains to Britomart that it was "the streight course of heauenly destiny,/ Led with eternall prouidence, that has/ Guided thy glaunce, to bring his will to pas" III.iii.24). After World War I, the appeal of such a "philosophy of history" with its nationalistic and destinarian underpinnings led a critic to argue for a reinstitutionn of the Trojans into history textbooks.[16] Yet Spenser is not merely paying lipservice to Tudor propaganda, or belying his better historical judgment. Rather than decide the matter of Brutus in favor of one of these contending interests and obligations, Spenser uses the Trojan legend as a basis for an inquiry into what kinds of historical perspective result from a commitment to such origins. Thus the question is not so much whether Spenser believed in the Trojan origin, but what he made of it.

Obviously Spenser did not "believe" in Brutus, as

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[14] Neither Nancy P. Pope, National History in the Heroic Poem (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990) nor Elizabeth J. Bellamy, Translations of Power discuss the two episodes, Merlin in III.iii. and Paridell in ix., together.

[15] Edwin Greenlaw, Studies in Spenser's Historical Allegory (Baltimore; Johns Hopkins P, 1932), 2.

[16] George Gordon, The Discipline of Letters (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1946), 37 and 58. This article was originally published in 1924.

Kendrick and Ferguson among others have pointed out,[17] and as he says in the View. Before Spenser deleted the following passage it was, quite appropriately, a dialogue about the national origins of the Irish:

> But the Iryshe doe hearin no otherwise then our vayne Englyshemen doe in the tale of Brutus, whome they devise to haue firste conquered and inhabited this lande, it beeinge as impossible to prove thet ther euer was anie suche Brutus of Albanye, as it is that ther anie suche Gathelus of Spaine. But hearin theye shewe their great lightnes, which beeinge a barbarous and salvage nation, woulde faine fetche them selves from Spaine Lyke as wee and the French also woulde from the Troians: wherin theye muche deceive them selves in their reckninge.[18]

Spenser declares the Trojan origin a vanity and even a sign of barbarity, because the existence of the founders cannot be proven. Obviously Spenser's contempt for Gathelus partially derives from his Spanish origin. In his diatribe against Irish notions of descent from the Spanish, Spenser demolishes any potential glory in such descent by saying that the Spanish are the most barbarous and mixed people in Europe (91). Spenser makes a sweeping condemnation of the major European dynasties who claimed Trojan ancestry. A belief in Trojan origin here points to a lack of historiographic sophistication rather than to the glory of an extended heroic genealogy.

What are we to make of this "blatant contradiction,"

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[17] T. D. Kendrick, 128 and Ferguson, 36.

[18] Spenser's Prose Works, ed. Rudolf Gottfried (Baltimore; Johns Hopkins UP, 1949), 86.

this "split between two different versions of truth" between the epic and the View?[19] Anderson argues that "[i]n time, 'antiquity' becomes for Spenser less simply an ideal and more of a fiction. It becomes more simply an image of fabrication, even while retaining its proximity to moral truth" (206).[20] While Anderson detects a decline in Spenser's confidence in the historical validity of antiquity in Spenser's treatment of it, Kendrick reads the "contradiction" as an emphasis on destiny.

> We find that Prince Arthur, the Redcrosse Knight, and Arthegal are persons struggling in a misty present from origins they know not towards a destiny that is hidden from them, needing the guidance of the prophet who has knowledge both of the past and the future: thus from the special view-point of his poem, Spenser presented us with a vision of the whole British History, whether performed or to be performed, as itself a destiny; and so he conveyed to us the idea that the past is evolutionary, a preparation for the future that in this case is a striving forward to reach Elizabethan England. (131)

We notice the omission of Britomart who is the vehicle for this very destiny that Kendrick talks about. "Evolutionary" history leading to the Tudors echoes Greenlaw's glorification of the Tudor myth. Yet what is interesting about Kendrick's analysis is his assessment of the knowability of past, present, and future: all are shrouded in uncertainty; lack of knowledge creates a need for a

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[19] Anderson, 202, 203.

[20] Unfortunately, it is not quite clear what specific moral truth we can derive from Spenser's antiquity; there seems to be a certain nostalgia for the Golden Age, as well as a sense of its obsoleteness (213-214).

prophet to illuminate both "the past and the future"; and it seems as if the characters themselves wander unawares "in a misty present." For Kendrick, the very shadiness and ignorance are prerequisite for a sense of destiny. One cannot help but wonder how the uninformed and unselfconscious state of these characters can contribute to their progress.

Kendrick's reading, moreover, goes against the grain of Renaissance concepts of history and contradicts Spenser's intent "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" (15).[21] According to Renaissance ideas of education, this aim, of course, should include a solid knowledge of and a critical reading of history. Politicians and leaders of state especially should know history so that they could guide public affairs and avoid past mistakes for the common good. For history teaches its readers to imitate virtue and shun evil.[22] As we will see,

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[21] The fashioning of a gentleman entailed rigorous training in history. Spenser cannot have been unaware of the irony of his choice of subject matter: "I chose the historye of king Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many mens former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of enuy, and suspition of present time." Arthur had not escaped the Brutus debate unscathed; as a descendant of Brutus Arthur was subjected to source criticism as well. And since none of the classical writers mention his routing of Rome or other military exploits, Arthur, Tudor national hero though he was, became part of the controversy. See, for example, Ferguson, 106, and Kendrick, 65.

[22] Some of the many treatments bearing on these commonplaces are Sir Thomas Elyot, The Book named the Governor (London: Everyman's Library, 1962), 228-231; Sir

Britomart does not represent an accomplished example of historical learning. Her poor example, however, could inspire a reader to do better.

Starting from a distinction made by Spenser himself in the letter to Ralegh between "poet historical" and "historiographer," Ferguson argues that Spenser "saw in those stories something of value as metahistory, something which could be used . . . to symbolize the greatness of the Elizabethan heritage and the prospects of Tudor England" (36). Again, Spenser's ambivalence is harnessed to the glory of the Tudors. However, the early British history as retold in The Faerie Queene does not bear out the desire for praise many readers want to see in it. The Brutus material does become "metahistory," but as sentimental, mythological, or destinarian history. For Spenser the story of British origin becomes also the occasion to investigate how the reading and interpretation of history itself functions in relation to previous history. Hence his emphasis on history-readers caught in the making of as yet unreal history.

Tudor propaganda or lipservice to an ageing Queen does not completely explain Spenser's "contradiction," his

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Philip Sidney, A Defence of Poetry (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1966); "Amyot to the Reader," in Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes, trans. Thomas North (London: Tudor Translations, 1895); and Jean Bodin, Method for the Easy Comprehension of History, trans. Beatrice Reynolds (New York: Columbia UP, 1945), 9-14 and passim.

wavering over the validity of the historicity of Brutus. Whether "Spenser did not wish to commit himself to any such expression of doubt"[23] or "had a change of heart on Brutus between 1590 and 1596,"[24] are in some ways moot points, since we could agree with either or both. Doubt about Brutus was not treasonous, and what does not work in history can work in epic, as Anderson points out. I don't think Spenser radically changed his mind; rather he might have reconsidered the value of an outspoken critique.[25] Since he dropped the critique from the View, he perhaps did not want to contradict himself within his own oeuvre, or echo Paridell's reading of Troy in Book III. And since epic demanded an origin, dynastic and temporal alike, in history, he might have taken Brutus as the lesser of two evils.

The other evil would have been Jean Bodin's claim that the French were the first founders of Britain, but were then supplanted by other invaders. Bodin makes this claim in the chapter "Criteria by which to test the origins of peoples"

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[23] Harper, 21. Even Camden did not commit himself in writing to a critique of Brutus. Such an equivocating stance seems to have been the rule in the late sixteenth century.

[24] Spenser's Prose Works, 310. Unfortunately, the editors do not give any hint as to what might have occasioned this "change of heart" during those years. Spenser had already used Brutus in Books II and III.

[25] His "exile" in Ireland did not put him in a position where he could voice criticism in as outspoken a manner as others could. In general, Brutus-bashing became almost as obsolescent as Brutus-boosting with advances in antiquarianism and historical research.

of his Method for the Easy Comprehension of History. This treatise on history was immensely popular and went through thirteen Latin editions between 1566 and 1650.[26] Bodin himself had been in the entourage of the Duke of Anjou during the French marriage negotiations, and he met Queen Elizabeth, Walsingham, and Leicester. During this visit Bodin achieved a certain degree of notoriety because of his arguments with the Queen.[27] Gabriel Harvey, who met Bodin at Cambridge, repeatedly mentions Bodin's work in his letters to Spenser.[28]

Both Bodin and Spenser were interested in the ethnic origins of various peoples; in the View Spenser experiments

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[26] Beatrice Reynolds, "Introduction," Methodus, x.

[27] See Summerfield Baldwin, "Jean Bodin and the League," Catholic Historical Review 23 (1937), 165-172. Bodin witnessed the execution of Edmund Campion in 1581, which occasioned his critique of how the Queen handled religious diversity. In the Methodus he describes Elizabeth's rule as a violation of divine laws and the laws of nature (253). Baldwin even argues for a possible link of Bodin to the Babington plot.

[28] See Leonard F. Dean, "Bodin's Methodus in England before 1625," Studies in Philology 39 (1942): 160-166. For Harvey's contact with Bodin see H. S. V. Jones, "Spenser's Defense of Lord Grey," University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature 5.3 (August, 1919): 34. The letters are in Letter-Book of G. H., 1573-80, ed. Edward J. L. Scott, Camden Society, n. s. 33 (Westminster: Nichols and Sons, 1884), 79 and 86. Harvey was also connected to Thomas Smith, who, as ambassador, met Bodin in Toulouse. During this stay in France, Smith wrote De republica anglorum which resembles Bodin's early work. See John L. Brown, The **Methodus ad Facilem cognitionem** of Jean Bodin (Washington: Catholic U of America P, 1939), 25. Jones, A Spenser Handbook (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1950), 379-385 detects echoes of the Methodus in Spenser's View.

with Carthaginian and Scythian origins for the Irish. More importantly, Bodin claims that all European nations are mixed and consanguineous, with a dose of Trojan blood.[29] In his eyes, this kinship should lead to "the good will and friendship of mankind" (335). Thus it becomes erroneous to make much of the antiquity of an origin or the longevity of a ruling dynasty. "Those princes seem to me to be gravely mistaken who trace the dignity of their noble rank from the earliest times or hope that it will be everlasting" (363). Bodin's list of extinct dynastic lines makes his point all the more forceful. Obviously Bodin's criticisms of national origins and legitimacy via lineage undermine the foundations of hereditary monarchies. They also bring into question the relevance of such material for an epic celebrating a dynasty.

It is not easy to assess Bodin's "Criteria by which to test the origins of peoples." He employs an etymological and pseudo-linguistic method for determining a nation's origin. Echoing Bodin, Spenser, too, mentions "Affiniytie of wordes and names" as a technique to "hunte out a probabilitye of thinges" when searching for historical origins (85). Bodin puts a more scientific spin on his linguistic method by looking at different languages and

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[29] Interestingly enough, Bodin does not discredit the existence and migration of Trojans. Rather, he argues against fabricated genealogies.

examining which words and roots they have in common.[30] When Bodin analyzes the origin of the Britons he claims that they are derived from the Gauls:

> evidence from linguistic remains indicates well enough that the Armorican Bretons are descendants of the Britons, because only those Britons who dwell in the narrow region of Wales understand the speech of the Bretons, as I have heard from the English. The combined authority of all historians also supports this view. But whence came these Welsh, if not from the Gauls? . . . If we grant that it was first called Albion by the Albion Gauls, it follows that Britain . . . was named by some other newcomers who had expelled the first settlers. (358)

Then Bodin launches into a linguistic and etymological explanation of who these invaders could have been:

> Then, too, among the Cantabrians there is a word breta which means earth . . . For this reason it seems probable to me that the Britons had their origin from the Cantabrians, who when first they saw the Island (as sailors are wont when land is seen) called it Britain. (358-359)

The Britons thus can trace their ancestry back to the Cantabrians, or today's Basques, that is a group of Spaniards. Bodin, however, does not explain why the

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[30] The tone of this chapter is puzzling; it is a tour de force in favor of French omnipresence. Bodin derives all nations from the Gauls, including the Trojans by a reverse migration. The editor herself notes that this chapter "runs counter to his professed dislike of nationalism" (xxiv). Julian Franklin points out the absurdity of "Bodin's 'corrections.'" But he refuses to comment on this chapter, maybe because it runs counter to Franklin's estimate of Bodin as a revolutionary historian. See Jean Bodin and the Sixteenth-Century Revolution in the Methodology of Law and History (New York: Columbia UP, 1963), 94. In a footnote, an early twentieth-century critic of Bodin simply calls these etymologies "spasshaft" or funny. See Fritz Renz, Jean Bodin. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der historischen Methode im 16. Jahrhundert (Gotha, 1905), 69.

Cantabrians would have felt compelled to settle in Britain, whether the discovery was a fishing accident (which seems most likely), or what drove them from their homeland.

Instead of explaining the motivation behind the Cantabrians' voyages Bodin cites "authorities" as further proof for his argument, and I think that this is where we find another reason for Spenser's non-committal and ambiguous use of the Trojans:

> I am convinced that they were sprung from the Cantabrians by the linguistic evidence, also by the very short stretch of sea, finally by the traditional belief of the inhabitants of the neighboring Hibernia, who say that they had the Hiberians (that is, the Spanish) as ancestors. (359)

The ironic role reversal in this passage shows Bodin's ridicule of, and even hostility toward, the British. To have the Irish cited as authorities on British history must have incensed every British reader. Undoubtedly even an antiquary would prefer the Trojans to this much less prestigious pedigree. Holinshed, in a defence of "our historie," accuses Bodin of "inconstancie" and of straying "in darkenesse."[31] But Bodin's "test" also reveals the absurdity of etymological origins: one just has to find one word in another language, breta for example, that almost matches a nation's name, Britain, and one can derive a country's origin (though admittedly with the help of

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[31] Holinshed's Chronicles. The Description of Britaine, ed. Vernon F. Snow (New York: AMS P, 1965), vol. 1, 6.

"traditional belief" or some other authority).

II

A similar method had, of course, been operative in positing eponymous founders for individual nations. This verbal tracing of history to a person who named the country is crucial for most Trojan-derived founders. Naming and appropriating the land go hand in hand: the founder takes possession by giving his name to the country. Thus history and origin are founded on and grounded in a person who has been converted into a land, a name that has become an identifiable and identifying label. Etymologies provide a language that preserves history that is too remote to be more than legend, history before the writing of history. In turn the land that bears the name preserves the memory of the person.[32]

The locus classicus for the conceptual and virtual relationship between names and their meaning, and between names and character, is Plato's Cratylus:

> for as his name, so also is his nature. Agamemnon (admirable for remaining) is one who is patient and persevering in the accomplishment of his resolves, and by his virtue crowns them, and his continuance at Troy with all the vast army is a proof of that admirable endurance in him which is signified by the name

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[32] For place names as the only evidence for historical proof, see also Michael O'Connell, "History and the Poet's Golden World: The Epic Catalogues in The Faerie Queene," ELR 4 (1974): 249.

Agamemnon.[33]

The correlation between Agamemnon's name and his actions proves that his name is true, and that he is true to his name. This mutually defining relationship also applies to genealogy by analogy: for rulers the reciprocity between their position and their character corroborates their right to rule. Genealogy becomes perpetuity, procreation becomes repetition.

> A king will often be the son of a king, the good son or the noble son of a good or noble sire, and similarly the offspring of every kind, in the regular course of nature, is like the parent, and therefore has the same name. (432)

This reciprocity between founder and founded represents a crucial link between etymology and lineage: as words bear witness to the truth of the past, so genealogy traces and transmits the qualities of a dynasty. Just as the original meaning of a word can be searched and found, so the original natures of peoples can be traced. For in etymology, as in genealogy, "origin defines essence." Because this essence manifests itself as a "living presence" throughout the word's transmission through time, "the source functions as

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[33] The Collected Dialogues of Plato, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Bollingen Series LXXI, 1973), 433. It seems as if in the Cratylus Troy also functions as the origin of etymology. Hector and his son Astyanax are examples for the connection between paternal and filial name. Even though the names only share one letter, "yet they have the same meaning," because for the etymologist "the change of all the letters, need not interfere with the meaning." Tongue in cheek, Socrates mentions yet a third name, "Archepolis," that has the same meaning as Hector and Astyanax: "ruler of the city" (432).

something perpetually present."[34] Therefore, to know the (past) origin means to know the (present) nature of something. With eponymous founders, lineage is based on etymology, and etymology grounds and enhances, but also contracts, lineage.[35] The contraction occurs because the emphasis on the founder condenses the intervening linearity of lineage. The tracing offers a certain stay against the vagaries of time and decay, because the source always lurks as a presence underneath the layers of accrued meaning and passing time. Thus this concept of origin and transmission is stronger than continuity, because it posits essence and presence as immutable and inalienable.

Spenser, too, uses eponymous and etymological derivations for ancestry in The Faerie Queene. He provides some of the well-known etymologies of Geoffrey of Monmouth. For example, in II.x.12 Brutus' companion Corineus to Cornwall, for example. He also invents etymologies for Kent and Devonshire, which derive their names from Canute and Debon respectively. However, the two most prominent etymological histories, those of the race of faeries and of Paridell, cast some doubt on the validity of this tracing.

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[34] Marian Rothstein, "Etymology, Genealogy, and the Immutability of Origins," Renaissance Quarterly 43.2 (Summer, 1990): 332-333.

[35] Obviously, this method also abridges and condenses linearity and lineage because of its emphasis on essence and its transmission. If, however, the inheritance and legacy are negative, as in the case of Paridell, repetition and stasis are the results.

For if etymology and lineage are to express meaning and continuity, defining characteristics have to be evident both in name and person. But the result of this process of signification in the faeries' and Paridell's genealogies only yields a tautological significance. Thus continuity turns into overwhelming sameness. In other words, temporality is suspended so that history does not happen, because it does not wholly pass into the past.

Guyon's Antiquitie of Faerie lond names Elfe as "the first authour of all Elfin kind" and Fay as "th' authour of all woman kind" "Of whom all Faeryes spring, and fetch their lignage right" (II.x.71). Most of their descendants are called Elf- with some suffix. Even though the history of faeryland is often read as a positive counter-example to the destructive history of Britain,[36] its "unreality" stands out all the more starkly: "seven stanzas of excellence, peace and power, undisturbed succession and order."[37] What works in some ways as praise for the Tudors, though, does not work as history, as the sweep and swiftness of the chronicle itself show. With the race of Faeries, the connection between etymology and essence, between word and lineage

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[36] Notably by O'Connell, 243. Idealization of the Tudors is certainly at work in the chronicle of faeryland, yet its juxtaposition with Arthur's Briton moniments on the one hand and Paridell's pedigree on the other create a more complex context. We cannot overlook the implications of these jarring resemblances.

[37] Harry Berger, Jr., The Allegorical Temper (New York: Archon Books, 1967), 104.

holds true: Prometheus calls his creation "Elfe, to weet/ Quick" (II.x.71). The chronicle has to hurry to contain them. The "mightie deedes" of the faeries' offspring "were too long their infinite contents/ Here to record, ne much materiall" (II.x.74; my emphasis).[38] The sheer number of praiseworthy deeds undermines their qualification as "braue ensample," so that their value as history becomes "ne much materiall" or irrelevant.

We may compare Brutus, Elf, and Fay to Paris as eponymous founders. Verbal tracings and similarities are even more obvious in Paridell's descent: Paris, Parius, Paridas, to Paridell; all come from the island of Paros that had been renamed by Parius (III.ix.36-37). The replication of the founder's name within the names of his descendants implies the narcissism of the Paris lineage. It also inscribes repetition in their lives: like his ancestor, Paridell lives "for faire Ladies loue, and glories gaine" (37). He most certainly is true to his name and descent. The irony here is of course that Paridell uses his pedigree as the culmination of his tale of Troy; Paridell does not so much derive from Troy as Troy, or rather the Paris side, culminate in Paridell. With this tale of illustrious ancestry Paridell seduces Hellenore and thus repeats Paris'

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[38] As Professor Nohrnberg reminded me, "ne much materiall" implies both an absence of relevance and of material.

seduction of Helen.[39] Paridell's self-serving intentions are evident. As revisionary historian Paridell abuses the story of the Trojan war, turns himself into an evil Aeneas, and manipulates history for his own ends. What is crucial about this episode is the response Paridell's distortion of history elicits from Britomart.

III

As I have argued above, the resemblance of Brutus' story to the fabricated genealogies and histories erodes the historical standing of Brutus as eponymous founder of Britain. The dialogue between Paridell and Britomart further calls into question the value of the story of Brutus as history and even as mythological history.[40] Britomart's attempt to salvage Brutus and Troy from Paridell's onslaught represents the first testing of her understanding of her "destiny." But the enactment of this understanding is fraught with pitfalls that reveal the deeper problem inherent in the Brutus origin.

It is here that Spenser's use of Troy unfolds itself in

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[39] See for example O'Connell, 255-257; Dubrow, 320-323; and Thomas P. Roche, Jr., The Kindly Flame (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1964) 62-65.

[40] See Robin Headlam Wells, Spenser's **Faerie Queene** and the Cult of Elizabeth (London: Croom Helm, 1983), 10-14; Wells discusses Spenser's use of Troy and Brutus in terms of "a fulfillment of the ancient prophecy that a British king would return to rule the land" and "as part of a divine historical plan."

all its complexity. Britomart first encounters history during Merlin's prophecy. This is not, as Heather Dubrow would have it, "History 101" (315)--after all Britomart learns more about her future and not so much about the past. The only mention of the past, one single stanza, refers to Britomart's Trojan descent:

> For from they wombe a famous Progenie
> Shall spring, out of the auncient Trojan blood,
> Which shall revive the sleeping memorie
> Of those same antique Peres, the heavens brood,
> Which Greeke and Asian rivers stained with their blood. (III.iii.22)

Merlin only tells her that she descends from the Trojans and that she will revive their lineage with Artegall. Thus she does not learn about history, but more about her own place in history; she is the nexus between a dead past and hopeful future. She almost becomes a new origin. Merlin's prophecy places the burden of the future on Britomart--it gives her a place in history--but she has to live towards it, she has to create it. Therefore Britomart's assessment and reading of the prophecy become crucial both for herself and for the reader. But Merlin's presentation of the past does not give Britomart much to go on. For the only specific instance of what the revival of "the sleeping memorie" might entail is a blood-bath, a consequence that is implied in the stanza's emphasis on these two meanings of "blood" in its rhyme

scheme.[41]

Andrew Fichter's reading of Merlin's prophecy points to Britomart's interpretation of the future of which she will be the origin:

> he presents Britomart with an interpretive choice . . . whether to regard history as an indeterminate cycle of loss and recovery, . . . or as a coherent, teleological process, conforming finally to the salvific, providential scheme.[42]

What is at stake here is the validation of the Tudors' place in history via Britomart's understanding of the future that will be their past. Spenser's equivocating presentation of the history, both in Book II and here, could prompt Britomart or us to combine Fichter's two options. What if the "cycle of loss and recovery" is the providential, though hardly salvific, scheme? Since, according to Fichter, Britomart's choice is between two interpretative options, the course of history remains the same, only her reading of it alters. Thus Britomart's response to Paridell becomes all the more crucial as evidence for this validation on which also depends the validation of The Faerie Queene as a monument to the Tudors. That is, the internal historical trajectory of The Faerie Queene as well as the poet's

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[41] In this sense, the tortured and precarious course of British history in Arthur's chronicle reifies the promises of lineage and legacy.

[42] Poets Historical (New Haven: Yale UP, 1982), 175. For Dubrow both Paridell and Britomart "offer cyclical versions of history," Paridell's "degenerative" cycle is opposed to Britomart's pattern of "growth and progress" (325).

employment of myth as a better version of history hinge on the heroine's words.

If, according to Sidney and Spenser, the poet improves on the reality of history by portraying things as they should be,[43] then Britomart as both the epitome and vehicle of this improvement should in her turn reflect an adequate understanding of history, even more so as it is her own history and so invokes a humanistic project of self-understanding. Britomart's reaction is triggered by the following stanza in which Paridell damns his own forbears and denies both a value of and a connection to the past:

> Troy, that art now nought, but an idle name,
> And in thine ashes buried low dost lie,
> Though whilome far much greater then thy fame,
> Before that angry Gods, and cruell skye
> Vpon thee heapt a direfull destinie,
> What boots it boast thy glorious descent,
> And fetch from heauen thy great Genealogie,
> Sith all thy worthy prayses being blent,
> Their of-spring hath embaste, and later glory shent. (III.ix.33)

Paridell's criticisms apply not only to Troy's hubris, but also to the hubris of those who want to claim Trojans as ancestors, and it sounds very much like Spenser's attack on Trojan-derived descent in the View. Just as the Trojans boasted descent from the heavens (via Dardanus, son of Jove), so later generations would boast descent from the Trojans. That is, Trojan descent is a vain and self-flattering matter, and Troy itself "now nought but an idle

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[43] A Defence of Poetry, 35-37 and "Letter to Ralegh," 16-17.

name." Moreover, Troy's latter-day degeneracy, the disintegration of the relationship between lineage and being, stems from the deeds of its offspring who have blemished and debased its worthiness and disgraced its original glory.

As one of this offspring Britomart begs Paridell to tell of Aeneas (40), after she compassionately laments the fall of Troy "In one sad night" (39). Her expression of grief makes it sound as if Troy did fall "in one sad night" which "makes ensample of mans wretched state,/ that floures so fresh at morne, and fades at euening late" (my emphasis). Yet what brought about that "one sad night"? The end of the Trojan war looms so large that it eclipses its causes and origin, that is its history. On the one hand the fall of Troy exemplifies the course of man's life from birth to death with all the misery in between. On the other hand, this all-encompassing and thus reductive reading of Troy denies the long war, its cause and course, and thus its deeper moral significance, of which Paridell is an example before Britomart's eyes. Despite the horror of Troy's fall, compassion for its fate alone does not do justice to its meaning.

For Britomart, however, this meaning lies in the survivors of Troy.

> Whenas the noble Britomart heard tell
> Of Trojan warres, and Priams Citie sackt,
> The ruefull story of Sir Paridell,
> She was empassioned at that piteous act,

> With zelous enuy of Greekes cruell fact,
> Against that nation, from whose race of old
> She heard, that she was lineally extract:
> For noble Britons sprong from Trojans bold,
> And Troynouant was built of old Troyes ashes cold.
> (38)

Her reaction is only partially motivated by compassion; she also remembers "that she was lineally extract" from the Trojans and that "noble Britons sprong from Troians bold." The syntax of this stanza obliquely connects compassion and self-awareness, pity and self-interest: "that piteous act" was committed "Against that nation, from whose race of old" Britomart stems. Yet Britomart cannot be seen as quite so self-serving as, for example, Dubrow wants to make her (324). For one thing, it is not clear how much Britomart really knows about the past; Merlin told her mainly about the future, and she does not seem to know much about Aeneas. In other words, her grounding in historical knowledge is weak.

Her contribution to the story is a reminder to Paridell that there is also Brutus and with him another kingdom. This means that the tale of Troy is not finished, but ongoing still.

> But a third kingdome yet is to arise,
> Out of the Troians scattered of-spring,
> That in all glory and great enterprise,
> Both first and second Troy shall dare to equalise.
> (44)

Her description of Troynovant, however, comes perilously close to another instance of the same hubris that caused the first fall of Troy. The third Troy, founded by Brutus who

could not "in small meares containe his glory great" (46),

> That it a wonder of the world is song
> In forreine landes, and all which passen by,
> Beholding it from far, do thinke it threates the skye. (45; my emphasis)

In her desire to revise Paridell's degrading version of Troy, Britomart tries to elevate the new Troy to heights that equal the first Troy's over-reaching ambitions. Even Paridell acknowledges the extent and tenacity of the Trojan origin of the British nation when he says,

> That of the antique Trojan stocke, there grew
> Another plant, that raught to wondrous hight,
> And far abroad his mighty branches threw,
> Into the vtmost Angle of the world he knew.
> (III.ix.47; my emphasis)

For the emerging Britomart a career-like evolution is at stake, whereas the accomplished seducer Paridell only has the immediate future (this very night) at heart. The crux of the matter is the way in which Britomart conceives this evolution. Eugene Vance has observed, her task "also includes a hermeneutical quest for the proper translation of antique legend into living language which is to be the medium of that new culture."[44] So far this "living language" sounds rather conventional, or perhaps even dangerous in its repetitiveness. Her inspired and compassionate reaction echoes what she heard from Merlin: she will be part of that genealogical "Tree,/ Whose big embodied braunches shall not lin,/ Till they to heauens

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[44] Mervelous Signals (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1986), 327.

hight forth stretched bee" (III.iii.22). Again heavenly aspirations define the very nature of this story, even though Spenser mitigates Trojan ambition with Trojan misery and readerly compassion. Britomart's transfer of this image from the genealogy of Merlin's prophecy to Troynovant that "threates the skye" constitutes the core of her understanding of this history. If genealogy, and the Trojan origin in particular, inspire their defenders, and Trojan descendants, with aspirations to grandeur, then their reading is located in part in the story itself. In order to overcome or find recompense for the fall of Troy the survivors become prone to repetition. The context of the passages I quoted is replete with allusions to the disaster of Troy, to its pain and suffering. And it is this emphasis on destruction that will yield at once another and a resurrected glory which informs Britomart's understanding.

Equipped with such tenuous though tenacious knowledge Britomart will go on in The Faerie Queene to live toward the future Merlin prophesied, she will make the history that will lead to Elizabeth whose lineage "doth itself stretch forth to heavens hight" (II.x.2; my emphasis). If Spenser undermines his own praises of Elizabeth with a reminder of the danger and over-weeningness of heavenly aspirations, he does so because it has become the only way to read Troy and Brutus. The price his epic pays for a history as it should be is the devaluation of its own historicity. Troy itself

threatens to fall again, as and because its survivors try to resurrect it. And their reading reduces Troy's true meaning even as it makes Troy the foundation of their beginning.

Britomart does not witness the Troy-like fatality of the events of the next morning: Hellenore sets fire to Malbecco's castle and runs off with Paridell after she has secured Malbecco's wealth for them.

> The rest she fyr'd for sport, or for despight;
> As Hellene, when she saw aloft appeare
> The Trojane flames, and reach to heauens hight
> Did clap her hands, and ioyed at that dolefull
> sight. (III.x.12; my emphasis)

In a conflation of Sparta and Troy, of one cause of the Trojan war and its end, Malbecco becomes another Menelaus, while his castle becomes another Troy. Yet the stanza establishes a more important connection: in the context of another burning Troy "heauens hight" relates not to the fame of the Trojans and their descendants but to the flames that raze their city. In this parody ambition and fame find their correlates in fire and ashes. The ashes Paridell and Hellenore leave behind are by no means "cold" (III.ix.38). Even though this episode invokes the Trojan war, the reader of The Faerie Queene clearly recognizes that the Trojan connection has a parodic side as well: if the glory of Troy can be repeated, so can its fall. In fact its fall and the repetition of the fall in succeeding empires are prerequisite for a continuation of the Trojan line. How else could a translatio imperii be effected?

This westering of empire and defeat, from Troy to Rome to Britain, is conducted as a spatial and temporal movement away from Troy. The Aeneid already testifies to the problems inherent in this process. In a refusal to let go of the past, Aeneas initially seeks to rebuild replicas of Troy rather than to give it a new form. On the verge of renouncing these futile efforts, however, Aeneas repeats the Trojan war in Latium in his rivalry with Turnus, a descendant of the kings of Argos, as I pointed out in chapter II. Such inability to get out of the Trojan cycle of history, is inherited by the British descendants of Aeneas. But for Virgil, the nevertheless necessary distancing and changing causes "a transition in the way history is perceived." As poet and prophet Virgil attempts to gain "a new and more tolerable perspective on loss."[45] However, as poet and prophet, Spenser is at a remove from his source, since it is the second resurrection of Troy. As I have pointed out above, it is nearly impossible for Spenser's characters, either Merlin or Britomart, to establish a meaningful connection with the world of Troy. The genealogical link is worse than tenuous, because after seven hundred years "Brutus sacred progenie" die without a trace (II.x.36).

The transmission of virtue through genealogy requires that there be an acknowledged time in the past when people

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[45] Fichter, 6.

were virtuous, brave, courageous, honest, and good. Poets have always had recourse to the Golden Age for such a time.[46] For in The Faerie Queene antiquity is typically a time without corruption, vice, and decay. Yet Spenser also knows that this Golden Age was also the time when Ate roamed among people who were to become founders of races and dynasties. Harvey and Bodin argued against the possibility of a Golden Age,[47] because contemporary conditions were infinitely better. Instead of acknowledging any kind of heroism in antiquity, Bodin even reduces the men of this past to pirates and "monsters" (297). This does not leave much room for an epic poet to glorify historical experience.

The analysis of history, the probing of cause and effect, is complicated by the didactic purpose of history, and epic. Both history and epic, as Sidney and Spenser define the genres, are to teach the reader by example.

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[46] In The Teares of the Muses Clio complains about man's use of genealogy for his own ends.

> But they doo onely strive themselves to raise
> Through pompous pride, and foolish vanitie;
> In th'eyes of people they put all their praise,
> And onely boast of Armes and Auncestrie:
> But vertuous deeds, which did those Armes first give
> To their Grandsyres, they care not to atchive.

For Clio genealogy itself has declined to mere pride without action. Boasting and vanity replace a true descent that would be visible in "vertuous deeds." The present is void of any distinction so that it will leave no "moniments of time." Clio blames this decay both in deed and in memory on "The foes of learning" and "The sonnes of darknes and of ignoraunce" (272). The Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser, ed. William Oram et al. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989), 273.

[47] Harvey, Letter-Book, 86 and Bodin, Method, 296.

Exemplarity requires an awareness of context, both past and present, if it is to fulfill its purpose. For exemplars can only function if they are imitated and applied. A reader of history, then, has to understand both the context of the exemplar and his own to figure out whether or not the exemplar applies to him. Timothy Hampton quite rightly points out that this moment of application is the crux of exemplarity.[48] In the writing of exemplary history context is downplayed or even disregarded in order to elevate a person or an event above his or its context. By disregarding the larger context for that "one sad night" Britomart reads Troy's story unhistorically. Because Britomart is part of a lineage that has been repeatedly presented as glorious, valorous, and noble she has little precedent for a more critical version (other than Paridell's equally biased version). This allows her to privilege the reading of Troy as a story of glory over the reading of Troy as a tale of fallen pride.

Spenser offers these two interpretations to the reader, but in a biased manner, since the negative reading is provided by Paridell. Thus, ironically, Paridell's reading of Troy and his repetition of the Trojan events with Hellenore make him a warning to the reader. The process of critical reading that Britomart ignores, or cannot perform,

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[48] Writing from History (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990), 10-14.

is transferred to the reader. Historical perceptiveness is to be exercised in a manner resembling Paridell's reading, but to be applied to Britomart's, and thus Elizabeth's and England's, origin material. We find an application of Paridell's reading of history in John Speed, the author of The History of Great Britain. He derides the Trojan origin as dishonorable, because Troy was conquered three times, which reflects poorly on the rulers of Troy. Thus were

> the Troians themselues made as it were the scum of a conquered people. . . . so let BRITAINES likewise with them disclaime their BRUTE, that bringeth no honour to so renowned a Nation, but rather cloudeth their glorie in the murders of his parents, and imbaseth their descents, as sprung from Venus that lasciuious Adulteresse. (emphasis on "imbaseth" mine)[49]

This passage echoes Paridell's reading of Troy:

> What boots it boast thy glorious descent,
> And fetch from heauen thy great Genealogie,
> Sith all thy worthy prayses being blent,
> Their of-spring hath embaste, and later glory shent.
> (III.ix.33; my emphasis)

The word "embaste," "imbaseth," or "embaseth" as the marginal note in Speed spells the word, is not very common.[50] What is more striking, however, is that Speed uses the word in the same context as Paridell. But he turns Paridell's blame of the descendants of Troy against the fathers, and the goddess mother, in Troy. Where Paridell proved himself to be a fitting descendant of Paris and a

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[49] The History of Great Britain (London, 1611), 166. I discussed this passage earlier in Chapter III.

[50] See The Oxford English Dictionary, **s.v.**

true member of that particular genealogy, Speed focuses on the inception of that genealogy. He reverses the historical process of genealogy through his critique that is to deracinate the origin. Speed does not conduct his critique in historical terms, but in terms derived from the discourse of genealogy: honor and fame. History, once the handmaid of genealogy, separates itself from its companion by repeating the process of its joining.

Even if epic makes demands different from a political tract, and allows room for myth and for moral rather than historical truth, the author must invest the act of grounding his history, no matter how spurious it is, with this moral truth. In The Faerie Queene the moral of the Tudor reign is expressed, on the one hand, in an overtly optimistic Elfin chronicle, and on the other, in the chaos of the British chronicle. Even Spenser's own contribution to the British history, his insertion of Britomart into the dynastic line, shows that epic history making entails more than praise. The incompatibility of epic demands and historical givens, between epic truth and historical truth, calls into question not merely the historical claims of a specific epic but epic itself. In Book IV it seems as if Spenser's frustration over the question of origins led him to unleash the origin of the origin (or rather one of the origins of the origin)--Ate, the goddess of discord who

spoiled Peleus' wedding and threw that fatal apple among the guests. The gathering of origins around Brutus that we encountered in Geoffrey is undone in Spenser's probing of the meaning of the story for England. The proliferation of origins that Spenser contends with leads him to find the enemy of meaning and coherence itself in the origin of the Trojan war.

"Another Troy to Burn":[1] Historical Determinism and Historiographical Revisionism in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida

The title of this chapter intimates my argument about Shakespeare's representation of Troy. His play is an occasion to examine Renaissance notions of history and the making of history. In contrast to Spenser who tried to find meaning in the history of Troy and its inheritance by the Britons, Shakespeare turns to the origin itself. He produces characters who are obsessed with their survival in the future through becoming material for histories. Shakespeare fuses England's mania for a Trojan descent with an inquiry into what kinds of history the origin itself generated. Troilus and Cressida is an analysis of becoming an origin by making history.

A picture of the origin had been made available by Chapman's translation of the Seaven Books of the Iliades (1598). Two years earlier, W. Fiston had issued a "corrected" version of Caxton's Recuyell. Yet the temporal vicinity of these two books only emphasizes the gulf between them: Caxton's warriors were medieval knights and Homer's were ancient heroes. Strangeness and familiarity ignited a flame that ultimately consumed itself. This second burning

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[1] This line borrows from Yeats' poem "No Second Troy," The Poems of W. B. Yeats, ed Richard J. Finneran (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1983), 91.

of Troy culminates with Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: this play represents the most frustrating and demystifying retelling of the Troy story, which led one critic to say that "Shakespeare deals a mortal blow to the story."[2] The themes of commerce, consumption and lechery, images of dissolution, indecision, syphilis, the portrayal of moral corruption, manipulation, and brutality--all convey a most disturbing picture of what once was epic material and the historical origin of the Britons.

This degradation and devaluation of a noble subject calls into question, and even undermines, two Renaissance concerns that are intimately connected with history: fame and exemplarity. In a way, to become an exemplary character was to achieve fame; and, conversely, famous characters were also exemplary. How can human beings overcome their own inevitable mortality and forge a place in time? Before Troilus and Cressida Shakespeare deals with these issues in the Sonnets and Love's Labour's Lost. The young men in Love's Labour's Lost want to survive the ravages of "cormorant devouring time" and become "heirs of all eternity." In the Sonnets Shakespeare threatens the young man with the effects of "devouring time," and promises him eternal life in his poetry which is more durable than "marble" or "monuments." One way to counteract this future

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[2] Piero Boitani, "Eros and Thanatos," The European Tragedy of Troilus, ed. Piero Boitani (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1989), 285.

oblivion is, of course, to create one's own posterity and live on in one's children; another is to achieve immortal fame. With this second option we find a correlative obsession with the past: the people who became famous are the ones we know from history. The purpose of history itself is preservation of the past so that noble deeds are rewarded and can furnish examples for readers in time to come. Fame and oblivion become enemies vis a vis their respective relationship to history. In his Chronicle, Hall had railed against

> Obliuion the cancard enemie to Fame and renoune, the suckying serpent of auncient memory, the dedly darte to glory of princes, and the defacer of all conquest and noble actes."[3]

Hall praises Geoffrey of Monmouth for rescuing Brutus from oblivion and enshrining him in history. Writing history or "memory by litterature is the verie dilator and setter furth of Fame. . . Thus Fame triumpheth vpon death, and renoune vpon Oblivio, and all by reason of writyng and historie" (v-vi).

Much earlier Petrarch played out his obsession with survival in times to come in the Letter to Posterity and he wrote letters to antiquity as well which attest to the successful survival in time of his addressees. In The Rape of Lucrece Shakespeare has his heroine figure out her present position via a comparison with the past: the mural

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[3] The Vnion of the two Noble and Illustr Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke, ed. Sir Henry Ellis (London: 1805), v.

of the Trojan war. These simultaneous strains of projection and retrospection are closely related attempts to overcome the brevity of human life and are combined in Troilus and Cressida where the characters picture themselves as already viewed by posterity. In the last section of the chapter I turn to a practical and prominent application of the Trojan heroes to a contemporary noble at the end of Elizabeth's reign--Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex. More than any of his contemporaries Essex was compared, by himself and by others, to a number of historical figures. This peculiar method of interpretation illustrates Renaissance habits of reading history. Since Cicero the reading of history was geared towards didacticism and exemplarity and thus towards practical application of the lessons of the past. In the case of Essex, these comparisons reflect not only hopes and ambitions that were pinned on the Earl, but also his own anxiety about how he wanted to be viewed by his contemporaries (a problem that would, of course, affect his reputation for posterity). The clustering of historical allusions around Essex signifies not merely flattery, but an attempt to read the present via recourse to the past and thus to ensure and even create a specific result in the future. Yet one had to be a good reader of history to master the negotiation between past and present, to select an appropriate appropriation of historical figures. The drive to model and mold oneself on past examples locks one

into a role that should fit one's circumstance.

I

When Cressida tells Troilus that "all lovers swear more performance than they are able" (III.ii.83-84), she voices an awareness of the disproportion between promise and performance that other characters in Troilus and Cressida share with her. Her remark stands in a series of discourses that concern the discrepancy between a present project and its later outcome. Earlier, Agamemnon cites the disappointment of the Greek army's hope to conquer Troy as the reason for the "grief," the "checks and disasters" (I.iii.1,5) that pervade his camp. Their expectation of victory indeed "fails in the promis'd largeness" (5). In the Trojan council scene Hector abandons his ethical qualms about the keeping of Helen in favor of "our joint and several dignities," the warriors' inherent and attributed qualities (II.iii.194). Troilus' answer to his brother elaborates on Hector's argumentative shift: "fame in time to come" (203) and "promis'd glory" (205) rather than the "moral laws/ Of nature and of nations" (185-86) are at stake for the Trojans.

What these characters have in common is not only their awareness of a discrepancy between expectation and execution. Ironically, they further express a determination to embark on the process that will bring about the

fulfillment of a future that is envisioned as already loaded with apprehension and doubt. In their willingness to disregard their disappointment or reservation, these characters exemplify the prevailing tendency of the participants in the Trojan War: they live for the future of their fame in song and story. Severed from any relevant relation to the past, they are rooted in a present that only counts in so far as it will yield a glorious, gratifying future, be that the end of the war or the consummation of the love affair. In their endeavors to ensure the fulfillment of their plans the characters use time, and the exigencies of a war they themselves created, as excuses and justifications for their inconsistencies. Ultimately, "the end crowns all" (IV.v.223), as Hector says.

At the same time, however, their plans are constantly counteracted or deflated so that the hoped-for future is repeatedly undermined, and their schemes do not bring about the planned results. This places the characters and their actions in a "perpetual present," because "everything takes place in and ends in the present."[4] Yet if the plot of Troilus and Cressida is thus static and sealed within the stage according to Bayley, how can other critics consider time as an ominous force or "a vengeful deity," even, in this play, "the most powerful of Shakespeare's dramatis

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[4] John Bayley, "Time and the Trojans," Essays in Criticism 25.1 (January, 1975), 58 and 57.

personae," or the "arch-enemy" of the characters?[5] That the characters in the play quite frequently refer to time and use time in personifications does not necessarily imply that time actually is the power it is said to be. Although critics quite often see time as a devastating agent, it is the characters themselves who cause events or actively manipulate given situations according to their ends. Jonathan Dollimore observes that "Time is not a negative force in this self-created world but just time, passing." In the general aura of decay and formlessness time functions like "a surrogate universal" which furnishes the characters with the means to impose meaning and structure on their disintegrating lives.[6]

The characters' orientation toward the future, however, presents an aspect of the play that has hitherto passed, if not unnoticed, at least without thorough analysis. The disjunction between the characters' most prominent concept of time and their actual situation in time is crucial to our understanding of one of Shakespeare's most frustrating dramatic products. For it bears upon a similar disjunction for the audience: the one between their expectations and the

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[5] Norman Rabkin, "Troilus and Cressida: the Uses of the Double Plot," Shakespeare Studies 1 (1965), 279.
Kenneth Palmer, "Introduction to Troilus and Cressida," (Arden edition), 68.
G. Wilson Knight. The Wheel of Fire, 65; as quoted in Rabkin, 276.

[6] Radical Tragedy (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 46.

play's performance. The play draws on well known material, yet it does not portray the events and the characters as we know them from history books and literature. While it "calls attention to its [...] dependency upon a prodigious literary and rhetorical legacy,"[7] at the same time, this derivative material is reworked in a way that subverts Homeric epic and Chaucerian romance alike.[8] In other words, the audience is constantly reminded of their knowledge of the story, but the play refuses to substantiate these reminders with any manifest similarity or a sense of the standard consensus.[9]

At the center of this puzzling relationship lies the difference between the characters' and the audience's

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[7] Elizabeth Freund, "Ariachne's broken woof": the rhetoric of citation in Troilus and Cressida," Shakespeare and the Question of Theory, eds. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York: Methuen, 1985), 21.

[8] Cf. Rosalie Colie, Shakespeare's Living Art (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974), 317. Colie's reading of Troilus and Cressida is highly interesting and perceptive; although she hints at the subversive quality of Shakespeare's reworking of his material, the main focus of her chapter is on language and figures of speech. To a certain extent I agree with her on Shakespeare's attack on literary tradition, yet I hope to be able to show that he does more than attack tradition.

[9] Kimbrough and Presson refer to a host of plays, written or performed at the same time as Troilus and Cressida, which also deal with the Troy story and treat it in a demystifying or derogatory way. Cf. Robert Kimbrough, Shakespeare's **Troilus and Cressida** and its Setting (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1964), passim, and Robert K. Presson, Shakespeare's **Troilus and Cressida** & the Legends of Troy (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1952), 1-9 and passim.

expectations about the play's outcome. These internal and external expectations contend with each other, and out of this opposition emerges the significant use of time in and for Shakespeare's play. The effect of this paradoxical relationship led Bayley to say that Troilus and Cressida presumably "denies and dissolves history"(59). In what sense, though, is the material "history"? And what did Shakespeare aim at when he endowed the characters of Troilus and Cressida with a strong sense of their future? I will argue that the seemingly contradictory relation between the futurity in the play and the anachronicity of the play points toward a more significant revision of the Troy material than mere debunking would imply. Elizabeth Freund touches upon a vital point, when she reads Troilus and Cressida as a dramatization of the Renaissance writer's belatedness and his simultaneous quest for originality (21 and 34). What we ultimately find in Troilus and Cressida is a devastating statement on the making and receiving of assumptions about heroism and history, be that in the Renaissance or today.

The initial step toward the rethinking of the reception of history in the early 16th century is the estrangement from supposedly familiar material.[10] Bayley argues that

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[10] The context of intertextualities goes beyond Chaucer and places the matter of Troy in a chain of versions and revisions that go well into the Middle Ages. Chaucer himself drew from precedents for his version of the love story, most notably from Boccaccio, who drew from Benoit,

Shakespeare's use of dramatic time in the play

> seems . . . to deny that the famous and the legendary ever existed as time has reported them, or that we would ever find anything at any moment in history beyond scraps of idiotic dialogue and meaningless event. (59)

This reading would deny both history's validity and fame's possibility. All the audience's admiration for and veneration of the Trojan heroes was a grand delusion. The play is not only located in "a perpetual present," but, according to Bayley, also "denies and dissolves history." This impression of a dissolution of history, here synonymous with the Troy story, stems from the discrepancy between our ideas about the play's material as they have been formulated by the reading of literature and history books and the portrayal of the matter of Troy in Troilus and Cressida. Bayley's analysis retrospectively perceives the play as not living up to traditional notions about the famous and heroic. The characters do not act as the books tell us they should; the plot is incongruous with other stories we have heard in so far as it preempts presuppositions derived from them. So from this retrospective point of view, the play can be seen as an anti-historic or anti-legendary disclaimer, as denying and dissolving history.

Yet in the early seventeenth century, the status of

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who drew from Dares and Dictys (cf. Palmer, 27). The point is, however, that the Troilus and Cressida story was incorporated by Shakespeare into the Troy story for the first time (cf. Robert Kimbrough, 172).

Troy as history had become problematic. By this time, Troy had become a mainly literary tradition with potential that had been exploited in lessons about history.[11] Rosalie Colie emphasizes the ethical loss of "the epic world [as] a model for elevated behavior which, when reduced to . . . vulgar acts, leaves us with no alternative glory" (321). Kimbrough mentions that "the fall of Troy was accepted as historical fact," which he later modifies to "the Elizabethan tendency to accept the matter of Troy as history" (42 and 176). One can use "history" in this double sense throughout a discussion of Troilus and Cressida, because it is appropriate to keep in mind the unresolved status of the matter of Troy at the time when Shakespeare wrote the play.[12] For Shakespeare's play, like Geoffrey's history before him, is located precisely in the gap between history and legend. Troy functions very much like a

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[11] The rhetoric of exemplarity that clings to the characters in the Trojan war made them survive the onslaught of historical suspicion. The major characters' status as paragons of virtue, be that chivalric or public, will be important in the last part of this chapter.

[12] Arthur B. Ferguson makes the point that "by the end of the [sixteenth] century, [the Troy story and Brutus] could be safely ignored, if not yet quite so safely attacked," that is, its dehistoricization was well under way. Up to Shakespeare's time the role of the poet as historian was still debated by Renaissance thinkers. "So historical poetry may be either wholly true, wholly false, or, as in Homer's 'fabulous or mixed report' of the siege of Troy, a mixture of both truth and falsehood. In any case, the poet shared with the historiographer a didactic function, a duty primarily to interpret the narrative of events in an ethical context." Arthur B. Ferguson, Clio Unbound (Durham: Duke UP, 1979), 109 and 33.

metaphor for the origin of history and literature: a doubtful origin that uncovers the complicity and corruption of both.

Bayley is right in saying that we get the impression of "a perpetual present" in Troilus and Cressida. For nothing ever seems to get beyond the play itself: it seems hermetically self-contained, systematically defying our expectations and refusing to move us. But this disjunction between our knowledge of the story of Troy, and the characters' enacting of this story for us, only too easily invites us to judge the characters according to our literary and historical knowledge: whereas the play itself shows the characters as working toward their fame, that is their recognition through posterity. To put the matter quite simply, the characters in Troilus and Cressida have not read the Iliad, or Chaucer for that matter. Yet they would like to have, or maybe even should have, for "what they reverence is time considered teleologically--the process completed, somehow ended so that durable judgments can be made."[13] They are concerned with their survival in time to come, and this concern for a more far-flung future becomes the motivating force for their strategies to resolve the conflicts in their more immediate future.

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[13] R. A. Yoder, "'Sons and Daughters of the Game': An Essay on Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida," Shakespeare Survey 25 (1972), 15. They could not have read the Aeneid though it would have been most informative.

What is primarily at stake in the Trojan council scene are not moral or ethical values, but rather the desire to survive the ravages of time, to be preserved for the future. The moral status of past political action is transformed into potential glory in an effort to validate that past in the present. "Helen must needs be fair/ When with our blood you daily paint her thus" (I.i.90-91), "she is a pearl/ Whose price hath launch'd above a thousand ships" (II.ii.82-83), and "the soil of her fair rape/ [is] Wip'd off in honourable keeping her" (149-150). By an amazing argumentative and ideological tour de force the Trojans twist their past transgressions and their violation of "moral laws/ Of nature and of nations" (II.ii.185-86) into a foundation for fame and future glory; they plan "to brazen it out. "Hector articulates the schizophrenia inherent in the Trojan situation, and he uses the third person to do so:

> [...] thus to persist
> In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,
> But makes it much more heavy. Hector's opinion
> Is this in way of truth: yet nevertheless,
> My spritely brethren, I propend to you
> In resolution to keep Helen still
> For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependence
> Upon our joint and several dignities.
> (187-194)

Right and wrong are no longer issues here, but have been replaced by "dignities," by the value both inherent in and attributed to a human being and his self-worth. If the Trojans stopped fighting and returned Helen, they would

invalidate their past actions and the deaths of their brothers in arms, obfuscate or even obliterate their self-esteem and identity. Because their future renown is based on their past actions, they cannot critique themselves and admit a mistake, especially not a momentous one.

Troilus' answer to Hector reveals this concern for self-esteem and glory in all its clarity. To prove their glory rather than be convicted of "having spleens" the Trojans have to continue fighting despite their losses in "this cormorant war" (6) and the dubious value of what they are committed to defending--the possession of Helen:

> Why, there you touch'd the life of our design:
> Were it not glory that we more affected
> Than the performance of our having spleens,
> I would not wish a drop of Trojan blood
> Spent more in her defence. But, worthy Hector,
> She is a theme of honour and renown,
> A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds,
> Whose present courage may beat down our foes,
> And fame in time to come canonize us;
> For I presume brave Hector would not lose
> So rich advantage of a promis'd glory
> As smiles upon the forehead of this action
> For the wide world's revenue.
> (195-207)

It is quite obvious that Helen is depersonalized and turned into "a theme of honour and renown," which is to perpetuate the characters' present reputation and thus corroborate their aspirations for future renown. In other words, the warriors have lost sight of the original quarrel, the past has not only been transformed but also erased because their historical self-awareness has been surpassed by their desire for a recognition of their deeds by posterity. So rather

than put an end to warfare, they prolong it through an endless succession of daily fights--they maintain a present that lacks a legitimate past, but live in hope of creating a future on its own terms.

This future and its "promis'd glory" have to be achieved through action, through a constitution of the present that is simultaneously directed by and toward a future. Obviously aspiration and achievement can be at odds with each other, as Agamemnon remarks concerning the disappointment of "promis'd largeness":

> The ample proposition that hope makes
> In all designs begun on earth below
> Fails in the promis'd largeness: checks and disasters
> Grow in the veins of actions highest rear'd.
> (I.iii.3-6)

Agamemnon attributes the "checks and disasters," which unsettle the Greek camp, to the discrepancy between what is hoped for and what actually occurs. But rather than proceed in his analysis of the present, he goes on to refer their plight to the "protractive trials of great Jove" (20), which are to reveal "constancy" (21) and "distinction" (27) in the warriors. Thus Agamemnon reinforces more than checks the discrepancy between present and future, makes visible what he wants to cover up--the fact that there is too much "distinction," that is, emulation and factiousness, in the Greek camp.

The importance of fame for warriors and politicians is quite obvious; it is one way to motivate them in their

cause. The lovers, too, commit themselves to the future. In their vows of faith, Troilus and Cressida bequeath their names as metaphors or even paradigms to lovers to come. Pandarus cannot abstain from meddling, and seals the "bargain" (III.ii.195) with his summary of future proverbs. The vows terminate a verbal war, which forms the first encounter between Troilus and Cressida and at the same time the prelude to the bedchamber. So in a sense, it is quite premature to provide posterity with proverbs.

Interestingly enough, Troilus pledges his name to writing, to future memorializing, which he also claimed as the major incentive for continuing the war in the council scene. He aims at double fame, so to speak, as glorious warrior and as faithful lover. As lover he is to serve as simile in "rhymes," "As truth's authentic author to be cited,/ 'As true as Troilus' shall crown up the verse/ And sanctify the numbers" (III.ii.172 and 178-81). He bequeaths himself to posterity as incarnate coinage for truth in order to prove his truth in the present. For Colie, Troilus forges here as in the council scene "a literary justification for . . . action," which shows him to be well acquainted with the literary and cultural values from Homer to Shakespeare (327 and 328). The effect of Troilus' testament for future lovers is that "the phrase 'As true as Troilus' shall relieve them of further search for proper bombast--that is, he kills literary creation, too, as he

pronounces his simile the height of literary creation."[14] Colie's interpretation of the derivative nature of Troilus' language points out the oxymoronic status Shakespeare gave his characters. Within the play they strive for what they already possess in the audience's and the critic's minds.

In Cressida's vow this futurity, which is already inscribed in the characters' words, is carried as far as the end of time. Her sense of time and medium of transmission into the future are very different from Troilus'. Her name will be written not on paper but in memory; her "world to come" (171, Troilus) is apocalyptic, in the sense that she envisions destruction and an end of time.

> If I be false, or swerve a hair from truth,
> When time is old and hath forgot itself,
> When water-drops have worn the stones of Troy,
> And blind oblivion swallow'd cities up,
> And mighty states characterless are grated
> To dusty nothing--yet let memory,
> From false to false, among false maids in love,
> Upbraid my falsehood.
> (181-189)

The harshness and bleakness of Cressida's vow sharply contrasts with Troilus' romantic and enthusiastic will to posterity. In a sense she goes beyond his oath: Troilus' name will be preserved in writing and will be quotable for others, whereas Cressida's name will be preserved in memory. Her name will also be quotable by oral transmission, but its

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[14] Ibid., 324. To read Troilus as if he knew literary tradition is to disregard and conflate the opposition between his perspective and posterity's; we can only read him as such, because we already know his proverbial fame.

endurance goes beyond writing and humanity--until "mighty states characterless are grated to dusty nothing" (my emphasis).[15] Her description of what a future could be surpasses the far-flung future of enduring fame which is so important for the other characters. It even includes the inverse of the warriors' fame--oblivion that could obliterate their honor.

Ulysses uses this potential effect of time in his remonstrance with Achilles. In conjunction with the manipulated lottery and the elevation of Ajax, his discussion of pride and time concludes his efforts to mobilize the recalcitrant "draught-oxen" (II.ii.108):

> Time hath my lord a wallet at his back
> Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,
> A great-siz'd monster of ingratitudes.
> Those scraps are good deeds past, which are
> devour'd
> As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
> As done.
> (III.iii.145-50)

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[15] Kenneth Palmer explains "characterless" as "without any written or inscribed mark: hence unrecorded" (footnote to line 186). Immediately after she learns that she is to be exchanged for Antenor (IV.ii.104-08), Cressida refers to these vows in order to calm herself. She paraphrases Troilus' claim to be as true "as earth to center" (III.ii.176) and as true "as iron to adamant" (176), which two form a magnet "Drawing all things to it" (IV.ii.108). Palmer explains "center" in Troilus' line as "of the globe itself." Kimbrough points out that "for Elizabethans the center of the earth was the dregs and waste material of creation," 86. This excursion into Renaissance cosmology puts quite a damper on Cressida's potential earnestness, yet even before this scene Cressida voices reservations about a love affair with Troilus and plays on dregs: "More dregs than water," she espies in the fountain of their love (III.ii.66).

To prove one's qualities once is not enough to keep the "great-siz'd monster" at bay, but "Perseverance, dear my lord,/ Keeps honour bright" (150-51). Yet, however correct Ulysses' statement might be, the context does not corroborate it. Ulysses instructs the Greek generals to "pass strangely by him [Achilles]/ As if he were forgot" (39-40) and he will then apply "derision medicinable" (44). So the whole discussion between him and Achilles is part of Ulysses' strategy and manipulation. Terry Eagleton argues that Ulysses employs temporal continuities in his urging "perseverance--pursuing a constant project over time--in the very act of deconstructing such continuities into an eternal present." A soldier's performance in battle, or any other act for that matter, can be appropriated by others and can be recontextualized in their own stories so that the initial act is "devour'd".[16]

Apart from urging "perseverance" Ulysses paints a picture of Achilles as the future laughing stock of "young Pyrrhus" and "all the Greekish girls" (III.iii.208, 210). Achilles has been foregoing battle glories because he is in love with Polyxena. Ulysses' "derision medicinable" is to apply his knowledge of Achilles' love for the enemy's daughter in his version of Achilles' future:

> But it must grieve young Pyrrhus now at home,
> When Fame shall in our islands sound her trump

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[16] William Shakespeare (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 62.

> And all the Greekish girls shall tripping sing
> 'Great Hector's sister did Achilles win,
> But our great Ajax bravely beat down him.'
> (III.iii.208-212)

More than philosophical arguments does this picture of Achilles as future ignominious soldier motivate him to reconsider his position. Again "reputation is at stake" (226), and Achilles himself knows that his "fame is shrewdly gor'd" (227). Fame serves as antidote to Achilles' doting, and even Patroclus reprimands him for his effeminate behavior, which is out of place "In time of action" (218).

Before this crowning irony Ulysses develops his discourse on the detrimental effects of time by intimating that time is "envious and calumniating" (173) for man; in this it is like Troilus' "injurious Time" (IV.iv.41), but also unchanging in itself:

> For beauty, wit,
> High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,
> Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
> To envious and calumniating Time.
> One touch of nature makes the whole world kin--
> That all with one consent praise new-born gauds,
> Though they are made and moulded of things past,
> And give to dust that is a little gilt
> More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.
> (171-179)

Lodged in this passage is the idea that time only repeats itself, that there is nothing truly new, but that history continually presents itself in new disguises of the past (176-79), so that this recurrence in not recognized. In the context of Renaissance philosophies of history this passage is crucial: it speaks against the possibility of learning

from the past, of the effectiveness of exemplars. The onlooker's inability to detect the repetition is due to a lack of memory just as well as manifest envy and fragmentation.[17] After all, what is praised is what is new, or it is made seemingly new through poor memory. If we recall Eagleton's remark on confiscation or appropriation of others' deeds in this context of man's failure to read the past, it becomes difficult to see how "Time" could be the enemy. After all, it is "the whole world" who "praise new-born gauds" or follow what is in fashion at the present moment. In this way Ulysses collapses time into a "perpetual present"; because the past is forgotten, awareness of the past does not shape or sharpen the characters' perceptions of the present. In the end of the play, the self-defeating attempt to evaluate a present without past or a standard of value is emblematized in the gorgeous Greek, whose sumptuous armor only hides a "Most putrefied core, so fair without" (V.viii.1). Yet it was Hector who caused the soldier's putrefaction with his sword that "hast [its] fill of blood and death" (4).

In both Ulysses' analysis of the present and Hector's encounter with the Greek soldier, we find an argument that absolves the beholder from any participation in the

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[17] Interestingly enough Ulysses' conception of time as "calumniating," that is to say as fragmenting, destroying evidence which leads to misrepresentations and misinterpretations, is connected to Cressida's vision of a "characterless" time, see Palmer's footnote to line 174.

assessment of the present as well as in the forming of the present. In both cases the observer, man evaluating "dust that is a little gilt" and Hector desiring the armor, does not acknowledge his involvement in the act of praise or putrefaction. Thus they avoid the conflict at hand--their active shaping of the present--and evade this issue by blaming it on something else, time, or someone else, the dead soldier. This evasiveness, or failure to recognize their share in the world's condition, is also evident in Troilus, who, like Ulysses, thinks of time as a destructive force.

When Troilus learns that Cressida is to be exchanged for Antenor, he blames time for his loss:

> . . . injury of chance
> Puts back leave-taking, jostles roughly by
> All time of pause, rudely beguiles our lips
> Of all rejoindure, forcibly prevents
> Our lock'd embrasures, strangles our dear vows
> Even in the birth of our own labouring breath.
> . . . . . .
> Injurious Time now with a robber's haste
> Crams his rich thiev'ry up, he knows not how.
> (IV.iv.32-37 and 41-42)

"Injurious Time" is the war that Troilus urged to perpetuate only the day before in the Trojan council. In fact, the present "injury of chance" is only a byproduct of premeditated, political plotting aimed at belatedly justifying Helen's abduction and becoming famous for it. Only the day before did Troilus have the chance to put an end to the "chance of war" (Prologue, 31), but their "joint and several dignities" (II.iii.194, Hector) and "fame in

time to come" (203, Troilus) weighed heavier than laws and truth. When Troilus afterwards complains about "injury of chance" and time, he is denying his own responsibility. Time becomes a "metaphysical scapegoat [...] whom Troilus blames for what clearly the time and this world have done [...] and for what he is doing."[18]

II

With this reduction of time to a conceptual entity without dimension, blameable and citable whenever convenient, the only role time plays for the characters is that of a "mechanism of evasion."[19] And what the characters desperately try to evade and escape is the reality of the war. In her brilliant essay on Homer's Iliad, Simone Weil describes "war's necessity [as] terrible," because its commitments turn human beings into objects that are just not yet dead.[20] War is such a terrible force "that the human spirit will not submit to it so long as it can possibly escape" (21). Troilus and Cressida takes place during a truce, but the underlying reality of the play is the Trojan War. The men are first of all soldiers and "for the soldier

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[18] Yoder, 21.

[19] ibid., 15.

[20] Simone Weil, The **Iliad** or the Poem of Force (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1945; reprint of the 1945 November issue of Politics, trans. Mary McCarthy), 21 and 4-5.

death is the future, the future his profession assigns him" (22). So they escape into a more pleasing and rewarding idea of the future--that of victory and fame.

Although the war is based on the characters' actions and decisions, it can get out of hand and manifest an independence of its own creators. Weil's metaphor to describe the world of the Iliad is force. Living in a world constituted by force, the characters are deprived of an awareness of the implications of their actions and of their situation in time:

> These men, wielding power, have no suspicion of the fact that the consequences of their deeds will at length come home to them . . . at the time their own destruction seems impossible to them. For they do not see that the force in their possession is only a limited quality; nor do they see their relations with other human beings as a kind of balance between unequal amounts of force. (14)

In Troilus and Cressida Troilus is certainly unaware of the fact that his stance in the council has anything to do with his loss of Cressida. Hector does not suspect that his chivalry toward Achilles will be rewarded with the Myrmidons' spears shot through his body. Agamemnon and Achilles lack any idea of the consequences of their involvement in the war that goes beyond victory and reputation.

> The relation of destiny and the human soul . . . is fraught with temptations to falsehood, temptations that are positively enhanced by pride, by shame, by hatred, contempt, indifference, by the will to oblivion or to ignorance. (35)

Weil's analysis of the lurking dangers of war can be seen in

the context of the characters' attempts to keep at bay the random destructiveness of the war. Hector's honorable fight, Agamemnon's ceremonial welcome of the enemy, Ulysses' speech on degree, all attempt to function as stabilizers against cruelty, decay, and duplicity. But, importantly, no corresponding deeds follow up on the promises. Hector makes a strong case for the return of Helen, but he has already sent the challenge to the Greeks and resolves for the contrary of what he argued. Agamemnon, as someone who tends to be overlooked by people who do not know him, exhausts his leadership in rhetorical flourishes. And when Ulysses eloquently defends degree as the necessary means to regain and maintain order and thus effectiveness, he proposes to restore these by a faked lottery and exploits the very factiousness he wants to remedy. In the end Achilles' arms are not unlocked by a concern for his future reputation but by blind hatred and infuriated emotion.

Apart from these analysts, debaters, and strategists whose intentions are directed toward the future, we find in the play other characters whose connection to the future is stronger than mere scheming and hope: the prophet who knows and tells the future, the very <u>time</u> the other characters are trying to figure out and influence. The prophets are not rooted in or are only barely connected to their respective communities, Cassandra being regarded as mad and Calchas as the homeless and disregarded traitor. Rather than enhance

their participation in the daily events, their prophethood removes them from the other characters, alienates them from the present. They are lifted out of their time, and this disconnection from their realities entails a loss of identity, which is enforced by the other characters. They call Cassandra mad, and Calchas Trojan, something that he is not any more.

With respect to Calchas, however, the character of prophet is more complex. Despite his detachment from the present, he does participate in the action of the play and he does so by trying to commensurate the future and the present--he precipitates Cressida's exchange for Antenor. At an opportune moment he begs for his daughter, and his plea highlights the discrepancy between promise and performance we have already observed:

> I do beseech you, as in way of taste,
> To give me now a little benefit
> Out of those many register'd in promise
> Which, you say, live to come in my behalf.
> (III.iii.13-16)

So far the Greeks have not lived up to the contract--but Cressida's "presence/ Shall quite strike off all the service I have done" (28-29), that is, "the sight I bear of things to come" (4). Apart from voicing his own immediate and personal concerns, Calchas explicitly states the disproportion between promise and requital that is so fundamental to the play. For the real prophets more than for any other character, this dichotomy between expectation

and execution shapes their behavior and station in the present because they know what the outcome will be. If we take into account that Antenor is said, in Chaucer's Troylus and Criseyde, to have opened the Trojan gate for the wooden horse, then Calchas' request for Cressida in exchange for this future traitor could be read as his active involvement in the production of the end of the war, and ironically, of Cressida's future.[21]

The prophets' connection with the future, their knowledge or intuition of things to come, establishes the link with the audience, who possess the very same knowledge of the outcome of both war and love. The other characters enforce this connection by disregarding or degrading the prophets. Cassandra foretells the wrong kind of future, wrong because it does not fit into the scheme of the warriors; Calchas is a traitor, who defected to the Greek camp without being welcome there as a person, though his message pleases the generals. The futility of the prophets' knowledge is comparable to the futility of the audience's knowledge. The play does not match our ideas about the famous and heroic, nor about the nobility of the lovers, so that we are constantly unsettled in our reception.

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[21] In his introduction Palmer remarks that "it is not clear whether or not Shakespeare believed that Calchas knew how Antenor would betray Troy" (68). Nevertheless, Calchas takes pains to describe Antenor's importance; especially the word "wrest" potentially implies not only Antenor's present station but also his future "manage" (III.iii.25) of Trojan affairs.

Rosalie Colie offers one possible reading of the estrangement in Troilus and Cressida:

> Shakespeare has attacked literature itself at its very source, turning upside down the Homeric values, neither making them problematic (as we might expect from his usual practice) nor humanizing them, but degrading them to trivial hypocrisies designed to cover appetite . . . he also undermines the greatest of English poets among his own predecessors. (317)

That Shakespeare would do so "in a period which openly idolized Homer" and "when Chaucer's reputation was reaffirmed" (318), is significant in itself. But there were other plays that frankly debunked the Troy material in "an attempt . . . to introduce a 'new' tradition of the Trojan War,"[22] which focuses on the decadence of the involved parties. Although decadence plays an important role in Troilus and Cressida and Thersites is its major spokesman, to limit the play to this theme does not really account for its intertextuality. Thersites himself is prisoner of the present his words espouse, thus reinforcing the "perpetual present" of the play and in turn highlighting the other characters' attempts to escape into the future. Shakespeare's attack goes against the literary tradition, even the source of Western literature, as Colie quite rightly has it. The quality of this attack, though, is richer than degradation or toppling of Homeric values. Homer's epic shows the characters endowed with a heroism that reveals them to be at once human and god-like in a time

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[22] Presson, 3.

of cruel and embittered warfare. Yet there is a host of mediators between Homer, Chaucer and Shakespeare, so that Shakespeare's revisions mainly go against the medieval tradition, even though this tradition has its favorite exponents.

In the course of its repeated reworking, the matter of Troy has become stock material for metaphors, exemplars, moral and ethical values, as well as the notion of heroism. As Colie notes, all these ideas come out of literature

> and they are despoiled by literary means--as if the playwright were showing us how automatically and uncritically we take Achilles and Hector, Helena and Ulysses, Ajax and Agamemnon as paragons of their kind. (322)

But do they really become nothing but cliches, as Colie goes on to argue? Does Shakespeare present us with a picture that is to prove that all our concepts of nobility, heroism and the like originate in literary cliches (322)? If so, I would like to carry this point a step further.

As we have seen so far, the characters want to become famous: the play depicts them as caught up in the process of working toward their future, as investing their energies in the shaping of the present that will yield the desired results. The play takes place during a truce which provides both sides with an opportunity to contemplate their situation. The Greeks have to come to terms with their seven year-long failure to defeat Troy, and the Trojans are once again asked to return Helen. Yet both councils seem

utterly pointless; strategies rely on manipulation and do not materialize in the end, and arguments are revoked as soon as they are most strongly put. Everything seems to peter out, to lose itself in nothingness, to surrender to forces other than the ones invoked. Their attempts to bring order into the chaos backfire on them; the very activity recapitulates the chaos of the war. The discourse engendered by fighting and destruction answers to nothing but a repetition of its own vocabulary--only the fall of Troy might have some meaning in a world bent on defending or defeating it.

The characters' orientation toward futurity is one such attempt to give their existences meaning. Memory will let their names survive what their bodies will not. The incessant din of war can be dimmed only by an endless repetition of their names and stories in the future. This repetition has been provided by posterity in the form of numerous accounts of the Troy story. By juxtaposing the literary tradition of the play's material with the futurity of the characters' desires, Shakespeare manages to write against a tradition without being absorbed into it.

> The repeated play with anachronicity compels us to read forwards and backwards in a strain against foreknowledge which briefly puts in doubt the authority of history, as if it were not determined but <u>newly enacted</u>. (my emphasis)[23]

Shakespeare has the characters meet us half-way, so that the

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[23] Freund, 32.

period of doubt is prolonged, the play seems more and more to be "newly enacted." Yet I would suggest that this doubt in the authority of history points precisely toward the way in which history is being understood or determined: as indeterminate. To perceive the play as newly enacting what is present in our foreknowledge not only briefly suspends the authority of history, which after all generated the foreknowledge, but works against the possibility and reliability of authority and history.

Troilus and Cressida affords us a perspective on history, be that literary or otherwise, which reveals the characters as being caught up in the process of living toward the fulfillment of their hopes and plans. One segment of the Troy story is taken and thrown into relief as an example of how history originates. The characters are placed in a potentially historical situation; their hopes for the future, that is their hopes to make history, continually overshadow their assessment of their present. Thus they overlook that they are already making history in that very present, while they are living toward a future that is supposed to preserve, not so much their present, as their plans. What we see in Troilus and Cressida, then, is not yet another rendition of the characters' fulfilled plans, their fame and nobility, but rather an attempt to write an initial account that portrays the origin of a well-known story. Instead of simply debunking a tradition,

Shakespeare newly historicizes the Troy story by revealing its realistic, bleak, cruel, and chaotic starting point. This palimpsest thus functions as an anatomy of the making of history and of history's relevance for a nation who tried to derive its existence from Troy and its descendants.

Shakespeare's picture of ancient heroes is anything but flattering and it certainly dampens the glory of Trojan descent. But this view is mitigated by portraying the characters as striving toward a future that is, by Shakespeare's time, already a past--a highly mediated past at that. By turning to the Troy story in ovo Shakespeare also points to the fact that what has come down to us via tradition is a painted, and even tainted, picture. After all, the Trojan legacy has been fabricated by this very tradition. This behind-the-scenes view lets the walls of Troy burn anew, so to speak, in order to throw light on its dark history of origination and transmission. When Rosalie Colie said, in a passage quoted above, that the heroes of Troy have been "despoiled by literary means," she refers to the politics of history that literature makes and Shakespeare unmakes. Inevitably, the continuous appropriation of the past for the present, the up-dating of Troy for contemporary value systems, erodes the origin and removes it further and further into an irretrievable past. Taken this way, Shakespeare's play "deals a mortal blow to the story," as Boitani observes, not only because it

radically demystifies the material, but also because the return to the origin makes us aware of what is was like to be in Troy and that the participants were made into heroes.[24]

Our preconceived notions of the warriors as "paragons" (Colie's word) are already intimated in the play. When Ulysses coaches Achilles on how to survive the effects of "envious and calumniating Time" (III.iii.174), he inadvertently, I think, voices the idea that the past repeats itself, but that because we prefer to look for glory, we are not aware of this fact:

> One touch of nature makes the whole world kin--
> That all with one consent praise new-born gauds,
> Though they are made and moulded of things past,
> And give to dust that is a little gilt
> More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.
> (III.iii.175-179; my emphasis)

This passage is supposed to persuade Achilles to rejoin the fighting troops, because otherwise his fame will be dusty and others, who are less heroic, will be remembered as more glorious. Yet deeds are not enough to fashion heroes; cultural memory will have to contribute its consecration to the hero and thereby condone his status. This work of cultural memory is unreliable: it is, like all judgment, prey to its own weaknesses of perception and preference. Thus the very possibility of historical exemplum is

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[24] It is important here to remember that, as I pointed out earlier, the Prologue denied reliance on authorship, or literary authority, to set the scene for the play.

questioned. How can one really learn from the past? How can the didactic use of the past truly function? And does history happen if there is no one to record it--and to magnify one cause over another? The makers of heroes are susceptible to subjectivity, and the whole process of generating historical example is selective by nature. It is important to remember in this context that history for the Renaissance, in imitation of classical Roman lore, was didactic, and that paragons were crucial to the effectiveness of history's lessons.[25] Due to this didacticism, history had to be presented in a rhetorically persuasive form, and many treatises on rhetoric specifically discuss history and exemplarity as touchstones for the orator's art.[26]

> And as History, which bears witness to the passing of the ages, sheds light upon reality, gives life to recollection and guidance to human existence, and brings tidings of ancient days, whose voice, but the orator's, can entrust her to immortality?[27]

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[25] See for example Myron P. Gilmore, "The Renaissance Conception of the Lessons of History," Facets of the Renaissance, ed. Wallace K. Ferguson (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963), 73-101 passim and George H. Nadel, "Philosophy of History Before Historicism," History and Theory 3.3 (1964), 291-315, passim.

[26] For example, Cicero, Quintilian, even Plutarch make a case for rhetoric and the educational purpose of history in his Lives. Moreover, during the Renaissance history was taught as a subcategory of rhetoric in the universities, see F. J. Levy, Tudor Historical Thought (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967).

[27] Cicero, De Oratore, trans. E. W. Sutton (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1942, Loeb 348), 225; II.36.

Making history and making a persuasive argument are in dangerously close quarters--sometimes only rhetoric can make history. Significantly, Sidney replaced the orator with the boring and obnoxious historian in his A Defence of Poetry where he lets the historian use Cicero's lines to proclaim, not history's, but his own importance: "I am lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae" (my emphasis).[28] But exemplarity was not confined to history:

> The ancients' use of "example" was rich and varied, ranging from the sample of merchandise by which the seller tried to persuade the buyer of the quality of his wares to the precedent in law or history by which the orator tried to do the same thing with his arguments.[29]

The same method the merchant employs to sell wares, the orator or historian uses to sell his goods, his values. Praising wares and selling merchandise, on the one hand, and persuading to virtuous action and deterring from evil, on the other, are conducted in the same manner. Trades and deals via examples deliver history.

We may recall wares and merchandise from Troilus and Cressida, where the same tools are used for very different purposes. In the Trojan council scene when the Trojans debate Helen's deliverance, Troilus' argument for the

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[28] Sir Philip Sidney, A Defence of Poetry, ed. J. A. Van Dorsten (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1966; rpt. 1986), 30.

[29] Nadel, 296. Crucial here is a passage from Cicero's Ad Herennium, trans. Harry Caplan (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1954), 247; IV.9. Here the use of exemplum is compared to selling wares, the example functions as the bait for the customer.

keeping of Helen focuses on the soiled status of his wares, i. e. Helen:

> We turn not back the silks upon the merchant
> When we have soil'd them, nor the remainder viands
> We do not throw in unrespective sieve
> Because we now are full.
> . . . . . .
> Why, she is a pearl
> Whose price hath launch'd above a thousand ships,
> And turn'd crown'd kings to merchants.
> (II.ii.71-73 and 82-84)

Troilus uses the example of soiled silks to explain why the Trojans cannot return Helen: she's been stained through use. Helen is a ware in the war between the Greeks and Trojans. Kings, the agents of history, have become merchants in the pursuit of the trade in women. From the very beginning Troilus and Cressida does not distinguish between commerce and history: trading and dealing between the Trojan walls and the Grecian camp are the activities that are to make history.[30] Rhetoric, the medium for the creation and dissemination of history and of historical example, is too versatile to be contained in its separate areas. In Troilus and Cressida rhetoric operates in all its fields of applicability. Thus the play discredits the trustworthiness not only of tradition but also of rhetoric as conveyor of the past. In Troilus' words, it all becomes "Words, words, mere words" (V.iii.108).

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[30] Antenor is exchanged for Cressida, and the reason for the war is the abduction of Helen in retaliation for the kidnapping of Hesione. Pandarus is a trader in and of the flesh, and Troilus is substituted by Diomed.

III

Such criticisms of history and the values history teaches are present in the play's presentation of chivalry, the proleptic anachronism. The medieval Trojans and Greeks had all been knights, and the values of chivalry, such as service for the lady, were still operative in Elizabethan culture. For some critics, the medieval values are one side of a two-sided picture. The Trojans' chivalry indicates their moral standing which is, of course, superior to the Greeks':

> The Trojans are on the whole chivalric, Medieval, idealistic, honourable, romantic, intuitive, emotional, effeminate, self-abandoning and submissive in love; believing in infinities of love and honour. The Greeks tend towards a more Renaissance viewpoint; they are expedient, realistic, rationalistic, reasonable (in a narrow sense), masculine, self-centered; overmastering rather than gentle; believing in the finite, the physical and possible, as opposed to the Trojan values of magnanimity and transcendence.[31]

Although this is quite an assembly of attributes, it is interesting to note that even our contemporary ethics would endorse the Trojans' values with a few exceptions (effeminate, submissive, for example). The Greeks, by contrast, sound Machiavellian and slavishly pragmatic. The Trojans endorse a value system, chivalry, that is oddly misplaced in their own time, but also in Elizabethan time. Even though Elizabeth fostered the codes of chivalric behavior, it became more and more evident how inadequate and

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[31] Frederick Turner, Shakespeare and the Nature of Time (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1971), 108.

ineffectual this behavior proved in court politics. The transition from chivalry to Realpolitik found its most particular expression at Elizabeth's court in the warring factions of Essex and Lord Cecil.

Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, was the most popular and prominent courtier in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign. More than any of his contemporaries Essex was compared, by himself and others, to a number of historical figures. This peculiar method of interpretation reflects Renaissance habits of reading history. Since Cicero the reading of history was geared towards didacticism and exemplarity and thus towards practical application of the lessons of the past. In Essex' case, these comparisons reflect not only hopes and ambitions that were pinned on the Earl, but also his own anxiety about how he wanted to be viewed by his contemporaries. The clustering of historical allusions around Essex signifies not merely flattery, but an attempt to read the present via recourse to the past and thus to insure and even create a specific result in the future.

In the past critics have been tempted to compare Elizabethan court factionalism with the Trojan War.[32]

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[32] For example Tucker Brooke, Essays on Shakespeare and Other Elizabethans (New Haven: Yale UP, 1948), 72-77. James E. Savage, "Troilus and Cressida and Elizabeth Court Factions," University of Mississippi Studies in English 5 (1964), 43-66; John Channing Briggs, "Chapman's Seaven Bookes of the Iliades: Mirror for Essex," SEL 21.1 (inter 1981): 59-73; and Eric S. Mallin, "Emulous Factions and the

Written in the aftermath of the failed Essex rebellion, during a time when ancient stories were in vogue, when "the problems, personal and national, of the past bore on present difficulties," Troilus and Cressida almost invites political allegory.[33] In 1598, at the juncture between the height of his power and his decline, Chapman dedicated his translation of Homer's Iliad to Essex. In his dedication he casts Essex as an example of Achillean virtues.

> TO THE MOST HONORED now living Instance of the Achilleian vertues eternized by divine HOMERE, the Earl of ESSEXE, Earl Marshall &c.[34]

Chapman's affiliation with Essex, his patron, and the explicit comparison in the dedication establish ground to conclude that Essex is also Shakespeare's Achilles, as G. B. Harrison does.[35] Chapman carries his dedicatory zeal even further and addresses Essex as Achilles in a passage that makes Essex the fulfillment of Homer's prophecy. For Chapman, Essex is even more heroic than Achilles who was

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Collapse of Chivalry: Troilus and Cressida," Representations 29 (Winter 1990): 145-179.

[33] G. B. Harrison, Shakespeare at Work 1592-1603 (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1958), 219.

[34] Allardyce Nicoll, Chapman's Homer vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1967), 503.

[35] op. cit., 219. However, Harrison does not further investigate the implications of this equation. Where does that leave Hector? What does that say about Shakespeare's attitude toward Essex? Achilles is not a flattering allconfusion serves a thematic purpose: it is none other than the first consul after whom Britain is named. Thus he first establishes the Britons as an indepe

Geoffrey combined and extended thematic material from Gildas and Nennius, who did the groundwork for historians dealing with the remote past. More importantly, he filled the gaps that his precursors found and left; more than Nennius, Geoffrey establishes links between founders and political ideals. The two genealogies in Nennius, different though compatible, are fused into one: Britto takes Brutus' name and Brutus takes Britto's history. This conflation of the founder's life with the consul's name unifies the early history of Britain.[18] Instead of two rival versions we have

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an origin rooted in the life of one person. Geoffrey fleshes out the rather sketchy biography of Britto in Nennius, an extension that, next to his transformation of Nennius' rudimentary Arthur figure into a world conqueror, represents his major contribution to the history of early Britain. The result is a revision of the meaning of British history.

As with Nennius' Britto, Brutus' birth presages disaster for his family. But the prophecies for the unborn child differ and inaugurate Geoffrey's revision of the origin story. Unlike Britto, who "will be hateful to all men," Brutus "after he had wandered in exile through many lands . . . would eventually rise to the highest honour" (54) ["Pluribus quoque terris in exilium peragratis ad summum tandem culmen honoris perueniret" (223)]. During his exile, he wanders into Greece where he finds the descendants of Helenus, who live enslaved to the descendants of Pyrrhus. The outcome of the Trojan war has determined the fates of the three younger generations. Under his leadership the enslaved Trojans want to gain their liberty "from the subjection of the Greeks" (56) ["a seruitute grecorum liberarentur" (225)]. Once the Trojans have rallied around

Brutus and Assaracus, a slighted Greek noble of Trojan descent, Brutus sends a letter to Pandrasus, the king of the Greeks. His challenge, however, does not allude to the Trojan war. He bases his request for liberty on the noble descent of the Trojans from Dardanus:

> The people sprung from the illustrious line of Dardanus have withdrawn into the hidden depth of the forests, for they have found it intolerable that they should be treated in your kingdom otherwise than as the purity of their noble blood demands. . . . Rather you should pardon them, for it is the natural aim of everyone in captivity to strive to return to his former dignity. (56)
>
> [Quia indignum fuerat gentem preclaro genera dardani . . . . aliter in regno tuo tractari quam serenitas nobilitas eius expeteret sese infra abdita nemorum recepit. . . . . set uenia adhibenda cum cuiusque captiui communis sit intentio uelle ad pristinam dignitatem redire. (226)]

Because of their origin they are entitled to freedom. The Trojans would even live like "wild beasts" ["ferino ritu"]. if only to live in freedom. If Pandrasus should refuse to allow them to live in freedom, they will "go off to join the peoples of other lands" (57) ["ad aliarum terrarum nationes . . . abscedant" (226-227)].

The ensuing battles prove Brutus a successful but merciless leader. The final conquest of the Greeks reenacts the fall of Troy in reverse. A traitor among the Greeks, like the Greek Sinon among the Trojans, enables Brutus' soldiers to slaughter the Greeks at night. After their formidable victory the Trojans finally decide to leave Greece, because they could not hope to be left in peace, as

Membritius explains to the vacillating Trojans. The desire for vengeance for their slain relatives would keep the Greeks in arms, while the departure of the Trojans would ensure safety and avoid a repetition of the Trojan fate. Thus the Trojans can break out of the cycle of conquest and retribution only by migration to new territory or by joining with other peoples. Brutus' marriage to Pandrasus' daughter Ignoge seals the pact worked out between him and the captured king. Three hundred and twenty-four ships depart from Greece.

This synopsis is enough to show that Geoffrey focuses on the Trojans' desire for liberty and freedom. Hanning quite rightly observes that

> This traditional theme of ancient historiography states rhetorically the way in which history is moral or at least meaningful: when a nation impairs the freedom of others, it encounters resistance and arouses its would-be subjects to great deeds in defense of liberty. (141)

In Aquitaine as well they encounter a tyrannical king and are forced to move on. After the war with the Gauls Brutus founds Tours, not for Turnus the slain enemy, but for his nephew who is slain by the Gauls. The motives of expiation for Turnus' slaughter and a desire for government free of tyrants in Nennius have been replaced with a single-minded drive for independence and liberty. The new motivation ignores the repercussions of the Trojan war while endorsing the government of a strong leader. This difference between redress of and retribution for wrongs leads to a vindication

> If there be one among the fair'st of Greece
> That holds his honour higher than his ease,
> That feeds his praise more than he fears his peril,
> That knows his valour and knows not his fear,
> That loves his mistress more than in confession
> With truant vows to her own lips he loves,
> And dare avow her beauty and her worth
> In other arms than hers--to him this challenge.
> (I.iii.264-271)

The analogy is tempting and almost convincing, but so far critics have failed to come up with motives for Shakespeare's recasting of Troy in the guise of the court.[40] What does the Essex-Troy connection mean? Why Troy? Where did it originate, did it play any role in the courtiers' self-understanding? Essex's Irish campaign and his rebellion were political disasters; as in Troilus and Cressida performance fell short of its promise. Or is there something of both Achilles and Hector in Essex? Like Shakespeare's Achilles, Essex had a tendency to sulk, to leave court when he did not obtain what he wanted. Like Hector chasing the "one in armour," Essex blamed others for his demise and labored to justify and explain his rebellion.[41] If Essex is such a composite, what does that mean for the political allegory? In the following I will

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[40] Tucker Brooke says that Shakespeare "is, however, subconsciously, anatomizing the England of the dying Elizabeth," 76; and Savage just says "that there is much more reflection of contemporary events in Troilus and Cressida than commentators have noted," 43.

[41] See Jardine, 277-388. Bacon heavily edited transcript of the trial was published after Essex execution and used in sermons and proclamations, see Jardine, 385-88.

argue that we don't necessarily have to square off the characters in the play with historical personages; such attempts only complicate and ultimately impoverish the play, because it doesn't lend itself to neat, topical equations. But the events of the years before Shakespeare wrote Troilus and Cressida, his connections with the Essex-Southampton circle, and his reworking of prominent issues furnish a background that casts light on the already shattered walls of Troy.

Toward the end of his lengthy dedication Chapman counterpoints his praise of Essex as the culmination of what Homer envisioned with the use of Achilles as exemplum for Essex:

> it wilbe worthie little less than admiration of your apprehensive judgement to note in many thinges the affinities [ancient strategems and diciplines of war] have with your present complementes of field--the orations, counsailes, attempts and exploits not to be exceeded by the freshest brains of this hote-spirited time, the horror of arms endlessly thundering, piety, justice, valour and royaltie eternally shining in his soule-infused verse. (507)

Affinity and applicability combine to make Essex's affinity with the Homeric "ancient stratagems and disciplines of war." In this curiously overriding anachronism Chapman makes Achilles both precedent and parallel to Essex who is invited to evaluate and recapitulate Achilles' accomplishments.

Essex himself offers us documentary evidence of the relevance of Troy for Elizabethan England. In the same year

as Chapman's Homer, Essex wrote and circulated a pamphlet addressed "To Maister Anthonie Bacon," in which he defended himself against accusations of war-mongering. In June 1598 he was charged with the publication of this Apologie, but denied any knowledge of or hand in it.[42] In this pamphlet Essex seems to have picked up on Chapman's strategy and seen Elizabethan politics toward Spain in terms of the Trojan war. In his Apologie, Essex argues that he prefers peace to war because war is so horrible, and he has experienced its hardships and losses. He goes on to compare war to disease which only a skillful physician can effectively cure. For this end it is sometimes necessary to apply harsh medicine.[43] Then Essex assesses the political implications of Spain's offers for peace:

> But do they offer treate and mean not peace? What is then their meaning? If you will have me to interprete, I will tell you. Their first maine attempt against England, was in 88. from that time to this present is full tenne yeares, the just time of the siege of Troy, And now they see open force cannot prevaile, they in shewe retire and give over armes, but they have prepared a Sinons horse, which cannot enter if we cast not down our walles. But because we are thought more credulous then the Trojans were, the bare letter of a base beggerly traiterous fugitive, assuring us that good which is meant, is the uttermost stratagem they use to deceive us with. (sig. B4v)

The danger Essex sees is a repetition of the fall of Troy

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[42] Harrison, Elizabethan Journals, vol. ii, 282. The work was finally published in 1603.

[43] An Apologie of the Earl of Essex (London, 1603), sig.A2v-A2r. The passage about the rigorous application of medicine echoes Ulysses' stratagem in Troilus and Cressida.

brought about by the gullibility of the Trojans. His advice, however, would revise that fate. The analogy with Troy serves as an historical example that allows its interpreters to learn from history and not to make the same mistakes. The analogy works on the basis of Spain's ten-year long "siege" of England, which now threatens to end in another betrayal--"a Sinons horse" in the shape of politicians who want to negotiate peace. According to the Queen and her ministers, this interpretation went way beyond their evaluation of the present situation, as well as their budget.

Essex's indictment of the ones who would "cast down our walles" simultaneously places him in the role of defender--of Troy, of England. A sense of futility and the inevitable repetition of the past pervades the passage, but it is also fuelled with a determination to prevent the evoked destruction. Argumentatively, Essex's procedure is similar to Hector's in the Trojan council: initially he paints the horrors of war, the necessity for peace and its benefits, one of which are unrestricted trading possibilities, and then he turns to the equal necessity of war. The connecting link between these two arguments is the image of disease and the physician's craft:

> But though warres bee diseases, yet I thinke it better to suffer some sicknesse, then to venture uppon every medicine: But to trust an enemies faith, when his perfidie shal undoe, or extremely endanger us, and infinitely advantage himselfe, were Medicum haeredem facere. It is not cure to bring a state from a

> doubtfull war, to an unsafe treatie. It is no more then to put a feverous bodie, out of a hotte fit into a colde. To conclude, as un unskilfull Phisition may be weakening a naturall bodie, with his medicines bring it from tertian or quartan fever into an hectique, so an unprovident statesman may with conditions or treatie, so disarme a state of the friendes reputation, and the strength it hath, as the cure will prove farre worse then the disease. Therefore it is not the name of warre or peace, but the circumstances or conditions of eyther of them, that should make us flee the one, and imbrace the other. (sig. A2r)

The resemblances to Troilus and Cressida are legion: disease, medicine, political security, trust, the force of circumstances.

But Essex's use of Troy as an analogy points to the method of reading politics through historical example that I outlined earlier. Apart from being a rhetorical ploy that conjures up unspeakable dangers for the descendants of the Trojans, Essex's comparison represents a juncture in his own political self-definition as well. While he casts himself here in the role of defender of the kingdom, as someone who can avert the repetition of historical disaster, he revises this position after the Queen does not accept his plan for full-scale warfare. In August 1598, while the problems in Ireland were coming to a head (as so often), Essex wrote to the Queen in an attempt both to justify himself and to pave the way for a reconciliation after their falling-out. Again, he is aware of the danger to the kingdom and offers her his dutiful services. He also complains about the Queen's indignation with him which she allows to be fed by his enemies' insinuations. Being out of favor he compares

himself to Lucan's Caesar on his boatride to Italy, the prelude to his bid for power (and of course an echo and rewriting of Aeneas' journey).[44]

> Mene evertere tantus
> Diis Superis labor est, parva quam puppe sedentem
> Tam magno petiere mari--
> Intrepidus quamcunque datis mihi numina mortem
> Accipiam.[45]
>
> [What trouble the gods take to work my ruin, assailing me on my little boat with such a mighty storm? I shall not shrink from the meeting whatever end Heaven appoints for me.]

Significantly Essex leaves out a reminder of his past military achievements; the appropriation of Caesar's self-congratulatory lament breaks off before the part on Caesar's accomplishments as conqueror of the northern peoples.[46] This is and is not an appropriate, but a telling, analogy. Essex perceives himself to be a toy of the gods and of fortune. In fact his attitude towards his achievements and the position they put him in, reveals that on the one hand he holds himself misread by his contemporaries, and that on

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[44] Caesar's willful and self-important trust in fortune contrasts sharply with Essex's whining self-pity. For a treatment of the connection between the Aeneid and the Pharsalia see, David Quint, Epic and Empire (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992), 137-140.

[45] Ed. Walter Bourchier Devereux, Lives and Letters of the Devereux, Earls of Essex (London: John Murray, 1853), vol. 1, 496. The translation is mine. The passage adopts Lucan's Civil War, ed. and trans. J. D. Duff (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1977), V.655-660.

[46] Ironically, he would have the opportunity to equal Caesar later in 1599 when he headed the expedition against Tyrone in Ireland. It is clear there as well that Essex is no Caesar.

the other hand he relinquishes his control over his own position to that of fortune. He says to the Queen in a letter of September 1598. "O! infelix virtus, qua tu levis umbra et nudum tantum nomen es. Nam cum ego te semper coluerim tu fortune servieras" (502) ["o accursed virtue, how you are an insubstantial shadow and a mere name only; for I have always cultivated you, but you serve fortune"].

Here we find a movement away from participation in the making of politics and history to a subjection to the vagaries of fortune. Essex's own understanding of himself shows him to place himself in the uncomfortable position of being placed in a role by others, of having his position in history assigned to him by others. His emphasis in the allusion to Lucan's Caesar is not on how Caesar rides out the storm, but on the moment of dejection and acceptance of whatever is designed for him. Like Shakespeare's characters, he does not admit that even his passive historicity is a sign of his own complicity in his fate. This denial may well have cost him his head. Ultimately, he went down in history not, according to Chapman, as another Achilles, but, according to John Hayward's History of Henry IV, as another Bolingbroke. More than anything else, Essex is a poor reader of history; he lets others decide what he will or will not be in history. But here we get into another play; how Hamlet comes to terms with this dilemma is the story of another city.

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