

Bangor University

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Sense of place and the writing of early British history in medieval and early modern England

Le Helloco, Daisy

Award date:
2019

Awarding institution:
Bangor University

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

SENSE OF PLACE AND THE WRITING OF EARLY
BRITISH HISTORY IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY
MODERN ENGLAND

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at Bangor University

by

Daisy Le Helloco
School of English
Bangor University

June 2018

I hereby declare that this thesis is the results of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. All other sources are acknowledged by bibliographic references. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree unless, as agreed by the University, for approved dual awards.

Yr wyf drwy hyn yn datgan mai canlyniad fy ymchwil fy hun yw'r thesis hwn, ac eithrio lle nodir yn wahanol. Caiff ffynonellau eraill eu cydnabod gan droednodiadau yn rhoi cyfeiriadau eglur. Nid yw sylwedd y gwaith hwn wedi cael ei dderbyn o'r blaen ar gyfer unrhyw radd, ac nid yw'n cael ei gyflwyno ar yr un pryd mewn ymgeisiaeth am unrhyw radd oni bai ei fod, fel y cytunwyd gan y Brifysgol, am gymwysterau deuol cymeradwy.

Dairg le Hellow

Sense of Place and the Writing of Early British History in Medieval and Early Modern England

Summary

Sense of place, the human connection to and understanding of place, has been theorized and understood as integral to the perception of and recording of the past. This dissertation addresses the use of sense of place in English and Anglo-Latin historical texts from the twelfth to the seventeenth century, specifically where they deal with the history of the island before the Anglo-Saxon settlements of the fifth century. The history of the island of Britain before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons has been a matter of great historical investigation and literary interest in England since the early twelfth century, when Geoffrey of Monmouth imaginatively repurposed the scant native sources into his chronicle *Historia Regum Britanniae*. This study looks at a selection of texts that follow the model of British history established by Geoffrey and the way in which place and the past interact in these works. It aims to answer questions about the relationship between space and time in the writing of the past, the different generic conventions associated with works organised on a spatial or temporal basis, and how the use of place in these texts is affected by the historical and literary context in which the authors are writing. I argue that the use of place in these texts is integral to an understanding of the author's purpose, and the theorisation of place and its interaction with historical narrative is a fruitful approach to historiography.

Contents

List of abbreviations	i
Acknowledgements	ii
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Sense of place	3
1.2. National and local, written and oral history	6
1.2.1. Oral tradition, manuscript, print	9
1.3. Genres: time, place and narrative	17
1.3.1. Travel writing and maps	23
1.4. Places in the early sources for British history	25
1.5. Scope and Structure of the thesis	30
2. The Twelfth Century: Geoffrey of Monmouth and Gerald of Wales	34
2.1. Britain in the world	38
2.2. Divisions of Britain: nations and borders	49
2.2.1. Borders	50
2.2.2. Wales	57
2.3. Wilderness, settlement and the city	62
2.3.1. Rivers	67
2.3.2. The country and the city	68
2.3.3. City-building	71
2.3.4. Caerleon	73
2.4. The locality	83
2.5. Conclusion	92
3. The Twelfth to Fifteenth century	96
3.1. Britain in the world	101
3.1.1. Maps	104
3.2. Divisions of Britain	107
3.3. The city	116
3.4. The locality	117
3.5. Conclusion	124
4. Leland and Vergil	127
4.1. The writing of the past in the sixteenth century: Humanism and Antiquarianism 128	
4.2. The writing of place in the sixteenth century	132

4.3.	Leland and Vergil: Approach to History	139
4.3.1.	Sources	141
4.3.2.	Vergil and Gildas.....	147
4.4.	Britain, England and the historicity of Arthur	158
4.5.	The locality.....	169
4.6.	Conclusion	181
5.	The Later Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Century	184
5.1.	Background and sources.....	185
5.2.	Britain in the world.....	189
5.3.	Divisions of Britain	193
5.4.	The countryside and the city	204
5.4.1.	Rivers	207
5.5.	The locality.....	212
5.6.	Conclusion	218
6.	Conclusion.....	224
7.	Bibliography	233

List of abbreviations

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| BL | British Library |
| HRB | Geoffrey of Monmouth, <i>The History of the Kings of Britain</i> , ed. by Michael D. Reeve and trans. by Neil Wright, Arthurian Studies 69 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007). |
| IK and DK | Gerald of Wales, <i>Itinerarium Kambriae</i> and <i>Descriptio Kambriae</i> , in <i>Giraldus Cambrensis Opera</i> , ed. by James F. Dimock, Rolls Series 21, 6 vols. (London, 1868, reprinted Nendeln: Kraus, 1964), vol. VI. |
| ODNB | Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, http://www.oxforddnb.com/ |
| PO | Michael Drayton, <i>Poly-Olbion</i> , in <i>The Works of Michael Drayton</i> , ed. by J. W. Hebel, 5 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1961), vol. IV. |
| WW | Thomas Churchyard, <i>The Worthines of Wales</i> (London: G. Robinson, 1587; reprinted Manchester: Spenser Society, 1896) |

Acknowledgements

I gratefully acknowledge the AHRC for providing the studentship which funded this study.

Many thanks are due to my family, especially my mother Lindsay. Thanks to my many supportive friends, especially those in Cambridge and London who provided me with a place to stay during research trips.

Thanks to Professor Andrew Hiscock for reading and making many useful suggestions on drafts of chapter 5.

My greatest thanks are owed to my supervisor, Professor Raluca Radulescu, whose encouragement, brilliant ideas and patience seem to be limitless. It would never have approached completion without her.

1. Introduction

This study focuses on how sense of place manifests in and shapes the historical writing of the early history of Britain, from the early twelfth to the early seventeenth century. The ‘early history’ of Britain is the term I will use for the history of the island from the earliest settlements, up until the Anglo-Saxon invasions of the fifth and sixth centuries and the loss of British control in the lowland area of the island that became England. In the medieval and early modern texts, this history usually includes the foundation of the island by Brutus; the Roman conquest and rule; and post-Roman British rule, and in particular the reign of King Arthur.

The elevation of Arthur to the preeminent figure of British history is one of the significant developments during this period, and in practical much of the historical material discussed in this study will be the legendary material that is now termed ‘Arthurian’. Beginning as a shadowy figure in a few surviving Welsh texts, Arthur’s rise to pre-eminence in the writing of British history is almost entirely due to the twelfth century writer Geoffrey of Monmouth, who devoted the largest portion of his *History of the Kings of Britain* to Arthur’s reign. Geoffrey is generally agreed, by both his contemporaries and by modern historians, to have invented a substantial amount of his account of Arthur, and other legendary figures such as Brutus. However, Geoffrey’s version of events, although it continued to be challenged, proved irresistible to writers who came after him, in the face of the stark absence of reliable sources for pre-Saxon Britain.

By the fourteenth century, the chronicler Ranulf Higden saw Arthur as a national hero, on a par with the worthies of classical history: ‘sed fortassis mos est cuique nationi aliquem de suis laudibus attollere excessivis, ut quemadmodum Græci suum

Alexandrum, Romani suum Octavianum, Angli suum Ricardum, Franci suum Karolum, sic Britones suum Arthurum præconantur'.¹ In the late fifteenth century, William Caxton affirmed that he saw the celebration of Arthur as an historical figure as part of his purpose in publishing texts that deal with the past:

After that I had accomplished and finished divers hystories, as well of contemplaycon as of other hystorial and worldly acts of grete conquerours and prynces and also certeyn bookes of ensaumples and doctryne, many noble and dyvers gentylmen of thys royaume of Englonde camen and demaunded me many and oftymes wherfore that I have not do made and emprynte the noble hystorie of the Saynt Greal, and of the mooste renowned Crysten king, fyrst and chief of the thre best Crysten, and worthy, Kyng Arthur, whych ought mooste to be remembered among us Englishmen tofore all other Crysten kynges.²

These quotations reveal one of the main recurring issues in Arthurian texts across this time-period; whether Arthur is a 'Welsh', 'English', or 'British' hero. Therefore, looking at historical texts is as much a question of geography as it is of history. This study looks at the connection between place and the writing of history, the generic issues this raises, and what this tells us about the motives and interests of historians who chose to focus their attention on pre-Saxon Britain. This extends beyond questions of the country or the nation, to place on a smaller scale. The historical facts of this period are still uncertain today and were much debated at the time. The particular places associated with these histories are therefore changeable, but also act as an anchor to the contemporary audience

¹ 'But perhaps it is usual for each nation to exalt one of their own with excessive praise, as do the Greeks with their Alexander, the Romans with their Octavius, the English with their Richard, the French with their Charles, so do the Britons with their aforementioned Arthur'. Ranulf Higden, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden monachi Cestrensis*, ed. by Joseph Rawson Lumby, Rolls Series, 9 vols. (London: Longman, 1865-86), *Polychronicon* V, p. 336.

² William Caxton, Preface to *Morte Darthur*, in *Caxton's Own Prose*, ed. by N. F. Blake (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973), p. 106.

in situating and verifying history. Beyond which specific places are named in the text, the sense of different types of place - ranging from the nation to the city to the locality - is revealing of each author's intentions and purposes in writing about this period. Comparing approaches to this material across centuries demonstrates interesting points of similarity and difference that are indicative of attitudes towards the writing of history and the conception of Britain as an entity, during a period when Britain and its constituent areas saw significant changes in their relationships to each other.

1.1. Sense of place

Place is easy to spot in texts. We are used to the idea that natural features, collections of human dwellings such as villages, towns and cities, and larger, abstract units such as counties or countries, should be named and constitute a 'place'. However, defining 'place', rather than giving examples of it, can be less simple. Place as a concept has been theorized in recent years, across a number of different fields.³ It is usually seen as space with added meaning - that is, with the accumulation of cultural, historical and social associations. For example, Ian Convery et al. suggest that, 'Place, as distinct from space, provides a profound centre of human existence to which people have deep emotional and psychological ties and is part of the complex processes through which individuals and groups define themselves.'⁴ Similarly, Peggy Teo and Shirlena Huang define place as an 'active setting which is inextricably linked to the lives and activities of its inhabitants. As

³ See the essays in *Making Sense of Place: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. by Ian Convery, Gerard Corsane and Peter Davis (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012).

⁴ Convery, Corsane and Davis, 'Introduction: Making Sense of Place', *Making Sense of Place*, pp. 1-8 (p. 1).

such, places are not abstractions or concepts but are directly experienced phenomena of the lived world.’⁵ In these definitions the concept of ‘place’ is directly related to human activity, or what is sometimes termed ‘culture’; places are rarely either wholly manmade or natural, but rather a confluence of the two. ‘Space’ is the blank canvas, ‘place’ represents space overlaid with human activity.

Since human activity occurs over time, there is a temporal as well as a spatial component to place. E. Relph describes the human feeling for place as the result of a ‘growing attachment, imbued as it is with a sense of continuity’, noting the importance of both continuity and change to our understanding of place.⁶ Yi Fu Tuan argues that place is ‘time made visible’.⁷ Place, as the confluence of the temporal and spatial, is therefore integral to human ways of thinking about the past, namely memory and history. The connection between place and memory is made early in Western literary tradition. Aristotle, in *De anima* and *De memoria et reminiscentia*, links human knowledge to the associative ordering of mental images in order to achieve understanding.⁸ Cicero recounts Simonides’ technique to identify people crushed by the collapse of a banquet hall:

Quos cum humare vellent sui neque possent optritos internoscere ullo modo, Simonides dicitur ex eo, quod meminisset quo eorum loco quisque cubuisset, demonstrator unius cuiusque sepeliendi fuisse. Hac tum re admonitus invenisse fertur ordinem esse maxime, qui memoriae lumen adferret. Itaque iis, qui hanc partem ingenii exercerent, locos esse capiendos et ea, quae memoria tenere vellent, effingenda animo atque in iis locis collocanda; sic fore ut ordinem rerum locorum ordo conservaret, res autem ipsas rerum effigies notaret atque ut locis pro cera simulacris pro litteris uteremur.⁹

⁵ Peggy Teo and Shirlena Huang, ‘A Sense of Place in Public Housing: A Case Study of Pasir Ris, Singapore’, *Habitat International*, 20.2 (1996), 307-25 (p. 310).

⁶ E. Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (Pion: London, 1976), p. 31.

⁷ Yi Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), p. 179.

⁸ David Bloch, *Aristotle on Memory and Recollection: Text, Translation, Interpretation, and Reception in Western Scholasticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

⁹ ‘When their friends wanted to bury them but were altogether unable to know them apart as they had been completely crushed, the story goes that Simonides was enabled by his recollection of the place in which each of them had been reclining at table to identify them for separate interment; and that

Place is not just ‘well suited to contain memories - to hold and preserve them’,¹⁰ but in fact ‘is crucial to the activity of remembering, and seems as important as temporality to both its conceptualization and its practice.’¹¹ Mary Warnock notes that emerging over the centuries from the classical tradition, there has emerged ‘a strong and natural tendency [...] to think of memory as a kind of storehouse. There is a spatial metaphor involved here, which we find it difficult to repress’.¹²

It is perhaps for this reason that viewing the British landscape as a means of metaphorically transporting oneself back to the past, ‘the closest thing we will ever experience to a time machine’, as T. Oliver puts it, is a common literary and historical trope.¹³ For the historian W. G. Hoskins, surveying the view from an Anglo-Saxon boundary bank was to know

which of these farms is recorded in the Domesday Book, and which came in the great 13th century colonisation; to see the Georgian stucco house of some impoverished squire whose ancestors settled on that hillside in the time of King John and took their name from it; to know that behind one there lies an ancient estate of St Boniface’s long-vanished abbey, and that in front stretches the demesne farm of Anglo-Saxon and Norman kings; to be aware [...] that one is part of an immense broken stream that has flowed over this scene for more than a thousand years.¹⁴

this circumstance suggested to him the discovery of the truth that the best aid to clearness of memory consists in orderly arrangement. He inferred that persons desiring to train this faculty must select localities and form mental images of the facts they wish to remember and store those images in the localities, with the result that the arrangement of the localities will preserve the order of the facts, and the images of the facts will designate the facts themselves, and we shall employ the localities and images respectively as a wax writing tablet and the letters written on it.’ Cicero, *Cicero De Oratore Books I, II*, ed. and trans. by E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 2.86.353-4, pp. 466-7.

¹⁰ Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 186.

¹¹ Anne Whitehead, *Memory* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), p. 11.

¹² Mary Warnock, *Memory* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987), p. 16.

¹³ T. Oliver, ‘CPRE calls for deeds not words’, *Conservation Bulletin* 54 (2007), 6-8 (p. 8).

¹⁴ W. B. Hoskins, *Provincial England: Essays in Social and Economic History* (London: Macmillan, 1963), p. 228.

The idea that place can provide a link to figures from the past, that one is closer to events that took place on the same spot, seems to be an idea that humans find natural and to which they respond easily, and using a stasis of place to metaphorically ‘travel’ through time is an enduring device in English literature, appearing in both historical writing and in works of creative fiction. In a well-known twentieth-century example, Rudyard Kipling’s *Puck of Pook’s Hill* tells the story of English history through the history of a single valley, as figures from the past reappear to relate what happened there.¹⁵ A more recent example is the opening of Kevin Crossley-Holland’s Arthurian children’s novel *The Seeing Stone*: ‘When I’m standing on top of Tumber Hill, I sometimes think of all the people, all the generations who grew up on this ground, their days and years...’.¹⁶ The frequency of this device in literature, and notably literature aimed at children, suggests that the desire to link events many years or centuries apart through their having happened in the same place is one that we understand instinctually. It further suggests, as Hoskins seems to argue in the quotation above, a common feeling that to fully understand and appreciate a place it is essential to understand its history.

1.2. National and local, written and oral history

In the medieval and early modern periods, attaching historical stories to physical features of the landscape, both natural and manmade, was a common way of making

¹⁵ Rudyard Kipling, *Puck of Pook’s Hill* (London: Macmillan, 1911),
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15976/15976-h/15976-h.htm>> [accessed 19 June 2014].

¹⁶ Kevin Crossley-Holland, *The Seeing Stone* (London: Orion, 2000), p. 1.

sense of the past. To some extent these processes, of connecting place to history and seeing the past in the landscape, is distinct from the practice of the writing of 'history'. For the majority of the population, for the majority of the period under discussion, access to historical writing was limited, and understanding of the past would have been based on a combination of oral tradition and the physical evidence of the landscape. The visible remains of the past provided to the general population clear evidence of a different time, and the existence of groups of people who had been other than themselves. Local traditions of historical associations represent an attempt to rationalise a past which is inconceivably old. In the popular imagination, there was (and is) a difficulty in distinguishing the old from very old. Barrows were often believed to be Roman, Saxon or Viking burial sites. This conflation of different time periods was not restricted to oral tradition or to uneducated sections of society; this can be seen, for example, in Inigo Jones' attempt to argue that Stonehenge was a Roman temple.¹⁷

The Romano-British past seems to particularly lend itself to these types of historical associations with the landscape, perhaps because it represents, before the modern period, the oldest period of which there was common knowledge. This is shown by the preponderance of sites across Britain known locally by Arthur's name; Arthur's Seat, Oven and so on.¹⁸ A number of cromlechs in Wales and Western England are known locally as Arthur's Stone. Records for such popular Arthurian sites begin to appear in the sixteenth century, and in many cases it is difficult to determine the age of the name, and

¹⁷ Inigo Jones, *The Most Notable Antiquity of Great Britain, vulgarly called Stone-heng on Salisbury Plain* (London, 1655).

¹⁸ O. J. Padel, 'Some south-western sites with Arthurian associations', in Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman, and Brynley F. Roberts (eds.), *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian legend in medieval Welsh literature*, Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages 1 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991), pp. 229–248.

to what extent written tradition is recording an existing name, or creating it wholesale, or some interplay between the two. This particular association between the landscape and the Arthurian legend in the popular imagination continues to this day; it can be seen in the New Age interest in certain Arthurian sites such as Glastonbury, and the eagerness of the news to report the locations of the ‘real’ Camelot.¹⁹ These examples from the mainstream press suggest that in the popular mind, identifying *where* something happened is proof that it *did* happen. Secure identification of the places associated with the legend becomes synonymous with proof of the veracity of the legend itself.

The intersection of memory and place in the Middle Ages is most apparent in the mnemonic landscape of religious belief, which centred on a ‘far-flung network of pilgrim routes and landmarks [...] conveniently sited for commemorative worship’.²⁰ A saint is valuable to a monastery as a means of increasing its wealth and prestige and of attracting pilgrims. Hagiography thus needs to emphasise the universal interest of the saint to Christians, while stressing the saint’s links to a particular locality. Although many saints were popular in all regions, devotion to a particular saint in a particular locality was often influenced by proximity to a particular shrine or other site associated with the saint.²¹

¹⁹ For example, David Keys, ‘Nameplate leads trail to court of King Arthur’, *The Independent*, 7 August 1998 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/nameplate-leads-trail-to-court-of-king-arthur-1170072.html> [accessed 24 June 2014]; Martin Evans, ‘Historians locate King Arthur’s Round Table’, *The Telegraph*, 11 July 2012 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/7883874/Historians-locate-King-Arthurs-Round-Table.html>> [accessed 19 June 2014]; Jaya Narain, ‘Camelot was in WIGAN? Author names this street as the probable site of the court of King Arthur’, *The Daily Mail*, 26 March 2014 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2589711/Was-Camelot-built-WIGAN-Historian-claims-site-King-Arthurs-castle-end-Lancashire-cul-sac.html>> [accessed 19 June 2014].

²⁰ Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, vol. I: *Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London: Verso, 1994).

²¹ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 165.

The interplay between the oral and literary in making historical associations in the landscape bears some similarity to saints' cults. The legends around King Arthur resemble the construction of saints' cults, in his strong association with certain sites, and the desire to claim him for a particular place. The resemblance also extends to the dissemination of the stories to the wider world. Knowledge of saints outside their local area drew pilgrims. Furthermore, there were benefits for the individual and the wider community. Eamon Duffy states that the practice of pilgrimage 'had important symbolic and integrative functions, helping the believer to place the religious routine of the closed and concentric worlds of household, parish, or gild in a broader and more complex perception of the sacred, which transcended while affirming local allegiances'.²² This interplay of the local and the wider world (to which I shall return later) is key in reading the use of place in the writing of the past, and particularly elements such as the Arthurian legend which have appeared in both popular tradition, and in written works with a more limited, learned audience. The Arthurian legends connect places all over Britain in one framework, allowing places to assert both their difference and their place in the wider world, and offered travellers a familiar entryway into unfamiliar surroundings.

1.2.1. Oral tradition, manuscript, print

Issues surrounding the interplay of written tradition and oral tradition in relation to saints' cults are also pertinent to the writing of the legendary history of Britain. Conceptions of this relationship have sometimes depicted it as a dichotomy between a

²² Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 191.

Latin, clerical, written culture and oral, vernacular, folkloric culture. For example, Jacques Le Goff presents a model for the Middle Ages which depicts ecclesiastical culture clashing with 'culture folklorique'.²³ Robert Muchembled likewise sees the relationship between the two elements as fundamentally antagonistic, arguing that 'popular culture was essentially oral, and its adversaries wielded the formidable weapon of writing.'²⁴ However, other scholars have argued against this dichotomy.²⁵ Jean-Claude Schmitt, writing about saints' cults, suggests that we should see their practice as working along a continuum, from written clerical to folkloric and oral.²⁶ Julia Smith points out that 'Latin, clerical culture was rarely, if ever, discrete. Its forms bore the heavy imprint of oral ways of thinking'.²⁷ This comment is particularly pertinent when looking at the Latin clerical authors Geoffrey of Monmouth and Gerald of Wales. The ease with which Geoffrey's work was vernacularized, by Layamon and Wace, and Gerald's frequent citation of oral testimony, seems a strong argument against any sort of insuperable divide between Latin and the vernacular, or the written and oral, in the twelfth century at least.

However, this is not to say that the form of these stories/ histories has no effect. As Roger Chartier points out, 'any comprehension of a writing, no matter what kind it is,

²³ Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

²⁴ Robert Muchembled, *Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France, 1400-1750*, trans. by Lydia Cochrane (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), p. 1.

²⁵ Natalie Z. Davis, 'Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion', in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion*, ed. by Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden : Brill,, 1974), pp. 307-36; Pierre Boglioni, 'La culture populaire au moyen age: Themes et problemes', in *La culture populaire au moyen age*, ed. by Pierre Boglioni (Montreal: L'Aurore, 1979), pp. 11-37; Aron Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception*, trans. by János M. Bak and Paul A. Hollingsworth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); and Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France*, trans. by Lydia Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

²⁶ Jean-Claude Schmitt, *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children since the Thirteenth Century*, trans. by Martin Thom (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 122-23.

²⁷ Julia M. H. Smith, 'Oral and Written: Saints, Miracles, and Relics in Brittany, c. 850-1250', *Speculum* 65 (1990), 309-43 (p. 311).

depends on the form in which it reaches the reader'.²⁸ As we will see, most of the authors studied here make a differentiation between material they have heard, and that which they have read. In terms of text culture, the availability and dissemination of texts had a profound effect on which narratives of British history rose to the top, and which vanished. The advent of print, which widened access to historical material outside of a small, Latin-speaking clerical circle, led to a sharp increase in the variety and genres of texts on offer. After the advent of print, the effect on 'collective' memory, or traditional oral culture, was significant. Local historical associations were in many cases replaced with those derived from a dominant print culture, which being centred on London naturally had a centralizing effect, as Harold Love argues in the strongest terms:

[Texts'] meaning now had to be established in a totalizing way, which had little to do with the relationship of the local landowner to his own and his neighbours' private archives, but everything to do with an emerging science of history whose interests were political and philosophical and whose aim, whether stated or not, was the replacement of local and family allegiances by national patriotism in the form in which it was defined by the metropolis. The texts associated with the new technology replaced the experience of the past as a shared possession with information *about* the past, seen as an increasingly remote source of materials for the operation of discursive reason.²⁹

Print works from London were disseminated around the country, but as Woolf points out, 'The route back to the centre was much less easily travelled. Local documents, even less than local oral lore, do not as a matter of course leave their immediate surroundings; even less often are they absorbed into the national past'.³⁰ Print fed back into oral

²⁸ Roger Chartier, 'Texts, Printing, Readings', in *The New Cultural History*, ed. by Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 154-75 (p. 161).

²⁹ Harold Love, 'Oral and Scribal Texts in Early Modern England', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain IV: 1557-1695*, ed. by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 97-121 (p. 115).

³⁰ Daniel Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500-1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 295.

discourse, especially via newspapers and history books, and the two became inextricably merged. Therefore, since our evidence of oral legends about the landscape is necessarily through texts, divining a ‘true’ oral tradition is very difficult.

Maurice Halbwachs, perhaps the most influential theorist of the history of memory, saw collective memory as being oral and represented by a multiplicity of voices, with history as a monolithic and primarily written view of the past.³¹ This idea has some use for the medieval and early modern period, particularly moving into the period after the introduction of print. However, contrasting collective memory, as something inherently oral and folkloric, with a written, scholarly history is complicated by the fact that the idea of a collective memory is explicitly invoked by several of the writers in this study, as a justification for the act of writing itself, as a source for written history, or as a justification for competing traditions within the same text. Memory is often linked to forgetting. In Greek thought the two were perceived as equal and interdependent: they were, as Edward Casey points out, ‘given explicit mythical representation in the coeval figures of Lemosyne and Mnemosyne, who are conceived as equals *requiring* each other.’³² In the texts in this study, forgetting appears as a state to be feared; many of the writers express an anxiety that if they do not record a particular aspect of the past, it will be completely forgotten. There is also a consciousness that remembering must be selective, that not everything can be retained, and therefore choice of subject must be carefully considered and justified. Writers often criticise predecessors for choosing to write about a certain subject, which is characterised as being necessarily at the expense of writing about, and therefore preserving in collective memory, a topic which they perceive

³¹ Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. by F. L. Ditter, Jr. and V. Y. Ditter (New York: Harper Colophon, 1980).

³² Casey, *Remembering*, p. 12.

to be of greater importance. Gerald of Wales excuses himself for writing about such 'infimis istis' ['insignificant themes'] as Britain and Ireland by arguing that 'Nos, ob patriae favorem et posteritatis, finium nostrorum abdita quidem evolvere, inclite gesta, necdum tamen in memoriam luculento labore digesta, tenebris exuere, humilemque stilo materiam efferre, nec inutile quidem nec illaudabile reputavimus'.³³ As Goody and Watt explain, the movement to a literate society means a past too extensive to be fully understood or absorbed by any one individual:

In contrast to the homeostatic transmission of the cultural tradition among non-literate peoples, literate society leaves more to its members; less homogenous in its cultural tradition, it gives more free play to the individual[. ... S]uch coherence as a person achieves is very largely the result of his personal selection, adjustment and elimination of items from a highly differentiated cultural repertoire.³⁴

This process of selection and omission is unavoidable, and history is therefore by its nature a highly individual form. However, in these texts we can see how place is used to incorporate, or be seen to incorporate, more viewpoints. This works to lessen the burden of responsibility on the individual historian, who does not have to be seen to vouch for one version of history out of all the possible versions; many versions can coexist at once. Bakhtin's idea of dialogics, as applied to landscape writing, provides a useful understanding of how place can allow many different voices to be heard. In this theory,

³³ 'I have been inspired to think that it may be a useful and praiseworthy service to those who come after me if I can set down in full some of the secrets of my own native land. By writing about such humdrum matters I can rescue from oblivion those deeds so nobly done which have not yet been fully recorded.' Gerald of Wales, *Descriptio Kambriae*, in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. by James F. Dimock, Rolls Series 21, 6 vols. (London, 1868, reprinted Nendeln: Kraus, 1964), vol. VI: *Itinerarium Kambriae et Descriptio Kambriae*, First Preface, p. 157; trans. by Thorpe, *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales* (London: Penguin, 1978), p. 212. All subsequent references are to this edition and translation unless otherwise stated.

³⁴ Jack Goody and Ian Watt, 'The Consequences of Literacy', in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, ed. by J. R. Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 27-68 (discussion pp. 58-63, quotation p. 63).

‘the number of interactions between entities is infinite, which enables a “polyphony” of interacting voices within any given text.’³⁵ Historians throughout the period under consideration here seem self-conscious about the burden of cultural remembrance imposed (or self-imposed) upon them, and anxious about what will happen to British culture if they do not undertake the task. Memory as an overt concern and justification for history influences the primacy of place in texts about the early British past, as the places of the island act as mnemonics for the events of the past. Furthermore, the use of place as a repository for memory allows for different versions of the past, both within the same text, and across the corpus of historical writing about any given era.

Along with print, a major change in this period was the Reformation. This was, of course, disruptive to both textual and material traditions, changing the reading of the past and people’s lived experience of the landscape. However, it was not merely destructive, but led to new ways of experiencing and writing the landscape. Ruins had been inspiring writers since the Anglo-Saxons beheld the old Roman towns. Now, as Margaret Aston puts it, ‘England acquired a whole suite of ruins [which] proved to be peculiarly fertile in stimulating consciousness of the past and in promoting historical activity’.³⁶ Alexandra Walsham describes how the ruined abbeys and priories were reimagined by Protestants as a symbol of their triumph and a warning against the dangers of backsliding.³⁷ In terms of textual tradition, Protestant principles of returning to the text as sole authority meant that Protestant scholars undertook to uncover neglected texts from post-Roman Britain

³⁵ Michael J. McDowell, ‘The Bakhtian Road to Ecological Insight’, in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, ed. by Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), pp. 371-91 (p. 375).

³⁶ Margaret Aston, ‘English Ruins and English History: The Dissolution and the Sense of the Past’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973), 231-55 (p. 231).

³⁷ Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 147-8.

(which I shall touch upon briefly below, 4.3.2). The loss of the old saints meant that secular saints such as Arthur took an even tighter grip upon the English sense of the landscape.

One area of medieval and early modern literature relating to place in its largest sense which has been studied enthusiastically is the idea of the nation, perhaps most extensively relating to the Elizabethan period and the conceptualization of England or Britain at a time when exploration changed the country's perception of itself in the world, and to the period surrounding the accession of James VI and I and the union of the English and Scottish crowns in 1603.³⁸ Medievalists were a little slower to explore questions of nation, perhaps due to the fact that traditionally some historians considered the concept anachronistic in this period, but there are now a large number of monographs and collections of essays relating to the construction of nation in both England and Wales.³⁹ Across the period, a major part of this is untangling notions of Britishness from Englishness, exploring the relationship between England and the other areas of the British Isles, and how this affects concepts of nation-building and origins.

The relationship between locality and identities has been debated, particularly by local historians. Christopher Lewis suggests that individual identity is best imagined as

³⁸ Significant examples include: Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Claire McEachern, *The Poetics of English Nationhood, 1590- 1612* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds.), *British Consciousness and Identity: the making of Britain, 1533-1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); David J. Baker and Willy Maley (eds.), *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

³⁹ Amongst others: Thorlac Turville-Petre, *England the Nation: Language, Literature, and National Identity, 1290-1340* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); Kathy Lavezzo (ed.), *Imagining a Medieval English Nation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004); Ruth Kennedy and Simon Meecham-Jones (eds.), *Authority and Subjugation in Writing of Medieval Wales* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); R. R. Davies, *The First English Empire: Power and identities in the British Isles, 1093-1343* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

‘concentric circles’ going outwards.⁴⁰ Charles Phythian-Adams agrees that ‘A sense of belonging more or less simultaneously to a variety of societal levels does not diminish the significance of any one of them’.⁴¹ This is important to the study of historical writing, since history is written for a community. David Carr argues that community ‘exists by virtue of a story which is articulated and accepted, which typically concerns the group’s origins and its destiny, and which interprets what is happening now in the light of these two temporal poles [...]’.⁴² If these communities are geographically defined, then each history works on the level of one of these geographical communities or identities. All the writers studied in this thesis are to some extent writing about their *own* community- whether country, county, town, or an ethnic/ racial group (e.g. ‘Britons’).

Britain is a diverse country, topographically and geologically. There was also great cultural diversity, represented by the local particularism of festivals and saints’ cults. The growth of towns over the period under discussion is a major change, but by 1520, 95% of the English population (of around 2.4 million) still lived in villages.⁴³ Even by the end of James VI and I’s reign, after a hundred years of great expansion of the capital, rural dwellers were still the majority. The advent of print had important repercussions for the relationship between London and the rest of the country, and the balance in power between dominant historical discourse and other forms of talking about the past. Local

⁴⁰ Christopher Lewis, *Particular Places: Introduction to English Local History* (London: British Library, 1989), p. 35.

⁴¹ Charles Phythian-Adams, *Re-thinking English Local History* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987), p. 48.

⁴² David Carr, ‘Narrative and the Real World: An argument for continuity’, in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. by Roberts, pp. 143-156 (p. 152).

⁴³ John M. Adrian, *Local Negotiations of English Nationhood* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 8.

histories were adapted into a mainstream of national historical writing. As Daniel Woolf argues:

[...] a pluralistic congeries of discrete community memories defined by place, custom, tradition, and ritual was gradually being both assaulted and scavenged from, its useful parts being appropriated and rearranged along the chronological axis beloved of humanist historiography and its readers. In this process, the local past was often submerged into a “national” past contained in history-writing and the civilized discourse that arose therefrom, whence it eventually fed back, principally via print media, into the local.⁴⁴

After the Reformation, the increase of writing about Britain, its history and the relationship between the past and the landscape can be seen as a way of performing a similar exercise, in attempting to integrate a diverse collection of localities into a nation.

1.3. Genres: time, place and narrative

Genre is central to our understanding of how texts are constructed and received. As David Scott Kastan argues, ‘some idea of genre underpins both the creation and the understanding of all literature; every act of reading and writing “originates” in a provisional idea of the text’s genre’.⁴⁵ The type of works which I will look at will mostly be historical in matter, but this requires some qualification. Is history a topic or a genre? That is, is it the subject-matter (‘the past’) or the treatment of it that defines history?⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past*, p. 273.

⁴⁵ David Scott Kastan, “‘A rarity most beloved’: Shakespeare and the Idea of Tragedy”, in *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Works*, I, ed. by Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 5-22 (p. 7).

⁴⁶ Geoffrey Roberts, ‘Introduction: The History and Narrative Debate, 1960-2000’, in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. by Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 1-21 (p. 16).

How do we treat ‘historical’ works dealing with material no longer seen as historically ‘true’? What is the status of non-narrative historical works?

The first two questions are particularly pertinent when dealing with pre-Saxon Britain. Much of the material which formed part of some chronicle narratives was already subject to doubt and scrutiny in the Middle Ages, notably the Brutus story and elements of the Arthurian legend which originate with Geoffrey of Monmouth. Arthur was generally believed to be a historical figure, but Geoffrey’s account was held to be untrustworthy, and historians across the period accepted portions of his account while questioning others. Modern historians’ views on Arthur generally follow Thomas Charles-Edwards’ assessment that ‘There may well have been an historical Arthur [but] the historian can as yet say nothing of value about him’, or David Dumville’s even stronger statement: ‘He owes his place in our history books to a “no smoke without fire” school of thought ... The fact of the matter is that there is no historical evidence about Arthur; we must reject him from our histories and, above all, from the titles of our books’.⁴⁷ When looking at texts which deal with figures such as Arthur, the writer’s understanding of the truth-value of this material is of course paramount. However, if these subjects are now not considered matters of historical fact as we now understand it, we also have to consider in what way we are categorising works that feature figures such as Arthur and Brutus, and how their use in works that are considered ‘historical’ differs from their use in other genres such as romance. Louis Mink gives a simple distinction between history and fiction: ‘History and fiction are alike stories or narratives of events and actions. But for history both the

⁴⁷ Thomas Charles-Edwards, ‘The Arthur of History’, in *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature*, ed. by Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman and Brynley F. Roberts (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991), pp.15-32 (p. 29); David N. Dumville, ‘Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend’, *History* 62 (1977), 173-92 (pp. 187-8).

structure of the narrative and its details are representations of past actuality; and the claim to be a true representation is understood by both writer and reader'.⁴⁸ The difference between a history and fiction is based in the work's truth claim. In HRB, for example, Geoffrey's apparatus - his appeals to authority and sources - makes clear that he intended it to be read as history, whether or not he understood all the events to have taken place, and its adoption into the mainstream of historical chronicles suggests it was read as such.

Place is often used in histories as a marker of truth claims, and as a yardstick by which historians measure historical truth. Historical works are understood, in the compact between author and reader, to be based in actuality, and therefore using real-world topography, which may be verified by the reader's own experience or corroborated by other texts, firmly establishes the author's claim to be writing a 'true' account. Monika Otter argues that 'The freedom to create such an autonomous spatial and temporal framework is one of the distinguishing features of fiction as opposed to historiography.'⁴⁹ This distinction is particularly helpful when looking at history that includes a figure like Arthur, who also appears in fictional works. Arthurian romance distinguishes itself from the chronicle accounts by having a much more fluid geography, which although it may use real places is not bound to be consistent in this: distances and relationships between places are fluid, and the real and fantastical can coexist. Erich Auerbach famously pointed out that in Arthurian romance you can travel from Cornwall to Brittany without crossing

⁴⁸ Louis O. Mink, 'Narrative form as a cognitive instrument', in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. Roberts, pp. 211-20 (p. 212).

⁴⁹ Monika Otter, *Inventiones: Fiction and Referentiality in Twelfth-Century English Historical Writing* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. 8.

the sea.⁵⁰ An interest in geography is not optional for a historian, but crucial as a stable dimension against which to test various versions of a historical narrative, and as reassurance for their audience.

Aside from content, there are also formal indications that dictate whether a work is considered a 'history'. This raises the question of to what extent concepts such as 'narrative' and 'story' are essential to the idea of history. In the past it has sometimes been claimed that 'history is narration'.⁵¹ Where this was not claimed outright it is often assumed as self-evident. History is the study of time, and it is 'the axis of temporal representation [...] whose predominance turns a world-representing text into a narrative text'.⁵² However, most would also agree that cross-sectional works- that is, those dealing with a particular place or group of people at a certain point in the past- can be works of history. W. H. Dray discusses the relationship between the two types:

Just as a "still" might be said to have no meaning as a still without reference to the moving picture, so a cross-sectional slice of historical development might be said to require reference to the development from which it was abstracted. But a similar argument could surely be elaborated for the converse conclusion: that narrative history presupposes the cross-sectional sort [...]. A narrative history that never pauses for a cross-sectional "breather" becomes progressively harder to follow; and the need to preface an historical narrative by a sketch of the context in which the action develops is also commonly acknowledged.⁵³

This echoes the relationship between time and space discussed above, in relationship to place. Neither time or space can exist independent of the other, and historical works

⁵⁰ Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: the representation of reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), p. 129.

⁵¹ Glenn Morrow, 'Comments on White's "Logic of Historical Narration"', in *Philosophy and History: A Symposium*, ed. by S. Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1963), p. 286.

⁵² Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 6.

⁵³ W. H. Dray, 'On the Nature and Role of Narrative in History', in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. by Roberts, pp. 25-39 (p. 27).

cannot be wholly on a temporal plane; the time axis must intersect with the space axis at some points. This becomes apparent in the text, as Dray suggests, by these types of ‘breather’, that proceed at zero narrative pace, such as description, including geographical description. Historians are not only concerned with change, but also with what has stayed the same.

The works in this study that are not narratives but engage substantially with the past — notably the works of Gerald of Wales and John Leland, Drayton’s *Poly-Olbion*, and Thomas Churchyard’s *The Worthines of Wales* — are organised spatially, as the chronicles are organised chronologically. The structure is taken from a journey around Britain, real or imaginary, and there is little or no correspondence between the order historical events are narrated in the text and the order the events took place. However, they still move back in time at various points, as they stop for (as Dray says) a ‘breather’. The prioritization of space over time creates different generic conventions and expectations to works that are organized temporally- for example, in how the landscape is described, in how the narrator’s (or traveller’s) voice appears in the text, and how they use other genres such as the pastoral. However, I will argue that the difference is one of degree, and all these works can be placed on a continuum based on the interaction between time and space.

A particular useful construct when considering the relationship between space and time in a text is Bakhtin’s notion of the chronotope, which theorises how historical time and space and historical persons are articulated, and how these are constructed in relation to each other.⁵⁴ In some chronotopes, time takes precedence over space, and in others space takes precedence over time. The chronotopes of a text are affected by historical

⁵⁴ Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: four essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

factors, which includes factors which influence sense of place, such as attitudes to nature and geographical knowledge. Michael McDowell argues that, 'If the meaning that shapes narrative is to be found in these concrete junctures of time and place of the chronotope, then an analysis of landscape in narrative becomes not only a key to understanding how we have viewed the relationship of humans and nature, but also a key to understanding at least some of the meanings of narrative.'⁵⁵ This is particularly important when considering how legendary history was connected to the landscape. Bakhtin suggested the idyllic chronotope as a model for restoring 'folkloric time': 'an organic fastening-down, a grafting of life and its events to a place, to a familiar territory with all its nooks and crannies, its familiar mountains, valleys, fields, rivers and forests, and one's own home. Idyllic life and its events are inseparable from this concrete, spatial corner of the world'.⁵⁶

Bakhtin applied the idea of the chronotope to his examinations of the novel, but it is equally useful for other forms of text. As Sue Vice points out, although any text has its own chronotopes, 'some texts are more fruitful to approach in this way than others, for instance those which are set at a particularly fraught historical moment, which set out to represent a historical event, or which adopt one of the forms where relations between time and space are especially clear'.⁵⁷ The texts in this study meet both of those criteria. They are, as I will demonstrate, intimately concerned with time and space. The traditional narrative of early British history is concerned with at least two historical moments- the settlement of Britain, and the Saxon conquest- which are not only significant in themselves, but significant for the construction of our notions of Britain and the places within it.

⁵⁵ McDowell, 'The Bakhtian Road', p. 378.

⁵⁶ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 225.

⁵⁷ Sue Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 202.

1.3.1. Travel writing and maps

Travel writing covers many different ways of engaging with the world. Nandini Das and Tim Youngs divide writing that comes under this broad umbrella into two categories: ‘the mythological or supernatural on the one hand (which we might extend to or sum up as storytelling) and the documentary function on the other’. However, as they note, ‘Whether or how far these properties of travel writing may be accommodated within a single generic description rather than having their own labels is a matter of debate’.⁵⁸ The literature of the middle ages that deals with travel in some form or another comes in many forms, such as pilgrimage and crusade narratives, saints’ lives, accounts of exotic wonders, and different examples of these fall on different places on this spectrum between the ‘mythological’ and ‘documentary’, with perhaps rather fewer pure instances of the latter.

The sixteenth century saw an explosion in travel writing. This was of course facilitated by print but also, paradoxically, influenced by the increased centralisation of English society. John Barnard argues that ‘The publication of travel literature in the last years of the century shows the shift from a peripheral, if creative, position of cultural dependency to the beginnings of a self-sustaining industry, one whose future development was intimately linked to the imperial project of which travel literature was an integral part’.⁵⁹ More people were travelling further than ever before, and the European discovery of the New World heightened the sense of the possibility of new

⁵⁸ Nandini Das and Tim Youngs, ‘Introduction’, in *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, ed. by Nandini Das and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 1-16 (p. 2).

⁵⁹ John Barnard, ‘Introduction’, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain IV: 1557-1695*, ed. by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1-26 (p. 25).

discoveries. Although there was still a broad spectrum of writing that could be categorised as ‘travel’, a move can be seen towards a more personal, individuistic way of writing about travel. The importance placed on the principle of eyewitness by humanism thought meant that first-hand accounts were more valued. Samuel Purchas, a prominent English collector of travel texts, emphasised the power of this individuality in the 1625 introduction to his *Purchas His Pilgrimes*: ‘What a World of Travellers have by their owne eyes observed [. . .] is here [. . .] delivered, not by one preferring Methodically to deliver the Historie of Nature according to rules of Art, nor Philosophically to discusse and dispute; but as in way of Discourse, by each Traveller relating what is the kind he hath seen’.⁶⁰

Another form of encoding place in text, which changed significantly in form and function from the twelfth to the seventeenth century, was the map. Maps first appear in the margins of medieval texts.⁶¹ Then followed the production of larger, decorative world maps, and even some local maps based on portolan charts.⁶² Early printed maps include the one that accompanied Caxton’s *Myrrour of the World* (1481), and many no longer extant, such as John Rastell’s 110 ‘mappis of Europa’ listed in his inventory. However, maps remained illustrations in books until the sixteenth century.⁶³ The first English atlas was published by Saxton in 1579. The trajectory taken by maps can therefore be seen to parallel that of travel writing; from collections of received wisdom, which gave an

⁶⁰ Quoted in Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs, ‘Introduction’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,), pp. 1-14 (p. 4).

⁶¹ Alfred Hiatt, ‘Maps and Margins: Other Lands, Other Peoples’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Literature in English*, ed. by Elaine Treharne and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 649-76.

⁶² A collection in P. D. A. Harvey, *Medieval Maps* (London: British Library, 1991).

⁶³ Laurence Worms, ‘Maps and Atlases’, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain IV: 1557-1695*, ed. by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 228-45.

approximate indication of one's relationship to the rest of the world, to detailed objects based on observation, used to record and facilitate personal journeys.

1.4. Places in the early sources for British history

There is a small corpus of early sources for the matter of Britain introduced by Geoffrey. The lack of these sources is likely the reason Geoffrey undertook to write his history, to compensate for this gap in historical knowledge. Throughout the period under discussion here, earlier historians, above all Gildas and Bede, were cited as sources and held up as examples of Latin historians to be admired and emulated. This thesis is not attempting to catalogue the individual sites associated with the Arthurian legend or British history in general, since there have been numerous works written on this subject.

⁶⁴ However, it is useful to summarize some of the earlier material available, since it establishes the base of knowledge and the problems of the sources that later writers were using for their work.

The earliest sources to discuss Britain come from continental writers, such as Ptolemy's *Geography*. We have Julius Caesar's own commentaries on his campaign in Britain. He describes in *De bello gallico* the geography and main products of the island, and he comments ethnographically on the peoples of the south-east coast. ⁶⁵

⁶⁴ For recent studies of the places associated with Arthur, see Oliver J. Padel, *Arthur in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000); Scott Lloyd, *The Arthurian Topography of Wales*, unpublished MPhil Thesis (Aberystwyth University, 2009). A useful study covering the historical tradition in Wales is Owain Wyn Jones, *Historical Writing in Medieval Wales*, unpublished PhD thesis (Bangor University, 2013).

⁶⁵ Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, ed. and trans. by H. J. Edwards, Caesar I, Loeb Classical Library 72 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), Book V, ch. 12-14.

Contemporary sources for post-Roman Britain are sparse; there is no evidence of wide-scale production of texts in Britain and Ireland until around the seventh century.⁶⁶ The earliest native source is Gildas' *De excidio Britanniae*. The purpose of the work was as an invective against the perceived failings of British kings in the area Gildas was located, in the south west. Gildas rarely names places, but we can extrapolate his sphere of interest from the kings he addresses, to the south-west and south Wales. One of the few named sites is Badon, where a decisive British victory took place. This has not been located, but can be assumed to be in this area; as P. J. C. Field points out, 'A British victory against the Anglo-Saxons in the north-east, no matter how crushing, would be unlikely to have brought two generations of peace to Gildas's home base'.⁶⁷ As we will see, the south-west remains the area most consistently associated with Arthur in later tradition. Gildas was writing a polemic rather than a chronicle, and although he is considered an important source for later medieval writers, given his high reputation and status as one of the few sources contemporary to when Arthur supposedly lives, *De excidio* provides little in the way of personal or place names. Gildas does not mention Arthur (which, both now and in the Middle Ages, is the most frequent evidence brought against Arthur as an historical figure).

The first insular history was Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*. Bede begins his history with a geographical and ethnological description of the island, discussing the different ethnic groups and the five languages spoken in the island.⁶⁸ However, since he is writing specifically about the English, Bede shows little interest in

⁶⁶ Robin Chapman Stacey, 'Texts and Society', in *After Rome*, ed. by Thomas Charles-Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 251-57.

⁶⁷ P. J. C. Field, 'Arthur's Battles', *Arthuriana* 18 (2008), 3-32 (p. 4).

⁶⁸ Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969 [corr. repr. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991]), I.1.

the state of Britain before the *adventus Saxonum*. Bede's reputation as a historian remained extremely high across the period under discussion here, and he is frequently cited as an authority even in relation to the period prior to that covered in his history.

An important source for the British history is the *Historia Brittonum*, a work sometimes attributed to Nennius but now more commonly seen as an anonymous compilation.⁶⁹ Dating from the ninth century, it originates the myth of Trojan origin, with the settlement of the island by Brutus. It is also considered an important source for the Arthurian legend. *Historia Brittonum* refers to Arthur as a 'dux bellorum'. It lists the sites of twelve battles, won by Arthur; this is in fact all that the work has to say about Arthur's life. It has been suggested that the list may have had its origin in a vernacular Welsh battle-poem, and may even preserve the rhyme-scheme of one of these poems.⁷⁰ David Dumville, who has a low opinion of the work as a work of history, believes that this passage may have been inserted wholesale from elsewhere; other scholars have used this as support for the idea that the list transmits details of real battles.⁷¹ Not all of the locations of these battles have been identified. The sites that have been located are geographically distant from each other. Linnuit is most likely the kingdom of Lindsey (in modern Lincolnshire), the forest of Celidon is in southern Scotland, and the City of the

⁶⁹ *Nennius: British History and the Welsh Annals*, ed. by J. Morris, *Arthurian Period Sources* 8 (Chichester, 1980). David Dumville argues that the Nennian preface is a later forgery; see the introduction to David N. Dumville, ed., *The Historia Brittonum: The Vatican Recension* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1995). Some subsequent scholars have maintained the authenticity of the preface; see P. J. C. Field, 'Nennius and his History', *Studia Celtica* 30 (1996), 159-6.

⁷⁰ This theory of the origin of the passage was first proposed by H.M. and N. K. Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature* (Cambridge, 1932), vol. 1. On the possible preserved rhyme-scheme, see Thomas Jones, 'The Early Evolution of the Legend of Arthur', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 8 (1964), 3-21 (pp. 3-4).

⁷¹ David N. Dumville, 'The Historical Value of the *Historia Brittonum*', *Arthurian Literature* 6 (1986), 1-26; Kenneth H. Jackson, 'Once Again Arthur's Battles', *Modern Philology* 43 (1945), 44-57; Rachel Bromwich, 'Concepts of Arthur', *Studia Celtica* 10-11 (1975-6), 163-81; Bernard S. Bachrach, 'The Questions of King Arthur's Existence and of Romano-British Naval Operations', *Haskins Society Journal* 2 (1991), 13-28.

Legion is probably Chester. Geoffrey Ashe suggests that, 'Nennius's far-flung geography shows Arthur being pictured a national rather than a local leader'.⁷²

However, there are also sites that would only have been of local interest. Folk-tradition relating to places in the landscape seems to be an element of the Arthurian legend from an early stage. The 'Marvels of Britain' section of the *Historia Brittonum*, which lists places of interest in the landscape, includes two related to Arthur; Carn Cabal, where the footstep of Arthur's and the grave of his son Amr. This type of local tradition, associating Arthur with physical features of the landscape, as discussed above, is common elsewhere, and seems to predate written versions of Arthurian tales. There is evidence for such local traditions being extant in the south-west in the twelfth century in the famous account by Herman of Tournai of the visit by some canons of Laon to the area in 1113. On casting doubt on the historicity of Arthur, they were shown features of the landscape (between Exeter and Bodmin) known as 'Arthur's seat' and 'Arthur's oven', and informed that this was 'terra Arturi'.⁷³

This interest in the locations of the myths seems to have continued in Wales into the later written literature. One example is *Culwch and Olwen*, apparently based on pre-Galfridian traditions, which is in large part a list of places in Wales. The author seems to assume that his audience will be familiar with the geography of the whole of Wales. This is a continuing theme in later Welsh poetry, where the bards make imaginary tours of Wales (*cylch Cymru*). The Triads associate Arthurian figures with a number of places, which sometimes correspond to other Welsh sources, but rarely with *HRB*. One example is *Kelli wic*, the name of Arthur's court in Cornwall in the Triads and *Culwch and Olwen*.

⁷² Geoffrey Ashe, 'Origins', in Ashe and Norris J. Lacy, *An Arthurian Handbook*, 2nd ed. (New York: Garland, 1997), pp. 1-55 (p. 15).

⁷³ Oliver Padel, 'The Nature of Arthur', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 27 (1994), 1-31 (p. 4).

It has not been clearly identified; the possibilities have been discussed by Oliver Padel.⁷⁴ This place does not recur in later tradition, since Geoffrey does not mention it, and it is not even clear whether the Welsh writers were describing a real place, or if the name is Welsh or Cornish.⁷⁵ However it suggests an early association of Arthur with Cornwall, which is continued to some extent in *HRB*. Another example is *Englynion y Beddau*, a poem in the Black Book of Carmarthen (although much of it has been estimated to date back to the ninth century), that lists the resting-places of legendary figures.⁷⁶ However, these Welsh texts were not widely known or disseminated. Of the sources written before Geoffrey, Gildas and *Historia Brittonum* were the most influential.

The benefits of focusing on the pre-Saxon history of Britain for this study are several. Firstly, it limits the corpus to be studied, acting as a selection method in texts that extend past this period and can often be very lengthy. It also provides relatively consistent references to place- although there are of course changes, the relatively conservative nature of this subject matter makes it easier to compare over long periods of time. The fact that Arthur and Brutus are not considered now to be historical makes it somewhat easier to trace lines of influence and reception.

⁷⁴ Padel, 'Some South-Western Sites with Arthurian Associations', pp. 234-8.

⁷⁵ As a Welsh place-name it can be translated as 'forest grove', and there are two places in Wales with the same name, and two in Brittany (Quillivic), although it is not clear that the latter have exactly the same meaning. Padel, 'Some South-Western Sites', pp. 234-8.

⁷⁶ Thomas Jones (ed.), 'The Black Book of Carmarthen "Stanzas of the Graves"', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 53 (1967), 97-137.

1.5. Scope and Structure of the thesis

Perceptions of this period in English and Anglo-Latin historical tradition will be central to the thesis. For reasons of space I will not discuss the strong Welsh and Scottish historical traditions around this period in depth (particularly the Scottish since it is many respects quite different), although I will touch on them where relevant.

The scope of the thesis extends from the twelfth century to the early seventeenth. The twelfth century saw an explosion in historical writing, and the Anglo-Norman historians were important influences on the main historical discourse in England over the next several hundred years, both in terms of form, methodology and content. The starting point for this study is Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britannie*, since Geoffrey was either the originator of much of this material, or the first to bring it to the attention of historians in England. The influence of Geoffrey's work can hardly be overstated. Many of Geoffrey's contemporaries questioned the veracity of his account, the reign of Arthur (around a third of Geoffrey's work) coming in for the bulk of the suspicion, and historians of the next few centuries took up the mantle of disputing Geoffrey's account, to a greater or lesser extent. However, even when it was being disputed Geoffrey's history was still the starting-point for his critics, for the simple fact that there was no better alternative for a period with so few reliable textual sources. The developments in historical discourse in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries functioned in many ways as a re-evaluation of the medieval chronicle tradition. The thesis therefore examines the continuities and differences between the writing of history and place in the twelfth century and in the sixteenth and seventeenth. It will demonstrate the ways in which this tradition changed or remained stable across this period.

The texts chosen for this study fall, broadly, into two types: narrative histories and descriptions of land (Britain, or smaller entities such as Wales). The first are texts that are structured chronologically, and the second are structured geographically. Within each chapter (arranged in chronological order) the works of two writers will be focussed on. While the nearly five centuries are covered more or less chronologically, the scope of this necessitates focusing in on individual works. Each chapter focuses on one work written from the chronological viewpoint, narrative histories, and one focussed primarily on the spatial axis.

The first chapter will look at Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. It will examine the way in which Geoffrey uses realistic places as a foundation for his history, whether real or constructed. The way that place acts in narrative will be a theme throughout the work, and it is particularly pertinent to Geoffrey's work, due to Geoffrey's handling of a chronological narrative. The comparison to Geoffrey's work in the first chapter will be Gerald of Wales' works about Wales, the *Itinerarium Cambriae* (1191) and the *Descriptio Cambriae* (1194). These are not historical works, but historical matter features prominently. Comparing a work of a different genre, organised not by time but by space, allows a better understanding of the different ways this material can be used for different purposes. Gerald's use of historical matter in a geographical description is also important in the long view of the thesis.

The second chapter looks at Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon* and the Middle English *Brut*. As well as demonstrating the continuing interest in the chronicle material, these works are important in the development of the production and consumption of literature in England. An important development is the introduction of print in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, which changed the ways in which these texts were

produced and consumed. Most of the works I focus on exist in numerous manuscripts. In many cases, their longevity was extended by their appearance in print. The *Brut* and *Polychronicon*, for example, were amongst the earliest works printed by William Caxton: Middle English *Brut* as *The Chronicles of England* in 1480, the *Polychronicon* in 1482. This manuscript/print context can tell us about how these works were used and read, and what effect the move to print had on the reception and readership of historical material. The question of reader response is particularly important in this area in light of the multiplicity of different approaches to the same material, reusing the same small corpus of sources. Writers of the texts are also readers of the previous texts. At some points this study will incorporate manuscript evidence of the ways in which these texts were read and used. This will also avoid the trap of presuming one homogenous audience across the period.

The third chapter looks at Polydore Vergil and John Leland. From an Arthurian perspective these authors are interesting because of Vergil's famous scepticism about Arthur's existence, and Leland's defence. Formally, Vergil's history is a chronicle while Leland's writing is based around his journeys around the country. This thus has many parallels to the relationship between Gerald and Geoffrey, looked at in the first chapter, and how works organised on temporal or spatial lines have different aims and different relationships to place and to the past.

The final chapter looks at Michael Drayton's vast poem *Poly-Olbion*, and the accompanying prose notes by John Selden, and Thomas Churchyard's *The Worthines of Wales*. This draws together many threads which run throughout the rest of the study: questions about genre; the truth value assigned to different works; changing perceptions

of earlier authors; and the interplay between the chronological and the geographical, the narrative and the descriptive.

I will take a consistent approach in each chapter. I will situate each text in the continuum of writing about pre-Saxon Britain in existing works, highlighting the similarities and any important changes in the factual content. The main body of the chapter will be organised by type of place, roughly in decreasing order of size. Firstly, I will look at Britain and its relationship to the rest of the world in the text, both spatially and culturally/ intellectually. Secondly, I will look at divisions of Britain, such as England, Wales, Scotland and Cornwall, and in later chapters, counties. Thirdly, I will look at the role of the city in the text, and its counterpoint, the countryside (or wilderness, or natural world). Lastly, I will look at what I have chosen to call the 'locality', which is, broadly speaking, anything that could be seen by a human observer.

Using these insights into how place is used in the text, I will define each text in terms of genre. This involves asking questions about what the author is attempting to achieve, what techniques the author uses to do this (and here the questions of the relationship of time and space to narrative, discussed in this introduction, come to the fore), and where this places in the text in the continuum of writing about the early British history. I aim to show the points of continuity and of difference across the period relating to the subject matter, but also to suggest an approach to the study of sense of place in historical writing that could be used in other contexts.

2. The Twelfth Century: Geoffrey of Monmouth and Gerald of Wales

This chapter looks at the sense of place in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Gerald of Wales' *Itinerarium Kambriae* and *Descriptio Kambriae*.¹ It explores the different purposes of each text, and the relationship of space and time, particularly as this relates to fulfilment of the authors' purposes and how it creates different generic modes and expectations. This is set in the context of the twelfth century, and how contemporary events and literary trends influenced sense of place, the writing of historical material, and how early British history was used in the discourse about the two. I begin with background on the authors' lives and sources. Subsequently, I have divided the use of place in the text into four types: the island of Britain, and national divisions thereof; wilderness, or the natural landscape, and human settlement; the city; and the locality, which encompasses the area that can be seen by a person. The conclusion draws comparisons between the two, and establishes the importance of Geoffrey and Gerald for the later works which draw on their writing.

HRB is the most influential work about the early history of Britain. Geoffrey attempts to write a complete narrative account of the history of the island, from its first human settlement, to the late seventh century and the final defeat of the Britons by the Saxons. It was one of the most widely circulated texts of the Middle Ages, surviving in

¹ All references to *Historia Regum Britanniae* (hereafter HRB) are to book and paragraph in *The History of the Kings of Britain: an edition and translation of De gestis Britonum*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007); all translations are from the same edition, unless specified as my own. I use the traditional title for the work, although as Michael Reeve has shown, Geoffrey himself referred to it as 'De gestis Britonum': Reeve, HRB, p. lix. All references to the *Itinerarium* and *Descriptio* (hereafter IK and DK) are to *Giraldus Cambrensis Opera*, ed. by James F. Dimock, Rolls Series 21, 6 vols. (London, 1868, reprinted Nendeln: Kraus, 1964), vol. VI.

over 200 manuscripts. HRB and its translations and adaptations (in English, French and Welsh, as well as Latin) became the standard account of the early history of Britain. In particular, Geoffrey's account of Arthur's reign, which occupies around a third of the whole work, brought the character of Arthur to a wider audience, creating the basic elements of Arthur's life that formed the basis for a wide range of literary and historical treatments in the following centuries. Arthur is mentioned in several Welsh and insular Latin texts that pre-date HRB, notably for Geoffrey's purposes *Historia Brittonum*, which introduces the idea of the Trojan origin, and the importance of Arthur in the defence of Britain. However, Geoffrey's popular and greatly expanded treatment largely usurped these other texts: 'Once Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and its numerous spin-offs in several languages had been accepted as the central, authoritative texts on early British history, the pre-Galfridian, British histories were rarely consulted until the Renaissance, so they had little direct impact on the historicization of Arthur during the Middle Ages.'² From the time of its first appearance, Geoffrey's work was met with both excitement over its apparent uncovering of new sources for a murky period of history, and scepticism over its veracity. Contemporaries such as William of Malmesbury were scathing about Geoffrey's ability to find sources that no one else had, namely what Geoffrey calls a 'quendam Britannici sermonis librum uetustissimum' [a certain very old book in the British tongue], although the figure of Arthur himself, usually now deemed to be legendary, was accepted; William of Malmesbury wrote, 'Hic est Artur de quo Britonum nugae hodieque delirant, dignus plane quem non fallaces somniarent fabulae sed ueraces predicarent historiae'.³ Scholars have generally agreed that the idea of a single

² N. J. Higham, *King Arthur: Myth-Making and History* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 9.

³ 'This Arthur is the hero of many wild tales among the Britons even in our own day, but assuredly deserves to be the subject of reliable history rather than false and dreaming fable.' William of Malmesbury,

source for the unique sections of the work is a fiction, but Geoffrey used a number of insular sources, including Gildas' *De excidio Britanniae*, Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, *Historia Brittonum*, and possibly other Welsh sources, as well as literary models such as the *Aeneid*.⁴ However, undoubtedly some portion of the work comes from Geoffrey's imagination.

Gerald of Wales' *Itinerarium Kambriae* was inspired by Gerald's journey through Wales, accompanying Archbishop Baldwin on his preaching of the third crusade.⁵ They departed on Ash Wednesday 1188, and IK describes their five-week journey, which is a complete circuit around the edge of Wales, beginning and ending in Hereford.⁶ Gerald records facts and anecdotes about the history and natural history of the various places he visits. The *Descriptio* is a complementary work which covers the history and natural history of Wales in a more general way, duplicating some material from the earlier work. IK and DK, along with Gerald's writing on Ireland, were his best-known works, but unlike Geoffrey we know a large amount about Gerald's life, and he left a much larger corpus of work. Like Geoffrey, Gerald made use of written sources for his works on Wales, including HRB (although usually only attributed when he disagrees with Geoffrey), and Gildas. However, as with HRB there is a great deal of material that Gerald wrote down for the first time. The two works therefore share some material, but do not cover exactly the same

Gesta Regum Anglorum, ed. and trans. by R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), p. 26.

⁴ Neil Wright, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Gildas', *Arthurian Literature* 2 (1982), 1–40; Neil Wright, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Bede', *Arthurian Literature* 6 (1986), 27–59; Molly Miller, 'Geoffrey's Early Royal Synchronisms', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 28 (1979), 373–89.

⁵ Robert Bartlett, 'Gerald of Wales (c.1146–1220x23)', ODNB, 2004; online ed., Oct 2006, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10769> [accessed 19 February 2019].

⁶ For details of the journey, see Huw Pryce, 'Gerald's Journey through Wales', *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History* 6 (1989), 17–34, and Peter W. Edbury, 'Preaching the Crusade in Wales', in *England and Wales in the High Middle Ages*, ed. by Alfred Haverkamp and Hanna Volrath (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 221–33.

material or time period. Whereas Gerald uses the landscape as his organising principle, Geoffrey's work is organised chronologically, but within the bounds of Britain. These generic differences have an effect on the sense of time and place in the text, and how history is encoded in the landscape. Place is a construction of both space and time. As Tor Arnesen puts it, 'In daily life and politics there is no clear-cut distinction between landscapes as they are, as they were, and as we recall them'.⁷ Landscapes are an important part of an historical text, but vice versa we can also read the history in the light of the places the writer chooses to depict within it. Therefore the interplay between the chronological/temporal, and the decisions made by the writer about the relative importance of these two axes at a given point in the text, are key to how history creates place, and the contrasts and similarities between Geoffrey and Gerald in these areas create a framework for looking at sense of place in historical texts generally.

⁷ Tor Arnesen, 'Landscapes Lost', *Landscape Research* 23:1 (1998), 39-50 (p. 41).

2.1. Britain in the world

A major goal of both writers is to bring Britain onto the world stage, setting the island and its history in a European context and justifying its history as part of a tradition of classical and Christian history, both geographically and by linking it with existing historical tradition.

In HRB it is the island of Britain which gives the work its thematic unity. The first dedication to Robert describes him as a figure to be celebrated throughout Britain, rather than England: ‘unde Britannia tibi nunc temporibus nostris ac si alterum Henricum adepta interno congratulatur affectu’.⁸ ‘Britannia’ is the first word of the first book, leading in to a description of the ‘insularum optima’: its size, geography, climate, and natural resources.⁹ Geographical descriptions were a common part of historical writing on Britain, and built on the descriptions of earlier writers. Orosius spends one chapter of his *Historiarum Adversos Paganos* describing the geography and climate of the areas about which he writes; as A. H. Merrills argues, his geographical rhetoric contributes to the sense of Romano-British unity Orosius aims to create.¹⁰ Gildas, Bede, and Henry of Huntingdon all open works with a description of Britain.¹¹ Neil Wright and N. J. Higham both point out the debt owed by Gildas to Orosius for this description.¹² These

⁸ ‘Hence the island of Britain now congratulates herself on gaining in you a Henry reborn for our time.’ HRB, Prologue, p. 4.

⁹ HRB, I.5, p. 7.

¹⁰ Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and other works*, ed. by Michael Winterbottom, *Arthurian Period Sources* 7 (London: Phillimore, 1978); Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. by Colgrave and Mynors, I.1; Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum (History of the English People)*, ed. and trans. by Diana Greenaway (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), I. 1, pp. 10-14.

¹¹ A. H. Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 68.

¹² Neil Wright, ‘Did Gildas read Orosius?’, *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 9 (1986), 31-42; N. J. Higham, *The English Conquest: Gildas and Britain in the Fifth Century* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 99.

geographical descriptions contextualize Britain in the world. Geoffrey, like other writers before him, emphasises the appeal of the island's situation and climate. By situating it as a valuable territory, Geoffrey justifies the time spent on trying to understand its history. They furthermore stress what the island has in common as a whole, rather than the differences between regions. Kathy Lavezzo suggests that,

by celebrating the land itself, these chroniclers [Bede, Geoffrey, Henry] complicate the image of Britain provided in the histories proper that dominate their texts, in which the nation is signified pre-eminently not by territory, but by people (namely, monarchs and ecclesiastics) [...] By invoking space, in effect, the historiographers imaginatively transform the hierarchically structured populace portrayed in their chronologies into a community levelled and bound by the land.¹³

This use of space thus creates the community which defines the audience of the work. Geography is not only a scene-setter at the beginning of the work but, as Andrew Galloway says, 'the fundamental basis of historical perspective'.¹⁴ In Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope, neither time nor space are privileged, but are utterly interdependent.¹⁵ Therefore the historical imagination can only work within a clearly defined spatial parameter. Lefebvre writes about the importance of space in the constitution of societies. To imagine societies in the past, they must be within a known space; 'otherwise they remain in "pure" abstraction'.¹⁶ Grounding the work in a real space also validates the truth value of the history, preparing the reader for unfamiliar peoples and history in a familiar

¹³Kathy Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature, and English Community, 1000-1534* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 81.

¹⁴ Andrew Galloway, 'Latin England', in *Imagining a Medieval English Nation*, ed. Kathy Lavezzo (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), pp. 41-95 (p. 50).

¹⁵ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*.

¹⁶ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), pp. 152-3.

setting.

Geoffrey's use of the Trojan origin myth further acts to draw Britain into the sphere of influence of classical history, both culturally and geographically. Brutus is given as the eponym of Britain by Isidore of Seville in the *Etymologiae*, who identifies him as the Roman consul Decimus Junius Brutus Callacius, who subdued Spain in 138BC. *Historia Brittonum* adopts this etymology and makes Brutus the grandson or great-grandson of Aeneas. Geoffrey opens his history with a variation of this legend. Aeneas's great-grandson Brutus is forced to leave Italy to establish his own country after killing his father Sylvius. He goes to Greece, where he becomes a rallying-point for other exiled Trojans, and after victories there they depart on ships. On a desert island they find a temple dedicated to Diana, where the goddess tells Brutus to travel west to establish a 'second Troy'. After fighting wars in Gaul, they make the crossing to Britain, then called Albion, and settle there. For other writers, such as the author(s) of the various versions of *Historia Brittonum*, connecting the founders of Britain to Troy is part of the Table of Nations tradition stemming from Genesis, which attempts to connect all societies back to Noah.¹⁷ *Historia Brittonum* variously traces Brutus back to Noah through Ham and through Japeth.¹⁸ In Geoffrey's more secularly-minded history, it serves to make a cultural and geographical connection to the classical past. Geographically, Geoffrey must both emphasise the remoteness of Britain (to explain why it was previously uninhabited) and

¹⁷ On medieval genealogy in general, see Walter Pohl, 'Genealogy: A Comparative Perspective from the Early Medieval West', in *Meanings of Community across Medieval Eurasia: Comparative Approaches*, ed. by Eirik Hovden, Christina Lutter and Walter Pohl (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 232-70. On its use in Geoffrey, see Francis Ingledew, 'The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*', *Speculum* 69:4 (1994), 665-704.

¹⁸ Morris (ed.), *Nennius*, 10, 17.

bring it into the sphere of world history, which the motif of the wandering exile and the goddess's prophecy allow him to achieve.

Another episode which demonstrates the dichotomy of Britain's position is during Caesar's attempt to conquer the island. When Caesar is in Gaul, planning his conquest, he makes a speech about the British. He admits that they share a common ancestry with the Romans, since they are all descended from Troy: 'Sed nisi fallor ualde degenerati sunt a nobis nec quid sit milicia nouerunt, cum infra oceanum extra orbem commaneant'.¹⁹ These words reflect the British anxiety about their liminal position in the world. Cassibellaunus' angry response stresses the primacy of the common bloodline, but also justifies the position of Britain at the edge of the world as one of bravery, amidst 'pericula oceanii' [the perils of the ocean]. He repeatedly stresses how highly the British value their freedom, which the island allows them to hold intact.²⁰ This scene represents both British anxiety about their isolation, and the justification of it as key to the distinctive character of Britain and the British.

Gerald's opening sentence to the first chapter of *IK* similarly represents a connection of Wales to world history. He locates Baldwin's journey temporally, by year and by the reigns of kings, including reference to Saladin's entry into Jerusalem the same year:

Anno igitur ab Incarnatione Domini millesimo centesimo octogesimo octavo, apostolatus apicem regent Urbano tertio, imperante Romae Alemannorum rege Frederico, Constantinopolis Ysaakio, regnante in Francia Philippo Ludovici filio, in Anglia Henrico secundo, in Sicilia Willelmo, in Ungaria rege Bela, in Palestina Gwidone, anno scilicet quo Saladinus, tam Egyptiorum quam Damascenorum princeps, occult Dei iudicio sed nunquam injusto, public belli

¹⁹ 'But, unless I am mistaken, they are no longer our equals and have no idea of soldiering, since they live at the edge of the world amid the ocean'. HRB IV.54, p. 69.

²⁰ HRB IV.55, p. 69.

certamine victoria potitus, Ierosolimorum regnum obtinuit, vir venerabilis, et tam literature quam religion conspicuus, Cantuariorum archipraesul Baldewinus, in salutiferae cruces obsequium ab Anglia in Walliam tendens, apud Herefordiae fines Kambriam intravit.²¹

This single sentence neatly contextualizes the journey both temporally and spatially, as well as providing the context for which the preaching of the third crusade was particularly urgent. It moves in from the world stage before in the final clause moving the focus to the relatively distant Wales, highlighting the global nature of his enterprise. The movement across Christendom from Jerusalem, incorporating the other great cities and rulers, of the past and present, mimics the concept of *translatio studii*, the movement across time and place of the knowledge and cultural legacy of antiquity, from Jerusalem, through Rome, to the ultimate west. Wales, which has previously been an absence in world history, now can take its proper place in the geography of western history. Georgia Henley demonstrates that Gerald's extensive use of quotations from biblical, patristic and classical sources likewise serve to contextualize Wales in a European context:

his habit of quotation has the striking effect of infusing his narrative of Welsh churches, holy men, and natural spaces with constant correlation to fundamental and familiar aspects of Western culture, rendering what might otherwise be a bewildering and strange context for his readers into a familiar one... Wales is drawn into a world that Gerald's readers understand.²²

²¹'In the year AD 1188, Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, crossed the borders of Herefordshire and entered Wales. He was a man whom everyone respected, for he was well known for his learning and piety. It was in the service of the Cross, from whence cometh our salvation, that he had undertaken this journey from England to Wales. At that time Urban III was Pope, Frederick King of the Germans and Holy Roman Emperor, and Isaac Emperor of Constantinople, Philippe, son of Louis, was then reigning in France, Henry II in England, William in Sicily, Bela in Hungary, and Guy in Palestine. In this very same year God in his judgment, which is never unjust but sometimes difficult to understand, permitted Saladin, the leader of the Egyptians and of the men of Damascus, to win a victory in pitched battle and so seize the kingdom of Jerusalem.' IK, I.1.

²² Henley, 'Quotation, Revision, and Narrative Structure', p. 51.

Given this, Gerald's opening acts as a statement of intent, a literal representation of his intent throughout the whole work in giving 'barbarous' Wales its proper due as a culturally distinct but rightful component of Christendom. This is particularly important given the crusading context of the work, and the recent developments, emphasised by this passage, that made the preaching of the third crusade so urgent.²³ If the Welsh are to be encouraged to take up the Cross, they must be acknowledged to be part of a wider Christian endeavour, set against Saladin and the East.

Although Wales is Christian, its remoteness lends itself to both sides of the crusade narrative, both allies and the 'other'. Gerald says, 'De nullo vero Cantuariensi antistite legitur, vel post sunjectionem istam vel ante, Kambriae fines intrasse, praetor hunc solum; qui legationis hujus occasione, et salutiferae crucis obsequio, terram tam hispidam, tam inaccessibilem et remotam laudabili devotione circuivit'.²⁴ As with Geoffrey, Gerald is simultaneously moving back and forth between depictions of the land as remote and isolated, and as part of the wider world. As we have seen, Gerald situates Wales within a wider Christendom, and the purpose of Archbishop Baldwin's journey and the Christian history of Wales, as evidenced in its churches, saints and relics, cement its credentials as a securely pious country. However, as a writer of what we would describe as a mix of travel literature and ethnography, Gerald wants to highlight the element of his work that is novel, appearing in writing for the first time. The lack of an archiepiscopal see and the allusions to the remoteness of the land and, in some circumstances, the barbarity of the people,

²³Stephen G. Nichols, 'Fission and Fusion: Mediations of Power in Medieval History and Literature', *Yale French Studies* 70 (1986), 21-41.

²⁴'From what we read, no Archbishop of Canterbury, except Baldwin, the present one, has ever entered Wales, either before the subjugation or after it. With praiseworthy devotion to the service of the Cross, from whence cometh our salvation, Baldwin has undertaken the task of travelling through our rough, remote and inaccessible countryside.' IK I. 2.

‘other’ Wales and emphasise its distance from the rest of Christian Europe. This ‘othering’ serves to make the Wales of Gerald’s work more akin to the pagan worlds of crusading texts. We can read links between IK and crusade narratives, since travel is so integral to the idea of crusade and to narratives of crusade, what Giles Constable calls ‘The distinctive combination of pilgrimage with warfare [...] that characterized crusading ideology’.²⁵ Peregrination was the standard word for crusading, and the crusaders were *peregrini*. Baldwin’s journey, likewise, is described as a *peregrinatio*. Therefore linguistically there was no clear distinction between the three activities of preaching, pilgrimage and crusading, and all carried an element of the geographical and ethnographical interest that characterises Gerald’s work. The *Annales Herbipolenses*, discussing the motivation of the crusaders, states that ‘Some men, eager for novelty, went for the sake of learning about strange lands’, which could equally describe Gerald’s own travels.²⁶ Gerald’s various goals therefore create a sense of Wales as simultaneously an object of pilgrimage, a source of crusaders, and the ‘other’ of crusading texts.

The two writers further emphasise Britain’s status as a Christian land by drawing parallels between British history and Biblical history. Robert Hanning argues that the originality of Geoffrey’s work lies in his ‘removal of national history from its traditional context, the history of salvation’, but goes on to suggest that he was unable to ignore the tone set by Gildas’ work entirely: ‘while muting the intensely religious voice of the British monk, the Anglo-Welsh canon preserved intact the tradition of a self-caused, catastrophic climax to British history’.²⁷ Several critics have argued that Geoffrey makes parallels with

²⁵Giles Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008), p. 114.

²⁶ *Annales Herbipolenses*, translated by James Brundage, *The Crusades: A Documentary History*, (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1962), pp. 115-121.

²⁷ Robert Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 412.

Exodus throughout HRB, creating an identification of the Britons with the Hebrews.²⁸ This identification provides HRB with its 'structure of founding, betrayal, and diaspora based on New and Old Testament models'.²⁹ The struggling Trojans wander round Europe, before divine intervention helps them to their destined land. Brutus tells Pandrasus that people prefer to live free in the wilderness than in luxury as slaves. Diana's promise to Brutus recalls God's promise to Moses. Geoffrey is not of course the first to make this connection, since he is following the similar parallels drawn by Gildas and the author of *Historia Brittonum*; for example D. H. Howlett and Nicholas Higham have pointed out the Biblical influence in the *Historia Brittonum* battle passage, such as the significance of the number 12, as in Joshua's 12 battles, which helps cast the Britons as latter-day Israelites.³⁰ In HRB the image of the Trojans as a divinely chosen people makes their receipt of a virgin land justifiable, as it does their later downfall when God punishes them for their hubris. Geoffrey's conception of British history very much fits a divinely planned view of history, although much of this is by virtue of the sources he uses and the more general literary resonances of some of these tropes, rather than, I would argue, through explicit emulation of this Biblical model. The idea of land as central to identity and creating a sense of community is ingrained in historical thought, of which the Bible

²⁸Fiona Tolhurst, 'The Britons as Hebrews, Romans, and Normans: Geoffrey of Monmouth's British Epic and Reflections of Empress Matilda', *Arthuriana* 8.4, Theoretical Approaches to Geoffrey of Monmouth (Winter 1998), 69-87.

²⁹Susan M. Shwartz, 'The Founding and Self-Betrayal of Britain: An Augustinian Approach to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 10 (1981), 33-53 (p. 34).

³⁰D. H. Howlett, *Cambro-Latin Compositions: Their Competence and Craftmanship* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), p. 73; Nicholas J. Higham, *King Arthur: The Making of the Legend* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), p. 186; Higham, 'The Chronicles of Early Britain' in *The Arthur of Medieval Latin Literature*, ed. Siân Echard (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 9-25 (p. 15). Howlett, in particular, stresses the importance of numbers throughout the work: 'For the author of the *Historia Brittonum* the geographical structure of the island of Britain, the genealogy and descent of its inhabitants, their physical compositions, and their acts were all describable on a single base, and that base was number' (p. 73).

is only one of many available models. An untouched land strengthens the claim of one community to the space over another.

Both authors justify their choice of subject matter, in comparison to classical history. Gerald justifies his decision to write about Wales, in the preface to *DK*, by preemptively parrying criticism that there are more worthy subjects of investigation:

Trojano Excidio, Thebis, et Athenis, Lavinisque litoribus, impar et inculta quid addere posset opera nostra? Quoniam igitur actum agree quasi nihil agentis opus existeret, malui potius et longe praelegi pauperes finium nostrorum historias, ab aliis hactenus omnino fere relictas, industria nostra parentibus et patriae non ingrate declarare.³¹

Gerald lists the subjects about which he has not chosen to write, but implicitly aligns Wales with them as being equally worthy of praise. The humility topos here serves his purpose of justifying Wales as a subject, since it displays his unwillingness to retread ground already covered by greater historians. In his prologue, Geoffrey laments that no one has written about British history before the Romans, or much about the post-Roman period:

Cum mecum multa et de multis saepius animo reuolens in hystoriam regum Britanniae inciderem, in mirum contuli quod infra mentionem quam de eis Gildas et Beda lucelento tractatu fecerant nichil de regibus qui ante incarnationem Christi inhabitauerant, nichil etiam de Arturo ceterisque compluribus qui post incarnationem successerunt repperissem, cum et gesta eorum digna aeternitate laudis constarent et a multis populis quasi inscripta iocunde et memoriter praedicentur.³²

³¹‘What could my own crude and feeble efforts add to the Fall of Troy, to Thebes or Athens, or to what happened on the coast of Latium? Besides, just to do again what had been done already would be to achieve nothing. This is why I have decided instead to write the history of my own country. It is a tale as yet untold, I have worked hard at it, and it will cause pleasure to my own relations and my countrymen.’ *DK*, Preface, p. 157.

³²‘While my mind was often pondering these things in many ways, my thoughts turned to the history of the kings of Britain, and I was surprised that, among the references to them in the fine works of Gildas

Importantly, it is the deeds that have been left out of the existing narratives which are in danger of being forgotten. This is the value for him of his 'source': '*...quendam Britannici sermonis librum uetustissimum qui a Bruto primo rege Britonum usque ad Cadualadrum filium Caduallonis actus omnium continue et ex ordine perpulcris orationibus proponebat*'.³³ Geoffrey proceeds to fill in this gap in the historical record, through a composite of sources and his own imagination. Geoffrey makes almost the opposite justification to Gerald, pitching his choice of Britain not as a humble reluctance to redo the other work of historians, but as redressing their remissness in neglecting it. This is less of a humility topos than a statement of superiority, announcing himself as the writer best qualified to tackle the subject. Geoffrey of Monmouth divides up the run of British history among his contemporaries, claiming the unique nature of his source as justification for his subject matter:

Reges autem eorum qui ab illo tempore in Gualii successerunt Karadoco Lancarbanensi contemporaneo meo in materia scribendi permitto, reges uero Saxonum Willelmo Malmesberienensi et Henrico Huntendonensi, quos de regibus Britonum tacere iubeo, cum non habeant librum illum Britannici sermonis quem Walterus Oxenefordensis archidiaconus ex Britannia aduexit.³⁴

and Bede, I had found nothing concerning the kings who lived here before Christ's Incarnation, and nothing about Arthur and the many others who succeeded after it, even though their deeds were worthy of eternal praise and are proclaimed by many people as if they had been entertainingly and memorably written down.' HRB Prologue, p. 5.

³³'A very old book in the British tongue, which set out in excellent style a continuous narrative of all their deeds from the first king of the Britons, Brutus, down to Cadualadrus, son of Caduallo.' HRB Preface, p. 5.

³⁴'The Welsh kings who succeeded one another from then on I leave as subject-matter to my contemporary, Caradoc of Llancarfan, and the Saxon kings to William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon; however, I forbid them to write about the kings of the Britons since they do not possess the book in British which Walter, archdeacon of Oxford, brought from Brittany [...]' HRB IX.208, p. 281.

He assesses the worth of HRB as being based on the novelty of his subject matter outside of Wales, allotting other subjects to other historians. The neglect of early British/ Welsh history is here not indication of their lesser worth, but an unexplored field ripe for investigation.

In Geoffrey and Gerald's prefaces we therefore see a balancing act, between unnecessary repetition of material already covered by others, and the danger that some subjects will be neglected entirely and therefore omitted from the standard historical continuum. Otter points out that this is particularly the 'situation of the twelfth-century historian, who is at a threshold between largely oral and largely written modes of historical tradition and therefore more acutely aware than his colleagues at most other times of the precariousness of historical transmission.'³⁵ Both Geoffrey and Gerald are worried about the possibility of material being forgotten. The area that is in danger of being forgotten is temporal in Geoffrey's case, a period of time (measured in reigns of kings), whereas Gerald relates it to histories of cities. Theories of place and landscape are predicated to a large extent on the question of seeing- the relationship of the human to the space, and their use of the past to give dimension to that space. While Geoffrey looks at the chronological narrative of Britain and sees an account of the British kings in a certain time period as what is lacking, Gerald looks at world history and sees a Wales-shaped space which gives the potential to move back and forth in time. Therefore, from different sides Geoffrey and Gerald are interpreting the same problem- how to write the history of Britain in terms of the visible landscape. These rationales, from different

³⁵ Otter, *Inventiones*, p. 51.

directions, point up the extent to which the history of the British presents a void in the writing of the island.

2.2. Divisions of Britain: nations and borders

The island of Britain, as a geographical entity, gives a unity to HRB which is at odds with the constant cycles of invasion, conflict and dispossession which drive the narrative. The idealized, apparently unchangeable description of the island is in contrast to the events that follow. The divisions begin from the first generation of Britons: Brutus gives his name to Britain, and his sons give their names to Loegria, Kambria and Albania (England, Wales and Scotland).³⁶ Civilisation comes with the taming of the land, and also with the naming of the land. As Maggie Roe says, 'Naming a tract of land can also be seen as an indicator of cultural value, thus changing an area from a space into a place, or a landscape. Such names are important indicators not just of association, ownership and other interactions that have occurred over time but also of the perception of the quality of character and the uniqueness of the particular landscape.'³⁷ The interest of Geoffrey, in particular, in toponymics and their etymology is an attempt to more closely intertwine the landscape with the significant actors of his history. The early division of the island reflects a paradox of the work, that although it is united by the integrality of the island, it is also a work deeply concerned with division and discord. It is perhaps for this reason, as much as the

³⁶ HRB II.23, p. 31.

³⁷ Maggie Roe, 'Making Sense of Place and Landscape Planning at the Landscape Scale', in Convery, *Making Sense of Place*, pp. 191-205 (p. 196).

fictionality of much of Geoffrey's history, that historians have frequently taken the stance, as Antonia Gransden puts it, that 'the value Geoffrey's work has as an historical source is as a mirror of his own times, not as a record of the past'.³⁸ It has been seen as a mirror for the turbulent politics and racial divisions of the twelfth century, although there is disagreement about what exactly it depicts. In this section I will look at the border milieu in which Geoffrey and Gerald were writing, and how questions of ethnic and geographic divisions in twelfth-century England and Wales play a role in the texts' writing of time and place.

2.2.1. Borders

The idea of 'frontier' is common in historiography. It has been used in two broad senses. In one usage, it refers to human interaction with nature and expansion into uninhabited areas (most familiar perhaps to the modern reader in the phrase 'frontier society', as applied to colonial expansion westwards across North America).³⁹ Perhaps most commonly by medievalists, it is applied to interactions between groups of people and societies. For example, in the context of historiography of the crusades it is important in describing the idea of Christendom, and the clashing of cultures on the edge of it.⁴⁰ In both these contexts, the idea of frontier carries an antagonistic element, since it represents the expansion of one group's cultural influence at the expense of others.

³⁸ Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England I: c.550 to c.1307* (London: Routledge, 1974), p. 206.

³⁹ Nora Berend, 'Frontiers', in *The Crusades*, Palgrave Advances, ed. by Helen Nicholson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 148-71 (pp. 148-51).

⁴⁰ Berend, 'Frontiers', pp. 148-71.

‘Border’, in contrast, can be seen as something more flexible and permeable. Borders can move, and at each new iteration of the border, the cultures on either side interact differently; Homi Bhabha points to borders as areas where ‘the overlap and displacement of domains of difference’ is constantly in play.⁴¹ Border communities engender ‘an insurgent act of cultural translation’.⁴² Borders can also be crossed, and in travel literature the moment of crossing is often a moment of deep reflection about the change of state. The area between England and Wales in the twelfth century can be seen as both a border and a frontier; the relationship between the two was in flux, often not peaceably, but the border between the two also created a distinctive area that reflected elements of both societies.

Gerald and Geoffrey came from a very similar cultural milieu, being clerics from Norman-Welsh border areas. We know little about Geoffrey’s background, other than his description of himself in HRB as Galfridus Monumentensis, of Monmouth (Preface 5; XI 249; Prophecies 145). Prior to the Act of Union in 1536, which created the county of Monmouthshire, the town was in Erging (English Archenfield), in the bishopric of Hereford.⁴³ The text of HRB, notably the detailed description of the topography of Caerleon, makes Geoffrey’s familiarity with south-east Wales evident. Much has been written speculating on Geoffrey’s ethnic background, of which there is little clear evidence. We know nothing about his parentage. Other than ‘Monumentensis’, Geoffrey also refers to himself as ‘pudibundus Brito’ (an unabashed Briton), which suggests he was of Welsh ethnicity. However, it has been pointed out that the term ‘Brito’ is ambiguous

⁴¹ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 2.

⁴² Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 7.

⁴³ J. E. Lloyd, ‘Geoffrey of Monmouth’, *English Historical Review* 57 (1942), 460-8 (461-2).

and could also mean Cornish or Breton; both ideas have had their supporters.⁴⁴ Many scholars have argued vociferously against any sort of Celtic identification for Geoffrey, seeing his sympathies as entirely Norman.⁴⁵ Others have cautioned against trying to pin down an ethnic identity at all, either due to lack of evidence or because of the complicated nature of identity and ethnicity on the Welsh border at the time.⁴⁶

Gerald of Wales (otherwise known as Giraldus Cambrensis or Gerald de Barri) was born at Manorbier Castle, then in Dyfed, in around 1146. His father, William de Barry, was a vassal of the earls of Pembroke.⁴⁷ He was of royal Welsh ancestry on his mother's side- his mother Angharad was the daughter of Gerald of Windsor and Nest, the daughter of Rhys ap Tewdwr, prince of Deheubarth. Gerald was proud of his family and of his mixed descent, which represented a South Walian aristocracy that by the mid twelfth century inextricably mingled Welsh and Norman lines.

What we know of their origins suggests that a border context is the most important background for understanding Gerald and Geoffrey's affiliations. As Karen Jankulak rightly points out, the only secure evidence we have for Geoffrey's background is his own description 'of Monmouth'; all other suppositions have been based on readings of the text, which the multiplicity of interpretations show cannot prove anything for certain.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Geoffrey of Monmouth I: Bern*, ed. Wright, p. ix. The Breton identification was first suggested by J. E. Lloyd, *History of Wales to the Edwardian Conquest* (1911), pp. 523-4; see also Tatlock, *Legendary History of Britain*, pp. 414, 440-4. On the Cornish argument, see O. J. Padel, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 8 (1984), 1-28. A composite position is E. M. R. Ditmas, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Breton Families in Cornwall', *Welsh History Review* 6 (1973), 451-61.

⁴⁵ Michael A. Faletra, 'Narrating the Matter of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Norman Colonization of Wales', *The Chaucer Review* 35 (2000), 60-85.

⁴⁶ Karen Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Writers of Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010), pp. 10-12; Michelle R. Warren, 'Making Contact: Postcolonial Perspectives through Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britannie*', *Arthuriana* 8:4 (1998), 115-34 (p. 117).

⁴⁷ Robert Bartlett, 'Gerald of Wales (c.1146-1220x23)'.

⁴⁸ Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, pp. 10-12.

Gerald's identities have, like Geoffrey's, been hotly debated.⁴⁹ Many historians have downplayed Gerald's affiliation to the country of his birth, seeing the Norman areas of Wales as wholly drawn into the Anglo-Norman sphere by this point. Bartlett, for example, argues that Gerald was 'an active agent of a power hostile to the Welsh, and ... regarded the Welsh as barbarous', and that 'the evidence for any opposite tendency in his thought is slight'.⁵⁰ However it is difficult to read Gerald's statement of intent in support of his view. He is giving an insider's perspective, for the benefit of both people within and without Wales. This is even more marked when compared to his attitudes towards the *Topographia Hibernica*, which are clearly those of an outsider and emphasise how much of Gerald's work on the Welsh is that of an insider. To be sure, Gerald is often critical of the Welsh. However, as has been pointed out before, association with a people does not make one blind to their faults. Gerald criticises Norman arrogance and boastfulness in the *Expugnatio* and the *Vita Galfridi*; in the latter, in the context of an attack on William Longchamp, he also identifies homosexuality as a specifically Norman vice.⁵¹ As John Gillingham points out, Gerald also refers to himself as part English, while elsewhere being extremely critical of the English.⁵² Gildas was far more critical of the British in his own day, and that has never been a reason to see him as an outsider.

⁴⁹John Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), pp. 154-7; Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, pp. 12-25; Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, 'Hybrids, Monsters, Borderlands: The Bodies of Gerald of Wales', in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, ed. by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 85-104; Rhonda Knight, 'Procreative Sodomy: Textuality and the Construction of Ethnicities in Gerald of Wales's *Descriptio Kambriae*', *Exemplaria* 14.1 (2002), 47-77. On border writing in general, see Michelle Warren, *History on the Edge: Excalibur and the Borders of Britain, 1100-1300* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

⁵⁰ Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p. 178, p. 210.

⁵¹ *Expugnatio Hibernica*, ed. and trans. A. B. Scott and F. X. Martin (Dublin, 1978), pp. 244-5; *Vita Galfridi, Opera*, vol. 4, pp. 423-4.

⁵² John Gillingham, "'Slaves of the Normans'? Gerald de Barri and regnal solidarity in early thirteenth-century England', in *Law, laity and solidarities: Essays in honour of Susan Reynolds*, ed. Pauline Stafford, Janet L. Nelson and Jane Martindale (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 160-71 (pp. 160-3).

The question of Gerald and Geoffrey's Welsh sympathies, or lack thereof, has been perhaps the liveliest critical debate about them. However, critics including Michelle Warren and R. R. Davies have cautioned against trying to extrapolate a single personal identity in the context of a border origin. Warren writes, 'The performative multiplicity of border identity means that we cannot reason Norman blood from a Norman name or Welsh blood from a perceived political bias toward the Welsh, and that biological parentage works as only one identifying element jostled among many partial contacts'.⁵³ Davies points out that mixed identities were common:

[T]o outsiders Wales was a land of exclusive racial groups: French (Norman), English, and Welsh. To the men of the March such a confident simplification was a distortion. Wales was by now their homeland; they also were Welsh 'by nation if not by descent' (*nacione Kambrensis non cognacione*); many of them, Gerald himself included, were of mixed blood and proud of it.⁵⁴

Recognition of this background is vital not just in terms of Geoffrey's identity, but also in the very choice of subject. As Constance Bullock-Davies suggests, 'It may not be without significance that the twelfth century, during which the Matter of Britain reached the peak of its popularity, was also the period when professional interpreters were most in evidence along the Welsh Border'.⁵⁵ Bullock-Davies points to passages in Geoffrey, and elaborations of these by later redactors, which demonstrate that these authors were aware of household translators as a contemporary species.⁵⁶ These interpreters provide

⁵³ Michelle Warren, *History on the Edge: Excalibur and the Borders of Britain, 1100–1300*, Medieval Cultures 22 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 10.

⁵⁴ Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, p. 103.

⁵⁵ Constance Bullock-Davies, *Professional Interpreters and the Matter of Britain: a lecture delivered at a colloquium of the Departments of Welsh in the University of Wales at Gregynog, 26 June, 1965* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1966), p. 15.

⁵⁶ For example, the episode in HRB when an interpreter mediates between Vortigern and Renwein. Wace enlarges on this (6057–60), showing that he was also aware of professional Welsh interpreters. See Bullock-Davies, *Professional Interpreters*, pp. 20–2.

evidence not only of the interplay of languages in Norman Britain, but also of a specific means by which Welsh vernacular tales, or knowledge of Welsh texts, may have been transmitted to Anglo-Normans. Julia Crick suggests that, 'In fact both Geoffrey and Gerald appear to have been Welsh primarily by osmosis, by virtue of residence or origin in the border areas under Anglo-Norman control'.⁵⁷ This idea seems to place ideas of nationality or ethnicity derived from blood at a premium which denies the value of lived experience, when both authors' enthusiasm for the landscape, and their close connection of personal and national pasts with sense of place, is evident from their writing. As Brynley F. Roberts says, 'It was a frontier society properly termed Cambro-Norman and it is the pride and tensions of this society that Gerald reflects in his commitments and emotions rather than a schizoid attachment to a strictly Anglo-Norman or a strictly native Welsh camp.'⁵⁸ Both Gerald and Geoffrey are thus best understood as writers from an area marked by its mix of cultures, rather than shoehorned into one particular cultural affiliation.

This conclusion from the historical and biographical evidence, that there is no particular reason why identification with Welsh or Norman endeavours should be an either/or matter, is supported by the texts. The interaction of the two cultures, and how their interests can be mutual rather than in opposition, is a major interest of both writers. HRB begins before the settlement of Britain by refugees from Troy. It continues onwards chronologically until the death of Cadwallader in 689, which marks the end of British hopes of expelling the Saxons from lowland Britain. Geoffrey thereby creates a European origin which can be shared by Welsh and Normans, bringing the former into the Anglo-

⁵⁷Crick, 'The British Past and the Welsh Future', p. 63.

⁵⁸ Brynley F. Roberts, *Gerald of Wales*, Writers of Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982), p. 11.

Norman imperium, while neatly eliding the messy and still-fresh transfer of power from Anglo-Saxon rule. Otter rightly points out that ‘on the whole, in Anglo-Norman society, the *Historia* appears to have been thought suitable for all audiences and indeed considered a unifying contribution to a common insular historical heritage.’⁵⁹ Geoffrey emphasises more than anything the inherent unity of Britain.

The island's eponym derives from one common founder, and although it is divided into three kingdoms, it always has the potential to be one whole, as under Arthur. Arthur successfully unites Britain under his leadership, but his conquest is external rather than internal; he expands his rule on the Continent rather than within the island. The threat to his rule is dynastic, from within his own family, rather than from a rival tribe. Therefore, it is perhaps not necessary to posit Geoffrey's intended audience as being either Welsh or Anglo-Norman; he is writing a conventional history with lessons to be learned, but always with the ideal of a peaceful Britain with a single strong ruler. Perhaps the best argument against Geoffrey intending his work to glorify the Anglo-Normans exclusively is that he does not move away from ‘Britain’ to ‘England’; Anglo-Norman writers who followed him, such as Wace and Gaimar, described the process by which the name of the island had become ‘Anglia’, but in Geoffrey it remains ‘Loegria’ and it is part of a whole Britain. In addition, the way in which Geoffrey obfuscates the matter of the Anglo-Saxon invasions suggests that they did not fit his scheme of a united Britain, which could be read as equally the inheritance of both the native Britons and the Anglo-Normans. He pushes the main invasions back to the eighth century, rather than the mid fifth-century (449 being the date given by Bede for the arrival of Hengist and Horsa). The confusion shown by later writers

⁵⁹ Otter, *Inventiones*, p. 78.

with this part of Geoffrey's scheme, some collapsing Cadwallader and Athelstan together to make them contemporaries, shows that he successfully elided this part of history. Bringing the history of the Britons into a wider historical framework makes Britain part of a wider historical tradition and shows both the British and the Normans in a favourable light. Likewise, when we look at Gerald's work, in IK and DK, it is noticeable that the majority of the historical matter is attributed to the reigns of the Henrys, or else to a generalised, indeterminate past. Therefore the gap between the British past and Norman present is again elided. The references of both authors to the current disorganized state of the Welsh suggests that the *translatio imperii* is justified, and the Norman kings are the true inheritors of the great British kings of the past. As David Storey says, 'While history (actual or "invented") is central to the nation's being, its right to exist usually rests on claims to a particular national space and, within this, particular places and landscapes often assume symbolic importance.'⁶⁰ Looking at the focus on place shows that it is the island of Britain, rather than any one race or dynasty that is glorified by these works, and the Anglo-Norman empire is praised in doing so.

2.2.2. Wales

As discussed above, the relationship between the ancient Britons and the present-day Welsh and Anglo-Normans, and how the inheritance of British legendary history should be apportioned between them, is a key theme in both texts. For both Gerald and Geoffrey, the British writer Gildas is their most-referenced

⁶⁰ David Storey, 'Land, Territory and Identity', p. 15.

authority and model. In the first preface to DK, Gerald says that he sought to imitate Gildas' example:

Prae aliis itaque Britanniae scriptoribus, solus mihi Gildas, quoties eundem materiae cursus obtulerit, imitabilis esse videtur. Qui ea quae vidit et ipse cognovit scripto commendans, excidiumque gentis suae deplorans potius quam describens, verum magis historiam textuit quam ornatum. Gildam itaque Giraldus sequitur. Quem utinam moribus et vita sequi posset ; factus eiusdem plus sapientia quam eloquentia, plus animo quam calamo, plus zelo quam stilo, plus vita quam verbis imitator.⁶¹

'Deplorans potius quam describens' shows Gerald's conception of history as a rhetorical medium. As with Geoffrey, his veneration of Gildas probably owes something to Bede, highly regarded but, as Gerald mentions here, light on facts. The only real use of the *De excidio* is a comparison between Gildas and Caesar's accounts of the bravery of the Britons. The fall of the Britons is invoked a number of times, and as Huw Pryce argues the effect is to justify an Anglo-Norman imperium:

Gerald turned what were essentially native traditions about their distant past against the Welsh into a critique that justified Marcher and royal ambitions. Thus, while observing that the Welsh were inspired by the memory of their former nobility and their glorious Trojan and British origins, as a latter-day Gildas he sought to show that such confidence was mistaken by insisting that their sins, both past and present, should not be forgotten.⁶²

⁶¹ 'For the subject which I am now treating I have often had to consult Gildas. Of all the British writers he seems to me to be the only one worth copying. He puts on parchment the things which he himself saw and knew. He gives his own strong views on the decline and fall of his people, instead of just describing it. His history may not be all that polished, but at least it is true. It is Gildas, then, whom I, Gerald, propose to follow. I only wish I could emulate his life and ways; but at least I can imitate what he tried to do, with more understanding perhaps than literary skill, more in my soul than by my pen, more in my enthusiasm than by my style, more in my life than by my works'. DK, Preface, p. 157; Thorpe, p. 213.

⁶² Huw Pryce, 'Gerald of Wales, Gildas and the *Descriptio Kambriae*', *Studies in Medieval Celtic History and Law in Honour of Thomas Charles-Edwards*, ed. by Fiona Edmonds and Paul Russell, Boydell & Brewer 2013, pp. 115-24 (p. 122).

In *HRB* the idea of Britain ‘the land’, the fertile paradise depicted in the opening description, is complicated over and over again. Geoffrey variously describes the work as being about the Britons, or about the kings of Britain. However, both these terms are linked inextricably to the island itself. This tension between the focus on Britain and the political reality becomes clear at the end of the history. The end of the work comes when the island is divided and renamed. It is carved up into Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, with the Britons pushed to the west, and at this point, Geoffrey tells us, ‘iam non uocabantur Britones sed Gualenses’.⁶³ In the last section of *HRB*, dealing with the seventh century, Geoffrey names the different Saxon kingdoms, but the Britons still share a single ruler until the very end, although in reality the Welsh kingdoms were emerging at this point. This is partly a reflex of Geoffrey’s use of Bede, who had little interest in British politics except where it related to the English. However, it seems to be a deliberate choice on Geoffrey’s part to depict the Britons (at least in the area of contemporary Wales) as a homogenous group with the same aims, even when this is anachronistic. Geoffrey depicts a unified British front, which by the end of the work is shown very definitely to not be synonymous with Britain the island.

HRB also depicts a political situation that is more particular to Wales than Britain-wide. Wales was known for its political instability, as Gerald suggests: ‘Quanti vero et quam enormes excessus, super fratrum et consobrinorum exoculationibus, ob miseras terrarum ambitiones, in his inter Waiam et Sabrinam, Mailenith scilicet, Elvail, et Warthrenniaun finibus, his nostris diebus acciderint, satis Walliae fines memoriter tenant et abhorrent.’⁶⁴ Wales, whose rulers had successfully resisted attempts by Anglo-Saxon

⁶³ ‘They were no longer called Britons but Welsh’. *HRB* XI, p. 281.

⁶⁴ ‘Wales recalls with horror the great number of terrible disasters which, as the result of the miserable desire to seize possession of land, have occurred in our time, among blood brothers and close relations,

kings to exert their power militarily, was successfully penetrated by William the Conqueror. Shortly after the conquest William appointed his strongest soldiers, among them William fitz Osbern, Hugh d'Avranches, and Roger of Montgomery, to fortify the Welsh marches, and the project was largely successful. Even the Welsh chronicle, *Brut y Tywysogion*, describes William as 'Vrenhin y Saeson ar Freinc ar Brytanyeit'.⁶⁵ Expansion in Wales continued under William Rufus and Henry I. However, after Henry's death in 1135 and during the ensuing instability during Stephen's reign, the expansion into Wales began to recede. As R. R. Davies points out, 'penetration proved easier than control', and they found it difficult to hold on to their gains.⁶⁶ Geoffrey in particular, therefore, was writing at a moment when the political situation in Wales was still unresolved and the balance of power between the Welsh princes and Norman lords was unstable.

In IK we can see this interplay between Wales as a unit in its own right and as part of the greater Britain. Gerald maintains the integrity of Wales as a unit. By taking Baldwin's moment and point of entry as the beginning of the work, he maintains the distinction between Wales and what lies across the border. The moment of beginning, for Baldwin's journey and for the narrative of the work, is the moment of crossing the frontier. The journey itself, by following the borders of Wales closely, mimics and reinforces this frontier. In space, therefore, Wales is sharply defined, which we can perhaps contrast to the fluidity of the area of British control in HRB, which fluctuates over time.

between the Wye and the Severn, that is in Maelienydd, Elfael and Gwrthryinion'. P. 19; Thorpe p. 80.

⁶⁵'Prince of the Normans and king of the Saxons, Britons and Scots'. *Brut y Tywysogion, or the Chronicle of the Princes*, ed. by Thomas Jones (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955), p. 50. Discussion in Lynn H. Nelson, 'The Opening of the Norman Conquest', in Nelson, *The Normans in South Wales, 1070-1171* (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1966), pp. 20-41.

⁶⁶R. R. Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence, and Change in Wales: 1063-1272* (Oxford, 1987), p. 94.

2.3. Wilderness, settlement and the city

We have seen how Britain gives HRB its shape. However, within the narrative the island has to start from somewhere. In place theory, ‘undifferentiated space, or “wilderness”, can over time coalesce into the specificity of ‘place’ [...] The process usually entails some form of sedentariness whose origins may range from simple cessation of wandering to full-blown colonial settlement’.⁶⁷ This highlights the fact that most former ‘wildernesses’ were actually the homelands of other cultures, and also how much conceptions of ‘place’ depend on human intervention. Cicero said of landscape, for example, “We sow corn, we plant trees, we fertilize the soil by irrigation, we dam the rivers and direct them where we want. In short, by means of our hands we try to create as it were a second nature within the natural world.”⁶⁸ This implies a ‘first nature’ unaffected by humans, the wilderness.⁶⁹ The ‘Second nature’ comes into being as response to human needs, bringing agriculture, towns and cities, and infrastructure such as roads. This process for searching for new land was still ongoing with the Cistercians in the twelfth century. As Otter says: ‘Going out, looking for a site, finding the right location, settling and cultivating the land are part of the Cistercian ideal from the beginning: a narrative of Exodus and Promised Land’.⁷⁰ She goes on to point out that it was criticised by Walter Map, his parody suggesting that the Cistercian wilderness topos very well-known.⁷¹ The Biblical echoes are always there in the idea of wilderness, which ties in with the parallels with the Israelites mentioned above.

⁶⁷ Mark Heywood, ‘Viewing the Emergence of Scenery from the English Lake District’, in *Making Sense of Place*, pp. 23-32 (p. 23).

⁶⁸Cited in Ian Thompson, ‘Gardens, Parks and Sense of Place’, in *Making Sense of Place*, pp. 159- 168 (p. 159).

⁶⁹Thompson, ‘Gardens, Parks and Sense of Place’, p. 159.

⁷⁰ Otter, *Inventiones*, p. 61.

⁷¹ Otter, *Inventiones*, pp. 66-7.

The desire for empty land is the inciting incident of HRB. Living under Greek rule, the number of Trojan men has grown to seven thousand. The Trojans ‘nemora et colles occupant’ [took possession of the woods and hills]. Brutus sends a letter to King Pandrasus:

Quia indignum fuerat gentem praeclaro genere Dardani ortam aliter in regno tuo tractari quam serenitas nobilitatis eius expeteret, sese infra abdita nemorum recepit; praeferebat namque ferino ritu, carnibus uidelicet et herbis, uitam cum libertate sustentare quam uniuersis deliciis refocillata diutius sub iugo seruitutis tuae permanare.⁷²

The goddess Diana tells Brutus:

Brute, sub occasu solis trans Gallica regna
insula in oceano est undique clausa mari;
insula in oceano est habitat gigantibus olim,
nunc deserta quidem, gentibus apta tuis.⁷³

The blank space as a reward for exploration and the hardships encountered on the way is a key part of colonialist discourse. It can be seen, for example, in descriptions of new land in the later expansion of Europeans into the rest of the world, in which

landscape is equally simultaneously pictured as natural and pristine, as untouched and untransformed. This symbolic erasure of other possible histories of land occupation [...] tends to ‘empty’ the landscape, just as much as cartography advances a blank space of the unknown before itself. In this way, as untouched nature, the landscape is pictured as ripe for settlement and colonisation: the landscape way of seeing, these writers argue, is incipiently colonial. [...] In the colonial and imperial context the landscape way of seeing chimes with an emerging capitalist understanding of nature as a resource. Landscape thus apparently pictures itself as already ready for improvement and transformation, for crop and pasture.⁷⁴

⁷² ‘It was unjust that people descended from the famous stock of Dardanus should be treated otherwise than their serene nobility demanded, and so they have retired to the heart of the forest; in order to maintain their freedom, they preferred to eke out their lives eating meat and grass like wild beasts, rather than to enjoy every delicacy, while still enduring the yoke of slavery to you.’ HRB I:8.

⁷³ ‘Brutus, to the west, beyond the kingdoms of Gaul, lies an island of the ocean, surrounded by the sea; an island of the ocean, where giants once lived, but now it is deserted and waiting for your people.’ HRB I:16.

⁷⁴ John Wylie, *Landscape* (New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 133.

These colonial impulses can be seen in Geoffrey's tempting description of the fertility of Britain, and in the conveniently empty landscape he provides for the Trojans. Having lost their ancestral homeland, they must expand outwards, but are constantly frustrated by the conditions involved in settling in already-occupied lands. In Aquitaine, for example, Corineus takes 200 men on a hunting party in the king's woods. When the king's envoys confront Corineus for hunting in king's woods without permission, Corineus answers that no one should need permission to hunt.⁷⁵ Corineus kills one of the king's men, which leads to war between Brutus' men and Goffarius's. After having succeeded in driving off the king's army, Brutus has his army lay waste to the country: 'Accumulato igitur igne, ciuitates undique incendit, absconditas quoque opes ab eisdem extrahit, agros etiam depopulate, stragem miserandam ciuibus atque plebanis infert, uolens infelicem gentem usque ad uunum delere.'⁷⁶ It seems as if Brutus would have been as happy to settle Gaul if he could have overwhelmed the existing inhabitants. The numbers of the Trojans decline throughout the war while the Gauls have greater reserves to draw from, which is the reason they finally pursue the promised land: 'In dubio tandem existens utrum diutius eos oppugnaret, praelegit naues suas salua adhuc maiori parte sociorum nec non et reuerentia uictoriae adire atque insulam quam ei diuinis praedixerat monitus exigere.'⁷⁷

The lure of empty territory takes the Trojans on to Britain. The journey of Brutus's men to find land carries obvious parallels with the Norman quest for expansion in the

⁷⁵HRB I: 23.

⁷⁶'He lit fires to burn down all the cities, carrying off their hidden treasures, and laid waste the fields, slaughtering townsfolk and country-dwellers alike in an effort to wipe out those unhappy people to the last man.' HRB I: 25.

⁷⁷'At last, doubting the wisdom of a protracted struggle, he decided to board ship while the majority of his companions were unharmed and his victory still unsullied, and to sail for the island vouchsafed to him by divine prophecy'. HRB I: 27.

tenth and eleventh century.⁷⁸ It turns out that this is a qualifier that the goddess forgot to mention in her prophecy, for the land is already inhabited; ‘Erat tunc nomen insulae Albion; quae a nemine, exceptis paucis gigantibus, inhabitabatur’.⁷⁹ Or rather, we can say that paradoxically, the island is both inhabited and uninhabited, giants being humanoid but non-human. Since the inhabitants are not human, the dubious ethical or legal implications of usurping the king in Aquitaine are thereby avoided. The giants cannot have laws, and there can be no question but that Brutus will have primacy over the land, but colonisation still involves an act of dispossession:

Amoeni tamen situ locorum et copia piscorum fluminum
nemoribusque praelecta, affectum habitandi Bruto sociisque
inferebat. Peragratis ergo quibusque provinciis, repertos
gigantes ad cauernas montium fugant, patriam donante duce
sorcuntur, agros incipient colere, domos aedificare, ita ut in
breui tempore terram ab aevo inhabitatam censes.⁸⁰

The division of Britain into highland and lowland is practical as much as symbolic. The struggle over Britain is inherently a struggle for control of the lowlands, and the potential for civilisation offered by agriculture and towns. The geography of Britain has shaped the events of British history practically, and this is reflected in the symbolic and ideological importance it acquires in these texts. This cultural collision, which foreshadows the later fate of the British as they are pushed to the margins of the island by the Saxons and Normans, introduces the uncomfortable truth that possession of Britain inevitably means dispossession for someone else in Geoffrey’s ethnic-based perception of rule and land.

⁷⁸Searle, *Predatory Kinship*.

⁷⁹ ‘The island was at that time called Albion; it had no inhabitants save for a few giants’. HRB I: 27.

⁸⁰ ‘The choice position of this pleasant land, its numerous rivers, good for fishing, and its woods led Brutus and his companions to want to settle there. After exploring its various territories and driving off to mountain caves any giants they came upon, they portioned out the land, at their leader’s invitation, and began to till the fields and build homes so that, in a short time, the country appeared to have been occupied for years’. HRB I: 27-9.

Victoria Flood points out that this is characteristic of the prophecy tradition, of which Geoffrey forms part:

In medieval imaginations the island of Britain did not lend itself comfortably to divided ownership. In many respects we can understand this, to borrow a term from economics, as a zero-sum situation: what one group has, another has not. For the greater part of its history insular prophecy rested on this perception, which was the very basis of its ideological appeal: it frames a statement of exclusive ownership. Yet, as with all dominant ideologies, incongruities and instabilities remain: not least, the multiplicity of the island's peoples and territories, a situation which in reality was far more complicated than the Galfridian model allows.⁸¹

The close connection of people and landscape is shown through the use of place in prophecies. The fall of Britain is foretold as a catastrophe not only for its people, but for its landscape: 'Montes itaque eius ut ualles aequabuntur, et flumina uallium sanguine manabant'.⁸² The parallel to the plagues of Egypt comes to mind. In the prophecies, destruction is characterised all in terms of ruined cities, rivers, mountains, and the infertility of the land. However, in the main narrative, as the Britons under Arthur experience success, the land can also work for the Britons. Significantly, Arthur uses the environment to defend the island against its enemies, as when he cuts down trees and uses them to trap the Saxon army.⁸³ Later, he blockades Cadwallader on islands in Loch Lomond.⁸⁴ The strong identification of the people with the landscape is demonstrated through the pathetic fallacy of the environment working for or against the Britons, as their fortunes wax and wane.

⁸¹ Victoria Flood, *Prophecy, Politics and Place in Medieval England From Geoffrey of Monmouth to Thomas of Erceuldoune* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2016), pp. 5-6.

⁸² 'Its mountains will be levelled with valleys, and the rivers in the valleys will flow with blood'. HRB, *Prophetiae Merlini* 112, p. 145.

⁸³ HRB IX. 145, p. 197.

⁸⁴ HRB IX. 149, p. 200.

2.3.1. Rivers

The rivers of Britain dominate the landscape in both Geoffrey and Gerald. Rivers in the text have a number of different significations, defining space both pragmatically and mythically. Gerald says in his introduction he has ‘tam fontium quam torrentum flumina nominatim expressa’ [named each torrent and stream], and rivers thereby act synecdochically for the idea that he will describe and classify the island in detail.⁸⁵ The pragmatic implications of rivers are shown in the emphasis on the island’s unusual fertility in the descriptions of Britain in both Geoffrey and Gerald. In Gerald’s work, it is shown in his strong interest in cataloguing the different fish found in the rivers of Wales, and his famous chapter on beavers.⁸⁶ However, he also sees them as connected to the fortunes of Wales. He says of the River Dee, ‘Item, ut asserunt accolae, aqua ista singulis mensibus vada permutat; et utri finium, Angliae scilicet an Kambriae, alveo relicto magis incubuerit, gentem illam eo in anno succumbere, et alteram praevalere, certissimum prognosticum habent’.⁸⁷ Again, the notion of borders in flux appears (see above, 2.2.1, ‘Borders’), but here he incorporates local legend which literalizes this idea.

Rivers are also used as points of geographical reference, dividing and defining the space. Gerald says that Wales is ‘scinditur autem et distinguitur aquia Wallia nobilibus’ [divided and distinguished by noble rivers].⁸⁸ Geoffrey’s initial description of Britain highlights the rivers: ‘tria nobilia flumina, Tamensis uidelicet et Sabrinae nec non et

⁸⁵ IK, Second Preface, pp. 12-13. For further discussion of this passage see below, 2.4, ‘The locality’.

⁸⁶ DK II.3.

⁸⁷ ‘The inhabitants of these parts assert, that the waters of this river change their fords every month, and, as it inclines more towards England or Wales, they can, with certainty, prognosticate which nation will be successful or unfortunate during the year.’ IK II.11, p. 139.

⁸⁸ DK I.5, p. 170.

Humbri, uelut tria brachia extendit', a detail not mentioned by Bede in his description.⁸⁹ Geoffrey uses rivers to emphasise the continuity of the British language and British place names. One example is the passage on the river Habren/Sabrina (Severn), in which Habren is drowned: 'Vnde contigit quod usque in hunc diem appellatum est flumen Britannica lingua Habren, quod per corruptionem nominis alia lingua Sabrina uocatur'.⁹⁰ Many of these examples demonstrate Geoffrey's obsession with toponymics. Rivers are a secure geographical reference point; they are the element of Geoffrey's text that are most easily recognised today. Cities can be laid waste by successive conquering kings, but rivers are unchanging. As features which change little across time, rivers give the best sense of continuity (see below, 'Rivers', 5.4.1). However, paradoxically they also, as Michelle Warren points out, 'embed instability in the permanent features of the landscape'.⁹¹ The majority of the significant battles and deaths take place near rivers. Brutus' army kill the Greeks in a river.⁹² Humber drowns in the Humber. Locrinus is killed by the Stour. Stakes planted in the Thames by the Britons sink Caesar's ships. The history of the rivers of Britain is one of changing allegiances, divisions and bloodshed.

2.3.2. The country and the city

The most important stage in the transformation of Britain from natural space to human place is the building of cities. We saw above how Gerald describes the history of

⁸⁹ 'Three noble rivers, Thames and Severn and Humber, extended like three arms'. HRB *Descriptio Insulae* 5.

⁹⁰ 'Hence the river is called Habren in British even today, although in the other tongue this has been corrupted to Severn'. HRB II.25.

⁹¹ Warren, *History on the Edge*, p. 5.

⁹² HRB I.9.

the world in reference to its great cities, and how both authors allude to Troy and Jerusalem to draw Britain into the framework of world history ('Britain in the world', 2.1). The cities featured in HRB and Gerald's Welsh works reflect both real cities that existed in Britain, and the ancestral, mythic city. All cities in Brutus' descendants' new homeland will recall the original lost city of Troy. As Virgil used Troy to bring Rome into the framework of Greek culture, so Geoffrey uses the myth of Trojan origin inherited from *Historia Brittonum* to draw insular culture into this framework, with both Troy and Rome acting as models.⁹³ The first medieval culture to claim Trojan origins was the Franks, in the seventh-century history of Fredegar and the eight-century *Liber historiae Francorum*.⁹⁴ This was echoed in other national literatures, such as that of Iceland. The 'Trojan past was always an imperial gesture for the European present.'⁹⁵

The lack of cities, as with the lack of agriculture (see above, 'Wilderness, settlement and the city', 2.3), become marks of backwardness. This way of thinking can be traced back to the Greeks, for whom 'the city becomes a question of foundation (of politics, citizenship, collective history, culture, everyday life)'.⁹⁶ In this view of the city,

It is in the urban environment- in a world that man himself has made- that mankind first achieved an intellectual life and acquired those characteristics which most distinguish him from the lower animals and from primitive man. For the city and the urban environment represent man's most consistent and, on the whole, his most successful attempt to remake the world he lives in more to his heart's desire.⁹⁷

⁹³ *Nennius*, ed. by Morris, pp. 60–61.

⁹⁴ Ian Wood, 'Defining the Franks: Frankish Origins in Early Medieval Historiography', in *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by S. Forde, L. Johnson and A. V. Murray, Leeds Texts and Monographs, New Series 14 (Leeds, 1995), pp. 47–57.

⁹⁵ Sylvia Federico, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages*, Medieval Cultures 36 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 12.

⁹⁶ Balasopoulos, 'Celestial Cities and Rationalist Utopias', p. 18.

⁹⁷ Robert E. Park, 'The City as Social Laboratory', in *Chicago: An Experiment in Social Science Research* (1929), reprinted in *Human Communities: the City and Human Ecology* (London: Collier-MacMillan, 1952), p. 73.

The city, both symbolically and as a real lived space, represents the transformation of space into a place with layers of human meaning. However, the importance of cities in these texts also reflects contemporary changes to the landscape of Britain. In the twelfth century, the development of towns, and the consequent growth of markets, manufacturers and government, ‘transformed Europe from a society of gift exchange into a money economy, with profound results for its entire structure of values and social customs.’⁹⁸ The growth of towns and money economy in England during the tenth and eleventh centuries meant profound differences between the highland and lowland areas of Britain. By the end of the tenth century there were mints in 70 English towns. In the Highland zones and Ireland, most people lived in villages, and a few small towns on the coasts. As John Gillingham points out, ‘By the later twelfth century it was conventional to see the Celtic regions as fundamentally pastoral economies and to comment on the absence of towns, commerce and agriculture’.⁹⁹ This includes writers such as Gerald of Wales, John of Salisbury, William of Newburgh and William of Malmesbury, who all stress the barbarism and difference of the Welsh, Irish and Scottish, often in terms related to the land.¹⁰⁰ William of Malmesbury, for example, describes Æthelbert’s marriage to a daughter of the king of the Franks: ‘Tum uero Francorum contubernio gens eatenus barbara ad unas consuetudines confederata siluestres animos in dies exuere et ad leniores mores declinare’.¹⁰¹ William’s use of *barbarus* is not reserved for non-Christians, since

⁹⁸ R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 102.

⁹⁹ John Gillingham, ‘The Beginnings of English Imperialism’, *Journal of Historical Sociology* 5 (1992), 392-409 (p. 399).

¹⁰⁰ R. R. Davies, ‘Buchedd a moes y Cymry : The manners and morals of the Welsh’, *Welsh Historical Review* 12 (1984-5), ; Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales* (Oxford: OUP, 1982).

¹⁰¹ ‘Then it was that, by intercourse with the Franks, a nation hitherto barbarous and now united in one way of life daily “unlearned its woodland wilderness” and turned to more civilized ways.’

both the Welsh and the Scandinavians are described as barbarous.¹⁰² The reference to untamed land shows how important these conceptions were for who was considered civilized. Gerald of Wales makes many similar comments in his Irish works, in which he describes the Irish as, ‘gens a primo pastoralis vitae vivendi modo non recedens. Cum enim a silvis ad agros, ab agris ad villas, civiumque convictus, humani generis ordo processerit’.¹⁰³ The existence of cities in Britain, along with the fertility and agriculture of the island, is therefore another defence against accusations of isolation or barbarity. The cities reinforce the worthiness of the island to be considered alongside other city-states of Europe, both as a symbolic link to the past and as a contemporary reality.

2.3.3. City-building

The city is also associated with royal power. Geoffrey’s introduction to HRB [discussed above, 2.1, ‘Britain in the world’] includes a standard justification for history: the remembrance of worthy deeds. This is seen in the work of other contemporary historians: William of Malmesbury, for example, in his letter dedicating the revised *Gesta Regum Anglorum* to Robert of Gloucester, says ‘Suscipe ergo, virorum clarissime, opus, in quo te quasi ex speculo videas; dum intelliget tuae serenitas assensus ante te summorum procerum imitatum facta quam audires nomina’.¹⁰⁴ In this sense chronicle histories often overlap with the mirrors for princes genre of writing, which often include

¹⁰²Gillingham, ‘Civilizing the English?’, Sonnesyn, *William of Malmesbury*, p. 137

¹⁰³ ‘A people that has not yet departed from the primitive habits of pastoral life. In the common course of things, mankind progresses from the forest to the field, from the field to the town’. Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernia*, in *Giraldus Cambrensis Opera*, ed. by Dimock, vol. V, III:10, p. 151.

¹⁰⁴ Accept therefore, noble lord, a work in which you can see yourself as in a mirror, where your Highness’s sagacity will discover that you have imitated the actions of the most exalted characters, even before you could have heard their names’. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, Dedication.

examples of kings from history to reinforce their moral lessons. Siân Echard has argued that ‘There are clear stylistic and thematic affinities between the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the mirror for princes, and this concern for kingship may be a defining quality of much Latin Arthurian writing’.¹⁰⁵ The mirrors for princes genre is based on the idea that it is important to tell the ruler the truth, even if it had to be disguised. The crucial definition in this genre was that between a good king and a tyrant. Echard suggests that the medieval depiction of King Arthur as both types of ruler, often within the same text, stems from this preoccupation.¹⁰⁶ In the *Historia*, Geoffrey's parade of kings gives models of behaviour or cautionary warnings; the format has classical precedent (notably Suetonius' *De Vita Caesarum*), and is also similar to the format of William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*. Vortigern is the paradigm of a bad king; in the Renwein episode, he puts his own interests before those of the country, which ‘is a recurring theme throughout the *Historia*; king after king forgets his national responsibilities in pursuit of his own desires, and disaster inevitably follows’.¹⁰⁷ By arguing that British kings deserve to be remembered, and modelling good kings and tyrants, Geoffrey brings the British history into the classical tradition of history.

Throughout HRB, conquest and warfare usually revolve around natural settings. Building follows in times of peace after the land is secured. Being a good king often involves using violence to bring about peace; for example, Brutus' destruction of the Greek camp is shown to be a necessary step to his eventual successful rule. It is only after the division and settlement of Britain, when peace is established, that Brutus moves to build

¹⁰⁵ Siân Echard, *Arthurian Narrative in the Latin Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.35-6.

¹⁰⁶ Echard, *Arthurian Narrative*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁷ Echard, *Arthurian Narrative*, p. 43.

a city. This pattern is repeated throughout; initial violence is followed by a period of peace, with the building of roads, cities and churches. These are presented as the activities of a good king, which supports Echard's reading of the work as an exemplary text. The roles of a king, besides military success, are discussed in other contemporary histories. For example, William of Malmesbury suggests that there is more to being a good king than being good in battle.¹⁰⁸ The four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and courage are equally important. If martial prowess represents courage, then peacetime activities undertaken by chronicle kings— the building of cities and roads, and the promulgation of laws— can be seen as manifestations of these other qualities. This is particularly important for conqueror-kings. After conquest, the control of their gains is dependent on how well they can manage their people and land, and cities represent and promote individual and collective endeavour.

Geoffrey and Gerald emphasize the cities of Britain that are left over from Roman rule. Geoffrey describes what can now be seen of the 28 cities: 'Bis denis etiam bisque quaternis ciuitatibus olim decorata erat, quarum quaedam dirutis moeniis in desertis locis squalescunt, quaedam ueri adhuc integrae templa sanctorum cum turribus perpulcra proceritate erecta continent'.¹⁰⁹ The traditional list of 28 Roman cities derives from Gildas, and is repeated in *Historia Brittonum*. These emphasize the continuation of the Roman inheritance.

2.3.4. Caerleon

¹⁰⁸ Sonnesyn, *William of Malmesbury*, pp. 180-1.

¹⁰⁹ 'It was once graced with twenty-eight cities, some of which lie deserted in lonely spots, their walls tumbled down, while others are still thriving and contain holy churches with towers rising to a fine height'. HRB *Descriptio Insulae* 5, p. 7.

The importance of this Roman link is also shown by the primacy of Caerleon in HRB. J. S. P Tatlock points out that 'Caerleon appears oftener [in HRB] than any other British town but London, York and Winchester'.¹¹⁰ This fact highlights the idiosyncrasy of the primacy of Caerleon in the text, since London and Winchester were the most important towns of the reign of Henry I.¹¹¹ A reason for Caerleon's importance might be that it is in the dukedom of Geoffrey's dedicatee Robert (as are Gloucester and Cornwall which also feature heavily in HRB). Caerleon in Geoffrey's day was very much connected with the issue of continuing British (Welsh) military power. Gillingham argues for the particular importance of Caerleon in the context of the relationship between Robert and Morgan of Caerleon.¹¹² In 1136 Morgan and Iorwerth ap Owain killed Richard of Clare and seized the castles of Usk and Caerleon. A charter of c.1143-54 gives Morgan the title of king. John Gillingham asks, 'if the Welsh were now allies of Robert of Gloucester, then might not Geoffrey's counter-history now have the extra advantage of being politically convenient to his patron?'.¹¹³ Caerleon remained contentious later in century: Iorwerth lost it to Henry II in 1171, regaining it four years later.¹¹⁴ The area between the Wye and Severn in general was at the time known for a turbulent history; Gerald of Wales says 'Quanti vero et quam enormes excessus, super fratrum et consobrinorum exoculationibus, ob miseras terrarum ambitiones, in his inter Waiam et Sabrinam, Mailenith scilicet, Elvail, et Warthrenniaun finibus, his nostris diebus acciderint, satis

¹¹⁰ J. S. P. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae and its early vernacular versions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950), p. 69.

¹¹¹ Stephanie Mooers Christelow, 'A Moveable Feast? Itineration and the Centralization of Government under Henry I', *Albion* 28.2 (1996), 187-228.

¹¹² J. Gillingham, 'The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 13 (1991), 99-118, reprinted in his *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity and Political Values* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 19-39.

¹¹³ Gillingham, 'The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*', p. 116.

¹¹⁴ Lloyd, *History of Wales*, vol. II, pp. 545-46.

Walliae fines memoriter tenant et abhorrent'.¹¹⁵ This turbulent history of the town provides the context for Welsh and Norman readers in Geoffrey's day and the generation after.

Caerleon receives the most detailed descriptions of any city in HRB, and Arthur's Whitsun coronation and celebrations at Caerleon is the grandest description of royal power:

Indicato autem familiaribus suis quod affectauerat, consilium cepit ut in Vrbe Legionem suum exequeretur propositum. In Glamorgantia etenim sper Oscam fluuium non longe a Sabrino mari amoeno situ locata, prae ceteris ciuitatibus diuitiarum copiis abundans tantae sollempnitati apta erat. Ex una namque parte praedictum nobile flumen iuxta eam fluebat, per quod transmarini reges et principes qui uenturi erant nauigio aduehi poterant. Ex alia uero parte pratis atque nemoribus uallata, regalibus praepollebat palaciis ita ut aureis tectorum fastigiis Romam imitaretur.¹¹⁶

Geoffrey's use of current physical attributes of the area lends verisimilitude to his depiction of Caerleon in the dark ages. It is notable that many of Geoffrey's most detailed geographical descriptions are of places in the borders and the south-east of Wales. Another example of this comes earlier in HRB, when Vortigern, fleeing from Aurelius, takes refuge in the castle Genoriu. Geoffrey specifies the location very exactly: 'Erat autem oppidum illud in natione Hergign super fluuium Guaiae in monte qui Doartius nuncupatur'.¹¹⁷ In *Historia Brittonum* Vortigern's stronghold is named 'Cair

¹¹⁵ 'Wales recalls with horror the great number of terrible disasters which, as the result of the miserable desire to seize possession of land, have occurred in our time, among blood brothers and close relations, between the Wye and the Severn, that is in Maelienydd, Elfael and Gwrthrynion'. P. 19.

¹¹⁶ He [Arthur] put his plan to his advisors, who suggested that the celebrations be held at Caerleon. The superior wealth of Caerleon, admirably positioned on the river Usk not far from the mouth of the Severn in Glamorgan, made it the most suitable of all cities for such a ceremony. On one side there flowed a noble river, on which could be brought by boat the kings and princes visiting from overseas. On the other, it was surrounded by meadows and woods, and so fine were its royal palaces that the gold that decked their roofs reminded one of Rome.' *HRB IX*, pp. 208-9.

¹¹⁷ 'The castle was in the region of Hergign on a hill named Doartius above the river Wye'. *HRB 8*: 161. Doartius is 'Cloartius' in a number of manuscripts.

Guorthgirn', in the region 'quae vocatur Guunnessi'.¹¹⁸ It appears that Geoffrey has moved the site east from the kingdom of the Gewisse (Gwent, not a Saxon kingdom as Bede claims) to Erging ('Hergign'). This demonstrates Geoffrey's eagerness to locate the important events of his history in the area he knew well. Geoffrey uses eyewitness affirmation far more rarely than other historians of the period, but a direct knowledge of the landscape seems to be influential in his choice of settings for the history. In the case of Caerleon, it seems clear that he knew the town. Geoffrey seems to have been inspired by physical remains of the past, and uses these in his presentation of a British history, and he may have been inspired to place Arthur's court at Caerleon by the visible Roman remains. The excavated Roman remains today are the military amphitheatre, the baths and the barracks, and a harbour; it is likely that the Roman buildings still stood to some height in the twelfth century.¹¹⁹ Geoffrey's description is therefore 'an excusable excursion of the imagination starting from what was actually visible.'¹²⁰ By using existing ruins, Geoffrey's Caerleon hovers between the idealised city and the empirically existent city. The Roman remains provide evidence of the city's existence, the advantages of its position can still be seen to this day, and therefore the virtues of the city depicted by Geoffrey can be thought to be true too. The connection from Geoffrey's day to the Roman past provided by the remains at Caerleon bathes Arthur's court in the glow of the Romano-British inheritance. Gerald of Wales also mentions the Arthurian connections of Caerleon: 'It was here that the Roman legates came to seek audience at the great Arthur's famous court', and describes the Roman city in even greater detail:

¹¹⁸ Morris, *Nennius*, ch. 42, p. 72.

¹¹⁹ Christopher J. Arnold and Jeffrey L. Davies, *Roman and Early Medieval Wales* (Stroud: Sutton, 2000), pp. 19, 27-8, 35.

¹²⁰ Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, p. 69.

Erat autem haec urbs antiqua et authentica, et a Romanis olim coctilibus muris egregie constructa. Videas hic multa pristinae nobilitatis adhuc vestigia; palatia immensa, aureis olim tectorum fastigiis Romanos fastus imitantia, eo quod a Romanis principibus primo constructa, et aedificiis egregis illustrate fuissent; turrim giganteam, thermas insignes, templorum reliquias, et loca theatralia; egregiis muris partim adhuc exstantibus omnia clausa. Reperies ubique, tam intra murorum ambitum quam extra, aedificia subterranea, aquarum ductus, hypogeosque meatus. Et quod inter alia notabile censui, stuphas undique videas miro artificio consertas; lateralibus quibusdam et praeangustis spiraculi viis occulte calorem exhalantibus.¹²¹

Gerald does not credit his association of Caerleon with Arthur to Geoffrey. Gerald clearly knew the area himself, as evidenced by his descriptions, so to the reader it is not clear that this is not local tradition. However, it seems clear that he was influenced by Geoffrey in his association of the city with Arthur.

Throughout HRB, Geoffrey shows one of the proper activities of a king as being the foundation of towns and the building of roads, which Bede had attributed wholly to the Romans. Many scholars have taken Bede's and Geoffrey's histories as being examples of diametrically opposed types of history. As Matthew Fisher puts it, 'Despite the lack of chronological overlap, the two texts, and the two textual traditions they spawn, are fundamentally incompatible'.¹²² Bede depicts the Britons as barbaric, and William of Malmesbury, following him, presents the history of the English as a process of civilization.

¹²¹ 'Caerleon is of unquestioned antiquity. It was constructed with great care by the Romans, the walls being of brick. You can still see many vestiges of its one-time splendour. There are immense palaces, which, with the gilded gables of their roofs, once rivalled the magnificence of ancient Rome. They were set up in the first place by some of the most eminent men of the Roman state, and they were therefore embellished with every architectural conceit. There is a lofty tower, and beside it remarkable hot baths, the remains of temples and an amphitheatre. All this is enclosed within impressive walls, parts of which still remain standing. Wherever you look, both within and without the circuit of these walls, you can see constructions dug deep into the earth, conduits for water, underground passages and air-vents. Most remarkable of all to my mind are the stoves, which once transmitted heat through narrow pipes inserted in the side-walls and which are built with extraordinary skill'. P.p. 55-6; Thorpe pp. 114-5.

¹²² Matthew Fisher, 'Genealogy Rewritten: Inheriting the Legendary in Insular Historiography', in *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Medieval Britain and France*, ed. Raluca L. Radulescu and Edward Donald Kennedy (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 123-141 (p. 129).

In William's account, the starting point is the marriage of Æthelbert to Bertha, daughter of the Frankish king. John Gillingham argues that in the ninth to eleventh centuries there was no 'sharply defined attitude towards the Welsh', and Geoffrey's work is a reaction to an increasingly negative depiction, as evidenced by William of Malmesbury: 'the whole conception and structure of the History was a refutation of attitudes which had been gaining currency in advanced intellectual circles, and which were now well on the way to becoming part of the established view of insular history'.¹²³ In Geoffrey's version, the Britons have long been civilised, and it is more akin to the Herodotean version of history, as that of the rise and fall of great powers, rather than a Christian progression to a predetermined ending. Of the cities of antiquity which dominated conceptions of the city into the middle ages - Athens, Rome, Alexandria, Jerusalem - Rome is distinguished by its association with grandeur, with empires and their rise and fall. Thus Geoffrey's use of a Roman city provides a clear allegory. Geoffrey's Caerleon stands as an idealised symbol of kingship and rule, and its current state is symbolic of the sober outlook for British fortunes at the end of the work. This neatly brings the work full circle from the "twenty-eight ruined cities" in the opening description- the story of HRB is the story of the rise and fall of British rule, and the cities associated with it share the same fate. The influence of Rome in HRB extends beyond the description of Caerleon, into the mythical founding, and the history of civil war and internecine strife which follows. Arthur's betrayal, like Caesar's in Roman history, is a climactic event which stands for the end of an ideal which is never again fully realised.

¹²³ Gillingham, 'Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's History', p. 109.

Geoffrey's attitude to the Romano-British past shows the influence of the Welsh national mythology and conception of the past, which stressed their Roman inheritance (for example via figures such as Macsen Wledig), and looked forward to a time when they would be restored to their former glory.¹²⁴ In HRB sites which might have fallen into disuse are emphasised in their continuity. Caerleon is not only a match for ancient Rome, but the court is interrupted by the challenge from Lucius, who will be defeated by Arthur; the British are not just symbolic inheritors of Rome, but the practical inheritors of its power. This theme is not just present in the Arthurian section; as Siân Echard points out, 'from the moment Brutus set foot on his new realm, Geoffrey undercuts the achievements of the continental Romans [...] Arthur's exploits in the *Historia* are simply the strongest expression of what is in fact a quite systematic shifting of British history away from any kind of subjugation, military or cultural, to Rome'.¹²⁵ In Geoffrey's account any sort of 'dark age' following the withdrawal of the Roman troops is therefore ellipted entirely, and a British Roman emperor is made to seem a historical possibility.

However, the depiction of the town also owes something to contemporary Anglo-Norman displays of power. Geoffrey's conception of Caerleon combines what he could surmise about the former functions of the town, with reference to the Roman remains, with the influence of contemporary royal residences. The Norman kings' building project included not only castles, but also high-status palace complexes, such as that at Winchester, enlarged by William the Conqueror. The growing importance of Westminster in Henry I's reign led to the building of a new palace complex, and an influx of merchants

¹²⁴See Karen Janulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Writers of Wales (Cardiff: University of Cardiff Press, 2008), pp. 29-30; R. R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales, 1063-1415*, new edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 16, 78-80.

¹²⁵Siân Echard, "'Whyche thyng semeth not to agree with other histories...': Rome in Geoffrey of Monmouth and his Early Modern Readers', *Arthurian Literature* 26 (2009), 109-29, pp. 114, 116.

into the area, selling luxury goods which could be sold to the court. This contemporary building activity, at high cost and on a large scale, seems to be echoed in the description of Caerleon (the 'golden roofs' may perhaps have been influenced by the rumour of gilded roofs on Henry's residence at Notre-Dame-du-Pré in Normandy).¹²⁶ Judith A. Green says that these 'numerous, large and high-quality buildings set a standard to which others could aspire [...] looking at the buildings which can be associated with leading members of the court, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that what might best be described as a courtly style was beginning to emerge'.¹²⁷ It is notable that Geoffrey's introduction of this 'courtly style' of building in his narrative is at the point where he turns to 'courtly style' in another sense:

Ad tantum etenim statum dignitatis Britannia tunc reducta erat quod copia diuitiarum, luxu ornamentorum, facetia incolarum cetera regana excellebat. Quicumque uero famosus probitate miles in eadem erat unius coloris uestibus atque armis utebatur. Facetae etiam mulieres, consimilia indumenta habentes, nullius amorem habere dignabantur nisi tercio in milicia probatus esset. Efficiebantur ergo castae et meliores et milites pro amore illarum probiores.¹²⁸

This passage has often been suggested to be the first instance of the romance idea of *amor fin*, or courtly love. The Arthurian section is the high point of Geoffrey's narrative, when everything goes right for the Britons. No king before Arthur is shown in a residence like

¹²⁶Stephen of Rouen, 'Draco Normannicus', in *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, ed. by Richard Howlett, 2 vols. (London: Longman, 1885), vol. II, pp. 589–786.

¹²⁷Judith A. Green, *Henry I: King of England and Duke of Normandy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 304.

¹²⁸'So noble was Britain then that it surpassed other kingdoms in its stores of wealth, the ostentation of its dress and the sophistication of its inhabitants. All its doughty knights wore clothes and armour of a single colour. Its elegant ladies, similarly dressed, spurned the love of any man who had not proved himself three times in battle. So the ladies were chaste and better women, whilst the knights conducted themselves more virtuously for the sake of their love'. HRB IX, p. 212.

Caerleon, and this seems to influence Geoffrey's depiction of what activities a king might support at a court like this.

Another aspect of the court at Caerleon shows the influence of both Geoffrey's sources and contemporary kingship. He says, 'Praeterea gymnasium ducentorum philosophorum habebat, qui astronomia atque ceteris artibus erudite cursus stellarum diligenter obseruabant et prodigia eo tempore uentura regi Arturo ueris argumentis praedicebant'.¹²⁹ Other kings in HRB have advisors, who perform a similar role in their use of fortune-telling, and particularly astrology. Edwin employs a 'sapientissimus augur' from Spain called Pellitus, who assures of victories by consulting the stars and flights of birds. Merlin fulfils a similar role to Vortigern, and his interpretations of omens make up the *Prophetiae Merlini*. Several other English kings in HRB are accompanied by magi, or *augures*. However, this particular vision of a circle around the king of learned men seems to indicate Geoffrey may have been influenced by what he knew of the court of Henry I, particularly in the reference to astrology.¹³⁰ There is evidence that astrology was practised in England. Local astrological tables were compiled in the mid-century by scholars in Worcester, Malvern and Hereford.¹³¹ The practice of magic and astrology at court were condemned by John of Salisbury and Walter Map. Scholars at Henry's court such as Petrus Alfonsi and Adelard of Bath brought knowledge of Arabic texts to Europe, and there are examples of horoscopes drawn up by Adelard; Judith Green suggests that 'in

¹²⁹ 'The city also contained a college of two hundred learned men, who were skilled in astronomy and the other arts, and who watched with great attention the courses of the stars and so by their careful computations prophesied for King Arthur any prodigies due at that time'. HRB IX, p. 211.

¹³⁰ See Hilary M. Carey, *Courting Disaster: Astrology at the English Court* (London: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 27-36; Green, *Henry I*, pp. 296-7.

¹³¹ Carey, *Courting Disaster*. 27.

both cases it may have been above all their ability to tell the future that was most valued [by the king]'.¹³²

Geoffrey describes Caerleon as both a seat of royal power and as an archiepiscopal see:

Duabus autem eminebat ecclesiis, quarum una, in honore Iulii martiris erecta, uirgineo dicatarum choro perpulchre ornabatur, alia quidem, in beati Aaron eiusdem socii nomine fundata, canonicorum conuentu subnixa, terciam metropolitanam sedem Britanniae habebat.¹³³

The nearest contemporary parallel is Winchester, which also united its role as a see with administrative functions. Geoffrey's choice of Caerleon for the British archbishopric is echoed by adapters of his work, but in later reworkings of the chronicle, Caerleon is often replaced with Canterbury in this role.¹³⁴ Christopher Brooke believes that Geoffrey is being deliberately mischievous in this regard, by ignoring both St David's and Llandaff and proposing Caerleon as an alternative; he claims that there would be no obvious benefit to Geoffrey for advocating either, since his work is addressed to Anglo-Norman patrons.¹³⁵ However, even this seems to require more interest in ecclesiastical matters than Geoffrey generally demonstrates. It seems more likely that this claim of Geoffrey's was partly based on Gildas' and, following Gildas, Bede's, references to the martyrdoms of Julius and Aaron; ecclesiastical sites often gained importance due to association with well-known local saints, so based on Geoffrey's sources Caerleon may have seemed the

¹³² Green, *Henry I*, p. 296.

¹³³ 'Site of the third metropolitan see of Britain, it boasted two churches, one of which, in honour of the martyr Julius, was distinguished by a convent of devout nuns, and the other, dedicated to his companion Aaron, housed a group of canons'. HRB IX, p. 209, 211.

¹³⁴ A. G. Van Hamel, 'The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth', *Études Celtiques* 1 (1936), 197–247 (p. 210).

¹³⁵ Christopher Brooke, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth as a Historian', in *Church and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to CR. Cheney on His 70th Birthday*, ed. by C.N.L. Brooke et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 77–91 (p. 82).

most appropriate site. The ecclesiastical function also supports what is known of contemporary crown-wearing occasions, similar to Arthur's Whitsun court; 'Such great courts were attended by both laymen and clergy, and it is clear that ecclesiastical councils either tended to follow on from, or were merged seamlessly with, the royal council, and that the king presided over both'.¹³⁶ Therefore, combining the two roles in one capital is an effective decision for Geoffrey's narrative. It is reminiscent of the ideal role performed by the city in Augustine's *City of God*. If, as Augustine argued, civic virtue was not incompatible with Christianity in the heavenly city, then the ideal earthly city should combine secular and holy functions. In the mirror for princes section of *City of God*, he says that rulers should use their power to spread the worship of God.¹³⁷ More simply, if Caerleon is to be the most important town in dark-age Britain, then it seems unlikely the see would be anywhere else, since the greatest ruler must perforce be the spiritual leader of his people too. Gerald follows Geoffrey in placing the see at Caerleon. In the work of both we can thus see how they use first-hand knowledge of the area to imbue a former Roman city with significance that contributes to the wider goals of the work.

2.4. The locality

On the continuum from time/narrative to place/description, at the lower end we have the locality. This is a space less abstract than the nation or any other intellectually-rationalised subdivision, and also less firmly connected to the continuum of time than

¹³⁶ Green, *Henry I*, p. 291.

¹³⁷ Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, ed. by B. Dombart and A. Kalb, CCL 47 and 48 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 5.24.

other divisions. William James said that ‘We think the ocean as a whole by multiplying mentally the impression we get at any moment when at sea’.¹³⁸ The individual sense of abstract concepts such as the island of Britain, its constituent nations, and the subdivisions thereof is made up in the mind by the experience of place in these ‘moments’, to which I will give the name ‘locality’. With more abstract divisions of place such as the nation or county, there was always a point when that place did not exist, and therefore historical time is fundamental to both the creation and conception of that place. The locality, defined by what a person can see with their own eyes, has no one moment of origin, but gathers an accretion of historical referents, meaning and memories that stretch back through time. The locality thus allows the writer to cover a large amount of material, in the way we are familiar with in modern travel writing, with the physical setting acting as a trigger for the inclusion of other types of knowledge such as history, natural history, folklore and personal reminiscence.

A good example of this is Gerald’s passage on Brycheiniog lake (now Llangorse Lake or Llyn Syfaddon, near Brecon).¹³⁹ This passage demonstrates how a single spot can be used to cover a wealth of historical, natural historical, anthropological and folkloric material. It includes a description of the natural history of the lake and the fish it supplies; the ‘very old’ legend of a town at the bottom of the lake; a story of the reign of Henry I; the miracles seen at the lake; the naming of the nearby mountain Cadair Arthur; the climate; and the characteristics of the people who live nearby. Through the locality, time is collapsed and condensed, as Gerald piles together accounts and evidence from different times in connection with what he can see.

¹³⁸ William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, 2 vols. (1890, reprinted New York: Cosimo, 2007), p. 203.

¹³⁹ IK I:2.

This passage describes a style of travel writing of which Gerald was the first exponent in Britain, but which is still recognisable today: enlivening an account of a contemporary, physical journey with temporal movement, to recount what happened at each location in the past. Gerald's 'noteworthy events', in both his Welsh and Irish works, include several taken from HRB, concerning King Arthur, Merlin, or other figures in Geoffrey's version of British history. Gerald does not usually credit Geoffrey as his source in these cases. Yet historical allusions such as these give depth to Gerald's narrative, and Gerald is able to make use of HRB in the instances where Geoffrey locates the action of his history in Wales.

We can see a similarity between this technique of Gerald's and the earliest surviving Arthurian traditions, notably the *Mirabilia*; history is 'hooked' onto a well-known place in the landscape, giving colour both to the place and to the story it represents. Gerald quotes from the *Georgics*, and the influence of this work on Gerald is clear, as he blends the landscape and human activity. This is similar to Bakhtin's concept of the idyllic chronotope as a model for restoring 'folkloric time'. Events that are not located in historical time are anchored in time and space by 'an organic fastening-down, a grafting of life and its events to a place, to a familiar territory with all its nooks and crannies, its familiar mountains, valleys, fields, rivers and forests, and one's own home. Idyllic life and its events are inseparable from this concrete, spatial corner of the world'.¹⁴⁰ Gerald's strong sense of attachment to place comes through especially in his description of Llanthony priory, and his nearby residence at Llandeuf, which occupy a whole digressionary chapter. He writes, 'Hic claustrales, in claustro sedentes, cum respirandi

¹⁴⁰ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 225.

gratia forte suspiciunt, ad quascunque partes trans alta tectorum culmina, montium vertex quasi coelum tangentes, et ipsas plerumque feras, quarum hic copia, in summo pascentes, tanquam in ultimo visus horizonte prospiciunt'.¹⁴¹ This passage beautifully encapsulates the experience of place, by not only describing Gerald's own personal attitude towards it but also the experience of the monks constructing the sense of place. The sense of place is a combination of feeling and thought, and here sight and feeling are combined with the thought of the practical advantages of the location.

DK and IK are both also organised geographically. There were three versions of IK between 1189 and 1215, and two versions of DK. The following versions added a substantial amount of new material.¹⁴² Very little of this added material is about the journey itself, but his own observations about the history, landscape, customs of the country. Some past scholars of Gerald have lamented these 'digressions': 'however fascinating they may be, there are too many of these "notabilia" and they distract from the artistic unity of the book'.¹⁴³ This in some measure misses the point of the work, since even in its original inception it worked largely as a device to include this sort of material.

Gerald is present as 'I' in the text from the beginning, in the account of Baldwin's sermon at Radnor. In the second Preface to IK, Gerald of Wales describes the content of the work:

¹⁴¹ 'Here the monks, sitting in their cloisters, enjoying the fresh air, when they happen to look up towards the horizon, behold the tops of the mountains, as it were, touching the heavens, and herds of wild deer feeding on their summits: the body of the sun does not become visible above the heights of the mountains, even in a clear atmosphere, till about the hour of prime, or a little before'. IK I.3, p. 38.

¹⁴² Similarly, he produced five redactions of the *Topographica Hibernica* and two of the *Expugnatio Hibernica*. These counts are those of the Rolls Series editors, although as Catherine Rooney points out, 'it is obvious from the critical apparatus that changes to the text were made more gradually... than this classification suggests'; Catherine Rooney, *The Manuscripts of Gerald of Wales* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2005), p. 29.

¹⁴³ Lewis Thorpe, 'Introduction', *The Journey through Wales/The Description of Wales* (New York: Penguin, 1978), p. 44.

Loca igitur inuia per quae transivimus, et tam fontium quam torrentum flumina nominatim expressa, verba faceta, viæque labores et casus varios, notabiles quoque tam moderni temporis quam antiqui partium illarum eventus, patriæ quoque descriptionem, hoc opusculo quasi speculo quodam dilucido.¹⁴⁴

Gerald's characteristic sentence structure, listing all the ingredients of his work to climax in 'hoc opusculo quasi speculo quodam dilucido', gives the impression of the expanse of Wales being compressed and collapsed down into the book. The idea of a mirror privileges the idea of sight and eyewitness. It foregrounds his own experience, but also implies a measure of objectivity; a true reflection of Wales. However, as he notes, he does not just look at the current state of the country but imaginatively connects it to its past. Some of these stories are based on oral tradition and stories he knows, which he usually flags. Some will have come to him through written sources.

Classical historians frequently made use of eyewitness testimony, recognised in the middle ages by the dictum of Isidore of Seville (whom Gerald cites as an authority throughout his work) that 'Apud veteres enim nemo conscribebat historiam, nisi is qui interfuisset, et ea quae conscribenda essent vidisset. Melius enim oculis quae fiunt deprehendimus, quam quae auditione colligimus. Quae enim videntur, sine mendacio proferuntur'.¹⁴⁵ Gerald's agreement with this principle is shown by his privileging of Gildas as a source for the early British history:

Prae aliis itaque Britanniae scriptoribus, solus mihi Gildas,
quoties eundem materiae cursus obtulerit, imitabilis esse

¹⁴⁴ 'This little work is like a highly polished mirror. In it I have portrayed the pathless places which we trod, named each mountain torrent and each purling spring, recorded the witty things we said, set down the hazards of our journey and our various travails, included an account of such noteworthy events as occurred in those parts, some in our own times, some long ago, with much natural description and remarkable excursions into natural history, adding at the end a word-picture of the country itself.' *IK* pp. 12-13. Trans p. 70

¹⁴⁵ 'Among the ancients, no one would write history unless he had been present and had seen what was to be written down, for we grasp with our eyes things that occur better than what we gather with our hearing, since what is seen is revealed without falsehood'. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*, ed. by W. M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957), I, *De Grammatica*, 41.

videtur. Qui ea quae vidit et ipse cognovit scripto commendams, excidiumque gentis suae deplorans potius quam describens, veram magis historiam texuit quam ornatum.¹⁴⁶

The idea that history is the period out of living memory which cannot have eyewitness validation is a fairly common one in the middle ages. Walter Map makes a distinction between ‘nostra tempora’ and the past:

Nostra dico tempora modernitatem hanc, horum scilicet centum annorum curriculum, cuius adhuc nunc ultime partes extant, cuius tocus in his que notabilia sunt satis est recens et manifesta memoria, cum adhuc aliqui supersint centennes, et infiniti filii qui ex partum et suorum relacionibus certissime teneant que non uiderunt. Centum annos qui effluerunt dico nostrum modernitatem, et non qui ueniunt, cum eiusdem tamen sint rationis secundum propinquitatem, quoniam ad narrationem pertinent preterita, ad diuinacionem futura.¹⁴⁷

This division is clear in Gerald’s writing, which is generally divides historical anecdotes into two types: either the very recent past (often assigned to reigns of either Henry I or II), or set in an indeterminate past, designated as *antiquitus*, or by appeals to *historiae Britanniae*. The more recent events are verified by eyewitnesses. Eyewitness accounts heard second-hand are what Bede says is according to ‘vera lex historiae’.¹⁴⁸ Many of the miracles in Gerald are backed up by eyewitness accounts, such as the boy who got his

¹⁴⁶ ‘For the subject which I am now treating I have often had to consult Gildas. Of all the British writers he seems to me to be the only one worth copying. He puts on parchment the things which he himself saw and knew. He gives his own strong views on the decline and fall of his people, instead of just describing it. His history may not be all that polished, but at least it is true.’ DK First Preface, p. 158.

¹⁴⁷ ‘And by our times I mean this modern period, the course of these last hundred years, at the end of which we now are, and of all of whose notable events the memory is fresh and clear enough; for there are still some centenarians alive, and there are many sons who possess, by the narration of their fathers and grandfathers, the certainty of things which they did not see. The century which has passed I call modern times- not that which is to come, though in respect of nearness to us they are of like account- for the past belongs to history and the future to divination.’ Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium: Courtiers’ Trifles*, ed. and trans. M. R. James, C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), pp. 122-5.

¹⁴⁸ Roger Ray, ‘Bede’s *Vera Lex Historiae*’, *Speculum* 55 (1980), 1-21.

hand stuck to a church while birds-nesting, who as an old man confirmed the story to Gerald in person.¹⁴⁹

Gerald often includes tales of relics, which are inherently associated with place and the telling of history. The bell of St David, the staff of Saint Cyric, and many others are observed at churches across Wales, and act as the impetus for relating the attached stories of the saints. He also includes ‘secular relics’, objects which are imbued with folkloric meaning. For example, when he writes about the Stone of Lechlevar at the church of St David’s, he quotes a Welsh woman: ‘alludens illi fictitio vulgari, nec vero Merlini proverbio, quo dici solebat, Angliae regem Hiberniae triumphatorem, ab homine cum rubra manu in Hibernia vulneratum, per Meneviam redeundo super Lechlavar moriturum’.¹⁵⁰ Anecdotes of this type (this one repeated in some manuscripts of IK from the *Expugnatio Hiberniae*) demonstrate how precise dating is not necessary for relating the past to the landscape, for relic narratives and saints’ lives, particularly of the earlier middle ages, often do not concern themselves with locating events precisely in time. As Otter argues, ‘space, rather than time, is the primary parameter [...] by being localized, the saints are made available in the present; temporal distance, or proximity, is replaced by spatial distance or proximity.’¹⁵¹

Similarly, Gerald’s work in general displays a vagueness about calendar time. He gives few indicators for the dating of events other than ‘in our times’, ‘in the reign of Henry I’, and ‘in ancient times’; a ‘now’, a less-immediate now, and a past. Jean-Claude Schmitt, writing about saints’ cults, suggests that we should see their practice as working along a

¹⁴⁹IK I.2, pp. 23-4.

¹⁵⁰ ‘She alluded to that vulgar fiction and prophecy of Merlin, well-known, “That a king of England, and conqueror of Ireland, should be wounded in that country by a man with a red hand, and die upon Lechlavar, on his return through Menevia”’. IK II.1, p. 108.

¹⁵¹ Otter, *Inventiones*, p. 43.

continuum, from written clerical to folkloric and oral.¹⁵² Julia Smith points out that ‘Latin, clerical culture was rarely, if ever, discrete. Its forms bore the heavy imprint of oral ways of thinking.’¹⁵³ The use of oral tradition when writing about saints and their cults, which Gerald extends to secular folkloric and legendary material, bridges the gap between the scholarly Latin world and the everyday vernacular. As R. R. Davies points out, ‘native Wales, until at least the thirteenth century, was for most secular purposes a largely preliterate society’,¹⁵⁴ an example of a society in which ‘oral or visual testimony and collective memory formed the essence of proof, not written documentation.’¹⁵⁵ Gerald’s work thus incorporates elements of both this oral society and classical models of history which prioritize the transformation of orality in written history.

Bakhtin’s theory of monologic and polyphonic texts is helpful in understanding the fundamental differences in Gerald and Geoffrey’s respective approaches to writing about Britain. A polyphonic work (usually the novel, in Bakhtin’s writing) contains a variety of different voices, without privileging any: ‘the author acts as an organizer and participant in the dialogue without retaining for himself the final word’.¹⁵⁶ Anne Curthoys and John Docker give examples of this in reference to classical history:

Where Herodotus specifies the source of a story, Thucydides’ informants remain largely unknown, and we only know their views and reports as assimilated and analytically reworked by the historian. The effect is that the History presents us with a magisterial and authoritative account, where the reader has no alternative but to accept the truth of the author’s interpretation and analyses and narrative of events: in this

¹⁵² Schmitt, *The Holy Greyhound*, pp. 122-23.

¹⁵³ Smith, ‘Oral and Written: Saints, Miracles, and Relics’, p. 311.

¹⁵⁴ R. R. Davies, ‘The Administration of Law in Medieval Wales: The role of the *ynad cwmwd* (*judex patriae*)’, in *Lawyers and Lawmen*, pp. 258-73 (p. 258).

¹⁵⁵ Smith, ‘Oral and Written: Saints, Miracles, and Relics’, p. 342.

¹⁵⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, ed. and trans. by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 72.

aspect Thucydides' *History* is monologic, whereas by contrast Herodotus in the *Histories* is polyphonic. The *Histories* frequently presents a number of stories and explanations for events, permitting readers more actively to become involved in the text, to consider what they think of the various narratives and interpretations.¹⁵⁷

It is clear that Gerald's work is a polyphonic text, not as well as travel literature but because it is travel literature, because organisation along geographical lines necessitates an inclusion of time, but not linear time. Because he is validating what he sees through his eyewitness of the place, what he asserts historically has a lower bar for validation, and thus he has the freedom to include a variety of voices and sources, oral and less frequently written, of different periods of time.

By contrast, Geoffrey's history is monologic, attempting to be the 'magisterial and authoritative' account of the early British history by finding or creating a single coherent narrative with no chronological gaps. Although as we have seen his use of eyewitness as a source, for example in his description of Caerleon, he does not put himself front and centre in the narrative. Since the author is not present as 'I', other people's experiences are also excluded, and he does not accept multiple accounts. A telling moment, for example, is his aside while describing the building of Shaftesbury: 'Ibi tunc aquila locuta est dum murus aedificaretur; cuius sermones si ueros esse arbitrarer sicut cetera memoriae dare non diffugerem'.¹⁵⁸ The sentence is slightly startling since it seems to be quibbling not with the idea of talking birds *per se*, but rather their trustworthiness. However, the purpose of mentioning it at all, if he is not to include the prophecies, is most likely to show that he is aware of the kind of material used by Gerald (and other contemporary historians

¹⁵⁷ Ann Curthoys and John Docker, *Is History Fiction?*, 2nd edition (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010), p. 37.

¹⁵⁸ 'While the city wall was being constructed there, an eagle spoke; and if I thought that its prophecies were true, I would not hesitate to set them down here with the rest'. HRB II.29, p. 37.

such as William of Newburgh), but is deliberately choosing not to include it; that he is selective about the truth value of sources in order to create a reliable single voiced narrative. The irony is that it is Geoffrey whose work came to be doubted as the work of a fabulist, whereas Gerald has generally been held in high esteem, even while including oral traditions. Writing a monologic history inherently requires filling in some gaps yourself. As R. G. Collingwood points out, ‘the historical imagination [...] is properly not ornamental but structural. Without it the historian would have no narrative to adorn’.¹⁵⁹ Geoffrey, as the sole voice in the text, seems self-conscious about the burden of cultural remembrance (self-)imposed upon him, and anxious about what will happen to British culture if he does not undertake the task. Geoffrey puts all his authority into the validation of one written text, which only he can vouch for. By attempting to be a single voice of authority, he paradoxically seems less trustworthy than Gerald, who accepts a variety of voices.

2.5. Conclusion

Looking at the places of these texts, from the nation to the locality, the natural and the manmade, and how they interact with notions of the past, is vital to an understanding of Geoffrey and Gerald’s purpose and approach. It demonstrates how genre can shape our

¹⁵⁹ R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, revised edition, ed. by Jan van der Dussen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 241.

reading of, and response to, the text. This latter is important because, as John Frow argues, ‘genres actively generate and shape knowledge of the world’, as they ‘create effects of reality and truth, authority and plausibility, which are central to the different ways the world is understood’.¹⁶⁰

At one level we can describe them both as historians. Gerald’s historical material stretches from ‘ancient times’ to the present reign of Henry II, but his work is clearly unlike Geoffrey’s in that it is not a chronological narrative and does not attempt to cover history comprehensively. We can still situate him as a ‘historian’, since as Robert Bartlett argues of Gerald’s work:

Although, to our eyes, only the *Expugnatio Hibernica* conforms to the standard model of historical narrative, the other Irish and Welsh works attempted to delineate contemporary societies as concrete, historical communities, and “history” was the only term then available to categorize writing of this kind. Gerald must be viewed in the context of the English historical tradition, one of the strongest elements in English culture at this time.¹⁶¹

However, even when looking at both authors as historians, the differences between Geoffrey and Gerald’s approaches are more than superficial, representing fundamentally different approaches to the past, the world around them and their work.

I argued above that the idea of Britain functions as the unifying theme of HRB, and that Geoffrey’s main concern in writing the British history was that it be a continuous narrative, without any troubling gaps. His narrative is focused on national space, chronological narrative, and written sources (whether or not these actually existed). Geoffrey’s history focuses more on the nation than the local, and more on written models

¹⁶⁰ John Frow, *Genre* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 2.

¹⁶¹ Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales, 1146-1223* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), p. 4.

of history than ones that prioritize eyewitness testimony and authorial experience. The two go hand-in-hand; nation is an abstract concept, a creation of the written word that needs written validation.

Gerald's work is a descendant of a style of history-writing that prioritizes the eyewitness account, and thus can incorporate many voices within the text. However, we can also read IK and DK in the context of travel writing, the earliest examples of the first-person travelogue that weaves historical material into a spatially-organised narrative. Travel books are, as Blanton summarizes, 'vehicles whose main purpose is to introduce us to the other, and [...] dramatiz[e] an engagement between self and world'.¹⁶² These accretions of stories from different times represent the human mark on an otherwise meaningless space in the landscape, and 'If we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place'.¹⁶³ As he writes, Gerald is creating places, the accumulation of which thus create a conception of Wales that is not abstract or based on the whole, but made up of the experience of individual spots, witnessed first-hand.

Antonio Balasopoulos suggests that 'Narrative represents the empirically "realistic" persistence of contingency, conflict, and change that marks our world, while description tends to spatialize and freeze time into an eternal, unchanging present, wherein social life becomes effectively achronic, devoid of historical pertinence'.¹⁶⁴ The tension between these two styles of writing about the past, and a desire for a fluid coherent

¹⁶² Casey Blanton, *Travel Writing: The Self and the World* (New York: Twayne, 1997), p. xi.

¹⁶³ Tuan, *Space and Place*, p. 6

¹⁶⁴ Antonis Balasopoulos, 'Celestial Cities and Rationalist Utopias', in *The Cambridge Companion to the City in Literature*, ed. by Kevin McNamara (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 17-30 (p. 25).

historical narrative while recognising the difficulty of validating such a history, recurs in most subsequent writing about the early British past.

3. The Twelfth to Fifteenth century

This chapter is about the writing of early British history after HRB, up until the advent of print in the late fifteenth century. It is thus more diffuse than the other chapters in this study, exploring general trends. It looks at the development of the chronicle tradition which built on Geoffrey's work, the Brut chronicles, and another chronicle by a named author, Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*. This latter work was translated into English by John Trevisa, and was one of the earliest works in print, edited by William Caxton. Thus, as well as continuing the discussion of sense of place in these works, they raise interesting questions about the role of the author and editor, and how the movement from manuscript to print affects lines of influence and the fixed or changing nature of the text.

HRB had a huge impact on the writing of early British history in England, and translations and adaptations of the work into vernaculars soon appeared. In 1155 Wace completed his *Roman de Brut*, a French verse chronicle largely based on HRB (although incorporating other material).¹ Layamon translated Wace's poem into English sometime after 1189, expanding on his source considerably.² Geoffrey's version of British history was also incorporated into the tradition of Welsh vernacular historical writing. Translations of the chronicle circulated with Dares Phrygius's history of the Trojan War and the chronicle *Brut y Tywysogion*.³

¹ Jean Blacker, 'Wace (b. after 1100, d. 1174x83)', ODNB, 2004, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.unicat.bangor.ac.uk/view/article/28365>.

² E. G. Stanley, 'Layamon (fl. 13th cent.)', ODNB, 2004, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.unicat.bangor.ac.uk/view/article/16217>.

³ On the Welsh *Brut* tradition, see Brynley F. Roberts, 'Introduction', *Brut y Brenhinedd: Llanstephan MS. 1 version: Selections* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1971).

The term *Brut*, from the name of Brutus, was used by Layamon and Wace to describe their verse adaptations of HRB into Anglo-Norman and Middle English, and came, in both Wales and England, to mean any chronicle that followed Geoffrey's model, beginning with Brutus arriving in Britain and founding a new kingdom. The *Brut* was first written in Anglo-Norman, and subsequently translated, rewritten and added to in Middle English and Latin versions.⁴ The Middle English *Brut* continued to be rewritten up until the end of the fifteenth century, adding recent history from a variety of sources. The work was widely read, the Middle English version surviving in some 180 manuscripts.⁵ There are only more manuscripts of Wycliffe's Bible.⁶ It is therefore central to understanding the medieval conception of English history.

In the fourteenth century English came increasingly to be used in courts, schools and Parliament, in preference to French and Latin. The major change in history writing in the fourteenth century, of which the *Brut* is the preeminent example, is the use of English as a historical language, just as it became a viable literary language in the works of Chaucer and his contemporaries.

However, at the time when the *Brut* was being written and rewritten, so were new Latin histories. Perhaps the most influential Latin history of the fourteenth century was Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*.⁷ Higden, a monk from Chester, wrote his chronicle of world history in the early fourteenth century, revising it several times. The first version

⁴ Julia Marvin, *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle: An edition and translation* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006); F. W. D. Brie (ed.), *The Brut or the Chronicles of England*, 2 vols., Early English Text Society 131, 136 (London 1906, 1908). There is no edition of the Latin *Brut*.

⁵ The *Brut* manuscripts are catalogued by Lister M. Matheson, *The Prose Brut: the development of a Middle English chronicle* (Tempe, AZ: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998).

⁶ William Marx and Raluca Radulescu, 'Introduction', *Readers and Writers of the Prose Brut*, *Trivium* 36 (2006), pp. xiii-xvi (p. xiii).

⁷ *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden monachi Cestrensis*, ed. Joseph Rawson Lumby, Rolls Series, 9 vols. (London: Longman, 1865-86). The volume numbers of this edition do not correspond with Higden's divisions into books. Translations from the Latin mine.

was completed in 1327, with two continuations thereafter. The *Polychronicon* survives in 100 manuscripts, and there are three translations into Middle English, most famously that of John Trevisa in 1387.⁸ Thorlac Turville-Petre suggests that ‘As the fourteenth century wore on, lay readers grew increasingly restless at being excluded from access to such sources of knowledge in Latin’, a point made by Trevisa in his preface.⁹ The 185 surviving Middle English manuscripts of the *Polychronicon* is evidence of this appetite for historical texts in the vernacular. Copies were made for cathedral, monastic and university libraries, as well as private copies for noblemen and merchants. Henry IV owned a copy.¹⁰ Trevisa’s translation was the version of the *Polychronicon* printed by William Caxton in 1482, with some changes, including the addition of an eighth book. The prevalence and longevity of Higden’s chronicle, in two languages, means it had a profound effect on the conception of history in England.

In Book I Higden gives a list of his sources. His major sources for pre-Conquest Britain are Bede, Gildas, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Gerald of Wales. Higden’s relationship with Geoffrey of Monmouth is complex. On the one hand, Higden uses Geoffrey of Monmouth for much of his chronicle, presumably because, as other authors had found, the sources are scarce for this period of British history. As the passage on Bath shows, Higden believed that Geoffrey was working from the ‘British book’, enough so to criticise William of Malmesbury for not having read it and relying on oral sources and firsthand experience instead.¹¹ However, he does not believe everything

⁸ Trevisa’s translation and the anonymous translation of Harley MS 2261 are included in the Lumby edition.

⁹ Turville-Petre, *England the Nation*, p. 72.

¹⁰ Jenny Stratford, ‘The early royal collections and the Royal Library to 1461’, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp, 5 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), III, pp. 255-66 (p. 261).

¹¹ Elsewhere Higden uses ‘liber Britannicus’ to refer to Geoffrey’s own work, but since William mentions HRB several times and evidently had read it, Higden must mean here Geoffrey’s putative source.

Geoffrey writes either, and often includes mention of stories found in *Historia Regum Britanniae* only in truncated form, and with a warning as to their doubtful veracity. Asides such as ‘si fas sit credere’ usually accompany stories sourced from *HRB*, and there are longer criticisms too.

The *Polychronicon* was amongst the first books printed in England, in 1482 by William Caxton. It followed the appearance of the *Brut* as *The Chronicles of England* in 1480. The *Polychronicon* was reprinted by Wynkyn de Worde in 1495. The works must have been expected to sell, because otherwise it is unlikely publishers would have committed to such huge works. For example, de Worde’s page average is 360 pages, while his *Polychronicon* is 796 pages in double columns.¹² The only other pre-1500 chronicle in English which covered the early British history to be printed by the mid-sixteenth century was John Hardyng’s, by Richard Grafton in 1543. To compare a Latin chronicle, *HRB* was printed three times in the sixteenth century, and not at all in England.¹³ Caxton’s presentation of the early British history was therefore the most readily available, and therefore his response to it is worth examining. The popularity of the *Brut* and *Polychronicon* in manuscript was one reason they were among Caxton’s first choices for printing. The earliest printed texts, both in England and on the continent, were nearly all texts that had already had a long life in manuscript, for the obvious business reason that they would likely be successful in print too. As Elizabeth Evenden points out, very little in the first 50 years of printing was work that had not appeared previously in manuscript.¹⁴

¹² H. S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers: 1475-1557*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 183.

¹³ By Josse Bade in Paris in 1508 and 1517, and by Hieronymous Commelin in Heidelberg in 1587. Neil Wright, Introduction, *Geoffrey of Monmouth I: Bern, Burgerbibliothek*.

¹⁴ Elizabeth Evenden, ‘The Perceived Worth of the Printed Book in England, 1476-1575’, in *The Oxford Handbook to Medieval English Literature, 1100-1500*, ed. Larry Scanlon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 90-108 (p. 99).

However, even after the *Brut* appeared in print the manuscripts were still read and annotated, throughout the sixteenth century and later. It is one of the clearest demonstrations of the continuation of manuscript culture after the arrival of the printing press, that these manuscripts were still valued and carefully read, even after a version of the work was available in print.

Caxton's role as editor has been much discussed in recent years. He often used the prefaces and epilogues to his works to explain his editorial interventions, although what precisely these were has still been disputed.¹⁵ In terms of his history texts, he did far more than print the works from one manuscript copy. He extended the *Brut* and the *Polychronicon*, finding other sources (including the *Brut*) to bring the latter up to date to 1460. He showed a sensitivity to older works, by 'conveying a sense of immediacy, or at least making them comprehensible to contemporary readers, remaining faithful to the ancient authors, and being adequate to the available sources.'¹⁶

The consideration of place in these texts can take several forms. One is the local interests of the composer/s of the text. The major sources for the Anglo-Norman *Brut* are Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, Gaimar, various other minor chronicles, saints' lives, and some form of king-list.¹⁷ Other chronicle sources are added to the Middle English *Brut*, varying between manuscripts. The varied nature of the sources- essentially, whatever the author/scribe of each version felt was interesting or relevant enough to include- means that the geographical focus of each text can be very different. Another question is the

¹⁵ See for example, on the question of Caxton's possible changes to the *Morte Darthur*, the essays collected in *The Malory Debate*, ed. Bonnie Wheeler, Robert L. Kindrick and Michael N. Salda (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000).

¹⁶ Lotte Hellinga, 'Printing', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), III, pp. 65-108 (p. 90).

¹⁷ Julia Marvin, 'Sources and Analogues of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* Chronicle: New Findings', *Readers and Writers of the Prose Brut*, p. 1.

growing importance of maps in this period as shaping people's perceptions of the geography of Britain.

Higden's geographical interests are very different to those of the *Brut* authors, and the *Polychronicon* was an important influence on English conceptions of the relationship between history and geography. The *Polychronicon* begins with a geographical description of the world, accompanied by a map, and then recounts European and British history. Throughout the work, and most significantly in the sections on British history, Higden uses geography to challenge his sources. For example, when he mentions the conquest of England by Brutus, he adds a long discussion of the discrepancies around accounts of Brutus' descent, presumably in order to discredit the story subtly with the only information he had available.¹⁸ In the Prologue to the *Polychronicon*, Caxton acknowledges that geography is essential to the work: 'Fyrst the descripcion of the universal world as well in lengthe as in brede with the divisions of countrees royaumes and empyres the noble cytees hye mountaynes famous ryvers merveylles and wondres also the historical Actes and wonderful dedes.'¹⁹ Here, the 'actes' and 'dedes' are almost an afterthought to the geographical angle. This description recognises the different levels of writing about place, organised by scale from the world down to local 'wonders', demonstrating an awareness of how these all contribute to the writing of history.

3.1. Britain in the world

The historical texts of this period demonstrate a thirst for discussion of Britain, or England (the distinction is discussed further below, 3.2 'Divisions of Britain') as a nation.

¹⁸ *Polychronicon* II, pp. 440-2. See Andrew Galloway, 'Latin England', pp. 56-8.

¹⁹ William Caxton, *Caxton's Own Prose*, ed. by N. F. Blake (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973)

Taylor argues that, in the fourteenth century, ‘the emergence of writings in the English vernacular, evident in the historical literature, bears witness to a new maturity and a new self-consciousness among the English people’.²⁰ In this light the *Brut* could be seen as a response to a desire for a vernacular history amongst the increasingly nation-conscious English people. Equally, the very existence for the first time of a readily available account of their origins in the vernacular would have spurred the recognition of the English as a common people with a common history.

The *Polychronicon* is a universal history.²¹ Universal history is part of Judaeo-Christian tradition, which does not see history in terms of a particular nation but in terms of God’s plan for all of humanity. The chronological framework for these histories is drawn from Eusebius, who compiled chronological tables giving dates from important events in different civilizations.²² Augustine developed this into the concept of the six ages, which formed the basis of most subsequent universal histories. Higden divides his chronicle into seven ages, after, he says, the example of the seven days of Creation. The *Polychronicon* begins at the Creation and takes in Biblical and Roman history, ending during Edward III’s reign. Critics have traditionally defined the *Polychronicon* in relation to its importance as an example of this type of history. John Taylor refers to it as a universal chronicle, and describes it as both ‘the first chronicle written in England to treat world history on an extended scale’, and as ‘one of the last great universal chronicles of the Middle Ages’.²³ The *Polychronicon*’s popularity may be due to its ability to supply this

²⁰ John Taylor, *English Historical Literature, English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), p. 7.

²¹ On the *Polychronicon* as universal history, see John Taylor, *The Universal Chronicle of Ranulf Higden* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966), pp. 33-50.

²² Robert M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980).

²³ Taylor, *Universal Chronicle*, p. 39, p. 49.

sort of context for British history, which, as noted above, is only present in HRB if it is read allegorically. The *Brut* is a more explicitly nationalistic history, and includes little history outside of Britain. However, *Brut* manuscripts are often annotated with biblical history, supplying an angle in which Geoffrey was uninterested, and again demonstrating the appetite for this sort of contextualization of British events with what was known from other sources.²⁴

In reaction to the focus on Higden's work as universal history, other critics have emphasised the nationalistic purposes of the work and the centrality of British history to its structure.²⁵ In Andrew Galloway's words, the *Polychronicon* 'achieved the most effective construction of a national textual identity and national model of authorship that England had yet seen'.²⁶ Higden in fact states in his preface that his main aim is to 'ex variis auctorum decerptum laboribus, de statu insulae Britannicae ad notitiam cudere futurorum'.²⁷ He later explains that he was persuaded to extend the focus of his history outside of Britain by his fellow monks, but it can be questioned to what extent he really changed his purpose. While the *Polychronicon* covers world history, with a particular focus on Roman history, a large proportion of the work is dedicated to Britain. The last two books are almost entirely concerned with domestic events. British history not only proportionally dominates the work, but also provides the framework for the chronicle.

²⁴ Tamar Drukker, 'I Read Therefore I Write: Readers' Marginalia in some *Brut* Manuscripts', in *Readers and Writers of the Prose Brut*, pp. 97-130.

²⁵ Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*.

²⁶ Andrew Galloway, 'Latin England', in *Imagining a Medieval English Nation*, pp. 41-95, p. 44.

²⁷ 'Gather from the works of many authors, to bring the situation of the island of Britain to the notice of future generations'. *Polychronicon*, V, p. 6. This use of *cudere*, in the sense of 'to make known' or 'to compose (a book etc.)', is rare but has precedents; for example Bede, 'novum opus in veteri opere cudere', *Epistolae*, in *The Complete Works*, vol. I, ed. by J. A. Giles (London: Whittaker, 1843), p. 149.

3.1.1. Maps

The *Polychronicon* contextualizes Britain's place in the world spatially. Like Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Bede and Gildas before him, Higden demonstrates his geographical approach to history from the beginning, by opening his chronicle with an extensive geographical chapter, which gives descriptions of different areas of the world.

However, perhaps even more important to the *Polychronicon's* influence geographical perceptions is in its relationship to maps. The maps of the *Polychronicon* show the same interest as Higden's narrative in not only contextualizing Britain's place in the world, but also emphasising its importance. Since there are 20 surviving maps in 19 *Polychronicon* manuscripts, it was one of the dominant images of Britain's place in the world in circulation.

The first *Polychronicon* map was added by Higden himself, to the second version of 1340. The map is in Book 1, alongside the geographical descriptions. It shows separated countries marked with their names, and the layout of the countries is fairly conventional. By this time there were maps designed for helping with navigation, but Evelyn Edson points out that 'The geographical forms are abstract, showing no evidence of the sea chart'.²⁸ Peter Barber argues that, 'This map seems to have been a popular world-image that had, in its essentials, evolved by the eighth century, and seems to have become an all-purpose image, bearing no particular reference to the texts it accompanied'.²⁹

Higden was far from the first writer to include a map in his work. Many copies of the work of Isidore of Seville, one of Higden's most important sources, contain simple

²⁸ Evelyn Edson, *The World Map, 1300-1492: The Persistence of Tradition and Transformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), p. 167.

²⁹ Peter Barber, 'Medieval Maps of the World', in P. D. A. Harvey (ed.), *The Hereford World Map: Medieval World Maps and Their Context* (London: British Library, 2006), pp. 1-44 (p. 32).

world maps.³⁰ Gerald of Wales commissioned a map to accompany a manuscript of *Topographia Hiberniae* and *Expugnatio Hibernica*.³¹ From the thirteenth century, there are four autograph versions of Matthew Paris's map surviving, which, according to Harvey, 'represent an attempt- indeed, an extraordinarily successful attempt- to build up a map of Britain from its outline on a world map closely related to the Cotton map'.³²

The most elaborate *Polychronicon* map is the Ramsey abbey map (BL Royal MS 14. CIX). Early critics assumed, based on the level of detail, that it was by Higden himself. Anglia is very large in respect to the rest of the world, and further stands out by being coloured red (which is not the case in the Higden map). The position of Anglia (in the corner of the map rather than in the middle of the ocean) and the colouring aligns this map to other English *mappae mundi*, such as the Hereford and Ebstorf maps. 'In effect, the *Polychronicon* offers us a textual version of what the [Ramsey Abbey] map visually displays: how an artefact of universal scope nevertheless can imagine a sovereign England'.³³

The Ramsey map demonstrates the awareness of Britain's position at the edge of the world, which was discussed in the previous chapter (2.1, 'Britain in the world'). This emphasis on English marginality is replicated in Higden's text: 'No less than seven times does Higden refer to the status of England as, alternately, a corner of the world, an other world, and a nation located almost beyond the world.'³⁴ Again, Britain's position is seen

³⁰ A more elaborate map accompanying Isidore's work is the eleventh century example in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 10058, f. 154v. Reproduced in P. D. A. Harvey, *Medieval Maps* (London: British Library, 1991), p. 22.

³¹ Dublin National Library of Ireland, MS. 700, fol. 48r. Thomas O'Loughlin, 'An Early Thirteenth Century Map in Dublin: A Window Into the World of Giraldus Cambrensis', *Imago Mundi* 51 (1999), 24-39; Barber, 'Medieval Maps', p. 14.

³² Harvey, *Medieval Maps*, p. 70.

³³ Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, p. 71.

³⁴ Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, p. 73.

as offering both advantages and disadvantages: ‘geographic alterity is double-edged insofar as it always carries with it not only the threat of wildness and regression but also the potential for independence and sovereignty’.³⁵ Higden places Anglia in the corner of the world map based on his belief that the name Anglia comes from *ab angulo orbis*. On this Higden cites Isidore of Seville, although the claim does not appear in our extant manuscripts of the *Etymologiae*.³⁶

Unlike the big *mappae mundi*, which were for public display, the Ramsey map’s ‘general appearance, and particularly the lengthy, usually unillustrated, inscriptions and the use of an informal documentary script, rather than a book-hand, reflect increased literacy within society and suggest that ... it was specifically created for private research and study which were becoming more common by the fourteenth century’.³⁷ The uses and development of the *Polychronicon* can be linked to a widening of the literary class. Where in the previous chapter we saw a relatively small group of Anglo-Latin clerics – men such as Geoffrey of Monmouth, Gerald of Wales, William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon – commenting on, criticising and evaluating each other’s work, from the fourteenth century a wider literate class had access to and showed interest in texts on geographical and historical subjects.

³⁵ Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, p. 74.

³⁶ Galloway, ‘Latin England’, p. 55.

³⁷ Barber, ‘Medieval Maps’, p. 34.

3.2. Divisions of Britain

In the historical texts before *Historia Regum Britanniae* dealing with the early history of the British, *De excidio* and *Historia Brittonum*, as well as other stories set around Arthur's court, the *Mabinogion* and the saints' lives, the action takes place largely in Wales and the south west; the area of the longest survival of British power. Geoffrey of Monmouth extends Arthur's influence outwards for the first time, to areas of Anglo-Saxon and subsequent Norman control, and also to the European stage. However, there is never any confusion in *Historia Regum Britanniae* as to who is fighting these wars; it is always the 'British' and the 'Britons'.

In subsequent works there is a tendency, beginning as early as Gaimar's *Histoire des Engleis*, to conflate the early history of the Britons, or as they came to be called, the Welsh, with the inhabitants of England. Late medieval chroniclers in England see no disjunction between writing a history of the English and beginning with Brutus, or with using 'England' and 'Britain' and 'English' and 'British' indiscriminately. The *Chronicles of England* begins with the arrival of Brutus and is largely based on Geoffrey of Monmouth; the *Polychronicon* is a universal history, which cites classical and patristic authors, although the focus is on England.

In HRB, the Welsh are clearly seen in a historical sense as the inheritors of the British. However, who are intended to be the moral inheritors of Britain's past, and who the work is intended to benefit, has been debated. Scholars have been divided over whether HRB was meant to appeal to an Anglo-Norman or Welsh audience (and some

have argued that it has no political purpose, or is parody).³⁸ In works which followed Geoffrey, the idea of 'Britain' often becomes subsumed into 'England'.

Alan MacColl has discussed the use of 'Britain' in the medieval England, and finds three distinct senses: Britain as the whole island (rare), Britain as a synonym for England as the southern part of the island, and Britain and England as synonyms for the whole island (which MacColl finds to be the most common sense in English writing).³⁹ Britain was seen, not as the name for the island, which later became divided, but as having been replaced by 'England'. This shift begins as early as the first Variant of *HRB*; as MacColl notes, references to Britain as an 'insula' are frequently replaced with 'terra' and other phrases that could apply to just England. Wace states clearly at the beginning of his adaptation of *HRB*, the *Roman de Brut*, that it is the history of 'Engleterre'. Laura Ashe sees this renaming as evidence of a move away from the ethnic history of Geoffrey, to a history of the land itself.⁴⁰

This process can also be seen in Gaimar's history. Gaimar says at the beginning of the extant portion of the *Estoire des Engleis*, 'tuzjurs sicom il conqueraient,/ des Engleis la reconuissaient:/ la terre k'il vont conquerant/ si l'a peleient Engeland./ Este vus ci un' acheson/ parquei Bretaigne perdi son nun' (30-4). Although this is the only occurrence of 'Engeland' in his work, it is symbolic of (in Leckie's phrase) the 'passage of dominion'.⁴¹ The two halves of Gaimar's history (the first half does not survive, and is assumed to have

³⁸ On the work as parody, see Valerie I. J. Flint, 'The *Historia Regum Britanniae* of Geoffrey of Monmouth: Parody and Its Purpose. A Suggestion', *Speculum* 54; Brooke, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth as a Historian'.

³⁹ Alan MacColl, 'The meaning of Britain in Medieval and Early Modern English', *Journal of British Studies* 45 (2006), 288-310.

⁴⁰ Laura Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 59-64.

⁴¹ R. William Leckie, Jr, *The Passage of Dominion: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Periodization of Insular History in the Twelfth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

been superseded by Wace's work) are therefore clearly demarcated by this change in nomenclature; the references to Arthur in the second portion are largely negative. However, Gaimar's vision of the transference of power is less simple than the domination of the Britons by the Saxons. Writing in Lincolnshire, an area which had been heavily influenced by Danish settlement, he was anxious to prove the precedence of the Danes in Britain over the Saxons. In asserting this chronology, Gaimar makes the Britons, rather than the Saxons, the antagonists of the Danes: 'Meis li Daneis mult les häeient/ pur lur parenz ki morz estaient/ es batailles kë Artur fist/ contre Modret k'il puis oscist'.⁴² This demonstrates how even within an ostensibly 'national' history, Arthur can be used to assert local interests; here, unusually, by being on the side of the enemy.

Scotland also problematises the view of the island as one entity in the chronicles.

Geoffrey makes it clear that it is not to be considered 'British':

Vicinitatis etenim Scotiae tutelam adhibebat, quae in omne dampnum ciuium imminere consueuerat. Natio namque ad inhabitandum horribilis, euacuata ciuibus, tutum receptaculum alienigenis praestauerat. Siquidem Pictis, Scotis, Dacis, Norguegensibus, ceterisque qui ad uastandam insulam applicuerant, situ locorum annitente patuerat; securi igitur affinitatis patriae, uersus illam diffugerant, ut si opus fuisset sese infra eam quasi in propria castra recepissent.⁴³

Picts are grouped in with those who 'landed' in the island, rather than the possessors of the island, the British (to be equated with the Welsh of Geoffrey's day). This may be confusion with the Scots, and also the influence of Bede, who was writing from a viewpoint

⁴² 'The Danes, however, felt great hatred for them because their relatives had died in the battles that Arthur had waged against Mordred, whom he subsequently killed'. Geffrei Gaimar, *Estoire des Engleis/History of the English*, ed. and trans. by Ian Short (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 4, ll. 37-40.

⁴³ 'They [the Saxons] were further protected by the proximity of Scotland, a continual deadly threat to the British. It was an inhospitable place, devoid of Britons, but readily accessible to foreigners. Its very position had made it suitable for Picts, Scots, Danes, Norsemen and the others who landed to lay the island waste; reassured by the nearness of that country, the Saxons retreated towards it, to retire there, if necessary, as if to a welcoming base'. HRB VIII:120.

where the Picts were potential invaders of England. In Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* the Humber often acts as a dividing line between the Saxons and Picts, whereas Geoffrey uses it as a division between the Britons and Saxons: 'Timuerunt igitur eum Saxones et sese trans Humbrum receperunt. In partibus illis munierunt ciuitates et oppida; nam patria illa semper refugio eis patuerat'.⁴⁴ Scotland is also a refuge for rebels in Caradoc's *Life of Gildas*. It is said of the saint's brother, Hueil, that 'A Scotia veniebat saepissime, incendia ponebat, praedas ducebat cum Victoria ac laude', before being killed by Arthur on the Isle of Man.⁴⁵ Therefore even though early Arthurian history in many ways envisaged a united Britain, the potential for exclusion of nations within the island was already there, and able to be exploited by later authors. Scottish chroniclers of the later middle ages emphasised the idea that Arthur was illegitimate (i.e., that Uther slept with Igerne before the death of Gorlois and not after), and that therefore the sons of the Scottish king Lot and Arthur's sister Anna should have inherited the throne. This reaction to the marginalisation of Scotland in other chronicle accounts demonstrates the complicated nature of Arthur's origin and national identity.

Arthur's transformation into a symbol of English kingship led to his use for propaganda purposes. The first king to be consciously associated with Arthur was Richard I. John Gillingham, who argues convincingly against any conscious use of, or particular interest in, the Arthurian legend on Henry II's part, points out that, 'Not only were there many more historians writing in the 1190s than in any decade of Henry II's reign, but Richard I became the first king of England since Alfred to set out systematically to mould

⁴⁴ 'In fear of [Aurelius] therefore, the Saxons retreated behind the Humber. There they fortified cities and towns; the region had always provided them with a refuge'. HRB VIII:120.

⁴⁵ 'He would often sweep down from Scotland, set up conflagrations, and carry off spoils with victory and renown'. *Two Lives of Gildas by a monk of Ruys and Caradoc of Llancarfan*, ed. and trans. by Hugh Williams (Llanerch: Felinfach, 1990), p. 92.

public opinion by means of the written word, by newsletters and fabrications'.⁴⁶ A key example is Roger of Howden's *Gesta Regis Ricardi*, in which Roger also struggles with the question of Arthur as king of the Britons or the English. When he describes Richard's gift of 'Excalibur' to Tancred of Sicily, he calls Arthur 'regis Britonum'. When he rewrote the passage a few years later, he called Arthur 'rex Anglie'.⁴⁷ The depiction of Arthur in HRB as an imperial ruler meant that he could be used to bolster English imperial claims.

Edward I used the figure of Arthur to assert English supremacy over the Scottish and Welsh.⁴⁸ In 1278 he very publicly moved the supposed remains of Arthur and Guinevere to a spot in front of the altar of Glastonbury abbey, in an attempt to quash the Welsh legend of Arthur's return to lead the Britons back to power. During the period of uncertainty over the ruler of Scotland, from the death of Alexander III in 1286 to the inauguration of Robert Bruce in 1306, Edward I attempted to use the early history of Britain to assert the claim of England to rule Scotland. Edward found himself in conflict with the Scots, largely due to his heavy-handed policies, which included demands for feudal service from the Scottish magnates and orders to muster troops for the French wars. This led to the Scottish attack on Carlisle in 1296 and the rebellion led by William Wallace in 1297.⁴⁹ Edward appealed to scholars, in 1291 and 1301, to help answer the 'Scottish question' with reference to historical works. Several of the responses refer to the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth, as well as William of Malmesbury and Henry of

⁴⁶ John Gillingham, 'The Cultivation of History, Legend and Courtesy at the Court of King Henry II', in *Writers of the Reign of Henry II: Twelve Essays*, ed. by Ruth Kennedy and Simon Meecham-Jones (New York: Macmillan, 2006), pp. 25-52 (pp. 35-6).

⁴⁷ See Gillingham, 'The Cultivation of History', p. 38.

⁴⁸ For this paragraph on Edward I, see John Carmi Parsons, 'The Second Exhumation of King Arthur's Remains at Glastonbury, 19 April 1278', in *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, ed. by James Carley (Cambridge: Brewer, 2001), pp. 79-83; R. S. Loomis, 'Edward I, Arthurian Enthusiast', *Speculum* 28 (1953), 114-27.

⁴⁹ Caroline Burt, *Edward I and the Governance of England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 180.

Huntingdon. Edward's letter to the Scots draws directly on Geoffrey's model of history by asserting the continuity of a united Britain from the time of Brutus. These claims were in turn refuted by Scottish chroniclers, both at the time and into the fifteenth century.⁵⁰ The late thirteenth and early fourteenth century also saw the composition and circulation in the north of England of political prophecies, ultimately deriving from Geoffrey of Monmouth, which asserted English overlordship of the whole island.⁵¹

However, the adoption of British history, and figures such as Merlin and Arthur, was not unproblematic, and it could still be presented as in opposition to English causes. After the deposition of Richard II, Merlinic prophecy was used by both the Lancastrian and anti-Lancastrian supporters. Henry IV, wanting to stem the prophecies which depicted Richard II as the rightful king, wrongfully deposed, used the Welsh as scapegoats; increasing anti-Welsh sentiment in England meant that associating prophecy particularly with the Welsh could discredit it, without harming the depiction of Arthur as an English king.⁵² This criticism of Merlinic prophecy appears later in Holinshed's chronicle, in his account of the division of the map of Britain between Mortimer, Hotspur and Glendower. The division occurred, Holinshed says, in accordance with "a vaine prophesie, as though king Henrie was the moldwarpe [mole], cursed of Gods owne mouth, and they three were the dragon, the lion, and the wolfe, which should divide this realme betweene them. Such is the deviation (saith Hall) and not divination of those blind

⁵⁰ Juliette Wood, 'The Arthurian Legend in Scotland and Cornwall', in *A Companion to Arthurian Literature*, ed. by Helen Fulton (Oxford: Blackwell, 2012), pp. 102-26 (p. 104).

⁵¹ Victoria Flood, "E si finerount les heirs d'engleterre hors de heritage": Galfridian Prophecy and the Anglo-Scottish Border, c. 1301-30s', in Flood, *Prophecy, Politics and Place in Medieval England From Geoffrey of Monmouth to Thomas of Erceldoune* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2016), pp. 66-109.

⁵² Helen Fulton, 'Arthurian Prophecy and the Deposition of Richard II', *Arthurian Literature* 22 (2005), 64-83.

and fantasticall dreames of the Welsh prophesiers.”⁵³ This shows that despite the appropriation of Galfridian material for an English history, there remained a recognition of the Welsh background to, and enthusiasm for, the legend.

Later historical writers (who often only knew of Geoffrey's history indirectly, through the work of Wace and other redactors) follow Wace and others in seeing it as a story of the English. The author of *De Origine Gigantum*, which attempts to fill a perceived gap in the Galfridian account of early British history by explaining how the giants arrived there before Brutus, claims that ‘what was once called Albion is now called England’.⁵⁴ When the Middle English *Brut* was printed by William Caxton in 1480, it was under the title *Chronicles of England*. It is notable that the increasing identification of Britain with England began around the same time as ‘British’ began to lose its particular association with the Welsh people and language. In the twelfth century Wales was given a number of different names. The vernacular was Cymru(y), which began replacing terms for Britain and Britons, as the language began to be referred to as Cymraeg.⁵⁵ Non-Welsh scribes used Wallia, while Welsh writers in Latin still often referred to the country as Britannia. Gerald of Wales calls it Kambria, using ‘Wallia’ as a pejorative term. The fluidity of terminology in this period suggests how the Matter of Britain could come to be appropriated by the conquerors of the native British.

This process of transforming Britain into England is not followed in the French romances. There Arthur is still often identified as a British king in the older sense, and associated with Wales (and particularly North Wales). There may be several reasons for

⁵³ Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (London, 1587).

⁵⁴ James P. Carley and Julia Crick (eds.), ‘Constructing Albion's Past: An annotated edition of *De origine gigantum*’, *Arthurian Literature* 13 (1995), 41-114; trans. by Ruth Evans, ‘Gigantic Origins: An Annotated translation of *De Origine Gigantum*’, *Arthurian Literature* 16 (1998), 197-211.

⁵⁵ See Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, pp. 7, 19.

this. Firstly, the Breton associations of Arthur, of which the romances were aware. Secondly, an unwillingness to bolster an 'English' hero. Wales would have had no political threat for France, and it had links with the Continent that did not involve England as intermediary. Thirdly, Wales may have functioned as an 'exotic' setting, of which the majority of the audience would have had little knowledge; almost in the same way that romances set in the near-East could be expected to have surprising elements, since it was likewise outside the known. It is also important to remember that even in an insular context, Arthur was not the only English hero available. In romance, figures such as Bevis of Hampton and Guy of Warwick enjoyed equal, if not greater, popularity, and also had strong associations with their respective localities. In creating national origins, they were uncomplicated by associations with a pre-Norman past.

Caxton refers to Arthur specifically as a prominent figure of English history. Caxton's references to Arthur as one who 'ought most to be remembered among us Englishmen' and 'sometime king of this noble realm, then called Britain' are in keeping with this trend. Caxton's geographical terminology is often more precise than that of the works he is printing. His epilogue to *The Descripcion of Britayne*, taken from the *Polychronicon*, clarifies the terms:

Here endeth het discripcion of Britayne the whiche conteyneth england wales and scotland also bicause Irlande is under the reule of england of olde tyme it hath so continued therfore I have sette the descripcion of the same after the said brituyne.⁵⁶

Although Caxton's Arthurian artefacts are located in England, he does acknowledge the place of Wales in the legend. He is aware of the variety of different traditions about Arthur,

⁵⁶ Caxton's *Prologues and Epilogues*, p. 40.

noting that ‘in Walsshe ben many [volumes], and also in Frensshe, and somme in Englysshe’.⁵⁷ Notably, Caxton refers to eyewitness accounts of archaeological remains which he believes are related to Arthur: ‘And yet of record remayne in wytnesse of hym in Wales, in the toune of Camelot, the grete stones and the mervayllous werkys of yron lyeng under the grounde, and ryal vautes, which dyvers now lyvyng hath seen’.⁵⁸ It is not clear whether Caxton has a specific site in mind when speaking of Camelot, but the grand description seems to be owed to Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Caerleon* (it is also possible that it refers to the Roman remains at *Caerwent*).

Caxton’s writing also gives an indication as to how the place of the Arthurian legend was perceived in the popular imagination by the late fifteenth century. He says,

After that I had accomplysshed and fynysshed dyvers hystories, as wel of contemplacyon as of other hystorial and worldly actes of grete conquerours and prynces, and also certeyn bookes of ensamples and doctryne, many noble and dyvers gentylmen of thys royaume of Englund camen and demaunded me many and oftymes wherfore that I have not do made and enprynte the noble hystorie of the Saynt Greal and of the moost renommed Crysten kyng, fyrst and chyef of the thre best Crysten, and worthy, kyng Arthur, whyche ought moost to be remembered emonge us Englysshemen tofore al other Crysten kynges.⁵⁹

Firstly, Caxton refers to Arthur specifically as a prominent figure of *English* history. As we have seen, in the handful of texts dating from before *Historia Regum Britanniae* which deal with the early history of the British— i.e., Gildas’ *De excidio* and the *Historia Brittonum*, as well as other stories set around Arthur’s court which may have earlier origins, such as the *Mabinogion* and the saints’ lives—the action takes place largely in Wales and the south west; that is, the area of the longest survival of British power.

⁵⁷ Caxton’s *Own Prose*, p. 108.

⁵⁸ Caxton’s *Own Prose*, p. 108.

⁵⁹ Caxton’s *Own Prose*, p. 106.

Geoffrey of Monmouth extends Arthur's influence outwards for the first time, to areas of Anglo-Saxon and subsequent Norman control, and also to the European stage. However, there is never any confusion in *HRB* as to who is fighting these wars; it is always the 'British' and the 'Britons'. As was discussed in the previous chapter, there is a tendency for Anglo-Norman writers following Geoffrey, beginning as soon as *HRB* was disseminated, to conflate the early history of the Britons with the history of the inhabitants of England. Late medieval chroniclers in England see no contradiction in writing a history of the English and beginning with Brutus, or with using 'England' and 'Britain' and 'English' and 'British' indiscriminately. Caxton's references to Arthur as one who 'ought moost to be remembered emonge us Englysshemen tofore al other Crysten kynges' and 'somtyme kyng of thys noble royalme, thenne callyd Bretaygne' demonstrate this trend, and in particular, the notion that Britain has been *replaced* by England. Therefore, anyone seeking to locate and nationalize Arthur is faced with an immediate problem of nomenclature. England can mean Britain, Britain can mean England, Wales or the whole island, and the terms do not only shift geographically but temporally, as we have seen in Gaimar and the *Brut*, when Britain is said to have now *become* England.

3.3. The city

The map in BL Royal MS 14. CIX is centred on the city of Jerusalem, which dwarfs all other features on the map, and is circled in red. Red is also used for the island of Britain, on which are depicted 13 towns: London, Winchester, Exeter, Bristol, Gloucester, Worcester, Oxford, Northampton, Stafford, Nottingham, Lincoln, Durham, and York.

They are large in scale, dominating the island. This map therefore gives a clear pictorial depiction of the relationship of Britain to Jerusalem, and implicitly suggests that the cities of Britain are worthy to be considered alongside the world's great cities. The growth in importance of the city in Britain, both practically and symbolically, is shown by the appearance of the London chronicles, which exist in 44 manuscripts dating from between 1430 and 1566.⁶⁰ These often appear in continuations to the *Brut*, perhaps as a reflection of the desire for people in London to know more about the city. They are of interest as evidence of a tradition of local history writing existing alongside the national project represented by the *Brut*.

3.4. The locality

Higden states in the preface, 'In multis quoque veri certitudo nullatenus vacillare videretur, probabiliter tamen dubitatur', and he quotes Isidore of Seville: 'Si de constructione urbis Romae certa ratio non appareat, non est mirum si in aliarum opinione dubitetur.'⁶¹ A scepticism towards believing his sources too readily is the cornerstone of Higden's historical method. He builds his narrative round his sources, but then compares the conflicting accounts, and combines this with other evidence, such as eyewitness knowledge and geographical and scientific knowledge, to come to a conclusion about which account is more likely. A good example of Higden's methods is the passage on the

⁶⁰ Mary-Rose McLaren, *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: A Revolution in English Writing* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2002), p. 3.

⁶¹ 'In many things that seem true and by no means uncertain, I nevertheless am doubtful'; 'If reason is uncertain in the matter of the building of the city of Rome, it is little wonder if there is doubt in regard to others.' *Polychronicon* I, p. 18.

foundation of Bath, in which he discusses William of Malmesbury's assertion that the hot baths were established by Julius Caesar:

Sed Gaufridus Monemutensis in suo Britannico libro asserit regem Bladud hujus rei fuisse auctorem. Forsan Willelmus, qui Britannicum librum non viderat, ista ex aliorum relatu aut ex propria conjectura, sicut et quaedum alia, minus scripsit exquisite. *Proinde videtur magis verisimile quod licet rex Bladud hanc urbem construxerit, non propter hoc ipse aut Julius haec calida balnea construxerit; immo quod aqua originalis transiens per venas sulphureas, quibus naturaliter calefacta ebulliat, in urbe illa fervidas scaturigines per loca varia, ubi scabredines et putredines saepe purgantur.*⁶² [my italics]

Here Higden rejects both Geoffrey of Monmouth and William of Malmesbury's accounts. His own explanation is a geological one, that the sulphuric rock heats the water. Despite criticising William here for using oral sources, Higden does not cite his own source for the sulphuric rock. However it seems likely he was influenced by Isidore of Seville's description of hot baths caused by sulphur.⁶³ Trevisa makes a number of original additions in his translation of Higden's chronicle. In these, Trevisa displays a geographical interest similar to Higden's. To the passage cited above about Bath, Trevisa adds his own geographical details:

þey me myȝt by craft make hote bathes for to dure long i-now, þis accordeþ wel to resoun and to filosofie þat treteþ of hote welles and bathes, þat beþ in dyuerse londes, þeiȝ þe water of þis bathe be more troubylly and heuyere of smelle and of sauour þan oþere hote bathes þat I haue i-seie at Akene in Almayne, and at Egges in Sauoy. þe babes in Egges beþ as feire and as clere as eny cold welle streem. I haue assaied, and i-bathed þerynne.⁶⁴

⁶² 'But Geoffrey of Monmouth in his British book claims that king Bladud built them. Perhaps William, who had not seen the British book, wrote this based on what others told him or from his own conjecture, as with other things without writing wisely. So it seems probable neither that king Bladud built this city, nor that Julius himself built this hot bath; rather that the water, originally travelling by veins of sulphur, which naturally sends out warmth, in that city springs hot in various places, whereby festering wounds are often cleansed.' *Polychronicon* II, pp. 58-60.

⁶³ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, II, XIII.11.

⁶⁴ *Polychronicon* II, p. 61. This passage is discussed further by Andrew Galloway, 'Latin England', pp. 50-53.

As in the last chapter, we see the importance of eyewitness in assessing and evaluating competing claims. However, as the layers of editing grow, these competing claims are in the same text. Trevisa does not change the text to reflect his knowledge, but instead adds his own glosses and assessments.

Some of Higden's gravest doubts about Geoffrey's account are about the Merlinic and Arthurian sections. For example, he discusses his process for what he has included about Vortigern thus:

Ea igitur quae in hoc loco de exitu Vortigerni leguntur quodammodo per anticipationem dicuntur, *ut historiae integritas conservetur*. Caeterum quae de stagno, de duobus draconibus, albo et rubeo, de caduca Vortigerni structura, de fantastica Merlini genitura, de prophetia eiusdem tam obscura, *in solo Britannico libro continentur, praesenti historiae addidissem, si ea veritate suffulta credidissem*. [my italics]⁶⁵

The main criticism of these stories is that they only appear in Geoffrey's account. This is not a new criticism, but is particularly damning in Higden's eyes, since he sets great store by displaying the sources which he is using and comparing them to others. However, like many writers of British history after Geoffrey, Higden is able to have it both ways: after casting doubt on the reliability of these stories, he includes them in any case, in order to 'historiae integritas conservetur' (in Trevisa's translation, 'kepe þe storie hool').⁶⁶ Higden often included discrepant versions of the same story. As Galloway notes, 'he is always deeply involved in their discrepancies or implausibilities, and often especially concerned

⁶⁵ 'Therefore what is said of the death of Vortigern in this place is said in such a way that the truth of the history is preserved. Those things that are said about the lake, of two dragons, white and red, of the fading of the structure of Vortigern, of the fables about the birth of Merlin, of the latter's very obscure prophecies, are contained in the British book alone and I would have added them to the present history, if I had truly believed them.' *Polychronicon* V, p. 278.

⁶⁶ *Polychronicon* V, p. 279.

with how their settings- temporal and geographic- account for these conflicts'.⁶⁷ One way he tests different versions against each other and reaches his conclusion is by using his knowledge of the world around him.

The version of the Arthurian narrative is truncated and alludes only to key events. Higden briefly mentions Uther's marriage to Gorlois' wife (not named), the conception of Arthur and his sister Anna, and Uther's death by poisoning.⁶⁸ Around this point in the narrative Higden begins using much of the material from Bede about the Saxon settlements. There is also a lot of material about Rome, before Arthur's reign is reached. Higden begins the account of Arthur's reign with the 'twelve battles' from the *Historia Brittonum*, citing Henry of Huntingdon and William of Malmesbury as his sources.⁶⁹ Like other writers Higden seems to take these battles as the kernel of truth in the Arthurian legend. This is likely to be because of the passage's apparent specificity, and for Higden, the opportunity for further geographical description and the possibility of locating these sites in the present day. However, Higden follows this passage by saying, 'Hic est Arthurus de quo nugae delirant, dignus plane quem non fallaces fabulae sed veraces historiae praedicarent.'⁷⁰ He is here quoting William of Malmesbury almost word-for-word (see 2, 'The twelfth century', above). The sudden change strongly suggests that the previous passage is the 'veraces historiae', and that what follows may be influenced by 'fallaces fabulae'.

Higden gives a substantial amount of space to questioning Geoffrey's depiction of Arthur. Higden's main criticism again is the lack of corroboration for Geoffrey's history.

⁶⁷ Galloway, 'Latin England', p. 50

⁶⁸ *Polychronicon* V, p. 314. Trevisa, in his translation, names Igerne but removes the reference to Anna.

⁶⁹ *Polychronicon* V, p. 328.

⁷⁰ *Polychronicon* V, p. 328.

Why, if Arthur achieved all the great victories Geoffrey attributes to him, there is no mention of it in other sources? He discusses the lack of reference to Frolo and Lucius in continental sources, and poses the question of why, if Arthur did conquer France and Italy, ‘omnes historici Romani, Franci, Saxonici tot insignia de tanto viro omiserunt, qui de minoribus viris tot minora retulerunt.’⁷¹ The lack of continental sources had been raised as a criticism before. Alfred of Beverley, writing in the early twelfth century, makes this point, but it does not seem to be repeated by anyone writing between Alfred and Higden. The criticism that Gildas and Bede do not mention Arthur was more widespread, and Higden refers to this also.

Higden’s criticism of Arthur is rebutted by his translator Trevisa, in an extended Middle English passage.⁷² Trevisa argues, ‘Seint Iohn in his gospel telleþ meny þinges and doyngeþ þat Mark, Luk, and Matheu spekeþ nouȝt of in here gospelles, ergo, Iohn is nouȝt to trowynge in his gospel.’ This argues for the value of a unique account. He also criticises the argument that since Frolo and Lucius are not mentioned elsewhere, they could not have existed, since ‘ofte an officer, kyng, oþer emperour haþ many dyvers names, and is diverselich I-nempned in meny dyvers londes’. He echoes Higden’s own criticism, that William of Malmesbury ‘were desceyved, for he hadde nouȝt i-rad þe Britische book’. Trevisa in part concedes to Higden’s view of Arthur, when he admits that the deeds of Arthur may have been overstated and overpraised:

it may wel be þat Arthur is ofte overpreysed, and so beep meny opere. Sop sawes beep nevere þe wors þey madde men telle magel tales, and som mad men wil mene þat Arthur scal come aȝe, and be eft kyng here of Britayne, but þat is a ful magel tale, and so beep meny opere þat beep i-tolde of hym and of opere.⁷³

⁷¹ ‘All the histories of the Romans, French and Saxons neglect to mention significant things about so great a man, when they report smaller deeds of lesser men.’ *Polychronicon* V, p. 334.

⁷² *Polychronicon* V, pp. 337-9. This defence is not contained in all manuscripts.

⁷³ *Polychronicon* V, p. 339.

The legend of Arthur's return features rarely in chronicle accounts, so even though Trevisa disbelieves it, his inclusion of it shows how the act of commenting on a text allows different voices into the text, which play against the monophonic chronicle history. Local and oral traditions are given access to the discourse of history in this way. Trevisa's defence of Arthur may be, like his passage on Cornwall, due to geographical loyalty. Trevisa emphasises the Cornish/Celtic contribution made by King Arthur. Beal suggests that 'As a result, the geographical loyalties of the translator and compiler of the *Polychronicon* pull against one another, creating a dynamic tension in the English chronicle that was not present in the Latin one.'⁷⁴ However, as we have seen, Higden's measured view of Arthur's historicity also acts to return him to a Celtic, insular context. Therefore Trevisa's defence is perhaps not as necessary as he thought.

Higden's objections to the Arthurian legend had all been raised before, but went strongly against the grain of the other most available version of the story, the *Brut*. Higden sees the 'real' Arthur as an exclusively insular figure, a perhaps inevitable conclusion for a history that uses continental sources. This movement back to Arthur as an important figure in a purely insular context, located primarily in the west of the island, and the idea that this material is the true core of the legend, is picked up on again by historians in the sixteenth century. Higden and Trevisa's geographical detail, aided by the inclusion of maps, also seems to have contributed to the *Polychronicon*'s popularity. Its early appearance in print may have been due to the alignment of Higden and Trevisa's interests in this regard with those of the work's first printer/ editor, William Caxton.

⁷⁴ Jane Beal, 'Mapping Identity in Trevisa's *Polychronicon*', in *Fourteenth-Century England III*, ed. by William Mark Ormerod (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2004), pp. 67-82 (p. 68).

Caxton's Preface to *Morte Darthur* demonstrates the use of material culture to back up claims for Arthur's historicity. These artefacts are located 'in divers places of England', and include his seal at Westminster, Gawain's skull and Cradok's mantle at Dover, and the round table at Winchester. Most of the Arthurian relics are located in England, although he acknowledges the place of Wales in the legend: 'And yet of record remain in witness of him in Wales, in the town of Camelot, the great stones and the marvellous works of iron lying under the ground, and royal vaults, which divers now living have seen' (It is not clear whether Caxton has a specific site in mind when speaking of Camelot). In this, we can see the use of the locality, as in Gerald's work, to provide multiple versions and voices to an existing legend. Caxton concludes, 'al these thynges forsayd alledged, I coude not well denye but that there was suche a noble kyng named Arthur and reputed one of the ix worthy, and fyrst and chyef of the Cristen men'.⁷⁵ As Masako Takagi and Toshiyuki Takamiya point out, many of Caxton's problems over the historicity of Arthur are created by Caxton himself, since in *Polychronicon* and *Chronicles of England* he elected to disseminate two divergent accounts.⁷⁶ Caxton is aware that Malory's work is even less historically justifiable, and thus goes to pains in his Preface to establish through more rigorous historical methods the general truth of Arthur's existence, whatever the truth value of any single account.

⁷⁵ William Caxton, *Caxton's Own Prose*, ed. by N. F. Blake (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973), p. 108.

⁷⁶ Masako Takagi and Toshiyuki Takamiya, 'Caxton Edits the Roman War episode: The Chronicles of England and Caxton's Book V', in *The Malory Debate: Essays on the Texts of 'Le Morte Darthur'*, ed. by Bonnie Wheeler, Robert L. Kindrick and Michael N. Salda, *Arthurian Studies* 47 (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), pp. 169-90.

3.5. Conclusion

The chronicles of the later medieval period are dedicated to reworking Geoffrey's vision of early British history. The verse adaptations by Layamon, Wace and Gaimar largely stick to his scheme for British history, while making adjustments to reflect their own viewpoints. In the *Polychronicon*, Higden uses a compilation approach to put different sources side by side, and uses geographical knowledge to challenge them. Higden's historical method is developed by subsequent authors writing about the pre-Conquest period (see chapter 4 and 5, below).

In some ways print marked the end of the development and variations in the *Brut* tradition. However, even after the *Brut* appeared in print the manuscripts were still read and annotated, throughout the sixteenth century and later. It is one of the clearest demonstrations of the continuation of manuscript culture after the arrival of the printing press, that these manuscripts were still valued and carefully read, even after a version of the work was available in print. Looking at the annotations of a sample of *Brut* manuscripts demonstrates that its geographical aim, to demonstrate the origins of the nation and of cities within it in order to depict a particularly English national history, was one that continued to interest readers.

Print can also be seen as marking the start of a new tradition: as the text was now fixed these chronicles could be commented on and criticized as a stable work. Neither the *Brut* nor the *Polychronicon* came to be very highly thought of in the sixteenth century. New chronicles soon appeared in print, such as those by Fabian and Rastell, and the older works were to an extent superseded. However, the number of manuscript and print copies of both works that were in circulation meant that earlier chronicles were readily available

to both writers and readers of the new histories. This is important context for how the geography of the early history of Britain was written and read throughout the sixteenth century. Reading was also filtered through the work of translators and editors such as Trevisa and Caxton, whose own writing appears alongside the original.

The question of the early British history and its veracity remained a matter of contention. Arthur was singled out for particular debate, perhaps more so than in the twelfth century. Caxton's Preface to *Morte Darthur* explains his reasons for publishing Malory's work. In it, Caxton again demonstrates a geographical approach to history. Like other authors earlier and later, Caxton uses the evidence of the landscape to back up claims for Arthur's historicity. Caxton clearly has an interest in promoting his latest publication. However, Caxton pleads here more for the general fact of Arthur's existence, rather than for the veracity of Malory's account in particular. For example, his preference for a Welsh site for Camelot contradicts the romance text he is glossing. The most he attempts to claim is that 'al these thynges consydered, there can no man resonably gaynsaye but there was a kyng of thys lande named Arthur'.⁷⁷ He mentions the evidence of Geoffrey's 'Brutysshe book', of the *Polychronicon* (giving precise references to book and chapter), and 'Bochas' (Boccaccio)'s *De Casu Principum*. The Preface to the *Morte Darthur* demonstrates the often thin dividing line between romance and history when it comes to Arthurian history. *Polychronicon* and *Chronicles* are incompatible with each other when it comes to Arthur, particularly on the matter of Arthur's Roman war. A number of critics have argued that this discrepancy lies behind the Roman war episode in

⁷⁷ Caxton's *Own Prose*, p. 108.

Malory, and that Caxton rewrote it to remove the discrepancy.⁷⁸ Therefore the *Brut* and the *Polychronicon* not only dominate the historical discourse of this period, but also influence the context in which the most successful Arthurian romance appeared, and possibly also its content.

In some ways this appearance in print marks the end of the *Brut* tradition; it was no longer rewritten and added to in the same way, since print acts to ‘fix’ a text. Once printed, it was treated as a standard, and could be copied without being assessed critically. When the chronicles were printed at St Albans in 1486 — the first book to be printed there in five years, and the first English book printed there — Caxton’s text was used as a basis, rather than any of the chronicles that had been kept at the abbey, and this was also the version that was reprinted in 1497 by Wynkyn de Worde.⁷⁹ This demonstrates the extent to which the process of editing and printing a text was seen as an act of verification, and how this can lead to a previously fluid and polyphonic manuscript tradition becoming fixed.

⁷⁸ Lister Matheson, ‘King Arthur and the Medieval English Chronicles’, in *King Arthur through the Ages*, ed. by Valerie M. Lagorio and Mildred Leake Day, 2 vols. (New York: Garland, 1990), vol. 1, pp. 248-74.

⁷⁹ Lotte Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England* (London: British Library, 2010), p. 96.

4. Leland and Vergil

This chapter looks at the early Tudor period, and two authors who engaged with the early British history, John Leland and Polydore Vergil. It looks at the relationship between the writing of the nation and the early British history in this period, particularly as regards the figure of Arthur. The last chapter noted that Arthur began to become detached from the stream of early British history, dominating the discourse about the period. Vergil became particularly known for his doubts about Arthur's historicity (even though this scepticism was nothing new), and Leland for his counter-defence of Arthur as a historical figure. They are therefore an obvious pair of historians to compare to each other. However, they are also a good comparison because they echo the different types of history discussed in the chapter on Geoffrey and Gerald. Polydore Vergil wrote a chronicle history of England, whereas Leland, who admired Gerald, wrote notes about his real journey around the country, as well as his defence of Arthur, which uses similar principles regarding the use of material, eyewitness evidence. They therefore represent again the axis between writing about the past chronologically and spatially, which demonstrates the continuity from the medieval period, but is also particularly interesting in light of the discussion of antiquarianism and humanism in the literature on early modern historiography. I also look at how printing facilitated discourse between authors and evaluation of the sources, particularly in regard to the availability in print of the early sources, notably Geoffrey and Gildas.

4.1. The writing of the past in the sixteenth century: Humanism and Antiquarianism

There are two important trends which are discussed in relation to early modern historiography: humanism and antiquarianism. In recent historiography there has been a move against seeing the ‘middle ages’ and the ‘Renaissance’ as distinct periods. Scholars are increasingly rejecting medieval/early modern as natural break, and instead characterising periods by human phenomena (for example, using institutional terms such as pre/post Reformation). However, the division between the periods is not entirely artificially imposed. James Simpson argues that sixteenth-century writers are ‘historicising both the break and, more profoundly, the forms of understanding that flow from it’;¹ ‘the very notion of “Medieval Studies” implies... a civilisation entire unto itself; and such a notion is itself the product of the moment that created the Middle Age by rejecting them in the first place.’²

This ‘moment’ of rejection of medieval ideas is strongly associated with humanism. The humanists saw themselves as making a change from older scholarship. The rise of humanism was fuelled by, and promoted, a lack of faith in medieval learning. This division is represented in the language used. Mary Thomas Crane points out that “‘Doctus” was the word used by English humanists to describe those who had received a humanist education, while “indoctus” could designate either those who had been educated according to late medieval scholastic principles or the relatively uneducated feudal aristocracy’.³ This break from previous ages was exemplified by the movement

¹ James Simpson, ‘Diachronic history and the shortcomings of medieval studies’, in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 17-30 (p. 29).

² Simpson, ‘Diachronic history’, p. 28.

³ Mary Thomas Crane, ‘Early Tudor Humanism’, *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, ed. by Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 13-26 (p. 19).

away from late and medieval Latin, begun in Italy. This had come to be seen as corrupted, and proper classical Latin became preferred. This is partly because, based on classical authors like Cicero, humanists saw oratory as being important, and hence the importance of ‘correct’ Latin.⁴ Humanism was also partly a reaction to scholasticism, the intellectual system dominant in later Middle Ages which placed a high value on dialectic and logic. And although classical authors were read in the middle ages, there was a change in the renaissance approach to these works: what Joanna Martindale calls ‘an increasing sense of the separateness of the classical past, which led to the building up of a complete picture of a civilisation seen as distinct from the present’.⁵

The term ‘humanism’ means studies appropriate to man, and is related to Cicero’s concept of *humanitas*.⁶ The *studia humanitatis* as an academic approach began in Italy in the late thirteenth century. Fundamentally, humanism was an attempt to rediscover and use the classical past. The ancient world came to be seen as the highest point of civilisation. Mary Thomas Crane describes how ‘In Italy, the humanist movement was fuelled in part by a patriotic and quasi-nationalist desire to reclaim and re-establish a link between contemporary Italy and ancient Rome’.⁷ Humanist principles spread to England later. In the late fifteenth century the universities of Oxford and Cambridge began to include humanist approaches on their curricula.⁸ In practice, the main activities of this type of scholar were, firstly, the recovery and translation of classical texts, and secondly,

⁴ See for example Erasmus: ‘the best way of acquiring a real ability to speak without mistakes is, on the one hand, to talk and associate with people who speak correctly and, on the other, to read good writers constantly.’ Erasmus, ‘De ratione studii ac legendi interpretandique auctores liber’, in *English Humanism: Wyatt to Cowley*, ed. by Joanna Martindale (London: Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 66-9 (p. 68).

⁵ Martindale, ‘Introduction’, *English Humanism*, p. 20.

⁶ Martindale, ‘Introduction’, *English Humanism*, p. 18.

⁷ Crane, ‘Early Tudor Humanism’, p. 14.

⁸ The first use of ‘humanist’ in English, to describe a person, was not until 1589, in Abraham Fleming’s preface to his translation of the *Georgics*. Martindale, *English Humanism*, p. 19.

a focus on training and writing in Ciceronian Latin (rather than medieval Latin).⁹ The humanist approach to history also involved a change to the principles of intellectual enquiry, with its increased emphasis on the empirical approach. The inductive method stressed the need to accumulate facts before making theories.

The second major historiographical trend (partly related to humanism but distinguished from it at the time), is antiquarianism. This involved the study of the past through its remains, which can include philology, laws, physical remains, or other evidence. Antiquarianism, through the study of artefacts and historical sites, became important to the early history of Britain, and particularly in the way the Arthurian legend and related material was connected to the landscape. Antiquarianism can be seen as distinct from history, as Peter Miller argues, ‘not because it isn’t intimately related to history, but because its written expression is extrinsic to its identity. That is to say, literary style, per se, is not central to the practice of antiquarianism in the way that it is for history’.¹⁰ This is a definition that, despite the greater fluidity of the term ‘history’ in sixteenth century English, seems to have held the true in the early modern period. A ‘history’ was seen as necessarily a narrative, and style was as important as, or possibly more important than, content. As Cicero wrote in *De oratore*, ‘Videstine, quantum munus sit oratoris historia?’¹¹ Bacon gave ‘factors’ the job of finding documents, suggesting this

⁹ Petrarch on Cicero: ‘O great father of Roman eloquence! I am not alone in offering you my gratitude; with me are all those who deck themselves with the flowers of Latin speech. We sprinkle our meadows with water from your fountains; you are our guide; it is you who sustain and enlighten us.’ Quoted in Martindale, *English Humanism*, p. 122. Later writers criticised those who were overly keen on Cicero. For example, Erasmus mocks them in *Ciceronianus*, with the character of Nosponus, who banished all other authors from his library. Peter Ramus and Gabriel Harvey both later wrote works called *Ciceronianus* (1557 and 1577, respectively), following Erasmus.

¹⁰ Peter N. Miller, ‘Major Trends in European Antiquarianism, Petrarch to Peiresc’, in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, 5 vols., ed. by Jose Rabasa et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011-), V, pp. 244-60 (p. 246).

¹¹ Cicero, *De oratore*, II. 15. 6.

was not part of the role of historian.

The importance of rhetoric is linked to what was explicitly seen as the role of history, to provide moral examples, especially for rulers. This was an idea taken up in the renaissance from classical writing (although it of course appears in different forms in the middle ages, notably the ‘mirrors for princes’ genre). This aim of history was not only desirable for prose political histories, such as Bacon’s, but for other forms often given the name ‘history’, such as historical drama. The monarchs, for their part, often took the point (take for example Elizabeth’s famous comment on *Richard II*: ‘I am Richard II, know ye not that?’).¹²

The antiquaries, likewise, did not consider themselves to be historians. Camden did not consider *Britannia* a work of history. The goals of John E. Curran’s definitions of antiquarianism and monumental historian, developed from Hardin’s use of these terms, are useful here:

The antiquarian, concerned with the tangible and findable, is willing to concede that there is a point in history beyond which he knows nothing, and, while he laments the loss of past cultures to the ravages of time, he is nevertheless able to acknowledge that such a loss has occurred, and to declare that time has won. From the point of view of the monumental historian, however, such a surrender is unacceptable. Charged with glorifying the history of their people and with conveying the memory of their deeds to posterity so that the great may live forever, monumental historians cannot brook large gaps in their nation’s history, nor can they allow a foreign history to take the place of their own; they cannot admit to a forgotten past.¹³

¹² Quoted in Charles R. Forker, ‘Introduction’, *Richard II*, Arden Shakespeare, third series (London: Arden, 2002), p. 5.

¹³ John E. Curran, Jr., ‘The History Never Written: Bards, Druids, and the Problem of Antiquarianism in *Poly Olbion*’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 51:2 (1998), 498-525.

The monumental historian needs to fill in or create (as with HRB) material to cover the whole timespan, since the genre allows no room for doubt. Antiquarianism can admit different possibilities, or the possibility of not-knowing. This ties in with the notion of monologic and polyphonic texts, the latter being more prevalent with the antiquarian approach to the past. A number of critics have seen Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia* as the first work of English historical humanism; and the tension between eyewitness experience and received wisdom in writing about Arthur and the British History, particularly in terms of place, can be seen in Vergil and his critics, notably John Leland.

4.2. The writing of place in the sixteenth century

The writing of Britain was nearly simultaneous with the age of exploration and the narratives it produced. In relation to writing about the world and Britain's place in it, the discovery of the New World was a blow to the medieval world-view and its trust in classical authors, but it also created an increased appetite for writing about the world. As Greenblatt suggests, 'The discovery of the New World at once discredits the Ancients who did not know of these lands and, by raising the possibility that what had seemed gross exaggerations and lies were in fact sober accounts of radical otherness, gives classical accounts of prodigies a new life'.¹⁴ As seen in the previous chapter, the position of Britain on the edge of the world was a tenet of how it was viewed by medieval authors, which now had to be completely reassessed. As Richard Helgerson says, 'For Britain to transform itself from its medieval isolation and marginality to the position of world dominance that

¹⁴ Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 22.

it is only now beginning to lose demanded much prospective and retrospective renaming.’¹⁵ The anxiety we saw with the medieval authors that Britain’s position at the edge of the world meant that it was seen as barbarous or disconnected from Europe is no longer in evidence, so new models for considering Britain’s situation were needed.

These new discoveries and approaches to knowledge can be linked to the explosion in the writing of geographical works over the sixteenth century. This includes maps, narratives of undertaken journeys (in Britain, in Europe and further afield), descriptions of a certain country, region or city. There are a number of reasons for this new interest. These include changes in historiographical thought; the age of exploration and the resulting discovery of new lands; and scientific and technological developments, which gave new ways of looking at the world.

Awareness of England/Britain’s place in the world influenced the awareness of place within the island. One of the most important changes was increased movement within England. There has a tendency amongst to see the population of Tudor England as fairly static. However, recently many historians have demonstrated a population that was fairly mobile, at levels from vagrants to the gentry.¹⁶ This necessarily led to a better understanding of areas of the country other than one’s own, a conception of the ways in which one region could be different from or similar to another. In *Henry VI Part I* a messenger arrives at court from a far corner of the kingdom, ‘Stained with the variation of each soil/ Betwixt that Holmedon [Northumberland] and this seat of ours’.¹⁷ These

¹⁵ Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 191.

¹⁶ Andrew McRae, *Literature and Domestic Travel in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Adrian, *Local Negotiations of English Nationhood*, p. 15.

¹⁷ William Shakespeare, *Henry VI Part I*, ed. by David Scott Kastan (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2002), 1.1.64-5. On the relationship between national thought and regional difference, see Steven G. Ellis, ‘Civilizing Northumberland: Representations of Englishness in the Tudor State’, *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12 (1999), 103-27.

variations became something to be written out and discussed.

One important driver of increased awareness of national and local situationality was developments in cartography. Benedict Anderson describes how the map ‘profoundly shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion- the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry’.¹⁸ D. K. Smith sees a new ‘cartographic imagination’ in Tudor England: ‘the new introduction of cartographic representation to a widespread, literate public, brought about a shift in the way terrestrial space could be represented and manipulated, ushering in a whole new way of thinking about the world.’¹⁹ Rhonda Lemke Sanford describes how maps are integral to transforming ‘space’ to ‘sense of place’.²⁰ As John Adrian points out, this means that maps must also have changed people’s view of their local consciousness, as well as national consciousness: ‘Together, maps and surveys enabled people to think about their local spheres not just as their physical reality (where they were born, worked, had families, and attended church), but as [a] particular, discrete place that could be defined and imagined in relation to other places.’²¹ After all, to imagine oneself in a map of Britain it’s necessary to identify where exactly you would be on it, and therefore situate yourself spatially.

¹⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*, revised ed. (London: Verso, 1991). The drawback of Anderson’s work, and some other modern historians, is that it places the emergence of national consciousness in the eighteenth century, which seems to require some peculiarly restrictive definition of the nation. For a refutation of Anderson’s argument about the lack of national thought before the eighteenth century, see Lavezzo, Introduction, *Imagining a Medieval English Nation*, pp. vii-xxxiv: ‘Both Anderson’s and [Hans] Kohn’s insistence on the lack of medieval precedents to the nation reflects the general tendency of post-Enlightenment Western intellectuals to invest all products of their culture with modernity’ (p. viii).

¹⁹ D. K. Smith, *The Cartographic Imagination in Early Modern England* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), p. 6.

²⁰ Rhonda Lemke Sanford, *Maps and Memory in Early Modern England: A Sense of Place* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 12.

²¹ Adrian, *Local Negotiations of English Nationhood*, p. 13.

An interesting example of the intersection in geographical works between local interests and national and the global, and between the visual map and the textual description, is William Cuninghams' *The Cosmographical Glasse* (1559). *The Cosmographical Glass* was dedicated to Robert Dudley. It is a geographical study framed as a dialogue between a student and a teacher. On one hand, it is a work with global implications. Much of the work is based in his scientific work in cosmology and surveying. Cuningham gives the first description of new methods of land measuring and surveying, which profoundly influenced how land was mapped and described. He also gives a new method of calculating longitude. John Dee says that Cuningham's work taught Englishmen to 'like, love, get and use Maps, Charts and geographical globes', and it was of huge practical value to sailors.²² The work was one of the few books taken by Martin Frobisher on his voyage in search of a Northwest Passage in 1576. On the other hand, the work is rooted in Norwich, where Cuningham was living at the time (and possibly born).²³ The book opens with a map of Norwich. Many of the book's examples feature Norwich, including the lunar eclipses of 1556 and 1558. Cuningham states that, 'touchinge this my booke of Longitudes and Latitudes, I have for the chief places of Englande used bothe my frendes travailes, and also mine owne observations'.²⁴ The work also had influence within England, not just on sailors. As a result of his descriptions of surveying techniques, the mapping and surveying of private estates had become commonplace by the end of the

²² John Dee, *The Mathematicall Praeface to Elements of Geometry of Euclid of Megara*, trans. by Henry Billingsley (1570), Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/22062/22062-h/main.html>.

²³ Samuel Pyeatt Menefee, 'Cuningham, William (c.1531–1586)', ODNB, 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6911>.

²⁴ William Cuningham, *The Cosmographical Glasse: Conteynyng the Pleasant Principles of Cosmographie, Geographie, Hydrographie, Or Navigation* (London, 1559), p. 169.

century.²⁵ This had a profound effect on how the gentry class saw the landscape and their place within England. *The Cosmological Glasse* therefore shows how in writing about place, the domestic and foreign, the national and local, and the scientific and anecdotal spheres of interest overlapped and influenced each other.

In the preface to *The Cosmographical Glasse*, Cuningham argues for the advantages of reading geographical works rather than undertaking travel oneself:

[F]rom this peregrination, thy wife with sheadinge salte teares, thy children with lamentations, nor thy frendes with wordes shal dehort & perswade the. In travailing, thou shalt not be molested with the inclemencye of th'Aere, boysterus windes, stormy shoures, haile, Ise, & snow. Comming to thy lodginge, thou shalt not have a churlish & unknown hoste, which shall mynister meate twise sodden, stinking fish, or watered wine. Going to rest, thou shalt not feare lowsy beddes, or filthy sheates. In Somer, the sone with his fierye beames, shall not vexe thee: nor yet in winter, stormye Saturnus shal make thy beard frozen. In sayling, thou shalt not dread Pirates, feare Peries and greate windes, or have a sicke stromacke though unholosome smelles.²⁶

This suggests one of the appeals of travel writing: viewing the difference of places through a proxy. Rather than seeing them yourself, you could rely on someone else to see them for you and describe them. However, within this is also encapsulated one of the problems of travel writing: you have to trust that the author really did see what they said. This is both its claim to veracity and a cause for suspicion, since the details of the account cannot be externally verified. This has led to the 'habitual linkage, in many different cultures and epochs, between travellers and liars'.²⁷ An early modern association of these ideas appears in *Othello*, in Iago's comment on Othello's accounts of his travels: 'Mark me with what

²⁵ Peter Eden, 'Three Elizabethan Estate Surveyors: Peter Kempe, Thomas Clerke, and Thomas Langdon', in *English Map-Making, 1500-1650: Historical Essays*, ed. by Sarah Tyacke (London: British Library, 1983), pp. 68-84.

²⁶ Cuningham, *Cosmographical Glasse*, Preface.

²⁷ Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing* (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 74.

violence she first loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies'.²⁸ Generally speaking, in the medieval period, reliability of any purportedly factual document was assessed in relation to established authorities (particularly patristic and classical authors). However, developments in historical thought, linked to humanism, led to a new emphasis on the importance of the eye-witness; empirical enquiry was more important than reference to the authors of past. The principle of *autopsy* ('self-seeing' in Greek) was present in classical historiography, notably in the work of Herodotus. These principles, less popular in the middle ages which prized compendiums of knowledge over eyewitness, became important again in the early modern period, as Stephen Greenblatt argues:

Herodotus' Histories had instituted certain key discursive principles that the many subsequent attacks on his veracity and the ensuing oblivion did not displace. Above all, his great work insisted upon the crucial importance of travel for an understanding of the world. Travel enables one to collect information, to verify rumours, to witness marvels, to distinguish between fables and truth [...] for him historical authority is linked to mobility; it cannot be achieved by remaining within the metropolitan bounds.²⁹

The humanist approach to history involved a change to the principles of intellectual enquiry, with its increased emphasis on the empirical approach; the inductive method stressed the need to accumulate facts before making theories. However, these new horizons also opened up new exciting possibilities for those who were willing to do the legwork and examine received ideas afresh. The doubts cast on the authority of medieval writers led to a new emphasis on the importance of the eye-witness; empirical enquiry was as important as, or more important than, reference to the authors of past. Obviously,

²⁸ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by E. A. J. Honigmann, Arden Shakespeare (Walton-on-Thames: Nelson, 1997), II.1.225.

²⁹ Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 123.

this is a simplistic summary, and there is no neat dividing line after which historical works became 'humanist', but the tension between eyewitness experience and received wisdom can be seen in Vergil and Leland's work.

4.3. Leland and Vergil: Approach to History

Polydore Vergil wrote the manuscript of *Anglica Historia* in 1512-13, with the first published edition appearing in 1534. Two revised editions followed in 1546 and 1555. The work covers the history of Britain from the earliest inhabitants up to the present day (the third edition was expanded to cover the period 1509-37.) Vergil's work followed a number of large-scale histories of England, produced by the first printers (see above, 3, 'The twelfth to fifteenth centuries'). Notable examples are the *Chronicles of England* (1480), the *Polychronicon* (1482), and Fabian's *Chronicle* (1516).

John Leland spent six years travelling around England and Wales at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries. He planned for his researches in monastic libraries to result in a number of different works, including a dictionary of British writers, a study of noble families, and works describing the history and toponymy of Britain.³⁰ At his death most of these works (in varying of stages of completion) were unpublished. John Bale translated and published an edition of the work, entitled *The Laboryouse Journey & Serche of Johan Leylande for Englandes Antiquitee, given of hym as a Newe Yeares Gyfte to King Henry the VIII in the XXXVII yeare of his Raygne*.³¹ In his letter to King Henry which prefaces the work, Leland described his work so far and his plans for the future.³² Those plans never came to completion, since, as Bale tells us in his commentary

³⁰ James P. Carley, 'Leland, John (c.1503–1552)', ODNB, 2004, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/unicat.bangor.ac.uk/view/article/16416>.

³¹ John Leland, *The Laboryouse Journey and Serche of Johan Leylande, for Englandes Antiquitees* (London, 1578), unpaginated. References throughout are to this edition, as more widely read than the Latin original.

³² Leland's manuscript copy is MS Bodleian Top. Gen. c. 3. Printed in *The itinerary of John Leland in or about the years 1535–1543*, ed. by Lucy Toulmin Smith, 5 vols. (London, 1906–10), I, p. xxxvii.

to *The Laboryouse Journey*, Leland had gone mad two or three years previously (he died in 1552).³³ Although his larger projects were only published much later, the results of Leland's research, and his approach to the British past, can be seen throughout the only prose work he published during his lifetime, the *Assertio inclytissimi Arturii regis Britanniae* (1544; a translation was published by Richard Robinson in 1582).³⁴ This work was a response to Vergil's criticism of the *Brut* history, and Arthur in particular, in his *Anglica Historia*.

The Reformation not only gave the initial impetus for the recovery of knowledge of the British past, but also provided the context for talking about that past. James Simpson says, of the treatment of pre-Reformation texts after the Reformation,

those deemed worthy of remembrance are refigured as memorials, fragments to be saved against the ravages of time by the ministrations of an incipient philology... philology needs a rupture in order to legitimate and justify its own project of restoration. The impulse to a philological response to the newly created past in the 1530s was all the sharper given the fact that the historical rupture was not only conceptual, but also physical.³⁵

The rupture of continuity the Reformation inflicted on the landscape was therefore mirrored in the metaphorical landscape of British history, both in terms of manuscripts as physical artefacts and in terms of what those texts had to say about Britain as a physical entity.

³³ Carley, 'Leland', ODNB.

³⁴ John Leland, *Assertio inclytissimi Arturii Regis Britanniae* (London, 1544); John Leland, *A Learned and True Assertion of the original, Life, Actes, and death of the most Noble, Valiant, and Renowned Prince Arthure, King of great Brittain*, trans. by Richard Robinson (London: 1582), available online at University of Oxford Text Archive, <http://tei.it.ox.ac.uk/tcp/Texts-HTML/free/A05/A05297.html> [accessed 13 May 2019]. Leland's other published works in his lifetime were Latin poems. Carley, 'Leland', ODNB; and Carley, 'John Leland in Paris: the evidence of his poetry', *Studies in Philology*, 83 (1986), 1–50.

³⁵ Simpson, 'Diachronic history', p. 23.

This boundary between the medieval and the Renaissance was partly constructed by John Bale, who published Leland's notes under the title 'Laboryouse Journey', 'by consistently setting out to distinguish what he portrayed as his enlightened era from the preceding aeons of "horrible darkness"'.³⁶ The influence of this type of thinking is also seen in the forms that writing about early British history took in this period. Scrutiny of the sources was an important principle of Protestantism; when writing about the Bible, 'compilation is an obvious sign of authenticity (in comparison with what is characterised in reformist polemic as papist neglect or even falsification of Scripture)'.³⁷ Therefore Bale's method of composition encompassed both antiquarianism and religious beliefs. For Bale, the truth was suppressed when documents lay hidden in monastic libraries, and the dissolution presented an opportunity to recover national culture; he believed that the English had been negligent in 'the due serch of theyr auntyent hystories to the syngulare fame and betwye therof'. The dissolution is 'not a rejection of the past, but an assimilation of it, as the shards and fragments of the monastic libraries are used to shore up a new version of national history and a new national religion'.³⁸ John Curran describes this attitude as the paradox of the antiquarian impulse, which simultaneously laments the passing of the past, whilst trying to reclaim it.³⁹

4.3.1. Sources

³⁶ Summit, 'Leland's Itinerary', p. 179.

³⁷ Summit, 'Leland's Itinerary', p. 183.

³⁸ Summit, 'Leland's Itinerary', p. 184.

³⁹ Curran, 'The History Never Written', p. 498.

Vergil's most cited authors for early British history are Caesar and Tacitus, and Bede and Gildas. Vergil praises Gildas and Bede as the only reliable sources for early English history, but 'after them other men produced works which are so bound in shadows that they cannot shine forth'. Vergil is particularly scathing about annals, 'in which both the arrangement and the style was so threadbare that they justly strike us, as they say, as food without seasoning', but recognises their use as 'matter for the creation of a new work'. Vergil's work is a composite history; He states that he 'elected to gather my material, no matter how raw and unadorned, from all manner of sources', which has echoes of the pseudo-Nennian prologue to the *Historia Brittonum*.

On the post-Roman period, Vergil's view of the sources tallies with that of William of Newburgh, whose opinion on Gildas and Geoffrey he quotes with approval:

Integritatis tamen eius [i.e. Gildas] non leve documentum est, quia in veritate promenda propriae genti non parcat, et cum admodum parce bona de suis loquatur, multa in eius mala deplorat. Nec veretur, ut verum non taceat, Brito de Britonibus scribere, eos nec in bello fortes fuisse, nec in pace fideles. At contra quidam nostris temporibus pro expiandis istis Britonum maculis scriptor emersit, ridicula de eisdem figmenta contexens, eosque longe supra virtutem Macedonum et Romanorum impudenti vanitate attollens. Gaufredus hic est dictus, cognomine Arthurus, pro eo quod multa de Arthuro ex priscis Britonum pigmentis sumpta, et ab se aucta, per superductum Latini sermonis colorem honesto historiae nomine obtexit. Quinetiam maiore ausu cuiusdam Merlini divinationes falsissimas, quibus utique de suo plurimum addidit dum eas in Latinum transferret, tanquam approbatas et immobili veritate subnixas prophetias vulgavit.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ 'It is no small proof of his [Gildas's] integrity that in telling the truth he is unsparing of his own people, and, although he is sparing in speaking good of them, he deplores their many evils. And so that he might not conceal the truth, he does not shrink from writing of the Britons (though one himself) that they were neither brave in war nor trustworthy in peace. But on the other hand, in our times a writer has come forth to excuse these faults in the Britons, manufacturing many silly fictions about them, and with his impudent vanity extolling them for their virtue far above the Macedonians and the Romans. This man is named Geoffrey, having the surname of Arthur because he writes much about Arthur taken from the fables of the ancient Britons and embroidered by himself, and passing it off as honest history by giving it the coloration of the Latin language. Indeed with a greater

As we saw above, Higden was unwilling to accept all his sources unquestioningly. Fabian included Geoffrey of Monmouth's story, but rejected the magical elements. Vergil likewise sees a certain amount of scepticism as the responsibility of historians: 'the historians' law is that a writer should neither dare to say a falsehood, nor shrink from telling a truth'. However, Vergil faced the problem, found by earlier writers, that however much they may esteem Gildas, his work does not provide the necessary historical content to write a complete history of the period, and they are still forced to fall back on Geoffrey's inventions. In fact, James Carley suggests that the impetus for Vergil's project may have been the 1508 publication of the *editio princeps* of Geoffrey of Monmouth in Paris, which provided wider access to the text, but also the necessity to challenge it.⁴¹ Vergil identifies his difficulty in writing the history of the pre-Saxon period as the absence of sources, either insular or Continental:

Equidem nihil occultius, nihil incertius, nihil ignorantius rebus Britannorum a principio gestis, partim quod annales, si qui fuerant, sicut supra ostendimus Gildam testificari, funditus perierant, unde postea qui historia scripserunt nihil hauriri potuere; partim vero quod ea gens, ut longe posita, tardissime cum Graecis tum Romanis cognita est. Istud ergo silentium rerum fuit <causa> quamobrem boni autores minus multa de huius populi primordio memoriae prodiderint, ac nonnulli ausi sint nimis multa garrire novamque condere historiam, per quam imperiti vulgi, cui semper pluris est novitas quam veritas, admiratione in coelo esse videntur.⁴²

boldness he has published very spurious prophecies of Merlin, supplying additions of his own invention when translating them into Latin, and passing them off as genuine and guaranteed by unshakable truth'. Polydore Vergil, *Anglica Historia (1555 version)*, ed. and trans. Dana F. Sutton, The Philological Museum, University of Birmingham (2005), <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/polverg/>, I:19; all Vergil references to book and chapter in this edition. William of Newburgh, *The History of English Affairs* I, ed. and trans. P. G. Walsh and M. Kennedy (Warminster: Aris, 1986), p. 29.

⁴¹ James P. Carley, 'Arthur and the Antiquaries', in *The Arthur of Medieval Latin Literature*, ed. by Siân Echard (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 149-78 (p. 154).

⁴² 'Indeed there is nothing more hidden, nothing more uncertain, nothing more unknown than early deeds of the Britons, in part because their annals, if there were any (as I have previously shown Gildas to testify) have wholly perished and cannot be drawn on by historians as a source, and partly because

This lack of sources leads to contradictions in the history; although he is sceptical of the *Brut* version of history, he is obliged to include it for a lack of alternatives. In Vergil's work, the eyewitness topos is most often invoked of texts. The idea is that reading works of past was in itself a form of eyewitness. This shows a tension between wanting to use principles of eyewitness and the evidence that is available, which is the crucial stumbling-block when writing about the very distant past from a humanist standpoint. He returns to a reliance on classical authors rather than relying on received opinion/ oral tradition; Vergil believes that oral history is given too much credence: 'Nam sic accidit ut permulta interim de avis audiant nepotes, eaque a nepotibus divulgata, licet senum somnia sint, credantur. Ex quo, si quis scribendo illa praetermiserit, bone Deus, quantum populi sermone vapulabit!'.⁴³ This is the reasoning he gives later for including the Galfridian version of history, despite his reservations; that people will expect it. In general, Vergil privileges written, and particularly classical, sources, over native and non-textual sources. His contradiction of the *Brut* narrative of British history is largely an *argumentio ex silentio*. On the Brutus legend, he points out that 'Caeterum Livius, Dionysius Halicarnaseus, et plerique alii qui diligenter de antiquitatibus Romanorum scripserunt nunquam huius Bruti meminere. Neque illud ex Britannorum annalibus prodi potuerat,

that nation, being located at a far distance, was very lately discovered by both the Greeks and the Romans. This silence was the reason why good writers failed to record much about the origin of this people, and why no few have dared to prate much and invent a new history, by which the unschooled common run of men (for whom novelty always counts more than truth) seem transported to heaven with wonder'. *Anglica Historia* 1:21.

⁴³ 'For it is the case that grandsons have heard much from their grandfathers, and the things these grandsons have spread about are believed, although they are only old men's dreams. As a result, if somebody omits these things in his writing, good God, what a drubbing he gets in common conversation!'. *Anglica Historia*, Dedication.

cum iampridem illi omnia librorum monimenta amiserint, id quod Gildas testificatur'.⁴⁴ Vergil's most cited authors for early British history are Caesar and Tacitus, and Bede and Gildas. Vergil praises Gildas and Bede as the only reliable sources for early English history, but believes that 'After them other men produced works which are so bound in shadows that they cannot shine forth'. He is generally sceptical of the Brutus myth, but in the preliminary description of Wales he includes the claim of Trojan origin without comment: 'Walli linguam habent diversam ab Anglis, quam ipsi qui ad Troianam stirpem sui generis seriem referunt, partim Troianam, partem et Graecam sapere vetustatem aiunt'.⁴⁵ Although Vergil is scathing of the version of history presented in HRB, he states that he will include its account of the kings for this period:

Idcirco percurremus vitas regum, quos ista nova historia repente et uno quasi partu genuit in lucemque edidit. Et illud, quamvis non sine stomacho, faciemus, tum rationis temporis habendae, tum malevolentiae deprecandae causa. Simulque errata quae in ea sunt (sunt autem infinita) evellere nitimur, quo ne legentes offendant neve in ea irruant.⁴⁶

This passage shows the difficult position in which Vergil feels he is placed with regards to the legendary history of Britain. On the one hand, his principles as a historian oblige him to scrutinise his sources; on the other hand, he senses an expectation on the part of the readers that he cover this period of history, which in its main particulars is well-

⁴⁴ 'Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and many others who wrote diligently about Roman antiquities never made mention of this Brutus. Nor can this be fetched from the Britons' annals, since long ago they lost all their written records, as Gildas attests'. *Anglica Historia*, I:19.

⁴⁵ 'The Welsh have a language different from the English. The Welsh derive their ancestry from the Trojans and claim that their language is partly made of Trojan, and partly of ancient Greek'. *Anglica Historia*, I:8.

⁴⁶ 'I shall therefore run through the lives of the kings which this new history has suddenly and, as it were, with one birthing, engendered and brought to light. And I shall do this (albeit not without indignation) both for the sake of having regard for the age in which we live, and also to avoid ill will. And at the same time I shall strive to remove the errors in them (and yet these are countless), so they do not trouble may readers, and so these readers do not fall into them headlong'. *Anglica Historia*, I:21.

established along the lines set by Geoffrey, and he has few alternative sources for information with which to challenge it. Thus, despite the heavy irony with which he alludes to Geoffrey's ability to construct historical narrative out of whole cloth, he is in fact unable to make much substantial alteration to Galfridian version of early British history. In this Vergil's work is again similar to John Rastell's in *The Pastyme of the People*. Rastell's introduction cites Gildas and Bede as the trustworthy sources for early British history, and refutes Geoffrey's account of Brutus. However, Rastell declares that he will make use of Geoffrey's history anyway, since it serves a didactic purpose:

yet I will not let here in this little work to reherse hit somewhat after galfridius seeing not only for this cause that i wolde haue every man precisely to believ it but because that in the same storyreding a man may see so many notable examples of diuers noble princes that wisely and vertuesly gouernid there people which may be an example to princis now liuing to vse the same and ... therefore according to my promise I shall breuely reherse the seid story as here after in this proces doth appear.⁴⁷

Rastell and Vergil therefore cleverly manage the generic expectations of the audience, suggesting that these stories may have more to offer the reader than their truth value.

The language of sight is echoed in the use of metaphors of darkness and light. Vergil frequently refers to this period of history as being 'occultis', 'in tenebris'- dark, shadowy. Leland also employs the metaphors of darkness and light in relation to uncovering the truth about early British history. However, in Leland's work they are applied somewhat differently: 'at lengthe (those same most thicke mistie cloudes in deede of ignorance beeing shaken off, & vtterly dashed aside) the light of *Brittish* Antiquitie with displayed beames farre and wide shall shine forth.' Here it is not the British past which is

⁴⁷ John Rastell, *The Pastyme of People*, ed. by T. F. Dibdin (London, 1811), pp. 4-5.

dark, merely the ignorance surrounding it; scholarship will not shed light on the past but clear away obfuscation and let its light shine through. The Renaissance is often defined by an inclination for the classical, and this can be seen in Vergil's work; he rejects Brutus because classical scholars do not 'ever once make rehearsall' of him, and is plainly relieved to be able to have the reinforcement of continental sources after the coming of the Saxons. Leland, on the other hand, recognises the possibility that using the Latin authors who are considered reliable may skew the account of British history: 'I pray you what praises might the *Brittans* hope for at the *Saxon* writers? Undoubtedly, cold comendations or rather none at all'.⁴⁸ He points out that Bede does not know much at all about the period before the arrival of the Saxons. Leland's view of native authors finds parallels in the work of sixteenth-century Welsh antiquarians, such as John Prise, for whom the project of the Renaissance, rather than rejecting the insular in favour of the classical, meant looking at native traditions with new eyes.

4.3.2. Vergil and Gildas

Vergil thus identifies his difficulty in writing the history of the pre-Saxon period as the absence of sources, either insular or Continental. Vergil's struggle for alternative sources to Geoffrey is a likely explanation for his preparation of an *editio princeps* of Gildas. This work, entitled *De calamitate excidio et conquestu Britanniae*, was printed in 1525, probably in Antwerp. John Joscelyn's edition, based on Vergil's, was printed in 1568.⁴⁹ In the prefaces to these editions Vergil and Joscelyn discuss their motivations for

⁴⁸ Leland, 'A Learned and True Assertion', p. 36.

⁴⁹ John Joscelyn, Preface, in *Gildæ, cui cognomentum est sapientis, de excidio & conquestu Britanniae* (London, 1568).

editing the work, the value of the work, and what they see as the problems of editing the text. Vergil's Gildas has often been described in histories of the book as the first critical edition of a medieval work. I would like to examine what Vergil and Joscelyn thought editing a text for print involved. How did they interpret their role, and what did they think their responsibilities were? And what was their motivation for printing Gildas specifically? By examining these two pieces of writing, I suggest that they are valuable in considering the changes to perceptions of medieval literature brought about by the challenges of putting them into print, and I further suggest that both provide discussion of the moral responsibilities of an editor to their readers.

Vergil came to England from his native Italy in 1502, as the agent of Adriano Castellisi, a close friend of the pope.⁵⁰ He was received by Henry VII at court, and the king asked him to write a history of England, which became *Anglica Historia*. Vergil also became friends with a number of English scholars, including Thomas More, William Latimer, and Cuthbert Tunstall. Tunstall, who was bishop of London at the time, was the instigator and dedicatee of Vergil's edition of Gildas. Tunstall gave Vergil the manuscript of *De excidio*, now BL, Cotton Vitellius A.vi. This seems to be the first time Vergil had come across the full work. He discusses in the preface his reaction to reading *De excidio* for the first time:

Quo cognito nihil mihi potius fuit, quam eum investigare autorem, quem nobis adiumento fore, iam tum quasi pro certo haberemus, quilom go post tempore, tandem mihi quaerentium manus incidit, ex quo ut uerum fatear, longe me hercule minus cepi fructus, quam putarum, quod ille in historia admodum brevis fuerit.⁵¹

⁵⁰ For bibliographical information on Vergil, see primarily Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), and William J. Connell, 'Polydore Vergil', ODNB.

⁵¹ 'When this became known, nothing was more important to me than to investigate this author, who will be a help to us, now that after seeking for a long time it at last came into my hand; so that out of it the truth may be disclosed, which for a long time I searched with little success, and it is

As he suggests here, he had sources. For Vergil, the brevity of the *De excidio* seems to have found the lack of sources the major problem in studying the early history of Britain, and particularly the lack of uncorrupted be itself evidence of its reliability, since it indicates that the source is pure and uncorrupted.

Vergil provides an example of the problems of unreliable sources, when he discusses a work falsely attributed to Gildas:

Ita fama ueteris auctoris inuenti breui, ad omnium bonarum artium studiosissimorum aures facile peruenit, tantumque eius desyderium fecit, ut placuerit tandem aliquando uulgari, uel ea de causa, ut diluceret fraus nebulonis pessimi, qui paucis ante annis, ex cuiusdam Gaufredi scriptis breuiarium composuerat, illudque Gildae sapientis falso compendium inscripserat.⁵²

A ‘scoundrel’ has made a work out of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s, and put Gildas’ name on it. Vergil seems to have taken this deception somewhat personally, since he expands on this at length in the *Anglica Historia*, repeating his opinion of the author as a ‘villain’:

Extat item alter libellus (ut tempestive lectorem nefariae fraudis admoneamus) qui falsissime inscribitur Gildae commentarium, haud dubie a quopiam pessimo circulatore compositum ad corroborandum cuiusdam novi hominis commentum. Sane is nebulo longe post homines natos impudentissimus summam illud ex eiusmodi novi auctoris farina dealbavit, crebro facta Bruti mentione, id quod Gildas nunquam somniavit, et ut callidius legentes falleret quaedam ex suo addidit quo vel duos fuisse Gildas, vel hunc libellum Gildae prioris opusculi epitomen crederes. Quorum tamen utrumque tantum abest ut

unadulterated, because that history was very brief’. *De calamitate excidio et conquestu Britanniae* (Antwerp, 1525), Preface, 2r. The place and date of its publication was unclear for some centuries, as it was published with no imprint; see Dennis E. Rhodes, ‘The First Edition of Gildas’, *The Library*, 6th series, 1 (1979), 355-60.

⁵² ‘So the reputation of a long-established authority was shortly discovered, it easily reached the ears of all good men of arts, and it was very necessary, so that it might satisfy at last common opinion, for this reason: so that the deceit of the wickedest scoundrel was made clear, who not many years before, out of a certain work of Geoffrey’s, composed a brief account, and he inscribed the compendium falsely as by Gildas the Wise’. Vergil, *De calamitate excidio*, Preface.

a doctis recipiatur, ut etiam unusquisque mediocriter eruditus id doli facile deprendat ac pro fallacia habeat.⁵³

The reference to Brutus suggests that Vergil is referring here to the pseudo-Gildas recension of the *Historia Brittonum*. Two manuscripts of this, British Library Cotton Caligula A.viii and Royal 13.D.5, have notes by Vergil.⁵⁴ Vergil believes the work to be a summary of Geoffrey of Monmouth, but is picking up on the aspects of a shared source. It is interesting that Vergil complains that the work might make readers believe there are two Gildases. The *Historia Brittonum* does not claim that there are two Gildases, but Vergil's statement presumably relates to the different styles of the *Historia Brittonum* from *De excidio*, and the confusion that might be created there. However, in the sixteenth century there was a very literal belief that Gildas was two different people amongst some antiquarians. This was popularised by John Bale in the 1550s, based on the idea that the lives of Gildas by Caradoc and the monk of Ruys described two different men. It would be interesting to ascertain whether Vergil had already come across these theories when he was writing his history.

These passages begin to suggest Vergil's motivations for editing Gildas. Firstly, he had the scholarly impulse for correct attribution, and providing a work that readers may find useful, and in the *Anglica Historia* he states explicitly that this fraudulent book is his motivation: 'ut nemo homo in istiusmodi errore in posterum tempus versaretur, nos

⁵³ 'There exists a second little book (that I may issue the reader a timely warning about a wicked fraud), which is most falsely entitled *The Commentary of Gildas*, doubtless written by some rascal in order to corroborate the lie of a certain modern writer. But this villain, by far the most impudent since Man's creation, has summarized this modern writer's farrago, tricking it out with frequent mention of Brutus, a thing of which Gildas never dreamed, and so that he might do a more clever job of deceiving his readers, he has concocted his own invention that there were two men named Gildas, or at least that you can believe this little book is a summary of Gildas' earlier tract. But both possibilities are so far from being acceptable to the learned that even any moderately educated man can easily penetrate the scheme and regard it as a pack of lies'. *Anglica Historia*, I:18.

⁵⁴ David N. Dumville, 'The Sixteenth Century History of Two Cambridge Books from Sawley', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 7 (1980), pp. 427-444 (p. 442).

nuper ipsius Gildae opus divulgandum curavimus'.⁵⁵ It seems likely, however, that there is also the objection to Geoffrey of Monmouth's version of British history behind the edition. Vergil believes that Gildas represents an important source of early British history that could supplant Geoffrey of Monmouth as the main source for this period.

Vergil's need for reliable sources for this period was urgent in order to complete his history of England. He wrote the manuscript of *Anglica Historia* in 1512-13, with the first published edition appearing in 1534. Two revised editions followed in 1546 and 1555. Therefore the edition of Gildas appeared in the twenty-two-year gap between the writing of the manuscript of the history and the print edition. The reasons for the long delay in publishing the *Historia* have been debated, with most of the theories relating to Vergil's relationship with Henry VIII. Hay, posits that it was delayed because of the marriage crisis.⁵⁶ The reason may also, however, be that Vergil was unhappy with his available sources for the work, and spent the intervening time trying to solve the problem of Geoffrey of Monmouth being the only readily available narrative source for the pre-Saxon period.

The *Anglica Historia* became notorious for denying the historicity of King Arthur, provoking angry defences of Arthur from antiquarians such as John Leland and John Prise. References to Vergil in recent scholarship still often claim that Vergil denied that Arthur existed. However, this is an oversimplification. Vergil does not say that Arthur did not exist, only that stories about him have been exaggerated and that the truth needs to

⁵⁵ 'So that no man may henceforth be deceived, I have recently published Gildas' own work'. *Anglica Historia*, I:18.

⁵⁶ Hay, *Polydore Vergil*, p. 82. Koebner suggests that the rejection of Arthur offended Henry VIII and the king refused to accept the dedication. However this seems unlikely, given the lack of dismissal of Arthur's dismissal on Vergil's part, and the lack of evidence for any particular enthusiasm for the Arthur on Henry's part. Koebner, 'The Imperial Crown of this realm: Henry VIII, Constantine the Great, and Polydore Vergil', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 26 (1953), 29-52.

be known. This view on Arthur dates back to William of Malmesbury, and was almost a standard trope in writing about Arthur by this time; Higden and Leland for example both say something similar. What Vergil actually critiques is the version of British history from Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Gildas provides a necessary alternate source for the period around the coming of the Saxons. On the post-Roman period, Vergil's view of the sources tallies with that of William of Newburgh, whose opinion on Gildas and Geoffrey he quotes with approval. As in the preface, Gildas and Geoffrey are set up in direct opposition to each other. In the dedication of his history to Henry VIII, Vergil cites Gildas and Bede as the only two reliable historians for the early period. The fact that this question is discussed in the dedication to a work that covers 1000 years after Gildas shows that he considered this the most complex problem he faced.

This gives Vergil a problem in writing a history of early Britain - he is anxious to reject Geoffrey's distortions (as he saw them), but to do this he needs to find something to fill the gap. James Carley suggests that the impetus for Vergil's history may have been the 1508 publication of the *editio princeps* of Geoffrey of Monmouth in Paris; Vergil wanted to write a corrective to this.⁵⁷ The edition of Gildas prepares the ground for the appearance of the history, since Vergil uses Gildas extensively as a source for all the material that *De excidio* covers. He cites Gildas explicitly as confirmation for Caesar's Roman war, British kings in Roman times, British rebellion, Christianity in Britain from time of the Gospels, Diocletian's persecution of Christians, Hadrian's wall, and the plagues.

⁵⁷ Carley, 'Arthur and the Antiquarians', p. 154

By making *De excidio* available before his own history, Vergil pre-emptively provides support and verification for his own work. This ties in with Vergil's remarks about ensuring that no one will be deceived. Both points are related to the possibilities of print and the way in which it could alter historical discourse. The historical works published in the early years of print were generally those that had proved popular in manuscript, demonstrated by Caxton's printing of *The Chronicles of England* and *Polychronicon* (see above, ch. 3). As Vergil found when lamenting the hold which Geoffrey of Monmouth had over the common narrative of early British history, it was often the more easily available work that held sway. Printing Gildas went some small way to lessening Geoffrey's dominance over the narrative. Secondly, print gave greater security in attributing texts and gave the author and editor responsibility for the text. As Vergil had found with the pseudo-Gildas, proving that a manuscript was not what it said it was a difficult task. The paraphernalia of print - the author's name, dedication, preface, the printer's name, and so forth - meant that the reader could be more secure in believing the work was what it said it was, but also put the editor in the forefront and gave them greater accountability for their decisions.

Joscelyn reedited Gildas in 1568. His edition was based on Vergil's, and as the title page shows, it was explicitly for the purpose of fixing the failings of Vergil's version; Joscelyn's name is not on the title page, but the names of Vergil and the printer are. The edition is dedicated to Matthew Parker, for whom Joscelyn was secretary. Joscelyn criticises Vergil's edition for changing and removing sections of the text, including removing a number of Gildas's anti-clerical passages, and particularly for amending scriptural quotations: there are 'reperio plane multa quae desunt in impresso Gilda, tum

eorum quae sunt auctoris propria, tum maxime sacrorum testimoniorum'.⁵⁸ Joscelyn did a great deal of antiquarian work, most famously in Anglo-Saxon studies.⁵⁹ However the preface describes quite specifically religious motivations for reediting Gildas. Joscelyn begins by asserting the importance of *De excidio* as a work of religious and moral example. The lesson of the Britons ignoring God and being punished can, Joscelyn says, be useful for 'Christian nations in all ages'. This passage, where he talks about the downfall of the Britons as a moral example, is the longest segment of his preface.

This contrasts with what we see of Vergil's opinion on what is important in the work. Vergil's preface does not mention this moral angle at all, but stresses the historical importance of the *De excidio*. We know that Vergil generally shared the view that history's purpose is to provide examples, both good and bad, as he explains in the dedication to the *Anglica Historia*:

... quando historia, ut hominum laudes loquitur et patefacit,
sic dedecora non tacet, neque operit quae idcirco ad vitae
institutionem longe utilissima censetur, quod alios ob
immortalem gloriam consequendam, ad virtutem impellat,
alios vero infamiae metu a vitiis deterreat.⁶⁰

However, he does not relate this directly to the *De excidio*. Gildas' castigation of the Britons, for Vergil, is primarily important for its utility in establishing the reliability of the source: a historian who is willing to note the failures of his own people increases his value

⁵⁸ 'Many things that are wanting in the printed Gildas, and many things which are the author's own, particularly regarding the evidence of scripture'. Joscelyn, Preface to Gildas, 2r.

⁵⁹ For biographical information on Joscelyn, see G. H. Martin, 'Joscelin (Joscelyn), John (1529–1603)', *ODNB*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15130>.

⁶⁰ '...For just as history speaks of and proclaims men's praises, so it does not keep silent about their disgraces, nor does it conceal them, and so it passes its judgments about what things are of the greatest use for the conduct of our lives, stimulating some to achieve immortal glory and virtue, and deterring others from vice by fear of infamy'. *Anglica Historia*, Dedication.

as an impartial, critical source. For Vergil, establishing the sources comes first, before the content is examined.

Joscelyn, on the other hand, puts the content first and stresses the religious duty in publishing works such as this. Vergil's work in general came to be viewed with suspicion from a Protestant perspective, since he was not only Catholic but also Italian and had been closely associated with the Pope. John Bale accused him of 'polutynge our Englyshe chronycles most shamefullye with his Romishe lyes and other Italshe beggerye'.⁶¹ This is particularly pertinent in discussing a pre-Saxon British writer like Gildas, since for Protestants, the evidence for a post-Roman British church was used to show the continuity of a native church. Joscelyn actively engaged in this project, for example giving many of his translated sources for British and Saxon history to John Foxe, for use in his polemic *Acts and Monuments*. The preface to an edition of the works of Ælfric, entitled *Testimony of Antiquitee*, is also believed to have been written by Joscelyn. Here he makes a similar point in relation to the importance of Aynglo-Saxon studies to Christian tradition:

Wherefore what may we now think of that great consent whereof the Romanists have long made vaunt, to wit, Their Doctrine to have continued many hundred years, as it were linked together with a continual chain, whereof hath been no breach at any time? Truly this their so great affirmation hath uttered unto us no truth, as (good Christian Reader) thou mayest well judge by duly weighing of this which hath been spoken, and by the reading also of that which here followeth, whereunto I now leave thee.⁶²

⁶¹ Quoted in W. R. Trimble, 'Early Tudor historiography, 1485–1548', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 11 (1950), 30–41 (p. 38).

⁶² John Joscelyn, Preface, in Ælfric, *A Testimony of Antiquity shewing the ancient faith of the Church of England* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1675), available at University of Oxford Text Archive, <http://tei.it.ox.ac.uk/tcp/Texts-HTML/free/A26/A26478.html> [accessed 13 May 2019].

Thus Joscelyn's preface to Gildas explicitly positions itself as a correction to Vergil's, and for explicitly religious reasons. By asserting the importance of Gildas to a Christian nation, Joscelyn is making a necessarily religious point. Figuring *De excidio* as primarily a religious work, and associating it so prominently with a Protestant archbishop, makes an explicit attempt to reclaim it from the Catholic Vergil. By playing up the extent of Vergil's changes to the text, particularly in terms of the scriptural element, Joscelyn provides a rationale for replacing Vergil's edition, by making it a moral matter and for the good of the reader. The discussion of antiquarian texts post-Reformation often figures the discussion in these terms. The precept of *sola scriptura*, the Bible as sole authority in religious matters, meant that textual stability and integrity was an explicitly spiritual concern, and this idea spilled over into study of other old texts. Matthew Parker, for example, used his antiquarian studies, particularly his work with Old English, to promote the native church. Siân Echard points out that this overarching project, in which antiquaries such as Joscelyn and Parker delved back into the past to find texts, 'speaks to the Reformation's concerns with authentic origins'.⁶³

Vergil, in altering passages, had no less of a religious agenda, but seems not to see that as his main purpose; he sees the emendation of the Biblical quotes used by Gildas, for example, as removing errors, rather than introducing them. His only moral argument is not related to content, but to attribution - the wrong that is done when people attribute works to Gildas that are not by him. Joscelyn's preface, in answer to Vergil, suggests again the effect of print on questions of authority. By putting his name on an edition of Gildas in print, Vergil assumed authority for the text. The title page and the preface of Joscelyn's

⁶³ Siân Echard, *Printing the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 27.

edition both make it clear that the purpose is to correct Vergil's errors. For Joscelyn, Vergil has misled the reader and he is happy to criticise him by name. Joscelyn's edition is thus a double-correction, of the false history of Geoffrey and of Vergil's questionable, un-Protestant motives.

Vergil concludes his preface by saying that he has brought Gildas 'ex densissimis tenebris, in lucem'.⁶⁴ Metaphors relating light and dark to knowledge or the revelation of knowledge are common over a long period of time, notably from the Bible. However, they become noticeably more common in the Renaissance in relation to knowledge, for example in the writings of Petrarch, and came to be applied particularly to the post-classical period, the so-called 'Dark Ages'.⁶⁵ The implications are varied, both in Vergil and in other writers, but in general they associate light with historical endeavour; a new source can be brought both out of the light and also of virtue. Joscelyn uses light in the last sentence of his preface. It could be a coincidence, but the fact that he uses the same metaphor in the same place as Vergil suggests that he does not believe that Vergil succeeded in shedding light on the past; since he corrupted the text, it remains shadowy, and the task is now Joscelyn's.

These two prefaces, then, demonstrate the perceived importance of Gildas's work. This is threefold: as an historical source for a period where they are scarce; as evidence for the early British church; and as a work that provides examples for moral behaviour. However, more than that they are evidence of editors of early medieval texts trying to think through the implications of these projects and the responsibilities of an editor. Although Vergil and Joscelyn are coming at the work from different perspectives, the

⁶⁴ 'Out of the darkest shadows into the light'. Virgil, Preface, in Gildas, *De calamitate excidio et conquestu Britanniae* (Antwerp, 1525), 3v.

⁶⁵ Theodore E. Mommsen, 'Petrarch's Conception of the "Dark Ages"', *Speculum* 17:2 (1942), 226-42.

questions are ultimately ones of morality, or ethics of an editor. An editor should not deceive readers, either by misattributing or changing a text; and they have a duty to provide these works, in Joscelyn's opinion a religious duty and in Vergil's the duty of a historian to uncover all the sources they can. In this way the metaphor of light works in two ways; Gildas's work can bring forth both historical and religious enlightenment.

4.4. Britain, England and the historicity of Arthur

Vergil's scepticism on the subject of Arthur led other authors beside Leland to defend the legend, and it is still perhaps the most commonly mentioned aspect of the work. Vergil's passage on Arthur is in fact quite brief. He acknowledges his fame, calling him

vir profecto talis qui, si diutius vixisset, rem prope perditam
suis omnino Britannis tandem aliquando restituisset. De hoc
propter ingentes pariter corporis vires atque animi virtutes
posteritas ea ferme praedicavit quae de Rolando Caroli
Magni ex sorore nepote memoria nostra apud Italos
decantatur, tametsi ille in flore iuventutis periit. Quippe
etiam nunc vulgus mirandis fert ad coelum laudibus
Arthurum, quod tres bello superasset Saxonum duces, quod
Scotiam cum vicinis insulis in suam potestatem redegisset,
quod Romanos in agro Parisiorum cum quodam Lucio
eorum duce delevisset, Galliamque devastasset, ac demum
gigantes homines valentes pugnando occidisset. Hic ad
extremum tot bellorum victor fertur, dum vellet urbem
Romam bello petere, domesticis seditionibus ab incepto
itinere revocatus, Morderedum nepotem, qui regnum per
tyrannidem in eius absentia occupaverat, interfecisse, et in
eo certamine ipse vulneratus cecidisse. Abhinc item paucos
annos positum fuit Arthuro in Glasconiensi coenobia

sepulchrum opere magnificum, quo posteri intelligerent
illum omnibus ornamentis dignum fuisse, quando Arthuri
tempore coenobium illud nondum erat conditum.⁶⁶

The allusion to the founding of Glastonbury is one of the few moments where he includes material evidence to challenge his sources. This passage on Arthur is slightly longer in the original manuscript version, where he adds, rather snippily: ‘Haec paucis perstrinximus, ne propositam breuitatem omitteremus, cum praesertim Gaufredus multa effusissime de Arthuro litteris mandauerit, cui plus fidei quam nobis super huiusmodi gestis rebus haberi facile patimur’.⁶⁷

It can be seen therefore that Vergil was far more disbelieving of Geoffrey than in the historicity of Arthur, despite what contemporaries such as Leland and Bale claimed. Carley points out the similarities to William of Malmesbury and more contemporary authors such as John Twyne: ‘For both Vergil and Twyne, as for others earlier and later, it was Geoffrey of Monmouth rather than Arthur himself who was being dismissed when they cast doubt on the “British history”.’⁶⁸ The technique of praising Arthur while deploring ‘false’ stories about him, first seen in William of Malmesbury, had almost

⁶⁶ ‘... Such a man that, had he lived longer, he would have finally restored the British state, which was all but ruined. Because of the powers of his body and the virtues of his mind, posterity has published the same kind of things about him as are in our days still recounted among the Italians about Roland, the nephew of Charlemagne by his sister. For even now the common folk praise Arthur to the skies, for thrice he overwhelmed Saxon captains in war, gained possession over Scotland and the neighbouring islands, defeated the Romans with their general (a certain Lucius) in the territory of Paris, laid waste to Gaul, and finally bested some giants in a fight. It is related that in the end, while he wanted to visit Rome, he was recalled from this journey by domestic seditions, that he killed his nephew Mordred, who in his absence had gained control of the kingdom as a tyrant, but that he himself received a wound in this fight and died. A few years ago a magnificent tomb for Arthur was erected in the monastery of Glastonbury, that posterity might understand that he was worthy of all ornaments, since in Arthur’s day that monastery had not yet been founded’. *Anglica Historia*, III.13.

⁶⁷ ‘I have narrated these things shortly in order not to neglect my intended brevity, particularly since Geoffrey has written many things about Arthur most effusively, whom I gladly allow to have more faith in these sort of deeds’. Cited in Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 199.

⁶⁸ Carley, ‘Arthur and the Antiquaries’, p. 156.

become a conventional topos by this time; even Leland says, ‘Truly, in fables which haue crept into the history of *Arthure*, I doe not more delite, then *Polidorus*, the Iudge’.⁶⁹ However, it is still possible to question the effect this idea has on the writing of Arthurian history. Vergil does not attempt to give any other version, or to any real extent critique the one he has. Although he has expressed doubts about Geoffrey, the biography of Arthur he gives, while pared back, nevertheless agrees with Geoffrey's on all essentials: son of Uther, defeat of the Saxons, conquests abroad, victory in Gaul. The only alternative evidence Vergil gives is against the idea that Arthur was buried in the church at Glastonbury, which is a post-Galfridian addition to the legend anyhow. As Vergil pointed out, sources for this period are few, but this means that he has to take up the version of events from Geoffrey, or leave a gap in his narrative. This is his main dilemma; much as he would like to reject Geoffrey's history, he cannot. This suggests that, *pace* Carley, Vergil had not completely dismissed Geoffrey, and it was difficult, if not impossible, to do so completely without dismissing Arthur as well.

Polydore Vergil's criticism of the historicity of Arthur was, as we have seen, not particularly strong. However, it was enough to anger some people, including John Leland. Leland's *Assertio inclytissimi Arturii regis Britanniae* was a response to Vergil's doubt over the historicity of Arthur in his *Anglica Historia*. A comparison of the works of Leland and Vergil reveals a tension between what can be discovered through the use of written authorities, and what can be discovered from oral accounts or eyewitness evidence. The *Assertio* does not construct a narrative of Arthur's reign to contradict Vergil's disbelief.

⁶⁹ Leland, *Assertio*.

Rather, Leland structures it around particular events in Arthur's life, which are connected to specific places, or to artefacts which Leland believes prove Arthur's historicity.

The publication of the two works overlaps. Vergil wrote the manuscript of *Anglica Historia* in 1512 to 1513, with the first published edition appearing in 1534. Two revised editions followed in 1546 and 1555. The chronicle covers the history of Britain from the earliest inhabitants of the island up to Vergil's day. Although Vergil is scathing about the version of British history stemming from Geoffrey of Monmouth, he states that he will still include its account of the early British kings: 'I shall therefore run through the lives of the kings which this new history has suddenly and, as it were, with one birthing, engendered and brought to light ... at the same time I shall strive to remove the errors in them so they do not trouble my readers, and so these readers do not fall into them headlong'. The reference here to 'ista nova historia' (that is, Geoffrey's) as having brought the reigns of these kings 'in lucem' is ironic in tone, questioning the miraculous nature of only one man having been able to find this material. Lest Vergil should be thought to be condoning Geoffrey's history, he presents himself as a guide, leading the reader through its pitfalls.

Leland, like Vergil, also employs the metaphors of darkness and light in relation to uncovering the truth about early British history. However it works somewhat differently: 'at lengthe (those same most thicke mistie cloudes in deede of ignorance beeing shaken off, & vtterly dashed aside) the light of *Brittish* Antiquitie with displayed beames farre and wide shall shine forth'.⁷⁰ Here it is not the British past which is dark, merely the ignorance

⁷⁰ Leland, *Assertio*.

surrounding it; scholarship will not shed light on the past but clear away obfuscation and let its light shine through. It is tempting to see this metaphor as related to Leland's time spent in literally dark libraries, hoping to uncover historical sources.

As seen in the previous chapters, the understanding of how Britain, and its early history, related to England and Wales as modern entities was fluid. The change of dynasty in 1485 and the Welsh background of the Tudors is frequently a starting-point for considerations of Arthurian literature in this period, although exactly how much importance can be attached to this is debatable. As Andrew Hadfield says, 'How seriously the Tudors took their Welsh-British roots is a moot point, one fiercely debated at the time, even if its actual impact on public policy and royal behaviour may well have been minimal'.⁷¹ The extent to which Henry VII and his son consciously associated themselves with King Arthur has been variously judged by modern historians. A traditional view of the matter asserted the encouragement of a continuous and official cult of Arthur by the Tudors, from Henry VII's mustering of support before Bosworth onwards. E. B. Millican states that the Tudors' interest in Arthur was 'something more than an antiquarian revival of a glorious past of British empire. It was a revival, to be sure, but it was a revival enhanced by the belief that in the Welsh blood of Henry of Richmond the very blood of Arthur had returned to a glorious *present* of British empire'.⁷² Henry VII used his descent from Welsh princes via Owen Tudor to gain support for his claim in Wales. He named his

⁷¹ Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare, Spenser and the Matter of Britain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 7.

⁷² E. B. Millican, *Spenser and the Table Round* (London: Cass, 1967), p. 9. Much of Millican's cited evidence for the Henrys' personal enthusiasm came from Elizabethan writers, making it difficult to see as evidence for an Arthurian cult earlier than Elizabeth's reign. See also Richard Koebner, 'The Imperial Crown of this realm: Henry VIII, Constantine the Great, and Polydore Vergil', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 26 (1953), 29-52.

eldest son Arthur, and enthusiastic poems written for the prince's birth refer to him as 'Arturus secundus'.

Subsequent historians (perhaps in part as a reaction to this view) stated that there was a decline in belief in King Arthur by the early 16th century, and the influence of the legend was historically negligible; Arthur was recovered as a literary figure only in Elizabeth's reign.⁷³ On the lack of literary successors to Malory, Rob Gossedge and Stephen Knight claim that, 'the new style of Tudor administrative organisation [...] with a standing army, ministers of state and the development of something like a civil service, made the idea of a king ruling through his great warriors with advice from a magical grand vizier seem both improbable and irrelevant.'⁷⁴ Other historians are keen to support the idea of Tudor promotion of Arthur, with suggestions that it was used for propagandistic purposes, in promoting their imperial ambitions and, for Henry VIII, in the assertions of the king's autonomy during the break with Rome. David Starkey, for example, argues that Arthur was consciously invoked as a model in Henry VIII's reign.⁷⁵ Martin Biddle points out that Arthur features in the iconography surrounding Henry's dealings with Emperor Charles V.⁷⁶

Documents produced by the court for political and propagandistic purposes in some cases engage with early British history. Cromwell's assertion in his preamble to the Act in Restraint of Appeals to Rome of 1533 that 'this realm of England is an empire' led

⁷³ Sidney Anglo, 'The British History in early Tudor propaganda', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 44:1 (1961), 17-48; David Carlson, 'King Arthur and court poems for the birth of Arthur Tudor in 1486', *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 36 (1987), 147-83; Levine, *Humanism and History*.

⁷⁴ Rob Gossedge and Stephen Knight, 'The Arthur of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Arthurian Legend*, ed. by Elizabeth Archibald and Ad Putter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 103-19.

⁷⁵ David Starkey, 'King Arthur and King Henry', *Arthurian Literature* 16 (1998), 171-96.

⁷⁶ Martin Biddle, 'The painting of the Round Table', in *King Arthur's Round Table: An Archaeological Investigation*, ed. by Martin Biddle (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), pp. 425-74.

to consideration of precedents for the idea of the king as emperor in early English and British history.⁷⁷ The word *imperator* carried two distinct but linked concepts: the right of sovereignty in a ruler's own territory on the one hand, and the right of conquest outside this territory. The first was most germane in the break with Rome, but the second was also pertinent to the Tudors' expansive aims.

The 1533 Act refers to the authority of 'divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles', collected in the *Collectanea satis copiosa*. This type of appeal to history by an English monarch had precedents, most notably Edward I's request for historical evidence to support his claim to the Scottish throne. There is also evidence of the British history being used to support this autonomy by others in the king's circle. In a letter from the ambassador Eustace Chapuys to Charles V, the ambassador describes a conversation with the Duke of Norfolk, in which Norfolk argues that 'the king had a right of empire in his kingdom, and recognised no superior'. Norfolk says that he has recently shown the French ambassadors Arthur's tomb and seal, and showed Chapuys a copy of the inscription on the seal: 'Patricius Arcturus, Britanniae, Galliae, Germaniae, Daciae Imperator'. Chapuys believes Norfolk to be using this in support of not just the absolute sovereignty of the English monarch within England, but also of the expansion of empire through conquest: 'if from this he argued that they might still make conquests like the said Arthur, let him consider what had become of the Assyrians, Macedonians, Persians & c'.⁷⁸ As Stewart Mottram says, Chapuys 'rather misses the point... assuming that Norfolk is here announcing an English colonial project to rival the worldly ambitions of Charles V', but understandably so, since 'Norfolk seems to have made no allowance for this potential for

⁷⁷ In G. R. Elton (ed.), *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 353.

⁷⁸ Quoted and discussed in Carley, 'Arthur and the Antiquarians', p. 152.

confusion'.⁷⁹ The agents of Henry are not only using the idea of 'empire' in a different way to that understood by the Holy Roman Empire, but using Arthur as an apex of English kingship in a manner not explicitly attempted before.

This appropriation of figures from legendary British history in defence of Henry VIII's concept of a purely *English* sovereignty, 50 years after his father's accession, shows that the Welsh ancestry of the Tudors and allusions to Arthur and Brutus in this context should not be taken as part and parcel of the same discussion; in fact they are in many ways appositional. Even in the context of Welsh support for the Tudor accession, there are several different strands to unpack. There is the monarch's own interest in (or exploitation of) their Welsh ancestry, whether real or expedient, and there is the native interest in the British inheritance of the Welsh. The Tudors' Welsh origins, and this perception of the dynasty's Welsh background heightened the consciousness in Wales of the Welsh inheritance from the ancient Britons, which defined Welsh identity in the period. However, Philip Schwyzer argues that the Welsh were less interested in British imperial themes and the Tudor bloodline than the English believed.⁸⁰ Most importantly for Wales, the Act of Union of 1536 meant Wales no longer existed as an entity independent from England. The text of the Act castigates 'rude and ignorant people' who 'have made distinction and diversity' between the Welsh and the king's other subjects. This may be in remembrance of the Glyndwr rebellion at the beginning of the last century. The Act meant discarding any differences in laws, customs, or language between England and Wales. Peter Roberts argues that 'Wales and Welsh identity emerged from the

⁷⁹ Stewart Mottram, *Empire and Nation in Early English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2008), p. 92.

⁸⁰ Philip Schwyzer, 'British history and "The British History": The same old story?', in David J. Baker and Willy Maley (eds), *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 11-23 (p. 20).

imperial programme of the Tudors strengthened rather than undermined'.⁸¹ Therefore, although historians seem to believe that Wales and Welsh identity are important in the writing of history in the Tudor period, there is no clear consensus as to what end.

When looking at *Anglica Historia*, however, and Vergil's own aims, the picture is much clearer. Vergil writes:

Haec scilicet una prope res est quae ad summam laudem regni tui Angliae desideranda videbatur, quod cum rebus omnibus beatissimum sit, eius tamen magnitudo in bene multarum gentium ignoratione erat, quod nulla ferme extaret historia qua cognoscere liceret quae Britanniae, quae nunc Angliae est soli natura, quae gentis origi, qui regum mores, quae populi generatim vita, quibus artibus a principio tantum comparatum atque auctum imperium ad eam adspirasset magnitudinem.⁸²

The avowed purpose of Vergil's work is therefore to write for an international audience in praise of the English (ironically, given, as noted above, the criticism directed at Vergil as an Italian and a Catholic author). For Vergil, the English are 'a people whose accomplishments have long remained hidden'. Vergil is clear that he is writing an 'English' history, 'because such today is the name of the island's greater part, and by far the greatest part of its government'. This seems to be a matter of terminology rather than focus, since he includes references to Scottish history. Indeed, his terminology is flawed, since he begins the description of the island in book I by stating that 'The whole of England, (which is now called by the double name of England and Scotland) is an island

⁸¹ Peter Roberts, 'Tudor Wales, national identity and the British inheritance', in *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, ed. by Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 8-42 (p. 8).

⁸² 'And this is the single thing which seems to be lacking from the supreme glory of your realm of English, that, although it is most blessed in all things, its greatness is unknown to a large number of nations since no history exists from which it would be possible to learn the nature of Britain (which is now England), the origin of this nation, the manners of its kings, the life of its people, and the arts whereby its government, as it was founded in the beginning and as it grew, attained to its greatness'. *Anglica Historia*, Dedication.

set in the ocean opposite the shore of France, and is divided into four parts. The first is inhabited by the English, the second by the Scots, the third by the Welsh, and the fourth by the Cornish'. This is unlike the tradition in earlier works that the island was originally called Britain and is now called England; the name Britain does not appear until late in the opening description: 'let me return to Britain, which we call England'. He goes on to describe England as 'the greater part' in detail. The detailed topography of the first section is used to make historical points: for example, in the description of Scotland, he notes its harbours, mountains and marches, and says, 'Quorum illa locorum commoditatibus etiam sustentata minus unquam devinci potuit, cum ad sylvas et paludes praesto ubique gentium sit profugium'.⁸³ This would seem in fact against an imperial claim of the English over the whole island. Leland's *Assertio* is obviously more narrowly focused, but just in comparison to Vergil's post-Roman section it identifies the Welsh aspect of the Arthurian legend: 'Truly the people of *Wales* haue alwayes beene and as yet are with a certaine Gentlemanly feruent affection bent to set forth the praises of their *Princes*.'

While it does refer to Scottish history, then, Vergil's work is consistently identified as an English history, and in the promotion of English interests it could be seen as an effective propagandistic tool. Vergil believes that he has avoided the common flaws of blindly patriotic writers, such as blindly including oral traditions, which is to the advantage of the work:

Sed cum illam regustarint, dubio procul intelligent aniles fabulas minime cum vero consentire, et amore patriae suos interdum autores spoliassse iudicio, privasse intelligentia, orbasse sensibus, id quod in nos cadere non potuit, qui proinde nullius auribus inservimus, et demum, cognita veritate, non poterunt

⁸³ 'Sustained by the advantages of such places, the Scots have never been conquered, since everywhere the forests and marches provide them with refuge'. *Anglica Historia*, I:6.

non probare historiam sancte et syncere confectam.⁸⁴

That is, since he has not written to please anyone in particular, he is free to include only such material as he deems well-verified. However, despite this affirmation there has been discussion about the propagandistic implications of the work. It has been debated as to what extent the work was officially sanctioned. Hay states that ‘The implicit purpose of the work (which is nowhere concealed deliberately) was to put a favourable interpretation on the rise of the house of Tudor’.⁸⁵ It may have been commissioned by Henry VII. James Carley says, ‘Shrewdly, [Vergil] had added imperial references- minor word changes or small additions- to his earlier text to suit the current political situation, but it was by no means rewritten in the early 1530s as a piece of Henrician propaganda’.⁸⁶ Carley does suggest that Leland was more involved in propaganda. Upon the declaration of war on Scotland in 1542, there was issued ‘A declaration conteyning the iust causes and consyderations of this present warre with the Scottis’. The second part consists of an appeal to history, which aims to prove that since the first division of Britain, Brutus received homage from Scotland and Wales. Carley suggests that the text in Leland’s notebooks forms the basis for this second part, making him ‘the progenitor if not the actual author’.⁸⁷ Writing about the legendary history of Britain was therefore still very much a political issue in the sixteenth century, it is not always easy to pin down what stance the author is taking. Writing in praise of the ‘British’, for example, has long lost its

⁸⁴ ‘But when they [i.e. the readers] have digested these things, they will undoubtedly understand that old wives’ tales do not agree with the truth, and that patriotism has sometimes robbed their writers of their judgment, deprived them of their intelligence, and stripped them of their senses, none of which things have been able to befall me, since I have not written so as to flatter any man’s ears, and in the end, the truth being grasped, they cannot help but approve of a history written honorably and sincerely’. *Anglica Historia*, Preface.

⁸⁵ Denys Hay, ‘Introduction’, *The Anglica Historia of Polydore Virgil, a.d. 1485–1537*, ed. and trans. by Hays (London: Camden Society, 1950), pp. i-lxii (p. xxix).

⁸⁶ Carley, ‘Arthur and the Antiquarians’, p. 155.

⁸⁷ Carley, ‘Arthur and the Antiquarians’, p. 161.

particular association with Wales. Although a number of scholars have sought to see writing about Arthur as a particular attempt to glorify the Tudors, the lack of very strong evidence that the Tudors were especially interested in their Welsh roots or Arthur in particular makes this conclusion dubious. Furthermore, the strong continuity in the narrative of the matter of Britain from the twelfth century, and the assertion of Vergil that he feels bound to include it despite his doubts, means that the inclusion of Arthurian material is not strongly indicative of any individual stance on what the interplay between the separate parts of Britain signifies.

4.5. The locality

There is almost neyther cape nor baye, haven, creke or pere, ryver or confluence of ryvers, breches, washes, lakes, meres, fenny waters, mountaynes, valleys, mores, hethes, forestes, woodes, cyties, burges, castels, pryncypall manor places, monasteryes and colleges, but I have seane them and noted in so doyng a whole worlde of thynges verye memorable.

Letter from John Leland to Henry VIII, 1546.⁸⁸

Leland's summary of his journeys around the country immediately shows the geographical focus of his interests. The parallels with Gerald of Wales are evident: in the summary of the type of sites he has seen, and in the importance he places on eyewitness evidence. In the Welsh section of the journey, the only written source cited is the *Itinerarium Kambriae*, and then only for topographical information (names of rivers and so on). Leland admires Gerald of Wales, but also does not use many written sources.

Vergil's use of place, and particularly eyewitness accounts of place, are far

⁸⁸ *The itinerary of John Leland in or about the years 1535–1543*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith, 5 vols. (London: George Bell, 1906–10), I, pp. xxxvii–xliii (p. xli).

more limited than Leland's. Vergil's history, after a Preface discussing his purpose and sources, begins with a long section describing the geography of the island in meticulous detail, including much detail about the agriculture and climate of various regions. There is no evidence Vergil travelled much in Britain himself, and he is presumably here relying on general knowledge or oral information for his detailed description of Britain. Some of this sort of information appears in the main narrative to back up Vergil's views of weaknesses in the written sources. For example, he suggests that the legend of the first settlement of the island by Brutus is unlikely, since the south-east coast of Britain is visible from France. Therefore, Vergil argues, it is unlikely that the island was ever uninhabited. In other cases, Vergil's geographical sense can lead him astray. For instance, he cites Tacitus on Agricola's subjugation of the isle of Môn (Anglesey), and asserts that this is a reference to the isle of Man:

Caeterum vide quid possit vetustas: insula nunc ab omni terra abest amplius xxv millibus, quae quondam vix mille passus procul erat, ex quo sunt qui audeant affirmare Monam esse eam quam Angliseam appellant, quae Walliae adiacet, estque Bangoriensis diocesis, cuius loci natura talis est etiamnum qualem ex Tacito docuimus habuisse illud litus quod inter Monam et continentem intererat. Attamen tale quid per angustiam loci, qui in circuitu vix est millia passum xl, per sterilitatem terrae, per inopiam arborum frugumque omnium non tam hominibus licet somniare quam pecoribus, a quibus insula pene deserta et inculta continenter despascitur.⁸⁹

In this instance, Vergil seems so keen to contradict oral sources that he contradicts common sense. It also demonstrates a lack of geographical knowledge, since the

⁸⁹ 'But see what the passage of time can accomplish: the island is now twenty-five miles distant from the mainland although it was once barely a mile away. For this reason some are so bold as to affirm that Mona is that island which men call Anglesey, lying hard by Wales, and that it belongs to the diocese of Bangor, the nature of which place between the island's shore and the Continent is even now such as I have reported it to have been out of Tacitus. But because of the smallness of the place (its circumference is barely forty miles), because of the infertility of its soil, because of the scarcity of trees and all crops, it is possible to imagine that it did not belong to men but rather to cattle, by whom this nearly deserted and untilled island is constantly grazed'. *Anglica Historia*, I:13.

wording suggests that he does not recognise that Mona was the contemporary Welsh name for the island. Another example of his use of material evidence is his assertion that Arthur could not be buried at Glastonbury because there was no monastery there in his time, quoted above. However, in the original manuscript version Vergil had repeated the claim that Arthur was buried there without dispute, leading James Carley to suggest that John Rastell's use of topography in his contemporary chronicle *The Pastyme of the People* to disprove the Arthurian legend may have influenced this change to the published edition of *Anglica Historia*.⁹⁰ Such examples of the use of place in the text are rare, at least in the early material.

Leland refers to himself explicitly as 'antiquarius'. The distinction outlined above, between the form and matter of historical investigation, is in fact particularly significant when considering Leland, since he became so influential in antiquarian and chorographical circles without publishing a complete 'history' in his lifetime. He became known and influential for his *Itinerary* despite the fact that these writings were never intended to be shared, being merely his notes for future projects. The only antiquarian work published in his lifetime, the *Assertio Arturii*, was a tract on a single topic which only showed the tip of the iceberg of his findings.⁹¹ The fact that Leland was able to be so influential through notes collated and published posthumously by others reiterates the lack of importance of narrative in the conventional sense to the project of antiquarianism.

In *The Laboryouse Journey* (published 1549), Leland claims that in 1533 he received a commission from the king, of which no record survives, 'to peruse and dylygentlye to searche all the lybraryes of monasteryes and collegies of thys your noble

⁹⁰ Carley, 'Arthur and the Antiquaries', p. 156.

⁹¹ *Assertio inclytissimi Arturii Regis Britanniae* (London, 1544).

realme'.⁹² It is now generally thought that Leland had no official position and decided to undertake this mission himself.⁹³ His initial purpose was to compile a list of works by British authors for *De uiris illustribus*, a dictionary of British writers. Leland's motivations were several. In a now-lost letter of 1536 from Leland to Thomas Cromwell, asking for permission to acquire manuscripts from the libraries of the monasteries at the dissolution, Leland explains his motivation thusly: 'It would be great profit to students and honour to this realm; whereas, now the Germans perceiving our desidiousness and negligence do send daily young scholars hither, that spoileth them, and cutteth them out of libraries, returning home and putting them abroad as monuments of their own country'.⁹⁴ Leland thus had a nationalistic or patriotic motivation; to keep native learning and 'monuments' in the country, for the benefit of native scholars. He also hoped to gather material for his own scholarly projects. His initial aim on this front was to compile a list of works by British authors for *De uiris illustribus*, a dictionary of British writers. However, by about 1539, he had become more interested in topography and local history.⁹⁵

Richard Helgerson has argued that:

With few exceptions, choreographies are narratives. They tell the story of a voyage through the territory they describe. But they are weak narratives. The

⁹² *Leland's Itinerary in England and Wales*, ed. by Lucy Toulmin Smith, foreword by Thomas Kendrick, 5 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964), I, p. xxxvii.

⁹³ Leland refers to himself as 'antiquarius'. According to James Carley, based on this, 'generations of scholars assumed that he had some sort of official position as "king's antiquary". This is not the case, and Leland seems to have appropriated the term in analogy with continental humanist practices'. Carley, 'Leland, John (c. 1503-1552)', ODNB, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16416> (and see for most of the biographical information that follows). As May McKisack accurately notes, 'A monarch of Henry's liberal education might well be presumed to have been concerned for the fate of the books: yet it remains hard to credit him with much forethought in the matter.' There is no reference to books or learning in the Visitation Articles of 1536 and 1538. May McKisack, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), p. 3.

⁹⁴ Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 2 vols. (1691-2); new edn, ed. P. Bliss, 4 vols. (1813-20), 1.67, pp. 197-204.

⁹⁵ Carley, 'Leland', ODNB.

voyages they recount have no immediacy. The chorographic traveller never encounters bad weather, impassable roads, or poor fare. His trip is rather an expository device (though an expository device laden with ideological significance) than a historical event.⁹⁶

This is an accurate description of most choreography following Leland, and of how these works differ from the voyage literature associated with foreign countries. This is in part due to the form we have this work in. Andrew McRae accurately notes that, ‘The copious notes prepared by John Leland in the reign of Henry VIII are remarkable for their concern with paths, obstacles and lodgings; however if he had lived to fulfil his promise to fashion from these notes “such a description that it shall be no mastery after, for the graver or painter to make the lyke,” Leland would probably have excised much of this detail.’⁹⁷ It was not designed to be travel writing, but travel to gather material for work in other genres.

One important context for Leland’s journey and writing of the landscape was the Reformation. Landscape was key to medieval religious practice, but after the Reformation it needed rewriting. William Worcester’s Itineraries had a similar pattern of exploring the topography of England, and can be seen as an immediate forerunner of Leland, demonstrating a ‘curiosity about distances and place names that perhaps sets the pattern for Leland’.⁹⁸ Although Worcester’s notes were not published until much later, they were preserved by Robert Talbot and then the Parker Library (Corpus Christi MS 210); it is possible that Leland was aware of them, since he was friends with Talbot.⁹⁹ However, the

⁹⁶ Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 151.

⁹⁷ Andrew McRae, ‘The peripatetic muse: internal travel and the cultural production of space in pre-revolutionary England’, in *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550-1850*, ed. Gerald MacLean, Donna Landry, Joseph P. Ward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 41-57 (p. 46).

⁹⁸ Summit, ‘Leland’s Itinerary’, p. 162.

⁹⁹ Summit, ‘Leland’s Itinerary’, p. 162.

distance of 60 years or so between the two made the kind of land they were able to describe very different. Worcester frequently references pre-Reformation religious practice: pilgrimage routes, saints' shrines, abbeys, friaries. These things were in the process of disappearing when Leland made his journey. Leland writes about saints, but as a source of place names and local interest; they are not sacred.¹⁰⁰ He has to find new ways of conceiving the land.

The word 'translation' is used throughout the *Itinerary*, and the act of translation is in translating the old world to the new and making it relevant. Landscape was important to the Renaissance because it was so important to medieval religious practice, but after the Reformation it needed rewriting. As Summit points out, medieval narratives of salvation were 'structured through experiences of landscape'. Leland's notes are based on a real journey, which provides structure to the *Laboryouse Journey*. In the letter to Henry VIII Leland suggests he will turn the notes into a map. However, as they stand they are in opposition to the top-down view of the world represented in cartography, which is static and objective, presenting a view of the world external to the human. The itinerary form shows the landscape from the perspective of movement, and is therefore subjective, based on individual experience.¹⁰¹

As with the work of Gerald of Wales, the landscape is dominated by rivers. Rivers act paradoxically in texts, as static and moving objects. They are, on the one hand, anchors in the landscape, being less subject to change by humans over time than other features. Yet they are also symbols of journey themselves, being ever on the move and passing through many different localities. In Bakhtian terms, the river can be seen

¹⁰⁰ Summit, 'Leland's Itinerary', p. 163.

¹⁰¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Perspective of Movement*.

chronotopically, as a location in both time and space.¹⁰² Worcester also structures his work around rivers, identifying them by their sources. Leland identifies them rather by bridges. Summit suggests that, 'Leland's interest in bridges underscores his own function as a metaphorical bridge, as he continually seeks to represent perspectives defined by in-between-ness; if as a traveller he is in a constant state of transition from one place to another, he is also similarly transitioning between a Catholic past and a Protestant future'.¹⁰³ This recalls Gerald's use of borders, and rivers as borders, to symbolize the division (albeit a permeable one) between England and Wales (see above, 2.2.1, 'Borders', 2.3.1, 'Rivers').

In the Welsh section of the *Itinerary*, the only written source cited is the *Itinerarium Kambriae*, and then only for topographical information (names of rivers and so on). Leland admires Gerald of Wales, and Gerald's format of travel writing, which long predates William Worcester's similar project, is clearly a major influence. This is shown in Leland's sense of eyewitness; objects and places (such as the tomb at Glastonbury, and Arthur's seal) are used as witnesses to history. Kendrick says, 'The land where Henry VIII reigned was for Leland the land where King Arthur had lived, and ancient Britain and modern England were not only equally dear to him, but each was for him incomplete without the other'.¹⁰⁴ Leland uses place to collapse time, reducing the distance between the past and present.

The *Assertio* does not construct a narrative of Arthur's reign to contradict Vergil's disbelief. Rather, Leland structures it around particular events in Arthur's life, which are connected to specific places, or to artefacts which Leland believes prove Arthur's

¹⁰² Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*; see above, 1.3.

¹⁰³ Summit, 'Leland's Itinerary', p. 165.

¹⁰⁴ Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, p. 56.

historicity. It begins with a section on Arthur's conception, starting with a verse about Tintagel. The word 'est' beginning the verse emphasises the continuing presence of this place in the landscape. This idea, that British history is present in the landscape as long as the places associated with it remain, is fundamental to Leland's conception of early British history. Figures such as Arthur are not misty figures from the distant past, but coexist with the present day. British history does not just exist on a temporal plane, but on a geographical one.

Leland's work is grounded in this overlap between the temporal and spatial. The foundations for the way he discusses this can be seen in his Itineraries. According to Leland, in 1533 he received a commission from the king, of which no record survives, 'to peruse and dylygentlye to searche all the lybraryes of monasteryes and collegies of thys your noble realme'. His initial purpose was to compile a list of works by British authors. However, by about 1539, Leland had become more interested in topography and local history. In order to visit the places he had read about in ancient histories and chronicles, he spent six years travelling through England and Wales. Leland's notes of his journey document local history through artefacts and places he has observed. The original purpose of his journey, to collect historical texts, is subsumed by his desire to record what he has seen firsthand, rather than from the second-hand authority of text. This method of organising history by place, rather than strictly temporally, shows its influence in the structure of the *Assertio*.

A good example of how Leland saw the role of text and eyewitness in history is the passage in the *Assertio* on Arthur's seal. Arthur's seal no longer exists, but it was supposedly the property of Arthur, and lists his royal and imperial titles. Leland writes of the seal:

Concerninge which, Caxodunus [Caxton] maketh mention, yet breefly and sclenderly in his preface to the history of *Arthure*: which the common people readeth printed in the English tongue. Being moued with the testimony of *Caxodunus* whatsoever it were, I went vnto *Westminster*, to the end that what so as an eare witnesse I had heard, I might at length also as an eye witnesse beholde the same. Pondering well that sayinge of Plautus, in my minde. Pluris valet oculatus testis vnus quam Auriti decem. Of more force standes eyewitnesse one, Then ten eare witnesses among.¹⁰⁵

Caxton mentions the seal, along with a number of other Arthurian artefacts, in his Preface to Malory's *Morte Darthur*. This passage demonstrates how Leland sees his responsibilities in writing about the past. He has a reverential attitude towards his sources, in this case Caxton. However, for Leland the principle of eyewitness evidence is too important to take the textual description for granted. Vergil doubts oral testimony about Arthur and ignores the eyewitness; Leland ranks the eyewitness evidence higher, but sees a place for both.

The physical rupture of the Reformation took many forms. Most apparently, there was a loss of the visual culture of churches, which for many people would be most of the visual art they could expect to ever see. There was also the disappearance or suppression of many festive practices which connected human figures to the landscape, such as mayings and folkplays.¹⁰⁶ These losses led to a sense of nostalgia, even at the same time when the past was being re-evaluated. This created a need for replacement of the visual associations between land and identity. Leland's work is born out of this moment of replacement. Schwyzer suggests that the disaster of dissolution 'transposed his grand

¹⁰⁵ Leland, *Assertio*.

¹⁰⁶ Greg Walker, 'The Renaissance in Britain', in *The Sixteenth Century, 1485-1603, The Short Oxford History of the British Isles*, ed. by Patrick Collinson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 145-87.

project from a bibliographical to a topographical key'.¹⁰⁷ The Reformation not only gave the initial impetus for Leland's journey to recover of knowledge of the British past; it also provided the context for talking about that past. The word 'translation' is used throughout the Itinerary, and the act of translation is in translating the old world to the new and making it relevant.

Antiquarianism and Protestantism shared some of the same principles in regard to the past, in that both place importance on the principle of seeing evidence for oneself. Scrutiny of the sources was an important principle of Protestantism; when writing about the Bible, 'compilation is an obvious sign of authenticity (in comparison with what is characterised in reformist polemic as papist neglect or even falsification of Scripture)'.¹⁰⁸ For Bale, the truth was suppressed when documents lay hidden in monastic libraries, and the dissolution presented an opportunity to recover national culture; he believed that the English had been negligent in 'the due serch of theyr auntyent hystories to the syngulare fame and betweye therof'. The boundary of the reformation as a dividing line, between a dark past and whatever was to come, was partly constructed by Bale, 'by consistently setting out to distinguish what he portrayed as his enlightened era from the preceding aeons of "horrible darkeness"'.¹⁰⁹ This imagined boundary, and the language of light and dark surrounding it, are key themes in the work of both Leland and of Protestant writers like Bale. This use of visual metaphor to talk about matters that are distanced temporally is where the reader can most easily grasp the intersection between how Leland conceives of writing about place, and about time.

¹⁰⁷ Philip Schwyzer, 'John Leland and His Heirs: The Topography of England', in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature*, ed. by Mike Pincombe and Cathy Shrank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 238-53 (p. 242).

¹⁰⁸ Summit, 'Leland's Itinerary', p. 183.

¹⁰⁹ Summit, 'Leland's Itinerary', p. 179.

In Vergil's work, place is far less important, and particularly the lived experience of place. The eyewitness topos is most often invoked in relation to texts, the idea being that reading works of the past was in itself a form of eyewitness. Leland's sense of eyewitness is completely other; objects and places (such as the tomb at Glastonbury, and Arthur's seal) are used as witnesses to history, growing out of both native sources and his own journeys. This demonstrates the different focus of a self-proclaimed 'antiquarius', and also arises from his own status as traveller. For example, in the opening section of the *Itinerary*, Leland writes about Arthur's conception, starting with a descriptive verse about Tintagel:

A place there is in th' winding shoare of th' Abryne Sea by
name,
Scituate in middest of a rocke, wheare ebbing ryde the same
Enuironeth. A Castle here with towery top shines bright,
(By auncient Cornish men so called) which Tintagill tho hight.

The description of where Tintagel is situated is specific, as is the case in many other historical works. The principle here seems to be that the appropriateness of the site for an ancient castle, makes the ancient nature of the castle seem inherently more likely.

For a long time Leland was seen as having got the worst of the dispute with Vergil; asserting a belief in Arthur has been seen through most of the modern period as a mark of naivety or credulity. However, recent scholars have judged Leland to have had his methods right, even if his conclusion was flawed. F. J. Levy is characteristic in suggesting that 'an examination of their respective methods demonstrates that Leland's was that of the humanist critic of sources [...] and was essentially the better of the two'.¹¹⁰ Carley titled

¹¹⁰ F. J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. 131.

his evaluation of Leland and Vergil's arguments about Arthur, 'The Battle of the Books', and concluded that Leland had won.¹¹¹

Stephen Greenblatt discusses the passage in Herodotus about the Scythians. The historian relates that the Scythians each gave a bronze arrowhead, which were then melted down into a bronze bowl. Herodotus uses the size of the bowl to estimate the number of Scythians. Greenblatt says,

The Scythian bowl, the "memorial" of the impermanent and elusive, utterly unreliable and yet tantalizingly concrete, the talisman of eyewitness and the visible trace of an old story, is in effect an emblem of historiographical curiosity within the large landscape of Herodotus' own text. The bowl is the concrete image of an anecdote- an anecdote of an anecdote, at once its reification and its explanation [...] At a particular point in both the textual and physical landscape there is an artefact that is the sign of history. But ultimately the sign- the Scythian bowl, the textual history- only calls attention to the elusiveness, the indeterminacy, of what it is meant to signify.¹¹²

Leland, like Herodotus, is a traveller-historian, and his use of Arthur's seal acts in the same way as the bowl- as the tangible evidence of an anecdote. The seal brings together Caxton and Westminster, written sources and artefact, word and object. Yet at the same time nothing could be more elusive. We know little about where the seal came from or when it vanished, and it is an appropriate sign for Arthur.

As Kendrick rightly says, 'The land where Henry VIII reigned was for Leland the land where King Arthur had lived, and ancient Britain and modern England were not only equally dear to him, but each was for him incomplete without the other'.¹¹³ I have talked

¹¹¹ James Carley, 'Polydore Vergil and John Leland on King Arthur: the Battle of the Books', in E. D. Kennedy, *King Arthur: a Casebook*. (New York: Garland, 1996), pp. 185–204.

¹¹² Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 126.

¹¹³ Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, p. 56.

above about the ways in which the ‘cult’ of Arthur in the middle ages is reminiscent of the saints’ cults. In *Historia Brittonum*, in Gerald of Wales, in the episode of the discovery of his bones at Glastonbury, and others, the desire of writers is to imbue places with meaning through a physical link to a figure of the past, in the same way that medieval England was imbued with meaning in each of its localities by physical connections to local saints. It is striking how invested Leland seems to become in the physical manifestations of Arthur’s existence, as though, as with a saint’s relic, he becomes nearer through the shared physical contact. At a time when the landscape was shedding many of its old associations, Leland was reinvesting them with the associations of early British history, going back even further to write a different history on the landscape.

4.6. Conclusion

Vergil and Leland approached the perennial problem of writing about this period in markedly different ways, which is shown by their different use of the language of eyewitness and orality. Vergil placed his faith in authority, in trusted classical authors and insular writers he considered reliable, such as Gildas and Bede. In this manner his style of history, regarding the pre-Saxon period, is not so far away from the chronicles he is following, and he is unable either to wholly reject the version of early British history provided by Geoffrey, or to construct viable alternatives.

Leland’s view in the importance of eyewitness creates a very different sense of the British past. Objects and places (such as the tomb at Glastonbury, and Arthur’s seal) are used as witnesses to history, and he finds these materials both from other writers and his

own journeys. Leland's willingness to believe in Arthur makes him uncritical of what he is shown and told, and he has been generally less well-regarded as a historian than Vergil. However, it was Leland's approach to integrating the history of Britain into the landscape that proved most influential in writing about early British history later in the century. Jennifer Summit suggests that, 'as Leland's work shows, in the wake of the Reformation it was impossible to experience the English landscape without also confronting physical evidence of the medieval past and the violence that historical change inflicted on it'. She argues further that

Rather than establishing Leland's proto-Renaissance credentials, I find that Camden's and other early modern geographers' uses of Leland reveal the persistence of the religious and political concerns that formed Leland's immediate context in the 1530s and 1540s. This point redefines the historical investments of early modern geography by making them the product less of Renaissance than of Reformation- less, that is, of a newly awakened, classicised self-consciousness than of an ongoing, politically driven struggle to redefine and contain the nation's own medieval past.¹¹⁴

However, the strong links we can see between Leland's work and Gerald of Wales' suggests that even to trace this national project only back as far as the Reformation is a mistake. It is an impulse arising from the traveller to make sense of what he sees and reconcile it with what he has read.

Leland's work was indeed hugely influential. Followers of Leland wrote the descriptions of England, region by region, which Leland had never managed to write as a finished work. Works such as Camden's *Britannia* became the usual way of writing

¹¹⁴ Jennifer Summit, 'Leland's Itinerary and the remains of the medieval past', in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 159-176.

England, and followed Leland in using place as an organising principle for history. In Adrian's description, chorography acts as a 'verbal map', which goes past what can be seen to 'invisible' details of history and customs.¹¹⁵ Writing history based not just on the works of previous historians, but also using material culture, architecture, and administrative documents, as Leland did, was the foundation of the antiquarian movement, which reached full force later in the century with the foundation of the Society of Antiquaries. Leland's organisation of historical material by place, a form which came to be known as chorography, changed the way in which both the British landscape and British history were represented by writers. Chorographical works, representing the whole country or a single county or city, became extremely popular after Leland's death. Famous writers of chorography such as John Stow and William Camden were influenced by Leland, and they in turn influenced poets whose works incorporated elements of this new way of writing the landscape, such as Edmund Spenser and Michael Drayton.

¹¹⁵ John M. Adrian, 'Itineraries, Perambulations, and Surveys: The Intersections of Chorography and Cartography in the Sixteenth Century', in *Images of Matter: Essays on British Literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Yvonne Bruce (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), pp. 29-46 (p. 29).

5. The Later Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Century

This chapter looks at the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century, focusing on Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* and Thomas Churchyard's *Worthines of Wales*. Both authors used medieval sources to write about their chosen areas (England and Wales in Drayton's case, Wales in Churchyard's) from a historical perspective. They also represent part of a huge increase in writing organised on the basis of place (making Leland's journey very prescient). The type of dynamic described in the earlier chapters of this study, where history and place interplay in a text, became formalized as a recognized genre, chorography, which proved enormously popular. Surveys were of the whole country, or one county or city. These described one region, but followed Leland's principle of integrating history and place. The first, William Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent* (1570, published 1576) was followed by many others, including: William Smith, *Vale-Royall of England, or Countie Platine of Chester* (1584); Sampson Erdeswicke, *Survey of Staffordshire* (1593); and Richard Carew, *Survey of Cornwall* (1602). Other chorographers described English cities, beginning with John Hooker's *Description of the Cittie of Exeter* (1575). Chorographical works, of the country, the city, and the county, fundamentally changed the way that a general readership would conceive of British history.

5.1. Background and sources

Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* (1612-22) is a vast work, of 15,000 lines. Drayton was working on the poem by 1598.¹ The first 18 songs were published in 1612, and the remaining 12 in 1622. The poem therefore took up a large portion of his writing career, and the roots for some of the material can be seen even further back: in *Ideas Mirrour* (1594), for example, he includes a description of the beauties of England. The full title of the work is 'Poly-Olbion, or A Chorographicall Description of Tracts, Rivers, Mountaines, Forests, and other Parts of this renowned Isle of Great Britaine, With intermixture of the most Remarquable Stories, Antiquities, Wonders, Rarities, Pleasures, and Commodities of the Same'.² This title shows the primacy of place and topography in the poem, as an organizing principle for the historical or antiquarian material. *Poly-Olbion* is a topographical survey of England and Wales which describes the landscape and gives historical details about each area, through the device of a journey undertaken by Drayton's 'Muse'. At certain points on the Muse's journey, the travel will pause while material from the past is recited. The poem is thus organized on a geographical basis but, as with IK and Leland's notes, the landscape provides the impetus for consideration of the past.

Drayton's work is accompanied by extensive prose notes ('Illustrations') by the antiquarian John Selden. As we saw in chapter 3, in the relationship between Higden and

¹ Joseph A. Berthelot, *Michael Drayton* (New York: Twayne, 1967), p. 95.

² Michael Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, in *The Works of Michael Drayton*, ed. J. W. Hebel, 5 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1961), vol IV, p. i. All references to *Poly-Olbion* are to song and line number in this edition. References to John Selden's annotations are to song and page number.

Caxton, the movement from manuscript to print allowed layers of commentary, providing the multiplicity of voices that allows different historical traditions to stand side-by-side without being overwritten. Selden takes a role somewhere between editor and co-author, using prose notes to comment and elaborate on the verse, clarifying what is true and what is poetic licence. Such collaborative authorship has been much considered in an early modern context. Bette London suggests that studying collaboration ‘makes authorship visible’ and ‘explore[s] how authorship operates’.³ Heather Hirschfeld argues that the Renaissance period in particular, ‘because of its particular historical engagements with the structures of religious and political authority, exhibits unique concerns with the status and significance of the writer’.⁴ Collaboration can be seen across a variety of early modern genres, in scientific, historical and religious works.⁵ Examples include Holinshed’s *Chronicles*,⁶ *A Mirror for Magistrates*,⁷ and travel compilations such as Hakluyt’s *Voyages*. Sharing of poetry in scribal copy meant, as Arthur Marotti suggests, that poetry was ‘subject [...] to reader emendation, to answer-poem response, to parody, to unconscious and conscious revision’.⁸ Marotti elsewhere suggests that manuscript culture was ‘less author-centred than print culture and not at all interested in correcting, perfecting or fixing texts in authorially sanctioned forms.’⁹ This makes this overlay of

³ Bette London, *Writing Double: Women’s Literary Partnerships* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 7.

⁴ Heather Hirschfeld, ‘Early Modern Collaboration and Theories of Authorship’, *PMLA* 116:3 (2001), 609-622 (pp. 610-11).

⁵ Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁶ Annabel Patterson, *Reading Holinshed’s Chronicles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁷ Scott Lucas, ‘The Suppressed Edition and the Creation of the “Orthodox” *Mirror for Magistrates*’, *Renaissance Papers 1994*, edited by Barbara J. Baines and George Walton Williams (Raleigh: Southeastern Renaissance Conference, 1995), pp. 31-54.

⁸ Arthur Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), p. 13.

⁹ Arthur Marotti, *Manuscript, Print and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), p. 135.

voices ideal for Drayton's polyphonic work, which is strongly influenced not just by the medieval Arthurian tradition, but also contemporary styles of writing about Britain, and classical and continental Latin models.

The nearest work to *Poly-Olbion* is perhaps Thomas Churchyard's *The Worthines of Wales* (1587), which anticipated *Poly-Olbion* in writing about Wales in a chorographical way, and in verse. *The Worthines of Wales* comprised 'A true note of the auncient Castles, famous monuments, goodly Rivers, faire Bridges, fine Townes, and courteous people, that I have seen in the noble Countrie of Wales'.¹⁰ The poem is similar to Drayton's work in that it tours the countryside describing sites of historical interest, but also in that he shares Drayton's views on the importance of the British history. Unlike Drayton's imagined journey, *The Worthines of Wales* records his real trips around Wales. It can therefore be read as an example of the type of travel writing which predominated towards the end of the sixteenth century, 'the 'report' or 'relation', which combined a chronological narrative of movements and events with geographic and ethnographic observations'.¹¹

Churchyard's work combines poetry and prose. The elegiac poetry, which discusses the past of Wales as it is visible in the landscape, is interspersed with prose discussion of the history and his sources. Churchyard's work is explicitly in praise of Wales, which he sees as having been unfairly criticised by early writers. He highlights the influence of Polydore Vergil in this regard:

As learned men, hath wrote graue works of yore,

¹⁰ Thomas Churchyard, *The Worthines of Wales* (London: G. Robinson, 1587; reprinted Manchester: Spenser Society, 1896), p. 11. All subsequent references to this edition.

¹¹ William H. Sherman, 'Stirrings and Searchings (1500-1720)', in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 17-36 (p. 30).

So great regard, to natiue Soyle they had:
 For such respect, I blame now *Pollydore*:
 Because of *Wales*, his iudgement was but bad.
 If *Buckanan*, the *Scottish* Poet late
 Were here in sprite, of *Brittons* to debate:
 He should finde men, that would with him dispute,
 And many a pen, which would his works confute.
 But with the dead, the quick may neuer striue,
 (Though sondrie works, of theirs were little worth)
 Yet better farre, they had not bene aliue,
 Than sowe such seedes, as brings no goodnesse forth:
 Their praise is small, that plucks backe others fame,
 Their loue not great, that blots out neighbours name,
 Their bookes but brawles, their bable bauld and bare,
 That in disdaine, of fables writers are.¹²

Churchyard is here criticising what he perceives as the smallness of writers who pick over each other's work. His assessment that Vergil was against the Welsh is not completely fair, since he does no more than pick up such criticism of the British as he gathered from Gildas. However, it shows the perceived value for Churchyard and Drayton of their chosen medium to write about the past. There developed a clear division between history in the sense of what was true, and other types of writing about the past. Woolf notes that 'During Elizabeth's reign, certain conventions of usage began to develop. It became more common to distinguish between history proper, a truthful account of real events, and poetry or fable, the account of the verisimilar or fabulous'.¹³ By composing a work partially in poetry and partially in prose, Churchyard and Drayton are not subject to the same criticism with which more conventional historians are met. Their poetry can be ornamental, and it does not limit them to picking over the details of historical events, while the prose can provide sources and engage in debate. In his preface, Churchyard includes the standard topos,

¹² WW, p. 23.

¹³ D. R. Woolf, 'Erudition and the Idea of History in Renaissance England', *Renaissance Quarterly* 40:1 (1987), 11-48 (p. 19).

familiar since the twelfth-century historians, that his topic matter has been unjustly neglected:

it seemeth a wonder in our age (wherein are so many writers) that no one man doth not worthely according to the countries goodnes set forth that noble Soyle and Nation. Though in deede diuers haue sleightly written of the same, and some of those labours deserueth the reading, yet except the eye be a witnes to their workes, the writers can not therein sufficiently yeeld due commendation to those statly Soyles and Principalities.¹⁴

The privileging of eyewitness, and the idea that Wales should be considered worthy of record, recalls very strongly the similar ideas expressed by Gerald of Wales. Like *IK*, it is from a first-person perspective, and it does not use an intermediary voice, such as Drayton's muse, between reader and poet. Drayton's 'journey' is a literary journey and a journey of the mind, rather than a physical one. He takes his information and format from chorography, rather than his approach; he does not undertake to see the sites of early British history in person. Churchyard, however, puts himself and his emotional response to the landscape and the history invokes front and centre in the poem.

5.2. Britain in the world

Although, as we have seen, situating British history, geography and mythology alongside that of the classical world was a concern for writers of this material from the twelfth century, it was fundamental to interpretations of the past in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As William Kerrigan describes, in the Renaissance

¹⁴ WW, p. 4.

humanist imitation is a kind of grammar for the restraint of the creative act, a way of generating the novel from the prior with maximum stability. Through the exercise of copying, resemblance itself has been positioned in a temporal order, the whole heft of the concept of imitation is toward veneration and precedence, forming the new from, and not alongside, the fixed ideal of the classical original.¹⁵

Andrew Hiscock, writing about the Earl of Surrey, argues that his ‘verse operates as an insistent encouragement to his reader to reassemble fragments from a number of pasts not only as a means to pursue routes to self-knowledge and to reflect upon the nature of time, but also to participate in an equally ambitious scheme of cultural revision and critique’, an assessment that could equally be applied to Drayton.¹⁶ For Drayton, his magpie approach to the past is evident in both his selection of material, and the classical models through which he views and assembles his collection. For example, Drayton writes of King Arthur in Song III,

... through the world his fame flew from this Realme.
That justlie I may charge these ancient Bards of wrong,
So idly to neglect his glorie in their Song.
For some abundant braine, o there had been a storie,
Beyond the Blindmans might to have inhanc’t our glorie.¹⁷

In *Poly-Olbion* Drayton thus attempts to assert the importance of native poetry and native mythology, as opposed to classical subjects and models. An important motivation for Drayton was to defend Arthur as an historical figure.

Here then I cannot chuse but bitterlie exclaime

¹⁵ William Kerrigan, ‘The Articulation of the Ego in the English Renaissance’, in *The Literary Freud: Mechanisms of Defence and Poetic Will*, ed. by Joseph H. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 261-308 (p. 273).

¹⁶ Andrew Hiscock, ‘“To Seek the Place Where I Myself Had Lost”: Acts of Memory in the Poetry of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey’, in *The Anatomy of Tudor Literature: Proceedings from the First International Conference of the Tudor Symposium: 1998*, ed. by Mike Pincombe (London: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 34-43 (p. 37).

¹⁷ PO III, 404-8.

Against those fools that all Antiquities defame,
 Because they have found out, some credulous Ages layd
 Slight fictions with the truth, whilst truth on rumour stayd.¹⁸

This opinion is similar to that of Leland and Vergil, that an element of truth to Arthur as a historical figure has been embellished. Selden, in his 'Illustrations' to *Poly-Olbion*, believed in the historicity of Arthur, but wanted a more exacting approach to accounts of his life: 'The Bards songs have, with [...] unlimited attribut so laden him, that you can hardly guess what is true of him [...] A man right worthy to have been celebrated by true storie, not false tales, seeing it was he that long time upheld his declining country'.¹⁹ This is almost identical in wording to William of Malmesbury's criticism of HRB. It is, however, oddly appositional to Drayton's opinion that the 'ancient Bards' have 'idly' neglected Arthur.

He is critical not only of 'ancient Bards' whom he believes to have neglected the Arthurian legend, but also of the learned traditions of his own day for not making use of the native mythology to make an epic to rival those of the classical world. However, classical forms and genre have a significant impact on the form. Drayton's classical influences help to explain the form of *Poly-Olbion*, and demonstrate the interaction between classical and native sources in terms of writing about the landscape. Although Drayton had insular precedents to this form of writing, and despite his insistence that the insular should not be neglected for the classical, his classical models are of equal importance. Spenser's 'Colin Clouts Come Home Againe' is similarly a pastoral poem of mixed genre that uses these classical models to explore the relationship between centre

¹⁸ PO VI. 275-8.

¹⁹ PO IV. 87-8

and peripheries, in his case in the context of England and Ireland. However, in Spenser's case, he uses the pastoral to emphasise the importance of bringing Ireland into an English imperium centred on London.²⁰ Like Geoffrey of Monmouth, Drayton is critical of what he perceives as neglect of the matter of Britain, although as a poet he directs this towards poets. Given Drayton's criticism of the neglect of Arthur by British writers, it might therefore have seemed that Drayton would have undertaken an Arthurian epic himself, since at all stages in his career he wrote more straightforward retellings of other historical subjects from the later medieval period, from his early epic poems 'The Legend of Piers Gaveston' (1593) and 'Matilda' (1594), to 'The Battle of Agincourt' (1627). It is difficult to say why he did not, other than the explanation that he thought this material could be best explored through the topological format he chose for *Poly-Olbion*.

Churchyard also questions the neglect of native models, and gives this as one of the justifications for his work:

The fame of Troy is knowne each where,
And to the Skyes doth mount.
Both Athens, Thebes, and Carthage too
We hold of great renowne:
What then I pray you shall we doe,
To poore Carleon Towne.²¹

This is reminiscent of Gerald of Wales' question, 'Trojano Excidio, Thebis, et Athenis, Lavinisque litoribus, impar et inculta quid addere posset opera nostra?'.²² The invocation of Troy in the hope that some of its perceived values might be attached to Britain had lost

²⁰ Thomas Herron, 'New English Nation: Munster Politics, Virgilian Complaint, and Pastoral Empire in Spenser's "Colin Clouts Come Home Againe" (1595)', *Eolas: The Journal of the American Society of Irish Medieval Studies* 8 (2015), 89-122.

²¹ Churchyard, *Worthines of Wales*.

²² 'What could my own crude and feeble efforts add to the Fall of Troy, to Thebes or Athens, or to what happened on the coast of Latium?'. DK, Preface, p. 157; discussion above, 3.1.

none of its potency in four hundred years, and it fact had seen a renewed surge of life. Andrew Hiscock notes that the British nation ‘required founding myths to legitimise itself and secured one of them in this consecrated space of classical textuality. The remembering of Troy throughout the literature of the English Renaissance remained intimately linked to cultural ideals of military heroism, political legitimacy, male descent and inheritance, and national identity-construction’.²³ Churchyard asserts the worthiness of the British cities and the matter of Britain to be considered alongside their classical equivalents, and the value of the antiquarian-poet in applying himself to neglected historical topics.

5.3. Divisions of Britain

The relationship between the different areas of Britain is a key interest of *Poly-Olbion* in particular. Following the Act of Union, the assignation of Arthur to Wales or England became less controversial, since either would be to the glory of the English crown. Although Drayton and Churchyard maintain the strong difference between Wales, it is now on a similar level as other regional differences within England. Charles Phythian-Adams points out that ‘the links between national and local history were simultaneously racial and institutional. In Tudor times the beginnings of county history (inspired by the Anglo-Saxonist William Lambarde and his *Perambulation of Kent*) could already be related to the perceived early racial divisions of the country: the British in Cornwall and

²³ Andrew Hiscock, *Reading Memory in Early Modern Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 58.

Wales, with the shires south of the Tees under West-Saxon, Mercian or Danish law respectively'.²⁴ The frontispiece for *Poly-Olbion* has been much discussed in terms of its representation of a spatial scheme for history. Anne Lake Prescott, for example, notes that

The title page with its four conquerors standing around a happy polyandrous Albion can claim unity because it is spatial. To unite the British and English story is harder if one demands chronological rigor and continuity, together with a recognition of the divorces and changes mentioned in the facing poem.²⁵

This complicated relationship between 'Britishness' and the component parts, namely Wales and England, is one that Drayton and Churchyard do not attempt to gloss over, but is a major aim of their work. Churchyard acknowledges what makes Wales distinctive, while still seeing it as sitting comfortably with England as part of a greater nation.

In both *Poly-Olbion* and *The Worthines of Wales*, the inhabitants of the different areas of Britain are also suggested to have different characteristics, both physically and in personality. This idea is reminiscent of the classical concept of geographical determinism, which discusses how properties of the land and climate influence the characteristics of different races.²⁶ For example, Hippocrates says, 'In general you will find assimilated to the nature of the land both the physique and the character of the inhabitants'.²⁷ The idea recurs in the work of medieval authors, for example Gerald of Wales. In the early modern period, 'regionally inflected humoralism [...] proves to be the dominant mode of ethnic

²⁴ Phythian-Adams, *Re-thinking English Local History*, p. 2.

²⁵ Anne Lake Prescott, 'Marginal Discourse: Drayton's Muse and Selden's "Story"', *Studies in Philology* 88. 3 (1991), 307-28 (p. 325). On the frontispiece see also Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, pp. 118-20.

²⁶ For discussion of this and related theories, see Robert Bartlett, 'Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31 (2001), 39-56.

²⁷ *Ancient Medicine: Airs, Waters and Places*, in *Hippocrates*, trans. by W. H. S. Jones, Loeb Classical Library 147 (London: Heinemann, 1923), p. 24.

distinctions'.²⁸ One of the most dominant theorists on the topic, Jean Bodin, argued that an effective ruler must know the 'diversitie of mens humors, and the meanes how to discover the nature and disposition of the people', so as to 'accomodat the estate to the order of the citisens; and the lawes and ordinances to the nature of the place, persons, time'.²⁹ In *Othello*, Emilia asks, 'Is he [Othello] not jealous?' and Desdemona replies, 'Who, he? I think the sun where he was born/ Drew all such humours from him'.³⁰ In *Poly-Olbion*, Drayton discusses the distinct characters of the Cornish:

But Muse, may I demaund, Why these of all the rest
(As mightie *Albyons* eld'st) most active are and strong?
From *Corin* came it first, or from the use so long?
Or that this fore-land lies furth'st out into his sight,
Which spreads his vigorous flames on everie lesser light?
With th'vertue of his beames, this place that doth inspire:
Whose pregnant wombe prepar'd by his all-powerful fire,
Being purelie hot and moist, projects that fruitfull seed,
Which stronglie doth beget, and doth as strongly breed:
The weldisposed heaven heere proving to the earth,
A Husband furthering fruite; a Midwife helping birth. ³¹

Here the link between the landscape and a people is more explicit. As with Brutus, the founding father of Cornwall, Corin, is suggested to have passed on his characteristics to his descendants. Drayton's other suggestion uses the imagery of the earth as mother. Cornwall's geographical location is suggested to have influence on the character of its people. Selden, commenting on Drayton's passage about the Cornish, is sceptical about the validity of this way of thinking:

²⁸ Mary Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 1.

²⁹ Jean Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale* (1606).

³⁰ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by E. A. J. Honigmann, Arden Shakespeare, Third Series (Walton-on-Thames: Nelson, 1997), III.4.29-31.

³¹ PO I, 252-63.

But to give reason of the climats nature, for this prerogative in them, I thinke as difficult, as to shew why about the Magellanique straights they are so white, about the Cape de buon speranza so black, yet both under the same Tropique [...] I refer it no more to the Sunne, than the speciall Horsmanship in our Northerne men, the nimble ability of the Irish, Spanish puft-up vanity [...] And I am resolved that every land hath its so singular selfe-nature, and individuall habitude with celestiall influence, that humane knowledge, consisting most of all in universality, is not yet furnisht with what is requisite to so particular discoverie.³²

Selden refers the reader to Hippocrates, Ptolemy, and Bodin for further reading on this issue, which is characteristic of his even and cautious approach to topics on which he is not certain. Drayton separates the British (that is, Welsh and Cornish) from the English and emphasises their distinctiveness, characterising them by geographical location and relationship to the more remote parts of the island. The inhabitants of ‘this fore-land... furth’st out into his sight’, into which they were pushed by the Saxon invasions, are influenced by the landscape.

Drayton returns again and again to the image of the native British being pushed to the margins of the island, demonstrating a similar belief in the unfair treatment of the Welsh, how important he believed this highland/lowland and central/marginal distinction to be in understanding the relationship between the different peoples and nations of the island. In the last lines of the last Song, Song XXX, which discusses the north of England, Drayton writes that the river Eden

[...] lent reliefe,
 To those old Britains once, when from the Saxons they,
 For succour hither fled, as farre out of their way,
 Amongst her mighty Wylds, and Mountains freed from feare,
 And from the British race, residing long time here,
 Which in their Genuine tongue, themselves did Kimbri name,
 Of Kimbri-land, the name of Cumberland first came.³³

³² PO I, p. 20.

³³ PO XXX, 303-8.

The emphasis on the status of the British on the edges and in the wilder parts of Britain - what Simon Meecham-Jones calls the 'discourse of peripherality' - was a common trope in relation to Wales in the Middle Ages.³⁴ This idea that Wales was on the edge of geographical world and in the wilderness was used denigratingly by medieval writers, such as William of Newburgh: 'Quibus paulatim profligatis, miseras eorum reliquias, quae nunc Walenses vocantur, inviis montibus et saltibus coarctarunt'.³⁵ It was part of a general Norman, and then English, negative attitude towards the Welsh, which began with William of Malmesbury, which, as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen puts it, 'confined the Welsh to a rugged pastoral life [and] relegated them to an eternal premodernity'.³⁶ In terms of the landscape of the peripheries of Britain, Drayton's attitude is still unfavourable; he refers many times to the 'monstrous Craggs' of these upland areas. This attitude was a general one in the early modern period, before the Romantics began to see mountainous landscapes as picturesque.³⁷

Although we can see echoes of these ideas, things had changed by Drayton's day. The union had made Wales accessible to tourists from England, and therefore this landscape was better known in England. At the same time, praising the Welsh had become

³⁴ Simon Meecham-Jones, 'Introduction', in *Authority and Subjugation*, ed. Meecham-Jones and Kennedy, p. 2.

³⁵ 'The Britons were gradually crushed by them, and the invaders penned the wretched remnants, now called the Welsh, in trackless mountains and forests'. William of Newburgh, *The History of English Affairs, Book 1*, ed. and trans. by P. G. Walsh and M. J. Kennedy (Wiltshire: Aris and Phillips, 1998), 1.Prologue.

³⁶ Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, 'Green Children from Another World, or the Archipelago in England', in *Cultural Diversity in the British Middle Ages: Archipelago, Island, England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 75-94 (p. 78). See also John Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity and Political Values* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2000), pp. 27-8.

³⁷ For example, compare Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House': 'Tis not, what once it was, the *World*; / But a rude heap together hurl'd; / All negligently overthrown, / Gulfes, Deserts, Precipices, Stone.' Andrew Marvell, 'Upon Appleton House, To My Lord Fairfax', in *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. by Nigel Smith (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2003), ll. 761-4.

a more common literary position than censure, perhaps through greater contact but also for political reasons: it was now part of England, and had connections to the English monarch.³⁸ Its geography was tied up in this change of attitude. For example, Ben Jonson's masque *For the Honour of Wales* (1618), written for Charles after he was created Prince of Wales in 1616, made great play of the use of mountains for the staging. As Stewart Mottram and Sarah Prescott suggest, 'for Jonson, the sheer scale of Snowdon seems to contribute to the very clear sense in this masque of Welsh pride in the Principality and in Charles Stuart, their newly-created prince'.³⁹

Likewise, in *Poly-Olbion* the Welsh landscape and pride in Welsh history and inheritance are connected. Like Jonson's later masque, Drayton's work is dedicated to the current Prince of Wales, in 1612 James' elder son Henry. Drayton makes a point of noting the seven songs in which Wales features (4-10) in a preface, in which he addresses the work 'To my friends, the Cambro-Britains'.⁴⁰ The Welsh connections of the work and the preponderance of allusions to early British history seem to be of a piece, since the particular interest of the Welsh in this material was a commonplace in the early modern period. One thinks for example of Hotspur's characterisation of Owen Glendower in Shakespeare's *Henry IV part I*, when he complains that the Welshman talks 'Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies [...] And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff/ As puts me from my faith'.⁴¹ Churchyard, in his dedication to Elizabeth, gives the Arthurian association of the Tudors as part of his reason for writing the work: 'Gracious Lady, vnder your Princely fauour I haue vndertaken to set foorth a worke in the honour of VVales,

³⁸ See above, chapter 3.

³⁹ Stewart Mottram and Sarah Prescott, 'Introduction', in *Writing Wales, from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 1-17 (p. 3).

⁴⁰ PO, p. vii.

⁴¹ *Henry IV Part One*, III.1.146, 150-1.

where your highnes auncestors tooke name, and where your Maiestie is as much loued and feared, as in any place of your highnesse dominion'.⁴² As discussed in the previous chapter, assessments of how highly the Tudor monarchs rated their Welsh and Arthurian connections is dubious, but certainly in these two works Drayton and Churchyard draw lines between Elizabeth, Wales and Arthur.

Drayton's main source for Welsh history was Humphrey Llwyd and David Powel's *Historie of Cambria* (1584), which, as Robert Rawston Cawley demonstrates, he followed almost verbatim for long passages.⁴³ Drayton follows Llwyd not just in content but also in his attitude. In Llwyd's map of Wales completed for Abraham Ortelius in 1573, he includes the border counties of Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Shropshire, which were not officially part of the contemporary Wales. Llwyd's vision of Wales was archaic, reflecting a pride in a unity that had scarcely existed in that form. In the address to the Welsh, Drayton announces that 'striving, as my much loved (and learned) Humfrey Floyd... to uphold her auncient bounds' (PO p. vii), he has also included these counties. His vision of Welsh history is not related to the contemporary country but to the entity constructed by the British history. He is writing about a land from the past.

However, this is not to say that Drayton's work is irrelevant to contemporary literature or discourse about the country. One of the most striking points about the work is Drayton's treatment of the Welsh in comparison to the English (particularly as regards Arthur), and what this means for notions of a united Britain. Drayton uses the Welsh conception of history to privilege them over the English:

My Wales, then hold thine owne, and let thy Britaines stand,
Upon their right, to be the noblest of the land.

⁴² WW, p. 4.

⁴³ Robert Rawston Cawley, 'Drayton's Use of Welsh History', *Studies in Philology* 22 (1925), 234-55.

Thinke how much better tis, for thee, and those of thine,
 From Gods, and Heroës old to drawe your famous line,
 Then from the Scythian poor.⁴⁴

In the Welsh songs Arthur is depicted as an exclusively Welsh hero. The words ‘Britons’ and ‘British’ lose any contemporary connotations of the whole island and take on their historical sense, which connects British with modern-day Welsh. Arthur’s right to be considered as a representative of England is repeatedly undermined.

In Song IV, as England and Wales argue over the ownership of Lundy, ‘The Britaines chaunt King *Arthurs* glory: The *English* sing their *Saxons* storie’,⁴⁵ Arthur is the Britons’ ‘most renowned Knight’.⁴⁶ Drayton gives the English no single equivalent hero. He mentions St George in passing, but, as Selden points out in his *Illustrations*, the reasons for his adoption by the English are unknown.⁴⁷ This is a significant problem, since the work as a whole places such strong emphasis on the connection between national heroes and the land which they inhabit. In contrast, Selden claims that St David was King Arthur’s uncle, giving a clear line of descent for the Welsh patron saint. Schwyzer suggests that in *Poly-Olbion* the connection between the river Severn’s desire for unity and its support for Wales, ‘is revealing of the extent to which Jacobean pan-Britannicism and Welsh patriotism drew on precisely the same sources and discourses- sometimes with awkward results’.⁴⁸ Drayton has often been referred to as a ‘patriotic’ or ‘nationalistic’ poet. For example, Richard Hardin asserts that,

⁴⁴ PO IV, 375-9.

⁴⁵ PO IV, 9-10.

⁴⁶ PO IV, 246.

⁴⁷ PO IV, 85.

⁴⁸ Philip Schwyzer, ‘A Map of Greater Cambria’, in *Literature, Mapping and the Politics of Space in Early Modern Britain*, ed. by A. Gordon and B. Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 35-44.

it is especially appropriate that Drayton should deplore the neglect of history, for history is inevitably the domain of the patriotic poet. In any society such poets are called to two kinds of subjects: the deeds of great men, and the failure of the present to continue on the path of greatness.⁴⁹

In terms of Drayton's treatment of Arthur, this evaluation is flawed. Arthur is the figure of the past who receives the most praise from Drayton, and we might expect this 'great man' to contribute to a patriotic vision. However, Drayton consistently diminishes the efficacy of Arthur as a symbol of 'Englishness', or of 'Britishness' in a broad sense, by associating him consistently with Wales and the native Britons, which is a natural result of a topographical and antiquarian approach to the material, since in this tradition Arthur remained consistently associated with the west of the island, as opposed to the more generalised and less localised Arthur of the romance tradition that emerged from Geoffrey of Monmouth.

This can be examined in the context of contemporary discourse about Britain. The importance of the British descent did not end with the Tudors. The imagery of James's reign incorporated much of this imagery.⁵⁰ The king's Great Seal included Cadwallader's arms, held up by a Scottish lion.⁵¹ James himself made reference several times in his writing and speeches to his descent, via the Tudors, from Brutus, as part of his desire for a united 'Great Britain'.⁵² Other writers, such as George Hardy Owen, also emphasised this angle.

⁴⁹ Richard F. Hardin, *Michael Drayton and the Passing of Elizabethan England* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1973), p. 29.

⁵⁰ Kevin Sharpe, *Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

⁵¹ Drawings of the seal in Sharpe, *Image Wars*, pp. 80-1.

⁵² For example, in Audience of 21 April 1604, cited in Francis Bacon, *Works*, ed. by James Spedding (London: Longman, 1857-74), 14 vols., III, p. 194.

Poly-olbion is dedicated to Henry Prince of Wales, which, as with writing for Charles later, and for Arthur Prince of Wales at the beginning of the sixteenth century, could be seen as one reason for the Welsh slant. It also avoids paying any attention to the king. Drayton's alienation from the court and the literary establishment is well-known. He became disillusioned with the court after failing to find patronage with James I.⁵³ Jean Brink calls him 'the one poet of stature who was never recognised by the crown.'⁵⁴ Henry's court was an alternative centre for many writers, 'the focal point for a brand of Protestant imperial nationalism associated with the memory of Sir Philip Sidney, the Earl of Essex and Elizabethan chivalry'.⁵⁵

Drayton had previously written about the Tudors' supposed descent from the British line. In *England's Heroic Epistles*, Drayton fictionalises the relationship between Catherine de Valois and Owen Tudor (even though Katherine's courtship by Henry V was a more common literary subject), elevating and legitimising Henry VII's ancestry. In the poem, Drayton discusses Tudor's descent from Pendragon via Cadwallader.⁵⁶ There are two mentions of this in Selden's notes to *Poly-Olbion*, but it is ignored by Drayton in this poem. The intervening change of dynasty between the two works is undoubtedly the major factor, not only since there was no longer a Tudor on the throne but also as a reflection of Drayton's apparent disconnection from the court after James' accession and his disillusionment with the new king. Again and again we can see that Drayton makes

⁵³ However, Thomas Cogswell has cautioned against 'the assumption that Drayton, certainly after 1603, invariably thundered against the status quo and that his later work was always subversive', suggesting that his poem on Agincourt was in support of Buckingham's French campaign and demonstrates Drayton's mellowing towards the establishment in his later life. Cogswell, 'The Path to Elizium "Latently Discovered": Drayton and the Early Stuart Court', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 54 (1991), 207-33.

⁵⁴ Jean Brink, *Michael Drayton Revisited* (Boston: Twayne, 1990), p. 2.

⁵⁵ Curtis Perry, 'Court and Coterie Culture', in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, ed. by Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 106-18 (p. 115).

⁵⁶ Drayton, 'Owen Tudor to Queen Katherine', in *Works*, ed. Hebel, II, pp. 208-14.

artistic choices in *Poly-Olbion* that consistently hinder it from being read as a celebration of the crown and the court in general or King James in particular, repeatedly presenting a decentralised, rural and archaic celebration of the land.

In fact, the localising nature of the antiquarian project can be seen as generally in opposition to a nationalism/patriotism, particularly the form centred on the monarchy and the capital. On this basis Hardin calls him ‘one of the few articulate literary spokesmen for the Country at a time when virtually all the worthwhile English poetry belongs to the ambience of Court and City’.⁵⁷ Looked at from this perspective, Drayton’s great focus on areas of British control, and on the natural features of this history rather than towns, is not an automatic reflex of the material in his sources, but a deliberate choice.⁵⁸

Both Drayton and Selden identify Arthur as a British hero, whose antecedents and inheritors are the Welsh. To be sure, in a handful of cases Arthur’s name is invoked merely as a general example of glorious kinship, which could just conceivably be construed as English as well as anything else. However, Drayton’s chorographical approach, and Selden’s anxiety about using only contemporary sources, means that Arthur can only be legitimately linked topographically to Wales and the British south-west of England, rather than elsewhere in the island. Andrew Hadfield suggests that ‘the Muses are reminding readers that the integration of Wales was by no means the straightforward, pointless exercise it was so often assumed to have been, and that the union might still have painful

⁵⁷ Hardin, *Michael Drayton*, p. 136.

⁵⁸ Thomas N. Corns rightly suggests that the lack of attention to cities ‘may explain its commercial failure, since there is little to interest the Londoner, while regionalism tends to fragment the potential readership.’ *A History of Seventeenth-Century English Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), p. 109.

repercussions'.⁵⁹ The strong Welsh leaning of *Poly-Olbion*, and particularly the use of Arthur to strengthen the connection between the native British and the island of Britain, renders the assumption that Drayton is a straightforwardly patriotic poet problematic. Looking backwards in time is not the inherently conservative action it is sometimes presented as, but often something more radical. As Andrew Hiscock argues, 'instead of soothing the powers that be with conservative and nostalgic poetic visions, textualized acts of memory can deploy significant resources for political critique in which the present, for example, may be demeaned, deemed in need of revitalisation, rendered unstable as a cultural construct, or exposed for its lack of continuity with the organising principles of cultural tradition'.⁶⁰

5.4. The countryside and the city

As with Geoffrey and Gerald, Churchyard uses his knowledge of the natural environment as evidence for Caerleon's suitability to be a seat of kings:

From Castle all these things are seene,
as pleasures of the eye:
The goodly Groues and Uallies gréene,
and wooddie Mountaines hye.
The crooked Créekes and pretie Brookes,
that are amid the Plaine:
The flowing Tydes that spreads the land,
And turns to Sea again.
The stately Woods that like a hoope,
doth compasse all the Uale:

⁵⁹ Andrew Hadfield, 'Spenser, Drayton and the Question of Britain', in *Shakespeare, Spenser and the Matter of Britain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 137-50 (p. 148).

⁶⁰ Andrew Hiscock, "'To Seek the Place Where I Myself Had Lost": Acts of Memory in the Poetry of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey', in *The Anatomy of Tudor Literature: Proceedings from the First International Conference of the Tudor Symposium: 1998*, ed. by Mike Pincombe (London: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 34-43 (p. 34).

The Princely plots that stands in troope,
 to beautifie the Dale.
 The Riuers that doth daily runne,
 as cleare as Christall stone:
 Shewes that most pleasures vnder Sunne,
Carleon had alone.⁶¹

This is clearly based on the descriptions of *Caerleon* by Geoffrey and Gerald, as well as Churchyard's eyewitness. However, this medieval view of the town was very outdated by Churchyard's time. This passage demonstrates the nostalgic mode of *The Worthines of Wales*, praising it for past glories. However, it is also, for writers like Churchyard, and Leland before him, the appeal of the approach to history through the landscape; the past is never truly past. By emphasising the natural beauties of the landscape, the elements of the country that are unchanging draw the viewer back into history.

Drayton, throughout *Poly-Olbion*, shows a clear preference for the countryside over the city, and natural sites over the manmade. This preference is echoed in the maps which accompany each song, drawn by William Hole. The maps show only natural features, with rivers and hills predominating, depicted anthropomorphologically. In some maps there are figures representing towns. However, these are easy to miss at first glance, and very much secondary to the mythical and natural features of the landscape of Britain. The landscape of *Polyolbion* is full of mythical figures, leaving no room for contemporary people. The coast and rivers of Cornwall are described in detail, with far less mention of towns or buildings.

Drayton and Churchyard's attraction to the rural over the city reflects the changing nature England, and a desire to retreat into the peripheries and leave the city behind. In

⁶¹ WW, p. 32.

1520, 95% of English pop. (of 2.4 mill) lived in villages.⁶² Even with the extraordinary growth of the population of London in this period, this was still generally the situation by the end of the century. By 1650, around 350,000 people lived in London, 7.2% of the population.⁶³ Whereas the focus on the cities of Britain in the medieval chronicles was borne out of an insecurity and a need to assert Britain's worth, Drayton and Churchyard are making a statement about the worth of the island's natural glories.

A key influence on the work is the pastoral, which guides the ways in which human history interacts with the landscape in the poem. Drayton had explored the interactions between nature and song in other works, such as 'Endimion and Phoebe', 'The Quest of Cynthia', and 'Pastorals'. Like the *Aeneid* or *Georgics*, *Poly-Olbion* combines the topographical with the mythological. This same combination was also common in Tudor and Stuart pageants and masques (such as those of Jonson, Samuel Daniel and Francis Beaumont), which personify rivers and cities of England.⁶⁴

Drayton's Preface 'To the Generall Reader' makes it clear that he sees the work as being part of this tradition. Drayton laments those who

choosest to remaine in the thicke fogges and mists of ignorance... refusing to walke forth into the Tempe and Feelds of the Muses... through delicate embrodered Meadows... in which thou maist fully view the dainty Nymphes... which shall lead thee, to most pleasant Downes, where harmless Shepheards are, some exercising their pipes, some singing roundelaies, to their gazing flocks.⁶⁵

⁶² Stephen Bending and Andrew McRae, *The Writing of Rural England, 1500-1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. xiii.

⁶³ Roger Finlay and Beatrice Shearer, 'Population Growth and Suburban Expansion', in *London 1500-1700: The Making of the Metropolis*, ed. A. L. Beier and Roger Finlay (New York: Longman, 1986), pp. 37-59 (p. 39).

⁶⁴ On a later masque by Milton which shares these features, see Philip Schwyzer, 'Purity and Danger on the West Bank of the Severn: The Cultural Geography of a Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634', *Representations* 60 (1997), pp. 22-48.

⁶⁵ PO, 'To the General Reader'.

However, it is not just these obvious figurative accoutrements of the pastoral, the shepherds and muses, that influence the poem. It is the way in which the past remains present in the landscape. Lefebvre writes of representational spaces that they ‘need obey no rules of consistency or cohesiveness. Redolent with imaginary and symbolic elements, they have their source in history - in the history of a people as well as in the history of each individual belonging to that people.’⁶⁶ Pastoral as a genre does not rely on real, named spaces. Rather, it uses the representational space, the non-specific countryside, to create this sense of history belonging to the people. In this way Drayton has created a kind of native pastoral which is influenced by the chorographical tradition and connects the myths to the real land of Britain.

Judith Haber argues that ‘from the beginning of the genre [of pastoral], presence, continuity, and consolation have been seen as related to - indeed as dependent on - absence, discontinuity and loss’.⁶⁷ We can therefore see that it ties very closely into wider discussions of how place is perceived and constructed, for as noted above, these same contradictions are present in looking at place, defined by both continuity and change.

5.4.1. Rivers

Rivers are the feature of the landscape that appear most often in *Poly-Olbion*, and are also the most dominant feature in the maps. It is notable that they appear particularly often

⁶⁶ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 41.

⁶⁷ Judith Haber, *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 1.

in connection with the early British history. The first Arthurian reference in the text appears in the first song in connection to the river Camel (I 181). Drayton identifies the battle of Camlann, where Arthur is killed by Mordred, as taking place by the river Camel, an identification first made by John Leland. In Somerset, Arthur is linked to the river Parret, which is

The nearest neighbouring flood to *Arthurs* ancient seat,
Which made the *Britaines* names through all the world so great.
Like Camelot, what place, was ever yet renowned?
Where, as at *Carlion*, oft, hee kept the *Table-round*,
Most famous for the sports at Pentecost so long,
From whence all Knightlie deed, and brave achievements sprong.⁶⁸

The identification of the Parret as the ‘nearest neighbouring flood’ to Arthur’s seat is an example of the importance of rivers to the design of *Polyolbion*. As mentioned above, they dominate the maps, reflecting their dominance in the text. The strategy of telling the story of the landscape through which a particular river passes was a common one in sixteenth-century topographical writing. Philip Schwyzer sees this as ultimately deriving from Leland’s example in his *Itineraries*.⁶⁹ It was not, however, limited to chorographical writers, but was also adopted by writers of verse and drama, used by Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* and *Prothalamion*, and later Milton in ‘Lycidas’ and *Comus*. As Schwyzer describes it,

Spenser does not use the form to describe the human and historical landscape through which the rivers pass. Rather, his river-marriages supplant history with landscape, making the rivers themselves the source of narrative [...] [There is] no potential for disjunction between the present and the past: this is consummation without loss. History as we understand it is almost entirely banished from Spenser’s river poetry.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ PO III, 395-400.

⁶⁹ Schwyzer, ‘John Leland and His Heirs’, pp. 238-53.

⁷⁰ Schwyzer, ‘John Leland and His Heirs’, p. 252.

This description could as well be applied to *Poly-Olbion*. In *Poly-Olbion*, the course of the river directs the course of the narrative. However, the narrative impetus is geographical, not chronological. Since a river's course is always static, the events which happened at different stages along it at different times are linked together. Rivers are also used by other writers as simpler metaphors for knowledge, which is another reason they may be figured as narrators. For example, Walter Raleigh writes:

Certainly, as all the rivers in the world, though they have divers risings, and divers runnings; though they sometimes hide themselves for a while under ground, and seem to be lost in sea-like lakes; do at last find, and fall into the great ocean: so after all the searches that human capacity hath, and after all philosophical contemplation and curiosity; in the necessity of this infinite power, all the reason of man ends and dissolves itself.⁷¹

Wales is throughout the period of this study defined by its rivers. As discussed in chapter 1, Gerald frequently describes the country in terms of its rivers. In another early modern example, in *Henry IV Part 1* Glendower describes the country metonymically through its border-rivers:

Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head
Against my power; thrice from the banks of Wye
And sandy-bottomed Severn have I sent him
Bootless home and weather-beaten back.⁷²

They go on to divide Britain 'Into three limits very equally', by the bounds set by the Trent and Severn.⁷³ The rivers are seen as immoveable boundaries, since Hotspur complains

⁷¹ Walter Raleigh, *The History of the World* (London, 1614), Google Books, https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=9j7pI_EHRSAC&dq=raleigh%20history%20of%20the%20world&pg=PA400#v=onepage&q&f=false, Book II, Preface.

⁷² William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part One*, ed. by David Scott Kastan, third series (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2002), III. 1. 62-5.

⁷³ *Henry IV, Part One*, III. 1. 71.

that, 'this river [Trent] comes me cranking in/ And cuts me from the best of all my land'.⁷⁴

As discussed in chapter 1, rivers can symbolise both conflict and unity, as they are at once always there and yet ever-changing.

The rivers of *Poly-Olbion* are more than geographically associated with events; they are personified, Drayton consistently using verbs such as 'tell', 'say' to render them the keepers and narrators of history. In Song I, for example, the River Camel is the first of many rivers to tell its history, and this triggers the first mention of Arthur in the poem, as there is a short account of his death in battle against Mordred by the Camel. The Camel is

As frantick, ever since her British Arthurs blood,
By Mordreds murtherous hand was mingled with her flood.
For, as that river, best might boast that conquerors breath,
So sadlie shee bemoanes his too untimelie death;
Who, after twelve proud fields against the Saxons fought,
Yet back unto her banks by fate was lastly brought:
As though no other place on Britaines spacious earth,
Were worthie of his end, but where he had his birth.⁷⁵

Here Drayton describes the Camel, the site of Arthur's death, but also alludes to Tintagel (a few miles away) as Arthur's birthplace. This juxtaposition of the Camel and Tintagel as the two key sites of Arthur's life seems to come from Camden, who says, 'Et si verum sit Arthurum hic cecidisse, idem littus illi fuit fatale quod natale'.⁷⁶ It is presumably from here that Drayton has taken this link. Arthur's existence is pared down to two events, his birth and death, and to two places, Camlann and Tintagel, which become one through the device of the river. Removed of any extra biographical detail or historical background,

⁷⁴ *Henry IV, Part One*, III. 1. 95-6.

⁷⁵ PO I. 183-90.

⁷⁶ 'And if it bee true that Arthur here died, the same coast was destined unto him for his death as for his birth'. William Camden, *Britannia*, and Philemon Holland (trans.), ed. by Dana F. Sutton, <<http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/cambrit/>>, accessed 30/9/13.

Camden's coincidence becomes in Drayton's poem an intensely physical connection of Arthur to the river. The two key events of his existence, his birth and death, are united in one place, and the river provides a fixed place in this sense which the site of the battle and Tintagel, if just linked by both being in Cornwall, would not. All the deeds of Arthur's life can be condensed into the course of one river. In the passage about the battle by the Camel, the battle is not something which has happened; it is always happening. The river is used in the same way in one of the longest digressions in the poem, the account of Brutus' departure from Troy and his landing at Totnes.⁷⁷ At the end of the song Drayton links this area of Devon with post-Saxon British survival:

For, when the *Saxon* first the *Britans* forth did drive,
Some up into the hills themselves o're *Severne* shut:
Upon this point of land, for refuge others put,
To that brave race of *Brute* still fortunate. For where
Great *Brute* first disembark't his wandering Trojans, there
His offspring (after long expulst the Inner land,
When they the *Saxon* power no longer could withstand)
Found refuge in their flight; where *Ax* and *Otre*y first
Gave these poore soules to drinke, opprest with grievous thirst.

As with the Camel, rivers can unite two events separated in time. Drayton uses two east Devon rivers, the Axe and Otter, as a division between the area of Saxon dominance and the British west. In this way the landing of the first Briton, Brutus, is connected to the post-Saxon British survival in the southwest. As in the passage about the Camel, this connection is made physical through the waters of the river. The waters of the Camel contain Arthur's blood. For the Axe and Otter, the water crossed by Brutus goes to nourish his descendants. It could therefore be seen as representing 'blood' in a figurative sense; the liquid is in the bodies of Brutus' descendants that creates a connection of history and

⁷⁷ PO II, 310-506.

ethnicity between the legendary ancestor and the contemporary people. The landscape is intimately linked to the people who live there, and the rivers mean they are still present in the context of the text.

5.5. The locality

As mentioned above, texts focusing on describing smaller units than the country, such as the county or city, became very popular in the later sixteenth century. This represents a greater awareness of the individual's place in the world. Local identity did not have to work in opposition to national identity. Christopher Lewis has suggested that individual identity is best imagined as 'concentric circles' going outwards.⁷⁸ The Tudor period was a time of centralization, but this also entailed the rise of parishes and towns as units of local administration. In the case of the latter, the Crown used them to fulfil the functions previously fulfilled by ecclesiastical institutions before the Reformation, and 44 new boroughs were incorporated.⁷⁹ This led to the rise of urban elites and stronger civic identities. John Adrian argues that 'Although sixteenth-century parishes towns were strengthening their contact with and accountability to Westminster, this did not necessarily erode local identity. On the contrary, national penetration may have served to stimulate local self-definition'.⁸⁰ These conditions 'made the late sixteenth century the

⁷⁸ Lewis, *Particular Places*, p. 35.

⁷⁹ Robert Tittler, 'The Emergence of Urban Policy, 1536-58', in *The Mid-Tudor Polity, c. 1540-1560*, ed. Jennifer Loach and Robert Tittler (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1980), 74-93; Tittler, 'The end of the Middle Ages in the English County Town', *Sixteenth century Journal* 18:4 (1987), 471-87; and Tittler, *The Reformation and the Towns in England: Politics and Political Culture, c. 1540-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998).

⁸⁰ Adrian, *Local Negotiations*. p. 10.

perfect moment for the emergence of local consciousness [...] Whereas previous local identity derived primarily from insularity (i.e. a lack of interaction with the world beyond the village), people were now becoming more knowledgeable about other places and beginning to recognize and appreciate how their own locale was different from others.’⁸¹ This can be seen in the journeys of Churchyard and Drayton. Drayton’s imaginary tour of the counties, and between England and Wales, likewise acknowledges both difference and similarity.

The arrangement of *Poly-Olbion* and *Worthines of Wales* as journeys aligns them with works such as IK and the *Laboryouse Journey*, on the spatial end of the narrative spectrum. Richard Helgerson points out that, ‘However strong Drayton’s commitment to the kind of providential dynastic history favoured by Holinshed and his fellow “compilers”, he nevertheless chose a generic form that puts the main emphasis elsewhere.’⁸² Helgerson seems to suggest that Drayton somehow did this by accident, but there is little indication that he wanted to write a ‘providential, dynastic history’. Choosing to write in verse and using such obviously literary conceits clearly has an effect on how the reader is supposed to receive a work which in other ways relies on historical fact, and I will argue that this was a deliberate choice intended to distance himself from a nationalistic chronicle tradition. Verse was sometimes suggested to be antithetical to the writing of history, both in the medieval period and the Renaissance. Selden makes a statement along these lines, commenting on Drayton’s use of the story of Bevis of Hamton:

What credit you are to give to the Hyperbolies of Itchin in her relation of Bevis,
your owne judgement, and the Authors censure in the admonition of the other

⁸¹ Adrian, *Local Negotiations*, p. 11.

⁸² Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 140.

rivers here personated, I presume, will direct. And it is wished that the poetically Monkes in celebration of him, Arthur, and other such Worthies had contained themselves within bounds of likely-hood... The sweet grace of an enchanting Poem (as unimitable Pindar affirms) often compels belief; but so farre have the indigestible reports of barren and Monkish invention expatiated out of the lists of Truth, that from their intermixed and absurd fauxeties hath proceeded doubt; and, in some, even deniall of what was truth.⁸³

It was, conversely, argued that true events were not suitable for poetry: Philip Sidney, in his *Defence of Poesie* (c. 1579), states that ‘The Poet onely, onely bringeth his own stuffe, and doth not learn a Conceit out of a matter, but maketh matter for a Conceit’.⁸⁴ In Sidney’s view this gives the poet an advantage over the historian, since ‘for the Poet, he nothing affirmeth, and therefore never lieth... In troth, not laboring to tel you what is, or is not, but what should, or should not be’.⁸⁵ This is important for understanding Drayton’s purpose. He chooses both verse and a geographical scheme to allow for the multiplicity of voices that are not possible in a monologic narrative work.

The journey follows a logical itinerary around the country, so from one point of view is entirely practical (although unlike Gerald or Leland’s journeys, does not represent a real journey undertaken by the author). However, the overall project of *Poly-Olbion* is to create an imagined space, based on the interaction of space and time. Lefebvre’s description of space seems particularly apt in relation to *Poly-Olbion*:

The historical and its consequences, the ‘diachronic’, the ‘etymology’ of locations in the sense of what happened at a particular spot and thereby changed it- all of this becomes inscribed in space. The past leaves its traces; time has its own script. Yet this space is always, now and formerly, a present

⁸³ PO II, p. 47. On this idea in Pindar and in Selden’s other classical sources, see Louise H. Pratt, *Lying and Poetry from Homer to Pindar: Falsehood and Deception in Archaic Greek Poetics* (University of Michigan Press, 1993)

⁸⁴ Philip Sidney, ‘Defence of Poesie’, in *The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. by Albert Feuillerat, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965-7), III, p. 26.

⁸⁵ Sidney, ‘Defence of Poesie’, p. 29.

space, given as an immediate whole, complete with its associations and connections in actuality.⁸⁶

Although Drayton's use of verse perhaps gives him greater leeway in his analysis of what is 'true', it shows a clear line of the development from the historical and chorographical traditions of writing about the geography of early British history we have already seen.

The first Song of *Poly-Olbion* is about Cornwall and Devon. Drayton begins the poem by invoking his Muse, 'Thou Genius of the place (this most renowned Ile)/ Which livedst long before the All-earth-drowning Flood, / Whilst yet the world did swarme with her Gigantick brood'.⁸⁷ In the first lines of the poem then both classical and biblical allusions are made, demonstrating the confluence in Drayton's work of different traditions. Drayton mentions his debt to 'Carewes Muse'.⁸⁸ A marginal note explains that this is 'A worthy gentleman, who writ the description of Cornwall'. Richard Carew's *Survey of Cornwall* (1602) was one of the earliest county surveys, and a source for Drayton and for Selden. However, Drayton's approach to Cornwall differs from Carew's significantly. Carew describes the living contemporary county. Even his historical references are often garnered from local people; for example, Carew notes of the battle at the river Camel, 'For testimony whereof, the old folk thereabouts will shew you a stone bearing Arthur's name though now deprived to Atry'.⁸⁹ In contrast, Drayton's account has little interest in contemporary activity.

The historical material in *Poly-Olbion* is especially prominent in the first ten songs, which deal with Wales, the Marches and the southwest of England: not coincidentally, the

⁸⁶ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 37.

⁸⁷ PO I, 1-3.

⁸⁸ PO I, 217.

⁸⁹ Richard Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall*, English Experience: Its Record in Early Printed Books Published in Facsimile, 100 (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1969), p. 123.

areas with the strongest Arthurian connections. Arthur is the chronicle figure mentioned most often in *Poly-Olbion*. Looking at Arthur shows the self-contained, localised nature of the history in *Poly-Olbion*. Drayton feels no need to distinguish between competing traditions: each place's history stands alone and does not contradict or interact with that of others.

Unlike Drayton, Churchyard is interested in proving Arthur's existence through material remains. This is mainly the castles: 'the Castles (that stand like a company of Fortes) may not be forgotten, their buyldings are so princely, their strength is so greate, and they are such stately seates and defences of nature'.⁹⁰ He does use written sources, and discusses these at some length in his prose notes, but 'I haue not only searched sondry good Authors for the confirmation of my matter, but also paynfully traueiled to trye out the substance of that is written'.⁹¹ His eyewitness approach links his *Worthines of Wales* to the rest of his poetry, such as his military accounts, which are often autographical.⁹² Churchyard addresses the sceptical historians belligerently: 'Then you that auncient things denyes,/ Let now your talk surcease:/ When profe is brought before your eyes,/ Ye ought to hold your peace./ And let Caerleon have his right,/ and ioye his wonted fame:/ And let each wise and worthie wight,/ Speake well of Arthurs name.'⁹³ He believes in the importance of eyewitness above all:

I honor and loue as much a true Author, as I hate and detest a reporter of trifeling fables. A true Historie is called the Mistresse of life: and yet all Historyographers in writing of one thing, agree not well one with another: because the writers were not present in the tymes, in the places, nor saw the

⁹⁰ WW, Preface.

⁹¹ WW, Preface.

⁹² Barbara Brown, 'Thomas Churchyard and *The Worthines of Wales*', *Anglo-Welsh Review* 42 (1970), 131-9.

⁹³ WW, p. 17.

persons they make mētion of: but rather haue leaned and listned on the common report, than stayed or trusted to their owne experience.⁹⁴

Again, we see the idea that eyewitness evidence was the primary indicator of truth. Elsewhere, he states, ‘The eye is iudge, as Lanterne cléere of light,/ That searcheth through, the dim and darkest place’. This echoes the metaphors of light and dark used by Leland (see above, 4.4.1, ‘Leland and the locality’).

This reliance on eyewitness is a key difference between Churchyard’s work and Drayton, and one which also differentiates Drayton’s work from the other spatially-organised texts in this study. Churchyard has seen the places about which he writes. There is no evidence that Drayton had travelled much, and his material is taken from written sources.

This difference extends into the way the two writers talk about the landscape. For example, Churchyard describes what he sees at Caerleon. The Roman remains visible at Caerleon intrigued many writers. In Geoffrey of Monmouth’s time, they were still intact.⁹⁵ However, by Churchyard’s day only ruins remained. For Geoffrey, the grandeur of the Roman structures gave credence to the fact that Arthur’s great court was there, and closes the gap of time. For Churchyard, the ruins create a sense of distance, a mere echo.

Drayton does not talk about material remains, for as we have discussed he uses features that barely change over time, such as rivers. His connection of Arthur to more static features of the landscape, as opposed to human artefacts, means that the distance is erased. This is the main difference in tone between the two poems: Churchyard’s

⁹⁴ WW, Address to the Reader.

⁹⁵ Ray Howell, ‘Roman Past and Medieval Present: Caerleon as a Focus for Continuity and Conflict in the Middle Ages’, *Studia Celtica* 46 (2012), 11-21.

melancholic sense of the distant past, and Drayton's sense of a vibrant landscape still peopled with figures from history.

5.6. Conclusion

Drayton's influences are the epic, the romance and the chronicle, all genres which are usually organised on a chronological basis and depend on a narrative and the progress of time to achieve their purpose. By fixing Arthur to the landscape, Drayton removes him from time. Although Drayton frequently uses verbs of narrative in his references to Arthur (the land will 'boast', 'tell', 'sing' of the hero), the poet himself has to show rather than tell. The organisation of the poem privileges the spatial axis, limiting the narrative scope to individual events that can be related to a particular county, river or material object. The uses of the word 'sing' in fact evoke the epic: for instance, the opening lines of the *Aeneid* and the *Iliad*: 'Arma virumque cano', 'μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος', the latter similar to Drayton's instructions to his 'muse'. However, the lack of a single hero (although Arthur might be the closest to filling this role) or a single narrative means that it does not follow the conventions of this chronological genre.

Drayton shares this desire to find the 'truth' about Arthur on the one hand; on the other, he is upset by the antiquarian reliance on absolute proof. As Claire McEachern rightly says, 'For Drayton, to exclude the traditional and the customary for the sake of some pure standard of evidence is to commit another kind of anachronism.'⁹⁶ This

⁹⁶ McEachern, *The Poetics of English Nationhood*, p. 181.

opinion was shared by other writers. Carew was more in sympathy with the antiquarian style of history, but shares some of Drayton's doubts: 'though I reuerence antiquitie, and reckon it a kind of wrong, to exact an ouerstrict reason for all that which vpon credite shee delivereth: yet I rather incline to their side, who would warrant her authoritie by apparant veritie.'⁹⁷ For Drayton, native tradition expressed a less obvious kind of truth about the nation.

Given Drayton's criticism of the neglect of Arthur by English writers, it might therefore have seemed that Drayton would have undertaken an Arthurian epic himself, yet he did not. J. D. Merriman suggests that 'the new sense of historical fact had jostled uncomfortably against Drayton's conception of the story'.⁹⁸ John E. Curran describes this attitude as the paradox of the antiquarian impulse, which simultaneously laments the passing of the past, while trying to reclaim it. Curran argues that Drayton shows awareness of this problem in *Poly-Olbion*, and attempts to combine two types of history. He is both an 'antiquarian', who privileges sources and is willing to concede loss, and a 'monumental historian', unwilling to admit loss or forgetfulness, and glorifying the history of a people.⁹⁹ I believe that these categories are in a way a different version of the argument I have made about the relationship between Geoffrey and Gerald, or Vergil and Leland. Drayton's privileging of a spatial scheme over a chronological one puts the locality above the nation as a whole, the polyphonic above the monophonic. Writers who look at place on a micro level see historical fact not as a matter of true and false, but a way of ensuring that no versions of history are lost.

⁹⁷ Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall*, p. 2.

⁹⁸ J. D. Merriman, *The Flower of Kings: A Study of the Arthurian Legend in England Between 1485 and 1835* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1973), p. 31.

⁹⁹ Curran, 'The History Never Written', pp. 499-500.

Selden's notes work to some extent against Drayton's representation of space. At the beginning of Selden's notes, he acknowledges the very different standards set upon him from those of Drayton: 'If in Prose and Religion it were as justifiable, as in Poetry and Fiction, to invoke a Locall power... I would therein joyne with the Author'.¹⁰⁰ Selden was an antiquarian, which, as we have seen, is (and was) often defined in contrast to a chronicler and a historian as not writing a chronological narrative (see 4.4.1, above). Selden's method in his historical works was to start with the earliest reliable contemporary evidence and move forwards in time.¹⁰¹ This is the method he adopts in the *Analecton Anglobritanicon* (1607), a history of the governance of ancient Britain and England, and in the *Jani Anglorum* (1610), a treatise on the constitution of England. Both these works provided some of the basis for his notes in *Poly-Olbion*. Therefore, one might expect the conception of history provided by Selden's *Illustrations* to be based on chronology, and he does in fact show this instinct in *Poly-Olbion*. In the Welsh section, he explains, 'least (by reason of the Composition in Print) some pages should have been idle, and because also here is so much of the *Welsh* Storie, I inserted this Chronologie of the Kings and Princes of Wales, from Arthur, until the end of the British blood in them' (PO IX p. 198). The marginal note adds: 'I will not justify the times of this Arthur, nor the rest, before Cadwallader; so discording are our Chronologes: nor had I time to examine, nor think that any man hath sufficient meanes to rectifie them.'

However, the fact that Drayton has included Brutus in a geographical setting, not a temporal one, means that Selden has to engage on these terms. For example, in the *Jani*

¹⁰⁰ PO I, p. 15.

¹⁰¹ Paul Christianson, 'Young John Selden and the Ancient Constitution', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 128 (1984), 271-315.

Anglorum, Selden had already discarded founding myths of Britain: both the descent from Noah's son Japhet, and the conquest by Brutus. He notes there that, 'There are some very learned and very judicious persons, who suspect that the story is patched up out of bards' songs and poetick fictions taken upon trust... on purpose to raise the *British* name out of *Trojan* ashes.' However, in the *Illustrations* Selden cannot renegotiate the confines of the poet's structure and deny completely the elements of the mythological. This is not to say that he accepts Brutus' historicity. He says: 'I should the sooner have beene of the Authors opinion... if in any Greeke or Latine Storie authentique, speaking of Aeneas and his plating in Latium, were mention made of any like thing... and indeede, this critique age scarce any longer endures any nation, their first supposed Authors name'.¹⁰² He points out that he is not mentioned by Bede, William of Malmesbury or Gildas. On the other hand, he mentions that Brutus is referred to by Nennius and Taliesin. He gives other possible reasons for an affinity between the Welsh and the Trojans. There may have been intermarriage with Romans while Wales was a Roman colony, or Celtic/Gaulish tribes may have been in Asia at an earlier stage and might have reached Troy. However, he is willing to acknowledge the uncertainty and admit the evidence in Drayton's favour: 'Let me adde for the Author, that our most judicious antiquary of the last age John Leland, with reason and authority hath also for Brute argued strongly' (I, p. 23). This all may seem fairly conventional, since all these arguments have been heard before, in texts previously discussed. Selden cannot usefully in this format give dates to certain events. He also disregards his previously strongly stated rule about only using contemporaneous sources for historical events. Another interesting passage is Selden's comment on the lines about

¹⁰² PO I, p. 21.

Arthur's birth. Selden adds the story of Uther and Igerne, which Drayton does not mention, blurring the line between the credulous poet and the sceptical antiquarian. On Arthur's birth, he quotes Euripides, who wrote, νόθοι τε πολλοὶ γνησίων ἀμείνονες ('Bastards are oftentimes better than legitimates'), blending time and genre in the same way as Drayton himself.¹⁰³ The form of *Poly-olbion* means that Selden, and the narrative itself, cannot stay within the bounds of the chronological. The movement of the Muse means that he, and the early history of Britain, has to move with it.

Although Selden and Drayton use many of the same sources, their approaches to the material are different, since as an antiquarian Selden feels a greater responsibility to evaluate and criticise his sources. Drayton's approach is that of a poet, and ascertaining historical 'fact', however he understands that, is not as important as the wider truths about Britain he sees through his mythical/ allegorical reading of the landscape. As we saw with Higden and his editors, the establishment of a secure text meant that the work of a single author can be respected and maintain its integrity, while being overlain with another voice, that of the editor/ annotator, giving a different viewpoint; or more than one, in fact, since within Selden's notes he refers to previous authorities. *Poly-Olbion* is therefore polyphonic on a number of levels. On figurative/ allegorical levels, the personification of the poetic spirit, as the Muse, and the landscape as various mythological beings, means there are human figures available as mouthpieces. As Bakhtin argued, the application of dialogics to landscape writing allows us to hear many voices,

¹⁰³ PO I, p. 21. Euripides, *Andromache*, in *Children of Heracles: Hippolytus, Andromache, Hecuba*, ed. and trans. by David Kovacs, Euripides vol. II, Loeb Classical Library 484 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), l. 638.

and Drayton's vision is a literalisation of this quality inherent in telling history through the landscape.

The Worthines of Wales likewise takes a localised approach to history. Churchyard is inspired by the castles of Wales, many ruined, to ruminate on the British past. However, his concentration on manmade remains means that he is constantly aware of the passing of time, and his poem is elegiac in tone, lamenting what has been lost. By taking a more landscape-based approach, particularly focusing on the rivers of the country, Drayton's sense of the past is affixed to the land that can still be seen, and thus supersedes time. The legend of Arthur's messianic return is unnecessary, since he has never gone away. Claire McEachern suggests that 'Drayton's catalogue of English kings, sung by that monarch of rivers the Thames, has a certain what-goes-up-must-come-down quality, and owes far less to nostalgia than to a wry and unforgiving sense of fortune's spinning wheel.'¹⁰⁴ Kings who are recorded by history will grow old and be replaced, but it is exactly in Arthur's ahistoricity and atemporality that he becomes a symbol to connect the land of Britain to the traditions of the people who live there.

¹⁰⁴ McEachern, *The Poetics of English Nationhood*, p. 172.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to explore the relationship between sense of place and the writing of history. Identification with place is often a strong source of identity, and the working out of identity is often a motivation for writing history. It can also be used to assert the worth of a place. There is a strong sense throughout Western thought that place aids in the act of memory, which is so intricately linked to the writing of history. Place is an aide-memoire, sparking connections between the present and the past. The interaction between place and time in narrative is another key factor in its importance to the writing of history.

Legendary British history was chosen as a focal-point for this study, because it is a period which is lacking in written sources, and therefore was much debated across the medieval and early modern period. This means that place becomes even more important than in writing about later periods of history, as a source of verification and (in the case of imaginative works) of inspiration. The few sources were valued and reused, so the continuity in the base material of these works offers a useful basis to compare differences and similarities across a long time-span.

Chapter 2 looked at the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Gerald of Wales. They were both working with a limited number of earlier sources, notably Gildas and *Historia Brittonum*, which provided a limited amount of information about the British past. The two works seem initially different, since HRB is a chronicle, ordered chronologically, while IK and DK both cover Wales geographically. However, Gerald viewed himself as a

historian, and while some critics have believed him wrong to do so, approaching all writing about the past in terms of place makes the gap between his work and Geoffrey's seem much less significant. Using the model of placing all narrative texts on a continuum, from temporal to spatial, rather than seeing the two modes as oppositional, allows us to see all genres of writing about the lived world as somewhere on this axis. The difference is one of degree, rather than of type. Bakhtin's conception of the distinction between monological/polyphonic texts proved particularly useful, in that it opened up a perspective on how a more spatially-orientated work, such as Gerald's, presents a more inclusive version of history than the monolithic chronicle, by allowing for many more voices to be present in the text without having to make exclusionary choices.

The third chapter covered a wide period of time, and included the adaptations of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*. This chapter aimed to demonstrate how the writing of the early British history developed over time. Firstly, it examined the way in which place was incorporated in these texts and how this reflected wider currents of change in the understanding of Britain and its history. An important aspect of this period was the relationship of legendary British history to the nations of England and Wales and their changing dynamics. It also looked at formal developments in historical literature. The use of maps demonstrated many of the concerns present in the texts, and visualised concepts, such as awareness of the alterity of Britain and of the importance of cities, which were mentioned in the previous chapter. It also looked at the movement to print, and how the role of an editor like Caxton interacts with the original text. I argued that the idea of a static edited work, with an editorial voice, creates a multiplicity of possible voices and viewpoints that works in favour of a place-based approach to history. Alternative interpretations and evidence do not replace the original,

but can appear alongside it. This is an extension of the theoretical argument in chapter 1, that the spatial element in an historical work represents a less monologic approach to history.

Chapter 4 looked at the work of Polydore Vergil and John Leland. Their disagreement over the historicity of Arthur was less about Arthur himself (although national pride played a part), and more about approached to history. Examination of this debate showed some of the uses of place in history as a tool of verification, and how this complements the scrutinization of written sources, which were more readily available in print. As in the comparison between Geoffrey and Gerald, the different genres of Vergil and Leland's works showed again how a spatially-organised work orientates towards the local, and the recording of multiple traditions.

The last chapter looked at Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* and Thomas Churchyard's *The Worthines of Wales*. These works share strong similarities, in their interest in Wales, their use of verse, and their spatial organisation. They connect the act of memory to what is visible in the landscape. However, there are also a number of key differences. Churchyard dedicates his work to Elizabeth, and highlights the connection of the Tudors to the British past. Drayton, as I argued, avoids any glorification of the king, deliberately pitching his work in opposition to the court milieu. Perhaps most significantly, they attempt to bridge the gap between their own time and the early British history in different ways. Churchyard, observing the castles and ruins of Wales, writes a poem suffused with melancholy, aware of what has been lost. Drayton cunningly adapts the pastoral genre to create a landscape filled with living beings, and personifies the rivers of Britain, so a multiplicity of voices narrate the British history, closing the gap between the present and the past.

There is a continuing concern with Britain's place and reputation within the world, attempting to draw it into the sphere of world literature while maintaining its distinct nature. All the authors studied see something in the landscape that is peculiar and defining of Britain and its history. The awareness of its liminal position in relation to Europe gives a strong sense of its individuality and its distinctive nature. However, there is also a concern that this alterity and distance could be seen as making it lesser, or removed from the wider streams of civilised thought and culture. Therefore the writers attempt to draw it in to the sphere of knowledge derived from classical tradition. Nearly all of the writers studied make some claim about the value of British history in comparison to classical subjects, and assert the worth of insular history and places. The claim that the history of Britain is as valid as that of Rome is stated outright, but also enacted through Drayton's adoption of a classical style of poetry and his use of classical beings to adorn the landscape.

The relationship between England and Wales is also a key feature. As with Britain as a whole, there is the same concern in writing about Wales, among the writers who are sympathetic to Welsh interests, that Wales and its particular relationship to the British history should be overlooked or denigrated. The changing relationship between Wales and England in this period means a constant conflict, particularly in those authors who could be said to have divided loyalties. We can see that the desire to follow the cues given by the places associated with the early British history, and particularly the figure of Arthur, was in opposition to the desire to claim him as an English or pan-British figure. Of course, many of the texts in this study (Geoffrey, Gerald, Drayton and Churchyard) have a particular Welsh slant. Choosing a different selection of texts would undoubtedly give a different picture of the relationship between the two countries.

The city is most present in the earlier texts, despite the fact that the cities of Britain grew exponentially in size over this period. Gildas' 28 cities were taken up by other medieval authors, because they provided the clearest evidence that Britain had a civilization to rival that of Rome. The material remains of Roman culture, such as at Caerleon and Bath, provided eyewitness verification. As the towns grew in size, city surveys describing the contemporary state of the towns became popular, and as London was one of the biggest cities in the world, there was less insecurity that England might be seen as 'backward' or uncivilized. In the work of Drayton and Churchyard, we can see a deliberate rejection of the culture of the city, in favour of the rural and the memory of the past. The classicizing aspect favoured by Drayton is instead the adaptation of the pastoral genre. His use of the landscape, particularly the use of rivers as an anchor for the past, shows the importance of such fixed landmarks to a sense of place and the continuity of this over time, recalling as it does the similar importance of rivers in the work of Geoffrey and Gerald.

It is notable that in the historical tradition, the influence cast by HRB is very long indeed, and there is remarkably little crossover with romance. Drayton and Churchyard are as clear on Caerleon as the site of Arthur's most important court as Geoffrey and Gerald were, and sites such as Camelot and Avalon are rarely mentioned. The conception of the author undoubtedly changes across the period, but to a lesser extent than sometimes claimed. The respect for Gildas, Bede, Gerald and (in a much more qualified way) Geoffrey remains constant across the period, and the interplay between authors as they comment on, reuse and refine each other's work continues. When taking a theoretical view of the relationship between time and space in creating narrative, we can see how the two aspects cannot really be disentangled, and that place is central to the conception of

the past, and to the construction of narratives in all forms. In general, works that are organized spatially place a higher premium on eyewitness evidence and material culture than do chronicles, which privilege the written source. The desire of chroniclers to create an uninterrupted chronological narrative means that they need to make hard decisions about what to include and omit. The eyewitness culture, which connects in many ways to descriptions of the antiquarian impulse, does not have to make such definite choices.

The comparison of these texts, many of them formally quite different, reveals much about our conceptions of genre. The texts that are usually classified as chronicles, HRB, the *Polychronicon*, the *Brut* and the *Anglica Historia*, share a similar concern for creating a coherent narrative, beginning from the pre-Roman Britain. However, this creates problems when we attempt to take these works as 'historical' in the sense that they hold a certain truth-value. In Geoffrey's case, this meant constructing much of the narrative for himself. The chroniclers after him recognise this, but feel constrained by both the popularity of his work and, in Polydore Vergil's case, feel a begrudging obligation to meet the expectations of the reader, who will expect that Geoffrey's version of Arthur be included in a history of England.

This creates questions about how this works are read and understood. HRB was read by historians from its first appearance in manuscript, and debated as to how much of its material was true and how much was factually accurate. Yet if there were such doubts as to its veracity, why was it treated in this way? Even today, when it is considered to have little value as 'history' as we understand it, it is studied by students of 'History' rather than as 'Literature' (although it has surely been read by many purely for pleasure). On the other hand, PO and *The Worthines of Wales* are studied (if at all) by students of literature, despite the fact that PO contains much factual information beneath the

mythological apparatus, and *The Worthines of Wales* is an almost purely factual account of a real journey. These categorisations are revealing about just how much in the way of generic expectations the reader brings to the text, and how much these expectations overwhelm the reading. Geoffrey provides his history with a preface asserting his qualifications to write it, cites his source (albeit vaguely), and throughout the narrative maintains a stance of impartiality. Although historians at the time proclaimed they were not fooled, the generic trappings of a history is enough to have it argued over as history for hundreds of years.

The expectations that readers bring to the text also explain much about the later readings of the works by scholars, which have attempted to pigeonhole the writer into an expected role. The attempts to see Gerald and Geoffrey as either Welsh or Norman, as writing either for or against a particular political outcome, have largely been put to rest by more recent scholarship which stress the importance of understanding the unique power dynamics in a border region. Similarly, a quick glance at the frontispiece of *Poly-Olbion*, with its historical heroes standing around an enthroned Britannia, misses the real indications in the text that Drayton is turning his back on the court, the monarch and London in favour of a polyphonic depiction of Britain, away from centralised power, with all its rich regional diversity.

By pairing these texts and examining the tradition of writing about Arthurian legend across a broad span of time, it is possible to draw some broad conclusions about the different ways place and time interact in texts (although given how long and multifaceted these works are, there will always be points to contradict any summary). Chronicle writing about the British past was a tradition that exhausted itself over the period. Once the standard narrative became accepted, and especially once the medieval

chronicles were fixed in print, there was little flexibility in what a new writer could bring to it, as exemplified by the sense of exhausted exasperation Vergil shows in attempting to challenge the popularity of the Galfridian account. By the late sixteenth century, scholars had largely moved away from this type of narrative in favour of other areas such as chorography and legal history. Conversely, travel writing, in which genre Gerald was something of an outlier in the twelfth century, had exploded in popularity. Chronicles are not inherently backwards-looking, but are always moving towards the future. They thrive at a time of uncertainty, such as the twelfth century, when the power structures and the nation are new and still being defined. As the country becomes more centralised and more stable, there is less need for works that deal in conflict and the rise and fall of nations. In contrast, there is a strong sense of nostalgia in the texts that focus on the landscape as a means to understanding Britain and its past, and a stronger sense of continuity with the past. As the country becomes more centralised and homogenous, there is a longing to keep returning to the same spots and see what has remained the same. The traveller returns home, but time keeps marching on.

The longer timeframe of this study means that not all the implications of place in the different time periods can be explored fully, and some aspects were covered much too shallowly. In retrospect, the project might have benefited from being more circumscribed. There are some areas which would have been interesting to pursue further. It would have been equally interesting to pair some of these texts with equivalents from within Wales, and see how this effects a reading of the matter of Britain and its association with the landscape. There could also have been opportunities to make more of the book as a physical object. For example, this study has used for the most part single modern editions of works such as *IK* and *HRB*, which have extremely complex and interesting textual

traditions. Incorporating discussion of these was outside the scope of this thesis, but tracing changes in the use of place in these variants and their reception would be a fruitful avenue of future research. I have looked at the relationship between the 'original' author and 'official' editor, in the work of Caxton and Selden, but when looking at early books and manuscripts during this research there was much evidence of ordinary readers' marginalia, particularly in relation to place, which would be another avenue to pursue. However, I hope I have demonstrated some value in taking a longer view of trends in historical writing, by creating the opportunity to look at change and continuity.

7. Bibliography

Primary sources

Anonymous works and collections listed alphabetically by title

- Alliterative Morte Arthure*, ed. by Valerie Krishna (New York: Franklin, 1976)
- Annales Herbipolenses*, trans. by James Brundage, in *The Crusades: A Documentary History* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1962), pp. 115-121
- Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, ed. by B. Dombart and A. Kalb, CCL 47 and 48 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955)
- Bacon, Francis, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. by James Spedding, 14 vols. (Oxford: Longman, 1857-74)
- Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969 [corr. repr. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991])
- *The Complete Works of the Venerable Bede*, vol. I, ed. by J. A. Giles (London: Whittaker, 1843)
- The Brut or the Chronicles of England*, ed. by F. W. D. Brie, 2 vols., Early English Text Society 131, 136 (London, 1906, 1908)
- Brut y Brenhinedd: Llanstephan MS. 1 version: Selections*, ed. by Brynley F. Roberts (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1971)
- Brut y Tywysogion, or the Chronicle of the Princes*, ed. by Thomas Jones (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955)
- Camden, William, *Britannia*, trans. by Philemon Holland, ed. by Dana F. Sutton, <<http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/cambrit/>> [accessed 30 September 2013]
- Carew, Richard, *The Survey of Cornwall*, English Experience: Its Record in Early Printed Books Published in Facsimile, 100 (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1969)
- Caxton, William, *Caxton's Own Prose*, ed. by N. F. Blake (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973)
- *Caxton's Prologues and Epilogues*, ed. by W. J. B. Crotch (London: Early English Text Society, 1927)
- Churchyard, Thomas, *The Worthines of Wales* (London: G. Robinson, 1587; reprinted Manchester: Spenser Society, 1896)
- Cicero, *Cicero De Oratore Books I, II*, ed. and trans. by E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942)
- Crossley-Holland, Kevin, *The Seeing Stone* (London: Orion, 2000)
- Cuningham, William, *The Cosmographical Glasse: Conteinyng the Pleasant Principles of Cosmographie, Geographie, Hydrographie, Or Navigation* (London, 1559)

- De origine gigantum*, 'Constructing Albion's Past: An annotated edition of *De origine gigantum*', ed. by James P. Carley and Julia Crick, *Arthurian Literature* 13 (1995), 41-114
- 'Gigantic Origins: An Annotated translation of *De origine gigantum*', trans. by Ruth Evans, *Arthurian Literature* 16 (1998), 197-211
- Dee, John, *The Mathematicall Praeface to Elements of Geometry of Euclid of Megara*, trans. by Henry Billingsley (1570), Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/22062/22062-h/main.html>
- Drayton, Michael, *The Works of Michael Drayton*, ed. by J. W. Hebel, 5 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1961)
- Englynion y Beddau*, 'The Black Book of Carmarthen "Stanzas of the Graves"', ed. by Thomas Jones, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 53 (1967), 97-137
- Euripides, *Andromache*, in *Children of Heracles: Hippolytus, Andromache, Hecuba*, ed. and trans. by David Kovacs, Euripides vol. II, Loeb Classical Library 484 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press)
- Gaimar, Geffrei, *Estoire des Engleis/History of the English*, ed. and trans. by Ian Short (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)
- Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain: an edition and translation of De gestis Britonum*, ed. by Michael D. Reeve, trans. by Neil Wright (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007)
- The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth I: Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS. 568*, ed. by Neil Wright (Cambridge: Brewer, 1985)
- Gerald of Wales, *Giraldus Cambrensis, Opera*, ed. by James F. Dimock, Rolls Series 21, 6 vols. (London, 1868, reprinted Nendeln: Kraus, 1964)
- The Journey through Wales/ The Description of Wales*, trans. by Lewis Thorpe (London: Penguin, 1978)
- Gildas, *De calamitate excidio et conquestu Britanniae* (Antwerp, 1525)
- Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum (History of the English People)*, ed. and trans. by Diana Greenaway (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996)
- Higden, Ranulf, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden monachi Cestrensis*, ed. by Joseph Rawson Lumby, Rolls Series, 9 vols. (London: Longman, 1865-86)
- Hippocrates, *Hippocrates*, trans. by W. H. S. Jones, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1923)
- Holinshed, Raphael, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (London, 1587)
- Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*, ed. by W. M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957)
- *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. and trans. by Stephen A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach and Oliver Berghof (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

- Jones, Inigo, *The Most Notable Antiquity of Great Britain, vulgarly called Stone-heng on Salisbury Plain* (London, 1655)
- Joscelyn, John, Preface, in *Gildæ, cui cognomentum est sapientis, de excidio & conquestu Britanniae* (London, 1568)
- Preface, in Ælfric, *A Testimony of Antiquity shewing the ancient faith of the Church of England* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1675), available at University of Oxford Text Archive, <http://tei.it.ox.ac.uk/tcp/Texts-HTML/free/A26/A26478.html> [accessed 13 May 2019]
- Julius Caesar, *The Gallic Wars*, ed. and trans. by H. J. Edwards, Caesar I, Loeb Classical Library 72 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986)
- Kipling, Rudyard, *Puck of Pook's Hill* (London, 1911), Project Gutenberg, <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15976/15976-h/15976-h.htm>> [accessed 19 June 2014].
- Leland, John, *Assertio inclytissimi Arturii Regis Britanniae* (London, 1544)
- *The Laboryouse Journey and Serche of Johan Leylande, for Englandes Antiquitees* (London, 1578)
- *A Learned and True Assertion of the original, Life, Actes, and death of the most Noble, Valiant, and Renoumed Prince Arthure, King of great Brittain*, trans. by Richard Robinson (London, 1582), available online at University of Oxford Text Archive, <http://tei.it.ox.ac.uk/tcp/Texts-HTML/free/A05/A05297.html> [accessed 13 May 2019]
- *Leland's Itinerary in England and Wales*, ed. by Lucy Toulmin Smith, foreword by Thomas Kendrick, 5 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964)
- Map, Walter, *De Nugis Curialium: Courtiers' Trifles*, ed. and trans. by M. R. James, C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983)
- Marvell, Andrew, *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. by Nigel Smith (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2003)
- Morris, John (ed.), *Nennius: British History and the Welsh Annals*, Arthurian Period Sources 8 (Chichester, 1980)
- The Parlement of the Three Ages*, ed. by Isaac Gollancz, Select Early English Poems 2 (London: Corner, 1915)
- Raleigh, Walter, *The History of the World* (London, 1614), Google Books, https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=9j7pI_EHRSAC&dq=raleigh%20history%20oof%20the%20world&pg=PA400#v=onepage&q&f=false
- Rastell, John, *The Pastyme of People*, ed. by T. F. Dibdin (London, 1811)
- Shakespeare, William, *Othello*, ed. by E. A. J. Honigmann, Arden Shakespeare (Walton-on-Thames: Nelson, 1997)
- *Henry IV, Part One*, ed. by David Scott Kastan, Arden Shakespeare, third series (London: Arden, 2002)

- *Richard II*, ed. by Charles R. Forker, Arden Shakespeare, third series (London: Arden, 2002)
- Sidney, Sir Philip, *The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. by Albert Feuillerat, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965-7)
- Stephen of Rouen, 'Draco Normannicus', in *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, ed. by Richard Howlett, 2 vols. (London: Longman, 1885), vol. II, pp. 589-786
- The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, ed. by G. R. Elton, second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982)
- Two Lives of Gildas by a monk of Ruys and Caradoc of Llancarfan*, ed. and trans. By Hugh Williams (Llanerch: Felinfach, 1990)
- Vergil, Polydore, *Anglica Historia (1555 version)*, ed. and trans. by Dana F. Sutton, The Philological Museum, University of Birmingham (2005), <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/polverg/>
- Vowell, John alias Hooker, *The Description of the Citie of Excester*, ed. by Walter J. Harte, J. W. Schopp and H. Tapley-Soper, 3 vols. (Exeter: The Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 1919)
- William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. by R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998)
- William of Newburgh, *The History of English Affairs, Book 1*, ed. and trans. by P. G. Walsh and M. J. Kennedy (Wiltshire: Aris and Phillips, 1998)

Secondary sources

- Adrian, John M., 'Itineraries, Perambulations, and Surveys: The Intersections of Chorography and Cartography in the Sixteenth Century', in *Images of Matter: Essays on British Literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. by Yvonne Bruce (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), pp. 29-46
- *Local Negotiations of English Nationhood* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)
- Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*, revised ed. (London: Verso, 1991)
- Anglo, Sidney, 'The British History in early Tudor propaganda', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 44.1 (1961), 17-48
- Arnesen, Tor, 'Landscapes Lost', *Landscape Research* 23:1 (1998), 39-50
- Arnold, Christopher J. and Jeffrey L. Davies, *Roman and Early Medieval Wales* (Stroud: Sutton, 2000)
- Ashe, Geoffrey, 'Origins', in *An Arthurian Handbook*, ed. by Geoffrey Ashe and Norris J. Lacy, 2nd ed. (New York: Garland, 1997), pp. 1-55

- Ashe, Laura, *Fiction and History in England, 1066–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- Aston, Margaret, 'English Ruins and English History: The Dissolution and the Sense of the Past', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973), 231-55
- Auerbach, Erich, *Mimesis: the representation of reality in Western Literature*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953)
- Bachrach, Bernard S., 'The Questions of King Arthur's Existence and of Romano-British Naval Operations', *Haskins Society Journal* 2 (1991), 13-28
- Baker, David J. and Willy Maley (eds.), *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
- Bakhtin, Mikhail, *The Dialogic Imagination: four essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist, trans. by Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).
- *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984)
- Balasopoulos, Antonis, 'Celestial Cities and Rationalist Utopias', in *The Cambridge Companion to the City in Literature*, ed. by Kevin McNamara (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 17-30
- Barber, Peter, 'Medieval Maps of the World', in *The Hereford World Map: Medieval World Maps and Their Context*, ed. by P. D. A. Harvey (London: British Library, 2006), pp. 1-44
- Barnard, John, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain IV: 1557-1695*, ed. by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1-26
- Bartlett, Robert, *Gerald of Wales, 1146-1223* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982)
- 'Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31 (2001), 39-56
- Beal, Jane, 'Mapping Identity in Trevisa's *Polychronicon*', in *Fourteenth-Century England III*, ed. by William Mark Ormerod (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2004), pp. 67-82
- Bell, Maureen, 'Women writing and women written', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 4, 1557-1695, ed. by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie with Maureen Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 431-51
- Bending, Stephen and Andrew McRae, *The Writing of Rural England, 1500-1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)
- Bennett, H. S., *English Books and Readers: 1475-1557*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969)
- Berend, Nora, 'Frontiers', in *The Crusades*, Palgrave Advances, ed. by Helen Nicholson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 148-71
- Berthelot, Joseph A., *Michael Drayton* (New York: Twayne, 1967)

- Bhabha, Homi, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Biddle, Martin, 'The painting of the Round Table', in *King Arthur's Round Table: An Archaeological Investigation*, ed. by Martin Biddle (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), pp. 425-74
- Blanton, Casey, *Travel Writing: The Self and the World* (New York: Twayne, 1997)
- Bloch, David, *Aristotle on Memory and Recollection: Text, Translation, Interpretation, and Reception in Western Scholasticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2007)
- Boglioni, Pierre, 'La culture populaire au moyen âge: Thèmes et problèmes', in *La culture populaire au moyen âge*, ed. by Pierre Boglioni (Montreal: L'Aurore, 1979), pp. 11-37
- Brink, Jean, *Michael Drayton Revisited* (Boston: Twayne, 1990)
- Bromwich, Rachel, 'Concepts of Arthur', *Studia Celtica* 10-11 (1975-6), 163-81
- Brown, Barbara, 'Thomas Churchyard and *The Worthines of Wales*', *Anglo-Welsh Review* 42 (1970), 131-9
- Burt, Caroline, *Edward I and the Governance of England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)
- Carey, Hilary M, *Courting Disaster: Astrology at the English Court* (London: Macmillan, 1992)
- Carley, James P., 'Arthur and the Antiquaries', in *The Arthur of Medieval Latin Literature*, ed. by Siân Echard (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 149-78
- 'John Leland in Paris: the evidence of his poetry', *Studies in Philology*, 83 (1986), 1-50
- 'Polydore Vergil and John Leland on King Arthur: The Battle of the Books', in *King Arthur: a Casebook*, ed. by Edward Donald Kennedy (New York: Garland, 1996), pp. 185-204
- Carr, David, 'Narrative and the Real World: An argument for continuity', in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. by Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 143-156
- Carlson, David, 'King Arthur and court poems for the birth of Arthur Tudor in 1486', *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 36 (1987), 147-83
- Casey, Edward S., *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington, IL: Indiana University Press, 1987)
- Cawley, Robert Rawston, 'Drayton's Use of Welsh History', *Studies in Philology* 22 (1925), 234-55
- Chadwick, H. Munro and N. Kershaw Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932-40)
- Charles-Edwards, Thomas, 'The Arthur of History', in *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature*, ed. by Rachel Bromwich, A. O.

- H. Jarman and Brynley F. Roberts (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991), pp.15-32
- Chartier, Roger, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France*, trans. by Lydia Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987)
- — ‘Texts, Printing, Readings’, in *The New Cultural History*, ed. by Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 154-75
- Christelow, Stephanie Mooers, ‘A Moveable Feast? Itineration and the Centralization of Government under Henry I’, *Albion* 28.2 (1996), 187-228
- Christianson, Paul, ‘Young John Selden and the Ancient Constitution’, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 128 (1984), 271-315
- Cogswell, Thomas, ‘The Path to Elizium “Lately Discovered”: Drayton and the Early Stuart Court’, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 54 (1991), 207-33
- Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome, ‘Hybrids, Monsters, Borderlands: The Bodies of Gerald of Wales’, in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, ed. by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 85-104
- — ‘Green Children from Another World, or the Archipelago in England’, in *Cultural Diversity in the British Middle Ages: Archipelago, Island, England*, ed. by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 75-94
- Collingwood, R. G., *The Idea of History*, revised edition, ed. by Jan van der Dussen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994)
- Constable, Giles, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008)
- Convery, Ian, Gerard Corsane and Peter Davis (eds.), *Making Sense of Place: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012)
- Corns, Thomas N., *A History of Seventeenth-Century English Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007)
- Crane, Mary Thomas, ‘Early Tudor Humanism’, in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, ed. by Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 13-26
- Curran, John E. Jr., ‘The History Never Written: Bards, Druids, and the Problem of Antiquarianism in *Poly Olbion*’, *Renaissance Quarterly* 51.2 (1998), 498-525
- Curthoys, Ann and John Docker, *Is History Fiction?* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2nd edition, 2010)
- Das, Nandini and Tim Youngs, ‘Introduction’, in *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, ed. by Nandini Das and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 1-16
- Davies, R. R., ‘The Administration of Law in Medieval Wales: The role of the *ynad cwmwd* (*judex patriae*)’, in *Lawyers and Laymen: Studies in the history of law presented to Professor Dafydd Jenkins on his seventy-fifth birthday*, ed. by T. M. Charles-

- Edwards, Morfydd E. Owen and D. B. Walters (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1986), pp. 258-73
- *The First English Empire: Power and identities in the British Isles, 1093-1343* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- Davis, Natalie Z., 'Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion', in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion*, ed. by Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 307-36.
- Ditmas, E. M. R., 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Breton Families in Cornwall', *Welsh History Review* 6 (1973), 451-61
- Doan, James E., '“An Island in the Virginian Sea”: Native Americans and the Irish in English Discourse, 1585-1640', *New Hibernia Review/ Iris Eireannach Nua*, 1:1 (1997), 79-99
- Dray, W. H., 'On the Nature and Role of Narrative in History', in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. by Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 25-39
- Drukker, Tamar, 'I Read Therefore I Write: Readers' Marginalia in some *Brut* Manuscripts', in *Readers and Writers of the Prose Brut*, ed. by William Marx and Raluca Radulescu (Lampeter: Trivium, 2006), pp. 97-130
- Duffy, Eamon, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)
- Dumville, David N. (ed.), 'The Sixteenth Century History of Two Cambridge Books from Sawley', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 7 (1980), pp. 427-444
- 'Introduction', *The Historia Brittonum: The Vatican Recension* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1995), pp.
- 'The Historical Value of the *Historia Brittonum*', *Arthurian Literature* 6 (1986), 1-26
- 'Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend', *History* 62 (1977), 173-92
- Echard, Siân, *Arthurian Narrative in the Latin Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
- *Printing the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008)
- "“Whyche thyng semeth not to agree with other histories...”: Rome in Geoffrey of Monmouth and his Early Modern Readers", *Arthurian Literature* 26 (2009), 109-29
- Edbury, Peter W., 'Preaching the Crusade in Wales', in *England and Wales in the High Middle Ages*, ed. by Alfred Haverkamp and Hanna Volrath (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 221-33
- Eden, Peter, 'Three Elizabethan Estate Surveyors: Peter Kempe, Thomas Clerke, and Thomas Langdon', in *English Map-Making, 1500-1650: Historical Essays*, ed. by Sarah Tyacke (London: British Library, 1983), pp. 68-84

- Edson, Evelyn, *The World Map, 1300-1492: The Persistence of Tradition and Transformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007)
- Ellis, Steven G., 'Civilizing Northumberland: Representations of Englishness in the Tudor State', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12 (1999), 103-27
- Evans, Martin, 'Historians locate King Arthur's Round Table', *The Telegraph*, 11 July 2012 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/7883874/Historians-locate-King-Arthurs-Round-Table.html>> [accessed 19 June 2014]
- Evenden, Elizabeth, 'The Perceived Worth of the Printed Book in England, 1476-1575', in *The Oxford Handbook to Medieval English Literature, 1100-1500*, ed. Larry Scanlon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 90-108
- Faletra, Michael A., 'Narrating the Matter of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Norman Colonization of Wales', *The Chaucer Review* 35 (2000), 60-85
- Field, P. J. C., 'Arthur's Battles', *Arthuriana* 18 (2008), 3-32
- 'Nennius and his History', *Studia Celtica* 30 (1996), 159-6
- Finlay, Roger and Beatrice Shearer, 'Population Growth and Suburban Expansion', in *London 1500-1700: The Making of the Metropolis*, ed. A. L. Beier and Roger Finlay (New York: Longman, 1986), pp. 37-59
- Fisher, Matthew, 'Genealogy Rewritten: Inheriting the Legendary in Insular Historiography', in *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Medieval Britain and France*, ed. by Raluca L. Radulescu and Edward Donald Kennedy (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 123-141
- Flood, Victoria, *Prophecy, Politics and Place in Medieval England From Geoffrey of Monmouth to Thomas of Erceldoune* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2016)
- Floyd-Wilson, Mary, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)
- Frow, John, *Genre* (London: Routledge, 2006)
- Fulton, Helen, 'Arthurian Prophecy and the Deposition of Richard II', *Arthurian Literature* 22 (2005), 64-83
- Galloway, Andrew, 'Latin England', in *Imagining a Medieval English Nation*, ed. by Kathy Lavezzo (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), pp. 41-95
- Gillespie, Alexandra, 'Introduction', in *John Stow (1525-1605) and the Making of the English Past*, ed. by Ian Gadd and Alexandra Gillespie (London: British Library, 2004), pp. 1-11
- Gillingham, John, *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity and Political Values* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2000)
- 'The Cultivation of History, Legend and Courtesy at the Court of King Henry II', in *Writers of the Reign of Henry II: Twelve Essays*, ed. by Ruth Kennedy and Simon Meecham-Jones (New York: Macmillan, 2006), pp. 25-52

- Goody, Jack and Ian Watt, 'The Consequences of Literacy', in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, ed. by J. R. Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 27-68
- Gossedge, Rob and Stephen Knight, 'The Arthur of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Arthurian Legend*, ed. by Elizabeth Archibald and Ad Putter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 103-19
- Gransden, Antonia, *Historical Writing in England I: c.550 to c.1307* (London: Routledge, 1974)
- Grant, Robert M., *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980)
- Green, Judith A., *Henry I: King of England and Duke of Normandy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
- Greenblatt, Stephen, *Marvellous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991)
- Gurevich, Aron, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception*, trans. by János M. Bak and Paul A. Hollingsworth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)
- Haber, Judith, *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)
- Hadfield, Andrew, 'From English to British literature: John Lyly's *Euphues* and Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*', in *British Consciousness and Identity: the Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, ed. by Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 140-58
- , *Shakespeare, Spenser and the Matter of Britain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)
- Halbwachs, Maurice, *The Collective Memory*, trans. by F. L. Ditter, Jr. and V. Y. Ditter (New York: Harper Colophon, 1980)
- Hanning, Robert, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966)
- Harashima, Takako, 'The Narrative Functions of John Rastell's Printing: *The Pastyme of People* and Early Tudor "Genealogical" Issues', *Journal of the Early Book Society* 11 (2008), 43-86
- Hardin, Richard F., *Michael Drayton and the Passing of Elizabethan England* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1973)
- Harvey, P. D. A., *Medieval Maps* (London: British Library, 1991)
- Hay, Denys, 'Introduction', *The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil, a.d. 1485-1537*, ed. and trans. by Hay (London: Camden Society, 1950), pp. i-lxii
- , *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952)
- Helgerson, Richard, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992)

- Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton, and the Literary System* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1983)
- Hellinga, Lotte, 'Printing', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), III, pp. 65-108
- William Caxton and Early Printing in England* (London: British Library, 2010)
- Henley, Georgia, 'Quotation, Revision, and Narrative Structure in Giraldus Cambrensis's *Itinerarium Cambriae*', *Journal of Medieval Latin* 24 (2014), 1-52
- Herron, Thomas, 'New English Nation: Munster Politics, Virgilian Complaint, and Pastoral Empire in Spenser's "Colin Clouts Come Home Againe" (1595)', *Eolas: The Journal of the American Society of Irish Medieval Studies* 8 (2015), 89-122
- Hiatt, Alfred, 'Maps and Margins: Other Lands, Other Peoples', in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Literature in English*, ed. by Elaine Treharne and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 649-76
- Higham, N. J., 'The Chronicles of Early Britain', in *The Arthur of Medieval Latin Literature*, ed. by Siân Echard (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 9-25
- The English Conquest: Gildas and Britain in the Fifth Century* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994)
- King Arthur: Myth-Making and History* (London: Routledge, 2002)
- King Arthur: The Making of the Legend* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018)
- Hirschfeld, Heather, 'Early Modern Collaboration and Theories of Authorship', *PMLA* 116:3 (2001), 609-622
- Hiscock, Andrew, "'To Seek the Place Where I Myself Had Lost": Acts of Memory in the Poetry of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey', in *The Anatomy of Tudor Literature: Proceedings from the First International Conference of the Tudor Symposium: 1998*, ed. by Mike Pincombe (London: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 34-43
- Reading Memory in Early Modern Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)
- Hoskins, W. B., *Provincial England: Essays in Social and Economic History* (London: Macmillan, 1963)
- Howell, Ray, 'Roman Past and Medieval Present: Caerleon as a Focus for Continuity and Conflict in the Middle Ages', *Studia Celtica* 46 (2012), 11-21
- Howlett, D. H., *Cambro-Latin Compositions: Their Competence and Craftsmanship* (Dublin: Four Courts, 1998)
- Hulme, Peter and Tim Youngs, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1-14
- Ingledeu, Francis, 'The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*', *Speculum* 69:4 (1994), 665-704

- Jackson, Kenneth H., 'Once Again Arthur's Battles', *Modern Philology* 43 (1945), 44-57
- James, William, *The Principles of Psychology* (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1955)
- Jankulak, Karen, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Writers of Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010)
- Jones, Owain Wyn, *Historical Writing in Medieval Wales*, unpublished PhD thesis (Bangor University, 2013)
- Jones, Thomas, 'The Early Evolution of the Legend of Arthur', trans. by Gerald Morgan, *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 8 (1964), 3-21
- Kastan, David Scott, "A rarity most beloved": Shakespeare and the Idea of Tragedy', in *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works*, I, ed. by Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 5-22
- Kennedy, Ruth and Simon Meecham-Jones (eds.), *Authority and Subjugation in Writing of Medieval Wales* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
- Kerrigan, William, 'The Articulation of the Ego in the English Renaissance', in *The Literary Freud: Mechanisms of Defence and Poetic Will*, ed. by Joseph H. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 261-308
- Keys, David, 'Nameplate leads trail to court of King Arthur', *The Independent*, 7 August 1998 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/nameplate-leads-trail-to-court-of-king-arthur-1170072.html> [accessed 24 June 2014].
- Knight, Rhonda, 'Procreative Sodomy: Textuality and the Construction of Ethnicities in Gerald of Wales's *Descriptio Kambriae*', *Exemplaria* 14.1 (2002), 47-77
- Koebner, Richard, 'The Imperial Crown of this realm: Henry VIII, Constantine the Great, and Polydore Vergil', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 26 (1953), 29-52
- Lavezzo, Kathy (ed.), *Imagining a Medieval English Nation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004)
- , *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature, and English Community, 1000-1534* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006)
- Le Goff, Jacques, *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980)
- Leckie, R. William Jr, *The Passage of Dominion: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Periodization of Insular History in the Twelfth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981)
- Lefebvre, Henri, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991)
- Lewis, Christopher, *Particular Places: Introduction to English Local History* (London: British Library, 1989)
- Lloyd, J. E., 'Geoffrey of Monmouth', *English Historical Review* 57 (1942), 460-8

- A *History of Wales from the earliest times to the Edwardian Conquest*, 2 vols. (London, 1911)
- Lloyd, Scott, *The Arthurian Topography of Wales* (unpublished MPhil Thesis, Aberystwyth University, 2009)
- Lloyd-Morgan, Ceridwen, 'Welsh Tradition in Calais: Elis Gruffydd and his Biography of King Arthur', in *The Fortunes of King Arthur*, ed. by Norris J. Lacy, *Arthurian Studies* LXIV (Cambridge: Brewer, 2005), pp. 77-91
- London, Bette, *Writing Double: Women's Literary Partnerships* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999)
- Love, Harold, 'Oral and Scribal Texts in Early Modern England', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain IV: 1557-1695*, ed. by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 97-121
- Lucas, Scott, 'The Suppressed Edition and the Creation of the "Orthodox" Mirror for Magistrates', *Renaissance Papers 1994*, edited by Barbara J. Baines and George Walton Williams (Raleigh: Southeastern Renaissance Conference, 1995), 31-54
- Marotti, Arthur, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986)
- Manuscript, Print and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995)
- Martindale, Joanna (ed.), *English Humanism: Wyatt to Cowley* (London: Croom Helm, 1985)
- Marvin, Julia, *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle: An edition and translation* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006)
- Matheson, Lister M., 'King Arthur and the Medieval English Chronicles', in *King Arthur through the Ages*, ed. by Valerie M. Lagorio and Mildred Leake Day, 2 vols. (New York: Garland, 1990), vol. 1, pp. 248-74
- *The Prose Brut: the development of a Middle English chronicle* (Tempe, AZ: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998)
- McLaren, Mary-Rose, *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: A Revolution in English Writing* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2002)
- McDowell, Michael J., 'The Bakhtian Road to Ecological Insight', in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, ed. by Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm (Athens GA: University of Georgia Press, 1996), pp. 371-91
- McEachern, Claire, *The Poetics of English Nationhood, 1590-1612* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- McRae, Andrew, *Literature and Domestic Travel in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)
- 'The peripatetic muse: internal travel and the cultural production of space in pre-revolutionary England', in *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the*

- Politics of Culture, 1550-1850*, ed. by Gerald MacLean, Donna Landry, Joseph P. Ward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 41-57
- Merrills, A. H., *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)
- Merriman, J. D., *The Flower of Kings: A Study of the Arthurian Legend in England Between 1485 and 1835* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1973)
- Miller, Molly, 'Geoffrey's Early Royal Synchronisms', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 28 (1979), 373-89
- Miller, Peter, 'Major Trends in European Antiquarianism, Petrarch to Peiresc', in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, 5 vols., ed. by Jose Rabasa et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011-), V, pp. 244-60
- Millican, E. B., *Spenser and the Table Round* (London: Cass, 1967)
- Mink, Louis O., 'Narrative form as a cognitive instrument', in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. by Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 211-20
- Morrow, Glenn, 'Comments on White's "Logic of Historical Narration"' in *Philosophy and History: A Symposium*, ed. by S. Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1963), pp. 286-90
- Mottram, Stewart, *Empire and Nation in Early English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2008)
- Mottram, Stewart and Sarah Prescott, 'Introduction', in *Writing Wales, from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 1-17
- Muchembled, Robert, *Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France, 1400-1750*, trans. by Lydia Cochrane (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978)
- Narain, Jaya, 'Camelot was in WIGAN? Author names this street as the probable site of the court of King Arthur', *The Daily Mail*, 26 March 2014 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2589711/Was-Camelot-built-WIGAN-Historian-claims-site-King-Arthurs-castle-end-Lancashire-cul-sac.html>> [accessed 19 June 2014]
- Nelson, Lynn H., *The Normans in South Wales, 1070-1171* (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1966)
- Nichols, Stephen G., 'Fission and Fusion: Mediations of Power in Medieval History and Literature', *Yale French Studies* 70 (1986), 21-41
- O'Loughlin, Thomas, 'An Early Thirteenth Century Map in Dublin: A Window Into the World of Giraldus Cambrensis', *Imago Mundi* 51 (1999), 24-39
- Oliver, T., 'CPRE calls for deeds not words', *Conservation Bulletin* 54 (2007), 6-8
- Otter, Monika, *Inventiones: Fiction and Referentiality in Twelfth-Century English Historical Writing* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996)
- Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>

- Padel, Oliver J., *Arthur in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000)
- ‘Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall’, *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 8 (1984), 1–28
- ‘The Nature of Arthur’, *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 27 (1994), 1–31
- ‘Some south-western sites with Arthurian associations’, in *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian legend in medieval Welsh literature*, ed. by Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman, and Brynley F. Roberts, *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages* 1 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991), pp. 229–248
- Partner, Nancy, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977)
- Patterson, Annabel, *Reading Holinshed’s Chronicles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
- Perry, Curtis, ‘Court and Coterie Culture’, in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, ed. by Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 106–18
- Phythian-Adams, Charles, *Re-thinking English Local History* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987)
- Pohl, Walter, ‘Genealogy: A Comparative Perspective from the Early Medieval West’, in *Meanings of Community across Medieval Eurasia: Comparative Approaches*, ed. by Eirik Hovden, Christina Lutter and Walter Pohl (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 232–70
- Pratt, Louise H., *Lying and Poetry from Homer to Pindar: Falsehood and Deception in Archaic Greek Poetics* (University of Michigan Press, 1993)
- Prescott, Anne Lake, ‘Marginal Discourse: Drayton’s Muse and Selden’s “Story”’, *Studies in Philology* 88. 3 (1991), 307–28
- Pryce, Huw, ‘Gerald’s Journey through Wales’, *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History* 6 (1989), 17–34
- ‘Gerald of Wales, Gildas and the *Descriptio Kambriae*’, *Studies in Medieval Celtic History and Law in Honour of Thomas Charles-Edwards*, ed. by Fiona Edmonds and Paul Russell (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), pp. 115–24
- Ray, Roger, ‘Bede’s *Vera Lex Historiae*’, *Speculum* 55 (1980), 1–21
- Relph, E., *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976)
- Rhodes, Dennis E., ‘The First Edition of Gildas’, *The Library*, 6th series, 1 (1979), 355–60
- Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith, *Narrative Fiction*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002)
- Roberts, Geoffrey, ‘Introduction: The History and Narrative Debate, 1960–2000’, in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. by Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 1–22

- Roberts, Peter, 'Tudor Wales, national identity and the British inheritance', in *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, ed. by Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 8-42 (p. 8)
- Rollo, David, *Glamorous Sorcery: Magic and Literacy in the High Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)
- Rooney, Catherine, *The Manuscripts of Gerald of Wales*, unpublished PhD thesis (University of Cambridge, 2005)
- Rouse, Robert and Cory Rushton, *The Medieval Quest for Arthur* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005)
- Samuel, Raphael, *Theatres of Memory*, vol. I: *Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London: Verso, 1994).
- Sanford, Rhonda Lemke, *Maps and Memory in Early Modern England: A Sense of Place* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002)
- Schmitt, Jean-Claude, *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children since the Thirteenth Century*, trans. by Martin Thom, Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983)
- Schwytzer, Philip, 'British history and "The British History": The same old story?', in David J. Baker and Willy Maley (eds), *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 11-23
- 'John Leland and His Heirs: The Topography of England', in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature*, ed. by Mike Pincombe and Cathy Shrank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 238-53
- 'A Map of Greater Cambria', in *Literature, Mapping and the Politics of Space in Early Modern Britain*, ed. by A. Gordon and B. Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 35-44
- 'Purity and Danger on the West Bank of the Severn: The Cultural Geography of a Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634', *Representations* 60 (1997), pp. 22-48
- Shapin, Steven, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994)
- Sharpe, Kevin, *Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010)
- Sherman, William H., 'Stirrings and Searchings (1500-1720)', in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 17-36
- Shwartz, Susan M., 'The Founding and Self-Betrayal of Britain: An Augustinian Approach to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 10 (1981), 33-53
- Simpson, James, 'Diachronic history and the shortcomings of medieval studies', in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 17-30

- Smith, D. K., *The Cartographic Imagination in Early Modern England* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008),
- Smith, Julia M. H., 'Oral and Written: Saints, Miracles, and Relics in Brittany, c. 850-1250', *Speculum* 65 (1990), 309-43.
- Sonnesyn, Sigbjorn Olsen, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012)
- Spiegel, Gabrielle, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999)
- Stacey, Robin Chapman, 'Texts and Society', in *After Rome*, ed. by Thomas Charles-Edwards, *The Short Oxford History of the British Isles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 251-57
- Starkey, David, 'King Arthur and King Henry', *Arthurian Literature* 16 (1998), 171-96
- Storey, David, 'Land, Territory and Identity', in *Making Sense of Place: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. by Ian Convery, Gerard Corsane and Peter Davis (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012), pp. 11-22
- Stratford, Jenny, 'The early royal collections and the Royal Library to 1461', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp, 5 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), III, pp. 255-66
- Summit, Jennifer, 'Leland's Itinerary and the remains of the medieval past', in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 159-176
- Takagi, Misako and Toshiyuki Takamiya, 'Caxton Edits the Roman War episode: The Chronicles of England and Caxton's Book V', in *The Malory Debate: Essays on the Texts of 'Le Morte Darthur'*, ed. by Bonnie Wheeler, Robert L. Kindrick and Michael N. Salda, *Arthurian Studies* 47 (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), pp. 169-90
- Tatlock, J. S. P., *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae and its early vernacular versions* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950)
- Taylor, John, *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987)
- , *The Universal Chronicle of Ranulf Higden* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966)
- Tuan, Yi Fu, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (London: Arnold, 1977)
- Teo, Peggy, and Shirlena Huang, 'A Sense of Place in Public Housing: A Case Study of Pasir Ris, Singapore', *Habitat International* 20 (1996), 307-25.
- Terdiman, Richard, *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993)
- Thompson, Carl, *Travel Writing* (London: Routledge, 2011)
- Tittler, Robert, 'The Emergence of Urban Policy, 1536-58', in *The Mid-Tudor Polity, c. 1540-1560*, ed. by Jennifer Loach and Robert Tittler (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1980), 74-93

- 'The end of the Middle Ages in the English County Town', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 18:4 (1987), 471-87
- *The Reformation and the Towns in England: Politics and Political Culture, c. 1540-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998)
- Tolhurst, Fiona, 'The Britons as Hebrews, Romans, and Normans: Geoffrey of Monmouth's British Epic and Reflections of Empress Matilda', *Arthuriana* 8.4, Theoretical Approaches to Geoffrey of Monmouth (Winter 1998), 69-87
- Turville-Petre, Thorlac, *England the Nation: Language, Literature, and National Identity, 1290-1340* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996)
- Van Hamel, A. G., 'The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth', *Études Celtiques* 1 (1936), 197-247
- Vice, Sue, *Introducing Bakhtin* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997)
- Walker, Greg, 'The Renaissance in Britain', in *The Sixteenth Century, 1485-1603*, ed. by Patrick Collinson, The Short Oxford History of the British Isles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)
- Wall, Wendy, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993)
- Walsham, Alexandra, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012)
- Warnock, Mary, *Memory* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987)
- Warren, Michelle R., 'Making Contact: Postcolonial Perspectives through Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britannie*', *Arthuriana* 8:4 (1998), 115-34
- *History on the Edge: Excalibur and the Borders of Britain, 1100-1300*, Medieval Cultures 22 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)
- Wheeler, Bonnie, Robert L. Kindrick and Michael N. Salda (eds.), *The Malory Debate*, Arthurian Studies 47 (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000)
- White, Hayden, 'Historical text as literary artefact', in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. by Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 221-36
- Whitehead, Anne, *Memory* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009)
- Wood, Juliette, 'The Arthurian Legend in Scotland and Cornwall', in *A Companion to Arthurian Literature*, ed. by Helen Fulton (Oxford: Blackwell, 2012), pp. 102-26
- Woolf, Daniel, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500-1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)
- Wright, Neil, 'Did Gildas read Orosius?', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 9 (1986), 31-42
- 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Bede', *Arthurian Literature* 6 (1986), 27-59
- 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Gildas', *Arthurian Literature* 2 (1982), 1-40
- Wylie, John, *Landscape* (New York: Routledge, 2007)

