Western Michigan University
ScholarWorks at WMU

Early Drama, Art, and Music

Medieval Institute Publications

11-30-2017

From the Romans to the Normans on the English Renaissance Stage

Lisa Hopkins

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/mip_edam

Part of the Dramatic Literature, Criticism and Theory Commons, and the Theatre History Commons

Recommended Citation

Hopkins, Lisa, "From the Romans to the Normans on the English Renaissance Stage" (2017). *Early Drama, Art, and Music*. 3.

https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/mip_edam/3

This Monograph is brought to you for free and open access by the Medieval Institute Publications at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Early Drama, Art, and Music by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.

From the Romans to the Normans on the English Renaissance Stage

Lisa Hopkins

EARLY DRAMA, ART, AND MUSIC

From the Romans to the Normans
on the English Renaissance Stage

EARLY DRAMA, ART, AND MUSIC

Series Editors

David Bevington
University of Chicago

Robert Clark
Kansas State University

Jesse Hurlbut
Brigham Young University

Alexandra Johnston
University of Toronto

Veronique B. Plesch
Colby College ME

Medieval Institute Publications is a program of
The Medieval Institute, College of Arts and Sciences

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

From the Romans to the Normans on the English Renaissance Stage

by
Lisa Hopkins

Early Drama, Art, and Music

MEDIEVAL INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo

Copyright © 2017 by the Board of Trustees of Western Michigan University

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
are available from the Library of Congress.**

ISBN: 9781580442794

eISBN: 9781580442800

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in, or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the written permission of both the copyright owner and the author of the book.

Every effort has been made to obtain permission to use all copyrighted illustrations reproduced in this book. Nonetheless, whosoever believes to have rights to this material is advised to contact the publisher.

Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
------------------	-----

Introduction	1
--------------	---

Part One: Legacies

“Bisson Conspectuities”: Language and National Identity in Shakespeare’s Roman Plays	31
Profit and Delight? Magic and the Dreams of a Nation	53
“A Borrowed Blood for Brute”: From Britain to England	71

Part Two: Ancestors and Others

Queens and the British History	99
Dido in Denmark: Danes and Saxons on the Early Modern English Stage	119
Valiant Welshwomen: When Britain Came Back	143
Athelstan, the Virgin King	167
Conclusion	187
Works Cited	193
Index	209

Acknowledgements

MANY PEOPLE HAVE HELPED in the completion of this book. I owe thanks to Richard Wilson, Peter Smith, Paul Hamilton, Timo Uotinen and the other members of the Kingston Shakespeare Seminar for letting me drone on at them about Athelstan plays, and to Richard for taking me to see the King's Stone; to Maddalena Pennachia and Iolanda Plescia for inviting me to deliver a version of chapter one in Rome as part of the "Shakespeare e la Memoria di Roma" conference held to commemorate the four hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's death; to Edel Semple and Ema Vryboulouva for inviting me to take part in their "European Women" seminar at the European Shakespeare Research Association conference in Worcester, which helped shape my thinking for the "Dido in Denmark" chapter; to Tom Rutter for help with the Prince of Wales's Men and for listening patiently to a version of chapter three ("A Borrowed Blood for Brute': From Britain to England") at a Sheffield Hallam 1590s day; to Dan Cadman and Todd Borlik for helpful suggestions about Brutes at the same event; to Adam Hansen for letting me sneak *The Lovesick King* and *The Queen's Exchange* into his "Shakespeare in the North" conference; to Paul Frazer for alerting me to some important material on *Gorboduc*; to Helen Ostovich for working with me on a collection on magical transformations which substantially fed into chapter two; to David McInnis for letting me read the paper on "Dethroning *Hamlet*: Denmark without Shakespeare" which he gave at the 2016 Australian and New Zealand Shakespeare Association conference at Waikato University; and to Mark Houlahan for inviting me to that conference. Matt Steggle and Domenico Lovascio both read the entire manuscript and made invaluable suggestions, and Willy Maley provided an invaluable reader's report. Working with Erika Gaffney is always a pleasure; like many others, I mourned the demise of Ashgate, but she has made the transition to Medieval Institute Publications seem completely seamless. Thanks too to my other Renaissance colleagues Annaliese Connolly, Colm MacCrossan, Kate Wilkinson and Richard Wood and, as

always, to Chris and Sam. Finally, this book is dedicated to the rest of the 48 percent who voted for the UK to remain in the EU, and to the memory of Mariangela Tempera, a good friend, an indefatigable scholar, and a marvelous dinner companion. Ciao, bella.

An earlier version of chapter two, “Profit and Delight? Magic and the Dreams of a Nation” was first published in *Magical Transformations on the Early Modern Stage*, edited by Lisa Hopkins and Helen Ostovich (Ashgate, 2014). An earlier version of part of chapter five appeared as “England’s Empire in Europe,” in *Early Modern Identities in English: Religion, Gender, Nature*, edited by Lorna Fitzsimmons (Brepols, 2014), 145–64, and an earlier version of part of chapter six as “Women and Land,” in *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare, Second Edition*, edited by Dymphna Callaghan (John Wiley and Sons, 2016), 481–93.

Introduction

IN HIS BOOK ON *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination*, Stuart Piggott notes that John Earle's 1628 *Micro-cosmographie* represented an antiquary as one who "likes Death the better, because it gathers him to his Fathers."¹ The antiquarians of whom Piggott writes were fascinated by the past and felt personally connected to it, and so too did many others in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries whose interest was more general than scholarly. In this book I discuss a number of early modern English plays set more or less in the period of English (or occasionally Scottish, Irish or Welsh) history between the Romans and the Normans. The years between the withdrawal of the legions toward the end of the fourth century and the arrival of the Normans in 1066 saw both the legendary Arthur and the more securely historical but almost equally famous Alfred, as well as Alfred's grandson Athelstan, not so well remembered now but a significant figure in early modern England. The fifth century onward also saw successive waves of invasions by Angles, Jutes, and Danes; at the end of this period, Britain had been transformed beyond recognition, and yet a number of early modern plays which are set during this period also suggest that there was nevertheless an underlying continuity.

There was a surprising number of such plays, though not all of them are now extant, which collectively constitute what Gordon McMullan has called "a larger theatrical project to interpret Elizabethan and Jacobean Britain through the reconstruction of a range of different pasts."² In addition to those I discuss in the course of the book, we know of lost plays on Vortigern, Mulmutius Dunwallow, Arthur, Estrild, Ferrex and Porrex, Guthlac, Hardicanute, and Earl Godwin and of one by Beaumont on *Madon King of Britain* (Madon being the son of Gwendoline and Locrine). Misha Teramura notes that "we find in Philip Henslowe's *Diary* that the Admiral's Men were preparing for a production of a play called 'The Conquest of Brute' (and perhaps its sequel) through the second half of 1598";³ its subtitle of "with the first founding of the Bath" suggests that

it may also have featured King Bladud.⁴ Paul Whitfield White observes that “Among the many lost plays identified by title in Henslowe’s *Diary* are at least five that relate to King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table,”⁵ and Tom Rutter has also suggested that the lost *Warlamchester* may have been about either the martyrdom of St. Alban or the revolt of Boudica.⁶ There was a particular propensity for performing Latin plays about English history at English Catholic colleges abroad, including *Mercia, sive Pietas Coronata* at Saint-Omer and *Aluredus sive Alvredus, Fatum Vortigerni* and *Emma Angliae regina ac Mater Hardicanuti Regis* at Douai (these can be translated as *Mercia, or Piety Crowned, Alured or Alvred, Vortigern’s Doom, and Emma Queen of England and Mother of King Hardicanute*). In this book, I will consider a range of texts by a variety of authors which collectively present a picture of the period from the Roman to the Norman invasions, including Drayton’s *Poly-Olbion*, Jasper Fisher’s *Fuimus Troes*, Thomas Hughes’ *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, R. A.’s *The Valiant Welshman*, Dekker’s *Old Fortunatus*, Dekker, Ford and Rowley’s *The Welsh Ambassador*, Fletcher’s *Bonduca*, Richard Harvey’s *Philadelphus, or a Defence of Brutes*, Samuel Daniel’s *History of England*, John Clapham’s *History of Great Britain*, Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Lear*, Middleton’s *Hengist, King of Kent*, Richard Brome’s *The Queen’s Exchange*, Anthony Brewer’s *The Lovesick King*, William Rowley’s *A Shoemaker a Gentleman*, Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton’s *Gorboduc*, William Haughton’s *Grim the Collier of Croydon*, Lodowick Carlell’s *Arviragus and Philicia*, Shirley’s *St Patrick for Ireland*, Henry Burnell’s *Landgartha*, and the anonymous *Locrine, A Knack to Know a Knave, Fair Em, Guy of Warwick, The Birth of Merlin, No-body and Some-body* and *Edmund Ironside*. Also, although I generally exclude from consideration plays written in Latin, such as Joseph Simons’ 1624 *Mercia* for Saint-Omer,⁷ I make an exception for William Drury’s 1619 *Aluredus, sive Alvredus*, since its 1659 translation by Robert Knightley as *Alfrede, or Right Reinthron’d* is in itself part of the ongoing discourse of English and British national identities, and I look also at a number of plays which though not set in the period before the Conquest did nevertheless contribute to the ways in which the ancestors of the English and British were conceptualized, including the *The Palsgrave, or the Hector of Germany*, *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, *Henry VIII*, *Tamburlaine*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Chettle’s *Hoffman*, and Dekker and Massinger’s *The Virgin Martyr*.

The story that plays set before the Conquest collectively tell begins with the Trojan prince Aeneas, supposedly the son of the goddess Venus. According to Virgil, Aeneas escaped from the sack of Troy carrying his elderly father on his shoulders and leading his young son Ascanius by the hand, though his wife Creusa became separated from the party and was never seen again. Aeneas had a divinely ordained destiny to make his way to Italy and there found a second Troy, but bad weather swept him onto the coast of Carthage, where Queen Dido fell in love with him and tried to persuade him to stay with her. When he eventually abandoned her, she committed suicide. Resuming his journey, Aeneas arrived safely in Italy, where he founded Rome and was eventually succeeded in its rule first by his son Ascanius and then by his grandson Silvius. Silvius's son Brutus, however, accidentally killed his father during a hunting trip and went into exile, searching for a land where he and his followers could settle. Eventually he found a country with no existing inhabitants, established himself and his followers there, and named it after himself: Britain.

In the version of events told by the influential twelfth-century writer Geoffrey of Monmouth in his *History of the Kings of Britain*, this is where British History starts. Brutus divided the island among his three sons, Lochrine, from whom England gets its alternative name of Logres, by which it is sometimes known in Arthurian myths (this is the origin of the Welsh name for England, Lloegyr), Albanact (who gave his name to Alba, later known as Scotland), and Camber, from whom Wales derives its name in its own language, Cymru. Lochrine's only daughter Sabren or Sabrina, pursued by her jealous stepmother Gwendoline, drowned herself in the River Severn (which supposedly takes its name from her) and thus became an emblem of the divisions between the constituent parts of the island. This story is told in *Lochrine*, published in 1595 as "newly set foorth, overseene and corrected, by W. S." and apparently a revision of an earlier play called *Estrild* written by the Babington conspirator Charles Tilney, executed in 1586.

Geoffrey then proceeds to tell a series of racy, circumstantial, and totally unfounded stories about a number of very colorful figures who, he claims, ruled or inhabited Britain during the period before the Romans arrived. Chief among them are Bladud, the father of King Lear, who supposedly built the Roman baths at Bath (where a seventeenth-century statue of him can still be seen), learned to fly, and died when he crash-landed on the temple of Apollo in London; Lear himself, subject of both Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1606) and the older, anonymous *King Leir*; and

his daughter Cordella, sometimes evoked as a precedent for female rule. The next prominent figure is Gorboduc, eponymous hero of a 1560s play by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, whose sons Ferrex and Porrex (also remembered in the anonymous *Ferrex and Porrex*) killed each other and so brought the direct line of Lochrine to an end. After a period of civil war, rule then passes to Molmutius Dunwallo (sometimes called Dunwallo Molmutius), son of the king of Cornwall, about whom the Admiral's Men acquired a play (now lost) in 1598.⁸ It was during the disputes between Molmutius Dunwallo's sons, Brennus and Belinus, that Elidure, the central figure of the anonymous play *No-body and Some-body* (1606), supposedly reigned three separate times; in some versions of her story Molmutius Dunwallo was also the father of St. Winifred, who is remembered in William Rowley's *A Shoemaker a Gentleman*. Leaping over a few rulers of less interest, we come next to Cymbeline, who in Shakespeare's version of his story had been reared at the court of Augustus Caesar and so brings us into the Roman period; he is succeeded in turn by his sons Guiderius and Arviragus, both characters in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* (1609) and also in Lodowick Carlell's *Arviragus and Philicia* (1639). A later post-Roman king, Lucius, is often cited as the first Christian king of Britain, though there seems not to have been a known early modern play about him.

In *Cymbeline*, the queen urges resistance to Roman invasion, and so too did Caradoc/Caractacus, hero of R. A.'s play *The Valiant Welshman* (1615), and Bonduca/Boudicca, the central figure of John Fletcher's *Bonduca* (acted ca. 1613 though not published until 1647). However, when the Romans did eventually leave Britain four hundred years later it opened the door to successive waves of invasion. In the story as Geoffrey tells it, first came Vortigern, a prominent figure in William Rowley's *The Birth of Merlin* (1622), and then Hengist and Horsa, the former of whom gives his name to Middleton's *Hengist, King of Kent* (ca. 1615–20?). The Saxons are resisted by Arthur, some of whose story is told in Thomas Hughes' *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (1587), but eventually triumph and settle in England until they in turn are threatened by the Danes.

The fact that there was not the slightest bit of evidence for the story of Brutus and his descendants did not stop people believing it, or at least affecting to do so, so that Thomas Heywood in an *An Apology for Actors* can ask "what man haue you now of that weake capacity, that cannot discourse of any notable thing recorded euen from *William the Conquerour*, nay from the landing of *Brute*, vntill this day."⁹ Particularly notable among early modern defenses of Brutus is *Philadelphus, or a defence of Brutes* by

Richard Harvey, brother of Gabriel Harvey and notorious as the target of the biting satire of Thomas Nashe. *Philadelphus* invokes the authority of Geoffrey of Monmouth to demand of the Brutus-skeptic Scot George Buchanan “who is most credible, he or you, a Monmouth or a Scot.” Harvey deals with the problem that the Brutus story had been pronounced entirely fictitious by Henry VII’s Italian historian Polydore Vergil by declaring scornfully that “A Brutan may iustly except against the witesse of an Italian,”¹⁰ though this does of course raise the problem that if Brutus was real, the British *were* Italian; however, even this can be got round, as Harvey delicately hints that it might just be the case that “the Brutans language was vsed in Italy in the dayes of Brute” (sig. B2v)—that is, perhaps the early Romans spoke Welsh, in which case we must assume that the change to Latin (and by implication to an effete Italianate identity) came later, after Brutus and his companions had left. Geoffrey certainly claimed that there was a linguistic link between Britain and early Rome, declaring that after Brutus came to Britain, “the language of the people, which had up to then been known as Trojan or Crooked Greek, was called British.”¹¹

It is a slight worry for Harvey that there is no written evidence for the story of Brutus, but he is confident that there once was, and that “If Brutes Chronicles had been preserued as well as Caesars ... then Caesar had been halfe a Brute” (sig. A4r). One simple reason for the absence of surviving records could be that “their actes were wrought in needleworke onely, and so worne out” (sig. D2v): perhaps, then, there might have been an early British equivalent of the Bayeux tapestry, showing Brutus’ accidental killing of his father Silvius, his subsequent travels and his eventual landing at Totnes, which unfortunately succumbed to moths. Or maybe it is a case of *chercher la femme*: perhaps the dons at the university which Brutus founded at Stamford in Lincolnshire neglected their chronicling duties because they “had by some Priuiledge got them wiues, and so forth: and had no leisure to do any thing but liue” (sigs. D2v–D3r).¹² (It is perhaps best not to enquire too closely who or what a “so forth” might have been.) Harvey concedes that the line of Brutus died out in England, and that Cadwallader “was the last king of the Brutans in the seate of Locrine. But, who can tell the genealogies of Camber?” (sig. L4r)—and even if no one can, “It is a dangerous position to refuse the offspring of Brute” (sig. D4r [2]). For Harvey, then, the Brutus story stands as an emblem of a securely established British national identity, guaranteed by an unbroken chain of genealogical inheritance. Other writers too use it in this way: Isabel in *Richard II* calls Richard “the model where old Troy did stand!”¹³

and in Jasper Fisher's 1633 play *Fuimus Troes*, whose title translates as "We were the Trojans," the British leader Nennius hails his fellow-warriors as "royal friends, the heirs of mighty Brute" (2.1.64).

Others, such as Camden and Samuel Daniel, were more skeptical about the Brutus story. Camden bows out of the debate with a wry "For mine own part, let Brutus be taken for the father, and founder of the British nation; I will not be of a contrarie minde,"¹⁴ and Robert Persons cheerfully dismissed the whole problem with a breezy "I for my part do feele my selfe much of the French opinion ... that so the ship be wel & happely guyded, I esteeme it not much important of what race or nation the pilote be."¹⁵ Daniel, though, declares in *The first part of the historie of England* that "though I had a desire to haue deduced this Breuiarie, from the beginning of the first British Kings, as they are registred in their Catalogue, yet finding no authenthical warrant how they came there, I did put off that desire"; in what looks like a coded rebuttal of the river-fixated *Poly-Olbion*, in which Britishness is a securely diffentiated ethnicity, Daniel ultimately concludes that "the beginnings of all people, and states were as vncertaine as the heads of great Riuers."¹⁶ Daniel's language also echoes James's; Jonathan Baldo notes that:

Citing the examples of England, once "diuided into so many little Kingdoms," and France, similarly "composed of diuers Dutchies," James helped map a course of assimilation and erasure for the various cultures and nations of the British isles: "For euen as little brookes lose their names by their running and falling into great Riuers, and the very name and memorie of the great Riuers swallowed vp in the Ocean: so by the coniunction of diuers little Kingdomes in one, are all these priuate differences and questions swallowed vp."¹⁷

In *Poly-Olbion*, rivers—particularly the Severn—form one of the most important links to the Brutus story, and Max Adams notes that "Two of the most important royal inauguration sites in Britain, at Scone and at Kingston in Surrey, were located on tidal reaches at, respectively, the Rivers Tay and Thames."¹⁸ For both Daniel and James, though, the constant flow of rivers can be made to speak not of continuity but rather of a process of dissolving which images the past as either irretrievably lost or fundamentally uncertain.

It was also an unfortunate coincidence that the name Brutus should naturally abbreviate itself to Brute, a pun which is activated on a number of occasions with clear intent. Stephen O'Neill cites a poem called "The

Newe Metamorphosis,” attributed to Gervase Markham but actually by John Mott,¹⁹ “where the kern are compared to ‘brutish Indians’”;²⁰ Purchas asks “were not Caesars Britaines as brutish as Virginians”;²¹ and in *King Lear* Gloucester terms Edgar “Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish!”²² In Anthony Munday’s *The Triumphes of re-united Britania* the term “second Brute” is used so insistently for James that one might begin to wonder about possible irony,²³ and the same thought might occur in Peele’s *Edward I*, where Lluellen hopes that “kinde Cambria deigne me good aspect, / To make me chieftest brute of westernne Wales” (sig. C3r),²⁴ or in *Locrine* which has Brutus’ own eldest son say “they are beasts that seeke to vsurp our land, / And like to brutish beasts they shall be seru’d.”²⁵ Even those who doubted the truth of the Brutus story could not be unaware of its influence; but they might worry about some of its potential implications.

It is also a cause of anxiety that the Brutus story depends so much on the transmission of one person’s bloodline, because in a number of plays there is a kind of “last man” motif in that there is apparently only one true Englishman (and/or true Briton) still left alive. Arvirargus in *Arvirargus and Philicia*, Hengo in *Bonduca*, Nennius in *The Valiant Welshman*, and Porrex in *Gorboduc* all stand as the last representative of their families and heritage, and *King Lear* and *The Misfortunes of Arthur* also show the running out of a bloodline (it is notable that in *King Lear*, unlike in Geoffrey of Monmouth, neither Goneril nor Regan has children). Both Hengo and Nennius, who exemplifies both Britishness in its purest form and the loss of that Britishness, are also associated with Prince Henry, the eldest son of James I, whose death in 1612 was greatly mourned. Even in Geoffrey, “For eleven years Britain remained deserted by all its inhabitants, except for a few whom death had spared in certain parts of Wales.”²⁶ An authentic British identity may have been successfully transmitted, but it has been touch and go.

Geoffrey’s story effectively ends with the death of Arthur, but there were other (and more reliable) sources for later events, chiefly the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, to which the endeavors of Sir Robert Cotton had given prominence, and this was perhaps a period of even greater interest to early modern playwrights than the centuries before it; Lucy Munro argues that “For early modern writers, the Anglo-Saxon period was a locus for theories and anxieties about national, linguistic, and religious identity, and it could represent both historical continuity and fragmentation.”²⁷ The first great figure of this period is Oswald (604–42), King of Northumbria;

his story may have been partly reflected in the now lost *Play of Oswald* (1600?),²⁸ though that also seems to have something in common with *The Queen's Exchange* (1634?), Richard Brome's play about Bertha, the mythical daughter of the historical Kenwalcus, King of the West Saxons. Offa (757–96) is glanced at in one or two plays, including *The Queen's Exchange* and *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, but is not central to any, and another rather marginal figure, in this case more puzzlingly so, is Alfred (871–99), who is central only in *Aluredus sive Alvredus* (1619). The figure of greatest interest to early modern English drama, though, is Alfred's grandson Athelstan (924–39), who appears in the anonymous play *Guy of Warwick* (early 1590s?), Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (1599), and Dekker, Ford and Rowley's 1621 *The Welsh Ambassador* (in which his Welsh contemporary Hywel Dda, known as a great lawgiver, is also mentioned).

Of the Danish kings, unquestionably the greatest was Canute (1016–35). He is the hero of Anthony Brewer's *The Love-sick King* (1619?), while the story of his wife Emma was told in a play performed at the English College at Douai (1620), and that of his son Hardicanute (1035–42) in a 1597 play of the same name which is now lost. Canute's English rival Edmund Ironside (1016), son of Ethelred the Unready, also gave his name to an anonymous play (late 1580s), and Ethelred himself is very briefly remembered in the rather unlikely context of Jonson's *Epicoene*, where Truewit says to Morose, "If you had lived in King Etheldred's time, sir, or Edward the Confessor's, you might perhaps have found in some cold country hamlet, then, a dull frosty wench could have been contented with one man."²⁹ Hardicanute was succeeded by Edward the Confessor (1042–66), who is mentioned in Shakespeare's 1605 play about his Scottish contemporary Macbeth (1040–57), and who was of course succeeded first (and very briefly) by Harold Godwinson, whose father Earl Godwin was the subject of a two-part play (now lost) performed by the Admiral's Men in 1598, and ultimately by William the Conqueror (1066–87), the hero of *Fair Em* (ca. 1590).

I have called this book *From the Romans to the Normans on the English Renaissance Stage*, and yet some of these stories precede the Romans. There is, however, little or no serious attempt to imagine what a Britain before the Romans might have looked like; in *King Lear*, supposedly set long before the coming of Caesar, we hear of the Roman military unit of a century, as if it were impossible for even a playwright so imaginative as Shakespeare to grasp the idea of an England not shaped and conditioned by contact with Roman culture. The closest we come to pre-

Roman Britain is in *Fuimus Troes*, where there is a chorus of five bards and a harper, and we are shown Druid rites: “[Enter] Lantonus, Hulacus [and] two druids, in long robes [with] hats like pyramids [and] branches of mistletoe” (2.3.s.d.); however, part of the point of *Fuimus Troes* is that the British share a heritage with the Romans, in that both are of Trojan descent, and the play’s Britons and Romans are presented less as opposites than as two branches of the same family between which there has been no recent contact. Rather than seeking to make precise chronological distinctions, what these plays are primarily concerned with is scrutinizing a part of the past which they concur in regarding as crucial in the formation of English ethnic and national identity, and although the earliest and latest of the texts I discuss were produced almost half a century apart, they are part of a continuing cultural conversation which, although certainly subject to inflection, changes surprisingly little in essentials. The relation between England and Scotland is a question for Jasper Fisher in 1633 as it was for Thomas Hughes and his colleagues in 1587, and throughout the period Wales is seen as special in terms of its unique connection to ideas of originary Britishness.³⁰ Paul Whitfield White notes of Middleton’s dramatic treatment of the figures of Vortiger and Roxena that “In the 1620s (the assigned date for Middleton’s *Hengist*), this story would have played well to the anti-Spanish crowds at the Globe who detested Prince Charles’s flirting with the Spanish Infanta, but it would have been no less appealing in the xenophobic, anti-Catholic fever of 1590s London”;³¹ this multivalence of topicality extends to other plays too, not least because throughout the period Rome looms hostile, alien, and yet at the same time a point of origin whose influence must be constantly negotiated. The anonymous *A Knack to Know a Knave*, first printed in 1594, features King Edgar and St. Dunstan, though it makes no claim to historical accuracy: St. Dunstan, who died in AD 988, refers to “the Uiolets in America,” not reached by Columbus until 1492, and King Edgar displays an improbable degree of classical learning, citing Cynthia, Hercules, Polyxena, Troilus and Cressida, and Alexander all in the same speech.³² Although I shall pay specific attention to some watershed moments such as the marriage of James VI and I to a Danish princess and the marriage of their daughter to a German Elector, I shall, therefore, generally be putting these texts in dialog with each other, and my focus will largely be on what they can tell us collectively rather than on seeking to tease out the views of any individual writer (even if it were possible to do that).

In examining these texts, I have aimed to consider three questions. First, what awareness did late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England have of the differing ethnic identities of the early inhabitants of Britain, as manifested both in the historical record and also in the physical landscape, in the shape of tribal boundaries of the late Roman and post-Roman periods such as those which separated the territory of the Catuvellauni from that of the Trinovantes, or, later, the boundaries of the constituent parts of the Heptarchy? Second, what elements of this awareness can be traced in the literary (particularly the dramatic) writing of the period? And third and most important, to what extent are the discourses which accrue to those ethnicities and boundaries also implicated in the formation of ideas about early modern national, cultural and political identities?

In terms of my three questions, the answer to the first is the easiest: the awareness of tribal boundaries can clearly be seen. It was well understood that the England of the past had been separated into different internal jurisdictions: Drayton in *Poly-Olbion* declares that “it appears that there were three sorts of lawes in the Saxon Heptarchy,”³³ and Samuel Daniel speaks of “the Saxons, encroching vpon each others parts, or States (which neuer held certaine boundes).”³⁴ Stuart Laycock notes that “The element Merc in Mercia refers to a border, so essentially the name Mercia means “borderland,” something of which early modern linguistic enquiry is likely to have increased awareness,³⁵ and David Hill and Margaret Worthington note the attempts of John Speed to make sense of Mercia’s frontier with Powys in particular:

When Speed was attempting to draw the map for Flintshire, the local justices would not co-operate in providing the sub-divisions of their county, the hundred boundaries, leaving the map rather devoid of features when compared to other counties. So, for the only county in the series, Speed draws an earthwork that he calls “Offa’s Ditch”. This follows no known line of any earthwork but starts more or less where Offa’s Dyke terminates after which it trends across county to end, more or less, where Wat’s Dyke ends at Basingwerk.³⁶

Speed may have been wrong in specifics, but he was clearly aware of the importance of Offa’s Dyke and of its boundary character. There is also a strong sense of the importance of internal territorial divisions in Fisher’s *Fuimus Troes*, where Nennius says of Caesar:

For had he won this coast, yet many blows
 Must pass, ere he could pass the Thames. And then,
 Ere he touch Humber, many nations must
 Be tamed. (3.2.30–34)

Later, Mandubrace declares:

By me the Trinobants submit, and Cenimagnians,
 Segontiacks, Ancalites, Bybrocks and Cassians—
 Six worthy nations do desire thy guard. (4.4.68–70)

For Fisher, groups which we might now term tribes, such as the Trinovantes and the Icenii, are separate nations. Finally, a stage direction toward the end of the play informs us that “*The four kings of Kent march over the stage*” (5.4.1 sd), suggesting that even Kent is not a single entity.³⁷

There was also a strong sense of physical demarcations between these different territories, which for Daniel are:

Intrenchments, Mounts and Borroughs raised for tombes and
 defences vpon all the wide champions [champaigns] and eminent hills
 of this Isle, remayning yet as the characters of the deepe scratches
 made on the whole face of our country, to shew the hard labour our
 Progenitors endured to get it for vs.³⁸

In particular, Lloyd and Jennifer Laing observe that:

The greatest single achievement of middle Saxon England was the construction of the great linear earthworks of Wat’s and Offa’s Dykes. These Mercian frontier works along the border with Wales were not the only dykes found in post-Roman Britain, but they were certainly the most ambitious. Similar territorial boundaries had been built in East Anglia (including the Devil’s Ditch on Newmarket Heath) and in the south-west (Wansdyke) in the early centuries following the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in England, but they were slight compared with the Mercian frontier works.³⁹

Wansdyke in Wiltshire especially, which modern archaeology confirms as “a huge linear defensive earthwork probably separating the territory of the Belgae from that of the Dobunni” on either side of which are traces of sharply different cultural patterns,⁴⁰ was understood as a territory demarcation. For Robert Callis, in a reading delivered in 1622, it “serves for a division of countreys,”⁴¹ for John Speed the West Saxons “assigned their limits by a great and long ditch crossing thorow the midst of these Plaines,

which for the wonder thereof is supposed by the vulgar to be the worke of the Deuill, and is called of all, Wansdike, vndoubtedly of Woden,”⁴² and Camden declares of Wansdyke “I have alwaies beene perswaded, that the Saxons made it, as a limite to divide the two Kingdomes of the Mercians, and West-Saxons asunder” and similarly sees Offa’s Dyke as dividing the Britons from the Mercians (he speaks too of dykes in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk which divided East-Angles from Mercians).⁴³ It was, then, well understood that England retained the traces of ancient physical borders which had once divided the territory of different tribes from each other; as King James asked Parliament in 1606, “Do we not yet remember, that this kingdom was divided into seven little kingdoms, besides Wales?”⁴⁴

More interesting than the simple fact of such recognition, though, is the affective tonality of the terms in which it is registered, for to what might be simple factual description of physical features, other notes accrue. For Daniel, the geographical is seen insistently if implicitly in terms of the human. Not only does he read “Intrenchments, Mounts and Borroughs” as bespeaking buried human bodies, but they are “scars” on the “face” of the country, and the idea that they “shew the hard labour our Progenitors endured to get it for vs” not only connects the inhabitants to the land but also frames that connection in terms of birth imagery: “labour,” “Progenitors,” and “get,” so often used in the period in the sense of “beget,” all point in this direction. The effect is to plant an idea of the English as almost autochthonous, so intimately connected to the land that they are virtually brought forth by it. Populations might change—in fact it was presumably pretty much inevitable that they should do so given that, as B. J. Sokol notes, it was being argued as early as 1589 that “the residence or continuance of one nation in one place is not of the law of nature which being in itt selfe immutable would then admitt no such transmigration of people and transplantation of nations as in dayly experience we see.”⁴⁵ However, as Mary Floyd-Wilson observes, geohumoral theory contended that “As an immigrant population acclimates to the nature and culture of its new environment, transplantation effects a change in people’s natural disposition and transforms their ethnicity: thus Gauls become German or, more radically, migrating Scythians turn Turk,”⁴⁶ and we shall see later that there was indeed a strongly held sense that whatever bloods and ancestries went into their making, the English were fundamentally and unalterably connected to England: as Samuel Rowlands’ long poem *The famous history of Guy Earle of Warwicke* has it, we are “worthy English, bred where wee are borne.”⁴⁷

Over the course of his construction of Guy as devout, triumphant champion of Christendom, Rowlands is apparently able to forget the tension between the English as itinerant descendants of the Trojans and the English as fundamentally constituted by the fact that we are “bred where wee are borne.” Other authors are less prepared to ignore this contradiction. For Speed, Wansdyke in particular forces us to be aware of the ways the land bears witness to multiple and potentially competing histories: coupling geography to etymology, he offers us a landscape characterized less by the human than by the divine, or at least the supernatural, for while “the vulgar” may imagine Wansdyke to have been built by the Devil, the educated can recognize its root word as “Woden.” There is, however, a provocative incompleteness about this contrast between the learned and the unlearned; although we are told that the learned recognize the derivation while the unlearned do not, we are obviously not meant to go one step further and conclude that, while the unlearned believe Wansdyke to be the work of the devil, the learned believe it to be the work of Woden. Of course they do not—they merely recognize it as the work of men who *did* believe in Woden—and yet the structure of the sentence does work to pit the Devil and Woden directly against each other as if they were two possible points of supernatural origin. In fact, Speed can be seen as in effect having his cake and eating it, dismissing but not quite disavowing the idea that the geographical markers of English ethnicity might glow with the aura of the supernatural. This is something we shall see again, particularly in relation to the Brutus story and its supposed connection to the goddess Venus, and the prophesied and destined accession of the Tudors. Ralf Hertel, suggesting that “It was a matter of urgent necessity to imagine the nation precisely because it had not yet materialized, at a time when the chasm created by the crisis of traditional forms of identity—the space national identity would eventually fill—was deepening,” argues that the *nouveau* status of the Tudors led to a “transference of venerability onto the nation”; he notes that “Joseph Llobera and others have argued that national identity replaces religious identity in the aftermath of the Reformation” and that John Aylmer, future bishop of London, was therefore emboldened to claim that God was English.⁴⁸ Whatever they may take Englishness to be, English Renaissance writers are rarely unwilling to entertain the idea that they belong to an elect and sanctified nation, with the aura of the numinous in their past and the promise of a divinely ordained destiny in their future.

What then of my second question: how and to what effect does awareness of internal territorial demarcations surface in literary texts? In many ways, it is also easy enough to trace how awareness of historical divisions was mapped onto contemporary terminology and concerns, though the ways in which it was so are complex and sometimes contradictory. Occasionally, it is a question of simple topicality, as when Daniel says of the Battle of Essendon, at which Edmund Ironside fought Canute, that "This fatall battell lost England," but then temporarily diverts from his main thrust of lamenting an eleventh-century calamity to note that "Here among the rest was slaine, Vlkill, an Earle of Essex, of euer memorable worth."⁴⁹ Daniel had been a protégé of a much more recent earl of Essex, Elizabeth's favorite Robert Devereux, who had a well-established interest in questions of historiography and to whom Richard Harvey had dedicated his *Philadelphus, or a defence of Brutes*, and the implication is clearly that the earl's execution in 1601 had been a disaster not just for himself but for the country as a whole; here, then, the past is simply being rather crudely suborned in an opportunistic attempt to wrest ancient English history into the shape of comment on modern English history. Similarly in *Edmund Ironside* it would be hard not to hear a contemporary resonance in First Pledge's "Oh England, never trust a foreign king,"⁵⁰ an obvious warning against James, and in Edricus' alleged resolve "to leave my native country and to exile / myself from England, sailing into *Spain*" (4.1.1326–27), which seems an odd destination for an Anglo-Saxon to choose but a very natural one for a disaffected early modern Englishman.

Past and present intersect with a more general and wide-ranging force when it comes to the charged terms "Britain" and "England." In William Drury's 1619 Saint-Omer play *Aluredus, sive Alvredus* the Saxon lord Athelrede (whose name significantly translates as "noble counsel") asks "Whither tends th'expiring fate of England? / What destiny menaces the Britans?"⁵¹ as if England and Britain were one and the same, but generally the two are kept securely separate. For Drayton, Wansdyke may mark a border between the Mercians and the West Saxons, but it does rather more than that, since it was erected

to be a limit of those two ancient states, sometime diuided by Auon, which falls into Seuerna, Wansdike crossing the shire Westward ouer the plaine was first cast vp. Wodensdike, the old name is supposed from Woden; of no lesse (if not greater) esteeme to the Saxons, then Arsaces, Pelops, Cadmus and other such to their posterity; but so, that, I guesse it went but for their greatest God

Mercury Stonehenge and it not improperly contend, being seuerall workes of two seuerall nations anciently hatefull to each other; Britons and Saxons.⁵²

Like Camden, Drayton too homes in on Wansdyke, and starts off innocuously enough by situating his discussion within the safely uncontentious framework of mythology. Suddenly, though, we are pulled from the past to the present with the abrupt change of tense to “contend” and “being.” Wansdyke and Stonehenge, both still visible then (and now), thus energize the landscape around them and activate debates which may still be pertinent, forcing us to ask whether it was really only “anciently” that Britons and Saxons (read: Welsh and English) were “hatefull to each other,” or whether tensions might still survive.

For Drayton, then, Wandsyke speaks not so much of Englishness as of Welshness, and the same division between Britons and Saxons is also recalled when he has Sabrina, nymph of the Severn, declare,

Well Britans haue yee sung; you English, well repli'd:
Which to succeeding times shall memorize your stories
To either Countries praise, as both your endlesse glories.⁵³

Similarly in John Clapham's *The historie of Great Britannie* we are told how “Austen [St. Augustine] calleth a Synode to reconcile the differences between the British and English Cleargie.”⁵⁴ This time the focus is on the practices of the Celtic church rather than on national identities per se, but in early modern England religious and national identities were never very far apart, and here too we are reminded that while historical divisions between Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Danes survived in the early modern period only in place-names, far deeper fault lines still ran between this newly homogenized England and its Celtic fringe.

My third question, to what extent are the discourses which accrue to historical ethnicities and boundaries also implicated in the formation of ideas about early modern national, cultural and political identities, is inevitably the most difficult to answer, because it touches on a number of anxieties. For instance, if a distinctively British identity had been lost, might it follow that the successors of the British were by definition degenerate? I have noted elsewhere that, in the nineteenth century, Shakespeare was much used in the degeneration debate,⁵⁵ and “degenerate” and its cognates are also terms found in many plays about the pre-Norman past. In *Titus Andronicus*, Aaron assures Chiron and Demetrius that Bassianus is

not “so degenerate” as to stand by and see them rape Lavinia, though what Bassianus is or is not will very soon not matter, because he is about to be killed before he can leave issue.⁵⁶ In *Aluredus, sive Alvredus* Gothurnus tells the Danes “Your flight’s degenerous” (5.6.2551) and Cuthbert refers to Protestant England as being “From heav’n rebelliously degenerate” (Epilogue, 2869). In *Locrine* we hear “Thrasimachus is not so degenerate” (sig. I2r) and in Henry Burnell’s *Landgartha* (1641) the prefatory verses by “Jo. Bermingham” call Burnell the only heir to Ben Jonson and declare other pretenders to that title “degenerate”; later the king of Sweland, Frolo, declares that he and his men “will not now degenerate first of ours.”⁵⁷ In Anthony Brewer’s *The love-sick king*, Erkinwald calls Elgina “Degenerate Princess” and tells her “I suspect thy birth: Yet well mayst thou be Sister to thy Brother, For Great Canutus blood runs low as thine, and Love-sick doateth on an English Nun.”⁵⁸ In Lodowick Carlell’s two-part play *Arviragus and Philicia*, Guimantes complains that his father must think him “so degenerate, that you beleeeve I want courage, or judgment, t’reach, or execute your great designes,” and later the king himself is confident that Guimantes “can not so much degenerate from me his father,” though he regards his daughter Philicia as a “degenerat bastard” for caring what becomes of the Pictish prince Arviragus.⁵⁹ There was, then, a definite and widespread sense that British national identities had deteriorated and that a once glorious bloodline no longer ran true.

Secondly, the fact that Rome had become the city of the Vatican rather than the Capitol inevitably colored plays’ use of the language of Rome. For these plays, Rome no longer connotes simply imperial power, but also Roman Catholicism. In *Bonduca*, Caratach assures Hengo that there will be no Romans in heaven (p. 61), and Bonduca asks “If Rome be earthly, why should any knee / With bending adoration worship her?” (p. 65); both these passages are clearly inflected by thoughts of Catholicism, and the sense that we should remember what Rome became as well as what it once was is underscored when Judas (whose name obviously packs a punch of its own) says Caratach “swears he will keep his Christmas” on the rock (p. 68). In *The Valiant Welshman*, Rome is referred to as “that conquering Sec” (sig. A4v), clearly inviting us to understand it in terms of its modern religious identity rather than its classical one.

The accession of the Tudors also brought a renegotiation of understandings of Welshness in general and of its relation to the historical past in particular. In *The Valiant Welshman*, Caradoc, the eponymous valiant Welshman, evinces an easy familiarity with the putative Trojan past when

he speaks of a combatant in the Trojan War almost as if he had known him personally:

O my good Lord, this honourable cause
Is able to inflame the coward brest
Of base *Thersites*. (sig. C3v)

On the one hand, this sense that the descendants of Aeneas were still to be found in Wales seemed to bolster the sense of a link to Troy, but it also brought difficulties, for the link was specifically with the Welsh, not the English. Anthony Martin, contending that “the function of the British history was to try to give antique sanction to what had, in fact, simply been the construction of a state within the areas of the British Isles which had been colonized by the Normans,” notes that “with the signal exception of John Leland, the principal defenders of the historical veracity of the Brut against the sceptics were all Welsh,”⁶⁰ and Philip Schwyzer similarly remarks that a “problem facing English defenders of the British History was that it was not about the English.”⁶¹ Even Richard Harvey had to concede that the bloodline of Brutus had been transmitted only through Camber.

Finally, these stories undo their own truth-value. For one thing, our attention is repeatedly drawn to the sources through which events have been mediated. Chris Butler notes that *Fuimus Troes* “becomes more fascinating if its two main sources (Caesar and Geoffrey) are regarded as the real protagonist and antagonist among the *Dramatis Personae*,”⁶² as if we were watching not characters in a conventionally told story but two diametrically opposed authorities competing for control of that story. Both *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and *The Welsh Ambassador* include a character named Gildas, and that was also the name of the historian on whom Geoffrey principally relied, as he declared in the dedication:

Whenever I have chanced to think about the history of the kings of Britain, on those occasions when I have been turning over a great many such matters in my mind, it has seemed a remarkable thing to me that, apart from such mention of them as Gildas and Bede had each made in a brilliant book on the subject, I have not been able to discover anything at all on the kings who lived here before the Incarnation of Christ, or indeed about Arthur and all the others who followed on after the Incarnation.⁶³

Both *Fuimus Troes* and *Bonduca* have a character named Nennius, and he too was a chronicler: Geoffrey’s translator notes his reliance on Nennius’

Historia Brittonum,⁶⁴ and *Bonduca* in particular seems deliberately to draw attention to Nennius' function as a chronicler when Caratach says "O Nennius, / thou hadst a noble Uncle knew a *Romane*, / and how to speak him,"⁶⁵ so that once again the distinction between story and storyteller is strangely blurred. (*Bonduca* also includes a Swetonius, again the name of a historian, though this time a Roman one.) In the anonymous *Thorney Abbey*, which tells of the founding of the future Westminster Abbey by a rich merchant called Thorney whose daughter has been seduced by a fictional prince named Edmund, Edmund's attendant (and pander) is called Gaufreid, which obviously suggests Geoffrey, and could well imply Geoffrey of Monmouth; this would be ironically appropriate because, although the play is set at a period later than that in which Geoffrey is mainly interested, it is no less reliant on the author's imagination.⁶⁶

The Misfortunes of Arthur draws attention to questions of chronology and historicity in a different way: it deliberately blurs historical periods, as too do *Titus Andronicus*, *Fatum Vortigerni*, *A Shoo-maker a gentleman*, and *Cymbeline*; indeed Tracey Miller-Tomlinson, noting that "it is difficult to imagine a play more keenly engaged with questions of historiographic method" than *Cymbeline*, argues that the play's "conspicuously freestyle historiography foregrounds the constructedness of all historical narratives,"⁶⁷ offering self-conscious musing on the nature and purpose of historiography in ways that have something in common with the 1590s' espousal of Tacitus and the oppositional flavor which accrued to that. A number of the plays also include conscious anachronism and deliberately reference or glance at contemporary events: *The Valiant Welshman* has Romans with cannons and muskets (sig. D2r), while *The Welsh Ambassador* has a scene in which a clown seeks to be appointed chronicler and specifically says that he will not be starting with Brutus, and John Kerrigan observes that "In *King Lear*, the British-Galfridian royal house shares the action with the Saxon-named Edgar and Edmund."⁶⁸ In effect, these plays thus prompt their audiences not to believe in them, and yet at the same time they insist that the story they collectively tell is an important one which continues to matter.

One reason that these plays matter is that though each is about a specific king or queen, they are also about monarchy in general. Geoffrey declares that "When Aeneas' last day came, Ascanius was elected King";⁶⁹ since Ascanius was Aeneas' son, this flirts with both heredity and election as possible principles of succession, and a number of these plays are concerned not only with *who* reigns but *on what basis* they reign. *A Knack*

to Know a Knave contains a character called Honesty who acts as King Edgar's moral guardian, bringing the play close to the values of advice literature, and has the king disguising himself, a common feature of stories about just rule and the difference between good kings and bad. Jessica Winston argues that "*Gorboduc* addresses the nature and make up of the English political nation ... As they performed the play at the Inner Temple, members of the Inn claimed for themselves the authority to counsel the privy council and made themselves in a significant way, and even if only for the duration of the play, part of the political nation itself"; she therefore suggests that "The history of *Gorboduc* ... best begins with the tradition of inns of court Christmas revels ... By the beginning of the sixteenth century, the law schools had established a set of complex conventions around their Christmas celebrations, which involved electing a prince or lord of misrule."⁷⁰ When *Gorboduc* was performed Robert Dudley was the Lord of Misrule, and the whole point of the play was to argue that he should become a prince in real life too, since it clearly advocated his marriage to Elizabeth. These plays, therefore, comment not just on kings and queens who are long dead but loudly and urgently on the nature and prerogatives of kingship and queenship as experienced by their audiences. A number of plays about the Norman and pre-Norman past, perhaps most notably *Fair Em*, were either performed by Lord Strange's Men or had other connections to the Stanley family, whose potential claim to the throne might have prompted speculation about implicit topicality, and Jonathan Baldo notes that anything connected to the Anglo-Saxons in particular was liable to irritate King James because "His theory of the divine right of kings faced opposition from the Society of Antiquaries, whose study of Anglo-Saxon language and law tended to support the supremacy of the common law that James found so offensive. James ordered the dissolution of the Society in 1607 and blocked attempts to revive it in 1614."⁷¹ These plays are about the past, but they are also about the present and the future.

This book is divided into two parts. The first part, "Legacies," contains three chapters. The first, "Bisson Conspectuities: Language and National Identity in Shakespeare's Roman Plays," focuses on the contested issue of language. Carla Mazzio notes that "The increasingly heterogeneous linguistic textures and forms of early modern English became a site for the articulation of anxieties about local and national forms of self-representation,"⁷² and something which bedevils all Renaissance writing about origins is the fact that, even when it contests ideas of Roman origins and Roman primacy, it can do so only in languages and paradigms borrowed from the

Romans, so that any idea of non-Roman origins runs the risk of seeming absurd from the outset. In *Fuimus Troes*, Fisher cheekily has Caesar say “Nor can I write now, ‘I came over, and / I overcame’;—such foes deny such haste,”⁷³ and yet the lines are only possible because Caesar famously *did* write that, in a letter to the Senate.⁷⁴ Particularly interesting in this respect is *Bonduca*, for there plays with connections to the story of Rome are openly remembered when Petillius says Junius is “In love, indeed in love, most lamentably loving, / to the tune of Queen Dido” (p. 51) and Hengo says “I can live on anger” (p. 62), echoing Volumnia in *Coriolanus*, as if in testimony to the paradox that a play about resistance to Rome is itself always already conditioned by the cultural legacy of Romanness, which cannot be forgotten. Finally there was the question not only of what Rome had been in the classical past but of what it had since become. In *The Valiant Welshman*, Octavian, King of North Wales, draws on language directly associated with Catholic rather than Imperial Rome when he muses:

How learnedly hath thy persasiue tounge
Discovered a new passage vnto ioy,
In mentall reseruatiō?⁷⁵

The term “mental reservation” was unmistakably and immediately identifiable as associated with Catholics, and specifically with Jesuits, who were considered if anything even worse than ordinary Catholics, and at the same time both words are also clearly of Latin origin, doubly underscoring the Romanness of what Octavius says. Latinity is therefore a contested discourse, in ways which this chapter explores.

Perhaps the most important cultural change to occur between the Romans and the Normans was the conversion of every part of the British Isles to Christianity. In the second chapter, “Profit and Delight? Magic and the Dreams of a Nation,” I focus on a number of plays involving magic, including *Doctor Faustus*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, *The Birth of Merlin*, *The Virgin Martyr*, *St Patrick for Ireland*, *The Seven Champions of Christendom* and, briefly, *The Tempest*. Collectively, I will argue, these plays offer a fantasized version of an England confident about both its past and its future, secure from both external invasion and internal disagreements about religion and proud of a firmly established classical past which authorized an expansionist agenda. Together, they take the pulse of the most urgently-felt fears and hopes of early modern England, allowing us to see both what it most dreaded and what it most wanted, and also how these related to the nation’s sense of its own pasts.

The third chapter, “A Borrowed Blood for Brute’: From Britain to England,” examines the question of hybridity in plays including *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, *Aluredus sive Alvredus*, *Fair Em*, *Hengist*, *King of Kent*, and *Edmund Ironside*. For Geoffrey, “Britain is inhabited by five races of people, the Norman-French, the Britons, the Saxons, the Picts and the Scots. Of these the Britons once occupied the land from sea to sea, before the others came.”⁷⁶ The idea of Saxon ancestry was not in simple opposition to the idea of descent from Brutus; in fact, many writers of the period found it surprisingly easy to mix and match the two. Drayton is only one of many contemporary writers who derive the name “England” from Hengist,⁷⁷ but he does not imagine that this simply equates the English with the Saxons, because for him there is in fact a strain of elemental, transhistorical Englishness which by a historical sleight-of-hand can never quite disappear, no matter how far underground it is driven or how thoroughly it is hybridized. The River Severn prophesies that:

when the Norman Line in strength shall lastlie faile
(Fate limiting the time) th’ancient Britan race
Shall come againe to sit vpon the soueraigne place.
A branch sprung out of Brute, th’imperiall top shall get,
Which grafted in the stock of great Plantaginet ...⁷⁸

That genealogy of Camber which no one could tell produces the Tudors, who claimed descent from Arthur and hence from Brutus, and British blood is thus reintroduced into the royal line at precisely the moment it appears to have disappeared.

While hybridity might have something to be said for it, however, it does complicate the presentation of any simple or monolithic narrative of national identity. Even for Drayton, there is the odd discordant note in his grand narrative of an essentially continuous and coherent national identity, as when he speaks of “the Dutch-made English.”⁷⁹ For Samuel Daniel, the problems posed by successive waves of invasion are far more significant. Daniel is confident that the English are a great people—“Nor is there any Nation, whose Ancestors haue done more worthy things, both at home and abroad; especially for matter of war. For since the Romans, no one people hath fought so many battailes prosperously.”⁸⁰ Nevertheless, his denial of Brutus means that he cannot be quite sure who the English actually are: after the Romans “wee are now heere to beginne with a new Bodie of people, with a new State, and gouernment of this Land, which retained nothing of the former, nor held other memory but that, of the dissolution

thereof: where scarce a Citie, Dwelling, Riuer, Hill, or Mountayne, but changed names,” and

Britayne it self was now no more Britayne, but New Saxonie, and shortly after either of the Angles (the greatest people of the inuadors) or of Hengist, called Engist-Land, or England. This distance, made by the rage of warre, lay so wide betweene the conquering and conquered people, that nothing either of lawes, rites and customes, came to passe ouer vnto vs from the Britaynes: nor had our Ancestors any thing from them, but their countrie.⁸¹

There is an astonishing disconnect between this and Daniel’s characterization elsewhere of a markedly human geography which speaks of our connection to our progenitors. Along the faultline between the two passages we can glimpse something of what it cost him to renounce the idea of an essential continuity of Englishness, and something of the reasons for the longevity of the Brutus story.

The second part of the book, “Ancestors and Others,” focuses on gender, and particularly on the role of women in transmitters of descent. The first chapter, “Queens and the British History,” contends that the barbarian queens of early modern English plays need to be read not only in relation to *romanitas* but also in relation to two other paradigms: Christopher Marlowe’s hugely influential Tamburlaine plays, and the “British history” narratives offered in *King Lear* and its predecessor *King Leir*, which prove the site of a struggle over the meaning of kingship and queenship and their relation to British national identities. The second, “Dido in Denmark: Danes and Saxons on the Early Modern English Stage,” returns to the issue of hybridity to connect the fact of successive waves of invasion to early modern England’s alliances with Denmark and with Protestant parts of Germany, focusing particularly on Anthony Brewer’s *The Lovesick King*, Chettle’s *Hoffman*, Middleton’s *Hengist, King of Kent*, Henry Burnell’s *Landgartha*, and *Hamlet*. Dido was a resonant figure because of the famous trick she had played to increase her territory: offered as much land as could be covered by an oxhide, she had cut the hide into thin strips to enable her to form a boundary with it. This chimed with one of the most famous of Anglo-Saxon documents, the *Burghal Hidage*, which as Hill and Worthington observe “contained a calculation of how many tax units (hides) were needed to build and maintain a fortification known as a *burh*.”⁸² For Daniel, the best way to salvage his sense of a broken genealogical chain and a consequently disrupted national identity is

through a discourse of the elect nation: “as soone as the Saxons had ended their trauailes with the Britaynes, and drew to settling of a Monarchie, the Danes, as if ordain’d to reuenge their slaughters, beganne to assault them with the like afflictions.”⁸³ The Saxons, the Britons and the Danes may all be troublingly separate and indeed implacably opposed to one another, but at least we may be able to hope that the battles between them and their eventual results may have been “ordained” to occur as they do. John Clapham in *The historie of Great Britannie* also uses a language of destiny when he speaks of “the Roman Empire, vnto which at that time the soveraigntie of the whole world was, by divine providence, allotted”;⁸⁴ God has a plan for the development of nations, and even if the English are fundamentally hybrid, that must be a hybridity which enjoys His blessing. The discourse of election recuperated uncertainties about individual ancestors by drawing attention instead to the importance of the Reformation; and the Reformation originated in Germany, which now stood as a new counterweight to Rome.

The third chapter of part two, “Valiant Welshwomen: When Britain Came Back,” looks at the distinctive role of Wales, home not only of the Trojans but of the Tudors, in a number of plays including *The Valiant Welshman*, *Cymbeline*, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, and *Henry VIII*. The reign of Henry VIII represents a crisis in understandings of Britishness. It is the immediately post-Polydore moment, and there were also compelling cultural reasons for a reappraisal of the usefulness of the Matter of Britain: Antonina Harbus notes that “Henry VIII sought a direct imperial connection with ancient Rome through his supposed descent from a British Constantine,”⁸⁵ while Winifred Joy Mulligan declares more bluntly that “in 1533 ... Henry VIII discarded King Arthur in favor of the British Constantine.”⁸⁶ Suggestively, this shift in allegiance precipitates an interest in what might be termed counterfactual history: *The Welsh Ambassador*, *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, and to a certain extent *Titus Andronicus* can all be seen as examples of this genre, and so in a sense can R. A.’s *The Valiant Welshman* in its merging of different figures named Caratach. Both this chapter and “A Borrowed Blood for Brute” also pay attention to questions of burial and disinterment, both of which offer an important metaphor for the relationship of the past to the present. Finally, in “Athelstan, the Virgin King,” I look at three early modern plays which feature Athelstan—*The Welsh Ambassador*, the anonymous *Guy of Warwick*, and Dekker’s *Old Fortunatus*—and argue that the reason these playwrights turn to Athelstan is that they find in him a flexible, suggestive, and culturally resonant figure

who could be used to discuss a number of important issues, including succession, the status of the monarch, and the relationship of early modern English identities to the histories which had produced them.

NOTES

¹ Stuart Piggott, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), p. 16.

² Gordon McMullan, "The colonisation of early Britain on the Jacobean stage," in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 119–40, p. 120. See also the very useful list of plays set in the period before the Norman Conquest provided by McMullan on pp. 138–41.

³ Misha Teramura, "Brute Parts: From Troy to Britain at the Rose, 1595–1600," in *Lost Plays in Shakespeare's England*, ed. David McInnis and Matthew Steggle (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), pp. 127–47, p. 127.

⁴ See Todd Borlik, "Hellish Falls: Faustus's Dismemberment, Phaeton's Limbs and Other Renaissance Aviation Disasters—Part II," *English Studies* 97.4 (2016), pp. 351–61, p. 353.

⁵ Paul Whitfield White, "The Admiral's Lost Arthurian Plays," in *Lost Plays in Shakespeare's England*, ed. David McInnis and Matthew Steggle (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), pp. 148–62, p. 148.

⁶ Tom Rutter, "Warlamchester," *The Lost Plays Database*, <https://www.lostplays.org/index.php?title=Warlamchester>.

⁷ See William H. McCabe, S.J., *An Introduction to the Jesuit Theater*, ed. Louis J. Oldani, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1983), p. 142.

⁸ See the entry on *Mulmutius Dunwallow* in the Lost Plays Database (http://www.lostplays.org/index.php/Mulmutius_Dunwallow).

⁹ Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1612), sig. F3r.

¹⁰ Richard Harvey, *Philadelphus, or a defence of Brutes* (London: John Wolfe, 1593), sigs. A3r and C3r.

¹¹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 72.

¹² The story of the supposed University of Stamford was a vigorous one: *Ingredientur, Dr. Sampsonus*, a lost anonymous play of ca. 1613, appears to have concerned a group of scholars who leave Oxford to found a university at Stamford (Matthew Steggle, *Ingredientur, Dr. Sampsonus*, *Lost Plays Database*: http://www.lostplays.org/index.php/Ingredientur_Dr_Sampsonus...). It may or may not be significant that in Lodowick Carlell's *Arviragus and Philicia* Guimantes suggests that his servant Sinatus should escape to Stamford (sig. C5r).

¹³ William Shakespeare, *Richard II*, ed. Stanley Wells (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), 5.1.11.

¹⁴ William Camden, *Britannia*, trans. Philemon Holland (London: F. Kingston, R. Young, and J. Legatt for George Latham, 1637), p. 8.

¹⁵ William Allen [Robert Persons], *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of England* (Antwerp: A. Conincx, 1595), p. 178.

¹⁶ Samuel Daniel, *The first part of the historie of England* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1612), sigs. B1v–B2r.

¹⁷ Jonathan Baldo, “Necromancing the Past in *Henry VIII*,” *English Literary Renaissance* 34.3 (2004), pp. 359–86, pp. 361–62.

¹⁸ Max Adams, *In the Land of Giants: Journeys Through the Dark Ages* (London: Head of Zeus, 2015), p. 333.

¹⁹ Hilton Kelliher, “John Mott and *The Neue Metamorphosis*,” *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700* 11 (2002), pp. 109–31. I am indebted to Matt Steggle for drawing my attention to this reference.

²⁰ Stephen O’Neill, *Staging Ireland: Representations in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), p. 34.

²¹ Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 20 vols. (Glasgow, 1905–7), vol. 19, p. 62.

²² William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Kenneth Muir (London: Methuen, 1972), I.ii.73–74.

²³ Anthony Munday, *The Triumphes of re-united Britania* (London: W. Jagard, 1605).

²⁴ George Peele, *The famous chronicle of king Edward the first* (London: Abell Jeffes for William Barley, 1593).

²⁵ W. S., *The lamentable tragedie of Locrine* (London: Thomas Creede, 1595), sig. G2v.

²⁶ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, p. 282.

²⁷ Lucy Munro, “‘Nemp your sexes!’: Anachronistic Aesthetics in *Hen-gist*, *King of Kent* and the Jacobean ‘Anglo-Saxon’ Play,” *Modern Philology* 111.4 (2014), pp. 734–61, p. 735.

²⁸ See the entry on *Play of Oswald* in the Lost Plays Database.

²⁹ Ben Jonson, *Epicene, or The Silent Woman*, ed. Richard Dutton (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 2.2.36–40.

³⁰ On the importance of Wales in plays about the pre-Conquest past see for instance John Kerrigan, *Archipelagic English: Literature, History, and Politics 1603–1707* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 117–21.

³¹ Whitfield White, “The Admiral’s Lost Arthurian Plays,” p. 152.

³² Anonymous, *A Knack to Know a Knave* (London: Richard Jones, 1594), sigs. C2r and F1r.

³³ Michael Drayton, *Poly-Olbion: A Chorographically description of tracts, riuers, mountains, forests, and other parts of this renowned isle of Great Britain* (London: John Marriott, John Grismand, and Thomas Dewe, 1622), p. 126.

³⁴ Daniel, *The first part of the historie of England*, p. 29.

³⁵ Stuart Laycock, *Britannia the Failed State: Tribal Conflicts and the End of Roman Britain* (Stroud: The History Press, 2008), p. 228.

³⁶ David Hill and Margaret Worthington, *Offa's Dyke* (Stroud: The History Press, 2003), p. 39.

³⁷ There were also other signs of an awareness that England had once had different internal jurisdictions: Eamon Duffy notes of St. Walstan of Bawburgh that "According to his legend, Walstan was born at Blythburgh in Suffolk. He was a king's son, and his mother, Blida, herself had a minor cult in late medieval Norfolk, although nothing whatever is now known about her" (*The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400–c. 1580* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992], p. 201), suggesting an awareness that there were once local kings to whose family Walstan could credibly have belonged.

³⁸ Daniel, *The first part of the historie of England*, pp. 25–26.

³⁹ Lloyd and Jennifer Laing, *Anglo-Saxon England* [1979] (London: Grafton, 1982), p. 170.

⁴⁰ Stuart Laycock, *Warlords: The Struggle for Power in Post-Roman Britain* (Stroud: The History Press, 2009), pp. 24 and 40.

⁴¹ Robert Callis, *The reading of that famous and learned gentleman, Robert Callis ... upon the statute of 23 H. 8, Cap. 5, of Sewers* (London: William Leak, 1647), p. 59.

⁴² John Speed, *England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland described and abridged ...* (London: George Humble, 1627), n.p. (EEBO doc image 44).

⁴³ Camden, *Britannia*, p. 241.

⁴⁴ James Shapiro, *1606: William Shakespeare and the Year of Lear* (London: Faber and Faber, 2015), p. 42.

⁴⁵ B. J. Sokol, *Shakespeare and Tolerance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 57.

⁴⁶ Mary Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 52.

⁴⁷ Samuel Rowlands, *The famous history of Guy Earle of Warwicke* (London: E. Alde, 1620), sig. A4r.

⁴⁸ Ralf Hertel, *Staging England in the Elizabethan History Play: Performing National Identity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 21, 81, 121 and 122.

⁴⁹ Daniel, *The first part of the historie of England*, pp. 50, 52, and 51.

⁵⁰ Eric Sams, ed., *Shakespeare's Edmund Ironside* (Aldershot: Wildwood House, 1986), 2.3.729. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

⁵¹ William Drury, *Aluredus, sive Alvredus* (1619), trans. Robert Knightley (as *Alfred, or Right Reinthron'd*, 1659), ed. Dana F. Sutton for the Philological Museum, 2014, <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/aluredus/>, 1.i.33–34.

⁵² Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, sigs. F24r–v.

⁵³ Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, p. 76.

⁵⁴ John Clapham, *The historie of Great Britannie declaring the succeſſe of times and affaires in that iland, from the Romans firſt entrance, vntill the raigne of Egbert, the Weſt-Saxon prince; who reduced the ſeverall principalities of the Saxons and Engliſh, into a monarchie, and changed the name of Britanie into England* (London: Valentine Simmes, 1606), p. 220. Thanks to Matthew Steggle for pointing out to me that the lost *England's firſt happines, or, the Life of St Austin*, one of three plays entered on the Stationers' Register in 1640 by the printer John Nicholson, must have deſcribed the career of St. Auguſtine of Canterbury, and that its title indicates that it was a celebration.

⁵⁵ Liſa Hopkins, *Giants of the Paſt: Popular Fictions and the Idea of Evolution* (Lewiſburg: Bucknell University Preſſ, 2004), chap. 1.

⁵⁶ William Shakeſpeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Jonathan Bate (London: Routledge, 1995), I.i.565.

⁵⁷ Henry Burnell, *Landgartha* (Dublin, 1641), ſigs. A3v and B4v.

⁵⁸ Anthony Brewer, *The love-ſick king, an Engliſh tragical hiſtory with the life and death of Cartesmunda, the fair nun of Wincheſter* (London: Robert Pollard, 1655), ſig. C3r.

⁵⁹ Lodowick Carlell, *Arviragus and Philicia* (London: John Norton for John Crooke, 1639), firſt part, ſigs. A5r, A8r and D1v.

⁶⁰ Anthony Martin, "The British Myth in Tudor Drama," in *The Anatomy of Tudor Literature*, ed. Mike Pincombe (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 157–65, pp. 157 and 161.

⁶¹ Philip Schwyzer, "British History and 'The British History': The ſame old ſtory?," in *British Identities and Engliſh Renaissance Literature*, ed. David J. Baker and Willy Maley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Preſſ, 2002), pp. 11–23, pp. 16 and 21.

⁶² Jasper Fiſher, *Fuimus Troes*, ed. Chris Butler as part of the MA "Shakeſpeare and Renaissance," Sheffield Hallam University, 2007, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/renplays/fuimustroes.htm>.

⁶³ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The Hiſtory of the Kings of Britain*, p. 51.

⁶⁴ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The Hiſtory of the Kings of Britain*, p. 55 n. 1.

⁶⁵ John Fletcher, *Bonduca* (London: Humphrey Robinson for Humphrey Moſeley, 1647), p. 47.

⁶⁶ *Thorney Abbey* is to be found in *Gratiae Theatrales, or a choice ternary of Engliſh plays* (London: R. D., 1662).

⁶⁷ Tracey Miller-Tomlinſon, "Queer hiſtory in *Cymbeline*," *Shakeſpeare* 12.3 (2016), pp. 225–40, p. 225.

⁶⁸ Kerrigan, *Archipelagic Engliſh*, p. 123.

⁶⁹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The Hiſtory of the Kings of Britain*, p. 54.

⁷⁰ Jeſſica Winſton, "Expanding the Political nation: *Gorboduc* at the Inns of Court and Succeſſion Revisited," *Early Theatre* 8.1 (2005), pp. 11–34, p. 12.

⁷¹ Baldo, "Necromancing the Paſt in *Henry VIII*," p. 363.

⁷² Carla Mazzio, "Staging the Vernacular: Language and Nation in Thomas

Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*," *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 38.2 (1998), pp. 207–32, p. 208.

⁷³ Fisher, *Fuimus Troes*, Introduction and 3.4.19–20.

⁷⁴ He did not, however, say it in England, but after the battle of Zela (modern Turkey) after his defeat of King Pharnaces of Pontus, as recorded by Plutarch amongst others in *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, trans. Thomas North (London: Thomas Vautrollier and John Wight, 1579), p. 764. I am indebted to Domenico Lovascio for pointing this out to me.

⁷⁵ R. A., Gent., *The Valiant Welshman, or the true chronicle history of the life and valiant deedes of Caradoc the Great, King of Cambria, now called Wales, as it hath beene sundry times acted by the Prince of Wales his seruants* (London: George Purslowe for Robert Lownes, 1615), sigs. B4r and C2r.

⁷⁶ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, p. 54.

⁷⁷ Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, p. 22.

⁷⁸ Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, p. 76.

⁷⁹ Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, p. 81.

⁸⁰ Daniel, *The first part of the historie of England*, sig. A2r.

⁸¹ Daniel, *The first part of the historie of England*, p. 28.

⁸² Hill and Worthington, *Offa's Dyke*, p. 116.

⁸³ Daniel, *The first part of the historie of England*, p. 33.

⁸⁴ Clapham, *The historie of Great Britannie*, p. 3.

⁸⁵ Antonina Harbus, *Helena of Britain in Medieval Legend* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002), p. 120.

⁸⁶ Winifred Joy Mulligan, "The British Constantine: An English historical myth," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Drama* 8 (1978), pp. 257–79, p. 269.

Part One
Legacies

Chapter 1

“Bisson Conspectuities”: Language and National Identity in Shakespeare’s Roman Plays

MOST NATIVE SPEAKERS OF English are aware that their language is a mongrel. To an extent, this awareness can be traced back to the early modern period, because one of the offshoots of the Renaissance was the beginning of philological enquiry. Many of the forms this took might now seem very quaint, such as Goropius Becanus’ declaration in *Origines Antwerpianae* (1569) that Dutch was the language originally spoken by mankind before the Tower of Babel because the Cimbri, whom he claimed as ancestors of the Flemish, had not been present at the event;¹ hence Surly’s question in *The Alchemist*, “Did Adam write, sir, in High Dutch?”²

Nevertheless, interest in the origins of languages was growing. In England, as Alysia Kolentsis observes, “Language reformers during the 16th century sought for English to realize its potential as a sophisticated and authoritative language that was capable of holding its own among the ascendant vernaculars of other nations such as Italy and Spain.”³ In particular, Rebecca Brackmann points to the increasing Elizabethan sensitivity to the use of words of foreign origin.⁴ Brackmann observes that “Cheke suggests that rather than venturing into other languages for loanwords, writers should revive outdated English words, and it has been suggested that by this he meant Anglo-Saxon ones” (she notes that Laurence Nowell compiled a *Vocabularium Saxonicum*).⁵ Matters of diction could often be discussed in surprisingly emotional terms: Carla Mazzio notes that “The influx of thousands of new words from Latin, Greek, French, Spanish and Italian in the sixteenth century led to extensive debates about the presence of foreign and ‘barbaric’ elements within the national vocabulary” and cites Richard Sherry’s declaration that foreign words had become as acculturated “*as if they had bene of our owne natiue bloode*.” Mazzio also argues that Thomas Tomkis’ 1607 *Lingua, or the Combat of the Tongue and the five Senses for Superiority* “stages the mother tongue as ‘a common whore [who] lets everyone lie with her,’”⁶ further exacerbating the impu-

rity and hybridity of English as a language. Such images suggest that this was a period not only of questions about the origins of words but of considerable sensitivity about the answers to those questions.

A sense of where words come from is, I think, something that we can expect early modern playwrights to have been increasingly aware of when they made lexical choices; certainly Lucy Munro suggests that it is significant that “Both *Hengist* and *The Birth of Merlin* ... contain references to language at the key moments at which the British first encounter the Saxons.”⁷ In the case of a number of dramatists, including Shakespeare, awareness of choosing English words is likely to have been heightened by the fact that they were sometimes deliberately choosing words from other languages. Shakespeare’s residence in the home of Huguenot refugees visibly gave him access to very serviceable French; he may have known a little Italian; and he seems to have had at least one player in his company who spoke Welsh, which he might also have sometimes heard while growing up in Stratford-upon-Avon. However small his Latin and Greek, Shakespeare was thus aware of and perhaps able to recognize at least five other languages in addition to his native English, and he must thus have had at least a basic awareness of the etymological origins and cultural affiliations of specific vocabulary items. In this chapter, I discuss the implications of some of his choices in this respect, particularly in his Roman plays, in order to argue that the ways in which Shakespeare represents English as a language conditions the ways in which he represents early modern English and British identities.

Arthur Golding, one of Shakespeare’s favorite writers, is one of many early modern authors who deliberately prefers words from Old and Middle English to Latin ones,⁸ and Shakespeare too pits English against Latin. It may seem almost redundant to remark that in early modern English plays about Rome, all the characters speak English. The use of English is, however, sometimes drawn attention to; in William Rowley’s *A Shoo-maker a gentleman*, for instance, Dioclesian says to the king of Vandals “Ile teach thee speake the Roman Language,”⁹ and Julia Briggs suggests that in *Hengist, King of Kent*, which pits invading Saxons against residually Romanized Britons, “Hengist’s signal to begin the massacre, the Old English phrase ‘Nemp your sexes’ (4.3.52) (‘seize your daggers’), is a reminder of the Saxons’ foreignness, as well as a possible pun on their name,”¹⁰ while Chris Butler argues that Jasper Fisher’s *Fuimus Troes* “may offer more to the modern reader as a dramatisation of the historiographical contest between native and classical (Latin) texts

for discursive eminence in the early decades of the seventeenth century than to the modern playgoer as an early modern representation of historical characters in conflict."¹¹

There are also occasions when vocabulary choice in plays about the past is ostentatiously and pointedly modern and carries an unmistakable ideological charge. A particularly suggestive use of a loudly contemporary term comes in *Gorboduc*, where the word "reave" and its cognates recur with extraordinary insistence, beginning in the play's first scene when Videna warns Ferrex that his father will "bereave" him of his inheritance;¹² forms of it subsequently appear a further fifteen times.¹³ Although the word was originally of Germanic origin, the idea of reaving (now usually spelled "reiving") had become distinctively associated with the perennial unrest on the Scottish Border, to the extent that families such as the Elliots and Armstrongs are now known customarily simply as "Border Reivers"; all *OED*'s earliest uses of "reft" are Scots. The use of the term "reave" thus offers further sly incrimination of Fergus, duke of Albany, whose attempt to profit from the power vacuum at the end of the play is a transparent warning about the dangers of favoring a Scottish succession over a Suffolk one.

The language of Border warfare is also used elsewhere in early modern drama. In Thomas Hughes' *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, another play about the forging of national identities, Gorlois soliloquizes "Thy murdered corse / And Dukedome *reft*" (my italics) and Gawin says to Mordred "Consider then your Fathers grieffe, and want: / Whom you *bereau* of Kingdome, Realme, and Crowne" (my italics);¹⁴ again the emphasis is an anti-Scottish one, since Mordred is clearly a version of Mary, Queen of Scots.¹⁵ In *The lamentable tragedie of Locrine* Albanact, whom his father Locrine has made king of Scotland, commits suicide with the words "This sword shall reau[e] his maister of his life,"¹⁶ and we also hear of "Offarius the arme strong King of Gaules" (sig. A4v); "armestrong" is also found at sig. F4r, and points us clearly in the direction of the Border, where the Armstrongs were one of the most powerful of reiving families. In all these plays, then, discussion of the past formation of national identities is significantly inflected by an undertow of allusion to contemporary ones, in ways which work to position the English as more civil than their neighbors and as having a more hopeful destiny.

Gorboduc, *Locrine* and *The Misfortunes of Arthur* all left visible traces on the writing of Shakespeare.¹⁷ I think this should alert us to the fact that we need to tease out the implications of the apparently simple phenomenon of characters speaking English in plays which are set

in ancient Rome and in the residually post-Roman cultures which succeeded it. By definition, the authors of such plays are participating in what Richard Helgerson considers as the common project of a loose group of Renaissance writers including Spenser, Coke, Camden, Speed, Drayton, Hakluyt, Shakespeare, and Hooker “To have the kingdom of their own language.”¹⁸ There can certainly be no doubt that Shakespeare in particular was constantly alive to the expressive powers of English, and that his word choices deserve attention. In *A briefe discourse of royall monarchie* (1581), Charles Merbury alleges that “William the Conquerour sought to surpesse, and extinguish our English speeche, commaunding all our lawes to be written in his owne language, as it appeareth also by the termes of our pastimes (of hawking, hunting, karding, dycing, Tennis, and such like,) which for the most part doe yet remaine in the Normane tongue.”¹⁹ However, English proved hard to kill, and words of Anglo-Saxon or Viking origin could (and can) be easily detected by sound, shape, and texture. It is notable that in both *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Henry V* we hear language-learning lessons where all the selected vocabulary items are markedly different from their Latin and French equivalents (even if Mistress Quickly does try to turn them into false friends). In *Merry Wives*, Parson Evans’ question “What is *lapis*, William?” receives the answer “A stone”;²⁰ in the years since the Romans left England, Latin *lapis* has given way to Germanic *stein*. In *Henry V*, Alice teaches a surprised Princess Katherine that the English words for parts of the body are completely different from those in Romance languages, starting with “hand” (Old Frisian) and “fingers” (Germanic).²¹

Shakespeare not only uses words which speak of England’s Saxon and Viking past, but tends to throw them into relief by pairing them with Latin ones, in what Scott Newstok calls “the curious prevalence of synonymous word pairs, collocated with an ‘and’ and coupling words of Latinate and Anglo-Saxon origins.”²² A prime example of Shakespeare’s awareness of such differences was incidentally drawn attention to by Josie Rourke’s 2013–14 production of *Coriolanus* at the Donmar Warehouse in London, in which Mark Gatiss as Menenius replaced “bisson conspectuities” by “blind conspectuities.” This is understandable, since “bisson” has long since been consigned to the outer reaches of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, but it disguised from the audience a particularly striking instance of Shakespeare’s delight in coupling words of Latin origin with words of English origin, for a sharp contrast obtains between the conspicuously Latinate “conspectuities” and “bisson,” meaning blind, which

is an Old English, specifically Northumbrian word, first found in the Lindisfarne Gospels, and present also in *Hamlet*, where the First Player speaks of Hecuba "*threat'ning the flames / With bisson rheum*."²³ The effect is particularly insistent in the Roman plays, where Shakespeare seems to go out of his way to have his characters use words which are conspicuously Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian in origin, recalling the successive waves of invasion which had shaped the linguistic as well as the political history and contours of the British Isles and implicitly troubling the idea of a link between Britain and the power and authority of Rome.

Cymbeline, a play set in a Britain just coming to terms with Rome but which gestures too at Britain's immediately post-Roman moment, helps us to see some of the causes and effects of such vocabulary choices. Toward the beginning of the play, First Gentleman says of the hero, Posthumus Leonatus:

I cannot delve him to the root: his father
Was call'd Sicilius, who did join his honour
Against the Romans with Cassibelan,
But had his titles by Tenantius.²⁴

What we have here is Galfridian history—that is, history according to Geoffrey of Monmouth. Cassibelan is Geoffrey's Cassivelaunus, who supposedly fought with Julius Caesar and was the brother of Lud, after whom London was said to have been named; Samantha Frenée-Hutchins identifies him as "the first historically named British king,"²⁵ meaning that he is the first to be named by a historian other than Geoffrey. Cassibelan and Tenantius (Geoffrey's Tenvantius, son of Lud and thus nephew of Cassivelaunus) both combine Latinate names with the status of legendary icons of early Britishness. However, First Gentleman's admission that in the case of Posthumus "I cannot delve him to the root" acknowledges the fragility of this embryonic Britain and of Geoffrey's so-called British History. Geoffrey's account had been debunked by Henry VII's Italian historian Polydore Vergil, who had very reasonably pointed out that there was no evidence whatsoever for events in Britain before the arrival of the Romans and the writings of Caesar and Tacitus, and it is therefore slyly suggestive that Polydore is the name adopted by Guiderius, one of *Cymbeline*'s two stolen sons. In Geoffrey, Guiderius fights against the Emperor Claudius at Portchester Castle, but here the choice of alias calls attention to the unreliability of Geoffrey and invites us to recognize the fictionality of the character. Similarly when Belarius says of himself and

his adoptive sons (really the kidnapped sons of Cymbeline himself) “In Cambria are we born” (5.5.17) we know that in fact they were not: according to John Weever in *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, Cymbeline’s palace, which is presumably where the two princes were born since that was where they were stolen from, was in Maldon in Essex,²⁶ not Wales. Wales had a special place in the story of Brutus, since his bloodline supposedly survived there and eventually produced the Tudors. These princes, however, were *not* born in Wales, and the very name of Polydore implicitly contests the Brutus myth in the first place; ultimately, then, the characters can only guess that “This youth, how’er distress’d, appears he hath had / Good ancestors” (4.2.47–48), because the name of Posthumus forces us to recognize that no one will ever be able to delve anyone’s ancestry to the root, and that we do not really know anything about our own early past. A desire to assert a connection to Rome may have been one of the things that brought the Renaissance to England in the first place, but ironically the Renaissance, in the shape of Polydore Vergil, had struck at the foundations of the supposed connection.

The same tension between a fetishized latinity and an inescapable modernity is evident in *Cymbeline* at the level of both plot and language. On the one hand, a sense of at least two crucial historical moments is firmly created, for though the reference to Cassivelaunus invites us to think of the moment of first contact between Romans and Britons during the lifetime of Julius Caesar, we also note that Innogen has in her bedroom a tapestry showing the story of Antony and Cleopatra, which puts us rather later in Roman history. There are also distinct evocations of Rome’s later decadence. First Senator says “the legions now in Gallia are / Full weak to undertake our wars against / The fall’n-off Britons” (3.8.4–6), evoking the tentative early stages of the Roman conquest but also simultaneously reminding us of the last phase of the empire in which the legions had to be recalled from the provinces to defend Rome itself. In similar vein, Guiderius while still disguised as Polydore says “Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to the east, / My father hath a reason for’t” (4.2.25–26), giving an impression of a culture already in collapse, observing practices which it has inherited from its elders but no longer understanding them. (I will think more about the implications of this later.) Most evocatively, Lucius (whose name echoes that of the first Christian king of Britain, according to Geoffrey) says of the headless trunk of Cloten “The ruin speaks that sometime / It was a worthy building” (4.2.354–55). We catch here a glimpse of what was surely the most

important single fact of life in Britain after the withdrawal of the legions: the survival of massive buildings—Bath, the Hadrian's Wall forts, the walls at Silchester, the amphitheater at Caerleon, to name only a few—which the native population could now occupy but did not know how to maintain, so that they gradually fell into disuse and decay, as poignantly recalled in the great Anglo-Saxon poem called simply "The Ruin," preserved in the Exeter Book, which speaks of a Roman site, almost certainly Bath, crumbling away because everyone who could have repaired it is dead.

Pitted against this, however, are insistent reminders of a much more modern world. We have the distinctively post-Latin vocabulary of Iachimo's reference to "Her andirons" (2.4.88), andirons being a word of Old French origin; Innogen's declaration that she is "not so citizen a wanton as / To seem to die ere sick" (4.2.8–9), where "citizen" and "wanton" are both Middle English and "die" is Old Norse; Arviragus' reference to his "clouted brogues" (4.2.214), where "clouted" is Middle English and "brogue" Irish; and his acknowledgement to Posthumus that "You help us, sir" (5.5.42–43)—"help" being a residue from the fact that "help" is a Germanic strong verb. Even Rome itself is already not what it was: Iachimo is "Siena's brother" (4.2.241), clearly signaling an Italian peninsula no longer united under Rome but fragmented into the semi-independent city-states of the Renaissance. The play's language insistently reminds us that the story of Britain is far more than a simple story of subjugation by Rome, and indeed Caesar himself is made to speak not Latin but English when the queen declares:

A kind of conquest
Caesar made here, but made not here his brag
Of "Came, and saw, and overcame." (3.1.23–25)

It is hard to know who could possibly be unaware of Caesar's conquest of Britain and of his celebrated declaration "Veni, vidi, vici," but the queen's translation confutes it doubly, not only denying (correctly) that it was said in Britain but also implying (incorrectly) that it was said in English. In *Cymbeline*, then, we see both England and English as simultaneously Roman and not-Roman, in ways that imply that the early modern English language and early modern English identities are both fundamentally hybridized.

The irony of the queen's denial of Roman triumph is foreshadowed in *Antony and Cleopatra* by Cleopatra's fear that:

Antony
 Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
 Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
 I'th' posture of a whore.²⁷

At the very moment when we see something occur we are asked to experience it as not actually happening but as being remembered, and as falling short of itself in the process. It is of a piece with this sense that the Roman past is gone beyond recapturing that *Antony and Cleopatra* too is littered with words of conspicuously non-Latin origin: the Scandinavian “windowed” (4.14.72) and “odds” (“The odds is gone,” 4.15.66), both brought to England by the Vikings, rub shoulders with the low German “spleets,” first recorded in English in 1585 and here ironically used by Octavius himself, icon of *romanitas*, when he says “mine own tongue / Spleets what it speaks” (4.7.121–22). Maecenas says of Caesar “When such a spacious mirror’s set before him / He needs must see himself” (5.1.34–35); in effect the play itself is a spacious mirror to the English language. In fact it thematizes Shakespeare’s own practice in the exchange between Lepidus and Antony:

Lepidus What manner o’thing is your crocodile?

Antony It is shaped, sir, like itself, and it is as broad as it has breadth.
 It is just so high as it is, and moves with its own organs. It lives
 by that which nourisheth it, and the elements once out of it, it
 transmigrates.

Lepidus What colour is it of?

Antony Of its own colour too. (2.7.41–44)

Caesar’s question “Will this description satisfy him?” (4.7.50) both hits and misses the point. The description *has* to satisfy Lepidus, woefully inadequate though it may be, because Lepidus and we are essentially in the same situation: he is being asked to apprehend a crocodile and we are being asked to apprehend the court of Cleopatra, and in both cases the only available representational material is language, which follows its own logic and is inflected and configured by forces outside the experience of Romans and Rome. Nor is Antony’s studied refusal of simile necessarily simply perverse, for it calls attention to the way in which language operates essentially on its own terms and creates its own reality: words are the tools through which we apprehend and construct the world, and that is why it behooves us to pay such close attention to the Anglo-Saxon flavor of the words through which Shakespeare chooses to construct his Rome.

In other Roman plays, too, the tension between Latin and the vernacular obtains. In *Julius Caesar*, Cassius, discussing Julius Caesar himself, icon of Roman conquest, says, "I had as lief not live as live to be / In awe of such a thing as I myself,"²⁸ where "lief," "live" and "thing" are Old Frisian, "be" West Germanic, "awe" Old Norse, and "myself" Old English. In *Coriolanus*, Menenius exhorts the plebeians to "Think / Upon the wounds his body bears, which show / Like graves i'th' holy churchyard,"²⁹ clearly pointing not to Republican Rome, where tombs were built by the sides of roads, but to a post-Roman, Christianized period in which temples have been replaced by churches. Menenius also declares "I would not have been so fidiused" (2.1.122–23), a nonce-word invented by Shakespeare for the occasion and infused by its grammatical function with a slyly salacious flavor, while the Third Servingman says "Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general" (4.5.184); thwack is an obviously onomatopoeic word not found in English before the sixteenth century, and even if *OED*'s suggestion that it might be equivalent to "thack" is accepted, that is in any case Old English. "This is clean kam" (3.1.302) derives directly from the Welsh *cam*, crooked, and while *OED* thinks that "abram" colored hair (2..3.18) is a variant of auburn, it has an undeniably biblical ring which makes it almost as anachronistic as churchyards.

Moreover, latinity in *Coriolanus* may find itself deliberately associated with insincerity or with values from which the speaker wishes to dissociate himself. Kolentzis suggests that in Shakespeare "Direct references to Latin, as well as comic commentary associated with excessively ornamented Latinate speech, regularly figure" and that "When characters use Latin-derived speech in a subtle way, particularly when their words are set alongside native 'Saxon' or 'Germanic' words, the contrast often exposes the ornate Latinisms as inadequate or even untrustworthy."³⁰ *Coriolanus* can serve as a prime example of this. Coriolanus himself says of the people "since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod and be off to them most counterfeitly" (2.3.97–99); here a stolidly Anglo-Saxon first half of the sentence gives way to the Latinate "practise," "insinuating" and "counterfeitly" in the second, words which collectively weave a web of deception and pretense. The tribunes, by contrast, confidently call "The Aediles, ho!" (3.1.172) and term Coriolanus "a traitorous innovator" (3.1.174): their use of the Roman authority-term "Aediles" sits badly alongside the patently self-interested nature of their own authority, and "traitorous innovator" is transparently insincere, serving to underline the degree to which latinity is associated with deception.

The same contrast between latinity and sincerity is also evident in *King Lear*, which while obviously not a Roman play does nevertheless have a significant relationship to the genre in that it effectively sandwiches the period of the Roman occupation: officially set in Britain's legendary pre-Roman past, it also glances forward to the centuries which followed the occupation by its use of the word "century" for a body of soldiers (4.4.6). In the old play of *King Leir* the Oswald figure is called Skalliger, but Shakespeare deliberately imports a sprinkling of Anglo-Saxon names, including those of King Edgar, whom Spenser in *A View of the Present State of Ireland* explicitly mentions as a lawgiver, and of Oswald himself.³¹ What the play effectively invites us to believe, therefore, is that England before the Romans and England after the Romans were in essentials the same, for character names and vocabulary items that ought logically to postdate the Romans are in fact to be found before them.

The play offers a number of pairings of English and Latinate vocabulary choices. Regan's Latinate "I am alone felicitate / In your dear highness' love" sits strikingly next to Cordelia's stolidly Anglo-Saxon "You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me."³² Edmund, who lies, promises Gloucester "auricular assurance" of Edgar's guilt (1.2.88–89), which couples latinity with the sinister note struck by the implicit allusion to the distinctively Catholic practice of auricular confession (Kolentzis observes that "the speech of the villainous Edmund is markedly more Latin-inflected than that of his brother");³³ by contrast the Fool, who tells true, offers the resolutely Anglo-Saxon vocabulary of:

Mark it, Nuncle:
 Have more than thou showest,
 Speak less than thou knowest,
 Lend less than thou owest,
 Ride more than thou goest,
 Learn more than thou trowest,
 Set less than thou throwest;
 Leave thy drink and thy whore,
 And keep in a-door,
 And thou shalt have more
 Than two tens to a score. (1.4.115–25)

When the Fool speaks to Lear of "That lord that counsell'd thee / To give away thy land" (1.4.137–38), there is an even starker contrast between the Latin origin of that flawed counsel and the staunchly English words "lord," "thee," "give" and "land" which sum up the core of the situation.

Titus Andronicus, Shakespeare's earliest Roman play,³⁴ also pits Latin against English. *Titus Andronicus* is steeped in the world of classical literature; we hear of *Metamorphoses* and of verses out of Horace and are aware that we are in a world where the image of "Ovid among the Goths" represented polar extremes of civilization and barbarism. Here, though, the contrast between words of Latin origin and words of Anglo-Saxon origin acquires an added dimension. Although older theories of their origin connected them to Scandinavia, the Goths were coming increasingly to be associated with Germany, and therefore to be understood as in opposition and antithesis to Rome: thus in William Rowley's *A Shoo-maker a gentleman* Dioclesian informs his co-emperor, whom he calls his "Brother Caesar," that

the Gothes, and Vandalls have outpast
The bounds, and o're the Rhine past into Burgandy, our worke
Must be to reverberate, and drive them to Confined Germany.
(sigs. B3r–B4v)

Francesca Royster suggests that *Titus* draws attention to this view of the Goths as Germanic, arguing that "Saturninus's reference to Tamora's 'hue,' ... alludes to her Germanic paleness,"³⁵ and Kurt Johannesson argues that this "new picture of the Goths, like the concept of the Renaissance, was born in Italy: in the end they are parts of the same myth. At its base lies the deep-rooted hatred of foreigners in medieval Italy"; conversely, "In medieval and Renaissance Germany there was deep suspicion of and aversion to everything Italian or Roman, for the pope had often humbled the German emperors." Whatever its origin, the result of this trend was a progressive Germanization of the Goths, as evidenced by the fact that Franciscus Irenicus included them in his 1518 *Germaniae exegesis*.³⁶ George North traces the etymology of the name Gothland to German—"Thys woord Gotlande in the Germaine tounge doth interpretat a good ground of good land" (sig. A4v)—and Johannesson argues that the Germanization of the Goths was accelerated by the growing influence of "German reformers, who began to see the Gothic overthrow of the Roman Empire as prefiguring the Protestant break-away from the Roman Catholic Church."³⁷ The fact that the Goths were first converted by Arians could be mapped onto Lutheranism,³⁸ and as Royster notes, "Many shared Augustine's view that the triumph of the Goths over Rome in AD 410 was just punishment for Roman decadence."³⁹

Goths were also increasingly conceived of as physically similar to the Germans. In this, as in so much else, early modern historians drew on the authority of Tacitus, who had claimed that

the peoples of Germany have never contaminated themselves by intermarriage with foreigners but remain of pure blood, distinct and unlike any other nation. One result of this is that their physical characteristics, in so far as one can generalize about such a large population, are always the same: fierce-looking blue eyes, reddish hair, and big frames—which, however, can exert their strength only by means of violent effort. They are less able to endure toil or fatiguing tasks and cannot bear thirst or heat, though their climate has inured them to cold spells and the poverty of their soil to hunger.⁴⁰

History has not been kind to this passage in that its assertion of racial purity was inevitably seized on by the Nazis, but what would have caught the eye of Renaissance readers would have been the reference to the Germans' "big frames," for this spoke to a well-established racial stereotype of big, "fat-foggy Germans (who men say / Are nothing but flesh and belly)."⁴¹ The idea that the Goths were bigger than the Romans is also to be found in *Titus Andronicus*, when Titus says to his brother:

Marcus, we are but shrubs, no cedars we,
No big-boned men framed of the Cyclops' size. (4.3.46–47)

By implication, the Goths with whom he is obviously contrasting himself *were* big-boned, so Titus is proposing a significant difference between them and the Romans. What we see during the course of *Titus Andronicus*, however, is a remarkable process of exchange whereby Romans and Goths each draw their own vocabulary out of the other, making a mockery of Marcus' warning to his brother "Thou art a Roman, be not barbarous" (1.1.383).⁴² As soon as they come into contact with Goths, the Romans start to sound like Goths. Titus himself declares "Here Goths have given me leave to sheathe my sword";⁴³ "give," "leave," "sheathe," and "sword" are all Germanic in origin. Shortly afterwards, Lucius demands

Give us the proudest prisoner of the Goths,
That we may hew his limbs and on a pile,
Ad manes fratrum sacrifice his flesh. (1.1.99–102)

"Hew" is Germanic and "limb" Old Norse; the actual Latin of "*Ad manes fratrum*" and the Latinate "sacrifice" thus sound suspiciously like a rather belated attempt to pull back from barbarism, and their effect is in any case immediately negated by the Germanic "flesh." Similarly Saturninus remarks when confronted with the Goth queen Tamora,

A goodly lady, trust me, of the hue
That I would choose were I to choose anew (1.1.265–66)

"Goodly" is Old Frisian, "trust" Old Norse, "hue" West Germanic, "anew" a distinctively Old English prefix on an originally Latin-derived word. Saturninus may just have been elected emperor of Rome, but he sounds for all the world like a Goth.

The Goths, conversely, sound like Romans. Tamora exclaims "O cruel, irreligious piety" (1.1.133) and Chiron adds "Was never Scythia half so barbarous!" (1.1.134); "piety" is little changed from the Latin *pietas*, and "barbarous" was the onomatopoeic word coined by the Greeks for describing those who did not speak Greek. Indeed the first act ends with a Goth actually speaking Latin as Demetrius exits saying "*Per Stygia, per manes vehor*" (1.1.634), and later Aaron speaks of Enceladus, Typhon and Alcides (4.2.95–8). Titus himself tries to reassert *romanitas*:

Here none but soldiers and Rome's servitors
Repose in fame; none basely slain in brawls. (1.1.357–58)

'Soldiers,' 'servitors,' 'repose,' and 'fame' are all words of Latin origin, and hence are appropriately applied to those allowed to lie in this Roman monument; 'slain' is of Germanic origin, 'none' Old English, 'basely' Anglo-Norman, and 'brawls' Middle English, and hence they are equally appropriately excluded. However, moments later Titus has to ask "And shall? What villain was it spake that word?" (1.1.364); "shall" is one of the two auxiliaries by which modern English forms the future tense ("will" being the other), and the use of auxiliaries is foreign to an inflected language such as Latin. We are pulled even more inescapably into modernity when the Roman Marcus, speaking of the archetypal Roman icon Lucrece, refers to "the woeful fere / And father of that chaste dishonoured dame" (4.1.89–90), "fere" being a Northumbrian word first recorded in 975, and again when Tamora vows "I'll find a day to massacre them all" (1.1.455), for the word "massacre" entered English only after the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572, an association underlined by the even more obviously French "we'll give your grace *bonjour*" (1.1.498). Rome is made to appear transient, and its influence impermanent, as a play about ancient Rome proves to have one eye firmly fixed on the urgently contemporary.

Titus Andronicus's systematic blurring of the boundaries between Romans and Goths bore directly on the question of a considerable interest to the Renaissance, which was what had happened to the Goths. For

a big, successful people they had performed a strangely effective disappearing act; contemporary readers of Shakespeare's play could hardly have failed to notice that there was no longer a people who called themselves Goths. The Renaissance had several answers to the conundrum of what had become of them. For George North, they scattered

aboute the yere of Christe. 380. at what tyme the Gothes, that long before were gone oute of Swecia and Gothia, made great spoyle, and wonderfully troubled the Romaines both in Italye, Spayne, and Fraunce. The Gothes which continually remained in theyr countye, did vnite and knyt them selues to the Swecians, bothe in lawes and maners, and euer synce haue bene subiectes to the Kynges of Swecia.⁴⁴

For North, then, some Goths went to Sweden. However, he goes on to describe how

The Gothes & the Swecians tyme out of mynde, & eyen from the beginning of their beyng: haue vnited & knyt themselves in leage & amitye, both vnder one law and one King. And also they haue appointed the confines & boundes of both Countries to be as one kyngdome. Yet haue they often tymes deuided them selues the one from the other, and eche nacion haue had their seuerall king.⁴⁵

Although basically Swedish, then, North's Goths are so only on a sort of part-time basis, and he also acknowledges that other descendants of the Goths are now to be found in very different climes, suggesting a terrifying degree of mobility and malleability inherent in their racial identity: "They possessed Italy no smal time, they occupied Fraunce, and they grounded them selues so in Spayne, that theyr chiefe Nobilitie doth discende from them, as the Romaine histories doth mencion."⁴⁶ William Slatyer in his *The history of Great Britanie* concurs that "Spaniard and Italian both, / Are said descended of the Goth,"⁴⁷ while Thomas Stocker in *A tragicall historie of the troubles and ciuile warres of the lowe Countries* elaborates how

the christians which came of Gothes, for the auoyding of the intolterable oppressions, and horrible furie of these nations [the Moors], retyned and withrewe them selues into the Mountaynes of Arragon, who at that tyme were called the Cantabrians, and Asturians, and chose one named Pelagius to be their king. This Pelagius forsaking the name of a Gothe, beganne to make very great warres against the Mores.⁴⁸

Pelagius in effect becomes an ex-Goth, and the people he leads are Christians, offering a stark reversal of traditional polarities by which Goths,

once synonymous with savagery and barbarism, are now literally on the side of the angels.

Even closer to home, there was a strongly held view that, in some sense at least, the Goths were in fact *us*. In *Fuimus Troes*, Camillus explicitly associates the Goths with the British when he informs Caesar that Brennus led the Gauls to sack Rome (2.7.35–46). Tacitus had suggested that the Britons were always already a mixed bag and that the best guide to their ancestry came from maps rather than mythology:

Who the first inhabitants of Britain were, whether natives or immigrants, is open to question: one must remember we are dealing with barbarians. But their physical characteristics vary, and the variation is suggestive. The reddish hair and large limbs of the Caledonians proclaim a German origin; the swarthy faces of the Silures, the tendency of their hair to curl, and the fact that Spain lies opposite, all lead one to believe that Spaniards crossed in ancient times and occupied that part of the country. The peoples nearest to the Gauls likewise resemble them.⁴⁹

John Clapham in *The historie of Great Britannie* follows Tacitus in favoring the idea that the original Britons came from the Continent, though he thinks of them specifically as French: he speaks of "the Inhabitants of this Ile, as being originally disceded from the Gauls," though he thinks that the Britons soon diverged from the Gauls in that they were taller, less polite, and displayed a distinctly un-French reluctance to eat poultry: "It was held among them, as a thing vnlawfull, to eate of a hare, a hen, or a goose."⁵⁰

The idea that the Goths had become the English was supported by claims that Goths physically resembled the original inhabitants of Britain since early Britons, too, were big-boned. In Geoffrey, the Saxons who descend on Vortigern are described as "men of huge stature,"⁵¹ and Aubrey Burl notes that "In a print of 1575, two robbers spaded into a round barrow near Stonehenge, a piratical haul of a skull and crossbones alongside them but nothing of mercenary value. The sketch 'sheweth wher great bones' of men are found."⁵² Stuart Piggott also notes that in 1578 Sir Thomas Elyot declared that a giant had been found buried at Stonehenge and that "when Brutus and his companion Corineus arrived, the latter killed a 'detestable monster, called Goëmagog, in stature twelve cubits' at Plymouth, where a turf-cut figure or figures of the giant was being cleaned by 1486 and survived until at least 1602,"⁵³ and Rowland Wymer points out that

well after that “The giant images of Corineus and Gogmagog ... were carried in pageants ... Corineus was costumed as a Roman and the Albion giant Gogmagog as an ancient Briton.”⁵⁴ The Britons were thus aligned with an ethnic group consisting of Scandinavians (Colbrand, whom Guy of Warwick fought, was a giant, and in Kyd’s *Solyman and Perseda* Erastus speaks of “the bigbound Dane”),⁵⁵ Goths, and “big bonde Germans.”⁵⁶ In *Fuimus Troes*, Brennus speaks of “big-boned Britons” (1.1.19) and Caesar describes male Britons as “tall and big, / With blue-stained skins and long black dangling hair” (2.4.10–12).

The idea of a kinship between English and Germans was promulgated with particular vigor by the Anglo-Dutch Catholic polemicist Richard Verstegan in *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence* (1605), who even went so far as to propose that there had once been a land-bridge between Britain and the Continent.⁵⁷ Samuel Klinger notes that:

Verstegen is aware that [Tacitus] does not mention the Saxons, but in order to establish his own preference for tracing English origins back to Saxon origins and to make use at the same time of Tacitus’ general description of the Germans, he glibly affirms that the reason why Tacitus did not call the Saxons by name is that he knew them by the name of Cambrians.⁵⁸

The Saxons were rendered respectable by the fact that they were seen as having introduced parliaments: Rebecca Brackmann notes that William Lambarde told a jury that the laws of England came from the Germans, “from whom both we and the Norman conquerors are descended,”⁵⁹ and Sir Edward Coke declared in 1597 that “At the first we were all one House and sat together, by a precedent which I have of a Parliament holden before the Conquest by *Edward* the Son of *Etheldred*. For there were Parliaments before the Conquest.” Oliver Arnold refers to this as “The Commons’ creation myth, enshrined in a sacred book,”⁶⁰ while Matthew Parker used the supposed purity of the Anglo-Saxon church as support for Protestantism.⁶¹ While they might not have been descended from the goddess Venus, as Brutus supposedly was, the unimpeachably historical Saxons, vouched for by the unquestionably historical Tacitus and enjoying a generally good press, might well seem ancestors worth having.

For many early modern writers, what went for the Saxons also went for the Goths. Jonathan Bate declares that “To the Elizabethans, Jutes, Getes, Goths and Germans were not only interchangeable, they were also their own ancestors. Lambarde tells of how they established themselves in

Kent, a county which, as Shakespeare reminds us, was especially associated with freedom and valour"; for Bate, "The Goths who accompany Lucius ... are there to secure the Protestant succession."⁶² As Samuel Klinger notes, there was a widespread tendency to equate the Goths with the Jutes who had settled Kent and "The term 'Gothic' came into extensive use in the seventeenth century as an epithet employed by the Parliamentary leaders to defend the prerogatives of Parliament against the pretensions of the King to absolute right to govern England," not least because of the idea that the Goths had a *dux bellorum*, a leader appointed specifically and solely for times of war, rather than a hereditary monarch; although most of the examples Klinger gives are considerably later than *Titus*, he does note Samuel Daniel's defense of Goths and also the existence of "an anthology or primer of Gothic ideas composed by the leading members of the society. Although not gathered and printed until 1658, the papers were prepared several decades before for oral presentation at the meetings of the society (Francis Tate, one of the authors, died in 1616)."⁶³ It is also notable that in *Cymbeline* Belarius, Polydore and Cadwal are noble savages not unlike the Goths in *Titus*.

It is therefore no coincidence that *Titus Andronicus* should display a number of overlaps with the two plays in which Shakespeare was later to tackle the subject of the British History, *King Lear* and *Cymbeline*. Innogen and Lavinia have in common the extent to which their lives are configured by those of their brothers; both have dynastic significance (in Geoffrey, Silvius, father of Brutus, marries a niece of Lavinia);⁶⁴ and both are prospective victims of rape by relatives, though Cloten's attempt on Innogen is unsuccessful. Both plays, too, have a character called Lucius, which according to Geoffrey of Monmouth was the name of the first Christian king of Britain. Equally Chiron's "Was never Scythia half so barbarous!" (1.1.134) anticipates Lear's mention of "The barbarous Scythian, / Or he that makes his generation messes / To gorge his appetite" (1.1.115–17), and Chiron's very name, which was that of a centaur, finds an echo in Lear's "Down from the waist they are Centaurs, / Though women all above" (4.6.123–24). When his grandson Lucius kills a fly, Titus asks:

How if that fly had a father and a mother?
How would he hang his slender gilded wings
And buzz lamenting doings in the air. (3.2.61–63)

Lear adopts a similarly anthropomorphic attitude when he says "die for adultery! No: / The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly / Does lecher

in my sight" (4.6.111–13). Lear even seems to glance at the supposed Germanness of the Goths when the Gentleman remarks of Gloucester "They say Edgar, his banish'd son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany" (4.7.90–91). *Titus* also appears to be in dialog with another play about the origins of Britain, *Locrine*: Locrine apostrophizes Humber "thou thy selfe at Albanactus tombe / Shalt offred be in satisfaction" as Alarbus is offered in sacrifice at the tomb of the Andronici, and Aaron's assurance that Bassianus is not degenerate echoes *Locrine's* "Thrasimachus is not so degenerate" (sig. I2r). For Shakespeare, then, *Titus Andronicus*, *King Lear*, and *Cymbeline* are in some sense all essentially part of the same story. That story is about the origins of Britain and how they continued to impact on early modern English identities, and he chooses to tell it in a mixture of Latin words and Anglo-Saxon ones because he sees Englishness itself as a mixture of Latin and Anglo-Saxon influences.

Finally, I want to touch briefly on *Hamlet*, which while obviously not a Roman play nevertheless gestures pointedly at the genre, with its tale of Pyrrhus, Horatio's "I am more an antique Roman than a Dane" (5.2.346), and characters bearing Roman names such as Claudius and Marcellus rubbing shoulders with the ostentatiously Scandinavian Hamlet and Osric. Here, too, words of Latin origin are obsessively coupled with words forged in the linguistic maelstrom of pre-Conquest England. "So hallow'd and so gracious is that time" (1.1.169) couples the English "hallow'd" with the Latinate "gracious"; "With an auspicious and a dropping eye" (I.ii.11) pairs "drop," of Germanic origin, with "auspicious," of Latinate; "Make mad the guilty and appal the free" (2.2.558) has Old English "mad" coupled with Latinate "appal." "That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd, / Excitements of my reason and my blood" (4.4.57–58) offers the effect twice over, for not only is "reason" of Latin origin and "blood" of Old Frisian, but also though "stained" is of Old French origin, *OED* notes that only in English can it ever carry the connotation of metaphorical rather than literal taint and disfigurement. Finally one might also note Hamlet's conviction that when it comes to his father "I shall not look upon his like again" (1.2.188). The word "like" is originally derived from the Germanic word for "corpse," which still survives in the English term "lych-gate" (the gate through which the corpse was carried into the churchyard) and in a very literal sense his father's "like" is therefore exactly what Hamlet is going to see again, and very soon too. In *Hamlet*, any attempt at adherence to the ideals of *romantitas* can only ever be mediated through a language decisively shaped and characterized by distinctively post-Roman histories and experiences.

In all these plays, then, the story may be of the past, but the language is relentlessly and pointedly of the present, and works insistently to remind us that, though Britain was shaped and marked by the fact of Roman occupation and the myth of descent from Aeneas, that forms only part of its story, for once the Romans retreated many other waves of invasion followed, each of which left their linguistic mark. The story of both England and English is one of hybridization, and it is in the Roman and Roman-related plays more than any others that Shakespeare makes us aware of that by drawing attention to the fact that the very language in which the story of national identity is told has been shaped and configured by hybridity.

NOTES

¹ Colin Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 31.

² Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist*, ed. Peter Bement (London: Routledge, 1990), 2.1.85.

³ Alysia Kolentis, "Shakespeare's Linguistic Creativity: A Reappraisal," *Literature Compass* 11.4 (2014), pp. 258–66, p. 262.

⁴ Rebecca Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2012), p. 57.

⁵ Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 59 and 29. See too Cathy Shrank, "Rhetorical constructions of a national community: The role of the King's English in mid-Tudor writing," in *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric*, ed. Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 180–98, p. 185.

⁶ Carla Mazzio, "Staging the Vernacular: Language and Nation in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*," *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 38.2 (1998), pp. 207–32, pp. 207–8.

⁷ Lucy Munro, "'Nemp your sexes!': Anachronistic Aesthetics in *Hengist, King of Kent* and the Jacobean 'Anglo-Saxon' Play," *Modern Philology* 111.4 (2014), pp. 734–61, p. 748.

⁸ See Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 64 and 69.

⁹ William Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a gentleman* (London: J. Okes for John Cowper, 1638), sig. F3v.

¹⁰ Julia Briggs, "Middleton's Forgotten Tragedy *Hengist, King of Kent*," *The Review of English Studies* 41.164 (November 1990), 479–95, p. 489.

¹¹ Jasper Fisher, *Fuimus Troes*, ed. Chris Butler, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/renplays/fuimustroes.htm>

¹² A. K. McIlwraith, ed., *Five Elizabethan Tragedies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), I.1.28.

¹³ "Reave," 2.1.3, 2.1.51, 3.1.26; "bereft," 2.1.172, 3.1.Chorus 12, 4.2.112, 5.1.2, 5.2.207; "reft," 2.2.15, 4.2.268, 5.1.134, 5.2.124; "bereaved," 4.1.4; "bereave," 5.2.212; "bereaves," 5.2.247.

¹⁴ Thomas Hughes, *Certaine deu[is]es and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse court in Greenewich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy raigne* (London: Robert Robinson, 1587), sigs. A2r and C1r.

¹⁵ See Curtis Perry, "British Empire on the Eve of the Armada: Revisiting *The Misfortunes of Arthur*," *Studies in Philology* 108.4 (2011), 508–37, and Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York: Garland, 1992), p. 48.

¹⁶ W. S., *The lamentable tragedie of Locrine* (London: Thomas Creede, 1595), sig. E1v A; "bereft" also occurs in the play, at sig. K2r.

¹⁷ See for instance Andrew King, "Dead Butchers and Fiend-like Queens: Literary and Political History in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and *Macbeth*," in *The Scots and Medieval Arthurian Legend*, ed. Rhiannon Purdie and Nicola Royan (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005), pp. 121–34 and Barbara Heliodora Carneiro De Mendonça, "The Influence of *Gorboduc* on *King Lear*," *Shakespeare Survey* 13 (1966), pp. 41–48. *Locrine* sounds sufficiently Shakespearean to have been occasionally attributed to him.

¹⁸ Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 3.

¹⁹ Charles Merbury, *A briefe discoure of royall monarchie, as of the best common weale wherein the subiect may beholde the sacred maiestie of the princes most royall estate* (London: Thomas Vautrollier, 1581), sig. E1v.

²⁰ William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, ed. G. R. Hibbard (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), 4.1.29–30.

²¹ William Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, ed. T. W. Craik (London: Routledge, 1995), 3.4.5–10.

²² Scott Newstok, "Loving and Cherishing 'True English': Shakespeare's Twinomials," in *Interlinguicity, Internationality and Shakespeare*, ed. Michael Saenger (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), pp. 75–85, p. 75.

²³ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins (London: Methuen, 1982), 2.2.501–2.

²⁴ William Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, ed. J. M. Nosworthy [1955] (London: Cengage Learning, 2007), 1.1.28–31. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

²⁵ Samantha Frenée-Hutchins, "The Cultural and Ideological Significance and Representations of Boudica during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I"

(unpublished PhD thesis, Exeter University and Université d'Orléans, 2009), p. 176.

²⁶ John Weever, *Ancient funerall monuments within the vnitied monarchie of Great Britaine* (London: Thomas Harper for Laurence Sadler, 1631), p. 608.

²⁷ William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. Emrys Jones (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 5.2.218–21. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

²⁸ William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, ed. Norman Sanders (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), 1.2.94–95. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

²⁹ William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, ed. G. R. Hibbard (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), 3.3.49–51. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

³⁰ Kolentzis, "Shakespeare's Linguistic Creativity," p. 263.

³¹ Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 183.

³² William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Kenneth Muir (London: Methuen, 1972), 1.1.74–75 and 1.1.95.

³³ Kolentzis, "Shakespeare's Linguistic Creativity," p. 263.

³⁴ I am aware of the arguments for attributing the first act of *Titus Andronicus*, from which the majority of my examples are drawn, to Peele, but my interest is in the language of Roman plays rather than in who actually wrote them. I use "Shakespeare" for convenience.

³⁵ Francesca T. Royster, "White-limed walls: Whiteness and Gothic extremism in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51.4 (2000), pp. 432–55, p. 433.

³⁶ Kurt Johannesson, *The Renaissance of the Goths in Sixteenth-Century Sweden: Johannes and Olaus Magnus as Politicians and Historians*, trans. James Larson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 85 and 87.

³⁷ Ronald Broude, "Roman and Goth in *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Studies* 6 (1970), pp. 27–34, p. 30.

³⁸ Johannesson, *The Renaissance of the Goths*, p. 101.

³⁹ Royster, "White-limed walls," pp. 436–37.

⁴⁰ Tacitus, *The Agricola and the Germania*, trans. H. Mattingly (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1948), p. 104.

⁴¹ Henry Burnell, *Landgartha* (Dublin, 1641), sig. IIv.

⁴² On the use of the word "barbarous" in the play and the attendant linguistic tensions, see Barbara Antonucci, "Romans versus Barbarians: Speaking the Language of Empire in *Titus Andronicus*," in *Identity, Otherness and Empire in Shakespeare's Rome*, ed. Maria Del Sapio Garbero (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 119–30, p. 122.

⁴³ William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Jonathan Bate [1995] (London: Arden, 2003), 1.1.88. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

⁴⁴ George North, *The description of Swedland, Gotland, and Finland ... chieflie out of Sebastian Mounster* (London: John Awdely, 1561), sig. B3v.

⁴⁵ North, *The description of Swedland, Gotland, and Finland*, sig. A4v.

⁴⁶ North, *The description of Swedland, Gotland, and Finland*, sig. A5r.

⁴⁷ William Slatyer, *The history of Great Britanie* (London: W. Stansby for Richard Meighen, 1621), p. 10.

⁴⁸ Thomas Stocker, *A tragicall historie of the troubles and ciuile warres of the lowe Countries ... Translated out of French* (London: John Kingston and Thomas Dawson for Tobie Smith, 1583), p. 41.

⁴⁹ Tacitus, *The Agricola and the Germania*, pp. 61–62.

⁵⁰ John Clapham, *The historie of Great Britannie declaring the successe of times and affaires in that iland, from the Romans first entrance, vntill the raigne of Egbert, the West-Saxon prince; who reduced the severall principalities of the Saxons and English, into a monarchie, and changed the name of Britanie into England* (London: Valentine Simmes, 1606), pp. 1 and 5.

⁵¹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 156.

⁵² Aubrey Burl, *Stonehenge* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2006), p. 57.

⁵³ Stuart Piggott, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), pp. 49–50.

⁵⁴ Rowland Wymer, “*The Tempest and the Origins of Britain*,” *Critical Survey* 11.1 (1999), pp. 3–14, p. 7.

⁵⁵ Thomas Kyd, *The tragedye of Solyman and Perseda Wherein is laide open, loues constancy, fortunes inconstancy, and deaths triumphs* (London: Edward Allde for Edward White, 1592), sig. A3v.

⁵⁶ Philip Massinger, *Believe As You List*, ed. C. J. Sisson (Oxford: The Malone Society, 1928), p. 6.

⁵⁷ Piggott, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination*, p. 57.

⁵⁸ Samuel Klinger, *The Goths in England: A Study in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 116.

⁵⁹ Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 205.

⁶⁰ Oliver Arnold, *The Third Citizen: Shakespeare's Theater and the Early Modern House of Commons* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), p. 56.

⁶¹ Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism*, p. 107.

⁶² Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, pp. 19 and 21.

⁶³ Klinger, *The Goths in England*, pp. 24–25, 1, 90, 120.

⁶⁴ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, p. 54.

Chapter 2

Profit and Delight? Magic and the Dreams of a Nation

THE PRE-CONQUEST PERIOD SAW Britain converted to Christianity, but to Catholicism rather than to the Protestantism which prevailed in the early modern period. The resulting tension is one explored in a number of plays including *Grim the Collier of Croydon, or The Devil and his Dame; with the Devil and St Dunstan*, featuring St. Dunstan, the tenth-century British bishop famous for defeating the devil in a fight, and the lost *England's first happines, or, the Life of St Austin*, one of three plays entered on the Stationers' Register in 1640 by the printer John Nicholson. This must have described the seventh-century career of another bishop-saint, St. Augustine of Canterbury, who converted England to Christianity, and its title indicates that it was a celebration. Also possibly in this category are the lost *Warlamchester* and James Shirley's *The Tragedy of St Albans*, also lost, either of which might have described the martyrdom of St. Alban; *A Knack to Know a Knave*, where, again, St. Dunstan appears as a character; and Rowley's *A Shoo-maker A Gentleman*. There is also William Drury's 1619 *Aluredus, sive Alvredus*, translated by Robert Knightley as *Alfrede, or Right Reinthron'd*, in 1659, in which Alfred is aided by St. Cuthbert, who delivers a Prologue to the play in which the opening lines are:

Who this deny's, that heav'n a pious care
Retains for humain things, that saints appeare
Cal'd to th'assistance of affaires below,
Must cruelness ith'Deity allow.¹

Effectively the saint declares that the age of miracles is not past. Finally there is a group of plays which put religion in dialog with magic and which explore the issue of strength of faith and the point at which it becomes in itself a danger to the state and its defense, and it is these which I explore in this chapter.

In stories involving magic, the most common use of it is to give people what they want. In this chapter, I want to explore the extent to which magic in the plays I shall be considering gives people what they want, and what is at stake in so doing. On the one hand, to stage plays in which dreams come true by magic might seem to be (literally) the ultimate in vicarious wish-fulfillment. On the other, playwrights in Renaissance England could hardly hope that the censor would let pass anything that seemed actually to advocate the usefulness and desirability of practicing a forbidden art: in the end even a white magician such as Prospero must be seen to renounce his art, and magicians any less white invariably had to be punished. If magic is to be seen to deliver results, it is simplest and safest for it do so within a firmly comic structure, perhaps the best example of this being *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where the pity which Oberon feels for Helena ultimately results in her receiving her heart's desire and everyone else, with the possible exception of Egeus, ending the play happy and satisfied. The magic in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, however, is distinctive in several respects. Perhaps most importantly, there are no books involved: the only visible instrument of the fairies' power is a flower, aligning the play closely with folk practices and herb-based medicine of the kind which Shakespeare's own son-in-law Dr. John Hall might later have endorsed.² At the same time, though, this folk-like remedy is notably *not* administered by a wise woman, and so is free from the taint of witchcraft which attaches so readily to figures such as Lyly's Mother Bombie or Mother Sawyer in Dekker, Ford, and Rowley's *The Witch of Edmonton*. Both Oberon and Puck thus neatly sidestep the two principal stereotypes of book-learned magician and lore-wise witch, a fact which combines with the festive, liminal atmosphere of the woods to situate their magic within the associative, transformative logic of dream rather than that of the world which the audience inhabit in their waking hours, and hence obviates the need for any curb on their activities to be invoked.

In other plays, however, such safeguards are not in place, and the question of what characters want becomes less dreamlike and more politicized. I want to discuss seven such plays, including *Doctor Faustus*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, *The Birth of Merlin*, *The Virgin Martyr*, *St Patrick for Ireland*, *The Seven Champions of Christendom* and, briefly, *The Tempest*. *The Birth of Merlin* is, as the title suggests, set in Arthurian England, *St Patrick for Ireland* in pre-Christian Ireland, *The Virgin Martyr* during the Roman Empire, and *The Seven Champions of Christendom* in a rather vaguely conceived but presumably Dark Age past; all of these plays thus

sit comfortably within the parameters of my project, but it might perhaps be objected that the other three have no place in it. However, *Doctor Faustus*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, and to a perhaps lesser extent *The Tempest* are essential to a discussion of early modern plays about magic because they effectively establish the terms of the genre, and also because they speak so evocatively of what the past meant to the present. I shall argue that what people want in them are four things which fall into two linked pairs: immediately, direct contact with the classical past coupled with an assurance of an imperial (and implicitly colonialist) future; and ultimately and consequently, national security coupled with religious certainty. Collectively, I will argue, these plays offer a fantasized version of an England confident about both its past and its future, secure from both external invasion and internal disagreements about religion, and proud of a firmly established classical past which authorized an expansionist agenda. Together, they take the pulse of the most urgently-felt fears and hopes of early modern England, allowing us to see both what it most dreaded and what it most wanted. At the same time, though, they disguise their own import in that they sidestep serious representational and doctrinal issues by drawing attention to the paradoxical simplicity of many of the theatrical effects involved. For both the darker political purposes of the tenor and the lightening effect of the vehicle, magic provides a crucial and versatile lexicon.

The first of the things desired by many of the characters in the plays is something that we who study them may also wish for, and something too that is arguably at the heart of historical drama as a genre. "I began with the desire to speak with the dead" says Stephen Greenblatt in the opening sentence of his groundbreaking *Shakespearean Negotiations*,³ and it seems to be a desire shared by many in the Renaissance, for it is something often asked of magicians. In *The Birth of Merlin*, Proximus, at Aurelius' request, conjures up the ghosts of Achilles and Hector.⁴ In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, which shows us an England in which memories of the classical world remain strong—Bacon refers to "here where Brute did build his Troynovaunt" (5.3.43)—one of the shows offered is Hercules in his lion's skin breaking some branches off a tree (3.2.92). In *Doctor Faustus*, Faustus causes Alexander and his paramour to appear for the Emperor; and in *The Tempest* Prospero startlingly recalls that "graves at my command / Have waked their sleepers, ope'd and let 'em forth"⁵ and presents simulacra of classical deities to the young lovers. What is notable about all these cases is that it is not just the dead in general but the classical dead in particular

who are brought back. A glance at the repertoire of Elizabethan theaters clearly indicates the popularity of classical subjects, with several plays on stories such as those of Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Antony and Cleopatra; along with exotic locations, classical personages seem to have been one of the sure-fire ways of filling a theater, not least because either the representation or the supposed resurrection of a classical character is something that is remarkably easy to stage: all that is needed is an actor and a costume sufficiently suggestive of the required period. These plays go one step beyond with a metatheatrical flourish which teases us with the possibility that we may briefly, and dangerously, believe that what we are seeing is more than merely a show.

More importantly, though, they also pack a political punch, for stories of the classical past, particularly those centered on the supposed founding of Britain by descendants of the *ur*-colonizer Aeneas, were often seen as authorizing an expansionist future, and many of these plays explicitly or implicitly relate the past to the future in ways which suggest such logic at work. In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, fears about a secure succession are allayed in a prophecy made by Bacon to Henry III about the future which is in itself, as Brian Walsh points out, a resurrection of the classical past in that such prophecies have their origin in Virgil;⁶ in *The Birth of Merlin*, Merlin prophesies to Uter that his daughter will be a queen in Ireland, “of whom first springs / That Kingdoms Title to the Brittain Kings,” and that his son will be even more famous:

all after times shall fill their Chronicles with fame of his renown,
whose warlike sword shall pass through fertile France and Germany,
nor shall his conjuring foot be forc’t to stand, till Romes Imperial
Wreath hath crown’d his fame with Monarch of the West, from
whose seven hills with Conquest, and contributory Kings, he back
returns to enlarge the Brittain bounds, his Heraldry adorn’d with
thirteen Crowns. (G1r)

This moves beyond the discourse of national defense which has previously dominated the play to one of national expansion, asserting England’s problematic claim to Ireland and prodigally promising thirteen further crowns, in a wild orgy of imperialist expansion.

The second pairing was of national defense and religious certainty. “Pray, sir, resolve me, what religion’s best / For a man to die in?” asks Flamineo in Webster’s *The White Devil* of the ghost of the recently dead Bracciano, presumably on the grounds that this is both the first

thing a dead man will have found out and also the thing that a living one most needs to know.⁷ Flamineo's choice is between Protestantism and Catholicism, but those were not the only possible configurations of the decision. At the end of the early modern prose narrative *The famous history of Fryer Bacon*, Friar Bacon finds himself torn between the opposing poles of magic and the church:

At the time that Fryer Bacon kept his chamber, he fell into divers meditations: Sometimes into the vanity of Arts & Sciences: then would he condemn himself for studying of those things that were so contrary to his Order, and souls health, and would say, that Magick made a man a Devil; sometimes would he meditate on Divinity; then would he cry out upon himself so for neglecting the study of it, and for studying Magick sometimes would he meditate on the shortness of mans life, then would he condemn himself for spending a time so short, so ill as he had done his: So would he go from one thing to another, and in all condemn his former studies.⁸

He therefore has a cell constructed within the actual wall of the church and lives out his life in that liminal space, crossing from the tainted terrain of magic to the sanctified ground of the church. The official position of the Protestant church was that the age of miracles is past, but in the semi-mythical past which many of these plays evoke, maybe it is not quite fully past: thus in William Rowley's *A Shoo-maker a gentleman* Alured says "My lifes but lent to bid you shun your deaths, and in that too / Heavens mercy is miraculous."⁹ The charged and contested boundary between miracle and magic is traced in a number of early modern plays, often in ways which bear specifically on the differences between the two confessions, and the liminality emblemized by Friar Bacon's cell characterizes a number of significant examinations of the relationship between workers of magic and workers of miracles. Many of them indeed focus on actual physical boundaries, a recurring motif, to which I shall return, being the involvement of a magician in erecting a wall, and even when they do not divisions of other sorts are at stake: in William Haughton's *Grim the Collier of Croyden* the spirit of St. Dunstan declares:

had I liv'd, the Danes had never boasted
Their then beginning Conquest of this Land;
Yet some accuse me for a Conjuror,
By reason of those many miracles
Which Heaven for holy life endowed me with.¹⁰

Moreover, in virtually all the instances I examine here, the struggle for meaning centers on a moment or moments when a deceptively simple theatrical effect is revealed as susceptible of two quite contrasting onstage interpretations, one of which sees it as the product of magic and the other of which sees it as the product of miracle; while at the same time the audience always knows, as with the staging of the classical dead, that the true explanation lies in a piece of obvious stage trickery, so that an epistemological boundary as well as a literal one is also being negotiated.

I want to start with *Doctor Faustus*, because not only does it speak loudly of the scars of religious warfare, with its references to the bridge at Antwerp and the Prince of Parma, but the fact that it touches specifically on conflicts between Protestants and Catholics also raises the vexed question of magic versus miracle. Moreover, not only is the tension between the idea of magic and the idea of miracle particularly apparent in that play, but its expression there is particularly influential, not least because it chimed so closely with some of the period's most urgent anxieties about this question. In his account of the antics of the supposed demoniacs of Denham (whom we might now term hysterical but whom Elizabethan Catholicism read as possessed) the Protestant Samuel Harsnett, who scathingly referred to the account of the supposed exorcisms at Denham as "the *Miracle Book*," regarded those involved as calculatedly fraudulent; he prefaced his account of the affair with references to witches and to Simon Magus.¹¹ The official Protestant position being that the age of miracles was past, Harsnett is forced to collapse the distinction between miracle and magic which provides the structuring logic of so many stage plays. Barbara L. Parker argues that *Doctor Faustus* works in a similar way: she thinks that "anti-Catholic satire is the play's governing concept, Faustus's demonic new religion being a parody of Roman Catholicism and virtually the entire play consisting of variations of the Mass" and that "Central to the identification of Catholicism with diabolism was the element of magic," though she also thinks that "*Faustus* repudiates both Catholicism and Protestantism."¹² For Parker, then, *Doctor Faustus* is like Harsnett in claiming that there is no difference between miracle and magic and that all apparent (good) miracles are really the result of (bad) magic. However, Andrew Duxfield, arguing that "Striking parallels ... exist between Marlowe's *Faustus* and key passages from the writings of Hermes Trismegistus," suggests that "Faustus's pursuit of knowledge through occult practices can, in the context of hermeticism, be seen paradoxically

as an attempt to ascend to a state of divinity,"¹³ in which case magic would not only be virtuous in itself but would in fact come very close to miracle.

At the same time, though, the miracle is exposed as fundamentally mundane. Though the uncertainties attending the existence of two such different texts make the details unclear, it is certainly obvious that broadly speaking Faustus fritters away his energies on cheap gimmicks which are theatrical only in the pejorative sense. Moreover, the figure who opposes him as representing the pole of sanctity is the Old Man, who relies wholly upon language:

Ah, stay, good Faustus, stay thy desperate steps!
 I see an angel hovers o'er thy head,
 And, with a vial full of precious grace,
 Offers to pour the same into thy soul.
 Then call for mercy and avoid despair.

Neither we nor, apparently, Faustus himself see this particular angel, but the Old Man's verbal evocation of it is sufficient to move Doctor Faustus: "Ah, my sweet friend, I feel thy words / To comfort my distressed soul."¹⁴ Soon after, the Old Man says:

Satan begins to sift me with his pride;
 As in this furnace God shall try my faith,
 My faith, vile hell, shall triumph over thee.
 Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smiles
 At your repulse and laughs your state to scorn!
 Hence, hell! For hence I fly unto my God. (5.1.112–17)

Once again we cannot see what he sees, "how the heavens smiles"—indeed it is hard to imagine what it would look like if we could—but again his statement of it is impressive. In one sense this simply reflects the Protestant preference for the word, but it is also possible to see a theatrical sensibility as well as a religious one at work, in the shape of an aesthetic and indeed ascetic preference on the part of the artist of the mighty line for a verbally created effect rather than a visually created one. The real magic, it seems, lies in the power of words and of the imagination on which they act. This laying bare of the device has the subsidiary effect of destabilizing the idea of an underlying truth and underlining instead the extent to which an individual and potentially aesthetically-grounded act of choice may be at work: put crudely, in terms of interpreting effects as magic or as miracle you pay your money and you take your pick, with the potential impli-

cation that individual choice of confession might be viewed with similar indulgence as being the product of preference rather than of error.

One of the specific actions that Faustus initially proposes but subsequently abandons is to surround Germany with a wall of brass (5.1.89), this being effectively a byword for invincibility: in Anthony Brewer's play *The Love-sick King*, which has a quasi-miraculous moment when Cartesmunda's beauty roots Canutus where he stands, Canutus laments that "In vain I shoot against a wall of brass, that sends mine own shafts back upon my self";¹⁵ in the anonymous *Wily beguilde* we hear of "the brazen walls of Plutoes court";¹⁶ in Geoffrey, one of Merlin's prophecies is of "the Man of Bronze [who] for long years shall guard the gates of London upon a brazen horse";¹⁷ Elysium in *The Spanish Tragedy* has a tower with "walls of brass";¹⁸ and Richard II's image of immortality is "As if this flesh which walls about our life / Were brass impregnable."¹⁹ In Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, the motif recurs. Burden has heard that Bacon intends "To compass England with a wall of brass,"²⁰ which Bacon himself confirms will "rin[g] the English strand / From Dover to the market-place of Rye" (1.2.65–66). The reason why England would benefit from such a wall is made clear when Henry III greets the Emperor and the King of Castile as

Great men of Europe, monarchs of the West,
Ring'd with the walls of old Oceanus,
Whose lofty surges like the battlements
That compass'd high-built Babel in with towers. (2.1.1–4)

Other nations, it seems, already have walls which have been provided by nature, something confirmed by Castile when he speaks of "The Pyren Mounts swelling above the clouds, / That ward the wealthy Castile in with walls" (2.1.14–15). England, by contrast, lies open and vulnerable to invasion, something that would have resonated very strongly since Greene was writing in the immediate aftermath of the Armada. Barbara Howard Traister argues that:

England is already walled with the ocean, and the trip from Spain to England has been a difficult surmounting of a series of walls for the visitors. England's glory can best be served not by shutting her off from the rest of the world with Bacon's wall but rather by allowing her communication and interchange with other countries ... there is no need for, but rather danger in, England's withdrawal behind brass walls.²¹

However, at a time when armed invasion had so recently been a very real possibility—a time which the name of Castile actively recalls—an impenetrable defensive wall was calculated to appeal to audiences as something they wanted very much indeed.²² (It is also, of course, something that there was no risk of the theater company being required to stage.)

William Rowley's *The Birth of Merlin* recalls both *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* and *Doctor Faustus* in a number of ways, not least when Lucina prophesies of Merlin that "his Art shall stand / A wall of brass to guard the Brittain Land" (E1r), and it too deals with the question of magic granting desires. National security is again high on the agenda: Merlin has to help Vortiger build his castle, and the issue is perhaps also glanced at in Edwin's remark that "my Conscience tyes me to repair the worlds losses in a new succession" (A3r and v), though he ends the play unmarried after his prospective bride goes into a convent. The play also pits the idea of magic and of miracle directly against each other in a way which bears directly on the question of which religion was best for a man to die in. Toclío announces that "there's here arriv'd at Court, sent by the Earl of Chester to the King, a man of rare esteem for holyness, a reverent Hermit, that by miracle not onely saved our army, but without aid of man o'erthrew the pagan Host, and with such wonder sir, as might confirm a Kingdom to his faith" (A3v). However, although the Hermit goes "arm'd with his cross and staff" (A4v), his sanctity is by no means a foregone conclusion: the second Saxon lord speaks of his "hellish charmes" (B2r), and the issue is openly debated by Ostarius and Aurelius, with Ostarius attributing the hermit's success to "hellbred magick" and Aurelius countering that "it was the hand of heaven, that in his vertue gave us victory" (C2v).

Piqued by the Hermit's triumph, Ostarius encourages a magic competition between him and his own magician Proximus. Richard Levin, tracing the history of magic contests back to biblical and classical origins, notes that "Although this episode may look at first glance like an abbreviated version of the magic contest in Greene's play, there are some very important differences that bring it much closer to the contests in the Bible, and these differences all turn on the role of religion here."²³ The Hermit may be firmly identified by the majority of the characters with Christianity, but this is not quite enough for the play, which is very careful to dissociate the Hermit from the taint of a particular brand of Christianity, Catholicism. It is to this end, I think, that it digresses into one of its most potentially disruptive episodes, the decision of the sisters Modesta and Constantia not to marry their respective suitors but to become nuns instead. Monika

Karpinska notes that “Modesta’s and Constantia’s dual vow of virginity is problematic in terms of a lack of precedent in early modern drama,”²⁴ but Megan Lynn Isaac suggests a possible reason for it in:

[the playwright’s] complicated strategy of comparison, which deconstructs the dichotomy of good and bad, moral and immoral. He represents a variety of situations in which stereotypically virtuous choices are shown to have unexpectedly corrupt or problematic consequences in order to suggest antithetically that stereotypically wicked choices may similarly have surprising, which is to say rewarding, results.²⁵

However successful in other respects, this does have potentially damaging consequences for the characterization of the Hermit: Rebecca Brackmann notes that the Reformer William Lambarde condemned the “Monkische Persuasion of Chastitie” which led St. Cuthbert to take holy orders.²⁶ It is these consequences which the author must negotiate by making it clear that the sisters’ choice is not of his instigating and by associating him anachronistically but firmly with an instinctively Protestant position on marriage:

Edwin. O reverent sir, per[s]wade not her to leave me,

Hermit. My Lord I do not, nor to cease to love ye,
I onely pray her faith may fixed stand.
Marriage was blest I know with heavens own hand.

Edwin. You hear him Lady, ’tis not a virgins state but sanctity of life,
must make you happy. (Dr4r–v)²⁷

The two girls do eventually go into a nunnery, but their decision is not condoned and it is indeed made clear in Modesta’s case that her decision is essentially the product of what we would now consider depression, being induced by “The contemplation of a happy death, which is to me so pleasing that I think no torture could diver[t] me” (D4v). As well as being thus dissociated from Catholicism, the Hermit is also distanced from the idea of magic, because it is a term which he himself uses of somebody else: when he realizes Aurelius is in love with Artesia he demands to know “what magick could so linck thee to this mischief” (B2r), echoing a number of other characters who see Artesia as a witch.

The undoubted practitioner of magic in the play is Merlin, and he introduces a rather different emphasis, for he is associated above all with the theatricality of magic, and provides a classic example of the lightness of the vehicle of a metaphor being used to modify and mask the seriousness

of its tenor. The element of theatricality is first introduced through his father the devil rather than through Merlin himself: after a stage direction "*Enter the Devil in mans habit, richly attir'd, his feet and his head horrid*" (D2v) the Clown demands "'Slid who's that talks so? I can see no body" (D3r). Like Oberon's cheerfully crude declaration that "I am invisible,"²⁸ this scene clearly depends on confident acting rather than any form of prop or trick. Later the Clown first asks "have we run through the Countrey, haunted the City, and examin'd the Court to finde out a Gallant with a Hat and Feather, and a silken Sword, and golden Hangers, and do you now bring me to a Ragamuffin with a face like a Frying-pan?" and then immediately afterwards says "How's this? do you juggle with me, or are mine eyes matches? Hat and Feather, Sword, and Hangers and all, this is a Gallant indeed sister, this has all the marks of him we look for" (E2r). Since there is no time for a change of clothes I think we can assume that although there is a trick involved here, it is a very old and simple one: the actor is wearing a costume which is different on its right and left sides,²⁹ so that he can transform his appearance by turning in one direction or another. Even the more ambitious effects are well within the comfort zone of Renaissance stage trickery,³⁰ as the play effectively admits when the Clown says "Me thinks I see something like a peel'd Oionon, it makes me weep agen" (G1r).

The family situation of *The Birth of Merlin's* subplot of a father and two daughters prefigures that of another play which both directly recalls *Faustus* and directly pits the language of overt and self-conscious theatrical artifice against the possibility of genuine miracle, Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*. The play gestures openly toward a positively bewildering number of generic affiliations and precedents: indeed John Wasson claims that it "could ... have been written in 1520 as easily as in 1620,"³¹ while Holly Crawford Pickett notes that "In the last two acts, the play increasingly begins to resemble a medieval saint's play."³² The morality tradition in particular is, as Nova Myhill argues, heavily in evidence.³³ There is an evil spirit, called Harpax, and a good one, called Angelo, who both counsel Spungius and Hirpius, in a classic morality structure; and as would be expected, Harpax is the more obviously tempting. The play also remembers a specific if highly ambiguous scion of the morality genre, *Doctor Faustus*. Theophilus challenges Dorothea, if she actually reaches heaven, to "send me some / Small pittance of that curious fruit you bost of" (K1v) as proof that her religion was the best to die in, recalling IV.ii of *Doctor Faustus* where Faustus has fruit brought for the pregnant Duchess of Vanholt. Later, Theophilus recalls Faustus again when he speaks of "all

the riches of the sea increasd / By violent shipwrackes," (I4v). This echoes Cornelius' promise to Faustus that "The spirits tell me they can dry the sea / And fetch the treasures of all foreign wrecks" (1.1.146–47). The stage direction "*Enter Harpax in a fearefull shape, fire flashing out of the study*" (L1r) also recalls the staging of the devil scenes in *Doctor Faustus*, while Spungius when he prefers Harpax to "any infected Lord, whose rotten life hangs betweene the 2 Poles" (I2r) echoes Faustus' "All things that move between the quiet poles" (1.1.58).

In keeping with this open acknowledgement of literary affiliations, Massinger and Dekker repeatedly show themselves fond of laying bare the device underpinning theater of this sort, as with the almost absurd simplicity of the sudden appearance of the basket of fruit which Dorothea sends via a sort of celestial Interflora service. For all of its exposure of its own theatricality, however, *The Virgin Martyr* does appear to take seriously the possibility of miracle: indeed John Wasson notes that the play "contains some fifteen major and minor miracles."³⁴ Particularly noteworthy is the profound ambiguity attending the dramatization of some of the most spiritually charged moments in the play. Theophilus may ask "how can stone smile, / Or wooden Image laugh?" (K4v), but he wards off Harpax with a cross of flowers from the basket which Dorothea sends from Heaven (L1r), and at the end a stage direction reads "*Enter Dorothea in a white robe, crownes vpon her robe, a Crowne vpon her head, lead in by the Angell. Antoninus, Caliste and Christeta following all in white, but lesse glorious, the Angell with a Crowne for him*" (M1r). All of these effects are strikingly simple to achieve, in a way that smiling stones or laughing images certainly and pointedly are not, yet that is far from meaning that they will lack theatrical power. Julia Gasper notes that "Dorothea herself says when Sapritius is struck down, 'I can no myracles worke,'" but argues that Massinger and Dekker were "aiming to present a type of story, one that was open to contemporary and metaphorical interpretation."³⁵ What could have been magic might thus transcend itself to appear genuine miracle.

Shirley's *St Patrick for Ireland* is so close to *The Virgin Martyr* that Massinger and Dekker's play has in fact been suggested as its principal source.³⁶ It too has obviously stagey miracles: when Dichu declares that Patrick blasphemes he suddenly announces that he feels himself grow stiff and cold and subsequently converts;³⁷ there is a bracelet which makes the wearer invisible, which Rodamant uses to perform tricks reminiscent of those of Faustus mocking the pope; a lustful prince pretends to be a god in order to rape his brother's beloved; and when the queen and her daugh-

ters deck the altar of the gods with garlands and a song is sung, “the Idol that presented Jupiter moveth” (D1r) and subsequently speaks, though once the credulous king has left the stage the others congratulate themselves on successfully deceiving him. In each of these cases, the effect can be achieved with laughable ease. The play does, though, also offer a real miracle, when the king offers Patrick poisoned wine and Patrick not only proves immune himself but revives someone who does succumb. It may however, be worth noting that the play seems not to have proved popular, for though we are told in the Prologue that “if ye / First welcome this, you’ll grace our Poets art, / And give him Courage for a second part,” none is known to have ensued.

A play which seems to have pleased its audience rather better was *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, published in 1638 with an ascription to John Kirke and a note on the title page that it was “Acted at the Red-Bull in St. Iohns Streete, with a generall liking.” This tells the stories of St. George, St. Anthony, St. James, St. Andrew, St. Patrick, and St. David, though St. George is securely at its center. The play opens with him as a young orphan in the care of the witch Calib, who has killed his parents, the earl and countess of Coventry. She intended to kill George too but instead has grown fond of him and brought him up with her own son, the clownish Suckabus, whose father is the devil Tarpax. The ghosts of George’s parents reveal his true identity and he turns on Calib, who is taken down to hell by Tarpax. George liberates the other six champions, whom Calib had taken prisoner, and accompanied by Suckabus heads off in quest of adventures, including the killing of a dragon and a lion by Andrew and Anthony, an encounter with the giant Ormandine and his enchanted garden for David, and various chivalric encounters for James, Denis, and Patrick, while George saves a princess from a dragon and finally rescues all the rest when they have been trapped by the villainous Brandron, who has also turned the daughters of the king of Macedon into swans. When the king converts to Christianity the daughters are restored to their proper shapes and George gives them as wives to Anthony, David, and Patrick before departing in quest of further adventures.

Throughout this complicated narrative, the play shows itself very aware of the ways in which its effects are created. It opens with the stage direction “*Thunder and Lightning: Enter Calib the Witch.*” Leslie Thomson, identifying *The Seven Champions of Christendom* as “the play with the most directions for thunder and lightning,” explains that “*thunder and lightning* was the conventional stage language—or code—for the

production of effects in or from the tiring house that would establish or confirm a specifically supernatural context in the minds of the audience";³⁸ here, however, its meaning is unfixed, for Calib orchestrates the thunder by crying "lowder a little," suggesting that it is responsive to diabolical command, but later George interprets the same phenomenon very differently when he says "This messenger assures me Heaven's pleas'd."³⁹ Having thus destabilized the meaning of its own stage effects the play subsequently proceeds by restraint: when in the second scene the action moves to Trebizond, St. Andrew and St. Anthony fight a lion and a dragon, but we don't see it happen, and on the same principle a stage direction requires "*The day cleares, inchantments cease. Sweete Musicke*" (G4r). Here what is important is the *cessation* of all effects, except for the music, and this is something which the play has in common with *The Tempest*, a play which it has been read as being influenced by⁴⁰ (and which has itself been read as influenced by *Faustus*) and where uniquely in Shakespeare the entire first scene invites us to believe that we have seen something which, it turns out, we cannot possibly have done, for Miranda's "O, I have suffered / With those that I saw suffer" (1.2.5–6) is flatly quashed by Prospero's "Tell your piteous heart / There's no harm done" (1.2.14–15). Indeed *The Tempest* is a play in which the more elaborate the effect, the less reliable it is, the illusion of the masque being entirely debunked by Ariel's open acknowledgement of its status as performance—"When I presented Ceres / I thought to have told thee of it" (4.1.167–68)—while Richard Levin points out that Prospero's victory over Sycorax is the exact opposite of the usual format, which normally involves imprisonment in a rock or similar whereas Prospero releases Ariel from one,⁴¹ and, moreover, does so offstage. In *The Tempest*, then, the underlying structural logic would seem to say that what audiences want is *not* to see, and the unreliability of what they actually do see is openly drawn attention to in what has become one of the play's most famous speeches:

These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And - like the baseless fabric of this vision -
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.

(4.1.148–56)

As with *Doctor Faustus*, the audience is invited here to share a sophisticated awareness of both the limitations of the visual and the power of the verbal.

Questions of seeing, in the shape of the debate about the primacy of the word versus the image, are of course central not only to the masque form to which *The Tempest* is so obviously related but also to the difference between the two confessions,⁴² and that is an issue which appears to be important in many of these plays. In *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, Tarpax tells his son the Clown that “Thou art by birth Duke of Styx, Sulpher, & Helvetia” (B3r). Helvetia—Switzerland—might seem an unlikely presence in this list until one remembers the close association of Switzerland with Reformers, which seems to have been an influence on the choice of the name Helvetius for the Lady’s father in *The Second Maiden’s Tragedy*. *The Tempest*’s odd reference to “Mistress Line” (4.1.236) has been read as an allusion to a Catholic martyr,⁴³ while Prospero’s epilogue might also seem to have a Catholic flavor. *St Patrick for Ireland* displays an openly Catholic sensibility, not least in its evocation of the famous pilgrimage site of St. Patrick’s Purgatory at Lough Derg in Ireland. *The Birth of Merlin* may be set a millennium before Luther but it is still, as we have seen, acutely aware of the tension between Protestantism and Catholicism. The confessional politics of *The Virgin Martyr* have been a matter of intense debate; as Nova Myhill notes, the play has been read as both Protestant and Catholic in its sympathies,⁴⁴ but Louise George Clubb has demonstrated the possibility of a Catholic reading⁴⁵ and Julia Gasper argues for a Catholic source.⁴⁶ One would inevitably be much more cautious about attributing advocacy of any particular position to *Doctor Faustus*, but there can certainly be no doubt that the play is steeped in the language of religious debate. In all these plays, then, magic could in fact be seen as functioning not so much in contrast to miracle but as providing a smokescreen by means of which the idea of miracle can be negotiated both more safely and more probingly, and while raising fewer hackles, than it could otherwise have been.

In all these plays, magic offers a basic visual stimulation which on a deeper level also induced in audiences a flattering sense of the sophistication of their own levels of awareness and apprehension. It holds out a dream of national security at a time of great danger and threat and renews the sense of a link with the past which spoke of a proud Trojan heritage which also worked to legitimize the idea of nationalist and imperialist expansion, gestured at by Merlin in *The Birth of Merlin* and actualized in the figure of

Prospero. And perhaps most importantly of all it provided a space of freedom and experiment which even in an age of Protestantism could at least imagine the presence and reality of miracle, in ways which might take the heat out of the difference between the two confessions and allow, however briefly, for a fantasy of religious unity colored with the tint of nostalgia, as Britain's past is imagined as holding out a hand to its present.

NOTES

¹ William Drury, *Aluredus, sive Alvredus* (1619), trans. Robert Knightley (as *Alfrede, or Right Reinthron'd*, 1659), ed. Dana F. Sutton for the Philological Museum, 2014, <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/aluredus/>

² See for instance Joan Lane, *John Hall and his Patients* (Stratford-upon-Avon: the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, 1996), p. 201, for some of the herbs which Hall was accustomed to use in his specifics.

³ Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 1.

⁴ William Rowley, *The Birth of Merlin* (London: Thomas Johnson for Francis Kirkman and Henry Marsh, 1662), sig. C3r.

⁵ William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan (London: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 5.1.48–49.

⁶ See Brian Walsh, "Deep Prescience': Succession and the Politics of Prophecy in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 23 (2010), pp. 63–85, p. 68.

⁷ John Webster, *The White Devil*, ed. John Russell Brown (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960), 5.4.130–31. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

⁸ Anonymous, *The famous history of Fryer Bacon* [1627] (London: M. Clark for T. Passenger, 1679), sig. C2v.

⁹ William Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a gentleman* (London: J. Okes for John Cowper, 1638), sig. B1v.

¹⁰ William Haughton, *Grim the Collier of Croyden* (London: R. D., 1662), 1.1.20–24.

¹¹ F. W. Brownlow, *Shakespeare, Harsnett, and the Devils of Denham* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993), pp. 22 and 195.

¹² Barbara L. Parker, "'Cursèd Necromancy': Marlowe's *Faustus* as Anti-Catholic Satire," *Marlowe Studies* 1 (2011), pp. 59–77, pp. 60 and 62.

¹³ Andrew Duxfield, "Doctor Faustus and Renaissance Hermeticism," in *Doctor Faustus: A Critical Guide*, ed. Sara Munson Deats (London: Continuum, 2010), pp. 96–110, pp. 96–97.

¹⁴ Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, A text, in *The Complete Plays*, ed. Mark Thornton Burnett (London: J. M. Dent, 1999), 5.1.51–57.

¹⁵ Anthony Brewer, *The Love-sick King* (London: printed for Robert Pollard and John Sweeting, 1655), sig. B1v.

¹⁶ Anonymous, *Wily beguilde* (London: H. L. for Clement Knight, 1606), p. 55.

¹⁷ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 172.

¹⁸ Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, in *Five Elizabethan Tragedies*, ed. A. K. McIlwraith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), 1.1.75.

¹⁹ William Shakespeare, *Richard II*, ed. Stanley Wells (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), 3.2.167–68.

²⁰ Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, in *Five Elizabethan Comedies*, ed. A. K. McIlwraith (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), 1.2.30.

²¹ Barbara Howard Traister, *Heavenly Necromancers: The Magician in English Renaissance Drama* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1984), p. 74.

²² For discussion of this see Walsh, “Deep Prescience,” p. 65.

²³ Richard Levin, “My Magic Can Lick Your Magic,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 22 (2009), pp. 201–28, p. 207.

²⁴ Monika Karpinska, “Bawdily Manipulations: Spheres of Female Power in *The Birth of Merlin*,” *Early Theatre* 9.1 (2006), pp. 123–29, p. 123.

²⁵ Megan Lynn Isaac, “Structure, Legitimacy, and Magic in *The Birth of Merlin*,” *Early Theatre* 9.1 (2006), pp. 109–21, pp. 109–10, 116, and 114.

²⁶ Rebecca Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2012), p. 133.

²⁷ This is again an idea shared with *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* where Lacy imagines that Margaret’s decision to enter a nunnery must have been prompted by a friar (5.1.53–57).

²⁸ William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, ed. Harold F. Brooks (London: Methuen, 1979), 2.1.186.

²⁹ This clearly occurs in the anonymous *The Fatal Marriage*. See *The Fatal Marriage*, ed. Andrew Duxfield for the “Editing a Renaissance Play” module of the MA “Shakespeare and Renaissance” at Sheffield Hallam University, 3.3, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/renplays/fatalindex.html>.

³⁰ On the pyrotechnic techniques available see Philip Butterworth, *Theatre of Fire: Special Effects in Early English and Scottish Theatre* (London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1998), particularly the discussion of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* at pp. 86–87.

³¹ John Wasson, “The Secular Saint Plays of the Elizabethan Era,” in *The Saint Play in Medieval Europe*, ed. Clifford Davidson (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986), pp. 241–60, p. 253.

³² Holly Crawford Pickett, “Dramatic Nostalgia and Spectacular Conversion in Dekker and Massinger’s *The Virgin Martyr*,” *Studies in English Literature* 49.2 (2009), pp. 437–62, p. 438.

³³ Nova Myhill, “Making Death a Miracle: Audience and the Genres of Martyrdom in Dekker and Massinger’s *The Virgin Martyr*,” *Early Theatre* 7.2 (2004),

pp. 9–31, p. 25. On the influence of the morality play see also Larry S. Champion, “Disaster With My So Many Joys’: Structure and Perspective in Massinger and Dekker’s *The Virgin Martyr*,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 1 (1984), pp. 199–209, p. 205.

³⁴ Wasson, “The Secular Saint Plays of the Elizabethan Era,” p. 253.

³⁵ Julia Gasper, “The Sources of *The Virgin Martyr*,” *The Review of English Studies* 42 (1991), pp. 17–31, p. 18.

³⁶ Hugh MacMullan, “The Sources of Shirley’s *St Patrick for Ireland*,” *PMLA* 48.3 (1933), pp. 806–14, pp. 806 and 812.

³⁷ James Shirley, *Saint Patrick for Ireland* (London: J. Raworth for R. Whitaker, 1640), sigs. B2v–B3r.

³⁸ Leslie Thomson, “The Meaning of *Thunder and Lightning*: Stage Directions and Audience Expectations,” *Early Theatre* 2 (1999), pp. 11–24, pp. 18 and 11.

³⁹ John Kirke, *The Seven Champions of Christendom* (London: J. Okes for James Becket, 1638), sigs. B1r and C2v.

⁴⁰ John Freehafer, “Shakespeare’s *Tempest* and *The Seven Champions*,” *Studies in Philology* 66.1 (1969), pp. 87–103, pp. 97, 87, 92–93, and 98–99.

⁴¹ Levin, “My Magic Can Lick Your Magic,” p. 213.

⁴² See for instance Huston Diehl, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

⁴³ Richard Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare: Studies in theatre, religion and resistance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 201.

⁴⁴ Myhill, “Making Death a Miracle,” pp. 24 and 14.

⁴⁵ Louise George Clubb, “*The Virgin Martyr* and the *Tragedia Sacra*,” *Renaissance Drama* 7 (1964), pp. 103–26, pp. 103, 113 and 118.

⁴⁶ Gasper, “The Sources of *The Virgin Martyr*,” p. 18.

Chapter 3

“A Borrowed Blood for Brute”: From Britain to England

I HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED THE importance of hybridity to ideas of English national identity. In this chapter, I start with *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and then turn to a range of plays including *Aluredus sive Alvredus*, *Fair Em*, *Hengist*, *King of Kent*, and *Edmund Ironside* to explore the concept of what *The Misfortunes of Arthur* calls “a borrowed blood for brute.” Arthur was the most famous Dark Age king of all, and the figuring of Elizabeth herself as Arthur was the culmination of the Tudor myth, bringing to mystical and metaphorical fruition the pattern that had failed in real life when Henry VII’s eldest son Arthur died in adolescence early in the century. Arthur was a figure of immense cultural resonance: Edward IV too had chosen the name for a son, albeit a bastard one, Arthur, Lord Lisle, and Paul Whitfield White observes that the Accession Day tilts were inherently Arthurian in character and that there was an annual “King Arthur’s Show” in London.¹ However, the figure of Arthur was beset by problems because there was neither documentary nor physical evidence of his existence. This is a play that is interested in the phenomenon of bodies returning from the dead—W. R. Streitberger points out that Gorlois needs to ascend in order to enter, as if he were rising from his grave—but is also aware that it has no body of its own to produce.² The first named English body is Aidan’s, buried at Lindisfarne in 651, followed by Cuthbert’s and Bede’s, both in Durham Cathedral. Having conveniently “discovered” the body of Arthur for Henry II, the monks of Glastonbury Abbey were deprived of it by Henry VIII, leaving no physical relic of the king except the highly dubious “Round Table” displayed at Westminster. Edward the Confessor’s chair, on which the monarchs of England were crowned and which enclosed the Stone of Scone (mentioned in *Macbeth*), was one of very few physical relics of pre-Conquest rule, whether genuine or fictitious: the statue of Bladud in Bath definitely and the Brutus Stone in Totnes probably date from later in the seventeenth century. This was perhaps why James devoted such special attention to the rebuilding of Arthuret church

near Longtown in Cumbria, which had suffered substantially at the hands of Border Reivers: its name and its traditional association with the king gave it such resonance that it was repaired by public subscription, an event sufficiently noteworthy to be mentioned in sermons delivered both at St. Alban's in 1612 and at Paul's Cross in 1613.³ Even this, however, revealed a problem at the same time as it gestured toward a solution, because if there was too little physical evidence for Arthur, then when it came to place-names there was far too much: for all Dee's presentation of him as the conqueror of large parts of Europe, could it really be credible that a Dark Age king could have held court in Winchester, fought on the Scottish Border, and founded a dynasty in Wales?

To connect the Tudors (and through them the Stuarts) to Arthur also raised another problem. Arthur is a crucial link in the idea of descent from Brutus and an important authorizing figure for the Tudor claim to the throne, but in most versions of his story, Arthur left no son. There is however, a different account offered by the Inns of Court play *Certaine deu[is]es and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse court in Greenewich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy raigne*, known more commonly and hereafter as *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and written by a variety of authors including Francis Flower, Christopher Yelverton, Francis Bacon, John Lancaster, and others, but usually ascribed principally to Thomas Hughes. *The Misfortunes of Arthur* ostensibly solves the problem of Arthur's childlessness, but actually foregrounds it and its consequences, because in its version of events, Arthur's enemy Mordred is his son as well as his nephew, being the product of Arthur's incest with his sister Anne. (In Geoffrey, Mordred leaves sons, but there is no suggestion here that he does.)⁴ Moreover, the play unsettles our belief in the accuracy of its own representation in that it contains a character called Gildas, a significant name because it was also that of a Dark Age monk and chronicler of whom little is known but who was nevertheless hugely influential in shaping later views of the period. As Leslie Alcock observes, Bede's extensive reliance on him meant that "the story told by Gildas has remained the fundamental account of the Anglo-Saxon settlement of England ... almost to the present day." Especially noteworthy is the fact that a significant part of Gildas' work is devoted to "a denunciation of kings and secular authority,"⁵ though Arthur is exempted from this because Gildas' *Historia Brittonum* identifies Arthur as a *dux bellorum*. In *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, though, Arthur has become a king, and

Mordred wants to be one after him, even though kingship is presented as a malevolent and sinister force: Mordred declares, "let terrour teach, / What Kings may doe, what Subiects ought to beare" (sig. B4r). In such a context, all the play's Gildas can do is offer advice he knows no one will take—as he admits himself, "I know how hard a thing / It is, for mindes trainde vp in Princely Thrones, / To heare of ought against their humor's course" (sig. E1r)—and disclaim any ability to understand the course of history: "Whereto this tempest tend's, or where this storme / Will breake, who knowes?" (sig. E1r).

In *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, then, everything is questioned, as one might perhaps expect from a play produced by a group of young men bent on setting the world to rights. Arthur dies without issue (and if he did have a surviving child it would have been a bastard born of incest); therefore there can be no *translatio imperii* (and even if there were, kings are of questionable legitimacy and only interested in grabbing land and power for themselves); therefore there can also be no transmission of authentic British identity (and even if there were it would be hopelessly hybridized); and anyway the whole story might be mythical in the first place. Indeed although Hughes' play was staged before the Queen in what Curtis Perry describes as "the uneasy interval between the execution of Mary Stuart and the attack of the Spanish Armada,"⁶ Brian Jay Corrigan suggests that what the play is really invested in is imagining what would have happened if Elizabeth *hadn't* executed Mary, Queen of Scots—that it is in effect un-history,⁷ and thus presents itself as consciously fictitious.

This sense that what the audience sees is a constructed rather than an actual version of events is underlined by the fact that *The Misfortunes of Arthur* represents a sort of historical melange in something of the same way that *Titus Andronicus* does, and seeks to glance at as many historical moments as it possibly can. (Indeed it shares territory with *Titus*, and also with *Cymbeline*, in its use of the resonant name Lucius, supposedly that of the first Christian king of Britain.) There is precedent for this in Geoffrey, where Arthur fights the Romans, and when

The moment the Romans said good-bye and went away, apparently never to return, the enemies whom I have mentioned reappeared once more from the ships in which they had sailed off to Ireland. They brought with them other companies of Scots and Picts, with Norwegians, Danes and all the rest whom they had under command, and seized the whole of Albany up to the Wall.⁸

The Misfortunes of Arthur, though, goes well beyond Geoffrey. “The argument of the Tragedie” opens “At a banquet made by Vther Pendragon for the solemnising of his conquest against the Saxons,” which puts Arthur’s father not in the immediately post-Roman Dark Ages but somewhere more like the time of King Alfred; however, it then shoots us back in time by adding that thirty-two years after this Lucius Tiberius demands that tribute be paid to Rome because of Caesar’s conquest. We are catapulted forward again when Mordred is joined not only by Saxons, Irish, and Picts but also by Normans, and time collapses altogether when Mordred says to the Dux Pictorum:

I will in lieu of your so high deserts,
Geue you and yours all Brytish lands that lie
Betweene the floud of Humber, and the Scottes.
Besides as much in Kent as Horsus and
Hengistus had, when Vortigern was King. (sig. C2r)

The historical Hengist and Horsa here rub shoulders with the mythical Locrine, who is evoked both by the idea of partitioning Britain and also by the mention of Humber, since that was the name of the Scythian invader whose widow Locrine married. Arthur too mentions Hengist and Horsa—“no lesse a tumult’s raisde, / Than when Hengistus fell and Horsus fierce / With treacherous truce did ouerrunne the Realme” (p. 28)—and “Hoel King of little Brittainne,” “Aschillus King of Denmarke,” and an unnamed king of Norway also put in an appearance, though in Dekker, Ford and Rowley’s *The Welsh Ambassador* Hywel Dda (the person meant by “Hoel King of little Brittainne”) is a contemporary of Alfred’s grandson Athelstan and thus hundreds of years after Arthur. Conan (who takes his name from a character who was a contemporary of Locrine) takes us still further forward in time when he says “Let Saxons now, let Normans, Danes, and Scottes. / Enioye our medowes, fieldes, and pleasant plaines” (p. 39), which evokes 1066, and we should therefore be alert to the irony of his prophecy that

when perhaps our Childrens Children reade,
Our woefull warres displaied with skilfull penne:
They’ll think thee heere some sounds of future facts (p. 38)

“Facts” can mean deeds as well as pieces of factual information, but the play has made it perfectly clear that facts in the usual sense are not its stock in trade.

Conan's prophecy mentions a "skilfull penne." As noted above, Hughes was not the sole author, and he may well not have been solely responsible for the play's agenda: David Bevington points out that "Francis Bacon, one of the contributing authors of *Misfortunes*, supported the program of Burghley and Walsingham for tough action against the Catholic danger."⁹ Moreover, Corrigan suggests that the authors were also the actors,¹⁰ and if so Bacon may well have played one of the elder statesmen and thus been directly associated with the idea of propounding an agenda, though this must remain speculation. One thing which is abundantly clear, though, is that at least one of the authors was someone who had seen, and been impressed by, the work of Christopher Marlowe. Edward Paleit notes that "Hughes's play uses Lucan's *Bellum Ciuile* to give the action poetic colouring and an ethical-political structure in which the Senecan motif of the sinning royal house is extended into the worse-than-civil war between Arthur and Mordred, the bastard product of the king's sinful incestuous desire—thus reprising the conflict between *gener* and *socer*, Pompey and Caesar, in the *Bellum Ciuile*";¹¹ Marlowe partly translated Lucan, though whether he had done so by the time *The Misfortunes of Arthur* was staged is less clear. Above all we see the mark of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, both parts of which were staged in the same year as *The Misfortunes of Arthur*; Gawin's exhortation to his brother to "Remember Arthurs strength, his conquestes late, / His fierie mynde, his high aspiring heart" is only the first of several references to the key Tamburlainian concept of aspiration,¹² as when the Chorus laments "O restlesse race of high aspyring head" (sig. C3r).¹³ *Tamburlaine* was a figure of considerable interest for discourses of British and English national identities. On the one hand, he was a Scythian, and as such not only of the same ethnic group as Humber in *Locrine* but also associated with a rather derogatory narrative of Scottishness: John Clapham in *The historie of Great Britannie* is one of many to take the view that "These Picts and Scottish-men (as some writers report) came first out of Scythia."¹⁴ On the other, Richard Harvey calls *Tamburlaine* as a material witness to the credibility of the Brutus story, with specific reference to the question of whether Brutus could really have accomplished the sea-voyage from Italy with sufficient followers to found a nation: "I would Tamerlane were euen now here, to answere your Ocean argument: hee could tell you, that his multitude of rude Scythians and shepheardes could do more Actes then all the fine gay troopes and rankes of Baiazete."¹⁵ *Tamburlaine*, then, could suggest both Englishness and Scottishness, both Self and Other; he is the Scythian whom we might see in the glass, the ultimate figure of hybridity.

Moreover, I have argued elsewhere that Tamburlaine can in many ways be seen as the fulfillment of a prophecy made in the quintessential “British history” play *Gorboduc*¹⁶ and that Marlowe’s play is directly remembered in both *King Lear* and *Lochrine*, both of which tell stories about kings who, like Tamburlaine, have three children from among whom they must choose one or more successors. Finally, one might imagine various responses to the figure of Tamburlaine, but when Marlowe’s two plays about him were first staged, in the year before the Armada, one thing which no one could fail to notice was that he was a military strongman, and the idea of a ruthless and invincible leader could hardly fail to be of interest in a country facing the imminent danger of invasion. In that context, the principal idea conveyed by the figure of Tamburlaine might well have been that no national identity can be secure if it cannot be defended by force.

Another aspect of the Tamburlainian identity which might have caught the attention of the dramatists of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* is its liminality. Tamburlaine himself intends to reach as far as “all the ocean by the British shore” (4.1.249), and *The Misfortunes of Arthur* has an almost obsessive interest in the idea of the shoreline, the place where England both starts and ends. The Argument announces that “Arthur at his landing was resisted on the stronds of Douer, where he put Mordred to flight. The last field was fought at Cornwell” (sig. A1r), neatly plotting the two extremities of the south coast. Later Mordred declares that “E’r Arthur land, the Sea shall blush with blood. / And all the Stronds with smoaking slaughters reéke” (sig. B1r); after the battle, Mordred’s first question is “And hath he wonne? Be Stronds & shoares possest?” (sig. B3r), as if possession of England’s coast was synonymous with possession of England. However, early modern England was acutely aware of the instability of many parts of the country’s shoreline, and the fact that the boundaries of England had moved over time. The antiquarian Reginald Bainbrigg observed of Bowness-on-Solway that “The fundacions of the picts wall may be sene, upon the west skar at a lowe water, covered with sand, a mile or more within the sea,”¹⁷ clearly showing that the line of the coast had changed, while John Wilson in *The English Martyrology* declared that St. Felix “was ordayned Bishop of an old Citty called Dunmocke (otherwise Dunwich) which at this day is more then halfe consumed by the sea.”¹⁸ Julie Sanders observes that in 1631 the earl of Carlisle secured a ruling that the Wapping mudflats were to be classed as “the King’s Waste,” that is “part of the river and therefore in the pos-

session of the monarch rather than any landowner,"¹⁹ and Ralf Hertel points out that Camden "speculate[s] that once there might have existed a land bridge between Kent and Calais";²⁰ Stuart Piggott notes that Richard Verstegan, whose Dutch background had given him experience of drowned land, also believed there had been a land-bridge between Britain and the Continent.²¹ Sophia Kingshill and Jennifer Westwood point out that the sandbar Scroby Sands, opposite Great Yarmouth, emerged above the surface in 1578 and was claimed by the local inhabitants, who christened it "Yarmouth Island." Sir Edward Clere, lord of the manor, was about to go to law over its ownership when a storm in 1582 washed it away completely.²² It is also suggestive that John Clapham in *The historie of Great Britannie* should speak of "the Ile of Wight, and ... that part of the firme land (which lieth over against it),"²³ as if the Isle of Wight were *not* firm.

The tide and the changes it brought provided potent and popular images of both death and liminality. There was a recurrent idea that birth and death were linked to the turning of the tide: Sophia Kingshill and Jennifer Westwood note that "Sixteenth-century parish registers of Heslidon (now Hesleden) sometimes noted the state of tide at the time of death, so we learn that on 11 May 1595, at six in the morning, 'being ful water', Henrie Mitford of Hoolam died, and that on 17 May of the same year, at noon, 'being lowe water',²⁴ Mrs Barbarie Metford died," which they compare with Mistress Quickly's observation in *Henry V*, II. 3, "'a parted even just between twelve and one, even at the turning o'th'tide"; one could also note *The Duchess of Malfi*, where Bosola tells the Duchess "'Tis now full tide,'tween night and day: / End your groan, and come away."²⁵ The low water mark was the appointed place of execution (and sometimes of burial) for certain sorts of criminals: Holinshed mentions pirates being condemned to be hanged at low water mark,²⁶ and Stow calls Wapping "the usuall place of Execution for the hanging of Pyrates and sea Rouers, at the lowe water marke, and there to remaine, till three Tydes had ouerflowed them."²⁷

The shore, then, spoke of uncertainty and instability, yet *Misfortunes of Arthur* puts great symbolic weight on those shifting sands. That the shore means more than just itself is clearly suggested when Gawin says of Mordred:

like as the craggy rocke,
Resists the streames, and flings the waltering waues
Aloofe, so he reiects and scornes my words. (sig. C2r)

The boundaries of land and self are figured as coterminous here: *pace* Donne, Mordred is an island entire unto himself. Mordred's own words suggest this even more strongly:

What though I be a ruine to the Realme,
And fall my selfe therewith? No better end.
His last mishaps doe make a man secure.
Such was King Priams ende, who, when he dyed,
Closde and wrapt vp his Kingdome in his death.
A solemne pompe, and fit for Mordreds minde,
To be a graue and tombe to all his Realme. (sig. C3r)

Troy might have fallen when Priam did, but Mordred will go one step further: England will disappear not only *with* him but *into* him, as its unstable shores collapse in on themselves.

Almost equally disturbing is the fact that the exactly opposite principle applies in the case of Arthur. The Nuntius declares that "Arthur hath woonne: but we haue lost the field. / The field? Nay all the Realme, and Brytaines bounds" (sig. E2v). There is, it seems, a radical *discontinuity* between Arthur's body and his land whereby it is possible for the triumph of one to entail the absolute forfeiture of the other. Moreover, Arthur dies praying:

let my death and parture rest obscure.
No graue I neéde (O Fates) nor buriall rights,
Nor stately hearce, nor tombe with haughty toppes:
But let my Carkasse lurke: yea, let my death
Be ay vnknownen, so that in euery Coast
I still be feard, and lookt for euery houre. (sig. F4r)

There was in fact a reasonably established tradition that, even if the body was now lost, Arthur had been buried at Glastonbury—Dee says so, as do Drayton,²⁸ Harvey,²⁹ and John Clapham in *The historie of Great Britannie*³⁰—but the play obviously wishes to riddle that. Ostensibly, it does so to suggest that Arthur may return, but to the extent that Arthur embodies British national identity, it also leaves us uncertain what has happened to that, and it evokes instability in another way too, by once again equating England with its unstable coasts. On England's shifting shoreline, the turning of the tide takes away souls and bodies vanish from sight, and it is that shoreline that *The Misfortunes of Arthur* imaginatively inhabits, and to which it consigns the iconic but untraceable body of Arthur.

In doing this, the play also inevitably recalls the loss of many other bodies at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Geoffrey is always careful to note where everyone is buried: Turnus at Tours (p. 71); Brutus in London (p. 75); Lear beneath the River Soar (p. 86); Belinus on the top of Billingsgate (p. 100); Gurguit Barbruc in Caerleon (p. 101); Archgallo in Leicester (p. 104); Lud near Ludgate (p. 106); Nennius by the north gate of London (p. 110), though Merlin does prophesy that in the future the kings buried in London will be disinterred (p. 176); Cassivelaunus in York (pp. 118–19), as too is Severus (p. 127); Vortimer in a bronze pyramid in the port where the Saxons habitually land (p. 163); Aurelius Ambrosius, Uther, and Constantine at Stonehenge (pp. 202, 211, 262); Helena at the top of Mont St. Michel (p. 241); Bedevere in Bayeux and Kay near Chinon (p. 257); Cadwallo in a bronze statue (p. 280). We are also told of the early martyrs that "Even now their tombs and the places where they suffered would kindle an immense glow of divine charity in the minds of all who saw them, had they not been forgotten by their fellow-countrymen" (pp. 130–31), and it is one of many black marks against Mordred that in contrast to Arthur, who "buried his dead," he "made no arrangements whatsoever for the burial of his dead" (p. 259). At the Dissolution, though, the bones of the important Oxford saint St. Frideswide were not only disinterred but mingled with those of Catherine, wife of Peter Martyr, and the same fate befell many other bodies.³¹ In *The Duchess of Malfi*, Antonio says:

I do love these ancient ruins:
We never tread upon them but we set
Our foot upon some reverend history.
And questionless, here in this open court,
Which now lies naked to the injuries
Of stormy weather, some men lie interr'd
Lov'd the church so well, and gave so largely to't,
They thought it should have canopy'd their bones
Till doomsday; but all things have their end:
Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,
Must have like death that we have. (5.3.9–18)

Among the rest, many royal bodies were lost, and with them the link to the past which they represented. Richard III's was one, and it too bore on the question of English and British national identities: Philip Schwyzer, noting that Sir George Buck's translation of the epitaph on the tomb that Henry VII erected for Richard III (which disappeared

at the dissolution of the Greyfriars monastery in 1538) says that he “possess’d the British throne” and has him speak of how “My English left me in the luckless Field,” invites us to be aware of “a curious and powerful vision of history, one prominent in the late fifteenth century and still available in the late sixteenth—a vision of Richard III as the last king of the English, an ethnic chieftain leading his ‘gentlemen of England’ on a doomed charge against the tribe fated to be both their antecedents and successors, the Britons,” in the shape of the Welsh “son of prophecy,” Henry Tudor.³² Schwyzer observes that Richard owned (and inscribed his name in) copies of Guido delle Colonne’s *Historia destructionis Troiae* and Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia regum Britanniae*, both of which suggest an interest in the British History,³³ and Richard is certainly connected to Britishness in the 1619 Douai play *Fatum Vortigerni*, where Martin Wiggins observes a marked similarity between V.xix and the scene in which Richard is visited by ghosts before Bosworth.³⁴ One can also see signs of a rather striking “Welshification” of Richard in R. A.’s *The Valiant Welshman*, where Codigune, who is eventually crowned King of Wales, says “Ile fall my selfe, or plucke this Welshman down” (sig. C1r); this closely echoes Richard of Gloucester in *Henry VI, Part 3*, and there is indeed a character called Gloster who says “Onely Kings wils are Lawes for other men” (sig. E1r), a philosophy of tyranny which would be perfectly at home in the mouth of his Shakespearean counterpart.

Other iconic English bodies had also disappeared in ways which are remembered in early modern English plays. William Rowley’s *A Shoemaker a gentleman*, published in 1638 but apparently written some twenty years previously,³⁵ is like *The Misfortunes of Arthur* a play which brings in as much history as possible—the characters include “Alured, King of Brittain,” i.e. Alfred, his nameless queen and, with wild disregard for fact, their two sons Eldred and Offa, St. Winifred, the kings of the Goths and Vandals, Bassianus, and the emperors Maximinus and Dioclesian—and which may also glance at *The Misfortunes of Arthur* when the shoemaker calls his wife “dame Guiniver” (sig. H1r). It too shrouds the burial of its king in mystery when Alured dies in the first scene and the queen says:

Here will I stay, untill my eyes like briny Pyoners
With their continuall Cadence, have digg’d up
A woefull Sepulcher, for these sweet Corps. (sig. B2r)

The queen, it seems, will bury him in the ground where he lies, and though this is obviously fanciful, we hear nothing of any more practical arrange-

ments. (In fact John Leland noted that Alfred and Edward the Elder were both buried at Hyde and that the abbey no longer existed.)³⁶ In *Ancient funerall monuments*, John Weever records other losses of royal bodies: of King Stephen's burial in Faversham Abbey in 1154, for instance, he says, "His body rested here in quietnesse vntill the dissolution, when for the gaine of the lead wherein it was encoffined, it was taken vp and throwne into the next water. So vncertaine is man, yea greatest Princes, of any rest in this world, euen after buriall," while another abbey:

hath beene honoured with the sepulture of foure Queenes, foure Dutchesses, foure Countesses, one Duke, two Earles, eight Barons, and some thirty fiue Knights; whose names are set downe by Stow in his Suruay of this honourable Citie; and in all, from the first foundation vnto the dissolution, sixe hundred sixtie and three persons of Qualitie were here interred. In the Quire were nine Tombes of Alabaster and Marble, inuironed with barres or strikes of iron: one Tombe in the body of the Church coped also with iron, and seauenscore graue-stones of Marble in diuers places; all which were pulled downe, taken away, and sold for fiftie pounds or thereabouts, by Sir Martin Bowes Maior of London, An. 1545. The rest of the Monuments are now wholly defaced, not any one remaining at this day, saue such which are of later times.

Even when tombs survived, they might be deceptive; Weever notes that at Hadley

Here in this Church, as the Inhabitants say, Gurmond, or Gurthrun, a Danish King lieth interred: and this their assertion is confirmed by the most of our ancient Historians; yet the Tombe which they shew for his funerall Monument beares not that face of Antiquitie, as to be of seuen hundred yeares and more continuance.

In such a context, it came as no surprise that when Glastonbury was dissolved, Arthur's body was apparently lost.³⁷ Indeed burial in the play is seen as inherently uncertain, which creates a sense of hovering between life and death neatly captured when Gueneuora soliloquizes:

Not death, nor life alone can giue a full
Reuenge: ioyne both in one. Die: and yet liue.
Where paine may not be oft, let it be long.
Seeke out some lingring death, whereby, thy corse
May neither touch the dead, nor ioy the quicke.

(sig. A4r)

Gueneuora's vision of her future has her neither dead nor alive, but poised liminally and apparently indefinitely between the two states in a way which undermines the whole concept of burial.

Perhaps, though, the loss and disappearance of Arthur might not be a wholly bad thing. The Chorus declares that

In Rome the gaping gulfe would not decrease,
Till Curtius corse had closde her yawning awes.
In Theb's the Rotte and Murreine would not cease,
Till Laius broode had paide for breach of lawes:
In Brytain warres and discord will not stent:
Till Vther's line and offspring quite be spent. (sig. B2r)

This is a richly suggestive passage. The idea that the peace and prosperity of Britain depend not on the reappearance of Arthur but on the total extinction of his bloodline would obviously have been startling enough, but as Perry notes, "The phrase 'gaping gulfe' would likely also have reminded the play's audience of John Stubbs' ill-fated 1579 tract *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf Where into England is Likely to be Swallowed by another French Marriage*,"³⁸ that mooted between Queen Elizabeth and the Roman Catholic Duke of Alençon. Two kinds of foreignness are raised here, Roman as in Roman Catholic and Frenchness, and perhaps then we should be alert to a possible pun when Arthur calls Mordred's dead body

A fearefull vision of my former guilte:
A dreadfull horror of a future doome:
A present gaule of minde. (sig. F3r)

Although the sense is clearly "gall," it is hard not to hear an aural pun on "Gaul" which could muddy the waters of identity yet further, as in *King Leir* where Mumford puns on "Gawles" and "as bitter as Gall," and to see the play as potentially incriminating not only Mary Queen of Scots but also Elizabeth, through her desire for a French husband.³⁹ Moreover, Rome figures again in the Nuntius' greeting to England:

Haile natiue soyle, these nine yeares space vnseéne:
To theé hath long renowmed Rome at last
Held vp her hands, bereaft of former pompe. (sig. B2v)

Underlying this passage is the paradox that Rome may be Catholic and hence alien but is also a point of origin, as when a character is named "Dux Pictorum," reminding the reader both of the continuing importance of

Latin in the sixteenth century and of the fact that the play is set in an age in which the Romans were a recent memory. We should therefore hear an ominous note in the Chorus' apparently innocuous remark that "rare the roome, which time doth not controwle" (sig. C3r): here too we should hear a pun, for "Room" was the standard contemporary pronunciation of Rome, and the aural echo reminds us that the original Rome fell and that anything equivalent to a successor state to Rome might also be expected to do likewise.

In *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, we do indeed see Britain fall apart, for in order to prosecute his claim to it, Mordred has to dismember it. First he promises to give Gilla

all Brytish lands that lie
Betweene the flood of Humber, and the Scottes.
Besides as much in Kent as Horsus and
Hengistus had, when Vortigern was King. (sig. C2r)

Next he promises the crown of Scotland to the Dux Pictorum (sig. C2r). It is thus against a backdrop of fragmentation, rearrangement and uncertain identities that the play conducts its analysis of the conflicted and contested nature of the Englishness which will eventually replace moribund Britishness. The Argument of the second Act declares that "In the fourth Scene the King of Ireland & other forrein Pri[nces] assure Mordred of their assistan[c]e against Arthur" (sig. B2r), so that when Mordred does eventually rebel he does so, according to Arthur, "With sluggish Saxons crewe, and Irish kernes, / And Scottish aide, and false redshanked Picts" (sig. D2v). Arthur's force is if anything even more international: the Nuntius declares that

On Mordreds side were sixtie thousande men,
Some borrowed powres, some Brytans bred at home.
The Saxons, Irish, Normans, Pictes, and Scottes
Were first in place, the Brytanes followed last.
On Arthurs side there were as manie more.
Islandians, Gothes, Noruegians, Albanes, Danes,
Were forraine aides, which Arthur brought from Fraunce. (sig. E3r)

For the Nuntius, the day of battle is the day "whenceforth men might inquire / What Brytaine was" (sig. E3r), and the ethnic diversity of these troops ensures that it will be by no means clear what the answer might be. The uncertainty is compounded by the fact that England's neighbor and

enemy Ireland is anachronistically made to possess a perfectly secure and established identity in the play when “the Argument and manner of the second dumbe shewe” declares that “there came a man bareheaded, with blacke long shagged haire downe to his shoulders, apparaild with an Irish Iacket and shirt, hauing an Irish dagger by his side and a dart in his hand” (sig. B2v). Though Clapham declares in *The historie of Great Britannie* that in the time of Agricola “The Nature and Fashions of the Irish, did not then much differ from the British,”⁴⁰ *The Misfortunes of Arthur* prefers to draw on an established visual lexicon of Irishness which is assumed to be transhistorically stable, in a way that Englishness and Britishness are not. Arthur is gone without trace or heirs, and if whatever ethnic group he must be taken to be ruling over survives at all, it does so only in specific and isolated locations:

Let Saxons now, let Normans, Danes, and Scottes.
 Enioye our medowes, fieldes, and pleasant plaines:
 Come, let vs flye to Mountaines, Cliffes and Rockes,
 A Nation hurt, and ne’r in case to heale. (sig. E4v)

“Mountaines, Cliffes and Rockes” is by no means a bad description of what we would now call the Celtic fringe, and the fact that we still recognize its truth confirms our sense that the play is presenting the marginalization of the indigenous inhabitants as a done deal. Even more damaging to any sense of a securely established national identity is the Nuntius’ casual declaration that after the battle “There lay the hope and braunch of Brute supprest” (sig. E4r). The play may attempt to row back from this in Gorlois’ belated reference to Elizabeth as “That pierlesse braunch of Brute: that sweete remaine / Of Priam’s state” (sig. E4v), but the Nuntius’ words are unequivocal and the damage has been done.⁴¹ The heirs of Rome and Troy have gone, and have left no addresses.

In their place, in Gildas’ words:

Hencefoorth the Kernes may safely tread their bogges:
 The Scots may now their inrodes olde renewe,
 The Saxon well may vow their former claimes,
 And Danes without their danger driue vs out. (sig. E4v)

The previously demonized Danes, Saxons and Normans must now count as the English, as is clearly seen when the Chorus laments:

Would Gods these warres had drawne no other blood,
 Then such as sproong from breasts of forreine foes:

So that the fountaine, fedde with chaungelesse course,
 Had found no neerer vents for dearer iuyce.
 Or if the Fates so thirst for Brytish blood,
 And long so deeply for our last decaie:
 O that the rest were sparde and safe reseru'd,
 Both Saxons, Danes, and Normans most of all.
 Heereof when ciuill warres haue worne vs out,
 Must Brytaine stand, a borrowed blood for Brute. (sig. E4v)

That hugely evocative phrase "a borrowed blood for Brute" forces a recognition of what even diehard defenders of Brutus covertly conceded when they acknowledged that the line of Lochrine had died out and had to be replenished by that of Camber: we are no pureblood Trojans, descendants of Aeneas and through him of the goddess Venus, but mongrels, a fundamentally hybridized nation which has survived only through the genetic and cultural contribution of foreigners. Having initially invited us to root for Britons against foreigners, *The Misfortunes of Arthur* shows us that the distinction is in fact facile and unsustainable; we should rather wish that "the rest were sparde and safe reseru'd, / Both Saxons, Danes, and Normans most of all," because it is they who will need to provide that borrowed blood of which the stock of Brutus so urgently needs a transfusion.

The effects of that borrowing of blood are explored in a variety of plays, and many of them make specific and symbolic use of the Brutus story to present hybridity and miscegenation as essential to national survival. Ideas of recurrence and resurfacing are also important as history is seen to repeat and reproduce itself in ways which suggest an essential continuity. In *Bonduca*, Tracey Miller-Tomlinson suggests, the name Hengo, which Fletcher seems to have invented for the nephew of the Icenian queen Bonduca, invites us to connect him with the Anglo-Saxon Hengist and to see the Roman conquest not as the death-knell of British identity but as a stage in its development:⁴² Hengo, who is apparently the last male heir of the Iceni and by implication of Brutus, may die, but he will in some sense be symbolically resurrected in Hengist. In one of the less reputable bastard offspring of *King Lear*, the anonymous 1606 play *No-body and Some-body* (though Anthony Archdeacon suggests Heywood as a possible author),⁴³ the entire plot is structured around recurrence in that the play's official business is, its subtitle announces, to tell the story of "Elydure, who was fortunately three seurall times crowned King of England," his reign being interspersed first with that of his elder brother and secondly with the brief and dis-

astrous attempt of his two younger brothers to rule together (though the play in fact spends its energies less on this ostensible story than on the heavily labored wordplay to be had from the existence of two characters called Nobody and Somebody and the resultant opportunities for gags about “Nobody did this”).⁴⁴ Even in *Gorboduc*, in which Eubulus bleakly announces “Lo, here the end of Brutus’ royal line,” he perhaps qualifies that slightly when he says five lines later “The heir, to whom the sceptre longs, unknown,” which may imply that the bloodline can no longer be securely identified rather than that it has become extinct.⁴⁵ In *A Shoo-maker, a Gentleman* “Crispianus” (actually Eldred in disguise) prophesies that the son of his brother Offa will “through this land plant a whole race of Kings” (sig. K2v). Identities are hopelessly riddled in this play in which no one character can be sensibly or plausibly connected to another: not only is it impossible to identify an Eldred and an Offa who might be sons of a king called Alured (presumably Alfred), let alone the putative children of one of those sons, but Eldred and Offa have also become fused with their disguises to such an extent that Crispin and Crispianus, their respective aliases, come to be treated as though they were real and independent characters: thus we are told that “it is well knowne to you Cordwiners that every yeare you doe celebrate the Feast of Crispine, & Crispianus” (sigs. A3r–v), even though Crispin and Crispianus are not real people at all but fictitious personae assumed by Eldred and Offa. The situation becomes even less clear when at the end of the play Maximinus says of Eldred and Offa “then let these twains, / Being English borne, be Brittain Kings againe” and appoints one to rule in the north and one in the south (sig. L1v), at which point Crispin and Crispianus presumably cease to have even a notional existence. Even if no individual can be securely identified, though, the overwhelming sense is that Britishness itself goes on, thanks at least in part to a marriage between a British prince and a Roman princess.

Other plays too showcase the potential advantages of hybridity. Tracey Miller-Tomlinson, noting that in Fletcher’s *Bonduca* (ca. 1613) “Phallic allusions involving Roman swords and Briton scabbards abound in the play,” argues that “the hybrid identities that result from the breakdown of binaries in *Bonduca* can ... be read as salutary, not only giving rise to the very idea of the nation in the play but also necessary to its vision of national unity and preservation.”⁴⁶ The anonymous author of *The Valiant Welshman* (ca. 1615) goes even further when he has the Brigantian Venusius express to the Welsh Caradoc his regret

that thus long I haue spent
 My honour and my time, in ayding Rome,
 And thus far haue digrest from Natures lawes,
 To ayde a forrayne Nation 'gainst mine owne. (sig. H2v)

Historically, there were of course differences between the Silures and Ordovices, the tribes over whom Caradoc rules, and the Brigantes, but here the author chooses to lose sight of those and to privilege instead a monolithic distinction between them and us which enfolds all Britons within an umbrella classification. A similar confidence in the potential for success of an essentially hybrid identity can be seen in Anthony Brewer's *The Love-sick King*, where the city walls of Newcastle, here imagined to have been built during the Danelaw rather than in 1265, the year in which they were actually begun, become emblematic of an indomitable Englishness which has survived historical vicissitudes and which leads Canute's sister Egina to say "If all the English perish, then must I, for I (now know) in England here was bred, although descended of the Danish blood, King my Father, thirty years governed the one half of this famous Kingdom, where I, that time was born an English Princess" (sigs. B2r–B3v). Egina might be of Danish origin, but she identifies as English.

In Henry Burnell's 1641 *Landgartha*, too, the idea of recurrence attaches itself to the Danes: Phoebus says that for "Troy's Brutaines":

a certaine people, and call'd Danes
 (Cymbrians by some) will prove their worst of banes.
 But shall be beaten backe; not without paine.
 At length (in processe of much time) shall raigne
 In this faire Ile, a Prince (one way descended
 Of Troian race: I'th'other side extended
 Vp by the Royall blood of Danes).⁴⁷

The idea of recurrence is present too, and again in association with Danes, in William Drury's 1619 play *Aluredus, sive Alvredus*. This was originally written in Latin and first acted at Douai in 1621, where, as its most recent editor notes, its appeal "lay in the fact that Alfred's situation could be pressed into service to stand for the predicament of Drury's contemporary Catholics, likewise dislodged from their proper places by an invasion of what they regarded as barbaric outsiders"; it was subsequently translated into English by Richard Knightley in 1659 because, to quote its most recent editor again:

Knightley realized that, without a word being changed, Drury's play had the capacity to acquire an entirely different meaning for a different audience in much altered historical circumstances. Alfred now stood for the exiled Charles II, the loyal followers who share his exile and work for his restoration for faithful royalists, the Danes for "barbaric" Puritans.⁴⁸

Knightley's English version, which is the one I shall be quoting from, is thus in itself an example of recurrence of a sort, testifying to the flexibility and versatility of a single historical figure. In it, the distinction between the two nations falls apart when Humfrey says to someone whom he takes for a Dane "Is't not to insensible brutes I send / My complaints" (1.13.532–33); this activates the Brutus/brute pun but connects it to Danes rather than Britons, although the supposed Dane is in fact Humfrey's fellow-Saxon Athelrede in disguise. Both Alfred and Gothurnus (Guthrum) embody the idea of coming back, Gothurnus saying "England, I rise from thy ashes / As a Phoenix from his reviving flame" (1.4.165–66) and being presented by Alfred himself as figuring the future when Alfred appoints him king of the Anglians and tells him

Nor shall you want
A kingdom, for where great Britaine confronts
The rising sun, you shall rule its people. (5.16.2850–52)

The rising sun was regularly employed to figure the notion of succession to the crown, and clearly points at the idea of futurity. Futurity is also implicit when a messenger says that some of the Danes "have lost both their lives and all their artillery" (3.13.1507), clearly imagining them in terms more appropriate to seventeenth-century troops than to ninth-century ones, and again when Cuthbert says Alfred now possesses "great Britaine's monarchy" (Epilogue, 2861), since the term Great Britain would not come into circulation until the reign of James VI and I.

The idea that today's Dane is tomorrow's Englishman is also suggested when Humfrey, Athelrede and Alfred all at various points disguise themselves as Danes and when Strumbo mistakes Alfred the Great and St. Cuthbert for "two Danish suckers of my English aile" (2.6.846). The English and the Danes are effectively interchangeable, and Strumbo's mistake is by no means ridiculous because the Danes and the English do use the same language: St. Cuthbert refers to England as "A prey to Mars" (Prologue, 11) and Gothurnus also mentions Mars (1.4.134), so that saint and heathen are improbably bonded by classical mythology. Recurrence

is in fact inherent in the structure of *Aluredus, sive Alvredus*, for Drury's play collapses English history in the same way as *Titus Andronicus* does Roman. Strumbo, who shares a name with a character in *Locrine*, says of St. Cuthbert "this man by his discovery hath already disembodied me, and the other will presently make me nobody" (2.6.873–75); this looks like an allusion to *No-body and Some-body*. Strumbo also cannot draw his sword from the scabbard (5.10), which looks like an allusion to King Arthur; he says "I am born in a cuntry where trees make war upon men" (2.7.946–47), which looks like an allusion to *Macbeth*; and finally he wishes "O that I were a hare!" (2.6.883), which looks like an allusion to *Bonduca*, since the sacrifice in III.i was almost certainly of a hare, the animal traditionally offered to the British goddess Andraste; *Bonduca* is also suggested when Alfred fears that the Danes will rape his daughters (4.11.1649–53), since that is what the Romans do to Bonduca's daughters. Dana F. Sutton's introduction comments that "the theme of Alfred's moral reform lacks plausibility and does not sit well with the other elements of the play"; that is arguably because he is sharing a persona with Lear at the time, in that Neothus' accusation is in effect that he should have taken better care of poverty and want (4.11.1671–81), and Lear is echoed again later when Bragadocia says he is "a king, ev'ry inch of me" and Pimpo observes aside "A cockscombe would fit his head excellently well" (3.5.1567–68). Finally Rollo suggests that Gothurnus might marry Edelvitha (4.17.2094–95), evoking the story of Emma, wife of Canute, whose story was told in *Emma Angliae regina ac Mater Hardicanuti Regis*, also performed at Douai. Altogether, then, *Aluredus, sive Alvredus* presents the story it tells as one in which past and present are collapsed into each other, and in which England is always already, and simultaneously, both what it was and what it will be.

Hardicanute, one of those gestured at in *Aluredus, sive Alvredus*, is a central figure in another play which explored the anglicization of the Danes. In the anonymous *Edmund Ironside*, the English are initially securely separate from the Danish. Facing mutilation by the Danes, First Pledge exhorts Second Pledge, "so let us perish like to gentlemen / like to ourselves and like to Englishmen" (2.3.663–64), and then appeals to heaven to "Pour thy vengeance on this bloody Dane" (2.3.709). The English are also equally securely associated with Troy. Edmund tells his followers, "Go in, brave lords, your sight doth me more joy / Than *Agamemnon* when he conquered Troy" (1.1.381–82); Canute, conversely, exhorts his, "Go to yon city which we mean to sack / new Troy, the state of

Edmund Ironside" (3.2.863–64). However, Stitch figures the Englishness of the Pledges as prosthetic and thus removable—"How they'll look when their noses be off! Everyone will take them for Frenchmen" (2.3.688–89). Once their noses have indeed been cut off, the second of them assures Canute that "We go but to thy cost, proud Danish Canute / throughout this isle thy tyranny to bruit" (2.3.726–27); "bruit" obviously means "noise" as in the sense of "to noise abroad," but also offers a verbal pun on "Brut." The followers of Canute, though, also have access to this language: Southampton, father of Canute's queen Egina, declares unexpectedly "I do remember hardy *Hannibal* / did use these words at won *Tarentum*'s loss ..." (4.4.1553–54), as if he could personally remember Roman history in the way that characters in *The Valiant Welshman* seem able to do. Even more provocatively, Canute himself delivers a little lecture on how

The ground I stand on, Edmund, is mine own
 fallen to me not successively indeed
 but by forfeiture as copyhold
 rent-run and wanting reparations
 falls to the lord. (5.2.1789–93)

For Daniel it would have been better for Edmund Ironside "to haue died at the battaile of Essendon with England" because his very identity was fatally undermined by it and "Knute became Edmond, and Edmond, Knute";⁴⁹ here, we see that happen as Canute claims to be the true owner of Edmund's England.

Most notably, though, the idea of recurrence attaches to the Normans, since the Norman Conquest, the most remarkable foreign invasion in English history, might find itself on occasion presented as the return of the Danes (indeed one of the Danes in *Aluredus* is called Rollo, which was the name of William the Conqueror's father), or, even more surprisingly, as the return of the Saxons and even of the Trojans. In John Clapham's *The historie of Great Britannie* Edward the Confessor, Harold Godwinson, and William the Conqueror are all listed under the rubric "The succession of the Princes of Denmarke in the Kingdome of England,"⁵⁰ and in *A brieffe discoure of royall monarchie*, Charles Merbury develops a contrast between Vortigern, "who for to mainteine his Tyrannie called in the Saxons, and they to stablish their new power: oppressed the Brittons: dryuing them into a corner of the llande, brenning, and spoiling their countrey" and "William the Conquerour (a Prince of more Iustice)" who allegedly had the foresight to recognize that

today's Norman is tomorrow's Englishman and "forbad (at his first arriuall here) his souldiers to hurte, or spoile any Englishman: saying that it should be a great sinne, and follie for him to spoile that people: which ere many dayes after were like to be his subiectes" (sig. B1v). Curtis Perry quotes Holinshed and Verstegan as going still further by declaring that Danes and Normans were essentially the same, and Sir John Hayward in *The Lives of the III Normans, Kings of England* (1613) as arguing that the Norman invasion "worketh no essentiall change. The State still remained the same, the solid bodie of the State remained still *English*: the coming in of many *Normans*, was but as Rivers falling into the Ocean; which change not the Ocean, but are confounded with the waters thereof."⁵¹ In *Edmund Ironside*, whose subtitle is "A true Chronicle History called *War hath made all friends*," Alfred and his brother the future Edward the Confessor are sent for safety to Normandy (4.2.1436–39), from where Edward will of course return to reign.

The idea that the Normans are not really as foreign as all that is found most clearly in *A pleasant comodie, of faire Em the Millers daughter of Manchester with the loue of William the Conqueror*, sometimes listed as by Robert Wilson but not really to be securely attached to any author. Andrew Hadfield argues that in *A View of the Present State of Ireland* Spenser presents William the Conqueror's imposition of Common Law on the English as "a harsh act performed for their own good,"⁵² and *Fair Em* would certainly seem to support this. The play opens with Sir Thomas Goddard, now reduced to working as a miller, lamenting that the Norman invasion has "made a number such as we subiect / Their gentle neckes vnto their stubborne yoke" because the newcomers "seek to roote all Britaines Gentry / From bearing countenance against their tyrannie."⁵³ However, by the end of the play William not only gladly reinstates him, but has himself inexplicably metamorphosed from a Norman into a Saxon as Demarch refers to him as "the Saxon Duke" (sig. D4r) and Zweno calls him "William Duke of Saxon"; William even introduces himself as "William of Saxonie" (sig. E3v), and in becoming a disguised ruler William is also echoing stories about Richard I and Robin Hood. He even appropriates the story of Brutus when he caps Mariana's comparison of herself to Penelope (sig. C4r) by saying "Nor may I make my loue the seege of Troye / That am a straunger in this Countrie" (sig. C4v). To all intents and purposes, he seems in fact as much the heir of Brutus as Arthur or Locrine.

In the anonymous *Northerne poems congratulating the Kings majesties entrance to the crowne*, we hear that

This name may well presage th'old Britans good,
 That Denmarke should in times past Cimbria hight,
 One letter change, set a where i once stooode,
 And Wales this name will clayme of ancient right,
 Nay both those names do on that Countrey light.
 Our Noble Queene in Cimbria land was borne,
 That she to Cambria might bring forth a sonne.⁵⁴

Carolyn Sale, noting that Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* is identified as “Cimmerian,” declares:

“Cimmerian” is not simply a synonym for “Moor” ... For Homer, the Cimmerians inhabited a land of darkness at the far edge of the world, possibly Britain ... Plutarch equates them with the Cimbres, and Harrison writes that the Cymbres or Cymbri inhabited the British isles at the time of the Roman invasion, with the Welsh being “the right Cymbri.”⁵⁵

The poem seems to be making the same set of assumptions; headily eliding the Danes with the Welsh by means of the Scots, it effectively suggests that everyone has really been British all along, even when they have temporarily appeared to be something else. Paul Hill, noting that “The last English king, Harold Godwinson, was half-Danish” and that “the last man to fall around the English standard at Hastings probably spoke Danish as well as he spoke English,” observes that by the ninth century “The Danish armies had succeeded in eliminating all but one of the early English dynasties,” the exception being Wessex; “William of Malmesbury dryly noted that Northumbria had already grown into one nation with the Danes.”⁵⁶ Collectively, these plays tell the story of that integration and of how the exhausted stock of Brutus was revived by new blood from overseas.

NOTES

¹ Paul Whitfield White, "The Admiral's Lost Arthurian Plays," in *Lost Plays in Shakespeare's England*, ed. David McInnis and Matthew Steggle (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), pp. 148–62, p. 149.

² W. R. Streitberger, *The Masters of the Revels and Elizabeth I's Court Theatre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 183.

³ John Boys, *An exposition of the last psalme delivered in a sermon perached at Pauls Crosse the fifth of Nouember, 1613* (London: Felix Kyngston for William Apsley, 1613), sig. B4r; William Westerman, *Jacobs well: or, a sermon preached before the Kings most excellent Majestie at Saint Albans, in his sumpper progresse 1612* (London: John Beale for Matthew Lawe, 1613), p. 69.

⁴ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 262.

⁵ Leslie Alcock, *Arthur's Britain: History and Archaeology AD 367–634* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), pp. 22 and 24.

⁶ Curtis Perry, "British Empire on the Eve of the Armada: Revisiting *The Misfortunes of Arthur*," *Studies in Philology* 108.4 (2011), 508–37, p. 509.

⁷ Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York: Garland, 1992), p. 48.

⁸ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, pp. 251 and 147.

⁹ David Bevington, *Tudor Drama and Politics: A Critical Approach to Topical Meaning* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 155.

¹⁰ Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, p. 19.

¹¹ Edward Paleit, *War, Liberty, and Caesar: Responses to Lucan's Bellum Ciuile, ca. 1580–1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 137.

¹² Thomas Hughes, *Certaine deu[is]es and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse court in Greenewich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy raigne* (London: Robert Robinson, 1587), sig. C1r.

¹³ George M. Logan points out that there is also a very considerable debt to Lucan's *Pharsalia*, a text which Marlowe partially translated ("Hughes's Use of Lucan in the *Misfortunes of Arthur*," *The Review of English Studies* 20 [February, 1969], 22–32).

¹⁴ John Clapham, *The historie of Great Britannie declaring the successe of times and affaires in that iland, from the Romans first entrance, vntill the raigne of Egbert, the West-Saxon prince; who reduced the severall principalities of the Saxons and English, into a monarchie, and changed the name of Britanie into England* (London: Valentine Simmes, 1606), p. 142.

¹⁵ Richard Harvey, *Philadelphus, or a defence of Brutes* (London: John Wolfe, 1593), sig. B1r.

¹⁶ See Lisa Hopkins, *Drama and the Succession to the Crown, 1561–1633* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 24–28.

¹⁷ Alan Michael Whitworth, *Hadrian's Wall: Some Aspects of its Post-Roman Influence on the Landscape* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2000), p. 46.

¹⁸ John Wilson, *The English Martyrology ...* (St. Omer: English College Press, 1608), p. 64.

¹⁹ Julie Sanders, *The Cultural Geography of Early Modern Drama, 1620–1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 23–24.

²⁰ Ralf Hertel, *Staging England in the Elizabethan History Play: Performing National Identity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), p. 37. He cites *Britannia*, trans. and enlarged by Richard Gough (1606; Hildesheim: Olms, 1974), I: li.

²¹ Stuart Piggott, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), pp. 57–58.

²² Sophia Kingshill and Jennifer Westwood, *The Fabled Coast: Legends and Traditions from around the Shores of Britain and Ireland* (London: Random House, 2012), p. 140.

²³ Clapham, *The historie of Great Britannie*, p. 187.

²⁴ Kingshill and Westwood, *The Fabled Coast*, p. 163.

²⁵ John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. John Russell Brown [1964] (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), IV.ii.194–95.

²⁶ Raphael Holinshed, *The Third volume of Chronicles* (London: Henry Denham, 1586), p. 811.

²⁷ John Stow, *A suruay of London Contayning the originall, antiquity, increase, moderne estate, and description of that Citie, written in the yeare 1598* (London: John Windet for John Wolfe, 1598), p. 347.

²⁸ Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, p. 93.

²⁹ Harvey, *Philadelphus*, sig. N2v.

³⁰ Clapham, *The historie of Great Britannie*, p. 200.

³¹ Carole Levin, *"The Heart and Stomach of a King": Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), pp. 20–21.

³² Philip Schwyzer, "A Scum of Britons?: Richard III and the Celtic Reconquest," in *Celtic Shakespeare: The Bard and the Borderers*, ed. Willy Maley and Rory Loughnane (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 25–34, pp. 27 and 34.

³³ Philip Schwyzer, *Shakespeare and the Remains of Richard III* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 107.

³⁴ Thomas Compton Carleton S.J., *Fatum Vortigerni*, ed. Dana F. Sutton, 2007, <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/vort/intro.html>

³⁵ The printer's preface refers to it as having been written "some twenty yeares agone" (William Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a gentleman* [London: J. Okes for John Cowper, 1638], sig. A4r).

³⁶ John Chandler, *John Leland's Itinerary: Travels in Tudor England* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), p. 201.

³⁷ John Weever, *Ancient funerall monuments within the vnitied monarchie of Great Britaine* (London: Thomas Harper for Laurence Sadler, 1631), pp. 278, 388 and 748–49.

³⁸ Perry, "British Empire on the Eve of the Armada," p. 516, n. 25.

³⁹ *The true Chronicle Historie of King Leir and his three daughters* (London: Simon Stafford for John Wright, 1605), sig. I1v.

⁴⁰ Clapham, *The historie of Great Britannie*, p. 76.

⁴¹ On the contradiction implicit in hailing Elizabeth as a "braunch of Brute" see also Perry, "British Empire on the Eve of the Armada," p. 511.

⁴² Tracey Miller-Tomlinson, "Hybrid Gender, Hybrid Nation: Race, Sexuality, and the Making of National Identity in Fletcher's *Bonduca*," *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 46 (2007), pp. 51–66, p. 52. See also Jodi Mikalachki, "The Masculine Romance of Roman Britain: *Cymbeline* and Early Modern English Nationalism," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 46.3 (1995), pp. 301–22, p. 314.

⁴³ Anthony Archdeacon, "The publication of *No-body and Some-body*: Humanism, history and economics in the early Jacobean public theatre," *Early Modern Literary Studies*, <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/16-1/archnobo.htm>

⁴⁴ Anonymous, *No-body and Some-body. With the true Chronicle Historie of Elydure, who was fortunately three seuerall times crowned King of England* (London: John Trundle, 1606).

⁴⁵ Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *Gorboduc*, in *Five Elizabethan Tragedies*, ed. A. K. McIlwraith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), 5.1.180 and 5.1.185.

⁴⁶ Miller-Tomlinson, "Hybrid Gender, Hybrid Nation," pp. 54–55.

⁴⁷ Henry Burnell, *Landgartha* (Dublin, 1641), sigs. F2r–v.

⁴⁸ William Drury, *Aluredus, sive Alvredus* (1619), trans. Robert Knightley (as *Alfrede, or Right Reinthron'd*, 1659), ed. Dana F. Sutton for the Philological Museum, 2014, <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/aluredus/>, Introduction.

⁴⁹ Samuel Daniel, *The first part of the historie of England* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1612), p. 52.

⁵⁰ Clapham, *The historie of Great Britannie*, p. 292.

⁵¹ Curtis Perry, "'For They Are Englishmen': National Identities and the Early Modern Drama of Medieval Conquest," in *Shakespeare and the Middle Ages*, ed. Curtis Perry and John Watkins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 172–95, pp. 183 and 180.

⁵² Andrew Hadfield, "Spenser, Ireland, and Sixteenth-Century Political Theory," *The Modern Language Review* 89.1 (1994), pp. 1–18, p. 12.

⁵³ Robert Wilson (?), *A pleasant comodie, of faire Em the Millers daughter of Manchester with the loue of William the Conqueror* (London: T. N. for J. W., 1591), sigs. A3r and A3v.

⁵⁴ Anonymous, *Northerne poems congratulating the Kings majesties entrance to the crowne* (London: J. Windet for E. Weaver, 1604), sig. B3v. As Stuart Piggott notes, the term Cimbria was a particularly flexible one because it signaled descent from Noah's grandson Gomer without being tied to any specific locality: "Gomer could be equated with the historical Cimbri of Jutland, in Italy with Umbria (Gumbria) and more especially with the Welsh, Cymraeg" (*Ancient Britons and*

the Antiquarian Imagination [London: Thames and Hudson, 1989], p. 59).

⁵⁵ Carolyn Sale, "Black Aeneas: Race, English Literary History, and the 'Barbarous' Poetics of *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62.1 (2011), pp. 25–52, pp. 28–29.

⁵⁶ Paul Hill, *The Age of Athelstan: Britain's Forgotten History* [2004] (Stroud: The History Press, 2008), pp. 15, 39 and 81.

Part Two
Ancestors and Others

Chapter 4

Queens and the British History

BRITISH QUEENS ARE A PROBLEM. In Geoffrey, the first British queen mentioned is Ignoge, and pretty much all we are told of her is how much she wept on leaving her homeland. Next comes Gwendolen, first wife of Locrine, whom Geoffrey understands as a queen in her own right: "Gwendolen reigned for fifteen years after the death of Locrinus, who had himself reigned ten years," though she relinquishes the throne once her son Maddan is of age. She came to power by killing her husband, his mistress, and his daughter. Cordelia also reigns in her own right until dethroned by her nephews, who "became indignant at the fact that Britain was subjected to the rule of a woman." Other queens are unchaste: according to Geoffrey, Guinevere and Mordred have an affair.¹ In this chapter, I want to explore the implications of this simultaneous distrust of queens and awareness of the role played by female transmission in plays about the pre-Conquest history of Britain.

Shakespeare wrote four plays set in the period between the Romans and the Normans, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Cymbeline*, and *King Lear*, and all four have queens or (in the cases of Goneril and Regan) quasi-queens who are at best weak and at worst wicked, and whose actions destroy the dynasties of which they form part. (In the case of *Cymbeline*, the royal family survives, but the queen's own son Cloten does not.) Individually and collectively, these queens have numerous limitations and weaknesses. Both Gertrude and Lady Macbeth are unable to see ghosts which are clearly visible to their son and husband respectively, in a way which figures them as blind both to historical process and divine logic; Cordelia and Ophelia may be virtuous, but neither has a dynastic function, and nor explicitly does Innogen. Sometimes, as in *Macbeth* or *Cymbeline*, queens may destroy or attempt to destroy the offspring of others, but none of them is shown producing surviving offspring of her own.

Even if they had done, though, that would not necessarily have been a positive thing. I have argued elsewhere that female transmission of a

claim to the throne is problematic in the early modern period.² It is particularly so in plays set in the period before the Conquest, in which queenship is always potentially disruptive to the narrative of emerging national identities. When the idea of female transmission is evoked, it is generally in order to deceive. In *Fair Em*, the Danish king Zweno says to William the Conqueror,

I ioy to see your grace so tractable.
Here take my daughter Blanch,
And after my desease the Denmark crowne.³

Similarly in Peele's *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes* Iuliana promises Clamydes that he shall "me possesse for spowesd wife, who in election am / To haue the Crowne of *Denmark* here, as heire vnto the same."⁴ Both these examples position inheritance through a wife as a foreign, specifically Danish, practice, but also present it as something that fundamentally and obviously cannot happen: *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes* is obviously firmly situated within the genre of romance rather than chronicle history, and in the case of *Fair Em* the audience knows perfectly well that William the Conqueror did *not* marry the Danish king's daughter and subsequently become king of Denmark himself.⁵ In *Arviragus and Philicia* the king falsely assures Arviragus that

our son we did intend to have chosen for our ayde, but when we did consider his fierce and cholerique nature, apter to make new wounds than salve th'old, we chose to bring our Daughter, equall interest'd in our love, nay crowne, for we have to the World made it known, since we have found him disobedient, that she shall share an equall portion of our State. (sig. D5r)

He adds that "her Dowery shall be th'Principality of *Pictland*" (sig. D6r). However, the king is lying about what he intends and Arviragus is in any case heir to the principality in his own right, so it is a doubly hollow comment, and the idea of female succession is thus doubly disavowed.

Despite the precedent of Elizabeth, the idea of queens regnant also remained problematic. There is a pointed exchange in William Rowley's *A Shoo-maker a gentleman* where Winifred, who is introduced as "the onely Daughter, and Heire / To Dun-wallis," says "But since I am a Queene and spotlesse Virgin, / Let me chuse my death" and Maximinus replies "Because thou once wert daughter to a King / Injoy thy wish."⁶ He thus grants Winifred's request, but not on Winifred's terms: carefully sidestep-

ping the words “queen” and “virgin,” he concedes her only a status founded solely on her relationship to a man, her father Dunwallo Molmutius. The Roman character’s obvious distaste for the idea of an independent female power serves to connect sacred queenship to indigenous Britishness, but it also serves to present it as radically opposed to *romanitas*. This means that queens in early modern plays may be stirring and charismatic figures and may even be icons of Britishness, but will struggle to speak to the all-important narrative of an underlying continuity: a queen must always be a disruption in the national story, and it is I think no coincidence that no queen in any of these plays is ever succeeded by one of her own children. (This was of course something that both aligned them with Elizabeth and also drew attention to Elizabeth’s own childlessness.) The Lear story in particular and the British History in general prove the site of a struggle over the meaning of kingship and queenship and the extent to which they can be seen as institutions grounded in the origins of Britain.

The first queen to be depicted in a British history play is Videna in *Gordobuc*, and it is not an encouraging precedent. The Argument of the Tragedy explains bluntly that “The sons fell to dissension. The mother, that more dearly loved the elder, for revenge killed the younger.” James Berg has suggested that this would resonate very strongly with the play’s original performance at one of the Inns of Court, “populated as they were with younger brothers who were forced to earn their livings by lawyering, and for whom the increasingly exclusive nature of land tenure would have been especially galling,”⁷ and Jaecheol Kim argues that there would also have been a geographical dimension in play which would have worked to call into question the very notion of Britain: “the socially embittered problem of the younger son also allegorizes the topographically ill-distributed wealth of the kingdom. It is quite conceivable that this heavily discursive web of the disgruntled, iconoclastic, and economically aggrieved younger son is offered as a convenient representation of the problems of the North.”⁸ The situation proposed by the play may therefore have seemed less artificial to the members of its original audience than we might now suppose, and they might also have heard echoes of their own ruler: Jacqueline Vanhoutte notes that “*Gorboduc* urges Elizabeth to accept parliamentary advice by marrying, providing an heir, and ensuring the stability of the country” and that “Furthermore, in giving that ‘native land’ a maternal shape, *Gorboduc* adapts Elizabeth I’s own maternal rhetoric in order to urge the queen to accept its political vision.” The queen would have been reluctant to do that, but:

For Elizabeth to refuse the identification with the motherland could carry an even higher political price. Queen Videna, who functions as a foil for mother England, gives shape to male anxieties about “unnatural” and uncontrolled maternal power, anxieties provoked in part, no doubt, by Elizabeth’s maternal posturing and evident also in the current rumors that cast the queen as the murderer of her own illegitimate children.⁹

Christine Coch notes that “By providing a paradigm to structure the relationships between Elizabeth, God, and her subjects, the maternal model defined and legitimated Elizabeth’s distinctive form of feminine personal government.”¹⁰ Videna is the first speaker, which hints at her being the most important character, and her first words are “The silent night,”¹¹ which work to associate her with the powers of darkness. The sense that queens may be sinister is underscored when the dumbshow before the fourth act features three queens who slew their own children, Medea, Ino, and Althea; it is true that there are also three kings who did so, but there are three additional female figures presiding in the shapes of Alecto, Megaera and Tisiphone, implicitly gendering evil as feminine.

Videna’s actions destroy not just her own family but the state. Eubulus startlingly prophesies that the dynastic link to Troy is broken for ever, but that this almost does not matter because an entirely new concept of kingship is about to emerge:

A simple colour shall for title serve.
 Who wins the royal crown will want no right,
 Nor such as shall display by long descent
 A lineal race to prove him lawful king. (5.1.197–200)

There will be no need for heredity in this brutal new world because might will be right, but without a concept of heredity, kingship can no longer be sacral. Indeed Eubulus goes on to admit as much:

And this doth grow, when lo, unto the prince,
 Whom death or sudden hap of life bereaves,
 No certain heir remains, such certain heir,
 As not all only is the rightful heir,
 But to the realm is so made known to be;
 And troth thereby vested in subjects’ hearts,
 To owe faith there where right is known to rest. (5.1.246–52)

Without an aura of rightfulness in the shape of lawful descent, a king cannot count on truth and faith from his subjects, and it is to this state that the actions of Videna have condemned Britain.

Other queens are similarly disruptive to attempts to consolidate and preserve national identities. In *The Valiant Welshman* Caradoc is betrayed by Cartismanda, driving a wedge between English and Welsh and facilitating Claudius' conquest of the islands. Guiniuer too is a troubling figure. Octavian assures Caradoc that

We giue thee for thy reward, this golden Fleece,
Our Royall daughter, beautious Guiniuer,
And after our decease, our Kingly right. (sig. C1r)

This clearly suggests female transmission, but actually the play moves swiftly to something even more troubling when Caradoc tells Guiniuer:

Then, Royall Queene, (for that's a stile befits
The royall vertues of such peereless lustre)
Ascend your Throne, whilst equally with me,
You part, with full applause, your soueraignty. (sig. F3r)

She is crowned and all cry "Long liue Queene Guiniuer, Queene of Cambria" (sig. F3r). As well as sharing power with her husband in this unprecedented way, Guiniuer is also personally suspect. At her wedding banquet she assures her father that her calm behavior is deceptive and that external appearances are "like the outward parts of some fayre whore," which is hardly appropriate language for a bride, especially if the audience remember that in Geoffrey Guinevere and Mordred have an affair,¹² or that in Malory she betrays Arthur with Lancelot. Her father's reply to this is also alarming:

How learnedly hath thy perswasieue tounge
Discovered a new passage vnto ioy,
In mentall reseruacion? (sig. C2v)

"Mental reservation," a notoriously Jesuit concept, is generally represented in early modern England as little better than lying,¹³ and such language damages Guiniuer further by connecting her to Catholicism. It is not surprising that in Rowley's *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman* one of the insults the shoemaker directs at his wife when she tries to interfere is "dame Guiniver" (sig. H1r), for Guiniuer is a disturbing and disruptive figure.

In *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare's British king declares at the end of the play:

Although the victor, we submit to Caesar,
And to the Roman empire; promising
To pay our wonted tribute, from the which
We were dissuaded by our wicked queen. (5.5.461–64)

Cymbeline identifies his queen as a force implacably opposed to Rome, and indeed she has even gone so far as to contest the massive cultural authority of Roman historiographers when she scornfully declares:

A kind of conquest
Caesar made here, but made not here his brag
Of "Came, and saw, and overcame." (3.1.23–25)

In this respect, Cymbeline's queen might well be viewed by early modern audiences as being typically British. Tacitus had made a point of declaring that "Britons make no distinction of sex in their appointment of commanders,"¹⁴ and Jodi Mikalachki notes that "Powerful females loomed large in early modern visions of national origins, from the universal gendering of the topographical and historical 'Britannia' as feminine to the troubling eruptions of ancient queens in the process of civilization by Rome."¹⁵ Though historically there was tension between the tribes of Cunobelinus and of Boudicca, who during her rebellion seems specifically to have targeted territory formerly belonging to Cunobelinus,¹⁶ both Samantha Frenée-Hutchins and Jodi Mikalachki have suggested that Cymbeline's queen is in fact implicitly identified with Boudicca.¹⁷ (When Melly Still changed Cymbeline to a queen at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in 2016, I heard an audience member ask "Is that Boadicea?") Significantly, though, that identification is never made in the play; in fact the queen has no name at all, and this radically disempowers her from functioning as an originating figure. Anthony Munday's 1605 mayoral pageant *The Triumphs of Re-United Britannia*, which as Ronald J. Boling notes stresses female power in that it "depicts the kings Loocrine, Camber, and Albanact yielding their crowns to Empress Britannia,"¹⁸ is nevertheless at great pains to insist that it is men who give their names to lands: Munday declares that Albion was so named after the son of Neptune and not after a daughter of Danaus named Albina, who he says did not exist,¹⁹ and that King Ecgbert coined the name of England from the land of Anglia, "from whence he deriued his originall. So that neither Hengist, nor anye Qu. named Angla, or deriuation ab Angulo, is to be allowed before this

sound and sure authority.”²⁰ Cymbeline himself, his sons Guiderius and Arviragus, and his son-in-law Posthumus Leonatus all have unimpeachably Latinate names and are all securely located as part of a historical, dynastic material heritage; the queen, being unnamed, of unknown parentage and leaving no surviving biological offspring, and so making no contribution to the dynasty, resists all known patterns of nomenclature. This emblemizes the way in which the males of the royal court operate inside Roman structures while she does not, stressing that she thus has no possible place in the story of the *translatio imperii*. The queen may in some sense *embody* Britishness through her potential association with Boudicca and her assertion of independence from Rome, but she cannot transmit it in the way that Innogen, not a queen but a princess and hence understood primarily in terms of marriageability, is able to do.

The queen’s lack of name also aligns her with a phenomenon of suggestive indeterminacy about female identities and origins which is a widespread feature of this group of plays. Even the unimpeachably historical Boadicea has no stable form of her name, appearing variously as Boudica, Bonduca and Voada, and we never learn who Innogen’s actual mother was any more than we learn about the mother(s) of Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia (*King Lear* in this respect differing significantly from *King Lear*). We also do not learn who the mother of Fleance was, nor does Holinshed give the name of the Welsh princess who allowed herself to be deflowered by him and so became the ancestress of the (thus illegitimate) line of the Stuarts. We do of course know who Hamlet’s mother was, but here identities are riddled in a different way, for it is in *Hamlet* rather than *Macbeth* that Shakespeare gets as close as he dares to glancing at the nightmare mother figure of Mary, Queen of Scots, whose condemnation under the Act of Association had led Robert Persons to suggest that her heirs had lost their title to the succession, an idea which made James so nervous that he asked his ambassador to London to obtain a copy of the act so that he could check its terms.²¹ Mary is merely an absence in *Macbeth*, albeit a loud one, but in *Hamlet* she is repeatedly evoked. Andrew Hadfield, arguing that “the plot of *Hamlet* seems saturated with suppressed and disguised references to Scottish history, all designed to express the anxiety felt by English subjects at the prospect of a Scotsman inheriting their throne,” points to the striking similarities between the two stories:

The murder of old Hamlet takes place in an orchard, as did the murder of Mary Stuart’s second husband. His body broke out in boils ... as did the dead body of Darnley, according to Buchanan. It was

commonly argued in anti-Marian propaganda that Mary's partner in crime and next husband, James, earl of Bothwell committed adultery with her before the death of Darnley, as old Hamlet argues was the case with Gertrude and Claudius; that the period of mourning was far too short, as Hamlet claimed was the case with his father; and that Bothwell was markedly inferior in appearance to Darnley, a judgement Hamlet claims anyone who saw Claudius beside his father would also make.²²

Along with the legend of Scottish descent from Scota, daughter of Pharaoh, and her husband Gathelus, a story still being mentioned as late as 1603 by Andrew Melville in his *A trewe description of the nobill race of the Stewards*,²³ Mary Queen of Scots makes the story of Scotland in particular dependent on a narrative of female succession.

I want to develop Mikalachki's observation that women play an important part in discourses of English and British origins and identities, but to argue that women in the plays I discuss here need to be read not only in relation to *romanitas* but also in relation to two other paradigms. The first of these is provided by Marlowe's hugely influential Tamburlaine plays. On the face of it, it might seem that Tamburlaine, a fifteenth-century Uzbek warlord who never visited Britain, can have nothing to do with the matter. However, I have argued elsewhere that there is a fundamental connection between Tamburlaine and early modern figurings of *romanitas*,²⁴ and Mary Floyd-Wilson argues that Tamburlaine was in fact central to the debate about origins more generally: "We should recognize in Menaphon's portrait of Tamburlaine ... the same descriptors that Jean Bodin and others applied to all northern tribes, including the Irish, Scots, and Britons."²⁵ It is therefore striking that Tamburlaine is in different ways remembered in all the plays I want to discuss here. Tamburlaine is in general an anomalous and paradoxical figure, and he becomes particularly so when read in relation to women. He is both the ultimate Other and yet also, according to the Prologue, what Marlowe's audience sees in the mirror. In relation to women, he slays the virgins of Damascus but fetishes his own wife Zenocrate, and leaves her chastity inviolate until their marriage. (Extraordinary as it may seem, in 1996 the Uzbek Women's Committee chose to mark the 660th anniversary of the birth of the historical Timur the Lame by holding a conference to celebrate his progressive attitude toward women.) Most significantly for my purposes, he is a figure of both invasion and defense. On the one hand, he is a relentless conqueror who specifically mentions his plans to advance in the direction of "the British

shore" (Part One, 4.1.249). On the other, he became a powerful icon of military success for an England which in the year of the plays' first performance was braced for imminent invasion by the Spanish Armada. He plays a similarly ambiguous role in plays featuring British queens, for he both evokes the idea of military might and at the same time dissociates that might from any potential connection with women. In a number of the plays I discuss in this chapter queens may be figured as Dido, but they can never be Tamburlaine, and the reasons why they cannot prove central to the plays' investigation of queenship. When a comparison is made with Tamburlaine, it is typically in order to point up the extent to which the queen under discussion falls short of him.

The second paradigm is real queens, and three in particular: Elizabeth I, Henrietta Maria, and Mary, Queen of Scots. (Anna of Denmark is separately considered in the next chapter.) Both Elizabeth and Mary were connected to Dido. Elizabeth's proposed marriage to the Catholic French Duke of Alençon²⁶ was often troped in terms of the story of Dido and Aeneas, as in the Siena Sieve portrait of Elizabeth where roundels on a column show the two classical lovers; *Dido, Queen of Carthage* seems to glance at this,²⁷ but also to recall Mary in its depiction of a queen who risks all for love. Henrietta Maria was not linked to Dido, but she was vilified, resented, and regarded as dangerously and intractably foreign. While a connection to Elizabeth might be at least partially recuperative, an association with either Mary, Queen of Scots or Henrietta Maria is at best damaging and at worst disastrous. There are four plays which seem to me particularly pointed exemplars of one or both of these paradigms: *Locrine*, *Bonduca*, *King Lear*, and *King Leir*, all of which explicitly stage parts of the British History (*Bonduca* may seem to be the exception, but although the figure of Bonduca is historical, Caratach gives the play strong links to the British History).

Locrine tells the story of the three sons of Brutus, Locrine himself, Albanact, and Camber. As Marie Axton observes, Locrine "defeats a Scythian invasion only to fall in love with the invaders' foreign queen,"²⁸ echoing but inverting the plot of *Tamburlaine*. The Huns invade Locrine's England led by Humber, who aims to "teach [the British] that the Scythian Emperour / Leades fortune tied in a chaine of gold" and whose companion Hubba speaks of "she that rules faire Rhamnis golden gate."²⁹ *Locrine* tells the story of the end of a dynasty, and explicitly connects that end to the power of queens. When the play opens, we actually see the fabled Brutus, great-grandson of Aeneas and great-great-grandson of the goddess

Venus, in person. He transmits much of his power and all the prestige of his bloodline to his eldest son Locrine, and during the course of the play we see Locrine lose it all and effectively precipitate the extinction of that bloodline because his infatuation with Humber's queen Estrild kindles the murderous wrath of his own queen Guendoline, who tops the list of "English Viragoes" in Heywood's *The generall history of women*.³⁰ Locrine and Guendoline have no children, but Locrine and Estrild have one daughter, Sabren, who after the death of her parents is forced by Guendoline to leap into the River Severn. Once drowned, Sabren is transmuted into Sabrina, nymph of the Severn, and will become a hugely significant figure in early modern literature and thought: in Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, for instance, Sabrina speaks at length and with unquestioned authority, and in Milton's *Comus* it is she who assists the beleaguered Lady. Yet Sabrina is also problematic because her relationship to both Britishness and Englishness is by definition marginal since the Severn traditionally represents the border of the Celtic fringe to which the Britons were driven by the invading Anglo-Saxons. (In *Cymbeline*, though the historical Cunobelinus "seems to have had influence over a huge part of central and eastern Britain, to the extent that Suetonius could refer to Cunobelin simply as 'Britannorum rex', 'King of the Britons,'" ³¹ it is clear that the Severn is the limit of his power.) Sabrina thus represents loss, division and dynastic failure, the end of Wales as well as the spirit of Wales, and the point beyond which the writ of the English king ceases to run.

Locrine was not always called *Locrine*; it appears to have been a revision of *Estrild*, a play written by the Babington conspirator Charles Tilney. We know virtually nothing about the original, though Benjamin Griffin has speculated that it might have been "more politically sensitive than we might guess if we did not know who had written it" and wondered "Was *Estrild* composed as a persuasion-piece along the lines of *Gorboduc*, half-warning and half-threatening on the succession question?" ³² It is, however, clear that *Estrild* was an exceptionally early example of a tragedy named after a woman, and a particularly significant woman at that, for Locrine's mythical queen shared her name with a number of other royal women, some of them more securely historical. Thomas Deloney in his *Strange histories* names Estreld as the love of King Edgar, ³³ and in Richard Grafton's *A chronicle at large*, too, Estrild appears as a variant of Elfrida, who killed her stepson Edward the Martyr, son of Edgar. ³⁴ Above all, Estrid Svendsdatter, sister of Canute the Great, was treated as queen of Denmark after her son Sven Estridssen claimed the throne in right of her descent, and she

not only gave her name to the dynasty but established the principle of female succession (Samuel Purchas in *Purchas his pilgrimes* mentions that Hardicanute's successor claimed through right of his mother).³⁵ She built the first church at Roskilde, the Danish equivalent of Westminster Abbey, and was believed to be buried in the north pier of the cathedral, and she also played a marginal role in English history as well as in Danish: she may have been married to Robert of Normandy and it was sometimes claimed that her son Sven was offered the succession to William the Conqueror. *Lochrine*, then, evokes a powerful queenly identity and it also evokes *Tamburlaine*, but it keeps them ruthlessly separate.

This is also true of dramatic treatments of arguably the most iconic figure of English queenship, Bonduca/Boudica, who in addition to her reputation for ferocity enjoyed special status because she had an unusually strong claim to historicity: indeed Samantha Frenée-Hutchins points out that it was Polydore Vergil's *Anglia Historia*, the very book which first challenged the reality of the Brutus story, which first introduced English readers to Boudica.³⁶ R. A.'s *The Valiant Welshman* features Cadallan and his daughter Voada, whose name invites us to connect her to Boudica. However, Voada is simply virtuous; it is only the male characters who echo Tamburlaine by talking of aspiration and ambition, as when Caradoc refers to Codigune as "the aspiring Bastard" (sig. E3v), the Witch says that the air is "full of fatall Comets, and the skie / Is filde with fiery signes of armed men" (sig. E4v), or Caradoc says to Claudius:

Let painefull Marchants, whose huge riding ships
Teare vp the furrowes of the Indian deep,
To shun the slauish load of pouerty,
Gape after massie golde: the wealth we craue,
Are noble actions, and an honoured graue. (sig. D2v)

Finally Fletcher's *Bonduca* explicitly connects Tamburlaine to the Romans rather than to Bonduca herself when Judas exhorts his fellow Romans, "Awake ye men of Memphis," echoing the Soldan of Egypt's call to his soldiers, and Junius asks "what is beauty?," echoing Tamburlaine himself.³⁷

Bonduca is a play that both offers and snatches away a sense of authentic Britishness. Wendy C. Nielsen observes that "In plays about Boadicea, audiences enjoyed the spectacular scene in the Druid temple, when she sacrificed a hare to the goddess Andate,"³⁸ and that she is right about the popularity of this motif is suggested by the fact that Fisher's *Fuimus Troes* also shows a Druidic ceremony, complete with reference to

"the dreadful mistletoe."³⁹ In *Bonduca* we see just such a scene, a ceremony of sacrifice with a flame arising from an altar and Druids singing; however, when Hengo dies, Britishness is definitively established as an identity that has been lost, and it is women who lose it. When the second daughter says "We will have vengeance for our rapes," Caratach replies simply "you should have kept your legs close then" (p. 59); because of these two girls, the royal bloodline has been polluted, and the genealogical chain has been broken. (Their influence seems particularly disturbing when Petillius continues to love one of the Daughters even after she is dead; as Claire Jowitt comments, "contact with women is associated with corruption and, ultimately, death in this play.")⁴⁰

Bonduca herself both is and is not Tamburlainian. Her resistance of Rome, commendable in itself given that the Rome of the play is repeatedly associated with Roman Catholicism, aligns her with Tamburlaine's war on existing empires, and she also echoes him when she exhorts her reluctant daughter to die and when she despises sexual incontinence; however, when she describes the Romans as "Making the world but one Rome, and one Caesar" (p. 47) she makes them, rather than herself, sound like Tamburlaine since they echo his emphasis on reducing places to his obedience. Bonduca is also both central and marginal to Britishness. On the one hand, she was an obvious icon of British resistance to the Romans. However, she can speak for only part of Britain (the play knows that historically she was queen of the Iceni) and she ultimately disappears from history: her own body, famously often said to be buried under King's Cross Station, has no tomb—Edmund Bolton in *Nero Caesar* may declare that "without auerring any thing precisely, no other toombe seemes to mee so likely to be hers, as the admirable monument of the stones vpon Salisbury plaines," but he does not even attempt to adduce any evidence for this speculation⁴¹—and the violated bodies of her daughters meant the extinction of her bloodline. She does not even have an after-voice in the way that Sabren/Sabrina does. Samantha Frenée-Hutchins observes that, although views of Boudica were very negative under James, representations of her under Elizabeth were generally favorable, since "Boudica, as priestess, goddess, and defender of Druidism paralleled Elizabeth's own position as defender of the faith." In Holinshed, Boudica is in fact shown as a virtual image of the queen in that she is wearing Elizabethan dress and an imperial crown with long flowing hair; thus Humphrey Llwyd in *The breuiary of Britayne* calls Boudica a woman "whose courage more then manlike, and noble deedes worthy to be extolled with prayse unto Heauen,

and equialent to the notes of renowned Emperours.”⁴² However, she must ultimately be both type and anti-type of Elizabeth, because while she can stand as a valuable icon of military resistance she is also disturbing and dangerous, and Fletcher’s play, appearing as it did after the death of Elizabeth, is clearly not sorry to consign its difficult queen safely to history.

Queenship is equally problematic in the two plays based on the Lear story, and these too find it difficult to accommodate the figure of Elizabeth, whom they typically connect to Dido, and even more difficult to connect the idea of queenship to the figure of Tamburlaine, in which they both register a strong interest. They are particularly troubled by Cordelia. In *Fuimus Troes*, Hirildas has a mistress called Cordella, though we don’t see her (or any woman).⁴³ *King Lear* pointedly shies away from the story of Queen Cordelia as told by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and though Tamburlaine is evoked, it is not in connection with any of the three daughters, but with Edgar, who like Tamburlaine injures his own arm when he disguises himself as one of those who “Strike in their numb’d and mortified bare arms / Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary” (2.3.15–16).

There is a similar avoidance and dislocation of both the Queen Cordelia and the Tamburlaine figures in the *Chronicle History of King Leir*. The play begins with the funeral of one queen—Leir opens the play by saying “Thus to our grief the obsequies performd / Of our (too late) deceast and dearest Queen”—and the refusal to contemplate crowning another as Lear declares “A sonne we want for to succeed our Crowne,”⁴⁴ implicitly refusing to entertain the idea that any of his daughters might do so; indeed Cordella herself colludes in the cultural demonization of female rule when she says “How may I blame the fickle Queene of Chaunce” (sig. C1v). In *Leir*, the world of the *Tamburlaine* plays is invoked only to be inverted by the play’s repeated references to “the Brittish shore,”⁴⁵ which was a destination for Tamburlaine but a location for the characters of *Leir*. Leir himself is repeatedly associated with Tamburlaine. In his first speech he declares that his wife’s soul “Doth ride in triumph mongst the Cherubins” (sig. A2r), echoing both Tamburlaine’s famous resolve to “Ride in triumph through Persepolis” and his mourning for a dead wife, and he also echoes Tamburlaine when he says “Oh, what a combat feelles my panting heart” (sig. A4v), while the Gallian king refers to “aspiring Cornwall” (sig. I2v) and Perillus offers Leir his arm to eat, recalling Tamburlaine advising Bajazeth to eat his own arms (4.4.45–47).

Our understanding of Leir’s daughters, by contrast, is conditioned by the play’s evocation of two paradigms of queenship, one drawn from

history and one from literature, but both working here to damaging effect. The first is provided by Marlowe, though conspicuously not by *Tamburlaine*. France when he first sees Cordella says “It is no Goddess” (sig. C1v), subtly rewriting Aeneas’ “*O dea certe*,” and Gonorill evokes both *Dido, Queen of Carthage* and *Hero and Leander* when she tells Cornwall he is “As welcome, as Leander was to Hero, / Or braue Aeneas to the Carthage Queene” (sig. C1r). Later *Edward II* is remembered when Ragan asks “Hast thou the heart to act a stratagem, / And giue a stabbe or two, if need require?” (sigs. E1v–E2r). Each daughter in turn is thus connected to a Marlowe text, but in every instance it is a text other than *Tamburlaine*, which remains reserved for their father.

The second and more important paradigm evoked in connection with Leir’s daughters is the image of Elizabeth. Gonorill says of Cordella “Here is an answer answerlesse indeed” (sig. B1v); this could be seen as directly echoing the rhetoric of the queen herself when she told Parliament that in the matter of Mary’s execution, “you must take an answer without answer at my hands.”⁴⁶ This, moreover, recalls not only Elizabeth in general but Elizabeth at a very specific and highly charged historical moment. The moment in question, the condemnation of Mary, had already left a distinctive mark on drama in the shape of Thomas Hughes’ *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, which Brian Jay Corrigan, as I have already mentioned, suggests is specifically invested in imagining what would have happened if Elizabeth hadn’t executed Mary, Queen of Scots.⁴⁷ There is something of the same sense of counterfactual history in *Leir*. Leir himself says “I am as kind as is the Pellican” (sig. B4v), an emblem which not only recalls the Pelican Portrait of Elizabeth but in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* is explicitly said to signify “Arthurs too much indulgencie of Mordred” and, by implication, Elizabeth’s of Mary.⁴⁸ Later, Mumford says of Cordella:

Now if I had a Kingdome in my hande,
I would exchange it for a milkmaids smock and petycoate,
That she and I might shift our clothes together. (sig. C1v)

Elizabeth, too, famously compared herself to a milkmaid.⁴⁹ Cordella, then, *can* sound like Elizabeth, but she *cannot* sound like Tamburlaine. Instead she sounds like Dido, and the comparison with Dido is always one that is potentially damaging to Elizabeth, since yoking the two had clear potential to recall the Alençon marriage.

Most problematic of all in terms of intersections between succession, historic queens, and recent queens is *Macbeth*. *Macbeth* is a play

which inherits both language and motifs from that arch-discussion of hybridity, *The Misfortunes of Arthur*: Mordred's declaration that "Chaunce hath made me king" (sig. C1r) anticipates Macbeth's musing that it may do the same for him, and Derrick Spradlin notes an anticipation of *Macbeth* in the Chorus' reference to "The mounting minde,"⁵⁰ while Andrew King argues for a resemblance between Lady Macbeth and Gueneuora.⁵¹ The parallel is an appropriate one: Macbeth is in a sense Scotland's Arthur in that his reign marks not only a break with dynastic continuity but also the end of an era. The death of Arthur traditionally marked the point at which Celtic Britain retreated to the fringe while the bulk of the land fell to the Anglo-Saxon invaders; the death of Macbeth marked the end of Gaelic Scotland, except for a fleeting revival during the brief reign of Donald Ban/Donalbain.⁵² In this sense, then, the story that *Macbeth* tells is, like that of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, the story of the cultural death of a nation, and it connects that death to Macbeth's childless queen.

Macbeth, with its reference to "the womb of time," is fundamentally about which seeds will grow and which will not. It is a play which riddles the whole notion of inheritance, descent, and ancestral identity in the absence from the play of Mary, Queen of Scots, the mystification of the link between Fleance and those with treble crowns, and the insistence on dispersal to Ireland as well as implicitly to Wales. Malcolm takes an English wife, Fleance a Welsh, Donalbain might take an Irish, and "How many children had Lady Macbeth?" is not quite such a pointless question as it sounds: we may know that historically she had one son from her first marriage, Lulach, and none by Macbeth, but in its own terms the play does leave us speculating about the precise mechanics of descent and how exactly the future will emerge from the past, not least whether future Scots will really be Scots or will have been hybridized by Malcolm's program of enforced anglicization, for *Macbeth* is a play which un-Scots the Scots. There is no allusion to Scota, daughter of Pharaoh, supposed ancestress of the Scots; there is not a single mention of Edinburgh, seat of power of the contemporary royal family; there is, though, repeated emphasis on Scotland's links with Scandinavia, which works to connect it to England's own Viking past. We also hear a surprising amount about Rome, as Macbeth compares his own steps toward the sleeping Duncan with "Tarquin's ravishing strides" (2.1.56), feels that by Banquo "My genius is rebuked, as it is said / Mark Antony's was by Caesar" (3.1.55–56), and finally asks "Why should I play the Roman fool, and die / On mine own sword?" (5.7.31–32); the play thus fantasizes for Scotland a Roman past

quite at odds with the fact that Hadrian's Wall marked the effective limit of the Roman advance. One might even detect a retrospective "Britishing" of *Macbeth* in a moment of shared intertextuality with *Cymbeline*, for Elizabeth Jane Bellamy notes that the queen's "A kind of conquest / Caesar made here, but not here—his brag" "seemingly misquotes the lines from a Macbeth soliloquy that position him "here, / But not here, upon the bank and shoal of time" (1.7.5–6)."⁵³ "Misquotes" is perhaps the wrong word, but there is indeed an echo, and it is an echo which connects the play to a disturbing and disruptive queen and in so doing highlights the extent to which *Macbeth* itself occludes the role of queens in the development of nations.

All these plays, then, individually and collectively position queen-ship as a particularly problematic element of the story of English and British national origins. It was a queen, Dido, who attempted to distract Aeneas from his imperial mission, and though it was a queen, Elizabeth, who presided over the birth of the English imperial project and saw off the Spanish Armada, Elizabeth could be connected to Dido, and so too could Cordella, Tamora, and Boudica (in *Bonduca*, Junius is said to be in love "to the tune of Queen Dido" [p. 6]). Queens may play an important role in the national story, but it is a role with which early modern playwrights are fundamentally uncomfortable.

NOTES

¹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), pp. 64, 78, 86, and 257.

² Lisa Hopkins, *Drama and the Succession to the Crown, 1561–1633* (Ashgate, 2011), chap. 4, “Female Transmission, Female Taint.”

³ Robert Wilson, *Fair Em* (London: printed by J. Danter for T. Newman and J. Winnington, 1591), sigs. F2v – F3r.

⁴ George Peele, *The historie of the two valiant knights, Syr Clyomon Knight of the Golden Sheeld, sonne to the King of Denmarke: and Clamydes the white Knight, sonne to the King of Suauia* (London: printed for Thomas Creede, 1599), sig. A4r.

⁵ Although Kevin A. Quarmby suggests that “For the play’s original audience, William’s ... journey resonates negatively with King James VI of Scotland’s October 1589 expedition to meet the fifteen-year-old Danish princess, crowned later as Queen Anne” (*The Disguised Ruler in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* [Farnham: Ashgate, 2012], p. 109).

⁶ William Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a gentleman* (London: J. Okes for John Cowper, 1638), sigs. B2v and H4v.

⁷ James Berg, “‘Gorboduc’ as a Tragic Discovery of ‘Feudalism,’” *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 40.2 (2000), pp. 199–226, p. 214.

⁸ Jaecheol Kim, “The North-South Divide in *Gorboduc*: Fratricide Remembered and Forgotten,” *Studies in Philology* 111.4 (2014), pp. 691–719, p. 704.

⁹ Jacqueline Vanhoutte, “Community, Authority, and the Motherland in Sackville and Norton’s ‘Gorboduc,’” *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 40.2 (2000), pp. 227–39, pp. 227 and 236.

¹⁰ Christine Coch, “‘Mother of my Contreie’: Elizabeth I and Tudor Constructions of Motherhood,” *English Literary Renaissance* 26.3 (1996), pp. 423–50, p. 446.

¹¹ Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *Gorboduc*, in *Five Elizabethan Tragedies*, ed. A. K. McIlwraith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), 1.1.1.

¹² Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, p. 257.

¹³ See for instance Arthur Marotti, “Alienating Catholics in Early Modern England: Recusant Women, Jesuits and Ideological Fantasies,” in *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts*, ed. Arthur Marotti (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), pp. 1–34.

¹⁴ Tacitus, *The Agricola and the Germania*, trans. H. Mattingly (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1948), p. 66.

¹⁵ Jodi Mikalachki, “The Masculine Romance of Roman Britain: *Cymbeline* and Early Modern English Nationalism,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 46.3 (1995), pp. 301–22, p. 302.

¹⁶ Stuart Laycock, *Britannia the Failed State: Tribal Conflicts and the End of Roman Britain* (Stroud: The History Press, 2008), p. 71.

¹⁷ Samantha Frenée-Hutchins, “The Cultural and Ideological Significance and Representations of Boudica during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I”

(unpublished PhD thesis, Exeter University and Université d'Orléans, 2009), p. 23, and Jodi Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea: Gender and Nation in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 102. On Boadicea in the reign of Elizabeth see also Antonia Fraser, *The Warrior Queens: Boadicea's Chariot* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), pp. 221–22.

¹⁸ Ronald J. Boling, "Anglo-Welsh Relations in *Cymbeline*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51.1 (2000), pp. 33–66, p. 34.

¹⁹ Anke Bernau notes that this is part of a widespread marginalization of Albina, once an important part of the national myth of origins: "The Albina legend was popular in England as a preface to the Brutus myth until the sixteenth century, after which it was either contemptuously dismissed or ignored" ("Myths of origin and the struggle over nationhood in medieval and early modern England," in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. Gordon McMullan and David Matthews [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007], pp. 106–18, p. 106).

²⁰ Anthony Munday, *The Triumphes of re-vnited Britania* (London: W. Jagard, 1605), sigs. A2r–v and A4r.

²¹ See Susan Doran, "Three Late-Elizabethan Succession Tracts," in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England*, ed. Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier: Institut de Recherche sur la Renaissance, 2004), pp. 91–117, pp. 94 and 97.

²² Andrew Hadfield, "Hamlet's Country Matters: The 'Scottish Play' within the Play," in *Shakespeare and Scotland*, ed. Willy Maley and Andrew Murphy (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 87–103.

²³ William Matthews, "The Egyptians in Scotland: The Political History of a Myth," *Viator* 1 (1970), pp. 289–306, p. 306.

²⁴ Lisa Hopkins, *The Cultural Uses of the Caesars on the English Renaissance Stage* (Ashgate, 2008), chap. 3.

²⁵ Mary Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 90.

²⁶ See for instance Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), p. 105.

²⁷ Jennifer M. Caro-Barnes, "Marlowe's Tribute to His Queen, in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*," <http://www.uta.edu/english/ees/caro-barnes.html>

²⁸ Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977), p. 106.

²⁹ W. S., *The lamentable tragedie of Locrine* (London: Thomas Creede, 1595), sig. C3r.

³⁰ Thomas Heywood, *The generall history of women* (London: William Hunt, 1657), p. 332.

³¹ Laycock, *Britannia the Failed State*, p. 51.

³² Benjamin Griffin, "Locrine and the Babington Plot," *Notes and Queries* 44.1 (March, 1997), pp. 37–40, pp. 38 and 39.

³³ Thomas Deloney, *Strange histories, or, Songs and sonnets, of kinges, princes, dukes, lords, ladyes, knights, and gentlemen and of certaine ladyes that were shepheardes on Salisburie plaine* (London: R. B. for W. Barley, 1612), sig. G2r.

³⁴ Richard Grafton, *A chronicle at large and meere history of the affayres of Englande and kinges of the same deduced from the Creation of the worlde, vnto the first habitation of thys islande* (London: Henry Denham for Richard Tottle and Humphrey Toye, 1569), p. 158.

³⁵ Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his pilgrimes* (London: William Stansby for Henry Featherstone, 1625), p. 623

³⁶ Frenée-Hutchins, "The Cultural and Ideological Significance and Representations of Boudica during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I," p. 8.

³⁷ John Fletcher, *Bonduca*, in *Comedies and Tragedies written by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher* (London: Humphrey Robinson and Humphrey Moseley, 1647), pp. 53 and 56; Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great, Part One*, in *The Complete Plays*, ed. Mark Thornton Burnett (London: J. M. Dent, 1999), 4.1.1 and 5.1.160.

³⁸ Wendy C. Nielsen, "Boadicea Onstage before 1800, a Theatrical and Colonial History," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 49.3 (2009), pp. 595–614, p. 597.

³⁹ Jasper Fisher, *Fuimus Troes*, ed. Chris Butler as part of the MA Shakespeare and Renaissance, Sheffield Hallam University, 2007, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/renplays/fuimustroes.htm>, 2.6.29.

⁴⁰ Claire Jowitt, "Colonialism, Politics, and Romanization in John Fletcher's *Bonduca*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 43.2 (2003), pp. 475–93, p. 481.

⁴¹ Edmund Bolton, *Nero Caesar, or Monarchie depraued* (London: Thomas Snodham and Bernard Alsop for Thomas Walkley, 1624), p. 181.

⁴² Humphrey Llwyd, *The breuiary of Britayne* (London: Richard Johnes, 1573), fo. 85. See Frenée-Hutchins, "The Cultural and Ideological Significance and Representations of Boudica during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I," pp. 116–20, on direct comparisons between Elizabeth and Boudica, including James Aske's 1588 *Elizabetha Triumphans*.

⁴³ Fisher, *Fuimus Troes*.

⁴⁴ *The true Chronicle Historie of King Leir and his three daughters* (London: Simon Stafford for John Wright, 1605), sig. A2r.

⁴⁵ For instance *The true chronicle history of King Leir*, sig. B3r.

⁴⁶ *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago, 2000), p. 199.

⁴⁷ Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, p. 48.

⁴⁸ Thomas Hughes, *Certaine deu[is]es and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse court in Greenewich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy raigne* (London: Robert Robinson, 1587), p. 41. In *King Lear*, the idea of the pelican is displaced onto Goneril and Regan: "twas this flesh begot / Those pelican daugh-

ters" (William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Kenneth Muir [London: Methuen, 1972], 3.4.73–74).

⁴⁹ See Paul Yachnin, "'Courtiers of Beauteous Freedom': *Antony and Cleopatra* in its Time," *Renaissance and Reformation* 15 (1991), pp. 1–20, p. 7.

⁵⁰ Derrick Spradlin, "Imperial Anxiety in Thomas Hughes's *The Misfortunes of Arthur*," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 10.3 (2005), <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/10-3/10-3toc.htm>.

⁵¹ Andrew King, "Dead Butchers and Fiend-like Queens: Literary and Political History in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and *Macbeth*" in *The Scots and Medieval Arthurian Legend*, ed. Rhiannon Purdie and Nicola Royan (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005), pp. 121–34, p. 129.

⁵² The fact that the play bothers to include Donalbain, a dramatically unnecessary figure, is perhaps to remind us that he and his brother Malcolm embodied very different philosophies for Scotland, Malcolm's anglicizing and Donalbain's traditionalist: when Donalbain acceded to the throne after Malcolm's death he expelled all his brother's English imports from the court, but he was soon overthrown and possibly blinded by his nephew, Malcolm's English-named son Edgar, who returned the country to the path on which his father had set it. See Peter Berresford Ellis, *Macbeth, High King of Scotland, 1040–57* (Dundonald: The Blackstaff Press, 1990), pp. 106–7.

⁵³ Elizabeth Jane Bellamy, *Dire Straits: The Perils of Writing the Early Modern English Coastline from Leland to Milton* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), p. 112, n. 31.

Chapter 5

Dido in Denmark: Danes and Saxons on the Early Modern English Stage

IN JACOBEOAN ENGLAND, THE most visible foreign woman was the queen herself, Anna of Denmark. In this chapter, I want to explore the image of her countrywomen on the early modern English stage, and to pair that with consideration of the representation of Saxon and east German women, because they are closely associated with Danes both through their role in England's past and through the fact that Anna of Denmark's mother was Anna Catherine of Brandenburg, while Anna's sister Hedvig married the Elector of Saxony in 1602. A number of plays of the period featured characters who fall into one of these categories. Cay Dollerup observes that "An old play in the October and November repertory of the Admiral's Men in 1597 must have had Danes among the *dramatis personae*, and the theme itself could also have been from Danish history. This is *hardwute* or *knewtvs* (i.e. *Hardicanute*).” Dollerup adds that

It has been suggested that Pembroke's Men had brought *Hardicanute* to The Admiral's, and provided this assumption is correct, Shakespeare may have known the play well, if it is true that he was connected with, and wrote for, Pembroke's Men around 1592–93. This conjecture is particularly interesting as it appears from the ... outline of *Hardicanute*'s life that the play must have been one of the most truly Danish dramas performed on the Elizabethan stage before *Hamlet*.¹

I will return to the implications of Shakespeare's probable familiarity with at least one Danish history play, but it is important to note first that *Hardicanute* is in fact only one of a number of lost actual or possible plays on the Danes and on Dane-related topics. Leah Scragg observes that:

A cluster of plays on Anglo-Saxon subjects was commissioned (or acquired) ... by the theatrical impresario, Philip Henslowe, towards the close of the sixteenth century for performance by the Admiral's Men, including items on Vortigern, Guthlac, *Hardicanute*, and Earl Godwine and his sons.²

There are also, of course, several plays about Danes and Saxons which survive, and of these, I will focus particularly on Anthony Brewer's *The Love-sick King*, Chettle's *Hoffman*, Middleton's *Hengist, King of Kent*, Henry Burnell's *Landgartha*, and *Hamlet*.

The Danes are difficult for Renaissance drama to deal with in a number of ways. In the first place, they pose a religious threat. In Geoffrey, when Vortigern asks the Saxons what their religion is, Hengist replies, "We worship the gods of our own country ... Saturn, Jove and the others who rule over the world, and more especially Mercury, whom in our language we called Woden."³ The idea that the Danes are religiously promiscuous is found in a number of texts. In *The Tragical History, Admirable Atchievements and various events of Guy Earl of Warwick*, Swanus, King of Denmark, invades Athelstane's England; here the Danes appear, curiously enough, to be Muslim, since they invoke Mahound, while in Henry Burnell's 1641 play *Landgartha*, first performed in Dublin, the Norwegian heroine Landgartha (who would have been strongly associated with Denmark since Christian IV ruled both countries, and the marriage of James and Anna actually took place in Oslo) has a cousin called Fatyma. Most notably, as Robert W. Dent points out, the story of Anthony Brewer's *The Love-sick King* is "an Anglicized version of a frequently dramatized story, that of Mahomet and the fair Irene at the fall of Constantinople";⁴ Canutus, the lovesick king in question, certainly sounds oriental enough when he says to the beautiful Saxon Cartesmunda "vail thy face my love, we must not have thee seen too much by slaves,"⁵ and again when he echoes Tamburlaine by vowing to the dead body of Cartesmunda: "Canutus arms, a while shall be thy Tomb: / Then gold inclose thee till the day of Doom" (sig. F4r). Finally, Alured refers to "the usurped Temples of Canutus" (sig. G1v), confirming the connection with non-Christian worship.

Similar religious uncertainty surrounds the Danes in Lodowick Carlell's two-part play *Arviragus and Philicia*, which was acted at the Blackfriars by the King's Men ca. 1635–36 and printed in 1639. The second part contains Cartandes, Queen of the Danes, who has vowed to sacrifice the first prisoner she takes to Mars, hoping that his blood "shall prove as fatall to this cursed Ile, as the Palladiums losse was to unhappy Troy" (sig. E8r). However, instead she falls in love with him (it is the heroic Pictish prince Arviragus, though she is eventually induced to accept his cousin Guiderius instead); she pretends to spare him from divine inspiration, but the audience are left in no doubt that she is really moved by passion. In the process she also manages to look briefly Catholic when she rebukes any

potentially skeptical onlookers who may “make reason the sole foundation of their Faith, as scorning all superiour or misterious working of the Gods” (E12v), though she rows back from this potential identification when she accuses Guiderius of equivocation (sig. E7v). Thereafter she is like Dido in the trust she places in him, with the jealous Oswald as her Iarbas, and also echoes *The Jew of Malta* when she tells Guiderius, “you professe to have no Mistris, so yours and consequently his must needs be counterfeit, nay so is all mankind in their professions” (sig. E8r). It was perhaps for this reason that, when Elizabeth visited Kenilworth in 1575, the inhabitants of Coventry had to ask her to reinstate the locally popular play *The Conquest of the Danes*, which, although devoid of “ill exampl of mannerz, papistry, or ony superstition,” “had recently been suppressed by ‘the zeal of certain theyr Preacherz’”:⁶ even if no specific charge could quite be made to stick, the preachers in question clearly regarded the whole topic of Danes as religiously suspect.

An even more marked feature of plays about Danes and their descendants the Normans is women’s potential to distract kings from the business of ruling. Despite their status as ancestors, the Danes were often treated as suspect, in ways which may perhaps have been influenced by Swedish historiographical tradition: Kurt Johannesson notes that in Johannes Magnus’s account of Swedish history “Two brave kings ... died through the false and evil nature of Danish women” and “The three royal saints of the north, Olav, Knud, and Erik, ... all suffered a martyr’s death through the evil of the Danes,” and this may have permeated to England since “In 1559 a Danish professor, Hans Münster, sounded an alarm from London, where the works of the brothers Magnus were being sold in bookshops, blackening the Danish name in the eyes of foreigners.”⁷ One of Elizabeth I’s favorite ladies-in-waiting, Helena Snakenborg, marchioness of Northampton, was Swedish, which may have encouraged the London establishment to adopt the Swedish perspective, and the Swedes had also made a considerable impression during the period when King Erik was courting Elizabeth. It is true that the marriage was much feared in some quarters, with an early viewer of *Gorboduc* reading the play’s second dumb-show as a specific warning against a marriage with Erik: “Then came in a king to whom was given a clear glass, and a golden cup of gold covered, full of poison, the glass he caste under his foot and brake it, the poison he drank of, after came in mourners ... whereby was meant that it was better for the Queen to marry with the L[ord] R[obert] known then with the K[ing] of Sweden.”⁸ However, the Swedes were also good business: the

king's ships brought with them "thousands of pounds worth of gold bullion, along with twenty pied horses which were displayed at the Crosskeys In on Gracechurch Street" and "the King's brother, Duke John of Finland, had set an extravagant standard of spending during his English visit in 1561."⁹ The Swedes were, therefore, held in general favor, and Olaus's anti-Danish sentiments thus fell on fertile ground.

Shakespeare very probably read at least some of Olaus Magnus,¹⁰ and Renaissance drama in general is fond of presenting Danish men as sexually susceptible as well as prone to drunkenness, a reputation which the notorious visit of James's brother-in-law Christian IV in 1606 would have done nothing to dispel; indeed Sir John Harington acerbically commented on the occasion that "I do often say (but not aloud) that the Danes have again conquered the Britains, for I see no man, or woman either, that can now command himself or herself."¹¹

In both *Fair Em* and *The Lovesick King*, a ruler of Danish descent allows himself to be distracted by a woman. Chettle's *Danish Tragedy* is apparently lost, but *Hoffman* may be its second part; it is therefore not surprising that Chettle's Hoffman is almost distracted from his revenge by his sudden passion for the Duchess Martha, whose son he is impersonating, and Sharon McDonnell argues that he is also presented as feminized: "Effeminacy is shown not only in Hoffman's weeping but also in his ability to prepare food."¹² In Henry Burnell's 1641 play *Landgartha*, the Danish king Reyner languishes for love of first one lady and then another. The most famous Danish play of all (and one which specifically evokes Aeneas' tale to Dido) is of course *Hamlet*, as *The Lovesick King* reminds us since the subplot concerning the hasty remarriage of Thornton's sister seems to glance at *Hamlet*, as does the name Osric, and *Arviragus and Philicia* too invites us to make the connection when Eugenius says of the new king Guimantes, "his smile I ever must suspect as dangerous, unlesse I could forget who was his Father" (sig. E5r) and Cartandes offers Philicia a cup of poison.

I have already noted that when Elizabeth visited Kenilworth in 1575, the inhabitants of Coventry had to ask her to reinstate the locally popular play *The Conquest of the Danes*. It has often been speculated that the eleven-year-old Shakespeare might have made the short journey from Stratford to Kenilworth at the time of Elizabeth's visit, and that the reference to a mermaid on a dolphin's back in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* encodes a memory of this. Shakespeare would also have had other reasons to be interested in Scandinavian history. Charles Nicholl observes

in his exhaustive study of Shakespeare's years in Silver Street that the church of St. Olave's was very much on Shakespeare's doorstep and that "The dedication, sometimes miswritten 'Olive's,' is to the Norwegian king Olaf II, or Olaf Haraldsson, who fought in England against the Danes in the early eleventh century, and was canonized for converting Norway to Christianity."¹³ René Weis suggests that "It was around this time in 1602, when he was writing *Hamlet*, that Shakespeare shifted his London base to the Mountjoys' house,"¹⁴ with the clear implication that *Hamlet* was started in Silver Street, and the intriguing coincidence of the church's dedication might well inspire speculation on a possible link. Olaf Haraldsson (the "St. Olave" of the church) was famous not only for converting Norway to Christianity; he was also rumored to have torn down London Bridge while occupying Southwark, where there was (and is) another church dedicated to him.¹⁵ Olaf is also named in Saxo Grammaticus's list of kings, and David Hohnen notes that Shakespeare might also have encountered Olaf in another, rather more exotic location, to which he may well have traveled: "Elsinore had had a parish church ever since the early thirteenth century, said to have been consecrated from the outset to St Olav."¹⁶ Finally, Shakespeare might also have heard of St. Olaf because of the saint's fame in the Isle of Man, of which the Stanley earls of Derby, who took a notable interest in the theater, were technically kings: a cup said to have been owned by St. Olaf had supposedly been brought to Man by King Magnus of Norway and it was said that while it remained unbroken it would keep its owner in peace and plenty. It is not impossible that attending St. Olave's may have helped focus Shakespeare's mind on the popularity and potential of plays about Scandinavia and the part played by the Norse and Danes in English history and the formation of English national identities. Moreover, Matthew Steggle observes that there seem to have been a number of similarities between *Hamlet* and the now lost play *Cutlack*, acted at the Rose in 1594, which he argues was about a mythical king of Denmark named Guthlagh: "Both feature a pseudo-historical Danish king who steals another king's wife ... Both are killed by a relative of the queen's original husband: son (*Hamlet*) or nephew (the Guthlagh-story), an interconnection made more complex still by the fact that Hamlet is also Claudius's nephew."¹⁷

It is therefore suggestive that not only is Claudius, too, derailed by his passion for a woman, but that Laertes is also envisaged as likely to fall prey to women. By contrast, the ruling family of neighboring Norway is apparently entirely male: we hear of Fortinbras, his uncle, and his late

father, but not of any queen or princess. It is therefore worth remembering that Saxo recounts how as a test of Hamlet's madness, he was presented with a fair maiden, on the grounds that if he were not insane he would seduce her.¹⁸ This casts a new complexion on the scene in which Claudius and Polonius eavesdrop on Hamlet and Ophelia: with England poised to acquire a Danish queen, Hamlet's encounter with Ophelia becomes readable as an enquiry into whether a Danish identity is synonymous with sexual susceptibility, and the play's references to Wittenberg and its obvious interest in the debate on the existence of Purgatory might also look like a hint that Danish religious politics and confessional identities might be more complex than their apparently monolithic Lutheranism might suggest (not least since it was already clear that Anna of Denmark was a Catholic convert). Ophelia would thus become unmistakably a honeytrap, with Hamlet being tempted to imitate the same sexual susceptibility that has enslaved his uncle to his mother.

Of course it is not necessarily the case that either Gertrude or Ophelia is Danish. Gertrude's "O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs" might seem surprising if Gertrude shared the nationality of those she excoriates,¹⁹ while both Polonius' name and his interest in "Danskens" (2.1.7) might suggest a Polish origin for his daughter. In some ways, though, this very suggestion of foreignness would make both Gertrude and Ophelia all the more typically Danish, for Danishness is fundamentally represented on the early modern stage as a radically hybridized and in effect a temporary identity. Danes were ancestors as well as destroyers, and one way of negotiating that fact was to connect them to another woman who was both an outsider but also a central part of the British History, and to focus on the ways in which sexual contact between members of different nations crystallizes the moment when the act of hybridization occurs. If Anna of Denmark was the most visible actual foreign woman, the archetypal foreign woman was Dido, to whom Anna was connected by the fact that when James married her he visited Elsinore, "where after a second Lutheran wedding he was edified with playes in Danish and Latin about Dido and Aeneas."²⁰ Dido was brought to the English stage most memorably in Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, a play by which Shakespeare in particular found his imagination haunted throughout his career, and thereafter foreign female characters of a surprising number of nationalities and ethnicities were fashioned in her image. In *The Lovesick King*, the anglicization of the Danes of which Elgina speaks extends to their borrowing the language and iconography of the *translatio imperii*.

Initially, Canutus orders his followers “Who bears the name of English strike him dead” (sig. A3r) and tells them to “Whip out this English Race, with iron rods” (sig. A3v). In a surprisingly short time, though, Canutus starts sounding like a king of England, priding himself on his descent from Troy, when he says “Were Hellen now alive, this Maid alone would stain her beauty and new Troy should burn, Paris would dye again to live to see her” (sig. B1r), while Elgina echoes her brother’s casual deployment of classical myth when she says “Venus defend me” (sig. B2v), a theme developed by Harrold who declares in disgust that “This is not now Canutus, nor his Palace, but rather seems a Roman Theatre, and this young Nero acting Comedies, with some light Strumpet in bold scenes of Lust” (sig. D1r). Danes may not be Christian, but to associate them with the classical pantheon can work to locate them as part of a past to which early modern audiences felt connected.

One ethnic group distinct from but often associated with Scandinavia was of particular interest to Renaissance writers, and here too questions of sexuality and religion are in play. Although there was, as we have seen in the first chapter, a growing trend to connect the Goths to Germany, traditionally they were Swedes. As George North explains in his *The description of Swedland, Gotland, and Finland ... chieflie out of Sebastian Mounster*, “Gothland boundeth wyth his Northe limites to the South of Swecia, & lyeth from the West to the mountaynes of Norway”;²¹ here was to be found “Vestrogothia a Dukedom, whose cities be Scaris and Varnem, where are the Sepulchres & graues of theyr auncient kyngs” (sig. A5r). Kurt Johannesson notes of Johannes Magnus that “The basis for Johannes’s work is the idea that the Swedes are descended from the Goths of antiquity and have inherited their virtues and historical mission,”²² and Arbella Stuart’s letters to King Christian IV of Denmark were invariably addressed “To the most august prince Christian, by the grace of God King of Denmark, Norway, the Wends and Goths”²³ *Titus Andronicus* both stresses the foreignness of its Goths and simultaneously connects them to the Dido story. The name of Lavinia takes us back to the origins of Rome, for it was also the name of the wife of Aeneas, and it is only one among many nods in the play to the *Aeneid* and the story it tells, as when Tamora speaks to Aaron of:

conflict such as was supposed
The wandering prince and Dido once enjoyed,
When with a happy storm they were surprised
And curtained with a counsel-keeping cave (2.2.21–24)

Bassianus' sarcastic question about whether the figure before him is really Tamora, "Or is it Dian, habited like her" (2.2.57), also glances at the *Aeneid*, this time with obvious ironic intent. When Aeneas makes landfall in Africa he meets, though fails to recognize, his mother Venus, disguised as a Carthaginian maiden, and the power of Venus will subsequently animate much of the action of the play; Bassianus here is pretending that he *does* recognize a woman who is *not* his mother as the goddess not of love but of chastity, with the apparent intention of presenting Tamora as no Dido but also thereby running the risk of acknowledging that he himself is no Aeneas, since the dynastic potential he might have represented is just about to be snuffed out by his murder while still childless.

The same borrowing of the *translatio* is found in Chettle's *Hoffman*, which may well be the second part of his apparently lost *Danish Tragedy*. Hoffman's base, named as Burtholme, is generally taken to be the Danish island of Bornholm, famous since the fourteenth century as a haven for pirates such as Hoffman's father had been,²⁴ and Jerome says he will "retire to my castle at Helsen,"²⁵ which seems to suggest Helsingor; Anthony Brewer's *The love-sick king* certainly seems to think that there is a connection between Hoffman and Denmark, since among the characters in the *dramatis personae* are "Osrick, Hoffman, & Huldrick, Danes." Nevertheless Austria grandly declares:

Saxons proud wanton sonns
Were entertaind like Priam's Firebrand
At Sparta: all our State gladly appear'd
Like chierfull Lacedemons, to receaue
Those Daemons that with magicke of their tongues,
Bewitch't my Lucibells my Helen's eares. (sig. C5v)

Austria thus recasts the entire plot strand in which he figures in terms lifted wholesale from the Trojan War, with himself and his daughter as Greeks and the Saxons as Trojans. Later, Martha when she is leading Hoffman on by pretending to consent to his lust entices him:

let vs walke
Into some couert, there are pretty caues,
Lucky to louers suites, for Virgil sings;
That Dido being driuen by a sharpe storme
Into a Lybian caue, was there intic'd
By siluer-tongu'd Aeneas to affect. (sig. L1v)

Martha, like Shakespeare's Tamora Queen of the Goths, becomes Dido, an alien in the sense that she was a Phoenician-born African queen, but also a key player in a story that was understood as fundamental to and foundational of British identity.

Perhaps most suggestively, the Dido story is found in Henry Burnell's 1641 play *Landgartha*, which was acted at the Werburgh Street theater in Dublin not long before it closed, and might be seen as a last attempt to promote the Stuart cause. Burnell's play is very aware of dramatic precedents: there is an obvious allusion to *Troilus and Cressida* in the fact that the "Prologue delivered by an Amazon with a Battle-Axe in her hand" recalls how "The best of English Poets for the Stage ... was faine / An armed Prologue to produce,"²⁶ while the king of Sweland, Frolo, declares that "Religion is but a toy, and first invented / By politicke states, to keepe fooles in awe" (sig. B4v), an equally obvious allusion to Marlowe, who had of course written a play about Dido. *Landgartha* herself is a martial heroine whose valor is presented as entirely praiseworthy. The play implicitly remembers Elizabeth when Cowsell says "The Lady Elsinora in my opinion, / Is th'rich Pearle amongst 'em; *Landgartha* to her / Is but a meere milkemayde" (sig. C4r), recalling Elizabeth's famous comparison of herself to a milkmaid, but it is another royal who provides much of its ideological impetus: *Landgartha* is initially sworn to virginity but relents in favor of the Danish king Reyner and becomes the ancestress of the royal house of Scandinavia, and hence by implication of Anna of Denmark and ultimately of Charles I. She could also be connected to Henrietta Maria since as Hero Chalmers notes, "Sophie Tomlinson draws our attention to the role played by Henrietta Maria in [Margaret] Cavendish's absorption of ideals of feminine heroism. The Queen had adopted a martial persona at the outset of the civil war, styling herself 'her she-majesty Generalissima.'"²⁷ It is in negotiating this connection to the Stuarts that the Dido story proves helpful. Dido is first evoked when Phoebus prophesies that

A Prince from Troy hereafter shall depart,
When Troy takes end (as all dominion
Of mortals must:) whose chance will fetch him on
The Lybian shores, and upon Latium next. (sig. F1v)

A specifically Marlovian version of Dido also seems to inform Hubba's lament to Reyner:

Wo'd all the Cables and Sayles were burnt:
You brought us hither with the hazard of our lives,

To gaine this kingdome for you; and now you have it,
 You'll wisely gi't away. (sig. F4r)

When Landgartha weeps at Reyner's departure she definitively becomes a new Dido, especially when he then takes a second wife as Aeneas did. On the level of plot, foregrounding Aeneas' sojourn with Dido and subsequent desertion of her dissociates Reyner from a role as king or ruler and connects him instead to narratives of destiny and descent. On the level of genre, it prises apart the link between Scandinavian ancestors and the potentially radical genre of the Danish history play and forges a new one with voyaging plays,²⁸ thus throwing the focus onto the *translatio imperii* and the long sweep of history rather than onto the problematic politics of an England on the verge of civil war. Finally it also draws on an idea of Dido as an ancestral figure associated with what Stuart Piggott terms "an optimistic picture of the peopling of Europe and Britain in which the Phoenicians, first introduced by Twyne ... in 1590, played an increasingly important part."²⁹

We have already seen that, for Austria in Chettle's *Hoffman*, early modern Saxons could be mapped onto the Trojans. They could also be connected to the Dido story. Tacitus states that ancient Germans, alone among barbarians, were monogamous, and the idea of the chaste and closely connected German became particularly compelling when James's daughter Elizabeth married Frederick, the Elector Palatine, in 1613; Jasper Fisher, author of *Fuimus Troes*, wrote an epithalamium for the couple which included the lines "Let the masculine Rhine embrace the feminine Thames (like trained vines); / Thus a great ocean will be given to the Anglo-Saxons, descended from the German Saxons,"³⁰ and Samantha Frenée-Hutchins suggests that Verstegan positions James "as an 'honorary German'" and notes that Camden argues that their language proved that Scots too had Germanic ancestry.³¹ Although Anna of Denmark might lament that her daughter would henceforth have to answer to "Goody Palsgrave," at least two plays of the period seem to make it their business to spell out exactly who and what Frederick was, why his wife might be one day something rather grander than "Goody Palsgrave," and why a German alliance was generally worth having. One of these, *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, makes no mention of Dido, but the other, William Smith's *The Hector of Germany. Or The Palsgrave, prime Elector*, openly references the Trojan War in its title. Though neither is set in pre-Conquest England, they do help explain the ways in which representations of the Saxons changed after the Palatinate marriage.

The first, *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, may possibly have been written by George Chapman, and Roy Strong observes that “out of all the poets with connections to St James’s court, Chapman by 1612 was beginning to emerge as the most important,”³² although Fredson Bowers does not entertain Chapman as a possible author.³³ Bowers also argues for a date in the 1590s,³⁴ which would of course significantly predate the Palatinate marriage; however, the play may very possibly have been revised and certainly took on new urgency in the context of the marriage and the build-up to it. (It also had an unusually long afterlife if, as Marshall thinks, “*The Tragedy of Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany* was performed on 3 October 1630 at court and on 5 May 1636 at Blackfriars before the Queen and the Prince Elector,”³⁵ though again Bowers argues the opposite view.)

The second play, which definitely postdates the marriage, is William Smith’s *The Hector of Germany. Or The Palsgrave, prime Elector*. The prologue to this explicitly disavows any connection between the Palsgrave who is its subject and the Palsgrave who had just married Princess Elizabeth:

Our Authour for himself, this bad me say,
Although the Palsgrave be the name of th’ Play,
Tis not that Prince, which in this Kingdome late,
Marryed the Mayden-glory of our state:
What Pen dares be so bold in this strict age,
To bring him while he lives upon the Stage?³⁶

This is, however, clearly disingenuous; Jaroslav Miller suggests that the play had been censored, prompting the sardonic tone of those last two lines, and that:

the author obviously counted on the ability of the audience to grasp the historical theme in the context of the current political and religious situation in England and on the Continent ... The plot ... works with an allegorical identification of Palsgrave with the Black Prince, Henry Stuart and Frederick of the Palatinate ... The chief message of the play is to present Frederick as the legitimate heir to the still living political and religious legacy of Henry Stuart.³⁷

Marshall concurs, arguing that “Throughout *The Hector of Germany* the character of the Palsgrave is moulded less by the real-life Frederick, though it is in him that Protestant hopes lie, but rather by a romantic image of what glory Britain’s prince might have found in Europe had he lived,”³⁸ while Hans Werner sees the play as clearly and uncompromisingly “encoding the equation ... Frederick V = Prince Henry.”³⁹ Indeed if by nothing

else, the game would be given away when the hero, Palsgrave Robert, is explicitly said to be at odds with “the bold Bastard, late expulst from Spayne,” (sig. A3r) who aims at the empire. The reference to Spain maps the play directly onto the contemporary political landscape as seen by the Protestant party and also creates an exact parallel with *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, where almost the first thing Alphonsus does is to reveal the fundamentally Spanish identity which lurks hidden beneath his official title as he muses that “The Spanish Sun hath purifi’d my wit.”⁴⁰ Thereafter he is repeatedly referred to as the king of Castile and the point is reinforced by the introduction of the other half of the polarity by which the Spain of this period was so often characterized, the Netherlands, when one of the seven Electors is addressed as “Brave Duke of Saxon, Dutchlands greatest hope” (sig. B4r), which seems a pointed variation from the more usual and certainly available terms “Germany” or “Almain.”

In both these plays, the status of the Palatinate and its ruler is carefully and repeatedly boosted. As in William Fennor’s gratulatory poem “A description of the Palsgraves Countrey, as it was delivered in a speech before the King, the Prince, the Lady Elizabeth, at White-Hall,” where the territory of the Palsgrave is said to lie between rivers “like a Paradise,” this Palatinate is a land worth having, even for an English princess.⁴¹ In *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, in a scene which could be seen as functioning almost as a modern newspaper briefing piece on a royal’s prospective spouse might do, the Electors introduce themselves one by one, each giving his full name, title and responsibilities. The Palsgrave is third and explains that

The next place in election longs to me,
George Cassimirus Palsgrave of the Rhein,
His Highness Taster. (sig. B4r)

The Hector of Germany goes even further: its Palsgrave Robert declares that “I am chiefe Elector of the seven, / And a meere Caesar now the Chayre is voyde” (sig. A3r). The imperial ambitions hinted at here were indeed an important subtext of the Palatinate marriage. Jaroslav Miller notes that “in September 1620 James I acknowledged in Privy Council that as early as 1612 he had discussed with his future son-in-law the hypothetical chance of Frederick’s accession to the Bohemian throne,”⁴² but *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany* hints at glories greater even than that. The play opens on a situation in which Alphonsus must say to his chief adviser:

O, my Lorenzo, if thou help me not,
 Th'Imperial Crown is shaken from my head,
 And giv'n from me unto an English Earl. (sig. B2r)

Soon the earl in question, Richard earl of Cornwall, brother of Henry III and younger son of King John, soliloquizes:

Here rest thee Richard, think upon a mean,
 To end thy life, or to repair thine honour,
 And vow never to see fair Englands bounds,
 Till thou in Aix be Crowned Emperour. (sig. E1r)

Here the play can be seen as reinventing *Henry V*'s "No king of England if not king of France" to show the focus switching from Angevin empire to Holy Roman in line with the priorities that drove the Palatinate marriage.

By the end of the play, Richard's aim has been triumphantly achieved: the Duke of Saxon tells Richard that "The Royalties of the Coronation / Shall be, at Aix, shortly solemnized" (sig. K3v) and Richard's nephew, the future Edward I, declares:

Was never Englishman yet Emperour,
 Therefore to honour England and your self,
 Let private sorrow yield to publike Fame,
 That once an Englishman bare Caesar's name. (sig. K3v)

The play then closes with Richard himself confirming the importance of his new status:

Sweet Sister now let Caesar comfort you,
 And all the rest that yet are comfortles;
 Let them expect from English Caesar's hands
 Peace, and abundance of all earthly Joy. (sig. K4r)

Richard of Cornwall had been not just the first but the only Englishman to hold the title of Holy Roman Emperor, but the Palatinate marriage made it possible to think that perhaps an English head might once again wear an imperial crown, for Jaroslav Miller notes that "Some texts from these years indicate the existence of public conviction or faith that within a certain time the Palatine dynasty could be elevated to the status of Roman Emperors," and Jane Pettegree concurs: "The panegyrics that accompanied the marriage of Elizabeth Stuart to Prince Frederick of the Palatine suggested the dynastic alliance would create a new, Protestant Holy Empire."⁴³ Henry Peacham's *Prince Henrie Revived* (1615), for example, celebrates the

birth of Frederick and Elizabeth's first son and wishes that "*Caesar Henrie thou maist one day raigne, as good, as great, as ever Charlemagne*."⁴⁴ It was for this, presumably, that the anonymous pamphlet *The marriage of Prince Fredericke, and the Kings daughter, the Lady Elizabeth* notes that the bride wore "upon her head a crowne of refined golde, made Imperiall (by the Pearles and Dyamonds thereon placed)"⁴⁵—that is, a crown closed with a hoop, which signified imperial status, rather than an open one, which was merely regal. In *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany* an unusually careful stage direction is used to introduce a key character: "*Enter the Empress Isabella King John's Daughter*" (sig. B4v s.d.). Since John's defiance of the pope had made him a Protestant icon, this would already have evoked easily recognized connotations at the time of the play's composition, but the Palatinate marriage brought it an important new association to compound its original meaning, for now it was again possible to fantasize about the daughter of an English king becoming an Empress.

Two aspects of the language and iconography attending on this imperial theme prove particularly resonant in the context of English dynastic politics and national and confessional allegiances: these are the name of Caesar and the idea of Rome, and the possibility of a *Protestant* Holy Roman Emperor obviously brings them into direct collision. In *Heauens blessing, and earths ioy* John Taylor draws on the standing Renaissance pun about the word room and the contemporary pronunciation of Rome when he declares that "Since first the framing of this worlds vast Roome, / A fitter, better match was not combinde,"⁴⁶ and in *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany* Alexander may say "Now is my Lord sole Emperour of Rome" (sig. H2v). Although it had been a long time since there had been anything particularly Roman about the Holy Roman Empire, a similar association can be seen at work in these plays. In the classic style of Renaissance empire-building as identified by J. H. Elliott,⁴⁷ classical mythology is extensively evoked, with the story of Troy in general and of the *ur-colonizer* Aeneas in particular deployed in the service of presenting Germany as both the home of people fundamentally kin and also as territory amenable to imperial ambitions. In *The Hector of Germany*, the King of Bohemia reveals the logic of the play's title by saying of the ailing Palsgrave:

The strength of Germanie is sicke in him,
And should hee die now in his prime of life,
Like Troy we loose the Hector of our Age. (sig. A3v)

In Fennor's "Description," we are told that:

Poets leave writing of the Grecian Queene,
 And of Aeneas, Lady Venus sonne:
 Two rarer beauties shortly shall be seene
 in Almany, when Englands pride is wonne. (sig. C3r)

In *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, the Duke of Saxon initially casts around for a suitable classical precedent:

Me thinks I now present Mark Antony,
 Folding dead Iulius Caesar in mine arms.
 No, no, I rather will present Achilles,
 And on Patroclus Tomb do sacrifice. (sig. K1v)

However, later Alexander settles definitively on a Trojan model when he explains how he watched the battle from the tower and

posted from the turrets top,
 More furiously than ere Laocoon ran,
 When Trojan hands drew in Troy's overthrow. (sig. K3r)

All the good characters are thus presented as sharing with the English, who claimed descent from Aeneas' great-grandson Brutus, a fundamentally Trojan identity which helpfully brings with it the motif of the *translatio imperii*.

Of course, Rome connoted Roman Catholicism as well as the Roman Empire. Inevitably, the villains of these texts are Catholic. In *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, Alphonsus himself declares at the outset that he is an apprentice Machiavel—"To be an outward Saint, an inward Devill; / These are the lectures that my Master reads" (sig. B1v)—and after Alexander's murder of the Bishop of Mainz plots cynically:

I will procure so much by Gold or friends,
 That my sweet Mentz shall be Canonized.
 And numbred in the Bed-role of the Saints,
 I hope the Pope will not deny it me. (sig. H2r)

The Palsgrave, meanwhile, is firmly Protestant, as is made clear in Fennor's "Description":

Pals, Brandenburg, and Saxony in one hand,
 unite their strength which makes their powers last:
 The Popish Prelates at these Princes frowne,
 yet these three Protestants uphold the Crowne. (sig. B4r)

In *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, Isabella says,

Alas I know my Brother Richard's heart
Affects not Empire, he would rather choose
To make return again to Palestine,
And be a scourge unto the Infidels. (sig. B4v)

Richard is presumably named after Richard the Lionheart, who was his uncle and who had acquired his sobriquet from his valiance while on crusade, and this stresses the extent to which the pursuit of empire on earth is habitually set in opposition to crusade and the pursuit of a crown in heaven.

Real rulers might also be moved by the same considerations as these fictional ones. In *A continuation of the historie of France*, Danett speaks of how

Charles the Emperour who was so ambitious a Prince that hee thought to haue swallowed vp both France and Germanie, was chaced out of both those countries with great ignominie, and was neuer able to hould no not [*sic*] one pore towne in either of both those realmes, & in the end through moodinesse of his euell succeſſe, gaue a defiance to all the world, and dyed in an Abby among a companie of Monkes.⁴⁸

In a letter to the people of Artois and Hainault, Henri IV was careful to declare that he too had been motivated by spiritual as well as political considerations:

albeit that euer since we haue had both courage, and the same right and abilitie that we now haue, to reuenge our selues vpon ye countries and subiects of the King of Spaine (the principall author and enterpriser of this war) yet being holden backe by many considerations of great importance to al Christendom, we haue chose rather to beare much, defending our selues but simply, than to set vpon those forcibly, to whome we could peraduenture, haue procured and done as much hurt as we haue receiued at their hands.⁴⁹

He argues that ultimately, though, his hand has been forced because of “the present danger that threatneth all christendome (which euerie man knoweth to haue risen through the discords, and iust gelousie that the king of Spaine his ambition hath bred euery where).” However, the effect of the wars had been so severe that Thomas Danett in his preface to *A continuation* is inclined to wonder whether this part of France actually was still in Christendom:

passing out of Spaine through France in the yeare 77 ... we found such a wildernes in all the country between Bayonne and Bourdeaux, that whole forrests and woods were turned vp and consumed, the townes vtterly desolated, the people despersed, the churches quite subuerted, and the children (a lamentable thing to bee recorded) remaining vnchristened by the space of ten yeares, which bred in mee such a commiseration, to see so noble a member of Christendome so miserablye torne in peeeces with hir owne teeth.⁵⁰

At best, the status of this part of France as Christian territory must be considered imperiled; at worst, any and all of Christendom can be threatened by disunity within it. A sense of national identity, with the differences it implies, must give place to one of shared religious allegiance and fundamental commonality.

It is, though, unusually easy in these plays to imagine Christendom as being capable of unification. In *Heauens blessing, and earths ioy* John Taylor speaks of how

The Royall blood of Emperours and Kings,
Of Potent Conquerors, and famous Knights
Successiue from these two Princes springs:
Who well may claime, these titles as their rights:
The Patrons Christendome to Vnion brings.⁵¹

Indeed perhaps the most surprising result of this ideological slippage between Germany and ancient Troy and its descendant Rome, in a landscape where a city may be called either Aachen or Aix and speak of a heritage which is simultaneously French, German, and neither, is the unexpected cosmopolitanism and linguistic proficiency of so many of the Englishmen in these plays. In them, an island nation is briefly and improbably glimpsed in a rare moment of pro-European sentiment and attitudes. In *The Hector of Germany*, the ailing Palsgrave greets the disguised king of Spain with "Before this dangerous sicknesse was my Foe, / No Christian King that came to me for ayde / But hee should speed" (sig. B1v), and this sense of a fundamentally united entity called simply "Christendom" pervades both this play and *Alphonsus, Emperour of Germany*, where Alphonsus declares (albeit insincerely) that "This is a joyful day to Christendome, / When Christian Princes joyn in amity" (sig. E3v). Its most striking manifestation comes when young Fitzwaters in *The Hector of Germany*, finding himself shipwrecked on a rock (here represented by the upper acting area), looks down at the stage below, which is temporarily representing an ocean, and laments:

Since I was cast vpon this fatall Rocke,
 And saw my Loue disseuered by the waues,
 And my kinde Steward in the Ocean drown'd,
 Here I haue liu'd, fed onely with raw Fish,
 Such as the Sea yeelds: and each Shippe I see,
 (As dayly there are some furrow this way)
 I call vnto for ayde, but nere the neere.
 On[e] ask't me, What I was? I answer'd him,
 An Englishman. Quoth he, Stay there and starue.
 To the next that past, I sayd I was a French-borne.
 Ile ayde no French quoth he. Vnto a third,
 That I a Spaniard was. He bad me hang:
 So that I know not what I ought to say,
 Nor whom to speake to. (sigs. F4v–r)

Beneath the familiar narrative of dissension between nations lurks a much stranger one, that of an Englishman who can convincingly pass for Spanish or French. Similarly in *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany* the King of Bohemia may scornfully ask “what have we to do with Englishmen? / They are divided from our Continent” (sig. C1r), and Prince Edward is certainly not well equipped for life abroad, being slow on the uptake, resolutely monoglot, openly scornful of local customs, and easily given the slip by his bride on their wedding night. Richard, however, copes noticeably better; if we were to transpose the play onto the politics of pre-Brexit England he would be a Eurocrat or Member of the European Parliament, equally at home in London, Brussels, and Strasbourg, and even trailing a whiff of an expenses scandal when the Bishop of Cologne attempts to buy him off with the promise that “his charges what so e're they are / Shalbe repaid with treble vantages” (sig. C2v). He even speaks German, which the audience seem also to be expected either to understand or to put up with, since there is a fairly substantial amount of untranslated German spoken on stage, though its foreignness is acknowledged in the quarto by the fact that it is printed in black letter.

The world of these plays is, however, not the usual xenophobic and isolationist England of so many early modern plays but an England unusually imbricated in European affairs, whose pan-nationalism is stressed when a character in *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany* introduces himself as “Frederick Arch-Bishop of Trier, / Duke of Lorraine, Chancelour of Italie” (sig. B4r). They refer to German as well as to English politics, and to questions of succession and rule in particular, as is stressed by the presence of two highly suggestive metaphors in *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*:

Alphonsus's declaration that "men rather honour the Sun rising than the Sun going down" (sig. B2r) and Saxon's "Why here's a tempest quickly overblown" (sig. C2r). The first of these, which has its origins in Plutarch's *Life of Pompey*, had been used by Elizabeth herself to figure her successor: in conversation with the Scottish ambassador, William Maitland of Lethington, she observed:

I know the inconstancy of the people of England, how they ever mislike the present government and has [*sic*] their eyes fixed upon that person that is next to succeed; and naturally men be so disposed: *Plures adorant solem orientem quam occidentem* [More people adore the rising sun than the setting one].⁵²

The word "tempest" could also be associated with succession: Leanda de Lisle notes that "The playwright Thomas Dekker's *Wonderful Year of 1603* recalls the harbingers of Elizabeth's decline as 'a hideous tempest, that shook cedars, terrified the tallest pines, and cleft asunder even the hardest hearts of oak,'"⁵³ while Mortimer Levine observes that John Hales wrote "a tract entitled *A Declaration of the Succession of the Crown Imperial of England*" and launched "a storm that Walter Haddon called the *Tempestas Halesiana*."⁵⁴ Rather than a world in which England is attempting to invade parts of Europe, then, this is a world in which England is attempting to position itself as part of Europe, and doing so through marriage rather than through war, as part of a policy which sought to decouple the notion of the Holy Roman Empire from the taint of Roman Catholicism and present instead a Protestant version built on a common foundation of *romanitas*.

It is therefore not surprising that the Saxons too can be assimilated into narratives of Britain's past by being connected to Dido. In Middleton's *Hengist, King of Kent* (ca. 1615–20),⁵⁵ we are told that "these saxons bring a fortune with em staines any Romane success" (ll. 674–75), suggesting a radical discontinuity between Saxon present and British past; however, Hengist looks oddly like a figure from that very past when, allotted as much land as can be covered by the hide of a deer, he copies Dido by cutting the hide into thin strips which enable him to mark out the outline of a substantial piece of ground. We know that Sir Robert Cotton possessed a copy of the document known as the Tribal Hidage,⁵⁶ which could have appeared to legitimate the idea that such a practice could have obtained in Anglo-Saxon England; what was actually meant by "hides" was not really clear, but could have borne such an interpretation.⁵⁷ Later we discover that

Simon, who sold Hengist the hide, subsequently made his fortune by marrying his master's widow; the combination of the widow motif with that of the hide confirms that the evocation of the "Widow Dido" is deliberate, and works to associate the Saxon incomers with a key figure in the story of Aeneas, the ancestral figure of the Britons. (Julia Briggs notes that there are also echoes of *Hamlet* in the play, which might further reinforce the idea of a connection with Dido).⁵⁸

The connection works, however, in complicated and suggestive ways. In some respects, its implications are such as might be expected: Roxena constitutes a sexual and dynastic threat to Vortigern in much the same way as Dido posed a sexual and dynastic threat to Aeneas' imperial destiny. Yet Hengist suggests that there may be something to be said for the importation of a bit of new blood when he says to Roxena "how many brothers Wantonly gott, through Ignorance of their / births may match with their owne sisters" (ll. 1069–71): an influx of Saxon sexual partners can thus be seen as preserving the Britons from the perils of inbreeding of the sort which, Middleton's audience would have been able to observe, were already visible in the Habsburgs.⁵⁹ In this sense, the marriage between Saxon and Briton is branded as peculiarly and particularly English, in that it *is* like the home life of our own dear queen (and king) and is *not* like the much less savory domestic arrangements of their foreign counterparts; indeed Philip Schwyzer notes that in Welsh prophecy "the English whose blood will be flowing so freely are often described as the children of Rowena,"⁶⁰ so that a relationship which initially epitomizes the alien becomes ultimately synecdochic of Englishness. In these plays, then, today's Saxons and Danes are tomorrow's English, and everyone is ultimately descended from Troy. The representation of Danish and Saxon women thus offers a way for Britain to understand itself as an island nation with a proud heritage, but also as a nation that is fundamentally and importantly connected to Europe.

NOTES

¹ Cay Dollerup, *Denmark, Hamlet, and Shakespeare: A Study of Englishmen's Knowledge of Denmark towards the End of the Sixteenth Century with Special Reference to Hamlet* (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1975), pp. 49–50.

² Leah Scragg, "Saxons versus Danes: the anonymous Edmund Ironside," in *Literary Appropriations of the Anglo-Saxons from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Donald Scragg and Carole Weinberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 93–106, p. 95.

³ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 157.

⁴ Robert W. Dent, "The Love-sick King: Turk Turned Dane," *The Modern Language Review* 56.4 (1961), pp. 555–57, p. 556.

⁵ Anthony Brewer, *The love-sick king, an English tragical history with the life and death of Cartesmunda, the fair nun of Winchester* (London: Robert Pollard, 1655), sig. F3r.

⁶ Beatrice Groves, *Texts and Traditions: Religion in Shakespeare 1592–1604* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 39 and 55.

⁷ Kurt Johannesson, *The Renaissance of the Goths in Sixteenth-Century Sweden: Johannes and Olaus Magnus as Politicians and Historians*, trans. James Larson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 110, 113, and 216. On the differing views of the past of Danish and Swedish scholars see also Martin Arnold, "On the Origins of the Gothic Novel: From Old Norse to Otranto," in *Bram Stoker and the Gothic: Formations to Transformations*, ed. Catherine Wynne (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 14–29, p. 16.

⁸ Jaecheol Kim, "The North-South Divide in *Gorboduc*: Fratricide Remembered and Forgotten," *Studies in Philology* 111.4 (2014), pp. 691–719, p. 692, n. 2.

⁹ Norman Jones and Paul Whitfield White, "Gorboduc and Royal Marriage Politics: An Elizabethan Playgoer's Report of the Premiere Performance," *English Literary Renaissance* 26.1 (1996), pp. 3–16, p. 9.

¹⁰ See Julie Maxwell, "Counter-Reformation Versions of Saxo: A New Source for *Hamlet*?", *Renaissance Quarterly* 57.2 (2004), pp. 518–60.

¹¹ James Shapiro, *1606: William Shakespeare and the Year of Lear* (London: Faber and Faber, 2015), p. 305.

¹² Sharon McDonnell, "Male Poisoners in Renaissance Revenge Tragedies" (unpublished PhD thesis, Sheffield Hallam University, 2015).

¹³ Charles Nicholl, *The Lodger: Shakespeare on Silver Street* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), pp. 58–59.

¹⁴ René Weis, *Shakespeare Revealed* (London: John Murray, 2007), p. 283.

¹⁵ John Stow, *A suruay of London Contayning the originall, antiquity, increase, moderne estate, and description of that Citie, written in the yeare 1598* (London: John Windet for John Wolfe, 1598), p. 13.

¹⁶ David Hohnen, *Hamlet's Castle and Shakespeare's Elsinore* (Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers, 2000), p. 22.

¹⁷ Matthew Steggle, *Digital Humanities and the Lost Drama of Early Modern England: Ten Case Studies* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), p. 75.

¹⁸ William F. Hansen, *Saxo Grammaticus and the Life of Hamlet* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), p. 1.

¹⁹ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins (London: Methuen, 1982), 4.5.110. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

²⁰ Richard Wilson, *Free Will: Art and Power on Shakespeare's Stage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 207.

²¹ George North, *The description of Swedland, Gotland, and Finland ... chieflye out of Sebastian Mounster* (London: John Awdely, 1561), sig. A5r.

²² Johannesson, *The Renaissance of the Goths in Sixteenth-Century Sweden*, p. 85.

²³ Sara Jayne Steen, ed., *The Letters of Lady Arbella Stuart* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 215.

²⁴ See Michael Pye, *The Edge of the World: How the North Sea Made Us Who We Are* (London: Penguin, 2015), p. 235.

²⁵ Henry Chettle, *The Tragedy of Hoffman* (London: J. N. for Hugh Perry, 1631), sig. C4v.

²⁶ Henry Burnell, *Landgartha* (Dublin, 1641), sig. A4v.

²⁷ Hero Chalmers, "Dismantling the Myth of 'Mad Madge': the cultural context of Margaret Cavendish's authorial self-presentation," *Women's Writing* 4.3 (1997), pp. 323–40, p. 332.

²⁸ On the potential political implications of Danish history plays see Curtis Perry, "'For They Are Englishmen': National Identities and the Early Modern Drama of Medieval Conquest," in *Shakespeare and the Middle Ages*, ed. Curtis Perry and John Watkins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 172–95, pp. 176–77.

²⁹ Stuart Piggott, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), p. 53.

³⁰ Jasper Fisher, *Fuimus Troes*, ed. Chris Butler as part of the MA "Shakespeare and Renaissance," Sheffield Hallam University, 2007, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/renplays/fuimustroes.htm>. Appendix, Epithalamium for Elizabeth and Frederick, editor's translation.

³¹ Samantha Frenée-Hutchins, "The Cultural and Ideological Significance and Representations of Boudica during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I" (unpublished PhD thesis, Exeter University and Université d'Orléans, 2009), p. 180.

³² Roy Strong, *Henry, Prince of Wales and England's Lost Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), p. 180.

³³ Fredson Bowers, "The Date and Composition of *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*," *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature* 15 (1933), pp. 165–89.

³⁴ Fredson Bowers argued that “the date of composition can be assigned to the years 1594–99 (and probably to 1597–99)” (“*Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, and the Ur-Hamlet*,” *Modern Language Notes* 48.2 [1933], pp. 101–8, p. 102).

³⁵ Tristan Marshall, *Theatre and Empire: Great Britain on the London Stages under James VI and I* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 188.

³⁶ William Smith, *The Hector of Germany. Or The Palsgrave, prime Elector* (London: Thomas Creede for Josias Harrison, 1615), sig. A2v. Thanks to Dave Kathman for sharing his evidence for assigning this play to William rather than to Wentworth Smith.

³⁷ Jaroslav Miller, “The Henrician Legend Revived: The Palatine Couple and Its Public Image in Early Stuart England,” *European Review of History: Revue européenne d’histoire* 11.3 (2004), pp. 305–31, p. 324.

³⁸ Marshall, *Theatre and Empire*, p. 157.

³⁹ Hans Werner, “*The Hector of Germanie, or The Palsgrave, Prime Elector* and Anglo-German Relations of Early Stuart England: the View from the Popular Stage,” in *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in Politics and Political Culture*, ed. R. Malcolm Smuts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 113–32, p. 119.

⁴⁰ George Chapman, *The tragedy of Alphonsus, Emperour of Germany* (London: Humphrey Moseley, 1654), sig. B1r.

⁴¹ William Fennor, “A description of the Palsgraves Countrey, as it was delivered in a speech before the King, the Prince, the Lady Elizabeth, at White-Hall,” in *Fennors descriptions, or a A true relation of certaine and diuers speeches* (London: Edward Griffin for George Gibbs, 1616), sig. B3v.

⁴² Miller, “The Henrician Legend Revived,” p. 317.

⁴³ Jane Pettegree, *Foreign and Native on the English Stage 1588–1611* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), p. 146.

⁴⁴ Miller, “The Henrician legend revived,” p. 317.

⁴⁵ Anonymous, *The marriage of Prince Fredericke, and the Kings daughter, the Lady Elizabeth ...* (London: Thomas Creede for William Barley, 1613), sig. B1v.

⁴⁶ Taylor, *Heauens blessing, and earths ioy*, sig. D1r.

⁴⁷ J. H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New 1492–1650* [1970] (Cambridge: Canto, 1992).

⁴⁸ Danett, *A continuation of the historie of France*, p. 147.

⁴⁹ Henri IV, *The Copie of a Letter sent by the French king to the people of Artoys and Henault*, pp. 2–3 and 7.

⁵⁰ Danett, *A continuation of the historie of France*, sig. A3r.

⁵¹ Taylor, *Heauens blessing, and earths ioy*, sig. D1r.

⁵² *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 66.

⁵³ Leanda de Lisle, *After Elizabeth* (London: HarperCollins, 2006), p. 118.

⁵⁴ Mortimer Levine, *The Early Elizabethan Succession Question 1558–1568* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), pp. 63 and 76.

⁵⁵ Thomas Middleton, *Hengist, King of Kent, or The Mayor of Queenborough* (Oxford: The Malone Society, 2003).

⁵⁶ Stuart Laycock, *Britannia the Failed State: Tribal Conflicts and the End of Roman Britain* (Stroud: The History Press, 2008), p. 204.

⁵⁷ David Hill and Margaret Worthington, *Offa's Dyke* (Stroud: The History Press, 2003), p. 116.

⁵⁸ Julia Briggs, "Middleton's Forgotten Tragedy *Hengist, King of Kent*," *The Review of English Studies* 41.164 (November 1990), pp. 479–95, p. 480.

⁵⁹ As early as 1601 a commentator on one of the impostors who pretended to be Dom Sebastian of Portugal had "The lip of Austriche": see José Teixeira, *The strangest aduenture that euer happened: either in the ages passed or present Contain- ing a discourse concerning the successe of the King of Portugall Dom Sebastian, from the time of his voyage into Affricke, when he was lost in the battell against the infidels, in the yeare 1578. vnto the sixt of Ianuary this present 1601. In which discourse, is diuerse curious histories, some auncient prophesies, and other matters, whereby most euidently appeareth: that he whom the Seigneurie of Venice hath held as prisoner for the space of two yeres and twentie two dayes, is the right and true king of Portugall Dom Sebastian*, trans. Anthony Munday (London: Richard Field for Frances Henson, 1601), sig. K4r.

⁶⁰ Philip Schwyzer, *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 20.

Chapter 6

Valiant Welshwomen: When Britain Came Back

IN THE MYTH OF the essential continuity of the island's inhabitants, no nation loomed larger than the Welsh, to the extent that they might be referred to simply as "the British," as in R. A.'s *The Valiant Welshman* where Clown utters the Welsh word "diggon" (enough) and Morgan says "he speakes Brittish ... as good Brittish, as any is in Troy-walles" (sig. G1r). In similar vein, the preface "To the Ingenvovs Reader" speaks of how "Amongst so many valiant Princes of our English Nation, vvwhose liues haue already euen cloyed the Stage, I searched the Chronicles of elder ages, vvwherein I found amongst diuers renovvned persons, one Brittish Prince, who of his enemies, receiued the title of Valiant Brittainne" (sig. A3r). The Welsh remembered even when no one else did that they were part of a people that had once spread across England and Scotland too; their national epic *The Gododdin* told of a battle that had taken place at Catterick in Yorkshire, and their national hero King Arthur, if he had ever existed at all, might have fought his last battle anywhere from Cornwall to the Border (and possibly beyond). In Geoffrey, Wales is the only place where Britishness survives during a devastating plague that drives out all other inhabitants: "For eleven years Britain remained deserted by all its inhabitants, except for a few whom death had spared in certain parts of Wales."¹ The unique status of the Welsh is explored in a number of plays including *The Valiant Welshman*, *Cymbeline*, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, and *Henry VIII*, usually in ways which draw on Wales's association not only with the British of old but more recently and specifically with the Tudors: Robert Persons in *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of England* says of England:

first of al, after the Brittaines, it had Romans for their gouernours for many yeares, and then of them & their roman blood they had kings agayne of their owne, as appereth by that valiant king Aurelius Ambrosius ... last of al, it semeth to haue returned to the Britains agayne, in king Henry the 7. for that his father came of that race.²

For Persons, the accession of Henry VII was Britain, in the shape of a Welshman, coming back.

For other writers, Wales could suggest not just the past in general but one very specific aspect of it. William Rowley's *A Shoo-maker a gentleman* was not published until 1638, but was written a couple of decades before: the prefatory material says that "as Plaies were then, some twenty yeares agoe, it was in the fashion."³ It features the Welsh saint St. Winifred, who although not an ancestress (she died a virgin) is an authorizing figure, and also speaks of Catholic continuity. The shoemaker who takes in the two disguised princes Eldred and Offa says "we must drink strong drinke, as we shew our Religion, privately. 'Tis dangerous to be good Christians now a daies" (sig. B4v), but the play itself has no hesitation in showing its religion, because it contains an actual miracle when an angel comes out of the well, and Maximinus ends the play by promising:

Build what Religious Monuments you please,
Be true to Rome, none shall disturbe your peace.
Set forward Princes, Fortunes Wheele turns round;
We Kingdomes lose, you the same hour sit Crownd.
And thus about the World she spreads her wings,
To ruine, or raise up the Thrones of Kings. (sig. L2r)

Rowley's play thus openly connects Wales to Catholicism, and I shall be arguing that some other authors do so too, and that they use Wales to suggest both literally and metaphorically the place where the bodies are buried.

In this chapter, I argue that, though the Welsh are certainly important in drama, they are so in ways one might not necessarily expect, because for all the stereotypical figure of "the valiant Welshman," the bulk of the cultural work is in fact done not by Welshmen but by Welshwomen, who prove able to authorize discourses of nationhood and identity with a freedom and power denied to female ancestors of other groups and nations. Geoffrey even suggested that the Welsh might take their name from a woman: "As the foreign element around them became more and more powerful, they were given the name of Welsh instead of Britons: this word deriving either from their leader Gualo, or from their Queen Galaes, or else from their being so barbarous."⁴ The connection of Wales to women is most fully explored in *Cymbeline* and also in two plays with which *Cymbeline* is, I suggest, in dialog: R. A.'s *The Valiant Welshman* and Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII*, which though not set in the pre-Conquest period does allow us to see how connecting discourses of

Welshness to images of iconic women could allow the idea of indigenous Britishness to be recuperated.

Cymbeline, the first of the sole-authored last plays, marks a clear stylistic disjunction from Shakespeare's earlier work, which it seems best to attribute to the sudden emergence of the Beaumont and Fletcher partnership, whose sensational drama, which valorized surprise above all things, was conditioning a shift in audience tastes; it is perhaps not too fanciful to see *The Tempest*, whose word-driven second scene so comprehensively rejects the logic of its image-driven first one, as staging a defense of language and narrative in the face of the growing competition from the new favorites, which extended to Fletcher's daring rewriting of one of Shakespeare's own plays, *The Taming of the Shrew*, as *The Tamer Tamed*. *Cymbeline*'s relationship with *Philaster* in particular is obviously a close one,⁵ and helps to show the extent to which it both is and is not about Wales. Jean E. Feerick observes of *Cymbeline*:

the play's use of geographically based notions of identity, which emphasized the degenerative and regenerative powers of environment, connects it with a set of texts more explicitly concerned with England's colonial activities ... Virginia was the focus of this propaganda, and overcoming worries about this land's harmful effect was its aim.⁶

Feerick's mention of Virginia reminds us that Wales even less than England was not an island entire unto itself but connected to the wider world. This was especially true of Milford Haven, which one might almost term the Channel Tunnel of its day, with similar connotations of penetrability and of potential for contamination. In Geoffrey there are repeated landings at Totnes, but in the early modern period it is always Milford Haven.⁷ As Garrett Sullivan notes, "Milford Haven, in which there were "many places where [an enemy] may easily land," signified not only as the celebrated point of entry for Henry Tudor, but also as a locus of national vulnerability" as a point at which Britain might find itself unexpectedly and undesirably accessible to foreign powers; it was for that reason that in 1595 the earl of Pembroke urgently requested a map of Milford Haven from George Owen, and that Guy Fawkes tried to persuade Philip II to land an invasionary force there.⁸ Stewart Mottram proposes that the play is also heavily invested in the idea of the ruin:

Cymbeline contains several references to wrecks and ruins, and these are references, I suggest, that can be read in light of the play's broader

concerns to champion—but also question—the heroic rhetoric of British union. Where ruins feature elsewhere in early Stuart literature supportive of Anglo-Scottish union they tend, as we will see, to celebrate union by offering a meditation on the derelictions of a previous (pre-Jacobean) age. Not so in *Cymbeline*. Its rhetorical ruins are expressive rather of anxieties about Stuart Britain’s “strength of empire.”⁹

Cymbeline, then, shows Wales as bespeaking both marginality and connectedness, as highlighting England’s links to past and future empires but also implying that those links might be fragile.

One area of British culture which *Cymbeline* presents as particularly unstable is its understanding of how to dispose of the bodies of the dead. All the last plays show some interest in disturbed or disrupted burial: *Pericles* opens with Gower apparently returning from a grave and shows both Thaisa and Marina failing to be contained by one, as too is Hermione in *The Winter’s Tale*, and the plot of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is set in motion by three queens lamenting the fact that their husbands have not been buried. In *Cymbeline* the motif reaches nightmare proportions. Guiderius treats the corpse of Cloten with complete disrespect:

I have sent Cloten’s clotpoll down the stream,
In embassy to his mother. His body’s hostage
For his return. (4.2.183–85)

This is of course a plot requirement—Innogen could hardly mistake the body of Cloten for that of Postumus if the head were on—but it also supplies a pointed contrast with Arviragus’ attitude to the apparently dead Fidele:

With fairest flowers
Whilst summer lasts and I live here, Fidele,
I’ll sweeten thy sad grave. (4.2.217–19)

Belarius’s view is that this differential treatment is wrong:

Though mean and mighty rotting
Together have one dust, yet reverence,
That angel of the world, doth make distinction
Of place ’tween high and low. Our foe was princely,
And though you took his life as being our foe,
Yet bury him as a prince. (4.2.245–49)

But Belarius absents himself from the actual rites, leaving Arviragus apparently puzzled about what to do until Guiderius says “Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to th’east. / My father hath a reason for’t” (4.2.254–55). Both which way the head should lie, and whether it mattered which way the head should lie, were topics of hot debate. Margaret Jones-Davies notes that “Roman Catholics would usually insist on being buried with their heads to the west so that they would face the east at the Judgement Day” but that “the direction of the bodies was dismissed as superstition by the reformers,”¹⁰ and Eamon Duffy confirms that “The Admonition to Parliament of 1572 complained of the superstitions used ‘bothe in Countrie and Citie, for the place of buriall, which way they muste lie.’”¹¹ Paul Hyland observes that:

When Sir Walter Raleigh laid his head on the executioner’s block in Palace Yard in 1618 he knelt facing the wrong way. He looked west towards Devon, where he was born sixty-five years earlier, and in the direction of a New World which had seduced and undone him. The Dean of Westminster pointed out his error. A man about to cross the threshold of eternity must lie with his face towards the east, the promised land and the resurrected Christ.¹²

Guiderius apparently concurs with the Dean of Westminster, but seems not to know the reason for it, suggesting a society clinging to practices it has inherited from its elders but no longer understands. On the edge of the Roman Empire, people are no longer sure how to negotiate the edge between this world and the next. In fact, the bodies of Innogen and Cloten are not actually buried at all: if they were, Innogen could not simply get up and walk away with Caius Lucius, let alone be spotted by him. There is no indication that Belarius, Polydore, and Cadwal regard the funeral as something unfinished to which they will have to return later. Belarius does say:

Here’s a few flowers, but ’bout midnight more:
The herbs that have on them cold dew o’th’night
Are strewings fitt’st for graves: upon their faces. (4.2.283–85)

However, he also adds “The ground that gave them first has them again” (4.2.289). It seems therefore as if Shakespeare is imagining an ancient British funeral rite which did not include actual inhumation—perhaps something like the placing of bodies on an uncovered dolmen, or conceivably on a burial platform to await excarnation, which is what archaeologists now believe did occur.

Innogen, however, does bury. She tells Caius Lucius:

I'll follow, sir. But first, an't please the gods,
 I'll hide my master from the flies, as deep
 As these poor pickaxes can dig: and when
 With wild wood-leaves and weeds I ha' strewed his grave
 And on it said a century of prayers
 (Such as I can) twice o'er, I'll weep and sigh. (4.2.387–92)

Lucius accepts the rightness of this:

The boy hath taught us manly duties: let us
 Find out the prettiest daisied plot we can,
 And make him with our pikes and partisans
 A grave. (4.2.396–400)

Finally he concludes “Some falls are means the happier to arise” (4.2.403), a sentiment wholly in tune with Christianity. Though I do not want to be too schematic about this, one could suggest that the ways in which Cymbeline’s Britain is both Roman and non-Roman map onto the ways in which Shakespeare’s Britain retained residual elements of Roman Catholicism, which tended to accrue particularly to burial practices, and that Roman practice is both recognizable and connected to the sense of authentic British inheritance embodied in Innogen, while the fragmentary and residual practices of Arviragus and Guiderius seem alien. It is this symbolic lack that Innogen addresses. Innogen is not an ancestress except in the generic sense of sharing a name with the wife of Brutus. She may be part of those genealogies of Camber whom no one can tell, but she is not presented as such. Instead she becomes a figure of resurrection, of the numinous, and of salvific funerary rites.

For all its rather marginal position in the Shakespearean canon today, *Cymbeline* in its day was very influential. William Drury’s *Aluredus, sive Alvredus* (1619), for instance, has Crabula say “I cant endure the heat of this sun” and also has a character come to grief in another character’s clothes,¹³ and both Shirley’s *St Patrick for Ireland* and Rowley’s *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman* are clearly also in dialog with the play,¹⁴ as too is *Fuimus Troes*. The names Arviragus and Guiderius are also to be found in the two parts of Lodowick Carlell’s *Arviragus and Philicia* (1639), and the king’s son Guimantes is something of a Cloten figure, though this Arviragus and Guiderius are fighting the Danes and Guiderius is Arviragus’ cousin (the son of his uncle Eugenius), not his brother, and

they come from Pictland, not from Wales. It is also, however, possible to look not forward but backward and to see *Cymbeline* as a response to or at least as in dialog with *The Valiant Welshman*, whose full title is *The Valiant Welshman, or the true chronicle history of the life and valiant deedes of Caradoc the Great, King of Cambria, now called Wales, as it hath beene sundry times acted by the Prince of Wales his seruants*. *The Valiant Welshman* focuses on Caradoc, but it also features Cadallan and his daughter Voada, and in Voada's husband Gederus, King of Britain, it shares a character with *Cymbeline*.¹⁵ Marisa R. Cull sees *Cymbeline* and *The Valiant Welshman* as going head to head on different sides of the river: "While Shakespeare, writing for the King's Men, casts his prince of Wales as the impetuous, violent, and uncivilized Guiderius of *Cymbeline*, R.A., writing his *The Valiant Welshman* for the Prince of Wales's Men, generates a near mirror-image of Henry Frederick in the bold and forthright Caradoc." She points out that "the first monologue" of *The Valiant Welshman* is spoken by Fortune and argues that this draws audience attention to the fact that the play was performed at the Fortune; even more suggestively, the Bard addresses Fortune as "Arch-gouvernesse of this terrestriall Globe" (sig. A4v), and later describes her as "mighty Fortune, Regent of this Globe" (sig. C41), underlining the sense that the Fortune's play and the Globe's are in direct competition and playfully prophesying the victory of the Fortune's offering.

For Cull, the question facing both plays was "How could courtly celebrations accommodate the interests of a military-minded prince while still honoring a pacifist-minded monarch?"¹⁶ *Cymbeline* almost programmatically features the young prince being blooded and the old king settling a peace, while *The Valiant Welshman* solves the problem by killing off Caradoc's father. *The Valiant Welshman* is also at odds with *Cymbeline* when Octavian says:

Great Iulius Cesar, fortunate in armes,
Suffred three base repulses from the Cliffes
Of chalky Douer. (sig. C3r)

Most suggestively, Gederus in *The Valiant Welshman* is separate from the King of Wales, as we are reminded when he says "braue Peeres of Wales, welcome to Bryttayne" (sig. D1r), thus implicitly dissociating Guiderius from Wales whereas *Cymbeline* has him growing up there. *The Valiant Welshman* opens with the Bard referring to Caradoc as "a King of Cambria," a formula also used on the title page, but *Cymbeline* presents

no king in Wales. In *The Valiant Welshman* Octavian is poisoned by a cup, suggesting an anti-Eucharist iconography, while I have already suggested that *Cymbeline* may be less hostile to Catholicism. What is clear in both plays, though, is that both call into question the extent to which Wales is able to authorize a real connection between modern and ancient Britain.

The Valiant Welshman begins with an ancient bard emerging from his tomb (to which he returns at the end of the play), and it, like *Cymbeline*, is obsessed with the idea of graves. Octavian defends his claim to the throne by declaring:

Graues to the dead,
Balsam to greene wounds, or a soule to man
Is not more proper, then Octauian
To the vsurped Title Monmouth holds. (sig. B2v)

Monmouth himself assures his soldiers:

Did Cesar come, this welcome he should haue,
Strong armes, bigge hearts, and to conclude, a graue. (sig. B2v)

He goes on to ask rhetorically of March:

Is there not roome enough within Churchyards,
To earth his aged bodie, with his sonnes,
But hee must hither come to make their graues? (sigs. B2v–B3r)

Revening March's death, Caradoc warns Monmouth "Although thou fear'st not hell, Ile dig thy graue" (sig. B4r), and Codigune says he will not give Caradoc either land or his wife and sister back, "But if thou long'st for any, aske a graue" (sig. E2v). Gald says to Voadia:

when I shall forget to offer vp
A sacrifice of my immaculate loue,
Vnto thy beautilous altar, let me haue
A base deformed obiect to my graue. (sig. FD3v)

The Clown says "it may be, as simple as we are here, if we say, he shall be buried, he shall, and if we say not, it may not be neyther" (sigs. G2r–v); later he adds "alwayes he that is aliue must die, and he that is dead must be buried" (sig. G3r). Finally, Marcus Gallicus, advancing on Voadia in the dead of night and planning to rape her, says "How husht is all things! and the world appears / Like to a Churchyard full of dead" (sig. H4r), bringing the grave motif to its climax.

The author of *The Valiant Welshman*, who is identified only by the initials "R. A.," may or may not have been Shakespeare's fool Robert Armin,¹⁷ and in many ways the play reads as though the author is pastiching as many Shakespeare plays as possible. In particular we hear of how "Gederus" (the Guiderius of *Cymbeline*) fights like the "Nemean Lyon" and "Hurl'd Ossa vpon Peleon," in an obvious evocation of *Hamlet*; shortly afterwards there is mention of "Cornewall, Gloster, twinnes of some Incubus."¹⁸ In this slightly feverish atmosphere in which allusions to *Hamlet* rub shoulders with allusions to *Lear*, past and future are collapsed in a number of pointedly topical moments, in something of the same way as the obvious anachronism of *Cymbeline* making Iachimo both a Roman and the brother of the marquis of Siena. Most suggestively, Venusius, leader of the Brigantes, is described in the *dramatis personae* as "Duke of Yorke," the title usually given to the monarch's second son, and given that the play's full title informs us that "*it hath beene sundry times acted by the Prince of Wales his seruants*," meaning James's elder son Henry, the Duke of York would to its original audience have been clearly identifiable as James's second son Charles, impying a direct link between Roman past and Stuart present.

What is much less clear, however, is to what extent this sense of a seamless continuity between past and present can really be justified, for it is not clear how much of a link there is between Caradoc, the valiant king of Wales, and the modern day Prince of Wales. The Caradoc of the play is given a wife, Guiniuer, and a daughter, Helena. Both names would sound a discordant note for a contemporary audience, for both were strongly associated with very different contexts. Guiniuer, as everyone knew, was the name not of the wife of Caradoc but of the wife of Arthur; in Geoffrey, Guinevere is not only named but given a pedigree, in that she is "descended from a noble Roman family."¹⁹ Helena was the mother of the Emperor Constantine and supposed finder of the True Cross; her story was very well known in Britain—where, according to many versions of her story, she was born—and people may well have been fairly regularly reminded of it since Camden refers to "Hellens mony many oftentimes found under the walles" of London.²⁰ (In his *The life of the glorious bishop S. Patricke*, Joscelyn had identified Helena as having "builded the walles of the Citty of London.")²¹ In Jacobus de Voragine's hugely popular *The Golden Legend*, she was said to be the daughter of King Coel (the old King Cole of the rhyme). To wrest these two women from their familiar contexts and foist them on Caradoc destabilizes our sense of the authenticity

of the narrative and works to unsettle any image of him as dynastic figure: since we know that *this* cannot have been his family, we may be left wondering whether he actually *had* a family—and if he did not, then he cannot have been an ancestor of the present royal family, and his glory, titles, and power cannot be any precedent or warrant for theirs. At the time of the play's first production James's elder son Henry Prince of Wales was still alive, embodying hope for the future, but when it was published in 1615 Henry was three years dead and the younger brother who had replaced him, the future Charles I, was a very different and much less charismatic figure. In that context, the publication of *The Valiant Welshman* might well be seen as a lament for a past that had vanished beyond recall, with the idea of descent from a prince of Wales no more than a lost dream and no possibility of the resurrection of a credible British identity.

By implication, *Cymbeline* too is troubled. Geoffrey of Monmouth tells of how Arviragus, the younger son of the king, marries Genvissa, daughter of the Emperor Claudius, and becomes a key link in the supposed genealogical chain between Trojans and Tudors; however, the name adopted by the elder son, Polydore, points firmly in the direction of Polydore Vergil, the Italian historian in the employ of Henry VII who had been the first to cast doubt on the authenticity of the British story, so that dynastic continuity is implicitly called into question even as it is ostensibly affirmed. Here too the possibility of a surviving British identity is thus difficult to believe in, and the idea of descent from princes of Wales is seen as at best doubtful.

The idea of descent from *princesses* of Wales, though, was a different matter. Many Renaissance writers, including Holinshed, confirmed Caradoc of Llancarvan's story that when Fleance fled after the murder of Banquo, he went to Wales, where he seduced the daughter of Gruffyth ap Llewelyn, who bore him a son called Walter who eventually became the ancestor of the Stuarts.²² There was no similar story of descent from a Welsh princess for the Tudors, but as Richard Harvey asks in *Philadelphus, or a defence of Brutes*, "who can tell the genealogies of Camber?" (sig. L4r); there was certainly nothing to say that the Tudors did *not* descend royally through the female line as well as the male, and the fact that Jasper Tudor, uncle of Henry VII, chose the name Helen for one of his illegitimate daughters may suggest a glance at either St. Helena or Elen Luyddog, a legendary Welsh figure also known as "Elen of the Hosts" or "Elen of the Ways," whose importance I shall discuss shortly (indeed Jasper, like many others, may have thought the two were the same person). There was also of

course the all-important fact that both of the last two Tudor rulers were queens regnant.

In *Henry VIII*, Shakespeare and Fletcher take up all these concerns when they connect Wales, princesses, and Britishness through a renegotiation of a deep-rooted and pervasive trope very influential in early modern English culture, that of the equation of women with land. As Sir Walter Raleigh famously remarked, “Guiana is a Countrey that hath yet her Maydenhead,”²³ and Lynda Boose comments:

although the equation between land and the female body which makes rape and imperialism homologous is a metaphor of masculine ownership that is neither peculiarly English nor new to England’s enclosure period, the collocation of the two discursive fields clearly acquired new energy at precisely this historical moment of heightened land anxieties.²⁴

Adrian Streete has suggested that Norfolk’s description of the French at the Field of Cloth of Gold is imbued with “the rhetoric of colonialism,”²⁵ and Second Gentleman certainly deploys such rhetoric when he says “Our King has all the Indies in his arms, / And more, and richer, when he strains that lady” (4.1.454–56); moreover, the equation between woman and land was arguably most often associated with Ireland, a country to which Andrew Hadfield notes two references in *Henry VIII*²⁶ and which was represented by Luke Gernon as “This Nymph of Ireland.”²⁷ *Henry VIII* offers a late negotiation of the relationship between women and land in which polarities are inverted as the Kent-born Anne Boleyn becomes the titular representative of Pembroke, and the familiar equation is put to work in this strange, belated play in new ways which explore the affective potential of valiant Welshwomen imbued with both dynastic and political significance.

Initially, it may seem to be business as usual when it comes to the representation of gender in the play. The Lord Chamberlain says “Two women placed together makes cold weather,” (1.4.22) and Norfolk says of Wolsey:

He counsels a divorce, a loss of her
That like a jewel has hung twenty years
About his neck, yet never lost her lustre. (2.2.29–31)

Both men’s speeches figure women as commodified, essentialized, and possessed of sinister power: “cold weather” connects women to nature in a way that we have come to understand as entailing a concomitant associa-

tion of men with culture. The jewel trope too is familiar; as Alison Findlay shows, when women in Renaissance plays are referred to by men as jewels it is generally as part of a process of commodification which rarely ends well for them,²⁸ and Valerie Traub observes that “the equation of female body parts with precious gems—the body metaphorically revealed, undressed and dismembered through the poet-lover’s voyeuristic gaze—is a crucial strategy in the attempt both to construct a modern masculine subjectivity and to exert control over a situation in which the poet-lover’s power is limited and secondary.”²⁹ Less conventional though is Buckingham’s remark of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, “O, many / Have broke their backs with laying manors on ’em / For this great journey” (1.1.83–85). As is usual with metaphor, Buckingham’s figure has both a tenor and a vehicle, but it could also be said to have an occluded tenor beneath the official and ostensible one. On the surface, Buckingham is making a remark about the amount of money laid out by various courtiers on Henry VIII’s meeting with François Ier at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520, and it was indeed an occasion on which “Hundreds of pounds worth of velvet, satin, cloth of gold and other luxurious fabrics were shipped across for the courtiers’ liveries and for furnishings and hangings of all kinds.”³⁰ The accusation of converting land into clothing is found too in 2 *Henry VI*, where the duchess of Gloucester “bears a duke’s revenues on her back,”³¹ but at the Field of the Cloth of Gold it was not women who were responsible for the sale of land, but men: the painting of the event which hung (and hangs) at Hampton Court, which Shakespeare can be assumed to have seen on one or more of his known trips there, showcases above all the body of Henry VIII himself, resplendent in gold and mounted on a white horse, and although some women are visible in the picture, none is at all prominent. It is a man’s body which is displayed and commodified, and the general anti-French animus which underpins the scene also makes it clear that the elapse of nearly a century had brought the benefit of hindsight, which clearly showed the Field of the Cloth of Gold to have been less a celebration of a prototype *entente cordiale* than a prelude to hostilities. For us, the Field of the Cloth of Gold is now reduced to nothing more than a sign on the side of a motorway shortly after one emerges on the French side of the Channel Tunnel, but for Shakespeare’s and Fletcher’s original audience it was understood not as a site of production or growth but as a graveyard waiting to happen. This is not land understood as discursively and imaginatively associated with the realm of the feminine, but land put to distinctively masculine uses which ultimately led to ruin and death.

Most suggestive in terms of the woman-land equation is the treatment of Elizabeth's mother, Anne Boleyn, whose character had at various times been so extensively vilified that Shakespeare and Fletcher must surely have been aware that presenting her on stage, even ten years after her daughter's death, would require very careful handling. When Anne is first introduced, she is having a conversation with an unnamed old lady:

Anne I swear again, I would not be a queen
For all the world.
Old Lady In faith, for little England
You'd venture an emballing. I myself
Would for Caernarvonshire, although there 'longed
No more to th'crown but that. (2.3.45–49)

The Old Lady refers to two discrete territories here, which she names as "little England" and "Caernarvonshire" respectively. One of them, more properly Caernarfonshire, is immediately identifiable: it is a county in North Wales whose county town is Caernarfon, and though that might at first glance seem to label it as a remote and marginal place, it had in fact an extremely significant history as the legendary home of the important Welsh figure Elen Luyddog, wife of the emperor Magnus Maximus (the Maccsen Wledig of Welsh folklore). Elen mattered to the Welsh in her own right, but because her name sounded like Helen and she had a son named Constantine she was also frequently taken to be the same as St. Helena, supposed finder of the True Cross and mother of the emperor Constantine, who ordered the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity and with whom Henry increasingly associated himself from the time of his marriage with Anne.³² It was the presumed identity of Elen with St. Helena which seems to have prompted Edward I's decision to rebuild the walls of Caernarfon Castle on the model of those of Constantinople, and which also led him to choose the castle as the birthplace of his infant son, whom he famously presented to the Welsh in fulfillment of his promise to give them a prince who spoke no English and was of unblemished life, under whose aegis they could pass peaceably under the rule of the English crown. Caernarfonshire, then, is central to the Tudor myth, and the Old Lady's allusion to it (not prompted by any actual historical association between Anne and Caernarfonshire but imported into the narrative in much the same way as the equally resonant Milford Haven is in *Cymbeline*) thus reminds us of Anne's enormous dynastic importance as the destined mother of a unity-bringing heir.

The identity of the other territory mentioned by the Old Lady, “little England,” is less immediately obvious to modern readers, but would have presented no difficulties to Shakespeare’s audience. Rory Loughnane observes that

Noting the Old Lady’s proclivity towards allusive wordplay, “little England” could equally stand for Henry’s penis, but its comparison to Caernarvonshire also suggests an alternate meaning. “Little England” or “Little England beyond Wales” is an area in south Pembrokeshire in the southwest of Wales, noted for its high density of English settlers, and where the English-Welsh demarcation was especially prominent.³³

Henry VII, founder of the Tudor dynasty, was born in Pembroke Castle; Thomas Phaer, sixteenth-century translator of the *Aeneid*, lived in Pembrokeshire, and according to George Owen of Henllys saw some of the local customs there as embodying living proof of the story of the *translatio imperii* from Troy to Britain.³⁴ Pembrokeshire was also famously divided in linguistic terms, with communities on one side of what was known as the Landscar or Landsker having English as a first language and those on the other speaking Welsh, and as the name Landsker suggests, there was also a prominent community of Flemish-speaking immigrants (of whom it is sometimes suggested that the playwright Thomas Dekker might have been one, since he combines a Dutch-sounding name with some apparent knowledge of Welsh). The diverse character and history of Pembrokeshire thus meant that it could function as something of a microcosm of Wales as a whole but also gave it particular resonance as an emblem of both what Britain had once been and what it had since become.

Pembrokeshire too was historically less marginal than might be supposed: indeed Ronald J. Boling points out that both Rhys ap Gruffudd and the Earl of Essex hoped to make Pembrokeshire the seat of government of a more independent Wales.³⁵ In part this was because the county had a particular association with prophecy, as in *Cymbeline* where, as Boling observes, “The tablet given by Jupiter to the sleeping Posthumus functions like a Welsh prophecy treating the matter of Britain” (p. 65), and as Drayton remembers in *Poly-Olbion*:

Musician, Herault, Bard, thrice maist thou be renown’d,
And with three seuerall wreathes immortallie be crown’d;
Who, when to Penbrooke call’d before the English King.
And to thy powerfull Harpe commaunded there to sing,

Of famous Arthur told'st, and where hee was interr'd

...

when King Henry sent th'reported place to view,
He found that man of men: and what thou said'st was true.³⁶

The supposed burial place of King Arthur, an important authorizing figure of the Tudor dynasty, was Glastonbury Abbey, but Drayton manages to associate him with Pembroke by staging a scene in which the discovery of the burial place is prophesied there, and he also manages to connect this to the Tudors by dint of referring to a judiciously unnumbered "King Henry." (It was in fact Henry II who was assured by Giraldus Cambrensis that Arthur would be found buried at Glastonbury.)

It was a potentially risky step to bring anything into *Henry VIII* which might remind the audience of Arthur. At intervals in the sixteenth century the name of Anne had been evoked in conjunction with the Arthur story, and always to damaging effect. According to one version of the legend, Arthur had an incestuous relationship with his sister Anne which produced Mordred, the traitor knight who eventually slew his father/uncle; this was, as we have seen, the story which had underpinned Thomas Hughes' *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, which had slyly worked at establishing an equation between Arthur and Elizabeth herself. Although *Henry VIII* connects its Anne to Wales, it is careful to avoid any such associations for her. Shakespeare and Fletcher glance at the dangerous territory occupied by *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, but keep safely on the right side of its border as the Lord Chamberlain says aside:

who knows yet
But from this lady may proceed a gem
To lighten all this isle? (2.3.77–79)

Elizabeth's grandfather Henry VII was famously "the son of prophecy";³⁷ here, Elizabeth herself becomes its daughter, with any potential association with Arthur recuperated by the fact that it is her life not her death or burial that is foretold, a glorious future rather than a questionable past. Moreover, though she may be a jewel, she is one who is not commodified but one who has agency, and she is figured not as mapped passively onto the land but as directly affecting it.

The Old Lady's mention of Pembrokeshire proves prophetic when the Lord Chamberlain tells Anne that the king "Does purpose honour to you no less flowing / Than Marchioness of Pembroke" (2.3.63–64). Historically, Anne was in fact created marquess rather than Marchioness,

but the root of both is the same and was, as Michael Drayton explains, the marker of a peculiarly liminal title: “By the March vnderstand those limits betweene England and Wales,” “hence is supposed the originall of that honorary title of Marquesse, which is as much as a Lord of the Frontiers.”³⁸ I have argued elsewhere that Wales was understood in early modern English drama as both liminal and feminized,³⁹ and it was particularly notorious for the insubordination and incivility of its women: in *The true chronicle history of King Leir*, for instance, Mumford when they land in Wales says “where I was wont to meet with armed men, / I was now incountred with naked women.”⁴⁰ Considerable critical attention has been paid to the most notorious example of this incivility, the description in *Henry IV, Part One* of the “beastly shameless transformation” done by Welshwomen on the corpses of English soldiers, but rather less to the passage which precedes it, which informs the audience that the army in question was that of Mortimer,⁴¹ who is specifically identified as Earl of March at 1.3.85, and is thus marked as a symbolic embodiment of the border between England and Wales.

Anne too is a liminal figure. Not only is her new title of marquess directly associated with marches, but First Gentleman says:

They that bear
The cloth of honour over her are four barons
Of the Cinque Ports. (4.1.47–49)

The Cinque Ports of Hastings, New Romney, Hythe, Dover, and Sandwich lay on the most vulnerable edge of England, where it came closest to the Continent; the coastline of Pembrokeshire made it too a borderland, a potential zone of penetration, especially, as we have seen, at Milford Haven. Vulnerable, penetrable, but hugely important as a point of dynastic origins, Pembrokeshire is indeed a fitting reward for Anne’s sexual capitulation to the king.

At the time of Henry VIII’s composition, mention of Wales in general and of the Marches in particular does specific and important political work. In 1536, the year of Anne’s execution, the Act of Union had appeared to “formally incorporat[e] Wales into England”; it also significantly downgraded the status of the Marches, since there was no need for Marches if there was no separate state for them to march on. However, David Powel in his *Historie of Cambria* had effectively seen Elizabeth as Prince of Wales, and the 1610 recognition of James’s eldest son Henry as Prince of Wales implicitly acknowledged that Wales had not in fact been

incorporated into England but did continue to exist.⁴² To insist on Anne's connection to Wales enables Shakespeare and Fletcher covertly to intervene in the debate about the principality's status and to imply the possibility of a royalty independent and separate from that of the king.

Loughnane argues that "through the Old Lady's prophetic equation of female sexual activity with the reward of Welsh regions, it is clear that English sovereignty over Wales is being implicitly compared to Anne's sovereignty over her own body."⁴³ In this respect there might be an instructive comparison to be drawn with the language-learning scene in *Henry V*, where Princess Catherine is inadvertently betrayed into uttering obscenities as she imitates Alice's comic mispronunciations of parts of the female body and its clothes, so that in performance "gown" typically becomes "con," the French for "cunt," and "foot" becomes "foutre," meaning "fuck." The comparison would be an apposite one because Catherine's second marriage, to Owen Tudor, would help bring the Tudor family to national prominence and ultimately to the throne, and because the whole language-learning scene has of course a subtext: Catherine is learning English not out of a sudden burst of intellectual curiosity but because she knows perfectly well that Henry V's army is getting closer and that she herself is his allotted prize, wanted not for her beauty but because her bloodline means that possession of her "cuntry" will authorize possession of her country. The trope is, however, less reductive to Anne than to Catherine, for the connection to Pembrokeshire gives Anne the power to trouble certainties and labels rather than supply any monolithic endorsement of them. Pembrokeshire was a place of blurring of certainties, being notoriously problematic to map: Boling notes that

George Owen argued that Pembrokeshire's tax burden was too high and attributes these unfair levies to Saxton's distorted map of the country in which "Pembrokeshire seems to be one of the biggest and largest shires of Wales, having the room and place of a whole sheet of paper allowed to itself." If Saxton's map enlarges Pembrokeshire as a bulwark against Ireland, Owen's map shrinks it to reduce the military levy for which he is responsible.⁴⁴

In *Cymbeline*, written a few years before *Henry VIII*, bodies as well as land become confused as Innogen takes the headless corpse of her stepbrother for that of her husband. In *Henry VIII* too Pembrokeshire disturbs normal polarities, confusing men's titles with women's and position-

ing women as owners of land rather than as being in a symbolic equation with it, and Boling suggests that the fantasy Pembrokeshire of *Cymbeline* and the historical Pembrokeshire of *Henry VIII* may not be as far apart as one would suppose: he points to verbal echoes of the historical encounter at Bryn Glas in the account of the decapitation of Cloten, notes that George Owen's *Description of Pembrokeshire* "twice uses the phrase 'heat of the sun,'" and compares the reference to fairies in *Cymbeline* to Martin Marprelate's remarks on the Welsh belief in fairies.⁴⁵

To associate a woman with *Welsh* territory does not therefore work in quite the same way as to associate her with any other territory does. Specifically it does not drain her of all sense of autonomy and power but leaves her marked as a place of origins and authorization with a symbolic resonance too great to be ignored. Connecting Anne to Milford Haven makes her a point of origin and confirms the alignment of Elizabeth with her grandfather Henry VIII in a way which marginalizes the association of femininity with weakness and gives prominence instead to its dynastic and symbolic potential.

It is also worth considering the difference between Princess Catherine's Alice and Anne's Old Lady. All we are told about Alice is that Catherine says to her "*Alice, tu as été en Angleterre*" (3.4.1). It is a safe bet that any woman at the French court who had spent time in England had done so as part of the retinue of Catherine's (much) older sister Isabel, second wife of Richard II, and since Shakespeare had already shown something of that marriage in *Richard II* he and his audience would have been well aware that it was childless. In contrast, there are two salient facts about the Old Lady: she is old, and she has knowledge (implicitly acquired through experience) of the mysteries of birth and reproduction. It is in some respects appropriate that we should know no more about her than this, because it is as if first Anne and then Elizabeth are ushered into the play by an abstract representation of female experience and female tradition. Her age, however, has now removed her from personal participation in sex and reproduction, and inevitably this would remind Shakespeare and Fletcher's audience of Elizabeth who had also aged and of whom Cranmer says:

Her own shall bless her;
Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn,
And hang their heads with sorrow. Good grows with her;
In her days every man shall eat in safety
Under his own vine what he plants. (5.5.30–34)

Janet Clare argues that "*Henry VIII* is a late legitimization of chronicle history defined against Rowley's distinctly Protestant and folkloric history, *When You See Me, You Know Me*, performed by a rival company,"⁴⁶ and *Henry VIII* is certainly at pains to achieve a greater degree of historical accuracy than *When You See Me, You Know Me*, which opens with Jane Seymour queen but Wolsey still alive and Mary Tudor not yet married to the king of France; there is also no mention of Catherine Howard and the king's last marriage is to "the Ladie Caterine Parry."⁴⁷ Shakespeare and Fletcher's play also reverses Rowley's emphases in other ways too. *When You See Me, You Know Me* stresses Henry's son, Prince Edward; Clare argues that this is because the play is designed to celebrate Prince Henry,⁴⁸ and this would certainly seem to be what lies behind the otherwise perverse and confusing decision to foreground the idea that the young prince will be called Henry rather than Edward, when Henry VIII exhorts his queen:

Now Iane God bring me but a chopping boy,
Be but the Mother to a Prince of Wales
Ad a ninth Henrie to the English Crowne. (sig. B1r)

By the time Shakespeare and Fletcher wrote, Prince Henry was dead, and they needed other ways of showing the historic continuity of the English monarchy. Adrian Streete, noting that "Rowley's play, along with the anonymous *Thomas, Lord Cromwell*, was reprinted in 1613. This year also saw the first performance of Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII*," suggests this was prompted by "the ongoing Oath of Allegiance controversy" and also links it to the marriage of Princess Elizabeth that year.⁴⁹ The Elizabeth of *Henry VIII*, though, is a virgin. This too is a contrast to *When You See Me, you know me*, where Henry says of the pregnant Jane "this is a womans glorie, / Like good September Vines loden with fruite" (sig. A4r), but is in line with the play's overall treatment of women in terms of a symbolic feminine which may replace the one lost with Catholicism, and this is, I suggest, the final and most suggestive way in which Shakespeare and Fletcher's play differs from Rowley's piously Protestant one, in ways which allow for further recuperation of the symbolic feminine and present royal women as emblems of timelessness and historical continuity rather than specifically as mothers.

In his prophecy of her greatness, Cranmer says of Elizabeth, "A most unspotted lily shall she pass / To th'ground, and all the world shall mourn her" (5.4.61–62); unlike Katherine, a lily whose time is past and who must "hang my head, and perish" (3.1.153), Elizabeth becomes an eternal lily in

ways surely inflected by the prominence of the lily in the iconography of the Virgin Mary. In *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, the dying Mordred contemplates becoming “a graue and tombe to all his Realme” (sig. C3r): England will disappear not only *with* him but *into* him. However, the fact that the Old Lady as well as Cranmer presides over the birth of Elizabeth enables Elizabeth’s death to mean more than loss and lack, for the Old Lady’s age aligns her with a number of powerful, resonant female figures in the last plays. In *The Winter’s Tale*, the sight of the wrinkled Hermione leads to the awakening of faith. Ruth Vanita observes of Hermione:

That her unqueening and trial resonates with that of Henry VIII’s wives has often been noticed. But another even more dramatic unqueening had occurred in England during that same time. Images of Mary, Queen of Heaven, had been removed or defaced in churches; her feasts and prayers to her were declared unlawful.⁵⁰

The Hermione/Perdita story also has obvious overtones of the Demeter/Persephone myth, and highlights the quasi-magical force of the mother-daughter bond in the last plays; in *Henry VIII*, Elizabeth is really too young for this association, but the play’s resolute refusal to stage Henry’s other daughter Mary allows something of its power to accrue to the connection between Anne and Elizabeth. In this sense the Old Lady’s age may work to remind us of the overtones of iconicity and the mythological that will accrue to Elizabeth and position the dead queen as now herself a mother figure, a secular patron saint of England. I have argued elsewhere that there are saint associations in *The Tempest* and *Cymbeline* too, so that these are something of a generic feature of the last plays;⁵¹ any such resonances obviously have to be kept at bay in the story of Henry VIII, but there is a sense in which the presence of the Old Lady smuggles them in, allowing us to notice that, as Jay Zysk observes, “Anne’s coronation, which occurs after the consistory, appropriates the very connection between *corpus mysticum* and *Corpus Christi* set forth therein,” creating what Zysk describes as “a play whose ostensible celebration of English Protestantism bristles against the ceremonies, ornaments, statues, and spectacles that iconoclasts smashed in church and bashed in print.”⁵² Certainly Anne is associated with a world that is literally other: Third Gentleman says “she kneeled, and saint-like / Cast her fair eyes to heaven” (4.1.83–84), and this in a play in which Katherine (and we) see what may be a vision of heaven (5.2.83–84). As it gives a cheery wave to Elizabeth, Shakespeare’s and Fletcher’s play also offers its audience a glimpse of a renewed connection between earth and heaven even as it tells the story of the Reformation which broke the

connection, and the mediating force is gendered feminine. R. A. may call his play *The Valiant Welshman*, but it is arguably Welshwomen to whom we should pay more attention, as Innogen, the daughter of Gruffydd ap Llewelyn, and Anne Boleyn all emerge as authorizing ancestral figures.

NOTES

¹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 282.

² William Allen [Robert Persons], *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of England* (London: R. Doleman, 1595), p. 178.

³ William Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman* (London: J. Okes, 1638), sig. A4r.

⁴ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, p. 284.

⁵ Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *Philaster*, ed. Andrew Gurr (London: Methuen, 1969), introduction, pp. xlv–l.

⁶ Jean E. Feerick, *Strangers in Blood: Relocating Race in the Renaissance* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), p. 80.

⁷ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, p. 73, n. 1.

⁸ Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr., “Civilizing Wales: *Cymbeline*, Roads, and the Landscapes of Early Modern Britain,” *Early Modern Literary Studies* 4.2 (1998), <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/04-2/sullshak.htm>

⁹ Stewart Mottram, “Warriors and Ruins: *Cymbeline*, Heroism and the Union of Crowns,” in *Celtic Shakespeare: The Bard and the Borderers*, ed. Willy Maley and Rory Loughnane (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 168–83, p. 174. Mottram notes that this had considerable resonance because John Davies of Hereford promised Henry that the Welsh would rebuild Caerleon for him, and he also observes the prominence of ruins in Jones’s designs for *Prince Henry’s Barriers* (1610) (pp. 175–77).

¹⁰ Margaret Jones-Davies, “*Cymbeline* and the sleep of faith,” in *Theatre and Religion: Lancastrian Shakespeare*, ed. Richard Dutton, Alison Findlay, and Richard Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 197–217, p. 211.

¹¹ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400–c. 1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 578.

¹² Paul Hyland, *Ralegh’s Last Journey* (London: HarperCollins, 2003), p. 1.

¹³ William Drury, *Aluredus, sive Alvredus* (1619), trans. Robert Knightley (as *Alfrede, or Right Reinthron’d*, 1659), ed. Dana F. Sutton for the Philological Museum, 2014, <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/aluredus/>, 5.11.2621.

¹⁴ See Lisa Hopkins, *Renaissance Drama on the Edge* (Ashgate, 2014), chap. 8.

¹⁵ Boece in *Historia Gentis Scotorum* located Voada in Scotland, equated her with Boudica, and made her the wife of Arviragus, but Holinshed said Arviragus was an error.

¹⁶ Marisa R. Cull, *Shakespeare’s Princes of Wales: English Identity and the Welsh Connection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 14, 120 and 123.

¹⁷ The attribution to Armin is traditional, but Tristan Marshall has recently suggested that Robert Alleyn is more likely to be the author (Tristan Marshall, *Theatre and Empire: Great Britain on the London Stages under James VI and I* [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000], p. 105).

¹⁸ R. A., Gent., *The Valiant Welshman, or the true chronicle history of the life and valiant deedes of Caradoc the Great, King of Cambria, now called Wales, as it hath beene sundry times acted by the Prince of Wales his seruants* (London: George Purslowe for Robert Lownes, 1615), sig. C4v.

¹⁹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, p. 221.

²⁰ Richard Hingley, *The Recovery of Roman Britain 1586–1906: A Colony so Fertile* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 34.

²¹ Joscelin, *The life of the glorious bishop S. Patricke ...*, trans. Fr. B. B. (Saint-Omer: [G Seutin?] for John Heigham, 1625), p. 226.

²² Caradoc of Llancarvan, *The historie of Cambria, now called Wales*, trans. Humphrey Llwyd (London: 1584), p. 97.

²³ Walter Raleigh, *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich and Bewtiful Empyre of Guiana*, ed. Neil L. Whitehead (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 196.

²⁴ Lynda E. Boose, “*The Taming of the Shrew*, Good Husbandry, and Enclosure,” in *Shakespeare Reread: The Texts in New Contexts*, ed. Russ McDonald (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 193–225, p. 203. On the woman-land metaphor see also Virginia Mason Vaughan, “Preface: The Mental Maps of English Renaissance Drama,” in *Playing the Globe: Genre and Geography in English Renaissance Drama*, ed. John Gillies and Virginia Mason Vaughan (London: Associated University Presses, 1998), pp. 7–16, p. 12, and Louis Montrose, “The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery,” *Representations* 33 (1991), pp. 1–41.

²⁵ Adrian Streete, “Conciliarism and Liberty in Shakespeare and Fletcher’s *Henry VIII*,” in *Stages of Engagement: Drama and Religion in Post-Reformation England*, ed. James D. Mardock and Kathryn R. McPherson (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2014), pp. 83–105, p. 100.

²⁶ Andrew Hadfield, *Literature, Travel, and Colonial Writing in the English Renaissance 1545–1625* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 225.

²⁷ Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley, “Introduction: Irish representations and English alternatives” in *Representing Ireland: Literature and the Origins of Conflict, 1534–1660*, ed. Brendan Bradshaw, Andrew Hadfield, and Willy Maley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 1–23, p. 4.

²⁸ Alison Findlay, *Women in Shakespeare: A Dictionary* (London: Continuum, 2010), pp. 212–14.

²⁹ Valerie Traub, “Jewels, Statues, and Corpses: Containment of Female Erotic Power in Shakespeare’s Plays,” in *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*, ed. Deborah E. Barker and Ivo Kamps (London: Verso, 1995), pp. 120–41, p. 131.

³⁰ David Loades, *Chronicles of the Tudor Kings* (London: Garamond, 1990), p. 141.

³¹ William Shakespeare, *Henry VI, Part Two*, ed. John Dover Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 1.3.83.

³² Winifred Joy Mulligan declares simply that “in 1533 ... Henry VIII discarded King Arthur in favor of the British Constantine” (“The British Constantine: an English historical myth,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Drama* 8 [1978], pp. 257–79, p. 269).

³³ Rory Loughnane, “‘I myself would for Caernarfonshire’: The Old Lady in *King Henry VIII*,” in *Celtic Shakespeare: The Bard and the Borderers*, ed. Willy Maley and Rory Loughnane (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 185–202, p. 196.

³⁴ George Owen, *The Description of Pembrokeshire*, ed. Dillwyn Miles (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1994), p. 206.

³⁵ Ronald J. Boling, “Anglo-Welsh Relations in *Cymbeline*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51.1 (2000), pp. 33–66, p. 41.

³⁶ Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, p. 93.

³⁷ David Rees, *The Son of Prophecy: Henry Tudor’s Road to Bosworth* (London: Black Raven Press, 1985), pp. 98–99.

³⁸ Michael Drayton, *Poly-Olbion: A Chorographical description of tracts, riuers, mountains, forests, and other parts of this renowned isle of Great Britain* (London: 1622), pp. 108–9.

³⁹ Lisa Hopkins, “Welshness in Shakespeare’s English Histories,” in *Shakespeare’s History Plays: Performance, Translation and Adaptation in Britain and Abroad*, ed. Ton Hoenselaars (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 60–74.

⁴⁰ Anonymous, *The true chronicle history of King Leir and his three daughters* (London: Simon Stafford for John Wright, 1605), sig. I3r.

⁴¹ William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*, ed. David Bevington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 1.1.44 and 1.1.38–40.

⁴² Cull, *Shakespeare’s Princes of Wales*, pp. 31, 38 and 49.

⁴³ Loughnane, “‘I myself would for Caernarfonshire,’” p. 186.

⁴⁴ Boling, “Anglo-Welsh Relations in *Cymbeline*,” pp. 40–41.

⁴⁵ Boling, “Anglo-Welsh Relations in *Cymbeline*,” pp. 50, 53, and 57.

⁴⁶ Janet Clare, *Shakespeare’s Stage Traffic: Imitation, Borrowing and Competition in Renaissance Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 15.

⁴⁷ Samuel Rowley, *When You See Me, You Know Me* (London: Nathaniel Butter, 1605), sig. E3r.

⁴⁸ Clare, *Shakespeare’s Stage Traffic*, p. 254.

⁴⁹ Streete, “Conciliarism and Liberty in Shakespeare and Fletcher’s *Henry VIII*,” pp. 95 and 98.

⁵⁰ Ruth Vanita, “Mariological Memory in *The Winter’s Tale* and *Henry VIII*,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 40.2 (2000), pp. 311–37, p. 315.

⁵¹ Lisa Hopkins, *Renaissance Drama on the Edge* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 135–52.

⁵² Jay Zysk, “Of Ceremonies and *Henry VIII*,” in *Stages of Engagement: Drama and Religion in Post-Reformation England*, ed. James D. Mardock and Kathryn R. McPherson (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2014), pp. 241–62, pp. 253–54 and 242.

Chapter 7

Athelstan, the Virgin King

THREE EARLY MODERN PLAYS feature King Athelstan: *The Welsh Ambassador* (1621), the anonymous *Guy of Warwick*, which is difficult to date but may possibly belong to the 1590s, and Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (1599). I shall be arguing that the reasons these playwrights turn to Athelstan is that they find him a flexible, suggestive and culturally resonant figure who could be used to discuss a number of important issues, including succession, the status of the monarch, and the relationship of early modern English identities to the histories which had produced them. Athelstan, often considered the first king of England, was a rich and complicated figure, not least because, according to which account you believed, there were at least four kings of that name: John Bridges in *A defence of the government established in the Church of Englande for ecclesiasticall matters* is one of a number of writers to remember that the Danish king Guthrum took the name Athelstane after Alfred the Great persuaded him to accept baptism;¹ Robert Persons mentions in *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of Ingland* that "Etheldred [the Unready] had by his first wife other two sonnes named Edwin and Adelston";² and in his study of Athelstan's England Paul Hill notes that "During Athelstan's reign, a figure appears in East Anglia who was himself called Athelstan, but nicknamed 'Half-King'."³ The figure in whom both I and the Renaissance are interested, though, is none of these: he is the illegitimate son of Edward the Elder and the grandson of Alfred the Great, and he reigned as undisputed king of England from 925 to 939.

Although Paul Hill declares that "when history was re-written again in the Tudor period, Athelstan was all but lost," something which Hill is inclined to attribute to "the fact that the Tudor line traced itself from the very dynasty which Athelstan had all but crushed,"⁴ Athelstan was in his day a hugely important figure. Hill notes that by the time he came to the throne, "the Danish armies had succeeded in eliminating

all but one of the early English dynasties,” the exception being the royal house of Wessex;⁵ according to his biographer William of Malmesbury, Athelstan’s status as heir to that house was confirmed in a semi-official investiture by his grandfather Alfred the Great. Athelstan used that as a launchpad to develop Alfred’s “new ‘kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons’” to the point where “the king of Wessex would no longer be *Westsaxena cinge*, but *Angol Saxonum rex*,”⁶ and indeed even more than that: Athelstan’s charters term him *basileus*, *imperator*, and *rex*, and Camden calls him “the first English King that brought this countrey absolute under his dominion.”⁷ As Drayton notes, Athelstan was the first English king to wear a crown (though Drayton regards the mythical Molmutius as the first *British* king to have done so,⁸ and Shakespeare has Cymbeline concur that Molmutius “was the first of Britain which did put / His brows within a golden crown, and call’d / Himself a king”).⁹ In addition, Athelstan may or may not have been the first to actually undergo a coronation ceremony, at Kingston upon Thames,¹⁰ but certainly “His reign is the first in which we have a numismatic portrayal of a crowned head,”¹¹ and we have numerous images of him crowned,¹² including several which were in the possession of Sir Robert Cotton and so could have been known to Jacobean and Caroline writers; certainly in Dekker’s *Old Fortunatus* Athelstane rather pointedly says “By my crowne I sweare” (sig. G3r), and *Guy of Warwick* too contains a reference to Athelstan’s crown.

Athelstan devoted particular attention to securing the borders of his new kingdom of England, something in which he was probably influenced by the example of his aunt Athelflede, Lady of the Mercians, whose building program essentially plotted a border between Mercia and the Danelaw.¹³ He was the first to fix the border between England and Wales at the Wye and that between England and Cornwall at the Tamar; it may therefore not be coincidence that *Old Fortunatus* has an earl of Cornwall and an earl of Chester, and so too does *The Welsh Ambassador*. He was also credited with subduing the Isles of Scilly and founding the abbey of St. Burien in token of his suzerainty,¹⁴ as well as subduing the Scots and extracting homage from them and from the Welsh. He fostered the heirs to the thrones or ducal chairs of Norway, France, and Brittany, brought the Welsh kings Hywel Dda and Idwal Foel into his affinity, and his engineering of royal marriages for several of his eight sisters made him almost like Queen Victoria in his use of relatives to construct a network of European royal cousins. He exercised influence outside England in other ways too: Sir Frank Shenton notes that when Athelstan sent a fleet to help

his foster-son and nephew Louis d'Outremer after the Germans invaded Lotharingia it was "the first occasion on which an English king is known to have assembled a fleet in order to help a continental ally."¹⁵

Nor was Athelstan as forgotten as we might suppose, for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were well aware of much of this, not least because Geoffrey of Monmouth's *The History of the Kings of Britain* ends with Athelstan.¹⁶ In 1589, in his account of how he traveled with his master Henry Cavendish (son of Bess of Hardwick) to Constantinople, a servant who identifies himself only as "Fox" noted that in Magdeburg "ther ys a great church called the Doome, and ther we wear shewed the toome of Edethe the Emperesse, the wyf of Ottan, Emperour. Thys Edethe was the daughter [actually sister] of Ethellstane, Kyng of England."¹⁷ Camden quotes William of Malmesbury (whose *De Gestis Regum Anglorum* was edited by Sir Henry Savile in 1596) as saying that Alfred knighted Athelstan;¹⁸ at least one scholar (Nowell) knew the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle;¹⁹ and the collection of Sir Robert Cotton included an extensive collection of Anglo-Saxon charters, among which Athelstan, a great issuer of charters, was well represented, as well as a book given to Athelstan by his brother-in-law Otto the Great of Germany, who also gave him Constantine's sword.²⁰ Sarah Foot remarks on a poem in praise of Athelstan found in a Cotton MS and on the fact that "Leland reported that he had seen several books at Bath with inscriptions reporting their donation by Æthelstan," and notes too that Cotton owned a miniature of Athelstan with St. Cuthbert which is now lost,²¹ while Leland's *Itinerary* declares that Athelstan gave the borough of Barnstaple its privileges and that he gave an estate in Pilton to Malmesbury Abbey.²² Cotton also had coins of Athelstan, and Marion Archibald notes that "in 1611 Cotton's collection was the source of Anglo-Saxon coins used to illustrate John Speed's *History of Great Brittain*";²³ both Cotton and Speed would therefore have known that Athelstan's coins call him variously "Rex totius Britanniae" and "Rex Saxorum," and Cotton also possessed a book in which Athelstan is referred to as "Anglorum basilyeos et curagulus totius Brytanniae."²⁴

Early modern writers had a number of reasons to be interested in this long-dead king. In the first place, Athelstan was like Elizabeth in that he never married. He may possibly have followed the model of his aunt Athelflede, who according to Thomas Heywood, who includes her in his list of English Viragoes, broke off conjugal relations after the difficult birth of her only child.²⁵

This Lady having once assaid the throwes of childbirth, would never after be drawn to have any carnall society with her husband, alledging that it was not fitting or seemly for a woman of her degree being a Princesse, a Kings daughter, and a Kings sister, to inure her selfe to such wanton embraces, whereof should ensue so great pain and sorrow.²⁶

Since he cannot have feared childbirth, though, this does not seem very likely. It is also of course possible that Athelstan's decision not to marry was a matter of sexual preference, but this is not an idea that any Renaissance text that I know of is interested in exploring; Athelstan may, as we shall see, be like Richard II, but no surviving play wants or needs him to be like Edward II. However, it is more probable that there was a political reason for his celibacy, and that it centered on the idea that he was a suitable candidate to reign but not to sire a successor. Sarah Foot suggests that the issue about the succession was that all of Athelstan's younger brothers "had been born to a ruling king,"²⁷ but it is more generally taken to be connected to his illegitimacy, with the theory being that he may have deliberately chosen celibacy in recognition of the unmarried status of his mother, as a means of ensuring that although he might reign, he would not act as a transmitter of the royal bloodline, which would revert instead to one of the thirteen legitimate children of his father Edward the Elder: thus, as Robert Persons has it in *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of England*, "This man dying without issue, his lawful brother Edmond, put back before, was admitted to the crowne."²⁸

There is some very slight evidence to suggest that this failure to marry was perceived as odd. In William Haughton's *Grim the Collier of Croyden*, the ghost of St. Dunstan says that, when he was alive:

I flourish'd in the reign of Seven great Kings;
The first was Adelstane, whose Neece Elfida
Malicious tongues reported, I defiled.²⁹

There is something rather titillating here about the way that a suggestion of sexual misconduct, explicitly associated with the name of Athelstan, is simultaneously proffered and withdrawn, as if there were something that could not quite be said. There are also a number of tantalizing references to a wife for Athelstan which seem to imagine her almost as a concept or formula rather than as a real person. Hill notes that the medieval *Athelston* romance gives him a pregnant wife, though the baby dies when he kicks her in the stomach.³⁰ More suggestively, Holinshed declares that "there

was a charter found of certeine lands giuen by King Athelstane, in this forme: *Athelstane giues to Paullane, Odhiam and Rodhiam, als guid and als faire, als euer yay mine waire, and yarto witnesse Mauld my wife*,”³¹ and John Selden in *Titles of honor* also mentions a charter issued by Athelstan which supposedly refers to “Maulde my wife.”³² Intriguingly, Paul Hill notes that “at Malmesbury in 1380 it was recorded that prayers were to be said for the soul of a Maud, Athelstan’s wife, at St. John the Baptist Chapel, set up by the burgesses in ca. 1180,”³³ but there is no mention of her anywhere in the historical record, and a likelier explanation seems to be the apparent existence of an English proverb, mentioned by Robert Dallington in *Aphorismes ciuill and militarie amplified with authorities*: “Heretofore in our lawes of England, this was a strong Conueyance; *I giue from me and mine ... Witnesse Maude my wife*.”³⁴ Certainly Samuel Daniel notes Athelstan’s childlessness,³⁵ and Speed his failure to marry,³⁶ so despite the mentions of Maud he does seem to have been understood as a celibate. Suggestively, Paul Hill notes that in the medieval *Athelston* romance “There is an obvious connection in the tale between Athelstan’s tyranny and that of Richard II, about whom the poet is probably writing.”³⁷ The parallel between the childless Richard and the childless Elizabeth was one often drawn; to this well-known pairing I suggest that Athelstan could profitably be added as a third term. As Hill observes, *Old Fortunatus*, one of the texts I shall be discussing, “was performed in front of Queen Elizabeth I and the words of Virtue toward the end of the play seem to be loaded with meaning and intended for her ears”;³⁸ indeed the Prologue specifically observes “Some cal her Pandora: some Gloriana, some Cynthia: some [B]elphaebe, some Astraea” (sig. A1v), and it might therefore be suggestive that Andelocia should say to Agripyne “I tell you I am not giuen to the flesh” (sig. H2r), while in *Guy of Warwick*, the visits of the Winchester-based Athelstone to Warwick might well look rather like a Progress. In this context, Sparrow’s question “But I pray tell me one thing, is the King a Man or a Woman?” (5.360) may not be as stupid as it seems. Literally, the king is of course a man, but symbolically I think he may well be a woman, and the celibate Athelstan provided a powerful lens for examining the benefits and logic of a celibate lifestyle not only as practiced by monks, nuns, and hermits such as Guy became, but also by implication as practiced by Elizabeth herself.

However, Athelstan was also like James in that, as Sir Frank Shenton observes, “His recognition as king of the Mercians was independent of his election in Wessex.”³⁹ *The Welsh Ambassador* in particular is acutely aware

of its status as a Jacobean play, in that the Clown prophesies what will happen in the years 1621, 1622 and 1623 (5.3), and one of its authors, the Devon-born John Ford, would certainly have had reasons to be interested in Athelstan. According to Camden, tombs of the Saxon lords who fell at Brunanburh, Athelstan's most famous battle whose actual site has never been located, were still visible at Axminster, and he went on to observe that Axminster belonged to the Mohuns, to whom Ford's play *The Queen* was later dedicated.⁴⁰ Moreover, Sarah Foot notes that Athelstan supposedly rebuilt Exeter and regards it as probable that "the core of Exeter's relic collection came directly from the minster in Exeter from King Æthelstan."⁴¹ I have suggested elsewhere that it was not a foregone conclusion that England and Scotland would stay united under one ruler after the death of James, and that in *Perkin Warbeck* Ford might be hinting at alternative succession scenarios.⁴² As I shall discuss later, *The Welsh Ambassador* too plays with historical fact in ways which suggest that it may not always be possible to predict who will inherit a throne. In what may well look like a sly challenge to the authority of the Stuarts, *The Welsh Ambassador* is a play which has never heard of Scotland, although Eldred fought the Welsh but stayed on as a friend and even learned some Welsh (2.2.115–18) and Edmond did the same in Ireland (2.2.121–22);⁴³ there is also a song and dance of Edmond, Eldred, and Clown who define themselves as respectively Irish, Welsh, and English (5.2.108–12). Athelstan might have ruled both Wessex and Mercia, but he did not found a dynasty and the two kingdoms did not stay united. He might, therefore, have afforded a way for talking about the first Stuart as well as the last Tudor.

Seventeenth-century writers might also just conceivably have been aware that Athelstan plays an extremely important part in the legends of the Freemasons. Arthur H. Williamson observes that "[i]n the late 1590s Scottish stonemasons organized themselves into semi-secret 'lodges' which were independent of their incorporated municipal guilds."⁴⁴ These were the forerunners of the freemasons, whose secret knowledge supposedly relates to the construction of Solomon's Temple on principles said to have been learned from the builders of the pyramids. I have argued elsewhere that it may be possible to detect some awareness of freemasonry in Shakespeare's Egyptian play *Antony and Cleopatra*,⁴⁵ and Richard Wilson has observed that "according to his assistant Nicholas Stone, from 1607 to 1652 the Grand Master of the English Lodge was none other than [Inigo] Jones, whose designs frequently incorporated Masonic symbols."⁴⁶ As Paul Hill observes, "Modern Freemasons claim that their origins lie in the

measures that Athelstan took to protect traders,”⁴⁷ and the Masonic Order of Athelstan believes itself to date from 926 and to have been founded by Athelstan in York, after he had become the first southern English king to reclaim it from the Vikings. (When the King’s Stone at Kingston upon Thames, upon which Anglo-Saxon monarchs were crowned, was moved to its present location in the nineteenth century, it was accompanied by a procession with full masonic honors.) It might therefore be suggestive that Lambarde, whose *Alphabetical Description* appears to use masonic language when it speaks of “the true squared Doctrine of Jesus Christ, the onlie Corner Stonne of infalible Buildinge,” should interest himself in Athelstan, mentioning “Editha the sister of King Athelstane” and declaring that Padstow was originally Adelstow, “Athelstan’s place,”⁴⁸ and it is just possibly pertinent that at least one version of the Guy of Warwick story, Samuel Rowlands’ 1609 poem, places great stress on the fact that Guy meets Athelstan at York (sig. K2r), for the Guy story itself may, as we shall see, possibly have had masonic or at least esoteric connections.

David Griffith notes that “the interweaving of the histories of Athelstan and Guy ... became a common feature of Anglo-Norman and French versions of the legend, and thereby found its way into English accounts,”⁴⁹ and Martha Driver adds to this that in some versions of Guy’s story Guy’s son Rainborn or Reinbroun marries Athelstan’s daughter (Driver is aware that historically Athelstan had no children but notes that “The twelfth-century *Liber Eliensis* does refer to a daughter of Athelstan, an ‘Aedida filia regis Aedelstani’, who is otherwise unattested”).⁵⁰ One thing that is certainly evoked when Athelstan is connected to the Guy of Warwick story is the king’s interest in borders. The first known fortification at Warwick was built in 914 by Athelstan’s aunt Athelflede, Lady of the Mercians and daughter of Alfred the Great, as a defense against the Danes; it subsequently became Warwick Castle, and both Shakespeare and Drayton were of course Warwickshire men, with Shakespeare probably responsible for the line late in *Henry VIII*, “I am not Samson, nor Sir Guy, nor Colbrand.”⁵¹ In the anonymous play *Guy of Warwick* (sometimes attributed to Drayton), local connections are strongly stressed. Time exhorts us:

To grace this bridal feast, imagine then,
King Athelstone hath left fair Winchester
And here in Warwick Castle keeps his court.⁵²

Later, Time says of Guy that:

in a forrest not far from the place,
 a mile distant called Arden wood,
 with his own hands he builds himself a cave. (5.7–9)

Sparrow says he was born at Stratford, and Athelstone concludes the play by announcing that

the shield-bone of the bore of Callidon,
 shall be hang'd up at Coventries great Gate;
 the ribs of the Dun Cow of Dunsmore Heath,
 in Warwick Castle for a monument;
 and on his Cave where he hath left his life,
 a stately Hermitage I will erect,
 in honour of Sir Guy of Warwicks Name. (5.475–81)

Since an alleged rib of the Dun Cow is still to be seen at Warwick Castle, this would obviously strike a chord, but in the specific context of Athelflede and Athelstan the story of Guy of Warwick becomes a matter not simply of local legend but of national survival, and indeed in Speed's *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* we find the stakes of Guy's victory over Colbrand the Dane described as simply "the liberty of *England*."⁵³ The contours of the Danish occupation inevitably varied over time (in *Edmund Ironside*, for instance, the polarities are Southampton and Chester, each represented by their respective earls), but Warwickshire lay in the heart of the conflict zone. Paul Hill notes that "The English translations of the Anglo-Norman *Gui de Warewic* of ca. 1230 have Athelstan summoning his council to deliberate on the impending invasion of King Anlaf of Denmark."⁵⁴ In the *Guy of Warwick* play, what is being staged is clearly a confrontation between nations when a stage direction announces "Enter Swanus King of Denmark, with him Colbron. Then Athelstone King of England, with him Herod" (4.30 s.d.). Swanus announces the terms of engagement as being that "thy homage and thy Princely Crown, / will Swanus bear to Denmark as his own" (4.41–42), with a possible nod to Athelstan's status as first crowned king, and the defeat of Colbrand signals the end of the Danelaw as Swanus says "now force perforce, to Denmark we must go" (4.197). It has even been suggested that beneath the seemingly ridiculous Dun Cow may lurk the words *Dena Gau*, the Danes' kingdom;⁵⁵ that rib in Warwick Castle may speak not of a fearsome ruminant but of national sovereignty and the establishing of England's borders.

It is therefore not surprising that in Samuel Rowlands' long poem *The famous history of Guy Earle of Warwicke*, first published in 1609 and

dedicated "To the Honourable Ladyes of England," Guy is presented as a formative figure in English national identity. The second stanza of the dedication asserts a fundamental connection between England and Englishness by speaking of "worthy English, bred where wee are borne."⁵⁶ However, the Argument immediately introduces a tension by presenting the heroine Phelice, daughter of the earl of Warwick and Guy's future wife, in terms which offer a heady mixture of Christian and classical contexts: "in a vision Cupid presents her with the picture of Mars, inioyning her to loue Guy as the admired Champion of Christendome" (sig. A4v). The idea of mating with Mars aligns Phelice with Rhea Silvia, whose coupling with the god produced Romulus and Remus and was thus foundational to Rome, but like Romulus and Remus two things are in conflict here, for Guy, the new Mars, is to be the champion of Christianity. Rowlands' poem presents Guy as a heroic figure by keeping at bay the potentially comic story of the Dun Cow and presenting instead a warrior who specializes in fighting with giants, monsters and dragons and who may therefore be justly termed "Englands Hector" (sig. L1r). Guy's great moment comes when the invading Danes force the King Athelstane of the play back to Winchester (sig. O4r), and Guy takes up a challenge to single combat issued by the Danish champion Colbrand. As in other versions, the stakes of the fight are made quite clear: the caption to the accompanying illustration declares:

Guy fights to free all Englands feares,
 With Colbrond Gyant Dane:
 And in Hide-mead at Winchester,
 Was that Goliah slaine. (sig. P1v)

Hyde Abbey at Winchester was famous as the burial place of Alfred the Great, though his bones had been lost at the Reformation;⁵⁷ here that loss is imaginatively undone as Guy, telling Colbrand that "The King hath ventur'd England on my Head," wins the fight, halts the Danish occupation, and preserves the authorizing link to the classical past which validates a secure, imperial, English identity. This is also a scene which allows us to glimpse something of the usefulness and versatility of Athelstan as a figure. In fact Sarah Foot suggests that the historical Athelstan had an antipathy to Winchester,⁵⁸ repaying the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's* marginalization of him by choosing to be buried at Malmesbury rather than with his forefathers in Winchester; here, though, associating Athelstan with Winchester makes him synecdochic of the Anglo-Saxon dynasty as

a whole and a type of his famous grandfather in particular. It might even help explain the apparent mystery of why there are so few early modern plays about Alfred the Great himself; there don't need to be, if Athelstan can do duty for him.

Athelstan is certainly a figure whom a number of playwrights seem to have found interesting; Helen Cooper observes that "Although there is only one surviving text of a Guy play, it seems likely that one dramatic version or another could have been seen in every decade from the 1580s to the closing of the theatres in 1642."⁵⁹ Paul Hill notes of Dekker's play *Old Fortunatus* that its "Athelstan, even at the beginning of the seventeenth century, still seems to embody some of the characteristics that were displayed by the later medieval literary Athelstans, a strong grip on power being one of them";⁶⁰ as we have seen, Athelstan needed such a grip because his hereditary claim was weak, given that he was the only illegitimate child among his father's thirteen or fourteen offspring. In particular, Athelstan seems to have been of considerable interest to Dekker: Cooper notes that *A play of the life and death of Guy of Warwicke* by Dekker and Day was licensed on 15 January 1620,⁶¹ and Athelstan also figures in another play partly by Dekker, *The Welsh Ambassador*, where the idea of uncertain bloodline is crucial. "The Welsh ambassador" was a common name for the cuckoo, and although the derivations customarily offered for this usage trace it back to the idea of seasonal migratory Welsh workers, whose advent in England was supposedly heralded by the cuckoo, the word cuckoo was often connected in the early modern mind with cuckold, and the play itself strongly hints at this association: when the Clown asks, "what is the reason that wee English men when the cuckoe is vpon entrance saie the welsh ambassador is cominge," Eldred at once replies "Let anie rascall sonne of whores come into *Cardigan, Flint, Merioneth, Clamorgan* or *Brecknock* and dare prade so."⁶² Eldred's phrase "sonne of whores" suggests that the name is offensive but also connects it to basely, an idea underlined when in the final scene the Clown dresses up as Vulcan, whose status as sign of cuckoldry is confirmed by references such as Demetrius' in *Titus Andronicus*, "Better than he have worn Vulcan's badge."⁶³

The Welsh Ambassador is set in the reign of a king called Athelstane, and in some ways shows considerable awareness of the career of the historical Athelstan, in ways which bear on the idea of questionable legitimacy. It features a duke of Colchester and a bishop of Winchester, and both are resonant titles in the context of the historical Athelstan. Sarah Foot notes

that Athelstan's father Edward the Elder had sacked Colchester, though he had then refounded it,⁶⁴ and at one point the Colchester of the play, sending defiance to the king, orders the messenger to "saie tis *Colchester* that speakes it" (3.1.109). Colchester, the oldest recorded Roman town in Britain, was the oldest town *tout court* if the British History was not to be believed; however, while Colchester may be the oldest title, the man who holds it in the play has only recently acquired it, and he has done so through his daughter's shame. I have already mentioned the suggestion that the historical Athelstan was not wholly comfortable in the Wessex dynasty's traditional capital of Winchester, and the play's bishop of Winchester is certainly opposed to Athelstan, being one of those who seek to uphold the written contract between the king and his cast-off lover Armante, which the king is desperate to retrieve and destroy so that he can be free to pursue his new love interest. This might well recall the armed peace between Athelstan and the historic Wessex capital of Winchester, whose chronicler refused to note his accession and where he did not choose to be buried. The stress on the written contract might well reflect the historical Athelstan's prolific issuing of charters, and when Carintha notes the impressive range of signatories to the contract (3.3.1–3), that chimes with the fact that the historical Athelstan did indeed tend to have his charters witnessed by an impressive range of dignitaries.⁶⁵

In particular, *The Welsh Ambassador* delicately surfaces the difficult question of Athelstan's brother, Edwin. As Sir Frank Shenton observes:

Under the year 933 a Northumbrian annalist states gauntly that "King Athelstan ordered Edwin his brother to be drowned in the sea." Anglo-Norman writers expanded this tradition into a pitiful story of Edwin's sufferings and Athelstan's remorse. Fortunately for Athelstan's memory the monks of St. Bertin in Flanders remembered his gratitude for the burial which they had given to his brother Edwin, drowned in a storm while escaping from England in a time of commotion.⁶⁶

Whether he drowned or not, Edwin does seem to have been something of a sore point with the king, with Paul Hill even suggesting that "Hywel [Dda] named one of his sons Edwin, perhaps not as a sycophantic acknowledgement to England, but as a way of irritating Athelstan."⁶⁷ Hill also notes that there is a distinctively masonic version of the episode:

Their tale places the whole incident in the bay of Weymouth, stating that Edwin had returned from a trip to the Orient whence he had

brought back the secrets of Freemasonry. Edwin, it is said, created the first English lodge at Ely which soon aroused the interest of the king who summoned him to his court at Weymouth to explain himself. Edwin refused to reveal the secrets of the lodge or even account for what was said at their meetings. He did, however, offer to make an oath of allegiance to the king, provided he was not made to break his vow of secrecy. The anger of the king rose, and he set his brother adrift in the boat.⁶⁸

Many early modern writers refer to the Edwin story. John Foxe in *Actes and Monuments* mentions that Athelstan killed his brother Edwin and subsequently founded two monasteries, and adds later “Such malicious make-bates about Princes and parliaments, neuer lacked in common weales. By such lying Ethelstane was incensed to kill his brother Edwine”;⁶⁹ Camden declares that Athelstan founded Middleton Abbey to appease the ghost of Edwin.⁷⁰

In *The Welsh Ambassador*, the king’s brothers are Edmond and Eldred, but the opening stage direction names an “Edwin” who never speaks and never appears again, and this ghost character does indeed prefigure a haunting. Edmund and Eadred were historically the names of Athelstan’s two brothers by his father’s second wife, and he was much closer to them than to Edwin and Alfweard, the two sons of the first marriage: indeed Sarah Foot notes that “According to William of Malmesbury, Æthelstan showed remarkable affection towards his younger brothers.”⁷¹ In the play, however, Edmond and Eldred have just returned from France, to which Athelstane has sent an army, where attempts were made on both their lives with the result that they are now disguised and pretending to be dead. In effect, the Edwin story has thus been transposed onto them, and it also appears in other forms in the play. When Carintha assures him that she is not weeping for her husband, Athelstane says that it would be “pitty to drowne / sich a rich land of bewtie in salt water” (1.2.55–56); shortly after, he tells her “wee both haue sea roome” (1.2.67). The imagery of drowning surely glances at Edwin, and I wonder too if we should take note of Richard Wilson’s suggestion that if Athelstane deliberately took himself out of the line of succession, this mirrors “the division between church and state, the kingdom and the glory, that philosopher Giorgio Agamben sees as the inception of Western democracy, encoded in the legend of the weak or Fisher King, who ‘goes fishing’ because he does not rule but reigns.”⁷² What then does it mean that in *The Welsh Ambassador* Voltimar speaks to Armante of “that little kings fisher (your sonne)” (3.1.134)? The Fisher

King first appears in Chrétien de Troyes, and is first found in English in the *Morte d'Arthur*, though Malory's "King Pescheour" seems to represent a misunderstanding or mistranslation of the French original. I know of no evidence that either Ford or Dekker had read either Chrétien or Malory, but equally I know of no evidence that they had not, or that they might not have come across the idea in conversation. We are on delicate and tentative ground here, but it could perhaps be the case that the use of the term "king's fisher" serves to associate Athelstan with the idea of sacred kingship.

There certainly seems to be esoteric matter in another Athelstan play. In *Guy of Warwick*, Guy is helped on his travels by Oberon, whom Sparrow mishears as Colbron (2.255) but whom the audience will know well enough to be a magic figure, while Guy's declaration to Athelstone that "at your yearly feast of Pentecost / will Guy of Warwick send a hundred Knights" (1.47–48) clearly works to associate him with Arthur, whose feasts of Pentecost are a regular feature of narratives dealing with the matter of Britain and led directly to the quest of the grail. Later, Guy swears chastity for twenty-seven years. No reason is ever given, and we know the marriage has been consummated because he leaves Phillis pregnant, but the play is clearly nervous about Guy's decision. The clown Philip Sparrow parodies the Guy plot; he leaves because he has got a girl into trouble. The inclusion of this cruder version suggests the play's discomfort with Guy's pilgrimage and vow of chastity. Guy also gives Phillis the ominous-seeming injunction "Give it to Herod if it be a son" (1.130) and Athelstone mentions "King Solomon's Temple" (3.81). I do not know what these allusions mean, but I do wonder if they mean *something*, and specifically if they relate to freemasonry's interest in ordeals and in Solomon's Temple. If that were the case, it would support the suggestion that there might be a similar significance in *The Welsh Ambassador's* treatment of the Edwin story.

Despite its obvious interest in and knowledge of the historical Athelstan, *The Welsh Ambassador* has made a number of significant changes to the traditional figure of the king. Like Brome's *The Queen's Exchange* after it, it reprises both *Lear* and *Macbeth*. *Lear* is clearly echoed by the fact that the characters include a Cornwall, an Edmund, and a Kent, and a fool who prophesies (5.3.49–50), talks about eggs (3.1.29–30) and mentions "dover peere" (1.3.26–27); the play also features a king of England, a journey to France and various disguises, and the villainous Voltimar tells the cast-off Armante "maddam I am to dischargd all your followers"

(3.1.90). As for *Macbeth*, Cornwall's stoical reaction to the apparent death of his son Penda, in a situation which is, as in *Macbeth*, one of the assassination of noblemen at the king's instigation, recalls Siward's response to the death of Young Siward (1.1.37–39), and the King himself says "since thou hast waded / For mee thus vpp to th'middle, on now deere *Voltimar*" (2.1.152–53), again recalling *Macbeth*. Moreover the plot subverts the whole idea of legitimate bloodline, which is central to both *Macbeth* and *Lear*, since for most of the play the prince is illegitimate but when his parents marry he is suddenly and miraculously legitimized. The stigma of illegitimacy is thus displaced from Athelstan onto his son, and even then it is only temporary.

In this tactic of allusion to earlier plays *The Welsh Ambassador* echoes an approach which one of its authors, Dekker, had already adopted to Athelstan in his 1600 play *Old Fortunatus*, which echoes both Marlowe and Shakespeare, but only in order to pit them against each other. Toward the beginning of the play we hear of Bazajet, Tamburlaine, and four harnessed kings (sig. B1r), and *Fortunatus*' name echoes *Faustus*' and he too begins by making a choice; later a number of characters acquire horns which only Andelocia can remove. At the same time *Henry V* is echoed by the Chorus' "Suppose you see him brought to Babylon" and Agripyne's declaration that she likes a soldier's wooing best because it is plain.⁷³ We seem, then, to be simultaneously in both the history-world of *Henry V* and the allegory-world of *Doctor Faustus*, and to be both in the fifteenth century and the modern world. This simultaneous evocation of and unmooring from the past is symptomatic of the wider tactics of Dekker's play. *Old Fortunatus* highlights the idea of Trojan ancestry—*Fortunatus* compares his initial choice between riches and wisdom to "his whose fatall choice Troyes downfall wrought" (sig. B2v) and Shadow says "These English occupiers are mad Troians" (sig. G34)—but the Athelstan of the play is wrenched loose from his historical context in that he is a contemporary of the Soldan, the Prince of Cyprus, Prester John, and the Great Cham of Tartary (and postdates Bajazet and Tamburlaine, as well as living in the age of tobacco, as evidenced by the figure "that leane tawnie face Tobacconist death" [sig. B3r]). It may also be worrying that it is the Soldan rather than any English heir of Troy who is the present possessor of "The ball of gold that set all Troy on fire" (sig. D2r), as we know since he offers to show it to *Fortunatus*. *Old Fortunatus* is, then, a play which evokes the heroic and epic past only to unmoor it from the present.

The Welsh Ambassador performs a similar act of unmooring when it fantasizes a marriage for Athelstan, even though the marriage does not occur until after the birth of the king's son, who is therefore illegitimate, though it is made clear that this stain could be wiped out if his parents do eventually marry (1.2.101–3). As well as thus silently revising the story of Athelstane's own illegitimacy and subsequent succession by transposing it onto the son it has invented for him, the play makes little secret of the fact that its story of a long-ago succession crisis encodes a sharp glance at a more recent one: the king/Armante/Carintha triangle revisits and recasts the Henry VIII/Catherine of Aragon/Anne Boleyn triangle, and indeed Armante echoes language used of Anne when she says "A royall concubine can bee no more / Then a greate glorious vncontrolled whore" (3.3.62–63), while Voltimar's question to the disguised princes and Penda "Did not I steere your course well at our cominge out of *Fraunce* to land you in *Wales*" (2.2.99–100) is an obvious glance at the Tudor landing in Milford Haven, and the Clown's reference to "four flanders mares" (5.3.67) equally obviously alludes to Henry VIII's rejection of Anne of Cleves. This topicality suggests that the play is no historical curiosity, but is raising questions which still matter about legitimacy and inheritance and is, as Athelstan so often does, looking directly at the Tudors and Stuarts.

There is also the question of what is to be inherited. As we have seen, the historical Athelstan was a fixer of borders. The Athelstane of *The Welsh Ambassador*, though, is more interested in unfixing, promising that he will give "twoe sheires in *England* next to *Wales*" in perpetuity as Armante's dowry (4.1.23–25), and this is only one of a number of signs of a troubling uncertainty in the concept of Englishness. This is a play in which "French" is a stable term (1.2.30), and Germany too has a securely established national image even if it is only as the home of unreliable clocks: Colchester figures Armante as "a german clock / Never goinge true" (4.3.5–6). Englishness, though, is a different matter. It is clear that it is important:

Colchester. All strangers leaue the roome.

Clowne. Noe english man stirr a foote.

Winchester. Hence with this triviall fellow. (3.1.49–51)

The play is, however, not as confident as Winchester that the Clown's remark is trivial, as we see when the king asks Penda, disguised as Conon, if he is a Saxon, implying that his ethnic identity is not self-evident (1.1.49), and the question is made all the more vexed by a marked emphasis on the

unreliability of historiography. An interest in historiography is signaled early, when Edmund disguises himself as Gildas, a name prominent among early chroniclers, whom Brian Jay Corrigan identifies as the earliest source for Arthur,⁷⁴ and whom Drayton at least had clearly read;⁷⁵ later, the Clown agitates to be made chronicler (4.2.31–35) and Winchester questions him suspiciously:

Winchester. Your cronicle begins with *Brute* the sonne of *Silvius*
the sonne of *Astyanax* the sonne of *Æneas* as other
cronicles of *England* doe, dost not?

Clowne. *Brute*? noe my lord; thincke you I will make brute
beasts of cuntry men? I weare a swete *Brute* then.
Brutus was noe more heere then I was heere.

Where was *Cassius* when *Brutus* was heere? (5.3.40–46)

It is a fair question; where *was* Dio Cassius, and why *doesn't* he mention Brutus?⁷⁶ This is a speech which suggests that ultimately we cannot really be certain of any aspect of the past, and the play as a whole presents that uncertainty as fundamentally connected to ideas about cuckolds, bastardy, and female frailty. Athelstan, then, is a figure who enables early modern writers to ask fundamental questions about what England is, who should rule it, and on what terms.

NOTES

¹ John Bridges, *A defence of the gouernment established in the Church of Englande for ecclesiasticall matters* (London: John Windet for Thomas Chard, 1587), p. 1359.

² William Allen [Robert Persons], *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of Inghland* (London: R. Doleman, 1595), p. 184.

³ Paul Hill, *The Age of Athelstan: Britain's Forgotten History* [2004] (Stroud: The History Press, 2008), p. 179.

⁴ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, pp. 16 and 206.

⁵ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 39.

⁶ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, pp. 73 and 81.

⁷ William Camden, *Britain*, trans. Philemon Holland (London: F. Kingston, R. Young, and J. Legatt for George Latham, 1637), p. 196.

⁸ Michael Drayton, *Poly-Olbion: A Chorographically description of tracts, riuers, mountains, forests, and other parts of this renowned isle of Great Britain* (London: 1622), p. 108.

⁹ William Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, ed. J. M. Nosworthy [1955] (London: Cengage Learning, 2007), 3.1.60–62.

¹⁰ It is sometimes claimed that his father, Edward the Elder, underwent such a ceremony, but Sarah Foot thinks Athelstan, not Edward the Elder, was the first monarch to be crowned at Kingston (Sarah Foot, *Athelstan: The First King of England* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011], p. 74).

¹¹ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 121.

¹² See for instance Foot, *Athelstan*, p. 77.

¹³ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 86.

¹⁴ Raphael Holinshed, *The first and second volumes of Chronicles* (London: Henry Denham, 1587), p. 33.

¹⁵ Frank Shenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 347.

¹⁶ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 284.

¹⁷ A. C. Wood, ed., *Mr Harrie Cavendish his Journey to and from Constanti-nople 1589 by Fox, his Servant*, Camden Miscellany vol. 17 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1940), p. 22.

¹⁸ Camden, *Britain*, p. 174.

¹⁹ Rebecca Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2012), pp. 96–97.

²⁰ Christopher Brooke, *The Saxon and Norman Kings* [1963] (London: Fontana, 1967), pp. 18 and 120.

²¹ Foot, *Athelstan*, pp. 94, 119 and 121.

²² John Chandler, *John Leland's Itinerary: Travels in Tudor England* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), pp. 106–7.

²³ Marion M. Archibald, "Cotton's Anglo-Saxon Coins in the Light of the Peiresc Inventory of 1606," *British Numismatic Journal* 76 (2006), pp. 171–203, pp. 176, 181, and 191.

²⁴ Foot, *Athelstan*, pp. 154–55 and 212.

²⁵ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 87.

²⁶ Thomas Heywood, *The generall history of women* (London: William Hunt, 1657), pp. 332–33.

²⁷ Foot, *Athelstan*, p. 12.

²⁸ Robert Persons, *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of Ingland* (Antwerp: A. Coninx, 1595), pp. 181–82.

²⁹ William Haughton, *Grim the Collier of Croyden* (London: R. D., 1662), 1.1.11–13.

³⁰ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 205.

³¹ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, p. 248.

³² This is quoted by, amongst others, John Selden in *Titles of honor* (London: William Stansby for John Helme, 1614), p. 303.

³³ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 105.

³⁴ Robert Dallington, *Aphorismes ciuill and militarie amplified with authorities, and exemplified with historie, out of the first quarterne of Fr. Guicciardine* (London: Richard Field for Edward Blount, 1613), p. 56.

³⁵ Samuel Daniel, *The Collection of the History of England* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1618), p. 12.

³⁶ John Speed, *The theatre of the empire of Great Britaine* (London: William Hall for John Sudbury and George Humble, 1612), p. 364.

³⁷ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 206.

³⁸ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 207.

³⁹ Shenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 339.

⁴⁰ Camden, *Britain*, pp. 206–7.

⁴¹ Foot, *Athelstan*, pp. 164 and 201.

⁴² See Lisa Hopkins, *Renaissance Drama on the Edge* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014).

⁴³ Lucy Munro suggests that "Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the play's Jacobean context, the play displaces the historical King Athelstan's victories against the Scots onto the Welsh" ("Nemp your sexes!": Anachronistic Aesthetics in *Hen-gist, King of Kent* and the Jacobean 'Anglo-Saxon' Play," *Modern Philology* 111.4 (2014), pp. 734–61, p. 755), but the result is a lacuna as much as a compliment.

⁴⁴ Arthur H. Williamson, "Number and national consciousness: The Edinburgh mathematicians and Scottish political culture at the union of the crowns," in *Scots and Britons: Scottish political thought and the union of 1603*, ed. Roger A. Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 187–212, pp. 206 and 153.

⁴⁵ Lisa Hopkins, "Scota, Cleopatra, and Roman Law," in *Antony and Cleopatra: New Critical Essays*, ed. Sara Deats (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 231–42.

⁴⁶ Richard Wilson, *Free Will: Art and Power on Shakespeare's Stage* (Manches-

ter: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 350.

⁴⁷ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 114. See also Foot, *Athelstan*, pp. 235–36.

⁴⁸ Rebecca Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2012), pp. 135, 132 and 173.

⁴⁹ David Griffith, “The Visual History of Guy of Warwick,” in *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, ed. Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 110–32, p. 111.

⁵⁰ Martha W. Driver, “In her owne persone semly and bewteus’: Representing women in stories of Guy of Warwick,” in *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, ed. Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 133–53, pp. 145–46. On the prominence of the Guy of Warwick story see Helen Cooper, “Guy of Warwick, Upstart Crows and Mounting Sparrows,” in *Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson: New Directions in Biography*, ed. Takashi Kozuka and J. R. Mulryne (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 119–38, p. 121.

⁵¹ William Shakespeare and John Fletcher, *Henry VIII*, ed. A. R. Humphreys (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), 5.4.22.

⁵² Samuel Rowlands, *The famous history of Guy Earle of Warwicke* (London: E. Allde, 1620), 1.26–28.

⁵³ Speed, *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain*, p. 365.

⁵⁴ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 204.

⁵⁵ Isaac Taylor, *Words and Places* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1925), p. 269.

⁵⁶ Rowlands, *The famous history of Guy Earle of Warwicke*, sig. A4r.

⁵⁷ As I write, there is speculation that part of his pelvis may have been found.

⁵⁸ Foot, *Athelstan*, p. 91.

⁵⁹ Helen Cooper, “Guy as early modern English hero,” in *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, ed. Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 185–99, p. 188.

⁶⁰ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 206.

⁶¹ Cooper, “Guy as early modern English hero,” p. 189.

⁶² Thomas Dekker, John Ford and William Rowley, *The Welsh Ambassador*, in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 4.2.68–71. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition and reference will be given in the text.

⁶³ William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Jonathan Bate [1995] (London: Arden, 2003), 1.1.589–88.

⁶⁴ Foot, *Athelstan*, p. 84.

⁶⁵ See for instance Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 127.

⁶⁶ Shenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 355.

⁶⁷ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 56.

⁶⁸ Hill, *The Age of Athelstan*, p. 202.

⁶⁹ John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (London: John Day, 1583), pp. 1130 and 1189.

⁷⁰ Camden, *Britain*, p. 213.

⁷¹ Foot, *Athelstan*, p. 43.

⁷² Richard Wilson, "Sermons in Stones: Shakespeare's Dangerous Thresholds" (unpublished inaugural lecture at Kingston University, 2014).

⁷³ Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus* (London: S. S. for William Apsley, 1600), sigs.. D1r and F3r.

⁷⁴ Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York: Garland, 1992), p. 8.

⁷⁵ Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, p. 72.

⁷⁶ *Pace* Lucy Munro's assumption that the Clown is confused and really means Caius Cassius ("Nemp your sexes!" p. 753), Dio Cassius is regularly named in Renaissance texts as one of the earliest authorities on British history.

Conclusion

AT THE OUTSET OF this book, I posed three questions: what did early modern England know about the pre-Conquest past, where does this knowledge surface in literature, and above all, to what extent did ideas about the past shape concepts of contemporary national, cultural and political identities? To combine the first and second questions, early modern English dramatists knew (or thought they knew) a lot about the period between the Romans to the Normans. In the first chapter, “Bisson Conspectuities’: Language and National Identity,” I traced Renaissance dramatists’ awareness of the fact that the very language in which they wrote their plays spoke of past ethnic conflicts and of the tension between the fantasy of Roman ancestry, with its implied connection to Troy, and the actuality of Germanic and Scandinavian origins. In the second, “Profit and Delight? Magic and the Dreams of a Nation,” I looked at the other major implication of the Roman element of England’s past, the connection to Catholicism and its subsequent loss. Next, in “A Borrowed Blood for Brute’: From Britain to England,” I examined some of the ways in which Renaissance drama considered the inescapable fact of hybridity, and in “Queens and the British History,” “Dido in Denmark: Danes and Saxons on the Early Modern English Stage” and “Valiant Welshwomen” I focused on the role of female ancestors in particular. Finally in “Athelstan, the Virgin King” I showed the range and flexibility of a single figure from the Anglo-Saxon past and how many issues such a figure could be used to speak to.

Collectively, these discussions have pointed up a number of concerns. In the first place, there is the question of the relationship between England and Britain. Britain supposedly took its name from Brutus, great-grandson of Aeneas, and James I was fond of insisting that the fact that England, Scotland, and Wales were a homogenous landmass mandated that they should also be a homogenous political entity. Against these markers of pastness and wholeness, though, other concerns militated. The dialect, place-names, and church dedications of different parts of the country spoke

of different ethnic origins, and even the Brutus story itself had a built-in emphasis on fragmentation in that it stressed the disappearance of the bloodline of Lochrine (and even that of Camber had to be taken largely on trust). As a result, England and Britain sit in uneasy tension in texts of the period, neither coterminous nor complementary, with the added complication that the term “Britain” is associated with the political agenda of James I as well as with the Galfridian narrative of the past. The disconnect between the two terms is not only a threat, though; it also offers an opportunity. In the sense that all narratives of the British/English past are fundamentally dynastic—even in a sense family history—they are essentially predicated not merely on reproduction but on diversification, for families are created not by parthenogenesis but by marriage, and the consequent, constant introduction of new blood. Hybridization is thus inevitable, and the successive waves of invasion by Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Danes, and Normans could seem in one way merely a metaphor for the formation of new families.

It is this stress on miscegenation which accounts in part for the emphasis placed on the role of queens in the formation of British national and political identities (the presence of two successive queens on the throne of England, coupled with the reign of Mary, Queen of Scots over the Border, also had something to do with it, as did the useful coincidence that James I’s wife Anna of Denmark came from one of the nations which had invaded England in the past). Thus not only the obvious figure of Boudicca but also her possible proxy, the unnamed queen of Cymbeline, along with Cordelia, Landgartha, Bertha of the West Saxons, and (in a play now lost) Emma are all important characters, as too are Roxena and Cartesmunda, lovers of Vortigern and Canute respectively; some texts even imagine a wife for the famously celibate Athelstan. Collectively, these women testify to the importance attached to the relationship between marriage and hybridization, but they also bear on the question of who should rule and on what basis: should it be a war leader, a *dux bel-lorum*, such as was supposedly elected by the Goths, or should heredity play a part, and if so how important were questions of gender, legitimacy (as touched on most notably in *The Welsh Ambassador*) and primogeniture (as raised in *Gorboduc*)? Too delicate to discuss in relationship to contemporary events, questions such as these could be floated with relative safety in texts set in the distant past.

Finally, a recurrent motif in the plays I have discussed is the return of the dead, which is presented as all the more important because we are several times reminded that the Reformation led to the destruction or loss

of many royal or holy bodies and tombs. This is particularly apparent in *Thorney Abbey*, a play which almost systematically tackles a number of the topics I have touched on in this book. Published in 1662 as part of *Gratiae Theatrales, or a choice ternary of English plays*, and attributed there to “T. W.,” *Thorney Abbey* defies either secure ascription or secure dating; in their catalog of *British Drama 1533–1642*, Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson offer a best guess of 1615, but give 1610–1642 as the possible limits, and note that though there are vague similarities with the work of both Rowley and Heywood there is nothing to confirm the presence of either.¹ The 1662 Prologue by “Theatro-Philos” declares,

This I’le dare to foretell, although no Sear,
That Thorny-Abbey will outdate King LEAR.²

Although this assessment was to prove wildly over-optimistic, the comparison to Shakespeare is not completely spurious. Not only is the play opened by a fool who discusses the propriety of fools appearing in tragedies, but Sibert, Earl of Coventry, and his wife Emma closely echo Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. The unnamed king comes to stay with them; they decide to kill him and employ two murderers for the purpose; Bishop Lucius (that name again) and the earl of Wiltshire arrive to visit the king and the murder is discovered; Sibert kills the king’s pages and blames the deed on them, remarking the while how shocking it is that this should have happened in his house; countess Emma feels faint. There are repeated thunder and other climatic effects which clearly indicate divine displeasure at the regicide, and which unnerve Sibert so much that he decides to flee to Ireland to escape them. However, the appearance of a blazing star encourages Emma to confess and all is revealed. There are also parallels with other plays about the pre-Conquest past. As in *The Welsh Ambassador*, there is a prince born out of wedlock whose parents subsequently marry, and there are echoes both of that play and of *Henry VIII* when Edmund says to Anne “this rich Ambassador / Discover’d to me more then the Indies wealth” and Anne replies, “Oh! what a jewell then beyond esteem / Have I then lost, which gold can ne’re redeem?” (p. 18). There is an odd echo of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (and a reminder of the potentially perilous associations of the name Anne) when Edmund assures Anne “then ’tis no snare, / Nor incest can it be, thou art my wife” (p. 19); since she is no relation of his, it could not possibly be incest, so perhaps the suggestion has gravitated in from the incest between King Arthur and his sister Anne.

Most notably, though, the play is about the foundation of Westminster Abbey, the place where the bodies of kings are buried. In fact Edward the Confessor's was the first royal burial in the Abbey, but in *Thorney Abbey* when the body of the unnamed, murdered king is finally discovered his brother and successor Edmund says,

Take up the body, and let it have a second buriall,
And layd within the sepulchers of Kings. (pp. 40–41)

The grave motif is underlined when Thorney actually takes up residence in a tomb, living there all the time he is having the Abbey built and declaring "Here in my grave, I'll live and learn to dye, / That after death my Soul to Heav'n may fly" (p. 43). His second motive is that "since I have no child to keep my fame, / Ile call it Thorny-Abbey by my name" (pp. 44–45)—but of course no one now calls Westminster Abbey by that name, and even the play itself does not trouble to remember the name of the king who will supposedly be the Abbey's first royal corpse. Even our principal memorial to the past no longer recalls the things it was originally intended to recall, and the story of its foundation is tainted by other, less welcome memories of incest, of regicide, of illegitimacy, and of two of Britain's most suspect queens, Lady Macbeth and Anne Boleyn (who is also recalled by the fact that the play has an earl of Wiltshire, the title conferred on her father Thomas Boleyn). The principal impression created by *Thorney Abbey* is therefore one of loss of bodies and blurring of memories and names. It is that loss and blurring for which so many of these plays seek a redress, albeit one of the imagination, by bringing back the missing dead. In *Fatum Vortigerni*, Death opens proceedings and later the ghost of King Constantine appears. *The Misfortunes of Arthur* opens with the ghost of Gorlois, and *The Valiant Welshman* with the bard emerging from his tomb. In *Cymbeline* Innogen returns apparently from the dead; in *King Lear* Lear believes that Cordelia does; and in both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* ghosts appear. These hauntings emblemize the way in which the past was felt to bear on the present.

In particular, the knowledge that there had been different constituent parts of Britain in the past bore strongly on the sense that there still were. In *Gorboduc*, *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and *Macbeth*, Scotland is a source of threat and danger; in *The Valiant Welshman*, *Cymbeline*, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman* and *Henry VIII*, Wales is a site of miracle and of the last hope of reviving a link to the British (and by implication Trojan) past. There is a recurrent acknowledgement that a purely British identity

is no longer possible (if indeed it ever was), because bloodlines have been diluted by wave after wave of invasion, but there is also a sense of a link between land and identity which means that while Britishness may have been constantly modified by new blood, it can also be seen as having been constantly revitalized by it. The idea of a thread of an enduring and distinctive Britishness, inflected by time but not fundamentally altered by it, is sometimes enhanced by topicality and is also bolstered by the plays' collective carelessness with chronology, as in *Fatum Vortigerni* where the characters include Uther Pendragon, Canute, Hengist and Horsa, and a Benedictine monk. As King Arthur rubs shoulders with Hengist and Horsa, Alfred the Great is sought after by the sister of King Canute, and the daughter of King Cymbeline is pursued by a Renaissance Italian nobleman, audiences are offered a vision of an undeniable and indestructible Britishness which even as it changes is still essentially the same.

NOTES

¹ Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson, *British Drama 1533–1642: A Catalogue*, vol. 6: 1609–16 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 461.

² Anonymous, *Gratiae Theatrales, or a choice ternary of English plays* (London: R. D., 1662), p. 5.

Works Cited

- A., R. Gent. *The Valiant Welshman, or the true chronicle history of the life and valiant deedes of Caradoc the Great, King of Cambria, now called Wales, as it hath beene sundry times acted by the Prince of Wales his seruants*. London: George Purslowe for Robert Lownes, 1615.
- Adams, Max. *In the Land of Giants: Journeys Through the Dark Ages*. London: Head of Zeus, 2015.
- Alcock, Leslie. *Arthur's Britain: History and Archaeology AD 367–634*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971.
- Allen, William. [Robert Persons]. *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of Ingland*. Antwerp: A. Conincx, 1595.
- Anon. *A Knack to Know a Knave*. London: Richard Jones, 1594.
- . *The famous history of Fryer Bacon*. London: M. Clark for T. Passenger, 1679.
- . *The Fatal Marriage*. Edited by Andrew Duxfield. <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/renplays/fatalindex.html>.
- . *The marriage of Prince Fredericke, and the Kings daughter, the Lady Elizabeth ...* London: Thomas Creede for William Barley, 1613.
- . *No-body and Some-body. With the true Chronicle Historie of Elydure, who was fortunately three seuerall times crowned King of England*. London: John Trundle, 1606.
- . *Northerne poems congratulating the Kings majesties entrance to the crowne*. London: J. Windet for E. Weaver, 1604.
- . *Thorney Abbey*. In *Gratiae Theatrales, or a choice ternary of English plays*. London: R. D., 1662.
- . *The true Chronicle Historie of King Leir and his three daughters*. London: Simon Stafford for John Wright, 1605.
- . *Wily beguilde*. London: H. L. for Clement Knight, 1606.
- Antonucci, Barbara. "Romans versus Barbarians: Speaking the Language of Empire in *Titus Andronicus*." In *Identity, Otherness and Empire in Shakespeare's Rome*, edited by Maria Del Sapio Garbero, 119–30. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009.
- Archdeacon, Anthony. "The Publication of *No-body and Some-body*: Humanism, history and economics in the early Jacobean public theatre," *Early Modern Literary Studies*. <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/16-1/archnobo.htm>

- Archibald, Marion M. "Cotton's Anglo-Saxon Coins in the Light of the Peiresc Inventory of 1606." *British Numismatic Journal* 76 (2006): 171–203.
- Arnold, Martin. "On the Origins of the Gothic Novel: From Old Norse to Otranto." In *Bram Stoker and the Gothic: Formations to Transformations*, edited by Catherine Wynne, 14–29. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Arnold, Oliver. *The Third Citizen: Shakespeare's Theater and the Early Modern House of Commons*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007.
- Axton, Marie. *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession*. London: Royal Historical Society, 1977.
- Baldo, Jonathan. "Necromancing the Past in *Henry VIII*." *English Literary Renaissance* 34.3 (2004): 359–86.
- Beaumont, Francis, and John Fletcher. *Philaster*. Edited by Andrew Gurr. London: Methuen, 1969.
- Bellamy, Elizabeth Jane. *Dire Straits: The Perils of Writing the Early Modern English Coastline from Leland to Milton*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013.
- Berg, James. "'Gorboduc' as a Tragic Discovery of 'Feudalism'." *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 40.2 (2000): 199–226.
- Bernau, Anke. "Myths of origin and the struggle over nationhood in medieval and early modern England." In *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, edited by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews, 106–18. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Berresford Ellis, Peter. *Macbeth, High King of Scotland, 1040–57*. Dundonald: The Blackstaff Press, 1990.
- Bevington, David. *Tudor Drama and Politics: A Critical Approach to Topical Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968.
- Boling, Ronald J. "Anglo-Welsh Relations in *Cymbeline*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51.1 (2000): 33–66.
- Bolton, Edmund. *Nero Caesar, or Monarchie depraved*. London: Thomas Snodham and Bernard Alsop for Thomas Walkley, 1624.
- Boose, Lynda E. "The Taming of the Shrew, Good Husbandry, and Enclosure." In *Shakespeare Reread: The Texts in New Contexts*, edited by Russ McDonald, 193–225. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Borlik, Todd. "Hellish Falls: Faustus's Dismemberment, Phaeton's Limbs and Other Renaissance Aviation Disasters—Part II." *English Studies* 97.4 (2016): 351–361.
- Bowers, Fredson. "Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, and the Ur-Hamlet." *Modern Language Notes* 48.2 (1933): 101–8.
- . "The Date and Composition of *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*." *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature* 15 (1933): 165–89.
- Boys, John. *An exposition of the last psalme delivered in a sermon perached at Pauls Crosse the fifth of Nouember, 1613*. London: Felix Kyngston for William Apsley, 1613.

- Brackmann, Rebecca. *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2012.
- Brewer, Anthony. *The love-sick king, an English tragical history with the life and death of Cartesmunda, the fair nun of Winchester*. London: Robert Pollard, 1655.
- Bridges, John. *A defence of the gouernment established in the Church of Englande for ecclesiasticall matters*. London: John Windet for Thomas Chard, 1587.
- Briggs, Julia. "Middleton's Forgotten Tragedy *Hengist, King of Kent*." *The Review of English Studies* 41.164 (1990): 479–95.
- Brome, Richard. *The Queen's Exchange*. Edited by Richard Wood. <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/renplays/qexchcontents.htm>
- Brooke, Christopher. *The Saxon and Norman Kings* [1963]. London: Fontana, 1967.
- Broude, Ronald. "Roman and Goth in *Titus Andronicus*." *Shakespeare Studies* 6 (1970): 27–34.
- Brownlow, F. W. *Shakespeare, Harsnett, and the Devils of Denham*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993.
- Burl, Aubrey. *Stonehenge*. London: Constable & Robinson, 2006.
- Burnell, Henry. *Landgartha*. Dublin, 1641.
- Butterworth, Philip. *Theatre of Fire: Special Effects in Early English and Scottish Theatre*. London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1998.
- Callis, Robert. *The reading of that famous and learned gentleman, Robert Callis ... upon the statute of 23 H. 8, Cap. 5, of Sewers*. London: William Leak, 1647.
- Camden, William. *Britannia*. Translated by Philemon Holland. London: F. Kingston, R. Young and J. Legatt for George Latham, 1637.
- Carlell, Lodowick. *Arviragus and Philicia*. London: John Norton for John Croke, 1639.
- Carleton, Thomas Compton, S.J. *Fatum Vortigerni*. Edited by Dana F. Sutton. 2007. <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/vort/intro.html>
- Carneiro De Mendonça, Barbara Heliodora. "The Influence of *Gorboduc* on *King Lear*." *Shakespeare Survey* 13 (1966): 41–48.
- Caro-Barnes, Jennifer M. "Marlowe's Tribute to His Queen, in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*." <http://www.uta.edu/english/ees/caro-barnes.html>
- Chalmers, Hero. "Dismantling the Myth of 'Mad Madge': The cultural context of Margaret Cavendish's authorial self-presentation." *Women's Writing* 4.3 (1997): 323–40.
- Champion, Larry S. "'Disaster With My So Many Joys': Structure and Perspective in Massinger and Dekker's *The Virgin Martyr*." *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 1 (1984): 199–209.
- Chandler, John. *John Leland's Itinerary: Travels in Tudor England*. Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993.
- Chapman, George. *The tragedy of Alphonsus, Emperour of Germany*. London: Humphrey Moseley, 1654.
- Cheney, Patrick. *Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

- Chettle, Henry. *The Tragedy of Hoffman*. London: J. N. for Hugh Perry, 1631.
- Clapham, John. *The historie of Great Britannie declaring the successe of times and affaires in that iland, from the Romans first entrance, vntill the raigne of Egbert, the West-Saxon prince; who reduced the severall principalities of the Saxons and English, into a monarchie, and changed the name of Britanie into England*. London: Valentine Simmes, 1606.
- Clare, Janet. *Shakespeare's Stage Traffic: Imitation, Borrowing and Competition in Renaissance Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Clubb, Louise George. "The Virgin Martyr and the Tragedia Sacra." *Renaissance Drama* 7 (1964): 103–26.
- Coch, Christine. "Mother of my Contreyme": Elizabeth I and Tudor Constructions of Motherhood." *English Literary Renaissance* 26.3 (1996). 423–50.
- Cooper, Helen. "Guy of Warwick, Upstart Crows and Mounting Sparrows." In *Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson: New Directions in Biography*, edited by Takashi Kozuka and J. R. Mulryne, 119–38. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006.
- . "Guy as Early Modern English Hero." In *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, edited by Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field, 185–99. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007.
- Corrigan, Brian Jay, ed. *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition*. New York: Garland, 1992.
- Cull, Marisa R. *Shakespeare's Princes of Wales: English Identity and the Welsh Connection*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Dallington, Robert. *Aphorismes ciuill and militarie amplified with authorities, and exemplified with historie, out of the first quarterne of Fr. Guicciardine*. London: Richard Field for Edward Blount, 1613.
- Daniel, Samuel. *The first part of the historie of England*. London: Nicholas Okes, 1612.
- Dekker, Thomas. *Old Fortunatus*. London: S. S. for William Apsley, 1600.
- Dekker, Thomas, John Ford, and William Rowley. *The Welsh Ambassador*, in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, edited by Fredson Bowers, volume IV. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961.
- Dekker, Thomas, John Ford, and William Rowley. *The Witch of Edmonton*. Edited by Simon Trussler and Jacqui Russell. London: Methuen, 1983.
- Deloney, Thomas. *Strange histories, or, Songs and sonnets, of kinges, princes, dukes, lords, ladyes, knights, and gentlemen and of certaine ladyes that were shep-herdes on Salisburie plaine*. London: R. B. for W. Barley, 1612.
- Dent, Robert W. "The Love-sick King: Turk Turned Dane." *The Modern Language Review* 56.4 (1961): 555–57.
- Diehl, Huston. *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.
- Dollerup, Cay. *Denmark, Hamlet, and Shakespeare: A Study of Englishmen's Knowledge of Denmark towards the End of the Sixteenth Century with Special Reference to Hamlet*. Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1975.

- Doran, Susan. "Three Late-Elizabethan Succession Tracts." In *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England*, edited by Jean-Christophe Mayer, 91–117. Montpellier: Institut de Recherche sur la Renaissance, 2004.
- Drayton, Michael. *Poly-Olbion: A Chorographical description of tracts, riuers, mountains, forests, and other parts of this renowned isle of Great Britain*. London: John Marriott, John Grismand, and Thomas Dewe, 1622.
- Driver, Martha W. "In her owne persone semly and bewteus': Representing women in stories of Guy of Warwick." In *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, edited by Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field, 133–53. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007.
- Drury, William. *Aluredus, sive Aluredus* (1619). Translated by Robert Knightley (as *Alfrede, or Right Reinhron'd*, 1659). Edited by Dana F. Sutton for the Philological Museum, 2014. <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/aluredus/>
- Duffy, Eamon. *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400–c. 1580*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Duxfield, Andrew. "Doctor Faustus and Renaissance Hermeticism." In *Doctor Faustus: A Critical Guide*, edited by Sara Munson Deats, 96–110. London: Continuum, 2010.
- Elizabeth I. *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*. Edited by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Feerick, Jean E. *Strangers in Blood: Relocating Race in the Renaissance*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010.
- Fennor, William. "A description of the Palsgraves Countrey, as it was delivered in a speech before the King, the Prince, the Lady Elizabeth, at White-Hall." In *Fennors descriptions, or A true relation of certaine and diuers speeches*. London: Edward Griffin for George Gibbs, 1616.
- Findlay, Alison. *Women in Shakespeare: A Dictionary*. London: Continuum, 2010.
- Fisher, Jasper. *Fuimus Troes*. Edited by Chris Butler. <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/renplays/fuimustroes.htm>
- Fletcher, John. *Bonduca*. In *Comedies and Tragedies written by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher*. London: Humphrey Robinson and Humphrey Moseley, 1647.
- Floyd-Wilson, Mary. *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Foot, Sarah. *Athelstan: The First King of England*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011.
- Foxe, John. *Actes and Monuments*. London: John Day, 1583.
- Fraser, Antonia. *The Warrior Queens: Boadicea's Chariot*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988.
- Freehafer, John. "Shakespeare's *Tempest* and *The Seven Champions*." *Studies in Philology* 66.1 (1969): 87–103.
- Frenée-Hutchins, Samantha. "The Cultural and Ideological Significance and Representations of Boudica during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I." Unpub-

- lished PhD thesis, Exeter University and Université d'Orléans, 2009.
- Gaspar, Julia. "The Sources of *The Virgin Martyr*." *The Review of English Studies* 42 (1991): 17–31.
- Grafton, Richard. *A chronicle at large and meere history of the affayres of Englande and kinges of the same deduced from the Creation of the worlde, vnto the first habitation of thys islande*. London: Henry Denham for Richard Tottle and Humphrey Toye, 1569.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Shakespearean Negotiations*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.
- Greene, Robert. *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. In *Five Elizabethan Comedies*, edited by A. K. McIlwraith. London: Oxford University Press, 1934.
- Griffin, Benjamin. "Locrine and the Babington Plot." *Notes and Queries* 44.1 (1997): 37–40.
- Griffith, David. "The Visual History of Guy of Warwick." In *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, edited by Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field, 110–32. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007.
- Groves, Beatrice. *Texts and Traditions: Religion in Shakespeare 1592–1604*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 2007.
- Hadfield, Andrew. "Hamlet's Country Matters: The 'Scottish Play' within the Play." In *Shakespeare and Scotland*, edited by Willy Maley and Andrew Murphy, 87–103. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.
- . *Literature, Travel, and Colonial Writing in the English Renaissance 1545–1625*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1998.
- . "Spenser, Ireland, and Sixteenth-Century Political Theory." *The Modern Language Review* 89.1 (1994): 1–18.
- Hadfield, Andrew and Willy Maley. "Introduction: Irish representations and English alternatives." In *Representing Ireland: Literature and the Origins of Conflict, 1534–1600*, edited by Brendan Bradshaw, Andrew Hadfield, and Willy Maley, 1–23. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Hansen, William F. *Saxo Grammaticus and the Life of Hamlet*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983.
- Harbus, Antonina. *Helena of Britain in Medieval Legend*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002.
- Harvey, Richard. *Philadelphus, or a defence of Brutes*. London: John Wolfe, 1593.
- Haughton, William. *Grim the Collier of Croyden*. London: R. D., 1662.
- Helgerson, Richard. *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Heywood, Thomas. *An Apology for Actors*. London: Nicholas Okes, 1612.
- . *The generall history of women*. London: William Hunt, 1657.
- Hill, David, and Margaret Worthington. *Offa's Dyke*. Stroud: The History Press, 2003.
- Hill, Paul. *The Age of Athelstan: Britain's Forgotten History* [2004]. Stroud: The History Press, 2008.
- Hingley, Richard. *The Recovery of Roman Britain 1586–1906: A Colony so Fertile*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

- Hohnen, David. *Hamlet's Castle and Shakespeare's Elsinore*. Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers, 2000.
- Holinshed, Raphael. *The Third volume of Chronicles*. London: Henry Denham, 1586.
- Hopkins, Lisa. *The Cultural Uses of the Caesars on the English Renaissance Stage*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2008.
- . *Drama and the Succession to the Crown, 1561–1633*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2011.
- . *Giants of the Past: Popular Fictions and the Idea of Evolution*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004.
- . *Renaissance Drama on the Edge*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.
- . “Scota, Cleopatra, and Roman Law.” In *Antony and Cleopatra: New Critical Essays*, edited by Sara Deats, 231–42. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Hughes, Thomas. *Certaine deu[is]es and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy raigne*. London: Robert Robinson, 1587.
- Isaac, Megan Lynn. “Structure, Legitimacy, and Magic in *The Birth of Merlin*.” *Early Theatre* 9.1 (2006): 109–21.
- Johannesson, Kurt. *The Renaissance of the Goths in Sixteenth-Century Sweden: Johannes and Olaus Magnus as Politicians and Historians*. Translated by James Larson. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.
- Jones, Norman, and Paul Whitfield White. “*Gorboduc* and Royal Marriage Politics: An Elizabethan Playgoer’s Report of the Premiere Performance.” *English Literary Renaissance* 26.1 (1996) 3–16.
- Jones-Davies, Margaret. “*Cymbeline* and the sleep of faith.” In *Theatre and Religion: Lancastrian Shakespeare*, edited by Richard Dutton, Alison Findlay, and Richard Wilson, 197–217. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).
- Jonson, Ben. *The Alchemist*. Edited by Peter Bement. London: Routledge, 1990.
- . *Epicene, or The Silent Woman*. Edited by Richard Dutton. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
- Joscelin. *The life of the glorious bishop S. Patricke ...* Translated by Fr. B. B. St. Omer: [G Seutin?] for John Heigham, 1625.
- Jowitt, Claire. “Colonialism, Politics, and Romanization in John Fletcher’s *Bonduca*.” *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 43.2 (2003): 475–93.
- Karpinska, Monika. “Bawdily Manipulations: Spheres of Female Power in *The Birth of Merlin*.” *Early Theatre* 9.1 (2006): 123–29.
- Kathman, David. ‘*The Freeman’s Honour*, William Smith, and the Lord Chamberlain’s Men’, paper given at the Shakespeare Association of America annual meeting, 2017.
- Kelliher, Hilton. “John Mott and *The Neue Metamorphosis*.” *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700* 11 (2002). 109–31.
- Kerrigan, John. *Archipelagic English: Literature, History, and Politics 1603–1707*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

- Kidd, Colin. *British Identities before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600–1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Kim, Jaecheol. “The North-South Divide in *Gorboduc*: Fratricide Remembered and Forgotten.” *Studies in Philology* 111.4 (2014): 691–719.
- King, Andrew. “Dead Butchers and Fiend-like Queens: Literary and Political History in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and *Macbeth*.” In *The Scots and Medieval Arthurian Legend*, edited by Rhiannon Purdie and Nicola Royan, 121–34. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005.
- Kingshill, Sophia, and Jennifer Westwood. *The Fabled Coast: Legends and Traditions from around the Shores of Britain and Ireland*. London: Random House, 2012.
- Kirke, John. *The Seven Champions of Christendom*. London: J. Okes for James Becket, 1638.
- Kliger, Samuel. *The Goths in England: A Study in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952.
- Kolentsis, Alysia. “Shakespeare’s Linguistic Creativity: A Reappraisal.” *Literature Compass* 11.4 (2014): 258–66.
- Kyd, Thomas. *The Spanish Tragedy*. In *Five Elizabethan Tragedies*, edited by A. K. McIlwraith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938.
- Laing, Lloyd and Jennifer Laing. *Anglo-Saxon England* [1979]. London: Grafton, 1982.
- Lane, Joan. *John Hall and His Patients*. Stratford-upon-Avon: The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, 1996.
- Laycock, Stuart. *Britannia the Failed State: Tribal Conflicts and the End of Roman Britain*. Stroud: The History Press, 2008.
- . *Warlords: The Struggle for Power in Post-Roman Britain*. Stroud: The History Press, 2009.
- Levin, Carol. “*The Heart and Stomach of a King*”: *Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.
- Levin, Richard. “My Magic Can Lick Your Magic.” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 22 (2009): 201–28.
- Loades, David. *Chronicles of the Tudor Kings*. London: Garamond, 1990.
- Llwyd, Humphrey. *The breuiary of Britayne*. London: Richard Johnes, 1573.
- Logan, George M. “Hughes’s Use of Lucan in the *Misfortunes of Arthur*.” *The Review of English Studies* 20 (1969): 22–32.
- Loughnane, Rory. “‘I myself would for Caernarfonshire’: The Old Lady in *King Henry VIII*.” In *Celtic Shakespeare: The Bard and the Borderers*, edited by Willy Maley and Rory Loughnane, 185–202. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.
- McCabe, William H., S.J. *An Introduction to the Jesuit Theater*. Edited by Louis J. Oldani, S.J. St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1983.
- McDonnell, Sharon. “Male Poisoners in Renaissance Revenge Tragedies.” Unpublished PhD thesis, Sheffield Hallam University, 2015.
- McIlwraith, A. K., ed. *Five Elizabethan Tragedies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938.

- McMullan, Gordon. "The colonisation of early Britain on the Jacobean stage." In *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, edited by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews, 119–40. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- MacMullan, Hugh. "The Sources of Shirley's *St. Patrick for Ireland*." *PMLA* 48.3 (1933): 806–14.
- Marlowe, Christopher. *Doctor Faustus. A text*. In *The Complete Plays*. Edited by Mark Thornton Burnett. London: J. M. Dent, 1999.
- . *Tamburlaine the Great, Part One*. In *The Complete Plays*, edited by Mark Thornton Burnett. London: J. M. Dent, 1999.
- Marotti, Arthur. "Alienating Catholics in Early Modern England: Recusant Women, Jesuits and Ideological Fantasies." In *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts*, edited by Arthur Marotti, 1–34. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999.
- Marshall, Tristan. *Theatre and Empire: Great Britain on the London Stages under James VI and I*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.
- Martin, Anthony. "The British Myth in Tudor Drama." In *The Anatomy of Tudor Literature*, edited by Mike Pincombe, 157–65. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001.
- Massinger, Philip. *Believe As You List*. Edited by C. J. Sisson. Oxford: The Malone Society, 1928.
- Matthews, William. "The Egyptians in Scotland: The Political History of a Myth." *Viator* 1 (1970): 289–306.
- Maxwell, Julie. "Counter-Reformation Versions of Saxo: A New Source for *Hamlet*?" *Renaissance Quarterly* 57.2 (2004). 518–60.
- Mazzio, Carla. "Staging the Vernacular: Language and Nation in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*." *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 38.2 (1998): 207–32.
- Merbury, Charles. *A briefe discoure of royall monarchie, as of the best common weale wherin the subiect may beholde the sacred maiestie of the princes most royall estate*. London: Thomas Vautrollier, 1581.
- Middleton, Thomas. *Hengist, King of Kent, or The Mayor of Queenborough*. Oxford: The Malone Society, 2003.
- Mikalachki, Jodi. "The Masculine Romance of Roman Britain: *Cymbeline* and Early Modern English Nationalism." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 46.3 (1995): 301–22.
- Miller, Jaroslav. "The Henrician Legend Revived: The Palatine Couple and its Public Image in Early Stuart England." *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 11.3 (2004): 305–31.
- Miller-Tomlinson, Tracey. "Hybrid Gender, Hybrid Nation: Race, Sexuality, and the Making of National Identity in Fletcher's *Bonduca*." *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 46 (2007): 51–66.
- . "Queer History in *Cymbeline*." *Shakespeare* 12.3 (2016): 225–40.
- Monmouth, Geoffrey of. *The History of the Kings of Britain*. Translated by Lewis Thorpe. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966.

- Montrose, Louis. "The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery." *Representations* 33 (1991): 1–41.
- Mottram, Stewart. "Warriors and Ruins: *Cymbeline*, Heroism and the Union of Crowns." In *Celtic Shakespeare: The Bard and the Borderers*, edited by Willy Maley and Rory Loughnane, 168–83. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.
- Mulligan, Winifred Joy. "The British Constantine: An English historical myth." *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Drama* 8 (1978): 257–79.
- Munday, Anthony. *The Triumphes of re-vnited Britania*. London: W. Jaggard, 1605.
- Munro, Lucy. "'Nemp your sexes!': Anachronistic Aesthetics in *Hengist, King of Kent* and the Jacobean 'Anglo-Saxon' Play." *Modern Philology* 111.4 (2014): 734–61.
- Myhill, Nova. "Making Death a Miracle: Audience and the Genres of Martyrdom in Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*." *Early Theatre* 7.2 (2004): 9–31.
- Newstok, Scott. "Loving and Cherishing 'True English': Shakespeare's Twinomials." In *Interlinguicity, Internationality and Shakespeare*, edited by Michael Saenger, 75–85. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014.
- Nicholl, Charles. *The Lodger: Shakespeare on Silver Street*. London: Allen Lane, 2007.
- Nielsen, Wendy C. "Boadicea Onstage before 1800, a Theatrical and Colonial History." *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 49.3 (2009): 595–614.
- North, George. *The description of Swedland, Gotland, and Finland ... chieflye out of Sebastian Mounster*. London: John Awdely, 1561.
- O'Neill, Stephen. *Staging Ireland: Representations in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007.
- Paleit, Edward. *War, Liberty, and Caesar: Responses to Lucan's Bellum Ciuile, ca. 1580–1650*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Parker, Barbara L. "'Cursèd Necromancy': Marlowe's *Faustus* as Anti-Catholic Satire." *Marlowe Studies* 1 (2011): 59–77.
- Peacham, Henry. *Prince Henrie Revived*. London: W. Stansby for John Helm, 1615.
- Peele, George. *The famous chronicle of king Edward the first*. London: Abell Jeffes for William Barley, 1593.
- . *The historie of the two valiant knights, Syr Clyomon Knight of the Golden Sheeld, sonne to the King of Denmarke: and Clamydes the white Knight, sonne to the King of Suauia*. London: printed for Thomas Creede, 1599.
- Perry, Curtis. "British Empire on the Eve of the Armada: Revisiting *The Misfortunes of Arthur*." *Studies in Philology* 108.4 (2011): 508–37.
- . "'For They Are Englishmen': National Identities and the Early Modern Drama of Medieval Conquest." In *Shakespeare and the Middle Ages*, edited by Curtis Perry and John Watkins, 172–95. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Pettegree, Jane. *Foreign and Native on the English Stage 1588–1611*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011.

- Pickett, Holly Crawford. "Dramatic Nostalgia and Spectacular Conversion in Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*." *Studies in English Literature* 49.2 (2009): 437–62.
- Piggott, Stuart. *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1989.
- Plutarch. *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*. Translated by Thomas North. London: Thomas Vautrollier and John Wight, 1579.
- Purchas, Samuel. *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 20 vols. Glasgow, 1905–7.
- . *Purchas his pilgrimes*. London: William Stansby for Henry Featherstone, 1625.
- Quarmby, Kevin A. *The Disguised Ruler in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012.
- Ralegh, Walter. *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich and Bewtiful Emphyre of Guiana*. Edited by Neil L. Whitehead. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997.
- Rowlands, Samuel. *The famous history of Guy Earle of Warwicke*. London: E. Allde, 1620.
- Rowley, Samuel. *When You See Me, You Know Me*. London: Nathaniel Butter, 1605.
- Rowley, William. *The Birth of Merlin*. London: Thomas Johnson for Francis Kirkman and Henry Marsh, 1662.
- . *A Shoo-maker a gentleman*. London: J. Okes for John Cowper, 1638.
- Royster, Francesca T. "White-limed walls: Whiteness and Gothic extremism in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51.4 (2000). 432–55.
- Rutter, Tom. "Warlamchester." *The Lost Plays Database*. <https://www.lostplays.org/index.php?title=Warlamchester>.
- S., W. *The lamentable tragedie of Locrine*. London: Thomas Creede, 1595.
- Sale, Carolyn. "Black Aeneas: Race, English Literary History, and the 'Barbarous' Poetics of *Titus Andronicus*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62.1 (2011): 25–52.
- Sams, Eric, ed. *Shakespeare's Edmund Ironside*. Aldershot: Wildwood House, 1986.
- Schwyzler, Philip. "British history and 'The British history': The same old story?" In *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature*, edited by David J. Baker and Willy Maley, 11–23. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- . *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Wales*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- . "A Scum of Britons?: *Richard III* and the Celtic Reconquest." In *Celtic Shakespeare: The Bard and the Borderers*, edited by Willy Maley and Rory Loughnane, 25–34. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.
- . *Shakespeare and the Remains of Richard III*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Scragg, Leah. "Saxons versus Danes: The anonymous *Edmund Ironside*." In *Literary Appropriations of the Anglo-Saxons from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth*

- Century*, edited by Donald Scragg and Carole Weinberg, 93–106. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Selden, John. *Titles of honor*. London: William Stansby for John Helme, 1614.
- Shakespeare, William. *Antony and Cleopatra*. Edited by Emrys Jones. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.
- . *Coriolanus*. Edited by G. R. Hibbard. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967.
- . *Cymbeline*. Edited by J. M. Nosworthy [1955]. London: Cengage Learning, 2007.
- . *Hamlet*. Edited by Harold Jenkins. London: Methuen, 1982.
- . *Henry IV, Part 1*. Edited by David Bevington. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- . *Henry V*. Edited by T. W. Craik. London: Routledge, 1995.
- . *Henry VI, Part Two*. Edited by John Dover Wilson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952.
- . *Julius Caesar*. Edited by Norman Sanders. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967.
- . *King Lear*. Edited by Kenneth Muir. London: Methuen, 1972.
- . *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Edited by G. R. Hibbard. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.
- . *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Edited by Harold F. Brooks. London: Methuen, 1979.
- . *Richard II*. Edited by Stanley Wells. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969.
- . *The Tempest*. Edited by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan. London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1999.
- . *Titus Andronicus*. Edited by Jonathan Bate [1995]. London: Arden, 2003.
- Shakespeare, William and John Fletcher. *Henry VIII*. Edited by A. R. Humphreys. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971.
- Shapiro, James. *1606: William Shakespeare and the Year of Lear*. London: Faber and Faber, 2015.
- Shenton, Frank. *Anglo-Saxon England*. 3rd ed. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971.
- Shirley, James. *Saint Patrick for Ireland*. London: J. Raworth for R. Whitaker, 1640.
- Shrank, Cathy. "Rhetorical Constructions of a National Community: The role of the King's English in mid-Tudor writing." In *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric*, edited by Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington, 180–98. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.
- Slatyer, William. *The history of Great Britanie*. London: W. Stansby for Richard Meighen, 1621.
- Smith, William. *The Hector of Germany. Or The Palsgrave, prime Elector*. London: Thomas Creede for Josias Harrison, 1615.
- Sokol, B. J. *Shakespeare and Tolerance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Speed, John. *England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland described and abridged ...* London: George Humble, 1627.
- Spradlin, Derrick. "Imperial Anxiety in Thomas Hughes's *The Misfortunes of Arthur*." *Early Modern Literary Studies* 10.3 (2005). <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/10-3/10-3toc.htm>.

- Steen, Sara Jayne, ed. *The Letters of Lady Arbella Stuart*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Steggle, Matthew. *Ingredientur, Dr Sampsonus, Lost Plays Database*, http://www.lostplays.org/index.php/Ingredientur,_Dr_Sampsonus.
- . *Digital Humanities and the Lost Drama of Early Modern England: Ten Case Studies*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015.
- Stocker, Thomas. *A tragicall historie of the troubles and ciuile warres of the lowe Countries ... Translated out of French*. London: John Kingston and Thomas Dawson for Tobie Smith, 1583.
- Streitberger, W. R. *The Masters of the Revels and Elizabeth I's Court Theatre*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Strong, Roy. *Henry, Prince of Wales and England's Lost Renaissance*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1986.
- Stow, John. *A suruay of London Contayning the originall, antiquity, increase, moderne estate, and description of that Citie, written in the yeare 1598*. London: John Windet for John Wolfe, 1598.
- Sullivan, Garrett A., Jr. "Civilizing Wales: *Cymbeline*, Roads, and the Landscapes of Early Modern Britain." *Early Modern Literary Studies* 4.2 (1998). <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/04-2/sullshak.htm>.
- Tacitus, *The Agricola and the Germania*. Translated by H. Mattingly. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1948.
- Taylor, Isaac. *Words and Places*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1925.
- Teixeira, José. *The strangest aduenture that euer happened: either in the ages passed or present Containing a discourse concerning the successe of the King of Portugall Dom Sebastian, from the time of his voyage into Affricke, when he was lost in the battell against the infidels, in the yeare 1578. vnto the sixt of Ianuary this present 1601. In which discourse, is diuerse curious histories, some auncient prophesies, and other matters, whereby most euidently appeareth: that he whom the Seigneurie of Venice hath held as prisoner for the space of two yeres and twentie two dayes, is the right and true king of Portugall Dom Sebastian* Translated by Anthony Munday. London: Richard Field for Frances Henson, 1601.
- Teramura, Misha. "Brute Parts: From Troy to Britain at the Rose, 1595–1600." In *Lost Plays in Shakespeare's England*, edited by David McInnis and Matthew Steggle, 127–47. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014.
- Thomson, Leslie. "The Meaning of *Thunder and Lightning*: Stage Directions and Audience Expectations." *Early Theatre* 2 (1999): 11–24.
- Traister, Barbara Howard. *Heavenly Necromancers: The Magician in English Renaissance Drama*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1984.
- Traub, Valerie. "Jewels, Statues, and Corpses: Containment of Female Erotic Power in Shakespeare's Plays." In *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*, edited by Deborah E. Barker and Ivo Kamps, 120–41. London: Verso, 1995.
- Vanhoutte, Jacqueline. "Community, Authority, and the Motherland in Sackville

- and Norton's 'Gorboduc.'" *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 40.2 (2000): 227–39.
- Vaughan, Virginia Mason. "Preface: The Mental Maps of English Renaissance Drama." In *Playing the Globe: Genre and Geography in English Renaissance Drama*, edited by John Gillies and Virginia Mason Vaughan, 7–16. London: Associated University Presses, 1998.
- Walsh, Brian. "'Deep Prescience': Succession and the Politics of Prophecy in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*." *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 23 (2010): 63–85.
- Wasson, John. "The Secular Saint Plays of the Elizabethan Era." In *The Saint Play in Medieval Europe*, edited by Clifford Davidson, 241–60. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986.
- Webster, John. *The Duchess of Malfi*. Edited by John Russell Brown [1964]. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976.
- . *The White Devil*. Edited by John Russell Brown. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960.
- Weever, John. *Ancient funerall monuments within the united monarchie of Great Britaine*. London: Thomas Harper for Laurence Sadler, 1631.
- Weis, René. *Shakespeare Revealed*. London: John Murray, 2007.
- Werner, Hans. "The Hector of Germanie, or The Palsgrave, Prime Elector and Anglo-German Relations of Early Stuart England: the View from the Popular Stage." In *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in Politics and Political Culture*, edited by R. Malcolm Smuts, 113–32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Westerman, William. *Jacobs well: or, a sermon preached before the Kings most excellent Majestie at Saint Albans, in his summer progresse 1612*. London: John Beale for Matthew Lawe, 1613.
- White, Paul Whitfield. "The Admiral's Lost Arthurian Plays." In *Lost Plays in Shakespeare's England*, edited by David McInnis and Matthew Steggle, 148–62. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014.
- Whitworth, Alan Michael. *Hadrian's Wall: Some Aspects of its Post-Roman Influence on the Landscape*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2000.
- Wiggins, Martin, and Catherine Richardson. *British Drama 1533–1642: A Catalogue*. Volume VI: 1609–16. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Williamson, Arthur H. *Scots and Britons: Scottish political thought and the union of 1603*. Edited by Roger A. Mason. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 187–212.
- Wilson, John. *The English Martyrology ...* St. Omer: English College Press, 1608.
- Wilson, Richard. *Free Will: Art and Power on Shakespeare's Stage*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.
- . *Secret Shakespeare: Studies in theatre, religion and resistance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.
- . "Sermons in Stones: Shakespeare's Dangerous Thresholds." Unpublished inaugural lecture at Kingston University, 2014.

- Wilson, Robert (?). *A pleasant comodie, of faire Em the Millers daughter of Manchester with the loue of William the Conqueror*. London: T. N. for J. W., 1591.
- Winston, Jessica. "Expanding the Political Nation: *Gorboduc* at the Inns of Court and Succession Revisited." *Early Theatre* 8.1 (2005): 11–34.
- Wymer, Rowland. "*The Tempest* and the Origins of Britain." *Critical Survey* 11.1 (1999): 3–14.
- Yachnin, Paul. "'Courtiers of Beauteous Freedom': *Antony and Cleopatra* in Its Time." *Renaissance and Reformation* 15 (1991): 1–20.

Index

- Adams, Max, 6
Aeneas, 3, 18, 56, 85, 107, 114,
125–26, 128, 132–33, 138, 187
Aidan, Saint, 71
Alban, Saint, 2
Albanact, mythical king, 3
Alcock, Leslie, 72
Alfred, King, 1, 8, 53, 74, 80–81, 86,
167–69, 173, 175–76, 191
Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, 2,
128–37
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, The, 7, 175
Anna of Denmark, 9, 107, 119–20,
124, 127–28, 188
Archdeacon, Anthony, 85–86
Archibald, Marion, 169
Arnold, Oliver, 46
Arthur, King, 1–2, 7, 21, 23, 74,
167–69, 171–73, 175–82
Arviragus, mythical king, 4
Athelstan, King, 1, 8, 23, 74, 167–69,
171–73, 175–82
Axton, Marie, 107
Aylmer, John, 13

Bainbrigg, Reginald, 76
Baldo, Jonathan, 6
Bate, Jonathan, 46–47
Beaumont, Francis, 145; *Madon King
of Britain*, 1; and John Fletcher,
Philaster, 145
Becanus, Goropius, 31
Bede, the Venerable, 71–72

Bellamy, Elizabeth Jane, 114
Berg, James, 101
Bevington, David, 75
Bladud, mythical king, 2–3
Boling, Ronald J., 104, 156, 159–60
Bolton, Edmund, *Nero Caesar*, 110
Boose, Lynda, 153
Boudic(c)a, Queen, 2, 4, 104–5,
109–11, 114, 120, 188
Bowers, Fredson, 129
Brackmann, Rebecca, 31, 46, 62
Brewer, Anthony, *The Love-sick King*,
2, 8, 16, 22, 60, 87, 122, 124–26,
188
Bridges, John, 167
Briggs, Julia, 32, 138
Brome, Richard, *The Queen's
Exchange*, 2, 8, 179, 188
Brutus, mythical founder of Britain,
1, 3–6, 13, 17, 21–22, 45–47,
71–72, 75, 79, 85, 91–92, 107–8,
133, 148, 182, 187
Burl, Aubrey, 45
Burnell, Henry, *Landgartha*, 2, 16,
22, 87, 120, 122, 127–28, 188
Butler, Chris, 17, 32–33

Cadwallader, 5
Callis, Robert, 11
Camber, mythical king, 3, 5, 17, 21,
85, 148, 152, 188
Camden, William, 6, 12, 15, 34, 77,
128, 151, 168–69, 178

- Canute, King, 8, 14, 108
 Caradoc/Caractacus, mythical king, 4
 Carlell, Lodowick, *Arviragus and Philicia*, 2, 4, 7, 16, 100, 120–22, 148–49
 Cavendish, Henry, 169
 Chalmers, Hero, 127
 Chapman, George, 129
 Charles I, 9, 127, 151–52
 Chettle, Henry, *Danish Tragedy*, 122, 126; *The Tragedy of Hoffman*, 2, 22, 120, 126–28
 Christian IV of Denmark, 122, 125
 Clapham, John, *History of Great Britannie*, 2, 15, 23, 45, 75, 77–78, 85, 90
 Clare, Janet, 161
 Clubb, Louise George, 67
 Coch, Christine, 102
 Coke, Edward, 34, 46
Conquest of Brute, The, 1
 Cooper, Helen, 176
 Cordella/Cordelia, mythical queen, 4, 99, 114, 188
 Corrigan, Brian Jay, 73, 75, 112, 182
 Cotton, Sir Robert, 7, 137, 168–9
 Cull, Marisa R., 149
 Cuthbert, Saint, 71
Cutlack, 123
 Cymbeline, mythical king, 4
- Dallington, Robert, 172
 Danett, Thomas, 134–35
 Daniel, Samuel, *History of England*, 2, 6, 10–12, 14, 21–23, 47, 90, 171
 De Lisle, Leanda, 137
 Dee, John, 72, 78
 Dekker, Thomas, 156, 176, 180; *Old Fortunatus*, 2, 8, 23, 167–68, 171, 176, 180; *Wonderful Year*, 137
 Dekker, Thomas, John Ford, and William Rowley, *The Welsh Ambassador*, 2, 8, 17–18, 23, 74, 167–68, 171–72, 176–78, 188–89; *The Witch of Edmonton*, 54
 Dekker, Thomas and Philip Massinger, *The Virgin Martyr*, 2, 20, 54, 63–64
 Deloney, Thomas, 108
 Dent, Robert W., 120
 Dido, Queen, 107, 111, 114, 121, 124, 126–28, 137–38
 Dollerup, Cay, 119
 Drayton, Michael, 173, 182; *Poly-Olbion*, 2, 6, 10, 14–15, 21, 34, 78, 108, 156–58, 168
 Driver, Martha, 173
 Drury, William, *Alvredus sive Alvredus*, 2, 8, 14, 16, 21, 53, 71, 87–89, 148
 Duffy, Eamon, 147
 Dunstan, Saint, 9
 Duxfield, Andrew, 58–59
- Earle, John, 1
 Edgar, King, 9, 40, 108
Edmund Ironside, 2, 8, 14, 21, 71, 89–91, 173
 Edward the Confessor, 8, 71, 90
 Elidure, mythical king, 4
 Elizabeth I, Queen, 14, 19, 71, 73, 82, 84, 101–2, 107, 110–12, 114, 121–22, 127, 137, 157–58, 160, 162, 169, 170
 Elizabeth, Princess, later Queen of Bohemia, 9, 128–32
 Elliott, J. H., 132
 Elyot, Sir Thomas, 45
Emma Angliae Regina ac Mater Hardicanuti Regis, 2, 8, 89, 188
England's First Happiness, or, the Life of St Austin, 53
- Fair Em*, 2, 8, 19, 21, 71, 91, 100, 122
Fatum Vortigerni, 2, 18, 80, 190–91

- Feerick, Jean E., 145
 Fennor, William, 130, 132–33
 Ferrex and Porrex,
 sons of Gorboduc, 1, 4
 Findlay, Alison, 154
 Fisher, Jasper, *Fuimus Troes*, 2, 6, 9,
 10–11, 17, 20, 32–33, 45–46,
 109–110, 128, 148
 Fletcher, John, 145;
 Bonduca, 2, 4, 7, 16–18, 20,
 85–6, 89, 107, 109–11, 114;
 The Tamer Tamed, 145
 Floyd-Wilson, Mary, 12, 106
 Foot, Sarah, 169–70, 172, 175–78
 Ford, John, 172; *Perkin Warbeck*, 172;
 The Queen, 172
 Foxe, John, 178
 Frederick, Elector Palatine, 9, 128–32
 Frenée-Hutchins, Samantha, 35, 104,
 109–10, 128

 Gasper, Julia, 64, 67
 Gernon, Luke, 153
 Gildas, 72, 182
 Giraldus Cambrensis, 157
 Golding, Arthur, 32
 Grafton, Richard, 108
 Greenblatt, Stephen, 55
 Griffin, Benjamin, 108
 Griffith, David, 173
 Godwin, Earl, 1, 8, 119
 Gorboduc, mythical king, 4
 Greene, Robert, *Friar Bacon and Friar
 Bungay*, 2, 20, 54–56, 60–61
 Guiderius, mythical king, 4
 Guthlac, 1
Guy of Warwick, 2, 8, 23, 120, 167,
 173–74, 179
 Gwendoline/Gwendolen,
 mythical queen, 1, 3, 99

 Hadfield, Andrew, 91, 105–6, 153,
 168, 171

 Hakluyt, Richard, 34
 Hall, Dr John, 54
 Harbus, Antonina, 23
 Hardicanute, King, 1, 8
Hardicanute, 119
 Harold, King, 8, 90, 92
 Harvey, Richard, *Philadelphus,
 or a Defence of Brutes*, 2, 4–5, 14,
 17, 75, 78, 152
 Haughton, William, *Grim the Collier
 of Croydon*, 53, 57–58, 170
 Helgerson, Richard, 34
 Hengist and Horsa, 4, 21, 74, 85,
 104, 191
 Henrietta Maria, 107, 127, 129
 Henry, Prince of Wales, 7, 129–30,
 149, 151–52, 158, 161
 Henslowe, Philip, 1–2, 119
 Hertel, Ralf, 13, 77
 Heywood, Thomas, 169–70, 189;
 An Apology for Actors, 4;
 The generall history of women, 108
 Hill, David, 10, 22
 Hill, Paul, 92, 167–68, 170–74,
 176–78
 Hohnen, David, 123
 Holinshed, Raphael, 77, 91, 105, 110,
 152, 170–71
 Hooker, Richard, 34
 Hughes, Thomas, et al., *The
 Misfortunes of Arthur*, 2, 4, 7, 9,
 17–18, 21, 23, 33, 71, 81, 83–85,
 112–13, 157, 163, 189–90
 Hyland, Paul, 147

 Irenicus, Franciscus, 41
 Isaac, Megan Lynn, 62

 James VI of Scotland and I of England,
 6–7, 9, 12, 14, 19, 71–72, 88,
 105, 110, 120, 122, 124, 128,
 130, 150–52, 171, 187–88
 Johannesson, Kurt, 41

- Jones-Davies, Margaret, 147
 Jonson, Ben, *The Alchemist*, 31;
 Epicoene, 8
- Karpinska, Monika, 61–62
 Kerrigan, John, 18
 Kim, Jaechol, 101
 King, Andrew, 113
King Leir, 3, 22, 40, 82, 105, 107,
 111–12, 158
 Kingsmill, Sophia, and
 Jennifer Westwood, 77
 Kirke, John, *The Seven Champions of*
 Christendom, 2, 20, 54, 65–67
 Kliger, Samuel, 46–47
Knack to Know a Knave, 2, 9,
 18–19, 53
 Knightley, Robert, *Alfrede, or Right*
 Reinthon'd, 2, 53, 87–88
 Kolentsis, Alysia, 31, 39–40
 Kyd, Thomas, *Soliman and Perseda*, 46;
 The Spanish Tragedy, 60
- Laing, Lloyd and Jennifer, 11
 Lambarde, William, 46–47, 62, 173
 Laycock, Stuart, 10
 Lear, mythical king, 3
 Leland, John, 17, 81, 169
 Levin, Richard, 61, 66, 91
 Levine, Mortimer, 137
 Llwyd, Humphrey, 110
 Locrine, mythical king, 1, 3–5, 74,
 85, 188
Locrine, 2–3, 7, 16, 33, 48, 75–76,
 89, 107–9
 Loughnane, Rory, 156, 159
 Lucius, mythical king, 4, 36, 47, 73, 189
 Lyly, John, *Mother Bombye*, 54
 124, 127; *Doctor Faustus*, 2, 20,
 54–55, 58–61, 63–64, 66–67,
 180; *Edward II*, 112; *Hero and*
 Leander, 112; *The Jew of Malta*,
 121; *Tamburlaine*, 2, 22, 75–76,
 106–7, 109–112, 120, 180
- Martin, Anthony, 17
 Marshall, Tristan, 129
 Mary, Queen of Scots, 33, 73, 82,
 105–7, 112–13, 188
 Mazzio, Carla, 19, 31
 McDonnell, Sharon, 122
 McMullan, Gordon, 1
 Melville, Andrew, 106
 Merbury, Charles, 34, 90–91
Mercia, sive Pietas Coronata, 2
 Middleton, Thomas, *Hengist, King of*
 Kent, 2, 4, 9, 21–22, 32, 71, 120,
 137–38;
 The Second Maiden's Tragedy, 67
 Mikalachki, Jodi, 104, 106
 Miller, Jaroslav, 129–31
 Miller-Tomlinson, Tracey, 18, 85–86
 Milton, John, *Comus*, 108
 Monmouth, Geoffrey of, *History of the*
 Kings of Britain, 3–5, 7, 17–18,
 21, 35–36, 45, 47, 60, 72, 79–80,
 99, 103, 120, 143–45, 151–52,
 169, 188
 Molmutius/Mulmutius Dunwallo(w),
 mythical king, 1, 4
 Mottram, Stewart, 145–46
 Mulligan, Winifred Joy, 23
 Munday, Anthony, *The Triumphes of*
 re-united Britania, 7
 Munro, Lucy, 7
 Myhill, Nova, 63, 67
- Newstok, Scott, 34
 Nicholl, Charles, 122–23
 Nielsen, Wendy C., 109
No-body and Some-body, 2, 4
 North, George, 41, 44, 125
- Magnus, Johannes, 121, 125
 Magnus, Olaus, 121–22
 Marlowe, Christopher, 75, 127; *Dido*,
 Queen of Carthage, 2, 107, 112,

- O'Neill, Stephen, 6–7
 Oswald, King, 7–8, 40
 Owen, George, 156, 159–60
- Paleit, Edward, 75
 Parker, Barbara L., 58
 Parker, Matthew, 46
 Peacham, Henry, 131–32
 Peele, George, *Edward I*, 7; *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes*, 100
 Perry, Curtis, 73, 91
 Persons, Robert, 6
 Pettegree, Jane, 131
 Phaer, Thomas, 156
 Pickett, Holly Crawford, 63
 Piggott, Stuart, 1, 45, 77, 128
Play of Oswald, 8
 Powel, David, 158
 Purchas, Samuel, 7, 109
- R. A., *The Valiant Welshman*, 2, 4, 7, 16–18, 20, 23, 80, 86, 90, 103, 109, 143–44, 149–52, 163, 190
 Raleigh, Sir Walter, 147, 153
 Richardson, Catherine, 189
 Rowlands, Samuel, *The famous history of Guy of Warwick*, 12–13, 173–75
 Rowley, William, 189; *The Birth of Merlin*, 2, 4, 20, 32, 54–56, 61–63, 67; *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, 2, 4, 8, 18, 23, 32, 41, 53, 57, 80, 100, 103, 113–114, 148, 190; *When You See Me You Know Me*, 161
 Royster, Francesca, 41
 Rutter, Tom, 2
 Sabren/Sabrina, mythical princess, 3
 Sackville, Thomas, and Thomas Norton, *Gorboduc*, 2, 4, 7, 19, 33, 76, 86, 101–3, 108, 121, 188, 190
 Sale, Carolyn, 92
 Sanders, Julie, 76–77
 Schwyzer, Philip, 17, 79–80, 138
 Scragg, Leah, 119
 Selden, John, 171
 Shakespeare, William, 15, 32, 34–36, 54, 119, 122–23, 154, 173; *Antony and Cleopatra*, 37–38, 172; *Coriolanus*, 20, 34, 39; *Cymbeline*, 2, 4, 18, 23, 35–37, 46, 48, 73, 99, 104, 108, 114, 143–52, 155–56, 159, 62, 168, 188, 190; *Hamlet*, 2, 22, 35, 48, 99, 105–6, 120, 122–24; *Henry IV, Part One*, 158; *Henry V*, 34, 77, 131, 138, 151, 159–60, 180, 190; *Henry VI, Part Three*, 3, 80; *Julius Caesar*, 39; *King Lear*, 2–3, 7–8, 18, 22, 40, 47–48, 76, 85, 99, 105, 111–12, 151, 179–80, 189–90; *Macbeth*, 2, 8, 71, 89, 99, 105, 112–14, 179–80, 189–90; *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 34; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 54, 63, 122; *Richard II*, 5, 60, 160; *The Taming of the Shrew*, 145; *The Tempest*, 20, 54–55, 66–68, 145, 162; *Titus Andronicus*, 2, 15–16, 18, 23, 41–44, 47–48, 73, 89, 92, 125–27, 176; *Troilus and Cressida*, 127; *The Winter's Tale*, 146, 162
 Shakespeare, William, and John Fletcher, *Henry VIII*, 2, 23, 143–45, 153–63, 173, 189–90; *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, 146
 Shakespeare, William, and George Wilkins, *Pericles*, 146
 Shenton, Frank, 168–69, 171, 177
 Shirley, James, *St Patrick for Ireland*, 2, 20, 54, 64–65, 67, 148; *The Tragedy of St Alban*, 53
 Simons, Joseph, *Mercia*, 2
 Slatyer, William, 44

- Smith, William, *The Palsgrave, or the Hector of Germany*, 2, 128–30, 132, 135–36
- Snakenborg, Helena, marchioness of Northampton, 121
- Sokol, B. J., 12
- Speed, John, 10–11, 13, 34, 169, 171
- Spenser, Edmund, 34; *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, 40, 91
- Spradlin, Derrick, 113
- Steggle, Matthew, 123
- Stocker, Thomas, 44
- Stow, John, 77
- Streete, Adrian, 153, 161
- Streitberger, W. R., 71
- Strong, Roy, 128
- Stuart, Arbella, 125
- Stubbs, John, 82
- Sullivan, Garrett, 145
- Sutton, Dana F., 89
- Tacitus, 41–42, 45–46, 104, 128
- Taylor, John, 132, 135
- Teramura, Misha, 1
- Thomas, Lord Cromwell*, 161
- Thomson, Leslie, 65–66
- Thorney Abbey*, 18, 189–90
- Tilney, Charles, *Estrild*, 3, 108
- Tomkis, Thomas, 31
- Tomlinson, Sophie, 127
- Traister, Barbara Howard, 60
- Traub, Valerie, 154
- Vanhoutte, Jacqueline, 101
- Vanita, Ruth, 162
- Vergil, Polydore, 5, 23, 35–36, 109, 152
- Verstegan, Richard, 46, 77, 91, 128
- Voragine, Jacobus de 151
- Vortigern, King, 1, 4, 90, 119
- Walsh, Brian, 56
- Warlamchester*, 2, 53
- Wasson, John, 63–64
- Webster, John, *The Duchess of Malfi*, 77, 79; *The White Devil*, 56–57
- Weever, John, 36, 81
- Weis, René, 123
- Werner, Hans, 129–30
- White, Paul Whitfield, 2, 9
- Wiggins, Martin, 80, 189
- William I (William the Conqueror), 4, 8, 34, 90–91, 109
- Williamson, Arthur H., 172
- Wilson, John, 76
- Wilson, Richard, 172, 178–79
- Wilson, Robert, 91
- Winifred, Saint, 4
- Worthington, Margaret, 10, 22
- Wymer, Rowland, 45–46
- Zysk, Jay, 162

Typeset in Garamond Premier Pro
Composed by Martine Maguire-Weltecke

Medieval Institute Publications
College of Arts and Sciences
Western Michigan University
1903 W. Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5432
<http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/mip>

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY