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“All the Kingdoms of the World:” Monastic and Secular Dynamics in the Histories of
William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth

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For earthly with heavenly, divine with mortal, ill agree.

- Gesta Regum Anglorum

O powerful goddess, terror of the forest glades, yet hope of the wild woodlands, you who have the power to go in orbit through the airy heavens and the halls of hell, pronounce a judgment which concerns the earth.

-Historia Regum Britanniae

Introduction:

Prior to Walter Goffart's analysis of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, most of the criticism concerning the work had attributed its portrayal of an English "Golden Age" to Bede's own "cloistered seclusion" as a monk at Wearmouth-Jarrow.¹ To one of these critics, Bede was "a quietly devout and pious man, writing of a lay world he hardly knew."² Goffart's work, rather than furthering this critical paradigm, instead places Bede firmly at the beginning of the eighth century, a monk, but one reacting to his immediate political and religious environment, and reacting in a manner apparent in his literary output. For instance, the narrative of Bede's history is geographically located, its emphasis throughout being Northumbrian, though it claims to be a history of all the English. It is likely that Bede dedicated his history to Ceolwulf, king of Northumbria in an effort to stabilize and gain favor with the monarchy after a shaky transition to a cadet dynasty and a brief dethronement of Ceolwulf himself.³ His lives of St. Cuthbert and Gregory the Great show evidence of having been written to quell the rising prominence of a powerful Northumbrian Bishop, Wilfrid. These instances, along with several others, point to a Bede intimately involved in the political-cultural milieu of eighth-century England and establish a historical context against which his history may be considered an argument, or a reaction. Goffart's analysis reverses the simplistic "Golden Age" hypothesis by asserting the reality of Bede and his literary environment.

The importance of the conflict between Bede and Bishop Wilfrid goes further. Goffart claims that a large component of Bede's *Historia* is in fact structured on, or

more appropriately, against, an earlier Life of Wilfrid written by the priest Eddius Stephanus (or Stephen of Ripon; the authorship is contested) shortly after the Bishop's death in 709. In an example at once complex and highly informative, as well as applicable to the present study, Goffart triangulates information about the Rule of St. Benedict from two saints lives (that of Wilfrid, mentioned above, and the life of Ceolfrid, the long-time abbot at Bede's monastery at Wearmouth-Jarrow) to derive an inference about Bede's work based on the fact that Bede himself is silent about it. With the help of Stephen's account in the Life of Wilfrid that "[Wilfrid] much improved the ordinance of the churches by means of the Rule of Benedict," the popularization of the Benedictine monastic communities in England had become almost exclusively attributed to the powerful bishop.⁴ Also linked to the bishop was the abbot Ceolfrid, the monk and eventual abbot at Bede's monastery during the most of Bede's time there. As is known from Ceolfrid's *vita*, Wilfrid appointed Ceolfrid on the advice of Wilfrid's friend Benedict Biscop to assist in the foundation of the abbey at Wearmouth.⁵ In Bede's *Historia*, however, he is silent about both the Rule of St. Benedict and the details of the founding of Wearmouth-Jarrow involving Wilfrid. In one of Bede's compilations called *History of the Abbots*, he also deletes details concerning the Wilfridian connection to the foundation of Wearmouth-Jarrow.⁶ Thus, Goffart asserts, "We could not possibly know, if the Life of Ceolfrid had not survived, that Wilfrid had a part in Benedict Biscop's enterprise."⁷ Goffart's claim, "the ultimate goal of Bede's narrative was the conversion of Irish Iona, the source of so much profit to Northumbria, and he prepared us for this event from the start of book III,"⁸ stems from numerous other examples in which discrepancies from one

text to another are linked solely by their bearing on the status of Wilfrid. This example helps to elucidate the manner in which argument is pursued in medieval historical narrative. The mere presence or absence of an event can often stand alone as evidence for the historiographer's thesis.

I resort to Goffart's example from Bede because Bede's *Historia* was itself one of the central archetypes for English historiography in the eleventh and twelfth centuries,⁹ and I would like to suggest a tradition between Bede and the two historiographers whom I will be examining, William of Malmesbury, and Geoffrey of Monmouth. In many ways these two writers could not have been more different. William confessed his contempt (not unmerited) for Geoffrey's claims to historical veracity. Geoffrey seems to have been of Breton stock, while William claimed Anglo-Norman bloodlines. Geoffrey was a secular canon, while William was a monk at Malmesbury. But they share one very important thing in common, the twelfth century itself. Both William's *Gesta Regum Anglorum* and Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae* were dedicated to the same man, Robert, Second Earl of Gloucester. The two historians were from the same country, had the same kings, and experienced, at different levels of intimacy, the same events. One of the goals of this essay will be to focus primarily on the traditional divisions between monk and clerk, and, by comparing the two major works of William and Geoffrey, to attempt to understand the ways in which those divisions are likely to react to a shared historical context.

Geoffrey of Monmouth and William of Malmesbury were nearly exact contemporaries, both born probably within five years of each other, just before the turn of the twelfth century.¹⁰ Geoffrey is thought to have been of Breton descent, his

ancestors having come over during the conquest as soldiers on the side of William I, or perhaps as “later-arriving Bretons under the Norman kings.”¹¹ He was most likely born in Monmouth, which at the time was controlled by Breton and Norman families.¹² The dates of seven charter signatures attributed to Geoffrey place him in or near the town of Oxford from 1129-1151, where he was very likely a teacher at the Augustinian secular canons’ college of St. George, founded in 1074 by a Norman Robert d’Oyly.¹³ If he was indeed a secular canon at Oxford he would have been well-off. There were possibly only five canons there during Geoffrey’s time, appointed by Norman families, who collected tithes from “nearly seventy manors in Oxfordshire.”¹⁴ It was during his time in Oxford that he completed his most well-known work, *Historia Regum Britanniae (HRB)*, probably by 1136.¹⁵ In 1152 Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, appointed Geoffrey as Bishop of St. Asaph’s church, which was a recently revived “outpost of Norman authority...against the ultra-Welsh diocese of Bangor...”¹⁶ J.S.P. Tatlock suggests Geoffrey’s “Breton descent” and “loyalty to the crown and strong Norman connections and sympathies” as the primary reasons for this appointment.¹⁷ Because of the numerous Welsh rebellions during his life, however, he would never visit his see.¹⁸ He is thought to have died around 1155.¹⁹

William’s birthplace is uncertain, though it was probably near the abbey of Malmesbury, in Southwest England, where he eventually became a monk.²⁰ His parents were of mixed Norman and English descent, with his father likely Norman.²¹ He entered Malmesbury abbey at an early age, where he would have had access to one of the largest and most comprehensive libraries then in England.²² Malmesbury,

located in what used to be old Wessex, helped to bring a tradition, originally sprung from the intellectual culture surrounding Alfred the Great's monarchy, to a blossoming of Anglo-Norman intellectual activity in the twelfth century. It was ecclesiastical in nature, with emphases on "biblical studies, history and hagiography, classical reading and scientific research, particularly in the area of astronomy."²³ His studies included logic and medicine, but his true loves were ethics and of course, history, which, he attests, "by the felicitous recording of great deeds, inspires its readers, by example, to the pursuit of good or the avoidance of evil."²⁴ William's biographer Rodney Thompson maintains that "William was, like Bede before him, a man without career-ambition or achievement."²⁵ As a testament to that opinion William refused the abbacy offered him in 1140, electing to stay as Malmesbury abbey's chief librarian, a post he had held since at least 1137.²⁶ This is not to say that he was somehow detached from current issues, but, rather like Bede, thought it best to address them in his writings rather than in ecclesiastical office. William completed his great historical work, *Gesta Regum Anglorum (GR)*, by 1125. He produced a second addition by 1135, and worked on a continuation of the history, *Historia Novella*, until 1143, its discontinuation supposedly due to his illness or death in or shortly after that year.²⁷ William wrote numerous other works including *De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae*, *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, and several saints' lives.

The two histories in question were immediately popular. Thomson notes that William's work was known "throughout Southern England at least" during his lifetime, and that by the end of the twelfth century, it had become well known

throughout England and continental Europe, rivaling even Geoffrey's work "in forming the bases of later chronicles of national and European history."²⁸ Down the centuries Geoffrey's history has clearly proved the most popular and best preserved. Maureen Fries cites "the existence of over two hundred and twenty MSS of the work," making Geoffrey's text "the most popular of all medieval *historias*."²⁹ One might compare this estimate to the merely thirty-five extant manuscripts of William's text.³⁰ Geoffrey's has, moreover, produced far more criticism than William's, which is perhaps to be expected from the rediscovery that Geoffrey's work is primarily imaginative rather than historical. However, the *GR* has also been gaining significant critical attention. Rodney Thomson has recently published a full commentary on the *GR* as well as a new biography dealing with William's life, historical context, and literary methodology. Though Geoffrey's work eventually overshadowed William's, it is the contemporaneous popularity of the texts that is chiefly of concern here.

While most of the research on Geoffrey of Monmouth somehow involves the characters either of Arthur or Merlin, there are several steady subgenres of criticism that, while they touch on these prominent characters, do not take them as their primary focus. Among these are comparative studies looking at the prior impact on Geoffrey's work as well as Geoffrey's influence on subsequent literature. Most of the comparative work has investigated the history's influence on later texts, particularly in the "Brut" tradition. Other critical work examines how the impact of the immediate historiographical context may have played a part in shaping what he wrote, and has focused primarily on issues of political and ethnic allegiance. The earliest, most comprehensive, and indeed most consistent example of how Geoffrey's ethnic

affiliation may have shaped his narrative comes from J.S.P. Tatlock's book on the *HRB* and its early vernacular renditions, *The Legendary History of Britain* (1950). He here asserts that Geoffrey's Breton descent and what we know about his life make it probable that his stance was pro-Norman politically, with Breton racial allegiances. Geoffrey's initial ethnic support in the *HRB* is thus owed to the Britons, but when Maximianus conquers Gaul and brings "a hundred thousand ordinary men and women" from Britain across the channel,³¹ Geoffrey begins to make distinctions between Bretons (Armorican Britons) and Welsh. He clearly defines the Welsh as inferior to their continental cousins, from whom the lineage of King Arthur himself is derived.³² While this possibility seems likely, more recent critics have collapsed the divide which Tatlock had established between Welsh and Breton, and taken issue with the matter of Merlin's prophecy of Arthur's return, claiming it as an example of Geoffrey's Welsh sympathies. John Gillingham's article on the subject considered Geoffrey's criticism of the Welsh no less than a demonstration of his care for the well-being of a "race" that had been oppressed since the Anglo-Saxon invasions: "Geoffrey was a Welshman whose object was to secure cultural respectability for his own nation."³³ Michael Faletra counters Gillingham's position directly in an article which attempts to reassert Geoffrey's Norman allegiance by claiming Norman legitimacy, in fact, in the Saxon invasions: "Indeed, in its staging of this crucial moment of transition, it supports an Orosian historiography of *translationes imperii*; in emphasizing the waning of the Britons, it associatively legitimates the Norman present."³⁴ Matthew Fisher's article, "Genealogy Rewritten,"³⁵ represents the latest

attempt to engage this ethnic debate. Using a literal interpretation of the prophecy, Fisher claims, much like Gillingham, Geoffrey's ultimate loyalty to the Welsh cause:

Insular historiography was from the outset driven by the political imperatives of ethnicity. If Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* can be read as a 'vita of the English nation;' Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* is a similarly political vita, reconstituting the Anglo-Saxon and Norman conquests of the British (Welsh) as an anomalous, if lengthy, interregnum.³⁶

I plan to devote a chapter to this subject myself, but in doing so I hope to propose an angle not previously considered, which has much to do with Geoffrey's relation to his prominent contemporary, William of Malmesbury. The dominance of the ethnic and political debates, however, has left little time for another significant aspect of twelfth century historiography, that of religious affiliation. While the monastic-clerical divide is widely acknowledged, there has been very little work done on the manner in which this divide might have played a role in shaping twelfth century historical narrative.

Throughout this essay it is my goal to emphasize the difference between these two historians in respect to their specific ecclesiastical affiliations, and how this difference emerges as elements in their histories. William of Malmesbury was a Benedictine monk, largely secluded by rule and exempt from having to minister to the mundane issues of church government. Geoffrey of Monmouth was a secular canon, of whom we have testament in his own hand as to his presence at several charter signings in the town of Oxford, dealing primarily with the receiving of tithes and land grants. William's cloistered spirituality and Geoffrey's active secular life, I will argue, were driving forces in their histories. The specific comparison I will be making will build

from the arguments of Valerie Flint and Francis Ingledew, of whom Flint has recognized Geoffrey's direct engagement of William's *GR* in the composition of the *HRB*, and Ingledew has linked Geoffrey's work to a monastic-secular divide. Here, then, I will be engaging specific elements of the histories of both men in which monastic or secular affiliation likely played a role. In the first chapter I plan to explore some dynamics of the twelfth century English church that surrounded and perhaps helped to stimulate the production of history. Looking primarily at trends in monastic appointments to episcopal sees from the conquest to the completion of the *GR*, I argue that William's history occurred at a time when monastic governmental power was on the wane, and that certain aspects of it were intended to help revitalize the argument for monastic sovereignty. In contrast I argue that Geoffrey's history combats the notions that William attempts to revive by insisting on the monk's inability to hold positions of power. In the second chapter I examine how the monastic-secular divide appears in the genealogical construction of the *GR* and *HRB*, and how Geoffrey's secular genealogical affiliation offers new possibilities as to his ethnic and political loyalties. In the third chapter I engage the question of how monastic and secular divisions may have contributed to the manner in which each historiographer designates and organizes authority in their texts, arguing that Geoffrey privileges royal prerogative derived from a bloodline, while William asserts God's providence through his emphasis on a "revealed" rendering of historical events. Very little research has been carried out in respect to this last topic, perhaps because it has been taken for granted that God is ultimately the authority in any twelfth-century history. My hope is to show that this assumption is simplistic, and

that further analysis reveals complexities in twelfth century historical construction that have gone unnoticed.

Chapter I. Ideological Divisions among Monastic and Secular Clergy in the Anglo-Norman Church

Although the relationship between monks and bishops had changed in many significant ways by the time William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth had begun writing in the first half of the twelfth century, the tradition of monastic and secular conflict in England goes at least as far back as Bede. Indeed the accumulation of power by Bishop Wilfrid seems to have been a central impetus for the composition of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* and several of Bede's other works.³⁷ While the initial converts of England were the Britons, supposedly at the request of the Briton King Lucius to the Pope Eleutherius some time around 156 A.D., it was Augustine's conversion of the Angles in 597, initiated by the vision of Pope Gregory, that marks the inception of the Anglo-Saxon church in England, and serves as an appropriate point of departure for the discussion of monastic and secular relationships concerning the governance of the English Church.

The modern understanding of the initial organization of the church in England is currently undergoing an interesting shift regarding the geographical and disciplinary uniformity of early monastic affiliation. The popular hypothesis had held that the monastic rule of St. Benedict came to England with Augustine in 597. Pope Gregory the Great was said to have endorsed Benedict's rule and possibly even practiced it himself.³⁸ Thus it would follow that Augustine, Gregory's prior, would very likely have brought the Benedictine rule along with him.³⁹ If this were the case we might assume that control over monastic practice had always rested directly with the bishop, but new evidence suggests that Gregory's connection to Benedictinism may only have lain in recommending the rule generally, and that his own monasticism in fact

resembled older rules based on Cassian and Basilic models.⁴⁰ This means that in practice Augustine's monastery at Canterbury would have likely followed a rule more Cassian and Basilic than Benedictine, and suggests that early English monastic practices were more diversified than formerly thought. There exists evidence from our previous sources that Bishop Wilfrid himself was responsible for spreading the Benedictine rule in the seventh century. Bede's account of Benedict Biscop, the founder of the abbey at Wearmouth-Jarrow, indicates that his abbey's rule was culled from seventeen different sources.⁴¹ Also relevant is the question of the monastic rules among the Welsh and Irish, who are thought to have followed a mixture of the older rules of Basil and Cassius.⁴² In England this diversity of rules would stand until the Viking invasions of the ninth century, after which the monasteries would be brought under the disciplinal control of the bishops.⁴³

The process of bringing the English monasteries into conformity under a single Benedictine rule was to have several important consequences. In the name of efficiency and disciplinal conformity monastic subordination to the bishops would reorganize church administration, making monastic communities one part of a single centralized ecclesiastical structure, instead of a bifurcated one placing monasteries directly under papal authority. By the same token, the cost of this "modernization" would be a loss of monastic independence from the largely geographical organization of the episcopate. The problem of monastic autonomy would remain a hot point of debate well into the twelfth century, the period in which William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth were to produce their histories. Some interesting linguistic features arise in the words associated with the two groups of which William and

Geoffrey were a part (i.e. monks and secular clergy respectively), which will help to inform some of the most basic ideological differences between the two men. In its earliest usage, the word “secular” is opposed directly to “monastic;” “Of members of the clergy: Living ‘in the world’ and not in monastic seclusion, as distinguished from ‘regular’ and ‘religious’.”⁴⁴ That is, being designated “secular” meant that one was, at the very least, not a monk. The definition also points to the association of secularity with the world, monasticism with seclusion. This distinction will be critical in the argument to come.

The idea of “centralization” presents a basic spatial structure, which the monastic community may have seen as an unacceptable concession to temporal power. If there can be said to be a “center” in Rome and the pope, it necessitates the presence of a hierarchy in which a branch is considered to be either nearer or farther away from that center, deriving its own power from the “distance” between itself and its center, and already the discussion requires temporal-spatial and thus secular terms (i.e. the mundane involves time and space, while heaven is infinite). The very word “diocese” offers a sense of the convergence in the bishop of both a power hierarchy and a temporal-spatial association, as the O.E.D. observes: “The sphere of jurisdiction of a bishop; the district under the pastoral care of a bishop.”⁴⁵ The definition of “diocese” associates it more closely with secular clergy than with monks. The post of bishop is by definition worldly. The etymology of “diocese” is closely associated with a Greek verb meaning “to administer.” “Ministration” itself derives from the Latin “ministrare,” meaning to serve, most commonly a priest, or in government a king.⁴⁶ This connection evokes in its origins a sense of temporal power and involvement in a

secular power structure. Several other terms associated with the episcopacy share a similar link to temporal-spatial power. The word “bishop,” for instance, which is only a long corrupted cognate of the Latin *episcopus*, meaning overseer, or watcher, conveying a sense of temporal government, may serve as an example.⁴⁷ The bishop’s linguistic association with temporality may be contrasted to the word “monk,” which derives ultimately from the Greek *mono*, that is “one,” monk thence meaning “one man” or “solitary man,” containing no inherent etymological relation to a power structure.⁴⁸

The ideological divide is also witnessed in the geographical distribution of monastic jurisdiction as compared to that of the English bishoprics whose control they are under. The basis of organization for bishoprics since Augustine had been spatial (i.e. geographical.)⁴⁹ That is, a bishopric is the plot of land over which the bishop has administrative jurisdiction. This mundane spatial organization contrasts strongly with the organization of the monasteries, whose congregations often “crossed diocesan boundaries.”⁵⁰ The reason for this seems to be that the rule that monks practiced bound communities together more than any kind of spatial or temporal connection. Consider for instance the possibility of “the” monastery at Wearmouth and Jarrow, which is actually two different buildings about seven miles apart, but which nonetheless considered itself “a single monastery in two places.”⁵¹ The very lack of strictly geographical organization among the monastic communities in England seems an initial piece of evidence (along with linguistic elements), of a basic ideological difference between themselves and the secular clergy, with the possible later exception of the canons regular.

From what is available in the historical record, it is possible to link these etymological and geographical possibilities to the unifying elements of practice that make them pertinent. It is clear that monks showed an interest in church government from the time of the early English church. The interest seems to have been in responding to trends in episcopal appointment which they found contrary to God's word. In one of Bede's final compositions, which he produced in failing health, he writes a letter to Egbert, Bishop of York, concerning the misbehavior of bishops and the growing misuse of monasteries.⁵² Among his chief concerns are luxurious behavior among the bishops, appointment of bishops from the lay nobility, an inadequate number of bishops for reaching less populated areas, and the collecting of tithes from those rural areas in spite of the bishops' absence. On the monastic side, Bede is also concerned with the construction of buildings, which are monasteries in name, but bear no resemblance to a monastic community in practice, and merely constitute acceptable housing for the unwed nobility. Although the monastic-secular divide is evident in this brief summary of his concerns, it is Bede's argument concerning tithes paid by rural laity, whom the bishops are not plentiful enough to reach, which epitomizes the logic of Bede's concern. As expected, Bede attributes this problem ultimately to disobedience to God:

For when the Lord sent his disciples to preach the Gospel, and said to them, "And as ye go, preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand," he added, a little further on, "Freely ye have received, freely give; provide neither gold nor silver."⁵³ [Matthew, x. 7, 8, 9] If, therefore, he ordered them to preach the Gospel freely, and did not permit them to receive gold or silver, or any temporal payment of money

from those to whom they preached, what hazard, I would ask, must hang over those who do the contrary?⁵³

In other words, the sin that bishops have committed in respect to God's command that the laity need "provide neither gold nor silver" is not only a passive disobedience but active opposition, exacting tribute, "gold or silver," and not preaching to those who have paid.

Bede's solution to these problems is practical and reifies the ideological division between monastic and secular worldviews by proposing the following:

I should therefore consider it expedient, that a general council should be held, and the consent both of kings and bishops be obtained, that, by a proclamation, a place may be provided among the monasteries, where an episcopal see may be created. And, lest any abbot or monks may endeavour to contravene or oppose this decree, license should be given them to choose some one from among themselves to be ordained bishop, and to rule with episcopal authority, over the adjoining country belonging to the same diocese, as well as the monastery itself.⁵⁴

Bede's suggestion, to create a monastic see and elect bishops directly from the monastery, implies an opposition to the trend of electing bishops from clerical or lay positions. Electing monk-bishops would, in Bede's view, ensure better behavior in their own positions and encourage it in other seats of authority. The monk-bishop would also be more likely, because of a more "accurate" knowledge of good and evil and of God's commandments in the holy scripture, to abide more closely by specific regulations concerning tribute and preaching. In addition to these justifications Bede's letter also contains an implicit argument for independence and autonomy from

episcopal and governmental control. Able to elect their own bishops from the monastery of their choosing, monks could gain representation among the bishops and hope to achieve some level of control over episcopal policy.

Whether Bede's plea had an immediate effect is difficult to say, but the concerns Bede expressed remained a vibrant issue well into the twelfth century. At the time of the Conquest, the monk-bishop in England had become nearly as common as the secular bishop.⁵⁵ Episcopal pressure toward disciplinary uniformity, however, eventually became too great. By the late tenth century, after much of the Viking presence had either diminished or stabilized in the north, most of the destroyed monastic communities below the Humber had been restored, according to Frank Barlow, "by a group of determined bishops, who, encouraged by the kings, especially Edgar, were able to use all available royal powers to recreate in England the best possible Benedictine monasticism."⁵⁶ The unification of the monasteries under the single Benedictine rule ran in tandem with the West Saxon political unification, resembling in some ways the political and religious conditions produced under the Carolingian empire, and may have "owed something to Frankish precedent."⁵⁷ Frankish precedent it seems also had an influence on the disciplinary organization of the English monasteries, when a council of English and foreign monks assembled at a 970 council in the city of Winchester to devise a single set of monastic customs that would "apply to the whole kingdom,"⁵⁸ modeled largely on those of the council of Aachen in 817.⁵⁹ The major departure from the Aachen council was that King Edgar, who was ruling at the time and fostered much of the reform, placed control of these restored monastic houses into the hands of the bishops who had reformed them,

instead of appointing an “arch-abbot” under direct royal control.⁶⁰ Under certain circumstances the bishop would even act as a “de facto” abbot.⁶¹ After these reforms, the disciplinary diversity and independence championed initially by Bede had become a unified and dependent component of the centralized and geographical episcopal structure.

Aside from the drastic political change that came with the Norman Conquest, several major ecclesiastical issues began to emerge that would have an important bearing on the relationship between monks and the secular clergy in the Anglo-Norman church. Among the most important were the Norman infiltration into the English Church, and the Gregorian reforms. In 1070 Pope Alexander II officially legitimized William’s conquest:

He sent papal legates to England, who deposed ‘unworthy bishops, held a reforming council, crowned William anew, and imposed penances on the invaders. It was a comprehensive act of settlement. But for the native church it was the start of its humiliation.⁶²

While it does not seem that William had a strong aversion to the idea of monk-bishops, lowering them in number only slightly throughout his reign,⁶³ he did show a rather extreme concern with their ethnic origins, with every episcopal appointment during his reign given to a Norman, or monks of foreign extraction.⁶⁴ The episcopal appointments during William’s reign resulted in an almost complete turnover in the ethnic composition of the bishops, with only one of the fifteen sees still occupied by an Anglo-Saxon, while eleven were now in Norman possession.⁶⁵

Aside from his renowned achievements in soldiery, William I himself was generally considered a religious, possibly even “puritanical” leader.⁶⁶ His policies toward the church were reformist in their own way, but always in the end subservient to royal goals.⁶⁷ His military prowess helped him naturally adhere to the centralized efficiency of English ecclesiastical organization, which he made efforts to expand into Wales.⁶⁸ He took issue mainly with aspects of what he considered the church’s “grossest failing, its worldliness,”⁶⁹ notably in punishing bishops when the morals of their clergy were allowed to become lax.⁷⁰ His own reforms and the money he spent on the church (he was among the great lay contributors to the English church) were geared toward administrative efficiency and moral regulation, and took place shortly after the conquest.⁷¹ As an early reformer himself, William had little sympathy for the later Gregorian reforms, which he saw “merely as sporadic outrageous moves, exploratory threats from afar that could never touch his shield.”⁷² William’s son Rufus, while by no means as religious as his father, did carry on many of the policies toward the church that the conqueror had enacted.⁷³ For our discussion his notable act toward the church was to lower further the number of monks appointed as bishops while increasing appointments from royal clergy.⁷⁴

When Henry I took the throne, the two trends I mention above, the increase in appointments of Norman/Anglo-Norman royal clergy and the gradual infiltration of the Gregorian Reforms would come to a head during the controversy involving Henry over the issue of lay investiture. While the central impetus for instituting the Gregorian reforms was the consolidation of ecclesiastical authority in the pope, rule three of the *dictatus papae* stated “that [the pope] alone can depose or reinstate

bishops.”⁷⁵ This offered certain bishops (namely Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury) some fodder with which to argue against the “anti-monastic” episcopal appointments of the King.⁷⁶ Henry’s appointments from royal clergy reached an all-time high around 1115, occupying almost 80% of the episcopal sees.⁷⁷ By 1125, not a single Benedictine monk, by this time the standard in English monasticism, was in possession of a bishopric, “a situation without parallel since the early tenth century.”⁷⁸ Along with his royal clerical appointments Henry had begun to take an interest, along with his queen Matilda, in appointing Augustinian canons, or canons regular, and in so doing had discontinued the long, although always minority, monk-bishop tradition in the English church.⁷⁹

Another important historical issue that will lead into the direct discussion of the two historians concerns the immense number of lay properties donated to the church over the period immediately following the Conquest. These donations helped the church grow wealthy and from that wealth to create opportunities for new intellectual activity. It also spurred a renewed “evangelical movement within its two great communal orders, the canonical and the monastic.”⁸⁰ The Norman nobility and episcopacy soon began to build churches on these properties, largely as grand substitutes for the distasteful “smallness” of the Anglo-Saxon Romanesque style.⁸¹ During these reconstructions the old churches were usually demolished.⁸² These demolitions had some very interesting consequences for the outgrowth of historical writing in the first half of the twelfth century. Initially it was the tearing down of ancient tombs that ended up leading to a renewed interest in the lives of the Anglo-Saxon saints,⁸³ and

It was, indeed, William of Malmesbury, continuing the work of Goscelin of St. Bertin, who rescued so much of England's hagiographical past and helped to transmit, and even refurbish, traditional cults. Moreover the rehousing of the archives after rebuilding led at least to a physical evaluation of the title deeds. And the building costs made the church authorities very aware of the need to exploit every profitable right to which they had a claim. So chronicles, saints' lives, and title deeds were created. These were *munimentia*, muniments, weapons with which the church could be defended by its servants, present and to come.⁸⁴

From this passage it is first important to point out that Barlow's claim, while I will employ it in my argument, as I believe it presents vital links to the immediate political environment, presents the writer of saints' lives and chronicles as a particularly worldly sort, producing them only as '*munimentia*' for maintaining church property. It should become evident in the following pages that this is clearly not the whole story. Though there was much proprietary conflict throughout the period, it is rarely without a complementary ideological or political agenda. What is most interesting here is that the physical demolition of property precipitated a reevaluation of documents in the archives of the churches. This seems to present a physical historical link between the Norman conquest and the rebirth of intellectual activity and especially historical writing in the early twelfth century. And the fact that William of Malmesbury was named as being involved in many of these archival excavations places him at the center of the burgeoning intellectual and political milieu of Anglo-Norman England.

This is one of the reasons that I suspect the recorded completion date for William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum* to be significantly tied to the monastic-secular events that occurred during the reign of Henry I, as it was in that very year (1125) that Henry discontinued the long tradition of having a Benedictine monk in at least one of England's episcopal sees. William of Malmesbury was himself a Benedictine, and judging by his engagement in so many subjects, and particularly in church affairs, the absence of Benedictine representation in the episcopacy is highly unlikely to have escaped his notice. In the following pages I will try to address the question of whether, and in what respect, the *GR* can be considered as *munimentia*, or fortification against not only proprietary impingement, but also more general ideological battles that may be surrounding the discontinuation of Benedictine bishoprics.

Queen Matilda, wife of Henry I, first encouraged William's major historical work and though she died before its completion, the *GR* from the outset was always intended primarily for Henry's household.⁸⁵ Judging from the textual criticism of William's manuscripts, we know roughly which manuscripts constitute the initial group. Of those, the recipients appear to have been Empress Matilda, King David of Scotland (brother-in-law to Henry), and Robert Earl of Gloucester (illegitimate son of Henry).⁸⁶ It is thus possible to tentatively conclude that those among the laity who most likely could have affected the shape of the narrative were people sharing confidence of the king, and those most likely to rule the kingdom after his death.⁸⁷ There is also ample evidence that this apparent reality did not stop William from at times offering harsh critiques of the Norman line, most evidently in his portrayals of

William I and William Rufus. That William could be so candid when addressing the Norman royalty becomes evidence used by critics to justify the claim that of William of Malmesbury's Anglo-Norman bloodline, his father was likely a Norman knight who came to England during the conquest.⁸⁸ This bit of background is enough to suggest that William is operating in direct coordination with the royal household of England, and also that this situation does not at all preclude contemporaneous political criticism.

In his dedication to Robert of Gloucester William suggests a purpose for his history with two different manifestations. The first is as follows:

The virtue of celebrated men holds forth as its greatest excellence, its tendency to excite the love of persons even far removed from it: hence the lower classes make the virtues of their superiors their own, by venerating those great actions, to the practice of which they cannot themselves aspire.⁸⁹

What I find most intriguing about the dedication, and particularly this passage, is that he concentrates on a vertical social structure (i.e. that the lower classes, or “inferiores,” derive their virtues from the exemplary actions of their superiors, or “superiorum”) rather than a horizontal historical structure, which might have been expected from the opening clause and the nature of the project. That is, instead of the “virtues of celebrated men” representing himself or later “princes” as is the case in the dedication, one might expect in a history such as this to find the “celebrated men” in fact to be those exemplary figures in history about which William intends to write, thus making Robert apposite to the “inferiores” who imitate their superiors. While designating Robert as a member of the “inferiores” would make a rather unappetizing

dedication, I am not entirely sure William would have disagreed with the comparison. It may indeed be integral to the manner in which he proceeds in constructing his history.

When he moves on to speak of the history itself, a temporal component is still almost entirely lacking:

Accept then, most illustrious Sir, a work in which you may contemplate yourself as in a glass, where your Highness's sagacity will discover that you have imitated the actions of the most exalted characters, even before you could have heard their names.⁹⁰

The argument for "ex speculo" as a reference to "per speculum" in 1 Corinthians 13 is tempting, but the prepositions "ex" and "per" give a different enough sense to alter its meaning, and perhaps it is not entirely necessary. The importance of this passage in fact lies in the "mirroriness," or "reflectivity" of the "speculum." In William's history then, Robert of Gloucester will see himself, that is a direct reflection of himself, in the deeds of the characters he reads. Notice that the temporal element here is almost non-existent. The emphasis is entirely on the manner in which the examples from this history can encourage admirable behavior in its royal reader, in order that the lower classes may strive after a good example. The Platonic structure embedded in this dedication, whether William intended it as such or not, should by now be clearly evident.⁹¹ And if one is to understand William's history in such a light, it is also necessary to understand the obligation William sees in diminishing the temporal quality of his history, as emphasis on the particular would only act as distractions to highlighting the qualities of the ideal king. This thought process, I would argue, is

also deeply ingrained in the monastic tradition. A deductive logic following from an ideal, such as a “rule” (e.g. the rule of St. Benedict), is a basic component of monastic organization, an organization exempt from spatial-temporal dependencies. And it is this organization that I think represents the fundamental contrast between their own ideology and that of the secular bishops and clerics.

This introduces a potential method for William’s construction of history, that he will be composing it as a narrative which “allows” its readers (primarily royal) to see and take example from right (or wrong) action, regardless of their temporal distance. It should be clear that whether actions in the history are right or wrong depends on William’s judgment of them in the text. This view will be monastic in character. In attempting to decipher what William wants the royal family to think concerning the monastic-secular debate, then, I will look to several instances in his text in which these issues arise. The first relates directly to the historical events I mentioned above. In book two, during William’s discussion of King Edmund’s military campaigns, he breaks off to cite the charter which the king had written asserting the rights of the abbey at Glastonbury and its absolute jurisdiction over the whole town. Edmund threatens that if “any one, either bishop, or duke, or prince, or any of their servants, should dare to enter it for the purpose of holding courts, or distraining, or doing anything contrary to the will of the servants of God there, I inhibit under God’s curse.”⁹² Glastonbury’s significance to Benedictine monasticism in England is crucial, and William would likely have inserted this royal charter in order to protect monastic sovereignty there. It was at this monastery in the mid-tenth century that Dunstan its abbot reinstated English monastic culture after the Viking invasions, as I

mentioned above, under “the best possible Benedictine monasticism.”⁹³

Glastonbury’s foundational importance to the Benedictine cause makes its inclusion in this history an absolute necessity. Not only is it included here; William attaches versions of it to the reigns of several different Anglo-Saxon and Danish kings throughout the history in the form of renewal charters. Each subsequent citation of the charter grows in length, generally appending information that works toward the legitimacy of monastic power at Glastonbury. King Edgar’s charter, the first mentioned after Edmund’s, contains statements ensuring the independent authority of the Glastonbury abbot, first by ensuring that “no person, unless a monk of that place, shall there be abbat (sic),” secondly by asserting that the monks of the abbey are to elect their own bishops,⁹⁴ and finally giving these monks the power to command bishops to ordain the monks they have elected.⁹⁵ These additions to the charter not only reaffirm the power of the monastery, but also make the bishops, at least in the instance of Glastonbury, subordinate to them.⁹⁶

The charters also provide a context within which William is able to highlight certain figures in monastic history that reinforce the ability of monks to hold positions of power in the church. For instance, his emphasis on the individuals in the “lineage” of Dunstan that have attained the archiepiscopal see at Canterbury is remarkable:

How powerful indeed the sanctity and virtue of Dunstan’s disciples were, is sufficiently evidenced by Ethelwold, made abbat of Abingdon from a monk of Glastonbury, and afterwards bishop of Winchester, who built so many and such great monasteries, as to make it appear hardly credible how the bishop of one see

should be able to effect what the king of England himself could scarcely undertake.⁹⁷

Not only is the Abbot of Glastonbury able to carry out the office of archbishop at least as well as secular appointments, but his ability to execute public works also rivals the monarchy, the most secular power position. Just prior to Cnut's renewal of the Glastonbury charter William again asserts monastic capability in episcopal office: "near the king stood the before-named Ethelnoth, who was the seventh monk of Glastonbury that had become archbishop of Canterbury."⁹⁸ Then, instead of listing others standing "near the king," as these phrases anticipate, he lists from one to seven the monks that had become archbishop, moving from here directly into the charter. The list as it appears here creates something of a bad join, an uncommon occurrence in William's work, which suggests he may be trying to highlight both the evidence of monk-bishop success and the importance of the monastic sovereignty granted in the charter renewal.

Following Edgar's renewal charter, William cites another of Edgar's decrees affirming the king's intention to "rebuild all the holy monasteries throughout [his] kingdom."⁹⁹ The meaning of the king's decree is ultimately redundant, as William summarizes its contents just prior. The differences to be noted in William's citation of the decree are the added weight of royal authority and certain inflammatory remarks the king makes concerning clerks. In describing the "ruinous" exteriors of the monastic houses, their "mouldering shingles and worm-eaten boards," and his intention to renew them, King Edgar offers a parallel in the inhabitants of their interiors, "wherefore, ejecting illiterate clerks, subject to the discipline of no regular

order, in many places I have appointed pastors of an holier race, that is, of the monastic order.”¹⁰⁰ In this neat analogy the monastic-secular divide takes a clear form. Clerks represent the decay of religious practice; monks represent the renewal of religious order and the return of regular life. The particular criticism leveled at the clerks is most important in comparison with Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae*, as it is in considering the relevant intersections of these two works that the ideological conflicts between monks and secular clergy begin to become apparent in the words and structure of their respective literary output.

Geoffrey is thought to have completed the *HRB* around ten years after the *GR*.¹⁰¹ His capacity as a canon at St. George’s Secular College in Oxford is almost certain.¹⁰² In 1152 Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, appointed Geoffrey as bishop of St. Asaph’s, though Welsh control of the district made it impossible for him to ever visit his see. Geoffrey’s ecclesiastical experience almost exactly opposes that of William of Malmesbury. Francis Ingledew, in his article “The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History,”¹⁰³ points to the work of Georges Duby and his identification of a “general monastic-clerical polarization in Europe in the early twelfth century,” the result of various shifts in policy engendered in the reign of Henry I:¹⁰⁴

Duby describes a process beginning around 1120, when the forms of attention to the natural and human world changed in the dawning belief that "the kingdom of God might also be of this world.... A sure and decisive change affected the way that the flesh was seen, a change in the intensity and quality of the gaze upon the carnal..." Duby explicitly connects this profound alteration of sensibility to the

renewal of "the clerk's preeminence over the monk."...Geoffrey was profoundly the creature of the clerical environment that developed in Henry I's reign (1100-1135). Whereas before the conquest, the Norman dukes had appointed their bishops from the military aristocracy or the ducal family, in post-conquest England, though some bishops continued to come from this background, "the chief link between [the Anglo-Norman bishops] was the fact that so many had been ducal or royal clerks." In the history of English political administration, the period of Henry I's reign was distinguished by a fundamental shift to curial government, as Henry not only continued the post-conquest policy of appointing curial bishops but made service in the royal household, instead of membership in the great magnate families, the basis for advancement to major administrative posts, a development that opened opportunity to the lower clergy.¹⁰⁵

Geoffrey's experience during Henry I's reign is thus viewed as creating an unabashed secularism in the *HRB*, which in part takes aim at the monastic tradition of historians and more specifically at the work of William of Malmesbury.¹⁰⁶

Among numerous instances of William criticizing or condemning outright the secular clergy, an anecdote which he inserted into the middle of his chapter on William the conqueror seems appropriate. While running through an account of William I's campaigns to claim his land rights in Normandy and Brittany, William of Malmesbury appends a story of two clerks from the town of Nantes, "who though not yet of legal age, had obtained the priesthood from the bishop of that place, more by entreaty than desert: the pitiable death of one of whom, at length taught the survivor, how near they had before been to the brink of hell."¹⁰⁷ For most of their lives they had

attended “sometimes to literature, sometimes to secular cares.”¹⁰⁸ Yet they had not satisfied their minds, for the reason, as William puts it, that they “had been occupied rather in wrong than proper pursuits.”¹⁰⁹ Dissatisfied and without proper religion, the two decided to prolong their friendship. Their plan was that whoever should die first would revisit the friend still alive to inform him that, “according to the Platonic tenet, death does not extinguish the spirit, but sends it back again, as it were from prison, to God its author.”¹¹⁰ If this proved impossible, the friend still alive was to assume the validity of “the sect of the Epicureans.”¹¹¹ When the first friend dies, he manages to return, though not from heaven, but as a man damned to “lasting and innumerable kinds of punishment.”¹¹² Proof of this comes by way of his “stretching out his hand, dripping with a corrupted ulcer,” and a thank you note from Satan and his Infernals, offering their gratitude for all the souls they had recently been sent due to the lax behavior of the ecclesiasts. At length the dead friend admonishes the living one to “change your habit, change your disposition; become a monk at Rennes, in the monastery of St. Melanius,” which he promptly does.¹¹³ The general moral that faith should take precedence over logic is clear enough, but it is the disciplinal transformation from clerk to monk, and thus from hell to heaven, that makes the story of particular interest. The fact that the spiritual miscalculation occurs in the character of the clerk unites the contrasting secular ideology with its typical human counterpart.

This is also exactly the kind of comment to which men such as Geoffrey of Monmouth would likely be sensitive. Geoffrey’s text also has numerous references and slights to monks and monasteries. Some occur by omission, others through narrative construction, and still others as insults. The following example emerges

during his discussion of Constans, the eldest son of Constantine II, and brother to Utherpendragon, Arthur's father. Upon his birth "the King handed Constans his first-born over to the church of Amphibalus in Winchester, so that he might enter the monastic order."¹¹⁴ When Constantine dies, the two younger sons are still too young to assume the throne, at which point Vortigern, who had long awaited the opportunity, seizes his chance to assume power. To do so he convinced Constans to release himself from the religious order,¹¹⁵ after which Vortigern would help Constans win the throne. Once this was achieved, Vortigern made Constans a puppet king, "hand[ing] the entire government of the kingdom over to Vortigern."¹¹⁶ This is the point that evokes Geoffrey's censure:

He accepted Vortigern's advice without question, never taking any action himself until Vortigern had told him to do so. It was his own lack of character which made him act in this way, plus the fact that what he had learned in the cloister had nothing to do with how to rule a kingdom.¹¹⁷

There is ample evidence in the work of Valerie Flint and from the mouth of William of Malmesbury himself that William did not respect Geoffrey as a historian, and that they often criticized one another's histories by constructing the same event, or kind of event, in a highly contrastive manner.¹¹⁸ Geoffrey certainly knew and drew upon William's *GR* for his own work, and as Flint argues, formed his narrative, in part, as a parody or answer to William's history.¹¹⁹ Whether Geoffrey's comment cited here constitutes a direct reply to William's championing of the monk-bishop is difficult to be sure of, but regardless, the issue of the monk-bishop, or monk as governor, emerges as a theme in both narratives, and thus was certainly an issue to which they

both wished to respond. Geoffrey's portrayal of the monk-ruler instead of the monk-bishop, while not in perfect alignment with William's example, is only a nominal problem. Everett Crosby, considering the divergence of bishop and chapter in twelfth century England, notes the suggestion by Hugh de Fleury that "the bishop took on royal dignity and was to be viewed as a king."¹²⁰ The Domesday book records the church as holding "more than one fourth of all the land, of which bishops possessed a substantial portion."¹²¹ The magnate status of the bishops in Norman England is certain, and both government and church officials were unabashed to term their bishops "barons," and their bishoprics "baronies."¹²² Understanding the twelfth century perception of the bishop as both feudal lord and ecclesiastical administrator strengthens the appositeness of Geoffrey's comments to William's concerning the ability of the monk-bishop to govern successfully.

As witnessed in William's praise for Edgar's promise to "rebuild all the holy monasteries,"¹²³ one of the physical manifestations of the monastic-secular debates in the histories of these two men is the moral weight they put on the construction or revivification of different buildings. William is very clear in his praise for those who erect monasteries, as numerous examples including this instance of king Athelstan attest:

I forbear relating how many new and magnificent monasteries he founded; but I will not conceal that there was scarcely an old one in England which he did not embellish, either with buildings or ornaments, or books, or possessions. Thus he ennobled the new ones expressly, but the old, as though they were only casual objects of his kindness.¹²⁴

Geoffrey is almost entirely silent about the builders of monasteries, instead favoring those kings who restored secular ways of life. His portrayal of Athelstan highlights in particular that under his reign his kingdom “kept peace and concord among themselves, they cultivated the fields and they rebuilt the cities and castles.”¹²⁵

Leading up to the battle of Hastings, William reminisces about the coming of the Anglo-Saxon princes to the Christian faith, and in doing so gives us an insight into the manner of the connection between monasticism (i.e. being a monk) and the renewal of monasteries:

I speak of princes, who from the greatness of their power might have full liberty to indulge in pleasure; some of whom, in their own country, and others at Rome, changing their habit, obtained a heavenly kingdom, and a saintly intercourse.

Many during their whole lives in outward appearance only embraced the present world, in order that they might exhaust their treasure on the poor, or divide them amongst monasteries.¹²⁶

The prince then has two primary methods of being monastic. The first is actually to give up his possessions and to “chang[e] their habit.” The second is to remain a prince, though only in “outward appearance,” to symbolically take the habit by contributing in some way to the growth of the monastic community. William’s spiritual negotiation gives those holding secular office, such as princes (e.g. Robert of Gloucester), a secular means of achieving salvation. And recollect again who William’s audience is, precisely those in this position. Giving to the monasteries is also a form of largesse, which would present an alternative to its strictly secular or feudal forms. I might also suggest mapping this notion of “good” onto Geoffrey’s

descriptions of renovation and rebuilding throughout the *HRB*. His two options, however would be quite different. Instead of a prince deciding to become a monk or give to monasteries, Geoffrey's good princes will be good either through complete secularity and stable rule, or, and this I shall argue is Geoffrey's "holier race," they can maintain a stable kingdom for a time sufficient to rebuild the broken cities and churches.

Further acknowledgment of city building in Geoffrey's history, significantly I think, occurs during the reigns of the great conquerors (Belinus and Arthur), and suggests an important link which Geoffrey creates between a strong king and structural restoration. This issue will be further considered in the second chapter. These examples, along with the brief historical outline above, should provide an adequate introduction to the debates over monastic and secular power during the early twelfth century in England, and the ways in which these debates have surfaced in direct or indirect remarks regarding the conflict. In the chapters to follow I hope to uncover some of the deeper, less obvious forms in which the monastic-secular struggle has emerged as an element of Geoffrey and William's narrative structure, rather than as overt condemnation or praise.

Chapter II Genealogical Dichotomies in *Gesta Regum Anglorum* and *Historia Regum Britanniae* and its Implications

I wish the second chapter broadly to be a continuation of the inquiry I have been making into the consequences of monastic and secular ecclesiastical affiliations as they emerge in the historiographical projects of William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth. The points I made in the first chapter should thus underlie those which I propose here. The use of genealogy and race have both been topics of intense discussion with regard to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. Evidence from several articles, and in particular Francis Ingledew's work on secular trends in Geoffrey of Monmouth,¹²⁷ strongly support the idea that a historiographer's use of genealogy is generally and intimately linked to his ideological perspective. Ingledew specifically divides the perspectives of medieval genealogists into two categories, the Virgilian and the Augustinian. The Virgilian conception of history is closely affiliated with a secular worldview, while the Augustinian is similarly affiliated with the perspective of monastic historiographers. My own contribution to the genealogical discussion will be to develop Ingledew's thesis through a comparative study of the *HRB* and the *Gesta Regum Anglorum*. This comparison will yield more detailed results than Ingledew was able to provide, as it seeks to highlight the specific instances in which the tendencies he describes materialize in these two texts as oppositional genealogical constructions. I will also examine the manner in which the genealogical argument may clarify the hotly debated topic of Geoffrey of Monmouth's ethnic affiliation.

The publication dates of the *HRB*, a remarkable epilogue,¹²⁸ and numerous examples demonstrating Geoffrey's use of (and tampering with) William of

Malmesbury's history led Valerie Flint to conclude that his "work was used by Geoffrey in a manner that closely resembles deliberate teasing abuse, and teasing abuse directed at least in part at William's monastic sources and treasured monastic foundations."¹²⁹ She cites in particular Geoffrey's complete neglect of Glastonbury in light of its importance in William's *GR*, as well as Geoffrey's treatment of Edwin. Edwin was in Bede's and William's histories the great royal convert from Anglo-Saxon paganism to Christianity. King Edwin's conversion allowed him to become the most powerful king in England, though in the end he was killed by the treachery of Penda and Caedwallo. Geoffrey's rendering, on the other hand, is entirely without reference to Edwin's conversion. He elects instead, in direct opposition to previous accounts, to describe the details of his paganism (e.g. his consultation with magicians and auguries).¹³⁰ At Edwin's death, Bede and William struggle to explain it in terms of divine justice, while Geoffrey makes no such attempt, mentioning only that "the fighting was quickly over. Edwin was killed and so were almost all the people he had under his command..."¹³¹ Nor is he critical of Caedwallo and Penda for killing him, the evil of whom both Bede and William are at pains to confirm. Another negligence, which Flint does not cite, but which seems appropriate to her argument, is that Geoffrey does not recount a single saint's life throughout his own history, while saint's lives play an important role throughout William's, and are structurally integral to Bede's. Not only does Geoffrey fail to mention the lives of the saints, but he expressly declines all opportunities to do so, citing both his homely style and Gildas as having adequately accounted for them in his own work.¹³²

In addition to Geoffrey's pointed negligence in this respect, he also employs a genealogical argument to challenge the historical perspective of William of Malmesbury. As is noted above, William's solution to the platonic problem of history in his dedication to Robert of Gloucester is to deemphasize the temporal, particular elements of history, placing importance instead on the images of the "ideal" king in which Robert, William says, will see himself "ex speculo."¹³³ Geoffrey's dedication, also addressed to Robert of Gloucester, does no such thing, and may even be said to put emphasis directly on the actions of past men; "yet the deeds of these men were such that they deserve to be praised for all time."¹³⁴ In Geoffrey's rendering it is the deeds themselves that one (Robert) must contemplate, rather than resorting to the arbitration of the narrator in discovering that which he is to praise. This difference in effect opens up the temporal world which William sought to deemphasize, and creates a narrative space in which genealogy becomes a key element of its structure.

Geoffrey's decision to employ a genealogy commencing with the fall of Troy has an intriguing history and important consequences for the secular aims of the narrative. The Norman ducal class from which William I and his line arose were well known for commissioning family histories that demonstrated the "achievements of the Norman lords,"¹³⁵ and they eventually came to see the potential in making use of history "as a distinct cultural symbol,"¹³⁶ from which later generations might learn. An integral subgroup of these historical documents was genealogical history, which, after the eleventh century, became one of the most notable documents distinguishing noble families in Europe.¹³⁷ Francis Ingledew links the importance of genealogical foundations in England to a shift in ideology concerning property in the eleventh and

twelfth centuries coincidental with the institutionalization of primogeniture among the European nobility.¹³⁸ Whereas pre-Conquest Anglo-Saxon notions of family prominence were weighted heavily in respect to the proliferation of a single family's heirs over large swaths of land, the system of primogeniture allocated prominence not by the amount of space over which a particular family presided, but the length of time through which they presided there. As the "Norman aristocracy even at the time of the conquest rarely went back further than two or three generations, or before 1000," they were by the standards of eleventh century Europe essentially "lineageless."¹³⁹ In addition, the effort at primogeniture had not been entirely successful in Normandy. Thus, as a kind of remedy, the Normans became inordinately fond of fabricated genealogies, of which Geoffrey's account, if accepted as an essentially Norman work, is but the most popular and ambitious example.

I argue that it is, in fact, an essentially Norman work, not only because of Geoffrey's own affiliation with the Norman power structure, but also because of the Norman genealogical tradition in which he participates, and its contrast to other methods of genealogical construction. The shift to primogeniture, if not in practice at least in aspiring toward it, restructured the Anglo-Norman nobility's association with the land which they held. It reinforced a claim to land rights by stabilizing the patrimony, and in doing so made the question of who was to acquire property a matter of birth rather than strength.¹⁴⁰ This produced a situation in which the geographical stability of the family name through time became more important than the purely spatial aspect of land holding.¹⁴¹ To be noble meant to be old. George Duby cites as "one of the most remarkable changes in genealogical writings in the twelfth century"

the appearance of family histories containing ancestors that never existed.¹⁴² The desired effect was to push the family's link to their land back to a period of time at which it could no longer be contested.¹⁴³ It was the royal genealogy that set the precedent. Their authors often "tracked" the family's lineage as far back as Troy.¹⁴⁴ By the twelfth century a lineage rooted in Troy committed a royal family to two important historical positions, the "development of the construct of the kingdom" as the dominant unifying body of a people, and the monarch or prince as the "cultural authority" of that body.¹⁴⁵ This commitment transferred the dominant notion of community from the entire domain of Christendom under the pope to spatially distinct geographical areas defined ultimately by the strength and ability of the secular ruler.

As Geoffrey's genealogy begins with Aeneas, it must be considered a strong maneuver toward secularizing history, but it is integral also to understanding the synchronic historiographical trends against which he is likely to be reacting. Geoffrey's Trojan genealogy in fact represents only the most secular end of a spectrum whose other extremity produced Norman and Anglo-Norman genealogies, beginning with Adam. The more "progressive" secular genealogies developed in contrast to another medieval historical perspective identified with monastic historians and genealogists of the period. Ingledew describes these perspectives in terms of divergent medieval historicisms, based upon the opposing historical philosophies of Virgil and St. Augustine. Both, in fact, "opted for a genealogical argument as the basis for comprehending time."¹⁴⁶ Ingledew's rendering of the Virgilian philosophy of history runs thus:

By conferring heroic value on the origins of Rome in the fall of Troy and in the figure of Aeneas, and by saluting the Roman emperor Augustus as the fulfillment of a long and patient historical design guaranteed by Jupiter, dignifies [in the *Aeneid*] secular history as such: history is the history of the empire.¹⁴⁷

His contrasting description of the Augustinian philosophy of history follows:

In [Augustine's] preface he characterizes the imperial city of Rome in immediate antithesis to the City of God that is his subject, he cites the *Aeneid's* assertion that Rome's mission is "To spare the conquered, and beat down the proud" against the city's own arrogance; when he begins the work proper, it is to depict a Rome conquered, and to assess its recent sack by comparing it in some detail with the fall of Troy as told by Virgil, as if to deride the Virgilian imperial project at the outset.¹⁴⁸

Monastic espousal of the Augustinian genealogical model, whose primary goal ran in direct contrast to the Virgilian imperialist model, led to the construction of genealogies devoted to diminishing the significance of a family's imperial power in order to secure their position with the king of heaven.

As the Norman genealogies developed, and time shrouded the invention of earlier genealogists, some of the more monastically oriented family historians would retain formerly inserted Trojan lineages in order to heighten the contrast between the decrepitude of the heathen spirit and the purity of the Christian. Employing the Augustinian model of history, the monastic genealogists would inevitably disparage "the Trojans' reputed descent from the 'feroci gente' of the Scythians."¹⁴⁹ Their central design being in exact opposition to the secular, what the monastic

genealogical examples attempt to evince in the Trojan lineage “is not nobility but, unless the rulers are strong, an often uncontrolled appetite for destruction and cruelty.”¹⁵⁰

If the two extremes of the secular and monastic genealogies are represented by Troy and the City of God, it must then be the case that Geoffrey’s text “cannot but represent a conceptual alternative to the monastic textual model that construed the human condition as a state of pilgrimage and exile that made the heavenly city, or ‘patria’ each person’s proper goal.”¹⁵¹ And indeed William offers a genealogy consistent with this model. In recounting briefly the histories of the four great pre-unification Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, he elects to give a full genealogy only for the house of Wessex, though the genealogy of the other kingdoms can be traced to the same source by their relation to the three sons of Woden. The house of Wessex eventually came to unite England under the rule of Athelstan. It was the first true Anglo-Saxon dynasty to rule over all of England, and thus it seems plausible to attribute William’s placement of the genealogy in his section on the first Wessex kings to the continuity it lends the lineage of the predominant Anglo-Saxon monarchy from its origin. The genealogy traces the house of Wessex back to the sons of Woden, then from Woden through to Noah. At this point one can infer the relation from Noah back to Adam, as it was recounted in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle and may have been tacitly understood.¹⁵² William would have made the choice to select the biblical genealogy in the midst of all the secular Norman genealogies produced around that time. The biblical lineage of the Anglo-Saxon Kings would have constituted a contrasting and typically monastic example.

William shows a reluctance to relate the genealogy of the house of Wessex that parallels some of the more biblically oriented Norman genealogists, who despite disagreeing with a particular Trojan lineage, retained it to disparage their paganism. In leading up to the genealogy he warns his audience that “it is to be apprehended, that the utterance of barbarous names may shock the ears of persons unused to them.”¹⁵³ He also links his own genealogy to the biblical model itself, in tracing “the line of the generation of their kings upwards, even to Adam, as we know Luke the evangelist has done with respect to our lord Jesus.”¹⁵⁴ William’s citation of Luke’s model as a parallel to his own biblical genealogy aligns with Frank Barlow’s statement that “all histories were chapters in the history of the world, continuations of the Book of Genesis, which would end with Doomsday.”¹⁵⁵ With William’s example the importance of genealogical selection becomes apparent. The biblical genealogy commits William to the biblical timeframe, whose definite limits necessarily put the mundane ruler in a subordinate position. The kingdom of man will finally end with God’s Word, not his own, so the earthly king is ultimately only a subject in the kingdom of God, and would do well to bend to His will. The history of specific men involved in the biblical genealogy is not important in itself, except as means to obtaining a blood link to God’s first human creation. In so doing it commits that bloodline to its role as an extension of the biblical narrative, an outpost of God’s divine rule. The history of individuals is diminished, as not important in itself, but only, as William’s epistle to Robert of Gloucester demonstrates, in relation to its ability to excite proper and pious action in the prince.¹⁵⁶

On the other hand the lineage beginning in Troy makes no such commitment; the king is not necessarily subordinate to God, or the same God for that matter, and his most important task lies in ruling over his people. The lineage begins with Troy, the great city built by men. The king's exemplars are first those men able to "re-build" great cities, those able to maintain a stable kingdom and fend off invading enemies, expanding their realm when their strength allows it. The lack of necessary subordination that the Trojan genealogy reinforces can also in part account for Geoffrey's extended biographies of imaginary British kings before the birth of Christ. The lineage is very important, but a lineage deriving from a secular source must also prove its power through the continuity of particular accounts of temporal kings who were able to maintain their territory through strong leadership. Simply being holy, or derived from divinity, is not enough.

In addition to the examples of strong leaders, Geoffrey takes pains to detail the various periods of "interregnum" in which British kings were pushed from their territory. Two aspects of these interregnums strike me as important. The first is that Geoffrey's attention never leaves the island of Britain. His attention to geography echoes, however distantly, the tendency of the secular clergy to organize themselves according to geographical instead of spiritual or disciplinal relations, as was the case noted earlier, in both the geographical distinction between monastic and episcopal organization and the etymologies separating the monastic from secular and episcopal. This kind of geographical consistency does not occur in William of Malmesbury's work, in which he indeed mentions, "I design this book as a compendium of many histories, although, with a view to the larger portion of it, I have entitled it a History

of the Kings of England.”¹⁵⁷ William spends much of his time relating the histories of Norman nobility and the lineages of Charlemagne, and describes the first crusade in detail, using the bounds of Christendom rather than the bounds of kingdom as the geographical confines of his history. The few times when Geoffrey leaves the island are to muster the British bloodline that has been in hiding among the Armorican Britons, though only in order to bring them again across the channel to reclaim their rightful position as rulers of the island. Geoffrey’s attention is always on or directed toward the island itself, thus when an interregnum occurs, he writes of the kings that ruled over it during that period instead of following the lineage across the channel to relate their exploits in that part of the world.

The criticism then centers on whether Geoffrey cares more about the island than the bloodline. I would argue that he maintains the island as a constant in his narrative not because of its necessary superiority to the royal bloodline, but to highlight the vicissitudes to which a population tied to a geographic area is vulnerable due to weak leadership. What I mean by “interregnum” is not necessarily that Britain was without a king entirely (though there were several periods of royal absence),¹⁵⁸ but the times during which a ruler without direct Trojan lineage had achieved the throne. The longest of these periods occurs immediately after the death of King Lucius, Britain’s first royal convert to Christianity, and the great champion of that religion on the island.¹⁵⁹ In his last paragraph concerning the King’s rule Geoffrey mentions, seemingly in praise, that because Lucius was

feeling that he ought himself to find money for some mark of distinction that should be greater than this,¹⁶⁰ he rewarded the churches with even larger lands and houses, and increased their power by giving them every possible privilege.¹⁶¹

Geoffrey's "praise," always muted but here especially ambiguous, becomes clear in what follows:

In the end Lucius died in the town of Gloucester while still occupied with these matters and with other moves which formed part of his plan. In the year 156 after the incarnation of our Lord he was buried with all honour in the church of the Archdiocese. He had no heir to succeed him, so that after his death dissension arose between the Britons, and the power of Rome was weakened.¹⁶²

Lucius's father was Coilus, a pagan king who nevertheless "rule[d] in peace over his possessions."¹⁶³ He was loved by the people, as was Lucius, but the two differed in their reverence toward the two great powers of the time, Rome and the Christianity. Coilus's allegiance was to Rome; he "conceived the greatest possible liking for them [the Romans]. He paid their tribute without even attempting to argue about it."¹⁶⁴ In father and son, then, there arise two different affinities, each of which leads to a difference in conduct. Where the godly Lucius, as mentioned above, focuses his attention on the conversion of the people and transferring lands to the church to build more ecclesiastical structures, his father Coilus, with Rome as his god, was praised for a different reason: "none of the other British kings ever held the nobles of their realm in greater honour, for Coilus either left them alone in peace or else rewarded them with frequent gifts."¹⁶⁵ The actions are clearly oppositional. Coilus's rule is based upon its secular demands, Lucius's upon his character and the religion to which

he subscribes. The next two consequences, though necessarily occurring diachronically, can, I think, be considered in parallel; namely that Coilus has a son, where Lucius fails to have one. The juxtaposition of contrasting royal examples is significant in itself, but also for their combined juxtaposition against the interregnum of British rulers. Lucius failed to create an heir, and though Geoffrey does not expressly make the point, it should be clear enough that the cause of Lucius's failure was due to his attention to matters other than the kingship. Thus the royal line that began with the two great conquerors, Belinus and Brennius, ended with the first Christian monarch.

With all that said it is unlikely that Geoffrey is opposed to the religious ruler. Indeed he has some of his best kings build new, or repair broken churches. It seems rather to be the precedence which religion takes over governance that ultimately spells doom for Lucius's line. In the same paragraph Geoffrey offers rare praise for an element of Lucius's kingship; "he turned to better use the goods and the lands which the idolatrous temples had hitherto owned, permitting them to remain in the hands of the churches of the faithful."¹⁶⁶ What is particularly interesting about this passage is not the praise itself, but its exact wording. Geoffrey's use of the comparative "better" (*melio*) seems particularly appropriate to this example, as it captures exactly the sentiment that contrasts with the absolutism of monastic logic. The pagan temples were not the most terrible thing, though they were wrong, and the churches cannot for a secular ruler be the most important thing, though they are right. In order to foster religion in a kingdom the realm must come first, and one of the most important elements in maintaining stability is to produce a legitimate heir. Once the

realm is stable, religion may follow. Thus is religion necessarily subordinated in the secular genealogy and idea of kingship.

The precise significance of the genealogy as a foundation for royal authority, in contrast to William's typically monastic lineage of the Anglo-Saxon Kings, may be able to add something to the long standing debate concerning Geoffrey's ethnic allegiance in the text. Is it a text championing Norman values and conduct, or is it really a text that argues for the Welsh descendants of the ancient Britons as the rightful heirs to Albion's throne? John Gillingham makes a strong case for the pro-Welsh thesis, maintaining that "Geoffrey was a Welshman whose object was to secure cultural respectability for his own nation."¹⁶⁷ He rejects the often-cited contention of the pro-Norman thesis that Geoffrey disparages the Welsh after Arthur in favor of the Armorican Britons (Breton). To counter it, Gillingham asserts that the theory that Geoffrey was anti-Welsh is based on his criticisms of the Welsh of his own day, and on grounds such as these we might as well argue that the sympathies of Wulfstan, the author of the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* were not with English, or that Gildas's sympathies weren't British.¹⁶⁸

Essentially, Geoffrey's criticism of the Welsh does not prove that he is anti-Welsh, and in fact it may support his Welsh leanings: one who criticizes may simply care enough to do so. As his concluding remark notes,

we know at any rate that one very early reader of *HRB* revised the text both in order to play down the theme of the treachery of the Saxons and also in order, as Neil Wright puts it, 'to record unequivocally that the national hero was dead', to put an

end, in other words, to the ambiguity which had surrounded Arthur's fate after the Battle of Camblann.¹⁶⁹

These remarks seem to confirm that, whether intended one way or the other, an early reviser of the text found it sufficiently dangerous to see that it was changed. The irresolvability of Geoffrey's ethnic loyalties has to do with the Welsh and Norman conflict that had been current from the time of the Conquest. Since the dominant power was the house of Normandy, the default position since Tatlock has been that Geoffrey's allegiance is Norman. As is described above, his Breton ancestry, appointed positions, and charter signings all point to the likelihood of it. Had Geoffrey been actively challenging Norman supremacy in his portrayal of British history, we would likely have heard of it in the historical record, which as best one can tell, we have not. Geoffrey was neither banished nor punished. In fact, in 1154 Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, regent for Henry II, and a Norman, promoted him to bishop of St. Asaph's. The popularity of Geoffrey's text also calls into question the possibility that its purpose was to undermine the Norman cause.¹⁷⁰ But if Geoffrey was in fact pro-Norman, why did he choose to write a history of the Britons, a people against whom the Normans had been fighting for the previous seventy-five years?

How too, if there is equally strong evidence on both sides, is it possible to arrive at any conclusive notions about Geoffrey's ethnic allegiances, and thence about the purpose of his history? A useful method may lie in reorganizing the question to include potential elements of the problem that could render the points of opposition inapposite. Specific elements to be considered here are the secular-monastic

dynamics that may have played a part in the formation of Geoffrey's text, specifically in relation to William of Malmesbury's *GR*. Just as in Flint, who supports the pro-Norman thesis, Gillingham notes that Geoffrey's "history was inspired by Henry of Huntingdon and William of Malmesbury."¹⁷¹ He relates this inspiration to the fact that "the Anglo-French world was beginning to despise Welshmen, to write off the Britons as barbarians, as brutish creatures without a history,"¹⁷² rather than accepting Flint's view that Geoffrey "meant, ultimately, to call into question the position held and hoped for in twelfth-century Anglo-Norman society by literate and celibate canons regular and monks."¹⁷³ Yet both agree that Geoffrey was working intimately with and reacting to these texts. In addition, Neil Wright emphasizes the importance of "unity" between England and Normandy as a potential structuring force in Geoffrey's text. Gillingham then appropriates this claim as an organizing factor in Geoffrey's Welsh commitments, asserting that the history may have constituted a warning to the Welsh "against civil discord."¹⁷⁴ To take this notion of unification seriously, however, it is necessary to reformulate the problem that causes the division in the first place. In all of the arguments for Geoffrey's allegiance to one side or another, this division shows itself either in genealogical terms or those of proper conduct. That is, because Geoffrey structures his history on the genealogy of the Britons and not the Normans, there is adequate cause to assume that he is in fact pro-Welsh. But since the overwhelming majority of the customs and rules of conduct Geoffrey highlights in his history are anachronistically Norman, one does not err in describing his text, at least in part, as pro-Norman. Consider, for instance, the comment of Maureen Fries:

Unitary though his purpose might be, Geoffrey's tone in the Arthurian section of his history is so colored with references to uniquely Anglo-Norman life and manners as to make those chapters 'not only important in [themselves]' but also to 'differentiate this part of [the story] from all others...Ceremonial wearing of the crown on the occasion of great feasts—William wore his at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost—was a Norman innovation Geoffrey appropriated for Arthur, as was the idea of a kingly recrowning: Arthur's at Caerleon was strikingly reminiscent of William's own, showy second ceremony at London on Christmas Day, 1066, a 'picture...of extravagant courtly and chivalrous splendor and elegance, such as was unknown among the Saxons and Britons' and an episode which 'could not have been written in England until after the time of the . . . Conquest'¹⁷⁵

This distinction is significant because it makes clear that genealogical favoritism and behavioral favoritism may not have constituted necessary antagonisms. In addition to this, many of the choices Geoffrey makes may have had little to do with royal or ethnic allegiance, but with methods of differentiating his own point of view from that of contemporaneous historiographers. Take the case of Geoffrey's disparagement of the Welsh Britons in favor of the Armorican Britons. As noted above, this has been one of the great points of controversy in defining Geoffrey's allegiances. Tatlock asserts that "nothing is more certain" than Geoffrey's Breton leanings.¹⁷⁶ If Geoffrey's heritage is Breton rather than Welsh, which there is strong evidence to support, then (as the argument goes) Geoffrey's line is likely to have come over as Breton conscripts of William I during the conquest, making Geoffrey himself more likely to have favored the Norman kings. There is an appropriate opposition,

however, which can be found in William of Malmesbury's *GR*, where he terms the Armoricans "somewhat degenerate in language and manners from our own Britons."¹⁷⁷ Is it possible to say that Geoffrey's Breton favoritism was not simply a reaction to William? An opposition to William on the point of the Armorican Britons would make some important options possible. When the Saxons finally depose the last of the Briton kings, the Trojan bloodline remains intact in Armorica. And in maintaining the bloodline there instead of in Wales he effectively counters William's subsequent comments about the Welsh as a barbarous people "without a history," an always troublesome group constantly on the verge of rebellion.¹⁷⁸ This change would have no more to do with an allegiance to either Wales or Breton than with an effort to separate his own assertions from those of other historians which might have put his historical argument in jeopardy.

Is there even sufficient evidence to claim that Geoffrey's choice of the Britons for his history was made on purely ethnic grounds, or are there other considerations which might have affected his decision? It may be that William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon were important factors in Geoffrey's decision. Both disparaged the Britons as a people, but in choosing "the English" and "the Normans" as the primary subjects of their histories they set a contemporaneous precedent which would have been impossible to overcome for a medieval historiographer. In an essay on form and its function in medieval historiography Gabrielle Spiegel asserts that the medieval historiographer had an "ethical commitment to mimetic accuracy."¹⁷⁹ Building upon this notion in an article investigating some of Geoffrey's influences on a letter written by Edward I, Matthew Fisher argues that a medieval historiographer,

within the intensely mimetic framework of the text, would insert “a narrative bearing a contested ideological agenda into an uncontested chronological and narrative space,” and by doing so bring the historical narrative into “the service of a new ideological project.”¹⁸⁰ Fisher’s statement relies on the narrative stability which Spiegel emphasizes. Although Spiegel’s argument that the medieval historiographer “began with a belief in the mimetic identity of his narrative to the events it recounted”¹⁸¹ assumes a kind of innocence the historiographer’s part, Fisher’s argument sufficiently adapts it to account for those historiographers who may not have been so naïve. As it relates to the current discussion, any manipulation to a previous account upon which a new history draws may be considered evidence insofar as it breaks from an untouched historical compilation. There would likely have been significant pressure on Geoffrey not to cover the same period that William had covered only a few years before, not because doing so might have incurred a charge of plagiarism (indeed Henry of Huntingdon published his *Historia Anglorum* just before Geoffrey), but because he disagreed with it. Thus Geoffrey’s *HRB* may represent only the boldest instance of a historiographer’s appropriating an unclaimed period of history in the “service of a new ideological project.” If this is the case the *HRB* does not present a history that is either Norman or Briton, but as a wholesale attack on the historical “argument” of William of Malmesbury. The use of genealogy in this argument is key. From the advent of Norman genealogies with Dudo, the Norman ducal line has been traced back to Troy, specifically to Antenor.¹⁸² Following in the tradition of Dudo, Geoffrey’s genealogy for the Briton kings does not put the two “races” at odds with each other; to the contrary, the *HRB* serves the exact

opposite function, in effect linking the two peoples by a common Trojan and thus secular lineage. The Britons are not to be seen as enemies, but as cousins. Geoffrey's actual attempt at unity may well have been toward that of the Britons with the Normans, rather than Normandy with England, or the Welsh. If this is the case, both Gillingham's and Tatlock's arguments become moot, as the entire point of conflict, the Briton-Norman animosity, is precisely Geoffrey's subject. The true opposition lies in the genealogical distinction between the Norman-Britons and the Anglo-Saxons, whose genealogy William of Malmesbury traces to Adam. In support of the genealogical opposition Geoffrey continually refers to the innate and longtime treachery of the Saxons, as if to delegitimize William's biblical genealogy from the outset.¹⁸³ Geoffrey's decision to recount the history of the Kings of Britain instead of those of the English or Normans becomes symptomatic only of a more general argument which ultimately concerns conduct and authority. Arthur shares behavioral traits with William the Conqueror, not as a function of Norman propaganda, but to emphasize the common Trojan heritage of the two peoples.

This chapter thus considers examples of what seem to be evidence for the importance of the monastic-secular divide in the genealogical construction of the *HRB* and the *GR*. The divide ultimately affects the several varying perspectives concerning Geoffrey of Monmouth's ethnic allegiances. The following chapter incorporates both the monastic-secular divide and genealogy into a further consideration of the manner in which the two historiographers assign authority in their texts, and how their different techniques lead to divergent moral views.

Chapter III: Locating Authority in *Gesta Regum Anglorum* and *Historia Regum Britanniae*

It is clear that William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth “authorize” certain points of view in their narratives. In this chapter I hope to demonstrate that these differences are underpinned by secular and monastic conceptions of history. The important point will be to show that these techniques of authorization function as the guiding logic of each history. The primacy Geoffrey gives to the stability of the monarchy over the predominance of religion will be further illustrated by looking at how he allocates authority in his text, and how that authority becomes a moral agent throughout the narrative. William subordinates his kings to the will God, and through Him struggles to uncover divine justice in worldly events. By comparing the manner in which these two historians locate authority it should become apparent that these guiding forces produce very different histories, and that the structure of William’s history helps to create the need for Geoffrey’s.

Moving back to William’s dedication to Robert of Gloucester, the Platonism evident in his writing becomes central:

Accept, then, most illustrious Sir, a work in which you may contemplate yourself as in a glass, where your Highness’s sagacity will discover that you have imitated the actions of the most exalted characters, even before you could have heard their names.¹⁸⁴

It is difficult to pin down where William’s philosophical knowledge comes from, but it is certain that he knew Plato and even makes reference to his dialogues on the immortality of the soul, if somewhat disapprovingly.¹⁸⁵ When he begins his discussion of Henry I he refers specifically to Plato’s republic in comparing Henry to

a philosopher king: it seems clear that he was familiar with the concept.¹⁸⁶ He also had access to almost all of Augustine's works, another possible source of William's platonic ideas.¹⁸⁷ And Robert of Gloucester, who had, according to William, "a devotion to learning," would be an appropriate candidate for this kind of dedication.¹⁸⁸ As Augustine with the neo-Platonists, William makes it apparent, here and throughout his work, that philosophy is all very well so long as it submits to the Christian faith.¹⁸⁹ He presents Robert of Gloucester in some sense as an ideal whose "great actions" others lower than himself will be able to "venerat[e]," though "to the practice of [these actions] they cannot themselves aspire."¹⁹⁰ Not only is he an ideal, but the history will show that he represents only one in a long line of princely ideals, a reiteration of a pre-inscribed order. From here it is possible to envision the purpose of William's history, and it is manifestly platonic, a top-to-bottom arrangement wherein the persons of lower social standing are equivalent to images, or less real imitations of the ideal prince: "To you, Princes, therefore, it is owing, that we [the lower classes] act well; to you, indeed, that we compose anything worthy of remembrance."¹⁹¹ The structure of his dedication deemphasizes the particular iteration of successive kings and gives primacy to the moral content of the relation, or the "good" and "bad" elements of the image he presents, which he aims directly at Robert. The conduct of the prince, or "acting well," is precisely that which gives order to the kingdom. This view of history accords nicely with the monastic emphasis on ideal conduct, particularly as it connects to monastic identification based more on the "rule" of the monastery than geographical proximity. William mentions that his two great loves are history and ethics.¹⁹² These seem interesting and quite significant

in combination with the ideal he lays out in the introduction. In resorting to a platonic framework William must deemphasize the particular, as it is less real from his medieval point of view, and therefore less true, not unlike Plato's attack on the poets in the Republic. The problem, however, is that history is exactly what he wishes to write, and because history is full of the particular, there must be something to counteract it, or defend against criticism pertaining to its telling. To manage this, William supplies extensive moral and divine justification for events in order to fit them into a trajectory of mundane or earthly history ultimately subordinate to God's divine plan.

Geoffrey's dedication also offers a strong indication of the nature of his attempt at a secular history. First, in a point about style, Geoffrey makes a comment that is difficult to associate with someone other than William of Malmesbury:

I have been content with my own expressions and my own homely style and I have gathered no gaudy flowers of speech in other men's gardens. If I had adorned my page with high-flown rhetorical figures, I should have bored my readers, for they would have been forced to spend more time in discovering the meaning of my words than in following the story.¹⁹³

Valerie Flint argues that Geoffrey's history is in large part a reply to the histories of William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon, and that the intellectual superciliousness of these previous historians helped to incite Geoffrey to his history.¹⁹⁴ The passage above seems a good piece of evidence in favor of this reading. It also calls attention to a particular element of "previous" historical works that have used rhetoric to order their narratives. By invoking an existing style and actively

setting his own against it he is confronting, if not William's work exactly, at least the style of writing in which William participates. If this is the case, I would argue for a reading that puts "my words" in italics. The distinction Geoffrey makes between "words" and the "story," which of course is made up of words, seems necessarily to be referring to points at which previous historians have made comments concerning their histories that do not directly correspond to the action, but exist as remarks upon that action, which in Geoffrey's mind are only self-aggrandizing interruptions of the story proper. This would include William's tendency toward ethical reasoning.

The second important element of Geoffrey's dedication comes in his specific dedications to Robert of Gloucester and Waleran, Count of Mellent. To Robert he makes the following comment:

I ask you, Robert of Gloucester, to do my little book this favour. Let it be so emended by your knowledge and your advice that it must no longer be considered as a product of Geoffrey of Monmouth's small talent. Rather, with the support of your wit and wisdom, let it be accepted as the work of one descended from Henry, the famous King of the English.¹⁹⁵

The first component of this passage that matters lies in his use of "emended" (corrigatur). The dedication seems to have been composed prior to its being made public, in order that both Robert and Waleran might make emendations to the work. The second is Geoffrey's wish for the work to become that "of one descended from Henry." The indication in both of these remarks is that the text is in the end to be considered as deriving from and being legitimated by the royalty. His use of the genealogical term, "descended from," to describe its creation also seems important in

this regard, as it is a concession that the final product, the text itself, will derive its authority from that royal lineage.

In the dedication to Waleran there emerges a similar tone, which works to reinforce the points above. Geoffrey again cites his royal lineage “from the race of the most renowned King Charles,”¹⁹⁶ nearly though not entirely paralleling him to Robert. Geoffrey then goes on in praise for Waleran’s line; “...having surpassed your fellow-warriors in bravery, you have learnt, under your father’s guidance, to be a terror to your enemies and a protection to your own folk.” Geoffrey sets this up rather nicely. Notice the praise he gives Waleran for both the destruction of his enemies and the protection of his own people. This introduces a theme which, as I have argued, is the most important in Geoffrey’s work, the stability of the realm. Geoffrey expands upon this notion with a metaphor that invokes the ruler and his territory:

Faithful defender as you [Waleran] are of those dependent on you, accept under your patronage this book which is published for your pleasure. Accept me, too, as your writer, so that, reclining in the shade of a tree which spreads so wide, and sheltered from envious and malicious enemies, I may be able in peaceful harmony to make music on the reed-pipe of a muse who really belongs to you.

The logic of the metaphor is exactly that the “shade of the tree,” or the area of land over which the ruler holds dominion, is that which allows the people, including Geoffrey, to be protected from “malicious enemies,” and only then becomes able to produce works of art, or to build cities and churches. Geoffrey’s muse can thus be said to “belong” to Waleran by the very opportunity his rule provides for the tranquility necessary to compose it. The geographical primacy Geoffrey gives to his

work puts him in direct opposition to that of William, and supplies a relevant secular alternative to his monastically structured history.

I wish now to inquire into the manner in which the philosophical differences found in the two dedications emerge as historiographical tendencies in their respective texts. I must make a distinction before beginning that will become relevant in the examples to be provided. In either of these histories there occur, especially upon occasions in which the moral is not necessarily clear, two distinct kinds of judgment on the event in question. When the writer makes a judgment of right or wrong expressing only his own opinion about an event, I call this a “moralization.” In more pivotal events, however, the writer may offer an analysis that invokes divine intervention, claiming an order to the narrative already ordained by God. I call this kind of judgment “rectification.” In the following examples the manner in which each historiographer deploys these two types of judgment is integral to understanding the proper location of authority in their works.

William’s *GR* employs both of these kinds of judgment with amazing frequency, offering moralizations whenever he is able, and rectifications as soon as required. His uneasiness about a lack of order in the events he recounts surfaces in his management of Offa, the powerful king of the Mercians. William believes Offa to be “a man of great mind” and a man who brought “to effect whatever he had preconceived.”¹⁹⁷ Yet William hesitates: “When I consider the deeds of this person, I am doubtful whether I should commend or censure.”¹⁹⁸ For William the moralization is requisite. In using “whether” he limits himself to these two options, as if they were the only ones available. William is concerned primarily with Offa’s relationship to the church. Offa

had seized the throne from Beornred, the other claimant following the murder of King Aethelbald by his own bodyguards, in 757.¹⁹⁹ On the death of Aethelbald, Cynewulf had regained Wessex's independence from Mercia and taken the former Mercian territory of Berkshire.²⁰⁰ In 779, 22 years after he had come to power, Offa united his forces and took back the former Mercian territory of Berkshire, defeating Cynewulf in the Battle of Bensington.²⁰¹ This was a great victory in the middle of Offa's long and expansionist reign. In William's claim to objectivity he elects to "give examples of each"²⁰² (i.e. those deeds which are to be commended and those which are to be censured). Yet in the first two examples he reaches nowhere near equilibrium. His only mention of Offa's campaigns is a brief account of his battle against Cynewulf: "Engaging in a set battle with Cynewulf, king of the West Saxons, he easily gained the victory, though the other was a celebrated warrior."²⁰³ William writes nothing more concerning his strong rule. After a short account of the treachery Offa employed in obtaining the kingdoms of Kent and East Anglia, the example William spends most of his time on is Offa's poor treatment of the church. Although he also begins in this case with a sentence to Offa's praise, the next six pages are devoted to censure, directly or indirectly condemning his acts against the church. The description of Offa's life arises as an awkward instance for William, in which royal accomplishment does not at all accord with religiosity. To structure a divinely ordained history William is forced to make decisions about how he is going to describe Offa's reign. In deemphasizing Offa's success in war, anyone reading will have to deal less with the problem of his simultaneous "rapacity" toward the church and be less likely to confront the history's divine organization.²⁰⁴

Although William offers plenty of commendation and censure (moralization), Offa's situation is too inconsistent and problematic for it to be asserted that divine rectification occurred during his reign. This does not stop it from occurring, however, in the reign of his successor Egbert. Egbert's life is equally problematic, but conveniently for William, in the exact opposite way. He describes Egbert as a king who "studiously avoided the cruel path trod by his father, and devoutly restored the privileges of all the churches which Offa had in his time abridged."²⁰⁵ The complication arises when "untimely death" takes Egbert just as his "noble qualities were ripening, in the first moments of his reign."²⁰⁶ This incident would in itself be problematic, but because Offa presented the exact opposite dilemma, divine rectification becomes available. William cites Alcuin, who in a letter to Osbert the patrician, "says, 'I do not think that the most noble youth Egbert died for his own sins, but because his father, in the establishment of his kingdom, shed a deluge of blood.'"²⁰⁷ Instead of becoming doubly problematic, William is able to insert a quote from a trusted source that claims divine rectification for the events surrounding Offa and his son Egbert, and in doing so saves his ultimately divine narrative from the vicissitudes of earthly rule.

In Geoffrey's history there are instances of both moralization and rectification, but they are far less frequent and they tend to occur in a very different manner. Geoffrey does not seem to have any explicit metaphysical problem with the success of an unchristian king. Indeed Britain's founder Brutus was a pagan, and all of the pagan kings up until Lucius, the first Christian King, have no divine rectification attached to their rule. In fact, as I mentioned above, Lucius's religious enthusiasm

seems to have been a large factor in his not producing an heir, precipitating the end of his royal line. Many of Geoffrey's moralizations do not contain a specifically religious element, but one more associated with a code of conduct, such as chivalry. For instance, the eldest son of the Briton King Cymbeline, Guiderius, refuses to pay tribute to Rome after his death. When Rome hears of this refusal the Emperor Claudius gathers his armies and sails to Britain. During the battle that follows, Claudius's chief of staff Lelius Hamo dons Briton armor as a disguise. He starts by fighting his own troops to engender trust among the Britons and then rushes back to "defend" the King. As soon as he reaches Guiderius "he kill[s] the unsuspecting man with the blade of his sword."²⁰⁸ With this accomplished, Geoffrey's comment follows: "He then edged away through the enemy's assault-troops and re-joined his own men, having won an execrable victory."²⁰⁹

The very thought of an "execrable victory" would have troubled William of Malmesbury, likely inciting him to develop this story as somehow part of a divine pattern, but Geoffrey uses it without any other qualification. Geoffrey's technique is worth a comment here. The lack of divine rectification from outside, William of Malmesbury's frequent inclination, poses the problem of how exactly authority in the *HRB* is established, to allow the reader to derive moral instruction from it. In William's work, the authority is God, as might be expected, but it is interpreted through William in the combined form of divine rectification and moralization. The reader, assuming there is a trust between him or herself and William in conveying accurate spiritual knowledge,²¹⁰ can easily understand what he or she is to take as correct or incorrect behavior, not only according to William's own moralizations, but

also through the divine support of rectification. Since such support is not available nearly so often in Geoffrey's work, he must rely on different methods to achieve an authoritative utterance. In the King Guiderius example several factors bear mentioning. His refusal to pay tribute to Rome is one of many instances throughout the *HRB* in which kings (including Arthur) refuse to pay. The implication is never stable, good kings both pay and do not pay according to their inclination. What constitutes Hamo's execrability then is precisely his dishonest conduct in battle. From here emerges a type of behavior of which Geoffrey expressly disapproves. Geoffrey achieves a structuring of the plot that needs no further comment because it was likely understood to anyone who had been a knight or introduced to knightly culture that this type of conduct lacked dignity and was deserving of condemnation. This I think shows a more intimate knowledge of secular codes of conduct and Geoffrey appeals in part to it in order to achieve authority. I will discuss the few places in the *HRB* in which he employs divine rectification after another important example from William.

The great structural dilemma in William's *GR* occurs in the transition from the Anglo-Saxon house of Wessex to the line of Norman kings after the conquest. The question of genealogy is important, as well as the character of Edward the Confessor, the last in the house of Wessex to be crowned King of England. How is it that God would allow a house sprung directly from Adam and possessing such a godly monarch to fall, as William says himself, into the hands of "devils?"²¹¹ The rhetorical maneuvers William uses to set up the transition are exemplary instances of him asserting a divine structure onto his material to create textual authority. Nearing the end of Edward the Confessor's life Edward has a vision:

‘I saw just now,’ continued he, ‘two monks near me, whom formerly, when a youth in Normandy, I knew both to have lived in a most religious manner, and to have died like perfect Christians. These men, announcing themselves as the messengers of God, spake to the following effect: ‘Since the chiefs of England, the dukes, bishops, and abbats, are not the ministers of God, but of the devil, God, after your death, has delivered this kingdom for a year and a day, into the hand of the enemy, and devils shall wander over all the land.’²¹²

The issue of authority comes up in several different ways here. The first is the fact that the King is giving a prophecy. This is a tendency that, for the monastic writer, post-dates Bede, who only gave gifts of prophecy to men with ecclesiastical affiliation. William is, however, careful to assure the reader that the king who gives the prophecy is a religious king whom God has deigned worthy of such a gift. King Edward, who is called “the Confessor,” has according to William “by no means degenerated from the virtues of his ancestors. In fact he was famed both for miracles and for the spirit of prophecy.”²¹³ And during the prophecy the messengers who convey his vision from God, namely “two monks,” who lived and died “like perfect Christians,” doubly reinforce Edward’s connection to divinity.

The second component of Edward’s vision involves the authority of the prophecy itself. In a fashion similar to that in which William attributed the good King Egbert’s early death to the sins of his father Offa, cause and effect are distributed here in to allow for a problematic transition to occur as part of a divine plan. It is because secular and ecclesiastical positions had become ministers not “of God, but of the devil,” that God permits the Normans to conquer a race of divine blood ruled by a

holy king. In this way God does not punish proper action, but punishes the improper action of others. This rectification reflects directly back to his audience. God punishes the wicked, not the good.

To reinforce the vision, in case the “for a year and a day” should also be taken as the interregnum in which William, Harold and Edward Atheling vied for power, William confirms it himself:

“we, however, find the truth of the presage experimentally; for England is become the residence of foreigners, and the property of strangers: at the present time, there is no Englishman, either earl, bishop, or abbat; strangers all, they prey upon the riches and vitals of England; nor is there any hope of a termination to this misery.”

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To go beyond mere claims and visions, William then retraces William I’s pursuits in Normandy and finally to the event itself. In preparation for war William of Malmesbury commends the future king, citing that “the prudence of William, seconded by the providence of God, already anticipated the invasion of England.”²¹⁵ In this sentence William makes sure to connect the conquest with William I’s prudent behavior, that is, to connect his moralization with divine rectification. The two are interlinked; God enjoys William’s “prudence” and William’s “prudence” is to seek papal authority for the invasion. Pope Alexander granted it and “delivered a standard to William, as an auspicious presage of the kingdom.”²¹⁶ William also notes that “Harold omitted to do this” (i.e. write to the pope).²¹⁷

The presages of victory continue when Duke William mobilizes to set sail for England. At first they fail to meet a “propitious gale,” causing some of the common

soldiers to begin to doubt their belief in the mission, saying that “God opposed him, who withheld the wind...that it was the fate of that family to aspire to things beyond their reach, and find God their adversary.”²¹⁸ As a consequence William exhumes the body of St. Vallery, in hopes that the saint might petition God on their behalf. When he has this done a wind immediately comes, “no delay now interposed, but the wished-for gale filled their sails.”²¹⁹ The miracle “proves” that of course the saint’s word is final, and that his help assures the support of God, but it also proves that the rationalizations of the common soldiery are not sufficient to render the will of God. This suggests an image similar to that which we find in the introduction concerning the behavior of the exemplar king. William’s conduct here would be an instance in which a royal audience member like Robert of Gloucester would be able to contemplate himself “as in a glass.”²²⁰ He is strong yet prudent, and at every turn he first seeks divine approval. The king in whom William of Malmesbury wishes his royal readers to see themselves is precisely Duke William in this instance. He lets us know this by reinforcing William’s actions with the highest possible approval.

Directly prior to his account of the battle William offers several pertinent descriptions. When scouts return from abroad they tell Harold that they have found William’s troops, noting also that “almost all his army had the appearance of priests, as they had the whole face, with both lips, shaven.”²²¹ This of course amused Harold, who in turn related to them that it was the custom there to shave one’s face. William then notes the opposing custom; “the English leave the upper lip unshorn, suffering the hair continually to increase; which Julius Caesar, in his treatise on the Gallic War, affirms to have been a national custom with the ancient inhabitants of Britain.”²²² The

connection William makes to the ancient Britons was not likely to have evoked much praise. On the contrary, both he and Henry of Huntingdon often degrade the Britons as a rebellious and barbarous people. Alongside the comparison of Normans to priests, the Anglo-Saxon suddenly resembles something uncivilized, ungodly, and unworthy of their own kingdom. To equal the barbarity of the troops William relates that in Harold's "imprudence, he drove away a monk, the messenger of William, not deigning him even a complacent look; imprecating only, that God would decide between him and the earl."²²³ This second dichotomy leaves not only the Anglo-Saxon troops less civilized than their Norman counterparts, but now even the king seems barbaric from his imprudence and irreligiosity. Finally, William describes the behavior of the two camps on the night before the battle. As he relates, "the English, as we have heard, passed the night without sleep, in drinking and singing, and, in the morning, proceeded without delay towards the enemy;" while the Normans "passed the whole night in confessing their sins, and received the sacrament in the morning."²²⁴ This brings the oppositions specifically regarding the customs of the two armies to three, and constitutes the moral deathblow to Anglo-Saxon England. By this point in the narrative, the battle of Hastings has become little more than a formality. William of Malmesbury constructs the events in such a way, distributing fault where it is most necessary to achieve a divine ordering, that enables a transition to Norman rule that his audience can understand as subordinated to a divine plan.

Among the striking characteristics of Geoffrey's History, his use of quoted monologue during battles distinguishes it sharply from William's. When William resorts to textual citations, they usually take the form of letters, visions, or anecdotes

such as the story of the two clerks mentioned in the first chapter and the various saints' lives he relates throughout. Where William painstakingly ensures the divine structure of history through his narration, Geoffrey is very reluctant to do so. The single instance in which Geoffrey proclaims a divine organization to history is when King Arthur had won the battle at Saussy against the Romans, who now had greatly to fear Arthur's march on Rome itself. Geoffrey remarks on the battle:

All this was ordained by divine providence. Just as in times gone by the ancestors of the Romans had harassed the forefathers of the Britons with their unjust oppressions, so now did the Britons make every effort to protect their own freedom...²²⁵

Geoffrey's rectification occurs at the pinnacle of Arthur's imperial campaign. By this time he has control over the British Isles, Scandinavia and most of northern Europe. His reasons for offering it here and nowhere else could be to assure his readers that they are to approve of all of Arthur's actions. Though at times he devastates entire countries, his motive and aim, to defeat the tyranny of Rome, is just. And even in this rectification Geoffrey adds a secular tint. It is not due to the piety of the Britons that God has ordained this devastation, but because the Britons deserved retribution for past wrongs. Other than this one instance, Geoffrey as a narrator is silent about divine organization.

This is not to say it doesn't occur in Geoffrey's text. After the advent of Christianity in Britain it occurs frequently, but comes in the form of quotation rather than narration. An example similar to William's portrayal of the Norman Conquest in its transitional aspects is the Restoration of the royal bloodline beginning with the

house of Constantine, king Arthur's grandfather. When the Romans leave Britain to defend the more central regions of their empire, the Britons, whom the Roman soldiers had never trained, become weak and powerless to defend themselves from the onslaughts of Germanic tribes. In desperation, the Archbishop of London Guithelinus sails to Armorican Britain, now Breton, to beg their king Aldroenus to send someone of royal stock to take the throne in Britain. Aldroenus agrees and elects to send his brother Constantine. When he appears, Guithelinus offers peculiar praise, "Christ is victorious!" he cried, 'Christ is King! Christ rules over us! If only Christ is on our side, then you are the King of a deserted Britain! You are our defense, our hope, our joy!'"²²⁶ This statement is remarkable in its timing. Specifically, Guithelinus's declaration that "Christ is King" is uttered as he sees Constantine, who has also just accepted the kingship. The noun to noun construction "Christ is King" begs the additional reading "King is Christ," suggesting the authority of the King, who on earth is to be regarded in much the same fashion as God. While Guithelinus's explanation may be understood simply as a prayer of thanks to God for giving Constantine to the Britons, it is interesting that Guithelinus never actually mentions Constantine's name, as if Geoffrey had intended a symbolic conflation of the two.

After Vortigern had had Constantine's oldest son Constans assassinated and seized power, Constantine's second oldest son Aurelius Ambrosius landed in Britain and had himself crowned king. His first task was to hunt down Vortigern for having betrayed both his brother and father. When Ambrosius was on his way to Gonereu castle he speaks to the Duke of Gloucester about the justice in his revenge on Vortigern. The beginning of his speech is a list of all the wrongs Vortigern had

committed, among which were the betrayals of both his brother and father and the mixing of the population with the Picts in order to wipe out the loyalty of the Britons to their line of kings. After the list of wrongs Ambrosius offers the rectification, “By God’s will, he has himself now fallen into the very snare which he had prepared for my faithful adherents.”²²⁷ As in the comment Geoffrey makes, it is a secular issue that earns divine rectification. Religiosity is clearly not the most important component here, but rather betrayal of family and kingdom. Ambrosius highlights the destruction caused by improper rule as he continues his commentary:

‘However, in my opinion, there is one aspect of all this which everyone must regret: that this evil man, through the heathen whom he invited over, has exiled the nobility, laid waste a fertile country, destroyed the holy churches and virtually obliterated Christianity from one sea to the other. Act then, like true men, my fellow countrymen, and take your vengeance upon him by whose agency all these things have come about.’²²⁸

For the current discussion the content of Ambrosius’s speech is certainly important, but the key is that Ambrosius says this, not Geoffrey. Ambrosius is a king second in glory and conduct only to Arthur; his bloodline goes back to Troy, and his care for religion is apparent. If Geoffrey will not, or only rarely, insert into his narration an assertion of divine authority, how will the reader of his history know what they are to praise or what they are to condemn? The position I have argued Geoffrey takes regarding royal prerogative helps to inform his decision to insert divine rectification into his quotations. Geoffrey’s history gives primacy to the need for a stable kingdom, as all other elements only derive from it (e.g. stable nobility, good crop,

intact cities and churches). Though the best king is a strong ruler who also supports religion, without the stable kingdom religious practice becomes uncertain. Thus I argue here that Geoffrey inserts his affirmations of divine order into the mouths of those whose bloodline and royal status can support such a claim. Thence does Geoffrey derive the authority for his text.

Another important example of the phenomenon that ties authority in Geoffrey's text even more closely to the bloodline is to be found in the character of Cadwallader, the last King of the Britons. After the death of his father Cadwallo, Cadwallader assumed the throne and at first ruled "bravely and peacefully," but after his twelfth year of rule he became sick.²²⁹ What follows Cadwallader's initial sickness is a "sickness" of the realm in general, "the Britons started to quarrel among themselves and to destroy the economy of their homeland by an appalling civil war."²³⁰ A famine followed, and then a plague, which "killed off such a vast number of the population that the living could not bury them."²³¹ On top of this the looming threat of attack from outside gnawed at the grieving king. Sailing to the kingdom of the Armorican Britons he issued the following lamentation:

'The fact that we have so often rescued our fatherland from these people now avails us nothing, for it is not God's will that we should rule there for all time. When He, the true Judge, saw that we had no intention of putting an end to our crimes, and that all the same no one could drive our people out of the kingdom, He made up his mind to punish us for our folly.'²³²

Again, what is said is less important to this discussion than who says it. Geoffrey makes no comment about the coincidental sequence of events that occur after

Cadwallader falls ill, though we might expect him to. He leaves all such commentary to the King. The bloodline becomes even more significant in this instance because Cadwallader, though a good king, is losing his kingdom. The logic of the rectification is similar to what we encounter in the case of William of Malmesbury, but it is Geoffrey's insertion of that logic into the speech of a king descended from Troy that gives significance to the claim. In this gesture Geoffrey forfeits a claim to knowledge of divine will in order to submit his own purposes to the authority found in the royal genealogy.

The comparison between William of Malmesbury's attempts to construct a divine plan for his history and Geoffrey's effort to implant it in well-founded royal authority allows for a more comprehensive view of the techniques typical of monastic and secular writing in the twelfth century. While more research would be necessary to confirm their relation to monastic or secular goals, it does not seem merely coincidental that the histories I have been comparing appear as they do. Geoffrey and William were certainly opposed to each other's work, and thus we should not find it surprising that their manner of historical construction, especially of authority, has more than a little to do with their theological differences.

Conclusion:

The vibrant historiographical culture in twelfth century England is full of many historians not so intimately connected or conveniently antagonistic, and cannot be grouped neatly along monastic and secular lines. What I have tried to provide is an illustrative investigation of two historiographers, intimately connected in time, patronage, and knowledge of each other's work, but whose historiographical work developed under very different ecclesiastical circumstances. The ecclesiastical positions of each historian differed in terms of the frequency with which they were engaged with mundane issues and state governance. The largely Benedictine monastic communities were to be segregated as far as possible from the outside world, according to the rule of St. Benedict, "so that there may be no need for the monks to go about outside, because it is not good for their souls."²³³ I have argued here that dependence on a monastic rule, complete submission to the omnipresence of God,²³⁴ and isolation from the mundane all played a part in shaping monastic tendencies in the construction of history, as exemplified in the work of William of Malmesbury. I proposed a contrasting example in the history of Geoffrey of Monmouth. His administrative position as a secular canon placed him in direct contact with the worldly. Since the secular canons were not required to adhere to a specific rule, as the monks, their notion of proper behavior was allowed to change more readily with the times. In his history there is a much stronger emphasis on the importance of secular governance and the stability of the realm.

While a causative link between the historiographical productions of these two men may lie beyond our grasp, much research has yet to be done on the monastic and

secular tendencies in their works. Throughout both histories the most common activity is war. An area which relates to aspects of my third chapter, but which, for reasons of space and focus, I was not able to touch on, is how aspects of a Just War theory come into play as parts of a larger monastic and secular dialogue. It would be very interesting and I expect highly productive to look into how these authors offer moralizations and/or divine rectifications for different manners of military engagement. It is well known that both monastic and secular forms of the Just War theory were available in the twelfth century, which would provide ample opportunity to engage the manner in which these theoretical tenants emerge as components of historiography. How was the war incited? What conduct receives praise, what is condemned? What justifies expansion of empire? How does the writer frame the war narrative so as to more conveniently assert its justification? All of these questions would provide opportunities for further research.

Another important area of potential investigation that would likely yield interesting results is exploring how William and Geoffrey employ prophecy and vision. Much work has been done on the prophecies of Merlin, but as a comparative study regarding Merlin as just one in a string of references Geoffrey makes to non-Christian prophecy would give Merlin a broader context in the narrative. Looking at Geoffrey's use of secular prophecy in light of the ways in which William and other twelfth century historiographers used it would also improve our understanding of Geoffrey and William's immediate historical significance. A comparative analysis of these two writers would still have much to yield, and through them we may be able to

achieve a better understanding of the role that monastic and secular affiliation assumed in shaping twelfth century historiography.

¹ Walter Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History: A.D. 550 - 800* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ., 1988) 237.

² Goffart 237.

³ Goffart 272-4, 295-6.

⁴ Goffart 315.

⁵ Goffart 279.

⁶ Goffart 279.

⁷ Goffart 279.

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⁹ Rodney M. Thompson, *William of Malmesbury*. (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1987) 98 for specific reference to Bede's influence on William.

¹⁰ William of Malmesbury, John A. Giles, and John Sharpe, *William of Malmesbury's Chronicle of the Kings of England from the Earliest Period to the Reign of King Stephen* (London: Bell., 1904) Translator's preface, p. vii; J. C. Crick, "Monmouth, Geoffrey of (d. 1154/5)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004)

¹¹ John S. P. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae and Its Early Vernacular Versions* (Berkeley: University of California, 1950) 443. Tatlock claims that the name Geoffrey did not show up in England until after the conquest (Tatlock 438). Several charters which Geoffrey is known to have signed before he began work on the *HRB* contain some form of the Latin *Galfridus Arturus*. Tatlock contends that *Arturus* is likely patronymic, and if so, is also very uncommon in Britain before the conquest (Tatlock 439).

¹² Tatlock 439-40.

¹³ Tatlock 441.

¹⁴ Tatlock 441.

¹⁵ Geoffrey of Monmouth and Lewis Thorpe, *The History of the Kings of Britain* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966) 9. See note one for this date.

¹⁶ Tatlock 442.

¹⁷ Tatlock 442.

¹⁸ Tatlock 442-3.

¹⁹ Tatlock 443.

²⁰ Thomson 2.

²¹ Thomson 2.

²² Thomson 2.

²³ Thomson 2.

²⁴ Thomson 3.

²⁵ Thomson 3.

²⁶ Thomson 3.

²⁷ Thomson 3.

²⁸ Thomson 37.

²⁹ Maureen Fries, "The Arthurian Moment: History and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britannie*," *Arthuriana* 8.4 1998 Winter: 88-99, 93.

³⁰ Michael A. Faletta, "Narrating the Matter of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Norman Colonization of Wales," *The Chaucer Review* 35.1 2000: 60-85, 61.

³¹ Thorpe 141. v.14: "...centum millia e plebe in Britannia.."

³² Arthur's grandfather is Constantine II, who was the brother of Aldroenus, King of the Armorican Britons. See pp. 150-1

- ³³ John Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity and Political Values*, (Suffolk, U.K.: Boydell Press, 2000) 20.
- ³⁴ Faletta 66.
- ³⁵ Matthew Fisher, "Genealogy Rewritten: Inheriting the Legendary in Insular Verse Chronicles," *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Late-Medieval Britain and France*, ed. Raluca Radulescu and Edward Kennedy (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2008) 123-141.
- ³⁶ Fisher 128. Phrase from Jennifer Miller's *Layamon's 'Brut' and English Historiography*.
- ³⁷ This is Goffart's thesis concerning Bede's *Historia*, see chapter 4 entitled "Bede and the Ghost of Bishop Wilfrid" pp. 235-328
- ³⁸ Marilyn Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003) 192.
- ³⁹ Dunn 192.
- ⁴⁰ Dunn 192.
- ⁴¹ Dunn 193.
- ⁴² Dunn 192.
- ⁴³ Frank Barlow, *The English Church, 1066-1154: A History of the Anglo-Norman Church*, (London: Longman, 1979) 177.
- ⁴⁴ For full definition, see 'secular, adj. and noun' under definition A. I. 1. a. When I use the word it will always be in this sense.
- ⁴⁵ O.E.D. See 'diocese, n.' under definition 3. a.
- ⁴⁶ O.E.D. See 'minister, v.' etymology.
- ⁴⁷ O.E.D. See 'bishop, n.' etymology.
- ⁴⁸ O.E.D. See 'monk, n.' etymology.
- ⁴⁹ Barlow 30.
- ⁵⁰ Barlow 50.
- ⁵¹ Bede, Stephanus Eddius, and David Hugh, *The Age of Bede* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1983) "in duobus locis posito uni monasterio"
ll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=1915&layout=html#chapter_113403
- ⁵² Letter to Egbert: "A Corner of Tenth-Century Europe." *A Corner of Tenth-Century Europe*. Web. 08 Apr. 2012. <<http://tenthmedieval.wordpress.com/2010/03/18/from-the-sources-v-bedes-letter-to-egbert/>>. Bede, Judith McClure, and Roger Collins. *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People ; The Greater Chronicle ; Bede's Letter to Egbert*, Oxford: (Oxford UP, 1994).
- ⁵³ Letter to Egbert, para. 6.
- ⁵⁴ Letter to Egbert, para. 10.
- ⁵⁵ Everett Uberto Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter in Twelfth-century England: A Study of the Mensa Episcopalis*. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge UP, 1994) 36.
- ⁵⁶ Barlow 177.
- ⁵⁷ Barlow 177.
- ⁵⁸ Barlow 177.
- ⁵⁹ Barlow 177.
- ⁶⁰ Barlow 177.
- ⁶¹ Barlow 177.
- ⁶² Barlow 57.
- ⁶³ Barlow 318, Crosby 36.
- ⁶⁴ Barlow 57.
- ⁶⁵ Barlow 57.
- ⁶⁶ Barlow 57.
- ⁶⁷ Barlow 56.
- ⁶⁸ Tatlock 442.
- ⁶⁹ Barlow 56.
- ⁷⁰ Barlow 56.
- ⁷¹ Barlow 57.
- ⁷² Barlow 57.
- ⁷³ Barlow 66-76.

⁷⁴ Crosby 36, Barlow 318.

⁷⁵ "Medieval Sourcebook: Gregory VII: Dictatus Papae 1090," *Internet History Sourcebooks Project*, (Web. 25 Apr. 2012) <<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/g7-dictpap.asp>>.

⁷⁶ Crosby 37.

⁷⁷ Barlow 318. See appendix 1.

⁷⁸ Barlow 76.

⁷⁹ Barlow 90.

⁸⁰ Barlow 2.

⁸¹ Barlow 13.

⁸² Barlow 13.

⁸³ Barlow 13.

⁸⁴ Barlow 13.

⁸⁵ William, R. M. Thomson, and Michael Winterbottom, *Gesta Regum Anglorum, The History of the English Kings*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999) Introduction to the commentary p. xvii. Thomson 15.

⁸⁶ Thomson xvii-xx.

⁸⁷ The *GR* was completed around five years after the death of Henry's eldest son William Adelin.

⁸⁸ Thomson xxxvii. See footnote 44.

⁸⁹ Sharpe 1. Hardy epistola auctoris: Virtus clamorum virorum illud vel maxime laudandum in se commendat, quod etiam longe positorum animos ad se diligendum invitat; unde inferiores superiorum virtutes faciunt suas, dum earum adorant vestigia, ad quarum aspirare non valent exempla.

⁹⁰ Sharpe 2. Hardy, epistola auctoris: Suscipe ergo (virorum clarissime) opus, in quo te quasi ex speculo videas; dum intelliget tuae serenitatis assensus ante te summorum procerum imitatum facta quam audires nomina.

⁹¹ We know that William had access to a translation of Plato's *Timaeus*. He also had much of Augustine's work, whose platonic example (via the neo-Platonists) he might have been able to follow more exactly. See Thomson's life of William, ch. 3 "William's Reading," pp. 40-75.

⁹² Sharpe 142.

⁹³ Barlow 177.

⁹⁴ Notice the continuity from Bede's letter to Egbert.

⁹⁵ Sharpe 152.

⁹⁶ (Thomson 17) mentions that "William is nearly unique at this time in realizing how these documents might be used..."

⁹⁷ Sharpe 149. Hardy 238: "Veruntamen quantum efficax fuerit, sanctitas et probitas discipulorum suorum [Dunstanus] indicio est. Adelwoldus ex monacho Glastoniensi abbas Abbendoniensis, idemque post haec episcopus Wintoniensis, tot et tanta monasteria fecit, quod vix modo videatur credibile ut talia fecerit episcopus Urbis unius, qualia vix posset rex Angliae totius."

⁹⁸ Sharpe 203. Hardy 314: "Astabat regio lateri supradictus Ethelnothus, qui septimus ex monachis Glastoniensis coenobii praesidebat cathedrae Cantuariensi."

⁹⁹ Sharpe 155. Hardy 247: "in regno meo [suo] sancta restaurare monasteria [insinuavit pietas]."

¹⁰⁰ Sharpe 155; Hardy 247: "quae velut muscivis scindulis cariosisque tabulis tigno tenuis visibiliter disruta: sic, quod majus est, intus a servitio Dei ferme vacua fuerant neglecta. Idiotis nempe clericis ejectis, nullius regularis religionis disciplinae subjectis, plurimis in locis sanctoris seriei scilicet monachici habitus praefaci pastores..."

¹⁰¹ c. 1135

¹⁰² Thorpe 12.

¹⁰³ Francis Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*," *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies*, 69.3 (1994 July), 665-704. Ingledew cites from page 84 of Georges Duby, *The Three Orders*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (1980; rev. ed. Chicago, 1982), pp. 83-87.

¹⁰⁴ Ingledew 690.

¹⁰⁵ Ingledew, 690.

¹⁰⁶ Flint 454.

¹⁰⁷ Sharpe 268. Hardy 405: "nondum patientibus annis, presbyteri; id officium magis precario quam bonae vitae merito ab episcopo loci exegerant: denique alterius miserandus exitus superstitem instruxit quam fuerint antea in inferni lapsum ambo praecites."

- ¹⁰⁸ Sharpe 269. Hardy 405: “Pluribus se annis nunc literis, nunc seculi lucris...”
- ¹⁰⁹ Sharpe 269. Hardy 405: “magis ad distorum quam ad rectum intentas.”
- ¹¹⁰ Sharpe 269. Hardy 406: “si fiat, edoctorus quod, secundum Platonicos, mors spiritum no extinuat, sed ad pricipum sui Deum tamquam e carcere emittat.”
- ¹¹¹ Sharpe 269. Hardy 406: “sin minus, Epicureorum sectae concedendum...”
- ¹¹² Sharpe 270. Hardy 406: “...aeterna et innumera poenarum...”
- ¹¹³ Sharpe 270. Hardy 407: “...muta habitum, muta animum, Redonis monachus effectus apud sanctum Melanium.”
- ¹¹⁴ Thorpe 151. vi 5: “Constantem vero primogenitum tradidit in ecclesiam Amphibali intra Guitoniam, ut monachalem orchinem susciperet.”
- ¹¹⁵ Thorpe 152.
- ¹¹⁶ Thorpe 152. vi. 7: “Sublimatus igitur Constans, totam justitiam regni Vortegirno commisit.”
- ¹¹⁷ Thorpe 152. vi. 7: “et semetipsum in consilium ejusdem tradidit: ita ut nihil absque ipsius praecepto faceret. Quippe debilitas sensus ipsius id faciebat. Nam intra claustrum aliud quam regnum tractare didicerat.”
- ¹¹⁸ Valerie I. J. Flint, “The *Historia Regum Britanniae* of Geoffrey of Monmouth: Parody and its Purpose. A Suggestion,” *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies*, LIV.3 (July 1979) 447-468, 447. footnote 4 from William’s comment on the *HRB*: Quidam nostris temporibus, pro expiandis his Britonum maculis, scriptor emersit, ridicula de eisdam figmenta contexens, eosque longe supra virtutem Macedonum et Romanorum impudenti vanitate attollens. Gaufridus hic dictus est, agnomen habens Arturi, pro eo quod fabulas de Arturo, ex priscis Britonum figmentis sumptas et ex proprio auctas, per superductum Latini sermonis colorem honesto historiae nomine palliavit: qui etiam maiori ausu cuiusdam Merlini divinationes fallacissimas, quibus utique de proprio plurimum adiecit, dum eas in Latinum transfunderet, tanquam authenticas et immobili veritate subnixas prophetias, vulgavit ...” (Chambers, *Arthur*, pp. 274-5)
- ¹¹⁹ Flint 452.
- ¹²⁰ Crosby 39. Footnote 18, “Nam et regalem dignitatem habere videtur episcopus.”
- ¹²¹ Crosby 39.
- ¹²² Crosby 39. Footnote 21, “Non sedemus hic episcopi sed barones. Nos barones et vos barones pares hic sumus.”
- ¹²³ Sharpe 155.
- ¹²⁴ Sharpe 128. Hardy 205-6: “Nova monasteria quot et quanta fecerit, scribere dissimulo. Illud non transilium, quod vix aliquod in tota Anglia vetustum fuerit quod non vel aedificiis, vel ornamentis, aut libris, aut praediis, decoravit. Ita recentia ex professo, vetusta quasi aliud agens artificii benignitate insignibat.”
- ¹²⁵ Thorpe 284. xii 19: “pacem etiam et concordiam inter se habentes, agros colentes, civitates et eppida reaedificantes erant...”
- ¹²⁶ Sharpe 278. Hardy 417: “De regibus dico, qui pro amplitudine potestatis licenter indulgere voluptatibus possent: quorum quidam in patria, quidam Romae, mutata habitu, celeste lucrati sunt regnum, beatum nacti commercium; multi, specie tenuis, tota vita mundum amplexi, ut thesauros egenis effunderent, monasteriis dividerent.”
- ¹²⁷ Francis Ingledew “The Book of Troy.”
- ¹²⁸ Flint 452. This epilogue includes the following: “The kings of the Saxons I leave to William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon. I recommend these last to say nothing at all about the kings of the Britons, seeing that they do not have in their possession the book in the British language which Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, brought from Wales.” (Thorpe’s translation p. 284)
- ¹²⁹ Flint 454.
- ¹³⁰ Thorpe 271. xii 4
- ¹³¹ Thorpe 277. xii 8: “Illato ocus praelio interficitur Edwinus, et totus fere populous quem habebat.”
- ¹³² Thorpe 126, 160.
- ¹³³ Sharpe 2. Hardy *Epistola Auctoris*.
- ¹³⁴ Thorpe 52. Tysilio 3: “cum et gesta eorum digna aeternitatis laude constarent...”
- ¹³⁵ Laura Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007) 6.
- ¹³⁶ Two quotations from Webber, Nick. *The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911-1154*. Rochester, NY: Boydell, (2005) 35-6.

¹³⁷ Raluca Radulescu and Edward Donald Kennedy, "Introduction." *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Late-Medieval Britain and France*, ed. Raluca Radulescu and Edward Donald Kennedy, (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2008) 1-6, 1. See John Spence's article in the same collection for the dates, "Genealogies of Noble Families in Anglo-Norman." 63-77, p. 63.

¹³⁸ Ingledew 674.

¹³⁹ Ingledew 681.

¹⁴⁰ Ingledew 675.

¹⁴¹ Ingledew 675.

¹⁴² Ingledew 675.

¹⁴³ Fisher 130.

¹⁴⁴ Ingledew 675.

¹⁴⁵ Ingledew 675-6.

¹⁴⁶ Ingledew 672.

¹⁴⁷ Ingledew 670-671.

¹⁴⁸ Ingledew 671.

¹⁴⁹ Ingledew 692.

¹⁵⁰ Ingledew 692. Even less extreme accounts, such as John Hardyng's *Chronicle* show a clear denunciation of the classical pagan tradition from the outset: "To whom I pray for spede vnto the ende /My wytte enforce in myght and sapience./Of other goddis, whiche poetes vsed and kende/In olde poesies, I lak intelligence;/ Ne nought I wille so hurte my conscience /On thaim to muse, whiche God defendeth me./And als for sothe for any eloquence /I tasted neuer the welles of Caliope; //Yit wille I nought pray helpe of Saturnus./Of Iubiter, ne Mars, or Mercury, /Venus, Ceres, Phebus, or Seueus, /Of Pallas, ne Alecte, or Megary./Of Genyus, or yit The siphony, Of Cupido, ne of Ymeneus, Mynerue, Diane, Bachus, or Cerbery, Manes, Glaucus, Vulcane, or Protheus.//Tho goddis olde and fals I alles refuse, /And pray to God, that sitte in trynyte,/ My goste to guy on thaim that it nought muse,/Enspiryng it in alle sufficiente /Of suche language, as is necessite /This boke to ende in balade and translate,/Thus newe bygunne of my symplicite./Amonges makers it be vnreprobate." From Sarah Peverley, *John Hardyng's Chronicle: A Study of the Two Versions and a Critical Edition of Both for the Period 1327-1464* (Ph.D. Thesis. University of Hull, U.K 2004) 243.

¹⁵¹ Ingledew 676.

¹⁵² Sharpe 109-10.

¹⁵³ Sharpe 109. Hardy 172: "quanquam timendum sit ne barbaricorum nominum hiatus vulneret aures desuetorum in talibus."

¹⁵⁴ Sharpe 109. Hardy 172: "Ab hoc Anglorum Chronica sursum versus usque ad Adam lineam generationis regum textunt, sicut Lucam evangelistam a Domino Jesu factitasse cognovimus."

¹⁵⁵ Barlow 14.

¹⁵⁶ Sharpe 1-2.

¹⁵⁷ Sharpe 2. Hardy Epistola Auctoris: "volo enim hoc opus esse multarum historiarum breuiarum, quamvis a majori parte vocaverim Gesta Regum Anglorum."

¹⁵⁸ See Thorpe page 88 and time before house of Constantine.

¹⁵⁹ See Thorpe 124-6.

¹⁶⁰ "this" being the transfer of pagan temples to Christian uses.

¹⁶¹ Thorpe 126. v. 1: "Et quia majorem honorem ipsis impendere debuerat, augmentavit illas [ecclesias] amplioribus agris et mansionibus, omnique libertate sublimavit."

¹⁶² Thorpe 126. v. 1: "Inter haec et caeteros sui propositi actus in urbe Claudiocestriae ab hac migravit vita, et in ecclesia primae sedis honorifice spultus est anno ab incarnatione domini centesimo quinquagesimo sexto. Caruit sobole quae sibi succederet: unde defuncto illo et dissidium inter Britones ortum fuit et Roman potestas infirmata."

¹⁶³ Thorpe 124. iv 18: "...in pace quod possidebat obtinuit."

¹⁶⁴ Thorpe 124. iv. 18: "Hic ab infantia Romae nutritus fuerat, Moresque Romanorum edoctus in maximam ipsorum amicitiam inciderat. Sed et ipse eis tributum reddebat, adversary diffugiens."

¹⁶⁵ Thorpe 124. iv 18: "Nullus in regibus majorem reverentiam nobilibus regni praestabat: quia ipsos aut divites in pace manere permittebat, aut paupers assiduis donariis munerabat."

- ¹⁶⁶ Thorpe 126. v. 1: "...possessions et territoria quae prius temple idolorum possidebant, in meliorem usum vertens, ecclesiis fidelium permanere concessit."
- ¹⁶⁷ Gillingham 20.
- ¹⁶⁸ Gillingham 24.
- ¹⁶⁹ Gillingham 38-9.
- ¹⁷⁰ See Maureen Fries. "The Arthurian Moment" p. 93.
- ¹⁷¹ Gillingham 31.
- ¹⁷² Gillingham 31.
- ¹⁷³ Flint 449.
- ¹⁷⁴ Gillingham 21.
- ¹⁷⁵ Fries 94. Fries's citation is from Robert Huntington Fletcher. "The Arthurian Material in the Chronicles, Especially those of Great Britain and France." (1906) (Rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1958). pp. 108-110
- ¹⁷⁶ Gillingham 24.
- ¹⁷⁷ Sharpe 6.
- ¹⁷⁸ Sharpe 214. See especially 435, also 219, 333 and 343 concerning rebellion.
- ¹⁷⁹ Spiegel 315.
- ¹⁸⁰ Fisher 130.
- ¹⁸¹ Gabrielle Spiegel, "Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historical Narrative," *History and Theory* (14.3 Oct., 1975) 314-325, 44.
- ¹⁸² Ingledew 685.
- ¹⁸³ Thorpe 270.
- ¹⁸⁴ Sharpe 2. Hardy *epistola auctoris*: "Suscipe ergo (virorum clarissime) opus, in quo te quasi ex speculo videas; dum intelliget tuae serenitatis assensus ante te summorum procerum imitatum facta quam audires nomina."
- ¹⁸⁵ See the story of the two clerks, Sharpe 269.
- ¹⁸⁶ Sharpe 425: "According to the saying of Plato, "Happy would be the commonwealth, if philosophers governed, or kings would be philosophers."
- ¹⁸⁷ Thomson 199. These include *De Doctrina Christiana*, *De Civitate Dei*, *Confessiones*, and *De Natura et Origine Animae*, among others.
- ¹⁸⁸ Sharpe 2.
- ¹⁸⁹ Sharpe 318: "So much does ancient custom please, and so little encouragement, though deserved, is given to new discoveries, however consistent with truth. All are anxious to grovel in the old track, and everything modern is contemned; and therefor, as patronage alone can foster genius, when that is withheld, every exertion languishes."
- ¹⁹⁰ Sharpe 1. Hardy *epistola auctoris*: "unde inferiores superiorum virtutes faciunt suas, dum earum adorant vestigial, ad quarum aspirare non valent exempla."
- ¹⁹¹ Sharpe 1; Hardy *epistola auctoris*: "Vestrum est igitur, O duces, si quid boni facimus; vestrum profecto si quid dignum memoria scribimus."
- ¹⁹² Sharpe 93-4.
- ¹⁹³ Thorpe 51. Tysilio 3 "Rogatu illius itaque ductus, tametsi intra alienos hortulos falerata verba non collegerim, agresti tamen stylo propriisque calamis contentus, codicem illum in Latinum sermonem transferre curavi. Nam si ampullosis dictionibus paginam illivissem: taedium legentibus ingererem, dum magis in exponendis verbis quam in historia intelligenda, ipsos commorari oportet."
- ¹⁹⁴ Flint 452-3.
- ¹⁹⁵ Thorpe 52. Tysilio 3-4; "Opusculo igitur meo, Roberte dux Claudiocestriae, faveas, ut sic te ductore, te monitore corrigatur, ut non ex Galfredi Monumetensis fonticulo censeatur exortum, sed sale Minervae tuae conditum: illius censeatur edition, quem Henricus illustris rex Anglorum generavit..."
- ¹⁹⁶ Thorpe 52. The Latin of Geoffrey's dedication to Waleran is not included in the Tysilio edition of *HRB*.
- ¹⁹⁷ Sharpe 77. Hardy 118: "...vir ingentis animi, et qui omnia quae mente concepisset efficere proponeret..."
- ¹⁹⁸ Sharpe 77. Hardy 118: "Hujus gesta cum consider, animus haeret in dubio utrum probem an improbem."
- ¹⁹⁹ "Offa" *The Kings and Queens of Britain*. John Cannon and Anne Hargreaves. Oxford University Press, 2009. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. CUNY City College of New York libraries. 24 April 2012 <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t44.e272>>.

²⁰⁰ Cannon “Offa.”

²⁰¹ Cannon “Offa.”

²⁰² Sharpe 77. Hardy 118: “singulorum documenta sermo percurrat.”

²⁰³ Sharpe 77. Hardy 118: “Cum rege West-Saxonum Kinewulfo aperto arte congressus palmam leviter obtinuit, quamvis esset ille bellator non ignobilis.”

²⁰⁴ Sharpe 78.

²⁰⁵ Sharpe 86. Hardy: “Ille sedulo paternae immanitatis vestigia declinans, privilegia omnium ecclesiarum, quae seculo suo genitor attenuaverat, prona devotione revocavit.”

²⁰⁶ Sharpe 86. Hardy 130: “Itaque cum spes egregiae indolis primis annis Egferti adoleret, saeva mors vernantis aetatis florem messuit.”

²⁰⁷ Sharpe 86. Hardy 130: “Non arbitror quod nobilissimus juvenis Egfertus propter peccata sua mortuus sit, sed quia pater suus pro confirmatione regni ejus multum sanguinem effudit.” Whether it is damaging or supportive of my argument will be difficult to ascertain, but there is an interesting uncertainty concerning Egfert’s death that deserves mention. It is possible that Ecgfert was in fact assassinated, which would make Alcuin’s comment on the subject refer to the direct connection Offa’s cruelty had with Egfert’s death. This would negate the attribution I have made of divine rectification so long as William meant it to be referring in fact to the people Offa upset. This, however does not seem to be the case. William used only the quote, which in context reads more as a rectification than as a simple cause and effect scenario. And even if Egfert’s were assassinated, the implication would still be that God exacted his punishment for the sins of the father. Note quotation from Thomson’s bio of William p. 171, “He knew what he wanted his [alcuin’s] texts to do for him and he was master of their content.” Thomson notes also that he altered Alcuin’s letters on several occasions. In at least one case Thomson attributes the alteration to “a prudent consideration of his audience, among whom would surely be the Canterbury monks (168).

²⁰⁸ Thorpe 120. iv 14: “...adituque invento ipsum nihil tale timentem mucrone suffocavit.”

²⁰⁹ Thorpe 120. iv 14: “elapsus deinde inter hostium cuneos, sese cum nefanda victoria inter suos receipt.”

²¹⁰ In Thomson’s biography of William he notes that it of all the monks in England the queen selected William to compose the history. Though we don’t know why he was chosen, it does not seem inappropriate to conjecture that he had attained some level of spiritual respectability among his royal patrons.

²¹¹ Sharpe 252.

²¹² Sharpe 252. Hardy 381: “‘Duos,’ inquit, ‘modo monachos vidi mihi assistere, quos adolescens olim in Normannia videram religionissime vixisse et Christianissime obisse. Hi se Dei nuncios praefati, talia ingessere: ‘Quoniam primores Angliae, duces, episcopi, et abbates, non sunt ministri Dei, sed diaboli, tradidit Deus hoc regnum post obitum tuum anno uno et die uno in manu inimici, pervagabunturque daemones totam hanc terram.’”

²¹³ Sharpe 246. Hardy 373: “de quo ante digressionem dicebam, minime degeneravit. Denique miraculis et prophetiae spiritu, sicut deinceps dicam, claruit.”

²¹⁴ Sharpe 253. Hardy 381: “Hujus ergo vaticinii veritatem nos experimur, quod scilicet Anglia exterorum facta est habitation et alienigenarum dominatio. Nullus hodie Anglus vel dux, vel pontifex, vel abbas; advenae quique divitias et viscera corrodunt Angliae; nec ulla spes est finiendae miseriae.”

²¹⁵ Sharpe 273. Hardy 410: “Verum tunc Willelmi industira cum prudentia Dei consentiens, jam spe Angliam invadebat.”

²¹⁶ Sharpe 273. Hardy 410: “papa vexillum in omen regni Willelmo contradidit.”

²¹⁷ Sharpe 273. Hardy 410: “Haroldus id facere supersedit.”

²¹⁸ Sharpe 273. Hardy 411: “Deum contra tendere, qui ventum arceret; idem patrem voluisse, eodemque modo inhibitum; fatale illi familiae esse, ut, altiora viribus spirans, Deum adversantem experiatur.”

²¹⁹ Sharpe 274. Hardy 411: “nec mora intercessit quin prosper flatus carbasa impleret.”

²²⁰ Sharpe 2.

²²¹ Sharpe 275. Hardy 412: “pene omnes in exercitu illo presbyteros videri, quod totam faciem cum utroque labio rasam haberent.”

²²² Sharpe 275. Hardy 413: “Angli enim superius labrum pilis incessanter fructificantibus intonsum dimittunt, quod etiam gentilitium antiquis Britonibus fuisse Julius Caesar asseverate in libro Belli Gallici.”

²²³ Sharpe 275. Hardy 412: “eademque impudentia, vel, indulgentius dicam, imprudentia, monachum Willelmi legatum, nec bono vultu dignatus turbide abegit; hoc tantum imprecans, ut Deus inter eum et Willelmum judicaret.”

²²⁴ Sharpe 276. Hardy 414: “Angli, ut accepimus, totam noctem insomnem cantibus potibusque ducentes, mane incunctanter in hostem procedunt... Contra Normanni, nocte tota confessioni peccatorum vacantes, mane Dominico corpore communicarunt.”

²²⁵ Thorpe 256-7. x 12: “Quod divinae providentiae stabat loco, cum et veteres eorum priscis temporibus avos istorum injustis inquietionibus infestassent: et isti nunc libertatem, quam illi eisdem demere affectbant, tueri instarent...”

²²⁶ Thorpe 150. Tysilio 77, “Christus vincit: Christus imperat: Christus regnat. Ecce rex Britanniae desertae. Adsit modo Christus: ecce defensio nostra: ecce spes nostra, et gaudium.” The Latin is somewhat different, but a similar ambiguity arises.

²²⁷ Thorpe 188. viii 2: “sed permittente deo in laqueum, quem fidelibus suis paraverat, incautus cecidit.”

²²⁸ Thorpe 188. viii 2: “Illud vero dolendum esse censeo, quod nefandus populus quem nefandus iste invitavit, nobiles cives et terminavit: fertilem patriam devastavit: sacras ecclesias destruxit: et Christianitatem fere a mari usque ad mare delevit. Nunc ergo cives viriliter agite: et vindicate vos prius in istum, per quem haec Omnia mala accesserunt.”

²²⁹ Thorpe 280. xii 14: “in initio viriliter et pacifice tractavit.”

²³⁰ Thorpe 280. xii 15: “...discordia afficiuntur Britones, et opulentam patriam detestabili dissidio destruunt.”

²³¹ Thorpe 281. xii 15: “quae in brevi tantam populi multitudinem stravit, quantam non poterant vivi humare.”

²³² Thorpe 281. xii 15: “Sed in vanum patriam contra illos totiens recuperavimus; cum non fuit Dei voluntas, ut in ea perpetuo regnaremus. Ipse verus iudex, cum vidisset nos nullatenus a sceleribus nostris cessare velle, ac neminem genus nostrum a regno expellere posse.”

²³³ “The Rule of St. Benedict.” *The Rule of St. Benedict*. Web. 10 May 2012.

<<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/benedict/rule2/files/rule2.html>>. Chapter 66. Monasterium autem, si possit fieri, ita debet constitui ut omnia necessaria, id est aqua, molendinum, hortum vel artes diversas intra monasterium exerceantur, ut non sit necessitas monachis vagandi foris, quia omnino non expedit animabus eorum.

²³⁴ See Benedict’s Rule Chapter 19.