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Places, Kings, and Poetry: The Shaping of *Breta sögur* for the Norse Corpus

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Introduction

Breta sögur is an Old Norse translation, originally made at some point in the early thirteenth century.¹ It translates the great Latin pseudo-history of Geoffrey of Monmouth, the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, which tells of the reigns of legendary British kings from their Trojan origins until the Anglo-Saxon conquest. *Merlínusspá* is a translation from prose into verse of *Prophetia Merlini*, a semi-independent text of prophecies that makes up a part of Geoffrey's *Historia*. Both texts appear in the early fourteenth century Icelandic manuscript, Hauksbók, though they were very likely originally translated separately.²

This study examines the whole of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*, including *Merlínusspá* as contentually part of the same text, and examines how that text has been adapted for a Norse literary milieu and a Norse audience from an intensely topical and British source, written in Latin. While work has been done on the sources and transmission of *Breta sögur*, there remains little scholarship on how that transmission from Latin sources have resulted in a distinctly Norse text. Thus *Breta sögur* will not only be looked at relative to itself and its sources, but also in relation to works of the Old Norse corpus to show how it can fit within that corpus, despite its peripheral status as a translation.³ There is not nearly enough space here to attempt to fit *Breta sögur* into the full chronological and inter-textual literary history of Old Norse, nor are the questions of source and transmission sufficiently answered to be assured of any conclusions derived from such an analysis. However, by speaking in

1 The original translation has been dated to around 1200 by Stephanie Würth and other scholars (Würth, “The Common Transmission of *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*, 297), which seems to remain the generally accepted date.

2 Though he does not propose any concrete conclusions regarding this, see J.S. Eysteinnsson, “The Relationship of *Merlínusspá* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*.”

3 This attempt is in part inspired by Trine Buhl's observation on the potential relationship between the translated sagas and the kings' sagas: “It seems likely that some answers to the emergence of the long prose form could be found by studying how the general process of translation, transmission, and copying gave rise to a new original approach to the old subject matter. We know that a variety of foreign literature was being transformed into long prose accounts in the vernacular in the latter part of the twelfth century and prior to the composition of the first kings' sagas, but only a few scholars have paid attention to the practice of translation as such and to the relationship between the production of translations and the development of domestic saga literature.” (Buhl, “Premises of Literary History: On Genre and Narrative Modes in the Sagas,” 60).

terms of genre and common, distinctive characteristics of Norse literature, it is hoped that *Breta sögur* can be shown to have developed by the early fourteenth century into a text that relates in form, detail, and character to the greater body of Old Norse literature.

Three chapters will examine three of the most important changes made to the text of the *Historia* which adapt it into the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*, while a fourth will make a determined effort to contextualize these changes. Chapter One will examine geography and genealogy, the essential core of Geoffrey's *Historia* and likewise the most important aspect of *Breta sögur*. Chapter Two will examine religion in *Breta sögur*, both the literary use of Norse gods and pre-Christian ideas, as well as the ecclesiastical qualities of the text, which are more prevalent than in the *Historia*. Chapter Three will examine the prosimetrical form of *Breta sögur* and *Merlinusspá* in Hauksbók, and its significance for the work as a whole, and the characteristics discussed in the previous chapters. Chapter Four will compare *Breta sögur* with the texts of the Norse corpus which share important characteristics with it: *Ynglinga saga* in *Heimskringla*, the origin legends at the beginning of *Orkneyinga saga* and the *Historia Norwegie*, and the *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo Grammaticus.

While this is an ambitious selection of topics, taken together as a whole they will suggest the most apparent and physical changes to *Breta sögur* in its adaptation into a Norse text. Likewise, though far from exhaustive in examining the ways in which *Breta sögur* is different from the many redactions of Geoffrey's *Historia*, these examinations aim to go some way towards showing, by example, exactly how a work of Latin historiography can be made into Norse historiography, and what the implications are of that change.⁴

Texts and Manuscripts

The transmission of *Breta sögur* is problematic, both of the Norse text and the *Historia regum Britanniae*. *Breta sögur* exists in two versions. The shorter one is preserved in Hauksbók, the great encyclopedic collection of Haukr Erlendsson compiled in the first

⁴ The terms Norse or Old Norse will be used throughout; as I am dealing primarily with a component of Hauksbók, it is not entirely clear whether the intended audience was Icelandic, Norwegian, or both.

half of the fourteenth century. It is currently broken into three manuscripts—AM 371, AM 544, and AM 675 4to—and 141 of the probably 210 original leaves are preserved. The bulk of the manuscript was probably written between 1302 and 1310 by Haukr himself,⁵ which includes *Breta sögur*. Much of the works contained in it are concerned with theological matters, but it contains a significant amount of historiography, including *Breta sögur*, *Trójumanna saga*, *Páttir af Upplendinga konungum*, *Ragnarssona þáttir*, *Eiríks saga rauða*, and many other works.⁶ Hauksbók is also the only place where *Merlínusspá*, originally translated by Gunnlaugr Leifsson around the beginning of the thirteenth century, survives, where it represents chapters 28 and 29 of *Breta sögur*. It fits into the exact place in the narrative that the original *Prophetia Merlini* were located in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, though the poem is split into two halves and placed in what appears to be reversed order, or at least contrary to the order of the original prophecies. Hauksbók also contains *Völuspá*, the most apparent Old Norse model for the verse translation of the *Prophetia*,⁷ though it should be noted that the poem does not appear to have been copied by Haukr, but by another Icelandic writer around 1350.⁸

The second, longer version of the saga is preserved in the heavily damaged manuscript AM 573 4to, from the middle of the fourteenth century, which contains *Trójumanna saga*, *Breta sögur*, and the beginning of *Valvers þáttir*. There is also a significant fragment in Papp. Fol. 58, a seventeenth century paper copy of the lost Ormsbók.⁹ This version, however, has not yet been edited, and even fully collated would contain significant lacunae.¹⁰ Stephanie Würth has argued for this version taking what was originally a more historiographic work and attempting to adapt it into a *riddarasaga*, by additions from other works and more florid prose.¹¹

5 Sverrir Jakobsson, “*Hauksbók* and the Construction of an Icelandic World View,” 23.

6 Rowe, “Literary, Codicological, and political perspectives on *Hauksbók*,” 66-7.

7 Marold, “*Merlínusspá*,” 14.

8 Rowe, “Literary, Codicological, and Political Perspectives on *Hauksbók*,” 57.

9 Würth, “The Common Transmission of *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*,” 299-300.

10 I am deeply indebted to Hélène Tétrel for providing drafts of her current transcriptions of AM 573 4to and where it fits into the lacunae of the former manuscript, Papp. Fol. 58. All quotations used in this study from AM 573 4to are from these transcriptions.

11 Würth, “The Common Transmission of *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*,” 322.

The main purpose in focusing on Hauksbók here is to look at *Breta sögur* as a complete, singular work, as part of a manuscript that reflects its topics and themes, and because its inclusion of *Merlínussþá* makes it reflect Geoffrey's *Historia* more than the other version, despite its abbreviation. We cannot be certain what particular changes between the Latin text and the Norse were made by Haukr himself, and which appeared in earlier translations, or which were representative of the Latin exemplar;¹² however, the Hauksbók text can be seen as standing at the end of a line of Norse redaction and interpretation. It represents an Icelandic perspective of the early fourteenth century, and because of Haukr's Norwegian political career can be thought of as also a Norwegian text, and thus reflecting a Norwegian perspective.¹³

The Latin basis for *Breta sögur*, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, exists in at least 215 manuscripts, almost certainly more. The redaction of the *Aeneid*, or whatever source contained the Virgilian material that the first chapters of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* are based on, is even more uncertain,¹⁴ as are any other sources that may have contributed to the Hauksbók text. Thus any textual comparisons that are made between the Latin and Norse must be understood as uncertain and speculative, though the hope remains that the most important changes are indicative enough of a Norse perspective, that they most likely come from some point along the transmission of the Norse translation

12 For a very thorough attempt to distinguish the Norse and the Latin changes, see van Hamel "The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth." Though it is an amazingly thorough work of scholarship, which will be used here, several of Van Hamel's conclusions, particularly regarding what the character of the Latin basis of *Breta sögur* must have been like, do not seem very likely and will be disregarded or argued against here.

13 For example, Sverrir Jakobsson in "Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic World View" clearly suggests that the whole of Hauksbók is representative of the Icelandic milieu, while Elizabeth Ashman Rowe concludes "Literary, Codicological, and Political Perspectives on *Hauksbók*" by pointing to Hauksbók's functions within a Norwegian milieu. This study of *Breta sögur* will thus avoid the debate apparent by the works used here by A.G. van Hamel, J.S. Eysteinnsson, and Philip Lavender over whether the original translation was Icelandic or Norwegian, by assuming that on some level the surviving text is both Icelandic and Norwegian, and that the two milieus are functionally the same, when discussed in contrast to Britain and the British/Latin text of the *Historia*.

14 For the best available work on the likely sources of the Aeneas-section of both versions of *Breta sögur*, see Tétrel "Trojan Origins and the Use of the *Aeneid* and Related Sources in the Old Icelandic *Brut*." In addition to the possibility that Virgil himself was used, she primarily stresses the *Historia Romana* of Paul the Deacon and Servius' commentary on the *Aeneid*. Most importantly, she points out that both versions of *Breta sögur* were using the same primary source, the *Aeneid* or a summary of it, and that the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* is simply an abbreviation of this.

of the *Historia*.

For the sake of straightforward comparison, and as it is the most comprehensive edition of the Vulgate text of the *Historia* available, references, comparisons, and quotations will be made to the Reeve/Wright edition, which collates seventeen manuscripts and is based on a study of many more.¹⁵ For thoroughness, some reference will also be made to the Wright edition of the First Variant version.

¹⁵ See Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, *Introduction*, xili.

Chapter One: Place and Genealogy

Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* is a work of massive scope. It centers around Britain, but has episodes in nearly every other part of Europe, from the meeting with Corineus in Spain and the invasion of Rome in the south, to the kings of Denmark and Iceland in the north that give troops and aid to Arthur's great campaign; the geographic scope of the work is massive. Britain becomes, for a time, the center of the world through conquest, and this dynamic is so plain and well-stated that there is every reason to think it was among Geoffrey's primary purposes in writing.

Within this geographical scope, the work lays out the ancient history of the Britons, the line of kings from their Trojan origins to their final defeat by the Saxon invaders; it is thus essentially genealogical in purpose. Geography ties directly in with this: chronological and spacial authority are inherently related, and the interest of aristocrats in texts of their genealogy inherently extends to an interest in the scope of the authority of their ancestors. It is thus of the utmost importance that the line of British kings goes back to the Trojans, not just to the Romans, and thus places the British on equal footing with the Romans; this important distinction affects place and place-name.¹⁶ Moreover, Geoffrey is responding to the historians of his day, and the earlier Anglo-Saxon historians, with a competing text and a competing historical narrative.

The abbreviated quality of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* emphasizes the genealogical aspect of the text. The reign of each king is given less textual space, and with many of the speeches and battle scenes shortened the full scope of the line of kings becomes more apparent, in contrast to the *Historia*, where each individual reign often appears as a semi-independent story.¹⁷ On top of this, several genealogical components are added into the text

¹⁶ Robertson, Kellie, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography," 44-5. Among Robertson's best examples: "In the first section of the *HRB*, Brutus names the capital of his new-found land, 'Troia Nova', the name by which, Geoffrey tells us, it was known for a long time until through corruption it came to be called Trinovantum. This etymology inscribes Trojan origins on the insular landscape, a rhetorical conversion of the existing Roman topography that gives a new past to the Welsh people."

¹⁷ There are, of course, exceptions to this; *Breta sögur* is clearly a history, not a chronicle. Aeneas, Brutus,

that show greater concern for the kings and rulers of the regions north of Britain, including Geoffrey's Saxon enemies. It is clear throughout *Breta sögur* that Geoffrey's political concerns are not shared by the Norse translator, and they often disappear in the text. The many geographical additions and alterations that characterize *Breta sögur* become tied with this into its genealogical and historiographic core; place, ruler, and people are inseparable, and all the components of the adaptation of *Breta sögur* affect each other. The temporal and territorial power of a king are the center of this historiography, and in the details of these descriptions the cultural translation of the text into a Norse milieu becomes plainly apparent.¹⁸

Genealogical Additions: Aeneas and the Anglo-Saxon kings

There are two additions to the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* that structurally enhance its genealogical quality, by expanding its linear scope and the sheer number of kings. The genealogy of Anglo-Saxon kings links the genealogy of the whole text all the way up to king Aðalsteinn and his foster-son Hákon föstri. The long Virgilian introduction that summarizes the Aeniad, at the other end of the saga, reaffirms the Trojan basis of the whole narrative and the scope of that Trojan genealogy.

The very last passage of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* is a list of Anglo-Saxon kings, prefixed by approximately four chapters that show an increasing interest in the Anglo-

Leir, Vortigern, and Arthur all have long and detailed reigns. Of these, though, all the kings except for Leir are essential for the history, and fully justify their detail. Van Hamel describes the story of king Lear as a sort of *páttir*, which the Norse translator must have had some particular interest in it (Van Hamel, "The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth," 201).

- 18 It would be gross over-analysis, of course, to attempt to attribute every variation between the *Historia* and *Breta sögur* to clearly deliberate alteration on the part of the translator or redactors. The manuscript used by the translator is unknown, and some of the changes that might be attributed to a Norse translator could have been the result of an alternate Latin version. However, the extensive attribution of aspects of *Breta sögur* to a Latin text posited by van Hamel, to the point of creating a sort of theoretical 'Canterbury text', is certainly excessive. Likewise, many changes that might be seen as mistakes, or unconscious simplifications, still reflect the perspective of the Norse scribe that made them, and thus on some level reflect Norse literary culture (Van Hamel, "The Old Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth," 207-19, 246). See also J.S. Eysteinnsson's critique of this component of Van Hamel's argument (J.S. Eysteinnsson, "The Relationship of *Merlínussþá* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*," 107-109).

Saxon kings. From the story of the saintly king Oswald in chapter forty-nine, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, until the end of the work, *Breta sögur* appears to put Anglo-Saxon kings on equal footing with the British kings. The work is significantly shortened here, and every detail stands out. For example, when the rather unsympathetic chieftain Peanda is attacking the Saxon king Oswi, Oswi gives a speech added into *Breta sögur*—despite the great abbreviation of the section—expounding upon his faith; it is also noted that he praised God for his victory.¹⁹ Both details, which enhance the Saxon king's virtuous character, are lacking in the *Historia*. While Geoffrey must, on some level, confront the saintliness of Oswald, he has no such obligation to his brother Oswi. The *Breta sögur* translator, on the other hand, uninvolved in the racial and political tensions of Geoffrey's milieu, could expound upon the nobility of Oswi's character. In the translation, then, there is a sort of unity created between the two brothers, in stark contrast to the rather unsympathetic and treacherous, yet Briton-allied, Peanda.

From here the death of the great British king Caduallo is told relatively fully, but the great exodus of the British people to Brittany is very short and a key detail is missing. In the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*, Ivor and Yni, son and nephew of Cadualadrus, do not appear. In the *Historia*, they are a sort of compromise Cadualadrus makes, before he makes his pilgrimage to Rome, giving up his kingly office for a holy life; they continue the line of kings on the island, while he pursues divine virtue.²⁰ Thus in *Breta sögur*, the religious sacrifice is more complete, but, more importantly here, the Britons have fully given up their

19 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 300. “[O]ss mvn þat fyrri betra er þeir neita sættvm. [S]kvlv ver þangat sækia til travst sem vrvgt er heitvm a almattkan gvð oss til fvlltings ok mvnv ver i hans travsti fagran sigr vega. Gongvm fram rosklega ok synvm enga ræzlv a ors því at gott er hvart sem helldr kemr vpp at ver fallim a foðorleifð vari ella sigrimz. siþan tokz harðr bardagi með þeim ok eigi langr aðr Pendan fellr ok með hanvm .xxx. iarla en Vsvið ok hans menn lofvöðv gvð fyrri fagran sigr.” (“*That will be better for us, that they deny reconciliation; we would seek for truce, which is negligent. Let us call on Almighty God to help us, and we will win a fair victory in his good faith. We go forth bravely and show no fear in ourselves, because it is good whether it happens that we fall into our patrimony or are victorious.*” Then a hard battle began between them, and it was not long before Peanda fell, and with him thirty jarls, and Oswi and his men praised God for the fair victory.)

20 “Filium autem suum Ivor ac Yni nepotem suum ad reliquias Britonum regendas in insulam dirigeret, ne gens antiquo genere illorum edita libertatem barbarica irruptione amitteret.” “. . . but he should send his son Ivor and nephew Yni to the island to rule the surviving Britons, so that the people descended from their ancient race should not lose their freedom because of barbarian invasion.” (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 280-81)

claim on the island; Geoffrey's patriotic purpose is undermined, and the British claim to their land is lost. This reflects the fact that a Norwegian audience would likely have as much interest in Anglo-Saxon kings as British ones.

In light of this transfer of power it seems significant and appropriate that chapter fifty-two of *Breta sögur* is titled “Bygðiz England annat sinn” (*England is settled a second time*).²¹ The geographical slate is swept clean, the Saxons have won by force of arms and the will of God their right to settle the land. A queen of Northumbria, Sæburg, is added into *Breta sögur*.²² She is mentioned before the final forfeiture of Cadualadrus, and then again at the beginning of chapter fifty-three, which consists essentially only of the dedications and the final genealogy; here she represents an entirely interpolated Anglo-Saxon ruler, who is at least slightly more than just a name on a list, and thus emphasizes the greater interest in Anglo-Saxon kingship in the Norse text.

This list of Anglo-Saxon kings covers thirteen names—including Caduallo and Sæborg—and ends with king Aðalsteinn. Most significant for a Norse audience would be the final phrase: “[H]ann fostradi Hakon svn Haralz konvngs harfagra”²³ (*He fostered Hákon, the son of king Harald fair-hair*). Treating *Breta sögur* as a genealogy, this essentially links

21 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 301.

22 Van Hamel argues firmly that this queen was present in X, the version of the *Historia* that *Breta sögur* is based on, because of her appearance in the Welsh *Ystoria Brenhined y Brytanyeit*, arguing that both the Welsh and Norse versions were based on X (Van Hamel, “The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth,” 223, 244). While certainly possible, Van Hamel overstates his point, and more work needs to be done on the relation of these texts; it is possible that Sæburg is a later interpolation in both texts, as Van Hamel notes that she is present along with the length of her reign in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Hengry of Huntingdon. Her literary function in *Breta sögur* stands, however, whatever the situation of the sources might be; if she was present in Geoffrey's text, it is very unlikely that she would have been at the head of a genealogical list.

23 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 302. A list of this sort, naturally, the old Norse translator, or Haukr himself (cite Helene, and this not being in AM 573) would have had some source for. Van Hamel notes the similarities between the list, generally, and Henry of Huntingdon's account, but because, in the Norse, Aðalsteinn's reign is oddly specific—31 years, 6 weeks, and 3 days—van Hamel attributes the immediate source to the Anglo-Saxon chronicle, which gives, at least, specific weeks (van Hamel, “The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth,” 244-46). This, however, seems to more likely be the result of a native Icelandic or Norwegian tradition about Aðalsteinn that revolves around the specificity of those '3 days'. In the genealogical lists from a lost manuscript from c. 1254, copied by Árni Magnusson into AM 1 e β II fol., the reign of Aðalsteinn is listed as “Aðalsteinn xiiii ar vii vicor iii daga” (Faulkes, “The earliest Icelandic Genealogies and Regnal Lists,” 117.) (*Aðalstein: 14 years, 7 weeks, and 3 days*)

the Anglo-Saxon and British²⁴ line of kings with the Norwegian one. Treating it as a piece of historiography, it links the translated saga directly to the corpus of *konungasögur*, where the story of Hákon's fosterage is written. On a literary level, the ending line of a saga often has a certain stylistic significance; the simple statement that the saga has ended is common enough, sometimes combined with reference to the author.²⁵ The whole idea of a work-final genealogy, with a particularly significant final name, is perhaps most famously represented by Ari fróði's *Íslendingabók*.

On the whole, the presence of Hákon and Harald hárfagri show how significant individual names can be, depending on their placement; these are historical Norwegian kings in a text of legendary British kings. Particularly in a translation, where every deviation that isn't pure error can reveal some potentially important intent on the part of the translator, this addition of a Norwegian king to a list of Anglo-Saxon kings, which is itself an addition to a work on British kings, has to be significant. If only in a very small way, it links the full Trojan ancestry of the British kings and the conquering might of the Anglo-Saxon kings to the Norwegian kingship, with fosterage as a sort of medium of transmission.

These Norwegian kings, as with the Anglo-Saxons, blur the Galfridean focus of the work on British history. They suggest the interest of the Norse audience more vaguely in the early history of the British Isles/England. It would be patronizing and misguided to suggest that the translator, redactors, and their audience could not or did not distinguish between England and Britain; but it remains that the distinction would not have been nearly as important to them as it was to Geoffrey and his audience. Some other parts of the work betray this lesser importance; for the entire story of king Lear, the isle is referred to as England.²⁶ Frequently the particular regions of Wales, that were of course of vital

24 Perhaps only peripherally, as there is no emphatic suggestion that the British and Anglo-Saxon lines of kings are linked, but on a literary, narrative level the connection is plainly there.

25 Cf. *Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagiensum*, and *Merlínussþá*, for more Latin examples of ending lines, but also *Sverris saga*, *Hákons saga Hákonarson*, and *Fagrskinna*, for examples among the *konungasögur*.

26 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 249-252. The last instance of this, on line 8 of page 252, is uncertain (See Finnur Jónsson's note). But over, from the first mention of Lear until his final victory and return to power, all mentions of the whole island use the name England. There is one instance, when he divides the country between his two eldest daughters, who marry jarls who rule over Britain, and one over Scotland ("annar þeira sat a Bretlandi en anar a Skotlandi"), said to total a half of his kingdom; as will be discussed later in

importance to Geoffrey, are simplified or changed to completely different places in *Breta sögur*.²⁷

At the other end of the text, opposite these Anglo-Saxon and Norwegian kings, there is an interpolated introduction, which summarizes much of the Aeneid. In terms of genealogy, person, and place, it makes several important impacts on the whole of *Breta sögur*: it reemphasizes the Trojan origins of the work, while at the same time it shows more interest in Rome and its history than the *Historia*; it spreads the geographical and historical scope of the work further into the Mediterranean. Finally, in the most comprehensive perspective, of the whole of Hauksbók, it emphasizes the link between *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*.

When Brutus defeats the Greek king Pandrasus—who is unnamed in *Breta sögur*—the king gives a speech of defeat, a portion of which differs slightly from the speech in the *Historia*, in a manner that reflects the greater genealogical concern of the Norse text. It is in effect a summary of an important aristocratic perspective on the value of genealogy, and thus is worth quoting in full. In accepting Brutus' mercy, and the marriage of his daughter to the young hero, he states:

“Nv þo at eigi lægi líf mítt við þa geriz þv Brvtvs sva agiætr maðr ok raðvgr ok sigrsæll at ek veit varla þann mann i heimenvm at litilræði se i við þig at tengiaz. Nv man ek þat til raðs taka at ganga glaðlega at þersvm kostvm er þat ok min ætlan at Brvtvs nafn man lengi vppi vera i verolldinni ok hans kyns manna. ma ok vera at

the chapter, this appears to be a case of the Norse translator's tendency to alter Geoffrey's insular geography, treating the regionality of the British isles in somewhat different terms; Geoffrey has Lear's daughters marry Dukes of Cornwall and Scotland (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 38-9). It is possible that the translator was thinking in a sort of theme of quadrants, with Lear maintaining rule over Cornwall and Wales, or perhaps Northumbria, while his daughters take Britain—possibly corresponding to what would be England proper—and Scotland. This, of course, must remain largely speculative, but at the same time it would be incorrect to attribute all changes of these sorts to pure mistake; correct or not, the Norse translator clearly had to have had some idea of British geography, which he applied to the best of his ability.

27 See late discussion and note on the addition of Denmark to the battle against Caesar; Venedotia and Demetia, in the north and south of Wales, respectively, are mentioned with some frequency in the *Historia*, but do not seem to appear at all in *Breta sögur*. See Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 62-3.

var viðrskipti verði i sogvr sett. Nv syniz mer þat virðingar venaz at efla þig með ollv því er ver megvn ok raða þersvm raðvm. ventir mik at margir gavfgir menn eigi sina ætt að telia til þín. men ek þo en manne firr vera i þeiri ættar tolv.”²⁸ (*Now, even if my life did not depend on it, you, Brutus, are such a famous and shrewd and victorious man, that I knew hardly any man in the world, for whom it would be a little trifle to be associated with you. Now I will adopt that counsel, to go gladly to that choice, which was also my plan, as the name of Brutus will live long in the world, and his kinsmen; it may also be that our dealings will be set in sagas. Now it seems to me most honorable, to help you with all that which I can, and give you this counsel. I expect that many noble men will be able to reckon their own family-line to you; I will yet be before all men in their genealogy.*)

Genealogy is addressed in the version of this in the *Historia*, but only in terms of Brutus' noble ancestors, rather than any prospective glory of his descendants. There is a more deterministic, prophetic aspect to the Norse speech,²⁹ and Pandrasus seems much more cheerful about the whole situation, a man looking to the glorious aspects of his defeat, rather than the somewhat more bitter, begrudging king of the *Historia*.³⁰ Rather than an episode that simply emphasizes the might of the great eponymous founder of Britain, as it is in the *Historia*, it is an episode that explicitly looks forward to the future line of kings that encompasses the rest of the work.

Probably the next most significant component of this introduction, in the discussion of genealogy, history, and landscape, is the episode of Pallas' tomb. After Turnus kills Pallas, the noble prince allied to Aeneas, it is said that Aeneas preserved and buries Pallas' body. It is then described how the body was dug up during the reign of king Sigurðr Jórsalafari, and found gigantic, unrotted, and accompanied by a strange lamp and an epitaph.³¹ This is a very famous episode, both in English and Norse literature, though both

28 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 240.

29 See Chapter Three for further discussion of this, and the place of prophecy in historiography.

30 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 16-19.

31 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 236-7.

its ultimate and immediate sources are uncertain.³² The version given in Hauksbók is long and well detailed, considering the abbreviated quality of *Breta sögur*, and thus likely had some importance to Haukr himself.

Sigurðr Jórsalafari is the first mention of an historical Norwegian king; the second is Hákon Aðalsteinsfóstri and his father Haraldr. These kings thus frame the work near its beginning and at its very end, and are the most explicit means by which the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* is connected to the contemporary Norse world. This contemporary connection is genealogical, in that it involves kings; it is geographic in that it involves kings travelling outside Norway and Scandinavia. *Breta sögur* is about a foreign landscape, centered around Britain but involved with much of Europe, in its own hyperbolic terms it is involved with the entire world; these touchstone kings were themselves known for their connections with that foreign world. Even their nicknames, noting a fosterage in England and a journey to Jerusalem, point to their immediate textual purpose in *Breta sögur*.

While Hákon's presence is a name in a genealogy and thus connects most immediately to that aspect of *Breta sögur*, Pallas' tomb is more intimately connected with the landscape. His name is not actually a part of any of the major lines of kings in the narrative, but his tomb is found outside Rome, in a stone buried in the ground, perhaps thematically recalling the unburying of the two dragons right before the beginning of *Merlínussþá*.³³ It is said of the body itself: “hans haleikr sigraði Rvma borgar mvra” (*His height surpassed the walls of Rome*); the body is compared hyperbolically to features of the landscape. Though both the preserved corpse and the walls are creations of men, they are the creations of ancient, giant-like men, and thus by their very aspect are reminders of the glory and strangeness of the ancient past. This might reflect the creation of stonehenge by

32 David and Ian McDougall give an extensive list, and suggests that the ultimate source is probably William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum*, which, interestingly, is the version that *Breta sögur* most closely follows (Theodoricus Monachus. *Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagiensium: An Account of the Ancient History of the Norwegian Kings*. Trans. and ed. David and Ian McDougall, Intro. Peter Foote, 84-5, note 185)

33 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 271. This is pure speculation, as the conditions of the two scenes are very different and there is no assurance that the audience of *Breta sögur* would have related the two. But it doesn't seem entirely absurd to speculate that such strong and strange visual imagery of unburying hidden things from stone buried in the landscape, connected to two kings that are very important for very different reasons, might have struck the original audience of *Breta sögur* as somehow reflective of each other.

Merlin, and the appropriation of great, giant-made stones from the Irish to the English landscape.³⁴ Within a genealogical work of such scope, both temporal and geographic, and at such distance from the conditions of translator and audience, repeated themes are likely felt more strongly, because of these characteristics. They are reminders and relations to that which is more familiar, and thus give greater emphasis to the scenes that they accompany. The relation between kingship, landscape, and the distant past is complicated and important, and within such a generally terse work any clear reminder of it invites noting to the scholar, and would undoubtedly have had some meaning to the original audience of the work.

Geography: Scandinavia, the Atlantic Isles, and Caithness

Beyond a general greater focus on genealogy, and not genealogies that would have been significant to Geoffrey, *Breta sögur* adapts its source text to include geography more significant to a Norse audience. With a minimum of detail, it thus fundamentally changes the some of the most basic functions of Geoffrey's *Historia*. The settlement of Caithness occurs after the British king Arviragus defeats an invasion of Picts, and settles the survivors on Caithness. It is one of the rare instances of a clear moral judgement made by the narrator of the prose body of *Breta sögur*, but one without any religious or hagiographic component.

“[M]ikla vvirðing logðv Bretar a þersa þioð ok villdv eigi gifta þangat dætr sinar. enn þo varð þar bratt mikill fiolþi storættaðra manna ok er mikil saga fra þeim þo at eigi se hon her skrifvt.”³⁵ (*The Britons laid great injustice on this people, and would not give them their daughters in marriage. Yet soon came there a great multitude of high-born men, and there is a great saga about them, though it is not written here.*)

34 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 284-5.

35 *Ibid*, 264.

This is a complete interpolation of the Latin that runs counter to Geoffrey's judgement of the situation. In the *Historia*, the Britons righteously refuse to give their daughters to these barbarians, so the Picts get their women from Ireland. Geoffrey states that he does not intend to write their history, or the history of the Scots descended from them.³⁶

Here the purposes of landscape, genealogy, settlement, and history are completely turned around from the Latin original to the Norse text. A land on the farthest north of the island, barren and desolate and full of people Geoffrey despises, is in the Norse text a nearer and potentially more familiar area to the audience, part of Norway's Atlantic empire. The Britons refuse to give up their wives, thus denying any genealogical connection to that race, and the Norse text counters this by stating that *despite this denial*, there is a great line of heroes from the region. The enabling, legitimizing, masculine qualities of settlement, of taking an empty land, or taking a land by force, exemplified by Aeneas and Brutus, is in the Latin text counteracted by the Picts having been given the land, in essence forced to settle, by no action of their own; their settlement has no legitimacy. Yet in the Norse this is again counteracted by the statement that the denial of daughters was an injustice, implying that the settled soldiers had the rights and legitimacy of any newly settled people. Finally, Geoffrey's statement that he could not be bothered to write the history of Picts or Scots is countered by the Norse translator's statement that this history is *already written*, though not included, and that it is a great story.³⁷

36 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 86-7. "Perempto uero Rodric, dedit deuicto populo qui cum eo uenerat partem Albaniae ad inhabitandum quae Katanesia nuncupatur; erat autem deserta, nullo habitore multis diebus inculta. Cumque uxores non habentes filias et cognatas Britonum ab illis petiuissent, dedignati sunt Britones huiusmodi populo natas suas maritare. At illi, ut passi fuerunt repulsam, transfretauerunt in Hiberniam duxeruntque ex patria illa mulieres, ex quibus creata sobole multitudinem suam auxerunt. Sed haec hactenus, cum non proposuerim tractare historiam eorum siue Scotorum qui ex illis et Hibernensibus originem duxerunt." (*With Rodric dead, Marius allowed the defeated people who had accompanied him to live in the part of Scotland called Caithness; it was deserted, having been uninhabited and uncultivated for many years. Since the Picts had no wives, they asked the Britons for their daughters and relatives, but they refused to marry their daughters to such people. On suffering this rebuff, the Picts sailed to Ireland and in that country took wives, whose offspring increased their numbers. But enough of the Picts, since it is not my intention to write either their history of that of the Scots, who are descended from them and the Irish.*)

37 This passage appears in similar form in the longer, later version of the saga, maintaining a few extra details, mostly from Geoffrey, but still suggesting that the original translation, or at least the common source of the two version, contained this passage. The longer version reads: "Bretar logdu [u]uirðing a þa þið ok uilldu eigi gífta þangad ðætr sínar ne leita þangad raðs sonum sínum ok uurdu þeir að te ingíaz

If Caithness might be thought of as partway between the territory familiar to Geoffrey and his audience, and territory familiar to the translator and redactors of *Breta sögur*, then there are several very minor instances of Scandinavia itself, as well as the islands of the North Atlantic, being given somewhat more focus in *Breta sögur* than in the *Historia*. Coinciding with this is a decrease in details, particularly about the people and places of Wales and France. Overall, these bring Scandinavia and the territories more familiar to the worldview of *Breta sögur* closer to the center of the text. While maintaining Britain as the center, Denmark, Norway, and the Atlantic islands become a somewhat more important and less antagonistic periphery.

Specifically, Arthur is said to conquer the Orkneys, Shetland, the Hebrides, Denmark, Norway, the Faroes, and Gotland.³⁸ The latter case is a simple addition and collation of names; Geoffrey does not mention Shetland, the Hebrides, or the Faroes in his *Historia*, and the remainder of the conquests are broken up into several short narratives.³⁹ In *Breta sögur*, the entirety of this northwestern Atlantic region is identified together; Norway and Denmark are drawn closer to the center by being associated with the islands immediately adjacent to Britain—the Hebrides, Shetland, the Faroes, etc.—as would have seemed natural from a Norse perspective.

The massive list of the guests of the Whitsun feast, the great geographical and aristocratic summary of Arthur's empire in Geoffrey's *Historia*, is missing in *Breta sögur*. However, when the numbers and countries of Arthur's legions are reckoned up in preparation for war against the Romans, the original lists are likewise missing; instead the names are given from the Whitsun list. The kings of Cornwall, Ireland, the Hebrides—

uid Ira. Uard þar skiot mikill fiolldi storættadra manna ok ero margar storar sogur fra þeim þott eigi fylgi þessi frasogn (41r-41v) (*The Britons laid injustice on these people and would not give their daughters there, nor seek counsel there from their sons, and they became bound together with the Irish. There quickly arose a great multitude of noble men and there are many great sagas about them, though none accompany this account*) Though it certainly cannot be determined with any certainty whether the original translator knew *Orkneyinga saga* in any of its forms, it seems likely that the passage here is referring to some part or version of that saga. See Chapter Four for a discussion of *Orkneyinga saga* in relation to *Breta sögur*.

38 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 289.

39 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 204-5.

originally the Orkneys, but they were changed in the Norse text,⁴⁰ while using the same king's name—Norway, Denmark, Scotland, and Iceland are named. Not only are all the many European, particularly Welsh and French, names gone from the great list of the Whitsun feast, but also the relatively shorter list of the European armies are gone,⁴¹ replaced by this list distinctly centered on northwestern Europe, on the British Isles, Scandinavia, and the Atlantic isles.

Two major geographical details are notable in the warfare that fills *Breta sögur*: the general removal of Scandinavia from the lists of regular antagonists against the Britons,⁴² and the addition of Denmark to the battle against Julius Caesar. Both imply a greater political and cultural connection between Britain and Scandinavia,⁴³ particularly since both components are important for the overall plot: the great battle against the first emperor of Rome, and the many invasions and raids that help signal the decline of Britain.

40 The Hebrides are not mentioned at all in the *Historia*, yet twice in *Breta sögur*, and here they are given a king. The idea of kings in the Hebrides suggests one more potential connection to *Orkneyinga saga* (see Chapter Four), and thus could be evidence that that, or some form of it, is the saga the translator was speaking of in the Caithness-settlement episode.

41 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 290, 291; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 210-11, 220-21.

42 There is a common trope in the latter part of the *Historia* of the some combination of Scots, Picts, Danes, and Norwegians attacking Britain, before the growth of the great empire of Arthur; additionally, Arthur speaks to his assembled army, which includes Danes and Norwegians, of the Danish, Norwegian, and French foes they had defeated before fighting the Romans (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 110-11, 114-15, 120-21, 162-3, 236-7). There is a sense, thus, that though Scandinavia is some important part of the sphere of British influence and empire, without Arthur's rule it's people function almost entirely as raiders. In *Breta sögur* generally the raiders are generically unnamed, Pictish, or Picts and Scots, but the Norwegians and the Danes are removed, or the whole reference to foreign raiders has simply been omitted; Arthur's speech is entirely removed (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 267, 283-4. 292-3).

43 *Breta sögur* gives the allies of Cassibellaunus as “Cridvosvs Danakonvnr Gvendagvs Ira konvnr ok Brittevs Skota konvnr” (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 260). Geoffrey's list of allies is longer, but the tributary kings are given as “Cridious Albaniae et Gueithaet Venedociae atque Britahel Demetiae” (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 70-71). Alban is, of course, Scotland, and Venedotia and Demetia are both regions in Wales (Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 62-3); here, then, not only does the translator add the Danes to the list, but he further changes the territories of the named kings to better fit with what his audience would have been familiar with.

Geography and Haukr: Alreksstaðir and Hǫrðaland

Hǫrðaland is mentioned twice in *Breta sögur*: once it appears in chapter fifteen, during the story of Brennius and Belinus;⁴⁴ the other, more significant appearance is during of Arthur's conquest of Norway. This account is seriously rearranged, and bears quoting.

“Systvr synir Artvrs konvngs varv þa með hanvm Hoel ok Modred Valveín ok Lancelot ok Yvein. hans faðir var Loth Havrða landz konvngr af Alrexstoðvm i Noregi. . . I þenna tima andadiz Sighialmr Norex konvngr. hann var broðir Lothz konvngs er þa atti Onnv systvr Artvrs konvngs. Sighilmr hafði fostrað Valvein broðor svn sin ok systvr svn Artvrs konvngs. hann gaf hanvm allt ríki efter sig þviat hann var svnlavs en Norðmenn villdv eigi hafa brezkan konvng yfir ser ok tokv þeir til konvngs þann mann er Ríkvlfir het. en er þetta fra Artvr konvngr þa ferr hann til Norex með miklvm her. varð þar harðr bardagi ok fell þar Ríkvlfir. vann nv Artvr konvngr allan Noreg ok Danmork vndir Valvein.⁴⁵ (*His sister's sons were with him, Hoelus and Modred, Gawain and Lancelot and Yvain; his father was Loth, the king of Hǫrðaland at Alreksstaðir in Norway. . . At that time Sichelm, the king of Norway, died. He was the brother of king Loth, who at that time was married to Anna, the sister of king Arthur. Sichelm had fostered Gawain, his brother's son and king Arthur's sister's son. He gave to him all the kingdom after him, because he had no son, but the Norsemen would not have a British king over them, and they took as king that man who was called Riculfus. But when Arthur heard of this, then he went to Norway with a great army; there was a hard battle and Riculfus fell there. Arthur then conquered all of Norway and Denmark for Gawain.*)

44 “[T]olpu menn þat þa fyrri Brenni at hann skyldi fara til Norex ok biðia dottvr Elfogii konungs ok fa þaþan fvllan styrk moti broðor sinvm. Siþan for hann til Hǫrðalandz. . .” (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 254) (*The men then told Brennius that he should go to Norway and ask for the daughter of king Elsingius, and bring from there a full force against his brother. Then he went to Hǫrðaland. . .*)

45 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 289.

Both references are notable in that they mention Hǫrðaland in reference to Norwegian kings; it is not simply a replacement name for Norway, as van Hamel seems to suggest,⁴⁶ but rather the residence of great and ancient Norwegian kings. The minor changes above emphasize this presence of Norwegian kingship in *Breta sögur*. In Geoffrey, Loth is said to be of Lothian and lord of Carlisle, both Scottish place-names,⁴⁷ and he is made king of Norway by Arthur.⁴⁸ A lord of the British Isles is placed in Norway. In *Breta sögur*, Loth is king of Hǫrðaland, specifically at Alreksstaðir; he is brother to Sichelm the king of Norway, and Arthur gives Loth's son Gawain the rule of Norway *and* Denmark. Gawain is made foster-son of Sichelmus in *Breta sögur*,⁴⁹ and in both instances Sichelmus officially left the kingdom to Loth—who is Sichelmus' nephew, rather than brother, in the *Historia*—thus legitimizing the conquest. Further, the detail that the Norwegians would not accept a British man as their king is added.

This is largely only the deepening of relations that were already present in the

46 Van Hamel, “The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth,” 207. “. . . there are a few more indications of the translator's special interest in Norway and the city of Bergen. Thus, although he usually renders *Norvegia* by *Noregr*, he twice prefers the name *Hǫrðaland*. . . thus putting the name of a province in stead of that of the kingdom.” This passage reveals two particular flaws in Van Hamel's thinking. One, in discussing geography of *Breta sögur* he tends to confine himself to the somewhat futile discussion of where the original translation was from. Two, he thinks in terms of the 'kingdom' of Norway, and Hǫrðaland as a provincial name replacing the proper name of the kingdom, while a Norwegian or Icelander translating this saga, and certainly Haukr himself, would very likely have been familiar enough with the story of Haraldr hárfagri conquering all of Norway; thus, the translator, while using ideas of a whole Norwegian kingdom from Geoffrey, would likely have thought of this ancient Norway as a much more disunified entity.

47 Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 12, 20-1.

48 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 204-5.

49 Probably a simplification or confusion of names from Geoffrey, where Gawain was raised and knighted by pope Sulpicius (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 204-5). Even if the change in figures, and simplification of names might potentially be a mistake, the relationship has changed, and that remains significant. The Latin 'traditus', in the sense of 'deliver', or 'hand over', certainly could be reflected in 'fostrað', but the cultural significance of fostering, particularly between kings, is added, and the 'arma receipt' that seemed much of the significance of the relation between Gawain and Sulpicius is missing. While any such close reading of linguistic features is very speculative, given the unknown features of the redaction of Geoffrey first used to translate *Breta sögur*, the same verbs are also used in Wright's edition of the First Variant version of the *Historia*. (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britannie II: First Variant Version*, ed. Wright, 146). Gawain as a foster-son of Sichelmus suggests the importance of fostering in the life of a young king, and of that relationship between the royal houses of Norway and Britain. While any conclusions regarding this must remain speculative, this might be thought in some way to reflect a sort of ancient reversal of the fosterage of Hákon with Aðalsteinn.

Historia, but the place names are entirely added. Alreksstaðir has particular significance in the context of Old Norse historiography. Magnus Olsen emphasizes the age of the name, as a farmstead, and its connection to the *konungasögur*, and particularly to Harald hárfagri.⁵⁰ Alreksstaðir is mentioned three times in *Heimskringla*, in *Haralds saga ins hárfagri*, in *Hákonar saga góða*, and in *Haralds saga gráfeldar*. In the first, it is among the great farms Harald is said to frequent in his old age. Hákon góði is also born en route somewhere between Sæheimr and and Morstr, thus, likely very near to Alreksstaðir.⁵¹ In *Hákonar saga góða*, then, it is said that he dies at the same place he was born, but that he dies while trying to reach Alreksstaðir.⁵² In *Haralds saga gráfeldar* it is, or appears to be, the location of the murder of Sigurðr slefa;⁵³ not as apparently important to genealogy of Norwegian kings, but it is still a significant location. The name appears in much of the *konungasögur* corpus, as well as in *Egils saga*; the most prevalent association is with Harald hárfagri, and both the birth and death of Hákon góði. If anything can be said to contradict Olsen's comments, it is only that the association appears to be equally with Hákon as with Hárald.⁵⁴

50 Olsen, *Farms and Fanes of Ancient Norway*, 13, 70, 103, 150. Finnur Jónsson and van Hamel both note the place, but the former only notes that it is modern Årstad, near Bergen (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 548), while the latter only notes that it is noted in the *Historia*, while mistakenly suggesting, following the plot of the *Historia* rather than the plot of *Breta sögur*, that Loth was made king of Norway by Arthur, and received Alreksstaðir from him (Van Hamel, “The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth,” 207).

51 Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed., *Heimskringla*, Vol. I, 142-3.

52 *Ibid*, 192.

53 *Ibid*, 219.

54 Among the large collections of *konungasögur*, the appearances of Alreksstaðir in *Heimskringla* have already been mentioned above; it does not appear in *Morkinskinna*, lacking as it does sagas of Oláf helgi or any of the earlier kings; *Fagrskinna* mentions, like *Heimskringla*, that Hákon góði heads towards his farm, Alreksstaðir, when he is mortally wounded, and dies at his birthplace on the way, called Hákonarhella (Bjarni Einarsson, ed., *Ágrip af Nóregskonunga sögum*, *Fagrskinna–Nóregs konunga tal*, 93). Among the Norwegian synoptic histories, only the *Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagiensium* of Theodoricus Monachus does not contain any mention of the place; the *Historia Norwegie* repeats the story of Hákon's death, and gives Alreksstaðir as the place of death of Gunnrød, of the Eiríkssons, apparently the same story as Sigurðr slefa's death in *Heimskringla*, with the victim changed (Inger Ekrem, and Lars Boje Mortensen, eds., Peter Fisher, trans., *Historia Norwegie*, 84-5); *Ágrip* contains both stories, following *Heimskringla* in giving Sigurðr slefa as the victim (Bjarni Einarsson, ed., *Ágrip af Nóregskonunga sögum*, *Fagrskinna–Nóregs konunga tal*, 11, 13). Naturally, these stories likely may derive from the same tradition, or even the same source(s). But Alreksstaðir is also mentioned in *Sverris saga* and *Hákons saga Hákonarsonar*; in the former king Sverrir takes a stand there against an army of peasants, it is mentioned in passing as king Magnus flees from a defeat, and again in passing after skirmish nearby (Þorleifur Hauksson, ed., *Sverris saga*, 77, 121, 225); in *Hákons saga Hákonarsonar* it is said of king Hákon that “Reid hann vpp til Alrexstada einn sunnudag sem vanndi hans var til” (*He rode up to Alrekstaðir a certain*

Additionally to the *konungasögur* and *Egils saga*, Alreksstaðir is mentioned twice in the *fornaldarsögur* corpus. It appears twice in *Helga þáttir Þórissonar*; as the hall of king Óláfr Tryggvason, where much of the action takes place, and on the second occasion the physical landscape around Alreksstaðir is described. This suggests authorial familiarity, or at least the attempt to show familiarity with and details of the landscape.⁵⁵ It is also mentioned at the beginning of *Hálfs saga ok Hálfsrekka*; here it is the seat of king Alrekr,⁵⁶ and thus we might take this as a sort of legendary origin story for the place itself, along with the kings of Hǫrðaland.

This interpolated location for the ancient kings of Norway—Alreksstaðir, in Hǫrðaland—fit unusually well with the idea that Haukr himself added them thoughtfully. Stephen Mitchell notes that Haukr, who was *løgmaðr* at the Gulating for a long time, was descended, according to the saga, from the kings of Hǫrðaland who fill *Hálfs saga ok Hálfsrekka*. He further notes how the other texts, including specific parts of *Landnámabók* and the Haukr's own mythical genealogy, illuminate Haukr's heroic ancestry, and that such textual details may well have been useful during Haukr's long Norwegian political career.⁵⁷ In *Breta sögur*, then, the significance of this legendary history of Haukr is extended geographically and chronologically outward, and Haukr himself becomes a descendant of Gawain, and thus related by blood to Arthur himself.

The place might have some significance, further, within *Breta sögur* itself. Specifically, no less than four sagas mention Alreksstaðir in the death-story of Hákon góði; the place seems to be intimately associated with him. That this one king was also

Sunday, as he was accustomed to) (Mundt, Marina, ed. *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*, 69). Both of these suggest no particular connection to traditional association with the earlier kings, unless they might be part of the reason Hákon Hákonarson was accustomed to go there. Finally, in *Egils saga*, Alreksstaðir appears among the great farms which Haraldr hárfagri possesses in Hǫrðaland, exactly as in *Heimskringla*. King Eiríkr sets his foster-son Fróði to watch over the place, called a farm of the king (“búi konungs”), where Eiríkr goes to feast soon after (Sigurður Nordal, ed., *Egils saga Skalla-Grimssonar*, 90, 164, 165). There seems to be a tradition of association of Alreksstaðir with Hárald hárfagri and his sons among the *konungasögur*, including the synoptics, and in *Egils saga*, while the place is clearly known on a more immediate and familiar level among the contemporary *konungasögur*, *Sverris saga* and *Hákons saga Hákonarsonar*.

55 Guðni Jónsson, ed. *Helga þáttir Þórissonar*, 349, 351.

56 Guðni Jónsson, ed. *Hálfs saga ok Hálfsrekka*, 95.

57 Mitchell, *Heroic Sagas and Ballads*, 123-4.

mentioned at the end of a completely interpolated genealogy seems unlikely to be entirely coincidental. The interpolation of Alreksstaðir likewise relates not only Hákon and Haukr, but the great founder of Norwegian genealogies, Harald hárfagri, to Loth, the brother-in-law of Arthur, and Gawain, Arthur's nephew and Arthur's own blood.⁵⁸ It thus, potentially, has both broad historical and more closely personal, or political, significance.

Conclusion: The Scandinavian Narrator

The self-awareness the narrator shows for his audience, and his particularly Norse audience, emphasizes the intention behind these changes made in *Breta sögur*; the presence of a narrator, particularly in the often terse prose, stands out and acts as evidence that clear thought went into the creation of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*. It is not just a haphazard attempt to make a foreign text readable, and fitted into an encyclopedic format, but rather the creation of a new narrative with its own functions.⁵⁹

Not long after the account of Arthur's conquest of Norway, it is noted how widely renowned the great Whitsun feast of Arthur is among Northmen; likewise, there are many tiny interjections, when it is noted that a saga is not known, or available, or in existence.⁶⁰

58 There is some other evidence that Haukr, or the original translator, deliberately changed Gawain's position in the narrative. The name given for Gawain in *Breta sögur* is 'Valvein', corresponding to the 'Valven' of *Valvens þáttur* and, oddly, to 'Walwanus' of the First Variant of the *Historia*, as well as some other insular histories, but it appears to differ from the 'Gualguainus' of the Vulgate of the *Historia* (there is, unfortunately, not the space here to attempt to determine what the direct source of this name variation). However, in the narrative portion where Gawain appears in the battle against the Romans, *Breta sögur* has him as 'Galven/Galvein gamli', which seems to correspond somewhat more closely to 'Gualguainus', but to call Gawain 'the old' does not seem to fit; he is Arthur's nephew, fighting on the same field as his uncle. The passage in *Breta sögur* names three men, "Galven gamla ok Berso sterka ok Gervin en frækna", which corresponds to Geoffrey's "Bosonem de Vado Boum et Gerinum Garnotensem, Gualguainum etiam nepotem suum" (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 228-9). The deletion of such specific place names is common, almost uniform, in *Breta sögur*, but Gawain's odd nickname, and the variation in spelling, suggest that Haukr or the translator might have thought of Gawain as two different characters; one, the younger, the nephew of Arthur, was already made king of Norway, and thus perhaps would not be participating in the battle, and his place is taken by an old warrior-general surrogate.

59 "Although the transmission of the texts was mostly anonymous, we can see from their many remarks about literary production that the authors and redactors were conscious of their own artistic creativity." (Würth, "The Common Transmission of *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*," 322)

60 This includes the settlement of Caithness, noted earlier, where the narrator states the saga is written, but

With these interjections there seems to be a sense of the desire for completeness, that the genealogy and history must be whole, despite its abbreviation, and when it is not whole the translator or redactor must make apologies. In the comment on the Whitsun feast, the fame of the events, whether real or imagined, gives them legitimacy, both suggesting their truthfulness and their significance as part of the whole narrative.⁶¹

The author's commentary on completeness, truth, and fame urge the audience to accept everything with more seriousness, from details of geography and genealogy to the whole idea of a great synoptic legendary history. The addition of details of Scandinavia, of the Atlantic isles and Caithness, the removal of other geographical details, the breaking down of Geoffrey's political interests and antagonisms, all adjust the text to function in its Norse milieu, and also urge the new audience to accept the ambitious whole. The addition of Alreksstaðir and Hǫrðaland suggest that Haukr, in his contribution to the text, attempted to replace Geoffrey's deconstructed interests with some of his own political and personal interests, which are apparent and reflected in the rest of Hauksbók.

not known. Earlier, a long list of kings is given before the great reign of Cassibellaunus, and the narrator states: “þa for síðan ríkt lítt at skilvæð þviat þa varv ýmsir konungar ok er engi saga frá þeim ger” (*The kingdom went on with little worth noting, because at that time there were various kings and there is no saga made about them*) (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 259). The distinction here seems important; as noted earlier, the translator is defending the men of Caithness, by saying there is a saga about them, but apologizing that it wasn't present there. Here the lack of a saga is used more as an explanation and a negative judgement, as there were no kings worth writing a saga about. Related to this latter is the abbreviated list of the sons of Ebraucus, where the narrator simply states: “en eigi eru nefndir fleiri” (*but more are not named*) (Finnur Jónsson, ed. *Hauksbók*, 247). More along the lines of the sentiment of the Caithness episode, after the death of St. Oswald, that “margar iartegnir ok stórar gerði gvð fyrri hans verðleika þó at þær se eigi her ritaðar” (*God made many and great miracles for his merit, though they are not written here*) (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 299); also, of at least an apologetic sentiment, it is said of king Maddan near the beginning of the saga: “Maddan var hǫgvær ok vinsæll ok er af hannum engi saga ger. (*Maddan was gentle and popular, but there is no saga made about him*) (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 246).

- 61 To some extent, this might be seen in relation to the comment in AM 573 4to (45r) on the fame of Merlin's prophecies: “Þa hóf Merlin upp ok sagði langt fram á kongaæfi sem eftir er mynt íð stærsta af kvaði því er Merlins þá heitir er orti Gunnlaugr munkr Leifsson ok kunna margir menn þat kvaði. En er Merlin lauk þá sinne þá lofði konungr miðg fróðleik hans ok uisdom. Sv þá hefir opt síðan af hinum vitruztum monnum á Eínglandi rannsokud uerid ok finz æ nockud þess [I] er myklum raukum þickir [s]æta.” (*Then Merlin began, and recited long on the lives of kings, which the greatest of poems is shaped after, that which is called the Prophecies of Merlin, which the monk Gunnlaugr Leifsson made, and many men know that poem. And when Merlin ended his prophecy, then the king praised his knowledge and wisdom. That prophecy has often afterwards been searched by the wisest men in England and always something is found in it which seems to cause great marvel.*) Though with the feast, significantly, is is notably specifically that it is famous among Northmen.

On the whole then, the idea of a new, Scandinavian narrator in the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* suggests itself, that is a combination of Haukr with all the previous redactors and translators. The commentaries noted above tie in generally with history, tale-telling, and place, with the idea of *Breta sögur* as a historiographic work of massive scope, both in time and place. In the next chapters, the religious and mythological concerns of that composite narrator will be discussed, which will be clearly shown to connect back to genealogy and the writing of history.

Chapter Two: Pagans and Christians

Breta sögur, as a translation of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in a clearly learned milieu, is unlikely to contain any true remnants of Old Norse paganism. It does, however, contain a distinctly Norse *interpretatio* of the classical gods, and alongside it a Christian interpretation of history that distinguishes it clearly from the *Historia Regum Britanniae*. Both of these elements of intellectualized religion seem to fit particularly well within the context of the historiographic, genealogical core of *Breta sögur*, discussed in the previous chapter, and of Hauksbók as a whole.

Interpretatio Germanica

Frederic Amory has noted, partly following Peter Foote, that there is an important distinction between religious syncretism in its truest sense, the actual mingling of religious beliefs and practices, and *interpretatio*, defined as:

[T]he often defective syncretistic preconceptions which both parties to the conversion, Christian missionaries and pagan recipients, bring to the religions confronting them, and will cling long afterwards.”⁶²

In discussing *Sólarljóð*, Amory primarily discusses the *interpretatio christiana* that “freely adapts the myths of the Eddas and the kennings of the skalds to the visions of a Christian seer.”⁶³ In much of *Breta sögur* there is also an *interpretatio germanica*, wherein Classical gods are given Norse names, and the nature of the two gods are theoretically comingled. Following the definition above, the preconceptions which the Norse audience and translator of *Breta sögur* would have had about the pagan mythology of their ancestors was overlaid onto the classical myth inherent in the Latin sources of the translation.

⁶² Amory, “Norse-Christian Syncretism and *Interpretatio Christiana* in *Sólarljóð*,” 2.

⁶³ *Ibid*, 3.

This is significant, in the context of our discussion, in how it might show ideas of Norse paganism layed upon, or used to interpret, both the uncertain sources of the Aeneas-introduction and the *Historia* of Geoffrey itself. Conversely, something can be seen of how Classical paganism was interpreted. Further, by some comparison to the longer version of *Breta sögur*, something can be said of the genre, perspective, and historiographic nature of the Hauksbók text.

The most frequent appearance of these reinterpreted classical gods is in the Aeneid introduction to *Breta sögur*. In this section of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*, Freyja is named once as Venus, Aeneas' patron; Sif is named twice in a single passage as Juno, worshipped by the Latin Queen, and only vaguely implied to be the opponent of Aeneas and Venus.⁶⁴ In the corresponding portion of the longer version, Freyja and Sif are both mentioned in the exact same roles, but after the appearance of Turnus and the beginning of conflicts between the Trojans and the Latins, the gods appear more, guiding the battle in much the same way as they do in the Aeneid, but completely unlike the totally secularized version of the war in Hauksbók. Thus the longer version uses pagan deities not essential to the plot, to add flavor and narrative depth.

There, Freyja pleads to the “himna könginn” (*king of heaven*) in one long passage, while Sif pleads to Thor in another, and both goddesses are mentioned with Thor in a third. Thus the conflict between Venus and Juno is made more explicit, a conflict which, by its pagan nature, is outside of history, and of no use in the Hauksbók version. Further, by using both the Christian-sounding 'king of heaven' and 'Thor' to refer to Jupiter, in separate and distinctive passages, there is a suggested interplay of *interpretatio*; both Christian and Norse images are used to translate the Vergilian Jupiter into the Norse milieu. The *interpretatio christiana*, applied to Thor, makes him a legitimately religious figure, in the context of the narrative, an expansion of his role that would be contrary to the historiographic and genealogical nature of the Hauksbók version.

⁶⁴ Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 232-3. It is of course possible, or even likely, that much of the audience of the various redactions *Breta sögur* knew something of the plot of the Aeneid, enough to infer this. But, likewise, it is in the character of this abbreviated text that certain details important to a full understanding of the plot are left out.

Both Frigg and Apollo appear once in the longer version; Frigg seems to represent Minerva, asking Apollo to hide the sun.⁶⁵ This seems to be the only instance in that longer version, and one of a few in both versions of *Breta sögur*, where the Latin name of the deity remains unchanged; in the other instances, it is also clear which Norse Gods the Latin names represent. Here it can be suggested that no Norse equivalent to Apollo was apparent to the translator, or any of the redactors in the transmission of the saga. He thus represents an entirely alien mythological idea, in whatever complexity the audience of the longer version of *Breta sögur* might have thought about him, to the cultural milieu, and the *interpretatio germania* cannot be applied to him. He is, for his single rather dramatic act, left to individual interpretation, and thus provides a fantastic, mysterious element far more appropriate in that version of the saga than it would be in Hauksbók.

Coming to the main part of the text, in the Hauksbók version of the Brutus-story, the triad of Diana, Jupiter, and Mercury appear as statues before altars, Diana being Brutus' own patron deity; they are first named as Gefjon, Saturn, and Jupiter, and immediately after as Odin, Thor, Gefjon.⁶⁶ Interestingly, in Geoffrey, Mercury is named here, rather than Saturn.⁶⁷ In the longer version, the Norse names are used in both instances. Hauksbók has a second instance of both Classical and Norse names being used, though it is in part translated directly from Geoffrey's *Historia*.⁶⁸ When the Saxons Hengest and Horsa meet with Vortigern, in both *Breta sögur* and the original they say that they were driven there by Mercury, then proceed to explain something of their religion, including several of their gods, and that the days of the week were named after them. In the *Historia* these are given as Mercury, who is called Woden, Saturn and Jupiter, and Frea, the most powerful of goddesses. In *Breta sögur* they are given as Mercury, who some call Odin, and also Thor, Tyr, Frigg, and Freyja.⁶⁹

65 From AM 573 4to 27r “[P]a er sva sagt ad Frigg bad Apollinem ad styra solinni. Þann dagh tok þa solin ecki ad ganga. (Then it is said that Frigg asked Apollo to steer the sun; that day, the sun did not begin to move.)

66 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 241.

67 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 18-19.

68 The majority of this section, including the mention of Norse and Classical Gods, does not seem to appear in the longer version of the saga.

69 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 124-5; Finnur

These instances of Norse and Classical gods being named together emphasizes the *interpretatio germanica* in the Hauksbók text. By their names appearing alongside each other, it is made clear to the Norse audience, without any greater explanation than is given by Geoffrey, that Thor is the same as Jupiter, and Odin is equated both with Mercury and with Saturn, and that Saturn might also be equatable with Tyr. Odin and Mercury are associated outside the Norse context; as shown, even Geoffrey saw them as the same god. But the equation with Saturn suggests certain ideas familiar from the other parts of Norse literature and culture: that Odin is the father of Thor, but that there is a certain ambiguity as to which one is truly the chief god. As will be discussed in the next section, the equation of Odin and Saturn also work particularly well in the genealogical context of Hauksbók, as they are both gods that fit, when euhemerized, into genealogies elsewhere in the manuscript.

The association of Freyja with Venus seems simple enough, considering their mutual associations with fertility. Likewise Sif, as the wife of Thor, would naturally be associated with Juno. Frigg as Minerva is more ambiguous, but perhaps from the perspective of Norse literary culture of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries they were simply of equal, or similar, importance within the constructed literary pantheons, far removed from their religious contexts. All of these comparisons, like the familiar Odin/Mercury, may well have been familiar to the translator of *Breta sögur*, and do not directly affect the text, though show active thought about the nature of both Classical and Norse pagan deities in both versions of the saga.

The association of Gefjon with Diana is the most confusing, and as she is the most important deity in the *Historia*-proper she bears some discussing. Diana, as a goddess of virginity and the hunt, seems to be naturally associated with Skaði. Skaði is certainly more familiar to scholarship than Gefjon, but their familiarity to the audiences of translated histories is uncertain. Gefjon appears in exactly the same role in both manuscripts, in a fundamental point of the narrative. Thus, it is likely that she appeared in the original translation, and, considering her central position, some greater amount of thought was

Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 269.

likely granted her by both translator and audience than the other deities.

The best explanation is in *Lokasenna*; there, Gefjon is said to know the fates of the world as well as Odin.⁷⁰ There, it is suggested that she is well equipped to give prophecy, as she does for Brutus; thus her equation with Diana seems to make sense. Of course, this is only with the Diana of Geoffrey's *Historia*. Though Skaði might appear much more of a match with the virginal and hunting characteristics of the Classical Diana, prophecy is more characteristic of the guiding goddess of Brutus in the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and *Breta sögur*.

Geographically, it can be suggested that the *interpretatio germanica* of Classical deities allows for a projection of Old Norse culture both temporally and geographically into the Mediterranean world of Aeneas and Brutus, while simultaneously making the supernatural and religious world of this distant past more familiar to the audience of both versions of *Breta sögur*. Where this is emphasized in the Hauksbók version of the saga in the Hengest and Horsus episode, it fits with the historical concerns of that version. Likewise, in the longer version, the additional gods presented with their own scenes and dialogues, somewhat in the manner of the *Aeneid*, is in this fourteenth century context essentially the addition of fantastic elements, befitting a *fornaldarsaga* or a *riddarasaga*. This supports the conclusions of Stephanie Würth noted earlier, who takes the longer version of *Breta sögur* as a failed attempt to make a historiographic work into a *riddarasaga*.⁷¹

It is unlikely that the mythology of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* has any kind of deliberate structure; individual gods are dealt with on a case by case basis. But there are clearly types, and the gods given both Norse and Classical names are clearly meant to be the most important. Odin, Thor, and Gefjon all also have Classical names, and thus to some

70 "Orr ertu, Loki, oc ørviti,
er þú fær þér Gefjón at gremi,
þvíat aldar ørlög hygg ec at hon qll um viti
iafngorla sem ec."

(Neckel, Gustav and Hans Kuhn, eds. *Edda: die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern*, *Lokasenna*, strophe 21) (*You are quick, Loki, and not of your mind/when you get Gefjon angry at you/because I know the fate of men, that she knows all about/just as well as me.*)

71 Würth, "The Common Transmission of *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*," 322.

extent take on Classical identity. Gefjon is essential to the plot as, she gives the prophecy of Britain's colonization and Brutus' success that drives the beginning of the narrative; in terms of history and genealogy, she is thus essential. Odin and Thor are chief gods, but when euhemerized they are also involved in history and genealogy, as will be shown in the next section.

Interpretatio and Genealogy

The Norse and Classical gods and the *interpretatio germanica* in *Breta sögur* is intimately involved with the genealogical concerns the whole of *Hauksbók*. The mythology of *Breta sögur* can be considered intertextually with the mythological introduction of *Trójumanna saga* and the long genealogy of Haukr, preserved in the extracts of *Hauksbók* made by Björn of Skarðsá in the seventeenth century, and thought to have been written by Haukr himself.⁷² Taken together, they suggest that although the pagan gods are used very inconsistently, *interpretatio germanica* and euhemerization are linked and the genealogical and narrative function of the gods are related.

Haukr's genealogy is broken into several distinct sections; the first and the longest, the one is of concern here, goes from the origin of mankind with Adam to Haukr himself.⁷³ After the listing of old testament names, he states that Japhet, the son of Noah, was assigned “þennann þridiund veralldar er nu biggim vier” (*that third of the world which we now inhabit*). From there he lists Greek or Greek-sounding names, and then Saturn, in Crete, and his son Jupiter. These are the only gods that appear for some generations. Then, after the Trojan names, Thor is said to be the grandson of Priam. Finally, the names begin to appear Norse; Skjöld is named, and five generations after him Odin appears. Both Odin and Thor are said to have different names, and are only called by their better known names.⁷⁴

⁷² Rowe, “Literary, Codicological, and Political Perspectives on *Hauksbók*,” 63.

⁷³ Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 504-5. Though it is interesting that he takes branches of the same genealogy to trace both the mother and father of his wife.

⁷⁴ “Tror er vier kollum Þór” (*Tror, who we call Thor*); “þann son er Voden hiet, þann kollum vier Odinn” (*That son was called Woden, that one we call Odin*) (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 504.)

Anthony Faulkes discusses in “Descent from the Gods” that this Hauksbók genealogy is part of a development of genealogies over the course of the thirteenth century, deriving from the *Snorra Edda*, which from Odin to Adam contain virtually the same names and order.⁷⁵ Hauksbók is one of the earliest surviving examples of this genealogy that stretches back past Saturn to Adam; the other being a genealogy of the Sturlungar contained in DG 11 4to, with the Uppsala version of the *Snorra Edda*.⁷⁶

The mythological introduction to *Trójumanna saga* only appears in the Hauksbók version of the saga and fits particularly well with this genealogy. All the gods mentioned are explicitly euhemerized. The saga begins with Saturn as a great king ruling in Crete, who is said to be known as Freyr.⁷⁷ This itself is notable, as Freyr does not seem to appear under any name in *Breta sögur*, in the rest of *Trójumanna saga*, or in Haukr's genealogy. His association to Saturn in the introduction seems to be entirely derived from his position at the head of genealogies, here generalized to put him at the head of essentially all European genealogies.

Saturn is followed by Jupiter, who is equated without any particular explanation to Thor; this contradicts the genealogy, where Thor appears many generations later, but fits with the Old Norse translation of a homily of Ælfric. This appears in Hauksbók, where the two thunder gods are also equated to each other, and Odin is equated with Mercury.⁷⁸ However, the equation of Thor and Jupiter does fit the genealogy in some sense; it puts both gods neatly into the line of kings, by simply collating them.

Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto are said to be the sons of Saturn in *Trójumanna saga*. Neptune, Pluto, Apollo, and Mercury⁷⁹ are not given Norse names; Sif and Juno are used

⁷⁵ Faulkes, “Descent from the Gods”, 104.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 102.

⁷⁷ Finnur Jónsson, ed. *Hauksbók*, 193.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 158-59. Here Latin, Norse, and to some extent Greek names are dealt with. Here Jupiter is equated with Thor, Mercury with Odin, Venus with Frigg (contrary to *Breta sögur*). See also Würth, “The Common Transmission of *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*,” 305, for a brief though thorough examination of euhemerized gods in these Hauksbók texts. The translation Ælfric's text on the whole, however, is more difficult to deal with, although it fits with the genealogies, in that the gods are euhemerized, its tone is so scornful and mocking that it is difficult to consolidate his euhemerized gods with the presumably noble ancestors of Haukr's genealogy; he explicitly provides a narrative of Saturn that largely contradicts the story given in *Trójumanna saga*.

⁷⁹ Mercury is, of course, equated with Odin elsewhere, in part of *Breta sögur* and in the Ælfric translation. It

interchangeably for the wife of Thor/Jupiter. For the contest of Paris, the three Goddesses are given as Sif, Gefjon, and Freyja.⁸⁰

This *interpretatio germanica* largely matches with *Breta sögur*.⁸¹ There is one difference in *Breta sögur*, however, in that Odin is related to both Mercury and Saturn. Here there is perhaps some confusion of *interpretatio*, and the desire of Norse redactors and interpreters to relate both their own and Classical mythology to the type of genealogy given as Haukr's own in Hauksbók. The relation to Mercury, in this context, is simply a direct translation from the *Historia*; the relation to Saturn, however, is perhaps a more native perspective, both translating Odin's position as chief God—present in Hauksbók somewhat through *Völuspá*—and his position at the head of genealogies. Thor and his relation to Jupiter has the same connotations.

It seems likely that Haukr intended *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur* to function as narrative accompaniments to his own genealogy, and elucidate different aspects of both human and divine genealogy. He did not perfect the construction; both sagas were already translated, and as we can see with the longer version of the saga, the position of the gods in them was largely settled. But the one addition that is likely Haukr's, the mythological introduction of *Trójumanna saga*, has the inclusion of Saturn and Jupiter in positions that are chronologically correct for the genealogy.

Stephanie Würth points out the similarity between the story of the euhemerized Saturn appearing in the translation of Ælfric's Old English homily, which appears in the *Heimslýsing ok helgifræði* section not long before *Trójumanna saga*, and the introduction of *Trójumanna saga*.⁸² If this homily was Haukr's source for the introduction of *Trójumanna*

seems likely that Apollo and Pluto simply have no clear Norse equivalents; it was noted earlier that Apollo is the only god given in the longer version of *Breta sögur* which is not given a Norse name. Neptune, however, is more problematic; an *interpretatio* as Njörðr seems natural and expected. It is possible, though this is pure speculative, that Haukr, having certainly read earlier versions of the *Snorra Edda* genealogy, off which his is based, knew that Njörðr was often given a position in the genealogy. Equating him with Neptune would, however, put him outside the genealogical line. This is purely speculative, but Haukr was certainly very familiar with the nuance and historiographic purposes of genealogical euhemerism, as has been shown.

80 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 200.

81 The two texts are also related by their *interpretatio* of Juno as Sif, Venus as Freyja, and Diana as Gefion.

82 Würth, “The Common Transmission of *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*,” 305.

saga, it suggests explicitly that he altered the text to better fit the genealogy; though both versions of Saturn are euhemerized, he is demonized in the homily. There is no comparable demonization in *Trójumanna saga*, which fits with the idea of Saturn having to be a noble figure, part of a great genealogy.

In *Breta sögur*, the gods are not explicitly euhemerized; they essentially fulfil their basic narrative functions, derived from the source texts. But through the shared *interpretatio germania* of these texts, and the full scope of Haukr's genealogy, the gods of *Breta sögur* can be thought of as genealogically important, by the relation between Thor and Jupiter, Saturn and Odin, and the relation of both gods with Gefjon, who actually has a genealogically function in the text itself. This seems very likely to have been Haukr's construction, and it emphasizes the inherent link between literary use of pagan gods and genealogy.

Other Pagan Elements

Other components of Old Norse mythology appear in *Breta sögur*; they are more generally the results of cultural translation than an explicitly learned *interpretatio*. Among the most notable in the prose of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*, two terms appear denoting a sort of guardian spirit. Once *hamingja* is used as part of a sort of curse or warning, when the mother of Brennius and Belinius is chastising her sons for fighting each other:

“... en ef þv villt hvarki giæta broðvrligrar astar ok móðorlegrar gleði þa man hamingian fra þer hverfa ok fylgia þeim er hana vill elska.”⁸³ (*but if you will neither heed brotherly love nor motherly happiness, then your hamingja will depart from you, and follow he who will love her*)

The term *fylgja* then appears in the context in a dream of Arthur. He dreams a prophetic vision of a battle between a flying bear and a dragon, representing Arthur and a giant, and

83 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 255.

the animal-symbols of the dream in the *Historia* are termed *fylgjur* in *Breta sögur*.⁸⁴

In both instances, it seems likely that some of the personalized, potentially animalistic concept of the *fylgja* and the *hamingja* must be implied by the use of the words; they are not an exact translation of the Latin. According to Turville-Petre, both *hamingja* and *fylgja* can have the sense of a personified guardian spirit, or the more abstract, presumably later sense of inherent 'luck' or 'fortune'.⁸⁵ *Fylgja* is clearly meant as in the concrete sense; we can presume that the scene of Arthur's dream so closely resembled the appearances of *fylgur* in Old Norse literature, where animals appear in dreams at times of duress and before death,⁸⁶ that the translator immediately made the association. This use of *hamingja* is rarer, but the fact that it is in this passage suggested to be a physical something that can transfer from one person to another, that somehow needs to be loved or appreciated, suggests that it is thought of in as a personified spirit akin to the *fylgja*.

This section of the speech of the mother of Brennius and Belinius is a complete interpolation to the text; there is no sense of similarly spiritual warning or curse in the *Historia*. It remains to speculate how the context of the phrase might affect its importance and meaning; the warring kinsmen and chastising female character is a scene readily comparable to many in the Old Norse saga corpus. But it is clear that this is an element of Norse religious and folkloric culture that has been very cleanly inserted into the narrative of *Breta sögur*.

The presence of *Merlinusspá* adds a certain element of pagan myth by its kenning

84 “dreymði hann at hann sa ein biorn mikin flivga i lopti. hanvm þotti oll iorð pipra ok skialfa ok allt þat sem a henni var af emivn þersa ens mikla dyrs. konvgr þottiz sia ein mikin dreka er kom moti birninv. hann flavg or vestri ok lysti af hanvm langa leið vm himínin ok tekz með þeim harðr bardagi en sa varð skilnaðr þeira at drekin bles eitri a biornin sva at hann fell til iarðar. konvgr spvrði spekinga sina hvat þetta hefði at segia. þeir sogðv at hans fylgia var drekin en biornin risa fylgia ok konvgr mvndi sigra risan.” (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 291-2) (*He dreamed that he saw a great bear fly aloft. All the earth seemed to him to shake and shiver, and all those things that were upon it, from the howling of this great beast. The king thought he saw a great dragon, and it fought the bear. It flew out west and struck at it a long way across the sky, and a hard battle began between them, and that ended between them, so that that the dragon blew poison at the bear, so that it fell to the earth. The king asked sages what this had meant. They said that his fylgia was the dragon, and the bear was the fylgia of a giant, and the king would vanquish the giant.*)

85 Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North*, 227-230.

86 Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North*, 228.

and poetic formula, and perhaps even more by its similarity to *Völuspá*; it is certainly conceivable that an audience familiar with both poems would have consciously compared a poem relating the rise and fall of the gods to one in the same meter relating the rise and fall of the British people. It appears to be accepted by scholarship that *Völuspá* was the model for the translation of the *Prophetia* into Old Norse. This can be seen in the *fornyrðislag* stanzas and the direct borrowings from the poem,⁸⁷ and it is also possible that a reference in verse ninety-four, to prophecies already made which used the same metre, is directly referring to *Völuspá*.⁸⁸

Pagan deities are mentioned in kennings in *Merlínusspá*: Njörðr, Týr, and Rön are each mentioned once, and Odin twice as Þróttr and Njótr.⁸⁹ The *valkyrjur* appear with the most frequency: Gøndul twice, Skögul four times, Hrist once, and Mist once.⁹⁰ There are also two references to the Volsung legend, once to Sigurðr's sword Gram and once to Högni.⁹¹ Finally, Yngvi appears once, which might be thought of as reference to Freyr or to a legendary king, and Fenrir also appears once.⁹² All these, however much they show the thoroughly Norse adaptation of the *Prophetia*, might easily be thought of as no more than necessities of using the skaldic diction and lexicon.

More suggestively, and far more frequently, most of the twelve dragon kennings in *Merlínusspá* evoke images of the *Miðgarðsormr*, suggesting belts, cords, or rings wrapped around the land, the earth, or a forest.⁹³ The only two potential exceptions to this, 'whale of the heath' and 'sickle of the stone heap', are notably used to refer to a serpent already *Miðgarðsormr*-like in the *Historia*, being wrapped around London.⁹⁴ This itself suggests

87 Marold, “*Merlínusspá*,” 413.

88 “Þav erv onnvr líoð vpp fra þersvm alvız eigi avðs bendravgar bið ek þioðir þers við þenna brag þo at ek mynt hafa mal að hætti þeim er spár fyri spioll vm rakti malmþings hvatvör i morgvm stað.” (Finnus Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 282-32) (*These are the second verses concerning this; peoples should not bully—I ask this of the treasure-bearing tree—for this poem, though I have shaped words in that meter, which before unfolded hastened tales of prophecy, of metal-thing in many places.*)

89 *Ibid*, 276, 278, 282.

90 *Ibid*, 273, 274, 278, 279, 281.

91 *Ibid*, 274.

92 *Ibid*, 279, 281.

93 *Ibid*, 278, 279, 280.

94 “Er a hans dogvm at hogormr alin sa er fyrðvm vill fiorspell gera sva er hann langr at vm Lvndvnir heiðar hvalr hring of mæler ok sva oðr at vrðar sigðr vmliðendr alla gleypir.” (*Ibid*, 275) (*During his days a*

that the use of *Miðgarðsormr* imagery in all other instances, referring to the red and white dragons, is significant and deliberate. This provides a pagan image of a world ending beast that mixed well with, and strengthens, the Christian eschatology of the poem, that will be discussed in the next section.

The figure of Merlin must be said to have some pagan elements. He is a prophet, born of a nun and an incubus, an aid to kings and an engineer of the golden age of Britain. Some of his crafts are less religiously ambiguous in *Breta sögur* than in the *Historia*; a certain level of prophetic power is common enough in the saga corpus, the power of foresight a feature of wise men and kings, and this seems hinted at in the descriptions and kennings for Merlin in *Merlinusspá*.⁹⁵ He appears almost at random in the poem at convenient places, and combined with the adaptation of his prophecies to verse,⁹⁶ in the context of the Norse literary milieu he might be thought of as an Odinic figure. Finally, it is notable that those aspects of his character that might be thought of as more pagan are distributed through both verse and prose; while his poetry and kennings only appear in the poetry, his supernatural birth is only described in the prose.⁹⁷

While true syncretism may not be likely to appear in a pseudo-historical translation, there is clear literary use of pagan ideas in the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*, and they contrast it clearly to its source. There is an *interpretatio* that gives Norse names to Classical gods, and may even collate characteristics of the Norse deities to their classical counterparts. There are kennings and poetic references which implant those Norse names in other places of the text, where in the *Historia* there was no such mythological suggestion. Finally, there are ideas like *fylgja* and *hamingja* that, though certainly originally part of a pagan worldview,

serpent is begotten, one which wishes to cause the death of men; it is so long—the whale of the heath—that it measures a ring around London, and so furious, that the sickle of the stone heap swallows everything.)

95 Among the king-kennings, he is called 'friend of men', 'enemy of the fire of the sea', 'Týr of Hrist', and 'breaker of rings' (*Ibid*, 276, 277, 278, 282). J.S. Eysteinnsson provides a fuller list of Merlin-kennings, and argues that any suggestion of Merlin as a king or warrior was entirely due to stereotyped poetic terminology, with no retained meaning (J.S. Eysteinnsson, "The Relationship of *Merlinusspá* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*," 97). While his point is well taken, even a stereotyped term has some meaning left, and it would be perhaps better to suggest that features of a king or warrior were expected of, or imposed upon, any great men like Merlin who were spoken of in poetry.

96 However, it is important that in both poetry and prose Merlin is referred to only once as a poet, but more generally, as noted above, as a wise or learned man, or as a king.

97 Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 271.

also exist in the Christian worldview, and thus by themselves implant some small element of true syncretism on the translated text.

Christianization of Geoffrey's Text: Merlínusspá

It has been shown that *Breta sögur* is a text of a learned milieu, concerned with euhemerized gods in a way completely distinct from Geoffrey's *Historia*. It is likewise a more Christian text than Geoffrey's *Historia*. It incorporates elements, particularly with the inclusion of *Merlínusspá*, of an ecclesiastical history of Salvation, and particularly its eschatology. Geoffrey's pointed disinterest in the archbishopric at Canturbury has been reversed. Hagiographic episodes have been altered and expanded. Looking at these elements alongside the more pagan elements of the text, which tie in to the aristocratic and learned concerns of Haukr, helps show the multiplicity of new ideas which are present in *Breta sögur*, when compared to its model.

Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the Norse text being deliberately more Christian than Geoffrey's is *Merlínusspá*; the poem clearly alters and expands upon ideas of the downfall of man, present in the *Prophetia* as describing the downfall of the Britons, and adapts them into more generally apocalyptic imagery. Though there are hints of this through much of the poem, the apocalyptic narrative begins essentially at verse fifty of the first part of *Merlínusspá*, and continues to verse sixty-two; beginning and end are noted explicitly by the narrator, and after the poem he takes over with dogmatic warnings of sin and evil.⁹⁸ Thus it is made clear within the narrative of the text that this section is an addition to the *Prophetia*-proper.

Merlínusspá also has two sections which might be called explicitly skaldic, in that they are extended battle sequences filled with kennings, expanded from extremely short sections of the *Prophetia*. These appear approximately from verse thirty-one through thirty-six of the first poem, and sixty-four through sixty-nine of the second.⁹⁹ This is one of the

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, *Hauksbók*, 280-81.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, *Hauksbók*, 274-5, 281.

clearest examples of a Norse literary device completely interpolated into the text; it is also a key differentiation between *Merlínusspá* and *Völuspá*. In the latter poem, the very idea of *Ragnarøk* is a combination of skaldic battle image and religious eschatology, while in *Merlínusspá* the two areas remain somewhat distinct. Thus, while the inherently Norse character of the skaldic section remains as evidence of the cultural translation of the whole text, the eschatology of *Merlínusspá* is more clearly Christian than that of its model.

The only real exception to this are the transformations of Geoffrey's dragons through kennings, discussed in the previous section. The two dragons are the symbols of the conflict between Saxons and Britons, and their battle is the introduction and opening of the *Prophetia*; they are thus probably the most important symbols of the entire work. To translate them into the great Norse dragon that surrounds the world and, according to *Völuspá*, will kill the god Thor, is to add a distinct element of pagan eschatology to the imagery of the poem.

These kennings do not appear in the actual apocalypse narrative of verses fifty to sixty-two of the first poem; rather they might be thought of as extending a more sub-textual ominousness through other parts of the poem, relating to that more explicit narrative of the end of the world. Thereby the secular conflict and teleological downfall of Saxons and Britons, the pagan apocalypse suggested by the *Miðgarðsormr*, and the Christian eschatology exemplified by the end of the first poem all combine in the symbols of these two dragons.

Völuspá certainly contributed to this aspect of the eschatology of *Merlínusspá*, and the presence of *Völuspá* in Hauksbók may have reminded a reader of this connection. But it also makes the difference between the two texts explicit. In *Völuspá* the *Miðgarðsormr* is physically present, and the pagan imagery is explicit. In *Merlínusspá* there is only a poetic hint, but by it the already significant imagery of Geoffrey's two dragons fighting becomes immediately more significant to a Christian Norse audience.

On the whole, this Christian eschatology can be thought of as a component of the history of Salvation, exemplified by Eusebius, which characterized medieval ecclesiastical historians, while more secular historians, like Geoffrey, were working within a contrary

paradigm of aristocratic, genealogical history. Francis Ingledew notes the reattachment of the secular prophecies of Merlin to salvation history in Orderic Vitalis;¹⁰⁰ this same dynamic is present in the Norse version of the *Historia*. Rather than placing secular prophecies within a clerical historiography, however, the prophecies themselves are the clerical component.

The narrator of *Merlinusspá* makes two explicit biblical references at the end of the poem, which emphasises this salvation history as a component, and an addition to, Geoffrey's more secular text:

V. 98) “Segir Daniel dravma sina marghattaða merkivm stvdda kvez hann drivglig sia dyr a iorðv þav er taknvðv tiggia riki þav er a havðri hofvz siþan.” (*Daniel speaks of his multifarious dreams, supported by signs; he says that he sees many beasts on the earth, those which signify the domains of kings, those who arised later on the earth*)

V. 99) “Rekr en dyri David konvngr margfallda spa ok mælir sva fioll mvnv fagna ok en friði skogr enn skæðar ár skella lofvm ok dalir ymna drottni syngia.”¹⁰¹ (*The dear king David lays out judgement of the manifold prophecies, and speaks thus: “Mountains will rejoice and the fair forest and wild rivers clap their hands, and the dales sing hymns to the Lord.”*)

He also provides one more explicit and generalized comparison of the prophecies of Merlin to biblical prophecy:

100Ingledew, “The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*,” 693. “Orderic. . . included a long excerpt from the prophecies of Merlin. . . within the context of an orthodox salvation history stretching between Christ's birth. . . and the apocolypse. To this theology of history, Merlin's prophecies, with their foregrounding of war and their violent contingencies, were easily conformable; and so the monk Orderis, while demonstrating an un-Augustinian susceptibility to secular prophecy, nonetheless reattached it to the salvation history from which Geoffrey the cleric had separated it.”

101Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 283.

V. 96 “Lesi salma spioll lesi spamanna lesi biartar þeir bœkr ok roðla ok finni þat at en froði halr hefir horsklega hagað spasogv sem fyri hanvm fyrðar helgir”¹⁰² (*Read the sayings of the psalms; read of the prophets; read those illustrious books and scrolls, and discover it, that the noble man has wisely arranged prophecies, as holy men before him.*)

Gunnlaugr thus brings Old testament prophecy to bear as a direct source and justification of the somewhat more pagan prophecy he is using—pagan both in terms of Merlin as prophet and *Völuspá* as a model. This Old testament prophecy—of unquestionable authority, of course—serves, in the first two verses quoted above, the same genealogical function as the prophecies of Merlin and the whole of *Breta sögur*. The prophet Daniel is said to be speaking of the future kings who will arise on the earth, and king David lays out a rapturous image of a joyous landscape: genealogy in the history of Salvation and a divine geography. It is thus, in essence, a Christian interpretation of the golden age, presumably after the apocalyptic downfalls described earlier in the poem. Verse ninety-six, meanwhile, defends by implication the credibility of both Gunnlaugr and Merlin, and counteracts the pagan imagery used in the poetry.

However, it would be a false to set up a dichotomy between Christian and pagan imagery in *Merlínusspá*. Here is an example of the *interpretatio christiana*, of the *miðgarðsormr*, Merlin, and other unchristian elements being used for a clearly Christian purpose. As Geoffrey's *Prophetia Merlini* narrated the downfall of the Britains, *Merlínusspá* uses that basis to hint at the broader downfall of Man.

Christianization in the Prose *Breta sögur*

Breta sögur, in its main prose narrative, is christianized mainly by alteration and addition to the hagiographic and conversion episodes of Geoffrey's *Historia*. Most notable is the matyring of St. Oswald; as an Anglo-Saxon, Geoffrey has little concern for him.

¹⁰²*Ibid*, *Hauksbók*, 283.

Almost equal space is given to Oswald's reign and martyrdom in each text, which, considering the particular abbreviation of the latter parts of *Breta sögur*, is notable. The *Historia* and *Breta sögur* are fairly close in their description of the first battle between Oswald and his eventual killer, Peanda, wherein Oswald prays before his victory and his holiness is suggested. However, *Breta sögur* differs in giving him an entirely interpolated saintly death scene and a miracle immediately afterwards:

“En er Osvalldr sa at engi viðstaða mvndi verða settiz hann niðr ok sa i gavpnir ser ok bað til gvðs fyri ollvm þeim er þar borðuz ok siþan let hann þar lif sitt ok for sva til almattix gvðs ok segia menn at Pendan yrði hanvm at bana. flyði þa allt lið hans er lifið þa. En efter bardagan geck at konvnginvm ein gamall maðr af monnvm Osvallz konvngs ok er hann stoð vpp var heil hondin. margar iartegnir ok storar gerði gvð fyri hans verðleika þo at þær se eigi her ritaðar.”¹⁰³ (*When Oswald saw that there would be no resistance, he sat down and covered his face with his hands, and prayed to God for all those who fought there, and then he lost his life there and when thus to Almighty God. Men say that Peanda caused his death. Then all his host that lived fled. After the battle an old man from among Caduallo's men walked to the king. He had taken a great wound on his hand; he slipped and stuck his hands down into the blood of king Oswald, and when he stood up his hand was healed. God made many and great miracles for his merit, though they are not written here.*)

In this instance the translator or redactor of *Breta sögur* that interpolated this passage is a hagiographer, where Geoffrey is not.¹⁰⁴ He is, even more, a hagiographer of an Anglo-Saxon saint, and thus in this instance *Breta sögur* simultaneously breaks down the political

¹⁰³*Ibid*, 299.

¹⁰⁴The miracles of St. Oswald are recorded elsewhere, however, though H       T       has not found any that exactly match this one (H       T      , personal correspondence June 8th to August 12th, 2012). Considering the nature of hagiography it is likely that the Norse text has a source for this one, or adapted it from details of other miracle episodes. However, it should not be ignored that there is some similarity between this scene and the death scene of St. Olaf, and it is possible that both translator and audience would have brought to mind Scandinavia's most famous saint-king when hearing of this one.

interests of Geoffrey's *Historia* while replacing them with ecclesiastical ones.

In the episode of the martyrdom of St. Ursula and her maidens, the *Breta sögur* version is shorter and simpler than that of the *Historia*, and likely dependent on other sources.¹⁰⁵ What is important here is the reason for their death. In the *Historia*, it is simply stated that Ursula and her maidens refused the advances of the king of the Huns and so were executed.¹⁰⁶ In *Breta sögur* it is stated that the maidens refused because they were Christian, and the men were pagans.¹⁰⁷ Thus the conflict between pagans and Christians appears of more concern in *Breta sögur*.

Augustine's conversion of England shows similar dynamics to the hagiographic episodes. In the *Historia* the downfall of Christianity after the Saxons take over Britain is a brief afterthought, clearly used to contrast the wicked Saxons to the virtuous Britains. Geoffrey is careful to note that the Saxon's have not completely taken over the island, because of their internal conflicts, and that Christianity has reigned continuously in the British part. When Augustine arrives, the first thing mentioned are the episcopal sees still maintained in the British part of the island, and that the British refuse to submit to Augustine's ecclesiastical authority. They have their own archbishop, and see no reason to help him convert their sworn enemies, the English.¹⁰⁸

Conversely, in *Breta sögur* far more detail is given to the description of the downfall of Christianity. Further, no distinction is made in this passage between British and English; Augustine is wholly responsible for creation of the archepiscopal see and Christianity in the land, and the conflicts are between regional kings, and between pagans and Christians, rather than between British and English. The abbot Dinoot, who objects to Augustine's ecclesiastical domineering in the *Historia*, is a disciple of Augustine who is placed over the

105Hélène Tétrel, personal correspondence June 8th to August 12th, 2012. The new source is fairly apparent in the text: the addition of Attila as the antagonist, the place name *Köln*, and the clear indication that Ursula is at the head of the maidens all point to a source distinct from the *Historia*.

106Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 108-9.

107“villdv þröngva þeim til samvistv við þa en af því at þær varv kristnar þa villdv þær eigi samþyckia við hei'na menn.” (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 268). (*They wished to force the maidens to have sex with them, but because they were Christian, they did not wish to consent to do this with heathen men*).

108Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 258-61.

archbishopric of Bangor in *Breta sögur*.¹⁰⁹ Thus Christianity is seen as a more singular, powerful, and important thing, and the conflict between Christians and pagans is more important than the conflict between English and British.

There is one other instance of Geoffrey clearly putting political concerns over ecclesiastical and religious ones; the *Historia* shows distinct evidence of him ignoring and disfavoring the see of Canterbury.¹¹⁰ Van Hamel makes it a central point of his argument that several additional mentions of Canterbury are significant, and in particular that they show that the Latin exemplar of *Breta sögur* had a particular concern for the archepiscopal see.¹¹¹ However, Tatlock himself, with no particular concern for *Breta sögur*, notes Canterbury's great importance for Scandinavians.¹¹² J.S. Eysteinnsson uses the same points to argue against van Hamel.¹¹³ It remains only to note that the removal of Canterbury in the *Historia* is likely, as Tatlock argues, a political move of Geoffrey, and the addition of the see to the Norse text both undermines this purpose and makes the religious world of the text more familiar to what a Norse audience would have been familiar with.

Though there are other instances of religious differences between the two works,¹¹⁴ these are some of the most apparent, and are enough to show that the religious perspective of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* is significantly different from the *Historia*, both in its literary

¹⁰⁹Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 296.

¹¹⁰Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 35-6, 263-4.

¹¹¹Van Hamel, "The Old-Norse Version of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and the Text of Geoffrey of Monmouth," 237.

¹¹²"Besides its power and influence in Denmark and Norway, enough to make the see of Bremen jealous, early in the twelfth century it claimed authority over the entire British Isles, and even after York in 1120 had made good its independence, Canterbury maintained its supremacy over the Scandinavian churches in Ireland." (Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 263)

¹¹³J.S. Eysteinnsson, "The Relationship of *Merlínussþá* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*," 108-9. J.S. Eysteinnsson likewise shares the basic assumption of this study, that, contrary to van Hamel, the changes to *Breta sögur* are best attributed largely to the Norse translators and redactors.

¹¹⁴*Breta sögur* removes all mention of the Pelagian heresy, which, while perhaps done because it would not have been familiar in a Norse milieu, has an equal effect of sharpening the conflict between pagans and Christians; while in Geoffrey St. Germanus comes to fight against both pagans and Pelagians, (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 130-31). in *Breta sögur* the conflict is simplified, so that the saint is only fighting against pagans, and it is more generally portrayed that paganism has spread throughout the land, rather than pointedly being an influence of the Saxons; *Breta sögur* suggests, perhaps, an even more thorough pagan resurgence than the *Historia*, by the alteration of the scene between Vortigern and the Saxons, wherein it is suggested that the Britons actually adopt the pagan week-days of the Saxons (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 269).

use of pagan religion and mythological ideas, and its more truly 'religious' treatment of ecclesiastical history. The possibility of intertextuality among the references to pagan gods in Hauksbók was discussed above; it cannot be ignored that the beginning of Haukr's genealogy, full of pagan and heroic names and related to the mythological episodes of Hauksbók, is Adam, Noah, and a series of other Old Testament names. Thus the Old Testament authority used in *Merlínusspá* is likewise used in what might be the most aristocratic part of Hauksbók.

Conclusion: A Learned Narrator

The learned figure that is apparent in the narrative voice of *Breta sögur*, particularly when equated with the narrator of other texts in Hauksbók, like *Trójumanna saga* and Haukr's genealogy, is concerned with religion as well as history and genealogy. He deals with historicized myth, and religion contextualized in the story of mankind, particularly in the eschatological imagery of man's descent. In places, we see that his religious judgement is not so harsh as Geoffrey's,¹¹⁵ while in other places, as have been explored above, it is clear that his concern for the religious and mythic element of history is far greater.

As noted in the previous chapter, Geoffrey's political reasons for writing were obscured in translation, and the addition of Norse, and sometimes even Anglo-Saxon, elements of geography and genealogy helped to fill the functional gap by connecting the foreign history to its new literary milieu. Here, by the addition of Norse gods, that were

¹¹⁵To some extent we can see this merely in the 'saga style' that, if certainly not pure, is at least partly apparent in *Breta sögur*; moral commentary is simply less common. We can also see the different judgement of the Norse narrator on his kings. The rather evil, or at least cruel king Morvidus is killed by a sea-monster in both texts, while in Geoffrey Morvid's cruelty is so clearly commented upon, the monster appears as a sort of judgement (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 62-63), while in the Norse text, he is simply killed (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 258). When the Norse narrator is judgemental of an individual king, it seems somewhat more playful, as with king Lear: "Svǫn hans tók konungdóm eftir hann þá er Leir hét. hann var ríkr ok hermaðr mikill en fyrra lǫt ævi sínar. hann vann vndir sig Cornbretaland ok Skotland. ecki var hann vitr maðr kallaðr." (Finnur Jónsson, ed. *Hauksbók*, 248) (*His son took the kingdom after him, who was called Lear. He was powerful and a great warrior for the earlier part of his life. He conquered under him Cornwall and Scotland. He was not called a wise man.*)

perhaps more immediately significant in the Norse literary milieu than Classical gods were in the English, *Breta sögur* proves to be a learned text that looks back on Nordic pagan traditions and adapts them for a contemporary context, both ecclesiastical and aristocratic.

Merlínusspá, meanwhile, has the inherent pagan components of Norse poetry, but still, with its dragon-kennings and even by the mere mention of Fenrir, manages to use them for the Christian eschatological core of the poem. Besides Merlin himself, we have a name for the narrator/translator of *Merlínusspá*: Gunnlaugr, as given in AM 573 4to. Though he is obviously a different person, his presence as a narrator in *Merlínusspá* can be connected to the narrator inferred from the prose of *Breta sögur*, and this will be explored further in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Form, Genre, and Prosimetrum

The combination of *Breta sögur* and *Merlinuspá*, which is only extant in Hauksbók, creates a combination of verse and prose in what might be considered a single text: a prosimetrum. This is among the most notable characteristics of its form. Considering the importance of prosimetrum in the Norse-Icelandic literary corpus, and particularly in historiography, it is important to determine whether this text can be called a prosimetrum, and what the implications of that are, for *Breta sögur* itself, i.e. what genres of the Old Norse corpus most clearly reflect the form and function of the verse/prose combination in the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*.

Prosimetrum, in the sense of a mix of verse and prose in a single work,¹¹⁶ was a widespread phenomena in classical and medieval tradition. Its history can be traced back to the origins of Menippean satire with Menippus of Gadara in the third century BC, at which point the form was innately tied into the satirical content, an aclassical juxtaposition of verse and prose passages coinciding with the comic expression of more ostensibly serious themes.¹¹⁷ In the early Middle Ages Boethius' *De consolatione Philosophiae* became probably the most influential work of prosimetrum, widely imitated by authors in the twelfth century.¹¹⁸

The functions of verse in prose, by this point in history, varied widely. Ziolkowski notes that verse can function to highlight passages, mark or emphasize direct speech, and it can use repetition or contrast to create emphasis or variety.¹¹⁹ Karsten Friis-Jensen identifies four very similar main functions of verse inserted into prose: one, the direct speech of characters; two, the direct speech of the narrator; three, as part of the narrative itself,

116Cf. Hanson and Kiparsky "The Nature of Verse and its Consequences for the Mixed Form," 36. Hanson and Kiparsky offer a useful distinction between 'prosimetrum', wherein the dominant form is verse, and 'versiprose', wherein the dominant form is prose. However, this distinction seems specially conditioned for use in a more linguistic argument, and does not seem to be made generally by literary scholars, not even by the scholars in the anthology with Hanson and Kiparsky, and thus will not be made here.

117Ziolkowski, "Prosimetrum in the Classical Tradition," 48-9.

118*Ibid*, 51-4.

119*Ibid*, 60-61.

highlighting certain moments or climaxes; or four, as a quotation. These are of course not mutually exclusive. He notes further: “The Latin prosimetrum of the Middle Ages was not a genre in itself, like the classical Menippean satire, but a verbal medium or idiom available in most genres as an alternative to prose or verse.”¹²⁰

It is, however, unlikely that the Hauksbók *Breta sögur* should be thought of as a Latin-style prosimetrum, or part of that tradition. The direct imitation of classical models and Boethius is not apparent, nor is the tendency towards quotation and multiple verse forms.¹²¹ Friis-Jensen, however, chooses to read the Bible as a prosimetrum, which is distinctly more relatable, and might be thought of as a link to the Latin tradition.

Merlínussþá, as has been shown, makes direct reference to the Old Testament, but perhaps even more notably, the prosimetrical style of a comprehensive, synoptic, prose history, within which is embedded large works of poetry, is characteristic of both the Bible¹²² and *Breta sögur*.

Old Norse prosimetrum is, however, of a different tradition; though, as with Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum* and to lesser extent Oddr Snorrason's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, there are points of close interaction.¹²³ As Joseph Harris notes, Germanic verse is based on an exaggeration of natural linguistic features, and there is at least some evidence for an Norse oral prosimetrum tradition;¹²⁴ no strong argument could be made for it being derived entirely from the Latin tradition. Further, it is a uniquely common form in the Old Norse corpus.¹²⁵ Verse is used both in a dramatic role, often as dialogue, and as

¹²⁰Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet*,” 29.

¹²¹See Friis-Jensen's survey of the Latin prosimetrical tradition: Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet*, 29-39.

¹²²“[T]he prosimetrical work seen in its entirety, a comprehensive history of the Jewish people, embraces whole poetical works by historical persons.” (Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet*, 38-9)

¹²³Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet*,” 40, 54, 57, 61. “Saxo knew both the Latin prosimetrical tradition and a vernacular one, probably mainly oral and Norse, and he decided to amalgamate the two in the *Gesta Danorum*.”

¹²⁴Harris, “The Prosimetrum of the Icelandic Saga and Some Relatives,” 132-5. Also Quinn, “Ok er þetta upphaf—First-Stanza Quotation in Old Norse Prosimetrum,” 62-3.

¹²⁵Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet*,” 39; “Prosimetrum is so common a feature of Old Icelandic sagas that it is the rule rather than the exception.” Likewise Sørensen, “The Prosimetrical Form 1: Verses as the Voice of the Past,” 181; “The combining of prose and verse is so common in Old Norse literature and was used over such a long period of time that for the saga audience in the Middle Ages it must have been the natural form of written narrative.”

evidence and documentation, but there are clear cases wherein the two functions overlap.¹²⁶ Generally, most of the saga genres, including the *fornaldarsögur*, use verse either in dialogue or for dramatic effect, while the *konungasögur* use verse both as evidence and reference.¹²⁷

The question remains whether the combination of *Merlínusspá* and *Breta sögur* in Hauksbók fits within this corpus at all. Joseph Harris argues for a unity of the saga genres that use verse, and thus are often prosimetrical, as contrasted to those that don't. The latter group includes the *lysisögur*, *riddarasögur*, and the translated pseudo-histories.¹²⁸ Though he does not mention it specifically, *Breta sögur* falls generally within this last group, and so, by implication at least, Harris seems to argue against it being seen as a prosimetrum. J.S. Eysteinnsson, who deals with the relationship between the *Historia*, *Breta sögur*, and *Merlínusspá*, does not address the idea of prosimetrum. However, he does note that they appear as one work in Hauksbók, and that *Merlínusspá* contains material borrowed from the *Historia* that allow it to stand alone better than the original *Prophecies*.¹²⁹ Perhaps ambivalent to the question, by emphasizing the independence of *Merlínusspá*, he does provide some evidence for their being seen as separate works in essence, while noting that in Hauksbók they are one.¹³⁰

Preben Meulengracht Sørensen, while responding to the categories of Friis-Jensen noted above, argues that skaldic verses are never the direct speech of the narrator, and never presented as the author's own composition.¹³¹ Although the author in *Merlínusspá* is clearly present in the verse,¹³² it is an unnamed author, and in no way suggested to be the same author as the prose; thus by Sørensen's terms, *Breta sögur* might be a prosimetrum. Philip Lavender argues clearly in defense of the prosimetrical form: "When *Merlínusspá* was

¹²⁶Harris, "The Prosimetrum of the Icelandic Saga and Some Relatives," 142, 156-7.

¹²⁷Sørensen, "The Prosimetrical Form 1: Verses as the Voice of the Past," 173-4.

¹²⁸Harris, "The Prosimetrum of the Icelandic Saga and Some Relatives," 136.

¹²⁹J.S. Eysteinnsson, "The Relationship of *Merlínusspá* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*," 104, 112.

¹³⁰Likewise, neither Edith Marold nor Jonna Louis-Jensen in their respective articles on *Merlínusspá* and *Breta sögur* in *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia* bring up the idea of prosimetrum, though this is of course just as likely on account of their brevity of the articles, as because of a rejection of the idea (Marold, "*Merlínusspá*," 412-13; Louis-Jensen, "*Breta sögur*," 57-8).

¹³¹Sørensen, "The Prosimetrical Form 1: Verses as the Voice of the Past," 173.

¹³²See V. 93 and V. 94, quoted below.

inserted into the *Breta sögur* we can assume that it gained significance for its audience in light of the traditional and familiar forms of prosimetrum.”¹³³ His evidence is certainly convincing: the mention of Merlin as the prophet is comparable to citing the names of skalds; it is also written in eddic verse, much of it spoken by Merlin himself, which is comparable to the prosimetrum of the *fornaldarsögur*.¹³⁴ Lavender accepts that the original translation of *Merlínusspá* was clearly a stand-alone text, expanding the syncretism inherent with Scandinavian myth and Christian concerns, but he also argues that it gained new meaning by its insertion into *Breta sögur*.¹³⁵

Functions of Prosimetrum

Accepting that the categories of Friis-Jensen and the commentary of Sørensen do not completely contrast the Hauksbók text from the rest of the corpus, and accepting Lavender's observations, much remains to be said in exploring the significance of the somewhat odd prosimetrum of *Breta sögur* and *Merlínusspá*. As such a large text, it is difficult to look at *Merlínusspá* as a quotation, though it fulfills many functions of providing authority and evidence for the larger prosimetrical work. Further, the synoptic and genealogical quality of *Breta sögur* would perhaps put it more in the genre of *konungasögur*; yet such a large poem, in eddic meter, fits much better with the type of prosimetrum evidenced in the *fornaldarsögur*.¹³⁶

The prophecy of *Merlínusspá* clearly functions as an authority for *Breta sögur*; the conversion of the *Prophetia* into verse emphasizes this characteristic. By taking a historical

¹³³Lavender, “Merlin and the *Völva*,” 130.

¹³⁴*Ibid*, 130-131.

¹³⁵*Ibid*, 135.

¹³⁶There is, of course, clear overlap between the two prosimetrical styles, and Judy Quinn points out that length and narrative, dialogic quality of *Hákonarmál* in *Hákonar saga góða* renders it somewhat akin to the prosimetrical style of the *fornaldarsögur* (Quinn, “Ok er þetta upphaf—First-Stanza Quotation in Old Norse Prosimetrum,” 76.) Lavender, in terms of the verse itself, suggests that the generic association that most likely would have been made by the audience would have been with the *fornaldarsögur*, and specifically with such a poem as the *Ævidrápa* as the end of *Orvar-Odds saga*, formally similar as long eddic verse, and functionally reiterating the narrative of the prose in a similar way to *Merlínusspá* in *Breta sögur* (Lavender, “Merlin and the *Völva*,” 131).

tone in direct speech, Merlin provides an eyewitness account of an authoritative figure concerning the events of his day, and those previous. By taking the tone of a prophet, he both extends his own authority and the chronological range of his eyewitness account. When this is translated into verse, in the Old Norse literary milieu, the form of these prophecies redouble their authority.¹³⁷ The overlap of the narrative of the verses with the narrative of the prose gives direct poetic evidence for that prose, in the same manner as *Ynglinga saga*.¹³⁸ Both in terms of evidence and authority, it is important to bear in mind the Prologue to *Heimskringla*, concerning the reliability of verses, and the trustworthiness of wise men;¹³⁹ both these types of evidence are clearly meant to be present in the poetic rendering of Merlin.

In addition to authorization and evidence, for *Breta sögur* to be considered prosimetrical, there must be some level of incorporation apparent between the verse and prose. As was briefly noted in Chapter One, the Greek king Pandrasus, when defeated, spoke of the position he would gain by allowing his daughter to marry Brutus. He would be at the head of a great line of men—one step away, in essence, from the origin of the line. As part of this, he is himself prophesying the greatness of Brutus' line, and thus what really qualifies as the whole of *Breta sögur*; this type of prophecy is one of the most important functions of *Merlínusspá*, and Pandrasus' speech is thus a change in the Norse text that directly relates to the added verse of *Merlínusspá*.

It was also shown in the previous chapters that *Breta sögur* does not have the same political concerns as the *Historia*, and the emphasized eschatological qualities of *Merlínusspá* run parallel and complimentary to this. Most explicitly, in regards to genealogy and geography, the second to last verse of the poem notes that the Norman conquest has come after the Anglo-Saxon kingship, taken its power, but even still the

¹³⁷Though, of course, in several verses Gunnlaugr admits that he is giving these prophecies their poetic form (See in particular V. 93 and V. 94, quoted below). But that distinction is not necessarily important for the Hauksbók prosimetrum, compiled a hundred years after Gunnlaugr's translation, and further these same verses suggest that age and authority of the original prophecies.

¹³⁸See Chapter Four.

¹³⁹Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed., *Heimskringla*, 3-4, 7.

British are not completely eradicated.¹⁴⁰ In relation to the prose and the narrative of the poem, then, it suggests that all lines of kings are equal in their fate and their doom, be they British, Anglo-Saxon, or French. This suggests that ecclesiastical character of *Merlínusspá* interacts in the prosimetrum with even the most aristocratic aspects of *Breta sögur*.

Often, indeed, the religious aspects of the text are complimentary to the aristocratic, genealogical ones. Marie Tanner notes, in reference to the literature of the Holy Roman Empire: “Prophecy was the handmaiden of genealogical mythmaking in its mixture of pagan and Hebraic elements and in its importance for imperial imagery; it differed in its eschatological focus.”¹⁴¹ This relationship is clear in the Hauksbók text. *Merlínusspá*, even moreso than its model, provides an authoritative microcosmic overview of *Breta sögur* through poetry and Christianity; through prophecy it stretches the historical scope into the end times, broadening the historical vision of the whole prosimetrum and creating a text which is self-reflective on its very surface.

On terms of pagan myth and poety, too, the high drama of versified speech is the voice of an ancient, possibly supernatural being, pronouncing prophecies reflecting upon the past, explaining the present, and predicting the future of the great line of English kings, all the while imbuing and postscripting it with dramatic and apocalyptic imagery. The voice of the prophet is thus aristocratic and clerical, pagan¹⁴² and Christian, a profound syncretism that, in a prosimetrical whole with *Breta sögur*, punctuates the center of a dense, synoptic history with poetic force.

140V. 102 “Uarð sv en enska ætt fyri stvndv velldis missa nv er valskr konungr. Þo er þeygi en þeira hætti liðit af laði ne lyðs Breta hvorsvm mæki hiall eignaðiz.” (*That, the English race, lost power awhile ago; now there is a French king; Yet still their custom has not passed from the land, and he has not obtained all of the British people*) (Finnur Jónsson, *Hauksbók*, 283).

141Tanner, *The Last Descendant of Aeneas: The Hapsburgs and the Mythic Image of the Emperor*, 2.

142In the sense of Merlin's prophetic, and other, powers being a sort of pagan magic, derived from Welsh traditions of prophecy. Lavender illuminates well Geoffrey's *Prophetia* as a syncretic text, of secular and biblical prophecy, and that dynamic being very deliberately expanded upon, further christianized, and reappropriated in relation to the *Völva* by Gunnlaugr (Lavender, “Merlin and the *Völva*,” 118-25)

Genre

It seems clear that, as a legendary history in relatively long form, *Breta sögur* fits somewhere between the *konungasögur* and the *fornaldarsögur*. Friis-Jensen clearly explains the style of the *fornaldarsögur*, in contrast to the other saga forms:

The most characteristic feature of the prosimetrical *fornaldarsaga* is perhaps a more extended use of the versified dialogue; series of *lausavísur* exchanged as dialogue between two or more persons, are found in the 'historical' sagas, but they seldom reach the dimensions seen in some *fornaldarsögur*. We can only establish a tangible difference if we proceed beyond the purely functional description and focus on the literary status of the versified speeches, establishing a distinction between more or less 'historical' persons reciting poems which they, at least theoretically, could have composed themselves, and mythical and supernatural beings whose speeches have been culled from traditional eddaic language and metres.¹⁴³

Here, the intermediate status of the Hauksbók prosimetrum can be seen. Much of *Merlínusspá* is clearly direct speech of Merlin, and part of it appears as a dialogue between himself and king Vortigern.¹⁴⁴ The narrator himself also appears, however. He introduces Merlin and the prophecies in the first part of the poem, provides a historical backdrop in the second part, and gives the poem a formal conclusion and a brief commentary.¹⁴⁵ He makes his presence very clear, as a poet developing and molding the more elemental substance of prophecy.

V. 93 “[H]er mvn ek letta lioð at semia ok spasogv spillis bavga þo erv fleiri orð ens

¹⁴³Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet*,” 46.

¹⁴⁴See verses 12-21 of the second poem, for Merlin's instructions to dig beneath the tower, the revealing of the two dragons, and Vortigern's response, demanding interpretation, which leads into a series of prophecies in direct speech (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 278).

¹⁴⁵Finnur Jónsson, ed. *Hauksbók*, 272, 277, 283.

fróða mannz hefi ek svmt af þeim samit i kvæði.” (*Here I will leave off arranging the verses and prophecies of the breaker of rings, though there are more words of the wise man; I have arranged some of them into verse*)

V. 94 “Þav erv onnvr lioð vpp fra þersvm alvиз eigi avðs bendravgar bið ek þioðir þers við þenna brag þo at ek mynt hafa mal að hætti þeim er spár fyrri spioll vm rakti malmþings hvatvör i morgvm stað.” (*These are the second verses concerning this; peoples should not bully—I ask this of the treasure-bearing tree—for this poem, though I have shaped words in that meter, which before unfolded hastened tales of prophecy, of metal-assembly in many places.*)¹⁴⁶

This is partly in line with Friis-Jensen's identification of *fornaldarsögur* prosimtrum, in that it harkens to an ancient source, and self-consciously uses the meter of prophecy, but the narrator, as a plainly real human and poem, seems to be an interpolation of a different genre.¹⁴⁷ Speaking in apposition to the narrator, Merlin is a supernatural creature by the description of his miraculous/demonic birth in *Breta sögur*.¹⁴⁸ Even if the translated verses are not the same as proper, authoritative Eddic poetry, the above verses suggest effort by Gunnlaugr to make them such. Joseph Harris argues for “a generic and probably a developmental continuum from the prosimtrum of some eddic poetry to that of the *fornaldarsögur*.”¹⁴⁹ In quoting and using what has been made into Eddic poetry, an image of ancient authority is evoked;¹⁵⁰ thus the poem might appear on this continuum, though perhaps even furthur out than the *fornaldarsögur*. Merlin is a figure very possibly familiar to the audience, according to AM 573 4to and the *Historie Norwegie*,¹⁵¹ and he is intimately

146Finnur Jónsson, ed. *Hauksbók*, 282-3.

147Here, perhaps, is the clearest indication of the influence of a 'Latin style' into the Old Norse meter.

148Finnur Jónsson, ed. *Hauksbók*, 271.

149Harris, “The Prosimtrum of Icelandic Saga and Some Relatives,” 145.

150“[I]t is easy to see how the use of eddic verse, with its sense of archaism, would have given a sense of historical realism to the sagas set in ancient times.” (Lavender, “Merlin and the *Völva*,” 130)

151From AM 573 (also quoted in Chapter One): “Þa hof Merlin upp ok sagdi langt fram a kongaæfi sem eftir er mynt id stærsta af kuædi því er Merlins spa heitir er orti Gunnlaugr munkr Leifsson ok kunna margir menn þat kuædi. En er Merlin lauk spa sinne þa lofadi konungr miog frodleik hans ok uisdom. Sv spa hefir opt sidan af hinum vitruztum monnum a Einglandi rannsokud uerid ok finz æ nockud þess [I] er

connected with ancient kings. His prophecies are an evocation of that connection. His very distance, the linguistical, temporal, and spatial remove of his prophecies from the Norse world might have given them a more exotic authority, making up for the somewhat illegitimate quality of their status as translations.

The *fornaldarsögur*-connection is also apparent by the context of *Breta sögur*. Sverrir Jakobsson has proposed that *Hauksbók* as a whole shows a definitively fourteenth century interest in pre-history akin to the *fornaldarsögur*.¹⁵² Certainly, as an overview of British pre-history, supplimented and given greater authority by its Aeneid-introduction, *Breta sögur* fits this idea very neatly. Contrarily, the ecclesiastical affinities of *Merlínusspá* also related to its manuscript context. Elizabeth Ashman Rowe has suggested that much of Haukr's authority comes from his clerical models and perspective; though he served the king of Norway, the authority of the Church was much greater and more efficacious,¹⁵³ even on a the level of texts and literary narratives.

Yet the relation to the *konungasögur* cannot be ignored. *Merlínusspá* can be seen as the first-person speech of a person witnessing the events, and thus as documentary evidence for some of the events described in the prose, as well as the narrative of the verse. Finally, Sørensen notes that the most important aspect of verse in Old Norse prosimetrum is that its form “authentically replicated as mode of expression belonging to the past.” There is no indication that the poetry of *Merlínusspá* is intended to mimic the speech of Merlin, or the

myklum raukum þickir [s]æta.” (Then Merlin began, and recited long on the lives of kings, which the greatest of poems is shaped after, that which is called the Prophecies of Merlin, which the monk Gunnlaugr Leifsson made, and many men know that poem. And when Merlin ended his prophecy, then the king praised his knowledge and wisdom. That prophecy has often afterwards been searched by the wisest men in England and always something is found in it which seems to cause great marvel.) From the *Historie Norwegie*: “Iste genuit Willelmum Rufum et Henricum fretrem eius, qui in prophetia Merlini regis 'leo iusticie' prenomminatus est.” (From him were born William Rufus and his brother Henry, who in the prophecy of royal Merlin was named 'the Lion of Justice'.) (Inger Ekrem and Lars Boje Mortensen, eds., Peter Fisher, trans., *Historia Norwegie*, 68-9) It is interesting to note that in both these references, a century and a half apart and in two different languages, it is by his prophecies that Merlin is known.

¹⁵²Sverrir Jakobsson, “Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic World View,” 35.

¹⁵³Rowe, “Literary, Codicological, and Political Perspectives on *Hauksbók*,” 75. “Haukr sought power through the imitation and replication of an authoritative European cultural model, and he chose one of the most authoritative models available to him, for the authority embodied in his clerical material was much greater than that embodied in the king: it was the authority of the Church, whose domain dwarfed that of the king of Norway.”

idealized modes of expression of ancient Britain.¹⁵⁴ The combination of *Breta sögur* and *Merlínusspá*, thus, is a very generically mixed text.

Conclusion: A Combination of Narrators

Yet there seems little doubt that *Breta sögur* and *Merlínusspá* together form a prosimetrum, functioning as such on multiple levels with the many layers of significance noted above. Despite the previous independence of *Merlínusspá*, it combines quite effectively with *Breta sögur*.¹⁵⁵ The narrator of *Merlínusspá*, presumably the voice of Gunnlaugr, has been shown to be clearly present, with clear interests in the history of Salvation, and in prophecy, presumably both pagan and Christian. He is distinctive from the narrator of the prose sections of *Breta sögur*, but is not entirely separate. The fall of the Britons is still described in the prose,¹⁵⁶ but the particular eschatological tone of *Merlínusspá* is a function of its form, and its distinctive narrator. As a prosimetrum, it might best be thought of as having the voices of multiple narrators, speaking together in a single work.

This idea of a harmony of narrative voices in no way separates *Breta sögur* from other Old Norse works; the idea of prosimetrum still makes the whole work more comparable to the rest of Old Norse historiography.¹⁵⁷ At the same time, however, it makes

154Sørensen, “The Prosimetrical Form 1: Verses as the Voice of the Past,” 188. It is perhaps important here that, while he does include the *fornaldarsögur* among his consideration, Sørensen is primarily dealing with skaldic verse, broken up into individual stanza; he does not make particular reference to any long poems, nor to any eddic verse. The issue is probably unanswerable at this point: though I argue that Merlin is enough of an ancient, supernatural creature that versified speech would seem natural for him to the Icelandic or Norwegian audience, the problem of Gunnlaugr admitting to arranging the verse remains, and Merlin is an unique enough that a more thorough examination of the recitation of eddic verse in sagas would be required.

155“Thus, *Merlínusspá*, within the *Breta sögur*, becomes part of a much tighter intertextual process and the more open-ended possibilities of interpretation are curtailed.” (Lavender, “Merlin and the *Völva*,” 131)

156“kristni var þá víðaz eydd ok niðr fallin vm allt landit.” (Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 296)
(Christianity was then destroyed far and wide and downfallen in all the land)

157Verse cited as source or documentation, as in the *konungasögur*, is making use of the voice of the skald, while verse used as direct speech of characters temporarily give those characters the position of narrator, particularly in long monologue-poems, as in the poems of Egil Skallagrímsson and Qrvar-Odd, or more mythological voices, as in *Merlínusspá* itself, or *Völuspá*.

it less comparable to the rest of the translated corpus. *Merlínusspá* is very unusual, as a poetic translation, particular of prose into verse, and treating it together with *Breta sögur* instills both works with this unusual characteristic. As Lavender notes, this separates the works from the *riddarasögur*,¹⁵⁸ even though *Breta sögur* and *Merlínusspá* are Arthurian works, and thus part of the “Matter of Britain”. This likewise separates them from all the other pseudo-historical translations, even from the closely related *Trójumanna saga*.

Verse, prophecy, clerical and genealogical/aristocratic components of *Merlínusspá* give depth and authority to *Breta sögur*, and they relate it most closely to the *fornaldarsögur* and *konungasögur*. Though *Breta sögur*, like the *Gesta Danorum*, cannot fully be considered as a part of either of these genres, its relations to them can show the interconnectness of the entire Old Norse literary corpus. While the sort of special grouping of the pseudo-historical translations is useful, and describes a clear group of works, that group should not be thought of as totally distinct to the rest of the corpus, or limited to comparisons with *riddarasögur* and other translations.

¹⁵⁸Lavender, “Merlin and the *Völva*,” 114.

Chapter Four: A Comparative Study of Historiographic Texts

The previous chapter has shown that *Breta sögur* relates closely with the prosimetrical characteristics of the *fornaldarsögur*, but also with those of the *konungasögur*. The main difficulty in making comparisons between these two genres is that *Breta sögur* in some major way differs from both. Its genealogical scope and generally, though not uniformly, dry, historical style differentiates it from most of the *fornaldursögur*. Yet its focus on ancient times differentiates it from the vast majority of the *konungasögur*. It seems to fit somewhere in between the two genres.

Breta sögur is, at its core, a legendary history, and while comparing it with this component of the *fornaldarsögur* corpus would be a massive endeavor, there are significantly fewer examples of legendary history among the *konungasögur*. This chapter takes a selection of them, and focuses on the relations and differences in these accounts of legendary kingship and history in order to illuminate how *Breta sögur* compares to them, and how it might fit in among this texts in the Old Norse corpus.

Ynglinga saga* and the Prologue of *Heimskringla

Ynglingasaga and the Prologue function within *Heimskringla* on many levels, but two functions are clearest: they extend the chronological scope of the work, and give it an origin of heightened authority. The history of Norwegian kings functions with Haraldr hárfagri as its main originator, as much of the corpus shows. Yet a massively expanded genealogy, an origin in the east, and a prophetic destiny give the historiography of *Heimskringla* greater authority. This authority is fairly distinctive among the *konungasögur*, but one shared by *Breta sögur*, and the other texts discussed in this chapter.

Ingeldew observes, concerning the *Aeniad*:

To gain its purchase on history in the *Aeniad*, prophecy seizes on genealogy, a

narrative mode that not only inevitably confers structure on history but also conjures value out of time through the mystification of ancestry. It is Rome's *beginnings* in the city of Troy and in the figure of Aeneas, and the genealogical succession from Aeneas, that generate and guarantee its imperial mission. Made an instrument of the gods, genealogy functions as argument, authorizing the possession of land and power on the basis of the possession of time.

These gods are euhemerized in *Ynglinga saga* and then prophecy is christianized in *Olafs saga helga*, while in *Breta sögur* the prophecies are given by the gods and then redoubled by the presence of Merlin. In a sense, both Merlin and St. Olaf, while being far from pure Christian exemplars, renew these great origin-prophecies for the Christian era, after the original prophecies concerning Brutus and Odin. Odin's prophecy in *Ynglinga saga* is particularly interesting, in that as a euhemerized god, he prophecies his own destiny; he plays the role, taking the Aeniad as a model, of both god and hero-king.

En fyrir því at Óðinn var forspár ok fjölkunnigr, þá vissi hann, at hans afkvæmi myndi um norðrhálfu heimsins byggva.¹⁵⁹ (*But because Odin was foreseeing and skilled in magic he knew then that his offspring would settle over the northern half of the world.*)

Odin and Brutus are both directly derived from Aeneas in their genealogical and geographic functions. The godly character of Odin, his magic, the synchronizing of hero, prophet, and god all distinguish him from his Roman and British relatives, but they also relate him innately to Merlin. Particularly, he is like the Merlin of *Breta sögur*, who is supernatural prophet in function, but hero and king in the language used to describe him in *Merlínusspá*.

The account of the *Prologue* takes the Virgilian model and extends it further, and likewise uses it to separate Northern Europe from the South. While all the great lines of Europe descended from Troy, as the above quote notes, Odin provides a sort of secondary

¹⁵⁹Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed., *Heimskringla*, Vol. I, 14.

foundation that covers the entire northern half of the world. This is not narrated, however, but a genealogical suggestion that is only born out in other texts;¹⁶⁰ *Heimskringla* itself only follows the Swedish line, the Ynglingar. In essence, this is similar to the basic idea of Arthur's empire in Geoffrey's *Historia*; it becomes even more related in *Breta sögur*, where Arthur's empire is decidedly more concerned with the Northern and Atlantic world.

On the other axis, the two works are somewhat different; *Ynglinga saga* on its own has no great focus and appears very neatly divided among all the kings after Odin. *Breta sögur*, on the other hand, has central kings, in Arthur, Brutus, and Aeneas. However, Arthur's narrative is substantially shortened in *Breta sögur*, compared to the *Historia*. *Breta sögur* is thus closer to a work like *Ynglinga saga* than its model.

The form and chronology of *Ynglinga saga* is innately linked to its prosimetrum; the verses are neatly divided among the reigns of the kings, each verse providing enough authority and evidence to support a certainly amount of narrative. Compared directly to the verse of *Merlínusspá*, there is little that relates them. In one component, however, they are importantly similar: they repeat the narrative of the prose. *Merlínusspá*, much more than the *Prophetia*, makes it clear that it is talking about kings and their reigns, and the second half of *Merlínusspá* includes a significant narrative component concerning Vortigern and Merlin. *Merlínusspá*, like *Ynglingatal*, was very likely meant to stand alone, and their inclusion in prosimetrum provide narrative overlap that, by legitimizing the prose, is much of their function in that prosimetrum.

Historia Norwegie

The Norwegian synoptic *Historia Norwegie*, even more briefly than *Heimskringla*, uses a legendary origin-story and the Ynglinga-kings to laid out a foundation for the rest of the work. The nature of that story is somewhat different from *Ynglinga saga*, and though

¹⁶⁰Namely in the prologue to the *Snorra Edda*, where the full conquest of Europe by the children of Odin, suggested by his prophecy to himself in *Heimskringla*, is borne out (Snorri Sturluson, *Edda: Prologue and Gylfaginning*, ed. Anthony Faulkes, 4-6).

the legendary portion of the *Historia Norwegie* is extremely brief, there are parts that relate it to *Breta sögur*.

First, it has an eponymous figure, Nórr, who yet is not the founder of Norway;¹⁶¹ that honor goes to Yngvi. It is important to note, however, that Yngvi himself is not said to be worshipped as a god. The author specifically notes that that honor—or perhaps from another perspective, that disgrace—only goes to his son and grandson:

Rex itaque Ingui, quem primum Swethie monarchiam rexisse plurimi astruunt, genuit Neorth. Qui uero genuit Froy. Hos ambos tota illorum posteritas per longa secula ut deos uenerati sunt. (*King Yngve, who according to a great many was the first ruler of the Swedish realm, became the father of Njord, whose son was Frøy. For centuries on end all their descendents worshipped these last two as gods.*)¹⁶²

Thus like *Breta sögur* there are gods associated with the origin of Norway, albeit in a very different, more explicitly euhemerized manner, while the great founding figure, in contrast to *Ynglinga saga*, is entirely mortal. This founding figure, likewise, comes from much closer to home. While Sweden is east of Norway, it can't be said to have the geographical connotations or Virgilian connections of the great treks of Odin and Aeneas/Brutus in *Ynglinga saga* and *Breta sögur*. Here, the author is not interested in using Troy as a method of authorizing his history, as he is only partly interested in the use of euhemerized gods.

The *Historia Norwegie*, unique among the works presented here, is not a prosimetrum. As a Latin history, the prosimetrical form would perhaps be less expected, and likewise less useful as a source of authority. Yet this quality makes its legendary section somewhat closer to Geoffrey's *Historia*; it can thus show the diverse ways legendary history can be presented, and how works both inside and outside the Old Norse corpus can be related.

¹⁶¹Inger Ekrem and Lars Boje Mortensen, eds., Peter Fisher, trans. *Historia Norwegie*, 53.

¹⁶²*Ibid*, 75.

Orkneyinga saga

Orkneyinga saga is uniquely related to *Breta sögur* by the Caithness episode discussed in Chapter One, that may suggest that the original translator of *Breta sögur* knew *Orkneyinga saga* or a saga related to it. But it is likewise one of the *konungasögur* that contains a legendary introduction, and is geographically situated closer to the events of *Breta sögur* than any other saga in the *konungasögur* corpus.

The legendary introduction of *Orkneyinga saga* is somewhat different from *Heimskringla*, the *Historia Norvegiae*, and *Breta sögur*; it is not derived directly from the Virgilian tradition of a legendary origination from Troy, nor does it directly involve the *Ynglingar*, *Skjöldingar*, or any of the other Scandinavian lines said to descend from Odin.

The founder is called Fornjótr, from Kvenland and Finnland; his children have elemental names, Ægir (*sea*), Logi (*flame*), and Kári (*the north wind*), and down his line through Kári come Frosti (*frost*), and Snær (*snow*).¹⁶³ The name 'Fornjótr' appears in some of the *pulur* of the *Snorra Edda* as a giant-name.¹⁶⁴ The magic of the family is so more powerful than the Lapps; essentially they beat the stereotyped sorcerers of Old Norse literature at their own game.¹⁶⁵ From this line comes Nórr, who would found Norway, and Górr, who would become king of the isles, and thus is the forefather of the Earls of Orkney.

Again, the family seems fundamentally different from what would be expected for the legendary originators of a great aristocratic line, although it is presumably the great line of Caithness that the translator of *Breta sögur* felt the need to defend from Geoffrey's scorn.¹⁶⁶ This is particularly the case when comparing it to the great founding tales of

¹⁶³Finnbogi Guðmundsson, ed. *Orkneyinga saga*, 3.

¹⁶⁴Sørensen, "The Sea, that Flame, and the Wind: the Legendary Ancestors of the Earls of Orkney," 213.

¹⁶⁵Finnbogi Guðmundsson, ed. *Orkneyinga saga*, 4.

¹⁶⁶The chronology of this is not perfect; Earl Sigurd's conquest of Caithness happens much latter than the events of *Breta sögur*, as the translator was likely aware. But the fact that he is of a line of sea kings that ruled the region during a vague mythical time period allows for a certain impreciseness. It seem likewise important that the line of the Earls of Orkney, as the saga tells it, spawned the Dukes of Normany, and thus the kings of England, Geoffrey's own rulers (Finnbogi Guðmundsson, ed. *Orkneyinga saga*, 7-8); it is entirely possible that the translator of *Breta sögur*, concerned as he was with Caithness and the Atlantic isles, and potentially familiar with an earlier form of *Orkneyinga saga*, was aware of this, and that it colored his interpolation into the settlement of Caithness.

Heimskringla and *Breta sögur*. However, giants can function as forefather's of great heroes, as *Ketils saga hængs* and the sagas of the men of Hrafnista show.¹⁶⁷ Ármann Jakobsson notes that the general idea of giant-founders in the sagas is connected to the idea that humans were once larger, more giant-like, and have lessened over the years. This is the same idea we see interpolated with the Pallas episode of *Breta sögur*.¹⁶⁸

Still, giantness is only one aspect of the peculiarity of the origin story of the earls of *Orkneyinga saga*. The location in the farthest North, the elemental qualities of the children, as well as the divorcing from the aristocratic lines linked to the East and South, all suggest that the intention of the story is not to lay the aristocratic foundation to the Outside, however glorious, but rather to make the line entirely autochthonous. Preben Meulengracht Sørensen develops this idea:

[T]his genealogy. . . gave expression to a specific Nordic self-esteem and pride in that it provided a counterpart to the immigration theory which got its inspiration from the continent. Its dynasties not only come from the extreme, frosty North, from fierce, uninhabitable quarters, which contrast sharply with the classical idea of an emigration from the centre of the world, where there was splendour and beauty.¹⁶⁹

The main ideas definitely shared with *Breta sögur* are the eponymous founder (Nórr and Norway), and the foundation by a great warrior: Górr and Nórr fight many battles before they settle, resembling Brutus' battles in Gaul before he reaches Britain. Potentially, as noted about, the idea of the descending quality of the race, from giants and heroes to more or less normal men, could be inferred from either saga. Yet on the whole, as Sørensen suggests, *Orkneyinga saga*, though certainly influenced by the Virgilian origin-story, is a deliberate step away from it. Likewise, though *Orkneyinga saga* is a prosimetrum, the

167See Mitchell, *Heroic Sagas and Ballads*, 122, and Ármann Jakobsson, "Identifying the Ogre: The Legendary Saga Giants," 194.

168Ármann Jakobsson, "Identifying the Ogre: The Legendary Saga Giants," 190-91, 194-5. He also admits, following Helgi Þorláksson, that the idea could be do to foreign influences. Certainly, the Pallas episode in *Breta sögur* supports this.

169Sørensen, "The Sea, that Flame, and the Wind: the Legendary Ancestors of the Earls of Orkney," 219.

aspect of the work in no way impacts the legendary introduction, and thus can't really be compared to *Breta sögur*.

Gesta Danorum

Saxo's debt to Geoffrey, and the similarity of the *Gesta Danorum* to the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, is obvious. It is a legendary history, with much the same rhetorical justifications, and Saxo uses the guise of translation to lend himself legitimacy and his work antiquity. His work fits somewhere between the *konungasögur* and the *fornaldarsögur*; because of his Latin language and style, yet clearly Norse source material, his work sits somewhere on the edge of the Old Norse corpus. As a Danish historian, he understandably uses the line of the Skjöldungar as part of the early generations of his royal line; the same family that Haukr uses in his own genealogy. All of these aspects make the *Gesta Danorum* the work probably most comparable to *Breta sögur*.

Yet Saxo resembles *Orkneyinga saga* in his clear attempt to distinguish the royal line of Denmark from foreign aristocratic lines, and his own legendary history from others. He even quotes the origin suggested by Dudo in *De Moribus et Actis Primorum Normanniae Ducum*, and by implication rejects it:

Dan igitur et Angul, a quibus Danorum coepit origo, patre Humblo procreati non solum conditores gentis nostrę, uerumentiam rectores fuere. Quamquam Dudo, rerum Aquitanicarum scriptor, Danos a Danais ortos nuncupatosque recenseat.¹⁷⁰
(*The Danes trace their beginnings from Dan and Angul, sons of Humbli, who were not merely the founders of our race but its guides also. Dudo however, who wrote a history of France, believes that the Danes sprang from the Danaans and were named after them.*)¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum (Danmarkshistorien)*, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, ed. and trans. Peter Zeeberg, Vol. 1, 86.

¹⁷¹Saxo Grammaticus, *History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, trans. Peter Fisher, ed. and commentary Hilda Ellis Davidson, 14.

As noted above, the *Historia Norwegie* states that Nórr gave his name to Norway, but then traces the line of kings from Yngvi. In *Orkneyinga saga* he is a founder, but it is clearly stated that there were regional kings before him; Saxo makes his eponymous founder the founder of the entire race and leaves it completely opened whether there were any before him. This is related to *Breta sögur*, where the eponymous founder Brutus takes the island completely uninhabited but for the giants. It is perhaps the closest an author can get to an autochthonous race, while still taking advantage of a Trojan ancestry. But Saxo clearly has no interest in the Trojans.

Saxo does connect his founder to another line; Angul is said immediately after the above passage to have founded the English race, and Saxo cites Bede for authority. Here Saxo displays the same genealogical ambition as *Orkneyinga saga*, connecting the Earls of Orkney to the Dukes of Normandy and thus to the kings of England. It is also the same ambition of *Breta sögur*, when Gawain is placed in the line of Norwegian kings, Hákon góði is mentioned at the end of the saga, and Haukr's own region of Hǫrðaland is stated to be the seat of the most ancient of Norwegian kings.¹⁷² This emphasizes the clear interest, particularly in the *Gesta Danorum* and *Orkneyinga saga*, in a singular, native point of origin.

As Saxo is not interested in glorifying his history with Trojans, the same can be said of the giants;¹⁷³ he fully accepts giants as one of the foundational races, akin to the gods. Yet gods and giants are both mostly antagonized in the *Gesta Danorum*.¹⁷⁴ Saxo's interest is in men, and specifically in Danish men. Although he must, because of his sources and

¹⁷²Considering Knut the great's empire and the continuing ambitions for England held by Danish kings after his death, along with Saxo's own interest in glorifying the Danish Baltic empire, this suggested connection between the founders of the English and Danish race might have been intended to have far more sweeping implications than the other examples stated here. Or, perhaps, it is only a sign of Saxo's usual ambition, hyperbole, and willingness to extensively alter his sources for his interests.

¹⁷³The issue of giants of the *Gesta Danorum* is a large, complex, and understudied topic, and I will here limit myself to a few points which relate to the issues of the other texts discussed here.

¹⁷⁴This can perhaps be most clearly seen in the divine genealogy, wherein Saxo describes ancient races of illusion-casting sorcerers, one of which is clearly intended to be giants; they are spoken of alongside the race that probably represents the gods, and it is even said that the two breed. But these three races are clearly separated from men (Saxo Grammaticus, *History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, trans. Peter Fisher, ed. and commentary Hilda Ellis Davidson, 21-22).

possibly his whole worldview, include giants as major characters in his stories, they in no way resemble the hinted, heroic giantness of Fornjótr, or the retrospective giantness of Pallas. His giants are, for the most part, the giants that Cornerius and Arthur must slay in *Breta sögur*: pure, brutal antagonists.

There are exceptions to this, and they certainly suggest that Saxo's worldview in this regard was at least related to that of the author of the introduction to *Orkneyinga saga*. Hading, the main king of Book One of the *Gesta Danorum*, is raised by giants.¹⁷⁵ Starkather is shown in multiple ways to be giant-like; but Saxo is careful to reject the tradition of him actually being a giant, or descended from them:

Fabulosa autem et uulgaris opinio quędam super ipsius ortu rationi in consentanea atque a ueri fide penitus aliena confinxit. Tradunt enim quidam, quod a gigantibus editus monstruosi generis habitum inusitata manuum numerositate prodiderit, asseruntque Thor deum quatuor ex his effluentis naturę uitio procreatas elisis neruorum compagibus auulsisse atque ab integritate corporis prodigiales digitorum eruisse complexus. . .¹⁷⁶(*But a common tale has been invented about his (Starkather's) origin which is fictitious, unreasonable and downright incredible. For some folk tell how he was born of giants and revealed his monster kind by an extraordinary number of hands. They assert that the god Thor broke the sinews which joined four of these superfluous extensions of freakish Nature and tore them off, plucking away the unnatural bunches of fingers from the body proper. . .*)¹⁷⁷

Here, Saxo may imply the sort of conception of past heroes that is at play in the Pallas story, simply, that there were much larger than modern men. But he is clearly rejecting any conception between a locally Scandinavian idea of a race of giants being related by blood

¹⁷⁵Saxo Grammaticus, *History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, trans. Peter Fisher, ed. and commentary Hilda Ellis Davidson, 21.

¹⁷⁶Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum (Danmarkshistorien)*, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, ed. and trans. Peter Zeeberg, Vol. 1, 380.

¹⁷⁷Saxo Grammaticus, *History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, trans. Peter Fisher, ed. and commentary Hilda Ellis Davidson, 170.

to his heroes, and his kings.

Saxo's use of verse is massively complicated and is dealt with thoroughly in Friis-Jensen's *Saxo as Latin Poet*. Two aspects of it, however, are of particular relevance here. Most obviously, all of Saxo's verse appears in the legendary portion of his work; though writing in Latin and in a Latin style, his direct poetic sources are Norse, and thus innately linked with the pre-Christian period and pagan kings. Thus he suggests the link between prosimetrum and legendary history, though in the case of *Breta sögur* that history is still largely Christian. Second, although verse is used in many places through the first half of the work, the most prominent poems deal with ideas of the descent and downfall of man. Though neither are explicitly eschatological, the verses spoken by Starkather to Ingel deal with the corruption of the warrior Danes by the decadent Saxons,¹⁷⁸ and Saxo's version of *Bjarkamál* is filled with warrior fatalism, in a manner often similar to the skaldic passages of *Merlínusspá*.¹⁷⁹

As the themes are related, so are the functions; in dealing with an extended legendary history, authority becomes particularly important. This can be seen in this use of prosimetrum, for verse to authorize prose, in the *Gesta Danorum*, *Heimskringla* and *Breta sögur*, as well as in the shortness of the legendary introductions of *Orkneyinga saga* and the *Historia Norwegie*. But Saxo, Geoffrey of Monmouth, the translator of *Breta sögur*, and even more Gunnlaugr of *Merlínusspá* have an additional source of authority: the very idea of translation.

Saxo and Geoffrey, as Latin author's, make this most explicit. Speaking of the carvings and oral storytelling that he claims are his native Danish sources in his prologue, Saxo states:

Quorum uestigiis ceu quibusdam antiquitatis uoluminibus inherens tenoremque

178Saxo Grammaticus, *History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, trans. Peter Fisher, ed. and commentary Hilda Ellis Davidson, 187-95; Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum (Danmarkshistorien)*, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, ed. and trans. Peter Zeeberg, Vol 1. 418-439.

179Saxo Grammaticus, *History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, trans. Peter Fisher, ed. and commentary Hilda Ellis Davidson, 56-63; Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum (Danmarkshistorien)*, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, ed. and trans. Peter Zeeberg, Vol 1. 170-187.

ueris translationis passibus emulatus metra metris reddenda curauī, quibus scribendorum series subnixa non tam recenter conflata quam antiquitus edita cognoscatur, quia præsens opus non nugacem sermonis luculentiam, sed fidelem uetustatis notitiam pollicetur.¹⁸⁰ (*Adhering to these tracks, as if to some ancient volumes, and following the sense with the true steps of a translator, I have assiduously rendered one metre by another. My chronicle, relying on these aids, should be recognized not as something freshly compiled but as the utterance of antiquity; this book is thereby guaranteed to be a faithful image of the past, not a flashy exhibition of style.*)¹⁸¹

Geoffrey is no less explicit in his postscript, and even frames it as a defense. He calls on his fellow-historians, Caradoc of Llancarfan, William of Malmesbury, and Henry of Huntingdon, to write the history of Wales and the Saxons:

[Q]uos de regibus Britonum tacere iubeo, cum non habeant librum illum Britannici sermonis quem Walterus Oxenefordensis archidiaconus ex Britannia adeuxit, quem de historia eorum ueraciter editum in honore praedictorum principum hoc modo in Latinum sermonem transferre curauī. ([H]owever, I forbid them to write about the kings of the Britons since they do not possess the book in British which Walter, archdeacon of Oxford, brought from Brittany, and whose truthful account of their history I have here been at pains in honour of those British rulers to translate into Latin.)¹⁸²

Breta sögur, to a great extent, adopts the 'saga style', and thus is distant from his work; most of those instances where he makes himself known have been noted in the previous chapters.

180Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum (Danmarkshistorien)*, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, ed. and trans. Peter Zeeberg, Vol 1., 74.

181Saxo Grammaticus, *History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, trans. Peter Fisher, ed. and commentary Hilda Ellis Davidson, 5.

182Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 280-81.

While not using the idea of translation in the same sense as Saxo or Geoffrey, he does defend himself by naming his direct source, and by further naming the patrons and sources of his immediate model, he thereby provides two layers of legitimization and source for the text at hand:

Avll þersi tíðindi er nv hafa sogð verið fra Bretlandz bygð ok þeira konvnga við skiptvm er þar varv yfir erv rituð eftir þeiri bok er historia Britorvm heitir ok er hon ger af fyri sogn Alexandrs Lvndvna byskvps ok Valltara erki diakn or Axna fvrðv ok Gilla ens fróða.¹⁸³ (*All these events which now have been told, concerning the settled of Britain and the dealings of their kings, when they ruled, are written according to that book which is called the History of the Britons, and it was made according to the instruction of Alexander, bishop of London, and Walter, archdeacon of Oxford, and Gildas the wise.*)

Although Gunnlaugr makes no clear reference to the idea of translation, he is more clear than the prose translator about the idea that he is interpreting an older text; namely, taking prophecies and making poetry. Much of the authority of the poem is build into its structure, as first-person speech of Merlin, a prophet which was certainly known in Norway according to the *Historia Norwegie* and AM 573 4to. Gunnlaugr clearly argue for the importance of what he's writing and his position in the process; much of this has been

183Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 301. This detail is somewhat odd, since this postscripted dedication ignores several of the figures Geoffrey dedicates his work to, but suggests that some form of the dedication would have been in the Latin exemplar of *Breta sögur*. Alexander appears in the dedication to the prophecies, as the figure who drove Geoffrey to publish them, while Walter gave Geoffrey the old British book which he ostensibly translated; both, importantly, are clergymen, unlike earl Robert of Gloucester, who also appears in the opening dedication (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 4-5, 142-3). Even stranger is the dedication to 'Gilla fróði', which seems most likely to be suggesting Gildas sapiens/'the wise'. However, though Gildas appear frequently in the *Historia*, and is noted and praised, like Bede, as a source, a dedication to him is never suggested along the lines of those to Walter and Alexander. Further, he appears most often, when he has a title, as 'Gildas hystoricus' (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 30-1, 52-3, 268-9; also Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britannie II: First Variant Version*, ed. Wright, 34, 65). 'Gildas sapiens' as a complete name seems to not appear in the histories of Bede, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, or the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; unless Haukr or the translator had access to another source, 'fróði' is likely a translation of 'hystoricus'.

notable from the verses quoted in the previous chapters, but bears repeating. From the first part of the poem:

V.4) Lios man lyðvm lioðborg vera þo er i fræði flest að raða þat er fyrri iofvr
olldvm sagði brezkri þioðv nv skal brag kveða.¹⁸⁴ (*The verse-fortress will be clear to men; still, it is the foremost of knowledge to interpret that which kings said in ages past to the British people; now shall poetry be recited.*)

And more explicitly in the second part:

V. 93) [H]er mvn ek letta lioð at semia ok spasogv spillis bavga þo erv fleiri orð ens
froða mannz hefi ek svmt af þeim samit i kvæði.¹⁸⁵ (*Here I will leave off composing the verses and prophecies of the breaker of rings, though there are more words of the wise man; I have arranged some of them into verse.*)

V. 96) Lesi salma spioll lesi spamanna lesi biartar þeir bækr ok roðla ok finni þat at
en froði halr hefir horskegla hagað spasogv sem fyrri hanvm fyrðar helgir.¹⁸⁶ (*Read the sayings of the psalms; read of the prophets; read those illustrious books and scrolls, and discover it, that the noble man has wisely arranged prophecies, as holy men before him.*)

In all of these texts, it seems apparent that a certain extra authority and defense is needed; the authors and translators were aware that what they wrote was legendary history, and that their sources, real or fictitious, need explicating. Translation, real or fictitious, represents the idea of moving this authority from one cultural milieu to another, from one audience to another even, as in Saxo's case, if the two milieus cover the same geographical place and time. Though medieval ideas of translation were certainly more liberal than modern, the

¹⁸⁴Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Hauksbók*, 272.

¹⁸⁵*Ibid*, 282.

¹⁸⁶*Ibid*, 283.

same basic idea was present: by translating a work, or even by using a work as a source, these authors mimic and take what authority that original might have had.

Overall a comparative analysis of legendary history among several texts shows that *Breta sögur* is unusual in several respects: the obvious adaptation of the legendary history of one cultural group by another relates it more to the *Aeniad* and the Latin Troy-stories than any of the works presented here. Though synoptic, all the other works in this chapter move beyond the 'legendary' period and approach very close to the author's own time, while *Breta sögur* stays, but for the final Anglo-Saxon genealogy, well into the distant past. However, through their relation to or rejection of the Virgilian historical model, all of these works are connected. Further, if we look at *Breta sögur* as a part of Hauksbók, and the genealogies therein, these works are also related by their use of native Scandinavian models of legendary kingship, either descent back to Odin or autochthonous origins. *Breta sögur* without a doubt deserves to be considered at greater length among them.

Conclusion

Translation is not simply a linguistic change, particularly in dealing with medieval historiography. There must be some manner of cultural translation; a text must be made significant and comprehensible to its new audience. When such a translation is transmitted, recopied and readapted for changing audiences, the cultural translation continues to occur. Still, at every step, the original text remains. Thus, when we are reading the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*, we are reading Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, the particular Latin version that travelled to Scandinavia, the original Norse translation, and whatever redactions took place before Haukr adapted the text.

Yet we are still reading a text of the early fourteenth century; a text which reflects Haukr's interests, the interests of his audience, and the literary milieu that they were a part of. The collection of changes that have been made to the text are gathered at that historical point, and to some extent are probably a jumble. It is intended by the inference of the idea of a consistent narrator through *Breta sögur*, some structure has been drawn from and given to the text and its adaption from its Latin model.

Accepting that structure, and the various types of details examined here—geographical, genealogical, religious, and literary—*Breta sögur* can be seen as a text adapted for a Norse audience. Its geographical scope has been recentered from the Latin original away from Wales and France, the areas of Geoffrey's personal and political concern, and back into the rest of the British isles, and out into the Atlantic Isles and Scandinavia. Its genealogical scope is larger than Geoffrey's, and as a part of an encyclopedic collections it is less focused on the British line of kings. The concerns of the learned Icelandic and Norwegian culture of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries—Christian, pagan, and secular—are apparent in the detail of the new narrative.

Likewise on the levels of form and genre, *Breta sögur* can be seen as intersecting and relating widely with the Old Norse corpus, with *konungasögur* and *fornaldarsögur*, as well as with its own special category of the pseudo-historical translations. Its prosimetrical

form, unique among the translations, both Old Norse translations and medieval translations of Geoffrey's *Historia*, still inherently connects to the rest of Norse literature, and this form makes it a dynamic, self-reflective text that invites further scholarly examination.

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Appendix: A Translation of the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*

I have primarily used Finnur Jónsson's edition of Hauksbók for this translation; for the much more difficult poetry of *Merlínuspa* I have also made use of Jón Sigurðsson's partly normalized edition and accompanying Danish translation. Where the two editions differ I have generally sided with Finnur Jónsson; any exceptions will be noted.

This translation was done in a limited space of time, primarily to accompany this thesis. Likewise, Hauksbók is a difficult manuscript, and while there are no major lacunae in the *Breta sögur* section there are obscure passages, occasionally so bad that even Finnur Jónsson could not make perfect sense of them. Thus there will certainly be mistakes, accidental inconsistencies, and less than graceful renderings and interpretations. Still, every attempt has been made to follow the Norse as closely as possible while still allowing the saga to be readable and, hopefully, somewhat enjoyable. For the verse, no attempt has been made to render a poetic translation, and word order has been changed, when necessary, to allow for comprehensible prose.

All Old Norse citations to *Breta sögur* are from Finnur Jónsson's edition of Hauksbók, abbreviated to 'Hb', while the citations from the *Historia Regum Britanniae* are from the Reeve/Wright translation/edition, abbreviated to 'Hist'. See the accompanying bibliography for full references to both.

Names have generally been rendered back to their Latin,¹⁸⁷ in the case of names from the *Historia Regum Britanniae* following the normalizations of Neil Wright's translation. Place names have been dealt with on an individual basis, but again, generally following the Latin and translation of Wright. A major exception is Wright's rendering of 'Kambria' as 'Wales' and 'Albania' as 'Scotland': I have generally left them in their Latin forms. Where the Old Norse orthography differs significantly from the presumed Latin or

¹⁸⁷For the names from the *Aeneid*, the general reference has been to the glosses and text of the Henry S. Frieze edition (Frieze, Henry S. *Virgil's Aeneid: Books I-XII*. Revised by Walter Dennison. New York: American Book Company, 1902). As the relation between the texts are entirely uncertain, the *Aeneid* has only been used as a general reference and specific references and citations to passages have not been made.

modern form, notes have been given, most frequently in the Aeneid-section where direct reference to a source text is more uncertain,

Verb tense has generally been standardized to the past. While this does take some stylistic precision away from the prose, the tense variation has seemed too haphazard to preserve in translation and maintain a readable text.

1. Here begins the saga of the Bretons

It is said now, of Aeneas the mild, that he wandered long at sea, when he went forth from Troy, and he came at last to Sicily. Then there came forth great chieftains and friends of the Trojans, Erikneus¹⁸⁸ and Acestes; they gave great hospitality to Aeneas and he was there for the winter, but when spring came, he prepared to leave and went to sea, but then they were taken by such a great storm that some ships sank, and at last they were brought to land.

They had been there some days without food, when Aeneas saw a hart, and shot it, and cooked it. There they saw a great and fair land, and many cities; they found a good harbor. They saw there near themselves the greatest capital city, and on its walls was written the fall of the Trojans. There Aeneas saw where Troilus was killed, and according to their custom it is written that twigs were twisted into his hair, this sight greived him so greatly. The most powerful queen ruled over this city, who is called Dido, and when she knew that Aeneas had come there, she went herself to meet him, and invited him to her, and he accepted. She tried to gladden him with games and entertainment of all kinds, but he was always unhappy, and when the queen noticed this, she said:

“You, Aeneas the mild, may the gods give you a glad heart and great honor, just as you are born for, and you and your men shall have all the honor that we have authority over.”

Aeneas answered: “Lady, I cannot be glad, for that sorrow is now repeated, because before my eyes, on your walls, is written the death of my kinsmen.”

The queen asked him to tell her about those great events which happened there, and he did so. The queen held then a great feast, and there she held games of all kinds. Aeneas paid little heed to this, and when the queen noticed this, she asked him then to adorn her feast with his own skills. He did as the queen asked, and played with great skill on all kinds of stringed instruments, better than any man there had heard before. The queen valued him

¹⁸⁸It is uncertain what character, if any, this refers to; in Book 5 of the Aeneid, Acestes alone comes to meet Aeneas.

above all men, and laid on him a great love, because she loved him before all men, and so it happened that he possessed her, and he loved her well now and was content with his lot. He was there one winter.

On one occasion Aeneas dreamed that Freyja came to him and said: "Go to Italy and take there that great honor that the gods have intended for you." After that he prepared his ship in secret, because he knew that he would not get away if the queen became aware of it, and he left in secret; but when she discovered that he was gone, then she sent a message to him, and said to him:

"Dido, queen of Carthage, sends to Aeneas the greeting of the gods and her love. This highest city of the world, which made you powerful, which is greatly in need of your oversight. we offered you such honor, as you had with us. You can well remember then when you came to us, and your men could have no help from you, but I greeted you with all glory, I let you be conveyed into my hall with all honor, and I set you in my highseat, and my men stood up and served you and your men. I gave your men gold and silver and treasure of all kinds, but I gave you all the kingdom, and I granted you that which was nearest to me, which was me myself. You swore on your gods and then upon our gods that you should be mine wherever you might be. Now you have betrayed me, and thus the gods as well. Now I shoot my words to them, that they avenge me on you. Take care that it does not seem to be your doing, that you destroy both me and those sons which are concealed in me, from your dwelling here. I knew at once that you wish not to return to our kingdom; you shall then know my certain death, and that of the children that I go with. Farewell, if you wish not to find me will I live, then act now for the sake of humanity and conceal my grave, and drink my funeral feast, because I think that now of great importance. Be well."

When she hear that he certainly would not come to her, then she killed herself, and it is thought that king Hannibal avenged this on the Romans, then when he conquered Rome, and killed thus many chieftains in a stone hall, so that he moistened the clay with the blood of Romans and made cement thereof. He also sent home to Carthage eighty baskets, full with the gold rings of those Romans that he had vanquished in that war.

2. Concerning Aeneas and Latinus

A king ruled Italy, who is called Latinus. His daughter is called Latina; she founded the first Latin alphabet, and from her name are called all those Latins who know that tongue. That was also the chief language of Rome, while their kingdom stood, and not only theirs but also of all the world. His queen worshiped Sif. Latinus sat there, where it is now called Rimina,¹⁸⁹ and on one occasion Sif appeared to the Queen in a dream, and said: “Prepare yourself for Aeneas, that he might not come over to that kingdom, where he is driven from his native country and from other nations.”

Now Aeneas went forth until came to Italy, and took land where now the Tiber falls into the sea. Then it was revealed to him that he should have peace with king Evander; “He rules there where you shall set a city, that will become the capital city of all Italy, because you shall possess all of the Italian-kingdom, and so that you believe this I offer you that sign: as you travel your road, you will find under a tree, that which is called Ulex,¹⁹⁰ a white sow with thirty completely white piglets, and at that place you shall raise a city, and you shall call it Alba.”

It all happened as was said, and Aeneas raised a city on that place which before was told to him, in the same manner as Carthage was built in, which queen Dido had made. It was stronger than any other in Italy. It was also manned with great zeal. Aeneas was famous widely across the land, and among all men they were thought of great worth, those who came from Troy.

3. Concerning Turnus

There was a king called Daunus,¹⁹¹ who ruled over Tuscany. His son was called Turnus, the greatest hero in Italy. He heard that Aeneas had word sent to king Latinus

¹⁸⁹Presumably the Italian city of *Ariminum*, but I can find no mention of it in the *Aeneid*, and the source is unknown.

¹⁹⁰Presumably a transcription of the Latin *ilex*, meaning 'holm-oak.'

¹⁹¹“Damivs” (*Hb* pg. 233, ln. 30).

asking for his daughter Latina, she who Turnus had asked for before, and he became greatly enraged, and the king said that he would give his daughter to no foreign man, one who had fled from his native country. Rather, he wished to give her to Turnus, the foremost hero, and a native there, descended from a line of the greatest kings, and said that he wished that he would become master of that kingdom, rather than a foreign man—because he would become the master of those lands, he who possessed her. He ended thus his speech, and bid all his men to serve Turnus, and promised his daughter to him. Afterward Turnus gathered a great army, and these were the chieftains with him: Messapus¹⁹² and Numanus, the in-law of Turnus, king Remulus,¹⁹³ Serranus¹⁹⁴ and many other chieftains; and in the city with Aeneas were these chieftains: Bitias,¹⁹⁵ Pandarus, Silvanus, Menesthus, Serestus, Tupidus,¹⁹⁶ the foster brother of Ascanius.

When Aeneas heard of this, then he had words with his men and told them these tidings; he said that he would go to meet king Evander and Pallas, his son, and ask for help from them, and he set Ascanius, his son, as leader over the city: “And never give up the city before I come back.” Then he went away from the city, to that father and son, and they welcomed him nobly. He told them his mission; they promised him their help. Pallas was the fourth greatest and strongest man in the land.

4. The Fall of Pallas, the Son of the King

King Latinus and Turnus gathered armies when they heard that Aeneas was away, and went to Aeneas' city and laid siege to it, to see how hard to overcome it was. Turnus then spoke before his people, and said:

“It is known to you, what obligation forces us to drive these men from us, who have

192“Mesapor” (*Hb* pg. 234, ln. 7).

193“Rampvrius” (*Hb* pg. 234, ln. 8), Finnur Jónsson notes his confusion of the odd spelling of this name, but cannot read it differently.

194“Sesrapnvs” (*Hb* pg. 234, ln. 8). ‘Serranus’ seems the closest fit, though he appears in the *Aeneid* only as a young Rutulian that Aeneas kills.

195“Bissa” (*Hb* pg. 234, ln. 10).

196Uncertain origin; possibly a Norse addition.

settled in our kingdom. You also know their intent, not to halt here or in any other place, before they have here just what they want. They have now been driven from nearly all the world, because none wish to endure their overbearing conduct, as was the case then when the Greeks drove them away. Aeneas has also asked for that woman, who was already promised to me.”

He commanded his men go first to burn Aeneas' ships, those that were off-shore from the city. Turnus and his men attacked the city with all their cunning, but they defended themselves bravely, and when they had been attacking for a long time, then the city-men took council among themselves. There were two men in the city who were the most dutiful and the greatest heroes in the army of Aeneas. One was called Nisus and the other Euryalus. They wished to ride out from the city and tell Aeneas of the fighting.

Now, they put on armor, and went secretly out from the city, and then came into the army, where many were drunk and fallen asleep. Then Nisus drew his sword, and struck with both hands, and Euryalus did the same and now they killed many multitudes of knights, and thus waded out from the army, and they had killed so many men that they did not themselves know the number, and they were so weary that they nearly could not walk, and this victory is widely praised in books, which they won there.

But when they came out from the army and morning came and arose bright, and the morning sun shone on their helms, they saw a great host riding towards them. That chieftain was at their head who is called Volcens. He was intending to join Turnus and his army. He saw these two knights, and knew by their weapons that they were of the Trojans. Nisus now went away into a grove, but Euryalus was infirm and they came between him and the grove and now attacked him from all sides, but he defended himself mightily, and because no one can stand against great odds, they then killed him; and when Nisus saw that, he leaped from the wood and struck with both hands so that nothing stood against him. He cleared a path for himself to the chieftain Volcens, and he laid him through with his sword, and his arms were all covered in blood up to the elbows. Now the weariness of fighting and wounds attacked his body so that he could not stand. He came now to where his companion was fallen and laid over him and said:

“My good friend Euryalus, we shall endure death in one place,” and he was then hacked up.

Then they took their heads and bore them on poles before Turnus, and told him of these events, and he became very glad at this. He set all his forces into motion against the city, and had the heads before his standard. They went forth so mightily that Turnus was able to break into the walls of the city, and he was so eager that he waited for no other man, and leaped into the city, and immediately killed two chieftains, and he grabbed a third and tore him asunder. There was a chieftain in the city called Cuspides;¹⁹⁷ he tossed a lantern at Turnus. Turnus became so furious at that they he struck with both hands. The commander Bitias undertook first to meet him, and struck into Turnus' shield and then leaned back, but when Turnus saw that his shield was taken from him, he laid his *kesja*¹⁹⁸ into his small-guts, and immediately afterwards he laid into Pelagius, his companion, with his sword.

Menestheus¹⁹⁹ saw this and grew very angry and said: “It is an eternal shame to bear, that a single man walks thus amongst us.” Then two men leaped against him, Serestus and Menestheus,²⁰⁰ and Turnus killed them both.

Now the city-men found that a small host had come into the city. They closed all the gates of the city, and attacked at him from all sides, but Turnus defended himself so that there came no wound upon him, and when it grew dark then it befell him, as other men, that his might had to struggle against exhaustion. Then he drew back to the bank of the river, and he then so was wearied that he tumbled down into the river, and there was under a boat, and there he came down and sunk into the darkness down along the river, and swam out under the wall. He came thus to his men and urged them to attack the city, and said that it was as good as conquered. Then spoke a knight of Turnus:

“You foolish and ignorant men, give your city and yourselves to the power of Turnus, because you know that you are more accustomed to a life of luxury and

197Seemingly an added name. Possibly a misreading of Latin *cuspis*, *cuspidis* 'spear, spear-point'.

198The only mention of a *kesja* in *Breta sögur*, seemingly a direct translation of the Latin *phalarica*, a type of heavy javelin.

199“Merstvs” (*Hb* pg. 236, ln. 2).

200“Menenvs” (*Hb* pg. 236, ln. 4).

entertainment, play and drink and the embraces of women than war and battle. You have also heard, that no people are harder than the Saxar,²⁰¹ and they are said to be as stone, and thus you are very foolish, if you wish to fight with us.”

Then answered young Ascanius, the son of Aeneas, and said: “It is not true, good man, that the men of our land do not know something about war, and here you can see some small evidence, that there is still something remaining of the Trojans.”

Ascanius threw a spear at him, and through him, and he fell down dead; the battle then began anew. Then Aeneas came into it, and king Tarcho,²⁰² Aulestes,²⁰³ and Mezentius²⁰⁴ with a great army. There was also Pallas the son of king Evander. This is one of the most famous battles of the Trojans; all feared Pallas and his terrible strength. He had never come before into battle, but neither hauberks nor horse stood against him. He went shouting around the army, and Turnus turned back, and when Turnus saw how much death he made, and how terrible he was, he charged then against him. And when Pallas saw that, he threw his spear at him; this came under Turnus' hand and against his three-fold coat of mail, and it ran outside the ribs and through there. When Turnus got this wound then he threw his spear at Pallas, the shaft of which was not narrower than a thick house-beam²⁰⁵, it came into the middle of Pallas, and there he lost his life. Then night broke up the fray.

Aeneas had the body of Pallas buried with great honor, and had it anointed with aromatic herbs, so that it would not decay, and during the days of king Sigurðr jorsalafari and the days of that caesar called Henry,²⁰⁶ another by that name, there was dug a foundation in Rome for a certain building. Then they found that body, unrotten, in a stone coffin. He had a great wound in the middle of his body that was three feet and a hand's breadth in length; his height surpassed the walls of Rome. A burning lantern stood by his

201Uncertain Norse addition; the source of this dialogue, if any, is uncertain. Possibly an attempt to connect the Rutulians to the Saxons, and/or provide some kind of etymology. Certainly that juxtaposition of 'Saxar' being 'sem stein' (*Hb* pg. 236, ln. 18) is probably not a coincidence.

202“Tarton” (*Hb* pg. 236, ln. 24).

203“Alrestvs” (*Hb* pg. 236, ln. 24), 'Aulestes', an Etruscan chieftain, seems to be the closest fit.

204“Mecencivs” (*Hb* pg. 236, ln. 24), as Mezentius is an ally of Turnus and the Latins, presumably this line is describing reinforcements coming in on both sides; unless it is simple confusion of the translator.

205“ass” (*Hb* pg. 236, ln. 34).

206“Heinrekr” (*Hb* pg. 237, ln. 2).

head, that could not be extinguished by force of water or wind; it could not be melted or destroyed, but with skilful bore with steel beneath the flame, this light went out through that bore that was just spoken of, with the air brought inside, and with the wind coming between the flame and the lamp. This was written on the stone coffin at his feet:

“Here lies Pallas, the son of Evander, according to his religion and custom, he who the spear of the knight Turnus killed.” It is reported that he was found during the days of caesar Henry, another by that name.

5. The Fall of Turnus the famous

Now the time of battle came, when there came to the forces of Turnus the famous Mezentius and his son Lausus. They now fought terrifyingly; Turnus killed many men; Aeneas killed three chieftains, and then came against him the courteous Lausus, and when they had fought for a moment, Aeneas said:

“Lausus, live your youth, and strive not against me!”

He became ever fiercer at that, and at last he fell before Aeneas. Aeneas and all his army greatly grieved at this. A truce was then set between them for a time. When the time for battle came again they divided then into battle arrays, and trumpets blew over all the hosts. Turnus drove forth so hard that all fled away from him, and he killed many heroes; and so Aeneas did the same. He met the great Mezentius and they fought long, and it ended thus, that Mezentius fell. Now there was the hardest fighting, and hundreds of men fell there, so that none could count them, and now the slaughter turned upon Turnus. When he saw this, he wished to find Aeneas himself, and at that his men burst into flight and he reluctantly had to retreat, and he was out of the kingdom for a time.

Aeneas now laid that kingdom beneath him. Many great events occurred there while Turnus was away, concerning the hostilities between Aeneas and the Latin kings, and Aeneas always had the better lot. The king then sent word to Nestor the wise, that he should fight against Aeneas, and offered him great rewards thereupon. When this message came to Nestor then he said:

“I saw the handiwork of Aeneas in Troy, so I will not come to war against him, and it is known to few men more than me of what kind these Trojans are, and I will not come there.”

Now these tidings came that Turnus had come again into the land with a great army, and Latinus and Turnus went to meet Aeneas with an overwhelming force. He also gathered an army to meet them, and the fiercest fighting began between them, and it went better for Aeneas' men. Now Turnus saw that Aeneas would gain victory, if it continued thus. He also knew, if he gave up his weapons, since Aeneas was so gentle, that he would keep his life, and Aeneas thought the same. When he saw Turnus, and the glorious belt that he had taken from Pallas, then it shocked him so greatly that his anger grew hot; they leaped now each at the other, and fought so mightily, that none on this side of the Greek sea²⁰⁷ had seen another like it. There could be seen many and mighty blows, but it ended thus, that Turnus fell.

After that battle Aeneas obtained Latina, the daughter of king Latinus, who Turnus had possessed, and then he took all their kingdom beneath him, and ruled it to his death-day, when lighting struck him unto death.

6. Concerning the sons of Aeneas and concerning Brutus

After Aeneas his son Ascanius took the kingdom. He had Alba built up by the Tiber, that which is now in Rome. Aeneas ruled Italy for three winters, and Ascanius his son for thirty-seven winters; he had a son who is called Silvius. He married young, and obtained that women who is called Lavinia. When Silvius knew that his wife was pregnant he sent for soothsayers, and asked whether she would have a son or a daughter. They said that he would have a son who would be very long-lived and do many ill deeds, kill both his father and mother, but he would live long and become famous. This happened all as they said; his mother died when she gave birth to him.

He was named Brutus. He grew up with his father until he was fifteen winters old,

²⁰⁷“þenna veg Girklanz hafs” (*Hb* pg. 238, ln. 16); it seems noteable that the same phrase is used in Haukr's genealogy, in describing the third of the world descended from Japheth: “þennann veg Gricklands hafs” (*Hb* pg. 504, ln. 18-19).

and had abilities of all kinds. On one occasion when he went deer-hunting with his father, he saw a hart, and shot at it, and when he sought for it, the arrow stood there, through his father Silvius. When men heard of this they drove him away from Italy. He went first to his kinsmen, those who had come from Troy, and they were enslaved in Greece. He became their leader and freed them all; he quickly became a powerful and daring chieftain. He was the most liberal of men; such a great host drifted now to him that he had near to seven thousand men, not counting women and children. There was a man in Greece called Assaracus. He was Greek from his father's family and Trojan from his mother's. This man aided Brutus with money and throngs of men, and they cleared forests, and made castles and dauntless fortresses for themselves; when they thought that they were secure, they sent a letter to the Greek king with these words:

“Brutus, the banished chieftain of the race of Trojans, sends to Pandrasus, the king of Greece, his greeting. You act absurdly, when you make such hard conditions for the men who are descended from the Trojan race, that they should settled wilderness, and live there on roots and the flesh of wild beasts, while you sit in luxury of all sorts and have everywhere that which the heart desires. Let now, at last, their misery end! Do now one of two things: either take them in reconciliation, or compensate them for those great grievances which you have done to them; third, give them freedom to go away, and let it turn out such as it may.”

When the king had read this he became very angry and gathered together an army to attack them. Brutus became aware of this and with out from his castles with six thousand men, into a forest which the king would pass through. He came at him during the night, in secret, and killed a great number of men. The king now fled with his men over the river called Akalon,²⁰⁸ and there a multitude of men perished; some were killed and some fled hither and thither. Among this host was the brother of the king, who was called Antigonus; he turned to meet them with his men, and there was hard fighting, and long before the greater part of his men were killed. He was himself captured and set in irons, and that man with him, who was named Anacletus. Brutus had a thousand men sent back to garrison the castle.

²⁰⁸“Callon” (*Hb* pg. 239, ln. 22).

A great army now gathered around the king, and he thought that Brutus had come into the castle, and he set himself around there, now, and attacked with all sorts of war-engines, but they defended themselves well and bravely, and brought out boiling pitch and glowing-hot stones. When Brutus heard of these events, then he had Anacletus lead before him. He drew his sword and said:

“I have heard the news of the king and my men, so that either you shall buy your life or die here.”

Anacletus answered: “Why would I not negotiate for my life, and that of my companion, if that is a choice?”

Brutus said: “You shall come into the camp of king Pandrasus with me and my men, and I will tell you the plan.”

Anacletus answered. “I will not win my life to bring about the death of the king.”

Brutus laid out the plan. Anacletus went to meet the king's watchmen and when they recognized him, then they asked where Antigonus the king's brother was. He said that they had both come from the dungeon, and said that the shackles had not come off him, and said that he was there in the forest and short distance from them. They went with him into the forest, and Brutus was there before them, and some were killed and some taken.

7. Brutus went then with him to the king's camp, and they did not become aware until they heard the trumpets of Brutus. They grew full of fear, when they woke wine-drunk, and no one got their weapons, but the king himself was captured and brought before Brutus. Then Brutus said to the king:

“You are given two choices: the one, that you die here, at once, or that you give me your daughter Ignoge, and allow all those of Trojan lineage who have come here to leave the kingdom with me, and give us ships and all other things which we need to have.”

The king answered: “I see now that the gods are very angry with me, when my brother should first be captured, and then myself. I have also lost most of the main part of my army. I am now hardly as able to rule as before, then when I sat with my honor in my kingdom. Now, even if my life did not depend on it, you, Brutus, are such a famous and

shrewd and victorious man, that I knew hardly any man in the world, for whom it would be a little trifle to be associated with you. Now I will adopt that counsel, to go gladly to that choice, which was also my plan, as the name of Brutus will live long in the world, and his kinsmen; it may also be that our dealings will be set in sagas. Now it seems to me most honorable, to help you with all that which I can, and give you this counsel. I expect that many noble men will be able to reckon their own family-line to you; I will yet be before all men in their genealogy. I wish now that you choose whether you will have, in dowry with my daughter Ignoge, a third of all my kingdom, or whether you wish that I prepare you to go away where you wish. I will also be a hostage with you, until all has happened as I have here promised.”

He and Brutus agreed to this, and Ignoge was given to Brutus. After that Brutus prepared himself for the journey away; the king gave him three hundred and twenty-four ships, and everything else that he had promised him, and when a fair wind was given, Brutus sailed away. Ignoge became so shaken on the journey that she nearly fell unconcious, and Brutus comforted her. They were out four days before they reached that island called Leogetia. It had been thickly peopled, but it was then very emptied, because of pirates. Brutus has the island explored and found no one but a multitude of beasts in the forests, and they took many of them.

They found a massive, ancient temple, and therein were graven images of Gefjon, Saturn, and Jupiter. They spoke to Brutus, and commanded him to come onto land. Afterwards, he walked up with twelve men; with him was that soothsayer called Gerio; he was the second most noble man with him. They had bound fine ribbons²⁰⁹ around their foreheads, and when they came into the temple they made three fires, one before Odin, one before Thor, and one before Gefjon. Then Brutus walked before the altar of Gefjon, and had a vessel in hand filled with wine and the blood of a white doe. He said:

“You who know the events of heaven and the order of the whole world, and understand the distinctive features of hell: tell me my fate, and where I will settled,

209“tignar dreglvm” (*Hb* pg. 241, ln. 6); presumably following the Latin *vitta*, (*Hist* pg.19, ln. 289) also meaning 'ribbon', but the idea being 'garlands'.

according to your plan, and where I shall command that you, divine maiden, be worshiped for eternity.”

He spoke thus nine times and walked four times around the altar, and poured from the vessel into the fire. Then the doe's skin was laid down before the altar, and Brutus laid himself there and fell asleep. He thought that he then saw Gefjon before him, and she spoke:

“In the western half of the world, near the kingdom of Gaul, lies an island out in the sea, unsettled; there giants settled earlier. There you must live, and your race, into eternity, and your kin will have authority over all the world.”

When he woke he told his dream to his men, and they became joyful and went to the ships, and sailed; immediately a strong wind was given to Africa. From there they sailed to Altars of the Philistines, and from there to the pit of Salinae,²¹⁰ and from there to Mauritania, from from there to the pillars of Hercules. From there they sailed to that sea which is called Tyrrhene, and there they found four thousand Trojans, those who had fled with Antenor. Their chieftain was Corineus. He was generally a gentle man, but the most bold with weapons, and so strong that he had tossed giants as a child. When they met Brutus, they bonded in friendship and from there until they came to Aquitaine. There ruled a king named Goffarius.

Corineus had gone from the ships with three hundred men, to hunt deer. The king's men found them and said that the king had given permission to no men to hunt deer. Corineus had come then, and said:

“We will do as we had before intended, whatever he says.”

Those who were foremost among the king's men bent up his bow, and intended to shoot Corineus. He grabbed him and broke the bow and ripped it from his hands, and tore it all asunder into sticks. When his companions saw this they fled and told the king. He was furious, and gathered a great host. Brutus heard of this and came onto land with his army to meet the king, and there began a hard battle and a great slaughter. Corineus strove through

²¹⁰“grafar Salmaevm” (*Hb* pg. 241, ln. 21-2). The Latin given is “lacum Salinarum”, which Wright translates as 'lake of Salinae' (*Hist* pg. 20-21, ln. 321). Assuming the phrase was the same in the exemplar of *Breta sögur*, the Norse translator must have had a somewhat different idea of *lacum*.

the battle lines of the king and struck with both hands, and at this the king's men took to flight, but he leaped after them with sword drawn, and shouted at them and said:

“Turn back, puny wretches, and do not all become shamed, when your thousands flee before me alone.”

At this a hero named Subardus turned to meet him, with six hundred knights, and when he saw Corineus he struck at him, but Corineus brought up his shield and struck him apart through the middle. Brutus then came forth with a hundred knights, and they then slaughtered in great numbers every man who did not flee, and then they could boast their rosy-fair victory²¹¹ and great plunder.

8. Concerning Brutus and Corineus

At that time twelve kings ruled over Gaul, and Goffarius had their support, and they promised to come back into his kingdom and drive the others away. Brutus and Corineus and their men lay nearly all Aquitaine under themselves; they burned cities and killed men and plundered riches. They came to that place that is now called Tours,²¹² and Brutus first had it built, and they settled themselves there because they expected to soon have an army at hand. Those twelve kings made an army with king Goffarius and traveled day and night, until they met one another and each of the two armies drew up, and there was fought the fiercest battle, and in the first clash two thousand knights of Goffarius fell. Fear was then struck into the people, and he and his knights then fled. The kings came into this with their host, and they all then made a stand. The odds were then so great that the Gauls outnumbered four to one. The Trojans were then overpowered and they followed at their heels and overtook their camp, and the fought now in the camp, and they now intended to torture the Trojans to death.

That night Corineus went secretly into the forest with three thousand men, and when morning came Brutus then rode out from his camp with a crowded host, but the Gauls

²¹¹“rósa fogrvn sigri” (*Hb* pg. 242, ln. 11). An odd phrase, but does not seem to be following anything in the Latin.

²¹²“Tvrons borg” (*Hb* pg. 242, ln. 17).

attacked and there a hard battle was fought and there was a great slaughter on both sides. That man who was called Turnus was the greatest hero with Brutus, other than Corineus; he was the sister's son of Brutus. He went forth hardest of all the men, and then he fell from wounds and exhaustion; but when the fighting was at its most severe, then Corineus attacked the kings in the rear with his troops, and then the slaughter turned quickly onto the native troops. He drove them to shout out, and they said that a bottomless number of troops was at their back. He then struck fear into the army and immediately they all fled, but the Trojans followed them and then kill thousands, and then they went back to camp with victory.

Although Brutus had obtained a great victory and much booty, still it seemed to him of little worth, because of the loss of his kinsman Turnus. He buried him there, and the city took its name from him, and was called ever after Tours. Brutus said:

“We have here had a great loss of life among our men. It will be slow for us to recover, because the native army comes greater with every day. Now it is my counsel to try to get away with such plunder as we now have and seek our destiny, and the quality of the land which the gods have shown to us.”

They all consented to this. Afterwards they went to their ships with an immense quantity of riches and sailed to that island which had been shown to them. They landed where it is now called Totnes.²¹³ That island was then called Albion. Nearly no one was settled there except for some giants. They thought that they had never seen a more fair or habitable land; there, every river was full of fish and good things of all sorts. Brutus left now to ride over the land and build settlements, and the giants fled away into mountains and caves. Then was the name of Brutus changed and called Britus,²¹⁴ and from his name was the land afterward called Britain. Corineus traveled farther north in the land and settled

213“Nesio” (*Hb* pg. 243, ln. 14) in the Norse, and “Totnesio” in the Latin (*Hist* pg. 26-7, ln. 452).

Presumably, then, just corruption through abbreviation, which seems to be a common orthographic feature of the names in the Hauksbók *Breta sögur*. It only appears in the Hauksbók version of the saga; no landing place is mentioned in AM 573 4to.

214“Brito” (*Hb* pg. 243, ln. 18), the name change is invented by the Norse translator; apparently he objected to Geoffrey's etymology of 'Britain' from 'Brutus'. But the change is somewhat inconsistent: 'Britus' is only used two more times in the chapter, while 'Brutus' is used six more times.

there where it is now called Cornwall; many giants were there. One of these giants was the greatest and strongest; he was called Goemagog. He was fifteen ells high; they had seen him tear a great tree up with its roots as if a little twig. When Brutus held a feast for his gods, then this giant came there and with him another twenty giants, and they killed many men in front of Brutus. He then gathered an army against them and the twenty were killed, and Goemagog was captured and kept there until Corineus came, because Brutus wished to see the wrestling of Corineus and the giant.

When Corineus came he was glad that he would test himself. Now they began and wrestled mightily; the giant seized him so quickly that three ribs broke asunder in Corineus. Then Corineus became angry, and exerted all of his strength, and afterward he had the giant up on his chest, and leaped then with him onto a certain jutting rock in the sea, and cast him down thereupon, and broke every bone in him. That place is today called Giant's Fall.²¹⁵

Brutus had a city built in the image of Troy. It was placed by a river, there where level plains were nearby, and it was a short distance to the sea. He had the city named New Troy. It has taken more names from those events which later happened. It was long called Trinovantum, after that Kaerlud, but now it is called London. In that time Eli was the priest of Jerusalem, and he was taken by Philistine men. The sons of Hector were then in Troy, and Silvius the grandson of Aeneas and uncle of Brutus, was in Italy. Brutus had three sons by his wife, Innogen, the eldest was called Locrinus, the second Albanactus, the third Kamber, and when they were grown, Brutus took ill. He divided the kingdom between his sons; they held it divided afterward. Brutus died from this sickness; he had then been in Britain twenty-four winters. His sons built his magnificent grave in that city which he himself had had built. He was greatly mourned by his men and all the common people.

9. Concerning the Kings of Britain

Locrinus took that rule after his father which was divided out for him, and that part

²¹⁵“Risa fall” (*Hb* pg. 244, ln. 1). The Latin is slightly more specific, with “Saltus Goemagog” (*Hist* pg. 29, ln. 488)

of the kingdom was called Loegria after his name. Kamber took that part which lies by that river which is called Severn²¹⁶ or Gualia,²¹⁷ and after his days it was called Kambria, and Albanactus took that domain which was then called Albania after his name; it is now called Scotland.

That king who was called Humber ruled over the Huns. He was hard and malicious. He traveled with an army to Albanactus as asks for battle, and Albanactus fell in that battle, but his people escaped and sought out Locrinus, and told him of these events. He went to meet with his brother Kamber and they gathered a host. They meet at the river which is now called Humber, and there a hard battle and a great slaughter began. The Britons attacked fiercely, so that the Huns gave way. There was no means for them to flee, except out into the river, and it was both deep and strong. King Humber and his men leaped out into the river and they perished there, and the land which lies there is called after him Northumbria.²¹⁸ There those brothers took great plunder. Locrinus took there three maidens and one was the most beautiful of them all; she was called Estrildis. Her skin was as fair as snow or ivory. Locrinus felt such great love for her that he then wished to immediately possess her, if he dared, but he had before married Guendoloena, the daughter of king Corineus—who was spoken of before—of Cornwall, and he wished then to possess this woman, rather than her, but when Corineus heard of this he became greatly enraged, and went immediately to meet Locrinus and walked into his hall with a drawn sword, and said:

“You intend to do a great dishonor to me, Locrinus, if you prevail, and you remember little of these things: how often I have born bloody hands for your father, and brought many fine victories into his hands, and how many giants I have felled from their feet for him, while there you intend to break betrothal with my daughter, and I am very old,

216“Sabrin” (*Hb* pg. 244, ln. 19), which seems to be the name somewhat consistently used for the Severn though *Breta sögur*.

217“egvalia” (*Hb* pg. 244, ln. 19) appears to be a confusion on the part of the Norse translator. 'Gualia' is a contemporary name of Geoffrey's time for 'Wales' (Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 62); Geoffrey states that the place is now know as 'Gualia', but for a long time known as 'Kambria' (*Hist*, pg. 30-31, ln. 7-10). Presumably the translator was more familiar with 'Kambria', and took 'Gualia' as another name for the Severn, or perhaps a part of the name.

218“Norðhymbra land” (*Hb* pg. 244, ln. 32). This origin for the name is added by the translator; Geoffrey only explains Humber as eponymous for the river.

and decrepit, if you do that, and then intend to be overbearing about it.”

Men then stood between them, and reconciliations were brought about, such that Locrinus should marry Guendoloena as before was planned, and he married her, but he did not forget his love of Estrildis more than before, but had her kept secretly in London for seven years, so that this was known by few men. He came to her often and secretly, but his wife Guendoloena suspected, and asked where he was, when no man was aware of him, and he said of himself that then he was sacrificing to his gods in secret; he said that only then does one fully receive good from it, when it done so. She let this please her well.

So it is said the Estrildis gave birth to a maiden, so fair that all wondered at her beauty, those who where able to see her. She was given a name, and called Habren, and she was brought up secretly, so that no one suspected then, more than before, what had happened. A little while later (Guendoloena gave birth to that son who Locrinus fathered,) and he was called Maddan. He went to his grandfather Corineus and grew up there; Corineus did not live long after. He was greatly mourned, and his men thought that they would not have his equal. When Locrinus heard of the death of Corineus, he divorced Guendoloena, his wife, and had a wedding feast for Estrildis, with all honor, and set her as queen over all his kingdom.

Guendoloena then traveled to Cornwall and settled herself there in her patrimony, but she was ill-content with her lot, and thought constantly how she could avenge her disgrace. She now had the kingdom of Locrinus raided and the land burned, herds plundered and men killed, and when Locrinus heard of this, then he gathered a host to himself, and planned to bring peace to his kingdom and come to terms with Guendoloena. When news of this came to her, then she gathered an army to herself and told her men that she would accept no reconciliation, unless, she said, either they should fall or should master both kingdoms under her son.

They met, at that place called Stour²¹⁹ and there was the fiercest battle, and when it was fought for a little while, Locrinus was shot through with an arrow, to his death. He had then been king for ten years. When the king was fallen, then his men gave themselves up,

219“Struann” (*Hb* pg. 245, ln. 37).

and she lay then all the kingdom under herself and her son, and herself had the full rule of the kingdom, while Maddan was young. She was cruelly-temper and daring. She had Estrildis and Habren, her daughter, taken and drowned in that river which was then called Severn,²²⁰ but is now called Habren after the name of the maiden.

10. Concerning Madden

Then when Guendoloena had ruled fifteen years she gave to her son his patrimony, but she ruled all of Cornwall until her dying day. At that time Samson prophet in Judea, and was there for all the time that Silvius, the son of Aeneas and the brother of Ascanius, lived. At that time Homer was also a poet. Maddan was gentle and popular, but there is no saga made about him. He had a wife and had with her two sons, one called Mempricius and the other Malim. They were fully grown when their father Maddan breathed his last, and when he was dead, each of them wished to have the whole kingdom, but neither wished to grant equality to the other. Men restrained them for some time, so that they managed not to fight, and neither could betray the other.

Then Mempricius sent word to his brother Malim, that they should meet and arrange a settlement and fellowship between them. He said that it was monstrous, that they were lower than their subjects. This pleased Malim well and the brothers met and walked both together in private conversation with the consent of other men. Then, when they were alone, Mempricius and his men at his command leaped forth and killed Malim, and after his death Mempricius took under himself the whole kingdom and went with an army over all his territory and killed the greatest part of the most high-born and noble men in the land, because it seemed to him that they had long stood against him with evil designs, when he had had them come forth. He knew also that all his evil deeds would least of all take them by surprise.

He also deserted nearly his entire family, because he knew that it would happen, that

²²⁰“Sabrina” (*Hb* pg. 246, ln. 6). The translator again alters Geoffrey's etymology. In the *Historia*, the eponymous Habren gives the river its original name, which, Geoffrey claims, was then later corrupted among the non-British to Severn. (*Hist*, pg. 34-5, ln. 62-4)

not long would pass before one of his kinsmen thought it better suited to him to have the kingdom and to bear the title of king, than he. In place of them, he gave great estates and high titles to men who were before of little worth, but were pleased with all that which he wished. He was married better than befitted him, because she was better than him in all things. They had a son, who was called Ebraucus. He was the best of men and the strongest of his age, and unlike his father in temper, and followed more the healthy counsel of his mother, than the monstrous things of his father. He was popular among the common folk.

When Ebraucus was young Mempricius forsook his only wife, and that was afterward a great scandal. He began then to associate with men and perform lustful acts with them. They consented to it, those who were then his men, because they thought with their consent they would receive great honors and mighty gifts. When he had been called king for twenty winters, he went deer hunting one day with his men, and became separated from them and was entirely alone. He came then into a valley. There he wandered into a great pack of wolves, and they immediately set upon him and torn him asunder, and it was proper that he died badly and shamefully, when he had lived badly. He began his rule with misdeeds, went forth with shame and ended with shame. At that time Saul was king over Judea.

11. Ebraucus, his son, took the kingdom after him, and he first divided it among the high-born men, and also raised up the honor of all his kinsmen, but when he had divided the kingdom as he wished, he then remembered how before his kinsmen had gone raiding in Gaul, and there he had left behind his near kinsmen and intimate friends, and had himself gotten away easily, and he thought that he should avenge this. He then went with an army into Gaul and fought many battles there and won a great victory and obtained great plunder, and went home with his fair triumph and plentiful wealth. When he had been home a short time, he had a great city built and called it after his name Ebraucus, that which is now called York, and where there is now an archiepiscopal seat.²²¹ He raised up many other

²²¹The detail about York and its archiepiscopal see is added in the Norse version; likewise Geoffrey names the city "Kaerebrauc, id est ciuitas Ebrauci" (*Hist*, pg. 35, ln. 90-1); presumably the Norse rendition is a shortening of former, or simply following the latter.

strong cities; he had a stronghold built in Scotland which he called Maiden-Cloister.²²² At that time David was king in Jerusalem and Silvius Latinus in Italy, and Gad, Nathan, and Asaph were prophets.

Ebraucus had twenty wives, and with them twenty sons and twenty daughters. These are the names of his sons: Brutus greenshield, Margadud, Sisillius,²²³ Regin, Morvid, Bladud, Gaul, Dardan, Eldad, Assaracus, Buel, but more are not named;²²⁴ his daughters: Gloigin, Innogin, Oudas, Guenlian, Ragan, Stadud, Gladus, Angaes, Stadiald,²²⁵ the fairest of all maidens who were in Britain. Ebraucus sent all his daughters south over the mountains into Italy to Silvius Alba, who ruled there and offered them in marriage there. Silvius gave them in marriage to noble men of Trojan descent, those who had power and property there. He sent his sons to Saxony, to conquer it and set Assaracus as commander over those brothers, and they went with mighty Silvius Alba to Saxony and were able to lay it all beneath them, and they ruled that kingdom afterward. Brutus was home with his father, and when Ebraucus had ruled for twenty-nine years he died, and Brutus greenshield prepare a magnificent grave for him and took the kingdom after him, but there is no saga made about him.

12. Brutus had a son named Leil who took the kingdom after him. He had a city built in northern Britain which was called after him Carlisle. At that time Solomon the wise ruled over Jerusalem and queen Sheba came to him, and then the temple of the Lord was raised. Leil ruled the kingdom for twenty-five years. His son, who was called Rud Hudibras, took the kingdom after him. He had great cities built, Canterbury and Winchester,²²⁶ and that castle which he called Paladur,²²⁷ and when the castle walls were

222“Meyde clavstr” (*Hb* pg. 247, ln. 27), seemingly an attempt at a literal translation of the Geoffrey's Latin for Edinburgh, “Castellum Puellarum” (*Hist*, pg. 34-5, ln. 94).

223Actually given as “Silvius” (*Hb* pg. 247, ln. 31), but clearly representing 'Sisillius' of the original. Possibly an attempt by the translator to impose a more consistent nomenclature on his text.

224Nine names are missing.

225Twenty-one names are missing.

226Geoffrey gives two names for each city, a Latin and a British (*Hist* pg. 36-7, ln. 118-19); the translator, following what seems to be his usual pattern, uses only the Latin names.

227“Baladyr” (*Hb* pg. 248, ln. 14). Again (see previous note), a transcription of the Latin “Mons Paladur”, ignoring the name Geoffrey gives as more contemporary, “Seftonia” (*Shaftesbury*).

built men heard an eagle speak, but it has not come down after that is has been explained. He had a city built which he called Bath.²²⁸ He ruled thirty-nine years. Elias was then a prophet in Judea, and he asked god that it should not rain, and god granted to him that it did not rain for three and a half years.

His son was called Bladud, who took the kingdom after him, and he was greatly skilled in magic, and men banned him from this there in the land. When he had been king for twenty winters, then he built for himself a feathered-coat, and he wished to fly and look out over his kingdom, and he thought it a somewhat easier thing to be able to take someone by surprise, but when he would have flown in the feathered-coat, the feathered-coat broke and he fell down over London, and came down on the greatest temple in the land, and broke it all asunder into sticks.

His son took the kingdom after him, who is called Lear. He was wealthy and a great warrior for the earlier part of his life. He conquered Cornwall and Scotland. He was not called a wise man. He had three daughters, the eldest called Gonorilla, the second Regau, and the youngest Cordeilla. Cordeilla was the fairest and wisest of them. The king loved her most for a long time, but when he had grown old he wished to find out what sort of love he had from each of them, to reward. He then called the eldest daughter to him and said:

“I am now so old that I will soon end my life, and my kingdom will come into the hands of you, my daughters, and I wish now to know whether you love me.”

She replied: “This I will swear, that I love you more than my life.”

The king said: “I think much of it, that you love my old age more than your youth. I shall also reward you, so that you and your husband shall have a third of all my kingdom.

After this he called Regau to him and asked whether she loved him.

She answered: “I cannot say otherwise concerning my love for you, but that I love you more than any other in the world.”

The king answered: “That love can be promising, and great good shall come here from it. I shall give you another third of my kingdom and that man which you choose

²²⁸“Bado” (*Hb* pg. 248, ln. 16). Here (see previous note), the modern name is given, while Geoffrey's British 'original' is ignored.

yourself.”

Then he called Cordeilla to him and asked her the same.

But she answered: “How can a daughter love her father any more than just the same? I will thus love you just as a good daughter loves a good father, and as great a good as I can, I will love you.”

He answered angrily: “You mock my old age, and I need not be called absolute king over England if I will not note the difference in love between you and your sisters. You shall not be my daughter hereafter, and I shall give you no property, and you shall have no honor here, but your sisters shall have have honor and wealth.”

She said: “That will be best for me, what you wish to permit to be.”

He gave his two elder daughters in marriage to two jarls, and let one half of his kingdom accompany them from home, while he lived, but they would possess all after his days. One of them ruled over Britain and the other over Scotland.

The king of France at that time was called Aganippus, a wise and popular man. He asked that king Lear give him the elder of his daughters in marriage, but the youngest was unmarried, who all said was the best choice. He sent men then to England to ask Cordeilla for her hand, and they bore their errand before king Lear.

The king replied: “Although Aganippus might have wealth and extensive lands, he is neither wise nor well-informed, if he does not know that I have given my daughters in marriage with good terms, but this one which he is now after is unwise and full of ambition, and I know not whether she is my daughter or not. I will also give no dowry with her. It seems to me that this choice for your king is not as honorable as befits his highness, but it seems to me better the sooner we parted.”

The messengers went back and reported the results of their mission, and also that they could say for themselves, that they had never seen and fairer lady or one proven wiser, and she could not be the cause of her reputation.

The king answered: “I am not poorer than Lear, and though he may not give a dowry with his daughter, it shall not for me stand in the way of a good choice.”

He sent now his men from there to meet king Lear with gold and treasure, and

commanded them to bring the king's daughter to him, if she wished to go with them. When they came to England they made their errand known. It seemed to King Lear a wonder, that her destiny should become so great, but he could not speak against that which he had before promised, and that agreement was made, and she went home to France with the messengers, and they were content with their lot.

13. Concerning king Lear in England

Now it must be told, that Lear, king in England, was greatly aged, and at that time his sons-in-law had an meeting called between themselves, and went afterward to meet the king and said:

“Those times will now pass where you are honored with the governance of the land, because the rule of your kingdom is now gone, and no one will now heed what you say, because of your old age. We will now have our conditions, that we should take the kingdom after your death; you are now dead in reputation. We have now taken all your kingdom under ourselves.”

The king then became reluctant to lose his to lose his kingdom and rule, and he went afterward to Scotland with jarl Maglaunus, who possessed his eldest daughter Gonorilla, and she took to him joyfully for superintendence. He had with him 40 knights, and when he had been there for two winters, his daughter said to the jarl:

“Why should my father, so very old, have so many men? It seems to me advisable that you send away his servants one by one, and let them never come back to him.”

The jarl had it done as she advised, but when the knights of Lear were half gone, he became angry and went away from there with twenty knights and traveled then to Henuinus, another of his sons-in-law, in Cornwall. They received him respectfully at first, but he had not been there long before they decided to divide the knights between the king and the jarl, and took the king's men away, so that there were not more than five remaining. The king grew angry and went back to Scotland; he thought that his daughter would not wish to let his honor diminish from what it was then, when he went to her, but it turned out

scarcely as he thought, because she would not take him unless he only kept one boy with him, and then he still accepted that. She began then to reproach him for his decrepitude and disgrace, and called him a disgrace to the family. The king grew very sad and thought upon her words, and spoke with himself alone:

“My daughter speaks great shame to her father, equally well as she has rewarded him, and she has often said that I have now become very worn out, while I had laid the kingdoms of other kings under my dominion, and bore the helm of terror over many nations. I remember now when I asked my daughters how much each of them loved me. I can now see, that these two daughters of mine were of another mind than they said. They have scornfully cheated me of my kingdom. I can now prove the old saying, that words come to mind according to unwise counsel.²²⁹ I now remember that which Cordelia said; though it did not please me then, I may have had the wrong view about that which I have not experienced. She said that she loved me as well as I was honored, and she would wish me more good when she had more choices. I will now visit her, thought it may be unworthy. She is more of a gift-giver than her sisters, and I can there be of more use.”

The king then traveled south over the sea to France, and had wretched clothes and the lone boy, and nearly every men lied to and cheated him wherever he came to. Then he sent the boy to his daughter and told her what had happened on his journey, and he did not dare to let noble men see him thus. When she heard this, she became very sad and asked the king to hide himself. She then sent forty knights to meet him, and all those things which he needed to have, and when it was thus done, she told the king that her father was expected there after a few nights. The king himself rode out to meet him with all his bodyguard, and brought him back with all honor and set him in his high seat and honored him in all things as much as possible. King Lear told him then of all the dishonors that his sons-in-law had done unto him, and for this reason he fled out from his kingdom. King Aganippus thereupon called an assembly of many people and said:

“You, the people, have been very indulgent to me, since I took here rule over the kingdom. Here has now come king Lear, my father-in-law, who has fled from his kingdom,

²²⁹“orð at eftir koma vsvinnvm rað i hvg” (*Hb* pg. 251, ln. 12). This 'fornkveðna' is added by the translator.

and we are all bound to honor him, for the sake of the queen. I now wish to ask you to take him as king over you, and I will gain for myself another kingdom, there where it falls to my lot, because I do not wish to lead you into that peril, that other men fight amongst themselves for the kingship.”

Then the men of the country answered: “We will have no king before you, but we will fight alongside you, there where you wish.”

The King then summoned an army from all around his kingdom, and traveled with it to England, and won all that for king Lear, and killed both jarls, and traveled back afterward to his own kingdom. King Lear ruled thereafter over all Britain with such esteem as he had had before. He lived three winters after and died in full honor. He had then been king for forty winters. His burial was magnificently done, and his funereal feast was so grand that it took place over two months. King Aganippus lived a short time after he had conquered Britain, and he was greatly mourned by every man. His son took the kingdom after him and Cordeilla went back to Britain, and ruled that land for five years. She was popular with the people, and thus it happened, that the twos sons of her sisters rose up against her, one called Marganus and the other Cunedagius. There had taken the earldoms after their fathers, and it seemed to them no harm to fight against her. Now they gathered an army, and when they meet a battle erupted, and it ended thus that Cordeilla was captured and set in a dungeon. There she thought upon her grief and how greatly diminished was her reputation, and because of this grief she stabbed herself with a sax, and thus ended her life.

14. The brothers thereupon divided the kingdom between themselves. North of the Humber paid homage to Marganus, and the southern part to Cunedagius. They both ruled two winters. Then Marganus drew together an army and raided in the kingdom of his brother, and when Cunedagius heard of this, he went to meet him with an army, and there a hard battle was fought, and it ended thus, that Marganus fled and was captured in flight and killed at that place which is now called Margam, but before had been called Kambria.²³⁰

²³⁰An example of the translator's usual habit of removing Geoffrey's many references to regions in Wales: In the Latin, Margam is said to be a district in Wales/Kambria named after Marganus' death (*Hist* pg. 44-45, ln. 280-82).

Cunedagius then took all the kingdom under himself, and ruled thirty-three winters, and was greatly grieved by his men. At that time these men were prophets in Judea: Isaiah and Hosea. Rome was founded then, on the eleventh Kalends of May by the two brothers, Remus and Romulus.

The son of Cunedagius took the kingdom after him; he was called Rivallo. During his time it rained blood for three days and there came after a great death of men. After him his son took the kingdom, who was called Gurgustius, then his son Sisillius, then Lago, then Kinmarcus the son of Sisillius, then Gorbodugo, then his sons Ferreux and Porrex. They soon quarreled over the kingdom, and Ferreux fled from the land, to France, and gathered troops from there, and went afterward back to Britain, and there was a great battle between the brothers and Ferreux fell in that battle and most of his troops. Their mother was called Iudon and she became very sad when she heard of the fall of Ferreux, because she loved him above all men. She went immediately to that place to find her son Porrex, and he was asleep. She went into that room where the king slept; she showed out the other men. Then she commanded her maid-servants to lay into the king with the saxes she had given them, and so they did, and killed him there.

After that evil deed there was much war in the land during the time of five kings, and little of account happened until that man rose up who was called Dunuallo. He was the son of Cloten, king of Cornwall. He was was a bold man, and eager. At that time there were five kings over Britain. The name of the first that he killed was Pinner. After that Rudaucus, king of Kambria, and Staterius, king of Albania, rose against him, and when they fought there was a hard battle and a great slaughter on each side, but it ended thus that both kings fell and most of their men and Dunuallo then laid the whole kingdom beneath him. He was the first of the kings of those lands to make for himself a crown of gold. He set those laws which are called Molmutine²³¹ and they were held there long after, so the no man would have done such an evil deed that he would not be able to find pardon, if he came forth during those days when he bore the crown. He had the land cleared extensively for farms and fields. He also made it empty of all robbers and plundering. He ruled forty years

²³¹After Dunuallo's second name, 'Molmutius', removed in the Norse text.

and died in London and was buried in the chief temple which he had build for the rule of law in the land.

15. Concerning Brennius and Belinus

The sons of Dunuallo to the kingdom after him. One was called Belinus and the other Brennius; they soon became not of one mind, and each of them wished to be called high king, but still they did come to terms, that Belinus should be called high king because he was the elder, and have the southern part of the kingdom, and Brennius the northern, and thus the settlement stood between them for five years. It was the law among Trojans that he who was older should be called higher in rank.

Then men told Brennius that he should travel to Norway and ask for the daughter of king Elsingius and bring from there a full force against his brother. Then he traveled to Hǫrðaland and asked for the daughter of the king and obtained her, and was there for one winter. When Belinus heard of this—he had not been consulted concerning it—he went thereupon with an army into Northumbria and laid it all beneath him. Brennius heard of this gathered an overwhelming host, and when Guðrekr,²³² king of the Danes, heard of his actions, he gathered together an army, because he grudged him this marriage that he had made. A hard battle was fought there. The Danes sought most that ship which the queen was in, and they were about to take it and capture her, and immediately they sailed away and onto the ocean.

The wind drove them to Northumbria with eight ships. Brennius sailed afterwards and came to Scotland, and discovered what plundering his brother had done in his kingdom, and that his queen and the Danish king had taken his dominion. He then sent men to his brother, and asked him to give back his kingdom and wife, or else he would invade his kingdom and spare no one. Belinus grew angry at these words and gathered a host and went

²³²Here following the translator's version of the name, "Gvðrikr" (*Hb* pg. 254, ln. 10); the Latin original is Guichtlacus (*Hist* pg. 49, ln. 28). Interestingly, though Tatlock suggest that the Geoffrey's Latin name is derived from a Scandinavian (or Anglo-Saxon) source, he does not suggest Guðrekr, but Vigleikr (Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 140).

against Brennius with an overwhelming force. They met each other at that forest called Calaterium and there began a fierce battle, and they fought all that day. In the evening the Northmen fled to their ships, and Belinus killed fifteen hundred of them. Brennius reached his ships and fled to Saxony, and Belinus took the kingdom anew. He reconciled with Guðrekr, the king of the Danes, so that he swore an oath of allegiance to king Belinus: he would hold power in his name in Denmark, and pursue the wife of Brennius and he himself, and he would pay tribute to Belinus every year, and give hostages as well. Belinus had roads and bridges built all over Britain, and established a law that on those roads that he had made every man should have peace with the other, and the law held during his days; no man dared to speak against him.

16. It is said of Brennius that at this time he raided in France, but did not gain any resources there. He then went to meet the jarl, who is called Seginus; he ruled over Burgundia.²³³ The jarl received him with all honor and invited him to stay with him, and be there as long as he wished. He dwelled there for awhile. The jarl thought better of him the longer he stayed with him, and at last the jarl gave his daughter to him, with that agreement that he should take all his kingdom after the jarl, if had had no son, but if the jarl has had a son, then he should assist him with his rule in Britain. All the chieftains in the land bound it with a firm promise.

The jarl lived a year longer, and Brennius took the all the kingdom under himself afterward. The jarl had been a close-fisted man, but Brennius was so open-handed that he gave with two hands to everyone who wished to accept. He became thereupon so popular that every man in the land wish to sit and stand as he wished. He remembered then what kind of friendship he had had to suffer with his brother; he thereupon levied an army and traveled to Britain. When Belinus heard of this he gathered troops and went to meet him.

²³³“Bvrgvnia” (*Hb* pg. 254, ln. 35), a complete alteration by the translator; Geoffrey gives Seginus as the king of the “Allobroges” (*Hist*, pg. 52-3, ln. 98). Tatlock notes that the region of the Allobroges was a common literary association with Burgundy during Geoffrey's day (Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 100), but it is uncertain whether this would have been common knowledge among the literary elite in Scandinavia in the 13th century, or whether the translator more likely had some particular source.

Their mother was living then, who was called Tonwenna. She went between them and wish to reconcile them, but when she could not do that then she went forth between the armies and walked to Brennius and laid both her hands on his shoulders and bared both her breasts and showed him and spoke, weeping:

“Remember this, my son, that you drank from these breasts in your childhood, and that I bore you before these breasts, when the Creator let you become a man, but now you wound these breasts with new grief. Remember, my son, what I endured for you, and lay down your anger with your brother, for the sake of my entreaties, and though you were driven from the land by him, you are now received without disgrace, because you are now neither a lesser men than he nor lesser in lands. Now it does not hurt to look on it this way, when you have been yielded to him, that you have now become a great king from a little boy, but if you will neither heed brotherly love nor motherly joy, then your *hamingja* will depart from you, and follow he who will love her.”²³⁴

When Brennius had heard this he wished to comfort her, and laid down his weapon and walked with friendly face²³⁵ to his brother, and when Belinus saw that, he laid his weapon aside. Then each remembered the other and they settled their relationship as fully as could be. Thereupon they both went together to Valland, and from there to France²³⁶ and raided there, and all those kingdoms which are north of the mountains they laid under themselves, and set their own men over them.

After that they fared south over the mountains all the way to Rome. At that time there were two consuls over Rome and Italy, one named Gabius and the other Porsenna. When the Romans knew how great the forces of the brothers were, they gave themselves into their power and paid them tribute and gave them hostages, for good faith that they would always do thus. Afterward they went north over the mountains to Saxony,²³⁷ and the

234As noted in the preceding study, *hamingja* seems most likely to refer to 'luck' or 'fortune' here, while *fylgja* seems to be to be more literally referring to a guardian spirit.

235Correcting “anliti” (*Hb* pg. 255, ln. 28) to 'andliti'.

236It is uncertain why the translator is here, seemingly singularly, differentiating between *Valland* (“Vallandz”) and France (“Franz”) (*Hb* pg. 255, ln. 31), particularly as Geoffrey uses *Gallia* for 'France' through this section (*Hist*, pg. 56-7, ln. 184).

237As throughout, the translator tends to use *Saxland* to replace the Latin *Germania*.

Saxons gathered together an army to meet them. They fought, and the brothers constantly gained victory. When the Romans heard of this they broke their agreement with the brothers and revolved to help the Saxons, but when the brothers became aware of that, they decided that Brennius should go with his army to Rome, while Belinus stay back in Saxony.

When the Romans became aware of this, they planned to prepare an ambush for Brennius, when he returned. Belinius heard of this and traveled with his army during the night into that valley where the Roman route lay. When it was day, the Romans saw before them a multitude of men with shining weapons, and they were seized with fear; they thought that Brennius had come there. They were not ready for a sudden battle. Belinus gave them a hard onslaught, and many Romans fell, but all those who lived fled. They took them in the night and parted thus from them.

Then Belinus went to meet Brennius and then both went to Rome and besieged the city. They had gallows raised before the city-gates and the hostages conducted thither. The city-men did not give up the defense any more; the brothers then had the twenty sons of the most powerful men of the city hung, who were among the hostages. At this sight matters changes, so that they were ready to give up, but those people that had fled before Belinus came up, and they counseled that they go out from the city to do battle with the brothers. It ended thus, that the Romans fled away and there was a great man-slaughter on both sides. There fell both the commanders of the Romans, Porsenna and Gabius. The brothers then took the city into their power and set their own men over it. They had many more battles in Italy before they could conquer it, and Brennius became chieftain over it; no more is said here about him.

Brennius returned home to Britain with his army and there ruled over the kingdom. He had many cities and castles built. He built a sea-tower for the people of London which looked out on the river Thames, and made a golden stud on the uppermost part, with great skill. When he died his body was burned and his ashes laid in a golden vessel and set up on the gold stud which was at the top of the tower, because he was born highest, and over all cities.

17. Concerning king Gurgunt

The son of Belinus was called Gurgunt. He took the kingdom after his father. He was the most gentle and wise of men. The men of the land were at first very disobedient to him, and begin a war against him, and though he was gentle from day to day, it was no less a strange thing then when he went forth, how grim and gallant he was then; he always gained victory, and laid himself into the battles in his land.

The Danish king kept back those tributes which he had paid to his father. He thereupon levied a host and traveled to Denmark, there was a fierce battle, and there fell the Danish king, and he laid the whole land under himself. When he went home, he came to the Orkneys and there was at the command of thirty ships the man called Partholoim; he had fled from Spain and been driven on the open sea for sixty months. He asked the king to give him some help, and he told them to settle on that land that is now called Ireland. They went there afterward and settled there, and their offspring after them. A little later king Gurgunt died and he was greatly mourned.

After him his son took the kingdom, who was called Guithelinus. All the people of the land loved him. His wife was named Marcia; she was Spanish by descent. Then king lived for a short time, and died from a sickness. After him his son Conan²³⁸ ruled for seven years; the queen led the kingdom for him while he was in childhood. She set those laws in the land which are Marcian, and they were well received for long after. After Conan his son took the kingdom, who was called Sisillius, and after him his brother, who is not named, and after him Morvidus the bastard son of Conan. He had not ruled long when a warrior-king came from Northumbria and raided, and Morvidus heard of this. Thereupon he grew enraged and went out with his army to meet him. There was a hard

²³⁸"Kananvs" (*Hb* pg. 257, ln. 24). This genealogy is greatly altered. 'Conanus', though a name that appears several times in the *Historia*, appears to be a character inserted by the translator here. His seven-year rule appears to be derived from the statement that Sisillius, the son of Marcia in the *Historia*, was only seven years only when he took the throne. The son of Sisillius, Kimarus, is not named, though the translator hints at the brother, Danius (*Hist* pg. 60-61, ln. 267). Presumably these change derive in some way from an error of the translator's exemplar, or a serious misreading of it; it is difficult to any reason for these changes.

battle, and it was not long before Morvidus had the victory. He had all those who had been captured led out before him and struck the heads from them himself, until he was so exhausted he could barely walk. Then he commanded of those who were left, they they should be flayed alive and burned afterwards in fire. When men heard this, then no one dared attack his kingdom again.

During his days there was an extraordinary occurrence in the kingdom; up out of the sea came a beast, great and so ferocious that that it tore and rent all that which came before it, and all the land was destitute there where it came through. The king went to meet it and shot a great missile at it, but it did not bite, and when the king saw that he walked near and intended to strike it. When he came to the beast, it swallowed him like a little fish, and so ended his life.

He had after him five sons. The eldest was called Gorbonianus and he became king; he was a great man for sacrifices. At that time was great abundance in Britain, that none such has come since. He was also the most popular of all men, and it never came that his prosperity was hindered during his day. He died in his full honor, and was buried in London.

18. After him his brother Arthgallo took the kingdom, and he was wicked and ill-willed, so that he dismissed all the powerful men in the land and raised up to authority those who had none before, and from this came his unpopularity, so that he had to flee the land. They took his brother as king, who was called Elidurus, and he quickly became popular. Arthgallo went to his kinsmen, to ask for aid for himself, but no one would give any. Afterwards he went back into Britain, and set out as an outlaw into that forest called Calaterium with ten men. On one occasion Elidurus fared into that same forest while hunting deer, found his brother Arthgallo, and remembered him. He brought him home with him, so that no one knew him but his servants, and was kept by himself in his chamber.

The king took sick, and thereupon commanded word to be sent to the chieftains of the land, and when they had come to him he summoned them altogether. The king grasped each one who had come and said:

“I have acted unworthily towards you, but I wish to make it known to you, that my brother has come here, he who was exiled before me, he who was exiled before me, and concerning which I know will quickly happen at our parting, thereupon I will give this kingdom to Arthgallo. If you will not agree to this for me, then I will have all of you beheaded.”

Though it did not seem good to them, they agreed to all that which the king asked for, and this was bound with oaths. They went afterwards to York and the king took the crown off his head and set it on the head of his brother Arthgallo, and Elidurus sat there as a judge. Arthgallo then took on a completely different manner during his rule, than he had had before; he then became a popular man.

He ruled for ten years and then died in the city called Leicester.²³⁹ Then the Britons took for their king Elidurus, for a second time.²⁴⁰ He had the same character as before during his rule. Two of his brothers rose up against him, one named Iugenius and the other Peredurus. They came upon the king unaware and captured him, because he was unaccustomed to any treachery from them; they set him in a cell in London. They divided the kingdom between themselves and ruled for seven winters, after which they both died. After that the Britons took Elidurus from the cell in London and he was then taken as king for the third time, and he ruled that kingdom all the remainder of his life with honor and esteem, and died very old with good renown, and he was childless.

Then the kingdom went on with little worth noting; at that time there were various kings, and there is no saga made about them. Marganus was first, then Enniaun, then Iduallo, then Runo,²⁴¹ Catellus, Porrex, Cherin,²⁴² Fulgenius, then Eldadus, Clendaucus, then Clotenus,²⁴³ then Gurgintius, then Merianus, then Cap,²⁴⁴ then Sisillius,²⁴⁵ then

239“Leira” (*Hb* pg. 259, ln. 3), seemingly a shortening of Geoffrey's name, “Kaerleir” (*Hist*, pg. 63, ln. 330).

240Somewhat confusing in the Norse version; in the *Historia*, Elidurus was only pretending to be sick, to help his brother. (*Hist* pg. 62-3, ln. 314)

241“Nore” (*Hb* pg. 259, ln. 15).

242“Kervi” (*Hb* pg. 259, ln. 15).

243“Canotvs” (*Hb* pg. 259, ln. 16), one of the few instances of the translator clearly replacing, or misconstruing, a name with a Norse one.

244“Caftenvs” (*Hb* pg. 259, ln. 16).

245“Rillvs” (*Hb* pg. 259, ln. 17).

Bledgabred,²⁴⁶ then Capoir,²⁴⁷ then Heli. He was a high-born man. He ruled forty years; he left behind three sons, one named Lud, another Cassibellaunus, and the third Nennius. Lud took the kingdom after his father. He had a new wall build around London, augmented both with castles and towers. He was useful to the kingdom, and the most valiant with weapons. He ruled the kingdom for a short time and was buried in London. He left behind two young sons, one called Androgeus and the other Tenuantius. Cassibellaunus took the kingdom after him, but when his brother's sons had grown somewhat, then he set Androgeus over London and Tenuantius over Cornwall.

19. Concerning Julius Caesar

At that time Gaius Julius Caesar fared north over the mountains and laid all Gaul beneath him. It was told to him that an island lay a short distance from there where a people lived who were descended from Aeneas, just as the Romans themselves, and that they did not know how to fight, and that that land would be easy to seize upon. Julius sent a message to Cassibellaunus with these words, that they should pay tribute to the Romans, and agree to be ruled beneath them, because at that time they had conquered all the world.

Cassibellaunus had another message sent back, and it said thus:

“The greed of you Romans is extraordinary, when you demand tribute of us, there where we have cleared the forests and wilderness ourselves for our subsistence. It would be better for you to bind with us in peace and friendship, and strengthen our kingdom with your great resources. Although we may have come into our kingdom with difficulty, we are now ignorant of all tyranny, and though the gods themselves might wish to enthrall us, we shall stand against them with our might. Turn away from this plan, because with the will of the gods we shall rise up against you.”

246“Beredabel” (*Hb* pg. 259, ln. 17).

247“Dolvar” (*Hb* pg. 259, ln. 17). This list is significantly shorter than the list in *Historia*, and the short descriptions of several of the kings are missing. The orthography of the names is also much more removed from the *Historia* than the other name lists in the translation—the Latin names used here can only be considered best guesses. This seems to strongly suggest that the translator's exemplar was here damaged, or there was some other difficulty in reading the section.

When Caesar had read this he became enraged and gathered his ships and fared with his army to Britain, and sailed up into the River Thames. Cassibellaunus had made great preparation on both sea and land; there were with him Cridious,²⁴⁸ king of the Danes, Gueithaet,²⁴⁹ king of the Irish, and Britahel,²⁵⁰ king of the Scots. There was also that chieftain called Bellinus; he recommended that they run with a small group of troops at the army of Julius, and not draw up in battle array, and so they did and came upon them unaware. The slaughter was then turned upon the army of Julius. When they had fought for a long time Julius and Nennius, the brother of Cassibellaunus, met each other, and Julius struck Nennius' helm, and the sword cleaved it. Nennius shoved his shield beneath Julius' sword, and Julius lost it; Nennius grabbed the sword and cast his own sword away, and struck with both hands and killed many men. Then that chieftain came against him who was called Labienus, and Nennius struck him his death-blow, and at this the Romans burst into flight, and they fled to their ships and went back to Saxony.²⁵¹ Nennius was wounded in the head from Julius' sword, and there arose a pain arose in that wound, and he died a few nights later, because the sword was tempered in poison. Cassibellaunus mourned for his brother greatly.

Julius took his loss very badly, and levied another army from Gaul and Saxony, and prepared to go to Britain. Cassibellaunus heard of this; he commanded a great preparation in Britain, to improve castles and ready weapons and defences. He also set a chieftain to watched over every harbor in Britain. He had iron and lead piles driven into the river Thames, and had there strongholds and timber-works. When two years were passed then Caesar came to Britain with an irresistible force, and when he sailed into the river Thames, his ships were rent by the piles so that they underwater, and they immediately went through into it, and a great part of the Roman army perished there. Many also came onto land with

248“Cridvosvs” (*Hb* pg. 260, ln. 13), in the *Historia* the name of the ruler of Scotland (*Hist* pg. 71, ln. 42); the king of the Danes does not appear in the original.

249“Gvendagvs” (*Hb* pg. 260, ln. 14), in the *Historia* the name of the ruler of Venedotia (*Hist* pg. 71, ln. 42); the king of the Irish does not appear in the original.

250“Brittevs” (*Hb* pg. 260, ln. 14), in the *Historia* the name of the ruler of Demetia (*Hist* pg. 70-1, ln. 42).

This passage is a notable example of the tendency in the translation to refer to kings as ruling over *peoples*, when they are rulers over *lands* in the *Historia*.

251Given as Gaul in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 70-1, ln. 75).

Julius and immediately rushed into battle with Britons, and there was a great loss of life among them, because there were three Britons to one Roman. They could not fight with an overwhelming force, and Gaius Julius went in flight to his ships and went to France and stayed there for a time.

20. Cassibellaunus made a great sacrifice after this victory and invited all those chieftains who were in his country to London. There they killed forty thousand cattle, and three hundred thousand forest deer. The small boys played in the king's hall, one named Hirelglas; he was the sister's son of Cassibellaunus; the other was named Cuelinus, and he was the sister's son of Androgeus. He was more lacking in prowess, and he became angry and gripped his sword and struck the head of the king's kinsman, and afterwards sought protection with his kinsman Androgeus. When Cassibellaunus heard of this he was angered, and commanded Androgeus to give up the boy, but Androgeus asked the king for settlement, but the king refused this. Then Androgeus left, because he thought that he would not be able to hold out against the king. The king then had all his property burned, and took some of it under himself.

Androgeus then sent a letter to Caesar and told him of all these events, “and if you will act according to my wishes, then I can arrange it thus that you possess all of Britain from my counsel. Now value compensation more for the most famous victory, and stand against my people; that is the custom of the world and the will of the gods, that they often become friends who earlier had stood against each other, and that has often given quick victory. Heed prudence, now, more than spite.”

When Julius had read this letter, it seemed to him wanting to trust the Britons more than before, and yet wanting to forsake this offer. He then took hostages from Androgeus, so that he sent his daughter, who was called Scaeva,²⁵² and with her ten knights. Then Julius ordered his army out for the third time. When Cassibellaunus became aware of this he he went out to meet him. Julius had set his camp by that city called Dorobernia,²⁵³ as

²⁵²“Segerna” (*Hb* pg. 261, ln. 31).

²⁵³“Dvrvberina” (*Hb* pg. 261, ln. 34), meaning Canterbury, following the one of Geoffrey's less common Latin names for the city (*Hist* pg. 76-7, ln. 201). Given the importance of Canterbury in Norway and

Androgeus had before counseled; there was a forest not far away, and in that forest was Androgeus and with him five thousand men. Cassibelaunus attacked Julius' camp with his forces, and there began a fierce battle, and many men on both sides fell there, and when this battle was at its fiercest, Androgeus came then with his men, and a great calamity was given to the Britons, and all the slaughter turned now upon them. When Cassibellaunus saw it he fled away into a mountain with his men; there he did not lack ample stones, and it was a good stronghold. Julius and Androgeus besieged the mountain and intended to cut them off from food there. When Cassibellaunus saw that he was overcome he sent a man to Androgeus, that he should come make a settlement between him and Caesar, and promised that he would have his full compensation according to his wishes. When this word came to Androgeus, he went before Caesar and said:

“It is badly suited to that chieftain, when he is like a lamb in war, and as grim as a lion and sly as a wolf in peace. Cassibellaunus is now overcome; grant him mercy now, and let him have his kingdom with payment of tribute. You can remember also remember what I have given to you, because you would never have conquered that kingdom if I had not given you advice, and you would not have been able to hold it if I stood against you. Grant me first the request that I ask of you.”

Julius saw that Androgeus was angry and reconciled with Cassibellaunus, in such a way that Cassibellaunus afterwards paid tribute to the Romans every year, and Cassibellaunus became the greatest friend of the Romans.

21. Gaius stayed a winter in Britain. At that time he had fought ten winters north of the mountains, and he traveled during the summer after back to Rome, and with him Androgeus. After that there came strife with the brother-in-law Pompey Magnus; then Julius Gaius Caesar became monarch over all the world, as it says in the saga of the Romans.

Cassibelaunus lived a short time after; he died in York. Then Tanuantius, his brother,

Iceland, the fact that the translator left the name roughly as 'Dorobernia' suggests he was not familiar with it, and likely did not associate it with Canterbury.

took the kingdom after him, and after him his son Kimbelinus, and he was with Augustus Caesar. He was on such friendly terms with the Caesar that he gave up all tribute to him while he lived, and during his days our lord Jesus Christ was born into this world.

He ruled ten years; he left behind him two sons, one named Guider and the other Arviragus. After Kimbelinus Guideris took the kingdom; he withheld tribute from the Romans. At that time Claudius was Caesar. He traveled with an army to Britain and took land by Southampton²⁵⁴ and set himself there around the city. When Guideris heard of this he gathered an army and they met, and the Britains set themselves at once against the Roman legion, and flight burst into the Caesar's host. Laelius was the name of a powerful man with the Caesar; he took on British attire. He knew also their tongue. He pretended as if he was fighting with the king for his army, and when he came there where the king was, then he lay him through with his sword and turned then back to his own men. When he could not reach the ships he fled into a forest.

Arviragus, the brother of the king, saw this; he stripped his brother and armed himself with his weapons, and the Roman army then went into the forest, because they thought that the Caesar had fled there, and in this fight Arviragus killed Laelius. Then he went into that city, which is called Portcestria.²⁵⁵ The Caesar held all his army there and beseiged the city with men and seigecraft. When Arviragus saw what straits he had come into he opened up the gates and prepared for battle. When the Caesar saw that he sent his men to meet Arviragus and offer him settlement, the same that had been made before between Julius and Cassibellaunus, and with it the Caesar would give his daughter to him with great property. When friends had gone between each of them, then they agreed on this settlement, there with full friendship.

Also during this journey, the Caesar conquered under himself the Orkneys, with the counsel of Arviragus and went afterwards home to Rome. He sent men to Britain with his

254A guess; the Norse gives "Hvmrv" (*Hb* pg. 262, ln. 34). In the *Historia*, the Laelius mentioned in this episode is "Laelius Hamo", and Southampton, or "Portus Hamonis" is named after him (*Hist* pg. 82-3, ln. 310); though the order of events is changed and the origin of the name lost, this seems most likely to be the city the translator is referring to.

255"Filistria" (*Hb* pg. 263, ln. 9).

daughter, who was named Gewissa, and he gained her, and then when there wedding feast was he had a city built as a memorial. At that time the holy apostle Peter sat in his bishopric in Antioch, and during his days he fared to Rome and set there his papacy, and then he sent the gospel-writer Mark to Egypt to preach the faith.

When Arviragus had obtained the daughter of the Caesar, then all the kings who were there turned to him, and a Roman slave girl was led before him, and held as tribute for him. The Caesar sent Vespasian then to claim this tribute, either by friendly means or hard. When he came to Britain he laid seiged to that city, which is called Exeter,²⁵⁶ and a little later king Arviragus came there with his army and there was a hard battle, and a multitude were wounded and thereby died. It went on until night, but during the morning after the queen was able to settle them, and he turned back to Rome and was well content with his journey.

Arviragus became peaceful and popular in his kingdom and died of old age. He was buried in that city, which is called Gloucester,²⁵⁷ which was build for his wedding. His son was named Marius, who took the kingdom after him. That king, who was named Rodric, came into his kingdom from the Picts.²⁵⁸ He had a great army and there was fierce battle there and it was not long before Rodric fell. There Marius had a high stone pillar built as a mark of victory. He gave his²⁵⁹ men a headland from the land, and let them clear and settle it. It is now called Caithness.²⁶⁰ The Britons laid great injustice on this people, and would not give them their daughters in marriage. Yet soon came there a great multitude of high-born men, and there is a great saga about them, though it is not written here. He held friendship with the Romans while he lived, and died with good renown. He son took the kingdom after him, who was called Coillus. He had been brought up in Rome and was their greatest friend for all his life.

256“Exonia” (*Hb* pg. 263, ln. 29), following the Latin.

257“Clavdiocestria” (*Hb* pg. 264, ln. 1), following the Latin.

258“Peito” (*Hb* pg. 264, ln. 1).

259It is not certain whether this is referring to the men of Marius or the men of Rodric. In the *Historia*, it is clearly the defeated Picts who are settled there, but it is possible that the translator was confused here, though considering the potential confusion of many of the pronouns through the text, I am inclined to assume he is referring to Rodric's men.

260“Katanes” (*Hb* pg. 264, ln. 7).

22. Concerning Lucius

His son was named Lucius, who took the kingdom after him. When he had not long been king, he heard that some men in Rome had another religion than the common people, and those men would give men life and salvation, and they said that they could create everlasting joy for themselves, with good works. Then he sent a letter to pope Eleutherius, and asked him to send clerics to him to bring Christianity to his land. The pope became very glad at these words and sent thither famous priests, Faganus and Duvianus, and they preached the name of god around all Britain with the support of the king. They baptized men and turned temples into churches. There were twenty-four temples before, and three chief-temples beyond that. They were masters of all men in the land, those who kept them. He turned all this falsehood into Christianity and had as many bishops made in the land as there had been before heathen sacrificial priests. There were three archbishops: one in London, another in Canterbury, and the third in York, and he gave them excellent properties. Faganus went constantly between Rome and Britain, and turned many men to the true faith with his teachings. The king died in the city called Gloucester,²⁶¹ and was buried there in the cathedral which he had built himself. This took place one hundred and fifty-five winters from the birth of our lord.

He left no sons behind him, and when the Romans heard of this, they sent that chieftain to Britain, who was named Severus, to conquer the land for them, as before it had been, but that jarl rose up against him, who was named Fulgenius. Because the Romans had great forces, Fulgenius went south over the sea and raised troops there, and came then back to Britain in secret and immediately besieged York. When Severus heard of that, he went with his army to meet him and there began a hard battle, and Severus fell in the fighting, and Fulgenius was mortally wounded. Severus left behind him two sons, one named Geta, and his mother was Roman; the other was named Bassianus, and his mother was British, and each wished to raise their kinsmen to power, until there was a hard battle between then

²⁶¹“Clavdyocestra” (*Hb* pg. 265, ln. 1).

and Geta fell. Bassianus took the kingdom and all the rule.

23. At that time a young man grew up in Britain, high-born and famous, named Carausius. When he thought they possessed no honor there, he went to meet with the Romans. He offered to them the defense of the land, and the right to claim tribute from Britain, and they gave that labor to him with their letter. He went with his army to Britain and raided there, and when Bassianus hear of this he went out to meet him and there began a hard battle, and Bassianus fell there. When the Romans heard of this they became angry with Carausius and sent that man named Allectus; when he came to Britain, Carausius went to meet him and there was the greatest battle; Carausius fell there. Allectus took all the kingdom under himself, and made great hardship for the men of the land, but they were displeased and took another as their king. He was called Asclepiodotus, and they raised him up against Allectus. At that time the leader of the Romans was Gallus.²⁶² He overtook London; when Asclepiodotus found out about this, he gathered an overwhelming army to himself, took the city, and destroyed it; Gallus gave up, then, and intended to escape, and when they came out from the city, those people called the Venedoti²⁶³ attacked them, and killed all the Romans in a day.

Asclepiodotus lay all of Britain under himself and ruled ten years. During his days Caesar Diocletian began a war over all the world against Christian men, and all Christianity in Britain began to be destroyed, because at that time that chieftain called Maximianus came from Rome. He was sent to destroy the churches and burn the temples; he killed some Christian men and banished others. He tortured these holy men in Urbs Legionum.²⁶⁴ Alban, Julius, Aaron. Alban took that man under his authority who was called Amphibalus, and then when the torturers wished to take him, then Alban changed clothes with him and walked gladly afterward to torture, for the sake of God.

262“Gallivs” (*Hb* pg. 265, ln. 29); Livius Gallus in the Latin (*Hist* pg. 93, ln. 75-6).

263One of the rare references of a specific region, or regional group, of Wales in the translation. Geoffrey lists the Demeti, the Deiri, and the Albani along with the Venedoti (*Hist* pg. 95, ln. 84-5).

264“Alkialnva borg” (*Hb* pg. 266, ln. 4-5); it is uncertain what the Norse translator is attempting to render here; the city is given as Urbs Legionum or Caerleon in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 94-5, ln. 115). Possibly the idea was 'the city of Albanus'.

At that time that duke of Lincoln rose up, who was called Coel. He fought with Asclepiodotus and killed him, and Coel took the kingship over Britain. When the Romans heard that, they sent south that senator who was called Constantius. He was a wise man and popular; he had conquered all Spain under the Romans. Coel sent him an offer of terms and offered him tribute, according to that which was before, and these terms were taken. Coel died not long after; Constantius then took the kingdom and obtained Helena, daughter of Coel. She was the fairest and wisest of all women, and the only child of Coel. They had a son who was named Constantine, and he quickly became a great man of noteworthy accomplishments. Constantine ruled for ten years. He died in York and is buried there.

24. Concerning Maxentius

After Constantine his son Constantine took the kingdom. He was a wise man and able as a ruler, just and well-composed; he was grim with his enemies; he greatly punished robbery and theft. At that time that Roman man who was named Maxentius fought against his kingdom, and worked great evil in Britain, both in plundering and in theft, and Constantine drove him scornfully away. His Roman kinsmen told him often that he should go with his army into Rome and win back the bondage which the Romans had laid on Britain, and from their urging the king summoned an army from all Britain and fared south over the mountains and laid under himself all Italy and Rome, and a little later he became Caesar over all the world. With him were the uncles of queen Helena, his mother, who were called Leolinus and Trahern and Marius, and he made them all senators of Rome. After that duke Octavius raided in Britain and conquered all of it under himself and was made king over it. When Caesar Constantine heard that, he sent him kinsman Trahern to Britain to take it back. When Trahern came to Britain he besieged that city called Porchester,²⁶⁵ and when

²⁶⁵“Postestria” (*Hb* pg. 267, ln. 6). The Latin given here is “Kaerperis” (*Hist* pg. 99, ln. 171), which Tatlock notes is a name Geoffrey has probably taken from Nennius, and is also used by Henry of Huntington in later versions of his own *Historia Anglorum* (Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 49). Either the Norse translator was familiar with the name *Kaerperis* and was able to associate it with Porchester, or his exemplar had replaced the former with the latter.

Octavius found out about these events, he went to meet Trahern and there began a hard battle, and Octavius had the victory; Trahern fled to his ships and sailed to Scotland. There he plundered and burned, and when Octavius heard that, he went to Scotland with his army. They met there where it is called Westmorland and fought there another time. Trahern had the victory then, and Octavius fled. Trahern searched then for where he had went away, until he fled out of the kingdom. Trahern laid Britain under himself and was made king over it. Octavius fled to Norway to king Gumbertus who ruled there.

Trahern was greedy with the men of the land, and when he went one day through a certain valley near London, a hundred armed men leaped forth and killed the king. After that the men of the land sent word to Octavius. He traveled to Britain, then, and he took the kingdom there another time. He drove all the Romans away from Britain, and freed the land from their tribute. Octavius had a daughter but no son; that man who was called Maximianus married her. He was the son of Leolinus, the uncle of queen Helena; he took the kingdom after Octavius. Conanus, the nephew of Octavius, was raised to power against him and they had many battles, and were reconciled after a time and became good friends. Maximianus then went south over the sea and conquered all of France. He killed the Caesar Gratianus and drove his brother Valentinianus away from Rome, and a winter later Maximianus was killed in that city which was called Aquila.²⁶⁶ He had had most of his people with him away from Britain, so there there was a great desolation afterward.

Then two jarls of the Picts²⁶⁷ went to Britain, one called Wanius and the other Melga. They both were killed by that man named Gratianus, who had long followed Maximianus and was then taken as king over all Britain. Every man wished him evil, and then they killed him themselves. At that time Conanus ruled over Armorica. Dionotus ruled Britain. He had a fair daughter who was called Ursula. Conan asked for her in marriage and she agreed; she then went south over the sea into Saxony with eleven thousand maidens,

266“*Aquila*” (*Hb* pg. 267, ln. 28). The section, the reign of Maximianus and the great conflict of Brittany and France, and most importantly the first migration of Britons to Brittany, is exceptionally abbreviated and somewhat confused. In the *Historia*, Rome is given as the location of Maximianus' murder (*Hist* pg. 111, ln. 409). There is one reference in the section to the “*Aequitani*” (*Hist* pg. 107, ln. 361), but none to the region itself, by name. It is unclear, then, what the translator is referring to.

267“*Peito*” (*Hb* pg. 267, ln. 30).

and when they came into Köln,²⁶⁸ it was at that time ruled by Attila, king of the Hun-lands with a great army. They wished to force the maidens to have sex with them, but because they were Christian, they did not wish to consent to do this with heathen men; Attila then had them all beheaded, and they are called the Maidens of Köln.

After that Britain lay long under the raids of pirates and robbers; Britain then had no support from the Romans. At that time Guithelinus, archbishop of London, went to Aldroenus, king of Armorica,²⁶⁹ and begged him for help for the needs of the land; he sent him home to Britain with his brother, who was called Constantinus, and immediately when he came there, all the men of the land gathered to him and took Constantinus as king. He drove away all the evil-doers from Britain, and he had good peace afterward while he lived. He obtained a Roman woman and had with her three sons, one named Constans, the other Aurelius, the third Uther Pendragon.²⁷⁰ Constans went into a cloister and became a monk.

When Constantinus had been king for ten years, there came to him one day a Scottish man, and he said that he had an urgent message for the king, and when they both went into a room, that man laid into the king with a knife and leaped out after and saved himself. The king's men took the body of the king and buried it with great grief.

25. Concerning Vortigern and Merlin the prophet

There was a powerful jarl in Scotland called Vortigern. Men held it true that he had plotted the death of the king, but he denied this. The jarl went afterward to meet Constans the monk, and persuaded him to take the kingship for himself, and so he followed this advice and was taken as the king, but no bishop would crown him with the cross of a king. Later, Vortigern took that authority upon himself, and set the crown on his head, and was afterward was on very friendly terms with the king; the king also wished to have his counsel concerning all the governing of the kingdom.

268“Koln” (*Hb* pg. 268, ln. 2). The translator is clearly interpolated a different version of the Ursula legend here; Köln does not appear in the *Historia*.

269“Armonica Armenia konvngs” (*Hb* pg. 268, ln. 9), possibly a confusion by the translator of some kind.

270Given only as “Pendragon” (*Hb* pg. 268, ln. 16), as often elsewhere.

Vortigern spread rumors that an army had come into the land, and asked the Scots to take up the defense of the country against invaders, and so it was done, and when they came there, he gave them money, until they said it would be better that he were king than than one who then was. The jarl then held a great feast, and at that feast the Scots killed the king, but Vortigern acted as if he was greatly angered at them, and had them all taken and killed. After that he took the kingdom in Britain, and was the king there for a long time after. Aurilius and Uther Pendragon fled to Little Britain,²⁷¹ to that king called Budicius,²⁷² and they were with him for a long time after.

At that time two brothers came from Saxony, one called Hengest and the other Horsus, and there was a third called Þiðrek.²⁷³ They went to meet the king and offered to protect the land from invaders for him, with three hundred men, and said that Mercury had directed them thither. The king asked who Mercury was.

Hengest answered: "Some call him Odin, and our forefathers have had great trust in him, and thus also Thor and Tyr, Frigg and Freyja. We believe this, that they rule this world and the fate of men."

Then the king and his men took that advice, to name the days of each week, as they thought it more urgent to take care of it altogether, months and the year, and they called them Odin's day and Tyr's day and Freyja's day.

A little later a great army came from the Picts to Britain. Vortigern was informed of this and went to meet them with an army, and there was there a hard battle. The Saxons fought well; the pirates fled from there. After that the king granted them the district of Lindsey, and they made there a strong city. The king let them send word to Saxony for more forces, and there came with them the daughter of Hengest. She was called Ronwein. She was fairer than any maiden. Hengest made for them a fair feast, and invited the king and all his men. Ronwein served the king with a gold vessel. This amazed this king so much that he

271"litla Bretlandz" (*Hb* pg. 269, ln. 6): Armorica, or Brittany.

272"Benidictvs" (*Hb* pg. 269, ln. 6-7), a rare example of the translator altering a name to a different Latin name.

273Not a character, or a name appearing, in the *Historia*. Though some scholars have proposed it, it is uncertain whether this is an intentional reference to Þiðrek of Bern.

asked for her. The king loved her so greatly that he heeded no other before her. The king had before two sons, one named Vortimer and the other Paschent.²⁷⁴

26. At that time Bishop Germanus and Bishop Lupus came to Britain to preach the faith, because then it was nearly entirely heathen there, and they made many miracles. Then came from the south of Saxony Octa, the son of Hengest, with three hundred ships for the king, but the Britons were full of hatred against the Saxons, and asked the king to drive them away, but the king would not, for the sake of affinity. Then the Britons took as their king Vortimer his son, and they had many battles with Hengest and his sons, and they killed Horsus and many other men. Hengest then fled to Saxony, and there was then good peace in Britain, with the ministrations of the holy Germanus. The step-mother of Vortimer plotted his death, and gave him poison to drink, and after his death Vortigern again took his kingdom. He sent word to Hengest for him to return with a few men, but Hengest came with three thousand men, and his coming was not to the liking of the Britons.

The king called many chieftains to him for an appointed meeting, and when they came there, then Hengest was seen next to the king, which was completely unexpected to the Britons. The Saxons then leaped up with great knives and saxes and killed there nine hundred men, and among them many jarls and barons and those men in the land who would have to be compensated for.²⁷⁵ Jarl Eldol the strong²⁷⁶ was therein at that time. He took up a stake and defended himself with it, and he killed there seventy men of the Saxons, and escaped. Afterward the Saxons wished to kill Vortigern. He offered them whatever ransom they would take. They then took for themselves all the greatest cities in Britain, and drove all the Britons away from them.

27. Vortigern was greived at these events, and planned to have built for himself not a small stronghold on a mountain side, and when they had dug the foundation then they drove

274“Pacencivs” (*Hb* pg. 269, ln. 29). The third son, Katigern, is missing (*Hist* pg. 131, ln. 368).

275A somewhat uncertain passage: “þvi helldr er botar maðr war i landinv.” (*Hb* pg. 270, ln. 15)

276“Elldon iarl en sterki” (*Hb* pg. 270, ln. 16). The nickname is added; he is 'Eldol of Gloucester' in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 136-7, ln. 1)

down great stones, and when it was done, the stones vanished. This wonder was told to the king; he called soothsayers to him, and commanded them tell him what caused this. They told him to search for that man who had no father, and blend his blood with lime. Then they king sent men everywhere in the land to search for this man. They came into that city, that is called Morlang,²⁷⁷ there were playing two young boys, one called Dinabutius and the other Merlin, and Dinabutius was beaten and said:

“You shall not contend with me, because I am the king's son, and you have no father!”

The messengers heard this and asked whether they might know about this, and they said that no man know the father of Merlin, and his mother was the daughter of king of Demetia,²⁷⁸ and she was a nun, then when she carried him. The messengers told their king the results of their mission, and he had them call Merlin and his mother to him.

The kings asked: “Who is the father of this boy?”

She said: “That is not known, but that is the incident of his conception, that I slept in my locked room with my maidens, then there came to me a young man, and he was staying with me so that I think he is the father.”

The king had summoned to him Maugantius the sage, and asked how that could be, and he said that in is found in books, that there are animals aloft between the earth and the moon that can change themselves into the likeness of men and can have children. When Merlin came to the king, he asked what he wished from him. The king told him what the sage had said. Merlin asked that they should speak with each other, and so it was done.

He said: “What foolish men told you that my blood should be blended with lime for the foundation? Rather, search for what is under the foundation.”

He ordered them to dig a deep foundation, and it is said that water was underneath, and said that the stones sunk into it. Merlin bid the sages say what was under the water, or

²⁷⁷The origin of this name is uncertain; the name of the city is “Kaermerdin” (*Hist* pg. 137, ln. 511). Possibly it is a corruption of the name 'Merlin' into a place-name. See Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, 175, for the relationship between Kaermerdin and Merlin and other versions of the place-name.

²⁷⁸Following the Latin; the Norse reads “Domovarsij konvngs” (*Hb* pg. 271, ln. 1), possibly a misreading or corruption of the original “regis Demetiae” (*Hist* pg. 139, ln. 522). Considering his treatment of the name over the rest of the text, it seems unlikely that the translator knew where or what Demetia was.

be silent.

Merlin said: “Under that water are two fortifications, and there are caverns there, and in the caverns sleep two worms.”

The king had the water diverted, and then removed the fortifications from their place. Then the two worms crept out from underneath, one white and the other red. They blew poison from their mouths, which burned as if fire, and the red took to flight. Then the red turned around, and the white took to flight, and when the king saw this, then he asked Merlin what this battle had signified. Then Merlin spoke a long time before the king and spoke of many other great tidings, those which have not yet come to pass.

28. The Prophecies of Merlin (I)

V.1) We are resolved to tell the trees of the fire of the sea²⁷⁹ about the wise prophecies of noble prophet who sat in broad Britain, called Merlin, a man of many-sided learning.

V.2) It is told to people and land-protectors that he was master of many obscure prophecies; he was dear to Christian kin of peoples; a wiser man was not on the earth.

V.3) Men seek to choose words carefully-men know this of that learning. Now, rather, we are eager to tell fitting prophecies of ancient memories.

V.4) The verse-fortress²⁸⁰ will be clear to men; still, it is the foremost of knowledge to interpret that which kings said in ages past to the British people; now shall poetry be recited.

V.5) They were in wide Winchester—that is the name of the city—three springs will

279“viðum svnbals” (pg. 272, ln. 1), kenning for 'men' or 'warriors'.

280“lioðborg” (pg. 272, ln. 8), meaning 'poem'.

divide the land with brooks, three different in three different places.

V.6) One is the best of springs to try; it increases the lifetimes of wealthy men, if they drink, nor does heavy sickness attack those who have drunk from the bitter water.

V.7) Another is bad; all those starve, who drink a drink of the brook; yet it is hardest to try the third, they all die who drink of it, nor are the dead bodies of men hidden under the earth.

V.8) Men wish to hide those wells which do life-destruction to most men, and the people bear it into the sea. All becomes other than it was before, green field turned to stone, stone to water, wood to ashes, and from ashes comes water.

V.9) They have gone to the most learned maid in the city of the forest of all-powerful Knut,²⁸¹ so that she might defend men from such harm.

V.10) She begins to inquire among and counsel the multitude; she begins to perform all arts; then the gentlewoman breathes onto the wells and makes them dry as bread.

V.11) She then drinks the dear water, and from that that might of the bride increases. She bears in her right hand—the noble woman—the forest of Colidon, but in her palm she will bear the city of London.

281“i kaps avðga Knutz skogar borg” (pg. 272, ln. 20). Though the structure is similar to a kenning, it appears to be derived directly from the Latin “ex urbe canuti nemoris” (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 150-51) There is some disagreement among the translators, however; while Neil Wright renders the phrase as “the city of the hoary forest”, while Sebastian Evans, in his 1913 translation, appears to have had the same thought as the Gunnlaugr and rendered it “The City of Canute's Forest” (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Evans, 144). The meaning of the passage, like much of the *Prophetia*, is uncertain, and though I am generally inclined to side with Reeve and Wright's edition in most things, it is easy to see how Gunnlaugr and Evans preferred the name of the greatest of medieval Danish kings over the rather poetic translation of *canutus*, 'gray' or 'grey-haired' as 'hoary'.

V.12) She goes afterward over good country, so that, on the footprints of the gentlewoman, fire springs up with a thick smoke; it wakes up the Rutenos²⁸² and causes pain to the sea-nation.

V.13) A terrible weeping arises in the land when the Gold-Skǫgul²⁸³ weeps loudly, and the people begin to wail with her, within all the island and all around.

V.14) A stag kills her, the one which bears ten horn-branches²⁸⁴ on its skull; four branches have crowns, yet the six others become the worst horns of an ox.

V.15) Wailing, ready to fight, those three isles of Britain stir. Then the Danish wood will waken and speak with the very voice of man:

V. 16) “Come you, Cambria with Cornwall, tell Winchester: the ground will swallow you up; the abode of the shepherd is carried from here, where the warships lay, to land; all the limbs will follow that head which helps men.”

V. 17) “At his seat the sea-beasts²⁸⁵ rejoice; there will be a throne over two places, though it has done harm to many men; it dies white wool of every kind.”

V. 18) “A city will fall—I know the death of men—because it before became a perjurer; truce-breakers will wholly become slain,” Winchester bellows, of evil men.

V.19) The bear-hedgehog²⁸⁶ will rebuild the city; a protector of the land builds the

282'Flemings', as Wright translates (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 152); I am here following the Norse and Latin, as it seems probable that the Norse audience would not have known how to interpret Rutenos.

283The name of a Valkyrie; appears several times, along with Gǫndul, in *Merlínusspá*, and both are often used in skaldic poetry and kennings.

284“horn kvstv” (pg. 273, ln. 4), meaning 'antlers'.

285“sunddýr” (pg. 273, ln. 11 and note. c), meaning 'ships'.

286“biarnigvll” (pg. 273, ln. 15), according to the *Lexicum Poeticum* a particular type of hedgehog, a

highest hall; a mighty chief will strengthen it with five hundred fair towers.

V. 20) That displeases London; it adds three portions of thick walls; it strives to content with kingly affairs. The fame of the builder fares south over the mountains, but the Thames begins to rage around the city.

V. 21) And the wise beast hoards very fine fruit, that which the chief chooses. Birds come there, flying forth; off the way, far and wide, they go to the apples.

V. 22) Yet the bear-hedgehog prepares crafts; he hides the apples in London; false beast, eager for booty, digs slippery²⁸⁷ paths in the ground.

V. 23) Then stones will speak from out of the earth and wailing of men will burst out. The island will be widened, and France shakes, and the seas come together, so that between the lands speech is heard.

V. 24) That bird comes flying out of the forest of Calaterium, which leads men astray; it flies at night, and peers carefully; the heron calls every bird to him; for two winters deceit is gathered.

V. 25) The birds flock; they go into crops, the destroy the fields and the fruit; famine and sickness appear. I see a great death of men ahead; a great harm comes among the people.

V. 26) Yet after that the bird fares into that dale which men call Galahes. It will raise itself onto the highest mountain and there the heron nestles up in oak branches, the one who

reproduction of Geoffrey's Latin 'hericius' (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 152-3).

287"haligar" (*Hb* pg. 273, ln. 23). Possibly a *hapax legomenon*, as the adjective *háligr* from *hár* wouldn't seem to make sense in the context; it seems more likely to be a derivation from *háll*.

flies west.

V. 27) It hatches three young in that nest; the kin of the heron are not endeared to men; there is a wolf and a bear and a very cunning fox, and seldom are born worse²⁸⁸ than them.

V. 28) All the brothers grow up there; they are not eager to work good. The fox cruelly frightening their mother; he kills her; he kills sheep, the inhabitant of the fox-hole is eager for the kingdom.

V. 29) He wishes to hunt his brothers with cunning; the cheiftain takes the head of an adulterer on himself; both treasure-men²⁸⁹ are frightened; the brothers flee, away from the land.

V. 30) In the south they shall seek companies of men, and the wolf and bear shall rouse the wild boar, and the boar promises them his support quickly, because he trusts to courage.

V. 31) They quickly prepare a sea-horse;²⁹⁰ a small host of the land is drawn together; there is a clash of men; the people go to row; the abode of Hogni²⁹¹ covers innumerable ships.

V. 32) They steer from the south over the cool sea towards Britain. They prepare themselves for battle, and the fox goes there with a host of warriors, quickly, to defend the land.

288Following Jón Sigurðsson's correction of "verr" to "verri" (Jón Sigurðsson, "*Trójumanna saga ok Bretasögur*, efter Hauksbók, med dansk oversælse," 25).

289"hoddskata" (pg. 274, ln. 12), meaning "generous man," here presumably "king" or "prince".

290"svntravkn" (pg. 274, ln. 15), meaning "ship."

291"Hogna siot" (pg. 274, ln. 16-7), kenning for 'sea'.

V. 33) There is an onslaught on helms; shields are cloven; shields press powerfully; spears clash; war is awake; far and wide the host stains the soil with blood.

V. 34) A shower of hail draws over the flashes of terror²⁹²; it makes a great din of dear metals; there is a clash on the adorned heaven of Gǫndul²⁹³ and the dull noise resounds among the hard tents²⁹⁴; the cloaks of Skoǵul²⁹⁵ do not protect; the hail of bows²⁹⁶ falls against the shields.

V. 35) The thins dogs of the sheathes²⁹⁷ howl; the sharp wolf of the the necklace²⁹⁸ bites the throng; the Gram of men²⁹⁹ breaks the heart-hall³⁰⁰; the wound-flame³⁰¹ breaks the abodes of the brain;³⁰² the fortresses of the brain³⁰³ are greatly broken.

V. 36) I see the standard rush forward; death is hastened; the bramble of wounds³⁰⁴ rings out among the excellent men; but the guileful babies of eagles and she-wolves go still along the way; children captured in war on either side rush into the blood.³⁰⁵

V. 37) And the fox conspires against the boar, because he raised his shield wearily against him; so the king makes as if he is dead; the body of the king of the Britons is not covered.

292“ognar lioma” (pg. 274, ln. 21), kenning for 'battle'.

293“gondlar himni” (pg. 274, ln. 22), kenning for 'shield'.

294“horðvm. . . tiolldvm” (pg. 274, ln. 23), kenning for 'byrnies/armor'.

295“skavglar kapvr” (pg. 274, ln. 21), kenning for 'byrnies/armor'.

296“hagl boga” (pg. 274, ln. 24), kenning for 'arrows'.

297“graner garmar sliðra” (pg. 274, ln. 24 to 275, ln. 1), kenning for 'swords'.

298“frán freki. . . halsgerðar” (pg. 275, ln. 1), kenning for 'sword'.

299“gramr gvma” (pg. 275, ln. 1-2), a generalization of Sigurðr's sword Gram to 'sword'.

300“gollor hallir” (pg. 275, ln. 2), kenning for 'chest'.

301“benlogi” (pg. 275, ln. 2), meaning 'sword'.

302“bygðvm hiarna” (pg. 275, ln. 2), kenning for 'head'.

303“borgir heila” (pg. 275, ln. 3), kenning for 'head'.

304“saraklvngr” (pg. 275, ln. 4), kenning for 'sword'.

305“. . . en a leið lægiorn ara ioð ok ylgjar en til sylgjar hrpa hernvmin hvartvegi born.” (*Hb* pg. 275, ln. 4-5).

An odd image, and the interpretation of the passage remains uncertain.

V. 38) But the boar urges it to prove itself; he blows into the king's face and eye, but with that the fox attacks the boar; he takes from him the left foot, the right ear, the headland of the spine.³⁰⁶

V. 39) But the cowardly head³⁰⁷ hides itself³⁰⁸ in a mountain; there the fox intends to increase falsehood. The wild boar sorely tells his sorrow to the wolf and bear.

V. 40) And the valiant brothers console the boar. They say: "The wounds will heal themselves. we will both seek your foot, ear, and tail. Wait here, boar."

V. 41) And the fox runs down from the mountain. Wrathful, he goes to find the boar. He offers reconciliation for the treachery; he says that he wishes greatly to speak with the swine.

V. 42) "Trust me, boar! I will be true; I never betray a swine in sworn truce. We shall lay out a meeting and make peace; you shall make one between us."

V. 43) A meeting is laid out and a peace arranged. A munificent man comes to the parley, but there turn out to be deceits at the meeting; the British king kills the duke.

V. 44) And then, at that, the king fastens the head of a leopard on himself; he rules the common people and a multitude of men; there ends the saga of this king.

V. 45) And at that the skin of the swine is changed, and it cunningly waits for the brothers. And when they come to bring food, it bites both of the two, and kills the brothers.

306 "hrygiar nes" (pg. 275, ln. 10), kenning for 'tail'.

307 Referring to the fox.

308 Following Jón Sigurðsson's correction of 'nest' to 'felst' (Jón Sigurðsson, "*Trójumanna saga ok Breta sögur*, efter Hauksbók, med dansk oversættelse," 29).

V. 46) During his days a serpent is begotten, one which wishes to cause the death of men; it is so long—the whale of the heath³⁰⁹—that it measures a ring around London, and so furious, that the sickle of the stone heap³¹⁰ swallows everything.

V. 47) It calls the counties of Cambria, and the nearby flocks of Northumbria, and the people of the battle-bold, valiant man³¹¹ drink the Thames dry.

V. 48) Then in the same land of the Leopard seven serpents are born; they have the malicious heads of he-goats; they are the sluggish sons of the king.

V. 49) They take most of the women, the blood of manslaughter befits the same, and a multitude of whores, and the spear-accustomed make their wives common; there is danger in such things.

V. 50) It is a lengthy thing to recount that which the friend of men³¹² said about the passage of the age, for men; the least fair things to hear are in it; I let it pass and tell the end.

V. 51) Great strife happens on the earth, says the wise man,³¹³ powerful menaces, battles and artifices, a wolf-age, and cold with rime of every kind on the hearts of men.

V. 52) Then careless men will forget themselves, and wanton men drink; they seek to rejoice, and be happy in wealth, and increase their gold and fame.

309“heiðar hvalr” (pg. 275, ln. 26), kenning for 'snake'.

310“vrðar sigðr” (pg. 275, ln. 26 to pg. 276, ln. 1), kenning for 'snake'.

311Here presumably referring to the serpent.

312“lofða vinr” (pg. 276, ln. 7), kenning here referring to Merlin.

313Merlin.

V. 53) The affairs of men become dangerous in many ways; the conduct of warrior will not be fair to experience; men who move about in dreams³¹⁴ greatly conceal themselves; they do not look to themselves or each other.

V. 54) It is the worst in the world; a son does not know a father; thus they broke their addinity, sons from fathers; none recognize familiar men, nor do close kinsmen recognize the Njorðr of rings.³¹⁵

V. 55) It is heavy to hear what comes to pass among the crowd; sheep live the lives of men; they think of this ostinate world, and forsake goodness of every sort.

V. 56) The white silver will do harm to men, and gold will make men blind; they forsake heaven, but look upon the earth; the multitude of drunkards betray men.

V. 57) The Danish people live for the flesh; the people do not at all act for themselves against it; the high-born time-makers of heaven³¹⁶ will turn their light from people.

V. 58) Still after that the green field forsakes growth, nor does the shower come down from the clouds; the fair-shapen sun and moon take another way for themselves than they have before.

V. 59) And there in heaven bright stars can observe everyone of the earth; some go backwards, some a different way from their old path.

V. 60) Some attack each other, and some keep away; they change their light and fair color; the winds fight; there are great storms, and they make a sound among the heavenly

314“dravms i vaðendr” (pg. 276, ln. 13), meaning 'indifferent men'.

315“nirðir bauga” (pg. 276, ln. 16), kenning for 'king'.

316“tignv tiðmork himuns” (pg. 276, ln. 21), kenning for 'sun and moon'.

bodies.

V. 61) The sea rages; it goes up aloft; such a thing is terrible for the children of men; such a thing is terrible to enumerate; the old earth will become free of men.

V. 62) It was made well known to men, from the old poem of the battle-stick;³¹⁷ I will not still say more of the trees of Þróttir's thing.³¹⁸

V. 63) Yet I have said, concerning the race of men, such as the book has made known to men; the tale of the Njótr of such steel³¹⁹ is of use, and be cautious!

V. 64) Look upon sin and treasonous counsel and ill works of all kinds; we practice virtue, we love the Lord, we quickly cast off evil counsel.

V. 65) Frail is the life of the children of men, under the storm-trodden tent of the mountain side,³²⁰ but life's secrets do not slip past God, nor does the evil of the multitude of men.

V. 66) All rejoice in a merry mood, and the hope of honor and glory; we heed God, and forget evil; we frequently strengthen the bravery of the soul.

V. 67) We often pray for the self-control of men, for the ardent strength of every heart, and the far-renowned ruler of men³²¹ watches the people day after day.

V. 68) And he who helps good people casts off every hurt of the host of mankind,

317“folk stafs” (pg. 276, ln. 30), kenning for 'warrior', here referring to Merlin.

318“Þrottir þings þollvm” (pg. 276, ln. 31), kenning for 'warriors'. Þróttir is a name for Odin.

319“stala slíka sogn” (pg. 277, ln. 1), kenning, for 'warrior' or 'man', here referring again to Merlin. Njótr is a name for Odin.

320“hregska hliðar tialldi” (pg. 277, ln. 3-4), kenning for 'sky'.

321“viðfrægr virða stiori” (pg. 277, ln. 7), kenning for 'God'.

and so the guardian of the nation leads this multitude.

29. The Prophecies of Merlin (II)

V. 1) Now I shall say to ordinary men, that which formerly was—wise men listen to me—that a king sat in Britain, a generous man, Vortigern.

V. 2) The land was formerly named for the Britons, that which is now named for the English, because the English people, a little while ago, defrauded the unwilling British men of their claim.

V. 3) And their land was called after its great people in ancient sagas, and there was where wise Christians settled before heathen men began to build halls.

V. 4) The saxon lineage of the English people is told in ancient sagas, then they won the thunder of spears,³²² to deprive the British king of his land.

V. 5) But the lord of the host³²³ could not hold the British land nor many rings; the heathen host travels all the way up the eastern way and puts the prince of the island in irons.

V. 6) But the duke seeks for shelter; the king sets out to build a trusty tower, and for this work, the generous man gathers many builders there.

V. 7) Wise master-smiths come to the construction—it is told to men—up on a mountain; but that which men made during the day, this is seen in no place the next morning.

322“*primv geira*” (pg. 277, ln. 18), kenning for 'war'.

323“*hers iaðar*” (pg. 277, ln. 18), kenning for 'king'.

V. 8) The king has wise men summoned; the battle-bold king asked what was the caused of it, when that foundation fully disappeared, as if the aged earth swallowed stone buildings, or covered their rims in fire.³²⁴

V. 9) There was a man, who knew how to understand obscure enquires into the future; the young man was called Ambrosius, but that man was known by another famous name: Merlin.

V. 10) It was the cause, the enemy of the fire of the sea³²⁵ then said, that under there was no small amount of water. The ruler ordered the men to dig; the wise tale of the prophet was proven.

V. 11) And the wise man asked the men what was further down under the water, and when no one else knew it, the spear-tree³²⁶ said to the wise king:

V. 12) “There sleep in the darkness, deep down, two dragons, in two caves; they are unlike the belts of the land;³²⁷ I see a red cord of the land,³²⁸ and a white.”

V. 13) “Let the earth be dug, to make a channel,” Merlin said to the giver of treasures,³²⁹ “divert the water down from the mountain, and you will know then what the breaker of rings³³⁰ has foretold.”

324 This last phrase is essentially a reconstruction, somewhat based on Jon Sigurðsson's translation (Jón Sigurðsson, “*Trójumanna saga ok Breta sögur*, efter Hauksbók, með dansk oversælse,” 41), as the passage appeared uncomprehensible to both himself and Finnur Jónsson.

325 “verdax havtvör” (pg. 277, ln. 29-30), kenning for 'king', here referring to Merlin.

326 “fleínþollr” (pg. 278, ln. 3), meaning 'warrior', here referring to Merlin.

327 “lindar landz” (pg. 278, ln. 4), kenning for 'serpent'.

328 “seil rás” (pg. 278, ln. 4), kenning for 'serpent'.

329 “menia deili” (pg. 278, ln. 5-6), kenning for 'king', here referring to Vortigern.

330 “spillir bavga” (pg. 278, ln. 6), kenning for 'king', here referring to Merlin.

V. 14) Doughty men do that which is commanded to men, and the water is channeled down from the mountain, and the gold-giver³³¹ perceived the peace-less snakes, just as the Týr of Hrist³³² had prophesied to men.

V. 15) And the ample dragons awoke; both rose up away from the place, then they quickly began to fight, the brave, rare rings of the land.³³³

V. 16) A great fight of the two snakes arises; belts of the ground³³⁴ gape fiercely; quarrelsome fences of the earth³³⁵ exchange blows; they blow poison and black fire upon each other.

V. 17) The gleaming red one was exiled; the bright worm bears him to the bank, but he skilfully recoils; faithfully, he pursues the white dragon.

V. 18) They fight in the channel of water, and long and vigorously the dragons fight; the worms are able to strike, now more here, and now there.

V. 19) “Speak, Merlin,” said the necklace-breaker.³³⁶ “Are you wiser than other men? What does the terrible battle of the two worms betoken for the children of men.”

V. 20) The friend of men³³⁷ wept when the noble prince ordered him to unravel these events; the wisdom-imparters of men³³⁸ speaks prophecy, strong in reasoning, to men.

331“seim gefendr” (pg. 278, ln. 8), meaning 'king', here presumably referring to Vortigern.

332“tyr. . . hristar” (pg. 278, ln. 9), kenning for 'king', here referring to Merlin.

333“frons. . . bavgar” (pg. 278, ln. 11), kenning for 'serpent'.

334“grvndar bellti” (pg. 278, ln. 12), kenning for 'serpent'.

335“havðrs gyrðingar” (pg. 278, ln. 12), kenning for 'serpent'.

336“menbroti” (pg. 278, ln. 17), meaning 'king', here referring to Vortigern.

337“gvmna vinr” (pg. 278, ln. 18-19), kenning for 'king', here referring to Merlin.

338“alldar snytrir” (pg. 278, ln. 20), kenning for Merlin.

V. 21) The bright red band of the earth³³⁹—said the offerer of poetry³⁴⁰—signifies the British people, but the white snake there signifies the heathen host, which will settle British soil.³⁴¹

V. 22) There is great sorrow, they signify to men; I declare that the white snake has victory; the land, and a multitude of men, will be overthrown; blood rivers will fall from the dales.

V. 23) Christianity will be destroyed, churches fall—that is a heavy sorrow—an army is in the land; at that time the wretched people will yet grow strong, when before its condition was heavily struck down.

V. 24) A king will come there, in the form of a wild boar; he is the most magnificent. He lends help to the helpless troops, and treads the Saxon host underfoot.

V. 25) He conquers the green earth, and the multitude of islands in the ocean, the Irish and the English and Scots of the far north, the wide lands of the French people, the coast of Norway and the Danes in the North.

V. 26) And the Romans fear the king; they cannot raise a shield against the king. I know many other things concerning the necklace-breaker,³⁴² but I do not clearly see the fate of the king.³⁴³

V. 27) He will honor languages of people; he will be the most famous of kings; the

339“ras fagršli” (pg. 278, ln. 21), kenning for 'serpent'.

340“bioðr bragar” (pg. 278, ln. 21), kenning for 'poet', here referring to Merlin.

341From this verse it is onward the narrative is essentially in the direct speech of Merlin, until verse ninety-three, when the narrator takes over.

342“menbrota” (pg. 278, ln. 32), meaning 'king', here referring to Arthur, the boar.

343Contrary to the concretely stated death of Arthur in the prose narrative of the saga, here the translator Gunnlaugr appears to be maintaining the tradition of Arthur's uncertain fate.

fame of the noble captain will live forever and his praise will go through the quarters of heaven.

V. 28) And a kinsman of the glorious king invites king and thanes to the land, but after that the power of the white worm becomes greater than it had been.

V. 29) The Fenrir of the sea³⁴⁴ assists him, he who follows out of Africa; There is a degradation of the Christian faith among the kin of the people, yet all the English people will be baptized somewhat later.

V. 30) The seat of the Bishop goes from London into the broad city of Canterbury, and the worthy Menevia will long take the honor of Legion.

V. 31) A great marvel occurs: it rains blood. At that, a hard hunger plagues manking, but then the red snake grows strong; it gains might from great toil.

V. 32) Distress befalls the white snake; his kin are tortured, his women are cut, he is plundered in his cities and many settlements, property of every king; on the green earth, men are cruelly slain.

V. 33) Seven kings fall before the Britons; the kinsman of princes take victory; the giver of troops becomes holy, one from the seven English princes.

V. 34) It happens thus, that a copper man shall himself be taken up—a ruler of men—and the glorious chief sits over the high gates on a bronze horse; the famous king guards London.

³⁴⁴“fenrer siofar” (pg. 279, ln. 2) which other than the mythological reference is a more or less direct translation of the Latin, “aequoreus lupus” (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed./trans. Reeve and Wright, 145).

V. 35) Then it will arise among the British people, that which had before done harm among them, so that they become not at all reconciled; they quarrel over power and over over the wide earth; the British race is impetuous.

V. 36) Fierce calamity comes from the king of heaven among the people; fruitfulness is overthrown; hard, deathly illness torments the people; the people cannot cover the dead; famine and sickness lie upon the battle-trees;³⁴⁵ loss of men, a great, heavy grief.

V. 37) After, the lands will lose those who live; the thing-bold race goes from the land; the blessed king—he is the British king—prepared his ships to go away, and he quickly is reckoned noble, set in the twelfth hall, well-off in happiness, by friends of God.

V. 38) Thus the land is emptied of the children of men; the grieved crowd drifts hence from the land, so that forests quickly grow, where fertile fields were before, with men on the British earth.

V. 39) Then the white land-belt³⁴⁶ will go, quick and resolute, to invite the Saxon gentlewoman, and with a great multitude of men the Skøgul of the barley-fjord³⁴⁷ comes to settle the land.

V. 40) A foreign seed will come again over our garden, but somewhere on the cool rim of the island the stands the red worm.

V. 41) Yet he possess little of the land; then the zealous white dragon is crowned and Saxon men reign; the copper-king must step down from the steep arm of the city.³⁴⁸

345“sigr viðum” (pg. 279, ln. 19), meaning 'warriors' or here more generally just 'men'.

346“hiarl þvengr” (pg. 279, ln. 25), meaning 'serpent'.

347“fiarðbyggs skovl” (pg. 279, ln. 26), kenning for 'woman'.

348“brottvn borgar arme” (pg. 279, ln. 30-31), kenning for 'wall'.

V. 42) Boundaries are given to the light-colored fetter of the leafy forest,³⁴⁹ in count of years; he will not reign beyond his bitter fate, nor rule that, the fair country.

V. 43) The belt of the earth³⁵⁰ will be in great uproar for one hundred and fifty years; he will sit honored over London and a multitude of people for three hundred years.

V. 44) Then the sharp Northeast wind will go against men—the fetter of the grove³⁵¹—and drive away those flowers, which the west wind grew.

V. 45) Gold will glitter in the house of God, but the storm of swords³⁵² will not yet let down; the treacherous dragon will scarcely reach his den, so that the punishments for his treacheries will draw near, those which he must bear.

V. 46) He will have success for a very short while; the byrnie-wearing people drive him back; that company come from the south, across the sea, that one which will plunder a great kingdom.

V. 47) That prince, who rules the people, will soon settled the land with the British host; the seed of the white snake will again be taken from many gardens.

V. 48) Then he will pay for his crueller rule; there is a tithe levied on his deceitful kin; he must work the green field, and he has never ruled since then; thus he is given a sore vengeance for his treason.

V. 49) Yet at that time two worms rule; one loses his life from an arrow, but the

349“lavfviðar. . . liosvm” (pg. 279, ln. 31), kenning for 'serpent'.

350“folldar bellti” (pg. 280, ln. 2), kenning for 'serpent'.

351“lvndar fiotri” (pg. 280, ln. 4), kenning for 'serpent'.

352“logþis veðr” (pg. 280, ln. 6), kenning for 'battle'.

other will return under the shadow of a name, to win his fate.

V. 50) Then the beast of righteousness will rule, he who the Dragons of Orkney fear, and to the south of the sea the full strong French towers themselves are afraid.

V. 51) Then from a great quantity of grass gold will be formed; silver hastens from the hooves of the race of the calf; beautifully-dressed women are in the land; there is no moral improvement from these gentlewomen.

V. 52) Minted coins are cut in half the most willing greed of kites is lost; the teeth of the wolf will lose their strength, and the whelps of the lion-wolf become fish in the whale-yard.³⁵³

V. 53) Swords are drawn painfully; I see the wounds of mothers blow out blood; I see many heavy things pass over the kin of the people; the woman's blood stains Venedotia, and then six vehement kinsmen of her brother kill the kinsmen of Corineus.

V. 54) Then men will cry at night and people make dear prayers; then men will strive for heaven; able men will possess The Long Life.

V. 55) Yet afterwards wild beasts will awaken in the forest, hunt in the cities; they will themselves slay their enemies; few will be those who dare to speak against them.

V. 56) One—the fittest frightener of wealth³⁵⁴—from Neustria, sits at England; yet kings are come from the south, five or more, to rule the earth.

V. 57) That breaks the bright cities of the Irish, and forests fall to the wearth; a chief

353“hvaltnvm” (pg. 280, ln. 23), meaning 'sea'.

354“skelfir avðar” (pg. 280, ln. 30-31), kenning for 'king'.

makes many kingdoms; a lord takes the head of a lion.

V. 58) There is uproar in the rule of the great king, still, in the earlier part of the life of the king, but the chafing old age of the distributor of wealth³⁵⁵ pleases the heavenly-prince well.

V. 59) He will adorn the city of bishops, and raise many holy places; he honors two cities with the pallium; he gives agreeable ornaments to the bondmaidens of Christ.

V. 60) From such things the instigator of the sword storm³⁵⁶ become endeared to the king of the troop of heaven,³⁵⁷ and because of this life the thing-bold king is counted among the angels of the prince of the sun.³⁵⁸

V. 61) The baby of the king will be like a lynx; he will overthrow his own people, and from that cause he will lose the rich land of both the Irish and the England, and Neustria, bereaved of his highness.

V. 62) And after that the British men go quickly in search of their native place, though there is already a bad season in the land; the English people are unreconciled.

V. 63) The magnificent rider rides to the river Periron on a white horse—the the vigorous man of rank—and there with a white staff he marks the outline of an old mill-farm.

V. 64) Cadualadrus will summon Conan, and so from Scotland he flees from the grim storm of Gōndul,³⁵⁹ the great metal-thing³⁶⁰ is pressed.

355“auðvarpaðar” (pg. 280, ln. 34), kenning for 'king'.

356“havtvör sverðels” (pg. 280, ln. 37), kenning for 'king'.

357“himna ferðar . . . grame” (pg. 280, ln. 38), 'king of angels', kenning for 'God'.

358“tigia tvngls” (pg. 280, ln. 39), kenning for 'God'.

359“grimv gavndlar eli” (pg. 281, ln. 7), kenning for 'battle'.

360“malþing” (pg. 281, ln. 8), meaning 'battle'.

V. 65) The sharp hail of the bow³⁶¹ roves hard from strings; the gavelock dashes furiously from here; the clouds of Skogul³⁶² can not stand against missiles.

V. 66) Byrnies are rent, metals bite, spears aloft are stained with blood; shafts in flight, folk in blood, lancet in bleeding wounds, spikes in shields, helm on head, shield before breast, spear on course, battle on the increase.

V. 67) The sword and targe meet each other, helm and sword, shield and arrow, the British byrnie and reddened brand, the mighty hand of man and sword-haft, arrows and the breaths of men.

V. 68) The willing dead hurry on, spears shriek loudly, the great metal-din is on the earth; one heap of slain becomes piled upon another, rivers of blood will fall from valleys; the glow of war is cast upon the sea.

V. 69) Men fall in the arrow-shower; death is drawn up to the English host; the field is reddened with blood; half the British obtain glorious victory.

V. 70) A river of the wave of the fallen³⁶³ rises up to the mountains; they will bear the crown of Brutus; the mighty oaks of Cornwall will become green; Cambria eagerly rejoices in such things.

V. 71) The English name of the island is annuled; it will not be called Anglia; it is allotted to hold the ancient name; it is called Britannia, after Brutus.

V. 72) The battle-bold wild boar will come from the kin-mighty line of Conan; that

361“hagl tviviðar” (pg. 281, ln. 8), kenning for 'arrows'.

362“skoglar sky” (pg. 281, ln. 9), kenning for 'shields'.

363“valbreka” (pg. 281, ln. 20), meaning 'blood'.

son of Yngvi³⁶⁴ wishes to fell oaks from the forest, yet the prince will be loyal to the small trees.

V. 73) The Arabians and Africans will fear the king, out in the world; the king, having wide lands, will make passage out to threaten to outermost parts of Spain.

V. 74) After the king has taken over the lands, his mood is not turned away from a woman. He bears on his head horns of gold; the beard of the man is shaped from silver.

V. 75) The friend of Mist³⁶⁵ blows from the nostrils of a goat such a fog, that it covers the island; a peace holds fast during the days of the king; at that time, fruitfulness does not end in the land.

V. 76) The fair women will be from drawn from the earth; pride whistles to the maidens in their tracks; fortresses will be build for lust; the wrong desire deceives the friend of men.³⁶⁶

V. 77) The fair spring becomes bloody, though there is abundance of all kings on the the earth; but on an islet two heroes fight for the fair-haired bride; she is in wide Stafford.

V. 78) Three ages see this marvel, though the condition of the people is ugly before The Lord, until the kings buried in London are reveal to men from the earth.

V. 79) Still the great crop-failure comes, and the death of men comes painfully among the crowd; the cities are deserted with loss of men; there is great need of able men; many a man flees away from the land.

364“yngva svn” (pg. 281, ln. 24), kenning for 'king'.

365“vinr Mistar” (pg. 281, ln. 29), kenning for 'man'.

366“gymna vín” (pg. 281, ln. 32), kenning for 'king'.

V. 80) The heroically good wild boar of wares comes there, to gather men, those who fled before from the land; he then lets them settle the British soil, the deserted cities, the beautiful farms.

V. 81) His breast will be food for men, those who have little property in hand, and the guileless tongue of the chieftain extinguishes the fury of the prince's people.

V. 82) Resounding rivers of the captain of the people fall from the very famous ice-hole of words;³⁶⁷ they will water the dears lands of the mind,³⁶⁸ in the adorned world of the heart,³⁶⁹ and the dry throats of many peoples.

V. 83) Then arises—I see it in advance—support in the three towers of London; there are three branches on that tree, but it covers the land with a ring of leaves.

V. 84) From a fair wind, there comes a sharp Northeastern wind; it strikes the oak from its stump; those branches which stand back will take the place of this one—I see it fully.

V. 85) They cover the whole island with leaves, until one hinders another there, and it is deprived of all its leaves; the powerful one takes the space which three have taken.

V. 86) And then it covers one thick leaves, one, over all the shore of the island-encloser;³⁷⁰ then birds cannot fly in the land, because it frightens them; but it still leads foreign birds on a journey to him.

V. 87) Then an ass of malice will rule, that swift one who takes possession of

367“orða. . . vok” (pg. 282, ln. 9), kenning for 'mouth'.

368“iarðir geðs” (pg. 282, ln. 10), kenning for 'breast'.

369“gollor heime” (pg. 282, ln. 10), kenning for 'breast'.

370“eykarms” (pg. 282, ln. 17), meaning 'sea'.

goldsmiths; the friend of men³⁷¹ is slow to avenge the angry children of plunderous wolves.

V. 88) And during his days strong oaks from the forest are recklessly burned, and among the little branches of the linden-tree an acorn grows abundantly, in the grove.

V. 89) And the Severn way of Røn³⁷² runs through seven mouths—I see it in advance—but the mighty Usk—it is a great wonder—will boil for seven months; at this a death of fish occurs, which from themselves become snakes.

V. 90) The hot springs of the city of Bath—many things happen—become cold, and its water, wholesome to men, then becomes ample death to mankind.

V. 91) There occurs the loss of a crowd of twenty thousand men in London; all those valient men will be slain; the death of men bloodies the Thames.

V. 92) Marriages will be commanded for cowled men; many women are forced there, and men hear their cry near the cold mountains of the world.

V. 93) Here I will leave off composing the verses and prophecies of the breaker of rings,³⁷³ though there are more words of the wise man; I have arranged some of them into verse.

V. 94) These are the second verses concerning this; peoples should not do violence—I ask this of the treasure-bearing tree³⁷⁴—for this poem, though I have shaped words in that meter, which before unfolded hastened tales of prophecy, of metal-thing in many places.

371“lofpa vinr” (pg. 282, ln. 20), kenning for 'king', here referring to the ass.

372“ranar vegr” (pg. 282, ln. 23), kenning for 'sea', here referring to the estuary of the Severn.

373“spillis bauga” (pg. 282, ln. 32), kenning for 'king', here referring to Merlin.

374“avðs bendravgar” (pg. 283, ln. 1), perhaps more precisely 'supporting beam of riches', kenning for 'warrior', or more generally 'man'.

V. 95) Men know it, those who read this book, how it has gone concerning the tales of the prophet, and it is known by the sword-trees³⁷⁵ what words are unfolded in the meter of the foresights of men, those which men do not know.

V. 96) Read the sayings of the psalms; read of the prophets; read those illustrious books and scrolls, and discover it, that the noble man has wisely arranged prophecies, as holy men before him.

V. 97) None estimate it as nonsense, though he gave treasure-skates³⁷⁶ names after trees or water, or a great storm, or all kinds of worms or wild beasts; the nature of the spoken form signifies tales or affairs of warriors.

V. 98) Daniel speaks of his multifarious dreams, supported by signs; he says that he sees many beasts on the earth, those which signify the domains of kings, those who arised later on the earth

V. 99) The dear king David lays out judgement of the manifold prophecies, and speaks thus: "Mountains will rejoice and the fair forest and wild rivers clap their hands, and the dales sing hymns to the Lord."

V. 100) Men are chastized for mocking books; use reason and fully understand what will be signified in these words, though not every prophecy comes to pass; words of prophets are still very murky.

V. 101) May men, who still live on earth when our lives have passed, learn what happens here and consider it; compare then the new tales to a prophecy and find out

375"kalldyr viðvm" (pg. 283, ln. 4-5), kenning for 'warriors' or 'men'.

376"hoddskotvm" (pg. 283, ln. 9), kenning for 'kings'.

afterward how it matches.

V. 102) That, the English race, lost power awhile ago; now there is a French king, though yet their custom still has not passed from the land, and he has not yet conquered the shed³⁷⁷ of the British people with a sharp sword.

V. 103) Good health to all those spear-casters³⁷⁸ who have listened to this lore; may men do good and destroy evil; I pray for atonement for hasty wrongs. Have the grace of god and the heavenly kingdom. Amen.

30. Vortigern then asked Merlin what would cause his death.

Merlin answered: “Guard yourself against the fire of the sons of Constantinus, if you can; in the morning it will be more difficult. Aurelius and Uther will avenge their father and burn you inside and destroy all the Saxons here.

It came to pass as he said. Aurelius came to Britain, and he was taken to the king and came to Vortigern during the night; he went with an army to his castle in Kambria and had the castle burned and broken, and burned Vortigern and all his men therein. Hengist heard of the death of the king; he feared Aurelius, because he was a man of great accomplishments. He went north, then, over the Humber and gathered troops there. Aurelius strove after and the met, and there was a hard battle between them, where it is now called The City of Kings.³⁷⁹ The Saxons went forward so hard, that it was imminent that the Britons would flee. Then the troops of Aurelius took them in the rear and flight broke out among the Saxons. With Aurelius was jarl Eldol; he met Hengest in the flight, and mighty blows between them could not be prevented, and it could barely be seen how it would turn

377“hiall” (*Hb* pg. 283, ln. 22). Presumably a reference to Wales; it is not sure what the implied meaning of *hiall* is here. Possibly the idea is a sort of last outpost, or a peripheral region, or perhaps, following Geoffrey's apparent disdain for the Welsh, an demeaning name for Wales.

378 “fleinvarpaðir” (pg. 283, ln. 23), meaning 'warriors', here generalized to 'men'.

379“Konvnga borg” (*Hb* pg. 284, ln. 1). The location of their first battle in the *Historia* is “Maisbeli” (*Hist* pg. 165, ln. 86); this name is an oddly convenient transcription of “Cunengeburg”, or Conisbrough, a town Hengest flees to and the location of a second battle (*Hist* pg. 164-5, ln. 114).

out. Then jarl Gorlois of Cornwall came there; Hengest was captured. Octa, the son of Hengist, fled into York with his men and Eosa his in-law, with a great army. Aurelius summoned his chieftains to him to counsel what should be done with Hengest.

Jarl Eldol answered: "He has grieved many mothers, and his mother shall not weep."

He leaped up and drew his sword and struck off his head, and Hengest was lain afterwards in a mound.

31. Aurelius went then with an army to York and besieged the city. Octa saw that great siegeworks aided Aurelius faithfully, and he would win the city. With the counsel of his men he walked out; he had fetters in his hands and a grass hat on his head. He went before Aurelius and said:

"My gods are conquered by your gods. Now take these fetters and lay them on me, or whatever else that you wish, unless you wish to give us forgiveness."

Then bishop Eldadus said: "The Gibeonites³⁸⁰ came to the Jewish people, and they gained mercy after great offences, and you, lord, should do no worse than them."

The king did as the bishop suggested; he gave them all pardon, and they kept good faith with him afterwards. Then the king went to London, and when he came into that monastery where Hengest had killed his father, he shed tears, and wished then to build some remembrance there. The prophet Merlin was then called. The king said that his wished to to prepare a burial-place for his father.

Merlin said: "If you wish to make this burial, of such great responsibility, then have men go to Ireland; very famous stones are there, and they will never fall, if they are well set."

The king laughed at this and said: "Do we lack stones here in England, although we might not take them from other lands?"

Merlin answered: "There are no such stones here, because those are set with all the impediments in the world, and giants carried them out from the land of the Saracens."

³⁸⁰"Galiante" (*Hb* pg. 284, ln. 20).

Then the king sent Uther Pendragon after these stones, and twenty thousand men with him. Merlin accompanied them, and when they came to Ireland, and when Gillomanus³⁸¹ heard of their errand, he gathered together an army and wished to defend these stones. There was a hard battle and the Britons had the victory; the king fled. The Britons went onto the mountain and found the stones, and took strong rope and tied it on the stones, and they brought many hundreds, and then each could be moved. Then Merlin went out and carried these stones to the ships for a little while, and they sailed home afterward to Britain, and the king thanked them for their journey. They were now ready for the burial of king Constantinus, with these stones, and the king gave a three week feast for all the highest men in the land.

32. Uther took the kingdom

After Vortigern had died, his son Pascentius fled to Saxony and obtained an army there, and went back to Britain and wished to avenge his father. Aurelius went to meet him with an army, and there was a hard battle and Pascentius fled to Ireland to king Gillomanus. They both gathered troops and went back to Britain. At that time king Aurelius lay sick in Winchester,³⁸² but Uther Pendragon went to meet them with an army. When they heard of Aurelius' sickness, then an Irish³⁸³ man came forth before the king, and asked what they would give, if he brought about Aurelius' death.

Pascentius answered: "I will give you a thousand pounds of silver, and if I become king, you shall become a centurion."

Eopa then cut his hair and took on monk's clothes, and pretended to be a physician, and went then to Winchester³⁸⁴ and bade men take him to the king. When he came there, he made him a drink, and when the king had drunk it, he fell asleep, and when he awoke, and knew that poison had come into his body, and he died not long after. Eopa then came to his

381The king of Ireland.

382"Tonícam" (*Hb* pg. 285, ln. 16), probably a shortening or misreading of the Latin name *Guintonia*.

383Eopa, a Saxon in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 177, ln. 321).

384"Tomiam" (*Hb* pg. 285, ln. 22).

men and told them the results of his mission.

Immediately after the king had died, there was seen a bright star in the sky, and a bright ray came off the star shaped like a dragon, and two rays ran out of the dragon's mouth. The more southerly ray shone over all France, but the other went over Ireland and branched out into seven rays. When these tidings came to Uther, then he asked Merlin what it meant.

Merlin answered: "Oh great grief! Aurelius is now dead, and that is the loss of every man. Go now and fight, because you will gain victory; that star which appears in the shape of a dragon marks you, and that ray which stands over France marks your son, because he will become so mighty that he will possess all that kingdom which the ray stood over. The other ray marks your daughter; she will be given in marriage to Ireland,³⁸⁵ and seven kin will come from her."

Uther doubted whether it would happen thus, but still he went to meet Gillomanius and Pascentius. There began a hard battle, and Gillomanius and Pascentius both fell, and Uther had the victory. He took the rule of all Britain. He had made two dragons of gold, and had one hung up over the grave of his father in Ambrius, and had the other borne before him in battle wherever he fought. He was afterward called Uther dragon-head.³⁸⁶

33. After the death of Aurelius, Octa, the son of Hengest, gathered together an army and went to Britain and besieged York. Uther came to meet him with a British army, and they fought until night. Then the Britons began to flee to a high mountain that was all closed in with high crags. The Saxons besieged the mountain, but when night began and it became dark, Uther plunged down the mountain with his army upon the unaware Saxons. A multitude of Saxons fell there, but Octa was captured and set in irons, and carried to London.³⁸⁷ During Easter the king held a feast for all the powerful men of the land. Gorlois, the king of Cornwall, was there, and his wife. She was the fairest of all women. The king

³⁸⁵Ireland is not mentioned in the version of this speech in the *Historia*.

³⁸⁶"dreka havfvð" (*Hb* pg. 286, ln. 6). Here Geoffrey states in, in the British language, 'Pendragon' means 'dragon's head' (*Hist* pg. 181, 398-99).

³⁸⁷"Ytoniam" (*Hb* pg. 286, ln. 13).

had an affection for her and spoke with her secretly. The duke found out about this and went away from the feast with his wife, without the king's permission, and set her in a tower. When Gorlois would not come back to the feast, the king grew angry and sent men to besiege his castle, so that men could neither in or out of there.

The king told Merlin that he could not keep his health, if he was not near the duke's wife.

Merlin said: "That is not easy, because there is a close and narrow path that three knights can defend against all the British army, who are awake there both night and day. Yet, I can make it so that there you appear as though you are Gorlois. Ulfyn your councilor and myself will appear as her two man-servants, and we will then be able to obtain entry into the tower."

The king accepted this counsel. They went afterward to the castle, and it all happened as Merlin planned; Igerna thought that night that she slept next to her husband, Gorlois.

34. When the army felt the loss of their king, they thought that he had been betrayed, and charged against Gorlois and killed him and the greater part of his men. Men told Igerna these tidings, but should know not how this could have happened, because she thought that she had slept next to him that night.

The king spoke then: "You can see that I live, and that plan will please me, to go to meet the king and ask forgiveness."

The king then walked away, and into his army, and then took back all such manner which he had had before. He then went to the castle, and told Igerna the whole truth. She then reconciled with the king, and he obtained her. They had two children; the son was named Arthur, and the daughter Anna, and not long after the king had a great and painful sickness. While the king lay sick, Octa and his men escaped from the dungeon, and went to Saxony, and then came back to Britain with an overwhelming force. When the Britons heard about this, they urged the king to give Anna, his daughter, to Loth,³⁸⁸ the king of

³⁸⁸Loth of Lothian, the earl of Carlisle, in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 188-9, ln. 545-6). This appears to be the

Ireland, and that counsel was taken.

He then went with an army to meet the Saxons, and there was a hard battle and it ended so that the Britons fled. When king Uther heard that, he summoned all his chieftains to him and had himself born on a stretcher against the army of Saxons. The Saxons thought it a great shame that they should fight against a sick man; they went then into that city called Verulamium,³⁸⁹ and made it their own. The Britons destroyed the city and when the Saxons saw that they went out from the city and there was a hard battle. Octa fell there, and most of his men, and those who kept their lives fled.

The king was glad at his victory and spoke: "I would rather that I, sick, gain such a victory than flee healthy."

A Saxon man blended poison into his drink, and he died a short time later. They carried his body to that monastery where his brother lay buried, and his grave was prepared with great honor, and he was greatly lamented by many men.

35. Arthur becomes king

After three weeks passed Uther died. His son Arthur was taken as king and crowned in the city called Silchester; he was then fifteen winters old. He was great in stature, beautiful in countenance, a wise man in reason, liberal with wealth, strong, hard, and gallant, glad and good to his friends, but grim to his enemies, trusty and prudent, pure of life and blessed by victory, far-renowned and well accomplished in all things.

A short time after he was taken as king, it was heard that a Saxon army had come into the land, and all the kingdom from Caithness south to Humber had been desolated. Then Arthur went with his army to meet them. The chieftain of the Saxons was called

same character in the translation as the Loth that is king in Hǫrðaland, in chapter thirty-six of the translation, who thus would go from benign earl in Geoffrey's work to a king in both Ireland and Norway in the translation. The alteration seems related to the alteration to the speech of Merlin in chapter thirty-two, where the translation specifically notes that Anna will be married in Ireland, that does not appear in the *Historia* (*Hb* pg. 285, ln. 29).

389"Værolamm" (*Hb* pg. 287, ln. 11), the Latin name for St. Albans (*Hist* pg. 190-1, ln. 563).

Colgrimus; they met where it is called Þverá,³⁹⁰ and there was a great battle and the Saxons fled to the city of York; the king besieged the city. Baldulfus, the brother of Colgrimus, heard of this; he gathered to himself six thousand men and meant to help Colgrimus. When they came ten miles out from York they stopped. The king became aware of their journey, and sent jarl Cador to meet them with a great army. They immediately rushed into battle, and some Saxons fell and some fled.

Baldulf was greatly discontent with his defeat and had his hair clipped and his beard shaved to a jester's length. He obtained a harp and went into the king's camp and entertained there. On one night he came himself into the city with rope, and his brother rejoiced at him. They then sent men to Saxony to ask for help from the chieftain Cheldricus. He then gathered an army and went to Britain with six hundred ships; they came to Scotland. King Arthur heard of this and sent a message to Hoelus, his sister's son, and he came to the king with twenty thousand warriors. They both then went together against the heathens, and they met by a river. There a hard battle began, until the heathens fled. The king pursued the fleeing host into that forest called Colidon. There the heathens offered resistance, and many of the Britons fell there. Then the king had the forest felled around them so that they could not get away. The heathens saw now that they were defeated; they sent a message to the king, and offered him gold and silver for their liberation, and that deal was made between them, that they would pay tribute and give him hostages there.

Then they remembered their great losses, and broke the settlement with the king and plundered in his kingdom. When the king became aware of this he had all the hostages killed and went afterwards to meet them with an army. Hoelus, his sister's son, was sick and could not assist him. When they saw the camp of the heathens, then Arthur spoke before his army and urged them to boldness. He was armed thus: he had fourfold byrnies; he had a helm of the strongest steel, and a dragon inlaid into it with wonderful craftsmanship; he had the sword called Caliburnus that was so great, that there were few men who could

390“þar sem Þverá heitir” (*Hb* pg. 287, ln. 30), *Þverá* meaning 'tributary river' is presumably an incomplete translation of the “flumen Duglas” in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 293, ln. 20).

wield it; his shield was made of the strongest hide, and painted in the likeness of Our Lady, because he always called on Her for help; his mighty spear was called Ron.

Now they began to fight, and fought all that day; night ended the battle.

36. In the morning there was daylight for fighting; the battle between them began anew, and many men fell on both sides, but more among the Britons. When the king saw the fall of his men, he became vehemently enraged, and drew his sword, and stuck with both hands; in a short time he felled four hundred and seventy men. In that fight both the brothers Colgrimus and Baldulfus fell, and many thousands of men; Cheldricus and all the Saxon army then fled to their camp. The king pursued the fleeing host and felled Cheldricus in flight, and the greatest part of his troops.

The king then went to Ireland and laid it under himself, and thus Scotland in the same manner. His sister's sons were with him, Hoelus and Modred, Gawain³⁹¹ and Lancelot and Yvain; his father was Loth, the king of Hörðaland at Alreksstaðir in Norway. Arthur's wife was named Ganhumara;³⁹² she was the daughter of duke Cador. King Arthur went earlier on a military expedition to Ireland and laid it under himself, and on that expedition he conquered the Orkneys and Shetland and the Hebrides, Denmark and Norway, the Faroes and Gotland, and lay tribute on all these lands. Then he turned back home to Britain

Then the sons of great chieftains gathered to him, and they became retainers to him, and his liegemen. At that time Sichelm, the king of Norway, died. He was the brother of king Loth, who at that time was married to Anna, the sister of king Arthur. Sichelm had fostered Gawain, his brother's son and king Arthur's sister's son. He gave to him all the kingdom after him, because he had no son, but the Norsemen would not have a British king over them, and they took as king that man who was called Riculfus. But when Arthur heard of this, then he went to Norway with a great army; there was a hard battle and Riculfus fell

391“Valveín” (*Hb* pg. 289, ln. 2).

392“Gvñvor” (*Hb* pg. 289, ln. 4). ‘Ganhumara’ is the Latin name given by Geoffrey for queen Guenevere (*Hist* pg. 204-5, ln. 209). Considering the addition of Lancelot and Yvain above, it seems likely that the Norse translator had another source for Guenevere's name, which would explain the particularly divergent spelling.

there. Arthur then conquered all of Norway and Denmark for Gawain.

37. At that time king Arthur went to France. Caesar Leo had set over France that chieftain who was called Flollo; he was more like a troll than a man, because of his physical strength. He went to meet king Arthur, and had strife with him, and fled away to Paris, but the king besieged the city, and when the French multitude hungered, Flollo challenged king Arthur to single combat, and the king accepted it gladly.

They then rode at each other with spears, and the king shot Flollo off his horse, but still he did not become wounded. Flollo leaped up and stabbed the horse under the king, and the king fell to the earth, and the Britons thought that the king might have been wounded. The king leaped quickly to his feet, and they fought long, but it ended thus, that the king clove the Flollo's head with the helm all the way down into his upper back, and the king then became owner of all France. He gave to Beduerus³⁹³ his cup-bearer his daughter Estrusia,³⁹⁴ and Andegauensium³⁹⁵ he gave to Kay, his counselor. Then he divided France among all his men.

Ritho was the name of a hero in France; he was nearly a giant in strength and stature. He forced kings to flay off their beards and send them to him in tribute, and he had them made into a lining under his cloak. At this time he sent word to king Arthur, that he send him his beard, and because he was greater than other kings, his beard would be on the keel³⁹⁶ on that cloak.

When this word came to the king, he said: "I would give him to all the trolls before he possesses my beard or my moustache."

The king then went to meet with Ritho; a hard battle began between them. Ritho struck a great blow into the shield of the king and he clove it all the way down to the

393" Biaðvorv" (*Hb* pg. 289, ln. 31).

394"Estrsviam" (*Hb* pg. 289, ln. 31), in the *Historia* actually an older name for the province of Normandy (*Hist* pg. 309, ln. 301-2).

395"Adenagiam" (*Hb* pg. 289, ln. 31), probably a transcription of the Latin name for Anjou, given to Kay in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 208-9, ln. 302). Here, considering the phrases immediately before and after, the translator appears to have taken the name as, or altered it to, a daughter of Arthur.

396"kiols" (*Hb* pg. 289, ln. 38), presumably simply in the sense of the position of honor, possibly meaning the center of the back of the cloak.

likeness of the Mother of God, but it did not bite further. The king then struck into the head of the giant and it did not bite, but yet the blow was so great, that skull was severely injured. The giant then seized the king so hard that the king drew back; it then seemed to men uncertain how it would go, but because his skull was so injured, then he fell before the king.

King Arthur then sent a message to all the kings, the each should take his beard, but they did not dare to try, and they promised of themselves there to be his under-men. After this victory king Arthur sat peaceful in Britain for five years. He had a great city raised by that river called Usk, and thus two strong halls, so that none in the land were stronger, and it was made in the Roman style. On Whitsunday, he summoned to him all the kings, dukes, jarls, and all the chieftains in his domain, and he was crowned then, and so too his queen, and that feast is the most far-renowned among Northmen, both ancient and new.

38. Concerning king Arthur and his men

The Romans were very displeased that they had lost all of Gaul to king Arthur, and that they could exact no tribute from Britain. Caesar Leo was gone at that time into the east, and the chieftain called Lucius had been set over all Romania. Those tidings came concerning the great feast of the king, so that messenger of Rome came there with a letter, which said thus:

“Lucius, Roman chieftain, sends to Arthur such greetings as might be befitting. We wonder greatly at your boldness, that you dare to hold these tributary lands, which our forefathers won from your kinsmen, for we Romans for resources and support. Now I summon you to the Caesar himself, to compensate there for you great transgression, so that there might be forgiveness for you, but if you forbear this journey, then I will come and claim it all from you, mercilessly.”

When the king had read the letter he consulted with his friends, what plan should be taken.

Cador, king of Cornwall, answered then: “I have feared it at this feast, that we

would lose our skill in arms for the sake of a life of luxury. We have done nothing in these five winters but play at chess and games and embrace women, and with such we lose much honor and reputation. The Romans will win no victory over us.”

The king said. “We all know it, that Julius Caesar obtained Britain by the treason of our landmen, but with no right. Though they have for some time taken tribute from here, it seems to me by that speech that our case to claim tribute from them is little less than they from us, because our kinsmen Brennius and Belinus hanged three hundred Romans in a market-place in Rome, and gained afterwards all of Romania. Constantine, the son of Helena, our kinsman, possessed that kingdom, and his sons. Why is it now not right that we claim tribute from them, now and again? Though I agree that we have won the French kingdom from them, and they have that to complain of.”

Then Hoelus, the king's sister's son, spoke: “You ask we chieftains to take this journey, and we will all follow you to assail Romania, because our prophets have before said, that three British men would gain the Roman kingdom. Two have now gained it, but you are the third. Take the victory, now, and conquer the world for yourself. I will either fall on this journey or gain victory; I will give you ten thousand valiant men for this journey.”

39. When the king heard these urgings, he called his troops out from all his kingdom. It is said that he had an army of no less than forty thousand men, and not including foot-soldiers. These chieftains were with him: Cador, king of Cornwall, Guillamurius, king of the Irish, Gunuasius, king of the Hebrides,³⁹⁷ Palpanus,³⁹⁸ king of the Norwegians, Aschillus, king of the Danes, Anguselus, king of the Scots, Hoelus, the king's kinsman, and Malvasius, the king of Thule,³⁹⁹ which is now called Iceland.

King Arthur sent messengers to Lucius, to tell him thus, that he would come to him and claim tribute from the Romans. When Lucius heard of this he gathered a host to himself

397“Svðreyia” (*Hb* pg. 291, ln. 21) Gunuasius is king of the Orkneys in the *Historia*; no king of the Hebrides is mentioned (*Hist* pg. 211, ln. 346).

398An added character in the translation; Loth is given in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 211, ln. 346).

399‘Thule’ is added to the translation, perhaps as a sort of learned annotation; the *Historia* gives “Islandiae” (*Hist* pg. 211, ln. 345).

from all the kingdom of Rome, and these chieftains were with Lucius: Philippus,⁴⁰⁰ king of the Greeks, Mustensar,⁴⁰¹ king of the Saracens, Corobia,⁴⁰² king of Spain, Cyrus, king of the Mediterranean,⁴⁰³ and many other chieftains, both dukes and jarls. They had so great an army that they totalled three hundred thousand and twelve hundred men. King Arthur left behind Modred, his sister's son, for the defense of the land, with his queen Ganhumara.

40. War of the Romans and king Arthur

The first night after he began his journey from England, He dreamed that he saw a great bear fly aloft. All the earth seemed to him to shake and shiver, and all those things that were upon it, from the howling of this great beast. The king thought he saw a great dragon, and it fought the bear. It flew out west and struck at it a long way across the sky, and a hard battle began between them, and that ended between them, so that that the dragon blew poison at the bear, so that it fell to the earth. The king asked sages what this had meant. They said that his *fylgja* was the dragon, and the bear was the *fylgja* of a giant, and the king would vanquish the giant.

The king heard, when he came into France, about a giant who was called Innvis.⁴⁰⁴ He was there where it was called the Mountain of Michael,⁴⁰⁵ all were frightened of him. He had taken to himself that maiden, who was named Helena; she was a kinswoman of Arthur. When the king heard that, he went away from his men one night with three men, and when they came to the mountain they saw two fires burn in a cave. The king walked to

400 Following the Norse, it is "Epistrophus" (*Hist* pg. 223, ln. 3) in the Latin. The Norse translator appears to have taken it as a completely different name, considering the divergence of names from the *Historia*, it seems likely that the translator had another source, or his exemplar was already interpolated.

401 "Manasar" (*Hb* pg. 291, ln. 26).

402 Following the Norse, it is "Aliphatima" (*Hist* pg. 223, ln. 4) in the Latin. 'Corobia' doesn't seem to appear anywhere in the *Historia*.

403 "Siris Media landz konvng" (*Hb* pg. 291, ln. 26-7); also, perhaps simply 'King of the middle lands', certainly an odd combination of Latin and Norse. Either way, it doesn't seem to fit with any of the peoples, lands, or kings in Geoffrey's list. This, more than any of the previous, suggests the translator was using another source here.

404 The giant is unnamed in the *Historia*; the source of this name is uncertain.

405 "Mikials fiall" (*Hb* pg. 292, ln. 6); Mont St. Michaels, "montis qui nunc Michaelis dicitur" (*Hist* pg. 225, ln. 35).

the cave, and saw that the giant Innvis sat by the fire, and roasted a wild boar. The king asked them to wait outside; the king walked in. When the giant saw this he took his club; it was so heavy, that two men couldnot have lifted it off the ground. The king then struck the giant with a sword in the forehead, but the giant struck with the club at the king. The king evaded, and the blow came down onto the earth next to the king; it was so great a blow, that all the mountain shook with it. Although the giant's wound was not great, still much blood poured from it. The giant then cast aside the club at the club and leaped at the king and grasped him so hard that the king fell onto his knees. At last the blood loss made the giant so weary that he could not stand up, and then the king leaped up and struck off his head. Then the king had the head shown as proof, because the king had never before come into such at trial, except then when had with Ritho.

He then went to his ships, and this great deed was famous over all the northern half of the world. Then Arthur hastened his army to meet the Romans, and when each one saw the other, Arthur sent three chieftains to the Romans: Galven the old,⁴⁰⁶ Boso the strong,⁴⁰⁷ and Gerinus the brave,⁴⁰⁸ they commanded the Romans withdraw from Gaul.

When Lucius heard this, he said: "Less will we flee it, than we shall take all the kingdom of king Arthur, and so he himself."

Then the man called Quintilianus: "You Britons have great self-conceit, that you think to take our Roman domain."

Galven became angry and drew his sword and struck the head off Quintilianus, and then went back to his men. The Romans pursued and there was a great battle, and a multitude fell on either side before the came back to their own men.

41. Now king Arthur heard that Lucius had come into the city called

406"Galven gamla" (*Hb* pg. 292, ln. 26), certainly reflecting Gawain in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 229, ln. 117), but the nickname, and the fact that he is only referring to as a 'chieftain', rather than by his family relations or his kingship over Norway, suggests the translator likely interpreted this as a different character.

407"Berso sterka" (*Hb* pg. 292, ln. 27), the nickname here is a replacement for 'of Oxford' in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 228-9, ln. 116-7).

408"Gervin en frœna (*Hb* pg. 292, ln. 27), the nickname here is a replacement for 'of Chartres' in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 228-9, ln. 117).

Augustudunum,⁴⁰⁹ and planned the next day to go to Langres.⁴¹⁰ That same night the king had his men arm themselves, and sent seven legions of his men into that valley which Lucius would pass through; this host was forty-eight thousand men in number. The king then had a mass said, and a churchyard hallowed for the burial of the men who fell there. Lucius became aware of the designs of king Arthur, and he set his banner that was shaped as if it were an eagle of gold, down in a fair valley, and had his legions arranged into eight positions.

Then Lucius spoke before the host: “It is known to you men, about that wrong claim that Arthur has raised up on our kingdom, and how great the shame or loss of men which our kingdom has taken from him and his kinsmen. It is better now for us to drive by hand this host of foes from us, with honor, rather than lay under their feet in shame. Bear in mind also this precedent did our kinsmen make themselves, that they took honor in return for victory, but money in return for shame. They always gained victory when death seemed certain for them. This night will pass, and that day will come when we drive away by hand these worthless people.”

The Romans had so great an army, that in each of these legions were seven thousand one hundred and six men.

42. After this the Romans rode forth into the dale and each of their legions meet there, and a hard battle began. These events happened first, that Boccus, king of the Medes rose against Beduerus and thrust a spear through him, and sir Kay wished to avenge him, but he was mortally wounded. Hirelgas, the kinsman of Beduerus, grew enraged when he saw his fall; he went forth so fiercely that he killed king Boccus. There was then fierce fighting and slaughter. In this battle fell Romithel,⁴¹¹ king of Spain, of the Romans, and Roman senators Quintus and Marius Lepidus, and three chieftains of the Britons.

409“Avgvstidvnm” (*Hb* pg. 292, ln. 35), a transcription of the Latin name of “Autun” (*Hist* pg. 234-5, ln.237).

410“Langvionis borgar” (*Hb* pg. 292, ln. 36)

411Follow the Norse, it is again “Aliphatima” in the Latin (*Hist* pg. 243, ln. 377); Considering there are two completely different names, both distinct from the Latin, given for the king of Spain, it seems that one of these must be simple error.

Now Lucius came with his retinue, and Cador and Hoelus resolved to meet him, and they drove Cador away. Now king Arthur saw the defeat of his men; he drew then his sword Caliburnus, and said:

“We shall now let none escape alive; fall with honor rather than flee with shame!”

The king struck then with both hands, and from each of his blows fell either a man or a horse. He killed two Roman chieftains: Sertorius, king of Libya, and Politetes, king of Bithynia. There was then a great loss of men on both sides. Lucius struck with his sword in his right hand, and thrust with his spear in his left. Wherever Arthur went, all were driven back. At that time Morvid took the Romans in the rear, and thousands of the Roman host fell then; in this fighting Lucius fell with good renown. The Romans then broke into flight. King Arthur pursued the fleeing host, until they gave themselves up into his power and swore oaths of allegiance to the king. King Arthur then had the bodies of all the men who had died there prepared for burial, and so the Romans with their men. The king sat in Gaul that winter, but during the summer he traveled to Rome and laid it under himself and the domains which lay there.

43. Concerning king Arthur

When this happened, messengers came from Britain, and told the king that Modred, his sister's son, had laid Britain under him, and had married queen Ganhumara,⁴¹² king Arthur's wife, and he had gathered chieftains to him to defend the land. The king became angry at these tidings, and he turned home to Britain with the greatest part of his army, but sent Hoelus, his kinsman, to the Caesar to come to terms with him; that matter went well for him, and a settlement and full peace were made there.

When the king came to Britain, Modred came to meet him with an army, and there was a hard battle. It went badly for the king, and he lost many of his men, but it ended thus that Modred fled into the city called Winchester. The king had the bodies of his men prepared, and there was great grief over their great loss. When Ganhumara heard of that she

⁴¹²“Gvnnarar” (*Hb* pg. 294, ln. 8).

went by night, in secret, to London and went into a convent there, and ended her life there.

Three days later king Arthur and Modred met, and then a hard battle began there, and a great slaughter. Mordred then retreated. Arthur did not bother to bury his men; he pursued the fleeing host, all the way to the river called Camblan. There Modred made a stand and drew up his host; he had at that time no less a host of men than forty thousand. The king had a greater host, and urged his men hard, and turned himself to that legion which Modred led. The king went through his legion as if he waded through fresh, powderus and Elafius, Egbrictus,⁴¹³ Bruningus the Saxon, Gillapatric, and a multitude of Irishmen, Scots, and Orkney-men. The king now offered pardon to all those who wished to accept it. Of his host there chieftains fell: Loth, king of the Norwegians,⁴¹⁴ Aschillus, king of the Danish, Cador and Cassibellaunus, and many thousands of other men.

In this battle the king took the wound which lead to his death, and he was carried to Avalon. The king lay there a short time before he died, and he was greatly mourned among his men. His body was buried at Christchurch in Canterbury. It is the saying of men, the he had been the mightiest of all the British kings in Britain. Then when king Arthur died five hundred and forty two years had passed from the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, during the latter part of the reign of Caesar Leo.

44. The death of King Arthur

After the death of king Arthur, Constantinus, the son of duke Cador, took power over Britain, as king Arthur himself had commanded. He had a short time to sit in peace, before the Saxons invaded the kingdom. There were two chieftains leading this host, the sons of Modred; they conquered London and Winchester and sat therein for awhile. At that time the bishops Daniel and David in Canterbury died.

413“Erlingtvs” (*Hb* pg. 294, ln. 29).

414Loth's return to the Norwegian throne here could suggest a number of things: the translator may have copied this passage more closely than the earlier one, where the name 'Palpanus' was interpolated; the translator, as a Norwegian or an Icelander, might have conceptualized ancient Norway as having multiple kings, which would fit with the earlier mention of Loth as king of Hǫrðaland; finally, another source might have been used for the earlier passage with 'Palpanus'.

Constantinus drew together a great army and went to meet those brothers, and a hard battle began there, and it was not long before the Saxons fell, and the brothers fled into the church of Mary in London. Constantinus leaped in after them, and killed each of them before the altar. Constantinus ruled for twenty years; he died suddenly, and was buried in the place, which was called afterwards Anesko.⁴¹⁵

After him his son Aurelius took the kingdom. He was not a wise man for ruling; he had his father's brother killed, who was called Aurelius, and his two sons, and had all the kingdom after that and ruled thirty years. After him Vortiporius took the kingdom, and the Saxons raided often in the land during his days. After him Malgo ruled the kingdom; he laid under himself all of Britain and Scotland, Ireland, Iceland and the Orkneys, Denmark and Gotland, and all these lands were tributary to him. But he associated with men, rather than women, and God became angry at this.

45. Kareticus took the kingdom after him. He was a foolish man and cruel with his men; from this he became dear to neither God nor men. The landsmen endured his evil foolishness, and sought help for themselves from other lands. When the Saxons headed of this, they gathered a host and went first to Ireland; there ruled that king called Gormundus, and they gathered great strength there. They went afterwards to Britain and devastated all the land to the north. Kareticus gathered an army to meet them, there was a hard battle, and it was not long before the king fled into the city called Cirencester. The Saxons besieged the city and no resolution was made. Then the Irish king Isembardus, his sister's son, came against him, and conquered that city. Kareticus then went out with his men, and struck with both hands; he was overpowered, and fled to his ships and left the land and never came back again.

King Gormundus and the Saxons now laid all the land under themselves. They burned both cities and churches, and destroyed Christianity. The bishops then fled with all the holy relics and south over the sea. Britain then left the guardianship of the line of

⁴¹⁵Following the Norse; in the Latin he is buried at Stonehenge, and *Anesko* may be a corruption of "Stanheng" (*Hist* pg. 254-5, ln. 104.).

British kings—though the Saxons do not record the names of kings at this time—and the land then changed its name and was afterward called England. Edelbertus⁴¹⁶ was then king over the southern part of the land, and Edelfridus⁴¹⁷ and Ella⁴¹⁸ over Northumbria. Christianity was they destroyed far and wide and downfallen in all the land.

46. The Christianization of England by Augustine

At that time the holy pope Gregory was in Rome, and he heard what happen to Christianity in England. He sent his excellent disciple there alone, the holy Augustine, and many other clerics. He preached the faith there and baptized king Edelbertus, and he was afterward a great man of strong, holy Christianity. He set his archepiscopal seat and monastery in the city called Bangor. It was divided into seven locations, and the disciple of Augustine was placed as abbot over them, who was called Dinoot, and there were three hundred monks under him. They worked the earth for their food.

At that time Edelfridus and Ella were kings over Northumbria, as was written before, and they wished so much less to take up the faith, that they made full war with Christian men, wherever they got ahold of them, so that on one day they had a hundred and twelve monks killed. They were afterwards exalted, just as other martyrs of God. After that the Britons took for themselves that king called Caduan, and he went with an army to meet king Edelfridus; a hard battle began there, and there fell no less than ten thousand people. Afterwards, a settlement was reached, that Caduan should have the land south of the Humber. They became good friends after that.

A short time later king Edelfridus left his wife and took another in her place, but she went to meet king Caduan, and he took her into his power and set her on the high-seat next to the queen. They both went to bed at the same time and had two sons; the son of Caduan

416“*Aðalbrikt*” (*Hb* pg. 296, ln. 6).

417“*Aðalraðr*” (*Hb* pg. 296, ln. 7).

418The name, and a second king of Northumbria, do not appear in the *Historia*. Possibly at this point the Norse translator was dealing with a genealogy he was more familiar with from other sources, and thus could have added names.

was called Caduallo and the son of Edelfridus⁴¹⁹ was called Edwinus, and they both grew up with the king. They loved each other greatly.

47. At that time their fathers died. They took their patrimonies for themselves; Caduallo took Norðumbria and when he had ruled it for two years, he wished to crown himself as king. He told this to his foster-brother, and his sister, who was called Brianus.⁴²⁰ When he said this to her, then such great weeping came upon her, it was an exceptional thing; this was said over all the kingdom. The king asked what caused that grief which was on her.

She answered: “You design seems distressing to me, and more from pettiness than from wisdom; it would seem thus before those, your kinsmen, to request a crown on your own behalf, but to not have the daring for it, to conquer the land under yourself with the sword. That kingdom would seem without honor, while the Saxons have power here in the land; they have always been faithless to us and our ancestors, first to Vortigern and his forefathers, and then those truce-breakers, those who went in company with Modred, and did that harm, such as had never been done here, and so may it ever be, while they are here in the land.”

After that Edwinus sent word to Caduallo that he wished to take the crown and the full royal dignity, and be called high-king, but the king did not agree to this. Then Edwinus became angry and said that he would not bargain for whether he was allowed to or not. When the king heard of Edwin's design, he sent men to Edwin, to try to take his head, if he let himself be taken as king. Then each of them gathered hosts and met by the Humber, and there was a hard battle, and Caduallo fled to Ireland lost many thousands of men. Edwinus now raided in the kingdom of king Edelfridus, and attacked it with point and edge, and killed all those men who he overtook. Caduallo gathered an army, and went to England, but did not reach land to come before the gathered landmen. Edwinus had with him a man, who knew everything about their journey and when victory-days were, and they only then

419Unstated here, the wife of Edelfridus/Aðalraðr was pregnant when he left her.

420A man, a nephew of Caduallo, in the *Historia* (*Hist* pg. 263-4, ln. 252-3).

did they fight.

48. Caduallo went then to find king Salomon, who was then the wisest of men, and he had raised him, and then a great wind appeared and drove him to the isle called Guernsey,⁴²¹ with two ships. It fell then upon him thus, the preceding loss of his men with his defeat, so that he did not eat or drink for six days. He laid in bed from all this together. So it happened, that he asked that his foster-brother Brianus⁴²² should go and hunt a deer for him on the island. He fared all day to search for deer and found none, but when he came come, then he cut the flesh from his thigh and roasted it, and made it food for the king; he told him it was deer-flesh. The king ate, and it seemed to him that he had never eaten so well, and he became almost healthy in three days.

He went afterwards and found king Salomon, and asked for his counsel. They made a plan, for Brianus to go away and try to see if he might capture Edwinus' prophet. Brian took on himself the dress of a beggar, and had a sharp iron staff made for himself. He went then until he came into York; king Edwinus ruled there with great pomp. Brianus joined the company of the beggars and sat by the hall doors and begged food for himself. When he had sat for a short time a woman walked out of the hall; she was Brianus' sister. She had to haul water, because Edwinus had captured her. She recognized Brianus immediately; She saw him and told him to hasten away, before the king's men recognized him. He then told her what the meaning of his journey was, and asked her to make a plan, that the prophet's room would not be locked that night. She promised him that, and did as he asked.

Brianus was with the beggars until night, but when all the people were asleep he went to the prophet's room; it was unlocked. Brianus walked in, and to his bed, and lay the iron staff on his chest thrust it through him, and let the staff stand there after. Then he went to the beggars, and was there among them until the matter began to die down, and then he

421“Grandregia” (*Hb* pg. 297, ln. 24), possibly an attempt to make sense of the Latin name of the island “Garnareia” (*Hist* pg. 267, ln. 308).

422In the *Historia* this is the same Brianus as the previous one; the female gender of the earlier, and the status of 'foster-brother' of this one, suggests that the translator is deliberately treating them as separate characters.

went away secretly and came to meet Caduallo; he told him about the results of his mission, and it seemed to him well done.

Afterwards Brianus went home to his city, and a little later that man came there who was called Peanda,⁴²³ with a Saxon army. Caduallo sent a great army to him and there was a hard battle, and it was not long before Peanda was captured and the greatest part of his army killed. Edwinus heard of this and gathered a host, and went to meet with Caduallo. They met in a valley called Hedfeld⁴²⁴ and there began a great and fierce battle; Edwinus and his son, Offridus, and that king called Godboldus⁴²⁵ were killed, and nearly all their men. Afterward Caduallo went around all of England and laid it under himself, and killed all the Saxons there, both women and children. After that he went into Scotland and killed Eadanus, the king of the Scots, and his two sister's sons.

49. Concerning king Oswald

After him the holy king Oswald took dominion over Northumbria. He ruled the kingdom for nine years; he was peaceful and faithful, open-handed with poor men. Caduallo greatly encroached upon his kingdom, and king Oswald withdrew to there where Scotland and England met each other. Caduallo heard of this and made an army against king Oswald; king Peanda was the commander over them. When king Oswald heard of this, he had a cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ set down on a plain, and bade all his men to come there, and bade them fall on their knees and pray to Almighty God that they might gain victory over their enemies. They did as he bade; afterward they went into battle, and God did according to their prayers, for the merit of his holy king Oswald, so that the Britons fled.

When Caduallo heard of this he became very angry; he gathered an army and went

423“Pendrak” (*Hb* pg. 298, ln. 14).

424“Holoel” (*Hb* pg. 298, ln. 18).

425“Balldr” (*Hb* pg. 298, ln. 19), certainly there is no occasionation with the god Baldr, but possibly the attempt to form a clearly Norse name. 'Godboldus' is the king of the Orkneys in the *Historia* (*Hist*, pg. 272-3, ln. 431).

to meet king Oswald, and there began a hard battle. Oswald had no help; when Oswald saw that there would be no resistance, he sat down and covered his face with his hands, and prayed to God for all those who fought there, and then he lost his life there and when thus to Almighty God. Men say that Peanda caused his death. Then all his host that lived fled.

After the battle an old man from among Caduallo's men walked to the king. He had taken a great wound on his hand; he slipped and stuck his hands down into the blood of king Oswald, and when he stood up his hand was healed. God made many and great miracles for his merit, though they are not written here.

After him Oswi, the brother of king Oswald, took power over Northumbria. He reconciled with Caduallo, so that he would have his kingdom in peace. Then Caduallo made peace over all Britain, so that (it should from hands and feet when peace might be destroyed in the land). Against Oswi rose up Alfridus, his son, and Oidwald, his brother's son. They were both short of strength against him, and thus wanting in luck; they fled away and went to meet Peanda, and begged him for help against Oswi. He was full of artifices and treason and wished willingly to help them, but he still did not dare to break the king's peace, and pondered cunningly.

50. At the time king Caduallo made a great feast, and all the kings of England were there, except Oswi alone. Peanda asked the king why Oswi was not there; the king said that he was sick.

“It is either that,” Peada said, “or he has sent men to Saxony after troops and thinks to avenge his brother king Oswald; he has now broken that peace which you set. Now it is my counsel for you to take him from life or drive him from the land.”

The king asked his men what plan he should take so that he would not break his own truce, that which he set.

Then king Margadud answered: “You do not fully remember what our land has suffered from these people, or what duty we have to repay them; we have never been settled in peace since the Saxons came into this land.”

The king gave authority to Peanda to go with this speech, which pleased him.

Peanda gathered a great host and raided in king Oswi's kingdom; he burned cities and farms and killed both women and children. When the king heard of this warfare, then he consulted with his men what he should do, and they urged him to seek settlement if it was a choice, because there were no troops for resistance, and he offered both gold and silver and the judgment of the best men in all their speeches, for settlement. Peanda denied this and said that he intended the kingdom for himself or his death. When Oswi heard that nothing could reconcile them, that he said to his men:

“It may be better for us that they deny reconciliation; we would seek for truce which is negligent. Let us call on Almighty God to help us, and we will win a fair victory in his good faith. We will go forth bravely and show no fear on ourselves, because it is good whether it comes up either that we fall onto our patrimony, or are victorious.”

Then a hard battle began between them, and it was not long before Peanda fell, and with him thirty jarls, and Oswi and his men praised God for their fair victory. After Peanda his son Wulfred took the kingdom, and he planned immediately to do battle with Oswi, and with him the two jarls Eba and Edbert, but Caduallo forbade them to fight, and settled a full reconciliation; Oswi sat in peace after in his kingdom.

51. The death of king Caduallo

Now when Caduallo had been king forty-eight winters, he took sick and died. He was buried in London, and there was a church made there and consecrated to the Holy Mary, and a requiem is read there every day for his soul. Afterward there was a statue cast of a horse, and there on his back a man, made in the likeness of the king, with all his armor of brass; it was afterward set over the city-gates of London. This statue was gilt as if by fire; it was made in honor of the king. The anniversary of his death is on the fifteenth of the Kalends of December.

After him his son took the kingdom, who the priest Bede called Chedualla;⁴²⁶ he was

⁴²⁶“Tedvallvm” (*Hb* pg. 300, ln. 22); the only one of Geoffrey's references to Bede that survives in the translation.

both popular and peaceful. When twelve winters were passed from the death of Caduallo, then the king received a great illness, and the land became without rule. Then there was a great warning, and a famine, and a death of men so great that half were not buried. All fled away, then, those who could. The king went away also, with some men, but when he parted from England he spoke, with tears falling.

“For ill have our lives been spared, from our sins and want of foresight and want of love for God. Now shall that monstrous thing come over here, which never was before, and we cannot refuse to acknowledge that this is God's vengeance. Here the Romans have gone all over the Briton kingdom, and many other peoples, and yet there have never been such here as now, yet for other reason must we now flee. A heathen race does not press down on us, and neither war; rather we must flee with God's will and his wealth. We need this oppression to turn us to a remission of sins.”

The king came to the kingdom of Armorica with his men, and was there with king Alanus for eleven winters; he was the son of king Salomon, his foster-father, and he was there while authority was fought over in England.

52. England is settled another time

At that time a queen called Sæburg⁴²⁷ came to Northumbria, with a great host. She lay all of Northumbria under herself. When king Cheduallo heard what had happened in England, and it had had time to recover there, and that there had come a new dominion over it, he asked king Alanus to give him men and ships, because he desired again for England. The king promised him this, and when the ships were prepared an angel of God appeared to Cheduallo, and commanded him not to go back to England; it said that it was against God's will, and commanded him to go to Rome to meet pope Sergius, and take confession from him; it said that they would meet in the company of holy men. It said that never again would his kinsmen have rule over England, unless they were endowed with his virtue.

The king acknowledged this, and then would the prophecies of the prophet Merlin

⁴²⁷This queen does not appear in the *Historia*, and her exact source is uncertain.

be fulfilled, if such should come to pass. The king valued the word of God more than his desire; the fitting out of ships was then ended, and the plan that was made before. The king then prepared his journey to Rome, and came to meet pope Sergius, and he greeted him joyfully and strengthened him with many fair words and glorious tales of his religion, and so it is said that he gave up his title of king and all his kingdom, and then pope Sergius ordained him as a bishop. He did not live longer than eight days and died in Rome, to eternal joy, on the twelfth of the Kalends of May. At that time four hundred and seventy-nine years were passed from the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

53. So it is said that afterwards there was no rule of British kings over England, from their own line of descent. Queen Saeborg ruled over Northumbria eight years. All those events which now have been told, concerning the settlement of Britain and the dealings of their kings, when they ruled, are written according to that book called the *Historia Britorum*, and it was made according to the instruction of Alexander, bishop of London, and Walter, the archdeacon of Oxford, and Gildas the wise.⁴²⁸ Caduallo was king for thirty-seven years; he first laid Roman tax on all England, to be paid every year. After him Aðalraðr⁴²⁹ ruled eight years, then Simbr was queen for one year, then king Kiniulfr for twenty-eight years, then Bricius for seventeen years, then Eggbrigtus for thirty years and seven months; he laid a greater kingdom under himself, then his son Eiðulfr, who ruled another half year, then Aðalbrigt, the brother of Eiðulfr for seven years, the Alfriðr his brother for twenty-seven years; he was the first to possess all of this kingdom, and drove away all his enemies, and ruled the kingdom well and long. After him Iatvarðr his son ruled twenty-four years; after him Aðalstein the good for thirty-one years and six weeks and three days. He fostered Hakon, the son of king Harald hárfagri.

428“Gilla ens froða” (*Hb* pg. 301, ln. 29); while the previous two times are clearly among Geoffrey's patrons and dedications, if this name is indeed referring to the Historian Gildas, he does not fit perfectly among them. It is possible that the number of references to Gilas in the *Historia*, none of which survive in the translation, inspired this apparent reference to Gildas as a sort of patron, or at least an inspiration.

429Following the Norse. As none of the names in this list of Anglo-Saxon kings are contained in the *Historia*, and the source for this list is uncertain, the names will be given in their forms from Hauksbók, with slightly normalized orthography, though this may jar somewhat with the normalization elsewhere.