



University of
**Southern
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**Palimpsest and Metonym:
Early Modern Variants of the Leir Story**

A Thesis submitted by

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Abstract

Today, variants of the story of King Leir are addressed as either sources for, or adaptations of, Shakespeare's *King Lear*. This linear and teleological approach has unnecessarily obscured a rich and complex palimpsest of cognate variants of the Leir story that existed in the early modern era. In this thesis, a new method, the historical collation, is proposed and utilised in order to understand this palimpsest. A historical collation of the bibliographic, paratextual, and narrative elements of substantive retellings of the Leir story, found in works printed in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710, reveals several trends and influences within the palimpsest. Variants of the Leir story were initially consistent and conservative, factual historiographies written to praise the monarch and the nation. Then, driven by trends within the book trade, and the diversification of historical genres, variants of the Leir story fractured and diversified in content and context, with the exigencies of new generic forms motivating the inclusion of topicalities and fictional elements. Finally, responding to trends within historiography, variants of the Leir story stagnated in number, style, and content, largely failing to respond to the politicised nature of contemporary print. Co-occurring with, but not causing this stagnation, was Shakespeare's nascent canonisation, with the story of King Leir no longer relevant as a history, but instead becoming sought after as a Shakespearean creation. Thus, a historical collation illuminates the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story and reveals trends within the book trade as its greatest influence, impacting first upon the diversification and popularisation of the traditional historiography, and then upon its stagnation and regeneration.

Certification of Thesis

I, Katrina Cutcliffe, declare that the PhD Thesis entitled *Palimpsest and Metonym: Early Modern Variants of the Leir Story* is approximately 100,000 words in length inclusive of quotations and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, works cited, references, and footnotes. The thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

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“And in spite of all the pains I had lavished on these problems, I was more than ever stupefied by the complexity of this innumerable dance, involving doubtless other determinants of which I had not the slightest idea. And I said, with rapture, ‘Here is something I can study all my life, and never understand.’”

Samuel Beckett *Molloy* 232

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Chapter 1: The Leir Story

“Shakespeare’s *King Lear*” is a collocation spoken with such frequency that a sense of singularity and ownership is implied—there is one King Lear and it is William Shakespeare’s. The rate at which Shakespeare’s play is performed, edited, printed, studied, epitaphed, commodified, and even mentioned in pandemic memes serves to reiterate but cannot capture its sustained cultural and scholarly impact. The same cannot be said of all early modern variants of the Leir story. John Taylor, the water poet, recrafted the chronicle history genre in 1622, retelling the Leir story specifically for the popular audience, yet his work remains largely unstudied. Little comment is made on Percy Enderbie’s 1661 text that defends Leir’s historicity before fictionalising this history for political gain. Antiquarian James Tyrrell’s 1696 dismissive recount of the Leir “fable” likewise draws little interest, and an anonymous ballad remains relegated to Shakespearean adaptation, when it was a source. This thesis will introduce readers to the many early modern variants of the Leir story as a rich and complex palimpsest of cognate texts. Their surprising number is highlighted, as is their diversity, influences, and cultural role. Within them is found contradictions and consistencies, sedition and conservatism, and popularity and disinterest. Exploring this palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story also reveals why Shakespeare’s *King Lear* now acts as its privileged metonym.

The story of King Leir begins not with Shakespeare but with Geoffrey of Monmouth. The earliest surviving record of the history of King Leir is within Monmouth’s 1100s manuscript *Historia Regum Britanniae*¹, with Monmouth asserting that this work was based on an earlier, lost manuscript. Monmouth’s historiography is the first extant work to give the

¹ To enhance readability, titles of works within the body of the thesis have been silently modernised and abridged, unless being quoted in full for specific purposes. Quotations have retained their original spelling.

English a “full history,” including the founding of the nation by Brute, or Brutus of Troy, in the eleventh century BC. Monmouth’s history, and the versions of Galfridian historiography that subsequently drew upon it, suggests that the Brutan line of kings ruled the eponymous nation Britain until the Saxon invasions in the fourth century AD, with King Leir and Queen Cordeilla part of this founding line and reigning in the eighth century BC. Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae* was widely disseminated and used as source material by contemporaneous and later historiographers.

By the early modern era, a myriad of works recounting Galfridian historiography operated within England as a vast and complex palimpsest, collectively retelling and reinforcing a shared, culturally significant, national history. Not only did the Brutan monarchs found the nation, their successional line traced through history to the present and the ruling monarch. During decades of successional instability, Tudor monarchs repeatedly justified their accessions, in part, by strategically drawing their lineage from the nation’s founder, Brute, with this strategy later embraced by the Stuart monarchs. Leir was thus a king of history and historiography—part of the past yet tied to the present. Not only was Monmouth’s history reprinted several times during the early modern era, including the first English translation in 1718, it was drawn upon by multiple authors in multiple genres. Most prolific amongst these were historiographical genres, which then included chronicles, annals, summaries, memorials, antiquarian works, and chronographicals. Each of these utilised different methodologies and styles but told the same history.

The Leir story also existed outside traditional historiographical genres and at times was retold in isolation, removed from the full line of Brutan kings. The term “Leir story” has been adopted throughout this thesis to avoid the modern connotations inherent within more specific terms such as “history,” “legend,” “fable,” or “narrative,” and importantly to act as a hypernym, inclusively representing each of the different ways that the story was told

throughout the early modern era. Leir's story was recounted as part of royal genealogies, most consistently those written to flatter the ruling monarch, including Gyles Godet's 1560 genealogy honouring Queen Elizabeth I *To the Reader Beholde*, and George Owen Harry's 1604 *The Genealogy of the High and Mighty Monarch, James*. A consideration of genealogies highlights the existence of Galfridian Brutan historiography in non-textual forms. Scholars such as Sara Trevisan note the prevalence of pedigree rolls, with town halls routinely displaying the pedigree of the reigning monarch, and wealthy homes displaying the lineage of gentry, who were as eager to trace their line to the nation's founders as was the reigning monarch. These publicly displayed pedigree scrolls traced the lineage of the elite through the historical rules of King Leir and Queen Cordeilla.

Geographical works also included the Leir story, including topographicals, chorographicals, historical maps, surveys, and personal recounts of journeys, such as John Taylor's 1639 *Part of this Summers Travels*. Many of these geographically focused works demonstrated the lived reality of the Leir story, which was made real for readers through time and place. Respected antiquarian John Stow is one of many to include details of Leir's tomb at Leicester, with his work noting how this tomb was commemorated and visited by contemporaneous early moderns. Demonstrating the ubiquitous nature of the Leir story, it was likewise drawn upon by specialised texts, including treatises, defences, polemics, works on armoury, and legal works such as J. A.'s 1618 *The Yonger Brother his Apology by it Selfe. Or A Gathers Free Power Disputed for the Disposition of his Lands*, which cited Leir's decision to confer a divided kingdom as partial justification for free will in the distribution of property. Demonstrating the diversity of applications and appropriations of the Leir story, verse accounts were also in existence, such as John Higgins's well known 1574 *Mirror for Magistrates*. Oral forms such as folktales, plays, and ballads were also common, with Richard Johnson's 1620 *Golden Garland*, a collection of ballads, indicating the popularity of

the Leir story by opening with *A Lamentable Song of the Death of King Leare and his Three Daughters*. So prevalent and relevant was the Leir story that even the humble yet ubiquitous almanac commonly included a recount of Leir's reign as part of that of the Brutan kings (Brewer, "Partisan" 185; Woolf, *Reading History* 35-36).

Thus, during the early modern era, a great number of cognate versions of Galfridian historiography acted in polyphonic harmony, with each version of the Leir story unique through its inclusions, exclusions, elaborations, and genre, and yet still consistent with established history. The variations included in different variants served not to create discord or doubt but instead to validate and perpetuate the history itself. The sustained multiplicity of the versions and their oral, textual, visual, and performative variants created a rich palimpsest, with its textual residue serving today as a reminder of a shared cultural memory that could be achieved only by centuries of repeated individual and national exposure to the story of King Leir. Yet what remains of this palimpsest today is a singular focus on one man's works. Shakespeare's sustained cultural currency acts as a scholarly, centripetal force, obscuring the true number and diversity of early modern variants of the Leir story and allowing his variant to act as metonym for an entire palimpsest.

Today, all measures of scholarly impact and cultural currency reflect the centrality of Shakespeare's *King Lear* (published in quarto in 1608 and in folio in 1623) to the study of the Leir story. Consider as illustration one ubiquitous, contemporary measure, Google Scholar, which reveals 15,200 results when searching for Shakespeare's "King Lear" anywhere within scholarly items published between January 2018 and November 2022, and 463 results when searching within titles alone. A similar search for "King Leir" pales in comparison. "Leir" was the spelling of the historical king's name in the first English translation of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. In the early modern era, "Leir" was king in the historiographies of William Camden, Percy Enderbie, Robert Fabyan, Thomas Heywood, Raphael Holinshed,

John Milton, John Speed, John Stow, John Taylor, James Tyrrell, and William Warner.

“Leir” was king in Gerard Legh’s 1562 work on armoury, in the legal works of J. A. in 1618 and John Page in 1657, in Richard Carew’s geographical survey of 1602, in Richard Johnson’s ballad collection of 1620, in Jerome Stephen’s celebration of the nation in 1632, and in an anonymous play, published in 1605. Yet, Google Scholar shows just 358 results for “King Leir” within publications between January 2018 and November 2022. While there are additional variables to consider, this statistic suggests that publications related to all of the “Leirs” listed above represent just 2.35 percent of the publications devoted to Shakespeare’s variants alone. More emblematic of Shakespeare’s dominance is that Google scholar records merely four titles featuring “King Leir” or 0.86 percent of the number featuring “King Lear,” with each of these four titles linked to a recognised source for Shakespeare’s play. Though it must be noted that early modern spelling was both unstandardised and inconsistent, other alternative spellings, and thus the texts in which they appeared, are rarely represented in scholarship today. “King Leire” appears in five entries and “King Leyr” within four during the same Google Scholar search time frame. The original Latin “King Leirus” fails to appear at all. Not one of these three is prioritised through mention in a title. Searching for the word “Shakespeare” again provides contrast, with Bruce Smith suggesting that this word now acts as a hypernym, and not a name, representing the historical man, his authorial nachleben, his collected works, and his changing identity as cultural icon. Searching for “Shakespeare” within the same time frame reveals 123,000 results within publications and 6,850 titles. It is clear that “Shakespeare” and his “King Lear,” and not the palimpsest of contemporaneous stories upon which he drew and within which his works existed, dominates scholarly focus on the Leir story.

The study of Leir variants is not an isolated instance of Shakespeare’s capacity to dominate scholarship. There is no exaggeration in the assertion that every element of early

modern life has been studied through the lens of Shakespeare and his works, or that each significant and tenuous link between these has been explored or perhaps exploited. Consider Shakespeare's centrality to scholarship on early modern theatre and the staging of plays (see: Dessen and Thomson; Fitzpatrick and Johnston; Gurr, *Stage*; L. Johnson et al.; Stern; Tribble and Sutton), audiences (see: Lopez; Peat), companies (see: Gurr, *Company*; Knutson; McMillin and MacLean; Wells, *and Co*), acting (see: Palfrey and Stern; Roach; Tribble), actors (see: Hornback; Wiles), and censorship (see: Clare; Dutton; Pinciss). Researchers have been equally interested in Shakespeare's plays as texts. This includes work on how they are positioned within the book trade (see: Erne, *Literary Dramatist*; Jowett; Lesser, *Renaissance Drama*; Murphy); understanding the Stationers' Register (see: Arber; Blayney, "If it"); knowledge of the material books (see: De Grazia and Stallyrass; Stone; Urkowitz; Werstine); how texts came to print (see: Crockett; Vickers, *The One*; Werstine); their language (see: Craig; Kermode; Wright); and their editors and editing processes (see: Bowers; Greg; Marcus, *Unediting*; Orgel and Keilen).

Individual facets of early modern life are even studied in relation to their capacity to illuminate specific elements of Shakespeare's plays. For *King Lear*, this includes, but is not limited to, humoral medicine (see: Bernard; Hillman and Mazzio; Park; Paster; Paster et al.), gender (see: Neely; Rutter; Thomas), madness (see: Moss and Peterson; Neely; Tambling), weather and environment (see: Bozio; de Sousa; Estok), cartography and geography (see: Drouet; Floyd-Wilson; Howard; Traub), religion (see: Callaghan; Kaufmann; Oser), the lived experience of early moderns (see: Crane; Smith), and even individual calendar years (see: Shapiro). The point of distinction in each of the above listed fields of scholarship is a subtle, epistemological shift that sees each topic studied through the lens of Shakespeare, rather than Shakespeare, and thus *King Lear*, being studied in relation to each topic. This inversion sees fields of scholarship reduced to, and known by, a synecdoche—Shakespeare studies. This

provides a stark contrast to the early modern era, in which Shakespeare's *King Lear* was one of many works recounting the Leir story as part of a shared national history, embraced by a broad range of authors, genres, and purposes.

To redress this inversion, within this thesis, Leir, Cordeilla, Regan, and Gonorilla are the spellings used for the central figures in the Leir story. These spellings derive from the first English translation of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and are most common within the early modern variants. It is intended that their use will create a literary *Verfremdung's* effect, with their unfamiliar spelling reminding readers of the silent and deeply entrenched teleology and bardolatry that have made Shakespeare's work central to the study of variants of the Leir story. It is anticipated that, by the end of the thesis, these names will become as familiar to today's readers as they were to early moderns, with the thesis establishing that the Leir story is not Shakespeare's alone.

1.1 An Overview of the Thesis

The three fields of scholarship that have traditionally addressed variants of the Leir story reflect Shakespeare's sustained centrality, with variants considered as Shakespearean originals, sources, or adaptations, instead of cognate texts. Chapter 2 of this thesis provides an overview of these fields including scholarship that has focused on Shakespearean variants of the Leir story, that being the 1608 Quarto and the 1623 Folio; sources for the Shakespearean variants; or adaptations of his work. It is demonstrated that this scholarly focus has created a significant gap in knowledge, with little subsequent understanding of the full number of early modern Leir variants or their nature as individual or interrelated cognate texts. Viewing variants of the Leir story as a linear progression of sources moving, teleologically, towards Shakespeare's, and adaptations as a linear progression from his works,

has additionally obscured knowledge through the privileging of Shakespeare's works. In response to this survey of the field, the purpose of this thesis is to understand early modern variants of the Leir story as a palimpsest, with each variant equally as privileged and equally as inter-dependent.

Seeking a methodology for the study of Leir variants as a group of contemporaneous works, diachronically and synchronically retelling Galfridian historiography, I conclude Chapter 2 by proposing a new methodology—the historical collation. While details of this methodology are later clarified, the approach presents a unique three-dimensional form of analysis that focuses on narrative, paratextual, and bibliographic elements of Leir variants, first within and then across the identified eras. The historical collation considers both diachronic and synchronic elements and is informed by close readings of the variants, as well as contemporaneous texts, and seminal and contemporary scholarship related to contextual factors such as the book trade. The method of historical collation allows each variant to be equally privileged within the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story, with the aim being to understand the palimpsest itself and not merely its metonym—Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Within this thesis, and in order to understand this palimpsest, the following research question is addressed:

What does a historical collation of early modern variants of the Leir story reveal in relation to their nature as a palimpsest, including diachronic and synchronic trends and influences?

The methodology of historical collation is additionally created and piloted in response to contemporary critiques of prior scholarly approaches to Shakespearean sources and adaptations, and to widespread calls to find new ways to approach such. It is intended that this thesis will provide proof of concept for the proposed methodology, which can then be applied to the study of other stories that exist in multiple forms, but whose scholarship is

dominated by one. The validity of the approach is demonstrated through the findings of the thesis and additionally suggested by the identification of a new source for Shakespeare's play (see Appendix 4).

To address the research question, the full nature of the early modern palimpsest of Leir variants is initially clarified through the identification of variants. Chapter 3 details the search to identify and catalogue extant variants of the Leir story, discussing the parameters of this search and its outcomes. In brief, digital scholarship tools were used to identify textual variants printed in the British Isles during the years 1557 to 1710. The number identified far exceeded those currently addressed by scholarship, and likewise exceeded any pre-held expectations in both their quantity and their diversity. In Chapter 3, a contextualising analysis of the initially identified variants is provided, revealing a clear distribution pattern in publication dates and genres that I then use to group three eras of Leir variants. I have entitled these the Brutan years (1557-1599), the diversification years (1600-1639), and the stagnation years (1640-1710). The expository nature of this nomenclature is clarified in relation to the contemporaneous role of historiography, variant genres, and publication rates during the different eras. Such was the number of Leir variants identified that a set of delineations was applied to the scope of the study, to limit the number of variants studied in more depth in the thesis proper.

Chapters 4 to 9 of the thesis answer the research question and record the findings of the historical collations. Chapter 4 addresses the Brutan years, Chapters 5 and 6 the diversification years, and Chapters 7 and 8 the stagnation years, with Chapter 9 synthesising across these findings in order to offer final insights into the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story. In Chapter 4, the Brutan years (1557-1599) are revealed as a time when variants flourished in number but not in diversity, with each of these trends largely driven by the relationship between Tudor monarchs and Brutan history. At this time the Leir

story is retold, and often explicitly defended, as a factual history within traditional historiographical genres. The collation of Brutan variants demonstrates strong consistency within variants, and with Galfridian historiography. Not only are the variants consistent in their bibliographic, paratextual, and narrative elements, they are comparatively conservative in their depictions of events and historical personages, particularly the roles of Cordeilla and France. Alterations to Galfridian history by Brutan variant authors were most frequently the omission or exploration of elements of the Leir story that could serve as analogies to Elizabeth I's rule. The majority of these alterations served to flatter the queen, or avoid potential critique, and thus were aligned with the nation defining and defending purpose of historiography at the time.

Chapters 5 and 6 include the findings from the collation of the diversification years variants (1600-1639), with this era's name reflecting both the number of variants published and the flurry of at times spectacular alterations to Galfridian historiography made within them. Diversification years retellings of the Leir story largely show less consistency with Galfridian historiography. Unlike Brutan variants, their alterations are more frequent, more pronounced, and less likely to flatter the monarch. Yet, akin to Brutan variants, the Leir story is still identified as a factual history, though this history is now contested and at times fictionalised. Variants split into two groups, with this split reflective of trends within the book trade and historiography. Daniel R. Woolf's work here becomes pivotal in understanding the "dissolving" of the traditional functions of the chronicle history into a variety of genres (*Reading History* 26). Though this dissolution occurred in the mid-sixteenth century, it did not impact on Leir variants until the diversification years. Diversification variants include more established forms of historiography and "parasite history" genres, with each of these groups altering the established tale in differing ways. Those variants which are representative of more established forms of historiography most often alter the story through exclusions,

with these exclusions no longer merely censorial. The parasite history genres show the most significant alterations, particularly to representations of female, historical personages and the final narrative elements of the Leir story, including the battle to reclaim Leir's throne and Cordeilla's succession. The movement of Leir's story into parasite history genres in diversification variants is shown to be the motivation for alterations, with works extending, adding, condensing, and reforming by generic necessity. This movement, however, was not consistent, and variants were unified by their combined connection to traditional, established historiography, more than by any consistency as new generic forms.

This is not the case in the stagnation years, with variants more consistent with their generic contemporaries than with one another. The findings from a collation of stagnation variants (1640-1710) are articulated in Chapters 7 and 8, with these variants found to be stagnating both in number and in style. This stagnation is influenced by elements of the book trade, including decreasing interest in historiography; the rise of the author and reader; and the consolidation of generic forms, particularly the movement from historiographical to literary genres. Notably, stagnation variants differ from trends within the book trade through their failure to engage with a climate of politicised print, which was fuelled by the deregulation of the industry and sustained socio-political upheaval. Their stagnation, however, makes the moments of politicisation appear all the more prominent. This politicisation is often seen through fictionalisation of the Leir story, as history is appropriated for political gain. Though the stagnation years mark the end of the Leir story as a consistent, factual, national historiography, they also mark its regeneration into a Shakespearean fiction, through a focus on Shakespearean variants and adaptations within substantive and derivative works. The final chapter of the thesis offers a synthesis across all three historical collations to identify co-occurring but not co-dependent trends within the book trade as the reason why

Shakespeare's *King Lear* now acts as a metonym for the early modern palimpsest of Leir variants.

Thus, currently, studies of the Leir story focus solely on the Shakespearean variants, their sources, and their adaptations. Shakespeare's *King Lear* consequently acts as a centripetal pivot point and privileged metonym. This has created a lacuna by obscuring a complex palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story whose full number is consequently unknown and unstudied. The Leir story is untold. This thesis has two key outcomes. Primarily, it illuminates the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story through the identification and subsequent historical collation of variants, revealing diachronic and synchronic trends and influences. Additionally, it suggests a methodological way forward for studying stories that exist in multiple variants but are dominated by one.

Chapter 2: How Scholars Have Previously Addressed Leir Variants

In art history, “mise en abyme” refers to a technique where a work is composed of a series of copies of an image, endlessly echoing within itself. Early modern variants of the Leir story are studied in this way, misrepresenting their palimpsestuous nature by focusing purely on Shakespearean variants. There have been three key approaches to variants of the Leir story: the quarto/folio debate, source studies, and adaptation studies. The quarto/folio debate addresses the two Shakespearean variants. Though there is no extant, authorial version of his *King Lear*, there are two early modern print variants. Source studies focus on the identification and tracking of Shakespeare’s sources, that being the pre-existing Leir variants that influenced him in the creation of his own. This approach thus identifies and studies variants of the Leir story only as constituents of, or inspiration for, Shakespeare’s. Finally, adaptation studies focus on the works that have used Shakespeare’s *King Lear* as source. Such studies address contemporaneous works that have been inspired by, reacted against, or simply perpetuated Shakespeare’s variants.

While they are linearly connected, with Shakespeare’s works acting as a pivot point, these three ways of addressing Shakespearean variants of the Leir story operate in isolation from one another. Each, through its singular focus on Shakespearean variants, fails to acknowledge or address the full spectrum of Leir variants extant in the early modern era—metonym, not palimpsest. A survey of the fields of scholarship related to variants of the Leir story is thus necessarily incomplete, as scholarship does not currently address the full spectrum of early modern variants of the Leir story. Thus, this chapter closes with a new approach to variants of the Leir story, suggested as a methodology that can be used to understand the early modern palimpsest of Leir stories.

2.1 Approach One: Shakespeare's Two *King Lears* and the Quarto / Folio Debate

Shakespeare's *King Lear* is extant in both Quarto (Q) and Folio (F) variants—Q1 or *His True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King LEAR and his three Daughters* (1608) and F1, *The Tragedie of King Lear* (1623). Q1 was published during Shakespeare's lifetime (1564-1616), but there is no indication, either in the work itself or its registration, of his consent, involvement, or lack thereof. F1 was published in 1623 as part of the first collection of Shakespeare's works. This publication occurred after Shakespeare's death, but with the permission and potential involvement of John Heminge and Henry Condell, two of Shakespeare's fellow actors in the King's Men, sharers in the Globe Theatre, and, as per their presence in his will, "fellows" (Schoenbaum 300).

The differences between Q1 and F1 are numerous. There are differences in content, with approximately 400 additional lines in Q1, including the Mock Trial scene, and over one hundred additional lines in F1, including the Fool's prophecy. There are differences in representations of character, including a more "honourable" Albany in Q1. Only in this variant does he have additional lines, enter in royal procession immediately after the King, and speak the last lines of the play, each of these indicating his status (Foakes 49; Taylor and Warren 7). There are also differences in formatting, with Q1 utilising more scribal abbreviations and suspension marks and F1 introducing act and scene divisions. Finally, I suggest that there are differences in implied theatricality, with F1 consistently having more: stage directions (though Q1 alone includes "he falls" in the Dover Cliff scene); verbal utterances; repetitions, especially of verbal utterances; contractions and pointing; and, at times, reference to more characters being on stage and/or to a larger cast. It is unclear if these differences denote that F1 is more closely tied to a performative version of the play, or, as it is printed later, if it reflects the consolidation of the play text genre.

Textual scholarship of *King Lear* has long been dominated by questions surrounding the derivation of copy-text and whether differences are significant enough to classify both as separate, substantive variants. In 2016, Sir Brian Vickers published *The One King Lear* and encountered much dissent, most notoriously Holger Syme's live tweet review, thereby reigniting this centuries-old debate. For indeed, the Q/F debate has existed as long as Shakespeare's play texts have been edited—that is, for more than three centuries. In essence, there are two sides to the debate: that the play texts should be conflated to form one (the stance taken by Vickers) or that each represents a separate substantive variant. This debate is problematised by potentially unanswerable questions surrounding how the texts came to the printers, the origins of the copy-text, and the potential explanations of discrepancies. The Q/F debate continues today.

The early modern editors of Shakespeare's works were the first to enter into the debate through their initiation of the editorial tradition of conflation. Nicholas Rowe, considered Shakespeare's first editor, produced his *Works of Mr William Shakespeare* in 1709. Rowe, engaging with the early modern notion of "original," suggests, in the dedication "TO HIS GRACE, THE Duke of Somerset," that:

I have taken some Care to redeem him from the Injuries of former Impreffions. I muſt not pretend to have reſtor'd this Work to the Exactneſs of the Author's Original Manuscripts: Thoſe are loſt, or, at leaſt, are gone beyond any Inquiry I could make: ſo that there was nothing left, but to compare the ſeveral Editions, and give the true Reading as well as I could from thence. (sig. A2r)

In reality, Rowe's variant, *King Lear a Tragedy*, is less a conflation than a text largely derivative of the Fourth Folio (1685).

It was Shakespeare's second editor, Alexander Pope, who in his 1725 *Works* (imprinted by the same printer as Rowe's *Works*) was the first to conflate Q and F in *The*

LIFE and DEATH of KING LEAR (Volume 3). Here Pope includes frequent, though sporadic, references to textual choices, many at the word and sentence part level, yet fails to clarify more substantial choices, such as the exclusion of the mock trial scene. When articulated, his decisions in conflation are made for “sense” or so that sections are not “unintelligible.” In the preface to the first volume, Pope articulates part of his aim: “We fhall hereby extenuate many faults which are his [Shakespeare’s], and clear him from the imputation of many which are not” (i-ii). Thus, conflation is aligned with identifying and valorising the Shakespearean version.

The first editor to exploit the impact of the gloss was Lewis Theobald in his 1733 *Works*. Theobald includes lengthy glosses that justify his editorial choices in the conflation of the available variants, including Q, F, and the work of other editors. He additionally utilises a wide variety of glosses, including those that justify inclusions of pointing (107); explain word choice (175); correct other editions, some of whose editorial choices are made “stupidly” (110); remove “corruption” (186) or sections “unworthy of our Author” (201); “restore” what Shakespeare intended (180); explain additions/removals (192); clarify speech attribution (219); and realign the text to meet human character (199), custom (207) or audience preferences (202). Theobald also uses a variety of evidence to justify his choices, including similarity to lines in other works by Shakespeare (158); his understanding of “the Poet’s mind” (159); historical knowledge (165); an appeal to classical authors (175); theatrical custom (219); and the following of editorial tradition (169). Theobald is nothing if not certain of his choices, noting in a gloss: “All the Copies concur in reading thus; but, without doubt, erroneously” (207). Read in their totality, editorial choices are designed to “correct” earlier editions and to remove their “corruption” so that Theobald could “restore” “our Author” to his glorious “original.” This editorial tradition, of re-conflating with justification, continued through subsequent early modern editors, from Thomas Hanmer to William Warburton,

Samuel Johnson, Edward Capell, and Edmund Malone. It could be said that each new edition was presented as the “one *King Lear*,” but, contradictorily, each recension, through its new editorial choices, glosses, and paratextual elements, substantially altered the text and created a new variant.

Since the early modern era, editors have remained arbiters of the Q/F debate and have essentially been grouped into three main methodological approaches. The first of these is the New Bibliographers, most notable amongst them Fredson Bowers, whose works include *On Editing Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Dramatists* (1955), and Walter Wilson Greg, whose works include *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* (1967). New Bibliography emerged out of an editorial desire to systematically explain the process of textual production or transmission from playhouse to printing house. Proponents sought to identify a true Shakespearean version of each play, “a pure text as the author had intended it” (Hall 541), and focused on identifying the copy-text (or the text used by printers as a guide to publication) as a means to do so. The ideal copy-text was one directly linked to Shakespeare’s fair papers, which, as already noted by Rowe in 1709, were lost (“fair” as opposed to “foul” papers represent a final draft). As no one text could represent an “ideal” version, New Bibliographers continued to conflate Q and F in order to find the text closest to what “Shakespeare intended.” Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, therefore, existed for many centuries only as a conflated text.

Gary Taylor and Michael Warren’s *The Division of the Kingdoms: Shakespeare’s Two Versions of King Lear* (1983) successfully challenged the New Bibliographers and ushered in the Revisionist approach. This seminal work, and the Revisionists who followed, suggest that “The Quarto and Folio texts of *King Lear* are distinct. There is no valid evidence that they derive from a single, lost archetype” (20). Revisionists go further to suggest that Q represents an earlier, authorial version and that F represents Shakespeare’s revision of this

work for the stage. *The Division of the Kingdoms* not only changed accepted ways of viewing text, it established scholars who are still influential in the field—many still Revisionists. Notable amongst them are Paul Werstine and his work on reclaiming the “bad” quartos; Steven Urkowitz’s revealing links between text and performance; and Sir Stanley Wells, general editor of Oxford and Penguin Shakespeares.

The Revisionists additionally changed the way that readers received the text, with the 1986 Oxford Edition *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* setting a precedent by including Q and F as separate texts—the two *King Leirs*. The distinction between New Bibliographers and Revisionists is that the first sought to conflate the texts into one in order to find Shakespeare’s “true” version, whilst the latter sought to acknowledge both texts as Shakespearean versions. The similarity is that both privileged Shakespeare as the source of the text/s, and Shakespeare’s intended version/s as the ideal. Neither field situated the works within their early modern context as today’s post-revisionists do.

Post-revisionists suggest debates about the “true” Shakespearean text or texts can narrow scholars’ focus. They have subsequently sought to remove this focus and equally value Q and F by situating both variants and their production firmly within the early modern context. For example, in *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (1996), Leah Marcus seeks to draw the reader’s attention to the processes and influences of editing by situating her example texts/lines within their editorial history and the historical context of their inception and printing (see also: De Grazia; De Grazia and Stallybrass; Ioppolo, *Revising*). This context, however, is not yet broad enough to consider variant versions of the Leir story.

Whilst the Q/F debate and its associated questions and scholarly approaches has perennially fuelled scholarly debate, it has also perpetuated a singular focus on merely two variants of the Leir story, Shakespeare’s, obscuring from view other variants of the story.

Source studies, the second traditional approach to variants of the Leir story, although still an element of Shakespearean scholarship, maintain a broader focus in the consideration of the variants.

2.2 Approach Two: Source Studies or Identifying Shakespeare's Originals

Source studies primarily seek to identify the sources which influenced Shakespeare's writing of *King Lear*, often, though not always, variants of the Leir story. Whether explicitly or tacitly, by focusing on Shakespeare's use of sources, scholars often additionally identify "the distinguishing qualities which constitute Shakspeare's universal eminence" (Ingleby et al. xxi in 1909), and "consider the nature of Shakespeare's dramatic inventiveness" (Olsen 196 in 2019). Intentionality, here seen as the ability to "prove" Shakespeare's intended use of a source, is ultimately the goal of traditional source studies, with the hunt for "Shakespeare's library" longstanding and exemplified by John Payne Collier in 1843 and Stuart Kells in 2018.

It is more than a teleological convenience to suggest that there was interest in "sources" in the early modern era. What is problematic is that, in the early modern era, the notion of a "true, original copy" (Shakespeare, *F* title page) was not an oxymoron but a commendation. This phrase was highlighted by post-revisionist Marcus (*Puzzling* 20) who identified the fluidity of its meaning, both at inception and with subsequent receptions. At the crux of her discussion are early modern notions of originality and imitation: "Literary theory in the sixteenth century looks back, both directly and through Roman intermediaries, to the thought of Plato (c. 427-348 BC), and the work of his pupil, Aristotle (384-322 BC), and is founded upon the concept of imitation" (Scragg 2). Book X of Plato's *Republic* begins with one interlocutor's question: "Could you tell me the general nature of imitation?" (296). The

ensuing dialogue ultimately defends imitation in all her guises (from painting to poetry and tragedy). In his *Poetics*, Aristotle positively aligns the arts with imitation. His first chapters articulate not only that the arts can “all be described in general forms of imitation of representation” but that this imitation is “inherent in man from his earliest days” (Aristotle 31 and 35). For early moderns, imitation, or “imitatio,” the process of reinventing the works of worthy authors (works known as “originals” or “authorities”) for a new audience, was essential to the arts. Pope’s 1725 preface to his first volume notes: “If ever any Author deserved the name of an *Original*, it was *Shakespear*” (ii). Thus, to early moderns, a worthy work could be both an “original” and an “imitation.”

Gerard Langbaine’s oft-noted 1687 *Momus Triumphans: or, the Plagiaries of the English Stage* could be considered the first example of Shakespearean source studies. The work was reissued twice more, and then extended in 1691, demonstrating its popularity. Langbaine identifies many “plagaries,” including both authors who plagiarised from Shakespeare, and those from whom Shakespeare plagiarised. Though politely avoiding the word “plagiarism” in deference to today’s negative, legalistic understanding of the term, John Kerrigan suggests that Langbaine was the first to “identify Shakespeare’s originals” (4).

In his work, Langbaine seeks to identify the plagiaries within the early modern plays he had collected. He does so for several reasons, including as, by identifying the “*Basis on which each Play is built ... the curious Reader may be able to form a Judgment of the Poets ability in working up a Drama, by comparing his play with the Original Story*” (sig. A4r). By moving away from the then more common terms of “original,” “authority,” “imitation,” and “copy,” Langbaine creates a contradictory text. In it he praises poets for the quality of their ingenuity in imitation: “*Whatsoever these ancient Poets (particularly Virgil) copied from any Author, they took care not only to alter it for their purpose; but to add to the beauty of it*” (sig. A6r). However, Langbaine also denigrates those who plagiarise: “*Tis a worfe fin*

to steal dead mens Writings, than their Clothes” (sig. A5v). Here Langbaine is experiencing the meeting of culturally accepted, classical notions of imitation with dawning early modern notions of ownership/authorship that were made manifest in the Statute of Anne in 1710.

In reality, it was Shakespeare’s editors, with Theobald leading the way, who were the first to demonstrate the desire to identify his sources, in the modern, scholarly sense of the word, noting all manner of texts, and social and historical occurrences that Shakespeare may have utilised. Theobald, in a 1733 gloss that clarifies Tom o’ Bedlam’s madness, refers in detail not only to *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, but to its widespread popularity “so rife in every Body’s Mouth,” its relevance to the Crown, and thus Shakespeare’s desire to “Satire” it (164). The early editors, therefore, as with today’s, engaged with both dominant approaches to variants of the Leir story—those that focus on Shakespeare’s text (the Q/F debate) and those that focus on his sources.

The pursuit of Shakespeare’s sources, as an independent endeavour, is first demonstrated in *Shakespeare Illustrated* (1754), the much maligned work of Charlotte Lennox (Doody). Though preferring the term “illustration,” Lennox was the first to use the term “source” in a manner akin to scholars today. It has been suggested that her preference for illustration, instead of source, is an attempt to identify “materials that ‘illustrate’ the plays contextually without them necessarily being claimed as sources” (Kerrigan 5). If correct, this is a tradition that has continued with synonyms such as “allusion” and “echo” becoming tropes of the new source studies, and the historicising of the text becoming a standard practice. In this way, scholars can negotiate the problem of intentionality and avoid the need to prove that Shakespeare did indeed use the source and that he intended his viewer/reader to see it as one.

In her work, Lennox devotes a chapter to “FABLE of the TRAGEDY of King LEAR.” Here she demonstrates agreement that Raphael Holinshed’s *Chronicles* provides a

source; is the first to identify Phillip Sidney's *Arcadia*; and, interestingly, includes a third, now neglected, source, a ballad "if we may believe the Editor of a Collection of old Ballads, published in the Year 1726: in his Introduction to an old Ballad called, *A Lamentable Song of the Death of King Lear and his three Daughters*" (301). Her reflection on Shakespeare's use of these texts is unswervingly critical: "This Fable, although drawn from the foregoing History of King *Lear*, is so altered by *Shakespeare*, in several Circumstances, as to render it much more improbable than the Original" (286). Margaret Ann Doody (2019) identifies Lennox's unique willingness to find fault in the Bard as the reason that her work is often overlooked or derided: "As far as she is concerned, his reputation is not safe, but rather abides our question" (78).

Another group of scholars upon whom the lens of history does not reflect kindly is the late Victorian source studies scholars, an era referred to as "the bad old days of allusion-hunting" (Newcomb 23) and an "occupation only suitable for pedants, outside the scope of true criticism" (Bullough, *VIII* 342). In today's digital age, stories of years spent combing through dusty archives are read like the folklore of old. This painstaking archival and textual work undertaken by both scholars and amateurs around the dawn of the previous century is, unfortunately, now better known because of the valorisation of Shakespeare that initiated and permeated their efforts. Consider as example the following extended quotation, from an 1888 text, wherein Shakespeare's variant is compared favourably to others:

Far away, far above all suggestions of the prosaic chroniclers, ballad-mongers, and early weavers of dramatic tissue, to regions that are swept by the wings of none but Jove's noblest ministers—Aeschylus, Sophocles and Dante, these his only peers—Shakespeare has lifted our thoughts, from the paltriness of human crime and folly, into contemplation of the eternal verities. (Woodfall Ebsworth 713)

The late Victorian valorisation of Shakespeare and his works thus overshadows the outcomes of their endeavours.

Yet, this era produced many familiar names and laudable texts. The work of discredited John Payne Collier, *Shakespeare's Library* (1843), was revised by W. Carew Hazlitt in 1875 to produce an impressive multi-volume look at Shakespeare's sources. Clement Mansfield Ingleby, Lucy Toulmin Smith, Frederick James Furnivall, and John James Munro, in their two-volume set, *The Shakespeare Allusion-Book: A Collection of Allusions to Shakespeare from 1591 to 1700* (1909), aimed not only to provide "a store of information on many subjects connected to Shakspere" (xvii), but to acknowledge "the distinguishing qualities which constitute Shakspere's universal eminence" (xxi), "the great heir of universal fame" (xx). The influential New Shakespeare Society was founded in 1874. Its 1875 prospectus advertised its goal: "to do honour to Shakespeare, to make out the succession of his plays, and thereby the growth of his mind and art" (Furnivall 5). Its leaders, Frederick James Furnivall and Frederick Gard Fleay, used what they believed to be the latest in scientific advances to apply a quantitative, as opposed to the previously qualitative, study of Shakespeare's works (Sawyer). Evocative of more recent responses to the use of computational analytics in the search for sources, the New Shakespeare Society was derided by peers for its "pseudo-scientific" methods (Sawyer). Yet it included many notable members, such as Furnivall, Fleay, George Bernard Shaw, Horace H. Furness, John Ruskin, Thomas Huxley, and Robert Browning (Sawyer 2). It is perhaps ironic that Shaw, himself a member of the New Shakespeare Society, would, in 1901, disparagingly coin the term "bardolatry" to articulate the era's valorisation of Shakespeare.

Here time must be given to one such "allusion hunter," obscure scholar, Wilfrid Perrett, whose name very rarely features in the reference lists of today's source studies scholars. In his 1904, *The Story of King Lear from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Shakespeare*,

Perrett uniquely identifies “the” fifty textual variants of the Leir story that existed prior to Shakespeare’s. The identified textual variants span countries of publication, languages, cataloguing systems, textual forms (manuscripts and published works), and genres.

Generated, inconceivably, at a time when the world’s libraries were catalogued on card file systems, that were searched individually and in person, Perrett’s work is an impressive feat, clearly designed specifically for the academic audience who Perrett assumed had more than a little Latin, French, and German, as he regularly quotes at length from variants in these languages, without offering translations.

Perrett’s laudatory work was before its time. He considers oral forms as sources, including folktales (9-11). He identifies source studies as an “elephant’s graveyard” well before Stephen Greenblatt: “the search for sources is the most profitless department of Shakespearean study” (“the Exorcist” ix). He discusses “analogues” (13) before Geoffrey Bullough. Finally, he values *all* variants by studying the sources of the sources of Shakespeare’s *King Lear*. In a manner that now might be considered an intertextual approach to sources, Perrett discusses all his identified variants, whether or not they impacted on Shakespeare, because they impacted on each other. Perrett culminates his research by postulating Shakespeare’s sources: “it would seem that Sh. had made the acquaintance of no less than six versions of the Lear-story, namely, HoL [Holinshed], FQ [Faerie Queen], Camden, MfM [Mirror for Magistrates], OP [Old Play–*King Leir*], Geoffrey [of Monmouth]” (272). He identifies these sources through a positivist approach of one-to-one correlation, or direct parallelism between narrative elements.

Perrett’s six sources are extended to eleven in the work of Bullough, who for many not only wears the honorific title “first source studies scholar” (Drakakis, “Inside” 57) but is “still unchallenged” in the field (Maguire and Smith 16) with his collection, although now printed half a century ago, still considered “magisterial” (Drakakis, *Resources* 291). In his

eight volume *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (1961-1975), Bullough identifies sources for all of Shakespeare's plays, dividing these into "sources" when evidence of direct borrowing is apparent, "possible" and "probable" sources when parallels are less clear but defensible, and "analogues" or contemporary occurrences that echo or allude. The sources that Bullough identified for Shakespeare's *King Lear* include eight variants of the Leir story, as well as two sources for the sub-plot, and one resonant, contemporary event, including: The Annesley Case (possible historical source); Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Anglicana* (probable source); William Holinshed's *The Second Booke of the Historie of England*; William Harrison's *An Historical Description of the Iland of Britaine* (possible source); William Camden's *Remains Concerning Britaine* (possible source); John Higgins's *Mirror for Magistrates*; Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queen*; William Warner's *Albion's England* (possible source); Anonymous *King Leir*; Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*; and Samuel Harsnett's *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*.

Bullough's work has been so influential that no discussion of source studies is complete without reference to his work as touchstone. However, consistently coupled with this reference is a discussion of the flaws in his work: "The limitations of Bullough's compendium are so familiar to Shakespeareans that they need only be lightly touched on" (Kerrigan 12). Bullough embraces positivism and identifies sources only through direct correlation of narrative elements and/or language (Kerrigan 12). He presents the sources, teleologically, as a linear development of works that led to Shakespeare's (Drakakis, "Inside" 58; Drakakis, *Resources* 48; Newcomb 22). The consideration of cultural and theatrical context is insufficient (Drakakis, "Inside" 58), as is Bullough's articulation of his own scholarly processes (Kerrigan 12; Maguire and Smith 16). He uses assumed intentionality, what Shakespeare "believed," "read," and "wanted" in his treatment of the sources. Finally, although Bullough consistently sets his work apart from the "adulatory phase of Shakespeare

criticism” (I xi), he does fall prey to the valorisation of Shakespeare, with his work “underpinned by a series of cumulative aesthetic judgements that emphasise ... the abiding cultural value of ‘Shakespeare’” (Drakakis, *Resources* 45). An oft-referenced section of Bullough’s final volume makes his bias clear:

I would claim that this is the best, and often the only, way open to us of watching Shakespeare the craftsman in his workshop—not indeed of “explaining” the mystery of his artistic genius, but at least of perceiving his constructive powers in operation, of seeing the ingenious collocations and associative energies which underlie the dynamic balance of the plays. (Bullough, *VIII* 346)

After Bullough’s conclusive work, interest in source studies declined (Kerrigan 12; Newcomb 20) with such alacrity that, little more than a decade after Bullough’s final volume was published, Greenblatt famously dismissed source studies as “the elephant’s graveyard of literary history” (Greenblatt, “The Exorcist” 7). Indeed, Bullough himself claims only to “assemble” (*Volume I* x) sources, and not to identify new ones. Not only did the practice of source studies diminish almost entirely, so too did the esteem in which it was held (Maguire 7).

Many scholars, however, are experiencing discontent with the approach that Bullough exemplified and are consequently explicitly questioning the cornerstones of prior source studies scholarship. John Drakakis notes, “We can no longer think ... of ‘source’ as a linear, quasi-religious quest for origins” (*Resources* 314). David Scott Kastan is “deeply suspicious” of claims of intentionality (3). Lori Humphrey Newcomb does not mince words when she suggests: “Source study is implicated in a model of cultural history that is teleological, axiological, nationalist, evolutionary, colonial, and exploitative” (Newcomb 27). New source studies scholars critique past work for being a means to valorise or reconstruct canonical Shakespeare, not to understand the sources of his works (Britton and Walter 24; Kerrigan 1).

Source studies are identified as ahistorical, for example by often failing to consider the impact of early modern notions of “imitation” and “originality” (Kerrigan; Maguire and Smith; Scragg). Its use of positivism, of utilising direct parallelism to “prove” a work as a source, is seen as excessive and contradictory to much of what is known about memory, as well as early modern, oral culture (Artese; Hirsch and Johnson 254; Maguire and Smith; Silvestri; Skura, “What Shakespeare”; Walter and Klann 1). Source studies are seen to create an artificially linear understanding of sources, failing to acknowledge their interrelation—what Drakakis calls “an endlessly expanding constellation of circulating and receding narratives” (“Inside” 72 and *Resources* 80; see also: Hirsch and Johnson 254; Maguire 7; Olsen; Osborne; Silvestri 54).

In their 2018 work *Rethinking Shakespeare Source Study*, Dennis Austin Britton and Melissa Walter (Eds.) state their aim is political and interpretive in nature. The contributors to this edition clearly enter into the desire to redefine/reposition source studies, and the diversity of their approaches and goals speaks to the liminal state of source studies today. While it is clear what today’s source studies scholars seek to move away from, there is no collective agreement on what they are moving towards, nor the mechanism to drive them forward: “Future source-study projects need not comprise a uniform practice, but they should reach beyond the status quo to imagine and articulate clear aims” (Newcomb 19). Perhaps today’s criticism of source studies is best articulated by Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith in their much-referenced work *What is a Source? Or, How Shakespeare Read His Marlowe* (2015): “we continue to look for sources even as methodology for assessing or admitting them remains undertheorized” (16).

Source studies are, consequently, currently undergoing a rebirth and reimagining, defined by Melissa Walter and Sarah Klann as a “resurrection,” with the digital turn as influential in this process as methodological concerns (Drakakis, *Resources* 18; Hirsch and

Johnson; Silvestri; Walter and Klann). Serving as exemplar for this resurrection is a current project led by John Drakakis, which seeks to update Bullough's seminal work, *Narrative and Dramatic Works of Shakespeare*. In the main, new source studies scholars seek to address methodological and axiological errors of the past. The focus of new source studies is no longer on finding the textual lineage for Shakespeare's variants, but on situating the texts collectively within their cultural and historical milieux, with Walter and Klann suggesting source studies should align with "current ways of thinking about authorship, memory, and audiences" (1).

Today, many still utilise the traditional approach of establishing new sources and/or exploring the discrepancies between sources and Shakespearean variants, before postulating the reasons for, or the impact of, such (see: Gilchrist; McCarthy and Schlueter; Olsen; Osborne; Skura, "What Shakespeare"; G. Taylor, "New Source"; Vickers, "Kyd"). However, sustained methodological interest in New Historicism and Cultural Materialism, as well as ease of access to early modern primary sources, has increasingly made the study of early modern source texts the study of early modern contexts (for foundational New Historicist work see: Greenblatt, *Negotiations*; for foundational Cultural Materialist work see: Holderness; Dollimore and Sinfield; for access to primary sources see: the *English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC)*; *Early English Books Online (EEBO)*; *Broadside Ballads Online (BBO)*). Source studies scholars, impacted by this shift, have embraced the imperative to "localise" texts (Marcus, *Puzzling*) and continue the field by focusing on Shakespeare's works and their sources within their historical contexts. Throughout his recent work, Drakakis embraces Francis Barker and Peter Hulme's hyphenating of the word "con-text" to signal: a refusal to arrange texts in a hierarchy that opposes 'foreground' to 'background', a process that not only separates the text from its history but that both recognises and abolishes the latter. (*Resources* 34)

Silvia Silvestri's 2021 work highlights that source studies scholars are consequently now "modelling new ways to explore and identify the intertextual, subtextual, and contextual forms of influence that shaped the playwright's production" (53). Uncomfortably, though the focus of source studies has extended, many still echo the bardolatry and assumed intentionality that tainted previous work. Even Drakakis's recent exemplary contribution to the field includes passages that appear to echo the earlier quoted Bullough's desire to discover Shakespeare at work:

[W]hat has been traditionally labelled "source study" might offer a window into the activity (and possibly psychology) of the successful practising dramatist as he shapes, adapts and expands his frames of reference to generate new meanings, and is in turn shaped by them. (Drakakis, *Resources* 53; see also: Artese; Drakakis, "Inside" 57; Osborne; Scragg; Skura, "Dragon" 316).

It would appear that centuries of scholarship that reinforced the cultural currency of the Bard, and the epistemologies and ontologies that are concerned with identifying and reifying his "genius," are difficult to escape.

One result of the quest to redefine source studies is the use of new nomenclature, not only to highlight new methodologies and aims, but to avoid the connotations of the old source studies: "the simple nomenclature of 'source' is restrictive and ideologically inflected" (Drakakis, *Resources* 34). Maguire and Smith, who tally twenty-seven different alternatives for "source studies" currently in use, note that: "Clearly, the stand-alone word 'source' has outlived its usefulness" (Maguire and Smith 16-17). Popular amongst the terms used by scholars who are seeking a new way forward for source studies are "echo" and "original." "Original" was once used by early moderns to denote a work worthy of "imitation," then used by Lennox to deride Shakespeare, before the Augustinian criterion of "originality" was used to praise him. Today, "original" is reclaimed by a strand of new source studies that moves the

field forward by positioning the works utilised by Shakespeare within their cultural contexts—privileging the sources themselves as “originals,” and not focusing solely on Shakespeare’s “genius” in their usage (Drakakis, “Inside”; Kerrigan). “Echo,” or similar, is often used by scholars who see a way forward that is removed from the positivist need for one-to-one correlation in identifying the linear development of an author’s sources, and instead focuses simply on understanding how remnants of the text echo elements of the cultural and textual contexts from which they derived, and into which they were received (L. Johnson; Osborne; Skura, “Dragon”). Whilst there is no clear, or agreed, way forward for the study of sources, it is clear that there is still interest in this “elephant’s graveyard” and that some of its scholars are actively seeking to shrug off the “ghosts” of bardolatry and teleology that haunt it.

2.3 Approach Three: Adaptations of Shakespeare’s Work

There is a synergy between Shakespearean source studies and Shakespearean adaptation studies. In many ways they are mirrors, with one tracing the path to, and the other the path away from, Shakespeare’s *King Lear*. Source studies and adaptation studies comprise many of the same elements and contain many of the same concerns. The key difference is that in the latter Shakespeare is now the “original” and source, with his cultural status making him, unlike the sources from which he drew, fixed, permanent, identifiable, inviolable, and self-sustaining. There is rarely acknowledgment that adaptations of Shakespeare’s work are in many ways adaptations of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s story, as much as Shakespeare’s. Nor is there acknowledgement that Shakespeare’s work was part of a broader palimpsest of cognate texts. Here, Sarah Cardwell provides the exception, noting:

Each new theatrical, filmic or television re-presentation of King Lear is considered an adaptation of Shakespeare's play, not of either the "original" stories or the previously published play text. (18)

Within Shakespearean adaptation studies, scholarship largely focuses on two key areas: the historical processes of adaptation, often in relation to Shakespeare's canonisation; or the product of these processes, the adaptations themselves. Shakespeare's text is central to each approach. Yet contradictorily, aligning with approaches to text previously discussed, today's adaptation scholars acknowledge that one of the difficulties in their field is that the text being adapted is not itself stable (Kidnie).

Though "the issue of what should 'count' as adaptation is often taken for granted" (Kidnie 2), a key point of similarity between adaptation studies and source studies is a lack of agreement in nomenclature and purview. The resulting proliferation of terms often sees scholars embracing more than one in their work, leading some to "endless ruminating over terminology" (Sanders 16). In adaptation studies, Shakespeare is re-imagined (Marsden), re-presented (Cardwell), re-worked (Foakes), re-invented (G. Taylor, *Reinventing*), and reviv'd (Tate). Shakespeare's works have offshoots (Cohn), rhizomatics (Lanier), and even an afterlife (Lynch). One can collaborate with Shakespeare (Henderson), canonise Shakespeare (Depledge and Kirwan), be playful and irreverent with Shakespeare (Gerzic and Norrie), and even steal from, or be given a gift by, Shakespeare (Desmet). Importantly, there is also "Shakespeare / Not Shakespeare" (Desmet et al.).

Most frequently, however, the terms used are "adaptation" and "appropriation." Christy Desmet and Sujata Iyengar note the complexity of their usage: "The terms originate within different cultural spheres and are influenced by the praxis and attendant discourse from these spheres" (11). Julie Sanders's oft-quoted 2016 work *Adaptation and Appropriation* clarifies the distinction between the two: "appropriation carries out the same

sustained engagement of adaptation but frequently adopts a posture of critique, overt commentary and even sometimes assault or attack” (6). It is adaptation studies with which this study of early modern variants of the Leir story most closely aligns. This term is clearly defined by Jean Marsden in her frequently cited 1995 work *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory*: “I define adaptation in its strictest sense as significant changes made to a pre-existing literary work” (7). Linda Hutcheon’s 2006 *A Theory of Adaptation* extends this definition by breaking adaptation into three co-dependent, but not always co-existing, ways of engaging with another work: acknowledged transposition; a creative and interpretative act; and/or an extended intertextual engagement (8).

Further complicating definitions of adaptation is that, while Shakespearean adaptation studies are largely textual in form, the adaptations themselves are largely performative. However, Margaret Jane Kidnie captures the intent of many when she seeks to: “challenge the sometimes unspoken assumption that adaptation is synonymous with performance, or that performance is somehow more vulnerable than text to adaptive practices” (5-6). Equally complex is that, within performative adaptations, audiences are happy for *King Lear* to *look* different, accepting performative differences in style, medium, and casting, yet they are less content for Shakespeare to *sound* different, privileging the “original” Shakespearean text and its early modern language in productions that, ironically, cut and conflate early modern editions for staging.

Related to or perhaps prompting earlier questions of nomenclature is the second characteristic shared by source and adaptation studies—discrepancies surrounding what qualifies as an adaptation. Adaptation studies, akin to source studies, historically sought one-to-one correlations between source and adaptation. Again, as with source studies, this positivism is no longer the case:

No longer motivated by a need to defend or attack – or even necessary to account for – perceived departures from a supposed origin or ‘source’, the critic’s goal is instead to trace a potential web of relations in which connected instances participate. (Kidnie 4; see also: Cardwell; Sanders)

Questions of what constitutes an adaptation raise the problematic topic of intentionality echoing and inverting its position in source studies: “the creative importance of the author cannot be as easily dismissed as Roland Barthes’s or Michel Foucault’s influential theories of the ‘death of the author’ might suggest” (Sanders 3). In adaptation studies, the adaptive intention of the author in the creation of the work can be construed, countered, or enhanced by the reception and perception of the reader/viewer (Desmet et al.). Echoing early modern valorisation of “imitatio” and thus echoing source studies, Sanders reminds readers of the centrality of adaptation to the arts: “adaptation and appropriation are fundamental to the practice and, indeed, to the enjoyment of literature and the arts more generally” (2).

A final similarity between source studies and adaptation studies is the privileging of Shakespeare’s work. This privileging reveals the paradox at the very core of adaptation studies, in that the act of adaptation is to change the original: “adaptation and canonization, so far from being contradictory processes, were often mutually reinforcing ones” (Dobson 5). Adaptations often explicitly historicise the adapted and the adaptation. As early as 1995, Marsden noted that modern adaptations reflect the era in which they were created (2). This theme continues within scholarship today: “Adapting Shakespeare is looking back to look *again* – and to look forward through this revised lens” (Steele et al. 306). To adapt Shakespeare’s work is both to de-historicise and to re-historicise. By implication, Shakespeare’s work is acknowledged as needing change—as *not* being timeless or universal. Yet, instead of adaptation questioning Shakespeare’s relevance or his capacity to speak to the

present, Shakespeare's work is the point of permanence, with the act of adaptation drawing attention to his universality and timelessness.

Further privileging Shakespeare's work, and akin to source studies in which the source was often viewed as inferior, Hutcheon notes the potentially negative status of an adaptation, which could be seen as "derivative" of the "original" and "superior" Shakespearean work. While many scholars and artists seek to avoid this privileging, Shakespeare's genius is inevitably proven, not this time in his use of sources, but in his prolonged relevance as a source. Reminiscent of the bardolatry for which source studies scholars are critiqued, Laurie Maguire notes within adaptation studies:

textual prejudice, with the ideological traffic tending to move only one way:

Shakespeare rewrites/adapts/improves his sources, but when others use Shakespeare as source, their product is inferior or derivative. (7-8)

Graham Holderness, whose landmark text *The Shakespeare Myth* inspired a generation of scholars to decanonise Shakespeare, suggests:

Although we would not wish to share their Bardolatry, and we are now finally convinced that Shakespeare's work is changeable, multiple, unfixed, and unstable, we nonetheless find ourselves seeking an origin for that work in the indefinable, the invisible, the limitless. (6)

Processes involved in both source studies and adaptation studies frequently silently reinforce Shakespeare's privileged status. Thus, far from diluting the canonicity and sanctity of Shakespeare's works, adaptations "function to safeguard the very category of 'Shakespearean'" (Kidnie 2-3), with the discernment between "Shakespeare / Not Shakespeare" (Desmet et al.) clear, at least in perception or intention.

Today, adaptations of Shakespeare's *King Lear* exist in multiple mediums—from graphic novels to pandemic Zoom recordings. Adaptation studies largely focus on these

contemporary adaptations, while also continuing to focus on the processes of Shakespeare's canonisation. Few adaptations receive sustained scholarly attention beyond their time of production, though Kurosawa Akira's 1985 film *Ran* is of note here, as is Nahum Tate's Restoration (1681) play *The History of King Lear*. Tate's adaptation is of particular relevance to this study as it is the first early modern adaptation of Shakespeare's play. Indeed, it is the only routinely recognised, early modern adaptation. Tate's *Lear* is often identified as the first step in Shakespeare's canonisation, a process that has been traced by many (Babcock; Dobson; Lynch; Marsden).

The Restoration saw a reinvigoration of interest in the arts, literature, and theatre. Nostalgia for the pre-war era prompted widespread interest in adaptations, particularly of the works of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and John Fletcher, which were repeatedly adapted for the Restoration stage and page (Hamond 390). Marsden identifies more than fifty adaptations of Shakespeare's plays appearing in print and on stage between 1660 and 1777 (1). Today, Tate's *King Lear* is frequently studied in relation to how it de-historicised and re-historicised Shakespeare's work to reflect stylistically the aesthetics of Restoration theatre or politics (Bender 69-70; Massai 435; Wikander). Though it was the first adaptation of Shakespeare's work, Tate likewise draws attention to his processes of re-historicisation within prefatory material:

'Twas my good Fortune to light on one Expedient to rectifie what was wanting in the Regularity and Probability of the Tale, which was to run through the whole A Love betwixt Edgar and Cordelia. (A3v)

Tate additionally draws attention to another inherent contradiction within today's adaptation studies by privileging Shakespeare's work: "my Zeal for all the Remains of Shakespear" (A2r). He concurrently finds it unsuitable for Restoration tastes and theatres and thus needing

adaptation: “a Heap of Jewels, unstrung and unpolisht; yet so dazling in their Disorder” (A3v).

Tate’s adaptation famously kept Shakespeare’s *King Lear* from the stage between 1642 and 1838, yet, owing to Shakespeare’s cultural canonicity, it has been frequently derided. It is “notorious” (Wikander 351) for its inferiority, “on a far lower level of artistic aspiration than its source play” (Wells, *Oxford* 63), and even categorised as “one of the most subversive acts in literary history” (Marsden 1). The status of Tate’s adaptation within scholarship was won by its ability to supersede Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, and is perpetuated by its “inferiority” to it.

In short, adaptation studies, as with source studies, present a contradictory and incomplete view of variants of the Leir story, by seeking only to understand those responding to Shakespeare’s “original” without consideration of either source or adaptation as two parts within a broader, complex palimpsest of cognate texts. An exploration of adaptation studies and its treatment of variants of the Leir story has highlighted clear similarities to source studies, yet there is little dialogue between the twin fields. Scholars have not found, nor indeed looked for, any overlap among all three ways that the variants of Shakespeare’s *King Lear* have been addressed—source studies, post-revisionism, and adaptation studies. There is thus no current way to understand the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story.

2.4 A New Approach

The purpose of this study is to understand early modern variants of the Leir story as a palimpsest, yet a survey of the field reveals that there is currently no method for doing so. Approaches to Leir variants which focus on Shakespeare’s texts, their sources, and their adaptations have formed unnecessary and misrepresentative delineations within scholarship.

Current linear approaches, and the centrality of Shakespeare within them, have created a gap in knowledge with the full number of early modern variants of the Leir story remaining unidentified and unexplored. This study inevitably overlaps with, yet equally seeks to distance itself from, prior scholarship in each of the above fields. It is, however, inspired by the work of the new source studies scholars and responds to their calls for methodological approaches free from bardolatry and teleology.

In order to understand the early modern palimpsest of Leir stories, I have identified a new approach to cognate texts—the historical collation. This method is designed to address stories, legends, or narratives that exist in multiple variants over a period of time. “Collation” is a term with multiple meanings, most often a task undertaken by bibliographers or editors in relation to variants of a single work or title (Rasmusson and de Jong 292). Eminent bibliographer Ronald B McKerrow suggests a collation can simply be the recording of the physical make-up of a book, such as the number of leaves, gatherings, and signatures (155-161). This shorthand system is most commonly encountered in the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) entries. It can also be a complex task undertaken by bibliographers or editors in order to compile textual irregularities between all variant forms of the one work. Readers will most commonly see the results of these collations featured in glosses or appendices of modern editions. This more complex form of collation can see bibliographers identifying discrepancies across variants at the quadrat level, and editors identifying discrepancies at the word or sentence level, often without reference to a broader context or full implication of these variations. John Jowett, an editor of the *New Oxford Shakespeare* series, clarifies the specific concept of the historical collation as “a collation of variants that records the readings of all editions, irrespective of their presumed textual authority” (210).

The historical collation undertaken as part of this study, and offered as a way forward for the treatment of stories, legends, or narratives existing in multiple cognate variants, adopts

a broader and more holistic sense of collation. The focus is specifically on revealing the diachronic and synchronic discrepancies and similarities of the variants of a story, as opposed to a single work. The collation does not seek, nor does it interrogate, a linear sequence of sources and appropriations, but an interrelated palimpsest of cognate texts. This broader form of historical collation adopts an interdisciplinary approach that includes elements of those methodologies already addressed (bibliography/post-revisionism, source studies, and adaptation studies) but is more strongly aligned with book history and cultural bibliography.

Elements collated include bibliographic, paratextual, and narrative elements. The bibliographic elements considered include title, text length, format, and genre, with emphasis given to how the retelling is situated within the work as a whole. Also considered within bibliographic elements are the authors and “authorising forces” who produced the works. These bibliographic elements are included as they frame and help to construct the retelling of the Leir story. Narrative elements, the primary instrument through which the story is retold, focus on inclusions and exclusions, both in relation to the Galfridian original and across variants. The narrative elements of the Galfridian original include the introduction to Leir; the love test; Leir’s downfall; the battle; and the restoration. Narrative elements also serve to highlight the depictions of historical personages within retellings and their engagement with time and place. Stylistic elements of retellings are also considered. Previous scholarship has allowed narrative elements of the Leir story to dominate, to the exclusion of “extra-textual” elements. This is most commonly seen in the work of modern editors and editions that frequently elide many of the original paratextual elements from the work. Yet, as is clarified in Chapter 4, the “digital turn” coinciding with the “visual turn” has allowed access to digitised texts that permitted this collation to more thoroughly address how the Leir story is retold through the consideration of textual and paratextual elements.

“Paratext” is a term coined by Gérard Genette in his influential 1997 work *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Genette refers to the paratext as the “threshold” through which the work is encountered: “what enables a text to become a book” (1). Thus, paratext refers to the portions of the work that are external to the text itself, such as prefatory material, tables and indexes, aesthetic elements, and inclusions such as footnotes and marginal notes. Whilst there is overlap between Genette’s definition of paratext and bibliographic elements already discussed, paratextual elements collated include prefatory material that contextualises the Leir story, marginal notes that were part of the story itself, and aesthetic elements such as woodcuts. McKerrow clarifies aesthetic elements by distinguishing between decoration and illustration: “The former is intended primarily to be beautiful ... the latter is intended primarily to elucidate the text” (109). The aesthetic elements collated within this study focus on illustrative elements within the story that contribute to its retelling, including woodcuts. Thus, within the collation, bibliographic, paratextual, and narrative elements are considered equally, with bibliographic and paratextual elements framing and impacting on the retelling of the story.

In many ways, the historical collation that I suggest could be considered a unique three-dimensional form of analysis. The three eras studied represent individual layers of the early modern palimpsest of Leir stories. Within each of the three layers, and providing depth and breadth, there is a diachronic and synchronic analysis comparatively collating a complex range of features within and between individual variants. The findings of each era’s collations are compared to the last era, acting as layers and providing greater diachronic and synchronic findings or, to extend the analogy, height. The three-dimensional nature of the study is thus achieved through the depth, breadth, and height of this analysis, engendering a clear understanding of the nature of the early modern palimpsest of variants of the Leir story. The complexity of this three-dimensional approach is intended not simply to address questions of

methodology raised by source studies and adaptation scholars, but as a deliberate contrast to the linear, pre-existing focus on Shakespeare's variants, their sources, and their adaptations. This methodology is relevant beyond its current application and could be applied to any story that exists in multiple variants, particularly if, as in Shakespeare's works, one variant dominates scholarship or popular thought. It is consequently envisioned that this methodology addresses questions currently being raised within Shakespearean studies, but additionally has relevance to broader literary studies, such as those folklore that remain part of popular culture.

Chapter 3: Identifying the Variants of the Leir Story

This thesis addresses the research question: What does a historical collation of early modern variants of the Leir story reveal in relation to their nature as a palimpsest, including diachronic and synchronic trends and influences? The first step in addressing this question is to identify the full nature of the early modern palimpsest of Leir variants. While the number of variants considered sources for Shakespeare's *King Lear* has altered, seminal source studies scholar Geoffrey Bullough suggests there are eleven sources for Shakespeare's *King Lear*, with eight as textual sources for the main plot—the Leir story. Post-revisionists are even more focused in their consideration of Leir variants, addressing only the first Quarto (Q1) and Folio (F1) editions of Shakespeare's play. Early modern adaptation scholars largely address one work, Nahum Tate's *King Lear*. Combined, these three approaches address approximately eleven early modern variants of the Leir story.

The numbers identified through the search processes used in this study soon rose substantially beyond this, with 205 early modern impressions identified. Initial search parameters are soon discussed. The variants were notable for reasons beyond their mere number. Though these notable aspects are later detailed within the collations, the following contrasts serve as exemplars. The work of post-revisionists made the presence of Shakespeare's *King Lear* in two variants expected. That John Taylor, John Higgins, and an anonymous balladeer would also have works present in multiple, substantive forms was unexpected. Source studies have made Leir stories present in histories and moralities well-known. Seditious ballads, and topographicals that bound Leir's story to understandings of time and place, were unknown. Consistency in text content was previously sought in sources and adaptations alike. Diversity found in paratext and its implications for text were revelatory, with woodcuts depicting Cordeilla covering the spectrum from warrior queen to

innocent waif, and Leir resembling historical ideals and reigning monarchs. Thus, the diversity of the variants identified was as notable as their number.

Chapter 3 provides a broad outline of the early modern palimpsest of Leir variants. It does so by first outlining the processes involved in their identification, including the search parameters (3.1). The diversity of these variants is then explored both diachronically and synchronically (3.2). This exploration serves as a necessary and important contextualisation of the historical collation of selected variants that forms the main body of this thesis. Lastly, as the number of initially identified Leir variants fell beyond the scope of this work, the reasoning for and criteria involved in the selection of variants for collation is clarified (3.3).

3.1 Identification of Variants, Including Search Parameters

3.1.1 Parameter One: Digital Scholarship

Initially seeking to identify all Leir variants extant in the early modern era, especially those that may have been obscured by prior methodological approaches to variants, search parameters were deliberately kept broad. Circumstantial necessities focused the study on the use of the *English Short Title Catalogue* (ESTC) as the primary, though not the only, database to identify Leir variants. This use of digital scholarship is often a hidden component of today's bibliographic studies (Steggle), and yet has been influential in the resurgence of source studies as noted in Chapter 2 (Drakakis, *Resources* 18; Hirsch and Johnson; Silvestri; Walter and Klann).

Traditionally, textual scholars interested in the identification of early modern texts used as their touchstone two works: the first, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475–1640* (STC),

edited by Alfred William Pollard and Gilbert Richard Redgrave; and the second, Donald Goddard Wing's *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America, and of English Books Printed in Other Countries, 1641–1700* (Wing). Due to their completeness (Steggle) and transparency (Gavin 72), these catalogues, together, “give a degree of bibliographical control unique to printed books in English or manufactured in Britain” (Barnard, “Preface” xxi).

Subsequent to the STC and Wing, bibliographic studies, and more specifically the cataloguing of texts, have joined other fields in the “digital revolution,” with an extraordinary amount of bibliographic data now available to search and view online: “It has become a truism that early modern literary studies has been revolutionized by the advent of online databases” (Farmer and Lesser 1139). The *English Short Title Catalogue* (ESTC) is one such tool. Modestly considering itself “a comprehensive, international union catalogue listing early books, serials, newspapers and selected ephemera printed before 1801” (British Library, “English short”), the ESTC is considered by others in much more glowing terms, as an “essential scholastic tool” (Lahti et al. 87) with “tremendous benefits” (McKitterick 194) that “has no rival” (Tabor 367). The ESTC is an open, searchable catalogue that includes STC and Wing records, along with the Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue and many additional materials, including ephemera such as advertisements and slip-songs (British Library, “Using the”).

As with the catalogues that preceded it, the ESTC is not without its critics or its flaws. The creators of the ESTC do not shy away from acknowledging its limitations. In the main, scholars identify three key critiques. The first of these is that, as an online database, the ESTC has the capacity to allow for continual updating. The ESTC has a mechanism for users to identify and report errors to ESTC staff, who subsequently verify and update entries daily (British Library, “English short”). This leads to questions of stability, and consequently

accuracy, in both the database and the research that uses it (Lahti et al.; McKitterick; Tabor). The second critique is likely a consequence of the first: the ESTC is not edited in the traditional sense of having one arbiter and vision. It is moderated by a group of individuals who each update their assigned entries (Tabor 384). This process inevitably impacts on consistency across entries and potentially on quality control (Farmer and Lesser 1140; Folger Shakespeare Library). Once again this is acknowledged by the ESTC: “Entries vary in editorial status and completeness” (British Library, “English short”). The final collective criticism of the ESTC is that it is incomplete, that it does not include all the records of the revised STC and Wing (Farmer and Lesser 1140-1; Folger Shakespeare Library).

Here it is opportune to briefly note that no catalogue or study of early modern works can be “complete” in the fullest sense of the term. Even the STC and Wing, upon which the ESTC was based, noted that they did not contain records of all surviving works (Gavin 72-72). “Surviving” is a key word, for no catalogue can be a comprehensive record of that which did not survive. Scholarship focused on the Stationers’ Register led to the estimate that eighty percent of playbook entries (Hill, “Rediscovering”), and just over half the total entries in the Stationers’ Register (Hill, *Lost* 3), survive. Even then, the Register is not a complete record of printing licences given, nor licences a complete record of printings (Allington et al.; Barnard, “Introduction”; Blayney, “If it”). Thus, any attempt to definitively catalogue printed works, such as the ESTC, will inevitably be incomplete on several levels.

While not readily identified in scholarship, there is an additional facet of the ESTC that impacted on the identification of variants. The ESTC numbering system is, at times, opaque and inconsistent. ESTC citation numbers represent “a different setting of type and in most cases this would correspond to an impression” (O’Brien). Although consideration of early modern printing practices makes the terms “impression” and “edition” frequently synonymous (Jowett 210; McKerrow 175-6), an impression is given to be “the whole number

of copies printed at one time” (McKerrow 175). There are three exceptions within the ESTC Citation Number system, with a single impression given multiple records if: there are changes to a title page, for example to denote two booksellers; the entry addresses a collection which includes a number of texts, each individually addressed in additional ESTC entries; or the text is a “ghost,” or one that appears in STC and/or Wing, but has since been disproven (O’Brien). These exceptions are often identified in the ESTC record itself, yet difficulties can arise due to a lack of transparency with regard to their application and a lack of consistency within their recording.

Though its limitations have been recognised, the ESTC remains unique as a data source, one that allowed this study to search for, identify, and confirm variants of the Leir story. It also provides, through citation numbers, a shared means to recognise individual variants, most usually at the level of impressions (O’Brien). Thus, this study has used the ESTC as the primary method for identifying and validating variants of the Leir story, with the variety of databases identified at the conclusion of an ESTC entry allowing access to remediated facsimiles of the variants (databases such as Early English Books Online (EEBO), Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO), *Broadside Ballads Online* (BBO) and *English Broadside Ballad Archive* (EBBA)). In short, the ESTC allowed the agile searching and visual accessing of remediated works that were essential to the completion of this study. Potential variants were identified through multiple, interrelated processes that utilised material within primary and secondary works in conjunction with inductive reasoning to identify potential works, terms, subjects, printers, or authors. These were then searched broadly within the ESTC in order to identify and subsequently to confirm variants.

3.1.2 Parameter Two: Printed Works

The second search parameter applied in the identification of Leir variants dovetails with the first, but was applied primarily to limit the scope and increase the feasibility of the project: only printed works were considered. There is much existing scholarship on oral, visual, and manuscript forms in general, though little on Leir variants in these forms. Their identification, and the observation of their interrelation with printed forms, would be an advantageous extension of this study, with the lack of consideration of oral culture an appropriate criticism of many studies:

The culture in which Shakespeare lived and worked was not primarily structured by the book, although scholars have often brought 20th century book-culture assumptions to our study of Shakespeare and his sources. (Walter and Klann 3)

However, the inclusion of non-literary variants is beyond the scope of this study. Though excluded, the importance of such forms to an understanding of printed forms of the Leir story, both then and now, should be noted, especially with regard to oral works. Some variants within this study, such as ballads and plays, existed in both printed and performative forms during this time, with only their printed forms considered in this study. The impact of oral works that have no printed form is seen tangentially, for example in folktales. Many scholars suggest folktales were Geoffrey of Monmouth's source for the Leir story, specifically 510A, 510B and 923 Type folktales (Artese; Bullough, *VII* 271; Dundes; Perrett; Skura, "Dragon"; Young). Additionally, whilst many Leir variants include visual elements, some visual works, such as pedigree scrolls, paintings, and etchings, did not cross over into print, yet they nonetheless had influence.

Finally, manuscripts, although at times crossing into print, were not included, though once again their importance must be noted. In his 1904 work, Perrett indicates the prevalence

of manuscripts that included the Leir story, such as the English Prose Brute, of which there are “So many copies ... that nearly every English library of importance possesses one or more” (61). Indeed, scholars of the book trade are at pains to note that manuscripts should be considered as valuable textual commodities that co-existed alongside printed works throughout the early modern era (Allington et al.; Barnard, “Introduction” 1; Chartier, “Revisited” 511). Instead of one form superseding another, they interacted. At times, manuscript form was deliberately chosen over print, either as a means to escape censorship, to avoid the cost of print, or for their malleable nature (Barnard, “Introduction” 35; Brewer, “Interregnum” 174; Chartier, “Revisited” 511). Thus, early moderns were exposed to multiple, printed, oral, written, and visual forms of the Leir story. It was, however, not feasible to include all such forms within this study. Such a large undertaking must remain a future goal.

3.1.3 Parameter Three: Printed in the British Isles

The third search parameter applied in the identification of Lear variants was geographical. In consideration of the fluidity within early modern definitions of Britain, only texts printed in what is now known as the British Isles were considered. In the early modern era, “Britain” was a far more complex term than it is today, as it designated boundaries of both time and place. Early moderns looked back on a Britain that was synonymous with antiquity: “England’s ‘British History’ was identified with the period spanning the conquest of the island by the mythical Brutus of Troy—whence the name “Britain”—and the Saxon invasions” (Trevisan 264). Brute founded Britannia, naming it and the line of kings that he would beget. Brute, upon his death, divided the kingdom of Britain among his three sons, and, by doing so, established Albania or Scotland, Loegria or England, and Cambria or

Wales. It is this Brutan, or British, line that is recounted in Galfridian history, and to which Leir belongs. Leir was a British king. Thus, for early moderns, Britain existed in history and legend until the potential for a contemporary Britain was suggested by the Union of the Crowns in 1603. At this time, King James VI of Scotland became James I of England, succeeded Elizabeth I, and began his campaign to unify the kingdom. Though rigorously sustained, James I's union project reached fulfilment only in the 1707 Act of Union, which joined the crowns of England and Scotland and created a political and geographical Britain in the minds of its rulers, if not the hearts of its people. Thus, though the term "British Isles" is modern in origin, it covers all the territories considered "British" for the majority of the early modern era.

It should be noted that focusing specifically on retellings printed in the British Isles does not account for the entirety of printed works available to the population at the time. Though the British book trade was parochial and insular (Barnard, "Introduction" 1), it was not isolated. One of the key themes of the history of the book is its mobility (Allington et al.; Hellinga). Of commercial necessity, the British book trade flourished through exactly that, international trade (Hellinga 213). Most works printed abroad were in Latin (Feather 232-233) and sold because "those printed abroad cost less, and were usually better printed, than the home product" (Barnard, "Introduction" 6). Trade with the continent also facilitated the desire to import books that would otherwise incur religious or political censorship (Barnard, "Introduction" 5). By the end of the seventeenth century, serious collectors might furnish half their library through works printed in Britain, especially if their preferences were for works in Latin (Barnard, "Introduction" 6), but the consumption habits of the general population could largely be addressed through almanacs, broadsheets, and vernacular works published in the British Isles. Thus, not only does this search parameter limit the number of variants found, it may also serve, unfortunately, to limit diversity in the type of texts found.

Again, it is pertinent to pause and address a key work that this search parameter excludes. Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia*, first published in 1534, sparked the historiography debate that played out over an extended period in works that recounted, or drew upon, national history. This debate is later discussed in detail. Vergil's work suggested that there was no factual basis for Galfridian historiography. Although Vergil lived in England from 1501 and composed the work there at the behest of Henry VII, it was printed repeatedly in Basel during the early modern era, but never within the British Isles (Perrett 78). While necessitating the exclusion of this influential work, focusing specifically on variants of the story printed in British Isles does allow this study to capture those that were designed purely for the British market, a market described specifically as "inward looking" (Feather 233). Thus these search parameters, and consequently this study, are focused on retellings of the reign of a British king, Leir, printed by British stationers for the British reading public.

3.1.4 Parameter Four: Chronology

Although this study is concerned with early modern interest in the Leir story, the term "early modern" is insufficient for setting precise chronological parameters. This term has been notably described as "chronologically shifty" (Marcus, "Renaissance" 42). The difficulty in defining the early modern date range is noted in theory and observed in practice. Whilst many use the term without clarification, others, such as *The Cambridge History of Early Modern English Literature*, contain lengthy clarification, then continue to use the term notwithstanding its "generality" and "ambiguity" (Loewenstein and Mueller 4). This study embraces the term but remains focused on a more specific chronology.

To facilitate a closer alignment with the British book trade and the variants it produced, this study has focused its chronological delineations to commence in 1557, with the Royal Charter given to the Worshipful Company of Stationers (the Stationers' Company), and progresses through to 1710 and the Statute of Anne. Thus, with a gentle nod to the key motif within all versions of the Leir story, the succession of power, this study has selected two parameters for the early modern era where the power of the press was regulated or legitimised in different ways, and subsequently assigned to two different parties: the 1557 Royal Charter assigning the Stationers' Company as industry authority, and the 1710 Statute of Anne which acknowledged the authority and rights of authors themselves. This is not to imply that these were the only attempts to regulate the book trade during this time, most especially during the reigns of Charles I and Charles II. This, after all, was when the British book trade was becoming fully established, and thus in a state of constant development and fluidity (Barnard, "Introduction" 9). Nonetheless, these two regulatory dates, standing either end of the early modern era, are relevant delineations and merit further clarification and contextualisation.

The Charter of 1557 does not mark the founding of the Stationers' Company. It was founded in 1403, when Henry IV approved the petition of the misteries of Textwriters and Limners and the bookbinders and sellers of London to unite as one company (Blayney, *Stationers* 4). In essence, the Charter enabled the Stationers' Company to do two things: license a work to be printed by one of its Stationers, and enforce this licensing through basic means of press regulation (Allington et al. 85; Barnard, "Introduction" 16), which meant that the company "in effect exerted a monopoly over the production of books" (Erne, *Book Trade* 20). In brief, after the 1557 Charter, a printer or bookseller wishing to have his or her work licensed to print would apply to the Company for the "right to copy." This incurred a small fee and, if granted, gave the printer sole right to print the title. An additional fee was applied

for entering this licence into the Stationers' Register. Though not mandatory, this step offered undeniable proof of ownership. If infringed by other printers or booksellers, a Stationers' right to copy could be enforced by the company "empowered to enforce seizures and fines for infringements" (D. J. Shaw 227; see also: Allington et al.; Barnard, "Introduction"; Blayney, *Stationers*; Eliot and Rose). Today, after both the rise and the fall of the "author," their absence from this process is notable and made further evident by the absence of the author's name from many early modern title pages, which routinely featured printers and booksellers. The author's role was simply to provide copy-text, either solicited or unsolicited, to printers.

The terminal date for the study, 1710, marks a shift in the power relationship between stationers and authors, with authors rising in prominence and agency throughout the intervening years. After the expiration of the Licensing Act in 1695, the Stationers' Company lost its powers to regulate the industry, leading to a period of disarray that prompted the enactment of the Statute of Anne in 1710 (Feather 241; Rose 118). Essentially, *An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies, During the Times Therein Mentioned*, was the first copyright act. This act made two distinct changes, empowering authors to hold the copyright for their own works, yet limiting the period of time for which this copyright was assigned. By doing so, the Statute of Anne "attempted to break the monopoly of the London booksellers by giving authors the right to demand a copyright themselves," an action that did not go unopposed by stationers (Chartier, *Order* 32-33). Given this study's focus on printed forms in the early modern era, the chronological scope is defined by these key dates drawn from the book trade: commencing in 1557, with the legitimisation of the power of the Stationers' Company, and finishing in 1710, with the act that recognised the authority of the author.

Consequently, the identification of variants of the Leir story was conducted according to the above search parameters, with the aid of digital scholarship, to identify

variants printed in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710. As a consequence, 205 ESTC records or impressions that included the Leir story were identified (see Appendix 1). Certainly, a consideration of the number of variants previously addressed by scholarship suggested that this was a notably large number. However, the preceding discussion of parameters applied to the identification of Leir variants likewise suggests that far more Leir variants were in existence at that time. Each of these will have formed part of a clearly rich and dense palimpsest of Leir variants extant at the time, generating both a collective understanding of the story and a lens through which each was encountered. Because of the extraordinary number of works identified and confirmed, combined with the number of unexplored search terms, these initial searches were, of necessity, left incomplete, with an expectation that this number represents not more than two-thirds of the relevant works. The number of variants identified did, however, suggest that the search had theoretically reached an appropriate level of saturation.

3.2 Diachronic and Synchronic Exploration of Variant Diversity

A diachronic and synchronic exploration of diversity within the 205 initially identified variants assists in understanding the early modern palimpsest of Leir stories. Additionally, it provides context for the collation of specific variants conducted in the following chapters. Without implying comparability, the number of impressions identified does suggest that the Leir story experienced sustained popularity with printers, and thus conceivably with readers, between 1557 and 1710. “Popular,” as a term used throughout book and social history, has proven to be complex, with varied definitions, indicators, and measures. Since the early modern era itself, popular literature has been positioned in opposition to elite literature, simplifying their complex relationship (Sullivan and

Woodbridge). Difficulties, then and now, arise through the associative value of the word, when popular is synonymised with dispensable, lacking value, or low in status. Lukas Erne, in his 2013 *Shakespeare and the Book Trade* engages rigorously with the term “popular,” its usage and its measures, and demonstrates that Shakespeare’s plays were popular by addressing their high rates of consumption and the value readers placed on them through binding, inclusion in collections, owners’ inscriptions, and marginalia. Although focused on Shakespeare’s work, Erne’s findings are applicable to this study, which subsequently defines “popular” in both its adjectival and nominal senses, both in relation to high rates of consumption and to designate a range of genres that were created specifically for general readership. This study thus suggests the Leir story itself was popular through its rates of production, and thus its presumed consumption, with 205 identified impressions, or an average of over thirteen per decade.

The identified works reveal notable trends within both a diachronic investigation of their similarities and discrepancies across the period 1557-1710, and a synchronic examination of their interrelationship within it. A diachronic analysis revealed that the Leir story was printed frequently, though not consistently, as patterns in frequency fluctuated. These distribution pattern did not marry with the steady increase in the total number of works published as the English book trade became established (Barnard, “Introduction” 9). By identifying the distribution patterns found within the 205 initially identified variants, and considering the way the story was depicted within these, three key stages of engagement with Leir were identified within the selected timeframe. The first, 1557 to 1599, saw greater frequency of impressions that were focused on the Brutan King Leir through traditional historiography. The second, 1600 to 1639, was a period of diversifying genres. The final, 1640 to 1710, was, by contrast, a period of stagnation in the number and diversity of variants that foreshadowed a later revival and repositioning of the Leir story. These three stages are

referred to within this thesis as the Brutan years (1557-1599), the diversification years (1600-1639), and the stagnation years (1640-1710). The thesis itself is divided into sections focused on these eras.

The first stage, or the Brutan period from 1550 to 1599, included approximately fourteen ESTC entries for Leir variants each decade, with the 1560s the most prolific decade at nineteen impressions, and the 1580s the least prolific with seven. Engagement with the Leir story was largely as a part of the established Galfridian history of England. At almost three-quarters of the works, historiographies dominated and included the works of many notable early historiographers, such as Robert Fabyan (whose first variant considered by this study was published in 1559), Richard Grafton (first variant published 1562), Raphael Holinshed (first variant 1577), John Stow (first variant 1565), and Matthew Paris (first variant 1567). In addition to these, there was sporadic, though increasing, inclusion of specialist works that engaged with history and thus included the king, such as topographical works, genealogies, treatises and, from the 1570s, works that focused on history for moral didacticism. More often than not, within all the works, Leir's story was retold as that of one king in the Brutan line. This prevalence of historiographies is noteworthy, as the history of the nation was at that time being contested, the subject of a "historiography debate" that is discussed more fully in Chapter 4. As earlier noted, Polydore Vergil's *Anglia Historia*, though published in Basel in 1534, "worked outwards into popular consciousness" towards the end of the Elizabethan era (Gilchrist 1). Vergil, through his identification of errors within the work of Monmouth, challenged established and culturally convenient ways of understanding history. This, however, was not all that he challenged. As an Italian, focused on humanist historiographical techniques, Vergil's history challenged English history, as well as English historians' methodologies, and national pride.

The “historiography debate” was captured in many of the historiographies of this time, not just through the presence of anti-Galfridian sentiment, but in the prolific works that sought to reaffirm Galfridian historiography simply through its retelling, as well as those that directly countered the debate. Richard Harvey, in his 1593 work *Philadelphus, or a Defence of the Brutes*, explicitly states his intent in his Epistle Dedicatory:

I muft not hold my hand and pen ftill, when I fee them too bufie, in toffing our hiftories and actes, at their owne pleafure... I fauour the hiftorie of *Brute*, without regard of their disfauour. (sig. A3v)

Grafton was equally pro-Galfridian in the Epistle of his 1569 variant *A Chronicle at Large* when seeking to: “with plaine declaration of the truth, confute fuch errors and vntruths as are written and fcattered in foreyn ftories concerning this realm” (sig. A3v). The impact of the historiography debate, though seen in all eras, is seen in the first stage of the Leir variants, during the Brutan years from 1557 to 1599, through the dominance of historiographies, supported by factual works that drew from history.

There was a marked change in the second stage of variants, the diversification period from 1600 to 1639, with the inclusion of the Leir story in diverse genres. Daniel R. Woolf has identified that the mid-sixteenth century saw the traditional functions of the medieval chronicle history pass to a diversity of genre types, including parasite histories (later explained). This variety is seen for the first time in Leir variants during the diversification years, with notably greater variation of genres than in the Brutan years. Here it should be noted that “genre” is a contested term, at times supplanted by “text type” or “text form.” Woolf identifies a “classificatory anxiety” that occurred in late Tudor literature culture, when historiographical genres diversified and defied traditional classifications (“From Hystories” 60). In some ways, this anxiety is maintained to this day. Stephen Orgel clearly articulates the assumptions behind the usage of the term “genre,” noting that it problematically implies a

shared understanding of both textual features and the value of given genres. Yet book historians embrace the term “genre,” often clarifying the term’s malleability and contextual dependency, as genres are socially and culturally constructed and defined within diverse textual and historical landscapes (Kewes, “History” 5). For these reasons, the term “genre” is used within this thesis.

The diversification years saw not just a diverse range of genres, but an increased number of texts. There were almost twenty ESTC entries for Leir variants each decade, an increase from the first stage which saw fourteen. The 1630s was the most prolific decade, totalling twenty-eight impressions. The diversification years saw greater variety in the ways that texts engaged with the Leir story, with the king represented both as a historical and contested figure, and as a popular character. Traditional historiographies no longer dominated, representing approximately a quarter of impressions, totalling twenty-one in all (inclusive of Galfridian and non-Galfridian variants). Geographical works such as topographicals, atlases, and surveys dominated. These works often combined geography and history, and totalled over thirty percent or twenty-four impressions during this time. This period also saw the emergence of popular forms of the story, such as plays and ballads, representing almost a fifth of works, or thirteen impressions. Popular works often removed the Leir story from its historical chronology, or genealogy, retelling it as a stand-alone story. This is unique to these genres. It presents a novel way of viewing any element of history, removed from its chronology, and thus more open to adaptation and reinvention. Many of the popular retellings retained the word “history” in their title, and were received by their audiences as history, but allowed themselves more liberties in retelling the story. This diversification of genres reflected a British book trade that was benefitting from two changes: increasing specialisation, variety and a growth in popular literature; as well as greater interest

in reading and increased literacies amongst all levels of society (Allington et al. 90; Barnard et al. 19; Feather 236-237; Hellinga 214).

The final period of variants, from 1640 to 1710, standing in contrast to the prolific and varied period before it, saw a comparable stagnation in publication of variants. There were seven ESTC entries for Leir variants on average each decade, less than half the number of the Brutan period of 1557 to 1599 and roughly a third of the diversification period from 1600 to 1639. The impact of the Interregnum (1649-1660) should be considered here, but not suggested as cause. The Interregnum has been called “a period not just of crisis but of innovation” for the book trade (Barnard, “Introduction” 22). Indeed, it has been suggested that the lapse in the Licensing Act, occurring in the lead up to the Interregnum (1641) as a result of increasing conflict between Charles I and Parliament, saw “the floodgates opened enough to give the English a taste of what a more or less free market in print might look like” (Brewer, “Interregnum” 137). Yet publication of Leir variants, which decreased sharply in number, and returned largely to traditional historiography, does not appear to have been heightened by the flourishing “free market” nor by Interregnum “innovation.”

When averaging across this period of stagnation, popular variants dominated, yet there is some comparability between their number and that of historiographies, and geographical works. This is clarified when looking more closely at the time frame. The first half of this period, 1640-1679, encompassing the Interregnum and the lapse in the Licensing Act, saw almost eighty percent of variants return to factual forms of historical engagement with Leir, with over two-thirds of the impressions historiographies and geographicals. The second half of this period of stagnation foreshadowed a later change. From 1680 to 1710, popular works, inclusive of those that commented on popular literature, dominated. Specifically, two-thirds of all impressions during this time engaged with the story through the lens of Shakespeare’s play. In 1702, Tate famously rewrote Shakespeare’s *King Lear*. Gerard

Langbaine catalogued plays, recognising Shakespeare's work as a worthy "original" (first published 1688). Edward Bysshe lauded the work of Shakespeare and others in *The Art of English Poetry*, first published in 1708, and Nicholas Rowe edited Shakespeare's works for the first time in 1709. Thus, this period of comparable stagnation was a crucial moment of transition for Leir variants as it additionally signalled a regeneration. At this time, variants of the Leir story largely returned to traditional historiography, before the emergence of a specific kind of variant, one which engaged not with the historical story but with Shakespeare's version of the same. Though many suggest Shakespeare's rise to cultural icon began in the eighteenth century, this thesis tracks the regeneration of the Leir story from a national history to a Shakespearean creation—from palimpsest to metonym—within the latter part of the stagnation years, 1680-1710. This is perhaps unsurprising, with Enlightenment intellectuals' (1650 to 1800) valorisation of their Bard well documented (Dobson; Lynch) and the impact of the Exclusion Crisis (1678-1682), as noted by Emma Depledge, "the watershed moment in [Shakespeare's] afterlife" (1). This transition in Leir variants is later discussed in detail. It additionally foreshadowed what was to follow in the treatment of Leir variants.

Though outside the parameters of this study, a consideration of the period up to the mid-century, 1750, reveals a new edition of Shakespeare's *Works* virtually each decade (Pope in the 1720s, Theobald in the 1730s, and both Hanmer and Warburton in the 1740s). A great number of texts at this time showcased Shakespeare and his play, rather than Leir and his story. There was interest in Shakespeare as an author and specifically in the manner of his excellence. The contents of John Dennis's grandly titled 1712 work *The Genius and Writings of Shakespear* hardly require further clarification. Additionally, the introduction and proliferation of periodicals at this time (Brewer, "Partisan" 177-185) saw frequent publications highlighting sections of Shakespeare's work held to be exemplary, with titles such as *The Spectator*, *The Censor*, *The Plain Dealer*, *Gentleman's Magazine*, *The Prompter*,

The Players, and *Twickenham Hotch-Potch* all featuring sections of Shakespeare's work in the years 1710 to 1750. Thus, the final stage of variant collation within this study, 1640 to 1710, though a period of relative stagnation for Leir variants, shows the nascent spark of a shift that saw Leir's story move from a contested but shared history to one man's story—Shakespeare's. This shift is evident in the three hundred years of scholarship that followed. Traditional ways of addressing the variants of the Leir story, the Q/F debate, source studies, and adaptation studies, are elucidated through this contextualisation. Extending this study beyond its current chronological scope would offer future potential to comment specifically on this shift.

Viewing the 205 identified variants in a diachronic manner highlights their relationship to the historical era in which they were printed. Looking at the variants as synchronic, existing in interrelationship within this complex and diverse historical era, highlights both extraordinary variety and strong consistency across the variants themselves. Clearly, the greatest consistency is that all, even those that seek to contest or reshape it, “echo” elements of the Galfridian “original.” The greatest diversity is in genre, with these frequently declared in titles and including chorographical descriptions (Camden, 1610), chronographicals (Slayter, 1630), chronicles (Stow, 1565), chronologies (Anonymous 4, 1635), explanations of coats of arms (Legh, 1562), moral tales (Higgins, 1574), legal works (Page, 1657), historical maps (Warner, 1586), treatises (Bridges, 1587), surveys (Carew, 1602), topographicals (Speed 1612), ballads (Johnson, 1620), plays (Anonymous 2, 1605), tragedies (Shakespeare, *FI* 1623), histories (Milton, 1670), apologies (J.A., 1634), defences (Leslie, 1569), memorials (Taylor, 1622), and genealogies (Anonymous 1, 1560; Harry, 1604). The hypernym that most accurately describes the majority of these genres is “historical.” The majority of the works, regardless of genre or treatment of the story, include as part of their title reference to themselves as part history, chronicle, or annals. This

nomenclature is indicative of content, with many genres, such as moral and topographical works, inclusive of a historical focus. Thus, though diverse in genre, they were unified in their presentation of history. Here, links can likely be seen to Leir as an established part of English history.

Within the identified variants, the retelling of the Leir story at times comprised the entirety of the text, as with the plays and ballads, or represented just one section of a larger work, such as when Leir's story is contextualised within the history of the Brutan line. These sections could be lengthy chapters, rich with nuance and detail on the king. Percy Enderbie's 1661 variant provides an exemplar:

of a most Noble and Heroick mind, as being questionlesse bred under the Discipline of those Philofophers which his Father had brough from *Athens*, besides a natural Propenfion of his own to moral Vertue; infomuch that his Kingdom flourished in great Peace and abundance of Wealth. (24)

Alternatively, sections of texts that addressed the story could be mere words that relied on prior knowledge of Leir's story as a shared national history, without fully engaging with his story. This concision is seen most frequently in geographies and topographicals aligning Leir's story with that of Leicester, the town he founded and where he and Cordeilla were buried (Camden *Britain*, 1610; Drayton, 1612; Grafton, 1569). Many of the variants included additional paratextual elements, with dedications and epistles common. The rich array of woodcuts and portraiture is notable. This paratextual element alone would be a fascinating area for future study. Both the Anonymous *A True Chronologi of all the Kings of England from Brute* (see figs. 3.1 and 3.2 below), in 1635, and Edward Mitchel's *A Brief Survey of all the Reigns of the Several Kings of this Isle*, in 1674, chose to give the history of the Brutan Kings through their images, and not a recount of their exploits.



Fig. 3.1 Anonymous 4 *True Chronologi* (Fo. 1) Fig. 3.2 Anonymous 4 *True Chronologi* (Fo. 1)

Portrait of Leir

Portrait of Cordeilla

The majority of the titles existed in multiple forms (abridgements, translations, revisions) and impressions, with some of the histories and genealogies updated and reissued for successive kings and queens. Although the notion of a distinct work or title is problematic due to early modern printing practices and disguises variations within identified titles, it could be suggested that there were just over fifty titles in total, with these titles representing all their aforementioned recensions, abridgements, translations, and revisions. This number is a considerable reduction from the initial 205 impressions, but not necessarily surprising in light of early modern printing practices. Stationers had a propensity to reprint older works that had initially sold well in order to offset risks associated with publication (Allington et al. 5). Additionally, authors frequently updated, summarised, and extended their own works. Those identified variants that exist in multiple impressions bear the names of well-known printers, editors, and/or authors: twenty-five impressions bear the name of John Stow between 1565 and 1632; twenty-four in the name of William Camden between 1586 and 1710; and twenty-one in the name of John Speed between 1612 and 1676. Camden's longevity is particularly noteworthy, with *Britannia* first published in Latin in 1586 and last published in English almost two centuries later. The vast majority of the works are published

in the vernacular, with Latin works just six percent of the overall number. The majority of the Latin works were historiographies, and the remainder topographicals. This is consistent with an English book trade that included an earlier acceptance of works in the vernacular and that thus produced a higher proportion of vernacular works than other countries (Barnard, “Introduction” 1 and 6).

Though most frequently told by an omniscient narrator, when told at length, the story was largely Leir’s story to tell. Cordeilla at times was narrator and even chief protagonist. All such works privileging Cordeilla notably first appeared when Queen Elizabeth I held the throne (Carew, 1602; Higgins, 1574; Leslie, 1569; Spenser, 1590). On one occasion, the Leir story was told sympathetically from the perspective of the Duke of Cornwall (Carew, 1602). Differences in characterisation are most common, though Leir’s representation is largely positive. His age is consistently noted, as is that his rule had been noble, lengthy, peaceful, and profitable for the country (Anonymous 3, 1620; Fabyan, 1559; Grafton, 1569; Heywood, 1641; Spenser, 1590). His founding of Leicester and the building of a temple to Janus, where both he and Cordeilla were later buried, are often celebrated in historiographies and topographicals (Grafton, 1569; Stow 1665). At times, Leir is less positively represented: a vain king (Harvey, 1593), a madman (Shakespeare, *QI* 1608 and *FI* 1623), and a foolish old man (Anon 2, 1605; Fabyan, 1559; Higgins, 1574). Cordeilla is more consistently represented positively, almost faultless across all identified variants. At times, she is described primarily as young (Taylor, 1622), devout (Anon 2, 1605), and silent (Harvey 1593; Shakespeare, *QI* 1608 and *FI* 1623), or alternatively as a warrior queen (Carew, 1602; Holinshed, 1577). Cordeilla is most frequently wise (Lanquet, 1559; Fabyan, 1559; Grafton, 1569; Higgins, 1574; Legh, 1562; Spenser, 1590; Stow 1665). She is at times chosen to be Queen for her wisdom alone, circumventing many elements of the Galfridian history (Grafton, 1569; Stow, 1565).

Consistently, at the heart of all the variants is the question of succession, raised due to Leir's lack of male heirs and addressed through the division of the kingdom. In Galfridian tradition, the love test is key, designed to allow the aged King to identify how best to divide his kingdom, with the assumption that there would always be three parts for his three daughters. Many of the variants echo this, though the love test does not feature in all (Grafton, 1569; Harry, 1604; Stow, 1565). At times, the Kingdom is simply given to the wise Cordeilla, instead of Leir's grandsons, his "natural" heirs, because of the "rebellious and undutiful" (Page, 1657, 62) behaviour and "ingratitude" (J.A., 1634, 53) of his older daughters (see: Fabyan, 1559; Anonymous 1, 1560; Taylor 1622; J. A., 1634). The love test, though a frequent motif, is not always related to the division of the kingdom but presented simply as the whim of an old King, which unintentionally leads to Cordeilla's disinheritance and Leir's downfall (Heywood 1641; Spenser, 1590). Leir's fall from status is an inevitable element of all variants, though the banished Cordeilla never suffers the same level of indignities as Leir. This classic reversal is Leir's alone. Interestingly, his return to grace is often encloded, with Cordeilla frequently acting to restore Leir's status through his attire, sending both robes and means before welcoming him, restored, to the French court (Anonymous 2, 1605; Enderbie 1661; Shakespeare, *Q1* 1608 and *FI* 1623; Tate, 1681; Warner, 1586). Though not always, the Leir story most frequently ends, as in the Galfridian history, with triumph before tragedy. Cordeilla and the French army reclaim the throne for Leir, who rules briefly before Cordeilla succeeds. In time, Cordeilla is challenged and successfully usurped by her nephews, Marganus and Cunedagius, who hold her prisoner. For differing reasons and with differing means, it is here that she takes her life. The Leir story is more frequently told as just one part of the Brutan line rather than as an elided story. Thus, it is not that Leir's story ends, but that the Brutan line continues.

Identifying 205 impressions of Leir variants printed in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710 demonstrates the extraordinary number and diversity of variants of the Leir story coexisting within a palimpsest of cognate texts. Distribution patterns in diachronic analysis revealed three periods of differing engagement with the story within this. The first, 1557 to 1599, saw works that were focused on the Brutan King Leir through traditional historiography, potentially fuelled by a historiography debate that contested the received, Galfridian version. The second, 1600 to 1639, saw a prolific number of publications that included the diversification of genres. At this time, the Leir story was then a site of exploration and experiment. The final period, 1640 to 1710, was a time of comparable stagnation that foreshadowed a revival and regeneration of the story that centred on Shakespeare and his retelling, instead of the Leir story itself. A synchronic analysis of the interrelationship among the variants reveals strong consistencies but additionally, clear and repeated points of divergence.

3.3 Selection of Variants for Collation

3.3.1 Criteria One: Retelling

Due to the unexpectedly high number of variants identified, and the need to facilitate a detailed analysis that would support more substantial findings than the contextualisation provided previously, further criteria were applied to select variants for historical collation (see Appendix 2 for a tabular representation of these delineations). As has been noted, whilst many of the variants engage with the Leir story in detail, others do not. Thus, those works that refer briefly to the story, without including a detailed or nuanced retelling, were not collated. Focusing specifically on “retellings” of the story, as opposed to “mentions” of the

King, excludes over a quarter of the initially identified variants (63 of the 205). The removed works are largely of two types. Geographies/topographicals and some historiographies largely recounted elements of the Leir story in relation to Leir's founding of Leicester or as part of the chronology or genealogy of the Brutans, without engaging fully with the story. These works, though popular throughout, existed mainly in the first half of the given time frame. Excluding these removes many well-known works, such as Camden's *Britannia* (with fourteen impressions during this time), Speed's *Theatre* (eleven impressions), and Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* (three impressions). The "retelling" criteria additionally removes a number of works that engaged directly with Shakespeare's *King Lear*, without retelling the story. These works begin to appear towards the end of the stipulated time period and include those that specifically honoured Shakespeare, such as Gildon's 1710 *The Works of Mr William Shakespeare*, and those which celebrated the best in poetry, such as Bysshe's 1710 *The Art of English Poetry*. What remains, however, are 142 Leir variants that retold the story in varying and varied detail, allowing a more detailed collation.

3.3.2 Criteria Two: Language

With the aim of heightening the potential for detailed synthesis in collation, the second criteria applied was that the retelling needed to be printed in English. The exclusion of works in Latin aligns with the British book trade, though not its book culture. As previously mentioned, the British book trade was an anomaly, as its insular nature allowed the printing of works in the vernacular to flourish and encompass the large majority of publications, when other countries were focused on Latin works (Barnard, "Introduction" 1; Feather 232-233; Hellinga 216). These printing practices did not marry with reading practices. The "Latin Trade," so named by contemporaries, was a key element of importation within the British

book trade, and subsequently Latin works appeared frequently in book sales (Feather 232-233; Hellinga 214).

Reflective of the fact that Latin was still the language of “scholarly publishing” and the “learned elite” at the turn of the seventeenth century (Feather 232-233), works in Latin that contained the Leir story were largely historiographies and topographical/geographies. A portion of these had already been excluded through the last criteria, as they do not retell the story. Of those variants identified as retelling the Leir story, just eight impressions, inclusive of two titles, were printed in Latin, reducing the number considered to 134. The works of two authors, however, are of note. Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britannia*, the original variant of the Leir story, was removed from the study. This is a notable exclusion, because Galfridian historiography echoes in all subsequent retellings. The second author was Matthew Paris, though the authorship is more communal than the designation implies. His works *Historia Major* and *Flores Historiarum* are thirteenth-century abridgements of Monmouth’s history (Perrett 38-39). Paris’s works were well-known to early modern historiographers, such as Speed and Grafton, who referenced them throughout their own works.

3.3.3 Criteria Three: Substantive Works

The final criteria allows the collation to focus purely on substantive retellings. Renowned bibliographer, Walter Wilson Greg, clarifies this term when addressing “the editorial problem in Shakespeare” in his often-referenced 1954 work. Greg asserts that, without an authorial manuscript, editors must select the most substantive version of a work to use as copy-text (xiii) in order to represent, as closely as possible, the author’s fair papers or intended text (x and xii). Greg notes there is some ambiguity in the discrimination between

substantive and derivative texts and/or passages within them (xiv and 208-209), and defines “substantive” and “derivative” thus:

“substantive” editions, namely those not derived as to essential character from any other extant edition, and “derivative” editions, namely those derived, whether immediately or not and with or without minor intentional modifications, from some other extant edition. (xiii)

John Jowett’s 2019 definition of substantive texts speaks to the ambiguity that Greg notes in distinguishing between the two types of text, particularly with regard to the “essential character” of a text. Jowett notes that a substantive text should be “based wholly or partly on a manuscript of independent authority” (215). He then explores the finite nature of the modifying terms “wholly” and “partly” and suggests the inclusion of a single substantive passage, or “light modification” throughout, is significant enough to warrant the designation of substantive.

Bibliographic studies traditionally apply the terms “substantive” and “derivative” in relation to complete texts. To align with this study’s singular concentration on the Leir story, the terms “substantive” and “derivative” have been refocused, moving away from a consideration of the entirety of the text and focusing only on those parts of the text that retell the Leir story itself. Should the story exist as merely one component of a larger work, this study has determined its substantive or derivative nature, irrespective of the remainder of the work. For example, although Speed’s 1627 *England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged* may in bibliographic terms be considered a substantive text, the presentation of the story is derivative of his earlier work (*The Theatre*, 1612), and thus for the purposes of this study the work is considered derivative. Additionally, the designated time frame is a consideration in this study’s definition of “substantive.” Works that may broadly be

considered derivative of those printed before 1557 are considered substantive if they are the first impression of such within the delineated time-frame.

Focusing on substantive retellings within the collation has benefits that are both self-evident and opaque. Clearly, as derivative retellings repeat substantive versions, they offer little insight in a collation of variants. Additionally, focusing on substantive retellings nullifies the potential for quantitative discrepancies posed by exceptions within the ESTC numbering system. As stated earlier, ESTC records typically correlate with a single impression of a work. There are three exceptions to this, which, when applied, are stated within the record itself (O'Brien). The ESTC is an essential tool for many scholars, yet critiques of this digital platform have previously been noted and were experienced in the identification of variants for this study. A lack of consistency and transparency in ESTC entries impacted on my capacity to understand the effect of exceptions in cataloguing within the identified retellings, and had the potential to undermine a quantitative summation and analysis of the number of impressions identified. Nonetheless, in the identification of variants for collation, I proceeded on the maxim that ESTC entries typically represent single impressions (O'Brien), and that entries should disclose exceptions to such, given that any anomalies would be addressed through the focus on substantive works: "Given the limitations and pitfalls of quantitative analysis in the study of literature, my stance is not to avoid it but to try to proceed with the necessary circumspection and methodological awareness" (Erne, *Book Trade* 27).

Understanding the implications of ESTC anomalies on the identification of variants was, however, a confounding undertaking, and may form a focus for the future study of variants. At times, ESTC records explicitly noted that the entry did not represent a separate impression, such as F2 *King Lear*, where seven of the identified eight 1632 ESTC records indicate that they refer to imprint variants, with the final 1632 ESTC record for F2 (ESTC

Citation Number S95179) failing to do so. Whether this is because the last record indicates an additional impression or an imperfect record is impossible to identify without access to the remediated work. Additionally, some ESTC records do state that they identify collections, such as Spenser's 1611 *Faerie Queen* (ESTC Citation Number S123523). However, when they do so, the record lists separate STC numbers for each part of the collection, except *Faerie Queen*, which would additionally be supplied if the collection did in fact represent an exception to the numbering system. There are multiple occasions where there are two apparently identical records, with identical title pages. On these occasions, evidence within the entry is often insufficient to demonstrate that they represent separate impressions (which can be made apparent only through visual confirmation) such as Stow's *Chronicles* of 1566 (ESTC Citations Numbers S124615 and S114855). In short, inconsistencies and opacity within ESTC records impacted on my potential to definitively identify all individual impressions of Leir variants. However, focusing on substantive variants circumvents the need to interrogate ESTC records and processes, and allows the data collected and the variants collated to be valid, as each digitised variant has been visually confirmed as a substantive retelling of the Leir story. Taken in their totality, the application of the above criteria includes, for collation, twenty-six substantive retellings (see Appendix 3 for full details of selected variants). These variants represent nuanced retellings of the Leir story as found in early modern works, printed in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710, and as such are representative of the palimpsest under study.

3.4 Synopsis: Variants Selected for Collation

This chapter initially identified texts within the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story by using a clarified set of search parameters. Through the use of digital

scholarship, 205 impressions of works printed in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710 were identified. Given the limited number of variants addressed by prior scholarship, this number was unexpected, as was their diversity.

A brief, contextualising, diachronic, and synchronic exploration of the 205 identified variants further served to clarify the early modern palimpsest of Leir stories. Chronological print distribution patterns revealed three eras, which have been named to reflect their engagement with the Leir story. The Brutan years, 1557 to 1599, focused on historiographical forms of the Leir story. The diversification years, 1600 to 1639, were marked by the existence of the Leir story in a diversity of genres. Finally, the stagnation years, 1640 to 1710, saw a substantial reduction in the frequency of variants and foreshadowed the subsequent rise to prominence of Shakespearean variants.

Given the number of variants initially identified, and in order to answer the research question in appropriate depth, a set of criteria was applied in order to select variants for collation: that being substantive retellings of the story printed in English, in the British Isles, between 1557 and 1710. These criteria led to the selection of twenty-six variants for collation, representing a tightly delineated sub-set which is representative of the broader early modern palimpsest of Leir stories. This set of variants maintains the chronological distribution pattern noted in the initially identified variants, representing three key stages of engagement. The Brutan years include eleven substantive retellings, an average of more than two per decade. The diversification years include nine substantives, with an average of over two per decade. Finally, there were six produced during the stagnation years, with an average of less than one substantive retelling per decade. One of these was explicitly constructed as a variant of Shakespeare's work, as opposed to a variant of the Leir story.

The substantive retellings of the Leir story, printed in English in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710, thus align with the fuller list of identified variants and capture a time

which first saw sustained, then diversified, then declining, interest in the Leir story. The collations within the following chapters explore these variants in detail in order to understand the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story by answering the research question: What does a historical collation of early modern variants of the Leir story reveal in relation to their nature as a palimpsest, including diachronic and synchronic trends and influences?

To the Reader:

In Chapter 4, I collate the Brutan variants, or the substantive retellings of the Leir story printed in the British Isles between 1557 and 1599. This collation reveals surprising levels of consistency and conservatism. It demonstrates that retellings of the Leir story are then one part of a broader national history—nation defining and affirming historiography. It also reveals clear diachronic patterns, engagement with the historical revolution and historiography debate, and strong contemporaneous analogies to Queen Elizabeth I.

Whilst emphatically demonstrating the historicity of Leir's story, discrepancies in omissions and extensions pose several questions which are answered within this chapter: Why do authors of Brutan years variants repeatedly justify the historicity of their own works? How does the role of France within the retelling silence the historiography debate? What connects Elizabeth, Boudicca, and Cordeilla? And, why did Leir have favourites?

Brutan Years Variants		
Date	Author	Title
1559	Fabyan, Robert	<i>The Chronicle of Fabian</i>
1560?	Anonymous	<i>To the Reader, Behold</i>
1562	Legh, Gerard	<i>The Accedens of Armory</i>
1565	Stow, John	<i>A Summary of English Chronicles</i>
1569	Grafton, Richard	<i>A Chronicle at Large</i>
1574	Higgins, John	<i>The Mirror for Magistrates</i>
1577	Holinshed, Raphael	<i>The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland</i>
1586	Warner, William	<i>Albion's England</i>
1587	Higgins, John	<i>The Mirror for Magistrates</i>
1590	Spenser, Edmund	<i>The Faerie Queen</i>
1593	Harvey, Richard	<i>Philadelphus, or A Defence of Brutes</i>

Fig. 4.1. Brutan Years Variants

Chapter 4: A Collation of the Brutan Years Variants 1557-1599

The first set of variants collated are from the Brutan years (1557-1599), with the following collation revealing consistency and conservatism through retellings. The Brutan years were previously delineated and named as such as their chief commonality was engagement with the Leir story through traditional historiography recounting the Brutan line of kings. Indeed, all but two of the eleven variants include the Leir story as part of the chronological history of the Brutan monarchs, though four of the remaining nine include an abridged line. The Brutan years saw higher engagement with the Leir story than did the diversification years or the stagnation years, with a total of eleven substantive retellings or more than two each decade. The diversification years saw approximately two substantive retellings each decade, with the period of stagnation and regeneration including less than one substantive retelling each decade.

Within the Brutan years, the printing of variants was not evenly distributed but grouped around two times, demonstrating them to be consistent with the larger book trade. Five of the eleven retellings were printed in the first ten years of Elizabeth I's reign (1558-1568). It was common to see texts printed upon the accession of a new monarch that both celebrated and legitimised her/his right to succeed, by demonstrating that the monarch's lineage derived from the nation's founding royal line. This was especially true during the Tudor years, which saw this lineage strategically deriving from Brutan kings, whom traditional historiography saw as the founders of Britain in pre-history (Burrow; Maccoll; Robinson-Self). Elizabeth, more than the Tudors before her, needed to demonstrate the legitimacy of rule. Lingering questions of illegitimacy surrounded Elizabeth (Collinson). More insidiously, Elizabeth's right to rule was challenged because she was a woman, with a woman's capacity to rule openly debated (Collinson). Therefore, Elizabeth's accession, and

the desire to legitimise the new queen, increased publication of variants containing the Brutan line and within them retellings of the Leir story. This desire was sustained throughout Elizabeth's reign. The second grouping of variants, four of the eleven, bridge from 1586 to 1593 and likewise serve to legitimise the queen. They also align with book history, as the 1580s and 1590s saw a dramatic burst in literary activity that utilised history in more varied genres, including plays, poetry, ballads, almanacs, and prose (Archer 214; Burrow 21, 23-4; Woolf, *Reading History*). Brutan variants reflect this literary activity, though they fail to demonstrate generic diversity.

As demonstrated in Chapter 3, the substantive retellings do not stand alone within the Leir palimpsest. The majority co-existed with shadows of themselves: translations, abridgements, extensions, earlier works, and later derivatives. Extending and updating a work, a common practice in manuscript production, had transferred to print, with stationers and authors alike updating, correcting, abridging, and extending pre-existing works, either their own, or those of others (Kewes et al.; Woolf, *Reading History*). This continued engagement with a work was both a shrewd printing practice and indicative of the earlier work's success. Apart from two of the eleven Brutan variants (Anon and Harvey), all exist in additional recensions. John Higgins's *Mirror for Magistrates* is the only work to have two substantive retellings of the Leir story within this time frame. A quarter of the variants were seen in prior works (Fabyan, Grafton, and Higgins²). Three-quarters were seen in later works (Fabyan, Legh, Stow, Grafton, Higgins, Holinshed, Warner, and Spenser). An additional quarter were included in collections (Higgins, Holinshed, and Spenser). Most commonly, these texts were specifically abridgements or extensions of the variant included in this study (Fabyan, Stow, Grafton, Higgins, Holinshed, and Warner). The overall number of recensions

² Within collations, when referenced in this way, variants are listed in chronological, as opposed to the more standard alphabetical order, though on this occasion the two are compatible. This is done in order to highlight diachronic analysis.

of Brutan variants is indicative of the success of prior works within the book trade and indicative of the popularity of Brutan historiography, of which the Leir story was one part.

Trends within recensions are evident. Within the Chronicle tradition, book historians track a trend of first abridgements, then extensions within the Brutan years, with a “culture of the summary chronicle in the 1560s” (Hiatt 54-55), and the chronicle then becoming progressively more complex and lengthier by the end of the century (Woolf, “From Hystories” 60). Trends such as these are usually most apparent when viewed teleologically, when the actuality frequently sees a fluctuation and interspersion of styles. Yet the four Brutan historiographies specifically noted as chronicles (Fabyan, Stow, Grafton, and Holinshed) marry well with the aforementioned movement from summary to complex chronicles: Robert Fabyan’s 1559 multi-volume *Chronicle* was a “concordaunce” or summary of histories of a judicious 500 pages; John Stow’s 1565 *Summarie* was of comparable size; Richard Grafton’s 1569 *A Chronicle at Large*, which had both *An Abridgement* and *A Manuell* printed prior and post, is an impressive 1400 pages; and the final chronicle, Raphael Holinshed’s, was a weighty tome of approximately 3000 pages. Here, Brutan variants align with the book trade.

Notably, within these texts, though they vary in total length, the majority of the variants (seven of the eleven) privilege the Leir story, foregrounding it more than others within the Brutan line. They do so in a number of ways, such as inclusions and length, as well as paratextual elements. Fabyan, Grafton, Holinshed, and Spenser include mention of the entire Brutan line, but provide greater elaboration for Leir and/or Cordeilla than many of the other monarchs. Higgins (1574 and 1587), Gerard Legh, and William Warner offer an abridged version of the Brutan line, failing to discuss all monarchs, yet selecting to recount the Leir story in detail. Higgins’s works recount the tale twice, once from the perspective of Cordeilla and once from that of her usurping nephews. The reason for this privileging is

difficult to ascertain, though potentially linked to what was then seen as the value of history—its potential to offer contemporary analogies, be they topical or moral. Within the Leir story, the most consistent analogue is between Elizabeth and Cordeilla. Whilst Elizabeth's sister, Queen Mary I, was the first official queen regnant in English history, Elizabeth was the first queen regnant to rule without the benefit of a husband both upon her accession and for the length of her reign. While there were three queen regnants in Galfridian or British pre-history, Cordeilla was the first to reign without the assistance of a husband. The associations between Elizabeth and the differing portrayals of Cordeilla are later discussed, and likely provide motivation for the privileging of the Leir story within variants.

One privileging of the Leir story, Holinshed's, is of particular note here. As a work written and published for the first time in the Brutan years, it is significant that Leir's history is more detailed than many others and that Cordeilla's story is more illustrated. All of Holinshed's Brutan kings include a portrait, while few contain an additional woodcut. These rare additional woodcuts, usually battle scenes, consistently represent the more sensational and nationalistic elements of the monarch's reign. They are consistently public, heroic, nationally significant, historical events. Cordeilla's second woodcut shows the moment of her suicide, with Cordeilla pictured alone on a luxurious bed, wearing a crown, and in despair (see figs. 4.2 and 4.3 below). It is unique—uniquely personal and uniquely domestic. The vulnerability of the queen in her bedchamber stands in contradiction, in Holinshed's woodcuts, to her war-like portrait and the text that comments on her "manly courage" (20). The duality of the images is sustained in the text, which indicates that this queen of manly courage can only sustain her rule while her husband is alive. These dual, even competing, representations of Cordeilla act as topical analogy to Queen Elizabeth. When Elizabeth ascended to the throne, she:

distinguish[ed] between her body natural as an individual woman and her body politic as representative of the state and holding both as subject only to divine, not human, authority. (Stump and Felch 75)

This dual body trope was evident throughout her reign, with the most well-known occurrence its use in Elizabeth's 1588 address to the troops in Tilbury. The work of Carole Levin explores the repeated correlations made between Boudicca and Elizabeth during Elizabeth's reign. Levin draws attention to duality in representations of both queens: "Both Queen Elizabeth and Boudicca were at various points heralded for their masculine nature, ... Yet both were clearly feminine in many of their reputed self-presentations" (Levin 59). While the Holinshed variant privileges the Leir story through the inclusion of two woodcuts of Cordeilla, it also aligns with national and royal sentiment through its visual reminder of the dual body trope. Elizabeth and Cordeilla were both women and queens, both domestic and public, both fragile and warriors.



Fig. 4.2. Holinshed's *Chronicle* (20)

First image of Cordeilla.



Fig. 4.3. Holinshed's *Chronicle* (20)

Second image of Cordeilla.

4.1 Authors of the Brutan Years Variants

The authors of all but one of the variants are clearly identified. This aligns with the role of the author in the book trade of the time, though it does so pre-emptively. Daniel R. Woolf has suggested that by the 1590s “the voice that told the history ... was increasingly linked to an identifiable or even well-known personality” (“From Hystories” 48). From 1560 onwards, all Brutan years retellings of the Leir story indicate an author. This is some thirty years earlier than the book trade as a whole. Elizabethan history writing was traditionally a collective or collaborative endeavour (Gillespie 3), yet only three of the eleven variants could be designated as such (Fabyan, Higgins, and Holinshed). Even then, the work was often presented as, or came to be known as, that of a single author. One of the anecdotes that humanises early modern historiographers is regarding John Stow, a highly respected historiographer in his own right, who contributed to Holinshed’s *Chronicle* and “In his grumpy old age ... expressed his resentment at the way Holinshed’s name had come to dominate it” (Patterson 3).

In the main, each of the authors was well-known and well-respected, often both in the book trade and civic affairs. Fabyan (the only included author whose variant is printed posthumously), Grafton, Legh, and Spenser held a civil office, or maintained strong connections with court (Day; Ferguson; Hadfield; McLaren; Moll 375). Notably, self-promoting Spenser, in his later work *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, recounts for his readers how he had been asked to read a portion of *Faerie Queen* to the Queen herself. Spenser notes that his work won her approval, a gentle boast made demonstrably true in the form of a lifetime pension granted to Spenser by Elizabeth in 1591 (Hadfield). The remaining authors also held positions of respect. Harvey and Higgins were ministers (Capp, “Harvey”; Schwyzer), and Stow and Warner were openly lauded by their peers for their work (Beer;

Craik). Thus, not only were works in the Brutan years authored, providing a sense of transparency and authority, they were authored by recognisable and respected public figures, giving credence to the work and the history it retold.

More than just identified, each of the ten named authors is explicitly present within the text. Four of the ten authors (Fabyan, Holinshed, Warner, and Harvey) are named within the title of the work, a choice made by the stationer and not by the author. Over half the variants contain a signed dedication (Legh, Stow, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, Warner, Higgins 1587, and Harvey). Though there is a clear modesty topos within prefatory material, the most marked self-fashioning of authors appears in direct addresses to the reader, which often call attention to authorial decisions, intentions, and expertise, and appear in ten of the eleven variants (Fabyan, Anon, Legh, Stow, Grafton, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, Warner, Higgins 1587, and Spenser). Take as example the evocative introduction to Holinshed's 1577 address to the reader in which he not only humbly reinforces his capacity to produce a weighty chronicle, but frames the act of doing so as a significant task:

It is dangerous (gētle Reader) to range in ſo large a field as I haue here vndertaken, vvhile ſo many ſundry men in diuers things may be able to controll mee, and many excellent vvittes of our countrey (as vvell or better occupied I hope) are able herein to ſurpaſſe me: but ſeeing the beſte able do ſeeme to neglect it, let me (though leaſt able) craue pardon to put thē in minde My labour may ſhevve maine vtter moſt good vvill. (iiiijr)

While it was a common practice to have dedications and addresses to the reader in works of this time, that they are prevalent to this degree within the variants reinforces the sense of a strong authorial voice in every sense of the word—again legitimising the work and thus the history it contained.

4.2 Historiography and the Brutan Years Variants

The start of the Brutan years marks a turning point for print histories. From the mid-sixteenth century, genres that relied on the medieval chronicle, both for content and function, flourished: “They soon proved better able to satisfy public interest in history, with the result that the chronicle itself was soon made redundant” (Woolf *Reading History*, 26). Daniel R. Woolf notes that the chronicle and its consistent functions “dissolved” (*Reading History* 26) into a range of genres reflecting the chronicle’s five functions: historical, commemorative, informative, communicative, or entertaining genres. Variants of the Leir story only partially reflect this change. The Brutan years saw a flourishing of interest in the story, but failed to provide diversity in generic form. This diversity is seen within the diversification years discussed in subsequent chapters. Its omission from the Brutan years aligns with their consistency and conservatism, and reflects their role in glorifying the monarch and the nation.

Within the Brutan years, retellings of the Leir story reflect four clusters of genres. The first three reflect the chronicle’s historical function: traditional historiographies, topographicals, and specialist engagements (though the anonymous genealogy is also commemorative in function). The final group of variants recount the story in historical or moral verse (Higgins, 1574, Higgins 1587, and Spenser). Verse such as this bridges two of the chronicle’s functions: historical and entertaining. Viewed within the context of diversification variants, these retellings more closely align with its historical function, serving as they do to reinforce the historicity of the Leir story. Notably, no retellings fulfil the informative, communicative, or entertaining functions of history. Additionally, there are no popular retellings. This stands in contrast to the book trade and the diversification years.

Although Stow was an antiquarian, all traditional historiographies are designated “chronicles” by their title. Historiographies are the most represented genre, with four of the

eleven variants (Fabyan, Stow, Grafton, and Holinshed). Specialist (Anon, Legh, and Harvey) and moral verse (Higgins 1574, Higgins 1587, and Spenser) historical genres are additionally well-represented at three variants apiece. Warner's topographical is the only one of this genre published in the Brutan years to retell the story in sufficient depth to be included in this study. That there was limited variety in genres is notable, as here the Brutan variants fail to align with book history. Earlier, this chapter identified that, numerically, the Brutan variants clustered around two points of time, the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign, and the late 1580s and early 1590s. The first years of Elizabeth's reign are known for their reinvigoration of interest in chronicles (Woolf *Reading History* 47), and the variants echo this with three of the four historiographies, or chronicles, the only variants printed at this time. The later era, through the establishment of the English book industry, saw a burst in literary activity with more varied historical genres (Barnard et al.; Eliot and Rose; Woolf, *Reading History*). As previously noted, whilst the variants align numerically with this later burst in activity, they do not align with the variation in genre. It was not until twenty years after changes noted in book history, during the diversification years of 1600 to 1639, that retellings of the Leir story were present in truly varied generic form—not, that is, until Elizabeth left the throne and the Tudor line ended. During the Brutan years (an era that coincides with the reign of Elizabeth), works that included the Leir story were differentially constrained to more traditional and established forms of historiography, retold by respected authors in authoritative ways.

This generic constraint reflected a larger nation building agenda. Valorisation of national history was part of “the successful Tudor policy for establishing a distinctive English identity” (Richards 104). This policy was based on a need forged by the Tudor adoption of Protestantism, which saw England no longer diplomatically united with its neighbours by a shared faith—no longer all part of Christendom. Throughout her reign, Elizabeth was consistently at war, with division evident between England and all its neighbouring countries,

many of which saw her as a heretic. One Elizabethan response to this was the establishment of a specifically English identity:

The years after 1558 saw only an increasing emphasis on the quality of Englishness in many of the quasi-official polemics directed at Elizabeth's subjects. That identity had become, over time, an increasingly important signifier of the Elizabethan Protestant hegemony, a nascent national, "English" identity. (Richards 104)

Indeed, the first recorded use of the term "British Empire" was during the Brutan years in the work of one of Elizabeth's advisors, John Dee's 1577 *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the Arte of Navigation* (A2r). This nation building agenda is seen in the book trade, which saw a reinvigoration of interest in chronicles in the first years of Elizabeth's reign. It is seen specifically in the Brutan variants, all of which are historiographies that recorded, glorified, and reinforced the historical origins of the English nation and the monarch who governed it. This nation building agenda is seen in the comparatively high number of variants published at this time and the "authority" of the works. It is shown in their consistency (as is later demonstrated), all reinforcing one, shared, established history. Finally, it is seen in their conservatism, with Brutan variants more representative of traditional forms of historiography, and slow to show the impact of the "historical revolution" and "historiography debate" (later discussed). Brutan variants served to reinforce received history, and thus the nation, and the monarch, that this history begot.

4.2.1 *The "Historical Revolution"*

Changes in historical methodology impacted on Brutan variants. In 1976, Fussner published his seminal text *The Historical Revolution: English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580-1640*. This work outlined a "historical revolution" in the writing of history at

this time, moving away from medieval history's providential approach, often seen in chronicles and annales, to the quasi-modern methodology of antiquarians or humanist historiography (Kamps; Woolf, "Erudition": Woolf, *Reading History*; Woolf, "From Histories"). Fussner's "historical revolution" is frequently critiqued as being teleologically neat (Kamps; Woolf, "Erudition": Woolf, *Reading History*), yet still relevant (Woolf, *The Idea* x-xi). Fussner identified altering trends in early modern historiography and these trends can be seen in the Brutan variants. However, though new methods were being established, the new and the old co-existed throughout the Brutan years, with the variants themselves more representative of the old approaches to historiography (the chronicle tradition) and inclusive of only one antiquarian (Stow) and one humanist (Spenser) work. This delayed impact of the "historical revolution" correlates with the variants' delays in utilisation of diverse historical genres, and could indicate the close alignment of the Leir story with prior methodologies and established or traditional approaches to history.

Medieval chroniclers largely had a linear, providential view of history, which was retold for its potential to provide moral analogies to the present. Chroniclers were historians, in the sense that they consulted the earlier histories and combined them in their own work. Although only four of the Brutan variants are designated as chronicles, the majority of all of the variants engaged with history following the approach of medieval historians. Two-thirds include lists of "The names of the Authorurs from whom this *Historie of England is collected*" (Holinshed), and prefatory material, later discussed, which highlights the use of "great" works in the creation of the text (Fabyan, Anon, Legh, Grafton, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, Higgins 1587, and Harvey). Where the works that medieval chroniclers consulted revealed gaps, they felt authorised to use creative licence in filling them (Kamps 10) in order to provide a complete chronology. Higgins addresses this now unthinkable, but then common, practice in his 1574 address to the reader:

I was often faine to vse mine owne fimple inuention (yet not fwaruing from the matter) becaufe the Chronicles (althoughe they wente out vnder diuers mens names) in fome fuche places as I moſte needed their ayde wrate one thing: and that fo brieflye that a whole Princes raigne, life and death, was comprifed in three lines. (vii-r)

Even Holinshed's *Chronicle*, "crowning achievement of Tudor historiography" (Kewes et al.), includes mention in the address to the reader that, where the works upon which he relied differed, he drew his own conclusions. Woolf identifies "a more confident sense of the 'real' and the 'probable,' together with a willingness to concede the existence of the unknowable rather than attempt to 'fill in the blanks'" ("From Hystories" 38) as one of the key transitions in the understanding and depiction of history between 1500 and 1700. The lines between fact and fiction were then "more often a matter of negotiation than of confrontation" (Woolf, "From Hystories" 37). The majority of the variants therefore retell the Leir story in the context of traditional, medieval historiographical methodologies, where great works were consulted in the creation of new works, and gaps filled by the author.

First seen in the advent of antiquarianism, the "historical revolution" is evident in the variants, though less in the number of antiquarian works than in chronicle historians' defence of their own practices. Antiquarians are best understood as early archaeologists, choosing not to accept received history unless there was demonstrable evidence provided by documents or artefacts of the time (Kamps 18). Antiquarians eschewed the moral, providential approach, focusing on factual recounts of synchronic, instead of diachronic, events organised around place, rather than time. Woolf has identified a "sharp increase in the publication of antiquarian and topographical treatises which began in the 1570s and continued through the last two decades of the century" ("Erudition" 23). Yet, while other variants do contain elements of topography or antiquarianism, there is only one distinctly topographical work (Warner, 1586) and one antiquarian work (Stow, 1565) that retell the Leir story during the

Brutan years. Stow was the most respected, prolific, and successful antiquarian of his time (Archer; Gadd and Gillespie; Perrett; Woolf, *Reading History*). He directly addresses contemporary approaches to writing history in his 1565 *Summarie*: “DIuers wryters of Hyftories write dyuerfly” (a.iiir). Stow acknowledges that he has consulted many works, but additionally that he has substantiated the contents of such: “I haue noted, which I my felfe, partly by paynfull fearchē, and partly by diligent experiēce, haue found out” (a.iiiv). Specifically and tellingly, Stow indicates the purpose of his work: “in hyftories the chiefe thyng that is to be defyred is truthe” (a.iiiv). During the Brutan years, chronicle historians, who were methodologically comfortable with recounting traditional histories and filling in the gaps, repeatedly retold the Leir story. Antiquarians, who were focused on recounting histories that were demonstrably true, did not.

Humanist historiography influenced the antiquarian approach (Gadd and Gillespie 35), but it did not take hold until the final years of the Brutan period of variants, the end of the sixteenth century (Woolf, *Reading History* 8). Humanist historiography is noted for its focus on secondary causes; its use of rhetorical/literary style; and its belief in the Ciceronian concept of history as moral instructor or educational analogy (Kamps; Woolf, “Erudition”; Woolf, “From Hystories”). There is only one variant clearly influenced by the humanist approach, Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* of 1590. Aligning with the introduction of humanism chronologically, the text shows clear use of rhetorical style and educational analogy: “The generall end therefore of all the booke, is to fafhion a gentleman or noble perfon in virtuous and gentle difcipline” (Spenser 591).

The “historical revolution” appears to have come late to variants of the Leir story, yet its dawning is clearly seen within them. All but one includes prefatory material where authors explicitly discuss their methodology, often phrasing this as a criticism of other approaches (Fabyan, Anon, Legh, Stow, Grafton, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, Higgins 1587, Spenser, and

Harvey). Holinshed is critical of the humanist approach: “My fpeech is playne, vvithout any Rethoricall fheyve of Eloquence, hauing rather a regard to fimple truth, than to decking vvordes” (iiiiir), and Spenser, author of the only humanist variant, replies:

all this famous antique hiftory,
Of some th’aboundance of an ydle braine
Will iudged be, and painted forgery,
Rather then matter of iust memory. (185)

While the Brutan variants are largely traditional and conservative forms of historiography, the “historical revolution” serves as an implicit frame, with the response to this frame the defending of the chosen methodology and the history being retold.

4.2.2 *Historiography Debate*

Not only did the Brutan years co-occur with the “historical revolution,” they additionally co-occurred with an early modern historiography debate that risked destabilising early modern understandings of history, as well as national identity and lines of royal succession. Polydore Vergil, an Italian humanist historian, published his *Anglia Historia* in Basel in 1534. Though not the first to express doubt over the veracity of Galfridian historiography, Vergil triggered a historiography debate when he demonstrated errors in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s work (Ashe; Gilchrist; Kamps; Woolf, “From Hystories”). Vergil noted that England’s history, or at least specific elements of Galfridian pre-history, did not align with or indeed were proven false by the histories of other nations, including France. Initially inciting outrage as a foreigner challenging accepted history, Vergil’s claims were eagerly dismissed by many historiographers. Acceptance of this doubt was slow to dawn, especially with nothing to fill the historical gap provided by the removal of the Brutan line

from Galfridian historiography. It is frequently suggested that William Camden's *Britannia* of 1586 was the first to show that English histories had accepted Vergil's claims. Yet pro-Brutan historiography was written well into the diversification (1600-1639) and stagnation (1640-1710) eras, addressed in subsequent chapters.

All Brutan variants affirm Galfridian historiography, once again serving to support established nationalistic history. They retold the Leir story as historical. Each, with varying degrees of subtlety and while also drawing attention to the accuracy of its methodology, acknowledges the historiography debate, or what Holinshed refers to as the "controuerfie" (vv), with Grafton more robustly referring to those that "haue eyther by ignoraunce or malyce flauderously written and erred from the manifeft truth" (32-34). A third (Holinshed, Spenser, and Harvey) were openly, even defensively, Galfridian, with Harvey's *Philadelphus, or a defence of Brutes, and the Brutans history* (1593) the most avid defender. Initially, Harvey's work reads as nationalistic polemic written to defend England against the slanderous attacks of historians from other nations:

I muft not hold my hand and pen ftill, when I fee them too bufie, in tolling our hiftories and actes, at their owne pleafure I fauour the hiftorie of *Brute*, without regard of their disfauour, as they diflike it, without respect of other mens liking. (A3v)

The work later develops as a reasoned argument and logical, indeed credible, defence of Brutan history: "The more they leaue out the glorie of our land, the more I prefume by the nature of forraine countries, that our land was enuied, becaufe it was moft glorious" (6).

In the main, however, alongside this open defence of Brutan historiography, the variants offer prevarication in their paratextual material. Many, as indeed was the case with Vergil himself, engage with the debate in prefatory material without offering a definitive stance, leaving the reader to decide, only to later retell the Leir story as if it were fact (Fabyan, Stow, Grafton, Higgins, Warner, and Spenser). Fabyan suggests that early English

history is “doubtful and unclear” (1559, p. 2). Higgins concurs, at once appearing to support Galfridian historiography through his indication that he has utilised a Monmouth manuscript, yet still suggesting in 1574: “AMongst diuers & fondry Chronicles of many Nations, I thincke there are none (gentle reader) so uncertaine & briefe in y^e beginninge as ours” (vii). Thus the debate was present, and the Galfridian affirming outcome implied and elicited, but the reader most frequently held definitive judgement.

There is demonstrable consistency and transparency in the way variant authors have responded to the changing beliefs about, and approaches to, early modern history. In the main, as previously noted, appeals to different forms of authority are used to establish the validity and authenticity of the work and the histories it contains. All but two of the texts include explicit reference to works consulted, such as tables of authors, marginal citations, and prefatory material discussing the research completed. While it became standard practice for historians to consult a number of works in the creation of their own, Fabyan’s was the first of the London chronicles in which these works were explicitly acknowledged (McLaren). Reference lists, citations, and methodology sections are all familiar today as scholarly devices that demonstrate the authority of the work. Early moderns additionally included more oblique appeals to authority. Harvey and Spenser explicitly call attention to the prior successes of their works in manuscript as a form of authority, noting that print editions were generated at the behest of those who saw the manuscript. Both Higgins and Spenser use their prior successes in print as a legitimising force. Finally, nine of the eleven variants include dedications to prominent figures as both appeals to, and for, authority. The response of the Brutan variants to the “historical revolution” and the “historiography debate” is a consistent appeal to authority, calling attention to the variants, regardless of their stated or implied genre, both as factual and as contested historiography.

Thus, works retelling the Leir story as part of traditional Galfridian historiography became part of an altering, and politicised, way of engaging with the past—valorising the nation and its monarch. In the main, though the potential for *critical* analogies is later explored, the Brutan years responded to social, political, and historiographical debates through collective conservatism and reinforcement of their own authority. At times, their bibliographic and paratextual elements aligned with book history, and at times they differed from it. The chronological distribution of texts was consistent with booms in the book trade, as was their movement from summary chronicles to lengthier and more complex works. Likewise, Brutan years Leir variants reflect the rise of the role of the author in the book trade. Authors extend and exploit their authority through an active presence in texts. The generic range of the Brutan variants was not consistent with the book trade, as Leir variants were slow to adopt diversification. Also inconsistent, but positively so, was that the variants were likely to exist in derivative or abridged forms, demonstrating their popularity. Finally, though more conservatively present than in the book trade as a whole, the “historical revolution” and the historiography debate play out in Brutan years variants through the inclusion of prefatory material that revealed the Leir story as part of a history that was contentious in methodology, malleable in factuality, but legitimate and legitimising in actuality. This altering context of historiography, combined with the inherent links between the story and the ruling monarch, may have served to fuel the proliferation of variants but, as is seen in the collation of narrative elements, it additionally constrained them.

4.3 Collation of Stylistic Elements of the Retelling

Earlier it was noted that the Brutan variants of the Leir story represent four established ways of engaging with history: Fabyan’s, Stow’s, Grafton’s, and Holinshed’s are

historiographies; Warner's topographical; Higgins's (1574 and 1587) and Spenser's moral verse; and Anonymous's, Legh's, and Harvey's specialised texts (genealogy, text on armoury, and historical defence respectively). While comparatively limited in genre and failing to align with the book trade's diversification of historical genres from the 1580s, the variants do show dawning though inconsistent stylistic variety within their retellings of the Leir story. Six of the earliest Brutan variants (Fabyan 1559, Anon 1560, Legh 1562, Stow 1565, Grafton 1569, and Holinshed 1577) maintain the style of traditional historiography through the inclusion of the Leir story as a factual third-person authoritative recount, situated within the chronology of the Brutan kings. The remaining later variants (Higgins 1574, Warner 1586, Higgins 1587, Spenser 1590, and Harvey 1593) show greater stylistic variety and are indicative not only of a later diversification of genres but of the developing early modern understanding of history that allowed for the production of more complex and varied texts that were not necessarily linear (Woolf, "From Hystories" 42).

Almost half of the variants (five of the eleven) use a structural frame other than the Brutan lineage. Legh's *Accedens of Armory* uses a teacher/student vignette between Gerard the Herehaght and Legh the Caligat Knight to frame the stories (Moll 375), with Legh's question "I would ask you one questiō of gētlewomē. When they are maydens, and continue fo, how fholde they bear their cotes, and whether fhall they beare any?" (Fo.164 r-v) motivating the retelling of several stories, including Cordeilla's. Both of Higgins's *Mirror for Magistrates* use a dream frame and depict the "dreams" as Complaints, attaching an Envoy as moral commentary. Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, the last of the fictional frames, adopts a traditional romance motif, where the court of the Faerie Queen is celebrating the twelve days of Christmas, and each day a knight is given a quest. Finally, Harvey, in his *Philadelphus: or a Defence of the Brutes*, focuses on a sequence of vices and virtues, with examples given for each. Thus, the Leir story is broken into parts and scattered throughout the text as examples.

Fascinatingly, though the story is split into thirteen parts, eight virtues and five vices, and spread across eleven non-consecutive pages, if the reader were to skip the intervening sections and read only those dedicated to the Leir story, the tale evolves in chronological order and recounts all elements of the Galfridian story.

Stylistic variety is also present in the irregular presence of morals, satire, or the historiography debate within retellings, as opposed to their presence in paratext. Some texts are devoid of links to the traditional medieval, or later humanist, purpose of history as morally edifying. In Stow's work, this absence reflects its antiquarian focus. However, most variants retain elements of this moral purpose, with six explicitly offering moral commentary on the Leir story, either within or after its retelling. The works of Higgins (both 1574 and 1587) and Spenser have previously been categorised as moral verse. Warner (1586), though writing a topographical, includes moral commentary throughout to "warne that none doe fail as Leir fell" (58). Finally, Harvey's variant (1593), while seeking to defend the existence of the Brutan kings, does so through an exploration and defence of their vices and virtues. Leir is assigned five virtues and two vices, whose "vice or Iniustice is proued in Diuiding" (29). Cordeilla is noted with three virtues, including "vertue, or wisdom is seene in Wordes of counsel" (22). The Dukes are assigned two vices and the older sisters one, as their "Intemperance appeared in Wordes" (20). Finally, "hotly Protestant" (Burrow 14) Grafton includes a marginal note when the Dukes take the kingdom: "Coueconfues [Covetousness] the roote of all evill" (47). Again works are conservative in their fulfilment of the moral purpose of history.

It has previously been noted that history was routinely appropriated to provide analogies for the present. In retelling a national history, all of the variants seek to reinforce and thus valorise the nation, both past and present. As previously stated, this intent was typical of historiography at the time:

Historians used the past to sanction certain types of behaviour and to deplore others; they also used it to justify the authority structures of their present, structures which in turn shaped and coloured what they said about the past. (Woolf, *The Idea* xiii)

The conservative ideology noted by Woolf is seen within Brutan variants. Satire or topical analogies are detected in only four of the later and more diverse variants (Higgins 1574, Higgins 1587, Spenser, and Harvey). It has already been noted that Harvey is openly and defensively pro-Brutan, and thus the topicality he offers is one that supports the national agenda. Higgins, in both of his works, continues both the Mirror and de casibus traditions, which saw writers directly seeking to shape the behaviour of magistrates or people in power. Scholars are divided as to whether Higgins embraced, indeed politically heightened, this tradition or if he “de-fanged” it, moving it from counselling to praising (Kewes, “Romans” 130 and 216; see also: Budra, “The Mirror”; Budra, *A Mirror*; Pincombe; Winston). Spenser’s 1590 work, also a moral verse, is the most satirical and critical of all Brutan variants, yet even his work is indirectly so.

Spenser’s career had produced works that consistently reflected his strongly nationalistic agenda: “Spenser’s poetry is remarkable among that of Elizabethan writers not for its engagement with topical political and religious events, but for the intensity of that engagement” (Zucker 180). This agenda could at times be extreme, such as his *View on the Present State*, however, it was typically hidden behind the guise of indirect satire and topical allusion. Most frequently, Spenser adroitly balanced flattery of the monarch, contemporary critique, and nationalism through a form of indirect satire (Hile). That Spenser’s career continued to flourish and that the annuity awarded to him in recognition of the 1590 *Faerie Queene* was paid until his death (Hile 6) are testament to Spenser’s capacity to balance indirect satire with overt flattery.

Throughout his works, Spenser's devotion to his queen, though not consistent, is overt (Baker 40). Spenser directly and flatteringly aligns the *Faerie Queen* and more specifically the character of Gloriana with Elizabeth, producing a work that is a "nationalistic panegyric that eulogises Queen Elizabeth I" (Wofford 106), with the Leir story itself prefaced through the specific and detailed linking of Elizabeth's lineage to Brutan kings: "Thy name O foueraine Queene, thy realme and race, / From this renowned Prince deriued are" (326). Spenser's work, however, is also seen by many as biting political satire, executed through indirection and in such a balanced way that much of this critique was left to the interpretation of the reader (Baker; Hile; Wofford). This critique is discussed in the collation of narrative elements. Thus, though the most critical and satirical of all Brutan variants, Spenser's work still supports Elizabeth, her rule, and its nation building agenda.

The final and more consistent stylistic element present in the variants is the existence of the earlier noted historiography debate within the retelling itself, with the majority (eight) of the variants engaging either obliquely or explicitly. Fabyan, Grafton, and Stow interrupt the flow of the otherwise narrative retellings to appeal to authority: "as testifieth Gaufride" (Fabyan 16). Grafton intersperses the Leir story with commentary of how the story has been discussed by others. He additionally includes his sources in marginal notes, as do Stow and Holinshed. Higgins hints at the debate in Morgan's subsequent recount of the story (Morgan being Cordeilla's nephew and Britain's next ruler), indicating "British stories may appear" (Fo.55r). Spenser is more explicit, with both the broader text and the Leir retelling addressing the broader historiography debate, and specifically tying it to Elizabeth's royal lineage. Spenser's introduction to Canto 10, recounts the rules of several Brutan kings and includes direct reference to the line of succession that stretched from these kings to Elizabeth: "Thy name O soueraine Queene, thy realme and race, / From this renowned Prince deriued are"

(326). Harvey's defence is most explicit throughout, with every section written purely to defend the existence of the Brutan line.

Thus, whilst seeking to avoid teleology, and acknowledging that change is neither consistent nor linear, there are several stylistic elements of note within Leir Brutan variants. Though the works in which they exist were late to embrace the generic diversity seen in other historical texts of the time, the actual retellings of the Leir story present within these variants do show some elements of stylistic variety. Given that all the variants are more traditional generic ways of engaging with history (historiographies, topographicals, moralities, and specialised), it is notable that at times the retellings stylistically align with, but at times contradict, the generic conventions of the broader text. Of greatest consistency is that, regardless of stylistic elements, the Leir story is retold as a factual part of national history. Within the Brutan years, variants of the Leir story are told as part of national history, their historicity is defended, and their conservatism and consistency denote glorification of the nation and its monarch.

4.4 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions

In the main, though a discussion of their variance follows, the variants' narrative elements are largely consistent with Galfridian historiography and with each other, both structurally and with regard to their inclusions in recounting the Leir story. First, the members of the royal family are introduced positively. Leir then sets the love test. The elder sisters respond to Leir's question, with Cordeilla then identifying their flattery of the king and phrasing her own response without flattery. Leir is dismayed and Cordeilla is punished. All the daughters are married. Leir's kingdom is subsequently taken and he seeks solace from

Cordeilla. Cordeilla assists Leir to regain the kingdom. Sometime later, Leir dies. Cordeilla then reigns, only to shortly be usurped by her nephews.

Elements of this story resonate closely with Elizabethan England. As is later demonstrated, the narrative elements of the Galfridian history that provide direct analogue to Elizabethan England have largely been excised, extended, or redesigned in such a way that they suppress these resonances or highlight them in service to the queen. At times, they leave readers to draw their own, potentially negative, analogies. Few, however, openly encourage the reader to do so. Here, once again, their focus demonstrates Elizabethan historiography's use as a nation building device.

4.4.1 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: Introduction to Leir

Retellings consistently begin with a positive introduction to Leir as king. Almost half of the Brutan variants (Fabyan, Anonymous, Grafton, Holinshed, and Harvey) specifically state that Leir is king of Britain. The remaining variants offer vagaries regarding Leir's territory. Despite some prevarication on his territory, Brutan variants agree in affirming Leir's reign, with their focus on his strength and ability as a king: "This Leyr was of noble condicions, and guded his land and subiectes in great wealth and quietnesse" (Grafton 46). This textual element is enhanced by illustrative woodcuts present in only two of the variants, but reflective of Leir's stature (see figs. 4.4 and 4.5 below). This broader lack of woodcut images is of note. James Knapp suggests the mid to late 1580s as the time when illustrated histories ceased, potentially due to Protestant iconoclasm and fear of reprisals (16-17). The infrequency of woodcuts in these early Brutan variants, both published before 1580, thus align with Knapp's observations.

Fig. 4.4. Anon *To the Reader* (Fo.6)

Portrait of Leir

Fig. 4.5. Holinshed's *Chronicle* (19)

Portrait of Leir

Introductions to Leir are equally consistently focused on succession. Initially, each outlines his direct line of succession and thus demonstrates his right to rule. This focus on legitimate, hereditary succession is perhaps unsurprising. As has previously been noted, the main structural device of the variants is the chronological line of succession of the Brutan kings. Thus, each monarch's right to succeed is clarified. The line then continues and is frequently sustained through to the Tudor line. The retellings frequently note, in their introduction of Leir, that he had three daughters as heirs (eight of eleven), with five of these going further to mention that he had no male heirs. The motif of succession is threaded throughout the Leir story and one that is returned to later in this chapter. Its careful articulation in the story's introduction could also resonate with the many Tudor crises of succession. Destabilising periods of succession act as bookends for the Brutan years (1557-1599). They begin with the death of Queen Mary I, who, regardless of the 1544 Act of Succession that had reinstated Elizabeth's right to the throne, refused to name Elizabeth as successor until death was imminent (Stump and Felch 73). The Brutan years thus span the reign of the determinedly "virgin queen" Elizabeth, who likewise refused to name an heir

until her deathbed. The careful clarification of succession seen at the start of all the variants could be seen to reflect more than the variants' governing structural device (the royal line). It may be reflective of the desire to suppress Tudor unease with succession, and particularly female succession during Elizabethan England.

When included in the introduction, all of Leir's daughters are consistently, positively represented, with Leir's equal love of them noted. Legh and Stow offer additional praise for Cordeilla here. Each does so from his perspective as narrator, and not as an indication of any favouritism on Leir's behalf. This may indicate their foregrounding of the future Queen Cordeilla, or deference to their own queen. It is Grafton who first suggests, as separate from all other variants and Galfridian tradition, that Leir loved Cordeilla the most. This hint of favouritism, a topic that is returned to later, is not consistently embraced, with Holinshed the only other variant to include it.

The introductions are largely consistent with five offering a degree of variance within these bounds. Higgins (1574 and 1587) and Legh, however, differ structurally, with both utilising Cordeilla as protagonist, introducing her before repeating the familiar introduction to Leir. Warner and Fabyan differ most through their brevity, largely excluding these introductory elements. Fabyan's work was published in 1559, immediately after Queen Mary I's death and the contested succession of Elizabeth. Warner's work was published in 1586, immediately after Mary, Queen of Scots' challenge to the English throne, which came in the form of plans to assassinate Elizabeth. Publishing at these moments of successive instability made it politically expedient to exclude these introductory discussions of succession, particularly in a tale that saw sisters contest one another for the throne.

4.4.2 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: The Love Test

In established historiography, the love test follows the introduction of Leir and it is here that greater variation is first seen. Though detailed in the Galfridian history, few of the Brutan retellings have detailed recounts of the love test (Fabyan, Higgins 1574, and Higgins 1587). Most are brief, with Stow the antiquarian focused on demonstrable facts, the lone retelling to exclude this portion of the story entirely. In the main, though the love test is introduced with a clarification of succession and prompts decisions about succession, it is undertaken simply as Leir's test of his daughters' love and not as a test for the kingdom. Holinshed and Higgins (1574 and 1587) provide the exception here, tying measurements of love to measurements of inheritance, as in the Galfridian original: "preferce hir whom hee best loved, to the succession over the kingdome" (Holinshed, 1577, 19).

Discrepancies in the length and type of engagement with the love test may align with Elizabeth's approach to rule and thus the desire to avoid potential critical analogies. Elizabeth's reign was marked by her ability to rule by negotiating parliamentary and diplomatic relations through vacillating favouritism, an approach that was likewise exploited and shared by those seeking her favour (Baker; Burrow; Collinson). This rule by favouritism, highly evocative of Leir's love test, was a tactic that Elizabeth employed not just within the English court but abroad. England's two chief foes, France and Spain, themselves enemies, were at times managed through the strategic distribution of Elizabeth's favouritism or even through the suggestion of her hand in marriage. Indeed, Elizabeth's rule by favouritism and flattery was well-known by her contemporaries, with Robert Naunton, in his 1630 *Fragmenta Regalia, or, Observations on the Late Queen Elizabeth*, giving a published account of her favourites.

Early modern readers, familiar with history's moral purpose and its use of contemporary analogies, could have seen Elizabeth in Leir, and her approach to rule as a sequence of "love tests" if this section were elaborated within variants. This correlation could explain why only three (Fabyan 1559, Higgins 1574, Higgins 1587) of the variants address the love test in detail, with Fabyan's variant written too early in Elizabeth's reign to provoke such analogies. Higgins's variants (1574 and 1587) were part of the *Mirror and de casibus* traditions which extended history's moral imperative by seeking to shape the behaviour of leaders. His variants may have included detailed recounts of the love test on these grounds, yet this potential for critical analogy was balanced against overt flattery for his protagonist Cordeilla and the queen whom she analogised. The remainder of the variants, eight of the eleven, minimise potential, critical contemporary analogies through the brevity of the love test or its excision.

Although brief, five of the variants suggest Leir's love test is motivated by his age: his "importente" (Fabyan15), and "unwieldy" (Holinshed 19), or "competent" (Grafton 46) age. All but one of the texts that tied this love test to Leir's age were printed before 1577, while the later Brutan variants avoided this correlation, again avoiding the potential for critical analogy to Elizabeth. Higgins's works, over time, show a reduction in stress on age, demonstrating an increased political sensitivity or deference to the aging queen. Spenser's 1590 text is the only later variant to tie the love test to Leir's "feeble age" (332). Published in the last decades of Elizabeth's reign, when her age and lack of an heir heightened concerns around succession, Spenser's depiction of an aged king ruling through favouritism had the potential to draw direct and critical analogy to Elizabeth—the monarch whom his work purports to flatter—and may be indicative of his willingness to offer indirect satire.

The love test sees the introduction of Leir's daughters. The elder sisters do not play a large role in early Brutan variants, with Fabyan, Anonymous, Legh, and Stow giving them

little detail or character. Anonymous and Legh fail to name them. Stow fails to include them. Though Galfridian history depicts the elder daughters' responses to the love test as overt flattery, the majority of the ten Brutan variants that contain the test include only light flattery and exaggeration—court rhetoric befitting any king. They positively align flattery with diplomacy and potentially provoke topical analogies to Elizabeth's rule.

The anonymous 1560 variant and Higgins's works are the only variants to depict the elder sisters' responses as clear and negative flattery. Here Higgins's variant, having avoided potential negative analogies between Leir and Cordeilla, could be positively aligning Elizabeth with Cordeilla, as one worthy of envy by her calculating kin. In Higgins's variant, the sisters' flattering manipulation of the King is motivated by their jealousy of Cordeilla: "my lifters did despise / My grace, and giftes, and fought my praife t'fwage" (Fol.49v). It is equally motivated by their desire to inherit the kingdom. Here, analogy could be drawn to Elizabeth's cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots. Mary actively plotted to take Elizabeth's life and crown. Her attempts led to Parliamentary calls for her execution for treason from 1572, two years before the publication of the first Higgins variant, with her subsequent execution undertaken in 1587, the same year as the publication of the second Higgins variant (Collinson). The comparison of the jealous sisters to the worthy queen reflects analogically and positively on Elizabeth. Thus, Higgins's variations in depictions of the sisters align with other variants within his work, such as his retelling of the story through Cordeilla's first-person recount, to flatter the queen through analogy between Cordeilla and Elizabeth.

Within the love test of the Brutan variants, though there is little to cue the reader or the King to the same conclusion, Cordeilla consistently sees the elder sisters' responses as calculating flattery—that Leir is being "diffimuled" (Fabian 15). Her response, often quite brusque, is consistently composed to act as a counterpoint to her sisters' flattery, revealing their tactics. Seven of the ten variants containing the love test largely have Cordeilla respond

that she loves Leir as much as he is worth (Fabyan, Legh, Grafton, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, Warner, and Harvey). At times, this worth is more explicitly a measure of parental worth (Fabyan, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, Warner, Higgins 1587, and Harvey): “thou art wrothy to bee beloued” (Fabyan 15). At other times, Leir’s worth is specifically financial (Grafton, Higgins 1574, and Harvey): “We loue you chiefly for the goodes you haue” (Higgins Fol.49v). In the main, Cordeilla extends her curt but telling response to include mention of love or duty (Legh, Grafton, Higgins 1574, Warner, Higgins 1587, and Spenser). Her aforementioned wisdom is routinely shown in her capacity to see through her sisters’ flattery and in her ability to speak the truth.

Not one of the variants depicts Cordeilla’s curt response in the love test as spiteful or hurtful. Indeed, each positively represents Cordeilla throughout their entirety. Earlier it was noted that Leir’s actions in the love test could have been seen as a critical analogy to Elizabeth but that variants frequently sought to avoid this analogy through concision or omission. I would suggest that many of the variants hold a sustained positive analogue between Cordeilla and Elizabeth and that the Leir story, and Cordeilla’s part within it, are privileged within the variants themselves for their capacity to do so. In commenting on the commonality of allegorical depictions of Elizabeth found in early modern society, Collinson suggests: “Virtually every flattering female deity of classical and biblical mythology was pressed into service.” The most common depictions of Cordeilla in variants link to her wisdom (Fabyan, Legh, Stow, Grafton, Higgins 1574 and 1587, Holinshed, and Harvey). Even antiquarian Stow, who fails to comment on the personal qualities of any other character and elides the love test, notes Cordeilla’s “wyfedom and virtue” (Fol.12v). Harvey, though content to give Leir both vices and virtues, can only find virtue in Cordeilla’s actions. Legh is explicit in his praise of the queen and suggests Cordeilla ruled with:

fuch wifedome, temperaunce , and noble corage Raigned, that I am cōftrained not to paffe her worthy doinges in Silence, but fo farre forth to vtter the fame, as may be to the praiſe of her, who lefte behind fuch a noble pattern of princely fto make as by al her doinges may right wel appeare. (Fo.165v)

By praising Cordeilla, whether in the love test or throughout the retelling of the Leir story, the variants collectively and consistently offer positive analogy to Elizabeth.

The love test traditionally connects to succession and this may again be why it is covered comparatively briefly in variants. Crises of succession plagued the Tudor years and, as has already been noted, these crises bookend the Brutan years. The question of succession arose within the first years of Elizabeth's reign and was sustained throughout the rule of the "virgin queen" Elizabeth and thus throughout the Brutan years. The question of who would succeed Elizabeth became so troubling and prevalent in the final years of her reign that parliament declared it an act of treason to publish any discussion of it, serving only to add fuel to the fire (L. Hopkins). Elizabeth, staunchly refusing to name an heir, was even more intolerant of these discussions, sending Puritan MP, Peter Wentworth, to the Tower after he petitioned her to name her successor (L. Hopkins 1). Thus, the Brutan variants show conservatism in their brief recounts of the love test to avoid analogies to contemporary and contentious discussions of succession.

As in Galfridian history, Cordeilla's unflattering response sees her disinherited and dowerless in all of the variants containing the love test. Her punishment is that she remains a member of the royal household but not the royal line. Further punishment is that Leir fails to see Cordeilla married, unlike her sisters. Marriage, however, remains an outcome of the love test, with Aganippus, a foreign ruler, seeking her dowerless hand in marriage in eight of the ten variants. Here, once again, Cordeilla's and by analogy Elizabeth's virtues are consistently extolled, with Aganippus initiating the union because: "my fame, / My beutie braue... my

vertues prairfde” (Higgins Fol. 49r); “hearing of her beautie, womanhood, and good condition” (Holinshed 20); “for her forme, and virtuous life” (Warner 58).

Here there is potential once more for analogy between Elizabeth and Cordeilla. Since the time of her coronation, parliament and the Privy Council saw Elizabeth’s marriage as the answer to questions of succession. Not only would marriage and subsequent children provide a clear line of succession, it would also provide Elizabeth with a male consort, mitigating concerns over the solo rule of a woman. As early as 1559, a select committee of the Commons, including members of the Privy Council, formally requested that the queen should marry (Collinson). This pressure was sustained. As early as 1561, the Queen’s ministers used courtly entertainments to depict “the evils of a divided kingdom and the anarchy resulting from uncertainty as to the succession” (Parsons 400), a tactic that was repeated throughout Elizabeth’s reign (Burrow 14). This sustained campaign was adroitly countered by Elizabeth, who repeatedly and skilfully deflected the question. In 1571, Elizabeth “became more explicit in her instructions, as the Commons were ‘to meddle with noe matters of state but such as should be propounded unto them, and to occupy themselves in other matters concerning the commenwealth’” (Collinson). Elizabeth herself was known to manipulate her intent to marry for diplomatic purposes, both at home and abroad.

It is notable that within this sustained socio-political climate all the variants stay true to the Galfridian history and tie the accession of the elder daughters to marriage, when previously they have elided or reduced elements of the story that contain potentially provocative contemporaneous analogy. Also of note is that Leir initiates the marriages of his elder daughters in all variants, and most see Aganippus initiate marriage to Cordeilla. The daughters, though future queens, acquiesce, subservient to the will of male rulers. Whilst this aligns with the Galfridian original, it also resonates with parliament’s sustained campaign to see Elizabeth married and may provide her with a warning against the evils of a divided

kingdom, with both of these balanced against Aganippus's aforementioned flattery of Cordeilla, and thus of Elizabeth.

Legh and Spenser include unique perspectives here. Legh's *Accedens of Armory* (1562), which holds Cordeilla as protagonist, uniquely gives her agency in responding to her punishment, seeing her flee to France: "his irefull hart straight braided out wrothful words of wreke and reuenge: enforcyng her to fhun y^e rage" (Fol.166v). Here it is her decision to accept Aganippus's hand in marriage, who: "fell there with all in love with her" (Fol.166v). This tacit confirmation of the queen's agency is unsurprising in Legh's work, which features Cordeilla as protagonist, and which has previously been seen to flatter the queen. It is also reflective of its publication date, early in Elizabeth's reign, before questions of her succession had escalated and the likelihood of her future marriage remained clear.

Spenser's variant, printed towards the end of Elizabeth's reign (1590), offers an equally unique but contradictory view to Legh's with regard to the outcome of the love test for Cordeilla. Spenser indicates that it was Leir who sent Cordeilla to Aganippus, replacing any hint of her agency with subordination. Publishing after three decades of rule by the "virgin queen," and immediately after the unsuccessful "French matches" of the 1570s (a topic later discussed), Spenser uniquely indicates that Leir did indeed select a husband for Cordeilla, sending her to Aganippus in France. Here once again, through analogy, Spenser provides critique of the aging queen, alluding to her refusal to marry and the potential crises of succession ahead.

Cordeilla's future husband, Aganippus, King of France, is never a central or detailed figure in the Brutan variants. His role, regardless of its lack of detail, sees the greatest variance of all. This may in part reflect the avoidance of contemporaneous analogies, with six of the variants published after the French marriage projects of the 1570s. Though consistently quashing long-standing debates on marriage, Elizabeth was not immune to utilising it as a

diplomatic manoeuvre. During Elizabeth's reign, Catholic France was both a threat to Protestant England and a strong ally, aiding England against their great foe, the Spanish. In order to shore up support from 1570 to 1571, Elizabeth was matched with Henri, duc d'Anjou, and, from 1572 to 1578, with his brother François, duc d'Alençon. These marriage projects, if successful, had the ability to immediately provide a stronger national stance and subsequently to provide heirs and a clear line of succession. Their lack of success may be reflected in the reduction of the role of France in variants published during and after the 1570s.

It is equally likely, however, that the suppression of the role of France within retellings was due to the historiography debate. Fabyan's retelling, the first of the Brutan variants, includes the following lengthy passage after introducing Aganippus:

But here is to bee noted, that where this Aganippus or Agamp is called in diuerse chronicles king of Fraunce: it cānot agree with other histories, nor with the Chronicle of Fraunce for it is testified by Policronica, by Peter Pictauience, by maister Robert Gagwine, by Bishoppe Antonine and many other chronicles: that long after this date was no kynge in Fraunce: but at this daie the inhabitauntes thereof were called Galli, and were tributaries unto Rome without king, til the time of Valentinianus Emperoure of Rome, as hereafter in his worke shall be manifestly shewed.

The storie of Britōs faith, that in the tyme that Leir reigned in Britain: the land of Fraunce was under the dominion of twelve kings, of the whiche Aganippus should be one. The whiche faiyng is full unlike to bee true, whiche might be proued by many reafons that I passe over for lēgth of time. (15-16)

Grafton quotes Fabyan almost verbatim (47). Here Fabyan and Grafton engage directly with the historiography debate noted earlier in this chapter and evident within the paratextual material of all variants. They highlight that the variants contained within them one of the

demonstrable differences between French and English histories: Aganippus was King of France in English history, but did not appear in French history. It was similar discrepancies that served, through Vergil and his devotees, to contest Galfridian historiography. French histories did not include King Aganippus, or Queen Cordeilla, or their restoration of Leir. Thus, the existence of these elements in retellings may have served to demonstrate Leir's history as untrue, further destabilising the entire Brutan line and thus the Tudor line that relied upon it for legitimised succession. The risk this posed was mitigated in several ways. Retellings were framed by a wealth of paratextual material that sought to address the debate, legitimise the works, and substantiate their authors' historical approaches. Additionally, the elements that provided contradiction between English and French histories were frequently omitted, condensed, or clarified. In this way, Brutan historiographies retold established history in a way devised to protect and perpetuate this history—and the nation it built.

4.4.3 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: Leir's Downfall

In all Brutan variants, the consequences of Leir's love test are his downfall and the loss of his kingdom. There is, however, great variation in how this comes about and what it entails. While Leir's downfall is quite lengthy in Galfridian history, it is comparatively brief when recounted in the Brutan variants. When addressed diachronically, Leir's downfall shows some consistency in depiction. The earlier works chose either not to depict Leir's downfall (Anonymous, Legh, and Stow), or to present it in such a way that no suffering or clear inversion is implied (Fabyan, and Grafton). Higgins provides a turning point by depicting Leir's downfall in relation to a reduction in status and material wealth, which then leads to personal and emotional suffering. While very briefly treated, Holinshed aligns with Higgins. Warner focuses on Leir's personal and emotional suffering: "His aged eyes powre

out their teares” (58). Highlighting his suffering, Spenser depicts Leir as a “wretched man” in an “extremest state” when he goes to Cordeilla (333). Thus, as the variants progress diachronically and as Elizabeth’s rule as a “virgin queen” is sustained chronologically, the outcome of Leir’s approach to succession increasingly becomes his own downfall. Here there is the capacity for contemporaneous analogy or the provision of a warning to the Queen. Therefore, while variants routinely and consistently flatter the Queen and avoid negative analogies to her reign, the sole point of exception is surrounding the perpetual and important question of succession—a constant point of anguish during the Tudor era.

Galfridian history sees the sisters justify their rebellion against Leir because of his age and his Knight’s behaviour. His age likewise serves as motivation in seven of the eight variants featuring Leir’s downfall (Fabyan, Grafton, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, Warner, Higgins 1587, and Spenser), with the treasonous uprising against Leir almost forgivably stimulated by his being “unwieldy old” (Higgins 1574 Fol.35v). Leir’s age most often mitigates the negativity of the rebellion against him, yet it often does not provide the sole motivation, with a more mercenary thirst for power always noted: “gaping ftil for the kingdome (when death wolde not yelde them that, ^ty they loked for) by trefaon they fought to preuent the same” (Legh Fol.166v). Despite its existence in Galfridian historiography and its explanation within retellings, rebellion against a monarch is never condoned.

Variation in depiction should here be noted. Blame for the dethroning of the king and his subsequent suffering is shared by different parties in different variants. Fabyan, Legh, Holinshed, and Harvey all indicate that the elder sisters’ husbands decide to take the throne from Leir, although Holinshed does not leave the sisters blameless, as Leir’s subsequent suffering is at their hands. The remaining variants, a majority, lay the blame for Leir’s deposition and downfall solely at the feet of his elder daughters. The mid-Brutan years’ variants heighten the elder sisters’ malice. Higgins’s later work even extends the actions of

the sisters and their responsibility for Leir's suffering. Again, this may be to draw a contemporaneous analogy to Elizabeth's cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots. Higgins's 1574 variant sees the sisters "beastly cruell" (Fol.50r) and his 1587 work sees them as "devilish beasts" and "vipers vile" (Fol.35r). Warner goes one step further, both in altering the story and offering contemporary analogy, seeing the sisters' attempt to take Leir's life: "Gonorill at his returne, not onely did attempt / Her fathers death, but openly did hold him in contempt" (58). These negative depictions of the elder daughters may provide contemporary analogy to Mary. They are equally likely to heighten the contrast between the "evil" daughters and the "good" daughter. Cordeilla's valour rises inversely to her sisters' evil—with Cordeilla frequently analogue to Elizabeth.

After his downfall, in each of the variants, Leir, in varying states of distress or dissatisfaction, seeks support from Cordeilla. It is here that the variants are most consistent with each other and with Galfridian history. Several acknowledge that he flees to France to seek comfort (Fabyan, Legh, Grafton, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, Warner, Higgins 1587, Spenser, and Harvey). This retreat to a foreign land is notable in its consistency, given its absence from French histories and thus its links to the historiography debate. Also consistent is Cordeilla's warm welcome for her father: "forgetting the iniurie past" (Legh Fo.166r). Two of the variants, as in established Galfridian history, see Cordeilla literally restore Leir to his former status through the provision of money, apparel, and servants, before he is welcomed to the French Court (Holinshed, and Warner). The Galfridian original takes this restoration one step further by noting that Aganippus then gives Leir power over his kingdom, until he could regain Britain. Of the two variants that see Leir's status physically restored by Cordeilla, only Holinshed comes close to this nationalistic honour: "for he was no leffe honored, than if he hade bin king of y^e whole cuntry himfelfe" (20). Thus the Brutan variants focus less on the restoration of the king than on his forgiveness by his daughter. This

focus is feasibly chosen to avoid the identification of conflicts between English and French histories that underpinned and fuelled the “historiographical revolution.” It also serves to shift focus to Cordeilla’s virtue—and, through her, to Elizabeth.

4.4.4 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: The Restoration

Galfridian history sees Cordeilla and France restore Leir to the British throne, with Leir leading the French army into battle against his sons-in-law, the Dukes. Each of the variants here shows a subsequent degree of awkwardness, as the restoration is essentially a condoned invasion by a foreign power, with the French army invading Britain to wrestle power from a ruling monarch. The narrative focus of variants, most often, is on Leir’s restoration, instead of on the mechanism that attained it. Stow, the antiquarian focused on that which is demonstrably true, fails to address this at all. Seven of the remaining ten variants include perfunctory mention (Fabyan, Anonymous, Legh, Grafton, Warner, Spenser, and Harvey). Each of these focuses on Leir’s restoration, with only two mentioning the war that attained it. The large-scale reduction of the battle may have been driven by the desire to avoid conflict between English and French histories, as the battle did not exist nor did the entirety of France’s role in the Leir story within French histories.

The excision of this battle was likely due to more than the “historiography debate,” but for its potential to offer contemporary analogy. The Brutan years saw foreign powers question Elizabeth’s right to succession; several wars; and the threat of internal uprising. Francesco Dall’Olio notes that Elizabeth and her advisors combated these threats through the introduction of:

political theory [that] came to associate tyranny with the usurpation of the throne, replacing medieval conceptions focused on the ruler's personality and identifying in illegitimate kingship the only case when revolt could be tolerated. (477)

Thus, in Brutan variants of the Leir story, through their consistent omissions of the battle, Leir and Cordeilla are depicted as repossessing the throne, not as usurping it. In the four variants (Anonymous, Legh, Spenser, and Harvey) that carefully present Cordeilla as the instigator of Leir's restoration, France, if present, is only in a supporting role: "After all an army ftrong fhe leau'd, / To war on thofe, which him had of his realme bereau'd" (Spenser 334). Importantly, France, England's ally against Spain, is shown as supportive of the restoration of the Brutan line, avoiding any analogous hints of invasion by the "Catholic threat" and deferentially allowing Cordeilla to act as hero. The battle is not civil strife, nor is it foreign invasion—it is a correction of history.

Here Higgins (1574 and 1587) and Holinshed provide the exception, with both detailing the battle to regain the British crown for Leir. This detail, though unusual in the variants, is closer to Galfridian history and made strategically patriotic. Higgins's 1574 work avoids suggestions of a foreign invasion to emphasise the return of the rightful rulers of Britain. It sees Aganippus go to great lengths to assemble an army and "commit them to my fathers aged hand" (Fol.51v). Cordeilla accompanies Leir into battle, but France does not. The difficulty of the battle is described, but it is made clear who are the "enemies" and who fights under the "royall cape" (Fol. 51v). Higgins's 1587 work extends this further by inserting an additional stanza to show the British people joining with Leir and Cordeilla, supporting their quest to regain the crown: "our Britaynes came to aide likewise his right" (Fol.36v). Higgins's variants remove all hint of foreign invasion or civil discord and focus, patriotically, on the return of right rule.

Though as detailed as Higgins's, Holinshed's *Chronicle* differs in both tone and content. Holinshed is specific about the army and navy that accompany Leir, but he is more detailed, even legalistic, in justifying Cordeilla's travelling with and succeeding Leir:

It was accorded, that Cordeilla should also goe with him to take possession of y^e land y^e whche he promised to leave unto hir, as hir rightfull inheritour after his deceffe, notwithstanding any former graunte made to hir listers or to their husbands in any maner of wise. (20)

This level of justification, both of the battle to regain the throne and Cordeilla's involvement, reveals a level of anxiety with regard to the means of Leir's restoration and the succession of his youngest daughter. Higgins and Holinshed were published contemporaneously, between 1574 and 1587, yet they depict the battle in different ways. Their consistency is in their patriotic inclusions.

As in Galfridian history, Leir regains the throne in all of the variants, ruling for a brief period before his peaceful death and Cordeilla's succession to the throne. The final element of the Leir story, Cordeilla's rule and conquest, is always briefly retold—a reflection of the equally brief Galfridian section. It does not appear as if potential analogies between Cordeilla and Elizabeth as regnant queens have been exploited, or perhaps found. Cordeilla's brief rule, terminated by usurpation, was unlikely to provide positive analogy to Elizabeth or affirmation of her nation building agenda. Three of the eleven Brutan variants (Fabian, Grafton, and Harvey) provide additional justification for Leir's youngest daughter's accession to the throne, noting that Cordeilla succeeded due either to Leir's direct will, or to that of the people: "by the assent of the Britons made Queene of Briteyn" (Grafton 48). Harvey again uniquely adds a critical edge to Cordeilla's succession, as she "hindered the right of her two Nephewes the very next apparant heires" (29). Here Harvey provides

justification for the nephews' later usurpation of Cordeilla. This aligns with the broader purpose of his work—a defence of the Brutes, their existence and their actions.

In each of the variants, Cordeilla's rule is short, at five years long, aligning with Galfridian historiography. Although little detail is offered about her rule, what is included is positive (Fabyan, Anonymous, Grafton, Holinshed, and Spenser). Most often, it is noted that Cordeilla's rule was peaceful: "the guyded the landfull wifely" (Grafton 48) and "right worthily" (Holinshed 20). Spenser's balance of indirect satire and direct flattery of the Queen is sustained unto the end, clarifying that Cordeilla not only reigned peacefully, but that "all mens harts in dew obedience [she] held" (334). In all variants, after five years as queen, Cordeilla's nephews waged war against her to take the kingdom. Their actions are most often depicted negatively, as "treason" (Legh Fo.165v) as they "made therein greate waite and destruction" (Fabyan 16). This aligns with Elizabethan missives on this topic, as previously mentioned. Motivation for their rebellion is offered only by Higgins (1574 and 1587) and Holinshed. Higgins maintains his positive depiction of Cordeilla, a queen both envied and enviable, motivating the nephews' rebellion "Because I loude always that femed right: / Therefore they hated me" (Fol.51r). Holinshed is unique in the motivation given to the nephews. Though this motivation is in keeping with some aforementioned contemporary sentiment, it was surely contentious. The nephews rebelled, "disdaining to be under the gouvernement of a woman" (20). Whilst a common contemporary sentiment, this is an unusual inclusion in variants printed during the Brutan and thus the Elizabethan eras.

Cordeilla is imprisoned by her nephews, the new Kings of Britain and descendants of the Brutan line. Here, she takes her own life. Fabyan, Stow, and Grafton align with Galfridian history. Indeed, they each quote "Galfride" or Monmouth as source, indicating that: "beyng in dispayre of recoueryng her estate (as testifieth Galfride) flewe her selfe" (Stow 39). Other variants note an equally affective motivation: "for sorrow" (Anonymous Fo.6), "weary of that

wretched life” (Spenser 334). Four of the variants, from the mid-Brutan years, offer Cordeilla more than a justification for her suicide—they offer a valorisation (Legh, Higgins 1574, Holinshed, and Higgins 1587): “fhee tooke fuche griefe, being a woman of a manly courage, and delpayring to recouer libertie, there fhe flew hirselfe” (Holinshed 20). This may be reflective of the two bodies trope earlier mentioned, with Cordeilla having manly courage, but feminine emotion. Higgins’s moral verse alone (1574 and 1587) gives a lengthy account, detailing and clarifying Cordeilla’s time in prison. Indeed, Higgins’s recount of the Leir story begins with Cordeilla already in prison. Once again aligning with the *Mirror and de casibus* traditions, Higgins (1574) shows a Cordeilla hesitant to tell her story but “willing bee to tell my fall” so that “others haply may avoide and fhunne the thrall” (Fol.48r). Her time in prison is told at length, with Despaire visiting Cordeilla and taunting her with all that she has lost. Her reversal is depicted in similar terms as Leir’s, as a loss of status, wealth, and confidence. It is Despaire who kills Cordeilla:

And therewithal Dispayre the stroke did strike:

Whereby I dyde, a damned creature like. ... Farre greater follye is it for to kill,

Themselues difpayring, then is any ill. (Higgins Fol.54v-r)

Thus Cordeilla’s downfall is told at length and acts as a frame for the Leir story, when told by Higgins as a cautionary tale for the ruling elite. Most often, Brutan retellings of the story end, as they began, with the moment of succession. Leir gives away his kingdom—Cordeilla has hers taken from her—and the line continues. The crucial element of the retelling, told as one part of the nation’s history, was that the Brutan line continued—from the Brutan line came the Tudor line, and the building of the nation.

4.5 Collation Synopsis

This thesis addresses the research question: What does a historical collation of early modern variants of the Leir story reveal in relation to their nature as a palimpsest, including diachronic and synchronic trends and influences? A collation of retellings of the Leir story, published during the Brutan years (1557-1599), has largely revealed consistencies across bibliographic, paratextual, and textual elements. During these years, the Leir story was consistently told as a factual part of history—two reigns within the line of Brutan kings who founded the nation. Contained within traditional historical genres, the story, and its self-conscious demonstration of its own authority, served as much to retell the history of King Leir, and Queen Cordeilla, as to affirm the nation and its monarch. Brutan variants stood as part of the nation building agenda undertaken under the rule of Queen Elizabeth, glorifying the founding of the nation and perpetuating the history that retold it.

Consistencies across bibliographic, paratextual, and textual elements are most apparent when the variants are viewed synchronically, rather than diachronically. Diachronically, variants from the mid and final Brutan years inconsistently provide comparatively more extension, and then variation, within retellings. This foreshadows the diversification years variants. A collation of bibliographic elements of Brutan variants demonstrates that the Leir variants did not always align with the broader book trade. They represent a more limited range of historical genres at a time when the functions of the medieval chronicle had split into a myriad of genres. A collation of paratextual elements reveals a conservative, though again a delayed, engagement with the “historical revolution,” with the impact of antiquarianism and humanism seen most frequently in a defensiveness surrounding methodology and thus the historicity of the contents of the work. Paratext refers to, whilst prevaricating around, the “historiography debate,” often leaving the reader to

decide if the Brutan line is a factual part of national history, but providing them with the material to affirm its truth. However, consistent and diverse appeals to authority within paratext serve to legitimise the variants and the history that they contain. The Leir story is a factual, consistent, flattering national history.

A collation of the narrative inclusions and exclusions demonstrates large scale consistency and conservatism, both within the variants and in established Galfridian history—again guiding the reader to affirm Brutan history. Omissions within retellings largely suppress elements of the story that could provide negative topical analogies to the Queen. Retellings of the Leir story, printed during the Brutan years, held within them the capacity to destabilise national history and the Tudor lines of succession. Parts of Galfridian historiography include the existence of Aganippus, King of France; that Queen Cordeilla of Britain was his wife; and the actions of the French in restoring Leir. They are not a part of France’s histories. The depiction of these elements in variants and their ability to fuel the “historiography debate” are feasibly why these sections are frequently excised or depicted with variance—a variance most frequently nationalistically deployed. The conservatism and consistency of the narrative elements of Brutan retellings answer the “historiography debate,” affirm Brutan history, and valorise the nation and the Queen.

The “historiography debate” does not provide the only context for the Brutan variants’ inclusions and omissions. The Leir story is redolent with potential analogies to Elizabeth and her reign. Extensions within the retelling, in the main, served to affirm the nation and its queen. Cordeilla’s role is valorised to provide explicit positive analogy to Elizabeth. Specific moments in Elizabeth’s reign offer analogy to different elements of the story. Most frequently, any potential for critical analogies is diminished through concision or excision of narrative elements, with those that had the potential to flatter the Queen or country extended. Implication of critical analogy is infrequent and focused only on questions of succession,

likely representative of socially condoned criticism of the virgin queen. Open satire, controversy, and seditious content are absent, as is fictionalisation of the story. Thus, though variation in textual inclusions and omissions exists, it is largely consistent, established, Galfridian historiography and nation affirming.

Three of the later works, those of Higgins (1574 and 1587) and Spenser, here provide greater degrees of variation. This is representative of a movement into trends discussed in relation to the diversification years. Higgins was most likely to extend the Leir story and Spenser most likely to alter it. They are the only moral verse variants of the story within the Brutan variants and draw on a historiographical tradition, previously discussed, that offered analogy to contemporary events for the moral edification of readers in general, and national leaders in particular. Each still favoured flattery over criticism of the Queen. Higgins (1574 and 1587) extends elements of the story that others excise: the love test, the sisters' overt flattery of Leir, Leir's downfall, the battle, Cordeilla's downfall and her subsequent suicide. Spenser's alterations of the story are subtle, but marked. His indirect satire at times draws critical attention to the aging Elizabeth and her approach to rule. At the same time, he overtly flattered his patron. Indeed, in the final book of *The Faerie Queen*, Spenser directly addresses Elizabeth, seeking forgiveness for his allegorical representations of her. In the main, however, during the Brutan years, narrative inclusions and omissions in retellings of the Leir story demonstrate its existence as a shared history and source of nationalistic pride. Though the variations of Higgins and Spenser are more pronounced, and can at times be read as offering moral and contemporary analogy, they flatter the Queen, and thus the nation, more than they criticise.

Given the broad nation building agenda of the Tudor years, the very real potential for censorship and associated harsh penalties likely impacted on Brutan retellings, not just through their inclusions and omissions, but also by constraining their diversity, their use as

moral and critical analogues, and their engagement with the historiography debate. It should again be noted here that Annabel Patterson, in discussing Holinshed's work, reminds readers:

how extraordinarily complicated, even dangerous, life had become in post-Reformation England, when every change of regime initiated a change in the official religion, and hence in the meaning and value of acts and allegiances. (6)

Depictions of history were then, as now, an act of power, especially as history was then used to legitimise more than nationalistic pride, with lines of royal succession tied to the Brutan line. The variants' authors were not immune to censorship. Holinshed's *Chronicle* was censored (Clegg). His "Preface to the Reader" begins by highlighting that it is "dangerous" to write a historiography such as this "vvhile fo many fundry men in diuers things may be able to controll mee" (iiijr). Grafton was imprisoned three times for his various publications (Ferguson). The rich potential for analogies within the Leir story, as well as its capacity to fuel the "historiography debate," feasibly heightened the fear of censorship and constrained Brutan retellings of the story—making them largely consistent. Driven by a nation building agenda, and positively reflecting on the Queen, Brutan variants' nationalism, conservatism, and self-censorship allowed retellings of the Leir story to flourish during the Brutan years, more than in any other period in this study. Thus, the first of the three layers within the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story is revealed as a consistent and conservative set of cognate texts, which glorify the nation and the monarch through the recounting of history and a defence of its historicity.

To the Reader:

In Chapters 5 and 6, I collate variants from the diversification years (1600-1639) using the same method of historical collation and addressing the same bibliographic, paratextual, and narrative elements as my collation of the Brutan variants (1557-1599). This collation is focused on both diachronic and synchronic analysis, yet the diversification variants often defy categorisation and synthesis, proving themselves to be as different from one another as they are from variants within the Brutan and stagnation (1640-1710) eras.

Though there are fewer diversification years variants than Brutan years variants, the diversity of the variants, as opposed to their number, proves to be pivotal with regards to the scale of the findings. As a consequence, I have divided findings from the diversification variants into two chapters. Chapter 5 collates the bibliographic, paratextual, and contextual elements of the variants, and Chapter 6 addresses the narrative elements. Together, these chapters reveal not only how the palimpsest of Leir variants changed between the Brutan and diversification eras but also what influenced it to do so.

The collation raises many questions that are answered in these chapters: What is the impact of the movement of established historiography into parasite history genres? What lends authority to the variants? Why are unique inclusions prevalent? Why are Leir's daughters now evil? Most importantly, is Leir still a king of history, or is he now a king of legend? The most significant contribution to knowledge provided by this thesis is revealed in this chapter, when the process of historical collation identifies a new source for Shakespeare's play.

Diversification Years Variants		
Date	Author	Title
1604	Harry, George Owen	<i>The Genealogy of the High and Mighty Monarch, James</i>
1605	Anonymous	<i>The True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his Three Daughters</i>
1605	Camden, William	<i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>
1608	Shakespeare, William	<i>Mr William Shakespeare: His True Chronicle History of the Life and Death of King Lear and his Three Daughters</i>
1610	Higgins, John	<i>Mirror for Magistrates</i>
1620	Johnson, Richard	<i>The Golden Garland of Princely Pleasures and Delicate Delights</i>
1622	Taylor, John	<i>A Memorial of all the English Monarchs</i>
1623	Shakespeare, William	<i>Mr William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies</i>
1630	Taylor, John	<i>A Memorial of all the English Monarchs</i>

Fig. 5.1. Diversification Years Variants

Chapter 5: A Collation of the Diversification Years Variants 1600-1639

The diversification years began, as did the Brutian years and the story of King Leir itself, with a point of succession. In 1603, King James VI of Scotland ascended to the English throne as King James I, having ruled for several decades in his own country. Repeating a pattern noted in the Brutian years, the ascension of a new monarch saw an increase in the publication of Leir variants, with three of the nine diversification variants (see fig. 5.1) printed in the first two years of James's reign, and five of the nine in the first seven years. As noted in Chapter 3, the historical collation within this thesis addresses retellings of the Leir story present within works published in the British Isles in English, between 1557 and 1710, seeing them as representative of the broader early modern palimpsest of Leir variants.

The Brutes' historical existence, and therefore that of Leir, was pivotal to James's claim to the throne. Though his accession was promisingly smooth, it was not without legitimate contestation. James was a foreigner and thus, under the terms of Henry VIII's will, unable to rule (Parsons 400). He was rumoured to be illegitimate (L. Hopkins 5), and his Scottish birth evoked longstanding feuds between the Scots and English. The Scots were wary of the 'auld inemie' England and the English intolerant of a kingdom that they thought to be inferior (Wormald). James and his supporters strategically sought to justify his accession by hereditary descent, knowing it to be stronger than by election. He made clear that he had both matrilineal and patrilineal claims to the throne—a double descent from Henry VII. James represented a union of the Roses (Woolf, "The Idea" 32). His double descent was based as much on the truth of Galfridian history as it was on his parentage:

James claimed a dual lineage (both Tudor and Stuart) from Arthur, and proposed to fulfill Merlin's prophecy of a united Great Britain by wearing the crowns of both Scotland and England. (Budra, "The Mirror" 6)

This foregrounding of James's double descent from Brute led to a proliferation of works that engaged with the Brutian kings upon James's accession, which subsequently served to reaffirm Galfridian historiography. His coronation entertainment, devised by Ben Jonson and Thomas Dekker, was filled with allusions to Brute and his founding of Britain (Parry 156). Verse-makers and genealogists were likewise engaged (Woolf, "The Idea" 63). James himself added to the number of works showcasing the Brutian kings. His *Basilikon Doron*, already printed in Scotland, was reissued in England, with newly included passages relating to Brute and his sons. Diversification Leir retellings were thus impacted by James's succession and part of the subsequent reinvigoration of interest in the Brutian line. Three of the nine diversification variants were printed in the first two years of James's reign, with two of these explicitly defending his right to the throne. George Owen Harry's genealogy stands as a showcase of genealogical skills, displaying his "great ingenuity of form" (Jones 383), designed to honour the new king and justify his accession through his linear descent from Brute.

That King James and his supporters drew on Brutian histories to justify his succession should have fuelled the historiography debate (outlined in Chapter 4), as Brute was not a part of early modern Scottish histories. The English believed that Brute divided his kingdom into Scotland, England, and Wales, with his son Albanactus ruling Scotland. The Scots did not: "the Scots traced their descent not to Brutus and the story of the *translatio imperii* at all but to Scota, daughter of Pharaoh, and her Greek husband Gathelus" (L. Hopkins 122). Scottish histories contradicted English histories and consequently could be used to contest the existence of Brute. Worse still, the Brutian monarchs were previously:

a useful political tool in contestations between England and Scotland, with the English claiming Brute's ancient overlordship of the isle as demonstrating their claim to suzerainty over the Scots. (Robinson-Self 34-5)

The usefulness of Brutan kings for the newly crowned English king, in demonstrating his double descent, far outweighed the risk of offence or credulousness that their use might cause. Thus the Brutan line was used by both Tudor and Stuart monarchs to quash questions of succession. The Brutan line was of sustained service to the king, not only to justify his succession, but also in aiding his union project. Having unified the crowns of England and Scotland with his accession, James, in his first address to parliament, made clear his intentions to formally unify the kingdoms (Richards 110). In support of his contentious and openly debated project (Kanemura 321; Richards 111; Wormald), pro-union works drew clear analogies—James sought to unify what the great founding king Brute had divided: “the public utilisation of the Brutan histories in the service of James VI and I's union project, [was] a strategy that appeared to originate with James himself” (Gilchrist 7). It was a strategy so successful that, though James abandoned his thwarted attempts to unify Britain in 1608, this theme “dominated the first decade of the century, and echoes of it would be heard even after that” (Woolf, “The Idea” 61). That eight of the nine diversification variants were published during James's reign is reflective of these circumstances, with Leir's divided kingdom the antithesis of James's desire to unify his.

The diversification years encompass the entirety of James's reign and the accession of his son Charles I in 1625. Notably, an increase in variant numbers is not repeated at Charles's ascension, with only one substantive diversification variant printed in the first five years of his reign. Unlike Elizabeth and James, Charles's right to rule was assured by primogeniture, with no similar justifications necessary for his accession, and accordingly no reinvigoration of Brutan historiography. However, this is not the only plausible motivation for the dearth of

substantive variants published between 1625 and 1639 (the diversification years ruled over by Charles). The lead up to civil war should also be considered for its impact, though this may be less than expected. The terminal date for the diversification years, 1639, marks a decade before the Interregnum. Teleologically, seeds of discord between the king and parliament are evident at the end of the diversification years and the inevitability of the conflict appears clear. However, at this time, for parliament, king, and populace, civil war was far from inevitable: “The 1630s were a period of calm between the storms of foreign and civil wars” (Kishlansky and Morrill; see also Bucholz and Key 212-3).

The diversification years are so named for the variants’ many differences across textual and paratextual elements, the most evident of these being genre. In Chapter 4, the collation of the Brutan years, it was noted that from the mid-sixteenth century the medieval chronicle and its consistent functions “dissolved” (Woolf, *Reading History* 26) into a range of genres reflecting the chronicle’s traditional functions: historical, commemorative, informative, communicative, or entertaining genres. Brutan variants did not respond to this trend and were largely historical and factual in function. While traditional histories of this type were still prolific elements of the book trade during the reigns of Elizabeth and James, they would rapidly decline under Charles (Woolf, “The Idea” 243 and 246), with historiography itself in a “state of stagnation” by the mid-1630s (Woolf, “The Idea” 246). Here diversification variants align with the book trade. Though late to show diversity, they do reflect the “dissolution” of the traditional functions of the chronicle in varied genres. Additionally, they partially reflect the dawning stagnation of traditional historiography, with only one historiography within the first fifteen years of Charles’s reign (Taylor 1630) and only five of the nine diversification variants traditional historiographical genres. This is a marked decrease from the Brutan years, in which all variants were of traditional historiographical genres.

The diversification years include a range of varied genres that are grouped within this thesis into two groups. Harry's genealogy, Camden's antiquarian historiography, Higgins's moral verse, and Taylor's 1622 and 1630 historiographies, although themselves diverse in genres, are representative in style, content, and consistency of more established forms of historiography. The anonymous play, Shakespeare's first quarto (Q1), Johnson's ballad collection, and Shakespeare's First Folio (F1), again diverse in genres, are all parasite histories. Parasite histories are seen for the first time and almost equalling historiographies in their number (four of the nine). This inclusion of more diverse, popular, and ephemeral text types during the diversification years is reflective of trends not just in the book trade and Leir variants but also, as earlier noted, within historiography. The diversification years saw, within the book trade, the completion of the rupture of the traditional chronicle historiography into what Daniel R. Woolf identifies as "descendent genres" (*Reading History* 26). He clarifies:

In short, the chronicle didn't so much decay as *dissolve* into a variety of genres such as almanacs (informative); newsbooks, diurnals, and finally newspapers (communicative); antiquarian treatises and classically modeled humanist histories (historical), diaries, biographies and autobiographies (commemorative) and historical drama, verse and prose fiction (entertaining). (*Reading History* 26)

Woolf coins the term "parasite genres" to refer to those works that served to entertain, while still serving a historical function: "These clearly derived from the chronicle but were much more able to meet the public demand whether because more readable, cheaper, or more novel" (*Reading History* 26). Within this thesis, Woolf's exemplary research and his designation of parasite history genres have been adopted with one amendment to reflect the parameters of the study and the bibliographic, paratextual, methodological, and stylistic elements of the variant. Adopting yet adapting Woolf's designation of genre is also consistent with the earlier redefining of the bibliographic term "substantive" to focus within this thesis

on the substantive nature of retellings as opposed to complete works. Though drawing attention to its historical function, Woolf includes historical verse as a parasite history genre. However, Higgins's moral retelling, a recension of earlier Brutus variants, is more closely aligned with established historiographical variants and is thus considered as such within this thesis. Though divided here into established historiographical and parasite history genres, these groupings are not intended to belie the diversity of genres within each grouping. The subsequent collation will demonstrate that, even within these genre groupings, there was great diversity in retellings of the Leir story.

Variants from the diversification years largely parallel, without actually mirroring, the book trade. The British book trade was then benefitting from two changes: increasing specialisation across stationers, multiplicity of genres, and a growth in popular literature; and a greater interest in reading and increased literacies amongst all levels of society (Barnard et al. 19; Echard 90; Erne, *Literary Dramatist* 6-7; Feather 236-237; Hellinga 214). Popular print and rising literacy rates, though both difficult to definitively quantify during this time, were co-occurring and mutually perpetuating elements of book culture (Barnard et al. 504). Although Leir variants paralleled the book trade's diversification and popularisation, they did so at a delayed pace. Diverse genres, especially popular genres such as ballads and plays, were present and contained retellings of historical events almost a century before they retold the Leir story. As previously noted, "popular" is a contested term and used within this thesis both in relation to high rates of consumption and to designate a range of genres that were created specifically for general readership.

Of note is that the diversification years saw more than popular parasite history genres, as I would additionally suggest they saw the popularisation of established historiographical genres. Highly respected antiquarian William Camden produced his *Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain* in 1605, a work that has been described as "a popular spin-off from

its more expensive and serious historical mother lode, the *Britannia*” (Herendeen). A more pointed exemplar of the popularisation of historiography is the work of John Taylor. On first inspection, Taylor’s *A Memorial of all the English Monarchs* (substantives in 1622 and 1630) appears to be a chronicle of traditional medieval design. It contains the ever present “Epistle Dedicatory,” complete with clarificatory marginalia, calls for patronage, and reference to methodology (A2r). The lives of the monarchs are then recounted in chronological order, each a discrete entity. However, a closer inspection of the work reveals how it has deviated from traditional chronicle design.

Taylor actively promoted himself as “the water poet,” acknowledging his life-long profession as a Thames boatman (Capp, “Taylor”; Finlayson 121-122). Taylor’s first work, *The Sculler, Rowing from Tiber to Thames* (1612), contained a woodcut depicting him at work on the Thames, and below it the waterman’s cry as a Latin epigram (Capp, “Taylor”). Taylor was a self-styled poet of the people. His works repeatedly acknowledged and celebrated his working and non-learned status (Capp, “Taylor”; Finlayson). He acknowledged the same of his audience in the title of his 1648 work: *Mercurius Nonsensicus: Written for the Use of the Simple Vnderstander* (emphasis added). This repeated association of both writer and audience as “simple understanders” was more than an advertising trick, with Rebecca Fall highlighting Taylor’s ability to transform the perplexingly clever nonsense verse genre for a wider reading public:

Taylor’s nonsensical writings, which I argue work to popularize erudite poetry by translating what un- or semi-learned readers might perceive as literary obscurity to a more congenial idiom. (88)

Taylor’s *Memorial*, following trends noted in his other works, is here suggested as a popularisation of the medieval chronicle. His brief “Epistle Dedicatory” contains many abridged elements of traditional historiographical epistles, but is plain and clear in language

and style, mainly, and uniquely, providing a clarifying summary of the work that follows. The standard prolonged and elegantly rhetorical, obsequious dedication to patrons and royals is replaced by mere mention of “our beftt Monarch Iames” (A2r). Instead of lengthy lists of authors consulted in the creation of his work, Taylor helpfully recommends his readers consult Boethius, Holinshed or Stow if they seek more detail than he provides. Rather than abbreviations and citations, marginalia note the most dramatic moments of the monarchs’ reigns. Images, a technique used to support newly- or semi-literate readers (Barnard et al. 3), were also included. Taylor’s *Memorial* mirrored medieval chronicles but transformed the genre for the popular audience.

Appeals to a more diverse audience were found in many other diversification variants. John Higgins’s moral verse suggests *all* readers will find pertinent examples for their moral edification within the book, and not simply the ruling and elite typically addressed by the *Mirror* tradition: “The rich and poore, and eu’ry one may fee, / Which way to loue, and liue in due degree” (B4r). Though much of the prefatory material of William Shakespeare’s First Folio (F1) seeks to elevate the status of its author and the contents of the work, it contains an address “to the great variety of readers” which indicates its intended audience was broad: “From the most able, to him that can but spell” (A3r). Finally, George Owen Harry’s genealogy could be seen to appeal visually to the popular audience. Harry showcases his knowledge of genealogical formats by utilising the visual format of “medieval Beibyl ynghymraec” (Jones 383). Harry’s genealogy is set out such that it is a visual representation of the family tree of Brute (see for example fig. 5.2 below). The reader is able to visually and literally follow the familial lines of succession, using running titles and diagrammatic setting out to track each line. Though more detailed, this visual formatting was akin to that of pedigree scrolls with which all readers were likely familiar. Pedigree scrolls of the reigning monarch were frequently displayed prominently in wealthy homes and civic buildings

(Trevisan). Thus, I suggest that all diversification variants are either popular, parasite history genres, the popularisation of historiographical genres, or inclusive of appeals to the broader, popular audiences.

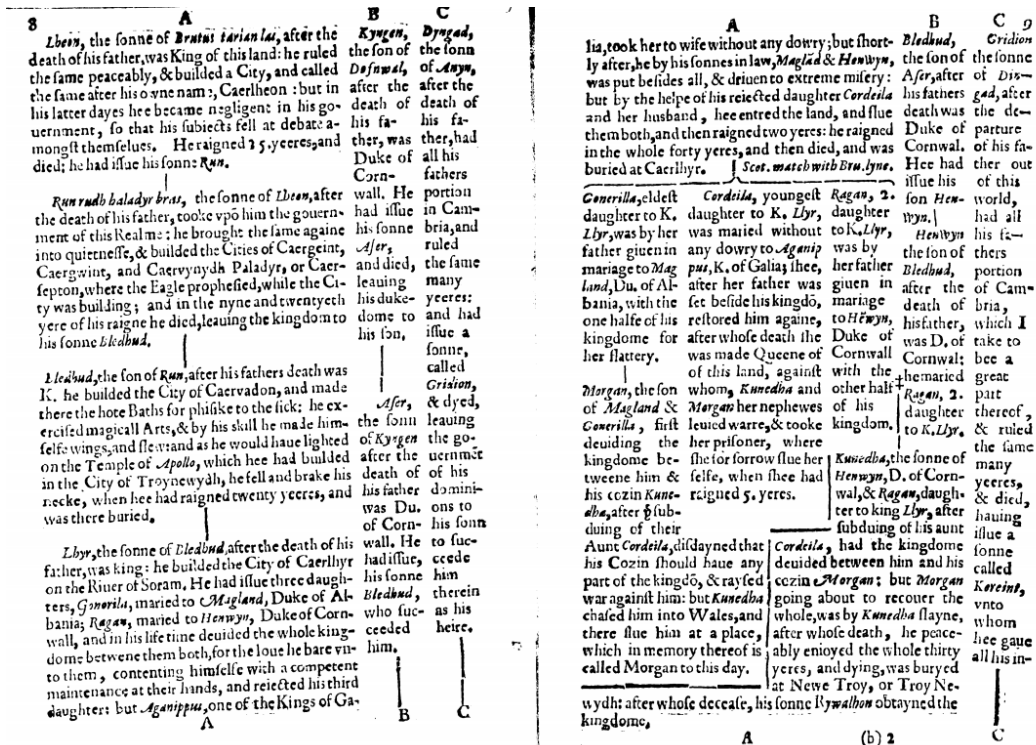


Fig. 5.2. Harry’s visual formatting. This page includes the Leir family (b2v and r).

Whilst Leir variants of the diversification years were no longer purely traditional historiographies, that does not mean that they were not all considered histories. Eight of the nine variants, all but Shakespeare’s F1, proclaims itself to be a “history” within its title. Two of the four parasite histories, or both quarto plays, extend this claim to “true, chronicle, history.” Some understanding of early modern perceptions of parasite history genres, as genuine records of history, is evident within contemporary texts. Thomas Heywood was a leading playwright, historiographer, and stagnation years variant author. In his 1612 *Apology for Actors*, he suggests:

playes haue made the ignorant more apprehenfiue, taught the vnlearned the knowledge of many famous histories, instructed such as cānot reade in the difcouery of all our *English Chronicles* ... from the landing of Brute, vntill this day. (F3r)

Although a leading playwright may not have presented an unbiased perspective, Heywood's thoughts do align with the proliferation of history plays seen from the 1580s and considered "one of the most important developments in popular appreciation of the past" (Archer 214). Ben Jonson extends the veracity of historical plays through an exchange between two characters in his play *The Devil is an Ass*:

Mer. By m'faith you are cunning I'the *Chronicle*, Sir.

Fit. No, I confesse I ha't from the Play-bookes,

And thinke they'are more authentique. (23)

Thus, the rupture into diverse genres did not necessarily question the historicity of their contents.

Diversification years conceptions of the difference between history and legend, and between historiographical and popular texts, were unformed. Woolf notes that the distinction between historical "fact" and traditional "belief" was nascent ("From Hystories" 37), with the lines between fact and fiction then "more often a matter of negotiation than of confrontation" ("From Hystories" 65). Ivo Kamps even notes "a trend toward cross-fertilizations and (apparent) interchangeability of history and literature in the early Renaissance" (9) citing Sir Walter Raleigh in his *The History of the World* (1614), who in turn cites Sir Philip Sidney's *Apology for Poetry*, uniquely noting the impact of "poets" on history prior to 1614:

For it was well noted by that worthy Gentleman, Sir PHILIP SIDNIE, that Hiftorians doe borrow of Poets, not onely much of their ornament, but fomewhat of their subftance. Informations are often falfe, records not alwayes true. (536)

Raleigh's assertion acknowledges many elements key to the diversification years. He implies the existence of the historiography debate, which contested the factuality of the Brutan kings. Additionally, Raleigh acknowledges the new breadth within historiographical genres, and the important role of parasite histories within these, including their capacity to fictionalise the story (later discussed) and by doing so their impact on historical works. Finally, Raleigh's assertion is clouded by a lack of generic clarification seen within the diversification years, with a wide range of texts newly considered as histories. This generic classification becomes clearer in the stagnation years (as addressed in Chapters 6 and 7), as it is only at this time that the book trade becomes more established and the genres within it become more standardised.

While accurate, it is teleological to note that the diversification years did mark a dawning shift from Leir as king of history to king of legend, with a legend being a "traditional story sometimes popularly regarded as historical but not authenticated" (Oxford English Dictionary). In many ways, this shift did not devalue the historical understanding nor the social value of the Leir story:

The unwritten history that persists in nursery tale and legend, just because it nourishes the roots of national sentiment, is a stronger factor in determining a country's policy than is sometimes recognised. The belief that English kings had a right, other than that of the sword, to the thrones of Wales and Scotland, of Brittany, and indeed to the whole of France, though bolstered from time to time by specious arguments, had its ultimate source in the Brut and Arthur legends and remained as an unnamed and unrecognised force of prejudice when the stories themselves only survived as poetical legends and when the memory of the political doctrine they embodied had become so attenuated as to be no more than a subconscious race memory. (Parsons 397)

The nascent shift from historical to legendary personage is discussed in the following chapter, which includes the collation of narrative elements. The impact of the historiography debate,

outlined in Chapter 4, “helped push beloved legends into the world of fiction” (Morse 123). Yet history and legend were not as distinct as fact and fiction during the early modern era. The fictionalising of a “history” may even have served to broaden the audience and reinforce the collective belief in the truth of that “history.” Additionally, historiographical debates that surround the existence of the Brutes had raged amongst antiquarians and humanists during the Brutan years, but were unlikely to have extended beyond them and their select readership: “One has to assume, therefore, that Englishmen and women, with some exceptions, were not in a position to evaluate critically the historical knowledge they received” (Kamps 5). That the diversification variants are either popular, popularised, or considerate of the popular audience may suggest their audience was not aware of the debate. Importantly, James Knapp notes the distinction between “history” and “literature,” with their concomitant terms of “fact” and “fiction,” did not appear until well into the modern era (30).

Though less conspicuous, a final defining feature of the Brutan years seen in the diversification years is the historiography debate surrounding the accuracy of Galfridian historiography. This debate was sustained throughout the broader book trade in the diversification years, with writers giving testimony to the truth of Galfridian historiography well into the seventeenth century (Robinson-Self 36). Within the context of the diversification years, Galfridian and anti-Galfridian history existed side by side (Parry 157). There is a sense that they existed not as conflicting, rival histories, but in an amiable cognitive dissonance, created by convenience and perpetuated by national pride: “Whether or not Brute had ever existed had little bearing on his continuing existence, or his ability to generate meaning” (Robinson-Self 40). The historiography debate is therefore less present in diversification years variants than in the Brutan years, with the majority of texts failing to engage with that debate. The only variants to address the debate were those of William Camden and John Taylor. Camden’s work is often seen as pivotal to the historiography

debate, with scholars routinely recognising that it represents a collective point of acceptance of Polydore Vergil's doubt (Breen; Gilchrist; Herendeen). Camden silently acknowledges Geoffrey of Monmouth's Brutan line as fictional by supplanting it. Camden's 1605 *Remaines of a Greater Worke, Concerning Britaine* does not engage with the debate in prefatory material. It is the work itself that offers an outcome to the debate. Camden tells the story of Ina, King of West Saxons—a story that he concludes with: "One referreth this to the daughters of king Leir" (183). Leir is not the protagonist—he is a footnote. Taylor, the "water poet," came late to the historiography debate, making this addition to his 1630 *Memorial*, published during the reign of Charles I:

I follow the common opinion: for many Writers doe neither write or allow of Brutes being here ... Howfoeuer, Histories are obscured and clouded with ambiguities, some burnt, loft, defaced by antiquity; and some abused by the malice, ignorance, or partialitie of Writers, so that truth is hard to be found. Amongst all which variations of Times and Writers, I must conclude there was a BRVTE. (A6v)

This reference was not included by Taylor in his 1622 *Memorial*, published during King James's reign. It demonstrates an increasing public awareness of the historiography debate with the newly literate and popular audiences, as signalled by the Water Carrier's changes.

Diversification variants may contain a comparative lack of intensity of engagement with the historiography debate because of their length, which in turn is partially reflective of their new genres and appeals to the popular audience. Some consistency is seen between Brutan and diversification variants with regard to text size, as both eras have approximately half in quarto format. However, the length of the historiographical variants that dominated the Brutan years had steadily increased, with Holinshed's 3,000 page tome the upper limit. This trend is not seen in the diversification years. Taylor's popularised chronicle, which covered the same time span, was a concise 80 pages in 1622 and only partially extended to

112 in 1630. Camden's historiography is also reduced from those of the Brutan years, being 300 pages. Altering trends in size and length of works likely reflect their popularisation and appeals to new audiences, with texts now more portable and less financially constraining. Within these works, the length of the retelling additionally varied widely, from Camden's noticeably succinct work to full-length plays.

Alterations to the typical structure of the works co-exist with, and are likely co-dependent on, these differences in length. All but one of the eleven Brutan variants included extensive prefatory material. Half the diversification variants (Harry, Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, and Johnson) contained no prefatory material. Of those that did, two of the lengthier diversification variants (Camden, and Higgins) include prefatory material that aligns directly with those of the Brutan years and likely reflect their status of established historiographical genres. Taylor's (1622 and 1630) reduction and popularisation of traditional chronicle prefatory material has already been discussed. The reduction in the number of variants containing prefatory material, as well as the condensing of prefatory material when included, is far more complex than simply a matter of length. The prefatory material of the Brutan variants consistently framed and constructed the contents of their works as histories—methodologically justified, legitimately patronised, and well-researched histories. The diversification variants show no such contextualisation.

The prefatory material of diversification variants, when included, does address a number of topics seen in the Brutan variants, including the “historical revolution” and the historiography debate. These were most frequently seen in Brutan variants through differing calls to authority and discussions of historical methodology. Whilst remembering that less than half the diversification variants contain prefatory material, the majority of these do allude to their methods and/or the debate—though these allusions are often implied and lack the rigour of Brutan variants. The most notable of these is Camden, as he is uncannily silent

on the debate he is said to have finalised. Camden does include mention of how his recording of events “may be proved” (4). His section on “grave speeches,” which contains the retelling, is said to have been gathered from many histories, and the source of the retelling itself is recorded as “anonymous.” Modern scholars corroborate this anonymity. Wilfrid Perrett notes: “There is nothing whatever but this spurious seventeenth century anecdote to connect Lear with Ina or Wessex” (124).

The only other works to have prefatory material comment even more obliquely on the debate. Niccols, editor of Higgins’s diversification years *Mirror for Magistrates*, does make numerous references, inserting a new address to the reader which suggests: “the stories in some places false and corrupted, [are] made historically true” (A5r). Niccols, however, later reveals that he has left the tragedies from Brute to the Conquest as Higgins had them—confirming Galfridian historiography. Shakespeare’s F1 makes no comment on historiography in its prefatory material. Its classification of *King Lear* as a tragedy, and not a history, is perhaps the only glimpse of the debate—this is akin to Camden’s variant, as it shows the outcome of the debate and not the reasoning behind it. The only other work with prefatory material, though brief, is Taylor’s. His 1622 variant reveals no indication of the debate, but alterations made to the 1630 variant, as discussed earlier, defend the existence of the Brutes as historical figures and maintain the debate. Thus, the question of the historicity of Galfridian historiography, and therefore of the Leir story, was still evident but significantly less present in the prefatory material of diversification years variants. In comparison to the Brutan years, the most evident difference in the diversification years’ variants was also the greatest force for change in the retellings—the movement of the retelling into multiple and varied genres. There is likewise noted a clear movement towards catering to the broader audience or, given the financial demands of the book trade, appeals to a newly forming and

growing popular market. Though diversified, each of the retellings retains a degree of historicity and a historical function but often fails to reinforce this for the reader.

5.1 Collation of Bibliographic and Paratextual Elements

Before commencing the collation, questions regarding the publication date of a variant should be noted. One of the variants, Richard Johnson's 1620 *Golden Garland of Princely Pleasures and Delicate Delights*, contains the first retelling of the Leir story in ballad form, yet clearly notes on its title page that this work is "third time Imprinted" (emphasis added). Limited scholarly activity has tried and failed to date the lost, first edition of this work. The only other extant edition of *The Golden Garland* is the thirteenth edition of 1690. Serving as proof of concept for the method suggested within this thesis, especially with regard to its capacity to answer the call of new source studies scholars, my historical collation of variants of the Leir story has demonstrated that the ballad *A Lamentable Song of the Death of King Leare and his Three Daughters* is a source for Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

The identification of a new source for Shakespeare's play may be considered the greatest contribution of this thesis to source studies. However, it falls outside the delineations of this study, outlined in Chapter 3, as it is a "lost" work. Thus, demonstration that the ballad is one of Shakespeare's sources, and a discussion of the impact of such, are included in Appendix 4, instead of in the body of this thesis. Consequently, though earlier editions of *The Golden Garland* existed, and the ballad pre-existed Shakespeare's play, following the delineations of this study as outlined in Chapter 3, the date 1620 is used for this Leir variant.

The Golden Garland, and its potential thirteen impressions during the diversification years, is not the only variant to be available in multiple versions, a trend that likewise occurred in the Brutan years. Substantive diversification variants co-existed with derivative

forms of themselves, as well as derivative versions of Brutan years variants and their recensions. Within the diversification years, existing alongside the substantive variants within the broader palimpsest of variants of the Leir story were an additional nineteen derivative forms of Brutan variants, with the work of John Stow accounting for seven of these. There were likewise an additional twenty derivatives of the diversification variants themselves—thirty-one if taking into account the lost *Golden Garlands*, the most reprinted variant of this time. Thus, though the Brutan years, being the first era of this study, contained a higher number of substantive retellings of the Leir story than the diversification years, eleven as opposed to nine, the diversification years saw a higher number of retelling impressions overall, forty-nine (if considering the lost *Garlands*), as opposed to thirty-six in the Brutan years.

Also of note, and indicative of their diversity, is that parasite history variants regularly co-existed with non-textual versions of themselves. Outside the delineations of this study, but serving as context, is that ballad and play variants co-existed with oral and performative versions of themselves. These printed works explicitly drew attention to their performative versions. The title of the anonymous play *King Leir* calls attention to the fact that it has been “*diuers and sundry times lately acted.*” Shakespeare’s Q1 (1608) follows suit, noting both performance and performers in its title: “*as it was played before the Kings Maiestie at Whitehall vpon S. Stephans night in Christmas hollidayes. By his Maiesties seruants playing vsually at the Gloabe on the Bancke-side.*” Also deferential to its oral form, *The Golden Garland’s* 1620 title defines its contents as “*Being most pleasant Songs and sonnets to sundry new Tunes now most in vse.*” Within it, *A Lamentable Song of the death of King Leare and his three Daughters* has its tune prominently centred under its title. This acknowledgement, even privileging of oral forms, is not seen in Shakespeare’s F1 (1623), which, as is later discussed, empowers not the theatre and the players, but the author and the text throughout

prefatory material: “Reade him, therefore; and againe, and againe” (A3r). Therefore, a key diversification seen during this era is with regard to the form and number of variants. The diversification years saw the repetition of old retellings in derivative works, the generation of new substantives, the regeneration of prior texts made substantive through significant alteration, and the reworking of both, through authorial collections. They additionally saw variants co-existing with performative and oral cognate versions. The diversification years provided both multiplicity and diversity within an increasingly complex, diverse, and accessible palimpsest of Leir variants.

5.1.1 *Authors of the Diversification Years Variants*

As with many elements of the book trade, the rise of the author is not neat, linear, or chronologically definitive. Though authors were acknowledged on frontispieces of some incunabula, it was not until 1710, the chronological end of this study, that authors were given ownership of their own works through the Statute of Anne. The diversification years, however, do mark a moment in book history where there was a sharp rise in the “recognition of the writer’s authority” (Barnard, “Introduction” 22). This was seen in the book trade in a clear development of authorial voice within works (Woolf, “From Hystories” 47) and the profession’s rise in stature (D. J. Shaw 234-5). This broader context is only partially reflected in the authorship of diversification variants, with authors conversely less present than in Brutan variants, largely through the reduction or removal of prefatory and paratextual material necessitated by the movement into more varied genres.

Before addressing authors of the diversification variants and the roles they played in retelling the Leir story, some clarity needs to be provided with regard to who authored the variants. Both the Brutan and diversification years each contain one anonymous work. Yet

problematically, whilst the authors of the remaining Brutan variants are clear, the author or authorising force behind diversification variants is more complex. The only anonymous work within the diversification years is the 1605 play *King Leir*. Scholars have not reached consensus on who authored this work. Consensus has been found, however, on the company that owned and performed it—The Queen’s Men (Ioppolo, “A Jointure”; Lee; McMillin and MacLean). Lukas Erne has clarified the pivotal role that acting companies played in bringing plays to print (*Literary Dramatist* 109). Dennis Austin Britton and Melissa Walter acknowledge the complexity of identifying the authorship of early modern plays in relation to the subsequent impact on understanding sources: “early modern playmaking was arguably a more deeply collaborative practice, and therefore it creates a more complex picture of both the identities of authors and their processes of composition” (5-6). Likewise, speaking specifically about the Queen’s Men’s plays, Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean further “authorise” the role of the company: “acting companies were responsible for the plays they performed and can be evaluated according to that responsibility” (xii). McMillin and MacLean’s work identifies how Queen’s Men’s plays, including *King Leir*, are consistent in their inclusion of the company’s medley style, their ideological focus, and the talents of their leading actors. Thus, though anonymous, the 1605 play *King Leir* could be seen to be “authored” by the Queen’s Men.

This call to performance and performers as an authorising force is likewise seen on the only other quarto play text within diversification variants, Shakespeare’s 1608 Q1. Both quarto play texts contain no prefatory sections and few paratextual elements, with the bulk of the texts the plays themselves. They contain no direct addresses either from or to the authors of the works. The context created by title and text is the performance context. Certainly, Q1 is equally reflective of the King’s Men’s performance style and performers as the anonymous *King Leir* is of the Queen’s Men. Notwithstanding longstanding questions of the copytext

used for Q1 (as summarised in Chapter 2), it is routinely accepted that Shakespeare was not involved in the printing of Q1. Thus, although Shakespeare is the author of Q1, the King's Men and their performances, particularly their performance at court as noted on the frontispiece, also act as an authorising force. Both quartos stand in stark contrast to the only other play variant within the diversification years—Shakespeare's F1 of 1623. This work does show the rise of the author, celebrating Shakespeare as author of the work, with extensive paratextual material that serves to identify and valorise his authority: "for his wit can no more lie hid, then it could be lost" (A3r).

Authorial clarity is also lacking with regard to Johnson's 1620 *The Golden Garland*. The work declares its author on its frontispiece, but it is most likely that Richard Johnson was collector and curator of the ballads, and that the Leir ballad itself is anonymous. A. G. Chester suggests that the frontispiece of the work declares Johnson as collector, not author, as a "garland" was understood by early moderns as a "miscellany," with Johnson credited as having "enlarged and corrected" the contents of the volume, not as having authored them (67-68). Having categorised Johnson in this way, note must also be made of Higgins's 1610 *Mirror for Magistrates*. Richard Niccols was editor of this work and thus the fourth editor of its different iterations. As well as extending the work, Niccols is highly present in paratextual material and consequently influences the frame through which the retelling is encountered. He clarifies his alterations: "the stories in some places false and corrupted, made historically true" (A5v). Niccols made no alterations to Higgins's retelling of the Leir story, except to remove the authorial, moral commentary from the end. Consequently, though Higgins is clearly still "author" of this variant, editorial intervention has reduced his presence. Clarity is lacking also with regard to Camden's *Remains of a Greater Work*, though it appeared to be a poorly kept secret. William Camden was unusually cryptic, not naming himself as author, but merely signing his dedication with the final letters of his name—"M.N." This lack of clarity

with regard to who authored, or “authorised,” the diversification variants, was unseen in the Brutan years and does not reflect the rise of the author seen within the broader book trade.

There is additionally a sharp contrast between the status and social identity of authors of the diversification and Brutan variants. In the main, each of the Brutan authors was a well-known and well-respected historiographer and often a notable presence in the book trade and/or civic affairs. Authors of diversification variants are themselves diverse. Three of the nine authors could be considered of similar standing to those of the Brutan years. Higgins’s prominent standing was established in the Brutan years. Likewise, Camden was a highly respected and influential antiquarian and herald (Herendeen). He was, perhaps, the most influential historiographer of his time (Woolf, “Erudition” 22-23). His pivotal role in the historiography debate has already been noted. His influence spread to thinkers as important as Ben Jonson and John Donne (Herendeen). Finally, little known George Owen Harry belongs to the category of respected personages: “The parson was a genealogist and an able antiquary, and his name is often quoted in later manuscripts as authority for pedigrees” (Jones 382). Though having only this one work printed, his manuscript work was more prominent, even acknowledged by Camden in *Britannia*.

The majority of the variants were authored by people with little civil standing or presence in the book trade. Taylor was a self-styled poet of the people, who “never pretended to a social status beyond his menial position as a laborer” (Fall 89-90). Johnson, collector of *The Golden Garland*, found some success in the book trade. However, the epistle of his earliest publication, *The Nine Worthies of London* (1592), reads akin to a defence of his unlearned status and acknowledges that he was mocked by more acclaimed authors for his literary ambitions: “the reproch of prouerbiall scoffes as (Ne futor vltra crepidam) shall discourage me from proceeding” (A4v). Three of the parasite histories are authored by playwrights, with the two quartos earlier noted as “authorised” as much by their

performances or performing company. Two-thirds of the variants thus have as their authors playwrights, poets, water carriers, and poor country men. Each of these was either a popular parasite history or historiography popularised for the emerging popular audience. It has previously been noted that the rise in literacy in the general populace coincided with the rise in popular literature. Authorship of diversification variants reflects this. In some ways, they denote the “rise” of a new kind of author, alongside the “rise” of newly diverse genres.

Another difference between authors of the Brutan years variants and those of the diversification years is that the Brutan authors were all explicitly present within their works. Four of the nine diversification years variants show no presence of the author within the text (Harry, 1604; Anonymous, 1605; Shakespeare, 1608; Johnson 1620). Additionally, Taylor’s presence is only slight within both of his works (1622 and 1630), though increased in the later work through the inclusion of additional editorial comment and the inclusion of a catalogue of his other works. Thus, the majority of the diversification variants, six of the nine, include no or limited presence of the author.

By contrast, authors are highly visible within three of the nine diversification variants and thus demonstrative of the rise of the author (Camden, Higgins, and Shakespeare 1623). Most representative of this rise is F1, with the prefatory and paratextual material dedicated to Shakespeare as author surpassing that of any other Leir variant. His authorial presence is unique and tellingly different from that of Camden or Higgins, partially because these authors address readers directly in their works, whereas Shakespeare’s presence is constructed after his death through the praise of his contemporaries. Much paratextual material has been included to honour Shakespeare, and affirm his status as playwright. Of note is that F1, one of the two lengthier texts, contained all the prefatory material typically seen in Brutan historiographies, containing two addresses to the reader, an epistle dedicatory, and multiple

dedications to Shakespeare. The difference here is one of content, not structure, in that each of these sections served solely to celebrate F1's author, Shakespeare.

The frontispiece of the Folio is dominated by an engraving of Shakespeare. The verso comments on the relative inferiority of the craftsmanship of this imposing image: "O, could he but haue drawne his wit." The title of the work begins with his name, Mr William Shakespeare, with Mr then an "honorific prefix" (Marcus, *Puzzling* 24). The lengthy prefatory material amounts to seven folio pages of explicit praise for Shakespeare. Praise is offered first by John Heminge and Henry Condell, both of whom had a role in bringing F1 to print. Ben Jonson follows, questioning "Am I thus ample to thy Booke, and Fame" crediting Shakespeare as being "Soule of the Age!" (A4r). Several others follow suit, with L. Digges praising the folio and uncannily predicting: "Be sure, our Shake-speare, thou canst neuer dye" (A6r). Leah Marcus suggests these paratextual elements and their valorisation of the author, contrasting with Shakespeare's absence from Q1, were a means to offset the potential lower status of plays at that time. They likewise heighten the presence of Shakespeare within this variant and mirror the rise of the author within the book trade.

The book trade itself saw a rise in the prominence of the author during the diversification years, with increased recognition, a clearer voice, and a rise in stature. This rise was not mirrored in the diversification variants themselves, which demonstrates, in contrast to the Brutan years, the overall reduction of the author's presence and status. Whilst all Brutan authors are present within their works, only a third of the diversification authors are. Brutan variant authors held positions respected within society, historiography or the book trade. Diversification years authors did not, with several bearing lowly, middling, or even ridiculed status. The presentation of Shakespeare within F1 (1623) provides a clear exception to this and stands as the sole exemplar of the rise of the author, but this rise is at the expense of the historicity of the work. Combined, these changes largely reflect the new genres of

diversification variants. As a consequence, there is less “authorising” and less validating of the historicity of the story.

Thus, a collation of the bibliographic elements of diversification years retellings of the Leir story has revealed more than a diversification of parasite history genres with variants, though this was undoubtedly the difference that was most prominent. There was greater diversity in the author’s social and literary standing. This coincided with a lack of clarity with regard to who authored the variants, with the influence of editors, collectors, and performers also acting as agents of authority. The diversity of genres manifested in works which often contained no prefatory material, largely parasite history genres. As a consequence, there was less engagement with the historiography debate and less opportunity to justify the works as histories—factual histories. The retellings were most often structurally removed from lines of succession and chronology. Overall, the diversification years saw the popularisation and compartmentalisation of the Leir story. Still presented as a history, it is less historicised, less contextualised, and less legitimised. It was also less debated and more accessible to an audience that was increasing in size due to rising literacy rates.

5.2 Collation of Stylistic Elements of the Retelling

Key stylistic distinctions between the Brutan and diversification years are the structural devices used by variants and the comparative proportion of the retelling to the broader work. Tied to their role within national history, all eleven Brutan variants retold the reigns of Leir and Cordeilla as just one part of the chronological history of the Brutan line. The majority of these (seven) retold the history of every Brutan king. This is not the case with the diversification years. Only a third of the works were structured so that Leir’s story was retold as part of the full, chronological descent of the Brutan line (Harry, Camden, and

Higgins, with Harry the only to address all Brutan monarchs). Higgins and Camden both present selected parts of this chronology, both presenting the Leir story in sections devoted to great speeches. Higgins's first-person monologue recounts the story from Cordeilla's perspective. Camden's "grave speeches," though in third-person, sees the story included because of Cordeilla's speech. The remaining four of the nine variants entirely remove the retelling from the Brutan line. The quarto plays (Anonymous, and Shakespeare 1608) solely contain the Leir story. Johnson's *The Golden Garland* contains ballads on historical topics and people, yet there is no clear, let alone chronological or successional, order. Uniquely, Shakespeare's F1 imposes a generic order in its collection of Shakespeare's plays. Here Leir appears as part of the works designated tragedies, not amongst the histories. Therefore, due to generic constraints, diversification variants appeared to be moving the retelling away from its historical frame.

That the Leir story is frequently told as a stand-alone story in the diversification years would imply a privileging of sorts, yet this is not the case. Both quarto plays (Anonymous and Shakespeare 1608) do privilege the Leir story by focusing solely on it and by extending its length well beyond anything seen in the Brutan years. Yet this honour came late to the Leir story, some twenty years after the proliferation of history plays (Archer 214), and as such does not stand as a genuine foregrounding of the story. Within Brutan variants, three-quarters privileged the Leir story over other components of the text, by selecting it for inclusion, its comparatively extended length, or the use of additional elements such as woodcuts. This privileging is not seen in the diversification years. Four of the nine variants, or four of the seven that include the Leir story as part of a broader work (Harry, Taylor 1622, Shakespeare 1623, and Taylor 1630), show no foregrounding of the Leir story. Camden and Higgins privilege the Leir story only through its inclusion in their works, when other Brutan monarchs were excluded. A degree of preference is shown by Johnson, whose work opens

with the Leir ballad. Hence, though consistently present, the Leir story was comparatively less privileged during this time.

In the main, where Brutan variants shared many consistencies in style, the diversification years do not, though they frequently stylistically overlap with or complement each other. They are united by a shared focus on history, but divided by different generic needs. The diversity of variant genres has already been noted, as has their grouping within this collation into two diverse groups—established forms of historiography, and parasite history genres. Also noted has been their chief commonality, that they were popular or popularised in some ways. The Leir variants that stylistically most resemble their historiographical Brutan years predecessors are the established forms of historiography, with Camden's antiquarian chorographical (1605) and Higgins's moral history (1610) most consistent. Both Camden's and Higgins's works contain prefatory material, such as addresses to readers and dedications. This paratext does call attention to the works' historicity and veracity, and therefore that of the Leir story. They do so through calls to authority, discussions of methodology, and structural devices such as marginal notes. These were all common to Brutan variants and contemporaneous historiographies. Amongst the prefatory material is also an indication of genre. Higgins notes his work: "whofe sentences (for the molt parte) tende either to teache the attaining of vertue, or efchuing of vice" (A2r). Camden refers to his antiquarian search for knowledge, referring frequently to both the ancient writers and antiquities he has consulted. Although these diversification variants represent the more traditional forms of history, both include the Leir story as a historical soliloquy, demonstrating a synergy with the ballad and play variants, and thus a cross-over between established historiographical genres and parasite history genres.

Complete stylistic diversity is seen within parasite histories (Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Johnson, and Shakespeare 1623). Thus, diversity was introduced of generic necessity

as authors altered the established history and its established form, to reflect genres new in print but established in oral and performative versions. The most influential generic necessity was length, with material of necessity extended and added within the retelling itself, as opposed to paratextual material. The three play variants extraordinarily extend the retelling of the story to over seventy pages in length. As a result, each play extends established parts of the Leir story and include new elements. They include more characters and give life to those previously supernumerary. Both quarto plays (Anonymous and Shakespeare 1608) were published well after the peak of the popularity of history plays on stage in the 1590s (Lammers 24), and after the first two decades of their popularity in print (Archer 214). That they were published at this stage in the development of the history play could account for a degree of standardisation of their features such as the setting out of dialogue and inclusion of stage directions. However, many of the elements now standard in a play text are not present. There is no prefatory material, no *dramatis personae*, and no act or scene divisions.

Most striking about the parasite history variants is that it is the first time each historical personage within the Leir story is able to speak for her/himself. The historical personages become historical characters and are described, with their actions clarified, in greater depth and clarity than in any preceding variant. Where earlier variants had seen Leir accompanied by a knight or servant when he was turned out by his elder daughters, now Leir is accompanied by Perillus in *King Leir*, and by Kent and the Fool in Q1. Each of these characters is fully developed in both the theatrical and the narrative sense. Likewise, they act as a theatrical device to allow the King to reveal his thoughts and explain his decisions. The exigencies of performance, troupe size, and staging conventions necessitated these changes being made to the story in both quarto plays. Thus, initially, these alterations speak more to performative practices than to critical engagement with the Leir story.

More specifically, these retellings of the Leir story reflect changes made specifically for their performance companies, which are here considered authors. McMillin and MacLean note that a key element of the Queen's Men's style was their desire to "tell the story plainly, and to tell it again, and to tell it so that no one can possibly miss it" (134). This is evident in their alterations to the Leir story. Though almost eighty pages in length, most additions serve only to elaborate, clarify, and exaggerate elements of the established Galfridian history. In Q1, Shakespeare not only elaborates and clarifies Galfridian history, he also alters it considerably, partly through the inclusion of a sub-plot that both mirrors and is combined with the retelling of the Leir story. This fictional sub-plot is another device allowing the extension of the established history to a length appropriate for "two hours traffic" on the stage. It is notable, however, that a fictional sub-plot was added, instead of extensions to the Galfridian original. Whilst the large majority of Brutan variants featured the story as just one part of the text, and some (such as Harvey's) have interspersed the retelling of the Leir story with other elements of the work, no other variant has included a sub-plot that is interwoven with, and impacts on, the story. Notably, this sub-plot is non-historical. Certainly, there was a Duke of Gloucester, a King Edgar and a King Edmund in British history. Edgar was King of England from 959 to 975AD, and Edmund King of East Anglia from 841 to 869AD, but scholars have been unable to find sufficient overlap between these kings and the characters or events of the play (Foakes 46; Gilchrist 13). Source study scholars indicate that the story of Gloucester and his natural and bastard sons was derived from Philip Sidney's 1593 pastoral romance *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. This non-historical subplot was important enough to warrant its inclusion in Q1's title, which, contradictorily, also draws attention to Leir's historicity: *true chronicle historie of the life and death of King Lear and his three daughters. With the vnfortunate life of Edgar, sonne and heire to the Earle of Gloster*. Through the inclusion of a non-historical sub-plot, Q1 alters the traditional narrative elements

of the Leir story and shows it to be more malleable, potentially even showing it to be less historical.

Both plays are further reflective of the companies for which they were written through the inclusion of characters created to showcase each company's key actors. For example, both plays have added comic characters not previously seen in Leir variants. Robert Hornback highlights the importance of the comic clown or fool as a theatrical device that often acted as a link between audience and play. The anonymous play's Mumford, attendant to the Gallian King yet not part of established history, was created for Richard Tarlton, the Queen's Men's famous clown actor (Hornback). Displaying elements of Tarlton's style, the character was bawdy and physical, with Mumford, who disguises himself as "Jack" (an early modern synonym for fool), often speaking in riddles: "More bobs, More: put them in still, / They'll serve instead of bombast" (Act V, Sc II, Lines 31-32). Likewise, the role of the Fool added to Shakespeare's Q1 and F1 is routinely accepted as having been created for Robert Armin, who established the "wise fool" tradition (Hornback; Wiles). The Fool's humour is different from Mumford's. He is a bitter, witty, cryptic, all-licensed fool, who speaks the truth while ridiculing and taunting his master:

Lear. Do'ft thou call mee foole boy?

Foole. All thy other Titles thou haft giuen away. (D1v-D1r)

These quarto plays' previously unseen inclusion of comic characters is reflective of more than performative traditions and company actors; it is reflective of the theatrical tastes of broader, popular audiences. The anonymous play goes further in this appeal, including humour and bawdy in every role, even those of Leir and Cordeilla. Cordeilla's punning interactions with Mumford stand in contrast to her pious and religious characteristics in other scenes:

Mum. Well, if I once see Brittainne agayne,

I haue fworne, ile ne're come home without my wench ...

Cor. Are you fure, *Mumford*, she is a mayd still?

Mum. Nay, ile not fweare she is a mayd, but she goes for one:

I'le take her at all aduentures, if I can get her.

Cord. I, thats well put in. (G2r)

In this way, the quarto plays are contradictions. In them, the Leir story was both represented and understood as a history. Yet they are stylistically far removed from traditional, established forms of historiography. The quarto plays show a willingness to alter and extend the story in ways that serve the company, the play genre, and its broader, popular audience, instead of prior alterations made to reinforce the veracity of the Leir story itself or flatter the nation and its monarch. Even so, whilst doing so they still draw attention to themselves as parasite histories:

Of vs & ours, your gracious care, my Lord,

Deferues an euerlasting memory,

To be inrol'd in Chronicles of fame. (Perillus to Leir: Anonymous, *King Leir* A3v-A3r)

The quarto plays were histories, but parasite histories that demonstrated a more malleable, popularised, and decontextualised approach to the story.

The most stylistically distinct parasite histories are Johnson's *The Golden Garland* (1620) and Shakespeare's *F1* (1623). These collections are more literary stylistically, in that they present themselves as works of literature designed for reader enjoyment rather than historical works for reader edification, when parasite histories traditionally then served both to entertain and retell history. It has already been noted that they are devoid of any of the traditional historiographical prefatory material associated with Brutan historiographies.

Johnson's octavo collection of ballads, in contrast to the quarto plays, subtly distances itself

from its popular equivalent, the broadside ballads, a genre that has only in recent years recovered from prejudices that began in the early modern era (Würzbach 1). Although demonstrably ballads, there is stylistic distance between these ballads in collection and the broadside ballad which contained the entirety of the ballad on one side of a folio sheet of paper, most commonly replete with illustrative woodcuts. In collecting these ballads, Johnson's focus turned to merely the textual elements of the broadside, removing the visual and only fleetingly acknowledging the aural, encasing this popular genre in a more literary frame in collection.

This distancing from earlier popular forms can also be seen in Shakespeare's F1 (1623), a work made impressive by its length and size as well as its extensive prefatory material in praise of its author. The plays within it are grouped into three genres: tragedies, comedies, and histories. *King Lear* is here a tragedy, where Q1 was a history. This is the first time that the title of a variant had failed to designate itself as a history. F1 contains many of the elements that modern readers would expect of a play text: stage directions, dramatis personae, prefatory material on the playwright, and clear act and scene divisions. It is a play designed to be read as a play—a performative experience made clear in literary form. More so than in either of the earlier quarto plays, the reader is able to understand and “experience” the play. In contrast to Q1, there are noticeably more stage directions, for example in the storm scene the stage direction “Storme ftill” is repeated throughout, acting alongside implied stage directions in the dialogue to reinforce the setting and build tension for the reader. There is reference to a larger cast or more cast members within individual scenes, building a clearer understanding of characters and context. How the dialogue was said is made more explicit to the reader than in Q1 through the inclusion of more verbal utterances, more repetitions of words, more contractions, and more pointing overall. Grammar then was elocutionary as opposed to syntactical. Early modern era pointing, or punctuation, was thus designed to

clarify how something was said (Dessen; Jonson, “English Grammar”). In this way, F1 is a more “theatricalised” text as well as a more literary one—it is a play designed to be read as a play. It appeals to a much broader audience, “From the most able, to him that can but spell” (A3r), but its size and consequent cost, as well as its lengthy prefatory material, likely excluded many. The parasite history variants that were most stylistically different from earlier variants therefore exclude previously seen reinforcements of Leir’s historicity to include more literary stylistic elements.

Stylistically, diversification variants stand out for their variety. Transformation into differing parasite history genres necessitated alterations and additions beyond those seen before. The variants represent a movement away from Brutan years historiography. On the whole, they move away from the calls to authority, such as citations and discussions of methodology that featured in the paratext and retellings of Brutan years variants. They most often identify themselves as histories, yet do not self-consciously seek to prove their historicity. Though there were two works that contained only the Leir story, there was less privileging of the retelling within variants compared to the Brutan years. The increased length of their new genres impacted on the need for more detail related to all elements of the story, including historical personages. The styles of these new and as yet unstandardised genres frequently overlap with or complement each other, drawing attention to their shared existence as histories. They show a clear movement, first away from traditional historiography and toward popular parasite history genres, then away from the popular and toward the literary. In this way, the historicity of the Leir story is less a point of focus and emphasis.

5.2.1 *Morality and Topicality*

Didacticism, morality, and historiography were inherently tied throughout the Brutan years. Over half the Brutan variants, six of the eleven, explicitly offered moral commentary on the Leir story, either within or after its retelling. Only a third of the diversification variants do so. This is not to imply, however, that as a whole the remaining variants lacked connection to morality or religion, nor that the movement to parasite history wrought this change. There is, however, a shift in the diversification variants away from this function of history, often associated with medieval and Tudor historiography, to another related function—history’s potential to provide contemporary analogy.

The variants more closely aligned to their Brutan predecessors, through a focus on history’s capacity to provide moral instruction to the reader, were surprisingly not those most stylistically aligned with Brutan variants: the anonymous quarto play (1605), Higgins’s *Mirror* (1610), and Johnson’s ballad (1620). This is not to suggest that these works did not include topicality nor that the two were aligned. The diversification variant most similar in its approach to the Brutan years variant’s moral edification of readers is the first ballad retelling of the Leir story—Johnson’s 1620 *The Golden Garland*. “A Lamentable Song of the death of King Leare and his three Daughters” is a historical ballad that ends with the traditional structural device of the moral: “Thus have you heard the fall of pride and disobedient sinne” (Stanza 23 B2v). Dialogue within the ballad heightens its moral didacticism, with Leir addressing the reader: “In what I did let me be made example to all men” (Stanza 14 A4r). In the ballad, it is Leir’s actions, as well as those of his daughters, that are found wanting. This is unique to variants of both the Brutan and diversification years. While the fool of Q1, and to a lesser degree of F1, finds flaws in Leir, it is unusual that the retelling consistently uses the actions of the monarch as explicit moral warning, instead of an opportunity for flattery. Even

Harvey in his Brutan years defence of the Brutes' existence and actions found more virtues than flaws in Leir's actions.

Also providing clear moral instruction to readers is Higgins's 1610 *Mirror for Magistrates*. This edition of the work, under the editorship of Niccols, "evolved from a politically corrective exemplar of the poetry/ history combination into a mundane and sentimental book of moral platitudes" (Budra, "The Mirror" 2-3). As with earlier substantive versions of the work discussed in Chapter 4 as part of the Brutan years, the *Mirror*, part of the de casibus tradition, recounts historical tales for their capacity to provide moral instruction. This remains evident in the retelling, though explicit moral commentary which previously concluded the monologue has been removed. The Leir story, told from the first-person perspective of "Queen Cordila," immediately establishes its desire to provide moral instruction to the reader:

Therefore if I more willing be to tell my fall,

...

Some others haplie may auoid and fhunne the thrall (59)

Although the retelling, and the text as a whole, is largely focused on the moral instruction, paratextual material does provide a topical frame, later discussed.

The most overtly moralistic and explicitly religious diversification variant is the anonymous 1605 quarto play *King Leir*. Though it lacks the explicit moral coda of the ballad, and the moral frame of Higgins's *Mirror*, the play is replete with allusions to religion, religious practices, providentialism, and moral reflexivity, reflective of the purpose of the medieval chronicles to which its title alludes. Contradictorily, it is also replete with blasphemy and bawdy inference. The inclusion of both speaks equally to its genre and the company that performed it. The Queen's Men's political agenda was still evident in this early Jacobean text: "The Queen's Men were formed to spread Protestant and royalist propaganda

through a divided realm and to close a breach within radical Protestantism” (McMillin and MacLean 166).

Within the play, there are references to Catholic beliefs, perhaps in deference to Leir’s historical context of pre-Protestant Britain. There are likewise references to the aforementioned Protestant beliefs. Largely, more generalised Christian piety serves as the silent fabric of the text, even appearing in commonplace dialogue. In the anonymous play, Leir’s daughters are not merely kind, they are: “the kindest Gytlef in Chriftendome” (C1r). Contradicting James’s belief in the divine right of kings, but aligning with providentialism, King Leir is represented as subservient to God’s will. In the opening scene, Leir hopes that his plan to divide the kingdom “do fort with heauenly powers” (A3v). In the final scene, in contrast to other variants which see the victory due to the “right” or “might” of the quest to regain the throne for Leir, both Leir and France thank God and the heavens for their victory. God’s will, and the characters’ subservience to and honouring of such, is given credit for both saving Leir and Perillus from a murderer and Cordeilla’s saving of a distressed Leir who is newly arrived in France. Forgiveness serves as a trope throughout, both that of God and the characters. All but one of the uses of the word “forgive” and its cognates are spoken by Leir and Cordeilla who seek, give, and receive forgiveness, both for themselves and others. Leir observes for example, “God pardon on high, and I forgiue below” (H4v). The extensive references to religion, morality, and God’s will within the anonymous play align it with Chronicle historiography—a tradition to which its title refers, but from which the play has generically ruptured into a parasite history.

These explicitly moral variants, however, are in the minority, with two-thirds of the variants shifting stylistically from history’s potential to provide moral commentary to its potential to act as contemporary analogy. Consequently, they continue a trend noted in the Brutan variants that saw the later and more generically diverse variants as more likely to

include topicalities of this kind. This is also consistent with the broader field of historiography of the time. Dan Breen notes: “writers of traditionally ‘literary’ and traditionally ‘historiographical’ texts alike considered questions of politics, philosophy, and religion” (1). Likewise, Woolf suggests that writers often approached topical issues through the “mirror of analogy” as a mechanism to avoid censorship (“From Hystories” 50), suggesting the early seventeenth century saw a “politicization of antiquarian learning” and histories that had a “harder edge” (*The Idea* 26 and 144). The diversification variants differ from this trend, in that whilst the majority contain topicality, it is more often, as in Brutan variants, in service to the monarch than offering critique.

More specifically, the majority of the works, six of the nine, focused more on history’s new purpose, that being to provide a “mirror of analogy,” instead of on its previous moral imperative (Harry, Camden, Shakespeare 1608, Taylor 1622, Shakespeare 1623, and Taylor 1630). Indicative of his antiquarian approach, Harry’s 1604 genealogy contained no explicit or implied moral instruction for the reader. Part of the flurry of works serving to clarify and legitimise James’s accession to the throne, Harry’s topicality was in service to the new king. Camden’s use of topicality is evident in his 1605 *Remaines of a Greater Worke Concerning Britaine*. Its service to the king is markedly greater than Harry’s. Camden’s 1605 work, in its prefatory material, explicitly, implicitly, and repeatedly supports James’s union project, a topic that “dominated English politics” (Wormald) for the first five years of James’s reign—1603 to 1608. It was James himself, confident of his plans, who reintroduced the name “Great Britain” into political discourse (Parry 156)—nomenclature which both united the kingdoms and evoked the historical founding of the nation by Brute. “Union fever” reached its height in 1606, a year after Camden’s work was printed, but began its steep descent in 1608, with parliament’s final rejection of the proposal (Gilchrist 11; Woolf, *The Idea* 56).

Camden's *Remaines of a Greater Worke Concerning Britaine* was printed during the grip of "union fever" and acted in support of the union and the newly self-titled King of Britain—a king who had extended to Camden "extraordinary privileges as Clarenceux" (Herendeen). Camden's prefatory material is loquacious in its praise for James. It is also strategic:

That to his endlesse honour MERCIE and TRVTH, RIGHTEOVSNES and PEACE may heere kisse together; and true RELIGION, with her attendants IOY, HAPPINES, and GLORY, may heere for ever seate themselves vnder him; in whose person the two mightie kingdomes of England and Scotland hitherto severed, are now conioyned, and beginne to close together into one, in their most antient name of BRITAINE. (3)

Throughout the work, Camden's affirmation of James's union project acts as trope. Camden even counters concern that had been raised regarding James's absolutist approach: "The power of the Kings [is] more absolute, than in most other kingdomes" (4). This overt pro-union topicality in support of the king frames the retelling of the Leir story and clarifies the reasoning behind the inclusion of a story that Camden does not depict as true.

Camden's work was a watershed moment in the erosion of Galfridian historiography, as his retelling of the story is recast with Ina, King of West Saxons, as protagonist, whose story merely "referreth" (183) to the daughters of King Leir. Although questioning the validity of the Leir story, Camden's inclusion of the Leir story would initially appear to speak to James's union project, particularly as one of the key themes of union polemics was: "the political dangers inherent in a disunited or a divided kingdom" (Richards 104). However, once again contradictorily, in his variant Camden recounts the love test but not its outcome. In *Remains*, there is no indication that Ina/Leir divides the kingdom, and the negative consequences of such division are not included. Camden's work confounds. He has chosen to include a Galfridian history which he has demonstrated to be false. While affirmation for the

union project proliferates elsewhere, Camden fails to include the elements of the Leir story which would have served to capitalise on union themes.

The remaining works which contain no explicit moral instruction, but clear topical reference, are those of Taylor (1623 and 1630), whose topicality differs in that it extends beyond support for James. Taylor's support for James is implied through the tracing of James's genealogy from Brute and consequently the justification of his right to the throne, aligning with his earlier work which had been more explicit in its support of royalist causes (Capp, "Taylor"). The greatest topicality in Taylor's work speaks also to his popularisation of historiography. Taylor positions his work within debates on social division and social hierarchies (Fall 90 and 99). This, however, is largely present in the style of the variant and not the content.

The final diversification variants to contain clear topicality are Shakespeare's Q1 (1608) and F1 (1623). Q1 and F1, as the most studied of all the variants, have been identified by decades of scholarship as containing a great deal of differing topical material on matters such as succession, the union project, rebellion against the crown, and nationhood (Marcus, *Puzzling* 148-9; Morse 133; Taunton and Hart 699). Topicality is further discussed in the next chapter in the collation of narrative elements. It is perhaps unsurprising that The King's Men would be obliged to honour their patron and his causes within their works (Gurr, *Company* 177). Yet there are topicalities that critique as well as those that support James within both texts. Their differing topicality reflects the times in which they were printed, as Q1 was printed at the height of union fever and F1 well into its decline. The most frequently referenced topicality in Q1 and F1 is also their most significant alteration to the Galfridian history—the plays' finale. Shakespeare's variants see Cordeilla and Leir die immediately after the battle to return Leir to the throne. The abridgement of the traditional timeline sees their deaths, and the earlier deaths of Gonorilla and Regan, occur before either sister could

conceive the sons who, in established history, later overthrow Cordeilla and continue the Brutan line. Shakespeare's retelling of the Leir story obliterates the Brutan line—a line that traditional historiography suggested had founded the nation—a line that sired King James himself, and Elizabeth before him. The apocalyptic outcomes of Leir's decision to divide the kingdom were likely presented as inducement to accept James's union project. This topicality is extended in Q1, which sees Albany, husband of Leir's eldest daughter, Gonorilla, and thus rightfully positioned to assume the mantle of King, utter the last lines of the play and inherit the kingdom. Notably, Albany married Leir's eldest daughter and Cornwall married his second daughter in Shakespeare's variant. This differs from the majority of other variants, which see the marriages reversed, with Albany marrying the second daughter. Albany was then the name given to the area of Britain north of the Humber—Scotland. The title Duke of Albany was the title James held when young, and was subsequently the title of his youngest son (Gurr, *Company* 173). Shakespeare's Q1, published early in the reign of King James, sees the destruction of the Brutan line and replaces it in British pre-history with a new line, that of the Duke of Albany—the Scottish Stuarts. The play acts to legitimise the succession of the new monarch and echoes his desire to unify the kingdom.

Shakespeare's Q1 (1608) and F1 (1623) also contain satirical and critical topicalities, with differences between the texts, or elements removed from Q1, frequently accounted for with reference to diminishing topicality and/or censorship of topical issues (Foakes, 146; Marcus, *Puzzling* 148-9; Taylor and Warren; Wells, *Oxford*). Though not implying F1 lacks topicality nor critique of the king, Q1, printed in the year that James's union project received its final rejection from parliament, is routinely seen to offer more critique of the new king than F1. This is reminiscent of Spenser's work in the Brutan years. Differences in topicality between Q1 and F1 represent a rich field of scholarship and are covered in detail within

modern editions and other scholarly works. As a consequence, they are addressed briefly here and only extended as relevant within the collation of narrative elements in Chapter 6.

Topicalities within Shakespeare's variants link to James's sale of knighthoods, war with France, coining, naturalisation of the Scottish, absolutism, rebellion, and unification (Foakes; Olsen; Taylor and Warren; Taunton and Hart). Topicalities are also seen in the role of the Fool—subversive in the world of the play and through analogy to James. More than a character licensed to critique a king (Hornback), the Fool provides direct analogy to James, who was the first English king for some time to have a court jester, Archie Armstrong: "Archie was noted for an impudence verging on arrogance, but retained considerable influence throughout the reign of James and on into that of Charles I" (Foakes 51). Therefore, both plays, to differing degrees, contain topicalities, some of which support the king, but many of which do not.

Didacticism, morality, and historiography had long been tied together within historiography. The diversification variants saw the loosening of these ties and by doing so reflect the "dissolving" of the medieval chronicle and its morality and providentialism into diverse genres with diverse purposes. In the main, diversification variants focused on history's capacity to draw contemporary analogy, with topicalities explored largely, but not only, in service to the king. Although there were still moral lessons to be learnt within the variants, they were less stylistically explicit. Whilst topicality and morality existed side by side in the majority of variants, there is an imbalance in their usage. Two-thirds of the variants primarily exploited history for its capacity to draw topical analogy, and one-third focused on its capacity to provide moral edification. This continues a trend noted in the Brutan variants, which saw the later and more generically diverse variants more likely to include topicalities. As is later clarified, they differ from these Brutan variants in that diversification variants contain topicalities that are more frequently granular instances within

works, instead of sustained correlations. The diversification variants, parasite history genres designed for broader audiences, reduced the moral learning within the retelling of the Leir story and increased its topicality. This is plausibly due both to the stylistic demands of the new genres and the desire to cater to a broader audience.

5.3 Collation Synopsis

A collation of the bibliographic and paratextual elements of substantive retellings of the Leir story printed during the diversification years (1600-1639) reveals increasing complexity in the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story when compared to those printed during the Brutan years (1557-1599). This complexity and diversity were driven primarily by trends within historiography that saw the “dissolving” of the traditional historiographical functions of the medieval chronicle into multiple genres.

Beyond their diversity, the two defining features of the diversification years (1600-1639) are the movement of the Leir story into parasite history genres (largely popular genres) and their collective consideration of a broader reading audience. In turn, these overlapping trends in the book trade and historiography may have been the cause of, or equally caused, their diversity. It should be noted, however, that, although Leir variants paralleled the book trade’s diversification and popularisation, they did so at a delayed pace. Also delayed was the impact of the rise of the author. In comparison to the Brutan years, diversification variants show an overall reduction of both the presence of authors in works and their societal status—lending less authority to the historicity of the Leir story. This coincided with a lack of clarity with regard to who authored variants, with the influence of editors, collectors, and performers also acting as agents of authority.

The structure of diversification variants was substantially different to Brutus variants, with these changes reflective of generic necessities. New genres, particularly parasite history genres, required the story to be lengthened. As a consequence, established elements were extended and exaggerated, and new elements were added. The diversity of genres generated works which often contained no prefatory material. Subsequently, there was less engagement with the historiography debate and less opportunity to justify the historicity of the works. The retellings were most often structurally removed from lines of monarchical succession and chronology—and thus removed from history itself. Transformation into differing diverse historical genres, including parasite histories, necessitated alterations and additions beyond those seen before. The diversification variants additionally saw focus on history's capacity to draw contemporary analogy, with topicalities explored largely, but not only, in service to the king.

Taken in their totality, the works themselves lend less authority to the story of King Leir, and less justification of its existence as a national history, yet through their diversity they bring this national history to a broader audience. Though it contains Shakespeare's two variants, there is nothing within the second layer of the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story to indicate why Shakespeare's *King Lear* now acts as its metonym. His two variants are no more unique in their approach to the story than the other parasite history variants. They are, however, more likely to fictionalise it. The following chapter collates the narrative elements of diversification variants in light of the findings of this chapter and further demonstrates the impact of Leir's generic diversification.

Chapter 6: A Collation of the Narrative Elements of the Diversification Years Variants

Chapter 4 identified that, within their narrative elements, the majority of the Brutan years (1557–1599) variants remained faithful to Galfridian history. Where alterations occurred, these were most frequently in relation to elements of the Leir story that resonated, either positively or negatively, with Queen Elizabeth I's rule. Consequently, both diachronic and synchronic discrepancies within Brutan variants were limited, and most frequently shaped by the avoidance of topicalities through omission or the exploration of topicalities through extensions. This chapter, focused on the narrative elements of the diversification variants, demonstrates that, in the main, diversification retellings of the Leir story show less faithfulness to Galfridian historiography. There are significant omissions, additions, and alterations. Some of these completely fracture the fabric of the established story.

The variants can be split into two groups that alter the narrative elements of the established tale in differing ways. The more established forms of historiography (Harry's genealogy, Higgins's moral verse, and Taylor's two popular chronicle variants), similar to Brutan variants, most often altered the story through the exclusion of elements. The parasite history genres (the anonymous Queen's Men's play as well as Shakespeare's two plays the first Quarto of *King Lear* [Q1] and his First Folio [F1], and Johnson's ballad) show the most significant alterations, especially to representations of historical personages and the final elements of the Leir story: the battle to reclaim Leir's throne and Cordeilla's succession. The movement of Leir's story into parasite history genres appears to be the motivation for alterations, with works extending, adding, condensing, and reforming by generic necessity. This movement, however, was not consistent in that the differences within the retellings do not consistently fall along generic lines. All the plays, for example, do not have consistent

alterations. The variants were unified by their combined connection to traditional, established historiography more than their new generic forms.

6.1 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: Introduction to Leir

As with Brutan variants and Galfridian historiography, diversification variants largely begin with an introduction to Leir, King of Britain. There is, however, escalating discrepancy and vagary in relation to the land over which Leir ruled—sometimes Britain, sometimes England, often unclarified. In the main, Brutan variants provided a positive introduction to Leir, focusing on his right to accession and achievements as a king. Diversification variants are only partially consistent with this trend, shifting the focus to his status and role as king. Some variants alter the focus entirely to depict Leir as a man, more than a monarch. The majority, but not the entirety of these, are parasite histories. History is made malleable, expanding to accommodate broader audiences and generic need, with many variants providing much more detail on Leir's personal qualities. That they expand their description of Leir, but frequently exclude legitimising his right to accession, or articulating his achievements, is notable in its contrast to Brutan variants and aligns with their new generic forms.

Specifically, all but one of the variants (Camden 1605) provide comment on Leir's attributes within their introduction to the retelling. The majority, six of the eight, focus on Leir's role as king. Though George Owen Harry's is most similar, four partially align with Brutan variants (Harry, Johnson, and Taylor 1622 and 1630) through mention of Leir's reign and achievements as a king, "King Leare once ruled in this Land, / with princely power and peace" (Johnson A2v). The two remaining variants to focus on Leir's role as king uniquely do so through implied, performative rather than explicit means, likely due to their genre

(Shakespeare 1608 and 1623). Their depictions additionally imply critical analogy, aligning with criticism of King James I's absolutist approach. William Shakespeare's Q1 and F1 see Leir enter after the sound of a sennet, in royal procession. His court is deferential and his first words disclose, through use of the royal "we," his intent to divide his kingdom. As the scene unfolds, Leir accepts no advice and punishes those who contradict him. Thus, though six of the nine diversification variants begin as Brutan variants did by establishing Leir as king, there is no longer justification of his right to rule, inclusion of his achievements is no longer consistent, and his rule is not always positively depicted. The focus moves more to Leir's enactment or embodiment of his kingship and away from his right to rule and his achievements. This is partially reflective of the story's new generic forms, but likewise serves as less justification for the existence of the historical king.

Introductions to the remaining two variants (Anonymous and Higgins) shift their focus on Leir almost entirely from monarch to man. The anonymous Queen's Men's play does so most explicitly, almost superseding Leir's role as king with his role as father when introducing him. Leir is deeply grieving the loss of his "deareft Queen" (A2r). The introduction to Leir praises his lost wife, "Whofe foule I hope, poffeft of heauēly ioyes" (A2r), when other variants praised Leir's reign. The anonymous play, published soon after the death of their patron Queen Elizabeth I, is unique. No other Brutan or diversification variant mentions Leir's Queen. She is simply absent from the story during the diversification years. She is also absent during the Brutan years—even the Galfridian original does not represent her as part of the royal line. Yet her loss is felt so deeply by the anonymous play's king that he feels no longer able to look after his daughters, nor his nation, without her. In stark contrast to the absolutist king of Q1 and F1, the Queen's Men's Leir is shown seeking the advice of his court about his abdication and the subsequent marriage and accession of his daughters.

That this anonymous Queen's Men's play, published shortly after the accession of James I (1605), amends the Leir story in this way is notable. Certainly, the Queen's Men performed this play during Elizabeth's reign and in service to their patron the Queen and her policies, thus positive representations of Leir's Queen are unsurprising. Yet any assumed similarities or differences between performative and published versions are lost to history. This text was published during James's reign. James was intolerant of the old Queen and openly disparaged her upon his accession (Levin 51). This intolerance played out in histories, pamphlets, and dramas of the time (Levin 51). The anonymous play, however, uniquely includes positive representation of Leir's Queen, so positive that the king cannot rule without her. The anonymous play introduces the king as a flawed man and the Queen as the defining element of his rule. Any implied topicality at the time of its publication is subversive.

The anonymous play's Leir is also acutely aware of his age: "One foote already hangeth in the graue" (A2r). Both his age and his love for his daughters are repeatedly stressed, something which leads to his manipulation by both his advisor Skallinger, who operates akin to a vice character within the play, and his elder daughters: "For he, you know, is always in extremes" (B1v). Throughout the entirety of the play, not just its introduction, Leir is depicted as a man more than a monarch—an all too fallible human. His most fallible quality is his age, something of which he is incredibly aware: "The world of me, I of the world am weary" (A2r). It is this quality that is seen most frequently in the diversification variants, with six of the eight variants that comment on his character referring to his age (Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Johnson, Taylor 1622, Shakespeare 1623, and Taylor 1630). This is increased from the Brutan variants in which only five of the eleven provide similar stress. The introduction of Leir as an aged king could therefore partially be accounted for in its consistency with traditional historiography. That it is stressed in more variants may be due to the number that significantly extend the retelling of the Leir story and thus include more

detailed depictions of characters by generic necessity, extending pre-existing awareness of Leir's age.

Several of the diversification variants do not begin with an introduction to King Leir, as in Galfridian history. John Higgins's retelling begins with an introduction to the protagonist Cordeilla. William Camden's begins with an introduction to Ina, King of West Saxons, later referred to as King Leir. Q1 and F1 open with the merging of the fictional subplot and the Leir story itself, instead of the more traditional introduction to the king. Thus, in their introductions, several of the diversification variants fail to privilege Leir. Some depict him as man more than monarch. Many do not include his right to accede and his achievements as king. The focus of introductions within retellings of the Leir story has shifted away from traditional historiography and Brutan variants—and away from Leir's rule as a historical king.

6.2 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: The Love Test

Although detailed in the Galfridian history, only a quarter of the Brutan retellings include thorough recounts of the love test. Over half of the diversification variants do so. Five of the nine extend the content in a variety of ways. A third of the variants, however, lack detail. Each of these is a more established form of historiography. Camden's antiquarian work mentions the love test in a most perfunctory manner: "Ina King of West-Saxons, had three daughters, of whom vpon a time he demanded whether they did love him" (182). Harry's genealogy and John Taylor's popularised chronicles (1622 and 1630) fail entirely to mention the love test, stating only that Leir divided the kingdom between Gonorilla and Regan without explaining why or how this occurred: "[Leir] in his lifetime deuided the whole

kingdome betwene them both, for the loue he bare vnto them” (Harry 8). These works thus show generic alignment with their Brutan predecessors.

The majority of the diversification variants (Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Higgins, Johnson, Shakespeare 1623) extend their focus on the love test. This is partially driven, once again, by the movement into parasite history genres, with Higgins’s recount no more detailed than in earlier substantives. Variants extend the love test in differing ways. Richard Johnson in the ballad and Higgins in his moral verse extend elements of the pre-existing tale—adding more than altering. All play variants (Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608 and 1623) add new material which alters the tale. All three plays include a scene before the love test that serves to establish character and additionally includes humour or bawdy—potentially indicative of the conventions of its performative genre. Jeremy Lopez, discussing theatrical conventions and audience response, notes the prevalence and importance of bawdy puns (44). Q1 and F1 begin with a scene that merges the Leir story with a non-historical sub-plot. The scene is ribald, with Gloucester and Kent openly punning on Gloucester’s bastard son:

Kent. I cannot conceiue you.

Gloft. Sir, this young fellowes mother Could, whereupon fhee grew round wombed.

Shakespeare *Q1* B1v

This bawdy merriment is contrasted against a dramatic sense of foreboding, with Gloucester and Kent acknowledging the “diuifion of the kingdomes” (Shakespeare *Q1* B1v) is imminent before Leir even speaks a line.

The anonymous Queen’s Men’s play likewise contrasts comic and tragic elements before the love test. Its key focus, however, is on the establishment of characters, both their personal qualities and theatrical role. The scene inserted before the love test first introduces the elder daughters and uniquely establishes their negative characterisation and their malicious jealousy of Cordeilla: “Some desperate medicine muft be foone applied, / To

dimme the glory of her mouting fame” (A4v). The elder daughters, who as historical personages are heirs to the throne, are bawdy, their feminine dialogue unthinkably filled with inuendo. Gonorilla expresses one of the causes for her jealousy: “By my virginity, rather then the shall haue / A husband before me” (A4v). Skallinger, an advisor to the king, enters and reveals Leir’s love test to the elder daughters, who then plan to manipulate the test for their own gains. Here Skallinger operates akin to a vice, a traditional theatrical role: “[The vice] is at once the villain, whom the audience learn to shun, and the welcome game-maker who makes the play possible” (Wiles 1-2). Essentially, the newly included scenes before the love test uniquely establish Skallinger and the elder daughters as villains—moving the retelling away from established historiography and towards established playing tropes. Common to all variants that extend the love test is that these extensions give individual voices to the different historical personages/characters within the work, where previously only Leir and Cordeilla were rendered in any detail. Again, this was a generic necessity in the parasite histories.

In the Brutan variants, as discussed in Chapter 4, Leir’s motivation for undertaking the love test is largely as a test of his daughters’ love and not as a test for the kingdom, although five of the variants additionally suggest Leir’s test is motivated by his age. These two characteristics, Leir’s age and his desire to know how much his daughters love him, are consistently tied together in diversification variants. With the exception of Camden’s variant, all those that include the love test reference both as motivation. These qualities, however, are often included to differing degrees and are reflective of the earlier mentioned altering focus on Leir as monarch or man. Some variants, such as the anonymous ballad in Johnson’s collection, focus more on Leir’s need for affirmation of who “could shew the dearest loue” (A2r). Others focus more on his age and his desire to “Vnburthen’d crawle toward death” (Shakespeare *F1* 283). The anonymous Queen’s Men’s play, aligning with its depictions of

Leir as an aged man more than an aged king, stresses both motivations for the love test, but makes clear that age is the primary cause:

One foote already hangeth in the graue,
 ...
 And I would fayne refigne thefe earthly cares,
 And thinke vpon the welfare of my foule. (A2r)

Once again, the diversification variants, through their retellings of the Leir story, humanise Leir. Their transformation into parasite history genres, such as plays, necessitated a greater focus on character than in established historiographical genres. As a consequence, they provided varied extensions that moved beyond established historiography. In this way, they straddle history and fiction, both closer to, yet further away from, traditional Galfridian historiography.

Most often, unlike the Brutian years, diversification variants make explicit links between the love test and the division of the kingdom. The variants do, however, remain divided along generic lines. Popular parasite history variants (Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Johnson, Shakespeare 1623) tie the love test to the division of the kingdom. Those aligned with the more established forms of historiography differ. Camden's antiquarian work and Taylor's popularised chronicle elide Leir's division of the kingdom. Harry's genealogy, though failing to include the love test, merely states Leir: "in his lifetime deuided the whole kingdome betwene them both, for the loue he bare vnto them" (8).

In the Brutian years, authors' inclusions drew a strong analogue between the love test and subsequent division of the kingdom, and Elizabeth's alignment of diplomacy, favouritism, and flattery. Contradictorily, given the pre-established topicality of many of the works, identifying analogies with contemporaneous monarchs James or King Charles I is problematic. James's union project dominated the first years of his reign. At this time, the

trope of the dangers inherent within a divided kingdom was prevalent in more than officially sanctioned polemics. Harry's (1604) and Camden's (1605) variants, representative of established historiographical forms, were printed at this time, and include prefatory material that demonstrates their support of James, with Camden's explicitly supporting the union project. Yet each fails to provide detail on the division of the kingdom and love test, and thus does not exploit the topicality inherent within this established part of the Leir story when they could easily have done so in service to the king's union project.

Whilst they extend the love test and the division of the kingdom, parasite history variants (Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Johnson, Shakespeare 1623), as well as Higgins's variant, appear equally ambivalent in their approaches to pointed topicalities. Individual, implied topicalities did, however, exist. The anonymous Queen's Men's play (1605), Q1 (1606), and F1 (1623) do include characters who act to sanction the king against dividing his kingdom—with two of these printed during the height of union fever. It is equally plausible, however, that characters included to caution the king were designed to enhance dramatic effect than it is that they aligned with any specific topicalities. Unlike the more established forms of historiography, the parasite histories have remained consistent with established Galfridian historiography by including a detailed recount of the love test and subsequent division of the kingdom. Overall, while Brutan variations in the love test often spoke to alterations made in response to topicality, diversification variants show a greater response to the transitioning generic form.

6.3 Depictions of Leir's Daughters

The representation of Leir's daughters is one of the most significant points of difference between Brutan and diversification variants. Within the Brutan variants, the elder

daughters played a negligible role in the retelling, meriting scant detail. One of the Brutan variants fails to name the elder daughters—another fails to mention them at all. When included in Brutan variants, all of Leir’s daughters are consistently positively introduced in the love test, with Leir’s equal love of them noted. While Galfridian history depicts the elder daughters’ responses to the love test as overt flattery, the majority of the Brutan variants which include the test show that the daughters use only light flattery and exaggeration, or courtly rhetoric.

Diversification variants are not consistent with Brutan variants nor, to a degree, with their generic contemporaries. Only two introduce the elder daughters positively (Camden and Johnson). The remaining diversification variants differ, aligning more with Galfridian history through their negative introduction to the elder daughters. Three works do so briefly (Harry, Shakespeare 1606, Shakespeare 1623). The remaining four variants explicitly heighten the negative qualities of Leir’s elder daughters in their introductions. Taylor’s popularised chronicles (1622 and 1630) introduce the daughters simply: “The youngest good, the other two, too bad” (B4r). Higgins, through the eyes of Cordeilla, provides much more detail. The elder daughters’ jealousy of Cordeilla motivates their manipulative responses to the love test: “my fifters did despise / My grace and gifts, and sought to wrecke to wage” (60). The anonymous play goes further than all others. In it, the elder daughters are introduced as evil and Leir as unknowing. The previously mentioned additional scene which precedes the love test depicts the daughters as masterful and confident manipulators. Their jealousy of Cordeilla and their desire to manipulate their father are made clear as they plot their response to the love test: “*Gon.* I fmile to think, inw hat a wofull plight / Cordeila will be, when we anfwere thus” (B1v). The malevolent sisters of the anonymous Queen’s Men’s play appear as characters extended for dramatic effective. They are also reflective of the company’s

performative style, which appealed to the popular audience through a reliance on stereotypes in characterisation (McMillin and MacLean 127).

For the first time in their introduction to the elder daughters, the diversification variants do not divide along generic lines. Indeed, they almost reach a consensus. The majority of the variants introduce the elder daughters in more detail than their Brutan predecessors. This may in part be due to the extended length of the diversification variants. Seven of the nine negatively depict the sisters. While the Galfridian original detailed their flattery of Leir, half of the diversification variants extend this into jealous manipulations and even evil plots. This dramatic heightening of the Leir story may be reflective of the variants' collective desire to cater to a broader audience or the movement into parasite history genres, with plays and monologues relying on dramatic techniques such as this. Within this context, Higgins's retelling appears less like a traditional *Mirror* or *de casibus* work, and more like a monologue or soliloquy, demonstrating its capacity to straddle both historical and entertaining purposes. Here Daniel R. Woolf's designation of historical verse as parasite histories once more becomes pertinent. Though Higgins's variants are demonstrated as established historiographical genres within the parameters of this study, their capacity to represent these genres and yet contain elements of parasite history genres is emblematic of diachronic alterations within retellings of the Leir legend. Thus, both Camden and Higgins are tied to the past and point to the future of generic and methodological approaches to the Leir story.

This negative introduction of the elder daughters may also be due to topicalities or the variants' publication largely under the reign of James I. It has been noted that "almost immediately after becoming king, James I disparaged his predecessor and other women" (Levin 51). His reign was marked by the "denigration of women" and James's "deep-seated misogyny" (Levin 51 and 75). James's approach, combined with an already strongly

patriarchal society which saw women below men on the great chain of being, may have combined with the desire to cater to broader audiences and the movement of the Leir story into parasite history genres, to heighten negative depictions of the elder daughters. The remainder of the collation of narrative elements highlights that these enhanced negative representations are as central to alterations and additions made to diversification variants, as are the differences in the representations of Cordeilla.

All Brutan variants positively depicted Cordeilla, with her most common attribute being wisdom. Indeed, Brutan variants frequently privileged Cordeilla in the retelling through varied means such as lengthy praise, additional woodcuts, or allowing the Leir story to be retold through her eyes. This is less so in diversification variants, with Cordeilla largely less featured, less praised, and less consistent in her characteristics. A third of the variants give relatively limited focus to Cordeilla throughout the entirety of the retelling in contrast to other figures (Harry, Shakespeare 1608 and 1623). Harry's work does not contain a single flattering word for Cordeilla, who is "reiected" (4) by Leir. Here the publication of Harry's work may provide context. Harry's genealogical justification of James's right to the throne potentially also reflected his monarch's views on female rulers. The limitation of Cordeilla's role in Q1 and F1 was likely more reflective of the exigencies of performance and casting that were central to the performative version of the text. The character of Cordeilla was doubled with the role of the Fool, with doubling a standard and necessary part of early modern performances (Foakes 146). This may account for her absence for half of the play but fails to clarify why her part was so small that it could be doubled. It does not, however, account for the entirety of her diminution, most especially in F1, in which she is an even less prominent figure. Almost half the variants (Anonymous, Camden, Higgins, Johnson), however, do feature Cordeilla as a prominent figure, though only two feature her more prominently than others (Camden, Higgins) through their singular focus on her within the

retelling. Even within these, she is proportionately less privileged than in Brutan variants. Higgins's diversification years *Mirror for Magistrates* excludes the moralising address to the reader found after the retelling in previous, substantive Brutan variants of *Mirror*, in which the first two paragraphs praised Cordeilla. Thus, though still foregrounding Cordeilla, Higgins's work does so less than it had before.

Most frequently, when included, Cordeilla is praised, though for a less consistent variety of reasons than during the Brutan years. Her wisdom, "the yongest, but the wisest" (Camden 182), beauty, "My beautie braue" (Higgins 61), and virtuousness, "Moft virtuous dame" (Johnson A5r) are the most frequently reported attributes. The anonymous play features the most unique and contradictory depiction of Cordeilla. She is highly flattered by all, earning her the jealousy of her sisters:

fhe is fo nice and fo demure;
 So sober, courteous, modest, and precise,
 That all the Court hath worke ynough to do
 To talke how fhe exceedeth me and you. (A3r)

Her virtuousness, bordering on piousness, earns her the derision of her sisters:

fhe is far too stately for the Church;
 Sheele lay her husbands Benefice on her back,
 Euen in one gowne, if fhe may haue her will. (C1v)

As previously mentioned, she is also at times bawdy and comic, punning with Mumford. Here Cordeilla is depicted in a manner that both aligns with the traditional history, and reflects the inherently performative elements of its genre—the popular history play's appeal to a broader audience through humour.

An example of the comparative reduction and repositioning of Cordeilla's role is her response to the love test. While not included in two of the eleven Brutan variants, when

included in the Brutan years, Cordeilla's response is one of the more detailed elements of the retelling. This is not the case for diversification variants. Here they uncharacteristically show brevity. Love and duty are consistently tied together in Cordeilla's response within each of the six diversification variants that include the love test: "For nature fo doth bind and dutie me compel" (Higgins 61). Importantly, four of the six diversification variants containing the love test have Cordeilla consistently limit her love and duty to Leir by the love and duty she owes to a future husband (Camden, Shakespeare 1608, Higgins, Shakespeare 1623). Here Camden is most explicit:

That albest she did love, honour, and reverence him, and so would whilst she lived. as much as nature and daughterly dutie at the vttermoſt could expect: Yet she did thinke that one day it would come to paſſe, that she ſhould affect another more fervently, meaning her husband, when ſhe were married. (Camden 182-3)

The Cordeilla of diversification variants is far different from that of the Brutan variants. Where her sisters' flaws were heightened by diversification variants, Cordeilla's strengths were reduced, as was her role—its size and its authority. In the main, diversification variants feature Cordeilla less prominently than did their Brutan years predecessors. Brutan variants frequently drew analogy between Cordeilla and Queen Elizabeth I, flattering both as one. Depictions of Cordeilla could still have been shaped or constrained by their capacity to analogise Elizabeth during the Jacobean years. They may reflect James's contempt for Elizabeth, and women more generally.

As with depictions of Leir, Gonorilla, and Regan, depictions of Cordeilla show more variety within diversification variants. Retellings of the Leir story, in their representation and extension of character, no longer show the consistency traditionally seen in the Brutan variants' representations of historical personages and in their adherence to Galfridian historiography. As they move into non-traditional and parasite history genres, variants altered

and extended characters to suit their generic needs and appeal to broader audiences. As a consequence, the movement of the sisters from historical personages to characters saw them also become evil, bawdy, or silenced.

Although it falls outside the delineations of this study, it is pertinent to mention that the variants are here moving closer to oral folktale versions of the Leir story, which Wilfrid Perrett has suggested may have been a source for Geoffrey of Monmouth in his creation of the story (15). These folktales were in circulation during the early modern era and are considered by some as a source for Shakespeare's play (Artese; Perrett; Skura, "Dragon"; Young). The variants' movement closer to oral folktales coincides with their popularisation and appeals to the semi- and newly-literate audience. This audience would have been more familiar with oral folktales than with established historiography. The interdependence of the alteration of the sisters' characterisation in Leir variants, the impact of new readerships, and links to established, oral folktales merits further study.

6.4 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: Leir's Downfall

The heightened maliciousness of the elder daughters makes Leir's downfall immediately seem the inevitable outcome of the love test itself, when this was not the case in Brutan variants. Most consistently within Brutan variants, the outcomes of the love test were the marriage of Leir's daughters and the division of his kingdom, not complete abdication and impending doom. Brutan variants first saw the elder daughters rewarded for their diplomatic and measured court rhetoric, often both with marriage and part of the kingdom. Cordeilla was then punished for her lack of flattery/diplomacy in varied ways in Brutan variants, often through disinheritance and/or the lack of marriage. Finally, Leir frequently

retained part of the kingdom with an almost legalistic explanation of his retained retinue, portion of the kingdom, and title.

While still containing the same elements, diversification variants collectively shift the focus to the consequences for the daughters, most especially their marriages. Over half of the diversification variants see the elder daughters rewarded for their flattery with marriage (Harry, Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Higgins, Shakespeare 1623). The anonymous play heightens this with the marriages themselves of greater interest than the kingdom to the elder daughters. The marriage of Leir's daughters is discussed in detail in the play, with Leir's nobles first advising strategic matches to ensure the peace of the nation is sustained: "match them with some of your neighbour Kings" (A3v) and Leir pleased to be able to compel Cordeilla to marry, as, though pursued by many suitors: "*Cordella*, vowes / NO liking to a Monarch, vnlesse loue allowes" (A3v). The elder daughters see the love test as a means to marry husbands of their choosing and to avoid long-held concerns over Cordeilla marrying before them: "Els ere't be long, sheede haue both prick and Praife, / And we muft be fet by for working days" (A4v). Here the bawdy, malicious, and detailed characterisation of the elder daughters continues as an essential part of this anonymous quarto play, feasibly due to genre and audience. Collectively, the variants confirm, within their Jacobean context, that a woman could not rule without a man.

The outcome of the love test for Cordeilla in the diversification retellings varies. Of the six that include the love test, only two note Cordeilla's marriage to Aganippus, King of Gallia/France, and consequently limit her "punishment" through the "safety" of marriage (Harry and Higgins). Two, however, see Cordeilla in the precarious position of being unwed and banished, significantly heightening her "punishment" (Anonymous and Johnson). The final two (Shakespeare 1608 and 1623) see Cordeilla disowned and demeaned as she is offered to her potential suitors, found wanting by one without a dowry, before the other

agrees to take her hand. In each of the diversification variants, whether married or banished, Cordeilla is dowerless and disowned: “thy truth then be thy dower” (Shakespeare *Q1* B2r). Thus, in diversification variants the immediate outcome of the love test for Cordeilla is the heightening of her personal downfall and with it the overall dramatic nature of variants.

Discussion of the immediate outcomes of the love test for Leir, or that which he retains of his kingdom and privileges, is brief but consistent within diversification variants. This brevity contradicts Brutan variants’ lengthy discussion of this topic. It additionally stands in contrast to the previously mentioned lengthy detailing of the immediate outcomes of the love test for Leir’s daughters in diversification variants, with more detail provided about the daughters than about Leir. Each of the six diversification variants to discuss Leir’s abdication clarifies that he immediately divides the kingdom in two between the elder daughters and their husbands (Harry, Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Higgins, Johnson, and Shakespeare 1623). Johnson’s ballad is again most consistent with established Galfridian historiography, and is the lone diversification variant to hint at the legalese found in Brutan variants:

I equally bestow,
my kingdome and my land.

My pompali ftate and all my goods. (A3v)

In consideration of the outcomes of the love test, diversification variants have shifted the focus of Brutan variants away from Leir and his status as a king to the daughters and their marriages. This additionally aligns with the previously established focus on Leir as a man, as opposed to a monarch, with greater focus on critique of the elder daughters’ actions and Cordeilla’s punishment. Variants explicitly exploit the topicality and dramatic potential made possible by extending the sisters’ roles as variants transition into parasite history genres and appeal to a broader audience.

Whilst Galfridian history gives lengthy detail about Leir's downfall and suffering, with his kingdom, royal trappings, status, and dignity each taken in turn, a third of the Brutan variants excised these details, and the remainder provided a comparatively brief recount. Diversification variants are, once more, closer to traditional Galfridian historiography as they largely provide comparatively more detail in outlining Leir's downfall. Their focus is on Leir's personal and emotional suffering caused by his abdication. Within diversification variants, Leir increasingly becomes a man first and a monarch second. Not only is Leir's downfall imminent earlier in diversification variants, during the love test, it occurs earlier and at times plays out in extended graphic detail. This is consistent with the overall trend of diversification variants. As they move the Leir story into parasite history genres and/or appeal to a broader audience, they give life to the historical personages within it, extending and clarifying their character, seeking and exploiting opportunities to heighten the drama of the story. Importantly, Leir's downfall marks the moment in the story where diversification variants fracture and become distinctly different from established historiography, with more variety and discrepancy seen within this and the remaining elements of the tale. Contradictorily, they are closer to Galfridian historiography than to the Brutan variants through their detailed discussions of Leir's downfall, yet they are further away because of the detail provided.

Once again, however, the diversification variants divide along generic lines, with the majority of the established historiographical genres (Camden, Taylor 1622 and 1630) excluding Leir's downfall. Taylor's works do, however, hint at Leir's downfall through this brief comment present in both: "The eldft Daughters did reiect their Sire" (B4r). The remaining two-thirds of the diversification variants (Harry, Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Higgins, Johnson, Shakespeare 1623) depict Leir's downfall as extreme suffering. Though they vary in detail, Leir is frequently mistreated both by his elder daughters and by

circumstances/characters added to the Leir story. Aligning with Galfridian history and the Brutan variants, the loss of Leir's regal accoutrements is frequently discussed, with the cutting of his train the most consistent trope, but it is the downfall of Leir the man and the erosion of his dignity, identity, or sanity that are most detailed within variants.

Harry's genealogy provides the least detail on Leir's suffering, explaining Leir was "driuen to extreme misery" (9), without clarifying how. Higgins's moral history is more detailed, providing clarification. Higgins's Leir is mistreated by the daughters who: "fhew'd him daily spite ... call'd him doting foole... [and] his requests debar'd" (62-63). The anonymous Queen's Men's play is yet more detailed and quite unique in its presentation of Leir's steep decline. It should be remembered that in it Leir's suffering is present at the start of the play and derives from the loss of his wife. It is this pre-existing level of distress that has seen Leir lose the will to live and rule, and convinces the elder daughters that they can successfully manipulate the love test: "For he, you know, is always in extremes" (B1v). Aligning with generic needs, the play includes a series of unique events designed to amplify Leir's suffering. These additions to the traditional Galfridian historiography are unique and fictional. The most dramatic of these is Regan's plot to have Leir murdered:

Ra. Ah, good my friend, that I should haue thee do,

Is such a thing, as I do fhame to speake;

Yet it muft needs be done.

Mef. Ile speak it for thee, Queene: fhall I kill thy father?

I know tis that, and if it be so, fay.

Rag. I. (E3r)

Both in its content and its fictionality, this is a shocking inclusion to the historical tale, yet the theatrical potential inherent within this murderous plot—its planning, attempt, failure, and fallout—is notable and likely cause for its inclusion. Other additions to the anonymous play

introduce humour whilst extending Leir's suffering. On their voyage to France, Leir and his companion Perillus are robbed and have no money to pay for their passage (G4r). The mariners forgive the debt but seek Leir's and Perillus's clothes as recompense. In the anonymous play, Leir is manipulated, morose, penniless, and mocked. He is also entertaining.

The final three variants (Shakespeare 1608, Johnson, Shakespeare 1623) are equally as detailed and provocative in their depiction of the king's suffering. As distinct from other variants, each of these extends and fictionalises Leir's suffering to see the king descend into madness. The early modern understanding of madness was grounded in early modern medical discourses which relied on Galenic humoralism (Neely; Paster). For early moderns, madness could be: "figurative and can include almost any excessive expression of emotion: anger, especially, but also lust, jealousy, folly, stupidity. 'Madness' can also name extreme forms of mental distress" (Neely 3). In 1586, Timothie Bright published the first English medical document on madness, *A Treatise of Melancholy*, which outlines symptoms, including unconsidered judgement, simplicity, and foolishness (iij). Patients could withdraw from society, and have extreme heavy moods, fears, a trembling heart, excessive appetite, and hallucinations (Bright 108):

all organically actions thereof are mixed with melancholic madnesse; and reason turned to a vaine feare, or plaine desperation, the braine being altered in his complexion.

(Bright 2)

Most importantly, madness could be cured, primarily by herbs, a healthy diet, and sleep (Neely 319). Early modern understandings of madness are explicitly present in Shakespeare's Q1 and F1 and Johnson's anonymous ballad. Additionally, they echo lightly through the Queen's Men's anonymous play, though the term itself is not used.

Shakespeare's Q1 is the first Leir variant in which the king goes mad. It is impossible to sufficiently emphasise the shocking impact the depiction of a king with madness would

have had in the early modern era. The dramatic potential within it is just as high as the murder plot of the anonymous play. Uniquely, this element, introduced in three variants, finds flaw with the king, not with those who surround him, and shows the king to be just as beset by the human condition as the broader audience to whom the works were addressed. Q1's Leir is acutely aware of his own downfall—his loss of status as a king. He is equally aware of his descent into madness: “O, let me not be mad, sweet heaven! / I would not be mad” (D3r). Early scenes are equally redolent with Leir's manifestation of the symptoms of madness: his unconsidered judgement in the love test; his instantaneous rage at Cordeilla's response; and his openly mocked foolishness. It is the storm scenes that are synonymous with the depiction of Leir's fall into complete madness. Here Leir experiences heavy moods, simplicity, and hallucinations. Leir aligns the rage of the storm outside to his madness within: “This tempest in my mind” (G1v). In Q1, the pinnacle of Leir's madness is his hallucinations within the mock trial scene. In the final scenes of the play, Leir “is restored to sanity by conventional remedies, conventionally applied by a doctor - herbal medicine, sleep, clean garments, music, and the presence of Cordelia” (Neely 334). Additions to the Leir story made in Q1, the character of the Fool, and the sub-plot in which Edgar feigns madness and assumes the guise of a Bedlam beggar, heighten the dramatic impact of Leir's madness. As with the anonymous play's king, Q1's Leir is devoid of all royal trappings, even royal attire. He is debased, desolate, desperate, pitied, and mocked—he is also mad. These additions uniquely combine to take this retelling further away from established historiography, and further away from positive depictions of a historical king.

The addition of Leir's madness to Q1 may be reflective of the story's movement into the history play genre, providing more dramatic potential and thus audience appeal. Notably, Leir's madness is caused in part by his daughters' heightened, even fictionalised, malevolence. It is made real through its comparison to the feigned madness of a character

from the introduced fictional sub-plot and extends to its full articulation during the storm scene when historical story and sub-plot literally meet. Leir's madness therefore occurs at the intersection of the established historiographical story and the newly added fictional elements.

Also including reference to Leir's madness is the ballad (Johnson 1620). It is notable that it does so, as, until this point, the anonymous ballad within Johnson's collection has been the most aligned with traditional historiography of all the parasite history variants. Even the variants representative of established historiography genres strayed further from Galfridian history than the ballad—until its depiction of Leir's suffering. Here, as with Q1 and F1, Johnson's anonymous ballad ruptures from established history. As with variants discussed earlier, the ballad sees Leir lose his regnal trappings as his daughters take his “chieft meanes / and moft of all his traine” (A4v). Yet the ballad heightens the level to which Leir is demeaned. Gonorilla offers Leir only that “Within her kitchin, he fhould have, what Scullions gave away” (A4r). While first offended by this, a desperate Leir later seeks, but is denied, the scullions' scraps. The ballad makes it clear that it is the actions of his daughters that drives Leir to madness. Leir:

Grew franticke mad, for in his minde,
 he bore the wounds of woe.
 Which made him rend his milk white locks
 and trefles from his head. (B1r)

Both Q1 and the ballad see Leir's madness reach its pinnacle in scenes set in nature and the elements. This reflects early modern understandings of the open and porous humoral body which was inherently linked to its environment. As in Q1 and F1, and reflective of early modern understandings of madness, the ballad's Leir is “cured” by Cordeilla: “the quickly fent / him cofrt and reliefe” (B1v).

Published almost two decades after Shakespeare's Q1 but close to Johnson's ballad collection, Shakespeare's F1 is the final variant to see Leir's suffering descend into madness, though this descent is not as steep as in Q1. Omissions from Q1 see descriptions of Leir's madness and the Fool's mockery of Leir reduced. These omissions occur throughout, yet they are most noticeable during the storm scenes or the peak of Leir's madness. Lines describing the storm itself are removed and thus Leir's humoral world is less out of balance. Also removed is a description of Leir's actions during the storm. He no longer tears out his white hair, an element that featured in both Q1 and the ballad. The mock trial scene is removed and with it Leir's greatest delusion—a key symptom of madness. Additionally, Edgar's moralising soliloquy is removed from the end of the mock trial scene, reducing the emphasis on Leir's madness. It is difficult to ascertain why F1 reduced, without removing, Leir's madness. It is likely, however, that this change reflects the progress of time, with the novelty for audiences and the dramatic impact of Leir's madness lost over time through repetition. Topically, it may also have been prudent to temper the aged king's downfall, as the ruling monarch himself was also ageing in 1623.

Diversification variants represent Leir's downfall and suffering in a way greatly heightened from Brutan variants. Whilst there is attention still given to his loss of royal status and regal trappings, it is his suffering as a man that is most emphasised. This aligns with earlier analysis of diversification variants that focused more on Leir the man, than on Leir the monarch. Additionally, for the first time, four of the diversification variants see Leir speak in first-person—he is literally given a voice and becomes a man, or indeed a character, as the Leir story moves into parasite history genres. The majority of the variants (five of the nine) depict Leir's suffering as extreme. He is often demeaned and desperate. One sees an attempt on his life, and in three he goes mad. The heightened dramatic nature of his downfall was likely explored due to the movement into parasite history genres and in order to appeal to the

broader audience of diversification variants. It is Leir's downfall that sees the diversification variants rupture from established Galfridian history, Brutan variants, and each other. It is also where it is first fictionalised. Variation amongst diversification variants is sustained through the remaining elements of the tale. Most emblematic of this break from established narrative elements is the anonymous ballad in Johnson's collection, which in a bait-and-switch form, begins in a highly traditional way, only to shockingly see Leir go mad. At this point in the story there is a sense that the diversification variants, in their movement into parasite history genres, were moving away from the history and into the more malleable land of legend. Their movement, however, is based on appeals to a broader audience, and on the exigencies of new generic forms.

6.5 The Causes of Leir's Downfall

Earlier it was noted that the diversification variants, in contrast to Brutan variants, largely provide a negative introduction to Leir's elder daughters. These negative representations are sustained, indeed heightened, throughout Leir's downfall and the remaining elements of the diversification retellings. Galfridian history sees the elder daughters' rebellion against Leir justified through Leir's age and his knight's behaviour. Age likewise serves as justification in seven of the eight Brutan variants featuring Leir's downfall, with his dethroning almost forgivably stimulated by his being "unwieldy old" (Higgins Fol.35v). Age, however, often does not provide the sole motivation, with a thirst for power always noted. In four of the Brutan variants, it is not the daughters but their husbands, the Dukes, who rise against Leir. In the remainder, it is the elder daughters themselves.

Once again, the diversification variants divide along generic lines. Those variants representative of more established forms of historiography were more likely to either exclude

the cause of Leir's downfall (Camden), or mitigate the elder daughters' role in such. Harry's variant, which omits the love test, is the only variant to leave the elder daughters clear of blame: "he by his fonnes in law, Maglād & Henwyn, was put befides all, & driuen to extreme mifery" (9). Taylor's works (1622 and 1630) judge the elder daughters' actions as wrong, "Falfe Gonorel and Regan" (B4r), but not evil. Each of the parasite history diversification variants, however, demonstrates that the elder daughters are responsible for Leir's downfall and suffering. In line with their earlier negative and dramatic representations of the daughters, the parasite history genres introduce detailed recounts and critiques of the daughters' actions. Each, however, does so in its own unique way.

Initially, Johnson's ballad introduces the elder daughters positively, in line with traditional historiography. Yet, as earlier mentioned, the ballad splits from this history during Leir's suffering and downfall. It provides no justification for Regan and Gonorilla's actions when recounting their malicious reduction of Leir. Both daughters incrementally demean their father until he:

wandered up and downe,
 Being glad to feed on beggers food,
 that lately wore a crowne. (B1v)

Contrasting with Johnson's ballad's lack of motivation for the elder daughters' actions, Higgins's moral recount provides clear but critical justification. They "Defired the Realme to rule it as they wold" (62). Higgins's does, however, mitigate the daughters' roles by apportioning some blame elsewhere: "Their husbands rebels void of reason quite / Rofe vp, rebeld, bereft his crowne and right." Higgins's nonetheless is quite clear in both recounting the elder daughters' offences against Leir, and condemning them as: "vipers," "cruell," and "vnkind" (63).

As before, it is the play variants that are most detailed, varied, and critical in their representations of the elder daughters' roles in Leir's downfall and suffering. Q1 and F1 do, however, provide some justification for the elder daughters' action. Whilst Leir's age is mentioned, Gonorilla's unique complaints are in reference to the riotous behaviour of Leir and his knights: "His Knights grow riotous, and him felfe obrayds vs, / On euery trifell when he returnes from hunting" (Shakespeare *Q1* C3r). Gonorilla's concerns are uniquely proven correct through the inclusion of Leir's sudden rage and unruly demeanour, previously established in the love test. These additions to Q1 and F1 serve as justification for Gonorilla's treatment of Leir and allude to Galfridian history which likewise included Leir's unruly knights. In both Q1 and F1, however, these justifications soon provoke indefensible behaviour from both daughters as they plot against Leir, manipulate their husbands, punish the innocent, murder servants, seek adulterous relationships, cause civil war, and, eventually, turn upon each other. It is not just Leir's downfall that the daughters' actions prompt. One of the most shocking additions to the Leir story seen in both Q1 and F1 is the blinding scene, where the established Leir story is merged with the fictional sub-plot. It is possible that this merging of the retelling with the fictional sub-plot gives licence to the enhanced fictionalisation of the story and to the enhanced negative depictions of Leir's elder daughters.

While similar, Shakespeare's Q1 and F1 differ by degrees in their depictions of Leir's downfall. F1 provides more justification for the daughters' actions, and they are incrementally less extreme, due to both omissions and inclusions (Foakes 144). Additions to F1 heighten the stress on Leir's age and the behaviour of his knights as cause for the removal of his train:

She haue refrained the Riots of your Followres,
 'Tis on fuch ground, and to fuch wolefome end,
 As cleeres her from all blame. (F294)

Likewise, several speeches by Albany are removed, removing criticism of Gonorilla's actions and reducing the positive representation of Albany.

Depictions of the elder daughters' roles in Leir's downfall and suffering, and their sustained malevolence, are equally strong in the anonymous Queen's Men's play. These characteristics were established earlier in this variant than in any other. Although the elder daughters express justifications for their treatment of Leir, they are unreasonable justifications, such as Leir's criticism of their spending which may here offer implied topical analogy to James's excessive spending:

I cannot make a banquet extraordinary,
 To grace my selfe, and spread my name abroad,
 But he, old foole, is captious by and by,
 And sayth, the coft would well suffice for twice. (C4v)

The elder daughters, motivated by jealousy and self-interest, openly plot against Leir and Cordeilla. They are bawdy and salacious. Their treatment of all men is manipulative and, through the early modern lens, unnatural: "I rule the King of Cambria as I please" (D2r). Not only do the elder daughters plot Leir's murder, when the murderer fails, Regan rails against the weakness of men and contests the "natural order":

A shame on these white-liuerd flauers, say I,
 That with fayre words fo foone are ouerome.
 O God, that I had bin but made a man;
 Or that my strength were equall with my will!
 These foolish men are nothing but mere pity,
 And melt as butter doth againft the Sun.
 Why should they haue preeminence ouer vs,
 Since we are creatures of more braue refoue? (I1v)

The anonymous Queen's Men's play, in moving the Leir story into a parasite history genre, has altered depictions of the elder daughters to capitalise on the dramatic potential inherent within the story, and includes topicalities such as James's spending and misogynistic views. Parasite history genres collectively heighten Leir's downfall and his elder daughters' role in it. They captivate, titillate, offend, and shock their audience through these alterations. In doing so, this quarto history play moves the Leir story further away from established forms of historiography while moving it out to a broader audience. Parasite history genres within the diversification years collectively respond to generic needs by extending the roles of the elder daughters. The choices made in these extensions are motivated by their transformation into parasite history genres and thus by the need to entertain a broader audience. Those variants representative of established historiographical genres had no such need and thus left depictions similar to those of the Brutan years.

6.6 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: The Battle

Geoffrey of Monmouth's original account of the Leir story saw Cordeilla and France restore Leir to the British throne, with Leir the one to lead the French army into battle against his sons-in-law. The conservative focus of Brutan variants, however, was most often on Leir's restoration and not on the battle which attained it, with eight of the eleven Brutan variants either excluding or merely referencing the battle due to topical sensitivities. Many of the diversification variants, once more, return closer to established Galfridian historiography by including the battle. However, as with Leir's downfall, there is great diversity across variants, with the majority including and exploiting the battle for its potential to appeal to a broader audience, and by doing so moving the retelling away from established historiography.

Once again the variants divide along generic lines. Excluding Higgins's, those variants representative of the more established forms of historiography (Harry, Camden, Taylor 1622 and 1630), as with their Brutan predecessors, exclude the battle, though Taylor's does note that Cordeilla helped Leir regain the crown through her "iust ayde" (1622 B4r). Q1 is the only diversification variant in which the battle is topically depicted as the invasion by a foreign army, France (Halio 26; Foakes 140; Taunton and Hart 704-4). The remaining variants, four of the nine, address the battle in varied ways whilst still showing some of the sensitivities that caused its exclusion from the Brutan years, by depicting the battle as a justifiable civil uprising (Anonymous, Higgins, Johnson, Shakespeare 1623). It is not that a monarch is being overthrown—it is that the true monarch is being reinstated and treasonous usurpers overturned. This sentiment, however, directly contradicts James's treatises, *The True Law of Free Monarchies* (1598, 1603) and *Basilikon Doron* (1599, 1603), which clearly state that no civil uprising could be deemed justifiable (Ioppolo, "A Jointure" 171).

Careful to justify a battle that provided great dramatic potential, the anonymous Queen's Men's play includes the Gallian king's address to the British populace upon his arrival, making clear his justifiable intent:

Feare not, my friends, you shall receyue no hurt,
 If you'l subscribe vnto your lawfull King, And quite reuoke your fealty from Cambria,
 And from aspiring Cornwall too, whose wiues
 Haue practifde treason 'gainft their fathers life.
 Wee come in iustice of your wronged King. (I3v)

Confirming the battle as just are the actions of the English/British, who readily join with Leir, Cordeilla, and the French army, showing the will of the people through their support in both the anonymous play and Higgins's variant: "And of our Britaines came to aide likewise his right / Full many subiets, good and ftout that were, By martiall feats, and force, by subiects

sword and might” (Higgins 63). All three plays (Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608 and 1623) extend their justification further, implying the country was already headed towards civil war before the French troops arrived, and thus the conflict was inevitable, with Leir acting as a just king and restorer of peace, not as an invader or usurper. The anonymous play sees the nobles yield to Leir happily, uniquely linking the suffering of the nation to the elder daughters’ excessive spending, showing that their tyranny extended from Leir over the nation:

the Country will yield presently,
Which since your absence have been greatly tax’d,
For to maintain their overf swelling pride. (I3r)

Though carefully justified, these actions still stand in topical opposition to James’s sentiments on tyranny and civil insurrection.

Depictions of the battle provide opportunities for diversification variants to move further from established historiography through the extension of pre-existing material and the inclusion of unique material. Where previously the parasite history variants shared connection to the broader group of variants through their consistency with Galfridian history, instead of a connection to their generic contemporaries, here they more closely align with their parasite history genre, exploiting the potential within each form and appealing to their broader audiences. As a consequence, some stray so far from traditional historiography that they are no longer recognisable as the history of King Leir, potentially questioning its historicity. Given the lack of interaction with the historiography debate noted within variants, it is probably that it is the transference into new generic forms, and not an acceptance of Polydore Virgil’s doubt in Galfridian historiography, that has motivated these changes.

Take as an example the battle in the anonymous play, a variant that has uniquely embraced humour throughout. In it, it is Mumford, a fictional and comic addition to the Leir

story, who leads the French army in to fight. As before, the greatest creative licence is often taken when fictional characters interact with the historical story. Mumford's invasion of Britain is made effortless by the incompetence of the watchmen who had been left to guard the beacon at Dover, but: "instead of watching the Beacon, wee'l go to goodman *Genstangs*, & watch a pot of Ale and a rasher of Bacon" (I2r). The desertion of the watchmen leaves the British unprepared for the attack, which becomes comic as they are woken from their beds by the invasion. Chaos ensues and a stage direction indicates: "with men and women halfe naked: Etner two Captaynes without dublets, with fwords" (I3v). This form of self-mockery likely held comic appeal to the popular audience and is more reflective of the performance genre and far removed from traditional historiography. In this play the battle is fictionalised in its extension to exploit its performative genre.

In opposition to the anonymous Queen's Men's alterations to the battle, the anonymous ballad in Johnson's collection heightens the sorrow and drama of the recount through the shocking and unique death of Cordeilla on the battlefield: "true hearted noble Queene, / was in the battell flaine" (B1r). Whilst initially the most traditional of all the parasite history genres, this unique inclusion sees the ballad dramatically alter the Leir story, and history itself, with the line of succession altered through Cordeilla's untimely death (later discussed in full). Not only does this alteration make the familiar history new again and the ballad more appealing to a broader audience, it once more reflects topicalities relevant to James's misogynistic rule and his derision of his predecessor, Elizabeth. The ballad removes the reign of the female Queen regnant, Cordeilla—a queen with whom Elizabeth had previously been positively analogised. Once more a parasite history fictionalises history.

F1 and Q1 share several unique elements in their alterations to the battle. As with the anonymous play, F1 and Q1 interweave the traditional Galfridian history with fictional elements—the sub-plot. As before, this engenders greater extension and alteration to the Leir

story. The battle itself is viewed through the eyes of the introduced, fictional characters Edgar and Gloucester. Likewise, Edmund assists Albany in the battle and it is Edgar who reports: “King Lear hath loft, he and his daughter taine” (K4r). These alterations are more additions to, rather than extensions of, the established tale. Equally as destructive to the Brutan line as the ballad, Shakespeare’s Q1 and F1 are the only variants to see Leir and Cordeilla lose the battle. This aligns with the trend seen in variants which allowed greater deviation from the established elements of the Leir history when interspersed with added fictional elements. The Leir story is moved further from history and closer to legend or even fiction as it is transferred into parasite history genres and intermingled with fictional elements added out of generic necessity.

Depictions of the battle in diversification variants speak both to genre and topicality. More obviously dividing along generic lines than ever before, the established forms of historiography largely elided the battle, and the parasite history genres exploited it for its dramatic potential. Parasite history variants are humorous, shocking, unique, sustained, and even fictionalised in their depictions of the battle. That the variants fracture, both from each other and from traditional historiography, during the battle may simply be because it is at the end of the Leir story. Had they done so earlier, the variants would have been unrecognisable as retellings of the Leir story and thus unable to engage, shock, and entertain by confounding expectations. That each of the parasite history genres recounts the story in isolation means that they are free to make radical alterations towards the end of the retelling without the subsequent need to realign with the remainder of established history, though the ballad does do so. Thus, though parasite history genres altered Galfridian historiography, this is not to suggest that these retellings were participating in the historiography debate which questioned the truth of Galfridian historiography. In the movement into parasite history genres, the exigencies of the new genres and the necessary inclusion of additional elements may have

encouraged the fictionalisation of an established history to appeal to broad audiences.

Notably, the Leir story is most fictionalised when new characters or events are added, instead of when parts of the established story are extended. When additions are made to the established story, this often encourages the fictionalisation of the story itself.

6.7 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: The Restoration

The final element of the Leir story, the restoration of Leir and Cordeilla's later accession and rule, sees the diversification variants largely attempt to move the, at times fractured, retellings back towards established history. The majority see the story retold in isolation (Camden, Anonymous, Shakespeare 1608, Johnson, and Shakespeare 1623) and thus are free from the necessary conventions of traditional forms of historiography, which saw the recounting of Leir's restoration, then Cordeilla's succession, and the subsequent inclusion of the full Brutan line. Previously, in the transition into parasite history genres and/or works created to appeal to a broader audience, the diversification variants have proven themselves willing to extend, amend, undo, or even invent history. Yet six explicitly reinstate the Brutan line, with one failing to comment on Leir's restoration and Cordeilla's succession (Camden), one excising Cordeilla's rule (Johnson), and two completely altering the end of the Leir story (Shakespeare 1608 and 1623).

As in Galfridian history, Brutan variants consistently include Leir's return to the throne and provide flattering comment on his sustained rule. Brutan variants then provide limited but positive detail on Cordeilla's rule, before including her conquest and accession. The diversification variants largely stay true to this, though they most frequently fail to include Cordeilla's rule. This collation has found that the diversification years mark the moment in Leir variants when the recounting of the rules of two monarchs was reduced to

focus on one—Leir’s story. Although six of the diversification variants maintain the Brutan line, they do so in differing ways. On this point, they again align more with established Galfridian historiography than with their generic contemporaries. Harry and Taylor (1622 and 1630) retell the full Brutan line. Likewise, Higgins’s work follows the formula established in the Brutan years, with the greatest part of the retelling dedicated to Cordeilla’s time in prison, uniquely exploring her downfall in greater detail than any other variant.

Unexpectedly, both the anonymous Queen’s Men’s play and Johnson’s ballad realign with traditional Brutan historiography. They do so, however, in unique ways. Until now, the anonymous play had demonstrated itself to often be the most unique of all the diversification variants—the most willing to alter and extend established historiography. It made the elder daughters into malevolent murderers, Cordeilla both bawdy and pious, and Leir a wallowing widower. It introduced comic characters, thieving sailors, and incompetent murderers. Yet, at the end of the play, the height of the dramatic arc, it repeats established history—Leir rules his kingdom once more and Cordeilla is clearly in line for the throne. There is a sense that, in transitioning the history into its parasite history genre, the play, both out of generic necessity and to appeal to its broad audience, exploited every available dramatic potential within the established Leir story, without seeking to alter the course of history itself in its retelling.

Johnson’s ballad goes one step further than the anonymous play. The ballad was in complete alignment with Galfridian historiography, more so than even many Brutan variants, until Leir’s downfall. In its conclusion, it does not alter the course of history, but it does elide part of it. Cordeilla dies on the battlefield. Certainly, Cordeilla dies in all Brutan variants, usually violently, often by her own hand, yet she does so after she has ruled the kingdom. In the ballad, though Cordeilla is slain, the battle is won and Leir: “good king in his old days / poffed his crowne againe” (B2v). Unlike the traditional Galfridian tale, the ballad’s Leir retains his crown only briefly. He too dies on the battlefield:

But when he heard Cordela dead,

...

Befwounding fell upon her breft,

from whence he neuer parted, But on her bofome left his life, that was fo truly

hearted. (B2v)

The ballad indicates that the elder daughters were put to death by the nobility as punishment for their wrongs, and their crowns were left to their next of kin. Thus the ballad elides both the remainder of Leir's rule and the entirety of Cordeilla's. It does, however, reinstate the Brutan line and thus, akin to the anonymous play, it repositions itself in line with established Galfridian historiography. This removal of Cordeilla's rule could be accounted for by the desire to engage the popular audience through the inclusion of shocking material. It is equally likely, however, given that this is the third edition of *The Golden Garland*, and that the work was published under the reign of James I and VI, that the removal of Cordeilla's reign aligned with James's desire to denigrate his predecessor, a trope within variants, with Elizabeth and Cordeilla frequently correlated during the Brutan years.

Shakespeare's variants (Q1 and F1) are most unique in their representation of Leir's restoration or more specifically in their failure to see Leir restored. They are the only variants to completely fracture from established historiography. Here again, the intermingling of the fictional sub-plot with the established history appears to give licence to the fictionalising of the history itself. Dialogue at the start of the final scene foreshadows these alterations:

Kent. Is this the promift end.

Edg. Or image of that horror. (L4v)

Shockingly, Leir and Cordeilla have lost the war and have been taken prisoner by Edmund, a character from the sub-plot. Edmund recruits a Captain to kill the imprisoned Cordeilla:

Baft. He hath Commiffion from thy wife and me,

To hang Cordelia in the prifon, and to lay
 The blame vpon her owne despaire,
 That she fordid her felfe. (Shakespeare *Q1* L4v)

Edmund's lines here directly parallel, yet contradict, other earlier variants of the Leir story, such as the *Mirror for Magistrates*, in which Cordeilla did indeed, as suggested by Edmund, "fordid her felfe" because of her "owne despaire." Once again intermingling fictional sub-plot and historical retelling, Leir's elder daughters turn upon each other, enraged with jealousy due to their mutual love for Edmund. Their deaths occur, chronologically, before they could mother the children who, in established historiography, continued the Brutan line. With all three of his daughters deceased, Leir too dies of grief: "*Lear*. Breake hart, I prethe breake" (L4r). Shakespeare's variants both see the end of the Brutan line. Leir and his daughters are deceased. There are no heirs and therefore no clear lines of succession. This would have been a shocking scenario within early modern life. A country without a monarch or clear lines of succession was left vulnerable to the invasion of other countries or civil strife. The impact of these alterations to established historiography is clear when it is considered that Q1 and F1 are history plays appealing to the popular audience through the inclusion of heightened dramatic material.

Topicalities may also account for differences between Q1 and F1 in reference to Leir's successor. The final lines of both Q1 and F1 see Albany, widower of Leir's eldest daughter and lone surviving link to the royal line and thus likely successor, offer the divided kingdom to Kent and Edgar, two fictional additions to the Leir history: "friends of my foule, you twaine / Rule in this kingdome, and the goard state fultaine" (L4r). Both texts record Kent's declination. Neither text records an acceptance. The last lines of both works are the same, but spoken by different characters:

The waight of this sad time we muft obey,

Speake what we feele, not what we ought to fay,
 The oldeft haue bone moft, we that are yong,
 Shall neuer fee fo much, nor liue fo long. (Shakespeare *Q1* L4r)

Albany speaks the last lines in *Q1* and Edgar in *F1*. Here the transition into a parasite history genre, the history play, gives meaning to this change. Early modern theatrical convention necessitated that the character with the greatest status would deliver the last line (Foakes 49; Taylor and Warren 7). Albany speaks the last opaque lines in *Q1*. This history was performed at court and published in 1608, early in James's reign. Albany had once been the name given to Scotland. It was also a title. Duke of Albany was the title held by James's father, by James when young, and was contemporaneously held by his youngest son. Shakespeare's *Q1* sees the destruction of the Brutan line and justifies the commencement of a new line, that of the Duke of Albany—the Scottish Stuarts. The play's end and its destruction of established historiography act to legitimise the succession of the new monarch.

Edgar, part of the fictional sub-plot and eldest son of Gloucester, speaks the last lines in the tragedy *F1*. Scholarship has paid much attention to Edgar, attempting to align him, and thus the decision to see him crowned as monarch in *F1*, with the historical King Edgar (959-975 AD). Yet there are flaws in this logic:

The problem with this argument is that Edmund, King of East Anglia 841-69, was perhaps better known as a hero, for his stand against a Viking army, and as a saint, who gave his name to Bury St Edmunds. (Foakes 46)

Given trends identified within diversification variants, it is probable that Shakespeare's accession of Edgar in *F1* is less based on allusions to historical figures, and more reliant on lost topicalities, or the establishment of the play as a discrete literary genre and separate from a parasite history genre. After all, *F1* saw the play move from history to a tragedy in its self-imposed generic designation. When *F1* depicts a fictional character acceding to the throne, it

also allows the story of King Leir to cross from history into tragedy, or even fiction. Thus, whilst the majority of the diversification variants used Leir's restoration, the final element of the tale, as the opportunity to realign with established historiography, at this point Shakespeare's Q1 and F1 diverge from history.

Unlike representations of Leir's restoration, Cordeilla's rule is largely excised from diversification variants, when it was present and positively depicted in all Brutan variants. Here the diversification variants do not fully divide along generic lines. Fewer than half the diversification variants include Cordeilla's rule (Harry, Higgins, Taylor 1622 and 1630). Those that exclude her reign do so for differing reasons. The anonymous Queen's Men's play recounts the Leir story in isolation, instead of as part of the full Brutan line, and concludes, by choice, chronologically, before her rule. Camden, while focusing on Cordeilla's speech in his inclusion of the story, does not include her rule. This is potentially representative of the focus of this section of his text—"wise speeches." Notably, the most common motivation for the exclusion of Cordeilla's rule, seen in a third of the variants (Shakespeare 1608, Johnson, and Shakespeare 1623), is that she has been killed before she can rule—a fictionalisation of established history.

Those works that did include her reign most frequently provide scant detail (Harry, Taylor 1620 and 1630). Each focuses more on her usurpation than her reign: "They vanquish'd her, and her in Prison threw" (Taylor 1630 B2v). None offers any positive commentary on her rule—not a single adjective of praise. This contrasts starkly with Brutan variants. Taylor's 1630 work further reduces the Queen through the implication that she was incapable of ruling without her husband. Higgins's stands alone as Cordeilla's champion. As in both Brutan substantives of his variant, his retelling, told in first-person perspective by Cordeilla herself, lavishes praise on her as a person, "My beautie braue, my wit was blaz'd abroad each where. / My noble vertues praisde" (61). Disproportionately, Higgins's variant

devotes just two lines within one stanza of his forty-nine stanza work, to Cordeilla's rule. The majority of the retelling is devoted to her downfall and suffering. Topicalities, or James's open disrespect for his predecessor and women more generally, echoing in the strictly patriarchal early modern era, may have impacted on representations of Cordeilla—especially given pre-existing correlations between Elizabeth and Cordeilla. It is bemusing, however, that, as the variants fractured into parasite history genres and appealed to a broader audience through the extension of dramatic elements, Leir's usurpation was explored and exploited but Cordeilla's was not, leaving much dramatic potential untapped. Johnson's ballad and Shakespeare's plays, however, did bring her untimely demise forward chronologically into the Leir story to capitalise on its dramatic potential.

6.8 Collation Synopsis

A collation of the narrative elements of variants of the Leir story reveals many diachronic and synchronic similarities and differences within Leir variants of the diversification years, as well as within the influences that caused these. In the main, differences were highlighted, with the second layer of the palimpsest of early modern variants revealed as a complex and varied cacophony of inconsistencies and elaborations. Consistent with the summation of bibliographic and paratextual features, the two defining features of narrative elements within the diversification years (1600-1639) are the movement of the Leir story into parasite history genres and the variants' collective consideration of a broader, popular reading audience. Where Brutus years variants shared many similarities in narrative elements, the greatest consistency within the diversification era variants is their inconsistency or their diversity. The established Leir history was extended in the diversification years to accommodate new generic exigencies, prompting the elaboration of existing elements and the

inclusion of fictional elements. Also included were elements specific to new genres and those used to appeal to a broader audience. The movement into parasite history genres saw the story often told in isolation from the Brutan line, with the frequent removal of paratextual material which previously legitimised the story as history. All part of a shared history—a nation-founding, monarchical genealogy—Leir's story now included fools, madness, bawdy, murderers, humour, blindings, and social critique. Brutan variants revealed it to be a consistent, nation affirming history, now it was a malleable, even fictionalisable, popular history. Once history and still recognised as such, the Leir story was becoming legend because of its movement into diverse genres and towards the popular audience.

The diversification variants engage with the Leir story in two chief ways. Those representative of more established forms of historiography (Harry 1604, Camden 1605, Higgins 1610, Taylor 1622 and 1630) are more consistent and show greater alignment with Brutan years variants, though still demonstrating an appeal to broader reading audiences. The greatest variety and alteration of the legend were seen within parasite history genres, or those that had pre-existing or co-existing performative forms (plays and ballads). The individual parasite history variants are equally as different from each other as they are from the established historiographical genre variants. Their chief similarity is a shared connection to this established history. As they move into parasite history genres, the variants are more representative of their performative versions than of any future, consistent literary form. They reflect the companies and conditions that created them. They diversify through the differing elements added to, and the unique extensions made to, the established history. Consistently, however, it is where the established history intermingles with fictional additions (such as new characters or events) that the established history itself is altered and at times fictionalised—completely diverging from established historiography.

The narrative elements that were excluded from the established forms of historiography are those most likely to be extended by the parasite history variants: the love test, Leir's downfall and suffering, the battle, the restoration, and Cordeilla's rule. Extensions to the love test, Leir's downfall, and his suffering within parasite history genres were more additions than alterations. They were likely made for dramatic impact, designed to heighten appeal to a broader audience through comic characters, evil plots, and the aged king going mad. The greatest degree of alteration is seen in depictions of the battle, Leir's restoration, and Cordeilla's rule. This is seen most specifically in Johnson's ballad, and Shakespeare's plays (Q1 1608 and F1 1623), where history is made malleable and exploited for dramatic effect.

While it does not alter history as dramatically as other parasite histories, the most "original" of all the diversification variants is the anonymous Queen's Men's play. This variant is the most consistently different from others and provides the most additions to the established historiography. No element of the traditional story is left untouched. Leir is a morose widower. The elder daughters are evil manipulators. Cordeilla is pious and bawdy, and France is a chivalric hero. It includes murderers, comics, thieves, drunkards, and lashings of swordplay. The arc of the story may be the same, but the detail added was chosen for its dramatic, indeed its performative, potential. Thus, parasite history variants within the diversification years altered the established historiography through additions and extensions to the story. Whether radical or comical alterations, each proved Leir's history to be malleable. Yet those variants representative of more established historiography largely replicated the story as told by the Brutan variants—affirming its existence as history. Therefore, Leir, king of established history, existed side-by-side with fictionalised Leir, king of malleable history.

One of the defining features of the Brutan years was consistency in the use of topicalities within the works. The Leir story was redolent with potential analogies to Elizabeth and her reign. Brutan authors thus balanced the desire to flatter the Queen and nation with the potential to cause offence through their strategic omissions and variations. The potential for contemporaneous analogy within the Leir story was equally as clear in diversification variants under James's rule. Indeed, scholars often suggest Leir and his division of the kingdom act as the antithesis of James and his desire to unify the kingdom, with the negative outcomes of Leir's decision acting as inducement to support the union project. Certainly, the sheer number of new variants printed during the diversification years, as well as the republication of prior variants, may confirm this assumption. Yet here again there was a generic split amongst variants. Those representative of established forms of historiography drew clear topicality, with this more evident largely in paratext than the retelling of the story itself, and with Harry, Taylor (1622 and 1630), and Camden speaking in support of their monarch. Thus, as before, those diversification variants representative of more established forms of historiography continue to align with these pre-existing forms.

Topicality operated differently amongst the parasite history genres. They offer internal inconsistencies, with individual variants providing both flattery and open derision for the monarchy. I would suggest that, instead of one overarching desire, such as flattery of the king through additions or the avoidance of censorship through omissions, diversification parasite history variants included topicalities in much the same way that they did puns or humour. Multiple individual topicalities were included to appeal to different groups within the broader, often popular, audience. Where one group may scoff at the derision of James's monopolies in Q1, another would be flattered by Q1's legitimisation of the line of Albany as monarch. Likewise, one group might laugh at Cordeilla's bawdy punning in the anonymous play as another cheered at the depiction of France in support of the Auld Alliance. Finally,

part of the ballad's audience might sneer at the madness of the king, whilst another group is affirmed by its moral stance against treason. Parasite history diversification genres cater to a broader audience through diverse, individual, layered topicalities.

The greatest consistency within the variants' topicalities is concerning the representation of women, or more specifically Leir's daughters. As previously stated, Elizabeth's rule saw sustained concern with the rule of a woman—a Queen regnant. The final years of her reign heightened this dissatisfaction (Levin 56). Upon his accession, James openly disparaged Elizabeth and women more generally—his rule is described as misogynistic (Levin 51 and 75-76). James intervened in how Elizabeth was represented and encouraged playwrights, preachers, and balladeers to “warn against the insolence of women, and their poor behaviour, and the horrors that occurred when they stepped out of bounds” (Levin 63). Deficits in James's rule later saw Elizabeth glorified:

[James's] failures as a ruler, alongside his deep-seated misogyny, invited fiercely nostalgic memories of the stronger and more effective monarch who preceded him.

The continuing failures of his son Charles's reign only exacerbated such recollections. (Levin 75-6)

Representations of royal women were then still in the spotlight through comparisons between Elizabethan and Stuart monarchs: “people repeated the quip, Elizabeth was King, and now James is Queen” (Levin 58).

In the Brutan years, Elizabeth was often positively analogised with Cordeilla—both Queens regnant. In the diversification years, across both the established historiographies and parasite history variants, Cordeilla is less featured, less praised, and less consistent in her characteristics. Her subservience to her husband is routinely privileged. That she ruled at all is included in only four of the nine diversification variants (Harry, Higgins, Taylor 1622 and 1630). Johnson's anonymous ballad and Shakespeare's Q1 and F1 delete her rule from

history. Johnson's ballad is most critical. Whilst initially paralleling established historiography, and returning to this same established royal lineage in its conclusion, Johnson's ballad sees Cordeilla slain in the battle—she fails to wear the crown and yet established history continues without her. The tendency to omit Cordeilla's reign may in part be due to the Leir story's existence as a stand-alone work in the diversification years, as opposed to being merely one part of history, with Cordeilla's rule cut from the end of the story. Yet this omission privileges the patriarch, Leir—it becomes Leir's story. Whilst the omission of Cordeilla's rule, the reduction of her role overall, and her subservience to her husband align with James's critique of Elizabeth, and women more generally, it is of note that Cordeilla is consistently ignored but never derided within diversification variants.

The same cannot be said of Leir's elder daughters. Depictions of the elder daughters, as with those of Cordeilla, are one of the few times the diversification variants do not divide along generic lines. Likewise, these depictions are one of the most significant points of difference between Brutan and diversification variants. Diversification variants collectively establish the elder daughters as evil. Over half establish their negative characterisation as early as the love test, where Brutan variants and the Galfridian original at this point introduce them positively. All the variants that depict Leir's downfall and suffering squarely lay the blame for such upon his elder daughters. Their evil is recounted consistently, though it manifests differently in each. The anonymous play depicts them as bawdy, mercurial murderers. The anonymous ballad within Johnson's collection shows them demeaning and debasing Leir. Q1 and F1 shows them to be jealous, violent, conniving, and adulterers. Authors of diversification variants have exploited the dramatic potential within the elder daughters' roles. Certainly, their negative depictions align with James's misogyny. More significantly, they exploit the opportunity for humour and drama inherent within the roles and their capacity to titillate and shock a broad audience within a strictly patriarchal society.

Regardless of the implied motivation for such large-scale alteration of their characterisation, the negative depictions of the elder daughters within diversification variants move away from their depictions in established historiography, with many of their evil deeds additions to the story.

Within the diversification years, there is most typically a divide between those variants representative of established forms of historiography and those representative of the parasite history genres. Whilst both demonstrated the history to be more malleable, extending and altering parts to accommodate broader audiences and generic need, the parasite history genres take greater liberty in altering the established story. They do so largely out of generic necessity. The transference of the traditional history into parasite history genres necessitated alterations such as the extension of length. Potentially, due to a competitive market all seeking a broader audience, each variant's alterations prompted others to alter the history more. Consistently, it is where fictional additions to the Leir story meet the history itself that the historical elements are given permission to alter. Notable is when additions were fictional instead of extensions of established history.

Though Leir is less a king of history because of additions—fictional embellishments and narrative alterations—he is also less a king of history due to omissions. Diversification variants frequently lack paratext and prefatory material calling attention to Leir's historicity. Their authors largely lack the societal standing that gave authority to Brutan variants. Leir's story is most often told in isolation without the supporting structure of the full Brutan line. The works rarely contain citations, marginalia, or references to historiographical methods. Within the retelling, Leir is routinely introduced without reference to his right to rule and achievements. He fully abdicates immediately after the love test in all diversification variants, failing to retain any portion of his kingdom. The heightened maliciousness of the elder daughters makes Leir's downfall immediately seem the inevitable outcome of the love test

itself. Leir is less of a king and more of a character. Through both their additions and omissions, the diversification variants remove focus from Leir as king and his historicity. They establish his story as fictionalisable—moving from history to legend. The sheer number of historiographical variants of the Leir story then extant, all recounting the established tale, would have served as counterpoint to the diversification years parasite history variants, highlighting their fictionalisation of the history. Notably, however, the diversification variants and their altered and unstable recounting of the Leir story were addressed to, and likely reached, a broader audience. In this way, it could be said that the Leir story and therefore Galfridian historiography were not proven to be fictional by the historical revolution, though this was co-occurring. Leir's history was fictionalised by the book trade's diversification and the generic exigencies inherent within the movement of historiography into parasite history genres—a quasi-euhemeristic process.

This chapter has thus clarified the second layer of the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story, particularly with regard to how its diversity contrasted with the consistency and conservatism of the first layer, the Brutan years. It has revealed the greatest influence to be the “dissolving” of the traditional functions of the chronicle into parasite history genres—a process that came late to Leir variants. Parasite history diversification variants moved further away from established history by generic necessity, with new and popular generic forms necessitating extensions and additions to the established history—a fictionalising or fracturing of such. This fictionalisation, however, is contradictorily not without precedent and could be seen to be a development of the methodological approach of chronicle historians. Chapter 4 of this thesis articulates the methodological approach of medieval chroniclers who consulted diverse texts in the creation of their own but, when prior works revealed gaps or insufficient detail, used creative licence in order to provide a

complete history (Kamps 10). Higgins's 1574 variant, in its address to the reader, articulates this clearly:

I was often faine to vse mine owne fimple inuention (yet not fwaruing from the matter) becaufe the Chronicles (althoughe they wente out vnder diuers mens names) in some fuche places as I moste needed their ayde wrate one thing: and that fo brieflye that a whole Princes raigne, life and death, was comprifed in three lines. (viv-r)

Diversification variants thus stayed aligned with the methodologies of earlier historiographers and the chronicles of many of their titles, as they developed new ways of working in new generic forms. The freedom to extend and amend history, part of the chronicle tradition, was pushed to its limits by authors of parasite history genres.

While they blur the boundary between history and fiction, diversification variants can still be considered histories. Chapter 5 clarified popular audiences' consideration of them as such. They contained appeals to this audience and elements of their new genres—bawdy and humour, murderers and drunkards, madness and mayhem—yet they also included more of the elements of Galfridian history than did Brutan variants. Even those diversification variants that radically altered history then largely reinstated it. This can be seen in the anonymous ballad within Johnson's collection, which simply omitted the reign of one monarch before reinstating the line, or Shakespeare's *Q1*, which jumped to the reign of the Duke of Albany or forward in time to the Scottish Stuarts. Co-existing with popularised forms of established historiography, parasite history genres drew on and aligned with old methodologies in their transition to new forms. The key difference is that Brutan variants which followed this same method—filling in the blanks in history—were framed by multiple scholarly devices (articulation of methodology, addresses to readers, lists of authors consulted, marginalia, authorial status), designed to corroborate the history as truth. Diversification parasite history genres contained no such corroboration of their historicity—with one variant, *F1*, a tragedy,

seeking to legitimise its author, instead of its contents. Thus, the movement into diverse genres caused diversification variants to demonstrate a greater willingness to fill in the gaps in history, and a greater creative licence in doing so.

To the Reader:

In Chapters 7 and 8, I collate variants from the stagnation years (1640-1710), the third and final layer within the early modern palimpsest of Leir variants explored within this study. This final historical collation addresses the same bibliographic, paratextual, and narrative elements as my collation of the Brutan (1557-1599) and diversification (1600-1639) variants. Yet its outcomes were not foreshadowed by findings of earlier collations.

Placing the retelling in contrast to earlier trends within variants and the broader book trade, a collation of Leir variants from the stagnation years reveals a stagnation not just in the number of substantives retellings but also in their styles and narrative elements. Largely due to this stagnation, instances of variety become more prominent in contrast and include: a Shakespearean adaptation; the first seditious content; a royalist antiquarian rewriting history and a Whig historian failing to do so; and correlation between fictionalisation and politicisation. Revealed also are seeds of regeneration that transform the Leir story from history to fable, and then to Shakespearean fiction—revealing why Shakespeare’s *King Lear* now acts as metonym for all early modern variants.

Stagnation Years Variants		
Date	Author	Title
1641	Heywood, Thomas	<i>The Life of Merlin</i>
1661	Enderbie, Percy	<i>Cambria Triumphans</i>
1670	Milton, John	<i>The History of Britain</i>
1681	Tate, Nahum	<i>The History of King Lear</i>
1696	Tyrrell, James	<i>The General History of England</i>
1700	Anonymous	<i>Tragical History of King Lear, and his three Daughters</i> ³

Fig. 7.1. Stagnation Years Variants

³ As it is a broadside, quotations from the ballad are included without reference to a page number.

Chapter 7: A Collation of the Stagnation Years Variants 1640-1710

This final collation of substantive retellings of the Leir story printed in English in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710 addresses an era that I have entitled the “Stagnation Years,” from 1640 to 1710. It is an era in which the absence of retellings is equally as illuminating as their scattered presence. The nation-building Brutan years, from 1557 to 1599, included eleven substantive retellings, an average of more than two per decade, and the diversification years, from 1600 to 1639, saw a greater average of over two per decade, or nine substantives. The stagnation years stand in stark contrast, including only six substantive retellings of the Leir story (see fig. 7.1), an average of less than one per decade, halving previous averages and demonstrating a clear stagnation in the publication of substantive Leir variants. This steep reduction in the number of substantive Leir variants occurs during a time which saw sustained socio-political change and a flourishing book industry fuelled by increasing literacy rates, generic diversification, and the consolidation of the popular audience. In previous eras, factors such as these were prompts for the production of a greater number of variants, not fewer.

As in both previous eras, stagnation variants co-existed with other versions of themselves, as well as with derivative versions of Brutan and diversification years variants and their recensions. Within the Brutan years, there were an additional thirty-eight derivative versions printed alongside the substantive retellings, or an average of just under ten derivatives a decade. The diversification years included the publication of an additional nineteen derivative forms of the Brutan variants, and an additional twenty derivatives of the diversification variants themselves, averaging just under ten derivatives each decade. Once again, the stagnation years show a stark reduction, with a total of twenty-eight derivatives

printed at this time, including one derivative of the Brutan variants, fifteen derivatives from the diversification years, and twelve derivative versions of stagnation variants. This averages four derivatives printed each decade during the stagnation years, a stark contrast to the previous averages, especially considering the potential to print derivatives from the two previous eras and the propensity of the book trade to rely on a solid backlist or the reprintings of “steady sellers” to offset financial risk (Barnard, “Introduction” 20; Lesser, “Introduction” 5). Notably, Shakespeare’s works represent nine of the twelve derivatives printed at this time. This includes the output of Shakespeare’s first editor, Nicholas Rowe, and his *Works of Mr William Shakespeare*, and is indicative of trends of stagnation and regeneration noted within this era, with the Leir story moving from shared history to one man’s fiction. This chapter demonstrates that the correlation of these two trends does not imply causation.

Both Brutan and diversification eras began with the death of one monarch and the crowning of the new. The stagnation years begin not with the transference of power but with the struggle for it. The country was under personal rule, with civil war in all three of King Charles I’s kingdoms merely years away. These wars led to the almost unthinkable trial and execution of the monarch, and the death of the monarchy itself. In previous eras, the crowning of a new monarch, or the transference of power, consistently coincided with a flurry of new retellings that sought both to praise and to legitimise the ruler. There is no such flurry in the stagnation years, though power changes hands on seven different occasions, often through contested means, none of these merits a similar flurry. Variants are almost mathematically self-organising with one per decade, except during the Interregnum. (For the full list of variants studied within this collation, please see Appendix 3.)

Both social history and book history see the start of the stagnation years, the 1640s, as a definitive moment which almost irrevocably shattered pre-existing paradigms. For social history, this paradigm shift refers to the civil wars leading to the Interregnum, with England

for the first time under parliamentary instead of monarchical rule. The first stagnation variant, Thomas Heywood's pro-monarchy Galfridian historiography *The Life of Merlin*, was printed in 1641 during the lead-up to civil war. No substantive variants were published during the civil wars themselves (1642 to 1651), nor during the trial and execution of Charles I, nor during the Interregnum (1649 to 1660). It is notable that no substantive variants were published at this time, as collations of previous eras have demonstrated that history itself, and thus the Leir story, was often used at times of national instability both to comment on and to stabilise the present, with more variants subsequently published at these times. The lack of substantive retellings printed at this time is even more notable as it contrasts with trends in the book trade:

The years of the Civil War and Interregnum [were] a time at which new publishing openings were being explored, new middling audiences being created, and in which public opinion was increasingly formed through the press. (Barnard, "Introduction" 23)

In this way, the stagnation in the printing of Leir retellings stands in contrast to previous eras addressed within this thesis, and in contrast to the book trade itself.

A brief exploration of the social history of the remainder of the stagnation years reveals sustained socio-political unrest and a set of variants which consistently fail to align with these events, though the collation within this chapter shows that they repeatedly comment on them. Again in contrast to trends from Brutan and diversification eras, the restoration of the monarchy and the crowning of King Charles II (1661) did not see a flurry of variants published, with Percy Enderbie's pro-monarchy Galfridian historiography *Cambria Triumphans* (1661) the lone variant printed at this time. This lack of variants also contrasts once more with the book trade, with the restoration of the monarchy aligned with the restoration of the arts and literature, both then and now (Hamond 388). Though John

Milton's Galfridian historiography was partially researched and composed in the years preceding the execution of Charles I (Woolf, *The Idea* 251; Raymond 385), Milton's *The History of Britain* (1670) and Nahum Tate's play *The History of King Lear* (1681) are the only other substantive variants published during the reign of Charles II. Tate's work is notable for several reasons. Its publication date coincides with the heat of the Exclusion Crisis (1679 to 1681), which saw parliamentary interference in the line of succession and attempts to exclude the Catholic future King James II from the crown. Secondly, Tate's variant is pivotal to this study as it is the first that frames itself as a rewriting of Shakespeare's play and not a rewriting of national history. It marks the regeneration of the Leir story from palimpsest to metonym—owned by Shakespeare and not the nation. Notably, this regeneration occurred after the stagnation of Leir variants had already begun.

Sustaining the trend of stagnation variants, and once more in opposition to trends seen in Brutan and diversification eras, there were no substantive variants printed during the short but turbulent rule of James II (1685 to 1688), nor during the Glorious Revolution (1688), nor immediately following the crowning of King William III and Queen Mary II (1689). Clear alignment between narrative elements of the Leir story and events at this time could have suppressed the publication of variants, yet also had the potential to encourage publication. This is later discussed in detail. James Tyrrell's anti-Galfridian, Whig historiography *The General History of England* was printed in 1696, two years after Mary II's death and into William III's solo rule. The final substantive variant, an anonymous broadside ballad, was likewise printed during William III's rule, likely in 1700⁴. This date, tentatively suggested by the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), was two years before William III's death and the

⁴ Please note that, as with many broadside ballads, this anonymous variant does not contain an imprint, and its dating is unclear. The ESTC dates the ballad with equivocation as 1700?. English Broadside Ballad Archives share this equivocation but not the date, suggesting the ballad was printed in 1710?. Early English Books Online (EEBO) once more differ, tentatively placing the ballad much earlier at 1635?.

crowning of Queen Anne, an event that once more saw no substantive variants published. While on average more topical and political than earlier variants, variants in the stagnation years stand out for both their contrasting number and times of publication and for their lack of correlation to royal successions.

Where they do correlate is with book history, though not consistently. Book history particularly gives insight into the co-occurring stagnation of the Leir story as a national history and its regeneration into Shakespeare's story. The year 1641 represents a definitive moment in book history (Brewer, "Interregnum" 137) and not just socio-political history, given that in the lead-up to civil wars the Licensing Act lapsed and the Star Chamber and High Commission, which both had powers of press censorship, were abolished. Although there were attempts to regain control, most notably during the Restoration, "the genie was out of the bottle" (Woolf, *The Idea* 259), and the print industry was essentially without any successful or consistent regulation until The Statute of Anne or *An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies, During the Times Therein Mentioned* was passed in 1710. This act is traditionally considered the first copyright act and represents the terminal date for this study. Between 1641 and 1710, almost the entirety of the stagnation years, the presses thus lacked consistent pre-publication censorship and post-publication regulation (Brewer, "Interregnum" 137). This collapse in licensing saw a boom in the print industry, a boom that was not experienced by retellings of the Leir story, only serving to reinforce the status of the Leir story as stagnating.

The most notable change to the book trade during the stagnation years was the overt politicisation of print. The stagnation years saw sustained socio-political unrest and, because the book trade was now established and its regulation had lapsed, it saw an industry emboldened to participate in political debate: "polemic became the order of the day" (Woolf,

The Idea 255). Though sparked by events of the 1640s, this politicisation of print was sustained throughout the stagnation years in an “irreversible entanglement of print and politics” (Brewer, “Interregnum” 151). Not seen before, politicised print or propaganda openly represented both sides of each key power-struggle (Brewer, “Interregnum” 146). Quarto pamphlets were the “weapons” of the civil war (Brewer, “Interregnum” 140). Towards the end of the Interregnum “satirical imprints” highlighted and hastened the decline of the parliamentary cause (Hamond 389). Future King Charles II “reassured” the country with a “burst of printed propaganda” before he returned to the country to take the throne (Brewer, “Interregnum” 151-152). Later in his reign, Charles II’s critics “did not shrink from marshalling the most abusive and impertinent parallels to stigmatize what they saw as the corruption of the newly restored monarchy” (Kewes, “History” 18-19). Both Whigs and Tories likewise “turned to the printing press in order to bolster public support” during the Exclusion Crisis (Hunter 239). William of Orange’s “bloodless” and “glorious” revolution was the outcome of his success in the “pamphlet war” that preceded it (Brewer, “Interregnum” 152). Each pivotal event was marked by an explosion of politicised print (Brewer, “Interregnum” 139), yet only one of these times saw the printing of a Leir variant. This, however, is not an indication of the variants’ level of politicisation, merely their timing. This chapter’s collation reveals the stagnation variants to be topical, even overtly political, with one revealed to be seditious.

Notably, this politicisation of print is seen equally within variants representative of established forms of historiography, as well as the parasite history genres. This is representative of historiography of the time. During the Brutan and diversification eras, the historiographies were largely conservative in nature, reinforcing the status quo (Woolf, *The Idea* 264). This changed in 1640:

It would take the civil war and the suspension of censorship in the 1640s to bring about a framework of historical discussion that was truly dialectical, even confrontational, rather than consensual in character. (Woolf, *The Idea* 33: see also Kewes, "History" 22)

Authors, attuned to history's traditional role and its capacity to provide instruction and direction for readers, were not averse to the manipulation of history to suit their political agendas (Kewes, "History" 23-24; Woolf, *The Idea* 265). This is seen within stagnation variants, particularly those printed in the second half of the era.

Though present within variants, this politicisation of print, and of historiography more specifically, once again draws attention to the stagnation in the printing of Leir variants during these years as an anomaly. Their stagnation is quite stunning when the narrative elements of the story are transposed onto key historical events, highlighting their ability to be used for the political propaganda that was so prevalent at this time. By way of illustration, consider the pamphlet war preceding the Glorious Revolution. It is unthinkable that the Leir story, a history that saw two daughters rise against the rightful king in order to gain the throne, was not used as political fodder, given *Gonorilla* and *Regan*'s potential to serve as analogies for Mary II and Anne. The capacity for the relevancy and politicisation of the Leir story does not match its publication record during the stagnation years.

Whilst the deregulation and politicisation of print were the dominant elements of the book trade during the stagnation years, they were not isolated developments. As previously mentioned, the stagnation years saw a boom in the book trade. Crises and the lack of regularisation were good for business, with more works printed in 1641 than in any other year, a fervour that was sustained, with each new socio-political crisis seeing another peak in publication (Brewer, "Interregnum" 139). Rising literacy rates and broader readership (Suarez 8-9) additionally impacted, increasing the size of potential audiences and the

diversity of genres. For some audiences, those in the middle and professional classes, the consumption of printed material became habitual (Barnard, “Introduction” 25), though the texts consumed were notably different to those from earlier eras. Stationers had continued to specialise and the number of genres available to readers was rising. There was a sharp increase in the printing of shorter works and ephemeral material such as pamphlets (Brewer, “Interregnum” 138). Newsbooks, magazines, and periodicals also rose to prominence during this era (Feather 236). Whilst the regeneration of the Leir story is later discussed in relation to these periodicals, the stagnation variants here once again contradict the book trade, with only one substantive retelling in ephemeral form, a broadside ballad (1700). As in previous eras, the majority, or four of the six stagnation variants, are traditional forms of historiographies. Here historiographies align with the book trade in their comparatively limited number:

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that by the mid-1630s English Historiography had, on the whole, settled into a state of stagnation...For that there are a number of plausible explanations. The most obvious of these is that after nearly a century of existence, during which it had successively emancipated itself from the chronicle, defended its existence against the assault of poets and sceptics, and faced the emergence of a potent rival in antiquarianism, humanist historiography had, from one perspective, simply run out of steam. (Woolf, *The Idea* 246)

In this way, the stagnation of the Leir story aligns with the stagnation of historiographies more broadly. However, the diversification years demonstrated the malleability of the story and its capacity to transfer from established historiographies into diverse parasite history genres. This diversity and popularity were not sustained.

Overlapping with but occurring after this stagnation of the Leir story was its regeneration from national history to Shakespearean play. This regeneration of Leir variants reflects trends within the book trade begun in Restoration England: “During the Restoration

period the poetry and drama of ‘the last age’, as it was now called, was selectively reprinted, and the canon of English literature was refashioned” (Hamond 390). Aligning with the previously mentioned consolidation and growth within the book trade and its willingness to cater for a diverse audience with varied genres, play texts were elevated to standardised literary genres. As a consequence of this rise in stature, authors’ prominence and recognition rose (Barnard, “Introduction” 22). Shakespeare was one such author:

The development of modern conventions for presenting plays in print and shifts in the marketplace for printed books ... made Shakespeare both an elite product and widely available to anyone who could read. (Depledge and Kirwan 3)

Jean Marsden identifies that, though many claim it was later, Shakespeare’s canonisation began in Restoration England through the work done by early editors and adaptors. Emma Depledge agrees with this earlier chronology, by suggesting Shakespeare’s rise to cultural prominence began “during and as a result of a succession dispute known as the Exclusion Crisis” (1; see also: Depledge and Kirwan; Dobson; Lynch). A collation of stagnation variants suggests the rise of Shakespeare, as with the decline of the historiography, was a result of the book trade.

A collation of substantive retellings from the stagnation years thus reveals two imbricated but independent trends. First, interest in the Leir story as a part of national history declined, conceivably due to the stagnation of historiographies more generally. Later, due to the nascent canonisation of Shakespeare, the Leir story was reconstructed as one man’s creation. These trends co-existed but were not co-dependent, with both attributable to trends within the book trade. Thus, within the stagnation years, the nationally significant palimpsest of Leirs that existed within the Brutus years, and then became complex in the diversification years, receded from view. Alongside this process, Shakespeare’s stature, and thus that of his variant, rose.

7.1 Authors, Authority, and Audiences

The previous chapter highlighted complexities in defining the authorship of several diversification variants. While only two of these nine variants were anonymous, the impact of editors and performance companies was considered. This ambiguity is sustained and further problematised in the stagnation years. The greatest distinction in authorship between eras is the impact of the rise of the author. This phenomenon was noted in the book trade during the diversification years, yet it was largely absent from Leir variants at this time, with the exception of Shakespeare's First Folio (F1). For the stagnation years, although one of the variants is anonymous (Ballad 1700), and one author almost unremarked upon by history and scholarship (Enderbie 1661), four variants are written by established authors with extensive careers in the print trade. This aligns with the book trade as, by the eighteenth century, authorship had become a financially viable career choice (Feather 237), with the Restoration era's establishment of the literary canon contributing to a greater respect for the role (Barnard, "Introduction" 22).

Whilst authors of Brutan variants were largely well-known and well-respected historiographers, often notable presences in the book trade and/or civic affairs, authors of diversification variants were largely unremarkable people whose careers existed beyond the book trade, historiography, and scholarship. The stagnation years, reflecting the rise of the author, sees a return of authorial status, but this status is within the book trade and not necessarily larger society, with four of the five known authors established in this profession (Heywood, Milton, Tate, and Tyrrell), or career authors. While all had notable publishing careers, three (Milton, Tyrrell, and Tate) are notable for reasons specific to this study.

Two stagnation authors were notable within the book trade for their consistent use of print as a vehicle for their personal, political agendas (Milton, Tyrrell), with politicisation a key trend of stagnation variants. Both career authors, Milton and Tyrrell crafted their works in accordance with their political agendas. Milton “occupied the intermediary sphere of a remunerated writer who chose the marketplace as the most effective means of addressing a broad public” (Raymond 376). He is today perhaps most known as a literary figure for *Paradise Lost* and as a political figure for his work during the Interregnum as Latin Secretary for Cromwell’s government. Despite somewhat tempered in *The History of Britain*, Milton’s approach has seen him frequently characterised as a political writer and even a polemicist (Campbell; Corns; Fulton; Raymond), largely due to publications both during the trial of Charles I which sanctioned the overturing of a tyrannical or unjust king, and his justification and praise of the Commonwealth during its last years (Campbell). Milton’s sustained support of the Commonwealth necessitated a self-imposed exile upon the Restoration, until the passing of the Act of Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion (Campbell). Milton is the first author of a Leir variant to be anti-monarchy.

Likewise, although most recognised for his friendship with John Locke, Tyrrell was an established author whose career, akin to Milton’s, was defined by his politics. Today Tyrrell is characterised as a Whig historian, theorist, polemicist, and even radical (Goldie; Rudolph; Zook). His stature as a gentleman made him an ideal author of politicised material: “As a gentleman and a scholar, complete with a most distinguished ancestry, Tyrrell brought a respectability to radical Whig ideology” (Zook 187). As with Milton, Tyrrell’s works reflect his political beliefs. Both men were established authors within the book trade, and both were using print as a vehicle to disseminate and even to legitimise their political beliefs.

The career of Restoration playwright Tate was as notable within the book trade as were Milton’s and Tyrrell’s, though for different reasons. In the diversification years, it was

noted that the quarto plays were as much “authorised” by their performances and performers as by their playwrights. This had changed by the stagnation years as “the years 1640 to 1740 witnessed drama’s consolidation as a literary genre in its own right” (Depledge and Kirwan 6), with playwrights also affected by the rise of the author through their recognition as writers and their enhanced agency within the print process: “now dramatists wished to capitalize on the success of a production through sales of a printed text” (Hamond 403-404). Tate, however, is less known as an “author” than as an “adaptor” of Shakespeare’s works, and thus represents a transition point within the stagnation variants and the Leir story more generally. Tate’s work was then, as now, routinely compared to Shakespeare’s. Most frequently, this comparison finds it wanting: “Though admired by some contemporaries, it was soon pilloried by Pope, Parnell, and Swift, and has subsequently been subjected to almost universal contempt” (D. Hopkins). Tate marks the nascent regeneration of the Leir story into Shakespeare’s story, with both men sharing the authorship of the 1661 adaptation, and Shakespeare largely acting as “authority.”

The rise of the author is demonstrated not just by the careers of individuals but within the individual variants themselves. Authors of Brutus variants were all explicitly present within their works, yet almost half the diversification years variants were not. This trend in Leir retellings, earlier identified as contrasting with the rise of the author, was not sustained within stagnation years variants, which saw all but one variant, the anonymous broadside ballad, explicitly contain the presence of the author, as well as “authorising” elements used to lend credibility to the text and its contents. In this way, stagnation variants continue to align with the book trade. During the stagnation years, the degree of authorising aligns with both the genre of the work and the degree of explicit politicisation it contains.

Apart from the anonymous variant, which contains no imprint or indication of the author or authorising force, Heywood is the least present of all authors. Heywood’s

historiography was printed in 1641 in the lead-up to civil war, perhaps the least politicised era of the stagnation years. Although containing the traditional prefatory material of historiographies of previous eras, including a dedication and address to the reader, Heywood's variant contains few of the scholarly devices that "authorised" the historiographies of Brutus and diversification variants. Enderbie, Milton, and Tate are all present within their works, though in differing ways. Each uses a generically specific set of "authorising" techniques to legitimise their works. Both Enderbie and Milton, though writing from differing political perspectives, "authorise" their historiographies in similar ways to Brutus and diversification variants with addresses to the reader; clarification of methodology; marginal citations; and acknowledgement of sources. Additionally, both works bear an image alongside the frontispiece. Enderbie's coat of arms reinforces his stature, and Milton's portrait, with its Latin inscription hinting at his time with the Commonwealth, affirms his authority.

Tate's politically charged adaptation of Shakespeare's play could be said to have three authors, or authorising forces, made explicit within it: the adaptor, the original, and the popularity of the performative version. These "authorities" are present within prefatory material as well as in the prologue and epilogue of the play itself. Aligning with the rise of the author, Tate himself is prominent throughout. In his epistle dedicatory, Tate includes detailed clarification of how he adapted the work. This is reminiscent of the prefatory material of historiographies which clarifies methodology in order to validate the work. Content in Tate's prefatory material, as well as in the prologue and epilogue, reflects an inherent contradiction within Restoration texts which both valorised and criticised Shakespeare: "I found the whole to answer your Account of it, a Heap of Jewels, unstrung and unpolisht; yet so dazzling in their Discolor, that I soon perceiv'd I had seiz'd a Treasure" (A3v). In authorising his work, Tate draws on, yet attempts to supersede, Shakespeare.

The stagnation variant to offer the greatest presence of the author, and to use the most authorising techniques, is likewise the most politicised variant—the historiography of Whig polemicist Tyrrell. The reader is greeted by the crest of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Tyrrell’s alma mater, establishing his credibility as a scholar. There follows a raft of authorising features typical of historiographies, including patronage, marginalia, citations, the explicit articulation and defence of his methodology, and even the open disparaging of others’ work:

AND thus having acquainted you with the Defects of these Writers in their several Undertakings, and the Reasons why it was necessary to compile a new History; I shall now shew you what Method I have followed, and what Authors I have made use of, in the Performance of it. (vii)

Throughout the entire work, not just its prefatory material, Tyrrell defends his integrity, methods, and findings. He explicitly and consistently reinforces his authority and his stature as a historian. Stagnation variants show a pattern whereby the more politicised a text is, the more the author and authorising practices are present.

Also persuasive is the potential to draw links between authors, the explicit “authorising” of works, and appeals to the audience within the politicised climate of the stagnation years. The reading audience and appeals to it are more present within stagnation years variants than in either earlier period, demonstrating the rise of the reader. Variant authors’ relationships to their readers were becoming more complex as authors relied upon steady readership to sustain their careers in the book trade. They also sought to use their works to sway the opinions of their readers. The stagnation years saw an increase in literacy, greater interest in reading, and thus larger readership (Barnard, “Introduction” 19; Suarez 8-9). As earlier mentioned, this fact was not overlooked by the parade of ruling regimes seen during this period with politicised print, and its capacity to reach a broad audience, being

used to sway public opinion. The stagnation years represents a unique period when book history and social history collide, which sees authors aim to sell their works for commercial gain, whilst hoping their readers would likewise buy into their political views. Within stagnation variants, this has engendered a greater sensitivity to and acknowledgement of readers. This is most frequently seen in the creation of works for a more general readership and direct addresses to readers within works.

Where Brutan variants appealed to scholarly audiences, and diversification variants to both popular and scholarly, stagnation variants largely appeal more to a general readership. This, however, is less clear in the two earliest variants, both historiographies. Heywood's 1641 text and Enderbie's 1661 work contain no definitive indication of their intended audience. The remaining four variants all directly cater to a broad readership. During the diversification years, quarto play variants and ballads were designated popular works, yet by the stagnation years plays such as Tate's had risen to the status of literature and the ballad revival had seen the broadsides, such as the anonymous 1700 variant, increase in readership to include popular, literary, and elite audiences (Dugaw 71-72). Most explicit in its catering to a broad reading public is Tyrrell's 1696 Whig historiography: "The freeholders as well as the gentlemen needed to understand their political rights and responsibilities, as the Whigs perceived them" (Zook 187). Tyrrell's repeated references to "ordinary Readers" (xxi) is indicative both of the rise in literacy and the desire to reach and cater to a general readership.

With the exception of the anonymous broadside ballad, each of the stagnation variants includes direct appeals to its readers, with the capacity to read often aligned with the capacity to think independently. This once more may align with the politicisation of variants, as authors sought to sway their readers and thus both relied on and highlighted the reader's capacity to think freely, as opposed to hegemonically. Many of the pre-existing elements of the genres were exploited to appeal to, sway, and even flatter the reader, with the address to

the reader taking on a new tone in each. Here once more the most politicised variant aligns with the greatest appeal to the reader, as it did with the greatest presence of the author and most “authorising.” Tyrrell’s 1696 Whig historiography contains a staggering 116 direct references to the reader. He is not alone, with all but the anonymous broadside repositioning the praise once reserved for patrons onto the reader—perhaps signalling the evolution of the book industry which likewise saw financial reward move from patron to consumer. Enderbie “witheth all Happinefs” (A4r) to his “Gentle” (A4r) and “Courteous” reader (A4r). Heywood’s reader is “COurteous, and confiderate” (A4r) and his work is designed: “fcarce anything fhall be here wanting to thy beft wilhes” (B1v). Both Milton and Tate refer to their reader’s capacity to read and think, writing for “them who can judicioufly read” (Milton 99). Not only are readers more present in stagnation variants, a greater degree of status and agency is accorded to them.

Interestingly, two of the variants hint that the relationship between the reading public and the author may have been strained at times. Authors were aware that readers as consumers could easily take their patronage elsewhere and even be convinced by other politicised works. Much was at stake within this politically charged era, where print could, and did, facilitate Glorious Revolutions. The fawning tones of Tate’s introductory material which clearly explains and justifies his decisions in adapting Shakespeare’s work are replaced with confrontation in the epilogue. Mr Barry the actor, as opposed to his character, states: “If you like nothing you have seen to Day / The Play your Judgment damns, not you the Play” (68). Although merely two lines, they hint at potential dissent between author and audience. Tyrrell’s mass appeals to his readership contains one sharp, but pragmatic, edge:

[I] fhall leave the Reader to make what Judgment he pleafes of it, which if it doth not fuit with mine, I fhall not take it amifs, fince I am fufficiently fenfible how much Mens Opinions depend on their prefent Intereft, Education, or Courfe of Life: and I

cannot but observe, that there are a fort of Men, whose Heads seem framed for such a set of Notions rather than others, which make them that they cannot easily digest any thing that clashes with them. (cxxvii)

Tyrrell's work here evokes memories of Brutus variants which sought to escape censorship by briefly raising, but leaving readers to decide upon, key issues. Tyrrell's work, however, has a harder edge, clarifying the issues at hand and the correct choice for the reader. While only alluded to in these two variants, the rise of the audience within Leir variants may have created tensions for authors who found themselves reliant on the financial and political support of their audiences. Variants of the stagnation years are therefore notable, in comparison to the two earlier eras of variants, for the clear presence of the rise of the career author, the increased presence of the author and authorising forces within the works, and the increased reference to and empowerment of readers. Each of these factors aligns with both the book trade and the politicisation of variants, such that the more political a variant was, the more present was its author and reader and the more authorised was the text.

7.2 Collation of Bibliographic and Paratextual Elements: Historiographies

The stagnation variants sustain a trend identified in the diversification years, splitting generically into established forms of historiographies (Heywood, Enderbie, Milton, and Tyrrell) and parasite history genres (Tate's play and the anonymous broadside ballad). This division, however, is misrepresentative, as ballads and play texts were no longer simply parasite histories but literary genres in their own right, as a more established and specialised book trade led to the consolidation of genres (Depledge and Kirwan 6; Dugaw 71-72). Daniel R. Woolf notes that one of the key transitions in historical thinking between 1500 and 1700 was a contradictory understanding both of the delineations between genres, as well as

history's capacity to transcend genre ("From Hystories" 38). There is less generic diversity within established historiographical genres in the stagnation years than in the diversification years. These established forms of historiography split once more in a manner previously unseen. Stagnation historiographies are split between those similar in tone to earlier historiography (Heywood 1641, and Enderbie 1661) and those which are openly politicised, even propaganda (Milton 1670 and Tyrrell 1696).

Each of the stagnation historiographies is antiquarian in approach. Brutan and diversification historiographical variants were impacted by the "historical revolution," explicitly addressing the debate in prefatory material, as authors articulate and defend their differing methodological approaches. The "revolution" is not, however, seen within stagnation years historiographies, with antiquarianism appearing to have triumphed. Methodology is still discussed and even used to demonstrate the authority of the work, yet it is never debated or defended. All but one of the eleven Brutan historiographies included extensive prefatory material, including addresses to patrons and readers clarifying methodology and demonstrating the historicity of the work. Likewise, all but one of the four diversification historiographies included prefatory material of this type, though this material was much reduced in length, with authorial confirmation of the historicity of the work likewise reduced. Stagnation years variants are closer to Brutan than diversification variants, with the inclusion of, at times, extensive prefatory material.

The prefatory material of Heywood's and Enderbie's pro-monarchy, traditional historiographical variants is most consistent with Brutan variants. Both include dedications containing more than a hint of the now traditional modesty topos. Heywood's 1641 dedication is adroitly signed "Yours obsequiously devoted, T. H." (A3v). Enderbie has set lofty goals for patronage, dedicating his 1661 Restoration work to the king, with Enderbie designating himself: "Your MAJESTIES Moft Loyall And Obedient Subject" (A3v). The

address to the reader was an element of prefatory material in both Brutan and diversification eras, but its contents have refocused in stagnation variants in line with the previously mentioned rise of the reader. Both Heywood and Enderbie appeal directly to the reader as potential consumer and possible critic of their works. Each employs numerous techniques in doing so. Enderbie, for example, demonstrates a similar deference to his reader as he does to his dedicatee, the king: “I intreat the courteous Reader to accept in good part my weak endeavours” (Lib I v). Heywood uses the size of his work as an advertising ploy:

For in the steed of a large study book, and huge voluminous Tractate, able to take up a whole yeare in reading, and to load and tyre a Porter in carrying, thou haft here a small Manuell, containing all the pith and marrow of the greater, made portable for thee (if thou so please) to beare in thy pocket. (A4v)

Thus the prefatory material of these variants has retained the features of established historiography, but shifted its focus to the reader, and to a broader reading public.

This same point can be made of the politically charged historiographies, those of Milton and Tyrrell, but they represent two extremes of the spectrum—Milton in his succinctness and Tyrrell in his loquaciousness. Milton’s 1670 work fails to include the traditional prefatory elements of historiographies, instead choosing to embed the material typically included in these sections within the first chapter. Milton’s reader is left in no doubt as to the political focus of the text. As early as the second page, or the fifteenth line of the work, Milton merges past and present:

Certainly oft-times we see that wise men, and of best abilities have forbore to write the Acts of thir own daies, while they beheld with a iust loathing and disdain, not only how unworthy, how pervers, how corrupt, but often how ignoble, how petty, how below all History the persons and thir actions were; who either by fortune, or from rude election

had attain'd a fore judgment, and ignominie upon the Land, to have chief fway in managing the Commonwealth. (2)

Milton's language persuades the reader and alludes to both his Whig beliefs, through his focus on the "Commonwealth" and "rude election," and his willingness to view history, and even rewrite history, through these beliefs.

Tyrrell's prefatory material shares Milton's political focus, but lacks its brevity. In seeking clarity, Tyrrell's prefatory material leans towards verbosity, at almost 140 pages. He has included multiple introductory elements which share many generic features with prior eras' historiographies, as once more the integrity of his methodology is aligned with the integrity of the history. Where Tyrrell differs is that his introduction, his methods, and the outcomes of his research are now politicised. Take for example a sampling of the politicised points made on just one page within Tyrrell's extensive prefatory material:

I think it will plainly follow, that all those Kings above-mentioned could have no other title to their Crowns besides *Election*... I will here therefore leave it to the Impartial Reader, to consider... for we find in the following History, frequent mention made of great Councils of the *Wites*, i.e. the chief, or wise Men of the whole Kingdom, which Councils were established to curb the exorbitant Power of their Kings; since by these they were *elected*, and by these too they were likewise often *deposed*, when ever their Tyranny rendered them insupportable...we shall now in the next Place treat of the manner of their Succession to the Crown, which some of our Modern Authors fancy to have been by a Lineal Succession... I hope no Body will Have the Confidence to affirm, that the Empire hath been only Successive, and not Elective all this while. (xli-xlii)

Tyrrell's own use of italics, or that of his stationer, highlights key Whig themes, as does the focus on succession through election and the impact of "Councils" to curb the power of the king.

Reflective of the broader book trade and extending history's pre-established capacity to provide topical analogies, the focus of historiographical variants shifted in the stagnation variants from the past to the present. Brutan and diversification variants retold a history that focused on, glorified, and supported the royal line and thus the ruling monarch. Stagnation variants politicised and questioned this history, with their differing authorial perspectives revealing a rupture within socio-political thought. Woolf notes that from the 1640s "the reader of any history would be well advised to take note of its author's political and religious perspective" (*The Idea* 264-265). Stagnation historiographies largely retain the prefatory features of their generic predecessors, but the later historiographies, Milton's and Tyrrell's, both refocus these through their open politicisation.

This consistency with, yet refocusing of, the prefatory features within historiographies is additionally reflected within the retellings themselves. Within Brutan variants, three quarters privileged the Leir story over that of other Brutan monarchs through its selection for inclusion, extended length, or use of additional elements such as woodcuts. Only one of the four diversification historiographies shows any such privileging. Stagnation historiographies once more show greater consistency with Brutan, with half (Heywood and Milton) privileging the Leir story through additional length, when compared to that devoted to other kings' reigns. Here Milton is the exemplar, with Leir's reign retold in three and a half pages, when most kings receive a brief paragraph. Leir is not the only king to receive such privilege. Milton's politicised historiography would appear to privilege those kings whose reigns included socio-political unrest, such as brothers King Belinus and King Brennus who,

reminiscent of the Leir story, divided the kingdom so that both could rule, but later turned upon each other, seeking ultimate control.

In the main, though often splitting along political lines, stagnation years historiographies reflect both earlier, Brutan variants, as well as trends within the book trade. The standardisation of the genre is apparent through the consistency of inclusions. All are antiquarian. The rise of the reader is seen in prefatory material and direct addresses. Authors are still interested in the authorising of their works, with citations, marginalia, and authorial interjections still consistent. The most telling trend within bibliographic and paratextual elements of historiographical variants of the stagnation years remains their parallels with the book trade and with the politicisation of print.

7.3 Collation of Bibliographic and Paratextual Elements: Parasite Histories

The previous chapter stated that diversification variants reflected broader trends in historiography and exemplified what Woolf has identified as the breakdown of the traditional chronicle history into genres that focus on one of its five functions: historical, commemorative, informative, communicative, or entertaining (*Reading History* 27). Diversification variants were almost equally divided between historiographies and entertaining works, considered in relation to what Woolf refers to as parasite history genres (*Reading History* 26). This division, but not its ratio, continued in the stagnation years, with two of the six stagnation variants parasite history genres. As previously noted, this term is no longer fully representative, as the consolidation of and specialisation within the book trade led to the establishment of both plays and ballads as consolidated literary genres. Stagnation parasite history genres combine numerous, pre-identified trends in order to generate texts emblematic of the stagnation years and the imbricated regeneration of the Leir story into

Shakespeare's story and not a nation's history. As with the stagnation historiographies, the parasite history genres reflect both their socio-political contexts and trends in the book trade through their politicisation. Diversification parasite history variants demonstrated the malleability of the Leir story, frequently fictionalising the retelling itself through the inclusion of additional elements, added through generic necessity. This trend is sustained within the stagnation years, which sees the parasite history genres, or Tate's play and the anonymous broadside ballad, the most willing of all variants to change the story in their politicisation. This is fully discussed in the collation of narrative elements.

Tate's 1681 variant has already been considered as a significant text as it is the first to be an adaptation of Shakespeare's work and not an adaptation of history. Generically, Tate's variant is both an adaptation and a play or, more specifically, a play text, with this description more reflective of the consolidation of the performative genre in print form. The bibliographic and paratextual elements of Tate's variant reflect the standardisation of this genre and are akin to many modern plays. Its contents and the alterations made by Tate to Shakespeare's play stylistically reflect the aesthetics of Restoration theatre (Bender 69-70; Massai; Wikander). One element of Restoration aesthetics was the commonality of the adaptation as a genre, with plays from the pre-civil war era, especially those of William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and John Fletcher, repeatedly adapted for the Restoration stage and page (Hamond 390). There were more than fifty adaptations of Shakespeare's work printed between 1660 and 1777 (Marsden 1). Tate's *King Leir* shares more generic similarities with these adaptations than it does with other Leir variants. When collating the diversification variants, it was noted that retellings of the Leir story appeared in history plays and ballads much later than those of other historical kings. This trend continues, with Tate's Restoration play text, his second Shakespearean adaptation, published two decades after the first adaptation of Shakespeare's work.

Tate uses bibliographic and paratextual features to clearly frame his work as an adaptation of Shakespeare's play, in much the same way that other authors have framed their variants as retellings of history. References to the processes of adaptation are found in the epistle dedicatory, the prologue, and the epilogue:

Your Entertainment fhould be moft old Fare.
 Yet hopes, fince in rich *Shakefpear's* foil it grew,
 'Twill relifh yet with thofe whofe Tafts are True,
 And his Ambition is to pleafe a Few.
 If then this Heap of Flow'rs fhall chance to wear
 Fresh Beauty in the Order they now bear. (A4r)

Tate's framing of his work as a Shakespearean adaptation is as much a part of the authorising of the text as it is its genre. The process of adaptation is depicted by Tate as the refining and improvement of Shakespeare's work: "a Heap of Jewels, unfrung and unpolisht; yet so dazling in their Diforder, that I foon perceiv'd I had feiz'd a Treasure" (A3v). While Tate may have depicted his adaptation as improving Shakespeare's work, literary critics were soon to disagree, with Tate's work remembered by history as a "subversive act" (Marsden 1) and routinely denigrated: "'Tatification' has become the universal term of opprobrium for tampering with Shakespeare's texts" (Wikander 351). The regeneration of the Leir story into Shakespeare's story is illustrated through one of the most common criticisms of Tate's work—the happy ending. Tate's restoration of Leir and Cordeilla to the throne is criticised as a saccharine affront to Shakespeare's play, yet in reality it was a return to established historiography. It is somewhat ironic that Restoration England routinely saw Shakespeare's plays adapted at the same time as bardolatry was being established (Dobson 4), with the rise in Shakespeare's status a concomitant feature of the establishment of the literary canon, a process which likely reflects the politicisation of print during this time: "That Shakespeare

was declared to rule world literature at the same time that Britannia was declared to rule the waves may, indeed, be more than a coincidence” (Dobson 7).

Although an adaptation of Shakespeare’s work, Tate’s variant reflects trends established within diversification parasite history genres. Within them, there was a greater willingness to alter the established story. Most typically, these alterations were made of generic necessity and reflected the movement of the story into play and ballad form. Where the established story intertwined with these fictional additions was where the greatest alterations were made to it and where the established history became fictionalisable. In adapting Shakespeare’s work, Tate chose to intertwine the main (or historical) plot more deeply with the fictional sub-plot of Shakespeare’s work:

’Twas my good Fortune to light on one Expedient to rectifie what was wanting in the Regularity and Probability of the Tale, which was to run through the whole A Love betwixt Edgar and Cordelia, that never chang’d word with each other in the Original.
(A3v)

Tate’s extensive fictionalisation of the established story occurs through the complete marrying of established history, Shakespearean additions, and newly included elements, thus reflecting earlier trends within diversification parasite history genres as well as the genre embraced by Tate—an adaptation. Notably, Tate’s politicisation of the Leir story is facilitated by this marrying of these three elements and thus embedded throughout every element of the work, as is later discussed.

The final stagnation variant is an anonymous, broadside ballad, tentatively dated by the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) as from 1700. Though substantive by all definitions of the term, the ballad is a clear recension of Richard Johnson’s *The Golden Garland* ballad of the diversification years. Broadside ballads have been considered to be everything from gossip mongering to early newspapers, seditious to trivial, as a voice of the

people or agents of the government, and even simply unavoidable (Atkinson 70; Echard 89; Hehmeyer; Hindley; Nebeker, “Broadside” 12; Sullivan and Woodbridge 270-271). The most common form of the ballad is the broadside, so named for its publication on one side of a broadsheet, or a folio-sized piece of paper, although this ballad covers only half of this. Broadside ballads typically contained three elements: the verse, the woodcut/s, and the tune/song. Of these, it is the verse section that has received the most scholarly attention. Initially derided as crude elements that failed to directly relate to the content of the ballad, woodcuts were seen to lack aesthetic or illustrative value (Fumerton and Palmer; Marsh; Würzbach 14). Renewed interest in the ballad, and the “visual turn,” has seen a revival of interest in woodcuts, with scholars exploring their contribution to meaning making as well as to the lived experience of ballad consumption (Fumerton and Palmer; Marsh; Palmer). The 1700 anonymous variant contains five woodcuts (see fig. 7.2), verse, title, and summary, but no tune. At first glance, as with Tate’s adaptation, the anonymous broadside appears to share more similarities with its generic peers than with other variants of the Leir story.

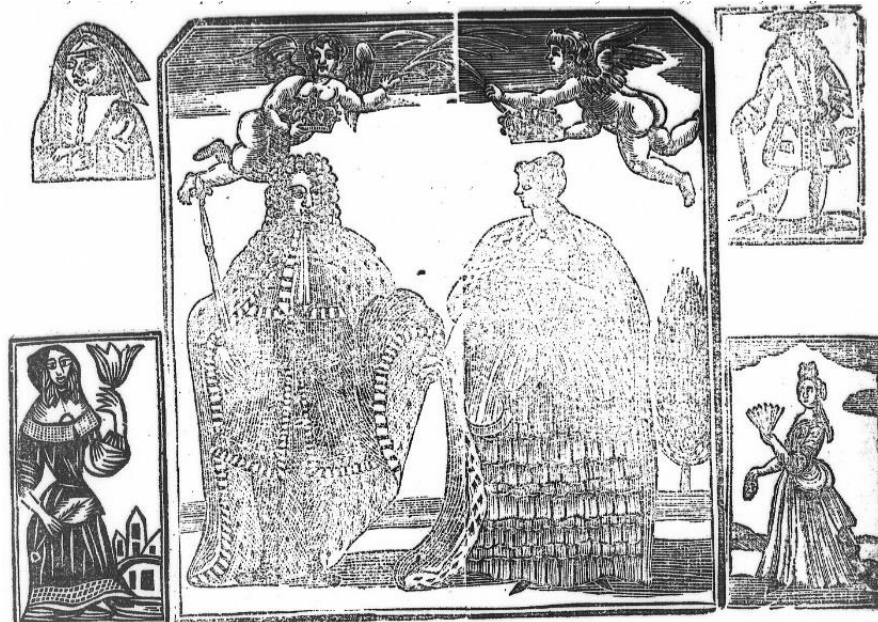


Fig. 7.2. Anonymous Ballad Woodcuts

The ballad's title declares itself a "tragical history." Its narrative elements, discussed fully in the following chapter, largely retell the familiar history. However, the conclusion to the ballad provides a break from both its source and the history it retold. In it, Cordeilla is slain in the battle and Leir "laid himself by her, and instantly dy'd" leaving the crown "vacant, for Want of an Heir / There being none equal the Crown for to wear." Where Tate sustains a tradition begot by diversification years parasite history genres, the ballad extends it. Previous variants have been most licensed to fictionalise the established history when it merges with fictional elements added out of generic necessity, yet the ballad has fictionalised the ending without any such provocation. The ballad takes creative licence and rewrites, or fictionalises, history. This fictionalisation, as well as the ballad's paratextual features, is later discussed in relation to its participation in an era of a politicised print. The ballad's woodcuts, or later alterations to them, additionally highlight another trend identified within the collation of the stagnation years. Whilst excluded from this study as a derivative, a 1710 version of the anonymous broadside is part of a group of texts that signal the regeneration of the Leir story from national history to Shakespearean construction. In it, though the verse is retained, several of the woodcuts have been changed (see fig. 7.3), with one of the newly selected images being Shakespeare's visage. This visually aligns the ballad and the Bard and is emblematic of the ballad's movement from source to adaptation, and the regeneration of the Leir story from shared history to Shakespearean creation.



Fig. 7.3. Derivative Anonymous Variant 1710 ESTC N70838. Broadside Ballads Online
Roud Number: V9899

The bibliographic and paratextual elements of stagnation variants reflect a standardising of genres within the book trade. Reflective of the diversification years, the variants are split between historiographies, representing four of the six variants, and parasite history genres. Both parasite history genres are stylistically representative of their established generic forms. The element most consistent between Tate's Restoration Shakespearean adaptation and the anonymous broadside ballad is a willingness to fictionalise the history. This is discussed in the collation of narrative elements. Also evident within them is their contribution to the regeneration of the Leir story from national history to Shakespearean construct.

7.4 History in the Stagnation Years

In the first era studied within this thesis, the Brutian years, Leir was a king of history and his story was retold as historical fact. Yet, during these years, Polydore Vergil had

ignited a historiography debate within the broader book trade which questioned the veracity of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history, specifically the existence of the Brutan line. This debate is prevalent and openly countered within Brutan variants. Leir variants of the diversification years were both historiographies and parasite histories, or plays and ballads, yet they too retold the story of King Leir as a factual part of national history. The willingness of the parasite history genres to alter this history was demonstrated as reflective of the stylistic demands of the new genres. History was fictionalisable in the diversification years, but still history. Explicit reference to the historiography debate is less prevalent within diversification variants, with only two of the nine addressing it in prefatory material. It is striking, given the last era's lack of engagement with the debate, that the stagnation years once more return to open engagement with the historiography debate.

During the stagnation years, parasite history genres within the book trade were still plausibly considered to be factual historical genres. Woolf notes that there was a "growing understanding of formal boundaries between genres but also of the liquidity of historical matter and its capacity to transcend such boundaries" ("From Hystories" 38). Ever increasing audiences were equally, perhaps even more, likely to learn about history from newspapers, chapbooks, ballads, almanacs, and plays (Kewes, "History" 5; Woolf, *Reading History* 31-32). Whilst tempered by the stagnation of historiography more generally, and especially within Leir variants at this time, it is notable that the past was still accessible to a growing readership through the diversity of genres in which it existed: "Significantly, none of these enjoyed special status as 'history'" (Kewes, "History" 3). Consideration of the historiography debate and the "truth" of the history within the stagnation years retellings of the Leir story split along generic lines, and eventually away from retelling the story as a history.

One of the strongest commonalities within prefatory material of Brutan and diversification variants was reference to the historiography debate—to the veracity of the

history retold within the works. The refuting of this debate was a strong theme within Brutan variants, but less so within diversification variants, which contain a text recognised as pivotal in the historiography debate—William Camden’s *Remains of a Greater Work*. Camden’s variant is frequently referred to as a turning point in the historiography debate, yet it is a debate that he fails to mention. This debate is revived by stagnation variants, which are more akin to Brutan variants through their rigour: “Brute was not easily dismissed, and may in fact have increased in popularity, at least in some circles” (Robinson-Self 37). Not only was the historiography debate reinvigorated in the stagnation years, it was resolved.

Three of the four stagnation historiographies engage at length with the historiography debate. While his address to the reader claims his work is “a true catalogue of all the Kings of the Island” (A4r), Heywood is the lone antiquarian not to make explicit reference to the historiography debate within his work. The three historiographies to engage with the debate, Enderbie’s, Milton’s, and Tyrrell’s, do so vociferously. Both Enderbie and Milton conclude that the history is factual and shore up its authority. They do so, however, for differing reasons. Enderbie’s demonstrates the truth of the history as a means to defend and honour the monarchy, akin to variants of previous eras. Milton’s, however, affirms the historicity of the Brutan line as it represents a convenient vehicle for political debate. In this way, the historiography debate within the stagnation years was politicised. History could be appropriated for a cause and yet retain its historicity. Here the stagnation variants, and specifically the historiographies within them, marry with the broader book trade:

When that government lost the trust and eventually the support of a significant segment of the articulate population, as it had done by the 1640s, the conditions were right for a sharp alteration in the manner in which historical discourse occurred.... the creation of an atmosphere of open ideological conflict. (Woolf, *The Idea* 264-265)

The retelling of history within the stagnation years was initially both a factual and a political endeavour. The sustained interest in authors and the “authorising” of works, along with a new focus on the reader (previously discussed), was used to reinforce the historicity of the work and its political agenda.

Enderbie’s 1641 variant was printed on the cusp of revolution—societal and historiographical. Akin to, but more fervid than, Brutan variants, Enderbie’s work valorises the monarchy. It is as much a defence of the institution of the monarchy as of the rule of the beleaguered monarch Charles I. As in the Brutan years, the historical kings are used to flatter and defend the monarchy. Opening remarks make Enderbie’s position clear:

Moſt DREAD SOVERAIGN, HE who is fo brain-fick as to question or diſpute the Antiquity of KINGS and MONARCHICAL Government, will put the choicest Wits to their Trumps, to find out a Nomenclation to expreſſe his Folly, the Word Fanaticke being too weak and flender. (A2r)

Enderbie is heavily engaged with the historiography debate throughout prefatory material, often citing sources and the conflict between them with detailed and pragmatic evidence given to defend the existence of the Brutes, and through them the monarchical line of succession and the reigning monarch. Notably, Enderbie refers to the historiography debate and the truth of the history he is retelling within the Leir story itself. Uniquely, he concludes the Leir story with a lengthy defence of Leir’s historicity. While variants from all eras studied within this thesis have defended the existence of the Brutes, no other has specifically defended the existence of Leir himself. The defence of Leir, a section almost as long as the retelling itself, begins: “Those who undervalue the Brittaines call this History in question; yet divers Authors relate it, out of which I will produce one in the same Language, in which he writ” (25). Enderbie then quotes Monmouth’s retelling in Latin, without offering a translation. He concludes: “Thus much I have added, to confirm the History of our Brittaines

Leir, and his daughters; I forbear to translate it, having already out of other Authors related the same in effect” (25). Enderbie, through his impassioned defence of Leir’s existence, defends the monarchy and the history from which it derived, both sustaining and politicising the historiography debate, and, with it, retellings of the Leir story.

Milton, similar to Enderbie, engages with the debate and affirms the existence of the Brutan line, though, where Enderbie does so to defend the truth of the history, Milton does so out of convenience. Milton’s 1670 post-Restoration variant frequently refers to the historiography debate in his embedded address to the reader. His opening words, as with Enderbie’s, link to it. Milton echoes earlier forms of historiography which justified the retelling of the Brutan line through the necessity to “fill in the blanks” in history, as well as their use of history for moral instruction, though morality is now tied to politics:

I intend not with controversies and quotations to delay or interrupt the smooth course of History; much less to argue and debate long who were the first Inhabitants, with what probabilities, what authorities each opinion hath bin upheld, but I shall endeavor that which hitherto hath bin needed most, with plain, and lightfom brevity, to relate well and orderly things worth the noting, so as may best instruct and benefit them that read. (3)

It is clear, however, that Milton’s defence of the Brutes is a politically expedient convenience. It is this politicisation which sees Milton unconvincingly participate in the debate: “In principle he would have liked to celebrate the greatness of the nation from ancient times, but in practice he wanted to castigate his countrymen for their lack of resolution and for their incoherent political aims” (Parry 178). Milton is frequently cited, with some incredulity, as the last of those who believed in and defended the existence of the Brutan Kings (Ashe 156; Parry 177; Perrett 29-30). This incredulity is fuelled by the political works of the man himself, which were never in service to the crown when the defence of the Brutes

was traditionally tied to the defence of the monarchy. Indeed, within the context of this study, Milton's lacklustre defence of the historicity of the Brutan kings is the chronological last of its kind, with no other variants defending their existence. In this way, though affirming the existence of the Brutes, his work denotes the progress of the debate, especially when considered within the broader stagnation of the variants. It also aligns the debate with the politicised climate of print.

Where Milton's variant is emblematic of the progress of the debate, Tyrrell's is emblematic of its finalisation. Unlike Enderbie and Milton, Tyrrell concludes the history is a fable and retells it with hesitation and disdain. Tyrrell's engages more vigorously with the historiography debate than any other variants, with extensive reference to it throughout prefatory material. This engagement with the debate aligns with his construction of himself as a scholarly author, and the "authorising" forces used within the work affirm his critical view for the reader. Tyrrell criticises earlier historiographers for "dwelling so long on the exploded Fables of Geoffrey of Monmouth" (v). Monmouth's historiographical crimes are mitigated by Tyrrell: "there are no certain or Authentick Histories remaining of any tranfactions before that time" (6), but they are also made vibrantly evident: "his Hiftory ought to be condemned" (7). Tyrrell's recount of the fable of the Brutan line is included begrudgingly and in deference to his readership:

AS for the first Book, it is no other than an Epitome of Geoffrey of Monmouth's pretended British History; and if it had not been more for the Diversion of the younger sort of Readers, and that the Work would have been thought by some others to be imperfect without it, I should have been much better satisfied in wholly omitting it; yet I hope it will neither prove tedious nor unuseful, since it may sometimes be of Advantage to know Legends as well as true History. (vii)

The Brutan kings are routinely referred to as either legend or fable by Tyrrell. His work, both the most politicised and most authorised variant, speaks to why retellings of the Leir legend stagnated. Within substantive Leir variants, the historiography debate appears to have been settled, and the Leir story demonstrated to be just that—a story, and not a history—even when recorded within historiographies.

Both parasite histories, Tate’s play (1681) and the anonymous ballad (1700), were printed late in the stagnation years, straddling the publication of Tyrrell’s work and his final word on Leir’s historicity. As in the diversification parasite history genres, neither Tate’s play nor the anonymous ballad refers to the historiography debate. Nor does either refer to the historicity of the work, though Tate’s may do so obliquely: “Tate . . . added the word “history” before the title, where Shakespeare’s original had not, perhaps to counterbalance the considerably greater doubt that now attached to the story” (Woolf, “From Hystories” 64). This stands in contrast to, yet derives from, diversification parasite history genres, which made history malleable, even fictionalisable, but still recognisable as, and accepted as, histories. Both stagnation parasite history genres operate in a liminal space—between history and fiction. All three final variants of the stagnation years reveal imbricated processes. Substantive variants of the Leir legend were stagnating in their publication rates. Historiographies were increasingly demonstrating, both in their absence and in their presence, the removal of the Leir story from history. Parasite history genres, or literary genres, were recording the movement of this history into fiction. Teleologically, seeds of regeneration can be seen as Leir moved from a national story to one man’s—Shakespeare’s.

7.4.1 *The Purpose of History*

Throughout each of the eras defined by this thesis, the purpose of history was more nuanced than simply recounting the past. Although the advent of antiquarianism encouraged a focus on the factual and demonstrable, historiography had long been tied to the moral instruction of readers. Over half the Brutan, and a third of the diversification variants, explicitly offered moral commentary on the Leir story, either within or after its retelling. Many of the remaining Brutan texts provided moral edification for the reader through paratext or implication. The collation of diversification variants, however, revealed a shift away from this function of history to another related function—its potential to provide contemporary analogy. This shift was not divided along generic lines, with parasite history genres equally as prone to providing moral instruction as historiographies, though historiographies were less likely to include topicalities. The stagnation years variants reveal an extension of this shift in the purpose of history, and align with a sharp change in the book trade.

Woolf has identified a post-civil war change in the purpose of history. This change came about because it appeared that history had failed in its chief purpose:

the events of the late 1630s, and *a fortiori* the nightmare of civil war that followed, badly shook faith in the conventional view of history as the *magistra vitae*, the great schoolmistress of morality and teacher of politics. (Woolf, *The Idea* 247)

As a consequence, history developed a new, but related, purpose. It became a vehicle for the dissemination and discussion of political views. Ideologies came to prominence within historiographies as the subjective nature of history became apparent, with writers politicising, disputing, and defending their representations of the past (Kewes, “History” 14; Woolf, *The Idea* xiv and 247). The implied topicalities and analogies of earlier periods become more

explicit and directed towards a broader reading audience: “No longer conceived only as advice to princes or education of statesmen, historical writings came to function as propaganda aimed at a mass audience” (Kewes, “History” 19). The politicisation of history became an inherent, indeed expected, element of the genre, included even by established and respected historiographers (Kewes, “History” 20). The politicised purpose of history was at its most prominent between the 1640s and the 1670s (Kewes, “History” 25), and aligns with the politicisation of print within the book trade more broadly.

Both aligning with and fuelling the changing purpose of history was the deregulation of the book trade. In Brutan and diversification eras, existing topicalities had been addressed through the “mirror of analogy” largely to avoid censorship (Patterson; Woolf, “From Hystories” 50). Earlier it was noted that the start of the stagnation years aligns with a pivotal moment in the book trade, with the lapsing of the Licensing Act and the removal of either censorship of, or punishment for, previously regulated material. There were attempts upon the restoration of the monarchy to reinstate control over the presses through *An Act for Preventing Frequent Abuses in Printing Seditious, Treasonable, and Unlicensed Books and Pamphlets; and for the Regulating of Printing and Printing Presses*. This act, however, was largely ineffectual and expired in 1695, having had little impact on a book trade previously empowered to print politicised material (Treadwell 755). Intermittent attempts to enforce the act were largely ineffective (Barnard, “Introduction” 2-3) and typically undertaken to secure the financial position of stationers rather than avoid politically charged material (Treadwell). The state could still “disrupt or even ruin the lives of book trade personnel” but did so with great infrequency, with these powers largely “disregarded” by the book trade (Brewer, “Interregnum” 168). The politicisation of the role of history during the stagnation years thus reflects an established book trade, empowered to print without censorship, and inspired by repeated socio-political change.

The stagnation years variants reflect the new purposes of history in many ways. The bulk of this politicisation, however, is seen within the features already addressed within this chapter—namely, the explicit discussion of political matters in prefatory material and a focus on authors, authorising forces, and audiences. Indicative of their stagnation, overall, there is less politicisation within the retelling of the Leir story than expected, given the context of the book trade, and the narrative elements of the Leir story and their capacity to offer analogue to altering topical events. More frequent than overt politicisation is the kind of topical analogy seen in diversification years historiographies. Narrative inclusions, exclusions, and additions are later discussed in relation to their capacity to offer these analogies. Overall, stagnation variants are split along both generic and, to a lesser degree, chronological lines. All historiographies, the three earlier variants and Tyrrell's 1696 work have politicised frames, but fail to explicitly carry this politicisation into the retelling of the Leir story itself, though Tyrrell's retelling does include strongly implied analogy. Extending a trend identified in the diversification variants, and aligning more closely with trends in the book trade and historiography, both Tate's play and the anonymous ballad are politically charged works.

This is not to say, however, that one of history's earlier purposes, the moral edification of readers, was absent from stagnation variants. Five of the six feature moralising elements within their retelling of the Leir story (Enderbie, Milton, Tate, Tyrrell, and the anonymous ballad), though they do so to differing degrees. Enderbie's pro-monarchy historiography provides infrequent, untranslated Latin moral codas throughout the work. Milton, though a political polemicist, was known to be stylistically influenced by the moralising medieval histories (Corns 200; Woolf, *the Idea* 251-252), and included several authorial interjections within the retelling that serve as moral commentary. Tyrrell's highly politicised variant begrudgingly retells the Leir story, and that of all the Brutan kings whom he has called out as fables. Tyrrell appears to mimic and even mock earlier forms of

historiography by retelling the story briefly, devoid of any authorising devices and embellished by moral codas. Finally, and consistent with diversification trends, both parasite history genres tie morals and politics together. Tate does so explicitly, stating he is drawing upon theatrical tradition: “Morals were alwaies proper for the Stage, / But are ev'n necessary in this Age” (A4r).

Morality, though included, is most frequently incidental within the historiographies, and within parasite history genres it is consistently tied to their politicisation. It is remarkable that, in a time when the retelling of history was a political act, a greater percentage of retellings offer moral commentary on the Leir story than in either the Brutan or diversification eras. It is feasible that this increase in moralising does not contradict, but instead reflects, the politicisation of print, with authors and readers now licensed to morally condemn the actions of past royals—as well as those of the present. Seeking to identify and explore the specific moments of politicisation, or individual topicalities, within individual variants is more problematic in the stagnation years than in earlier eras. The chronological length of the period, combined with the number of regime changes and the complexity of each, necessitates great caution when attempting to do so. Historians can devote their entire careers to understanding the events that led to the Interregnum, yet the diversification years contain the Interregnum, the Restoration, the Exclusion Crisis, and the Glorious Revolution. Thus, whilst this thesis engages with the politicisation of variants and the exploitation of specific analogies within the retelling of the Leir story for topical debate, it does not have the scope to discover all such analogies and points of politicisation. The following section is only indicative of that which is possible, with this area meriting future study.

Exploring the specific politicisation of the retelling within stagnation variants again exposes an inherent contradiction within them. Half of the Brutan and two-thirds of the diversification variants contained topicalities within the retelling itself, yet only half of the

stagnation years variants, printed within a highly politicised print and social context, do so. As previously noted, a sharper increase would have been expected, further indicative of the stagnation of variants. There is, however, a point of difference. In previous eras, much of the topicality was in service to the crown, such as the sustained analogies found between Queen Elizabeth I and Cordeilla in Brutan variants which saw Cordeilla's role heightened, praised, and privileged. When present in Brutan or diversification variants, potentially critical analogies featured as individual moments of topicality, instead of sustained debates. Stagnation variants differ, in that those that do include politicised elements within the retelling do so often in a more sustained and openly critical manner.

All later variants contain explicit contemporary analogy or politicisation within the retelling of the Leir story itself (Tate 1661, Tyrrell 1696, and the anonymous ballad 1710). Due to the differences in the socio-political contexts, the politicisation of these three variants is discussed here individually. More detailed interpretation of these topicalities, as well as those implied through inclusion, exclusion, or additions within other variants, is provided in the collation of narrative elements. Tyrrell's 1696 Whig historiography, surprisingly, contains the least politicised retelling of the three. This is surprising due both to who Tyrrell was and when he was writing. As previously noted, Tyrrell was as much a Whig polemicist as a scholarly historiographer, bringing respectability and a sense of balance to Whig polemics (Zook 187). His historiography was published seven years after the success of the Glorious Revolution and the accession of William III and Mary II to the throne—there is no moment in history that provides greater opportunity for analogue to the Leir story. The Glorious Revolution saw Mary, with the support of her sister Anne, and her European husband, take the throne from her father James II. This capacity for contemporary analogue and thus for political debate could provide both support for and criticism of the Glorious Revolution and the role that Whigs played in it.

Whig polemicists as a whole were circumspect in their justification of the Glorious Revolution. They did so in highly legalistic terms, with James II depicted as a tyrant who had abdicated through his vacancy from the country and thus from the throne. The actions to remove him were thus a justifiable and necessary “resistance” and not civil war or foreign invasion. This rhetoric carefully dissolved James II’s claim to the throne but not the monarchy or the society that depended on it (Goldie; Rudolph; Zook). Tyrrell retells the Leir legend within a clear frame—it is a fable from which the reader should take moral lessons and not a history. Potentially due to its capacity for both positive and critical analogies to the Whig-endorsed Glorious Revolution, Tyrrell is selective in his inclusions and extensions, focusing purely on the line of succession in a uniquely whiggish manner. It is Leir’s “suddain advancement” (11) of Gonorilla and Regan that sets in motion Leir’s downfall—stressing this inversion of the correct legal procedures for succession. Tyrrell’s variant avoids any indication of the impact of Gonorilla’s and Regan’s rule on the country or the people, in much the same way that Whig polemics sought to focus on the monarchical and not social impact of James II’s “abdication and vacancy.” Gonorilla and Regan are tyrants because they “put fo many affronts and Indignities upon” (11) Leir. Their tyrannical behaviour and “suddain advancement” justify Cordeilla’s actions. In Tyrrell’s work, Cordeilla’s actions evoke Whig rhetoric and are neither a civil war nor a foreign invasion, but instead the actions of a daughter who “afflited her Father with powerful aids, and in Person went to revenge his wrongs: So that bringing a great Army into *Britain*, she destroyed his Enemies, and restored him to his Crown” (11). Tyrrell’s retelling of the Leir story echoes Whig depictions of the Glorious Revolution as much as they echo earlier retellings of the Leir “fable.” Yet Tyrrell does not privilege his retelling of the Leir story with any more length or paratextual material than any other Brutan king. While his retelling is clearly done through the lens of Whig politics, it is not fully fractured from the antiquarian historiography that Tyrrell contended he

was writing, failing to exploit the potential politicisation of the Leir story which had such strong opportunities for analogy to the Glorious Revolution.

In some ways, Tate's variant sits in opposition to Tyrrell's. Tyrrell was a known polemicist and his variant framed by openly politicised prefatory material, yet his retelling did not fully exploit possibilities for contemporary, politicised analogy. Tate was a known playwright whose variant was framed by its existence as an adaptation of Shakespeare's work, yet his retelling is complexly interwoven with politically charged material. Tate's play was published in 1681, towards the end of the rule of the heirless Charles II and at the peak of the unsuccessful yet still potently present Exclusion Crisis, which saw parliament attempt to prevent the accession of Charles II's Catholic brother, the future James II (Speck). Tate was one of many Restoration playwrights who were royalists and whose writing reflected this allegiance to the crown:

They portray royalism as under attack, not really by republican idealogues but merely by rebels who want power themselves. They portray revolution as illegitimate, even against tyrants. They portray mobs as anarchic, inconstant to fixed principles. And they portray political revolutionaries as rebels against all bonds, all fidelity, all words that bind. (Canfield 263)

Tate's works show sustained support of the monarchy through the 1680s, with *King Lear* published in 1681. This support was later tempered during the reign of James II due to his radical pro-Catholic policies, with Tate later demonstrating support for the Glorious Revolution (D. Hopkins). Tate's complete works are read in relation to this transition, revealing consistent support of the monarchy alongside dawning Whig sentiment (Bender 73; Dobson 80-81). Thus "Tate's objectives in his adaptations were more political than sentimental" (Wikander 351).

The consensus of Tate as a royalist, particularly at the time he wrote *King Lear*, is contested by a collation of his adaptation of the Leir story. Much has been written about the play as a politicised work that reflects on key elements of the Exclusion Crisis, provoking questions surrounding abdication, right rule, succession, banishment, exile, civil war, rebellion, and tyranny (Bender 64; Hardman 917; Spurr 9; Wikander 351-352). At the time, each of these was a potentially explosive issue, with the nation still gripped by a genuine fear that the Exclusion Crisis would spark another civil war (Bender 68; Hardman 913). The Exclusion Crisis had also consolidated parliament's division into two sides. Known by pejorative nicknames, Tories supported James II's right to succeed and thus monarchical rule, whilst Whigs supported the right of parliament to intervene on matters of succession and rule (Spurr 9 and 20). The Exclusion Crisis's unsuccessful outcome meant that "The years after 1681 saw a 'Tory revenge,' an attempt to drive Whigs from public life and the century's worst wave of persecution of Dissenters" (Spurr 9). It was thus a political act to adapt a play whose core narrative elements aligned with, and referred back to, key elements of the Exclusion Crisis—which may explain Tate's deflection from this politicisation through the contextualisation of his variant as an adaptation of Shakespeare's work and not national history. Emma Depledge notes:

Playwrights altered Shakespeare's plays with unparalleled frequency during the Exclusion Crisis...an environment of harsh stage censorship and crippling theatrical recession encouraged playwrights to alter older plays between 1678 and 1682... The playwrights in question exploited existing resonances between their times and Shakespeare's plots and characters. (94)

Tate's variant is thus part of a broader, politicised engagement with Shakespeare's play, and reflective of the politicised nature of print at this time.

Notably, Tate did not censor his engagement with events in the Leir story which had the capacity to analogise elements of the Exclusion Crisis, nor does his representation of them solely align with Tory sentiment. In fact, Tate's is the first variant to heighten and extend depictions of misrule and the motivations given to the citizens for rebellion, civil war, and interference in successional order. Tate's explicit and sustained politicisation of the Leir story, which largely manifests in additions to the traditional tale, is addressed here briefly, but extended within the collation of the narrative elements. Most importantly, and uniquely, Tate adds consistent, critical commentary on the behaviour of the monarchy through the eyes of those who surround them. The Bastard, or Edmund, comments on the misrule of the sisters and the impact on the citizens:

The Riots of these proud imperial Sisters
 Already have impos'd the galling Yoke
 Of Taxes, and hard Impositions on
 The drudging Peafants Neck, who bellow out.
 Their loud Complaints in Vain — Triumphant Queens! (25)

Gloster affirms Edmund's interpretation, aligning the misrule of the sisters with themes key to the Exclusion Crisis—tyranny, justifiable civil dissent, and alterations to monarchical order:

This change in the State fits uneasie. The Commons repine aloud at their female
 Tyrants, already they Cry out for the re-installment of their good old King, whose
 Injuries I fear will inflame 'em into Mutiny. (26)

Of note is that, through consistent inclusions such as these, Tate sustains and extends a trend noted within diversification parasite history variants, where most fictionalisation of the Leir story was made at times when the established history was impacted by elements added out of generic necessity—here these fictionalisations are also politicisations. Thus, in Tate's work, it

is largely characters from the fictional sub-plot who comment critically on both Leir's and then his daughters' rules—though it must be noted that Shakespeare's sub-plot is so intertwined with the established Leir story that it is no longer sub- but part of the main plot, serving to both fictionalise and politicise the history.

Not only does Tate depict Leir's elder daughters, and thus the ruling monarchs, as tyrants, by doing so he justifies the civil uprising against them—and confirms Whig sentiments against absolute monarchy and supports the role of the parliament. Both characters added to the established history, Gloster calls on Kent to lead the people against the monarch, justifying their actions:

Our injur'd Country is at length in Arms,
 Urg'd by the King's inhumane Wrongs and Mine,

 And be your Cause as Prosp'rous as tis Just. (44)

Here Tate treads a careful line. The play's civil uprising was undertaken to reinstate the “rightful” King, potentially analogising either Whig or Tory sentiments and their differing views on James II as the “rightful” king. Matthew H. Wikander notes that Tate falls short of depicting a popular uprising as successful, with Edgar confronting Edmund in a dual (355)—once more, fictional characters added to the history impact on its alterations and politicisation.

The ending of Tate's Restoration play is also open to competing politicised interpretations. Peace is restored with the restoration of the monarchy, with the marriage of Cordeilla and Edgar denoting the continuance of the royal line. This restoration, however, only occurs after the kind of civil uprising that the Exclusion Crisis threatened to prompt. Additionally, Leir's restoration sees the removal of unjust, tyrannical, absolutist monarchs—plausibly analogising the threat that Whigs saw within the accession of Catholic James II.

Also of note is that it is Gloster's legitimate son, Edgar, who, unique to Tate's adaptation, assumes the throne with Cordeilla. Gloster's illegitimate son has been depicted as a power-hungry mercenary willing to seduce Queens and see his father killed in order to succeed: "And to my hand they vaft Revenues fall / To glut my Pleasure that till now has starv'd" (27). This extreme dichotomising of legitimacy and illegitimacy likely aligns with Tory sentiments. In the Exclusion Crisis, Tories supported the legitimate James II, though he was Catholic. Whigs supported the Protestant Duke of Monmouth, though he was illegitimate. The play's newly adapted/fictionalised finale thus aligns with Tory politics, but acknowledges both Tory and Whig concerns. Taken in their totality, the additions Tate makes to the established historiography, as well as the adaptations he makes to Shakespeare's play, speak to a sustained politicisation of the story through the exploitation of potential analogies between it and the Exclusion Crisis—neither Whig nor Tory, but both.

The anonymous ballad, printed in 1700, goes further in its politicisation of the Leir story—to sedition. The ballad was published eleven years after the Glorious Revolution and after the death of Queen Mary II (1689) while the country was under the sole rule of King William III. The Glorious Revolution was previously outlined in relation to Tyrrell's variant. Book historians (Brewer, "Interregnum"; Nebeker, "Broadside") have demonstrated that ballads, pamphlets, and other ephemeral material were known to be used as agents of dissent and influence by all parties during the Glorious Revolution. The future William III, operating at the behest of the English Parliament, flooded England with pamphlets to procure support from the populace, allowing him to recast his invasion and the deposition of the Catholic James II as a "bloodless" and "glorious" revolution. Politicised ephemera were also embraced by William III's opponents and satirists, and its use sustained by all parties after his accession (Brewer, "Interregnum" 152) cannot be underestimated. Contemporaneous sentiments were exemplified by Andrew Fletcher, who, in his 1704 *An Account of a Conversation*, suggested:

“if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the Laws of a Nation” (10).

As with Tate’s play and the Exclusion Crisis, there are many elements of the Leir story which have the capacity to provide analogy to William III and Mary II’s reign and the Glorious Revolution that prompted it—making it all the more noteworthy that publication of substantive Leir variants stagnated at this time. Detailed analysis of the politicisation of the ballad through the heightening of analogies is addressed in the collation of narrative elements, with this discussion focused on key elements only. The most prominent point of analogy is with the Glorious Revolution itself. The ballad sees Gonorilla and Regan take the throne from their father, Leir. The Glorious Revolution could be critically viewed as Mary II, with the support of her sister Anne, taking the throne from their father James II. The capacity for analogy is heightened within the ballad through the anonymisation of historical figures. Whilst Leir is named within the ballad’s title, this is the only time. Each of the daughters is consistently referred to by her position in birth (eldest, second, youngest) and not by her name, disguising the identity of the royal and increasing the potential for analogy. The extraordinary actions undertaken by the unnamed daughters of the ballad to depose their father and prosper from rule play out as satire of the actions of Mary II and William III:

his eldft Daughters, who foon did beguile
 Him of his whole Kingdom, nay, Scepter and Crown,
 And quickly their age old Father pull’d down.

Notably, the traditional resolution of established history, Leir’s and Cordeilla’s victory and subsequent restoration/rule, is excised from the anonymous ballad. Their deaths occur during battle, when “the Fight was no fooner begun” and no victory noted. The ballad’s subtitle reinforces this silence, referring to the “attempt” to restore Leir and not the successful

completion of such. This easily overlooked detail immediately precedes the explicitly politicised, even seditious, conclusion to the ballad:

Then ftraightway feeing this fudden Event,
 They put the two Daughters to Death by Confent.
 The Crown was left vacant, for Want of an Heir
 There being none equal the Crown for to wear:
 The Crown was left ufelefs, being without King
 So fad Difobedience is the worft of all Sin.

There are many possible points of politicisation within this conclusion, heightened by the lack of clarity with regard to who “they” were who put the daughters to “Death by Confent.” “They” appear, within the context of the ballad, to be the general populace. If so, more extreme than Whig sentiment, the ballad depicts a successful and justifiable civil uprising which concludes with the death of the entire royal family and the end of the institution of the monarchy itself.

It is noteworthy that, by 1700 when the ballad was printed, Mary II had died without issue. Part of the Settlement signed by William III and Mary II upon their accession was that Anne would inherit the throne (Gregg; Rudolph 95-96). In 1700, Anne’s sole surviving heir, Prince William, Duke of Gloucester, died. Thus the death of the two Stuart sisters, as with the death of the ballad’s sisters, would leave their royal line “for Want of an Heir.” Not only does the verse of the ballad politicise the Leir story, its conclusion supports the justifiable overthrow of the monarch—sedition. Importantly, whilst diversification parasite history genres were those most likely to alter or fictionalise the traditional story, they frequently did so of out generic need, and only when the elements of the established historiography merged with additions, such as sub-plots. This ballad is uniquely and starkly different—there is no generic need or additions to prompt alterations. The ballad, potentially responding to a

sustained politicisation of ephemera, retells, fictionalises, politicises, and rewrites history, in order to satirise the present.

This politicisation becomes even more apparent when considering the ballad's woodcuts (see fig. 7.2). The ballad is the only variant of this era to have paratextual material of this kind, and its five woodcuts far exceed the number found in any other variant considered within this study. Woodcuts are representative of the "increasing power and sophistication of political satire in visual form in the later years of the seventeenth century" (Hunter 13). Ostensibly, the ballad's woodcuts could be seen to depict the characters in the ballad, with a king and queen together in the centre, surrounded by three female forms and one male form. The main image could thus suggest Leir and Cordeilla, with the remaining woodcuts, by number and gender alone, suggesting the additional characters in the ballad—that is, the three sisters and France. Yet the woodcuts surrounding the central image depict a nun, a Puritan, an elegantly dressed male, and an elegant female. These characters are not in the ballad, so plausibly they provide a link to its politicisation. The woodcuts are not labelled to identify the characters depicted, with this technique known to be used to encourage readers to draw inferences and connote meaning (Marsh 259).

Wolf notes that, from the time of Henry VII, images of reigning monarchs had been sufficiently prolific that they became a commonplace and that, for early moderns, "the images themselves serve as pictorial metonyms for the biography and history behind them" ("From hystories" 57). Though the Bodleian's Broadside Ballads Online (BBO) image matching software demonstrates that the Leir from the central image resembles woodcuts that depicted Stuart monarchs Charles II, James II, and William III, the ballad's central image here is likely to represent William III and Mary II. The English Broadside Ballad Archive (EBBA) classifies the royal couple's clothing as from 1680 onwards, or the late Stuart era. Additionally, the ballad's king aligns with contemporaneous ballad woodcuts for William III

(such as in *The Royal Salutation, or, The courtly Greeting between K. William and Qu. Mary at his Return from the Wars in Ireland to his Royal Pallace*, Ballad Roud Number: V1744), and the ballad's queen is similar to depictions of Mary II (in ballads such as *Molly Whan*, Ballad Roud Number: 166). The woodcuts thus serve as a visual prompt, tying the verse of the ballad and its seditious outcomes to the reigning monarchs.

While their intended and interpreted early modern meaning/s is/are lost to history, each of the images could be conjectured to satirise the monarchy by drawing attention to its flaws. The central image shows the royals, William III and Mary II, uncrowned, with the angels themselves holding their crowns aloft and afar: "There being none equal the Crown for to wear." The border image that literally stands out from the others is that of the Puritan lady (bottom left). It is probable that her woodcut is newer than the others, as differences in inking cannot account for her image being the only one that, to its very corners, stands bold of the page. More nuanced than what would now be considered stock images, woodcuts were key assets for printers who selected and reused them with purpose. Specific woodcuts were often favoured for the sentiment and connotative meaning generated for readers, who over time read within and between ballads (Fumerton and Palmer; Marsh; Nebeker, "Heyday"). This Puritan image appears in eleven other ballads, largely between 1640 and 1690. The difference between each of these and the woodcut of the *Lear* ballad is that its background has been reworked to remove houses that were to the left, and a chimney and upper storey have been removed from the pointed houses to the right. These alterations make the ballad's Puritan lady appear as if she is leaving a church, not a house, drawing attention to the devoutness of her Puritan faith. The image may also have reminded readers of the pivotal role of Puritans in the Interregnum and the Glorious Revolution.

Above the Puritan lady (top left) is an image of a nun. Claire Walker, a leading scholar of early modern English nuns, notes that, from the early seventeenth century, images such as

this had a specifically incendiary meaning: “For Catholics they stood for the future return of their homeland to the Roman creed. To Protestants they were reminders of the papist threat, which forever loomed across the Channel” (Walker, *Gender and Politics* 115-116). The ballad’s nun may have reminded readers of the recently deposed James II, whose Catholicism and tolerance led to both his daughters’ and his country’s decision that he was not “equal the Crown for to wear.” The final two woodcuts are problematic to interpret, with their meaning potentially lost to history. As a whole, however, as with the verse, the ballad’s woodcuts draw attention to the flaws of the monarchy, present and past.

A close reading of the politicised elements within stagnation years retellings of the Leir story demonstrates the changing purpose of history at this time. History’s traditional role of moral instruction is still evident, but it is reshaped in the stagnation years variants to focus on the moral nuances of political events—at times, explicitly so. This could reflect the socio-political contexts of the stagnation years, as well as the book trade which was largely unregulated and highly politicised. Whilst a politicised frame is consistently offered within prefatory material, only half of the stagnation years variants explicitly politicise their retellings of the Leir story. Tyrrell’s fable is recrafted with a Whig focus. Tate’s adaptation is more Whig than Tory, uniquely and newly including justification for civil uprising and the overthrow of tyrannical monarchs. The anonymous Ballad is openly seditious, suggesting the death of the monarchy itself. Within the stagnation years parasite history genres, the politicisation of retellings is richly and consistently threaded through narrative elements, and much more pronounced than any moments of topical analogy seen in earlier eras. These politicisations commonly critique the monarchy, whereas earlier eras were more inclined to flatter. History in the stagnation years was now able to be adapted, appropriated, fictionalised, and politicised—co-occurring and self-perpetuating processes. Importantly, these processes occurred most frequently in parasite history genres, and are thus extensions of

trends identified in earlier eras. Importantly, for the first time, they are also seen within historiographies.

7.5 Collation Synopsis

A collation of the bibliographic and paratextual elements of the stagnation years variants reveals the altering nature of the early modern palimpsest of Leir variants, and additionally indicates why Shakespeare's variant now acts as its privileged metonym. Diachronic and synchronic comparisons between this layer of the palimpsest and previous layers reveals several key trends and influences that stand in stark contrast to collations of the previous two eras. The most pronounced distinction was the infrequency with which retellings were printed, both in substantive and derivative forms. Their publication rates contrast sharply with the previous two eras and with the proliferation of print seen in the book trade at this time. Also notable is that the stagnation Leir variants show a stronger correlation with trends in the book trade than does either earlier era. Here they reflect the establishment of the book trade and the influence of trends which saw diminishing interest in historiography; the rise of the author and reader; the consolidation of generic forms; and the politicisation of print within a deregulated industry fuelled by sustained socio-political upheaval. As a consequence, and dissimilar to previous eras, stagnation variants often bear more similarities to their generic contemporaries than they do to each other.

The most notable change to the book trade during the stagnation years was the overt politicisation of print. The 1640s are a definitive moment in both social and book history. The book trade became deregulated and largely remained that way until the end of the stagnation years. The subsequent sustained willingness to comment on and participate in socio-political events is reflected in the Leir variants. Though the traditional purpose of history, its capacity

to provide moral edification, was still evident, it was superseded by history's capacity to comment on the present. Notably, where Brutan and diversification variants had been pro-monarchy, this was not the case in stagnation variants, with half either Whig or seditious in tone. With the exception of the ballad, stagnation years variants show a pattern whereby the more politicised that a text is, the more present is the author, the more explicit is the "authorising" of works, and the more direct are appeals to the audience.

There are, however, some anomalies within the politicisation of stagnation years variants. Previous eras had seen significant socio-political events, such as the accession of a new monarch, prompt a flurry of publication of substantive Leir variants. Yet the stagnation years, an era which saw more socio-political disruption than either earlier era, see very few variants printed. Also anomalous is that, though most frequently framed by politically charged prefatory material, only half the stagnation variants contain clear topicalities within the retelling itself. This is fully discussed in the following chapter. When included, however, they do so in a more sustained and openly critical manner than any earlier variant.

The politicisation of Leir variants aligns with their fictionalisation. Historiographies were increasingly demonstrating the movement of the Leir story from shared, national history to a history open for interpretation, appropriation, and debate. Tyrrell's variant, the last historiography in this era, identifies the Leir story, and indeed the entire Brutan line, to be a fable. Stagnation years historiographies suggest that if kings could be fables, their actions could be judged and that if national history could be invented, it could be rewritten. Parasite history genres clearly fictionalise and politicise the Leir story. Considering them parasite history genres, however, is misrepresentative as both ballads and plays were established literary genres in their own right, genres in which Leir was no longer a king of history.

Importantly, however, within the stagnation years, the Leir story is largely no longer of interest to printers and thus likely no longer appealed to readers. When considering trends

within the stagnation years, the comparative absence of variants is as important as the study of those variants present, signalling the stagnation of the palimpsest itself. Additionally, when addressing topicalities, it is essential to contextualise this in relation to the variants' comparatively limited response to the politicised nature of print at this time. Leir variants stagnate at this time. When printed, the Leir story is malleable, adaptable, and fictionalisable. Both the stagnation of variants at this time and their politicisation and fictionalisation are likely reflective not just of trends in the book trade but also of history's failure to fulfil its social purpose. Co-occurring with, yet not dependent on, the stagnation of Leir variants and historiography itself were seeds of the regeneration of the Leir story. Both parasite history genres, either in substantive or derivative versions, are tied to Shakespeare instead of national history. As historiography stagnated, the Leir story was first fictionalised and then regenerated into Shakespeare's story—succession, not conquest. The concluding chapter of this thesis highlights how these seeds later flourished and a national history became one man's story.

Chapter 8: A Collation of the Narrative Elements of the Stagnation Years Variants

Chapter 4 identified that the majority of the Brutan years (1557–1599) variants largely remained consistent with Galfridian history within their narrative elements, with omissions or extensions made to avoid critical, or to prompt positive, analogies with the monarch. Chapter 6 demonstrated that diversification years (1600-1639) retellings of the Leir story, while divided along generic lines, largely showed less consistency with Galfridian historiography, though including more of the original elements than Brutan years variants. The movement of Leir’s story into parasite history genres in diversification variants appears to be the motivation for alterations, with works extending, adding, condensing, and reforming by generic necessity. Stagnation years variants extend trends from both eras. Most often, however, stagnation variants consistently return to the narrative elements of the Galfridian original. For this reason, variants at this time can be seen to stagnate, not just because of the infrequency with which they were printed, but because of their regression to Galfridian narrative elements and their failure to extend the diversification seen in the previous era. Also emblematic of their stagnation, given the era of politicised print in which they were printed, is the overall lack of topicalities within narrative elements, as opposed to the prefatory and paratextual materials that frame the retelling.

More specifically, stagnation variants align with Brutan trends and conform closely to the narrative elements of Galfridian history. Most consistently, the historiographies align by including the original, Galfridian narrative elements (including Thomas Heywood’s 1641 *Life of Merlin*, Percy Enderbie’s 1661 *Cambria Triumphans*, John Milton’s 1670 *History of Britain*, and James Tyrrell’s 1696 *General History of England*). In both Heywood’s and Enderbie’s variants, the only significant breaks from Galfridian history are the alteration of

Leir's downfall and the depictions of the means of his restoration. These alterations, as with Brutan variants, may align with the socio-political context of their time of publication or, more specifically, their chronological proximity to the civil war. Milton's and Tyrrell's works are the variants which are most consistent with established Galfridian historiography. This is initially surprising, given each author's previously mentioned status as a political writer, a topic that is explored more fully in the collation.

As a whole, stagnation variants are not as inclusive of the kind of diversity noted within the previous era, yet alterations within parasite history genres, when included, far exceed those found in diversification variants. The parasite history genres include an adaptation of Shakespeare's work and an anonymous broadside ballad. Their narrative elements reflect trends established in the diversification years, which identified a division between parasite and established forms of history, with parasite histories, due to the exigencies of their genres, more likely to extend, add, or fictionalise. The narrative elements of Nahum Tate's 1681 *History of King Lear* clearly adapt Shakespeare's play, but equally retain many of the elements of the traditional history. Tate's work is a unique retelling, both within stagnation variants and Leir variants more generally, as it is fully differentiated and even fictionalised in its move away from both the history and the play it adapts. The 1700 anonymous broadside ballad *The Tragical History of King Lear*, whilst also a parasite history, is distinctly different from Tate's. The initial narrative elements of the ballad align consistently with the Galfridian historiography and appear to lull readers into the familiar pattern of the history, before then confronting them with a seditious twist to the established tale in its uniquely fictionalised conclusion. In this way, stagnation parasite history genres, as in the diversification years, are more likely to alter the established history than the historiographies and at times even fictionalise the story. As is later discussed, parasite history

genres also became increasingly more willing to politicise the Leir story through the use of contemporaneous topicalities or politicisation.

Extensive politicisation was expected within stagnation variants. At this time, print had been politicised, and history had a newly acquired purpose (as articulated in Chapter 7) to comment on and even shape political events and public opinion. The expectation of topical analogy was also generated by a trend noted in the collation of diversification years variants which saw later variants include an increasing number of topicalities that featured as individual moments, rather than sustained debates within works. As noted in the previous chapter, topicalities within stagnation Leir variants are surprisingly infrequent and brief. Topicalities and politicisation are explored in detail within this chapter, nonetheless they are rarely explicit or sustained within works. Consequently, it is important to stress that the absence of topicalities or explicit politicisation is more notable than its presence. Two, however, reflective of the book trade are more explicit and more sustained in their politicisation of the story. Notably, topicalities within stagnation variants are, for the first time, willing to criticise the monarchy.

To facilitate the discussion of sustained politicisation as well as of individual moments of topicality in narrative elements, a brief summary of some of the many significant, historical moments that occurred throughout the stagnation years is necessary. The complexity of these events had necessitated the exploration of topicalities to be, at times, tentative. Heywood's *Life of Merlin* was published in 1641 during the reign of King Charles I when the nation was on the cusp of civil war. The first foray began in Ireland in October 1641. Charles I's kingdoms then became involved in separate but interconnected conflicts, in what became known as the war of the three kingdoms. Central to England's civil war and the events that led to it was the pitting of parliament against the monarchy and the tempering of monarchical power:

Charles I was the first king since 1258 to face a rebellion openly supported by many of his tenants-in-chief and nobility who were fighting not under the banner of a pretender to his throne but in the name of their own liberties and the desire to change those who advised the king and the type of advice he was given. (Kishlansky and Morrill)

Charles I and his supporters entered into a “war of words” with parliament before civil war ensured. Whilst Charles I ultimately lost the civil war, when Heywood’s variant was printed, Charles appeared to have been winning the “war of words” (Kishlansky and Morrill).

Heywood’s royalist, traditional, Galfridian variant aligns with this element of the book trade and may have functioned in conjunction with this “war of words.” Indeed, any writing on or valorisation of monarchical history at this time would have been seen as a political act.

The next three variants were all written during the rule of Charles II, after the Interregnum and the subsequent restoration of the crown: Enderbie’s 1661 *Cambia Triumphans*, Milton’s 1670 *History of Britain*, and Tate’s 1681 *History of King Lear*. These were printed roughly a decade apart and, though under the reign of the same king, at very different times. Enderbie’s variant was printed soon after the restoration of the monarchy and twenty years after Heywood’s variant. It was a very different world. England had seen civil war, the unimaginable trial and execution of the monarch, and parliamentary rule. Here Enderbie’s monarchist, traditional, Galfridian historiography echoes the timing of Brutan and diversification era variants which were frequently printed upon the accession of a new monarch. Charles II acceded to the throne in 1661 upon his return from France where he was exiled during the Interregnum (Seaward; Spurr 8). Enderbie also shares the purpose of many Brutan historiographies, both to celebrate and to justify the rule of the new monarch.

Milton’s 1670 *History* was printed almost ten years into Charles II’s reign by an author known for his support of the Commonwealth and at a time when the monarchy and the

populace were again in opposition: “The first precarious decade of the restored monarchy was punctuated by risings and plots, plague and fire, and naval defeats” (Spurr 8). Charles II’s rule appeared to be ineffectual, marked by rising debts and conflict with other countries, as well as within his own (Seaward). Charles II’s reign had the potential to offer much grist to a Whig polemicist such as Milton, yet contradictorily Milton largely avoids explicit or sustained politicisation within his retelling. However, his choice to depict Leir’s historical personage and his downfall in traditional ways aligns with Whig sentiment and is later explored in relation to potential politicisation.

Tate’s 1681 *History of King Lear* was also printed during Charles II’s reign during the penultimate year of the Exclusion Crisis (1678-1681). At this time, parliament unsuccessfully attempted to intervene in the lines of succession and exclude the Catholic future King James II, then Duke of York, from the crown, seeking instead to crown Charles II’s bastard son, the protestant Duke of Monmouth. The Exclusion Crisis had opened old wounds, hinting at the kind of parliamentary interference and popular rebellion that had fuelled the civil wars. It also served to further polarise and solidify divisions between Whigs and Tories, Catholics and Protestants, and dissenters and monarchists: “Whig and Tory positions first crystallized in the Exclusion Crisis” (Spurr 20). The politicised nature of print during the stagnation years was affirmed once more during the Exclusion Crisis: “the London crowds were managed and manipulated by sophisticated propaganda” (Spurr 22). Earlier eras of variants, particularly Brutan variants, saw authors exclude elements of the Leir story that may have aligned with topical events, yet in extensions and alterations to traditional narrative elements Tate directly “explores themes related to the crisis, including plotting, banishment, and succession” (Bender 66). He does so particularly through the use of the sub-plot: “Edgar and Bastard would probably have encouraged Tate’s audience to draw parallels to two of the figures at the heart of the succession debate: York and Monmouth” (Depledge 118). Though largely

royalist, a collation of narrative elements reveals many instances of Whig sentiment within Tate's variant.

Whig polemicist Tyrrell printed his *General History of England* in 1696. The fifteen years that separated his variant from its predecessor encompassed the entire rule of James II; the 1689 Glorious Revolution that saw James II's daughter and her husband depose James II; the joint rule of King William III and Queen Mary II; Mary's death; and the first years of William III's solo rule. Politicised print won the Glorious Revolution for William III and marked the entirety of his reign. While William was careful to wait for support from both parties (Spurr 10), Whigs were instrumental in his accession and its public justification. Whig rhetoric carefully constructed and sustained engagement with legal arguments which legitimised William III and Mary II's rule through James II's abdication and vacancy, and his tyranny (Rudolph 93 and 99). Whig writers' willingness to appropriate and even rewrite history earned them the pejorative reworking of their name—with the term "Whig historian" still used today to denote a person willing to rewrite history to suit a cause. Tyrrell aligns with but equally contradicts a Whig approach through his retelling of the Leir story. It is rewritten as a fable, with its repetition of established historiography appearing as a mockery of the history itself. Finally, the anonymous broadside ballad *The Tragical History of King Lear* was printed in 1700, four years after Tyrrell's variant and still within William III's reign. It goes further than Tyrrell's mockery of monarchical history—it is seditious. As with Tyrrell, it largely retells the established historiography, yet its ending sees the crown left vacant, which is one of the key justifications used by Whigs to legitimise the Glorious Revolution. The stagnation years encompass a series of complex political struggles, each of them tied to the monarchy, succession, right rule, rebellion—key narrative elements of the Leir story. Yet at this time, and in stark contrast to the politicisation of print during this time,

retellings of the Leir story stagnated as never before, with barely one substantive printed each decade and with topicalities frequently no more evident than in diversification variants.

8.1 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: Introduction to Leir

In their introductions to Leir, stagnation variants almost completely align with Galfridian historiography yet at times also link with key elements of Brutan and diversification variants. Brutan variants provided a positive introduction to Leir, focusing on his right to accede and achievements as a king. Diversification variants were only partially consistent with this trend, with six of the nine variants shifting this focus from legitimising Leir's rule and praising his achievements, to his humanity or how Leir enacted his royal role. Here the stagnation variants align more closely with Brutan variants, though, akin to diversification variants, they split along generic lines. All four historiographies (Heywood, Enderbie, Milton, and Tyrrell) introduce Leir within the contextualising frame of the Brutan line. He is thus consistently introduced with his rule legitimised through succession from his father. Consistent also within stagnation historiographies is the provision of antiquarian detail as proof of Leir's accomplishments, including most frequently that Leir "built *Caer-Leir*, now *Leiceftre*, on the Bank of *Sora*" (Milton D1r). Notably, only Heywood and Enderbie, both monarchists, additionally offer praise for the king or his reign. Milton and Tyrrell, both politically aligned with either Commonwealth or shared rule, do not. Here the authors' selection of information in their introductions to Leir may align not only with their shared methodology but also with their individual political beliefs.

Enderbie's Restoration historiography is most extensive in his praise of Leir and most detailed in the provision of supporting antiquarian detail, demonstrating Leir's historicity and achievements. Enderbie introduces Leir, as he does many of his kings, through praise:

This King was of a moft Noble and Heroick mind, as being queftionleffe bred under the Difcipline of thofe Philofophers which his Father had brought from *Athen*, befides a natural Propenfion of his own to moral Vertue; infomuch that his Kingdom flourished in great Peace and abundance of Wealth. (24)

This glowing and substantiated praise for the monarch, given, pointedly, in 1661 upon the restoration of the crown, is reflective of Enderbie's royalist beliefs. Notably, given the rise of the reader during this time, Enderbie is careful to appeal to his reader, praising not just the king but the outcome of his kingship for the people—past “peace” and “wealth” under Leir's rule.

In their introductions to Leir, the parasite history genres, or literary genres, break from historiographies through their negative depiction of Leir. Tate does so explicitly, while the anonymous ballad balances praise with implied criticism. Both variants retell the Leir story decontextualised from the Brutan line, yet both fail to legitimise his reign in any way while some diversification parasite genres do so, further breaking the Leir story from its historical context. The 1700 ballad does show some consistency with the established history, through its positive introduction to Leir:

A Certain great King once rule over this Land,
 Who had all the Pleafure a King cold command
 And liv'd in great Spondor and Honour and Peae,
 He reign'd many Years not without great Increafe.

Notably, although the ballad does praise Leir, read within the political context of its time of publication, it is notable that its focus remains solely on his “Pleasure,” his lifestyle, and his “great Increafe.” It does not comment on that of his nation nor its people. Throughout all eras, variants that include praise for Leir most frequently praise the positive impact of his rule on the country: Enderbie's included comment that “his Kingdom flourished” (24) and

Heywood's Leir "kept the Land in peace and tranquillity" (b1v). The ballad appears to be consistent with earlier variants by offering praise for Leir. Yet what is praised is inconsistent. The anonymous broadside ballad does not praise attributes that would raise Leir's standing with readers, and highlights the divide between monarchy and populace. By doing so, the anonymous ballad's introduction to Leir is less positive than the established story that it echoes, and foreshadows a dissent made evident in the last stanza of the ballad.

Tate's 1681 play goes further than the ballad. Leir is introduced, in his absence, by Gloster and Kent, fictional characters newly added to the story by Shakespeare and adapted by Tate. Their introduction to the king is negative:

Glost. My Lor, you wait the King who comes resolv'd
 To quit the Toils of Empire, and divide
 His Realms amongst his Daughters, Heaven succeed it,
 But much I fear the Change.

Kent. I grieve to see him
 With such wild starts of passion hourly seiz'd
 As render Majesty beneath it self. (2-3)

Even Cordeilla's first words speak negatively of the "chol'rick King" (4). Here Tate's play once more echoes a trend noted in diversification parasite history genres where the Leir story became more fictionalised when elements were added out of generic necessity and impacted on the traditional narrative elements through interaction. Leir has been transformed from the laudable king of history to a choleric, humanised, inadequate ruler. Leir is revealed as human and fallible and shown to make poor successional decisions, decisions which lead to civil war. Tate's introduction of Leir may align with source material but also with topicalities. His variant was printed at the height of the Exclusion Crisis. Here Tate appears to be aligning Leir with Charles II, with the "change" that is feared being the accession of James II. Parasite

history genres, or literary genres, within the stagnation years thus introduce Leir through implied or explicit criticism, as either a king focused solely on his own gains or a king incapable of ruling.

Tate's negative introduction to Leir exploits for dramatic or perhaps political gain a theme prevalent in earlier introductions to Leir—his age. This attribute is also an element of Galfridian historiography. Five of the eleven Brutan variants stress Leir's age, as do six of the nine, diversification variants. Leir's age is mentioned in all stagnation variants, but treated differently. Heywood's and Tyrrell's historiographies mention, but show no sustained engagement with, Leir's age. Enderbie's historiography and the anonymous ballad both note that Leir is "aged and full of years" (Enderbie 24) on several occasions, yet fail to tie this to his competence as a king. Both Milton's and Tate's variants, however, focus on Leir's age, tying it to his humours, his competence, and the loss of his crown. Potentially linking to the politicisation of print, Milton and Tate both humanise and weaken Leir. The humanising of Leir was a trend in the diversification years, whereas within the stagnation years its use is more political than narrative. Milton critically introduces the monarch as "failing through Age" (17); he refers to his own "declin'd Age"; and his response to the love test sees him "all in passion" (18). In Milton's variant, Leir's vulnerability, his age, causes his kingdom to be taken from him in an act of rebellion. Tate's Leir is weaker still, with his negative introduction reinforced through sustained commentary on his age and ill-humours, with both declining and impacting on his royal stature: "This Disposition that of late transforms you / From what you rightly are" (11, *Gonorilla*). Once more Leir's age serves as motivation for his daughters' rebellion and the loss of his crown. Importantly, Leir's humoral disposition is not just commented upon, it is shown. Tate's play includes evidence of Leir's swift humoral changes such that readers are able to confirm the judgements made by other characters, and judge the king negatively. Both Milton and Tate immediately induce critique of Leir.

Overall, introductions to Leir within stagnation variants are largely consistent with earlier eras, and split along generic lines. Historiographies largely align with Galfridian historiography and are similar to those of earlier eras. They introduce Leir through the context of the royal line and introduce his achievements through antiquarian detail. Aligning with the royalist political beliefs of their authors, only half offer additional praise of Leir's leadership (Heywood's and Enderbie's variants). Parasite history genres, the anonymous ballad and Tate's play, introduce Leir without the contextualising frame of the Brutan line and are less positive in their depictions of Leir, with Tate's play openly critical. Leir's age, his humours, and his humanity are consistent factors. Inconsistent, however, is the use of topicalities, with the selection of narrative inclusions in Leir's introduction surprisingly, and almost disappointingly, failing to respond to trends within the politicised book trade of the time.

8.2 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: The Love Test

The love test is thoroughly recounted in the Galfridian original, yet only a quarter of the Brutan variants and five of the nine diversification variants engage with this narrative element to the same degree. One of the Brutan and three of the nine diversification variants exclude this element entirely. The love test features in all stagnation years variants, once more showing consistency with the Galfridian original. There are, however, many inconsistencies within stagnation retellings of the love test. Aligning with the Galfridian original, but not with earlier trends in Leir variants, only two stagnation retellings devote relatively more detail to the love test than other narrative elements. Both of these are historiographies, Enderbie's and Milton's, whereas the diversification variants that provided detailed recounts of the love test were all parasite history genres, all of which not only

recount the love test, but extend it through unique elaborations or fictionalisations of the story. Notably, the love test within Tate's play is relatively short in comparison to his engagement with other narrative elements. This contrasts sharply with the play that he was adapting as well as with earlier trends.

The final inconsistency within stagnation retellings of the love test is the relative lack of topicalities. Brutan retellings that include the love test often exploited it for topicalities linked to Elizabeth's rule. Yet in the stagnation variants, an era within which print and especially historiography was openly politicised, variants often fail to offer either explicit or implied topicalities within the love test. A potential exception is the ballad. Though traditional in its inclusion of this element, the anonymous broadside ballad phrases Leir's question to his daughters in a topical way, uniquely highlighting that recent history had proven affection was newly tied to loyalty and personal safety for the monarchy: "Now which of you three will do moft for my Sake / Suppose that my Life now fhould lie at the Stake." That the ballad offers one hint of topicality, and Tyrrell none, is surprising as both were printed after the Glorious Revolution, which offered many opportunities for the political exploitation of topicalities through the opportunity to analogue Leir's daughters and James II's daughters—either positively or negatively commenting on their role in the Glorious Revolution. The consistent lack of explicit topicalities within the love test demonstrates that, as well as a stagnation in the number of substantive retellings printed, there was, surprisingly, a stylistic stagnation in their retellings, which failed to sustain the earlier diversification within retellings or respond to the politicised nature of contemporary print.

Leir's motivation for undertaking the love test remained relatively consistent across all eras. The Galfridian original has three elements. Leir, motivated by his age, seeks to gauge his daughters' love for him and divide his kingdom accordingly. Brutan variants which include the love test largely align with the original. Leir's motivation for undertaking the love

test is largely as a test of his daughters' love, with over half of the variants additionally suggesting Leir's test is motivated by his age. Whilst often not originally a test for the kingdom, this is the outcome in all. Likewise, Leir's age and his desire to know how much his daughters love him are tied together in all but one of the diversification variants that include the love test. Most often, diversification variants make explicit links between the love test and the division of the kingdom. Stagnation variants are largely more consistent with the three elements of the Galfridian original than with those from earlier eras.

The original Galfridian history depicts the elder daughters' responses to Leir's love test as calculated flattery. The majority of the Brutan variants which include the test alter this, as the daughters use only light flattery and exaggeration, as befitting court rhetoric. This alteration may have been designed to avoid critical, topical allusions to Elizabeth's rule. Half of the diversification variants, however, extend Galfridian flattery into jealous manipulations and even evil plots designed to win the kingdom, with the dramatic heightening of the Leir story reflective of the variants' movement into parasite history genres. Here once more stagnation variants align closely with the Galfridian original, with all but Heywood's early historiography depicting the elder daughters' response as calculated flattery. None of the stagnation retellings, however, touches on the kind of malicious dissimulations seen in some diversification variants. Heywood's royalist historiography contains the least flattery, merely adherence to court rhetoric, and Tyrrell's Whig historiography contains the most calculated flattery in the elder daughters' response to Leir's love test:

the two Eldest called Heaven and Earth to witnefs, that they loved him Ten thousand times dearer than their own Souls, and that they were not able to Exprefs their infinite kindnefs for him; and at last concluded their flatteries with horrid Oaths and affeverations of their Sincerity. (11)

It is problematic to discern topicalities within Tyrrell's retelling. Given that he is a Whig historian writing after and seeking to justify the Glorious Revolution, it is unusual that his variant would offer the most critique of the sisters who would take Leir's crown—unlocking topicalities inconsistent with his politics, whilst using narrative elements consistent with the Galfridian historiography. His extension of the sisters' flattery potentially links to his positioning of the Leir history as a fable from which readers can learn moral lessons—a historiographic as opposed to topical choice. In this way, Tyrrell's variant exemplifies the stagnation years as, despite his stature as a polemicist, he focuses on history's moral purpose, rather than the potential for topical analogy and politicisation with the Leir story.

In the Galfridian original, Cordeilla's response to the love test is detailed at length. This detail is shared by those Brutan variants which contain the love test, but not diversification variants, which, when including the love test, are collectively brief. As before, stagnation variants align with earlier historiography instead of their immediate generic predecessors. Though proportional to their overall length, both Milton's 1670 history and Tate's 1681 play provide the most detailed recounts of Cordeilla's response to the love test. In Tate's variant, this could in part be due to the processes of adaptation. It is in the love test that Tate establishes his merging of Shakespeare's sub- and main plots. As a consequence, additional detail could be accorded to Cordeilla's response due to her newly acquired status of romantic lead and the imminent introduction of Edgar as her love interest.

The wording of Cordeilla's response to the love test provides a unique moment of consensus amongst retellings of the Leir story. While not all Brutan or diversification variants contain the love test, when it is included, Cordeilla's response aligns across Galfridian, Brutan, diversification, and stagnation variants. It is perplexing why this narrative element instead of any other would deserve this honour. No shared topicality, generic demand, or narrative necessity prompts this consistency. Consistently in her response, Cordeilla first

exposes the flattery of her sisters: “fhe wittily perceiving the deep diffimulation and fawning of her Sifters” (Enderbie 24). Then her brusque response to Leir is bound as much by duty as by love: “My Love, said the Youngest, that I to you owe, / Is the abundant Duty a Child ought to show” (Anonymous Broadside Ballad). Finally, Cordeilla’s response earns Leir’s ire. In both Brutan and diversification variants containing the love test, the elder daughters are rewarded for their responses, often both with marriage and with part of the kingdom, while Cordeilla is punished for her lack of flattery, often through disinheritance and/or the lack of marriage. This pattern is repeated in stagnation variants: “This short Answer not at all fatisfied the old fuspicious *King*; for he fhewed his refentments by his neglect of her, and the fuddain advancement of her Sifters” (Tyrrell 11). Here Tyrrell’s language selection in the “fuddain advancement” of the sisters may be an implied topicality and reflect Tyrrell’s, and broader Whig, interest in successional law and procedures, especially as it served to justify the Glorious Revolution and the reign of the contemporaneous monarch.

Tate’s variant, however, is the lone stagnation variant to break from this pattern through an addition. Here, not only does Tate breaks away from the established story, he breaks from his Shakespearean original. That this break occurs so early in the retelling is notable. Apart from additions, diversification parasite history genres that broke away from the established story did so largely in their conclusions. Shakespeare adds a subplot throughout, yet it initially acts as a mirror to the established history, impacting on but not disrupting the key narrative elements. Much of Tate’s recount of the outcomes of Cordeilla’s response in the love test is consistent with either the established story and/or the work being adapted. As in established historiography, Cordeilla is disowned and, as in the Shakespearean play, her suitor Burgundy refuses her without a dowry. However, this is the point in the play where Tate newly introduces the unrequited love between Edgar and Cordeilla. This narrative

element is one for which Tate is routinely derided but which he suggested would make sense of Shakespeare's play:

'Twas my good Fortune to light on one Expedient to rectifie what was wanting in the Regularity and Probability of the Tale, which was to run through the whole *A Love betwixt Edgar and Cordelia*, that never chang'd word with each other in the Original. (A3v).

Tate's early introduction of this new narrative element derails the Leir story—it turns the adaptation into an original and the history into a fiction. On this point, Tate's love test is unique as a stagnation variant. It aligns with both Galfridian and Shakespearean originals, but is most consistent with its genre of adaptation or even fiction. Overall, however, within the love test, stagnation variants are more connected with the Galfridian original, than either variants from earlier eras, generic contemporaries, or the politicised book trade. In this way they indicate a stylistic stagnation and not just a stagnation in the numbers printed.

8.3 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: Leir's Downfall

Diversification variants began to diversify fully in their depictions of Leir's downfall, breaking away from each other as well as from the established history. They did so, however, along generic lines, with the majority of the variants that were more established historiographical genres largely excluding Leir's downfall and the parasite history genres extending and heightening Leir's suffering in unique and at times fictional ways. Extending this trend, and demonstrating the consolidation of the book trade and the genres it produced, stagnation years variants show greater diversity in Leir's downfall than in their earlier narrative elements. This diversity, as before, is restricted to the parasite history genres, with

the historiographies continuing to stagnate stylistically. It is the historiographies that are first discussed.

Leir's downfall in the Galfridian original was initiated by Leir himself, with its first stage his decision to divide the kingdom. Brutan variants provided lengthy detail about this division but offered variations within its enactment. At times, Leir abdicated but retained varied privileges, whilst in other variants he remained ruler of part or all of the kingdom. Diversification variants were, atypically, consistent on the division of the kingdom. Each of the six diversification variants to discuss Leir's abdication clarifies that he immediately divides the kingdom in two between the elder daughters and their husbands. Stagnation years historiographies (Heywood 1641, Enderbie 1661, Milton 1670, and Tyrrell 1696) divided politically and narratively.

Monarchist histories written by both Heywood and Enderbie are conservative in their discussion of succession, as Leir clearly states the division of the kingdom will occur after his death: "dividing his Kingdom betwixt them in Reverfion, and a Moiety for their prefent maintenance and livelyhood" (Enderbie 24). This outcome is consistent with many Brutan historiographies but with none from the diversification years. This likely reflects topicalities and shared support of the monarchy, by avoiding any disruption to traditional practices of succession and thus heightening the negative nature of the later rebellion. Milton and Tyrrell expressed different political beliefs in their prefatory material, both supporting Whig legalistic rhetoric around succession and joint rule between king and parliament. Milton's Leir immediately gives part of the kingdom to the elder daughters, but retains a portion for himself, and Tyrrell's Leir completely abdicates seeing "the suddain advancement of her Sifters" (11). The outcomes of Leir's love test in all four stagnation historiographies are consistent with varieties within Brutan variants but, for the first time, may be shaped by the

authors' political beliefs: "thereafter the reader of any history would be well advised to take note of its author's political and religious perspective" (Woolf, *The Idea* 264-5).

Though the division of the kingdom precedes Leir's downfall, it was never the only cause, with Leir's age as well as the actions of his elder daughters also serving as causation. Brutan variants featuring the love test align with Galfridian historiography in seeing the elder daughters' usurpation of Leir justified through his age, although in half of these it is not the daughters but their husbands who rise against Leir. Diversification historiographies, but not the parasite histories, were distinctly different, being more likely to either exclude the cause of Leir's downfall or mitigate the elder daughters' role in such. One of the most significant points of difference between Brutan and diversification variants was their representations of Leir's daughters. In both eras, these representations were aligned with differing topicalities. Within Brutan historiographies, the elder daughters are rarely featured. At times, they are omitted entirely from the narrative. When included, their role is downplayed. Diversification historiographies contrast sharply with Brutan, including lavish critical detail in their representations of the elder daughters.

Returning once more to align with Brutan variants, all stagnation historiographies suggest Leir's age and his elder daughters' quest for power as the motivation for his downfall. In each of them, however, the sisters' husbands are equally to blame: "fince the fatal Sifters will not of their own accord cut off his thred of life, his daughters by the hands of their ambitious and covetous husbands will undertake that task" (Enderbie 25). The heightened critical depictions of the elder sisters in stagnation historiography variants extend that within diversification historiographies, though the sisters' actions in causing Leir's downfall are initially mitigated by his age and by their husbands' actions. This may be due not to topicalities but to the overall stylistic stagnation of variants, with the heightened critical depictions of the sisters enhancing the history's capacity to provide moral lessons.

This is made explicit in many of the histories, such as the authorial commentary inserted by Milton to highlight the faults of the “impiouf” (19) elder sisters:

Now might be feen a difference between he filent, or down-right fpok’n affection of fom Children to thir Parents, and the talkative obfequioufnefs of others; while the hope of Inheritance over-acts them, and on the Tongues end enlarges thir duty. (19)

The potential for topicalities or politicisation within this trend is unlikely, with neither the royalist nor the Whig positions benefitting from a more critical depiction of the elder sisters. Indeed, Whig historian Tyrrell walks a political tightrope. By critiquing Leir’s daughters, who with “their fubtile practices work him out of all” (11), he potentially exposes critical analogies to the royals he sought to support. Yet Tyrrell additionally reinforces his assertion that the Leir story is a fable from which the reader can learn by engaging critically with the elder sisters.

The description of Leir’s downfall is another point of differentiation within stagnation variants, again potentially aligning with the political beliefs of the author. The Galfridian original gave extended detail about Leir’s downfall, with his kingdom, royal trappings, status, and dignity each taken in turn. This was altered within Brutan historiographies, with a third excising these details and the remainder providing a comparatively brief recount.

Diversification historiographies, however, aligned with the Galfridian original, providing comparatively more detail to clarify Leir’s downfall. Within the stagnation years, royalist historiographies align with Brutan variants, and Whig historiographies align with diversification variants. Both Heywood and Enderbie, writing either side of the civil war, omit Leir’s suffering and move straight to the battle to regain his crown, and the immorality of those who would rebel against it. That they do so may reflect the broader stagnation of variants or their royalist positions, seeking to avoid topical analogies.

Where Heywood's and Enderbie's royalist histories avoid depictions of Leir's suffering, Milton's and Tyrrell's do not, and consequently align with diversification variants and the Galfridian original. It is Heywood's and Enderbie's omissions, not Milton's and Tyrrell's inclusions, that demonstrate politicisation. Milton offers no new details nor extensions that may have provided analogies to topical events. Tyrrell's recount is briefer than Milton's, something to which he draws attention by including that Leir's "Daughters by turns, who being fet on by their Husbands, put so many affronts and Indignities upon him (needles here to be recited)" (11). Tyrrell is the lone author within this study to suggest detailed recounts of Leir's suffering "needles here to be recited," drawing attention to their absence and thus to the widespread knowledge of their prior existence. It is the stagnation of histories, that is most evident in the collation of Leir's downfall within stagnation historiographies, as each narrative element becomes more closely aligned with Galfridian historiography or earlier cognate texts. Also evincing their stagnation, is that, though printed in an extended era of politicised print, topicalities are fleeting and rare. Yet the capacity to draw political capital or even moral lessons from the downfall and suffering of a king would have been opportune at any point within the stagnation years.

The collation of Leir's downfall within diversification variants revealed a split along generic lines. This split is sustained and intensified within stagnation years variants. Whilst historiographies largely stagnated in their narrative and topical inclusions, parasite history genres begin to show some diversity, topicality, and further fictionalisation of the Leir story. Leir's downfall is, relative to the length of each, the largest part of both retellings. Both Tate's 1681 play, printed at the height of the Exclusion Crisis, and the anonymous 1700 Broadside ballad, printed after the Glorious Revolution, skim quickly past Leir's division of his kingdom. That each stresses Cordeilla's banishment as part of the division could reveal a contemporaneous, politicised analogy. Little justification is provided by Leir for Cordeilla's

banishment in either text. Tate's *King Lear* includes a detailed recount of not just Cordeilla's, but also Kent's and Edgar's, subsequent banishments, highlighting the injustice of Leir's actions: "*Kent*. I'll Thunder in thine Ear my juft Complaint, / And tell Thee to thy Face that Thou Dost ill" (6). Both works potentially foreground the banishment over the division to draw topical analogy to James II's sequence of "banishments": "James spent nearly a third of his life in two continental exiles" (Speck). James II fled to France during the civil war. He was banished once more during the Exclusion Crisis when Tate's play was written, and then once more after the Glorious Revolution when the ballad was written. Within Tate's play, this may provide critical commentary on the actions of the exclusionists (Hardman 913) and within the ballad, provide critical commentary on the king himself.

As in diversification parasite history genres, stagnation variants devote a great deal of detail to the cause for, and description of, Leir's downfall. Capitalising on dramatic potential within the established history, and responding to contemporaneous sentiment and the misogyny of James I's rule, diversification variants lay the blame for Leir's downfall on the elder daughters and their quest for power, heightening critical depictions of the sisters and their malevolent actions. Stagnation parasite history variants follow these trends and are equally unique in their depictions of the elder daughters' cruelty. Leir, however, is not left blameless in either stagnation parasite history variant. Once more evincing its willingness to broadly critique the monarchy, the ballad suggests Leir "had his desert." Tate's retelling engages even more critically with Leir's behaviour. Providing more cause for his downfall than the division and subsequent banishment, Tate's depiction of Leir shows his sustained incendiary behaviour and poor judgement. Gonorilla comments: "As you are old, you shou'd be staid and wise ... He thinks to play the *Tyrant* here" (11 and 12 emphasis added). Leir, when king, is not depicted positively within Tate's play. This is unusual, given Tate's self-proclaimed status as a monarchist and the traditional representations of the historical king

Leir, yet emblematic of his willingness to provide conditional critique of the monarchy (Bender 73).

That Tate's Leir is not depicted positively as a king aligns with Tate's critical depictions of Leir's elder daughters. Both Tate's play and the anonymous broadside ballad juxtapose the actions of the daughters before the love test with their actions as monarchs. It would appear that in both variants it is only the accessions of the elder daughters that makes them evil. That this depiction is consistent across both parasite history, or literary, genres likely reflects the politicised nature of print at the time, which was newly licensed to provide critical commentary on royalty. It potentially also aligns with the specific times of their publication. Initially, the ballad introduces Leir's daughters through the "delight" he took in their shared "beauty ... virtue and wisdom" and how much he loved them. Yet, when themselves Queens, Leir's elder daughters

fool did beguile

Him of his whole Kingdom, nay, Scepter and Crown,

And quickly their aged old Father pulled down.

Their actions go further than a quest for power and seem to be deliberately demeaning the aged king, who is even encouraged by his second daughter: "To eat of her Scraps that her Scullion fet by." As noted in Chapter 7, the woodcuts of the ballad allude to members of the royal family, and the daughters themselves are unnamed within the ballad, referred only to by their birth order. This is likely designed to create contemporaneous analogies and thus demonstrates the politicisation of the Leir story. Book historians (Brewer, "Interregnum"; Nebeker, "Broadside") have demonstrated that ballads, pamphlets, and other ephemeral material were known to be used as agents of dissent and influence by all parties during and after the Glorious Revolution. The ballad follows this trend. Its heightened critical depictions

of the daughters as monarchs mock the actions of Mary and Anne in the Glorious Revolution and the deposition of their father.

Tate's engagement with the daughters is equally critical but even more detailed, unique, and topical. They become increasingly malicious, violent, manipulative, immoral, and tyrannical throughout the length of their rule, or, more specifically, the length of their mis-rule. They are described by the heroic Gloster as "female tyrants" (26), with the words of the villainous Edmund highlighting the impact of their misrule:

The Riots of these proud imperial Sisters
 Already have impos'd the galling Yoke
 Of Taxes, and hard Impositions on
 The drudging Peafants Necks, who bellow out
 Their loud complaints in Vain. (25)

Their thirst for power even sees them turn against their husbands and thus the natural order, with Gonorilla boasting that she has taken rule, and indeed the masculine role, from her husband: "I have giv'n the Diftaff into my Husband's Hands" (45). The pinnacle of their malevolence sees them plot against all those who would threaten either their rule or their adulterous relationships with Edmund. They turn violently on Gloster, each other, Leir, and Cordeilla. Tate's heightening of the elder sisters' viciousness may be due in part to the source for his adaptation and the dramatic genre he was writing. That he has refashioned the story such that their evil increases through the length of their rule and is specifically linked to their desire for absolute power could be topical analogy. At the time of the play's publication, there was a genuine fear that the Exclusion Crisis would prompt another civil war (Hardman 913), just as Leir's interference in successional practices had done. Tate's characterisation of the elder sisters acted as a royalist warning against such interferences.

Once more aligning diversification parasite history genres and those of the stagnation years, Leir's downfall is swift, inglorious, and described in detail. Both Tate's adaptation and the anonymous broadside ballad, similar to the works that preceded them, see Leir suffer as a monarch through the reduction of his royal trappings, but also see him suffer as a man, with his dignity and then sanity lost: "possest with Discontent" (Anonymous ballad), "My wit begins to burn" (Tate 25). It has been suggested that:

The emphasis on pathos and sentiment in Tate's version chimed in with the tendency of the Romantics to locate the tragedy in the mind of Lear, and reduce the external action to a domestic drama. (Foakes 86)

These changes likewise align with trends noted in both historiographical and parasite history diversification variants through their depictions of Leir's suffering and madness.

There is a unique point of differentiation in Tate's depiction of Leir's downfall. Tate parallels Leir's downfall, an element of the established history, with the downfall of the country, "Our injur'd Country" (44), as it suffers the sisters' misrule, an element uniquely inserted and explored in detail by Tate. During this section of the retelling, Tate fully intertwines the historical tale, source material, and additions. Extending trends noted in diversification parasite history genres, this is also where Tate begins to fully fictionalise the Leir story. He has also politicised it, reflecting trends in the book trade at the time. His alteration to Leir's downfall, mirroring it to that of the country, is also feasibly reflective of the socio-political context of the time of publication: "Shakespeare thus serves for Tate ... as a stalking-horse for topicality of his adaptations" (Dobson 82).

In Tate's variant, the height of the nation's suffering coincides with, and is directly aligned with, the height of Leir's suffering during the storm scene:

Gloft. This change in the State fits uneasie. The Commons repine aloud at their female Tyrants, already they Cry out for the re-installment of their good old King, whose Injuries I fear will inflame 'em into Mutiny. (26)

The impact of the elder daughters' misrule, their tyranny, is what inflames Gloster to incite a civil uprising and the sisters' deposition at this point in time. Tate's consideration of the impact of misrule on the nation may reflect more than politicisation. It may also reflect the rise of the reader and thus their consideration within the work. Tate's unique inclusion of the impact of misrule likely aligns with its date of publication and its author's political beliefs: "Drawing on his source material, Tate explores themes related to the crisis, including plotting, banishment, and succession" (Bender 66). Although loyal to the crown, Tate's works at times included critique (Bender 73), something already seen in his depictions of Leir. Depictions of the monarchy within his play may serve as topical critiques of royalty. Their presence reflects Tate's political vacillations, but they also plausibly reflect the performative version, the rise of the reader, and Tate's consideration of readers' varied political beliefs. The protests in Tate's work link to the popular dissent with the monarchy during Charles II's reign and the protests against him, his lavish spending, and the impact of the Dutch war on an increasingly impoverished nation. Within this tinderbox of disillusion, and with the Popish threat shadowing the future, it was feared that the Exclusion Crisis would spark another uprising against the monarchy and thus another civil war. Tate's depiction of a civil uprising, prompted and led by nobility, clearly echoes the events leading to Charles I's trial and execution (Kishlansky and Morrill). In this way, Tate's unique paralleling of Leir's downfall with that of the nation evoked past unrest and directly paralleled contemporary events, with both Whig and Tory readers able to find their views expressed.

A collation of Leir's downfall within stagnation variants reveals, for the first time, some diversity and some sustained topicalities or politicisation of variants. As in the

diversification years, variants split along generic lines. Stagnation historiographies continue to stagnate stylistically, consistently aligning with the Galfridian original or Brutan variants and largely failing to include topicalities. Parasite history genres, particularly Tate's variant, begin to show diversity and politicisation, aligning them with both earlier variants and the broader print industry in which "Political and religious upheavals encouraged fresh applications of past events by those committed to anatomizing, and intervening in, current crises and to averting future ones" (Kewes, "History" 1). Finally, and importantly, Tate's variant shows a greater fictionalisation of the history than seen before, driven by processes of adaptation and politicisation.

8.4 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: The Battle

Geoffrey of Monmouth's original saw Leir, seeking restoration, lead the French army into battle against his sons-in-law. The battle was depicted neither as a French invasion nor as a civil war. It was a story of triumph that saw the continuation of the royal line. The focus of Brutan variants conservatively shifted to Leir's restoration and not the battle that attained it, with the majority either excluding or merely referencing the battle. In diversification variants, the battle was one of the narrative elements that showed the greatest diversity. The majority included and exploited the battle for its capacity to provide topicalities and to appeal to a broader audience. Dividing along generic lines, the established forms of historiography largely elided the battle, whereas parasite history diversification variants exploited it for its dramatic potential, with alterations that at times completely diverged from the established history and fictionalised the Leir story. Following the Galfridian original, the strongest consistency is that almost half the diversification variants depict the battle as a justifiable

civil uprising. It is not that a monarch is being overthrown—it is that the true monarch is being reinstated and the treasonous usurpers overturned.

Stagnation variants show greater diversity in their depictions of the battle than in any other of the narrative elements discussed so far. At times, as before, they return to trends within Brutan variants, largely avoiding discussion of the battle. Alternatively, they engage with it in detail and even begin to fully fictionalise the battle through unique inclusions and rewritings of history. Unlike diversification variants, they do not divide along generic lines. Notably, they also fail to divide along political lines. Topicalities are more consistent than in any prior narrative element and shown in omissions, misdirections, obfuscations, and explicit alterations to the established history. That more topicalities occur in depictions of the battle is perhaps unsurprising given that all variants were printed either on the cusp of, or after, the civil war, or at times when war was a foreseeable threat. That the variants would address such a pivotal political and social event is also not surprising given the politicised nature of print during this period, combined with the number of occasions on which it was plausible that a second civil war would occur. What is surprising, however, is that they do so at all. The collation thus far has shown the variants, especially historiographies, largely stagnating stylistically and not drawing on opportunities for political or topical analogue. Yet sustained topicalities were initially considered likely, given the politicised nature of print at the time and trends found within diversification variants.

There was great potential for the traditional elements of the battle to be plumbed for differing topical analogies in each of the altering contemporaneous socio-political environments: “The same text could resonate differently from one time to the next as the current political context changed” (Woolf, “From hystories” 64). Central to the battle was interference with successional order, tyranny, civil war, rebellion, exile, restoration, and national security. Read during the stagnation years, the battle to restore Leir becomes a battle

to restore peace. Questions concerning how the war is fought, who fights, why they battle, what they win, and what they lose are answered within stagnation variants not through adherence to traditional narrative elements, but often by the political context or disposition of the author. Due to the variety within them and the complexity of their contemporaneous political events, each variant's depiction of the battle is addressed individually and in chronological order and not in generic groupings.

Heywood's 1641 royalist and Galfridian historiography initially appears to sustain its narrative adherence to the traditional story. This is reflective of the broader stagnation of historiography. However, choices made in the depiction of the battle, largely in relation to inclusions and language use, are topical and linked to its social context, on the cusp of civil war. Heywood's recount of the battle is brief, but this serves to highlight, instead of obfuscating, the political analogy within it. He avoids the use of the words "war" and "battle," or any synonyms, perhaps deemed too incendiary within the current climate. Instead, Heywood includes that, incited by the elder sisters, the Dukes "rose up in armes against him" (a4r). Heywood implies but does not include rebellion and civil warfare. Within Heywood's retelling, Leir is then "compeld to flie into *France*" (a4r). Again, though Leir often exiles in France within variants, this has specific topical resonances in 1641. Charles I's wife, Henrietta Maria, was the youngest daughter of the King of France. During the later civil war, both Henrietta Maria and Charles I's two sons were exiled in France. Finally, the battle itself is recounted immediately after a moral interlude: "briefly lhee [Cordeilla] animated her Husband to take his [Leir's] quarrell in hand, who entred into the Land with a puiffant army, and re-instated him in his throne" (a4r-b1v). Again, while frequently avoided, it is not uncommon for Leir variants to depict the battle as a justifiable foreign invasion, but it reads quite differently in 1641. The battle to restore the monarch within Heywood's variant, through imposition, is motivated by civil war at a time when England itself was on the cusp

of civil war. The battle is undertaken by France and its stronger army, at the behest of Cordeilla, who at that point in the narrative is a French Queen. Through direct analogy, Heywood's recount of the battle, akin to the moral it contains, warns readers of the outcome of any unjustifiable or even justifiable rebellion against the ruling monarch.

Enderbie's variant shares many similarities with Heywood's. Both variants are royalist, traditional historiographies. In their depictions of the battle, both offer their first clear topical analogies that politicise the story in support of the monarchy. That Enderbie does so more flagrantly than Heywood is surprising given his time of publication, 1661, after the restoration of the crown and the *Act of Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion*:

which was passed by the Convention Parliament in August 1660 and ratified by its successor, the Cavalier Parliament, in June 1661, [which] legislated against raking up painful memories of the Civil War. (Kewes, "History" 18)

Enderbie's variant does much more than provocatively imply civil war before Leir's exile, as Heywood's had done. Enderbie explicitly adds a civil war into history, well before the battle to restore Leir. He states that the rebellion against the monarch, King Leir, has caused warfare and describes the war itself: "nothing is now heard in Brittain but the clashing of arms, neighing of horses, thundering of Trumpets, and warlike Musick" (25). That he does so aligns his work with the book trade more broadly, as post-civil war: "It was no longer sufficient to describe the evils of rebellion and civil war; the task was rather to explain how civil war had once again come about" (Woolf, *The Idea* 247). Within the full collation of Leir variants, this is one of the most extraordinary alterations to the established tale. It is extraordinary because no other historiography has rewritten established history in this way. Others have omitted, extended, or highlighted narrative elements in response to topicalities. Some have questioned the veracity of the history within the "historiography debate." None

has altered history to explicitly include an additional civil war. That Enderbie does so is not merely reflective of topicalities; I would suggest it is reflective of the broader movement of the Leir story from a history, to a fiction.

In Enderbie's retelling, Leir is then "forced to flie for succour" (25) to Cordeilla in France. Whilst this is a common element of the established tale, it draws topical analogy to contemporary events. Charles II had close ties to France, his mother's native country, exiling there at his father's behest during the civil wars, and then again during much of the Interregnum (Seaward; Spurr 8). The battle to restore Leir is led within Enderbie's variant not just by France but by Leir himself, empowering the embattled monarch: "*Aganippus* arrives in *Brittain* with his Father in Law, gives battel to the difobedient Rebels, gives them the overthrow, and again establi'heth *Leir* in his Regal dignity" (25). The battle itself serves as moral commentary on a topical event by reinforcing the dangers of civil war and rebellion against the crown. Enderbie's and Heywood's retellings thus show many consistencies. They are both royalist. They are initially both almost pedantically Galfridian, demonstrating a stagnation of all earlier narrative elements in their return to alignment with the original. They are also, in depictions of the battle, the first times that Leir's history is fictionalised by historiographers.

The depiction of the battle within Milton's Galfridian historiography is consistent with Brutan variants. It shares the brevity of other historiographies within the stagnation years, but obfuscates and almost entirely elides the battle itself. Milton's offers one brief sentence to retell the battle, with the presence of one word, "Army," signalling it as such:

permitting his Wife *Cordeilla* to go with an Army, and fet her Father upon his Throne.
 Wherin her piety fo prosper'd, as that she vanquish'd her impious Sifters with those
 Dukes. (20)

The battle was a moral one, pitting Cordeilla's "piety" against her sisters' "impious" actions, instead of one army against another. Not only does Milton largely elide the battle, he is also careful in its depiction. It is Cordeilla and not Aganippus who returns to set her father upon the throne. Indeed, when in France, Aganippus surrenders to Leir "the power, and disposal of his whole Dominion" (20). While none of these elements is unique within retellings, it is unusual that Milton not just elided the battle but also so thoroughly privileged the British king, given his political beliefs about the Commonwealth. Milton once wrote in support of Charles I's overthrow and the overthrow of all tyrants (Campbell). His history was drafted in the weeks before Charles I's execution (Campbell), yet Milton's depiction of the battle fails to exploit the opportunity for topicalities that would have been evident then or at the time of its publication, given the precarity of the first decades after the restoration (Spurr 8). Milton does not focus on the tyranny of the sisters to justify the battle. He does not depict the battle as a moral victory over tyranny. He does not justify the actions of the Commonwealth or warn against absolutist rule. Instead, Milton skims over and obfuscates the presence of the battle. His avoidance of topicalities is notable, as:

For all his idealization of liberty and his regret in the 1660s over the collapse of the godly republic, *the History of Britain* is no attack on monarchy - and was therefore publishable under Charles II. The sad destinies of the Britons and then the Saxons were fulfilled through the failings of the people themselves, and not their rulers.

(Woolf, *The Idea* 252)

This self-censorship may in part be due to the date of publication of the work and Milton's relatively recent release from the Tower where he had been imprisoned, as he was not named as an exception to the *Act of Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion* (Campbell). However, by avoiding topicalities, Milton returns his retelling of the Leir story to the moral

purpose of history, failing to respond to its contemporaneous politicisation and further demonstrating the stagnation of the variants.

Where Milton condenses and obfuscates, Tate extends and clarifies. In some ways, Tate's depiction of the battle aligns more closely with Milton's expressed political beliefs than with his own. Although he was a self-proclaimed monarchist, in depictions of the battle Tate did not shy away from exploiting the opportunity to explore issues raised by the Exclusion Crisis, nor were these opportunities one-sided: "The simultaneous strains of Tory and Whig rhetoric—cries for loyalty and legitimacy on the one hand, a belief in the right to rebel on the other—come from the same camp in the play" (Bender 73; see also: L. Hopkins; Wikander 351). Earlier it was noted that Tate uniquely rewrites the Leir story such that Leir's downfall is paralleled with the downfall of the nation, with peace threatened by Leir's elder daughters, who became "female Tyrants" (26) when they became queens. The battle itself, though clarified, is relatively brief when compared to the detail devoted to its justification and planning. An officer reports the onset to Regan:

Old *Gloster*, whom you late depriv'd of Sight, (His Veins yet Streaming fresh) presents himself, Proclaims your Cruelty, and their Oppression, With the King's Injuries; which fo' errag'd 'em, That now that Mutiny which long had crept Takes Wing, and threatens your Best Pow'rs. (41)

Many Leir variants suggest that the battle to regain his crown is a justifiable civil war. Tate's is unique. In his variant, the battle is instigated by Gloster and led by Kent, when typically Cordeilla and/or France play/s these roles. It thus depicts a civil uprising in the fullest sense of the term, not led by one "legitimate" successor against another "legitimate" successor, but prompted by nobility and undertaken by the people. Many feared the Exclusion Crisis would prompt a return to civil war, with living memory of the civil wars that led to the execution of

Charles I and the Interregnum proving such rebellions was possible. Queen Regan and Queen Gonorilla, akin to Charles I, faced a civil rebellion openly prompted by nobility.

Tate's play, similar to Enderbie's history, explicitly details that civil war began earlier than in other variants. The difference is that Enderbie's variant sees this early civil war as separate from Leir's restoration and motivated only by the tyranny of his elder daughters, the queens. Tate is closer to both his source and earlier versions of the Leir story. The battle designed to restore Leir to the throne is motivated by "the King's Injuries," as well as "Old *Gloster*, whom you late depriv'd of Sight" (41), and the people's "Oppression," which together fuelled the "Mutiny which long had crept" (41). Tate's representation of the battle intermingles the established history with source material and topical analogue. As he does so, he fictionalises and politicises the Leir story, with the battle now condoning civil action against misrule and tyranny: "*Glost*. And be your Cause as Prosp'rous as tis Just" (44). Importantly, however, this civil uprising fails: "King Lear has loft, He and his Daughter tane" (56). Thus Tate's depiction of the battle is as much a warning against as support for civil action against tyranny or the crown. Though doubly derivative, both an adaptation of Shakespeare's play and the established history, the collation of Tate's variant demonstrates itself to be unique and original. It is the first variant to detail the impact of the Queens' misrule; the first to justify a civil uprising very clearly; and the first not to have Cordeilla help Leir regain the throne. The battle in Tate's variant fictionalises even more than it politicises the Leir story.

Tyrrell's depiction of the battle, contrary to Tate's, shares many commonalities with both Brutan variants and other stagnation historiographies. Appearing straight after moral commentary on the elder sisters' vices and Cordeilla's virtues, the recount of the battle is brief, with Cordeilla herself leading the charge: "Ihe affited her Father with powerful aids, and in Person went to revenge his wrongs: So that bringing a great Army into *Britain*, she

destroyed his Enemies” (11). Tyrrell’s adherence to traditional representations of the battle and his focus on morality are consistent with his retelling so far and with the broader stylistic stagnation of variants. It may, however, additionally resonate with Whig rhetoric. Whig historians such as Tyrrell framed the Glorious Revolution to provide a legal way for William III and Mary II to accede to the throne whilst limiting the people’s capacity to act against future monarchies. For Whig historians, the overthrow of James II was a Glorious Revolution and not a civil war or foreign invasion (Rudolph 122-3). The motivation for the Glorious Revolution aligns with the motivation Tyrrell gives for the battle to regain Leir’s throne. The Glorious Revolution was necessary resistance against a tyrant who had abdicated through his absence from the country (Rudolph 1). Likewise, the moral condemnation of the sisters’ actions serves as justification for Cordeilla’s restoration of Leir, with this restoration the focus and not the battle itself. Additionally, just as Mary II’s legitimate succession was stressed by Whig historians, instead of William’s role, within Tyrrell’s variant neither the personage nor the country of France takes any part in the battle, which is the sole undertaking of Cordeilla, the rightful heir. Thus, whilst Tyrrell’s depiction of the battle continues to demonstrate a stagnation of narrative elements, it is a politically expedient choice to do so.

The last stagnation variant, the anonymous broadside ballad, has thus far aligned closely with Galfridian historiography in its narrative elements, and is emblematic of the stylistic stagnation of variants at this time. However, its retelling of the battle sees it split from history into fiction. In the ballad, Cordeilla leads the French army into battle against her sisters, but almost instantly is defeated:

But now comes the Tragedy here at the laft;
 The Fight was no fooner begun, to be plain,
 But this noble Queen in the Battle was flain.
 The Queen being dead, then her Father elpy’d,

He laid himself by her, and instantly dy'd.

Eric Nebeker speaks specifically about the power of the ballad and popular forms of print which at times “could, and did, contest the government and provide critical commentary” (“Broadside” 2). The ballad’s central woodcut shows William III and Mary II with the angels holding their crowns aloft and afar, as noted previously, tying them to the Leir story. Thus the battle to return Leir to the throne is critically analogised to the Glorious Revolution but, unlike Tyrrell’s which provides a clear victor and support for the revolution, the ballad fails to provide any victory or support for the monarchy.

The battle to restore Leir to the throne is a pivotal point within stagnation variants because it is here that they begin to diversify and become topical, where previously they had stagnated and failed to respond to a politicised climate of print. Antiquarian historiographer Enderbie inserts a civil war into history in order to support the monarchy. Tate justifies the civil war, yet this war is not what restores Leir, providing censorious contemporaneous analogue. Tyrrell exploits established history for Whig rhetoric. The ballad inverts its formulaic adherence to the established history in order to see the royals die before the battle is fully begun. It is perhaps not surprising that the battle is the point of divergence for stagnation variants given their socio-political contexts. What is surprising is that they show their first consistent signs of diversification and politicisation so late in the retelling. By doing so, however, variants are fictionalising as much as politicising the story.

8.5 Collation of Narrative Inclusions/Exclusions: The Restoration of the Monarchy

In Galfridian historiography, the Leir story has no end. Leir is restored to the throne. Then, after his death, Cordeilla rules. While she is later usurped by her nephews, the royal line continues through the Brutan line to contemporaneous rulers. Brutan variants aligned

with this and consistently included Leir's restoration, providing flattering comment on his subsequent rule. The majority of the diversification variants likewise see Leir restored, with three of the nine breaking from established history to see Leir die before he can regain the crown, fictionalising the history in its transference to popular, parasite history genres, likely reflecting a stagnation in genre. Stagnation variants are closer to Brutan, with five of the six restoring Leir to the throne.

The final element of the Leir story, Cordeilla's later succession and rule, also varies across the eras. Although addressed briefly, Cordeilla's rule was consistently and positively represented in Brutan variants, before including the rebellion against her and her usurpation and untimely death. Diversification variants are less consistent: four included her rule within that of the entire Brutan line; two retell the Leir story in isolation without continuing to Cordeilla's rule; one excises her rule but sustains the Brutan line; and two excise her rule and terminate the Brutan line, introducing new lines of succession, and fictionalising the history. Those diversification works that did include her reign most frequently provide scant detail and focus more on her usurpation. The stagnation variants divide along generic lines. Once more, despite increased diversification and politicisation in depictions of the battle in stagnation variants, depictions of Leir's restoration and Cordeilla's subsequent rule within historiographies largely align with the Galfridian original and Brutan variants, and thus also return to a stagnation within narrative elements. Literary genres, however, sustain the diversity and topicality of their generic predecessors and continue to fictionalise the Leir story.

In the main, stagnation historiographies (Heywood, Enderbie, Milton, and Tyrrell), consistent with Brutan variants, provide brief recounts of Leir's restoration. Topicalities appear to have had limited impact. Enderbie is the lone historiographer to provide additional laudatory detail on Leir's restoration. This is likely due to the variant's publication in 1661

upon the restoration of the crown and to the royalist beliefs of its author. Enderbie's Leir is not simply restored; he is "again establiſheth ... in his Regal dignity" (25). Nor does he simply reign; he "once more holding and guiding the ſtern of the Brittiſh Monarchy, paſſed his time with perfect quietneſs" (25). It is at the cloſe of Leir's reign that two of the historiographies engage with the historiography debate. Enderbie does so at length, using multiple ſcholarly devices to demonstrate the truth of the Leir ſtory. He firſt provides additional antiquarian detail about Leir's burial and tomb, before dedicating lengthy proſe to combatting "Thoſe who undervalue the *Brittains* [and] call this Hiſtory in queſtion" (25). Demonstrating the historicity of the work, marginal citations refer to historiographers ſuch as Geoffrey of Monmouth and John Stow. The uniqueness of theſe proteſtations has previously been addreſſed.

Stagnation historiographies' depictions of Cordeilla's rule, or ſpecifically the legitimisation of her acceſſion and the articulation of her overthrow, differ by degrees, conceivably in reſponse to topicalities. Each explicitly juſtifies Cordeilla's ſucceſſion. Whiſt this has been a conſiſtent narrative element within earlier variants, it reſonates more topically during the ſtagnation years, particularly within the works of Heywood and Enderbie. Heywood's 1641 variant juſtifies Cordeilla's acceſſion, not juſt through Leir's wiſhes, but alſo by noting that ſhe "by the generall aſſent of all the Peeres and Commons was admitted as Queen" (b1v). At a time when the monarchy was directly in conflict with Parliament, it appears unuſual that royaliſt Heywood would include the aſſent of the Peers and Commons, as well as Leir's, when juſtifying Cordeilla's acceſſion. More pronounced in the balancing of parliamentary and monarchical roles is Enderbie's variant, even though he was a royaliſt, writing upon the reſtoration of the crown. In his variant, Cordeilla accedes to the throne, not juſt by Leir's will, but by election or "by the joynt ſuffrages and votes of the *Brittains*" (26). Heywood's and Enderbie's retellings remain royaliſt, traditional, and Galfridian on the

whole. However, their clarifications of Cordeilla's accession appear to contradict their prefatory material and their stated royalist stance.

Again consistent with Brutan variants, stagnation historiographies provide scant detail about Cordeilla's rule with all but Tyrrell's providing praise. Notably, while praise for Cordeilla is a common feature of earlier variants, Heywood's and Enderbie's once more newly fashion this praise to include consideration of the general public and thus their readers. Heywood's Cordeilla ruled "with great prudence, and the generall love of the multitude" (b1v), and Enderbie's "with great applaufe, and general liking" (26). Narratively, stagnation historiographies move almost immediately to the uprising that saw Cordeilla, in the established history, lose her kingdom and her life. This uprising, similar to the battle, is redolent with themes that aligned with socio-political events within the stagnation years—rebellion, succession, and the unlawful overthrow of the monarchy. However, where stagnation historiographies showed diversity and topicality in depictions of the battle, they have largely failed to do so when recounting Cordeilla's overthrow, leaving the battle the lone moment of diversity within a set of narrative elements that largely stagnate. Similar to Brutan variants and the Galfridian original, stagnation historiographies perfunctorily describe Cordeilla's overthrow, imprisonment, and suicide. They neither elide to avoid nor extend to exploit feasible topicalities. Enderbie's 1661 restoration variant provides some exception. In it, Cordeilla's nephews invade the country not simply for the traditional motivations, but because they are "envying her prosperity" (26), and her suicide when imprisoned is carried out "with true Trojan and masculine Heroick Spirit" (26). While largely consistent with Brutan variants, these few additional details reflect positively on the monarchy and may even allude to Charles I, valorising his bravery as he faced execution and his martyrdom for this country, with both of these themes prevalent upon the restoration of the crown (Kishlansky and Morrill). In the main, however, stagnation historiographies align with Brutan in their

depictions of the restoration of the monarchy, the final years of Leir's rule and the totality of Queen Cordeilla's. Though there are some hints of topicalities, there is no explicit or sustained politicisation, when these were prevalent within the book trade at the time. Additionally, their narrative elements stagnate, returning to consistency with the Galfridian original and Brutan variants.

This stagnation, however, is not evident within the parasite history, or literary, genres. The split between the narrative conservatism of historiographies and the fictionalisation of parasite histories was noted in the diversification years and is sustained, and indeed extended, within the restoration of Leir and Cordeilla in the stagnation years. Both parasite histories fictionalise the restoration of the monarchy and thus the history itself. They do so in differing ways and reflect differing topicalities. Tate's restoration adaptation of Shakespeare's play uniquely moves away from his source to provide a happy ending, an act for which he is routinely derided. Tate's variant makes a partial return to established history, but combines this with a significant movement away from it. The majority of the final elements of Tate's retelling are fictional, either Shakespeare's or Tate's own inventions. Cordeilla and Leir are freed from prison, not by the civil uprising, but by the actions of the heroic but fictional Edgar and complicit through traditionally supernumerary Albany. Also a Shakespearean fictionalisation, both Gonorilla and Regan are dead, "Each by the other poifon'd" (66). Yet, consistent with established historiography but not with Shakespeare's work, Leir is restored: "Ha! Didft Thou hear't, or did th' inspiring Gods Wifper to me Along? Old *Lear* fhall be / A King Again" (65). Also consistent with many earlier variants, Leir's restoration is only partial, with Albany retaining part of the kingdom.

It is in the final element of the Leir story, Cordeilla's accession and rule, that Tate fully departs from history. In his adaptation of Shakespeare's work, Tate completely intertwines the established history with Shakespeare's sub-plot. This act causes the full

fictionalisation of the story. Newly restored Leir, moving the play full circle, returns to his initial intent “To difengage from Our long Toil of State, Conferring All upon your younger years” (3). With Cordeilla and Edgar having successfully passed a play-long love test, Leir condones the marriage between Cordeilla and Edgar and gives them the kingdom. Tate’s ending is different from both the established history and his source. He restores the Brutan line of history through Cordeilla’s accession, but also has Edgar, a fictional character, accede to the throne. Edgar’s last lines pledge allegiance to his Queen and country and tie Cordeilla’s accession to the prosperity of the country:

Edg. Our drooping Country now erects her Head,
Peace spreads her balmy Wings, and Plenty Blooms.

...

[Cordelia] Thy bright Example shall convince the World

(Whatever Storms of Fortune are decreed)

That Truth and Vertue shall at last succeed. (67)

It is not just Leir and Cordeilla restored in Tate’s play—peace is restored to the nation. The Leir story, however, is also now a fiction.

Depictions of the restoration of the monarchy in Tate’s play align with its sustained politicisation of the story, making it unique within stagnation variants. Written at the height of the Exclusion Crisis, themes within the play are consistent with, and exploited for their topical reference to, themes within this crisis: plotting, legitimacy, misrule, civil unrest, rebellion, tyranny, succession, and civil war. Direct parallels are drawn between characters/historical personages within the play and historical personages from within the Exclusion Crisis: “Tate arguably built on existing parallels within Shakespeare’s plays to suggest links between his heroes and the duke of York and his villains and the duke of

Monmouth” (Depledge 117). Ultimately, the play’s conclusion provides royalist support for the accession of James II:

Considerable changes were needed to Shakespeare’s play for the resolution to reflect the triumph of legitimacy it was hoped would come with a decision for James as Charles’s heir and assure the country once again of the harmony of the Restoration.
(Hardman 918)

However, taken in their entirety, Tate’s alterations to the narrative elements of both the established history and Tate’s source mirrors his divided politics and those of his readers. In his play, civil rebellion is justified by tyranny and depicted as heroic, but it does not gain peace for the nation—in alignment with his stated royalist beliefs, it is the restoration of the royal line that restores peace.

The second stagnation years parasite history genre, an anonymous ballad, was printed in 1700 after the Glorious Revolution. Initially its narrative elements directly aligned with the Galfridian original, but the ballad broke significantly from this in its depictions of the battle, potentially in order to critically analogise the Glorious Revolution and the actions of the monarchy as a whole. The ballad rewrote, indeed fictionalised, history by failing to restore the monarchy at all. The penultimate stanza of the ballad fails to record a victory for Leir or Cordeilla, and instead recounts their deaths and the subsequent deaths of Leir’s elder daughters:

The Queen being dead, then her Father espy’d,
He laid himself by her, and instantly dy’d:
Then straightway seeing this sudden Event,
They put the two Daughters to Death by Consent.

No clarity is offered within the ballad as to who “they” are who “put the two Daughters to Death by Consent,” but extreme Whig sentiment could be interpreted through the term “by

Confent.” Additionally, the ballad’s suggestion that the crown is left vacant echoes the justification used by Whigs to legitimise the Glorious Revolution. It does, however, go one step further. Whilst Shakespeare’s diversification variants (1608 and 1623) did include the deaths of the entire Brutan line, the anonymous Broadside Ballad goes further, by killing the entire monarchy without providing any line of succession. The final stanza reads:

The Crown was left vacant, for Want of an Heir,
 There being none equal the Crown for to wear:
 The Crown was left ufelefs, being without King,
 So fad Difobedience is the woft of all Sin.

It is not clear if this is a seditious inducement towards the overthrow of the monarchy or merely a mockery of its ineptitude. Ballads at that time were endeavouring to undertake both these tasks, and indeed were part of the politicised ephemera that were used by both sides of the Glorious Revolution in order to sway public opinion (Brewer, “Interregnum”; Nebeker, “Broadside”).

The central woodcut of the ballad draws the reader’s attention to the ruling monarchs William III and Mary II, and thus prompts analogies. Michael Hunter has identified “the increasing power and sophistication of political satire in visual form in the later years of the seventeenth century” (13). Read in the context of the Glorious Revolution, the anonymous broadside ballad’s failure to restore the monarchy serves to mock its inadequacies. The ballad’s finale diverges completely from the established history in order to destroy and satirise the entire royal line. The deidentified ruling monarch and the anonymised malevolent daughters who plot to depose him and take his crown directly parallel and mock the actions of James II and his daughters Mary and Anne. In the ballad, the entire monarchy self-destructs as royals turn upon one another. Though initially aligning with established historiography, the subsequent politicisation of the story is present in paratextual and later

narrative elements. The role of Catholic France and the woodcut of the nun satirically highlight James II's Catholicism and his proactive tolerance. It also reminds readers of his weakness, as James II was exiled in this Catholic kingdom at times during the Interregnum and the Glorious Revolution. Likewise, the ballad's depiction of an English sanctioned invasion by France mocks the actions of Mary and William, who use the same justification, the reinstating of the English monarchy (in Mary), to legitimise their forthcoming invasion of England. No member of the historical royal family escapes death in the ballad, and no member of the contemporaneous royal family escapes its satirical critique. Its finale sees the overthrow and destruction of the monarchy—an act of both mockery and sedition. Until this point, the ballad was largely consistent with the Galfridian historiography and devoid of explicit politicisation, but its conclusion inverts both of these to fictionalise and politicise the story.

In the main, the final narrative element of the stagnation variants, the restoration of the monarchy, demonstrates once more that Leir variants during this period stagnated not simply in the number printed but also in their stylistic and narrative elements. At this stage, they split along generic lines, more so than they have done in any other narrative element. The historiographies stagnate through their consistent return to alignment with the Galfridian original and Brutan variants, which may be reflective of a lack of interest in historiographies within the book trade. Instead of responding to the broader climate of politicised print, few topicalities are included and, when they are noted, they are rarely sustained or explicit. However, parasite history, or literary, stagnation variants extend trends found in diversification variants, and fully fictionalise the story. Reflecting these genres' consolidation within the book trade, and their establishment as literary genres, both Tate's play and the anonymous broadside ballad reflect contemporaneous trends of politicisation. The stagnation

variants, in this final narrative element, appear to demonstrate that the Leir story is no longer relevant as a history, but can be made relevant, indeed political, as a fiction.

8.6 Collation Synopsis

This final collation has further revealed the nature of the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story, specifically its stagnation. Primarily, it has highlighted the stagnation of the story as a historiography, the increased fictionalisation of its parasite history variants, and some of the parallel processes of Shakespeare's canonisation. Combined, these three trends, particularly the broader stagnation of historiographies, clarify why Shakespeare's *King Lear* now acts as metonym for the highly complex and nationally significant palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story. Combined, the historical collation of their bibliography, paratextual, and narrative elements has revealed several diachronic and synchronic similarities and differences, and the elements of the book trade that influenced these.

Several contradictions have been highlighted throughout the collation of narrative elements. Largely, variants align with the book trade, yet they notably contradict it in relation to one key element. The stagnation of interest in historiographies within the broader book trade is evident within variants, not simply because of their scarcity in comparison to earlier eras. Stylistic and narrative elements stagnate by repeatedly returning to the Galfridian original instead of extending trends of diversification noted in the previous era. Also evident within narrative elements was the consolidation of the book trade and of the genres within it. Generic divisions noted within diversification variants are often sustained, although parasite history genres are now more correctly literary genres or a ballad and a play. These literary

genres are those which most frequently include fictionalisation and politicisation. By doing so, they sustain some of the diversity of the previous era, where historiographies do not.

The greatest contradiction between stagnation variants and the book trade is their failure to respond to an industry that became politicised, largely due to the deregulation of print and the extraordinary contemporaneous socio-political events. While variants are frequently framed by politically charged prefatory material, and written by authors with stated political beliefs, topical analogies are infrequently included and no more evident than in diversification variants. Their level of politicisation does not compare to that of the print industry as a whole, once more demonstrating their stagnation. Instances of overt politicisation are rare, with Tate's play the lone variant to include sustained politicisation throughout the narrative elements. The expanse of time covered by the stagnation years, and the complexity of the historical events within it, make the identification of implied topicalities complex and tenuous. Yet, because of the politicisation of print at this time, identifying implied topical analogies was necessary, with most works containing at least fleeting topical analogy. Importantly, while instances of analogy were identified and highlighted, in the main, though the narrative elements of the Leir story contained multiple opportunities for differing contemporaneous topical analogies and the politicisation of the story, these opportunities were not exploited. Here the stagnation variants divide along generic lines. The book trade had witnessed the purpose of history move from moral edification to political debate, yet, with few notable exceptions, stagnation historiographies largely failed to respond to this trend and remained largely unpoliticised. The parasite history genres, however, demonstrate greater politicisation and greater fictionalisation of the story.

The preceding collation has demonstrated the largescale stagnation of the narrative elements of the Leir story, with most stagnation variants largely returning to alignment with the Galfridian original or with Brutan variants and failing to embrace the diversity of the

previous eras. With the exception of Tate's variant, consistency is found within variants' narrative elements throughout the introduction to Leir, the love test, and to a lesser degree Leir's downfall. The battle is the first element to show diversity and topicality across the narrative elements. It is the sole narrative element to do so. All variants recount the battle in detail. Three of the six stagnation variants go so far as to fictionalise the battle. Importantly, when only parasite histories included fictionalisations within the stagnation years, Enderbie's antiquarian historiography does so within the stagnation years, and by doing so it provides a lone brief insight into how history had been politicised at this time. Leir's restoration and Cordeilla's rule see a return to a narrative stagnation, and the Galfridian original, within historiographies. In the parasite histories, the stagnation years mark the inclusion of complex fictionalisations and politicisations, signalling the regeneration of the history into a fiction. Due to the overall stagnation of narrative elements and to the failure to respond to the politicisation of print, the individual instances of differentiation stand out all the more starkly, with a focus on them within this chapter belying their rarity.

Most unique of all the variants is Tate's play—more an original work than an adaptation of Shakespeare's play or of the established history. Tate's variant is the only variant to both fictionalise and politicise the majority of the story by fully intertwining Shakespeare's sub-plot with the established history and unique elements. Politicising the work, Tate parallels Leir's downfall with the downfall of the nation. His is the first variant to detail the impact of the Queens' misrule; the first to very clearly justify a civil uprising; and the first to not have Cordelia help Lear regain the throne. While the retelling ends in peace and the restoration of the crown, it also breaks from history to end in fiction.

Overall, a collation of the narrative elements of stagnation variants reveals two trends. Through their multifaceted stagnation, they point back to the Galfridian original, and in their moments of diversifications, they point forward to the regeneration of the history into fiction.

More specifically, they adumbrate the movement of the Leir story from national history to Shakespearean construction. In the final chapter of this thesis, I synthesise across the historical collations of all three eras in order to comment on the key synchronic and diachronic similarities and discrepancies, as well as their causes. Through this synthesis, I explain the altering nature of the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story and identify why Shakespeare now acts as its metonym.

Chapter 9: Lear's Accession

Akin to the Leir story, this thesis ends with a point of succession. The collation of the final era under consideration, the stagnation years (1640-1710), identified the stagnation of Leir variants, including the stagnation of Leir retellings as historiography. A collation of the final era also indicated the subsequent regeneration of the Leir story from national history to Shakespearean fiction. These were imbricated but independent processes, dependent more upon the book trade than each other. It has been demonstrated that the substantive retellings of the Leir story, printed in English in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710, capture first sustained, then diversified, then declining interest in the Leir story. Sustained interest in Leir variants during the Brutan years (1557-1599) was demonstrated to be due to the story's existence as one part of the line of the Brutan kings whose lineage extended from the nation's founding to the reigning monarch. Brutan variants thus had the capacity to serve as an instrument for nation building and aligned with Elizabethan political agendas. Diversification years (1600-1639) variants reflected trends within the book trade and the proliferation of new genres, largely dividing along generic lines between established forms of historiography and parasite history genres, with the latter altering the retelling of generic necessity. Finally, the stagnation years revealed the stagnation of variants in their number, style, and narrative choices, alongside their inexplicable failure to fully respond to a climate of politicised print. Additionally, stagnation variants foreshadowed the rising prominence of Shakespeare's variants and the subsequent regeneration of the Leir story—Leir's abdication and *King Lear's* accession.

9.1 A Proposed Methodology

A review of the first chapter of this thesis provides the opportunity to revisit the identified gap in knowledge. In Chapter 2, the three approaches used today to address variants of the Leir story were outlined, identifying both seminal and contemporary works in each approach. This survey of the field revealed that Shakespeare's centrality imposes unnecessary delineations to the study of Leir variants. Scholars either look back from, on from, or at, Shakespeare's two versions of *King Lear*, without considering, or even acknowledging, the totality of Leir variants. The first approach to Leir variants outlined was the Q/F debate. Shakespeare's *King Lear* exists in two extant, substantive variants: the first Quarto (Q1) was published in 1608 and the First Folio (F1) was published in 1623. The implications of discrepancies between these two Shakespearean variants, as well as the origins of each variant have prompted longstanding interest in the Q/F debate, with responses to Brian Vickers's 2016 *The One King Lear* reinvigorating this interest.

Source studies are the second approach to variants of the Leir story outlined in Chapter 2. Interest in the Leir variants upon which Shakespeare called in creating his own work began as early as the Q/F debate, finding their seminal articulation in the work of Geoffrey Bullough, with the eight volumes of his *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* published between 1957 and 1975. Interest in source studies, however, was not sustained. Of late, however, fuelled by the desire to correct the teleological, bardolatrous, and methodological errors of the past, source studies scholars have reinvigorated the field by seeking a new way to address Shakespeare's sources. They are yet to find an agreed way forward.

The final approach to variants of the Leir story outlined in Chapter 2 was adaptation studies. Where source studies trace the works that influenced Shakespeare, adaptation studies

trace those influenced by his works. Both fields share many similarities, including questions concerning methodology and the reconsideration of prior positivist approaches. Adaptation studies are a complex field with various focuses, such as the processes involved in adaptation, Shakespeare's canonisation, or adapted works from all genres and all eras. Regardless of whether the adaptation is contemporaneous, or centuries old, whether it directly parallels Shakespeare's work, or merely draws upon it, the privileging of Shakespeare's work as the immutable, unsurpassable source is constant.

A review of the field thus revealed that Shakespeare's cultural currency, combined with the natural predilection for scholarly specialisation, has created a gap in knowledge. Pre-existing linear approaches, and the centrality of Shakespeare within them, have hidden from view the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story. The full number of variants is consequently unknown and there is no methodology to understand their nature as a complex palimpsest of cognate texts. The chief purpose of my thesis was to address this gap by utilising a new approach to understand early modern variants of the Leir story as a palimpsest. In Chapter 2, inspired by book history scholars, I proposed a methodology created to address the identified gap in knowledge—a historical collation. In part, this methodology provides one answer to the calls of source studies and adaptation scholars who were expressing discontent with the positivism and bardolatry of pre-existing methodologies. Importantly, the historical collation proposed goes beyond these requests to provide a way to address all identified variants of the Leir story with distributed equality. Whilst a collation is not an unfamiliar term for textual scholars, a historical collation is here suggested as a broader, more holistic collation which considers the bibliographic, paratextual, and narrative elements of each variant. Evidence was subsequently drawn from a close reading of the variants themselves, and from the act of collating, with both of these processes informed by

research from works contemporaneous to the variants, seminal to research today, and current within the field.

The complexity of this methodology's three-dimensional approach is intended not simply to address questions of methodology raised by source studies and adaptation scholars, but additionally as a deliberate contrast to the singular, indeed linear, pre-existing focus on Shakespeare's variants, their sources, and their adaptations. Its use is relevant to any story that exists in multiple variants, particularly if, as in Shakespeare's works, one variant dominates scholarship or popular thought. It is suggested that this methodology has relevance to broader literary studies, such as the study of folklore that remain part of popular culture and thus have existed in multiple variants over an extended period of time. Testament to the relevance of the methodology are the findings of the collation, which are summarised and synthesised below, and the identification of a new source for Shakespeare's *King Lear* (discussed in Appendix 4). Given the period of time since a new source has been identified and the elements of Shakespeare's play inspired by the ballad, this is a significant contribution to Shakespearean studies. Earlier I articulated that the purpose of my research was to understand early modern variants of the Leir story as a palimpsest. The generation of the historical collation methodology allowed this purpose to be addressed and facilitated a response to the research question: What does a historical collation of early modern variants of the Leir story reveal in relation to their nature as a palimpsest, including diachronic and synchronic trends and influences?

9.2 The Search for Variants and the Delineations of the Study

To address the research question, it was first necessary to identify the full number of variants of the Leir story within the early modern palimpsest, beyond those currently

considered by scholarship. Given the scope of the thesis, several search parameters were used in the initial identification of early modern variants of the Leir story. These parameters were fully articulated and clarified in Chapter 3.1. The search sought textual variants of the Leir story that were printed in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710. Given the opaque nature of the term “early modern” (Loewenstein and Mueller 4; Marcus, “Renaissance” 42), these dates were selected as relevant chronological delimitations as they represented key moments in the book trade that bookended the “chronologically shifty” (Marcus, “Renaissance” 42) early modern era. Variants were identified using digital scholarship, largely reliant upon the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), as it was demonstrated to be the most relevant, comprehensive, and reliable digital catalogue (Lahti et al. 87; McKitterick 194; Tabor 285).

Of the limitations necessitated by the application of search parameters, there were two that warrant future inquiry. The consideration of works printed outside the British Isles could strongly impact on the collation. John Barnard notes that imported books could allow for sale of works that “would otherwise incur religious or political censorship” (“Introduction” 5). The Brutan years were noted within this thesis as conservative in their topicalities. It is plausible that imported works during this time, if they included the Leir story, would not share this characteristic. Additionally, the stagnation years was noted as a time of highly politicised print, with the retellings themselves less so. Again, the identification of any imported variants may alter this finding.

The most significant limitation, however, and the most imperative area of future study, is the complexity of considering oral and performative versions of the Leir story. The preceding collations revealed the importance of performative and oral versions of printed variants. While rising literacy rates were noted for their impact during both the diversification and stagnation eras, throughout the entirety of the period studied, early modern England was primarily an oral culture. The story of King Leir would have existed in these forms. Indeed,

diversification parasite histories were shown to co-exist with oral and performative versions of themselves, often “authored” and “authorised” by their playing companies and performative versions, demonstrating the importance of one form to the other. Additionally, Chapter 3 noted that many scholars suggest that folklore was Geoffrey of Monmouth’s source for the Leir legend, specifically the 510A, 510B, and 923 Type folktales (Artese; Bullough, *VII* 271; Dundes; Skura, “Dragon”; Perrett; Young) and, in 1973, seminal source studies scholar Bullough identified folklores as a source for Shakespeare’s play (*VII* 271). Yet few scholars have focused on folklore’s relationship to the Leir story, with Meredith Skura’s (“Dragon”) and Alan Young’s works on the sources of Shakespeare’s *King Lear* notable exceptions. Chapter 6 of this thesis noted that diversification representations of Leir’s daughters, a key difference within Leir retellings, moved closer to their representations in folklore. Here the variants moving closer to oral folktales coincides with their popularisation and appeals to the semi- and newly-literate audiences, who may have been more familiar with oral versions than with established historiographies, potentially pointing to another motivation for genre based diversification at this time. The consideration of oral and performative versions of the Leir story is of considerable interest as a future area of study.

Using the discussed search parameters, I identified 205 impressions that included King Leir (see Appendix 1), which substantially exceeds the number currently considered by scholarship. The identification of this number, and the appendix that records the date, title, and ESTC number of each, represent a contribution to knowledge as it is hoped that this appendix will be a resource for other scholars interested in variants of the Leir story. This number, however, does not represent the total number of variants available within these search parameters. Due to time constraints, the search for Leir variants was ceased, though considered two-thirds complete. This is a significant limitation of the study and a necessary

area of future research. By identifying such a large number of impressions, however, the initial search was indicative of the extraordinary number of variants within the palimpsest.

A brief, contextualising, diachronic and synchronic analysis of the 205 impressions identified within the search parameters revealed a clear distribution pattern, which guided the grouping of variants and the structure of my study and this thesis document. Within the period from 1557 to 1599, a flurry of variants was identified, with approximately fourteen impressions per decade. Historiographies and established historiographical genres dominated, with the Leir story told as one part of the history of the Brutan kings. For this reason, I named this era “the Brutan years.” The second distribution pattern fell between the years 1600 and 1639, which was found to hold an even greater number of variants, with almost twenty impressions per decade. Notably, these variants were from more diverse genres, with this characteristic guiding my naming of this era—“the diversification years.” The final years of the study, 1640 to 1710, provided a stark contrast, with an average of seven impressions of the Leir story each decade. As a consequence, this era was named “the stagnation years.”

The identification of 205 impressions of the Leir story demonstrated the need to apply delineations to the study, with any analysis of such a large number of texts considered unlikely to provide the depth of findings sought. This study thus specifically addressed substantive retellings of the Leir story, printed in English in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710. Section 3.3 of this thesis clarified the reasoning behind these delineations. Appendix 2 records the full list of the 205 variants and is annotated to show the delineations that excluded variants. Appendix 3 records the final list of variants studied within this thesis. As with the search parameters, these delineations also act as limitations for the study. The most significant limitation provided by these delineations is with regard to a focus on variants that retold the Leir story as opposed to brief mentions of the king and his reign. Including all such works might provide greater insight into the role of the historical revolution, the

historiography debate, or the stagnation of variants, with the brevity of mention potentially caused by any of these factors. Even under these limiting delineations, there were twenty-six substantive retellings identified, well in excess of the eleven variants routinely considered by today's scholarship focused on source studies, the Q/F debate, and early modern adaptation scholars.

9.3 From Palimpsest to Metonym: Findings from the Collations of Bibliographic and Paratextual Elements

Chapters 4 to 9 of this thesis explicitly answer the research question through their inclusion of the findings from the collations, with the Brutan years discussed in Chapter 4, the diversification years in Chapters 5 and 6, and the stagnation years in Chapters 7 and 8. Chapter 9 synthesises each of these in order to offer final insights into the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story. In Chapters 5 to 8, I identified several key trends and influences both within and across eras, illustrating the nature of the early modern Leir palimpsest and its altering form. As previously noted, in the Brutan years, the Leir story was found to be conservatively and consistently told as one part of the factual, historiographical genres that recorded the full Brutan history in order to glorify the nation and its monarch, Queen Elizabeth I. Within the diversification years, the generic demands of new parasite history genres, and the consideration of the popular audience, then reshaped retellings of the Leir story to include pronounced variety. These emerging genres were yet to be consolidated and thus, though there was diversification across all variants, and elements of fictionalisation within parasite history genres, diversification variants were largely more closely aligned with Galfridian historiography than with their generic peers, and were additionally still considered histories. The stagnation years were found to reflect the consolidation of these genres, with variants now sharing more commonalities with their generic contemporaries than with each

other, and including the politicisation and at times the fictionalisation of the story. In the main, however, the final era under study recorded the stagnation of the Leir variants in number, style, and narrative elements, whilst also foreshadowing the regeneration of the national history into Shakespearean fiction. In summary, Leir was first part of an established history that defined the nation, before it diversified and reached the populace, then swayed thinking, before it became a fiction—a Shakespearean fiction.

9.3.1 Significant Influence: The Book Trade

The greatest influence on diachronic and synchronic alterations within Leir variants was identified as the book trade, particularly trends that saw historiography break into diverse and even popular genres, before then stagnating. Though the delineations of this study focused on retellings of the legend printed in the British Isles, and thus only on those that were part of the book trade, the degree of its influence was not foreshadowed by these delineations or prior scholarship. Largely paralleling trends within the book trade, Leir variants at times anticipated these trends, but more frequently were delayed in their compliance. Several of these delays impacted on the altering nature of the Leir palimpsest. While the book trade saw a surge of literary activity, with historiographical genres becoming more diverse during the Brutan years (Barnard et al.; Eliot and Rose; Woolf, *Reading History*), this was not seen within Leir variants. This initial hesitation in generic diversification, along with the conservatism and relative consistency of variants, may reflect the role of national history during the Brutan years. The history of the Brutes, the country's founding regnal line, was then tied to national history and pride (Richards 104), and also served, through the tracing of her descent, to legitimise the monarch's accession to the throne.

Contradictorily, the hesitancy towards generic diversification was sustained beyond the Brutan years into the diversification years. Diversity of genres within the book trade, and the movement of history into parasite history genres, are seen within diversification variants, but at a delayed pace when compared to the broader book trade. This may have foreshadowed or contributed to the stagnation of variants in the following era. The key discrepancy between the book trade and the stagnation variants again speaks to a decline of interest in the story, or more specifically in history itself, with history then seen to have failed in its chief purpose. The print industry was booming, yet the number of substantive Leir variants printed per decade during the stagnation years was half that of earlier eras, failing to match the flurry of often politicised print seen during this era in the broader book trade, specifically during times of socio-political unrest. Focusing on the elements of the book trade with which Leir variants had delayed correlation highlights the nascent stagnation of Leir variants well before the stagnation years.

Where Leir variants show delayed engagement with the book trade thus revealed a trend progressively occurring across all eras. However, where the variants align with or preempt trends revealed the greatest forces for change within individual eras. Trends within the book trade were thus the driving force behind the chronological distribution patterns identified in Chapter 3 and addressed above, which led to the grouping of the substantive variants into the three eras. Brutan variants closely aligned with trends in historiography, as will be discussed more fully in the following section. These trends linked to elements such as length, size, style, prefatory contents, and paratextual features. Diversification variants were shown to align with, and were explicitly affected by, the popularisation of print, rising literacy rates, and the subsequent diversification of historiographical genres. Finally, the stagnation variants were also found to correlate, at times, with the book trade. They record the rapidly declining interest in historiography, the consolidation of the book trade and the

subsequent standardisation of genres, and, at times, the deregularisation and thus the politicisation of print, with both genre standardisation and politicisation leading to occasions of the fictionalisation of the story. Finally, stagnation years variants were shown to reflect the rise of the author, rising literacy rates, and what I suggest is the ensuing rise of the reader.

The book trade has always been bound by consumer demand. As literacy rates rose, the reading tastes of new audiences shaped the works themselves, and the collation of Leir variants suggests that the works in turn sought to shape their audiences. Brutan historiographies included as part of their prefatory material addresses to the reader, an element embraced within the structure of this thesis. The rise of popular print within the diversification years parallels the rise of literacy and a newly diverse reading public. The stagnation years continue and heighten this trend and record the rise of the reader through direct appeals which sought to influence readers' political opinions, with the capacity to read aligned with the capacity to think independently. In this way, Leir variants record a subtle shift within the book trade, which merits further exploration. They record a shift in power from patron to reader. Where Brutan variants flatter their patron and nation, stagnation variants flatter their readers and political agendas. This collation has found that, once used to inform or instruct a nation, the Leir story was later used to influence or agitate an independent, thinking person.

9.3.2 Significant Influence: Constructions of History

The variants discussed within this thesis, and the plethora of texts from which they were delineated in Chapter 3, are largely forms of historiography. The majority of the variants studied purported claims of historicity in support of this historiography. Thus it is unsurprising that the second significant influence on the early modern palimpsest of variants

was the altering role of history. Despite prefatory protestations to the contrary in variants from all eras, in no era under study did history serve merely to factually record the past. Here Leir variants were shown to parallel broader trends within the book trade and historiography. The altering purpose of history aligned either with morality, topicality, or politics. Once again, Brutan variants were found to conform with broader trends within historiography. All works were then considered factual retellings of history. However, the purpose of history within broader society was then additionally moral, with six of the eleven variants offering explicit moral commentary either within or immediately after the retelling. Further demonstrating the finding that Brutan variants acted as part of a nation building agenda, topicalities were found to be rare, and almost consistently used to flatter the monarch. Elements of the Leir story that could provide critical analogy to the monarchy were consistently excised from the Brutan retellings.

Similar to Brutan variants, all diversification variants, even the parasite histories and popular works, were considered factual histories, with the difference between history and legend, or fact and belief, then not clear within the broader book trade or society itself (Kamps 9; Woolf, "From Histories" 37). Nonetheless, diversification variants demonstrated that this distinction was nascent, with fewer attempts within historiographies to confirm their historicity, including less paratext, fewer scholarly devices, and less authorial presence. Parasite history genres within this era identified themselves as histories and were demonstrated in Chapter 4 to be received as such. However, they are devoid of the prefatory and paratextual material that more established forms of historiography frequently provided to demonstrate the historicity of the work. This lack of historical affirmation, combined with times of fictionalisation, was demonstrated to be driven by the movement of the story into parasite history genres, and not by the suggestion that the Leir story was false, or a demonstration of the impacts of the historical revolution (later discussed). A collation of

diversification variants identified a shift in the purpose of history, with only three of the nine now offering any explicitly moral elements, and topicalities now frequently present, including those critical of the monarchy. These topicalities, however, were demonstrated to be individual instances and not sustained politicisations, with texts containing topical references including those that both flattered and critiqued the monarchy. In Chapter 5 of this thesis, I demonstrated the newly emerging genres and popular audience motivated these changes, with trends within the book trade impacting on the altering purpose of history.

The purpose of history within stagnation years variants again aligned closely with trends within the book trade, and historiography itself, though there is a discrepancy between its application within prefatory material and the retelling itself. Chapter 7 identified the 1640s as a pivotal time for several reasons, including that history was seen to have failed in its chief purpose—to teach morality, particularly to leaders (Woolf, *The Idea* 247). Not only did this impact on the number of historiographies printed by the book trade, it impacted on their purpose within an era of highly politicised print. Here stagnation variants divide along generic lines. Within their prefatory material, historiographies were politicised, with history open to debate, appropriation, and interpretation by the author. Whilst the collation revealed fewer claims to historicity within historiographies and the use of fewer scholarly devices, it was demonstrated that the more politicised the variant was, the more present were its author, “authorising” techniques, and direct appeals to the audience within prefatory material.

It was found that parasite histories within the stagnation years had almost completely split from historiographical genres and are consequently more accurately described as literature, reflecting the consolidation of the book trade and the genres it produced. The politicisation of these works, in response to broader trends within the book trade and historiography, was found to align with their fictionalisation, with the parasite histories demonstrated to include sustained politicisation and even sedition. Discussion of the

politicisation of stagnation variants reveals a limitation of the study. As suggested in Chapter 7, the stagnation years cover a series of complex historical events to which most retellings largely failed to respond polemically or consistently, while their paratextual and prefatory features frequently do so. Greater understanding of the nuanced intricacies of these events may provide additional clarification of topicalities with these works, and thus their politicisation, especially as diversification variants were found to hold individual instances of politicisation, which may also feature in stagnation variants. In the main, the collation of Leir variants thus suggested that the altering purpose of history impacted strongly on the number of variants within each era, their genres, styles, and paratextual material, and ultimately, two coinciding outcomes—the stagnation of the story and its fictionalisation.

There are two key trends in historiography, outlined in Chapter 4, which were additionally identified across all eras: the historical revolution and the historiography debate. Both of these trends were found, essentially, to emerge and peak within Leir variants during the years under study. The “historical revolution,” a term coined by F. Smith Fussner, refers to the changing methods within historiography as it moved from the approach of medieval chroniclers to the quasi-modern methods of antiquarian and humanist historiographers. Though Fussner’s work is now routinely critiqued, this “revolution” is evident within variants not only in the use of differing methodologies but through the explicit discussion and defence of methodology in the prefatory material of established forms of historiography within each era. Although chronicles appear in the Brutan years, all the established historiographies of the stagnation years were antiquarian. It is notable, and a potential area for future exploration, that the outcome of this “revolution” in Leir variants was initially the increased demonstration of the historicity of the story through tangible, antiquarian proof, provided through a multitude of scholarly devices. However, it would appear that stagnation years antiquarians then used this “proof” to legitimise both the history as they told it and their

socio-political beliefs, whilst in part allowing the latter to fictionalise the former. Exploring this shift, or the broader impact of the historical revolution, would require extending the delineations of the study. As several antiquarian works within this collation excised elements of the story for which they could offer no proof, this enquiry would necessitate broadening the selection of variants to those that did not retell the story, but merely mentioned it briefly.

The historiography debate is the second such trend in historiography evident in variants. Italian humanist Polydore Vergil sparked this debate in the mid-1500s when he expressed doubt with regard to the veracity of Galfridian historiography or, more specifically, elements of Galfridian pre-history that did not align with the histories of other nations. Impacting strongly on variants, the historiography debate questioned the veracity of the Leir story. At times, this debate is explicitly discussed in prefatory material and within the retelling itself. Alternatively, prolific paratextual scholarly devices are used to defend the truth of the history, without acknowledging the debate. Confirming that Brutian variants used history as a means to valorise Queen and country, eight of the nine referred to the fallacy of the debate and used multiple means to demonstrate the historicity of the work. Calls to various forms of authority were identified within Brutian works, including patronage, citations, marginalia, and lists of works consulted. Thus, Brutian variants entered into the debate by defending Galfridian historiography. By doing so, they valorised the history as well as the nation and the monarchy founded upon it.

While containing the ground-breaking work of William Camden, only two of the eleven diversification variants refer to the debate. Diversification and stagnation parasite histories do not participate in the debate, yet their willingness to fictionalise the story may relate to it, suggesting growing doubt. Stagnation historiographies return to the historiography debate, with three-quarters referring to it and little-known William Tyrrell silencing it, by uniquely and emphatically condemning the Leir story as a fable. Notably, I

would suggest that it is not Tyrrell's condemnation, Camden's rewriting, or the parasite histories' fictionalisations which signals the end of the historiography debate—it is the work of stagnation historiographer Percy Enderbie which does so. In Chapter 8 of this thesis, he was found to defend the historicity of the story while openly fictionalising it for political reasons. Notably, however, the collations demonstrated that the fictionalisation of the Leir story was consistently linked to genre or politicisation and not to the historiography debate's questioning of its veracity. While outside the remit of this study, a future area of research could seek to identify if the historiography debate impacted more broadly on the stagnation of historiography within the broader book trade.

Thus, a collation of the bibliographic and paratextual elements of variants from all eras revealed their greatest influence to be the book trade, with trends within historiography key to the changing nature of the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story. This statement equally belies and affirms the complexity of both, with the book trade impacted by multiple and altering financial, monarchical, social, political, and legislative influences, and history playing a significant and altering role within the lives of individuals, nations, and monarchies.

9.4 From Palimpsest to Metonym: Findings from the Collations of Narrative Elements

The collations of narrative elements of the variants from all three eras revealed explicit, though at times inconsistent, evidence of the trends identified above within the retellings themselves, as opposed to within the prefatory and paratextual elements of the broader works which framed the retellings. Specifically identified influences included the impact of the development and consolidation of genres, as well as the altering purpose of history, with calls to factuality, morality, and topicality evident to altering degrees within the

retellings of each era. Most evident across all retellings was the influence of topicality through either exploitation or avoidance of contemporaneous critical analogies.

The narrative elements of Brutan variants were largely akin to those of the Galfridian original. The most significant omissions were consistently found to be elements of the story that could act as critical analogy to the monarch, and the most significant extension linked to elements of the story that could flatter. A collation of the narrative elements of the Leir story within Brutan retellings thus revealed alignment with the broader purpose of historiography, that being valorisation of the nation and the monarch. The most significant impact on the narrative elements of diversification variants was identified as genre. Parasite histories demonstrated greater narrative variation through necessity as the story was extended and manipulated to comply with genres such as plays and ballads, which were relatively new to print but established within culture and thus known to audiences. Though additions to the traditional narrative elements at times crossed into fictionalisations, it was found that the diversification parasite histories, as emerging genres, were largely still more consistent with the narrative elements of established historiography, than with their generic contemporaries.

Stagnation years variants, however, reverse this and demonstrate the consolidation of genres within narrative elements. While greater diversity of narrative elements was found in the parasite history or literary genres, on the whole variants stagnated in their narrative elements. They frequently returned to parallel the Galfridian original and, within an era of politicised print, failed to fully exploit the opportunity for politicisation inherent within the narrative elements' potential to analogise contemporaneous events. Stagnation parasite histories included the greatest variety and politicisation at this time. Within all stagnation variants, fictionalisation, when present, was tied to politicisation as well as genre, with historiographies for the first time adding moments of fictionalisation or deeming the story itself a fiction. Summarising key alterations to narrative elements within all eras reveals that

key moments in the arc of the story retained some consistency diachronically. This belies the number of variables impacting on narrative elements, and the degree of discrepancies within synchronic analysis of eras or diachronically across eras.

When studied synchronically, within both the diversification and the stagnation years, the degree to which narrative elements altered from the Galfridian original was demonstrated to increase as the narrative progressed, with the start of the story consistent across all eras, but with the end typically more varied regardless of genre or whether the story was told as part of the Brutan line or as a discrete unit. While including nuanced and, at times, topical variation, such as Higgins's use of Cordeilla as protagonist, Leir variants of all eras began by introducing Leir as a legitimate monarch. The most consistent elements identified were the provision of antiquarian detail to demonstrate Leir's achievements and the justification of his succession through reference to his lineage. Points of difference were provided at times, such as in the diversification years when Leir was humanised in his introduction with critique of Leir at times evident. These alterations were demonstrated to be motivated by genre and topicality. The second narrative element, the love test, retains relative consistency across variants, though there is some variety within all eras. Here the stagnation variants were found to be more consistent with the Galfridian original than in any other era, once more demonstrating the stagnation of historiography. The greatest consistency within depictions of the love test across all eras was the omission of detail which could have provided critical topical analogy to the ruling monarch. This is shown in Brutan variants more than in any other era, with their conservatism here linked to potential analogies with Elizabeth I. The greatest variations were found in the diversification years, primarily in parasite histories. In their transference of the story to new genres and in seeking to engage broader audiences, these genres added elements such as humour, exaggeration, bawdy, and villainy to the sections of the narrative that introduced Leir and recounted the love test.

Though their roles are developed across the entirety of the retelling, it is the love test which introduces Leir's daughters: Gonorilla, Regan, and Cordeilla. Their roles were found to be the greatest point of differentiation within narrative elements across all eras, with the movement into diverse genres and the exploitation of potential topical analogies impacting. Within the Brutus years, Leir's elder daughters were rarely mentioned. However, demonstrated to be a positive analogy to Queen Elizabeth I, Cordeilla's role was privileged and praised. These roles altered significantly in the diversification years, with the majority of the variants negatively depicting the elder daughters and their quest to rule, and half of the variants heightening their negative qualities to include evil machinations. Cordeilla is less present, less praised, and less privileged in diversification variants. The alterations in these roles were demonstrated to be dependent upon genre and altering topicalities under the rule of King James I. Finally, while stagnation years historiographies stagnate in their depictions of the sisters, the parasite histories are shockingly diverse. In both parasite history, or literary, genres, the elder sisters' heightened, even fictionalised, malevolence was linked to critique of the monarchy, and Cordeilla's rule was excised. These extreme alterations to the established story reflected the politicisation of print during this time and the consolidation of these literary genres, and subsequently the fictionalisation of the Leir story. The collation revealed many variables motivating alterations in depictions of Leir's daughters, yet the consistent selection of these female characters as a point of experimentation likely goes beyond the evidence provided and merits future study.

Leir's downfall is the third narrative element analysed within collations and was demonstrated as a key element, as this is the point within the Leir story where variants begin to show some diversity both diachronically across and synchronically within eras. Not only was a greater degree of variety found, there was also a growing degree of topical references, including excisions to avoid critique of the monarchy, and fictionalisation across all variants.

This is particularly evident in the diversification years, where established forms of historiography, unlike their Brutan predecessors, largely excluded Leir's downfall. However, the parasite history genres, as part of their movement to new, but as yet unconsolidated, genres, fracture from one another and from established history, exploiting and extending Leir's downfall for its dramatic potential. Genre and the altering role of history were demonstrated as causes of variety within depictions of Leir's downfall.

The penultimate narrative element is the battle to regain Leir's throne. This was demonstrated as a point of great diversity within variants, affected first by the diversification, then the consolidation, and subsequently the stagnation of historiographical genres as well as the altering purposes of history, including topicality. The conservative Brutan variants, avoiding topicalities, largely focus on Leir's restoration and not on the means to achieve it. Diversification variants were found to divide along generic lines, with the established histories largely excluding the battle, and the parasite histories exploiting it for its dramatic more than its topical potential, with the battle now recounted in detail, or made comic. Dramatic exploitations within parasite histories at this stage in the retelling move the Leir story such a distance from the Galfridian original that some fracture history itself, with the battle lost, or Cordeilla and even Leir himself dying in battle. Although the cumulative effect of generic transformation was shown to impact on diversification representations of the battle, it is politicisation that was demonstrated to impact most consistently within stagnation variants. Stagnation variants show greater diversity in the battle than in any other narrative element thus far, with fictionalisation found in both established historiographical genres and parasite histories.

The final narrative element of the established Leir story and the Galfridian original is the restoration of the royal line or more specifically Leir's restoration and rule before Cordeilla's subsequent accession and rule. Within Galfridian historiography, her rule was

followed, in turn, by the remainder of the Brutan line. While diversity was found in the previous two narrative elements, across all eras, most variants conform to the traditional tale and explicitly return to, or imply, the traditional ending of the Leir story. Three diversification and two stagnation parasite histories are the exceptions, failing to restore the traditional historical ending, with their fictionalisations of the Leir story suggested to be motivated by topicality more than by genre within the diversification years, and then by explicit politicisation within the stagnation years. Thus, collating the final narrative element of the Leir story reveals the story's sustained role as a shared history, whilst aligning with history's changing purpose, and its fictionalisation as it moved into diverse genres.

A collation of the narrative elements of the Leir story generates a clear understanding of the early modern palimpsest of Leir stories, aligning narrative elements with the collation of their bibliographic and paratextual features. It highlights clear and often genre-based trends, with each identified era responding to these and prompting the reforming of the palimpsest. Brutan variants, all established forms of historiography, were revealed as relatively stable when considering key narrative elements. Their retellings were constrained by a desire to substantiate their historicity and valorise Queen and country. They represent a conservative contraction of the Galfridian original. Yet their nuanced execution of its narrative elements identified that Brutan variants were influenced by contemporaneous topicalities and trends within historiography. Diversification variants were affected by the rise in readership, popular audience, and unconsolidated, diversified genres. Parasite history genres reshape the story of generic necessity, including additions and extensions which in turn serve to make the story dramatic, comic, and at times even fictional. Then, in the stagnation years, the historiographies reflect a broader lack of interest in historiography and largely return to narrative alignment with the Galfridian original, with parasite histories maintaining the fictionalisation of the previous era. As noted above, many trends within the

book trade and historiography were found to have impacted on the prefatory and paratextual elements of the Leir variants, with these elements framing the retelling of the story. Within the retelling itself, the greatest instruments for change were generic diversification and consolidation, as well as the altering role of history and the embracing of topicalities and then the politicisation of variants.

Within current scholarship, it is the narrative elements of Shakespeare's *King Lear* that are most familiar. The discussion of narrative discrepancies between Q and F is often fuelled by the desire to identify the Shakespearean original. Sources are typically selected by positive alignment with Shakespearean narrative elements, and adaptations defined and evaluated in comparison to the Shakespearean "original." The collation of narrative elements found that, when considered within the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story, the narrative elements of Shakespeare's variants are unique. They are the first to fictionalise Leir's restoration, or more accurately the first to end the Brutan line. However, within the context of the book trade of the diversification years, this unique ending appears contextually appropriate and reflective of broader trends within parasite histories, as opposed to the singular genius of its author. Shakespeare's variants were revealed as two of many exemplars representing key impacts on the Leir palimpsest—no more unique than other exemplars, each of these epitomising broader trends. John Stow's Brutan variant, with its scholarly antiquarianism, is emblematic of both the conservatism of the Brutan years and the broader historiography debate, as he excised large portions of the Leir story and corroborated, through the use of scholarly devices, those that were included. Richard Harvey's Brutan variant, William Camden's diversification, and James Tyrrell's stagnation all reveal narrative elements shaped by the historical revolution, with Harvey defending the Brutes, Camden renaming them, and Tyrrell mocking them as fables. John Taylor, the diversification years water poet, represents the rise of the popular audience, as he condenses the traditional

narrative elements for a unique purpose. Percy Enderbie's historiography adroitly and surprisingly represents the politicisation of print during the stagnation years, as he both defends the truth of the story, but then fictionalises it through the addition of a civil war. Finally, an anonymous broadside balladeer within the stagnation years rewrites the ending of the traditional tale, fictionalising the history to provide seditious political analogy within a deregulated book trade. Each of these exemplar variants, as much as Shakespeare's, is a unique variant and emblematic of key influences altering the changing nature of the early modern palimpsest of Leir stories.

9.5 Shakespeare as Host

Daniel R. Woolf identified a stage in historiography, during the Elizabethan and Stuart eras, when the medieval chronicle and its constituent functions dissolved into several genres (*Reading History* 26). Woolf coined the term "parasite history" to describe those genres that "derived from the chronicle but were much more able to meet the public demand whether because more readable, cheaper, or more novel" (*Reading History* 26). The parasite history is a genre that has proven pivotal to the altering nature of the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story. Woolf offers this explanation of his chosen nomenclature:

parasite ... a term that reflects both their feeding upon a chronicle host and, in the case of one of them – the "chronicle play" – an inability to survive once that host has withered away. (*Reading History* 26)

The notion of parasites and hosts, as applied to the Leir story, is both demonstrated to be true and conversely proven false by this study. Certainly, aligning with Woolf's theories, the story of King Leir was shown to first be retold in chronicles, before diversifying into many genres, including parasite histories during the diversification and stagnation years. Additionally,

when historiography receded within the book trade, Leir variants of all genres also began to stagnate. However, the Leir chronicle plays did survive after their “host withered away.” I would suggest that a new host was found—Shakespeare—with the versions of the Leir story that survive today being those that represent sources or adaptations of his work.

This is evinced in multiple ways within this study. One of the six substantive retellings collated in the stagnation years, Tate’s play, was an adaptation of Shakespeare’s variants, instead of a retelling of the history. This variant directly called upon Shakespeare’s stature, instead of the historicity of the story, to authorise the work. An anonymous ballad, collated in two substantives variants within this study, was demonstrated within this thesis to be a source for Shakespeare’s play. However, a 1710 derivative alters the ballad’s woodcuts to reposition it as an adaptation, a status which has remained unchanged. Notably, three-quarters of the derivatives printed during the stagnation years are derivative of Shakespeare’s work, instead of derivatives of Galfridian historiography as in earlier eras. In Chapter 3, when providing a brief diachronic and synchronic analysis of the 205 impressions identified by the initial search parameters, it was revealed that, in the final decades of this study, 1680 to 1710, two-thirds of all impressions engaged with the story through the lens of Shakespeare and his play. Chapter 3 also highlighted that, although outside the parameters of this study, a consideration of the period up to 1750 demonstrated that the Leir story was most frequently retold to praise Shakespeare and his work and not to retell history. At this time, there was a new edition of Shakespeare’s complete works almost each decade. Additionally, at least eleven different texts were printed between 1710 and 1750, including John Dennis’s 1712 *An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakespear*, which included elements of the Leir story as exemplars of Shakespeare and his literary genius and not as parts of history. The Leir story had a new host, a host which fuelled the production of new genres.

As with the attenuation of the historiographical Leir, the rise of the Shakespearean *King Lear* was fostered by trends within the book trade, with these trends more complex than the rise of the author or the consolidation of literary genres seen within variants. Much scholarly attention has been paid to these processes, many of which fall outside the remit of this thesis. It is of note, however, that Chapter 3's analysis of the impressions identified within the initial search parameters identified the impact of the proliferation of periodicals during the later years of this study (Brewer, "Partisan" 177-185). Between 1710 and 1750, the decades immediately after the chronological delineations of this study, at least fourteen magazines, from the well-known *Spectator* to the lesser known but aptly named *Twickenham Hotchpotch*, included excerpts from Shakespeare's *King Lear*, often in multiple editions, each time highlighting sections of Shakespeare's work held to be exemplary, instead of characteristics or characters from the history. In some ways, this represents the commonplacing of Shakespeare's *King Lear* within the book trade, with magazines here replicating elements of the traditional, personal commonplace book. This commonplacing of Shakespeare's variant is further demonstration of the Leir story's transition between hosts, as it was once common for readers to include excerpts from historiographies in their commonplace books (Woolf, *Reading History* 124). Indeed, Woolf identifies newsbooks, diurnals, and newspapers as some of the genres into which the chronicle history dissolved, noting that the last chronicles coincided with the first wave of newsbooks, and suggesting that this is why many newspapers have the word "chronicle" in their title (*Reading History* 29). Thus, over time, more than one genre tied to historiography, and into which the chronicle dissolved, sustained the Leir story and contributed to Shakespeare's nachleben. Plays, ballads, magazines, and literature all hosted on Shakespeare, and reached an ever-broadening audience, regenerating the Leir story from moribund national history to one man's fiction.

The purpose of my research was to understand early modern variants of the Leir story as a palimpsest. The unique methodology of historical collation addressed this purpose and revealed a complex palimpsest, which fluctuated and reformed in relation to trends within the book trade, which in turn was affected by societal, political, and commercial factors. The collation also revealed why Shakespeare's *King Lear* now acts as metonym for the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story. The decline of historiography and the rise of Shakespeare were two imbricated but independent events which ultimately sustained, but irrevocably altered, the Leir story—fictionalising it.

Specifically, I asked what a historical collation of early modern variants of the Leir story would reveal in relation to their nature as a palimpsest, including diachronic and synchronic trends and influences. In answer, the collation identified three altering formations of this palimpsest. In the Brutan years, variants flourished. They were conservative and consistent, honouring the nation and its monarch. The diversification years, in response to the book trade, then demonstrated greater generic variety, with alterations made of necessity as the story moved into diverse genres, un-consolidated as literary forms, which were still tied to history. The final era revealed the stagnation of historiography and the Leir story itself, overlapping with the rise of Shakespeare's stature and the regeneration of the story. Throughout this time, the Leir story moved from historical fact to popular history, historical fable, and then literary, even Shakespearean, fiction. This change was motivated by many factors within the book trade, including the diversification of historical genres, the historical revolution, the historiography debate, and the altering nature of history's purpose.

The findings of this collation serve to contextualise and clarify how scholars have previously addressed variants of the Leir story, as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis. The shift I have documented explains why the study of early modern variants of the Leir story is today obfuscated by Shakespeare's shadow, focusing only on his variants, their

sources, and their subsequent adaptations. It also reveals what has been obscured by this shadow, by illuminating the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story, including its trends and influences. The story of King Leir has not been revealed to be Shakespeare's story; it has been revealed as the book trade's story. Driven by trends in the book trade and historiography, the palimpsest of early modern variants of the Leir story thrived throughout the Brutus years, then diversified, before receding in the stagnation years, until Shakespeare's alone remained to act as its silent metonym—not a history, a tragedy.

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⁵ While all efforts were made to identify URLs that could provide access to the listed items, at times, such as for the *EBSCO Host*, *Informit*, and *Early English Books Online (EEBO)*, only institution-specific URLs were available. As a consequence, and in light of the MLA9 guidelines, these links have been excluded to enhance the readability of the works cited list.

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**Appendix 1: Initially Identified Impressions Printed in the British Isles Between 1557
and 1710**

<p><i>N.B.</i> Titles are abridged and standardised, and orthography silently modernised, to facilitate use of the table. Each title listed thus represents the title itself or a translation, abridgement, revision, or compilation of such. For full details of collated texts, please see Appendix 3.</p>				
1550s	1557			Total 5
	1558			
	1559	Anonymous: <i>A Brief Chronicle</i>	ESTC S118992	
		Fabyan: <i>The Chronicle of Fabian</i>	ESTC S92506	
		Fabyan: <i>The Chronicle of Fabian</i>	ESTC S92507	
Fabyan: <i>The Chronicle of Fabian</i>		ESTC S122517		
Lanquet: <i>An Epitome of Chronicles</i>	ESTC S108255			
1560s	1560	Anonymous: <i>A Brief Abstract of the Genealogie of all the Kings of England</i> ⁷	ESTC S115534	Total 19
		Anonymous: <i>A Brief Chronicle</i>	ESTC S118406	
		Lanquet: <i>Cooper's Chronicle</i>	ESTC S108257	
	1561	Anonymous: <i>A Brief Chronicle</i>	ESTC S112402	
	1562	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of England</i>	ESTC S119746	
		Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i>	ESTC S101100	
	1563	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of England</i>	ESTC S103361	
	1564	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of England</i>	ESTC S112513	
	1565	Grafton: <i>A Manuel of the Chronicles of England</i>	ESTC S117712	
		Lanquet: <i>Cooper's Chronicle</i>	ESTC S891	
		Lanquet: <i>Cooper's Chronicle</i>	ESTC S122052	
1566	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S114855		
	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S124615		
1567	Paris: <i>Flores Historiarum</i>	ESTC S114410		
	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S525		
1568	Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i>	ESTC S108406		
1569	Grafton: <i>A Chronicle at Large</i>	ESTC S121210		
	Leslie: <i>A Defence of the Honour of Princess, Marie Queen of Scotland</i>	ESTC S108490		
1570s	1570	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of Englande</i>	ESTC S122606	Total 21
		Paris: <i>Flores Historiarum</i>	ESTC S94147	
		Paris: <i>Historia Major</i>	ESTC S101950	
		Paris: <i>Flores Historiarum</i>	ESTC S113615	
		Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S117869	
		Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S123579	
	1571	Paris: <i>Historia Major</i>	ESTC S115428	
		Paris: <i>Historia Major</i>	ESTC S124585	
1572	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of Englande</i>	ESTC S103363		
1573	Paris: <i>Flores Historiarum</i>	ESTC S94148		
	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S95397		
	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S122465		

⁷ English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) records date as 1560?.

	1574	Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S106149 ESTC S100676	
	1575	Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S104059 ESTC S1140	
	1576	Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i>	ESTC S108418	
	1577	Holinshed: <i>Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland</i> Holinshed: <i>Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland</i> Holinshed: <i>Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland</i>	ESTC S3985 ESTC S119439 ESTC S121346	
	1578			
	1579	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S111288	
1580s	1580	Stow: <i>Annales of England</i>	ESTC S117590	Total 10
	1581			
	1582			
	1583			
	1584			
	1585	Monmouth: <i>Historia Regum Britanniae</i>	ESTC S114973	
	1586	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	ESTC S107379 ESTC S111586	
	1587	Bridges: <i>A Defence of the Government</i> Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i> Holinshed: <i>The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S106910 ESTC S107382 ESTC S104063 ESTC S122178 ESTC S114857	
	1588			
	1589	Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	ESTC S119575	
1590s	1590	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S107384 ESTC S121920 ESTC S123180 ESTC S125541 ESTC S111745	Total 15
	1591	Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i>	ESTC S108422	
	1592	Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	ESTC S119582	
	1593	Harvey: <i>Philadelphus, or a Defence of the Brutes</i>	ESTC S125405	
	1594	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	ESTC S107385	
	1595			
	1596	Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	ESTC S117748 ESTC S119586	
	1597	Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	ESTC S108424 ESTC S119589	
	1598	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S95399 ESTC S117864	
	1599			
1600s	1600	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Stow: <i>Annales of England</i>	ESTC S107386 ESTC S112626	Total 15
	1601	Stow: <i>Annales of England</i>	ESTC S117878	
	1602	Carew: <i>Survey of Cornwall</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	ESTC S107479 ESTC S119593	
	1603			
	1604	Harry: <i>The Genealogy of the High and Mighty Monarch, James</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S103822 ESTC S1733	

	1605	Anonymous: <i>The True Chronicle History of King Leir</i> Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Stow: <i>Annales of England</i>	ESTC S111094 ESTC S107408 ESTC S117881	
	1606			
	1607	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S122157 ESTC S117859	
	1608	Shakespeare: <i>True Chronicle History of King Lear (Q1)</i>	ESTC S111085	
	1609	Heywood: <i>Troia Britanica: or, Great Britaines Troy</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i>	ESTC S119729 ESTC S1728	
1610s	1610	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i>	ESTC S107167 ESTC S104065	Total 21
	1611	Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S123122 ESTC S123523 ESTC S117861	
	1612	Drayton: <i>Poly-Olbion, or a Chorographical Description</i> Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i> Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	ESTC S121629 ESTC S1107 ESTC S117917 ESTC S121946 ESTC S119601	
	1613	Drayton: <i>Poly-Olbion, or a Chorographical Description</i>	ESTC S121632	
	1614	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>	ESTC S107394	
	1615	Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i> Stow: <i>Annales of England</i>	ESTC S519 ESTC S117596	
	1616	Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i> Speed: <i>Theatrum Imperii Magnae Britanniae</i>	ESTC S112623 ESTC S107575	
	1617	Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i>	ESTC S122304	
	1618	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	ESTC S117863	
	1619	Higgins: <i>Falls of Unfortunate Princes</i> Higgins: <i>Falls of Unfortunate Princes</i> Shakespeare: <i>True Chronicle History of King Lear (Q2)</i>	ESTC S4704 ESTC S125413 ESTC S111098	
1620s	1620	Higgins: <i>Falls of Unfortunate Princes</i> Higgins: <i>Falls of Unfortunate Princes</i> Johnson: <i>Golden Garland</i>	ESTC S92988 ESTC S116210 ESTC S106558	Total 15
	1621	Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i>	ESTC S92989	
	1622	Drayton: <i>Poly-Olbion, or a Chorographical Description</i> Taylor: <i>Memorial of all the English Monarchs</i>	ESTC S121639 ESTC S118223	
	1623	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F1)</i> Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	ESTC S107501 ESTC S111228 ESTC S95304	
	1624			
	1625	Jerome: <i>England's Jubilee</i>	ESTC S103354	
	1626	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	ESTC S107395	
	1627	Speed: <i>A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i> Speed: <i>England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i> Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	ESTC S95303 ESTC S103213 ESTC S520	
	1628			
	1629	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>	ESTC S107502	
1630s	1630	Slatyer: <i>Genethliacon</i> Taylor: <i>Memorial of all the English Monarchs</i> Taylor: <i>All the Works of John Taylor</i>	ESTC S117418 ESTC S118225 ESTC S117734	Total 27

	1631	Speed: <i>A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i>	ESTC S122258	
	1632	Jerome: <i>The Arraignment of the Whole Creature</i>	ESTC S103944	
		Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i>	ESTC S1620	
		Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i>	ESTC S1651	
		Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i>	ESTC S95179	
		Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i>	ESTC S111233	
		Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i>	ESTC S111235	
		Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i>	ESTC S111472	
		Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i>	ESTC S123146	
		Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i>	ESTC S123147	
Speed: <i>England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i>		ESTC S117733		
Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	ESTC S122267			
Stow: <i>Annales of England</i>	ESTC S117586			
1633				
1634	J. A.: <i>The Younger Brother His Apology</i>	ESTC S100213		
1635	Anonymous: <i>True Chronologi of all the Kings of England</i>	ESTC S2071		
	J. A.: <i>The Younger Brother His Apology</i>	ESTC S116555		
1636	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>	ESTC S122127		
1637	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	ESTC S1529		
	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	ESTC S2550		
	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	ESTC S115671		
	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	ESTC S121328		
	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	ESTC S122164		
Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>	ESTC S107503			
1638				
1639	Taylor: <i>Parts of this Summer's Travels</i>	ESTC S111384		
1640s	1640			Total 6
	1641	Heywood: <i>The Life of Merlin</i>	ESTC R10961	
		Heywood: <i>The Life of Merlin</i>	ESTC R40977	
		J. A.: <i>The Younger Brother His Apology</i>	ESTC R9194	
	1642			
	1643			
	1644			
	1645			
	1646	Speed: <i>A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i>	ESTC R218797	
		Speed: <i>England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i> ⁸	ESTC S996	
Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>		ESTC R218799		
1647				
1648				
1649				
1650s	1650	Heywood: <i>The Life of Merlin</i>	ESTC R14810	Total 7
		Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	ESTC R219672	
	1651			
	1652			
	1653			
	1654			
1655	Shakespeare: <i>True Chronicle History of King Lear (Q3)</i>	ESTC R17679		

⁸ ESTC records date as 1646?.

	1656			
	1657	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Page: <i>Jus Fratrum, the Law of Brethren</i>	ESTC R16547 ESTC R218585 ESTC R219127 ESTC R203096	
	1658			
	1659			
1660s	1660			Total 6
	1661	Enderbie: <i>Cambria Triumphans</i>	ESTC R19758	
	1662	Speed: <i>A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i> Speed: <i>England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i>	ESTC R221744 ESTC R184520	
	1663	Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F3)</i>	ESTC R212954	
	1664	Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F3)</i>	ESTC R30560	
	1665			
	1666	Speed: <i>England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i>	ESTC R37583	
	1667			
	1668			
1670s	1670	Milton: <i>History of Britain</i>	ESTC R13663	Total 11
	1671	J. A.: <i>The Younger Brother His Apology</i> Milton: <i>History of Britain</i>	ESTC R28301 ESTC R16569	
	1672			
	1673			
	1674	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Mitchel: <i>A Brief Survey of all the Reigns of the Several Kings of this Isle</i>	ESTC R21833 ESTC R180629	
	1675	Speed: <i>A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i>	ESTC R188986	
	1676	Langhorne: <i>An Introduction to the History of England</i> Speed: <i>An Epitome of Mr John Speed's Theatre and of His Prospect</i> Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	ESTC R13965 ESTC R221688 ESTC R13825	
	1677	Milton: <i>History of Britain</i>	ESTC R16523	
	1678			
	1679	Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i>	ESTC R7177	
1680s	1680			Total 9
	1681	Tate: <i>History of King Lear</i>	ESTC R20622	
	1682			
	1683			
	1684	Tate: <i>Poems Written on Several Occasions</i>	ESTC R11038	
	1685	Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F4)</i> Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F4)</i> Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F4)</i>	ESTC R24524 ESTC R25621 ESTC R202288	
	1686			
	1687	Langbaine: <i>Momus Triumphans</i> Langbaine: <i>Momus Triumphans</i>	ESTC R3459 ESTC R226672	
	1688	Langbaine: <i>Momus Triumphans</i>	ESTC R8916	
	1689	Tate: <i>History of King Lear</i>	ESTC R15029	
1690s	1690	Johnson: <i>Golden Garland</i> Johnson: <i>Golden Garland</i>	ESTC R179109 ESTC R224138	Total 8
	1691			
	1692			

	1693			
	1694			
	1695	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Milton: <i>History of Britain</i>	ESTC R12882 ESTC R38870	
	1696	Tyrrell: <i>General History of England</i>	ESTC R32913	
	1697	Tyrrell: <i>General History of England</i>	ESTC R23783	
	1698	Tyrrell: <i>General History of England</i>	ESTC R34088	
	1699	Tate: <i>History of King Lear</i>	ESTC R15123	
1700s	1700	Anonymous: <i>Tragical History of King Lear</i> ⁹ Tyrrell: <i>General History of England</i>	ESTC R216217 ESTC R39399	Total 7
	1701			
	1702	Tate: <i>History of King Lear</i> ¹⁰	ESTC T36412	
	1703			
	1704			
	1705			
	1706			
	1707			
	1708	Bysshe: <i>The Art of English Poetry</i>	ESTC T137144	
1709	Rowe: <i>Works of Mr William Shakespeare</i> Rowe: <i>Works of Mr William Shakespeare</i> Rowe: <i>Works of Mr William Shakespeare</i>	ESTC T138294 ESTC T138296 ESTC T138297		
1710s	1710	Anonymous: <i>Tragical History of King Lear</i> ¹¹ Bysshe: <i>The Art of English Poetry</i> Gildon: <i>The Works of Mr William Shakespeare</i>	ESTC N70838 ESTC T130588 ESTC T138298	Total 3
Total number of impressions printed in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710 = 205				

⁹ This Roxburghe Ballad is variously dated. ESTC records date as 1700?. EEBO records date as 1635 and EBBA suggests 1710?.

¹⁰ ESTC records date as 1702?.

¹¹ ESTC records date of this Douce Ballad as 1710?.

Appendix 2: Impact of Delineations Applied in the Selection of Variants for Historical Collation

<p>Texts in bold represent substantive variants that retell the Leir legend in detail, and that were printed in English in the British Isles between 1557 and 1710.</p> <p><i>N.B.</i> As with Appendix 1, titles are abridged and standardised, and orthography silently modernised, to facilitate use of the table. Each title listed thus represents the title itself or a translation, abridgement, revision, or compilation of such. For full details of collated texts, please see Appendix 3.</p>				
1550s	1557			1 Substantive
	1558			
	1559	Anonymous: <i>A Brief Chronicle</i>	Does not retell	
		Fabyan: <i>The Chronicle of Fabian</i> Fabyan: <i>The Chronicle of Fabian</i> Fabyan: <i>The Chronicle of Fabian</i> Lanquet: <i>An Epitome of Chronicles</i>	Substantive Derivative Derivative Does not retell	
1560s	1560	Anonymous: <i>A Brief Abstract of the Genealogie of all the Kings of England</i>	Substantive	4 Substantives
		Anonymous: <i>A Brief Chronicle</i>	Does not retell	
		Lanquet: <i>Cooper's Chronicle</i>	Derivative	
	1561	Anonymous: <i>A Brief Chronicle</i>	Does not retell	
	1562	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of England</i>	Does not retell	
		Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i>	Substantive	
	1563	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of England</i>	Does not retell	
	1564	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of England</i>	Does not retell	
		Grafton: <i>A Manuel of the Chronicles of England</i> Lanquet: <i>Cooper's Chronicle</i> Lanquet: <i>Cooper's Chronicle</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Does not retell Derivative Derivative Substantive	
	1566	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Derivative	
Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>		Derivative		
1567	Paris: <i>Flores Historiarum</i>	Latin		
	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Derivative		
1568	Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i>	Derivative		
1569	Grafton: <i>A Chronicle at Large</i>	Substantive		
	Leslie: <i>A Defence of the Honour of Princess, Marie Queen of Scotland</i>	Does not retell		
1570s	1570	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of England</i>	Does not retell	2 Substantives
		Paris: <i>Flores Historiarum</i>	Latin	
		Paris: <i>Historia Major</i>	Latin	
		Paris: <i>Flores Historiarum</i>	Latin	
		Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Derivative	
	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Derivative		
	1571	Paris: <i>Historia Major</i>	Latin	
Paris: <i>Historia Major</i>		Latin		
1572	Grafton: <i>Abridgement of the Chronicles of England</i>	Does not retell		
1573	Paris: <i>Flores Historiarum</i>	Latin		
	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Derivative Derivative		

	1574	Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i> <i>Stow: Summarie of English Chronieles</i>	Substantive Derivative	
	1575	Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i> <i>Stow: Summarie of English Chronieles</i>	Derivative Derivative	
	1576	Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i>	Derivative	
	1577	Holinshed: <i>Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland</i> <i>Holinshed: Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland</i> <i>Holinshed: Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland</i>	Substantive Derivative Derivative	
	1578			
	1579	<i>Stow: Summarie of English Chronieles</i>	Derivative	
	1580s	1580	<i>Stow: Annales of England</i>	
1581				
1582				
1583				
1584				
1585		Monmouth: <i>Historia Regum Britanniae</i>	Latin	
1586		Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	Latin & does not retell Substantive	
1587		Bridges: <i>A Defence of the Government</i> <i>Camden: Britannia</i> Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i> <i>Holinshed: The First and Second Volumes of Chronieles</i> <i>Stow: Summarie of English Chronieles</i>	Does not retell Latin & does not retell Substantive Derivative Derivative	
1588				
1589		Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	Derivative	
1590s	1590	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> <i>Spenser: Faerie Queen</i> <i>Spenser: Faerie Queen</i> <i>Stow: Summarie of English Chronieles</i>	Latin & does not retell Substantive Derivative Derivative Derivative	2 Substantives
	1591	Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i>	Derivative	
	1592	Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	Derivative	
	1593	Harvey: <i>Philadelphus, or a Defence of the Brutes</i>	Substantive	
	1594	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	Latin & does not retell	
	1595			
	1596	Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	Derivative Derivative	
	1597	Legh: <i>Accedens of Armory</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	Derivative Derivative	
	1598	<i>Stow: Summarie of English Chronieles</i> <i>Stow: Summarie of English Chronieles</i>	Derivative Does not retell	
	1599			
	1600	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> <i>Stow: Annales of England</i>	Latin & does not retell Derivative	
	1601	<i>Stow: Annales of England</i>	Derivative	

1600s	1602	Carew: <i>Survey of Cornwall</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	Does not retell Derivative	4 Substantives
	1603			
	1604	Harry: <i>The Genealogy of the High and Mighty Monarch, James</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Substantive Derivative	
	1605	Anonymous: <i>The True Chronicle History of King Leir</i> Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Stow: <i>Annales of England</i>	Substantive Substantive Derivative	
	1606			
	1607	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Latin & does not retell Derivative	
	1608	Shakespeare: <i>True Chronicle History of King Lear (Q1)</i>	Substantive	
	1609	Heywood: <i>Troia Britannica: or, Great Brittaines Troy</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i>	Does not retell Derivative	
1610s	1610	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i>	Does not retell Substantive	1 Substantives
	1611	Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Derivative Derivative Derivative	
	1612	Drayton: <i>Poly-Olbion, or a Chorographical Description</i> Legh: <i>Aecedens of Armory</i> Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i> Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i> Warner: <i>Albion's England</i>	Does not retell Derivative Does not retell Derivative Derivative	
	1613	Drayton: <i>Poly-Olbion, or a Chorographical Description</i>	Does not retell	
	1614	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>	Derivative	
	1615	Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i> Stow: <i>Annales of England</i>	Does not retell Derivative	
	1616	Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i> Speed: <i>Theatrum Imperii Magnae Britanniae</i>	Does not retell Latin & does not retell	
	1617	Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i>	Derivative	
	1618	Stow: <i>Summarie of English Chronicles</i>	Derivative	
1619	Higgins: <i>Falls of Unfortunate Princes</i> Higgins: <i>Falls of Unfortunate Princes</i> Shakespeare: <i>True Chronicle History of King Lear (Q2)</i>	Derivative Derivative Derivative		
1620s	1620	Higgins: <i>Falls of Unfortunate Princes</i> Higgins: <i>Falls of Unfortunate Princes</i> Johnson: <i>Golden Garland</i>	Derivative Derivative Substantive	3 Substantives
	1621	Higgins: <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i>	Derivative	
	1622	Drayton: <i>Poly-Olbion, or a Chorographical Description</i> Taylor: <i>Memorial of all the English Monarchs</i>	Does not retell Substantive	
	1623	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F1)</i> Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	Derivative Substantive Does not retell	
	1624			
	1625	Jerome: <i>England's Jubilee</i>	Does not retell	
	1626	Camden: <i>Britannia</i>	Does not retell	

	1627	<i>Speed: A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i> <i>Speed: England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i> <i>Speed: The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	Does not retell Does not retell Does not retell			
	1628					
	1629	<i>Camden: Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>	Derivative			
1630s	1630	<i>Slatyer: Genethliacon</i> Taylor: Memorial of all the English Monarchs <i>Taylor: All the Works of John Taylor</i>	Does not retell Substantive Derivative	I Substantive		
	1631	<i>Speed: A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i>	Does not retell			
	1632	<i>Jerome: The Arraignement of the Whole Creature</i> <i>Shakespeare: The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i> <i>Shakespeare: The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i> <i>Shakespeare: The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i> <i>Shakespeare: The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i> <i>Shakespeare: The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i> <i>Shakespeare: The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i> <i>Shakespeare: The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i> <i>Shakespeare: The Tragedy of King Lear (F2)</i> <i>Speed: England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i> <i>Speed: The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i> <i>Stow: Annales of England</i>	Does not retell Derivative Derivative Derivative Derivative Derivative Derivative Derivative Derivative Derivative Does not retell Does not retell Derivative			
	1633					
	1634	<i>J. A.: The Younger Brother His Apology</i>	Does not retell			
	1635	<i>Anonymous: True Chronologi of all the Kings of England</i> <i>J. A.: The Younger Brother His Apology</i>	Does not retell Does not retell			
	1636	<i>Camden: Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>	Derivative			
	1637	<i>Camden: Britannia</i> <i>Camden: Britannia</i> <i>Camden: Britannia</i> <i>Camden: Britannia</i> <i>Camden: Britannia</i> <i>Camden: Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i>	Does not retell Does not retell Does not retell Does not retell Does not retell Derivative			
	1638					
	1639	<i>Taylor: Parts of this Summer's Travels</i>	Does not retell			
	1640s	1640				I Substantive
		1641	Heywood: The Life of Merlin <i>Heywood: The Life of Merlin</i> <i>J. A.: The Younger Brother His Apology</i>		Substantive Derivative Does not retell	
		1642				
1643						
1644						
1645						
1646		<i>Speed: A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i> <i>Speed: England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i> <i>Speed: The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	Does not retell Does not retell Does not retell			
1647						
1648						
1649						

1650s	1650	Heywood: <i>The Life of Merlin</i> Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	Derivative Does not retell	0 Substantives
	1651			
	1652			
	1653			
	1654			
	1655	Shakespeare: <i>True Chronicle History of King Lear (Q3)</i>	Derivative	
	1656			
	1657	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Page: <i>Jus Fratrum, the Law of Brethren</i>	Derivative Derivative Derivative Does not retell	
	1658			
	1659			
1660s	1660			1 Substantive
	1661	Enderbie: <i>Cambria Triumphans</i>	Substantive	
	1662	Speed: <i>A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i> Speed: <i>England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i>	Does not retell Does not retell	
	1663	Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F3)</i>	Derivative	
	1664	Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F3)</i>	Derivative	
	1665			
	1666	Speed: <i>England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland Described and Abridged</i>	Does not retell	
	1667			
	1668			
	1669			
1670s	1670	Milton: <i>History of Britain</i>	Substantive	1 Substantive
	1671	J. A.: <i>The Younger Brother His Apology</i> Milton: <i>History of Britain</i>	Does not retell Derivative	
	1672			
	1673			
	1674	Camden: <i>Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain</i> Mitchel: <i>A Brief Survey of all the Reigns of the Several Kings of this Isle</i>	Derivative Does not retell	
	1675	Speed: <i>A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World</i>	Does not retell	
	1676	Langhorne: <i>An Introduction to the History of England</i> Speed: <i>An Epitome of Mr John Speed's Theatre and of His Prospect</i> Speed: <i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>	Does not retell Does not retell Does not retell	
	1677	Milton: <i>History of Britain</i>	Derivative	
	1678			
	1679	Spenser: <i>Faerie Queen</i>	Derivative	
1680s	1680			1 Substantive
	1681	Tate: <i>History of King Lear</i>	Substantive	
	1682			
	1683			
	1684	Tate: <i>Poems Written on Several Occasions</i>	Does not retell	
	1685	Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F4)</i> Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F4)</i> Shakespeare: <i>The Tragedy of King Lear (F4)</i>	Derivative Derivative Derivative	
	1686			

	1687	Langbaine: <i>Momus Triumphans</i> Langbaine: <i>Momus Triumphans</i>	Does not retell Does not retell	
	1688	Langbaine: <i>Momus Triumphans</i>	Does not retell	
	1689	Tate: <i>History of King Lear</i>	Derivative	
1690s	1690	Johnson: <i>Golden Garland</i> Johnson: <i>Golden Garland</i>	Derivative Derivative	1 Substantive
	1691			
	1692			
	1693			
	1694			
	1695	Camden: <i>Britannia</i> Milton: <i>History of Britain</i>	Does not retell Derivative	
	1696	Tyrrell: <i>General History of England</i>	Substantive	
	1697	Tyrrell: <i>General History of England</i>	Derivative	
	1698	Tyrrell: <i>General History of England</i>	Derivative	
1699	Tate: <i>History of King Lear</i>	Derivative		
1700s	1700	Anonymous: <i>Tragical History of King Lear</i> Tyrrell: <i>General History of England</i>	Substantive Derivative	1 Substantive
	1701			
	1702	Tate: <i>History of King Lear</i>	Derivative	
	1703			
	1704			
	1705			
	1706			
	1707			
	1708	Bysshe: <i>The Art of English Poetry</i>	Does not retell	
1709	Rowe: <i>Works of Mr William Shakespeare</i> Rowe: <i>Works of Mr William Shakespeare</i> Rowe: <i>Works of Mr William Shakespeare</i>	Derivative Derivative Derivative		
1710s	1710	Anonymous: <i>Tragical History of King Lear</i> Bysshe: <i>The Art of English Poetry</i> Gildon: <i>The Works of Mr William Shakespeare</i>	Derivative Does not retell Does not retell	0 Substantives
Total number of variants selected for collation = 26 substantive				

Appendix 3: Variants Selected for Historical Collation

	Date	Author/Editor	Title	ESTC Citation Number	Publisher/Imprint
Brutal Years 1557-1599	1559	Fabyan, Robert	<i>The Chronicle of Fabian, whiche he nameth the concordance of histories, newly perused. And continued from the beginnyng of Kyng Henry the seuenth, to thende of Queene Mary.</i>	ESTC S92506	1559. Menſe Aprilis. Imprinted at London, by Ihon Kyngſton.
	1560? ¹²	Anonymous	<i>[To the reader. Beholde here (gentle reader) a brief abstract of the genealogie of all the kynges of England, ...]</i>	ESTC S115534	Imprinted at London by Gyles Godet dwellinge in Blacke frieres.
	1562	Legh, Gerard	<i>The Accedens of Armory.</i>	ESTC S101100	Imprinted at London in Flete ſtrete within Temble barre, at the ſigne of the hand and ſtarre, by Richard Tottill the laſt day of December.An.do.1562.
	1565	Stow, John	<i>A Summarie of Englyſhe Chronicles, conteynyng the true accompt of yeres, wherein euery Kyng of this Realme of England began theyr reigne, howe long they reigned: and what notable thynges hath bene doone duryng theyr Reynges. Wyth alſo the names and yeares of all the Baylyffes, Cuſtos, maiors, and ſheriffes of the Citie of London, ſens the Conqueſte, dyligently Collected by Iohn Stovv ciſen of London, in the yere of our Lorde God 1565. Whervnto is added a Table in the end, conteynyng all the principall matters of this Booke. Perused and allowed accordyng to the Quenes maieſties Iniunctions.</i>	ESTC S117862	In ædibus Thomæ Marſhi.
	1569	Grafton, Richard	<i>A Chronicle at large and meere Hiſtory of the affayres of Englande and Kinges of the ſame, deduced from the Creation of the vvorlde, vnto the firſt habitation of thys Iſlande: and ſo by contynuanſe vnto the firſt yere of the reigne of our moſt deere and ſouereigne Lady Queene Elizabeth: collected out of fundry Aucthors, whoſe names are expreſſed in the next Page of this leafe.</i>	ESTC S121210	Imprinted at London by Henry Denham, dwelling in Paternolter Rowe, for Richarde Tottle and Humffrey Toye, Anno. 1569. the laſt of March. Seene and allowed according to the order appointed. Cum priuleglo ad imprimendum ſolum.

¹² English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) records date of publication as unclear, suggesting 1560?.

	Date	Author/Editor	Title	ESTC Citation Number	Publisher/Imprint
Brutan Years 1557-1599	1574	Higgins, John	<i>THE FIRST parte of the Mirour for Magistrates, containing the falles of the first infortunate Princes of this lande: From the comming of Brute to the incarnation of our fauour and redemer Iesu Christe.</i>	ESTC S106149	Imprinted at London by Thomas Marthe. Anno.1574. Cum Priuilegio.
	1577	Holinshed, Raphael	<i>THE Firſte volume of the Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande. CONTEYNING, The deſcription and Chronicles of England, from the firſt inhabiting vnto the conqueſt. The deſcription and Chronicles of Scotland, from the firſt originall of the Scottes nation, till the yeare of our Lorde. 1571. The deſcription and Chronicles of Yrelande, likewise from the firſte originall of that Nation, vntill the yeare. 1547. Faithfully gathered and ſet forth, by Raphaell Holinshed.</i>	ESTC S121346	At London, Imprinted for Iohn Harriſon.
	1586	Warner, William	<i>ALBIONS England. Or Hiſtoricall Map of the ſame Iſland: profecuted from the liues, Actes, and Labors of Saturne, Iupiter, Hercules, and AEneas: Originalles of the Brutons, and Engliſh-men, and Occaſion of the Brutons their firſt aryuall in Albion. Continuing the ſame Hiſtorie vnto the Tribute to the Romaines, Entrie of the Saxones, Inuaſion by the Danes, and Conqueſt by the Normaines. With Hiſtoricall Intermixtures, Inuention, and Varietie: proffitably, briefly, and pleaſantly, performed in Verſe and Proſe by William Warner</i>	ESTC S111586	Imprinted at London by George Robinſon for Thomas Cadman, dwelling at the great North-doore of S. Paules Church at the ſigne of the Byble.
	1587	Higgins, John	<i>THE Mirour for Magiſtrates, wherein may bee ſeene, by examples paſſed in this Realme, with how greeuous plagues vices are puniſhed in great Princes and Magiſtrates, and how fraile and vnſtable worldly proſperity is found, where Fortune ſeemeth moſt highly to fauour: Newly imprinted, and with the addition of diuers Tragedies enlarged.</i>	ESTC S104063	AT LONDON in Fleete Streete, by Henry Marſh, being the aſſigne of Thomas Marth, 1587. CVM PRIUILEGIO.
	1590	Spenser, Edmund	<i>THE FAERIE QVEENE. Diſpoſed into twelue books, Faſhioning XII. Morall vertues.</i>	ESTC S125541	LONDON. Printed for William Ponſonbie. 1590.
	1593	Harvey, Richard	<i>PHILADELPHUS, OR A Defence of Brutes, and the Brutans Hiſtory. Written by R. H.</i>	ESTC S125405	Imprinted at London by Iohn Wolfe, 1593.

	Date	Author/Editor	Title	ESTC Citation Number	Publisher/Imprint
Diversification Years 1600-1639	1604	Harry, George Owen	<i>THE GENEALOGY OF THE HIGH AND MIGHTY Monarch, James, by the grace of God, King of great Brittain, &c. With his lineall descent from Noah, by diuers direct lynes to Brutus, first Inhabiter of this Ile of Brittain; and from him to Cadwalader; the last King of the Brittainish blood; and from thence, sundry wayes to his Maiesty: wherein is playnly shewed his rightfull Title, by lawfull descent from the said Cadwalader, as well to the Kingdome of Brittain, as to the Principalities of Northwales and Southwales: together with a briefe Cronologie of the memorable Acts of the famous men touched in this Genealogy, and what time they were. Where also is handled the worthy descent of his Maiesties ancestour Owen Tudyr, and his affinity with most of the greatest Princes of Christendome: With many other matters worthy of note. Gathered by George Owen Harry, Parson of Whitchurch in Kemeis, at the request of M. Robert Holland.</i>	ESTC S103822	LONDON. Imprinted by Simon Stafford, for Thomas Salisbury, 1604.
	1605	Anonymous	<i>THE True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella. As it hath bene diuers and sundry times lately acted.</i>	ESTC S111094	LONDON. Printed by Simon Stafford for Iohn Wright, and are to be sold at his shop at Christes Church dore, next Newgate-Market. 1605.
	1605	Camden, William	<i>REMAINES OF A GREATER WORKE, Concerning Brittain, the inhabitants thereof, their Languages, Names, Surnames, Emprefes, Wife speeches, Poësies, and Epitaphes</i>	ESTC S107408	AT LONDON. Printed by G.E. for Simon Waterfon. 1605.
	1608	Shakespeare, William	<i>M. William Shak-speare: HIS True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King LEAR and his three Daughters. With the vnfortunate life of Edgar, sonne and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his fullen and assumed humor of Tom of Bedlam: as it was played before the Kings Maiestie at Whitehall vpon S. Stephans night in Christmas Hollidayes. By his Maiesties seruants playing vsually at the Gloabe on the Bancke-side.</i>	ESTC S111085	London, Printed for Nathaniel Butter, and are to be sold at his shop in Pauls Church-yard at the signe of the Pide Bull neere St. Auftins Gate. 1608.
	1610	Higgins, John	<i>A MIROVR FOR MAGISTRATES: BEING A TRVE CHRONICLE HISTORIE OF THE VNTIMELY falles of such vnfortunate Princes and men of note, as haue happened since the first entrance of Brute into this Iland, vntill this our latter Age. NEWLY ENLARGED WITH A LAST part, called A Winter nights Vision, being an addition of such Tragedies, especially famous as are exempted in the former Historie, with a Poem annexed, called Englands Eliza.</i>	ESTC S104065	At London. Imprinted by Felix Kyngston. 1610.

	Date	Author/Editor	Title	ESTC Citation Number	Publisher/Imprint
	1620	Johnson, Richard	<i>THE GOLDEN Garland of Princely pleasures and delicate Delights. Wherin is conteined the Histories of many of the Kings, Queenes, Princes, Lords, Ladies, Knights, and Gentlewomen of this Kingdome. Being moft pleafant Songs and Sonnets to fundry new tunes now moft in vse: The third time Imprinted, enlarged and corrected by Rich. Johnson. Deuided into two Parts.</i>	ESTC S106558	Printed at London by A. M. for Thomas Langley, and are to be fold at his Shop ouer against the Sarazens Head without Newgate, 1620.
	1622	Taylor, John	<i>A MEMORIAL OF ALL THE English monarchs, being in number 150. from Brute to King Iames. In Heroicall Verfe, By Iohn Taylor.</i>	ESTC S118223	Printed at London. 1622.
	1623	Shakespeare, William	<i>MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARES COMEDIES, HISTORIES, & TRAGEDIES. Published according to the True Originall Copies.</i>	ESTC S111228	LONDON. Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623.
	1630	Taylor, John	<i>A MEMORIAL OF ALL THE English Monarchs being in number 151, from BRUTE to King CHARLES. In Heroicall Verfe by Io. Taylor.</i>	ESCT S118225	LONDON. Printed by I, for Iames Bowler, 1630.
Stagnation Years 1640-1710	1641	Heywood, Thomas	<i>The Life of MERLIN, Sirnamed AMBROSIVS. His Prophefies, and Predictions Interpreted; and their truth made good by our English Annalls. Being a Chronographicall History of all the Kings, and memorable passages of this Kingdome, from BRUTE to the Reigne of our Royall Soveraigne King CHARLES. A Subject never published in this kind before, and deserves to be knowne and observed by all men.</i>	ESTC R10961	LONDON: Printed by J. Okes, and are to be fold by Jasper Emery in Pauls Church-yard, at the signe of the Eagle and Child, neare St. Auftins Gate. 1641.
	1661	Enderbie, Percy	<i>CAMBRIA TRIVMPHANS, OR BRITTAINE IN ITS PERFECT LUSTRE SHEVVING THE Origen and Antiquity OF THAT ILLUSTRIOUS NATION. THE Succession of their Kings and Princes, from the Firsft, to KING CHARLES Of Happy Memory. The Description of the Countrey : The History of the Antient and Moderne Estate. The manner of the Investure of the Princes, with the Coats of Arms Of the Nobility. By PERCIE ENDERBIE, Gent.</i>	ESTC R19758	LONDON, Printed for Andrew Crooke, and are to be fold at the Green Dragon in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1661.
	1670	Milton, John	<i>THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN, That part especially now call'd ENGLAND. From the firft Traditional Beginning, continu'd to the NORMAN CONQVEST. Collected out of the antientest and best Authours thereof by JOHN MILTON.</i>	ESTC R13663	LONDON, Printed by J. M. for James Allestry, at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard, MDCLXX.
	1681	Tate, Nahum	<i>THE HISTORY OF KING LEAR. Acted at the Duke's Theatre. Reviv'd with Alterations. By N. TATE.</i>	ESTC R20622	LONDON, Printed for E. Flefher, and are to be fold by R. Bentley, and M. Magnes in Ruffel-ftreet near Covent-Garden, 1681.

	Date	Author/Editor	Title	ESTC Citation Number	Publisher/Imprint
	1696	Tyrrell, James	<i>THE General History of ENGLAND, AS WELL Ecclesiastical as Civil, From the Earliest Accounts of Time, To the Reign of his Present Majesty King WILLIAM. Taken from the most ANTIEN RECORDS, MANUSCRIPTS, and HISTORIANS. Containing the LIVES of the KINGS, and MEMORIALS of the most EMINENT PERSONS in CHURCH and STATE: with the Foundations of the NOTED MONASTERIES, and both the UNIVERSITIES. Vol. I. By JAMES TYRRELL, Esq;</i>	ESTC R32913	LONDON. Printed for Henry Rhodes in Fleetstreet, John Dunton in Jewenstreet, John Salusbury in Cornhil, and John Harris in Little-Brittain, MDCXCVI
	1700? ¹³	Anonymous	<i>Tragical HISTORY of KING LEAR, and his three DAUGHTE[RS.] Firft, Shewing how he gave the two Eldest the full and whole Possession of his Crown. Second, How he baniſh'd the Youngest his Court and Prefence, who fled into France, and married the French King. Third, How his two eldest Daughters, in some Time after, took away his Attendance, and turn'd him out of Court, when being destitute, he travelled into France, where his youngest Daughter relieved him, raised an Army to restore him to the possession of his Crown, in the Attempt of which she was kill'd in the Field of Battle, and her Father immediately died with Grief for the Loss of his Daughter.</i>	ESTC R216217	

¹³ ESTC records date of publication as unclear, suggesting 1700?. EEBO confirms uncertainty around the date, but suggests 1635? as potential date, with EBBA, also uncertain, but suggesting 1710?.

Appendix 4: A New Source for Shakespeare's *King Lear*¹⁴

Serving as proof of concept for the method of historical collation suggested by this study, its use has allowed me to identify a new source for William Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The ballad, *A Lamentable Song of the Death of King Leare and his Three Daughters*, is absent from scholarship today. The first extant publication of the ballad is in the third edition of *The Golden Garland*, a collection of ballads published in 1620 and attributed to Richard Johnson. The date of the third edition, falling after the publication of both the first (1608) and second (1619) quarto editions of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, has seen the ballad relegated to the status of Shakespearean adaptation, not source. This, however, was not always the case. Works printed during the 1600s and 1700s, as is later discussed, routinely referenced the ballad as a source. Then, during the 1700s and 1800s, whether the ballad was a source or an adaptation became extensively debated (Wells, *Oxford* 278). Before finally, it was the Victorian "allusion-hunters" who had the definitive word, "proving" that Shakespeare's play pre-dated the ballad, and thus the ballad was moved from source to adaptation. Consequently, seminal source studies scholar Geoffrey Bullough does not list the ballad as a source for Shakespeare's *King Lear*, and today both traditional and new source studies scholars overlook the ballad, failing to address or even acknowledge it.

Once it was deemed that the ballad was not a source for Shakespeare's play, it fell first from scholarly interest, and then into obscurity. The inimitable scholar Sir Stanley Wells is the lone author to recognise the ballad today, though he does not view it as a source and privileges Shakespeare in his interpretation, suggesting that the ballad: "probably gives us an eyewitness account of a performance of the play in Shakespeare's time" (*Oxford* 279). Yet I

¹⁴ At the time of composition, much of this appendix had been submitted as a journal article to *The Huntington Library Quarterly*. It is unknown if, at the time of reading, this paper will be published in that journal or another.

demonstrate that the ballad is a source for Shakespeare's play by calling upon several forms of textual evidence. Though eschewing prior linear and positivist approaches to source studies, the most telling evidence for the ballad as source is that it is explicitly referred to in the anonymous quarto play *King Leir* (1605), a recognised source for Shakespeare's play. Additionally, prefatory material from subsequent recensions of the ballad refers to it as a source for Shakespeare's play. Finally, contemporaneous critics shared this belief. I suggest, and clarify within this appendix, that there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the anonymous ballad, *A Lamentable Song of the Death of King Leare and his Three Daughters*, was in fact a source for Shakespeare's play, *M. William Shak-speare: HIS True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King LEAR and his three Daughters*. Their faint similarity in nomenclature even alludes to such.

Context: The Study of Ballads

Previously, the popular, topical, and ephemeral nature of ballads has seen them largely derided or ignored by scholars, a prejudice established in the early modern era itself (Würzbach 1). Presently, ballad studies are undergoing a sustained revival (Barnard et al. 509; Nebeker, "Broadside" 2; Sullivan and Woodbridge 269; Würzbach). Databases such as the English Broadside Ballad Archive (EBBA) and Broadside Ballads Online (BBO) facilitate access to remediated versions and support a boom in scholarship that reclaims ballads and their distinctive features from obscurity and indifference.

"Popular" by all accounts of this contested term, ballads had their heyday in the seventeenth century, although they existed for roughly half a century before and more than a century after, with a ballad revival in the 1700s. Ballads were written on all manner of topics: the historical and topical, the sacred and profane, and the lamentable and comical. They were

heard, sung, read, viewed, and enjoyed by all parts of society (Hehmeyer; Nebeker, “Heyday”). Ballads have been considered to be everything from gossip mongering to early newspapers; seditious to trivial; as a voice of the people or agents of the government; and even simply unavoidable (Atkinson 70; Echard 89; Hehmeyer; Hindley; Nebeker, “Broadside” 12; Sullivan and Woodbridge 270-271). Contemporaneous sentiments on the influence of ballads were exemplified by Andrew Fletcher, who, in his 1704 *An Account of a Conversation*, suggested: “if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the Laws of a Nation” (10). Published in prolific numbers, ballads have survived at higher rates than other ephemera due to early collections (Barnard et al. 504; Nebeker, “Broadside”), including Johnson’s. However, the most common form of the ballad was the broadside, so named for its publication on one side of a broadsheet—a folio sized piece of paper.

The earliest extant form of the Leir ballad is in Johnson’s collection, with later broadside variants also extant, including one substantive broadside collated in the stagnation period (see Chapters 7 and 8). Both the Johnson and the broadside substantive variants of the ballad were published in multiple derivative forms both throughout the period designated for study in this thesis and beyond, with twenty-seven derivatives identified thus far between 1620 and 1795. Although the historical collation of variants is able to identify the ballad as a source for Shakespeare’s play, it is unable to identify if the source was from the Johnson collection (the original, no longer extant *Golden Garland*), an earlier broadside variant collected by Johnson in his work (no longer extant), or an oral variant from which either derived.

The Ballad as Source

The Golden Garland of Princely Pleasures and Delicate Delights. Wherein is Contained the Histories of Many of the Kings, Queenes, Princes, Lords, Ladies, Knights, and Gentlewomen of this Kingdome. Being Moft Pleafant Songs and Sonnets to Sundry New Tunes Now Moft in Vfe (ESTC S106558) is a rare text, as Richard Johnson was one of only two authors who were publishing collections of broadside ballads at the time (Hindley vii). A *Lamentable Song of the Death of King Leare and his Three Daughters*, a historical ballad, is the first in the collection and, unlike others within it, is presented free from commentary. The ballad contains twenty-three stanzas of eight lines, with regular meter and rhyming structures. It is sung to the tune of “When Flying Fame.” Most importantly, it retells the established Leir story, yet includes alterations and additions unique to the ballad and Shakespeare’s play: Leir’s madness, Cordeilla’s early death, and successional alterations to established historiography.

There is little extant bibliographic or paratextual material to confirm the original date of the ballad. Though the third edition bears the date 1620, dating of the first edition of *The Golden Garland* is problematic, as earlier editions are no longer extant. Excluding a later transfer, there is nothing to be found in the Stationers’ Register as *The Golden Garland* is unrecorded. There is nothing to be found in the history of the printers. The careers of A. Mathewes and Thomas Langley, printers of the third edition, span approximately from 1615 to 1640, but they were not the printers of the only other extant edition, nor consistent printers of Johnson’s work, so were unlikely to be the printers of the first *Garland*. Additionally, the first edition of this compilation was potentially not the first printed version of the ballad. Savvy printers would have selected ballads for inclusion in their collections based on earlier, proven success in broadside format (Wells, *Oxford* 277; Woodfall Epswoth 710). *Lear*’s

position as the first ballad in *The Golden Garland*, the only ballad standing without need of editorial explanation, is indicative of its established standing. Furthermore, earlier popularity as an oral variant may well have been what saw the ballad move into print as a broadside. Each of these stages pushes the origin of the ballad progressively earlier.

The career of *The Golden Garland's* compiler, Richard Johnson (1573-1659), may further affirm this early date and the ballad's progression from broadside to collected ballad. An "obscure figure" (Proudfoot) with an extensive portfolio of works, Johnson's propensity for reworking established pieces is well known. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* refers to him as "in every sense a derivative writer" (Proudfoot) and Naomi Liebler, though defending Johnson and his writing, indicates that Johnson "would today be dismissed as a hack" (71). When discussing the "all but forgotten *Golden Garland*" (67), Allan G. Chester weighs the evidence for and against Johnson's originality. He identifies that the title of *The Golden Garland* suggests a derivative work, with a "garland" understood by early moderns as a "miscellany" (67-68). Likewise, the frontispiece does not include a claim to authorship, with Johnson identified as having only "enlarged and corrected" the contents of the volume. Chester concludes:

Johnson has recently been convicted of plagiarism to a degree remarkable even according to the easy standards of his time. And with the habit of ballad writers in mind, it would be dangerous to attribute to Johnson any considerable degree of originality in this kind. (67)

Thus, Johnson's career reinforces the notion that he was not the author of *The Golden Garland* and that, as with other ballads in the collection that retain extant earlier broadsides, a broadside edition of the *Lear* ballad pre-existed the first edition of *The Golden Garland*. This, aligning with previously stated evidence, suggests that the first publication of the original ballad was considerably earlier than 1620, without providing clarity or specificity for dating.

David R. Carlson, when exploring another ballad “circulated under the name of Richard Johnson” (344) and its relationship to Shakespeare’s *Richard III*, identifies a similar lack of clarity with regard to which was written first. Carlson identifies multiple occasions when ballad mongers created ballads that capitalised on the success of plays. He additionally identifies several specific times when Shakespeare quoted a ballad collected by Johnson (346 note 8 and 347 note 9). This is relevant to the study of the Leir ballad as it demonstrates that Shakespeare was aware of Johnson’s work, increasing the possibility that *The Garland* was a source.

The most compelling evidence to confirm that the ballad was a source for Shakespeare’s play is not found within either text. The anonymous Queen’s Men’s play *King Leir*, a recognised source for Shakespeare’s play, includes direct reference to the ballad. In the fourth scene of the play the Gallian King articulates to his nobles why he intends to travel to England in search of a bride—or more specifically why he intends to win one of Leir’s daughters as his bride:

King. Diffwade me not, my Lords, I am fefolu’d,
 This next fayre wynd to fayle for Brittany,
 In some difguife, to see if *flying fame*
 Be not too prodigall in the wondrous prayfe
 Of these three Nymphes, the daughters of King *Leir*,
 In Prefent view do anfwere abfent prayfe,
 And eyes allow of *what our eares Haue heard*. (B3v emphasis added)

Here the Gallian king refers to the ballad by its tune—Flying Fame—a tune prominently displayed under its title in *The Golden Garland*, with tunes likewise frequently displayed on broadsides. The Gallian King also refers specifically to what he has *heard* from the ballad

with regard to Leir's daughters' beauty. His reference to the ballad's description of the daughters as beautiful reflects the first stanza of the ballad:

three daughters faire had he [Leir],
 So princely seeming beautifull,
 as fayrer could not be. (A2r)

This beauty is also seen in Leir's daughters' protestations of love and duty in the ballad's love test. Even taken in isolation, the anonymous play's reference to the ballad and its tune is a compelling confirmation of the ballad's prior existence. That the ballad was a source for Shakespeare's play instead of simply a source for the anonymous play is later demonstrated through a discussion of narrative elements, with Shakespeare's work borrowing, indeed heightening, several elements unique to the ballad that did not occur in the anonymous play. However, before turning to these narrative elements, there is further evidence of the ballad as a source for Shakespeare's play within the prefatory or paratextual elements of later derivative versions of the *Golden Garland* ballad.

An exploration of texts that include derivative versions of Johnson's work further confirms the ballad as a source and suggests how it moved from this status to be considered an adaptation. In 1723, a century after the extant third edition, and three decades after the thirteenth edition of *The Golden Garland*, "A Lamentable Song of the death of King Leare and his three Daughters" appeared in the second volume of *A Collection of Old Ballads. Corrected from the Best and Most Ancient Copies Extant. With Introductions Historical, Critical, or Humorous. Illustrated with Copper Plates*, a duodecimo of almost 300 pages, attributed to Ambrose Philips. This collection was highly influential, perhaps the first antiquarian collection of ballads. It was used and transformed by many others in the creation of their own collections (Dugaw). Its influence can clearly be seen in later variants of the ballad, including Thomas Percy's 1765 three volume octavo work, *Reliques of Ancient*

English Poetry: Consisting of Old Heroic Ballads, Songs, and Other Pieces of our Earlier Poets, (Chiefly of the Lyric Kind.) Together with Some Few of Later Date (ESTC T84936), which was printed in four editions with the last appearing in 1794. Both the Philips and the Percy collections were part of the ballad revival of the eighteenth century, which saw interest in ballads across both popular and elite audiences, often associated with a positive sense of reminiscence (Dugaw). Both variants of the ballad within these collections largely repeat the verse of *The Golden Garland*, but additionally offer editorial comment that frames the reader's interaction with, and understanding of, the Johnson variant.

Publishing fifty years apart, Philips and Percy provided markedly different editorial content to contextualise the ballad. Yet they both suggest that the ballad was a source for Shakespeare's play. In *A Collection of Old Ballads* (ESTC N166), Philips's editorial comment, when introducing the ballad, retells traditional Galfridian history as context.

Following this, Philips addressed the dating of the ballad:

I cannot be certain directly to the Time when this Ballad was written, but that it was some Years before the Play of Shakespeare, appears from several Circumstances, which to mention would swell my Introduction too far beyond its usual Length. (12)

Percy, writing fifty years after Philips, provided a different contextualisation for the ballad. Appearing in a section of the text devoted to "Ballads that Illustrate Shakespeare," Percy's editorial focus was not on Galfridian history or on the historicity of the Leir story, but on Shakespeare. Here it is relevant to remark that the intervening years between these texts saw sustained publication of Shakespeare's collected works from his early editors: Alexander Pope, Lewis Theobald, Thomas Hanmer, William Warburton, and Samuel Johnson. Even though Shakespeare's status had risen to prominence, as evinced by the differing contextualisations of the ballad, Percy agrees that the ballad predated the work of the Bard, but additionally offers:

After all, 'tis possible that Shakespeare and the author of this ballad might both of them be indebted to a more ancient dramatic Writer. For that an older play of KING LEIR had been exhibited before Shakespeare wrote. (211)

Here Percy draws attention to the contemporality of the ballad, the anonymous play, and Shakespeare's play, although specifically suggesting that the ballad was one of Shakespeare's sources.

Later collections of the *Golden Garland* ballad variant were not alone in their recognition of the ballad as a source for Shakespeare's play. Literary commentators concurred. Charlotte Lennox's 1754 work, *Shakespeare Illustrated*, is considered by many the first source study of Shakespeare's work. In it, she expresses frustration with Philips's brevity in *A Collection of Old Ballads*, wishing that he had extended his introduction beyond its usual length to substantiate his conclusions on dating. Nonetheless, Lennox acknowledges that the ballad "bears so exact an Analogy to the Argument of *Shakespeare's King Lear*, that his having copied it cannot be doubted, if indeed it be true, that it be written before that *Tragedy*" (302-303). Samuel Johnson, recognised as "arguably the most distinguished man of letters in English history" (Rogers), acknowledged in his 1765 *The Plays of William Shakespeare*: "The story of this play ... is taken originally from Geoffrey of Monmouth ... but perhaps immediately from an old historical ballad" (160). Proof offered by Samuel Johnson flatters the Bard, as the ballad "has the rudiments of the play, but none of its amplifications" (160).

Within these works, there are seeds of the movement of the ballad from source to adaptation. As interest in, and the status of, Shakespeare rose, so too did the privileging of his work. This is seen in the changing contextualisation offered in early ballad collections, and both Lennox's and Samuel Johnson's acknowledgment of the ballad as a source, though an inferior work. This development culminated in Victorian bardolatry that saw a reversal of the

adapted to adaptation, with the ballad no longer considered a source. Take for example Joseph Woodfall Ebsworth, who in 1888, when acting as part of the editorial team for the first publication of the Roxburghe collection, was able to demonstrate that the ballad was an adaptation of the play. His proof was nothing more than Shakespeare's stature: "Of all that is grandest and sweetest in the marvellous tragedy of 'King Lear' our Shakespeare was the sole author. He made those dry bones live" (713). Woodfall Ebsworth acknowledges the debate around the ballad as source, yet suggests that those who call into question Shakespeare's originality are "irrational iconoclasts" (709). As Shakespeare's stature rose, that of the ballad (and ballads more generally) declined, until it was no longer thought possible that a balladeer could have conceived of elements so central to Shakespeare's play, and that they were likewise essential to Shakespeare's originality—that of Lear's madness and the shocking finale.

Narrative Elements

The narrative elements of the ballad are largely consistent with Galfridian historiography, whilst also including extensions and alterations, and the addition of unique elements. (These are fully articulated in Chapter 6 through the collation of narrative elements of diversification variants.) There is, however, a number of elements unique to the ballad that demonstrate its use as a source, as these elements likewise appear in Shakespeare's play and in no other variants of the Leir story. The two most telling of these co-occurring narrative elements are Leir's madness and alterations to the royal line in shocking conclusions. Both of these elements are significant deviations from established historiography and from all other Leir variants. (While both of these are discussed in Chapter 6, they are explored here as relevant to demonstrating the ballad as a source.)

Both the ballad and the play see Leir mistreated by his elder daughters and cast out, devoid of regal trappings and supports. It is here that both the ballad and Shakespeare's play see Leir go mad. Leir of the ballad: "Grew frantike mad, for in his minde, / he bore the wounds of woe" (B1v). Shakespeare's Lear is aware of his mental decline early in the play, with this element acting as motif throughout: "O Lear. Lear! beat at this gate that let thy folly in, and thy deere iudgement out" (Shakespeare, *Q1* D2r). Both works describe Leir's madness using early modern understandings of such. At this time, madness could be "figurative and [could] include almost any excessive expression of emotion: anger especially, but also lust, jealousy, folly, stupidity. 'Madness' can also name extreme forms of mental distress" (Neely 3). (Early modern understanding of madness is more fully discussed in Chapter 6.)

One of the symptoms of early modern madness was withdrawal from society. Timing in both the ballad and Shakespeare's play sees Leir cast out from the royal household and surrounded by nature when his wits turn. Leir of the ballad: "To hils, and woods, and watry fouonts, / he made, his hourelly moane" (B1v and r). This contextualisation is accentuated in Shakespeare's play—his Lear is in a humoral landscape that is just as wild as his thoughts:

Lear. Rumble thy belly full, spit fire, spout raine,
 Nor raine, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters,
 I taske not you you elmeents with vnkindnes,
 I neuer gaue you kingdome, cald you children,
 You owe me no subcription. (Shakespeare, *Q1* F4r)

Further evidence of Leir's mad withdrawal from society is in the company he keeps, with both variants associating the king with beggars and outcasts. Leir of the ballad is glad to feed on beggars' food. Shakespeare's Lear heightens this downfall, with Lear ultimately taking shelter during the storm scenes in a hovel with Tom o' Bedlam, a madman and beggar, whom Lear sees as his "philosopher" (Shakespeare, *Q1* G3r).

In both the ballad and the play, Leir's actions also speak to early modern representations of madness through his hallucinations. For the ballad Leir: "hils and woods, and fenceleffe things, / did feeme to figh and groane" (B1r). Shakespeare's play extends this, such as in the mock trial scene of Q1 in which Leir hallucinates an entire court, righting the wrongs that have been done by his daughters. Finally, both Leirs demonstrate the changeable, heightened emotions of an early modern madman. In the ballad, Leir's madness:

made him rend his milk white locks
 and tresses from his head:
 And all with booke bestaine his cheeckes,
 with age and honour spied. (B1v)

Shakespeare's Leir reaches the peak of his madness in the storm scenes, which see him rage as strongly as the storm: "Blow wind & cracke your cheeks, rage, blow" (Shakespeare, *Q1* F4r). It can thus be seen that both source (ballad) and adaptation (play) include Leir's madness, with the play extending and heightening elements of its source, likely due to the exigencies of its comparative length.

The second element unique to both the ballad and Shakespeare's play is the shocking, history altering, conclusion. In the ballad, Cordeilla is slain on the battlefield, and, although the verse clarifies that Leir regains his crown, he then immediately dies of grief:

But when he heard Cordela dead,
 who dyed indeed for loue
 Of her deare father, in whose cause
 she did this battell mooue
 Befwounding fell upon her breast,
 From whence he neuer parted,
 But on her bofome left his life,

that fo truly hearted. (A6r)

Although history is altered in the ballad by its condensing of Leir's reign and removal of Cordeilla's, it is subsequently reinstated as the elder daughters' crowns are "left unto the next of kin" (A6r). The ballad's timing of Cordeilla's and Leir's deaths, the cause of Leir's, and its evocative imagery, are all used as a source for elements of the conclusion of Shakespeare's play. In its final scene, Leir carries Cordeilla's lifeless body onto the stage, both having been imprisoned. Uniquely, they have lost the war but, similar to the ballad, they die because of it, with Cordeilla dying first and Leir, as in the ballad, subsequently dying of grief. The play, as with the ballad, abridges Leir's reign and elides Cordeilla's. Shakespeare's play, however, extends the ballad's disruption to national history, by truncating the Brutan line, leaving the question of succession comparatively unclear. (Discussions of altering topicalities and their impact on variations between the conclusions of Q and F are contained within Chapters 5 and 6.) These two unique elements of the ballad and Shakespeare's play show clear narrative interdependence.

Conclusion

These shared narrative elements, unique to the ballad and Shakespeare's play, become a conclusive demonstration of the ballad as source. Most importantly, the 1605 anonymous Queen's Men's play, *King Leir*, directly refers to the ballad, dating it earlier than the Queen's Men's and thus Shakespeare's play. Shakespeare's use of the anonymous play as a source for *King Lear* is well established. Likewise, his use of other Johnson ballads as sources has also been noted. Additionally, the ballad is identified within its derivative editions, and by multiple contemporaneous commentators, as having been one of Shakespeare's sources. Despite the recent revival of interest in ballads, and the extraordinary two-century publication

history of its variants, the ballad *A Lamentable Song of the Death of King Leare and his Three Daughters* is today largely unacknowledged and unstudied. It remains unclear whether this is due to the previously lowly status of ballads themselves, or to earlier scholarship that found it uncomfortable that a ballad may have been used as a source for elements of Shakespeare's *King Lear*—elements essential to *his* originality and thus genius. I would suggest, however, that the ballad is indeed a source for Shakespeare's play and thus merits more than "flying fame."