Material Malory: the Caxton and Winchester Documents

and a Parallel-Text Edition

by

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The Roman War accounts found in the Winchester manuscript (BL Add 59678) and in Caxton’s edition of *Le Morte Darthur* offer a tale of campaign, strategy, and conquest. Malory’s postponement of the traditional disaster it precipitated and the positioning of England within the historical empires of the world make it a critical tale in understanding the issue of geographical politics, governance, and nation within the work. For fifteenth-century audiences, the chapter’s concern with geography, empire, and models of kingship sparked radical revisions in order to best express the concerns and perspective of the writer/redactor and its subsequent editor. The two witnesses to Malory’s Roman War account are examined, via the textual, ideological, social, and material relation of the two texts, as central in articulating a claim of imperial domain over the “Romaynes and Sarazens” of the exotic East. The Caxton text is studied as a
recontextualization of the Roman War account in light of the waning hopes of the
Crusades and the early impact of printed maps of Ptolemy's *Geographia*.

This study also analyzes the theoretical underpinnings of the parallel-text edition
as an editorial form and its relation to literary studies, with an emphasis on Middle
English editing. Four major parallel-text editions from the last twenty years are
critiqued. The study articulates guiding principles for scholarly parallel-text editions and
provides a parallel-text edition of the Roman War account grounded in those principles.
A textual history of the Malory documents and the ideology of 20th century editions,
particularly Eugene Vinaver's *Works*, are explored within the context of materialism and
"New Philology."
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Thank you all.
Dedication

To Jerome, Conor, and Nicolai—it's 100% done.
Introduction

In the Winchester manuscript, Arthur speculates that, after having conquered Rome, that he should go over the “salt see” to Jerusalem to revenge the death of Christ. In the shortened version in the Caxton edition of Sir Thomas Malory’s Le Morte Darthur, this reference, along with other additions and deletions change the nature of Arthur’s encounter with the East. I argue that the differences between the two texts may be found in changing geographical knowledge from the mid to late fifteenth century as well as changing responses to the “threat from the infydel.” This study explores these issues via the textual, ideological, social, and material relation of the two texts.

The two Malory documents at issue, the Caxton printed book of 1485 and the “roughly contemporary” Winchester manuscript, have posed questions of textual authority to scholars since the discovery of the Winchester manuscript in 1934. Eugene Vinaver, editor of the first edition based on the Winchester (The Works of Sir Thomas Malory), P. J. C. Field, editor of the third revised edition of Vinaver’s edition, William Matthews, advocate for the validity of the Caxton text, and James Spisak, editor of the 1989 edition based on Caxton texts, have all, despite the polar opposition of their conclusions, mounted intention-based arguments over the textual relations of the two texts, each side claiming greater evidence of authorial intention in the text they advocated. Vinaver argued vociferously that Caxton corrupted Malory’s work via the printing and editing process. While most scholars no longer affirm the conclusions of
Vinaver—that Caxton as an editor systematically “corrupted” Malory’s work—there is broad acceptance of the view that Caxton was the likely editor of the text he printed and that the Winchester is “closer to what Malory wrote.” Rather than basing his edition on the Winchester, however, there is also evidence that Caxton may have chosen to base his printed text on another copy of Malory’s work, now lost to posterity (Mukai). Why Caxton chose his presumed copy text over the Winchester or why he himself might have undertaken to revise the text are subjects of wide speculation. While it is indisputable that the Caxton edition presents a mediated text—a text that resulted from the practices of the emerging printing trade—little work has been done to articulate the context of that mediation and the mediation of the Winchester manuscript.

The present study does not argue the relative merits of the Caxton or Winchester texts as competing witnesses to a hypothetical authoritative version of the work, but rather explores the two material texts as a means of considering the complex representation of the East as well as issues of governance in late medieval England. This project attempts to recuperate the place of Caxton’s edition of *Le Morte Darthur* as a significant material and literary artefact in studying fifteenth-century literary culture, a position that has been obscured as the editorial mediation of the Caxton text became a focus of post-Winchester scholarship. I attempt this recuperation, not with a claim, as Spisak, Kindrick, and Matthews have argued, for textual authority based on primacy or nearness to authorial intention, but based on its unique position in print culture, its relation to the Winchester manuscript, and the cultural work Caxton’s edition performed. The Roman War account, in particular, is central to our understanding of Caxton’s role in
shaping and reflecting the interests and concerns of the reading public. Caxton's work, more generally, presents an ideological shift as part of the formation of English vernacular and lay literary culture of which *Le Morte Darthur*, as part of Caxton's "Nine Worthies" project, was a key text. The Winchester manuscript and Caxton's *Le Morte Darthur* provide the material basis for this inquiry.

The Roman War account is the site of the largest textual variation between the two Malory documents and, in addition to seeding the greatest controversy in the Winchester-Caxton textual debate, offers a look at the shift in literary culture and politics from 1469, when Malory is assumed to have completed his copy, to 1485 when it was published in book form. Upon the death of Edward the IV in 1483, Richard III assumed the throne of England, in a highly charged political milieu, followed in 1485 by Henry VII. The Roman War account as represented in the Malory texts reflects two versions of a changing ideal of leadership and English nationalism and implicitly addresses the contemporary crises of authority: internally, in terms of the complex relation of nobles to king, and externally, in terms of England's perception of ascendancy to the great historical empires: Babylon, Persia, Athens, Rome. Book Five of Caxton's edition of *Le Morte Darthur* and fol 71r – 96r in the Winchester manuscript present the account of King Arthur's Roman Campaign, a campaign in which Arthur defeats the emperor Lucius and the armies of the East, including Babylon, Turkey, and Africa—a move which appropriates the mantle of these realms for England. How the two versions grapple with England's relation to Rome and the fifteenth-century geographic conception of England's
place in the world provides critical insight into the struggle for authority and governance that marked the relation of king and nobles in mid-fifteenth-century England.

The parallel-text edition which accompanies this study provides an essential critical tool in understanding the effect of the shift from manuscript to print on the contour and focus of Arthurian romance as it emerged from the fifteenth century. I provide an in-depth textual study of the parallel-text edition as an editorial form and its relation to literary studies, with an emphasis on Middle English editing. While scholars have used the parallel-text edition and commented upon it within individual literary works, no study of the theoretical implications of the editorial form and its interpretive implications is yet available. This study analyzes the theoretical underpinnings of parallel-text editions, critique four major parallel-text editions from the last twenty years, articulate guiding principles for scholarly parallel-text editions, and provides a parallel-text edition of the Roman War account that is grounded in those principles.
Chapter One:
“More Odd Texts”: A Theory of Parallel Texts

How are we to understand the ways in which the form that transmits a text to its readers or hearers constrains the production of meaning?

- Roger Chartier (1)

In the past twenty years, the parallel-text edition has gained wider use as an editorial form. Despite this increasing, though controversial, popularity, little scholarship has been done on the editorial form itself and the textual theories, which underlie it. Similarly, scant attention has been paid to the forms of interpretation that such editions generate, the ways that they can or cannot be read, and the characteristics that might distinguish good scholarly parallel-text editions from less useful ones. In this study, I argue that a parallel-text edition of Malory’s Roman War account in the Caxton and Winchester versions will provide a critical addition to the current eclectic and facsimile editions. Such a parallel-text edition of Malory’s work marks a conscious effort to produce an edition, which emerges out of the theoretical perspective of material philology. Before taking up these arguments, it is necessary to explore the theoretical implications of the parallel-text form fully and to provide an excursus on its use in post-modern editions of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Post-structuralism and textual theory have affected the shape of critical literary editions during this period
and, though many editions do not explicitly state their situatedness in this nexus, scholars who claim that parallel-text editions are merely pragmatic responses to corrupted texts fail to see that, despite the assertion that social theories of texts have failed to provide corresponding editions, the parallel-text editorial form is in fact an embodiment of an approach to texts rooted in post-structuralist theory. The past fifteen or so years have seen a number of significant parallel-text editions of major works (*King Lear*, *Piers Plowman*, *The Prelude*), but even these editions often have been presented as apologetic editorial forms which address otherwise irresolvable textual problems. Far from apologizing for their use, I explore the function of parallel texts and the way this particular form encourages the examination of a social history of texts.

**Part One: An Excursus on Parallel-Text Editions**

This excursus looks, in particular, at parallel-text editions that have been considered landmarks within their literary period: the Riverside Chaucer’s parallel-text of the F and G versions of the prologue to *The Legend of Good Women*, A. V. C. Schmidt’s four-version parallel-text edition of *Piers Plowman*, Michael Warren’s *Parallel King Lear 1608-1623*, and Jonathan Wordsworth’s parallel text of Wordsworth’s *The Prelude*. Although the parallel-text form is again in vogue as an editorial practice, it is hardly a new form: one early attempt to produce a parallel-text edition was that of Henry Wharton

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1 For example, see Fellows’s article entitled “Author, Author, Author . . . : An Apology for Parallel-Texts.”
and his 1688 edition of Pecock’s *Treatise Proving Scripture to be the Rule of Faith.*

Wharton wistfully notes:

> I had once intended to represent his Arguments in our modern Language, and publish both together in distinct Columns, but the fear of inlarging these Papers too much, deterred me from pursuing that design. (xl)

Wharton’s concerns show that editors have struggled with the challenge of the parallel-text format for some time! Wharton himself was preceded by a more successful endeavor to produce a parallel-text: an edition of facing page translations was published in 1566 by Archbishop Parker, *A Testimonie of Antiquitie* in which a sermon by Aelfric is placed side by side with a contemporary translation. A. S. G. Edwards notes that Parker’s parallel-text was used as a means of resolving the problems of “presenting an antique text to a modern audience” (“Observations” 38). The parallel-text format was also employed by medieval scholars of the mid- and late-nineteenth century, in particular Frederick Furnivall and other contributors to the Early English Text Society (EETS) series.


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2 Edwards discusses Wharton’s edition in “Observations on the History of Middle English Editing.”
in 1866, and Julius Zupitza produced a parallel-text edition of the Auchinleck and Caius
texts of The Romance of Guy of Warwick (1883-91), both also for EETS. The declared
purpose of Furnivall’s work was primarily to amass diplomatic transcriptions that “[a]ll
we Chaucer-men” (Trial 52) might share at a time when access to manuscripts was
limited. It was an editorial choice for comprehensiveness and chronology that was, as
David Greetham has noted “an essentially historical activity” which legitimized the
editing of vernacular texts. (Greetham, Scholarship 320). David Matthews has also
argued that Furnivall exerted a democratizing function in making these texts more widely
available through manuscript transcription and parallel-texts, breaking an elite hold on
these texts.3 In his Trial Forewords to My ‘Parallel-Text Edition of Chaucer’s Minor
Poems,’ Furnivall states, “The chief interest of the investigation has been to me the
watching of the growth of the Poet’s mind and power from his earliest efforts to the
greatest triumphs of his genius” (Trial 6). The parallel-text format provided a
chronological basis from which Furnivall hypothesized “growth”—that is, the assumption
that the most-polished manuscripts were most often the products of authorial revision.
The work of Furnivall and other EETS editors laid the groundwork for the ensuing
eclectic editions of the early twentieth century by establishing a form of raw material
archive from which editors selected a “best text” or from which variants were collated.
While medievalists have been, and largely remain,4 skeptical of the value of the parallel-

3 David Matthews discusses this aspect of Furnivall’s work in The Making of Middle English, 1765-1910.
4 See Allen’s frequently quoted article, “Some Sceptical Observations on Editing of The Awntyrs off
Arthur.”
text edition, a related, though distinct, form has been of significant interest in translation theory. Recent notable examples of facing-page translation, a particular form of a parallel-text edition, include Harvard University’s *I Tatti* series (1995 - ), with facing-page Latin-English translation of classic Latin works, and the *Gesta Guillelmi of William of Poitiers* a Latin/English edition translated by R. H. C. Davis and Marjorie Chibnall and published by Oxford’s Clarendon Press (1998) as part of the Oxford Medieval Text series. The facing-page translation has become a standard medium for poetry translation. While facing-page translation is a distinct type of edition from a parallel-text edition of versions of a literary work, the impetus for foregrounding of the translator’s decisions is similar to the impetus to bring to the reader the different versions of a literary work. In English literary studies, however, the parallel-text edition of documentary versions of a work is still somewhat suspect. Kane and Donaldson once characterized any edition short of a fully “reconstructed” critical edition as little more than a “poor spirited and slothful undertaking” (129). Even more recent criticism continues this uneasiness: Nicolas Jacobs characterizes the argument against parallel-text editions as a lapse into “strong relativism,” the implications of which for an editor are that “he or she should in effect cease to edit, and should merely reproduce . . . as many versions of the chosen text as are to hand . . .” (5). Despite such criticism, the number of parallel-text editions issued by scholars of medieval literature continues to grow, albeit slowly. The parallel text is

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5 See Hartmann, Harris, and Schaffner.
once again being utilized to meet the critical questions of current literary interests, though for different purposes than by those the nineteenth-century editors of EETS and "[a]ll we Chaucer-men" envisaged.

Central to the debate over the post-eclectic, parallel-text edition as an editorial form is the controversial question of the decentering of the author. Eclectic editions\(^7\) generally claim to focus on establishing the likely intent of an author, "what the author actually wrote," while parallel texts range in focus from authorial to uncertainly authorial readings, to decidedly non-authorial issues in which later redactors', scribes', or printers' versions are of interest. In *Writing East: The "Travels" of Sir John Mandeville*, Iain McLeod Higgins argues the value of studying redactors' versions by proposing a view of multiple witnesses as textual isotopes. As a rhetorical construction, a parallel-text editor formulates as his or her essential question: What is the significance of difference? How do parallel-text editions exploit the representation of difference? Parallel-text editions that represent the physical manifestations of two or more texts often shift the site of inquiry from authorial intention to that of material production and the "life" of a work. This includes the historical conditions, which plausibly explain the state of difference—even if those conditions are "ultimately irrecoverable" (Grigely 48). A parallel text, foregrounding a dialogic stance, attempts to respond within a framework of a social

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\(^7\) While eclectic editions are often referred to as critical editions or conflated editions, I reject the former because it reserves the use of the term "critical" for one particular edition. All scholarly editions, I would argue, are "critical" in that they result from critical scholarship. See McGann *The Textual Condition* 48-50. The latter term, "conflative," used by Weiss in *King Lear: A Parallel-Text Edition*, refers to the practice of eclectic editors to use several versions to create a single-text. However, "conflative" seems to imply a pejorative stance toward eclectic editing, for which reason I also reject the term.
theories of texts and, even when the two (or more) texts are attributed to a single author, as in the case of revised texts, such editions foreground a social logic of the text.

Before pursuing the theoretical implications of parallel texts further, I wish to examine four of the many parallel-text editions that have been published in the last twenty years as exempla for the theoretical foundation of my investigation into the ways in which this particular editorial form functions.

The F and G versions of the Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women* in *The Riverside Chaucer*

Of all of Chaucer's works, the manuscripts that contain the prologue to the *Legend of Good Women* appear to represent an authorial revision. Generally regarded as the last of Chaucer's dream-vision poems, the *Legend* presents an intriguing textual history. *The Riverside Chaucer*, edited by Larry Benson and a team of collaborators on the basis of the earlier work of F. N. Robinson, presents the prologue of the *Legend* as a parallel text (edited by A. S. G. Edwards and M. C. E. Shaner), the only parallel-text version of Chaucer's work to appear in the Riverside edition. (See Figure 1.) Cambridge, University Library, MS Gg. 4.27 (G), the earliest surviving manuscript, provided the base text for Robinson's initial Riverside edition of the poem. Robinson himself followed the editorial tradition of Skeat in selected G as the base text. (Most of the other editions of Chaucer's works in the *Riverside* use the Fairfax (F) manuscript as their base text.) In the revised *Riverside* (1987), Edwards and Shaner have treated G "with skepticism" while
also recognizing the complexity of issues surrounding its status as the “earliest of the manuscripts” (xlvi) yet as an authorially revised version of the prologue. Ever since the scholarship of John Livingston Lowes in the early 1900’s, the text of the prologue in G has generally been regarded as revised by Chaucer himself and, in view of its early dating (first quarter of fifteenth century), was characterized by Robinson as possessing a “peculiar authority” (1178). In *The Riverside*, the explicit used to communally mark both the prologue versions is taken from G, whereas the jointly-assigned title to the versions is supplied from F. (The G manuscript does not include a title).

The parallel-text is laid out such that each text is represented in its manuscript order: where particular passages appear “out of order” in regard to the other of the paired text, a line reference to that section is given, rather than a side-by-side format. Textual notes are provided for each version individually. While recognizing that the multiplicity of witnesses qualify the *Legend* as “one of Chaucer’s most problematical” texts (588), neither Shaner’s introduction to the *Legend* nor the “General Introduction” nor the “Textual Notes” include any explicit discussion as to why this—lone among all the Chaucer texts presented—was chosen to be reproduced in a parallel-text format.

Tim Machan argues that Chaucer’s works which survive in multiple copies “reveal how distinctively the process of manuscript production shaped the character of medieval literature” (“Texts” 433). Machan notes that in the case of the *Legend*, the G version has gained authority on the basis of its being considered by Robinson and other editors, following Lowes, as “more dramatically and artistically successful than the F
version . . . [and that] many critics conclude that G must represent Chaucer’s final treatment of the matter” (437). Despite the allegedly authorial revision, G is considered to be the earliest witness of the twelve extant manuscripts, thereby presenting, paradoxically, both the earliest manuscript and the latest authorial revision. Machan argues that the choice to provide only one parallel-text edition among Chaucer’s works in *The Riverside* makes a “kind of pre-interpretive decision” for readers, one which implies:

that the transmission history of the prologue is so profoundly different from those of the rest of Chaucer’s works that it alone merits recognition of the possibility of revision and an indeterminate final form, since it alone is printed with parallel texts, even though the transmission of other works displays a good deal of variation and possible revision. (“Texts” 438)

By way of contrast, Machan notes that the link intervening between the Monk’s Tale and the Nun’s Priest’s Tale also survives in two versions, but only the longer (and, presumably, later and better) version is printed in *The Riverside*. Machan here identifies an important crux in the theoretical implications of the parallel text: that parallel-text editions present readers with a condition of uncertainty. Machan argues that the single version of the prologue of the Nun’s Priest’s Tale provided in the *Riverside* contributes to the impression that the Canterbury Tales is an integral, a polished work and that, by contrast, the prologue to the *Legend* “appears both aberrant in the Chaucerian canon and resistant to the textual certitude on which critical interpretation often rests” (“Texts” 438). In addition, the lack of any critical discussion preceding the two texts which would
explicitly address the interpretive impact of the use of the parallel-text format, leaves readers—typically students—to draw conclusions such as those which Machan indicates: that the Legend is a uniquely uncertain component in the Chaucer canon. While the treatment of the prologue of The Legend of Good Women as a parallel text has the potential to open a discussion of the manuscript transmission of Chaucer’s works and manuscript culture in general, this opportunity is also eclipsed by the lack of critical commentary preceding the parallel text. By presenting the two versions of the prologue, The Riverside edition relies on the best textual scholarship but fails to acknowledge the interpretive distinctions that arise from the spatial arrangement of a parallel-text versus an eclectic, single-text version. Lastly, the choice to present passages from F and G only in their manuscript order means that the reader does not always have the benefit of side-by-side alignment of the two versions. For example, when the G version reads: “For trusteth wel, I ne have nat undertake/As of the lef again the flour to make” (71-72), the reader is provided with the corresponding line numbers in F and thus must turn forward one page to find the corresponding passage. Only by rolling and compressing the intervening page, might the reader approximate a side-by-side study of the corresponding passages. Other parallel-text editors have dealt with this issue by providing the differently ordered, or transposed, passages in smaller type or in italics to facilitate such comparative study. The opportunity to document widely separated variants, in footnotes or in another form of apparatus on the pages themselves, was perhaps precluded by The Riverside’s discrete “Textual Notes” section. The Riverside Chaucer, then, does not provide a full critical
parallel-text edition of the prologue of the *Legend of Good Women* so much as a gesture toward the acknowledgement of the prologue’s manuscript transmission. Nevertheless, its configuration of texts can provide a springboard to class discussions of manuscript culture and the complexities of textual editing.

**A. V. C. Schmidt’s *Piers Plowman: A Parallel-text Edition of the A, B, C and Z Versions***

The recent publication of A. V. C. Schmidt’s 1995 parallel-text edition of four of the main critically edited versions of *Piers Plowman* marked a significant contribution to the complex, and sometimes tortured, realm of “Langland” editions. (See Figure 2.) Schmidt’s edition followed the model set by Skeat, whose 1886 EETS parallel-text edition of the A, B, and C texts, as Anne Hudson has observed “has remained an invaluable resource used by all serious students of the poem for over a hundred years, partly because of the convenience of its presentation of the text and partly for the notes of its second volume...” (Rev. 558). Skeat’s edition provided three editions, each one representing the A, B, and C manuscript families, respectively. Belying Jacobs’s contention that parallel-text editors “merely reproduce... as many versions of the chosen text as are to hand” (5), Schmidt’s “daunting labor” (Hudson 558), like Skeat’s before him, presents four texts, each of which represents a major manuscript family and each of which is edited within that family. In other words, Schmidt’s work offers an eclectic parallel-text edition, not a representation of individual manuscripts. In this sense, his edition sits within two schools of editing, as did Skeat’s before him. No explanation of
the *Piers* manuscripts and their relation can be provided simply\(^8\) other than to note that Schmidt uses a base-text approach with Cambridge, Trinity College MS R.3.14 as the base for the A text; Cambridge, Trinity College MS B15.17 for the B text; San Marino, Huntington Library MS Hm 143 for the C text. The Z text is based on the sole member of its branch, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Bodley 851. Acclaimed as eclipsing Skeats's edition as "the preeminent parallel edition of *Piers*" (Machan, Rev. 373) and lauded for the "visual clarity of the layout" (Brewer, Rev. 292), Schmidt's edition has rightly been termed a "strikingly handsome parallel-text edition" (Brewer, Rev. 286). Following Skeat's page layout, Schmidt's edition is clear and orderly, with aligned passages separated by ample white space, so that the four texts do not appear cluttered. The arrangement provides the ability to closely contrast passages and facilitates comparison of the texts. Reviewers also noted the text's expensive price and have called for it to be re-issued as a more affordable edition for students and smaller libraries. This concern recalls Wharton's frustration that a parallel-text edition, simply by virtue of its comprehensiveness, can become an expensive publication to produce. Schmidt, while providing little information about his editorial method and choices in this first of a promised two-volume work, does state that it is designed "to provide Langland specialists and advanced students with a compact and solid base for exploring the poem" (viii). On this score, Schmidt's edition is successful.

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\(^8\) For a complete account of the complex textual relations see Brewer's *Editing 'Piers Plowman': the Evolution of the Text* or, for a shorter summary, her review of Schmidt's edition.
As a major proponent of the authorial claims of the Z text, Charlotte Brewer claims, unsurprisingly, that the inclusion of Z in Schmidt’s parallel-text edition is a “ringing endorsement of Z’s authenticity as an authorial, pre-A version of the poem” (Rev. 288), a position that Schmidt supports as “overwhelmingly likely” (viii). The controversial addition of Z to Skeats’s original parallel text further establishes a more prominent place for Z in Piers scholarship than it had, to this point, been accorded, a prominence—it must be noted—which has been scathingly contested by George Kane.

Hoyt Duggan’s Piers Plowman Electronic Archive is “a multi-level, hypertextually linked electronic archive of the textual tradition of all three versions of the fourteenth-century allegorical dream vision Piers Plowman... it embraces the provisional nature of scholarly editing” (Archive 7/4/01). Contrasting the Schmidt’s edition with the “questioning and exploratory research” of the Archive, Brewer hails Schmidt’s edition “a resounding return to print culture” (Rev. 288). This is a curious position for a parallel-text edition: because it provides set, eclectic texts, and because it is a “deliberate echoing of Skeat’s edition of 1886,” Brewer marks it as a “return” rather than a disruption of print culture (Rev. 288). In Brewer’s view, the parallel text in book form is seen as a continuation of the work of the EETS editors and their decidedly pre-electronic milieu. In this view, Schmidt’s edition apparently represents a move away from the uncertainties and ambiguities of the electronic project and presents “stable” texts—albeit four of them—as representing the work. For Brewer, Schmidt’s Piers
edition does not challenge the editorial process so much as it represents a crowning form of it.

Brewer sees the concurrent editing of the versions as affording a specialized opportunity to re-think the editorial choices that have traditionally been made when editing only a single version: “Schmidt has been the first editor of the poem to be in a position to realize Chambers’s ideal of editing the versions of the poem concurrently . . .” (Rev. 288). It is clear that parallel-text editions not only alter the experience of reading texts, but also the experience of editing them. For readers, as Brewer notes, “the opportunity to compare the four texts side by side is constantly illuminating” (Rev. 292). Apparently the process of editing the texts concurrently is also illuminating, though the insights, which this procedure has allowed Schmidt to make, are not beyond criticism. For example, George Kane criticizes the fact that the inclusion of Z in the edition, and Schmidt’s assumptions regarding that text’s priority, “affects his editing to the extent that he takes its readings into account in editorial decisions about all versions” (316). Kane is critical of the edition on other grounds, though never simply because it presents parallel texts. Rather, he takes issue with many of Schmidt’s emendations, aspects of his apparatus, and also the delay of the second, accompanying volume which is to set forth the editorial principles which underlie this volume. As Kane notes, “No review of half a book can be taken as a final assessment of its quality, particularly not one of an edited text exposed without its rationale” (322). This is a frequent complaint against Schmidt’s edition and, six years later, the second volume is still “forthcoming.” Schmidt’s choice
of base texts, the insights gained in the concurrent editing of the text, his justification for the use of the Z text, and the rationale for certain emendations, indeed for the rhetorical construct of the edition of the whole, remain significantly problematic without the publication of the companion volume. Hudson similarly notes, "no proper assessment of the material in the first volume can be made until the explanations of the second can be pondered" (Rev. 558). The absence of the editorial rationale hampers the full interpretive impact of Schmidt’s edition. Nonetheless, as Brewer justly notes, Schmidt’s edition displays a “magnificent accumulation of industry and scholarship” (Rev. 292) and stands to refute the notion of parallel-text editions as invariably undertaken by “slothful” editors. This criticism is usually directed at parallel-text editions that do not also embody eclectic editions; still, by including Z, Schmidt’s edition disrupts the traditional view of Piers as transmitted in three authorial versions and provides new evidence of the range and variation in the representation of textual transmission that can be attained within the form of the parallel-text edition.

Michael Warren’s The Parallel King Lear, 1608-1623

The publication of parallel-text editions of Shakespeare plays has formed a critical part in the “Material Shakespeare” school of criticism, an influential body of Shakespeare scholarship during the past fifteen to twenty years. The 1989 publication of Michael Warren’s parallel text of King Lear affected not only Shakespeare scholarship but had a broad impact on the shape and direction of scholarly editions in English literary
studies in general. (See Figure 3.) Warren’s edition provides not only parallel texts of the 1608 quarto and the 1623 folio, but produces the original format of those texts by reproducing photo facsimiles of the text. Warren aligns passages by “cutting” the photo facsimiles into dialogue units or strips with varying amounts of white space in between, as needed to allow the dialogue units from the two texts to be aligned. Similar to Schmidt’s *Piers Plowman* edition, Warren’s sets his editorial ideal as one of comprehensiveness: “As the book now appears, it is the most complete source for study of the fundamentals of *King Lear* ever assembled” (VII). Warren’s edition is also beautifully printed and produced, and is skillfully laid out with generous margins and white space to aid the comparative process. It is similarly expensive and, because of its large folio size, is typically, and unfortunately, shelved in the remote folio section of libraries, physically separated from other volumes of Shakespearean scholarship. In addition to the “cut” and adjusted photo facsimiles in parallel-text format, Warren’s edition also provides photo-facsimiles of the two versions in a continuous (uncut) format, an appendix with a summary of the textual variants, and critical discussion of his editorial rationale and his theory of the relation of the two texts.

In contrast to the *Legend* and *Pier Plowman* editions discussed above, Warren’s work does not provide an edited text—rather his attempt is to provide a transparent vehicle, circumventing the traditional role of the editor as much as humanly possible. In discussing the order placement of the texts in his edition, he laments the fact that his introduction and parallel-text edition (with “cut” and aligned photo facsimiles) precedes
the continuous photo facsimiles of the single-versions. "Thus, I who wish to avoid editing as far as possible find myself, incongruously enough, placing my version before the historical documents" (VII). Warren's goal was "to produce a parallel-text presentation of the First Quarto and the First Folio after the manner of W. W. Greg's Doctor Faustus, but with a minimum of editorial intervention" (VII). By choosing to present his parallel-text edition in the form of cut photo facsimiles divided into dialogue units, Warren avoids introducing new typographical errors or variants and retains "the feel of the originals but also their uncertainties... stimulating [readers'] detective instincts" (VII). Warren's edition focuses on providing "as direct access as possible to the raw data crucial to any conception, discussion, edition, or performance of the play" (XXXVII). This presentation of "raw data" arguably represents a strong historiographical approach to the documents and, along with such an approach, a historian's hope for neutrality in interpretation. Warren claims his parallel-text edition "is not intended to advocate any position except this: that no responsible statement about King Lear can be made unless proper attention has first been given to the earliest texts" (XI). Like the bibliographers and philologists before him, Warren attempts to presents a kind of naked text, ostensibly free of interpretation. But Warren's approach, as noted above, clearly values a theory of texts and editions in which the reader is invited into a realm previously occupied only by the editor. Further, the presentation of the two versions foregrounds the process of seventeenth-century dramatic production and printing out of which the quarto and folio were originally written, performed, and produced. In
other words, the plays become more than written documents, but part of a complex social milieu. Still, Warren hopes that

Although the very act of producing parallel texts—juxtaposing passages so that variants become evident, and thereby also drawing attention to words or passages present in one text but not in the other—necessarily involves the potential for prejudicing interpretation, every effort has been made to present the materials neutrally. (XXXVII)

It is not so much the “prejudicing interpretation” toward one text or the other—which Warren generally does avoid—but his approach to multiple versions of texts as artifacts of the authorial and social process and the subsequent inclusion of the reader in the collation—and interpretation—of variance that is part of a specific approach to textual and literary theory. Warren’s edition posits the question all parallel-text editions must address, if only at the level of the reader; that is, what are the uses of uncertainty? What interpretations can arise from this multivalent textual condition? One of the primary uses, clearly, is the foregrounding of the social production of texts. Such an edition need not function, as has been noted in the Piers and Legend texts, to the exclusion of authorial intention, but its primary concern is to represent the distinct social and historical circumstances of the particular texts.

Warren uses the metaphor of the intimate conversation to explain his use of the parallel-text form. “The aim has been to let the texts sit side by side conveniently,

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9 Howe discusses the productive questions which have emerges from the controversy surrounding the dating for the Beowulf manuscript and the uses of uncertainty.
commenting on each other, with their own variant states provoking insights beyond those of any one reader” (XXXIX). Warren places the editor in the position of host, and acknowledges that interpretation of the author’s intention is not a fixed goal for the editor, or even a desirable one; rather, that meaning will multiply in keeping with the number of readings. Warren disperses the role of editor from that of a single judge to a broad spectrum of critical readers. As an editor, Warren does not attempt to fix meaning, but rather attempts to provide a textual foundation for readers’ interpretations. In so doing, he invites the reader to assume the traditional role of the editor. But Warren’s editorial “neutrality” only goes as far as not expressly arguing for the validity of one text over the other: his editorial approach is clearly rooted in a particular theory of texts. As Warren explains, “This parallel-text version is intended to enable each individual to greet the materials in an accessible and relatively unmediated form. It is a tool for use” (emphasis his)(XXXIX). Clearly, Warren’s work parallels the post-structuralist fascination with “the relationship between tool and tool-makers” (Doss 215). Warren’s edition makes use of the parallel text as a tool for unearthing uncertainty by inviting:

participation in and contribution to further understanding. In an editorial and publishing economy that promotes books presenting ideal texts, books in which scholars talk of a Platonic text achieved by distilling the original from the various imperfect exemplars, this book is conceived as a Socratic text, one that engages the reader in a dialogue, in a process that leads along the paths of acquaintance and understanding. (XXXIX)
On a very pragmatic level, one of the functions a parallel-text edition can provide is that of Through Line Numbering (TLN). TLN was first introduced into Shakespeare studies by Charlton Hinman in his 1968 edition *The Norton Facsimile: The First Folio of Shakespeare*. Hinman’s edition provided a “standard scholarly reference that is independent of editorial variation” (Bertram 8) by consecutively numbering every typographical line in the Folio text of each play, including stage directions and dialogue. As various editions emended various lines, the ability to cite a passage by line number became impossible. Warren chose a related from—that of a Continuous Line Numbering (CLN)—which numbers each version independently, also counting all lines, including stage directions. Bertram and Kliman made use of TLN in their 1991 edition *The Three-Text Hamlet: Parallel Texts of the First and Second Quartos and First Folio*. They provide a numbering system in which every line is numbered according Hinman’s TLN for the Folio text. For Quarto 1, a line is left blank if there is no corresponding passage. e.g., Q1 has no line 460. Alternatively, the lines may appear out of order, e.g. in Q1 TLN 241 is followed by TLN 219 in Bertram and Kliman’s edition. While a TLN may be initially cumbersome to work with, it does provide scholars with a stable line-reference system as a means of aiding comparison of texts whose line ordering do not consistently match up—as in the case of the *Hamlet* texts where the order of F and of Q1 are substantially different. Parallel-text editors can also choose one text to serve as a kind of anchor while repeating, usually in italics in a third column, the differently ordered or transposed passage of the second text so that the corresponding passages can be viewed
side by side, even though they appear in different sections of their respective documents. Bertram and Kliman provide an extra column labeled “Q1 transpositions” in which they provide the passage from Q1 out of order from its manuscript so that it can be read directly across from its appearance in F or Q2. They also provide the Q1 line number so the reader can refer to it in the context of its surrounding lines or scene.

Other major parallel-text editions that followed Warren’s situated their editorial ideology more firmly in the conventional author-centered tradition. Both Rene Weiss’s *King Lear: A Parallel Text Edition* and the Bertram/Kliman *Hamlet* edition select texts based on an assessment of the texts’ authorial claims, albeit in varying degrees. Weiss uses a parallel text format to argue for F as a revised form of Q:

> The most we can safely say about Q and F *Lear* is that they differ in several important ways, and that these do not necessarily form part of a systematic revision [by Shakespeare]. But one of the most valuable results of the intensive investigation of the textual history of *Lear* has been the legitimizing of Q because it prints foul papers. (Weiss 34)

Weiss goes on to argue that a critical, eclectic edition—if one were to be made—“would now turn to Q rather than F for their copy-text” because the “holograph would rightly be preferred” (35). Weiss’s parallel-text edition, therefore, is not informed by any social theory of texts. Rather, his parallel-text version and his critical commentary both attempt to establish the basis for the authorial legitimacy of Q by placing its reading head to head with those of F. In this way, a parallel-text edition is used to
legitimize one text by drawing on, as it were, the authority of the more widely accepted text and by transferring that authority to the other text by means of comparison, proximity, and critical analysis.

**The Norton and Penguin *The Prelude***

Jonathan Wordsworth’s 1979 Norton edition of William Wordsworth’s *The Prelude*, includes a parallel text of the 1805 and 1850 versions as well as the 1799 two-book version (printed in a separate section). (See Figure 4.) The lack of the 1799 version in the parallel-text format, because of its shorter length, provoked D. C. Greetham to observe that “a parallel-text edition of all three would be visually awkward, though very illuminating” (*Textual* 401). Similar to J. C. Maxwell’s 1971 Penguin parallel-text edition of the 1805 and 1850 versions, the Norton edition presents each version as a clear reading text with periodic alignment of the versions at stanza breaks. Neither the Penguin nor the Norton, however, provide any explicit means of alerting the reader to variants between the two texts, leaving readers to sort the comparison out on their own. Because of the lack of horizontal parallelism, both the Penguin and Norton edition, as Greetham notes, “encourages each version to be read separately (i.e. vertically)” (*Textual* 401). Jonathan Wordsworth’s Norton edition provides footnotes that give historical and literary contexts but refrain, surprisingly, from providing any substantial textual commentary. Maxwell’s Penguin edition likewise provides, at the end of the edition, literary and historical notes followed by textual notes that “record all departures from the
1850 text” (567). These textual notes do not offer any detailed comparison of the two texts but rather deal exclusively with the 1850 text. As parallel-text editions, therefore, both of these editions provide very different reading experiences than do closely aligned texts such as Schmidt’s *Piers Plowman* edition, Warren’s *King Lear*, or the Bertram/Kliman *Hamlet*, and they function less effectively than parallel-text editions which facilitate contrastive analysis and which critically engage the reader with the variation between the two texts.

Nonetheless, the presentation of the two-text *Prelude* effectively constitutes a landmark in the development of parallel-text editions by disrupting the assumption that these two versions—separated by forty-five years of authorial revision—could adequately represent authorial intention in a single text. Since Ernest de Selincourt’s 1926 edition—the first scholarly edition to publish the 1805 version—it has become standard to refer to the 1805 *Prelude* and the 1850 *Prelude* and to assess the earlier version as equal if not superior to Wordsworth’s final authorial intention as expressed in the 1850 version. S. M. Parrish, one of the editors of the Cornell Wordsworth series, argues that “the long devotion of the poet to its shaping and revisions, and the resulting complexity and bulk of its variants have required three editions for the adequate realization of the aims stated above;” that is, to present the “earliest drafts down to the final lifetime (or posthumous) publication” (v). The Norton and Penguin texts provide an awareness of this complexity, and their editorial format stands to convey this textual multiplicity to students with the publication of these parallel-text editions in relatively
inexpensive paperback editions. As such, the Norton and Penguin serve to affirm the new-standard perception of the two, if not the three, versions as "radically different forms of the whole poem" (Maxwell 17). I would argue, then, that despite the seemingly comprehensive scholarship of the Cornell Wordsworth series and the two parallel-text editions of *The Prelude*, no critical parallel-text edition of the work yet exists which adequately serves students or scholars by providing aligned passages and an appendix of variants in one volume.

Part Two: Parallel-Texts and Material Philology

The preceding survey of parallel-text editions shows the range of approaches and it may serve to indicate some of the ideological underpinnings manifested by parallel-text editions. Although the parallel-text form is sometimes thought to be the bastion of "non-interventionist" or "disintegrationist" editors, parallel-text editions do not invariably contain facsimile transcriptions and, indeed, often present parallel eclectic editions, such as the *Piers* and *Wordsworth* editions, derived from different manuscript "families" rather than from individual texts. Contrary, perhaps, to some conceptions of parallel-text editing, principles of historicism are not a common ideology even among the form's most recent practitioners. However, a major implication of parallel-text editions, whether grounded in constructs of the author or constructs of the social aspect of texts, is their premise of indeterminacy. The field of indeterminacy may be limited to versions definitively linked with the author—as in the Norton *Prelude* and Weiss's *Lear* edition—
or may be broadened to include issues of literary production. Of the last, few parallel-text editions disavow the author as the focus of the edition, even, as in the case of Schmidt's *Piers*, when authorial governance of the individual versions is difficult to establish. Whether the texts presented in parallel are established as authorial, critical texts or, like Warren's *Lear*, represent single states of the text, all parallel-text editions express a kind of multivocality, a form which, in Bakhtinian terms, works as a kind of polyphonic literary form. According to Bakhtin, a multivocal novel "is constructed not as the whole of a single consciousness, absorbing other consciousnesses as objects into itself, but as a whole formed by the interaction of several consciousnesses, none of which entirely becomes an object for the other" (18). Parallel-text editions recognize a blurring of textual boundaries; as Foucault observes, the "frontiers of a book are never clear cut . . . it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences; it is a node within a network" (*Archeology* 23). Parallel-text editions exercise a particular form of such intertextuality, each forming a node, that is a text, within a network of the literary work. To clarify the term "work," I offer a definition based on the principles of Jerome McGann in which a "work" is defined as the global set of texts. A work is never complete as there will be continuing accretion, but it is recoverable at any point in time, at least theoretically, as it is based on material objects, that is, texts. In contrast, a "text" is a material, finite, physical object, composed of bibliographic and linguistic codes. In this schema, a text is equivalent to a document. It is never iterable; each new edition or reproduction is always different, always a new text.
To date, the parallel-text form, as this brief survey has demonstrated, has not been fully utilized as a tool for exploring the life and "essential drift" of a work (Derrida *Signature* 181) and has tended, not surprisingly, to remain author-centered and cautious about experimenting with new paradigms. I will argue that textual historicism forms a valid basis for parallel-text editing, not intended to replace editions centered on the author, but to provide additional avenues of textual inquiry that, while not ignoring the author as the creator of a text, study the uses, uncertainties, and appropriations of a given work. An over-reliance on the author as an organizing principle has produced editions whose claims for authority have obscured the continual re-representation of a literary work.

While parallel-texts, at least in medieval literary scholarship, have often been accompanied by an apology, there is also a growing recognition that "the intellectual momentum of the day favours a two-text approach" (Weiss 33), not only in Shakespeare scholarship (as Weiss was commenting on), but in literary editing generally as well as in linguistics and translation theory. As Roger Chartier has argued, if we want:

> to understand the appropriations and interpretations of a text in their full historicity we need to identify the effect, in terms of meaning, that its material forms produced. This perspective is radically different from all approaches that hold the production of meaning to result solely from the impersonal and automatic functioning of 'language.' (2)
Chartier adds that the “most ambitious (and also the riskiest) approach aims at identifying the major changes that have upset the modes of the inscription and transmission of discourse” (2). Chartier’s work reverberates with the sensibilities of the “New Philology,” theorized (although not necessarily under this rubric) by scholars such as Bernard Cerquiglini, David Hult, and Stephen G. Nichols. Nichols prefers the term “material philology,” to define a practice which seeks to contrast the material text with an “ideal” form. Identified by Rupert Pickens as the “source text” for the New Philology (64), Cerquiglini’s In Praise of the Variant (L’Eloge de la Variante) is dedicated to Foucault, and the influence of Foucault on Cerquiglini’s work is strongly apparent. In what can only be called an ode to medieval sensibilities, Cerquiglini identifies medieval literary practices as an “aesthetics of return” which, rooted in memory and oral practice, takes pleasure in experiences of sameness and subtle degrees of difference. Cerquiglini writes of this aesthetic as

a mental structure, the *habitus* shared by the huge collection of literate, half-literate, or paraliterate people who saw topical repetition as a creative act. In an aesthetics of return, where pleasure lay in variance, writing made minute shifts in what was already known, and the acts of reading and listening lent themselves to the vicissitudes of recognition and surprise” (37).

Whether Cerquiglini’s praise of the variant constitutes a serious philological practice or a political treatise, and whether the “New Philology” represents a genuinely “new”
approach are questions which have been subjects of much controversy. Paul Eggert and critics of the New Philology have observed that most “New Philologists” are, as Sarah Kay points out, “scholars with no track record as editors” (308). Kay asks the question:

if they are not editors, what are they? The answer seems to be that they are seeking to restore—or to reinvent—a philological discipline which is both anchored in postmodern thought, and which also loops back into a past before linguistics was born. (308)

Still, such a theoretical positioning does not adequately account for the lack of editions by these scholars. This is the work to be taken up in the present study of Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur* and in the presentation of new texts of the work—to bring to bear the theoretical basis of a material philology while engaged in the task of traditional philology; that is, to make an edition. One of the primary aims of such a “radically different” edition is to attempt to identify the “transmission of discourse” and the circumstances which produced the condition of alterity. Parallel-text editions, as one way to represent the theories of material philology, highlight the indeterminacy of both the editorial and transmission (or revision) process.

Peter Shillingsburg worries that “it is difficult to see what role the scholarly editor has when the ‘means of production’ is the legitimizing authority” (*Resisting* 152), while Paul Eggert similarly is concerned that the alternative to authorial agency is “to edit

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10 See Eggert and Wenzel and, for an excellent summary and analysis of the heated debate between traditional philologists. Nichols discusses the material text as a “medieval event.” Other relevant collections include Brownlee et al, Busby, and Paden.
irresponsibly . . . or not edit at all, leaving readers to deal as best as they can with, say, facsimiles” (101). Despite such concerns, more editions which include discursivity, but do not necessarily exclude agency, are certainly forthcoming. A recent contribution to "historicist" editions is Michael Rudick’s *The Poems of Sir Walter Ralegh: A Historical Edition* in which Rudick presents a “canon” of Ralegh’s work which includes different versions of individual poems, though not in parallel format, as well as poems with contested authority. Rudick casts himself as a textual “agnostic” (xv), making no claim to present the author’s intentions, but rather to provide the material inscriptions of the poems as a means of providing the transmission history or “story” of the “text’s various contextualizations” (xxv). He points out that “the aim of collations is to invite the reader to consider alternatives because they have their place in a material history that no single copy can represent adequately” (lxxviii) and goes on to argue “the double, even threefold presentation has the advantage of decreasing ponderous collations in the apparatus of any one text” (lxxvi). As Rudick argues, a historical “canon/text has the advantage of material existence, an object of study on its own terms” (xxvii) rather than editions which function as “idealized constructs” (xxix). To better understand such a historical positioning of an edition, it is essential to investigate the form of the parallel-text edition within the nexus of philology and theory, and the interaction of reader and editor.
Contrastive Analysis

One of the greatest practical strengths of the parallel-text edition, clearly, is its function of bringing two texts into close proximity so as to foster the process of contrastive study. As Dan Embree and Elizabeth Urquhart point out in setting out their rationale for a parallel-text edition for *The Simonie*:

> to publish three separate editions would simply make the task of comparison physically awkward; to 'restore' the archetype would be to discard dozens of stanzas and scores of lines of Middle English verse; to combine all the stanzas of all three versions into a single 'composite' edition would be to edit a text that never was. (58)

Intriguingly, Embree and Urquhart consider themselves “scribes—not revisers” (59), thus situating their enterprise within the theoretical boundaries of material philology—with a historicist-oriented commitment to representing the integrity of the manuscript.

Similarly, T. L. Burton argues that his decision to present *Sidrak and Bokkus* in a parallel-text form “has been made because this is the clearest and most convenient way to indicate the difference between the two school of English manuscripts” (xxi). Burton argues that producing a base text while recording the variants has “two serious disadvantages:” the obscuring of the differences between the two manuscript groups and the fact that such a presentations “would have made reconstruction of the text of manuscripts from the opposite school a laborious and time-consuming process” (xxii).

Bertram and Kliman, editors of *The Three-Text Hamlet*, argue that even facsimiles can
not serve the same function as a parallel-text editions and that, although they “have long been available,” the facsimiles “do not offer the convenience for direct comparison that may be found in a parallel-text format” (7).

Reading Parallel-Texts

Not all readers of parallel-texts find its contrastive format as easy to use as Embree and Urquhart; Rosamund Allen complains that “the parallel-text edition is clumsy in use, and leaves the reader doing his own editorial work; the editor risks his elaborate textual notes being ignored as the reader struggles to keep his places in a multiple of texts of the work” (13). Allen’s critique is well founded: the parallel-text editions exhibit a highly spatialized textual structure that requires different reading patterns than do the eclectic editions or “clear-reading” texts. Depending on how the texts are formatted, parallel-text editions force readers into consciously radial reading\(^\text{11}\), to greater degrees, as in the four-text Piers edition, or lesser degrees, as in the Wordsworth editions. Parallel-text editions may uncomfortably push the reader into a conscious exercise of what is typically unconscious—that is, an awareness of the directional flow of reading. But Allen overlooks, I believe, the kind of skipping that readers of scholarly editions engage in if they actively use the footnote or endnotes provided, engendering a strongly vertical reading of the page. This activity similarly pushes readers into a more laborious, highly abstract form of reading. To get a grasp of the mechanics of “reading”

\(^{11}\) McGann discusses “radial reading” in his chapter “How to Read a Book,” 101-128 in The Textual Condition.
context and thus engender what can be a demanding reading process. With the increase in the production of parallel-text translations, hypertext and electronic archive editions, and parallel-text book editions, readers are likely to become increasingly comfortable with and skilled in the kind of radial reading required for parallel-text editions of literary works. McGann observes that radial reading "is a function of the historicity of texts" (Textual 125) and notes that critical editions are "one of the most sociohistorically self-conscious of texts" (Textual 121). While Allen's critique of the parallel-text form identifies the form as cumbersome, it should also be noted that eclectic editions with their apparatus criticus require a different, though equally abstract, form of radial reading. The effort required to shift between two parallel texts horizontally can be less taxing and is certainly more conducive to a study of textual artifacts in extenso than that required to construct an abstract version based on the symbolical, quasi-formulaic variants provided in the apparatus criticus.

**Audience**

These spatial aspects of parallel-text editions suggest the question: who is the audience of a parallel-text edition? "Any attempt to answer that question seems to involve a further question: For whom is the text being edited?" (Edwards 97). The question of audience, clearly, is a major consideration in shaping the form of an edition. As we have seen above, parallel-text editions are now available in inexpensive "student

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12 Edwards discusses the essential editorial step of imagining and preparing for an edition's projected readers in "Editing and the Teaching of Alliterative Verse."
editions" such as the Penguin and Norton *Prelude* editions and Weiss’s *Lear*, while the Warren *Lear* and the Schmidt *Piers* are expensive library texts not affordable to all levels of libraries. While parallel-text editions such as Warren’s and Schmidt’s are largely aimed at a scholarly or specialist audience, the two Wordsworth parallel-text editions demonstrate that there is also a student audience for such editions. Such parallel-text editions can be profitably used in the classroom to disrupt singular readings of a work and to call attention to interpretive issues such as authorial revision, material culture, reception, and transmission. A significant flaw in the Wordsworth editions, in my view, lies largely in the lack of an accompanying critical essay to set the two texts in context for its assumed student-readers, much the same way that the *Riverside Chaucer* fails to address the presence of two texts for the prologue of the *Legend of Good Women*. An introductory essay along the lines of Tim Machan’s essay “Texts” in *Companion to Chaucer* would go a long way in making such a parallel-text a truly useful tool in the university classroom. Edwards asks, “What is the extent of the editor’s responsibility to make the audience aware not only of the indeterminacy of his or her text, but also of the extent of that indeterminacy” (“Editing” 97). Using my distinction between text (an individual document) and work (the global set of those texts), I would rephrase Edwards’s question to ask, “how does an editor make its audience aware of the multiplicity of a work’s textual history and of the indeterminacy of the work?” Parallel-text editors identify this responsibility as a central tenet of their editions. Warren claims that editions which foreground such indeterminacy invite
participation in and contribution to further understanding. In an editorial and publishing economy that promotes books presenting ideal texts, books in which scholars talk of a Platonic text achieved by distilling the original from the various imperfect exemplars, this book is conceived as a Socratic text, one that engages the reader in a dialogue, in a process that leads along the paths of acquaintance and understanding. (XXXIX)

Not all practitioners of the parallel-text edition see this indeterminacy as completely positive. Rene Weiss labels scholars who argue against the idea of a single King Lear text as belonging "to the new 'disintegrationist' school of King Lear scholarship" (1).

Nonetheless, this "Socratic" aspect of parallel-text editions presents the possibility for their productive use by students and their professors. Indeed, Michale Rudick's edition is in response, as he sees it, to a "felt need" (xvii) to "narrow the distance between Ralegh's ostensibly meager poetic canon and his major distinction as a national hero" (xvii). While editors of eclectic editions may legitimately argue that they provide a reading text that allows students to focus on the literary work itself, parallel-text editions can encourage students to explore the interpretive function of reading by foregrounding the way in which scribes, redactors, or editors interpreted the work. An awareness of scribal and early print transmission seems essential for students to gain a truer understanding of the nature of Middle English works and the literary culture in which they operated. Edwards's concern that such activity shifts the focus from work to text ("Editing") is valid only to the extent that such an activity might come to dominate all assignments.
within the class. Rudick sees his edition as proposing, for Ralegh's work, "a canon of possibilities" (xxix); such editions bring these possibilities into the classroom as central to the understanding of medieval and early modern works.

**A Fragmentary Form**

As Michael Warren observed, the effect of his edition of "cut-up" facsimiles of the quarto and folio induced a fragmentary representation of Shakespeare's play *King Lear*:

> I learned that the parallel-text format has a potential for distorting perception: the texts analytically distributed appeared a series of disjunctive fragments, and there was a need to establish or restore their wholeness. (VII)

To counterbalance this perception of fragmentation, Warren subsequently provides facsimiles of each of the two texts as whole, uncut, texts. But all editions represent—and "distort"—a work in various ways. While *The Prelude* parallel-text editions do not create this perception of fragmentation because of their bias away from aligning passages and presenting continuous stanzas, this effect can clearly be seen in Schmidt's *Piers* edition in which each page of the edition presents only one small section of the text in four different versions. Thus, the experience of reading the poem becomes an experience of a series of discrete passages separated from their immediate contexts. Parallel-text editions establish a binary (or more) physical field that acts in a disjunctive manner via the
process of a two-page horizontal reading. Parallel-text editions represent “a materialist hermeneutics” (McGann Textual 15) in which the reader is forced to encounter both the physical gap created by the gutter of the book and the hermeneutic gap created by the interpretive activity of reading two or more texts of a literary work.

Warren’s concern about “distorting perception” due to the fragmentary quality of his parallel-text edition—a condition which he fervently wished to avoid as a non-interventionist editor—is an integral aspect of all editions; it just occurs in different ways. McGann recently quipped that editorial representations should rightly be termed editorial “defonnations”¹³ and, though Warren might wish that it were otherwise, even transcriptional representations will alter perceptions of the work. In this regard, parallel-text editions are no different. Warren astutely recognizes, however, the quality of this particular editorial “deformation.”

Text, Work, or Works

Central to the paradigm of an edition as either a multiplying or unifying endeavor is the editor’s sense of whether he or she is working with two different texts (that is, variants of a single literary work) or two completely different literary works. Again, the term “text” is used to refer to the physical object and “work” to the global set of texts which constitute the larger, idealized sense of the work. In the wake of theorists such as Barthes, Derrida, and Foucault, editors began to work from the premise that each new act of inscription generated a new work. It makes sense to discuss here the basis of a

¹³ McGann used this term in a paper given at the 2000 MLA conference in Washington, D.C.
distinction, then, of what constitutes a literary "work." Any editor struggling with the textual history of more than one text must ask, as Warren does, "What is the work called King Lear?" (XI). The complexities of the concept of "work" provoked Foucault to ask: "How can one define a work amid the millions of traces left by someone after his death? A theory of the work does not exist . . ." ("Author" 104). Martin Heidegger's lament over the degenerative fate of literary works epitomizes the characterization of literary works as autonomous objects: "World-withdrawal and world-decay can never be undone. The works are no longer the same as they once were. It is they themselves, to be sure, but they themselves are gone by" (167). Heidegger's definition of a work of art, as an object, can not adequately embrace the less-easily defined borders of a literary work. Joseph Grigely provides a definition of work as "a nontangible idea represented by a sequential series of texts," (101) both authorized and non-authorized. Grigely's definition still contains elements of a unifying ideal in that it postulates a work that exists in some ideal realm beyond the physical manifestations of the texts which represent it. McGann proposes a more materialist approach, defining a work as that which "comprehends the global set of all the texts and poems which have emerged in the literary production and reproduction process" (Textual 32). The continuing process of accretion and deletion produces variants, errors, titles, passages, and contexts as represented in a material text. Thus, an edition such as Rudick's "historical edition," seeks to recover these moments of inscription, these acts of recontextualization of the work.
It is my contention that a great deal of confusion currently exists in the use of the terms “text” and “work” and that the concept of the non-iterability of inscription has been used, as in the case of Malory, to claim a kind of “divorce” between versions, with one text being postulated as the “authorial” work and other as a distinct work somehow less than or distantly related to the authorial work. In the debate over the Malory documents,¹⁴ editors such as P. J. C. Field argue that the Caxton edition is in fact an utterly different work than that presented in the Winchester manuscript, which Field argues is significantly closer to what Malory wrote. Field, following in the tradition of Vinaver, argues that Caxton so altered his received text that in fact his edition titled Le Morte Darthur is a different work than that represented in the Winchester manuscript. In this way, Field indicates that the Caxton is somehow not the “real” work. Endeavoring to acknowledge the impossibility of exact iterability and the inadequacy of any single, critical text for works with complex textual histories such as Piers Plowman, D. C. Greetham speculates that such works “may therefore have to be considered as related, but nonetheless separate works” (Textual Scholarship 356). When this model of “relationary works” is used to distinguish between texts of authority or “non-authority,” a stance Greetham clearly would not advocate, this separation into distinct works (especially in a world of scribal “publication”) runs the risk, if taken to its logical extreme, of claiming that each manuscript or text is a separate work. I believe this approach weakens a socio-

historical approach to editing in that it fails to acknowledge both a work’s Derridian “drift” and its role in socialized production and readership.

According to Weiss, Stanley Wells’s 1986 Oxford Complete Shakespeare was “the first major edition of the works [of Shakespeare] to treat Q and F as two different texts” (Weiss 1). There should be no question that Q and F are two different texts; the question at hand is whether they constitute two different works. Weiss further observes that Wells “belongs to the new ‘disintegrationist’ school of King Lear scholarship, an influential group of textual scholars, critics and editors who have argued since the late 1970’s that there is no ideal single King Lear text; rather there are two different texts” (Weiss 1). Weiss’s use of the word “texts” is emblematic of the unspecified use of the term in literary studies to mean, at various times, either a particular inscription or the more abstract sense of a work. The Q and F are, indisputably, two different texts; to recognize them as distinct textual iterations is essential, but I argue that the Quarto King Lear and the Folio King Lear are indeed part of the same “work,” representing distinct textual instances of that work. In the case of King Lear, Q and F represent two different versions of the work—each represented by a different text; the work is defined by the accretion of textual versions.

As Robert Sturges succinctly puts it: “Print turns a work into a text” (117). Scribal manuscript inscription similarly instantiates a work. Sturges further defines a work as “the totality of a given literary discourse” (112) while also disavowing “the valorization of the work itself as an unchanging, autonomous object, at the expense of the
social forces that continue to shape it once it has been produced” (112). While Sturges rails against the “tyranny of the author” (112), my purpose is not to dislodge the author altogether, a critical tendency that has waned somewhat in recent years, but to propose instead that editions based on conceptions of the work are still an emerging editorial form. Peter Shillingsburg worries that “it is difficult to see what role the scholarly editor has when the ‘means of production’ is the legitimizing authority” (Resisting 152). This is a common concern among editors, but represents an underestimation of what shape editions may come to take as a new generation of editors begins to grapple with the editorial implications of a theorized philology and a material theory of texts.

Allen, firmly grounded in an authorial approach to editing, speculates that, the more editions we have, with their editors’ informed conjectures . . . the closer we shall approximate to what the author wrote. Meanwhile the challenge of the eclectic method of editing, which must be the hardest to operate . . . is, for [The Awntyrs off Arthure] at least, a better means of uncovering and appraising the effects of the original poem than other editorial methods. (25)

[15] Eggert argues that the place of the author in editing has been challenged by deconstructionists and materialist but that it continues as the only practical model for editing. Eggert’s discussion is excellent, though I challenge his conclusion that editions based only on a concept of the author are viable.

[16] See Rudick as one example of new editions exploring models other than authorial intention as the basis for the edition.
While I agree with Allen’s call for more editions, it is hard to concur with her evaluation of the eclectic method as “better,” though it certainly may be valid for Allen’s particular aims. As Ralph Hanna III has wryly pointed out:

editions are composed to communicate texts, and the fundamental choice of editorial technique is not based on some property inherent in the materials edited but on the communication which the editor intends to effect. That is, editorial technique isn’t God-given or absolute but a fact about audience or about critical perspective. There is no one way to edit any text but a multiplicity of possible editions, limited only by the audiences with the money to purchase copies or the scholar’s ingenuity in discovering contexts into which the work might be placed. (“Problems” 87-88)

It may be a matter of taste as to which form a given scholar prefers for the close comparison of variant versions of multiple manuscripts. But, beyond matters of taste, editions inevitably reflect the politics, class, and nationality of the editor and/or publisher. Not all readers and all reading circumstances may comfortably accommodate the particular structures of the parallel-text edition.

Camille characterizes the discourse about electronic editions, with their capacity for image reproduction, as a “dream of a return to a ‘natural’ mode of text reception (as if all textuality were not something totally constructed) . . .” (46). All editors, whether of print or electronic editions, dream of a transparent representation of “the text itself.”
Hanna exposes the dream and, in the aftermath of this awakening, it is possible to imagine a range of editions, ones which foreground the author, redactor, dramatic performers, scribes, or readers—not as a means to construct an ideal text, but which provide "more odd texts" and a broad field in which to consider the interplay of a literary work and its embodiment in print or hypertext.

**Electronic Editions**

Electronic editions offer unique ways to represent works and texts. Extensive study has been made of the place of humanities texts in the electronic medium\(^\text{17}\) and several major projects have been mounted which explore alternative means of presenting, "distintegrating," or editing literary works.\(^\text{18}\) Central to the capabilities of electronic editions is the ability to view digital images of manuscript pages side by side, usually in concurrent but separate windows, possibly supplied with modern transcriptions, in order to compare multiple manuscript versions. Few electronic editions of literary works to date provide an actual parallel-text format through the use of scrollable frames,\(^\text{19}\) but "virtual" parallel-texts are easily created by the viewer who opens and aligns multiple windows containing the different texts. One notable use of the contrastive function is

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\(^{17}\) See Finneran, Bornstein and Tinkle, Lanham, Shillingsburg, Landow and Bolter.


\(^{19}\) See my and Trudy Mercer’s electronic, parallel-text edition of Margaret Fuller’s Summer on the Lakes in 1843 http://courses.washington.edu/hum523/fuller/.
contained within the “Reading Room” of MIT’s *Hamlet on the Ramparts* site.\(^\text{20}\) One of the limitations of parallel-text or virtual parallel-texts in the electronic medium is the restricted amount of available screen space—the presentation typically loses line breaks once the texts are put side by side. Furthermore, texts need to be printed out or re-copied into the user’s computer files in order to be “scriptable” for the individual, that is, able to be written upon, altered, edited, and commented upon, much less meet the hypertext ideal of a collective scriptability.

As a result of the ubiquitous presence of the electronic medium, Sven Berkits in “The Fate of Reading in the Electronic Age” expresses his concern that “we are adapting ourselves to the ersatz security of a vast lateral connectedness” (111-12). While I do not share Berkits concern, his critique does underscore the lateral nature of reading electronic editions via the qualities of hypertext, links, and multiple open windows. In this way, parallel-texts perform similarly in the print media but are also suited—by their disruption of linearity—to electronic media. Phillip Doss observes that in “allowing escape from the context of a single documentary sequence, hypertext allows a reader to escape the linearity imposed by print media” (218). Some of the claims for hypertext have been hyperinflated: it is not only the electronic medium but the editorial approach that governs the mutability of the form. Richard Lanham describes the electronic medium as a “bi-stable oscillation” (55). This oscillation is not limited to the electronic edition although, certainly, the magnitude of the oscillation greatly expands in the electronic media. In

fact, print-based parallel-text editions are an example of the way in which electronic forms have influenced print forms—not necessarily in initiating the form (the parallel-text form, as has been discussed has a long history in medieval editing)—but in reinscribing it in a post-structuralist context in which a single text is decentered, where multiple valences intersect, where material culture and previously discarded texts are excavated, and where textual instability is the basis for new theories of textuality. Greetham sees such mutability as the very appeal of electronic editions and that the promise of poststructuralist theory is epitomized in the possibilities presented by electronic editions. According to Greetham, “postmodernist literary editing forbids the sort of closure that the ‘definitive editions’ actively sought, and we are now able (through electronic variation) to accomplish this deferral . . . ” (“Alterity” 542). Greetham argues that the facilities of preservation of manuscripts through digital archiving can also become a facility through which the play of representation may occur. According to Greetham, “electronic, reader-driven editions” can “achieve the flexibility and lack of closure that difference observes” (“Alterity” 543). Greetham sees electronic editions are carrying forth two features of medieval texts: the dual iconic/lexical semiotics of the page and the potential for scriptability which scribes provided via the gloss of medieval manuscripts. As hypertext theorist George Landow has observed:

As readers move through a web or network of texts, they continually shift the center—and hence the focus or organizing principle—of their investigation and experience. Hypertext . . . provides an infinitely
recenterable system whose provisional point of focus depends upon the reader, who becomes a truly active reader in yet another sense. (36)

A parallel-text edition can also function in this realm of requiring a truly active reader, whether it is a parallel-text in print or hypertext. It is no coincidence that parallel-texts have increased as readers have learned to adroitly manipulate this kind of radial reading.

Jerome McGann has observed, from “a traditional scholar’s point of view, an ideal scholarly edition of a literary work would marry the respective virtues of facsimile editing and critical editing . . . grounded in primary textual materials (“Rosetti” 145). McGann sees electronic editions as especially conducive to effecting such a fusion because of the limitations of print editions. A similar critique of electronic editions (be they archives or editions) as of print parallel texts is that they cannot merely function as documentary repositories—ghettos of a “profusion of textual material” (Duggan “Unrevolutionary” 83). Scholarly parallel-text editions, in book or electronic form, need to provide sound scholarly support: introductory content, alignment of passages, a system of cueing readers to variants, commentary on the interpretive gap between the documents. C. M. Sperberg-McQueen states “it is emphatically not enough to provide the full text of each witness to the text, without providing collations and information on their relationships” (44). This has been a fair criticism, and occasional mischaracterization, of parallel-text editions and, as these two forms co-exist and co-develop, will be an aspect of the form that needs stronger development. In the nineteenth century, Frederick Furnivall also noted the importance of including critical commentary to accompany his parallel-
text: “tentative as the results I have got-to, must necessarily be, I yet do not like to send out Part I of my Parallel-Text Edition of the Minor Poems for the Society, without saying something about the contents of it, and the notions I have formed ... as to the sequence of Chaucer’s works.” (Trial Forewords 5). For Furnivall, judgment arose out of the parallel-text edition’s representation of material texts.

**Editing Middle English Texts**

Jennifer Fellows’s article, “Author, Author, Author ... An Apology for Parallel Texts” is justly praised by Douglas Moffat as “one of the few efforts to articulate a rationale for parallel-text editing in Middle English” (40). Fellows tentatively asks, “is it perhaps more pertinent to an understanding of medieval culture to concentrate on what was actually read than to pursue the elusive chimaera of original authorial intention?” (15). Noting that parallel-text editions have long been in use, Moffat cites Madden’s edition of La3amon’s Brut as one which exemplifies what has been a problem of the form: “the failure of editors to do much more than offer transcriptions of the versions” (41). Moffat cautiously argues that parallel-texts can be “justified” in situations “where codicological damage has resulted in a substantial loss of what would otherwise be a preferable version” (41). And this in what claims to be a defense of the form. Moffat clearly sanctions an editorial organizing principle centered primarily on authorial intent. The theoretical justification for parallel-text editions, he argues:
would be that the decision to offer a parallel-text edition, when not forced on the editor by manuscript damage, is a declaration either that the authorial text is unrecoverable, which is, in fact, the best-text edition, or that a variety of authorial, or quasi-authorial, texts exist. (42)

Moffat strives to reconcile parallel-texts as “at one with the other traditional options available to the editor of Middle English works” (42) by relating the form to best-text editing and by allowing how it may be the best approach when the authorial text is “unrecoverable.” In contrast to Moffat, Edwards recognizes the value of “the analysis of social pressures on the shaping of texts” (“Editing Middle English” 197). He notes that the existence of such pressures “has long been recognized in medieval texts, mediated as they were through scribes and redactors often clearly engaged by the materials they were copying” (197). Edwards goes on to mention the study of the shaping of texts is “of considerable interest in appreciating the reception of a work” (198) but then retreats somewhat by offering this caveat:

But from an editorial point of view there are inherent dangers in such preoccupations. An interest in the work of scribes and redactors can lead to the displacement of the editor and the author by a concern with the activities of later copyists . . . The identification and analysis of the pressures that led to the reshaping of a text by later hands remains a proper form of discrimination. In isolation, however, such activity leads merely to a study of the decomposition of a text. (“Editing Middle English” 198)
Edwards’ focus on textual transformations as a study of decomposition harks back to a Heideggerian sense of decay, as opposed to a dynamic study of use. But it is well to remember that most medieval writers, including Malory, can hardly be considered pure points of originary genius from which a text singularly was created. In addition to being “auctors” in the framework of St. Bonaventure’s definition, they were also translators and redactors, recasting the materials that preceded them. I take seriously Hanna’s warning that “the scholar who seeks not to judge must ultimately refuse to analyze the record and thereby conflate, in one of two ways, two different agents, author and scribe.” (Pursuing History 16). But there are ways to mitigate this conflation, notably through the inclusion of strong introductory essays that situate the texts in a historical context and that actively resist such conflation: the judgment in a parallel-text shifts from that of aesthetics to that of use. In his chapter “Alterity and Editing Middle English Literature,” Greetham argues that “it is the otherness or alterity of the text, medieval or modern, that confronts the contemporary critic and editor” (Transgression 518-9). The condition of a hermeneutic alterity\(^{21}\) forms the theoretical basis of parallel-text editions. In “The Uses of Uncertainty,” Nicholas Howe identifies a division amongst Beowulf scholars: between those engaged in the technical aspects of language and manuscript study and those primarily working from a historicist or cultural approach. Parallel-text editions can broach this divide between editions and literary theory, serving the interest of historically-oriented editors and readers by proposing questions of materiality, readers,

\(^{21}\) Spiegel discusses the function of such a hermeneutic.
only serviceable method when a "clear relationship of one text to an author" does not exist or if neither of the two versions to be presented in parallel-text form show evidence of "debasement" (24). Fellows's essay in the end becomes, indeed, little more than an apology. Her argument stops far short of offering a theory of parallel-text editions that is any different from the traditional position: that editors should seek to create texts which represent, as best as possible, authorial intention.

Having considered the kinds of textual and theoretical questions that parallel-text editions, as distinct from eclectic or single-text diplomatic editions, seek to propose and answer, I propose a parallel-text edition for the Roman War accounts in the Winchester manuscript and Caxton's printed book. The following chapter will provide a detailed textual history and examine the relationship of the two texts.22 The two versions of the Roman War account are ideally suited to the form of a parallel text edition and pose a significant textual controversy meriting such an editorial treatment. A parallel-text edition may interrogate the two texts as integral to an understanding of the work, and it may acknowledge the intertwined textual history of the two witnesses as a rich source for understanding what has come to be known as Le Morte Darthur. Such an editorial position is not necessarily one which "easily slip[s] into an anti-aesthetic stance" (Berman 168) but rather a move to widen the field of editorial practice to introduce editions based on material publication and to recognize that editions suit particular textual

22 See also Field, Malory: Text and Sources.
and socio-historical purposes. Signifying a crossroad in the overlapping borderlands of manuscript and print culture, the contribution of Malory's work to our understanding of that borderland has often overlooked in the effort to establish a single authoritative text. As Chartier argues, one method of critically analyzing the way in which the form of texts affects their possible meanings is to decipher "different but contemporary modes of circulation and sorts of representation of a 'same' work" (3). In this way, the parallel-text edition of the two Malory documents from the fifteenth century tracks this circulation and representation and seeks not to correct their differences but to study them. Establishing authorial intent is clearly a legitimate mode of inquiry; searching for the "transmission of discourse" is another mode, equally legitimate, that need not be preconditioned. Despite claims that material philology has not produced editions and that there has been recourse to the author recently in terms of editorial theory, more editions which explore some of the possible representations of historical documents and the aesthetic of variance are yet to come. The time is ripe for editions which seek to operate out of the theory and principles of a material philology. It is my intention that this discussion should provide a basis for a better understanding of how these editions function and how they can meet the needs of scholars and students.

23 See Eggert.
General Principles for Parallel-Text Editions:

1. **Integrity.** Parallel-text editions should be based on a careful study of the relevant texts and should be grounded in consistent principles.

2. **Usability.** Parallel-texts editions should have a clear, organized format that enhances the function of contrastive analysis.

3. **Alignment of passages.** Parallel-text editions should provide a system of aligning passages in order to facilitate comparison. Parallel-text editions should also provide a system to enable comparison of differently ordered passages, ideally in a side by side format.

4. **Critical context.** Parallel-text editions should be accompanied by essays which grapple with the social transmission of the texts and which attempt to account for the textual and interpretive gaps. Such essays should clearly articulate a theoretical and editorial position: a theory of the texts.

5. **Clear statement of editorial procedures.** Often accompanying editions as a "Note in the Text," this part of the edition should address the editorial principles employed. To provide the most accurate representation of the manuscripts, the editor should provide a clear explanation and notation of all changes. No silent emendations.

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24 The basic framework of these principles is based on Shillingsburg's "General Principles for Electronic Scholarly Editions" in "Principles for Electronic Archives, Scholarly Editions, and Tutorials," 30.
6. **System of noting differences.** Ideally, the editor should provide a system to cue the reader to substantive differences between passages in the two texts. An index which organizes these differences for further analysis could be provided.

7. **Through Line Numbering (TLN) or Continuous Line Numbering (CLN).**

While not all parallel-text editions are documentary, one of the pragmatic functions of such editions can be the establishment of a TLN system for the texts based on the historic documents. While TLN is better suited in some ways to verse than to prose, for disputed texts such as the Roman War account where scholars need to work in a closely comparative mode, TLN facilitates such contrastive analysis.

8. **Electronic editions.** Parallel-text editors should consider the way their edition might function in the electronic media and consider the implications of hypertext and the processes of radial reading.
To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
For fere of nyght, so hateth she derknesse.

Hire chere is pleynly spred in the brightnesse
Of the sonne, for ther yt wol unclose.
Allas, that I ne had Englyssh, ryme or prose,
Suffisant this flour to preye aryght?
But helpeth, ye that han konnyng and myght,
Ye lovers that kan make of sentement;
In this cas oghte ye be diligent
To forthren me somwhat in my labour,
Whethir ye ben with the leef or with the flour.
For wel I wot that ye han her-biforn
Of makyng roopen, and lad awey the corn,
And I come after, glenyng here and there,
And am ful glad yf I may fynde an ere
Of any goodly word that ye han left.
And thogh it happen me rehercen eft
That ye han in your fresche songs sayd,
Forbereth me, and beth nat evele apayd,
Syn that ye see I do yt in the honour
Of love, and eke in service of the flour
Whom that I serve as I have wit or myght.

[CF. LL. 188–96, BELOW]

She is the clerennesse and the verray lyght
That in this derke worlde me wynt and lededeth.
The hert in-withe my sorwfull brest yow dreedeth
And lovesth so sore that ye ben verrayly
The maistresse of my wit, and nothing l.
My word, my werk ys knyt so in youre bond
That, as an harpe obeyeth to the hond
And maketh it souene after his fyngerynge,
Ryght so move ye oute of myn herte bringe
Swich vois, ryght as yow lyst, to laughe or
pleyne.
Be ye my gide and lady sovereyne!
As to myn erthly god to yow I calle,
Bothe in this werk and in my sorwes ale.
But wherfore that I spak, to yive credence
To olde stories and doon hem reverence,

Thanne closeth it, and draweth it to reste,
So sore it is afered of the nyght.
Til on the morwe that it is dayes lyght.
This dayesye, of alle floures flour,
Fulfyld of verru and of alle honour,
And evere ylike fayr and fresh of hewe,
As wel in wynter as in some newe,
Fayn wolde I preysen, if I coude aryght;
But wo is me, it lyth nat in my myght.

For wel I wot that folk han here-beform
Of makyng roopen, and lad awey the corn;
[And] I come after, glenyng here and there,
And am ful glad yf I may fynde an ere
Of any goodly word that they han left.
And if it happe me reherse eft
That they han in here freshe songs sayd,
I hope that they wole nat ben evele apayd,
Sith it is seyd in fortheryng and honour
Of hem that eyther serven lef or flour.
For trysteth wel, I ne have nat undertake
As of the lef agayn the flour to make,
Ne of the flour to make agyn the lef,
No more than of the corn agen the shef;
For, as to me, is lefer non, ne loother.
I am witholde yit with never nother;
I not who serveth lef ne who the flour.
That nys nothyng the entente of my labour.
For this werk is al of another tonne,
Of olde story, er swich strif was begonne.

But wherfore that I spak, to yeve credence
To bokes olde and on hem reverence.

Figure 1: The Riverside Chaucer parallel-text of The Legend of Good Women.
Thenne gan Gloten to grete ant gret sorwe made
Al for ys lyther lyf that a lueded yddel,
Ant avoued faste — ‘For eyn hungur or for furste,
Schalwere fysh vp on the Fryday deyfen in my wombe
Ar Abstinence myn auntie hauze ye me lese —
Ant yet hath he hated me al my lyf tyme!’

‘This shewyng shrilt,’ quod Repentance, ‘shal be meryt to be.’
And panne gan Glotten greete, and gret doel to make
For his hiper lif pat he lyved yddle,
And avoued faste — ‘For hunger or for furste,
Shal neuer fysh on pe Fryday deyfen in my wombe
Til Abstinence myn auntie hauze ye me lese —
And yet hauve I hided hire al my lyf tyme!’

Thanne cam Sleupe al bladered, wip two slymed eijen,
‘I meste sitte,’ seide pe seyge, ‘or elle sholdie me nape;
I may not stonde ne stoupe ne wipnoote stoele knelle.
Were I broght abside, but if my tailende is made,
Sholdie no ryngynge do me ryse er I were ripe to dyne.’

He bigan Benedictice with a bolk, and his brest knokked,
And raxed and rode, and rutte as pe laste.
‘What, awake, renke! quod Repentance, ‘and rape bee to shrifyt!’

‘If I sholdie deye bi his day,’ quod he, ‘me list nougyt to loke.
I can neyxt parfitly my Pateramater as pe preest is synged.
But I kan rymes of Robyn Hode and Randolf Erle of Chester,
As neyxt of Oure Lord ne of Oure Lady pe leeste pat euere was maked.

PASSUS VII

Thenne cam Sleuith al byslobered, with two slimed ystes;
‘Y meste sitte to be shryeue or elles sholdie Y nape;
Y may nat stande ne stoupe ne wipnoote stoele knelle.
Were Y brouthe in my bed, but yf yf my tailende is made,
Sholdie no ryngynge do me ryse til Y were ripe to dyne.’

A bigan Benedictice with a bolk and his brest knokked,
Roxelle and romede, and roste as pe laste.
‘What, awake, renke!’ quod Repentance, ‘and rape bee to shrifyt!’

‘Y Y sholdie deye be his day,’ quod he, ‘Y drede me sore;
Y can nat parfitly my Pateramater as pe prest hit synged;
Y can rymes of Robyn Hode and of Randolf Erle of Chester,
As Oure Lord ne of Oure Lady pe leeste pat euere was maked.

Figure 2: A. V. C Schmidt's parallel-text of Piers Plowman
1805. Book Fourth

Unknown among these haunts in former days.

The very garments that I wore appeared
To prey upon my strength, and stopped the course
And quiet stream of self-forgetfulness.

Something there was about me that perplexed
Th' authentic sight of reason, pressed too closely
On that religious dignity of mind
That is the very faculty of truth,
Which wanting—either, from the very first
A function never lighted up, or else
Extinguished—man, a creature great and good,
Seems but a pageant playing with vile claws,
And this great frame of breathing elements
A senseless idol.

This vague heartless chase
Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange
For books and nature at that early age.

’Tis true, some casual knowledge might be gained
Of character or life; but at that time,
Of manners put to school I took small note,
And all my deeper passions lay elsewhere—
Far better had it been to exalt the mind
By solitary study, to uphold
Intense desire by thought and quietness,
And yet, in chastisement of these regrets,
The memory of one particular hour
Doth here rise up against me. In a throng,
A festal company of maids and youths,
Old men and matrons, staid, promiscuous rout.

A medley of all tempers, I had passed
The night in dancing, gaiety and mirth—
With din of instruments, and shuffling feet,
And glancing forms, and tapers glittering.

And unaimed prattle flying up and down,
Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there
Slight shocks of young love-like interspersed
That mounted up like joy into the head,
And tingled through the veins. Ere we retired,
The cock had crowed, the sky was bright with day.

—De Selincourt draws attention to Coleridge’s later definition of reason as “the mind’s eye,” “an organ bearing the same relation to spiritual objects as the eye bears to material and contingent phenomena” (CC, IV, i, pp. 152-57).

1. As with the floating island of 315, 339-43, Wordsworth’s image contains a specific reference. Owen points out (“Peas’s Tiger,” NL, CXXV (1970), pp. 375-80) that he had in mind a near life-sized model of a tiger savaging a white man, captured at the fall of Serigapatta, India, in 1999, and on show at the East India Company in London. The tiger is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

2. Discouraging, depressing.

3. I.e., the study of human behavior.

4. “Promiscuous rout”: varied company; both words are used in a Miltonic sense.

5. Temperaments.

6. The omission of 1805, lines 282-86, 299-90, 295-94, makes for an easier lead into the conclusion scene that follows.
Chapter Two:
"Alas! Who may truste thys world?:
A Textual History of the Winchester Manuscript
and the Caxton Printed Edition

Unlike many medieval works, Malory’s Arthuriad has benefited from intense
textual study, not only of the surviving manuscript witness, but also of the early printed
versions of the work. While the focus of this scholarship has been the establishment of a
putatively authorially-intended text, this focus has also resulted in significant scholarly
attention to Caxton’s printed text and, to a lesser degree, that of Caxton’s successor,
Wynkyn de Worde’s 1498 edition. The focus of the work on the Caxton and de Worde
editions has primarily been to definitively establish Caxton as the editor (or, alternatively,
to exonerate him from the editing) with rather less investigation of the printed text as an
important artifact of the work’s transmission. In The Making of Middle English, David
Matthews argues for the importance of studies which

invest in the history of the transmission of Middle English texts via print
technology. This would mean more study of the reception, transmission,
and use of Middle English texts in order to say, among other things, what
people did with these texts at different times. (195)

Matthews also observes that the “New Philology” of recent years “has so far always
come back to editing as a central concern, which would therefore suggest that a
recentering of early editions in the field of analysis is due” (xxi). This chapter is
concerned with precisely this field of analysis, specifically with the textual history and
dialogic relation of the unique copy of the Winchester manuscript and the Caxton edition,
as it survives in two copies. While David Matthews expresses concern that the textual transmission of works once they reach print is "increasingly neglected" (xv), he also identifies a central problem with author-based editions, which establish a text based on the earliest manuscript:

No matter how problematically it does so, the manuscript is thought to put us in contact with an original, medieval text . . . . However true it often is that early editions involve wild departures from the manuscripts, something is lost when they are ignored. (xv-xvi)

The "something" which Matthews laments is the cultural, political and literary life of a work—the literary work in dynamic interaction with readers. In addition, the preference for the readings of the manuscript witness, while an important emphasis, has had the effect of eclipsing study of the reader or the social history of the text. It is clear that the text presented in the manuscript, if it is closer in time to the author's life, may possibly represent a state of the text, which is "closer" to what the author wrote and "intended," if indeed such intent can ever be determined. Just how much closer, or what stages of intervention lie between the author's holograph and the manuscript, we cannot say with certainty. This textual stance, which seeks to recover an authorial version, echoes the perspective of Sir Lancelot upon hearing of Arthur's death: "Sir Lancelot's heart almost brast for sorrow, and Sir Lancelot threw his arms abroad, and said, 'Alas, who may trust this world'" (Cowen 524). Or, as it appears in the Winchester: "syr Launcelottes hert
almost braste for sorowe, and sir Launcelot threwe hys armes abrode, and sayd, ‘Alas! Who may truste thys world?’ (Vinaver, *Works* 1254)

Scholars interested in establishing an authorial work often adhere to what Eugene Vinaver termed a “mistrust of texts” (“Principles” 352), which is to ask, “who may trust in this text?” If the object of study, however, is the “activity of intelligence” (Pearsall 95) of editors and readers, a focus on the material artifacts forms the basis of inquiry. This is not to say that the material text is to be accepted as an unquestioned authority, rather that it be accepted as an historical artifact and a tool for inquiry into the social history of the work. Ivo Kamps has argued the major contribution of materialist criticism has been its “recognition that literary criticism is an activity inescapably replete with ideological values” (2) and this assumption underlies the ideology of much of the present study.

Editions of *Le Morte Darthur* or *Works* have never been examined in terms of the ideological representations of editions\(^1\): therefore, the production of editions of Malory in the fifteenth and twentieth centuries and a cultural materialist study of these editions forms the basis of the present study. In the case of Malory, we are fortunate to have three versions from the fifteenth century, allowing a study of the work as it entered into late fifteenth-century English literary culture at the cusp of print technology. This chapter also studies the work as it appeared in 20\(^{th}\) century editions, with particular emphasis on Vinaver’s edition, *Works*, and what textual uncertainties remain, despite the apparently

\(^1\) Gaines’s anecdotal bibliography does provide many interesting details of the commercial transactions involving the early texts and a very useful discussion of the editors and the publication history of the various editions; Meale considers the way in which the critical judgments of Malory editors shaped their editions as a “hoole book” or as individual tales; and Edwards provides a reception history in “The Reception of Malory’s *Morte Darthur*."


definitive three-volume edition, now in its third edition, revised by P. J. C. Field. In particular, this chapter is concerned with the ideology of editing practiced in the mid-twentieth century and which formed the basis of the two major twentieth-century editions: Vinaver's *Works* and James Spisak's Caxton-based edition. This textual history addresses the critical response to those editions and looks ahead to "post-Vinaver" editions of Malory, particularly the parallel-text edition of the Roman War account that accompanies this study.

**Description of the Texts**

The Winchester manuscript,² spectacularly identified by Dr. William F. Oakeshott in 1934, was bound into one volume with other texts and was part of the library of Winchester College. Composed of 473 folios, the manuscript has two quires missing, one from the beginning and one from the end of the codex, with an additional three leaves lost from the body (Ker ix), none of which occur in the Roman War account. Written in the hand of two scribes, personal names and some place names appear in red ink, creating the most distinctive feature of the manuscript. Three- or five-line letters with floral flourishes marks divisions in the narrative, but the manuscript is otherwise undecorated. The hand of the scribe B, who was responsible for most of the central portion of the manuscript, which includes the Roman War tale, is a form of the secretary hand "introduced from France a century earlier" (Ker xv). The final colophon states

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² Vinaver and Ker provide complete descriptions of the Winchester manuscript in their Introductions. See also Gaines and Yeats-Edwards for additional descriptions of the manuscript and its provenance. Meale provides a description of the visual features of the manuscript.
that Malory finished the work “in the ix yere of the reygne of kyng edward the fourth,”
thus the surviving manuscript cannot pre-date 1470 (Edward’s ninth regnal year was from
March 1469 to March 1470) (Meale 7). The orthography of the Winchester manuscript
has been deemed “characteristic of west Northamptonshire” (Field, “Caxton’s” 41) with
punctuation limited to virgules (/ or //), occasional punctus marks, and capital letters.
Field’s assessment of the Winchester is that it was “copied by two tolerably professional
hands on paper that was apparently not manufactured until [Malory] was dead”
(“Caxton’s” 45). The paper is dated after Malory’s death, with watermarks similar to
another document definitively dated to 1475. Thus, neither the Caxton’s text (printed in
1485) nor the Winchester was produced in Malory’s lifetime (he died in 1471).

The manuscript, now British Library MS Additional 59678, is divided into larger
sections than the printed edition, giving rise to Vinaver’s opinion that Malory wrote the
sections in a more or less independent fashion. Vinaver’s edition, reflecting his reading
of the arrangement of the manuscript, divided the work into eight sections comprising a
total of forty-three tales. The Winchester manuscript is also glossed with brief
summaries, a little discussed feature of the manuscript. Like the place-names, the glosses
are written in red ink and, in the case of the Roman War account, for example, serve as
place-markers for narrative events with typical phrases such as “The deth of Sir Gaynis”
(f. 79v). Meale notes a more frequent occurrence of glosses earlier in the manuscript,
primarily written by scribe A (9). The Roman War account, however, has eleven
marginal notes which note the death of key figures in the narrative and which were apparently provided by Scribe B.

The first printed edition, *Le Morte Darthur*, was typeset at William Caxton’s print shop near Westminster Abbey and issued on July 31, 1485. Caxton presented his text of Malory’s work in the form of a single volume consisting of 432 folios (863 printed pages) divided into 21 books with 507 chapter divisions. Caxton’s colophon states that the text was “by me deuyded in to xxi bookees chaptreyd and enprynted and fynysshed in thabby Westminster . . .” (Vinaver, *Works* 1260), thus acknowledging that the chapter divisions were imposed by him rather than by Malory. What level of editing this signifies is contested. In addition, Caxton included rubrics for each of the twenty-one books into which he divided the text. The rubrics provide a single sentence synopsis of the action of each of the chapter divisions of each book. For example, the first rubric of Caxton’s Book Five reads “How twelve aged Ambasyatours of Rome came to kyng Arthur to demaunde truage for Brytayne.” (Vinaver, *Works* 183).

The Caxton edition was composed with Caxton’s type 4*, an enlarged version of his type 4. Printed in gothic blackletter type, the book does not contain any illustrations, but each chapter and subchapter begins with a five-line and three-line woodcut letter, respectively. Punctuation is limited to virgules (/ or //), capitals and spacing. Two copies of Caxton’s edition survive: a complete copy housed in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, comprising of 432 leaves, and an incomplete copy at the John Rylands

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3 Needham provides a full description of the Caxton edition in his Introduction. See also Gaines’s and Spisak’s Introductions for additional descriptions of the physical text.
University Library in Manchester, England, missing 11 leaves. Two pages, in particular, contain significant variants, with bibliographer Hilton Kelliher of the British Library concluding that the Pierpont Morgan copy pages were reset sometime during the print run. Aside from these two pages, however, the two documents are nearly identical.

Wynkyn de Worde’s 1498 edition of Le Morte Darthur survives in a unique copy at the John Ryland’s University Library of Manchester. The original book consisted of 326 leaves, but twenty-two are now missing as was recently established by Tsuyoshi Mukai. De Worde’s colophon states that the edition is a “newel prynted” version of Caxton’s but the addition of twenty-one woodcut illustrations, the presentation of the printed text in double-columns and the addition of “comynalte” (common people) to Caxton’s list of intended readers mark the edition as envisaged for a broader audience and “reading-class” (Mukai 25). Edward Hodnett terms the woodcut illustrator the “Arthur cutter” and describes his woodcut illustrations as “markedly individual and amusing” (14). The change from a dense non-illustrated manuscript to a woodblock-illustrated, printed text represents a significant change in the literary production of Malory’s work and the de Worde editions need to be more fully explored for their role in circulating the work and for the semiotic exchange of images and text.4

Tsuyoshi Mukai has hypothesized, based on what he has determined to be de Worde’s regular editorial practice, that de Worde had access to Caxton’s copy-text and made corrections for his printed edition based on readings from this exemplar. This

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4 The woodcuts in de Worde’s Malory are discussed by Whitaker in “Illustrating Caxton’s Malory,” and in “The Illustration of Arthurian Romance.”
process of correction implies that de Worde’s edition may truer to the earlier copy text in certain passages. The Winchester manuscript, which has been identified as remaining in Caxton’s shop at least until 1489 may, Mukai speculates, have been handed over to de Worde in 1491 when the business passed to him after Caxton’s death (31). But, Mukai argues, de Worde “preferred and turned to Caxton’s copy-text as a back-up copy” (38) rather than the Winchester as the basis for his corrections. Mukai’s research re-opens the possibility of a collateral relationship between manuscript and print: that is, that Caxton did not necessarily base his edition on the Winchester but on a now-lost fair copy. It is Mukai’s contention, then, that the de Worde edition may be the text closest to the fair-copy. An unstated implication of Mukai’s argument, then, must be a questioning of the greater authority asserted for the Winchester manuscript, at least for certain passages.

Prior to the recovery of the manuscript, William Caxton’s 1485 edition of Le Morte Darthur had been the primary witness to Malory’s work for over four hundred years. Based on what we know of his press, Caxton may have printed 500 copies of Le Morte Darthur (Riddy Sir Thomas Malory 8). Caxton’s edition, then, moved well outside of the kind of private ownership or personal circulation that marked manuscripts by authors such as Chaucer who, as Paul Strohm has pointed out, circulated his works among friends, court-affiliated officials, and fellow poets. The Winchester, in contrast did not have a large social history until the twentieth century. David Matthews notes that when a manuscript is produced, it copies a preexisting text, and itself can be copied, to produce a series of texts that can be imagined as having a
vertical relation to one another (as stemmatic diagrams suggest). Print technology, on the other hand, because it is a copy technology, produces texts not only in this vertical relation, but in the horizontal one as well.

(xix)

But this "horizontal" relationship of "allotexts" does not long remain undifferentiated. As David Matthews points out, printed texts, such as the Rylands and Newberry versions of the Caxton edition, "quickly begin to be differentiated from one another. They are marked by their social circumstances, just as any manuscript it" (xix). These are what Matthews calls both "the routine markings of the text," licensed and "unlicensed" (xix), both of which "inscribe the texts with the marks of its own individual history" (xx). Other than subsequent editions, and one sixteenth-century compilation of Arthurian deeds based on Malory, "no evidence survives of how contemporary readers responded to the work" (Edwards 243). Edwards has, however, identified ample evidence of the work's literary assimilation.

Four key attributes mark the major divergences of the Caxton edition from the Winchester manuscript:

1. A substantially shorter Roman War account (a topic taken up in the following chapter)
2. The modernization of linguistic features and orthography (such as the replacement of the thorn and yogh)
3. Chapter and book divisions provided by Caxton
4. The shortening or excising of Malory’s *explicit*.  

One of the most celebrated excisions is the self-referential explicit which concludes the first major section, “The Tale of King Arthur” in Vinaver’s edition:

Here endyth this tale, as the Freynshe booke seyth, fro the maryage of kynge Uther unto kyng Arthure that regned aftir hym and ded many batayles.

And this booke endyth whereas sir Launcelot and sir Trystams com to courte. Who that woll make ony more lette hym seke other bookis of kynge Arthure or of sir Launcelot or sir Trystrams; for this was drawyn by a knyght presoner, sir Thomas Malleorre, that God sende hym good recover. Amen. Explicit &c. (Vinaver, *Works* 180)

insights into the identity and status of Malory and a biographical context in which to better place his work.\(^5\) W. F. Oakeshott argues that the *explicit* in the Winchester “certainly derive in the form in which we now have them from Malory himself” (650).

The fuller *explicit* informed the conception of the Winchester as revealing Malory’s full intent both in terms of meaning and in terms of the division of the work. Most scholars have subsequently relied on Vinaver’s edition, which provides the full text of the Winchester *explicit*. However, subsequent work has demonstrated that Vinaver, too, made interpretive decisions for the divisions of the tales not always directly related to the indications of the *explicit* and rubricated letters of the manuscript (Evans, Meale, Cooper “Opening”).

In terms of linguistic variation, William Matthews notes several changes in the Caxton version from the Winchester, specifically in the Roman War account:

The prevalent grammatical inversions of the older text are largely replaced by a normal late fifteenth-century syntactical order; verbal inflections used in standard speech are regularly substituted for the frequent northern inflections of Winchester; and for most of the northern dialect words, which had either been transferred from the poem or added by Malory himself; the reviser usually employs words which were current in standard speech. (“Question” 106-7)

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\(^5\) Possible contenders for authorship have been Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revel, Warwickshire, championed by G. L. Kittredge, and a Yorkshire Sir Thomas Malory championed by William Matthews in *The Ill-Framed Knight*. Field argues convincingly for the Newbold Revel Malory in “Sir Thomas Malory, M.P.”
In addition, the “3” and “p” used in the Winchester are replaced, for the most part with “y” and “th,” respectively, though the “3” is also used to denote the letter “z” as in the word “Sara3ens.” While the excision of the explicits and the linguistic changes seem to promote the Winchester as the earlier text, the possibility remains, however unlikely, that the Caxton text derived from a manuscript that descended collaterally from the author’s original and could reflect earlier changes rather than Caxton’s editing.

Adding to the dramatic plot twists that characterized study of Malory’s work in the twentieth century is the textual forensic work of Lotte Hellinga who, in 1982, linked the Winchester manuscript to Caxton’s print house via the identification of extraneous type marks on the Winchester Manuscript. Hellinga employed infrared photography and other technologies to determine that the Winchester manuscript bore “offsets” that were identifiable as letter type from Caxton’s print shop and in use at the time that he printed Le Morte Darthur. Hellinga concludes that that there is a direct derivation between the two texts rather than the collateral relationship previously posited by Vinaver. According to Hellinga, “someone (either Caxton or another person) used the Malory manuscript . . . in order to prepare a revised version in manuscript; subsequently this was marked up for the compositors and used by them. This intermediate stage would now be lost” (“Malory" 92). Hellinga’s work shows that the Winchester manuscript—at some point—was in Caxton’s printing shop; however, the manuscript does not bear any of the marks used by compositors to ready a text for printing, leading to her conclusion that Caxton used a different, and now lost, manuscript as the marked-up copy for his edition. Field
concurs, speculating that Caxton “must have had two manuscripts of Le Morte Darthur in his printing shop, and based his edition on the one that did not survive” (“Caxton’s” 34). Mukai’s work questions Hellinga’s proposed relationship of the manuscript based on his study of de Worde’s edition.

The discovery of the Winchester manuscript in the early twentieth century coincided with significant theoretical and ideological ideas about editing. Vinaver’s Malory edition embodies much of the ideology upon which late nineteenth century editing was based and, in its use of Lachmannian stemmatics, displays the debt to the scientific principles of Darwin and the disciplines of natural science. As Jonathan Evans points out, botany and philology share a paradigmatic history in late nineteenth-century thought and the framework of taxonomy and the discipline of botany “had a profound influence on both later 19th-century linguistics and textual editing” (25). To date, little work has been done to excavate the ideologies, which informed the making of editions of Malory’s work. And yet, as David Matthews argues, “Middle English studies at all stages had a political dimension, demanding a political description” (xxiv). Many have similarly lamented the divide of social history and bibliography from literary criticism and theory. This textual history attempts to integrate the social history of the Malory texts with textual theory, bibliography and, ultimately, literary criticism. It is in this light, therefore, that the work and critical legacy of Vinaver will be explored in the context of Vinaver’s debt to nineteenth-century editorial theory and the modernist milieu of the 1930s and 40s. Paul Strohm has noted, that the mercurial fortunes of texts and
their subsequent "varied and unpredictable uses" are the "vicissitudes ... [which] register the presence of centers of authority beyond textual bounds" (7). He describes such vicissitudes as "the operations of political agency" (7). Recognition of the influence of political, national, and institutional agency that exerted a shape and use on Malory editions situates twentieth-century editions of Malory specifically and the cultural work of editorial practice in general.

**Vinaver and the Tradition of Editing Malory**

Vinaver's contribution to Malory scholarship has long been recognized and highly regarded. Russian by birth, Vinaver was Professor of French literature at University of Manchester in England; his knowledge of the French sources of Malory's work was, and remains, highly respected; he was renowned as a careful textual scholar and editor. After years spent working on a new edition of Caxton's printed text of Malory, Vinaver put aside that work when the Winchester manuscript was found, in 1934, to embark on a radically new edition based on the Winchester—an act of scholarly courage if ever there was one. Such was Vinaver's commitment to the best possible scholarship. To understand Vinaver's contribution to Malory scholarship, a brief textual history of Malory's work will establish the field out of which Vinaver was working.

In 1498 Caxton's edition was reissued by Jan van Wynkyn de Worde, as noted, with a fair number of textual variants and with the addition of twenty woodcut illustrations; de Worde reissued the edition, with some changes in the woodcuts, in 1529.
Both of the de Worde editions survive in single copies. In 1557, William Copeland printed a folio edition, as did Thomas East in 1578. In 1634, a quarto version was published by William Stansby, which was advertised on its title page as "newly-refined" for Elizabethan tastes (qtd. in Needham 3), although modernizations in language had been incrementally introduced. After 1634, the work "went into a long hibernation," but was revived, as Paul Needham notes, as an "antiquity of English literature" in the early nineteenth century (3). In 1816 there were two editions, both based on the 1634 quarto, followed by a well-known edition by Robert Southey in 1817 based on Earl Spencer's copies (including the errors from those copies) of the 1485 Caxton (missing the eleven leaves) held by the John Rylands Library and from de Worde's 1498 edition. Thomas Wright published an edition in 1858 which used the 1634 quarto as its copy text. Edward Strachey identified *Le Morte Darthur* as "our English Epic" (qtd. in Parins 175) and produced a modernized edition in 1868 based on the Caxton text of 1485. After a careful study of Southey's edition, Strachey estimated over 20,000 variants from Caxton's text had been incorporated.

In the midst of this textual drift, F. J. Furnivall had pointed out the apparent points of similarity between the alliterative *Morte Arthure* and Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, but Malory's work was strongly conceived at the time as little more than a "most pleasant jumble" (Furnivall qtd. in Parins 165) summarizing several sources or perhaps translated from a single French book: Malory refers to an apocryphal single source several times in his text. When there is a possible question of authority in the narrative, Malory maintains
that the account he provides is according to what “the French book maketh mencyon” (Vinaver 726). Malory was thought of as a compiler, a translator or condenser, almost a kind of editor himself, part of the continuous text of the Arthurian tradition. There was also strong sense in the nineteenth century that English prose lacked the kind of foundational epic found in French or German national literatures. With the first parts of Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King* appeared in 1859, Malory’s prose suffered in the comparison, as a kind of “crude original” (Furnivall, qtd. in Parins 173). Sir Walter Scott had earlier commented on *Le Morte Darthur* as being “written in pure Old English . . . told with a simplicity bordering on the sublime” (iii-iv). Critical opinion of Malory was much the same as the neo-classical assessment of Shakespeare had been: that is, that Malory’s prose was simple and natural, but not sophisticated or aesthetic.

In 1889, H. Oskar Sommer produced a diplomatic edition of Caxton’s edition, in which Vinaver later identified more than 1,000 errors though Sommer strove to produce an edition which reprinted Caxton “page for page, line for line, word for word” (Sommer viii). Sommer did, however, advance the understanding that *Le Morte Darthur* stood in some relation to the alliterative *Morte Arthure*. With Furnivall’s suggestion and Sommer’s diplomatic edition, the sense that perhaps Malory was working out of an English tradition as well as from French sources began to surface. Strachey continued to position the work as a key national text, arguing that its influence on “English life, upon our thoughts, morals and manners, has been great” (qtd. in Parins 323). *Le Morte Darthur*, according to Strachey was “our first great work of English prose . . . an infant
beauty in Malory’s style which is full of promise of the perfectly manly form that is to be” (qtd. in Parins 323).

In the 1920s Vinaver began work on a new critical edition of Caxton’s text that would collate the complete copy of Caxton’s edition at the Pierpont Morgan library with the incomplete copy at the John Rylands library in Manchester and restore the sections expurgated or modernized by Elizabethan and Victorian sensibilities. This textual collation represents the basis of the eclectic, critical approach to texts. Vinaver, trained in philology and French literature, knew that numerous textual variants had been introduced into the text, erroneously in his view, and he believed that Caxton’s text was therefore not a perfect embodiment of Malory’s intention. Vinaver used his knowledge of Malory’s French and English sources, then, to provide emendations of Caxton’s text.

In 1934, Vinaver’s work was enormously complicated and, ultimately, invigorated by the discovery of the Winchester manuscript. In particular, the Roman War account in the Winchester was found to be almost twice as long as the corresponding section in the Caxton edition and far closer linguistically and narratively to the English alliterative Morte Arthure. Vinaver’s ensuing edition of 1947 solidified Sommer’s earlier sense that Malory was more than a fumbling translator, that he did not “servilely copy his originals” but that in fact his work was conscious, even artful, and that it drew on native English sources as well as French (Sommer, qtd. in Parins 269). Further, Vinaver worked from the growing
understanding that romance had a different kind of narrative structure⁶, a form of interlacement used in French prose romance, rather than a classical, linear unity. In other words, *Le Morte Darthur* was more than a mere boy’s tale, but an important prose work worthy of being considered an English epic. As Sommer’s argues, “it is one of the most important and interesting [English prose romance], considering the great influence it has exercised no only on the formation of English prose style, but also on the subject-matter of English literature” (qtd. in Parins 269). By revealing the ties with English verse, the Winchester witness provided the basis for the claim that indeed Malory’s work was an instance of a national literature, not a mere borrowing from the French. After its recovery in 1934, the Winchester manuscript, seen as the artifact of this previously under recognized national literature, subsequently was championed passionately as representing “the real Malory.” Shadowed by the deep concerns of World War II, Vinaver saw his editions as connected to English national identity: “To have seen a text of this magnitude through the press at a time of the greatest national emergency is in itself a unique achievement” (xii). In the Preface to the 1947 edition, Vinaver assesses the Winchester manuscript, stating “the most obvious merit of this text is that it brings us nearer to what Malory really wrote” (*Works* ix). Further, Vinaver maintained that Caxton’s hand had been intentionally, even cunningly, injurious to the work.

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Vinaver declared that, with the publication of *Works*, "[s]ome of the damage due to Caxton’s ‘symple connynge’ can now be repaired" (*Works* xxix).

But Vinaver did not produce a diplomatic edition of the Winchester manuscript. There was a strong sense, partly because of Vinaver’s own rhetoric, that the “genuine Malory” (Wilson 209n) was now fully transparent in Vinaver’s edition because of his choice of the Winchester as his base text. Vinaver used the Winchester as a best-text, drawing upon Bedier’s best-text theory and Karl Lachmann’s stemmatic theory, but his choice of the “best text” did not preclude him from making substantial emendation on the basis of readings in the Caxton edition and in Malory’s sources. Oakeshott, upon his initial study of the manuscript, had called for exactly this kind of edition, arguing that a new Malory edition “will therefore have to be reconstructed with the aid of Malory sources” (650). For the Roman War account, Vinaver emended the readings of the Winchester manuscript from sources and also by including four passages and readings from the Caxton text.

Vinaver’s “mistrust of texts” was the foundation of his recourse to sources for emending the text. In addition to the eclectic blending of primary documents into one “definitive edition” (*Malory* ix), Vinaver overlaid a second major shape on the edition: he introduced modern paragraphing, punctuation, capitalization, genitive apostrophes, and the use of quotation marks for dialogue. Vinaver did this for two reasons: to make the text accessible for twentieth-century readers but also because of the way in which he understood Malory’s text as marking the emergence of what we would now call early
modern prose. Vinaver noted that “an attempt has been made to give the work the appearance of a modern novel, not that of a learned treatise” (Works x). But more than merely making the text accessible to modern readers, Vinaver saw Malory’s work as a critical marker in the emergence of English literary prose. According to Vinaver, “the aesthetic principle involved in such changes [from verse to prose] is fundamental for the transition from medieval to modern fiction” (Works ix). Vinaver remarks that what he finds “surprising is a fifteenth-century author’s instinctive understanding of the principle of ‘singleness’ which underlies the rhythmical structure of any modern work of fiction” (Works ix). The addition of dialogue markers by Vinaver, however, foregrounds a distinction between narrative and speech not apparent in either of the fifteenth-century texts. Thus, while Vinaver accused Caxton of imposing a false unity on the tales, Vinaver, too, was operating out of a literary and aesthetic principle of unity informed by philology and modernism. Takamiya lauded Vinaver’s goal of producing a novel-like edition of Malory, stating that there “is no doubt that modern paragraphing, punctuation, and capitalization, and the use of quotation marks for dialogue, all of which Vinaver justifiably employed, have seemed to make his text as readable as a modern novel” (Rev. 252). D. S. Brewer, on the other hand, imputed this modernity of genre to Malory himself and it was Vinaver’s edition which merely allowed this modernity to be recognized. Brewer states that Vinaver was ‘surely right in perceiving that Malory, though he was following earlier modes, nevertheless was creating something of a modern form” (119).
Despite this attention to aesthetic unity, Vinaver challenged George Saintsbury's famous phrase that from his multiple sources in French prose romances, Malory had made "this vast assemblage of stories one story and one book" (25). Vinaver used the *explicit* excised or edited in Caxton's text to propose a new intended structure for the text: that of eight related, but autonomous tales and not the one unified book as published by Caxton. Vinaver felt that his edition restored to each "the title which Malory himself assigned to it in his colophon" (*Works cxxv*). Vinaver's conception of Malory's work as eight books was controversial and not universally accepted and more recent scholarship has made Vinaver's tale division and theory of eight independent tales seem even less convincing (see, e.g., Evans, Cooper, and Meale).

The irony is that while Vinaver's modernization of the text through the introduction of paragraphing, punctuation, and speech indicators was considered a triumph, Caxton's similar move to modernize the text for his readers was simultaneously considered a travesty. In addition, scholars who have worked closely with Vinaver's edition—Field and Cooper—have pointed out that it is not always clear when emendations are drawn from Caxton's edition and when they are inferred by Vinaver from sources, a classic example of emendation based on what the editors feels the writer might have preferred, if only he had thought of it. Like most great editors of the critical, eclectic period, Vinaver had developed a strong sense of Malory's intentions and endeavored to present a representation of those intentions.
Vinaver presents a Lachmannian study of the transmission of the manuscript witness and Caxton's printed text and, based on his analysis, argues that the two stand in a collateral relation to each other. This has been disputed by Lotte Hellinga based on infrared photography of the Winchester which shows offset marks of letter press from Caxton's print shop on the manuscript. Hellinga's study came much later than Vinaver's edition and has proved that the two versions, amazingly, share a closer textual history than was originally thought, though it is also clear that the manuscript was not used as the copy-text for the printed edition. Given the many competing theories, Michael Salda, co-editor of *The Malory Debate*, has termed the textual debate as a case of "My stemma can beat up yours" without a resolvable solution based on evidence.

The weight of Vinaver's scholarly reputation served to promote a view of the Caxton edition as a corrupted, compromised version of Malory's work: a low-culture, printed mutation of the high-culture manuscript. Vinaver's edition was initially accepted as a clear window into Malory's intention; his reconception and re-titling of the work from *Le Morte Darthur* to *Works* privileged the manuscript over the printed folio, a position that has dominated twentieth-century criticism. There has been, too, a tradition of claiming that Vinaver's edition was closer to what Malory "really wrote," which has appeared in Vinaver's edition, as quoted above, on book jackets, in introductions to various editions, and which has been repeated throughout the critical commentary. For example, John Lawlor, in his introduction to Janet Cowen's Caxton-based edition, states that the
modern reader who is wholly intent on Malory, on seeing what he in fact
wrote . . . can now turn to Vinaver’s irreproachable *Works of Sir Thomas
Malory*. Those who wish to revisit the *Morte Darthur*, the book as Caxton
shaped it, have their text in the present volume. (xxx)

The Caxton-based edition by Cowen is positioned by Lawlor’s introduction as less-
authoritative than the Winchester based on assumptions of authorial intent and stemmatic
descent. Vinaver’s edition, to borrow a phrase from Fredson Bowers, was seen as having
stripped away the disfiguring veil of Caxton’s edition. Despite the now general
acknowledgement of the opacity of Vinaver’s edition as itself a particular rhetorical
representation, the hierarchy of texts remains entrenched in Malory criticism. Jerome
McGann chose Vinaver’s editing of Malory as his case study for his chapter on “The
Problem of Literary Authority” in his 1983 landmark text, *A Critique of Modern Textual
Criticism* for the way in which Vinaver’s methodology epitomized the “predilection to
believe that a text which shows no editorial intervention will be *prima facie* more sincere
than one which exhibits intervention” (*Critique* 82). McGann notes that Vinaver
“continually pushed the reader” toward the conclusion that the Winchester was more
authoritative and that this predilection is “deeply embedded in our textual criticism” (82).

It was not until 1979, more than 30 years after Vinaver’s first edition, that Murray
Evans argued for a more critical look at Vinaver’s edition; it was almost another twenty
years before scholars began to distance critical questions about Vinaver’s edition from
the unstinting regard with which the edition as a scholarly endeavor has been held.
Winaver's edition is described by scholars as "formidable" (Takamiya 252), "one of the outstanding achievements of twentieth-century literary scholarship" (qtd. in "Preface" Works v), a "great edition" (McGann Critique 66) and, more recently, as "magisterial" (Cooper 255). C. S. Lewis was among the more skeptical of Winaver's contemporary critics. He argues that Winaver's edition "smacks of our own century as Caxton's smacked of his" (27). Despite Lewis' appraisal, Winaver's status as a near-legendary editor of the grail of Malory's own prose continued to grow throughout most of the twentieth century. Criticism regarding Winaver's theory of independent tales was vigorous, but his edition was largely uncontested as the definitive edition of Malory's Arthuriad. James Spisak produced a new edition in 1983 based on the Caxton text (discussed below), but Winaver's edition, reprinted in 1967, in a paperback version in 1971, and, as the third edition, in 1990 (with revisions by Field) has been the dominant form in which students and readers encountered Malory in the second half of the twentieth century.

The Ownership of a Manuscript

Shortly after Oakeshott realized the contents of the manuscript in the Fellows library, Winaver came to Winchester seeking access to the manuscript, and articles detailing the discovery appeared in the Daily Telegraph and Times Literary Supplement. It was not until 1976 that the Winchester College trustees wrestled with the decision of their continued ownership of the manuscript. Paul Yeats-Edwards, Fellows Librarian of Winchester College and caretaker of the manuscript, describes the atmosphere at the
college when rumors first began to circulate that Winchester College was considering selling the manuscript to the British Library:

The very idea of selling what was considered to be our most valuable asset split the College in half. It will not be my purpose to relate the circumstances under which W was sold. It is now, sadly, history. The manuscript has gone, despite a howl of protest from many members of the College staff, including the Archivist (Peter Gwynn) who resigned to mark his disapproval. (380)

Yeats-Edwards attempted to be neutral in regards to the sale, “despite the fact that I loved the manuscript above any other rare and valuable book in the Fellows library” (380).

Yeats-Edwards attributed the outcry that ensued when “the storm broke” and the announcement was made of the sale, to the fact that many “clung to the old idea” that the Winchester manuscript had been connected with the christening of Henry VII’s son Prince Arthur at Winchester Cathedral, a connection Yeats-Edwards refutes.

Nonetheless, Yeats-Edwards notes that all “felt a great sympathy for Walter Oakeshott . . . [who] personally disapproved of the sale and wanted W to stay here in Winchester, for the boys’ education and for their enjoyment” (381).

Yeats-Edwards does not discuss the College’s Governing Body’s final reasons for selling the manuscript (other than the £150,000), but reverberations of the earlier loss of the Caxton edition to America may have played a factor. The 1885 purchase of the Caxton edition by the young and then-unknown American Miss Abbey Hanscomb, only
twenty-five years old, remained a source of concern for the future of literary icons of English literature. Hanscomb, described by Needham as a "femme bibliophile" bought the Caxton for £2200 and, Needham notes, "this treasure of English literature migrated to America" (n.p.). Gaines is less circumspect about the propriety of Hanscomb's possession, describing her as "a young woman from Brooklyn (of all places)" (4).

(Gaines lists the purchase price as £1950.) Gaines recounts how there was "much public outcry at the loss of such a national treasure to America, but there were no laws at that time to block the transaction" (4). Hanscomb died less than ten years later and her husband, Norton Quincy Pope, sold her collection of Caxtons and Shakespeare quartos to Robert Hoe; upon his death in 1911, the Pierpont Library in New York acquired the Caxton (for $42,800) where it remains today. Thus the offer by the British Library to Winchester college promised financial gain, the best possible care of the manuscript, and, perhaps most importantly, the assurance that an upstart from Brooklyn could not similarly abscond with such a national treasure.

At the British Museum's Caxton Quincentenary exhibition, the Winchester manuscript quickly went on exhibit (item 74) side by side with the printed edition (British Library, Hellinga "Malory" 91). Yeats-Edwards describes the day the sale was transacted with the clarity of a tragedy etched in memory:

So, at 12 noon, on March 26 (a Friday), I officially handed over W to a representative of the British Library ... This unique manuscript, the College's pride and joy, was popped into a knapsack by the official from
Yeats-Edwards poignant recollection of the transformation of the manuscript from local historical artifact to national icon is laced with a sad awareness that the manuscript, via the transaction, was transformed from a living document to a scholarly, museum piece—safe from any *femme bibliophile*, but separated from its historic past. This brief description of two of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century sales of the two Malory texts shows the powerful function of literary texts as cultural artifacts. This history of the documents is important, too, in setting the stage for later British-American debates about the merits of the two versions.

*Works and Theories of Titling: Not Just the *Morte* Anymore*

A central question has been whether the name *Le Morte Darthur* is the title accorded by Malory to his work, an epilogue or afterthought, or publisher’s invention. As Joseph Grigely notes, titles “like poems and novels, have textual histories” (171) and, in the case of Malory’s Arthurian romance, the textual history of the title is complex. Jacques Derrida’s concept of *paleonymics* theorizes the interaction, or grafting, of old names and new concepts and is a useful concept in articulating a theory of the Malory texts that considers both the interrelationship of the Caxton and Winchester versions and the titles of the work over time. Derrida explores the possibility of pressing old names into service for new or fundamentally different concepts, specifically in terms of writing, and, though Derrida does not employ the concept of paleonymics in terms of titles of
literature, he posits the peculiar dynamic between word and concept. A title—which in the case of Malory's work appears in an ending passage—can continue to function despite drastically changed conceptions of the work. Further, the historical changes in the titles can serve as evidence of the interpretive history of the work. Derrida states that "[d]espite the general displacement of the classical, 'philosophical,' occidental concept of writing, it seems necessary to retain, provisionally and strategically, the old name. This entails an entire logic of paleonymics" ("Signature" 195). In the interview "Positions," Derrida takes up "the question of paleonymy [paleonymie]" asking "what is, then, the 'strategic' necessity which sometimes requires that an old name be preserved in order to initiate a new concept?" (37). The title Le Morte Darthur has been "under erasure" in the last fifty years—crossed out by the late twentieth-century title, Works. Despite efforts to sever the correspondence between the "old name" and the work, however, the title Le Morte Darthur has persisted, seeming to defy the textual theory that precipitated its loss of favor. Critics use Works as the edition for their interpretive activity, yet continue refer to the work as a whole as Le Morte Darthur. Derrida's concept of paleonymics offers a means to sort through the confusion of multiple titles for Malory's work and documentary versions by positing names as a form of a graft: "To leave to this new concept the old name of writing is tantamount to the structure of the graft, the transition and indispensable adherence to an effective intervention in the constituted historical field" ("Signature" 195). The linguistic shadow of Le Morte Darthur can be seen as a form of the graft, generating new meaning and operating as a "tool of intervention (levier
In order to maintain a hold on the former organization which it is effectively a question of transforming” (“Positions” 37). Thinking of the title *Le Morte Darthur* as a form of a graft ultimately calls for both a historicized understanding of the interrelation of the primary documents and editions. Thus, a critique of the title provides a reading of the transient states of the title and of the discourse that developed alongside those transient states. The title of the work promotes a critical line of inquiry which affords the opportunity to study a work via its editing history, and which involves historical, bibliographic and theoretical aspects of the work.

Vinaver’s interpretation of the role of the *explicit* and in particular the final explicit, resulted in his re-titling his edition of Malory’s tale of the birth, life, and death of King Arthur to *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, a critical edition based on principles of “eclectic editing” which he published in 1947. Vinaver’s title resulted in a radically different conception of the work—one which privileged the manuscript over the printed folio and which has dominated twentieth-century criticism. Helen Cooper’s 1998 edition follows Vinaver’s critical stance in that it is based on the Winchester Manuscript. It does not, however, retain Vinaver’s title. With Cooper’s edition, *Le Morte Darthur: The Winchester Manuscript*, fifty years of effort to change the title of the work collapsed. Though Vinaver’s title *Works* appears to have been relatively short-lived, it fortuitously—if inadvertently—created a kind of rupture out of which assumptions regarding the editorial and interpretive history of the work could be examined.
We do not know if Malory ever conceived of a title for his work. There is no author's holograph, no preliminary or concluding leaves to the Winchester manuscript, and no clear indication that Malory intended his final explicit to be used as a title for a unified text. The final explicit reads:

Here is the ende of the hoole book of kyng Arthur & of his noble knyghtes of the rounde table / that Whan they were hole togyders there was euer an C and vl / and here is the ende of the deth of Arthur / I praye you all letyl men and jentyl wymmen that redeth this book of Arthur and his knyghtes from the begynnnyng to the en " dynge / praye for me whyle I am on lyue that god sende me good delyueraunce / & Whan I am deed I praye you all praye for my soule / for this book was ended the ix year of the reygne of king edward the fourth / by syr Thomas Maleore knyght as Ihesu helpe hym for hys grete myght / as he is the seruaunt of Jhesu bothe day and nyght/ (facsimile sig. ee.v (v) – sig. ee.vi.)

Because the concluding leaves of the Winchester manuscript do not survive, it is unknown whether the final explicit was edited, excised, or lengthened by an intermediary scribe or by Caxton. Based on the other explicits, it is clear that Caxton tended to delete or shorten explicits rather than to add to them and thus it is generally thought that the final explicit may well have been part of the Winchester text. Caxton's printed folio does
not contain a “title” in the modern sense; rather, the text is “named” within Caxton’s colophon, which directly follows the final explicit:

C Thus endeth thys noble and Joyouse booke entytled le morte Darthur / Notwythstondyng it treateth of the byrth / lyf / and actes of the sayd kyng Arthur / of his noble knyghtes of the rounde table / theyr meruayllous enquestes and aduentures / thachyeuyng of the sangreall / & in thende the dolorous deth & departyng out of thys world of them al / Whiche book was reduced in to englysshe by syr Thomas Malory knyght as afore is sayd / and by me deuyded in to xxi bookes chapytred and enprynted / and fynysshed in thabbey westmestre the last day of Iuyl the yere of our lord / M/ CCC/ lxxxv/

C Caxton me fiere fecit

(sig. ee.vi )

Prior to his edition of 1947, the work had come to be known, via Haslewood’s 1816 edition, as *Le Morte Darthur*, the “title” attributed to it on the basis of the final explicit and Caxton’s final colophon. Vinaver was convinced, however, that Caxton forced a false unity on what, instead, Vinaver saw as eight separate tales. Thus, when Vinaver issued his 1947 edition, he titled it simply *Malory: Works*. Vinaver argues that the title *Le Morte Darthur* was not Malory’s intended title, but rather a title applied by Caxton. According to Vinaver, Caxton’s chose *Le Morte Darthur* to heighten the sense
of unity and tragedy, and Vinaver derides Caxton’s title as “spurious and totally unrepresentative” (“Preface” vi) and as having been “applied by Caxton, with little justification to the entire collection” (“Preface” xxv). But R. M. Lumiansky reasonably points out that, given the material artifacts we have, the assumption that Caxton named the text is quite speculative. Lumiansky notes that three of Malory's sources—the alliterative Le Morte Arthure, the stanzaic Morte Arthur, and Le Mort le Roi Artu—could well have provided a precedent for Malory to title the work (153). Vinaver, however, asserts: “only nineteenth-century editors have allowed themselves to be misled by the title Le Morte Darthur.” He goes on to point out that “Wynkyn de Worde (1498 and 1529), Copeland (1557), East (c. 1585), and Stansby (1634) had consistently rejected it, and that the first to use it after Caxton was F. Haslewood in his 1816 reprint of Stansby’s text” (“Preface” xxxiii). The instability we perceive in the current title is actually a long and intricate part of the work’s textual history. And this is not a bad thing: in the complex history of the name lies insight into both the textual and critical interpretation of Malory’s work.

The title of Malory’s text is not a simple, continuous historical matter by any means. But most recent critics have tended to gloss over the fact that the title Le Morte Darthur has not been with us always. Despite assertions of constancy, Vinaver’s point is well taken: only in Caxton’s time and in the last 180 years has the title Le Morte Darthur
Darthur been a fixed designation for the work. The instability we currently perceive in the title is actually a long and intricate part of the work's textual history. Having a stable name can create the illusion of a stable text: with Malory's work, the volatility of titles affords no such illusion. Vinaver chose a new title, Works, not only to emphasize the episodic or independent nature of the tales and but also to underscore Caxton's title as a "misinterpretation, no doubt deliberate ("Preface" xxi). As George Painter has wryly observed, Vinaver saw Caxton's title as a form of "textual conspiracy" (17). According to Vinaver, Malory's "last explicit suggested to Caxton his most ingenious device—that of publishing the book under one title" ("Preface" xxxiii). Vinaver goes on to "indict" Caxton's alleged misinterpretation of the final explicit and his editing of other explicit, as a form of textual malfeasance, stating, "[t]his subterfuge proved successful" ("Preface" xxxiii). In the posthumously published article "The Besieged Printer," William Matthews notes that "stated with brilliance and conviction, Vinaver's theory [of subterfuge] proved infectious" (67). It cast the Caxton text as both textually and morally inferior—a hierarchy of texts that has pervaded both the scholarly and general reception of the two versions. Despite the recent return to the title Le Morte Darthur in Helen Cooper's edition, albeit in a modified form, the hierarchy of texts proposed by Vinaver continues. The recent publisher's blurb for Le Morte Darthur: The Winchester Manuscript appears as both the back cover statement and is the description picked up by Amazon.com, claiming:

"the title of Malory's book, since Caxton's print of 1485, has been 'The Death of Arthur' not 'The Life'" (55).
This modern-spelling edition, in a new abridgement by Helen Cooper, is based on the authoritative Winchester manuscript and represents what Malory wrote more closely than the version printed by William Caxton. (back cover)⁸

Cooper's is an excellent student edition based on the Winchester, but the claim it represents Malory more closely seems difficult to defend when—like Caxton—Cooper edits the Roman War account for her audience.⁹

Despite the move in textual theory toward a broader conception of editions as rhetorical documents,¹⁰ many Malory scholars continue, perhaps partly due to publishing and academic pressures for “definitive editions,” to posit the two historical documents in a hierarchical relationship. Further, based on Makao’s work, the proposed hierarchy seems less defensible as a position from which to posit “authority.”

In their “Note on Malory’s Text” in the collection Companion to Malory, Elizabeth Archibald and A.S.G. Edwards note the potential confusion that arises in their book due to the various means by which different scholars refer to sections of the text—either by Caxton’s chapter titles, by Vinaver’s book divisions, or by the colophons used in the manuscript: “If this seems confusing and/or inconsistent it is at least a reflection of the general situation in this aspect of Malory studies” (xii). In considering the confusion

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8 To view the on-line blurb from Amazon, see <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0192824201/qid=1022531513/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/102-0162043-9362527>.
9 See Cooper’s Introduction, in particular xxv, in which she discusses her editing of the Roman War account.
10 Edwards considers the rhetorical nature of editions in “Editing and the Teaching of Alliterative Verse,” 98.
that arises with the abundance of titles both within the tales of the Malory versions and of the Malory versions, a discussion of the rhetorical and interpretive function of titles is needed.

**Theories of Titling**

Textual critic Peter Shillingsburg defines a “whole speech act,” as that within which “an understanding of the work is achieved” (102). If a title is similarly conceived as a speech act, it is possible to see the powerfully shaping influence of titling a work—be it a task taken on by an author, an editor, or a critic. Greetham likens an act of editorial entitling to a genesis experience:

> An editor is thus like Bloom’s strong poet, belated but virile, carrying out cultural and semiotic space in his belatedness by renaming the universe. The editor becomes Adam in the Garden of Eden, conferring identity (of difference) on every creature in his world through the act of naming.

*(Theory 287)*

In this very way, Vinaver renamed the universe of Malory studies in an effort to carve out a new semiotic space in which his edition could operate. The title *Works* in every way declared that Vinaver’s edition was a completely new work, and a radical rupture from *Le Morte Darthur*. Titles of literary works are indicative of both the editor’s (contingent) concept of the work’s identity as well the particular linguistic and interpretive community the editor envisions for the work. Greetham recognizes that these
"acts of naming are . . . transformations whereby one signification is superimposed over another, one system of naming and identifying over another . . . again, semiotics through re- or dis-location rather than mimesis through correspondence" (Theory 287). Grigely notes that titles, as well as texts, are changed by authors and that such changes are evidence of the non-static condition of texts: "in as much as textual transience is about change, its usefulness in critical discourse depends on being able to document transient states, whether those states were intended by the author-artist or not" (171). Without any certain evidence about any title introduced by Malory, and recognizing that "titles" as such were not yet a standard literary practice in his time—even Caxton’s "title" is not a title in the modern sense but a colophon—the transient titles of Malory’s Arthuriad may serve to document interpretive stances over time. Though Vinaver saw himself as unnamning rather than renaming, his title was no more “true” than that of Le Morte Darthur. Vinaver, of course, saw himself as rescuing the Malory text from an erroneous correspondence; in the process; however, he contributed to a semiotic re- or dis-location of the work. The title Le Morte Darthur, as Vinaver rightly claims, confers a conception of the work as a tragic epic by overlaying Arthur’s death over the whole text. In choosing Works, Vinaver attempted to dislocate or dislodge the then-calcifying correspondence between the work and Le Morte Darthur occurring during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Nonetheless, Vinaver’s attempt to rename the work never completely replaced the “old name.”
According to Grigely, the presence of multiple titles “develops a text’s space without cornering it” (171). Investigating the dynamics of old and new titles creates such a space—one that historicizes the textual life of the versions. This does not posit a position which uncritically accepts the value of multiple texts or which shies away from making declarations regarding texts that genuinely have greater or lesser claims of authorial veracity; however, evidence to show that the Caxton edition presents an inferior text is not substantive enough to warrant such a hierarchy. Comparing multiple texts, with credible claims of authority shifts the question from ‘which text is better” to “what were the paths of transmission?” This second question acknowledges the mutable nature of medieval texts and is a central concern if one is interested in writerly (that is, inscriptable) texts rather than readerly texts, that is, text as ideal form. If textual criticism of the past twenty years—from Jerome McGann to David Greetham—has accomplished anything, it is the rationale to investigate the life of texts rather than only the “death of texts”—that single moment when the author lifted pen from paper.

It is possible to acknowledge that Caxton—in the context of the process of literary production typical of his time—made changes to the text he printed, while also recognizing that the manuscript also presents a mediated text. Because there is no author’s holograph, the scribes of the Winchester manuscript have thus far largely been unscathed by “accusations” of corrupting the text. However, assumptions regarding greater authenticity of the Winchester should not be the result of the conception of
manuscripts as *prima facie* preceding printed texts. Field rightly recognizes that "both surviving primary texts of Malory's Roman War story suffered not only from inevitable scribal and compositorial error but also from conscious alteration, particularly at the beginning" ("Caxton's Roman War" 56). While literary production need not necessarily be equated with textual "suffering," the point is well made that each text represents the intervention of other literary participants in the effort to bring the Malory text to a state of publication. How these primary texts—in the manuscript and in the printed book—have been referred to since Vinaver's edition illuminates another dimension of the largely unstated rhetorical position of editors and critics of the Malory texts.

**Titles of the Historical Documents**

Not only has the theoretical, socio-political, and institutional ideology of critics influenced the version used as the basis for an edition, it also has influenced the "titles" used to refer to the two documentary witnesses. Gerald MacLean observes:

> If we are to understand the cultural conditions of the original productions of the texts we edit ... then I think it important that we recognize the extent to which the historical field of our inquiry is already traversed by class discourse, a discourse that is directly linked to concerns of gender, sexuality, and nationality. (41)

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11 Barker argues that the fifteenth century was marked by non-linear relationships between manuscripts and printed texts, with manuscripts copied from printed texts as well as texts printed from manuscripts. An example of a manuscript copied from a printed text, Caxton's *Chronicles of England*, is provided by Blake in *William Caxton and English Literary Culture*, 294, n. 4.
As part of the study of the scholars and editions of Malory in the twentieth century, I provide the university with which editors and major critics of the Malory texts are affiliated, not to argue a simplistic dualism amongst Anglo-American critics, but to explore how institutional affiliation and nationality have operated as factors in editorial ideology and to foreground the reading of editions as rhetorical constructs. My use of the terms “versions,” “Caxton’s edition,” and “Winchester manuscript” reflects my own interest in textual transmission, the particular authority of early print editions and in titles which evoke the historical circumstances of a given text.

In his Introductions and Prefaces to the 1947, '68 and '71 editions, Vinaver (University of Manchester) used the terms “Winchester Manuscript” and “Caxton’s Le Morte Darthur” to refer to the two historical witnesses. In effect, Vinaver ascribes a quasi-ownership of the Morte to Caxton, affirming the degree to which he felt that Caxton altered Malory’s text and, interestingly, rejecting the term “Malory manuscript” first supplied by Oakeshott. Vinaver felt that Caxton’s title for the work was the cause of American critics’ passionate attachment” (xliii) to the unity of the work as a result of the way in which the title Le Morte Darthur became “inseparable from the work itself” (xliii). “What a magnificent title it was!” Vinaver conceded, but he goes on to describe the title as “so delightfully inaccurate that even Caxton . . . felt he had to apologize for its inaccuracy. It was one of those titles that assume an existence of their own; it became a poetic concept in its own right” (xliii-xliv).

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12 See discussion of Lumiansky’s volume, Malory’s Originality, below.
N. F. Blake (University of Sheffield), like Vinaver, characterizes Caxton’s edition as a corrupted text, and Blake’s choice of referents for the two versions clearly reflects this critical judgment. Ironically, he embarks on the very task for which he excoriated Caxton—re-naming a historical text. In 1976—a position reiterated in 1982 and 1991—Blake repudiates the title *Le Morte Darthur* arguing that the Caxton edition, “which I shall call *King Arthur*” (“Light” 170), should be renamed in order “to avoid confusion with the Malory text” (“Caxton Prepares” 272). Working within a framework of authorial intention and ideal text, Blake negotiates a messy divorce between the two versions by expunging the common name. By using *King Arthur* to represent the printed edition and *Works* to represent the text embodied by the manuscript, Blake attempts to clarify the blurred distinction between the historical document *Le Morte Darthur* and the title of the work over time as well as to sever the associative relationship between the title *Le Morte Darthur* and Malory. While Blake’s proposal suggests an astute insight into the theoretical problem of the indeterminate relationship between title, text, and work, he ignores the fact that the Caxton edition is an historical, already-named document that represents a particular state in the textual history of Malory’s work. As much as Blake endeavored to rename *Le Morte Darthur*, his choice of *King Arthur* for the Caxton edition was adopted by few other scholars and quickly fell into disuse.

When James Spisak (Virginia Polytechnical University) published his critical edition based on the Caxton edition, it sparked a heated critical debate regarding the name of the two versions. Spisak’s 1983 edition was entitled *Caxton’s Malory: A New*
Edition of Sir Thomas Malory’s Le Morte Darthur based on the Pierpont Morgan Copy of William Caxton’s Edition of 1485. Spisak noted how Caxton had slipped from “hero to whipping boy” (618) since the publication of the Winchester-based Works but proposed that, in his estimation, the Caxton text stood in closer relation to Malory’s lost original than the Winchester—thus his choice of “Malory’s Le Morte Darthur” (emphasis mine). By linking the names Caxton, Malory, and Le Morte Darthur, Spisak attempts to relocate authority for the work in Caxton’s version. With the Pierpont Morgan as his copy text, Spisak emended his edition from the John Rylands document, from de Worde’s 1498 edition, and from the Winchester manuscript (627). Though he valorized a different stemma, Spisak’s is an eclectic, critical edition and his editorial principles, much like Vinaver’s although not source-based, are predicated on the establishment of authorial intention and the perceived closeness of the text to an ideal, authorial text. Spisak’s edition fueled the debate in which Caxtonites and Winchesterites sought to establish textual authority for Malory’s work via recourse to the projected author.

Basil Cottle’s 1985 review of Spisak’s edition indirectly hints at an Anglo-American divide in valorizing either the manuscript or printed text. Cottle (University of Bristol) states “this handsome edition of a vitally important imprint is an all-American production” and he goes on to note that Spisak’s edition effects a “partial dethronement of the Winchester manuscript” (252), a metaphor especially intriguing when contrasted to John Withrington’s more recent observation that Vinaver’s Works “broke the monopoly
of Caxton’s ‘authorized’ edition” (350). Mirroring national metaphors, perhaps, the Winchester manuscript is associated with monarchy, Caxton’s edition with capitalism. Spisak’s title of “Caxton’s Malory” partly emanated in response to the “Malorization” of the Winchester manuscript in which institutional affiliation played a strong role. In his introduction to the 1976 Early English Text Society’s facsimile of the Winchester manuscript, N. R. Ker (Oxford University) refers to the manuscript as “the Malory” and to the printed edition as “Caxton’s edition.” Similarly, in a British Library Journal article in 1976, “The Malory Manuscript,” and in subsequent work, Lotte Hellinga (University of Amsterdam, British Library) uses the terms “The Malory manuscript” and “Caxton’s edition.” The British Library catalog published for the Caxton quincentenary also refers to the “Malory manuscript” in its collection. Pairing Malory’s name with the word “manuscript” argues for greater authority for that version and almost implies an author’s holograph. Hellinga states that once acquired by the British Library, “it has been called the Malory Manuscript since” (Caxton 90). As noted, the British Library acquired the manuscript from Winchester College in 1976 for a large and controversial sum, generating letters of outrage in the daily papers for the spending of public funds on a transfer of the manuscript from Winchester to London. Thus it is conceivable that the museum wished to assure its trustees, scholars, and the general public that the money had been well spent, that the Library had acquired “the real Malory,” so to speak, and that the manuscript was more authentic than the Caxton edition which resided at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York. Critics who advocated the
greater authority of the Winchester manuscript lined up behind the name “the Malory manuscript,” a phrase Oakeshott had first used in his 1934 article in TLS just shortly after the manuscript’s discovery; according to Yeats-Edwards, however, the manuscript “quickly became known as ‘the Winchester Malory’” (376).

Institutional ownership and Caxton’s class appeared to influence interpretation and choice of title (both for the work and its documentary versions) differently for American and British scholars. Such institutional and class perspectives are critical factors in articulating a theory of the Malory texts—one which does not accept any title uncritically, which examines assumptions of hierarchy, and which recognizes editions—and their titles—as cultural, rhetorical constructs of a particular historical period.

Ideaology of the Text

Thomas Miller situates the role of class and political ideology in the formation of English literary studies and notes that how one “interprets the politics of the reading culture will depend upon how one views the politics of reading and writing” (58). If reading and writing reflect sites of contestation for authority and privilege, then the meta-text of mid-twentieth-century Malory editions and scholarship can be seen, in part, as bids for ownership and literary authority. Russell Berman, in assessing what he considers to be the loss of lyric poetry’s standing in current German studies, concedes that in its earlier centrality to the canon, “[i]deology and institutions contributed to the results as much as did aesthetic judgment” (170). In the discussion of the Malory documents,
attention to matters of class ideology and the cultural politics of reading and writing can unearth new ways of understanding the cultural situatedness of Malory editorial work in the last century.

Paratextual ideologies clearly inform the making of editions and the cultural work implicated therein. "Paratexts," according to Samuel Kinser, "indicate the forces that have shaped a text: they show how contexts invade the text" (17). These contexts are "created tacitly or explicitly by joint decisions of authors, publishers, and editors . . . They cooperate with the text to bring it into being" (150). This awareness of the contexts that invade a text is likewise applicable to editions.

The choice of names used by British and American critics during the early work on the Winchester manuscript and its transfer to the British Library in the 1970's reflects a complex web of textual ideology, institutional affiliation, and nationality. The chart below represents just a sampling of titles and referential names used by scholars and shows a change from the use of the term "Malory manuscript" to the use of the term "Winchester manuscript" by the early 1980's and the clustering of its use by scholars associated with the British Library. In the late 1980's, the term "Vinaver's Malory" emerges.

- **Printed Books:**

  Caxton (1485)  
  *The Noble and Joyouse Booke Entytled Le Morte Darthur.*

  De Worde (1489)  
  *The Booke of the Noble Kyng, Kyng Arthur, Sometyme Kynge of Englonde, of his Noble Actes and Feates of Armes and Chyvalre,*
his Noble Knyghtes and Table Rounde and is Devyded in to. xxi. Bookes.

Haselwood (1816) *La Mort D'Arthur. The most ancient and famous History of the renowned Prince Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.*


- **Titles used by Malory scholars:**

|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| **Oakeshott (1934)** Malory MS
(Winchester College) | | |
| **Vinaver** Winchester MS | Caxton's *Le Morte Darthur* | |
(U of Manchester) (1947,48,68,71) |
| **Yeats-Edwards (1976)** Winchester Malory
(Winchester College) | | |
| **Blake** Winchester MS | King Arthur | |
(U of Sheffield) British Museum Library (1976, 82, 91) MS Additional 59678 (1989) Winchester Malory |
| **Ker (1976)** The Malory | Caxton's edition | |
(Oxford) | | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Manuscript</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hellinga</td>
<td>The Malory MS</td>
<td>Caxton’s edition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1976,81,82)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(U of Amsterdam, British Library)</td>
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<tr>
<td>British Library Publications</td>
<td>The Malory MS</td>
<td>Caxton’s edition</td>
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<td>Matthews (1975)</td>
<td>Winchester MS</td>
<td>Caxton edition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(UCLA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evans (1979)</td>
<td>Winchester MS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(U of Winnipeg)</td>
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<td>Cottle (1984)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(U of Bristol)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spisak (1983)</td>
<td>Winchester MS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Virginia Polytec)</td>
<td>MS version</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(U of So. Mississippi)</td>
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<td>(U of Virginia)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(New York University)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Arthurian Encyclopedia (1991)</td>
<td>Malory MS</td>
<td>Caxton’s version</td>
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<td>(Ed. Norris Lacy - Pennsylvania State U)</td>
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After more than fifty years of scholarly debate, Mukai’s terms reflect a general consensus among current usage across the field of North American, European, and Japanese scholars.

If the issues of institution, ideology, or nationality are considered as influences of the general pattern of the mid-century, what different principles or assumptions might medievalists in North America and medievalists in the England working during this period have brought to bear in their work as literary and textual scholars? The larger framework of American medievalists has been addressed by Spiegel when she notes a “ruptured sense of past” which was part of a “sea change in the practice of medieval history in America” (78). Spiegel notes that the class and demographics of American medievalists radically changed in the 60s and 70s when, not coincidentally, the challenges to Vinaver’s assumptions began to be raised:

In addition to the entrance of women and blacks into the American academy for the first time, there was also a new wave of participation

<table>
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<th>Malory’s text</th>
<th>Caxton’s version</th>
<th>Vinaver’s edition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winchester MS</td>
<td>Caxton edition</td>
<td>The Vinaver-Field Winchester Malory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukai (Naruto U)</td>
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Archibald & Edwards (U of Victoria)
among classes and what, for lack of a better word, can be called ethnic
groups, among them Jews, all of whom entered the university in newly
massive numbers . . . (78)

It is from this new milieu that the critiques of Vinaver’s work began to surface; American
editors and critics, in particular, began to champion the Caxton edition. To be sure, this
change in university demographics was hardly an isolated American phenomenon, but
Spiegel argues that John Van Engen’s research “has pointed to the ambivalence with
which these ‘new’ groups of Americans have approached the study of European, and
specifically medieval, history (78). Spiegel notes that even for those Americans “with
cultural roots in Europe . . . most came from among peasants, the unfree, or the disposed”
(78). Van Engen argues that the study of “the European Middle Ages remains for
Americans a continuing dialectic between connection and disjunction, the tug of social
and cultural features still influential among us and the shimmer of something totally and
yet perceptibly other” (414). Far from a homogeneous cross-Atlantic or international
endeavor, a legitimate critique of the editorial heritage of the Malory texts represents, as
Jerome McGann has called for, a “commitment to explore the social and historical
dimensions of literary works” (Historical 3), in this case, Malory’s Arthuriad. MacLean
has observed that questions of class, gender, and national identity, “[o]nce excluded from
editorial decision making and theorizing, such questions have nevertheless established
philosophically cogent analytical and critical programs” (25).
Lumiansky (New York University) edited a 1964 collection of essays, *Malory's Originality*, published by Johns Hopkins Press, in which the authors, American scholars, controversially countered Vinaver’s view of the independent relation of the tales arguing for “our view of the unity of Malory’s work” (Lumiansky *Malory's Originality* 4). In the second edition of *Works*, Vinaver refutes the critique of his theory and mentions that the criticism is “summarized in a book published in 1964 under the title of *Malory’s Originality* by a group of American scholars who deny that ‘Malory wrote eight separate romances’” (xli).13 Lumiansky’s collection thus represented a kind of literary school of thought in regard to the Malory texts, one which Vinaver saw as “united in their rejection” of his theory of the eight tales (*Works* xli). Derek Brewer, a British scholar, had put together, as Meale suggests, “the most influential critique” of Vinaver’s theory of the independence of the tales14 just a year earlier. The collection, *Essays on Malory*, represented Oxford’s scholars responses and critiques of Vinaver’s theory and edition and included the well-known critique by C. S. Lewis. And yet Lumiansky’s volume broke open a wider divide between British and American scholars which, in addition to the issue of unity, began to separate into questions of which text—Caxton’s or the Winchester—represented Malory’s “final intention” (Lumiansky 4). This divide was largely reflected in two volumes of essays on Malory which were published in the 1980s: the 1985 collection edited by Spisak, published in the United States and reflecting this “American school” of the unity of the tales and the possibility of Malory as his own

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13 Vinaver’s rebuttal is included in the Introductory material of the second and third editions of *Works*; xli-l in the third edition.
14 Brewer offers his critique of Vinaver’s theory in “‘the hoole book.’” *Essays in Malory.*
reviser, and the 1986 collection edited by Toshiyuki Takamiya which generally reflected the Japanese scholars’ linguistic analysis against the theory of Malory as his own reviser and the more Vinaverian approach of the largely British scholars. The volume also included a brief introductory note by Vinaver. In Brewer’s introduction to this volume, he affirmed his allegiance to Vinaver’s Works stating that it “will long remain our standard text” (7). In terms of scholarly use, his prediction has largely held true. While British scholars such as Brewer disagreed with Vinaver about the unity or independence of the work, few took up argument advanced by several prominent American scholars that the Caxton text best represented Malory’s own revision. It may be noted, as well, that even the artifacts themselves, ironically mirror this mid-century divide: the Caxton edition held by the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York and the Winchester manuscript held by the British Library.

In addition to national or institutional politics, Blake’s scholarship on Malory raises the question of Caxton’s class as a contributing influence in textual scholarship. Blake is intent on establishing that Caxton—unlike Sir Thomas Malory—was not of the aristocracy. According to Blake, although Caxton “received gifts from members of the aristocracy this did not make him any different from a host of tradesmen at the time” (“Light” 169). In comparing Caxton to Lydgate, Blake notes how both “accepted commissions from aristocratic patrons and received rewards from them, but their friends and acquaintances and the bulk of

15 Noguchi and Nakao have advocated the Winchester as a better text and have studied the lexical factors of the Caxton as evidence of an edited version.
their audience were to be found in their own class” (“Light” 182). Arguing against the portrayal of Caxton as a scholar, Blake concludes: “It is still most acceptable to regard Caxton as a merchant, as a man that was interested in buying and selling” (Culture 18). Blake’s criticism shows that he avoids referring to Caxton as an editor or translator—activities Caxton clearly undertook—and refers to Caxton almost exclusively as a merchant or tradesman. Blake embraces Vinaver’s re-titling of the work and, more importantly, reinforces Vinaver’s proposed hierarchy of the texts through what Derek Pearsall has noted as a certain “language of moral approbation and disapprobation [which] hangs around textual criticism” (103). While class, nationality, and institutional affiliation have rarely been considered as factors in scholarly editing in general and not at all in particular reference to Malory, an editor’s ideology—institutional, political, cultural—seems an inextricable, though not always self-identifiable, part of the equation of his or her textual approach. MacLean notes that “class attitudes are invariably part of the structures by which we decide which texts are and are not worth editing” (38), as had been seen with Caxton’s own writing, a trend reversed by the recent interest in Caxton’s prose and literary activity (Kuskin, Wogan-Brown). In a curious and inexplicable assertion in the midst of the 1976 quincentenary of Caxton’s contribution to English literary culture, Blake claims that Caxton

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has aroused little interest among historians . . . partly because he played such a small part in the economic and intellectual life of the country and partly because there has been a natural antipathy towards biographical enquiry of people of his rank in the enquiry into wider social, constitutional and political issues. (Culture 19)

Blake’s claim references Edward Gibbon’s earlier critique of Caxton as having produced work of inferior scholarly merit (563-4). While Blake’s is a quizzical assertion for a paper delivered at an international conference on Caxton, it reveals an uneasiness before the rise of cultural studies with the study of a member, albeit influential, of the merchant class.

Miller’s work on the formation of the discipline of “college English” pays attention to the Bakhtinian notions of heteroglossia and unification as they relate to the democratic and hegemonic affects of print culture and the ensuing definition of the literary canon (30). Miller notes that Samuel Johnson was instrumental, through the Dictionary, in establishing a theoretical framework for the language that distinguished high and low culture, virtue and denigration. Johnson’s work “established principles of scientifically determining correct usage” (38), a framework which can likewise be seen in the work of nineteenth- and twentieth-century editors in regard to philology and stemmatics. According to Johnson, a writer may gain “publck infatuation” who does not know “the original import of words,” but such a writer “will use them with colloquial licentiousness, confound distinction, and forget propriety” (Dictionary xxiv, as qtd. in Miller 41). Miller notes that Johnson was “a neoclassicist who defined change as
corruption...[and] variation as ‘dangerous spots of barbarity’” (41). Miller sees
Johnson’s distaste for the “corruptions of oral utterance” as “more than class anxiety,
though it is obviously that as well” (40). As Miller argues, literary scholars functioned as
arbiters whose cultural work included the distinction of the literary from the common.
Such ideological discriminations can be studied in the formation of the “Malory canon”;
the recovery of the Winchester may be seen as having relieved a form of class anxiety
which had previously accompanied Caxton’s mediation in the Malory text. The
“tradesman” in whose hands a literary icon had rested could be exorcised as a corrupting,
almost vulgar, even insidious, overlay—an overlay that had obscured the true identity of
the high-culture manuscript. Blake argues that scholarly interest in Caxton’s work in
general suffered from prejudice against the “inferior literary work” of translation, as well
as a dim view of the merit of literary works of the fifteenth century (Culture vii). While
critical work on Caxton’s editions has moved well past unease with Caxton’s class and
Vinaver’s accusations of Caxton’s “symple connynge,” the residual influence of a
neoclassical ideological response to the Caxton edition has lingered long in the cultural
work of Malory editions.

The Politics of Debate

The greatest contribution of Vinaver’s edition is the intense scholarly research
and discussion generated by his choice of the Winchester as his base text and the
assumptions and conclusions he drew as a result of his work. The debate has provoked,
at times, intense response drawing on matters of nationality and politics and point out,
perhaps, the impossibility of a “purely textual” edition. Of particular note is the exchange between Charles Moorman, of the University of Southern Mississippi, and P. J. C. Field, of the University of Wales. Moorman’s 1985 article “Desperately Defending Winchester” broached the theory that the nexus of the Winchester-Caxton debate lie in matters not found in either text:

I, for one, am inclined to think it is because Matthews is perceived by his critics not simply as a scholar attempting to examine a literary problem, but as a genuine iconoclast, a breaker of idols. Think back to the discovery of W, of what was hailed from the moment of its dramatic discovery as one of the great literary finds of the century, the authoritative Malory, the genuine handwritten article, the real thing . . . On that newly discovered manuscript old scholarly reputations were refurbished and new ones founded, new editions of it were published frequently at premium prices, the whole Arthurian industry bathed in its glory . . . Then to have a California Cockney suddenly attempt, even indirectly by raising up its deposed rival, to discredit that fabulous manuscript, to reduce it to the status of first draft, of trial run, and to raise up Cinderella Caxton as Malory’s finished product, why that would never do . . . And so from desperation, out from the edge came the abacus and the grapeshot. (114)

Field’s response to Moorman’s allegation was to assert that academic debate:

17 See the Summer 1995 issue of Arthuriana.
like civil life generally, depends on minimum assumptions of good faith.

When a senior scholar comes to believe that those who disagree with him have colluded for twenty years in unprofessional practices, from ignoring evidence to ethnic prejudice against Cockneys, it is in everyone's interest to try to see if it is possible to generate less heat and more light. (31)

The scholarship of William Matthews served as a catalyst in the heated debate over the relative authority of the two texts. Matthews, a self-described "Cockney" from London, but a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, was a vigorous defender of the superiority of the Caxton version. Two articles by Matthews—long awaited and much discussed—were published posthumously in *Arthuriana* in 1997.

Matthews argues that the Caxton version is a "much better text than that presented in the Winchester manuscript: more accurate, fuller, and, if our argument is correct, graced by Malory's own revision of the Roman War episode and possibly other small sections too" (130). Matthews felt Vinaver's claims for the Winchester were over-reaching in a way that imperiled the understanding of the Caxton text. According to Matthews, while Vinaver was "hymning the virtues of the Malory text, Caxton on the other hand is urged still further along the primrose path that leads to an academic bonfire" ("Besieged" 67).

Robert Kindrick (University of Montana, now Wichita State) supports Matthews claim that Malory was his own reviser, arguing that the Winchester manuscript was an earlier and possibly more corrupt version that Caxton rejected in favor of a "more authoritative text" (18).
Field, editor of the third edition of Vinaver's *Works of Sir Thomas Malory* and the more recent *Malory: Texts and Sources*, refutes Williams' conclusion and bases his stance, in part, on linguistic analyses by Yuji Nakao and Shunichi Noguchi, both of whom argue that the evidence points to Caxton as the reviser. Noguchi argues that “Caxtonian words and phrases” (“Winchester” 18) in the Caxton version of the Roman War account mark the text as edited by Caxton. Despite the linguistic analyses that point to the occurrence of “Caxtonian words,” some aspects of the Caxton version defy a clear Caxton-revision explanation of the Roman War account. According to Spisak “[e]ven Vinaver, who first suggested that Caxton did the revising, has agreed that the printed version is often closer to the alliterative poem than the manuscript is” (618). Further complicating the issue, Field notes that the Caxton edition has “northernisms” that “do not appear in the same contexts either in *W* or in the alliterative poem” (“Caxton’s” 40) and Noguchi notes that Sally Shaw’s study identifies Caxton’s text as having “more correct readings” than the Winchester (“Winchester” 19). On the other hand, Field advocates the view that the Caxton edition is a revised account of Malory’s work. But Field also allows that:

Fifteenth-century readers lacked (above all with vernacular prose romances) any modern sense of authorial rights, so any reader dissatisfied with the story might have set about ‘improving’ it, and we can only guess how many readers read *Le Morte Darthur*, and what they thought of it.”

(36)
It seems clear that Malory’s work is but one example of the diffuse conception of authority in medieval literary culture.

Kindrick continues to advance the line of thinking established by Matthews: that the Winchester manuscript was an earlier and possibly more corrupt version that Caxton rejected in favor of a “more authoritative text” (18) represented by the version he chose to print:

Caxton worked with editorial integrity—perhaps not precisely the same as modern notions but nonetheless a dependable quality—and his efforts give his own edition of *Le Morte Darthur* preeminence as the ‘better text.’ (18)

Despite the implied polarities of the Winchester-versus-Caxton debate, both positions have sought to answer the same fundamental editorial question, that is, which text is “more authoritative” and, indeed, whether either text in any way represents Malory’s presumed “fair-copy.” Questions of greater authority are based in an editorial theory of which the goals are to determine origin, to establish a unifying aesthetic, and to construct a critical edition. Despite long arguing that the Caxton text is an editorially corrupted version of the Winchester, Blake acknowledges “the whole concept of a definitive version of a text based on the author’s original or even final intentions may well be an anachronism for this period” (“Reflections” 65). Print-culture constructions of author are fraught with complications in application to Middle English writers, scribes, and early printers.
While Field has made a compelling argument for positioning the Winchester as the earlier text based on linguistic and source analysis and for Caxton’s likely editorial intervention, it is also clear that the scribal manuscript is a mediated document as there is no direct link with Malory-as-author. Resisting the jump to authorial intent posited for the Winchester as a result of evidence of mediation in the Caxton serves as a catalyst to reexamine ideas of authorship in Middle English texts. Indeed, one of the most compelling aspects of the Malory documents is that, when taken together, they contain much of the complexities of the shift from script to print culture. As Dan Embree and Elizabeth Urquhart argue in making their case for a parallel-text edition of *The Simonie*, the extant versions are “quite distinct though closely related texts which need to be understood in relation to one another before they can be very seriously studied” (58). If nothing else, recognition of the Caxton text preserves Malory’s tale as a liminal work poised on the brink of two understandings of textuality.

Critical inquiry based on a Foucauldian archeology currently dominates the shape and critical questions of much current scholarship and thus, in service to those questions, new editions of Malory, rooted in history and materiality, can be imagined as functioning in a post-Vinaver world. As historian Gabrielle Spiegel has noted:

If genealogy once meant for historians the tracing of direct lines of descent from past to present, under the sign of Foucault it now stands for all that is contingent, invasive, aleatory in history, the constant irruptions and
disruptions, misalliances and failures that mark familial relationship over time. (76)

In a “hermeneutic alterity” (Spiegel 79), the irruptions of the familial relationship between the Caxton and the Winchester need not necessarily be smoothed over.

**Post-Vinaver**

There is a current emphasis in returning, not surprisingly, to a study of the Winchester Manuscript, and a better understanding that Vinaver’s text was a particular representation that spoke to the interests of New Criticism, philology, and modernism. In the most recent essay by Cooper, “Opening up the Winchester,” she states, with a hint of surprise, that a study of the manuscript yields “the realization of just how far distant Vinaver’s edition is from [the Winchester] itself” (256). Coming from an Oxford University scholar such as Cooper, that this represents a kind of watershed in terms of the critical reception of Vinaver’s edition and shows how closely Vinaver’s text was seen as representing the Winchester manuscript.

Despite the now-tepid response to their theory, the work of the Malory-as-reviser scholars (Matthews, Kindrick and Lumiansky), in addition to the work of scholars such as Evans, John Withrington and Cooper, has had the effect of wearing away the impenetrable gloss of Vinaver’s edition. As Cooper notes, “there is nothing in the manuscript to indicate that the *explicitis* and colophons indicate separate ‘works’ in Vinaver’s sense” (260). Cooper’s edition is a paperback student text, not meant as a
scholarly edition, but is the first since Vinaver’s to seek to represent the Winchester manuscript. Based on the Winchester, it too is shaped—by modern punctuation and spelling and by being “slightly abbreviated” (xxiii)—for its audience and by its editor’s understanding of the work.

While Caxton’s edition bore the derision of the previous generation of textual and literary critics, Works—though undisputed as a scholarly endeavor of the highest caliber—is no longer univocally proclaimed “the definitive edition”: it is a version bound by the textual theories of its time and of its editor. Evans (University of Winnipeg) calls for a diplomatic version of the Winchester manuscript to enable readers to go “behind” Vinaver to discover the “original landscape” of the Winchester (263). Such a version has yet to be produced, except for the current study’s edition of the Roman War account. It is important, however, not to confuse this “original landscape” of the Winchester with a conception of any ideal text attributed to Malory. Any medium by which the text is produced—be it script, typeface, or hypertext—alters, or more precisely defines, that ideal, ephemeral landscape and readers’ perception of it, even if the editor strives to produce a diplomatic edition. All we have are two well-worn documents—and from these new editions are crafted.

Drawing on his experience in observing the rise and fall of the status of editions, C. S. Lewis comments:

Beyond question, Professor Vinaver has shown the cathedral from a new angle; placed the modern pilgrim where he will enjoy it best. And now
that his edition is deservedly reaching the stage of cheap reprints, it may in
its turn become the household book; until perhaps *alter Achilles*, some
second Vinaver (a little cold to the first one as he is a little cold to Caxton)
recalls his generation to the long forgotten book of 1485 . . . . (Lewis 28)

The variety of recent editions of literary works reflects a growing capacity for reading
variation within a literary work. Particular or historical editions, which attend to the
circumstances of production, circulation, and readership, are likely to emerge in greater
numbers. Such editions of Malory will not negate Vinaver’s work, but will propose
alternative criteria to meet the interests and ideologies of a new century of Malory
scholars.
Chapter Three: Mapping the Roman War

The “mapping” of this chapter title is not an attempt to plot the progress of Arthur across the continent in the Winchester and Caxton versions, but instead the mapping addresses the suggestive implication of geographical places in the narrative, and the differences between the Winchester and Caxton versions as markers for changes in geographic representation of England and the East. This study does not study the actual geography of the Roman War campaign, but the powerful imaginative geography, especially in terms of how ideas about the exotic East inform the narrative. In creating a parallel-text of the two versions and in engaging in the contrastive analysis facilitated by such an edition, the question must be asked: what can account for such substantive changes? It is my argument that Caxton’s worldview, shaped by the politics of a shifting monarchial power base, by a frustrated Crusade fervor, by international trade connections, and by the westward dissemination of maps based on Ptolemy significantly differed from that of Malory. The Roman War account, which overtly addresses issues of religious and national dominion, engendered the most significant revisions between the two versions in response to this changed worldview. An awareness of the geographical-textual process of constructing culture\(^1\) calls for a critical study of the Roman War in terms of the fifteenth-century overwriting of the Roman War account and the concurrent changes in the representation of geographic space. While some medievalists have adopted the broader theoretical interest in issues of empire and the relationship of East

\(^1\) For studies of the intersection of geographical and textual representation, see Tomasch and Giles. See also Celia Lewis’s review.
and West, using the term "post-colonial Middle Ages," others have argued against the anachronistic application of an essentially early-modern conceptual framework to medieval literature. The term "post-colonial," in this sense, does indeed seem too narrow; however, fascination and violent interaction with the East hardly is reserved for later colonial impulses. Literary representations of empire, geographic space, and the East clearly have a deep and long history and are rightly studied in the context of Middle English literatures. As Ivo Kamps observes, "the metaphoric models of place ... created by these texts become inscribed in memory and shape how people conceptualize and experience their world" (xiii). The Roman War account draws upon maps—both physical and those inscribed in memory—of its medieval reader and their conception of England in relation to the continent, to Rome, and to the East. Bernhard Klein similarly suggests that maps function as "a metaphorical paradigm" (87) and thus the Roman War account can be productively studied as a significant marker of the shifting paradigm represented by the end of the age of the mappamundi and the advent of the Ptolemaic map in late medieval geographic representation.

Malory’s Roman War account, the tale of Arthur’s campaign against the Roman Emperor Lucius, has long been considered one of the least inspired tales of his work, a tedious account of battles and place names. C. S. Lewis’s oft-quoted commentary lauds Caxton for apparently having the good sense to edit and shorten “the whole dreary business” (26). Eugene Vinaver, along with other mid-twentieth century Malory

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2 For discussions of the intersection of, and disjunction between, post-colonial theory and Middle English literature, see Cohen, Bartlett, and Ingham.
scholars, did not share Lewis’s opinion and instead criticized Caxton for having printed a “drastic abridgement” of the Winchester (xxx). Vinaver argues “Caxton, ‘simple person,’ reduced it to less than half its size, and while doing so rewrote it from beginning to end” (xxx). Despite the criticism of Caxton’s apparent editing process, subsequent editors, notably Helen Cooper in her recent edition of *Le Morte Darthur*, continue Caxton’s penchant for shortening the Roman War account. Cooper states that, in the interest of students and general readers, her edition enacts “some slimming of the opening sections” (Cooper xxv) of the Roman War account. Cooper’s svelte Roman War has been edited to eliminate catalogues of foes and to limit descriptions of battles. “Few readers,” Cooper explains “now are likely to share Malory’s passionate interest in the details of battle tactics and tournaments, and I have cut these generously” (xxv). Andrew Lynch points out that this aversion to Malory’s description of battles and campaigns has been part of a century-long trend. Lynch notes that nineteenth- and twentieth-century Malory editors “lined up to abuse the fight scenes, and did so with increasing force” (82). Lynch also demonstrates that editors’ and scholars’ complaints were highly similar, and eventually formed a tradition almost unquestionable: ‘A tedious battle . . . all the details of which are minutely related’ (British, cited in Parins 89); ‘the greatest exaggeration’ (Southey xxxi); . . . ‘the general reader would find it too long, too monotonous, and too obscure’ (Knowles ii); ‘a catalogue of encounters, with but little variation of the familiar incidents’ (Minto, cited in Parins 199); . . . ‘a
monotonous lack of inflection; an endless succession of single combats...

whose details are repeated with wearisome iteration' (Morros, Introduction) ... (qtd. in Lynch 82-83)

Thus, along with other battle passages, the Roman War campaign, which is at its core a tale devoted to battle narrative, has been considered a distraction and a bore or, at the very least, as a minor tangent to the larger issues of the work.

Textually, however, the Roman War account is the site of the greatest discrepancy between the Caxton print (Book Five) and the Winchester manuscript (Folio 71r – 96r). In contrast to the literary interest in the tale, the transmission history of the tale, the question of Caxton or Malory as editor, and the relative authority of the two texts, has generated substantial study.³ Recent scholarship by William Kuskin and Fabienne Michelet, however, has begun to leave aside the fierce debate over the question of the reviser, which has dominated scholarship on the Roman War account for more than a decade, and turned, instead, to studying the Roman War account as an integral part of the literary and cultural concerns of Malory’s Arthuriad and of its printer, William Caxton. Kuskin and other Caxton scholars have focused attention on Caxton’s vital role as part of late fifteenth-century literary culture rather than as the fey “simple person” which vexed Vinaver. Kuskin situates Le Morte Darthur, and the Roman War in particular, within the larger literary scheme of Caxton’s Nine Worthies project while Michelet invokes the

³ For a representative look at the scholarship on textual criticism of the Caxton and Winchester versions, especially in regard to the Roman War, see Wheeler, Kindrick, and Salda. Kindrick also introduced a special issue of Arthuriana (7.1, Spring 1997) which published Matthews’s controversial paper as well as other articles regarding textual issues of Malory’s work.
medieval topoi of the *translatio imperii* as the structure for the tale's "opposition of East and West" (209). Felicity Riddy previously located *Le Morte Darthur* in the political crises engendered by the War of the Roses and the multiple losses of Henry VI in France. Within that larger context, she identifies the plot of *Le Morte Darthur* as a "narrative of empire and civil war, which Malory inherited and invested with new meanings" (64-5).

Riddy, Kuskin, and Michelet approach the Roman War account not as the dull cousin to the rest of Malory's Arthuriad but as a chapter rich with cultural and narrative significance. Although the Roman War account has remained, in many ways, an underappreciated tale or book (depending on one's view of the independence or unity of the section of the Arthuriad), interest in literary geography and exoticism enable a reassessment of the Roman War account, not only as a source of a textual crux, but as a pivotal means of understanding Malory's and his reviser's representation of empire and Christian England's projected relation with the Islamic East in the context of the fifteenth-century legacy of the Crusades and cartographic representations of the world and the immediate concern for stability and the exercise of good governance at home. In preparing a parallel-text edition, and in the accompanying discussion of the Roman War account, I seek not to resolve the differences between the Winchester manuscript and the Caxton printed edition, but to study them as part of a geographic/cultural critique of the two versions, often looking at precisely the sections that Cooper's edition omits, for the way in which these passages articulate a negotiation of England's relation to the exotic east. Arthur did not battle only Lucius, apocryphal emperor of Rome, but triumphed over
Lucius and all of his allies from the East. The popularity of works such as Marco Polo's *Travels* and John Mandeville's *Travels* along with encounters as part of the Crusades, pilgrimages, and the fall of Constantinople, form the particular context of this study.

P. J. C. Field has made a substantial contribution to the study of Malory's Roman War account with his detailed textual study of both the manuscript and print versions as well as his editing Vinaver's third edition. Along with Vinaver and other Malory scholars, Field has laid the groundwork for a re-evaluation of the Roman War account as a rich and vital part of Malory's work—in both versions—for its window into ideas of geography, empire and, in particular, England's relation to the East vis-à-vis the waning hopes for the successful reconquest of Jerusalem and the kingdoms of the East. The Roman War account has been studied for insights into Malory's view on warfare, for the significance of the glorious rather than ruinous conclusion of the account, for its indications of Malory's view on Lancastrian alliances with France and, perhaps most voluminously, for the textual variants between the Winchester and Caxton version. The study of the Caxton and Winchester versions, especially in terms of textual authority, sparked a heated polarity among scholars, leaving Kuskin to remark that, "the debate continues through a self-perpetuating industry of scholarly claims, hypothesis, counter-claims and reversals" (541). But the debate has productively progressed to the point where there is now greater agreement among scholars that Caxton, not Malory, as William Matthews has proposed, is the reviser of the Roman War account and, indeed,

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the whole of *Le Morte Darthur*. The present study considers changes in fifteenth-century culture as underlying the editorial changes made in the Caxton edition: the political, geographic, and literary context in which the work was initially written (late 1460s) was significantly changed by the time the work was prepared for print in the early 1480s. Enough evidence—linguistic and literary\(^5\)—has been compiled to make the case that Caxton “overwrote” his copy text to comply with his worldview, just as Malory had overwritten his source texts before him.\(^6\) The issue of Caxton overwriting Malory has been acknowledged by Lewis\(^7\) but in the intervening years, this even-handed positioning of Caxton’s role as editor was displaced by efforts to establish an authoritative text of Malory’s work. Though Caxton is the likely reviser, it is important that the usual corollary which accompanies this recognition be set aside—that is, that the Caxton text is a “less authoritative” text or that the Winchester perforce represents “what Malory himself wrote” (Field “Caxton’s Roman War” 31) or that either version can function to establish the “better text” (Kindrick 18). Sunichi Noguchi argues, “the view that Caxton’s Malory represents the author’s final literary achievement is definitely a fallacy” (123). While I agree that the claim of representing Malory’s “final literary achievement” would be a fallacy in terms of the Caxton text, I would also argue, that such a focus on

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\(^5\) See the linguistic studies of Noguchi, Takagi and Takamiya, and Tieken-Boon van Ostade.

\(^6\) For a discussion of the process of scribes, redactors, and printers “overwriting” their sources, see Higgins, especially 26 - 27.

\(^7\) Lewis was nonplussed by Vinaver’s accusations of editorial conspiracy. His view was that “Caxton’s text is not most usefully regarded as a corruption. He touched up Malory as Malory touched up his predecessors and by the same right. The greatest service he did the old fabric was one of demolition” (26).
authority misses the rich contextualization which results from valuing both the book and manuscript as witnesses to the work’s fifteenth-century reading. This study does not seek to establish a “Malorian” text, a pursuit that would reflect an editorial interest in the establishment and definition of authorial intention. According to Field any editor who declines or is unable to exercise his judgment and falls back on some arbitrary canon, such as the authority of the copy-text, is in fact abdicating his editorial function . . . the result is that what many editors have done is to produce, not editions of their authors’ works at all, but only editions of particular authorities for those works, a course that may be perfectly legitimate in itself, but was not the one they were professedly pursuing. (Field *Empire* 108)

This has been the predominant complaint against editions that did not operate from the central tenet of authorial intention. However, the purpose of this study of the historical documents is not to produce an eclectic critical edition, which has as its goal to best represent Malory’s intent, but a contrastive analysis: to explore Malory’s representation of the geographic and political relation with the Islamic “East” by means of contrasting it with that of the reviser, presumably William Caxton. In so doing, this study also considers the way in which the Roman War account figures in the larger scheme of *Le Morte Darthur*. For this purpose, the Winchester manuscript and the Caxton print of 1485 are—as they exist—ideal texts, without need of emendation, each an artifact of medieval manuscript and print transmission, respectively, and, more to the point, each
bearing the unmistakably mark of human intervention. As such they form a kind of “multi-text,”\textsuperscript{8} or continuum of recontextualization,\textsuperscript{9} of the Arthuriad in English vernacular prose, forming the basis of the present inquiry.

**The Roman War: A recontextualization of empire**

Iain Mcleod Higgins has described the fourteenth-century *Mandeville’s Travels* as “a deliberately dialogic response to previous and contemporary writings about the East” (11). Malory’s and Caxton’s representations of the particular tale of Arthur’s Roman War campaign are likewise informed by almost four hundred years of struggles for dominion over the East and a gradual slipping away of the conquests made by the First Crusade. There is an indication in Caxton’s preface that he viewed Malory not so much an author in the same vein, say, as Chaucer or Lydgate, but rather as a redactor/translator who was part of this recontextualizing process. Caxton informs his readers that *Le Morte Darthur* is printed from a “copye syr Thomas Malorye dyd take oute of certeyn hookes of Frensshe and reduced it into Englysshe” (Vinaver cxlv). This can be contrasted with Caxton’s view of Chaucer not only as an “author,” but also as “that noble and grete philosopher, Geoffrey Chaucer” and “laureate poete” (Blake *Prose* 61). In his introduction to his second edition of *The Canterbury Tales*, Caxton tells the story of his learning that a

\textsuperscript{8} See Higgins 470. Higgins uses the term to denote a work which exists in multiple, and often distinct, manuscript forms.

\textsuperscript{9} Rudick argues that the effort to establish an authorial version acts to “suppress an equally important discontinuity, that is, the recontextualization each inscriptions materializes . . .” (xxiv).
better text of the *Canterbury Tales* was available and, in response to this news from a certain gentlemen, Caxton provides his reply:

To whom I said, in caas that he coude gete me such a book trewe and correcte, yet I wold ones endevoyre me to enprynte it agayn for to satysfye th’auetour, where as tofore by ygnouraunce I erryd in hurtyng and dyffamyng his book in dyverce places, in settyng in somme thynges that he never sayd ne made and levyng out many thynges that he made whyche ben requysite to be sette in it. (qtd. in Blake, *Prose* 62)

Even for a writer not quite as esteemed as the “laureate poete,” Caxton, in his Preface to the *Polychronicon*, mentions that his text “shal folowe al alonge after the composynge and gaderynge of Dan Ranulph, monke of Chestre, fyrste auctour of this book, and afterward engliッシュd by one Trevisa” (qtd. in Blake, *Prose* 131). This term of “auetour,” however, is not used in reference Malory. Like Trevisa, Malory is presented as a translator and redactor. While Caxton’s lack of reference to Malory as an author does not perforce mean that Caxton did not view him as such, it does hint that in Caxton’s view, Malory’s Arthuriad was perhaps less appreciated for its originality and more as a recontextualization: an English version and reappropriation of a national legend which, as Caxton implies, had apparently languished too long in French accounts and not kept apace with the reemergence of English as a literary language. Wynkyn de Worde’s colophon may further indicate Caxton’s perception of Malory’s literary status: “ye

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10 See Lumiansky, *Malory’s Originality*.
11 For a discussion of the emergence of English as a literary language and, in particular, Lancastrian policies which supported its nationalistic function, see Fisher.
translacon of this boke was fynyssed . . . by syr Thomas Maleore knyght (Sig.E5r, 2nd column). Thus, Caxton’s view of Malory exemplifies a medieval conception of textuality which embodies the notion of a “continuous text whose existence includes, but reaches past” the named author (5). This would be particularly true of a work “drawn out” of the long “historical” and literary tradition of Arthur.

Although Malory’s choice of route has been the subject of speculation—either, as Vinaver argued, as a tribute to the route of Henry V, or, as Robert Kelly recently proposed, as route indicative of a “pro-Lancastrian, pro-French” position (112), in all cases, it is clear that Malory’s sense of continental geography, not atypical of the fifteenth century, was vague at best (Field, Texts 56). The Caxton text presents an altered route within the narrative, placing the landing in Flanders rather than in Normandy and adding the additional diversion of Brabant, the implications of which Matthews and Field have considered.12 The focus of this study is not the plotting of the narrative route, a task addressed by Vinaver, complete with map (Works 1396 n 227), but the powerful imaginative geography of the Caxton and Winchester versions as markers of the shifting paradigm represented by the end of the age of the mappamundi and the advent of the Ptolemaic map in late medieval geographic representation.

The Roman War chapter reflects a strong revision by Malory of his sources. Malory’s account of the Roman War is derived primarily from the English alliterative poem Morte Arthure, composed in the late fourteenth century, though the two

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12 See Field, “Caxton’s Roman War,” and Matthews for a discussion of the Caxton text’s substitution of Flanders.
documentary witnesses express that derivation in distinct ways. The most significant change represented in the Winchester, presumably undertaken by Malory, is the placement of the Roman War early in the Arthuriad rather than as the concluding tale of Arthur’s reign, as it appears in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s account and in the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*. While Kelly has discussed how it is possible that Malory chose to rely on the French Vulgate as the inspiration for his moving of the outcome, it is clear that Malory consciously chose to deviate from his primary sources. In no previous account does Arthur return from the Roman War campaign to a united nation and a peaceful, prosperous realm.

In Geoffrey’s account, in the *Morte Arthure*, and in *The Chronicles of England*, Arthur’s kingdom is indirectly undone by his campaign to Rome, during which time Mordred and Guinevere make a liaison and the familiar battle between Arthur and Mordred ensues. The unintended outcome of Arthur’s Roman campaign, in these earlier accounts is the destruction of the kingdom and the narrative implications, in Geoffrey, is that of the fated rise and fall of kings. In a significant contrast, Malory postpones this traditional outcome of the Roman War campaign and instead makes the campaign a cornerstone in the establishment of Arthur’s reign and England’s mythical world supremacy. Both in Hardyng’s *Chronicles of England* (suggested by John Withrington and Toshiyuki Takamiya and Masako Takagi as one of Malory sources) and in Malory, Arthur brings the campaign to its ultimate conclusion, arriving in Rome to receive the
crown, at the pope’s hand, of the Holy Roman Empire. In Hardyng’s *Chronicle*, Arthur enters Rome and is crowned at St. Peter’s Church:

At [the] Capytol, in [the sea] imperiall,
They crowned hym with crownes thre of golde
As emperoure moste principall,
And conquerour that daye most worthy hold;
Wher then he fested the citee manyfolde,
[Of Rome the byshop, and all his cardinals,]
The senatours, with other estates als.

(Hardyng 145; Chapter lxxxii)

However, despite achieving the crown of the Roman Empire, Arthur returns after one winter to a nation in the grip of civil unrest.

In the Winchester and the Caxton versions, the passage of Arthur’s succession to the throne of the Roman Empire remains fairly stable as seen in the Winchester:

and at þe day assigned as þe Romaynes me tel"
þys he was crowned Emperoure by the Poopys hondis
with all þe Royalte in þe worlde to welde for euer/ /

(*WT LN 1575-77*)

And, similarly, in the Caxton edition:

And at the day appoynted, as the

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13 Beginning with this passage, the texts used for both the Caxton and Winchester are from the accompanying edition and are cited using the TLN number in the edition.
Romance telleth, he came into Rome and was crowned em
by the popes hand with all the ryalte that could be ma
de / (C TLN 1574-76)

Caxton apparently corrects a scribal error—changing the problematic “romaynes” to
Malory’s standard phrase “as the romance telleth.” In the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*,
Arthur plans to proceed to Rome and visualizes the event:

And this royall, as romawns vs tellis,
Reuerence the Romayns in his riche table.
The tawghte men and pe conynge, when them tym thoghte,
Tas theire lefe at pe Kynge and tornede agayne:
To pe cete pat nyghte thaye soughte at pe gayneste,
And thus the ostage of Rome with Arthure es leuede.
Than this roy royall rehersys theis wordes:
"Now may we reuell and riste, fore Rome es oure awen!
Make oure ostage at ese, pise auenaunt childyren,
And luk 3e honden them all that in myn oste lengez.
The Emperour of Almayne and all theis este marches,
We sall be ouerlynge of all pat on the erthe lengez!
We will by pe Crosse Dayes encroche peis londez,
And at pe Crystynmesse Daye be crowned therafyre;
Ryngne in my ryalltes, and holde my Rownde Table,

With the rentes of Rome, as me beste lykes. (Krishna 3200-3215)

But, of course, the news of Mordred’s usurpation abruptly ends the campaign without Arthur fully achieving either the crown at the Pope’s hand or the unquestioned world dominion bestowed upon him in the Malory narratives. The catalogue of place names and the lengthy treatment of the battles of the campaign in the Winchester have been seen as prominent remnants of Malory’s alliterative source—in addition to Hardyng’s Chronicles and the Vulgate (Kelly 123)—that resisted, to a degree, Malory’s effort to craft the tale into the framework of romance. Malory’s reworking of the tale, as it appears in the Winchester, continues to evoke the feel of heroic epic rather than romance. According to Eugene Vinaver, Malory did not postpone the traditional disaster for the larger scheme of the purported “whole book,” but because he was “interested in Arthur as a great hero and ‘conqueror,’ [such as] Henry V, who, like Arthur, has won his most resounding victories away from home” (Works 1367). But, as Kelly points out, subsequent work by Helen Wroten, Richard Griffith, William Matthews and Field “demolished” the theory that Malory intended his route to be a tribute to Henry V (113-4). Nonetheless, the image of Arthur as empire-builder and conqueror dominates the Roman War account in both the Caxton and Winchester versions.

While Caxton’s text is close to the Winchester in maintaining Arthur’s ascendance to the Emperorship of the Holy Roman Empire, the most overt differences between the two are language and length: the Winchester adheres to the Morte Arthure,
retaining the alliteration and rhythm at the expense of a style consistent with the other
tales or sections of the Arthuriad. As Field notes, “Caxton seems to have systematically
modified the Morte Darthur towards his own linguistic norms” (Empire 116). The
Caxton edition largely eliminates the alliterative rhythm and meter and, of course,
 reduces the account to almost half its previous length. Perhaps the marked textual
discrepancies between the Caxton and the Winchester versions can also be attributed, in
addition to the issue of style, to the fact that the Roman War chapter is primarily
concerned with political and historical positioning. The Roman War campaign functions
as a narrative vehicle for positioning England as a real-world empire and, as such,
received careful attention by the reviser. A highly politicized content is also found in
Malory’s final tale—the shadow-side of successful the Roman War campaign, but
perhaps the inescapable death of Arthur required a closer adherence to the final narrative.
The issue of empire may have provoked both Malory’s dramatic change from his sources
and Caxton’s motivation for editing this chapter further. While contemporary editors and
audiences may find the Roman War chapter of small interest, for fifteenth-century
audiences, the chapter’s concern with geography, empire, and models of kingship seems
to have had such interest that the chapter underwent radical reformations in order to best
express the concerns and perspective of the writer/redactor and its subsequent editor.
Field has argued that Caxton changed Arthur’s symbolic dream, experienced as he
embarked on the Roman campaign, in which a dragon “oute of þe weste partyes” (W
TLN 297) fighting a “grymly Beare” (W TLN 305) that had come.“oute of þe oryent” (W
TLN 305) to that in the Caxton edition of a dragon fighting a “grymly bore,” (C TLN 305) also “oute of thoryent” (C TLN 305). Field points out that in the Caxton edition: the bear is (six times) turned into a boar. The change must have been deliberate, and it created a bold political allusion: the boar was the badge of King Richard III and the dragon that of Henry Tudor. The allusion would only have made sense in or just before 1485, and it is difficult to see who could have been responsible for it but Caxton himself. (Caxton’s 37)

I have argued elsewhere¹⁴ that scribal transmission and/or confusion could account for this change as the animal described is a confused amalgam of paws and tusks, but, even accepting that Caxton was responsible for consciously inserted the change, this change does not provide evidence that the Caxton text is a less authoritative text.

As has been noted by Withrington, Takagi and Takamiya, and Edward Kennedy, a major motivation for a possible revision by Caxton would be his interest in bringing Malory’s French version of the story of the Roman War in line with that of the Chronicles of England. The Chronicles, as Kennedy has pointed out, was “one of the most widely circulated medieval works in England in the late Middle Ages” and contained the well-established story of King Arthur (223). He notes that the part of Malory’s book that would have been most familiar to Caxton’s readers would have been the story of Arthur’s Roman War; and it is

¹⁴ See Roland.
therefore not surprising that Caxton would have revised that part of the book to make it correspond in style and to a lesser extent in content more closely to the account with which readers would have been familiar, that found in the *Chronicles of England*. (223).

It is ironic, then, that the Roman War episode is perhaps the least appreciated part of Malory’s tale today and, certainly for students, the tale that, should they read either paperback edition—the Penguin Caxton-based edition edited by Janet Cowen, or the Oxford Winchester-based edition by Helen Cooper—their awareness of the chapter’s full cultural implications will be curtailed. In his Preface to *Le Morte Darthur*, Caxton considers the historicity of Arthur and claims that “in dyvers places of Engiond many remembraunces ben yet of hym and shall remayne perpetuelly . . . Thenne, al these thynges consydered, there can no man resonably gaynsaye but there was a kyng of thys lande named Arthur” (Vinaver xiv). Caxton pushes to set the book on a historical basis, and, in light of recent geographic knowledge, it is unlikely that the existence of Prester John’s land or an implied trip by Arthur to Jerusalem, as they occur in the Winchester, could meet this standard of “history.” As Takagi and Takamiya point out, “by appropriating expressions or words from the Chronicles of England, Caxton aimed to create an ambience of a historical Roman War story” (178). In Caxton’s Prologue to the *Polychronicicon*, he makes evident his interest in the value of history: “historye representynge the thynges lyke vnto the wordes enbraceth al vtylyte & prouffite. It sheweth honeste and maketh vyces detestable. It enhaunceth noble men and depresseth
wicked men and foole's" (Crotch 66). Joerge Fichte notes that for Caxton the nature of history is verisimilitude and that Caxton's histories "partake of both historiography and romance" (102). In his Preface to *Le Morte Darthur*, Caxton sets forth his theory on the civilizing value of both history and chivalry:

I, accordyng to my copye, have doon sette it in enprynte to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble actes of chyvalrye, the jentyl and vertuous dedes that somme knyghtes used in tho dayes, by whyche they cam to honour, and how they that were vycious were punysshed and ofte put to shame and rebuke. (Vinaver, *Works* xv)

Withrington was one of the first scholars to devote a careful study to the narrative effect of the variants of the Winchester and Caxton texts. While refraining from definitively identifying Caxton as the reviser, Withrington advanced the view that "Caxton's candidacy must remain the stronger" (366). More importantly, Withrington notes several key narrative points of departure between the two texts: the degree of Arthur's civil unity as the tale opens, the pairing of Lancelot and Tristram, and the diplomatic maneuvering of the ambassadors. Withrington points out that the internal order is less assured in the Winchester:

And so aftir his mervelous knyghtis

And he had venquyshed the moste party of his enemyes (*W TLN* 7-9).
The implication is that Arthur had largely defeated his enemies, but that the process was still incomplete. With England not completely brought under Arthur's control, the Winchester establishes a position which

underlines the sense of fragility which surrounds the newly-established realm. This particular problem is resolved only when foreign imperialism is met and conquered, and Arthur's kingdom can enjoy a new-found period of stability and civil harmony. (Withrington, "Caxton" 353)

By contrast, in the Caxton text, "the implication is that Arthur has already proven triumphant in establishing the political unity and civil peace which elude the king in Winchester's version." (Withrington, "Caxton" 353). In contrast to the hint of instability in the Winchester, Caxton's text projects an image of stability and satisfaction:

Whanne kyng Arthur had after longe werre re" sted /and helde a Ryal feeste and table rounde with his alyes of kynges/prynces/ and noble kynghtes all of the round table / (C TLN 5-8).

Withrington also points out that the Caxton text's emphasizes the "niceties of diplomatic behavior" ("Caxton" 364), which would be in accord with Caxton's commercial and diplomatic interests. Withrington's comparison is rare for its considered treatment of the narrative implications of the two texts as deliberate moves rather than as a platform for eradicating the influence of Caxton's editing from the "genuine Malory." While Withrington's emphasis is on the opening scene of the two versions, the narratives have
not been similarly investigated in terms of their representation of the East, and, specifically, references to Jerusalem, Priamus, and Prester John’s land.

A contrastive analysis of the two versions of Malory’s Roman War account reveals many significant variants between the two texts, of which four form the major focus of this study: the removal of Prester John from the chronicle of Eastern allies, the conversion of Priamus, the deletion of Arthur’s stated intent to form a Crusade; and the addition of the term “infidels.” All four of these textual changes are studied in the context of the symbolic and representational geography of the mid-fifteenth century.

Exoticism and the Conquest: geographic implications of the Roman War Campaign

As a result of the languishing hopes for the Crusades, the reemergence of Ptolemaic maps, and new discoveries in navigation and exploration, mid-fifteenth century Europe was in the midst of a period of rapidly changing geographic knowledge. The fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, while not producing another Crusade as many, including Caxton, fervently hoped, did have the effect of amplifying the process, already well underway, of the “despoiling” (Greetham Scholarship 311) of archives of the Eastern Empire of the Byzantines and may have hastened the “westward dispersion” of classical scholars and works such as Ptolemy’s Geographia (Kimble 200). Accounts from the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, such as Marco Polo’s The Description of the World (Divisament dou Monde) from the mid-fourteenth century, enjoyed wide popularity as exotic accounts of the nations of the east and Middle East. Indeed,
Mandeville’s Travels is both a subtext and minor source for the Roman War account. Field notes that Mandeville’s Travels and “the Acts of the Apostles, provide some of the expanded material that the Alliterative poet brought into his account of the Roman War” (Field Empire 106). Field notes that by adding material from Mandeville’s Travels, and the Acts of the Apostles, the places Malory names “embrace what was then almost the whole known world” (Empire 106). In the fifteenth-century, these accounts, still popular, were augmented with accounts from pilgrims, returning crusaders, and, turning westward, were imbued with the possibility of an expanding world. Christopher Columbus is known to have read the classics of medieval travel literature, including Divisament dou Monde. It is this influence of the travel writing about the East that, as Jennifer Goodman points out, “led him to expect to find an island populated by Amazons in the East Indies” (42). Edward Said has observed that a major response of Western Europe’s growing contact and conflict with the nations of the East was
to characterize the Orient as alien and to incorporate it schematically on a theatrical stage whose audience, manager, and actors are for Europe, and only for Europe. Hence the vacillation between the familiar and the alien.

(71-72)

Said also argues that the results of “imaginative geography and of the dramatic boundaries it draws” (73) are a rhetoric that is both “anatomical and enumerative” (72).

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15 On the fly-leaf of the Egerton version (BL MS Egerton 1982), a now-lost note on the inside of the cover read: "Thys fayre boke I have fro the abbey at Saint Albons in thys yeare of our Lord m.ccccclxxxx the sixt day of Apyll. Willyam Caxton. Richard Tottyl, 1579 – Lond." (Moseley 38, n *)
In the case of the Roman War, the litany of the kings and dukes of the East provides just such an exotic and enumerative function:

Emperoure sente furth his messyngers of wyse olde kny3tes
vnto a Contrey calld Ambage And Arrage And vnto Aly
sundir to ynde to Ermony that the Rever of Eufrate
rennys by. And to Assy Aufryke and Europe the large
and to Ertayne and Elamyte to the oue yles to Arrabe
to Egypte to Damaske and to Damyake and to noble
deuris & erlys. Also þe kynge of Capydos and þe kynge
of Tars and of Turke and of Pounce and of Pampoy
le And oue of Preter Iohuus londe. Also þe sowdon of
Surre and frome Nero vnto Na3areth and frome Ga
rese to Galey there come Sarysyns and be com sudgettis
vnto Rome So they come glydyng In Galyes also there
come þe kynge of Cyprus and þe Grekis were gadirde
& goodly arayed with þe kynge of Macidony and of Calabe
and of Catelonde bothe kynges and dukes. And the kynge
of Portyngale with many thousande Spaynardis // Thus
all thers kyngis and dukys and Admyrallys noblys assem//
bled with xvj. kynges at onys And so they com vnto Rome with
In both the Winchester and Caxton versions, this catalogue of Saracen kings creates what Higgins terms “a multiple Otherness.” (93). Caxton’s version, though briefer, retains this sense of multiple otherness:

Wel sayd Lucius bfore Eester I suppose to passe the mountayns and soo forth in to fraunce/ and there byreue hym his londes with Ianeweyes and other myghty warryours of Tuskane and lombardyel/ And I shall sende for them all that ben subgettys and aleyd to thempyre of Rome to come to myn ayde/ and forthwith sente old syse knyghtes vnto these coun’” trayes folowynge/ fyrste to ambage and arrage/ to Alysau’n”
drye/ to ynde to hermonye/ where as the ryuer of Eufrates ren"  
neth in to Asye / to Auffryke / and Europe the large / to erta"  
yne and Elamy to Arabye / Egypte and to damaske / to da"  
myete and Cayer / to Capadoce / to tarce / Turkye / pounce and  
pampoylle / to Surrye and gallacye / And alle these were sub"  
getto Rome and many moo / as Greece / Cypres / Macydone /  
Calabre / Cateland / portyngale with many thousands spay  
nardys / Thus alle these kynges / dukes / and admyrals assem  
bled aboute Rome with xvj kynges attones with grete mul"  
ty rude of peple/ whan themperour vnderstood their comyng / he  
made redy his Romayns / and alle the peple bytwene hym &  
Flaundres & C Also he hadde goten wyth  
hym fyfty Geaunts whiche had ben engendred of fendys  
And they were ordeyned to garde his persone / and to breke  
the frounte of the bataylle of kynge Arthur /  
And thus departed fro Rome and came doune the montayns  
for to destroye the londes that Arthur had conquerd (C TLN 202-235)  
According to Field, the Roman War account derives  
ultimately from a short list of provinces and peoples in the Historia which  
looks like a typical stroke of Galdrfidian historical verisimilitude. Wace  
reordered the list and brought it up to date by replacing Parthia with
Turkey, and La3amon and Mannyng used the revised list with a few small changes. The alliterative poet reworked and expanded it, turning into an elaborate account of imperial summons and response. (*Empire* 106)

A key passage for establishing the context of the East-West anxiety of fifteenth-century England, this section of the Roman War account is considered part of Malory’s tedious litany of battle participants, a remnant of an older literary form, which is excised from Cooper’s edition. From Vinaver’s thirty-three-page text of the Roman War account to Cooper’s “slightly abbreviated text” (xxiii) of twelve pages, the push to reduce the Roman War account occurs, unfortunately, at a time when critical interest in issues of empire and exoticism is foregrounded.

The description in the Winchester of the “horryble peple” (*WTLN* 233) of Lucius’s army does not appear in the *Morte Arthure* where the massing armies are described as “a full gret nombye” (Krishna 602), “legyons ynewe” (Krishna 605), and as “summes full huge” (Krishna 606). As employed in the Winchester version, “horryble peple” carries with it the heightened sense of a nameless threat on the southeastern borders of Latin Christendom. Although the term “horruble peple” is not part of the Caxton print, it cannot be attributed to a more benign view of Muslims on the part of Caxton but perhaps to his effort to reduce the romantic aspects of the tale and emphasize the realistic, historiographic aspect. Clearly, like *Mandeville’s Travels*, this passage in the two versions that details the assemblage of Roman and Eastern subjects functions as “an ethno-geographical survey” that resembles a form of medieval catalogue (Higgins
203). The Caxton text’s omission of the reference to horrible people distinguishes between the grotesque nature of the fifty giants that served as the front guard for Saracens. The giants are present in the Caxton text and are described as “engendred of fendys” (C TLN 228) much as in the Winchester, “engendirde with fendis” (W TLN 228) which has its close source in the Morte Arthure’s “engenderide with fendez” (Krishna 612). The Winchester text seems to amplify the sense of monstrous Otherness that threatened to spill into Europe, a threat which echoed concerns that a Muslim invasion, following upon the sacking of Constantinople in 1453, could be imminent. Both texts provide, via Arthur’s vanquishing of Lucius and all his allies, a vicarious revenge narrative in response to the fall of Constantinople.

The geographical catalogue of Lucius’s allies in the Winchester and Caxton texts, as well as the Morte Arthure, can be described as biographically sterile in comparison to Wace and La3amon’s version. Despite the complex, and at times even laudatory, views of Eastern culture portrayed in Mandeville’s Travels and Marco Polo’s Travels, this appreciation and even individualization is obliterated in the Winchester and Caxton texts, compressed into a monotype description of all the nations of the east as equally threatening and equally subjects of Rome and all vanquished by the conquest of Lucius. The Winchester’s description of the Saracen fighters retains their descriptions as kings, whereas Caxton, on the other hand, portrays the litany of Eastern rulers only as “subgettys and aleyd to th’Empyre of Rome,” deleting any reference to their being
monarchs in their own lands. The Caxton text also omits the Winchester reference to “noble deukis & erlys” and shortens the “kynge of Capydos” simply to “Capadoce,” and thus continuing the process of stripping out the personalities of the principalities of the East. In Wace’s and La3amon’s accounts, the Roman War account is far longer and includes the names of most of the kings and dukes, an inclusion which highlights their noble and kingly status. This stripping away of identity from the kings and dukes of the East in the Malory versions stands in marked contrast to a tendency Withrington points out regarding Malory’s treatment of minor characters in which he “frequently gave names to those unidentified individuals he found in his sources” (17). In La3amon’s Brut, which, as Mary Dictman has noted, Malory may have known (69), the kings and dukes of the East were named as noble, chivalrous adversaries:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{be aereste king } & \text{ be } \text{ per com } \quad \text{he wes swi} \text{de kene mon,} \\
\text{Epistrod, King of Grece; } & \text{ Ethion, Duc of Boece} \\
\text{per com mid mucle wi3e, } & \text{ Irtac, King of Turckie,} \\
\text{Pandras, King of Egipte, } & \text{ of Crete be king Ipolitte,} \\
\text{of Syrie be king Euander, } & \text{ of Frigie be duc Teucer,} \\
\text{of Babilone Mæptisas, } & \text{ of Sapine be kaisere Meodras,} \\
\text{of Medie be king Boccus, } & \text{ of Libie be king Sexstorius,} \\
\text{of Bittunie Pollidices, } & \text{ of Iture be king Sexes,} \\
\text{Ofutesar, King of Aufrike } & \text{—nes } \text{ per na king his ilike. (Barron 12657-65)}
\end{align*}\]
Wace also provides the names of the kings and dukes as a role call at a chivalrous tournament: “To meet Lucius came Epistrophius, King of the Greeks; Ession, King of Boeotia; and Itarc, King of the Turks, a passing strong and perilous knight” (Mason 78). But in the Winchester and Caxton Roman War versions, the “minor characters” remain the nameless adversaries found in the *Morte Arthure*:

```
Thane Sir Lucius lordlyche lettres he sendys
Onone into þe Oryente, with austeryn knyghtez,
Till Ambyganye and Orcage and Alysaundyre eke,
To Inde and to Ermonye, as Ewfrates rynnys,
To Asye and to Affrike and Ewrope þe large,
To Irritayne and Elamet and all þase owte ilez,
To Arraby and Egipt, till erles and oþer,
That any erthe occupyes in þase este marches,
Of Damaske and Damyat, and dukes and erles,
For drede of his daungere they dresside þem sone;
Of Crete and of Capados the honourable kynys
Come at his commandmente clenly at ones (Krishna 570-581)
```

Field notes that the result of the litany of Eastern rulers as it appears in the *Morte Arthure* is a “visionary tour de force that presents dozens of recognizably real localities in a Miltonic sweep across three continents. Malory seems to have attempted to abbreviate this while keeping as many of the place names as possible” (Field *Empire* 107). But
there is also a conscious representation of the kings and dukes as "horrible peple" rather than as the *Morte Arthure*'s "honourable kinges." Caxton continues the process evidenced in the Winchester by further simplifying and diminishing the royal quality of the Eastern adversaries.

Jennifer Goodman notes that while Sir John Mandeville and Marco Polo "presented themselves to their contemporaries as true travelers undertaking real journeys, the chivalric romance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries depict journeys of the imagination" (45). But Malory's Roman War account appears, in both its manuscript and edited printed forms, to attempt to negotiate the narrowing gap between imaginative travel accounts and real encounters with the east and, because of his trade connections, it is likely that Caxton had a somewhat more accurate geographic knowledge than Malory, although still heavily influenced by narrative, "historical" geography. Kimble points out that in *The Mirror of the World* Caxton "printed one hundred year old information as if it were current" (Kimble 200). Kelly speculates that Malory likely never saw an actual map but rather read verbal geographic descriptions in his sources as well as in "a standard reference work such as Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon" (117). However, as P. D. A. Harvey points out, Higden's World Map was also popular, with many versions of the map circulating independently and as accompanying illustration (Harvey 21). The immensely popular *Polychronicon*, rewritten in versions from the 1330s to the 1360s often "included a world map to illustrate its first book on natural history and geography" (Harvey 35). Harvey notes, in reference to the Hereford Map, that the "world map may
or may not have been a generally familiar object in thirteenth-century England, but it is clear that at the very least an educated person might expect to come across one from time to time” (35). As a bookseller and manuscript dealer, Caxton could be expected to encounter such maps in the course of his business.

While Malory may have seen a Higden map or other similar “T-O” map (see Appendix A), Caxton, on the other hand, is more likely, by virtue of timing alone, to have seen such a map. It is possible that Caxton may have seen one of the new maps based on Ptolemy’s *Geographia* printed in Italy in the late 1470’s. While Caxton, in his Prefaces and other front and end matter does not mention Ptolemy’s maps, in *Myrour of the Worldde* Caxton uses the term “Mappa Mundi” (introduction to Book III, chapter xxiv) in reference, as Blake points out, not to an actual map but to imply a sense of the whole world: “In the seconde partye is declared to yow whiche parte of th’erthe is inhabyted and of the dyvysion of Mappa Mundi” (Blake *Prose* 117). Though general rather than specific, such a reference may be said to reveal a geographical awareness on Caxton’s part of which we can be less certain in regard to Malory. Caxton’s edition of *Mirrour of the World* includes the first map printed in England, a form of the “T-O” (Prior 66). (See Figure 1.) In this same text, by way of introducing the “thirde partye,” consisting of information on day and night and eclipses, Caxton makes note of “firmament and of the sterres; and how the world was mesured and the heven and th’erthe; of the kynge, Tholomeus, and of his prudence” (Blake *Prose* 118). Caxton’s reference here is to Ptolemy’s work in astronomy, indicating that Caxton at least knew of Ptolemy’s celestial
writing if not his terrestrial cartography, but which could be from a number of texts including Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* or Boece. Ptolemy’s *Almagest* was “circulating widely in the West from the twelfth century onwards” (Delano-Smith 41) and therefore the mention does not indicate familiarity with the new maps. Blake argues that “Caxton knew no Italian and his knowledge of works by Italians was slight” (23), the implication of which is that Caxton, who apparently did not read Latin but relied on French sources for his translations, may not have actively traded in texts from Italy such as the Latin *Geographia*. However, the *Geographia*, in its printed forms, steadily spread to Northern Europe. Kimble notes that “by 1475 maps accompanying manuscript copies of the *Geography* were beginning to include maps drawn on the new principle” and that the “effect of the re-discovery of Ptolemy’s *Geography*, authentic, convincing, and vastly superior to the average text-book of the day, can therefore be imagined” (215).

**The end of the mythic East: The disappearance of the land of Prester John**

The first printed edition of Ptolemy’s *Geographia* was published by Hermanus Levilapis (without maps) in 147516 in Venice, clearly too late for Malory to have seen. (See Figure 2.) During the intervening years between Malory’s writing of *Le Morte Darthur* and its appearance in print, the impact of manuscript and printed versions of the *Geographia* were powerful. The Bologna *Geographia* of 1477, produced with the newly developed printing process, ushered in a new era in cartography and the representation of

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16 A reproduction of one of the pages from this text can be viewed at: [http://bell.lib.umn.edu/map/PTO/GEO/mainptg.html](http://bell.lib.umn.edu/map/PTO/GEO/mainptg.html).
the earth. Copies of the print *Geographia* spread to northern Europe by the early 1480s as evidenced by Lienhart Holle’s Ulm edition of 1482 published under its other title, *Cosmographia*. (See Figure 3.) The Ulm edition was complete with wood cut maps, many of which were hand-colored, deriving from Nicolaus Germanus’s copies (Berggren 126). Lisa Jardine notes that by the late fifteenth century, the *Geographia*, often complete with colored and illuminated maps “took pride of place in a surprisingly large number of great men’s libraries” (205). Yeats-Edwards observes that Caxton “may have been acquainted with, and had access to a major library of vernacular books in Flanders” (384) and he also notes that the Dukes of Burgundy, “whom the English nobility and Caxton accepted as arbiters of literary tastes, favored books in the vernacular, as can be seen from inventories of their libraries” (384).17 Jardine notes that the *Geographia* was an extremely expensive purchase since some copies contained as many as sixty individual maps, drawn, place names added, then colored and decorated. The printed editions used woodcuts copied from those of Nicolas Germanus’s 1460 manuscript edition. Aside from the possible presence of a *Geographia* being in the Ducal libraries, it is known that, at least by 1444, a copy of the *Geographia* was in England: a copy of *The Cosmographia* (the alternative title for *The Geographia*) was included with a group of Latin translations by Antonio Pacini given to the University of Oxford in February 1444” (Delano-Smith 254, n.98). Caxton also engaged in vigorous book

17 See, for example, Doutrepont. Note especially Item 199, *Cosmographia Tholomei*. 
importation, in one instance bringing to London “1161 books, and one container with books” (Kerling 197).

In the fifteen intervening years between the manuscript and the printed book, maps were becoming more widely available and the hazy conception of mythical Christian kingdoms such as Prester John’s land were slowly fading. By the late fifteenth-century, a diplomatic professional and merchant such as Caxton may well have had the opportunity to observe world maps which depicted the three known continents in a different symbolic relationship than the T-O maps, shifting the top orientation of the east to the now familiar orientation of north as the top and in which Jerusalem was displaced as the center of the world. Harvey notes that later medieval maps drew on “the new, vastly more accurate, portolan charts,” used for navigation beginning around the second half of the fourteenth-century, many of which were now drawn, not in England—the previous site of intense geographical mapping such as represented in the Hereford Map—but in Italy (35). Early printed maps, however, tended to be reproductions of Ptolemaic maps, without information based on the portolan charts of explorers, and Caxton’s connections with continental merchants, printers, and diplomats would certainly have enhanced the potential for his encounter with maps in a period in which cartography and print technology were combining to rapidly spread new images of the known world.

The advent of printing and the spread of maps, in particular the Geographia, is unlikely to have escaped Caxton’s notice nor failed to inform his sense of the East as he sought to portray a historical Arthur in a changing geographic space. The introduction of
Ptolemaic maps to Europe did not banish all marvelous aspects of English geographical knowledge by any means. As C. W. R. D. Moseley notes, the Behaim globe, made in Nuremberg in 1492 "quotes Mandeville wholesale, with great respect" (31). For example, the globe includes places from Mandeville's narrative such as the island of the Satyrs and the mythic islands of Masculina and Feminea, supposedly inhabited by their single sex. The incorporation of such material suggests that the new maps based on Ptolemy represented not so much a radically new paradigm but a continuum of geographic representation. In fact, the opening lines of the Geographia put forth exactly such a conception of knowledge as connected and synthetic: the Geographia states that world cartography "is to show the known world as a single and continuous entity" (Berggren 57). Kimble argues that, in terms of cartography, "the practice of 'harmonizing' established facts with traditions," that is, of blending the encyclopedic maps based on narratives such as Mandeville's Travels with new information from Ptolemaic or portolan maps became "acute" around the mid-fifteenth century "so that scarcely any two world-maps of this period give us the same world-view" (197).

Moseley notes that "the principle sources of Columbus's ideas were Polo, Mandeville and Ptolemy" (31) without the sense that Ptolemy completely replaced Mandeville or Polo. The spread of Ptolemaic maps, however, during the intervening years between the writing and editing of Le Morte Darthur mark a period of intensive mapmaking and the beginning of a shift in English geographic knowledge. Caxton's worldview, as
represented in the Roman War account, may be seen as reflecting some early responses to these changes in the geographical-textual process of constructing the East.

It is possible that an emerging awareness of such geographic changes on the part of Caxton can account for the removal in the print version of the reference to Prester John’s land. The reference to Prester Johan’s land found in the Morte Arthure— “Of Perce and of Pamphile and Preter Iohnes landes” (Krishna 588)— is incorporated into the Winchester’s “oute of Preter Iohns londe” (W TLN 215), but eliminated from the Caxton print. Prester John’s land, an imaginative land ruled by a Christian king, was vaguely located in the East, perhaps India, and purportedly visited by Mandeville in his travels. In the Cotton Version of Mandeville’s Travels (a unique manuscript dated to about 1400), Prester John is described as the “great Emperour of Ynde. And men clepen his roialme the yle of Penexoire” (Seymour 194). Prester John is described as allied by marriage to the Great Khan of China but also as a “Cristene and a gret partie of his contree also” (Seymour 198), and his kingdom is accorded status as both a noble princedom and a Christian realm in which the inhabitants believe in “the Fader, in the Sone, and in the Holy Gost. And thei ben fulle deuoute and right trewe on to another” (Seymour 197). Mary Campbell notes that “rumors of Coptic Christians in Ethiopia invited its identification with the related concepts of ‘Prester John’ and ‘India’” (239). Larry Benson agrees that the legend was “probably based on reports of Christian communities” (268, n.588) which existed in the East, but the exact location of Prester John’s land in Mandeville’s Travels remains vague. According to the Cotton Version of
the Travels, Prester John “holt fulle gret lond and hath many fulle noble cytees and gode
townes in his royalme and many grete dyuerse yles and large” (Seymour 195), but the
exact location is unspecified. Mandeville justifies his vague geographic positioning of
Prester John’s land by the fact that men “dreden the longe weye and the grete periles in
the see in tho partyes” (Seymour 195). Caxton’s edition, on the other hand, eliminates
the reference to the mythical Christian kingdom and, in so doing, appears to attempt to
accommodate changing geographic information and, as Field noted, to eliminate what, by
the 1480s, may have been suspect as mythical references. Field proposes that Caxton
purged some of the place names based on three criteria: “he did not want names that
were textually corrupt or manifestly legendary or from the Holy Land” (Empire 124).
Both the legendary nature of Prester John as well as his Christian association may have
influenced Caxton decision. Caxton’s support of the Crusades\textsuperscript{18} may have determined
that a decision to retain the Prester John reference, purportedly a Christian ruler in the
East, would have muddied Caxton’s focus on the rhetoric of opposition to the Islamic
“infydeles.” In addition, in light of the north-orientation of the Ptolemaic maps, the
description in the Mandeville text of the geographic relation of Jerusalem and Prester
John’s land may have seemed less possible to Caxton than to Malory. The Cotton
version of Mandeville’s Travels describes the route to Prester John’s land, stating that “in
goynge from Scotlond or from Englond toward Ierusalem men gon vpward alweys. For
oure lond is in the lowe partie of the erthe toward the west, and the lond of Prester John is

\textsuperscript{18} See Kuskin.
the lowe partie of the erthe toward the est” (Seymour 134). In this worldview, as represented by the T-O maps, Jerusalem is both the geographic center as well as the altitudinal pinnacle. But Jerusalem as the symbolic spiritual and physical center of the world was no longer a tenable construct when faced with the maps of the Geographia. It is perhaps not a coincidence that, as hopes for the Crusades faded and intense interest focused on exploration of the New World, so too did Jerusalem’s representation as the epicenter of the world. Accompanying this shift in the cartographic representation of Jerusalem would be the displacement of the already vague location of Prester John’s land. Perhaps not surprisingly, King Arthur, who once was placed on medieval maps such as the Hereford, no longer had a physical place on the Ptolemaic-based maps of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

William Matthews argued that Malory attempted to “move the Roman War from the narrow world of Arthurian chronicle into the wider Arthurian world of French and English romance, and to mitigate the epic qualities of the poetic source and invest the episode with traits more suited to romance” (“Question” 99). Within the genre of romance, however, the Caxton version appears to attempt to heighten the historical “truthfulness” of the account. While Prester John’s land clearly operated in the realm of romance, by the 1480s it apparently violated the constraints of the equally important—to Caxton—mode of historiography and, quite possibly, a narrative framework that was challenged by new images of the known world.
‘Where art thou Priamus?’: The conversion of the East

Another locus of recontextualization between the Winchester and Caxton versions of the Roman War is the textual treatment of Priamus, a character who embodies the symbolic encounter of the East with the West. After engaging in a ritualized battle with Gawain, Priamus, a noble Saracen, agrees to convert to Christianity and becomes accepted by Arthur into the Round Table. In the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, Priamus expresses Christian-like behavior: when bested by Gawain, Priamus asks, “With thy bat thowe suffre me, for sake of thy Cryste, / To schewe schortly my schrifte and schape for myn ende.” (Krishna 2587-2588). But it is in the Winchester and Caxton versions that Priamus is actually converted and christened. In the Winchester and Caxton texts, the conversion of Priamus functions as an enactment of the hoped-for conversion of the Muslims. In this way, Arthur performs the function on an individual, symbolic level of the broader, cultural hope of the Crusades. Kuskin argues that by eliminating many of the “stylistic traces” of the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, Caxton’s version “emphasizes the Crusade-like aspect of Arthur’s journey to Rome, and thus fits Caxton’s Worthies Series much more closely than the Winchester manuscript” (541). Kuskin further argues that, in terms of the conversion of Priamus, “the printed edition’s cleaner style gives it more weight” (541). While appreciation of this “cleaner style” may be a purely 20th century reading experience, Kuskin’s observation in regard to the conscious shaping of the Roman War campaign into Caxton’s Worthies project is germane. The conversion of
Priamus does become, in Caxton’s streamlined version of the Roman War account, a more prominent episode by virtue of the elimination of many of the Winchester’s preceding passages. Kuskin cites the printed version’s “continuity with the Series themes overall” to argue that “it appears that Caxton did revise the Roman War episode” (541). Caxton’s anti-Islamic and pro-Crusade rhetoric is similarly evident in his introduction to *Charles the Grete*, which dedicates the work “to the exaltacyon of the crysten fayth and to the confusyon of the hethen sarazyns and myscreaunts, whiche is a werk wel contemplatyf for to lyue wel.” (Herrtage 9). In contrast to other episodes in the Roman War account, Caxton does not substantially reduce the Priamus episode itself. For example, Priamus’s pledge in the Winchester, “yet wolle I be leue on thy lorde þat þou beleyst on” (*W* TLN 1232-3) remains virtually intact in the Caxton, “yet wyl I byleue on thy lord that thow byleuest on” (*C* TLN 1232-33) substantiating that Caxton considered this episode to be of central importance to the Roman War narrative. Though Caxton retains the essence of Priamus’s conversion, a few changes between the two versions are worthy of note. In the Winchester it is clear that Arthur himself christens Priamus:

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// Than þe kynge In haste crystynde hym fayre
and lette conferme hym Priamus as he was a fore and
lyghtly lete dubbe hym a deuke with his hondys and made
hym knyght of þe table rounde (*W* TLN 1480-83).
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In the Caxton, it is less clear that the christening was done by Arthur:

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thenne the kyng lete hym anon be crystned/ and dyd
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doo calle hym his fyrste name Pryamus/ and made hym a du"/ke and knyghte of the table round (C TLN 1480-83).

Later in the Winchester version, as Arthur is distributing lands as part of the spoils of war, he calls out:

Where art þou Priamus thy fee is yet bynynde/ here I make þe and gyff þe deukedom of Lorayne for euer vnto þe and thyne ayres. And whan we come In to Ingelonde for to purvey the of horse mete and a ml. li.quarterly for to mayntene thy seruauntis so þou leve not my felyship this gyffte ys thyne owne (TLN 1594-1600)

A spatial/rhetorical question calling Priamus forward, it can also be seen as a questioning of Piramus’s faith, a question later responded to, in the Winchester, with loyalty and conviction:

The knyght thankyd þe kynge with

a kynde wylle and sayde as longe as I lyve my ser"/

vys is youre owne // (TLN 1600-02).

In the Caxton version, as throughout, much of the direct speech is edited and thus the resonance of Arthur calling forth Priamus by his now-Christian name is lost and replaced by the more direct statement that Arthur:

& he gafe

to syre Pryamus the duchye of Lorayne/ and he thanked hym

and sayd he wold serue hym the dayes of his lyf and after
made dukes and erles/ and made euery man ryche

(C TLN 1581; 1596; 1601).

Gone too are the particular spoils of war Arthur promises to Priamus when he comes to England. In the Caxton version, Priamus does not receive, perhaps unfortunately, an offer of “horsemeat” and, more to the point, is not invited to come to England.

The section of the Roman war in which Priamus is converted an adaptation of the “Foraging Episode” from Fierabras. The transformation of Fierabras to Priamus occurs in the Morte Arthure and the relation of the episode to the conception of Christian Worthies is clear, a connection which would have strong appeal to Caxton. Priamus narrates his genealogy as a form of a condensed biblical history: his ancestors are two of the three old testament worthies, Judas Maccabeus and Joshua, followed by the two of the pagan worthies Hector and Alexander:

my fadir is come of Alysaundirs bloode pat was ouer leder of kynges. And of Ector also was he come by pe ryght lyne & many mo were of my kynrede bothe Judas macabeus And deuke Josue And ayre I am alper nexte of Alysaundir and of Aufryke and of all the outhe iles (W TLN 1228-32).

Lee Patterson suggests that “Gawain’s defeat of Priamus is a metaphor for historical transition, a translatio virtutis from past to present. But if the dominion of the present
over the past is asserted, so too is the continuity between them” (221). This sense of historical transition becomes more sharply focused by the Malory versions, over that of the *Morte Arthure*, because of the addition of the conversion episode, presided over by Arthur himself. In defeating Lucius, the Roman Emperor, Arthur simultaneously defeats the “pagan” Saracens and enacts, at least symbolically, dominance over the kingdoms and religion of the East. In the person of Priamus, the *translatio imperii* is enacted: the lineage of empire is passed symbolically to England with Priamus’s conversion and submission to Arthur. Thus, in converting Priamus and defeating the Roman Empire, Arthur enacts ascendancy to the great historical empires of Babylon, Persia, Athens, and Rome and effectively bypasses any claim of French inheritance of such a claim through Charlemagne.

**Next Year in Jerusalem**

In both the Winchester and Caxton versions, the christening of Priamus is followed by Arthur’s assault on the remaining towns between his troops and the ultimate object of the campaign: Rome. Punctuated by his display of mercy to the countess of Clarysyn, once the conquest of Rome is assured, Arthur gives his “assente” to the Roman senators’ forced request that he govern Rome. In the Winchester, Arthur plans his crowning at Christmas:

> And than as I am a vysed to gete me
> ouer þe salte see with good men of armys to deme for his
deth that for vs all on þe Roode dyed” (TLN 1570-72).

Arthur’s pledge is the same mix of the religio-military fervor of the Crusades and implies a desired violent encounter with the Jews as well as the Muslims and derives from the *Morte Arthure*:

Syne graythe ouer þe grette see with gud men of armes,

To reuenge the Renke that on the Rode dyede. (Krishna 3216-3217)

Such an encounter holds the promise of his dominion reaching the breadth of the historical Roman Empire—from England to Jerusalem. In the Caxton version, the promise of Arthur’s continuing his victorious campaign in Jerusalem is absent. Several explanations for this change may be offered: textual consistency, a desire to make a greater distinction between Arthur and Lucius as models of governance, and Caxton’s situating of *Le Morte Darthur* within the framework of his Nine Worthies publishing project. The editorial explanation for the deleted passage recognizes that, while Arthur expresses a trip to Jerusalem as a possibility in the Winchester text, he never embarks on such a trip and the possibility dies without further mention in the narrative. Caxton, as editor, may have felt that it made sense to drop this narrative loose end from the printed version.

A political reading of the removal of the reference to a possible Crusade to Jerusalem concerns the issue of governance: in a narrative concerned with the consequences of a sovereign’s seeking and taking of advice, Arthur apparently fails to act upon his counselors’ advice in the Winchester version. Arthur states that his advisors, for
apparently moral and religious reasons, urge him to proceed to Jerusalem and thus, presumably, complete the “noble” task of purging any religious states in opposition to Latin Christendom. However, in contrast to the opening sequences in which Arthur relies on the advice of his counselors, Arthur never acts upon the advice to advance to Jerusalem. Read in the broader narrative of governance, such a failure to act upon the proffered advice suggests Arthur’s eventual downfall. As was just demonstrated by Lucius’s overruling of his senators’ advice, disastrous consequences resulted when he ignored and overruled the advice of his wise counselors when they urged:

And perfore Sirres

truste to oure sawys ye shall fynde hym your vttir ene”

mye . . . be my counsayle rere up your lyege peple and

sende kynges and deukes to loke vnto your marchis And þat

the mountaynes of Almayne be myghtyly kepte // (W TLN 184-201).

The Caxton edition similarly retains Lucius’s disregard of his senators’ advice:

wherfore I aduyse yow to kepe wel youre marches and

straytes in the mountayns / For certaynly he is a lord to be do”

ubted (C TLN 199-201).

But Lucius ignores the advice to defend the “mountayns of Almayne” and instead plans an offensive that by Easter will march into France. Later in the narrative, Lucius again

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19 Radulescu compares John Vale’s Book and Sir Thomas Malory’s Le Morte Darthur in light of issues of politics and governance.
acts in contradiction to one of the senators urges, “Sir withdraw the!” (W TLN 866). Such disregard stands in marked contrast to the careful solicitation of advice by Arthur when the Roman senators first present Lucius’s challenge and Arthur’s attentive response: the proposed campaign against Lucius is discussed in full with Arthur’s advisors in the Winchester text and, though more briefly, in the Caxton version. Arthur resolves “not to be over-hasty” (W TLN 44-45) and undertakes the campaign against Lucius in accord with his counselor’s advice. If, as Raluca Radulescu argues, “[g]ood kingship and the governance of the realm were the most prominent subjects of debate, given the monarchical problem and the conflict between the houses of Lancaster and York” (69), then the Caxton text’s removal of Arthur’s mention of his advisors’ proposal that he continue to Jerusalem displays a later concern that the narrative lacked consistency in terms of the issue of governance based on sound advice.

Shelley Lockwood notes that the existence of “a widely perceived crisis of governance in England” (xvi) resulted in works such as Sir John Fortescue’s On the Laws and Governance of England. Fortescue’s work, along with Lydgate’s Serpent of Division, were both part of John Vale’s Book and both address the issue of royal counsel and England’s symbolic relationship to Rome. Both works use the model of Julius Caesar’s Roman Senate as, respectively, a good and bad model of advice and governance. Despite their divergent take on the Senate of Caesar, both warn of the dangers of bad governance based on the advise of evil counselors. For Fortescue, the Roman Senate
provided a model of governance in which the emperor ruled by the advice of the senators, as he explains in *De Natura Legis Naturae*:

> But he [Julius Caesar] being at last put to death on account of this arrogance, Octavian, a man of the mildest character, being raised to the monarchy of the whole world, governed it not only royally but also politically by the advice of the senate. (Lockwood 129)

Fortescue’s recourse to Rome is an indication of the way in which Roman models dominated the parameters of fifteenth-century political thinkers. Fortescue’s chapter 16 is a treatise on “How the Romans prospered whilst they had a great council” (Lockwood 117-118). Lockwood argues that in fifteenth-century England “a general theory of policy-centered kinship” emerged in which “an hereditary monarch . . . ruled by his will, but after due consultation with, and in the interests of, his subjects” (xxi). Fortescue clearly focuses on the aspect of advice:

> The Romaynes while theire counseill callid the Senate was grete, throughghe the wisdoome of that counseill gate the lordship of the grete partie of the worlde . . . By whiche ensample it is thoughte, that yif the kyng have suche a counseill as is before specfied, his londe shal not oonly be ryche and welthy as were the Romaynes, but also his highenesse shalbe mighty and of power to subdue hys enemyes and all other that he shall luste to reigne upon. (Kekewich 246)
Fortescue goes on to warn that “whanne they lefte suche counseill they felle into noon power and povertie” (Kekewich 246). Radulescu cites *John Vale’s Book* as typifying a widespread concern that “the country and its politics had entered a period of decline, which was confirmed by the factional strife among the nobility and gentry. Vale suggests the royal counselors were to blame” (72). Clearly this analog of the Roman council reverberates in the Roman War campaign in which Arthur’s counselors’ advice is critical to his successful campaign and the failure to heed such advice the root of Lucius’s failure.

In the Winchester and Caxton Roman War narratives, Arthur consistently receives sound advice and acts responsibly upon that advice, in contrast to Lucius. As the tale nears conclusion, Caxton perhaps wrestled with the question of how Arthur could return to England leaving “good gouernaunce in þat noble cite” (*W* TLN 1623) when he has just failed to act upon his counselors’ advice in the core issue of reconquest of the Holy Land. In this last instance of royal counsel within the Winchester version, Arthur never takes up his counselor’s advice: he is crowned Emperor and, at the urging of his men, who wish to “sporte vs with oure wyffis” (*W* TLN 1611) (also deleted from the Caxton text and replaced with the more sober “and gyue vs lycence to goo home to oure wyues” (*C* TLN 1611), returns to England, victorious, a conqueror, a hero who has unified the realms of the historical Roman empire, but one who has also failed to extend that conquest to the Holy Land. Arthur’s return to England without having revenged the death of Christ can be seen in this regard as a kind of political and spiritual failure. The
Caxton text eliminates this tension by eliminating the reference altogether. Though Malory clearly was concerned with the issues of advice and governance, the Winchester version appears to be governed more by his alliterative source than by the issue of Arthur as a consistent model of good governance. In La3amont, interestingly, Lucius sends for his subject kings and dukes, based on the advice of his senators, and he is not, therefore, conspicuously held up as a contrasting model of poor governance.

Riddy casts Arthur’s conquest over Lucius as “an extraordinary transformation of the Roman conquest of Britain” (62) and, as Michelet argues, the Roman War narrative gives voice to a desire for English ascendancy to the mantle of empire previously held by the Roman empire. Like *The Wars of Alexander*, Malory’s Roman War account expresses “a need to escape the limits of history itself” (Chism 116). The Roman war account is a form of symbolic historiography, which, as Chism notes in regard to *The Wars of Alexander*, “conflates genealogy and geography as contested territories,” (117). In Malory’s Arthuriad, Arthur appropriates both the geography of ancient Rome and its imperial genealogy. Arthur’s performance of *translatio imperii* early in the work establishes the stakes for the final book, “The Death of Arthur,” and positions the destruction of the round table in Malory as “the loss of empire, not just the civil war” (Riddy 66). Whereas Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of England* can be seen as a narrative of cultural identity” (Shichtman and Finke 7), the Winchester/Caxton versions expands this sense of identity to include the pursuit and establishment of empire. William Boelhower has suggested, “a map generates culture through the naming process
inasmuch as it provides a structural base for institutionalizing an implicit, and characteristically national, internal order” (50). The Roman War account, no less than the mappamundi or a map from Ptolemy’s Geographia, offers a form of symbolic cartographic representation of translatio imperii and, in so doing, “transfers to Britain a cultural legacy, the idea of a universal empire, that had previously traveled from Babylon to Rome” (Michelet 209). By traveling east, Arthur achieves, not only the physical conquering of Rome, but seizes for England the symbolic capital of the great empires of the east. This sense of establishing a universal empire for England is strengthened in the Caxton text by the Roman ambassadors’ lauding of Rome as “that noble empyre which domyneth vpon the vnyuersal world” (C TLN 43-44). Malory’s account of Arthur’s crowning at the hands of the Pope, which occurs in both the Winchester and Caxton versions, focuses the conclusion of the Roman War as the cornerstone for this transfer of empire. In contrast, in Geoffrey’s account and in the Morte Arthure, the vanquishing of Rome formed part of the continuum of fortune’s dispensations, and the glory quickly dissolved into despair. In Geoffrey’s account, Arthur’s betrayal by Mordred can be seen as a direct consequence of his quest for empire and, like all the other kings in Geoffrey’s narrative, ultimately subjected to the downward motion of fortune’s wheel. But in Malory’s Arthuriad, although the kingdom of Arthur eventually comes to ruin, the translatio imperii has been successfully transacted and seems to invest a latent inheritance of such an empire in fifteenth-century England.
A third explanation for the deletion of the reference to Jerusalem in the Caxton text may be plausibly found in Caxton’s conception of his Nine Worthies vis-à-vis the Crusades. Clearly, a major sub-text of the Roman war account—in both the Winchester and the Caxton print—is that of the Crusades. Indeed, the ending of Malory’s Arthuriad resonates with Crusade rhetoric: Sir Bors, Sir Ector, Sir Blamour and Sir Bleoberis go, at Launcelot’s urging to the Holy Land where they dyd many bataylles vpon the myscreantes or turkes. And there they dyed vpon a good fryday for goddes sake” (fac. sig. ee.e(v)). Of course, it is essential to point out that the concluding folios of the Winchester are not extant and therefore it is not possible to determine if the Caxton text represents an editorial intervention or if it coincides with the Winchester. In the larger context of the Arthurian tradition, from Geoffrey’s Historia in 1138 through the Caxton print, the Crusades were both a performance of and inspiration for the Arthurian romances. While still evoking intense emotion and interest on the part of the nobility, the actual possibility for a new Crusade in the 1480s was fading in proportion to the fevered rhetoric. The apparent failure of the Crusades as well as the negative comparisons of England to Rome of antiquity was of enormous concern to fifteenth-century nobility.20 Read in the broader narrative of governance, the failure to act upon the proffered advice suggests Arthur’s downfall, a downfall with more uncomfortable reverberations in the 1480s than fifteen years earlier. As Caxton prepared his text for publication, it was increasingly obvious that Edward IV was never going to make good on his pledge to

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20 See Chism.
Pope Paul II’s General Summons to Crusade against Mehemet II and the Turks. Edward IV’s failure to uphold his Crusade promise stemmed in large measure from his awareness that his political position at home was too precarious to enable him to safely leave the crown for the period needed for a Crusade.

Another possibility is that, as Kuskin has suggested, Caxton conceived of the Nine Worthies as an overarching publishing project, and may have felt that the reference to a Crusade in Malory’s Arthuriad might cloud the distinction between the three Christian Worthies’ encounters with Islamic forces: in Caxton’s edition and as part of his larger project, the military taking of the Holy Land was reserved as the domain of the narrative of Godfrey of Bologne. In 1481, Caxton had translated William of Tyre’s history of the First Crusade from the French and published it under the title *Godeffroy of Boloyne, or The Siege and Conqueste of Jerusalem*. Godfrey’s violent conquering of Jerusalem in the First Crusade had, by the fifteenth century, became the basis of the Crusade mythos. In Caxton’s Preface to *Godeffroy of Boloyne* there is “a sense of urgency; the realization that it was high time for the princes of Christian Europe to make a concerted effort to fight the Turks” (Fichte 103). By removing the Jerusalem reference, Caxton retains for each of the three Christian worthies an encounter with the Saracens, but each in a distinct geographical zone.
The Caxton Addition: “stuffed hit...with infydeles”

A startling difference between the Winchester and Caxton texts surfaces in the light of the present focus on relations with the East. In the Winchester text, after the chronicle of foreign kings and dukes allied with Lucius is listed, the narrative describes the movement of Lucius and his large armies into “Cullayne” whereupon he seized a castle and “feffed hit with Saresyns” (W TLN 236-237). In the Caxton text, however, Lucius

...byseged a Castel there by/ and wanne it
soone and stuffed hit with two honderd sarasyns or Infydeles

(C TLN 236-7)

In both texts, Lucius goes on to destroy and take “many fayre countrayes” (W TLN 238), (“many fayr countrees” (C TLN 238)), which Arthur had previously won from King Claudius. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) lists the first use of the word “infidel” as occurring in “1470-1485, Malory” and provides the citation to Arthur v.ii. 21 The term “infydeles,” however, appears only in the Caxton text. According to the OED, the line from “Malory” is a “specific application” of the word meaning an “adherent of a religion opposed to Christianity, esp. a Muhammadan, a Saracen (the earliest sense in Eng.)” (927). This definition is a narrow form of the word’s later meaning which broadened from the specific reference to Saracens to any unbeliever (as, noted in the OED, used by Tyndale in 1526). Thus the word’s early usage in England is specifically in reference to

21 The book and chapter citation is from the Caxton textual division; the quotation, however, is from Vinaver, Works, in which he provides the Caxton version along the bottom of the page, without the chapter divisions.
Muslims and can be understood in the context of the Crusade fervor that continued to grip fifteenth-century England. Caxton is known to have introduced many new words to English via his translations\(^{22}\) of French works, and the word “infidel” is again associated with Caxton, as an adjective. The first instance of the adjectival form is credited by the OED to Caxton’s 1480 edition of the *Chronicles of England*. In the Chronicles, the chapter on the fall of Constantinople in 1453 appears to mark the first time the word “infidels” was used in English: “Aboute this tyme the cite of Constantinople, which was imperiall cite in all grece was taken by the turkes infidels” (ccliv). The OED citation, “The Cyte of Constantynople . . . was taken by the turkes inydeles” (928), is actually from Caxton’s 1482 edition of the *Chronicles* and it is this spelling of “infydeles” that was followed in Caxton’s 1485 edition of *Le Morte Darthur*. With Latin and Old French roots, “infydeles” possibly likely came into English as a result of Caxton’s translation work, and its specific use in reference to the Turks can be attributed, via *Le Morte Darthur* and The Chronicles, to William Caxton. The *Middle English Dictionary* credits *The Chronicles of England*, BL Add 10099, circa 1500, with the introductions of “infydels”; however, it is generally agreed that the continuation in BL Add 10099, as well as in several other manuscript and print versions, was a copy of Caxton’s edition and that Caxton was the compiler of the continuation.\(^{23}\) Blake has shown that Caxton often would recall a word he translated for a work he had published and would then introduce it into a text on which he was currently at work and, in this way, was “responsible for the

\(^{22}\) Blake discusses Caxton’s introduction of French words into English in *Caxton’s Own Prose*.

\(^{23}\) See Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* 294, n. 4, and Duff 50.
introduction of many words into English” (Prose 32). In addition, Noguchi has noted Caxton’s “fondness for doublets” as a feature of his diction (Winchester 119). The reference to “infydeles” does not appear in Geoffrey’s account, nor in Wace, La3amon, or the Alliterative Morte Arthure. The corresponding passage in the Morte Arthure contain the single reference to Saracens and, clearly, the Winchester remains close to this account:

In the contre of Coloine castells ensegegez,
And suggeournez pat seson wyth Sarazenes ynewe. (Krishnu 623-4)

At one level, this apparent introduction of “infydeles” into the English language is a yet another piece of evidence, if any were needed, of Caxton’s having edited Le Morte Darthur and the Roman War episode in particular. However, the introduction of the “infydeles” into the Arthurian tradition also provides the opportunity to study the recontextualization of the Roman War account in the late fifteenth century, in which the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem may have been a “distant memory,” but, as Higgins points out, “the dream of its recovery was being kept alive in everything from small-scale Crusades and pro-crusading tracts to popular romances” (7). Rather than offering evidence for discarding the Caxton text as “unauthoritative,” the linguistic linking of Caxton and the word “infydeles” provides an insight into the shaping of Christian-Islamic rhetoric in late Yorkist England and the last gasp of Crusading fervor. The removal of Prester John as an ally of the Roman force and the stripping of noble identity from the allies of Rome, the focus of the Priamus conversion, the removal of the unfulfilled
promise of a Crusade to the Holy Land, and the introduction of the term “infydeles” all serve to create a new version of Malory’s Roman War account which intensifies the rhetoric of east-west polarization.

The recontextualization of Malory’s Arthuriad in the Caxton text can be seen then, not as a botched editing job, but as a conscious re-crafting of the well-known tale to suit the particular political nexus of Caxton’s time and position. As Kuskin argues, Caxton’s intervention in the text is not a marker of “intellectual simplicity, but of ideological complexity” (511). The textual comparison that forms the basis of this study was given shape by the process of constructing the parallel-text edition of the two versions. Once the versions are side-by-side, a study of the recontextualization can begin with the questions: “Is there a pattern to the changes?” and “What can account for the differences between the texts?” The final chapter of this study contains a parallel-text edition of the Winchester and Caxton texts of the Malory’s Roman War both as the foundation for the current study but also, one hopes, to generate other studies of the multi-text known as the Roman War account of Le Morte Darthur. In the effort to bring together the interests of theory, criticism, and bibliography, the edition does not stand alone, but is situated in my own theory of textuality (Chapter One), in the history of the texts and the cultural work of the editions (Chapter Two), in my interpretive engagement with the texts (Chapter Three), and in a foregrounding of my editorial politics and practices (Chapter Four).
Figure 5: “T-O” maps from Caxton’s edition of *Mirrour of the World*
Cosmographia vero ipse est totius orbis ad quasdam regiones ipsas cumbis quas generaliter visum est; postea qui totius mundi area estesse cunctorum regionum regionis diversasqueque in alius regionibus sunt. Verum autem cosmographia quae maxime circa quae magis et circa quorum eorumque descriptio. Circa quem omnino regionem circa ipsum pendentium interf stem. Cosmographia vero magis ad quantitatem et qualitatem intentis. Nunc de perrito defixitione animadvertere in omnibus. De pingendi vero propriorum non nisi alem imaginibus maxime descriptionem. Vide cosmographiae picture agendiusque esse nobis compose nisi homine pictor. Cosmographia autem non idem expostulare potest quis per suas lineas suavemque notitiae loco figurisque figurisque generalibus scribere. Quodsi mathematica opus est. Sed cosmographiae ergo potior pars. Contemplata in hac opere totius orbis magnitudinem x formam. Præterea situs ad totum observatit facit partem contentam qualis / & quia e quibusque subjunctis sita ambris parallelo locorum. Vnde de die ac noctis magnitudine et latitudine supra terrae nobis sunt de stellisque supra Orientem tempus aequum de bis quae perpetuo nobis non ostendunt. Et orum deinde quod ad rationes habitacionum nos trans spectantes differeret potest quia humanis ingenii mathematica sine demonstrari debuit jamque pelsem intuitus est et alius cipsum natura se habet cum veluti animis nos ostendit possitque terram.
Chapter Four: Editorial Methodology

In the edition accompanying this study, I have endeavored to follow the criteria set forth in Chapter One for parallel-text editions and to represent the material production of and intervention of time in Malory’s Arthuriad. As called for by Mary Jo Kline in *A Guide to Documentary Editing*, this chapter attempts to provide an explicit statement of editorial goals and methodology and relies, foundationally, upon the principles of documentary editing which emerged in the 1970s rather than the earlier practice of “critical editing.” This edition strives toward a diplomatic representation of orthography, line breaks, color, and abbreviation in an effort to represent the syntactic cues of the manuscript and folio and to celebrate rather than control the alterity of the two documents. As D. Thomas Hanks and Elizabeth L. Fish argue, modern readers interested in viewing Malory’s text as “much as possible as he prepared it for his readers” should “turn to Malory’s unpunctuated text” which, they argue, provides “all the syntactic cues that a reader needs to construct meaning of the text” (285). Symbolic notation, while kept to a minimum, follows those set forth in Kline’s *Guide*.

Editorial theory is, by necessity, changed and tempered by the hard-edged practicalities of working with a particular text or, as A. S. G. Edwards has characterized the editing of medieval texts, the “quest for method and . . . the pressures that shape the quest” (“Editing Middle English,” 185). G. Thomas Tanselle provided the basic maxim that:

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1 See Grimm for a discussion of the effect of editorial decisions on readers’ perception of Malory.
All scholarly editors must decide to what extent the texts they present in their editions can be permitted to depart from the documentary texts that have come down to them; no more basic theme runs through the history of scholarly editing than the perennial debates over the role of editorial judgment ... in the production of responsible texts. (1)

In this regard, the shape of this edition of the two fifteenth-century versions of Malory's Roman War account has changed substantially since my initial proposal of the project. While rooted in a diplomatic sensibility, the exigencies of the primary goal of contrastive analysis required that the text be broken into corresponding passages for this purpose. This breaking of the page, so to speak, transforms the edition from a strictly diplomatic edition to an edition shaped to meet a particular interest—a close comparison of the texts. Thus, while folio and signature page breaks are noted, the pages themselves are not kept as whole objects, a practice which is an example of what Derek Pearsall has coined as the "tradition of pragmatic eclectism" (93). For an experience of the sensation of the page,² the reader must turn to the facsimile editions (Ker, Needham) or, when possible, the manuscript and printed book. Though, of course, as Sian Echard has pointed out, the very existence of the facsimiles imposes a kind of "house arrest" (185) for the fifteenth-century documents and, indeed, the facsimiles themselves are expensive enough to be catalogued as part of some libraries rare book collections.

² For a discussion of the physicality and sensuality of the page, see Camille.
Unlike the goal of the critical editions of the mid-twentieth century, the present editor makes no claim of "definitiveness" for this edition, offering instead, not an edition for posterity, but an edition useful for our particular time. Such "small" editions, in contrast to the mammoth editorial endeavors of, say, the Center for Editions of American Authors, now the Center for Scholarly Editions (CSE), may serve to loosen the hold somewhat of the "tyrannical concept of the editorial function and the imperative need of editors and readers for unequivocal assertion concerning 'the author's text'" (Pearsall 97). Indeed a goal of the CSE and its revised editorial program is "to foster the widespread dissemination of reliable texts in cheap editions appropriate for classroom use and available to the reading public" (585). If the current edition can be inexpensively reproduced and used in classrooms to further the study of the diachronic changes of Malory's work, the understanding of texts as material objects, and the changing conceptions of literature in manuscript and print in the late medieval period, the goals of the current edition would be well met.

The accompanying edition is not the first effort to present the Roman War account in a parallel-text edition nor to present the Caxton text in a diplomatic edition. Eugene Vinaver provided a form of a parallel text of the Roman War account in his edition, *Works*, by providing the Caxton text along the bottom quarter of the page. Though presented in smaller type and constrained to the bottom quarter (or less) of the page, the Caxton text is available for comparative purposes. However, the Caxton text is aligned only by larger sections and is interrupted with brief citations from the *Morte*.
Arthure for a useful, though disjunctive, reading. H. Oskar Sommer strove to represent the Caxton edition in his 1889 diplomatic edition which set as its goal the representation of the Caxton text “page for page, line for line, word for word” (viii). Though Sommer’s edition has generally stood the test of time, Vinaver did find a substantial number of transcription errors in the edition (approximately 1,000), the bane of all editors and a condition which the current editor no doubt has similarly been unable to avoid completely though every effort has been made to present the texts as accurately and faithfully as possible.

In the Caxton edition, the Roman War account comprises Book V and is divided into sixteen chapters, beginning with folio vii(v) of signature h. Woodcut letters, which denote sectional divisions, have been represented in size but not in font style. Caxton’s edition compresses words such as “the empire” into “thempire” and these are not modernized or separated into two words in this edition. The Caxton edition makes liberal use of the virgule ( // ) as an indicator of phrases and sentences. As in the Winchester text in this edition, a mark represented in this edition by the symbol (””) is often (though not always) used to denote end of line word divisions. For both texts, the font used in this edition is 12-point Book Antiqua. Very occasionally, the font is brought to 11-point for a few words when the width of the edition could not allow for the number of words fit onto the manuscript line, especially in a line in which the scribe relied heavily on abbreviations. It is important to note that these instances are a submission to the
requirements of technology and university dissertation page margins and not representing a feature of the manuscript. The pages of the current edition were set using Page Maker.

The Roman War account in the Winchester manuscript begins on folio 71 and continues until folio 96. The initial H is a five-line decorated letter with a floral-motif background and tendrils extending across the top of the page to about the mid-point and descending down the left hand margin to about the midpoint. The manuscript is ruled with the text block proportions remaining constant throughout the manuscript. Though not a deluxe manuscript, decorated initial letters denote the beginning of books and chapters. The names of persons and places are written in red ink, which forms a striking contrast with the dark lettering of the rest of the page. This practice required the scribe to put down his or her pen to switch inks, and thus indicates the relative value placed on the names of places and persons in the tale. To denote this aspect of the manuscript, those words which appear in red ink in the manuscript, similarly appear in this edition in red type. The effect of this scribal practice is evocative and is largely lost in the facsimile, which is reproduced in black and white. The marginal glosses were also written in red ink. The line breaks of the manuscript have been maintained, as has all the spelling. The representation of the orthography of the manuscript includes the use of the thorn (þ) and the yogh (ȝ). The yogh is also used by the scribe to indicate the letter “z,” as in Saraȝens. Italic letters indicate the expansions of abbreviations (see discussion below). The virgule, typically double, (/ / ) appears in the manuscript as an end of sentence marker, though periods are also used sporadically. A superscript double virgule (“”) is
used to represent the scribal mark often used (though not always) to denote words that are
divided due to line breaks.

Every attempt has been made to provide a faithful, yet easy to read, diplomatic
transcription of the two texts which represents the words and symbols but which
modernizes the script/type style to facilitate the reading and comparison of the Roman
War account by modern readers. Annotations have been made sparingly as ample notes
on the text can be found in the editions of Vinaver, Spisak, and Cooper. Nonetheless, as
Ralph Hanna has pointed out, there is a “social embeddedness of annotation” (184) both
predicated on the editor’s assumptions of the audience he or she addresses and
reconstituting the audience of which the editor is a member. In the present edition, I am
assuming an easy access to Vinaver’s edition and therefore do not provide annotation
other than the noting of marginal glosses; this edition focuses on the representation of the
fifteenth-century texts and the alignment of passages.

To indicate word abbreviation notation, I have used italics to represent expansion
of letters indicated by abbreviation marks. In the Winchester portion of this edition, if the
letter is provided but above the line, it isn’t italicized, for example “w” is represented as
“with.” In the case where the abbreviation is a notation rather than a letter, the letter is
provided in italics. For example, “grymm” is a representation of “grym” in which the
final m has a suspension line above it. I represent the end-of-word abbreviation mark
as “-is” despite the precedence of Vinaver representing it as “-es.” In Vinaver’s edition,
“the sign 7 has been interpreted as es, despite the fact that the scribes of the Winchester
MS, as a rule prefer is” (Vinaver cxxiii). In the current edition, I have followed this scribal “tendency,” though it can be recognized only as a tendency and not a constant practice. For example, the current edition uses “knyghtis” rather than Vinaver’s choice of “knyghtes” based, in part, on the fact that in the first instance of the word, the scribe (Scribe B) spelled out the word in its entirely as “knightis” (TLN 7). Similarly, the scribe spells out “londis” (TLN 184), horsis (TLN 285), and woodis (TLN 1168) to name a few other examples. This tendency, however, is not consistent and words are also spelled out with an “-es” ending, such as “soueraynes” (TLN 191) or “bourdoures” (TLN 420).

This occurrence, plus the more typical extension of the symbol certainly justifies the practice of the Vinaver/Field edition, but, in trying to represent the manuscript as close to a diplomatic representation as possible, I have opted for the “-is” ending. It is my understanding that the forthcoming on-line transcription of the Winchester, directed by D. Thomas Hanks, will also follow the practice of representing this abbreviation as “-is.”

Scribal abbreviations in the Winchester are not always a direct correspondence, as in the case of “-is” and “-es.” Similarly, a line through the stem of a p usually represents “er” but, as in parliament or parties, it can represent “ar.” Thus, the same abbreviation can be used to indicate two different words, as is the case for “there” and “their.”

Instances in which “there” and “their” are fully spelled out indicate that the scribes were fully aware of the different spellings and uses of the two forms but this distinction cannot be detected in the abbreviated form. For example,

And there with be batayle be gan to Ioyne & grete
slaughter þer was on the Sarysens party” (TLN 793-94)
is an instance of “there” both spelled out and in abbreviated form. Similarly, “their” is
represented as both “þer” and “theire.” For example, “thes .iiij. feawtyrd þer sperys”
(TLN 786) is followed a few lines later with, “And than they rode a yen to theire fer ys”
(TLN 790). Thus, both “there” and “their” (spelled with or without a final “e”) are
indicated by the same abbreviation and thus, in following the orthography of the
manuscript, are represented as the same word in the edition, “þer.” The reader of the
dition, as the reader of the manuscript, must supply the meaning and it is easily provided
by the context. An exception to my practice of expansion of abbreviations is in the case
of numbers or words using Latin abbreviations, i.e. “C” for hundred and “ml” for
thousand and, in one instance, of “li” for pounde. I have also consistently added an italic
“e” to the end of the word emperour or other words ending in r when the scribe provides
an extension. The scribe is not consistent in this practice, and it has been judged at times
by the Vinaver/Field or Spisak editions as an otiose mark but, in my estimation, it does,
in almost all cases, indicate an “e.”

Transcriptional errors are sometimes corrected in the manuscript by the
scribe, usually indicated by the placement of dots under the word. To recreate this self-
correction process, such instances are indicated in the Winchester portion of this edition
by a strike-though line, for example as occurs with the word “ and”. The scribe also
occasionally inserts a missing or corrected word interlinearly and these are indicated by
the use of a caret directly preceding and following the insertion, for example “ ^and^ “.
The Caxton text uses far fewer abbreviations, but these are indicated in the same manner as in the Winchester portion of the edition. In a very few places, the symbol [ ] is used to indicate an apparent erasure in the manuscript or to indicate an inkblot or some obscuring of the letters. If the letter is readily intuited by virtue of the surrounding text, I have provided the letter in the brackets, for example "[I]" (TLN 93).

Through Line Numbering

In *Companion to Malory*, editors Elizabeth Archibald and A. S. G. Edwards note the potential confusion that arises in their book due to the various means by which different scholars refer to divisions of the text:

While we have tried to impose a general level of uniformity on such references to the various divisions of Malory’s work, we are conscious that there is no completely standard way of referring to them . . . If this seems confusing and/or inconsistent it is at least a reflection of the general situation in this aspect of Malory studies. (xii)

Vinaver’s edition, by far the most frequently used edition, has posed problems of its own. Scholars frequently refer to passages by providing the page number and line number of the text as it appears in Vinaver’s edition. Between the first and second edition, however, Vinaver re-formatted the paragraphing to better fit with his sense of the divisions of the text, thereby outdating all page and line numbers used in reference to the first edition. Yuki Nakao references the text by using the folio pagination of Sommer’s
diplomatic edition rather than using the signatures of the more awkward signature pagination of the Caxton text. However, Sommer's edition is no longer widely used and not readily available. The Caxton signature and Winchester folio numbers, combined with line numbers, may be the best and most consistent way to refer to specific passages except that the facsimiles, though in most research libraries, are not widely available in smaller university libraries. Given these circumstances, page numbers and line numbers from Spisak's and Vinaver's editions may be the handiest reference simply because these are the volumes that are in most libraries.

It is in light of these difficulties in simply identifying a line of text that the present edition provides a system of Through Line Numbering (TLN) to provide a stable way to refer to passages in the Roman War account and to facilitate contrastive analysis of the two texts (see item 7 in the General Principles, pg. 58). Readers, for example, may refer to TLN 72-73 to study the two texts' treatment of Britain's claimed historical lineage of Bellinus and Brenius. Line numbering that corresponds to the lines of text in the manuscript and in the printed book has also been supplied for ease of reference back to the historical documents or their facsimiles.

For the most part, the Winchester manuscript was represented as a continuous text. There are several places where there are blank lines in the manuscript and the blank lines in the edition correspond with these. In some instances, it was necessary to introduce blank lines into the Winchester text to facilitate the alignment of the passages. In this edition, I included the three instances of scribal catchwords in the line numbering
(TLN 404, 908, 1428), both to allow this aspect of the manuscript to be represented on the page and to allow for alignment of the passages. In addition, Caxton often left several blank lines between chapters and the blank lines in the edition correspond to the number of blank lines in the Caxton text. Caxton also occasionally leaves half-lines blank, i.e. TLN 313, and these are likewise diplomatically represented.

**Shortcomings of the edition**

It is perhaps the fate of every edition to fall short of its editor’s aspirations and, in this regard, the present edition is no exception. While an index of varying passages is an enormously useful component of a parallel-text edition (see item 6 of the General principles provided on pg. 58), it lies beyond the scope of the current edition. With such a chart of the main areas of difference between the quarto and folio versions of *King Lear*, Rene Weiss undertakes a “detailed analysis of the imaginative and textual problems signaled by the above list of Q/F differences” (7). Michael Warren similarly provides an appendix of varying passages to aid scholars in their study of the textual and interpretive nuances of the two texts. It is the intent of the editor to provide such an appendix in a future, published version. A less significant, though unfortunate, shortcoming of the current edition is the fact that endnotes rather than footnotes were a necessity within the constraints of Page Maker. Lastly, an additional aid to scholars will be the future provision of a means of noting differently–sequenced passages (see item 3 in the General Principles, pg. 58) by providing the out-of-order passage in a smaller, italicized type next to the appropriate passage.
Chapter Five:

A Parallel-Text Edition of the Winchester and Caxton Versions

The following edition is comprised of the Winchester manuscript version of Malory’s Roman War account and the Caxton printed edition of the same account. The Winchester version appears on the left-hand pages and runs, for the most part, as a continuous text with only occasional blank lines to re-align it with the Caxton text. For the Winchester version, folio numbers appear underlined while line numbers which correspond to the manuscript are provided for ease of reference. The line numbers are not a feature of either the manuscript or the printed edition. Through Line Numbering (TLN) appears on the Winchester page, for reasons of space and layout, though the TLN reference numbers refer to both versions. A more thorough description of the purpose of the TLN numbers can be found in Chapters One and Four.

The Caxton version runs on the right-hand pages and is broken into passages so as to align with the Winchester text. The Caxton printed version is approximately half the length of the Winchester and the blank spades identify the passages not present in the Caxton edition. This edition consciously does not break lines to align passages although, at times, such a system might be preferable for ease of reading. Lines were kept whole so that the line numbering systems, both for the historical documents and for the present edition’s TLN system, function without confusion. Signature references appear underlined and, as with the Winchester text, line numbers for each page of the printed text are provided for ease of reference back to the historical document. These numbers are a feature of the current edition and do not appear in the original document.
yt be ffelle whan Kyng Arthur had wedded quene Gwenuere and fulfylled the rounde table And so aftir his mervelous knyghtis And he had venquished the moste party of his enemies // Than sone aftir com Sir Laun//
celot de Lake vnto þe courte And Sir Trystrams come that tyme also // And than so hit be felle that þe Emperoure of Roome Lucius sente vnto Arthure messyngers commaun ynge hym for to pay his trewage þat his auncettries haue payde be fore hym // Whan kynge Arthure wyste what they mente he loked vp with his gray þen and angred at þe messyngers passyng sore // Than were this messyn// gers a ferde and knelyd stylie and durst nat a ryse they were so a ferde of his grymme countenaunce // þan one of þe knyghtis messyngers spake a lowde And seyde crowned kynge mysse do no messyngers . Þfor . we be com at his commaundemente as servytures sholde // Than spake þe conquerour þou recrayed & coward knyght why feryst þou my countenaunce there be In this halle & they were sore aggrevd þou durst nat for a deuke-dom of londis loke In þer facis // Sir seyde one of þe Se// natoure so cryste me helpe I was so a ferde whan I loked In thy face that myne herte wolde nat serue for to sey my message. But sytthen hit is my wylle for to sey myne erande // The gretis welle Lucius the Emperoure of Roome and commaundis þe vppon payne þat woll falle to sende hym þe trewage of this Realme that thy fadir Vther Pendragon payde ðoper ellys he woll be reve þe all thy Realmys þat þou weldyst //Thow seyste well seyde
Whanne kyng Arthur had after longe were re/ sted /and helde a Ryal feeste and table rounde with his alyes of kynges/prynces/ and noble kynghtes all of the round table / there cam in to his halle he syttynge in his throne Ryal xij aun/ cyen men / berynge eche of them a braunche of Olyue in token that they cam as Embassatours and messagers fro the Empe rour Lucyus / whiche was called at that tyme/ Dictatour or procurour of the publyke wele of Rome/ whiche sayde messa/ gers after their entryng & comyng in to the presence of kyngge Arthur dyd to hym theyr obeyssaunce in makyng to him reue rence said to him in this wyse/The hyghe & myghty Emperour Lucyus sendeth to the kyng of Bretayne gretyng / commaundyng the to knouleche hym for thy lord / and to sende hym the trua/ ge due of this Royamme vnto thempyre / which thy fader and other to fore thy precessours hauve paid as is of record / And thou as rebelle not knowynge hym as thy souerayne withhol/ dest and reteynest contrary to the statutes and decrees maade by the noble and worthy Iulius Cezar conquerour of this Royame / and fyrst Emperour of Rome/ And yf thou refuse his demaunde and commaundement / knowe thou for certayne that he shal make stronge weree ageynst the / thy Royames & londes /and shall chastyse the and thy subgetys /that it shal be ensample perpetuel vnto alle kynges and prynces/ for to denye their truage vnto that noble empyre whiche domyneth vpon the vnyuersal world / Thenne whan they had shewed theeffecte of
Arthur but for all thy brym wordys I woll nat be to ouer hasty. And þer fore þou and thy fellowship shall a byde here viij. dayes and shall calle vnto me my counceyle of my moste trusty knyghtis and deukis and Regeaunte kyngis and erly and barowys and of my moste wyse doctours // And when we have takyn oure avysement ye shall haue your answere playnly suche as I shall a byde by(30)

/// Than þe noble kynge commaunded Sir Clegis to loke that thes men be seteled and servyd with þe beste þat there be no deyntes spared vppon them þat noþer chylde nor horse faȝt no thynge. þfor they ar full Royall peple. And thouȝe they haue greved me & my courte yet we muste remembrir onoure worship. So they were led In to chambyrs & served as rychely of deyntes þat myght be gotyn// So þe Romaynes had þer of grete mervayle /// Than þe kynge vnto counsayle called his noble knyghtis. And with In a towre there they assembled þe moste party of þe knyghtis of þe rounde table Than þe kynge commaunded hem of theire beste counceyle ///

/// Sir seyde Sir Cador of Cornuaylc as for me I am nat hevy of this message for we haue be many dayes rested Now þe lettyrs of Lucius the Emperoure lykis me well. þfor now shall we haue warre & ^ wor// shyp. Be [ ] cryste I leve welle seyde þe kynge sir Cador. this message lykis the but yet they may nat be so An// swerde for þer spytevous speche grevyth so my herte that truage to roome woll I neuer pay There fore counceyle me my knyghtis for crystes love of hevyn /// þfor this much have I founde In þe Cronycles of this londe þat sir Belyne And sir Bryne of my bloode elders that borne were In Bretayne And they hath ocupyed the Empyrehip. viij. score wynters /// And aftir Constantyne oure kynneman conquered hit and dame Elyne ys son of Ingelonde was Emperoure of Roome and he recouerde the crosse þat cryste dyed vppon./// And thus was þe Empyre kepte be my kynde elders & thus have we evyidence I now3e to þe Empyre of hole Rome

/// Than answerde kynge Angwysshaunc vnto Arthur Sir þou ouȝte to be a boven all oþir crysten kyngis for-
their message / the kyng commaunded them to withdrawe them

And said he shold take auyce of coungeylle and gyue to them
an ansuere / Thenne somme of the yonge knyghtes heryng this
their message wold haue ronne on them to haue slayne them
sayenge that it was a rebuke to alle the knyghtes there beyng
present to suffre them to saye so to the kyng / And anone the
kynge commaunded that none of them vpon payne of dethe to
myssaye them ne doo them ony hannel and commaunded a kny
ghte to brynge them to their lodgynge / and see that they haue
alle that is necessary and requysyte for them /with the best che
re / and that noo deyntee be spared / For the Romayns ben gre
te lordes / and though theyr message please me not ne my court

yet I must remembre myn honour/ C After this the kyng le/
te calle alle his lordes and knyghtes of the round table to co
unceyl vpon this mater / and desyred them to saye theire ad/
(10) uys / thenne syr Cador of Cornewaile spacke fyrste and sayd
Syre this message lyketh me weI
If we haue many days re
sted vs and haue ben ydle / and now I hope ye shalle make
sharp warre on the Romayns where I doubte not we shal ge
te honour / I byleue wel sayd Arthur that this mater pleaseth
the wel / but these ansuers may not be ansuerd/ for the dema/
(15) unde greueth me sore/ For truly I wyl neuer paye truage to
Rome / wherfore I pray yow to coungeylle me / I haue vnder/
stande that Bellinus and Brenius kynges of Bretayne ha
ue had thempyre in their handes many dayes / And also Con/

(20) statyn the sone of Heleyne / whicke is an open euydence that
we own noo trybute to Rome / but of ryght we that ben des/
cended of them haue ryght to clayne the tytle of thempyre|

C Capitulum Secundum

(25) Thenne ansuerde kynge Anguysshe of Scotland / Syr
ye ought of ryght to be aboue al other kynges/ for
of knyghtode and of noble counceyle that is all way
In the And Scotlondc had neuer scathe syne ye were
crowned kynge And whan he Romaynes raynede
vppon vs they raunsomed oure elders and raffte vs of
oure lyves. There fore I make myne avow vnto
mylde Mary And vnto thes cryst-e that I shall be avn//
ged vppon the Romayns And to farper thy fyght [I] shall
brynghe ferse men of armys fully . xxml. of tyred
men I shall yeff hem my wages for to go and warre
on the Romaynes & to dystroy hem and all shall be with
In .ij. ayges to go where he lykes/ Than he kynge of
lytell Brytayne sayde vnto kynge Arthure Sir an//
swere thes alyauntes and gyff them her answere and
I shall somen my peple and . xxx ml. men shall ye
haue at my costis and wages. ye sey well seyde he
kynge Arthure/ Than spake a myghty deuke that
was lorde of weste wayls Sir I make myne a vo//
we to god to be revenged on the Romaynes . And to
haue he vawarde and her to vyngqyshe with vctory he
vyscounte of Roome// ffor onys as I paste on pyl//
grymage all by the poyn te Tremble than he vysco//
unte was In Tulkayne and toke vp my knyghtys
& raunsom ed them vnrresonable// And than I complay //
ved me to the Potestate he Pope hym self but I had
no thynge ellys but plesaunte wordys oper reson at
Roome myght I none haue and so I yode my way sore
reubked and her fore to be avenged I woll arere of my
wyghteste walshemen and of myne owne fre wagis
brynghe you . xxx ml. / Than Sir Ewayne and his son
ler that were nere cosyns vnto he conquerrour yet we//
re they cosmyns bothe twayne and they helde Irelonde
& Argayle and all the oute Iles. Sir seyde they vnto
kynge Arthure here we make oure avowes vntoo
Cryste manly to ryde In to Lombardy and so vnto Me//
layne wallys And so ouer the poyn te Tremble In to he
vale of vyterbe and her to vytyale my knyghtis and for
to be a venged on the Romayns We shall brynghe the
xxx " ml. of good memmys bodyes/ /Than leepe In yong
Sir Launcelot de laake with a lyght herte & seyde vnto
kynge Arthure thouse my londis marche ngyhe thynge
enemyes yet shall I make myne avow aftir my po//
wer he of good men of armys aftir my bloode thus
many I shall brynghe with me .xx. ml. helmys In haubir//
unto yow is none lyke ne pareylle in Crystendome/of kny3t/

(30) hode ne of dygnyte/& I councelleyou neuer to obeye the Ro/
maynes / for whan they regned on vs/ they destressyd oure el/
ders/ and putte this land to grete extorcions & taylles/ wher
fore I make here myn auowe to auenge me on them/ and for
to strengthe youre quarel I shal furnysshe xy M good men
(35) of warre and wage them on my costes / whiche shal awayte
on yow with my self when it shal please yow/ and the kyng
of lytel Bretayne graunted hym to the same xxx M/ where

for kyngge Arthur thanked them / And thenne euery man
agreed to make warre/ and to ayde after their power/ that is
to wete the lord of westwalis promysed to brynge xxx M men

And syr Vwayne/ syre Ider his sone with their cosyns pro/
mysed to brynge xxx M/ thenne syre launcelot with alle other
(5) promysed in lyke wyse euery man a grete multytyde/ C And
kes attyred pat shall neuer fayle you whyles oure ly
ves lastyth/ Than low3e sir Bawdwyn of Bre

tayne and carpys to be kyng I make myne avow
vn to be vernacle noble. for to brynge with me. x. ml
good menny bodyes pat shall neuer fayle whyle there
Iyvis lastyth/ Now I thanke you seyde the kyng
kyng with all my trew herte I suppose by he ende be
done & dalte he Romaynes had bene bettir to haue
lefte he proud message/ So when he .vij. nyghte
was atte an ende the Senatours be sought he kyng
to haue an answere hit is well seyde he kyng/ Now
sey ye to youre Emperoure that I shall In all haste me
redy make with my keen kynghtis and by he reuer of Rome
holde my Rounde table and I woll brynge with me the
beste peple of .xv. Realmys. And with hem ryde on he
mountaynes In the mayne londis and myne done
he wallys of Myllayne the proud and syth ryde vn/
to Roome with my Royallyst knyghtis/ Now ye haue
youre answere. hygh. you pat ye were hense & frome
this place to the porte per ye shall passe ouer. And I
shall gyff you .vij. dayes to passe vn to Sandwyche

N ow spede you I councyle you & spare nat
youre horsis and loke ye go by watlynge
strete and no way ellys and where nyght fallys
on you loke ye there abyde be hit felle ober town
I take no kepe for hit longyth nat to none Alyoun/
tis for to ryde on nyghtis and may ony be founde a
spere lengthe oute of he way and pat ye be ln he water
by the . vij. nyghtis ende there shall no golde vnder
god pay for youre Raunsom/ Sir seyde this Se/
natoure this is an harde conduyte we be seche you
that we may passe saufly. Care ye nat seyde the
kyng youre Condute is able/ Thus they passed
fro Carleyle vnto Sandwyche warde that hadde
but . vij. dayes for to passe thorow he londe and so
Sir Cador brought hem on her wayes. But the
Senatours spared for no horse but hyred hem ha/
keneyes frome townw ^to^ townw. And by he sonne was
sette at he . vij. dayes ende thay com vnto Sandwy/
che so blythe were they neuer and so the same nyght
they toke he watir and passed In to fflaundres &
aftir pat ouer he grete mountayne pat hyght Godarde
and so aftir thorow Lumbardy and thorow Tuskayne

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whan kynge Arthur vnderstood theire courages and good wylles/ he thanked them hertely/ and after lete calle thembas/

satours to here theire ansuere/ And in presence of alle his lor/
des and knyghtes he sayd to them in thys wyse/ I wylle that
(10) ye retorne vnto your lorde and procurour of the comyn wele for the Romayns/ and saye ye to hym Of his demaunde and com maundement I sette nothyng/ And that I knowe of no tru age ne trybute that I owe to hym/ ne to none erthely prynce Crysten ne hethen/ but I pretende to haue and occupye the so/
(15) ueraynte of thempyre/ wherin I am entytled by the ryght of my predecessours somtyme kynges of this lond/ and saye to hym that I am delybered and fully concluded to goo wyth myn armye with strengthe and power vnto Rome by the gra ce of god to take possession in thempyre/ and subdue them that ben rebelle/ wherfore I commaunde hym and alle them of Ro me that incontynent they make to me their homage & to knou leche me for their Emperour and gouernour vpon payne that

shalle ensiewe/ And thenne he commaunded his tresorer to gy ue to them grete and large yeftes/ and to paye alle theyr dis pencys/ and assygned syre Cador to conueye them oute of the
(25) land/ and soo they took theire leue and departed /and tooke theyr syhppynge at Sandwyche/ and passed forthe by flaun/ drys/ Almayn/ the montayns/ and all ytalye vntyl they cam
and some after they come to the Emperoure Lucius and they shewed hym his letters of kyng Arthure And how he was a gastfullyst man that ever they on loked

// Whan pe Emperoure Lucius hadde redde pe letters and vnder stooed them wel of theire credence he fared as a man were rased of his wytt I wente pat Arthure wold have obeyed you & serued you vnto your honde. for so he semed ope on kyng crystynde for. to obey ony Senator pat is sente fro my persone// Sir sayde pe Senatoris lette be suche wordis for pat we haue ascape on lyve we may thanke god euer. ffor we wolde nat passe a yen to do that message for all your brede londis. And pe fore Sires

truste to oure sawys ye shall fynde hym your vttir ene// mye and seke ye hym and ye lyste for In to this londis woll he com & sul hynde with In this half yere for he thynkys to be Emperoure hym self. ffor he seyth ye haue ocupyed pe empyre with grete wronge for all his trew auncettryes sauff his fadir Vther were Emper// oures of Rome And of all pe soueraynes that we sawe euer he is the Royallyst kyng pe lyveth on erthe// ffor we sawe on Newerys day at his rounde table .ix. kyngis and pe fayryst felyship of knyghtes ar with hym that durys on lyve And per to of wysedome and of fayre speche and all Royalte and Rychesse they fayle of none.// There

fore Sir be my counsayle rere up your lyege peple and sende kyngis and deukis to loke vnto your marchis And pat the mountaynes of Almayne be myghtyly kepte// Be Estir seyde the Emperoure I caste me for to passe Almayne And so furth In to fraunce and per be reve hym his londis I schall brynge with me many gauntys of Geene that one of them shall be worth an. C. of knyghtes and perleous pas// sage shall be surely kepte with my good knyghtis// Than pe Emperoure sente furth his messyngers of wyse olde kny3tis vnto a Contrey callyd Ambage And Arrage And vnto Aly sundir to ynde to Ermony that the Rever of Eufrate rennys by. And to Assy Aufryke and Europe the large and to Ertayne and Elamy to the oute yles to Arrabe to Egypte to Damaske and to Damyake and to noble deukis & erlys. Also pe kynge of Capydos and pe kynge of Tars and of Turke and of Pounce and of Pampoy le And oute of Preter Iohnus londe. Also pe sowdon of
vn to Lucius/ And after the reverence made/ they made relacy //
on of their answer lyke as ye to fore haue herd/ whan thempe
rour Lucyus had wel vnderstande theyre credence/ he was sore
meued as he had ben al araged/ & sayd/ I had supposed that
Arthur wold haue obeyed to my commandement/ and haue
serued yow him self/ as hym wel bysemed or ony other kyng
to doo/ O syre sayd one of the senatours late be suche vayn wor
des/ for we late yow wete that I and my felawes were ful
sore aferd to beholde his countenaunce/ I fere me ye haue made
a rodde for your self/ for he entendeth to be lord of this empyre
whiche sore is to be doubted ye he come/ for he is al another man
than ye wene/ and holdeth the most noble courte of the world
alle other kynges ne prynces maye not compare vn to his no//
ble mayntene/ On newe yeres daye we sawe hym in his estate
whiche was the ryallest that euer we sawe/ for he was serued
at his table with ix kynges/ and the noblest/ felauship of other
prynces lordes and knyghtes that ben in the world/ and eue
ry knyghte approued and lyke a lord and holdeth table round
And in his persone the moost manly man that lyueth/ and is
lyke to conquere alle the world/ for vn to his courage it is to
lytel/ wherfore I aduyse yow to kepe wel youre marches and
straytes in the montayns/ For certaynly he is a lord to be do //
ubted/ Wel sayd Lucius before Eester I suppose to passe the
montayns and soo forth into fraunce/ and there byreue hym
his londes with laneweyes and other myghty warryours of
Tuskane and lombardye/ And I shall sende for them all that
ben subgetts and aleyd to the empyre of Rome to come to myn
ayde/ and forthwith sente old wyse knyghtes vn to these coun //
trayes folowyng/e fyrste to ambage and arrage/ to Alysaun //
drye/ to ynde to hermonyse/ where as the ryuer of Eufrates ren //
neth in to Asye/ to Auffryke/ and Europe the large/ to erta //
yne and Elamyne to Arabye/ Egypte and to damaske/ to da //
myete and Cayer/ to Capadoce/ to tarce/ Turkye/ pounce/ and
Surre and frome Nero vnto Na3areth and frome Ga
rese to Galely there come Sarysyns and be com sudgettis
vnto Rome So they come glydyng In Galyes also there
come þe kynges of Cypres and þe Grekis were gadirde
& goodly arayed with þe kynges of Macidony and of Calabe
and of Catelonde bothe kyngis and deukis. And the kynges
of Portyneale with many thousande Spaynardis // Thus
all thes kyngis and dukys and Admyrallys noblys assem/
bled with xv. kyngis at onys And so they com vnto Rome with
grete multytude of peple// When þe Emperoure vndirstood
þer comynge he made redy all his noble Romaynes & all
men of warre betwyxte hym and flaundyrs// Also he
had gotyn with hym fyffty gyauntys that were engendirdre
with fendis And all tho he lete ordeyne for to a wayte on his
persone and for to breke þe batayle of þe frunte of Arthurs
knyghtis// But they were so muche of þer bodys þat horsys
myght nat bere them. And thus þe Emperoure with all hys
horryble peple drew to passe Almayne to dystroy Arthurs
es londys that he wan thorow warre of his noble
knyghtis// And so Lucius com vnto Cullayne and þerby a
Castelle be Segys & wanne hit with In a whyle & ffeffed
hit with Saresyns. And thus Lucius with In a whyle destroyed
many fayre contrayes þat Arthure had wonne be fore of þe
myghty kyng Claudas so this Lucius Lucus disperced a brode
his oste Syxty myle large and commaunde hem to mete
with hym In Normandy In the contray of Constantyne and
at Barftlete there ye me a byde for the douchery of
Bretayne I shall thorowly dystroy hit.

N ow leve we Sir Lucius and speke we of kyng Ar//
thurue that commaunded all þat were vndir his obey//
saunce affir the vtas of Seynte hyllary þat all shulde be
assembled for to holde a parlement at yorke with In þe wallys
and þer they concluded shortly to a reste all þe shyppes of this
londe and with In x. dayes to be redy at Sandwych Now
sirys seyde Arthure I purpose me to passe many perelles
wayes and to ocupye þe Empyre þat myne elders a fore
haue claymed þer fore I pray you counseyle me þat may

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pampoylle/ to Surrye and gallacye/ And alle these were sub
gette to Rome and many moo/ as Grece/ Cypres/ Macydone/
Calabre/ Cateland/ portyngale with many thousandes of spay
nardys/ Thus alle these kynges/ dukes /and admyrals assem
bled aboute Rome with xvj kynges attones with grete mul/
tytude of peple/ whan themperour ynderstood their comyng/he
made redy his Romayns/ and alle the peple bytwene hym &

Flaundres C Also he hadde goten wyth
hym fyfty Geaunts whiche had ben engendred of fendys
And they were ordeyned to garde his persone/ and to breke
the froununs of the bataylle of kynge Arthur/

And thus departed fro Rome and came doune the montayns
for to destroye the londes that Arthur had conquerd and cam
uento Coleyne/ and byseged a Castel there by/ and wanne it
soone and stuffed hit with two honderd sarasyns or Infydeles
and after destroyed many fayr countrees/ whiche Arthur had
wonne of kyng Claudas/ And thus Lucius cam with alle
his hoost whiche were disperplyd lx myle in brede/ and com/
maunded them to mete with hym in Burgoyne/ for he purpo
sed to destroye the Royame of lytly Bretayne/

C Capitulo tercio

ow leue we of Lucius the emperour and speke we of
kyng Arthur/that commaunded alle them of his re/
tenue to be redy atte vtas of hyllary for to holde a parlement
at yorde/ And at that parlement was concluded to areste alle
the nauye of the lond and to be redy within xv dayes at sand
wyche/ and there he shewed to his armye how he purposed to
conquere thempyre whiche he ought to haue of right/ And the/
be beste and moste worshyp //The kyngis & knyghtis ga\#/nirde hem vnto counsayle & were condescended for to
make ij. chyfftaynes that was Sir Baudwen of Bre\#/ntayne an Auncient & an honorable knyght for to councey//
te and conforte Sir Cadore son of Cornuavle pat was
at pat tyme called Sir Constantyne that affir was kyng
affir Arthurs dayes// And per In the presence of all pe lordis
the kyng ye rescuyed all pe rule vnto thes ij. lordis and
quene Gwenvyvere And Sir Trystrams at pat tyme he left
with kyngge Marke of Cornuavle for pe love of labeale
Isode where fore Sir Launcelot was passyng wrothe
//Than quene Gwenvyuer made grete sorow that the
kyngge and all pe lordys sholde so be departed And per she
fell dounne on a swone and hir ladyes bare hir to her
chambr //Than pe kyngge commaundde hem to god & be
lefte pe quene In Sir Constantynes And sir Baudewens
hondis And all Inglonde holy to rule as them selfe
seemed beste// And whan pe kyngge was an horsebak
he seyde In herynge of all pe lordys If pat I dye In this
lurne heere I make pe Sir Constantyne my trew Ayre
for ou arte nexte of my kyn save Sir Cadore thy fadir
And per fore if pat I dey I woll pat ye be crowned kyngge
// Rght so he sought & his kynghtis towarde Sande//
wycbe Where he founde be fore hym many galyard
knyghtis for per were be moste party of all pe rounde ta//
ble redy on bo bankes for to sayle whan pe kyngge lyked
Than In all haste pat myght be they shypped per horsis
& harneyse & all maner of ordynaunce pat fallyth for
pe werre & tentys and pavylyons many were trussed
and so they shutte frome pe bankis many grete carycys
and many shyppes of forestage with coggis and galeries
& spynnesse full noble with galeyes & galoytys rowyng
with many Ores. And thus they strekyn forth In to
the strems many sadde hunderthes.
\Here Folowyth the dreme of Kyngge Arthure\\n\s the kyngge was In his Cog and lay In his Ca//
ban he felle In a slumberyng & dremed how a
dredfull Dragon dud drenche muche of his peple
& com fleyng one wyngge oute of pe weste partyes and
his hede hym semed was enamyled with Asure and his
shuldyrs shone as pe golde & his wombe was lyke may//
les of a merveylous hew and his tayle was fulle of
tatyr & his feete were florysshed as hit were fyne
re he ordeyned two gouernours of this Royame that is to say
Syre Bawdewyn of Bretayne for to councielle to the best and
syr Constantyn sone to syre Cador of Cornewaylle/ whiche af

ter the dethe of Arthur was kyng of this Royamme/ And in
the presence of all his lorde he resyned the rule of the roya/
me and Gweneuer his quene to them/ wherfore syre launcelot
was wrothe/ for he lefte syre Trystram with kyng marke for
the loue of beal Isoulde/ Thenne the quene Gweneuer made gre
te sorowre for the departynge of her lord and other/ and swou
ned in suche wyse that the ladyes bare her in to her chambre

Thus the kyng with his grete armye departed leuyng the que
ne and Royamme in the gouernaunce of syre Bawdwyn and
Constantyn/ And whan he was on his hors/ he sayd with an
hyhe voys yf I dye in this iourney I wyl that syre Constan
tyn be myn heyer and kyng crowned of this royame as next
of my blood/ And after departed and entred into the see atte

Thus the kyng with his grete armye departed leuyng the que
ne and Royamme in the gouernaunce of syre Bawdwyn and
Constantyn/ And whan he was on his hors/ he sayd with an
hyhe voys yf I dye in this iourney I wyl that syre Constan
tyn be myn heyer and kyng crowned of this royame as next
of my blood/ And after departed and entred into the see atte

Sandwyche with alle his armye with a greete multitude of

shyppes/ galeyse/ Cogges /and dromoundes/ sayllyng on the see/

sig.i.ii

C Capitulum iii

And as the kyng laye in his caban in the shyp/ he fyll
in a slomerynge and dremed a merueyllum dreme /

hym semed that a dredeful dragon dyd drowne moche of his
peple/and he cam fleynge oute of the west/and his hede was
enamed with asure / and his sholders shone as gold / his be-
ly lyke maylles of a merueyllum hewe / his taylle ful of tat
sable. And his clawys were lyke clene golde with an
hydouse flame of fyre þer flowe oute of his mowth lyke as
þe londe & þe watir had flawmed all on fyre/Than
hym semed þer com oute of þe oryent a grymly Beare
all blak In a clowde And his pawys were as byg as a
poste he was all to Rongeled with lugerande lokys And he
was the fowlyst beste þat euer ony man sye he Romed and
rored so rudely þat merveyle hit were to telle / Than
þe dредfull dragon dressyd hym a yenste hym & come
In þe wynde lyke a ffaucon & freyshely stryks þe Beare
and agayne þe gresly Beare kuttis with his grysly tuskis
þat his breste and his brayre was bloode & hit rayled
all ouer þe see / Than þe worme wyndis away & fleis
vpon hyght and com downe with such a sow3e & touched
the beare on þe rydge þat fro þe toppe to þe tayle was .x.
foote large & so he rentyth the beare & brenys hym
v þat clene þat all felle on pouder bothe þe fleyshe and the
bonys And so hitslotered a brode on þe see/ Anone the
kynge waked of his drcme & In all haste he sente for
a Philo3opher and charged hym to telle what sygnyll
fyed his dreme / Sir seyde the Phylo3opher þe Dra/
gon þou dremyste of be tokyns thyne owne þersona that
thus here sayles with thy syker knyghtis And þe colour
of his wyngys is thy kyngdomes þat þou haste with thy
knyghtis wonne. And his tayle þat was all to tatered
sygnyfyed your noble knyghtis of þe Rounde table. And
the Beare that þe dragon slowe a bove In the clowdis
be tokyns som tyraunte þat turrentis thy peple oper
þou art lyke to fyght with som Gyaunte boldely In Batay/
le þe thy self a lone / There fore of this dредfull
dreme drede þe but a lytyll and care nat now sir con/
querroure but conforte thy self / Than with In a
whyle they had a syght of þe bankys of Normandy
and at þe same tyde þe kynge arveyd at Barfflete &
founde þer redy many of his grete lordis as he had
commaunded at Crystemasse be fore hym selufe & cetera

T
han come þer an husbande man oute of the
contrey and talkyth vnto þe kyng wonderfull
wordys. And sayde sir here is a foule Gyaunte of
ters / his feet ful of fyne sable / & his clawes lyke fyne gold
And an hydous flamme of fyre flewe oute of his mouthe / 
lyke as the londe and water had flammed all of fyre / After 
hym semed there came oute of thoryent / a grymly bore al blak

(15) in a clowde / and his pawes as bygge as a post / he was rug"/
ged lokynge roughly / he was the foulest beest that euer man 
sawe / he rored and romed soo hydously that it were merueill 
to here / Thenne the dredeful dragon auauanced hym and cam in 
the wynde lyke a fawcon gyuynge grete strokes on the bore / 

(20) and the bore hytte hym ageyne with his grysly tuskes/ that 
his brest was al blody / and that the hote blood made alle the 
see reed of his blood /
Thenne the dragon flewe awey al on an hey3te / and came dou 
ne with suche a swough and smote the bore on the rydge whi"/

(25) ch was x foote large fro the hede to the taylle / and smote the 
bore all to powdre bothe the flesshe and bonys / that it flytteryd al 
abrode on the see / And therwith the kynge awoke anone / and 
was sore abasshed of this dreme / And sente anone for a wyse 
philosopher / commaundynge to telle hym the sygnyfycacion of 
his dreme / Syre sayd the philosopher / the dragon that thow 
dremedest of / betokeneth thyn owne persone that sayllest here/ 

the colours of his wynges ben thy Royames that thow haste 
wonne / And his taylle whiche is al to tatterd sygnefyeth the 
noble knyghtes of the round table C And the 

(30) bore that the dragon slough comying fro the clowdes / betokeneth 
some tyraunt that tormenteth the peple / or els thow arte lyke 
to fyghte with somme Geaunt thy self / beynge horrrible and ab 
homynable whoos pere ye sawe neuer in your dayes / wherfore 
of this dredeful dreme doubte the no thynge / but as a Con"/
querour come forth thy sefl / Thenn after this soone they had 
syghte of londe and saylled tyl they arryued atte Barflete 
in Flaundres / and whanne they were there he fond many 

(35) of his grete lordes redy / as they had ben commaundd to awa" 
yte vpon hym

C Capitulum v

(10) Thenne came to hym an husband man of the countrey/ 
and told hym how there was in the countre of Con"/
stantyn besyde Bretayne a grete gyaunt whiche hadde
Gene that turmentyth thy peple mo than .v. C. &
many m o foure chylde ren pat hath bene his susteynaun\212
ce all this vii. wynters yet is pe sotte neuer cesid but
In pe contrey of Constantyne he hath kyld all oure
knave chylde ren and this nyght he hath cley\345 te the
duches of Bretayne as she rode by a ryver with her
ryche knyghtis & ledde hir vn to yondir mounte to ly
by hir whyle hir lyff lastyth // Many folkys folowed
hym mo than .v. hundrid Barounes and bachelers
and knygthits full noble but euer she shyked wonderly
lowde pat be sorow of pat lady cover shall we neuer// She
was thy cousyns wyff Sir Howell the hende a man
pat we calle ny\345 e of thy bloode// Now as \212 ou arte oure
Ryghtwos kyng rewe on this lady and on thy lyege
peple & revenge vs as a noble conquerroure sholde
Alas seyde kyng Arthur this is a grete myscheffe
I had levir than all the realmys I welde vn to my
crowne pat I had bene be fore that freyke a furlonge
way for to haue rescowed that lady. And I wolde
have done my payne// Now felow seyde Arthur
woldist \212 ou ken me where pat carle dwellys I trowe I
shall trete with hym or I far passe Sir Conquerrour
seyde the good man he bolde yondir .ij. fyrys for \212 per
shalte \212 ou fynde pat carle be yonde pe colde strendus
and tresoure oute of numbr \212 per mayste \212 ou sykerly fryn//
de more tresoure as I suppose than is In all ffraunce
after// The kyng seyde good man pees & carpe
to me no more thy soth sawys have greved sore
my herte//Than he turnd towarde his tentys
& carpys but ltytl//Than pe kyng seyde vn to
Sir Kay In councyle & to Sir Bedwere pe bolde
thus seyde he loke pat ye .ij. after evynsonge be sure//
ly armed & your beste horsis. for. I wold ryde on
pylgrymage prevayly and none but we. iij. And
when my lordis is servyd we wol ryde to seyne
Mychaels mounte where mervayles ar shewed// A
none Sir Arthure wenete to his wardrop & caste
on his armoure bothe his Gesseraunte and his Bas//
net with his brode shylde. And so he buskys hym tyl hys
stede pat on pe bente hoved. Than he stertes vpon loftte &
hentys pe brydyll and stirres hym stoutly & sone he
fyndis his knygthits. ij. full cleny arayed. And than they
trotted on styly to gedir ouer a blythe the contray full of ma//
slayne murthered and deuoured moche peple of the countreye
and had ben susteyned seuen yere with the children of the co//

(15) myns of that land/ in soo moche that alle the children ben alle
slayne and destroyed/ and now late he hath taken the duchesse
of Bretayne as she rode with her meyne/ and hath ledde her
to his lodgynge whiche is in a montayne for to rauysshe and
lye by her to her lyues ende/ and many people folowed her

(20) moo thatn v C/ but alle they myghte not rescowe her/ but they
lefte her shrkyng and cryenge lamentably/ wherfore I sup//
pose that he hath slayn her in fulflylynge his fowle lust of le//
chery/ She was wyf vnto thy Cosyn syre Howel/ whome we
calle ful nyhe of thy blood/ Now as thow a rygthful kynge

(25) haue pyte on this lady/ and reuenge vs al as thow arte a no
ble conquerour/ C Alas sayd kynge Arthur./ this is a grete
meschyef/ I had leuer than the best Royame that I haue/
that I hadde ben a forlonge way to fore hym for to haue resco//
wed that lady/ C Now felawe sayd kynge

(30) Arthur canst thou brynge me there as thys gyaunt haunteth /

ye syre sayd the good man/ loo yonder where as thow seest tho
two grete fyres/ there shalt thou fynde hym/ and more tresour
than I suppose is in al Fraunce/ whanne the kynge hadde vn
derstanden this pyteous caas/ he retorned in to his tente /

(35) C Thenne he callyd to hym syre kaye and syre Bedewere / &
commaunded them secretely to make redy hors and harneis for

him self and them tweyne/ For after euensonge he wold
ryde on pylgremage with them two only vnto saynt Mychels
sig.i.iii
mounte,/ And thenne anone he maad hym redy and armed
hym at alle poynetes/ and tooke his hors and his sheld /

And soo they thre departed thens and rode forthe as faste as
ny myrry byrdis And whan they com to þe forlonde
Arthurc and they a lyght on hir foote//Now fastenyd
seyde Arthurc oure horsis þat none nyȝe oper . for I woll
seche this seynte be my self a lone and speke wyth this
maystir man þat kepyss this mountayne//Than the
ynghe yode vp to þe creste of þe Cragge. And than he
comforted hym self with þe colde wynde And than he yode
forth by .ij. welle stremys. And þer he fyndyd: iȝ fyres
flamand full hyȝe. And at þat one fyre he founde a care//
full wydw wryngeande hir handys syttande on a gra//
ve þat was new marked//Than Arthurc salued hir &
she hym a gayne and asked hir why she sate sorowyng
//Alas she seyde careful! knyght poLL carpys ouer Iowde
yon is a werlow woll destArAroy vs bothe I holde þe vnhappy
what doste þou on this mountayne//Thou3e here were

Sucy fyffty

sucy fyffty ye were to feyble for to mac[c]he hym all at
onis. Where to berys þou armorure hit may be lytyll avayle
for he nedys none oper wepyyn but his bare fyste// here is
a douches deede þe fayryst þat þat lyved he hath murthered that
mylde with oute ony mercy he forced hir by fylth of hym
self and so affir slytte hir vnto þe navylll// Dame seyde
þe kynge I com fro þe conquerrour sir Arthurc for to trete
with þat tiraunte for his Iyegc peplel
ffy on such tretyse
she seyde þan for he settyss nought by þe kynge noþer by no
man ellys// But & þou have brought Arthurc wyff dame
Gwenyvere he woll be more blyther of hir than þou
haddyste geffyn hym halfondel fraunce and but yf þou
haue brought hir prese hym nat to nyȝe loke what he
hath done vnto .xv. kyngis he hath made hym a coote full
of precious stoneys and þe bordoures þer of is the berdis .xv.
kyngis and they were of þe þe grettyst blood þat dured on erþe
othir farme had he none of xv realmys. This presente was
sente hym to this laste Cristmesse they sente hym In fay
the for savyng of þer peple. And for Arthurc wyff he lodgys
hym here for he hath more tresoure than euer had Arthurc
or ony of his elders// And now þou shalt fynde hym at souper
with .vj. knave chyldyme. And þer he hath made pykyll & powder
with many precious wynes and iij. fayre maydys þat tumys the
broche. That bydis to go to his bed for they .iij. shall be dede
with In .iij. oures or þe fylth is fullylled þat his fleyshe askys

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euer they my3t tyl that they cam to the forlond of that mount

(5) And there they alyghted/ and the kynge commaunded them
to tarye there/ for he wold him self goo vp in to that mounte
And soo he ascended vp in to that hylle tyl he came to a grete
fyre/ and there he fonde a careful wydowe wryngynge her han
des and makyng grete sorowe syttyngye by a graue newe ma

(10) de/ And thenne kynge Arthur salewed her/ and demaunded
of her wherfore she made suche lamentacion/ to whome she an/
suerd and sayd Syre knyghte speke softe/ for yonder is a de
uyll yf he here the speke/ he wylle come and destroye the/ I
hold the vnhappy what dost thou here in this mountayne /

(15) For yf ye were suche fyfty as ye be/ ye were not able to ma/
ke resistence ageynst this deuyl/ here lyeth a duchesse deede the
whiche was the fayrest of alle the world wyf to syre Howell/
duc of Bretayne/ he hath murthred her in forcyng her/ and
hath slytte her vnto the nauyl/ C Dame sayd the kynge/ I
come fro the noble Conqueroure kynge Arthur for to treate
with that tyraunt for his lyeye peple/ Fy on such treatys sa/
yd she/ he setteh not by the kynge ne by no man els / But
and yf thou haue broughte Arthurs wyf Gweneuer/
he shalle be gladder than thou haddest gyuen to hym half fra/
(20) unce/ Beware approche hym not to nygh/ for he hath vaynquys
shed xv kynges/ and hath maade hym a cote ful of precious
stones enbrowdred with theyre berdes/ whiche they sente hym
to haue his loue for sauacion of theyr peple at this laste Cry/
stemasse/ And yf thou wylt/ speke with hym at yonder grete
Well seyde Arthure I woll fulfylle my message for alle your grym wordis. Than fare þou to yondyr fyre þat flamyss, so hyȝe and þer þou shalt fynde hym sykerly for sothe. Than he paste forth to þe creste of þe hylle & syȝe where he sate at his souper alone gnawynge on a lyme of a large man & there he beekys his brode lendys by þe bryght fyre and brekelys hym somys and .iij. damesels turned .iij. brochis. And þer on was .xij. chyldir but late borne and they were broched in maner lyke birdis. Whan the kyng be hylde þat syght his heTte was nyȝe bledyng for sorow. Than he haylesed hym with angirfull wordys. Now he that all weldys geff þe sorow theeff þer þou syttes for þou art þe fowlyste freyke þat euer was fourmed & fendly þou fedyst the. þe devill haue thy soule. And by what cause þou carle hast þou kylld þes crysten chylde þou haste made many martyrs by mour. theroyng of this londis. There fore þou shalt haue thy mede thorow Mychael. that owyth this mounte. And also why haste þou slayne this fayre douches. There fore dresse þe doggysson for þou shalt dye this day thorow þe dynte of my hondis. Than þe gloton gloored and grevid full foule he had teythe lyke a grayhounte he was þe foulyst wyȝte þat euer man sye and þer was neuer suche one fourmed on erpe for þer was neuer devil In helle more horriblyer made for he was fro þe hede to the foote .v. fadom longe and large And þer with sturdely he sterte vpon þis leggis & cauȝte a clubbe In his honde all of clene iron. Than he swappis at þe kyng wþat kyd wpeyn he cruysshed downe wþat the club. the Coronel. doune to þe colde erpe. the kyng couerde hym with his shylde & rechys a boxe evyn Infourmede In the myddis of his forehede þat þe slypped blade vnto the brayne rechys. yet he shappis at sir Arthure. but þe kyng shuntys a lytyll and rechys hym a dynte hysȝe vpon þe haunche. And þer he swappis his Genytrottys. In sondir. Than he rored & brayed and yet angurly he stry. les and fayled of sir Arthure and þe erpe hittys þat he kytte In to the swarffe a large sweȝr de length and more. pan the kyng varte vp vnto hym & raught hym a buffette and kut his baly In sundir þat oute wente þe gore þat þe grasse and þe grounde all foule was be gone. Than he kaste a way þe clubbe and cauȝte þe kyng vnd þis armys & hande. led þe kyng so harde þat he crusshed his rybbe. Than þe baleful maydens wronge hir hondis and kneled on þe grounde & to cryste called wþat þat þe warlow wrath Arthure
fyre at souper/ wel sayd Arthur I wyll accomplyshe my mes
sage for al your ferful wordes/ and wente forth by the creast
of that hyle/ and sawe where he satte atte souper gnawynge
on a lymme of a man/ bekynge his brode lymmes by the fyre
and brecheles/ and thre fayr damoysels tornynge thre broches
wheron were broched twelue yonge children late borne lyke
yonge byrdes

Whanne kynge Arthur beheld that
pyteous sy3te/ he had grete compassion on them so that his hert
bledde for sorowe/ and hayled hym sayeng in this wyse he that
alle the world weldeth gyue the shorte lyf & shameful dethe/
And the deuyl haue thy soule/ why hast thou murthred the/
se yonge Innocent children/ and murthred this duchesse/ Ther

fore aryse and dresse the thow gloton/ For this day shall thou
dye of my hand/ Thenne the gloton anone starte vp and tooke
a grete clubbe in his hand/ and smote at the kynge that his
coronal fylle to the erthe/ and the kynge hytte hym ageyn that
he carf his bely and cutte of his genytours/ that his guttes &

his entraylles fylle doune to the ground/ thenne the gyaunt
threwewe away his clubbe/ and caught the kynge in his armes
that he crusshyd his rybbes/ Thenne the thre maydens knelyd
doune and callyd to Cryst for helpe and conforte of Arthur
undir and so they waltyrde & turnbylde ouer þe craggis and
bussshys and eythir cleght opere full faste In þer armys and
opere whyles Arthure was a boven and opere whyle vndir &
so they neuer leffe tyll they fylle per as þe floode marked. But
euer In þe walterynge Arthure hittis hym with a shorte dagger
vp to þe hyltys. and In his fallynge þer braste of þe gyauntis
Rybbys .iij. evyn at onys And by fortune they felle there
as þe .iij knyghtis a boode with their e horsis// Whan Sir Kay
saw þe kynge and the gyaunte so I cleyght to gyder. Alas
sayd sir Kay we ar forfete for euer yondir is oure lorde ouer
fallen with a fende hit is natt so seyde þe kynge but helpe me
sir Kay for this corseynte haue I cleged oute of þe yon//
dir clowys// In fayth seyde Sir Bedwre this is a
foule carle and cau3te þe corseynte oute of þe kyngis armys
(10) 477
And there he seyde I haue mykyll wondir and Mychael
be of suche a makying that euer god wolde suffir hym to
a byde In hevyn. And if seyntis be suche that servys
leshu I woll neuer seke for none be þe fayth of my body
(15) 482
The kynge than lough at Bedwres wordis & seyde
this seynte haue I sought ny3e vnto my grete daun //
gere. But stryke of his hede and sette hit on a troun //
cheoune of a speare and geff hit to thy servaunte that is
swyffte horsed and bere hit vnto sir Howell þat is In
harde bondis and bydde hym be mery for his enemy
(20) 487
is destroyed. And aftir ^in^ Barflete lette brace hit on a
Barbycan that all þe comys of this contrey may hit
be holde// And than ye .iij. go vp and fecche me my
sheldy my swerde and þe boystouse clube of Iron. And
(25) 492
yf ye lyste ony tresoure take what ye lyst for þer may
ye fynde tresoure oute of numbir. So I haue the Curtyll
I kepe no more. for this was a freysh Gyaunte and
mykyll of strength .ffor I mette nat with suche one this
(30) 497
xv. wyntir Sauff onys In þe mounte of Arrabe I mette
with suche an oþer. but this was fersar that had I nere
founden had nat my fortune be good. Than þe kynhtis
fechched the Clubbe and þe coote And all þe remenaunte
and toke with hem what tresoure that hem lyked. Than
(5) 503
þe kynge & they sterte vppon þer horsys. And so they rode fro
thenþ þer as they come fro./ And a none þer clamoure was
howge a boute all þe contrey. And than they wente with
(10) 508
one voyse to fore þe kynge and thanked god & hym þat
þer enemy was destroyed// All thanke ye god seyde Ar //
thur and no man ellys looke þat the goodlys be skyffed
And thenne Arthur weltred and wrong, that he was other
whyle vnder and another tyme aboue, And so weltryng and
walowynge they rolled doune the hylle, tyl they came to the
see marke, and euer as they soo weltred, Arthur smote hym
with his daggar, and it fortuned they came to the place, whe'

re as the two knyghtes were and kepte Arthurs hors, then'
ne when they sawe the kynge fast in the gyaunts armes, they
came and losed hym, And thenne the kynge commaunded syr

kaye to smyte of the gyaunts hede, and to sette it vpon a trun'
cheon of a spere and bere it to syre howel, and telle hym that
his enemy was slayne, and after late this hede be bounded to
a barbycan that alle the peple may see and behold hit, and go
ye two vp to the montayn, and fetche me my sheld, my suerd
and the clubbe of yron, And as for the tresour take ye it, for
ye shalle fynde there good oute of nombre, So I haue the ker
tyld and clubbe I desyre no more, This was the fyerst gy'

aunt that euer I mette with, sauf one in the mount of Arabe,
whiche I ouercame, but this was gretter and fyyerser, Thenne
the knyghtes fette the clubbe and the kyrtyl, and some of the
tresour they took to them self, and retorned ageyne to the host

And anone this was knowne thurgh alle the countrey, wher
for the peple came and thanked the kynge, And he sayd a
geyne yeue the thanke to god, and departe the goodes among
that none playne of his parte// Than he commaunded his
cosyn sir howell to make a kyrke on pat same cragge In
þe worshippe of seynte Mychaell On þe morne frome
Barflete remevyth þe kynge with all his grete batayle
proudly arayed// And so they shooke ouer þe streymys In to
a fayre champayne And þerby doune In a valey they
pyght vp his tentys. And evyn at þe mete whyle come
iij. messyngers. that one was þe Marchall of ffraunce þat
seyde to þe kynge how þe Emperoure was com In to ffraunce
and hath destroyed much of oure marchis and is com
In to Burgayne and many borowys hath destroyed and
hath made grete slaughter of your noble people & where
that he rydyth all he destroyes And now he is comyn
In to dowse ffraunce And þer he breynnys all cleene Now all
the Dowse lepers bothe deukys and oþer and þe peerys of
Parys towne ar fledde downe In to þe lowe contrey towarde
Roone And but yf þou helpe them þe sunne they muste yelde hem
all at onys bothe þe bodyes and townys they can none oþir
succour but nedys they must yelde them In haste

Than þe kynge byddis Sir Borce now bowske the
blythe. And Sir Lyonel and Sir Bedwerc loke þat
ye fare with Sir Gawayne my neveu with þou and take as many
good knyghtis and loke þat ye ryde streyte vnto Sir Lucius and
yf I bydde hym In haste to remewe out of my londys. And
yf he woll nat so bydde hym dresse his batayle and lette vs
redresse oure ryghtis with oure handis. And þat is more wor //
shyppe than thus to ouer ryde maysterlesse men// Than a
none In all haste they dressed hem to horsebak thes noble
knyghtis // And when they com to þe grene wood they sawe
be fore hem many prowde pavylyons of sylke of dyverse
coloures þat were sette In a medow besyde a Ryvere And the
Emperoures pavylyon was In þe mydlys with an Egle display //
ed on loftte //. Than thorow the wood oure knyghtis roode
tyll þat they com vnto the Emperoures tente /// But he
hynde them they lefte stuff of men of armys In a boyshe ///
mente And þer he lefte In the boyshemente Sir Lyonel. And
Sir Bedwerc Sir Gawayne and sir Borce wente with the
message /// So they rode worthwhile In to þe Emperoures tente
and spoke bothe at onys with hawte wordys /// Now geff þe
sorow Sir Emperoure & all thy sowdyars þe a boute // ffor why
ocupyst þou with wronge the Empyreship of Roome that
is kynge Arthures herytage be kynde of his noble Elders
yow/ And after that kynge Arthur sayd and commaunded
his Cosyn howel that he shold ordeyne for a chirche to be bylded
on the same hylle in the worship of saynte Mychel/ C And
on the morne the kynge remeuyd with his grete bataylle/ and
came in to Champayne and in a valeye/ and there they pyght
their tentys/ and the kynge beynge set at his dyner/ ther cam

(5) in tw o m essagers/ of w hom e that one w a s M archalof fraunc e
and sayd to the kyng that themperour was entryd in to fra/ unce/ and had destroyed a grete parte and was in Burgoyyn
and had destroyed and made grete slaughter of peple & brente
townes and bowres/ wherfor yf thou come not hastely/ they
(10) must yelde vp their bodyes and goodes/

C Capitulum sextum

(15) T henne the kynge dyd doo calle syre Gawayne/ syre
Borce/ syr Lyonel and syre Bedewere/ and comma/
unded them to goo strayte to syre Lucius/ and saye ye
to hym that hastely he remeue oute of my land/ And yf he wi!
not/ bydde hym make hym redy to bataylle and not distresse the

(20) poure peple/ Thenne anone these noble knyghtes dressyd them
to horsbak/ And whanne they came to the grene wood/ they sa
w e m any pauelions sette in m edowe of sylke of dyuerse co/
lours besyde a ryuer/ And themperours pauelione was in the
myddle with an egle displayed aboue/ To the which tente
(25) our knyghtes rode toward/ and ordeyned syr Gawayn and
syre Bors to doo the message/ And lefte in a busshegment syre
Lyonel/ and syre Bedewere/ And thenne syre Gawayn and
syr Borce dyd their message/ and commaunded Lucius in Ar
thurs name to auoyde his lond/ or shortly to adresse hym to ba
there lakked none but Vther his fadir. There fore þe kyng commaundyth þe to rdye oute of his londys oper ellys to fyght for all and knyghtly hit wynne/ ye sey well seyde þe Emperour as youre lorde hath you commanded/ But telle your lorde I sende hym gretynge. but I haue no loy of youre Renckys thus to rebuke me & my lordys/ But sey youre lorde I sende hym gretynge. but I haue no loy of youre Renckys Thus to rebuke me & my lordys/ But telle your lorde I woll ryde downe by Sayne and wynne all þat þer to longis and aftir ryde vnþo Roone and wynne hit vp clene. hit be semys þe ylle seyde Sir Gawayne that ony such an Elfe shold brage suche wordys. ffor I had levir than all ffrauce to fyght a yenste þe oþer I seyde Sir Borce than to welde all bretyayne oþer Burgayne the noble/ /Than a knyght þat hyght Sir Gayus þat was cosyn vnþo þe Emperoure he seyde thes wordys. Thes englyshe Bretonys be braggers of kynde for ye may see how they boste and bragge as they durste bete all þe worlde / /Than grevid Sir Gawayne at his grete wordys and with his bowery bronde þat bryght semed he stroke of þe hede of sir Gayus the knyght and so they turned' þer horsis and rode ouer watrys and woodys In to they com ny þe bussheiment þer Sir Lyonell and Sir Bedwere were hovyng styyle/ /Than þe Romaynes folowed faste on horsebak and on foote ouer a fayre champeyne vnþo a fayre wood/ /Than turnys hym Sir Borce wyth a freyshe wylle and sawe a gay knyght all floryshed In golde þat bare downe of Arthurys knyghtis wonderfull mȧ ny/ /Than Sir Borce aspyed hym he kaste In feautir a spere and gyrdys hym thorow oute þe body that his gputy s fylle oute and þe knyght to þe grounde þat gresly gronyd/ / Than preced In a bolde barowne all In pur pull arayed he threste In to þe prece of kyng Arthurys knyghtis and froysshed downe many good knyghtis And he was called Calleborne the strengyste of pawynes londis And Sir Borce turned hym to & bare hym thorow the brode shylde and þe brode of his breste þat he felle to þe erþe as dede as a stone/ / Than Sir ffeldenake the myghty þat was a praysed man of armys he gurde to Sir Gawayne for greff of Sir Gayus and his oþer felowsys And sir Gawayne was ware and drew Galantyne his swerde and hyt hym such a buffette þat he cleved hym to þe breste. And than he cau3/ te his courser & wente to his ferys/ / Than a rych man of Rome one of þe Senatours called to his felowsys & bade hem returne for yondir ar shrewed messengers & bolde
taylle/ To whome Lucius ansuerde and sayd ye shalIe retarne
to your lord and saye ye to hym that I shall subdue hym and
alle his londes/ Thenne syre Gawayn was wrothe and sayde

I hadde leuer than alle Fraunce fyghte ageynste the/ and
so hadde I saide syn Borce leuer than alle Bretayne or bu//

rgoyne C Thenne a knyght named syre Gaynus
nyghe cosyn to the Emperour sayde loo how these Bretons ben
ful of pryde and boost/ and they bragge as though they bare
vp alle the worlde/ Thenne syre Gawayne was sore greued
with these wordes/ and pulled oute his swerd and smote of
his hede/ And therwith torned theyr horses and rode ouer wa
ters and thurgh woodes tyl they came to theyre busshement /
where as syr Lyonel and syr Bedeuer were houyng/ The ro//

payn vnto a wood/ thenne syre Boors torned his hors/ and
sawe a knyghte come fast on/ whome he smote thurgh the bo///
dy with a spere that he fylle dede doune to the erthe/ thenne cam

Callyburne one of the strengst of pauye and smote doune ma
ny of Arthurs knyghtes/ And whan syr Bors sawe hym do
soo moche harme he adressyd toward hym & smote hym thur3
the brest that he fylle doune dede to the erthe/ Thenne syr Fel///
denak thought to reuenge the dethe of gaynus vpon syre Ga///

wayn/ but syre gawayn was ware therof and smote hym on
the hede/ whiche stroke stynted not tyl it came to his breste/
And thenne he retorned and came to his felawes in the bus///
shement / And there was a recountre/ for the busshement brake
on the Romayns/ and slewe and hewe doune the Romayns

(30) (35) (5) (10) (15)
booster. If we follow them any farther the harme shall be
owrys. And so the Romaynes returned lightly to theire
tentys and tolde the Emperoure, how they had spedde. And how
the marshall of Rome was slayne and mo than v. ml. In the
felde dede. But yet one they wente and departe our bushe
mente brake on bothe sydys of the Romaynes. And the
bolde Bedwer and sir Lyonel. bare downe the Romaynes on
every syde/ There were oure noble knyghtis of mery Ingelonde
bere hem thorow the helmys & bryght sheldis & slew hem
downe. And the hole roughte returned vnto the Emperoure &
tolde hym at one worde his men were destroyed x. ml. by
batayle of tyred knyghtis for they ar the brymmyst men that ever
we saw In felde// But all wayes Sir Borce And Sir
Gawayne freyshly folowed on the Romaynes evyn vnto the
Emperoures tentys// Than oute ran the Romaynes on every
syde bothe on horse & on foote to many oute of numbir. But
Sir Borce and sir Berel were formeste In the frunte and
freyshly faust as euer dud ony knyghtis. But Sir Gawayne
was on the ryght honde & dud what he myght. But there
were so many hym a gaynste he myght nat helpe thes fe
rys. but was fayne to turne on his horse othis hir lyffe
muste he lese // Sir Borce and Sir Berell the good baroun
ges fou3 as .iij. boorys pat myght no farþer passe// But at the
laste thou3e they loth were they were yolden & takyn and
saved per lyves yet the stale stoode a lyttyll on fere with Sir Gaway
ne pat made sorow oute of mesure for thes .iij. lordys. But
than cam In a freysh knyght denly arayed Sir Idres Sir
Vwaynes son a noble man of armys he brought .v. C. good
men In haubirkis attyred. And whan he wyste Sir Borce
and sir Berel were cesed of werre Alas he sayde this is to
muche shame & ouer muche losse// ffor with kynge Arturhe and
he know pat thes .iij. knyghtis bene thus loste he woll neuer mery
be tylly this be revenged. A fayre knyght sayde sir Gawayne
þou moste nedis be a good man for so is thy fadir I knowe
full well thy modir In Ingelonde was þou borne Alas thes
Romaynes this day haue chaced us as wyde harys & they
haue our noble chyffen takyn In the felde per was neuer
a bettir knyght þat strode vppon a steede // Loo where they lede
oure lordys ouer yondir brode launde. I make myne avowe
seyde Sir Gawayne I shall neuer se my lorde Arturer but yf
I reskew hem þat so lyghtly ar ledde vs fro// That is kny3tly
spokyn seyde sir Idres & pulde vp here brydyls & halowed
ouer þat champayne. there was rysshynge of sperys & swapp//
and forced the Romayns to flee and retorn/ whome the nol
ble knyghtes chaced vnto theyr tentes/ Thenne the Romayns
gadred more peple/ and also foote men cam on/ and ther was

a newe bataille and soo moche peple that syr Bors and syr
Berel were taken/ but whan syre gawayn sawe that/ he tooke
with hym syre Idrus the good knyght and sayd he wold ne

uer see kynge Arthur but yf he rescued them/ and pulled out
ving of swerdis. And sir Gawayne with galantyne his swerde
dud many wondyrs // Than he threste thorow þe prece vnto
hym þat lad sir Bors and bare hym thorow vp to þe hylty &
lad away sir Bors straye vnto his ferys // Than sir Idrus
þe yonge sir Vwaynes son he threste thorow a knyght þat had sir
Berell þat þe brayne and þe blode clevid on his swerde // þer
was a proude Senatoure preceded aftir sir Gawayne & gaff
hym a grete buffet That sawe sir Idres and aftir rydyth
& had slayne þe Senatoure but þat he yelded hym in haste yet
he was loth to be yoldyn but þat he nedys muste // And with þat sir
Idrus ledde hym oute of þe prees vnto sir Lyonel. And vnto
Syr Lovel Idrus brothir and commandaund hem to kepe hym
on payne of theire hedis. Than þer be gan a passyng harde
stoure. for þe Romaynes euer wexed euere & þerefore
pat aspyed he sentc forth a knyght vnto kyng Arthu / //
re And telle hym what sorow we endure & how we haue
takyn þe chefe chaunceler of Rome. And Petur is presoner
a Senatoure full noble & odir proude pryncis we knowe
nat theire namys And pray hym as he isoure lorde to res //
cowe vs be tyme foroure presoner may pay rychesse oute of
numbir And telle hym þat I am wounded wonderly sore // Whan
þe messyngers com to þe kyng & tolde hym thes wordys the kynge
thanked cryste clappying his hondys. And for thy trew
sawys & I may lyve many wyntyrs þer was neuer no knyght better
rewardíd. But þer is no golde vnnder god þat shall save þer lyvys
I make myne avow to god. And sir Gawayne be In ony perel
of deth for I had levir þat þe Empyreoure & all his chyff lordis were
sunkyn In to helle than ony lorde of þe rounde table were byt //
tyrly wounded // So forth þe presoner were brought be fore
Arthure And he commandaund hem In to kepyng of þe Conestablys
warde surely to be kepte as noble presoner // So with In a why //
le com In þe fore Ryderis thatis for to say Sir Bors Sir
Bedwere Sir Lyonell And sir Gawayne that was sore woun //
ded with all hir noble felyshyp they loste no man of worshypp
So anone þe kyng lete rensnake Sir Gawayne anone In
his syght And sayde fayre Cosyn me Ruys of thyne hurtys
And yf I wyste hit myght glad thy hert othir fare þe bettir with
hit I sholde presente þe with hir hedyȝ thorow whom þou art thus
rebuked. That were lytyll a vayle sayde sir Gawayne for
theire hedyȝ had they lorne & I had wolde my self & hit were
shame to sle knyghtis when they be yolden // Than was þer lyo
& game amonge þe knyghtis of rounde table And spoke of þe grete
prouesse þat þe messyngers ded þat day thorow dedys of armys // So
galatyn his good swerd/ and followed them that ledde thoij
knyghtes awaye/ and he smote hym that lad syre Bors/ and
took syr Bors fro hym and delyuerd hym to his felawes/
And syre Idrus in lyke wyse resc owed syr Berel/ thenne

(30) beganne the bataill to be grete that oure kny3tes were in grete
leopardy/ wherfore syre Gawayn sente to kyng Arthur for so
cour and that he hye hym for I am sore wounded/ and that
oure prysoners may paye good oute of nombre/ And the mes-
sager came to the kyng and told hym his message/ And anon
(35) the kynge dyd doo assemble his armye/ but anone or he depar
ted the prysoners were comen/ and syre gawayn and his fe/

lawes gate the felde and put the Romayns to flyght/ and af-
ter retorned and came with their felauship in suche wyse/ that

sig.i.v. no man of worship was loste of them/ sauf that syr Gawayn
was sore hurte/ Thenn the kynge dyd do ransake his woun/
des and comforted hym/ And thus was the begynnynge of
the first iourney of the brytons and Romayns/ and ther we/
(5) re slayne of the Romayns moo than ten thousand/ and grete

i lyne and myrthe was made that nyghte in the hoost of kyng


on þe morne when hit was day þe kyng callyd vnto hym sir Cador of Cornuayle And sir Clarrus of Clercounente A clene man of armys. And sir Cloudres Sir Clegis, i.j. olde noble knyghtes And sir Bors Sir Berell noble good men of armys And also Sir Bryan de les ylyes and sir Bedwere þe bolde And also he called sir Launcelot In heryng of all peple and seyde I pray þe Sir as þou lovys me take hede to thes opér kny3tis & boldely lede thes presoneres vnto Paryse towne þer for to be kepte surely as they me love woll haue. And yt ony Rescowe be falle moste I affye the In me as Ieshu me helpe // Than sir Launcelot and sir Cador with thes opér knyghtis attyred oute of þer felyshyp x. ml. be tale of bolde men arayed of þe beste of þer company. And than they vnfolde Baner & let hem be displayed

Now turne we to þe Emperoure of Rome þat wyste by aspye whethir this presoneres sholde wende he callyd vnto þe, hym sir Edolf and sir Edwarde .ij. myghty kyngis. And Sir Sextore of Lybye And Senatours many. And þe kyng of Sur // re and þe Senatoure of Rome Sawtre all thes turned towarde Troyes with many proved knyghtis to be trappe þe kyngis sondis men þat were charged with þe presoneres//Thus ar oure knyghtis passed towarde paryse a busshemente lay be fore them of Sixty ml men of Armys//Now lordis seyde sir Launcelot I pray you herkyns me a whyle I drede þat In þis woodys be leyde a fore vs many of oure enemycs. There fore be myne advyse sende we .ijj. good knyghtis I assente me seyde Sir Cador And all they seyde þe same & were aggre // ed þat Sir Claryon and sir Clement þe noble þat they sholde dyscouer þe woodys bothe þe dalys & þe downys. So forth rode thes .ijj. knyghtis & aspyed In the woodys men of armys ry // dyng on sterne horsys// Than Sir Clegys cryed on low dé is þer ony knyght kyng opér cayser þat dare for his lordis love þat he servyth recountir with a knyght of þe rounde table be he kyng opér knyght here is his recounter redy// An Erle hym answeryd angirly agayne and seyde thy lorde wenys with his knyghtis to wynne all þe worlde I trow your currage shall be aswaged In shorte tyme// ffye on þe cowarde seyde Sir Clegis as a cowarde þou spekyste for by Ihesu myne armys ar knowyn thorow oute all Inglonde and Bretayne And I am com of olde Barounes of Auncetry noble and Sir Clegis is my name a knyght of þe table rounde. And frome Troy Brute brought myne elders// Thou be semeste well seyde þe kyng to be one of þe good be thy bryght browys but for all þat þou canst conieoure opér sey þer shall none þat is here
Arthur/ And on the morne he sente alle the prysoners in to parys vnder the garde of syre launcelot with many knyghtes & of syr Cador

C Capitulum vii

Now torne we to the Emperour of Rome whiche aspyed that these prysoners shold be sente to Parys/ and anone he sente to leye in a busshelement certayne knyghtes and prynces with syxty thousand men for to rescowe his knyghtes and lordes that were prysoners/ And so on the morne as Launcelot and syre Cador chyuetayns and gouernours of all them that conueyed the prysoners as they sholde passe thurgh a wode syr Launcelot sente certayne knyghtes tespye yf ony we re in the woodes to lette them/ And whanne the said knyghtes cam in to the wood/ anone they aspyed and sawe the grete en
medyll with þe this tyme// Than sir Clegis Returned fro þe
Ryche kyng and rode streyghte to Sir Launcelot And vnto
sir Cadore And tolde hem what he had seye seyne In the
woodis of þe fayryste syght of men of armys to þe numbir of
Sixty ml And þer fore lordyngis fyght you be hovys oþer ellys
shunte for shame chose wheþer ye lykys// Nay be my fayth
sayde sir Launcelot to turne is no tyme for here ^is^ all olde
knyghtis of olde grete worship þat were neuer shamed. And as
for me & my cousyns of my bloode we ar but late made
knyghtis yett wolde we be loth to lese þe worship þat ooure
eldyrs haue deseruyd. ye sey well seyde sir Cador And all
thes knyghtis of your knyghtly wordis comfortis vs all
and I suppose here is none woll be glad to returne. And as
for me seyde sir Cador I had leuer dye this day than onys to
turne my bak// ye sey well seyde sir Borce lette vs set on
hem freyshly and þe worship shall be oures And cause ooure
kyng to honoure vs for euer and to gyff vs lordshyppis
& landys for ooure noble dedys And he þat faynes hym to
fyght þe devyl haue his bonys & who save ony knyghtis
for lycours of goodys tyle all be done & know who shal
haue þe bettir he doth nat knyghtly so Ihesu me helpe// þan
anone Sir Launcelot and Sir Cador tho .ij myghty Dukis
dubbed knyghtys worship to wynne Ioneke was þe fyrste
a Juster full noble Sir hectimer and Sir Alyduke bothe
of Inglonde borne And sir hamerel and sir hardolf full har
dy men of Armys. Also Sir harry And Sir harygall þat
(10) 757
good men were bothe// Now felowys seyde Sir Launcelot
and sir Cador the k^e^ne Comhydir sir Bedwere and sir Berel.
take with you sir Raynolde and sir Edwarde that ar sir Roulon//
dis chyldir & loke þat ye take kepe to thoes noble presoners what
chaunce so vs be tyde save them & your self this commaundement
we giff you as ye woll answere to ooure souerayne lorde.
And for ony stowre þat euer ye se vs be stadle stondys In your
stale & sterte ye no ferþer. And yf hit be falle þat ye se oure charge
is to muche than recoyer your self vnto som kydde castell & than
ryde you faste vnto oure kyng & pray hym of soccouer as he
(20) 767
is oure kynde lorde// And than they fruyshed forth all at
onyes of þe bourelyest knyghtis þat euer brake brede with mo than
v. C. at þe formyst frunte & caste þer speares. In feawter all at
onyes and save trumpettis þer was no noyse ellys// Than the
Romaynes oste Remeved alytlyl and þe lorde þat was kyng
of Lybve that lad all þe formyste route he keste his speire In fe//
autyr & bare his course evyn to Sir Berel and strake hym.
busshement/ and returned and told syr Launcelot that ther lay in a wayte for them thre score thousand Romayns/ And then"n ne syr Launcelot with suche knyghtes as he hadde and men of warre to the nombre of x M put them in araye and met wyth
thorow þe gorge that he and his horse felle to þe grounde &
so he was brought oute of his lyff// Alas sayde sir Cadore
now carefull is myne herte þat now lyeth dede my Cosyn þat
I beste loved he a lyght off his horse and toke hym In hys
armys And þer commaunded knyghtis to kepe well þe corse//Than
þe kynge craked grete wordys on lowde & seyde one of þon prow
de knyghtis is leyde full lowe// yondir kynge seyde sir Cador
carps grete wordis. But & I may lyve or this dayes ende I
shall countir with yondir kynge so Cryste me helpe// Sir seyde sir
Launcelot meve you nat to sore but take your speare In your honde
& we shall you not fayle// Than sir Cador Sir Launcelot and
sir Bors the good men of armys thes .iij. feawtyrd þer sperys
and threste In to þe myddys & ran thorow oute þe grete ote twy//
se oþer .iij. tymes. And whan þer sperys were brokyn they swange
oute þer swerdis & slowe of noble men of armys mo than an .C.
And than they rode a yen to theire ferys// Than a lowde the
kynge of Lybye cryed vnto sir Cador well haue ye revenged
þe deth of your knyght ffor I haue loste for one knyght an .C. by
vj. score. And there with þe batayle be gan to løyne & grete
slaughter þer was on the Sar تسens party but thorow the noble pousse
of kynge Arthurs knyghtis .x. were takyn & lad forth as preso//
ners þat greved sore sir Launcelot Sir Cador and Sir Bors
þe brym /The kynge of Lybye be helde þer dedis and sterte on
a sterne horse and vmbely closed our e knyghtis & drove
downe to þe grounde many a good man. ffor þer was Sir Aladu //
ke slayne And also sir Ascamour sore wounded And Sir herawe
and þir heryngale hewyn to pecis And Sir Lovell was takyn* And
Sir Lyonell als. And neve had sir Clegis Sir Cleremon //
de nat bene with þe knyghthode of Sir Launcelot tho newe
made knyghtis had be slayne euerychone// Than siðor Cador ro //
de vnþo þe kynge of Lybye with a swerde well stelyd & smote hym
an hyþe vppon þe hede þat þe brayne folowed// Now haste thow
seyde sir Cador corne boote agaynewarde and þe devyll haue8
thy byonis þat euer þou were borne// Than þe Sowdan of Surer
was wood wrothe. for þe deth of þat kynge grevid hym at his
herte and recomforted his peple and sette sore on oure
knyghtis //Than siðor Launcelot and Sir Bors encountyrs
with hym sone And with In a whyle as tellyth þe Romaynes
they had slayne of þe Sarzens mo than .v. ml. And siðor Kay
þe kene had takyn a Captayne And Edwarde had takyn .ij.
Erlys and þe Sowdan of Surer yeldid hym vp vnþo Sir
Launcelot And þe Senatur of Sautre yeldid hym vnþo sir
Cador// Whan þe Romaynes & þe Sarzens aspyed how þe

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them and foughte with them manly/ and slewe and dreten"
chid many of the Romayns/ and slewe many knyghtes & ad"

myrals of the party of the Romayns and sarasyns/ ther was

(30) slayne the kynge of lylye and thre grete lordes Aladuke/ he" rawde and heryngdale/ but syr Launcelot fought soo nobly that
game yode they fledde with all hir myght to hyde there hedis

Thanoure knyghtis followed with a freysshe fare And slew
downe of be Sara3ens. And followed with a freysshe fare// And
Sir Launcelot ded so grete dedys of armys pat day pat sir Cador
and all be Romaynes had mervayle of his myght for per was
noþer kynge Casyer noþer knyght pat day myght stonde hym
ony buffette per fore was he honoured dayes of his lyff for
neuer ere or pat day he was proved so well ffor he and Sir
Bors and sir Lyonel was but late a fore at an hy3e feste
made all .iij. knyghtis// And thus were be Romaynes &
be Sare3ens slayne a downe clene save a fewe were reco //
virde per by In to a lyytll castell. And than be noble Renckys
of be Rounde table there as be felde was toke vp hir good
bodies of be noble knyghtis & garte sende them vnto kynge
Arthur In to the erthe to be caste So they all rode vnto
Paryse and be leftte be presoners per with the Pure proveste &
than they were delyuerde In to sure sauff garde. Than
every knyght toke a spere & dranke of be colde wyne and
than fersely In a brayde returned vnto be kynge// Whan
be kynge his knyghtis sawe he was than mervelously reioy //
ced & cleyght knyght be knyght In his armys & sayde all
be worship In be worlde ye welde be my fayth// There
was neuer kynge sauff my selH pat fayled othir
But of be knyghthode of Sir Launcelot hit were mervayle
to telle & of his bolde Cosyns ar proved full noble kny3tis
But of wyse wytte & of grete strengthe of his ayge sir
Launcelot hath no felowe// Whan be kynge herde sir Cador
sey such wordys he seyde hym be semys for to do such dedis
// And sir Cadore tolde Arthur whyche of be good knyghtis
were slayne. The kynge of Lybye And he slew the fyrste
knyght on oure syde pat was Sir Berell And sir Aladuke
was anoþer a noble man of armys And sir Maurel and sir
Mores that were .iij. brethyrn with sir Manaduke and Sir
Mandyff .ij. good knyghtis //Than be kynge with a keuerechoff
wyped his lyen & sayde your corragge & your hardynesse nere
hande had you destroyed. for & ye had turned agayne ye
had loste no worship. ffor I calle hit but foly to a 'byde whan
knyghtis bene ouer macched. Not so sayde sir Launcelot
the shame sholde ouer haue bene oures. That is trouthe
seyde sir Clegis and Sir Bors for knyghtis ons shamed
no man myght endure a stroke of his hande/ but where he came he shewed his prowesse and myght/ for he slewe doune ryght on euery syde/ And the Romayns and sarasyns fledde from (35) hym as the sheep fro the wulf or fro the lyon/ and putt them alle that abode alyue to flyght/ And so longe they fou3te that

tydynges came to kynge Arthur/ And anone he graythed hym and came to the bataille/ and sawe his knyghtes how they had vanquysshed the bataylle/ he embraced them knyght by knyghte in his armes and said ye be worthy to welde all your honour and worship/ there was neuer kynge sauf my self that had so noble knyghtes/ Syre sayd Cador there was none of vs fail led other/ but of the prowesse and manhode of syre Launcelot were more than wonder to telle/ and also of his cosyens whi che dyd that daye many noble feates of werrre/ And also syre Cador tolde who of his knyghtes were slayne/ as syr beriel & other syr Morys and syr Maurel two good knyghtes/ then"

(10) ne the kynge wepte and dryed his eyen with a keuerchyef/ & sayd your courage had nere hand destroyed yow/ For though ye had returned aseynde/ ye had lost no worship/ For I calle hit foly/ knyghtes to abyde when they be ouermatched/ Nay sayd Launcelot and the other/ For ones shamed maye neuer (15) be recouerd
Recouerys hit neuer // Now leve Sir Arthure and his no // ble knyghtis and speke we of a Senatoure pat ascape fro be batyle /When he com to Lucius the Emperoure of Rome he seyde Sir with drawpe what doste pou here In this mar // chis and to ouer ren poore peple pou shalt wyynne ^no^thyng ellys. & If pou dele with kynge Arthure and his doughty knyghtis pou wynnys naught ellys but grete strokys oute of me // (25) 869 sure. for this day one of Arthurs knyghtis was worth In batyle an C. of ours. ffye on pou seyde Lucuyus for cowardly pou spekyste yf my harms me greve thy wor // dys greveth me muche more // Than he called to hym his councelye men of noble bloode // So by all theire advyse he sent forth a knyght pat hyght sir Leomye he dressed his peple & hy3e hym he bade & take hym of the beste men of armys many sad hundrethis & go be fore and we woll folow aftir // But pe kynge of per commynge was prevely warned & than In to Sessoyn he dressid his peple & forstalled pe Romaynes from pe kyd castels & pe walled townes. And per sir Vyler the Valyaunte made his avow evyn by fore pe kynge to take oper to sle the vyxounte of Rome or ellys to dye there fore. (30) 874 Than pe kynge commandad Sir Cadore to take he // de to be rerewarde and take renkys of pe rounde table pat the beste lykes sauff Sir Launcelot & Sir Bors with many mo othis Sir Kay Sir Clegis shall be per als and sir Marroke Sir Marhaulte shall be with me In fere & all thes with mo oper shall a wayte vppon my persone // Thus kynge Arthure disperscd all his oste In dyuerse partyes that they sholde nat ascape but to fyght them be howys. Whan pe emperoure was entyrd In to pe Vale of Sessoyn he my3t se where kynge Arthure hoved In Batayle with baners displayed on euery syde was he be sette pat he myght nat ascape but oper to fyght oper to yelde hym were was none oper boote // Now I se well seyde sir Lucuyus yondir traytoyre hath be trayed me. Than he redressis his knyghtis on dyuerse partyes & sette vp a dragon with Eglys many one ene // wed with Sabyly // And than he lete blow vp with trumpettis & with tabours pat all pe Vale dynlded And than he lete crye on lowde with trumpettis and with tabours pat all pe Vale dyn // ned And than he lete cry on lowde pat all men my3t here //Syrs ye know well pat pe honoure & worshyp hath
C Capitulum viii

(20) Now leue we kynge Arthur and his noble knyghtes whiche had wonne the felde/ and had brought theyre prysoners to parys/ and speke we of a senatour whiche esca// ped fro the bataille/ and came to Lucius themperour & sayd to hym/ Syre emperour I aduyse the for to withdrawe the /what
dost thou here/ thou shalt wynne noo thynge in these marches

(25) but grete strokes oute of al mesure/ For this day one of Ar// thurs knyghtes was worth in the batayll an hondred of ours
Fy on the sayd Lucius thou spekest cowardly/ for thy wor// des greue me more than alle the losse that I had this day /and

anone he sende forth a kynge whiche hyghte sir leomye with a
grete armye and badde hym hye hym fast to fore/ and he wold
folowe hastely after/ kynge Arthur was warned pryuely/ &
sente his peple to Sessoyne/ and toke vp the townes & castels

fro the Romaynes/ Thenne the kyng commaunded syr Cador to
take the rereward/ & to take with hym certayne knyghtes of
(35) the round table/ and syre Launcelot/ syre Bors/ syr kay/ syre
Marrokk with syre Marhaus shalle awayte on our persone/

Thus the kynge Arthur disperplyd his hoost in dyuerse par
tyes/ to thende that his enemyes shold not escape/ whanne the

(5) But sayd openly vnto the Romaynes/ syrs I admoneste you
euer folowyd þe Romaynes. And this day let hit nevir be
loste for þe defau3te of herte for I se well by yondyr
ordynaunce this day shall dye much peple & þer fore

Do dou3tyly

do doughtly this day & þe felde is ours. Than anone þe
welshe kyng was so ny3e þat he herde Sir Lucyus Than
he dressed hym to the vycounte his a vow for to holde
his armys were full clene And þer In was a dolefull
dragon and In to þe vawarde he pykys hym with styff
spere In honde And þer he mette wyth þe valyaunte vyl/
lers hym self þat was vyncounte of Rome and þer he smo/
te hym thorow þe shorte rybbys with a speare þat the bloode
braste oute on euery syde and so fylle to the erthe and
neuer spoke mo wordys aftir// Than þe noble Sir Vway/
ne boldely approached & gyrde thorow oute þe Emperoures
batayle where was þe thickest prece & slew a grete
lorde by þe Emperours standard And than flow to þe Ba/
er & strake hit thorow oute with his bryght swerde
& so takyth hit fro hem & rydyth with hit a way vnto his
felshyp // Than sir Launcelot lepe forth with his stede
evyn streyght vnto Sir Lucyus and In his wey he
smote thorow a kynge þat stooode althir nexte hym &
his name was lacounde a Sare3en full noble & than
he russhed forth vnto Sir Lucyus and smote hym on
þe helme with his swerde þat he felle to þe erthe. And syth he
rode thryse ouer hym on a rowe and so toke þe Baner of
Rome & rode with hit a way vnto Arthure hym self. And
all sedye þat hit sawe þer was neuer knyght dud more
worship In his dayes/ // Than dressed hym sir Bors
vnto a sterne knyght and smote hym on the vmbrell
þat his necke braste. Than he loyned his horse vntyl
a sterne Gyaunte & smote hym thorow bothe sydys
And yet he slewe In his way turnyng .ij. ober knyghtis
Be than þe bowe men of Inglonde & of Bretayne
be gan to shote. And these othir Romaynes & Sara3ens
shotte with dartis & with crosse bowys. þer be gan a stronge
batayle on euery syde and muche slaughter on þe Romay/
nes party and þe douche men with quarels dud muche
harme for they were with þe Romaynes with hir bowys of
horne// And þe grete gyauntes of Gene kylled downe
many knyghtis with clubbys of steele crusshed oute hir
that this day ye fyghte and acquyte yow as men/ and remem
bre how Rome domyneth and is chyef and hede ouer alle the
erthe and vnuersal world/ and suffre not these bretons thys
day to abyde ageynste vs/ & ther with he dyd commaunde hys

(10) trompettes to blowe the blody sownes in suche wyse that the gro/
und trembled and dyndled/ Thenne the batails approuched
and shoue and showted on bothe sydes and grete strokes were
smyten on bothe sydes/ many men ouerthrown/ hurte/ & slayn
and grete valyaunces/ prowesses and appertyces of werre we/
re that day shewed/ whiche were ouer long to recounte the no/

(15) ble feates of euery man/ For they shold conteyne an hole vo/
braynes. Also they squatted oute þe braynes of many coursers. Whan Arthure had aspyed þe Gyauntis workis he cryed on lowde þat knyghtis myght here & seyde fay re lordys loke your name be nat loste lese nat youre worship for yondir bare legged knavys and ye shal se what I shall do as for my trew parte he toke there oute Excalyber And gurdys towarde Galapas that
grevid hym moste he kut hym of by the kneis cleny þere In sondir. Now art þou of a syse seyde þe kyng lyke vnto oure feris And than he strake of his hede swyf. Than come In Sir Cadore and Sir Kay Sir Gawayne And good Sir Launcelot Sir Bors Sir Ly onel and sir Ector de Marys and Sir Ascamore the good knyght þat neuer fayled his lorde Sir Pelleas and sir Marhault that were proved men of armys All thes grymly knyghtis sette vppon þe gyauntys And by þe dyntys were dalte and þe dome yoldyn they had felled hym starke dede of fyffty all to the bare erthe. So forth they wente wyth þe kyng tho knyghtis of þe rounde table was neuer kyng noþer knyghtis dud bettir syn god made þe worlde they leyde on with longe swerdys & swapped thorow braynes shyldys noþer no shene armys myght hem nat with stonde tyll they leyde on the erthe. x. ml at onys. Than þe Romaynes reled a lytyl for they were som what rebuked. But kyng Arthure with his pryce kynghtis preced sore aftir. Than Sir Kay Sir Clegis and Sir Bedwere the Ryche encouytys with them by a cliff syde & þer they iiij. by good meanyes slowe In þat chace mo than .v. C. And also Sir Kay Roode vnto a kyng of Ethy. ope and bare hym thorow & as he turned hym a gayne towarde his feris a tyrraunte strake hym betwyxt þe breste & þe bowellys. And as he was hurt ye yet he tur ned hym a gayne & smote þe todir on þe hede þat to þe breste hit rau3te And seyde thou3e I dey of thy dente thy praysyng shall be lytyll. Whan Sir Clegys and sir Bedwere saw that Sir Kay was hurt thy fared with þe Romaynes as gray houndis doth with harys. And than they returned ayen vnto noble kyng Arthure And tolde hym how they had spedde Sir kyng sayde sir Kay I haue serued þe longe now bryng me vnto som beryellys for my fadyrs sake And commaûnde
lume/ But in especyal kynge Arthur rode in the bataille ex/// hortyne his knyghtes to doo wel/ and hym self dyd as no/// bly with his handes as was posseyble a man to d oo/ he drewe

(20) oute Excalibur his swerd/ and awayted euer where as the ro/// maynes were thyckest and moost greud his peple/ and anone he adressyd hym on that parte and hew e and slewe doune ry3t and rescued his peple/ and he slewe a grete gyaunt named ga/// lapas/ whiche was a man of an huge quantyte and heyghte

(25) he shorted hym and smote of bothe his legges by the knees/ sa yenge/ Now arte thow better of a syse to dele with/ than thou were /and after smote of his hede/ there syre gawayn foughte
me to dame Gwenyuere thy goodly quene and grete wel
my worshipfull wyff pat wrathed me neuer and byd hir for
my love to worche for my soule// Than wepte kynge Ar
thur e for routhe at his herte And seyde þou shalt lyve for
euer my herte thynkis And þer with þe kynge hym self pulled
oute the truncheoune of þe speare & made lechis to seche
hym sykerly And founde noþer lyvir nor lungys noþer bowellis
that were attamed// And than þe kynge putte hym in hys
owne tente with syker knyghtis And sayde I shall revenge
thy hurte & I may a ryght rede// Than þe kynge In this
malyncoly metys with a kynge And with Excalyber he smote
his bak In sunder than In þat haste he metys with a noþir &
gurde hym In þe waste thorow bothe sydes. Thus he russed
here & there thorow þe thycyst pres more than .xxxth. tymes
//Than Sir Launcelot Sir Gawayne and sir Lovel ys son
gerde oute one þat one hande where Lucius the Emperoure
hym self In a launde stood. Anone as Sir Lucius sawe

Sir Gawayne be sayde all on hyght þou art welcom lwys
ffor þou sekyst aftir sorow here þou shalt be sone ouer macched//
//Sir Launcelot was wroth at hys gryme wordys and
gurde to hym with his swerde a bouen vppon hys bryght
helme þat þe Raylyng bloode felle doune to his feete// And
Sir Gawayne wyth his longe swerde leyde on faste þat
iiij. Amerallys deyde thorow þe dynte of his hondis //And
so Lovel fayled nat In þe pres he slew a kynge & a deuke þat
knyghtis were noble// Than þe Romaynes Releved whan
they sye hir lorde so hampred they chaced and choppedde
doune many of oure knyghtis good And In that Rebykyn
ey they bare þe bolde Bedwere to the colde erthe & wyth a
ranke swerde he was merveylously wounded// yet sir
Launcelot and sir Lovel rescowed hym blyve. with þat come
In kynge Arthure with þe kynghistis of þe table Rounde and
rescowed þe ryche men that neuer were lyke to ascape
at þat tyme for ofte tymes thorow envy grete hardynesse
is shewed þat hath bene þe deth of many kyd knyghtis for
thouþe they speke fayre many one vnto ouper yet whan
they be In batayle eyper wolde beste be praysed

A

None as kynge Arthure had a syght of þe Emperoure
Lucyus ffor kynge ouper for Captayne he taryed
no lenger And eythir with her swerdys swapped at othir so
Sir Lucyus with his swerde hit Arthure ouer thwarte þe nose
& gaff hym a wounde nyþe vnto þe tunge Sir Arthure
was wroth and gaff hym a ouper with all þe myght þat In his
nobly and slewe thre admirales in that bataill/ And so dyd

alle the knyghtes of the round table/ Thus the bataill bitwe'

(30) ne kynge Arthure and Lucius themperour endured longe/ Lu
cius had on his syde many sarasyns/ whiche were slayn/ and
thus the bataille was grete/ and oftsydes that one party was
at a fordele and anone at an afterdele/ whiche endured so longe
tyle at the last kyng Arthure aspyed/ where Lucius themperour

(35) fought/ and dyd wonder with his owne handes/ And anon he
rode to hym/ And eyther smote other fyersly/ and atte last Lu
cyus smote Arthure thwart the vysage/ and gaf hym a large
wound/ And whanne kyng Arthure felte hym self hurte/ anon

sig. lvi(v) he smote hym ageyne with Excalibur that it cleft his hede fro
the somette of his hede/ and stynted not tyl it cam to his breste
Irme was leved that frome pe creste of his helme vnto? the bare pappys hit wente a doune And so ended be Emperour /Than be kyng mette with Sir Cadore his kene Cousyn and pryde hym kylene doune elene for love of sir Kay my foster bropher. And for be love of sir Bedwere pat longe hath me served. There fore save none for golde nothir for syluer. for they pat woll accompany them with Sara thens the man pat wolde save them were lyytll to prayse And be for sele doune & save nober hetyn nothir cysyn. Than Sir Cadore Sir Clegis cau3te to her swerdys. And sir Launce / lot Sir Bors Sir Lyonel Sir Bors Sir Ector de Marys they whyrled thorow many men of armys. And sir Gaway / ne Sir Gaherys Sir Lovell And Sir fflorens his brothir pat was gotyn of Sir Braundylces systir vppon a mountay / ne. All thes knyghtys russen forth In a founte with many mo knyghtys of the Rounde table that here be not reher / sid// They hurled ouer hyllys valeyves & clowys and slow downe on euery honde wondirfull many that thousand Is In an hepe lay thrumbelyng to gedir. But for all that the Romaynes and be Sar thens cowde do oper speke to yolde them self be was none saved but all yode to the swerde for evir kynge Arthure rode In the thyckeste of be pres and raumped downe lyke a lyon many Senatours noble// he wolde nat a byde vppon no poure man for no maner of thyng & euer he slow slyly & slypped to a nober tylle all were slayne to the numbir of a C. ml and yet many a thousand ascaped thorow prevy frendys// And than Relevys the kynge with his noble knyghtys & rensaked ouer all be feldis for his bolde barouns And tho pat were dede were bur / ryed as be bloode asked And they pat myght be saved there was no salve spared nober no deyntes to dere pat myght be gotyn for golde oper syluer. And thus he let save many knyghtys pat wente neuer to recouer. But for Sir Kayes reco / vir and of sir Bedwers the ryche was neuer man vn / dir God so glad as hym self was// Than be kyng rode streyte be as be Emperoure lay & garte lyffte hym vp lordely with barounes full bolde And be Sawdon of Surr and of Ethyope the kyng. And of Egypte and of Inde ij. knyghtys full noble wyth xvij. oper kyngis were takyn vp also. And also Syxty Senatours of Roome that were honoured full noble men & all the elders// The kyng le bet bawme all thes with many good gummys and setthen lette lappe hem In Syxty folde
And thenne themperour fylle dounde dede/ and there ended his lyf/ And whan it was knowne that themperour was slayne

(5) anone alle the Romayns with all their hoost put them to fly//
ght/ and kynge Arthur with alle his knyghtes folowed the chaas/ and slewe doune ryght alle them that they myghte at//
neye/ And thus was the vyctery gyuen to kynge Arthur &

the tryumphe/ and there were slayne on the party of Lucius
(10) moo than an honderd thousand/ And after kyng Arthur dyd

doo ransake the dede bodyes/ and dyd doo burye them that were slayne of his retenue euery man accordynge to thestate & de//
gree that he was of/ And them that were hurte he lete the sur//
gyens doo serche their hurtes and woundes/ and commaun//
(15) ded to spare no salues ne medecynes tyl they were hole/

Thenne the kynge rode strayte to the place where themperour lu
ceius lay dede/ and with hym he fond slayne the Sowdan of Surrey/ the kyng of Egypte and of Ethyope/ which we//
re two noble kynges with xvij other kynges of dyuerse regy//
(20) ons/ and also syxty senatours of Rome al noble men/ whome

the kynge dyd do bawme and gomme with many good gom//
mes aromatyk/ and after dyd do cere them in syxty fold of ce//
of Sendell large And than lete lappe hem In lede þat
for chaufferynge òper chougyng they sholde neuer savoure
And sytthen lete close them In chestys full clenyly a
rayed & ðer baners a bovyn on ðer bodyes and ðer shyl dys
turned vpwarde ðat eviry man myght knowe of what
contray they were// So on the morne they founde
In the ðeth .iij. Senatours of of Rome. Whan they
were brought to the kynghe seyde thes wordis//
Now to save your lyvys I take no force grethe with that
ye woll meve on my message vnto grete Rome and
presente thes corses vnto the proude Potestate and
affair hym my lettyrs & my hole entente & telle hem
In haste they shall se me And I trow they woll be ware
how they bourde with me & my knyghtis// Than þe Emperoure
hym self was dressed In a chariot and every .ij. knyghtys
In a chariot ñewëd ñewëd affair ðer ðe Senatours com affir by cow
plys In a corde //Now sey ye to the Potestate & all
þe lordys affir þat I sende hem þe trybet that I owe to Rome
for this is þe trewe trybet þat I and myne elders haue
lost þis x. score wyntyrs // And sey hem as me semes
I haue sent hem the hole somme And yf they thanke hit nat
I nowe I shall a mende hit whan þat I com for suche tresou
re muste they take as happyns vs here// So on þe morne

thes Senatours Rayked vnto Rome And with In .xviiij. dayes
they come to the Potestate and tolde hym how they hadde
brought þe taxe and þe trewage of .x. score wyntyrs bothe
of Ingelonde Irelonde And of all þe est londys ffor kyng
Arthure commaunds you noþer trybet noþer taxe ye neuer no//
ne aske vppon payne of your hedys. but yf your e tytil be
þe trewer than euer ouët ony of your elders// And for these
causys we haue foughtyn In ffraunce and þer vs is foule
happed for all is chopped to þe deth bothe þe berrer & þe worse
there fore I rede you store you wyth stuff for war is at
honde. ffor In the moneth of May this mysheff be felle
In the Contrey of Constantyne by þe clere stremys And þer
he hyred vs with his knyghtis & heled them þat were hurte þat
same day and to bery them that were slayne
red clothe of Sendale/ and leyd them in chestys of leed/ by ca/
use they shold not chauffe ne sauore/ and vpon alle these bo/

(25) dyes their shieldes with theire armes and baners were sette/ to
thende they shold be knownen of what countrey there were/ and
after he fonde thre Senatours whiche were on lyue to whome

he sayd/ for to saue your lyues I wylle that ye take these dede
bodyes/ and carye them with yow vnto grete Rome/ and pre/

(30) sente them to the potestate on my behaule shewynge hym my let/
ters/ and telle them that I in my persone shal hastely be atte
Rome/ And I suppose the Romayns shalle beware how they
shal demaunde ony trybute of me/ And I commaunde yow to

saye whan ye shal come to Rome to the potestate and all the

(35) councelyle and Senate/ that I sende to them these dede bodyes
for the trybute that they haue demaunded/ And yf they be not
content with these/ I shal paye more at my comynge/ for other
trybute owe I none/ ne none other wylle I paye/ And me

sig. i.vii thynketh this suffyseth for Bretayne/ Irlond and al Alma/
yne with germanye/ And ferthermore I charge yow to saye
to them/ that I commaundem them vpon payne of theyre hedes ne
uer to demaunde trybute ne taxe of me ne of my londes

(5) Thenne with this charge and commaundement the thre Sena/
tours afore sayd departed with alle the sayd dede bodyes le/
ynge the body of Lucius in a carre couerd with tharmes of the
Empyre al alone/ And after alwey two bodyes of kynges in
a charyot/ and thenne the bodyes of the Senatours after them

(10) and soo wente toward Rome/ and shewed theyr legacyon &
message to the potestate and Senate/ recountyng the bataylle
done in Fraunce/ and how the feld was lost and moche peo/
ple & Innumerable slayne/ wherfore they aduyed them in no
wyse to meue no more warre ageynste that noble conqueroure

(15) Arthur/ For his myght and prowesse is most to be doubted
seen the noble kynges and grete multytyde of knyghtes of
the round table/ to whome none ertythe prynce may compare/
Now turne we to Arthure with his noble knyghtis pat entryth streyghte In to Lushburne and so thorowe fflaundirs and than to Lorayne he lau3te vp all þe lordshyp// pys and sythten he drew hym In to Almayne And vnto Lombardy the ryche and sette Layws In þat londe that dured longe aftir. And so In to Tuskeynay and þer the tirrauntyes destroyed and there were Captaynes full kene þat kepte Arthurs comyng and at streyte passages slew muche of his peple and þer they vytayled and garnysshed many good townys// But þer was a cite kepte sure defence agaynst þe Arthure and his knyghtis And þer with angred Arthure And sedye all on hyght I wol wynne this towne þer ellys many a doughty shall dye// And than þe kynge approched to þe wallis with oute sheld sauff his bare harneys// Sir seyde sir flflorc// once foly þou workeste for to ny3e so naked this perleous cite And thow be a ferde seyde kyng Arthure I rede þe faste fle for they wynne no worshyp of me but to waste þer toolys for þer shall neuer harlot haue happe by the helpe of oure Lord to kylle a crowned kynge þat with Creyme is a noynted// Than the noble knyghtis of þe rounde table approched vnto the cite and þer horsis levys. they hurled on a frunte streyght vnto þe barbycans & þer they slewe downe all þat be fore them stondys and In þat bray þe brydge they warne And had nat þe garnyson bene they had wonne with In þe yatys and þe cite wonne thorow wyghtnesse of hondys// And than oure noble knyghtis with drew them a lyttlyl and wente vnto þe kynges & pryde hym to take his baronage and than he pyght his pavylyons of palle and plantys all a boute the Sege and þer he lette sett vp suddeynly many engynes// Than þe kynges called vnto hym sir fflorens And seyde these wordys my folkys we xen felle for wantynge of vytayle And here by þe forestes full fayre and þer as oure foemen many and I am sure they haue grete store of bestis and thyder shall þou go to fforrey that forestes And with þe shall go sir Gawayne and Sir Wysharde with sir Walchere ij. worshipful knyghtis with all þe wysseste men of þe Weste marchis// Also Sir Cleremount and sir Clegis that were comly In armys And þe Captay// ne of Cardyff that Is a knyght full good// Now go ye and warne all this felyshep þat hit be done as I commaunde // So with þat forth yode sir fflorens and his felyshyp was
Now torne we vnto kynge Arthur and his noble knyghtes whiche after the grete bataylle acheued ageynste the Romayns entryd in to Lorayne braban and Flaundres and sythen returned in to hault Almayn/ and so ouer the mon
tayns in to lombardye/ and after in to Tuske/ wherein was

a Cyte/ whiche in no wyse wold yelde them self ne obeye/ wherfore kynge Arthur biseged it/ and lay longe aboute hit/ and gaf many assaultes to the Cyte/ And they within defensed them valyauntly/ Thenne on a tyme the kynge called syr flo/

rence a knyght/ and sayd to hym they lacked vytayle/ and not ferre from hens ben grete forestes and woodes/ wherin ben many of myn enemyes with moche bestayl/ I wyl that thou make the redy and goo thyder in foreyeng/ and take with the syr Gawayn my neuew/ Syre wysshard/ syre Clegys Syre

Cleremond and the Captayn of Cardef with other/ & brynge with yow alle the beestes that ye there can gete/ And anone
sone redy And so they rode thorow holtys and hethis tho/
row foreste & ouer hyllys. And than they com In to a lowe
medow pat was full of swete floures & thes noble kny3tis
bayted her stedis/ And In the grekyng of the day sir Gaw/
ayne hente his hors wondyrs for to seke/ Than was he
ware of a man armed walkyng a paase by a woodis ease
by a revers syde and his sheld braced on his sholdir & he
on a stronge horse rydys with oure man wyth hym save a
boy a lone pat bare a grymme speare// The knyght bare
In his sheld of golde glystrand .ij. Gryffons In Sabyll
and charbuckkle be cheff of Syluer. Whan sir Gawayne was
ware of pat gay knyght Than he gryped a gretc spere and
rode streyght toward hym on a stronge horse for to mete
with pat sterne knyght where pat ^he^ hoved// Whan sir Gawayne
com hym ny3e In englyshe he asked hym what he was.
And pat ober knyght answerde In his langage of Tuskeyne
and sayde whober prychyst pou pylloure pat proters pe so large pou
no pray prove whan pe lykys for my presoner pou shalt be for
all thy proude lokys //Thou spekyste proudly seyde sir
Gawayne but I counseyle pe for all thy grymme wordis pat
pou grype to the thy gere or more grame falle

Than hir launcis they handylde by crauff of armys
And com on spedyly with full syker dyntes and there
they shotte thorow shyl dys and mayles and thorow there
shene shuldyrs they were thorow borne the bred of an
hande// Than were they so wroth pat a way wolde they neuer
but rathly rushed oute per swerdys and hyttys on per hel ///
mys with hatefull dyntys and stabbis at hir stomakys with
swerdys well steled so freysshly po fre men fyghtis on the
grounde whyle pe flamynge fyre flowe oute of hir hel ///
mys// Than sir Gawayne was grevid wondirly sore &
swyngis his swerde Galantyne and grymly he strykys
and cleys pe knyghtis shylde In sundir & thorow oute the
thycke haubirke made of sure mayles and pe Rubyes that
were rych. he rushed hem In sundir pat men myght be hol///
de pe lyvir and longis Than groned pe knyght for his grymme
woundis and gyrdis to sir Gawayne and awkewarde hym
strykis and brastyth the rere brace and pe vawm brace

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these knyghtes made them redy/ and rode ouer holtys & hyllys thurgh forestes and woodes/ tyl they cam in to a fayr medow fyl of fayre floures and grasse/ And there thy rested them & thevr horses alle that nyghte/ And in the spryngynge of the day in the next morne syre Gawyn took his hors and stale away from his felauiship to seke some adventures/ And anon he was ware of a man armed walkynge his hors easyly by a wodes syde/ and his sheld laced to his sholdre syttynge on a stonge courser withoute ony man sauyng a page berynge a myghty spere. The knyght bare in his sheld thre gryffons of gold in sable charbuncle the chyef of syler/ w han syre Gawayn aspyed this gay knyght/ he fewtryd his spere and rode strang to hym / and dem aunnded of hym from whens that he was that other anserd and sayd he was of Tuscanе/ and dema/ unded of syre gawayн/ what profryst thow proude knyghte the so boldly/ here getest thou no praye/ thou mayst proue whan thou wylt/ for thou shalt be my prysoner or thou departe/

C Thenne sayd gawayn/ thou auauntest the gretely and spe/ kest proude wordes/ I counceylle the for alle thy boost that thou make the redy/ and take thy gere to the/ to fore gretter grame falle to the

C Capitulum x

Thenne they took theyr speres and ranne eche at other with alle the myghte they had/ and smote eche other

thurgh their sheldes in to theyr sholders/ wherfore anone they pulled outhe their swerdes/ and smote grete strokes that the fy re sprange oute of their helmes/ Thenne syre gawayne was al abasshed and with galatyn his good swerd he smote thurgh shelde and thycke hauberke made of thyck maylles and al to russhed and brake the precious stones/ and made hym a large wounde/ that men myghte see bothe the lyuer and long/ Thenne gro ned that knyght/ and adressyd hym to syre Gawyn/ & with an awk stroke gaf hym a grete wound and kytte a vayne/
bothe and kut thowrow a vayne that Gawayne sore greved for
so worched his wounde that his wytte chonged And he with all
his armure was all blody be renne// Than that knyght tal//
ked to Sir Gawayne and bade hym bynde vp his wounde
or thy ble chonge for pou all bledis this horse & thy bry3t
wedys. for all be barbers of Bretayne shall nat thy blood
staunche// ffor who that is hurte with this blaae bleed shal
he euer// Be god sayde Sir Gawayne hit grevys me but
lytlyl yet shalt pou nat feare me for all thy grete wordis
Thow trowyste with thy talkynge to tame my herte But
yet pou be tydys tene or pou parte hense but pou telle me In has//
te who may stanche my bledyng. That may I do and
I woll so pou woll succour me that I myght be fayre crystynde
and be com meke for my mysedes/// Now merci I lhesu be
seche and I shall be com crysten and In god stedfastly be//
leve & pou mayste for thy manhode haue mede to thy soule
I graunte seyde Sir Gawayne So god me helpe to full
fyll all thy desyre that hauste gretyly hit deseryyd. So pou say me
be soth what pou sought here thus sengey thy self a lone and
what lorde or legaunte pou art vndir/ Sir he seyde I hy3t
Priamus and a Prynce is my fadir & he hath bene Re//
bell vnto Rome and ouer redyn muche of hir londis &
my fadir is come of Alysaunderis bloode that was ouer leder of
kyngis. And of Ector also was he come by be ryght lyne
& many mo were of my kynrede bothe judas macabeus
And deuke Josue And ayre I am alper nexte of Alysaunder
and of Aufrlyke and of all the outhe Iles yet wol I be leue
on thy lorde that pou beleyst on and take be for thy labour tresour
Inow for I was so haute In my herte I helde no man
my pere So was I sent In to this werre by be assente
of my fadir with .vij. score knyghtis And now I haue enco //
untred with one hath geyeyn fyghtyng my fylle There
fore sir knyght for thy kyngis sake telle my thy name
//Sir seyde Sir Gawayne I am no knyght but I haue
be brought vp In the wardrobe with be noble kyng Arthure
wyntyrs and dayes for to take hede to his armoure &
all his oper wedis and to poynte all be paltokkys that lange
to hym self and to dresse doublettis for deuks & Erlys
and at yole he made me yoman and gaff me good gyff//
tys more than an .C. pounde and horse & harneyse rych
//And yf I haue happe my hele to serve my lyege lorde I
shall be well holpyn In haste// A sayde Sir Priamus
and his knavys be so kene his knyghtis ar passynge good
whiche greued gawayn sore/ and he bledde sore/ C Thenne the

(35) knyghte sayd to syre Gawayn/ bynde thy wounde or thy blee/ chaunge/ for thou bybledest al thy hors and thy fayre armes/ For alle the Barbourys of Bretayn shall not conne staunche thy blood/ For who someuer is hurte with this blade he shalle

sig. i.viii neuer be staunched of bledynge/ Thenne anserd gawayn hit greueth me but lytyl/ thy grete wordes shalle not feare me ne lasse my courage/ but thow shalt suffre tene and sorow or we
departe/ but telle me in hast who maye staunche my bledynge/

(5) That may I doo sayd the kynyght yf I wylle/ And so wyll

I yf thou wylt socoure and ayde me that I maye be crystned
and byleue on god/ And therof I requyre the of thy man/
hode/ and it shalle be grete meryte for thy soule I graunte sa/
id Gawayne so god helpe me taccomplyshe alle thy desyre/

(10) But fyrst telle me what thou soughtest here thus allone/and
of what londe and legeaunce thou arte of/ Syre he sayd my na
me is Pryamus/ and a grete prynce is my fader/ and he hath
ben rebelle vnto Rome and ouer ryden many of theyr londes/
My fader is lyneally descended of Alysaunder and of hector

(15) by ryght lynge/ And duke Isuue and Machabeus were of
oure lygnage/ I am ryght enherytour of Alysaunder and au
ffryke and alle the oute yles/ yf wyl I byleue on thy lord
that thow byleuest on/ And for thy laboure I shalle yeue the
tresour ynough/ I was soo elate and hauteyn in my hert that

(20) I thought no man my pere ne to me semblable/ I was sente
in to this werre with seuen score knyghtes/ and now I haue
encountred with the whiche hast gyuen to me of fyghtyng my
fylle/ wherfore syr knyghte I pray the to tell me what thow
arte/ I am no knyght sayd gawayn/ I haue ben brough vp

(25) in the garderobe with the noble kynge Arthur many yeres for
to take hede to his armour and his other araye/ and to poyn/
te his paltockes that longen to hym self/ At yole last he made

me yoman and gaf to me hors and harneyes and an honderd
pound in money/ And yf fortune be my frend/ I doubte not/

(30) but to be wel auauanced and holpen by my lyege lord/ A sa/
yd Pryamus/ yf his knauys be so kene and fyers/ his kny3/
//Now for thy kyngis love of hevyn and for thy kyngys love whepe. l Jou be knave. knyght telIe l Jou me thy name/ Be god seyde Sir Gawayne Now wolll telle pe 50th I am knol' wyn In his ccurte & kyd In his chambr and Rolled with pe Rychest of pe Rounde table And I am a deuke dubbed wyth his owne hondis pe fore grucche nat good sir if me this grace is be happened his Is pe goodnesse of god pat lente me this strength// Now am I bettir pleased sayde Sir Pryamus than Jou haddest gyff me pe provynce of perysie pe pe ryche for I had levr haue be toryn with .iii. wylde horse than ony yoman had suche a loose wonne of me oper els ony page opera prycker sholde wynne of me pe pryce In this felde gotyn But now I warne pe sir knyght of pe rounde table here is by pe deuke of Lorayne with his knyghtis and pe dough/ tyeste of Dolphyne landys with many hy3e duchemen & many lordis of Lumardy and pe garneson of godarde & men of westwalle worshipfull kyngis And of Sysoyne and of Southlonde Sare3yns many numbirde and there named ar In Rollys Sixti .ml. of syker men of armys There fore but Jou hy3e pe fro this heth hit woll harme vs both and sore be we hurte neuer lyke to recouer But ta// ke Jou hede haynxman pat he no horne blow for and he do than loke pat he be hewyn on pecis for here hovys at thy honde a .C. of good knyghtis pat ar of my retynew and to a wayte vpon my persone. ffor and Jou be raught with pat rou3t raunsom noper rede golde woll they none aske// Than Sir Gawayne rode ouer a water for to gyde hym self and pat worshipfull knyght hym folowed sore wounded & so they rode tylle they com to per ferys pat were bautyand hir horsys In a low medow where lay many lordys lenyng on there shyl dys with law3yng and lapyng & many lowde wordys //Anone as sir wychardc was ware of sir Gawayne & aspyed pat he was hurte he wente to warde hym wepyng & wryngyn his hondys// Than Sir Gawayne tolde hym how he had macched with pat myghty man of strengthe there fore greve yow nat good Sir for thou3e my shylde be now thirled & my sholdir shorne. yett thy knyght Sir Pryamus hath many perelouse woundys But he hath salvys he seyth pat woll hele vs bothe But here is new note In honde nere than ye wene fore by an houre aftir none I trow hit woll noy vs all// Than sir Pryamus and Sir Gawayne a lyght bothe & lette hir horsys bayte In pe layre medow Than they lette brayde of hir basnettys & hir brode
tes ben passynge good/ Now for the kynges loue of heuen whe
ther thou be a knaue or a knyghte telle thou me thy name/
By god sayd syre Gawayne/ Now wyl I saye the sothe/ my
name is syre gawayn and knowen I am in his courte and in
his chambre/ and one of the knyghtes of the round table/ he
dubbed me a duke with his owne hand/ Therfore grutche not
yf this grace is to me fortuned/ hit is the goodnesse of god
that lente to me my strenghte/ Now am I better pleasyd sayd
Pryamus than thou haddest gyuen to me al the prouynce and
parys the ryche/ I have leuer to haue ben torn with wylde hor/
ses/ than ony varlet had wonne suche los/ or ony page or pry/
ker shold haue had prys on me/ But now syre knyghte I
warne the/ that here by is a duke of Lorayne with his armye
and the noblest men of Dolphyne and lorde of lombardye/

with the garneson of godard/ and sarasyns of Southland y
nombred lx M of good men of armes/ wherfore but yf we
hye vs hens/ it wyle harme vs bothe/ for we ben sore hurte/ ne/
uer lyte to recouer/ but take hede to my page that he no horne

blowe/ For yf he doo ther ben houynge here fast by an C kny3
tes awaytynge on my persone/ and yf they take the/ ther shall
no raunson of gold ne syluer acquyte the/ Thenne syre gawa
yne rode ouer a water for to saue hym/ And the knyghte folo/
wed hym/ and soo rode forth tyl they came to his felawes/

whiche were in the medowe/ where they had ben al the nyghte

Anone as syre wychard was ware of syre gawayn and sawe
that he was hurte/ he ranne to hym soroufully wepynge/ and
demaunded of hym who had soo hurte hym/ and gawayn told
how he had foughten with that man/ and eche of them hadde

hurte other/ and how he had salues to hele them/ but I can tel
le yow other tydynge/ that soone we shal haue adoo with ma
ny enemyes/ Thenne syre pryamus and syre gawayn alygh/
(25) ted/ and lete theire horses grate in the medowe and vnarmed
shyldys than eythir bled so muche pat every man had wondir pat they myght sitte In ber sadyls or stonde vppon erthe// Now feche me seyde Sir Pryamus my vyall pat hangys by the gurddyll of my haynxman for hit is fulle of pe floure of pe iiij. good watyrs pat passis from paradise pe mykyll fruyte In fallys pat at one day fede shall vs all // putt pat watir In oure fleysh where pe syde is tamed & we shall be hole with In .iiij. houres Than they lette close pe woundys with colde whyght wyne And than they lete a noynye them with bawme ouer & ouer and holier men than they were with In an houres space was neuer lyvyn syn god pe worlde made So whan they were clenred & hole they broched barellys & brought them pe wyne wyth bred & brawne & many ryche byrdys// And whan they had etyn Sir Gawayne seyde lordyngis go to all mys. And whan they were armed & assembled to gedirs with a clere Claryon callys them to gedir to counceyle. And Sir Pryamus for to rescow me they have made a vowe oper ellys manfully on this molde to be marred all at onys This was pe pure purpose when I passed thens at hir perel // lys to preff me vppon Payne of pe lyvys// Now good men seyde sir Gawayne grype vp your hertes & yf we gyltes go this a way hit woll greffe oure kynge. And Sir fflorens In this fyght shall here a byde for to kepe pe stale as a kny3t noble for he was chosyn & charged In chambr with pe kynge chyfften of this chekke and chyff of vs all. And whethir he woll fyght oper fle we shall folow aftir ffor as for me for all yondir folkys faare for sake hem shall I neuer// A fadir seyde fflorens full fayre now ye speke for I am but a fauntekyn to fraysted men of armys and yf I ony foly do pe faughte mus// te be youres. There fore lese nat youre worshyp my wytt is but symple & ye ar oure allper gouernoure pe fore worke as ye lykys// Now fayre lordys seyde Sir Pryamus Cese youre wordys I warne you be tym for ye shall fynde In yondir woodys many perellus knyghtis they woll putte furth beystys to bayte you oute of numbir and ye ar fraykis In this fyght nat paste .vij. C. and pat is feythfully to fewe to fyght with so many for harlottys and haynxmen wol helpe vs but a lytyll. for they woll hyde them In haste for all pe hy3e wordys// ye sey well seyde Sir Gawayne so god me helpe
them/ And thenne the blood ranne fresshly fro theyre woun/
des/ And pryamus toke fro his page a vyolle ful of the four
depthes that came oute of paradys/ and with certayne baume

enoynted theyr woundes/ and wesshe them with that water/ &
(30) within an houre after/ they were both as hole as euer they we

re/ And thenne with a trompet were they alle assembled to co/

unceylle/ And there pryamus told vnto them/ what lordes and
knyghtes had sworne to rescowe hym/ and that without faill
they shold be assailed with many thousands/ wherefor he coun/
(35) ceilled them to withdrawe them/ Thenne syre gawayn sayd it
were grete shame to them to auoyde withoute ony strokes/
Wherfore I aduyse to take oure armes and to make vs redy
to mete with these sarasyns and mysbyleyung men/ and wyth
the helpe of god we shal ouerthrouwe them and haue a fayre
day on them/ And syre Florens shall abyde styll in thys felde
to kepe the stale as a noble knyghte/ and we shal not forsake

yonder felawes/ Now sayd Pryamus seasse your wordes/ for
(5) I warne yow ye shal fynde in yonder woodes many peryllo/
us knyghtes/ they wylle put forthe beestes to calle yow on/
they be out of nombre/ and ye are not past viij C whiche ben o/
uer fewe to fyght with soo many/ Neuertheless sayd syr gawa
yn we shal ones encountre them/ and see what they can do
(10) and the beste shalle haue the vycrory
//Now fayre sonne sayde Sir Gwayne vnto fflorens wolle
ye take youre felyshyp of be beste provyd men to be number of a
C. knyghtis and presly prove your self & yondir pray wynne I as//
sent me with good hert seyde fflorence

Than sir fflorens called vnto hym Sir ffloynys with
v. score knyghtis & forth they flynged a faste trolle
and pe folke of pe bestis dryvys. Than folowed aftir sir fflo//
rens with noble men of armys fully .vij. C. And one Sir ffe//
raunte of Spayne be fore on a fayre stede pat was fostred
In farmagos pe fende was his fadir he flyttys towarde
Sir fflorens and sayde whoþer flyest þou false knyght. Than
Sir fflorens was fayne and In beautyr castis his spere
& rydys towarde pe rought & restys no lenger & full
but In þe forehedhe he hyttys Sir ffraunte and brake
his nekke bone// Than fferaunte his cosyn had grete ca//
re and cryed full lowde þou haste slayne a knyght & kynge
a noynted þat or þis tyme founde neuer frayeke þat myght a
byde hym a buffete þer fore ye shall dey þer shall none of you
ascape// ffye on þe seyde florlys þou eegree wrecche and
þer with to hym he flyngis with a swerde þat all þe sleyshe of his
flanke he flappys In sundir þat all þe fylth of þe freyke and
many of þis guttys fylle to þe erthe/ Than lyghtly rydis
a raynke for to rescowe þat Barowne þat was borne In þe
rodis & rebell vnto Cryste he preçed In proudly and
aftir þis pray wyndys. But þe Raynke Rycharde of
þe rounde table on a rede stede rode hym a gynste and
threste hym thorow þe shylde evyn to þe herte. Than he
rored full rudely but rose he neuer more../ Than alle
his feeys mo than .v. C. felle vpon Sir fflorence and
on his .v. score knyghtis. Than Sir fflorens and sir fflo//
das In feautyr bothe castys þer spearys and they felled .v. at
þe frunte at þe fyrste entre & sore they assayed our & folke
and brake browys & brestys and felde many a downe//
// When Sir Pryamys þe prye knyght perceyved þer gamys
he yode to Sir Gawyne and thes wordys seyde thy pryse
men ar sore be gone & put vndir for they ar ouer sette
with Sare3ens mo than .v. C. now wolde þou suffir me for the
loue of thy god with a small parte of thy men to succoure hem
be tyme// Sir grucch ye nat seyde Sir Gawyne þe gre
is there owne for they mowe haue gyfftyes full grete I gra//
unted of my lorde there fore lette them fyght whyls hem
lystes þe freysh knyghtis for som of hem fought nat þer fylle of
all this .v. wyntyre there fore I woll nat styrre wyth my

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C Capítulo xj

(15) Thenne syre Florence calyed to hym syre florydas with an honderd knyghtes and droofe forth the herde of be stes/ Thenne folowed hym vij honderd men of armes/ and syr Feraunt of spayne on a fayr stede came spryngynge oute of the woodes/ and came to syre Florence and axyd hym why he fledde/ Thenne syre Florence took his spere/ and rode ageynste hym/ and smote hym in the forhede and brake his necke bone/

Thenne all thother were meued/ and thought to auenge the dethe of syr Feraunt/ and smote in emonge them/ and there was grete fyghte and many slayne and leyd doune to gro/

(25) unde/ and syr Florence with his C knyghtes alwey kepte the stale and foughte manly/ C Thenne whan Pryamus the good knyght perceyued the grede fyght/ he went to syre Ga/

wayn/ and badde hym that he shold goo and socoure his fe/ lauship/ whiche were sore bystad with their enemyes/ Syr gre ue yow not sayd syre Gawayn/ For theyr gree shall be theirs

I shall not ones meue my hors to them ward/ but yf I see mo
stale half my steede length. but yf they be stadde wyth mo
re stuff than I se hem agaynste/ / So by bat tyme was Sir
Gawayne ware by pe woodyd syde men commynge woodyd
with all manner of wepon. for per rode pe Erle of Ethelwolde
havyng on eyper half many hole thousandys and pe deuke
of douchemen dressys hym hym aftir & passis with Pryamus
knyghtis. Than Gawayne the good knyght he chered his
coldyghtis and sayde greve you nat good men for yondir grete
syght and be nat a baysshed of yondir boyes In hir bryghte
weedis for & we feyght In fayth be felde is ours/ / Than
they haled vp per brydyls and be gan walop and by bat they
com nygh by a londys length they iowked downe with her
hedys many lanyll knyghtis a more loylar loustynge was
neuer sene on erthe. Than be ryche men of be rounde table
ran thorow be thykkeste with hir stronge sperys bat many a
raynke for bat provesse ran In to be grevys & durste no kna
vys but knyghtis kene of herte fyght more In this felde
but fledde// Be god seyde Sir Gawayne this gladys my
herte bat yondir gadlyngis be gone for they made a grete
numbir/ / Now ar they fewer In the felde when they were
fyrst numbyrd by .xx. ml. In fayth for all per grete boste
//Than tubeaunce of Geane a myghty gyante he feau/
tred his speare to Sir Garrarde a good knyght of walys
he smote pe waylshe knyght evyn to pe herte. Than our
knyghtis myghtyly meddeled wyth hir myddylwarde.
but a none at all assemble many Saresyns were destro
yed for pe soueraynes of Sessoyne were salued for euer/ / By
bat tyme Sir Pryamus the good prynce In pe presence
of lordys Royall to his penowne he rode and lyghtly
hit hentys and rode with pe Royall rought of pe round
table and streyte all his retynew folowed hym aftyr
oute of pe woode they folowed as shepe oute of a folde
and streyte they yode to pe felde and stood by per kynde lor/
de and syttyn they sende to pe deuke thys same wordis
Sir we haue bene thy Sowdyars all this .vij. wynter and
now ^we^ for sake pe for pe love of oure lyege lorde Arthure
ffor we may with oure worshype wende where vs lykys
for garneson nober golde haue we none rescyeved. ffye
on you pe devyll haue your bonys. ffor suche Sowdyars
I sette but a lyytll// Than pe deuke dressys his dowch
men streyte vnto sir Gawayne and to Sir Pryamus
So they .ij. gryped pe spearys and at pe gaynyste In he
gurdys wyth hir noble myghtis and per sir Pryamus9

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than ther ben/ For they ben stronge ynough to matche them/ &

with that he sawe an erle called syre Ethelwold and the duk
of duchemen cam lepyng out of a wood with many thousands
(35) & pryamus kny3tes/ & cam strayte vn to the bataylle/ thenne sir
gawayn comforted his knyghtes/ and bad them not to be a/
basshed/ for alshal be ours/ thenne they began to wallope & mette
with their enemyes/ ther were men slayn & ouerthrown on euery

**sig. k.i(v)** syde/ Thenne threstyd in amonge them the knyghtes of the ta/
ble round/ and smote doune to the erthe alle them that wyth/
stode them/ in soo moche that they made them to recuyelle & flee/

By god sayd syre Gawayn this gladeth my hertel/ for now
(5) ben they lasse in nombre by xx M/ Thenne entryd in to the ba
taylle lubaunce a geaunt/ and fought and slewe doune ryght
and distressyd many of our knyghtes/ emonge whome was
slayne syre Gherard a knyght of walys/ Thenne oure knyghtes toke herte to them/ and slewe many sarasyns/ And thenne
(10) came in syr Priamus with his penon/ and rode with the knyghtes of the round table/ and fought so manfully that ma/
y of their enemyes lost theyr lyues/ And ther syr Pryamus
metyth with þe Marquesse of Moyses londe & Smyth / 1421
hym thorow: / Than Chastelayne a chylde of kyng / 1422
Arthur's chamber he was a warde of Sir Gawaynes / 1423
of þe weste marchis he chasis to Sir Cheldrake that / 1424
was a chyfeyne noble and with his spere he smote thorow / 1425

Cheldrake

Cheldrake and so þat chek þat chylde cheved by chaunce of armys / 1429
// But than they chaced þat chylde þat he nowhere myght a scape / 1430
for one with a swerde the halse of þe chylde he smote In too: // Whan'' / 1431
Sir Gawayne hit sawe he wepte wyth all his herte & Inward: / 1432
ly he brenete for sorow: // But anone Gotelake a good man of / 1433
armys for Chastelyane the chylde he chongyd his mode þe / 1434
wete watir wente doune his chykys: // Than sir Gawayne / 1435
dressis hym & to a deuke rydys And sir Dolphyn the deuke / 1436
droff harde a gaynste hym But Sir Gawayne hym dressyth / 1437
with a grete spere þat þe grounden hedde droff to his herte yette / 1438
he gate hit oute & ran to an opere one Sir hardolf an hardy / 1439
man of armys and styly In he lette hit slyppe thorow & sodey: / 1440
nly he fallyth to þe erthe yet he slow In the slade of men of / 1441
armys mo than Syxty with his hondys: // Than was Sir / 1442
Gawayne ware of þe man þat slew Chastelayne his chylde & / 1443
swyfftyly with his swerde he smyttyth hym thorow Now and þou / 1444
haddyst ascaped with outyn scathe þe scorne had bene oures: & / 1445
aftir Sir Gawayne dressis hym vnto þe route and russhyth / 1446
on helmys & rode streyte to þe rerewarde and so his way / 1447
holdyth And Sir Pryamus hym alper nexte gydynghe hym / 1448
his wayes and þer they hurtelyth and hewyth downe hethyn / 1449
knyghtis many & Sir fflorosse on þe opere syde dud what he myst / 1450
There þe lordys of Lorayne and of Lumbardy both were ta: / 1451
kyn and lad a way with oure noble knyghtis: ffor suche a chek / 1452
oure lordys cheved by chaunce of þat werre þat they were so a / 1453
vaunced for hit avayled hem euer: // Whan Sir fflorosse and / 1454
Sir Gawayne had þe felde wonne than they sente before .v. / 1455
score of knyghtis and her prayes & hir presoner passyth hem / 1456
aftir. And Sir Gawawayne In a streyte passage he hovth tyll / 1457
all þe prayes were past þat streyte patthe þat so sore he drehith / 1458
So they rode tyll they þe cite sawe and softly þe same day with / 1459
A sawte hit was gotyn: // Than Sir fflorosse and sir Gaway'' / 1460
ne harborowed surely þer peple & sytthen turnys to a-tente / 1461
and tellyth þe kynge all þe tale truly þat day how they travay: / 1462
slewe the Marquys of Moyses land/ and syre gawayn with
his felawes so quytte hem that they had the feld/ but in that
(15) stoure was syr Chestelayne a chyld and ward of syre Ga//

wayne slayne/ wherfore was moche sorou made/ and his deth

wes soone auengyd/ Thus was the bataille ended and ma//

ny lorde of lombardye and sarasyns left dede in the feld/

C Thenne syre florence and syre Gawayne herberowed surely
(20) theyr peple/ and token grete plente of bestyal of gold & syluer
and grete tresour and rychesse and returned vnto kyng Ar//
led and how his ferse men fare welle all and fele of thy foomen ar brought oute of lyff & many worshipfull preso// ners ar yolden In to oure handys. But Chastelayne thy chylde is chopped of þe hede yette slewe he a cheff knyghte his owne hondys this day

N ow thanked be god sayde þe noble kynge but I mer// vayle muche of þat bourely knyght þat stondyth by þe for hym semys to be a straunegere for presonere is he none lyke Sir seyde Sir Gawayne this is a good man of armys he macched me sore this day In þe mournyng and had nat his helpe bene þat had I founden. And now is he yolden vnto god & to me Sir kyng for to be com Crysten and on good beleve. And whan he is Crystynde and In the fayth be// levs There lyvyth nat a bettir knyght nor a nobler of his hondis// Than þe kynge In haste crystynde hym fayre and lette conferme hym Priamus as he was a fore and lyghtly lete dubhe hym a deuke with his hondys and made hym knyght of þe table rounde And a none þe kynge lette cry a sawte vnto þe towne and þer was rerynge of laddyrs & brekynge of wallys þe payne þat þe peple had was pyte to se// Than þe duches hir dressed with damesels ryche and þe countes of Clarysyn with hir clere maydys they kneled In þer kyrtys þer þe kynge hovyth and be sought hym of socoure for þe sake of oure lorde and sey vs som good worde And Cetyl thy peple or þe cite suddeynly be with a sawte wonne for than shall dye many a soule þat grevid þe neuer// The kynge of wallys lyffte vp his vyser with a knytghtly coun// tennaunce and kneled to hir myldely with fullmeke wordis and seyde shall none mysse do you madam that to me longis for I graunte the Chartryrs and to thy cheff maydys vn to thy chyl dern and to thy chyff men In chambr that to þe longis// But thy deuke is In daunguer my drede ys þe lesse// Þe ye shall haue lyvelode to leve by as to thyne astate fallys// Than Arthure sendyth on echye syde wyth sertayne lordis for to cese of þer sawte for þe cite was yolden and þer with þe deuke is eldyst sonne com with þe keyes & kneled downe vnto þe kynge and be sought hym of his grace // And þer he cese of þe sawte by assente of his lordis and the deuke was dressed to doure with þe kyngis dere knyghtis. ffor to dwelle In daunguer and dole dayes of his lyff // Than þe kynge with his crowne of his hede recouerde þe cite and the
thur whiche lay styl at the syege/ And whanne they came to
the kynge/ they presented theyr prysoners and recounted the/
yre adventures/ and how they had vaynquysshed theyre ene/
(25) myes

C Capitulum xii

N ow thanked be god sayd the noble kynge Arthur/
But what maner man is he that standeth by hym self
hym semed no prysoner/ Syre sayd Gawayne this is a good
(30) man of armes/ he hath matched me/ but he is yolden vnto god
and to me for to bycome Crysten. had not he haue be shold
neuer haue roturned/ wherfore I pray yow that he may be bap/
tysed/ sor ther luyeth not a nobler man ne better knyght of his
handes/ thenne the kyng lete hym anon be crynstned/ and dyd
(35) doo calle hym his fyrrste name Pryamus/ and made hym a du/
ke and knyghte of the table round C And thenne anon
the kyng lete do crye assaulte to the cyte/ and there was re/
rynge of laddres brekyng of wallys and the dyche fylled/
sig. k.ii
that men with lytel payne my3t entre in to the cyte/ thenne cam
out a duchesse/ & Clarysyn the countesse with many ladyes &
damoysels/ and knelyng before kyng Arthur requyred hym
for the loue of god to receyue the cyte/ & not to take it by assa/
(5) ulte for thenne shold many gyltles be slayne/ thenne the kyng
aualyd his vyser with a meke & noble countenanunce/ & said ma/
dame ther shal none of my subgettys mysdoo you ne your ma/
ydens/ ne to none that to yow longen/ but the duke shal abyde
my Iugement/ thenne anone the kyng commanded to leue the
(10) assualt/ & anon the dukes oldest sone brought out the keyes/ &
knelyng deleyuerd them to the kyng/ & byshou3t hym of grace/ &
the kyng seased the toun by assent of his lordes/ & toke the duc
& sent hym to douer there for to abyde prysoner terme of his lyf
castell and þe Captaynes & connestablys knew hym for lorde and þer he deleyuerde and dalte by fore dyuerse lordis a dowre for þe deuches and hir chyldryn // Than he made wardens to welde all þat londis And so In Lorayne & Lumbardy he lodged as a lorde In his owne and sette lawys In þe londis ^as^ & hym beste lyked // And than at lammas he yede vnto Lusarne he sought and lay at his leyser with lykyngis I nowe // Than he mevys ouer þe mountaynes and doth many meruayles and so goth In by Godarte that Gareth sone wynys // Than he lokys in to Lumbardy and on lowde spekyth in yondir lykyngne londis as lorde woff I dwelle sir ffloerence and Sir ffloridas that day passed with .v. C. good men of armys vnto the cite of Virvyn they sought at þe gaynyste and leyde þer a buysshment as hem beste lyks. So þer com outh of þat cite many hundretthis and skyrmysshed wyth oure fore ryders as hem beste semed. Than broke outh oure buysshemente and þe brydge wynys and so rode vnto þer borowy wyth baners vp dysplayed There fledde much folke outh of numbir for scurde of Sir fflorence and his fers knyghtis. Than they busked wp a baner a bovyn þat gatis and of Sir fflorence in faythe so fayne were they neuer. The kynge than hovyth on an hylle and lokyth to þe wallys and sayde I se þe yondir sygne þe cite is wontle Than he lete make a cry thorow all þe oste that vppon payne of Iyff & lymme and also Iesynge of his goodys þat no Iyege man þat longyth to his oste sholde lye be no maydens ne ladyes noper no burgesse wyff þat to the cite Iongis// So whan this Conquerour com In to þe cite he pas// sed in to þe castell and þer he lendis and comfortis þe care// full men with many knyghtyly wordis & made there a Captayne a knyght of his owne contraye & þe commos accorded þer tyll// Whan þe soueraygnes of Myllayne her// de þat þe cite was wonne they sente vnto kynge Arthure grete sommys of Syluer Sxty horsys well charged & be sought hym as souerayne to haue ruthe of þe peple and seyde they wolde be sudjectis vntyll hym for euer and yelde hym seruyse & sewte surely for hir londys bothe for Plesaunce and Petresaynte and for þe porte Trembyll and so mekly to gyff for Myllayne a mylly// on of golde and make homage vnto Arthure al hir lyff tymes. Than þe kynge by his councyele a conduye hem sendys so to com In and know hym for lord// Than in to Tuskane he turned when he tyme semed & there
& assigned certayn rentes for the dower of the duchesse & for her children. Thenne he made lordes to rule tho londes & lawes as a lord ought to do in his owne countrey/ & after he took his journey toward Rome/ & sent sir Florys & syr florydas to fore with v C men of armes/ & they cam to the cyte of vrbyne & leid there a busshement there as them semed most best for them/ & ro de to fore the toune/ where anon yssued out moche peple & scar mussshed with the fore rydars/ thenne brake out the busshement & wan the brydge & after the toun/ & set vpon the wallis the kyn ges baner/ thenne cam the kynge vpon an hille & sawe the Cyte & his baner on the wallys/ by whiche he knewe that the Cyte was wonne/ & anone he sente & commaunded that none of his lyege men shold defoule ne lygge by no lady/ wyf/ ne maide/ & whan he cam in to the cyte/ he passid to the castel/ and comforted them that were in sorou/ & ordeyned ther a captayn a kny3t of his own countrey/ & whan they of Melane herd that thylk cyte was wonne/ they sent to kyng Arthur grete sommes of money/ & besou3t hym as their lord to haue pyte of them/ promysyng to be his subgettys for euer/ & yelde to hym homage & fealte for the landes of plesaunce & pauye/ petersaynt & the port of tremble/ & to gyue hym yerly a melyon of gold al his lyf tyme/ thenne he rydeth in to Tuskane & wynneth tounes & castels & wasted al
he wynny toweyrs and townyes ful hye and all he
wasted in his warrys þer he a wyay ryddys// Than he
spedys warde Spolute with his spedfull knyghtys
and so vnto Vyterbe he vytayled his knyghtis and to þe
vale of Vysecounte he devysed þer to lygge in þat vertouse
vale amonge wynys full And þer he suggeourys that
soueraigne with solace at his harte for to wete wheþer the
Senatours wolde hym of succour besoke// But sone after
on a Saturday sought vnto kynge Arthure all þe Sena//
toures þat were on lyve and of þe cunnyngyst Cardynallis
that dwelled in þe courte and prayde hym of þe and
profird hym full large and be sought hym as a souerayne
moste gouernoure vndir god for to gyff them lycence
for vj. wekys large þat they myght be assembled all
And than in þe cite of Syon that is Rome callyd to
crowne hym þer kyndly with Crysem hondys with Septu//
re for sothe as an Emperoure sholde// I assente me sey//
de þe kynge as ye haue devysed and comly be Crystmas
to be crouned here after to reigne in my asstate and to
kepe my rounde table with þe rentys of Rome to rule
as me lykys// And than as I am a vysed to gete me
ouer þe salte see with good men of armys to deme for his
deth that for vs all on þe Roode dyed// Whan þe Sena/
tours had this answere vnto Rome they turned and
made rydy for his corownemente in þe moste noble
wyse and at þe day assigned as þe Romaynes me tel//
lys he was crouned Emperoure by the Poopys hondys
with all þe Royalte in þe worlde to welde for euer //þer
they suggeourmed þat sason tyll aftir þe tyme and stabelys//
shed all þe londys frome Rome vnto ffraince & gaff
londys & rentys vnto kryngytys that had hem well deser//
ued þer was none þat playned on his parte ryche nothir
poore. Than he commaundd Sir Launcelot and Sir
Bors to take kepe vnto þer fadyrs landys þat kynge
Ban þe kynge Bors welded & her fadyrs loke þat ye
take seynge in all your brode londis and cause youre
lyege men to know you as for þer kynde lorde & suffir
neuer your soueraynte to be allledged with your subiectis noper the
soueraygne of your persone and londys// Also þe myghty
kynge Claudas I gyff you for to parte be twyxe you
evyn for to mayntene your kynrede þat be noble kny3tis
So þat ye and they to þe rounde table make your repyre
//Sir Launcelot and Sir Bors de Gaynys thanked

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in his way that to hym wil not obeye/ & so to spolute & viterbe & fro thens he rode in to the vale of vycecounte emong the vynes

And fro thens he sente to the senatours to wete/ whether they wold knowe hym for theyr lord/ But soone after on a sater day came vnto kynge Arthur alle the senatours that were left on lyue/ and the noblest Cardynals that thenne dwellyd in Rome/ And prayd hym of pees/ and profered hym ful large

(5) and bysought hym as gouernour to gyue lycence for vj we kes for to assemble alle the Romayns/ And thenne to crowne hym Emperour with creme as it bylongeth to so hyhe astate/ I assente sayd the kynge lyke as ye haue deuysed/ and at cry/ stemas there to be crowned/ and to holde my round table with

(10) my knyghtes as me lyketh/ And thenne the senatours maade redy for his Intronsacyon/ And at the day appoynted as the Romaunce telleth he came in to Rome/ and was crowned em perour by the popes hand with all the ryalte that coude be ma de/ And sudgerned there a tyme and establysshed all his lon/

(15) des from Rome in to Fraunce/ and gaf londes and royammes vnto her seruauntes and knyghtes to eueryche after his desert in suche wyse that none complayned ryche ne poure/ & he gafe
be kynge fayre and sayde Per hertis & seruyse sholde euer be his owne/ Where art thou Priamus thy fee is yet be hynde/ here I make pe and gyff pe deukedom of Lorayne for euer vnto pe and thyne ayres. And whan we com in to Ingelonde for to purvey the of horse mete and a ml. li quarterly for to mayntene thy seruauntis so thou leve not my felyship this gyffte ys thyne owne/ The knyght thankyd pe kynge with a kynde wylle and sayde as longe as I lyve my ser/ vys is youre owne/ Thus pe kynge gaff many londys there was none that wolde aske pat myghte playne of his parte. for of Rychesse & welth they had all at her wylle/ Than the knyghts & lordis pat to pe kynge longis Called a counsayle vppon a fayre morne and sayde Sir kynge we be seche the for to here vs all we ar/vndir youre lordship well stuffid blyssed by god of many thyngis and also we haue wyffis weddid we woll be seche youre good grace to Reles vs to sporte vs for worshyp be Cryste this lourney is well ouer com ye say well seyde pe kynge for I now3e is as good as a feste for to attemte god ouer muche I holde hit not wysedom/ And per fore make you all redy and turne we in to Ingelonde/ Than there was trussynge of harneyse with caryage full noble and pe kynge toke his leve of pe holy fadir pe Pope and Pa/ rtryarkys and Cardynalyys and Senatoures full ryche and lefte good gouernaunce in pat noble cite and all pe contrys of Rome for to warde and to kepe on payne of deth pat in no wyse his commaundement be brokyn. Thus he passyth thorow pe contrys of all partyes And so kying Arthur passed ouer the see vnto Sandwychyche haven/ Whan quene Gwenyuere her/ de of his commynge she mette with hym at London & so dud all oper quenys and noble ladys. for per was neuer a solempner metyng in one cite to gedyrs for all maner of Rychesse they brought with hem at pe full //Here endyth pe tale of pe noble kynge Arthur that was Emperoure hym self thorow dygnyte of his hondys. And here folowyth afftir many noble
to syre Pryamus the duchye of Lorayne/ and he thanked hym

and sayd he wold serue hym the dayes of his lyf/ and after

(20) made dukes and erles/ and made euery man ryche/ Thenne
after this alle his knyghtes and lordes assembled them afore
hym/ and sayd blessyd be god your warre is fynysshed and
your conquest achedu/ in soo moche that we knowe none soo
grete ne myghty that dar make warre ageynst yow/ wherfore
(25) we byseche you to retorne homeward/ and gyue vs lycence to
goo home to oure wyues/ fro whome we haue ben longe/ and
to reste vs/ for your lourney is fynysshed with honour & wor
ship/ Thenne sayd the kyng/ ye saye trouthe/ and for to temp/
te god it is no wysedom/ And thefore make you redy and
(30) retorne we in to England/ Thenne there was trussyng of har/
neis and bagage and grete caryage / And after lycence gyuen
he retorne and commaundd that noo man in payne of dethe
shold not robbe ne take vytaylle/ ne other thynge by the way
but that he shold paye therfore/ And thus he came ouer the see

(35) and londed at sandwyche/ ageynste whome Quene Gweneuer
his wyf came and mette hym/ and he was nobly receyued of
alle his comyns in euery cyte and burgh/ and grete yeftes
presented to hym at his home comyng to welcome hym with/

sig. k.iii  C Thus endeth the fyfte booke of the conquiste that kynge
Arthur hadde ageyenste Lucius the Emperoure of Rome/ and
talys of Sir Launcelot de lake

Explicite the noble tale betwixt kynge Arthure and Lucius the Emperoure of Rome.
here foloweth the syxth book whiche is of syr Launcelot du lake
Endnotes
(TLN number appears in parenthesis)

1. Left-hand marginal gloss: The deth of Gaynes (578)
2. Right-hand marginal gloss: The deth of Sir ffeldenake (599)
3. Right-hand marginal gloss: The deth of Sir Berel (776)
4. Right-hand marginal gloss: The deth of iij. knightis sir Aladuke, sir herawde & Sir heryngale (801)
5. Right-hand marginal gloss: The deth of þe kyng of lybye (807)
6. Left-hand marginal gloss: How Sir Gawayne slew iij. Admyrallys In batayle (1013)
7. Left-hand marginal gloss: How kyng Arthure slew þe Emperour of rome sir Lucyus (1033)
8. Left-hand marginal gloss: How Sir fflorence slew sir fferaunte (1348)
9. Left-hand marginal gloss: The deth of þe marquesse (1420)
10. Right-hand marginal gloss: The deth of Chastelayne (1432)
11. Right-hand marginal gloss: The deth of Sir dolphyn (1439)
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Vita

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