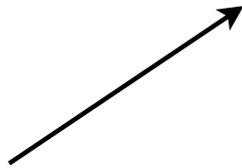


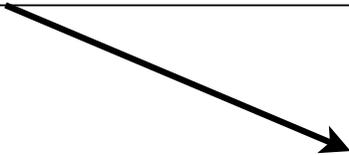
The paper should have one inch margins, be doubled spaced, and typed in 12 point Times New Roman font.

Alfred's "Modest Foundation":
The Birth of the Anglo-Saxon Identity through Propaganda



Class papers often include a title page. The title should be centered a third of the way down the page, and your name and class information should follow several lines later. When subtitles apply, end the title with a colon and place the subtitle on the line below the title. The cover page is single spaced.

Always check with your professor, though, as some may not want a cover page or will have different instructions / preferences.



Peter Damian
HST 414 English History
Professor Humbert
April 25, 2013

Arabic page numbers begin in the header of the first page of text, with your last name before it.

→ Damien 1

Note numbers should be placed at the end of the clause or sentence to which they refer and should be placed after all punctuation except the dash.

King Alfred the Great is credited with many “great” accomplishments: he held the Viking forces at bay, he promoted learning as one of the highest importances, and he was notably pious. While his work in each of these areas was significant, arguably his most important contribution came from the combination of his more specified achievements. Historians have argued over the influence of Alfred on the growing Anglo-Saxon identity during his reign and those of his successors. A distinct shift can be seen during Alfred’s reign in kingship: before Alfred, there was a plethora of “kings” and independent houses, whereas after Alfred, his is the only royal house and all others become subordinate.¹ While Alfred did not entirely achieve unification of all the people of England, it is not to be denied that he laid the groundwork for later generations.

Note numbers should begin with “1” and follow consecutively throughout a given paper, article, or chapter.

A thesis statement is (typically) one sentence that clarifies the point of the paper, controlling the direction and focus. The thesis is found toward the end of the introduction.

Through the Annals of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* during the years of his reign and Asser’s *Life of King Alfred*, it is clear that Alfred sought to advocate for the “English” identity, and was instrumental in the formation of such an identity by unifying the separate kingdoms of England militarily, religiously, and linguistically.

During the course of Alfred’s life, the many kingdoms of England were under the constant threat of Viking armies. His father, as well as his brothers who were the kings of Wessex before him, spent their reigns fighting off Viking attacks.² Alfred, when he was old enough to join his brothers, fought in many battles—and was victorious in most of them, according to Asser.³ This state of affairs—the constant plague of Vikings—presented Alfred with a unique opportunity: to unite the kingdoms against a common enemy. As a proven warrior, Alfred stood

In the text, note numbers are superscripted. In the notes themselves, note numbers are can be done one of two ways: superscripted, or full sized and followed by a period.

The first time you cite a source, use the full citation. Subsequent citations use the author’s last name followed by the title of the work and page number(s).

¹ Kemp Malone, "The Rise of English Nationalism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 1, no. 4 (October 1940): 504, accessed April 24, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2707127>.

² Asser, "Life of King Alfred," in *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*, trans. Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1983), 68-80.

³ *Ibid.*, 80-81.

“Ibid.” is an abbreviation meaning “in the same place.” Use it when the present note repeats the information of the immediately preceding note. For example, “Ibid., ##” indicates the same source but different page number(s).

to gain a great deal by helping the neighboring kingdoms of Mercia, Kent, and Northumbria defend against the invading Vikings; he would protect the kingdoms and people that did not strictly fall under his law, and by doing so, would prove himself to be a more apt leader than those in place.

While it is questionable whether his original intentions were to adopt these municipalities through joint conquest against the Vikings, it is undeniable that his military leadership in these battles garnered him great respect from his neighbors as well as fostering the “English” identity among the combined military forces. Asser often references “combined forces” when referring to the armies fighting the Vikings, suggesting that by the time Alfred took control of Wessex it was a common practice of battle.⁴

What Alfred did differently than his predecessors was to take advantage of such commonality. Asser notes that, “Many Franks, Frisians, Gauls, Vikings, Welshmen, Irishmen, and Bretons subjected themselves willingly to his lordship, nobles and commoners alike.”⁵ Many municipalities “petitioned King Alfred of their own accord, in order to obtain lordship and protection from him in the face of their enemies.”⁶ Asser later states that, “All the Angles and Saxons—those who had been formerly scattered everywhere... turned willingly to King Alfred and submitted themselves to his lordship.”⁷ Whether or not all of Alfred’s alliances were made with consent, it is clear that Asser sought to portray Alfred’s relationship with other kingdoms as that of a savior or father figure to these struggling kingdoms. The Annals of *The Anglo-Saxon*

⁴ Ibid., 76, 78.

⁵ Ibid., 91.

⁶ Ibid., 96.

⁷ Ibid., 98.

Footnotes should be in 12 point Times New Roman font, rather than 12 point (like the rest of your paper).

Chronicle reference such oaths as well, citing the kingdoms of the East Angles and the Northumbrians as submitting to King Alfred in 893.⁸ Some of these alliances, as Sarah Foot notes, might have been pre-existing; the presence of the stories of their origin in Asser's work and the Annals suggests the importance of broadcasting these ties as propaganda for the unification of England.⁹ These kingdoms viewed Alfred as the ultimate leader, especially in matters of battle, and so sought his protection in return for their subservience. In this way, Alfred built himself as the King of not only Wessex, but of the Anglo-Saxons in an official capacity. Through the alliances he made, in the words of Foot, "King Alfred might be credited with the invention of the English as a political community."¹⁰

The first time you reference an author in text, use their full name. All subsequent references should be only their last name.

Asser often references the "Christian army" when discussing Alfred's campaigns against the Vikings.¹¹ The Annals call the army the "English army," which serves the similar purpose of unifying the armies under one name.¹² However, Asser's term also unites them under one religion. This distinction is important because of the social implications. The unification of the kingdoms under Alfred was an official, political unification, whereas the commonality of religion provided a basis for a truly united group—not only by formal alliance, but by similarity of ideas and intentions.

⁸ "The Anglo Saxon Chronicle 888-900," trans. Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, in *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1983), 114.

⁹ Sarah Foot, "The Making of Angelcynn: English Identity before the Norman Conquest," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 6 (1996): 26, accessed April 24, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3679228>.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹¹ Asser, "Life of King Alfred," 78-79

¹² "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," 115.

If a source does not have an author, use only the title of the work and page numbers in subsequent footnotes.

Chicago style uses either footnotes or endnotes. Either is acceptable, but ask your professors for their particular preference. This essay uses footnote style. Endnotes would look very similar in-text, but instead of notes at the bottom of the page, they would go at the end of the paper right before the bibliography.

Alfred took great care to cultivate a Christian identity outside of his own kingdom. He made sizeable donations to churches all over England and even went so far as to convert the Viking leader, Guthrum, from which the ensuing peace lasted only a short time.¹³ He also brought “monks of various nationalities” to his kingdom, diversifying the native religious population.¹⁴ This inclusion by Asser suggests that this might have pleased some of the foreigners—or simply English people not from Wessex—who might have read Asser’s work. Asser cites Alfred’s generosity to both his native people and foreigners, showing him to be nondiscriminatory toward visitors as well as charitable.¹⁵ Alfred also collected church lands as he pushed the Vikings out of England. As Janet Nelson discusses, Alfred’s military tactics combined with his religious tactics gave him more religious control over areas that were not strictly his.¹⁶ Additionally, Alfred received many gifts from foreigners from as far as Jerusalem, which held certain biblical significance, which likely served as strong propaganda for Alfred’s worldliness, showing readers of Asser’s work that Alfred was not stuck in a Wessex dictated mindset.¹⁷

The laws of Alfred the Great relied heavily on The Old Testament tradition. As Foot states, his laws were a combination of laws from many kingdoms, legislated “overtly in the tradition of a Christian king, against an historical background of Old Testament law-giving.”¹⁸ By doing this, Alfred was attempting to draw a parallel between his own laws and those of the

¹³ Asser, “Life of King Alfred,” 85.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁶ Janet L. Nelson, “A King across the Sea: Alfred in Continental Perspective,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 36 (1986): 67, accessed April 24, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3679059>.

¹⁷ Asser, “Life of King Alfred,” 101.

¹⁸ Foot, “The Making of Angelcynn: English Identity before the Norman Conquest,” 32.

Chosen People of Israel.¹⁹ This comparison was likely modeled to be inclusive to all English Christians, so as to appeal to the variety of people he had under his rule. Through the spread of a unifying religion and laws that echoed it, Alfred was more capable of creating a wholly Christian identity for the Anglo-Saxons.

Perhaps Alfred's most notable achievements as king were in his scholarly pursuits. In many ways, Alfred's thirst for knowledge and his promotion of learning throughout England is comparable to that of the Carolingian Renaissance in France. While his efforts did much to educate the Anglo-Saxons and change the course of literacy, he also achieved a great deal in his goal toward unifying his kingdom through the standardization of language. Like his monks, Alfred summoned scholars from all over Europe, desiring the most accurate, but also the most diversified advisors, Asser among them.²⁰ These scholars, and Asser in particular, helped him to translate many religious works from Latin into English so that the common people might be able to understand them.²¹ In one episode described by Asser, Alfred learns to read Latin and then to translate it into English in a single day.²² He is said to have done this out of "divine inspiration," stressing the religious aspect of his scholarship.²³ Alfred's translations made religion more accessible to the people of Alfred's various kingdoms, as well as exposing them all to a shared language.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Asser, "Life of King Alfred," 93.

²¹ Ibid., 92-93.

²² Ibid., 99.

²³ Ibid.

If you cite the same source two or more times in a row and you are referencing the same page number(s), use "Ibid." on its own.

If you mention words in another language (e.g., old English, French, Gaelic, German, Elvish, Klingon, Parseltongue, etc.), use italics.

The dialect of English which Alfred used in his translations has been called “The King’s English,” a standardized dialect created by Alfred, which made way for English Literature, and promoted reading and writing prose as well as religious texts in English rather than Latin.²⁴ The standardization of English brought the Anglo-Saxons together in terms of communication. This helped to streamline the identification of English people, as they were often, as Bede had done in his work, identified by the languages which they spoke.²⁵ This enabled the introduction of the Anglo-Saxon, or *Angelcynn*, identity to form more rapidly. Both Asser and the Annals refer to Alfred’s people as the “Anglo-Saxons,” a term essentially coined during Alfred’s reign. Before Alfred became king, the term was uncommon, but during the later years of Alfred’s reign the term grew in prominence. Foot argues that this was done purposefully in order to promote the English identity as that of one people.²⁶

Alfred’s reign was significant in many ways. He was remarkable in his military prowess, his religious fervor, and his scholarship, but it was his promotion of an English identity, largely through the works of Asser and the Annals of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle*, that was truly great. As his obituary in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states, by the end of his life, “he was king over the whole English people, except for the part which was under Danish rule.”²⁷ However, he did not succeed in uniting all of the English; that was for his successors to do. But, as Asser quotes, “The just man builds on a modest foundation and gradually proceeds to greater things.”²⁸

When referencing source titles in text, use italics for a monograph or primary source. If referencing a journal article, put the title of the article in quotation marks.

²⁴ Malone, “The Rise of English Nationalism,” 504.

²⁵ Foot, “The Making of Angelcynn: English Identity before the Norman Conquest,” 29.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 30.

²⁷ “The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,” 120.

²⁸ Asser, “Life of King Alfred,” 100.

One blank line should be left between entries, which should be listed in letter-by-letter alphabetical order according to the first word in each entry. Sources you consulted but did not directly cite may or may not be included (consult your instructor).

Label the first page of your back matter, your comprehensive list of sources cited, "Bibliography." Two blank lines should be left between "Bibliography" and your first entry.

Damien 7

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