The Anglo-Norman and Continental French Reception of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Corpus from the 12th to the 15th Centuries

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Although¹ there were pockets of resistance, particularly regarding the work's reliability – the most notable from William of Newburgh² – acceptance of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *De gestis Britonum* (c.1123–39)³ (hereafter *DGB*) was brisk and strong; the current count of manuscript witnesses in Latin is over 225, with nearly 50 manuscripts from the 12th century alone.⁴ The *Prophetiae*

- 1 Given space restrictions, the lists, notes, and references presented here cannot be exhaustive, but are intended to suggest future paths of research.
- 2 Henry, archdeacon of Huntingdon, was amazed (*stupens*) to have discovered it at Le Bec in the company of Robert de Torigni, and treated it with caution in his adapted abbreviation of Geoffrey's *DGB*, the *Epistola ad Warinum* (c.1139); see Henry of Huntingdon, *History of the English*, ed. and trans. D. Greenway, *Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon: Historia Anglorum. The History of the English People*, Oxford, 1996, pp. 558–83, at p. 558; and N. Wright, "The Place of Henry of Huntingdon's *Epistola ad Warinum* in the Text-History of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*: a Preliminary Investigation", in G. Jondorf and D.N. Dumville (eds.), *France and the British Isles in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Essays by Members of Girton College, Cambridge, in Memory of Ruth Morgan*, Woodbridge, 1991, pp. 71–113. Alfred of Beverley repeated much of Geoffrey's account of the history of the Britons in his *Annales* (c.1143), but noted that no contemporary Saxon or Roman historians had commented on Arthur's conquests: *Annales* v, ed. T. Hearne, *Aluredi Beverlacensis Annales, sive historia de gestis regum Britanniae, libris IX E. codice pervetusto ...*, Oxford, 1716, p. 76. William of Newburgh's scathing criticism of what he considered Geoffrey's mendacious propaganda is the most well-known; on William's criticism, and that of Gerald of Wales (each of whom were writing in the 1190s, and the latter who evinced some ambivalence toward the Galfridian material), see, for example, K. Robertson, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Insular Historiography", *Arthuriana* 8:4 (1998), 42–57. See also S. Meecham-Jones, "Early Reactions to Geoffrey's Work", pp. 181–208 in this volume.
- 3 Most recently edited as the *De gestis Britonum*, ed. M. Reeve and trans. N. Wright, *Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain: An Edition and Translation of De gestis Britonum [Historia Regum Britanniae]*, Woodbridge, 2007; for dating, see p. vii. See also *Bern*, ed. Wright; and *The First Variant Version*, ed. Wright.
- 4 Crick, SC and Crick, DR; for references to Crick's updates in the count, as well as Reeve's own discoveries, see *DGB*, pp. vii–viii, n. 5. See also J. Tahkokallio, "Update to the List of Manuscripts of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*", *AL* 32 (2015), 187–203; id., "Early Manuscript Dissemination", in this volume, who counts nearly 80 manuscripts

Merlini (c.1130–35), which circulated separately, as well as part of the *DGB*, is extant in over 70 manuscripts as an independent text;⁵ the *Vita Merlini* (c.1148–55) was less widely known, or at least less widely copied, with fewer than a dozen manuscripts, many fragmentary.⁶

However, reception can also be gauged by the number of translations and adaptations, in addition to Latin recopyings; the term “adaptations” here is used to mean texts in another language that can conform closely to the original, though more broadly based than translations; practically speaking, the almost innumerable isolated or episodic borrowings of characters, events or places, from Galfridian material inserted into Arthurian or other romances, for example, are excluded from consideration here. Measured in terms of translations and adaptations, the French-language reception of Geoffrey’s work (primarily the *DGB* and the *PM*), both in continental dialects and Anglo-Norman, was very enthusiastic, most likely second only to the English tradition(s) of adapted (or “translated”) versions of those two works. As noted below, much work remains to be done, particularly on the interrelationships among these texts across these very rich French-language traditions.⁷

before c.1210, pp. 155–80; for the *PM* see M.B. McInerney’s “Riddling Words: The *Prophetiae Merlini*” in this volume, pp. 129–52.

5 *The Prophetia Merlini of Geoffrey of Monmouth: A Fifteenth-Century English Commentary*, ed. C.D. Eckhardt (Speculum Anniversary Monographs, 8), Cambridge, MA, 1982, p. 10. See also Alan of Lille, *Interpretation of the Prophecy of Merlin*, ed. and trans. C. Wille, *Prophetie und Politik: Die ‘Explanatio in Prophetia Merlini Ambrosii’ des Alanus Flandrensis*, 2 vols. (Lateinische Sprache und Literatur des Mittelalters, 49), Bern, 2015, vol. 1, pp. 5–18; and G. Veyseyre and C. Wille, “Les commentaires latins et français aux *Prophetie Merlini* de Geoffroy de Monmouth”, *Médiévales* 55 (2008), 93–114.

6 *VM*, pp. 43–45.

7 For an overview of the European reception of the *DGB*, see H. Tétrel and G. Veyseyre, “Introduction”, in ead. (eds.), *L’Historia regum Britannie et les “Bruts” en Europe, Tome I, Traductions, adaptations, réappropriations (XII^e–XVI^e siècle)* (Rencontres 106, Civilisation médiévale, 12), Paris, 2015, pp. 9–37. Occitan reception (in terms of translations or adaptations rather than treatments of Arthurian myths or isolated characters such as appear in the romance *Jaufré* for example [ed. C. Brunel, Paris, 1943]) appears non-existent, though recent discoveries of previously unknown texts such as the anonymous Anglo-Norman verse *Brut* in London, College of Arms, 12/45A (scroll) (see 1.A.b.3 [*DGB*, translations (verse), anonymous, number 3] below, and n. 15), suggest, as always, that there may be unknown Occitan texts still buried in manuscripts awaiting discovery. The same may be true for 12th- to 15th-century French/Occitan versions of the *VM* as well, of which there are currently no known vernacular copies.

I *De gestis Britonum*

A. Translations (verse): Keeping in mind that medieval authors had a different view of “translation” than moderns, a view – and practice – that often admitted some adaptation, interpretation, and original contributions, the following texts were most likely intended to “reproduce” to a considerable extent the vulgate *DGB* or the First Variant version, or a combination, revealing more consistent “faithfulness” to the Latin originals than a significant number of the works listed under “Adaptations” (1.B) (the greater portion of which are prose texts).⁸

a) Known authors:

- 1) Gaimar, *Estoire des Bretuns* – no longer extant; known only from references in Gaimar’s *Estoire des Engleis* [Dean 1],⁹ oldest extant French-language chronicle (c.1135–40); octosyllabic; Anglo-Norman¹⁰
- 2) Wace, *Roman de Brut* (1155) [Dean 2]; octosyllabic; earliest extant, most well-known and frequently copied of the French-language *DGB* translations; omits book of Prophecies¹¹

8 On “translation” in 12th-century French chronicles, see especially P. Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority*, Woodbridge, 1999, pp. 16–32.

9 Numbers within square brackets refer to items (or references [r] attached to items) in R.J. Dean, with the collaboration of M.B.M. Boulton, *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts* (Anglo-Norman Text Society Occasional Publications Series, 3), London, 1999. See also n. 33 below for multiple references in Dean to the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* traditions.

10 Geffrei Gaimar, *Estoire des Engleis*, ed. A. Bell, *L’Estoire des Engleis by Geffrei Gaimar* (Anglo-Norman Texts, 14–16), Oxford, 1960 (repr. New York, 1971); Geffrei Gaimar, *Estoire des Engleis*, ed. and trans. I. Short, *Estoire des Engleis / History of the English*, Oxford, 2009. In an article which has significant bearing on the early vernacular reception of the *DGB*, Short suggests a narrower window for the composition of the *Estoire des Engleis*, March 1136–April 1137 (“Gaimar’s Epilogue and Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Liber vetustissimus*”, *Speculum* 69:2 (1994), 323–43); cf. P. Dalton, “The Date of Geoffrey Gaimar’s *Estoire des Engleis*, the Connections of his Patrons, and the Politics of Stephen’s Reign”, *The Chaucer Review* 42:1 (2007), 23–47, and R.W. Leckie, Jr., *The Passage of Dominion: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Periodization of Insular History in the Twelfth Century*, Toronto, 1981, pp. 78–86. See also Geffrei Gaimar, *Estoire des Engleis*, ed. and trans. J. Wogan-Browne, T. Fenster, and D. Russell, “Gaimar, *L’Estoire des Engleis*”, in J. Wogan-Browne, T. Fenster, and D. Russell (eds.), *Vernacular Literary Theory from the French of Medieval England, Texts and Translations, c. 1120–c. 1450*, Cambridge, 2016, pp. 99–103 [two extracts], and I. Short, “What was Gaimar’s *Estoire des Bretuns*?” *Cultura Neolatina* 71:1 (2011), 143–45.

11 For extensive manuscript details and copious variants, see Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. I.D.O. Arnold, *Le Roman de Brut de Wace*, 2 vols., Paris, 1938–40; see also Judith Weiss’s presentation of Arnold’s text, with emendations: Wace, *Roman de Brut*, trans. J. Weiss, *Wace’s Roman de Brut: A History of the British: Text and Translation* (Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies), Exeter, 1999, rev. ed. 2002. My as-yet-unpublished findings suggest that Wace

b) Anonymous:¹²

Octosyllabic:

- 1) London, British Library, Harley 4733, late 12th century; 250 lines, with gaps (§§143–47, Arthur's coronation, pursuit of Saxons to Somerset) [Dean 1r, 17]¹³
- 2) Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Gall. 29, early 13th century (continental); 4182 lines (§§5–32, description of Britain, arrival of Brutus to battle at Tours)¹⁴

did not translate the First Variant version as exclusively or consistently as has been previously thought, and that the *Brut* is more alternately reliant on the vulgate *DGB* and the First Variant; this has been argued very recently by L. Mathey-Maille, "De la Vulgate à la Variant Version de l'*Historia regum Britannie: Le Roman de Brut* de Wace à l'épreuve du texte source", in Tétrel and Veyseyre (eds.), *L'Historia regum Britannie*, pp. 129–39. On Wace's decision to omit the Prophecies as found in both the vulgate and First Variant, see J. Blacker, "‘Ne vuil sun livre translater’: Wace's Omission of Merlin's Prophecies from the *Roman de Brut*", in I. Short (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Anniversary Essays* (Anglo-Norman Text Society Occasional Publications Series, 2), London, 1993, pp. 49–59. Manuscripts of Wace's *Brut* are almost equally divided between continental and Anglo-Norman – although given a broad range of factors, not the least Wace's Norman-based *Schriftsprache*, the poem should not be thought of as Anglo-Norman. However, in terms of cultural associations, Wace is most frequently viewed as being in the Plantagenet sphere, rather than in the French. On Wace's life and works, see Wace, *Conception Nostre Dame*, trans. J. Blacker, G.S. Burgess, and A.V. Ogden, *Wace, The Hagiographical Works: The ‘Conception Nostre Dame’ and the Lives of St Margaret and St Nicholas* (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions, 169 / Texts and Sources, 3), Leiden, 2013, pp. 1–9.

- 12 Each of these anonymous verse translations of the *DGB* has been identified as Anglo-Norman except the Bekker fragment and the Munich *Brut*; none contain the Prophecies except London, British Library, Harley 1605 (among the others, only Royal and Egerton treat material in proximity to the Prophecies (*DGB* §§112–17), but they exclude them); many, if not all of the texts, with the likely exception of Egerton, date from the 12th century (the approximate manuscript dating is given here). The anonymous verse translations of the *PM* – all of which are also Anglo-Norman – appear below in II.A. See n. 17 below on the unique nature of the Egerton *Brut*.
- 13 "A 12th-century Anglo-Norman *Brut* Fragment (MS BL Harley 4733, f. 128)", ed. P. Damian-Grint, in I. Short (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Anniversary Essays* (Anglo-Norman Text Society Occasional Publications Series, 2), London, 1993, pp. 87–104.
- 14 "An Edition of the Munich *Brut*", ed. P.B. Grout, unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1980; ead., "The Author of the Munich *Brut*, his Latin Sources and Wace", *Medium Ævum* 54:2 (1985), 274–82. For a published edition, see *Der Münchener Brut*, ed. K. Hofmann and K. Vollmöller, *Der Münchener Brut, Gottfried von Monmouth in französischen Versen des xii. Jahrhunderts*, Halle, 1877; for a description of the manuscript, see P.B. Grout, "The Manuscript of the Munich *Brut* (Codex Gallicus 29 of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich)", in S.B. North (ed.), *Studies in Medieval French Language and Literature presented to Brian Woledge* (Publications Romanes et Françaises, 180), Geneva, 1988, pp. 49–58.

- 3) London, College of Arms, 12/45A (scroll), late 13th century; approx. 2500 lines (§§23–133, with numerous lacunae; Prophecies omitted) [Dean 6r]¹⁵
- 4) London, British Library, Arundel 220, early 14th century; 258 lines (§§106–08, Vortigern's tower, discovery of Merlin) [Dean 22]¹⁶
- 5) London, British Library, Egerton 3028, mid-14th century; 2914 lines (not including 354-line continuation of English history to 1338–40) (§§65–205, sons of Cymbeline to almost conclusion, many lacunae); Prophecies omitted [Dean 50]¹⁷
- 6) London, British Library, Royal 13. A. xxi, first half of the 14th century; 6237 lines (§§6–137, Aeneas's marriage to Uther's arrival at Tintagel); Prophecies omitted [Dean 3]¹⁸

- 15 Discovered by O. de Laborderie, "‘Ligne de reis’: Culture historique, représentation du pouvoir royal et construction de la mémoire nationale en Angleterre à travers les généalogies royales en rouleau du milieu du 13^e siècle au milieu du 15^e siècle", unpublished PhD thesis, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 2002, pp. 380–85 (revised in *Histoire, mémoire et pouvoir: Les généalogies en rouleau des rois d'Angleterre (1250–1422)* (Bibliothèque d'histoire médiévale, 7), Paris, 2013); excerpts edited by I. Short, "Un *Roman de Brut* anglo-normand inédit", *Romania* 126 (2008), 273–95. Short observes that, given that the other verse versions are from the 12th century (except for Egerton) and that this text also demonstrates older usages, it is also likely from the 12th century; it has approximately 2500 lines, corresponding to lines 1293–8338 of Wace, thus a significant reduction of both the French poet's text and the Latin (p. 275).
- 16 See J. Koch, "Anglonormannische Texte in Ms. Arundel 220 des Britischen Museums", *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 54 (1934), 20–56, and *I Fatti di Bretagna*, ed. M.L. Meneghetti, *I Fatti di Bretagna: Cronache genealogiche anglo-normanne dal XII al XIV secolo* (Vulgares Eloquentes, 9), Padua, 1979, pp. 33–43. See also R. Trachsler, "Du *libellus Merlini* au *livret Merlin*: Les traductions françaises des *Prophetiae Merlini* dans leurs manuscrits", in C. Croizy-Naquet, M. Szkilnik, and L. Harf-Lancner (eds.), *Les Manuscrits médiévaux témoins de lectures*, Paris, 2015, pp. 67–87, esp. pp. 72–73.
- 17 Although an anonymous verse *Brut*, the Egerton *Brut* (composed likely around the time the extant manuscript was assembled with its illustrating miniatures, late 1330s–early 1340s) is *sui generis* in that it is an abridgment of Wace's *Brut*, not a "translation" of Geoffrey's *DGB*. See "An Anglo-Norman Metrical 'Brut' of the 14th century (British Museum Ms Egerton 3028)", ed. V. Underwood, unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1937, and J. Blacker, "Courtly Revision of Wace's *Roman de Brut* in British Library Egerton MS 3028", in K. Busby and C. Kleinhenz (eds.), *Courtly Arts and the Art of Courtliness: Selected Papers from the Eleventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 29 July–4 August 2004*, Cambridge, 2006, pp. 237–58; see also A. Stones, "The Egerton *Brut* and its Illustrations", in G.S. Burgess and J. Weiss (eds.), *Maistre Wace: A Celebration: Proceedings of the International Colloquium held in Jersey, 10–12 September 2004*, St Helier, 2006, pp. 167–76.
- 18 The Royal *Brut* is inserted into Wace's *Brut*, in place of lines 53–8728; *An Anglo-Norman Brut* (Royal 13.A.xxi), ed. A. Bell (Anglo-Norman Text Society, 21–22), Oxford, 1969. See also A. Bell, "The Royal *Brut* Interpolation", *Medium Ævum* 32:3 (1963), 190–202, and P. Damian-Grint, "Redating the Royal *Brut* Fragment", *Medium Ævum* 65:2 (1996), 280–85.

- 7) New Haven, Beinecke Library, Takamiya 115 (*olim* Martin Schøyen 650), c.1225–75; 168 lines (end of §§142–43, Uther's death, Arthur's coronation, battle against Colgrin and Saxons, Scots and Picts at York) [Dean 16]¹⁹

Decasyllabic (only Prophecies; see 11.A.ii below)

Alexandrine:

- 1) Krakow, Jagiellonian University Library, Gall. fol. 176, late 12th century (continental) (Bekker fragment); 136 lines (§§127–30, assembling Stonehenge)²⁰
- 2) London, British Library, Harley 1605, mid-13th century; 3361 lines (in five fragments)
[Dean 15 and 20]:²¹
 - i) 1280 lines (§§73–94, death of King Lucius to arrival of Hengist)
 - ii) 1279 lines (§§113–36, an incomplete text of the Prophecies [missing §112; begins at Lincoln's l. 73], to beginning of Uther's reign; see 11.A.iii.1 and n. 41 below)
 - iii) 80 lines (§§152–54, reinstatement of Loth)
 - iv) 81 lines (§§155–56, Bedevere, Kay enfeoffed, feast at City of Legions)
 - v) 641 lines (§§165–69, Mont-Saint-Michel giant, first encounter of Arthur and Emperor Lucius)

B. Adaptations, that is, works containing sections of the *DGB* which were either

- a) Translated, sometimes rather faithfully, but often interspersed with either original passages or passages taken from other recognizable works (as in Sébastien Mamerot's version of the *Neuf Preux* which also intersperses its closely translated sections from the *DGB* with lengthy passages from romances such as the vulgate *Mort la roi Artu*);
or

19 See Dean no. 16, p. 16; Bernard Quaritch (Firm), *Catalogue 147: Bookhands of the Middle Ages. Part V: Medieval Manuscript Leaves*, London, 1991, pp. 82–83, item 101; online at <<https://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/4428130>> (accessed 21 May 2018).

20 "Le fragment Bekker et les anciennes versions françaises de l'*Historia Regum Britanniae*", ed. S. Lefèvre, *Romania* 109 (1988), 225–46.

21 "The Harley Brut: An Early French Translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*", ed. B. Blakey, *Romania* 82 (1961), 401–08; B. Barbieri, "La Geste de Bretuns en alexandrins (Harley Brut): Une traduction de l'*Historia* aux teintes épiques", in Tétrel and Veyseyre (eds.), *L'Historia regum Britannie*, pp. 141–55, and her edition *Geste des Bretuns en alexandrins ou Harley Brut*, ed. B. Barbieri (Textes littéraires du Moyen Âge, 37), Paris, 2015 and F. Le Saux, "Romance", in this volume, p. 250, n. 58.

- b) adapted, some more strictly (but not translated “verbatim”), some more loosely, in order to be fit into larger works “needing” a section on the history of the Britons, and the life of Arthur.²²

Except for the first item – the *Estoire des Bretons* (recently edited as the *Estoire de Brutus*) – the following texts are listed here without precisely distinguishing where they fall on the “translation to adaptation” continuum, leaving those questions of definition to scholars working on these specific texts [*n.b.*: for works extant in multiple manuscripts, not all manuscripts are listed here]:

i. Continental Chronicles and Romances:

- 1) *Estoire des Bretons*: oldest French prose translation of the *DGB*, from §§6–188, with short lacunae; pre-1300, possibly pre-1280; in the only manuscript which contains it, the *Estoire des Bretons* is inserted into the *Histoire ancienne jusqu’à César*, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 17177, fols. 82vb–108rb²³
- 2) *Perceforest*, originally composed between c.1330–40, reworked in the 15th century; translation of §§6–52 (preceded by a description of the island, but not Geoffrey’s); largely prose (some octosyllables, decasyllables); opening section is the beginning of a much larger text²⁴

22 As in the case of the anonymous verse *Bruts* and verse Prophecies, further work remains in order to establish the interrelationships among the texts in this list of prose adaptations of the *DGB*.

23 G. Veyssière, “Geoffroy de Monmouth, *Historia regum Britanniae*, 1135–1139”, in C. Galderisi et al. (eds.), *Traductions médiévales, Cinq siècles de traductions en français au Moyen Âge (XI^e–XV^e siècles): Étude et Répertoire*, 2 vols. in 3 [1, 11.1, and 2], Turnhout, 2011, vol. 11.1, no. 237, pp. 459–60, and *L’Estoire de Brutus. La plus ancienne traduction en prose française de l’Historia regum Britannie de Geoffroy de Monmouth*, ed. G. Veyssière (Textes littéraires du Moyen Âge, 33), Paris, 2014, pp. 180–84.

24 In fact, the *Perceforest*’s most recent English translator has gone as far as to remark that “indeed, on one level almost the whole of *Perceforest* can be seen as a vast interpolation into Geoffrey’s *Historia* between the reigns of kings Pir and Capoir”; see *Perceforest*, trans. N. Bryant, *Perceforest, The Prehistory of King Arthur’s Britain* (Arthurian Studies, 77), Cambridge, 2011. However, although Kings Pir and Capoir both appear at the end of the *DGB* §52, Capoir appears as Scapiol in *Perceforest*, and the narrative that follows his eventual appearance up to the end of the text bears little resemblance to anything in the *DGB*. For a detailed overview of the different redactions and numerous intra- and inter-textual complexities of this enormous narrative, see R. Trachsler, “Le *Perceforest*”, in R. Trachsler (ed.), *Disjointures-Conjointures: Étude sur l’interférence des matières narratives dans la littérature française du Moyen Âge*, Tübingen and Basel, 2000, pp. 239–81; see also J.H.M. Taylor, “Introduction”, in ead. (ed.), *Le Roman de Perceforest, première partie* (Textes littéraires français, 279), Geneva, 1979, pp. 11–58; *Perceforest*, ed. G. Roussineau, *Le Roman de Perceforest, quatrième partie*, 2 vols. (Textes littéraires français, 343), Geneva, 1987, vol. 1, pp. ix–xxxv; and G. Veyssière, “L’*Historia regum Britannie* ou l’enfance de *Perceforest*”, in D. Hüe and C. Ferlampin-Acher (eds.), *Enfances arthuriennes: Actes du 2^e Colloque arthurien de Rennes, 6–7 mars 2003*, Orleans, 2006, pp. 99–126.

- 3) *Croniques des Bretons*, anonymous 15th-century prose text; first section based on both the *DGB* and Wace's *Roman de Brut*; remaining sections based on the *DGB*; circulated separately, then as the *incipit* to Jean de Wavrin's *Croniques et anciennes istories de la Grant Bretagne, a present nommé Engleterre*²⁵
- 4) Jehan Wauquelin, *Roman de Brut*, 1444–45²⁶
- 5) Jean de Wavrin, opening section of the *Recueil des croniques et anciennes istories de la Grant Bretagne, a present nommé Engleterre*, c.1455²⁷
- 6) Pierre Le Baud, *Compillacion des Chroniques et Ystoires des tresnobles roys et princes de Bretagne armoricque jadis extraitz et descenduz de ceulx de Bretagne insulaire*, 15th century; the whole of this work, dedicated to Jean de Derval in 1480, treats the history of Britain from its origins to 1458; the opening section contains a résumé of the *DGB*²⁸
- 7) Sébastien Mamerot, the Arthurian section of the *Histoire des Neuf Preux et des Neuf Preuses*, 1460; contains a “traduction intégrale” of the *DGB*, with numerous changes and lacunae, among the most important of which is the elimination of Merlin's Prophecies²⁹
- 8) *Les Neuf Preux*, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 12598; 18th-century paper manuscript reflecting a 15th-century text; fols. 219a–231a containing an “Arthurian section” corresponding to the *DGB* §§92–132³⁰
- 9) “Fourth redaction” of the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*; 15th century; inserted Brutus section³¹

25 Veyseyre, “Geoffroy de Monmouth”, p. 461.

26 Including the Prophecies. As Gilles Roussineau reports, the text “traduit ... dans son intégralité, l'*Historia regum Britannie*”; see “Jehan Wauquelin et l'auteur de *Perceforest* traducteurs de l'*Historia regum Britannie* de Geoffroy de Monmouth”, in M.-C. de Crécy (ed.), with the collaboration of G. Parussa and S. Hériché Pradeau, *Jehan Wauquelin de Mons à la cour de Bourgogne* (Burgundica, x1), Turnhout, 2006, pp. 5–23, at p. 6. According to Veyseyre, this text contains a literal translation of the *DGB*, with no substantial borrowings from Wace; see “Geoffroy de Monmouth”, p. 462.

27 Jean de Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques et anciennes istories de la Grant Bretagne*, ed. W. Hardy, *Recueil des croniques et anciennes istories de la Grant Bretagne, à présent nommé Engleterre, I: From Albina to A.D. 688*, London, 1864. Frequently referred to by the shortened title *Chronique d'Angleterre*.

28 See Veyseyre, “Geoffroy de Monmouth”, p. 463.

29 See R. Trachsler, *Clôtures du cycle arthurien: Étude et textes* (Publications Romanes et Françaises, 215), Geneva, 1996, for a discussion of the text (pp. 297–313) and an edition of the sections corresponding to the *DGB* §§158–80 (pp. 419–64); see also A. Salamon, “Sébastien Mamerot, traducteur de l'*Historia regum Britannie*”, in Tétrel and Veyseyre (eds.), *L'Historia regum Britannie*, pp. 211–30.

30 The “Arthurian section” in this manuscript also contains numerous elements from Wace; Trachsler, *Clôtures*, pp. 298–302.

31 Text named by J.H. Kaimowitz, “A Fourth Redaction of the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*”, in D.F. Bright and E.S. Ramage (eds.), *Classical Texts and Their Traditions: Studies in Honor*

- a) New York, Public Library, Spencer 41
- b) Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 5078

ii. Anglo-Norman Chronicles:

- 1) Peter Langtoft, *Chronicle*, late 13th–early 14th century; the first of three sections contains a condensed adaptation of the *DGB*; monorhymed alexandrine laisses [Dean 66]³²
- 2) Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut*, 13th–14th century:³³
 - a) The *Anglo-Norman Prose Brut to 1272*: the original form of the text, also referred to as the Common Text [Dean 42]³⁴

of C.R. Traham, Chico, CA, 1984, pp. 75–87; Kaimowitz discusses New York, Public Library, Spencer 41, including the “detailed account of Brutus [fols. 71r–80v], the source of which is identified in the text (f. 71r) as the *Brut*” (p. 78); Kaimowitz speculates that the *Brut* was Wace’s but also states that the text is “heavily and directly indebted” to the *DGB*. On both that manuscript and Arsenal 5078 with respect to their translation(s) of the *DGB*, see R. Trachsler, “*L’Historia regum Britannie* au XV^e siècle: Les manuscrits New York, Public Library, Spencer 41 et Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, 5078”, in Tétrel and Veyseyre (eds.), *L’Historia regum Britannie*, pp. 193–209.

- 32 Peter Langtoft, *Chronicle*, ed. J.-C. Thiolier, *Édition critique et commentée de Pierre de Langtoft, Le Règne d’Édouard Ier, tome premier*, Créteil, 1989–. See also T. Summerfield, *The Matter of Kings’ Lives: Design of Past and Present in the Early Fourteenth-Century Verse Chronicles by Pierre de Langtoft and Robert Mannyng*, Amsterdam and Atlanta, 1998.
- 33 Extant in at least 50 manuscripts in the various textual families, the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* was revised and added to during the ensuing 50 years. The following abbreviated list of the families and earlier development of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* is based primarily (though not exactly) on H. Pagan, “What is the Anglo-Norman Brut?” <https://www.univ-brest.fr/digitalAssets/36/36991_Heather-Pagan-com.pdf> (accessed 19 March 2018), pp. 1–7, at pp. 3–4, and L. Matheson, *The Prose “Brut”: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle* (Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 180), Tempe, 1998, p. 4. The Prose *Brut* tradition is very difficult to describe, given not only its complexity and heterogeneity, but also because scholars are not in agreement as to what constitutes a *Brut* text, ranging from the use of the term “Brut” to refer to a group of texts almost as if they constituted a genre (as could be construed from P. Meyer’s observation that “plusieurs des compilations historiques en vers ou en prose où l’*Historia Britonum* [*DGB*] a été employée portent le titre de *Brut*”; “De Quelques chroniques anglo-normandes qui ont porté le nom de *Brut*”, *Bulletin de la SATF* 4 (1878), 104–45, at p. 105) to those referring to specific works. On the difficulties of definition, see in particular D. Tyson, “Handlist of Manuscripts Containing the French Prose *Brut* Chronicle”, *Scriptorium* 48 (1994), 333–44 and H. Pagan, “When is a Brut no Longer a Brut?: The example of Cambridge, University Library, Dd. 10. 32”, in Tétrel and Veyseyre (eds.), *L’Historia regum Britannie*, pp. 179–92. For further information on these texts, individual manuscripts, and related traditions, see Dean nos. 36, 42–49, and 52–53 (pp. 24–27, 30–34, and 35–36). Many of the Prose *Bruts* and related texts have yet to be edited.
- 34 Julia Marvin considers the major sources of the Oldest Version of the Prose *Brut* (which Pagan and Matheson refer to as the “Common Text”) to include Wace’s *Roman de Brut* and Gaimar’s *Estoire des Engleis*, while the “chronicle also appears to draw directly, though

- b) The Common Text/Oldest Version, with a continuation to 1307 (end of the reign of Edward I of England; sometimes called the First Continuation)³⁵
- c) Second Continuation:
 - i) Short Version (including the *Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* to 1332) [Dean 45]:³⁶
 - a) The Common Text to 1307, plus the Short Continuation to 1333 (ending with an English raid on Haddington Fair, Scotland) [Dean 36]
 - b) Addition of verse prologue (in some manuscripts)³⁷
 - ii) Long Version: the Common Text to 1307, much revised, including the addition of prophecies attributed to Merlin;³⁸ addition of prose prologue; and the Long Continuation to 1333 (ending with the battle of Halidon Hill) [Dean 46]

less extensively" on Geoffrey's *DGB* ("Arthur Authorized: The Prophecies of the Prose *Brut* Chronicle", *AL* 22 (2005), 84–99, at p. 84); *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle: An Edition and Translation*, ed. and trans. ead. (Medieval Chronicles, 4), Woodbridge, 2006; see also Marvin's description of the development of the *Brut* tradition(s) in ead., *The Construction of Vernacular History in the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut: the Manuscript Culture of Late Medieval England*, York, 2017, esp. pp. 1–15, 8, n. 22, 131–62, and 231–50; and J. Spence, *Reimagining History in Anglo-Norman Prose Chronicles*, York, 2013, esp. pp. 1–21.

35 This category may be the most debated by scholars, and ultimately prove to be more of a useful theoretical construct than an actual stage represented by manuscripts. Only a detailed, methodical examination of all the 50 or so manuscripts will explain how the text developed between the "Oldest Version" and the "Long" and "Short" versions, here listed under the rubric of the "Second Continuation" (if only to distinguish how their narratives diverge from 1307 onward, with significant variations). For further analysis, see T.R. Smith, "National Identity, Propaganda, and the Ethics of War in English Historical Literature, c. 1327–77", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 2018, including appendix entries for "*The Brut*", "*Long Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*", and "*Short Anglo-Norman Prose Brut*".

36 *Prose Brut* to 1332, ed. H. Pagan (Anglo-Norman Texts, 69), Manchester, 2011.

37 According to Lister Matheson, at this stage of the development of the Short Version of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* a metrical prologue was added recounting the Albina foundation myth; this prologue is an abbreviated redaction of the Anglo-Norman poem, *Des grantz geanz*, ed. G.E. Brereton, *Des Grantz Geanz: An Anglo-Norman Poem* (Medium Ævum Monographs, 2), Oxford, 1937; a prose prologue based on this same poem was also added; see Matheson, *The Prose "Brut"*, pp. 4–5 and 33–34. See also Dean nos. 36–41 (pp. 24–30), and J. Marvin, "Albine and Isabelle: Regicidal Queens and the Historical Imagination of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* Chronicles", *AL* 18 (2001), 143–83.

38 The "prophecies" here are to be distinguished from the Prophecies (that is, Geoffrey's *PM*) since "the prophecies brought into the [Long Version] are not the Galfridian ones themselves, but a version of the *Prophecy of the Six Kings to Follow John*"; Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History*, p. 240 and n. 33.

- 3) *Le Livre de reis de Brittanie*, 13th century; begins with a summary of the history of England to the overthrow of the Britons, based on the *DGB* (and not on Wace) [Dean 13]³⁹
- 4) *Le Livre de reis de Engleter(r)e*, 13th century; the very short summary of the history of Britain with which the work begins is drawn from both Geoffrey and Bede [Dean 23]⁴⁰

II *Prophecies of Merlin*

A. Verse translations:⁴¹

i. Octosyllabic:

- 1) London, British Library, Additional 48212.O, mid-14th century; 117 lines (*DGB* §116:33–42), Prophecies fragment, from the awakening of the Daneian forest to the heron's three eggs [Dean 21]

ii. Decasyllabic [Dean 19]:⁴²

- 1) Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, 302, second half of the 13th century: 668 lines (§§112–17), Prophecies preceded by 166 lines of the preamble
- 2) Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 67, second half of the 13th century: 668 lines (§§112–17), Prophecies preceded by 172-line preamble

39 *Le Livre de Reis de Brittanie e Le Livre de Reis de Engletere*, ed. J. Glover, London, 1865; the most recent edition of both texts appears in C. Foltys, "Kritische Ausgabe der anglo-normannische Chroniken: Brutus, Li rei de Engleterre, Le Livre de Reis de Engleterre", unpublished inaugural dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, 1961.

40 Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Oxford, 1969. For continuations of the *Livre de reis de Engleter(r)e*, see Dean nos. 26 and 27, p. 21.

41 All of the following are Anglo-Norman. In line 1 of the unique prologue in Lincoln, Cathedral Library, 104, a certain "Willelme" names himself as responsible for the Prophecies text in that manuscript, but he remains as yet unidentified, as is the "Helias" to whom the Durham and Fitzwilliam manuscripts appear to be attributed; all other witnesses are anonymous/without attribution. On the decasyllabic and alexandrine Prophecies, see "Anglo-Norman Verse Prophecies of Merlin", ed. and trans. J. Blacker, *Arthuriana* 15:1 (2005), 1–125, rev. ed. *Anglo-Norman Verse Prophecies of Merlin*, Dallas, 2005; on the attributions, see pp. 4–86. The Durham manuscript is the base manuscript for the decasyllabic version (and English translation) and the Lincoln manuscript, for the alexandrine version.

42 While the decasyllabic witnesses of the Prophecies have many similarities among them, as do the alexandrine, more work remains to be done to establish exact descentance (e.g., which is the earliest of the versions, what is the relationship between the different witnesses).

- 3) Durham, Cathedral Library, C.IV.27, late 12th–early 13th century; Wace, *Brut* + interpolated Prophecies: 668 lines (§§112–17), preceded by 172-line preamble
- 4) Cologny-Geneva, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 67, second half of the 13th century; Wace, *Brut* fragment + Prophecies: 668 lines (§§112–17), preceded by ll. 63–172 of preamble

iii. *Alexandrine* [Dean 20]:

- 1) London, British Library, Harley 1605, mid-13th century (second fragment contains most of the Prophecies; see 1.A.b.2 [Alexandrine] above)
- 2) Lincoln, Cathedral Library, 104, second half of the 13th century; Wace, *Brut* + interpolated Prophecies: 587 lines (§§112–17)
- 3) London, British Library, Additional 45103, late 13th century; Wace, *Brut* + interpolated Prophecies: 587 lines (§§112–17)

B. Prose translations:⁴³

- 1) Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 17177 (*Estoire des Bretons*) Prophecies with occasional glosses (see 1.B.i.1 above)⁴⁴

43 In addition to these more comprehensive versions, there are also isolated prophecies found in a variety of texts, particularly in commentaries on the *PM*, a substantial tradition unto itself that cannot be addressed here; on the interrelationships of the various Merlin traditions including the commentaries, see especially *Prophetia Merlini*, ed. Eckhardt, pp. 1–15. In addition, there are romances that contain prophecies that came to be associated with Merlin, but also more direct borrowings from the *DGB*. For example: 1) The *Prophéties de Merlin* dating from the late 13th century and attributed (within the text) to a certain Richard d'Irlande, purportedly translated from the Latin, should more probably be considered a French Arthurian romance, with prophecies running through it as a narrative thread. See *Les Prophecies de Merlin, edited from MS. 593 of the Bibliothèque Municipale de Rennes*, ed. L.A. Paton, 2 vols. (Modern Language Association of America Monograph Series, 1), New York and London, 1926–27 (repr. New York, 1966); *Les Prophéties de Merlin (Cod. Bodmer 116)*, ed. A. Berthelot (Bibliotheca Bodmeriana Textes, 6), Cologny-Geneva, 1992; and N. Koble, “*Les Prophéties de Merlin*” en prose: le roman arthurien en éclats (Nouvelle Bibliothèque du Moyen Âge, 92), Paris, 2009; and 2) the more substantial interpolation of Galfridian prophecies in the *Didot-Perceval*; see *The Didot Perceval, according to the manuscripts of Modena and Paris*, ed. W. Roach, Philadelphia, 1941; and especially J. Abed, “La Traduction française de la *Prophetia Merlini* dans le *Didot-Perceval*”, in R. Trachsler (ed.), with the collaboration of J. Abed and D. Expert, *Moult obscures paroles: Études sur la prophétie médiévale*, Paris, 2007, pp. 81–105.

44 See G. Veyssière, “‘Mettre en roman’ les prophéties de Merlin. Voies et détours de l’interprétation dans trois traductions de l’*Historia regum Britannie*”, in Trachsler (ed.), *Moult obscures paroles*, pp. 107–66.

- 2) Jean de Wavrin, *Chronique d'Angleterre*, Prophecies with occasional glosses (see I.B.i.5)⁴⁵
- 3) Jean Wauquelin, *Roman de Brut*, Prophecies with occasional glosses (see I.B.i.4)

Although a superficially simple pattern emerges from the table above – 1) that the verse translations are almost always in Anglo-Norman and appear earlier than the prose translations; and 2) that the prose translations (but more often adaptations) fall into two distinct groups, a) the Anglo-Norman prose chronicles which are more loosely based on Galfridian texts, and b) the continental, more of whose authors are known by name, and whose texts tend to stick closer to the Galfridian sources – when one dives into the texts themselves, many more questions arise than have yet been answered regarding the comparative nature of these traditions, to each other, and to the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth. More fundamentally still, as Sylvie Lefèvre⁴⁶ notes in her recent “call to editors”, “so much remains to be done in order for the landscape to be finally more accessible to [lit., more readable for] all of us.”⁴⁷

45 Richard Trachsler reports that at least three manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale de France appear to contain a text “proche ou identique” to that found in de Wavrin’s *Chronique d’Angleterre*: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 2806, fr. 5621, and fr. 16939; see “Des *Prophetiae Merlini* aux *Prophecies Merlin* ou comment traduire les vaticinations de Merlin”, in C. Galderisi and G. Salmon (eds.), *Actes du colloque “Translatio” médiévale*, Mulhouse, 11–12 mai 2000 (Perspectives médiévales, supplément au numéro 26), Paris, 2000, pp. 105–24, cited at p. 121, n. 44. As Trachsler remarks, there may of course be others (p. 121).

46 S. Lefèvre, “Conclusions: *L’Historia regum Britannie* entre éternels retours et complexes détours”, in Tétrel and Veysseyre (eds.), *L’Historia regum Britannie*, pp. 299–303, at p. 303: “Appel aux éditeurs”: “L’ultime enseignement pourrait bien être l’absolue nécessité d’éditer tant de versions, traductions, adaptations encore inédites, souvent connus des seuls spécialistes de ce volume. Certaines entreprises sont en cours: réédition de Wace à partir de la copie Guiot; travaux des directrices de l’ouvrage, Hélène Tétrel et Géraldine Veysseyre, mais il reste beaucoup à faire pour que le paysage tout entier soit enfin plus lisible pour tous”.

47 I would like to express my gratitude to Jane H.M. Taylor and Richard Trachsler for their advice in the preparation of this article, and to Heather Pagan, Trevor Smith, and Julia Marvin for their guidance through the complexities of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* traditions. Any errors that remain are my own responsibility.