Korinna Gonschorek

Imagining Male Fairies in European Literature of the Middle Ages

Abstract: This chapter engages with the depiction of male fairies in Old French, Anglo-Norman, and Middle English literature. While the figures of female fairies have been examined thoroughly, research on their male counterparts is scant. This chapter aims to provide an overview of the different types of male fairies and their narrative functions. In doing so, transcultural connections are highlighted by drawing on a large corpus of Old French, Anglo-Norman, and Middle English texts. The first part is concerned with the relationships between human women and fairy knights which result in the birth of a hero, while the second part examines the fairy as a supernatural helper. Finally, the more threatening figure of the male fairy as an abductor comes into focus. It becomes clear that, even though there are certain characteristic traits which help us group the male figures within different categories, there are strong differences in the functionalisation and distribution of mythical elements taken from the oral tradition of Celtic mythology.

Keywords: Celtic mythology, fairy, Old French literature, Middle English literature, otherworld, *lai*, Middle English Breton lay, romances

1 Introduction

In studying European medieval romance, one cannot help but come across numerous depictions of fairies, be they benevolent, malevolent, dangerous, or beautiful. The relationship between a human and a supernatural partner, termed *gestörte Mahrtenehe*[1] by Friedrich Panzer in the early twentieth century, is especially prevalent in those texts: the hero meets a fairy mistress, often in an otherworld and through her cunning; they fall in love, and she issues a taboo, which he then breaks. After being sent away, the hero needs to prove his valour in order to win back her favour.[2] The

1 Literal translation: 'disrupted marriage of a mare'. A mare is a mythological figure believed to produce nightmares by sitting on a person's chest while they sleep.

2 There have been several attempts to grasp the narrative pattern of these stories. Friedrich Panzer (1902) applies a strongly folkloric perspective and attempts to determine an ideal type of narrative and its mythological origin. He considers medieval texts as adaptations of this ideal, original narrative – a statement which is impossible to prove due to the orality of mythology. Ralf Simon (1990) tried to distinguish nine narrative functions by considering Middle High German texts, but his conclusions remain rather generic. Anne Wawer (2000) argues very generally that there is a rationalisation of the fairy, through which it becomes assimilated to the human world.

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opposite of the beautiful fairy mistress is the fairy godmother. In the mythical imagination, she is present at the birth, and she weaves the fate of the child. In literature, the fairy godmother can bless the child with magical material gifts,[3] and she can take the role of the stepmother by taking the child to the fairy realm with her (Wolfzettel 1984, 947–948).[4]

Researchers have long been convinced that the belief in fairies is strongly – although not solely – influenced by Celtic mythology[5] and its representation of highly ambiguous figures. While fairies were sometimes seen as supernatural, beautiful beings, they were also depicted as small, pixie-like creatures which were more mischievous than sublime (Wolfzettel 1984, 947–952). However, in medieval literature, fairies are most commonly portrayed as powerful beings with magical powers, superior to humans. Although numerous researchers have devoted considerable attention to female fairies and their role within narrative patterns,[6] the figures of male fairies have largely been neglected. Even though they appear less frequently in medieval literature, they are featured in prominent roles and deserve closer examination.

To address this lack of attention, I examine the different types of male fairies in Old French, Anglo-Norman,[7] and Middle English texts. Even though it is impossible to draw certain lines of textual transmission, there is a clear intercultural, interlingual, and intertextual entanglement. The texts utilise previously existing mythical concepts, which are adapted to the dominant cultural background. As Helen Cooper has demonstrated, the belief in fairies, which has its origins in Celtic mythology, has remained continuously popular – particularly in the British Isles and Ireland – since the early Middle Ages.[8] Cooper notes that "the more literary kind of fairy was conveyed into

3 Examples for magical gifts and abilities granted by a fairy godmother can, for example, be found in the *lai* (see n. 11) of *Tyolet* (45–48), *Huon de Bordeaux* (3520–3583), and *L'Âtre Périlleux* (7112–7113).

4 See, for example, Ulrich von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet*, or *Floriant et Florete*.

5 Laurence Harf-Lancner (1984) and Friedrich Wolfzettel (1984) connect the *fées marraines* [fairy godmothers] and *fées amantes* [fairy lovers] with the classical Parcae or Fates, the goddesses of fate. Wolfzettel also includes both Celtic and Germanic origins.

6 James Wade (2011) offers a comprehensive and detailed overview, but he focuses heavily on female fairies. Male fairies are only included as supplements to different thematic aspects. Harf-Lancner (1984) analyses the role of fairies in medieval literature in great detail. However, her focus is solely on Old French and Anglo-Norman texts. Lucy Allen Paton (1960) studied fairy mythology in detail, but her focus is on Morgain la Fée and hardly includes any of the male fairies considered in this chapter.

7 Even though Anglo-Norman is, from a linguistic perspective, a variety of Old French, I want to treat them separately, as this chapter is concerned with literary traditions based on content. In this, there should be a distinction between Old French texts which were produced on the Continent, and Anglo-Norman texts written on the British Isles.

8 Defining the term *Celtic* is difficult in itself, since it refers to several communities within Western Europe. In research, the very heterogenous group of "Celts" has been defined by their language, encompassing all speakers of a common Indo-European language (i.e. "Celtic"), which is related to Germanic and Latin (Maier 1994, 187). *Celtic mythology* originally refers to religious tales. However, it must be kept in mind that what we perceive as "the Celts" were not one people but rather consisted of

French literature by way of parallel Celtic traditions in Brittany, and from there back across the Channel to England" (Cooper 2004, 177–178). This statement highlights the difficulty of separating the different literary circuits: the Celtic mythological elements, which were used to depict (male) fairies in different languages (i.e. Old French, Anglo-Norman, and Middle English), stem from a common source. Even though the texts are written in different languages, the fact that Anglo-Norman, a variety of Old French, was effectively written on the British Isles makes the textual relation even more significant. It seems that transcultural encounters did not just occur at the level of content, through the adaptation of a common mythological source, but later at the level of production as well, especially in the process of translating from one language to another.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the connection between male fairy figures in Old French, Anglo-Norman, and Middle English texts.[9] In the examination, it becomes clear that the texts utilise different mythological elements, which stem from common sources, to create their male fairies.[10] Viewing these texts alongside each other, even though they were composed in different languages, is promising as this can demonstrate the development of mythical thinking in the Middle Ages. This can help clarify the distinctions between different cultural circuits, while the overarching connection remains visible. The first part of this study will be concerned with three texts depicting the relationship of human women with male fairy knights, which can be considered a reversal of the *gestörte Mahrtenehe*. I will explore the Anglo-Norman *lai*[11] *Yonec*, written by Marie de France in the late twelfth century, in which the fairy knight Muldumarec visits a young lady imprisoned in a tower and engages in a sexual relationship with her. Additionally, I will examine the Old French *lai* of *Tydorel* (c. 1170–1230), in which the fairy knight seduces a married woman, which results in the

multiple distinct groups, each with their own mythologies (Maier 1994, 245). Mythological texts were transmitted orally, and in only a few places – mainly Ireland and Wales – were they written down, and only after Christianisation (Green 2016 [1993], 10–11). When I refer to Celtic mythology, I mean the content of those texts from the British Isles and Ireland, even though they had already lost their "pure" mythological quality by the time they were written down and had taken on a "folkloric" character.

9 This chapter is a first attempt to give an overview of Old French, Anglo-Norman, and Middle English texts containing male fairies, and to consider as many texts as possible – without, however, claiming to be comprehensive.

10 In this context, it must be kept in mind that mythological knowledge was largely transmitted orally, resulting in a high degree of *mouvance* in medieval texts (Zumthor 1972, 65–75). It is thus not productive to search for an author's intention in the creation of the figures, as medieval authors often used common prototypical figures. Instead, the focus should lie on the representations and roles of the figures within the text, and on the question of how this mythological knowledge was utilised in their creation.

11 The Old French *lai*, as well as the Middle English Breton lay, refers to a specific form of medieval romance literature. *Lais*/lays are usually short texts written in rhymed verse, and their content often includes themes of chivalry, love, and the supernatural deriving from Celtic mythology.

birth of Tydorel, who exhibits clear signs of his fairy ancestry. The focus will then shift to the Middle English Breton lay *Sir Degaré*, composed in the early thirteenth century, in which Degaré is the result of the fairy knight raping a young princess. What all these texts have in common is that the relationship between a mortal woman and a supernatural fairy knight produces a superhuman hero.

The second part will focus on male fairies as helping figures, which appear several times in Old French literature. In *L'Âtre Périlleux* (mid-thirteenth century) and *Amadas et Ydoine* (c. 1190–1220), we encounter supernatural opponents whose function is to test the hero. In *L'Âtre Périlleux*, the hero needs to prove his physical strength, while *Amadas and Ydoine* adds a moral dimension to the test. Once the heroes pass, the fairy knights change their roles and they become helping figures. The fairy figure Auberon in the Old French text *Huon de Bordeaux* (c. 1260) can also be classified among the fairy helpers, though he is quite unique in medieval literature. On the one hand, he is the product of fairy godmothers, to whom he owes his powers; on the other hand, he is one of the most powerful fairy figures depicted in medieval texts. In *Huon de Bordeaux*, he is presented as a helper to Huon, yet it is clear that he pursues his own agenda in seeking an heir to his fairy realm.

While the male fairy figures in the texts mentioned above are somewhat threatening but ultimately prove to be more or less positive figures, this is not the case for the male fairies who abduct mortals and take them to the otherworld. The texts considered here are the Anglo-Norman romance *Gui de Warewic* (c. 1232–1242), as well as its Middle English adaptation *Guy of Warwick* (c. 1300), in which Gui's son Rainbrun saves the imprisoned knight Amis from a fairy knight in his otherworldly palace. Additionally, the Middle English Breton lay *Sir Orfeo* (late thirteenth or early fourteenth century) will be examined, in which Orfeo's wife Heurodis is taken by the fairy king. In these cases, the male fairies are introduced as otherworldly opponents who operate outside the norms of a courtly code. The heroes are forced to travel to the otherworld in order to win back the mortal.

2 The creation of a hero: Fairy lovers and fairy rapists

In the *lai Yonec*, the figure of the supernatural fairy mistress is mirrored in the fairy knight Muldumarec who visits the lady in her tower. Like the fairy mistress in Marie's *Lanval*, he claims to have loved the lady from afar for a long time before he could appear to her, which was made possible by her wish. The fairy knight Muldumarec is essentially a male counterpart of the courtly *fée amante* [fairy lover] who rescues a typical *mal mariée* [unhappily married woman]: a young and beautiful lady was married to an old and jealous man who locks her in a tower. This results in the lady's loss of beauty, as well as complete unhappiness. The audience witnesses an outburst of

despair, in which the young lady wishes for a noble knight to rescue her (*Yonec* 65–104). It is not only the desire for freedom which comes across in her speech but also the desire for love. Her prayers are immediately answered by the appearance of the fairy knight who has been summoned by her wish, and he declares his enduring love for the lady:

> Jeo vus ai lungement amee
> E en mun quor mut desiree;
> Unkes femme fors vus n'amai
> Ne jamés autre n'amerai.
> Mes ne poeie a vus venir
> Ne fors de mun paleis eissir,
> Si vus ne m'eüssez requis.
> Or puis bien estre vostre amis! (*Yonec* 127–134)
>
> [I have loved you for a long time and I have desired you much in my heart; I have never loved another woman besides you, and I will never love another. But I could not come to you or leave my palace if you had not wished for me. Now I can truly be your lover!][12]

It seems odd that the fairy knight suffers such limitations to his ability to approach the human he desired, but these limitations can be interpreted as a reflection of his fairy nature. He is summoned by the wish of the human, a motif which can also be found in texts depicting the relationship with female fairies, such as Anglo-Norman *Lanval* or Middle High German *Der Ritter von Staufenberg*. Even though Muldumarec has to wait for the lady to call him, his ability to reach her sets him apart from human lovers. Marie's *lai Laüstic* seems to present a counterpart to *Yonec*, even though it does not include a fairy figure. The basic narrative structure of the *lais* is very similar: two lovers are kept apart by a jealous husband. However, while Muldumarec is able to come to the lady's tower in spite of her sister-in-law, who keeps watch over her, the situation is presented differently in *Laüstic*:

> N'unt gueres rien ki lur despleise,
> Mut esteient amdui a eise,
> Fors tant k'il ne poent venir
> Del tut ensemble a lur plesir,
> Kar la dame ert estreit gardee
> Quant cil esteit en la cuntree. (*Laüstic* 45–50)
>
> [Hardly anything displeased them; both of them were at ease, except that they could not get together at all as they liked, for the lady was closely guarded when he [i.e. the husband] was away.][13]

12 All translations are my own.

13 For a discussion of possible translations of this text passage, see Burgess (1992).

The lady's guards pose an insurmountable problem for the two lovers, as opposed to the lovers in *Yonec*. It seems like it is ultimately Muldumarec's superhuman power which enables the couple in *Yonec* to come together, a quality which the human lover in *Laüstic* is missing.

This leads to Muldumarec's most distinguishing feature: his ability to transform into a hawk. This narrative element, as well as others, can already be found in Celtic texts (Illingworth 1961, 505–511). However, it is not the aim of this study to identify Celtic narrative motifs and patterns as they have been examined extensively.[14] Instead, I want to take a closer look at how this element of transformation, which is rooted in Celtic mythology, is used throughout the text. His ability to transform places the knight in the realm of the supernatural.[15] When he first comes to the lady's tower, she is afraid of his magical abilities:

> Quant ele ot fait sa pleinte issi,
> L'umbre d'un grant oisel choisi
> Par mi une estreite fenestre;
> Ele ne seit que ceo pout estre.
> En la chambre volant entra;
> Giez ot as piez, ostur sembla,
> De cinc mues fu u de sis.
> Il s'est devant la dame asis.
> Quant il i ot un poi esté
> E ele l'ot bien esgardé,
> Chevaliers bels e genz devint.
> La dame a merveille le tint;
> Li sens li remut e fremi,
> Grant poür ot, sun chief covri. (*Yonec* 105–118)
>
> [When she had lamented thus, she saw the shadow of a large bird above a narrow window; she did not know what it could be. It came flying into the chamber; it had leather straps on its claws; it seemed to be a hawk, and it had moulted five or six times. It sat down in front of the lady. When it had stayed there a little, and when she had beheld it clearly, it became a handsome and noble knight. The lady thought this was a marvel, and her blood welled, and she trembled; she felt great fear and covered her head.]

It becomes clear that the supernatural bears a threatening quality, but in the case of Muldumarec, it is soon relativised both by his adherence to courtly ideals and his as-

14 For a detailed analysis of Celtic mythological elements, see, for example, Johnston (1905); Cross (1913); Illingworth (1961); and Sergent (2014).

15 The fairy knight who can take animal form also appears in the *lai* of *Tyolet* (early thirteenth century). When Tyolet, who has been brought up in the forest, sheltered from the life of chivalry, follows a stag, he watches it turn into a knight who introduces him to chivalric ideals and way of life. This recalls *Le Conte du Graal* by Chrétien de Troyes, in which Perceval, who has been removed from society by his mother, meets a group of knights in the forest, and then resolves to become one of Arthur's knights himself.

surance that he is of Christian belief. He tells the lady: "Dame, [. . .] n'eiez poür: / Gentil oisel ad en ostur!" (*Yonec* 121–122) [Lady, do not be afraid: the hawk is a noble bird!]. He links his appearance as a hawk to the virtues of chivalry by calling it 'noble.' As Schneider argues, "[h]is words reveal that his transformation into a human does not remove the hawk from his identity, and that the hawk is consistent with his masculine role in chivalry, courtship, and love" (Schneider 2016, 28). After his proclamation, the lady is comforted, but she makes his belief in God a condition for their union (*Yonec* 137–140). Muldumarec complies with her demand and uses his ability of transformation once again, this time to become the lady and receive the communion (*Yonec* 161–188). In this narrative, the concept of the fairy knight becomes closely connected with courtly and religious norms. The intrusion of the supernatural does not cause a problem in the text as long as it is in accordance with concepts of courtliness and religion. This is an aspect which also appears frequently in the depiction of female fairies. In *Partonopeus de Blois*, for example, Partonopeus loses his fear of the supernatural mistress when he hears her utter the name of the Virgin Mary (*Partonopeus de Blois* 1159–1164).

Still, the fairy knight is clearly marked as an otherworldly being. Not only his shapeshifting is telling in this respect but also his prophetic knowledge about the birth of their son – a motif commonly used in folk tales (Hodgson 1974, 25). When he is mortally wounded by the lady's jealous husband, he foretells the future of their son.

> De lui est enceinte d'enfant.
> Un fiz avra, pruz e vaillant;
> Icil la recunforterat.
> Yönec numer le ferat.
> Il vengerat e lui e li,
> Il oscirat sun enemi. (*Yonec* 327–332)
>
> [She has become pregnant by him with a child. She will have a son, noble and excellent; he will comfort her. She will have him named Yonec. He will avenge him and her; he will kill his enemy.]

Muldumarec specifies the manner of their revenge when he talks to the lady again on his deathbed. He describes the circumstances under which Yonec will avenge his father's death, and he gives the lady two gifts: his sword, which Yonec will use when he takes revenge, and a magic ring, which will let the lady's husband forget her infidelity (*Yonec* 414–436). Everything he says comes true, and Yonec, after having gained knowledge of his true origin, uses his father's sword to kill his stepfather (*Yonec* 529–546). In this, he delivers justice to the man who has murdered his father.[16] In Mul-

16 William Calin calls Yonec's revenge "a classical case of oedipal conflict" (1994, 28), which seems rather far-fetched in this case. Even though Yonec does indeed kill his stepfather, I prefer Frederick

dumarec's death, Marie creates another opposition between the otherworldly being and the human man in the *lai Laüstic*. When the fairy knight is mortally wounded in his bird form, he ultimately provides an opportunity for the lady to escape her prison and to follow her lover to the fairy realm. In *Laüstic*, the lady claims to be listening to a nightingale in the middle of the night while she is in truth looking at her lover through the window. Enraged, the husband orders the nightingale to be killed. He effectively ends all interaction between the lovers by killing the bird. In Marie's *Yonec*, otherworldly elements are integrated into a system of courtliness and religious belief. The superior character of the fairy knight is not tarnished at any point of the text. Instead, his otherworldly nature and his magical abilities enhance his figure, and they are used to mark the hero of the text, Yonec, as superior.

The fairy knight is depicted very differently in the lay of *Tydorel*. Even though there are some structural similarities to Marie's *Yonec*, Tydorel's father, a male fairy, appears in a more ambiguous form than Muldumarec. As is the case with Muldumarec, the fairy knight's supernatural character is revealed very early on. The association of the fairy knight with the supernatural is already established in the couple's first meeting. When the queen is in an orchard, she becomes tired and lies down beneath an "ente" (*Tydorel* 30), a grafted fruit tree, a motif frequently found in medieval literature in connection with the supernatural (Jirsa 2008, 142). The image of the grafted tree in which two different kinds are merged into one is metaphorically connected to the merging of the otherworld with the human one, and thus it is often used as a symbol for the world of fairies (Saunders 2001, 228). Marie-Thérèse Brouland links the image of the fruit tree to the Celtic legends *Echtra Cormaic Maic Airt* and *Imram Brain*, in which the main figures are led to the otherworld through branches of fruit trees (Brouland 1990, 59). Furthermore, the grafted tree is an image of fertility, since grafting actually increases the tree's fertility (Allen 2019, 131), which implicates the conception of Tydorel – the child that will result from the union with the fairy knight. When the queen wakes up, she cannot find her companions; instead, a fairy knight approaches her:

> Contreval le jardin garda,
> Si vit un chevalier venir,
> Soef le pas, tout a loisir:
> Ce fu li plus biaus hon du mont,

Hodgon's interpretation: "The fusion of the two realities, first indicated in the motif of a child born of one mortal and one supernatural parent, becomes complete in the dénouement where the supernatural knight from the fairy world has been transformed into a *this-world* king whose tomb provokes Yonec's revenge. The combination of the two realities [. . .] results in the violence perpetrated against the fairy knight and allows the ultimate justice provided by Yonec's vengeance" (Hodgson 1974, 25).

De toz iceus qui ore i sont;
De raineborc[17] estoit vestuz,
Genz ert et granz et bien membruz. (*Tydorel* 40–46)

[She looked down towards the garden, and she saw a knight coming with soft steps and without haste: he was the most beautiful man in the world of all those who are there now; he was clad in precious fabrics; he was noble and tall, and he had strong limbs.]

The extraordinary beauty of the fairy knight recalls the depiction of Muldumarec. It is a feature commonly used to mark both male and female fairies. The fairy knight is distinguished by both his great physical beauty and the splendour of his clothing. He appears to the queen in a manner which leads her to believe that he is a nobleman who has come to speak to the king. However, when the knight reaches her, he takes her hand, and declares his love:

"Dame," fet il, "ci sui venuz
Por vos que molt aim et desir:
Si me dites vostre plesir,
Se vos savez et vos cuidiez
Que vos amer me peussiez
D'itele amor con je vos quier,
Ne me fetes longues proier:
Je vos ameré loiaument;
Et si ne puet ester autrement,
Je m'en irai, vos remaindrez:
Sachiez ja mes joie n'avrez." (*Tydorel* 58–68)

["Lady," he says, "I have come here for you, whom I love and desire very much: tell me what you want, whether you know and think that you could love me in the way which I seek from you. Do not let me beg for long: I will love you truthfully; and if it cannot be otherwise, I will go, and you will stay: know that you will never again feel joy."]

At first glance, this declaration bears a strong similarity to the *lai* of *Yonec*. However, one striking difference is that the lady's wish does not seem to play a role in this text. Instead of being summoned by the loved one, the fairy knight himself decides that it is time to find her and make her his lover. He appears to give her a choice in the matter, since he will leave if she decides to stay faithful to her husband, but at the same time he foretells that she will give up happiness for the rest of her life if she refuses him. The motivation behind the queen's decision to accept the fairy knight as her lover remains unclear, but it appears like she does indeed fall in love with him on account of his immense beauty.

17 The Old French word *raineborc* probably refers to the German city of Regensburg, which was known for trading in costly fabrics (see e.g. Heimpel 1954). Wolfram von Eschenbach, for example, also writes of *Regenspurger zindâl* (*Parzival* VII, 377, 30) in the description of costly material. See also *Tobler-Lommatzsch*, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch* (1925–2018, s.v. *raineborc*, n.).

> La dame l'a molt esgardé
> Et son semblant et sa biauté;
> Angoisseusement l'aama,
> Otroie li qu'el l'amera,
> S'ele seust qui il estoit,
> Conment ot non et dont venoit. (*Tydorel* 69–74)
>
> [The lady looked at him for a long time, and at his appearance and his beauty; she loved him violently, and she agreed to love him if she knew who he was, what his name was, and where he came from.]

Unlike the lady in *Yonec*, the queen does not demand proof of the fairy knight's Christian faith in order to love him. Instead, she requires information about his ancestry and origin. Even though he denies the queen knowledge of his name, he shows her to the lake from which he came, and in which he proves his supernatural abilities. The fairy knight shares Muldumarec's knowledge of the future. He foretells both the birth and the fate of their children and grandchildren, even before they consummate their union. Then, he takes the queen back to the orchard, and they have intercourse: "La l'amena ou il la prist, / Toute sa volenté en fist" (*Tydorel* 151–152). This sentence is very ambiguous as it offers two possible translations. It could either mean 'He led her there, where he took her; he did all he desired from this,' or 'He led her there, where he took her; she complied with all his desires.' In this formulation, it remains unclear whether it is the fairy knight who takes what he wants, or whether the queen offers herself up willingly. The Old French word *volenté* has a wide semantic range, reaching from 'wish, desire' to 'control, power,' and even 'impulsive act' (*AND* s.v. *volenté*, n.). This ambiguous wording mitigates the suspicion of a rape, much like the fact that the queen had previously expressed that she would love him. Additionally, the fairy knight is called her *ami* (*Tydorel* 159) [friend; lover] only a few lines later, which creates the impression of a reciprocal relationship. This is intensified by the narrator who informs the audience that the queen and the fairy knight often meet afterwards (*Tydorel* 159–160).

One aspect which deserves closer examination in the two *lais* considered above is the detection of the relationship through a third party. Even though the detection has grave consequences for Muldumarec, it is not his fairy nature which forces him to leave his lady, but the jealous husband's attack on him. Tydorel's father, however, makes clear from the very beginning that the relationship can only continue until they are "aparceu" (*Tydorel* 112) [discovered]. The necessity to keep the union secret serves as another indicator of the knight's supernatural origin, since it proves that his presence is not compatible with the human world. A wounded and impoverished human knight who discovers the lovers must die as a result (Lecco 2022, 400). Tydorel's father suddenly disappears and is never seen again, and while Yonec is destined to avenge his father and become king, Tydorel is left without a clear purpose. How-

ever, he immediately displays characteristics of his supernatural origin in his inability to sleep.

It is important to note that Tydorel's descent from a fairy knight is less problematised than in other texts, weakening the association between fairies and demonic beings. In the Middle English text *Sir Gowther*, for example, the lady is seduced by a "fende" (*Sir Gowther* 74) [demon/devil] who has assumed the form of her husband. She is impregnated, and the child shows signs of its demonic origin from the very beginning: Gowther kills nine wet-nurses and bites off his mother's nipple (*Sir Gowther* 113–132), he forces her to flee when his father dies of grief (*Sir Gowther* 154–159), and he burns down a nunnery (*Sir Gowther* 181–192). Tydorel, on the other hand, is an exemplary knight, which weakens the association of the otherworld with evil. In this, the lay of *Tydorel* shows closer similarities to *Yonec*. However, the two fairy knights have very different effects on their sons. While Yonec grows up like a normal knight and eventually uses his knowledge and power to overthrow the evil stepfather, Tydorel, who shows signs of his fairy origin all along, follows his father into the lake to test his immortality, never to be seen again (*Tydorel* 475–490). In the texts considered above, the fairy knights are explicitly distanced from any demonic suspicion. Instead, they are presented as fairy lovers who father heroic children.

This is different in the Middle English Breton lay *Sir Degaré*, in which the fairy knight is portrayed highly ambiguously. Instead of encountering a fairy lover, the audience is confronted with a fairy rapist. When he is first introduced, the fairy is described as a noble knight by the narrator:

> Toward hire comen a knight,
> Gentil, yong, and jolif man;
> A robe of scarlet he hadde upon;
> His visage was feir, his bodi ech weies;
> Of countenaunce right curteis;
> Wel farende legges, fot, and honde:
> Ther nas non in al the Kynges londe
> More apert man than was he. (*Sir Degaré* 90–97)
>
> [A knight came towards her, a gentle, young, and handsome man; he wore a scarlet robe; his face was fair, and his body, too, in every way; of his manners he was very courteous; his legs, feet, and hands were well-shaped: there was nobody in the king's country more attractive than him.]

The knight is introduced as the epitome of courtly knighthood. As is the case in the other stories considered above, his extraordinary beauty sets him apart from human men and places him within the realm of the supernatural. His description and the place of their first meeting also recall the *lai* of *Tydorel*, in which the knight is clearly marked as a supernatural being. In *Sir Degaré,* the princess finds herself alone at noon, a time when humans are most vulnerable to demonic interference, according to a literary tradition which dates back to antiquity (Friedman 1966, 28). In addition,

the location of the forest is telling in this context. It is a space in which the laws of court do not apply, and in which the supernatural can find its way into the human world, a "locus of danger and adventure" (Saunders 2001, 213).

This proves to be true when the knight, who first kindles the hope of rescue in the young princes, reveals his otherworldly nature and acts accordingly. Even his greeting seems to imply some sort of prophetic knowledge of her coming.

> "Damaisele, welcome mote thou be!
> Be thou afered of none wihghte:
> Iich am comen here a fairi knyghte;
> Mi kynde is armes for to were,
> On horse to ride with scheld and spere;
> Forthi afered be thou nowt:
> I ne have nowt but mi sword ibrout.
> Iich have iloved the mani a yer,
> And now we beth us selve her,
> Thou best mi lemman ar thou go,
> Wether the liketh wel or wo."
> Tho nothing ne coude do she
> But wep and criede and wolde fle;
> And he anon gan hire at holde,
> And dide his wille, what he wolde.
> He binam hire here maidenhod,
> And seththen up toforen hire stod. (*Sir Degaré* 98–114)

> ["Lady, you must be welcome! Do not be afraid of any man: I, a fairy knight, have come here; it is my habit to wear arms, and to ride on a horse with shield and spear; therefore, do not be afraid: I have brought nothing but my sword. I have loved you for many years, and now that we are here by ourselves, you must become my lover before you go, whether you like it or not." Then she could do nothing but weep, and she cried and wanted to flee; and he and he seized her immediately, and he did his will, as he desired. He took her maidenhead, and soon afterwards he stood before her.]

It seems as if the fairy knight aims at soothing the princess's fears. Even though he reveals his nature, he is careful to show that he does not pose a danger. His lack of weapons (except for his sword) serves as proof here – even though the sexual connotation of the sword implies a different sort of threat. He also proclaims his lasting love for the princess, which recalls the lays of *Yonec* and *Tydorel*, but with a quite aggressive turn: he clearly states that he intends to make her his lover, regardless of her desires, and does not even give her the chance to react to his words before he rapes her.

In medieval literature, it is common for the (female) fairy to offer sexual pleasures to the objects of their affections. One of the most prominent examples in this case is the *lai Lanval* as well as its Middle English adaptations, in which the fairy mistress brings the hero, whom she has loved from afar, to her otherworldly pavilion in the forest. He finds her naked there, and she promises him both sexual fulfilment and

wealth. In cases like these, it seems as if sexual pleasures are exchanged merely for the fairy's delight, even though James Wade argues that the fairy bestows her body as a gift and thus "the sexual gratification given by the fairy mistress creates a unique bond between giver and receiver that leads to a certain *bondage of the gift*, a bondage that reveals not only the indebtedness of the receiver, but also the *interestedness* of the gift itself" (2011, 114; emphasis in the original).

Opposed to this are the texts in which the fairy is male, as is the case in *Tydorel* and *Yonec*. Here, the aspect of sexual wish-fulfilment is secondary, and the union between fairy and human is aimed at the conception of a hero who is enhanced through his supernatural lineage. While there is no clear evidence of rape in either of the Anglo-Norman texts, and in the case of *Yonec* it is even overtly stated that the woman consents freely (*Yonec* 137–141), this is not the case in *Sir Degaré*. As in the other two texts, the fairy knight prophesies the birth of Degaré, which, especially in connection with the rape of the princess, evokes the idea of a demon-incubus (Saunders 2010, 199). However, Degaré shows no signs of violence and destruction. Like Yonec and Tydorel, he is the image of courtly perfection and shows his chivalric superiority, which seems to stem from his superhuman lineage, throughout the text (Saunders 2001, 215). As the child of the superhuman being, he can master challenges easily, as shown, for example, when he defeats a dragon in the forest shortly after he has left his foster parents (*Sir Degaré* 343–384). The most distinguishing – and confusing – victory is that over his grandfather. He succeeds where many others have failed: unknowingly, he wins his mother's hand in marriage when he defeats the king (*Sir Degaré* 573–584).[18]

It is striking that, in all his victories, the text depicts the superiority of the human world over the fairy realm as Degaré acts in perfect opposition to his fairy father (Eckert 2018, 39–40). He shows restraint concerning his sexual urges on several occasions: when he is married to his mother, Degaré remembers to let her try on the glove which will fit only her before he consummates the marriage (*Sir Degaré* 654–658). Furthermore, when he then sets out to find his father, he comes to an enchanted castle and saves the lady there from a hostile knight. She offers herself to him, but he refuses (*Sir Degaré* 969–983). As opposed to the fairy knight who forced himself on Degaré's mother, he controls himself completely. The victory of the world of mortals over the fairy world culminates in the battle between Degaré and his father. It soon

18 Much recent research has focused strongly on Oedipal interpretations and a suspected incestuous relationship between the king and his daughter: see Chery Colopy (1982), and more recently Sharon Rowley (2014), and Lesley Lawton (2016). These lines of interpretation do not seem convincing. As Kenneth Eckert (2018) points out, the princess has to confess to her father that she is not a virgin anymore, which eliminates the suspicion of a sexual relationship with her father. Furthermore, while Degaré's marriage with his mother and the fight with both his father and grandfather does indeed invite an Oedipal interpretation, this would neglect the other textual implications, rendering the human world superior to the otherworld, as proposed in this chapter.

becomes clear that Degaré is the superior fighter. He defeats the fairy knight, and here he also shows restraint when he decides not to kill him. After they have recognised each other, the fairy knight tries to convince Degaré to accompany him to the otherworld. Degaré refuses, and the fairy knight comes to the human court instead and marries Degaré's mother (*Sir Degaré* 1076–1090). The fairy knight is thus integrated into the human courtly system: the otherworld loses its power, and the human realm prevails.

As the examination of these three texts has shown, there are, on the one hand, considerable differences in the depiction of fairy knights in relationships with human women in Anglo-Norman and Middle English literature. The most striking aspect is the level of violence employed by the supernatural knight in ravishing the lady. On the other hand, there are certain traits, such as prophetic knowledge and supernatural beauty, which all these knights share. These traits, as well as the conception that the most powerful heroes are born from supernatural lineages, are extant elements of Celtic fairy mythology.

3 Supernatural helpers

By contrast with the male fairies who take a woman as a lover in order to father a child, there are also numerous depictions of fairies who first appear as opponents of human knights but then become supernatural helpers. In this section, I will consider three texts: the Old French *L'Âtre Périlleux* and *Huon de Bordeaux*, and the Anglo-Norman *Amadas et Ydoine*. In these texts, the fairy knights seem to be introduced to test the hero. In *L'Âtre Périlleux*, this is a test of physical strength, while in the other two it is a test of morality. One aspect which is of special interest here is the source of the fairies' magical powers. While the fairy knights considered above are inherently supernatural, it will be shown that the supernatural powers of the fairies examined in this chapter are gifted either by God or fairy godmothers. This reduces the threatening quality of the fairy.

In *L'Âtre Périlleux*, Gauvain encounters the fairy knight Orgellox, who is clearly marked as a supernatural being. Not only is his fairy nature underlined by the used vocabulary – during the fight with Gauvain and after his defeat, he is called *li Fées Orgellox*, *li Faés*, *l'Orgellox Faé*, *l'Orgellox qui ert faé*, and *l'Orguillous* – but also by the superhuman power of his character (Harf-Lancner 1984, 66). Orgellox is introduced as an opponent who needs to be subdued by the hero. His depiction as a supernatural being enhances the figure of Gauvain: the latter is strong enough to overpower even a monstrous knight. In this, the power dynamic which appeared in the texts considered above is reversed. It is not the fairy or their descendant who proves superior, but the human hero. After Gauvain's victory, Orgellox offers himself up, and he becomes a

supernatural helper. The extent of his powers becomes apparent when he reanimates a dismembered knight.

> Et le Faé sans delaier
> A le bras de l'escrin osté,
> Et el cors ariere posé;
> Puis fu plus sains que nul poisson.
> Et tels en orent fait le don
> A l'Orgelleus, qu'erent faé. (*L'Âtre Périlleux* 7108–7113)
>
> [And the *Faé* took the arm out of the coffer without delay, and he placed it behind the body; then he [the dismembered knight] felt better than a fish in water. Those who had given Orgellox this gift were *faé*.]

One aspect that stands out in this passage is the narrator's comment that Orgellox has received his magical powers as gifts from other supernatural beings. He himself soon clarifies how he came by these powers:

> Et Tristran et toute sa gent,
> Qui ont la merveille veüe,
> De demander forment s'argue
> Qui li dona tel destinee.
> Et cil dit: "El me fu donee
> En cele nuit que je fui né." (*L'Âtre Périlleux* 7124–7129)
>
> [And Tristan and all his people who had witnessed this marvel asked insistently who had given him such power. And he said: "It was given to me the night I was born."]

Magical powers given at birth recall the image of the fairy godmother. Orgellox was blessed by a supernatural being, which Harf-Lancner reads as a justification of his supernatural qualities: instead of possessing an inherent superhuman power, Orgellox is reduced to a regular human who was granted his abilities by a female fairy (Harf-Lancner 1984, 66–67).[19]

19 A different representation of the gift of supernatural powers can be found in *Le Romans de la Dame a la Lycorne et du Biau Chevalier au Lyon*. In this romance, the "Chevalier Feés" (*La Dame a la Lycorne* 2001) [fairy knight] owes his power, which he was granted at birth, to "Amours" (*La Dame a la Lycorne* 1963). The story of his conception is similarly interesting: while his mother was waiting for her lover in an orchard one day, she saw a beautiful blossom on an apple tree. "Amours" (*La Dame a la Lycorne* 1945) told her that this was the likeness of her lover, and by looking at it intently, the lady became pregnant and gave birth to the fairy knight (*La Dame a la Lycorne* 1918–2019). This depiction of *Amours* recalls the typical personification of love, which frequently appears in medieval romances. However, this could also be a link to the classical tradition, in which Cupid (Old French: *Amour*; Latin: *Amor*) is the god of love. While the supernatural conception is usually connected to the birth of a hero, as was also shown above, this is not the case in *Le Romans de la Dame a la Lycorne et du Biau Chevalier au Lyon*. The fairy knight is marginalised throughout the story: after he has been saved by

In *Amadas et Ydoine*, however, the source of the fairy knight's magical powers remains unexplained. As Harf-Lancner points out, he mirrors those female fairies who take the object of their desire with them to the fairy realm (1984, 67). After the knight has tried to abduct Ydoine, she falls into a death-like sleep and is thought to be dead (*Amadas et Ydoine* 4628–4663, 5171–5192). The tale reaches its climax in the confrontation at the graveyard, where the fairy knight appears as the leader of a host and must be defeated by Amadas before ultimately offering himself as a helper (*Amadas et Ydoine* 5584–6453). In the depiction of the host, the author intertwines mythological elements with Christian ones. The host counts more than a thousand people, divided into two groups: an assembly of clerics who bring a dead body on a bier, and a fairy host made up of a richly dressed company of males and females. In these two groups, which are not allowed to cross the boundaries of the cemetery, the author incorporates both elements of the Wild Hunt.[20] It evokes the association with otherworldly beings who cross over into the mortal world – a motif which is also known from the myth of King Herla.[21] The fairy host is grouped around a riderless white horse, which gives the impression that they are looking for one of the dead to take to the otherworld (Harf-Lancner 1984, 67). James Wade, too, has remarked upon the ambiguous qualities of the fairy knight as a being "somewhere between fairy and angel" (2011, 36). However, before Amadas's victory, the fairy knight is repeatedly demonised within the text by being called a *maufé* (*Amadas et Ydoine* 6685; 6712; 6925; 7133) [demon]. As an otherworldly opponent, the fairy knight enters the graveyard as an aggressor and challenges Amadas for the body of Ydoine. In his declaration, "Avoir le voel tout a estrous. / Le cors de li enporterai, / car longement amee l'ai [. . .]" (*Amadas et Ydoine* 5776–5778) [I want to have her at once. I will take away her body, because I have loved her for a long time] he suggests that he intends to take her to the fairy realm. He tries to convince Amadas that Ydoine was his lover (*Amadas et Ydoine* 5734–5753), even though this is later relativised. In his bold proclamation, the fairy knight lays claim to the woman, a claim which does not seem to be justified: he is presented as the prototypical fairy who takes the object of his desire. However, combined with Ydoine's false confession of infidelity to Amadas before her apparent death (*Amadas et Ydoine* 5009–5046), the fairy knight's proclamation becomes a hard test. James Wade very convincingly argues that the fight which results from this confrontation is not merely a test of Amadas's physical strength but of his morality (2011,

the hero, he is merely a counsellor, and he serves as a messenger between him and his lady. Further research is needed to produce a more detailed analysis and interpretation.

20 For more information on the Wild Hunt, see for example Schmitt (1994); Lecouteux (1999); and Ueltschi (2008).

21 The myth of King Herla tells how Herla is invited to the fairy realm, and when he returns after what seems like three days, he discovers that he was gone for several hundred years. He and his companions are doomed to roam the earth as a ghostly host, as anyone who dismounts and touches the earth immediately turns to dust (Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium* I, 11).

36). The supernatural being serves as a moral authority which needs to be persuaded before helping the protagonist. The fight is long and hard, but the fairy knight's declaration at its end proves that he only intended to test Amadas.

> Et si vous di, amis, de moi,
> que par armes ne puis morir:
> ma nature nel puet sosfrir,
> n'a Diu ne plaist que vous mesface.
> A demorer n'ai plus d'espace,
> car li jors vient: a Diu m'en vois. (*Amadas et Ydoine* 6430–6435)
>
> [And I tell you about myself, friend, that I cannot die through weapons: my nature does not allow it, and it does not please God that I injure you. I have no more time to stay, because day comes: I go to God.]

The fairy knight connects his own motivation directly to God. While the source of his supernatural ability to survive any weapon attack remains unexplained, he clearly states that he does not wish to harm Amadas as this would displease God. The need to depart before sunrise is something he shares with the fairy knight in Hue de Rotelande's *Protheselaus*. Even though the knight in *Amadas et Ydoine* is never actually called *faé*, he certainly evokes the association with the otherworldly beings, especially as part of the Wild Hunt (Ueltschi 2008, 195). After Amadas has passed the fairy knight's test, the fairy knight changes his attitude towards him: he confesses to having put an "anel faé" (*Amadas et Ydoine* 6444) [enchanted ring] on her finger, causing her to appear dead. In reuniting the lovers, he changes his position from being an otherworldly opponent to being a supernatural helping figure.

The elements considered above are combined in the figure of Auberon in *Huon de Bordeaux*.[22] However, unlike the fairy knights in *L'Âtre Périlleux* and *Amadas et Ydoine*, he is driven by a clear agenda. On the one hand, he acts as a helper, but on the other, his actions are motivated by his desire to find an heir for his fairy realm. In the prologue, he is introduced as "the little wild king who spent all his time in the forest" ("le petit roi sauvaige / Que tout son tans conversa en boscage," *Huon de Bordeaux* 6–7). Through the use of the word "sauvaige" he is initially placed in a sphere separate from the world of the court, clearly establishing his fairy nature. His lineage – he is described as a descendent of Morgan le Fay and Caesar – further confirms this.[23] Because of the limited scope of this study, a complete analysis of the figure of

22 *Huon de Bordeaux* was a highly influential text during the Middle Ages and the early modern period, as the numerous adaptations show. For a detailed examination of these adaptations, see Vial (2002).

23 Auberon is also a hybrid figure in the sense that he does not only exhibit typical characteristics of the Celtic fairies, but he also integrates similarities to Germanic dwarves (Rossi 1975, 347). However, Claude Lecouteux concludes after his very thorough study of medieval dwarves that Auberon and the Germanic variants of Alberich should in no way be equated. Instead, he convincingly argues that they

Auberon is not possible here. Instead, I will focus on the most important aspects of his characteristics and the role he plays in the text.[24]

Auberon shares some of the characteristic traits attributed to Celtic fairies, though with notable differences (Rossi 1975, 323). His dwelling place is the forest, which is a space of confrontation with the categorical other – a realm that is established as the opposite to the courtly world and its rules of behaviour and expectations of restraint and self-control (Schulz 2003, 516). This is certainly true for numerous medieval fairy stories. Tyolet, for example, meets the "chevalier beste" (*Tyolet* 155) – a knight with the ability to transform into a stag – in the forest, and Partonopeus, the hero in *Partonopeus de Blois*, gets lost in the Ardennes after hunting a wild boar sent by the fairy queen Melior. One of the most prominent encounters with a fairy can be found in Marie de France's *Lanval*. While the forest is not explicitly described in this *lai* but only implied, "in later versions of the story the forest is specified and even characterised as dense, suggesting the development of its symbolic potential" (Saunders 1993, 55).

Auberon initially appears to be quite similar to those mischievous fairies. Besides being a wood-dweller, he is of small stature and possesses magical powers. Humans are afraid of him, which becomes apparent when Géraume, Huon's companion, first describes the fairy king and warns Huon of his dangerous powers:

> Et la dedens maint uns nains, par vreté;
> Si n'a de grant que trois piés mesurés,
> Mais tout a certes est mout grans biautés,
> Car plus est biaus que solaus en esté.
> Auberons est par droit non apelés.
> Il n'est cors d'omme, s'il est u bos entrés,
> S'a lui parole, ki li puist escaper;
> Et puis qu'il est aveuc lui demorés,
> N'em partira ja mais en son aé. (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3174–3182)
>
> [And in there lives a dwarf, truly; and he measures no more than three feet, but he is certainly of great beauty, because he is more beautiful than the sun in summer. His true name is Auberon. He that has entered into the forest and talked to him and could escape him afterwards is not human, because whoever has stayed with him will never leave again while he is alive.]

Géraume highlights Auberon's extraordinary beauty, but the sense of danger is conveyed in his warning that whoever speaks to Auberon will be caught forever. This danger is further emphasised by the description of Auberon's magical powers: he can control the weather and the elements, and Huon would be lost to him if he spoke a word to him. When Huon encounters Auberon, the fairy immediately wants him to

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are the result of oral folkloric transmissions which influenced the creation of the figures (Lecouteux 1988, 87–88).

24 For a detailed description of Auberon and his magical abilities, see for example Rossi (1975) and Prosenc (1998).

speak. When Huon ignores the fairy king and refuses to speak, Auberon becomes enraged and demonstrates his magical abilities by conjuring a wild tempest.

At the same time, Auberon's threatening nature is relativised by the narrative voice, which describes him as a "noble chevalier" (*Huon de Bordeaux* 26) [noble knight]. This characterisation blends the traditional courtliness and the sense of the marvellous attributed to fairies (Vial 2002, 205). While he does indeed possess magical powers, it is clearly stated that he is *faé* (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3781), a term that can be translated as both 'enchanted' and 'magical' (*AND* s.v. *faé*, a.) and thus gives an ambiguous quality to his abilities. On the one hand, this hints at his lineage and inherent magical power, indicating that he is not necessarily subject to incantation but contains the ability within himself. On the other hand, this phrasing could also suggest that Auberon has received his abilities as gifts at his birth. He himself later describes that he was blessed by fairies when he was a child: he knows the thoughts and the heart of humans; he can move himself to where he likes; he can create a palace and food at will; he can command animals; he does not age; he knows the secrets of Paradise and he can hear angels singing; when he decides to end his life, he will go to Paradise and sit at God's side (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3533–3583). His only unfavourable gift, given to him by a malevolent fairy, is his small stature. However, this is soon rectified by the fairy, who, regretting her spitefulness, compensates him with the gift of extraordinary beauty (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3520–3530).

This description of the sources of Auberon's powers opens up some interesting perspectives. In comparison to the other male fairy figures considered in this chapter, Auberon is one of the most powerful fairies in Old French literature. However, it becomes clear that he owes most of his power to female counterparts. While his lineage would justify inherent magical powers, he is framed in the tradition of gifted human figures: he receives his powers as gifts from fairy godmothers, folkloric figures which decide over children's fate by bestowing positive or negative gifts (Harf-Lancner 1984, 27). Auberon's self-characterisation in this context is also significant. When he hears Huon call him a *malfé* (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3360) [demon], he clarifies:

> Je ne fui onques anemis ne maufés;
> Ains te di bien, se me puist Dix salver,
> Je suis uns hom com uns autres carné. (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3364–3366)
>
> [I have never been a fiend or a demon; but I tell you truly, if God may save me, I am a human like others, of flesh and blood.]

Auberon places himself in one category with humans. The humanisation of fairies can be found in numerous other texts (e.g. *Partonopeus de Blois*; *Lancelot en prose*), in which magical abilities are learned like other arts instead of inherited and inherent in supernatural beings.

However, he is simultaneously placed above ordinary humans. Not only is he granted the power to manipulate the human world, but he also appears to be an al-

most god-like figure. When he tells Huon about the gifts granted by the fairy godmothers, he states:

> De paradis sai jou tous les secrés
> Et oi les angles la sus u ciel canter,
> Nen viellirai ja mais en mon aé,
> Et ens la fin, quant je vaurai finer,
> Aveuqes Dieu est mes sieges posés. (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3579–3583)
>
> [I know all the secrets of Paradise, and there I hear the angels sing in the heaven; I will never age in my lifetime, and in the end, when I want to finish it, my seat will be placed by God.]

He has intimate knowledge of Paradise, and he can choose the hour of his death. In addition, he will take his place beside God, a position of highest honour. It is an extraordinary aspect in *Huon de Bordeaux* that Auberon's magical abilities and his fairy nature seem to be perfectly compatible with Christian beliefs. He insists numerous times that his powers were granted by God: "Le grant pooir que Jhesus m'a donné" (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3674) [The great power which Jesus has given to me], and on a narrative level, the terms *féerie* and *Dieu* are often combined to explain the source of his fairy characteristics (Prosenc 1998, 44). The use of an appeal to the Christian faith in order to de-demonise fairies is a recurring theme in medieval literature, as seen in Marie's *Yonec*, discussed above, and in *Partonopeus de Blois*, in which Melior soothes Partonopeus's fears by proclaiming her faith (1159–1164). However, the portrayal of Auberon's fairy qualities as a gift of God is rather unusual. In this case, the text seems rather provocative: Auberon is clearly marked as a mythical being, yet he seems to also be placed in one tradition with God, Jesus, and saints. This tension between Christianity and mythology is resolved when Auberon declares in the end that he enters Paradise by the will of God himself:

> Je ne veul plus au siecle demorer,
> La sus m'en veul em paradis aler,
> Car Nostre Sires le m'a, certes, mandé,
> Et je ferai la soie volente. (*Huon de Bordeaux* 10510–10513)
>
> [I do not want to remain in the world; I want to go up to Paradise, because our Lord has demanded it of me, certainly, and I will comply to His will.]

In Auberon's case, the intertwining of Christianity with his fairy nature results in an increased emphasis on morality. Auberon chooses to help Huon only after he has successfully completed the test of the cup:[25]

25 The motif of the magic cup of truth can already be found in the Irish tale *Echtra Cormaic*, in which King Cormaic is removed to an otherworld and, after having completed some trials, is given a magical cup which will break if it hears a lie and repair itself when the truth is told.

> Car je te di en fine loiauté
> Nus n'i puet boire s'il n'est preudom, par Dé,
> Et nés et purs et sans pecié mortel. (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3691–3693)
>
> [Because I tell you sincerely that nobody can drink from it if he is not a worthy man, by God, and noble of birth, and true, and without mortal sin.]

In choosing Huon and granting him many magical gifts, Auberon is aligned with the tradition of female fairies who grant gifts to the hero but also impose taboos.[26] Among the gifts bestowed by Auberon is a horn with magical properties with which he can summon the fairy king (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3734–3743). At the same time, he places restrictions upon its use, warning Huon to never sound the horn unless he is in deadly peril (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3747–3752). However, when Huon breaks this taboo, there are no consequences. This is different when Huon breaks taboos which are related to his moral conduct. When he lies about his faith in order to escape execution at the hands of pagans (*Huon de Bordeaux* 5461–5467), Auberon refuses to help him. Similarly, when Huon gives in to his sexual desire towards Esclarmonde, a great tempest breaks out (*Huon de Bordeaux* 6821–6828) and Auberon refuses his help (*Huon de Bordeaux* 5605–5629). In this respect, Auberon functions as a moral authority in the text. Considering that Auberon intends to make Huon his heir in the fairy realm, this distinction between taboos which are related to a moral code and those which are not makes sense. Auberon needs proof of Huon's worthiness, and when his expectations are not met, he refuses to uphold his own promises.

The gifts which Auberon has received by the fairy godmothers make him one of the most powerful fairy figures in medieval literature. It is worth examining how he uses his gifts in the text. He does not merely act on his own behalf, but he serves as a helper to Huon, the protagonist of the text. Why he decides to help remains mostly unexplained. When Huon decides to speak to Auberon, it seems as though the little fairy king gains a strange satisfaction from that. In this respect, the realm of the fairy gains a courtly dimension, drawing it closer to the world of humanity. Adding to this is the portrayal of Auberon as a ruler within his court. Each time he comes to Huon's aid, he is accompanied by an entourage (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3866), and his palace, though presented as an otherworldly space, adheres to all the courtly ideals (*Huon de Bordeaux* 3619–3623). In this respect, the dynamic between Auberon and Huon could be compared to the relationship of a lord and his vassal in the feudal system (Rossi 1975, 356). In this, the fairy king is removed from the otherworldly imagination and placed within a mundane social role. This impression is reinforced by the fact that Auberon is looking for an heir, as becomes clear throughout the course of the text. He

26 In medieval fairy stories following the pattern of the *gestörte Mahrtenehe*, the female fairy usually issues a taboo, such as forbidding her human lover from speaking about or seeing her. When her human lover breaks this taboo – a necessary narrative step – they have to separate. In some cases, he can win the fairy back through heroic deeds.

chooses Huon for his moral superiority over many other humans and ultimately decides to leave this world and claim his place in Paradise.

As the texts considered above show, the helping fairies share some common features. They do not choose the hero unconditionally, as female fairies frequently do, but they test the humans before granting them their favour. Not only physical strength is necessary but, in some cases, also unquestionable morality. Here, the male fairies seem to function as a counterpart to the female fairies who choose their lover, impose a taboo later, and then require proof of their strength and valour in order to take them back. Furthermore, even though the male fairies considered in this section appear to be extraordinarily powerful, they owe their power to the favour of benevolent female fairies who grant them gifts at birth – regardless of the place of composition – and they share a close connection to God. Even though the figures are depicted quite distinctly, it is possible to connect them through their common mythological background.

4 The fairy as an abductor

While the male fairies considered in the section above either owe their powers to God or place them in his service, this is not the case for male fairies who are depicted in their otherworld. Instead of integrating fairies in a Christian belief system, the fairy otherworld, which is derived from Celtic mythology, stands in opposition to it. In this context, male fairies depicted in their own otherworldly realms are portrayed as substantially more threatening than the figures considered above. They appear to align more closely with the dangerous figures from mythological sources.[27] This section will examine the Anglo-Norman text *Gui de Warewic* and its Middle English adaptation *Guy of Warwick*, as well as the Middle English Breton lay *Sir Orfeo*, with a particular focus on the role of the fairy as an abductor.

In the Anglo-Norman tale *Gui de Warewic* and its Middle English adaptation *Guy of Warwick*, which closely follows the Anglo-Norman version,[28] the "chevalier faé" (*Gui de Warewic* 12229) [fairy knight] or "eluysch kny3t" (*Guy of Warwick* 11317) [otherworldly knight] has taken the knight Amis as prisoner. The fairy is first introduced by a recounting by Amis's wife, describing their life in an enchanted country and how Amis was taken when he crossed the boundary of the forest (*Gui de Warewic*

27 In this, the male fairies considered in this section also stand in strong contrast to female fairies inhabiting the otherworlds, as they are often presented similar to courtly ladies, and they frequently assure the hero of their Christian faith.

28 This only refers to the content. As Julie Burton has shown in her article "Narrative Patterning and *Guy of Warwick*" (1992), the structure of some Middle English adaptations varies strongly from the Anglo-Norman text.

12224–12244; *Guy of Warwick* 11315–11332). Rainbrun, Gui's son, is determined to rescue Amis and crosses the border to the otherworld. He finds an entrance in a hillside (*Gui de Warewic* 12287–12292; *Guy of Warwick* 11379–11382), a motif reminiscent of the Celtic fairy mound, which is one of the most frequently used elements in Celtic tales (Patch 1950, 46). This first description of the otherworld shows some similarities to Marie's *Yonec*. However, while the figure of Muldumarec is associated with courtliness and Christian values, the fairy knight in *Gui de Warewic* is immediately cast in a more threatening light. His crime of abducting a human clearly marks him as dangerous. Furthermore, the otherworld seems to be set in opposition to Christian belief, which becomes apparent when Rainbrun crosses himself before entering the fairy hill[29] (*Gui de Warewic* 12289; *Guy of Warwick* 11381). This emphasised othering occurs when Rainbrun has to cross a swift river before he can reach the fairy knight's castle. Once again, he comes to a boundary which marks the Celtic otherworld (Patch 1950, 28–44), he crosses himself, and he continues to the rich and splendid palace (*Gui de Warewic* 12341–12364; *Guy of Warwick* 11427–11442).

One aspect in which the otherworld in *Gui de Warewic* and its Middle English version differ considerably from otherworlds presented in Celtic mythology, however, is that the depicted kingdom appears as a space which has no allure for mortals, even though it displays many otherworldly elements. Instead, it is presented as a place of danger in which a human is kept by enchantment (Byrne 2016, 53). After Rainbrun has found Amis, he is informed that the supernatural being cannot be killed by a mortal's weapon (*Gui de Warewic* 12436–12442; *Guy of Warwick* 11515–11520). In this portrayal, the fairy knight is depicted in a similar way as the otherworldly knight in *Amadas et Ydoine*. However, unlike that figure, the fairy knight in *Gui* and *Guy* does not function as a moral authority to test the protagonist. Instead, his only narrative function is to showcase Rainbun's strength and superiority since he is a "larger-than-life enemy, who, like Grendel's mother, is subject only to his own weapon" (Saunders 2010, 205). The adventure ends quite anticlimactically: there is a short description of the fight, after which the fairy knight submits to Rainbrun, promising to release all prisoners in exchange for his life (*Gui de Warewic* 12469–12498; *Guy of Warwick* 11546–11570). The ease with which Rainbrun triumphs raises questions about the true supernatural power of the fairy knight.

Compared to the romances and lays considered above, it becomes clear that, although the author of *Gui de Warewic* expressly builds on the Celtic otherworld by including typical topological elements, such as the overflowing splendour and the seemingly overpowered knight, the lack of detail and the anticlimactic fight suggest a

29 From a structural perspective, the text presents an opposition between two spaces separated through a noticeable border, see Lotmann (1989). In connection to the Celtic otherworld, the hill and the river are reminiscent of the borders between the human realm and the world beyond: the crossing is symbolic for the Christian world of humans, while passing the border brings the hero to the otherworld disconnected from the norms of this world.

diminished interest in the otherworld and the fairy knight as central themes. Corinne Saunders highlights this problematic constellation:

> Yet the programmatic and paradigmatic quality of this otherworldly adventure, the lack of development, suspense and enigma, renders the narrative ultimately unadventurous. Whereas Sir Orfeo is memorable for its evocation of a sinister otherworld of the undead, and for the eeriness of Heurodis' taking and of the faery hunt, the tale of Reinbrun seems pedestrian in its failure to invest detail with meaning. Its conventions are exotic, escapist, and readily escaped by the hero, rather than sinister, life-threatening and transformative in their effect. (Saunders 2010, 205)

As Saunders observes, the Middle English Breton lay *Sir Orfeo* uses the material available for the creation of the otherworld much more effectively by linking the motif of death with the fairy realm. As Elizabeth Allen (2019) has shown, the crossing to the otherworld can actually be interpreted as a descent to an underworld, where people are exhibited in various states of torture, mutilation, and in different scenarios of death.[30] Early research on this lay has focused heavily on examining multiple literary traditions – mainly Celtic, classical, religious, and historiographical – as potential sources.[31] In this sinister representation of the fairy king, the folkloric element of the fairy who seizes a human of their choosing is taken to an extreme. This is supported by the fact that Heurodis, the king's wife, falls asleep at noon, much like the princess in *Sir Degaré*. The fairy king comes to her in a dream while she sleeps beneath an "ympe-tree" (*Sir Orfeo* 70), a grafted tree. In this respect, *Sir Orfeo* closely resembles the lay of *Tydorel*. In both texts, the fairy king uses the liminal space to approach the queen, and he is depicted in a wonderous manner:

> Tho com her king, also blive,
> With an hundred knightes and mo,
> And damisels an hundred also,
> Al on snowe-white stedes;
> As white as milke were her wedes.
> Y no seighe never yete before
> So fair creatours y-core.
> The king hadde a croun on hed;
> It nas of silver, no of gold red,
> Ac it was of precious ston –
> As bright as the sonne it schon. (*Sir Orfeo* 142–152)

> [There came the king, just as quickly, with a hundred knights and more, and also a hundred maidens, all on white steeds; their garments were as white as milk. I have never before seen

30 Allen does not only compare the otherworld with the world of death, but also Orfeo's court which is depicted as completely static. As opposed to the otherworld, Orfeo's kingdom is presented as a paradise, an "artifice produced by the king's music [i.e. his harp]" (Allen 2019, 131). She connects this with the threat of a fading genealogy: even when Heurodis returns to the kingdom, she is barren. Orfeo appoints his steward as his heir, thus giving up the expectation of producing an heir himself.

31 See e.g. Davies (1936; 1961); Friedman (1966); Knapp (1968).

such a fair and exquisite creature. The king had a crown on his head; it was not of silver or red gold, but it was made of precious gems – it shone as bright as the sun.]

In this description, the fairy king is clearly marked as an otherworldly being. His appearance with an entourage of several hundred knights and ladies recalls the story of *Amadas et Ydoine* at the graveyard. Furthermore, Heurodis describes the fairy king as the most beautiful creature she has ever encountered – a motif which appears in connection with all otherworldly fairy knights. Additionally, he is adorned with a crown made of the most precious gems, which radiates light. This foreshadows the depiction of the fairy king's otherworldly realm later in the text, when Orfeo follows the hunting party through an entrance in a rock:

Al that lond was ever light,
For when it schuld be therk and night,
The riche stones light gonne
As bright as doth at none the sonne. (*Sir Orfeo* 369–372)

[This whole country was always bright, because when it should be dark and night, the precious stones began to shine as bright as the sun at noon.]

It becomes clear in the very beginning that Heurodis will have no chance of escaping the fairy king: if she refuses to come with him, he will take her by force. It can be assumed that the different mutilated and dead bodies which Orfeo sees in the fairy king's palace have suffered just such a fate (*Sir Orfeo* 387–404). Immediately after Heurodis wakes up from her dream, the audience is confronted with a disturbing scene:

Ac, as sone as sche gan awake,
Sche crid, and lothly bere gan make;
Sche froted hir honden and hir fete,
And crached hir visage – it bled wete –
Hir riche robe hye al to-rett
And was reveyd out of hir wit. (*Sir Orfeo* 77–82)

[But as soon as she woke up, she cried and cried out loathsomely; she rubbed her hands and feet, and she scratched her face – it bled profusely – she tore her robe all to pieces, and she was driven out of her mind.]

As Saunders has shown, Heurodis's reaction is the result of the "most jarring and intrusive action" (2001, 231) within the text. Even though the fairy king does not physically harm her, and it remains unclear whether her soul has been taken or she merely experienced a dream vision, this invasion of her mind is the first manifestation of her eventual physical abduction. Heurodis's reaction, as described in the text, reflects this violation: "crying out suggests fear; scratching her face and rending her garments looks like mourning; rubbing her limbs seems like madness" (Allen 2019, 129). The intensity of the scene, coupled with Heurodis's scattered reaction, suggests that her un-

willing displacement – she tells Orfeo that the fairy king took her, "Wold ich, nold ich" (*Sir Orfeo* 154) [whether I wanted it or not] – is an act of aggression. It becomes clear that the intrusion itself, rather than the content of the fairy king's speech, caused the queen such profound disturbance.

> Loke, dame, tomorwe thatow be
> Right here under this ympe-tre,
> And than thou schalt with ous go
> And live with ous evermo.
> And yif thou makest ous y-let,
> Whar thou be, thou worst y-fet,
> And totore thine limes al
> That nothing help the no schal;
> And thei thou best so totorn,
> Yete thou worst with ous y-born. (*Sir Orfeo* 165–174)
>
> [Lady, see to it that you will be right underneath this grafted tree tomorrow, and then you shall go with us and live with us forever. And if you make a hindrance of us, you will be fetched, wherever you might be, and all your limbs will be torn apart, so that nothing shall help you. And even if you are so torn, you will still be taken with us.]

Even though the fairy king does threaten to dismember Heurodis if she does not comply with his wishes, the sense of danger is weakened by the delay. Instead, it seems like the fear of the supernatural is internalised in the figure of Heurodis. The world of fairies is threatening and unfamiliar and being confronted with it so unexpectedly causes Heurodis to temporarily lose her mind.

It seems rather odd that the fairy king should warn Heurodis of her kidnapping before he actually takes her.[32] The arbitrariness of fairies is one of their most characteristic features in medieval literature, as has been shown above. Mostly, their actions lack motivation or are driven solely by sensual desire. In this case, the fairy king seems to desire Heurodis as part of his collection because he admires her beauty. This becomes apparent when Orfeo, disguised as a haggard minstrel, comes to the otherworld to reclaim his wife. Despite the fairy king having given his word, he is clearly dismayed:

> A sori couple of you it were,
> For thou art lene, row and blac,
> And sche is lovesum, withouten lac;
> A lothlich thing it were, forthi,
> To sen hir in thi compayni. (*Sir Orfeo* 458–462)

32 Andrea G. Pisani Babich reads this delay as a challenge for Orfeo: by stealing Heurodis, who is under the protection of a thousand knights, the fairy king proves his superiority over the human realm and destroys the orderly kingdom of another powerful ruler (Pisani Babich 1998, 479). This reading seems rather unconvincing since there is no evidence in the text to support it.

> [You would be an ill-matched couple, because you are lean, rough, and dirty, and she is beautiful without blemish; therefore, it would be a loathly thing to see her in your company.]

Saunders offers a convincing interpretation of the fairy king's motivation, which, in comparison to the fairies considered above, moves the fairy king closer to the dangerous and mythical figures of fairies.[33] He engages in the Wild Hunt, which has its equivalent in *Amadas et Ydoine*. While Orfeo is in the wild, he occasionally catches glimpses of the fairy king and his company. The victims seem arbitrarily chosen at this point, but when considered alongside with the horrific display of bodies in the fairy realm – which will be explored later in this chapter – it becomes clear that they are deliberately selected by the fairy king (Williams 2012, 545). The design of the hunt is shown very clearly in the text:

> He might se him bisides,
> Oft in hot undertides,
> The king o fairy with his rout
> Com to hunt him al about
> With dim cri and bloweing,
> And houndes also with him berking;
> Ac no best thai no nome,
> No never he nist whider they bicome [. . .] (*Sir Orfeo* 281–288)

> [He could see them nearby, the king of fairyland with his company, who had come to hunt all around with dim cries and horn-blowing, and he also had barking dogs with him; but they took no beast, nor did he ever know where they went.]

In this passage, it is specified that the otherworldly hunt takes place "in hot undertides," the exact time when Heurodis first encountered the fairy king (*Sir Orfeo* 65). This suggests that Orfeo witnesses the fairies' hunt for other humans, abducted just like his wife, an impression reinforced by the fact that the fairies do not take any beasts. However, in comparison with the Wild Hunt depicted in *Amadas et Ydoine*, the Middle English text reveals a more threatening aspect: the fairies are not merely seeking the dead to bring to the otherworld. Instead, they also choose the living and force them to come with them. When Heurodis is taken, she has no chance of escape, even though she is surrounded by a thousand knights. In this immense display of power, it becomes clear that the otherworldly forces are not to be defeated by human ones. Humans are abducted at will, and the gallery of human bodies which Orfeo encounters

33 The question of the fairy king's motivation has already been posed by Constance Davies (1961), who states that Heurodis could not have been taken for love, since the fairy king already has a queen. This point is taken up by James F. Knapp (1968). However, Saunders recognises that "neither possession of a wife nor the commitment of the beloved to another have ever negated the possibility of love, particularly not in a genre and period where Tristram and Launcelot represent the archetypal lovers; nor is there any reason why the king of faery should imitate human morality – indeed, in taking Heurodis, he does not do so" (2001, 230).

in the fairy king's realm illustrates that the fairies "both are drawn to suffering and produce it" (Williams 2012, 545).

> Than he gan bihold about al,
> And seighe liggeand within the wal
> Of folk that were thider y-brought
> And thought dede, and nare nought.
> Sum stode withouten hade,
> And sum non armes nade,
> And sum thurth the bodi hadde wounde,
> And sum lay wode, y-bounde,
> And sum armed on hors sete,
> And sum astrangled as thai ete;
> And sum were in water adreynt,
> And sum with fire al forschreynt.
> Wives ther lay on childe bedde,
> Sum ded and sum awedde,
> And wonder fele ther lay bisides
> Right as thai slepe her undertides;
> Eche was thus in this warld y-nome,
> With fairi thider y-come. (*Sir Orfeo* 387–404)
>
> [Then he beheld everything around him, and he saw people lying within the wall who had been brought there and who seemed dead but were not. Some were standing without a head, and some had no arms, and some had wounds through their bodies, and some were lying there, mad and bound, and some were sitting armed on horses, and some choked as they ate; and some were drowned in water, and some were all shrivelled through fire. Wives lay there in childbed, some dead and some driven mad, and wonderous many lay beside them just like they were sleeping at noon; each had been taken to this world like this and had come there with the fairies.]

In this horrific display of bodies, there is one intriguing element which eludes clear explanation: the bodies appear to be dead, but despite appearing decapitated or burned, they are actually alive. Dorena Allen explains this contradiction through the mythological belief from the British Isles, where fairies are said to take the dying with them and leave behind unmoving changelings in their place (1964, 104). This reading may also help explain the resurrection of the dismembered knight in *L'Âtre Périlleux*: the fairy knight possesses the power to remove the human from this world to the otherworld and, similarly, has the power to return him unscathed. The gallery also serves as a means of othering. Tara Williams has closely examined the role of the frozen victims, arguing persuasively that it is proof of the fairies' morality – one that stands in opposition to human morality: "Although the suffering figures might appear to confirm his [i.e. the fairy king's] lack of ethics (because he caused the suffering and/or found it appealing), the spectacle ironically reinforces that he adheres to at least one moral standard: keeping his word" (Williams 2012, 546). The fairy king's threat to Heurodis that she would be taken violently if she refused is proven to be

true: some of the bodies are missing limbs or are otherwise mutilated, which suggests that the fairies took them by force.

While the fairy king's displays of power have so far been used for the abduction of humans, this works against him towards the end of the text. When Orfeo comes to the fairy king's court disguised as a minstrel, he enters a courtly sphere which closely resembles the human one.[34] The fairy king grants a rash boon in exchange for a song (*Sir Orfeo* 449–452), a motif which is often found in medieval literature of various cultural circuits.[35] However, there is one striking difference to the Old French fairy stories considered above: Orfeo does not fight the fairy king in order to win back his wife. Instead, he holds the fairy king to his promise which, as established earlier, must be kept (*Sir Orfeo* 463–468). Even though the fairy king was marked through his cruelty and arbitrariness before, he is somewhat de-demonised in this context. His obligation to keep his word places him in one line with human kings like Marke and Arthur. However, the rash boon often underscores the inadequacy of a king who is not able to protect his wife from abduction. Consequently, the fairy king himself is imagined as an unsatisfactory ruler, inferior to the human king Orfeo.

5 Conclusion

In the considerations above, it has become clear that, despite the separation of literary traditions by language, space, and time, the influence of a shared mythology created strong interferences across Old French, Anglo-Norman, and Middle English literature. Even if the specific connections can hardly be traced due to the scant transmission of Celtic texts, the movement and transference of literary motifs and structures are apparent. Depending on the intended function of the fairy figure, different elements from Celtic mythology were used and reinterpreted. This contribution demonstrates how this heterogenous group of figures displays connections in certain characteristics. Specifically, male fairies seem to serve two main purposes in medieval texts. They either test the heroes – both morally and physically – or they father supernatural children who bear the marks of their fairy lineage. They are seldom presented as unproblematic figures. Their otherworldly nature makes it necessary for them to proclaim their faith in God in order to avoid being placed in the same category as demonic beings. There are some motifs – such as the declaration of enduring love, the role of the helper, and the promise of the sexual encounter – which reappear frequently.

34 The otherworld in *Sir Orfeo* is clearly marked as Celtic and bears strong similarities to the otherworld depicted in *Gui de Warewic*, as E. B. Lyle (1979) shows.

35 For example, compare Chrétien de Troyes's *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* (168–179), Geoffrey Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale* (989–998), or Gottfried von Straßburg's *Tristan* (13184–13196).

However, it is striking that, despite the shared textual tradition across different cultural circuits, male fairies in Middle English literature are depicted in a much more sinister manner compared to their Old French and Anglo-Norman counterparts. It can be hypothesised – although it is almost impossible to confirm this – that the integration of the mythical figure of the male fairy into a literary tradition shaped by Christianity posed a problem which was increasingly difficult to reconcile in the context of medieval romance, especially in the later Middle Ages. This may also explain why male fairies virtually disappear from later Middle English texts. It is true that there are some ambiguous figures such as Graysteel in *Eger and Grime* (around 1450), or the Green Knight, Gawain's opponent in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (late fourteenth century), the latter of which, however, is not inherently magical, but enchanted by Morgan le Fay. The source of Graysteel's waning and waxing powers remain unexplained, but evidence of his possible fairy nature is so scant that I am hesitant to place him in the same tradition as figures like the fairy king in *Sir Orfeo*. The difficulty of including male fairies in medieval literature becomes apparent when considering Middle High German literature. While female fairies appear frequently in romances,[36] there are no clear examples of male fairies. The closest equivalent is probably Joram in Wirnt von Grafenberg's *Wigalois*, who takes Gawan to his kingdom, but he is never clearly described as a fairy in the text. While the figure displays parallels with descriptions of male fairies, he certainly cannot be considered one himself (Selmayr 2017, 88). Although this chapter provides only a brief overview of one phenomenon that developed across different countries and languages, it shows the value of placing these texts in a single broader tradition for interpretation and understanding. In connecting different philological fields, it is possible to create a more comprehensive picture of medieval literature.

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36 See, for example, *Partonopier und Meliur* by Konrad von Würzburg, Konrad von Stoffeln's *Gauriel von Muntabel*, or *Die Königin vom brennenden See.*

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