Bart Besamusca, Frank Brandsma*

# État présent: Arthurian Literature in Middle Dutch

## Introduction

Starting in spring 2014 authentic medieval Dutch texts have become available on any smartphone or tablet. The new app *Vogala* was launched in January 2014 and was then quickly downloaded more than 13,000 times in the first six weeks alone.[1] It features recordings of Middle Dutch masterpieces, read aloud by specialists. Opening one of the fragments shows the Middle Dutch text with a parallel modern Dutch translation. When the sound file is started, the line read aloud lights up in red in both text columns, moving in sync (karaoke-style) with the voice. The listeners hear the medieval Dutch and are able to make sense of it by looking at both the original and the translation.[2] Some fifty sound bites were made available in the first year – more are to come – and they range from the Bible translation and texts of the mystical poet Hadewijch to the famous lament for Egidius and chivalric romances, such as *Karel ende Elegast* (Charlemagne and Elegast) and *Walewein* by Penninc and Pieter Vostaert. From the latter Arthurian romance, the beginning and the episode of the Sword Bridge were selected. It looks like this in the app:

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**1** The free app is available in the App Store, Google Play and other Android stores. It was made by a team led by Hubert Slings and Frits van Oostrom, who came up with the idea for the app. The Old Dutch word 'vogala' ('birds') is used in the first 'literary' sentence in the medieval Dutch vernacular, written down by a Flemish monk in an English monastery around 1100.
**2** As a result of the Dutch app's apparent success, Van Oostrom and his team are considering a version with an English translation next to the medieval Dutch.

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**De zwaardbrug**, *Penninc & Vostaert*     **i**

De ridderroman Walewein en het zwevende schaakbord telt meer dan 11.000 verzen. In het navolgende fragment bevinden we ons in een van Waleweins avonturen.

*Gelezen door Remco Sleiderink*

00:01 — 06:28

| | |
|---|---|
| Daer na quam hi up enen dach | Daarna bereikte hij op zekere |
| Daer hi een riviere vant | dag een rivier; |
| Ende sach over an tander lant | op de andere oever |
| Enen casteel die scone stoet. | stond een mooi kasteel. |
| Doe peinsdi in zinen moet: | Hij dacht bij zichzelf: |
| 'Tote daer salic neven dese riviere | 'Tot daar zal ik deze rivier |
| Varen.' Maer haddi hare maniere | volgen.' Maar als hij had geweten wat het |
| Ghekent, hi hadde bet of ghereden. | voor rivier was, was hij beter omgekeerd. |
| Se was van herde fellen seden: | Het was een bijzonder gevaarlijke rivier; |
| Al was twater boven claer, | ook al leek het water aan de oppervlakte helder, |
| Dat segghic jou al over waer, | – dat zal ik je wel vertellen – |
| Het was onder herde fel. | daaronder was het buitengewoon woest. |
| Dat suldi ooc noch heden wel | U zult weldra nog wel meer |
| Horen een deel van haren zeden. | horen over die rivier. |

Even though *Walewein* is the only Arthurian text currently available in the app, it is a very good representative of the genre. In a triple quest narrative, it describes how the eponymous protagonist, aided by an enchanted fox, prince Roges, searches for and finds a beautiful damsel and a magic sword in order to bring a floating chess-set to Arthur's court. The *Walewein* 'state of affairs' in research also demonstrates many of the current developments in Middle Dutch Arthurian studies that this 'état présent' will bring to the fore. The romance is being made available by the most modern technologies both in the app and in a new digital edition, produced using the E-Laborate editing platform, created by the Huygens Institute in The Hague. Thus it has become possible to consult the full *Walewein* manuscript on the internet. The text's double authorship is a fruitful area for digital humanities research into stylistics, authorial idiosyncrasies, and scribal practice. The text has become available in modern English and German translations, and has been studied comparatively by specialists in Romance and Germanic languages, and with regard to, for instance, its intertextuality (a sword bridge!) and the special role of the protagonist by Dutch specialists. Scholars have also studied its position as an indigenous romance in the vernacular produced in Flanders vis-à-vis the French Arthurian literature present in the same area, as well as *Walewein*'s relationship to the elaborate *Lancelot* tradition in Middle

Dutch. As a counterpoint to all this specialist attention, the text has also been made suitable for use in the classroom.

These recent research activities on and around *Walewein*, discussed below in more detail, may serve as a bridge, much wider than a sword, to the development in Arthurian Studies in the Low Countries, with the 2006 overview in *A History of Arthurian Scholarship* taken more or less as the *terminus post quem*.[3] As in the Scandinavian 'état présent' in the first volume of *JIAS*, the leading questions are: What do we have? and What are we doing with it?

## Texts and manuscripts, editions and translations

Folium 120v of manuscript Ltk 195 (dated 1350) in the Leiden University Library shows the most famous image in Dutch Arthuriana: Walewein in pursuit of the flying chessboard. It takes only a few seconds and mouse clicks to access this image in high resolution, and fortunately the same now goes for many of the relevant manuscript sources.[4] Before we go deeper into websites and digital editions, however, back to quill, parchment, and the making of the texts. Dutch Arthurian romances were composed mainly in the thirteenth and the first half of the fourteenth centuries, whereas the manuscripts date mainly from the fourteenth and (to a lesser extent) fifteenth centuries. The 2011 synthesising article by Bram Caers and Mike Kestemont offers a good overview of the debate over the difficulties in the dating process and gives a chronological overview of the emergence of chivalric romance in Dutch, using rough indications such as 'the middle of the thirteenth century' and 'late thirteenth century'.[5]

Around 1200, the first Arthurian romance to be translated into Middle Dutch was probably the (fragmentarily preserved) *Tristan*, based on Thomas. In the decades before 1250, one of the earliest Middle Dutch renditions was the *Wrake*

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**3** See Norris J. Lacy (ed.), *A History of Arthurian Scholarship* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2006), pp. 158–68. This chapter, 'Medieval Dutch Literature', was written by Bart Besamusca. Earlier overviews of Dutch and Belgian Arthurian scholarship, also written by Besamusca, can be found in W. H. Jackson and S. A. Ranawake (eds), *The Arthur of the Germans: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval German and Dutch Literature* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), pp. 187–228, and Norris J. Lacy (ed.), *Medieval Arthurian Literature: A Guide to Recent Research* (New York and London: Garland, 1996), pp. 211–37.
**4** http://www.bibliotheek.leidenuniv.nl/bijzondere-collecties/bijzondere-collecties/hoogtepunten-middelnederlandse-literatuur.html
**5** Bram Caers and Mike Kestemont, 'Over de datering van de Middelnederlandse ridderepiek', *Verslagen & mededelingen van de KANTL*, 121 (2011), 1–59.

*van Ragisel* (an adaptation of the *Vengeance Raguidel*), of which only fragments survive. The Middle Dutch translation of the *Conte du Graal* (in all probability together with its *First Continuation*) dates from the same period. Of this work, the *Perchevael*, only fragments remain, but the episodes concerning Walewein (Gauvain) have been edited to fit into the *Lancelot* Compilation (see below). Also (speculatively) dated to this early period is an indigenous romance only preserved (in an adapted version) in the *Lancelot* Compilation: *Lanceloet en het hert met de witte voet* ('Lancelot and the stag with the white foot'), a tale reminiscent of both the 'Dragon's tongue' episode in the *Tristan* and the *Lai de Tyolet*. The first part of the *Ferguut* (a translation of Guillaume le Clerc's *Fergus*) was probably also composed around this time, while the second part, which has no direct relation to the French original, was added some years later, perhaps after 1250. The *Ferguut* has come down to us in a single manuscript, dated around 1350, which, like the *Walewein* manuscript, is available online on the website of the Leiden University Library (see references below).

The middle of the thirteenth century saw the creation of more translations, and also of indigenous romances, of which Penninc and Pieter Vostaert's *Walewein* is the prime example. The romances of the *Ridder metter mouwen* ('the knight with the sleeve', a love story and 'Vatersuche') and *Moriaen* (a tale of a Moorish knight's chivalric education and quest for his father) are also Dutch originals, of which fragments survived. The indigenous romance *Walewein ende Keye* (a story of the rivalry between Gauvain and Kay) has only been preserved (in an adapted version) in the *Lancelot* Compilation. Around 1260, a poet, in all probability Jacob van Maerlant, produced *Torec*, translating a now lost French text about a knight and a golden circlet. By this time, French prose romances from the Vulgate Cycle were also translated into Middle Dutch, starting with Jacob van Maerlant's renderings of the prose *Joseph d'Arimathie* and prose *Merlin*: the *Historie vanden Grale* and the *Boek van Merline*, made around 1261 for Albrecht van Voorne (a nobleman from the inner circle of the count of Holland).

The main French prose text, the *Lancelot en prose*, was translated into Middle Dutch at least three times. The fragments of *Lantsloot vander Haghedochte* ('Lancelot of the cave') reveal that this rhymed adaptation, which came into being around 1260, reduced most of the innovative features (e.g. the geographical and chronological 'realism') of the original to a more traditional format à la Chrétien de Troyes. In contrast, a second (also Flemish and versified) version, created probably around 1280 and preserved in the *Lancelot* Compilation – the *Lanceloet-Queeste vanden Grale-Arturs doet* trilogy – accepted the innovations and offered a more faithful translation. The three fragments of the third translation show that

its author rejected the verse form, and rendered the story in Middle Dutch prose.[6] Other Dutch translations of the prose *Lancelot* may lie beneath German translations, like the one preserved in the Blankenheim codex (p. 25 below), which contains an explicit reference to its Middle Dutch intermediate source text. Finally, in 1326, the Brabantine poet Lodewijk van Velthem finished his translation of the *Suite-Vulgate du Merlin*, attaching his *Merlijn* Continuation to Maerlant's Grail and Merlin texts. Apart from Middle Dutch fragments, this trilogy is preserved in a Middle Low German 'Umschreibung' in MS Burgsteinfurt, Fürst zu Bentheimsche Schlossbibliothek, MS 28 (B 37), which was copied *c.* 1425.

Around 1325, many of the already existing romances were inserted in the text collection known as the *Lancelot* Compilation, which is preserved in The Hague, Royal Library, MS 129 A 10. The last leaf of this codex states that the above-mentioned Lodewijk van Velthem was its owner. One of the manuscript's most intriguing aspects is the contemporaneous corrector, who not only put right scribal errors, but also added marginal signs and words to facilitate the oral delivery of the text.[7] Using the Flemish *Lanceloet-Queeste-Arturs doet* trilogy as the framework for his text collection, the creator of the *Lancelot* Compilation added seven romances to the history of Arthur's reign. Between the *Lanceloet* and the *Queeste*, the *Perchevael* (i.e. the Gauvain-episodes) and the *Moriaen* were inserted, whereas the *Wrake van Ragisel*, the *Ridder metter mouwen*, *Walewein ende Keye*, *Lanceloet en het hert met de witte voet* and *Torec* were inserted between the *Queeste* and *Arturs doet*. In the first decades of the 14th century, most of the Middle Dutch Arthurian romances were thus brought together in two collections of texts ('Merlin' and 'Lancelot'), both related to Lodewijk van Velthem. In

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**6** Recently, a fragment was found which was part of the same manuscript as the two so-called Rotterdam Fragments. See Bart van Minnen and Geert Claassens, 'De *Roman van Lancelot* in Middelnederlands proza: het fragment-Wezemaal', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 121 (2005), 169–83.

**7** See Frank Brandsma, 'Doing dialogue: The Middle Dutch Lancelot translators and correctors at work', in *De l'oral à l'écrit. Le dialogue à travers les genres romanesques et théâtral*, ed. by Corinne Denoyelle (Orléans: Editions Paradigme, 2013), pp. 69–84, for more literature on this topic. Jos Biemans has suggested that the corrector's additions were meant to modernize the verse form in the direction of prose. See his 'De "corrector" in de Lancelot codex: een hachelijk avontuur, waarbij aan het eind toch een nieuw perspectief gloort', in *Maar er is meer: avontuurlijk lezen in de epiek van de Lage Landen. Studies voor Jozef D. Janssens*, ed. by Remco Sleiderink, Veerle Uyttersprot, Bart Besamusca (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 2005), pp. 359–75.

concept and contents at least, these two sets could have been combined into one great Arthurian 'Summa' in the first half of the fourteenth century.[8]

The assumed dates of the manuscripts indicate that the Middle Dutch Arthurian romances were copied and read in the 14th and 15th centuries, although none of the texts have survived in a large number of copies. Later on, Dutch printers would favour Charlemagne epics over Arthurian romances. Two quires of the *Historie van Merlijn*, printed between 1534 and 1544 by Simon Cock in Antwerp, are the only witnesses of interest in Arthurian tales in the days of early printing in the Low Countries.

This overview of texts and manuscripts mentions some key issues in Arthurian research in the last decades: the genesis of the *Lancelot* Compilation, the role Lodewijk van Velthem played in the literary circles of his day, the (intertextual) relationships between translations and indigenous romances, Penninc and Pieter Vostaert's part in the making of the *Walewein*, and so on. We will come back to these topics in the next section. What the overview also makes clear is the clustered nature of the transmission process: a few Arthurian romances (*Walewein*, *Ferguut*, *Lantsloot vander Haghedochte*) are preserved in single-text codices or in multi-text codices in which they are the only Arthurian romance, while the others are extant in sets of Arthurian texts: in the *Lancelot* Compilation and in the *Merlin* collection. In a way this simplified the work of the first generations of nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars interested in medieval manuscripts and Arthurian romance.

In terms of modern editions, most of the texts had been edited before the middle of the nineteenth century, with the notable exception of the Merlin trilogy. The giant on whose shoulders we sometimes still stand is W. J. A. Jonckbloet (1817–1885), holder of the first chair in Dutch language and literature at the University of Leiden. In the decade before 1850 he published six text editions in seven years, making the complete *Lancelot* Compilation (ten texts; some 87,000 lines) and *Walewein* available in reliable, scholarly editions for specialists able to read Middle Dutch. Jonckbloet turned editing and studying medieval texts into a scientific discipline in the Netherlands, whereas before it had been the playground of enthusiastic amateurs, like the 'dilettant' L. G. Visscher, who published the poorly executed first edition of *Ferguut* in 1838.[9] Jonckbloet's 'New School' of editing also stimulated lexicographical work: in 1872 work was started on the

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**8** See Bart Besamusca, Remco Sleiderink, Geert Warnar, 'Lodewijk van Velthem. Ter inleiding', in *De boeken van Velthem. Auteur, oeuvre en overlevering*, ed. by Bart Besamusca, Remco Sleiderink, Geert Warnar (Hilversum: Verloren, 2009), pp. 7- 30 (pp. 23–25).
**9** See Lacy (ed.), *A History of Arthurian Scholarship*, pp. 158–59.

*Dictionary of Middle Dutch* (*Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek*, 10 volumes), by E. Verwijs and J. Verdam. Its publication in instalments began in 1885; nowadays its digital version (*CD-ROM Middelnederlands*, 1998) is one of the key research tools in the field, especially since it includes all the textual sources. Its web-based version (http://gtb.inl.nl/) allows for easy consultation.[10] Apart from the dispersed fragments of Arthurian texts like *Lantsloot vander Haghedochte*, most of which had not yet been discovered or edited, one set of texts eluded the 'New School' editors: the *Merlin* texts in the Burgsteinfurt manuscript were known to exist but not available. It was, and still is, in the library of the Lord of Bentheim in Steinfurt and the noble family had become rather reluctant to give access to scholars after lending it to a reverend in Batenburg, whose children tore out a few leaves. Still, when Johannes van Vloten knocked on the door of Bentheim Castle in 1879, he was allowed to make a transcription, resulting in his 1880 edition of Jacob van Maerlant's *Merlijn*.[11] Deviating from its erroneous title, this edition also contains Maerlant's Grail text and Velthem's translation of the *Suite-Vulgate du Merlin*. It still is the only edition of the latter text, whereas Maerlant's work has been made available in a diplomatic edition by Timothy Sodmann published in 1980. There is work to be done here, especially since Van Vloten, with typical over self-confidence, considered himself capable of undoing the 'Umschreibung' and restoring the Middle Dutch text hidden beneath the Low German words in the manuscript (pp. viii-ix). Thus what we have for this text is a late nineteenth-century reconstruction rather than a reliable rendition of the text witness, and a new scholarly edition is much needed.

It is hard to overestimate the importance of Jonckbloet, who incidentally also published the first edition of Chrétien's *Chevalier de la charrette* in an appendix to his *Roman van Lancelot*, and his critical editions. Nevertheless, new editions were in order in the second half of the twentieth century, in the light of new insights, questions, methods and discoveries. One of the first of these new editions was the 1957 edition of the *Walewein* by G. A. van Es. His two volume critical edition gave modern Dutch translations for difficult words and phrases. This became, in a slightly adapted form, the Dutch format for subsequent textual editions and is still used, for instance in recent editions of *Perchevael* by Soetje Ida Oppenhuis de Jong (2003) and *Walewein ende Keye* by Marjolein Hogenbirk and W. P. Gerritsen (2011), available in digital and print formats.[12] *Walewein ende Keye* is the latest

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**10** The textual sources are also available through www.dbnl.org

**11** Jacob van Maerlant, *Merlijn*, ed. by J. van Vloten (Leiden: Brill, 1880), pp. vii-viii.

**12** *De Middelnederlandse Perceval-traditie*, ed. by Soetje Ida Oppenhuis de Jong (Hilversum: Ver-loren, 2003). For an extensive review of this edition, see Bernhard Schmitz and Johan H. Winkel-

product of the (so-called) 'Lancelot Project', set up to study and edit the Middle Dutch Lancelot material. So far, nine volumes have been produced. The *Quête du saint Graal* and *La Mort le roi Artu* translations in the compilation are currently being edited, while the final section of the prose *Lancelot* translation is the last of the texts in Jonckbloet's edition waiting for a new edition. The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences has taken this project under its wings and set up a centre for editing texts from all different periods, from Carolingian glosses to Rembrandt documents and modern Dutch poets (at the Huygens Institute, housed in the Royal Library in The Hague). In this centre, new editing tools, in particular the E-Laborate platform, are developed, tested and refined, and made available to scholars worldwide. The *Walewein ende Keye* edition was produced in this digital environment, as are the other editions in progress. Also, a new *Walewein* edition in E-Laborate is in the making. It remains to be seen whether a version on paper will also be feasible for these editions.

The new technique has great advantages in bringing the medieval material closer to the modern user/reader, since it is easy to add high resolution images to the critical text. The interface allows the user to see manuscript and edition next to each other and to open, for instance, a 'window' with the translation of difficult words. A 'window' with a parallel English translation is a *desideratum*. One of the innovations of the *Lancelot* Compilation editions in the 'Lancelot Project' has been to make the work of the contemporaneous corrector, largely ignored by Jonckbloet, visible. The editions give the final text as the corrector produced it, with a special commentary window giving the underlying scribal version. In E-Laborate, the manuscript is presented with the edition, so readers may see for themselves what the corrector did. A special project at the Royal Library already allows this kind of insight into the entire compilation, since manuscript 129 A 10 is, as one of the library's treasures, presented online.[13] Next to the manuscript, the reader finds the text of the modern edition, or, for some sections, Jonckbloet's text. With the manuscripts preserving *Ferguut* and *Walewein* present online as well, more than half of the sources are available, just a few easy clicks away. The exception again is the Merlin material in the Burgsteinfurt manuscript, while most of the Middle Dutch Arthurian fragments also remain un-digitised.

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man, 'Zum mittelniederländischen *Perceval*. Aus Anlaß der Ausgabe von Soetje Ida Oppenhuis de Jong', *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, 135 (2006), pp. 35–45. For the E-Laborate edition of *Walewein ende Keye*, see: http://www.waleweinendekeye.huygens.knaw.nl (first edition: 2009), book version: *Walewein ende Keye. Een dertiende-eeuwse Arturroman overgeleverd in de Lancelotcompilatie,* ed. by Marjolein Hogenbirk, in co-operation with W.P. Gerritsen (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011).

**13** http://www.kb.nl/themas/middeleeuwen/lancelotcompilatie

The ability (and willingness) to read Middle Dutch is no longer something editors and publishers may count on when producing books on medieval Dutch romances. Since the 1980s, more and more modern Dutch translations of Middle Dutch Arthurian romances have appeared, often in relatively inexpensive collections. Rien Wols published, for instance, his translation of *Walewein* into modern Dutch as a Prisma Pocket book in 1980. Around 2000, the Griffioen series was very popular, subsidised by a cultural fund and featuring translations of (parts of) the *Lancelot* Compilation, *Moriaen*, *Ferguut*, *Walewein ende Keye*, and the *Merlin* texts by Maerlant and VeltHem.[14] In 2012, Ingrid Biesheuvel published a collection of Arthurian texts in translation: *Ridders van de Ronde Tafel. Artur-verhalen uit de Nederlanden*. The tiny *Tristan* fragment was edited and translated by Johan Winkelman in 2013.[15]

While translations into modern Dutch give access to the texts to a wide audience in the Netherlands, an extra effort has to be made to make high school students enjoy the medieval tales. In this field, the work of John Verbeek and his collaborators has been fruitful, especially his 2008 book *Walewein*, which offers selected passages of the text in lesson-size portions with inspiring classroom assignments to bridge the gap between the pupils' smartphone world and the knights and damsels on the parchment leaves. The app discussed in the introduction is the next stage on this path to the future of medieval texts in the Netherlands.

For the international scholarly community, bilingual editions of Middle Dutch Arthurian romances are even more important.[16] In this context, the work of David Johnson and Geert Claassens is extremely valuable. Providing line-by-line translations of Middle Dutch texts, they made *Walewein* available to Arthurians worldwide in 1992, *Ferguut* in 2000, and five romances from the *Lancelot* Compilation in 2003.[17] More recently, *Walewein* was edited and translated into German

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**14** The translations are listed in the Bibliography.

**15** Johan H. Winkelman, *Vergeten fragmenten van Limburgse liefdesromans uit omstreeks 1200. Een drieluik over Floyris en Blantsefluor, Aiol en Mirabel en Tristant en Ysolt* (Leiden: n.p., 2013), pp. 171–208. This edition and translation are also available through http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_tri001tris02_01/

**16** See Bart Besamusca, 'De medioneerlandistiek en het buitenland. Over de noodzaak van tweetalige tekstuitgaven', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 125 (2009), 109–15.

**17** In 2012, the series Dutch Romances (I-III) became available in paperback, published by Boydell & Brewer. For an extensive review of the *Walewein* edition, see: Johan Winkelman and Bernhard Schmitz, 'Comments on Some Philological Aspects of David F. Johnson's English Translation of the Middle Dutch *Roman van Walewein*', *Neophilologus*, 90 (2006), 283–302.

by Johan Winkelman and Gerhard Wolf.[18] Baukje Finet-van der Schaaf publis-hed editions and French translations of *Moriaen* in 2009, and the *Ridder metter mouwen* and *Lanceloet en het hert met de witte voet* in 2012.[19]

The manuscripts online, the digital editions, and the app demonstrate how Arthurian research profits from new technologies, as the paragraphs on stylo-metry in the next section will show as well. With regard to scholarly sources, three more online databases should be mentioned. Research into Dutch literature and language in general benefits from the bibliography *BNTL*, even as Arthurian scholars also rely, of course, on the *BBIAS* and now *BIAS*, and from the resources (primary texts as well as important articles and journals) in the Digital Library of Dutch Literature DBNL.[20] Finally, the name index created by Willem Kuiper and his collaborators is a valuable online tool: the *Repertorium van eigennamen in Middelnederlandse literaire teksten* (*Index of proper names in Middle Dutch lite-rary texts*; abbreviated *REMLT*). A 2014 *Festschrift* for Willem Kuiper shows the diverse and frequent use Dutch medievalists make of this resource.[21]

## Recent developments and trends

In the final section of Besamusca's 2006 article on the study of Arthurian litera-ture in the Low Countries, it was noted that since the 1990s Dutch and Belgian scholars have increasingly published on Middle Dutch Arthurian literature in other languages than Dutch.[22] This trend, which has, in addition, inspired inter-national specialists in other areas than Middle Dutch to study Dutch Arthurian romances, has become stronger in the research period under discussion here.[23] In 2005 and 2007, for example, *Arthuriana* devoted two issues to Middle Dutch Arthurian romances. Following an introduction by guest editor David Johnson

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**18** Penninc and Pieter Vostaert, *Roman van Walewein*, ed. by Johan H. Winkelman and Gerhard Wolf (Münster: Agenda Verlag, 2005).

**19** *Le Roman de Moriaen*, ed. and trans. by Baukje Finet van der Schaaf (Grenoble: Ellug, 2009); *Récits arthuriens en moyen néerlandais: 'Roman van den Riddere metter mouwen'/Le Roman du Chevalier à la manche, 'Lanceloet en het hert met de witte voet'/Lancelot et le Cerf au pied blanc*, ed. and trans. by Baukje Finet-van der Schaaf (Grenoble: ELLUG, 2012).

**20** www.bntl.nl (*Bibliografie der Nederlandse taal- en literatuurwetenschap*) and www.dbnl.org.

**21** Marjolein Hogenbirk, Roel Zemel (eds.), *Want hi verkende dien name wale. Opstellen voor Willem Kuiper* (Amsterdam, Münster: Stichting Neerlandistiek VU, Nodus Publikationen, 2014).

**22** See Lacy (ed.), *A History of Arthurian Scholarship*, pp. 166–68.

**23** For the expansion of criticism of Middle Dutch Arthurian literature, see also Bart Besamusca, 'Approaches to Arthurian Fiction: The Case of *Torec*', *BBIAS*, 63 (2011), 295–323 (pp. 321–23).

and an overview of the corpus by Norris Lacy, these issues include essays dealing with intertextuality and Gauvain (Marjolein Hogenbirk), the *Wrake van Ragisel* (Katty De Bundel), *Walewein* (Lori Walters), *Ridder metter mouwen* (Sîan Echard), *Lanceloet en het hert met de witte voet* (Michael Twomey), and in particular with *Walewein ende Keye* (Lucy Perry, Ad Putter) and *Torec* (Thomas Kerth, James Morey, Sîan Echard). David Johnson concludes this series of essays by compiling a bibliography of non-Dutch scholarship on Middle Dutch Arthurian romances.[24]

The tendency to put Middle Dutch Arthurian literature in its European context by applying a comparative approach has resulted in many publications aimed at scholars who cannot read Dutch. In the volume of *Arthurian Literature* devoted to the European dimensions of Arthurian literature, for instance, Norris Lacy presents an overview of the character of Perceval in various traditions, including *Perchevael* and *Moriaen*, while Lori Walters discusses Gauvain as a figure of plenitude in French literature, *Walewein*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and Frank Brandsma focuses on the narrative agent 'li contes' in French, German and Dutch versions of the Prose *Lancelot*.[25] The PhD research Bernhard

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**24** *Arthuriana*, 15/2 (2005): David F. Johnson, 'Middle Dutch Arthurian Romances: What are They and Why should We read Them' (1–2), Norris J. Lacy, 'The Uses of Middle Dutch Arthuriana' (3–12), Marjolein Hogenbirk, 'Intertextuality and Gauvain' (13–25), Katty De Bundel, '*Hi sette sijn vechten an hare minne*. Love and Adventure in *Die Wrake van Ragisel*' (26–38), Lori J. Walters, 'Reconfiguring Wace's Round Table: Walewein and the Rise of the National Vernaculars' (39–58). *Arthuriana*, 17/1 (2007): David F. Johnson, 'Middle Dutch Arthurian Romances: New Readings' (3–4), Thomas Kerth, 'Arthurian Tradition and the Middle Dutch *Torec*' (5–31), James H. Morey, '*Torec*, Cosmic Energy, and Pragmatism' (32–41), Lucy Perry, 'Masculine Excess, Feminine Restraint, and Fatherly Guidance in the Middle Dutch *Walewein ende Keye*' (42–54), Ad Putter, '*Walewein ende Keye* and the Strategies of Honor' (55–78), Siân Echard, '"Seldom does anyone listen to a good exemplum": Courts and Kings in *Torec* and *Die Riddere metter Mouwen*' (79–94), Michael W. Twomey, 'Self-Gratifying Adventure and Self-Conscious Narrative in *Lanceloet en het hert met de witte voet*' (95–108), David F. Johnson, 'Bibliography of Scholarship on Middle Dutch Arthurian Romances in Languages other than Dutch' (109–17). In 2014, *Arthuriana* featured another article on a Middle Dutch romance: Joseph M. Sullivan and Zoë Wyatt, '*Die Riddere metter Mouwen [The Knight with the Sleeve]* and its Discourse on Personal Bonds', *Arthuriana*, 24/3, 99–128.
**25** Norris J. Lacy, 'Perceval on the Margins: A Pan-European Perspective', *Arthurian Literature*, 24 (2007), 1–14; Lori J. Walters, 'More Bread from Stone: Gauvain as a Figure of Plenitude in the French, Dutch and English Traditions', *AL*, 24 (2007), 15–32; Frank Brandsma, 'Degrees of Perceptibility: The Narrator in the French Prose *Lancelot*, and in its German and Dutch Translations', *AL*, 24 (2007), 121–34. Cf. also Frank Brandsma, '*Conte* and *Avonture*. Narration and Communication with the Audience in the French, Dutch, and German 'Lancelot' texts', in *Lancelot. Der mittelhochdeutsche Roman im europäischen Kontext*, ed. by Klaus Ridder and Christoph Huber (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2007), pp. 121–33.

Schmitz devoted to the character of Gauvain in Old French, Middle High German and Middle Dutch literature resulted in a detailed book-length study published posthumously in 2008.[26] Two years later, volume five of the multi-volume handbook 'Germania Litteraria Mediaevalis Francigena', which deals with German and Dutch literary styles, forms, motifs, themes and texts of French origin in the period 1100–1300, discussed courtly romances in verse and prose, including the Perceval romances, the Gauvain texts, *Fergus* and *Ferguut*, and the Lancelot romances.[27] In the period between 2004 and 2008, the research project 'Arthurian Fiction: A Pan-European Approach', carried out at Utrecht University, studied the Arthurian narratives and the manuscripts in which they are transmitted throughout Europe. The database compiled during this period was subsequently converted into a web research tool (www.arthurianfiction.org). The project results were also used to write an extensive survey of key Arthurian characters 'on the outskirts of the tradition, examining the role of convention and innovation in responses to Arthurian fiction outside of French, German and English literature'.[28] Finally, Miriam Edlich-Muth's recently published monograph focuses on five Arthurian text collections, Malory's *Morte Darthur*, the *Tavola Ritonda*, Fuetrer's *Buch der Abenteur*, Micheau Gonnot's compilation (Paris, BN, fr. 112) and the *Lancelot* Compilation, analyzing 'the shared structural features of the collections with regard to their chronological arrangement of the material, their presentation of character and the solutions they offer to the particular problems of adapting the Arthurian storyline'.[29]

Since the early 1980s Dutch and Belgian scholars have focused on the sociocultural context of Middle Dutch literature. However, this dominant historicalfunctional approach of medieval texts has not prevented a tangential development which became apparent in the research period under discussion: a growing interest in literary style. At first, this concern took the form of a qualitative approach. Joost van Driel is the most important representative of this type of

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**26** Bernhard Anton Schmitz, *Gauvain, Gawein, Walewein. Die Emanzipation des ewig Verspäteten* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2008).

**27** René Pérennec and Elisabeth Schmid (eds.), *Höfischer Roman in Vers und Prosa*, Germania Litteraria Mediaevalis Francigena, vol. 5 (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2010): René Pérennec, 'Percevalromane', pp. 169–220; Geert Claassens and Fritz Peter Knapp, 'Gauvainromane', pp. 249–310; Willem Kuiper and Geert Claassens, '*Fergus/Ferguut*', pp. 311–30; Frank Brandsma and Fritz Peter Knapp, 'Lancelotromane', pp. 393–458.

**28** Bart Besamusca and Jessica Quinlan, 'The Fringes of Arthurian Fiction', *AL*, 29 (2012), 191–242 (p. 193).

**29** Miriam Edlich-Muth, *Malory and his European Contemporaries: Adapting Late Medieval Arthurian Romance Collections* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2014), p. 6.

research. In his 2007 Leiden dissertation he studies various stylistic phenomena, such as rhyming techniques, features of poetic language and forms of dialogues in a corpus of Middle Dutch verse romances, including various Arthurian narratives like *Ferguut*, *Moriaen* and *Lantsloot vander Haghedochte*.[30] Then he compared the stylistic characteristics of a number of Middle Dutch authors, including Arthurian poets, in a monograph published in 2012.[31] Scholarly interest in literary style is also traceable in the most recent literary history of Middle Dutch literature. In the volume which covers the period until 1300 and includes a discussion of various Arthurian romances, Frits van Oostrom quite frequently comments on stylistic features of the texts which he presents in his survey.[32]

A crucial aspect of literary style is concerned with the form which authors chose for their work. In the period up to 1300 most Middle Dutch literature was written in rhymed couplets, while prose was an exception. In a 2010 article, Joost van Driel presents an overview of the extant Middle Dutch religious and secular prose literature up to the end of the thirteenth century, including the fragmentary Middle Dutch Prose *Lancelot*. He argues that the use of prose was influenced by various factors, such as genre, literary traditions and regionally bounded literary poetics.[33] Bart Besamusca looks at the use of different media in medieval Dutch and English Arthurian literature in comparison to French literature. He suggests that the strong preference of Dutch and English authors for writing verse might be explained by what he calls 'metrical conservatism': authors rejected the prose of their French originals 'due to the tastes of their audiences. For the English and

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**30** Joost van Driel, *Prikkeling der zinnen. De stilistische diversiteit van de Middelnederlandse epische poëzie* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2007). For stylistic features of conversations, readers who do not master Dutch may consult Joost van Driel, 'Styles of Conversations in Medieval Literature: The Case of Flemish Romances', *Neophilologus*, 94 (2010), 109–26.

**31** Joost van Driel, *Meesters van het woord. Middelnederlandse schrijvers en hun kunst* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012).

**32** Frits van Oostrom, *Stemmen op schrift. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur vanaf het begin tot 1300* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2006). The Arthurian romances are discussed on pp. 256–81 and 302–17. For the sake of completeness, we also list the two other volumes which cover the medieval period: Frits van Oostrom, *Wereld in woorden. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1300–1400* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2013); Herman Pleij, *Het gevleugelde woord. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1400–1560* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2007).

**33** Joost van Driel, 'Verheven vorm. Middelnederlands proza tot circa 1300', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 126 (2010), 1–19.

Dutch readers and listeners, the prestigious verse form of Arthurian fiction was a *conditio sine qua non*'.[34]

Doubtless the most innovative research development in the period under discussion was the introduction of stylometrics in Middle Dutch studies. Stylometry is a cross-disciplinary research area within Digital Humanities which is concerned with the quantitative study of style. For Middle Dutch literature, Mike Kestemont is the leading scholar in this approach, which had important forerunners in, among others, Karina van Dalen-Oskam and Joris van Zundert, who were keenly aware of the research possibilities of the digital format of texts. They applied computational philology to determine the exact passage in which *Walewein*'s second author, Pieter Vostaert, took over the work of his predecessor, Penninc. Using a stylometric measure system called Delta, Van Dalen-Oskam and Van Zundert are able to show that Vostaert's work starts around line 7,780. Unexpectedly, their graphs also indicate a change in the copying of the *Walewein* in manuscript Ltk. 195, showing the position where the first scribe stopped writing and the second scribe started his work (l. 5,784).[35]

Kestemont's investigations also focus on stylometry in connection to authorship attribution, and his results are exciting for Arthurian scholarship in Middle Dutch. Concerning the core of the *Lancelot* Compilation, the trilogy *Lanceloet*, *Queeste vanden Grale* and *Arturs doet*, his stylometric analysis of the rhyme words contradicts earlier opinions on its authors. Whereas it has been suggested in the past that the *Queeste* and *Lanceloet* were composed by different authors or that the trilogy as a whole was written by a single poet, Kestemont attributes *Lanceloet* and *Queeste* to one and the same author, and *Arturs doet* to another writer.[36] Even more noteworthy is Kestemont's conclusion with regard to the shared authorship

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**34** Bart Besamusca, 'The Prevalence of Verse in Medieval Dutch and English Arthurian Fiction', *JEGP*, 112 (2013), 461–74 (p. 473). See also his 'Der Reiz der Versform', in *Lancelot. Der mittelhochdeutsche Roman* (n. 25), pp. 77–92.

**35** Karina van Dalen and Joris van Zundert, 'Delta for Middle Dutch: Author and Copyist Distinction in *Walewein*', *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 22 (2007), 345–62. See also their essay 'The Quest for Uniqueness: Author and Copyist Distinction in Middle Dutch Arthurian Romances based on Computer-assisted Lexicon Analysis', in *Yesterday's Words: Contemporary, Current and Future Lexicography*, ed. by Marijke Mooijaart and Marijke van der Wal (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), pp. 292–304, and Karina van Dalen-Oskam, 'Kwantificeren van stijl', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 123 (2007), 37–54.

**36** Mike Kestemont, 'Arthur's Authors: A Quantitative Study of Rhyme Words in the Middle Dutch Arthurian Epic', *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, 142 (2013), 1–33 (p. 19–21). See also Mike Kestemont, *Het gewicht van de auteur. Stylometrische auteursherkenning in de Middelnederlandse literatuur* (Gent: Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde, 2013), pp. 223–29.

of three well-known other narratives. His quantitative research confirms Klaas Heeroma's earlier, disputed intuition that *Moriaen*, *Lantsloot vander Haghedochte* and the Charlemagne epic *Karel ende Elegast* were written by the same author.[37]

That the computational study of style by applying quantitative methods is not limited to author attribution is shown by Kestemont in a 2012 article on the use of assonance in rhyming couplets in Middle Dutch chivalric texts. While early thirteenth-century and late fourteenth-century poets, including the makers of *Ferguut* and the *Wrake van Ragisel*, seem to feel free to write assonances, authors who compose verse texts in the period between *c.* 1250 and *c.* 1350 strove for full rhyming couplets. Most Arthurian poets belong to this second group of authors.[38]

Another research development deserving to be mentioned in this survey is the renewed interest in geographical regions in connection to Middle Dutch literature. Frank Willaert and Bram Caers have studied the creation and manuscript transmission of chivalric literature in the various parts of the medieval Low Countries (in particular Flanders, Brabant and the Rhine-Meuse area), continuing earlier investigations carried out by scholars like Evert van den Berg and Jan Goossens.[39] Focusing on the dating and localisation of the original works and their extant manuscript copies, Willaert and Caers show that the majority of epic texts, and in particular Arthurian romances, were composed in Flanders. A reason for this phenomenon could be the great influence of French literature in this region. The manuscript transmission shows, in addition, that most original works were copied in the same region as where they were composed. Moreover, while Flemish texts were also copied in Brabant and further eastward, Brabantine romances seem not to have been copied in Flanders. Willaert and Caers suggest that the prestige of thirteenth-century Flemish literature caused interest in these texts outside Flanders, while for the same reason Flemish readers were not interested in non-Flemish literature.

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**37** Mike Kestemont, 'Auteursherkenning met rijmwoorden in de Middelnederlandse Arturen Karelepiek. Eerherstel voor Icarus?', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 128 (2012), 135–59. See also Kestemont, *Het gewicht van de auteur* (n. 36), pp. 238–40, 259–68.

**38** Mike Kestemont, 'Een "Assonantic Revival"? Een kwantitatief diachroon onderzoek naar de assonantie in de Middelnederlandse ridderepiek, met bijzondere aandacht voor de veertiende eeuw', in *Ene andre tale. Tendensen in de Middelnederlandse late ridderepiek*, ed. by An Faems and Marjolein Hogenbirk (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), pp. 259–90.

**39** Frank Willaert, *De ruimte van het boek. Literaire regio's in de Lage Landen tijden de Middeleeuwen* (Leiden: Stichting Neerlandistiek Leiden, 2010), pp. 13–22; Bram Caers, 'Een *buchelin ins flemische*. Over ontstaan en verspreiding van de ridderepiek in de Nederlanden (ca. 1150–1450)', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 127 (2011), 223–51.

Among the prestigious Flemish texts, it is notably *Walewein* which continues to attract scholarly attention. Next to the editions and studies mentioned above, numerous articles, for example, discuss this romance by applying an intertextual approach. Roel Zemel argues that *Walewein* presents the hero's quest for Ysabele as a playful version of Tristan's quest for Isolde.[40] Johan Winkelman is also interested in the link between *Walewein* and the Tristan tradition, comparing a series of Middle Dutch episodes with Gottfried's *Tristan* in particular.[41] *Walewein*'s connections with the *chansons de geste* are studied by Roel Zemel and Marjolein Hogenbirk. Both scholars show that Walewein is portrayed in a number of episodes as an epic hero.[42] Roel Zemel, in addition, argues that the deeds of Walewein and Ysabele in the Endi episode resemble those of Guillaume and Orable in the *Prise d'Orange*. In his view, this connection is meant to illuminate the poetical problem of composing a romance about Walewein/Gauvain.[43] Norbert Voorwinden lists a series of parallels between *Walewein* and the German Arthurian romance *Diu Crône*, written by Heinrich von dem Türlin around 1230. One of his conclusions is that both texts can be interpreted as anti-Grail romances.[44]

Various essays are concerned with other aspects of *Walewein* than its intertextual connections. Veerle Uyttersprot identifies the multiple narrative techniques applied in the Endi episode.[45] Johan Winkelman analyzes the text from a theological point of view, emphasizing the religious aspects of the romance, such as the text's interest in eschatological matters and the tension between Christian

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**40** Roel Zemel, 'Wanneer Walewein in het voetspoor treedt van Tristan', in *"Daer omme lachen die liede". Opstellen over humor in literatuur en taal voor Fred de Bree*, ed. by Ton van Strien and Roel Zemel (Amsterdam, Münster: Stichting Neerlandistiek VU, Nodus Publikationen, 2005), pp. 15–21.

**41** Johan H. Winkelman, '*Walewein* en *Tristan* parallel gelezen. Een intertekstuele analyse als sleutel tot interpretatie', *Spiegel der Letteren*, 49 (2007), 377–401.

**42** Roel Zemel, 'De *Roman van Walewein* en het heldenlied', in *Maar er is meer: avontuurlijk lezen in de epiek van de Lage Landen* (n. 7), pp. 27–44; Marjolein Hogenbirk, 'The "I-word" and Genre: Merging Epic and Romance in the *Roman van Walewein*', in *"Li premerains vers": Essays in Honor of Keith Busby*, ed. by Catherine M. Jones and Logan E. Whalen (Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2011), pp. 157–70.

**43** Roel Zemel, 'Walewein en Ysabele in Endi', *Nederlandse Letterkunde*, 15 (2010), 1–28.

**44** Norbert Voorwinden, 'Der mittelniederländische *Roman van Walewein* und *Die Krone* Heinrichs von dem Türlin. Parallelen zwischen zwei unkonventionellen Artusepen', in *Vom Verstehen deutscher Texte des Mittelalters aus der europäischen Kultur. Hommage à Elisabeth Schmid*, ed. by Dorothea Klein (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2011), pp. 345–58 (pp. 356–57).

**45** Veerle Uyttersprot, 'Literair vuurwerk in Endi. Vertelstrategieën in de *Roman van Walewein*', in *Maar er is meer: avontuurlijk lezen in de epiek van de Lage Landen* (n. 7), pp. 13–26.

doctrine and secular love.[46] Gerhard Wolf focuses on the first episode in *Walewein*. He suggests that the ideal nature of Arthur's court is qualified because it is the narrative's intention to show the complex nature of human existence.[47] In another article, Wolf discusses four scenes in which visualisation is of prime narrative importance, arguing that *Walewein* criticizes the Platonic idea that reason is capable of controlling the senses.[48] Roel Zemel analyzes the four rash boons in the romance against the background of the 'don contraignant' scenes in Chrétien's romances. He argues that this motif, which is in essence incompatible with courtly conduct, is in *Walewein* used successfully only once, by Ysabele: she acts inappropriately by uttering ambiguous phrases, yet saves the protagonist's life.[49] In another contribution, Zemel studies both *Walewein* and the famous thirteenth-century Flemish beast epic *Van den vos Reynaerde*, discussing passages which encourage the readers/listeners to reflect on the fictional status of narrative texts.[50]

In marked contrast to the abundance of attention for *Walewein* stands the scholarly neglect in recent years of the other Middle Dutch romances outside the manuscript context of the *Lancelot* Compilation. Due to its poor manuscript transmission, this disregard may be understandable when it concerns the Middle Dutch *Tristan*, but in the case of *Ferguut*, it is striking that this narrative, of old a scholar's favourite, has been put in the shade by *Walewein* in the last decade. Apart from Joost van Driel's stylistic interest in the poet's masterly command of the Middle Dutch language (see above), just two contributions are noteworthy. Roel Zemel studies humour and irony in the Fergus romances by analyzing both the beginning of Guillaume's *Fergus* and the concluding episode of the Middle

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**46** Johan H. Winkelman, 'Walewein en God. Over de theologische achtergronden van een Arturverhaal', *Nederlandse Letterkunde*, 11 (2006), 354–82. See also his 'Waleweins dilemma: Venus' minne of Abrahams schoot. Liefdesperikelen in een Middelnederlandse Arturroman', *Nederlandse Letterkunde*, 9 (2004), 326–60.

**47** Gerhard Wolf, 'Der Artushof in der Komplexitätskrise. Ein Beitrag zur Eingangsaventiure des mittelniederländischen *Walewein*', in *Artushof und Artusliteratur*, ed. by Matthias Däumer, Cora Dietl, Friedrich Wolfzettel (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 2010), pp. 253–81.

**48** Gerhard Wolf, 'Sieht man mit dem "inneren Auge" besser? Zu Formen und Funktion visueller Wahrnehmung im mittelniederländischen *Roman van Walewein*', in *Sehen und Sichtbarkeit in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters*, ed. by Ricarda Bauschke, Sebastian Coxon, Martin H. Jones (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2011), pp. 211–27.

**49** Roel Zemel, 'Op weg naar de vierde "bede" in de *Roman van Walewein*', *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 26 (2008), 75–92.

**50** Roel Zemel, 'Vlaanderen omstreeks 1250: spreken over literatuur', *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 30 (2012), 45–54.

Dutch *Ferguut*.[51] Starting from the threefold mentioning of Saint Alena, who was venerated in the neighbourhood of Brussels, in the second part of *Ferguut*, Mike Kestemont suggests that this part of the text was written at the court of the Lords of Gaasbeek.[52]

In recent years, Lodewijk van Velthem and his oeuvre have continued to attract attention. The poet's life and his search for sources have been surveyed, and his ownership of The Hague, Royal Library, MS 129 A 10, has once again been strongly put forward.[53] Basing her research on a number of adverbial adjuncts which captured her attention, Marjolein Hogenbirk supports the opinion that Velthem is to be identified as the compiler of the text collection known as the *Lancelot* Compilation, and in a more recent contribution she uses marginal notes by scribe B to suggest that the compiler, alias Velthem, and B, the leader of the scribes who copied the manuscript, are one and the same person.[54] Velthem's oeuvre might even be more extensive than previously thought. Geert Warnar argues that an episode of around nine hundred lines in Jacob van Maerlant's Grail-Merlin romance, the so-called Maskeroen episode, or Satan's Lawsuit, was in fact not written by the Flemish poet, but interpolated in the romance by Velthem, who is also held responsible for the translation of the first chapter of Hugh of Saint Victor's *De modo orandi*, which serves as the prologue to *Arturs doet* in the *Lancelot* Compilation.[55] Finally, by applying various forms of stylometric analysis Marjolein Hogenbirk and Mike Kestemont make it plausible that *Der ystorien bloeme*,

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**51** Roel Zemel, 'Koning Artur in actie. Over het begin van *Fergus* en het eind van *Ferguut*', *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 29 (2011), 29–54.

**52** Mike Kestemont, 'In het land van Alena. Over de lokalisering van de *Ferguut*', in *Want hi verkende dien name wale* (n. 21), pp. 93–98. That a Lord of Gaasbeek probably acted as patron of Segher Diengotgaf's *Trojeroman* (Romance of Troy), has been argued by Kestemont in his essay 'Seghers wapenfeiten. Oude en nieuwe hypotheses omtrent de *Trojeroman*, het huis van Gaasbeek en het handschrift-Van Hulthem', *Spiegel der Letteren*, 52 (2010), 249–75.

**53** See Remco Sleiderink, 'Lodewijk van Velthem. De onnoemelijke ambitie van een Brabantse dorpspastoor', in *Maar er is meer: avontuurlijk lezen in de epiek van de Lage Landen* (n. 7), pp. 109–29; Bart Besamusca, 'Het bibliografisch ganzenbord van Lodewijk van Velthem', in *De boeken van Velthem* (n. 8), pp. 73–87; Jos A. A.M. Biemans, 'No Miniatures, not even Decoration, yet Extraordinarily Fascinating. New Hypotheses Concerning the *Lancelot Compilation* and Related Manuscripts', *Quaerendo*, 39 (2009), 225–56.

**54** Marjolein Hogenbirk, 'Is hij het? Lodewijk van Velthem en de compilator', in *De boeken van Velthem* (n. 8), pp. 47–72; Marjolein Hogenbirk, 'B. Over twee marginale notities in *Arturs doet*', in *Want hi verkende dien name wale* (n. 21), pp. 73–79.

**55** Geert Warnar, 'Velthem in de Vierde Partie. De verwerking van de geleerdentraditie in het Middelnederlands', in *De boeken van Velthem* (n. 8), pp. 119–42 (pp. 139–42).

which is a verse adaptation of Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda aurea* and severely criticized for its exceptionally bad rhymes, may be attributed to Velthem.[56]

The identity of the compiler is still discussed and the same goes for his intentions. What motivated the composition of the *Lancelot* Compilation? Katty De Bundel and Geert Claassens oppose the scholarly opinion that the interpolation of the five romances between the *Queeste vanden Grale* and *Arturs doet* was a dubious choice, as the quest for the Grail is presented as the final adventure, and argue that the inserted romances show that the Arthurian court has lost its position as the epicentre of courtliness and chivalry after the quest for the Grail and are thus announcing the downfall of Arthur's realm in *Arturs doet*. They base this interpretation on their readings of *Walewein ende Keye* and *Torec*.[57] David Johnson arrives at a rather similar conclusion, focusing on the place of *Torec* in the *Lancelot* Compilation. In his view, the romance criticizes the Arthurian world by presenting 'a contrasting vision of uncorrupted knighthood that exposes the weakness of Arthur's court'.[58]

The individual romances which constitute the *Lancelot* Compilation have attracted varied degrees of attention in the research period under discussion. Six of the ten texts (the trilogy *Lanceloet-Queeste-Arturs doet*, the *Wrake van Ragisel*, *Perchevael*, and *Lanceloet en het hert met de witte voet*) were only studied occasionally.[59] Scholars have been far more interested in intertextual research on *Wale-*

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**56** Marjolein Hogenbirk and Mike Kestemont, 'Het werk van een klerk. Een stylometrische verkenning van het auteurschap achter *Der ystorien bloeme*', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 129 (2013), 246–73.

**57** Katty De Bundel and Geert Claassens, '"Alle daventuren van Logers". Over de samenstelling van de *Lancelotcompilatie*', in *Maar er is meer: avontuurlijk lezen in de epiek van de Lage Landen* (n. 7), pp. 303–18. See also Claassens's essays on *Walewein ende Keye* and *Torec*: 'Laß Dich einen Fremden loben! Der mittelniederländische *Walewein ende Keye* und die Europäische Artustradition', in *König Artus lebt! Eine Ringvorlesung des Mittelalterzentrums der Universität Bonn*, ed. by Stefan Zimmer (Heidelberg: Winter, 2005), pp. 181–219 (p. 213); 'De *Torrez* à *Torec*: un roman arthurien en moyen néerlandais et sa source inconnue en ancien français', in *"Lors est ce jour grant joie nee". Essais de langue et de littérature françaises du Moyen* Âge, ed. by Michèle Goyens and Werner Verbeke (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009), pp. 159–75 (pp. 173–74).

**58** David F. Johnson, 'Questing in the Middle Dutch *Lancelot Compilation*', in *The Grail, the Quest and the World of Arthur*, ed. by Norris J. Lacy (Cambridge: Brewer, 2008), pp. 92–107 (p. 106).

**59** See, in addition to the publications which are discussed above, Frank Brandsma, 'Luisteren naar de spiegel', in *Maar er is meer: avontuurlijk lezen in de epiek van de Lage Landen* (n. 7), pp. 283–301; Ludo Jongen and Rob Stufkens, 'Stemmen van boven. Heilige wegwijzers in de queeste naar de Graal', in *Maar er is meer: avontuurlijk lezen in de epiek van de Lage Landen* (n. 7), pp. 319–37; Frank Brandsma, 'Pleidooi voor de jzn', in *"Want hi verkende dien name wale"* (n. 21), pp. 29–35; Geert S. Pallemans, 'Revisiting the Old French *Lai de Tyolet* in Light of the Middle Dutch *Lancelot Compilation* and *Lancelot en het hert met de witte voet*', *Neophilologus*,

*wein ende Keye* and *Torec*, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, *Moriaen* and the *Ridder metter mouwen*.[60] Marjolein Hogenbirk studies *Moriaen* with special attention to the link with Chrétien's *Conte du Graal*, which is understandable since Moriaen is the son of Perceval in the indigenous romance, and the *chansons de geste*, in particular *Aliscans*, which shares the 'enfances' theme with *Moriaen*. The author of *Moriaen* combines, so the argument goes, Arthurian values, such as self-control, with *chansons de geste* ideals such as loyalty to the king and male bonding, to illustrate that it is 'inner beauty which is most important when aspiring to becoming an excellent knight'.[61]

In the case of the *Ridder metter mouwen*, Simon Smith is the dominant investigator. In an impressive series of articles, he has contributed to a thorough understanding of the romance, strongly focusing on intertextuality. In the *Ridder metter mouwen*, references to other texts, such as Chrétien's *Chevalier de la charrette* and *Conte du Graal*, and the Middle Dutch *Ferguut*, serve to create humour.[62] Also comical is a curious episode which seems to be composed by the compiler of the *Lancelot* Compilation, in which Ywein, the knight with the lion, succeeds in setting free a group of knights, using the disguise of a lion tamer.[63] With regard to the love theme, Smith notes that while the hero Miraudijs proves himself worthy of the love of Clarette, various other characters, including the ugly King of Cornwall, pursue love in improper ways; the tragic end of the most famous couples in the Arthurian world, Lancelot and Guinevere and Tristan and Isolde, is recalled

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91 (2007), 351–60; Bart Besamusca, 'Tyolet, Lanceloet und Lanzarote auf der Jagd nach dem Hirsch mit dem weißen Fuß', in *Vom Verstehen deutscher Texte des Mittelalters aus der europäischen Kultur. Hommage à Elisabeth Schmid*, ed. by Dorothea Klein (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2011), pp. 359–74.

**60** See, in addition to the publications mentioned above, Marjolein Hogenbirk, 'Wat een held! Humor in *Walewein ende Keye*', in *"Daer omme lachen die liede"* (n. 40), pp. 31–36; Bart Besamusca, 'Een kleurrijk personage: Torecs oudoom', in *"Want hi verkende dien name wale"* (n. 21), pp. 13–18.

**61** Marjolein Hogenbirk, 'De carrière van de zwarte ridder Moriaen. Tussen *Conte du Graal* en *Aliscans*', *Queeste*, 16 (2009), 51–73 (71); 'Vom Außenseiter zum größten Helden des Hofes. Die Karriere des schwarzen Ritters Moriaen', in *Artushof und Artusliteratur*, ed. by Matthias Däumer, Cora Dietl, Friedrich Wolfzettel (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 2010), pp. 283–305 (p. 283); 'Dutch Design: The *Romance of Moriaen* as an Example of Middle Dutch Arthurian Tradition', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie*, 130 (2011), Sonderheft 'Dialog mit den Nachbarn. Mittelniederländische Literatur zwischen dem 12. und 16. Jahrhundert', 127–40.

**62** Simon Smith, 'Een vermakelijk verhaal. Over humor in *Die Riddere metter Mouwen*', *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 25 (2007), p. 7–66; 'Eenzame Egletine. Over een slapeloze vrouw in *Die Ridder met de Mouw*', in *"Daer omme lachen die liede"* (n. 40), pp. 23–30.

**63** Simon Smith, '*Ywein metten lybaerde*. Over een curieuze episode in *Die Riddere metter Mouwen*', *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 26 (2008), 29–73.

to remind the audience of discreditable attitudes in love affairs.[64] Associations with lustful, rather than honourable, love are avoided, for instance by the image of the allegorical tree of love which is planted in the hero's heart by Venus.[65] In a book-length study, Smith extensively discusses medieval judicial combats in order to interpret the judicial duel between the hero and Kay's nephew Galyas in its proper context.[66]

Ulrike Wuttke complemented Smith's investigations by studying the *Ridder metter mouwen* from a gender perspective. In the first of her two essays published in the period under discussion, she focuses on the curious episode in which the hero decides to become a monk, yet leaves the monastery in order to participate in a tournament which promises to reward the champion with a bride, Clarette.[67] In the second essay, Wuttke discusses the portrayal of the heroine, arguing that her remarkable absence in the second part of the *Ridder metter mouwen* is due to the adaptation of the Flemish romance by the compiler of the *Lancelot* Compilation.[68] Clarette plays a central role in a 2008 essay by Wouter Schrover, who argues that the *Ridder metter mouwen* sheds new light on the interpretation of Chrétien's *Perceval*: whereas the Flemish hero's relationships with women are good and he is able to combine the secular and the spiritual, the French protagonist's problematic relations with women illustrate his failure to combine worldly adventures with a religious mind-set.[69] Thea Summerfield shows that romance elements derived from the *Ridder metter mouwen*, *Moriaen* and *Torec* are used by Lode-

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**64** Simon Smith, 'Ware minnaars en valse vrijers. Over de liefdesthematiek in *Die Riddere metter Mouwen*', *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 27 (2009), 7–23; 'Tristan – Lancelot – Miraudijs. Over drie minnaars in *Die Riddere metter Mouwen*', *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 29 (2011), 7–28; 'Een vorstin met een verleden? Over Guenièvre (en Lancelot) in *Die Riddere metter Mouwen*', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 130 (2014), 24–52.
**65** Simon Smith, 'Vreedzame Venus. Over ontluikende liefde in *Die Riddere metter Mouwen*', *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 30 (2012), 55–86.
**66** Simon Smith, *De grieven van Galyas. Over een gerechtelijk duel in* Die Riddere metter mouwen (Amsterdam, Münster: Stichting Neerlandistiek VU, Nodus Publikationen, 2010).
**67** Ulrike Wuttke, 'Ein Minneritter als Mönch? Eine Episode des mittelniederländischen Artusromans *De Ridder metter Mouwen* aus Sicht der Genderforschung', *Queeste*, 12 (2005), 1–17. Simon Smith discusses the monk episode in 'Een martiale monnik. Over *moniage*, tenue en toernooi in *Die Riddere metter Mouwen*, *Voortgang, jaarboek voor de neerlandistiek*, 23 (2005), 33–90.
**68** Ulrike Wuttke, '"Clarette, die nine vaect". Die Darstellung der Protagonistin im mittelniederländischen Roman *De Ridder metter Mouwen*', *Queeste*, 13 (2006), 130–53.
**69** Wouter Schrover, 'Ontmoeting van twee werelden. Een nieuwe interpretatie van de intertekstuele relatie tussen de *Conte du Graal* en *Die riddere metter mouwen*', *Queeste*, 15 (2008), 120–41.

wijk van Velthem to enhance the status of King Edward I as ideal sovereign in his *Spiegel historiael*.[70]

## Where Should We Be Heading?

The preceding pages have shown that the study of Arthurian literature in Middle Dutch suffers from a number of lacunae where editions and translations are concerned. The highly intriguing *Perchevael* and *Moriaen*, for example, are still not accessible to scholars who do not read Middle Dutch. There can be no doubt that their long expected appearance in the Arthurian Archives series would result in an increased number of essays devoted to these romances.

Another desideratum relates to the Lancelot Project. At the moment, the edition of the core texts of the *Lancelot* Compilation is still awaiting completion. The four published *Lanceloet* volumes (1991–1998) offer the reader a total of 26,636 lines of verse. For the remaining ten thousand lines, one must still consult Jonckbloet's 1846–1849 edition of the whole *Lancelot* Compilation. The same is true for the complete texts of *Queeste vanden Grale* and *Arturs doet*. It should be noted, in addition, that English translations of the two last mentioned verse romances would certainly elicit international scholarly interest, because both texts are captivating versions of the French originals and quite unknown outside Belgium and the Netherlands.

Highly welcome would be an edition of the Merlin trilogy which is preserved in the so-called Burgsteinfurt manuscript. While Maerlant's two Grail-Merlin romances have been edited some decades ago, albeit not without flaws, unfortunately, Velthem's *Merlin* continuation is still only accessible in the unreliable 1880 edition by Van Vloten. To solve this deplorable state of affairs, a co-operation between specialists in Middle Dutch and Low German is called for. Only a team of such scholars is capable of producing the edition we need: a critical, fully annotated text which provides a solid foundation for further investigations.

Co-operation between Netherlandists and Germanists is also recommended in the case of the text which is preserved in the late fifteenth-century manuscript Best. 7020 (W*) 46 of the historical archive of the city of Cologne. As mentioned above, the German prose *Lancelot* in this so-called Blankenheim codex refers to a Middle Dutch source: 'Diss buchelin zu einer stonden / Hain ich inn flemische

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70 Thea Summerfield, 'Schrijven in Maerlants schaduw. Lodewijk van Velthem, Edward I en koning Artur', in *De boeken van Velthem* (n. 8), pp. 183–205.

geschrieben fonden'.[71] It is high time that the consequences of this intriguing statement are taken into further consideration.

This survey has identified various areas of promising recent, current and future research. Studying literary style by means of computational philology has yielded exciting results, which so far have dealt with authorship attribution. It would be rewarding to apply stylometry to other aspects of the style of Middle Dutch verse and prose texts. The study of literary/cultural regions in the Low Countries also cries out for continuation, since it has made strong contributions to our understanding of the development of Middle Dutch literature. These investigations need to be intensified, as there seem to be more new insights to be gained.

Two romances in particular merit our attention in the coming years. Since 2003, *Perchevael* has been accessible in an edition which leaves nothing to be desired, yet scholars seem to avoid this highly idiosyncratic version of the Perceval story. Its uniqueness should stimulate further research.[72] The same is true for *Lantsloot vander Haghedochte*. The text is available in a flawless 1987 edition and its mix of features which pertain to verse romances, on the one hand, and to the Prose *Lancelot* tradition, on the other hand, is very interesting. Still, the romance seems to be neglected in the study of Arthurian literature in Middle Dutch. Since we now may proceed from the assumption that the poet of *Lantsloot vander Haghedochte* also wrote *Moriaen* and *Karel ende Elegast*, and since we already know that the text is preserved in a remarkably deluxe codex, studying *Lantsloot vander Haghedochte* imposes itself as a matter of urgency.[73]

In the 2006 overview of scholarship in Middle Dutch Arthurian literature which we took as our point of departure, it was noted that the study of Arthuriana in the Low Countries was flourishing.[74] Almost ten years later we are happy to confirm this state of affairs, which we expect to be long lasting, reflecting the blossoming of Arthurian studies worldwide.

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**71**  Jackson and Ranawake (eds), *The Arthur of the Germans* (n. 3), p. 203.
**72**  See Frank Brandsma, 'La véridicité des émotions dans le *Perchevael*, transposition en moyen néerlandais du *Conte du Graal*: Les larmes de Perchevael' in *Fictions de vérité dans les réécritures européennes des romans de Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. by Annie Combes (Paris: Garnier, 2012) pp. 157–71; Marjolein Hogenbirk, 'Back to Basics. Reacting to the *Conte du Graal* in the Low Countries', *Wolfram Studien XXIII: Wolfram's Parzival-roman im europäischen Kontext*, ed. by Klaus Ridder (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2014), pp. 51–70.
**73**  For an evaluation of the codex, see Jos A. A.M. Biemans, 'Conventies, standaarden en varianten. Verschillende mogelijkheden en keuzes bij de vormgeving van handschriften met berijmde Middelnederlandse ridderepiek', in *Ene andre tale* (n. 38), pp. 215–57 (pp. 248–50).
**74**  Lacy (ed.), *A History of Arthurian Scholarship* (n. 3).

# Bibliography

Like the bibliography included in the 'État présent' on Norse Arthurian material and scholarship, this bibliography provides an overview of manuscripts, recent and canonical editions, and modern translations, as well as relevant websites. We have listed all known codices and fragments of the texts. In the bibliography we have given the editions of the fragments only when no edition of the full version of the romance is available. Scholarly works are listed in the footnotes of our survey.

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