CHAPTER 10

The Fool and the Wise Man: The Legacy of the Two Merlins in Modern Culture

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Wit, an't be thy will, put me into good fooling!
Those wits, that think they have thee, do very oft
prove fools; and I, that am sure I lack thee, may
pass for a wise man: for what says Quinapalus?
'Better a witty fool, than a foolish wit.'
William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, Act I Scene 1.

Inputting the search parameter "Merlin" into a major search engine today yields in the region of 115,000,000 results.[1] The sheer numbers, as well as the use of the name "Merlin" as a trademark by various companies, a charity, as well as in film and TV productions, and even as an Office assistant in Microsoft Office, demonstrate how familiar a feature of modern culture Merlin has become.[2] Merlin's appearances in modern film and literature are almost too many to enumerate.[3] *Merlin* is the title of a recent British TV series, first broadcast in 2008, and is the eponymous hero of the French mini-series *Merlin l'enchanteur*, which aired in 2012. He features in the Hollywood film *King Arthur*

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(2004), *The Last Legion* (2007), *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (2010), the French sitcom *Kaamelott* (2005–2009), and the 2011 TV mini-series *Camelot*. Merlin also makes an appearance in the *Stargate: SG-1* (1997–2007) and *Stargate: Atlantis* (2004–2009) series, and the third *Shrek* film, (2007), he is mentioned in *Babylon 5*'s Season 3 episode "Of Light and Dark (1996)", and is also arguably Tim in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. In modern literature, he appears in Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, is a main protagonist in Mary Stewart's Arthurian novels, lives backwards in T.H. White's *The Once and Future King*, is recast as Gandalf in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and as Dumbledore in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels (although Rowling also mentions Merlin by name).[4] He is mentioned in Sergei Lukyanenko's *Night Watch* series.[5]

Studies of modern incarnations of Arthurian characters, including Merlin, have been growing in number. Over the past few decades, scholars increasingly have been able to "turn their attention away from the elite literature and art of the nineteenth and twentieth century toward genres of popular and even mass culture."[6] The slowness of this process and the reluctance to engage with what is perceived as the low-brow genres of television series and mass-market paperbacks is all the more surprising, considering that the common complaint of medievalists is the lack of information about anything other than the intellectual and political elites of the periods we examine. Yet the result of our habit, born of necessity, of focusing on the elites is that, when venturing into the modern world, the temptation is accordingly to stick with the familiar field of action and avoid the vast unchartered territories of mass-market popular culture, although it is unclear why it is difficult to write a scholarly essay about, for instance, a computer game. At the crux of the problem lies the question of whether "mass culture medievalism merely deform[s] history or [has] a role to play in the transmission of medieval culture," as Finke puts it.[7] I would like to suggest that, as far as the figure of Merlin is concerned, the answer is almost certainly the latter. Our general perception of the common image of Merlin is guided by something other than the knowledge of medieval texts, and by something more than the classics that feature him. This is where the mass-market culture, and cinema and television in particular, come in.

Another particularly compelling reason why a medievalist might wish to turn his or her attention to the examination of cinematographic representations of characters such as Merlin is that modern films and TV

series are similar to many medieval sources, in having no single identifiable author or "creative controlling force."[8] Even in cases where a single mind is claimed to stand behind the creation of, for example, a film or series of films (and critics speak in particular of the "authorial intentions" of, for instance, George Lucas or Antoine Fuqua and David Franzoni), the amount of creative input and influence exerted by other individuals and organizations over the time of production often results in effects not unlike scribal intervention over the centuries of transmission of medieval texts. To explore Merlin's incarnations in these modern media by means of analytical tools developed in an examination of medieval texts is therefore a more reasonable exercise than may at first glance appear.

A final argument for the need for a thorough study of Merlin's development from his earliest incarnations to the present day from a medievalist's viewpoint, a banquet at which the present chapter can be no more than an aperitif, is that among the many studies of the modern incarnations of Merlin that have been published, factual error is often sadly abundant when the narrative concerns the earliest strata of the tradition.[9] For instance, the introduction to Watson and Fries' *Figure of Merlin* names the Myrddin of the Welsh poetry as "poet and madman" but omits a crucial reference to his primary function in that poetry as prophet, and refers to the Norman Geoffrey of Monmouth (d. 1155), as a "Welsh cleric," and also to Nennius, whose authorship of the *Historia Brittonum* had already been refuted most definitively by David Dumville some years previously.[10] Gollnick writes that Geoffrey "introduced Merlin to the world of literature." While in his essay in R. J. Stewart, ed., *Book of Merlin*, Geoffrey Ashe points out that the "ascription [to Nennius] is uncertain," he nevertheless uses that name.[11] Finally, in a recent monograph dedicated to the subject, Gaëlle Zussa lists the indubitably Anglo–Saxon Bede, and the fictional Nennius alongside Gildas as "Welsh chroniclers."[12]

These types of inaccuracy highlight the need for a new study that would take account, as accurately as possible, of the legend's medieval origins. As has been pointed out in many recent works, much of the modern Merlin in his various incarnations, particularly in the English-speaking world, is traceable, via Malory (and Caxton's print edition), to the courtly literary traditions of medieval France and England.[13] However, in order to explain some of the more perplexing features of the figure's development, it is necessary to delve deeper and further into the roots of this tradition.

Since it is physically impossible, within the limitations of this chapter, to address all the modern incarnations of Merlin, I choose to focus on a small selection, to show what I see as a particular and very important trend in the representation of Merlin that has its origins in the medieval tradition. Others may wish to apply my analysis to other works, or test it against a wider selection, but the trend itself can be outlined on the basis of a small modern sample. This trend can be described as a duality of representation. Merlin, in all his incarnations, can be categorized as either a guiding figure (wise man), or a person occupying a marginalized position in society, or indeed outside it (fool). I use the term "fool" to mean a person who would be defined as either madman, wild man, or fool, in opposition to conventional definitions of wisdom. His "madness" or "foolishness" is only a label designating an unconventional way of thinking that is deemed unacceptable to society and (usually) leads to his becoming an outcast. A particularly important feature, which is constant in both the wise man and the madman personas of Merlin, is his prophetic ability. I propose to start by outlining the medieval foundations of this dualistic tradition.[14]

The Merlin of Geoffrey of Monmouth's work, which is widely and justifiably considered to represent a crucial stage in the development of the Arthurian legend, is a famously complex and contradictory construction.[15] While Geoffrey's Merlin (or, perhaps better, his two Merlins) is a particularly poignant example of the duality of the character's image, he is not the origin of this duality.[16] Geoffrey's Merlin, featured in *Historia regum Britanniae* (henceforth *HRB*) and *Vita Merlini* (henceforth *VM*), appears, based on these two works, to have an improbably lengthy lifetime stretching from the mid fifth to the late sixth century.[17] As Jarman has pointed out, this appears to be a result of a merger of two different traditions of Merlin: *Merlinus Ambrosius* and *Merlinus Celidonius/Silvester*.[18] While Jarman states that it is the Merlin of the *HRB*, the *Merlinus Ambrosius*, "who became the famous wizard and seer of international romance," I would like to argue that both figures exercise an influence on modern representations of Merlin.[19] Indeed, it must be noted that the image of Merlin as a wild man, that is, based on *Merlinus Silvester* rather than *Ambrosius*, does appear in several later medieval texts, such as the *Roman de Silence* (s. xiii), *Roman de Fergus*, and Peire de Corbiac's (also known as Corbian) *Thezaur* (*c.* 1250), which refers to a "Merlin the Wild."[20] Furthermore, the Welsh tradition of *Merlinus Silvester* (outlined below) is preserved in manuscripts from as late as the fifteenth century,

and therefore was being transmitted contemporaneously with the tradition of *Merlinus Ambrosius*.

Some medieval writers, the first of whom was perhaps Gerald of Wales (*ca*. 1146–1223), explicitly distinguish between the two Merlins.[21] It is worth quoting Gerald in full, since he effectively summarizes the salient features of both Merlins. Gerald writes:

> Erant enim Merlini duo; iste qui et Ambrosius dictus est, quia binomius fuerat, et sub rege Vortigerno prophetizavit, ab incubo genitus, et apud Kaermerdyn inventus; unde et ab ipso ibidem invento denominata est Kaermerdyn, id est, urbs Merlini; alter vero de Albania oriundus, qui et Celidonius dictus est, a Celidonia silva in qua prophetizevit, et Silvester, quia cum inter acies bellicas constitutes monstrum horribile nimis in aera suspiciendo prospiceret, dementire coepit, et ad silvam transfugiendo silvestrem usque ad obitum vitam perduxit. His autem Merlinus tempore Arthuri fuit, et longe plenius et apertius quam alter prophetasse perhibetur.[22]

> There were two Merlins. The one called Ambrosius, who thus had two names, prophesied when Vortigern was King. He was the son of an incubus and he was discovered in Carmarthen, which means Merlin's town, for it takes its name from the fact that he was found there. The second Merlin came from Scotland. He is called Celidonius, because he prophesied in the Caledonian Forest. He is also called Silvester, because once when he was fighting he looked up into the air and saw a terrible monster. He went mad as a result and fled to the forest, where he passed the remainder of his life as a wild man of the woods. This second Merlin lived in the time of Arthur. He is said to have made more prophecies than his namesake.[23]

Thus, the salient features of the legend, as Gerald knew it, were: a Merlin Ambrosius, the son of an incubus, who prophesied to Vortigern, and a Merlin Silvester, the mad prophet of the Caledonian Forest. Although Gerald does not refer to the nature of the prophecies made by Merlin Ambrosius, it is clear that he is referring to the episode recounted in *HRB* VI.108, where Merlin the boy explains to Vortigern about the dragons beneath his tower, followed by the prophecies proper in *HRB* VII, also known as the *Prophetiae Merlini*.[24]

The two different Merlins outlined here are traceable to an earlier tradition, parts of which can be argued to date back possibly as far as the tenth century.[25] The basic elements of the story of Merlin Ambrosius are present in, and were probably taken by Geoffrey from, the ninth-century

Historia Brittonum (Chap. 24).[26] Meanwhile, the story of Merlin Silvester (as Myrddin) survives, in fragmented state, in seven medieval Welsh poems. Although Merlin is not named in most of these poems, they are traditionally (perhaps due to the popularity of Geoffrey's Merlin) associated with him. In the following discussion, I refer to the Merlin of this Welsh tradition under his Welsh name, Myrddin, to avoid confusion. The poems are: "*Ymdiddan Myrddin a Thalies*in" ("The Conversation of Myrddin and Taliesin"), "*Y Bedwenni*" ("The Birch-tree Stanzas"), "*Yr Afallennau*" ("The Apple-tree Stanzas") "*Yr Oianau*" ("The Oh! Stanzas"), "*Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer*" ("The Conversation of Myrddin and Gwenddydd his Sister"), "*Gwasgargerdd Myrddin yn ei Fedd*" ("The Scatter-song of Myrddin in his Grave"), and "*Peirian Faban*" ("Lordling Youth").[27]

These poems vary in date and survive in late manuscripts. The first four survive in the Black Book of Carmarthen, the earliest collection of Welsh poetry.[28] "*Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer*" is found in the Red Book of Hergest, Oxford, Jesus College MS 111 (s. xiv/xv, after 1382) and also in Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth 3 (s. xiii^{2}/xiv).[29] "*Peirian Faban*" is found in a fifteenth-century National Library of Wales manuscript, Peniarth 50 (*ca.* 1445).[30] All these poems consist of two primary elements: prophecy and legend. The first is often the dominant theme, as the poems recount Myrddin's prophecies. In "*Afallennau*" and "*Oianau*" in particular there is a frequent repetition of the phrase "*a mi disgoganaf*" ("and I will prophesy").[31] The legendary material often appears to be of secondary interest, and gives us only snippets of information regarding Myrddin's (if, indeed, he is the hero) background and situation. In the "*Afallennau*", he is characterized as a "*hwimleian*" ("wild-wanderer").[32] It is usually assumed that the Myrddin of these poems is mad, and this seems to be supported by textual evidence, if current madness is, indeed, the implication of the phrase "*tra fuvm puyll*" ("while I was sane") referring to his past.[33] The cause of his madness is not specified, although he appears to be suffering from guilt regarding the death of his nephew (a son of his sister, Gwenddydd).[34]

Myrddin's identity in these poems is a matter of some debate. The "*Bedwenni*", "*Afallennau*" and "*Oianau*" are recounted from the first-person point of view, and the speaker's identity is uncertain, and while in the "*Ymdiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin*" Myrddin is not named, either, the names of the speakers are indicated in the manuscript at each stanza.[35] In "*Gwasgargerdd Myrddin yn ei Fedd*" he identifies himself: "*merdin yv*

vy henv vab moruryn" ("Myrddin is my name, son of Morfryn").[36] He is similarly referred to, in the third person, in "*Peirian Faban*" (ll. 28, 48).[37] Finally, in "*Cyfoesi*", Gwenddydd calls him "*Llallogan Fyrddin*". This reference is considered to be important, as it has been argued that the name Llallogan should be identified with that of Lailoken/Laloecen, the Scottish "wild man" figure.[38]

Whether this represents a merging of the legends of Lailoken and Myrddin, the most important result of this association or even simply similarity for our purposes is the characterization of Merlin (in his Welsh incarnation as Myrddin) as an outcast of society.[39] For instance, in the "*Afallennau*", the repeated praise of the special virtue of the apple tree which keeps it concealed suggests that Myrddin is taking advantage of it to hide from his enemies:

> Awallen peren a tif in llanerch.
>
> y angert ae hargel rac riev Ryderch.
>
> amsathir in y bon. maon yn y chilch.[40]

> Sweet apple tree that grows in a clearing,[41]
>
> its virtue hides it from Rhydderch's lords,
>
> a crowd around its base, a host around it.[42]

The "*Oianau*" is a poem addressed to a piglet who appears to be Myrddin's only companion.[43] Like the "*Afallennau*", this poem presents Myrddin hiding from his enemies, and also presents him as a prophet: "*A mi discoganaf a gwir uit*" ("And I will prophesy and it will prove true"), he says.[44] In the "*Cyfoesi*," he also refers to joining the "wild men of the mountain," which on the one hand confirms his own identity as a "wild man," an outcast from normal human society, and on the other, suggests the existence of an "anti-society" composed of "wild men."[45]

Since one of the poems, "*Peirian Faban*," occurs in a fifteenth-century manuscript, we can safely assume that the tradition of Myrddin, or Merlin Silvester, was still known in that period in Wales. We also know, from examples already cited above, and the surviving title of a lost Breton lai, *Merlin le Sauvage*, that it was also still current on the Continent, though the extent of its popularity can only be speculated upon.[46] Meanwhile, Geoffrey had picked the same tradition up in his *VM* in the mid-twelfth century in a confusing, or perhaps, confused,

attempt to expand on the image of Merlin he provided in the *HRB*.[47] The *VM* takes over certain elements of the Welsh tradition, such as Merlin's identity as a warrior/king running mad after a battle.[48] However, Geoffrey disposes with the notion of guilt, which is present in the Welsh poems.[49] Instead, his Merlin runs mad because of sorrow.[50]

A peculiarity of Merlin's madness, in both his Galfredian and his Welsh forms, is that he retains his identity throughout, in contrast with the wild men we find in many other medieval narratives, such as the knightly lovers Yvein and Tristan.[51] The two knights forget their own identity, and have to be reminded of it. The other difference between their "madness" and that of Merlin is that the latter's madness is never caused by rejection, although the theme of betrayal or loss of love is present in most of his tradition.[52] Merlin (like Myrddin) appears to be subject to a completely different type of madness than the knights. In fact, if anything, he is more akin to the one-eyed, one-legged man encountered by the hero at the beginning of the "*Chwedl Iarlles y Ffynnawn*" ("Story of the Lady of the Fountain") (the Welsh version of "*Yvein*"), who exercises authority over animals in the forest and directs the hero.[53] The parallel is enhanced by Merlin's appearance riding a stag at the head of several herds of wild animals when he visits his wife on the occasion of her (attempted) remarriage.[54] Indeed, Merlin occasionally appears in the later tradition ("*L'Estoire de Merlin*", for instance) as a master of animals.[55]

Having outlined the fool/madman version of Merlin, it is time to turn to what is commonly regarded as the dominant type of depiction of this character—the "wise man" Merlin. I will not dwell too long on this figure, since, being perceived as the mainstream depiction, it has been amply examined by others.[56] This figure can be said to be first introduced in recognizable form in Geoffrey's *HRB*. He first appears in this text as a "*iuvenes*" (young boy/young man) playing in front of the city gates of "*Kaermerdin*" (Carmarthen) when Vortigern sends his men to find a boy without a father to sacrifice in the building of his tower.[57] This Merlin explains to Vortigern that his mages, who had suggested his (Merlin's) sacrifice as a solution to the problem, were mistaken, and that the tower fails to stand because of a pool of water beneath its foundations, within which are two dragons.[58] In Geoffrey's narrative, this is followed by an extensive section containing the prophecies of Merlin.[59] This was often circulated separately throughout the Middle Ages, and was subject to much interpretation and commentary.[60]

It is also in this narrative that Merlin, for the first time, is connected to Arthur's birth when he helps Uther to win Igrena.[61] The form of Merlin presented in this text was subsequently picked up by Wace in his *Brut* (*ca*. 1155) and Robert de Boron in his *Merlin*, and later the French courtly tradition, Middle English romances, and also the chronicles and other "non-fictional" material in England.[62] We know it through the form popularized by Malory, but it was already in that form in the *Estoire de Merlin* of the Old French Vulgate Cycle.[63]

The figure of Merlin as a magical child begotten by an incubus, developed by Geoffrey and his followers from the *Historia Britonnum* episode, which became a staple of the "wise man" version of his character outlined above, gives him a highly morally ambiguous nature, especially in the later medieval tradition. In this strange incarnation as wise child, he has been compared with Lao Tzu (老子), whose name means "old child."[64] The story of Merlin's origin as a child begotten by an incubus, saved from serving evil by his mother's repentance, is a story of supernatural power that could serve either good or evil. This is often cited as the cause for his popularity and is, indeed, a common theme in many of his modern incarnations.[65] It can be argued that this was echoed by the first appearance of the character of Anakin Skywalker in *Star Wars Episode I*: The *Phantom Menace* (1999). The moral ambiguity of Merlin is also referred to in *Stargate: SG-1*, and, indeed, seems to be fairly common (although not omnipresent) in modern portrayals of the character. He is, for instance, ambiguous and manipulative in *Camelot* (2011).[66]

As in his "fool"/"wild man" incarnation, the "wise man" Merlin is associated with prophecy throughout the tradition. However, he is also associated with politics, manipulation, and king-making, particularly in relation to Arthur.[67] While this association is hinted at by Taliesin in *VM*, it is explicit in *HRB* and all the works that follow that tradition. In this respect, the "wise man" figure of Merlin can be said to be more canonical—we expect Merlin to be associated with Arthur, rather than to be a king in his own right, as he is in the *VM*.[68]

I have thus outlined the two original Merlins in their earliest recognizable forms, present in the works of Geoffrey, and recognized by Gerald. One of the particularly striking features of these figures is that they clearly fall into the dichotomy of wise man/fool (madman). The wise man belongs at court—he replaces the king's advisors and thus occupies the crucial position of authority. Merlin as wise man in *HRB* displaces the mages of Vortigern to become his advisor.

The madman, conversely, occupies the margins of society, or, indeed, is completely expelled from society, and into the forest, sometimes joining those who had already suffered a similar plight.[69] His fate is often emphasized by the contrast between his former power and position at the heart of society (as king) and his current exiled and marginalized state.

While the wise man is the figure we are used to thinking of as influencing the modern portrayals of Merlin, the mad prophet exiled to the margins of society, whom we encounter in the early Welsh poetry and, in a slightly toned-down form, in the *VM*, should not be dismissed so lightly as an alternative source of inspiration. The line between madness and wisdom has been a very fine one throughout Western literary history, and one need only evoke Ovid and the Bible for examples.[70] Supernatural wisdom, whether as magic or prophecy, is frequently marginalized within society, and, as can be seen in almost all the medieval works invoked here, often ends badly for the madman or prophet: Lailoken and Suibhne suffer a violent three-fold death, while the infant Merlin of *HRB* is nearly sacrificed to the mistakes of Vortigern's advisors. The Merlin of *VM* is an exception, but his salvation from both madness and his prophetic gift has the air of a Christian intervention, and is concluded with a long passage praising God. Indeed, Merlin's exile in *VM* extends beyond his cure, as he remains a hermit, in the company of his sister Ganieda, the other cured madman, and Taliesin.

This theme of marginalization of the magician/prophet/madman, associated with the Merlin of *VM*, and the Myrddin poetry of the Welsh tradition, is instantly recognizable in many of Merlin's modern incarnations. In the BBC television series *Merlin*, for example, the background story is that magic is outlawed, with capital punishment meted out to all who practice it. Merlin, therefore, has to act in secret, and is constantly brought face to face with social outcasts (depicted either as wizards, magical creatures, or druids) to whose ranks he, in fact, should rightly belong. This is the "joining other wild men" theme, referred to above.[71]

Although at first glance belonging rather to the tradition of Merlin as the wise advisor, the Merlin of the French *Kaamelott* is certainly closer to a madman figure, and his ability to perform magic is often doubtful (and doubted). Although this could be argued to represent a subversion of the ostensibly more common image of Merlin as all-powerful wizard, it is, in fact, much more of a reincarnation of the fool Merlin. Indeed, one struggles to find particularly well-known examples of the

"all-powerful wizard" image of Merlin. T. H. White's Merlyn (White's spelling), who is perhaps closest to this image, is, however, widely considered to be a largely autobiographical construct and is hampered by his peculiar characteristic of living backwards; Mark Twain's Merlin, characterized by the Yankee hero as "that cheap old humbug, that maundering old ass," is certainly not all-powerful, although he appears at the end to play a part in putting the hero to sleep, to wake in his own time.[72] Mary Stewart's Merlin is a mystical visionary with psychic powers and engineering skills, and the Merlin of *King Arthur* (2004) becomes to quote J. M. Sullivan "a thoroughly non-magical guerrilla leader."[73] Meanwhile, the Merlin portrayed by Gerard Jugnot in the 2012 mini-series *Merlin l'enchanteur* lives in voluntary exile in the forest and loses his magical powers for most of the film, with comic effects. One of the few exceptions to this general theme of subversion of Merlin's powers is, perhaps, the animated *Quest for Camelot* (1998), which shows, albeit briefly, a bearded and unambiguously magic-wielding Merlin.

A particularly apt example of Merlin as outcast is also the figure of Merlin in the 1990–2000s Canadian–American TV series *Stargate*. This particular Merlin, known also as Moros, features in five episodes of the series (four of *Stargate: SG-1* and one of *Stargate: Atlantis*), and represents both a wise man who advises and helps the heroes by providing a weapon to defeat their enemies, and an exile who has been marginalized by his own society as one whose ideas are dangerous.[74] He is also presented as one who had, at one point, occupied a leading position in his society, and had become an outcast since.[75]

The "anti-society" also emerges in some of the modern representations of Merlin; for example, in *King Arthur*, he is the leader of the wild original inhabitants of Britain (the society proper is represented here by Rome and Arthur), while in the BBC's *Merlin* it is represented by druids. It can also be argued that in *Stargate* the "anti-society" to which Merlin/Moros belongs is the sum total of all ascended beings who had, at one time or another, broken the non-interference rule to aid those on the lower, physical plane of existence. Thus, other members of the "fool" or "exile" club would, in this case, include, apart from Merlin/Moros, who spends the longest time in exile, Oma Desala ("Maternal Instinct," "Meridian," "Reckoning, Part 1," "Threads"), Orlin ("Ascension" and "The Fourth Horseman, Parts 1 and 2"), and Morgan le Fay/Ganos Lal ("The Pegasus Project" and *The Ark of Truth* (2008)). Indeed, one of Oma Desala's lines in the *SG-1* episode "Threads" is reminiscent not

only of the conventional madness of medieval legend, but also specifically of Myrddin of the Welsh tradition, through a reference to a pig.[76]

The representation of Merlin in *Stargate* is particularly useful for our analysis, due to the humorous and self-reflective nature of much of the series. A particularly vivid example of this in relation to Arthurian legend comes in Season 9 Episode 19, "Crusade," in the comic scene where Vala Mal Doran asks the protagonists whether they had ever heard of any cases where a child had been begotten without a father. After a confused pause, when Mitchell finally offers a "Well, there is one…," Teal'c (an alien slightly better acquainted with Earth culture than Vala) suggests Darth Vader. Everyone understandably gives him a strange look. The punchline is delivered when Mitchell confesses that he had been thinking of King Arthur. While the parallel here is being drawn between Arthur and Vader as a prophesied leader, the reference should, in fact, correctly have been to Merlin, rather than Arthur. The replacement could well be explained through the fact that Merlin in the *Stargate* mythology is given an entirely different role, as a re-descended Ancient, and his image is built rather, as we have seen, on the fool/exile aspect of the tradition. And, like the Merlin of the *VM*, the *Stargate* Merlin, when he finally appears in person in the Season 10 episode "The Quest, Part 2," is forced to hand over his "powers" to another, to complete his task. While the various strands of the Arthurian tradition are fused in this series (for example, a holographic image of Merlin, wearing a sort of Phrygian cap, is first encountered under Glastonbury Tor; Daniel Jackson quotes medieval Welsh during a briefing on the Arthurian knights; and the task that Merlin passes on to him is the construction of the *Sangraal*, a weapon), this Merlin is closer to the fool than the wise man image.[77]

This brings us to another major theme within the representation of Merlin, this time the wise man Merlin of the *HRB*: the notion of his moral ambivalence. He is, after all, the offspring of an imp. We find this theme stressed also in Chap. 4 of the Merlin continuation of the Vulgate Cycle, for instance.[78] This theme also carries on into the modern tradition. For example, Goodrich argues that Merlin's moral ambivalence is one of the reasons for his popularity, and also that Merlin himself is one of the prototypes of the image of the "mad scientist," an all too familiar part of modern culture.[79] As a child without a father whose uniqueness and power put him above others, this aspect of the Merlin character is echoed by the *Star Wars* character or Anakin Skywalker/Darth Vader.

The representation of Merlin as the wise man is widespread, particularly in historical novels, as noted by R. H. Thompson.[80] The constraints of the genre, in the case of historical novels, and a desire, perhaps, to move away from “magic and fantasy”, in many cases lead this figure of Merlin to be stripped down to the bare basics of advisor, engineer, and healer, with no outright magic.[81] Merlin is distinctly unmagical in *King Arthur* (2004), for example.

The element that tends to fluctuate most in the modern tradition is Merlin’s age. While Mary Stewart, for example, represents the trend of charting Merlin’s life from a young age to his old age, other portrayals tend to focus on either one end of the scale, or the other. It can be argued that the beardless boy image is indebted more to the legacy of the wonder-child of the *Historia Brittonum* and *HRB*, while the bearded old man derives rather from *VM* and the Myrddin tradition. It is possible to explain the contradictions between the youth/age of modern portrayals of Merlin and the medieval prototypes by suggesting that at one point the “fool” and “wise man” Merlins merged and switched characteristics. The wise advisor to the king became associated with the bearded sage, while the previously hairy mad man, a visionary living on the outskirts of society, became associated rather with youth. However, it may be better to simply suggest that the issue of age was never a particularly important aspect of the tradition in the Middle Ages, and therefore never became a staple of any particular representation of Merlin, leaving the modern interpreters of the figure a chance to introduce variation without particularly disturbing the audience’s expectations. Merlin’s age appears to excite a certain fascination in the modern world, if one is to judge by the variety of Merlins brought to our screens, ranging from the teenage Merlin of the BBC’s eponymous series, the beardless (and hairless) Merlin of Channel 4’s *Camelot*, to the bearded old man in *King Arthur* (2004) and *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice* (2010), and, in the world of animation, Disney’s *The Sword in the Stone* (1963) and Warner Bros’ *Quest for Camelot* (1998).[82] Inspired by Merlin are also the bald and beardless techno-mages of *Babylon 5* and its spinoff series, *Crusade* (1999), and the bearded Gandalf and Dumbledore. Yet the early material, apart from perhaps the *HRB*, which introduces him first as a boy, does not tend to specify Merlin’s age. His white beard, associated with wizardry and wisdom, is something of a Sherlock Holmes pipe—a late addition now seen as canonical. As S. T. Knight points out, “The white beard that medievalizing Romanticism gave Merlin has made him an educationally trans-generational grandfather

figure in the time of Freudian dissent with parents, as seen in his multicultural avatar Obi-Wan Kenobi, Dumbledore, and Gandalf."[83] Where I would disagree with Knight, however, is in his assessment that Merlin's depiction in modern culture "as old, bearded, and eccentric, is the way in which the power of the modern individual controls through irony the force of knowledge which it so patently lacks."[84] Rather, the eccentricity, and perhaps, even the beard rather than being a modern addition, appear to derive from the hairy wise man image of Myrddin/Lailoken/Suibhne.

To conclude, the present chapter proposes that most modern incarnations of the Merlin figure can be analyzed using the two original "Merlins" of the Middle Ages: the fool and the wise man. Some modern incarnations may exhibit features of both, but all exhibit features of at least one of the two. One of the advantages of this approach is its simplicity, compared with, for example, the complexity of the analysis proposed by Goodrich, who proposes that "five overlapping representations of the mage […] emerged in the late twentieth-century: as atavism, anachronism, avatar, adaptation, and commodity."[85] In this interpretation, the Merlin depicted in medieval or Renaissance costume, as wizard or as wild man, is *atavism*; a Merlin living through several different ages, trying to cope with modernity, is *anachronism*; an immortal being reincarnated is *avatar*; assuming an independent identity as a new character who can be "related to the Arthurian mage only by a metaphorical pattern of association, like Spock of *Star Trek* and Obi-Wan Kenobi and Yoda of *Star Wars*" is *adaptation*, and as a brand for new products is *commodity*.[86] My suggestion does not require the dismissal of Goodrich's categories. In fact, I would suggest that one can apply this analysis to all of his five categories. For example, while I would not necessarily agree with Goodrich that *Star Trek*'s Spock is an *adaptation* of Merlin, the more ambiguous figure of Obi-Wan Kenobi can be analyzed as the "wise man" Merlin (*Episodes* I–III), a guiding figure and advisor, and "fool" Merlin (*Episode* IV), an eccentric outcast living on the edge, or perhaps even outside, society. Note that the interpretation of Obi-Wan as an *adaptation* of Merlin in Goodrich's sense does not preclude a similar interpretation of the character of Anakin Skywalker, already referred to, this time as the miracle child variety of the "wise man" tradition.

The present discussion has aimed to show that while much in the modern representations of Merlin is indebted to the "wise man" figure traceable to Malory, that tradition is not the only, or even the dominant, one

in exerting its influence on modern culture. While I do not wish to suggest that the distinction proposed in the present study between "fool" and "wise man" images of Merlin can be used to define all representations of the character ever created, I do propose that it can provide a useful new tool for future analyses of this complex and mysterious literary figure.

Notes

1. Figures given by Google.com (accessed September 21, 2012); the same search run at the same time on Yahoo.com yielded 159,000,000 results (accessed September 21, 2012).
2. For references, see, for example, A. F. Howey and S. R. Reimer, *A Bibliography of Modern Arthuriana (1500–2000)*, (Cambridge, 2006), and K. J. Harty, ed., *Cinema Arthuriana: Twenty Essays*, revised edition (Jefferson, NC, 2002). Earlier bibliographical studies include C. S. Northcup and J. J. Parry, "The Arthurian Legends: Modern Retellings of the Old Stories: An Annotated Bibliography," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 43 (1944), 173–221.
3. Modern incarnations of Merlin have been extensively studied. While it is impossible to provide a full bibliography of the relevant scholarship here, relevant works include: G. Zussa, *Merlin, un mythe médiéval recyclé dans la production culturelle contemporaine* (Geneva, 2010); reviewed by S. Knight in *Arthuriana* 22 (2012), 111–113. Compare Knight's own recent book, *Merlin: Knowledge and Power Through the Ages* (Ithaca, NY, and London, 2009); reviewed by A. Minard in *Speculum* 86 (2011), 775–777. Earlier studies include J. Gollnick, ed., *Comparative Studies in Merlin from the Vedas to C. G. Jung* (Lewiston, 1991); C. Dean, *A Study of Merlin in English Literature from the Middle Ages to the Present Day: The Devil's Son* (Lewiston, 1992); J. Watson and M. Fries, ed., *The Figure of Merlin in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Lewiston, 1989). See also Bouloumi, «Le mythe de Merlin dans la ittérature française du XXe siècle», Cahiers de recherches médiévales, 11 (2004), 181–93 and Hidetoshi Yanagawa, 'Merlin dans l'imaginaire breton depuis le XIXe sŠiècle', Iris 21 (2001), 173–83.
4. Mary Stewart, *The Crystal Cave* (London, 1970); *The Hollow Hills* (London, 1973); *The Last Enchantment* (London, 1979); J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* first edition 1954; edition used (London, 2004); J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (London, 1997); *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (London, 1998); *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (London, 2000); *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (London, 2007).

5. See, for instance, Sergei Lukyanenko, *Posledni Dozor* (Moscow, 2007), pp. 76, 80–86, 157, 256.
6. L. A. Finke, review of D. W. Marshall, ed., *Mass Market Medieval: Essays on the Middle Ages in Popular Culture* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007) in *Arthuriana* 10 (2007), pp. 105–106, at p. 105.
7. Finke, review of Marshall, ed., *Mass Market Medieval*, p. 106.
8. J. M. Sullivan, "Cinema Arthuriana without Malory?: The International Reception of Fuqua, Franzoni, and Bruckheimer's *King Arthur* (2004)," *Arthuriana* 17 (2007), 85–105, p. 97.
9. Inacuracies relating to the early modern tradition also abound, but it is not within the remit of the present discussion to correct them all. It is worth noting, however, that the general impression of a significant lapse in interest in Merlin between Malory and the "nineteenth-century revival" is somewhat misleading. Amongst printed books published before 1700 the following titles indicate an interest in the figure: T. Heywood, *The Life of Merlin, Sirnamed Ambrosius: His Prophesies, and Predictions Interpreted…* (London, 1641, reprinted in 1651); W. Lilly, *Merlinus Anglicus Junior: The English Merlin Revived, or, A Mathematical Prediction Upon the Affairs of the English Commonwealth…* (London, 1644); the anonymous *Merlin Reviv'd, or, An Old Prophecy Found in a Manuscript in Pontrefract Castle in York-shire* (London, 1681); the anonymous *Catastrophe mundi: or, Merlin reviv'd: in a discourse of prophecies and predictions…* (London, 1683); the anonymous *The Mystery of Ambras Merlins, Standardbearer Wolf and the Last Boar of Cornwal…* (London, 1683). In the eighteenth century were published, among others, Jonathan Swift's *A Famous Prediction of Merlin, the British Wizard, Written Above a Thousand Years Ago, and Relating to This Present Year, with Explanatory notes, by T. N. Philomath* (London, 1708) and George Ogle's, *Of Legacy-Hunting: The Fifth Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated. A Dialogue Between Sir Walter Raleigh and Merlin the Prophet* (London, 1737). The eighteenth century also saw John Dryden's opera, *Merlin, or The British Enchanter: And King Arthur, the British Worthy*, adapted into volume form and published in London in 1736. Other works published in those two centuries which concern Merlin are too many to enumerate here. For the claim that Arthuriana suffered a "profound neglect" between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, see Watson and Fries, ed., *Figure of Merlin*, p. xii. Gollnick ed., *Comparative Studies* contains an essay on Dryden's opera, but jumps from Middle English Chronicles to Dryden, and then straight to T. H. White. A brief overview of Arthuriana in this period can be found in S. T. Knight, "King Arthur and Merlin," in *Icons of the Middle Ages: Rulers, Writers, Rebels, and Saints*, ed. L. M. Matheson (Santa Barbara, 2012), pp. 43–58, at p. 49.

10. Watson and Fries, ed., *Figure of Merlin*, pp. ix–x. As B. F. Roberts points out, "there is little or no evidence that [Geoffrey of Monmouth] is to be regarded as Welsh or Cambro-Norman," B. F. Roberts, "Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae* and *Brut y Brenhinedd*," in *Arthur of the Welsh*, ed. R. Bromwich et al. (Cardiff, 1991), pp. 97–116 at pp. 98–99; for a recent introduction to Geoffrey and his work, see K. Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth* (Cardiff, 2010). For "Nennius," see D. N. Dumville, "Nennius" and the *Historia Brittonum*," *Studia Celtica* 10/11 (1975), 78–95.
11. "Introduction," to J. Gollnick ed., *Comparative Studies*, p. iii; G. Ashe, "Merlin in the Earliest Records," in R. J. Stewart, ed., *The Book of Merlin: Insights from the First Merlin Conference, London, June 1986* (Poole, 1987), pp. 17–46. Note also that Ashe refers to only one of the seven medieval Welsh poems concerning Merlin, ibid, p. 26; for a discussion of these poems, see pp.180–181 above.
12. G. Zussa, *Merlin*, p. 27.
13. For Malory's role, see J. M. Sullivan, "Cinema Arthuriana," pp. 86, 90. Caxton's *Le Morte Darthur* (London, 1485) is partially available online on the Malory Project website <www.maloryproject.com> (accessed October 19, 2012).
14. I am currently preparing a study of the image of Merlin as prophet in medieval English and Welsh political discourse.
15. See, for example, the discussion in J. J. Parry and R. A. Caldwell, "Geoffrey of Monmouth," in R. S. Loomis, ed., *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages: A Collaborative History* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 72–93 at pp. 75–79, 89–93; and A. O. H. Jarman, "The Merlin Legend and the Welsh Tradition of Prophecy," in *The Arthur of the Welsh*, ed. R. Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman and B. F. Roberts (Cardiff, 1991), pp. 117–145, at pp. 130–134.
16. For a more detailed discussion, see A. O. H. Jarman, "The Merlin Legend."
17. A. O. H. Jarman, "The Merlin Legend," pp. 135–136. The *HRB* is edited and translated in *The History of the Kings of Britain*, ed. M. D. Reeve and trans. N. Wright (Woodbridge, 2007). The *VM* is edited and translated in *The Life of Merlin/Vita Merlini*, ed. and trans. B. Clarke (Cardiff, 1973). For more on the *HRB*, see, for example, the introduction to this edition, pp. vii–lxxiv; also *Arthuriana* 8.4 (1998); and V. I. J. Flint, "The *Historia Regum Britanniae* of Geoffrey of Monmouth: Parody and Its Purpose. A Suggestion," *Speculum* 54 (1979), 447–468. For more on Geoffrey see Jankulak, *Geoffrey*. J. S. P. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions* (New York, 1950) is also still a useful resource for Galfredian studies.

18. Jarman, "Merlin Legend," p. 136.
19. Jarman, "Merlin Legend," p. 135; cf. also N. Thomas, "The Celtic Wild Man Tradition and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini*: Madness or *Contemptus Mundi*?" *Arthuriana* 10 (2000), 27–42, p. 28.
20. Frykenberg, 'Myrddin' in Koch, *Celtic Encyclopedia IV*, p. 1325. For editions and translations of the *Roman de Silence*, see L. Thorpe, ed., *Roman de Silence: A Thirteenth-Century Arthurian Verse-Romance by Heldris, de Cornuälle* (Cambridge, 1972); R. Psaki, trans., *Le Roman de Silence* (New York, 1991); and S. Roche-Mahdi, ed. and trans., *Silence: A Thirteenth-Century French Romance* (East Lansing, Mich., 1992); for a further bibliography on this text, see S. Menegaldo and D. James-Raoul, "Heldris de Cornuälle, *Le roman de silence*," *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes/Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies* 12 (2005), 207–210. For editions and translations of the *Roman de Fergus*, see W. Frescoln, ed., *Guillaume le Clerc,* "*Le Roman de Fergus*" (Philadelphia, 1983); a translation can be found in D. D. R. Owen, *Fergus of Galloway: Knight of King Arthur* (London, 1991); for more on this text, see, for instance, M. D. Legge, "Some Notes on the *Roman de Fergus*," *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society* 27 (1948–1949), 163–172; B. Schmolke-Hasselmann, "*Le roman de Fergus*: technique narrative et intention politique," in K. Varty ed., *An Arthurian Tapestry: Essays in Memory of Lewis Thorpe* (Glasgow, 1981), pp. 342–353; M. A. Freeman, "*Fergus*: Parody and the Arthurian Tradition" *French Forum* 8 (1983), 197–215 and also N. Tolstoy, *The Quest for Merlin* (London, 1986), pp. 83–88. For an edition of the *Thezaur*, see A. Jeanroy and G. Bertoni, ed., "Le Thezaur de Peire de Corbian," *Annales du Midi* 23 (1911), 289–308 and 451–471; and Sachs, ed., *Le Trésor de Pierre de Corbiac en vers provençaux, publié en entier avec une introduction et des extraits du Bréviaire d'amour du Matsre Ermengqu de Beziers, et de l'Image du Monde de Gautier de Metz, et du Tresor de Brunetto Latini* (Brandeburg, 1859). For a recent discussion, see C. Leglu, "Memory, Teaching, and Performance: The Two Versions of Peire de Corbian's Thezaur," in *Études de langue et de littérature médiévales offertes à Peter T. Ricketts*, ed. A. Buckley and D. Billy (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 281–292.
21. Jarman, "Merlin Legend," p. 136. For more on Gerald, see R. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales: A Voice in the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (Stroud, 2006) and M. Richter, *Giraldus Cambrensis: The Growth of A Welsh Nation*, 2nd ed. (Aberystwyth, 1972).
22. Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae* II.viii, in *Giraldi Kambrensis Itinerarium Kambriae, et Descriptio Kambriae*, Giraldi Cambrensis Opera Omnia VI, ed. J. F. Dimock (London, 1868), p. 133.

23. Gerald of Wales, *The Journey Through Wales and The Description of Wales*, trans. L. Thorpe (London, 1978), pp. 192–193.
24. See Geoffrey of Monmouth, *HRB*, ed. Reeve, trans. Wright, pp. 138–141, 142–159. The notion of Merlin as a boy has recently been picked up in the BBC series *Merlin*.
25. For an overview, see Jarman, "The Merlin Legend;" for references to the dates of the poems, see pp. 118–120.
26. See D. N. Dumville, ed., *The Historia Brittonum 3. The "Vatican' Recension* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 87–95, esp. 91–95. This text was formerly erroneously ascribed to Nennius; see D. N. Dumville, "Nennius." Note that in this text the fatherless child is not given a name.
27. The poems are edited in A. O. H. Jarman ed., *Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin* (Cardiff, 1982), pp. 1–2 ("*Ymdiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin*"), 25 ("*Y Bedwenni*"), 26–28 ("*Yr Afallennau*"), 29–35 ("*Yr Oianau*"); I. Williams, ed., "Y Cyfoesi a'r Afallennau yn Peniarth 3", *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 4 (1927–1929), 112–129; E. G. B. Phillimore, "A Fragment from Hengwrt MS. No. 202," *Y Cymmrodor* 7 (1886), 89–154, at pp. 112–121 and 151–154 for the *Gwasgargerdd Myrddin yn ei Fedd*; and A. O. H. Jarman, ed., "Peirian Vaban," *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 14 (1950–1952), 104–108; "Ymdiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin" is also edited separately in A. O. H. Jarman, ed., *Ymdiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin (O Lyfr du Cerfyrddin)* (Cardiff, 1967). Translations of these poems are available in J. K. Bollard, "Myrddin in Early Welsh Tradition," in P. Goodrich, ed., *The Romance of Merlin* (New York, 1990), pp. 13–54 at pp. 21–52. For an overview of all material surviving on this tradition, see Jarman, "Merlin Legend;" O. J. Padel, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Development of the Merlin Legend," *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 51 (2006), 37–65 and P. Walter, ed., *Le devin maudit: Merlin, Lailoken, Suibhne: Textes et étude* (Grenoble, 1999).
28. Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth 1 (s. xiii med.); for more on this manuscript, see D. Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts* (Aberystwyth, 2000), pp. 58, 70–72; A. O. H. Jarman, "Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin, the Black Book of Carmarthen," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 71 (1985), 333–356; there is also a facsimile edition of this manuscript: J. G. Evans, ed., *Facsimile of the Black Book of Carmarthen* (Oxford, 1888).
29. Frykenberg, Myrddin, p. 1323. For more on the Red Book, see Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, pp. 60, 79–83 and Huws, "Llyfr Coch Hergest," in *Cyfoeth y Testun: Ysgrifau ar Lenyddiaeth Gymraeg yr Oesoedd Canol*, eds. I. Daniel, J. E. Rowland, D. Johnston and M. Haycock (Cardiff, 2003), pp. 1–30; for more on Peniarth 3, see Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, pp. 58, 66n., 200n.; D. M. Lloyd,

"La poésie de Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr et le manuscript Peniarth 3," *Etudes Celtiquse* 5 (1950–1951), pp. 87–104.

30. For more on this manuscript, see Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, p. 17. The prophetic material in this manuscript has been edited and discussed by M. B. Jenkins, "Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition in the Middle Ages," unpublished PhD dissertation (Cambridge, 1990); see also C. Lloyd-Morgan, "Darogan yr Olew Bendigaid: Chwedl o'r Bymthegfed Ganrif," *Llên Cymru* 15 (1981–1982), 64–85; C. Lloyd-Morgan, "Prophecy and Welsh Nationhood in the Fifteenth Century," *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, 1985* (1985), 9–26, p. 15.
31. See Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, pp. 26, 29–35; trans. in Bollard, "Myrddin," pp. 22–23, 25–30.
32. See Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, p. 28, l. 68; trans. in Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 24.
33. Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, p. 27, l. 56; Bollard translates this as "calm in mind;" see Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 23.
34. Jarman, "Merlin Legend," p. 126; see Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, p. 27, ll. 39–4l; trans. in Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 23.
35. Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 17.
36. Phillimore, "A Fragment from Hengwrt MS. No. 202," p.151; trans. Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 47.
37. Jarman, ed., "Peirian Vaban," 104–108; trans. Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 51.
38. It must be noted that there are no sound changes which may account for the transformation of Lailoken to Llallogan. For an overview of the Lailoken legend, see Jarman, "Merlin Legend", pp. 121–124; H. L. D. Ward, "Lailoken (or Merlin Silvester)," *Romania* 22 (1893), 504–526; Jarman, "Lailoken a Llallogan," *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies 9* (1937–1939), 8–27; Jarman, ed., *Ymddiddan*, pp. vii–viii; Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 31; Walter, ed., *Le devin maudit*, pp. 7, 32–34, 46–47, 174. For more on the "wild man" tradition, see D. A. Wells, *The Wild Man from the Epic of Gilgamesh to Hartmann von Aue's Iwein* (Belfast, 1975); K. Jackson, "The Wild Man of the Woods," *Report of the Yorkshire Society for Celtic Studies* (1935); J.-M. Fritz, *Le discours du fou au Moyen-Âge. XIIe-XIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1992).
39. Another representative of the "wild man" tradition is Suibhne (Sweeney); for more, see Jarman, "Merlin Tradition," pp. 126–130; N. Thomas, "The Celtic Wild Man"; J. F. Nagy, *A New Introduction to* Buile Suibhne (The Frenzy of Suibhne) *being The Adventures of Suibhne Geilt: A Middle Irish Romance* (Dublin, 1996).
40. Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, p. 27, ll. 35–37.
41. Alternatively, Llanerch could be a place name.

42. Translated in Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 23.
43. Each stanza of this poem begins, *Oian a parchellan…* "Oh, piglet;" see Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, pp. 29–35.
44. Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, p. 29, ll. 5, 11–12; trans. Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 25.
45. Williams, ed., "Y Cyfoesi," pp. 114–21; trans. in Jarman, "Merlin Legend," p. 119. A similar notion is expressed in *Afallennau*; see Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, p. 27, l. 59; trans. Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 24. Note, however, that the "wild ones" here could be a reference to animals rather than wild men. See pp. 185–186 of the present article for examples of this anti-society or exiles in modern narratives of Merlin.
46. See above, p. 178. For the reference to the Breton *lai*, see E. Hoepfner, "The Breton Lais," in Loomis, ed., *Arthurian Literature*, pp. 112–121, p. 112.
47. This reconstruction depends on assuming pre-Geoffrey dates for the poems. Alternatively, Geoffrey may have become aware of a different "wild man" legend and his association of it with Merlin caused a new identification of the protagonist as Myrddin in the surviving Welsh poems. Note, however, that it has been suggested that Geoffrey may have known of the "*Ymdiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin*"; see Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 17.
48. Clarke, ed. and trans., *Life*, pp. 52–55.
49. See in particular, Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, p. 27 ll. 39–41; trans. Bollard, "Myrddin," p. 23. See also above, p. 180.
50. Clarke, ed. and trans., *Life*, pp. 54–57.
51. See, for example, *Chevalier au lion*, ll. 2784–2792, translated in W. W. Kibler, trans., *Chrétien de Troyes: Arthurian Romances* (London, 1991), p. 330; *Tristan en prose* Ch. XII, in P. Ménard, ed., *Le Roman de Tristan en Prose* I (Geneva, 1987), p. 247 onwards. For more on the prose Tristan, see E. Vinaver, "The Prose Tristan," in Loomis, ed., *Arthurian Literature*, pp. 339–347. For an examination of the similarities between Tristan's, Yvein's and Lancelot's madness, see R. L. Curtis, "Tristan Forsené: The Episode of the Hero's Madness in the *Prose Tristan*" in *The Changing Face of Arthurian Romance: Essays on Arthurian Prose Romances in memory of Cedric E. Pickford*, Arthurian Studies XVI, ed. A. Adams, A. H. Diverres, K. Stern and K. Varty (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 10–22.
52. Jarman, ed., *Llyfr Du*, p. 27, ll. 56–57; trans. Bollard, 'Myrddin', p. 23; Clarke, ed. and trans., *Life*, pp. 70–77.
53. Clarke, ed. and trans., *Life*, pp. 74–75; cf. Owein and Chretien's Yvein; see Kibler, trans., *Arthurian Romances*, pp. 298–299; S. Davies, trans., The Mabinogion (Oxford, 2007), pp. 118–119. See also Frykenberg, 'Wild Man', p. 1797. Petrovskaia, 'Cross-Legged Gods and One-Legged

Foresters', in Consolino et al., ed., *Aspetti del meraviglioso* (Brepols, 2016), pp. 357–69.
54. Clarke, ed. and trans., *Life*, pp. 74–77.
55. Fryckenberg, 'Myrddin', p. 1325. See H. O. Sommer, ed., *The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances*, vol. 2 (Washington, 1908); for a translation of the text, see R. T. Pickens, trans., *The Story of Merlin*, in N. J. Lacy, ed., *Lancelot-Grail: The Old French Arthurian Vulgate and post-Vulgate in Translation* 5 vols. (New York and London, 1993–1996), volume 1 (1993). For a discussion of this text, see A. Micha, "The Vulgate Merlin" in Loomis, ed., *Arthurian Literature*, pp. 319–24.
56. See, for example, K. Bell, "Merlin as Historian in *Historia Regum Brittanie*," *Arthuriana* 10 (2000), 14–26; W. T. Greene, "Malory's Merlin: An Ambiguous Magician?" *Arthuriana* 1 (1987).
57. HRB 106; Reeve, ed., Wright, trans., *Historia*, pp. 136–137.
58. HRB 108; Reeve, ed., Wright, trans., *Historia*, pp. 140–141.
59. HRB 109–117; Reeve, ed., Wright, trans., *Historia*, pp. 142–159.
60. For more, see J. Hammer, "A Commentary on the *Prophetia Merlini* (Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, VII)," *Speculum* 10 (1935), 3–30; C. D. Eckhardt, ed., *The Prophetia Merlini of Geoffrey of Monmouth: A Fifteenth-Century English Commentary* (Cambridge, MA, 1982); C. D. Eckhardt, "The *Prophetia Merlini* of Geoffrey of Monmouth: Latin Manuscript Copies," *Manuscripta* 26 (1982), 167–176; K. R. Moranski, "*The Prophetie Merlini*, Animal Symbolism, and the Development of Political Prophecy in Late Medieval England and Scotland', *Arthuriana* 8 (1996), 58–68.
61. HRB 137–138; Reeve, ed., Wright, trans., *Historia*, pp. 186–189.
62. For an edition of Robert de Boron's Merlin, see A. Micha, ed. and trans., *Robert de Boron: Merlin, roman du XIII*e siècle (Paris, 1994); for discussions, see A. Micha, *Etude sur le Merlin de Robert de Boron* (Geneva, 1980), and P. Walter, *Merlin, ou le savoir du monde* (Paris, 2010), esp. pp. 51–53. For an edition and translation of Wace's Roman de Brut, see J. Weiss, ed. and trans., *Wace's Roman de Brut, a History of the British: Text and Translation* (Exeter, 1999). For more on Merlin's depiction in Wace's Brut, see, for example, J. Rider, "The Fictional Margin: The Merlin of the Brut," *Modern Philology* 87 (1989), 1–12. For an overview of the figure of Merlin in Middle English romances, and translations of extracts, see P. Goodrich, "Middle English Romances," in Goodrich, ed., *Romance of Merlin*, pp. 129–178. For an overview of the use of the Merlin figure in Middle English Chronicles, see C.D. Eckhardt, "The Figure of Merlin in Middle English Chronicles," in *Comparative Studies in Merlin*, pp. 21–39; and for a detailed view of medieval attitudes to Merlin's prophecies, see J. Blacker, "Where Wace Feared to Tread:

Latin Commentaries on Merlin's Prophecies in the Reign of Henry II," *Arthuriana* 6 (1996), 36–52.

63. For editions and translations of the *Estoire*, see Sommer, ed., *The Vulgate Version*; for a translation of the text, see Pickens, trans., *The Story of Merlin*.
64. See, for example, Walter, *Merlin*, pp. 70–71.
65. For instance, this is the case in *Camelot*; see also Lukyanenko, *Posledni dozor*, p. 80. For discussions, see, for example, J. Rider, "The Fictional Margin", p. 3; and F. P. Riga, "Merlin, Prospero, Saruman and Gandalf: Corrosive Uses of Power in Shakespeare and Tolkien" in J. B. Croft, *Tolkien and Shakespeare: Essays on Shared Themes and Language* (Jefferson, NC, 2007), 196–214, at pp. 196–198, 202, 206, 209, 211–212.
66. Similar ambiguity is present in Lkyanenko's *Last Watch*, see *Posledni Dozor*, p. 80. Counterexamples include the film *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, and the BBC TV series *Merlin*.
67. One thinks in particular of the Merlins of the BBC television series and the *Camelot*. Merlin's representation as Arthur's mentor also appears to be staple in the modern tradition. Examples include the musical film *Camelot* (1960), *The Sword in the Stone* (1963), *The Last Legion* (2007), and *Merlin l'enchanteur* (2012).
68. It could be argued that the Moros/Merlin of the *Stargate* mythology is the latter, since in the *Atlantis* series he is shown to have been the leader of the *Atlantis* colony in the Pegasus galaxy.
69. Gutiérrez García, "Locura," p. 19, n. 31, rightly points out: "la inestabilidad espacial es uno de los rasgos definitorios de Merlín, que acude a vivir al bosque, hábitat situado en los márgenes de la comunidad;" cf. also B. Geremek, "El marginado" in J. Le Goff, ed., *El hombre medieval* (Madrid, 1991), pp. 361–367.
70. J. Dufournet, *Adam de la Halle: à la recherché de lui-même, ou, le Jeu dramatique de la Feuillée* (Paris, 1974), pp. 297–301.
71. See above, p. 181.
72. Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, The Oxford Mark Twain 11 (Oxford, 2010), 29 vols, pp. 63, 570. T. H. White, *The Once and Future King* (London, 1958), follows Malory; for more on this, see M. Kellman, "T. H. White's Merlyn: A Flawed Prophet," in *Comparative Studies in Merlin*, pp. 55–61, for a discussion of White; White's innovation of backward-living Merlin is referred to in the *Stargate: SG-1* episode "Camelot."
73. Sullivan, "Cinema Arthuriana" p. 87. For more on this, see Knight, *Merlin*, pp. 194–196; and pp. 208–209 for a discussion of Mary Stewart's novels.
74. Merlin appears in *Stargate: SG-1* episodes "Avalon, Part 1," "Camelot," "The Quest, Part 2," and "The Shroud," as well as in the *Stargate:*

Atlantis episode "Before I Sleep," where he represents authority prior to his marginalization. Merlin also features in the *Stargate* straight-to-DVD film, *The Ark of Truth* (2008).

75. Compare the image of Myrddin; see above, p. 182.
76. "Frank, I need a Noah's boy in a blanket, two hen fruit wrecked on a shingle with a mystery in the alley, a warm Eve with a mouldy lid, and two checkerboards, alright? Oh yeah, hold the pig." That the creators of the television program were aware of the Welsh legends is attested by the reference of Myrddin as a variant name of Merlin when he is first referred to by Daniel Jackson in the episode "Avalon, Part 1." Whether in the case of Oma Desala and the pig the implicit allusion to Myrddin is intentional or accidental, the two characters certainly belong to the same tradition.
77. *Stargate: SG-1*, Season 9, Episode 1, "Avalon, Part I"; Episode 20, "Camelot;" Season 10, Episode 11, "The Quest, Part II."
78. See M. Asher, trans., *The Post-Vulgate Part I: The Merlin Continuation*, in Lacy, ed., *Vulgate*, vol. 4, p. 179. It is interesting that the mysterious disappearances of Merlin referred to in this passage are paralleled by those of Tolkien's Gandalf; see, for example, J. R. R. Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings*, pp. 970–971.
79. P. H. Goodrich, "The Lineage of Mad Scientists: Anti-types of Merlin," in *Dionysus in Literature: Essays on Literary Madness*, ed. B. M. Rieger (Bowling Green, OH, 1994), pp. 71–88, esp. p. 77.
80. R. H. Thompson, "Rationalizing the Irrational: Merlin and His Prophecies in the Modern Historical Novel," *Arthuriana* 10 (2000), 116–126, p. 117.
81. See, for example, the discussion in R. H. Thompson, "Rationalizing the Irrational," pp. 117–118.
82. There is also surely something Merlin-like in Nicholas Cage's character Balthasar in *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, and in particular in his tutorial relation to the hero of the film, reminiscent of the master-apprentice Merlin–Arthur relationship which, thanks largely to T. H. White, we have come to view as traditional.
83. Knight, *Merlin*, p. 221. It must, however, be argued, that a beard in itself would be insufficient to identify a character as indebted to the Merlin figure; as Lupack rightly points out, "few viewers of *The Last Crusade* would consider Indiana Jones's father to be a Merlin figure," A. Lupack, review of K. J. Harty, ed., King Arthur on Film: New Essays on Arthurian Cinema, Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1999, in *Arthuriana* 10 (2000), 137–139, p. 138. In relation to the parallels between Obi-Wan and Merlin, one is reminded of Aronstein's characterization of *Star Wars* as having "the young-boy-finds-wizard-sword-father-kingdom plot;" see

S. Aronstein, “Not Exactly a Knight:” Arthurian Narrative and Recuperative Politics in the “Indiana Jones” Trilogy, *Cinema Journal* 34 (1995), 3–30, p. 6.

84. Knight, *Merlin*, p. 222.
85. Goodrich, “Merlin in the Twenty-First Century,” in A. Lupack ed., *New Directions in Arthurian Studies*, Arthurian Studies 51 (Cambridge, 2002), 149–162, pp. 157–158.
86. Goodrich, “Merlin in the Twenty-First Century,” pp. 158–159; Goodrich also suggests that BBC’s *Doctor Who* also represents Merlin, p. 158.

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