



2016

***Le Morte Darthur* and the Extratextual Significance of Prophecy across the Centuries**

Stephanie Victoria Violette
University of New Mexico

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/rmmra>

 Part of the [Comparative Literature Commons](#), [History Commons](#), [Philosophy Commons](#), and the [Renaissance Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Violette, Stephanie Victoria (2016) "*Le Morte Darthur* and the Extratextual Significance of Prophecy across the Centuries," *Quidditas*: Vol. 37 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/rmmra/vol37/iss1/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Quidditas by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

***Le Morte Darthur* and the Extratextual Significance
of Prophecy across the Centuries**

Stephanie Victoria Violette

University of New Mexico

Prophecy is the driving force of Thomas Malory's Le Morte Darthur. The Morte emerged from a tradition of prophecy that existed long before its creation, and which continued into the early modern period. Prophecy influenced both political and religious spheres, as well as medieval cultural perceptions of time. English culture absorbed the Morte's prophetic elements and used them to either bolster later uses of prophecy or to defame them. Using the Morte as a starting point, this examination draws on elements from various sources: Greek, Christian, and Welsh folklore, Geoffrey of Monmouth and contemporaries of Thomas Malory. Also part of this analysis are the Tudors, their rivals, and their enemies, all of whom drew on Arthurian-style prophecy in their bids to consolidate power, and the Church, who demonized those prophecies that threatened the established order. Elements of prophecy existed in the cultural belief systems of medieval England long before Thomas Malory wrote his masterwork, and they continued for centuries afterward. By tracing the use of Arthurian prophecy, this literary history argues that these concepts frequently spilled from the literary realm into the everyday beliefs of people, and as such was often used as a tool by authority figures.

Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* is an intricate mix of legend and medieval culture, and supernatural events tend to allow this text to function as a narrative. Magic facilitates the first major event in the narrative: Arthur's conception.¹ Magic potions, prayers, illusions, magical objects, and prophecy all help to move the action forward. Of all of the instances of the supernatural in the *Morte*, prophecy most often drives the plot and structures the narrative, but its significance is not exclusively literary.² Such uses of prophecy situate the *Morte* in a tradition of prophecy that existed long before the work's creation. After the repopularization of the Arthurian genre into the Early Modern Period, English culture absorbed the *Morte*'s prophetic elements and used them both to bolster later uses

1 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 5.

2 Dobin, *Merlin's Disciples*, 18.

of prophecy, and to defame them; in this way, the concept of prophecy influenced both the political and religious spheres, as well as medieval cultural perceptions of time itself.

Numerous times in *Le Morte Darthur*, prophecy explicitly reveals events, and this thrusts the characters into action, structuring the narrative and adding literary appeal. For instance, the prophecy foretelling Arthur's birth ("The first nyght that ye [Uther] shal lye by Igrayne ye shal gete a child on her"),³ both tells the reader what is to come, and indicates to Uther, Arthur's father, that his sexual conquest of Igrayne is fated, therefore unavoidable, encouraging the prophecy to fulfillment and driving the narrative. What exactly Uther thinks of this prophecy's validity, however, is unclear, as Malory does not reveal his inner monologue, only his actions; Uther's response to Merlin's request that he be delivered the child is simply "I wylle wel...as thow wilt have it."⁴ Likewise, when Arthur pulls "the swerd by the handels," "lightly and fiersly" out of the anvil, although he does so out of necessity for a sword, there is a prophecy written upon it: "whoso pulleh oute this swerd of this stone and anyld is rightwys Kynge borne of all Englonde,"⁵ making the emergence of a new king fated, even though Arthur seems an unlikely choice. This prophecy lends legitimacy to Arthur's reign, briskly driving the plot onward from the introductory phase of Arthur's childhood. The positioning of these prophecies, either near the beginning of the narrative or just before the event in question, serve to remind the reader (and sometimes the characters) of the coming action,⁶ ultimately compelling them forward.

In this way, Malory uses prophecy not to teach lessons or dole out divine punishment, but to structure the narrative. When Ar-

3 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 5.

4 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 5.

5 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 8-9.

6 Kapelle, "Merlin's Prophecies, Malory's Lacunae," 59.

thur begets Mordred, which is another fated event (“Youre owne son, begotyn of youre syster, that shall be the destruccion of all thys realme”), Merlin does mention that “God ys displeed,”⁷ but Jane Bliss notes that Malory downplays God’s wrath compared to French sources (e.g. *Mort Artu*), especially in the final battle.⁸ Corrine Saunders also suggests, “cold destiny rather than kind providence governs the battlefield”⁹ at the end of the *Morte*, although others, such as Marilyn Corrie, feel human error drives Malory’s ending.¹⁰ Malory’s intentions are as ambiguous as a historical chronicle reflecting real events might be, to the point where Mark Lambert refers to Malory as a historian, not a moralist.¹¹ Malory’s historian tendencies also shine through when he establishes several events and prophecies in the *Morte*, but does not tie them into the narrative as a modern reader of fiction might expect. Sir Pellynore’s death is prophesied, but Malory leaves the climax of his demise out of the *Morte*. Additionally, although it is not a prophecy, Jane Bliss suggests that Malory introduces Arthur’s illegitimate son Borre as though he is going to be an important character, but then all but ignores him.¹² In this way, Malory’s narrative is often reminiscent of a historical chronicle, not a morality play or similar artifice.¹³

Furthermore, some of these prophecies seem to be guiding, not damning. As Rachel Kapelle explains in her research, there are two types of prophecy in the *Morte*, “categorical,” or immutable and “contingent,” or changeable,¹⁴ which often seem to be in conflict with each other. The categorical sort (e.g. “that Launcelot scholde

7 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 37; 30; 32.

8 Bliss, “Prophecy in the *Morte Darthur*,” 5.

9 Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural*, 258.

10 Corrie, ““God may well fordo desteny,”” 708.

11 Lambert, *Malory: Style and Vision*, 126.

12 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 28; Bliss, “Prophecy in the *Morte Darthur*,” 2.

13 Lambert, *Malory: Style and Vision*, 126.

14 Kapelle, “Merlin’s Prophecies, Malory’s Lacunae,” 64.

love hir [Gwenyver], and sche hym agayne,” or that “a lybarde of kinges blood [Launcelot] ...shall engendir a lyon [Galahad]...whyche...shall passe all other knightes”¹⁵ give structure and foreshadowing to the narrative.¹⁶ The reader knows what to expect based on these prophetic hints. However, in contrast to categorical prophecies, contingent prophecies seem to offer an alternative route, and suspense, to an otherwise predictable narrative. Such contingent prophecies are ambiguous; for instance, when Pellynore declares that “God may well fordo destiny” upon hearing that he has doomed himself for letting his daughter commit suicide,¹⁷ Malory is presenting an alternative perspective, in which Pellynore can (or believes that he can) overcome his fate.¹⁸

The best example of this tension is again the prophecy that Mordred will slay Arthur; from the very first book this is explicitly a categorical prophecy, but in Arthur’s prophetic dream just before the last battle, the ghost of Gawain warns him that if he fights Mordred before Launcelot’s return “doute ye nat ye shall be slayne.”¹⁹ The warning creates, at the very last moment, a hope that perhaps Arthur can change his fate, if he waits for Launcelot. This mix of prophecies, mutable and immutable, complete and incomplete, and significant and insignificant, “involve[s] the reader in the same historical world as the narrative,”²⁰ which creates an unpredictable progression that is far more realistic than the standard morality tale.

Prophecy serves also to control either the characters in the text or the ideas of the readers of said text, and it is often unclear how aware the characters are of this, or if they have any power to prevent it. Rachel Kapelle, joined by Elizabeth Edwards, both argue that often characters in the *Morte* do not deny their fate as Pellynore

15 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 62; 463.

16 Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural*, 236.

17 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 77.

18 Corrie, “God may well fordo desteny,” 704.

19 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 684.

20 Batt, *Malory’s Morte Darthur*, 19.

does, but refuse or are unable to acknowledge it at all.²¹ In particular, categorical (inevitable) prophecies are incompatible “with the paradigmatic behavioral codes Malory’s characters follow”²² This is why, when Launcelot reads his own fate on a tombstone, he gives no reaction, why Arthur attempts to drown the infant Mordred and “all the children that were borne in May Day,” and why Arthur is confused that Merlin does not just avoid the witch Nimue, who is fated cause him great and prolonged misfortune.²³ Arthur’s reactions are realistic for a character in his position, one who has no notion of being guided by larger forces, but Merlin, who serves a prophetic function throughout the narrative, is different; he is, in the words of modern fiction writer T. H. White, “born at the wrong end of time,” forced to “live backwards from in front,”²⁴ and thus is able to understand these larger forces.

Arthur’s failure to understand prophecy is also reflective of its ambiguous nature. Kapelle points out that it is abnormal that Arthur never realizes he cannot escape his fate,²⁵ as other famous characters, such as Macbeth or Oedipus do, but this only makes it clear that Malory’s aim was not to use prophecy to such an effect. Malory’s tendency resembles older Arthurian Welsh tales. In “How Culhwch Won Olwen,” for example, a hag tells the queen that “[the king] shall have an heir...by *you* [the queen], since he hasn’t had one by anyone else.”²⁶ This prophecy is then never mentioned again, and seems only to form expectation in the reader’s mind and to structure the narrative. This “amnesia,” as Elizabeth Edwards calls

21 Kapelle, “Merlin’s Prophecies, Malory’s Lacunae,” 60; Edwards, “Amnesia and Remembrance,” 133-4.

22 Kapelle, “Merlin’s Prophecies, Malory’s Lacunae,” 60.

23 Arthur tells Merlin “syn ye knowe of youre evil adventure [with Nimue], purvey for hit, and put hit away by youre crauftes, that mysseadvnture;” Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 463; 39; 78.

24 White, *The Sword in the Stone*, 37.

25 Kapelle, “Merlin’s Prophecies, Malory’s Lacunae,” 58-9.

26 Davies, “How Culhwch Won Olwen,” 180.

it,²⁷ is more characteristic of the realm of legend than of fiction. After all, Merlin's prophecies, as Geoffrey of Monmouth records in his twelfth century *The History of the Kings of Britain*,²⁸ feature prominently in centuries of ostensibly non-fiction interpretations of prophecy, along with those of Joachim of Fiore, the ancient Greek Sybils and others, as reputable sources of prophecy.²⁹

Prophecies such as Monmouth's, St. Cyril's, Hildegard's, St. Brigit's, and others,³⁰ were all means of controlling the ideas of real people in the pre-modern world. This easily predates Arthurian legend and the Christian era entirely; countless prophecies pervade ancient Greek tales, and are key features of the Old Testament,³¹ to give only the most obvious examples. Relevant authorities, religious and political, often used prophecy as a form of control. Returning to the prophecies professed in Geoffrey of Monmouth's work, scholars like Julia Crick have noted that, especially in pre-modernity, prophecies of this kind did nothing to discredit an author or idea, but in fact enhanced their authority and boosted the work's popularity.³² Put simply, prophecy fit believably into the worldview of premodern audiences. Whether prophecies came to pass was of secondary importance, and this could rarely be proven either way. As Francis Bacon notes in his *The Advancement of Learning*, interpretation must always fall short; the best prophecies are ambiguous by design.³³ Bacon treats prophecy as just another sort of history: "It is no more than a species of history; divine history having this prerogative over human, that the narration may precede, as well as succeed the fact."³⁴

27 Edwards, "Amnesia and Remembrance," 134.

28 Monmouth, *The Kings of Britain*, 131-42.

29 Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy*, 96.

30 Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy*, 335.

31 Grimm, "Sir Thomas Malory's Narrative of Faith," 18.

32 Crick, "Geoffrey of Monmouth," 357; 360.

33 Dobin, *Merlin's Disciples*, 79.

34 Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, ch. 1.

Persuasive prophecy is useful in lending authority and legitimacy to a party or cause, and so, because of its popular appeal in medieval and early modern England, Arthurian prophecy often became a key talking point of real political struggles.

Such trends were common by Malory's lifetime, and it is not surprising that his use of prophecy resembles the writings of his contemporaries. There are many similarities when comparing Malory's use of prophecy (and fortune) to that of his contemporaries, such as Geoffrey Chaucer, John Gower, and John Lydgate.³⁵ For instance, Chaucer's depiction of Fortune in *Troilus and Criseyde* structures the narrative, and he is ambiguous in his mixing of Christian and Greek worldviews. No doubt, this influenced readers' notions of their own fates.³⁶ Comparable is Malory's apparent exemption of "Lancelot from culpability for his fate,"³⁷ which is distinctly pre-Christian in attitude. It is Gower and Lydgate who write off fate as intrinsically linked to one's morality in alignment with a Christian worldview.³⁸ The *Morte's* characters and prophetic themes thus became popular and embedded in English culture, especially by the fifteenth century,³⁹ reflecting the cultural values of that age and of previous ages.⁴⁰ Despite being fictional, all of these works involved prophecy and were as influential as anything claiming to be real or legitimate was. These writers gave authorities the foundations upon which they could persuade the people of their legitimacy.

The publishing of the *Morte* in 1485 facilitated the repopularization of the Arthurian genre, and just as Monmouth's prophecies of Merlin had been doing for centuries, Arthurian prophecies became a part of political use of prophecy in the non-fictional realm.

35 Corrie, "Fortune and the Sinner," 207.

36 Corrie, "God may well fordo desteny," 700.

37 Corrie, "God may well fordo desteny," 713.

38 Corrie, "Fortune and the Sinner," 208.

39 Eckhardt, "Prophecy and Nostalgia," 109.

40 Crofts, *Malory's Contemporary Audience*, 1.

Most notably, the Tudor family fabricated and utilized prophecies that linked them to King Arthur's lineage. Henry VII named his first son and heir apparent Arthur.⁴¹ As he had only recently won the throne after the War of the Roses (1455 - 1487), this was an attempt by Henry VII to strengthen his family's ties to the throne, if only in name. After all, Arthur was prophesied to one day take the throne again,⁴² and he had originally gained his own legitimacy through prophecy.⁴³ Likewise, however, did Henry VII's rival, Edward IV, also use Arthurian prophecy to stake his claim. He too named his illegitimate son Arthur (Plantagenet), but to no avail; the House of York ultimately cemented its authority.⁴⁴ After Henry VII's son Arthur died young, his brother took the throne as Henry VIII, and he too tried to establish himself as prophetically linked to King Arthur. He commissioned an elaborate round table like that of Arthurian legend, with his own portrait in the place of King Arthur;⁴⁵ and that table remains in Winchester Castle to this day.

Into the seventeenth century,⁴⁶ Arthurian and Merlinian prophecies circulated. These prophecies affected the political and religious landscape for better or for worse. The so-called prophet Ursula Shipton predicted the marriage of Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn, the dissolution of the monasteries, Mary Tudor's bloody reign, Elizabeth I's victory against the Spanish Armada, the death of Cardinal Wolsey, and the 1666 London Fire.⁴⁷ Her link to Arthurian tradition was that she "never had a Father of human race, but was begot [by] some wanton ariel Daemon."⁴⁸ This parallels Merlin's genesis, as

41 Stein, *The Death of Merlin*, 131.

42 Jansen, "Prophecy, Propaganda, and Henry VIII," 285.

43 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 8-9.

44 Eckhardt, "Prophecy and Nostalgia," 109.

45 Jansen, "Prophecy, Propaganda, and Henry VIII," 285.

46 Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy*, viii.

47 Shipton, *The Wonderful History*, 15; 18; 20-2.

48 Shipton, *The Wonderful History*, 3.

according to Robert Boron, Merlin, too, was the offspring of a devil and a nun, which is the reason for his ability to “know things done and said and past.”⁴⁹ This recycling of the legendary circumstances Merlin’s birth gave Shipton’s prophecies legitimacy and authority, even though she probably never existed.⁵⁰ Prophets were common during this period, and many were contemporary to Mother Ship-ton: Thomas of Erceldoune in Scotland, Nostradamus in France, and Dr. John Dee in England, who was an adviser to Queen Elizabeth.⁵¹ During the reign of Henry VIII, there even circulated an anonymous prophecy about a ‘childe with a chaplet,’ reminiscent of King Arthur, and who Henry VIII claimed was a reference to himself.⁵² Even if this did not begin as a tactful piece of propaganda, created to bolster Henry VIII’s legitimacy, it was appropriated as such after the fact.

Often, however, such uses of prophecy could backfire. Just as some prophetic interpretations supported authority, others threatened the status quo. Those involved with such interpretations often faced harsh persecution from the authorities, religious as well as political, often facing execution for both treason and sorcery. Thomas Howard, the fourth Duke of Norfolk, was put to death for treason, but his specific crime was interpreting sections of Monmouth’s Merlin prophecy to mean that Mary Stuart, not Queen Elizabeth, was rightful ruler of England.⁵³ Likewise, John Hale, vicar of Isleworth, and John Dobson, vicar of Mustone, both also suffered death for preaching similarly treasonous prophecies against Henry VIII during his reign.⁵⁴ By the Early Modern period, sorcery was inextricable from prophecy. This comes as no surprise. Returning to the reason-

49 Boron, “The Prose Merlin [Excerpt],” 705.

50 Ashe, *Encyclopedia of Prophecy*, 228.

51 Jansen, “Prophecy, Propaganda, and Henry VIII,” 275; Dobin, *Merlin’s Disciples*, 125.

52 Jansen, “Prophecy, Propaganda, and Henry VIII,” 275.

53 Dobin, *Merlin’s Disciples*, 20-1.

54 Jansen, “Prophecy, Propaganda, and Henry VIII,” 283.

ing for Merlin's abilities, his father was a devil, so his prophecies were intended to "trick" humans into learning about the demonic, but as his mother was a nun, God favored him as well, and "willed that he should know things contrary to those he knew from the other side [divine things]." ⁵⁵ Thus, according to Boron, Merlin was simultaneously divine and demonic, and depending on the perspective of those in authority positions, prophetic interpretations, too, could be demonic just as easily as they could be divine. ⁵⁶

Early Modern religious and philosophical thinkers such as Heinrich Kramer (c. 1430 – 1505) and William Covell (1588 - 1613) added authority to the argument that contemporary divination was always evil. Kramer published the *Malleus Malificarum* in 1486, and claimed divination was done "through the explicit and intentional invocation of evil spirits." ⁵⁷ Infamous medieval inquisitor, Bernard Gui, ⁵⁸ also shared this view, and for centuries afterward, even across oceans, these beliefs drove the witch hunts of the early modern period. Covell, in a pamphlet against the use of prophecy in state affairs (*Polimanteia*), further explains that because God only enabled divine prophecy in ancient times, and as "Satan interminglenth himself in the midst of affayres publique ... hee giueth by dreames, to the imitation of diuine dreames," ⁵⁹ Satan is the origin of all non-biblical prophecy. Of course, such categorical arguments were generally only used against dissenters by those in power. Henry VIII and Elizabeth I in fact outlawed 'false prophecy' during their reigns, but they simultaneously supported prophecies they wanted to be true. ⁶⁰ Such ideas persisted for centuries, culminating in witch hunts and inquisitional *auto-de-fes* alike. Countless people were

55 Boron, "The Prose Merlin," 705-7.

56 Dobin, *Merlin's Disciples*, 77.

57 Kramer, *The Malleus Maleficarum*, 55.

58 Bailey, "From Sorcery to Witchcraft," 970.

59 Covell, *Polimanteia*, n.p.

60 Dobin, *Merlin's Disciples*, 24.

burned or hanged for trying to predict the ‘wrong’ future.

The political and religious reaches of prophecy, thus, were profound. Just as important, however, was the influence that the concept of prophecy had on cultural perceptions of time. The Christian worldview within which Malory was writing, as well as the romanticised pre-Christian world that preceded and in many ways permeated the Middle Ages, are both present elements in the *Morte*,⁶¹ and other contemporary writings as well, as Marilyn Corrie has noted in Chaucer.⁶² These worldviews of time are manifest in both linear and cyclical patterns exemplified by the many prophecies and the echoes of those prophecies throughout texts, and it is not surprising that scholars often compare the prophecies and structure of the *Morte* to those of the Bible, which also contains both cyclical and linear patterns.⁶³ Kevin Grimm explicitly calls the *Morte* a “narrative of faith” for “its blend of Christian and chivalric values” when trying to describe the *Morte*’s genre, and Brettler further argues that the Old Testament contains repetitions, instances where history seems to repeat and be cyclical, and also a linear structure supported by prophecies and the potential fulfillment of those prophecies in the New Testament.⁶⁴ Reflecting these patterns are the real life cultural belief in circular and linear patterns, such as cycles in alchemy,⁶⁵ and millennialism, as followers of Joachim, and countless other linear end-of-days prophecies throughout the centuries into the present day illustrate.⁶⁶

As for the *Morte* itself, it seems to present both options. Malory himself appears to enter into, or at least to entertain, the debate on whether Arthur is truly dead at the end of the *Morte*, as

61 Bliss, “Prophecy in the *Morte Darthur*,” 12-3.

62 Corrie, “God may well fordo desteny,” 691; Corrie, “Fortune and the Sinner,” 209.

63 Bliss, “Prophecy in the *Morte Darthur*,” 2.

64 Brettler, “Cyclical and Teleological Time,” 120-2.

65 Stein, *The Death of Merlin*, 139-40.

66 Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy*, 435.

he presents both alternatives ambiguously.⁶⁷ Arthur is both taken off to Avylyon by Morgan le Fay, Nimue, and other magical female characters, certain to “com agayne,”⁶⁸ and yet he has a grave, and, as Malory writes it, Launcelot later buries Guenever in Arthur’s tomb: “besyde my lord Kyng Arthur he shal berye me.”⁶⁹ Scholars such as Edward Donald Kennedy have even astutely noted that, much like his literary forbears, Malory himself incorporates prophecy at the end of the *Morte* that can be interpreted as predicting real world events, benefiting either the House of Lancaster or the House of York.⁷⁰ Kennedy stresses that it unlikely that Malory truly believed in the literal nature of such a prophecy: of the phrase “he [Arthur] changed the lyff” he offers that this was a common euphemism for death during Malory’s lifetime, and of Malory’s epitaphic prophecy “*Rex quondam Rexque futurus*,” he claims Helen Cooper’s translation—“king once, king to be”—is far more realistic than T. H. White’s whimsical “once and future king.”⁷¹ However, whether Malory himself believed what he wrote or meant to convey ambiguity is largely inconsequential, as his writing and the reception of it nonetheless mirrors closely, if not exactly, the cultural landscape of the early modern era; prophecies about the return of the king circulated in spite of the alleged discovery of Arthur’s grave in Glastonbury in 1191.⁷² Both of these conflicting realities simultaneously undercut and highlight the legend of Arthur through their very ambiguity.

So, in the same way that prophecy is a driving force of the action in the *Morte*, the *Morte*’s use and revival of Arthurian prophecy also drove and influenced the politics, religion, and worldviews

67 Bliss, “Prophecy in the *Morte Darthur*,” 12.

68 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 689.

69 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, 694.

70 Kennedy, “Malory and Political Prophecy,” 47; 56.

71 Kennedy, “Malory and Political Prophecy,” 52; 54.

72 Sweeney, “Divine Love or Loving Divinely,” 74.

of the society from which it emanated, and for centuries afterward this trend continued. Malory's structure, similar to that of a legend or a chronicle, resonated with a certain authenticity and realism in the minds of his contemporary audience, especially when coupled with the inherent legitimacy generally lent to prophecies in the premodern world. Prophecies have been present for millennia in literature, from ancient Greek texts, to the Bible, and throughout the Middle Ages into the Modern era; societies absorbed these prophetic Arthurian themes and concepts familiar to the populace. Authorities then recycled, manipulated and reused aspects of these prophecies as a means of control. Prophecy functions not only as a convenient means of narrative structure and foreshadowing for literature. It also structures the political landscape, belief systems and worldviews of the people consuming it, either through the artifice of literature, or the ostensible reality of the court seer.

Stephanie Victoria Violette hails from New Brunswick, Canada, where she acquired a BA in History and English Literature at St. Thomas University in 2015. She is currently part of the history department at the University of New Mexico, and is working towards her MA in medieval history, while also performing duties as a graduate assistant. Her most current research interest pertains to the trajectory and significance of cultural belief in apparitions and specters across the Middle Ages; in the past, she has done work on heretics and apostasy, mysticism, psychology and the paranormal, degrees of conversion, and portrayals of belief in literature. She intends to begin a doctoral program within the next academic year.

Bibliography

Ashe, Geoffrey. *Encyclopedia of Prophecy*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2001.

- Bacon, Francis. *The Advancement of Learning*. Ed. Joseph Devey. New York: P.F. Collier and Son, 1901.
- Bailey, Michael D. "From Sorcery to Witchcraft: Clerical Conceptions of Magic in the Later Middle Ages." *Speculum* 76, no. 4 (2001): 960-990.
- Batt, Catherine. *Malory's Morte Darthur: Remaking Arthurian Tradition*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.
- Bliss, Jane. "Prophecy in *the Morte Darthur*." *Arthuriana* 13, no. 1 (2003): 1-16.
- Boron, Robert. "The Prose *Merlin* [Excerpt]." In *Le Morte Darthur; Or, The Hoole Book of Kinge Arthur and of His Noble Knightes of the Rounde Table*. Ed. Stephen H. A. Shepherd, 705-9. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004.
- Brettler, Marc. "Cyclical and Teleological Time in the Hebrew Bible." *Time and Temporality in the Ancient World*. Ed. Ralph Mark Rosen, 110-28. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2004.
- Corrie, Marilyn. "'God may well fordo desteny': Dealing with Fate, Destiny, and Fortune in Sir Thomas Malory's *le Morte Darthur* and Other Late Medieval Writing." *Studies in Philology* 110, no. 4 (2013): 690-713.
- Corrie, Marilyn. "Fortune and the Sinner: Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate and Malory's *Morte Darthur*." *Literature Compass* 5, no. 2 (2008): 207-19.
- Covell, William. *Polimanteia*. [Cambridge and London]: University of Cambridge, 1595.
- Crick, Julia. "Geoffrey of Monmouth, Prophecy and History." *Journal of Medieval History* 18, no. 4 (1992): 357-71.
- Crofts, Thomas. *Malory's Contemporary Audience: The Social Reading of Romance in Late Medieval England*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006.
- Davies, Sioned, trans. "How Culhwch Won Olwen." In *The Mabinogion*, 179-213. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Dobin, Howard. *Merlin's Disciples: Prophecy, Poetry, and Power in Renaissance England*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990.
- Eckhardt, Caroline D. "Prophecy and Nostalgia: Arthurian Symbolism at the Close of the English Middle Ages." In *The Arthurian Tradition: Essays in Convergence*. Ed. Mary Flowers Braswell and John Bugge, 109-26. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1988.
- Edwards, Elizabeth. "Amnesia and Remembrance in Malory's *Morte Darthur*." *Paragraph: A Journal of Modern Critical Theory* 13, no. 2 (1990): 132-146.

- Kennedy, Edward Donald. "Malory and Political Prophecy." *Poetica* 77, no. 1 (2012): 47-59.
- Kramer, Heinrich. *The Malleus Maleficarum*. Ed. P G Maxwell-Stuart. New York: Palgrave, 2007.
- Grimm, Kevin T. "Sir Thomas Malory's Narrative of Faith." *Arthuriana* 16, no. 2 (2006): 16-20.
- Jansen, Sharon L. "Prophecy, Propaganda, and Henry VIII: Arthurian Tradition in the Sixteenth Century." In *King Arthur through the Ages*, Vol. 1. Ed. Valerie Marie Lagorio and Mildred Leake Day, 275-91. New York: Garland Pub., 1990.
- Kapelle, Rachel. "Merlin's Prophecies, Malory's Lacunae." *Arthuriana* 19, no. 2 (2009): 58-81.
- Lambert, Mark. *Malory: Style and Vision in Le Morte Darthur*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975.
- Malory, Thomas. *Le Morte Darthur, Or, The Hoole Book of Kinge Arthur and of His Noble Knightes of the Rounde Table*. Ed. Stephen H. A. Shepherd. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004.
- Monmouth, Geoffrey. *The History of the Kings of Britain*. Translated and edited by Michael A. Faletra. Peterborough, ONT: Broadview Editions, 2008.
- Reeves, Marjorie. *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.
- Saunders, Corinne J. *Magic and the Supernatural in Medieval English Romance*. Rochester, New York: D.S. Brewer, 2010.
- Shipton, Mother. *The Wonderful History and Surprising Prophecies of Mother Shipton*. [London?]: Printed for the Travelling Stationers, [1775?].
- Stein, Walter Johannes. *The Death of Merlin: Arthurian Myth and Alchemy*. Edinburgh: Floris, 1989.
- Sweeney, Mickey. "Divine Love or Loving Divinely?: The Ending of Malory's 'Morte Darthur'" *Arthuriana* 6.2 (2006): 73-77.
- White, T. H. *The Sword in the Stone*. New York: Time Incorporated, 1964.