

MEDIEVALES 69

Magie, Féerie, Sorcellerie

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publiés par les soins de Danielle Buschinger, Anne Ibos-Augé et
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le nom a été justement repris par un groupe de rock finlandais, tous deux invoqués chez Penderecki ? Le premier avale les âmes destinées à l'Enfer. Le second est désigné par le nom syriaque donné à Satan. À l'inverse, le succès jamais démenti des *Dialogues de Carmélites* de Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), depuis leur création mondiale à la Scala de Milan en 1957, est probablement suscité par la présence d'un Antéchrist : la Révolution française.

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Merlin: Magician or Prophet?

Natalia PETROVSKAIA (Utrecht)

“Sometimes he angers me
 With telling me of the moldwarp and the ant,
 Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies [...]”
 William Shakespeare, *Henry IV Part I*, Act 3, Scene 1

Introduction

Merlin is one of the most important figures of the Arthurian tradition. As Peter H. Goodrich observes, “Most people know that Merlin is the epicentre of the supernatural in the Arthurian legend, his secularized male magic counterpoised by the female magic of Morgan le Fay and the Lady of the Lake and by the mystical religious miracle of the Holy Grail”¹. The nature of Merlin’s association with the supernatural, which, as Goodrich observes, presents a major component of the character, has not remained entirely stable throughout the history of the tradition, despite the apparent uniformity of the character’s image today². One of the difficulties lies in the fact that, as pointed out already in the twelfth century by Gerald of Wales, it appears that we are dealing with more than one Merlin. Gerald posited two: Merlin Silvester and Merlin Ambrosius³. A similar double (though not necessarily coinciding with Gerald’s) was suggested by Paul Zumthor in the twentieth century in relation to Merlin’s association with magic and prophecy⁴. It is the purpose of the present discussion to add some considerations to the issue of Merlin as prophet and magician opened up by Zumthor.

“Fool” or “Wise Man”

It is something of a commonplace that the modern Merlin in his various incarnations, particularly in the English-speaking world, is traceable, via Malory (and Cantor’s print edition), to the courtly literary traditions of medieval France and England⁵. However, in order to explain some of the more perplexing features of the character’s development, it is necessary to delve deeper and further into the roots of this tradition. There are a number of complications, including the difficulty of determining the exact extent of the influence today of, for instance, Geoffrey of Monmouth, the complicated (and late) transmission of some of the purportedly early Welsh sources, as well as the two distinct phenomena which dominate the literary history of Merlin in particular⁶. The first of these two phenomena is the Janus-like duality of the figure: there appear to be two distinct traditions of Merlin, in which he is represented either as a wild man or as a wise advisor. In a previous publication I have termed these two figures the

¹ GOODRICH 2003 p. 1.

² LITTLETON/MALCOR 1995 pp. 87-88.

³ GERALD OF WALES 1978 pp. 192-193, quoted and discussed by in PULIFER 2009 pp. 92-93.

⁴ ZUMTHOR 1973, english translation published in ZUMTHOR 2004.

⁵ For discussion, see, for instance, SULLIVAN 2004 pp. 86, 90 and PERRINE 1972. For the importance of Chaxton’s edition of Malory, see WITTENBERGTON 1992.

⁶ For a discussion of the role of Geoffrey of Monmouth in forming later incarnations of the Merlin figure, see JANKULAK 2010 pp. 78-93.

“fool” and the “wise man”⁷. The second particularly striking phenomenon pertaining to Merlin is the ambiguity of his association with magic on the one hand and prophecy on the other. As has been mentioned above, the complexity of Merlin’s association with prophecy has been pointed out by Paul Zumthor, who observes that the Merlin of romance appears to be distinct from the Merlin to whom a large body of prophetic literature was attributed in the Middle Ages⁸. The multi-layered question of the possible interrelation between the two traditions of Merlin as “fool” and “wise man”, the presence or absence of magical or prophetic gifts, and with the Merlin of romance on the one hand and Merlin of the (political) prophecies on the other, must therefore be posed. It is to this subject that the present investigation is dedicated.

In order to attempt to untangle the complex tradition, let us first turn to the issue of the “fool” (“wild man”) and the “wise man”. The iconic representation of Merlin as a “wild man” belongs to the tradition associated with Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Vita Merlini* (ca. 1150).⁹ This text appears to be connected to the Welsh legend of Myrddin, of which seven poems are generally regarded as the witnesses¹⁰. The poems in question are: *Ymddiddan Myrddin a Thalesin* “The Conversation of Myrddin and Taliesin”, *Yr Bedwenni* “The Birch-tree Stanzas”, *Yr Afallenau* “The Apple-tree Stanzas”, *Yr Oianau* “The Oh! Stanzas”, *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydder Chwaer* “The Conversation of Myrddin and Gwenddydd his Sister”, *Gwasgargedd Myrddin yn ei Fedd* “The Scatter-song of Myrddin in his Grave”, and *Peirian Faban* “Lording Youth”¹¹. While these are generally associated with the figure of Myrddin, who is in turn equated to Merlin, it must be noted that the character is not mentioned by name in either the *Afallenau* or the *Oianau*. The association with Myrddin is based on two factors: that the poems can be fitted within the same (albeit vague) narrative, and the prophetic nature of all of these poems. An additional consideration for regarding these poems as a thematic unit lies in the similarities between the story they seem to tell and the storyline of Geoffrey’s *Vita Merlini*¹².

According to the narrative which can be gleaned from the Welsh poems, Myrddin participated in the Battle of Arfderydd, an event which precipitated his withdrawal from society and possibly led him to madness. While the exact cause of either is not specified within these poems, he appears to be suffering from guilt over the death of his nephew, a son of his sister, Gwenddydd¹³. The similarity with the *Vita Merlini* is apparent. In Geoffrey’s text the catalyst for madness is also a battle linked to Merlin’s sadness over the loss of his companions. Like Myrddin, Merlin removes himself into voluntary exile from society. Together, these two traditions may be seen as the origin of the “wild man” aspect of Merlin. It must be noted that, although this

⁷ See PETROVSKAYA 2017.

⁸ ZUMTHOR 2004, p. 129. For the original French version of the text, see ZUMTHOR 1973. For a similar observation see, for instance, LITTLETON/MALCOLM 1995 pp. 87-88.

⁹ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 1973.

¹⁰ For more on the relationship between the texts, and a further bibliography, see PADIEL 2006.

¹¹ The poems are edited in JARMAN 1982 pp. 1-2 (*Ymddiddan Myrddin a Thalesin*), p. 25 (*Yr Bedwenni*), pp. 26-28 (*Yr Afallenau*), pp. 29-35 (*Yr Oianau*); See WILLIAMS 1927-1929, PHILLIMORE 1886 pp. 112-121 and 151-154 for the *Gwasgargedd Myrddin yn ei Fedd*. See also JARMAN 1950-2; *Ymddiddan Myrddin a Thalesin* is also edited separately in JARMAN 1967.

¹² The relationship between these traditions is discussed by Jarman. See, for example, JARMAN 1981 and JARMAN 1960, JARMAN 1981 p. 126; JARMAN 1982 p. 27 II, 2-3.

narrative is conventionally considered to be confined to Geoffrey and the Welsh poems, Merlin as “wild man” also features in several later Continental texts, albeit in an altered form. The *Roman de Silence* of Heldris de Cornuaille is an example¹⁴. In this text, Merlin is represented as a wild man (“*Cho est uns hom trestois pelus | Et si est com un sors veus: | Si est isniais com cers de lande*”¹⁵) and, in a clear echo of the *Vita Merlini*, exposes the unfaithfulness of the king’s wife¹⁶. The story of “Grisandole” in the *L’Estoire Merlin*, which the *Silence* narrative appears to be based on, is another example¹⁷.

The “wise man” figure of Merlin can also be traced to Geoffrey, and to his *Historia regum Britanniae*¹⁸. This, generally regarded as the “mainstream” tradition of Merlin, presents him as a wise advisor to the king. The figure of the “wise man” Merlin of the *Historia regum* is picked up and elaborated on in the works of Wace and Layamon, and the French prose romances of the thirteenth century in a tradition that culminates in Malory¹⁹. It is also the *Historia regum* that describes Merlin as prophet, associating him with individual rulers as their prophet. When Aurelius replaces Vortigern as the king in the *Historia regum*, and decides to build a memorial to warriors fallen in battle, he is advised that the only one who can help him is the *uates Vortegirni* “Vortigern’s prophet” Merlin²⁰. Merlin refuses to prophesy at Ambrosius’ request, stating that his gift is only to be used in times of dire need, but helps him construct Stonehenge²¹. Merlin finally prophesies again at the death of Ambrosius, when summoned by Uther²². Although at no point do we witness Merlin prophesying for Arthur, his doing so is referred to in Book XI of the text: *tempus illud uenisset quod Merlinus Arturo prophetauerat* “the time came which Merlin had foretold to Arthur”²³.

It appears from the brief discussion above that prophetic ability is an attribute of both the “fool” and “wise man” types of Merlin. The far-reaching grandiose type of political prophecy so prominent in the *Historia regum* (“wise man” tradition) and the original Welsh poetry (“fool” tradition), is suppressed in *Vita Merlini* in favour of minor prophetic skills, related to the fate of individuals, displaying clear parallels with the Lailoken legend, and only resurfaces properly in the conversation with Taliesin towards the end of the text²⁴. The same phenomenon can be observed the Merlin episodes of the *Roman de Silence*. It has been suggested that this change in focus is due to the influence

¹⁴ For an edition of the *Roman de Silence*, see HELDRIS DE CORNUAILLE 1961 etc. published in several parts in consecutive issues of *Nottingham Medieval Studies*. For the Merlin section of the narrative, see the final instalment. A more recent edition and translation is HELDRIS DE CORNUAILLE 1992/1999.

¹⁵ HELDRIS DE CORNUAILLE 1967 pp. 37-38 II, 3929-31

¹⁶ See the discussion in BERTHELOT 2010 p. 56. See GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 1973 pp. 64-67. Merlin’s sister does not seem to hold this against him later in the narrative.

¹⁷ The narrative occurs in the French and English prose *Merlin* and in the *Liure d’Artes*. See SOMMER 1894, pp. 300-312; WHEATLEY 1865-1899 pp. 420-439; for a discussion, see PATON 1907; HELDRIS DE CORNUAILLE 1961 p. 58. For the relationship between the two texts, see HELDRIS DE CORNUAILLE 1992/1999 p. XII and ROCHE-MAINDI 2002.

¹⁸ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007.

¹⁹ FRYKENBERG 2006 p. 1324; for a discussion of Wace’s and Layamon’s images of Merlin and their connection with Geoffrey’s *Historia regum* see RIDER 1989 p. 2.

²⁰ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007, I, 128, pp. 170-171.

²¹ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007, II, 128-130, pp. 172-175.

²² GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007, I, 133, pp. 178-179.

²³ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007, I, 205, pp. 278-279.

²⁴ JARMAN 1981 p. 133.

“fool” and the “wise man”⁷. The second particularly striking phenomenon pertaining to Merlin is the ambiguity of his association with magic on the one hand and prophecy on the other. As has been mentioned above, the complexity of Merlin’s association with prophecy has been pointed out by Paul Zumthor, who observes that the Merlin of romance appears to be distinct from the Merlin to whom a large body of prophetic literature was attributed in the Middle Ages⁸. The multi-layered question of the possible interrelation between the two traditions of Merlin as “fool” and “wise man”, the presence or absence of magical or prophetic gifts, and with the Merlin of romance on the one hand and Merlin of the (political) prophecies on the other, must therefore be posed. It is to this subject that the present investigation is dedicated.

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¹⁵ HELDRIS DE CORNUAILLE 1967 pp. 37-38 II. 5929-31.

¹⁶ See the discussion in BERTHELOT 2010 p. 56. See GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 1973 pp. 64-67. Merlin’s sister does not seem to hold this against him later in the narrative.

¹⁷ The narrative occurs in the French and English prose *Merlin* and in the *Liure d’Arria*. See SOMMER 1894, pp. 300-312; WHEATLEY 1865-1899 pp. 420-439; for a discussion, see PATON 1907; HELDRIS DE CORNUAILLE 1961 p. 58. For the relationship between the two texts, see HELDRIS DE CORNUAILLE 1992/1999 p. XII and ROCHE-MAUDIN 2002.

¹⁸ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007.

¹⁹ FAYENBERG 2006 p. 1324; for a discussion of Wace’s and Layamon’s images of Merlin and their connection with Geoffrey’s *Historia regum* see RIDER 1989 p. 2.

²⁰ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007, I, 128, pp. 170-171.

²¹ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007, II, 128-130, pp. 172-175.

²² GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007, I, 133, pp. 178-179.

²³ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 2007, I, 205, pp. 278-279.

²⁴ JARMAN 1981 p. 133.

of the wild-man Myrddin legend on the *Vita Merlini*²⁵. As Gutiérrez García has pointed out, in *Vita Merlini*, Geoffrey omits all reference to any supernatural origins for Merlin – only his prophetic gift is retained²⁶. This Merlin may not be supernatural anymore (or, perhaps, never was supernatural), but he is associated with madness and exile, and the “wild man” tradition²⁷.

Prophecy and Madness

Merlin's prophetic gift in the *Vita Merlini* appears to be linked with his “wild man” status as exile from society, and his loss of prophetic gifts at the end of the text is linked to his liberation from the constraints of marginality. This link is further emphasised in the repetition of the episode, with another madman, whose name is given later as Maelidin, who just chances to come along, and is cured at the same fountain²⁸.

The episode of Merlin's cure gives the other legendary figure featured in the text, Taliesin, a chance to propound on the subject of various springs and their properties, continuing, in effect, the curious dialogue between him and Merlin²⁹. The dialogue itself is curious and presents us with what seem to be two types of wisdom: Taliesin's is geographical, and acquired through experience, while Merlin's is temporal, and acquired through vision³⁰. In this respect, it is also important to note that it is never made entirely clear in the manuscripts (and the editions and translations do not convey this) which individual is speaking at any given point. This seems to mirror the confusion evidenced in much later tradition between Merlin and Taliesin. Both characters are used to articulate similar universal truths or standard types of wisdom. Indeed, the shape-shifting associated with Taliesin in the Welsh tradition is in later medieval European traditions associated with Merlin³¹. Meanwhile, where their types of wisdom are being put side by side and properly distinguished, as in *Vita Merlini* or the Welsh poem *Ymddydan Myrddin a Thalesin*, it is invariably the “fool”/“wild man”/“prophet” persona of Merlin that engages in the dialogue. He articulates similar wisdoms as Taliesin but speaks not as a bard who is integrated in society (even though he may choose exile as he does in *Vita Merlini*) but as a wild seer who is placed outside society by his “madness”. As Gutiérrez García points out, Merlin belongs to the tradition of the mad prophet, rather than holy prophet³². His madness is a key part of his persona and appears to be a more stable element in the tradition than his gift of prophecy, which

dwindles and passes into the background in most of the later romances³³.

The prominence of the element of prophecy in all early material connected with Merlin (both Geoffrey's works and the Welsh poetry) appears to dwindle considerably in later tradition, even in the texts featuring the “fool”/“wild man” Merlin³⁴. One might tentatively suggest that Merlin's madness in these cases shifts in type from prophetic frenzy to the type peculiar to the heroes of romance. Here again the history of the character is at odds with the dominant image of Merlin. As Anne Berthelot observes, “Merlin is the one character related to the Arthurian legend who seems to have the least chance of getting involved in any kind of romantic relationship, or any relationship with a woman”³⁵. Indeed, his association with prophecy and magic, particularly in the “wise man” incarnation, appears to preclude his use as a romantic hero. It is therefore particularly interesting that, as can be seen from both the *Vita Merlini* and some of the later tradition, he very much does become involved in such relationships³⁶. His uniqueness as a subject of romantic intrigue lies not only in the paradox created by the “wise man” in love, but also in the independence of the evolution of theme of his madness from any such narrative element, incorporated with it only in some cases. The similarity between the mad knightly lovers Yvain and Tristan and the not-always-mad Merlin is enhanced in the later tradition, which gives Merlin his own mad passion, which ends badly for him, when he is entrapped for all eternity by Vivienne³⁷.

The “Wise Man” Merlin, Magic, and Political Prophecy

The association of the figure with madness does not always coincide with a presence of prophetic ability, and the “wise man” persona of Merlin is as much of a prophet in the early tradition as the “fool” is. As Rider points out in relation to the Merlin of Layamon's *Brut*, “The space devoted to him in the narrative is small. Yet his existence and powers are absolutely fundamental for the course of history [...]. The kings whose succession is the subject of the history are his masters, yet they depend on his vision and help”³⁸. Rider refers to the fictional kings who inhabit the world of Layamon's *Brut*, yet his observation is perfectly valid for the real kings who came in contact with the legend of Merlin. The figure of the Arthurian prophet recurs in association with a number of English kings, whether by others in reference to them, or in their own use. The association of Henry III with the lynx of the *Historia regum* prophecies, is an example of the former³⁹. An interest, and indeed, need, to suppress or harness the political power of Merlin's prophecies appears to have been felt, for instance, by Edward I⁴⁰.

²⁵ ZUMTHOR 2004 p. 131.

²⁶ Julia Crick, for instance, observes that in the early, Grillofedian, material, Merlin is a prophet rather than magician. CRICK 1992 p. 358.

²⁷ BERTHELOT 2010 p. 55.

²⁸ For discussions, see for example, GOODRICH 2000 pp. 101-108, WALTER 2000 pp. 173-185, and MACDONALD 1991 pp. 7, 12-14. ZUMTHOR 2004 pp. 148-152. It also has to be noted that what Fries refers to as Merlin's “rejection of a courtly marriage for a celibate insilvestration” is not necessarily Geoffrey's addition to the story and may well have been already part of it in the early Welsh tradition. WATSON/FRIES 1989 p. x.

²⁹ JARMAN 1981 p. 132. For a comparison between Yvain, Tristan, and Merlin as “wild men”, see also STOCK 2002 p. 25.

³⁰ RIDER 1989 p. 3.

³¹ CLANCHY 2014 p. 282.

³² See, for instance, discussion in COOTE 2000 p. 43.

²⁵ See GUTIÉRREZ GARCÍA 2002 pp. 9-10; GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 1973 p. VIII.

²⁶ GUTIÉRREZ GARCÍA 2002 p. 14.

²⁷ This aspect of the “fool” figure is often retained even in some “wise man” presentations of Merlin in modern culture. A particular example is the vague mysticism of historical novels set in the Arthurian period. Mary Stewart's Merlin trilogy, which gives Merlin no supernatural powers apart from his visions, is but one illustrative example; PETROVSKAIA 2017 p. 185. For other examples see also NASTALA 1999 pp. 7-10.

²⁸ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 1973 pp. 126-131.

²⁹ See GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 1973 pp. 115-121 for Taliesin's speech on springs. Cf. *Ymddydan Myrddin a Thalesin*.
³⁰ GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH 1973 pp. 90-113; note that Taliesin's account of the world is similar to that found in Honorius Augustodunensis's *Imago Mundi*; for an edition of that text, see HONORIUS AUGUSTODUNENSIS 1982. Encyclopaedic knowledge of this type is often reflected in insular literary texts, particularly those associated with Taliesin; for more on Taliesin, encyclopaedic knowledge and the association between the two, see discussions in HAYCOCK 1994, 1997, 2007 and PETROVSKAIA 2016.

³¹ HOFFMAN 1991 p. 19. WALTER 2002 pp. 237-238. Petrovskia 2018 p. 142. Merlin's appearance in the form of a stag in the beginning of the “Grisandole” story of the *L'Évairie de Merlin* is an example; HELDINIS DE CORNUALLE 1992/1999 p. 317.

³² GUTIÉRREZ GARCÍA 2002 p. 21.

In the fictional texts, the association of Merlin with prophecy appears to weaken proportionally to the strengthening of his association with magic. Whilst prophecy does not disappear entirely, it appears to recede into the background. In Malory's *Morte*, for instance, while Merlin does prophecy throughout the work, characters' reactions to the prophecies, acknowledgment of the prophecies' fulfillment, and sometimes such fulfillment itself, appear to be largely absent from the text⁴¹. As Kapelle notes, the different ways prophecy is treated in Malory's text are due to the difference between his sources⁴². This reinforces the suggestion that to Malory, prophecy was not central to the narrative. Even as an aspect of Merlin's character it fades into the background. An interesting perspective on the role of prophecy in the fictional context is offered by Hoffman, who comments, in relation to Malory's Merlin, that "The prophet is accurate only when he is ignored, only when his predictions do not change anyone's behavior and, thus, alter the future he has announced"⁴³. These "'ineffective' prophecies", as Hoffman terms them, are endowed with a narrative function within the text, as they foreshadow future developments⁴⁴. This is very different from the function of the earlier Merlinian prophecies of *Historia regum* and the Welsh tradition, with their claim to real-world relevance and impact. This does not represent an innovation of Malory's as he relied heavily on the Vulgate Cycle. Prophecies similarly have an exclusively internal narrative relevance in other texts, including *L'Estoire de Merlin*. *Le Livre d'Arthur*, the Huth *Merlin*, and the prose *Tristan*⁴⁵. It may well be that the beginning of this trend divorcing the romance from the Merlin's prophecies, may be traced back to the mid-twelfth century and Wace's careful omission of the prophecies from his work⁴⁶.

Conclusion: How Many Merlins?

A close link between prophetic and historical writing in the Middle Ages was postulated by Richard Southern and it is possible that the distinction between type and extent of Merlinian prophecy observed in the works discussed above is genre-dependent⁴⁷. One could postulate that the external reference of prophecy belongs to the genre of historical writing, while in romance (fiction) prophecy only has an internal, narrative, function. The separate circulation of the *Prophetiae Merlini* from the *Historia regum* may represent an early awareness of this distinction⁴⁸. Subsequently, particularly in the English context, the prophecies of Merlin remain an important feature outside the romance tradition, integrated, however, as shown by Southern, into tradition of historical writing⁴⁹. The type of writing these prophecies represent is, however, associated primarily with political discourse, and they circulate separately from Arthurian materials. In this tradition, Merlin is the prophet by default, but the texts are

⁴¹ KAPELLE 2009 pp. 59-60.

⁴² KAPELLE 2009 p. 61.

⁴³ HOFFMAN 1991 p. 18.

⁴⁴ HOFFMAN 1991 p. 18. Hoffman's further point regarding Merlin's back-to-front reading of Arthurian history (p. 19) inspires the thought that Malory's text might be the precursor to the backward-looking Merlin of T. I. White.

⁴⁵ Discussed by ZUMTHOR 2004 pp. 132-136.

⁴⁶ BLACKER 1996, CLANCHY 2014 p. 161, LITTLETON/MALCOR 1995 p. 88.

⁴⁷ SOUTHERN 1972.

⁴⁸ CRICK 1992 p. 359; FLOOD 2016 p. 19; also ECKHARDT 1982.

⁴⁹ SOUTHERN 1972. For discussion of the tradition of prophetic writing, see, for instance, CRICK 1992 esp. p. 362; FLOOD 2016 and 2018; PETHER 2009.

not narrative in nature and do not provide a "fool"/"wise man" distinction.

Based on the above argument, we can thus distinguish two traditions, narrative/romance and prophetic/political, associated with Merlin. Paul Zumthor terms the romance tradition the "fable" of Merlin and the prophetic Merlin, the "theme", and observes that "The two traditions are contemporaneous in the sense that they have a common chronological origin, but one of them, the theme, began immediately to develop vigorously [...] and has, moreover, remained throughout history by far the more active of the two"⁵⁰. It appears, therefore, that there are not merely two Merlins, as Gerald of Wales observed in the twelfth century, but a plurality of Merlin figures that can be taken two by two, but of which no two pairs entirely coincide. The "fool" and "wise man" Merlins, for instance co-exist in two parallel traditions. The distinction, however, as we have seen, does not entirely coincide with the distinction between the prophet and the magician Merlin. Meanwhile, though the magician Merlin derives from the prophet Merlin, it appears that he is subsequently separated from and replaces him⁵¹. This substitution, however, appears to occur in romance/fictional texts only, and the prophet continues to exist in historical writing. Further in-depth study, taking into account the subtleties of the difference between medieval and modern genre distinctions, may help throw new light on the intricacies of these connections and interrelationships between the multiple Merlin traditions.

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⁵¹ ZUMTHOR 2004 pp. 131, 132, 136-139.

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