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ENGL 3490.031
Final Paper Proposal

Topic: Morgan Le Fay as a symbol of conflicting cultural and spiritual change.

Thesis and Explanation:

Most of the characters in the King Arthur mythos seem to be very one or the other, in that they are either noble or evil, pure or cursed. Morgan seems to be unique in that she is represented in both ways, as a healer and a villain. I'm curious to see, and would like to explore the idea that she represents the spiritual conflict of the times through her various roles and portrayals. To do this, I would like to look at the chronology of how she is portrayed, and what was happening in history as the different retellings were circulating.

I may just be fascinated with her character and want to spend more time reading about her, but I think there is also so much written about her that shows the dichotomy and contradictions of who she is and how others in the stories see her. I was struck by Guinevere's disdain for Morgan in "The Mantle", for the reason that Morgan was not fey, but practiced fey ways. Given that Arthur's court has their creed and ethics so heavily drummed into all they do, her independence and ability to stand on her own power without validation from other members of the court makes her unique. I'm curious about what may have inspired her character and what historical events or mythology may have influenced those who portrayed her for their respective audiences.

Format:

I am going to be brave and try to do a video essay, but I am going to do an outline and write what I want to say so that there is a paper to provide if for some reason I am unable to do that. I just think that doing a video essay like we've enjoyed for class would be fun, and I should give it a shot. There's plenty of beautiful art and cinema portrayals of Morgan le Fay, so I think that would add to the fun of exploring her character.

Works Cited:

- 1: Soane, George. *Specimens of German Romance: Selected and Translated from Various Authors*. 1826.
- 2: Lacy, Norris J., and James J. Wilhelm. *The Romance of Arthur: An Anthology of Medieval Texts in Translation*. Routledge, 2015.
- 3: Bradley, Marion Zimmer. *The Mists of Avalon: A Novel*. Ballantine Books, 1987.
- 4: Fries, Maureen. "From the Lady to the Tramp: The Decline of Morgan Le Fay in Medieval Romance." *Arthuriana*, vol. 4, no. 1, Mar. 1994, pp. 1–18.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/art.1994.0018>.
- 5: Adderley, Cedric. "Meeting Morgan Le Fay: J.R.R. Tolkien's Theory of Subcreation and the Secondary World of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight." *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*, vol. 22, no. 4, Jan. 2000, p. 5. dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol22/iss4/5.