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# Chrétien's *Lancelot*: Love and Philology\*

Lenora D. Wolfgang  
Lehigh University, Pennsylvania

## Prologue

As Félix Lecoy said at the end of his discussion of the *Lai de L'Ombre* in *Romania* 103, the great lesson for the text editor to learn is modesty. It is a great temptation to correct a text. The desire to do so lies in wait, ready to seduce those who undertake the perilous and seductive task of editing ancient texts. Therefore, he wishes the text editor to be inspired by vigilant prudence, but also that his observations do not clip his wings,

car la tentation de 'corriger' est là, qui nous guette et cherche à nous séduire. Puissent les modestes considérations qui précèdent inspirer à ceux qui abordent la tâche séduisante, mais périlleuse, de l'édition de nos anciens textes une prudence vigilante, sans trop toutefois leur rogner les ailes.<sup>1</sup>

## Chrétien's 'Lancelot'

In 1883 Gaston Paris said of the *Lancelot*:

Dans aucun ouvrage français, autant qu'il me semble, cet amour *courtois* n'apparaît avant le *Chevalier de la Charrette*. L'amour de Tristan et d'Iseut est autre chose: c'est une passion simple, ardente, naturelle, qui ne connaît pas les subtilités et les raffinements de celui de Lancelot et de Guenièvre. Dans les poèmes de Benoît de Sainte-More, nous trouvons la galanterie, mais non cet amour exalté et presque mystique, sans cesser pourtant d'être sensuel. Il en est de même de l'*Eracle* de Gautier d'Arras. Il en est de même des poèmes de Chrétien antérieurs à celui-là: dans *Erec* nous voyons

même la femme traitée avec une certaine brutalité. L'amour conventionnel et idéal se retrouve, quoique moins en évidence, dans le *Chevalier au Lion*, mais ce poème, comme nous l'avons vu, est postérieur au *Conte de la Charrette*. C'est donc dans ce dernier ouvrage qu'il se présente pour la première fois dans le monde poétique, qu'il devait pendant longtemps éblouir et dominer.<sup>2</sup>

He summarized *Amour courtois* as follows:

1. Il est illégitime, furtif. On ne conçoit pas de rapports pareils entre mari et femme; la crainte perpétuelle de l'amant de perdre sa maîtresse, de ne plus être digne d'elle, de lui déplaire en quoi que ce soit, ne peut se concilier avec la possession calme et publique; c'est au don sans cesse révocable d'elle-même, au sacrifice énorme qu'elle a fait, au risque qu'elle court constamment, que la femme doit la supériorité que l'amant lui reconnaît.

2. A cause de cela, l'amant est toujours devant la femme dans une position inférieure, dans une timidité que rien ne rassure, dans un perpétuel tremblement, bien qu'il soit d'ailleurs en toutes rencontres le plus hardi des guerriers. Elle au contraire, tout en l'aimant sincèrement, se montre avec lui capricieuse, souvent injuste, hautaine, dédaigneuse; elle lui fait sentir à chaque moment qu'il peut la perdre et qu'à la moindre faute contre le code de l'amour il la perdra.

3. Pour être digne de la tendresse qu'il souhaite ou qu'il a déjà obtenue, il accomplit toutes les prouesses imaginables, et elle de son côté songe toujours à le rendre meilleur, à le faire plus 'valoir'; ses caprices apparents, ses rigueurs passagères, ont même d'ordinaire ce but, et ne sont que des moyens ou de raffiner son amour ou d'exalter son courage.

4. Enfin, et c'est ce qui résume tout le reste, l'amour est un art, une science, une vertu, qui a ses règles tout comme la chevalerie ou la courtoisie, règles qu'on possède et qu'on applique mieux à mesure qu'on a fait plus de progrès, et auxquelles on ne doit pas manquer sous peine d'être jugé indigne.<sup>3</sup>

Gaston Paris was an incurable romantic. I have elsewhere demonstrated how he did away with the final four lines of his base manuscript when editing a poem called the *Lai de l'Oiselet*, more perhaps due to its language and tone (the word *pet* is rhymed with *Oiselet*) than because the ending was unique among the five manuscripts preserving the text. On the other hand, he found the expression *fine amour* in his worst manuscript and added it to his text.<sup>4</sup>

It is my contention that we have not come so far from such practices as we often contend. We simply label our intentions differently.

The same Gaston Paris who wrote so movingly of *amour courtois*, however, found that the structure of the *Lancelot* left much to be desired. In fact, it was not until fairly recently that it was not considered to be a poorly written romance.<sup>5</sup> If we have come a long way in refuting older views of the structure of the *Lancelot*, scholars have often gone in the opposite direction with *amour courtois*, seeing humour, parody, and irony in some of the love episodes.

For the purposes of the present discussion, I shall say at the outset that I follow Gaston Paris and his view of courtly love and hold that absolutely nothing felt or done in the name of perfect love can in any way be considered ridiculous or foolish, Aristotle mounted notwithstanding! Lancelot may seem somewhat ridiculous when he falls from his horse, but, as Douglas Kelly has said, 'in none of these episodes does Chrétien cause Lancelot's prestige or valour to suffer because of his foolishness', and the love of Lancelot and Guenevere was unique in the Arthurian world: 'The *Charrette* constitutes without doubt the best picture of the ideal of courtly love in medieval French narrative literature. Its only possible rival, Thomas d'Angleterre's version of the Tristan legend'.<sup>6</sup>

I maintain that this attitude in the long run makes the study of the *Lancelot* worth the effort. No matter how ingenious or superior a critic may be, if he heaps scorn on the theme or the structure of the romance, we simply look elsewhere and look further. If the structure and courtly love theme of the *Lancelot* have been the centre of controversy since it was first published, the manuscript tradition is even more difficult and in some respects the worst of Chrétien's five romances.

There are, technically, eight manuscripts that preserve the *Lancelot*: *I* is a fragment of 239 verses; *G* is a fragment of 1502 verses; *F* has

1483 verses; *E* 5763 verses; *A* 5843; and *V* 6274 verses. Only *C* and *T* are considered complete, with 7112 and 7134 verses respectively.<sup>7</sup> Alexandre Micha assured us that no manuscript was copied from another and, except for *C* and *T*, all manuscripts are bad and some are worse.<sup>8</sup>

He calls *E*, the Escorial manuscript, for example, *détestable* (267). It has missing 232 verses in 77 lacunae, as well as the ending. The lacunae, he says, suppress, abridge, *entraînent des bouleversements*, and they do away with some *notations intéressantes*. Interpolations replace better lines. We are 'deprived' of certain psychological *données*; an *ironie* is lost here; a tainted passage (*taré*) is left there; a passage is misunderstood; there is corruption; an antithesis is overlooked; the scribe is confused by a word, an expression (379-80). After these characterizations, Micha makes two lists: one of 'stupid' mistakes, the other of *négligeances* (381-82). He concludes that the manuscript seems to have been dictated! It is, in short, 'un manuscrit franchement détestable, effroyablement remanié, responsable des fautes grossières, mais qui copiait un modèle très aberrant; inintelligent ...' (382). After all of this, it is a wonder that anyone would want to pay attention to the *Escorial*, excoriated as it has been!

One turns with relief to Micha's praise of 794, Guiot's best copy, everybody's base. It lacks only 20 verses (285). It is very *lisible* (33). It is the *beau recueil* (268). It is the most conservative. Only once does it suppress important verses (verses 363-4, the *deux pas*), or it suppresses 'maladroitemment des vers qui étaient à garder' (verses 30 and 32, the references to Carlion and Camalot). There are some *illogismes* of detail and 25 *non-sens*. Nevertheless, it is a *texte de qualité*; a 'texte supérieur à celui des autres mss'. Finally, 'Ce manuscrit a eu en excellent modèle' (285-86).

I have chosen six passages to compare in this paper in order to test the validity of Micha's remarks, and especially to confront his 'best' and 'worst' manuscripts in some of the more perplexing and controversial passages of the romance. What is particularly disturbing in the *Lancelot* manuscript tradition is that some of the best lines are *not* in the best manuscripts and, inversely, some of the worst manuscripts do contain them.<sup>9</sup>

I The deux pas

The first passage illustrating the idea of a 'good thing' in a bad manuscript is the one generally called the episode of the *deux pas*, or of the *Charrette*. This episode is in only four manuscripts (*CTAE*). The issue is whether the text says explicitly in this passage how long Lancelot hesitated before mounting a cart during his pursuit of the kidnapped Guenevere. Because he hesitated, he is considered blameworthy according to the precepts of an ideal love service. In the passage, *C*, the acknowledged best manuscript, does not have the two lines (Foerster 363-64) specifically alluding to a hesitation of *deux pas* which are considered essential to an understanding of both this passage and a later one in the story.

There has been a great deal of ink and energy expended on this passage.<sup>10</sup> Most editors consider it to be better if those two lines are added:

Qu'il ne l'atant ne pas ne ore.

Tant solemant deus pas demore (Foerster 363-64).

Line 364, as given above, which all text editors except Roques add to their texts, and which Foulet and Uitti call the 'archetypal reading', appears, however in only one manuscript: *E*, the Escorial, the 'execrable' one! The text of *T* is not quite right:

Tant solement pas ne demore

A (Chantilly) is almost right:

Tot seusement ii pas demore

and *C* omits altogether. Some of the bloodshed over this passage comes down to the reasoning that the better lines must be authentic and therefore must have been Chrétien's, and so they must be in any critical edition.<sup>11</sup>

The episode of the *deux pas* is, of course, central to the romance and the love story. Lancelot's hesitation, seen as a minute flaw in a perfect love service, is unique to the romance. It is from this episode that the knight receives the epithet 'The Knight of the Cart'. With so much invested in the scene, it is no wonder that whatever makes it 'better', i.e., more informative, expressive, or clear, is considered to be

authentic. Without the two lines and their specific reference to the precise amount of time Lancelot hesitated, there is a sense that the scene is diminished and therefore spoiled. Admittedly the moment is exquisite, but is it spoiled, lessened, without these two lines?

Now it is often said that without the precise reference to two steps in the first passage, the later one, where Guenevere explains her coldness to Lancelot, is puzzling or confusing (lines 4501-07 Foerster, Roques 4483-89).

Five manuscripts preserve this text: *CTV* have *deux pas* and *AE* have *un pas*, so that in this passage *C* is correct and *E* seems contradictory unless *deux pas* and *un pas* simply mean *an instant*, or a moment, rather than literally two steps. The passage reads in full:

And the queen told him:  
'What? Were you not ashamed  
And fearful of the cart?  
By delaying but for two steps you showed  
your great unwillingness to mount.  
In truth, it was for this that I did not wish  
To see you or converse with you'.

(William Kibler's translation, lines 4483-89).<sup>12</sup>

Now, if the first passage said only that Lancelot hesitated, and the second one gives the more precise detail that it was just two steps or a moment that he hesitated, then, the *two passages taken together* inform us the whole truth of Lancelot's sin in Guenevere's eyes. It is possible, then, to consider this state of affairs better since it is from the lips of the Queen that we learn the *precise nature* of the fault that causes her to rebuff her lover at the very moment we expect her to reward him!

The following is the first passage without lines 363-64 (or 360*ab*). It is based on William Kibler's translation. *With a full stop after 360* (Foerster 362), the text reads:

The dwarf continued on his way.  
The knight would regret [not mounting immediately]  
And be accursed and shamed for it;  
Later he would consider himself ill-fortuned.<sup>13</sup>

There is no sense here that anything is missing.

I now come back to my basic query: How can *C*, the best manuscript, fail us so badly at so sensitive a moment if the *deux pas* episode is as important as it seems to be? With only 20 lacunae in *C*, according to Micha, how could Guiot not have been attentive here, of all places? My tentative answer is a question. Is it possible that the *deux pas* were not in the first passage but put in afterwards, as an allusion to the later scene? Once these earlier lines exist, however, they are seen to make the passage better, therefore they are defined as authentic, and thus by Chrétien - and so the tautology justifies the emendation.<sup>14</sup>

## II Line 211

My second passage concerns line 211 (Foerster or 209 Roques) pronounced by the Queen as she is being led away by her kidnapper Meleagant and escorted by Kay. As she departs, she is heard to lament that, if 'someone' only knew, he would not let it happen. The manuscript readings are as follows (punctuation added):

*C* Ha! rois se vos ce seüssiez

*T* Ha, ha! se vos le seüssiez

*G* 'Ahi! se vos le seüssiés (Rahilly ed., 211)

*A* Ha! amis se le seüssiez

*E* Ha, ha! se me creüssiez (-1).

The words for this 'someone' are: *rois* in *C*, *vos* in *TG*, *amis* in *A*, and *E* has no word for 'someone' and is a syllable short. Most editors sharply condemn *C* for *rois* and emend with either *vos* or *amis*.

Alfred Foulet addressed these lines in a 1977 article.<sup>15</sup> He criticized Roques's reasoning that the text of *C* with *rois* could stand because Roques had said:

Il n'y a aucune raison d'affirmer qu'il y ait dès le début du roman, entre Lancelot et Guenièvre, une dilection spéciale, pas plus que pour Erec, qui s'expose, lui aussi, gratuitement, comme Lancelot, à de graves difficultés pour venger l'honneur da sa souveraine. L'on



peut imaginer, d'après la leçon choisie par Foerster, que Guenièvre pense à Lancelot quand elle laisse entendre au comte Guinables (209) que, si certain était averti, elle en aurait un secours qui lui manque, mais elle aurait pu songer à n'importe lequel des guerriers qui entourent Artur, à défaut même de Gauvain, embarrassé par une décision irréfléchie du roi son oncle.<sup>16</sup>

Roques's reasoning may be faulty, but there may be another way to interpret the line of *C* using *rois*: 'Ah, king, if you only knew what you were doing ...'. This interpretation may be much less satisfying since we like the text with an oblique allusion to Lancelot this early in the story from the lips of the Queen. A text with *rois* is less poignant and less interesting. But once the possibility of using *vos* or *amis* arises from the other manuscripts, then the better, more interesting, more expressive, becomes desirable and authentic and, therefore, the author's version and justifies the emendation.

This single line or word, like the *deux pas* couplet, has acquired such importance because they are part of the subtlety and uniqueness that we have come to associate with the *Lancelot* love story. But twice now *C*, the best manuscript, has failed us. The worst manuscript, *E*, has an interesting mistake in 211 (209) that suggests the scribe could have had contradictory exemplars, that is, with *rois*, *amis* or *vos*.

I have called this kind of mistake in *E* a 'domino' or 'wave' effect whereby a fault or a contradiction in a copy or copies sets off a chain reaction in subsequent manuscripts. As a result, none of the exemplars is followed, as in this case where *E* has neither *rois*, *vos* nor *amis* and is also -1. When a manuscript shows evidence of such an error, it is a clue that there could be contradictory readings that are nevertheless equally compelling and sensible to a scribe who is not just automatically copying.

Let us suppose we had only the reading of *C*, with *rois*. What would we lose? As it stands, the reading with *rois* indicates Guenevere's anguish and criticism of the King and the 'rash boon' that caused her virtual kidnapping. Later, when Lancelot does enter the story, we can look back at her words and see foreshadowing: 'Ah king, if you only knew ...', that is, 'knew what I would suffer, knew how I would be left to fate, knew how another might come to rescue me ...'. What we do not have is an intimation at that very moment that Guenevere is thinking precisely of someone else. If then, a subsequent scribe substituted *vos* or *amis* for *rois*, he could be seen as interpreting

or making more explicit in an earlier passage what would be clarified later.

### III Camelot

A third instance where *C*, the best manuscript, does not have the best text is in the passage 24-40 (Roques) or 24-42 (Foerster) where *Camelot* is mentioned for the first time in Arthurian literature:

Del Chevalier de la Charrete  
 comance Crestiens son livre;  
 matiere et san li done et livre  
 la contesse, et il s'antremet  
 de panser si que rien n'i met  
 fors sa painne et s'antancion;  
 des or comance sa raison.  
 Et dit qu'a une Acenssion  
 fu venuz devers Carlion  
 li rois Artus et tenu ot  
 cort molt riche a Chamaalot,  
 si riche com a roi estut.  
 Après mangier ne se remut  
 li rois d'antre ses compaignons.  
 Molt ot an la sale barons,  
 et si fu la reïne ansanble;  
 si ot avoec aus, ce me sanble,  
 mainte bele dame cortoise,  
 bien parlant an langue françoise;

(Kibler ed., lines 24-40).

Of the five manuscripts that preserve this passage (*C T E A* (begins at line 31) *G*), only *C* omits this name. Most editors see an instance of homoeoteleuton (*bourden* or eyeskip) here, and this phenomenon is extremely easy to explain. The scribe's eye jumped from the word *antancion* to *acenssion*, thus eliminating the line with *raison*. Once the line with *raison* was eliminated, there was one line too many, and the line with *carlion* was dropped. Once *carlion* was eliminated, then line 34 was made to read *riche et bele tant con lui plot* omitting the name *Camelot*, an unknown name, which had been introduced in relation to *Carlion*, a well-known name. Another inducement to drop

the name Camelot is that only *G* has a spelling of it that does not make the line -1.

This explanation is quite logical, but it does not exactly make sense. We are talking about the best scribe Guiot writing the best manuscript. How could he let something so important as the name of the court slip away? If the name is so important, why did he not incorporate it somehow? Camelot, of course, has become important to us, but was it so important then?

The whole idea of withholding and giving names is an issue in the *Lancelot*. If we had only ms *C* we would not miss the name since it did not exist before the Lancelot manuscripts. But, as in the previous texts we have been examining, once we find a name or a more expressive or explicit word, we are loath to give it up. The name Camelot is certainly more interesting here than the *cheville tant con lui plot*, but was it by Chrétien? It is a known characteristic of medieval composition that subsequent authors or scribes gave names to anonymous places and characters in earlier stories. If a scribe wrote Camelot, he may have thought he was doing a service to the reader, but he may have been doing a disservice to the writer! If we add the name to our text, it is certainly more interesting; but that does not necessarily mean it is by Chrétien.

#### IV The love scene (Foerster 4651-4754; Roques 4633-4736)

Five manuscripts preserve this episode: *CTEAV*. All of them begin the episode and the following one with the same large initials.<sup>17</sup> All five manuscripts have the same number of lines with the exception of *A* (Chantilly) where six lines (4712-17) drop and *bourdon* is clearly involved. All five have almost the same wording, including the verb *aorer* (to adore; except for *T*) in line 4670 and *autel* (altar) in line 4736, and all editors, including Foerster, Roques, Kibler and Foulet/Uitti have essentially identically worded passages.

I think it would be fair to say that all the scribes and editors were paying strict attention when they were reading the love scene! Only the few complex lines of wordplay suffer *bourdon* or are slightly different in some of the manuscripts. The scribes as well as we are reading attentively, with baited breath, to see how much the author would tell us, how far he would go, whether Lancelot would be discovered!

I want to insert a comment here on Chrétien's presumed attitude toward the theme of this romance. How could any poet write this love scene and disapprove of *amour courtois*? This is an author who tells us he wrote a *Tristan* and a *Philomela* and translated Ovid.<sup>18</sup> Such an author would obviously relish depicting a lover distracted, suicidal, obsessed, deaf to defiances, indifferent to temptation, in the throes of Ovidian ecstasy and torture. Unlike Isolde, Guenevere was a wife before she was Lancelot's lover, so the adultery issue is clear, but presented in human terms. There is no magic potion. Love outside marriage is always difficult, dangerous, and often doomed.

There is nothing in this scene that needs social, political, mythical, Celtic, French, English or any other explanation to be appreciated or understood. And everyone pays attention, altering nothing!

#### V The comb with the golden hair

Six manuscripts have the episode of *Lancelot* and the comb with the golden hair (*CGTVEA*) (Foerster 1356-1511, Roques 1344-1499).<sup>19</sup> There is nothing even remotely amusing about this scene. Once Lancelot learns from the damoiselle that the comb was the Queen's he reacts physically. He falls forward on his horse and catches himself before falling off, the equivalent of catching one's breath. The pain drove away his colour and speech momentarily. It is the damoiselle who is a witness to this scene and who tells us how to react: she is terrified for him and runs to his aid. But he is ashamed, and so she pretends she ran over not to help him but to pick up the comb. He gives it to her, but removes the hair first. The ecstasy of Lancelot is translated into a description of how he adores the hair and again the verb *aorer* 'to adore' (Foerster 1474, Roques 1462) appears in the romance (only *V* had *acoler*).

Whatever this scene may owe to the *Enéas*, its simplicity, like the love scene, is its own explanation and all the scribes are attentive, telling the same story that no one has the slightest intention of altering.

#### VI Lines 5893-95 (Foerster; 5873-75 Roques):

Por ce qu'or set ele sanz dote  
 Que ce est cil cui ele est tote  
 Et il toz suens sanz nule faille.

These lines represent the Queen's thoughts when she learns that the knight whom she suspected of being Lancelot would willingly fight at his worst:

For now she knew beyond doubt  
That this was he to whom she belonged completely,  
And she knew that he was fully hers.

(Kibler's translation).

Four manuscripts (*CTVF*) preserve this passage (*AE* have already ended and *IG* do not have the episode).

These lines, like the ones in the *Chevreffeulle*, 'ni vous sans moi, ni moi sans vous', summarize succinctly the totality of the love between Lancelot and the Queen, and again, no one misunderstands, omits or alters, scribe, reader or text editor.

## Conclusions

Of the six passages I have analyzed for this paper, *C* has readings in three that most editors emend: they add the *deux pas* and *Camelot* lines to the text and emend *Ha rois*. In each of these Guiot is said to have left out material due to *bourdon*, to have deliberately changed material, or not to have had the material in his exemplar to begin with. In each of these three passages, editors have emended *C* with material they consider to be by Chrétien or crucial to an understanding of the text. I have tried to counter these emendations with the notion that if we had only *C*, our text might at times be a little less rich, expressive, explicit or clear, but that the essential story is nevertheless not altered. Lancelot still hesitated before getting into the cart, Guenevere's relationship with him is only slightly less clear earlier in the story without the use of *vos* or *amis* in line 211 (209), and Camelot would never have been missed, since it did not exist before the *Lancelot* manuscripts!

In the case of the three other examples, all the manuscripts, the so-called good and bad ones, if they have the episodes at all, depict them in the same way. There was no inattention when it was a question of the love scene, the adoration of the comb, and of the Queen's thoughts that she belonged completely to the one who would do battle at his worst because it was at her behest.

When all is said and done, we are left with Bédier's dilemma. When we choose the better readings and call them authentic, we do so because we cannot believe that anyone but the author could have written them. What is wrong or lesser is necessarily the fault of the scribe. As I said in the proposal for this discussion, if our text is Guenevere, then the scribe is a *nain*, or Meleagant, who has kidnapped her and hidden her beauty from us.

With a little punctuation and ingenuity we still have Lancelot's hesitation and the Queen's anguish as Meleagant takes her away. As for Camelot, although somehow it is not *Lancelot* without Camelot, we cannot say with certainty that Camelot is Chrétien's invention. Once we have it, however, it is almost impossible to give it up, and we cannot resist attributing it to the author. If, however, a scribe did add to the 'master', it would be in the spirit of clarifying, interpreting or explaining, like Godefroy de Leigny's conclusion to the romance itself.

Perhaps there is no definitive solution to these problems, but there are lessons to learn from the examples. Best manuscripts are not always best, nor worst worst. Characterizations like lacunae, interpolation, blunder, garble, abridge, cut, suppression, corruption, contamination and *remaniement* make it almost impossible to take variant versions seriously at times, or to question favoured readings! Once we overcome Micha's manuscript bashing, however, as in the case of *E*, we find a scribe who at times gave us the very reading we prefer!

If, in reviewing all the manuscripts again for a new edition, I would add anything to the idea of a textual grid,<sup>20</sup> it would be a precaution: the *Lancelot* in all the glory of the love story is Chrétien's. If, at times, there are variant readings that do not alter the main themes but that seem better in certain details, they may be added to the base or emend it, but they may not be assumed to be necessarily by Chrétien. As we have seen in the case of Guiot: he is best, but not best when we see something better!

#### NOTES

\* This paper was read at the Sixteenth International Arthurian Congress, August 17, 1990.

<sup>1</sup> 'Le texte du *Lai de l'Ombre*', *Romania*, 103 (1982), 469.

<sup>2</sup> 'Etudes sur le romans de la Table Ronde: *Lancelot du Lac*', *Romania*, 12 (1883), 519.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 518-19.

<sup>4</sup> See Lenora D. Wolfgang, *Le Lai de l'Oiselet: An Old French Poem of the Thirteenth Century, Edition and Critical Study* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1990 [Transactions, vol. 80, part 5], note to lines 151-68).

<sup>5</sup> See F. Douglas Kelly, *Sens and Conjointure in the 'Chevalier de la Charrette'*, (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), 1-21.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 213, 241.

<sup>7</sup> The manuscripts that preserve the *Lancelot* are: Bibliothèque Nationale f.fr. 794 (C), vv 1-7112; 12560 (T), vv 1-7134; 1450 (F), vv 5652-7134; Chantilly 472 (A), vv 31-5873; Escorial M.iii.21 (E), vv 1-5763; Vatican 1725 (V), vv 861-7134; Garrett 125 (G), vv 1-290, 951-1282, 1461-1628, 2306-2445, 2628-2962, 3624-3690; Institut de France 6138 (I), vv 3615-3654, 3735-3774, 4741-4899.

<sup>8</sup> Alexandre Micha, *La Tradition manuscrite des romans de Chrétien de Troyes* (Geneva: Droz, 1939, 1966), 128, 213.

<sup>9</sup> In addition to photographs of the manuscripts, the editions used for this paper are Wendelin Foerster, ed., *Christian von Troyes. Sämtliche erhaltene Werke, nach allen bekannten Handschriften*, vol. 4, *Der Karrenritter (Lancelot)* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1899 [Repr. Rodopi, 1965]); Mario Roques, ed., *Les Romans de Chrétien de Troyes*, vol. 3, *Le Chevalier de la Charrete* (Paris: Champion, 1958 [CFMA 86]); William W. Kibler, ed., *Chrétien de Troyes. Lancelot, or, The Knight of the Cart (Le Chevalier le la Charrete)* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1981); Alfred Foulet and Karl D. Uitti, eds., *Chrétien de Troyes. Le Chevalier de la Charrette (Lancelot)* (Paris: Bordas, 1989 [Classiques Garnier]); and Leonard James Rahilly, ed., 'The Garrett manuscript no.125 of Chrétien's *Chevalier de la Charrete* and *Chevalier au Lion*: a Critical Study with Transcription' (unpub. dissertation, Princeton University 1971).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. recent articles in *Speculum*, 61 (1986), 836-58; 63 (1988), 271-92; 64 (1989), 307-16.

<sup>11</sup> I do not defend Roques's punctuation of his line 360, which is partly the issue in the articles in note 10. Cf. Eugene Vinaver, 'Les deux pas de Lancelot, in *Mélanges pour Jean Fourquet* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1969), 355-61.

<sup>12</sup> *Lancelot*, 4483-89 (Kibler's edition):

Et la reine li recontre:  
 'Comant? Don n'eüistes vos honte  
 de la charrete, et si dotastes?  
 Molt a grant enviz i montastes  
 quant vos demorastes deus pas.  
 Por ce, voir, ne vos vos je pas  
 ne aresnier ne esgarder'.

<sup>13</sup> The words in square brackets are mine. The French text reads as follows:

Tantost a sa voie tenue  
 qu'il ne l'atant ne pas ne ore;  
 tant solemant deus pas demore  
 li chevaliers que il n'y monte.  
 Mar le fist et mar en ot honte  
 que maintenant sus ne sailli,  
 qu'il s'an tendra por mal bailli. (Kibler ed.)

<sup>14</sup> See Karl D. Uitti with Alfred Foulet in *Speculum*, 63 (1988), 271-92 who vigorously defend the inclusion of Foerster 363-64. See also Alfred Foulet, 'On Editing Chrétien's *Lancelot*', and 'The Prologue to Chrétien's *Lancelot*', in *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes, A Symposium*, ed. Douglas Kelly (Lexington, Kentucky: French Forum, Pub, 1985), 287-304; and idem, 'On Grid-Editing Chrétien de Troyes', *L'Esprit Créateur*, 27 (1987), 15-23.

<sup>15</sup> Alfred Foulet, 'Guinevere's Enigmatic Words: Chrétien's *Lancelot*, vv. 211-213', in *Jean Misrahi Memorial Volume, Studies in Medieval Literature*, eds. Hans R. Runte, Henri Niedzielski and William L. Hendrickson (Columbia, SC: French Literature Publications Company, 1977), 175-79.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 177. Foulet cites from Roques's edition, xix-xx.

<sup>17</sup> Although Micha had said none of the manuscripts was copied from another, p.128.

<sup>18</sup> *Cligés*, vv. 1-7. (See Alexandre Micha, ed., *Les Romans de Chrétien de Troyes*, vol. 2 [Paris: Champion, 1957, 1965. CFMA 84]):

Cil qui fist d'Erec et d'Enide,  
 Et les comandemanz d'Ovide  
 Et l'art d'amors an romans mist,  
 Et le mors de l'espaule fist,  
 Del roi Marc et d'Ysalt la blonde,  
 Et de la hupe et de l'aronde  
 Et del rossignol la muance,

<sup>19</sup> Manuscript G preserves only lines 1473-1511 (Foerster; 1461-99 Roques).

<sup>20</sup> The idea of a textual grid to edit Chrétien was developed by Alfred Foulet and Karl D. Uitti (see items in notes 10 and 14 above). When they amend the *deux pas* and Camelot passages and line 211, they explain that they are recuperating what Chrétien must have written and not merely emending Guiot.