

Title

The Bonn *Lancelot-Grail* Manuscript and its Illustrations, Bonn, LUB MS 526

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Motivation

I want to compare the illustrations in Bonn LUB 526 with the rest of the Lancelot-Grail manuscript tradition in order to find out what patrons and/or makers found interesting and important in this copy which, unusually, is signed by the scribe Arnulfus de Kayo in 1286. This will tell us what place these stories and this manuscript held in the value system of 13th century culture.

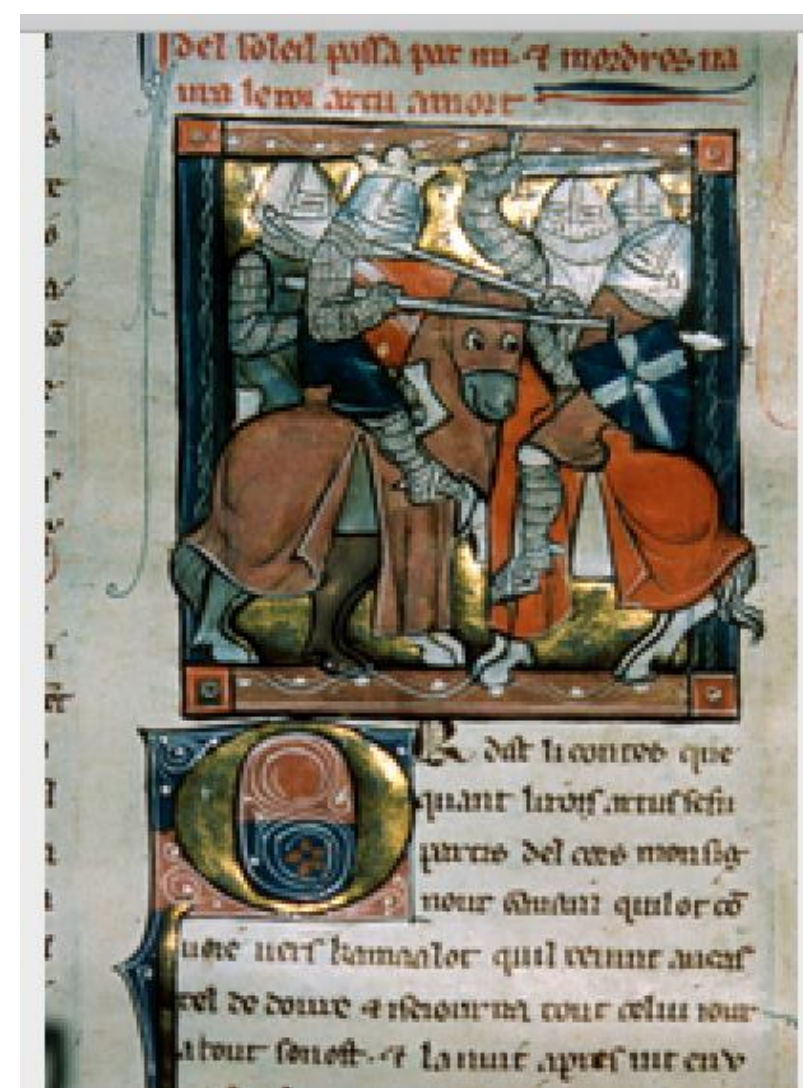
Project Description

I will go to the LUB in Bonn and assist in the photography of the manuscript to be executed by a professional photographer from the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music (Oxford) with whom I have worked on other projects. Then I will make a page to add to my *Lancelot-Grail* web site and I will write the text for an analytical study to be published as part of the series *Manuscripta Illuminata* which I edit with Brepols in Turnhout, Belgium.

Context

The *Lancelot-Grail* Romance was one of the most popular tales of the Middle Ages, surviving in hundreds of copies, most of them illustrated. The pictures tell us what aspects of the story people liked the most. The text is about chivalry, adventure, military prowess, friendship, love, and the search for spiritual purity exemplified by the Holy Grail. But it is also about treachery and betrayal, defeat and humiliation, adultery (of Lancelot and Guinevere) and loss of friends, wounding, sickness, and death (it ends with the death of King Arthur and the disintegration of his court of the Round Table. All human emotions are there, and people loved it.

The Bonn manuscript is special because it is signed and dated and is a focal point for any study. It was the basis for the most recent edition of the text—but nothing is said there about the illustrations! They have never been studied in the detail they deserve. My project will correct that situation by making the manuscript available on the web and also in print.



Project Deliverables

- I expect to have completed the photography of the manuscript
- To have manipulated the images
- To have completed the web pages
- To have a book in draft
- In a year I should have completed the book

- By mid-term the photography should be complete
- By the end the web page should be complete and the book in draft

Potential Impact

- It should fill a gap in our knowledge of how medieval literature in illustrated manuscripts was created and received at the time.
- The proof lies in the manuscript itself which my project will make available on the web.

Acknowledgements:

I acknowledge the participation of the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music (DIAMM), Oxford University, and the colleagues and students who worked on the Lancelot-Grail Project at Pitt.

Reference:

A. Stones, *Studies in Arthurian Manuscripts*, 2 vols. London: Pindar Press, 2019.

