

## **Abstract**

This work deals with the magical chessboard found in the text of the *Vulgate Cycle*. The aim is to examine its role in the narrative to present a complex understanding of this literary object and to propose a symbolic reading of it. First, the work analyzes all occurrences of the magical chessboard in the narrative and shows how interactions between it and the players function. The acquired information is then confronted with the game theories of Roger Caillois and Jacques Henriot, revealing to what extent this "game" cannot actually be considered a game. By adding a demonstration of the chessboard's place in medieval imagination, where it often symbolizes unexpected and dangerous escalation as well as a space of transition, the work leads to seeing the magical chessboard as a symbol of Lancelot's perverted relationship with his own identity and his role at the Arthurian court, as well as in the larger story of the Holy Grail and Salvation.

**Keywords:** Lancelot-Grail, Arthurian literature, game of chess, identity, magical chessboard, La Forêt Perdue