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The Arthurian Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: Once and Future Fictions

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The Arthurian Romances of Chrétien de Troyes

Once and Future Fictions

DONALD MADDOX
Paperback Re-issue

Chrétien de Troyes was one of the most important medieval writers of Arthurian narrative. A key figure in reshaping the "once and future fictions" of Arthurian story, he was instrumental in the late twelfth-century shift from written and oral legendary traditions to a highly sophisticated literary cultivation of the Old French verse romance. While examining individually each of Chrétien's five Arthurian romances, Donald Maddox looks at their coherence as a group, suggesting that their intertextual relations lend a harmony of meaning and design to the ensemble as a whole. Central to his argument is the focus on customs, which provide unity within as well as among the works while conveying an acute sense of the vulnerability and dissolution of feudal institutions in an age of social crisis and transition.
This series of critical books seeks to cover the whole area of literature written in the major medieval languages – the main European vernaculars, and medieval Latin and Greek – during the period c. 1100 – c. 1500. Its chief aim is to publish and stimulate fresh scholarship and criticism on medieval literature, special emphasis being placed on understanding major works of poetry, prose and drama in relation to the contemporary culture and learning which fostered them.

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