

Fictions Of Identity In Medieval France

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Maddox considers the construction of identity in a range of Medieval French fictions. In this study of vernacular French narrative from the twelfth century through the later Middle Ages, Donald Maddox considers the construction of identity in a wide range of fictions. He focuses on crucial encounters, widespread in medieval literature, in which characters are informed about fundamental aspects of their own circumstances and selfhood. These always arresting and highly significant moments of 'specular' encounter are examined in numerous Old and Middle French romances, hagiographic texts, epics and brief narratives. Maddox discloses the key role of identity in an original reading of the Lais of Marie de France as a unified collection, as well as in Arthurian literature, fictions of the courtly tryst, genealogies and medieval family romance. The study offers many new perspectives on the poetic and cultural implications of identity as an imaginary construct during the long formative period of French literature.

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