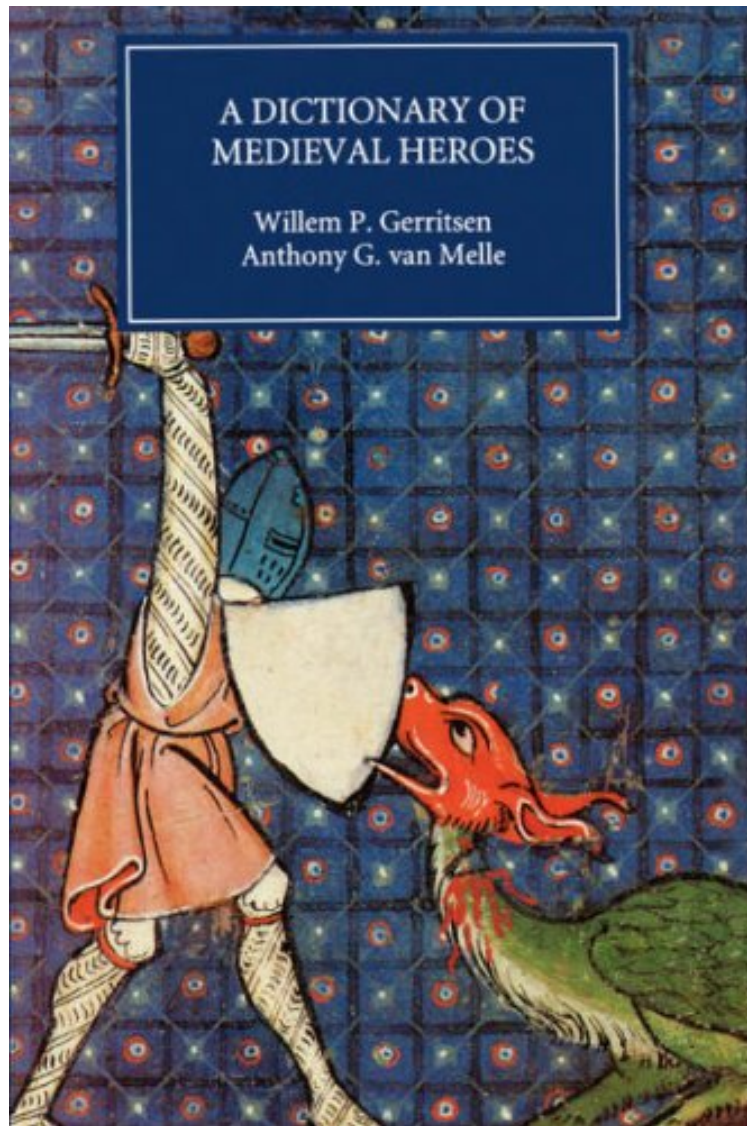


[PDF] Dictionary of Medieval Heroes: Characters in Medieval Narrative Traditions and their Afterlife in Literature, Theatre and the Visual Arts

Dictionary of Medieval Heroes: Characters in Medieval Narrative Traditions and their Afterlife in Literature, Theatre and the Visual Arts

Willem P. Gerritsen, Anthony G. van Melle, Tanis Guest
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Willem P. Gerritsen, Anthony G. van Melle, Tanis Guest : Dictionary of Medieval Heroes: Characters in Medieval Narrative Traditions and their Afterlife in Literature, Theatre and the Visual Arts before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dictionary of Medieval Heroes:

Characters in Medieval Narrative Traditions and their Afterlife in Literature, Theatre and the Visual Arts:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A Great Resource that Inspires further ResearchBy Mithridates VI of PontusWillem P. Gerritsen and Anthony G. van Melle's 'A Dictionary of Medieval Heroes' does not try and is not supposed to be a comprehensive volume on the subject of Medieval heroes. Rather, the "object of this book is to trace the fortunes of eighty characters from medieval narrative through time... there follows a survey of later medieval versions, with mention of the current state of scholarly research in the area. Where the character concerned also played a part in the work of post-medieval artists, the last section of [each] article is devoted to this 'afterlife" (pg 1). The very brief introduction addresses in little detail the purpose of medieval narrative poetry, the dates of the first lais and chansons de geste, the rise of the French prose romance, and interesting elements such as the adaptation of Arthurian stories to 12th chivalric ideals and locals, and a myriad of other topics. The selection of the 80 characters is confined principally to the main genres of epic and romance. This does not prevent the book from providing useful outlines of the different manifestations of important heroes over the ages. The characters covered span from Medieval incarnations of Vergil's Aeneas, to lesser known Moriaen from a Middle Dutch Arthurian Romance of the 13th century, a knight as black as a raven, who scared away sailors with his black skin. Arthur, Beowulf, Tristan Iseult, Ruodlieb, and the other well known medieval heroes all receive multiple page analysis with mention of the myriad of primary source texts that they appeared in. As a historian I especially like to study the slow fictionalization of historical characters, such as Charlemagne, Theodoric the Great, Brendan, Cid, Roland, who took on mythic proportions and pursued knightly quests over the ages. Also included in the dictionary are examples of modern theatrical, literary, and on screen incarnations. This volume serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it is a great introduction to medieval heroes and their legends. Secondly, it provides a wonderful framework and starting point in the form of the listed primary sources and massive bibliography, for further more detailed analysis and research. And thirdly, it's a wonderful source for finding other incarnations of Arthurian legends, or similar epics and romances for reading (and thus enjoyment). I cannot wait to track down Chretien de Troyes less famous romance Cliges, where one of the characters drinks a magic potion which makes him go straight to sleep every evening and dream that he possesses a wife where upon waking is unable to distinguish his dream from reality. Or, to read about Little Hagen from the Middle High German epic Kudrun, raised by a princess from India, Portugal, and Iceland, whose superhuman powers are gained by the blood of a 'gaboleon,' and who kills griffins with the weapons of a crusader who had washed up on his shore. This book has opened thousands of doors that I did not even know existed!

A treasury of medieval tales about the great heroes of the time is unlocked in this volume. Some are familiar figures, like Charlemagne and his paladins, Arthur and his knights, or Tristan and Isolde, but there are many other lesser-known, but equally fascinating, stories to be found, ranging from the medieval versions of the exploits of Alexander the Great and Aeneas to the parody of heroism in Reynard the Fox. The different cultures from which the middle ages drew its inspiration are represented: Cu Chulainn from the Celtic world, Apollonius of Tyre from Greek romance, Attila the Hun and Theodoric the Ostrogoth from the struggle of the Roman empire against the Barbarians. Each entry gives an outline of the story, how it spread through Europe, its modern retellings and appearances in art, and a selective bibliography.

A rich source... recommended for college libraries. --ChoiceThe selection goes far beyond the obvious narrowly heroic figures and includes major classical and Arthurian personalities and those from Spielmannsepik and Reynard the Fox. Storytelling is accompanied by detailed and scholarly accounts of different versions and reception. --Year's Work in Modern Language StudiesLanguage NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: DutchAbout the AuthorWILLEM GERRITSEN is Professor of Medieval Literature in the University of Utrecht; ANTHONY van MELLE is a lecturer in the Faculty of Education, School of Languages, Utrecht.