



A Companion to Wolfram's Parzival (Studies in German Literature Linguistics and Culture)



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Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* expands and transforms the Arthurian tradition into a grand depiction of the medieval cosmos around 1200. Standing between clerical and chivalric cultures and articulating the interests and values of both, Wolfram produced the most popular vernacular work in medieval Germany and one of the most vibrant of the High Middle Ages. The brilliance, boldness, and astonishing originality of *Parzival*, along with the allure of its elusive author and his enigmatic grail, have continued to fascinate modern audiences since the nineteenth century. And in the late 20th century, as the study of literature becomes increasingly interdisciplinary, Wolfram's masterpiece continues to hold forth a seemingly inexhaustible supply of cultural knowledge and insights. The original essays in this volume provide a definitive treatment in English of significant aspects of *Parzival* (Wolfram's modes of narrative presentation, his relationship to his sources, his portrayal of the grail), and of some of the broader social and cultural issues it raises (the theology of the Fall, the status of chivalric self-assertion, the characterization of women, the modern reception of *Parzival*). These and other essays point in new directions for the future study of *Parzival*, and demonstrate that the poem deservedly occupies a central position in our understanding of the High Middle Ages.



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