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0521020883 - Medieval Listening and Reading: The Primary Reception of German Literature 800-1300

D. H. Green

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This study brings recent scholarly debates on oral cultures and literate societies to bear on the earliest recorded literature in German (800–1300). It considers the criteria for assessing what works were destined for listeners, what examples anticipated readers, and how far both modes of reception could apply to one work, exploring the possible interplay between them.

The opening two chapters review previous scholarship and the introduction of writing into preliterate Germany. The core of the book presents lexical and non-lexical evidence for the different modes of reception, taken from the whole spectrum of genres, from dance songs to liturgy, from drama and heroic literature to the court narrative and lyric poetry. The social contexts of reception and the physical process of reading books are also considered. Two concluding chapters explore the literary and historical implications of the slow interpenetration of orality and literacy. There is a comprehensive bibliographical index of primary sources.

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Medieval Listening and Reading

The primary reception of German literature 800–1300

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Trinity College, Cambridge



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Preface

This book has been a long time in the making. It goes back to 1978, when I published an essay on oral poetry and written composition, and 1979, when in a book on medieval irony I touched on oral and written composition in the context of the narrator. Looking back on these attempts I see now that the first suffered from a too ready equation of verbs like *hoeren* and *sagen* with orality and the second from an uncritical acceptance of the oral-formulaic theory. In other words, they suffered the disadvantage of being written at that time. In German literature the pioneer is M. G. Scholz and it is a pleasant duty to record my debt to his work. My own would have been unthinkable without his preliminary labours and the courtesy he has shown in prolonged correspondence. We stand closer together than often appears.

On beginning work in 1980 I held the tentative view that it might yield one or two articles. Twelve years and hundreds of pages later I can only marvel at this naivety. The work has been long and enjoyable, but writing could only be done in retirement (our political masters do not make it easy for academics to write books before this). Writing in retirement imposes its own urgency, for one is aware of the passing of time. This is mentioned only to explain why aspects of my problem are not touched on in these pages, so that work enough remains to be done.

It is a pleasure to record debts of gratitude incurred in working on this book. I have made many calls on the time of staff at the University Library at Cambridge, the Herzog August Bibliothek at Wolfenbüttel, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek at Munich, the Arbeitsstelle des Mittellateinischen Wörterbuchs at Munich and the German seminar libraries at the Universities of Munich and Freiburg. I have also received financial support and research scholarships, allowing me to work for long periods in Germany, both from this country (my University and my College, the British Academy and the Leverhulme Trust) and from Germany (the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst and the Herzog August Bibliothek). Thanks are also due to my College for financial support in publishing this book.

Encouragement has also been given by invitations to lecture on this topic and by ensuing discussion and correspondence. The occasions have been in this country, the USA, Canada, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. I am particularly indebted to the Sonderforschungsbereich 'Übergänge und Spannungsfelder zwischen Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit' at Freiburg for inviting me to lecture there so often and to teach in the summer term 1990. For stimulus and suggestions I thank the members of my seminars at Cambridge and at Freiburg, but also those colleagues,

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too many to list, who have exchanged offprints and found time for correspondence on shared problems.

Finally, my thanks are due to Laura Pieters Cordy for her skill with the computer, her willingness to instruct my wife and myself in its mysteries and the high standards which she set. My gratitude to my wife Margaret, for her readiness to venture on to this terrain, as for so much else, is expressed by my dedicating this book to her.

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Abbreviations

AfB	<i>Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte</i>
AfD	<i>Archiv für Diplomatik</i>
AfdA	<i>Anzeiger für deutsches Altertum</i>
AfK	<i>Archiv für Kulturgeschichte</i>
AH	<i>Art History</i>
AHR	<i>American Historical Review</i>
AJP ^h	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
AS	<i>The American Scholar</i>
ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>
BBSIA	<i>Bulletin Bibliographique de la Société Internationale Arthurienne</i>
BEC	<i>Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes</i>
BuW	<i>Buch und Wissen</i>
CCM	<i>Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale</i>
CetM	<i>Classica et Mediaevalia</i>
ChR	<i>Chaucer Review</i>
CJ	<i>Classical Journal</i>
CL	<i>Comparative Literature</i>
CR	<i>Classical Review</i>
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
DA	<i>Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters</i>
DU	<i>Deutscher Unterricht</i>
DVjs	<i>Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift</i>
EG	<i>Etudes Germaniques</i>
EMH	<i>Early Music History</i>
FMLS	<i>Forum for Modern Language Studies</i>
FMS	<i>Frühmittelalterliche Studien</i>
FS	<i>Festschrift</i>
GL	<i>Germanistische Linguistik</i>
GLL	<i>German Life and Letters</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
GRM	<i>Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift</i>
HJb	<i>Historisches Jahrbuch</i>
HJbb	<i>Heidelberger Jahrbücher</i>
HZ	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
IASL	<i>Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der Literatur</i>
JAMS	<i>Journal of the American Musicological Society</i>
JbfrL	<i>Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung</i>
JEGP ^h	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
KDL	<i>C. von Kraus, Deutsche Liederdichter des 13. Jahrhunderts, Tübingen 1951ff.</i>
LiLi	<i>Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik</i>

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<i>LwJb</i>	<i>Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch</i>
MF	<i>Minnesangs Frühling</i>
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
AA	Auctores Antiquissimi
Cap.	Capitularia
Const.	Constitutiones
Epp.	Epistulae
Leg.	Leges
Leg.Germ.	Leges nationum Germanicarum
SS	Scriptores
SS r.M.	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
MHG	Middle High German
MIÖG	<i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung</i>
MLG	Middle Low German
<i>MLJb</i>	<i>Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch</i>
MLR	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
MM	<i>Miscellanea Mediaevalia</i>
MÖIG	<i>Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung</i>
MQ	<i>Musical Quarterly</i>
MSD	K. Müllenhoff and W. Scherer, <i>Denkmäler deutscher Poesie und Prosa aus dem 8.-12. Jahrhundert</i> , Berlin 1892
MSt	<i>Mediaeval Studies</i>
MuA	<i>Musik und Altar</i>
<i>NdJb</i>	<i>Niederdeutsches Jahrbuch</i>
NLH	<i>New Literary History</i>
NM	<i>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen</i>
ÖAK	<i>Österreichisches Archiv für Kirchenrecht</i>
OE	Old English
OHG	Old High German
ON	Old Norse
OS	Old Saxon
OT	<i>Oral Tradition</i>
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
PBB	<i>Paul und Braunes Beiträge</i>
PG	J. P. Migne, <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Graeca</i>
PL	J. P. Migne, <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina</i>
PMLA	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association</i>
RAALBA	<i>Rendiconti della Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti</i>
REL	<i>Revue des Etudes Latines</i>
RF	<i>Romanische Forschungen</i>
RFHL	<i>Revue française d'histoire du livre</i>
RG	<i>Romanica Gandensia</i>
<i>RhVj</i>	<i>Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter</i>
<i>RhM</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum</i>
RPL	<i>Res Publica Litterarum</i>
RR	<i>Romanic Review</i>
SE	<i>Sacris Erudiri</i>
SMV	<i>Studi Mediolatini e Volgari</i>
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
UR	<i>U.R. Schriftenreihe der Universität Regensburg</i>
UTQ	<i>University of Toronto Quarterly</i>
VB	<i>Vestigia Bibliae</i>

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VfL	K. Ruh (ed.), <i>Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon</i> , Berlin 1978ff.
VR	<i>Vox Romanica</i>
WA	<i>Wiener Arbeiten zur germanischen Altertumskunde und Philologie</i>
WaG	<i>Welt als Geschichte</i>
WW	<i>Wirkendes Wort</i>
YFS	<i>Yale French Studies</i>
ZfbLg	<i>Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte</i>
ZfdA	<i>Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum</i>
ZfdPh	<i>Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie</i>
ZfSL	<i>Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur</i>
ZHF	<i>Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung</i>
ZRG(GA)	<i>Zeitschrift für Rechtsgeschichte (Germanistische Abteilung)</i>
ZVLGA	<i>Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde</i>