



Remembering Boethius: Writing Aristocratic Identity in Late Medieval French and English Literatures

Elizabeth Elliott

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Remembering Boethius explores the rich intersection between the reception of Boethius and the literary construction of aristocratic identity, focusing on a body of late-medieval vernacular literature that draws on the Consolation of Philosophy to represent and reimagine contemporary experiences of exile and imprisonment. Elizabeth Elliott presents new interpretations of English, French, and Scottish texts, including Machaut's *Confort d'ami*, *Remede de Fortune*, and *Fonteinne amoureuse*, Jean Froissart's *Prison amoureuse*, Thomas Usk's *Testament of Love*, and *The Kingis Quair*, reading these texts as sources contributing to the development of the reader's moral character. These writers evoke Boethius in order to articulate and shape personal identities for public consumption, and Elliott's careful examination demonstrates that these texts often write not one life, but two, depicting the relationship between poet and aristocratic patron. These works associate the reception of wisdom with the cultivation of memory, and in turn, illuminate the contemporary reception of the Consolation as a text that itself focuses on memory and describes a visionary process of education that takes place within Boethius's own mind. In asking how and why writers remember Boethius in the Middle Ages, this book sheds new light on how medieval people imagined, and reimaged, themselves.

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