



The Lament of the Nibelungen (Medieval Texts & Translations)

Winder McConnell

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Appended to most of the major manuscripts of the German national epic poem, the Nibelungenlied, the Diu Klage (Lament) is the first known commentary on this great thirteenth-century poem. Composed in rhyming couplets, the 4360-verse Klage describes the aftermath of the debacle at the court of Attila the Hun and the manner in which news of the catastrophe is carried back to the land of the Burgundians. The poet attempts a fascinating reconciliation of Christianity with a pre-Christian ethos (revenge = loyalty = a place in heaven). Of particular note in this regard is the pro-Kriemhild stance of the Klage's author and the concern demonstrated for continuity at the Burgundian court. The present translation (based on Manuscript B in St Gallen) will provide English-speaking readers with the first opportunity to acquaint themselves with the commentary.



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