1. Record Nr.   UNINA9910969899003321

   Autore   Arnovick Leslie K. <1957->

   Titolo   Written reliquaries : the resonance of orality in medieval English texts /
                       / Leslie K. Arnovick

   Pubbl/distr/stampa Amsterdam ; ; Philadelphia, : J. Benjamins, c2006

   ISBN   9786612154966
                       9781282154964
                       1282154966
                       9789027292841
                       9027292841

   Edizione   [1st ed.]

   Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (309 p.)

   Collana   Pragmatics & beyond, , 0922-842X ; ; new ser., 153

   Disciplina   820.9001

   Soggetti   Dialogue in literature
                       Discourse analysis, Narrative - Social aspects
                       English philology - Middle English, 1100-1500
                       Literature, Medieval - History and criticism - Theory, etc

   Lingua di pubblicazione   Inglese

   Formato   Materiale a stampa

   Livello bibliografico   Monografia

   Note generali   Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph

   Nota di bibliografia   Includes bibliographical references and index.

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                       Methodology: Delineating Historical Data -- Conclusion: A Joint
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| Sommario/riassunto | Written Reliquaries: The resonance of orality in medieval English texts establishes the linguistic component of orality and oral tradition. The relics it examines are traces of spoken performance, artifacts of linguistic and cultural processes. Seven case studies animate verbal acts of making promises, quoting proverbs, pronouncing curses, speaking gibberish, praying Pater Nosters, invoking saints, and keeping silence. The study of their resonance is enabled by a methodological conjunction of historical pragmatics and oral theory. Insights from oral theory enlighten spoken traditions which in turn may be understood in the larger historical-pragmatic context of linguistic performance. The inquiry ranges across broad as well as narrow planes of reference to trace a complex set of cultural and linguistic interactions. In this way it reconstructs relevant discursive contexts, giving detailed accounts of underlying assumptions, traditions, and conventions. Doing so, the book demonstrates that an integrated methodology not only allows access to oral discourse in both Old English and Middle English but also provides insight into the fluid medieval interchange of literacy and orality. |