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Introduction -- 1. From Written Record to Memory: A Brief History of Anglo-Saxon Legal-Homiletic Discourse -- 2. Leges Cnuti, Sermones Lupi: Homily, Law, and the Legacy of Wulfstan -- 3. Ecclesiastical Anglo-Saxonism in Thirteenth-Century Worcester: The First Worcester Fragment and The Proverbs of Alfred -- 4. Laamon's Brut: Law, Literature, and the Chronicle-Poem -- 5. Defining the Piers Plowman Tradition -- 6. Documents, Dreams, and the Langlandian Legacy in Mum and the Sothsegger -- Conclusion -- Bibliography -- Index

Sommario/riassunto

The reappearance of alliterative verse in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries remains one of the most puzzling issues in the literary history of medieval England. In *From Lawmen to Plowmen*, Stephen M. Yeager offers a fresh, insightful explanation for the alliterative structure of William Langland's *Piers Plowman* and the flourishing of alliterative verse satires in late medieval England by observing the similarities between these satires and the legal-homiletical literature of the Anglo-Saxon era. Unlike Old English alliterative poetry, Anglo-Saxon legal texts and documents continued to be studied long after the Norman Conquest. By comparing Anglo-Saxon charters, sermons, and law codes with Langland's *Piers Plowman* and similar poems, Yeager demonstrates that this legal and homiletical literature had an influential afterlife in the fourteenth-century poetry of William Langland and his imitators. His conclusions establish a new genealogy for medieval England's vernacular literary tradition and offer a new way of approaching one of Middle English's literary classics.
