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**Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies**

**Title**

Einführung in die lateinische Literatur des mittelalterlichen Europa (review)

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5f351774>

**Journal**

Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 32(1)

**ISSN**

0069-6412

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**Publication Date**

2001-10-01

Peer reviewed

## REVIEWS

**Udo Kindermann, *Einführung in die lateinische Literatur des mittelalterlichen Europa* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998) 182 pp.**

Designed to replace the out-of-print introduction to the field of medieval Latin studies by Karl Langosch, *Lateinisches Mittelalter. Einleitung in Sprache und Literatur* (5th ed., Darmstadt 1988), *Einführung in die lateinische Literatur des mittelalterlichen Europa* is a low-resolution snapshot of the field of medieval Latin philology. Intended for German students at the master's degree level, it is basically a lengthy annotated bibliography emphasizing German-language texts and classics of the field. (Bibliographical entries are arranged in reverse chronological order rather than in the alphabetical order customary in English.) Densely written and without illustrations or elucidatory quotes from either primary or secondary sources, this is not a book to be read from cover to cover. It serves rather as a *Studienbegleiter*, or study guide, to the immense literature in the field.

Kindermann, professor of Latin philology at the University of Cologne, addresses himself directly to German university students embarking on the study of medieval Latin. He takes care to point out the suitability of primary and secondary sources for beginners in the field (beginners, that is, in possession of a solid *Gymnasium* education and competency in classical Latin). He also repeatedly calls attention to issues that have been little studied (thesis topics, anyone?) and bemoans what he sees as the lack of authoritative works in certain key areas, such as lexicography. In the opening pages, interestingly enough, he is at pains to legitimize the field of medieval Latin philology within the German university system, pointing out that classical and Germanic philology became full-fledged university disciplines in Germany decades before medieval Latin philology.

Focus here is on texts of accepted "literary" merit. After briefly situating medieval Latin temporally and geographically, Kindermann provides an overview of the canonical prose texts and of some of the various methods, both medieval and modern, used to interpret them. The last chapters cover verse forms. The appendix provides suggestions for further reading on topics not covered in the text proper, such as philosophy, musicology, and history, plus lists of standard reference works and periodicals. Extremely handy as well are the lists of abbreviations

found in the literature (153–154) and in the manuscripts (155–163). Kindermann pays comparatively little attention to the linguistic system(s) of medieval Latin; his brief overview of the linguistic differences between classical and medieval Latin (39–44) is meant as a reading aid rather than as a description of medieval Latin over any part of its vast physical and temporal span.

Given that this *Einführung* is written specifically for students, it can be criticized for lacking two things: an overview of the professional possibilities in the field and a discussion of why students should devote themselves to the study of *Mittellatein* in the first place. The absence of these themes is a reflection of the ivory tower approach of the German university system. Indeed, this book is presumably intended to provide the basic orientation so often missed by students at German universities.

*Einführung in die lateinische Literatur des Mittelalters* would be of some value to students planning to study Latin philology in a German-speaking country, firstly because it introduces a large quantity of specialist terminology in both German and Latin, and secondly because it acquaints the reader with the relevant German-language bibliography. Although Kindermann's style is academic—in other words, full of cranial-busting attributive constructions likely to pose difficulty for English speakers—the bibliographical references that form the meat of the book are clear and extensive. Readers interested in learning more about medieval Latin studies in Germany are recommended to the web site of Kindermann's department

<http://www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/ifa/mtl/index.html>

which contains a comprehensive reading list as well as information on faculty and student projects.

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