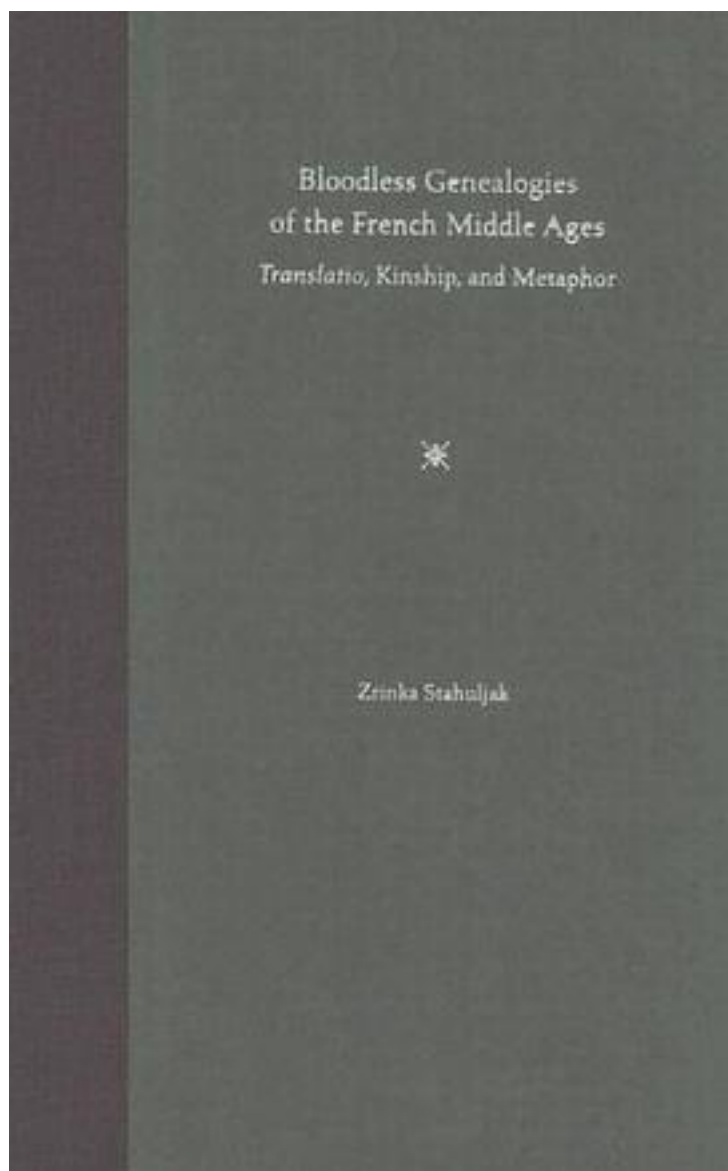


Bloodless Genealogies of the French Middle Ages



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Zrinka Stahuljak reevaluates, in Old French literature and art, two concepts fundamental for the medieval period: genealogy and "translatio." She argues that literary criticism has inherited the definition of genealogy developed by historians, wherein genealogy is defined as a bloodline linking fathers and sons from generation to generation. Similarly, she maintains, literary criticism has interpreted medieval "translatio," a concept fundamental for understanding all forms of intellectual and political transmission in the Middle Ages, as a genealogy. Through an analysis of the romances of antiquity, Arthurian prose romances, the Charlemagne window at Chartres, and the iconography of the Tree of Jesse, covering the period between 1150 and 1250, she challenges both these notions at the core of medieval scholarship. Because she addresses such basic concepts of medieval literature and culture that transcend national and linguistic boundaries, Stahuljak's study, drawing on literary, historical, and visual sources, has implications well beyond French medieval studies. Her examination of canonical texts and traditional, long-held notions of how genealogy works in literature and of the medieval theory of translation will provide interesting, fresh analysis and methodology for the classroom and a significant contribution to our understanding of the relationship of linguistics, history, and anthropology in the 12th century.

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