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By Wolfram von Eschenbach, Richard Barber

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Vast in its scope, incomparably dense in its imagery, *Parzival* ranks alongside Dante's *Divine Comedy* as one of the foremost narrative works to emerge from medieval Europe.

Written in the first decade of the thirteenth century, *Parzival* is the greatest of the medieval Grail romances. It tells of Parzival's growth from youthful folly to knighthood at the court of King Arthur, and of his quest for the Holy Grail. Full of incident and excitement, the story involves deeds of chivalry, tournaments and sieges, courtly love and other erotic adventures. *Parzival*'s quest becomes a moral and spiritual journey of self-discovery, as he learns that he must repent of his past misdeeds if he is to succeed. Exuberant and Gothic in its telling, as well as profoundly moving, *Parzival* has inspired and influenced works as diverse as Wagner's *Parsifal* and *Lohengrin*, Terry Gilliam's film *The Fisher King*, and Umberto Eco's *Baudolino*.

Cyril Edwards's fine translation also includes the fragments of *Titurel*, an elegiac offshoot of *Parzival*.

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Review

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About the Author

Cyril Edwards is Lecturer in German at St. Peter's College, Oxford.

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