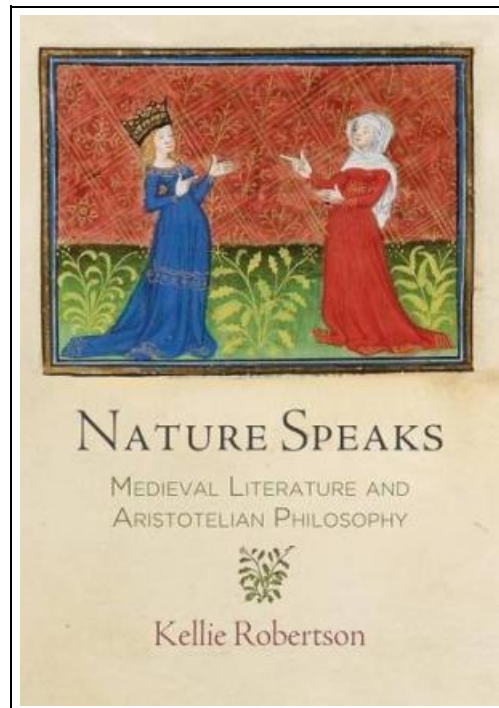


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University of Pennsylvania Press, United States, 2017. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. What does it mean to speak for nature? Contemporary environmental critics warn that giving a voice to nonhuman nature reduces it to a mere echo of our own needs and desires; they caution that it is a perverse form of anthropocentrism. And yet nature s voice proved a powerful and durable ethical tool for premodern writers, many of whom used it to explore what it meant to be an embodied creature or to ask whether human experience is independent of the natural world in which it is forged. The history of the late medieval period can be retold as the story of how nature gained an authoritative voice only to lose it again at the onset of modernity. This distinctive voice, Kellie Robertson argues, emerged from a novel historical confluence of physics and fiction-writing. Natural philosophers and poets shared a language for talking about physical inclination, the inherent desire to pursue the good that was found in all things living and nonliving. Moreover, both natural philosophers and poets believed that representing the visible world was a problem of morality rather than mere description. Based on readings of academic commentaries and scientific treatises as well as popular allegorical poetry, *Nature Speaks* contends that controversy over Aristotle s natural philosophy gave birth to a philosophical poetics that sought to understand the extent to which the human will was necessarily determined by the same forces that shaped the rest of the material world. Modern disciplinary divisions have largely discouraged shared imaginative responses to this problem among the contemporary sciences and humanities. Robertson demonstrates that this earlier worldview can offer an alternative model of human-nonhuman complementarity, one premised neither on compulsory human exceptionalism nor on the simple reduction...



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