



The Old English Epic of Waldere

By Jonathan Himes

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The epic fragments of 'Waldere' yield some of the earliest lore dealing with migration-period heroes such as Attila the Hun, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, Walter son of AElfhere, and Gunther and Hagen of the Nibelungs, while at the same time expressing the political concerns that the viking-age poet shared with his audience. Imagery and themes such as armaments and the worthiness of warriors to bear them lead to the climax of Walter's victory over Guohere in single combat, a duel presenting an ethical dilemma for Hagen as indicated in both of the extant leaves. This critical edition resolves some long-standing textual cruces while also providing background on Old English heroism, weapons, and versification.

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The Old English Epic of Waldere By Jonathan Himes Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

"Though long overshadowed by Beowulf, the romantically-discovered fragments of the Old English epic of Waldere give us our earliest vernacular glimpse of the Nibelungs and related legends. Jonathan Himes's new edition now combines scholarly rigour with reader-accessibility, puts the case for identification of the speakers, and provides welcome expansion on the background of the legend, the problems of the manuscript, and issues both archaeological and literary. It will replace all previous editions and give a new stimulus to study of an often-bypassed poem." -Tom A. Shippey, Professor of English and Walter J. Ong Chair of Humanities (Retired), St. Louis University "Although only a small part of its original length, the fragmented Old English poem Waldere contains a wealth of material for students of early medieval history; it is especially important for the study of early medieval arms, armor, and military history. Yet up to now few have looked at the poem except as a work of language and literature. That will now change thanks to Jonathan Himes' insightful analysis of the poem. With great skill Himes is able to pull out and interpret every bit of information Waldere has to offer." -Kelly DeVries, Loyola University, Maryland

About the Author

Dr. Jonathan B. Himes is Associate Professor of English at John Brown University. Other publications include articles, a chapter, and an edited book on the Oxford Inklings, Truths Breathed Through Silver (CSP, 2008), as well as a collaborative book on Waldere in Finnish (Minerva, 2005).'

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