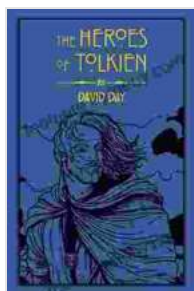


# An Exploration of Tolkien's Heroic Characters and the Sources That Inspired His

J.R.R. Tolkien's works are filled with unforgettable characters, many of whom are heroic in nature. From the noble Aragorn to the valiant Gandalf, Tolkien's heroes embody the best of human nature. But where did Tolkien find inspiration for these characters? What sources did he draw on to create his own unique vision of heroism?

In this article, we will explore the sources that inspired Tolkien's heroic characters. We will look at the mythology and folklore of Northern Europe, as well as the works of other authors that Tolkien admired. By understanding the influences that shaped Tolkien's work, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the richness and complexity of his characters.



## The Heroes of Tolkien: An Exploration of Tolkien's Heroic Characters, and the Sources that Inspired his Work from Myth, Literature and History by David Day

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 51632 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 256 pages



**The Mythology of Northern Europe**

The mythology of Northern Europe is a rich tapestry of stories, legends, and myths. These stories have been passed down for centuries, and they have had a profound impact on Western culture. Tolkien was a lifelong student of Northern mythology, and he drew on it extensively in the creation of his Middle-earth legendarium.

One of the most important sources of inspiration for Tolkien was the Anglo-Saxon epic poem *Beowulf*. This poem tells the story of a young warrior who travels to Denmark to help King Hrothgar defeat a monstrous creature known as Grendel. Beowulf is a classic example of a heroic character. He is brave, strong, and loyal. He is also willing to sacrifice his own life for the good of others.

Another important source of inspiration for Tolkien was the Norse mythology. The Norse gods and goddesses are often depicted as being heroic figures. They are strong, brave, and resourceful. They are also flawed, and they often make mistakes. This makes them more relatable to readers, and it helps to create a sense of realism in Tolkien's stories.

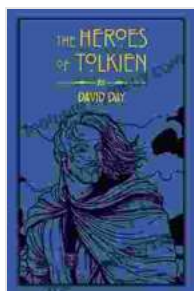
## **The Kalevala**

The *Kalevala* is a Finnish epic poem that tells the story of the creation of the world and the adventures of the hero Väinämöinen. The *Kalevala* is a rich source of mythology and folklore, and it had a profound impact on Tolkien's work. Tolkien was particularly drawn to the character of Väinämöinen, who is a wise and powerful wizard. Väinämöinen is also a skilled musician, and he uses his music to create the world and to heal the sick.

## **The Works of Other Authors**

In addition to the mythology and folklore of Northern Europe, Tolkien was also inspired by the works of other authors. One of the most important influences on Tolkien was the English writer William Morris. Morris was a master of fantasy and romance, and his works helped to shape Tolkien's own vision of Middle-earth. Tolkien was also influenced by the works of other fantasy writers, such as George MacDonald and E.R. Eddison.

The heroic characters in J.R.R. Tolkien's works are some of the most beloved and iconic characters in literature. These characters embody the best of human nature, and they have inspired readers for generations. By understanding the sources that inspired Tolkien's characters, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the richness and complexity of his work.



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