



The Old English Epic of Waldere

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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