Sigurðr in the Medieval North

Sigurðr the Dragon-Slayer was a preeminent hero of the Medieval North and remembered in both narrative and art.

**ABSTRACT**

Sigurðr is the supreme hero of the Völsung legend. He is widely represented in the art and narrative of medieval Europe.

Dragon-Slayer, King, Husband and Hero, the multifaceted character of Sigurðr forms the core of my project to develop a comprehensive analysis of his legend, its cultural context and how it developed over time.

The earliest depictions of Sigurðr are found on rune and image stones, mainly from Sweden. From the 12th and 13th centuries, Sigurðr decorates the portals of four Norwegian stave churches (Hylestad, Vegusdal, Lardal, and Mael), as well as appearing in a number of written texts.

The Aim

The aim of the project is to investigate the impulses behind and the structure and development of the legend surrounding the hero Sigurðr Fáfnisbani in the medieval North.

**Sources**

Both literary and artistic sources depict Sigurðr. From literature, sagas (such as Völsunga saga), eddic poems from Iceland, the *Nibelungenlied* from Germany, and the Scandinavian and Faroese ballads present various versions of the legend.

Sigurðr is found depicted pictorially on material from the British Isles, Germany and Scandinavia.

Comparative Analysis

The Sigurðr legend existed in several variations, some more developed than others. These, usually written sources, can be used to establish key scenes.

**Key scenes can be used to identify Völsung scenes on artistic material, many of which are disputed.**

One contribution the project will make is a catalogue and assessment of all material that has been posited as showing Sigurðr.

**REFERENCES**


**PICTURE CREDITS**

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