

## Abstract

This thesis focuses on the formal and stylistic analysis and comparison of two works written by English authors, namely William Morris' poem *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung and the Fall of the Niblungs* (1876) and J. R. R. Tolkien's poetic work *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún* (published posthumously in 2009) with respect to how each of these works deals with the original Old Norse motives which they are based on. Both *Sigurd the Volsung* and *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún* can be described as poetic adaptations of the Old Norse tale of Sigurd Fafnisbani, which is recounted in the *Saga of the Volsungs* and in a cycle of poems found in the *Poetic Edda*. Both Morris and Tolkien borrowed this story to use it in their own works, yet each of them treats it in a different manner. Therefore, not only do both of the works differ from the original Old Norse texts on multiple levels, but they also differ one from another. The differences between them can be traced in the metrical properties of the individual poems, for instance, or in the use of specific stylistic elements. From this, it can be inferred that although it was the goal of both authors to evoke the atmosphere of the legendary heroic past where Sigurd's story takes place, each of them attempts to do so in a different way. This is probably caused by the authors' different perceptions of what was the key component of the spirit of the Norse legendary past that pervades the Old Norse literary works. On the other hand, in certain aspects the adaptations correspond with each other as well; such similarities will also be addressed in the thesis.