



# J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century

*Tom Shippey*

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Recent polls have consistently declared that J.R.R. Tolkien is "the most influential author of the century," and *The Lord of the Rings* is "the book of the century." In support of these claims, the prominent medievalist and scholar of fantasy Professor Tom Shippey now presents us with a fascinating companion to the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, focusing in particular on *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*.

The core of the book examines *The Lord of the Rings* as a linguistic and cultural map and as a response to the meaning of myth. It presents a unique argument to explain the nature of evil and also gives the reader a compelling insight into the unparalleled level of skill necessary to construct such a rich and complex story.

Shippey also examines *The Hobbit*, explaining the hobbits' anachronistic relationship to the heroic world of Middle-earth, and shows the fundamental importance of *The Silmarillion* to the canon of Tolkien's work. He offers as well an illuminating look at other, lesser-known works in their connection to Tolkien's life.

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