

Fred Putnam

The Lament of Eorl the Young and the Ubi Sunt : Reading Beyond the Text

The “Lament of Eorl the Young”, chanted by Aragorn as the three companions approach Meduseld for the first time (as described in *The Two Towers*), is closely and commonly linked to the Anglo-Saxon poem *The Wanderer*, as an example of the poetic genre called “ubi sunt” after the title of a famous thirteenth-century poem entitled “Ubi sunt qui ante nos fuerunt?” (“Where are they who have gone before us?”). What human question/problem/issue does this genre address, and what does it say about this question (Hildebidle n.d.). The further question is: What might Eorl the Young's chanting this ubi sunt when he came down from the Northand imply about the origins of the Rohirrim?

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