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## **FANTASY LITERATURE AND TOLKIEN'S THEORY ON FANTASIES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The genre of fantasy has won much acclaim in every area of art and entertainment, from literary fiction to being incorporated into movies and games. The influence of myths, legends and folklore is quite evident in most of the fantasy. Initially, however, the fiction was branded synonymous to children's literature and looked down for its escapist appeal. Preference for fantasy and magic was seen as a means of escape from the rash realities of everyday happenings around the world. The present article aims to give an overview of fantasy literature, giving details on the salient characteristics, history and development of the genre.

To understand the term Fantastical Literature, the shortest and quickest route would be to acquaint oneself with how it is popularly defined. Fantastical literature, simply speaking, is a genre of literature that advocated magical and supernatural elements into a fictional plot, theme or setting. The elements used in a Fantasy can be traced back to ancient works that had inclinations to mythology and folklore. From the Eastern epics of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, and the tales in *The Book of One Thousand and One Nights* to the Western classics of *Beowulf*, *The Odyssey*, *Divine Comedy* and the Arthurian Legend, fantastical elements have always existed, enrapturing many audiences throughout the ages.

### **KEYWORDS**

Fantasy, literature, mythology, folklore, epics