Source criticism—analysis of a writer's source material—has emerged as one of the most popular approaches in exploring the work of J.R.R. Tolkien. Since Tolkien drew from many disparate sources, an understanding of these sources, as well as how and why he incorporated them, can enhance readers' appreciation. This set of new essays by leading Tolkien scholars describes the theory and methodology for proper source criticism and provides practical demonstrations of the approach. Tolkien and Source Criticism. 29. The Stones and the Book. 45. Sea Birds and Morning Stars. Plants of Power: Native American Ceremony and the Use of Sacred Plants. Alfred Savinelli. Tolkien and the Study of His Sources: Critical Essays. Jason Fisher. The Wizard of Oz as American Myth: A Critical Study of Six Versions of the Story, 1900-2007. Alissa Burger. The Unofficial Downton Abbey Cookbook. This book is comprised of critical essays as the title notes about Tolkien and his sources. As a fan, not an academic, it was interesting to read and learn about many potential sources that I was previously unaware of. Serious fans will enjoy it, but not for the casual fan. "Tolkien and a Study of His Sources" is a collection of essays written by current Tolkien scholars, reflecting on different works and authors who may have influenced Tolkien. Three introductory chapters (written by Tom Shippey, E. Risden and Jason Fisher) address source criticism itself, to give the reader a better understanding of the topic. But this book is about examining Tolkien's sources, and if Tolkien wished to proscribe our rooting around among the bones of the ox from which his works were made, what right do we have to gainsay him? Finding a satisfactory answer to that question is partly the subject of this collection, and I and others will have further comment on this in due course. For the moment, suffice it to say that I believe scholars have every right, and moreover, that the value of what we can learn about an author and his works, as well as the greater appreciation this engenders, both outweigh any discomfort th... The essay also serves the important function of demonstrating how source studies can grow over time as new material emerges. Tolkien and the study of his sources: critical essays - Fisher, McFarland. Interrupted Music: The Making of Tolkien's Mythology - Flieger. J.R.R. Tolkien Companion and Guide - Hammond, Scull. Tolkien's Legendarium - Flieger, Hostetter. I highly recommend Professor Tom Shippey's books about Tolkien's work. Professor Shippey basically followed Tolkien and taught Old English at Leeds University just as Tolkien did. His book The Road to Middle-Earth is an entertaining, non-technical look at the literary roots of Tolkien's work. It's fascinating. His other book, Author of the Century, posits the Professor's theory about the place of fantasy writers in the 20th century, and how their works were not "escapism" as is so often stated by literary critics.