

expanded into longer lays that must have fallen short of epics, while the ruin of the Burgundians was worked up into a great epic poem known to scholars as 'Diu (altere) Not'. The evidence is indirect in both cases, since it is based upon inference: for not a line of these poems survives unless it is embedded more or less unrecognizably in the text of the extant Nibelungenlied. Yet the inferences in question are sound.

p. 391 The correspondences between the Nibelungenlied and the Thidrekssaga reveals their common sources.

p. 392 Another rule of more general application is that where the logical sequence is clear in the Thidrekssaga, but obscure or "blinded" in the Nibelungenlied, it must be the former which preserves the common source.

Footnote: There is of course less opportunity for applying such rules to the Iliad, since there are fewer truly parallel sources. One parallel that has attracted much attention of late is in the Illiad. Prima facie, the former is the more archaic yet this interpretation does not command universal assent among Homeric scholars.

p. 394 a diagram of the growth of the Nibelungenlied in barest outline

p. 395 To conclude, 'The last poet' took one or more shadowy lays of Young Siegfried, took two parallel lays of Siegfried and Burnhild and the weightier epic poem Diu Not, and out of them fashioned the Nibelungenlied. Of the Young Siegfried lay or lays he retained only what was needed to account for subsequent events, and he placed this with great skill in Hagen's mouth as a Brief report. The two lays of Siegfried he fused together, though not with complete success, and he expanded and even padded out their matter to make the first half of his epic. To make its second half, he expanded the epical Not, though to a lesser degree, and he reworked it and refined it. In doing all this, and whilst introducing new beauties of his own, even of episodic length, he was inhibited, by his conservative attitude towards his audience and towards his art, from harmonizing his sources as discreetly as he might otherwise have done.