



Cei and the Arthurian Legend (Arthurian Studies)

Linda Gowans

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`No Arthurian critic will be able to ignore this book which gathers together so much diverse material and skilfully brings out unexpected links between versions widely separated in time and country of origin.' MODERN LANGUAGE REVIEW Cei is one of the most puzzling figures in the development of the Arthurian legend: a hero beyond compare in the early Welsh sources, his appearances in later Arthurian literature are frequently associated with comic defeat in combat, objectionable outspokenness, and sometimes with more serious misdeeds. This study assesses Cei from his native Welsh context to his role in the romances of Chrétien de Troyes and later developments, in which the author looks at the portrayal of Cei in a selection of medievalContinental, Welsh and English works, before moving closer to the present day and the rich heritage of English ballad and Gaelic folktale; the ending offers something of a surprise. This account of the long and varied career of one of Arthur's closest associates shows how a sympathetic approach to Cei can shed new light on some particularly controversial aspects of Arthurian studies.



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