

MEDIEVAL FANTASY SYMPOSIUM

‘History is a wheel’:
A Song of Ice and Fire
as a Contemporary Mosaic
of Themes, Motifs and Conventions
of Predominantly Medieval Origin

Unieście, Poland

19-22 May 2016

Koszalin University of Technology

Department of Humanities

MEDIEVAL FANTASY SYMPOSIUM

International Conference
Unieście, 19-22 May 2016

First Circular and Call for Papers

Dear Colleague,

You are cordially invited to the fourth Medieval Fantasy Symposium, organised by Koszalin University of Technology, which will be held in Unieście between 19 and 22 May 2016. Medieval Fantasy Symposia aim at bringing together specialists in the areas of medieval and fantasy literature, in particular those who seek to find cultural connections between the numerous supernatural elements in the literary output of the Middle Ages (e.g. *Beowulf*, Norse and Celtic mythologies, Arthurian cycle) and modern tales in the fantasy genre which are set in different quasi-medieval worlds (as in *The Lord of the Rings* or *A Song of Ice and Fire*). The scope of the symposia is not, however, strictly limited to the world of literature, as it also embraces the many fields of artistic expression including the fine and cinematic arts.

‘History is a wheel’: *A Song of Ice and Fire* as a Contemporary Mosaic of Themes, Motifs and Conventions of Predominantly Medieval Origin

In his preface to *The World of Ice and Fire* Maester Yandel remarks that ‘every building is constructed stone by stone, and the same may be said of knowledge, extracted and compiled by many learned men, each of whom builds upon the works of those who preceded him’. Interestingly enough, the very same applies to contemporary fantasy writers such as George R.R. Martin who regularly draws upon the enormous heritage of medieval literature and culture in his acclaimed series of (so far) five Westeros-set novels. All these numerous themes, motifs and conventions are, however, rarely used in exactly the same way as in the works that inspired the writing of *A Song of Ice and Fire*. In fact, Martin tends to adapt them in a highly creative manner, so as to make them more suitable for the narrative demands of his quasi-medieval, though at the same time very modern tale of ruthless dynastic struggles.

The 2016 conference will focus exclusively upon the employment of such medieval elements in *A Song of Ice and Fire* and its television adaptation *Game of Thrones*. Its main themes include:

1. morality and ethics.
2. the supernatural and spirituality.
3. knighthood and chivalry.
4. politics and kingship.
5. personal names, titles and forms of address.
6. themes and tropes.

Individual papers on any topic within the abovementioned areas should take 20 minutes, followed by 10-minute discussion. Participants are invited to submit their proposals in the form of 200-word abstracts by 31 January 2016. Notices of acceptance will be sent in early February. Selected papers will be published in a conference proceedings volume.

In addition to three plenary lectures, a number of sessions, field trip and panel discussion are planned.

The conference will be held in a beautiful seaside resort in Unieście, situated right between the Baltic Sea and lake Jamno. All the rooms are equipped with audio and video facilities, including data projectors and laptop computers.

The conference fee – covering the cost of participation, accommodation, food and drink, conference materials, coffee breaks, evening reception, and future publication – will be about 115 EUR/450 PLN (90 EUR/350 PLN for PhD students).

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For more information on MFS please visit our website:
www.medieval-fantasy.pl
where you will find information on our past and present events.
We are also on Facebook - give us a like and share with your friends.

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