

MEDIEVAL FANTASY SYMPOSIUM

International Conference
Unieście, 1-4 June 2017

Call for Papers

Dear Colleague,

You are cordially invited to the fifth Medieval Fantasy Symposium, organised by Koszalin University of Technology, which will be held in Unieście between 1 and 4 June 2017. 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.

‘Reges quondam regesque futuri’: Various Aspects of Royal Power in Medieval and Modern Fantasy Literature

Medieval kingship is a complex, multi-layered cultural construct. On the one hand, in its primary sense, it lays emphasis upon the numerous royal duties (moral, political, military etc.) which arise from the very fact of being a king. Hence, despite being a sovereign, he is, at the same time, a person who is, first of all, subject to the law of his realm, one who should use his power solely for the benefit of its inhabitants. Indeed, a “king is he that can hold his own, or else his title is in vain”, claims the elvish prince Maedhros in J.R.R. Tolkien’s *Silmarillion*. On the other hand, though, there are numerous examples of medieval rulers who often transgress their royal duties to satisfy their exuberant egos. They are the *reges horrendi* of the biblical Book of Wisdom, the *rois maudits* from the historical novels of Maurice Druon.

The conference will focus exclusively upon various aspects (cultural, religious, political, intellectual etc.) traditionally associated with kingship. The thematic scope will cover all sorts of texts of undisputedly medieval origin (poems, sagas, chronicles etc.) as well as post-medieval fantasy (including historical fantasy) works written by, amongst others, William Shakespeare, J.R.R. Tolkien, Maurice Druon, George R.R. Martin and Elżbieta Cherezińska. The main themes will include:

1. king-making and images of kingship.
2. ideology and sacrality of kingship.
3. warrior-kings and their knights.
4. royal bynames, their significance and meaning.
5. noble kings and their accursed counterparts.
6. symbolism of crowns, swords and other royal insignia.

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 14 February 2017. Notices of acceptance will be sent in early March. Selected papers will be published in a conference proceedings volume.

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

The conference will be held in the beautiful seaside resort of Unieście, situated right between the Baltic Sea and Lake Jamno. All the rooms are equipped with audio-visual 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 110 EUR/470 PLN (90 EUR/370 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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