

ABSTRACTS

THE REAL GAME OF THRONES? MYTHICAL DIMENSIONS OF MEDIEVAL TALES

Racha Kirakosian

Looking at the mythical dimensions of medieval narratives, we can see how medievalism, which is not automatically a purely creative preoccupation with the past, needs our critical attention. The show *Game of Thrones* operates on medievalist fantasy elements which are grafted onto a long tradition of appropriating the past and using it as an imaginary canvas. Medieval tales themselves functioned on a mythical plane where the line between claims to historical accuracy and creative leeway is blurred. Using the concept of “mythical thinking” as expounded in Ernst Cassirer’s work, we can see how the medieval narratives *Mélusine* and *Duke Ernst* deploy mythical elements. Investigation into aspects of femininity in conjunction with bestiality on the one hand and orientalism on the other with the help of Cassirer’s “mythical thinking” elucidates the ways in which cultural and historical appropriation work. Reminding the reader of Umberto Eco’s as well as J. R. R. Tolkien’s view on medievalism, the author – in light of politicised forms of the preoccupation with the medieval past – calls for critical medievalism.