

IMC 2020 Session 104

Session	104
Title	J. R. R. Tolkien: Medieval Roots and Modern Branches
Date/Time	Monday 6 July 2020: 11.15-12.45
Organiser	Andrew Higgins, Independent Scholar, Brighton
Moderator/Chair	Deidre Dawson, Independent Scholar, Temple, Texas
Paper 104-a	<p>A Preliminary History of Deadly Splinters (Language: English) Victoria Holtz Wodzak, School of Humanities, Viterbo University, Wisconsin Index Terms: Language and Literature - Other; Medievalism and Antiquarianism</p>
Paper 104-b	<p>Tolkien's Alliterative Styles in <i>The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth</i> (Language: English) Anna Smol, English Department, Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia Index Terms: Language and Literature - Other; Medievalism and Antiquarianism</p>
Paper 104-c	<p>Dewdrop, Apple and Pomegranate: Three Symbols of Ring Bearing in Czerniawski's <i>Wyprawa</i> (Language: English) Joel Merriner, Faculty of Arts & Humanities, University of Plymouth Index Terms: Language and Literature - Other; Medievalism and Antiquarianism</p>
Paper 104-d	<p>Foraging for Sources: <i>Sir Orfeo</i> as the Origin of Medieval Romance Topoi Present in Mirkwood (Language: English) Andoni Cossio, Facultad de Letras, Universidad del Pais Vasco - Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea, Vitoria-Gasteiz Index Terms: Language and Literature - Middle English; Language and Literature - Other; Medievalism and Antiquarianism</p>
Abstract	<p>This session will address wider topics and new approaches to Tolkien's medievalism, ranging from source studies and theoretical readings, to comparative studies (including Tolkien's legacy).</p>

Paper -a:

When Frodo awakens in the House of Elrond and inquires about his injury, Gandalf tells him 'Elrond is a master of healing, but the weapons of our Enemy are deadly. To tell you the truth, I had very little hope; for I suspected that there was some fragment of the blade still in the closed wound. But it could not be found until last night. Then Elrond removed a splinter. It was deeply buried, and it was working inwards' (234). Obvious potential source stories for this splinter include *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Snow Queen*, Troylus and Zellandine. This paper will trace the motif from its roots in the 14th-century story of Troylus and Zellandine to a couple of its 19th and 20th-century branches.

Paper -b:

Tolkien's verse drama, *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son*, is his only published play and historical fiction, which has been influential among Old English scholars interested in Tolkien's interpretation of the word 'ofermod' in the Anglo-Saxon 'Battle of Maldon', a poem that inspired this drama. Critics often describe the play incorrectly as a sequel to 'Maldon' and focus on Tolkien's views on heroism while overlooking his achievement in alliterative metre. Tolkien, an advocate for the use of alliterative metre by modern poets, uses an old style in new ways and should be considered one of the 'New Old English' poets.

Paper -c:

Jerzy Czerniawski's illustrations for Maria Skibniewska's 1981 revised Polish translation of *The Fellowship of the Ring* (*Wyprawa 'Expedition'*) feature a symbolic language unique in global Tolkien visual culture. Employing motifs redolent of Dutch *Vanitas* painting, and the iconographic traditions of the Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance worlds, Czerniawski approximates the physical and metaphysical states imposed upon Tolkien's characters by the deleterious act of Ring-bearing. Focussing on depictions of Frodo, Galadriel, and Gandalf, my paper will examine Czerniawski's use of the dewdrop, apple, and pomegranate as symbols of both these imposed states and concurrent Tolkienian themes of temporality, salvation, and rebirth.

Paper -d:

In view of Jason Fisher's (2011) principles for a rigorous study of J.R.R. Tolkien's sources, this paper aims to demonstrate that the relationship between *Sir Orfeo* (c.1330) and *The Hobbit* (1937) is of influence and not of mere similarity. Firstly, by showing that 21 years (1915-1936) of devotion passed since Tolkien encountered *Sir Orfeo* in Oxford, till the finished typescript of *The Hobbit* was sent to Allen & Unwin. Secondly, by taking other scholar's studies further (Shippey, Anderson, Honegger, Rateliff, Wickham-Crowley, and Hillman) and unravelling how the themes of abduction and otherworld, as taken from *Sir Orfeo*, are incorporated into Mirkwood.