

Utz Publishes Essay, "Robin Hood, Frenched"

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The essay collection, which draws from an eclectic mix of scholars from the US, UK, and Australia, examines the persistence of medieval themes, characters, and situations in a variety of media from reality television to Virginia Woolf, Arthurian film to Disney animation, Shrek to historical fantasy. Each essay demonstrates that the Middle Ages is not static but continues as a vital presence in contemporary popular culture, changing our assumptions about the flow of history and the creation of the present.

Utz's essay examines a series that appeared on French television between 1963 and 1966. Entitled *Thierry La Fronde*, or Thierry the Sling, the successful series, which was also shown in Canada, Poland (*Thierry Śmiątek*), Australia (*The King's Outlaw*), and the Netherlands (*Thierry de Slingeraar*), transposes the English Robin Hood narrative into late medieval France.

Drawing from the postmedieval English tradition surrounding Robin Hood, in which the protagonist appears as a member of the nobility who has fallen from grace, Thierry de Janville, a young nobleman, who had fought against the English occupation during the Hundred Years War, and loses his title and lands because of his disloyal steward. Taking the name "Thierry La Fronde" and surrounding himself with a host of merry men (and Isabelle, his "Maid Marian"), he resists the Black Prince and his allies. Utz's analysis of the series addresses the feuilleton's indebtedness to numerous elements of the Robin Hood narrative, characters, and episodes, specifically those in *The Adventures of Robin Hood* and *Ivanhoe*, two TV shows targeting Anglo-American audiences in the 1950s. Utz also points out how the series presents an excellent reservoir for investigating common 1960s conceptions about medieval history, literature, and culture.

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