



URBAN AMAZEMENT

I reckon that of all the mazes that ever were contrived, this city is the most confusing.
Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet*

The theme of the conference focuses first and foremost on the maze-like structure of both the urban landscape and the net of relationships within that structure, drawing attention to the ubiquitous feeling of puzzlement that accompanies the journey through the urban labyrinth. It invites the speakers to consider the multiplicity of ways in which the city is imagined in literature, allowing for a vast variety of amazing visions of the urban landscape, but it also proposes a completely opposite type of relationship, in which it is the cityscape that can be read like a dense plot.

Both, however, are designed to confuse, since, in this context, narratives are considered to be as complicated and convoluted as urban structures, and the labyrinth of streets strongly resembles the labyrinthine nature of stories, allowing the participants to explore literary and urban dead-ends, mysteries and puzzles. Moreover, the theme of the conference encourages the speakers to reflect on urban and literary Minotaurs, Theseuses and Ariadnes, in the form of urban stories of monsters, heroes and heroines that echo the complicated nature of interpersonal relationships within the city maze.

We therefore invite speakers to present 20-minute papers revolving around the following topics:

- city as a labyrinth;
- readings of the cityscape;
- convoluted plots, convoluted paths;
- traps, dead-ends, and *culs-de-sac* in city and literature;
- clues, hints and red herrings in urban fictions;
- following narrative tropes;
- urban monstrosities;
- multiculturalism and the urban landscape;
- the voice of the city: urban polyphony and heteroglossia;
- the hybrid city and narratives of belonging;
- the wild pervading the city;
- labyrinthine heroes, antiheroes, and villains;
- the wanderer, the *flâneur*, the street-walker;
- the visions of the city: the diverse faces of the urban maze;
- temporal dimensions of the city;
- nomadism vs. sedentarism within the cityspace;
- the sinful and the secular: city as a punishment and city as an atonement;
- aesthetics of order and disorder
- urban myths and legends

The list may be expanded to include other topics regarding the conference themes as well as work in progress presentations.

Please send 250-word abstracts to monika.kowalczyk@us.edu.pl by 15th April, 2014.