

2018 SAA Seminar: Continental Shakespeare 1
Leader: Karen Newman, Brown University

Anston Bosman, Amherst College

Playlist/Archive/Canon

My paper steps back from exemplary close readings of transnational plays to consider larger-scale dynamics in the history of theatrical and dramatic migration, translation, and remediation. To what degree can we regard plays of English origin that turn up in Continental repertoires as a *corpus*? Why should we do so? What might be the benefits of so doing, and what the costs? I start from the problem of the playlist, that ambiguous inventory of projected or recollected dramas from which any synoptic account of our topic must proceed. While we depend on such lists—and I will share mine as part of our work—it is crucial to ask what they are evidence of. Over and above questions of individual authors and works, what is the shape of this archive? Can we discern patterns of genre, audience, region, or historical change? What about degrees of lostness? In moving from inventory to typology, which assumptions govern our in/exclusions and attributions? Finally, how should we understand the relation of this miscellany of obscure or presumptive works to the past and future literary canon? Must we deploy our archive fever in the service of the *catalogue raisonné*? How might we instead balance the weight of artists and traditions against the uplift of anonymity, teamwork, improvisation, and *mouvance*?

Iris Julia Bührlé, University of Oxford

(Not) Shakespeare: dancing Shakspear in Italy in the 18th and 19th century

This paper examines several ballets based on Shakespeare's plays or on Continental adaptation-translations of his works which were performed in Italy in the 18th and early 19th century. During this period, more Shakespeare ballets were created in Italy than anywhere else in the world, although there were hardly any performances of Shakespeare's plays in Italian theatres. This was partly because there were no suitable translations yet. Due to their wordless nature, ballets travelled more easily, and some of them were created by Continental ballet masters who knew adaptations of Shakespeare's works by such authors as Jean-François Ducis. This paper analyses the changes the source texts underwent as they were adapted in a different medium and a different culture. It reveals how the ballet adaptations, which were performed to large audiences unfamiliar with the source texts, interpreted Shakespeare's works and shaped the way they were understood by the Italian public.

John Hugh Cameron, Saint Mary's University

Imitée de l'anglais: Ducis's Re-Imagining of "Saint-Guillaume"

Je saurai vivre encor, je fais plus que mourir.

(*Hamlet, Tragédie en cinq actes* 5.8.14)

For this seminar, I want to discuss Jean-François Ducis's (1733-1816) translations, or 'imitations' as he called them, of Shakespeare's tragedies, particularly in terms of his choices concerning language and of the dramatic ideas and theories underpinning his approach. My title comes from the title page of Ducis's translation and adaptation of Shakespeare's (or Saint-Guillaume, as Ducis often called him) *Hamlet*. Another area of interest is Ducis's impact on translations into other languages, particularly Italian and Russian. In terms of the former, I may include some notes on Verdi and other Shakespearean operas in Italian, while in terms of the latter, some reference may be made to Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* (c. 1825). However, as fascinating as his later influence was across the continent (and it could be said that he is the most influential of Shakespeare's adaptors), my main focus will be Ducis's own tragedies as adapted from Shakespeare, particularly *Hamlet, Tragédie en cinq actes* (1769). A key area for me will be Ducis's choices in language, but also how concerns over dramatic structure and style, particularly that of the French neoclassical stage. Relying heavily on the work of Pierre Letourneur (1736-1788) and Pierre de la Place (1707-1793), Ducis's issues with English caused him several problems when translating *Hamlet*, a play full of "wild irregularities", as he described them to David Garrick; in fact, Ducis admitted to Garrick that what he wrote was less a translation or an imitation than simply "a new play" entirely. It is the creation of these new plays, not only of *Hamlet* but also of *Othello* (1792), *Macbeth* (1784), and *Le roi Lear* (1783), that will be discussed in order to better understand and appreciate Ducis's achievement. Despite being mocked derided by many critics, both then and now, Ducis's influence on Shakespeare's European reception was immense, and I seek to both better contextualize his dramatic output and, perhaps, resuscitate his reputation.

Ton Hpenselaars, Universiteit Utrecht

William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, and G. A. Bredero, *Griane*

No abstract submitted

Andrew S. Keener, Northwestern University

**Windsor's Worlds of Words:
Continental Vernaculars in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives***

My paper analyzes the ways Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* expresses and projects from the stage and in print the conversation between multilingual dictionaries and Renaissance plays. This focus on Continental vernaculars offers a challenge to the play's traditional categorization as "Shakespeare's most English comedy."

As a point of departure, I examine a copy of Shakespeare's Second Folio possessed by the eighteenth-century Venetian dramatist Apostolo Zeno and annotated copiously by a seventeenth-century reader "in prag" (i.e. Prague) in English and German. Strikingly, in the text of *Merry Wives*, this reader rechristens Shakespeare's comic go-between Mistress Quickly as "Fraulein Schnelfuss." The transnational crossings here could hardly be more layered: an English "messenger" based on the *mezzana* archetype in Italian drama is

translated into German, and at the hands of a seventeenth-century reader, possibly in Prague, and almost certainly in Continental Europe.

I then place this “Fraulein Schnellfuss” in dialogue with Continental vernaculars legible both in Shakespeare’s play and in multilingual dictionaries and language manuals printed in Renaissance Europe. As a “she-Mercury,” to use Falstaff’s epithet, Quickly stands as a linguistically and physically mobile participant in a landscape of foreign languages, French doctors, Welsh parsons, and German horse-thieves. Perhaps prompted by a Continental performance, did this early reader envision a *German* “fairy queen” governing the masque at the play’s conclusion? Questions remain, but this Second Folio shows that the label “Shakespeare’s most English comedy” fails to capture this play’s range of languages and the ways it was taken up by Continental readers.

Russ Leo, Princeton University

Nil Volentibus Arduum, Baruch Spinoza, and the Reason of Tragedy

This paper examines the origins and aims of the Dutch artistic society or *kunstgenootschap* Nil Volentibus Arduum—that is, “Nothing is difficult for the willing”—which first met at the Amsterdam pub the *Stil Malta* on November 26, 1669 to a purpose: to refine the Dutch language and to develop an archive of Dutch literature that showcased its native elegance and intellectual resources. Ten of the initial eleven members of the *kunstgenootschap* practiced law or medicine in Amsterdam, having been trained at the universities of Leiden or Utrecht: Lodewijk Meyer, Joannes Bouwmeester, and Moesman Dop were physicians, for instance, while Andries Pels and Willem Blaeu were jurists. But they were also poets, playwrights, and translators with a shared agenda. The popular theater of the 1660s frustrated them, particularly the spectacular tragedies that catered to the desires of the masses at the expense of precision and edification—the Dutch adaptation of *Titus Andronicus*, for instance, Jan Vos’ *Aron and Titus, or Revenge and Retaliation* [*Aran en Titus, of Wraak en Weerwraak*] (1641). In response the members produced and promoted ennobling works that elevated the Dutch language and contributed to civic virtue; they developed a poetics, in turn, that was attentive to form and utility, particularly to the movement of the affects. In their discussions of poetics—and tragedy in particular—the members of Nil Volentibus Arduum also developed detailed philosophical notions of affect, action, and politics directly in conversation with René Descartes as well as their own friend and contemporary Baruch Spinoza. This is most evident, I argue, in their *Naauwkeurig Onderwys in de Tooneel-Poëzy*—that is, the “Precise Instruction in Dramatic Poetry,” the *kunstgenootschap*’s most thorough statement on theatrical form and practice—a testament to the philosophical purchase of their native poetics. As the various members of Nil Volentibus Arduum explored the effects, limits, and utility of *treurspel*, they shared Spinoza’s preoccupations with affects and the imagination and their pivotal role in political life. Taking the concrete connections between members of NVA and Spinoza as points of departure, this paper examines their comparable theses on reason, wonder, and spectacle.

Noémie Ngara N'Diaye, Carnegie Mellon University

English Echoes in Baroque Norman Theatre: the Case of Abraham Cousturier

In this paper, I bring to light hitherto unnoticed connections between Elizabethan drama and contemporary French drama by focusing on Abraham Cousturier, a major playbook publisher based in Rouen, Normandy –a city that, from 1596 well into the 1620s, published twice as much drama as Paris did. We know very little about Cousturier, and yet, I argue, he should be a node of interest in future attempts at mapping the early modern Anglo-French theatrical network. In this paper, I first pinpoint the Shakespearian and Marlovian echoes that permeate some of the plays published by Cousturier, especially plays featuring racial others (Turks, Moors, and Blackamoors). I then offer a hypothesis accounting for Cousturier's familiarity with English theatre: if Cousturier had spent time in London between June 1 and October 31 1594 and attended performances at The Rose theatre then, he could have seen most of the plays that resonate in his subsequent dramatic publications. Finally, I briefly point out the implications of this hypothesis of transnational influence for early modern race studies.

Matteo Pangallo, Virginia Commonwealth University

Stranger Companies: Foreign Performers in Early Modern England

No abstract submitted

Maria Shmygol, Université de Genève

***Titus Andronicus* in Seventeenth-Century Germany**

This paper arises from my work as a translator and editor on the Early Modern German Shakespeare Project at the University of Geneva, where I am preparing, with Lukas Erne, a scholarly English edition of *Tito Andronico* (1620, 2nd edn 1624). For the purposes of this SAA seminar, I am interested in thinking broadly about the different versions of the Titus material that circulated in text and performance in seventeenth-century Germany. Aside from *Tito Andronico*, these versions include translations of Jan Vos' immensely popular Dutch *Aran en Titus* (1641), adaptations of which were performed in Schwäbisch Hall (1656) and Linz (1699), as evidenced by the surviving programmes. Vos' play also served as the basis for Hieronymus Thomae's *Titus und Tomyris* (1661, 2nd edn 1662), which takes some major departures from its source. In the course of exploring these different versions of Titus, I have uncovered evidence of a 1658 performance of Titus in Augsburg, in the form of a playbill pamphlet that has been untouched by modern scholarship. I would like to place this document into the wider context of other Titus texts. Likewise, I would like to consider the significance and potential implications of how the Titus material is 'packaged' in these texts, with particular emphasis on the different approaches they take to the staging of certain events and characters.

Paul Whitfield White, Purdue University

**GUILLIAME DU BARTAS AND THE LORD ADMIRAL'S "SEVEN DAYS OF
THE WEEK, PARTS 1 AND 2"**

Among the top-grossing plays in the mid-1590s for the Admiral's Men at the Rose were a pair of lost plays, "The Seven Days of the Week" Parts 1 and 2, with an extended run from June 1595 to the end of 1596. My argument is that they were biblical plays inspired by, or based on, the scriptural epic poems *Le Sepmaine ou creation du Monde* ("The Week of the Creation for the World") and *La Seconde Semaine* ("The Second Week") composed by the Huguenot poet, Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas. Originally published in 1578 and 1584 respectively, the poems were translated into English by multiple writers, including James IV of Scotland and Philip Sidney, during the last two decades of the sixteenth century. Lilly B. Campbell and, more recently, Martin Wiggins have briefly suggested a link between the plays and Du Bartas, but it has otherwise not been explored. I would like to do so here.

Susanne L Wofford, New York University

**Wit and Doltishness in Shakespeare and Lope:
a comment on a European comic tradition**

No abstract submitted