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JOURNÉE D'ÉTUDES

Organiser / Organisatrices :
Heather Hirschfeld
(University of Tennessee – Marco Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies)
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MIND(ING) THE RENAISSANCE STAGE

29.03.2024
UNIVERSITÉ TOULOUSE - JEAN JAURÈS
Maison de la Recherche (salle D31) **et en ligne.**

MIND(ING) THE RENAISSANCE STAGE

9h15

Overture / Opening speech

9h30

Présidence / Chair : Nathalie Rivère de Carles (UT2J)

Heather Hirschfeld (University of Tennessee at Knoxville)

How to Mind a Prefix: Bethinking on the Shakespearean Stage

Douglas Clark (Université de Neuchâtel/ National University of Ireland, Galway)

Thinking about cogitation

10h45

Pause / break

11h

Présidence / Chair : Pascale Drouet (Université de Poitiers)

Anne-Sophie Refskou (Aarhus University)

Compassion and Cognition in The Spanish Tragedy

Kevin Curran (Université de Lausanne)

Thinking Hamlet, Feeling Hamlet, Judging Hamlet

12h30

Déjeuner / lunch

14h

Présidence / Chair : Lynn S. Meskill (UT2J)

Mickaël Popelard (Université de Caen)

« *Minding the stage* » : *the staging of truth in Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors (1595)*

and *Bacon's Orations at Graies Inne Revells (1596)*.

Claire Guéron (Université de Bourgogne)

Romancing the mind in Chapman, Jonson and Marston's Eastward Ho (1605)

15h15

Clôture / Closing speech

Abstracts and biographies

Résumés et notices biographiques

• *How to Mind a Prefix: Bethinking on the Shakespearean Stage*

This paper considers the unique forms of early modern theatrical "minding" represented by the use on stage of the term 'bethink'. I begin by discussing the linguistic functions of the prefix 'be-', particularly its ability to convey a 'sense of total affectedness' to a root word. I then consider its semantic impact when coupled with the root 'think.' 'Bethink', I suggest, affords us a unique philological – and thus historical – perspective on what we study today in philosophical, psychological, or neuroscientific terms as theory of mind, consciousness or cognitive processing. For the now-obsolete word named, at least until its twilight in the mid-seventeenth century, named an especially intense, conscientious and reflexive form of thinking. On the early modern stage, in particular, the locution insists on their characters' awareness and enactment of their own cogitation, their presentation, in Mary Crane's phrase, of 'what it felt like to think . . . from within an early modern body.' The focus of the paper is thus on the use of 'bethink' in signature dramatic moments, where it underscores characters' felt experience with the concerns of the seminar: the nature of the mind, its cognitive/emotional capacities, and its relation to the body and world. As my examples from plays such as *The Spanish Tragedy*, *If You Know Not Me, Merchant of Venice* and *Measure for Measure* will show, when 'bethink' is used by a character alone onstage, it turns thinking into meta-thinking. When it is used in dialogue, it both beckons and forestalls the mutual reflection of characters. And when it is used in different dramatic genres (tragedy, city comedy) and by different speakers (revengers, merchants) it affirms the movement of self-conscious contemplation across holy and profane realms. I conclude by considering the ways in which the use of 'bethink' may gesture to characters' efforts to avoid or resist, in order to capture a fleeting sense of autonomy, the very kinds of embodied or extended cognition associated with contemporary cognitive literary studies.

Heather Hirschfeld is Distinguished Professor of the Humanities at the University of Tennessee. She is the author of *The End of Satisfaction: Drama and Repentance in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cornell University Press, 2014) and *Joint Enterprises: Collaborative Drama and the Institutionalization of the English Renaissance Theater* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2004) and the editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespearean Comedy* and the third edition of *The New Cambridge Shakespeare Hamlet*.

• *Thinking Hamlet, Feeling Hamlet, Judging Hamlet*

Unlike "thinking Hamlet," "feeling Hamlet" seems to have fallen between the cracks of modern critical debate. On one hand, there is a tradition associated most closely with Samuel Taylor Coleridge and, later, A.C. Bradley, Harold Bloom, Stephen Greenblatt, Marjorie Garber, Peter Holbrook, and a number of others which views Hamlet as a harbinger of modern subjectivity, arriving on the scene with a fully formed inner life. On the other hand, there is the seminal work of Margreta de Grazia which shows how Hamlet's inwardness was not perceived as the play's salient feature until around 1800. Instead, in its own time, to the extent that Hamlet the character offered particular theatrical pleasures, early sources tell us that this had more to do with his physical intensity – his "antic disposition" – than with verbal disclosures about a putative inner life. Somewhere between these two Hamlets – the rowdy clown of the Renaissance and the introspective thinker of post-Enlightenment modernity – is the "feeling Hamlet" of the eighteenth century. Described by Wolfgang von Goethe and Henry Mackenzie as a man of feeling, Hamlet indeed feels things

with particular intensity – fear, anger, disgust, sorrow. The theatrical pay-off, so the argument runs, is that he makes audience members feel things intensely, too, as a result.

In this talk I wish return to the now rather outmoded idea of Hamlet as a man of feeling, not to resurrect an old-fashioned reading of the play, but rather to think more carefully about what being a man of feeling might mean, both in Shakespeare's world and our own. Feeling, or sentiment, was at the time Goethe and MacKenzie were writing closely linked to judgment. It was premised on a specific kind of relationship between the experience of the body and critical participation in the world. We find this connection articulated with particular nuance in the sentimental philosophy of David Hume and Adam Smith. With this intellectual context in mind, I wish to suggest that Hamlet can help us recover a specifically early modern way of understanding the link between feeling and judging, which we can then situate in a larger genealogy of thought that runs from Aristotle to the eighteenth century. Hamlet will serve as a guide in my talk whose particular way of going about the business of adjudication offers us an opportunity to retell the story of modern judgment in a new way. The endgame of this retelling will be to begin laying the groundwork for an ethics of collectivity in which judgment – and in particular theatrical judgment – plays a key role.

Kevin Curran is Professor of Early Modern Literature and a Board member of the Centre d'Études Théâtrales at the Université de Lausanne in Switzerland. He is the founder and general editor of two book series: "Edinburgh Critical Studies in Shakespeare and Philosophy," which is about to publish its twentieth volume, and, in French, "Questions de Théâtre," which deals with performance arts generally and is aimed at a broad readership. Kevin's monographs and edited collections include *Shakespeare's Legal Ecologies* (Northwestern University Press, 2017), *Renaissance Personhood* (Edinburgh University Press, 2020), *Shakespeare and Judgment* (Edinburgh University Press, 2017), and *Marriage, Performance, and Politics at the Jacobean Court* (Ashgate, 2009). His new monograph, *Shakespeare's Theater of Judgment: Six Keywords*, is coming out later this year with Edinburgh University Press.

• *Thinking about Cogitation*

Cogitation was commonly used as a term in Elizabethan and Jacobean writing to describe the process of active thought (whether irrational or rational), yet the history of this concept has not been fully explored despite many excellent analyses of the "cognitive patterns" at work in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts. My paper seeks to enrich our understanding of early modern theories of mind by establishing the notable place that cogitation took as a term to describe the complex nature of mental activity in instructional and imaginative literature. From language manuals, dictionaries, theology, moral philosophy, and plays, cogitation commonly functioned as a word that signalled thinking, as well as concrete thoughts. What is important to note is that writers typically used the term to accentuate the deficiency in our mind's capacity to function as it should, as well as its debased nature. My paper will open by offering a brief overview of this important convention as it emerges across the period's literature, before determining how cogitation was performed in plays like William Wager's *The Trial of Treasure* and William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*.

Douglas Clark is currently a Research Fellow at the National University of Ireland in Galway. He joined the Institute of English Studies at the University of Neuchâtel in 2021 as a senior research assistant as part of the 'Civility, Cultural Exchange, and Conduct Literature' project. He specialises in British literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and has published widely on the prose, drama and poetry of Elizabethan and Jacobean England. His research interests include the history of the book, environmental writing, manuscript studies, moral philosophy, theatre history, the history of poetics and theories of mind. He is currently completing his first book, *Performing the Will in English Renaissance Drama*.

• *Compassion and Cognition in The Spanish Tragedy*

In this paper, I trace the relationship between emotional co-involvement and cognition in the early modern auditorium by analysing one of the early successes on the London stage: Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*. I argue that Kyd's tragedy exemplifies a key point about the early modern stage, namely that the audience's feelings and cognition should not be understood as distinct but rather as closely intertwined. In Kyd's tragedy – and in many of the plays that followed it – the playwright seeks to please audiences both by encouraging emotional co-involvement and by offering complex cognitive challenges to that emotional co-involvement, sometimes in the form of a self-referential joke and sometimes in a more serious vein. *The Spanish Tragedy* undeniably seeks to arouse strong emotional responses from its audience, but I suggest that the play simultaneously encourages the audience to assess their emotions. The audience's compassion for the central character Hieronimo – their invited participation in his grief for his murdered son – is complicated by his quest for revenge, which would have produced a moral conundrum for many early modern subjects. I show that the play investigates uneasy connections between compassion, anger and violence but also that Kyd avoids moral didacticism precisely by situating compassionate co-involvement within a frame characterised by self-referential theatricality. In other words, the play encourages a cognitive engagement with compassion and it does so both through an alienating meta-theatricality and through self-awareness of emotional excess.

Anne-Sophie Refskou is a contract lecturer in Renaissance theatre studies at the University of Aarhus (Denmark). Her research focuses in particular on the complex emotion of 'compassion' in Shakespeare's plays and in modern theatre in general. She also works on the dissemination of the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries in global and cross-cultural contexts, and co-edited *Eating Shakespeare: Cultural Anthropology as Global Methodology* (Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare 2019). Her forthcoming publications are 'Word Games: Affect and Play in Hamlet and Romeo & Juliet', in E. Whipday (ed), *Shakespeare/Play*. Bloomsbury Academic (in press) and 'Precursor of feared events': A Pre-War Hamlet at Elsinore, 1939', in A. Lidster and S. Massai (eds), *Shakespeare at War: A Material History*. Cambridge University Press (forthcoming).

• « *Minding the stage* » : *the staging of truth in Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors (1595) and Bacon's Orations at Graies Inne Revells (1596)*.

On 3 January 1596 a piece of theatrical entertainment was performed at Gray's Inn, one of the London Inns of Court, as part of the 1595-1596 Christmas festivities, or « Christmas Revels ». The work in question had been penned by Francis Bacon and is known as the *Orations at Graies Inne Revells*. It consisted of a series of six speeches, each praising a different kind of life as being the most suitable for a Prince. But it also encapsulated – and foreshadowed – some of Bacon's most deeply held philosophical tenets. A much more famous work had also been performed at Gray's Inn a few days before, on 28 December : this was Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*. In addition to their identical venue, what the two works have in common is their similar concern for the staging of truth and error. More precisely, both Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* and Bacon's *Orations at Graies Inne Revells* deal with how the stage can become instrumental in separating the wheat of truth from the chaff of confusion. Taking this theatrical confrontation as its starting point, this paper will aim at discussing the heuristic process whereby one's illusory certainties are gradually shattered through theatrical and/or rhetorical means, thus leading to the substitution of truth for one's initial state of cognitive confusion. Admittedly, error takes different forms and it springs from different causes in the two works. In Shakespeare's play, the characters

find themselves shrouded in a cloud of error which it is the plot's dramatic function to disperse. In Bacon's rhetorical piece, it is through the confrontation of diverse points of view that the truth is supposed to finally emerge. In both cases, however, error gets distilled and refined into truth by dint of the stage's dramatic still. The aim of this paper is to show that it is only by « minding the stage » – that is to say, by using the stage as a way of shaping thought and meaning – that it becomes possible for the truth to establish itself. What a comparison of *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Orations* shows, I will argue, is how the stage helps to generate cognitively enhanced states of mind for both performers and audience.

Mickaël Popelard is Professor of Early Modern Literature at the University of Caen Normandy. His research focuses on early modern philosophy and literature. His publications include: *Francis Bacon: l'humaniste, le magicien, l'ingénieur* (Paris, PUF, 2010) ; *Spectacular Science, Technology and Superstition in the Age of Shakespeare* (EUP, 2017 and 2019, coedited with Sophie Chiari) ; *La Nouvelle Atlantide et autres textes littéraires* (Paris, Classiques Garnier, 2022). His latest book, which he co-authored with Laurent Curelly, is a translation of some of Gerrard Winstanley's political pamphlets (*Pamphlets politiques*, Bruxelles, Zones Sensible, 2023).

• *Romancing the mind in Chapman, Jonson and Marston's Eastward Ho (1605)*

City comedy's indebtedness to Chivalric Romance has long been acknowledged. Its absorption of chivalric motifs was double edged, involving both parodic and aspirational dimensions. Transferring chivalric valour to the citizenry implied defining a new kind of nobility, one not rooted in blood, but in craft and creative thought. The figuration of the citizen mind as a place of enchantment depends in great part on the fact that *Eastward Ho* is a play, rather than a narrative, the original form of romance. Yet to successfully establish craft and cleverness as the citizen counterparts to the knight errant's superhuman force and courage, it was not enough to show a merchant successfully completing a quest through the sheer power of his wit. The mind itself needed to be "romanced", meaning constructed as a place of magic and wonder. In this paper, I will argue that *Eastward Ho* achieves this "romancing of the mind" by coopting the long-standing allegorical associations of chivalric romance, whereby battles, enchantments, monstrous encounters, hidden treasure, and magical beings stood for mental phenomena. I hope to show that by selectively activating such associations, Chapman, Jonson, and Marston allowed *Eastward Ho's* London to double as a vivid mindscape, a mirror of its citizen characters' minds, be they of the honest or the scheming variety. Because of the inherent difficulty of staging sea voyages, monstrous transformations, castles in the sky and magically appearing riches, the chivalric marvelous, while constantly hinted at, is irrevocably tied to the realm of the imagination. By signposting these romance tropes as projections of their characters' imaginations, Chapman, Jonson and Marston were reinforcing their status as allegorical counterparts to the wondrous processes of inspiration and creative thought. At a time when patents were the subject of increasing litigation, *Eastward Ho* invites the audience to reflect on the genius of invention.

Claire Guéron est Maitresse de Conférences HDR at Université de Bourgogne (Dijon). She specialises in early modern stage semiotics, the ethics of spectatorship and Shakespearean detective stories. Recent publications include *Allegorising Thought on the Shakespearean Stage* (Edinburgh UP, 2023), 'Figure and Figura in Henry V', in François Laroque (ed), *William Shakespeare King Henry V*, Paris : Ellipses, 2020, pp.65-80, 'Le double jeu de Nick Revill, détective Shakespeareien', *Textes et Contextes*, vol. 14, no. 1, [online], 16 June 2019. »Never Shake thy Gory Locks at me»: Objecting to Gesture in *Macbeth*, *Interfaces : Text, Image, Language*, vol.40, 2018.