ABSTRACTS and CVs

Madalina Nicolaescu
Teaching Shakespeare via Zoom in Romania

The paper will focus on the experience of teaching Shakespeare on ZOOM (BA, and MA programmes) at the University of Bucharest during the years of the Pandemic (2020-2021), the goal being to identify the opportunities the new online system can offer, as well as the dangers and challenges it poses given the specific approaches to teaching Shakespeare at the University of Bucharest. One difficult question was : How to introduce a performative dimension of "doing Shakespeare" within the zoom format? The issues that will be raised also include questions about the employment of film adaptations in class and about the need to rethink the curriculum.

Mădălina Nicolaescu is professor at the English Department, British Cultural Studies at the University of Bucharest. She has been teaching and researching on Shakespeare and Early Modern English culture, on adaptation, translation and transnationalism and on globalization at the intersection with gender studies. She has been the recipient of a large number of research grants abroad. Author and (co)editor of numerous books, e.g. *Meanings of Violence in Shakespeare's Plays* (2002), *Fashioning Global Identities* (2001), *Between History and Personal Narrative. East European Women's Stories of Migration in the New Millennium* (2014) etc. She has lead several large scale research projects on Shakespeare: *Inhospitable Translations*, (2007-2008), *The European Dimension of ShakespeareTranslations* (2009-2011), *The Circulation of Shakespeare in Europe's Borderland* (2017-2019).

Kinga Földváry
Looking for the invisible: archival research and online databases

The project that I have recently been offered grant support for is a survey of Hungarian adaptations of Shakespeare's work, both cinematic and originally made for television screens. Apart from the methodological challenges, of classification and definition (what is a Hungarian film? what is a Shakespeare film? what is a film, for that matter?), the greatest practical challenge the task involves concerns archival research, especially since the online databases are poorly designed and hard to navigate. Nonetheless, it is vital to get down to combing through all available archives, in order to gauge whether there are further, previously unknown works that need to be included in the investigation, or even whether there are any forgotten items that could be reintroduced to the public or at least brought to the awareness of academics. At the same time, online databases and digital materials may direct attention to the transcultural elements in adaptations that allow these works to travel across national and linguistic boundaries. These discoveries may in turn find their way back to teaching, opening up the field of Shakespeare and adaptation studies for English majors as well as students of drama and theatre studies.

ABSTRACTS and CVs

Kinga Földváry is Associate Professor at the Institute of English and American Studies at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Hungary. Her main research interests include problems of genre in film adaptations of Shakespeare's plays, twentieth and twenty-first century British literature, and theories of visual and popular culture. She is the author of *Cowboy Hamlets and Zombie Romeos*: *Shakespeare in Genre Film* (MUP, 2020)

Jacek Fabiszak
Ninateka and its resources in discussing about Shakespeare in the academia

The aim of the paper is discuss the didactic uses of an open internet platform called Ninateka (https://ninateka.pl) which offers a wide array of films, audiobooks and music. It is a platform run by the Narodowy Instytut Wizualny [NInA; National Audiovisual Institute], an institution responsible for collecting, recording and preserving the most valuable texts of culture, esp. films, theatre productions, music, etc. I will focus on adaptations of Shakespeare's works which include critically acclaimed theatre productions as well as less-known, fringe-like films and animations. I will ask questions about the criteria of selecting the works that are available on the platform and how useful they may turn out to be in teaching Shakespeare and Western theatre at the academic level.

Jacek Fabiszak is professor at the Faculty of English of Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań, Poland. His teaching area covers cultural and theatre history and Shakespeare. He has published widely on English Renaissance theatre and drama and on film and tv adaptations, as well as on Polish televised Shakespeare. Applying linguistic and sociological theories, he has explored Shakespeare´s plays as dramas of social roles. He has co-authored and co-edited many other publications.

Zsolt Almási
"The database -- a site of cultural memory and a heuristic device"

In this paper I shall argue that a digital database can serve both as a site of memory and it can prove a heuristic tool. I shall use the database of the National Museum and Institute of Theatre History to demonstrate how data analysis can be extremely beneficial for comparing different epochs in the history of theatre, spotting trends and drawing attention to long-forgotten Shakespeare productions that were exceptional and/or set a trend in significant ways. I shall use the database to see if it can add to what we already know about the stage histories of Shakespeare's great tragedies. When exploring the database I will also refer to the limitations of the approach, such how well the database complies with the criteria of the five V's, such as Volume, Velocity, Variety, Veracity, Value. Volume relates to the size of the dataset, Velocity to the methodology of updating the database, Variety to the types of data present, and Veracity to the quality of the content of data, including Correctness, Completeness, Consistency and Timelessness.

Values indicates that the data in the dataset should be relevant (Kreutzer and Sirrenberg 80-82). Although the dataset does not meet all the criteria equally, yet even in its current form, the database has the potential to serve as a site of cultural memory and also a heuristic tool.

Zsolt Almási is an associate professor in the Institute of English and American Studies, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Hungary. His book, *The Problematics of Custom as Exemplified in Key Texts of the Late English Renaissance* came off the press in 2004. He is the co-editor of journals (*International Journal of Digital Humanities*), *Digitális bölcsészet* (*Digital Humanities*) and was co-editor of books with Mike Pincombe, *Writing the Other. Humanism versus Barbarism in Tudor England*, (2008) and *New Perspectives on Tudor Cultures*. (2012). More recently he co-edited with Kinga Földváry a special issue "Shakespeare in Central Europe after 1989: Common Heritage and Regional Identity" of *Theatralia*. He serves as the head of the Department of English Literatures and Cultures, the executive secretary of the Hungarian Shakespeare Committee. His current research projects and publications focus on Shakespeare in the contemporary Hungarian theatre, digital Shakespeare and digital philology.

Nicoleta Cinpoes
'The Unbearable Lightness of Being ... Digital'.

Nicoleta Cinpoes is professor of Shakespeare studies at the University of Worcester, UK. She has written the monograph *Hamlet in Romania*, and has edited many collections on Shakespeare. In her contribution to *From New to Neo-Europe: Titus redivivus,* she has examined the popularity of the most bloody tragedy *Titus Andronicus* among European directors of the 1990s. She has lead a number of crosscultural seminars at Shakespeare theatre festivals, and reflecting on them, she has explored the new trend of Shakespearean theatre festivals, their landscape and their impact on the production and circulation of staged Shakespeare.

Michal Denci
„Pirandello´s Avatar"

The paper analyses the relationship between digital media interpreted as a communication tool and Pirandello's ideas of theatre from the semiotic point of view. Pirandello considered his writing as a process of codification of a virtual world that cannot be translated into reality without deformations. According to Pirandello, the problem of theatre consists in the dissonance between the author's idea expressed in text and its representation made by human bodies on the stage. In this process we could identify problems on two levels: a problem of misinterpretation of the author's text and a problem of inappropriacy of human body perceived as medium: actors are unstable and unable to embody the ideal characters codified in text. That means that in digital

forms we can codify and fix Pirandello's virtual worlds, unlike the reality of performers. Therefore, it seems natural to observe Pirandello's dichotomies by exploring principles of digital media we may use to evoke his texts, images, or sound of his voice, that is permanently accessible to us thanks to digitalization. We should be aware that in doing so we are not only interpreting Pirandello's writings but are also codifying a sort of Pirandello's avatar. At the end we should not omit one fact: Pirandello asserted that if we want the original in theatre, we must turn to commedia dell'arte. That's the reason why – especially while teaching Pirandello's (pseudo)philosophy, based on the contrast between form and life – we have the possibility to use digital media in contrast with teacher's performance.

Michal Denci graduated at the Università degli studi di Firenze, Facoltà di lettere e filosofia (BA and MA) in arts and theatre, music, and film production, and obtained PhD at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava. He works in the LUDUS theatre (theatre for young people) as production manager, at Department of Theatre Studies at Theatre Faculty of Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava as a lecturer of History of Italian theatre, and occasionally collaborates with the Italian Cultural Institute in Bratislava.