

Seminar presentation sheet

Academic year	2017/18
Seminar n°	5
Seminar title	THE CRISIS OF DEATH. PERSPECTIVES ON DEATH AND DYING IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME AND TODAY
Teacher(s) (Name, SURNAME)	Agnieszka ROMANOWSKA
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Teacher(s)' presentation	Agnieszka Romanowska teaches history of English literature and culture. Her main field of research is literary and theatrical reception of Shakespeare in Poland and literary translation. She has published on the theatricality of Shakespeare's dramatic text, Polish poet-translators and history of Shakespeare's reception in Poland.
Seminar presentation	<p>While in early modern Europe the brutal commonness of death and dying was experienced on a daily basis, it is often claimed that, with the development of medicine and technology, mortality has become one of the post-modern taboos. Public executions, admonitory displays of dead bodies or mass graves of plague victims seem to be as remote from us as <i>ars moriendi</i> and ritualization of dying. Are they? With terrorism, acts of violence disseminated via media and global spread of deadly viruses we are nowadays confronted with the omnipresence of death more acutely than we would like to admit.</p> <p>Death is treated in this seminar both as the critical moment in every human life and as one of the facets of social and political crises. The participants will explore individual and communal aspects of death in early modern culture and today, examine how death and dying is depicted in a selection of Shakespeare's plays, and scrutinise how death and death-related themes present in Shakespearean productions for stage and screen, are used in today's cultural discourse on mortality.</p>
Prerequisites to follow the seminar	Readings assigned during the PreFaces moodle work; contributing to the pre-Montpellier moodle activities moderated by the teacher; meetings with local NGOs and institutions of culture to explore their ways of dealing with today's European crises.

<p>Seminar objectives /skills to be developed by the students</p>	<p>At the end of the seminar, the student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have knowledge about the attitudes to death and dying in early modern culture; • have knowledge about how death was depicted in early modern literary texts, especially Shakespeare's plays and selected poetry of the period; • have knowledge about how Shakespearean depiction of death and dying is interpreted nowadays on stage and screen in various places in Europe; • have enhanced their knowledge on how modern political and social crises are reflected in culture; • be able to comment on today's reception of Shakespeare's plays on the basis of theatrical/film reviews; • be able to present creative interpretations of Shakespearean productions with reference to today's international crises.
<p>Session 1 – Presentation / plan</p>	<p>Focus: Death in Shakespeare's culture and today.</p> <p>Pre-Montpellier moodle activity: Readings assigned by the teacher; Formulation and sharing of research questions on the basis of the readings.</p> <p>Topics to be discussed during the seminar session: Aspects of death and dying in early modern times; The topic of death and dying in the literature of the period. Death and today's European crises. Similarities and differences in individual and communal attitudes to death in Shakespeare's time and today.</p>
<p>Session 2 – Presentation / plan</p>	<p>Focus: Death and dying in Shakespeare's plays and adaptations on stage and screen today 1.</p> <p>Pre-Montpellier individual preparation: ca. 15 minute reports on how theatre, film and/or other cultural institutions respond to today's crises in Shakespearean or Shakespeare-related productions (local or global examples) and their popular and critical reception.</p> <p>Topics to be discussed during the seminar session: Death and dying in today's productions and adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. Crisis-related topics in today's culture. Use of Shakespeare in the cultural discourse on crisis in various places in Europe. Theatrical potential of Shakespeare's death scenes.</p>

<p>Session 3 – Presentation / plan</p>	<p>Focus: Death and dying in Shakespeare's plays on stage and screen today 2.</p> <p>Pre-Montpellier individual preparation: ca. 15 minute reports on how theatre, film and/or other cultural institutions respond to today's crises in Shakespearean or Shakespeare-related productions (local or global examples) and their popular and critical reception.</p> <p>Topics to be discussed during the seminar session: Death and dying in today's productions and adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. Crisis-related topics in today's culture. Use of Shakespeare in the cultural discourse on crisis in various places in Europe. Theatrical potential of Shakespeare's death scenes.</p>
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Bibliography/ Webography:

PHILIPPE ARIÈS, *The Hour of our Death* (originally published as *L'homme devant la mort*) (Vintage Books, 2008, or any earlier edition, transl. by Helen Weaver), Conclusions 602-614.

JAMES CALDERWOOD, *Shakespeare and the Denial of Death* (Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1987) Introduction.

MIA KORPIOLA and ANU LAHTINEN (eds.), *Cultures of Death and Dying in Medieval and Early Modern Europe. An Introduction* (Collegium. Studies across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences, 18, 2015) 1-31.

FIONA MARTIN, "*Morbid Exhilarations*": *Dying Words in Early Modern English Drama*. Dissertation. Available on: <http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/5192/thesis.pdf> (Accessed on 15.12. 2016). (optionally)

MICHAEL NEILL, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity* (Clarendon Press, 1997), Introduction.

SARAH N. REDMOND, *Staging Executions: The Theater of Punishment in Early Modern England*, Dissertation. Available on: <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/islandora/object/fsu:176386/datastream/PDF/view> (Accessed on 20.12.2016). (optionally)