

## Seminar presentation sheet

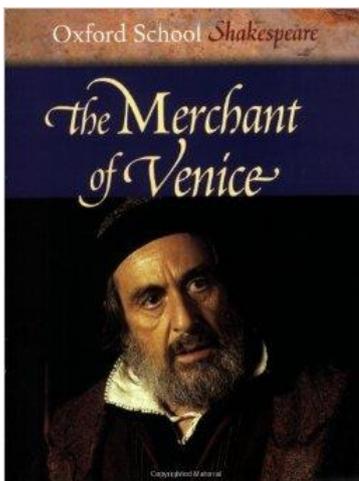
Academic year	2017/18
Seminar n°	8
Seminar title	<b>FACING THE OTHER: THE CRISIS OF ACCEPTANCE AND UNDERSTANDING</b>
Teacher(s) (Name, SURNAME)	Marta GIBINSKA
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Teacher(s)' presentation	My interests and research have always been concentrated on English Renaissance literature, with particular focus on Shakespeare and contemporary playwrights. I am interested in how language in drama operates, how to lift the text onto the stage and see in it the potential of acting as a means of interpretation. I have researched the history of Shakespeare on Polish and European stages, reception of his plays in changing historical contexts, and finally, translation and its role in the target culture.
Seminar presentation	The mental, emotional, social and political attitudes of many Europeans have recently been focused on the division between "we" and "they", between "I" and "the other". It is enough to listen to the news to realize that "the other" might be perceived as the police in minority communities, Muslims in Western countries, illegal immigrants at our borders and in our cities, etc. Add to that the long history of anti-Semitism in Europe, and you get a disquieting and abrasive image of incessant crisis of acceptance and tolerance towards anybody and anything that is not close, familiar, recognizable as "my own". It is important to see that the prejudice, aversion and rejection work both ways. In this seminar we shall study the problem of the crisis in interpersonal relations which rises from racial differences. Two plays of Shakespeare – <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> and <i>Othello</i> – will be the starting point for the attempt to

	<p>diagnose various aspects of the crisis at encountering the other. We shall study Shakespeare's plays to find out the potential critical and dramatic interpretations leading to discovery of the essence of the problem at hand: how to stage the plays to enhance our recognition of the crisis of our time, and how to initiate possible processes leading to eradicating enmity and prejudice as well as to accepting a more tolerant social and personal position.</p>
<p>Prerequisites to follow the seminar</p>	<p>Students who would like to explore with me the problem of the crisis of acceptance and understanding would be expected to read carefully the two plays of Shakespeare well in advance of the Intensive programme in Montpellier. A very welcome addition to reading will be viewing either theatre or film productions of the two plays.</p> <p>I would also expect them to find out their local NGO where they could learn about the problems of those who are "the others" in the local society, but also the problems of the local people in accepting "the others"; find out what the NGO people do or try to do to lessen the tensions and disagreements or rejections; define the best ways in which peaceful coexistence may be (or is) negotiated.</p> <p>If not an NGO, students may refer to cultural and educational institutions in their town/region and ask them about eventual instances of interpersonal crisis.</p> <p>The aim of these interviews is, first, to research the problem; second, to try to read Shakespeare's problem plays with the eye on the contemporary experience; and third, to be ready for the discussion in the seminar group and cooperation in preparing a coherent presentation of the seminar results by the end of our working week in Montpellier.</p> <p>In case of doubts or uncertainty in preparing for the course, I shall welcome queries either on the Moodle or by email.</p>
<p>Seminar objectives /skills to be developed by the students</p>	<p>At the end of the seminar, the student will be able to discuss knowledgeably the problem of the crisis of understanding and acceptance between people divided by race, gender, social/economic position, or religious beliefs in our world. The student will also be able to offer art as an effective means of negotiations leading to the recognition and eventually diminishing the crisis. In this case the healing art will be theatre and Shakespearean drama.</p>

Session 1 – Presentation / plan	Reviewing and discussing individual preparatory work for the seminar. Locating common concerns. Referring the results to the two plays by Shakespeare.
Session 2 – Presentation / plan	In-depth discussion of <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> . Finding out the best (from our contemporary perspective) ways of dramatic presentation of the critical encounters in the play.
Session 3 – Presentation / plan	In-depth discussion of <i>Othello</i> ; selecting and defining particular incidents of interpersonal crisis in order to discuss the best possible theatrical realization.

### **Bibliography/ Webography:**

*Please, use good academic editions of the two plays by Shakespeare. Such editions offer good critical introductions and essays which I absolutely **recommend for your study**. Below you find information about available editions. Please pick one for each play.*



The Arden Shakespeare 2<sup>nd</sup> series: ed. John Russel Brown, 2006.

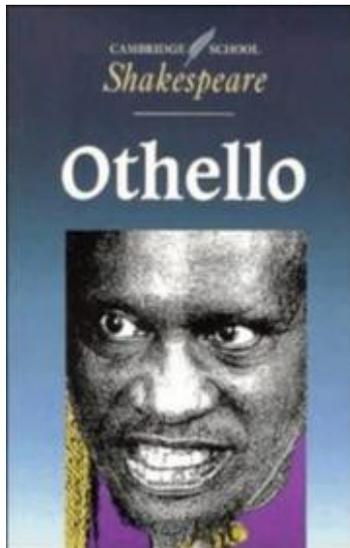
The Arden Shakespeare 3<sup>rd</sup> series: ed. John Drakakis, 2011.

Oxford Shakespeare: ed. Jay L. Halio 1998, 2008.

Cambridge Shakespeare: eds. Robert Smith, Jonathan Morris, 2005.

New Penguin Shakespeare: eds. Stephen Orgel, A.R. Braunmuller, 2000, 2008.

Norton Shakespeare: ed. Leah Sinanoglou Marcus, 2005.



Arden Shakespeare 3<sup>rd</sup> series: ed. E.A.J. Honigmann 1997, 2006.

Cambridge Shakespeare: eds. Rex Gibson, Jane Coles, 2005.

Oxford Shakespeare: ed. Michael Neill, 2008.

Penguin Shakespeare: ed. Stephen Orgel, 2001.

Norton, ed. Edward Pechter 2003, 2006.

Complementary readings to widen your understanding of some of the Renaissance ideas concerning our topic:

**Montaigne's Essays**, Translation by John Florio (1553-1625).

Book I, essay XLII. Of the Inequalitie that is betweene us

Book II, essay XVII, Of Presumption

Book III, essay III, Of Three Commerces or Societies

Available online: [http://www.mises.ch/library/Montaigne\\_Essays\\_Florio\\_Translation.pdf](http://www.mises.ch/library/Montaigne_Essays_Florio_Translation.pdf)

**Sir Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*: on the four idols consult the following pages:**

<http://www.sirbacon.org/links/4idols.htm>

<http://www.sirbacon.org/zeb-ben.htm>