

Seminar presentation sheet

Academic year	2016/17
Seminar n°	9
Seminar title	REPRESENTING SOCIAL CRISES, PAST AND PRESENT
Teacher(s) (Name, SURNAME)	Paul M. FRANSSEN /Sabine SCHÜLTING
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Teacher(s)' presentation	<p>Paul Franssen teaches English Literature, predominantly from the early-modern period, at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. His main research interests include Shakespeare and his contemporaries, Austen, Wilde, and Coetzee.</p> <p>Sabine Schülting teaches English Literature and Culture at Freie Universität Berlin. Her main research interests include Shakespeare, cultural encounters, material culture studies, and gender studies.</p>
Seminar presentation	The seminar will focus on the representation of economic crises, and their entanglement with social, religious and communal conflicts, in three early modern plays: William Shakespeare's <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> and <i>Coriolanus</i> , and Christopher Marlowe's <i>The Jew of Malta</i> . In a second step we will explore the ways in which 20 th century adaptations (Arnold Wesker's <i>The Merchant</i> and Bertolt Brecht's <i>Coriolan</i>) have used the plays to address contemporary problems.
Prerequisites to follow the seminar	Students participating in this seminar should have read the three plays by Shakespeare and Marlowe as well as the articles listed in the bibliography below.
Seminar objectives /skills to be developed by the students	At the end of the seminar, students will be able to analyse the ways in which early modern drama addresses the massive economic changes taking place in the late 16 th and early 17 th centuries. They will also be aware of the construction, representation, and performance of crisis in drama/theatre. Students will have the skills to compare early modern plays with contemporary adaptations, and to contextualize the latter in 20 th -/ 21 st -

	<p>century debates on economy and politics. Students will be able to present the results of their analyses in both oral and written form, and to engage with major critical studies in the field.</p>
<p>Session 1 – Presentation / plan</p>	<p>General Introduction: early modern economic and social crises</p> <p><i>Coriolanus</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Midlands Revolt and early modern food crises • Textual analysis: Urban crisis, society, and social hierarchies, the crisis of masculinity <p>Bertolt Brecht's <i>Coriolan</i> (1951-53)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brecht's version, the performance by the Berliner Ensemble (1964), and Günter Grass's <i>The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising</i> (1967) • Study of select scenes from Brecht's version: the tragic hero and the plebeians • Final discussion: <i>Coriolanus</i> and the East-West-conflict
<p>Session 2 – Presentation / plan</p>	<p><i>The Merchant of Venice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usury and trade • Textual analysis: Money and love, communities, loyalty <p>Arnold Wesker, <i>The Merchant</i> (1976)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wesker's play and its radical critics • Study of select scenes from Wesker's play: tolerance and trade
<p>Session 3 – Presentation / plan</p>	<p><i>The Jew of Malta</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mediterranean as multicultural trade route and conflict zone • Textual analysis: <i>The Jew of Malta</i> and the desire of gold <p>Comparisons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textual analysis: Marlowe's <i>Jew</i> and Shakespeare's <i>Merchant</i> • Final discussion: Comparing Marlowe to Brecht and Wesker

Bibliography

❖ Books:

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, *The Jew of Malta*. (We recommend the New Mermaid edition)

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *Coriolanus*. (We recommend that you use a good scholarly edition, i.e. The Norton Shakespeare, or the Arden, Oxford or Cambridge edition)



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *The Merchant of Venice* (We recommend that you use a good scholarly edition, i.e. The Norton Shakespeare, or the Arden, Oxford or Cambridge edition)

❖ Articles

DAVID GEORGE, "Plutarch, Insurrection and Dearth", in *Shakespeare and Politics*, ed. Catherine Alexander and John Joughin (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004) 110-129.

STEPHEN J. GREENBLATT, "Marlowe, Marx and Anti-Semitism," *Critical Inquiry*, 5 (1978): 291-307.

AARON KITCH, "Shylock's 'Sacred Nation': Commerce, Statehood, and the Figure of the Jew in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*," in his *Political Economy and the States of Literature in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) 105-128.

IAN MUNROE, "The City and its Double: Plague Time in Early Modern London", *English Literary Renaissance*, 30.2 (2000): 241-261.

JAMES SHAPIRO, "'Which is *The Merchant* here, and which *The Jew*?': Shakespeare and the Economics of Influence," *Shakespeare Studies*, 20 (1988): 269-279.