

Plenary abstracts

Erzsébet Stróbl

Popular Memory in Jacobean Sermons: Remembering Queen Elizabeth

On 24 March 1609, Richard Crackanthorpe delivered a sermon at Paul's Cross, London, in celebration of King James I's Accession Day. Yet a substantial portion of the sermon was devoted to commemorating Queen Elizabeth I's accession to the throne more than fifty years earlier, which the preacher presented as the beginning of God's blessing upon England. Although a new King from a new dynasty now ruled the country, the memory of the late Queen was kept alive by preachers who closely linked her remembrance with concepts of true faith, providence, and the elect status of the English nation. By examining a corpus of printed Jacobean sermons mentioning the Queen, this lecture analyses the role of early modern preachers in preserving the memory of Elizabeth and in constructing the image of the last Tudor monarch. It argues that the praise of the late Queen served as a means of expressing subjects' expectations of their King during the early years of his reign, as a yardstick against which his actions could be measured in the subsequent years, and as a point of reference for articulating criticism of his policies in his late reign. The lecture contends that, far from being forgotten, Jacobean sermons actively preserved the memory of the late Queen and her legacy and played an important role in securing her place in posterity.

Attila Kiss

The Hydropoetics of Caliban: An Osmotic Macrodynamic Model of English Renaissance Theatre.

Remedios Perni

Studying Shakespeare through Performance: From Activist Stages to the University Classroom

Scholars within the field of Shakespeare studies have increasingly integrated the concept of Performance as Research (PaR) into their methodologies, often merging their research and teaching with a commitment to activism. This conference explores the role of performance as both a pedagogical and a social tool in teaching Shakespeare. Building on international case studies such as Shakespeare in Yosemite, Shakespeare Behind Bars, and others, I situate performance not only as a method of interpretation but also as a form of social engagement and activism. The Spanish university context provides a particularly rich field of inquiry. University theatre groups have likewise appropriated Shakespeare to address social and political issues, one notable example being the University of the Balearic Islands Theatre Company, led by Juan José Bermúdez de Castro. Their production *Un Habitatge Digne*—a rewriting of *As You Like It* that addresses the housing crisis in Mallorca, Spain—premiered in 2025, exemplifies how university theatre can intervene directly in civic debates. I then turn to my own classroom practice at the University of Alicante, where I implemented a series of performative activities for the English Literature classroom. Specifically, my students engaged with the fanfiction play if you die in Hamlet, you die in real life. Through a four-session workshop combining close reading, adaptation, performance, and critical reviewing,

students explored how parody, queer reinterpretation, and meme culture reframe Shakespeare for the twenty-first century. These activities revealed how performative pedagogies can transform canonical texts into living dialogues.

Conference Paper Abstracts

Almási Zsolt (PPKE)

Shakespeare szavak nélkül: Kulcsár Noémi *Rómeó és Júliája*

Előadásom középpontjában az a kérdés áll, hogy vajon lehetséges-e Shakespeare drámát színre vinni szavak nélkül. A kérdésre adott válaszhoz Kulcsár Noémi *Rómeó és Júlia* táncszínházi adaptációját, pontosabban verzióját használom tárgyként. Az adaptáció vagy verzió Shakespeare tragédiájához való viszonyának feltárásához Pavel Drabek „recrafting” és Ileana Orlich „transcreation” fogalmait alkalmazom. A viszony feltárásához a cselekmény egyes különbségeit, a játékteret és a táncot veszem górcső alá. Ezzel pedig végeredményben amellet érvelek, hogy nem egészen szavak nélkül kerül színpadra Shakespeare drámája, hanem a szavak megjelennek, csak nem hangként/textusként, hanem testet öltenek, és ezzel egyszerre tartanak fent és ásnak alá egyfajta hierarchiát és logocentrizmust.

Bernáth András (SZTE)

Stoner, Tales from Shakespeare and The Limits of Interpretation

When studying, discussing and teaching Shakespeare today, we are faced with several limitations. The biggest one is probably time, and in my short paper, I attempt to answer briefly all four questions raised by the conference. As a teacher and researcher, I wish to communicate through Shakespeare that his works still matter, and our most important task is perhaps to find out what they mean to us now, as it is demonstrated in *Stoner*, a novel by John Williams (1965). However, it is also important to consider what these works may have meant in their own time, and the changes in the reception. As in *Stoner*, we can begin with the sonnets, themselves concerned with time, and then go on to the plays, for instance, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*. We need bear in mind that we tend to teach modern editions (or adaptations or translations) of Shakespeare, which are different from the early texts, and we are also influenced by a tradition of interpretations. *Tales from Shakespeare* by Charles and Mary Lamb (1807) were written for the children of their age: they reflect the interpretations of the Romantic critics, but are still influential. The traditional concern with the characters may be worthy of preservation, but we need to reconsider the partial interpretations, celebrating *Hamlet* as a moral hero, or viewing the ambiguous Ghost merely as *Hamlet's* father. Modern literary theory, in particular Umberto Eco's *The Limits of Interpretation* (1994), can help us differentiate between two levels of meaning: a naïve or indeed romantic interpretation, and a realistic, truly critical one, which can yield more comprehensive and reliable readings.

Cseicsner Otília

Shakespeare-hangjátékok és kutathatóságuk

A közmédia éppen folyamatban lévő átalakításával várhatóan elhárul a Shakespeare-hangjátékok ügyében emelt akadálytömeg és az archívum kutathatóvá válik. Ennek tempójától függően vagy egy átfogó, vagy egyetlen (az egyetlen külső forrásból elérhető) darabról szóló írással jelentkezem. A Romeo és Júlia megjelent lemezen, a színpadi változata is kutatható.

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Erdély Perovics Andrea (SZTE)

Előadás: Artaud testében megvalósuló shakespeare-i színház

Antonin Artaud William Shakespeare-hez fűződő viszonya első pillantásra ellentmondásosnak tűnik: miközben élesen bírálja a Shakespeare nevéhez kapcsolódó színházi hagyományt, a kegyetlen színház programjában mégis Shakespeare-re és az Erzsébet-kori színjátszásra hivatkozik. Előadásomban bemutatom ennek az ambivalenciának az okát: Artaud szövegeiben két különböző „Shakespeare” rajzolódik ki, amelyeket nem választ el egymástól. Egyfelől elismeri Shakespeare alkotói zsenialitását, másfelől elutasítja azt a „shakespeare-i funkciót”, amely a nyugati színházi hagyományban a logocentrikus, mimetikus és pszichologizáló színház paradigmájává vált. Előadásomban azt is igyekszem feltárni, hogy Artaud milyen mértékben merít a reneszánsz emblematisz színház térszemléletéből. Különös figyelmet fordítok az anatomizáló módszerre, valamint a színész és a néző közötti éles határ felszámolására. Végül amellet érvelek, hogy Artaud saját testében teremti újjá a shakespeare-i színház egy sajátos, radikálisan új formáját.

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Fabiny Tibor (KRE)

Hiding in the Contrary: Shakespeare's Re-Creation of a Motif from the Joseph Narrative (Gen. 37–50) – through the lens of Luther's paradoxical theology

This paper interprets a motif of two of Shakespeare's plays as dramaturgical recreations of the Joseph narrative (Gen 37–50) 1 . As far as the intertextual relationship between „The „Bible in Shakespeare”—or „Shakespeare and the Bible”—is concerned, scholars have adopted terms such as “reference,” 2 “allusion,” 3 “accreted allusion,” 4 and so on. I would label my intertextual reading “evocation.” This is not an analytical, strictly objective approach, but rather a midrash-like “creative game” practiced by the reader, even at the risk of being accused of subjectivity. This means that the allusion is not necessarily already present in the text; rather, meaning is established by the creative response of the reader—provided that it makes sense to the reader and is hopefully convincing to others. This interplay is a conscious or unconscious construction of meaning, somewhat similar to the Reformation principle that “Scripture interprets Scripture” (scriptura sacra sui ipsius interpres) 5 . But in my case, scripture is not merely “Holy Scripture,” but both the Bible and Shakespeare.

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Fazekas Sándor

A Shakespeare-szonettek fordításának javított kiadása

Előadásomban a Shakespeare-szonettek fordításának második, javított kiadásáról szeretnék beszélni, elsősorban a kötet szerkezet és a tegezés/magázás kérdésére koncentrálni, munkaverziókat bemutatva az új változatból. Az előadás tisztelgés Nádasdy Ádám emléke előtt, aki saját kezűleg végigjavította a kötetemet, és a Szonettek próza fordításának elkészítését is megkezdte, ez a munkája rövidesen napvilágot lát majd, Géher István László közreműködésével. Koncepcióink közös pontjairól és eltéréseiről is lesz szó az előadásban.

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Fábián Annamária

Shakespeare magyar szépirodalmi adaptációiról: olvasás, kutatás, oktatás

Előadásom nem annyira a vitaindítást, mint az együtt gondolkodást célozza, és egy publikációs terv körvonalazását is egyben. Az adaptációkutatáson belül számos előadáskritikai, színházi előadásokat elemző szerzőnk van, és nagyszámú publikációval is büszkélkedhet a magyar Shakespeare kutatás ezen a téren. Az a kutatási irány, amelyet szerintem érdemes lenne határozottabbá, láthatóbbá tenni – akár egy irodalmi antológia létrehozásával – az a magyar nyelvű szépirodalmi Shakespeare-adaptációkat célozná meg. A magyar szerzők Shakespeare ihletésű verseit, novelláit, drámáit, talán kevésbé alapos elméleti és gyakorlati boncolgatásnak tettük ki eddig, pedig azt gondolom, rendkívül izgalmas terület, amit a magyar irodalom és akár középiskolai, akár egyetemi szinten való oktatásában is nagyon termékenyen használhatnánk.

Itt csatlakoznék még egy témához, mégpedig Kállay Géza emlékeztetéhez, akinek több irodalmi műve is (A Bolond levele..., A Lear király és holdudvara előhangja, és a Melyik Erasmus kávéházban több novellája) Shakespeare adaptációként értelmezhető, és feltétlen érdemes a részletes elemzésre: gondolatébresztő előadásomban ezek közül néhányat szeretnék elemezni az adaptációelmélet (főképp prequel-sequel irányú) definíciós küzdelmei mentén.

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Filip Bul Krajník (Masaryk University in Brno)

From Page to Performance: Reimagining Double Falsehood in a Czech Academic Theatre Context

Lewis Theobald's *Double Falsehood* (1727), long associated with the lost Shakespeare-Fletcher play *Cardenio*, has attracted renewed scholarly and theatrical interest in recent decades, yet it has remained virtually unknown in the Czech context. This paper examines the first Czech (and Central-European, for that matter) production of the play: an English-Czech bilingual rehearsed reading created by postgraduate students at Masaryk University in Brno in 2025. Focusing on the adaptation process, it explores how the company transformed Theobald's text into a concise, approximately one-hour performance while preserving its central dramatic conflicts. Particular attention is paid to strategies of textual reduction, the introduction of a narrating "Ghost of Shakespeare" to bridge narrative gaps, the sensitive treatment of scenes involving sexual violence through material drawn from Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, and the use of live music and early modern songs to reinforce atmosphere and historical resonance. The paper argues that the production functioned not only as an academic exercise but also as a practical test of the play's performability for contemporary Czech audiences. Audience response and the subsequent publication of the first Czech translation of *Double Falsehood* (created by the author of this presentation) suggest that Theobald's controversial play has the potential to enter (not only) Czech Shakespearean performance culture beyond its traditional status as a scholarly curiosity.

Győrei Zsolt (SZFE)

A palásttól a frakkig

Molnár Ferenc 1921-es Előjáték a Lear királyhoz című egyfelvonásosa sajátos fénytörésben láttatja a magyar polgári színház Shakespeare-kultuszát. Az egyetemi magántanár, a Kisfaludy-Társaság Shakespeare-bizottságának kültagja mint megcsalt férj és a Leart alakító Shakespeare-színész mint csábító állnak egymással szemben, konfliktusuk kifejezését és befejezését egyaránt a nagy tragédia határozza meg. A dramolett gazdag allúziókkal támogatja meg a klasszikus dráma és a hétköznapi kabaré-mizéria ellentétének hatásos kibontását. Karinthynek az erre reflektáló, Előjáték Az ördöghöz című jelenete nem csupán sikerült irodalmi karikatúraként méltatható, de újabb értelmezési réteget is ad Molnár egyfelvonásosának olvasatához: az egykori és a kortársi sikerdarabok egymás mellé állításával a teatralitás eszközeinek és értelmezésének erős megváltozására világít rá. Előadásomban a két szöveg dramaturgiai szempontú vizsgálatával ennek a változásnak megmutatására teszek kísérletet.

Kocsis Zoltán (SZTE)

Shakespeare on the Virtual Stage: The Effects of Role-Playing

Shakespearean performance transforms radically when it is staged in virtual environments and enters video game worlds. In *Hamlet* adaptations, such as *Grand Theft Hamlet*, and *Fallout 76* productions, avatars, role-play, technical limits, and player agency do not merely reproduce and relocate theatre into digital space. Instead, they reshape presence, spectatorship, and subject formation, turning the virtual stage into a site where Shakespeare is both performed and reinterpreted. These examples clearly show how virtual space can become a laboratory of theatre, performance, and subjects, where what happens is not merely that Shakespeare is transferred into the world of a video game, but that the virtual world itself also reinterprets Shakespeare.

Maczelka Csaba (PTE)

Teaching Shakespeare and Culture in an International Hybrid Classroom: Experiences from the EDUC Alliance

This paper offers a critical overview of our recent collaborative experience of teaching the course "Shakespeare and Culture" within the framework of the EDUC (European Digital UniverCity) Alliance. The hybrid course was offered for students in Brno (Masaryk University) and Pécs (University of Pécs), and brought together Czech and Hungarian aspects of Shakespeare's historical and contemporary reception.

Pethő Nóra

Shakespeare tematikájú irodalmi jogesetmegoldó és perbeszédverseny a magyar jogi oktatásban (?)

Shakespeare műveinek felhasználása a „jog és irodalom” körén belül bevettnek számít, nem csak az angol nyelvű jogi oktatásban. A fiktív eseten alapuló jogesetmegoldás és ahhoz kapcsolódóan a per eljáratása a joghallgatókkal, azaz az ún. *moot court* a kora újkori angol jogászképző kollégiumok népszerű oktatási módszere volt, érdekes elegyét adva a jognak és drámának. Shakespeare műveinek és a perjátéknak az összekapcsolása szórakoztató és/ vagy oktatási céllal a mai napig kedvelt műfaj (lásd pl. az 1987-es American University-n eljátszott pert Shakespeare szerzőségével kapcsolatban, vagy az amerikai Shakespeare Theatre Company mai perjáték sorozatát). Jogi oktatás céljára a legkidolgozottabb formában valószínűleg a kanadai McGill University-n „alkalmazzák” Shakespeare-t a 2002 óta futó „Shakespeare Moot Court Project” keretében, amelyben igen szokatlan módon maguk Shakespeare művei jelentik a jogforrást, amelyet a verseny résztvevőinek kell értelmezniük egy fiktív, nem is közvetlenül Shakespeare művéből származó jogeset megoldása kapcsán. A projekt érdekessége, hogy minden részt vevő csapat „vegyes”, amennyiben egy joghallgatóból és egy angol irodalom szakos hallgatóból áll. Ugyanakkor a „perjáték” a mai magyar nyelvű jogi és irodalmi oktatásban is viszonylag széles körben alkalmazott módszer egy irodalmi műben ábrázolt esethez kapcsolódó jogi-erkölcsi dilemmák körbejárására, vagy éppen az írásbeli és retorika készségek fejlesztésére. Mindezek alapján régóta úgy gondolom, gyümölcsöző lenne, ha Magyarországon is megrendezésre kerülne egy Shakespeare tematikájú jogesetmegoldó és perbeszéd verseny, amely új – még ha nem is teljesen előzmények nélküli – kutatási és oktatási projektet jelenthetne a Shakespeare-kutatás és – oktatás területén. E felvetés mentén szeretném kérni a konferencia résztvevőit, hogy osszák meg korábbi, idevágó tapasztalataikat, illetve hálás lennék, ha tudnánk közösen gondolkodni arról, hogy mi közvetíthető és mi oktatható Shakespeare-en keresztül ebben a formában. Ezek megválaszolását befolyásolhatják olyan koncepcionális kérdések, minthogy milyen nyelven kerüljön megrendezésre a verseny, hogy Shakespeare szövegeire jogesetként vagy joganyagként tekintünk-e, vagy hogy ki a verseny célközönsége (például a joghallgatókon kívül irodalom, angol vagy akár más szakos hallgatók)? A projekt találkozási pontja lehet a különböző diszciplínáknak, ebben pedig a széles körben ismert, ezáltal közös kulturális referenciakeretet biztosító szerző művei nem pusztán alapanyagként, hanem nélkülözhetetlen közvetítőként jelennének meg. Természetesen örömmel veszek bármilyen, akár kritikus, hozzászólást az ötlethez, amelyen keresztül a Shakespeare-kutatás és -oktatás lehetséges szerepeiről is alkalom nyílna közösen gondolkodni.

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Pikli Natália (ELTE)

Minions of the Moon, or, Lunar Inconstancy: The Moon, Fortune and Occasio in Shakespeare and Emblems

The paper will present a small part of one of my current work-in-progress projects: re-visiting the relationship between two highly popular genres in Shakespeare's time, theatre and emblems. The wider research context implies addressing the following questions: what were the (more or less) direct links between emblem authors and Shakespeare's plays (eg. Peacham's drawing, Wither's 1613 references to visiting the theatre); how early modern playwrights used the emblem, both in the public theatre and in university drama; why and how different concepts tended to appear in 'bundles' both in emblems and plays, and how gendered representation in emblems influenced the world of the theatre. The paper introduces the complex representation of the Moon (with all his/her associations in the age), 'Fortuna' and 'Occasio', considering gender aspects as well.

Schandl Veronika and Kinga Földváy (PPKE)

Macbeth in Performance - from Globe to Global

The presentation discusses the pitfalls and possibilities of our project of mapping Shakespeare in performance.

Szele Bálint

Socialist Productions of *As You Like It* in Hungary

This paper examines four Hungarian productions of *As You Like It* (1949, 1954, 1964 and 1983) against the changing political and cultural landscape of socialist Hungary. Drawing on theatre reviews, archival materials and the productions themselves, it argues that Shakespeare's comedy became a sensitive indicator of political and social change. While the earliest productions supported the official socialist interpretation of Shakespeare and promoted optimism and collectivist ideals, later performances increasingly reflected resignation, doublespeak, political passivity and the growing disillusionment of the Kádár era. Rather than presenting a timeless pastoral comedy, each production embodied the concerns of its historical moment. The paper demonstrates that *As You Like It* served not only as a theatrical work but also as a medium through which changing relationships between politics, culture and society could be expressed in socialist Hungary.

Szélpál Livia (SZTE)

Rewriting Shakespeare: Literary Education and Shakespearean Intertextuality in Zora Neale Hurston's *Spunk*

William Shakespeare occupied an important position in Zora Neale Hurston's literary education and intellectual imagination. Although formally trained as an anthropologist, Hurston regarded Shakespeare as an essential part of literary education and strongly advocated studying his works, particularly among African American students. She considered Shakespeare's use of language as a model for recognizing the artistic value of African American language, folklore, and cultural traditions. This presentation scrutinizes Hurston's engagement with Shakespeare in relation to her educational philosophy and her views on cultural self-determination. It also considers the historical context of her response to the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision. In her open letter to the *Orlando Sentinel*, she opposed school desegregation. Hurston questioned whether legal institutional desegregation alone could create genuine intellectual empowerment for black children, emphasizing instead self-education, independent thought, and access to literature as essential foundations of education. The presentation focuses on Hurston's 1925 short story *Spunk*. The short story was later adapted into a play by George C. Wolfe. I interpret the short story as a case study of Shakespearean intertextuality. In my presentation, I aim to offer a comparative analysis of *Spunk* with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* by analyzing the shared motifs of murder, betrayal, the presence of the dead, and the consequences of moral transgression. Moreover, the presentation aims to highlight how Hurston transforms Shakespearean tragedy into an African American folktale through vernacular expressions and Hoodoo beliefs. The presentation argues that Hurston's use of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is an act of creative

reinterpretation. She deliberately appropriates a canonical tradition to strengthen African American cultural identity and to establish vernacular culture as a legitimate source of literary artistry.

Varga Mária

‘Not know me yet?’: The Implied Readers of Shakespeare’s Cleopatra

The ambiguity and multivalence of Shakespeare’s Cleopatra is of great interest to critics and academics alike. Interpretations of her character vary considerably and the text itself seems to support each reading equally. The diversity of these readings calls into question the perspective of the implied reader of the play. Building off of Brian Richardson’s “Singular Text, Multiple Implied Readers”, this paper proposes that Cleopatra’s character is intended to be received by not one, but multiple implied readers. To support this hypothesis, the paper aims to answer three questions: firstly, how Shakespeare’s divergences from his source text affect Cleopatra’s character and how she is perceived; secondly, how the text invites multiple interpretations of Cleopatra, particularly through gaps in the text and the perspectives of secondary characters; thirdly, whether the theory of multiple implied readers is supported by critical interpretations and analyses. For the sake of a diverse selection of readings, three centuries worth of criticisms have been sampled and utilized.

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Vöö Gabriella (PTE)

The Indian Chief Is No King Lear: Shakespearean Craft and Ethical Constraint in Simms’s *The Yemassee*

This presentation explores what happens when a highly accomplished nineteenth-century American novelist learns deeply from Shakespearean dramaturgy without attaining Shakespearean tragic openness. In William Gilmore Simms’s *The Yemassee* (1835), political conflict is staged through rival leaders, unstable authority, public councils, and dramatic reversals in ways that recall Shakespeare’s history plays and tragedies. Chief Sanutee, in particular, is granted the dignity, foresight, and burden of a declining sovereign. Yet he is not allowed the moral and structural centrality of a figure like Lear. The paper argues that Simms borrows Shakespearean resources of political and tragic elevation while redirecting them into a more managed and teleological narrative. *The Yemassee* grants the Indigenous community grandeur but withholds historical futurity. Rather than treating Shakespearean characterization, plot twists and dramaturgy as a matter of literary influence, the paper proposes to ask an ethical question about craftsmanship itself. Can a writer approach greatness through formal mastery alone if he cannot allow the defeated figure full tragic stature? By tracing Shakespeare’s afterlife in a historical novel rather than a

play, I suggest suggest that the real significance of influence lies in the critical problems such undercurrents continue to pose.

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Tóth Zsófia Anna (SZTE)

The Replication of Shakespearean Comedy in a Postmodern Retake: 10 Things I Hate About You (1999)

It is well-known that 10 Things I Hate About You (1999) is a postmodern adaptation of William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. In this paper, I intend to discuss the timelessness of the classical Shakespearean comedy formula as it can perfectly work in a 20th century American setting within the framework of a postmodern comedy as well. As it is usually stated by humor scholars, timeless comedy is almost impossible to produce but Shakespeare's comedies still have timeless appeal as 10 Things I Hate About You proves it likewise by reusing, with some twists, the recognizable "recipe." Here, I would like to provide a brief and absolutely not thorough list borrowing several parts from Salvatore Attardo's edited volume dedicated to many aspects of humor and comedy: "Shakespeare's comic plots and preferred forms of humor draw especially on the Roman writers of comedy, Plautus and Terrence, and the Italian tradition of commedia dell'arte but develop a distinct style of their own that goes well beyond straight farce and verbal wit. [...] the comic elements of trickery, disguise, confusion, master-slave tension, checked desire, tokens such as rings that bring recognition and plot resolution, and stereotypical comic characters such as the senex (old man) who locks up his daughter to prevent young men from getting at her [etc. ...] Shakespeare takes them and gives them a decidedly romantic cast [...] Shakespearean comedy often feels quite distinct from the highly satirical cast of the comedies of his contemporary Ben Jonson. [...] Shakespearean comedy mixes a variety of high and low comic elements, many of which had roots in Roman comedy and its Greek forebears, Aristophanes and Menander." (Attardo 2014, 684) What does seem remarkable is that *10 Things I Hate About You* replicates most of these elements even if it is supposedly a work with postmodern sensibilities thus proving that despite a rethinking of the original work, this new take still works with the same comic elements that were invented hundreds, what is more, even thousands of years ago.

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Zineb Laadioui (PhD student/English Lit teacher)

Teaching Shakespeare through Loose Adaptations: Making the Canon Accessible through Contemporary Film

Shakespeare continues to occupy a central position in English literature curricula, yet many students approach his works with apprehension because of the perceived linguistic, historical, and cultural distance that separates the plays from their own experiences. This paper argues that loose cinematic adaptations such as *She's the Man* (2006), inspired by *Twelfth Night*, and *10 Things I Hate About You* (1999), adapted from *The Taming of the Shrew*, provide an effective pedagogical bridge between Shakespeare's texts and contemporary students. Rather than treating these films as simplified substitutes for the original plays, this paper positions them as legitimate interpretive texts that encourage students to engage critically with Shakespeare before confronting the complexities of Early Modern English. Drawing on adaptation theory, particularly the work of Linda Hutcheon and Julie Sanders, alongside scholarship in Shakespeare pedagogy, the paper explores how these films translate Shakespearean conflicts into familiar social settings such as the American high school. Themes of identity, gender performance, romance, social expectations, and power become immediately recognizable, allowing students to establish emotional and intellectual connections before examining their dramatic origins. This approach shifts the

classroom from one centred on textual intimidation to one built on curiosity, comparison, and critical inquiry. Through close analysis of selected scenes and practical classroom strategies, the paper demonstrates how loose adaptations foster discussions about interpretation, cultural translation, and the continuing relevance of Shakespeare. Students are encouraged to identify what has been preserved, transformed, or omitted, developing analytical skills while recognizing adaptation as a creative dialogue rather than a measure of fidelity. Ultimately, the paper contends that beginning with familiar cultural texts creates a more inclusive learning environment, making Shakespeare less an inaccessible literary monument and more a living body of stories that continues to evolve across media, cultures, and generations.

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