

Sujet : Performing Mrs Dalloway – What a lark, what a plunge

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Chers Collègues,

Comme certains s'en souviennent peut-être, je travaille à l'adaptation chorégraphique / théâtrale de certaines oeuvres de Virginia Woolf. Après une *Promenade au phare* minimaliste, chorégraphiée par Hélène Duval (UQAM) sur la musique de Max Richter (Three Worlds), une nouvelle aventure scénique est engagée: *Performing Mrs Dalloway*. J'ai travaillé à la réalisation d'un script, en procédant au découpage scénique de ce qui se donne au

départ comme un flux continu, en optant pour la structure suivante: Prologue – The Party – The Notebook – On the Edge of the World – Epilogue. C'est une expérience très étrange, même en restant très près du texte original, que de convertir une écriture "romanesque" en écriture théâtrale. Par moments, au début surtout, cela ressemble à du Wilde et on se dit "Suis-je en train de dénaturer la tonalité?". Pourtant, il m'a semblé que l'ambivalence du personnage central pouvait être maintenue, tout comme la multiplicité des points de vue, notamment en créant un chœur de "voix" qui reprennent les pensées et les points de vues de divers personnages.

Si vous avez 10 minutes à consacrer à la lecture de ce script, dont nous allons entamer la mise en scène, mais que nous pouvons encore améliorer, je serai ravi de recevoir vos conseils, vos impressions, vos suggestions de retouches. Par rapport à vos moments favoris du roman, pensez-vous que la réduction ait omis des mots, des passages, des mécanismes essentiels? Mais surtout, au-delà du changement de format et donc d'impact, pensez-vous qu'on retrouve au moins une partie du roman dans ce script?

Un grand merci par avance pour vos conseils et vos remarques. Je sais que certains d'entre vous estiment que le texte woolfien, tant de fois retouché par Woolf elle-même, n'est pas ou plus retouchable, qu'il y a une sorte de crime à vouloir s'engager dans une ré-écriture créative. Je peux comprendre ce point de vue et à ceux-là je dirai de ne surtout pas lire *Performing Mrs Dalloway*. Mais je partagerai quand même ce retour: 38 étudiants sur 40 n'avaient jamais lu une ligne de Woolf avant de découvrir le script. Le metteur en scène Sud Africain non plus. Or tous disent aujourd'hui qu'ils ont envie de lire davantage que les extraits en prose que j'ai fournis dans le dossier, pour travailler la transposition.

Un point important: nous avons pris en considération la nécessité pour le spectateur novice de comprendre du premier coup ce qui se passe, les enjeux, ce qui conduit à aller droit au but donc à renoncer à cette émergence graduelle que le roman propose. Personnellement, en tant que woolfien, c'est ce qui me gêne le plus. Tout cela va très vite, trop vite!

Désolé d'être si long mais l'intérêt d'être membre d'une petite communauté savante est justement de partager nos questionnements. Enfin, inutile de dire que cette plongée dans Mrs Dalloway m'a plus d'une fois bouleversé.

Bien à vous tous et toutes

Jean-Rémi Lapaire

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Le 03/02/2018 à 12:22, Marie Laniel a écrit :

Chères et chers collègues,

La date d'envoi des propositions de communication pour le prochain colloque de la SEW, « Virginia Woolf and the Writing of History », qui se tiendra à l'Université de Rouen du 8 au 10 novembre 2018, est repoussée au 20 février 2018.

Bien cordialement,

Pour le bureau

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Virginia Woolf and the Writing of History

8–10 November 2018

University of Rouen

ERAC (<http://eriac.univ-rouen.fr>)

With the collaboration of the University of Picardie - Jules Verne

<https://www.u-picardie.fr/unites-de-recherche/corpus/presentation/>

And the Société d'Etudes Woolfiennes

<http://etudes-woolfiennes.org>

Dr. Anne Besnault-Levita, Dr. Marie Laniel, Dr. Anne-Marie Smith-di Biasio HDR

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Prof. Anna Snaith (King's College, London)

Dr. Seamus O'Malley (Yeshiva University, New York)

Proposal submission deadline: February 20th, 2018

Call for papers

Virginia Woolf and the Writing of History

We propose to examine Virginia Woolf's relationship to history by reflecting on her reading and writing of history.^[1] be that the history of her own time, of the past, women's history or literary history. This will involve analysing how the literary and historicity are interlinked not only in her novels, but also in the essays, letters and journals. This in turn might lead us to consider the question of anteriority and tradition, engaging both the po-ethical and political dimensions of a Woolfian writing of history and of pre-history, such as that which informs her late essay "Anon," but is also present throughout her writing in the attention it accords to a cultural unconscious, subtending the present of language like a sometimes conscious, sometimes not yet conscious memory of the past.^[2] We might also be led to see Woolfian historiography from the perspective of materialist revisionism, a feminist rewriting of the past, or an infinite working through the library of her father, Leslie Stephen. Other possible perspectives would be to consider her work as that of an archivist writing against the archives of patriarchy in search of her own *arkhe*,^[3] or examining how she reinvents the historiographical, biographical and literary traditions. Woolf's engagement in the history of Modernity might in turn be considered from a Benjaminian perspective, as a form of historiographical reconfiguration anticipating

post-modern philosophy.

The question of Woolf's hermeneutics of history might lead us to define the different forms of her engagement in women's history, in the history of class, of her queering of history, her heterodoxy. We can also read her writing as a form of archeology delving into the written and non-written traces of history, attentive to the emergence of spectres and forms of survival or *survivance*^[4] but also as a response to what Woolf herself called, in *Three Guineas*, "history in the raw." Thus addressing how Woolf arrests the *kairos* of historical moment, her own inscription of two world wars as if in negative, might lead us furthermore to consider her writing as a form of resistance, nonetheless steeped in the Real of history, the present and the body.

We invite papers which address these questions among others from a variety of theoretical, literary and cultural approaches.

Possible topics may include:

- Virginia Woolf as a reader and interpreter of history
- Virginia Woolf as an apprentice historian
- Virginia Woolf's revisionist historiography
- Virginia Woolf's counter literary histories
- Virginia Woolf's complex relations to past and present historiographical traditions
- Virginia Woolf, Historicism and New Historicism
- Virginia Woolf, historicity and the new biography
- Virginia Woolf's feminist take on history and literary history
- Virginia Woolf, history and its "effect upon mind and body" (*Three Guineas*)
- Virginia Woolf's writing of history and pre-history
- Memory, the immemorial, oral tradition
- History, historiography and chronotopes in Virginia Woolf's works (libraries, museums, monuments...)
- Archeology, material artifacts and the archive

Submission

Paper proposals (a 300-word abstract with a title plus a separate biographical statement) should be sent by February 20th 2018 to Anne Besnault-Levita

(annebenobloy@gmail.com), Anne-Marie Smith-Di Biasio (amdibiasio@neuf.fr) and Marie Laniel (marie.laniel@gmail.com)

Advisory Committee

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[1] 'The War from the Street' (1919), *Essays* III (1919-1924), 3-4.

[2] 'Anon' (1940), *Essays* VI (1933-1941), 580-607.

[3] Jacques Derrida, *Mal d'Archive*, Paris : Galilée, 1995.

[4] Georges Didi-Huberman, *L'Image survivante*, Paris : Minuit, 2002. 'Abbeys and Cathedrals' (1932), *Essays* V (1929-1932), 301-306.

—Pièces jointes :—

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