

Keynote Lectures

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‘The Fair fills apace’: Human Mobility, Translation and Satire in Early Modern Drama

This lecture will take Terence Hawkes’s *dictum* that ‘we can only see the past through the eyes of the present’ (2002) as a starting point for an interrogation of the extent to which our awareness of the *current* crises of human mobility can enter a mutually enlightening rapport with *past* experiences of displacement as represented in Early Modern drama. The key text to be considered is Ben Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair*, an author and a play who have been the object of substantial critical revision over the past two decades. Jonson’s comedic / satirical representation of human desires, reflecting historical processes of social and demographic change, construes the Fair as a space of mobility and transit that can productively be approached with a set of notions derived from translation. I will be arguing that such a reading affords insights into the challenges that mobility (forced and otherwise) poses to individuals and communities at different points in history, while proving that translation is ideally positioned to provide conceptual standpoints from which to address such challenges.