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Descriptif

Shakespeare in Québec. The cultural divide between “the two solitudes,” as Hugh MacLennan memorably named the francophone and anglophone populations of Québec, has been well documented. However, despite this binary, Québec boasts a remarkably rich history of adaptations of Shakespeare written in French. Almost 40 textual adaptations of Shakespeare’s plays have been written in Québec since the Quiet Revolution, a period of massive social change that began in the 1960s. As adaptations of Shakespeare texts, these plays engage with and contribute to Shakespeare scholarship, while also reflecting contemporaneous issues in Québécois culture and society. Early adaptations are deeply entrenched in nationalist political and linguistic debates, however, since 1990, playwrights from more diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, including women, queers, and aboriginals, have enriched the corpus and widened the scope of its aesthetics and socio-political concerns. As Quebecois adaptations, these plays all bear witness to postcolonial, marginal subjectivities, united by the plurality of identity positions they foreground. In this seminar we will read Shakespeare’s Hamlet, King Lear, and Pericles as well as several Québécois adaptations of these plays.