

International conference:

Edition and editorial practices, past and present

Dates: 22-23 October 2026

Venues: Université Paris Cité & Paris Institute for Advanced Study

The conference is jointly organised by the Shakespeare Society of France (SFS) and the Society for Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century English and American Studies (SEAA1718), with the support of ECHELLES (UMR 8264, CNRS – Université Paris Cité) and of Hakluyt Society.

The increasing circulation of printed and manuscript texts and the changing practices for their production and consumption are characteristic of the early modern period. These circulating texts then fed bodies, minds and imaginations throughout the early modern period, through both their content and material form. In the shadow of the book, map or periodical, material objects containing manuscript or printed words and signs as well as illustrations, lies a multitude of agents who participated in the considerable labour of putting together an edition, issue, or print-run of a given work. Of course, such labour was not limited to the publishing of new texts, an increasing number of which came out year after year thanks to the growth of the reading public and the decrease in production costs; it also involved new printings of older texts. As Samuel Johnson put it in 1755 in his dictionary, “edition” denoted both the “publication of any thing, particularly of a book”, and the “republication, generally with some revisal or correcting” of pre-existing works.

With Johnson’s definition of “edition” as a starting point, this international, bilingual conference organised with the *Société Française Shakespeare* and the *Société d’Études Anglaises et Américaines des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* seeks to analyse the world of edition and editions in the early modern period as well as of works first produced in the early modern period. This conference therefore proposes to bring together discussions of the publishing and editorial worlds of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, and the stakes and questions that underpin the making of contemporary editions of early modern texts.

Throughout the early modern period, both the world of publishing and editorial practices were shaped by changing social and technological circumstances. The growth of the reading public and the emergence of a colonial, commercial, capitalist society went hand in hand with technological and infrastructural developments that helped reduce the costs of producing printed materials (e.g., improvements made to printing presses) and circulating them on a global scale. With these changes came a desire for new texts (sometimes officially sanctioned, sometimes pirated) in vernacular languages and in translation as well as for new editions of older texts. In other words, the publishing and editorial worlds were, from the 16th to the 18th century, part of the material and ideological matrix of emerging capitalism, through the (re)production and (re-)circulation of knowledges and literatures in an increasingly globalised world.

While technological developments were central to publishing and editorial practices in the early modern period, this is no less true of our current historical juncture. New publishing formats (e.g., digital, hypertextual) raise numerous questions about how to tackle re-editing early modern works for a variety of potential target audiences. Interrogating publishing and editorial practices helps rethink the (de/re)construction of the early modern canon from a social, political, and pedagogical perspective. How did the canon emerge? How did publishing and editorial practices contribute to consolidating or challenging it? How might new practices help bring to the fore new sources as well as contribute to developing more diverse, more ethical and more inclusive approaches to early modern works? While the focus of the conference is on the early modern period, the prism of publishing and editorial practices straddles the early modern and the contemporary periods, thus opening new ways of thinking about both.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Translation studies and the history of translation.
- Intersectionality and contemporary editions of early modern texts.
- Editorial practices and the decolonisation of the early modern period.
- The environmental impact of publishing: from production to circulation and from paper to digital technologies.
- The role of publishing and editorial practices in the construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of the canon.
- The materiality of publishing and editing, from Caxton to hypertexts.
- Actors of the publishing worlds: authors, editors, illustrators, translators, printers, publishers, booksellers...
- The economics of publishing and editing: from authorship, copyright and piracy to translation and practices of consumption.
- The history of the circulation of knowledge and the history of publishing and editorial practices.
- The politics and ethics of publishing and editorial practices.
- Publishing and editorial practices and pedagogy.

We invite 250-300 word abstracts, accompanied by 100-word bio notices, in French or English, to be sent by 30 November to John-Erik Hansson (john-erik.hansson@u-paris.fr) and Ladan Niayesh (ladan.niayesh@u-paris.fr). A selection of papers will be published under the aegis of Société Française Shakespeare and SEAA1718.

Confirmed keynotes: Bénédicte Miaymoto (Sorbonne Nouvelle), Guido Van Meersbergen and Natalya Din-Kariuki (University of Warwick, Hakluyt Society)