

Editorial : On plagiarism and forgeries

How do you write history when sources are lacking? By making them up or twisting them, quite simply. John Payne Collier (1789-1883), the first editor of *Punch and Judy* (the famous London street puppet show) in 1828, enriched his introduction with many literary quotations and two poems that had never before been published. He declared that he had found the first one, *Punch's Pranks*, in an anonymous manuscript from the 1790s, but he later admitted he actually wrote it. He also attributed the second one, *A Sonnet to Punch*, to Lord Byron, but no editor of Byron's poems ever included it among the writer's works...



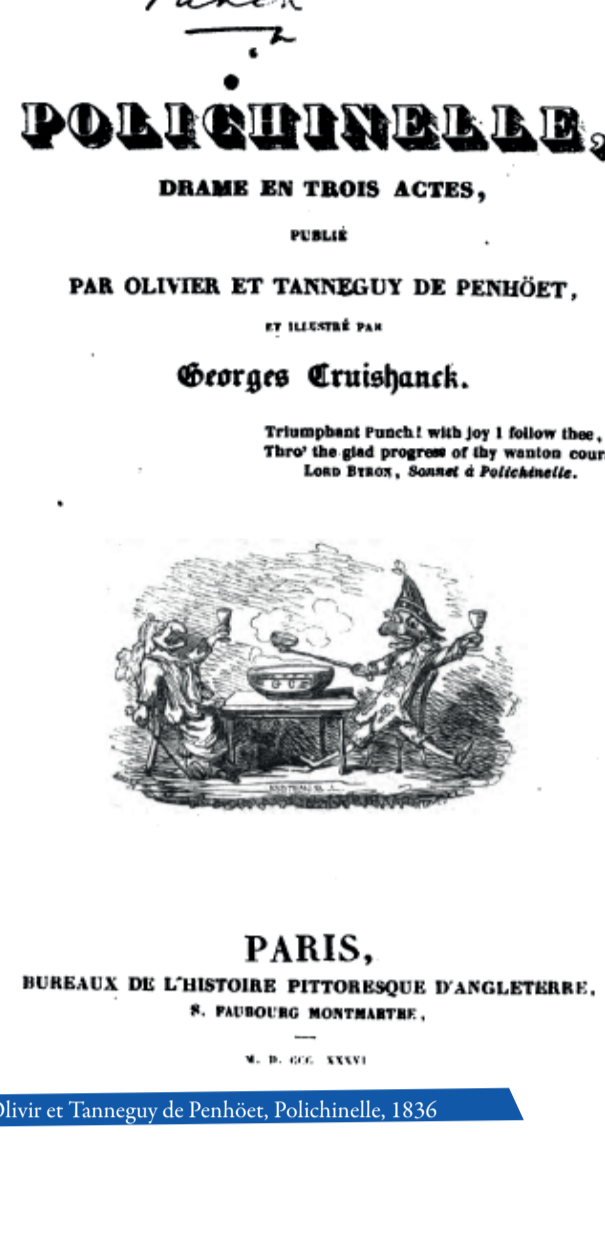
Fostered by the success of George Cruikshank's engravings, Collier's *Punch and Judy* was successively reprinted. In 1836, Olivier and Tanneguy de Penhoët translated it into French and published it. The book, entitled *Polichinelle*, copied Cruikshank's engravings, but was presented as an original work, and no reference to John Payne Collier was made. In this version, the characters' names have been Frenchified: Punch becomes Polichinelle, and Judy Madame Polichinelle, but the cover of the book displays, as an epigraph, two lines (in English) from pseudo-Byron's sonnet, renamed *Sonnet à Polichinelle*.

Triumphant Punch! With joy I follow thee,
 Thro' the glad progress of thy wanton course.
 Lord Byron, *Sonnet à Polichinelle*.

• John Payne Collier, *Punch and Judy*, 1828.

Seventy years later, in 1906, the Symbolist poet Gustave Kahn published a book entitled *Polichinelle (de Guignol)* with Sansot publishing house. A "Foreword from the editors" introduced the work as follows: "M. Gustave Kahn has discovered a complete and faithful text of the heroic farce that will be recognised as it was performed on the Champs-Élysées..." – except that it was, word for word, the Penhoët translation - therefore Punch's farce, not Polichinelle's. Its source was not to be found on the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, but in Trafalgar Square...

- [Didier Plassard]
- Links :
[The Tragical Comedy, or Comical Tragedy, of Punch and Judy](#)
[Polichinelle](#)
[Polichinelle \(from Guignol\)](#)

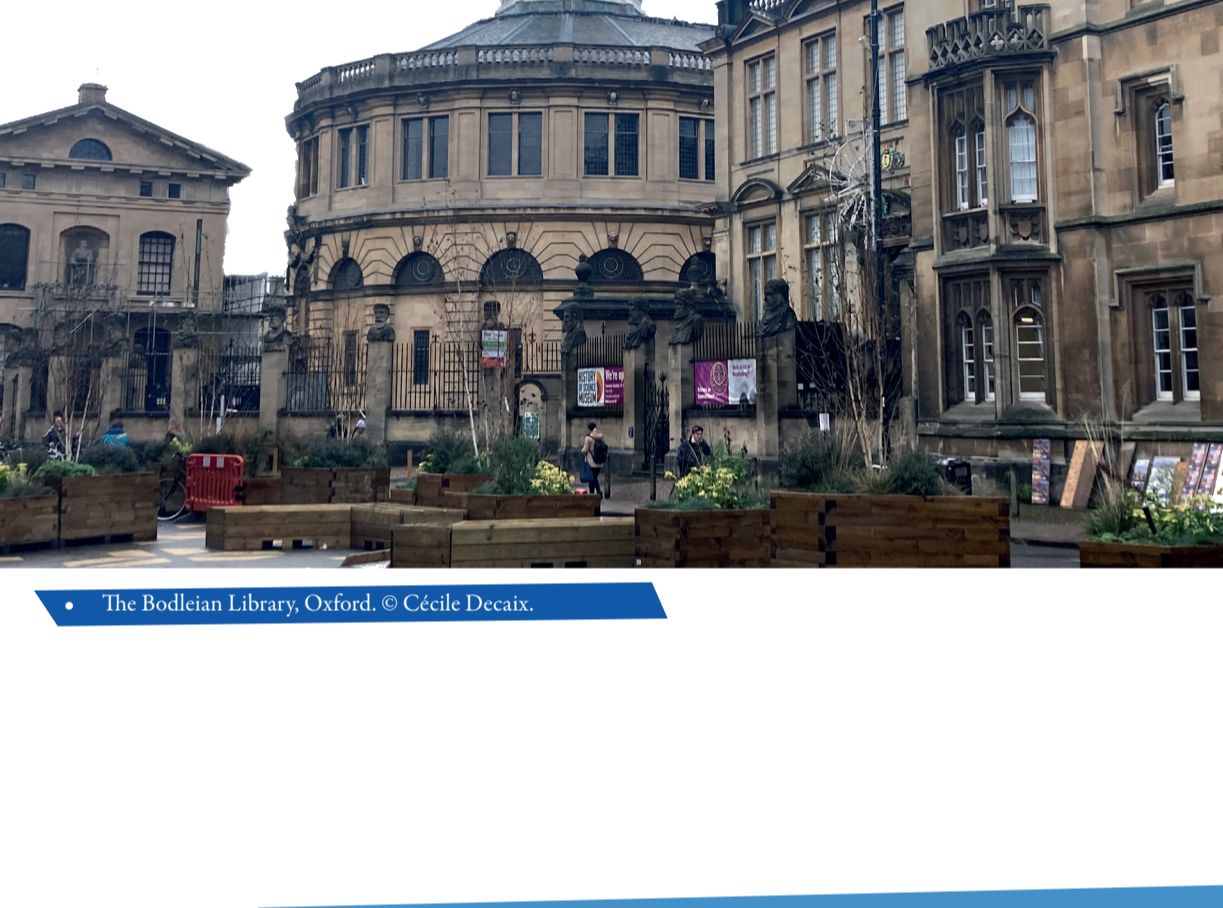


• Olivir et Tanneguy de Penhoët, *Polichinelle*, 1836

A short account of a murder... at the Bodleian library

A Short Account of Lord Cheyne, Lord Shorland, and Mr. Thomas Arden (1739) is a fascinating narrative by Henry Collyer, owner of "Lilliputian Popets". Collyer revisits the 1550 event that gave rise to the domestic tragedy *Arden of Faversham* – the murder of Thomas Arden, Mayor of Faversham, ordered by his wife and her lover. A rare first-hand account of this period (very few early 18th-century texts on marionettes have come down to us), *A Short Account* provides precious information as to how Collyer adapted a play which was well-known to his contemporaries for the marionette theatre. The author summarises the plot, describes the characters and their costumes, and inserts a few lines from his show so that readers and future spectators can judge the quality and style of his work. He also makes a point of distinguishing himself from other performers, as he considers them crude, ignorant, and responsible for the decline of marionette theatre.

A Short Account is kept at the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, and has never been digitized.



[Cécile Decaix]

• The Bodleian Library, Oxford. © Cécile Decaix.

Databases and the Web: URLs

A database is not just a tool meant to store information – it is also a way to connect information together. This network makes up its richness. For example, the works in the *PuppetPlays* database are linked by author, place of publication, or animation techniques. By linking the information in each record, we can search for all the works of an author, or all the versions of the same work. Each bibliographical element is associated with a persistent identifier (DOI, Ark, IdRef...), which allows it to be found in the database.

But how do you find these identifiers when consulting a web page?

They appear in the URLs or web addresses of the pages you visit.

A web address generally displays the path to a web page. First, "http" or "https" explains to your machine what it's going to read. "Hypertext Transfer Protocol" tells it that it is looking at an internet hyperlink. The "s" in "https" implies that the webpage's security level is increased. Next comes the domain name (1) which the page owner purchased. It is always followed by an "extension" (TLD): ".fr", ".com", ".org" or, in our case, ".eu". This extension is chosen according to the geographical location or the status of the owner. "eu" refers to the language of the web page (English, in this case). Finally, the internal organization of the website is displayed. In our database, records are sorted by types (2): authors, works, and animation techniques. Depending on the type, the record has a Unique Identifier Number (3) and a Unique Text Identifier (4).

The URLs of all the *PuppetPlays* entries are made up of the same elements.

Here is the web address to author Ben Jonson's entry: <https://puppetplays.eu/en/auteurs/220918/jonson-ben>

(1) Domain name	(2) Type of entry	(3) Identifier number	(4) Text identifier
https://puppetplays.eu	/auteurs	/220918	/jonson-ben

Now that you understand the basics of URLs, try accessing the authors index from Ben Jonson's URL... you only have to delete the number and text identifiers from the URL!

[Maxine Schoehuys-Kreiss]



• Ben Jonson © National Galleries Scotland

The "SOS from an earthling in distress" who finds comfort in reading Albert Camus...

It is still very common to think that puppet shows are simplistic because they easily appeal to a broad audience, and especially to young spectators. However, not only can these shows deal with the utmost serious subjects, "the metaphorical and symbolic density of the particular form of theatre provided by puppetry" is also particularly suited to philosophical issues, as Hélène Beauchamp and Flore Garcin-Marro point out. According to them, "by placing the human presence at a distance, puppet theatre puts questions about human nature and the human condition, as well as the boundaries between the living and the non-living, at the heart of the performance" [Introduction to *Scènes philosophiques de la marionnette* (Montpellier: L'Entretemps, 2016)].

Some puppeteers even engage with (compagnie index) and dramatiser, or 'puppeteer' their thirties who is going through a deep metaphysical crisis. What is the meaning of life, if we are all going to die? How can we bear the idea of our programmed disappearance, both as an individual and as a species?

The play is a mix of autobiography, documentary, concert, radio programme and cooking classes. It strikes a rightful balance between humour and seriousness, and it addresses philosophical issues in a serious manner while never taking itself too seriously. Thanks to Polina Borisova's talent, the puppets are as innovative as the play script, offering a wide range of manipulation techniques, scales and aesthetics.



• Lucile Beaune and Valentine Martinez in *EXISTENCES*. © Fabio Falzone.

The *PuppetPlays* team wishes you a Happy Holiday Season

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and innovation programme under Grant agreement ERC 835193

CONTACTS
PuppetPlays (GA 835193)
 Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3
 Site Saint-Charles 1
 71 rue du Professeur Henri Serre
 34090 Montpellier - FRANCE

Principal investigator
 didier.plassard@univ-montp3.fr
 Research Engineer
 carole.guidicelli@univ-montp3.fr

@ERCPuppetPlays #PuppetPlays

