Theta XIII - Forms of the Supernatural on Stage: Evolution, Mutations

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Articles issus de la XVe Table Ronde sur le Théâtre Tudor, Tours, les 7-8 septembre 2017
The subject of this volume presents a particular historical interest in the English context, given the impact of the religious reforms (and counter-reforms) over the sixteenth century. On the one hand, the medieval biblical plays, miracles, and moralities disappeared (though in chronologically and geographically uneven fashion), while, despite sporadic upsurges of a theatre of Protestant propaganda, the dramatic representation of sacred personages and explicitly religious themes became progressively more difficult, to the point of near-impossibility. On the other hand, both before and after the development of the Elizabethan public theatre in the 1570s, playwrights found indirect and innovative means of dramatising spiritual issues and entities. With respect to dramatic works ranging from the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century, the authors of these thirteen essays seek to identify points of rupture and continuity in evolving dramaturgical practices, taking into account the pressures of political and religious orthodoxy, as well as questions of genre and context, the mentality of spectators, and staging techniques.