

SAA Seminar 38 Shakespeare in Place Abstracts

Objectives of the seminar:

This seminar takes up a burgeoning interest across the field of early modern studies in ideas of place—what Tim Cresswell would call “meaningful location” (7). In tandem with the general turn in literary studies towards critical cultural geography, this scholarship has developed an important matrix for thinking through the production and reception of cultural texts. On the one hand, the theoretical approach suggests how cultural infrastructure creates and disseminates a sense of place (which is to say, gives a place meaning) and, on the other, asks how a performance might confirm, adjust, or challenge what one already knows about the place in which it literally and figuratively appears? Among other things, this imbricated relationship insists on thinking through not just the textures of place creation but something that might be flagged, imaginatively, as a site of memory. This refers to, as Paul Connerton describes it, “the encoding power of place” (31).

“Shakespeare in Place,” then, aims to explore Shakespeare’s presence (through performances of his plays, but also as a cultural concept) in place making and, moreover, in place meaning. The seminar encouraged a range of geographically and historically diverse case studies to explore different kinds of place-based relationships.

Works Cited

Connerton, Paul. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.

Cresswell, Tim. *Place: A Short Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Mark Aune, “Destination Shakespeare: The Stratford Shakespeare Festival”

Stratford, Ontario is a city of about 32,000 on the Avon River, a ninety minute drive from Toronto and a three hour drive from Detroit. Beginning in the 19th century, the city’s primary industries were furniture manufacture and steam

locomotive maintenance. The Stratford Shakespeare Festival was founded in 1952 by World War II veteran Tom Patterson when the elimination of steam power triggered a precipitous loss of jobs. British director and cultural colonist Tyrone Guthrie was hired as the Festival's first artistic director and pledged to develop the festival using Canadian expertise and talent. Since then, with occasional fallow periods, the Festival has grown and thrived, becoming the largest Shakespeare festival in North America.

In my paper, I plan to investigate how Stratford has been defined by its nominal and then ontological connection with Shakespeare and, at the same time, how Shakespeare has been defined by Stratford, Ontario. Those who founded the town in 1832 clearly desired a connection with England and Shakespeare when they named the town and the river. This affiliation can be seen in the city map, which features Shakespeare and Falstaff streets as well as Anne Hathaway Park. Business in town, such as Othello's Restaurant and the Elizabethan Restaurant manifest the connection commercially.

At the same time, a relatively remote (especially in 1953) Ontario city would seem to be an improbable location for a festival of Shakespeare plays. The local population would not be large enough to support a very extensive festival and while Toronto residents could make a day trip of it, audiences from farther away would have to invest significant time and money to visit. (Though the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, founded in 1935, can be seen as a precedent, its ethos was to provide an entirely local Shakespeare performance, while Stratford explicitly emulated British theater practices.) Despite these potential drawbacks, the Festival regularly staged Shakespeare, and after the first season, Shakespeare and other classical plays.

As much as the Festival has shaped Stratford, the location has also shaped the performance of the plays. For many critics, this means an increasing reliance on modernization, music, and effects at the expense of acting and directing quality. In other words, the Festival has settled for a touristic form of Shakespeare that provides cultural capital for those willing to travel, and at the same time seeking to avoid any potentially challenging productions that might cause audiences to stay at home.

In my paper I hope to use the Stratford Festival as a kind of case study of the way that performing Shakespeare in a (relatively) remote location as an annual event shapes the way his plays are produced and consumed.

Rebekah Bale, 'The Place of the Spirit and the Spirit of the Place: An Analysis of an African *Hamlet*'

Hugues Serge Limbvani adapted, directed and played the role of Hamlet in a version of the play that toured eleven countries in Central and West Africa as well as cities in North America and Europe during 2004-5. Limbvani was born and raised in Congo –Brazzaville although he has now spent more than eighteen years in France.

The issue of place in this adaptation is multi-layered; in performance terms and in the terms of the play itself. First of all the director himself negotiates the notion of place through his roots in Congo-Brazzaville and his theatrical work in France, the former colonial power. Secondly his decision to cast actors from different countries in Francophone West-Central Africa points to a dissection of place in terms of culture and language rather than nation state.

Within the internal logic of the adaptation there are two areas in which the concept of place might be usefully analysed – the role of Gertrude and the place of women in a system that allows no choice in whom they marry and the place of the spirits or ghosts in the Congolese world view.

In this adaptation, Gertrude is in love with Claudius but forced by her father to marry the old king. Hamlet is the product of this marriage. Upon the king's death, Gertrude takes advantage of the custom that allows the brother of a deceased man to marry his brother's wife. The play begins not with the scene on the battlements but with an intimate scene between Gertrude and Claudius that establishes the pain that a forced marriage has had on Gertrude.

The second motivating factor that Limbvani has spoken about is his desire to foreground the role of the spirit world. Despite a Catholic upbringing, the

director believed strongly in taking seriously “the authority of the revenant.” (Lieblein 1) The place of the dead and the aims of the spirit world are extremely important to the African perspective that Limbvani was seeking.

Another aspect of place which is manifested is that of audience – Limbvani explains that for him it was important to take the play to African cities because the audience there react in different ways. Rather than polite respect for the performers that he finds in European audiences, African ones tend towards the critical and “when something doesn’t please them, they let you know.” (Lieblein 3)

These factors combine to produce a fascinating reworking of *Hamlet* in which Shakespeare is not only performed ‘in Africa’ but is adapted to address key elements of West-Central African culture.

Paula S. Berggren, ‘Travel and Travail in Shakespeare’s Sonnets’

England’s geographical insularity both protected and isolated its inhabitants. In the early modern world, a great age of exploration and discovery, readers who stayed at home –in place—could satisfy a taste for travel by turning to a wide variety of literary accounts of far-flung excursions. Yet travel in Shakespeare’s plays frequently invites negative responses. In her encounter with Jaques, for example, Rosalind as Ganymede deplors the melancholy mood that he attributes to his experience: “I had rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad—and to travel for it too!” (*As You Like It* 4.1.24-27). She goes on to catalogue the affectations that stigmatize the typical traveler, chief among them the tendency to derogate one’s own home and heritage, one’s native place.

In this essay, I inquire into the overlap between *travel* and *travail* in Shakespeare’s sonnets, after having examined their interplay in several of the plays. The word *travail* is first introduced in Sonnet 27, “Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,” in which the speaker, despite his fatigue, cannot sleep as he

undertakes a mental journey towards the absent beloved. In 34, the querulous speaker complains of having been lured unprepared into a metaphorical *trauaile*, a journey on a day that promised fair but turns out to be foul. Sonnet 50 (in which *travel* has its modern spelling) and Sonnet 51 depict the unhappy speaker reluctantly riding away from the object of his desire and then anticipating how he will have to apologize for his sloth in his return. In 63, "Against my love shall be as I am now," he thinks ahead to the time when the beloved's "youthful morn / Hath *trauaild* on to age's steepy night" (4-5). By Sonnet 79, he grants the insufficiency of his verse's power to preserve that youthful beauty, which "Deserves the *travail* of a worthier pen" (6) and in 109, "O, never say that I was false of heart," he apologizes for having been absent and "Like him that travels" (6) now returns again.

The orthographical confusion of these related terms allows us to speculate on the links in the poet's mind between journeys, labor, exile, the pains of childbirth, and the act of writing. I argue that *travail/travel* contributes to the extraordinary sense of absence as a palpable presence in so many of these poems. Ultimately, I hope to be able to show that the back-and-forth of venturing and returning that the words *travail/travail* are used to describe constitutes a central gestural motif of the sonnets, as assertions are examined and then double back upon themselves and the directional signals that putatively organize life instead cancel each other out.

Andrew Bozio, 'A Sense of Location: Cartography, Emplacement, and *King Lear*'

The concept of "place" underwent substantial revision in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Losing the primacy it once held in an Aristotelian worldview, "place" became subordinated to a multi-dimensional and infinitely expansive "space," a category theorized largely but not exclusively by Galileo, Descartes, and Newton. In this midst of this gradual recalibration, cartography was also changing. In this essay, I use the cartographic moment in *King Lear* to ask how early modern maps engaged and renegotiated changing definitions of space and place. Through Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* and John

Speed's *Theater of the Empire of Great Britain*, I begin by establishing that the spectrum of early modern maps extends from the platial to the spatial, in which the invocation of discrete, perceptible places allows cartography to signify the local at the same time that it charts the global. I then suggest the perceptual and cognitive apparatuses at work in reading early modern maps, to demonstrate that thinking through the map is an act of producing space. Finally, I turn to Lear's own "mapmindedness," to borrow P.D.A. Harvey's word, in order to show that Lear's ambiguous position within the spectrum of early modern cartography matters for our understanding of his tragedy.

Hannah Crawforth, 'Law in Shakespeare's London: *The Merchant of Venice* (1596-7) and the Inns of Court'

Shakespeare rarely writes about London, the city in which he spends much of his adult life and where his career as a playwright prospers. Yet his plays are informed by London, I argue in this paper; the city is vividly present in many of his dramas that are ostensibly set elsewhere. The paper focuses upon a particular kind of boundary: the relationship between public and private lives in Shakespeare's London. We most often see this concern manifest itself in the treatment of the law in his plays, which I argue is often represented cynically as a public interference in the private lives of citizens. The famous trial scene with which *The Merchant* concludes is perhaps the single most important instance of this, and I offer a new reading of the play by arguing that the tensions between public justice and private mercy evident in this drama is the overarching theme of the play itself. In a city where, as Lena Orlin has shown, evidence gained by eavesdropping on one's neighbours through the gaps in poorly-constructed house walls was considered admissible in court, I show how Shakespeare's understanding of the law itself operates in the space between public and private actions.

Sarah Crover, 'Falling into Place: Evoking Locale in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*'

Long capturing the imagination of playgoers and scholars alike, Falstaff's offstage ducking in the Thames in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, is one of the fascinating moments in Shakespeare's work where, so vivid is his language, that he manages to convince his audience that they have actually witnessed what they have only heard described. This incident, centrally positioned as it is in Act 3, is, arguably, the key event around which the rest of the plot is built. Certainly it overshadows the other two punishments the wives inflict on Falstaff: between the plotting, the execution and the aftermath, his ducking dominates the plot for most of Acts 2 and 3. This emphasis raises questions about what this offstage ducking does for Shakespeare, and his play, that he would give it such pride of place.

Tim Cresswell, drawing upon the work of John Agnew, suggests that "meaningful location" consists of three key elements: location, locale, and sense of place (7). Re-examining the detailed findings at the Rose and Globe excavations sites discussed by Bowsher and Miller in *The Rose and the Globe: Playhouses of Shakespeare's Bankside, Southwark*, and employing Cresswell's notion of meaningful location, I argue that the muddy, flood-endangered locations of the principal London playhouses of the period generated the location and locale for the ducking episode at Datchet Mead, just as the vividly described episode in turn is used by Shakespeare to project a sense of place back onto the riverside. I believe that the pervasive presence of the Thames and its tributaries haunted Shakespeare's creative process as he wrote for theatres that, as Jonson famously noted of the Globe, were usually "Flanck'd with a ditch and forc'd out of a Marish." It is no wonder then, that he produces such an unforgettable encounter with the river, which likewise haunts his audience as it evokes both material locale and encodes a marginal space as a meaningful, if disreputable, location.

Geraldo DeSousa, 'Home and Away: Shakespeare, Geography, and Alien Habitats'

This paper focuses on the concepts of home and away in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (1599) and Fletcher and Massinger's *The Sea Voyage* (1622), and the extent to which intertwined cultural paths "give their shape to spaces" (de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 97). In his influential writings, Northrop Frye classified *As You Like It* as a "green world" comedy, arguing that the symbolic landscape of such plays appropriates "the ritual theme of the triumph of life and love over the wasteland" (*Anatomy of Criticism* 182). Robert Watson, in *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance*, argues that "*As You Like It* emerged from a culture I have depicted with hopes of recovering some original and authentic reality" (77). Yet, I submit, both Shakespeare's play and *The Sea Voyage*, ironically, suggest that to be "in nature" actually means to be "against nature" because, as Godfrey Goodman, in *The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature* (1616), writes "Nature is able to bring nothing to perfection." The characters find themselves caught in a strange geography—a "process...at work in different spaces and places and on different levels and scales" (Sanders, 9). This methodology, as Sanders explains, "interweave[s] natural and built environments" (9). These plays provide experiments in survival; and while the journeys depicted therein lead to homecoming rather than homesteading, the playwrights suggest that our experience of the natural world is to a large extent a matter of perception and of cultural assumptions. In different ways, these two plays attempt to sort out the nature of nature: how alien habitats, in the absence of architecture, resist becoming familiar places. Homesteading requires architecture to arrange and partition spaces, cover voids, set limits, and define boundaries; only then can alien habitats become familiar places.

Works cited

Julie Sanders, *The Cultural Geography of Early Modern Drama, 1620-1650*
Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011.

Cary DiPietro, 'Seeing Places: the New Visual Aesthetic of the Restoration Theatre and the Case of *The Tempest*'

This paper is the first half of what will be a chapter on 'place' in an illustrated monograph about the visual cultures of modernity and English performances of Shakespeare after 1660. The chapter opens with a discussion of the two major Restoration adaptations of *The Tempest*, the 1667 adaptation by Davenant and Dryden performed at the Duke's Theatre, a converted indoor tennis court at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the 1674 adaptation by Thomas Shadwell, the so-called operatic *Tempest* built upon Davenant and Dryden's adaptation and staged at the purpose-built Dorset Garden Theatre in Drury Lane. Both adaptations, though not the first in the Restoration, are of interest because their stage success was due in part to the new visual aesthetic of painted scenery employed by Davenant after 1660 and later the King's company led by Killigrew. The difficulty that besets the discussion of the new visual aesthetic, however, is the absence of visual records of performance, an absence, I argue, which masks an important cultural development of early modernity: the ability of new media to represent places visually as mimetic copies of places as seen by the eye.

Shakespeare's play is especially relevant, even in its adapted versions, because its own sense of place, the unnamed island, is linked to early colonial encounter with the new world, the play's pastoralism combining by way of Thomas More's pun in 'utopia' an idealized place (*eu-topos*) and its absence (*ou-topos*). I argue that the idealized 'absent' place of performance provides one way of thinking about the theatrical representation of place as 'not a place', an idealized artifice that 'colonizes' theatrical space by imposing order on it. In the case of baroque theatre, the craft of perspective painting and visual order subordinate a sense of scenic place by transforming theatrical space into the 'baseless fabric of a vision'. The evocation of place through aesthetic artifice is thus mediated through representational forms and practices that, thinking through the spatial theory of Henri Lefebvre, are encoded with different kinds of social exchange in the space of the theatre. In contrast to this argument, however, I will argue alternatively that the play enables through the experience of its performance a critique of the subordination of place to colonial discourse, no less through its utopianism. This latter argument turns upon an understanding of the aesthetic as developed by

the cultural theorist Theodor Adorno according to which specific kinds of art open up the possibility for a negative dialectical critique of social order. The paper concludes by looking forward to the second half of the book chapter in which I turn from aesthetic theory to place theory in the phenomenological tradition to think about how representations of place produce or are produced by our felt attachments to place that transcend or prefigure epistemology and how such attachments might help us to rethink the notion of represented places as merely mimetic copies of real places.

Lea Puljcan Juric, "Voyages to Epidamnum in *The Comedy of Errors*"

My paper explores the role of Epidamnum, an ancient Illyrian city on the coast of modern-day Albania, in Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*. The link between Plautus' *Menaecmi* and *The Comedy of Errors* is well-known, but the importance of Epidamnum and the ancient Illyrians, the city's majority inhabitants, to this intertextual scene has not been explored. I show that Plutarch's *Morals* also helps to explain the Adriatic context of the play. Closer to Shakespeare's time, a passage on trade and negotiaton in Thomas Nashe's prose pamphlet *An Almond for a Parrat* (1589) echoes a similar anecdote about ancient Epidamnum in Plutarch. Though Shakespeare does not quite reproduce the stigma that Plautus attaches to Epidamnum in the *Menaecmi*, that city remains epicentral for the resonance of loss and gain in the plot—the disappearing, and then reclamation, of people, property, and the logic designed to support the established social and political order. Certainly, the theme of ostensibly magical social upheaval, (impending) ruin, and eventual recovery is prominent in many Shakespeare comedies and cannot be tied to a particular setting. In *The Comedy of Errors*, however, it owes much to the Graeco-Illyrian 'sorcery' that permeates the *Menaecmi* and, indirectly, to the unsavory reputation of the ancient Illyrians as barbarous and riotous doubles of their purportedly civilized northeast Mediterranean neighbors.

Jemima Matthews, '(Dis)placing the Thames'

In William Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* the intruder Falstaff is taught to know his place by being literarily displaced into the ditch close by the Thames side. To know one's place and to be *in place* it seems one may also have to learn what it means to be out of place. This paper will begin to unpack some of the ways in which cultural understandings of community and belonging are integrated in and upon the material geography of the river Thames.

Through privies, river stairs, and Bankside lodgings, the lived spaces of London extended into and physically entered the water. Through reclamation and other associated processes the edge of the built environment could advance into riverspace. Whilst Falstaff's ducking takes place in Datchet Mead, *Merry Wives* relies upon evoking a series of other spaces and places. The play is simultaneously site-specific whilst also folding multiple spaces and places in upon themselves. Edward S Casey has posed the apparently theoretical question '[d]o places have edges?' (65) This paper will take up this challenge and explore edges and edge-spaces in *Merry Wives*. Casey has argued that 'edges extend to places as well: [...] a given edge can just as well be seen as the end of one place as the beginning of another. A place comes to its own edge. If it did not come to some edge, it would not count as a place at all.' (69) This paper will consider how edges are used to constitute and define *place*. However, I will also consider how edge-spaces are used to undermine *place*. In particular I will focus on the way in which edge-positions reconstitute both place and belonging. The importance of labour, craft and community are central to the paper, and there will be a focused consideration of the way in which these processes negotiate and mutually construct both the river and its banks. Through consideration of archival material including maps and plans I will examine some of the material edges and edge-spaces of the early modern Thames in order to reconsider the way in which the river emerges on the early modern stage and page.

Works Cited

Casey, Edward. 'Do Places have Edges? A Geo-philosophical inquiry' in (eds.) Daniels, Stephen., DeLyser, Dydia., Nicholas Entrikin, J., and Richardson, Douglas. *Envisioning Landscapes, Making Worlds: Geography and the humanities*. London: Routledge, 2011.

Sharon O'Dair, 'Cursing the Queer Family: Shakespeare, Psychoanalysis, and My Own Private Idaho'

Elsewhere I have argued that in rewriting Shakespeare's *Henriad*, *Idaho* collapses the pastoral distinction between country and city. The country is no less corrupt than is the city; because of its corruption, Mike leaves the country for the city. City dwellers, like Hans, the auto parts dealer, conduct business in the country, and so, too, do Mike and Scott, for whom Hans is a customer. In turn, Mike and Scott rely on and are subject to the constraints of a law enforced (or not) by native Americans, "natural" men no longer. *Idaho*, a Western in which no home on the range is possible, offers a pastoral manqué, a pastoral ripped of its foundations, a perhaps not surprising result in a world that has marked the end of nature, as Bill McKibben put it in his 1989 best-seller.

In writing this essay, I had hoped to establish that Mike's longing for home and for family is associated in the film with pastoral longing and pastoral spaces, with a retreat or return to the country—the open range of the American past, the Italian countryside of the European past—and thus to argue that Van Sant shows both to be illusions. Just as the country is neither better nor worse than the city, so the home Mike attempts to build on the street (and the love he attempts to kindle in Scott) is just as legitimate as the family into which he was born or perhaps rather, just as legitimate as the family into which Scott was born. But while I stand by the argument that *Idaho* collapses the pastoral distinction between city and country, I am sad now to argue that the film does not collapse the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate kinship structures, does not effectively question or better yet escape the heteronormative demands, rooted in the incest taboo, that consign Mike (and many of the other young people in the film) to the margins of society, illegitimate and lost. Van Sant simply begs the question posed by his film about family and home, about kinship, and about the queer subject—"why Mike's on the street" (Fuller xli). Mike is on the street, Van Sant tells Graham Fuller, "because his real family didn't work" (Fuller xli). *Why doesn't his real family work?*

Van Sant begs the question because the only answer he can provide is one offered in the intellectual space established not by Shakespeare but by another progenitor to which he is indebted, Sigmund Freud. In *Idaho*, Van Sant fails to imagine for his homosexual street kids a compelling alternative to the incest taboo, the Oedipus complex, and the symbolic law of the father, thus reaffirming the psychoanalytic dictum that, as Judith Butler puts it, “alternative kinship arrangements attempt to revise psychic structures in ways lead to tragedy,” tragedy “figured incessantly as the tragedy of and for the child” (70).

Kurt Schreyer, “The Royal Arctic Shakespeare Company”

The sea is a forbidding place for literary study, not to mention theatrical performance. As the anonymous author of *Life in a Man-of-War* (Philadelphia, 1841) explains, “from the ‘high and giddy mast’ to the confines of the hold below” there is such “vociferous turmoil and noisy outcry” uncondusive “to anything like a contemplative mood.” Whatever distractions he may have experienced aboard ship, the author’s blithe use of an obscure nautical phrase borrowed from 2 *Henry IV* begs the question: since when were sailors more interested in literary rather than libidinal pursuits? When—and *where*—did they read, and perhaps perform, Shakespeare? This paper will begin to address these broad questions by studying surviving records from nineteenth-century Royal Navy ships sent to search Arctic seas for lost members of Captain Sir John Franklin’s Northwest Passage expedition. Frozen in ice for many winter months, these ships staged frequent theatrical productions, typically farcical comedies, but also several Shakespeare plays. The rescue vessels also housed substantial libraries. Like the geographic place of the Arctic to which these ships ventured, maritime literary practices and culture are too often viewed as marginal interests to serious scholarship. Aiming to overcome this marginalization, I suggest that remote Arctic latitudes provided sailors with the opportunity to cross literary horizons and social boundaries more readily, perhaps, than in British home waters. I will therefore study shipboard libraries and improvised “arctic theatres” as contested places of cross-class engagement perhaps unique in the balkanized territory below the deck of a Royal Navy warship where tradition, rank, and discipline supposedly held sway.

Sarah Breckenridge Wright, ' "Then shall our names... Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered": Memorial Construction in Shakespeare's *Richard II*'

Shakespeare's *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second* marks a new beginning in the bard's career. Turning away from the War of the Roses, Shakespeare tackles an equally tumultuous political reign, peopled by increasingly complex characters. In *Richard II* he delves into the mind of one of the most intriguing of these characters: Richard Plantagenet himself. Shakespeare's Richard has often been characterized as the quintessential "king with two bodies," a representation of the conflict between body politic and body natural. He has also been described as a tragic hero, a manipulative villain, a spokesman for divine right, a masterful rhetorician, and a feudal lord who endorses a world of oaths, titles, and ritual solemnity. All of these readings are stimulating, and they convey the complexity of the last Angevin king, but they fail to realize that *Richard II* is above all a play about authorship. Amidst a tumultuous political milieu, Shakespeare's Richard ceases to become king and becomes an author who assumes the task of writing himself into history. By inscribing and adorning the land, he fuses his historical legacy with the soil on which it was played and takes authorial control of his memorial construction.

In this paper, I will begin by demonstrating that Richard associates himself with the land both because of the symbolic relationship between a monarch and his realm, and because he wanted to lay claim to what Shakespearean audiences would have recognized as England's most potent economic resource, assuming the power inherent in the land and applying it to his own historical legacy. Moreover, as John of Gaunt's "sceptered isle" speech makes clear, the soil itself was a substance out of which greater political and social paradigms could be constructed. I will then show that Richard's authorial practice depends on his inscription and adornment of the soil. Just as a poet leaves his mark in ink on a piece of parchment, Richard leaves his mark on the land. In this way, he

regulates his national memory by exploiting the land's power as a palimpsest whose *scriptio inferior* can never be fully erased.

.....

Julie Sanders and Susan Bennett, Staging piece in response to papers: 'Shakespeare in (and out of) place'

This seminar was designed to explore a burgeoning interest across the field of early modern studies in ideas of place—what Tim Cresswell would call “meaningful location” (7). We are interested in exploring Shakespeare’s work in place making and, perhaps more significantly, place meaning as well, of course, in how a turn to place opens up particular and sometimes unexpected avenues of inquiry for his plays and poems. Whether looking at Shakespeare’s plays (and sonnets) in the period of their first production, other remote historical moments, or a more or less contemporary framework, ideas of place inform, shape, and contest the meanings that accrue. This is hardly surprising since, as Cresswell puts it, “Place is primary because it is the experiential fact of our existence” (32). Equally, of course, texts and performances contribute to the condition of place.

Much recent work on ideas of place, summarized in Cresswell’s book, which seminar participants have engaged with to great effect, deals with more contemporary instantiations of environment, typically modern and/or global cities. But we hope through this seminar to test the usefulness of place concepts in other historical periods and in different articulations of cities and other sites. Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift have described what they call “the restless site” (48) to take account of “rhythms of appearance and disappearance, anticipations and memories” (49) that remind us that place is “*living* rather than *lived* space” (48 emphasis in original). With this sense of movement in/as place, we have approached the papers in our staging piece (circulated to all seminar members in advance) through their various engagements with the potentialities of place in the production and reception of Shakespeare’s work.

Initially, then, we suggest four main inflections of place through which to explore and engage the various papers: “in” place (as locale, as performance, embodied and practised), “between” place(s) (edges, liminalities, fluidities, contact zones),

“out of” place (unnatural, distanced, labored, colonized, invaded), and “affective” place (home, nature, remembered site, the *unheimlich*).

Works Cited

Amin, Ash and Nigel Thrift. *Cities: Reimagining the Urban*. Cambridge: Polity, 2002.

Cresswell, Tim. *Place: A Short Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.