

Staging Geographies and the Geographies of Staging:  
Space and Place in Shakespeare's *Richard II*:  
Text and Production

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

## Declaration of Authorship

I, Laura Jane Higgins, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Abstract

This thesis provides a new set of analytical tools with which to approach Shakespeare's plays in production. This approach, which I am terming *theatrical geographies*, operates through a tripartite process which involves an analysis of the textual geographies, an examination of the geographies of staging across the play's performance history, and a close reading of the workings of space and place in a selection of contemporary productions. By combining theoretical perspectives and conceptualizations of space and place from cultural geography with existing ideas on theatrical space, this critical framework furthers understanding of the multiple spatialities that performance generates and illuminates the role of space(s) in creating meaning.

This research brings together elements of traditional Theatre History and Performance Studies, and builds on previous work which has focused on the individual areas of space as a dramaturgical element, theatre architecture, the histories of individual theatres, and scenography. By taking account of important questions left by these engagements with theatrical space and adding an interrogation of space in action in postmodern performance, *theatrical geographies* offers an integrated approach to the complex interactions between text, place, and performance. This enables a more nuanced analysis of the real and imagined spaces of the theatrical event as it facilitates an examination of the materialization of the fictive world and a consideration of the ways in which individual plays intervene in the identities of their places of performance.

My test case is *Richard II*. An analysis of the textual geographies reveals the richly ambiguous places that comprise the playworld, and applying a geographical consciousness to contemporary productions demonstrates the negotiations between Shakespeare's dramatic-geographical imagination and spatial issues of concern in the postmodern world, thus uncovering fresh nuances in the play and opening up new conceptions of its potential cultural work.

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## Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to my supervisor Professor Elizabeth Schafer for seeing the potential of this project and for her advice and encouragement throughout; to Jack Merrall and Delories Dunn for their discussions and comments; to Maureen Beattie, Adrián Daumas, Julius D'Silva, Grant Hicks, Chuk Iwuji, Donnacadh O'Briain, Genevieve O'Reilly, William Osborne, Liza Sadovy, Jonathan Slinger, and Susan Tracy for their insights into producing and inhabiting some of the spaces I discuss; to Mara Lockowandt and Chris Horton for their help with formatting the graphics; and to my mum and dad, Monica and Joseph Higgins, for their constant love and support.

## A Note on the Text

To avoid over-long in-text citations in the case of reviews and other press articles, abbreviated forms for newspaper titles and dates are used. N.m.p. is used in bibliographic entries for secondary sources where the writer quoting the source has not given the medium of publication.

For brevity and ease, productions are often referred to simply by the director's surname.

As Richard's Queen is never named, an upper case letter will be used for the noun 'Queen' when it refers to this character since it serves as both proper name and title.

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## List of Abbreviations

<i>AP</i>	<i>Associated Press</i>
<i>BH</i>	<i>Boughton Herald</i>
<i>BP</i>	<i>Birmingham Post</i>
<i>DE</i>	<i>Daily Express</i>
<i>DM</i>	<i>Daily Mail</i>
<i>DT</i>	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>
<i>DV</i>	<i>Daily Variety</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>Era</i>
<i>ED</i>	<i>Evening Dispatch</i>
<i>EJ</i>	<i>Evesham Journal</i>
<i>EN</i>	<i>Evening News</i>
<i>ES</i>	<i>Evening Standard</i>
<i>ESS</i>	<i>Elizabethan Stage Society</i>
<i>Ex</i>	<i>Examiner</i>
<i>Exp</i>	<i>Express</i>
<i>FT</i>	<i>Financial Times</i>
<i>G</i>	<i>Guardian</i>
<i>H</i>	<i>Herald</i>
<i>HR</i>	<i>Hollywood Reporter</i>
<i>HRev</i>	<i>Hudson Review</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>Independent</i>
<i>IHT</i>	<i>International Herald Tribune</i>
<i>ILN</i>	<i>Illustrated London News</i>
<i>IS</i>	<i>Independent on Sunday</i>
<i>JC</i>	<i>Jewish Chronicle</i>
<i>L</i>	<i>Lady</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>Metro</i>
<i>MG</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>
<i>MGaz</i>	<i>Morning Gazette</i>
<i>MGW</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian Weekly</i>
<i>MP</i>	<i>Morning Post</i>
<i>MS</i>	<i>Morning Star</i>
<i>MSun</i>	<i>Mail on Sunday</i>

NA	<i>Newcastle Advertiser</i>
NC	<i>New Chronicle</i>
NOW	<i>News of the World</i>
NP	<i>Nottingham Post</i>
NSN	<i>New Statesman and Nation</i>
NYT	<i>New York Times</i>
O	<i>Observer</i>
OP	Original Practices
PI	<i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i>
PIntv	Personal interview
PP	Production programme
RSC	Royal Shakespeare Company
RST	Royal Shakespeare Theatre
S	<i>Sketch</i>
SMT	Stratford Memorial Theatre
Sp	<i>Spectator</i>
St	<i>Star</i>
ST	<i>Sunday Times</i>
STC	<i>Sunday Times, Culture</i>
STel	<i>Sunday Telegraph</i>
Stg	<i>Stage</i>
Tat	<i>Tatler</i>
TB	<i>Tatler and Bystander</i>
T	<i>Times</i>
TN	<i>Theatre News</i>
TO	<i>Time Out</i>
TOP	The Other Place
TRB	Theatre Royal Bristol
V&ATC	Victoria and Albert Museum Theatre Collections
WE	<i>Wolverhampton Express</i>
WMCS	<i>Western Mail Cardiff Supplement</i>
WO	<i>What's On</i>

## Introduction:

Space, Shakespeare, and *Richard II*

This is a particularly exciting juncture at which to take a new approach to the examination of space in and for theatre. It is a space-time in which converge the rich legacies of twentieth-century developments in theatre architecture and scenography, an awareness of the possibilities opened up through the use of found spaces and site-specific performance, and vibrant, new conceptualizations of space on the part of cultural geographers. This thesis explores the complex relations between text, place, and performance in Shakespeare production. By borrowing from current thinking in cultural geography, and by complementing traditional theatre history methodologies with perspectives of experience and embodied practice embraced by performance studies, I build on the work of theatre scholars/practitioners who have investigated different aspects of theatrical space. By drawing on these various approaches, and adding the dimension of space in action in performance, I provide a spatially-inflected, integrated framework for approaching Shakespeare's plays in production.

Taking *Richard II* as a test case, this thesis demonstrates the potentials of this new set of critical tools, which I am terming *theatrical geographies*. In this term, I wish to acknowledge the important contributions made to my thinking by both theatre and geography, and to imply the wide range of scales and sites—both real and imagined—that 'geographies' encapsulates. I use the plural form in order not to limit the spatial thinking applied to the theatrical event to a single model and to indicate that different modes of geographical consciousness may be rewardingly employed in the analysis of performance.

The overarching argument of this thesis is that combining conceptualizations of space and place from cultural geography with existing ideas on theatrical space furthers understanding of the multiple geographies that performance generates, and expands the ways in which space in theatre is conceived of and apprehended, thereby enabling a more nuanced analysis of the theatrical event. I also argue that approaching *Richard II* in production with a consciousness of the interplay between Shakespeare's geographical imagination and our postmodern geographical imagination brings new subtleties to our reading of the play as text and performance, and reveals how it participates in dialogues about contemporary spatial questions and anxieties.

The intertheatrical mapping made available through my examination of the geographies of production and the analyses of my case studies enhances our serial

appreciation of *Richard II*, and facilitates the identification of both new and recurring spaces which are engendered in production, thus opening up new ways of thinking about the cultural and political work in which the play engages. I also argue that the stage environments produced by *Richard II* are as important in the construction and disruption of imaginative geographies of England as are those of more widely diffused, technologically-mediated representations of the nation in film and television, and the landscapes of painting, literature, and photography: all of which have received the critical attention of geographers. Moreover, since geographers have largely ignored theatre, this thesis also aims to forge new ground at the interface between theatre and geography.

This thesis extends the work on theatrical space by addressing the intriguing questions left pending by those scholars/practitioners who have investigated theatrical space from various perspectives. Analyses of textual space, studies of theatre architecture, histories of individual theatres and theatre districts, and discussions of scenography have elucidated theatrical space as a dramaturgical element and a material place. However, there remains a need for an exploration of the spaces produced when a particular play is emplaced in a particular theatre and for a more sustained analysis of the scenographies generated by a play across a protracted period of time. By bringing together traditional and new ways of thinking about space and applying them to the study of the journey of a single play, I provide significant insights into the collaborations between text, actors, objects, and audience imagination in the production of space in performance and demonstrate how a play can intervene in the lives and identities of the theatres it temporarily inhabits.

Theatrical geographies is a particularly appropriate framework for the analysis of Shakespeare in performance as—in contrast to many modern works in which the detailed descriptions and stage directions limit the potential for alternative constructions of the fictive world—there is more scope for different materializations of the playworld. In addition, the frequency with which Shakespeare's plays are performed makes available for analysis a large number of productions and therefore enables the creation of an extensive intertheatrical mapping. Moreover, Shakespeare's personal involvement in the construction of space, from the design and building of the Globe to the realization on stage of the fictive worlds he created in his plays, demonstrates a particularly comprehensive engagement with space, which suggests that a reciprocally space-sensitive approach to his works is highly appropriate. Furthermore, Shakespeare's knowledge of the old and new mapping cultures, combined with his lived experience as

an inhabitant of a rural town, a migrant worker, and a city dweller in the capital contributed to the formation of the distinctly paradoxical geographical imagination which can be detected in his plays. This productively ambiguous sense of space makes Shakespeare's dramatic geographies rich objects of interpretation on the page, and more especially in performance, where 'the setting, periodization, costuming and theatre space, [. . .] are so crucial to a production's impact' (Schafer, 'Performance' 208), and the design and articulation of space may be a means of confirming or unsettling expectations of the playworld.

Shakespeare's plays also reveal an interesting variety of spatial patterns, including: multiple shifts of location (the histories, *Cymbeline*); key shifts from one place to another (*Othello*, *As You Like It*); alternation between places (*Troilus and Cressida*, *Henry IV Part 1*, *Antony and Cleopatra*); and dispersed locations within a single named place (*Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, *Much Ado About Nothing*). Even the claustrophobic Elsinore is a site of multiple spatialities: traversed by travellers from Europe and viewed imaginatively from the perspective of Hamlet's excursion to the high seas, it is both a centripetal and centrifugal force and a gathering point for the tensions between staying and leaving, shot through with an ambiguity that gives it a significance beyond the idea of dramatic setting.

Scholarly investigations into how cartography may have influenced the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries (discussed in Chapter One) have provided important insights into the early modern geographical imagination. Although such studies enhance our understanding of the plays, they resituate the dramatic texts back in their original geo-historical context. The critical framework I am proposing adds a new perspective to these engagements with Shakespeare and geography by considering *Richard II* in performance in relation to present geographical thought, thus augmenting the meanings available in the play and demonstrating how Shakespeare in production can engage with the geographical pleasures and anxieties of the current age. The detailed analyses I provide in my case studies bring Shakespeare production into the wider dialogue between spatiality and performativity currently occurring across the arts and humanities (Daniels, Pearson, and Roms 1) and locate Shakespeare production within the performance discourse that performance scholars argue is particularly apposite to articulating, exploring and understanding our relations with the spaces we inhabit (see Solga, Hopkins, and Orr 3; and Harvie *Theatre* 8). Moreover, as my case studies postdate existing stage histories of *Richard II* (Page 1987; Shewring 1996; Healey 1998), by focusing on these productions, this thesis makes a timely contribution

to the play's ongoing performance history, whilst simultaneously offering an innovative approach to their interpretation.

I have chosen *Richard II* to demonstrate the potentials of my approach, as staging the play's geographies presents some distinctive challenges and opportunities. The play is rich in ambiguous and qualitative spaces, as well as named historical places—nations, regions, cities, and castles—and domestic spaces. The narrative ranges across space, mapping locations in England, Wales, and Ireland, and situating Richard's kingdom within the wider geographies of Europe and the Holy Land, and the mythical sites of Heaven and Hell; but the closing in of space is also present in the text. We see Richard pass from being a king who is in control of space and able to command people to and from his presence, and from his kingdom, to being one confined by space; and although Bolingbroke vows to 'make a voyage to the Holy Land' to atone for Richard's murder (V.6.49-50), he never goes.

The play examines not just history, but 'the power-filled and problematic making of geographies' (Soja, *Postmodern 7*), and provides a meditation on the ever shifting identity of England and its relations with places beyond its shores. It deals with the spatial themes of exile, pilgrimage, crusade, and the transformation of the landscape through conflict, and so articulates human relations with place that are of great interest to cultural geographers. Further, in its exploration of an 'England' in a state of transition, and the impact of this upon its inhabitants, *Richard II* creates an intersection between historical chronicle and cultural geography. It is consequently a pertinent work with which to begin an analytical journey through real and imagined spaces, and an appropriate site for the convergence of historiographical and geographical theories and methodologies that theatrical geographies employs.

*Richard II* also resonates with one of the central problems exercising cultural geographers today. Geographers are currently seeking to formulate a more progressive sense of place which maintains the 'notion of spatial difference, of uniqueness, even of rootedness if people want that', but without being reactionary (Massey, 'Power-geometry' 64); and which simultaneously accommodates the potential role of mobility in identity formation, but without subscribing to a generalized romanticization of nomadic lifestyles (Cresswell, 'Mobilizing' 20). In articulating the concept of England as bounded space and exploring the effects of displacement on identity, the play encapsulates some of the tensions between sedentary and nomadic experiences of place.

In addition, *Richard II* has a somewhat sporadic and troubled stage history and, as the 'seemingly most arcane and intractable' of the English chronicle plays (Gregor

213), it has been more resistant to geo-temporal relocation than many of Shakespeare's other works. Although the play's geographical themes still resonate today in our world of displaced persons, global markets, territorial contests, and debates about the nature of national space, the tensions between this contemporary thematic relevance and the historical and geographical specificity of its medieval narrative and alien concept of divine right give rise to compelling questions as to how and where to locate *Richard II* on the contemporary stage.

Human spatialities, such as those I identify in *Richard II*, have also become a focus of concern within certain areas of theatre and performance studies. This thesis complements the work of theatre and performance scholars/practitioners who have engaged with geography in their 'examination and promotion of cultural topographies' (Solga, Orr, and Hopkins ix), and researchers, performers and artists who participated in the AHRC's multi-disciplinary *Landscape and Environment* programme.<sup>1</sup> This work is wide-ranging, but a few examples will give an idea of its scope and some of its key concerns; the shared areas of interest and points of difference with my current project confirm the value of the new perspectives that the framework of theatrical geographies brings to Shakespeare performance studies.

The productive exchange that has begun to take place between theatre, performance studies, and geography revolves around the view that performance is not only 'a creative practice and mode of representation but also [. . .] a vital means of embodied engagement and enquiry' (Daniels, Pearson, and Roms 1). This is exemplified in a strand of performance studies/practice which has explored the potential of pedestrian performances to draw walkers into real or invented narratives which enable them to rewrite their own experience of an environment, to find a place within it, or to engage in performative encounters with the histories of places and their previous inhabitants (Marla Carlson 17; Heddon and Turner 17, 19; Sotelo; Feenstra). D. J. Hopkins and Shelley Orr have used walking in post-9/11 New York as a means of exploring 'the relationship between built space and memory, especially those architectural spaces built specifically as memorials' (36) and have examined the negotiations in the design and location of these spaces and the ways in which they

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<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the 'compelling cultural significance' of landscape and environment, this programme, which ran initially from 2005-2010 but continued into 2011, brought together 'researchers from a wide range of disciplines and approaches (including those for whom practice is integral to the research) to address the changing ways landscapes and environments have been imagined, experienced, designed, made and managed'. The broad focus of their investigations included 'landscapes and environments articulated in words, pictures, performance, patterns of building and cultivation and in forms of conduct and livelihood' (*Landscape and Environment* Website).



facilitate or limit opportunities for the performance of grief and remembering. Walking has also offered a practice for the exploration of distance, connectedness, and the spaces between through collaborations such as that between Nottingham-based Sorrell Muggridge and Toronto-based Laura Nanni who ‘walk together in shared time rather than in shared space’ (Heddon and Turner 19-20).

The analysis of performance institutions and the relations between performance venues and identity formation has also featured in the research of theatre and performance scholars whose work enmeshes with cultural geography. In his discussions of ‘the roles culture and performance play in imagining a political subject’, Michael McKinnie foregrounds one of London’s designated identities as a ‘global city’ and its concomitant anxieties. In the context of analysing the respective locations, repertoires, and aims of the Lift and the Barbican, he argues that ‘cultural policy and performance institutions in contemporary London [. . .] seek to instantiate an urban subject who is simultaneously a financier and a communitarian, a local patriot and a global migrant’ (112, 125). Ric Knowles, who is also concerned with urban identities and performance spaces, focuses on the ways in which Toronto has defined itself through the enactment of the ‘official multicultural script’ (‘Multicultural’ *passim*). Knowles argues that although government policy has worked to exclude First Nations’ theatre from the city’s stages—except in the folkloric forms sanctioned by the mainstream funded theatres—First Nations theatre companies are ‘negotiat[ing] and perform[ing] into existence a new Native community in Toronto’ (82), and forging alliances among themselves that open up new conceptual and material spaces.

The tripartite methodological framework of theatrical geographies has crossovers with the work of theatre and performance scholars who have engaged with dramatic texts. Although Joanne Tomkins focuses explicitly on the articulation of anxieties about land and identities in Australian performance, she shares my concern to analyse plays in a way that ‘illuminate[s] spatiality’ and sheds light on ‘how spatiality makes and remakes meaning’ (*Unsettling* 17). Tomkins begins by considering ‘the setting that is outlined by the playwright’ and ‘incorporat[es], when possible, the setting augmented by the designer of a particular production, to elicit the ways in which a play’s spatial arrangements speak to, and about, social and political space’ (*Unsettling* 17). Similarly, Kim Solga interrogates the realization of textual space in performance and her analysis of the 2005 revival of Split Britches’ *Dress Suits to Hire* aims to provide ‘a full account of how space works in the play *as space*, as the material dimension of its critique of sexual tensions’ (152). Solga is interested in how *Dress*

*Suits* ‘manipulates architecture and geography’ as a means of exploring the physical and imaginative socio-sexual geographies of emotion and separation of contemporary America (153). Her analysis demonstrates a sensitivity to the overlaying of real and fictive spaces that constitute the geographies of theatrical performance and a consciousness of how their associations and connotations contribute to the production of meaning: concerns which are also central to this thesis.

Like these researchers, I conceive of space as lived, embodied and practised; and like them I am also concerned with relations between performance and memory, and with the processes by which ‘cumulative meanings accrue in a single location as a result of the history of events that have taken place there’ (Hopkins and Orr 36): a principle that I apply to both theatres and discrete sites within the stagescapes I examine. In common with the studies outlined above, the framework of theatrical geographies also takes account of the connections between places and stories; the potential of spaces to determine performance and the potential of performance to make significant interventions into spaces; and the role of places in the construction of identities. However, performance studies research has largely focused on the performance of everyday life and street events such as protest or on ‘less conventional performances’ (Harvie, *Theatre* 68).<sup>2</sup> My project furthers this work, then, by drawing on cultural geography to demonstrate that the performance of a canonical text in conventional theatres similarly provides important insights into our understanding of contemporary space and space relations.

Further, as Harvie argues, the tendency of performance scholars to apply a more optimistic performative mode of analysis to everyday performance and less conventional performances—as opposed to the cultural materialist framework which is usually ‘used to explore the (repressive) conditions of theatre production’ (*Theatre* 68)—produces ‘separations of objects and analyses [which . . .] reinforce disciplinary separations between theatre studies and performance studies, impoverishing them both’ (69). By constructing a geographically-consciousness framework which adopts a mobile critical position that accommodates aspects of both materialist and performative analysis, and applying this analytical framework to Shakespeare production in mainstream theatres, this thesis aims to enrich thinking on space and performance in theatre, performance studies, and geography.

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Harvie’s discussions of *Back to Back*, *Blast Theory*, *Critical Mass*, and *Reverend Billy* (*Theatre* 58-66); and Rugg 97-101.

In addition, the construction of city dwellers and urban visitors as embodied practitioners, whether in their performance of everyday life or their participation in ‘alternative’ performances, offers an optimistic view of individuals as thoughtful agents producing and modifying space, and capable of entering into productive dialogues with the environment, its histories, policies, and distinct sites. This is an identity which is usually denied the ‘conventional’ theatre goer, who is assumed to be a passive spectator at a play. Drawing on Jacques Rancière, I wish to problematize the active-passive binary, and argue that the case studies considered in this thesis were equally concerned with the role of ‘the productive and emancipated spectator’ (Bennett 1).

Rancière argues that ‘every spectator is already an actor in his own story and that every actor is in turn the spectator of the same kind of story’ (n.pag.). In one sense, then, we always combine the performance of everyday life with the act of attending a theatrical performance, so our own performances interact with those of others, whether formally considered actors or spectators. Like, Rancière, I envisage a theatre in which audiences are simultaneously ‘performers who display their competences and spectators who are looking to find what those competences might produce in a new context, among unknown people’ (n. pag.); this suggests that theatregoing can involve the application of existing knowledge accompanied by an openness to the modification of that knowledge. Such a theatre requires ‘spectators who are active interpreters, who render their own translation, who appropriate the story for themselves, and who ultimately make their own story out of it’ (n. pag.).

Productive and emancipated spectatorship, then, doesn’t depend on the type of theatre (canonical text, pedestrian dramaturgy, new work) or the type of venue (conventional theatre, found space, street); but is, rather, a disposition underpinned by the dual consciousness that audiences are always both performers and spectators whose competences enter into reciprocal enhancement, and whose stories form part of a polyphonic chorus of competing narratives that can be fruitfully told and analysed. This thesis demonstrates that a sensitivity to the roles that the geographies of performance can offer theatre goers is a significant component in audience competences and opens up new ways of telling the story of the play as well as facilitating new positions from which spectators may tell their own stories of Richard or of their theatrical experiences. My examination of Warner’s *Richard II* and my case studies shows the potential of the spaces generated by this play in the millennial border to cast the audience in roles that require them to be ‘active interpreters’ and demonstrates the spectators’ participation in the production of the multiple spatialities of theatrical performance.

The four case studies I examine have been selected for the compelling ‘answers’ they offer to the challenges of placing this play at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The geographies of each of these stagings tapped into pressing spatial issues of their historical moment and situated *Richard II* within discourses that extend the discursive boundaries of the play. Although they are all drawn from mainstream theatrical institutions, the productions present very different opportunities for analysis as they were performed in four very different theatre spaces. Steven Pimlott’s production was staged at the RSC’s then studio theatre, The Other Place; Trevor Nunn’s in the Old Vic, a ‘traditional’ proscenium arch theatre; Tim Carroll’s at the ‘replica’ Globe; and Michael Boyd’s in a reconstruction of the Stratford-upon-Avon Courtyard inserted into the Roundhouse, London.

These case studies are four of the five major British productions of *Richard II* clustered within the first decade of the new millenium; the fifth, directed by Jonathan Kent (for the Almeida) at the Gainsborough Studios, merits attention and will be discussed in Chapter Three. I have not included Kent’s *Richard II* as a case study firstly, as I wish to focus in this current project on the geographies that the play has generated in purpose-built theatres. Secondly, since Kent’s production made a specific intervention into a found space, interacting with the building’s past histories and dilapidated state, it could form part of a future investigation into Shakespeare in non-conventional spaces and site-specific/site-responsive productions of the plays and could be productively considered both in the context of the Almeida’s Shakespeare in Shoreditch season (which also included *Coriolanus*), and alongside the Shakespeare productions/adaptations of companies such as Creation Theatre, Punchdrunk, In Situ, Hydrocracker, and Dreamthinkspeak.

The selected case studies afford an opportunity to examine the similarities and disjunctures in the modes of geographical consciousness that can be critically applied to productions of the same play in fairly close temporal proximity, but in very different theatres. They are situated within the period of increased interest in geographies on the part of other theatre and performance studies scholars and are therefore appropriate objects of analysis through which to demonstrate the significant interventions into spatial understanding that have been taking place through the performance of Shakespeare in conventional theatres.

In addition, as the framework of theatrical geographies brings to the analysis of Shakespeare production the knowledges produced by the lived experience of the space in action in performance, it was also essential to provide a substantial focus on

productions which I had been able to attend, and thereby complement archival research with ‘fieldwork’. In the case of Carroll, Nunn, and Boyd my analyses are informed by a vivid personal experience of the productions’ spaces. This lived experience affords me an appreciation of the knowledges produced through a kinetic and sensual encounter with the spatialization of the playworld and the geographies of the place of performance. My analysis of Pimlott draws solely on traditional archival materials, an examination of which suggests that this powerful three-dimensional expression of the playworld was resonant with the geographical concerns of both the moment of the play’s composition and the production’s cultural moment.

I refer to these productions as ‘postmodern’ as bringing to their analysis a sensibility towards ‘the interpretive significance of space’ (Soja, *Postmodern* 11) embeds them in the postmodern project of reasserting the importance of space in critical thought, which had tended to prioritize time. Attending to the insights provided by folding the practice of an ‘interpretive human geography’ (Soja, *Postmodern* 2) into the analysis of *Richard II* in performance reveals the ways in which these productions have brought the play into dialogue with contemporary spatial concerns and therefore also reflects their engagement in the construction and critique of postmodern geographies.

I have chosen to examine English speaking productions, and primarily those staged in the UK, in part because the in-depth analysis of performance I carry out requires the language skills necessary for a close examination of theatre ephemera (as well as, when possible, personal experience of seeing the productions under discussion).<sup>3</sup> I do, however, include a section in Chapter Three on Steven Berkoff’s production at the Joseph Papp Theatre in New York, as it is particularly pertinent to my discussion of the first geo-temporal relocations of *Richard II*. Berkoff’s production was revived in the UK for the Ludlow Festival and went on to play at the Festival of Classical Theatre at the Corral de Comedias in Almagro, Spain, but I have focused on its premier in New York as the reviews show that the production opened up important questions about the inscription and ownership of space, and also about the nature of the theatre spaces required for the play. Moreover, this 1994 production, although premiering across the Atlantic, was, nevertheless, directed by a British theatre maker and provides an informative counterpoint to Deborah Warner’s production just a year later at the Cottesloe, and is therefore noteworthy for the different perspectives on the play’s geographies that it affords. In addition, although initially staged in the USA, the timing

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<sup>3</sup> Regrettably, this means that certain significant European productions, for example Monouchekine (1981) and Peymann (2000, revived 2006) are not considered in this thesis.

of Berkoff's production coincided with the opening of the much-debated channel tunnel—a controversy that received attention in the American press in reports which sometimes included quotations from John of Guant's speech—and which make the London-born director's appropriation of *Richard II* as a critique of the tensions between England's colonial and separatist past particularly relevant to this thesis.

In contrast to Chapter Three, in which the examination of the imaginative geographies generated by *Richard II* is (generally) sequenced chronologically, I have grouped the case studies according to the particular geographical consciousness I apply in my analysis. Chapters Four and Five (Pimlott (2000) and Nunn (2005)) constitute a pair as there is a central focus on the staging of the play's geographies through scenography. These productions are also linked by the different ways in which theories of extensibility, time-space compression, and non-places can be used to illuminate the relations between their respective representations of the playworld and their historical moment. They are also connected by the prominence they give to the microsite of the coffin and its resonances as a discrete geographical unit. Chapters Six and Seven are twinned by a focus on how Carroll's (2003) and Boyd's (2008) productions made particular interventions into their places of performance. The chronological schema is disrupted therefore in order to mark two distinct, although not mutually exclusive, focuses of analysis that are available within the methodologies of theatrical geographies.

Although this thesis seeks to go beyond the classification of theatrical space, it is important to establish a vocabulary for referring to the different spaces involved in discussing performance, and I adopt the following terms. I refer to the theatre building as the *theatre space* or *place of performance*, and these terms embrace not only the stage and auditorium but all areas of the building: those considered to be the exclusive domain of creative, administrative, and other support personnel, and those to which the spectators have access. I use *performance space* to refer to the space occupied by both spectators and performers during the production. The *playing area* or *playing space* denotes the part of the *performance space* occupied exclusively by the performers; either *stage environment* or *stagescape* is used to refer to the particular qualities and character given to the *playing area* by the scenography and action; and I term the area specifically assigned to the spectators *audience space*. I use the terms *fictive space* or the *space of the fiction* to refer to the places of the narrative represented in the *performance space*, and *extra-perceptual space* to refer to spaces evoked in the text, or in production, but not physically realized on stage. *Textual space* or *textual geographies* comprise all the spatial elements referred to in the text—including named places and

sites such as the throne, the grave, and the ground in *Richard II*—all of which combine to make up the playworld.

I also analyse what I am terming *associative geographies*. These are places suggested by the scenography and/or the articulation of the performance space and are a distinct phenomenon of production. Whilst they may be places associated with particular characters in the play—places that exist within the historical moment of the narrative—there is no indication in the text that they serve as specific locations for any of the scenes. Alternatively, they may be anachronistic and part of the world of the audience. These associative geographies are highly significant in opening up fresh nuances and in interpreting and experiencing the production; they can also function as a means of casting the audience in roles which afford a temporarily shared perspective from which to engage with the dramatic narrative. In addition, I explore particular *microsites* created in performance; these may be concentrated spaces produced by particular props, furniture, or scenographic features or, in the geographer's terms, 'articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings' (Massey, 'Power-geometry' 66) that are engendered when the text is embodied.

The difficulties involved in making a clear distinction between space and place are indicative of the complexity of human relations with the geographical and the instability of the concepts themselves. As Keith and Pile point out, spatial language is now employed to articulate 'an understanding of the multiplicity and flexibility' of power relations (2)—as these can no longer be theorized within 'a single dimension such as class or gender or race' (1)—although it often remains uncertain as to whether 'the space invoked is "real", "imaginary", "symbolic", a "metaphor-concept" or some relationship between them or something else entirely' (2). De Certeau sees place as univocal and 'geometrically defined' and space as 'practiced place', transformed from place to space by the inhabitants (117). Most geographers, however, although sensitive to the complexity of both concepts, reverse this formula and view places as 'spaces which people have made meaningful [. . . and become] attached to in one way or another' (Cresswell, 'Place' 7), so that the 'the most straightforward and common definition of place [. . . is] a meaningful location' (7). The strict application of either of these formulations proves exceedingly difficult in practice on account of the constantly shifting relations and flows that produce space/place, and the processes, practices, and emotions brought into play in relation to both material and conceptual spaces/places. In the case of theatre, imposing a rule seems particularly problematic. On the one hand, de Certeau's contention that 'space is like the word when it is spoken, that is when it is

caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many conventions, situated as the act of a present (or time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts' (117) captures the exciting dynamics of the geographies engendered by live performance. On the other hand, those spaces generated by the multiple languages of performance can be classed as places as they can become 'meaningful locations' (Cresswell, 'Place' 7) for the actors/characters and/or for the audience; and theatres themselves are places invested with multiple meanings. Since the terms themselves seem to offer nuances that change with the context under discussion, in my use of 'space' and 'place' throughout this thesis I have tried, rather than keep to one or other of these systems, to bear in mind the possibilities associated with both formulations and have in each case chosen the term that seems most appropriate.

Since this thesis brings together modes of thinking from distinct—although highly complementary—disciplines, Chapter One is dedicated to a discussion of the ideas from theatre, geography, and performance studies that have informed my work. I summarize the development of cultural geography and some of its fundamental principles, and demonstrate that, although geographers have largely ignored the complex spatialities of theatre, there are clear points of shared interest which indicate the mutually rewarding and illuminating potential of a closer partnership between theatre history, geography, and theatrical performance. I detail some of the key concepts from cultural geography that I adopt, and adapt, in proposing new ways of thinking about space and theatre, and which underpin my exploration of the theatrical geographies of *Richard II*. I review a selection of studies which show how scholars of theatre and early modern drama have so far engaged with Shakespeare's geographies. By examining some of the work that has been done in the fields of textual space, theatre architecture and location, and scenography, I highlight the questions and challenges that this work leaves, and which theatrical geographies offers a means of addressing.

Chapter Two comprises an examination of the textual geographies of *Richard II* and provides the knowledge essential for a consideration of how the play has been spatialized in performance; although this textual mapping also aims to provoke thought about future stagings of the play's geographies. Through an analysis of character journeys and a discussion of the evocative force of named places, I show how



Shakespeare maps a world of richly ambiguous spaces and articulates human geographical themes.<sup>4</sup>

Chapter Three analyses the ways in which the textual geographies of *Richard II* have been staged, uncovering general trends and key shifts in thinking about the nature of the playworld and the spaces thought suitable to accommodate it. I examine particular productions which challenged traditional realizations of the imaginative geographies of medieval England, and argue that these stagings were indicative of how scenographic space was acquiring a new eloquence: an expressiveness capable of evoking associative geographies and metanarratives, which benefit from continued reflection after the production. The intertheatrical map that arises out of this spatially-inflected reappraisal of *Richard II* in performance is subtended by theories of landscape representation, theatre history, and scenography.

In Chapter Four, the first of my case studies, I examine Steven Pimlott's *Richard II* at The Other Place in 2000. I discuss the permeable space generated by the production and, drawing on the geographical concept of extensibility, I argue that this worked to stress the interconnectedness of the characters' lives, even though the theme of isolation was emphasized in the production. I pay particular attention to the roles of the women in creating this fluid space and argue that Pimlott's extra-textual use of the feminine presence provoked new questions regarding gender and power that fused together the playworld and the world of the audience. I examine the associative geographies that dominated reviews of the production and draw on Foucault's ideas on disciplinary structures to suggest the cultural and political work of the play in this space.

Chapter Five analyses Trevor Nunn's 2005 *Richard II* at the Old Vic and draws on David Harvey's theory of time-space compression, Edward Relph's notion of authentic and placeless geographies, and Marc Augé's concept of non-places, to demonstrate how this production engaged with the need or desire to reinforce identities through the maintenance of traditional places within global networks and flows. The resistances that occurred through the emplacement of the play in this highly technical world operated as a critique of the very systems which appeared to sustain it.

Chapters Four and Five focus principally on the spaces generated within the stage environment, and in Chapters Six and Seven there is an added focus on the interventions made by the play into the place of performance. In Chapter Six I

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<sup>4</sup> I borrow the phrase 'evocative force' from Marc Augé's discussion of the potential of place names and certain nouns to trigger imaginative responses, evoke mythologies, and engender a range of emotions (95-96).

demonstrate how Tim Carroll's 2003 *Richard II* at the Globe was infused with a sense of playfulness. I argue that the production therefore tapped into a carnival dynamic that problematized the relations between work and play, both onstage and off, and configured the playhouse as a place of '*serious play*', thus complicating its position within the geographies of tourism and leisure. The creation of a place where the potential of play as both pleasurable and politically valuable is recognized and occurs in an overlapping relation with work evokes comparison with Joan Littlewood and Cedric Price's desire for a London Fun House. Their vision of a place for the combination of entertainment and education provides a counterpoint for a reconsideration of the ideal of neutrality and flexibility as a stimulus for creative work-play, set against determined and fixed architectural forms associated with a dominant cultural authority.

Chapter Seven contextualizes Michael Boyd's *Richard II* within *The Histories*, performed at the Roundhouse in 2008, and examines the haunted spaces produced on and offstage throughout the cycle. I consider the role of spectators and actors in the place-making processes at the Roundhouse, as they 'haunted' the theatre space and its environs, and discuss the ways in which the spectral figures that Boyd introduced into the play troubled the identities of places in the fictive world, and created microsites of intense emotion and new possibilities. Drawing on Derrida's hauntology, on cultural geographers who have explored the significance of ghosts in configuring and understanding places, and on Edward Casey's progressive conceptualization of places of public memory, I argue that Boyd's *Richard II*—in conjunction with the other plays in *The Histories*—produced a monumental space where the past could be reassessed as a means of envisioning the future. I also borrow the concept of the mental map to suggest the role of the theatre space in producing and maintaining memories of performance after the theatrical event.

## Chapter One

## The Grounds for Theatrical Geographies

When, on returning from Ireland, Richard II confesses ‘I weep for joy / To stand upon my kingdom once again’ (III.2.4b-5); when Hamlet tells Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that ‘Denmark’s a prison’ (II.2.243); and when Antony declares to Cleopatra ‘Let Rome in Tiber melt [. . .] / Here is my space’ (I.33-34), the utterances indicate location, but they also suggest that the place of the speaker is not simply the tangible space occupied, but a ‘state of mind’ (Ley 507) and ‘a center of meaning constructed by experience’ (Tuan, ‘Place’ 152). Any place—whether a Welsh beach, a castle in Denmark, or a palace in Alexandria—is an amalgamation of materials, emotions, social relationships, memories, imaginings, and ideologies.

Places are powerful forces in our lives; rather than being defined solely by their measurable features, they are imbued with personal meaning, and the lines cited above indicate that Shakespeare was aware of this when creating his characters. One of the principal links between theatre and cultural geography is a consciousness of the potential of both real and imagined places to generate affective responses and a concern for knowledge of place that goes beyond scientific facts to how places are constituted by, and constitutive of, ‘people’s real lives, their values and beliefs, their daily preoccupations, their hopes and dreams’ (Cloeke et al xiii). My analysis of the geographies of the world of *Richard II* (Chapter Two) reveals the relations between place and identity and the affective bonds that tie people to places, and discloses the social, political, oneiric, and aspirational potentials of places in the drama.

Further, just as the fictive human geographies of drama are generated by, and generative of, emotions and aspirations, so too are the theatres where they are performed. The Young Vic’s claim that it is both ‘an idea and a building’ is indicative of its aspirations to provide a place with room for tradition and experimentation, which would be a ‘concrete’ realization of the originators’ ‘dream of the inclusive class-free society’, with access for all through low ticket prices (Young Vic Website). In his discussion of theatre design, Ian Mackintosh comments how certain theatres were, or were not, ‘loved’ at different times (*passim*); Jean-Claude Carrière states that when Brook and his associates discovered the Bouffes du Nord, it was a case of ‘love at first sight, of falling for a space’ (Todd and Lecat 9); and Claire Cochrane observes that the ‘legacy of love’ for the old Birmingham Repertory Theatre in Station Road initially engendered resistance to the development of the new and larger theatre to which the

company moved in 1971 (*Birmingham Rep* 3). These responses confirm that theatres are not only places of cultural significance but places of affect and personal value. Like all places in our life world, a theatre is ‘a shared feeling and a concept as much as a location and a physical environment’ (Tuan, ‘Humanistic’ 275), and a theatre may take on different identities and meanings, and provoke different feelings and ideas, when a particular play is performed there.

#### (i) Cultural Geography and Re-thinking Space

The physical, emotional, and intellectual factors that constitute fictive geographies and real places—so clearly articulated by Shakespeare’s characters and expressed by the theatre scholars/practitioners quoted above—have always been of central concern in cultural geography, which emerged as a subdiscipline in the 1920s in reaction to environmental determinism, and developed through the work of Carl Sauer and his followers at the University of Berkeley, California. Cultural geographers of the ‘Berkeley school’ regarded landscapes not as natural backdrops shaping the lives of their inhabitants, but as ‘collectively shaped over time’ and reflective of ‘a society’s – a culture’s – beliefs, practices and technologies’ (M. Crang, *Cultural* 15). Later cultural geographers criticized the Berkeley school, arguing that their concerns were dominantly rural and antiquarian, [and] narrowly focused on physical artifacts (log cabins, fences, and field boundaries)’ (Cosgrove and Jackson, ‘New’ 96). However, their commitment to studying both the physical features of any given region, and also examining the whole system of skills and knowledges that shape a particular environment (M. Crang, *Cultural* 17) set a precedent for considering space as produced by multiple social forces and human interventions, rather than as an inert, natural given.

The human interactions with place which produce the cultural landscape, and reveal individual environments as both outcome and shaping force have been studied through traditional methodologies related to field work and also through the analysis of creative sources. In 1947, J. K. Wright argued that the scientific and the aesthetic were neither mutually exclusive nor antagonistic in geography. He urged his colleagues to think more imaginatively about the ways in which they sought and presented geographical knowledge, and advocated ‘the study of the expression of geographical conceptions in literature and art’, which he termed *geosophy* (15). Building on Wright’s ideas, David Lowenthal argued that imagination plays an important role in the construction of private landscapes and perceptions of the social milieu (‘Geography’).

In response to the quantitative revolution of the 1960s, humanist geographers sought to restore human agency to the centre of geographical concerns (Brosseau, 'Geographies' 334), and turned to imaginative literature as an important tool in 'clarify[ing] the meaning of concepts, symbols, and aspirations as they pertain to space and place' (Tuan, 'Humanistic' 275). In the process of asserting the importance of examining 'place'—as opposed to mapping abstract space by scientific, and (seemingly) objective, means—these humanistic geographers stressed 'human development of emotive bonds with environment' and focussed attention on how this personal engagement was 'expressed creatively in landscape, social life and artistic media' (Hughill and Foote 17).

By the mid 1980s literary geography had become a distinct strand of cultural geography. Apart from recognising the sense of place afforded by the novelist's ability 'to represent the daily qualities of [. . . people's] lives in ways that could not be handled or grasped by other means' (Harvey, *Justice* 28), geographers sought in novels information that would enhance geographical description (Pocock, 'Geography' 88). They were also interested in exposing 'the social values and ideologies [. . . perceived to be] operating through spatial categories, moral and ideological geographies, in literature' (M. Crang, *Cultural* 48). Similar studies developed in art, and geographers became particularly interested in the analysis of landscape paintings. Early work examined paintings for their evocations of 'the essence, or spirit, of place'; considered the ability of particular paintings 'to determine the popular definitions of regions or countries'; and analysed how painting worked as a means by which new landscapes could be apprehended as a step in the process towards ownership (Rees 56, 63). Later cultural geographers sought 'to decipher the social power of landscape imagery, [. . . and] identify [. . .] the politics of landscape' (Daniels and Cosgrove 7), and conceived of both physical and represented landscapes as instrumental in ordering society into 'hierarchical class relations' (Rose 90): an approach problematized by Gillian Rose, who factored into the picture the neglected aspects of gender and sexuality (91-93).

This work with literature and painting demonstrates how the knowledge that Wright had seen as 'the informal geography contained in non-scientific works—in books of travel, in magazines, in newspapers, in many a page of fiction and poetry, and on many a canvas' (10), and situated in 'the periphery' rather the 'core' zone of the discipline, has increasingly become more central to cultural geography. However, geographers ignored—and continue to ignore—plays, believing (initially) that drama was unsuitable for geographical analysis since, 'although persons may well be influenced by

setting, any concentration on this element would detract from [what they perceived as] its prime study of character' (Pocock, 'Geography' 89). They marginalized poetry, selected novels that portrayed rural societies (Porteous 117), and focused primarily on classical painting. In the late 1980s, however, the 'new cultural geography', which sought to be 'contemporary as well as historical [. . .]; social as well as spatial [. . .]; urban as well as rural; and interested in the contingent nature of culture, in dominant ideologies and in forms of resistance to them' (Cosgrove and Jackson 95), entailed an engagement with modernity and postmodernity previously lacking in the discipline (Cosgrove, 'Terrain' 567), and therefore needed to address the challenges presented by rapidly changing landscapes and the instabilities of urban environments.

These developments called for a new definition of culture which embraced the popular and the ephemeral, and brought into play a whole new range of sources. Jacquelyn Burgess and John R. Gold advocated a greater focus on television, radio, newspapers, fiction, film, and pop music, arguing that media institutions and practices were crucial 'in moulding individual and social experiences of the world and in shaping the relationship between people and place' (1). This engagement with an increasing number of products and processes prompted Don Mitchell to reassess the problematic meaning of culture in relation to geography, and in a 1995 essay he observed that 'the specification of "culture" is usually replaced by a proliferation of examples that presumably (and self-evidently) constitute culture: everyday life, works of art, political resistance, economic formations, religious beliefs, styles of clothing, eating habits, ideologies, ideas, literature, music, popular media, and so forth' (106). Culture, for geographers, had become 'everything' (106): everything, that is, except theatre.

This resistance to the geographies of plays in production, may, as Amanda Rogers argues, stem from a perception of dramatic scripts as deriving from 'fixed linguistic structures of representation', and therefore existing as 'textual representation rather than as a practice that is productive, materially affective, and embodied' (53); although I would suggest that the complex multi-layering of spaces in theatre may also be a deterrent. The continued exclusion of theatre from geographical analysis, however, remains puzzling, particularly since the spatial metaphors of geography have now shifted from natural-science based analogies—such as, system, organism, or machine—to 'theatre', 'text' and 'carnival', (Cosgrove, 'Terrain' 567), and performance has entered into the methodological thinking of cultural geographers. Cosgrove and Daniels have applied the 'dimensions of scenery, stage, script and performance' inherent in the metaphor of landscape-as-theatre to posit a new model of geographical fieldwork as 'a

performing art' (171) through which students engage with the urban theatricality of Venice; and Nigel Thrift has encouraged geographers to embrace 'the plethora of methods' now available through 'the performing arts which attempt to co-produce the world' ('Dead' 3). Thrift's examples of street theatre, community theatre, and legislative theatre, suggest a suspicion regarding the potential of what might be thought of as conventional theatre (3). However, through theatrical geographies, I demonstrate that 'traditional' theatre performance is just as 'centrally and intimately [involved in] the production of spaces, [. . .] both through altering the conditions of possibility of extant spaces, and by producing new spaces' (3), as the other types of theatre and performance to which Thrift refers.

As an art in which space is the single irreducible 'dimension' (Isacharoff, 'Comic' 187-88), theatre presents exciting opportunities for geographical analysis, just as the mobilization of ideas from geography gives theatre historians and performance analysts exciting new ways of conceiving and analysing space in theatre. The following discussion of the key theories and concepts that have informed my work demonstrates the strong links between theatre and geography.

Marc Brosseau criticized fellow geographers for using literature to verify their own hypotheses ('Geography' 347-348; 'The City' 90; see also Sharp 329), and for seeking what was 'reassuring' in novels rather than 'for what might be disruptive, subversive or a source of new questions' ('Geography' 347). Brosseau urged his colleagues to take a dialogic approach which would be 'sensitive to the particular way [a literary text] generates another type of geography' ('Geography' 348), and 'to examine the way in which a novel generates its own geography' ('The City' 90). His analysis of John Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* demonstrates how the idea of place is animated through the fragmented and mobile geographies that the novel 'enacts' (93). The practice on which the revelation of these geographies hinges is a personal encounter between text and reader and, in contrast, a play is 'designed to generate a spatial practice, or at the very least to lend itself to exploitation within a spatial practice' (McAuley, *Space* 219). However, Brosseau's concept of texts as 'active entities' able to 'force us to change our outlook and expectations' and to 'resist us' ('The City' 90-91), and his contention that the text 'generates' its own geographies, can be usefully expanded and applied to the dramatic text in production. A play in performance generates a complex set of real and fictive spaces that are in constant negotiation with one another, and it is important to ask what types of geographies the text generates and

how the staging of these geographies modifies our perspective and reconfigures our preconceptions of the world of the play and the world of the audience.

My perception of Shakespeare's texts as 'active' is also related to the fact that they are highly mobile, and my enquiry into the geographies that *Richard II* has generated is informed by Philip Crang's work on the geographies of material culture. 'Things move around and inhabit multiple cultural contexts during their lives' and in this process 'material changes; and changes or 'translations' in the thing's meanings' occur (P. Crang, 'Geographies' 178). Cultural geographers are interested in 'the knowledges that move with things, especially about their earlier life' and what 'people encountering a thing in one context know about its life in other contexts' (178). The cultural geographer's approach to the mobilities of objects combines a concern for how, and by whom, the knowledges that travel with things are mediated, with an interest in the role that the 'imaginative geographies of where a thing comes from [. . .] play in our encounters with objects' and the role of material culture in 'wider imaginative geographies' (178-179). Taking account of such concerns adds fresh impetus to the study of the stage history of a Shakespeare play and brings a more distinct geographical consciousness to the analysis of the multiple spaces generated in performance. Each successive site where the play is spatialized and embodied is a zone where knowledges that have travelled with it converge with new knowledges produced by the performance, and changes in a play's meanings can be articulated through the geographies of its staging. Crang's approach encourages an examination of the imaginative geographies produced by an object, an interrogation of the potential effects of the geographies of its provenance, and a consideration of the geographies of the context of the encounter between person and object. Cultural geography therefore offers several interlinked lines of enquiry which can be variously combined to explore the imaginative geographies constructed by *Richard II* and the relations between the text, place, and production and reception across a range of space-times.

The multiple contexts of the play's journey do include those private spaces where single readers engage with the text; and changes in materiality and meaning may be associated with the corporeal geographies of the play as book, and can be explored through an investigation of the location of the 'the paratextual machinery of authorship – the cover, the author's name, the title, the dedication, the epigraph, the preface, footnotes, definitions, [and] glossaries' (Crang and Thrift 24). New historicists and cultural materialists have geographized Shakespeare's texts, defining them as sites 'of struggle' and 'cultural contest' (Drakakis, 'Theatre' 26; Sinfield, *Faultlines* 49), and



Terence Hawkes employs highly spatial language to discuss approaches to Shakespeare's plays, suggesting that they can be viewed as 'a kind of intersection or confluence which is continually traversed, a no man's land, an arena, in which different and opposed readings, urged from different and opposed political positions, compete in history for ideological power' ('By' 8). Whilst accepting that the text may be seen as a geographical unit in itself, and recognizing the critical energy produced by new historicist and cultural materialist perspectives, I go beyond the metaphorization of Shakespeare's plays as sites of struggle and the materiality of sites of writing. Although the text is my starting point for the initial mapping of the playworld, it is in the processes of rehearsal, performance, and reception, when the text is translated into three-dimensional space in theatre, that it undergoes the most radical, material changes. The spaces generated by the play are integral to these material transformations, and recent geographical thinking on the nature of space and place has significant implications for articulating and analysing the dynamism, social and political significance, and affective aspects of space in Shakespeare production.

The nineteenth-century historicism and the subsequent development of Western Marxism and critical social science led to 'the subordination of a spatial hermeneutic' and the view that the role of geographical analysis and explanation was merely to describe 'the stage-setting where the real social actors were deeply involved in making history' (Soja, *Postmodern* 3, 31). Consequently, space came to be seen as 'a flat, immobilized surface, as stasis' (Massey, *Gender* 4), and reduced either to a 'fixed, dead, and undialectical' entity 'susceptible to little else but measurement and phenomenal description' or 'dematerialize[d] [. . .] into pure ideation and representation' (Soja, *Postmodern* 7). However, the spatial turn which began to spread across the social sciences and humanities in the late 1980s led to a redefinition of space as 'inherently dynamic' and active (Massey, *Gender* 2), rather than merely 'a passive, abstract arena on which things happen' (Keith and Pile 2); as 'formed out of social interrelations' (Massey, *Gender* 5); and as 'always becoming, in process and always caught up in power relations' (Hubbard et al 11; see also Crang and Thrift 3). Having reasserted the importance of space in the construction of history, geographers stressed the impossibility of divorcing space from time (Crang and Thrift 2000: 3; Thrift, 'Space' 142), and began to think in terms of 'space-time'. Apart from challenging the perceived inertia of space, geographers began to identify and investigate a whole range of new spaces from 'the geography closest in – the body' (Rich 212), to 'the global reach of finance and telecommunications' (Massey, *Gender* 4). These ideas of space and the

appreciation of the infinitely expanding spaces and territories that can be identified on all scales (Thrift, 'Space' 139), were influenced by the work of Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau, whose theories have been important in the development of theatrical geographies, and have also impacted on the work of several theatre scholars.<sup>1</sup>

In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre explored the possibilities of creating a bridge between 'the theoretical (epistemological) realm and the practical one, between the mental and the social, between the space of philosophers and the space of people who deal with material things' (Lefebvre 3-4). This led him to formulate three categories of space: *spatial practice* or perceived space; *representations of space* or conceived space; and *representational space* or 'lived space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants'' (39). Lefebvre's focus on 'lived space' has encouraged a cross-disciplinary awareness that places are produced and modified through human processes and experienced personally.

Similarly, de Certeau emphasizes processes and practices in the production of space, and posits that '[a] space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables' and is, thus, 'composed of intersections of mobile elements'. He argues that space is 'actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it' and 'occurs as an effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities' (117). De Certeau's concept of space encapsulates the sense of movement, dynamism, and change that suggests something active and interactive, rather than a static entity, and also takes account of the constantly fluctuating relationships between bodies and objects. Within his schema de Certeau accommodates material spaces on all scales, ranging from named cities to rooms, and also suggests the existence of immaterial spaces of dream and memory (115), all of which are susceptible to ambiguities and modifications produced by kinetic and temporal operations.

De Certeau also places particular emphasis on the relations between stories and places, and argues that stories select and link places together, and that all 'narrated adventures', whatever their source or perceived factual or fictional status, 'produc[e] geographies of actions' (116). This relation between space and stories has also been expounded by bell hooks, who states that: 'Spaces can be real and imagined. Spaces can tell stories and unfold histories. Spaces can be interrupted, appropriated, and transformed through artistic and literary practice' (152). Both de Certeau's and hooks'

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<sup>1</sup> See McAuley *Space*: Dillon; Rhem; Wiles; Robinson.

ideas about the construction and potentials of spaces and the roles of spaces in creating and responding to stories can be seen operating in *Richard II* as text and production. The characters both shape and are shaped by the sites of their personal trajectories; and, in performance particularly, it is possible to identify significant junctures at which spaces are interrupted, appropriated, and transformed.

Thinking of space not simply as bounded areas with fixed identities, but as being in constant flux, constructed through the mobilities and flows of people and objects, and constituted by sets of relations; and recognizing that space operates within a dynamic and inseparable partnership with time, opens up new ways of analyzing space in performance, considering the potentials of theatres, and examining the shifts in theatre identities that may occur when a particular play is performed there. If places ‘can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings’ (Massey, ‘Power-geometry’ 66), and if spaces can occur on all scales, and are continually in motion, then performance generates a series of constantly changing sites as the social relations of the play are enacted, and as ‘the ensemble of movements’ of bodies and objects are ‘deployed’ on stage. Moreover, if ‘places are never complete, finished or bounded but are always becoming – in process’ (Cresswell, ‘Theorizing’ 20), then theatre identities too must be constantly shifting. Such conceptualizations of space are perfectly suited to the analysis of the three-dimensional and unstable environment activated in the theatrical event, and the fleeting, but significant, microsites that occur in performance.

The work of Edward Soja has been particularly important in assisting me to identify and articulate the range and nature of spaces that can be generated in performance, and informs the ideological underpinning of theatrical geographies. In arguing for the need to reassert the importance of space in social and critical thinking, Soja proposes a trialectical ontology, comprising spatiality, historicity, and sociality: a theory he has developed by drawing on Foucault’s concept of heterotopias (see ‘Other Spaces’), the work of feminist and postcolonial critics, and, predominantly, on Lefebvre. Soja has re-examined Lefebvre’s three categories of perceived, conceived and lived spaces, and notes that, as Lefebvre develops his ideas, it becomes clear that the third category combines the other two in a space which is both real and imagined. He observes that although Lefebvre’s lived space had been generally seen as ‘a combination or mixture of the “real” and the “imagined” in varying doses’ (*Thirdspace* 10), many working in geography and related spatial disciplines have neglected lived space, and have ‘tended to concentrate almost entirely on only one of these modes of

thinking, that is on either Firstspace [perceived space] or Secondspace [conceived space] perspectives' (10).

Soja's theorization of Thirdspace is motivated by the desire to deconstruct and reconstitute the restraining dualism of real and imagined space that prevents 'the geographical imagination [. . . from] captur[ing] the experiential complexity, fullness and perhaps unknowable mystery of actually *lived space*' ('Expanding' 268). In his conceptualization of Thirdspace, Soja seeks to initiate and develop 'the creation of another mode of thinking about space that draws upon the material and mental spaces of the traditional dualism but extends well beyond them in scope, substance and meaning' (*Thirdspace* 11). The space constituted by this thinking is '[s]imultaneously real and imagined and more (both and also . . .), [and] the exploration of Thirdspace can be described and inscribed in journeys to "real-and-imagined" (or perhaps "realandimagined"?) places' (11).

The significance of Soja's conceptualization of Thirdspace for theatrical geographies is profound. Firstly, recognizing the possible co-existence of these 'other', 'real-and-imagined' spaces, with, or within, physical and conceptual spaces provides the underpinning for an approach to theatrical space that works as 'a creative recombination and extension' (*Thirdspace* 6) of the 'Firstspace perspective'—which translates into theatre as the location, design, and histories of theatres—and the 'Secondspace perspective'—which in terms of theatre may be defined as imaginative representations of space in textual geographies and scenographies. By analysing theatrical space as it is produced for, by, and in performance, theatrical geographies aims to capture in greater measure the multilayered experiential complexity and fullness of actually lived theatrical space.

Secondly, Thirdspace affords a critical location, where personal subjectivity can be selected, but without 'remain[ing] rigidly confined by this "territorial" choice' (Soja and Hooper 194). Soja's rethinking of space emerges from his commitment to 'a radical postmodernism' (*Thirdspace* 5) that goes beyond both the rejection of grand narratives and a reductive anti-modernist stance, since together these perspectives comprise a limiting partisan opposition. Consequently the term Thirdspace denotes

a space of extraordinary openness, a place of critical exchange where the geographical imagination can be expanded to encompass a multiplicity of perspectives that have heretofore been considered by the epistemological referees to be incompatible, uncombinable. It is a space where issues of race, class, and gender can be addressed simultaneously without privileging one over the other; where one can be Marxist and post-Marxist, materialist

and idealist, structuralist and humanist, disciplined and transdisciplinary at the same time (*Thirdspace* 5).

This space for a third way which ‘draws on and encompasses both materialism and idealism, Marx and Hegel simultaneously, yet remains open to much more than their simple combination’ (*Thirdspace* 36), is an extremely liberating place from which to view Shakespeare’s plays, whether as text or on stage. Gill Dolan describes positionality as ‘a strategy that locates one’s personal and political investments and perspectives across an argument’ and a means of ‘stopping the spin of poststructuralist or postmodernist instabilities long enough to advance a politically effective action’ (Dolan 417). Dolan acknowledges that ‘[a] position is an unstable but effective point of departure (417), and *Thirdspace* develops this geographical metaphor through a consciously mobile critical spatiality which sanctions a modification of position in the course of intellectual enquiry on the grounds that ‘identities [. . . are] always contingent and incomplete processes rather than determined outcomes’ (Keith and Pile 34). This is particularly pertinent to the analysis of space in action in performance, since certain spaces produced in the course of the theatrical event offer a mode of thinking that similarly disrupts typical binaries.

I borrow Soja’s concept of *Thirdspace*, then, firstly as a means of assisting the apprehension and analysis of real and imagined, or real-and-imagined, spaces that *Richard II* has generated; and secondly, as the ideological ground from which to construct my analyses. This allows me to view the productions from a space of radical openness: to exist as materialist, idealist, and other—and therefore to respond to paradox without the need to resolve it—and to articulate the ‘both-and’ nature of spaces that are produced in the course of the theatrical event. I also aim, in my application of this concept, to enhance understanding of it. Cresswell comments that, within the debates about the formulation of a more progressive concept of place, Soja’s *Thirdspace*—which is lived and practised, ‘rather than simply being material (conceived) or mental (perceived)’ (‘Theorizing’ 21)—is a particularly promising concept, but difficult to identify in reality (21). Soja himself states that *Thirdspace* ‘can be mapped but never captured in conventional cartographies; it can be creatively imagined but obtains meaning only when practised and fully *lived*’ (‘Expanding’ 276). My analysis of some of the microsites engendered by *Richard II* in performance demonstrates that theatre can perform such unconventional cartography and can open up *thirdspaces*.

In addition, Soja’s ‘journeys’ to real-and-imagined spaces employ a methodology that I adopt in theatrical geographies: one that complements, and is

complemented by, traditional methodologies of theatre historiography. In one of these ‘journeys’, Soja takes ‘a Foucauldian stroll’ through an exhibition commemorating Paris and Los Angeles (*Thirdspace* 18), constructing a remembered trajectory through a discussion of exhibits, in which the cities and their landmarks were mediated by documentary, artistic, and multimedia/technological texts and objects; in ‘Inside Extropolis’ his ‘tour’ of Orange County is mapped through reference to ‘newsclippings’ and Baudrillard; and in ‘The stimulus of a Little Confusion’ he charts a comparison of Amsterdam and Los Angeles, bringing to his discussion of the different sites that constitute his perambulatory mapping, his personal experiences of living in these cities and formal knowledges disseminated through the popular and academic media. In all these *flâneuries*, Soja uses ‘specific sites and sights as memory aids, geographical *madeleines* for the remembrance of things past and passed’ (18) to produce geographical-social-historical narratives of the cityscapes he explores. In a similar way, in my journeys through the real and imagined spaces of *Richard II* as text and performance, I take on the role of a conceptual and (when possible) literal *flâneur*, acting as an observer and a collector of details and fragments that may be interpreted back into the complexity of the [constantly-changing] whole (Birkerts 165). Just as Sauer accepted that geographers were travellers, ‘vicarious when they must, actual when they may’ (289), so, as a theatrical geographer, when possible, I bring to the performances I analyse a personal and experiential knowledge of the places and spaces produced by those theatrical events, but I also draw on the accounts of others whose experiences and knowledge of these spaces can contribute to the geo-historical, intertheatrical mapping I construct.

I have indicated that cultural geographers have acknowledged the strong links between geography and imagination, and are interested in articulations of place in imaginative literature, visual arts, film, and television. One concept that has developed out of creative depictions of places and peoples in a wide range of texts—and which is particularly important to my spatially-inflected reassessment of *Richard II*’s stage history—is that of ‘imaginative geographies’. This concept was originally formulated by Edward Said (*Orientalism*), whose theorization of Western perceptions of ‘the East’ was predicated on an examination of the portrayal of Islam and Islamic territories and peoples in texts of various genres, paintings, and academia. Although originally connected with Orientalism and colonialism, the idea of imaginative geographies has gained significance beyond the analysis of East-West relations, and has produced a more intense scrutiny of the ways in which all ‘representations of space, place and

landscape [. . .] structure people's understandings of the world, and in turn help to shape their actions' (Driver 152). Television, film, newspapers and magazines, school textbooks, advertising, computer games, the internet, and music, feature among the most common means of constructing and disseminating imaginative geographies (Driver 152; M. Crang 99; Costa 201). Environments which feature in the media do not just represent 'the world outside', but 'offer different ways of apprehending it and comprehending spaces', and the 'distinctive geographies' of these 'mediated environments and relationships [. . .] have significant implications in today's world' (M. Crang 99). The concept of imaginative geographies is productively mobilized in my discussions of the representation of England in productions of *Richard II*, and is a particularly apt term to give weight to the significance of different spatializations of the play in its successive contexts. Although not as widely accessible as those images of place circulating in technological media, the representations of the playworld of *Richard II* discussed in this thesis have participated in the construction and disruption of perceptions of medieval and contemporary England. Further, theatres are also produced by and productive of imaginative geographies as the people and events associated with them are woven into narratives which influence how they are positioned within popular and scholarly discourses and impact on their perceived identities. Shakespeare's Globe, which will be discussed in the context of Tim Carroll's *Richard II*, is a good example of how the negotiations between the histories of a place, its representations, and the mythologies that attach to it, can produce imaginative geographies that affect perceptions of the present cultural landscape and evoke conceptual reconstructions of past topographies.

For geographers, the map has long been a fundamental means of representing the world and positioning places. However, the concept of the 'mental (or 'cognitive') map' has facilitated a departure from the idea of 'mapping as a mode of graphic communication' (Cosgrove, 'Mapping/Cartography' 30). 'Mental map' is used to refer to 'an individual's knowledge of spatial and environmental relations, and cognitive processes associated with the encoding and retrieval of information from which it is composed' (Kitchen and Blades 1). The knowledge that comprises these mental maps—or *cognitive schemata* or *structures*, as Tuan calls them in an effort to dispel the over-literal conception of pictures in the head ('Images' 206)—is obtained through direct interaction with the environment and from a wide range of secondary sources and experiences, and is articulated in the oral, written, and visual strategies that people use

to depict ‘some part of the spatial environment’ to themselves or others (Downs and Stea 6).

Much research into mental maps has been concerned with navigation and orientation; examining how particular environmental features impact on estimations of distances and the speed at which an environment is learned; and investigating the reasons for distortions and differences detected in the cognitive maps of individuals living in the same neighbourhood.<sup>2</sup> However, since mental maps are ‘spatial representations produced by ordinary subjects, and therefore not subject to the conventions of scientific cartography’, they not only provide information about how individuals navigate the physical topographies of their environment, but also afford insights into ‘human perceptions and affective relations with space and place [. . . and] the imaginative and aesthetic aspects of human spatiality and material spaces’ (Cosgrove, ‘Mapping/Cartography’ 30). Theatres, as I have suggested, are places of affect and centres of meaning, and can acquire significant positions on our mental maps through particular encounters with them. Memories created in a theatre affect the positioning of that place within our cognitive schema and this, in turn, may impact on how and when the events that took place there are retrieved and articulated. The concept of the mental map is important to the relations between memory and place explored in my analysis of Boyd’s *Richard II*.

#### (ii) Shakespeare’s Geographies

Cultural geographer D. C. D. Pocock observed in 1988 that exploration of the interface between geography and literature had been ‘largely unidirectional’, as literature scholars were less willing to go into these interstitial territories (‘Place’ 87); but scholars of early modern drama have shown great interest in working at the interface between geography and literature. Shakespeare scholars have long been concerned with the playwright’s ideas of the mapped world. Early eighteenth-century editors, such as Lewis Theobald and William Warburton, attributed to the playwright a comprehensive eighteenth-century geographical knowledge and an accuracy of description comparable with England’s leading cartographers of county maps: Camden, Speed and Saxton. They therefore assigned any apparent geographical inaccuracies to editors and printers (Mayhew 25). Later, Samuel Johnson, George Steevens, and Edmond Malone

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<sup>2</sup> For an overview of models of cognitive mapping see Kitchen and Blades; and Downs and Stea. For a study of differences and distortions see Lloyd and Heivly.



‘accept[ed] that “Shakespeare did make errors even by the standards of his own era, such as placing Bohemia on the coast in *The Winter’s Tale*” (Mayhew 25, 30).<sup>3</sup>

These critiques of Shakespeare’s geographies demonstrate the tendency to think of space as mapped territories with fixed identities, dependent more on their exact location and physical features, than any symbolic meaning they may have, or any insight into human relations that their creative representation might afford. However, towards the end of the twentieth century there was ‘a startling explosion of academic, artistic and cultural interest in “cartography” as an object of critical attention’ (Cosgrove, ‘Mapping Meaning’ 3), and researchers working in the humanities and cultural studies began to explore ‘the centrality of the map as both material object and as metaphor within early modern culture’ (4): an enterprise which unsettled the perceived stability of both maps and the places they represented.

By the fifteenth century maps, globes, and armillary spheres had become ‘graphic symbols of scholarly learning’ (Woodward 87) and the high status of maps and the fascination with the measuring instruments required for mapmaking is clear from their appearance in art of the period (Helgerson, ‘Folly’ 241). The capacity of globes and maps to act not only as symbols of erudition, but also as symbols of power is demonstrated particularly in the *Armada* and *Ditchley* portraits of Elizabeth I (1588 and



Fig. 1 The Armada Portrait (c. 1588).



Fig. 2 The Ditchley Portrait (c. 1590).

<sup>3</sup> Theobald’s, Warburton’s, Jonson’s, Steevens’ and Malone’s editions of Shakespeare were published in 1733, 1747, 1765, 1766, and 1790 respectively.

c. 1590 respectively), which suggest the Queen's status as empress of territories beyond English shores and give her authority over the nation in/on which she stands (Figs. 1 and 2). Abram Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* was first published in 1570, and Gerard Mercator's *Atlas* in three parts between 1585 and 1595; the first terrestrial and celestial globes were introduced into the London market by Emery Molyneux in 1592; and the first edition of Christopher Saxton's *Atlas of the Counties of England and Wales* was published in 1579. These mappings enabled Elizabethan men and women to survey the world, and their own nation, from the comfort of their own home: to enter into, as Ortelius's title suggests, the theatre of the world, and form their own imaginations of territories beyond physical reach. Maps circulated widely along with other geographical texts, such as Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1589), which contained travel writings by explorers, ambassadors, and merchants, as well charts and plans. World maps and atlases were desirable objects in the Renaissance; they were displayed in private homes, reproduced in tapestries, book illustrations, paintings, and playing cards, (Helgerson, 'Land' 56; Morgan 148, 150), and were printed in large sizes and 'pocket-size spin offs' (Helgerson, 'Folly' 242).

This awareness of the aesthetic appeal and cultural and political significance of maps prompted a new examination of the influences of cartography on early modern drama, and Richard Helgerson's work has been fundamental in the development of this field. Helgerson argues that the publication of Saxton's collection of county maps allowed English men and women, for the first time, to take 'effective visual and conceptual possession of the physical kingdom in which they lived' ('Land' 51), and that the ideological effect of this was to 'strengthen[. . .] the sense of both local and national identity at the expense of an identity based on dynastic loyalty' (56). Further, by juxtaposing two equally 'potent' images—that of the land and that of Elizabeth I, whose image and arms became gradually marginalized in subsequent editions of Saxton's *Atlas*—the maps 'opened a conceptual gap between the land and its ruler' and placed subjects in a problematic position by showing royal authority at the same time as they undermined it (56).

Subsequent studies of early modern cartography have been underpinned by a consciousness of the ideological work of maps, their ambiguities, and instabilities. Lesley B. Cormack argues that the illustrated frontspieces of maps, including that of Saxton's *Atlas*—which depicted Elizabeth enthroned between geography with a compass and globe on the right and astronomy with an armillary sphere on the left—and other geographical texts circulating in the sixteenth century were instrumental in shaping

imperial aspirations and a sense of English superiority. Joyce Woolway Grenfell discusses the unsettling effects of the expanding world on the discourses that had underpinned England's understanding of its place in the world as a Christian nation, and the consequent need for early modern writers and cartographers to find a new typology that would allow for 'assimilat[ion] of new geographic territory with the Christian morality' (227). This geographically-produced moral uncertainty is expressed in Jodocus Hondius's *Christian Knight Map of the World* (1597)—on which the Christian Knight is pictured surrounded by the enemies he has to overcome: sin, the flesh, the devil, death, and the world itself (Grenfell 230; see also Helgerson, 'Folly' 247)—and Grenfell links the ethical dilemmas suggested in this map to the absence of maps in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The Red Cross Knight and Britomart travel without map or compass and are, thus, forced to read the signs as they traverse the terrain and accommodate this new land to existing beliefs; Grenfell argues therefore that Spenser was suggesting that, in spite of the many maps of England and the New World then in circulation, there was no adequate map available to guide the traveller through this morally uncharted territory. The importance of Helgerson's work and the studies cited above is that they reveal the potential of the map as a shaping force, and also problematize cartographic processes and products by suggesting that, as well as sources of delight (Morgan 142, 148), they were sources of anxiety. The spiritual and ethical dilemmas, divided loyalties, and the tensions between the inward and outward-looking gaze encouraged by maps indicate that Shakespeare's geographic imagination was characterized by an appreciation of the ambiguities of spaces and spatial relations. This more complex conception of Shakespeare's relations with geography adds urgency to the task of investigating his plays for those 'other' geographies which go beyond confirming his or our knowledge of the mapped world.

The tensions between delight and anxiety that maps were perceived as inducing have been explored in relation to the two scenes in which Shakespeare introduces a map as prop: *Henry IV Part One* III.1 and *King Lear* I.1. These studies show how the negotiations around the maps in both these scenes challenge the traditional idea of the map as a representation of spatial stability and 'at times, a tool in achieving it' (Cosgrove, 'Mapping Meaning' 4-5), and expose 'the disintegrative danger of maps' (Hertel 53). Bruce Avery explores the dichotomy between change and fixity represented by Hotspur and Glendower's opposing approaches to cartography, and concludes that, whilst for young Harry Percy 'neither the landscape nor the map are fixed entities—they can be arranged to suit him' (59), for Glendower the world is fixed: rivers shall, must

and do wind. David Read complicates this reading by arguing that although in the first part of the scene Hotspur endeavours to draw Glendower back within the ‘normal boundaries’ (477), later in the same scene ‘the fabulist and the pragmatist have switched places; it is Hotspur who wants to deny the boundaries, over Glendower’s objections’ (477).

Both Avery and Hawkes stress the power of the map in *King Lear* to excite the feelings of awe and wonder associated with maps as delightful objects combined with fear and suspicion related to their potential to effect alterations in the organization of territory, and changes in, or the erosion of, familiar traditions. Hawkes stresses the shocking effect of Lear’s proposal in the light of the traditional conception of the unity of kingship, and emphasizes the role of the map as a powerful symbol of the process of fragmentation that Lear begins with the division of his kingdom. He also argues that Jacobean audiences would have seen in the map their own ‘way of life [. . .] grotesquely reduced to and barbarically treated as a mere physical diagram’ (‘Lear’s Maps’ 5), thus construing the map as a tool which connects audience and characters and generates thought on the construction, or deconstruction, of both the fictive world and that of the spectators. John Gillies also suggests that the importance of Lear’s map is connected with its function as a critique of the power of maps and ‘mappery’, but argues that in *King Lear* the main body of the play between the map and the Dover cliff scene, is taken up with the spatial issues of ‘housedness and unhousedness, accommodation and nakedness’ (‘Scene’ 123).

Although Shakespeare used the map as prop only twice, as far as we know from dialogue and stage directions, it is not surprising that the ‘immense cultural and ideological authority’ of cartography in the sixteenth century (Gillies, ‘Scene’ 118) has impelled scholars to investigate Shakespeare’s employment of these powerful objects. Whilst my main concern is with how the geographies of his plays are translated into three-dimensional, populated ‘maps’ in performance, this work is informative as it suggests that Shakespeare was engaging with complex spatial debates that went beyond the geographical connections with theatre—expressed in the world-as-stage trope—to an exploration of the mutability of space and spatial representations. Both these scenes unsettle the apparent fixedness of the map and also suggest the instability of the map-makers—Lear, Hotspur, and Glendower—who embody competing and fluctuating interests, ideologies, and mythologies. The concern with lived spaces expressed in *King Lear* and *Henry IV Part One*, whether the life places of the Jacobean audiences or the incommensurable heath where Lear finds himself un-accommodated, points to the need to

explore the human geographies that are mapped in Shakespeare's texts and examine their realization in production.

The recognition that maps could do things other than represent an accurate and stable world opened up a more nuanced approach to the 'examples of anachronism and geographical confusion' found in some of Shakespeare's plays (McJannet 87). The view that the anomalous seaside Bohemia in *The Winter's Tale* is an example of the playwright's geographical ignorance or an editorial error is countered by Richard Schoch who, in his discussion of Victorian representations of Bohemia, suggests that it was a symbolic space rather than a specific location, and opens up the debate about the pre-eminence of figurative value over geographical accuracy. Gillies also stresses the metaphorical significance of Shakespeare's geographies, and explores Shakespeare's geographic imagination as it is mediated in the plays through figures such as, Antonio (*The Merchant of Venice*), Desdemona (*Othello*), and Antony (*Antony and Cleopatra*), whom he defines as 'voyagers'. Gillies argues that these characters, who transgress accepted boundaries, whether cartographic or moral, reflect the range and nature of Shakespeare's topographic interests, and maintains that the geography of these plays is 'a complex and dynamic quantity, with a characterological and symbolic agenda' rather than merely 'a literal quantity and [. . .] a backdrop' (Gillies, *Shakespeare* 3).

Places too, then, can be considered for the imaginative work they can do, and Peter G. Platt's analysis of Venice is particularly important in this respect, and has been influential in the formulation of theatrical geographies. Platt maintains that Venice is not merely a dramatic setting and geographical site, but 'does the work of a verbal paradox' (121). Since Renaissance paradox 'challenges conventions and commonly held opinions [. . .] startles its "audience" into marvel and amazement; and [. . .] contains opposites without necessarily resolving them' (122), the power of paradox lies in its ability to 'perform an epistemological function [. . .] and force a reconfiguring of thought and knowledge' (122). Platt draws on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century accounts of Venice to give a sense of the city's physical, political, religious, moral and social 'doubleness'. He argues that these contradictions suggest that the place itself works as a paradox, 'capable of reconfiguring the boundaries of the known' (128), not only for the characters in the play, but also for the spectators, since 'the stage – and particularly the interaction between audience and play – is also a site of paradox, a place where spectators, dazzled and destabilized by unresolved and unresolvable problems, are forced to evaluate their cognitive and cultural worlds' (121). By combining stage, play, and audience Platt constructs the whole theatrical event as the paradoxical site

where, in the face of irreconcilable problems, this reconfiguration of thought and knowledge can take place. Conceiving of theatre in this way affirms the political potential of Shakespeare in performance and leaves exciting, and unanswered, questions about how exactly a particular construction of Venice—or other named places in Shakespeare—in a particular space-time might perform this reconfiguration of thought and knowledge. *Theatrical geographies* takes the discussion of place and space in Shakespeare forward by studying specific instances of the ‘paradoxical site(s)’ created by specific stagings of *Richard II*, and looking at how the spaces generated by the play might facilitate a reconfiguration of thought and knowledge, particularly in relation to the paradoxical qualities of the England of the play.

Whilst the works discussed above have engaged with geography through cartographic texts and travel writings, other scholars, influenced by Lefebvre’s emphasis on lived space and de Certeau’s idea that the city is generated at ‘ground level, with footsteps’ (97), have considered early modern London as ‘an inherently spatially performed entity [. . .] enacted before it was visualized [. . . and] walked before it was drawn’ (Gordon 70). Andrew Gordon uses *Coriolanus* to reflect on how the dynamic relationship between the city as ‘architectural fabric’ and the city as ‘social body’ may be mediated through civic ceremony, in an attempt to ‘bring into correspondence [. . . these] two readings of the city’ (71). In her examination of the complex relations between theatre, court, and city, and the reciprocal influences operating in the production of spaces and subjectivities in London (6), Janette Dillon analyses performances in and of the city through plays in the public theatres and through street pageantry, and reveals a shared public consciousness of the symbolic geographies of the city. Further, Dillon demonstrates how these symbolic geographies were produced, challenged, and reinvented through official and unofficial ceremonial performance.

To such performances, I would also add the riots and unrest of the 1590s, of which, perhaps the most serious occurred on 29 June 1595, when around a thousand London apprentices marched on Tower Hill intending to ransack gunmakers’ shops, tore down the pillories in Cheapside and set up a gallows outside the house of the unpopular mayor Sir John Spenser (Archer 1, 6; Rappaport 12-15). The episode had particularly grave consequences: the Queen appointed Thomas Wilford as provost marshal assigning him ‘special powers to apprehend and punish “rebellious and incorrigible persons”’ (Rappaport 13), and five apprentices were charged with treason and executed on Tower Hill. This incident exemplifies the differing meanings with which the same place may be invested: the site of the enactment of protest became, from

the two distinct perspectives from which it could have been viewed on 24 July (the date of the executions), the site of justice and the site of injustice.

Maps were ‘deeply engaged in the work of early modernity’ (Helgerson, ‘Folly’ 241), and Helgerson argues that the generation who ‘came of age’ as Saxton’s county maps were appearing developed ‘a cartographically and chorographically shaped consciousness of national power’ (‘Land’ 52). Indeed, he states that a ‘map-conditioned sense of geographic space’ was crucial to understanding certain works by early-modern playwrights, poets and painters (Folly 250). However, conceiving of the city as a ‘spatially performed entity’, susceptible to new meanings and temporary transformations, highlights the interactions between the material bodies, objects, and buildings—including the playhouses—which produced the urban space of early modern London, and suggests that Shakespeare’s geographic imagination also accommodated the idea of place as created and animated by flows, language, and sounds. Studies which invoke either a consciousness of the power and influence of maps or an awareness of mapping as performed practice configure geography as a key factor both in apprehending the plays and in the shaping of Shakespeare’s dramatic imagination; they offer complementary approaches to the analysis of Shakespeare’s plays and the urban world he inhabited. In this thesis, I draw on and extend both these lines of thought by exploring how what conditions our sense of space now is reflected in, and/or illuminated through, *Richard II* in production, and argue that a knowledge of current theorizations of space enhances our understanding of the meanings created by the play in performance.

### (iii) Mapping Theatres

The interest of cultural geographers in examining the symbolic significance of the structures that comprise a community’s cultural landscape is paralleled by the interest of theatre historians in the location, design, uses and characters of individual theatres or types of performance space. The geographical location of theatres within urban landscapes has sometimes constituted a response to the city’s existing structures—the paths, nodes, districts, edges, and landmarks by which inhabitants navigated their routes—and at others has contributed to the formation of these spatial elements (Carlson, *Places* 10-11; *Theatre* 47). Since places are ‘materializations[s] of cultural values’ (P. Crang, ‘Geographies’ 174), theatres may invest their locations with a particular meaning and identity, and/or their own identities and meanings may be constructed in relation to

the existing reputation and character of the districts of which they form a part; and they may also be a shaping force in the lives of their personnel and spectators/visitors.

An awareness of the relations between geographical location and meaning is evidenced in discussions of the Elizabethan playhouses, and scholars have argued that their location in the Liberties was linked to the ambiguous position of theatre in early modern society (Carlson, *Theatre* 47-48; and Mullaney *passim*). Further, Steven Mullaney maintains that this geographical situation afforded theatre ‘a culturally and ideologically removed vantage point from which it could reflect upon its own age with more freedom and license than had hitherto been possible’ (30). Similarly, Russell West, stressing ‘the *simultaneous* geographical marginality and economic integration of the theatres’, suggests that ‘their spatial ambivalence form[ed] an emblem of their partly subversive and partly participatory place within the society’ making them ‘not so much marginal, but *liminoid*, on the threshold’ (52).

Locating these first commercial theatres in the margins, where—along with other institutions ‘expelled’ from the city: lazar houses, prisons, madhouses, hospitals, brothels, scaffolds of execution—they could operate as ‘vehicles’ for the ‘performance of the threshold’ offering ‘a liminal breed of cultural performance’ (Mullaney 31), places the playhouses within a tawdry, but exciting, imaginative geography, and assigns them an ironically privileged and potentially transgressive identity. Dillon, however, problematizes this mapping by pointing out that as not all Liberties were outside the City, not all theatre was marginal, and she warns against falling for the City’s rhetoric, which constructed the liberties as ‘places of riot and disorder’ (97).

Moreover, the early modern playhouses, like later theatres, existed within an extensive network of spaces and spatial relations, and were mapped into London’s geographies of business and pleasure. Ann Jennalie Cook situates the early modern theatres within the personal cartographies of leisured gentlemen whose playgoing might also trace a route between the dining houses and the gambling tables. Tiffany Stern locates the playhouses within the wider cultural geographies of London, which she argues were key factors in production and reception, as ‘[e]ven the ways by which Londoners approached the playhouses might [. . .] have [had] an effect on what they understood from the plays they saw there [as] the very bustle of London, its noises and imagery, were part of the plays put on (9).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Stern suggests that the blackened heads, displayed on London Bridge gatehouse, with their associations of treachery, may have produced racist responses, and that Othello’s blackness may already have identified him as a guilty creature, even before the narrative unfolded (13). She cites the bridge, with its gruesome appendages, and Ludgate, which, with its decorated images of Lud and other kings, functioned



Such discussions draw attention to the role of geographies in constructing the early modern playhouses as contested sites and highlight the mythologies that have attached to places that figured in Shakespeare's mental maps. They also frame issues which are now articulated by the physical presence and practices of Shakespeare's Globe. Although not actually located on the site of the first Globe, this intervention into the cultural landscape has generated new histories which enter into dialogue with the narratives of the early modern playhouse geographies; both the old and new narratives contribute to the construction of the imaginative geographies of 'Shakespeare's London' and contemporary Bankside.

A similar geographical consciousness is demonstrated in studies of later periods, which examine the location and functions of particular theatres and interrogate the significance of their exterior and interior topographies. Carlson (*Places; Theatre*) shows how theatres from the eighteenth century onwards have reflected class relations through the construction of different approaches and entrances for different socio-economic groups; he also considers how the box system has been demonstrative of civil, social, and financial status, and how the support spaces for socializing in intervals were initially developed to maintain the social divisions that existed within communities of playgoers. Ian Mackintosh complicates the view of the interior geographies of 'the old theatres' as supportive of class divisions, by suggesting 'that there had been few more effective architectural devices to bring together the social classes in a single space than the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theatres' (79).

The topographies of these 'old theatres', then, configure them both as 'evidence of a compartmentalized social structure' (Mackintosh 79), and as centres which give room for the convergence of a heterogeneous group at the same event. They also made inscriptions on the landscape, not just through their physical structures, but also by transforming their localities through the display of bills on walls and in local shops and creating flows through the city (Moody 154, 156). Jane Moody's analysis of the locations, repertoires, and functions of illegitimate theatres in London 1770-1840 is highly sensitive to the geographies theatres created. Although these geographies were in part related to a theatre's status as legitimate or illegitimate, and some theatres reflected the ethnic makeup of the local community (166), audiences were not exclusively local and the movement of different groups of spectators between theatres is evidenced by the fact that Astleys attracted 'genteel people, with their children and servants' from far

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both as a celebration of English kingship and a prison, as landmarks which were 'part of the complex fabric out of which Shakespeare's plays were woven' (13).

beyond its immediate neighbourhood and the existence of West End box offices for the Surrey and the Coburg (Moody 171; see also Mackintosh 37).

The work of locating Victorian theatres within a framework that allows for a consideration of the relations between different venues and types of performance has recently been furthered by a project at the University of Nottingham in which theatre historians and geographers have collaborated to create a Web-based interactive map of the sites of performance in nineteenth-century Nottingham (1857-1867). The project aims ‘to recover a sense of the social and cultural landscape through which spectators [. . .] would have moved on their way to the theatre, lecture rooms, concert halls, or the town’s Goose Fair’ (‘Mapping the Moment’ n. pag.), and emphasizes ‘the interconnectedness of sites of entertainment – and the performances themselves – within the boundaries of the nineteenth century town’ (‘Mapping the Moment’ n. pag.) Significantly, Jo Robinson, a principal participant in the Nottingham project, reassesses the work in the light of de Certeau’s ideas that the map tends to present a ‘totalizing’ vision which conceals the processes of selection and production, and that the ‘the panorama city’ erases or miscomprehends practices, and ‘causes a way of being in the world to be forgotten’ (89; see Certeau 121, 93, 97). In addressing the problem of ‘the reduction necessitated by the map from the lived practice and usage of the city’ (89)—suggested by de Certeau’s theories of spatial representations—Robinson argues that, in order to capture the mobilities implicit in the spatial experience of performance, it is necessary to consider other modes of thinking ‘which engage[. . .] with the experience of movement and the practice of usage of landscape’ (96). ‘Mapping the Moment’, then, contributes to accessing and understanding Nottingham’s theatrical past. However, Robinson’s re-evaluation of the map and the knowledges it affords points to the necessity of seeking new ways of articulating the relations between theatre and of apprehending and communicating the multiple spatialities of live performance produced by interactions between performers and spectators, and between places and performance: a need to which this thesis responds.

Histories of individual theatres also demonstrate a geographical consciousness as they reveal human relations with place and illuminate processes of change relating to the logistics and ideologies of theatre design. These histories explore the origins and transformations that theatres undergo—whether through structural modifications, changes in repertoire and/or personnel, or alterations to the surrounding area and its communications. George Rowell’s history of the Old Vic, for example, illuminates the potentials and constraints of the theatre’s geographical location and explores the various

identities of the theatre as it underwent a series of re-namings and was implicated in varying cultural works as it figured as coffee tavern and temperance hall, venue for educational lectures, and home to the first permanent Shakespeare company.

Claire Cochrane discusses the innovative Shakespeare productions staged at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre in the 1920s, which contributed to its distinct identity during that period, and argues that under the direction of its founder, Barry Jackson, ‘the Rep was positioned at the centre of an important network of artistic influence that extended far beyond Birmingham’ (*City’s Theatre* 3): thus mapping the theatre physically and conceptually, and suggesting its role as a key node for the development and dissemination of ideas. Taking the example of the Birmingham Rep, Cochrane also explores the relations between repertory theatres and their cities (‘Theatre and Urban Space’). Her analysis shows how theatres can shift position within the urban landscape—not just literally through physical relocation—but also through changes such as the reconfiguration of the city boundaries; modifications in the geographies of work and domestic life and the temporal organization of labour; and the development of transport networks which open up quicker routes between cities. All these factors affect the aesthetic, ideological, and affective relations between theatre and city and are relevant to interrogating the ‘meaningful intervention’ theatres can make into ‘the urban experience’ (138; see also *The Birmingham Rep*).

Ronnie Mulryne and Margaret Shewring’s anthology of writings by scholars/practitioners about the Cottesloe; and Sally Beauman’s and Colin Chambers’ discussions of *The Other Place* give insights into the political ideals, and the desire for flexible spaces for experimentation and for the creation of new actor-audience relationships that led to the development of the ‘alternative’ small-scale theatre spaces in the 1960s and 1970s.

These discussions of theatres and their geographies and interior topographies show how places of performance are implicated in complex issues of access, taste and expectations, legislation, class, and dramatic style and content. Although Mackintosh claimed in 1993 that most people still underestimated ‘the role of “place” in theatre making and theatre going’ (1), from the late 1980s onwards there has been a growing consciousness among theatre scholars/practitioners that a spectator’s reception and experience of a play in the theatre is determined not only by the action that occurred on stage, but that ‘[t]he entire theatre, its audience arrangements, its other public spaces, its physical appearance, even its location within the city, are all important elements of the process by which the audience makes meaning of its experience’ (Carlson, *Places* 2).

This is evidenced in Gay McAuley's concern with 'physical places of performance as they exist in the wider social space of the community' (*Space* 7), and her consideration of the impact on performers and audiences of a range of spaces in theatres, from the box office, through the dressing rooms, to the rehearsal spaces. Acknowledging that encounters with a range of sites are involved in the experience of theatre suggests the importance of continuing to develop critical tools that enable the analysis and documentation of the complicated social, cultural, and dramatic geographies produced by, and operating in and around theatres, and through their external and interior topographies. This thesis aims to take this work forward by analysing the geographies produced by the collaborations between individual productions and places of performance.

Scholars of early modern drama, then, have recently connected with geography by exploring Renaissance cartography and its influences, and theatre scholars have shown a sensitivity to the cultural geographies of theatre location and design. However, explorations of space as a dramaturgical element and studies of scenography, are also important to this thesis, and raise key questions which I seek to address.

#### (iv) Mapping Texts: Spatializing Plays

Scholars who have analysed the spatial systems contained in play texts have formulated classifications of different types of space and have argued that examining the relations between these spaces illuminates the play's meaning(s). Michael Isacharoff identifies three types of theatrical space: 'theater space (i.e. architectural design)' and 'stage space (i.e. the stage and set design)' ('Space' 212), which he regards as 'the most tangible forms', as they are either 'permanent (theatre buildings) or can be permanently recorded (decor and set)' (214); and 'dramatic space', which is the most 'intangible' (214). Within the category of dramatic space, Isacharoff distinguishes between mimetic space—that made visible to the audience and constituted by all the visual and sonic elements that can be found in the language of the play, both in the 'auditory [language] (the spoken text or discourse of the characters) and non-auditory (the stage directions or metadiscourse)' (221, 215)—and diegetic space, which comprises those spaces referred to by the characters and existing in the playworld beyond the spectator's field of vision. Isacharoff aims to analyse these 'elusive' spaces, and 'to study the mechanism of space, from one scene to the next, as well as the relations linking space to other constituent elements of performance' (214). The approach he outlines captures the sense of

movement inherent in performance, and hints at the idea of ‘space as process and in process’ (Crang and Thrift 3), which is a fundamental principle of theatrical geographies. However, in spite of opening up a vista towards the analysis of space in performance, Isacharoff observes that ‘photographs and other visual reproductions of a performance can only provide disparate and incomplete elements, and their effect is normally to render static a dynamic reality’ (214), and therefore concentrates on space in the ‘script’ (214).

Hannah Scolnicov is also concerned with ‘the spatial conception’ of plays, and has formulated four categories of space to analyse the balance between different spaces in the text and ‘the relative meanings that attach to them’ (15): the ‘theatrical space within’ and the ‘theatrical space without’ (which echo Isacharoff’s mimetic and diegetic space); theatre space, which ‘from the point of view of the production, [. . .] is a given space, full of potential, but also beset by limitations’ (11-12); and ‘theatrical space’. This final category resonates with my conception of space in action in performance, as it is the space where ‘the play has physical extension’ (12). It is created in performance as ‘the actors define their particular space through word, movement and gesture, and with the aid of props, scenery, lighting and acoustic effects’ (12), and may be confined to the stage or extend into other areas of the theatre space. Scolnicov therefore suggests that every play in production generates a unique space, but like Isacharoff, her analyses are firmly rooted in the organization of textual space, and leave unexplored the challenge of accessing and analysing the exciting spaces brought into existence when the text is embodied by actors and intervenes in real space.

The role of the text as the ‘creator of space’ (Ubersfeld 97) and its ‘interactive function [. . .] at every stage of the meaning making process’ (McAuley, *Space* 32) has been further explored by Ann Ubersfeld and Gay McAuley, and I adopt their useful concept of the ‘spatialization’ of the play. Ubersfeld argues that a semiotic analysis of the textual spatial elements should be ‘the starting point’ (103), since ‘[i]t is in the recurrence of certain spatial images, in the permanence of images from the didascalia or the dialogue that we can find the spatialization elements for an eventual performance’ (105). The first step in the process of ‘determin[ing] the semio-lexical field or fields of space’ is to draw up an ‘inventory’ which includes places at all scales from countries and cities, and mythical locations, through smaller spaces such as a character’s bed, to the most intimate space of the human heart (Ubersfeld 106-107). Similarly, McAuley sees the ‘wealth of spatial reference contained in the text’ including: ‘geographical and other place names, reference to objects, descriptions of place and space, verbs of

movement and other indications of proxemic relationship, even prepositional phrases' (32) as constituting the 'spatial system' which is important in 'the genesis of performance' (32).

For Ubersfeld and McAuley, uncovering the spatial system in the text is a key stage in the play's journey from page to stage; although Ubersfeld acknowledges that the play's spatial structures may be resisted or subverted in performance (103), and McAuley stresses that textual space is 'made really meaningful only in performance' (*Space* 32). Further, the playtext 'contains the potential for many spatializations' (McAuley, *Space* 32), which generate different meanings, and which are dependent on the choices that individual practitioners make concerning what to 'select, discard, [or] play with' (32); and, as a play may be staged according to the different "'matrices" of spatialization' (e.g., conflict between spaces, or spaces divided), '[i]t becomes uniquely interesting for us to make note of the choice made by the director among the various matrices of spatialization in the text' (Ubersfeld 111). This thesis, via the framework of theatrical geographies, takes up the challenges implicit in these observations by analysing a series of 'uniquely interesting' spatializations of *Richard II*, and pushes this thinking further by noting and examining subversions and resistances that occur in particular productions. However, it also takes account of other factors which are productive of the spatialization, and which exist outside of any spatial system that might be perceived as operating in the text. As Rush Rehm suggests, 'theatrical space demands *presence*—the simultaneous presence of performers and audience' (10); indeed, this embodied presence is constitutive of the space of performance and introduces elements of instability, as the actors' own performances are unstable (Aronson 5); and unpredictability, as the spaces generated when the playing area is 'actuated by the ensemble of movements [and language] deployed within it' (Certeau 117) may include *terrae incognitae*: microsites hitherto unknown/unrecognized in the text, but which are produced in performance and can impact on the play's potential meanings.<sup>5</sup>

One of the primary physical changes to theatres that the text generates in performance is achieved through the scenography, which is one of the means by which the spatialization of the text is realized, and therefore a key component in theatrical

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<sup>5</sup> J. K. Wright argued that '[e]ven if an area were to be minutely mapped and studied by an army of microgeographers, much about its geography would always remain unknown, and, hence if there is no *terra incognita* today in an absolute sense, so also no *terra* is absolutely *cognita*' (3-4); consequently there is always the possibility of discovering and documenting new, if sometimes tiny, places. I borrow the term *terrae incognitae*, then, as an appropriate analogy in relation to the analysis of the geographies of Shakespeare in performance, where the territories of the text are generally thought to be well known.

geographies. Questions raised by Christopher Baugh's recent review of twentieth-century scenography, and Arnold Aronson's concerns with the problems of scenographic analysis have been of particular significance in formulating my approach.

Baugh observes that throughout the nineteenth century successive acts of rejection set up a cyclical process by which the dominant aesthetic was replaced by new styles and techniques in scenography, but that 'the acts of rejection at the close of the nineteenth century, [. . .] were so radical and thoroughgoing that no new dominant aesthetic was to emerge [. . .] to replace, in the western world, the universality of nineteenth-century realism' (44). He notes that the approaches, solutions, and energies generated by rejections of nineteenth-century ideologies and forms of theatrical space—reflected in the work of practitioners from Craig, Appia, Meyerhold, and Stanislavsky, through Artaud, Brecht and Neher, to Grotowski—'have not been superseded in either practical or artistic usefulness', so can be treated as 'ongoing conditions of contemporary scenography – rather than as historical precursors' (45). Nevertheless, running through Baugh's history is a consciousness of Craig's sense of the possible progression of scenographic form: 'Today they *impersonate*; tomorrow they must *represent* and interpret; and the third day they must *create*' (Craig 30, also qtd. in Baugh 51). Reflecting on Craig's 'agenda' (51), Baugh raises a series of crucial questions relating to the form that contemporary scenography should take:

[I]f the stage scene should no longer exist in order to imitate or impersonate a pre-existing material reality, then what should it look like? How should the stage scene, if it were to become 'non-real', relate with the real actor? How should it function as a location for performance? If the scene increasingly begins to acknowledge, and indeed to celebrate that it looks like nothing other than itself, then what does this mean for the relationship between dramatic literature and scenography? (46).

Clearly there can be no generalised answers to the questions Baugh poses, and they suggest the need for the study of individual examples of postmodern scenography. The analysis of the stage environments of my case studies illuminates the 'identity and distinctiveness' of present day scenography (Baugh 46) by showing how these designs interact with current geographical thinking, and exploring the particular relations between play, place and spatial design engendered by specific productions.

The critical analysis of scenography is also a pressing issue for Arnold Aronson, who comments on Foucault's ability to probe the images in Velázquez's *Las Meninas* in a manner that leads to 'an explication of social structures and hierarchical relationships within a particular society' (97). Acknowledging the common ground between painting

and scenography—which both show ‘characters interacting within a dynamic spatial structure comprised of symbolic scenic pieces depicted with an emblematic use of color and line’ (97)—Aronson asks: ‘Could we not take a stage design—a theatrical environment—and wade into the depths of its forest of symbols, its spatial dynamics and its existence as a site for revelation?’ (97). Within the framework of theatrical geographies the spatial dynamics of a stage design and its existence as a site for revelation are of extreme interest, so my answer to Aronson’s question is clearly, yes. However, as Aronson himself acknowledges, one primary obstacle to the sort of analysis he suggests is ‘the instability of the scenographic object’ (97). Of the various representations that could be made available to the critic’s eye, none seems entirely satisfactory:

[I]f I were to present a stage design for consideration, what exactly would I show? A painted rendering? A model? A photograph of an empty set? (And, if that, a black-and-white or color photo?) A photo from a production with the actors?—but then, how to decide which moment of the production to show? Would the photo be only of the stage (which would emphasize the setting as an independent work of art), or would it include the auditorium as well (which would emphasize the convention of presentation)? (97-98).

Aronson’s recognition of the difficulties of analyzing the three-dimensional reality of scenography through static, or decontextualized representations, is also implied in Pamela Howard’s claim that ‘[s]pace is elastic, emotional and mobile, [and] constantly changed by the performers themselves’ (Howard 14). There are clear parallels here in the scenographer’s and the geographer’s perceptions of space. Both allow for a stage/landscape of material forms, which is produced and constantly transformed by language, mobilities and flows, and which is comprised of human interactions. Undoubtedly, the dynamic, unstable reality of theatrical space has driven those analysts interested in the most ‘intangible’ space of theatre (Isacharoff, ‘Space’ 214), back into the text, leaving the problem of how to access and analyse the three-dimensional, lived and embodied spatializations of drama.

Iain Mackintosh airs a similar dilemma in respect of theatre buildings, and argues that the essential qualities of ‘rest and movement’, that all theatres, regardless of their form, should have, can only be appraised in the presence of actors and audiences and that photographs of empty auditoriums are misleading (169). Mackintosh is primarily concerned with successful theatre design, but his contention that the qualities of a theatre cannot be assessed ‘without seeing it clothed with audience and actors’ (169) underscores the need to conceive of space in and for theatre as a living process,



rather than an inert form. The premise that theatre architecture can only be evaluated in the act of its primary function as a place of performance may be similarly applied to the analysis of scenography, which is animated by the actors who ‘inhabit and use it, and make it their living space’ (Howard 14), and by the spectators who experience and interpret it.

My engagement with individual spatializations of *Richard II* is complemented by an awareness of the reciprocal relations between the production and the theatre. Whilst the theatre intervenes in the play through the particular space it offers, the play may make a distinct intervention into the life of the theatre, as my discussions of *Richard II* at the Globe and the Roundhouse will demonstrate. Carlson argues that anyone seeking to understand a public performance of a play without taking into account the full ‘performance matrix’, which includes the place of performance, ‘will be dealing with a partial perspective and in many cases a seriously flawed one’ (*Places* 207). Theatrical geographies responds to this exhortation towards a fuller analysis of the theatrical event by taking account of the potential shifts in theatre identities as well as the physical changes that are generated by performance.

#### (v) Addressing the Geographies of Staging

If, then, any public performance of a play should take into account the full spatial matrix (Carlson, *Places* 207); if theatres should be appraised when they are ‘clothed’ with actors and audiences (Mackintosh 169); if there are multiple spatializations of a single play (McAuley, *Space* 32), and each of these is ‘uniquely interesting’ (Ubersfeld 111); and if, as Aronson and Howard suggest, we need a way of analysing scenography that somehow takes into account the inherent instability of a stage environment, then there is a great need for studies which approach the analysis of theatrical space with a broader conceptualization of space than that available when each of the aspects of theatrical space discussed above is considered individually and in isolation from performance. In order to explore past spaces of theatre production and to apprehend and analyse ‘the energized space of the stage when it is occupied and rendered meaningful by the presence of performers’ (McAuley, *Space* 7), it is necessary to combine methodologies from theatre history, performance studies, and cultural geography.

In order to build up an intertheatrical map of the geographies of production of *Richard II*, I have consulted traditional archival materials. The translations in the play’s

meanings and the knowledges that circulate about its earlier life in other contexts are produced by all those involved in the processes of production, reception, and criticism; they are articulated in performance and through material remains such as reviews, programmes, photographs, publicity materials, recordings of performance, (auto)biographies, and spectator anecdotes. An examination of the knowledges provided by such sources has long been the practice of theatre historians and performance analysts, and I draw on these materials; however, I also engage with Diana Taylor's conceptualization of the repertoire. Taylor defines the repertoire as the embodied practice and knowledge generated and stored in a wide range of cultural and theatrical performances (19), and maintains that the gestures and languages produced and transmitted through performance—which constitute the repertoire—are stored, but also subject to transformation. This idea of the repertoire is particularly appropriate to the study of Shakespeare in performance, as every new production of a Shakespeare play is bound up in complex operations of citation and innovation. Taylor also stresses that '[t]he repertoire requires presence' since 'people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by "being there," being part of the transmission' (20), and she positions herself as witness to, or participant in, the various performances she analyses. Like Taylor, I would argue that '[e]mbodied and performed acts generate, record, and transmit knowledge' (Taylor 21), and I have also argued that embodied and performed acts generate spaces, some of which are only available in performance. A combination of approaches, then, is necessary to apprehend those spaces as fully as possible, and where possible, I seek to understand the spaces and knowledges engendered in performance by 'being there'.

My approach is also influenced by Carol Chillington Rutter's emphasis on embodiment in Shakespeare production. I share with Rutter an interest in what bodies 'do' on stage and concur with her conviction that 'the body in play bears continuous meaning onstage, and always exceeds the playtext it inhabits' (*Enter* xii). Bodies in motion and stasis create the transient sites of meaning that I analyse. In the readings of the case studies that I provide I also recognize, the 'inaccuracy' of my own 'accurate' remembering (Rutter, *Enter* xii). Where possible, I also draw on interviews with practitioners who have activated and inhabited some of the spaces of *Richard II* that I investigate.

The mobile nature of performance often means that spaces are produced and dissolved with great rapidity, and geographer David Lowenthal brings some important insight to grappling with this challenge. Lowenthal maintains that 'we learn most

rapidly about the world not by paying close attention to a single variable, but by superficially scanning a great variety of things' (Lowenthal, 'Geography' 250) and stresses the 'selective, creative, fleeting, [and] inexact' nature of everyday perception (Sprout and Sprout 10, qtd. in Lowenthal, 'Geography' 250). Artistic objects activate a more intense mode of looking than everyday objects, but the theatrical gaze is itinerant, moving with the action of the play and subject to disruptions of concentration, and therefore also prone to selection, creativity, transience, and imprecision. However, since '[e]ssential perception of the world [. . .] embraces every way of looking at it: conscious and unconscious, blurred and distinct, objective and subjective, inadvertent and deliberate, literal and schematic' (Lowenthal, 'Geography' 251), knowledge can be produced both by sustained contemplation and fleeting sensory perceptions. Whilst my analysis of Pimlott's *Richard II* was facilitated, in part, by the production video, which allowed sustained contemplation and the repeated viewing of particular sections, my other case studies draw on my lived experience and the knowledge produced by a range of modes of looking and being in the space.<sup>6</sup>

I present these readings as a means of entering into dialogue about the spaces generated by *Richard II* in performance and the impact of particular productions on the lives of the theatres they (temporarily) inhabited. I start from Lowenthal's premise that each person's view of the world is both highly idiosyncratic and personal, and yet simultaneously based on a shared vision of the environment, which enables each person to orient her/himself and survive within their milieu. I trust therefore that my 'idiosyncratic' readings will provoke further dialogue, and that my understanding of the potential resonances created by the geographies of performance will find recognition within a shared knowledge of the places and non-places that constitute our contemporary cultural landscape and in the context of the similarities and differences of our twenty-first-century experience of time and space.

Like Rutter, then, I am interested in the excessive nature of performance, which surpasses text, through the collaboration of words, minds, bodies, objects, and space; and therefore do not wish to impose a single model of analysis. Rather, I am arguing that applying a geographical consciousness will facilitate new ways of thinking about the complex operations that occur in the space-time produced by performance. Like Taylor, I trust that these openly acknowledged 'differences in tone' (xvi), and the shifting prioritization of the different spatial focuses I discuss will be a means by which

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<sup>6</sup> My analysis of Tim Carroll's *the Globe* is also supported by two of the several video recordings available in the *Globe* archive, and a television version broadcast by BBC 4 in September 2003.

I can open up a rich vein of conceiving Shakespeare in performance geographically, rather than thinking solely about theatrical space.

## Chapter Two

### Textual Geographies of *Richard II*

In this chapter I explore the textual geographies of *Richard II*. I discuss the locations in the play and highlight the human geographical themes that are addressed. By examining the resonances of key sites, I demonstrate their ambiguities and show how the play keys into spatial issues of its historical moment, whilst also anticipating spatialities currently of importance in cultural geography, such as the development of affective human bonds with place; the instability of places; tensions between place-based and mobile identities; and how the real and the imagined combine in the construction of the evocative force of places. This textual mapping provides the basis for my analysis of the ways in which the play's geographies have been staged. However, it also aims to be forward-looking and to inspire questions as to how the geographies of *Richard II* might be further explored in future productions.

In the first section, I analyse the masculine geographies and consider the role of proper names in the construction of the world of the play. I then examine the feminine geographies and argue that, although they appear in few scenes, the female characters in *Richard II* map significant spaces into the world of the play and make crucial interventions into the identities of the places that figure in their trajectories.

#### (i) Geographies of Power and Displacement

Following Holinshed, Windsor can be mapped as the location for the opening scene of *Richard II*, in which Bolingbroke and Mowbray appeal each other (Nicholl and Nicholl 21). However, the scene evokes other geographies that are also constitutive of the playworld, indicative of its power relations, and suggestive of discourses pertaining to mythological and religious spatialities.

The play begins with the indication that Richard is in command of space, as amongst his first utterances is the instruction to call Bolingbroke and Mowbray to his presence (I.1.15). But in addressing his uncle, John of Gaunt, as 'time-honoured Lancaster' (I.1.1), Richard—in the very first line—complicates both the power relations suggested by his own title and the concept of the kingdom. John of Gaunt was the greatest English magnate and the 'castles, forests, manors and other estates' in England and Wales (Saccio 20), which he had acquired through inheritance, his three marriages, and royal mandate 'were so extensive, and their associated powers and privileges so

complex, that it was necessary to administer them via a quasi-royal chancellor and council and to appoint separate chief stewards for the north and south parts' (Dutton 3). In 1390 Gaunt was granted 'the franchise of a county palatine in Lancashire which was vested in his heirs male' (4). Although he still owed allegiance to the king, this made the Duke of Lancaster virtually the ruler of 'a kingdom within the kingdom', and allowed him to enforce law in his own county court and to manage, in a separate court, all matters relating to duchy lands (4). The evocative force of 'Lancaster' opens up a vision of England that goes beyond the specific location of the action; sets up a sense of 'two houses both alike in dignity', and brings into play a sense of the strength of the contesting forces that will develop throughout the drama. For Elizabethan playgoers this historical resonance may also have been enhanced by their local knowledge: as the duchy had a strong presence in the capital, many of them would have been aware that the Savoy Manor, the duchy's fourteenth-century headquarters, had been destroyed during Wat Tyler's rebellion because 'Gaunt had stirred up much public resentment in acquiring his private empire' (Dutton 4-5).

As the scene develops, the kingdom itself is mapped into a wider set of real and imagined geographies. When Bolingbroke wishes to add weight to the accusations of treason he levels at Mowbray, he professes himself willing to meet with his opponent 'Or here or elsewhere to the furthest verge / That ever was surveyed by English eye (I.1.93-94). This stirring statement of resolve equals, and linguistically mirrors, Mowbray's declaration that to attest to Bolingbroke's treachery he would:

. . . run afoot  
Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps,  
Or any other ground inhabitable  
Where ever Englishman durst set his foot. (I.1.63-66)<sup>1</sup>

To express their determination to settle the dispute both characters employ language that draws on discourses of travel and discovery and the spatial metaphors of their avowals offer an extensive geographical vision of the world known to Shakespeare and his contemporaries through the multiple geographical texts in circulation at the time.

The rousing pronouncements made by the appellants set up the relationship between England, as the general location of the narrative, and a much wider geographical context. The utterances of Bolingbroke and Mowbray express a centrifugal energy, which constitutes an inverted correspondence with Gaunt's later centripetal circumscription of England as the 'sceptred isle' (II.1.40) and 'fortress built by nature'

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<sup>1</sup> All references from *Richard II* are to the New Penguin Shakespeare.

(II.1.43). These rhetorical mappings articulate the perceived role of the English in shaping this extensive world, and suggest the importance of specific place as the position from which the local, the national and the global are viewed geographically, metaphorically and ideologically. Further, the distant lands to which Mowbray and Bolingbroke refer are not just the edges of the known world, but paradoxical sites of possibility and limitations. Curious tensions between inhospitable terrains and inviting territories resided in the term ‘inhabitable’ at the turn of the sixteenth century, and these oaths evoke geographies of danger and discovery that are both empirical and conceptual.

In the context of the final and most serious accusation that Bolingbroke makes against Mowbray, the geographies of Christian theology are also mapped into the playworld, as Bolingbroke states that Mowbray ‘did plot the Duke of Gloucester’s death’ (I.1.100), and

Sluiced out his innocent soul through streams of blood –  
Which blood, like sacrificing Abel’s cries  
Even from the tongueless caverns of the earth  
To me for justice and rough chastisement. (I.1. 104-106)

This invocation of the Biblical narrative of fratricide, constructs a decidedly post-Edenic world, which Gaunt complicates in his ‘this England’ speech, and which Bolingbroke reinforces in the final scene, when he orders Exton, Richard’s murderer: ‘With Cain go wonder through the shades of night, / And never show thy head by day nor light’ (V.6.43-44).

Shakespeare, drawing on Holinshed, indicates in the dialogue that the trial by combat takes place in Coventry (I.1.99; II.1.45), but as with I.1, there are other geographies to be explored. Firstly, the action produces the microsite of the lists; a qualitative site, which presents particular staging challenges. And secondly, through Bolingbroke’s and Mowbray’s responses to exile, the scene examines the relations between language, land, and identity.

As well as being the area set apart for the combat, the lists are the fulfilment of the spatially-inflected oaths discussed above. Whilst Mowbray and Bolingbroke’s avowals to go to the ‘furthest verge’ and the ‘frozen ridges’ or ‘any other ground inhabitable’ operate as figures of speech which underpin their resolve and map England into a larger world, they also pre-figure the lists as a richly paradoxical site in which the extremes of time and space are fused. It is noticeable that a protracted amount of time in I.3 is dedicated to setting up the lists and to imbuing this formal space with the sense of

gravity suitable to the trial by combat. The procedure enacted in the play reflects the exceedingly stringent rules which applied to the setting up of the spaces for both judicial duels and the extrajudicial duels of the later Middle Ages. There were strict codes of conduct for spectators, who were forbidden to make any physical signs which might distract the combatants (Langholm 331) and every possible measure was taken to ensure the equality of the combatants, and to eliminate the possibility of any extraneous factors influencing the outcome (Ho 296; see also Langholm 331; Jillings 265).

In a trial, then, the lists constituted a zone meticulously protected from and yet, in reality, ultimately vulnerable to chance. This irresolvable tension resulted in objections to the trial by combat as an instrument of justice, since it was possible that older and weaker combatants might be defeated by stronger and younger opponents, irrespective of the rightness of their cause (Gross 693). Further, since it was also argued that Christian soldiers conquered by dying rather than killing, then it followed that '[i]t may be divine justice for the righteous man to win a duel or it may be greater glory for him to lose' (Ho 218; see also Langholm 338).

The lists are dramatically constructed by Shakespeare as a ritual space through the meticulous attention to the appropriate formalities, and are the symbolic and physical realization of the geographical metaphors with which Bolingbroke and Mowbray support their accusations in I.1. Used specifically in the plural, 'lists' denote the palisades set up to define the area of combat and the singular 'list' connotes a limit or boundary (OED 8.a.). As such, the lists of I.3 correspond to the 'furthest verge' and 'frozen ridges', which are the limits to which the antagonists have vowed to go, and constitute a zone at the edge of time and space, where both participants in the duel stand on the border of historical eternity and geographical infinity.

The lists in *Richard II* are therefore a distinct and significant site in the play, and a highly ambiguous place. Ritualistic, controversial, and sacramental, the lists, as well as a geographical location, are a qualitative space, a crucible where superstition and spirituality; ultimate justice, mercy, and faith; divine intervention and human fallibility; honour and valour; truth and deception; innocence and guilt, all coexist. Acknowledging the gravity of the lists, where the expansive rhetoric of the dares of I.1 is narrowed down to this confined space—which for one of the combatants is expected to be the point of no return—allows for an appreciation of the impact of Richard's aborting of the duel, and raises questions about how their excitement and ambivalence may be constructed in performance.



Richard's alternative to the divine justice of the lists is to banish both nobles, and their responses to exile engage directly with early modern tensions relating to language and loyalties, and current debates about place and identities. Mowbray's dismay at Richard's 'heavy' and 'unlooked for' sentence (1.3.154-155) is expounded in a singularly eloquent discourse on the disabling effects of language deprivation in exile. By comparing his native language, once no longer available to him, to 'an unstrung viol or a harp', or 'a cunning instrument cased up' (1.3.162-163), Mowbray defines language as an 'instrument' facilitating solo performance and integration within an ensemble; and therefore vital to performing his identity in the community to which he belongs. Language facilitates more than a perfunctory communication, and Vincent Descombes' theorization of the 'rhetorical country' is informative in grasping the enormity of the effects of displacement that Mowbray expresses. Descombes maintains that the 'rhetorical country' is a place where a person is 'at home' because 'he is at ease in the rhetoric of the people with whom he shares his life', and that it 'ends where [. . . a person's] interlocutors no longer understand the reasons he gives for his deeds and actions, the criticisms he makes or the enthusiasms he displays' (179 qtd. in Augé 108). Going beyond the 'rhetorical country' does not necessarily involve a shift to another geographical location but nonetheless represents 'the crossing of a frontier' (179). Here, however, Mowbray constructs England as both geographical location and rhetorical country, and articulates the reduction of social, intellectual, and political space that alienation from his native land will entail.

Bolingbroke, also deeply moved by his sentence, resists all attempts on the part of his aggrieved father, John of Gaunt, to persuade him to cheat despair by dealing with his banishment imaginatively. Gaunt offers various suggestions to soften the blow of what his son refers to as 'an enforced pilgrimage' (1.3.264): the idea of calling it 'a travel that thou tak'st for pleasure' (1.3.262); thinking that it is he who has banished the King and not the reverse; considering it as a quest for honour on which his father has sent him; or that he is escaping from some '[d]evouring pestilence' that pervades the atmosphere. But Bolingbroke vehemently protests against all of them, arguing that such flights of fancy are more injurious than facing the reality of being forced to leave his homeland. For Bolingbroke thinking cannot make things so: 'O, who can hold a fire in his hand / By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?' (1.3.294-295); and imagination will not compensate for memory, as 'every tedious stride I make / Will but remember me what a deal of world / I wander from the jewels that I love' (1.3.268-70).

In contrast to Mowbray, however, Bolingbroke's focus is more on land than language, and the final lines he pronounces before going into exile are an impassioned assertion of his own identity, and the identity of his country as progenitor and nurturer:

Then England's ground farewell! Sweet soil adieu –  
 My mother and my nurse that bears me yet!  
 Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,  
 Though banished yet a true-born Englishman! (I.3.306-09)

These words constitute a proclamation of pride and confidence in his English roots, in spite of the foreign routes he will have to travel. These lines not only express a sense of national identity dependent on his birth place, but indicate that Bolingbroke still retains the power to affirm this identity through verbal pronouncement; and it is this that affords the consolation that Gaunt's more imaginative strategies for dealing with displacement are unable to provide.

When Bolingbroke goes into exile at the end of I.3, the focus switches back to Richard, and there is no suggestion in the text regarding the location of this intimate scene in which the king discusses Bolingbroke's departure with Aumerle, Bagot, and Green (I.4). The site of the following scene, however, is clearly indicated in the dialogue through Gaunt's message that Richard should visit him at Ely House (I.4.58); but of central interest in II.1 is Gaunt's rhetorical mapping of England, which further complicates the geographies of the playworld and how 'this England' might be conceptualized and staged.<sup>2</sup>

Phrases from Gaunt's description of the nation, notably 'this England' and 'this sceptred isle', have entered the vernacular, and the speech, regarded as an aria or panegyric, has been a key focus for critics, who have often commented on the delivery by particular actors. The significance of the speech for this thesis lies in the range of ideas it draws together in its conceptualization of the nation, and in how these contrasting ideas have influenced or might impact on staging the play's geographies. Proper names of places possess an 'evocative force', which varies according to context (Augé 85), and have a 'power and resonance [. . .] over and above a particularly specifiable moment in history or a geographical locale', which enables them to occupy a position in both a mythological and physical landscape (Said, 'Invention' 180). By combining images which draw on the natural qualities of England as a bounded space, its resistance to exterior forces, and the spread of its fame across the world, with images from Biblical narratives, Gaunt articulates a problematic 'poetic geography on top of the

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A for the full speech.

geography of the literal' (Certeau 105), and therefore locates England in the mythological and physical landscapes of the early modern world; although he ultimately acknowledges the radical change in the poetic geography he constructs.

I have already commented on the evocative force of Gaunt's own title, 'Lancaster', and the geographies and histories that this contains, and Gaunt's awareness of his own place-based identity would make him 'no disinterested commentator on the glories of England' (Friedman 291). John Friedman argues that what 'offends' Gaunt 'is not simply that England's reputation for deeds of arms and for crusading valor has been diminished' but that 'the kingdom—"this earth, this realm"—has been sold, leased, given to those who, presumably, have no title to it' (291-292). This unsettles ideas of Gaunt as 'the sound patriotic voice of the play' (Friedman 291), and has implications for the interpretation of this character in performance. In addition, the speech constitutes an attempt to grapple with the sheer complexity of what constitutes place and explores the tensions between conceiving of bounded places as necessary centres of meaning, and being aware of their reactionary potential to construct and maintain otherness.

In his 'multiple reference to England as a throne, an Earth, a seat of gods, a demi-paradise, a breed, a little world, a blessed plot, a realm or a womb' Gaunt 'deliberately mixes locus with concept, a device 'built by nature' with a 'breed of men' (Oz 109), and the result is a set of paradoxes (cf. Leggatt 55): it is peaceful, it is warlike; it is protective, it is threatening; it is protected, it is threatened; it is blessed, it is cursed; it is sacred, it is secular; it is male, it is female. In its ambiguities, Gaunt's rhetorical map reflects the medieval mapping tradition, with which Shakespeare would have been familiar. The medieval *mappamundi* was 'essentially a cartographic encyclopaedia' the function of which was to 'provide a visual synthesis of contemporary knowledge' (Scafi 63), and the medieval map-makers were not concerned with geographical accuracy but with the representation of space and events which were not 'cosynchronous' (63). The synthesis of images that comprise Gaunt's England is analogous to the spatio-temporal narrative device of the *mappamundi*. This allows Gaunt to articulate England as substance and concept, within the same 'sort of "relativistic" framework' within which space and time were expressed on the *mappamundi*, thus facilitating a corresponding transcendence of everyday life and producing 'a vision of a multi-dimensional reality' (Scafi 64). Whether 'this England' is perceived as 'exist[ing] not in the past, not in history, not in time at all, but in a timeless realm of the imagination' (Leggatt 55), or viewed 'not [as] an established realm but an emergent one' (Benny Green, PP *Richard II* dir. David Williams 1972 n. pag.), the

methodology of theatrical geographies proposed in this thesis provides a means of examining successive stagings of the ‘multi-dimensional reality’ of its evocative force and analysing the ways in which these stagings have realized, unsettled, and/or added to that force.

Following his banishment, Bolingbroke’s journey takes him from Coventry to France, and the next reference to his trajectory is towards the end of II.1, when Northumberland reveals, in a discussion in which he, Ross, and Willoughby air their grievances, that he has received intelligence from Le Port Blanc that Bolingbroke is on his way back to England. Shakespeare’s dramatic manipulation of time and space drives the action forward, and by the end of II.1 audiences have witnessed Gaunt’s warnings and Richard’s rejection of his uncle’s advice; Gaunt’s death and the appropriation of his lands and wealth by the king; Richard’s declaration of his imminent departure for war in Ireland; and the news that Bolingbroke is about to land at Ravenspurgh, in north Yorkshire, with ‘eight tall ships, three thousand men of war’ (II.1.286) and a bevy of sympathetic nobles.

Just as Bolingbroke’s sentence was commuted from ten years to six by the ‘word’ or ‘breath’ of the king (I.3.213, 215), and his new identity as ‘banished’ flesh confirmed lexically (I.3.196-197), so his defence of his return to England is made through the language of place. In II.3, when we next encounter Bolingbroke among the ‘high wild hills and rough uneven ways’ of Gloucestershire (II.3.4), he insists that Berkeley address him as ‘Lancaster’ (II.3.70), his title by inheritance. Here, the other ‘kingdom’ of the duchy, established by Richard’s reference to ‘Lancaster’ at the beginning of the play, is re-invoked. Shakespeare, Dutton argues, was not unduly specific about ‘the unique privileges of the Duchy of Lancaster being denied to Henry’ as in the sixteenth century ‘the duchy was at its height’, and the Elizabethans would have understood the seizure of Bolingbroke’s inheritance as an action much more significant than a simple flouting of aristocratic entitlement (4). In the light of the vast geographical extent of the Duchy and its political status, it is no wonder that Richard should want to ‘dismantle this private kingdom’ after Gaunt’s death (4), or that Bolingbroke should desire the return of his inheritance. His appropriation of this title is crucial to Bolingbroke’s position at this moment in the play, and also to understanding the geographies of power and land ownership in the world of the play. If a ‘long [. . .] time lies in one little word’ (I.3.213), so also does an enormous space, and the land-titled nobles map into this England their extensive rights and properties, which are at stake in the conflict.

The materiality of geographies and their histories, and the evocative force of proper names, are therefore reinforced here, but the scene also reveals the ‘fractured emotional geography’ (Pile 217) of England produced by the process of this conflict. York describes the effects that Bolingbroke’s march from the north east has had upon England: ‘Frighting her pale-faced villages with war / And ostentation of despised arms’ (II.3.94-95). The shock that induces the pallor destabilizes the land and its identity and that of its inhabitants, who are required to choose an allegiance that will alienate them either from Richard or from Bolingbroke, and may also involve them in geographical relocation as part of the army of supporters that Bolingbroke gathers on his journey south. The image of the startled faces of villagers who have witnessed the passage of troops through their communities transforms the England of the play into a landscape of fear.

This idea of England as a fearful place is reinforced later by Scroop, who, when informing Richard of these events, speaks of Bolingbroke ‘covering your fearful land / With hard bright steel and hearts harder than steel’ (III.2.110-11). The language expresses a transformation in the appearance of the space accompanied by a change in mood. The several meanings of ‘fearful’ activate a range of perceptions of the modifications to the identity of England engendered by Bolingbroke’s return from exile. But if the land is made ‘fearful’ it is also invigorated as the progression of Bolingbroke, with all his accumulated wrongs, acts as an animating force. Scroop details how men and women of all ages have aligned themselves with Bolingbroke to fight against Richard, and noticeably the people Scroop lists include the most unlikely candidates: ‘Whitebeards . . . [with] thin and hairless scalps’, ‘boys with women’s voices’ and ‘distaff women’ (III,2.112, 113, 118). With the re-entry of Bolingbroke into the national space, England becomes an energised landscape; whether viewed as a land in the grip of terror or a land galvanized into positive action against oppression, it is an England in a state of upheaval.

Some of the critical events in this upheaval take place in castles. Shakespeare follows Holinshed in charting the progression of the two antagonists through these key nodes in their personal geographies.<sup>3</sup> However, by setting several scenes in castles, Shakespeare also maps into the play a set of highly ambivalent structures, and an understanding of the general and specific historical resonances of these places enriches

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<sup>3</sup> Holinshed states that Richard went from Barclowie (Berkroughlie) Castle to Conwai (Conway) Castle after dismissing his troops (Nicholl and Nicholl 37-38), and Conway is the only named castle not mapped into the play by Shakespeare.

appreciation of their dramatic potential as sites for the staging of the conflicts of *Richard II*.

Castles were originally the products of military force and places where power could be exercised and preserved (Smail 133). However, while tensions between town and castle occurred, medieval castles were not merely instruments of feudal oppression and often played a protective role in the life of the town, as well as fostering commerce (Wheatly 47-51). Throughout the medieval and Tudor periods, castles performed a number of different functions, serving as fortresses, but also as prisons, accommodation for monarchs on royal progresses, regular or occasional royal residences, and centres of administration (R. Brown 359). Although, commonly conceived of as secular places of an aggressive military anti- or no-culture, castles also became expressions of the aspirations of powerful civil servants whose 'romantic role models were likely to be the heroes of antiquity or Arthurian legend' (Heslop 36, 55).

By Elizabethan times many castles had fallen into disrepair: their military importance had declined and the great private houses built during Tudor times became the preferred venue of hospitality for monarchs when travelling. However, a survey of 'superfluous buildings in the Queen's hands', commissioned in 1561 for the purpose of leasing, selling, or demolishing any unnecessary buildings, indicates that castles evoked a spirit of nostalgia. An auditor for the Exchequer was authorized to sell any 'loose stuff' and to let the ground around castles to provide royal revenue, but was instructed that any walls should be allowed to remain standing (Colvin 231), although little money was invested in maintaining or renovating these places. Some castles remained as ruins in the cultural landscape, symbols of the tensions between financial need and a romanticized past. The castle, then, is a richly ambiguous space: a place whose appearance suggests a stable identity, but which embodies a series of dialectics: defence-aggression; protection-subjection; hospitality-hostility; romantic aesthetics-practical design; and obsolescence-nostalgia.

At Berkeley Castle—which, as the site of Edward II's gruesome murder, would have had particular resonance for members of an Elizabethan audience familiar with Holinshed's chronicles or Marlowe's *Edward II*—York relinquishes his original position of loyalty to the king, and proclaims himself 'neuter' in the dispute (II.1.158). He offers Bolingbroke and his men the hospitality of the castle: an action which contrasts sharply with the show of arms which may have been more appropriate to receiving men that he has dubbed as 'rebels all' (II.3.147). For York, then, Berkeley Castle becomes a site of capitulation; and for Bolingbroke, a site of empowerment and negotiation, where he can

work on persuading York to accompany him to Bristol Castle, where he confronts the King's favourites, and transforms their place of protection and defence into a place of threat and, ultimately, death (III.1).

At Bristol Castle, after accusing Bushy and Green of wronging both the King and the Queen, Bolingbroke's own grievances take over. Noticeably his complaints relate not only to how they have despoiled his lands and profited from them, but to the obliteration of signs of rightful ownership. The destruction of his 'household coat' and erasure of his 'imprese' (3.1. 20-27) constitutes the dismantling of the material structures which contained and exhibited his identity and status. This dismantling of the crucial signs of place making has the effect of making Bolingbroke a vulnerable verbal construction detached from space and time. It is not clear at what moment in the play Bolingbroke conceives of the possibility of constructing a new identity as king of England, rather than reconstructing his old shattered identity by reclaiming his patrilineal inheritance but, in ordering the executions of Bushy and Green, it is at Bristol Castle that he begins to carry out 'acts of quasi-regal authority' (Saccio 28).

Reports of the events at Berkeley and Bristol are severely demoralizing for Richard, who, having returned from Ireland with high hopes that God and his country would defend his right, plummets into despair on being acquainted with the progress of Bolingbroke's campaign. The scene in which Richard re-bonds with his land, and swings between lavish proclamations of his divinely appointed position and ruminations on his own mortality, takes place, ironically, near Barkloughly Castle. Historically the populations of Wales and neighbouring Cheshire were firm supporters of the king, yet rather than approaching this stronghold, Richard proceeds to hold court in the open on the Welsh coast, which becomes a liminal space in which he articulates his irreconcilable identities as invincible monarch and vulnerable human being. Further, Richard's discourse on the 'death of kings' and the humanity of monarchs (III.2, 155-177) employs the trope of the body as castle, and emphasizes the fragility of the 'flesh which walls about our life' (III.2.167): death 'Comes at the last and with a little pin / Bores through his castle wall' (III.1.169-170). The geographical siting of this speech, with Barkloughly Castle close 'at hand' (III.2.1), mingles the unstable and problematic identities of castles in general with the symbolism of this particular castle to suggest a psychological landscape. The castles which Richard initially encounters on his return to his kingdom are part of Edward I's iron ring of fortresses, built by his great-great-grandfather to keep the Welsh Marcher lords in subjection and symbolic of royal conquest and staying power. But if the high expenditure on the creation and

maintenance of this network of fortresses, in particular from the mid-twelfth to the early thirteenth century, can be interpreted as a sign of strength, it can also be seen as indicative of insecurity (R. Brown 362). It is precisely this state of strength and insecurity between which Richard vacillates here: caught between the waves of the sea and the encroaching tidal wave of Bolingbroke's success, Richard can not sufficiently re-assert the regal aspect of his persona to approach Barkloughly either as a place of defence or attack, and resolves to go and 'pine away' at Flint Castle (III.2.208). Here the journeys of Richard and Bolingbroke converge and castle and body once again intertwine in Bolingbroke's command: 'Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle, / Through brazen trumpet send the breath of parley / Into his ruined ears' (III.3.32-34).

At Flint Castle, having descended from the battlements to 'the base-court' (III.3.177, 180)—a move which spatializes his surrender of status and marks a new phase of his journey—Richard proposes the next stretch of the trajectory that he and Bolingbroke should travel together: 'Set on towards London, cousin, is it not so?' (III.3.208), and there are significant sites in the capital which could have provoked this suggestion. London was traditionally associated with parliaments and with coronations, and gaining access to the places most closely connected with the rituals which have confirmed his power and status in the past might offer Richard a glimpse of recovering his identity and the relationship with his kingdom which he expressed so confidently in the first moments of his return from Ireland.

The place-specific nature of the 'patterns of interaction, [and] patterns of behaviour' that are learnt through our daily activities contribute to our sense of belonging and self-definition, and any displacement that causes disruptions in these patterns can be unsettling (M. Crang 103). Gaston Bachelard argues that so bonded are body and place that 'the house we were born in is physically inscribed in us' (14), and that '[we] are the diagram of all the functions of inhabiting that particular house' (15). London is the geographical location of those 'houses' where Richard's identity and patterns of movement have been formed through those 'passionate liaisons' between place and body (Bachelard 15): Westminster Abbey, where he was crowned at the age of ten, and Westminster Hall, where he has presided over parliaments. Richard would be familiar with, and responsive to, the organized choreography of bodies in space related to his own status within particular places; it is not surprising therefore that when he enters Westminster Hall (IV.1)—where Bolingbroke has been presiding over the newly revived dispute over Gloucester's death—he refers to the difficulty of modifying the behaviour that the space has inscribed upon him: 'I hardly yet have learned / to



insinuate, flatter, bow and bend my knee' (IV.1.166). Richard is used to being the object of deference within this space and the drama of the radical review of his identity that this scene enacts is intensified by the fact that all his life he has known his place within this particular place. The disruption to the bodily patterns inscribed by place was poignantly expressed by Frank Benson's Richard (1896), who, 'after crowning Bolingbroke [. . .] proceed[ed] to examine himself in the mirror and in doing so mechanically ascend[ed] the steps to the vacant throne', but '[j]ust as he [. . . was] about to sit down, [. . .] suddenly remember[ed] himself with a short laugh and an apologetic gesture' (*Sketch* 17 March 1896); and by Mark Rylance (2003), who, when exiting after Bolingbroke's announcement of his coronation, meandered in a dazed fashion around the expansive stage filled with numerous courtiers, staggering uncertainly through the figures surrounding the new king-in-waiting, all of whom had, by then, begun to ignore him.

Viewed from the perspective of theatrical geographies, the importance of IV.1 lies not only in its location in Westminster Hall—a place Richard had caused to be 'splendidly rebuilt' (Wells, *Richard* 234)—and in adding to the affective bonds with place already discussed the idea of physical bonding with place, but also in its articulation of the relations between identity and conceptual space. Identity requires not only a place, but also a name (R. West 131), and situations in which name and place are challenged by internal or external disturbances must, then, precipitate a crisis of identity which demands both replacement and renaming: a repositioning that may require physical and/or psychological relocation. The struggles engendered by such a crisis are discussed by Russell West, who argues that Romeo and Juliet do not leave Verona because they are unable to separate themselves from the 'collective structures of place, name, household, [. . . and] family', which provide their identity, as within the dramatic logic of the play 'this space of individualism, falling as it does into the interstices between the networks of the aristocratic households, cannot as yet hold its own' (132). In *Richard II*, Shakespeare also articulates this struggle for an alternative conceptual space and recognizes the temporal discrepancy between the conceptualization of the space and the material realization of a place where new ideas can be accommodated. Once he has completed his unkinging (IV.1.203-220), Richard finds himself without a name—not even 'that name was given me at the font' (IV.1.256)—and without a place; without 'a sustainable and visible position of social identity' (R. West 132) he is thrown into an interstice as the alternative to kingship does not exist.

Poised, then, between the throne he is accustomed to occupying and the door of the Parliamentary chamber, through which lies the way to a terrifyingly new and unsettling world in which he does not know his place, Richard is unsure how to proceed. Having asked Bolingbroke for leave to go, in answer to the latter's rejoinder 'Whither?' (IV.1.314), the deposed king does not specify. He makes no attempt to suggest a place which might afford the opportunity to establish a new identity, although he has complained so bitterly of losing his old one. The idea of such a space is so new that Richard cannot conceive of it, and answers only, 'Whither you will, so I were from your sights' (315). Bolingbroke commands that Richard be conveyed to the Tower of London, only later to change his mind and send Richard north to Pomfret Castle.

Bolingbroke's decision to send Richard to Pomfret rather than to the Tower is a move that Elizabethan spectators may have interpreted as a conscious employment of geographical location for the consolidation of his hold on power. The Tower of London was 'immemorially associated with the crown', whereas Pomfret was 'the strongest of [. . . Bolingbroke's] duchy castles, where a loyal Lancastrian garrison would make rescue unlikely and politic murder all too possible' (Dutton 14). Further, this castle already had resonance for Shakespeare as the 'bloody Pomfret', 'fatal and ominous to noble peers' (*Richard III* 3.3.10), where Rivers and Grey are executed. But Bolingbroke's removal of Richard from the centralized hub of national governance to this fortress in west Yorkshire also has more macabre undertones connected to the overlaying of histories in places. In 1322 Richard's great grandfather, Edward II, had executed his 'troublesome cousin' Earl Thomas of Lancaster and declared his inheritance forfeit to the Crown; the execution took place 'a few hundred yards north' of Pomfret Castle (Given-Wilson 553). Edward's judgement was reversed by a parliament of 1327 and the Lancastrian estates restored to Thomas's brother Henry. But if history was in some way repeating itself in the contest for right and power between Richard and Bolingbroke, which Shakespeare dramatizes, Richard's death at Pomfret constitutes a kind of subverted geographical repetition. Bolingbroke's order to 'exile' his own 'troublesome cousin' to the castle that would evoke memories of Edward II's failure to hold onto duchy lands, gives this fatal site in Richard's trajectory a resonance that goes beyond the pragmatism that may have underpinned the move.

## (ii) Journeys of Love and Lamentation

Having analysed the geographies mapped through the language, movements, and actions of some of the male characters, I now explore the feminine geographies of the playworld and demonstrate how the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of York, and the Queen, also produce spaces with their stories. They have been marginalized in scholarly criticism, poorly represented in critical reception, and often subjected to cuts in their lines, or even, in the case of the Duchess of Gloucester and the Duchess of York, completely excised from the play. However, the scenes in which they feature are interpolated into a narrative otherwise drawn from chronicle sources, which suggests their significance in the play's version of history and their integrity to the dramatic structure. Three of the five locations for these scenes—the home, the garden, and the street—present a contrast with the strongholds of male-dominated negotiations discussed above, but an examination of the trajectories of *Richard II*'s women shows that the key sites in their stories are as problematic and as prone to conflict and instability as the court and the castle. Their stories map additional places onto the geographies of power charted in the first section of this chapter and further demonstrate the complex and shifting relations between place(s) and identities. These women interrupt, appropriate, and transform spaces in ways no less powerful and significant than the male characters, and their interventions and mobilities figure as a form of resistance, and problematize received distinctions between public and private, and domestic and political.

The narrative of murder and betrayal related in I.1 is taken up in I.2 by the Duchess of Gloucester, who urges Gaunt to act in response to her husband's violent and untimely death. The placement of this scene between the accusations which set the dramatic action in motion (I.1) and the aborted trial at Coventry (I.3) is crucial, as it introduces the feminine presence early on, and its juxtaposition with the masculine events of the opening scene draws attention to the effects on women of official and clandestine power negotiations. The structural position of the encounter between Gaunt and the Duchess of Gloucester highlights two competing discourses—allegiance to the monarch, supported by Richard's status as 'God's substitute' and 'Deputy' (I.2.37-38), and family loyalty—although some directors have chosen to open with this scene, in order to alert the audience to the background of the quarrel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray.<sup>4</sup> Such a reordering affords different dramatic possibilities in performance, but '[t]he tournament at Coventry acquires a new dimension from the solitary figure

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<sup>4</sup> Notably: Lefevre 1981; Peymann 2000 (revived 2006 Stratford-Upon-Avon).

who intrudes between the decision and the event' (Dusinberre 299), and the Duchess of Gloucester arrests the momentum of the proceedings set in motion by the challenges of I.1, producing a time and space for reflection: a point that can work powerfully in performance, as my discussion of Michael Boyd's transition from I.2 to I.3, will demonstrate.

Since the scene is Shakespeare's invention, it is not possible to draw on the chronicles with regard to the location of this exchange between the widow and her brother-in-law, but likely settings would be either Gaunt's London residence or Ely House in Holborn (where Richard visits Gaunt in II.1). However, the other geographies that this exchange reveals merit attention. Following Gaunt's refusal to intervene, the duchess asks 'Where then, alas, shall I complain myself?' (I.2.42). Although the question implies 'To whom?', the phrasing underscores the situatedness of power. Access to the necessary sites of power is barred by Gaunt's reply that her only recourse is 'To God, the widow's champion and defence' (I.2.44) and, faced with advice which directs her to the heavenly court, the duchess realizes that her earthly journey is at an end. There is literally nowhere to go, except home, and the Duchess of Gloucester's description of what her home has become in the wake of her husband's death maps an important emotional geography into the play.

The words she uses perfectly exemplify the interactions between historical events and places, and the impact of experience on perceptions of place. The once shared marital home has been transformed into 'empty lodgings and unfurnished walls / Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones' (I.2.68-69). Even the soundscape has changed: the duchess withdraws the invitation she issues via Gaunt for York to visit her at Pleshey, deeming her 'groans' (I.2.70) to be but poor welcome. This transformation may or may not be literal since a place can be defined and transformed by the gaze of the beholders (Svoboda 17). In this case it is the endless absence of the beloved that, for the Duchess of Gloucester, produces a shift in her perception of their once shared home, and her own lamentations act to transform Pleshey. The withdrawal of the invitation for York to visit her comes in the wake of her realization that the house has now become a place in which 'sorrow [. . .] dwells everywhere' (I.2.72), and therefore no longer a legitimate site of hospitality.

The importance of an analysis of the personal geographies of the Duchess of Gloucester—which would be so easily passed over in a simple mapping concerned only to establish a set of named locations in which the dialogue takes place—is demonstrated by Steven Berkoff's approach to this scene. When rehearsing *Richard II* in New York,

Berkoff was very conscious of the transformed marital home as a factor influencing his direction of the scene between Gaunt (Earle Hyman) and the Duchess of Gloucester (Carole Shelley). Berkoff conceived of the duchess as ‘going through a kind of mental breakdown and in her grief doing obsessional gestures, like continually circling Gaunt’, and wanted ‘to show the pain of this slow moving woman whose grief is continuous and we imagine her walking the corridors of the castle day and night’ (60). Later, feeling that this blocking ‘wasn’t working’ (124), Berkoff rejected the idea of the circling, and created an image of close physical proximity with both characters ‘in one spotlight’, giving the Duchess of Gloucester the opportunity to ‘cling to [. . . Gaunt] for comfort and be more intimate’ (124). However, the final rehearsals in the thrust configuration forced a return to the original idea with the duchess ‘circl[ing] Gaunt as a predator while he sat at the centre’ (132). In fact, Berkoff had remained convinced of the potential of the original idea and had regretted the return to ‘the real world’ that the second idea had represented, since he felt ‘the ‘real’ world look[ed] far more fakey than the evocative world’ (124).

Berkoff sets up an unusual opposition here, not between real and fictive, but between real and evocative. The more naturalistic stage picture of the woman grieving and the male relative consoling her was weaker for Berkoff because it lost the power to evoke a space that was not physically and perceptually present to the characters or spectators at that moment—although no less significant in his thinking about the staging—and was therefore inadequate to produce the space charged by the dialogue. Within the framework of theatrical geographies, then, the Duchess of Gloucester’s importance lies in the addition to the textual map of the domestic setting where she must end her days, and in the space her presence, and her evocation of this extra-perceptual place, has the potential to create onstage: a potential which was explored by John Barton (1973), when he chose to have the Duchess emerging from the trap, holding a skull and crying vengeance; and by Michael Boyd’s use of spectrality, which I discuss in Chapter Six. (2007).

While the Duchess of Gloucester is ultimately directed away from the geographies of power, the Duchess of York is inspired to leave the family home at great speed and to force access to the very heart of political negotiations. Her words and actions modify both the family home and the court. With the injunction to Aumerle to ride post-haste to the king and the promise that she will ‘not be long behind’ and ‘never will rise up from the ground’ until Bolingbroke has pardoned him (V.2.113-117), the Duchess of York states her intention to ‘ride’ (116) to Henry’s court and plead for her

son's life. When in V.2 his commitment to assist in the assassination of the new monarch at Oxford is discovered, Aumerle makes no efforts to protest against his father's resolve to make his treacherous purposes known to the king. The chaos that ensues in the York home is engendered by the Duchess of York's refusal to accept that informing Henry is an appropriate course of action. At the end of the scene Shakespeare sets up a race in which three members of the same family compete to make a timely arrival in the king's presence. The momentum of this race, interrupted briefly by Henry's discussion with Percy about his 'unthrifty son' (V.3.1), spills over into V.3 as wife and husband vie for the king's favour for their conflicting petitions.

The most likely location for V.2 is Langley Palace or one of York's other houses in London, and the probable location of V.3 is Windsor. The scenes constitute the juxtaposition of two ostensibly distinct places, each with its own modes of operation and etiquette, but the Duchess of York's interventions within both places suggest the more complex relations between them, which unsettle perceptions of the home as private, feminized, and personal, and the court as male, public, and political. By mapping the York family home into the play, Shakespeare demonstrates the instability and dynamism of the domestic environment of his own time and its position within an equally unstable and dynamic network of spaces in which both men and women moved.

The 'eruption of conflict' in the York household 'dramatizes a tragic effect of revolution – division within nuclear families' (Forker, Introduction 41), and it is therefore impossible to regard the home as a private place cordoned off from the places of public affairs. Neither can the early modern home be seen simply as a place of feminine confinement. Although the debate about the nature of women, which fuelled a preoccupation with female sexuality and chastity and a growing desire to control unmarried women, implicated the home in mechanisms of constraint (Wiesner, 'Beyond' n. 318; Stallybrass), it was an environment capable of generating affective, spiritual, and work-related fulfilment. The religious commitment inspired by Protestantism made the home 'the center of religious piety', and a place where 'women exerted influence, found enhanced meaning for their lives, and established important personal relationships' (Willen, 'Women and Religion' 140), but it could also be a troubled and troubling place. Throughout the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, Crown and Church combined to exert a significant influence on spatial relations and the dilemmas of conscience suffered by men and women produced faith-related geographies of displacement. Whilst some women felt forced to leave the marital home in order to continue to practise their beliefs, others found new ways to determine the character of

the home: some women whose husbands attended church chose to arrange for Mass to be said in their homes or household chapels, and some used their houses for the illegal purpose of harbouring Catholic priests, thus making the home itself a site of transgression.

The home was a centre of economic production, ‘where families not only lived together but worked together as well in a great variety of trades’ (Rackin, *Shakespeare* 35), but women also moved between different sites. Their involvement ‘at court, in religious change, in the household economy, in service occupations, in poor relief, even in the family itself, cannot be understood in terms of a separate sphere of domestic activity’, as ‘[i]n intellectual, political, religious, and economic terms, the early modern English family was integral to both society and state (Willen, ‘Women’ 560). No space is constructed in isolation from the network of other spaces within which it exists; indeed, all sites are ‘experienced by individuals bodily, locally and materially’ (Fincher 8). The ‘hearth’, the ‘pulpit’ and the ‘court’ were key nodes in the nexus of sites that shaped the lives of both men and women, and which they in turn played a role in shaping.

The means by which the Duchess of York shapes the spaces in which she acts have generally been viewed as humorous in ways that undercut her role in the political negotiations that take place in V.2 and V.3. Whilst accepting that the Duchess of York challenges the ‘masculine mode’, Linda Bamber argues that ultimately, ‘she offers only a comic contrast to the seriousness of the world of men’ (147); and Jean E. Howard and Phyllis Rackin consider the Aumerle conspiracy scenes as a point at which the action ‘degenerates from the historical tragedy of Richard’s fall to the farcical domestic quarrel between the Duke and Duchess of York about their son’ (138). However, viewing these scenes as ‘family antics’ or a ‘domestic dustup’ (Bamber 147) detracts from the significance of the Duchess of York’s actions, reinforces the public-private binary, and denies the possibility that the home can be a politicised space. A reconsideration of the subversive and empowering potentials of comedy is appropriate in relation to this character, and her spatial negotiations reveal a simultaneous consciousness of, and disregard for, the ethics of place.

The change in linguistic register in V.3, away from the lyrical poetry of the rest of the play, indicates a distinct shift in mood, and to identify a swing towards comedy here is not untoward, as Henry’s perspective on events suggests: ‘Our scene is altered from a serious thing, / And now changed to “The Beggar and the King”’ (V.3.78-79). A tradition of perceiving the Duchess of York as played for laughs can be traced in

reception from the beginning of the 1970s, but references to the character in reviews prior to this (although sparse) suggest that these scenes were not played in a comic mode. Several actresses who have played the role recently have been aware of the potential for comedy. Maureen Beattie believes that the language of V.3 ‘signals to the audience that they are allowed to laugh’ but believes that ‘the task of an actress is to be absolutely real and true: as worried as a woman would be about her son losing his life, and genuinely concerned about the mystery of why her husband is behaving the way he is’ (PIntv). Similarly, Liza Sadovy recognizes an element of ‘situation comedy’ in the scene, but rejects the idea of playing it for laughs (PIntv); and Susan Tracy acknowledges that ‘the comedy may come from the fact that the Duchess makes a fool of herself’ but that this ‘doesn’t belie the truth behind her mission and what she has to fight for’ (PIntv). Each of these actresses was aware of the high stakes and conscious of being driven by a mother’s profound instinct to protect her son, which produced an indecorum with which they were unconcerned.

The opening of V.2 presents the Duchess of York as a courteous wife, and laughter in this scene may be triggered by her sudden transition from dutiful spouse showing interest in her husband’s reports of the events in the capital, to a woman who demonstrates a blatant disregard for those same events and rejects their significance for her own subjectivity. An Elizabethan audience may have recognized in York’s rebukes to his wife: ‘Peace, foolish woman’ (V.2.80b) and ‘Make way, unruly woman’ (V.2.111b), an echo of contemporary theories which constructed women as naturally irrational and unable to control their emotions—ideas which ‘justified [. . . their] relegation to hearth and home and exclusion from participation in public affairs’ (Boxer et al. 25)—and the Duchess of York’s treatment of her husband and a family servant may, even to postmodern spectators, appear to justify York’s disparaging remarks. However, her behaviour in this and the following scene also demonstrates a flexibility in relation to the adoption of roles, which could produce a range of audience reactions from shock, through admiration, to amusement.

The Duchess of York’s entrance into the realm of state affairs is marked by her specific recognition of herself as ‘a woman’ (V.3.75). Her answer to Bolingbroke’s enquiry as to the identity of the ‘shrill-voiced suppliant’ (V.3.74) requesting admission indicates her flexibility with regard to her conception of herself: ‘A woman, and thy aunt, great King. ’Tis I / Speak with me, pity me, open the door! / A beggar begs that never begged before’ (V.3.75-77). The Duchess of York, then, announces firstly her gender, secondly her kin relationship to the monarch, and thirdly the role of humble



petitioner, which she is prepared to adopt. Thus, ‘woman’, ‘aunt’, and ‘beggar’ are all articulations of identity she employs as part of her strategy for gaining entrance to the king’s presence in this moment of crisis, and here she demonstrates the ingenuity associated with Shakespeare’s comic heroines. Although the adoption of male disguise by women in Shakespeare’s comedies may not result in a permanent disruption to masculine order, it ‘celebrates a flexibility and responsiveness that few men, in comedy or tragedy can match’ (Berggren 19). Such ‘flexibility and responsiveness’ is displayed by the Duchess of York, who, in no need of disguise, enters the court, openly affirms her femininity, and does not balk at taking on the role of a beggar. Tactically therefore she elevates her male interlocutor and recognizes and uses the appropriate relations of the court, at the same time as she challenges the authority invested in the place itself, since beggars would be out of place at court.

Although defensive of the Duchess of York’s family values, Molly Smith argues that Bolingbroke’s concession to the Duchess’s demands is a political strategy and merely the reiteration of his earlier promise to pardon Aumerle in order to win his future love. However, formerly in the play, Bolingbroke affirms that he has returned to England only to claim his rightful inheritance (II.3.112-135); since this word has not proved true, there is no reason to believe that his promises are steadfast, and consequently no reason to doubt the effectiveness of the Duchess of York’s intervention. Here again, performance can elucidate this question. In Boyd (2007), Northumberland and Hotspur were present in this scene, and the latter in particular exerted a silent pressure urging punishment of the traitor. Bolingbroke’s decision to spare Aumerle was taken in the face of Hotspur’s manifest disgust at the new king’s compliance with the duchess’s request.

Howard and Rackin argue that in obtaining Bolingbroke’s pardon for Aumerle, the Duchess of York ‘becomes the only woman in the play to influence the action’ (141), but they nevertheless maintain that a ‘domestic quarrel’ has ‘[r]eplac[ed] the gorgeous pageantry of Richard’s late medieval court with the vulgar domestic farce of a suddenly modern world’ (155). However, as I have argued, the ‘domestic’ itself cannot be construed as a stable and unpoliticized realm, and Howard and Rackin’s conclusions suggest a historically-specific feminist preoccupation with correlating female strength with the impersonation of male behaviour and liberated sexuality. A domestic quarrel is exactly what this scene is not. It may bring a divided family unit together before the king, but the family business is intensely political even before the supplicants enter Henry’s court. The core of the discussion in both V.2 and V.3 is what to do with a

young man who, but for the discovery of his intention, would have participated in regicide.

The words and actions of the Duchess of York precipitate a disruption in both the domestic and courtly settings and her mobility between these two sites demonstrates her identity flexibility. Further, she unsettles the space of tragedy, since her interventions impact on both the places within the dramatic narrative and on the generic ground where the reader/spectator has hitherto been positioned. Peter Stallybrass flags up three main areas of acceptable female comportment in the Renaissance: silence, chastity and enclosure within the house, which he maintains ‘were frequently collapsed into each other’ (126). Although the Duchess of York defends her chastity, and conforms within her marriage to ‘the enclosed body’ (Stallybrass 127), she does not comply with the other spatialized behaviours that Stallybrass argues were expected of the ‘normative’ or ‘finished’ early modern woman: ‘the closed mouth’ and ‘the locked house’ (127). Her transgression of these assigned spatialities takes her on a literal journey that facilitates her intervention into ‘the production of space, the making of history, and the composition of social relations’ (Soja, *Thirdspace* 7).

Richard’s Queen is never referred to by her Christian name in the play, and this namelessness may be rooted in the historical facts relating to Richard’s conjugal relations. Richard’s first wife, Anne of Bohemia, died in 1394, and on her death Richard was so grief-stricken that ‘for a year he would not enter any chamber that she had been in’ (Saul 456), and as ‘a grand gesture of mourning’ (Rubin 113) ordered the palace at Sheen, the site of Anne’s death, to be burned down: an act which testifies to the power of place and its influence upon emotions and imagination. Richard’s Queen during the final few years of his reign was Isabel of Valois. She was only six when she was ‘handed over to Richard at Ardres’ (Saul 457), made her state entry into London in 1396, and was just nine when her husband was deposed. In not naming the Queen, and therefore precluding straightforward identification with either Anne or Isabel, Shakespeare strengthens the dramatic potential of this female figure by combining in a single character a story of genuine love and the tragedy of an exiled orphan-widow.

The Queen appears in four scenes and is present at moments of crisis when key events that determine the unfolding of the narrative occur or are reported. An examination of her trajectory reveals the underexplored significance and potential of this character, as she progresses from her first, almost silent, appearance at Ely House (II.1), through the court (II.2), the garden (III.4), and the public street (V.1).

The first reference to Richard's wife is made by Mowbray, who explains that he had retained part of a sum of money given to him by Richard as repayment for expenses incurred when 'last I went to France to fetch his queen' (I.1.130). There is no indication in the text that the Queen is seen on stage until she accompanies her husband to visit the sick John of Gaunt (II.1), and following an enquiry with regard to Gaunt's health (II.1.71) she is silent for the remainder of the scene. In the 152 lines subsequently spoken before the royal party exits, she is not addressed until Richard finally includes her in the arrangements for his departure: 'Come on, our Queen. Tomorrow must we part. / Be merry for our time of stay is short' (222-23). However, if the Queen speaks only one line, her inclusion in this scene is highly significant since, although excluded from the discussions relating to the Irish war and the confiscation of Gaunt's wealth, she is witness to them. Indeed, Genevieve O'Reilly saw this scene as providing the Queen with a space of intense listening where she perceives the beginning of a 'political firestorm': an experience that 'lights a fire within her' and fuels the sense of foreboding she expresses in the following scene (PIntv).

In II.2 Richard has departed for Ireland and the Queen is at court in conversation with Bushy and Bagot. Bushy, observing her sadness, reminds her that she promised the king 'To lay aside life-harming heaviness, / And entertain a cheerful disposition' (II.2.3-4). When the Queen attempts to articulate the deep but inexplicable fear she is experiencing—'Some unborn sorrow ripe in fortune's womb / Is coming towards me' (II.2.10-11)—Bushy tries to dispel her sorrow in an almost unfathomable speech about the distorted vision produced by tears. Her apprehension is not taken seriously and she struggles, within the conventions of the ethos and manners particular to the court, to express her own fears: her response to Bushy's dismissal of her anxiety is couched in similarly riddling language. But the Queen's 'nameless woe' (II.2.40) proves prophetic and Green arrives to deliver the news that Bolingbroke has returned from exile to claim his confiscated patrimony. York, Richard's deputy in his absence, arrives to make preparations to deal with the rebellion, and the Queen is ushered away with the words, 'Come, cousin, / I'll dispose of you' (II.2.116-117). The verb 'dispose' is particularly revealing with regard to the routes taken by the Queen, since it is an intensely spatial term. The OED glosses 'dispose' as: 'to place (things) at proper distances apart and in proper positions with regard to each other, to place suitably'. The Queen is 'disposed of', or 'placed', in York's 'house', although we are not informed of her whereabouts until III.1, when Bolingbroke orders the execution of Bushy and Green at Bristol Castle, and in the next breath asks to be commended to the Queen (III.1.36-39).

It is likely, then, that the location in which the Queen next appears is the garden at Langley House (III.4), but other important geographies are also unfolded in this scene. The setting is significant not only for the resonances suggested by theological discourses familiar to sixteenth-century audiences, but also because gardens are particularly unstable spaces:

[T]here can be no final form for a garden because the gardener is fighting a constant battle for control. No matter how the ultimate garden design is envisioned, it is always at risk, challenged by weather, pests, blight and disease, not to mention the natural life cycle of plants (S. Ross 7).

The garden exemplifies the contention that places are never finished but always in process; as a dramatic setting it complements the instability of England at this point in the play, and is an apposite place for the challenge with which the Queen is presented.

For Shakespeare's audiences, gardens would have been not merely flat areas of enclosed land for flowers or herbs, but often places with differently designed sections, associated with a range of pastimes, and which might contain items imported from other countries within and beyond Europe. Gardens were sites of visual, aural, and haptic pleasure, and loci of converging imaginative geographies, textured with a range of mythological references that embraced classical Roman, Greek and Egyptian, and Biblical narratives (Woodhouse). As an unstable place which fused the familiar and the exotic, the garden adds force to the action of III.4. The Queen begins by attempting to conform to courtly perceptions of the garden as a place of sport and entertainment and ends by evoking Eden: one of the most powerful imaginative geographies current at the play's historical moment, and the place where man and woman were given joint responsibility for the flourishing of the earth. The dialogue that occurs in the garden of III.4 precipitates a striking change in the Queen, who, in turn, intervenes in the identity of the garden. The scene begins by reinforcing the marginalization of the Queen, indicated by her absence from the opening scene and the lists at Coventry, and her near-silent presence at Ely House, but her exit from the garden is a positive gesture of resistance to this marginalization.

In the opening lines of III.4 the Queen asks her two Ladies: 'What sport shall we devise here in this garden / To drive away the heavy thought of care?' (1-2), and her companions' replies comprise a catalogue of pleasurable pastimes: 'play[ing] at bowls' (3), 'danc[ing]' (6), 'tell[ing] tales' (10), and 'sing[ing]' (18). This conversation defines the garden as a place of courtly recreation and constructs the women as an embodiment of the well-taught female courtier who was 'able to entertain in an innocent manner with dancing, music, games, laughter, [and] witticisms' (Castiglione 217). When the fruitless

search for an activity capable of allaying the Queen's sadness is interrupted by the entry of the Gardeners she withdraws to listen to their conversation unseen, and only by eavesdropping, learns of the impending downfall of her husband. She is outraged at receiving this intelligence from the 'harsh rude tongue' (74) of the Gardener, and her indignation is also fuelled by the fact that, in spite of her intimate connection with the subject of this report, she is indeed the 'last that knows it' (94). This sense of injustice prompts the Queen to take responsibility for the next stage of her journey: 'Come. Ladies, go / To meet at London London's King in woe' (97-98).

As with the expression of her forebodings in II.2, in III.4 the Queen initially uses a riddling language suitable to the garden as genteel ludic space. With the entrance of the Gardeners, however, the garden is transformed into a site of labour; but their discussion of the strategies for the good governance of both garden and kingdom produces a space of tension for the Queen, which engenders a change in her language and prompts her to respond in a way that disrupts the lady-courtier paradigm. Bamber's description of 'Isabel's garden' as a world which is 'private, slow, full of sorrow that cannot be released into action' (135) may be applicable to the space in the early part of the scene. However, the garden is not 'Isabel's', but rather a place where she has been 'disposed of'; and sorrow is released into action by the Queen's curse and her exit from the garden. Through mobility, the Queen achieves a sense of direction and a degree of self actualization she could not attain in the bounded place that constructed her as the ideal courtier.

By choosing to set the Queen's transition from courtly consort to self-determined traveller in a garden, Shakespeare activates a range of associations that contribute to the instability and ambiguity that I have suggested is already a feature of this site, and which provoke questions as to how the rich textures of this place might be staged. Not least among the associations engendered by the garden is Eden: the Queen addresses the Gardener as 'old Adam's likeness' and asks 'What Eve, what serpent hath suggested thee / To make a second fall of cursed man?' (III.4.73, 75-76), evoking the Christian myth of Creation, Fall, and Redemption. Eden is a distinctly paradoxical place: a garden Paradise, conceived of as a place of harmony, overflowing with natural resources; but '[f]rom the perspective of the fallen world, and the early modern period had direct access to no other, Paradise is always lost and the loss is part of the meaning of the world' (Belsey, *Shakespeare* 75).

The garden of III.4, as a (mis)representation of Eden, recalls Gaunt's equation of England with 'This other Eden – demi-paradise' (II.1.42); and the 'blessed plot'

bounded by 'the silver sea' finds a counterpart in the First Man's allusion to England as 'our sea-walled garden, the whole land' (III.4.43). But there is a disruption in analogical continuity here. In contrast to Gaunt's garden-kingdom, the garden of III.4 is not the mythologized land of kings, heroes, and crusaders, but a material site where the gardener and his assistants labour to 'keep law and form in due proportion' (III.4.41). The discourse of the Gardeners is grounded in the purpose of their own toil and in their status as workers, and therefore echoes 'the communistic dream' of *Henry VI Part Two* (Cartelli 63), which has its roots in the 'famous Edenic motto' (Patterson 40) 'When Adam delv'd and Eve span / Who was then the gentleman?': a phrase which provided 'a common ideological source which helped to define a succession of popular uprisings and rebellions' (Cartelli 63). Spectators familiar with this earlier history play would have been aware of another troubled garden where the rebel Jack Cade, instead of finding the sustenance he had sought meets his death at the hands of the owner, Alexander Iden. The violent confrontation of words and deed enacted within the garden in Kent unsettles its identity as pastoral idyll, and raises the problematic issues of enclosure and land ownership, also explored in *Richard II*, making it a provocative intertheatrical space.

The dialogue of III.4 generates a site which brings together the spiritual myth of perfect union between man, woman, and God, and the materialist myth of a truly egalitarian society, and suggests that both are as firmly rooted in geography as in history. It is in the place, as much as the sequence of events, that both sacred and secular ideals of an equal and just world reside. However, more local references may have been couched in the garden of *Richard II* as the references to 'fruit trees all unpruned', 'hedges ruined', 'knots disordered', and 'wholesome herbs / Swarming with Caterpillars' (III.4.45-46), may, for sixteenth-century London audiences, have evoked gardens nearer home: those of the grand mansions on the Strand or on the road to Westminster, or those of the post-Dissolution mansions built on sites of destroyed monasteries which had been given to courtiers and civil servants. These latter gardens, 'spectacular, if only for being full of reused or semi-demolished monastic buildings' (Schofield 76), were representative of processes of cultivation, devastation, decay and renovation, and testified to changes in land use. They add to the other associations generated by the garden of III.4, a set of sites marked by the traces of conflicts between church and state, which featured in the urban geographies familiar to Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

In the polyvalent space of the garden the Queen finds her voice in an expression of plain speaking that contrasts with her riddling both in II.2 and in the first section of III.4, and her final words are a curse. Having decided to seek out Richard in London, she addresses the Gardener and proclaims her malediction: ‘for telling me these news of woe, / Pray God the plants thou graftst may never grow’ (III.4.100-101). As a result of the interactions in the garden the Queen has changed and these same interactions have engendered shifts in the identity of the garden itself. The Queen and her Ladies initially construct the garden as a place of leisure. For the Gardener and his companions it is a site of labour, but through their allegorizing it also takes on the character of both a spiritual and political Eden. In her anger the Queen makes it a site of confrontation, and her tears are the impetus for its next identity: a garden of remembrance produced by the gardener’s intention to ‘set a bank of rue [. . .] In the remembrance of a weeping Queen’ (III.4.105-107).

The crisis in the garden propels the Queen forward on the next stage of her journey, and makes of this scene more than merely a hiatus in the main action of Richard’s demise. In the street the Queen asserts her singular identity, naming herself as the ‘true king’s queen’ (V.1.6), and when she encounters Richard on his way to the Tower, she addresses him in terms shot through with mundane and mythological geographies that express paradoxes of places and identities:

Ah, thou the model where old Troy did stand,  
The map of honour, thou King Richard’s tomb,  
And not King Richard! Thou most beauteous inn,  
Why should hard-favoured Grief be lodged in thee  
When triumph has become an alehouse guest? (11-13).

‘London’s most important legendary association in the Middle Ages was with Troy’ (Wheatley 53) and the narrative of the city’s classical roots was carried over into the sixteenth century. The inscription on the Agas map (c. 1560) states that the city was founded by ‘Brutus the Trojan, in the year of the world two thousand eight hundred and thirty two and before the nativity of our saviour Christ, one hundred and thirty’, thus merging classical and religious histories and mythologies into the construction of the capital of England. Furthermore, the text in the second cartouche of the Agas map identifies the city with the monarchy, as in a ten-line rhyming verse the city itself speaks of its history and its renown as a ‘stately seat of Kings’. By identifying Richard with Troy therefore the Queen is connecting him with the foundation of the nation as historical event, and with its foundations as geographical site: a proclamation ostensibly fused with glory. However, the suggestion of the correlation between king, Troy, and

London is problematic. In Troy, as in all exemplary cities, aspects of the real and the ideal coexisted (Wheatley 52-53): Troy was the epitome of duality, and emblematic not only of ‘heroic success’ but also of ‘failure through treachery’ (45). The Queen’s use of Troy to address her husband, can be read both as a straightforward exhortation to Richard to remember his status, and as an exemplification of Shakespeare’s paradoxical geographical imagination. Richard as the ‘model’ of old Troy is both the image of the exemplary city and the embodiment of duplicity; so the evocative force of Troy unsettles the authority which it simultaneously invokes.

The allusion to Troy suggests narratives of power and betrayal at the same time as it casts the city of London as a legendary site. But if Londoners were familiar with the glory of London as a consequence of its classical and regal connections, they were also aware of its glory as a centre of natural resources and economic negotiations. It is significant that the Agas map, widely reproduced after 1561 as an object of decoration for merchants’ houses, attributes the city’s glory to its mythical roots and its regal connections, and also stresses that the greatness of this city, ‘so plentifully peopled’, is dependent on its natural resources and its citizens. At a crucial point in the transfer of power in the play, the Queen’s reference to Troy invokes a range of geographical issues connected with the construction and ownership of civic space: issues which link to debates concerning authority structures in Elizabeth I’s London at the end of the sixteenth century, when tensions between ‘wholesalers and artisans, freemen and foreigners, servants and householders’ were running high (Archer 32). The story that Troy tells is an ambiguous one, and its connections with the founding of the nation make the contested site not just fourteenth-century England but sixteenth-century London.

The Queen is not permitted the freedom of the London streets for long. Even before Northumberland arrives to give the order that Bolingbroke has decided to send Richard to Pomfret Castle and the Queen back to France, Richard encourages his wife to return to her native land, urging her ‘In Winter’s tedious nights sit by the fire / With good old folks . . . [and] / Tell thou the lamentable tale of me’ (V.4.40-44). Having claimed a place for himself in the collective memory of the land of his birth by making the Queen his troubadour, Richard continues his journey towards the prison cell where he will end his life. Within the textual geographies, the only option left open to the Queen is to act on Richard’s instruction: ‘Hie thee to France, / And cloister thee in some religious house’ (V.1.22-23).



The three women discussed above do not meet and therefore have no opportunity to map into the play those ‘counter-universes’ which Carol McKewin argues can be engendered by ‘private talks between women’ (119).<sup>5</sup> They have no opportunities to create, through ‘shared conversation, mutual affection, and extraordinary intimacy [. . . ,] a kind of female subculture apart from the man’s world’ (Lenz, Greene, and Neely 5). However, although the absence of meaningful discourse between the women in *Richard II* impedes the creation of an alternative universe or female subculture, it works dramatically to impel them into the spaces of male culture. The Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of York, and the Queen, all do precisely what Nina S. Levine implies they do not; they ‘step out of their place’ (16) for the specific purpose of entering into dialogue with men.

Moreover, they map into the play the most intimate geographies of the body, the womb, and the marital bed. The Duchess of Gloucester justifies her appeal to Gaunt on the grounds of kinship ties and locates the source of these fierce bonds in the marital ‘bed’ and ultimately, in the female body, the ‘womb’ (I.2.22). The Queen’s reference to the ‘unborn sorrow ripe in fortune’s womb’ (II.2.10), suggests both her premonition of Richard’s fall and the sadness of her own unpeopled womb. And the Duchess of York, amazed at her husband’s indifference to Aumerle’s fate, suggests: ‘Thou dost suspect / that I have been disloyal to thy bed, / And that he is a bastard, not thy son’ (V.2.105b-107). These references to the womb give this space a dimension quite other to Gaunt’s ‘teeming womb’ of the nation. In the mouths of the women the womb, as literal and metaphorical site of gestation, has a different force of conception, childbirth, and barrenness.

By evoking the marital bed through the utterances of these women, Shakespeare maps into the playworld another highly ambiguous space. The bed itself was an important location in the female geographies of the early modern period, and one that was not free from cultural and ideological concerns. Catherine Belsey argues that the recurrence of depictions of the Fall on wedding furniture—including marriage chests, plates, and beds—suggests both the instability of marriage as an institution at that time and the paradoxes contained in the idealization of marriage and the nuclear family. Marriage, as a mirror of the (assumed) divine and patriarchal order, was supported by its

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<sup>5</sup> McKewin includes the exchange between the Queen and her Two Ladies in the list of scenes containing such feminine communication ‘conducted apart from the speaking or silent presence of male characters’ (119). However, I would argue that the brevity and lack of substance of this exchange and the lack of knowledge about the Ladies, undermine the potential of this dialogue to effectively construct a counter-universe.

association with what came to be designated the proto-partnership of Adam and Eve. Belsey observes that religious beliefs and writings fuelled the development of the idea of marriage as the ideal of romantic, companionable, and erotic love, and as the ideal state ordained by God, but unsettles this narrative by pointing out that: '[t]he story of the first marriage is also a record of deception, exile and loss' (23). What would it mean' Belsey asks, 'to climb into the conjugal bed past a substantial and prominent image of Adam and Eve?' (63). Although the text indicates love and fidelity towards their husbands on the part of the women discussed here, the microsite of the marital bed is both an Edenic and post-Edenic space, and similarly pervaded by the paradoxes that pertain to Gaunt's England and the garden of III.4. Examining the feminine geographies raises questions as to how the highly personal spaces evoked by the women might be exploited to generate new spatializations of *Richard II*.

The playworld, then, is mapped by named places—England, Lancaster, London, Troy, the Holy Land, the Castles of Berkeley, Bristol, Barkloughly, Flint, and Pomfret—each with its particular evocative force, and each of which occupies a mythological as well as an actual geographical location (see Said, 'Invention' 180). But it also comprises those smaller sites of equally powerful resonances—the lists, the garden, the throne, the ground, the grave, the bed and the womb—some of which, as my case studies will demonstrate, have become increasingly important in contemporary productions.

### Chapter Three

#### Geographies of Production

Having mapped the textual geographies of *Richard II*, I now explore some of the material and imaginative geographies that the play has generated. *Richard II* has not enjoyed the same mobilities as other Shakespeare plays, perhaps because ‘when the subject was topical it was not allowed to be acted, and at other times no one wanted to’ (Souvenir *Richard II*, dir. John Gielgud, 1952). Alternatively, it may be that there are places where the sad tale of a medieval English monarch might seem to be out of place; Steven Berkoff, ruminating on the prospect of directing the play in New York in 1995, asked ‘[W]hat is New York to Richard or Richard to New York?’ (6).<sup>1</sup> But if *Richard II* is less well-travelled than some of the other plays in the canon, the geographies of its staging are no less worthy of analysis.

In this chapter I briefly discuss the early life of *Richard II* and its impact on some of the theatres in which it was performed. I examine productions which established enduring imaginative geographies, and discuss key spatializations which have confirmed or disrupted these representations, and/or signalled shifts in thinking about *Richard II* and the sort of theatre space regarded as suitable for its staging. There is a strong emphasis on scenography as a fundamental element in the construction of the fictive world, and one of the visible and material means by which the changes or translations in meanings that occur in performance can be analysed. To analyse past productions, I draw on the traditional resources of theatre historiography through which the knowledges produced by performance are mediated and disseminated, since it is difficult to access the dynamic space produced through the constantly changing social relations which can be brought to the interrogation of spaces experienced personally. However, where the documentation affords such insights, I give a fuller account of significant transient microsites that were generated by individual productions.

The thinking underpinning this chapter draws on theories of landscape, theatre history, and scenography. Daniels and Cosgrove argue that ‘the meanings of verbal, visual and built landscapes have a complex interwoven history’ and that understanding any landscape involves appreciating ‘written and verbal representations of it, not as ‘illustrations’, images standing outside of it, but as constituent images of its meaning or meanings’ (1). Working in reverse, and progressing from the written representation of

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<sup>1</sup> Berkoff, whose production of *Richard II* is discussed below, ultimately found this city to be an environment which was complementary, rather than incongruous, for the play.

the playworld to the visual, three-dimensional *stagescapes* of performance, this thesis presents a set of constituent images which comprise the world of *Richard II*. I term this an intertheatrical map after J. S. Bratton's concept of 'intertheatricality' (Bratton 37-38), which posits the interdependence of 'all entertainments [. . . that] are performed within a single theatrical tradition' (37-38). Bratton's approach—which encourages an examination of theatrical events in relation to each other across a time span that goes beyond the occasion of a particular performance—is concerned with the 'fabric of [. . .] memory' woven out of the shared theatrical languages that pertain to performance traditions and also with the 'sense of the knowledge, or better knowingness, about playing that spans a lifetime or more, and that is activated for all participants during the performance event' (37). The intertheatrical map of *Richard II*, then, is aimed at fostering the sort of 'knowingness' about past spatializations which will enhance appreciation of successive images of the playworld. This task acquires particular urgency in the light of Aronson's contention that the most effective instances of postmodern design engender an awareness of 'the whole history, context and reverberations of an image in the contemporary world' (14), since a knowledge of the constituent images discussed in this thesis can enable performers and audiences to apprehend these multiple resonances.

#### (i) Casting the Playhouse

*Richard II* was written in 1595 and was first performed in autumn that same year. Although it has not been possible to establish where exactly the play premiered, among the venues suggested are James Burbage's Theatre in Shoreditch and the Crosskeys in Gracechurch Street; and an enigmatic letter from Edward Hoby to Robert Cecil, dated 7 December 1595, has been construed as suggesting a private performance of the play.<sup>2</sup> However, interest in the venue of the play's premiere and other early performances has been eclipsed by a performance of *Richard II* at the Globe on 7 February 1601, commissioned by the Earl of Essex's steward Sir Gelly Meyrick, and a number of Essex's other followers. This performance, which the players, considering the play to be 'so old and so long out of use that they should have small or no company

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<sup>2</sup> For a summary and critique of the arguments regarding the inconclusive evidence for this performance, see Bergeron, 'The Hoby Letter'.

at it',<sup>3</sup> had been initially reluctant to give, took place on the eve of Essex's (supposed) rebellion, and has been significant in figuring *Richard II* as an intensely political play.

It has been argued that Essex's supporters intended the performance as 'a gesture of support and defiance' (Wells, *Royal* 68), which they hoped 'would serve as effective propaganda for their treasonable enterprise' (Forker, Introduction 10), or perhaps as a means of 'rous[ing] themselves to action' (Monrose 54). However, Paul E. J. Hammer, who has recently (2008) reviewed the question of *Richard II* and the Essex rebellion, maintains that, rather than mounting a military coup, Essex had intended to make an aristocratic intervention on 14 February, but had been forced to change his plans by the actions of his enemies during the weekend of 7 February. Hammer argues therefore that the interest of Essex's followers in Shakespeare's *Richard II* was related more to their own 'self-staging as watchers of this particular play' (26). Since those of Essex's supporters who attended the performance could trace their lineage to certain characters in *Richard II*, they identified with their forebears on stage, who had changed the course of the nation's history at that time, and hoped that their participation in Essex's peaceful presentation of his petition to the Queen would be just as instrumental in making history (Hammer 29-30).

We may see this performance of *Richard II* as mirroring the resolve of a group of men to save England, not through the overthrow of Elizabeth herself, but through the nonviolent removal of the men they saw as her corrupt advisors (Hammer 31); or as an appropriation of the play as 'an instrument in the political struggle' (Wells, *Richard II* 13) which indicated approval of usurpation, and therefore as 'a famous attempt to use the theatre to subvert authority' (Dollimore, *Political* 8). But, whichever theory we subscribe to, the deployment of *Richard II*, seen in the context of the events that followed, exemplifies the sort of intriguing negotiations between play, place, and performance that work to construct theatre identities. The Elizabethan public theatres, as Dawson and Yachnin have argued, had the potential to fulfil a variety of functions, relating to the social, religious, and commercial lives of playgoers, and through this performance of *Richard II*, the Globe became a site for the intersection of real and fictive, and personal and national histories and aspirations. It is significant that the performance was a public event, as whatever the intentions of its commissioners, on the occasion of this performance of *Richard II*, the playhouse provided an open arena where issues as sensitive as the question of succession in the latter years of a childless

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<sup>3</sup> Green, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Elizabeth, 1598-1601* 578, qtd. in Forker, Introduction 10; and Wells, Introduction 13.

monarch, and revolution in the cause of removing an unsuitable ruler, could be aired.

No matter how outmoded it may have been considered by the Chamberlain's Men, *Richard II* still had resonance some six years after its composition, as the succession crisis was ongoing. Further, the play's reputation as dangerous material has been fuelled by a conversation between Elizabeth I and William Lombarde, in which the queen is reputed to have proclaimed 'I am Richard II, know ye not that?', and complained that 'this tragedy . . . played 40tie times in open streets and houses'. Montrose dismisses as 'implausible' suggestions that Elizabeth was referring to 'multiple performances of a tragic drama on the subject of Richard II', and maintains that '[t]he attributed royal remark seems [. . .] to make better sense when taken metaphorically, as an application of the *theatrum mundi* trope to the recurrent enactment of treason in a theatre-state in which "princes are set on . . . stages, in the sight and view of all the world."' (56). However, if *Richard II* was not actually travelling through the streets of London at the turn of the seventeenth century, the popularity of the play at this time is borne out by the fact that it is the only one of Shakespeare's plays to have had three editions printed within two years and, in fact, between 1597 and 1634 there were six Quarto editions (1597, 1598 (2), 1608, 1615, 1634). Notably the 'deposition scene' did not appear in editions published prior to 1608, and the scholarly controversies regarding the reasons for its excision and whether or not it was acted on stage, have, like the contested performance of 1601, been influential in constructing the play's identity as a 'a political hot potato' (PP *Richard II* dir. Trevor Nunn, 2005 n. pag.).<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Odai Johnson argues that this performance, and Sir John Hayward's *Life of Henry IV*, dedicated to Essex, combined to form a "shadow text" to the myth of Richard' (506), which 'retextualized the story', transforming it from 'strictly historical material to revolutionary polemic' (506-507). Timothy Viator suggests that the frisson of inflammability that had attached to *Richard II* made the play particularly attractive to Nahum Tate, who, seeking to augment box office receipts at a time when Drury Lane was in financial difficulties, made two thwarted attempts to stage the play in December 1680 and January 1681.

Until Tate's attempted revivals, the play had kept a low profile after the Essex incident, with only one recorded performance at the second Globe in 1631 (Forker, Introduction 121). Tate's first revision of *Richard II*, which made radical cuts and additions designed to angle sympathy towards Richard, failed to pass the censors, and his second attempt to stage the play by changing the characters' names and relocating

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<sup>4</sup> For a review of these controversies, see Clare.

the action to Sicily, under the title of the *Sicilian Usurper*, was banned after two performances (January 18 and 19 1681), and the theatre closed for the remainder of the month. In the Epistle Dedicatory to his version, Tate denies any intended allusion to the volatile political present (n.pag.). However, it is not surprising that the censors were troubled by the staging of a play that ‘celebrates regicide as a means to national security [. . .] at the peak of the Exclusion Crisis’, only days after William Howard, Viscount Stafford, had been convicted of conspiring to kill the King (Johnson 506): especially at a time when readers and playgoers ‘routinely saw parallels between [. . . texts] and [. . . their] country’s situation’ (Viator 111). The impact of *Richard II* on this occasion, albeit in a highly adapted form, was to silence plays, players, and theatre for ten days, but also to confirm the theatre’s identity as a place where the popular seventeenth-century game of ‘[p]arallel constructing’ was played (Hume 222; also qtd. in Viator 111).

When, after virtually a forty-three-year absence from the stage, *Richard II* was revived by John Rich at Covent Garden in February 1738, such conscious playing with the relations between the political pressures of the real and fictive worlds that converge in performance was still a marked tendency. The play proved itself again able to score ‘topical hits’ (McManaway 171). In the climate of the government’s failure to resolve the troubled relations with Spain, and fears of rebellion against George II, the production was ‘greatly distinguished by the particular behaviour of the audience [. . .] who applied almost every line that was spoken to the occurrences of the time, and to the measures and character of the ministry’ (Davies I.150-151, qtd. in McManaway 171). As with the Tate’s attempted stagings, this production seems, as McManaway suggests, to have been a calculated risk to give a politically aware audience the opportunity to make connections between the inadequacies of a medieval monarch and the current regime.

The play’s early life, then, illustrates the ways in which texts intervene in the identities of their places of performance, and how performance itself engenders particular knowledges that travel with the play. The three productions of *Richard II* discussed above show how the play itself has been cast as politically volatile, and how its performance was instrumental in casting the theatres where it was performed as places of (real or imagined) subversion and political debate.

## (ii) Visioning the Medieval

Edmund Kean's decision to produce *Richard II* at Drury Lane in 1815, 'in the midst of the Corn Law agitation' (Moody 141), suggests a continued awareness of the play's ability to comment on the political space-time of its staging. But there was a growing desire among actor/managers 'to produce memorable "illustrations"' of Shakespeare (Styan 17) for audiences 'predisposed to look at the stage as a series of living pictures' (Schoch, 'Pictorial' 58), and theatre producers were beginning to exploit the opportunities the play offered for the sumptuous reconstruction of medieval England. Between 1813 and 1829, William Charles Macready toured his productions of *Richard II* to Glasgow, Bath, Dublin and Bristol, taking to the provinces a spatialization of the play that '[i]n splendour, scenery, and decorations [. . .] would have reflected credit even on the London boards' (NA 28/01/1813, qtd. in Barker 96). Macready's staging of the play's geographies was given star billing in the playbills, and the various castles were given special mention (TRB playbill, 16/03/1829, qtd. in Barker 99). However, in its demonstration of Victorian theatrical pictorialism as a mode of thought (Schoch, *Pictorial* 59), Charles Kean's 1857 production was exemplary. Kean's staging of the play's geographies not only made an impact in its own historical moment, but produced a vivid three-dimensional mapping of places in the play that would influence expectations of the spatialization of the fictive world for almost a century.

Kean had already achieved a reputation for the 'gorgeousness of spectacle and of archaeological accuracy' of his Shakespeare revivals (*ILN* 14/03/1857), which were considered intellectually informative as well as aesthetically pleasing, since 'as an educational exhibition of the costume, the architecture and the manners of bygone times, [. . . Kean's productions] served the highest purposes, and administered to the gratification of the purest tastes' (*ILN* 14/03/1857). But he seems to have surpassed himself with *Richard II*, which the *Examiner* hailed as 'the most elaborate and costly spectacle' that Kean had ever staged (14/03/1857). The most renowned scene in Kean's production was the actor/manager's own addition, as he replaced York's account of Richard and Bolingbroke's entry into London (V.2) with an extravaganza which required some six hundred extras. The following extract from the *Morning Chronicle* is worth quoting in full as it gives a taste of the ways in which, as the critic puts it, 'the creations of the painter's art [. . . were] endowed with animated reality', and demonstrates that the sense of place was produced as much by the flows of nobles, commoners, artists, and indeed by words and music, as by the built structures:



The fronts of the houses are adorned with tapestry and hangings, as was usual on accessions of public rejoicings; wreaths of flowers fantastically festooned extend from one side of the streets to another; balconies and scaffoldings are erected in various localities; flags and banners, suitably inscribed, wave from every window and the greedy looks of old and young dart ‘desiring eyes’ through every casement. The streets below swarm with an eager, joyous, and uproarious crowd, who, pending the Duke’s arrival, beguile the tedium of expectancy by amusements such as Strutt, in his “Sports and Pastimes of the English describes as distinctive of the age”.

Among the other amusements is the dance of itinerant fools in their patri-coloured dress of red, white, and blue quaint tippets, and white and blue hats. The corps de ballet, dressed in this fantastic style, go through a lively and picturesque dance. At length amidst the clang of “Bow Bells,” the blast of trumpets, the city procession advances on its way (14/03/1857).

Walter Pater expressed a marked admiration for Kean’s ‘tasteful archaeology [which] confront[ed] vulgar modern London with a scenic reproduction, for once really agreeable, of the London of Chaucer’ (Pater 297). Pater’s comment reflects a lament for a lost London: a grieving for a place radically changed for the worse, which parallels Gaunt’s pronouncements with regard to a lost England. Pater’s response is indicative of the intriguing slippage between real (present), fictive, and historical conceptions of place that operates in theatre, and the complexity of these spatial negotiations is intensified where the play in performance is dealing with a specific geography and history. Pater’s praise for Kean’s production was engendered, at least in part, by an encounter between his own imaginative geographies of medieval London—constructed by combining other textual and/or performed representations—and those the production constructed. The geographies of *Richard II*, as staged by Kean, provided spectators with a marked sense of place, oriented them through the sites of the play, but they also offered a sense of reassurance, of the possibility of a return of the spectacular England. Kean had ‘restored to [. . . the spectators’] eyes Richard the Second in his court, shown in their strength castles now known as ruins, [and] reproduced with scrupulous fidelity the complete spectacle of lists set out for a tournament on Gosford Green’; he had given them a series of ‘shows’ that ‘le[ft] the mind bewildered for a time, but ultimately settle[d] on the memory as a fine picture of at least one phase of a past state of a society’ (*Ex* 14/03/157). Kean’s geographies, however, were not without controversy. Of particular note was his choice to stage Gaunt’s death, and the *Examiner*’s contention that Richard ‘bec[ame] immediately a bird of prey beside the corpse, and los[t] inevitably the will of the audience’ (14/03/1857) affords an example of how the relocation of an event can open up new nuances in the reading of character.

The ‘fine picture’ of medieval England (*Ex* 14/03/157) produced by Kean lingered in the memories of theatregoers for some time as it wasn’t until the late nineteenth century that *Richard II* began to receive more regular performances. When the first of Frank Benson’s Stratford-upon-Avon productions took place in 1896, the play was hailed as a revival ‘after a very long stage rest’ (*S* 25/03/1896). William Poel’s Elizabethan Stage Society had performed a recital of *Richard II* in 1894, but the play had been given little stage room throughout the last four decades of the nineteenth century, making Charles Kean’s 1857 spectacular version at the Princess’s Theatre the last major production. Anticipating Benson’s 1896 production of *Richard II* in Stratford-upon-Avon, the *Sketch* called to mind Kean’s extravaganza: ‘Of course we need not expect at Stratford the strength of the cast of the famous Charles Kean revival at the Princess’s in 1857, but I do not doubt that, both pictorially and histrionically, Mr Benson will repay people the trouble of a pilgrimage to Shakespeare’s birthplace’ (25/03/1896). In this conjectured comparison, the critic offsets (perhaps ironically) any possible insufficiencies in the scale of the work in the provinces with a reference to the potentially enriching associations mapped onto audience experience by virtue of attending a performance in the playwright’s own hometown. The intricate relations between the empirical geographies of theatre spaces and the anticipated fictive geographies of Benson’s production are implicit in the *Sketch*’s comments and are indicative of how the real-and-imagined, multiple spatialities of the theatrical event impact upon spectator experience. Reviews indicate that Benson’s production did not disappoint either ‘pictorially’ or ‘histrionically’. The characters ‘w[ore] dresses bearing the correct coats of arms of the period of the families to which they belong’ (*H* 17/04/1896). The scenery included the lists at Coventry, ‘gay with shields and banners, bearing arms and badges of the knights, nobles, and prelates mentioned in the play’ and ‘copied from contemporary authorities’, and ‘a special reproduction of Westminster hall had been painted’ for the ‘abdication scene’ (*BH* 4/04/1896). Furthermore, Benson’s Stratford revival also generated an extensive set of spectator geographies by attracting interest on a national level, with requests for tickets being received from ‘nearly all parts of the kingdom’ (*H* 24/04/1896).

Since, at the end of the nineteenth century, the play was unfamiliar to English audiences, it is to Benson’s credit that he restored *Richard II* to a more prominent place in the minds of the theatregoing public. He played the title role in performances of *Richard II* at the Stratford Memorial Theatre (SMT) virtually every year between 1896

and 1915.<sup>5</sup> It is also noteworthy that, if he did not have the number of actors required to people the tragedy to the same extent as Kean, Benson's nevertheless became a landmark production owing to his particular interpretation of the king. His fame as Richard is partly due to an essay by C. E. Montague, who saw Benson's achievement as lying in his ability to capture both sides of Richard's character: in Montague's view, Benson '[brought] out admirably that half of the character which criticism seems almost always to have taken great pains to obscure – the capable and faithful artist in the same skin as the incapable and unfaithful king' (*MG* 04/12/1899). Montague's essay established a tradition of regarding Richard as the poet king and Bolingbroke as one of 'the men of affairs' that would haunt interpretation and reception of the role into the mid 1950s.<sup>6</sup>

1899 and 1903 saw two contrasting productions of the play, which were demonstrative of two distinct approaches to staging Shakespeare that were operating at the turn of the twentieth century. William Poel's Elizabethan Stage Society (ESS) performed *Richard II* 'after the manner of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century' (PP cover), in the Lecture Theatre of the University of London. The single setting 'consisted of a broad line of tapestry, which covered the back wall, a sage-tinted screen at each side, an elevated seat for the King in the centre against the tapestry, two or three oak chairs, two tables with sad-coloured cloths and a grey carpet over the floor' (*E* 18/11/1899) and worked, along with 'the absence of the usual set scenes', to bring the actors in their Elizabethan costumes 'into bold relief' (*E* 18/11/1899). The *Morning Post* had initially found 'the realism of the modern room', especially the 'very modern clock over the Vice-Chancellor's chair' distracting, but stated that 'as the story unfolded the persons began to live, the room and the clock disappeared and long before the end of the play was holding the audience as firmly as though they had been at one of the great playhouses watching the efforts of a famous actor-manager and his company' (13/11/1899). For this critic 'the faithful rendering of the play', combined with the quality of the acting, produced and sustained this twofold effect of appropriating the space and transforming it from a disjunctive and seemingly unsuitable site for *Richard II* into a place associated with the maximum illusion and spectacle. The significance of Poel's production is that in eliminating the usual illusion of place as it was constructed through the means familiar to theatregoers of the time, and choosing a venue and style that were

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<sup>5</sup> The only exceptions were 1897, 1898, 1900, 1902, 1903 and 1912.

<sup>6</sup> J. C. Trewin referred to Douglas Seale's production for Birmingham Repertory Company in 1955 as marking a departure from the 'Montague-Benson reading of the artist king' (*L* 13/04/1972).

incongruous with the spectacular geographies staged by Kean and Macready (and, to a much lesser extent, Benson), Poel had succeeded in demonstrating that story, character, movement and language engender place; but also, somewhat ironically, managed to transport this spectator into an ‘ordinary’ theatre. The production of space in performance, whether of Kean’s archaeological, pictorial variety, or Poel’s ersatz Elizabethan variety, works on, and with, the imagination of the spectator and mediates a number of imaginative geographies, which are not limited to the realization of the world of the play.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s 1903 *Richard II* rivalled Kean’s 1857 revival. The *Illustrated London News* was effusive in its praise for ‘the solidity of Mr. Harker’s castle [. . .] the sweep of his heather-clad hills, the loveliness of Mr Hann’s formal garden, [. . . and] the spaciousness of Mr Hemsley’s tournament lists’ as well as the ‘admirably drilled crowds’ with which Tree filled the stage (19/09/1903). Tree echoed Kean by adding a tableau which staged Bolingbroke’s entry into London, but in addition to reproducing the imaginative geographies of the sort of medieval England that had held sway in theatregoers’ minds since 1857, he interpolated another tableau at the end of the play: the coronation of Henry IV in Westminster Abbey. This dramatic strategy placed the location of Richard’s murder, in close proximity to the locus where the new kingship was ratified, creating a particularly evocative juxtaposition of sites and uniting the Duchy stronghold of Pomfret with the Crown stronghold of Westminster.

In the period that saw Poel and Tree’s vastly different visions of *Richard II*, a third strand of thought on spatializing Shakespeare was emerging through the influence of Adolph Appia and Edward Gordon Craig, whose work with light and space was opening up new possibilities in terms of scenographic topographies and architectural forms for theatre. These ideas, combined with a growing desire for ‘a performing space that freed Shakespeare from the weight of scenery’ (Kennedy, *Looking* 35) and concern for the presentation of a fuller Shakespearean text, are evident in Harley Granville Barker’s work. Barker, who had acted with Poel, was looking for a ‘new formula’ for staging Shakespeare; one that would ‘reflect light and suggest space’, and offer fluidity, but without requiring an audience to have a historical sense of the Elizabethan (Barker iv). Although right up until the mid 1950s, reviewers were generally resistant to new ways of spatializing *Richard II*, there were indications, from the early 1930s onwards, that directors and designers were beginning to think about different ways of constructing the playworld.

Reception of Tyrone Guthrie's production at the SMT in 1933 suggests the tensions between traditional and newer approaches to the construction of place[s] in *Richard II*. One reviewer was outraged at the inaccuracy of the heraldry—which he regarded as an act of ‘carelessness’ akin to ‘flying the Union Jack upside down’—and complained about the reduction in spectacle, commenting that ‘[e]ven the costumes did not convey any idea of the pageantry’ (*BP* 22 April 1933). The *Birmingham Gazette* echoed some of these sentiments and stated that *Richard II* ‘deal[s] [. . .] with the most picturesque period in the history of England [. . . and] lends itself to a highly colourful setting’ (22/04/1933). Some of the adverse criticism that Guthrie's production attracted was prompted by responses to the theatre itself, particularly the economic strategies of the management. The original SMT had burned down in 1926; Guthrie's *Richard II* featured in the second season of the new SMT, and the budget and the technologies available to directors played a role in engendering expectations. The *Birmingham Post*'s disapproval seems to have been motivated as much by the enormous financial outlay involved as by the imprecision of the chivalric devices, since the critic complained that ‘something like 5,000 or £10,000’ had been spent on ‘installing the finest lighting system in this country’ and yet Guthrie had used it ‘to produce an effect in many scenes which anybody could obtain in a cellar with a tuppenny candle’ (22/04/1933). The new building therefore brought new possibilities and problems, not only because its design alienated those in the ‘gods’, who could hardly see or hear the performance on stage, but because its state-of-the-art technology was integral to its new identity and engendered the risk of unmet expectations when directors like Guthrie wished to forge other paths of progress.

What the *Birmingham Post* saw as a ‘dull production’ (22/04/1933), however, was described by the *Times* in terms which contrast sharply with the views expressed by other critics:

The week [at the Stratford Festival] would have been incomplete without such a production as this—one trusting in the main to simple curtain and effects. If the Festival had been barren of some attempt to hit a mean between Mr. Komisarjevsky's violent methods and Mr. Bridges-Adams's traditional treatment, most people would have felt they had missed the approach which opens the best promise of a truly modern interpretation of Shakespeare. It is a method which allows for pace, gives freedom to the actor, and invites the imaginative cooperation of the audience (22/04/1933).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> From the perspective of theatrical geographies, this was a very interesting season, as Bridges-Adam's mixture of European political and pictorial traditions for *Coriolanus*, and Komisarjevsky's constructivist set for *Macbeth*, added to Guthrie's *Richard II*, made for a real mix scenographic styles (see Kennedy *Looking* 127, 129).

The reviewer made clear that the liberating ‘method’ was, at least in part, linked to the design and articulation of the stage environment, within which the ‘scenery was always significant’ and ‘the groupings, [were] well under control, [. . . and] never artificial’ (*T* 22/04/1933).

Guthrie’s approach did not constitute a complete departure from audience expectations of a colourful world: ‘The lists at Coventry glowed with colour from rich gowns and pennants and heraldic devices and a bluish grey sky deepened every tone. Gaunt’s death was set in a scene of sable upon which Richard and his court broke with their bright hued apparel (*T* 22/04/1933). However, the *Times* observed that ‘[t]he background of the play was not so much suggestive as receptive, seeming to “take” the scenery that the poetry paints, as an etching might take colour in the mind, and where Mr. Guthrie felt that more solidity was needed, we seldom felt inclined to dissent (22/04/1933); thus implying more complex negotiations between the space and the text than had become usual for *Richard II*, and suggesting the interactions between language and place that engender changes in mood and substance.

Language is fundamental to the construction of place, and crucial in circulating, maintaining and modifying perceptions of place, and words have ‘the specific power to call places into being’ (Tuan, *Language* 686). At a basic level, this relates to the fact that, in Shakespeare, certain locations are indicated in the dialogue, but the verbal construction of place(s) in theatre, as in everyday life, is more complex and far reaching, and goes beyond the pragmatics of stating where an action occurs. The interplay between language, suggestion, and substance, that the *Times* indicates was in operation in the construction of space for Guthrie’s *Richard II*, is illustrative of how ‘the quality of human communication, including (pre-eminently) the types of words and the tone of voice used, seems to infect the material environment’, and is capable of casting a ‘light’ over it, be it ‘tender, bright or sinister’ (Tuan, *Language* 690).

One particularly striking aspect of the *Times*’s review is the critic’s proposition that the production ‘invite[d] the imaginative cooperation of the audience’ (22/04/1933). Whereas the *Birmingham Post* complained that the production had not been invested with ‘sufficient imagination’ (22/04/1933), implying that the imaginative input should be the sole responsibility of the production team, the *Times* celebrated the collaboration of the audience in the theatrical event. In Stratford in 1933, Guthrie had clearly been grappling with what Barker had identified as ‘the problem of Shakespearean scenery’ (iv). When working on *The Winter’s Tale* and *Twelfth Night* in 1912, Barker felt that addressing the challenge of creating a stage environment for Shakespeare’s plays would

entail the ‘invent[ion of] a new hieroglyphic language of scenery’ which would produce a space that was both ‘decorative, therefore, not realistic, and [. . .] uncumbrous’ (iv). Barker suggested that finding this environment was a collaborative process, and that as directors and designers worked towards a new ‘convention’, so audiences ‘must learn to see’ (iv) The *Times*’s response to Guthrie’s *Richard II* suggests that the production contributed to nurturing this new sort of seeing on the part of the spectators. Guthrie’s production, then, was important in reimagining the geographies of *Richard II* and providing an alternative to the form of archaeological realism with which the play had become associated, but also in suggesting the reciprocal imaginative processes that create the space of the fictive world in performance.<sup>8</sup>

The development of ideas, of course, can never be traced within a neat, uninterrupted, chronological pattern, or sourced in a single event. Although the *Times* recognized a new potential of spatial design in Guthrie’s 1933 production, stagings of *Richard II* at Stratford in the 1940s sought to convey a clear sense of place and continued to exhibit a concern with constructing a glorious England of the past.<sup>9</sup> It is, perhaps, not surprising in the climate of the Second World War that ‘[c]ostumes and heraldic emblems in rich glowing colours’ gave ‘an impressive splendour’ to Robert Atkins’s *Richard II* (*ED* 24/05/1944), or that ‘[t]hat great old England-lover John of Gaunt moved the audience into temporarily holding up the performance with their applause’ (*ED* 24/05/1944). These representations of the traditional splendours may have been the result of the generally adverse responses to Guthrie, or a reflection of the wartime spirit of patriotism and the need to reassert the roots of national pride. But the recognizable imaginative geographies of the pictorial tradition were soon disrupted again by Ralph Richardson’s production at the New Theatre in 1947,<sup>10</sup> and John Gielgud’s production for the Lyric Hammersmith in 1952.<sup>11</sup>

Lionel Hale described Richardson’s set as resembling ‘the bare ribs of an enormous wedding cake’ which gave ‘no verisimilitude to castle or council chamber’ (*DM* 24/04/1947), and the *Times* felt that the combination of ‘circular framework[s] of ornamental pillars’ and ‘sliding or dropping curtains’ was ‘almost too nakedly

<sup>8</sup> It is pertinent to note that Guthrie went on to become a very influential figure in the reassessment of scenography and staging configurations, particularly in relation to Shakespeare. In his autobiography, he praised the Shakespeare stagings of Poel and Barker—who had both felt that ‘the first consideration must be the text’ (183)—and agreed with them that ‘[Henry] Irving and his contemporaries were wrong to subordinate this to scenic convenience’ and to tie Shakespeare to ‘a literal realism’ (183).

<sup>9</sup> Iden Payne, 1941; Robert Atkins, 1944; Walter Hudd, 1947.

<sup>10</sup> The production was performed by the Old Vic Company at the New Theatre (now the Albery), which had become their temporary home following the closure of the Old Vic in 1941 due to bomb damage.

<sup>11</sup> Gielgud had played Richard at the Old Vic in 1929–30 (dir. Harcourt Williams), and again at the Queen’s Theatre in 1937 (dir. John Gielgud); he directed Paul Scofield in the role in 1952.

serviceable’ (24/04/1947). Although Philip Hope-Wallace accepted that the ‘slightly arty structure derived from the gigantic crowns one sees depicted in tapestries with figures standing in or on them’ might be ‘convenient’, he complained that it gave ‘no suggestion whatever of locality (seashore, castle, or dungeon)’: something which was ‘surely needed, especially when the programme distains anything as old fashioned as giving a list of scenes’. His challenge to those of his readers who had also seen the production—‘Hands up those who frankly were absolutely certain, when each scene began, whether we were in Coventry or Wales or where’ (unsourced clipping V&ATC)—indicates the extent to which the space generated by *Richard II* was still expected to provide the visual pleasure of recognition of particular places, and to act as a means of orientation, allowing the spectators to follow the characters through the sites that map their personal geographies.

Gielgud’s production received similarly unfavourable comments. T. C. Worsley conceded that ‘the ingenuity of the construction [. . .] transferred itself readily enough from interior to exterior, from palace to prison, from garden to court’ (NSN undated clipping V&ATC), thus fulfilling the still-prevalent desire for the production to map the movement between the sites of the action; but the *Stage* stated that the scenery and costumes, reminiscent of ‘pages from a Book of Hours’, were spoiled by ‘fussy touches which distract the eye, especially in the toy-like Berkley [sic.] Castle scene’ (undated clipping V&ATC). The *Evening Standard* described Loudon Sainthill’s décor’ as ‘a frivolous arrangement of golden sticks, between which little trees and bits of battlement [. . . were]



Fig. 3 *Richard II* 1952. Dir. John Gielgud.  
Des. Loudon Sainthill.



intermittently shoved’, and stated that in such settings, Richard could be ‘no more than king of toytown, or perhaps a bird in a gilded cage’ (02/01/1952).

Richardson’s and Gielgud’s productions are particularly significant within my intertheatrical mapping of *Richard II*, as they displayed some of the features that Aronson associates with ‘modern’ scenography (14); that is, they ‘moved the stage picture [sufficiently] away from the specific, tangible, illusionistic world of romanticism and realism into a generalized, theatrical and poetic realm’ for the pictorial image to ‘function[. . .] as an extension of the play’s themes and structures (a metanarrative)’ (adapted from Aronson 14). The connections made by critics therefore merit further interrogation for what they reveal about the ways in which these spaces expressed the themes and structures of *Richard II* and illuminated the relations between character, place, and identities.

By imagining the framework of Richardson’s set as ‘bare ribs’ (*DM* 24/04/1947), albeit disparagingly, Hale was inadvertently referring to the spatialization of an idea contained in the text. In the scene of Richard’s capitulation at Flint Castle, Bolingbroke orders Northumberland to ‘Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle’ (III.3.31) and, in his soliloquy at Pomfret Castle, Richard muses on ‘how these vain weak nails / May tear a passage through the flinty ribs / Of this hard world, my ragged prison walls’ (V.5.19-21). The design therefore gave material expression to a feature of the body and an element of architecture in a way which combined the paradoxical strength and fragility of both built structures and the human frame. Definitions of ‘ribs’ current in the play’s moment of composition carry the suggestion of protection and support and, since the gaps between the ‘bones’ or the ‘timbers’ constitute points of vulnerability, the space created for Richardson’s production expressed the points of weakness to which power is subject, and which Richard himself identifies in his meditation on ‘the hollow crown’ (III.2.160-170).<sup>12</sup>

The references to the ‘toy-like [. . .] Castle’ and ‘toytown’ in Gielgud’s production were, no doubt, intended as expressions of disapproval, but the design echoed the scale and style of the illustrations in Froissart’s *Histoire du Roy d’Angleterre* and the ‘toytown’ association is not inappropriate, given Gaunt’s accusations that,

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<sup>12</sup> A ‘rib’ is defined as: ‘One of the curved bones articulated in pairs to the spine in men and animals and enclosing or tending to enclose the thoracic or body cavity, whose chief organs they protect’ (OED 1a); ‘building rib a piece of timber forming part of the framework or roof of a house’ (OED 10).

through his own actions, Richard has diminished both his own and the realm's stature (Figs 3 and 4).<sup>13</sup> The critic's equation of Richard's kingdom with 'toytown' implies that



Fig. 4 Richard receives Northumberland at Conway Castle.  
*Histoire du Roy d'Angleterre.*

the design was able to suggest the childish irresponsibility which could be seen as characterizing Richard's actions and/or to construct England as a plaything of the monarch. If, in this production, Richard could also be seen as 'a 'bird in the gilded cage' (*ES* 02/01/1952), then the space also embodied another unsettling aspect of power by showing Richard as captive within his own regal authority.

The construction of the fictive world in Gielgud's 1952 production was also seen as a negotiation between the play and the particular place of performance. The *Observer* felt that 'if it [. . . was] to be scenic at all' *Richard II* 'demand[ed] quite a lot of landscape and architecture' (04/01/1952). However, the same critic noted that 'the economic solution of the building problem [. . . had] been clever' as, although it seemed that audiences were 'watch[ing] a game played with toys', this 'suit[ed] the theatre which is what the house agents insist on calling bijou' (*O* 04/01/1952). The 'toytown' imagery, then, was also interpreted as a strategy for dealing with the limitations of scale imposed by the Lyric, where the play had to be pushed back into theatre's small 'picture

<sup>13</sup> Although Sainthill does not cite this as one of his sources, the set for III.3 is reminiscent of the illustration of Richard II receiving Harry Percy Earl of Northumberland, at Conway Castle, in 1399. Sainthill states that his main inspiration came from the Wilton Diptych, the Westminster Abbey portrait and from missals and a Book of Hours (*Richard II* Souvenir, Lyric Hammersmith Winter Season 1952-53).

frame' (O 04/01/1952). The role of the design of the theatre building itself in generating particular dynamics between performers and audiences was suggested by the *Observer's* disappointment in regard to the absence of a forestage at the Lyric, which denied the spectators a closer proximity to the actors: a closeness that was particularly missed in the monologues (04/01/1952).

Colour was one of the aspects that critics had come to associate with the representation of the world of *Richard II* and Gielgud's production met expectations in this respect. However, T. C. Worsley objected to the 'pretty taste in colours' which he found 'a typical example of the present tendency in stage decoration, prettification for prettification's sake without due regard for appropriateness' (NSN undated clipping V&ATC). Furthermore, according to the *Daily Express*, '[t]he scenery [. . . was] too pretty for a tragedy' (30/12/1951). The suggestion that pretty colours did not suit the play intimates that tension was growing between staging *Richard II* in a way that corresponded to the dominant, and reassuring, imaginative geographies of 'that most sumptuous of all English periods',<sup>14</sup> and creating a space which gave expression to other elements within the text. Some of these elements emerged more clearly a few years later in two 1955 productions, which staged a much darker perception of *Richard II's* geographies.

### (iii) Re-Visioning the Medieval

In 1954, Joan Littlewood directed *Richard II* for Theatre Workshop, and played the part of the Duchess of Gloucester. She revived her production at the Theatre Royal Stratford East in January 1955, so that it ran concurrently with Michael Benthall's staging at the Old Vic, making comparisons inevitable. The opposing social and political identities, and contrasting economic means of the theatres and their directors were reflected in Tynan's pugilistic metaphor, which described Stratford East's 'crowding south paw' as 'very much on [. . . his] left' and the Old Vic's 'well-scrubbed fighter' as 'on [. . . his] right' (O 23/01/ 1955). However, further reflection on the geographies of both stagings complicates these divergent perspectives and troubles their apparant opposition. Although Tynan commented that 'Stratford's sombre castellation

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<sup>14</sup> I borrow this phrase from the *Morning Post*, which commented that in Harcourt Williams' 1929 production at the Old Vic 'There was practically no scenic effort beyond curtains and some conventional castle walls. But the costumes of that most sumptuous of all English periods were beautifully as well as lavishly reproduced, and the heraldry was particularly well and carefully studied' (10/11/1929).

[. . . was] stronger though less graceful than Mr Leslie Hurry's ramped promontory at the Vic', he observed that '[b]etween the two settings there [. . . was] little to choose', and that neither had 'really fit[ted] the play's geographical restlessness' (O 23/01/1955).

Some of the differences in approach, regarded as 'predictable' by Howard Goorney (101), who played four roles in the Theatre Royal production, resulted from Theatre Workshop's financial situation, which would not have permitted the forty-five strong cast that graced the Old Vic stage. Littlewood's stage environment was influenced not merely by budgetary restraints, but also by the company's socialist ideologies. Goorney states that one of the most important contrasts to the 'pomp and ceremony [. . .] coloured pennants [. . .] fanfares [. . . and] elegantly dressed and beautifully spoken [actors]' of Benthall's Old Vic production was the mood with which Littlewood and her company wished to imbue the world of the play (101). The company aimed to 'bring out the hatred and cruelty of the period', and John Bury's 'stark setting . . . [was] conceived to emphasize fear and oppression' (101).

Part of what made Theatre Workshop's *Richard II* unconventional was this conception of theatrical space as a medium for the expression of moods, emotions and

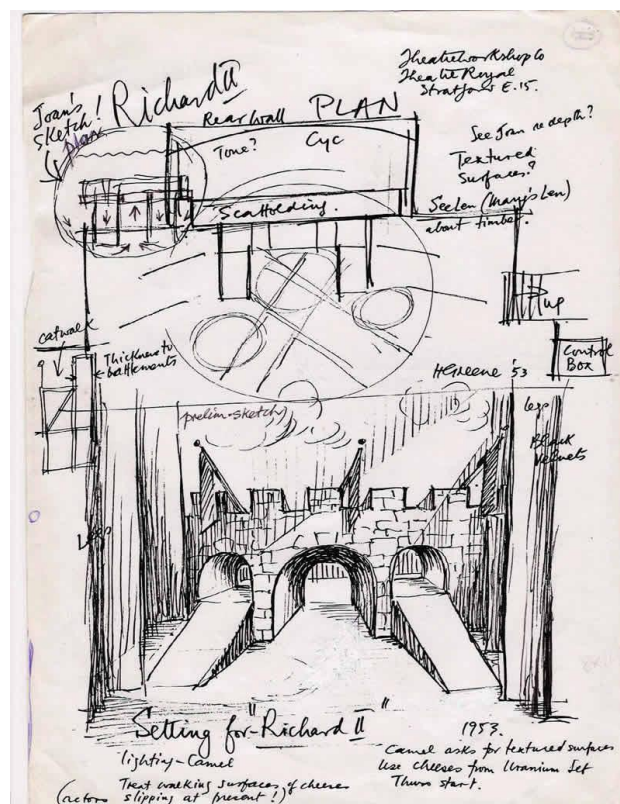


Fig. 5 Sketch for *Richard II* 1955. Dir. Joan Littlewood.  
Des. John Bury.

concepts. Philip Hope-Wallace observed that 'the setting [. . .] reached out towards the eerie', although he added that 'this also meant [it reached out towards] the absurd when exits and entrances had to be made practically on all fours through the mouth of a cardboard sewer, [which was] a permanent feature at the back of the stage' (MGaz 21/01/1955). It is clear from the production photographs and design sketch (Figs. 5 and

6)—which show two tunnels, each accessed by a ramp, on either side of a central

archway at stage level—that Hope-Wallace’s description of the actor’s proximity to the ground when entering and exiting was somewhat exaggerated. However, the height of the arches did mean that actors had to stoop in order to pass through all three tunnels and, considering the menacing world that the company wished to create, the sewer is an apposite associative geography, which was suggested as much by this enforced physicality—which gave Hope-Wallace the impression that the characters were virtually crawling between the spaces that comprised the fictive world—as by the tunnels themselves.



Fig. 6 *Richard II* 1955. Dir. Joan Littlewood. Des. John Bury.

The associative geography of the sewer was also indirectly evoked by Kenneth Tynan. After pointing out that, in Benthall’s production, Bolingbroke (Eric Porter) brought ‘a proper queasiness to the job of usurpation’, in contrast to Stratford’s George Cooper, who ‘tackle[d]’ the task ‘with the business-like aplomb of a public executioner’ (*O* 23/01/1955), Kenneth Tynan observed that Littlewood’s ‘whole anti-Richard faction [. . .] behave[d] like rodent exterminators enamoured of their work’ (*O* 23/01/1955). The evocations of open drains and rat catchers implicit in Hope-Wallace’s and Tynan’s reviews indicate the extent to which Littlewood’s production unsettled the pervasive idea of the glorious heraldic and chivalric England; her ‘excessively grim scenery and [. . .] lighting’ (Hobson, Unsourced clipping *V&ATC* 23/01/1955) plunged *Richard II* not so much into the dark corridors of power as the murky passageways of a medieval

underworld, prefiguring developments at the RSC in the 1960s, when the influence of Brecht filtered through into the creation of the hard steel and stone world of Barton and Hall's *Wars of the Roses*.

There is evidence that the Old Vic's *Richard II* met some of the expectations bequeathed to the play through the pictorial tradition, since, for Alan Dent, Hurry's design, 'achieve[d] the glow of history' (*NC* 18/01/1955); but a number of reviewers picked up on a disquieting darkness in the scenography, which jarred with other production values, and which clearly disrupted their imaginative geographies. Stephen Williams claimed that 'it was just as dark in S.E.1 as it was in E.15' and professed that he 'despair[ed] of ever seeing the sun rise on medieval England' (*EN* 19/01/1955). In similar vein, the *Times* was particularly concerned about 'the darkness' in the Old Vic's medieval world, as it 'seemed especially pointless in a play in which sunshine dominates the imagery' (19/01/1955). Moreover, although Robert Wraight stated that Hurry's costumes '[had] an air of colourful authenticity about them' he complained that the setting was 'a dreary double-decker piece of austerity that [. . . was] adaptable for every scene' (*St* 19/01/1955). Hurry's spatialization was disapproved of on two counts, both of which were criticisms that could be levelled at Littlewood's scenography: the sombre functionality of the interchangeable set, which denied the experience of a tour of distinct sites of action, and the draining of light and warmth from the space of the fiction. Anthony Cookman's response also suggests that something was out of joint at the Old Vic; Cookman commented that the play had begun 'with trumpets flourishing and banners aswirl' but that the audience had been left 'to decide for themselves what sort of person Shakespeare meant Richard to be' (*TB* 02/02/1955), suggesting that the reassuring certainty of that initial glimpse of the old imaginative geographies had given way to an ambiguity which had unsettled the previously perceived harmony between pageantry, place, and person.

One example of this jarring may have been the soldiers who were seen in the background of III.2, their obvious exhaustion and attitudes of physical weariness providing a striking juxtaposition with Richard's psychological turmoil on the coast of Wales (production photographs). Benthall's inclusion of these figures within the stage picture, opened up a glimpse into the world of the commoners, who are excluded from Shakespeare's play, and constituted another meeting point with Littlewood. Littlewood's programme contained an extract from Langland describing the arduous life of farm workers, and several brief statements giving the dates of Richard's reign, the mid-fourteenth-century outbreak of the Black Death, the Hundred Years War, and the

Peasants' Revolt. She added that 'Wat Tyler was Killed by the Barons at Mile End whilst he was parleying with *Richard II*': a location just 'a couple of miles from this same theatre' (Alan Dent, unsourced clipping Theatre Royal Stratford East Archive).<sup>15</sup> Thus, Littlewood set her production within the geographies of suffering, poverty and popular rebellion, which find only a shadowy expression in the text. Although Tyler met his death not in the first meeting between Richard and the insurgents at Mile End, but the following day at the parley at Smithfield, Littlewood's use of 'bad' geography drew the play, the theatre, and the audience into a shared space-time.

In spite of significant differences, then, Littlewood's and Benthall's productions both contributed to a new, and darker, envisioning of the geographies of the world of *Richard II*, which was further developed by Peter Hall, John Barton, and Clifford Williams when, in 1964, they added the second tetralogy to their revival of the *Wars of the Roses*, which had played at the RST the previous year.<sup>16</sup> John Bury, who had designed Littlewood's *Richard II*, produced 'a model set of steel-clad walls and metallic stage, conveying the stark reality of a brutal power politics' (Bate and Rasmussen 131). Russell Jackson notes that this 'grim steel and stone version of the mediaeval world', a picture of the 'Middle Ages' as 'damaged (if glamorous) goods' (217), was also reflected in Prospect Theatre Company's *Richard II* (dir. Richard Cotterell 1968). But in 1973 John Barton further unsettled the imaginative geographies of *Richard II*, and the adjectives and metaphors used by critics to describe the topographies of this production, indicate that this staging mapped a material and psychological world that opened up new readings of the tragedy.

Barton's was the next major production at Stratford, and the title of Peter Thomson's review of the 1973 Stratford Season, 'Shakespeare Straight and Crooked', is indicative of debates relating to staging the plays in this period.<sup>17</sup> In 1971, Kenneth Muir had argued that as the playwright's professional skills could be trusted, it was appropriate 'to play Shakespeare straight, without cuts and without gimmicks' (46). In *Free Shakespeare* (1974), John Russell Brown advocated the liberation of Shakespeare from what he perceived as the restraints imposed by the structures of contemporary theatre and academia, in order to facilitate an ongoing exploratory approach to the works: an approach which operated within the system of conventions of Shakespeare's

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<sup>15</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>16</sup> *The Wars of the Roses* comprised *Henry VI* and *Edward IV*, a two-part adaptation of the *Henry VI* trilogy, and *Richard III*.

<sup>17</sup> Barton had previously directed *Richard II* in 1954, and this production is discussed briefly in Chapter Seven.

day, and made the actor central to the process of discovering the works. In the midst of these debates ‘directors’ Shakespeare’ had emerged. Directors’ Shakespeare is underpinned by a concept, or ‘a super-objective’, which may be reinforced by the design (Thomson 144), and may employ cuts, additions, reordering, and pre- and/or post-play action as a means of reinforcing the director’s interpretive stance, and of producing fresh nuances for audiences already familiar with the play (Smallwood, ‘Directors’ Shakespeare’ 176).<sup>18</sup> There is a strong link between directors’ Shakespeare and academically-informed interpretation, and in addition to employing some of the strategies listed above, Barton, an ex Cambridge Don, brought a weight of scholarship to his reading of *Richard II*. Described by Stanley Wells as ‘the most strongly interpretive production of a Shakespeare play’ he had seen (*Royal* 65; cf. Hodgdon 145), Barton’s highly symbolic and stylized staging generated great excitement and controversy, and in the light of the qualities of its stagescape and its continued influence, it merits extended analysis here.<sup>19</sup>

The excitement that the production created in its historical moment was partly due to Barton’s departure from what had become the tradition of focusing on the contrasts between Richard and Bolingbroke. The fundamental concept that drove Barton’s *Richard II* was ‘the essentially tragic doctrine of the king’s two bodies’ and Shakespeare’s unique exploration of ‘the latent parallel between the King and that other twin natured human being, the Actor’ (Anne Barton, PP 14). For Barton, the journeys of Richard and Bolingbroke suggested a mirroring, or reversal, as ‘Richard’s journey from king to man is balanced by Bolingbroke’s progress from a single to a twin-natured being’ (14). These ideas of split natures, doublings, and mirroring, were underscored by the casting—as Ian Richardson and Richard Pascoe alternated playing the roles of the two protagonists/antagonists—but they also found expression in the set, designed by Timothy O’Brien and Tazeena Firth.

The single fixed set consisted of ‘two walls, set at right angles to the front of the stage, parallel to one another 8 m apart, 8 m long, 8 m high at the upstage ends and zero cm high at the downstage ends’ each with ‘a staircase built into their steep incline’ and which O’Brien likened to ‘the great sun clocks in Jai Singh’s observatory in Jaipur’. A

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<sup>18</sup> Although Smallwood uses the term ‘directors’ Shakespeare’ to refer to the ‘intelligent and inventive’ approach that he sees as dominating professional Shakespeare production from the 1950s-1960s onwards in Britain, it is not an unproblematic term. The Victorian actor-managers and directors producing innovative Shakespeare earlier in the twentieth century (such as Barry Jackson, Nigel Playfair, and Terence Gray) might also attract the appellation.

<sup>19</sup> Seeing Barton’s *Richard II* was one of my earliest and most formative theatrical experiences, but for many of the details of performance I draw on accounts given by reviewers and scholars, particularly Thomson, Smallwood, Speaight, Greenwald, and Wells.



bridge with ‘a level floor 2 m deep from front to back’ stretched across these walls/staircases and could be ‘raise[d] and lower[ed] on the slope of the walls’. O’Brien saw the walls as sufficiently suggestive of ‘the sea-walled garden’, of a court in a Christian country, or of castles, not to need an imitated surface of stone, and’ they were dressed in the same dark cork as covered the theatre’s forestage walls, and [. . .] set [. . .] on the deep brown carpet provided as stage covering for the season’. There was also ‘a portable pyramid of golden steps’ which served as the throne, and which was ‘set downstage before the audience arrived’ and upon which ‘stood the robe and crown of the king’ (‘Designing’ 114, 116, qtd. in Page 59).

The design forced critics to grapple with what the space represented and facilitated, and to consider the associations it engendered and how these might be read back into the play. The topographies of this *Richard II* released resonances not available in conventional, mimetic representations, or even in the stark, steel world of the RSC’s 1964 production. By creating an intensely material vision of the geographies of power, which also operated as an expressionistic dreamscape, O’Brien and Firth pushed further what Aronson identifies as a key feature of ‘modern’ scenography: its potential to operate as ‘an extension of the play’s themes and structures’ and to function as a ‘metanarrative’ (14). One of the most important achievements of Barton’s stagescape was its ability to suggest other stories which illuminated the play and the character relations, and analyzing the metanarratives produced by the geographies of this production problematizes the conclusions drawn by several scholars in relation to the production’s political work.

The relevance and significance of the stage environment was perceived differently by critics. Harold Hobson thought that, in ‘the bare platform slung over a pit of darkness between steel escalators’, O’Brien and Firth had ‘devised a very powerful symbol of the play’s dramatic action’ (*ST* 15/04/1973); an opinion echoed by Michael Billington who saw the set, ‘with its sky-seeking staircases framing the acting area’, as a reminder that *Richard II* is a play built around the basic concept of ascent and descent, of kingly rise and fall’ (*G* 1204/1973) (Fig.7) The staircases and connecting bridge, which provided a platform on which Richard was elevated to watch the combat, and by which he was lowered as he descended from the battlements of Flint Castle to the ‘base court’ (III.3.176,180, 182), elucidated in concrete visual terms the exchange of positions that Richard articulates through his imagery of the buckets, as he is left ‘drinking [. . . his] griefs’ while Bolingbroke ‘mount[s] up on high’ (IV.1188). B. A. Young, however, described the stairways as ‘steep, narrow flight[s] of steps resembling a London



Fig. 7 *Richard II* 1973. Dir. John Barton. Des. Timothy O'Brien and Tazeena Firth.

transport escalator' and felt the design was 'quite unrelated to the content of the play'; although he did make a telling connection with 'the Grand Staircase imagined by Jan Kott in *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*' (*FT* 11/04/1973). Kott argues that the 'Grand Mechanism'—the image of history itself—emerges from the portrayal of the various usurpers and monarchs in Shakespeare's plays. He likens feudal history to 'a great staircase on which there treads a constant procession of kings', adding that '[e]very step upwards', which 'brings the throne nearer or consolidates it' is 'marked by murder, perfidy, [and] treachery' (9). Young referred to the 'pyramid of steps' that constituted the throne as 'a tall golden cenotaph' (*FT* 11/04/1973), and his comparison of the royal seat with a war memorial complemented his Kottian reading of the staircases. The topographies of Barton's stagescape, then, combined to present power as ruthless and destructive, and embroiled in conflict and death.

Barton's *Richard II* also generated a profoundly religious playworld—a place with an 'impressive hieratic atmosphere' (Barber, *DT* 12/04/1973) in which 'Christian symbols [. . . were] conspicuous' (*WE* 12/04/1973), and it is important therefore to examine the potential scriptural metanarratives suggested by the geographies of this staging. Further probing of the significance of the stairways links Richard and Bolingbroke to Jacob and Esau, thereby setting a Biblical narrative of fraternal rivalry and reconciliation, against the story of sibling tensions and fratricide contained in the play's references to Cain and Abel, and providing an alternative to the Kottian interpretation.

*Genesis* tells how Jacob cheats his brother Esau of his rights and blessings as first-born son, and then flees to Harran to avoid his brother's death threats. On his way, Jacob sleeps in the open air with a stone for a pillow and in a dream sees 'a ladder set up on the earth and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! And behold the Lord stood above it' (*Genesis* 28.12-13). In the dream, God promises to give Jacob possession of the land and guarantees his return to it and blessing for his descendents (*Genesis* 28.10-22). Years later, having married and prospered, Jacob is commanded by God to return with his wives and children to his homeland, and hears on route, that his brother Esau is coming to meet him with four hundred men. Fearing that this will be the moment of Esau's revenge, Jacob sends gifts ahead but when the brothers come together Esau, who has also thrived and graciously refuses Jacob's peace offerings, runs to meet Jacob and they embrace in a tearful meeting of reconciliation (*Genesis* 33). In contrast, in the Cain and Abel narrative, Cain is unable to come to terms with God's favour for Abel, and murders his brother.

Taking into account both Biblical stories of familial conflict with their opposing resolutions, and interpreting the steps as stairways to heaven, opens up a space for the drama of Richard and Bolingbroke to co-exist with two other stories of material and spiritual legacies. Thus, the mirroring in the production, particularly in relation to the space, need not be seen merely as a means of erasing the difference between the kings and mystifying royal tragedy (Hodgdon 146). The stairways—each one a 'Jacob's ladder' in keeping with Barton's vision of duality—could be seen as symbolic of the link between Heaven and earth and a channel of blessing for both the inherited and the disinherited; and simultaneously as a materialization of the contending forces and individual rights and claims of the antagonists of the three parallel stories evoked by the geographies of this staging. This reading presents a range of choices for conflict resolution.

The idea of rise and fall in the exchange of power which the staircases expressed for many critics, and the Biblical associations I have suggested were further complicated by the other ways in which the design exploited the vertical plane, and by other stylized elements. The combination of these also brought a sinister feel to the world of the play, making it a crucible for mixed theologies and mythologies: a space of history and legend, which was simultaneously an unremitting reality and a psychological landscape of fears, desires, and possibilities, and a celebration of theatricality.

One particularly distinctive effect was the elevation of actors on stilts, and this extension of the body into upper space suggested how a character's change in status, or degree of threat, might have been viewed from their own perspective, or from the perspective of other characters and the audience. Northumberland (Clement McCallin), for example, appeared towards the end of II.1 'in a long black robe concealing buskins, high boots, which increased his height' (Wells, *Royal* 73); in II.3 'he rode a big black horse' as he accompanied Bolingbroke, who walked beside him on foot, flanked by monks; and when he oversaw the offstage executions of Bushy and Green in III.1, his height was extended by the 'black plumes in his helmet' (73). In the street (V.1),



Fig. 8 *Richard II* 1973. Dir. John Barton. Des. Timothy O'Brien and Tazeena Firth.

Northumberland towered over the kneeling figures of Richard and the Queen (Fig 8), accentuating their fall and his own rise, but also producing a nightmarish vision, as he entered dressed 'quite literally as a giant bird-of-prey, claw-beaked, taloned and feathered in black' (Greenwald 125). Both the transformed power relations of this scene, and its dreamlike quality were reinforced by the huge hobbyhorses ridden by the guards escorting Richard to the Tower. Indeed, the horses used in the production grew in size as the play progressed, and the 'grace and diminutiveness' of those ridden by Mowbray and Bolingbroke in the lists 'prepare[d] the mind for the full effect of the huge and threatening black chargers, surely not of this earth, on which are mounted

Northumberland and his friends, the terrifying four horsemen of some dreadful apocalypse' (Hobson, *ST* 15/04/1973).

The stage environment, with its 'repeated vision of cowled monks' (Kennedy, *Looking* 243), and the *Dies Irae* which accompanied the opening action of V.2 (Shewring 135), encapsulated the Christian belief systems circulating in the world of the source narrative and in the play's moment of composition. But these religious references were combined with allusions to classical theologies. The Duchess of Gloucester rose like a ghost from the trap, holding a skull, and 'crying "Blood!" in tones that were electronically echoed' (Wells, *Royal* 69; see also Greenwald 122-23; Thomson 152). Through her entrance from the underworld the Duchess of Gloucester embodied both the Shakespearean ghost, with all its pneumatological ambiguity, and the Furies rising from the 'the tongueless caverns' (I.1.105) to urge vengeance.

The trap was used again at the end of the performance, when '[m]ournful music sounded, and on the play's last line the coffin descended as if into a vault' (Wells, *Royal* 80). For Robert Smallwood, the 'dimensions' of the coffin suggested that it was 'incapable of containing a corpse that had not been dismembered' ('Directors' Shakespeare' 184), whilst Peter Thomson saw 'the coffin carrying Richard's body [. . . as] a child's' (152), and an expression of the 'make-believe of children's games' and the 'child's vision' with which the 'performance was often in touch' (152). Both interpretations suggest a frightening world and evoke other stories: metanarratives which take reflection beyond the play, and can then be read back into the production. The former indicates a gruesome act of violence perpetrated after the victim's death, and the latter points poignantly to the boy who became king at ten and was lost somewhere in the immensity of the solid power structures that loomed over Barton's stage world. The left-hand panel of the Wilton Diptych, which shows Richard kneeling before his patron saints, Saint Edmund, Edward the Confessor, and John the Baptist, was printed in Barton's programme. Uncertainty over the dating of this painting has stemmed partly from the youth of the king in the picture, but Francis Wormald notes the practical canonization of weak kings who have died in mysterious circumstances or been murdered (191, 202) and argues that the iconography suggests that it is a memorial picture in which Richard is idealized in death as a youth (202). In addition to the interpretations given by Smallwood and Thomson, the lowering of the small coffin into the vault articulated both the sacred possibilities of redemption—with the king in his reversion to youth received into eternity—and offered a terrible image of a life stunted by its own delusions of power.

One of Barton's most controversial decisions was to cast Bolingbroke as the Groom who visits Richard in prison. Whilst this was seen by some critics as a senseless and unfathomable intervention (*NP* 12/04/1973; *BP* 11/04/1973), and has troubled scholars, I would argue that the staging of this encounter was consistent with the religious, mythological, and psychological imaginative geographies of the world of Barton's *Richard II*, and produced a transient *terra incognita* of radical possibility.

Shakespeare chooses to insert between Richard's soliloquy and his murder two incidents involving the Keeper and the Groom. Rather than have Richard surprised by violence after his fifty-four line rumination on his fate, he allows him these moments of contact with other human beings. There are many ways in which these exchanges could be played to engender different moods and provoke different audience responses to Richard in the final moments of his life. Richard greets the Groom, who was once his servant, as 'noble peer' (V.5.67), and depending on the actor's interpretation, these lines may express, for example, an ironic bitterness or a genuine humility. Barton's intervention complicates this view of the scene and opens up fresh readings which link back to the richly ambivalent stairways and their metanarratives.

Richard's visitor, who describes Bolingbroke's passage through the streets of London on his coronation day appeared monk-like, his face concealed by his cowl. He brought Richard a toy hobby horse, a diminutive replica of those used throughout the performance. The removal of Richard's days of glory was symbolized through the miniaturization of one of the key instruments of ceremonial show by which he had previously been raised up: on his return from Ireland he appeared riding a white unicorn. Through the introduction of this emblem—a reminder of the loss of his status and his free movement in the outside world—the temporal phase of Richard's rule was seen shrunken as if at a distance. The miniature horse also reinforced the distortion of dreams, where identities can be misconceived; so when the monk-like figure threw back his hood, revealing himself to be Bolingbroke, 'Was it the King who saw Bolingbroke in the face of the Groom?' (Greenwald 126). Caroline Spurgeon has commented on Shakespeare's customary association of kingship with dreams (190, also qtd. in Righter 112), and Richard advises his Queen 'Learn, good soul, to think our former state a happy dream' (V.117-18). Indeed, among the key factors which O'Brien took into account in his design for the production was 'the image of the play as a bad dream whose central figure is moving towards destruction' (Greenwald 121). Barton's stage environment was always imposing in its materiality—evocative of castles and cathedrals, as well as anachronistic machinery—but it was also an expressionistic

dreamscape: a psychological and mythological landscape that could accommodate hobby horses, unicorns, outsize birds of prey, melting snowmen, and undersize coffins.

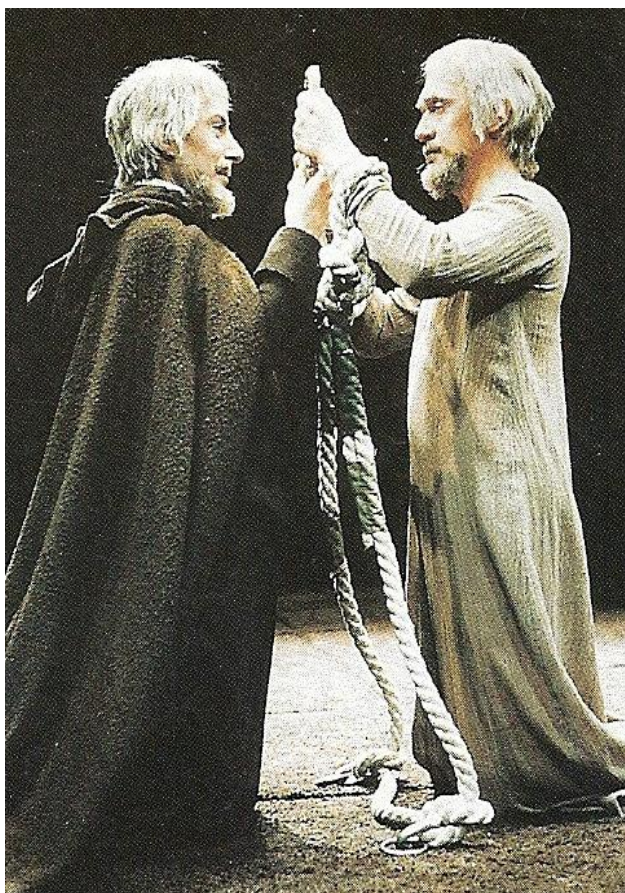


Fig. 9 *Richard II* 1973. Dir. John Barton. Des. Timothy O'Brien and Tazeena Firth.

Wells accepted the uncertainty between dream and reality that produced this 'theatrically impressive moment' (*Royal* 79-80), in which Richard and Bolingbroke knelt opposite each other, gazing through the 'halo' of the shattered mirror, which Richard removed from round his neck and held up between them (Fig 9). And he acknowledged this 'Wilfred Owen-like "strange meeting"', where the two men were drawn together more powerfully by the shared hollow crown than they were separated by their rivalry, as 'an extension of something in the text' (79). However, he found the intervention 'strained' and was troubled when the 'explicit fellow-feeling' suggested by the encounter was denied only seconds later as Richard, attacking the Keeper, declares 'The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee' ([V.5. 102] 80). Other scholars also suggest reactionary political meanings. Robert Shaughnessey describes the image as 'a powerfully sentimental gesture, and a profoundly anti-historical one, a transitory vision of wholeness and reciprocity, designed to arrest the movement of history by denying historical difference and change' (102). Barbara Hodgdon argues that the production

‘rewr[ote] both deposition and closure, subsuming the play’s radical politics into radical style’, and that the Groom incident was the means by which ‘Barton further literalize[d] the king’s interchangeable identity’ (145-146). Similarly Smallwood interpreted this encounter between Richard and Bolingbroke as stressing ‘the arbitrary way in which the royal role is cast and [. . .] the powerlessness of those who tried to fill it’ and argued that the image depicted the ‘[t]wo kings [. . . as] two victims of history, or of fate’ (‘Directors’ Shakespeare’186).

Reading through the lens of theatrical geographies, however, opens up another possible interpretation. Rather than seeing this image as a moment in which ‘common humanity and fellow-feeling transcend politics’ (Shaughnessey 101), I would argue that it is precisely this recognition of common humanity that makes the intervention political. By creating room for an unlikely alliance, the intervention produced a thirdspace of radical openness that constituted the grounds for change. The two giant stairways that flanked the playing area could be viewed as the two powerful kingdoms in tension in this play: the king’s England and the Duchy of Lancaster. Placing this image of mutually-reflected humanity in the shadow of these gigantic structures—materializations of the ‘two households both alike in dignity’—narrowed down the responsibility for resolving the conflict to the transactions between people, upon which all systems of power are built. This fleeting but memorable encounter, then, produced a space of opportunity; but since spaces are ‘articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings’ (Massey, ‘Power-geometry 66), and are always in process, they can be ‘interrupted’ (hooks 152), as was the case here. The thirdspace of Barton’s Pomfret, however, has been hinted at in subsequent productions, and found particularly powerful expression in Michael Boyd’s *Richard II* discussed in Chapter Seven.

As I have argued, in spite of the oppositional political readings attributed to them, both Littlewood’s ‘sombre castellation’ (Tynan, *O* 23/01/1955) and Benthall’s ‘dreary double-decker’ (Wraight, *St* 19/01/1955) had begun to unsettle the imagined sunny world of pageantry and splendour, and in the last two decades of the twentieth century, efforts to ‘revivify and render meaningful the more disturbing political veins of the old Shakespearean text’ (Healey 71) led a number of directors to ‘lift[. . .] the play out of its medieval context altogether’ (71). But this drive to ‘free *Richard II* from the specificity of its historical setting’ (Shewring 155) was complicated by the particularly contrasting productions of this period. Some stagings used elements of the ‘old’ imaginative geographies in combination with steps and levels that echoed Barton’s



imagery of rise and fall, and extended this to evoke the precariousness of power; and others made clear attempts to relocate the play and produce new and distinctive imaginative geographies.

In 1985, the Bristol Old Vic staged *Richard II* (dir. John David) with ‘visual grandeur’ setting it against a ‘superb heraldic window’, the ‘jigsaw pieces’ of which were ‘transferable as the tragedy progresse[d]’ (Foot, *G* 15/02/1985). While the *Sunday Times* complimented Clive Lavagna’s ‘splendid’ costumes, the critic commented that the ‘gold screen’, which dominated the set and took away the depth of the stage, ‘ma[de] the action two-dimensional, like a painting’ (17/02/1985). However, if this compression of depth intensified the vertical plane, it also suggested the anxieties of power and a kingdom on the edge: ‘[r]oyal crests floated uncertainly in the sky above the stage-wide high wall on top of which Richard’s throne perche[d] precariously – elevating the actors awkwardly and requiring a steep stairway to reach it’ (Shorter, *DT*



Fig. 10 *Richard II* 1985. Dir. John David. Des. Clive Lavagna.

15/02/1985). The space foregrounded the isolation of the ruler, the insecurities of power relations, and the perilous operations of ascent and descent (Fig 10).

In Stratford the following year Barry Kyle directed ‘a robustly old-fashioned’ *Richard II*, which viewed the play ‘in terms of the decline of a picture-book Plantagenet England’ (Billington, *G* 12/09/1986), and which became known as the Book of Hours production. Billington observed that ‘William Dudley’s beautiful set, with its miniaturised castle walls and patterned green floor, suggest[ed] an enclosed Eden, a demi-Paradise’ (Billington, *G* 12/09/1986), but his appreciation of the spatial articulation of some of Gaunt’s metaphors for England was not uniformly shared by critics. Michael Ratcliffe acknowledged that the ‘medieval garden walled and crenulated in pale limestone, backed by the azure heavens and arched over with the numbers of solar time like a Book of Hours’ was ‘very pretty’, and accepted the value of emphasizing ‘Shakespeare’s horticultural metaphor’ throughout the piece. However, he missed ‘the sense of changing place – Berkley, Flint, Pomfret – so important to this play’, feeling that in Dudley’s single set, this was ‘insufficiently conveyed by the variety of spectacular architectural devices that rise, descend and corkscrew through a hole in the garden floor’ (*O* 14/09/1986). Further, Jane Edwards felt that ‘the exquisite set [. . .] bec[ame] increasingly irrelevant as the tragedy move[d] out of the claustrophobic luxuriance of Richard’s court to the reality in Bullingbrook’s camp, not to mention Pomfret’ (*TO* 17/09/1886). Ratcliffe’s and Edwards’ remarks suggest that, although there had been a definite shift since Barton towards spatilaizing an image of the playworld, rather than staging its constituent sites of action, the play’s ‘geographical restlessness’ (Tynan, *O* 23/01/1955) still existed in the minds of some critics as an itinerary.

Nicholas Shrimpton saw Kyle’s ‘visual feast’ as ‘an essential image of the cultural richness of the Ricardian court’ (181), and commented that twenty years after Hall and Bury’s ‘sackcloth and steel’ world of the *Wars of the Roses* had transformed the image of Shakespeare’s Middle Ages for a generation’, the ‘wheel of taste had come full circle’ (180; see also Shewring 58). On closer scrutiny, however, this spatialization of *Richard II* as beautiful garden was just as problematic as the Gauntian rhetoric it reflected. The play opens with Gloucester’s blood crying from the earth—just as Cain’s cried out after that first post-Edenic murder—and closes with Bolingbroke’s acknowledgement that blood has sprinkled him to make him grow. Ratcliffe commented that Kyle’s production ended ‘with the husbandry of state in ironically fine order as the arbour revolve[d] to reveal a trellis of perfectly grown roses, half red and half white’ (*O* 14/09/1986). These fragile flowers, however, foreboded the Wars of the Roses, when the prophecies of *Richard II* are fulfilled: ‘Ten thousand bloody crowns of mother’s

sons / Shall ill become the flower of England's face' (III.396-97), and 'this blessed plot' (II.1.50), through the 'woofullest division', becomes 'this cursèd earth' (IV.1.146-147). The final image was extremely 'telling', as Henry was seen 'enthroned on top of Richard's coffin and with a couple of grim reapers already sharpening their scythes' (Billington, *G* 12/09/1986). Kyle's 'intricate walled garden', in which '[c]ourtiers bright with jewels and heraldry' moved 'under an emblematic sky-scape of blazing blue and gold' (Shrimpton 180), may have visually 'announc[ed] its distance from the harsh steel world' of the RSC histories of 1963 and 1964 (Bate and Rasmussen 141), but was ultimately no less threatening.

Shrimpton noted that in Kyle's 'controversially singleminded reading' which slanted the play's sympathies entirely towards Richard, Irons was 'a witty, supercilious, and sophisticated king whose avant-garde views had led him to a proper, if impolitic, scorn of his reactionary barons' and Bolingbroke (Michael Kitchen) was 'a brutal philistine' (180-181). The connections that Shrimpton made with Thatcher's Britain and the savage arts cuts, suggest that there was a new irony in the Gardeners' discussion, as the garden of England had not been so much neglected by Richard as despoiled by Bolingbroke, and demonstrate that relevance and topicality are not necessarily expressed through geo-historical location of the play.

Just as Kyle's 'pop-up picture-book approach' (Edwards, *TO* 17/09/1986) to *Richard II*'s England was not devoid of the more unsettling aspects that had become a feature of the stage world since the mid 1950s, neither was Clifford Williams' 1988 production for Triumph Theatre. Although described by Paul Taylor as 'naff Ladybird book medievalism' (*I* 30/11/1988), the production was deemed 'thrice welcome' by Charles Osborne, in what he perceived as an era of 'perverse productions of Shakespeare'. Osborne saw Williams' staging as 'clear, intelligent, [and] traditional'; he praised Carl Toms' sets, which 'cleverly and attractively adapted Elizabethan principles of staging to modern use' and '[left] the play to exist in its own time and place, and interpose[d] no irrelevant concept between playwright and audience' (*DT* 30/11/1988). Osborne's appreciation of this *Richard II* reveals a weariness with directors' Shakespeare, but defining the play's time and place is problematic; its narrative is medieval and its moment of composition early modern, but it exists in a series of space-times, where it generates imaginative geographies and engenders interactions between the material and imagined spaces of characters, performers and spectators. Indeed, the geographies of staging in Williams' production worked to forge a link between stage and auditorium which sheds light on an important aspect of the workings of the real and

imagined spaces of theatre. The split levels situated ‘royalty and entourage aloft on throne or battlements, and all others on the ground, admiring and aspiring’, forcing the ‘supporting cast [. . . and] the theatre going public [. . .] to look up at their bright star’, Derek Jacobi, in the role of Richard (Sams, *TLS* 9-15/11/1988) (Fig. 11). Thus, actors, characters, and spectators were united in this shared, acute raising of the gaze, making both the fictive world of the play and the star-conscious contemporary world of the 1980s present to one another. The throne, set at the top of a flight of steps, ‘monumentally dominat[ed] the stage below’ (Wardle, *T* 29/11/1988), reinforcing both

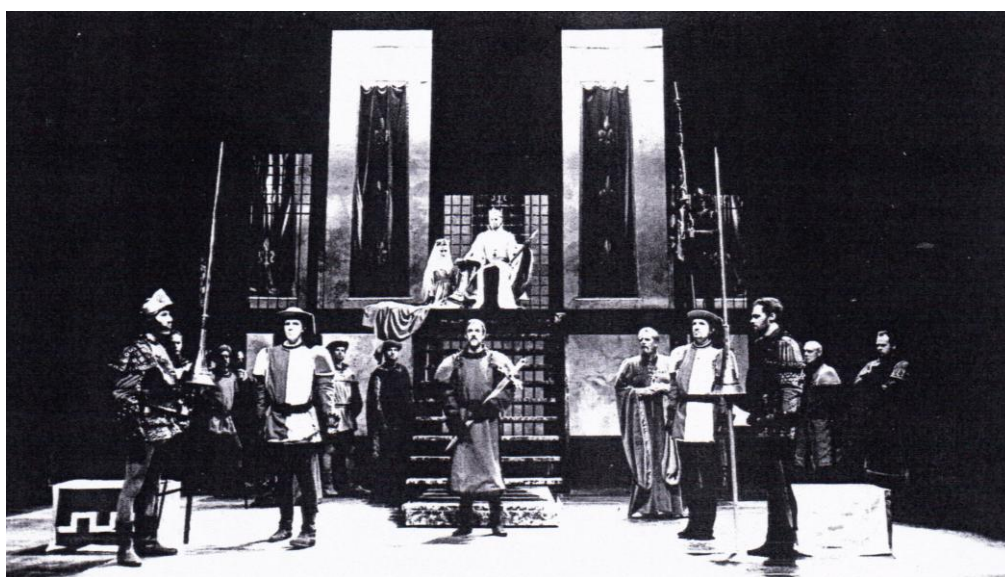


Fig. 11 *Richard II* 1988. Dir. Clifford Williams. Des. Carl Toms.

Jacobi’s fictional-monarchical and real-theatrical authority. However, this positioning also suggested the same sense of instability as Lavagna’s design for John David (1985), as ‘[t]he king’s exalted position often look[ed] as precarious as it later proves’ (Sams, *TLS* 9-15/11/1988). Williams’ spatilaization was symbolic of both theatrical hierarchies and of the play’s geographies of power, and further analysis reveals that this staging was neither as twee as it seemed to Taylor, or as safe as it appeared to Osborne.

Noting the striking contrast with the ‘beautiful medieval walled garden’ of Kyle’s book of hours production, Michael Billington stated that Williams presented the audience with ‘a harsh, dark, metallic England where walls and windows descend[ed] onto a raised central platform with the finality of a guillotine’, and observed that the set could well be that of *Richard III*—due to be added later in the season, also with Jacobi in the leading role—as it seemed equally suited to ‘that vision of a beleaguered nightmare world’ (*G* 30/11/1988). Michael Coveney commented that the production bore ‘all the

hallmarks of very old hat Old Vic with Bagot in a bulging cod piece, sundry lords in black tights and trumpets off and a split-level black-charred set that resembles a seaside jetty at a wintry low tide’, but acknowledged the power of the space when it was

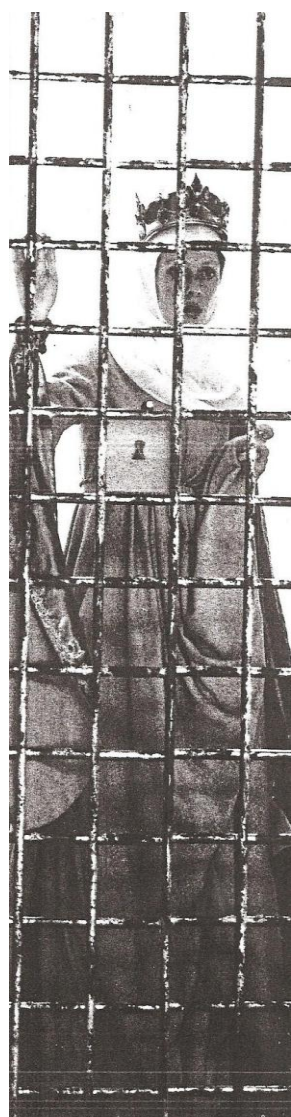


Fig. 12 *Richard II* 1988.  
Dir. Clifford Williams. Des. Carl Toms.

activated in performance, and conceded that ‘[e]ven the drab presentation improve[d] once Carl Toms’s set [. . . was] invaded by walls that slid[. . .] into place like blades of a guillotine, prison windows and a golden bough in the Queen’s garden’ (*FT* 30/11/1988). In spite of the picture book look, then, Williams’ *Richard II* was shot through with the grimness and violence that had seeped into its scenography over the last three decades.

James Macdonald’s 1993 production at the Royal Exchange, Manchester captured, in some ways, the splendour of colour and detail that appeared to concur with earlier imaginative geographies of *Richard II*, but it was not altogether a reassuring world picture. The design, which

‘place[d] the period in a luscious medieval miniature, with lavishly persuasive fourteenth-century costumes and a hard-flagged palace floor that reflect[ed] the moods of Johanna Town’s lighting’ (Thornbear, *G* 20/09/1993), created a space which articulated the tensions between sumptuous spectacle and political reality through colours and textures. The production began with ‘the heavy, ceremonial stamp of the Lord Marshal’s staff’ which, amplified by the theatre’s sound system, ‘boom[ed]’ around ‘the Exchange’s globe’ (Wainwright, *I* 11/09/1993), and the ‘peremptory bluntness’ of this aural cue summoned into being a world of order, but a ‘simple,

unsophisticated order, one step away from the “war of all against all”, (Wainwright, *I* 11/09/1993). Macdonald’s *Richard II* shared with that of David and Williams, the sense of a world on the edge, and the precariousness of this world was further underscored by the use of aerial space:

James Macdonald’s production makes great play with elevated power literally. The king’s throne is suspended in mid-air over the abortive combat; the battlements of Flint castle sway above the stage like a balloonist’s basket; and Richard’s prison is a dangling cage into which his killers clamber, zookeepers putting down a maddened beast (Hoyle, *T* 14/09/1993).

The aerial aspects of Macdonald’s geographies were undoubtedly, in part, a resolution to the challenges presented by the in-the-round configuration of the Royal Exchange. However, the decision to situate these key sites in a state of suspension—literally up in the air—encapsulated perfectly the uncertainties of political power and challenged its very grounds, and added visual force to Richard’s vacillations between resistance and surrender prior to his descent to the ‘base court’, and to the liminoid space of non-identity that he experiences at Pomfret.

For Wainwright, the firm sense of the playworld achieved by Macdonald enabled the production to communicate ‘the play’s amazing penetration of political circumstance and the working of individual political characters’, but the critic was also sensitive to the role of the actors in imbuing place with a particular atmosphere. Gaunt (James Maxwell), the Duchess of Gloucester (Sue Johnston), York (Ewan Hooper) and Richard Bremmer’s ‘mournful’ Marshal, all embodied ‘the weariness of those old enough to have seen too much’ and made Macdonald’s England ‘emphatically an “all-hating world”’ (*I* 11/09/1993). The production, then, also exemplified the power of language, tone, and demeanor, not just to establish location, but to create place identity and engender mood (Tuan, ‘Language’ 1991), and to prompt questions about the stage world that are concerned not only with where we are on the Ptolemaic map, but what kind of place we are in.

Just as language can imbue places with mood and challenge our perceptions of the fictive world, so places too can exude atmospheres and the kind of place we are in when watching a performance can engender its own set of questions related to the venue’s geo-histories, as was the case with the final production considered in this section. When, in 2000, Jonathan Kent and Ian MacDiarmid (the Almeida’s Artistic Directors) wanted to stage large-scale productions of *Richard II* and *Coriolanus* they took out a one year lease from the developers planning to turn the Gainsborough Studios into a

complex of apartments, television studios and offices.<sup>20</sup> Haworth Tompkins—the architects commissioned to convert the decaying building for the Shakespeare in Shoreditch season—made few architectural interventions; apart from removing an intermediate floor to restore the turbine hall to its original volume, they treated the space ‘almost entirely as “found”’, and sought to maintain ‘the sense of discovery and risk one feels on first entering a derelict building’ (Haworth Tompkins Website). The venue certainly proved ‘a powerful presence’ (Hagarty, *NOW* 23/04/2012) and was ‘hugely atmospheric in a dilapidated way’ (Butler, *IS* 16/04/2012). The ‘sheer size and grandeur’ of the Gainsborough Studios (Hagarty, *NOW* 23/04/2012), the Hollywood stars who ‘lit up the audience’ (Coveney, *DM* 13/04/2000), and an awareness of the building’s past lives contributed to the impact it made as a site for *Richard II*.<sup>21</sup>

For most critics the building’s identity as erstwhile ‘home to Hitchcock and the British film industry’ (Cavendish, *TO* 19/04/2000) was predominant, but they were also aware of its previous functions as a power station, a whiskey bottling point, and a carpet warehouse, and these old identities folded together with the narrative’s historical moment and its religious aspects to configure the place of performance as ‘a ruined industrial abbey’ (Gore-Langdon, *Exp* 14/04/00) with the atmosphere of ‘a weirdly medievalised industrial cathedral’ (Taylor, *I* 14/04/00). The sense of the king and kingdom in decline was expressed in the merging of scenography and architecture through the carpet of real, un-mown grass ‘studded with weeds’ covering the stage (Brown, *MSun* 16/04/2000), the ‘autumnal apple trees’, and the lightning-shaped fissure in the ‘high and oppressive’ exposed brick wall that backed the playing area (Butler, *IS* 16/04/00), which ‘both suggest[ed] schismatic disintegration and allow[ed] for extravagantly regal entrances’ (Billington, *G* 05/04/2000).

The ‘cracks in the edifice’ of Richard’s system of operations (Peter, *ST* 16/04/00) chimed well with the demolition order hanging over the Gainsborough Studios, and the critics’ consciousness of the venue’s imminent destruction also implicated Kent’s *Richard II* in wider debates about the transient nature of performance. Robert Butler declared that as ‘[e]phemerality [. . . was] one of the chief pleasures of drama’ there was a need for ‘more new theatres that are on the verge of disappearing’ (*IS* 16/04/00); indeed, Kent deemed the project ‘a folly’—hopefully a ‘glorious’ one—which amplified

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<sup>20</sup> The season opened with *Richard II* on 12 March and ran until 5 August, with *Coriolanus* added and playing in repertory from 14 June. Kent’s *Richard II* therefore ran simultaneously with Pimlott’s production discussed in Chapter Four.

<sup>21</sup> Several reviewers named Glen Close, Miranda Richardson, and Donald Sutherland as spectators.

the singular, fleeting existence of theatre through the disappearance of both production and venue (Lister, *I* 12/04/2000).

Several critics lamented that Kent's production lacked a sense of the play's politics (Woddis; Billington). However, in the light of the impact the venue made, looking more closely at the effects of placing *Richard II* in the Gainsborough Studios reveals the cultural and political work that the production engaged in. If, on the one hand, the interior geographies and planned demolition collaborated to emphasize Richard's 'neglectful reign' and the insecurity of his realm (Taylor, *I* 14/04/2000; Jongh *ES* 13/04/2000), they also proved a distraction which drew spectators away from the medieval lives presented onstage and set up cycles of attention and diversion. For certain critics the Gainsborough Studios almost overshadowed Fiennes' performance (Hagarty; Jongh); Roger Foss found it hard to 'to stop [. . . his] eyes drifting from the scenes of political rebellion and near anarchy in Richard's turbulent 'sceptr'd isle to the old fuse boxes and miles of ducting that once provided this building's nerve endings' (*What's On* 19/04/2000); and David Nathan found it strange to 'come out of a play of this magnitude with the building in which it [. . . was] housed foremost in [. . . his] thoughts' (*JC* 21/04/2000). Cavendish ambivalently claimed that the building's 'state of grand desolation' allowed the audience to 'savour the bygone greatness of an Edwardian power station turned home to the British film industry' and 'threaten[ed] to distract attention from the play it was intended to illuminate'; but that the production 'shrewdly utilise[d] the awesome industrial surroundings to concentrate [. . . the spectators'] minds' on the play (*TO* 19/04/2000). Susannah Clapp's idea that the 'lofty brick slab [. . .] visited by glamour and neglect' was 'its own drama' (Clapp, *O* 16/04/00) is useful in approaching the analysis of these responses, as it indicates the performative potential of place. The relationship between Kent's *Richard II* and the place of performance was an uneasy partnership in which the drama of the play and the drama of the building fluctuated in their predominance. The space both contributed to the performance of history and performed its own history: drawing attention to its past glories as 'Hollywood on the canal' (Coveney, *DM* 13/04/2000); its status then as 'a ravishingly atmospheric new space' for Shakespeare (Brown, *MSun* 16/04/2000); and its future fate as 'yet another regenerated zone' (Foss, *What's On* 19/04/2012).

The placement of this history play within the 'spectacular architectural decay of the Gainsborough Studios' (Foss, *What's On* 19/04/00), where, on entering, 'the ghosts of history assault[ed] your imagination' (Maunsell, *BP* 19/04/2000), urged an acknowledgment of the fact that history comprises multiple interweaving and diverging



narratives that can be simultaneously mapped onto place. The competing narratives that the building framed and evoked encouraged a going between pasts and sites of varying proximities and, in the processes of fluctuating attention that it engendered, this collaboration between play and place challenged audiences to think about whose story/ies we centralize. Kent's *Richard II* leaves little doubt of the potential of the place of performance as performer and performance; embroiled as it was in a wealth of spatial histories and geographies—that mapped the Gainsborough Studios into a multilayered zone that featured the present-day inadequate transport networks which made access to the venue difficult and the first site of London's first public playhouse.

The relationship between the play and this place of performance make it difficult to situate Kent's *Richard II* within the structure of the intertheatrical mapping that this chapter constructs. The medieval aesthetic of the costumes and music, and 'the eerie atmospherics of [. . . this] darkness-at-noon production' (Jongh *ES* 13/04/2000) suggest the appropriacy of including it in this exploration of re-visioning the glorious medieval, and yet it also fits with the idea of relocation—although not of the play but of the Almeida's operations—and so provides a bridge into the following section which deals with relocations of the fictive world.

#### (iv) Relocating Richard

Those productions of the 1980s and 1990s which spatialized Richard's world within a grim, or, in the case of Kyle, a pretty—but no less disturbing—medievalism, had also exploited steps and levels. This marked concern with vertical spatialities—inspired, at least in part, by Barton—had offered a new way of mapping the topographies of power and power relations. However, reviewing Kyle's 1986 production, Jane Edwards expressed a wry dissatisfaction with the visual materialization of the theme of rise and fall (*TO* 17/09/1986), indicating that the time was ripe for finding new ways of staging the play's geographies. The post-1973 productions discussed above were interspersed with several significant productions which further disrupted and extended the imaginative geographies of *Richard II*; the 1980s produced the first British geo-temporal relocations of the play, and two productions in the 1990s followed suit. Modernizations of Shakespeare plays are often thought of in terms of updating, foregrounding the historical aspect of this dramatic strategy, but as geography's concept of space-time suggests, the temporal relocation of a play also implies a shift in its geographies, even if the world of the play is still perceived as England.

The shifts in both time and geographical location suggested by Robin Lefevre and his designer Grant Hicks (Young Vic 1981) were so radical that they proved decidedly abrasive to some critics. The world constructed for this *Richard II* deeply unsettled the existing perceptions of several reviewers and alienated them in a way that hindered their emotional responses. The space featured a large circular icon of Christ, hung high on the upstage wall (Hicks, PIntv), which the *Sunday Times* saw as ‘[a] stained glass window suggest[ive of] a Gothic interior’, and below this was a metallic spiral staircase (01/03/1981). A raked promontory stage ‘fram[ed] an open pit leading up to a corridor and balcony lined with dark recesses and hiding places’ (Wardle, *T* 26/02/1981). To most critics the costumes suggested pre-revolutionary Russia, although associations with ‘Ruritania, the Balkans or some other spot in Eastern Europe round the start of the twentieth century’ (Shorter, *DT* 22/02/1981) were also made.

*The Observer* regarded this relocation as ‘a strange place for a play that keeps breaking into patriotic bits about England’ (1/03/1981), and Michael Coveney was also among those reviewers who questioned Lefevre’s transposition of the play to ‘Eastern Europe before the Revolution’. Coveney wondered how such a setting could ‘relate[. . .] to a play about the divine right of kings and the geographical and social upheavals in an island country unmistakably called England’ and stated that ‘[t]he points of reference in *Richard II* to this sceptre’d isle in a tumultuous phase of its history w[ould] not stand this hotchpotch approach’ (*FT* 26/02/1981). However, for Rosemary Say, the replacement of ‘fourteenth-century Renaissance light and colour’ with ‘a bleak world of frock-coated elder statesmen [. . . and] court officials booted and darkly uniformed’ evoked a time and place when ‘a fall from grace meant death’ (*STel* 01/08/1981). Lefevre’s geo-temporal relocation, then, asserted the genuine risk involved in challenging authority structures and the high price of dissent. This sense of danger connected with moving in the world of high politics was intensified by the ‘dark pit, surrounded by an equally sombre sloping stage fading away into the darkness’ (Say, *STel* 01/08/1981), and this stage environment gave the distinct impression that Lefevre’s *Richard II* was ‘a conspiratorial affair based on plotting and intrigue rather than monarchical display’ (Say, *STel* 01/08/1981).

Malcolm Page suggests, appropriately, that the last Tsar’s conviction that he ‘had absolute authority for life’ may well have provided a parallel with the, now alien, concept of divine right (44), and so influenced the geographies of this staging. But, in spite of the Eastern European connections made by critics, Lefevre and Hicks always saw their *Richard II* as ‘fundamentally English’ (Hicks, PIntv). Wishing to foreground

the play's interrogation of the manipulation and ruthlessness of power, they had sought to create a world which was 'stark, raw, crisp, graphic, military and sinister' (Hicks, PIntv). They conceived of this world as periodized, but 'not specified', and located at some point between the Victorian era and the 1930s: a time which would allow for the clear representation of social position and rank. The icon was a constant reminder that the play also involves a 'religious battle', and the presence and status of the clerical figures was emphasized by their large 'decadent crosses and tall orthodox hats'; although Hicks maintains that in the pursuit of power little attention is really paid to the religion (PIntv).

The crucial significance of this production within this present account of the play's travels is that, although Lefevre and Hicks had seen their stage environment as England, it produced entirely new imaginative geographies in the minds of critics; and, as such, constituted the most radical British relocation of *Richard II* up till that time. Although underpinned by some of the same ideas about the darkness of the playworld, the cut and thrust nature of politics, and the precariousness of power, identifiable in productions since Littlewood and Benthall, it presented reviewers with fresh challenges, forcing them to confront the disjunctures between this world and their imaginative geographies of *Richard II*, produced through their previous encounters with the play as text and production. Of the 'questions [that] loom[ed] up large at large at the Young Vic's idea of *Richard II*', the first was 'where are we?' (Shorter, *DT* 22/02/1981). This question implies 'What kind of place is this?', and requires an answer comprising more than a name and/or a grid reference.

The *Observer* admitted that the topographies of the stagescape comprised 'a puzzle' and struggled to make sense of the large 'hole around which the actors gingerly progress[ed]' wondering if the 'steps leading down from it' may have been an allusion [. . .] to the ladder of power' (01/03/1981). Shorter also 'wonder[ed]' about this, and noted that 'the huge hole in the promontory stage [. . .] serve[d] from time to time as a kind of pedestrian underpass' but that it mostly 'appear[ed] as a cavern to be avoided; like a great grave' (*DT* 22/02/1981). The *Sunday Times* found the production 'confusing' and was troubled by the contradictory elements of the 'stained glass window [which] suggest[ed] a Gothic interior' combined with the 'metallic spiral staircase' which evoked 'either a public library or a fire escape', and the presence of priests robed in orthodox vestments. Unable to reconcile these curious juxtapositions, and failing to think of 'a place with Gothic cathedrals, fire escapes and the orthodox church', the critic concluded that 'no deep meaning' could be 'extract[ed] from the

décor' (01/03/1981). However, it is precisely these sorts of contradictions, and resistances, which increasingly arise in the ongoing challenge of generating space with/for *Richard II*, that theatrical geographies seeks to interrogate by mining the significance of the associative geographies and reflecting on how this process enhances understanding of the play. The associative geographies that Hicks' scenography evoked may have seemed to the *Sunday Times* facile and irrelevant, or even amusing, and yet the places s/he imagined—a cathedral, a church, a library—are representative of sites of sacred and secular knowledge, and evocative of the maintenance of traditions, and as such, resonate with the play's themes. Further, Shorter's ruminations on the 'huge hole', which led him to perceive it as a threatening abyss or grave, relate directly back to Richard's recognition of the hollow crown and the inevitability of mortality. In this evocation, Lefevre also foreshadowed two of my case studies (Pimlott 2000; Carroll 2003) in which the grave is mapped into the stage world, and becomes a microsite of reflection and challenge more important than the named places in the character journeys.

Indeed, part of the production's achievement was working with 'the lump of black' (Hicks, PIntv) that the creative team had inherited from Carl Toms' design for *King Lear* (dir. Frank Dunlop and Andrew Robertson 1981). As the Young Vic's low budget did not allow for any changes to this existing stage, Hicks and Lefevre worked with it and exploited the darkness it suggested. This enforced pragmatism may have created some rewarding intertheatrical connections for audiences who saw both productions as, at the opening of *King Lear*, Toms had stretched across this large hole cut into the centre of the floor of the precipitous rake, a 'golden map', which emphasized from the beginning 'Shakespeare's substance/nothingness dualism' (Carne, *FT* 10/10/1981). The removal of the map after the division of the kingdom in I.1 left the gaping hole, symbolic of both the insubstantiality of control over the material world and the darkness into which Lear would fall. In Lefevre's *Richard II* it became the chasm between Richard and Bolingbroke in the negotiations as to who should take the crown, giving visual expression to the portentous nature of this exchange (production photo).

In Stratford, Ron Daniels opened the 1990s with a production that echoed Lefevre by suggesting a similar relocation. 'The costumes and sets traverse[d] the centuries, ranging from the medieval and Jacobean to the modern' and included, 'armour for the men and a chic designer number for the Queen, neo-classical paintings and strip lighting on a brutalist wall' (Nightingale, *T* 09/11/1990), but the overriding impression was of a pre-revolutionary Russia. Indeed, in spite of this eclecticism,

references to ‘sinister Russian-hatted bodyguards’ (Taylor, *I* 09/11/1990), and Gardeners who ‘look[ed] vaguely like orthodox priests’ (Nightingale, *T* 09/11/1990) suggest that there was about this England ‘more than a subliminal feel of Eastern Europe pre-1989’ (Taylor, *I* 09/11/1990).

Daniels and designer Anthony McDonald maintained some of the darkness of the re-visioned medieval world, and this *Richard II* existed in a place where ‘[c]ourtiers and clerics scuttle[d] like black beetles on a dunghill, [and] where grim-faced guards rake[d] the stalls with crossbows’ (Coveney, *O* 11/11/1990). Irving Wardle, obviously disapproving of this construction of the fictive world, commented only that the set ‘suggest[ed] a real tennis court made out of breeze blocks’ (*I* 11/11/1990), but Paul Taylor, expanding on Wardle’s allusion to the austerity of the staging, observed that McDonald’s ‘striking design imagine[d] England as a vast bleak warehouse where people could be rounded up and shot’ and stated that ‘the court decor, with its huge sliding black tunnels, ha[d] the eerie monumentality one associates with totalitarian tastes’ (*I* 9/11/1990). This sense of a dangerous and unstable place is confirmed in Coveney’s reference to the ‘pervasive mood of usurpation, threatened riot and dynastic chaos’ that characterized this world of *Richard II*.

The transition of this England from ‘a medieval police state’ to ‘a modern tyranny [. . . where] Bolingbroke’s rifles replac[ed] Richard’s cross-bows’ (Billington, *MGW* 18/11/ 1990) was underscored by the scenography for Pomfret, which fused a dilapidated vision of Richard’s earlier command of space with his present imprisonment. Richard (Alex Jennings) had taken his decision to go to war in Ireland in a cosy, candlelit ‘soiree’ (Stage Manager’s scene list), against a backdrop reproduction of Guido Reni’s *Atlanta and Hippomene*. This painting—which Coveney interpreted as a ‘pictorial analogue of Bolingbroke’s ascendancy, an image of victory through flight from a diverted opponent’ (*O* 11/11/1990)—was glimpsed again in V.5.

Here Richard was seen ‘sit[ting] on a steel bed frame in prison-camp clothes, the painting destroyed behind him in a concrete wilderness’ and half lying ‘in tattered decaying heaps on the floor’ (Coveney, *O* 11/11/1990; production photo). The presence of the ragged painting unsettled the idea of place as bounded site and created a space which worked on several levels. The topographies of V.5 materialized the traces of Richard’s past decadence, setting him simultaneously within the prison and his lost home, whilst also suggesting the juxtaposition of his cell with a vision of his own goods appropriated and destroyed, just as Bolingbroke’s had been. The painting, having literally fallen, also revealed the bleak landscape of the England that Richard had had a

role in producing. The stark world of the commoners beyond Richard's own privileged milieu was always implicit in the layers suggested by the false proscenium and curtains incorporated into Macdonald's scenography (Figs. 13 and 14). By articulating these



Figs. 13 and 14 *Richard II* 1990. Dir. Ron Daniels.  
Des. Anthony Macdonald.

traces, overlayerings and juxtapositions, Daniels' *Richard II* expressed the physical geographical changes precipitated by conflict concealed in earlier productions, and tapped into the idea of places as traces and memories, which haunt us, just as they are haunted.

Dismayed at Barton's 1973 re-visioning of the world of *Richard II*, J.C. Trewin had asked: 'What on earth is Bolingbroke doing as the Groom at Pomfret?' (*BP* 11/04/1973); and Billington had responded similarly to Lefevre's 1981 production,

asking what Richard ‘garbed like a Ruritanian Princeling’ was doing in the lists at Coventry (*G* 26/02/1981). Billington’s encounter with the play at the Young Vic was influenced by the very production that had so dismayed Trewin; claiming *Richard II* to be ‘so much richer and complex’ than Lefevre’s portrayal of ‘a decadent, frivolous *ancien regime* [. . .] being supplanted by a group of austere bureaucrats’, Billington reminded his readers of ‘the brilliant Barton notion of Richard and Bolingbroke as mirror images’ (*G* 26/02/1981). Although Billington criticized Daniels’ emphasis on ‘the metaphor-for-tyranny theme’ he welcomed this RSC *Richard II* as ‘an argumentative production’ that was preferable to a ‘bland retread’, and was not as hostile towards Daniels’ ‘visually Germanic, temporally eclectic’ England (*MGW* 18 November 1990) as he had been towards Lefevre’s ‘translat[ion] [of] the action from fourteenth-century England to some mittel-European State’ (*Guardian*, 26 February 1981). Indeed, in response to Lefevre’s production, Billington had observed that ‘[t]he comedies and the tragedies can wear modern dress. Not so Shakespeare’s histories for the blindingly obvious reason that they are rooted in specific historic events’ (*Guardian* 26 February 1981), and yet nine years later, he was able to see the potential of Daniels’ modernization to ‘set[. . .] one arguing’ (*MGW* 18 November 1990).

Whether or not it is ultimately arguable that Shakespeare’s other genres are always more amenable to modernization, it is understandable that geographical relocations of this English history play, populated by nobles whose very titles map places in England, might jar with, or at least perplex, critics and audiences expecting to be taken on a tour of the locations of the action, or at least to recognize in the spatialization of the play, some semblance of the sceptred isle, medieval or otherwise. However, the cultural landscape of both Britain and Europe had changed radically in the decade following Lefevre’s production, and this may account for more positive responses to Daniels’ unsettling of the fictive world. 1989 had seen the breaching of the Berlin Wall, the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, and the removal of the Ceaușescus in Romania. At home high unemployment, depressed wages, riots, the outcome of the Miners’ strike, cuts in arts and research funding, and war in the Falklands had produced a sense of malaise in Britain. There was a corresponding sense of unease in the Conservative Party, where Margaret Thatcher’s style of leadership had eventually become ‘abrasive, hectoring, inflexible and dismissive of dissent’ (Ram 1552), and might beg comparison with the fallen tyrants. The 1980s had also seen Michael Bogdanov’s eclectic *Wars of the Roses* with its relocation of *Henry V* to a decidedly Thatcherite England, and *Richard II* set in the Regency period.

From the selection of spaces generated by *Richard II* discussed so far, it is clear that two visions of the playworld had coexisted, singly or in combination, from the mid 1950s onwards. To the England of pomp and pageantry, and the poet king, was added the grimmer, darker vision, initiated by Littlewood and Benthall, subsequently developed through the ‘steel and sackcloth [. . .] image of Shakespeare’s Middle Ages’ (Shrimpton 169) in the RSC’s *Wars of the Roses*, and further explored through the new topographies of power constructed in 1980s and 1990s levels, steps, and conspiratorial corridors. The relocations of Lefevre and Daniels, with their associative geographies, produced new perspectives, and set up further tensions through provoking resistance and disequilibrium. Their productions of *Richard II* indicate an increasing interest in making the construction of place in the fictive world operate as an interrogative, rather than a representation of medieval or Elizabethan England. This, in turn, made way for new reflections on the world of the play: questions concerning not just where the action is set, but what kind of place it is set in. If, as Shewring maintains, audiences need ‘to share [. . .] in some measure [. . .] a sense of what it means to be in England’ (11), then it is necessary for critics and audiences to ask of each new production: ‘Which England?’ or ‘Whose England are we in?’

If the construction of the fictive geographies can seem incongruous with the play, so too can the theatre in which it is emplaced, and a sense of geographical strangeness was at first puzzling and ultimately motivating for Steven Berkoff when he staged *Richard II* at the Joseph Papp Public Theatre in New York. When Berkoff first posed his rhetorical question: ‘What is New York to Richard and Richard to New York?’, he concluded that the answer was ‘Nothing’, since the king and the city did not actually share the same moment in time (6); but in spite of his initial response, he discovered that there was ‘something fascinating about performing an Elizabethan play within the skyscrapers of Manhattan and the still rotting slums of the Lower East Side, between the steaming breath oozing out from the cracked pipes and the brutality of modern New York speak’ (7). Indeed, for Berkoff the city became a vital collaborator in his project, not just the ‘backdrop’ but the ‘energy centre which charged [. . . his] work and fed [. . . his] inspiration’ (7). The seeming incongruity between play and place became a compelling factor in Berkoff’s work on *Richard II*, and his consciousness of the urban context throughout the project demonstrates the significance of geographies in the rehearsal process as well as the production.

Berkoff’s account of directing *Richard II* in New York resonates from the very beginning with the significance of place in Shakespeare production. He celebrates



Joseph Papp's theatrical achievements, stressing his status as the son of European immigrants, and regards the Public Theatre as a 'cultural oasis' where Papp 'encouraged all races to act Shakespeare' (6). In the Public Theatre, once a meeting place for Jewish immigrants, Papp created an 'environment where some of the most versatile people in the world could find a sanctuary' (12). Berkoff suggests that, for many, Shakespeare is seen as 'the ultimate emancipation from the past and absorption into the host society' (12). The Joseph Papp Public Theatre, with all the familiar hierarchies and prescriptive procedures of a large commercial institution—with which Berkoff repeatedly expresses his frustration—performs a complex set of identities as a space of labour, an upholder of Shakespeare's cultural authority, a refuge for the displaced, and a monument to its Russian-Jewish, immigrant founder; and all this is before the 'curtain rises'. In April 1994, the Anapacher auditorium of the Public Theatre became the first staging post for Berkoff's *Richard II*, which was revived in 2005 and performed at Ludlow Castle, Shropshire, and at the Corral de Comedias in Almagro, Spain.

Berkoff's spatialization of *Richard II* exemplified how theatres can become sites where the tensions played out in the drama converge with concerns about the ownership of texts and spaces. Moreover, the production was a catalyst for discussions of theatrical style and a stimulus for reconsidering the nature of the play. Although Barton's 1973 production had been considered stylized because of its innovative scenography, its choral speeches addressed directly to the audience, and its mixture of theatrical devices, Berkoff's mode of physical theatre redefined stylization in relation to *Richard II*; and for some critics of the New York staging and the Ludlow revival (2005), Berkoff's individual appropriation of the space was more abrasive than his geo-temporal relocation.

Berkoff wanted to set his *Richard II* in a period which was 'not modern and yet not too distant to be remote' (24) and initially thought of the Victorian era as '[a] period which would still justify weapons like swords, [. . .] elegant posturing, [. . .] pomp and tendency for overdressing' (24). Rehearsing with top hats, frock coats, and canes, confirmed his instinct as '[t]he play seem[ed] to leap the chasms of time and fit the Victorian era perfectly' (45), and Berkoff's imagery reflected the sort of elegance suggested by *My Fair Lady* (45): the lists at Coventry, for example, were created after the fashion of Ascot (54).

If Berkoff's decisions were influenced by the need to find a space-time for the play that fitted with stylish dress and duels of honour, his thinking was also underpinned by a consciousness of wealth and class structures. The idea of having the Lady in

Waiting brush the Queen's hair in II.2—which replaced his original clichéd suggestion that she should be sewing (53)—‘reinforce[d] the servant theme of Victorian England’ by creating ‘a beautiful image of a spoilt and pretty young Queen having her hair lovingly caressed while she attends to other matters’ (Berkoff 70). The ‘ample amount of cheap labour available as servants’ in the Victorian era (53) was further underscored in this scene as servants were on hand to gather up the top hats, gloves, and umbrellas, of Bushy, Green and York (Herb Foster) as they entered, and return them when the men exited, and to bring in a tray of tea (53). York was unable to give his news of Bolingbroke's return and the threatened civil war until he had ‘lovingly put[. . .] his sugar in his cup, [and] slowly stirr[ed it]’ (70): bringing to ‘the queen's exasperated, “Uncle, for God's sake, speak!” [. . .] a new and comic relevance’ (Ridley, *PI* 06/04/1994). The New York critics in general showed an equal exasperation with the slow pace of Berkoff's production, but, in the scene under discussion, Berkoff was conscious of wishing to use the ‘tea ceremony’ as ‘a mask for serious matters’ (53) and a ‘metaphor for an England that will never get flustered’ (70).

For Berkoff, the Victorian relocation released numerous ideas and images (45), and the costumes and accessories cued the actors to adopt a physicality that embodied the elegance and manners of the period, and also dictated the visual tones of the space: black, white, and shades of grey dominated the stage environment, giving it a sense of nineteenth-century chic. The “scenery” [. . .] consist[ed] almost entirely of a row of Queen Anne chairs plus a grid backdrop of fanciful family crests’ (Ridley, *PI* 06/04/1994), and the ‘bare grey stage’ (Gerard, *DV* 06/04/1994) was activated as the men in their black Victorian morning coats, grey trousers, ascot ties, with black top hats, white gloves. and canes, and the women in their grey dresses moved against ‘a mural of black, white and gray heraldic shields’ (Canby, *NYT* 10/04/1994). As stated in Chapter One, this thesis is informed by the idea that space is ‘composed of intersections of mobile elements [. . . and . . .] actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it’ (Certeau 117). This formula, which stresses the instability and mutability of space and the role of human agency in its generation and modification, is no less applicable to all of the productions discussed in this chapter: even Kean's ‘authentic’ medieval London was produced by the flows of nobles, commoners, artists, and words and music, as much as by the built structures. However, the creation of space through movement and flows is a conscious feature of Berkoff's physical style, and this was overtly demonstrated in the actors' use of meticulously synchronized mime to suggest ‘a march, or a ride on horseback, or a siege’ and gave the sense of movement between

places (Ridley, *PI* 06/04/1994). The cast flowed between playing their characters, forming a chorus—who responded with gestures and postures to the dialogue and events—and embodying inanimate objects, such as the doors through which the Duchess of York (Carole Shelley) entered Henry’s court.

These physical manoeuvres ‘orient[ed]’, ‘situat[ed]’ and ‘temporaliz[ed]’ the space (Certeau 117), and suggested its political identity. For Clifford A. Ridley, the production encapsulated his perception of *Richard II* as ‘a play about artificiality vs. sincerity and honor’, and the ‘music-hall capering’ of the actors—who engaged in ‘vaudeville shtick-fighting with exaggerated lunges and parries, jerking this way and that before freezing in ludicrous poses and expressions’—produced a playworld inhabited by ‘something like figures in Daumier cartoons come to life’ (*DV* 06/04/1994). Since Daumier, a political cartoonist and social caricaturist, became, in the 1830s, ‘the most determined antagonist’ of the French Royalist party (Ivins 94), the connection was appropriate and tapped into Berkoff’s openly left-wing politics and his intention to present, through his relocation, a pampered and powerful aristocracy with an imperialist mindset.

The fictive world produced through visual, kinetic, and aural operations, required the audience to enter into a particular way of seeing, even to the point of imagining the contrasting levels of Richard’s (Michael Stulbarg) and Bolingbroke’s (Andre Braugher) respective parties at Flint Castle. Such was Berkoff’s commitment to avoiding any hint of emulating realism, that he sought ‘a solution’ to having Richard ‘descend from a platform’, and opted for a ‘split screen’ effect to afford the audience the possibility of seeing ‘both faces and attitudes at the same time’ (Berkoff 77). Bolingbroke’s troops marched downstage and struck a pose looking upwards as if at the king and his party on the battlements; Richard then appeared behind them, but after his first line to Northumberland (Sam Tsoutsouvas) the positions were reversed, with Richard coming downstage and looking down as if from height (77). For David Richards, it was precisely this sort of theatrical method and Berkoff’s ‘idiosyncratic style’—comprising ‘a blend of ‘Kabuki and story-theater techniques with slow-motion effects and some 19th-century melodramatic flourishes thrown in’—that produced a space that was over-inscribed with the style of the director. Richards perceived every speech and gesture as a proclamation of “Berkoff was here” and compared Berkoff to ‘a mad graffiti artist’ who had ‘left his mark everywhere’ but left no ‘blank spaces’ for the actors to take ownership (*NYT* 01/04/1994). Berkoff’s stylized Victorian relocation also engendered tensions related to the (perceived) nature of the play. Sydney H.

Weinberg saw the actors as ‘valiantly fight[ing] the constricted Edwardian confines of Berkoff’s production’, and regarded the resulting stage environment as totally unsuited to *Richard II*, which he defined as ‘less a play of action than one of psychological insight’ (*HR* 04/04/1994).<sup>22</sup>

When Berkoff’s *Richard II* opened in New York (1 April 1994), the play was being evoked in discussions of Britain’s troubled geographies in news reports on both sides of the Atlantic. The official inauguration of the controversial Channel Tunnel was imminent, and on 6 May 1994 ‘this “scepter’d isle” became officially [. . .] attached to Europe’ (C. Brown, *I* 07/05/1994). This dramatic change in Europe’s geographies called forth a plethora of references to Gaunt’s speech. Colin Brown reported that when Prince Charles had ‘expressed regret that a tunnel would mean Britain would no longer be an island’ he had ‘had in mind Shakespeare’s lines from *Richard II*: “This royal throne of kings, this scepter’d isle . . . This precious stone set in the silver sea, Which serves it . . . as a moat defensive to a house, Against the envy of less happier lands, This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.”’ (*I* 07/05/1994). Linda Colley observed that the Eurotunnel ‘challenge[d] our identity as a proud island nation’, and appropriated some of the same lines to problematize England’s island status, stressing the imperialist undertones in the speech about a land which had never actually been an island, as it was surrounded by Wales and Scotland, and once connected to France (*I* 08/05/1994).<sup>23</sup>

The ushering in of ‘a new era for trade and tourism between Britain and the continent’ symbolized for some ‘an end to the splendid isolation that, for centuries, was the key to Britain’s security’ (Heathcote, *AP* 05/05/1994). But it also opened up a new and troubling immigration route. The setting up of the Red Cross camp at Sangatte in 1999 was a response to the enormous number of asylum seekers, refugees, and would-be migrants, who had attempted to cross from Paris to London by walking through the tunnel, stowing away on freight trains, or hiding underneath them. Whilst for some the tunnel was a passageway to and from the pursuits of leisure, culture, and business, for others it became a corridor of hope, desperation, fear, and suspended identity. Motivated perhaps by an imaginative geography of England that in its unreality matched Gaunt’s highly problematic rhetorical mapping, these daring and desperate travellers constructed England as a land of aspiration and a safe haven. CBS News quoted from Gaunt’s

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<sup>22</sup> Critics variously defined Berkoff’s production as Victorian or Edwardian.

<sup>23</sup> Willy Maley, who argues that Shakespeare’s history plays are English, whilst the later tragedies are British, regards Gaunt’s speech as moving, not in the emotional sense of the word, but ‘because it moves the map of England north and west to obliterate Scotland and Wales’ (16).

speech to stress that ‘this happy breed of men’ were no longer happy, owing to ‘the growing number of immigrants’ that had ‘flooded [. . .] this little island’ (22/04/1994).

The programme notes for Berkoff’s 2005 revival of his production at Ludlow Castle suggest that he had been aware of the ways in which *Richard II* had become implicated in debates about the changing geographies of Britain. He explained that he had set the play in ‘Oscar Wilde’s era when the aristocracy demonstrated an overwhelming superiority that reflected the attitude of the Victorian empire’, and stated that he saw ‘fantastic parallels’ with Britain’s contemporary situation, particularly in respect to ‘the arguments about this little island joining Europe’ (PP 7). He felt *Richard II* was, of all Shakespeare’s plays, ‘the most tangible to send echoes around the British Isles about the dangers of imperialism, colonialism and nationalism’, and he saw Richard as ‘part of the Oxbridge/Harrow/Ascot set who believed in this wonderful land, “the scepter’d isle” (7).

Lefevre, Daniels, and Berkoff had all displaced *Richard II*, and their spatializations opened up the possibility of forging connections between this history play and the revolutionary geographies of Eastern Europe, and the Imperial geographies of nineteenth-century Britain. Further, it is clear from the press articles quoted above, and from Berkoff’s comments regarding Britain’s relations with Europe and beyond, that the play had begun to speak to particular geographical anxieties of late twentieth-century Britain. These concerns were linked primarily to ideas of borders and territories that might be mapped and represented in traditional cartographic forms. However, in 1995, the geographies of Deborah Warner’s *Richard II* opened up considerations of other spatial issues of concern in the postmodern world, and brought the play into dialogue with other contemporary spatial anxieties. Hildegard Bechtler’s design generated an illuminating set of associative geographies and the production, staged in the Cottesloe, the smallest of the National Theatre’s auditoriums, challenged notions of the scale of theatre space required for *Richard II*, thereby contributing to rethinking the nature of the play.

Warner’s decision to cast Fiona Shaw as Richard made the production controversial, and although this cross-gender casting is not the main focus of the present analysis, the interpretation it facilitated worked in collaboration with the space.<sup>24</sup> This was the last major production of the play in the twentieth century, and an analysis of the ways in which it broke new ground in thinking about space, place, and *Richard II*

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<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of the critical reception of Shaw’s performance and a nuanced analysis of the potential of Warner’s cross-gender casting, see Silverstone “‘It’s not about gender’”; and Klett.

provides an apposite bridge into my case studies, which further developed this new engagement with similarly complex, contemporary geographical issues.

(v) A Space In Between

Bechtler exploited the intimacy of the Cottesloe by constructing a boxed-in, traverse playing area ‘in bare, honey-coloured wood [. . .] flanked by steeply raked seats that rose beyond barricades’ (Rutter, ‘Shaw’s Richard’ 319). The traverse, like the thrust stage, contracts the audience in as ‘part of the show’ and works as ‘a reminder to the spectators of their own presence, [and] of their importance in the total performance event’ (McAuley, *Space* 57); and Bechtler’s seating arrangements indicated that one intention underlying the design was the facilitation of audience involvement in the conflicts in the play. The particular attention reviewers paid to audience placement suggests the importance of the role of spectators in this production (Figs. 15 and 16).

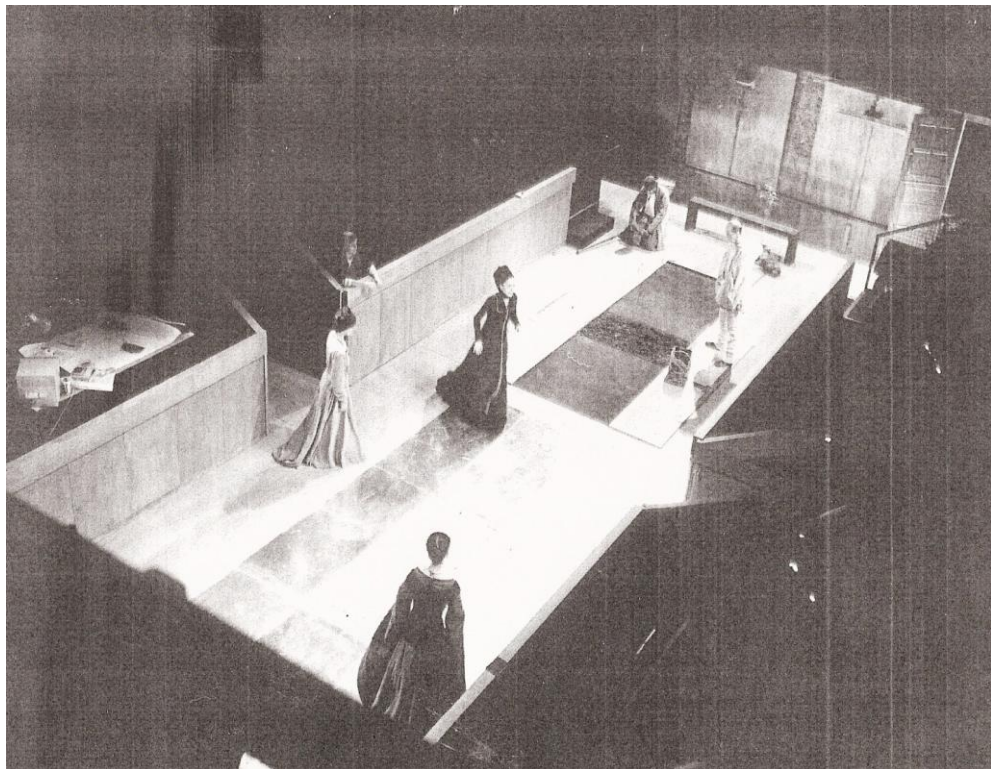


Fig. 15 *Richard II* 1995. Dir Deborah Warner. Des. Hildegard Bechtler. Rehearsal photograph.



Fig. 16. *Richard II* 1995. Dir Deborah Warner.  
Des. Hildegard Bechtler.

Benedict Nightingale saw the set as ‘a long golden corridor flanked by an audience in pews’ (*T* 05/06/1995); Paul Taylor likened the seating to ‘cathedral stalls’ or ‘jury boxes’ (*I* 14/06/1995); and Jack Tinker described the audience as situated ‘in formal boxes around a long rectangular arena as if at some courtly joust or state meeting’ (*DM* 16/06/1995). The design of the space therefore indicated a variety of possible roles in which the audience might be cast: a church congregation, jurors at a trial, and courtiers witnessing developments in affairs of state. By creating within the performance space a sense of the seats of ecclesiastical, juridical, and monarchical authority, the production reinforced the interactions between these key sites within medieval and Elizabethan geographies of power, and foregrounded the role of these overlapping institutions in the production and resolution of conflict. The nature and location of the seating highlighted the different official standpoints from which the negotiations that effect the regime change might be challenged or defended, and encouraged the audience to think about the complex intertwining of the sacred and the secular, and the religious and the political, in the debate about the divine right to absolute power, so alien to present-day culture.

Other associative geographies mapped more contemporary places into the fictive world, and the performance space also cast the members of the audience in the role of spectators at a sporting event. The traverse stage, ‘roughly the length of a cricket pitch’ (Billington, *G* 05/06/1995), gave ‘a vivid, sport-like urgency to the aborted tournament at Coventry’ (Taylor, *I* 14/06/1995), and the audience ‘became neck-craning spectators half expecting to see horses galloping out of the end doors’ (Billington, *G* 05/06/1995). This perception of the space as an arena of sporting contest was echoed by Irving Wardle’s observation that the playing area suggested ‘a palatial tennis court’ (*IS* 04/06/1995): an analogy also developed by Neil Smith, who commented that the traverse staging made this *Richard II* ‘more like Wimbledon than Shakespeare with actors separated by eighty feet of blank stage hurling observations at each other with all the mechanical proficiency of a Sampras serve’ (*WO* 07/06/1995). Smith’s claim that the ‘narrow arena’ only ‘c[ame] into its own’ in the prison scene (*WO* 07/06/1995) implies that his Wimbledon allusion was intended as a disparaging critique. However, given the weight of traditions associated with this particular English institution, the aggressive style which currently characterizes the game and the ferocity with which grand-slam players now confront each other, the analogy is not inappropriate; and the battles, successes, and failures of sportsmen and women feature among the factors which comprise national aspirations. The ‘games’ played in *Richard II*, of course, are not simply fought for wealth and fame and there is more at stake than a large cheque in the bank and a silver trophy. The viciousness of the language employed by Bolingbroke and Mowbray in the opening scene suggests the dangerous and brutal nature of the conflict, and the proposed resolution to their quarrel, the trial by combat, was given full weight.<sup>25</sup>

Bechtler’s space, then, cast the audience through a set of historical and contemporary associative geographies that afforded different perspectives on the action. It also acted as a conductor for the ‘extraordinary urgency’ of the play’s conflicts (Billington, *G* 05/06/1995), as the ‘long, narrow brass and wood jousting corridor’ established an exciting ‘combative environment’ (Woddis, *H* 06/06/1995) and gave ‘incredible energy to a play that has conflict and opposition at its heart’ (Martin, *MS* 23/06/1995). The idea of the traverse as a configuration suited to the spatialization of

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<sup>25</sup> An outstanding feature of Warner’s production was the time given to the construction of the lists. The space was articulated to achieve a solemn separation between the combatants and the king, and Richard’s ritual anointing of both Bolingbroke and Mowbray, combined with the activation of the playing area through movement, chanting, and shouting, brought both a sobriety and exhilaration to the tournament preparations.



opposition is not uncommon, but the analogy of the ‘corridor’, employed by several critics, merits examination as it is among postmodernity’s ‘most troubling’ spaces (Hurdley 49). Recognising the troubling nature of this space, Warner defined *Richard II* as ‘a corridor play, between well defined spaces’ and stated that the ‘corridor’ was ‘an incredible late twentieth century state [. . .] where most of us are’ (Norden 26). Bechtler’s success in articulating this conception of the play is evidenced in Paul Taylor’s review; Taylor perceived the stage environment—which ‘eerily evoke[d] a corridor, a no-man’s land bound by eavesdropping audiences’—as a ‘resonantly apt location for a play where people are endemically betwixt and between states of mind, allegiance and being’ and an expression of an ‘acute realization that the play deals with painful in-between states [and] grey areas of identity [. . .] and morality’ (Taylor, *I* 14/06/1995).

Corridors, as Rachel Hurdley and Steven Connor have argued, are richly ambiguous zones, neither public nor private, neither open nor interior, and where one is enclosed and yet exposed (Connor n. pag); and they ‘simultaneously connect and disconnect other spaces’ (Hurdley 46). As spaces where running is generally forbidden and yet invited by their very form, corridors create tensions in relation to rhythm and pace, and they unsettle time, suggesting both its ‘inevitable running on [. . .], and its suspension’ (Connor n. pag.). The anxieties that corridors produce are also directly related to power relations, as they are ‘parts of a traditional cartography of power, in which both gaze and movement are controlled’ (Hurdley 49), and these concerns are reflected in contemporary architecture, which seeks to eliminate corridors in the interests of ‘openness, innovation, [and] accessibility’ (46). Corridors imply the offices and meeting rooms they lead into, where power is wielded, and to understand the expression the ‘corridors of power’, Connor maintains, is to see that ‘the real power of these rooms is precisely that they have corridors running along outside them, along which one must uncertainly approach’ (n. pag.). To venture into the corridor is to enter a space characterised by ‘overlapping modes of anticipation, anxiety, hesitation and delay’ (Hurdley 50); to become ‘the reprobate, the plaintiff, [or] the petitioner’ (Connor n. pag.); or even to be assailed by fears of being left being left, or even dying in this non-place (n. pag.).

Being in the corridor, then, troubles identity and creates a state of disequilibrium, and the uncertainties suggested by Bechtler’s space were echoed in Shaw’s embodiment of Richard. Warner saw ‘a bull’s eye in the casting, which creates precisely that corridor state’ (Norden 26): a point elucidated by Catherine Silverstone’s

discussion of the ‘gender category crisis’ produced by Shaw’s performance, as the actor’s body could ‘be read as a metaphor for the crisis Richard experiences when he is deposed [. . . since] he is neither king nor man but caught, oscillating between, but not fully embodying, either identity’ (208). Indeed, Warner’s *Richard II* made a clear statement that the king’s identity was unsettled from the very beginning by staging an extra-textual spatial transition. Prior to the opening dialogue the audience witnessed a ‘dumb show’, which took place at one end of the playing space ‘behind a gauze curtain flickeringly backlit by candles’ (Rutter, ‘Shaw’s Richard’ 310), and in which Richard was robed and crowned. Instead of making ‘the big ceremonial entrance’ (319) from this inner chamber, however, Shaw walked offstage and then came, devoid of the royal regalia, into the ‘corridor’ to meet the appellants.

As Hurdley argues, it is important to reassess ‘the power of corridors’ from a positive perspective: to remember ‘the affective dimensions of the journeys *to* or *from*’ (49), and the urgency of relations between these points of departure and destination that the very existence of corridors emphasizes (59). Warner’s production tapped into the anxieties of the in-between states that the corridor represents, and also highlighted the ‘affective dimensions’ of Richard’s trajectory. Both Warner and Shaw were interested in the love relationship between Richard and Bolingbroke (David Threlfall), and ‘[p]itching this production on emotional rather than political ground’ was fundamental in Warner’s approach to directing the play (Rutter, ‘Shaw’s Richard’ 319). Irving Wardle described Richard and Bolingbroke as ‘magnetically circling each other like a platonically divided creature seeking to unite its two halves’ (*IS* 04/06/ 1995), and interpreted the production as ‘operat[ing] simultaneously as a love journey and a power struggle’. There was also an emphasis on the results of the emotional journey undertaken in this corridor, as the maturity that some critics recognized in Shaw’s handling of the prison soliloquy reflected the actress’s conviction that ‘[t]he tragedy of the play—of all our lives—is that we have got to give up the thing that we feel is our essence, the thing we are most proud of, in order to gain ourselves’ (qtd. in Rutter ‘Shaw’s Richard’ 323). Shaw’s observation suggests that in our increasingly individualized, contemporary world, even as the 1990s hurtled towards the new millennium at a rate of time-space compression capable of inducing breathlessness or indifference, *Richard II* could still create a space of envisioning: a space for the potential retrieval of a self that recognizes and embraces responsibilities to others, and that supersedes the desire for purely earthly power achieved through access to the spaces off the corridors of power.

For Shaw's Richard the well defined space to which this corridor ultimately led was the Prison at Pomfret, and this space was nuanced by an echo of Barton's Groom intervention. Although there was no clear encounter between Richard and Bolingbroke, the shadowy figure that passed across the balcony in the half light speaking as the Groom was noted in the prompt book as Threlwell. There is no mention of this in the any of the reviews I have read, so spectators may have missed or barely apprehended Henry's presence; but the employment of this actor/character in this role hinted at the possibility of and the need for the thirdspace of opportunity which I have argued was created in Barton's prison intervention.

Warner's nuancing of Richard's final well-defined space through the veiled presence of Henry is noteworthy, and it is also essential to reflect on the first well-defined space with which spectators were presented, as this is a significant example of the enriching potential of interrogating those spaces which are activated even before the first lines of the text are spoken. Spectators who entered the auditorium early would have had time to contemplate, to the strains of Arturo Anecchino's *Mass*,<sup>26</sup> an intriguing collection of seven objects, each of which had been placed on separate stands arranged in a line down the centre of the playing area. The stage management props settings script details these items as:

1. Egyptian facing d/s
2. Horse facing d/s
3. Medallion facing s/l
4. Dagger, blade facing d/s/r
5. Small figure
6. Crystal
7. Headless figure

During the moments prior to the first lines of the text, a character, identified in the prompt book as the Lord Marshall, was seen moving around the playing area, and just before the other characters entered, he cleared away these 'exhibits' (prompt book) and put them into a 'communion box' (props settings script). The presence of these items was clearly important as they formed a striking part of the initial organization of the playing area, but, although nearly all the reviewers mentioned the design of the performance space, few critics referred to this preliminary space. Paul Martin described this 'opening image' as 'a row of plinths the length of the drawn-out playing area, each

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<sup>26</sup> Anecchino's score was performed live by Eleanor Alberga (music director), Rebecca Arch, and Irita Kutchmy, with Elaine Claxton (soprano), and used throughout the production, on occasion as a link between scenes.

topped by a relic-like artefact' (*MS* 23/06/1995); and Peter Holland was perplexed by these 'small and enigmatic object[s]' and the 'eerie figure in black', who collected the objects 'into a reliquary and carefully [. . . removed] the pedestals' ('Shakespeare 1994-1995' 263). Holland noted that it was 'not common for the set to be dismantled before the play has properly begun' and found this 'bemusing' and 'the only moment in the whole production where the production's intentions were unclear' (263). Such mysterious spaces produced in performance can be analysed for their potential to illuminate the director's approach and/or the production's cultural work, and imaginative reflection on this transient space yields rich metanarratives that can be read back into the play.

Although the objects were not introduced into the action again, their display and subsequent concealment in the box generated a series of ideas that illuminate the world of Shaw's Richard. Notions of religion and the sacred are contained in the connections with relics and the 'communion box' and fit with the music. Rutter, building on these associations by invoking genealogies, suggested these 'icons' may have been 'the seven sons of Edward III' ('Shaw's Richard' 319), or that '[t]he rich collection of gemlike miniatures' may have represented Richard's 'exquisite profligacy' (319). An examination of these objects in the light of both the play and its historical sources produces a series of possible stories embedded in geographies which range around the places familiar to Richard and beyond them to a romanticized past capable of affording him security in the present. These objects may be read, not only as treasures accrued through his own 'profligacy' (Rutter, *Shaw's Richard* 319), but as treasures accumulated by Edward the Black Prince in his bellicose exploits and bequeathed to Richard in memory of his father. Their display, then, would serve as a tribute to the Black Prince, a reminder to others of Richard's paternity, and a means of confirmation for Richard of his place in the royal line in the face of baronial challenges to his authority.

In line with Shaw's boy-like approach to the character, this assortment of curios could also be seen as Richard's toys: a collection of miscellaneous and fascinating articles that a child might gather and hold on to, but which prove to be playthings that now must be discarded in view of the gravity of events to be instigated by the quarrel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray. The religious themes in the play and the spiritual character of the music accompanying this prologue prompt connections between the creation of Warner's corridor of transition and scriptural principles of coming of age. In *I Corinthians*, Paul writes of the passing of that which is imperfect in the following terms: 'When I was a child I spoke as a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a

child; when I became a man I gave up childish ways' (13:11). The collecting in of these items presaged the unsettling consequences of the confrontation that was about to take place, and the putting away of 'childish things' signalled these imminent changes, which would precipitate Richard's emotional journey towards maturity. As the objects were put into the 'communion box', un-placed as it were, so this initial place in the fictive world was transformed into the corridor, where Richard would have to construct new meaning without his previous way markers.

Conceiving of the artefacts as relics in the religious sense imbues them with a sanctity which sets them apart from the everyday in the same way that Richard, as God's anointed, is set apart. The stowing of the articles within the 'communion box', the contents of which can then only be touched by consecrated hands, symbolizes Richard's own belief that he too may only be touched by holy hands, indeed that only the touch of the divine may remove his power. The objects also resonate with the very beginnings of Richard's kingship. When, in 1376, Richard was declared Edward III's heir, '[l]ike the infant Christ he was brought to parliament and given gifts' and '[t]he parliament sermon likened the gathering to that of Christ's presentation in the Temple' (Rubin 115). Displayed and arranged with such care and precision, these objects could also be read as the gifts which confirmed the regal and divine status of the fatherless boy, and therefore comparable in their sacred authority with 'icons' and 'relics'. But the word 'relic' also carries a secular meaning as an object, institution or person who is outdated, and in this sense their removal foreshadowed the removal of Richard himself as the representative of an obsolete practice or belief system. After the exhibits had been gathered into the small box, the characters took their place in the large oblong 'box' which constituted the corridor of the fictive world: living exhibits, imbued with their own curiosity value as figures in a story from a bygone age, and moving before the eyes of the 'visitors'.

All of these potential readings illustrate the ability of space in action in performance to generate meanings and metanarratives that sometimes go beyond the text, but can enrich the interpretation offered. The fusion of non-textual theatrical languages at the beginning of Warner's production, created a space which was a site of concentrated histories, marked by signs which provided clues to the intersecting lives and narratives leading up to the moment at which Shakespeare begins *Richard II*. Its dismantling made way for the encounters that would take place in the corridor of transition.

The idea of Warner's spatialization of *Richard II* as a corridor is not simply an easy way of referencing the shape of the playing space, or stressing the traverse as suited to conflict. Corridors, 'these 'past' and 'before', neither 'here' nor 'there' places, make the push and pull between different worlds matter' (Hurdley 59). By evoking a 'spare yet gorgeous' medieval world (Rutter, 'Shaw's Richard' 319), within a spatiality of great significance in the contemporary world, Warner exploited the corridor's potential to link space-times and give urgency to the negotiations between them.

Up until the early 1990s, then, three main approaches can be discerned, as the imaginative geographies of *Richard II* in production moved from the Victorian and Edwardian visioning of a sumptuous and colourful medieval England; through a darker re-visioning of this world, in which steps and levels reconfigured the topographies of power; to the unsettling of England through geo-temporal relocations of the play. Whilst successive spatializations of *Richard II* were implicated in more general developments within scenography and theatre architecture, the productions that most clearly challenged the familiar traditional imaginative geographies opened up new and searching questions about the world of *Richard II* and their own space-time. Further, in these productions, the space itself operated as a means, not just of representing places in the playworld, or imagining England as a geographical unit and/or concept, but of evoking metanarratives and engendering associative geographies, which, in turn, promote fruitful and ongoing interpretive reflection.

The intertheatrical mapping provided in this chapter demonstrates how the spaces generated by *Richard II* in performance have become increasingly eloquent in their potential as an interpretive tool. By the end of the twentieth century, *Richard II* was beginning to participate in debates about contemporary spatial concerns. The case studies that follow show how the play's potential to engage with, and comment on, the problematic spatialities of postmodernity has been further developed.

## Chapter Four

Making the Familiar Nation Strange: *Richard II* at The Other Place

Steven Pimlott's *Richard II* premiered at The Other Place on 20 March 2000; Samuel West played Richard and David Troughton, Bolingbroke. David Fielding designed the 'environment': a linguistic detail, which, in its departure from the more normal terms 'set' or 'scenography', signals the distinctiveness of the all-encompassing stage-and-auditorium-scape of this production. The production was part of a cycle, but, one which dispensed with the conflation and continuity that characterised previous RSC cycles, by treating each play discretely, and assigning a different director to each of the kings.<sup>1</sup>

For Michael Attenborough, a principal motivating force behind the undertaking was a desire to seize the millennial moment as an appropriate juncture at which to examine the way Shakespeare 'looked at history, the way he considered issues of national identity, leadership and social organization' (Hemming, *FT* 25/03/2000). These concerns were echoed by Pimlott who maintained that *Richard II* 'speaks directly to today's identity-crisis-ridden times' (Roberts, *ES* 02/03/2000). Pimlott believed that issues connected with 'Europe, devolution of power, [and] the national question of how we should govern ourselves'—all topics which he saw as being addressed in *Richard II*—had 'never seemed so charged as they do now' (Roberts, *ES* 02/03/2000). Pimlott saw in Shakespeare's history plays a dramatic investigation of the transition from medieval kingdom to modern nation state and a continual probing of the nature of England and Englishness, which made them particularly 'resonant for a twenty-first century audience', and felt that that 'the question of what constitutes England [. . . had] never been so pertinent' (Hemming, *FT* 25/03/2000). My analysis of the space produced for this *Richard II* demonstrates that the geographies of Pimlott's staging provoked questions as to what kind of England the characters were moving within and shows how the space invited the audience to reflect critically on the characters' dilemmas.

The title of the cycle, *This England: The Histories*, embraced both geography and history, but foregrounded the idea of the nation, and was suggestive of the cultural work the project aimed to do. The conscious employment of Gaunt's famous phrase as the cycle title would have encouraged those familiar with it to recollect the multifarious phrases that constitute Gaunt's description of the kingdom, and urged them to examine

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<sup>1</sup> The first tetralogy was an exception since Michael Boyd directed the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III*. The directors responsible for the other plays are as follows: Steven Pimlott, *Richard II*; Michael Attenborough, *Henry IV* parts 1 and 2; Edward Hall, *Henry V*.

the correspondences between Gaunt's poetic configuration of his homeland and its representation in the cycle. Reception of Pimlott's *Richard II* was particularly responsive to the design and articulation of the performance space, and the phrases employed by reviewers to describe the stage environment are striking when juxtaposed with those of Gaunt's speech; they constituted an England as ambiguous and conflicted as that of Gaunt and equally far from the 'demi-paradise' of his eulogy. Reviewers' responses provided an alternative rhetorical mapping which made Gaunt's familiar imaginative geographies decidedly strange. Although Sarah Hemming claimed that seeing all eight of the histories would afford 'audiences of today's sceptred isle [. . .] the opportunity to immerse themselves in Shakespeare's version of England' (*FT* 25/03/2000), spectators experienced in Pimlott's 'version of England' a spatialization of the geographical anxieties of the production's historical moment. Although mindful of the troubled geographies of the play, Pimlott's *Richard II* also emphatically staged the troubling geographies of contemporary Britain.

In this chapter I analyse the implications of the associative geographies articulated by critics in response to Pimlott's staging and argue that the space worked to cast the spectators in roles that encouraged them to collaborate in the interrogation of nation and national rule. I discuss the ways in which the space brought *Richard II* into dialogue with anxieties about regional and national borders and identities at the turn of the millennium, and yet spoke back to sixteenth-century concerns about religious and national uniformity. I then examine the activation of this space in performance, and explore the resonances created by the interaction of the actors/characters with the distinctive topographies of the stage environment. Drawing on Paul Channing Adams' discussion of extensibility, I argue that the permeable space generated by this *Richard II* emphasized the interconnectedness of lives, in spite of the themes of isolation and imprisonment that the production foregrounded. I begin with a consideration of the factors which influenced the choice of The Other Place (TOP) as the venue for *Richard II* and the ways in which Pimlott's approach facilitated the production of a space which became a significant collaborator in the rehearsal and production process.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> My analysis of the production draws on the archive video recorded 20 September 2001, as well as on other archival materials and Sam West's account of rehearsals and performance.



## (i) Inside the White Box

Of the thirty-seven productions of *Richard II* staged in Stratford-Upon-Avon between 1896 and 2000, Pimlott's was the only production of the play not to be staged in the main house. Adrian Noble justified the choice to 'set the play in a little room' on the grounds that '[t]here is little action (as in a Beckett play) but much contention' (*DT* 01/04/2000). Noble's comment suggests how perceptions of the play were changing from the idea of the piece as a 'panoramic' work (Hornby, *HRev* Winter 1996), which required 'a lot of landscape and architecture' (*O* 04/01/1952), to a drama of 'psychological insight' (Weinberg, *HR* 04/04/1994) and concentrated dispute; which, in turn, affected the type of theatre space considered suitable for its performance. Samuel West described the production as 'a chamber ensemble . . . small . . . [and set] in a white box' (qtd. in Williams, *IS* 05/03/2000), implying a sort of intimacy that reviewers indicated was absent from the uninviting expanse through which the actors/characters moved, and within which the audience was also contained.

One factor influencing the design of the stage environment was Pimlott's desire to challenge the way the company 'approach[ed] the production as a whole' and he aimed, through the use of 'a single staging and minimal sets', to enable actors 'to rehearse in the performance space, giving everyone a greater involvement in the creative process from an earlier stage' (PP n.pag.). The influence of this strategy and the significance of Pimlott's 'vision of the white box' for 'the way the play and the performance turned out' (S. West 86) was evident in the ways that the actors interacted with the topographies of the environment, in particular with the 'mound' or 'grave' (as it was variously referred to in the prompt book), a rectangular plot of earth which became a rich site of reflection and memories. So powerful was the character of the space that even the rehearsals themselves came to be referred to by the cast as 'white boxing' (S. West 86), which indicates the extent to which the space was always a collaborator. For West, Pimlott's 'extraordinary confidence' in admitting that he was unsure as to when and where they were going to set the play and his minimalist strategy—reflected in the sparseness of the white box with its few 'well chosen' props (S. West 87)—facilitated a way of working with, and in, the space which was free from the usual constraints of knowing the design from the beginning (86). Within the framework of 'carte blanche, and pièce blanche' that the actors were given by Pimlott (86), the space was clearly both a product and a shaping force.

The topographies of this stage environment were also produced by the company's focus, not on the 'restless geographies' (Tynan, *O* 23/01/1955) mapped in the journeys of the characters and the historical locations that pictorial productions had sought to reproduce and later productions had indicated with levels and metonymic features, but on those other, smaller geographical units, the 'ground', the 'earth', the 'grave', the 'throne', and the 'coffin'. The main features of the white box were a plot of earth stage right,<sup>3</sup> a rough wooden oblong box, a set of white chairs placed around the playing area and one chair of the same style, but sprayed gold, for the throne (Fig 17).

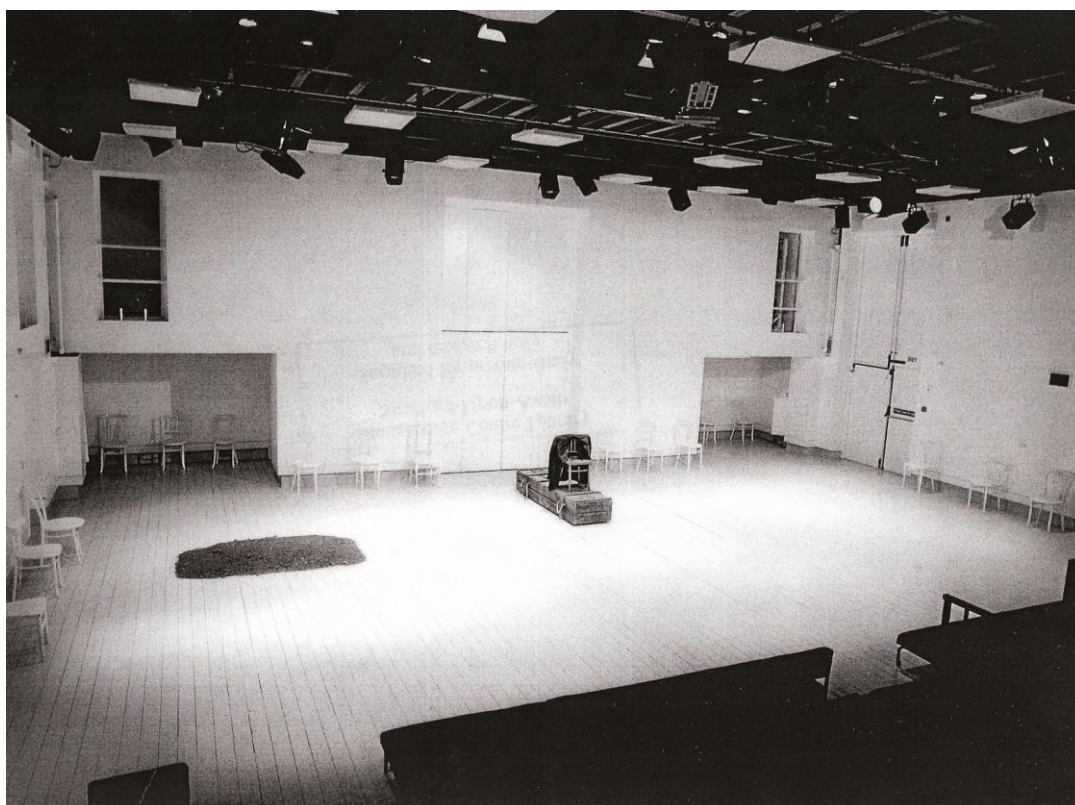


Fig. 17 *Richard II* 2000. Dir. Steven Pimlott. Des. David Fielding.

Entrances and exits were made through two 'alcoves' (prompt book) located on either side of a central upstage door, and also through the audience upstage centre, and upstage left and right. On particular occasions the fire door—which was visible in the stage left wall, and which gave directly onto the car park—was also used.

<sup>3</sup> In explaining the motivation behind the plot, Sam West notes that 'the word "earth" occurs twenty-nine times and "ground" another twelve, and they both have prominent parts in some pretty famous speeches' (88).

As Michael Dobson observed, Pimlott's *Richard II* 'offered an altogether surprising opening to the sequence by keeping [. . . spectators] carefully alienated from any received ideas of England at all' ('Shakespeare 2000' 274). The adjectives most commonly used to describe this stage environment included: 'bleak', 'clinical', 'stark' and 'harsh', and similarly cold terms, such as: 'merciless white box' (Carnegy, *Sp* 08/04/2000), 'inside of an ice cube', and 'unforgiving white oblong' (Clapp, *O* 02/04/2000). The 'intense white space', into which The Other Place had been converted, 'enclose[ed] the actors and the audience in a cold, stark world bestride by powerful men, bureaucrats and government ministers' (*M* 11/04/2000), and this shared occupation of the performance space was reinforced by the 'harsh neon light' (Spencer, *DT* 31/03/2000) which 'spread[. . .] out across the audience as well as the cast' (Butler, *IS* 02/04/2000). These comments give the impression that this was a singularly unwelcoming place; they also indicate the calculated inclusion of the audience in the performance space, suggesting that they also had a role to play in the theatrical event.

Jane Edwards commented that '[R]ather than a scept'ed [sic] isle', Fielding had 'created an antiseptic laboratory [suitable for] conducting an experiment in kingship' (*TO* 05/04/2000): an idea echoed by Michael Billington, who imagined the space as a 'science lab: a perfect setting for this masterly dissection of kingship' (*G* 1/04/2000). Gordon Parsons added to these associative geographies by imagining the space as an 'operating theatre' where spectators watched 'the dissection of Richard's sense of identity as king and as man' (*MS* 13/04/2000). In common with Shakespeare's other works, *Richard II* encourages the examination of human motivations and actions, and configuring the stage environment as a 'laboratory' or 'operating theatre', with all their connotations of trials, testing, and clinical analysis, clearly tapped into Pimlott's intention to interrogate ideas of national identity and the workings of national government.

The 'laboratory' and 'operating theatre' were not the only strictly controlled environments that featured among the associative geographies in reviews of the production. The 'clinical white box of a room [. . .] flood[ed] with fluorescent light' (Taylor, *I* 31/03/2000) was also figured as 'a mental institution' (Butler, *IS* 2/04/2000), 'a lethal debating chamber' (Clapp, *O* 02/04/2000) and 'a courtroom' (Parsons, *MS* 13/04/2000), and as a place where the audience were 'at the closest quarters with the players in experiencing the "prison" that Samuel West's Richard compares to the world' (Carnegy, *Sp* 08/04/2000). Most of the places that constituted the associative geographies suggested by the 'white vastness' (*EJ* 06/04/2000) of this 'bleak,

diagrammatic and highly arresting' performance space (Taylor, *I* 31/03/2000) combined to construct an England highly institutionalized, profoundly impersonal, and relentlessly constraining.

Richard, of course, ends his days in confinement in Pomfret Castle, but in this production, the theme of confinement was underscored from the beginning by means of an interpolated prologue, which included an extract from Richard's prison speech, and maintained by the repetition of some of these lines at two other moments in the play. When the audience entered, a solitary figure, whose function I analyse below, was sitting on one of the chairs next to the stage-left alcove. A 'tape-loop collage of stylized national noise – coronation crowds, military bands, [and] indistinct conservative oratory' (Dobson, 'Shakespeare 2000' 275) was playing and for Michael Coveney this 'bubbling soundtrack of patriotic songs and speeches, from *Jerusalem* to the *Winds of Change*' suggested '[a] nation on the march in times of trouble' (*DM* 31/03/2000): an association evocative of Bolingbroke's troop-mustering trajectory reported by Scroop in III.2 (104-120). The mood created by the recorded medley was a mixture of nostalgia and the sense of menace that can be generated by large gatherings, and implied the fine line between national celebration and national violence. To signal the opening of the play, the space was suddenly animated by a peal of bells and all the characters entered from different directions and crossed the playing area to take up still positions which ranged across the playing space and around the throne; Gaunt (Alfred Burke) propelled himself into position in a wheelchair. Following their assembly onstage Richard entered from the audience, where he had been sitting reading a copy of the play, and locked the upstage right door.<sup>4</sup> He then crossed back to the centre of the playing area, where he sat on the edge of the oblong box to deliver the following composite extract from his Act V speech:

I have been studying how I may compare  
This prison where I live unto the world,  
And for because the world is populous  
And here is not a creature but myself  
I cannot do it. Yet I'll hammer it out.  
Sometimes am I king,  
Then treasons make me wish myself a beggar.  
Then am I kinged again and by and by  
Think that I am unkinged. And straight am nothing.

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<sup>4</sup> The preshow placement of Richard amongst the audience is discussed by Sam West (89) and mentioned by Escolme (94). It is not clear either from the video or the note in the prompt book, which simply states 'R enters DSC', and, surprisingly, for such a significant intervention, is not mentioned in any of the reviews I have read. It is, however, clear from my consultation of the prompt book and production video, that certain details were changed as the run progressed.

Thus play I in one person many people,  
 And none contented. But what'er I be  
 Nor I nor any man that but man is  
 With nothing shall be pleased till he be eased  
 With being nothing.  
 (V.1.1-5, 32-33, 36-38a ('by Bolingbroke' omitted from 37), 31-32a, 38b-41a)

West summed up the production as 'an exploration of the prison that we are all born into' (90) and incarceration and the struggle with isolation were continuous threads, as the first five lines of this speech were also assigned to two other characters. They were spoken by the Queen (Catherine Walker) as she sat alone at the beginning of the garden scene and at the very end of the play by Henry who, prior to delivering this speech, repeated the locking of the door and then went to sit on the edge of the box, which had been placed centre stage with the throne on top of it as at the beginning. Thus, the opening lines, gesture, and image were mirrored by an epilogue which, in Susannah Clapp's opinion, made the play 'a story told by Richard in which the whole of England is a jail' (*O* 0204/2000).

This *da capo* ending was read as reflecting a sort of 'Kottian fatalism' (Kennedy, *Foreign* 10).<sup>5</sup> Dobson remarked that Richard's 'supplanter was doomed to the re-enactment of his predecessor's kingly miseries' ('Shakespeare 2000' 274-75); and Bridget Escolme observed that this performed affirmation of history repeating itself 'imposed a more conservative ending than might have been expected from this theatrically and politically conscious production' which, for the most part 'emphasise[d] power as process' (105). However, although punctuated at both the beginning and end by words and gestures (potentially) indicative of recurring cycles of entrapment, the associative geographies engendered by the production activated a more complex set of negotiations, which operated through the ways in which the design of the space involved the audience, and thereby unsettled the interpretation of unremitting cyclicity.

Significantly, critics often included various contradictory interpretations of the white box in their reviews, as if struggling with competing associative geographies to make sense of Pimlott's England, and thereby suggesting the productive ambiguity of this spatialization of the fictive world. However, the particular associative geographies to which I have so far drawn attention figure among those places discussed by Foucault

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<sup>5</sup> Kennedy notes that such *da capo* endings emerged in Shakespeare production in the 1960s and 1970s, and gives the example of the ending of Polanski's *Macbeth* (1972) where 'after Shakespeare's final scene, the camera showed Donalbaine a disenfranchised younger brother climbing through a storm to seek out the witches, and hearing the same music Macbeth had heard at the beginning of the play' (*Foreign* 10).

in his analysis of the significance of the spatial organization of power in medical, punitive, military, and educational institutions. Foucault observes how spatial organization was seen as a means of addressing the competing needs to avoid contact, contagion, physical proximity, and overcrowding, on the one hand, and to ensure ventilation, circulation, and surveillance (both global and individualized), on the other ('Eye' 146). Although underpinned by humanist ideals, these institutions, Foucault argues, produce 'docile bodies' which are manipulated, shaped, and trained, and made obedient and responsive. These processes operate through the pressure of practices that inscribe the body by assigning individuals particular spaces, regulating timetables, and making them subject to procedures of normalization, examination, and documentation (*Discipline* 135-169). The coincidence between the associative geographies produced by Pimlott's *Richard II* and the disciplinary spaces that Foucault analyses—which include: the prison, the hospital/clinic/asylum, the school, and the military training camp—merits further analysis. Foucault's ideas regarding these confining structures can be usefully mobilized to reveal the active role that the audience was encouraged to adopt.

The predominance of these structures of confinement and rehabilitation within the associative geographies of Pimlott's *Richard II* initially seems to support the conclusion that the repetition of the 'prologue' as 'epilogue', undercut what critics identified as the production's Brechtian aesthetic (Billington, *G* 01/04/2000; Dobson, 'Shakespeare 2000' 276), and therefore, its political credentials. However, although Pimlott's white box could be interpreted as the theatrical culmination of Foucault's confining institutions, further examination of the way in which these associative geographies positioned the audience, offers a progressively political alternative to previous interpretations of the function of the *da capo* device.

Bridget Escolme argues that '[w]hatever the physical or psychic location the RSC's white box suggested, it contained the audience, who [. . . were] fully lit, and [. . . was] always the theatre in which we [. . . were] spectators' (98). She also maintains that the production brought into the theatre 'the large swathe of Richard's subjects' who are absent from the play 'by addressing the audience as commoners, lords, [and] soldiers' (98). Pimlott's *Richard II*, then, produced a real-and-imagined space, which enabled the spectators to be simultaneously theatregoers and fictional characters. However, I would argue that the audience were also cast by the space itself in a series of other roles, which can be articulated by taking a Foucauldian view of the associative geographies identified by critics.

Foucault sees the prison, the asylum, and the clinic or hospital as key sites of power/knowledge, as it is in such places that inmates are observed, examined, and documented, and bodies of knowledge about the inhabitants can be constructed and disseminated (*Discipline* 184-194). Significantly, in relation to the examination of nationhood that underpinned Pimlott's approach to *Richard II*, Foucault's metaphors for those ambiguous places of refuge and correction, where the mad 'mingled' with the 'population' of workhouses and prisons, are strikingly appropriate: he refers to the 'the country of confinement', and wonders why the poor, the unemployed, prisoners and the insane should have been 'assign[ed] the same *homeland*' (*Madness* 35-36, my emphasis). The audience in Pimlott's white-box—operating theatre / science lab / mental institution / prison—were brought into an England constructed as a 'country of confinement' and cast as the experts with the responsibility for carrying out the observation, examination, documentation, and subsequent dissemination of knowledge about the inmates. In Foucault's analysis, however, it is the poor, the weak, and/or the deviant who are subject to such scrutiny by the powerful experts, whereas in Pimlott's England the associative geographies worked to construct the powerful as the subjects of intense scrutiny. Thus, the scenography of Pimlott's *Richard II* made possible a mode of audience involvement that demanded the intellectual interrogation of the material presented (Strehler 184) and which conformed to the aims of epic theatre.

In Foucauldian sites of power/knowledge, such as those that featured in the reviews cited, power is attributed to those who are exercising the gaze and the bodies of knowledge they produce impact on the way that the subjects of the gaze construct and conduct themselves. The critical engagement encouraged by placing the spectators in the white box with the actors/characters imposed on the audience the responsibility of responding to the 'inmates': having observed and examined, their task was to produce their 'reports' and grapple with the solutions to the problems that the characters had repeatedly emphasized the need to 'hammer out'. The associative geographies, with all their connotations of analysis and dissection by experts, suggested the shared responsibility for examining the past—all that leads up to the final crisis point of another beginning—in order to 'geo-graph' the future.

The audience roles I am suggesting here as crucial to the cultural and progressive political work of this production were, in part, dependent on the complex negotiations between the real and imagined spaces of the place of performance and the associative geographies; and Escolme's analysis of Pimlott's *Richard II* is significant in relation to this. Escolme saw the white box as 'simultaneously fictional and theatrical'

(108) and defined it as a ‘Presence Chamber’ which was ‘a fictional location – the room in which the king gives audience – and [. . .] a place in which presence is both experienced and examined’ (98). For Escolme, this Presence Chamber ‘produce[d] an intense effect of presence’ (98); it emphasized the presence of the actors; promoted awareness of the spaces where they had, or ceased to have, meaning in the fictive world, and made audiences conscious of empirical off-stage spaces, where the actors’ identities as dramatic figures were negated. Escolme argues that the performance space also constantly reinforced the location of both the dramatic narrative and the audience in the present, in terms of both theatrical time: the duration of the performance; and historical time: the moment of the production. The exposition of present problems, made present to audience scrutiny through the performance of the past problems with which the play engages, was clearly important in Pimlott’s approach to *Richard II*, and Escolme’s idea of the ‘Presence Chamber’ implies the urgency and relevance of the dramatic narrative at the beginning of the twenty-first century. I would argue that, in addition, the white box was also a ‘pressure chamber’: a spatialized expression of both the dichotomy of inside and outside—articulated in the play through exile and return—and symbolic of the bi-directional forces acting upon British borders at the close of the twentieth century. The condition of confinement and isolation stressed in this production through the all-embracing performance space with its bolted door, and the repeated lines from Richard’s prison speech, was resonant in British politics, and the following discussion draws attention to some of the specific, turn-of-the-millennium geographical anxieties that Pimlott’s England reflected.

The patriotism in the play is, for Benny Green, marked by ‘the jingoism’ of ‘a realm subconsciously aware that until it settles the vexed question of the legitimacy of royal succession, it can never step onto the larger European stage’ (PP *Richard II* dir. David Williams 1972 n. pag.). Although perhaps not quite as concerned with succession issues as the first Elizabethans, subjects of the second Elizabeth were, at the time of Pimlott’s *Richard II*, grappling with their role on the European stage, struggling with the matter of devolution, and wrestling with issues related to the migrant workers and asylum seekers entering Britain. This locates the production at a juncture of geo-historical uncertainty which parallels the instability of both the England of the play and that of its moment of composition: a juncture at which, according to Tony Blair, ‘the foundations of a New Britain [. . .were] being laid’ (28/09/1999).

Blair’s vision for Britain in the brave new world of the twenty-first century was energized by a belief in the ‘forces of change driving the future’ (28/09/1999), and



among the inexorable forces operating within the time-space compressed world on the verge of the twenty-first century, Blair listed: ‘Global finance and Communications and Media. Electronic commerce [. . . and] The Internet’, which he perceived as forces that ‘[d]on’t stop at national boundaries. Don’t respect tradition [. . . and] wait for no-one and no nation’ (28/09/1999). But whilst straining towards a techno-driven future for Britain and expressing excitement about the permeable borders created by science, technology, and commerce, Blair’s rhetoric pulled back towards the past, as he claimed that the current potential of the nation to be a ‘beacon of tolerance, liberty and enterprise’ in European and global contexts was rooted in, what he saw as, essential British values which ‘flow from our unique island geography and history’ (*G* 30/12/1999). Blair’s confidence in Britain as a model twenty-first-century nation was based on these values, which included: flexibility and adaptability in the face of rapid change, the development of new bonds of connection and community, cooperation across national boundaries, and the need to create truly multi-racial, multicultural societies (*G* 30/12/1999). Blair’s turn-of-the-millennium thoughts on British identity and the nation-state, then, held a sense of pride in place as bounded space in optimistic tension with inclusiveness and openness.

Not everyone shared the idealism of this political rhetoric or felt so confident about Britain’s place in the world or in Europe; British identity was under scrutiny and English identity considered as being under threat. In his New Year’s address to the Conservative Party, William Hague ‘emphasised Britain’s history as an “independent” nation’ and criticized what he saw as Blair’s readiness to ‘hand[. . .] over powers and rights to Europe’ (Waugh, *I* 30/12/1999). To counter accusations that he was ‘breaking up the UK through devolution and his willingness to accept more political and economic integration in the European Union’, Blair ‘insisted the government’s devolution programme would cement rather than undermine the UK’ and stated that Britishness today was ‘no longer based on “territory or blood”’, but rooted in shared values of ‘fair play, creativity, tolerance and an outward-looking approach to the world’ (Parker, *FT* 29/03/2000).

Yvonne Roberts saw in Blair’s rhetoric a reversion to ‘the vocabulary of empire’ and was highly sceptical of ‘New Labour’s face-lift or sticking the word, “new” in front of patriotism’, especially since what she saw as an ‘ugly nationalism [was] rampant in the treatment of refugees’ (*G* 30/03/2000). The press carried stories about the rise in numbers of asylum seekers in Britain, and reported that excessive applications had led to fast-track approvals that undermined the rights of ‘native’ British citizens and put an

unacceptable strain on resources. But there were also reports of the financial exploitation of migrant workers, who were housed in conditions bleaker and less welcoming than Pimlott's white box. The production's opening gesture of Richard locking the door, was elucidated by West as a gesture which ensured that everyone else was 'trapped inside the box' with him, until a resolution could be reached (90). However, in the light of the geographical anxieties expressed in the political developments outlined above, this action could also be read as a protective measure designed to keep out those unwanted intruders: the 'commoners' of the fictive world; and the asylum seekers and migrant workers of numerous media reports, and second and third generations of immigrants, whose presence would contribute to that multi-cultural, multi-racial nation Blair envisaged. The white box was, then, a pressure chamber which encapsulated the tensions produced by anxieties about immigration and the erasure of regional and national specificity and traditions, and conflicted with the optimistic urge to be part of the integrated world of permeable borders.

If the white box articulated fears about the erasure of national and regional identities and the conflict between unity and fracture prevalent at the turn of the millennium, the homogeneous whiteness of the walls also spoke back to the problematic issues of religious identity and uniformity in early modern England, thus linking Pimlott's modern spatialization to the playwright's world. In the mid sixteenth century the Tudor government achieved 'an astonishing degree of conformity [. . .] in thousands of communities, great and small, throughout the country' (Duffy 478). The religious reforms imposed by Henry VIII and Edward VI, and continued by Elizabeth I after the brief period of reversal in Mary's reign, aimed to eliminate all objects and traditions related to Catholic worship; this changed the physical appearance of churches as '[i]n response to the central diktat the altars were drawn down and the walls whited, windows broken or blotted out to conceal "feigned miracles"' (478). The whitewashing and the removal and/or destruction of the symbolic objects of Catholicism were designed to force into 'oblivion' the 'doctrines they embodied' (480): to enforce a forgetting through the modification of the places in which 'the collective memory of the parishes was, quite literally enshrined' (480). The whitewashed walls of churches, freed from representations and artefacts which the Reformation iconoclasts perceived as disturbing items of superstition and impediments to genuine worship, provided some with a pure setting for the exercise of their faith and impoverished the spiritual engagement of others by obliterating their religious heritage. I would, then, add the Reformation churches to those associative geographies imagined by reviewers. Reflecting on both

the whitewashed walls of these churches and the whitewashed walls of Pimlott's box for *Richard II* raises questions about whether the elimination of any signs of a past, and the erasure of images that symbolize beliefs and shape identities helps or hinders the inscription of a new future. The emplacement of *Richard II*—which examines religious beliefs and traditions of authority—within a purportedly 'neutral' (Parsons, *MS* 13/04/2000), yet so rich and complex a space as Pimlott's white box articulated these questions in the context of the production's own historical moment of traditions under the microscope.

Several reviewers imagined the space of Pimlott's *Richard II* as an art gallery (Butler, *IS* 02/04/2000), or art installation (Shaw, *Metro* 11/04/2000; Dobson, 'Shakespeare 2000' 275-76), and these associative geographies are also illuminating. The quest, from the 1970s onwards, for more egalitarian theatre spaces, which would afford a greater degree of intimacy between actor and audience and would also be conducive to experimentation, provided the impetus for the creation of small-scale theatres (such as TOP) and for what became known as the black box studio. This movement in theatre was paralleled in the world of the visual arts by the search for a new type of gallery space and led to the creation of the white cube: a display space that, in theory, could isolate a work from disruptive contextual influences and confirm its status as art (O'Doherty n. pag). In order to work as 'a unique chamber of esthetics', this ideal gallery has to be '[u]nshadowed, white, clean, artificial' and combine '[s]ome of the sanctity of the church, the formality of the courtroom, the mystique of the experimental laboratory [. . . and] chic design' (O'Doherty n. pag.): all qualities which reviews suggest were combined in the stage environment of Pimlott's *Richard II*.

A more significant parallel can be drawn in the light of O'Doherty's claim that 'as modernism gets older, context becomes content' and [i]n a peculiar reversal, the object introduced into the gallery "frames" the gallery and its laws' (n.pag). *Richard II* framed the white box, and focused attention on the space, eliciting connections that illuminated its operations, and ultimately pointed back to the crises of identity and power that the play explores. In configuring England as an ambiguous space evocative of conflicting social, scientific, artistic, and religious institutions, Pimlott's *Richard II* produced a highly paradoxical space underscored by the tensions between integration and isolation, and freedom and confinement: a space apposite for the reconfiguration of thought and knowledge.

## (ii) Permeable Spaces: Interconnected Lives

Critics were exceptionally responsive to the space generated by Pimlott's *Richard II*, but their comments focused, almost exclusively, on their general impressions of the white box. However, as Pamela Howard argues, particular items of furniture, and by implication, discrete features of the stage environment—such as, in this case, the mound, the throne, and the coffin—contain and hold ‘smaller specific space within a larger and more abstract space’ (13). These ‘contained spaces’ draw ‘a metaphoric meaning from [. . . their] presence and placing on the stage’, and their reality is used ‘imaginatively’ by actors (13). In order to appreciate more fully the richness of the stage environment of this *Richard II*, it is necessary to examine the discrete features of the topographies and the ways that characters interacted with them to create transient sites of meaning, and to show how the placement of objects and actors generated a permeable space that complicated ideas of presence and absence, and which can be analysed in relation to contemporary discussions on the transcendence of personal boundaries through extensibility.

I take up my analysis from the end of the ‘prologue’ constituted by the lines from Richard's prison speech. The phrase ‘being nothing’, when spoken by Richard at the opening of this production, was powerfully juxtaposed with his ceremony of making himself the ‘something’, around which/whom everyone else who occupied the space, was arranged. Having spoken these words, Richard rose, put on his jacket and, in a slow and deliberate manner, picked up the crown and paused, staring at it for several beats, before putting it on. In the intense, purple light (S. West 89; Escolme 93) that covered the playing area, these actions defined a transitional space of reflection, curiously personal to Richard, yet made similarly a space of preparation for the other actors and the spectators through their unidirectional gaze trained on Richard. At ‘Old John of Gaunt, time Honoured Lancaster’ (I.1.1), Gaunt wheeled himself forward to stage right of the oblong box/dais. The opening dialogue was conducted under this same purple wash until, on acknowledging the combatants to be ‘In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire’ (I.1.19), Richard, after a long pause, his foot on the ‘coffin’ (as the box was always referred to in the prompt book), sat on the throne. During this pause the other characters in the playing area noticeably shifted position, indicating their co-presence and their own state of readiness and signalling the control exerted by Richard. When the king gave the instruction ‘Call them to our presence’ (I.1.15, reordered to follow I.1.19), an unnerving electronic buzz and instantaneous lighting change transformed the space into

the ‘bright, white political reality’ that, for West, corresponded to ‘the colour of the play in [. . . his] head’ (88), and which contributed to reviewers’ perceptions of the stage environment as a clinical and analytical space. The space was suddenly animated again as the characters re-dispersed around the playing area; the Queen, who had been standing upstage centre, exited through the upstage centre door; and the Duchess of Gloucester (Janet Whiteside) came to kneel on the upstage edge of the ‘mound’ or ‘grave’, facing the audience.

The coincidence of the Queen’s departure and the Duchess of Gloucester’s movement to take up this strong position within the topographies of the stage environment stressed the feminine presence in the play, whilst also suggesting the disjuncture between these two women and encouraging questions about their relations to the narrative of murder and treason that unfolds in this scene. The Duchess of Gloucester did not appear to follow the debate transpiring around her and for the most part knelt staring at the earth, until, on Bolingbroke’s accusation that Mowbray ‘did plot the Duke of Gloucester’s death’ (I.1.100), she tensed and looked up, and in the pause that followed these words she and Richard created a dual image of conflicting but related concerns, as the Duchess froze staring at the audience and Richard stared fixedly down. The silent presence of the Duchess of Gloucester throughout this scene introduced the female perspective and, through her simple physical response to the mention of Gloucester’s death, she drew attention to the non-naturalistic juxtaposition of the earth and the throne from which the command for the murder had emanated. This constituted a distinct spatialization of the impact of violent acts which, even if done in secret, send out shockwaves across space-time. Moreover, it established a permeable space, in which seemingly impossible simultaneities could occur, and people removed in space and time could be present to each other.

Such a spatialization might simply be thought of as ‘purely theatrical’, but it instances yet another way in which this production was participating in contemporary geographical debates which suggest that ‘[t]he dichotomy of presence and absence is too simple to explain the connections that bind socio-spatial processes’ (Adams 275). Paul Channing Adams’ examination of extensibility and the person is useful in theorizing the permeable nature of this space, which worked to confirm the connectedness of lives, even though the company had identified a terrible existential isolation in the play and the production’s historical moment (S. West 87).

Adams distinguishes between the body and the person, arguing that ‘the body is self-contained and spatially and temporally finite, while the person is other-contained

and spatially and temporally unbounded' (275). The thoughts, ideas, and actions of a person can thus impact on geographically distant spaces through the networks of communication and transport that facilitate mobilities and flows, or simply through the repetition of words and ideas, or the repeated performance of artistic works (267-268). Adams argues that although the repercussions of some actions are 'less easily determined' than others, they are, nevertheless, 'equally pervasive', and it is therefore not possible to assign to a person 'an unbranching, finite line in space-time' (275). Although extensibility has come to be largely associated with the potentials of the technological networks of time-space compression, the instability and permeability of boundaries is not the result of these developments alone. Thrift maintains that an acknowledgement that '[a]ll spaces are porous to a greater or lesser degree' should be one of the fundamental principles 'at the root of any approach to space' ('Space' 140), and argues that even though

bodies caught in freeze-frame might look like envelopes [. . .] they are leaky bags of water, constantly sloughing off pieces of themselves, constantly leaving traces – effluent, memories, messages – through moments of good or bad encounter in which practices of organization and community and enmity [sic] are passed on, sometimes all but identically, sometimes bearing something new' (Thrift, 'Space' 140-141).<sup>6</sup>

There are two ways in which linking Pimlott's 'England' of 2000 with extensibility theory is important in arguing that the space engaged the play in a vital political and cultural work. Firstly, the theory of extensibility is rooted in micro-narratives that take into account human agency and the effects of the behaviours and work of individuals. This challenges macro-studies, which tend to reduce people to: unthinking entities bent on economic gain; beings devoid of self-consciousness and therefore morally incompetent; and/or 'products of ideological domination' who have a 'passive relationship to ideas' (Adams 267). Secondly, the conspicuous absence from the white box of the technological networks and devices, now commonly perceived as engendering the transcendence of space and time, emphasized that the interconnectedness of lives is not a phenomenon dependent solely on scientific development.

As well as establishing the permeability of the space and suggesting the interconnectedness of lives, positioning the Duchess of Gloucester next to the 'mound'

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<sup>6</sup> Thrift seems to be ignoring Adams' distinction between person and body here. However, I would suggest that in his affirmation of the porosity of all spaces, Thrift is constructing the body as both a physical and conceptual space able to leave both physical and conceptual traces as a result of its actions and interactions, and therefore implicating the person-body in the operations of extensibility.

or ‘grave’, which was placed in counterpoint to the throne and the wooden box/dais—or ‘coffin’—drew attention to these discrete features within the topographies of the stage environment, and asserted their importance as distinct sites of meaning within the otherwise clear, white space.

Sam West comments that the box used in the production was initially a rehearsal prop, which ‘looked like an ammo box’, and that ‘its true nature wasn’t revealed until the end of the play’ (87-88). His idea that the nature of a site can be ‘revealed’ in the course of the production is appropriate within the framework of my analysis, as it suggests that human interactions with spaces disclose something of their identity. When Richard’s murdered body is bundled into the box at the end of V.5, one of its identities was made clear. However, as I have argued, places are unstable, always in process, and prone to multiple meanings, and this was demonstrated by the performance. By the end of play, the audience had seen this same site activated as the dais for the throne; the weapon store from which the axes for the duel were taken; the tool box which contained the gardeners’ implements; the cell in which Richard stood to deliver his prison soliloquy on time, space, and identity; and—in an uncanny moment that echoed, and yet deconstructed, Barton’s ‘strange meeting’ (Wells, *Royal* 79) between Richard and the Groom/Bolingbroke—the mirror of IV.1. When Richard and Bolingbroke stared into the upended box from opposite sides, the opaque surface of the mirror’s wooden back allowed no mutual recognition. Richard interrupted this disjointed gaze by sending the mirror toppling over on ‘As brittle as the glory is the face’ (IV.1.287), causing Bolingbroke to stagger backwards out of its way. This action transformed what divided them from mirror into coffin, and articulated their resistance to, rather than acknowledgement of their connectedness. The box, then, although serving ultimately as Richard’s coffin, was a site of accumulated and simultaneous meanings that were developed and revealed as—in collaboration with the actors—it performed its various roles. Such processes were at work on the mound, which also became a concentrated site of overlaid identities.

For her dialogue with Gaunt (I.2), the Duchess remained kneeling on the mound, for most of their exchange leaning over it and kneading the soil, as if to keep in contact with the final connection she has with Gloucester: his grave (Fig. 18). On speaking the lines, ‘Desolate, desolate will I hence and die. / The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye’ (I.2.73-74), Whiteside rubbed some of the earth into her face and then lay down upon the mound, making with her body an inscription of grief and loss upon this



Fig. 18 *Richard II* 2000. Dir. Steven Pimlott. Des. David Fielding.

microsite, defining it as Gloucester's grave, and also staging her own death and integration into England's earth.

The terminology used by the company to refer to these sites within the stage environment—the 'mound'/'grave' and the 'coffin'—also suggests the theme of mortality that they came to see as central to the play. Pimlott had 'wanted to have a grave onstage at the beginning to represent the death of the Duke of Gloucester' and the actors soon realized the usefulness of the pile of earth (S. West 88). Whiteside's interaction with the mound was one example of the collaboration between the space and the actors and, as different characters worked with it, it superseded its initial identity as the grave of Gloucester and became, like the wooden box/'coffin', a concentrated site of coexisting meanings. Richard and Bolingbroke both interacted significantly with the mound revealing it as a locus constructed by and constitutive of some of the play's themes and moral, spiritual, and intellectual systems. As Gaunt exited upstage at the end of I.3, Bolingbroke approached the mound and, on 'Sweet soil adieu', took a handful of earth and put it in his pocket, configuring the plot as the ground of his homeland, whilst not erasing its identity as Gloucester's grave, and making the soil of England and the dust of his wronged kinsman, a memento or talisman. On returning from France, he sprinkled the earth onto the plot; a discreet but provocative gesture which, by the return of the earth to its rightful place, intimated a strict economy of exchange, and enacted his contract with the land to 'weed and pluck away' 'the caterpillars of the commonwealth' (II.3.166, 165).



It is appropriate here to comment on the scene in which Bolingbroke commences the fulfilment of this contract, as the movement from III.1 to III.2 was a striking example of how the multiple exits on all sides of the white box, and the ease with which objects could be moved to make simple but significant modifications to the stage environment produced some powerful scene transitions which stressed the overlaying of spaces, and the notions of porosity and traces. Bushy (Paul McEwan) and Green (William Buckhurst) were initially undaunted by Bolingbroke's arraignment. The impression that these were trumped-up charges was given by the 'script' Northumberland (Christopher Saul) handed Bolingbroke and by Bushy and Green's amused responses to the accusations. Bushy and Green initially behaved like wayward boys called to the headmaster's office for minor misdemeanours but, when Bushy started pushing people around, he was summarily shot in the back of the head by Hotspur and the scene shifted into a darker mood. Green, who had retreated downstage, instinctively put his hands to the back of his head, and was lead downstage by Bolingbroke and made to kneel and face the audience. Hotspur handed his gun to Bolingbroke, who shot Green in the back of the head. Although death had been present symbolically in the production since the beginning, through the 'mound', Pimlott's decision to have Bushy and Green 'dispatched' (III.1.35) in the playing area, downstage at the closest point to the audience, created a site of brutality, and intensified the irony of Bolingbroke's request to be commended to the Queen as he spoke the words standing just upstage of the dead bodies of her husband's favourites. As Bolingbroke and the lords exited downstage centre, Richard, returning from Ireland, burst through the upstage centre door, and ran eagerly towards the downstage area, treading almost on the heels of this violence. The dialogue announces the shift of location from Bristol to Barkloughly, yet the space still resonated as the site of Bushy and Green's execution, and Richard's sudden reappearance reinforced the permeable and fluid nature of Pimlott's fictive world and emphasized the connectedness of lives across distance and time.

Richard's excessive re-greeting of his 'dear earth' contrasted sharply with Bolingbroke's simple gesture. West approached the mound and dabbled with the soil in a similar manner to the Duchess of Gloucester, and lay on the mound almost exactly in the place where the Duchess of Gloucester had taken her last leave of both Gaunt and the audience; thus, superimposing upon the Duchess's gesture of desolation a life-affirming performance of identification with the earth. The mound continued to be a distinct focus in this scene: a collaborator in Richard's thoughts and actions, and a

concentrated site of hopes and fears that was a distinctly tangible material metonym of England's ground, and simultaneously an imaginary force which arrested Richard with a vision of his earthbound nature and humanity. On discovering the desertion of the Welsh troops, and asking 'Have I not reason to look pale and dead?' (III.2.79), Richard stood at the edge of the mound, gazing at this patch of ground, which was transformed by a lighting change and the 'tinker' of bells (prompt book) into a visionary manifestation of the king's own mortality. It became a site of foreboding when it prompted the 'ague fit of fear' (to which Richard admits at line 190), and it was the site to which he returned to curse the favourites he thinks have betrayed him. He stared at it on hearing that their peace had been 'made with heads not hands' and that they now 'lie full low graved in the hollow ground' (III.2.137-138, 140). West sat at the stage-left edge of the mound to discourse on the death of kings, reinforcing it as the place where he had come 'face to face with the reality that flattery has kept from him: that he may be king, but far from kingship giving him special protection, it dooms him' (S. West 94). At the mention of 'the hollow crown' (III.2.160), West removed the simple golden round from his head, and on 'Bores through his castle wall' (III.2.170) he poured a handful of dust through it: a moment which West saw as the transformation of the crown into the 'waist of death's hour glass' (94). Spaces can be 'real and imagined' and can be 'interrupted, appropriated, and transformed' (hooks 152), but by arresting Richard in his tracks, the mound demonstrated the power of spaces to interrupt, appropriate and transform us. The same site which Richard had appropriated at the beginning of the scene as the site of his joyous re-encounter with his land, now possessed him, and generated fearful thoughts.

The mound, then, became a participant in this dialogue of aborted hopes, reinforcing Richard's realization of mortality by providing a literal spatialization of the dust to which he had suddenly become conscious he would return. But it also resonated with the previous identities and meanings with which it had been imbued through the words and actions of other characters: Gloucester's grave; the site of the Duchess of Gloucester's leave-taking; and the locus of Bolingbroke's contract. These identities would continue to resound when the Queen, in a momentary loss of dignity, violently uprooted the Gardener's recently-planted rose bush and threw it on the earth (III.4); and when Richard next interacted with the mound in IV.1, re-appropriating it with an ironic confidence, and transforming it into a mockery site of self-burial.

West entered the deposition scene 'wearing a crown of thorned red roses [. . .], carrying a white rose as sceptre [. . .], wrapped in a George cross flag and whistling

“God save the King” (S. West 96). Exasperated with Richard’s indecision: ‘Ay, no. No, ay’ (IV.1.200), Bolingbroke tugged the crown from Richard and appeared about to crown himself, but West arrested this action with his invitation to the court to witness his ‘undo[ing of] himself’ (IV.i.202). Standing beside the mound, Richard read his de-coronation proclamation from a book held out for him by Northumberland. While Bolingbroke, forced to watch this ritual, stood firmly centrestage holding the real crown, Richard placed the wreath-crown and rose-sceptre on the mound, and, at the end of the ceremony, covered it with the flag. This juxtaposition made Richard’s deposition/abdication a highly ambivalent affair. The inauthenticity of his floral crown and sceptre brought into question the validity of his speech act, and intensified the ambiguity of the mound.

Whilst Richard’s business at the mound constituted a spatialization of his own symbolic death through the divestiture of the symbols of his identity, it also added the resonance of the rubbish dump to the plot of earth. The discarding of the wreath and rose, perishable materials subject to decay, also worked as a consigning of kingship to the refuse tip. The neat covering of the mound with the flag suggested the ease with which discarded items, doomed to rot, can be concealed beneath a neat and respectable veneer: an idea reflected in the unchanging white surface of the performance space. There was a nod here to the controversies of the quest for a greener and more pleasant land in relation to the problem of society’s detritus, as actor and site worked together to embody the question of what should be done with castoff materials destined for landfill sites up and down the country.

Only moments later, however, in his animated accusations concerning the infidelity of the assembled nobles, during which West ranged around the space, he kicked the mound as he passed it, exposing a corner of the earth, desecrating his own symbolic grave, and reminding those present that things buried in secret can be brought to light. But West’s petulant irreverence, even towards the mound he had so playfully reappropriated, was again interrupted by the site itself, which resonated here not only as the site of the revelation of Richard’s own mortality, but also as the place of disclosure of his own treachery. Still insistent that he read the ‘articles’ (IV.1.242), Northumberland had pursued Richard across the space, hounding him literally to the grave; and, although West made as if to flee downstage from the unrelenting Northumberland, he was again arrested by this now polyvalent plot of earth and sank down beside it, realizing that he had given his ‘soul’s consent / To’undeck the pompous body of a king’ (IV.1.248-249). Once more this microsite exerted a gravitational pull,

drawing to it West's Richard and the gaze of the audience, and urging an interrogation of the meaning of its presence in the white box.

The presence of the mound to the court—produced through the placement of the throne and the language and movements of the actors—was, as in the opening scene, a point of strangeness and indicative of the potential of this permeable space to accommodate productive incongruities and simultaneities. As I have argued, the presence of the Duchess of Gloucester in I.1 was crucial in establishing this fluid space, and this quality was reinforced by the introduction of the Queen in scenes where her participation is not indicated in the text. Although according to the textual geographies the Queen only appears in four scenes, some productions have included the Queen in I.1 and I.3, and have sometimes increased the number of Queen's Ladies, suggesting the feminine presence as an ornamental display. In Pimlott's *Richard II*, the Queen, although onstage during the interpolated prologue, had exited by the time the dispute began and did not appear in I.3. She was, however, a clear and intriguing presence in III.3, the scene of Richard's capitulation at Flint Castle, and made a fleeting, but significant, intervention in the final scene.

The Flint Castle scene opened the second half and had its own 'prologue', comprising lines taken from a later section of the play. The loop tape was playing again as the audience reassembled, recalling the nationalist thread of the narrative. As the action recommenced, initially under the purple lighting state, the space was animated, as at the beginning, by the peal of bells and the characters criss-crossing the stage to take up positions on the margins of the playing area, leaving a distinct focus on three of the dramatic figures: the Queen, who was seen huddled in one of the white chairs next to the stage left alcove, and Richard and Bolingbroke, who, having entered from opposite sides of the playing area, had come to stand facing each other at mid-stage right and mid-stage left, respectively. Bolingbroke then spoke to Richard the lines that Richard later speaks to the Queen:

In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire  
 With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales  
 Of woeful ages long ago betid;  
 And ere thou bid goodnight, to quite their griefs  
 Tell thou the lamentable tale of me (V.1.40-44).

These dislocated words, and the co-presence of these three characters—who are actually separated from each other at this point in the play—produced a particularly complex embodiment of extensibility, which unsettled both linear time and the idea of place as bounded. This image produced a site of reflection which embraced Bolingbroke,

Richard, and the Queen in a collapsed space-time, where the simultaneity of their unfolding stories could be emphasized. This strange meeting between Richard and Bolingbroke could be considered another echo of Barton's Groom intervention, creating a space for the mutual recognition of the shared tragedy of the hollow crown. But through the assignation to Bolingbroke of the very lines that Richard would soon address to his Queen, this business also generated an ironic site of impossible bequest, as the doomed king would never be able to fulfil the role of Bolingbroke's storyteller. Further, this strange encounter between the two men had its counterpart in a similarly uncanny and fleeting encounter, or mis-encounter, between Bolingbroke and the Queen.

The gaze between Richard and Bolingbroke was abruptly ruptured at the end of the passage from V.2; Richard exited upstage and Bolingbroke, in a gesture that echoed Richard's preparation to take control of the situation in I.1, donned his coat (a significantly different garment from Richard's smart, tailored jacket), and swung into the business of discussing the recent intelligence. When Hotspur entered with news that Richard is at Flint, the men formed a line across the downstage playing area, locating the castle, by means of their gaze, beyond (or in) the audience. Noticeably, when Bolingbroke articulated his terms of peace with Richard—asking that his 'banishment [be] repealed' and his 'lands restored again be freely granted' (III.3.40-41)—the Queen, who had been looking towards stage left, turned and looked downstage. The look was momentary, and after a beat she turned away; but, as with the Duchess of Gloucester's sudden look up from the mound in response to the mention of her husband's death (I.1.100), the Queen's simple action, which coincided with Bolingbroke's request for redress of the wrongs done him by Richard, highlighted the permeability of this space, and reinforced the interconnectedness of these isolated figures. On Bolingbroke's instruction 'March on, and mark King Richard how he looks' (III.3.61), all the lords exited downstage centre. Bolingbroke turned to face upstage for several beats, and then, as Flint Castle had been located out over the audience, he turned back to face downstage and announced the appearance of King Richard on the battlements, at which point the audience saw the upper-level doors above the upstage-centre alcove open to reveal Richard, Aumerle, and Carlisle, even as Bolingbroke remained looking down stage. However, in the interstitial space between the anticipation and the materialization of Richard's presence, Bolingbroke and the Queen had been framed in a transient site of potential acknowledgement, where their shared and distinct concerns and dilemmas were fleetingly present to each other and to the audience. The Queen continued as a silent co-presence in this scene and, after the exit of Richard and the lords, she spoke the

first five lines of the adapted prison soliloquy, before engaging with her Lady in the conversation of the garden scene. The shift from Flint to the garden was made strikingly seamless by the Queen already being in the space, and made possible the interpretation that she was always in the garden, and not present to the negotiations at Flint. Extensibility offers the possibility that she was indeed in both places, enriching the dramatic potential of both scenes, as her physical presence in the space urged a consideration of the connections between these characters, and the reciprocal impacts of their lives.

After the garden scene, the Queen is seen only once more in Shakespeare's text, when she meets Richard in the street, and she has been banished back to France by the time of Richard's death; but in Pimlott's production she was seen once more, just as Exton was about to present Richard's dead body to Henry IV. To set up my analysis of the space generated by this significant intervention, and to highlight the ways that it was enabled and underscored by the interplay of traces and superimpositions within this fluid space, it is necessary to relate briefly the action of V.5 and the transitions that preceded and followed it.

At the end of V.4, the scene in which Exton airs his plan to rid Bolingbroke of his 'living fear' (V.4.2), one of Exton's interlocutors set the throne upon the mound, and Richard then entered, dragging behind him the wooden box, which he upended and set centrestage, then stepped back into.<sup>7</sup> He delivered his prison soliloquy from inside the box, railing against the limits of his world by banging his head on the back of the box at various points in his speech. This constituted a keen visualization of the drawing in of space at the end of the play. But the stagescape was also, at this moment, a Beckettian wilderness with two highly resonant microsites: a living man in a 'coffin' juxtaposed with a throne on a grave. This image was an acute spatialization of the existentialist solitariness that the cast had found in their explorations of *Richard II* (S. West 87). Richard remained in the wooden box for his conversation with the Groom, but came out when the Keeper entered with the food. His foray into the broader space of the white box was brief and within seconds Richard had been unceremoniously shot and bundled back into the box, which was now truly his coffin.

After Richard's murder, the space was reactivated by the bells and the surge of flows as the characters filled the stage to begin the final scene. They distributed

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<sup>7</sup> The prompt book details that Green and a servant stand in the alcoves, and that Bagot picks up the throne. As Exton was played by Paul McEwan, who also played Bushy, this action suggests an ironic reunion of the favourites as participants in the murder plot.

themselves around the playing area with no demonstrable awareness of Richard lying in his open coffin centre stage, and the Queen entered and stood in front of the upstage centre doors, in the place she had occupied at the beginning. Northumberland, Ross, and Willoughby then spoke of sending to London, the heads of the rebels—her husband’s allies—and Hotspur announced the Abbot of Westminster’s death, and delivered the Bishop of Carlisle to Henry’s ‘kingly doom and sentence’ (V.6.23). Each of the lords exited after their communication, and the ironic laugh with which Hotspur spoke his last line already, perhaps, indicated his dissatisfaction with the new king. Henry delivered his speech of leniency to Carlisle, who then also left the space. As these exchanges were taking place, the Queen, unheeded and ‘unseen’, and yet a distinct presence, came downstage centre, crouched beside Richard’s coffin and laid a rose on his chest, creating a microsite of tenderness and intensely personal emotion, around which this talk of beheadings, justice and mercy, continued to flow. This was a very transient site, and was interrupted by the figure who came to place the lid on the coffin, at which point the Queen exited and the space was set for Exton to deliver his news.

Undoubtedly, having the Queen on stage in III.3 reminded the audience that ‘there is another figure for whom Richard’s descent to the “base court” will have consequences’ (Escolme 104), and suggested that the ‘[t]he Presence Chamber of the theatre offer[ed] the Queen a voice that the King’s fictional presence chamber [. . . could not] permit her’ (105). The Queen’s presence at Flint Castle, did remind the audience of the effects on her of the male power negotiations, just as the Duchess of Gloucester’s presence on the mound in I.1 mapped female loss and mourning onto political manoeuvring and male violence. However, I do not wish simply to interpret these female interventions as a physical mnemonic of a feminine condition of victimhood and enforced passivity, or reduce their complexity: the Duchess of Gloucester’s desire is always for vengeance, and Walker’s Queen was feisty in her anger at Bushy and Green’s refusal to take her seriously in II.2 and, in III.4, outraged as much for her own tarnished reputation as for the fate of her husband. I want to suggest that their role in establishing and maintaining the permeable space, and their interventions into spaces within the fiction, to which access is denied them in the text and usually in production, complicated ideas of presence and absence in a way that generated questions about their own political roles and the extent of their knowledge. Further, the Queen is an exiled widow by V.6 and her presence onstage in the final scene—afforded by the permeability of the space—was therefore paradoxical, and operated as a way of making the familiar resolution strange. Her interaction with

Richard's coffin did remind spectators of her fate; it did suggest that men who are bad rulers are also husbands and brothers, and lovers; but the juxtaposition of the Queen's act of affection and the new King's dispensation of justice, opened up another space: a potential thirdspace of radical openness, where one could ask whether, between the love and violence, between the throne and the grave, there might have been/be another way.

Moreover, within the dialogues about contemporary spatial concerns with which the production engaged, there remains the question of the location of women in the 'political' sphere. In bringing the silenced narratives of women into history, feminists 'have sought a position, a political stance, not in the rhetoric of time and progress but from a spatialized position' and—as demonstrated theatrically by the positions of the women within this stage environment—have 'adopted the margins, challenged the centre, transgressed borders, written over maps' (McDowell and Sharp 7-8). Feminists have deconstructed the division between political and non-political identities, and challenged traditional theories 'which locate politics solely in the formal arena of the state' by foregrounding 'the silent politics of the self, the body, the private sphere, of nature, [and] work practices' (McDowell and Sharp 395). However, 'within moves to recognize every act as political' it is important to remember that 'institutions of statehood and processes of nation building are of great significance in contemporary society' (396). Pimlott placed the Queen's act of commemoration of Richard and of her own story centrestage in the formal setting of Henry's court; and this juxtaposition of the male and female narratives in the same space also asked how a new political map of gender relations might be drawn: one in which both men and women are equally mapped into publically recognized political sites.

When Henry was left alone on stage the throne had been set once more on top of the coffin, and he hung his coat on the back of the gold-sprayed chair, went to lock the stage-right door, then returned and sat on the edge of the dais—now Richard's coffin—to deliver the first five lines of the recurring prison speech. I would like to unsettle the dominant reading of this *da capo* ending by suggesting the ways in which the space in these final moments offered Henry and the audience a set of questions and challenges.

Three aspects of the construction of this space worked to create a state of potential which coexisted along with the state of isolation and dilemma that the reiterated action and repeated lines expressed. The first of these was the striking white walls. In light of the major changes that occur in the course of the play, these might be seen as ominously concealing historical processes; yet simultaneously, the whiteness also invited a new inscription. Secondly, the microsite of the 'box', like the 'casket'



Gaston Bachelard theorizes, is an ambiguous site of remembrance and anticipation, which ‘contains the things that are *unforgettable*’ for both the owners and the legatees of the casket and its ‘treasures’ (84). In the ‘casket’—whether finely wrought and jeweled, or a rough wooden box—‘the past and present and future are condensed’ (84). The image of Bolingbroke seated on the box asked the audience whether to live in the present and forge the future the casket should be opened, locked, or buried.

Thirdly, in these closing moments, Henry was not actually alone onstage. I observed above that when the audience entered, a single figure was sitting next to the upstage left alcove. This figure, sometimes referred to in the prompt book as ‘Common Man’, also moved through the play in various serving roles: as a soldier or bodyguard, he trained a gun on the audience in IV.1 when they were unresponsive to Bolingbroke’s command to rise; and, as the Groom, he bundled Richard into the coffin, and later placed on the lid when the Queen had completed her silent tribute. When all the other characters exited and Henry sat on the box, he returned to his chair upstage left. Considering his presence opens up the possibility of interpreting Pimlott’s white box as a dual psychological landscape of memories: those of the absent commoners in *Richard II* and those of theatregoers reviewing their own past at the turn of the millennium. In his roles, ‘Common Man’ slipped between engaged and disinterested observer, subservient supporter of different factions, and troubled participant and witness. He shared spaces with the named characters, and yet attention would be focused on the ‘major players’. He embodied the challenge of whose responsibility it was to geo-graph the future of England and was a mirror image for the audience, encouraging them to assess their own roles in the stories being played out inside and outside of the white box.

The associative geographies that dominated reception of Pimlott’s *Richard II* focused attention on the need for a critical analysis of power and also revealed the role of institutions in conditioning our sense of space. Further, the roles assigned to spectators through these associative geographies were related to work and to the processing of information, and suggests the importance of conceiving the role of the spectator as one which continues after the event. Reception ‘can be prolonged by group discussion of all aspects from general appreciation to specific questions to other group members about small details of the production’ (Bennett 165), and in academic investigations such as I engage in here, and an awareness of the spectator’s (at least) dual

role as ‘expert’ and witness at Pimlott’s *Richard II* contributes greatly to this ongoing analytical process.

The white box was both product and shaping force, and constituted a fluid, permeable space of juxtapositions and co-presences, which enabled an appreciation of both the isolation and interconnectedness present in the play and inherent in the postmodern condition. More concerned with highlighting superimpositions and traces, than with establishing movement between specific named places, the stage environment exploited the grave, the throne, and the coffin to create microsites of reflection. The space and the play collaborated to articulate geographical anxieties about seclusion and openness, and place and identity pertinent to the production’s historical moment. Yet, if signs of a pageantry-filled past had been erased from the imaginative geographies of ‘this England’, so too had the signs of the multimedia, high-technology present, creating a space between the two. Five years into the new millennium, Trevor Nunn’s *Richard II* generated a space in which extensibility also operated, but through the instruments of the multimedia that were so conspicuously absent from Pimlott’s white box.

## Chapter Five

Global Village/Urban Realpolitic: *Richard II* at the Old Vic

Fig. 19 *Richard II* 2005. Dir. Trevor Nunn. Des. Hildegard Bechtler.

Trevor Nunn's production of *Richard II* was first performed at the Old Vic Theatre on Wednesday 14 September 2005. It was designed by Hildegard Bechtler. Kevin Spacey played Richard and Ben Miles was Bolingbroke.

In an interview with Ralph Berry, Trevor Nunn commented on the 'simple rule' by which Peter Hall had advocated that the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) should operate.<sup>1</sup> Hall had insisted that 'whenever the company did a play by Shakespeare, they should do it because the play was relevant, [. . . and] made some demand upon our current attention' (Berry 61).<sup>2</sup> It is evident that Hall's exhortation 'to consider each of the plays in the canon as if that morning it had dropped through the letterbox', and to ask what 'the play had got to say that very day' (61), was still alive in Nunn's thinking when he came to direct *Richard II* for the first time in 2005. In the production programme Nunn states that the current challenging of 'everything about our institutions [. . .] the issue of the monarchy and the republican debate [. . . and] arguments about [whether] our parliamentary system [. . .] is any longer valid, or just a kind of circus, a medieval showcase' are factors which 'all lend [. . . *Richard II*] an unexpected relevance' (n. pag.). For Nunn, the spatialization of this relevance involved

<sup>1</sup>Peter Hall was Artistic Director of the RSC from 1960 – 1968, and Trevor Nunn from 1968 – 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Nunn accepts the problematic nature of this idea, given that the demands of relevance had to coexist with the RSC's commitment to staging each of Shakespeare's plays once every five or six years (Berry 61).

a rejection of any attempt to recreate a medieval world onstage and instead he ‘opted to strip away traditional associations and go for a more contemporary production’. By doing this Nunn aimed to uncover ‘the essence of the play’ and also link it to ‘our current concerns about surveillance, the abuse of power and political integrity’ (PP n. pag.).

This chapter analyses the contemporary space-time generated by Nunn’s *Richard II* and draws on the concept of the non-place (Relph; Augé), and David Harvey’s theory of time-space compression to examine the network of spaces in which the characters in this *Richard II* moved. I argue that the geographies of this production exposed the weaknesses of the technologies of the globalized networks of time-space compression and problematized the perceived egalitarianism of a highly mobile world in which space has seemingly been erased by time. With few exceptions, the non-places were implicit rather than staged and the production mapped a series of very specific locations constituting traditional places of identity, relations, and history (Augé 52), which coexisted within a globalized world of time-space compression suggested by the use of technologies. My analysis of these places and non-places demonstrates the characters’ simultaneous submersion in, and resistance to, the placeless geographies constructed by the ever-accelerating pace of postmodern life.

#### (i) Maintaining Traditional Places

The stress that Nunn placed on contemporary relevance was mediated through the programme, which, unlike those for many other productions, including my other case studies, does not contain a play synopsis or information designed to make the audience aware of the historical source narrative and the play’s Elizabethan context. Although there is a chronology of Shakespeare’s life and works, which includes other key events, the emphasis is on ‘Shakespeare our contemporary’: a phrase used as the heading for an interview with Trevor Nunn about ‘approaches to Shakespeare’ (n. pag.).<sup>3</sup> Indeed, a common thread in the programme articles is the continued relevance of Shakespeare’s plots and characters to our present time. Michael Pennington, writing ‘on why Shakespeare continues to astonish us’, claims that ‘in any community with the leisure and determination to clear in its midst a space for storytelling, Shakespeare, an

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<sup>3</sup> This phrase, the title of Jan Kott’s book, came to resonate as productive of the ‘blood and steel’ aesthetic of the war machine for the Hall-Barton *Wars of the Roses*, and the evolution of the ideas it evokes, is demonstrated by the contrasting world of designer chic generated by Nunn’s *Richard II*.

ordinary man and not an intellectual, buttonholes us continually about what matters and what doesn't matter' (n.pag.).

The Old Vic has a long tradition of providing space for the telling of Shakespeare's stories, as Lilian Baylis created the first permanent Shakespeare company there in 1914, and a double-page spread in Nunn's production programme lists the previous productions of Shakespeare, including eleven of *Richard II*. But the imaginative geographies generated by Nunn's *Richard II*, underpinned by the rationale of contemporary relevance, produced a fictive world which distinguished his production from previous stagings in this particular place of performance.

Nunn maintains that, by packing his plays with 'contemporary references', Shakespeare demonstrated '[a] preference to keep his audience colloquially involved and in a state of spontaneous recognition rather than of satisfied scholarship' (PP n.pag.). Nunn's own commitment to 'exploring new and contemporary contexts for Shakespeare' (n. pag.) is clearly intended to promote amongst modern spectators a similar sense of recognition of their own space-time, and in *Richard II*, this aim was realized through Bechtler's scenography, which materialized the world of the play as a 'place of harsh political reality [. . .] controlled by mass communication' (Segall, *ST* 09/10/2005). This set the narrative firmly within 'the world networks of traffic and consumption' (Augé 115) that are both symptomatic and productive of time-space compression: thus, mapping Richard's England into the postmodern geographies of places and non-places.

Marc Augé argues that we currently live in 'a situation of supermodernity', which is characterized by 'accelerated transformations' expressed through 'three figures of excess': an 'overabundance of events, spatial overabundance, [and] the individualization of references' (40). These excesses entail high-speed transport and the creation of networks for the evasion of place, and have produced a surfeit of non-places, such as airport lounges, supermarkets, and service stations; all of which undermine the specificity of place with uniform designs that give the impression they could be anywhere, and afford a degree of anonymity to their users. Non-places are pervaded by texts which take multifarious forms, from simple arrows indicating direction and signs giving instructions; through the silent screens of cash machines, which facilitate tacit transactions; to advertisements issuing 'invitations' to identify with the 'ego-ideal' projected by retail images, and directing travellers and consumers towards 'encounter[s] with the self' rather than with others (99,105). The constant stream of 'buzz words of the day, advertisements and snippets of news', relayed through the print, audio and

visual media that fill non-places, alienates those who pass through them from a sense of the past; and '[e]verything', Augé argues, 'proceeds as if space had been trapped by time, as if there were no history other than the last forty eight hours of news, as if each individual were drawing its motives, its words and images, from the inexhaustible stock of an unending history in the present' (104-105).

Non-places are implicit in the shrinking world that Harvey argues has been produced by the rapidity with which goods, people, ideas, and information circulate, since they form part of the networks which facilitate these flows. Edward Relph argues that modern routes of transit eliminate social contact, cut the traveller off from the landscape, and force people to experience place 'as little more than the background or setting for activities and [. . .] quite incidental to those activities' (52). Relph sets the 'placeless geography' of most contemporary cultures against an 'authentic geography' (117). Comprised of places which are 'felt and understood [. . .] as symbolic and functional centres of life for both individuals and communities', an authentic geography is 'primarily the product of the efforts of insiders, those living in and committed to places', and 'declares itself only to those willing and able to experience places emphatically' (117).

Non-places and placeless geographies, then, threaten to obliterate history by their continual focus on present negotiations and images, and undermine the perceived importance of place. They force a reappraisal of conventional anthropological methodologies through which social relations are analysed as they produce encounters that deny the normal procedures of tradition and culture that produce the systems and places within which these relations exist. The opposition of places and non-places generates tensions between place as the source of cultural identity, security, and orientation (Relph 43), and mobilities as an alternative means of identity formation (Cresswell, 'Theorizing'). Rooting identities in authentic geographies raises questions concerning gendered, raced, and classed experiences of places and non-places: all urgent issues currently exercising geographers, and which are addressed in *Richard II* through the exploration of emotive bonds with England and the traumas of exile; Gaunt's construction of England as distinctly bounded space; and the gendered experiences of space demonstrated by the personal geographies of the female characters. Through the creation of specific, traditional sites, which clearly existed within the networks of non-places, Nunn's *Richard II* participated in this debate, by foregrounding the struggle to maintain traditional sites of identity and history constructed by and

meaningful to ‘insiders’, and by critiquing the perceived resistance of non-places to meaningful encounters and identity-shaping experiences.

Although this was an ‘aggressively modern-dress production [. . .] that ma[de] full use of TV screens, videos, microphones and machine guns’ (Billington, *G* 0510/2005), tradition asserted itself with equal force through the geographies of Nunn’s staging. This was evidenced by the construction of both the spaces of official political business and those domestic spaces of family life. The ‘solidly oak-panelled presence chamber’ (Dobson, ‘Shakespeare 2005’ 321), which ‘exude[d] a timeless atmosphere of parliamentary ceremonial’ (Jongh, *ES* 05/10/2005), and the sitting rooms of the Gaunt and York households, constituted statements of defiance in the face of the high-tech, postmodern world of this *Richard II*, and sanctuaries against the non-places proliferating outside their walls. In this respect, the production was another riposte to the pressures that had produced Pimlott’s white box; it provided an alternative perspective, demonstrating the barrier constituted by the inward-looking gaze, which fosters a tendency towards the preservation of those institutionalized sites of power/knowledge which, like the authentic places discussed by Relph, comprise some sort of stability in an unstable world. Generic spaces are transformed into meaningful locations by place-making activities, which comprise the numerous ways that individuals or groups inscribe these spaces and claim ownership, through, for example, the decor and the placement of objects, the establishing of particular routines and practices, and the drawing up of rules (Cresswell, *Place* 5-7). The place-making activities evident through the decor, accoutrements, and rituals of the parliament chamber and the domestic spaces constructed in this production represented the characters’ attempts to insulate the authentic places of both their personal and public lives against the relentless forces of technology and time-space compression, as well as against the disruptions in the state.

The first of the specific places was the parliament setting for I.1; a visual merging of the Lords and the Commons, where Richard’s wooden throne occupied a raised upstage-centre position in an oak-panelled chamber. At stage level there was a single row of low-backed wooden benches on either side, and between them, below Richard’s throne, a long wooden table. Here Bolingbroke and Mowbray (Sean Baker) rehearsed their mutual accusations of treason, ‘leap[ing] up from their opposing benches to argue, dispatch-box style’ (Bassett, *IS* 0910/2005). Extensive cutting conflated 1.1 and 1.3 into one scene—thereby avoiding the difficulties of finding a way of combining the medieval business of the lists with men in business suits, and resulting in a ‘verbal

joust' (Fisher, *WMCS* 14/10/2005). Here challenges relating to the delicate affairs of embezzlement and murder were issued, not by throwing down gages, but dossiers—no doubt evoking in the minds of some theatregoers, the 'dodgy dossier' associated with the correspondingly controversial issue of Britain's involvement in the Iraq War.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Matt Wolf identified Spacey as 'a Tony Blair-like Richard' (*IH* 12/10/2005) and Charles Spencer also saw Tony Blair in Spacey's 'self dramatizing' Richard, and Gordon Brown in Ben Miles' humourless, sharp-suited Bolingbroke" (*DT* 05/10.2005). The characterization and the scenography prompted the 'spontaneous recognition' on the part of the audience that Nunn felt was in keeping with Shakespeare's dramaturgy (PP n. pag.). Given these connections with the present day government in the distinctly non-medieval world of this *Richard II*, however, the absence of women was noticeable. In what seems a distortion of the contemporary reality on offer in the geographies of this staging, and a missed opportunity to bring the interrogation of gender and power into the play in a new way, the production erased from this late twentieth- /early twenty-first-century debating chamber, any indication of the 128 women MPs serving in 2005 (Women MPs n.pag.). Further, the conflation of I.1 with I.3, also wrote the Duchess of Gloucester out of the play, delaying any sense of a feminine presence until I.4—when Richard and his favourites were seen in a nightclub in the company of women—and, as Dobson points out, obscuring 'the extent of Richard's responsibility for the murder of the Duke of Gloucester' ('Shakespeare 2005' 322).

The action returned to this parliamentary chamber for IV.1, in which the deposition was preceded by a similar throwing down of dossiers. This sense of history repeating itself as Bolingbroke prepares to take power is crucial to the dramatic structure of the play and was underscored by the enactment of this second 'verbal joust' in exactly the same place as the first. The space worked powerfully as the location for the deposition scene. Bolingbroke stood upstage centre, before the throne and at the head of the long table. A chair was placed downstage centre for Richard, thus positioning him at exactly the opposite end of the space from where the audience had last seen him in this particular location. These spatial relations signalled Richard's reversal of fortune, whilst also placing him in a strong position theatrically (according to western proscenium arch conventions), indicating his status as the chief actor in the negotiation of his own downfall. Spacey's Richard here gave the impression of a man

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<sup>4</sup> 'Dodgy dossier' was a term that came to be applied to a 2003 report on Iraq. Certain aspects of the intelligence contained in the document, and which were significant in justifying the invasion if Iraq in 2003, proved to be highly questionable, both in their sources, and their manipulation in the report.



on the verge of a nervous breakdown and the embarrassment and frustration of the witnesses—particularly Hotspur (David Leon)—in the face of this disruption of decorum, was palpable.

The throne, which Richard had ascended at the opening of the play, was a crucial site in this scene. Like the mound, the coffin, and the gold sprayed chair in Pimlott, this throne was also a microsite whose potential and meaning was activated by the performers. Bolingbroke stood between Richard and the empty throne, which loomed large and forebodingly over the proceedings, declaring its symbolic status as the contested site of supreme national authority and simultaneously issuing an invitation, a plea, a dare, a reprimand. Richard selected this microsite as the space in which to calmly un-king himself, ensuring a significant location for his last ceremonial act.

The very recognizable materialization of the central site of political debate drew together early modern and postmodern cultural fictions of democratic processes. The parliament setting confirmed the contemporary alienation, felt by many British people, from the site where the decisions that are made impact on their local life worlds. It also articulated ‘the distinctive myth of the Tudor and Stuart period’, encapsulated in the claim made by MPs in the House of Commons, that the people were “representatively present” (Arnold 23). Oliver Arnold’s contrastive analysis of seventeenth-century depictions of the House of Lords and House of Commons reveals that, whilst defining themselves as the ‘epitome of the realme’ (Hartley 220-221, qtd. in Arnold 27), the MPs created a place outside of which nothing else existed, thus reducing the very ‘thousands’ which they represented to ‘an insubstantial, otherworldly place inhabited by ghostly people, the shadows of the body’ (Arnold 27). The inward-looking gaze that Arnold detects in the visual representations he analyses constructs the House of Commons as a bastion of self-absorbed privilege, and Nunn’s *Richard II* emphasized the continual flourishing of this traditional place as a site of vested interests, in spite of the pressures exerted by the surrounding networks and non-places, and the transparency suggested by the pervasive presence of cameras.

The exclusivity suggested by Nunn’s parliament setting fitted well with the absent commoners in *Richard II*, and their absence was underscored in the production as these common people were, in fact, seen as ghostly presences. They featured as nameless protestors making fleeting appearances in film footage of civil unrest, which was transmitted on the two large screens placed either side of the proscenium, located, significantly, just beyond the borders of the stage and at the front of the auditorium. The positioning of the screens also underscored this disjuncture between politicians and the

electorate. Whereas Pimlott's environment emphasized the inclusion of the audience by casting them in particular roles, the geographies of Nunn's staging persistently reinforced the great divide between rulers and ruled. The actor-audience relations afforded by the proscenium arch and architecture of the Old Vic were exploited so that these twenty-first-century MPs, no less than their Elizabethan and Jacobean counterparts, were able to banish even the technologically mediated, 'insubstantial, otherworldly place' of the commoners (Arnold 27) into the auditorium and beyond their own gaze. By means of the screens, these ghostly commoners intruded into the space of their fellow 'shadows of the body' (27): the audience.

The specificity of the parliament setting, with its air of timelessness, suggested resistance to change in a constantly changing world, where the experience of time-space compression can be as 'stressful and [. . .] deeply troubling' as it can be 'challenging, [and] exciting' (Harvey, *Condition* 240). The parliament space worked both as an unyielding 'container of social power' (255), and a place which provided its inhabitants with 'a sense of self that lies outside the sensory overloading of consumerist culture and fashion' (292) which was clearly in operation in Nunn's *Richard II*. The need to counteract the erosion of place precipitated by time-space compression, and to reassert the importance of place, challenged by the constantly multiplying and homogeneous non-places, also found expression in the two family homes represented in the production. The first of these, Gaunt's (Julian Glover) starkly suave drawing room (2.1.), was evoked by a leather sofa and a single painting of a country landscape. Here the aged statesman was seen dressed in a smart suit and sitting in a wheelchair, with cameramen and make-up assistant in attendance. In spite of his ill health, Gaunt purposefully propelled himself into position, choosing the painted idyll as a backdrop against which to deliver his discourse on 'this England', which was recorded for television transmission. Extracts from Gaunt's 'hymn' to the 'sceptred isle' appeared on the screens at various subsequent points in the action, such as the end of II.1, when Richard 'embarks on a war and seizes Bolingbroke's estate to pay for it' (Bassett, *IS* 09/10/2005). Whilst these 'packaged sound bites' (Segall, *ST* 09/10/2005) were seen by Sheridan Morley as detracting from the speech's 'original power and integrity' (*DE* 05/10/2005), Katherine Duncan-Jones viewed the repetition of the 'admonitory punch lines' as a constant reinforcement of place (*TLS* 04/10/2005). The screens, which relayed these potent statements from Gaunt's speech and periodically showed 'footage of black Daimler processions [. . .] and crowds of protesters' (Coveney, *I* 06/10/2005) were part of the material reality of the highly mediated world of the production.

However, the role of the screens in reinforcing place also lies in their iconic status as symbols of our contemporary, image-saturated world, where the transmission, and potential retransmission, flattens and distorts reality, at the same time as it seems to preserve it. Detached from the singularity of their moment, events can seem staged, and the potential for the manipulation of images and the replication of events in a style that suggests authenticity unsettles the possibility of ever apprehending reality. What, in the play, is a private conversation between two brothers, was ‘an organized press conference’ in which Gaunt went ‘well beyond his brief, forcing himself to his feet at “Is now leased out” (2.1.59) and shocking all present with the inflammatory rage of his rhetoric’ (Dobson, ‘Shakespeare 2005’ 322). The filming of Gaunt’s speech highlighted the opportunities for staging the self, which modern technology affords, and brought new nuances to this character, who is often perceived as the stable patriotic voice of the play.

The pastoral painting on the wall, a visual underscoring of the values that drive Gaunt’s lament, may have been an artefact which constituted a genuine ‘focus of contemplative memory’ able to generate a sense of self (Harvey, *Condition* 292), or it may have been a prop, crucial to ‘staging’ the ‘authenticity’ of his patriotism. However, the media presence put Gaunt’s home into the public domain and, in transmission, his residence became an interface between the official parliamentary space of debate and the space, ostensibly, of private concerns. In Nunn’s production, then, Gaunt resided in the interstices of the regimes that collide in the space-time of this production of the play: he embodied ‘the wilful nostalgia’ associated with ‘the flowering of the urge to *invent* traditions’, which is a major feature of globalization (Robertson 155), whilst also appropriating and exploiting the technological machinery of the accelerated international present for his own political ends. This Gaunt was also, however, an older statesman ‘plunge[d] into the maelstrom of ephemerality’ (Harvey, *Condition* 292) that characterized the England of Nunn’s production, and caught up in ‘the explosion of opposed sentiments and tendencies’ (292) that create the insecurities which now trouble a whole set of economic and political structures, and unsettle previously held ideas and aspirations.

It is in his own home that York recounts a defining moment in the overthrow of the monarch he has previously supported, declares his acceptance of the new regime, and explains that he is ‘in Parliament pledge’ for his son’s ‘truth / And lasting fealty to the new-made king’ (V.2.44-45). In Nunn’s production, York (Peter Eyre) related the transference of loyalties in the streets and confirmed the shift in his own allegiance from

a position of authority within a place made to state his values and confidence in the traditional English sites of knowledge and power. The room of V.2, represented by two leather sofas, was adorned with a photograph of gargantuan proportions of Aumerle (Oliver Kieran Jones) on his graduation day. This picture was an emblem of personal pride, and a message to visitors, and to the audience, that Aumerle ‘had been through the best prep school, been to Oxford, and had everything lavished upon him’ (Tracey, PIntv). It was also a response to the world beyond their dwelling. Through the display of objects that embody ‘ties to loved ones and kin, valued experiences and activities, and memories of significant life events and people’ the home can become ‘a private museum to guard against the ravages of time-space compression’ (Harvey, *Condition* 292), and the proportions of this photograph also signalled very clearly its role and value in the construction of the Yorks’ house as a place just as resistant to change as the wooden-panelled parliament chamber. The architectural background of Aumerle’s graduation photograph—the Oxbridge College, where traditions also attempt to guard against ‘the ravages of time-space compression’—mapped onto the York home another site of resistance to change and, thus, reinforced the role of this domestic space as a place of refuge in the face of whatever ‘tide of woes’ might come rushing on the ‘woeful land’ (II.2.98-99). The giant photograph proclaimed the Yorks’ pride in traditions and testified to the access their son had had to one of the most elite places of education.

Through this ostentatious display of a key moment in Aumerle’s glorious and privileged trajectory, the Yorks were able to substitute the sleek images of publicity and retail abounding in the non-places, which crowded the extra-perceptual space beyond their home, with their own conservative advertisement for a bright future dependent on the continued existence of these traditional sites of identity formation. The oversize photograph of Aumerle was crucial in making this room a place, and functioned as an ‘exhibit’, which was both a testimony to past achievement and an index of future possibility; although its functions were ironized by the uncovering of Aumerle’s involvement in the conspiracy to regicide.

The York family home was seen by Katherine Duncan Jones as ‘a refreshing glimpse of suburban domesticity [which provided] a visual antidote to many nightmares in the dark corridors of power’ (*TLS* 04/10/2005), but this house was certainly no less a male-dominated space than those ‘corridors’. York dictated the rituals which formed part of the couple’s place-making activities. Susan Tracey (Duchess of York) described Eyre’s York, as ‘a man who needed everything perfectly in its place’, and an adherent

of the ‘gin and tonic at six o’clock syndrome’ (PIntv). Having given York his evening drink, Tracey ‘backed away to the further sofa’ to play the part of ‘the open ear’ (PIntv). The geographies of this sitting room mitigated against closeness and Tracey saw the room’s lack of intimacy as mirroring their relationship in general.

One stark contrast between the York home and the corridors of power, however, was the absence of cameras and screens, and when the divided family passed through the spaces that led to the royal presence they were immersed again in the world of time-space compression that their home was a fortification against. Security cameras were in evidence in V.3, epitomizing the collapse of time and space. A television screen relayed the action in the lobby to where Henry was in conversation with Harry Percy and a larger screen placed upstage left relayed this exterior action to the audience, who were consequently able to share Henry’s simultaneous perspective on inside and outside. Hitherto, the camera had acted both as a means of controlling the action within the space of the dramatic fiction by making those who came under its gaze amend their behaviour for public consumption: Gaunt had overtly demonstrated a self-conscious approach to the delivery of his patriotic sentiments in II.1; and Bolingbroke was careful to preserve an image of bonhomie as he signalled to an exasperated Northumberland (Oliver Cotton), who was struggling with the map of Gloucestershire’s ‘high wild hills and rough uneven ways’ (II.3.4), that the cameras were rolling. In V.3 Henry’s security staff were seen loitering in the passageway and the arrival of each of the Yorks was seen on screen before they arrived onstage; here the cameras were a device by which those inside could observe and anticipate the actions of those outside.

Richard’s private space, however, contrasted sharply with the traditional sites of domesticity and government discussed above. Nunn’s setting for I.4, in which Richard criticizes the recently-banished Bolingbroke for his ‘courtship to the common people’ (I.4.24), was described in the Stage Manager’s scene breakdown as ‘Annabelle’s’. The location was summed up by the *Sunday Times, Culture* as ‘a bass-heavy nightclub’ where the king ‘h[ung] out with his courtiers’ (11/10/2005), and by Rebecca Tyrrell, as a place with ‘leather sofas, [and] glass tables for lining up the coke [. . . where spectators saw] Spacey in his shirtsleeves like a city type chilling out after work’ (*STel* 09/10/2005). At ‘Annabelle’s’ Richard received the news that Gaunt was ill via a mobile phone message. The mobile phone is highly emblematic of time-space compression, and one of the simplest manifestations of extensibility; through technology, the disembodied words of Bushy flowed into the space, making an impact on it, in spite of his physical absence.

The placement of I.4 in Annabelle's and Bushy's intervention from a distance exemplify how Nunn located the characters within a network of interconnected places and non-places, and also raises awareness of how the environment in which spectators see dramatic characters significantly contributes to their perceptions of them and/or clashes with their preconceptions. The seeming appropriateness or incongruity of the setting affects how audiences experience the play and influences interpretations of both the characters and the transactions that are carried out in those places mapped by the stage environment. For Alastair Macaulay, seeing Richard 'smoking with friends in a private club' highlighted the contrast between the private and the public more strongly than any other production had 'dared' (*FT* 06/10/2005). Further, since Nunn reduced the feminine presence by cutting I.2, the audience's first glimpse of female intervention was this nightclub, where unnamed women provided company for the king and his favourites. The presence of these women emphasized the exclusion of the Queen (Genevieve O'Reilly) from both her husband's official state business and from his private pleasure. Mapping this space into Richard's personal geographies constructed him as a playboy-king and generated images that would have reinforced Bolingbroke's later accusations that Bushy and Green had 'in manner with [. . . their] sinful hours / Made a divorce betwixt his Queen and him' (III.1.11-12), but allayed interpretations of Richard as homosexual by showing him associating with women who were objects of sexual interest or, as Genevieve O'Reilly unequivocally put it, 'whores' (PIntv).

Allowing the audience to see Richard in the contrasting places of his work and leisure also reinforced his mobility in contrast to the Queen (who, in Nunn's production, did not appear in any other than her textual scenes), and suggested the frequency with which she was abandoned. Indeed, the relocation to contemporary England inspired Nunn to draw parallels between Diana, as 'our modern icon of a forlorn princess', and 'the Queen's fractious relation with Richard' (O'Reilly, PIntv). These connections were activated through the choice of setting for II.2, in which the Queen was seen at the centre of a photo shoot. The white drape used for the photographer's backdrop set off her bright pink Armani dress, presenting her to the audience as a glamorous 'young it girl' (Tyrrell, *ST* 09/10/2005), and confirming her use to Richard as 'a photo opportunity' (O'Reilly, PIntv).

This staging of the Queen as an object of the camera's eye also suggested her relations with the extra-perceptual world of the production, but in a way significantly different to the camera's mediation of the images of the masculine characters. Gaunt's speech and Bolingbroke's farewell to England employed the camera's ability to produce

moving and talking images, which can then be disseminated *ad infinitum* across national and global space-times. In contrast to the men, who were broadcast complete with stirring speeches, the Queen would be reduced to her ‘submissively posed’ (O’Reilly, PIntv) and silent image, and her picture distributed via some glossy magazine—typical of those publications found in non-places such as airport lounges, the foyers of luxury hotels, and supermarkets—filled with ‘articles, photos and advertisements’ which confirm the need ‘to live on the scale (or in the image of) today’s world’ (Augé 99).

The garden of III.4, where the Queen was next seen, was evoked simply by an open expanse of green devoid of any objects. In preparing to design the set for Nunn’s *Richard II*, Bechtler had collected images of ‘spaces that had no intimacy’ (PP n.pag.), and the garden was paradoxically a peaceful yet bleak environment. Although there were no cameras rolling and no suggestion of surveillance or collapsing of inside and outside, even here the media-gaze intruded indirectly on the Queen’s privacy. The *Sun* newspaper made ‘a polished guest appearance, as the reading of the royal gardener’ (Hagarty, *Sun* 07/10/2005): a light-hearted visual joke in a scenario of intense power struggles, perhaps, but resonant, nonetheless, with the tenacity of the paparazzi, who had proved themselves capable of hounding Princess Diana to her death in a Parisian tunnel, and then participating in mourning the passing of ‘the people’s princess’. This tabloid newspaper, like the camera of II.2, was a material object that signalled the relations of the royals with the extra-perceptual world and indicated that, like the figure in whose life Nunn and the company found correspondences, this Queen might also be pursued as she fled across the channel to France after her enforced ‘divorce’ from Richard.

#### (ii) Reassessing Placeless Geographies

The non-places in the world of this production were, for the most part, implied rather than realized onstage; an ever-present, but largely unseen, network of sites constantly exerting pressure against the timeless places of national ceremony (parliament) and private refuge (the Gaunt and York family homes). But the production staged action in two places which can be configured as non-places: one of which demonstrates their particularly disturbing potential as spaces of dangerous encounters, and one which offers a more light-hearted enmeshing of Nunn’s postmodern geographies with the local milieu of the theatre.

Aural cues informed the audience that Bolingbroke's departure (I.3) was set in a railway station and, as Northumberland's intelligence in II.1 informs us that the exiled duke goes to France, it was likely that Nunn's Bolingbroke was off on the Eurostar: an enjoyable instance of real world/fictive world slippage, given the theatre's proximity to Waterloo Station and the director's affinity with 'Shakespeare's preference to keep his audience colloquially involved' (PP n. pag.).<sup>5</sup> But the choice of specific place for this scene also underscored the speeded-up world of this production, in which the transport network reduced distances and made return from exile—a two-and-a-half-hour train journey from capital to capital—a much easier proposition than in the medieval world of the source narrative. Bolingbroke's farewell took on propagandist overtones since his leave-taking was filmed, so he was highly conscious that his words were destined, not simply for the ears and eyes of those who were physically present, but for an entire population who inhabited the extra-perceptual spaces of the fictive world. As with Gaunt's 'this England' speech, clips from this discourse of departure were periodically re-broadcast on the screens.

The scene in which Exton tells Henry he has killed Richard (V.6) took place in an airport hangar and the murdered body was presented to the new king in a flight case. This space, beyond the authentic geographies of Henry's lifeworld, and therefore not relational, historical, or concerned with identity formation (Augé 77-78), was, for him, a non-place, and becomes particularly resonant when read through Augé's theory. To operate successfully within a non-place it is necessary first to prove your commonly accepted identity through such documentation as facilitates mobilities and exchanges in the postmodern world. For example, at an airport check-in, the traveller presents her/his passport and then, 'freed from the weight of his [sic] luggage and everyday responsibilities', can enjoy the anonymous freedom of the concourse or departure lounge (Augé 101). Ironically, anonymity is achieved through confirming identity and only 'the innocent', who successfully prove their individual identity, can enter the non-place and acquire the temporary identity shared with other users. A translator's note points out that the expression '*non-lieu*', which Augé uses consistently for 'non-place', 'is more commonly used in French in the technical juridical sense of "no case to answer" or no grounds for prosecution': a recognition that the accused is innocent' (102). Here, then, in the airport hangar, within the laws of non-place, Henry could suspend all the demands of place, attend to the business in hand, assume himself

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<sup>5</sup> This resonance would not apply in the same way if the production was revived at the Old Vic today as the Eurostar now operates from St Pancras.



innocent, and later resume his kingly identity at the exit.<sup>6</sup> The play, though, will not allow this degree of ‘give’, and Henry does acknowledge his guilt, leading him to reject the seemingly easy alternative that the airport hangar of Nunn’s production offered: the secret removal of the body and ‘end of story’.

The combination of setting and action worked to challenge the untroubled anonymity associated with non-places and unsettled the assumption that place, rather than non-place, is ‘the centre of action and intention [. . . and] “a focus where we experience the meaningful events of our existence”’ (Relph 42, incorporating qt. from Norberg-Schultz 19). In setting this scene in the non-place of the airport hangar, Nunn emphasized Henry’s response to Richard’s death as a moment of decision. The location stressed the disturbance Richard’s murder caused by negating the anonymity of the non-place and defusing its potential as a space of un-conscienced transgression and freedom from everyday responsibilities.

What Henry learned in the airport hangar was that access to—and often exit from—both places and non-places comes at a price. Nunn’s protagonists inhabited exactly the sort of high-tech world familiar to twenty-first-century spectators: a world in which many things appear to be free at the point of access. In the networks of postmodernity, mostly unseen but typical of the world of Nunn’s *Richard II*, entering particular spaces, and generating flows of goods and information requires only the typing in of a password, the swiping of a card, the verification of a PIN. Within the combined authentic and placeless geographies of this production, the play operated as a means of exposing the contemporary mythologies of free flow in the postmodern world and forced a reconsideration of the cost of access and mobilities. The hangar provided a non-place, detached from the traditional places in which the audience had previously seen Bolingbroke/Henry: the crowded parliament chamber, where he had affirmed his own integrity in I.1, and proclaimed his own coronation in IV.1 (318-319); and the office at court where he had dealt with Aumerle’s treachery.

Owing to Nunn’s reordering of the text, Henry’s encounter with the corpse in the flight case followed directly on from Richard’s murder in Pomfret Castle (V.5). In the prison scene the cost of access had been set firmly within the monetary economy and, before being left alone with the fallen monarch in his cell—succinctly defined by a flat which partitioned off a small downstage area containing a sink and a bed—the Groom slipped the Keeper a few banknotes. Although the religious theme was

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<sup>6</sup> I recognize that Augé’s theorization of non-places privileges the experience of the user, and for a critique of this perspective see Sharma.

underplayed in this production, Spacey clearly evoked crucifixion when, on hearing the music, he climbed up on the radiator to look through the narrow rectangular window, then turned to the audience, leaned back against the wall, and extended his arms along the window ledge. Juxtaposed with this visual echo of Richard's comparison of his own betrayal with Christ's (IV.1.170-171), which superimposed Calvary on his cell, the financial transaction between the Keeper and the Groom performed a curious reversal of Judas's thirty pieces of silver, whilst also typifying the wordless negotiations carried out in the globalized economy in which the England of the production was embedded.

### (iii) Revealing Resistances and Other Spaces

Although accepting that the production was 'lively and entertaining', Michael Billington admitted to being left 'wondering what kind of England we [. . . were] in' and to questioning 'how Richard retain[ed] absolute power in an England of mobile phones and text messages' (G 5/10/2005). By the same token, it strained belief that the Queen would actually be the last to know of her husband's fall; especially with all those ubiquitous cameras rolling and continual televised transmissions. However, the inconsistencies arising out of this spatialization of *Richard II* led Billington to ask the most pertinent question: 'What kind of England are we in?'; and the correspondences between our own world and that of the world of Nunn's *Richard II* made this an enquiry that resonated on both sides of proscenium. The postmodern space-time of global flows is produced and sustained by a combination of people and machines, and always open to the possibility of error, vandalism, and atmospheric disturbance (Thrift, 'Hyperactive' 31). The communication networks on which so many areas of twenty-first-century life have come to depend cannot always be controlled and do 'fail' at the most important moments. Moreover, the mobilities and networks of time-space compression need to be scrutinized in full recognition of how 'social differentiation' determines experience of them (Massey 62). Through the inconsistencies produced by 'resistances' in the text to the stage environment in which it was emplaced, Nunn's *Richard II* performed a critique of the world it represented. The production exposed the weaknesses of the contemporary space of globalized communications that Tony Blair had celebrated in his turn-of-the-millennium speeches, and confirmed the inability of time to annihilate space. And, in this England, the Queen's information deprivation accentuated her isolation.

The internal geographies of the Old Vic theatre also underscored the failure of the globalized techno-revolution to reach everyone. The poorer citizens of Britain, and often the older generation, remain unconnected to the World Wide Web, unable to access and contribute to the continual messages that fly around the earth, and left subject to the endlessly manipulable images of television. In a similar socio-spatial situation of disadvantage, those in the uppermost parts of the circles are still underprivileged ‘citizens’ in this theatre, as distance prevents them from apprehending the finer details of the action, and the standees at either side of the Lilian Baylis circle are only able to see two-thirds of the stage. Spacey’s assumption of the role of artistic director at the Old Vic had also effected the latest repositioning of the theatre within the cultural landscape of London. His UK Shakespeare debut as the eponymous king contributed towards making Nunn’s *Richard II* one of the hottest tickets in town; and Bechtler’s designs and the Armani costumes constructed a fictive world oozing with wealth and style that seemed, judging by the sartorial style of some of the playgoers, to spill over from the stage.<sup>7</sup>

The high-tech, high-fashion, postmodern playworld produced by these intricate negotiations between text, theatre, design, and Hollywood star—which generated the fruitful anomalies that I have discussed above—was, nevertheless, framed by images that resonated with historical ideas of kingship. On entering the theatre auditorium, spectators would have seen, in the centre of the stage, a glass cabinet edged with gold, which contained the full regalia of the king, and ‘glow[ed] like an irradiated skeleton’ (Clapp, *O* 09/10/2005). This image of untouchable monarchy—guarded only by such a brittle barrier—was echoed in the final scene when, after Henry and the lords had exited, Aumerle was left alone staring at the dark wood coffin, which occupied the same place on stage as the glass cabinet, and on top of which the crown had been placed. The lights faded to focus on the casket containing Richard’s corpse, reducing its beam to single out the crown before the final blackout. The production was therefore framed by two microsites expressive of the concept of the king’s two bodies. Spectators first saw the royal body of state on display as the robe and crown, pristine and protected; then the ceremonial body, the man robed in majesty in place in the wood-panelled chamber; and finally, the mortal body, concealed and in process of decay. Both the visual prologue and epilogue were images of the body confined: contained initially by an invincibility implied by the trappings of status, and ultimately by the inevitability of mortality.

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<sup>7</sup> The programme credits Bechtler with the set and costume design, but also states that ‘costumes for Kevin Spacey, Genevieve O’Reilly and other courtiers [were] designed by Giorgio Armani’ (n. Pag.).

As images which marked the beginning and end of Richard's trajectory, these microsites were a realization of Nunn's appraisal of the play as an investigation of 'a man's journey from being a king and all the artificiality and ritual that surrounds that, to being a man stripped of all those things' (Curtis, *ES* 13/09/2005). Nunn's seemingly compassionate view of Richard's road to essential humanity was countered by Nicholas de Jongh, who claimed that through the image of 'the crown guiltily laid upon his coffin' the production 'sentimentalize[d] Richard', and he complained that 'Spacey's unlovely, unstable, monarch merit[ed] no such posthumous sympathy' (*ES* 05/10/2005). I am inclined to agree with de Jongh that this Richard was not appealing; but if Spacey's interpretation disturbed audiences with the manner of his life, then the production also asked if they were disturbed by the manner of his death; the final focus on the microsite of the murdered body urged the audience to remember and judge both. The focus on the coffin recalled the challenge issued at the end of Pimlott through the similarly provocative emphasis on the box containing Richard's body: that of deciding how to deal with those dark concealed spaces where the past, present, and future converge. Whilst in Pimlott, Henry was facing away from the box, in Nunn's final image Aumerle and the audience shared a moment of directing their gaze at Richard's coffin, bringing them together in an act of looking that spanned the divide previously emphasized by the inward looking-gaze of parliament.

Nunn's contemporary spatialization of *Richard II* participated in current debates concerning the maintenance of authentic geographies amidst the proliferation of non-places in a postmodern world of excesses and time-space compression. The presentation of traditional strongholds of government and domestic life suggested an ongoing, felt need for bounded spaces where personal and national identities are constructed and nurtured, but the use of non-places for certain scenes also critiqued the contention that such placeless geographies resist meaningful personal encounters. Further, by making the characters the spectators' contemporaries, this spatialization grafted audiences into the fictive world whilst simultaneously excluding them from it; by using giant television screens as a border of separation the production invited audiences to consider the means by which they process technologically-relayed information about events to which they have no direct access.

The technologies of this England afforded the extensibility of the characters, but the seeming incongruities between Nunn's high-tech, postmodern world, and the events of the play revealed how the very systems that create and sustain global networks are

themselves vulnerable and periodically inefficacious—whether by accident or design—and indicated the inability of rapid transport and communications to create the egalitarian society they are supposed to facilitate. The focus in the opening and closing moments, on the glass case and wooden coffin respectively, confirmed the microsite of the ‘casket’ as an important and eloquent spatiality in the geographies of the production.

This chapter has examined the staging of traditional sites within the fictive world, and in the next chapter through my discussion of *Richard II* at Shakespeare’s Globe I bring into play a multilayered place of performance which is also caught up in dialogues relating to traditions and personal identities. The theatre, whose name identifies it with the playwright it celebrates, has been a site as contested and ambiguous as the England of the play under discussion in this thesis.

## Chapter Six

Play-house/Work-house: *Richard II* at Shakespeare's Globe

Fig. 20 *Richard II* 2003. Dir. Tim Carroll.

Tim Carroll's *Richard II* opened at the Globe on 8 May 2003. Richard was played by Mark Rylance and Bolingbroke by Liam Brennan. It was an original practices (OP) production and therefore aimed to 'explore ways of staging that would have been possible at the time of the first Globe' (PP 16). OP productions featured an all-male cast and involved meticulous research in order to replicate costumes and props through the use of materials and techniques that approximated, as closely as possible, those of their historical counterparts. Another fundamental aspect of the OP productions was the investigation of the potentials of the topographies of the playhouse and particularly the relations between performers and audience facilitated by the same light conditions and the closeness of the spectators, especially the groundlings, to the stage. The production programme for *Richard II* includes a list of ninety-six people who contributed to the production values and names those working on such fine details as braids, lace, and buttons (19), but the absence of any named set designer/scenographer indicates the extent to which the architectural form of the space was considered a key player in shaping the theatrical event.

<sup>1</sup> The 2003 season also included two all-female productions (*Richard III* and *The Taming of the Shrew*), which, explored aspects of Elizabethan and Jacobean staging, but fell outside of the OP rubric on the grounds of gender.

The role of the theatre in the plays performed there had always been envisaged by Sam Wannamaker, who instigated the Globe project in 1970. One of the driving forces behind the quest for ‘maximum authenticity’—which was Wannamaker’s stated aim for the reconstruction—was that the space should offer opportunities for the investigation of Elizabethan theatre practices, and provide a means of revitalizing Shakespeare’s plays for modern audiences (Gurr 34). The process of design and construction entailed the consultation of five specific bodies of evidence: pictorial panoramas of London, the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, archaeology, Tudor building techniques, and Tudor iconography (Gurr 6). The theatre is therefore an amalgamation of geographical site; sight as the spectacle of performance; and the citation of the past in its architecture, its building materials and techniques, and in the use of simulacra of Elizabethan and Jacobean costumes and artefacts on stage.<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding its strictly determined architectural form, the Globe is susceptible to the modifications that can be made by the particular plays staged there, and collaborates in different ways with the diverse dramatic narratives presented. This chapter considers the ways in which Mark Rylance’s interpretation of Richard linked to his ideas about the Globe’s function as a place to play and contributed to the particular intervention this production made into the multiple identities of this polyvalent space. Rylance’s playful use of inverted ceremony in III.2—Richard’s return from Ireland—and the deposition scene (IV.1) introduced a carnivalesque element, which was further developed through the Globe’s adapted form of the early modern tradition of the post-play jig. This sense of carnival foregrounded the work-play dichotomy of the fictive world, whilst simultaneously engendering reflection on the tensions between labour, leisure, and learning that have featured in debates about the Globe’s place in the geographies of culture, tourism, and education.

By configuring the Globe as a place of ‘*serious play*’, Carroll’s *Richard II* produced a space for the convergence of work, play, and learning, which stands in counterpoint to Littlewood and Price’s unrealized dream of a London Fun Palace. The production critiqued the contention that places which stimulate creative relations between work-play and leisure-learning need be free from signs of cultural authority and limited to the sort of ‘indeterminate, flexible architecture’ (Crimson n. pag.) that Littlewood and Price thought conducive to a politically progressive participation in

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<sup>2</sup> The twenty-five years of research and debates through which the design of the Globe was arrived at have been extensively documented. See Day; Egan; Gurr and Orrell; and Mulryne and Shewring.

performance and/or witnessing. An analysis of Carroll's opening scene shows how the work-play dichotomy was established and demonstrates how sustained reflection on a single object can unfold narratives and reveal geographies which illuminate the world of the play.

#### (i) Positioning the Globe

Pauline Kiernan, who documented the final stages of building and monitored developments over the first two seasons, describes Shakespeare's Globe as 'a bundle of paradoxes [. . . that] defies easy categorization' (3). The paradoxical identities of the theatre are clear from the lexical and syntactical difficulties involved in deciding how to refer to it. Kiernan's book title, *Staging Shakespeare at the New Globe*, gives one possibility; and the term 'new Globe' is also adopted by Dennis Kennedy ('Shakespeare'). But Kiernan also refers to 'the reconstructed open playhouse', which suggests the process of consultation of historical documents that informed its design and building. Alastair Macaulay used the phrase 'the new/old' to describe the 'latest' addition to the bank of the Thames (*FT* 26/08/1996), indicating the impossibility of dissociating the building's contemporaneity from the historicity of its 'predecessor'. The *Independent* spoke of the 'reconstruction of the original Elizabethan theatre' (15/10/1995), and Benedict Nightingale referred to 'the replica of Shakespeare's wooden O' (*T* 03/08/1998): both terms which focus on the idea of a copy. Robert Winder's declaration: '*Shakespeare's Globe* reopens for business today, just 383 years after the original playhouse burnt down' (*I* 21/08/1996), typifies this linguistic dilemma and hints at connections between the Globe and mythical narratives; whilst acknowledging the destruction of the first Globe in 1613, Winder's use of the verb 'reopens' suggests that this is the original, which had simply been out of use and has now been ushered back into action; he erases the second Globe and gives the impression that the first building somehow arose mysteriously from the ruins like a phoenix from the ashes. This treatment of the building as if it had always been there, combined with the paradoxical acknowledgement that for a number of centuries it was not, constructs Shakespeare's Globe as a spectral presence that overrides history. The several terms noted above: 'new', 'old', 'original', 'reconstruction', 'replica', and its existence within imaginative and material geographies, suggest the complexity of the Globe's identities and the



difficulties of defining its position within the cultural landscape of postmodern of London.<sup>3</sup>

The Globe is further complicated by the discourses within which it has been situated according to the perceived social and political ramifications of the processes and practices through which it was constructed and those which continue to (re)constitute it. For John Drakakis, it was literally ‘a site of struggle’ in which capitalist enterprise defeated local interest and essentialist ideologies produced a cultural imperialism that undercut the project’s purported social ideals (Drakakis 27, 39; see also Holderness ‘Sam Wanamaker’). For Silverstone, the Globe’s attempts to produce a past reality that can never actually be materialized locate it within discourses of absence and loss (‘Shakespeare Live’). In 1996 Shakespeare’s Globe was voted the top tourist attraction in Europe on the grounds that it was an attraction in itself with a strong international presence, a place of entertainment, and a catalyst in contributing to the regeneration of the Bankside area of London’ (*I*, 13 December 1996). The fulfilment of these criteria implicates the Globe in problematic discourses of heritage.<sup>4</sup> In 1995 the Globe’s bid for £12.4 million of lottery funding had been rejected by the Arts Council precisely because of its connections with tourism, causing Zoe Wannamker to complain that the project had been ‘dogged by sniffiness and the view that it’s something which is touristy and Disneyland and down-market’ (qtd. in Macdonald, *I* 20/09/1995). Dennis Kennedy, however, maintains that the commodification, implicit in the Disneyland analogy, ‘does not in itself destroy the meaning of cultural products or represent fraud’ (‘Shakespeare’ 182); and W. B. Worthen—stressing that his associations are by no means ‘invidious’—argues that ‘the distinctive force of Globe performativity’ is achieved through its participation in ‘several paradigms of contemporary entertainment’, which result in it being ‘a theme park, [. . .] living history, [. . .] a heritage site, [. . .] urban redevelopment, [. . .] participatory experience [. . . and a] theatre’ (84).

Since the Globe is a theatre and an attraction in itself, some of its identities are bound up with forms of leisure constructed as tourist ‘products’—spectacle, entertainment, and education—and it can be discussed in terms of certain ‘dualistic understandings’ through which tourist places are located: inauthenticity and authenticity; familiarity and alterity; work and leisure; and present and past (see P.

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<sup>3</sup> I will refer to Shakespeare’s Globe simply as the Globe, except where clarification is necessary, and one of the phrases above will be used.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the polemics of heritage see Samuel; Lowenthal *Heritage*; Walsh; and P. Wright.

Crang, 'Performing' 143). It is therefore situated physically within geographies of leisure and conceptually within recent sociological and geographical discourses on tourism. These discourses acknowledge the appeal exerted by the 'playfulness of place', and construct tourist sites as 'places to play' which activate mobilities and engender 'host' and 'guest' performances (Sheller and Urry 1, 6; Bærenholdt et al. 139-140). These performances—which for guests include such activities as strolling, eating, and photographing; and for hosts the counter-activities of guiding, serving, and posing/smiling—can be complicated when the 'roles' of tourist employees overlap with those of tourists, unsettling relations between work and leisure (P. Crang, 'Performing' 151). Both host and guest performances produce and mobilize knowledge and create various forms of capital (Bærenholdt et al. 148; and Avellano 71).

Multiple modes of performance occur at the Globe: ranging from the presentation of the histories of the first, second, and third Globes by tour guides; through the interactive performance of dressing/being dressed in the costume demonstration; to the conscious decision by some spectators to be groundlings, as the 'authentic' way of experiencing a play there. Audience performances include the adoption of roles in which they are cast by the actors—and which might require spectators to respond by supporting or denouncing certain characters or factions—or the performance of resistance by refusing to participate in this casting, (cf. Silverstone, 'Shakespeare Live' 44-45). Silverstone's contention that certain Globe productions may draw some spectators into complicity with 'hegemonic narratives [. . .] concerning gender, sexuality and national identity' ('Shakespeare Live' 45)<sup>5</sup> makes all the more urgent a continual analysis of the collaborations between this playhouse and individual productions and an ongoing consideration of the performance opportunities Globe productions offer the spectator. Moreover, responding to these opportunities or witnessing the responses of others affect how spectators experience the play and how memories of it are subsequently mobilized.

Places to play do not exist in isolation, but within a whole network of mobilities; they are mediated and transformed by the ideas disseminated about them, and are therefore themselves also mobile: constantly made and remade by the performances they generate and continually changing their position on the 'global stage' (Sheller and Urry 8). They are 'inscribed in circles of anticipation, performance and remembrance'

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<sup>5</sup> See Silverstone's discussion of the performance of female characters by male actors at the Globe, and her examination of audience performance, particularly in relation to *Henry V*, 1997 dir. Richard Olivier ('Shakespeare Live' 38-45).

(Bærenholdt et al. 144-45) and these processes contribute to forming visitor responses as '[people] try to make sense of [. . . places] by performing them in accordance with meanings attributed to them': an occurrence which is complicated by the fact that 'people attribute different meanings to the "same" place' (Bærenholdt et al. 32).

The borrowing of performance language by sociology and geography and the function of theatres as places of play(s) suggests a fruitful exchange between theatregoing and these recent theorizations of tourism. Furthermore, since Carroll's *Richard II* exploited a carnivalesque playfulness to problematize work-play relations in the playworld and the place of performance, the general playfulness that operates at the Globe was nuanced by this production in ways that contribute to this current dialogue about 'places to play'.

#### (ii) A Place to Play-Work

As a curious convergence of past and present, and histories and mythologies, the Globe offers visitors—whether there to see a play or to tour the theatre and the exhibition—an encounter with place that operates on various levels and opens up the possibility of 'performing' an enjoyable construction of imaginative geographies. Referring to playgoing at Shakespeare's Globe, Jeremy Kingston claimed that

[A] visit to this lovingly reconstructed theatre is a joyful excursion. True, the uncarpeted stairs and the great nails on the door panels, the painted pillars and the neatly thatched roof, are two years old, not 402, yet the combination of period details gives some sensation of what it must have been like to listen to the holy texts of our drama when they were newly penned (*T* 01/06/1998).

Kingston's reverence for Shakespeare's works is not unproblematic and articulates the controversy of the cultural authority attributed to Shakespeare that has featured in debates about the Globe project. However, his remarks suggest the appeal exercised by the playful interactions between authenticity and pastiche that the Globe embodies. Kingston's pleasure in playgoing was engendered, in part, through the replication of the colours and textures of a long-disappeared place, and although he acknowledged the contemporaneity of the materials that produced these colours and textures, he was, nevertheless, empowered by them to imagine their historicity. Juhani Pallasmaa argues that natural materials, such as stone, brick and wood 'allow our vision to penetrate their surfaces and enable us to become convinced of the veracity of matter' and that, in contrast to 'the machine-made materials of today [. . . which] tend to present unyielding

surfaces to the eye without conveying their material essence or age’, natural materials ‘express their age and history, as well as the story of their origins and their history of human use’ (31-32). In his ‘joyful’ encounter with the Globe, Kingston experienced a sort of ‘veracity of matter’ as even the new and un-aged natural materials were able to convey ideas about origins and histories. Visitors are encouraged by the space—both as bounded area and as constituted by constantly changing social relations—and by the tour guides (‘hosts’) to engage with and in the playfulness that is one of the Globe’s qualities.

The Globe’s identity as a place to play was further developed by Mark Rylance during his time as Artistic Director (1995-2005). Rylance wanted to promote the Globe as a ‘social space’ (season brochure 1999), and saw it as a place that offered an alternative to the ‘increased isolation’ of the contemporary world (season brochure 1999). The closing remark of his message in the 1999 season brochure: ‘I do hope you will be able to come round’, suggests an open-house or home space; and in the 2002 season brochure he added an additional phrase to the message: ‘I hope you will be able to come round and play.’ This invitation was expressed in the 2003 season brochure in the form of a compliment to the audience’s ability to play: ‘It is the presence of your intelligent, humorous and generous imagination in the Globe which inspires our creation’ (see also PPs 2003: 1). Rylance constructed the spectators as fellow players and playmates, but also as co-workers in the product(ion)s, thus complicating the work-play binary of theatre as labour for the actors and leisure for the audience.

The photographs in the 2003 brochure for the Season of Regime Change—the year following Rylance’s invitation to ‘come round and play’—comment on the work-play relations of the playhouse, which is always simultaneously the actors’ work-house, and mediate the playfulness of Carroll’s *Richard II*. These images show the actors in various states of preparation for, or waiting to, play-work and take potential spectators/visitors through a tour of the non-stage spaces that figure in the actors’ geographies of work.<sup>6</sup> By ‘staging’ the actors in modern dressing rooms with radiators and fridges and in a green room with plastic cups and a drinks machine, the photographs playfully undercut the Globe’s ‘authenticity’, and deconstruct ideas of the Globe as a place of time travel by opening up the usually unseen geographies of the playhouse—those workaday places of the actors and production team—and transferring

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<sup>6</sup> All the photographs relate to *Twelfth Night*, dir. Tim Carroll (2002, revived 2003).

them into the domain of audience consciousness.<sup>7</sup> Presenting (potential) audiences with these images of the actors' ambivalent relations with play and work invites/ed reflection on the similarly ambivalent leisure-labour dynamic into which Carroll's *Richard II* drew spectators: a dynamic which was enacted through a 'prologue' (discussed below) which opened up the tiring house for the spectators to see the actors preparing.

Carroll's role was that of 'Master of play'—a title he believed Rylance employed partly as a means of reminding directors 'that play should be involved' (Amer, *TN* 15/05/2003)—and a reappraisal of the potentials of play and playfulness was central to the cultural work in which Carroll's *Richard II* engaged; although this initially seems to be at odds with the over-riding theme of the plays that constituted the 2003 Season of Regime Change. *Richard II* was performed in repertoire with *Richard III*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Edward II*, and *Dido, Queen of Carthage*; the weighting towards tragedy and the serious business of flawed rule, problematic gender politics, and abandoned love, may not seem at first sight suitable material for play. The months preceding the opening of *Richard II* had seen the lead up to, and initiation of, the Iraq War. Although the season probably received its title before the outbreak of the conflict (Dobson, 'Shakespeare 2003' 276), the potential resonances added by Britain's role in fighting for regime change in the 'Middle East' recalls Michael Pennington's claim that 'the [history] plays pick up like iron filings whatever crisis is in the air' (Wardle, *T* 02/02/1989).<sup>8</sup> But if the plays, particularly those about the eponymous kings, could be identified as articulating very present concerns in relation to 'a modern world which increasingly turns to violence in order to effect security or regime change' (Rylance, season brochure 2003; PPs 2003: 1), the season also offered audiences a group of plays which would 'explore[. . .] power and change on three levels: in our states, in our marriages, and in our relationship to the divine' (Rylance, season brochure 2003; PPs 2003: 1). The plays in repertoire that year found an apt context in contemporary politics on the domestic, national, and international scales; and *Richard II* maps all three of these spaces of power negotiations.

Carroll had no doubts about the 'urgent relevance' of the play for modern audiences and the enduring pertinence of the questions that *Richard II* asks: 'When is it

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<sup>7</sup> The photographs facilitated an imaginative possession of the whole building on the part of visitors, and the 2004 season brochure suggested a further development in this shared possession as nearly all the photographs are of those other players and co-workers: the spectators.

<sup>8</sup> Another of Shakespeare's history plays was also provoking thought about questions relating to conquest through violence and war as Nicholas Hytner's production of *Henry V* was running at the National Theatre.

right to overthrow a legitimate ruler? When is it right to use violence to do that? At what point can you say you have overthrown that ruler? Is it necessary to kill that ruler in order to secure the new regime?’ (Amer, *TN* 15/05/2003). These are sobering questions and suggest a generic constriction; indeed, Adrián Daumas, who directed the Spanish premiere of *Richard II* in 1998, described it as a play with ‘no satire, no comedy, not even a comic character’ and which therefore ‘imposes a limitation on [. . . directors] not to make a comedy of a tragedy’ (Higgins 481). However, the sense of carnivalesque playfulness I identify in Carroll’s production has been found in the text by scholars who have applied Bakhtin’s ideas of carnival and heteroglossia to *Richard II* to foreground the problematic and constantly shifting relations between order and disorder, feasting and fasting, and work and play (Ruiter); and the instability of identities which make particular actions ‘playful’ (Bergeron, *Richard II*). David Bergeron states that ‘[i]n what may seem a contradiction we often refer to *Richard II* as a “serious play”, and suggests that ‘it is indeed “serious play”’, culminating in the deposition scene, where the problem of misrule becomes explicit, prominent, theatrical and carnivalesque’ (35). In the scene on the Welsh coast and the deposition scene, Rylance engendered a sense of the carnivalesque, adding to the ‘serious’ questions articulated by Carroll, another pressing enquiry regarding the status of kings and clowns. The negotiations between *Richard II* and the Globe, facilitated through this sense of the carnivalesque, complicated the usual construction of the theatre as everyday for performers and holiday for spectators, and the production worked to make both fictive world and performance space a place of ‘serious play’.

Audience members who had arrived sufficiently early would have seen, through the open tiring house doors, the actors putting on makeup and costumes: preparing, and/or being prepared for their roles. This idea had emerged from the centrality of the costumes to the OP productions, and as some of the actors’ garments were ‘made with very expensive material, intricate stitching, and patterns that had to be laced together’ they often had to be assisted by more than one dresser (M. Brown, personal communication). Brown thought that having the audience watch him get into costume contributed to his preparation as an actor, and felt ‘as if the audience were also being prepared to embark on the journey with [. . . him]’ (personal communication). The ‘prologue’ fused this domain of the actors with the audience space, melding both into a combined site of preparation, problematizing the work-play binary by showing the actors getting ready to play and encouraging the spectators to join in the work by entering into this process. The work-play theme was subsequently amplified by the

opening sequence which confirmed the king's prerogative to play in areas of his kingdom where most of his subjects were forbidden both rights of work or leisure.

At the beginning of Act One, Richard and his followers entered through the central door singing and bringing with them the deer they had killed. The dead deer—evocative of the white hart of Richard's personal emblem and suggestive of the arrested motion of a graceful creature—was set down centre stage where it remained for the duration of the scene. It signalled that the men were returning from a hunt and served as a symbol both of Gloucester's death and of Richard's own impending demise. Throughout the ensuing dialogue, the accusations and defences made by Bolingbroke and Mowbray (Terry McGinty) flew across the stage and at times over the head of the king who stooped at various points to stroke the dead animal, a gesture that suggested a sympathy with the creature whose death he had been party to, and provided an ironic parallel with the murder of Gloucester discussed in the scene. The actors ranged across and around the stage constantly forming and dissolving patterns, which hinted at the dynamics of the relationships between characters, and foreshadowed the machinations of the factions and shifting loyalties that are set in motion as the plot unfolds.

Although Dobson viewed the dead deer as an outdated prop typical of 'pre-war Stratford revivals of *As You Like It*' and saw Rylance's interactions with it as distracting ('Shakespeare 2003' 276), I would argue that the deer, as well as playfully undercutting ideas of authenticity, worked at various levels as a more critical evocation of the contested geographies of the world of the play and those of its moment of composition. At the most basic level, the deer was a prop which served to suggest place; Shakespeare conflates the meetings at Shrewsbury and Windsor detailed in Holinshed and since the latter was the site of the more extensive discussions it could be assumed as a dramatic setting for the opening scene of the play. The deer, then, served as metonym of the sixteen royal parks around Windsor, setting up the king and his jovial hunting party as an embodiment of 'merry England' and giving the audience their first glimpse of Richard as majesty at leisure. To present the king as partial to leisure pursuits was not a novel ploy: in Tree (1903) the dispute of the nobles interrupted Richard's game of bowls; in Bogdanov (1989) Richard was first seen 'in a long silk housecoat, toying with a piquet board against a background of cards, music, and easel painting' (Wardle, *T* 02/02/1989); and in Peymann (2000, revived 2006) Richard was playing billiards with his favourites when the action began. However, these are private pastimes and do not have implications for public land use, whereas the representation of hunting as sport is, in the context of the play's narrative, shot through with wealth- and status-related

conflicts of interest concerning work and survival on the one hand, and leisure and profit on the other. Further, interrogation of the centre-stage placement of the dead deer reveals the darker and more complex cultural geographies of privilege and enclosure of medieval and Elizabethan England.

The animal's corpse worked, not merely as a location marker, but as an evocation of the extra-perceptual spaces: the vast forested areas of England, which were the play-spaces of medieval and Tudor monarchs. These forests, which provided habitats for deer and other game, were initially considered 'natural' spaces from which 'medieval consumers' could take whatever they needed (Birrell 78). But the Anglo-Norman kings conferred on English woodlands a 'legal character' which impacted dramatically on their 'physical character' (Rubin 3; see also Kirby and Kirby 239; Nicholls 57). Under Forest Law, woodlands were appropriated for royal use and numerous forest officials 'enforced the exclusive right of kings and lords to timber and fruit, game and wildlife' (Rubin 3; see also Birrell 82). The protection of deer for hunting was a major driving force behind the formulation of the Forest Laws and the taking of deer was strictly prohibited. For all but a small group of people 'with defined rights [. . .] it was forbidden to remove even a branch from a tree' (Birrell 78), and there were severe punishments for those who transgressed (Alexander 448; Birrell 80; Manning 16; Nicholls 57). Apart from providing ludic terrain for the king and the aristocracy, the forests afforded the monarch a source of gifts, in the form of venison and timber (Birrell 82), and a source of revenue, obtained by charging for the right to work in the forest or from the rents levied on those who applied to clear sections of land in disafforested areas for the cultivation of crops and for pasture.

In Richard II's reign, attempts to control and fashion the forests and restrict their usage were intensified by the passing of the Game Laws and also by legislation which increased the annual income required to keep greyhounds for hunting (Rubin 131). In addition to being excluded from the parks and suffering the despoiling of crops by deer which escaped via fences in disrepair, those whose property was 'within a free chase' were forbidden to enclose their cultivated fields (Manning 19). This made the woodlands highly contested spaces; resistance to the Game Laws 'ranged from anti-enclosure riots to poaching' (Manning 16), and peasants and landless gentlemen infringed the laws sometimes through small-scale, informal action, and sometimes through more organized, long-term operations (16). By the time Shakespeare dramatized Richard's reign, however, the forests of England had seriously diminished as 'the rapid development of overseas trade and the expanding population led to sharply



increased demands for timber for ships, houses and iron smelting' (Holmes 69), a situation exacerbated by the dissolution of the monasteries and the 'heavy fellings of timber throughout the period of break-up of these large estates' (69). By 1503 the destruction was so extensive that 'an Act of Parliament referring to the situation in England stated quite simply that the forests of the country had been "utterly destroyed"' (70).

The dead deer could be read as suggesting the king's penchant for hunting or indicating that the action was set in, or close to, the forest, or at the door of the castle, to which the prize of the hunt would be brought. However, theatrical geographies seeks to tease out the resonances produced by the close reading of the stage environment, and to interrogate the potential significance of the extra-perceptual spaces evoked in performance, as well as those directly perceived, and to look for the metanarratives suggested by the space as it is constructed in performance. Sustained investigation of a single object in the space can open up material and symbolic geographies that enrich understanding of the play and the production. Here, the dead deer was a locus for the convergence of mediaeval geographies of privilege and protest, and Tudor geographies of illegal commerce, suggesting a whole land-centred parable of contest and exclusion beginning with the Norman conquest of England, passing through the enactment of the first Game Law in 1381 after the Peasants' Revolt of Richard's reign, and extending to a comment on the rapidly disappearing Elizabethan forests, which continued to support illicit trade in venison and deer skins used in crafts such as glove-making.

Significantly, the appropriation of the forests as the preserve of monarchs was justified on the grounds that 'the king could go to forget his cares in the chase and to enjoy quiet and freedom' (Birrell 81). By opening with the arrival of the king and his hunting party, the production staged the tensions between work and play, and everyday and holiday that are articulated in the text (cf. T. Rutter 69-77; Ruiters 42-63), and which were fundamental to the dialogue between the play and the place of performance generated by this *Richard II*. It established the kingdom as ludic space, where the cares of office licensed Richard to play. But the nature of this ludic space was radically altered when Richard the hunter became the hunted, a change which was ritually marked on the king's return from Ireland.

## (iii) Inverted Rites: Unsettled Sites

On his return from Ireland, Richard not only greeted the fictive earth of the wooden platform stage, but he greeted the ‘living earth’ of spectators assembled before him in the Globe. During the speech in which he expresses a maternal love for England and calls down ‘spiders that suck venom’, heavy-gaited toads’, stinging nettles’ and ‘lurking adder[s]’ on his ‘foes’ (III.1.8-20), Rylance moved to the downstage edge of the platform and offered flower petals, which he then dropped into the proffered hands of a number of spectators in the front row of the yard. At one level, this action confirmed the non-illusionist capabilities of the performance space and exemplified its potential to suspend the ‘physical or psychological dividing line[s] between playgoers and players’ (Kiernan 16). At another, it was a profession of Rylance’s trust in the audience’s acceptance of his invitation: they had come round to play, and he was playing with them. However, this articulation of relations—which connected actor and this group of spectators in a gesture of giving and receiving—also evoked the sacramental rite of Holy Communion and created a ceremonial space. Here, Richard was configuring himself as both priest and king, in the same way as he adopts the roles of both ‘priest and clerk’ in the transfer of kingship later in IV.1 (173), and was playing with his own identity and with that of the audience. In bestowing the flowers, Rylance/Richard made the audience his kingdom and conferred the kingdom on them. This invented rite marked a modification and an intensification of the ludic space suggested in the opening scene by the hunting party. By encouraging the audience to play with the player-king, Rylance transformed the performance space into the subversive space of carnival. Moreover, the ‘communion’ flowers—a substitute for the holy body of Christ/king/nation—were imparted to that motley crew, who (by journalistic accounts), generally did not know how to behave in public.<sup>9</sup> Rylance’s invented rite prefigured, and was as subversive as, Shakespeare’s invented decoration rite by which Richard un-kings himself in IV.1. The distribution of the petals to the groundlings—a gesture which suggested a handing over of the holy body and the body politic to the ‘people’—deconstructed the sacred; unsettled the previous sense of

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<sup>9</sup> In an article entitled ‘Shakespeare Becomes pantomime: The Audience Dominates Performances at the Globe’, Alastair Macaulay stated that ‘[t]he audience is never so happy as when it can boo, hiss, cheer or roar with laughter’ (*FT* 01/06/1998), and this observation is typical of many comments made by reviewers on audience behaviour during the first seasons.

ludic space of which the king was the privileged owner; and prepared the way for a more explosive eruption of carnivalesque space in IV.1.

In keeping with the OP rubric, costumes, props, and hangings had been thoroughly researched and, like the theatre, they had been made from materials most closely resembling those available in the sixteenth century and using techniques employed at that time. The throne—a finely crafted piece of stage furniture, based on the Archbishop’s throne in York Minster, which is ‘one of the earliest examples of an upholstered chair in England’ (PP 23)—was placed in a strong location up-stage centre to denote the parliament setting. As I indicated in my analysis of Nunn, the throne is an important microsite in IV.1 and it was given a particularly dynamic role in this production by Rylance’s interactions with it, as he challenged its authority through his ‘self-carnivalization as “a mockery king of snow” [IV.1.259]’ (Liebler 83).

For Gurr and Ichikawa, the throne in this scene ‘serves as a character in the drama, standing empty while Bullingbrook and Richard argue in front of it, disputing whose right it is to occupy it’ (57-58). Whilst in Nunn the royal chair on a raised dais upstage was a silent, if eloquent, participant in the negotiations, at the Globe, Rylance gave it a voice by conversing with it during his rite of un-kinging. Maria Jones notes that ‘[o]ne of the most inventive parts of Rylance’s performance in this scene was to treat the empty throne as a “character”’ (173) and she describes how Richard talked to the throne during his ‘decoration’ ceremony, ‘inclin[ing] his head to listen as though he were receiving instructions at each stage’ (173). Jones interprets this as Richard’s ‘personalization of his relationship with the *locus*’ and an affirmation of his real status, since ‘only the true king could converse with the seat of divinity’ (173). However, the subversive operations of carnival activated by Rylance’s performance set in motion a more complex interplay between rites, sites, rights, and identities.

The sequence was seen by Georgina Brown as Richard ‘chat[ting] to his former self on the throne’ (*MSun* 25/05/2003), and described by Paul Taylor as ‘an astonishing routine with an invisible ventriloquist’s dummy to satirize, guilt inducingly, his new painfully sundered identities’ (*I* 16/05/2003). The idea of the split self suggested by these critics articulates, from a modern psychological perspective, the theory of the king’s two bodies: the unity of the vulnerable body natural and the infallible body politic in the person of the king. Ernst Kantorowicz argues that in Richard’s discourse on mortality on the Welsh coast (III.1) kingship ‘comes to equal death’ and that the idea that ‘[t]he king “never dies” [. . . is] replaced by the king that always dies’; consequently ‘[t]he fiction of the oneness of the double body breaks apart’ (30).

Similarly, Righter suggests that when Richard, in the wake of Salisbury's bad news, asks 'Am I not King?' (III.2.83), it is 'as though the individual and the ideal had already suffered a minor psychological division' (111).<sup>10</sup> In the deposition scene at the Globe, Rylance physicalized this division; he enacted the break which divorced the body politic from the body natural by miming every phase of his de-coronation as a dialogue with the throne. But what Richard performs here is an invented rite and therefore implicated in 'the peculiar logic' of carnival, which is the logic of 'the "inside-out" (*à l'envers*) of the "turn about," of a continual shifting from top to bottom, from front to rear, of numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanations, comic crownings and uncrownings' (Bakhtin 11). The sense of the carnivalesque that Rylance introduced into this scene unsettled the identity of both the microsite of the throne and the identity of its imagined (absent) occupant; it also confirmed the potential of the playhouse as a festive space of play.

The theatre has always been 'a privileged place of special license and liberty, in which there can take place a suspension of the ordinary rules and conventions of social order', and where '[t]he stubborn realities of existence become malleable in the solvent of theatrical fantasy: rigid hierarchical relations can be inverted, kings can become clowns and *vice versa*' (Holderness, *Shakespeare's History* 112). In this mock uncrowning Rylance's Richard performed the unholy question: 'Who is the king and who is the clown here?', thus, making way for the equally unholy answer that they were possibly one and the same. If kings can be clowns and vice versa, then the authority and sanctity of holy rites, holy sites, and holy persons is brought into question. Rylance's Richard had already shown his penchant for playing with identities on the beach in Wales, when he became both priest and king, and conversing with the throne—at a point in the play where his right to the contested site of the royal seat is in doubt—he uncrowned himself as monarch of the realm, whilst simultaneously crowning himself as player-king: not the king of the 'flawed rule' (Righter 109), but the carnival king, whose very purpose is to celebrate the subversion of identities. Alexander Leggatt states that when Richard reverses the coronation ceremony, he 'speaks [. . .] in a stately formal manner, quite unlike his earlier flippancy' (69), and Kantorowitz attributes to this scene a 'sacramental solemnity' (35). However, Rylance's conscription of the throne as a player in his comic version of the invented rite of de-coronation contravened these ideas

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<sup>10</sup> Anne Righter married John Barton and the feature on the king's two bodies that she wrote for Barton's production programme drew on her investigations of the image of the world as stage in early modern drama and ideas of the player-king.

regarding the performance of this scene. By engaging in a playfulness that disturbed the assumed sobriety of the lines of his deposition speech (IV.1.202-221), Rylance challenged both the identity of the royal seat and the royal successor.

His actions, nevertheless, also provided a strong physical metaphor for the fragility of power, which both looked back to his lamentation for dead kings (III.2.156-170) and ahead to the absence of identity that he expresses later in the scene (IV.1.254-255). Having pronounced his de-coronation and wished Bolingbroke long life in 'Richard's seat' (IV.217), Rylance mimed the digging of the 'earthy pit' (IV.1.218), which he sees as his imminent destination. This business of digging a grave centre-stage collapsed interior and exterior spatialities and located the microsite of mortality at the foot of the microsite of ultimate national authority. The juxtaposition of the grave and the throne provided a visual echo of the 'hollow crown' speech (III.2) by bringing together in the same space 'that small model of the barren earth / Which serves as paste and cover to our bones' (III.2.154-155) and 'the regal throne', which Bolingbroke has proclaimed he will ascend only moments earlier (IV.1.113).

Rylance's carnival play was interrupted by Northumberland's (Albie Woodington) repeated insistence that Richard read the 'grievous crimes' committed by himself and his followers (IV.1.223-224; 242; 268) and brought to an end when the serious work of establishing the successor to the throne was completed by Bolingbroke's announcement of his coronation (IV.1.218). The reassertion of official ceremony, which undercut the player-king's carnival antics, ironically conferred on him 'a kind of anonymity [. . . which is] a characteristic of carnival as sketched by Bakhtin' (Bergeron 36): the sort of anonymity which Richard confers on Bolingbroke and Mowbray through their banishment (36).

Bolingbroke's anonymity is temporary as he re-emerges in a number of guises: wronged gentleman; purifier of the nation; and, eventually, contender for the throne. Likewise, at the Globe, Richard's temporary carnivalesque anonymity was a prelude to his emergence in a 'third body', which broke out joyously at the end of the production. This third body was a product of Richard's self-dramatization performed through the inverted rites and tapped into the subversions inherent in carnival. Rylance's inscription of the grave in the very presence of the unsettled locus of authority reinforced his reference to his own death and to the mortality of kings. His performance of these words and actions—'even miming his dead self speaking from the grave' (Jongh, *ES* 15/05/2003)—employed 'the mode [. . .] of carnival to joke with the complexities of death and to mock the establishment rituals that try to order it' (Gorfain 166). But his

performance also invoked carnival immortality, its ‘burying and reviving’ (Bakhtin 21) and its ‘conception of the world as eternally unfinished: a world dying and being born at the same time’ (166). Through his particular carnivalesque playing of, and with, the deposition scene, Rylance’s Richard performed the two bodies of state and person. However, the production also brought into play a third body: not the ‘individual body’, but ‘the great generic body of the people’, for which ‘birth and death are not an absolute beginning and end but merely elements of continual growth and renewal’ (Bakhtin 88).

Richard appeared as this third body in the effervescent jig performed by all the actors at the end of the production. The performance of a jig at the end of plays was a feature of Globe performances during Rylance’s time as Artistic Director and seen as particularly appropriate to OP productions as the concluding jig was an aspect of playgoing for Elizabethan audiences. Roger Clegg’s analysis of the content and use of jigs in the early modern playhouses suggests that there are few correspondences formally between these after pieces and their third-Globe counterparts. The early modern jigs were products of the ‘proto-capitalist playhouses’ which accommodated an intensely physical dramatic heritage in which ‘music, singing and dancing mingled with the variously evolving branches of slapstick, sword-play, bawdry, satire and farce’ (Clegg 68); they ‘teemed with clownish antics, knockabout and subversive folly’ (68), and were attacked for several reasons, ranging from their subject matter and language to their perceived potential to attract unsavoury types and provoke unlawful or antisocial behaviour (74). The jigs performed at the third Globe do not represent such transgressive shenanigans and each one is choreographed for the particular play, with the character relationships in mind (S. Williams n. pag.). Sian Williams, the Globe’s choreographer, points out that its definition as ‘dance song game’ suggests the jig’s playful nature, and sees its potential as both a celebratory device for uniting audiences and performers and a ritual of recuperation from the effects of tragedy in performance (n. pag.).

My informal discussions with fellow playgoers reveal that the jigs at the new Globe have worked variously as a feel-good factor, a distancing effect, and a disconcerting disruption to the closing action and the thoughts it generates. However, in Carroll’s *Richard II*, the jig operated as an extension of the play, confirming the carnival dynamics of the production, uniting audience and performers in a festive space, and inviting spectators to share in and interrogate the reversals suggested by carnival. The *Richard II* jig drew on what Clegg sees as the enduring appeal of its early modern

ancestor: the ability to tap into ‘what Bakhtin has termed the “rejuvenating laughter” of carnival’ (77).

As an extension of the play, the jig also suggested the continued tensions between work and play. David Ruiter argues that confusion as to which force—‘order/festivity, everyday/holiday, court/tavern’—is dominant is ‘a necessary, or at least an inescapable, irresolvable aspect’ of the second-tetralogy plays (17). He maintains that ‘festivity is ever-present, whether in the fore or the background’ in these works and that ‘the motion it creates in its relation to order is pendulous’ (35). Ruiter argues that, as a result of these alternating shifts between order/everyday and festivity/holiday, neither force can cancel out the other, and that ‘if one side were ever to gain complete victory over the other, if order were ultimately to murder festivity or festivity slay order, it would indeed be a short-lived victory’ and would stifle both time and ‘dramatic motion’ (35). In Carroll’s production, Richard’s vibrant presence as a dancer in the jig—particularly the move in which he and Henry swung each other by the arm—enacted the carnival regeneration that resolves the antinomies of life and death through rejuvenation (Knowles 4), but without effecting a distinct resolution of the social and political dichotomies in which carnival is implicated. Rather, the closing jig embodied the perpetuation of the struggle between order and disorder, rule and misrule, and work and play, which were foregrounded in this production from the beginning through the establishment of the kingdom as Richard’s personal ludic space, and through his playful inversion of sacred rites on the coast of Wales and in the Deposition scene.

In asserting the dynamics of carnival, Carroll’s *Richard II* authorized the Globe as a space of creative play, and modified Bergeron’s figuration of this drama as a ‘serious play’ rather than a ‘serious play’ (35), by figuring it, in performance, as ‘serious play’. In bringing together Eileen Allmann’s conception of play as ‘both an emancipating, visionary experience and a didactic performance of that vision’ (17), and Marianne Novy’s reassertion of the potentials of play as fun and entertainment, rather than merely a means of psychic and spiritual self-improvement (322), the production configured the Globe as a place where these two aspects of play could be witnessed, experienced, and applied to the narrative that *Richard II* dramatizes, and thereby created a space which realized, in part, Joan Littlewood and Cedric Price’s vision for a place to play in London.

Littlewood and Price worked together in the 1960s on a project they called the Fun Palace. This ‘university of the streets’ (Littlewood 130) was to be a ‘laboratory of fun, providing room for many kinds of action’ (130) and was to include a ‘fun arcade’, a

science playground’, an ‘acting area’, and a ‘plastic area [. . .] for uninhibited dabbling in wood, metal, paint, clay, stone, or textiles’ (131). Littlewood’s aim was to combine pleasure, entertainment, and education in a place of total informality and flexibility and to deconstruct the false division between work and leisure by providing a place where people could indulge in creative play as observers and/or observed. She wanted an open, multi-level space, which would afford visitors the possibility of ‘settling down for several hours of work-play’ (130). The key features of the Fun Palace, however, were to be its neutrality, ephemerality, and mutability. Both Price and Littlewood desired to create a space which, in keeping with Price’s other work, ‘would not impose physical or psychological constraints upon its occupants’ (Cline and Carlo n. pag.) and which would be ‘endlessly adaptable to the varying needs and desires of the users’ (Matthews n. pag.).

The idea of a place constructed out of a combination of Littlewood’s social and political commitment to the arts and Price’s conviction that architecture should be ‘enabling, liberating and life-enhancing’ and should empower people ‘to think the unthinkable’ (Design Museum n. pag.) is enthralling, but the Fun Palace was never built, so we will never know if this planned ‘blank space for our projections [. . .] would have encouraged participation, or its neutral frame caused disinterest and anomie’ (Crimson n. pag.). The dream of the Fun Palace was ideologically grounded in the conviction that work, play, and education are not only compatible, but can operate in a mutually enhancing relation to each other within a single place: a belief that has underpinned the Globe project since its inception. The Globe is, of course, an entirely different space from the imagined Fun Palace. It is a highly determined space that proudly flaunts all the specific features that bear witness to the intense scholarly investigation that produced it and displays, in various forms—from the Shakespeare quotations that adorn the gift shop walls, to the historical information in the exhibition centre—the cultural authority of the playwright it celebrates. However, the Globe as constructed through Carroll’s production of *Richard II* was, for the duration of its run, a Bankside Fun House, which brought together in the same place the academic and the popular in a playful interrogation of what it means to be caught between work and play; to have the pleasures and cares of kingship; and, within the theme of the Season of Regime Change, to ask who has rights to rule a nation and claim ownership of space.

The resurgence of carnival embodied in the jig at the end of Carroll’s *Richard II* spread a playful joy across the stage and throughout the yard and galleries. Since ‘[c]arnavalesque play dissolves separations of audience and performer as well as



hierarchies of privilege and subordination' (Gorfain 166), this appearance of the 'resurrected' player-king effected a union of on- and off-stage players into an unruly 'grotesque body'. To construct the spectators as the 'body of the people' is to construct them as a body 'opposed to the official repressive order' (Gash 179); this body has a parallel in the collective of believers that Pauline theology constructs as the resurrected body of Christ: a body which is also opposed to institutionalized order, and which transgresses boundaries of class, gender, and nationality and reverses hierarchies of honour and shame' (179). Both these bodies: the secular, anarchic body and the body of believers are offensive, dangerous, and vulnerable, but also exuberant. The transgressive equality of religious and folk traditions was conferred on the Globe audience by the production's final act of playfulness. However, it is important to note that the jig followed hard on an act of uncrowning performed in a sober manner that contrasted with Richard's self-decoronation in IV.1. When the 'untimely bier' (V.6.52) bearing Richard's body had left the stage, Henry removed his crown: a gesture which articulated questions regarding his means of attaining power, thus also leaving the audience to ponder this issue.

The Globe as a place to play engenders actor and audience performances which are mediated by the multilayered dramatic narratives of the plays. The 'playfulness of place' that generally operates at the Globe was nuanced by the performance of kingship and clownery that Carroll's *Richard II* offered, as by providing a place for *serious play* the production afforded spectators the fun of playing with rites, sites, and identities, whilst also co-opting them into the critical work of interrogating the rights and responsibilities of rule and regime change. The space of uncertainty produced by Henry's solitary and interrogative uncrowning was interrupted and transformed by Richard's re-emergence in the jig, which configured the place of performance as festive space. The re-emergence of dead characters was a feature of Michael Boyd's production of *Richard II*, and the haunted space produced by these resurgences is the subject of my final case study.

## Chapter Seven

Haunted Space and Commemorative Geographies: *Richard II* at the Roundhouse

Michael Boyd's *Richard II* was first performed as part of *The Histories* at the Courtyard Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon and then transferred to the Roundhouse, London, where the first performance took place on 1 April 2008. The designer was Tom Piper; Richard was played by Jonathan Slinger and Bolingbroke by Clive Wood. Donnacadh O'Briain was Assistant Director throughout the project.

In contrast to the approach taken to the RSC's *This England*, Boyd's *Richard II* was part of a project which emphasized continuity, and was underpinned by a cyclical conceptualization of history (K. Wright 4). A sense of cohesion was achieved through the application of theatrical strategies that the company built up throughout the process of rehearsing and performing the first tetralogy, and which then fed into their work on the plays in the second tetralogy. All three of Stratford's theatres had been used to stage *This England*—The Other Place for *Richard II*; the Swan for both parts of *Henry IV* and the *Henry VI* trilogy; and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre for *Henry V*—and the different nature of each of these places of performance, combined with the different approaches of the individual creative teams, produced distinct spatializations of each of the reigns dramatized. In contrast, for *The Histories*, Boyd and his creative team worked exclusively in the Courtyard, and this consistency actively contributed to the production of echoes perceptible in *Richard II* and throughout the cycle.

This chapter analyses the haunted space produced by Michael Boyd's *Richard II* in the context of *The Histories* at the Roundhouse. Drawing on Derrida's hauntology and cultural geographers who have explored the relations between ghosts and place, I consider the dramatic force of the spectres that Boyd introduced into *Richard II* and their impact on the geographies of this staging. I discuss the ways in which the theatrical languages employed by the company produced a series of *multi-ghostings* that encouraged the generation and reactivation of memories, and borrow the concept of the mental map to suggest how these place-specific memories may have been maintained beyond the theatrical event. Taking into account discussions of monuments by cultural geographers and Edward Casey's theory of places of public memory, I argue that Boyd's *Richard II* produced a distinctive memorial space, and that *The Histories* configured the Roundhouse as a place of both personal memories and public memory.

The ghost is well established as a dramatic figure, and Shakespeare's ghosts, especially the Ghost in *Hamlet*, have provoked extensive discussions as to their moral

significance, spiritual provenance, and potential dramatic force.<sup>1</sup> More recently, however, scholars in other disciplines have become concerned with ‘ghostly matters’ (Gordon *passim*). My analysis is informed by the work of cultural geographers and sociologists who have engaged with the ghost as a psychological, social, or political figure, and/or have sought to develop a poetics of haunting which provides a vocabulary for exploring and articulating ‘the momentary revelations often just “felt”; immutable qualities hardly obvious to the eye, described most of the time as an atmosphere, a mood; or . . . the uncanny, that surround us’ (Degan and Hetherington 1). Avery Gordon states that haunting is ‘neither pre-modern superstition nor individual psychosis; [. . . but] a generalizable social phenomenon of great import’ (7). Through her explorations of the ghost in literature, protest, and as implicit in the strategy of disappearance employed by military dictatorships, she urges the importance of investigating how the ghost operates as ‘a crucible for political mediation and historical memory’ (18). For several cultural geographers this interest in ghosts and haunting has emerged from an awareness that places do not exist solely in the present, and that those experiences and practices which trigger a sense of ‘ghostly presences’ in particular places make us conscious of ‘connections not only with other places but also other times as geographies and histories collide’ (Pinder 10). This consciousness of the ghost as a figure able to facilitate an awareness of interconnected lives is also central to the work of Michael Mayerfield Bell, who argues that ‘we constitute a place in large measure by the ghosts we sense inhabit and possess it’ and that the ghosts we perceive in places produce a ‘web of social connections across space and time’ (813, 825). For Steve Pile, ghosts are connected with temporal and spatial ruptures and ‘haunt the places where cities are out of joint [. . .] in terms of both time and space’ (217) and it is only in ‘find[ing] a way to accommodate its ghosts’ that a city can be ‘just and free’ (224).

These sociological and geographical discourses on haunting share certain strands of thinking that have their roots in Derrida’s *Specters of Marx*. In his initial discussion concerning the question of ‘learning to live’, Derrida evokes the figure of the ghost as a mediator in this process, which can only be realized ‘in between life and death’ (xviii), and argues that learning to live entails a learning ‘to live *with* ghosts, in the upkeep, the conversation, the company and companionship, in the commerce without commerce of ghosts’ (xviii). The writers cited above all argue that ghosts, although not necessarily

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<sup>1</sup> See Moorman; Greg; Rea; Battenhouse; Robert H. West; Joseph; Siegal; Muir ‘Folklore’; Cartelli ‘Banquo’s Ghost’; Ratcliffe; Ackerman.

malevolent presences (Bell 816), unsettle notions of fixed space and linear time, and problematize the normal oppositions of presence and absence, visibility and invisibility, and life and death. As such, ghosts are associated with the spaces in between and therefore have about them an otherness that can be usefully harnessed to think about how, in the act of haunting, they might create sites of disturbance and sites of potential. All these writings also have in common an emphasis on the urgent need to acknowledge ghosts and, further, to address the ghosts; or as Derrida puts it: to ‘reckon with them’ (xx). In these discourses the ghost is often a presence perceived only in its absence, whilst the ghosts I analyse were very distinctly embodied. Nevertheless, a similar urgency pertains to investigating the effects of their trajectories on the geographies of the playworld, and examining their function as, and their role in, producing sites for mediation, memory, and imagination.

I have chosen to analyse *Richard II* (and *The Histories*) at the Roundhouse, firstly because my experience of attending the complete cycle there affords me a personal knowledge of the space, which is complemented by the perceptions I am able to form through the consultation of the archival resources available; and secondly, because the replication of the Courtyard within the Roundhouse adds another layer of complexity to the spatial operations with which I am concerned. I am aware that a spectator seeing *Richard II* as a single work would experience both the play and place of performance in ways very different from that of spectators attending either the whole cycle, or even just the second tetralogy. However, the following analysis draws on my experience as a serial audience member, and therefore takes into account the extended opportunity for engaging with the place of performance and the scope for appreciating the dramatic echoes in performance that this mode of spectatorship afforded.

This chapter reflects the personal excitement generated by my encounter with *The Histories* and which has endured, as this analysis demonstrates, for much time afterwards. Several factors which contributed to the enthusiasm expressed in this account were directly connected with the space. Firstly, as I discuss further below, the serial nature of the theatrical event produced a mode of theatregoing that can be viewed as ‘dwelling’, and this facilitated a particularly strong bonding with the place of performance, which engaged spectators directly in the production of spaces. This act of dwelling involved not only taking up a seat to view the onstage action, but spending time in a number of spaces in and around the Roundhouse, which became sites of reflection and social intercourse. Bennett’s contention that ‘the buzz of an excited audience [. . .] continues the interpretive process and is likely to enhance the experience

of that production in the individual's memory' (164) was intensified for serial spectators at *The Histories*. Indeed, as the space and organization of the schedule provided opportunities for pre-, post-, and in-between-show gathering, this allowed the theatricalised bodies assembled to continue the transition of this positive emotional energy.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, this network of spaces was subject to flows of affect and a range of emotions—passing through the spectrum from pleasure to anxiety—which were both connected to the *Histories*' narratives and to other stories being played out offstage. Further, the microsites created by Boyd's use of spectres in *Richard II* produced spaces of possibility that afford a particularly exciting thirdspace from which to rethink the political potential of this play.

The lived experience of the theatrical geographies of Boyd's *Histories* was, and remains in the documentation of it, 'fraught' with an intensity that makes particularly conspicuous the 'contradictory pull between reception/analysis and perception/affect' engendered by performance (Kershaw 35). The cultural geographer's position regarding fieldwork is of assistance in confronting the challenge that the tensions between these positions of engagement presents for the theatre historian and performance analyst documenting productions s/he has seen personally; especially where, as here, the researcher's 'reflections come out of [. . . her/his] own role as participant in or witness to the events [. . . s/he] describe[s]' and necessitate an acknowledgment of the ensuing personal 'involvement and sense of urgency' expressed (Taylor xvi). I bring to the stagescapes and environments I analyse Philip L. Wagner's awareness that 'any appreciation of a landscape [. . .] construes a concrete experience and incorporates something of the individual who observes the landscape, which lends the place a humane significance (Wagner, Philip L. 5). This chapter openly acknowledges the presence of the researcher in the work and adds this 'humane significance' by attempting to articulate 'how theatre makes us feel and behave' (Harvie, *Theatre* 43); not with the intent of excluding other narratives that may be constructed via other critical strategies, but as a means of reinforcing the political optimism that can be produced by mainstream, publically funded companies working with canonical and historically distant plays. Like Harvie, I 'unapologetically' affiliate myself with the 'wilfully optimistic' group of researchers (*Theatre* 67) whose 'performative critical approach credits people as social agents, individuals with the freedom and ability to act'

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<sup>2</sup> I borrow the concept of the 'theatricalised body' from Simon Shepherd's discussion of the ways in which '[t]ime-span, pulsing, shape and space' contribute to how a performance works on an audience (76) by conforming to or disrupting prevailing conceptualizations of space and time. I interpret the concept as applicable to both actors and audiences whose bodies are affected—theatricalised—by the theatrical event.

to produce change (66). I approach the interpretation of *The Histories* as the sort of audience member Rancière constructs: a participant whose own spectating and performing interacted with the performances and spectating of others. I position myself within the community of story tellers and translators that the event created and offer the narrative produced here, inflected through my own stories and competences, as one of many competing narratives that could be constructed.

Boyd's *Histories* enacted a 'positive social configuration' and brought together 'an audience that f[elt] like a community' (Harvie, *Theatre* 75), giving spectators an opportunity to participate in the creation of a haunted space of memory in which this version of England's national history challenged them to think how the past might have been otherwise and how the future might be. In attending, through the tone of my description and analysis, to the circulation of emotions produced by this theatrical event, and acknowledging the strength of the pull towards perception/affect that it exerted, I also aim to contribute to current debates in cultural geography about the provenance of and means by which affect moves between bodies (Pile 'Emotions') and participate in the 'expansion of the definition of the political and of the sphere of being political into affect' (Anderson 740). This is not, as Ben Anderson argues, to replace the realities of suffering that 'traverse life' with 'an affirmative account of the social and cultural', but to recognize the need for 'a positive metaphysics that moves, and inspires' and which 'cultivate[s] a politics of becoming' (Anderson 740; see also Thrift 'Intensities').

#### (i) Home-making at the Courtyard/Roundhouse

In 2006 Michael Boyd formed an ensemble of thirty-four actors, who, over a two-year period, would perform all eight of Shakespeare's history plays. The company began by rehearsing the plays in the order in which they were written and the first tetralogy was performed in 2006 in the RSC's temporary Courtyard Theatre as part of the Complete Works Festival. The plays in the second tetralogy were gradually added to the repertoire between July and October 2007. The project in Stratford culminated in two four-day runs of the complete cycle. In the first, referred to as the 'Staging History Weekend', the plays were 'staged in the order in which Shakespeare wrote them, the order in which his audience would have seen them, and the order in which they [. . . had] been rehearsed and staged over two years by *The Histories Ensemble*' (RSC Season Guide 2007-2008: 10); and in the second run, entitled 'The Glorious Moment',

the plays were performed in the chronological order of the narrative, allowing an ‘opportunity to experience Shakespeare’s compelling account of a nation in turmoil from start to finish’ (10). In April 2008 *The Histories* transferred to the Roundhouse in London, where the project came to an end on Sunday 25 May, after a further two ‘Glorious Moments’. From the outset, then, this particular production of *Richard II* was conceived of as part of a cycle. Performances of the complete cycle would eventually run in such a way as to give audiences the chance to see the play in various modes: as a single theatrical experience; as the first work in the second tetralogy, and therefore the instigator of the events that they would return to see unfold throughout the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V; as a prequel to the conflicts related in the first tetralogy; or as part of a chronological sequence which constitutes a gripping narrative spanning almost a century of English history.

When relating my experience of *The Histories* to friends and colleagues I found myself saying that, during April and May 2008, ‘I moved into the Roundhouse’. Although this statement could be construed as mere hyperbole, I would argue that both the company and the spectators did indeed ‘move into’ the Roundhouse, and that this act of ‘dwelling’ significantly affected the identity of the venue and audience perceptions of the theatrical event. A ‘dwelling’ is not necessarily a residence, but a place where we can linger and wander (Casey, *Getting* 113-116): a place which has a sense of ‘felt familiarity’, even if we have never been there before, and to which we can return repeatedly (115-116). *The Histories* clearly encouraged successive spectatorship, with certain audience members booking well ahead to attend all eight of the plays in ‘Glorious Moment’ mode; some seeing a single play; others several or all of them, in or out of sequence; and spectators repeating the experience having first seen the cycle, or parts of it, in Stratford. Throughout *The Histories* the Roundhouse was a place of lingering and wandering and acquired for many a sense of felt familiarity. It was a dwelling for spectators who repeatedly returned to it and a place where memories were generated and where spectators came to figure in each others’ memories.

This felt familiarity was also fostered, for some spectators by the activation of memories of another place which featured in their mental maps: the Courtyard Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon. In his introductory message in each of the programmes for the season at the Roundhouse, Boyd states: ‘we [the ensemble] are delighted to be bringing [. . . *The Histories*] to London and into this iconic space’. This ‘iconic space’, though, had to be transformed for the bringing of *The Histories* and, when the company moved

in, the first task was to ‘effectively recreate as closely as possible The Courtyard Theatre within the space of the Roundhouse’ (K. Wright 27)<sup>3</sup> (Fig 21). The virtual

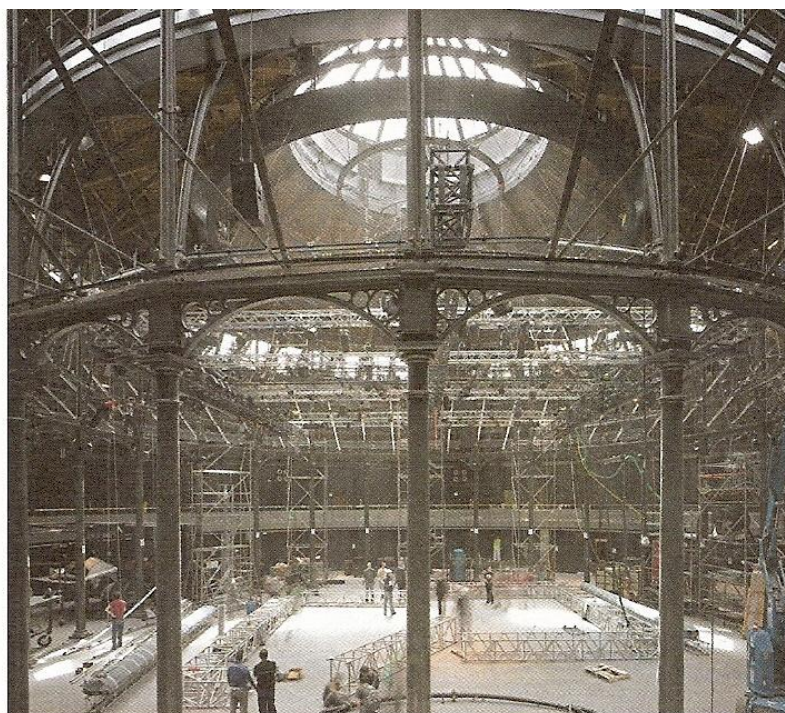


Fig. 21 The Roundhouse before the construction of the Courtyard.

reconstruction of the Stratford theatre in the London venue created an overlaying of spaces. For the RSC actors it was, in some senses, home from home; and, for some spectators, encountering a (seemingly) known place removed from its geographical context may have made the theatre feel equally familiar and yet unsettlingly strange. As a first-time visitor to the Roundhouse, my initial entry into the auditorium, as it was set up for *The Histories*, produced a striking double-take, a collision of thoughts that went as follows: ‘This looks like the Courtyard . . . this *is* the Courtyard.’ The Roundhouse, of course, is/was not the Courtyard, but identity, name, and location were unsettled and I would suggest that, for spectators familiar with the RSC’s temporary Stratford auditorium and unfamiliar with the Roundhouse, a sensation of (misplaced) place recognition was the first of the many *multi-ghostings* generated throughout *The Histories* and which produced the spectral and commemorative geographies that were a key feature of Boyd’s *Richard II* and the cycle in general.

As well as working to ensure that audiences in London would ‘have a similar experience to those [. . .] in Stratford-Upon-Avon’, the replication of the Courtyard was a pragmatic strategy for avoiding ‘any major changes to the staging’ (K. Wright 27).

<sup>3</sup> The reproduction was slightly smaller than The Courtyard as it lacked the second gallery.



The 'experience' of *The Histories*, for both actors and audiences, was very much tied up with the potentials afforded by the size and configuration of the Courtyard. Throughout the cycle, the acting area was conceived of as both grounded and aerial and ranged through a 360-degree angle. Actors moved through the vertical and horizontal axes using ropes to fly down through, or across, the space, and trapezes to create points of focus in mid air. They came up through traps, and entered and exited upstage right, upstage left, and upstage centre through a double doorway in a circular tower, referred to by the company as the 'Hell Mouth' (O'Briain, PIntv). Characters also entered and exited via a gap in the central stalls seating block and via two walkways through the audience that joined the back of the stalls to the downstage left and right corners of the thrust stage. In addition, entrances and exits were also made from and to the gallery by means of four ladders placed either side of the stage and in corresponding positions in the auditorium. The constant flow of bodies at all levels and in all directions enveloped the spectators in a highly energized and thoroughly possessed performance space. Casey argues that since 'a considerable portion of [. . . the] power [of place] is taken *on loan* [. . .] from the body that lives and moves in it', taking into account the way that 'a lived body energizes a place by its own idiosyncratic dynamism, intensifying that place's own idioloical character' can deepen 'our understanding of 'place as lived, experienced and remembered' (*Getting* 104). The dynamic energization of space effected by the movement of the actors, experienced repeatedly by returning spectators, and augmented by their own movements through the space, lent the building a particular power, and became part of the spectators' lived experience of the place of performance. The Roundhouse became a space possessed, in several senses of the word: possessed by the actors through their intense kinesthetic knowledge of every level of the performance space; possessed by serial spectators who, in the commonplace sense of frequenting, haunted the spaces in and around the place of performance; and possessed by the spectral figures who haunted the spaces of the fiction. The entire theatre space collaborated with *The Histories*, to configure history itself as space possessed, and foregrounded the physical experience of time in place (Figs 22 and 23).

Actors and audiences shared in the generation of flows through the Roundhouse outside of performances, and also shared some of the same spaces, thus reinforcing the felt familiarity of dwelling. Spectators entered the building via the door which leads to the box office and restaurant, and from where a flight of stairs leads up to the floor on which the doors to the stalls were situated, and where there was a small RSC

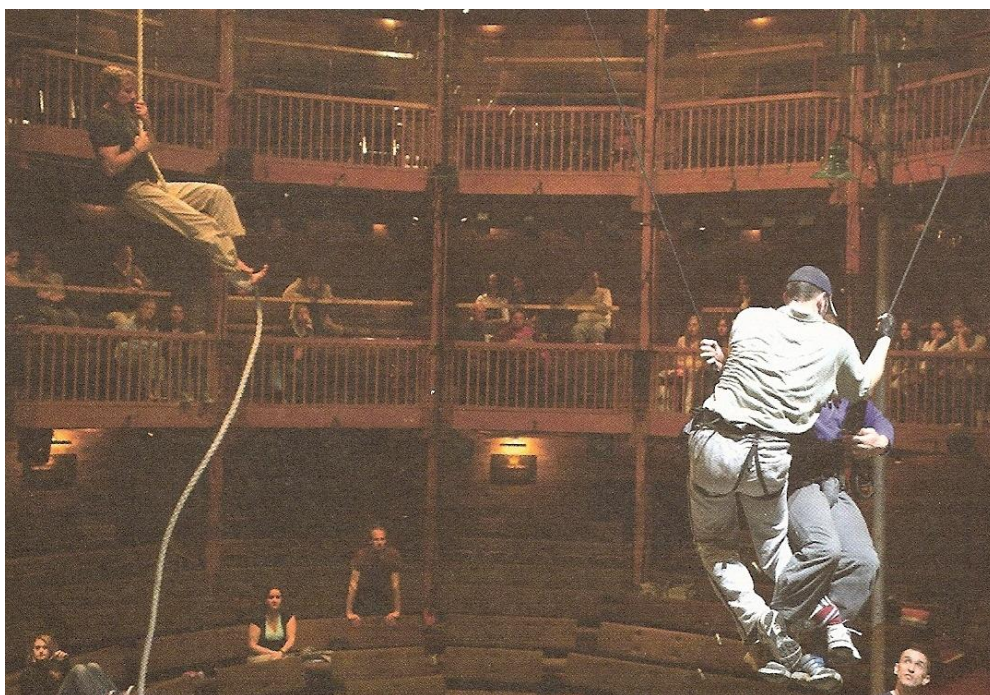


Fig. 22 Aerial rehearsals for *The Histories*, Courtyard Theatre Stratford-upon-Avon 2007.

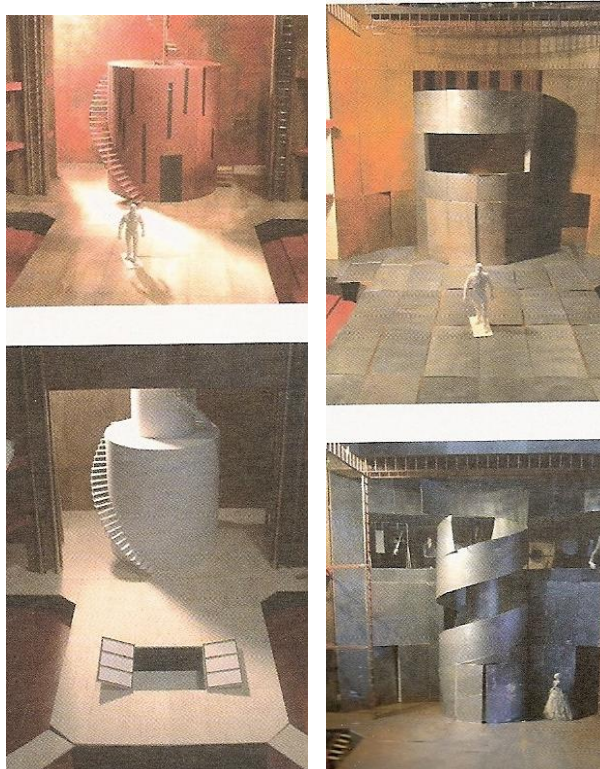


Fig. 23 The development of Tom Piper's design for *The Histories*, dir Boyd 2006-2007. The bottom right picture was the final design.

merchandizing area, a bar, and a door leading to an outdoor patio. Although there was, at the far end of this patio, an area cordoned off for the exclusive use of performers and

Roundhouse staff, the other areas were common ground, and the movements of actors among spectators added to the sense of shared space, particularly on trilogy days, when both performers and audience were enclosed together from 10.30 in the morning until almost 11.00 at night (or later for those actors and spectators who stayed on after the performance in the bar).<sup>4</sup>

Anthony Holden noted that, although bonding between audience members is a characteristic of ‘epic adventures’ in the theatre, the ‘surprise innovation’ of *The Histories* was that ‘the audience also bond[ed] with the actors’ (O 18/05/2008). Holden described the excitement he and other spectators experienced at ‘shar[ing] the alfresco terrace with the off-duty cast’ and seeing ‘Geoffrey Freshwater (Shallow/Archbishop of Canterbury) savouring a cigarette in civvies’, Julius D’Silva still wearing ‘Bardolph’s bulbous nose over his packed lunch before [. . . the] afternoon’s instalment’, and ‘David Warner’s rotund Falstaff [transformed into] a tall, slim, silver-haired player-king wafting around in a Noel Coward silk gown’ (O 18/05/2008). Although (in my experience) spectators did not transgress the boundary which designated an area of personal space for the performers, actors ‘crossed over’ onto the main patio and conversed with friends and strangers. This mutual visibility and exchange united spectators and performers in the mundane, ‘homely’ actions of eating, drinking, smoking, and chatting, all of which contributed to the construction of the Roundhouse as ‘dwelling’. Further, I would argue that just as spectators bonded with each other and with the performers, they also bonded with place, and that, for the duration of their encounters with *The Histories*, and possibly for some time afterwards, the Roundhouse and its environs occupied a position of salience on the mental maps of many spectators: a position determined both by the place-making activities in which they engaged during their visits, and the productions, which activated the performance space and permeated the whole building.

The patio, bars, and restaurant were places that facilitated the lingering, wandering, and return that are activities characteristic of dwelling (Casey, *Getting* 115-116), and contributed to the formation of memories. Another significant area of the building associated with ‘return’, and one which does not usually attract scholarly attention but merits comment here—as it was a space generated daily throughout *The Histories* and therefore an integral feature of their geographies—was the returns queue. This was a place of self-enforced lingering, to which I and many others returned on

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<sup>4</sup> Throughout the runs in Stratford and London, there were several trilogy days on which the company staged *Henry IV* parts 1 and 2 and *Henry V* or all three parts of *Henry VI*.

several occasions. It was also a site of bonding and exciting conversations—not least about Shakespeare and theatrical experiences past—but also a place of expectation and anxiety, and ultimately of delight or disappointment, depending on the outcome of the waiting. Here, desire was enacted through the literal taking possession of space—the staking out of a closely guarded position in the queue—and led either to the possession of the desired place: a seat in the house—or to dispossession when the wait was unsuccessful and the show began leaving some hopefuls on the wrong side of the closed auditorium doors.

Places, Urry argues, are ‘centres of many material activities including the purchase and use of goods and services’, and are ‘emotionally pleasurable because they are sites of intense and heightened consumption’ (79). Although theatres are embedded within the market economy, the ways in which they are experienced cannot be articulated solely in terms of the model of consumption. Theatres are pleasurable because they are places of intense emotions generated by all aspects of being there. The heightened emotions that circulated during *The Histories* at the Roundhouse in the auditorium as the stories unfolded, on the patio as spectators remembered and/or anticipated aspects of performance, and in the returns queue suggest the strength of the pull towards perception/affect in the analysis presented here and the need to pay attention to it. As Anderson argues ‘different modalities— affect, feeling and emotion—enliven [. . .] space-time’ and ‘attuning to how [. . . emotion] takes place, how it attaches and moves bodies, calls us to question how we attend to the more-than-rational or less-than-rational’ (748).

The emotions that permeated all parts of the place of performance were generated, in part, by the encounters between spectators and the plays and with each other and transmitted, in part, through conversations engaged in and overheard.<sup>5</sup> This made the theatrical event an invigorated space where one could feel the excitement of what Harvie refers to as ‘the profound, almost visceral, recognition [. . .of sharing] a feeling with an audience who otherwise feel different’; that is, of feeling our ‘simultaneous similarity and difference within the audience’ (*Theatre* 76). Being in such

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<sup>5</sup> A pertinent example is a discussion I overheard in which the group were expressing how moved they had been by *Henry VI Part Three* II.5, in which a Father addresses the Son he has killed and a Son the Father he has slain. This intensified my own memories of this scene and the emotions it produced/s (both within and beyond the context of this particular production), as well as sparking, for me, a sense of connectedness through shared affect, even though we did not converse directly.

a space can be empowering as it produces emotional knowledges that can change our capacities to affect and be affected.<sup>6</sup>

(ii) Ghosts, *Multi-Ghosting*, and Memories

The theatre building can play a role in preparing the audience to ‘perceive meaning’ (McAuley, *Space* 42), and spectators cross a series of thresholds (for example: the box office, the cloakroom, the foyer, the bar), which can be exploited to prepare them for the performance, assisting them to distance themselves from the ‘stresses of the real world’ and ‘gently insert[ing]’ them into the world of the performers’ (43). In addition, specially created features of the performance space, perceptible to the audience before the play, can also constitute an ‘invitation to reflect on’ the provenance and relevance of the work(s) to be performed (43). As I have pointed out, breaks between plays allowed spectators to bond with each other and with the actors, and also to prepare for the next decades of English history by picnicking on the patio or taking refreshment in the Roundhouse restaurant or bars, or other eating places in the immediate vicinity; and stints in the return queue also engendered camaraderie and conversation. These social interactions generated spaces of preparation and reflection, which became incorporated into the geographies of *The Histories*, but there were also spaces which had been consciously constructed to assist preparation and invite reflection, and which helped spectators shift in and out of the frame of the fiction. The stairs up to the first level entry to the auditorium were lined with five large-scale production photographs—one of each of the monarchs whose reigns the plays dramatize—and a note in the production programmes drew audience attention to an exhibition of paintings by Lisa Wright, the artist in residence throughout *The Histories* project, which depicted ‘iconic moments from the productions’ (n. pag.). This exhibition, which audience members could visit during intervals, was situated in the area leading to the gallery seating and therefore encouraged spectators from the stalls to experience a part of the house they would not usually visit, affording them a wider knowledge of the place of performance.

The exhibition facilitated a deeper engagement with the plays by providing opportunities to ponder the echoes and foreshadowings of the stories being played out on stage. As well as large-scale production stills, the exhibition included a screen

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<sup>6</sup> I draw here on Anderson’s investigation into how listening to music can open up spaces of hope and hopefulness.

showing numerous images from the productions. It stimulated the contemplation of ‘iconic moments’ (PPs n.pag.) that some of the viewers had already witnessed; nurtured the desire to see the not-seen, through the presentation of moments missed; and/or provoked the viewer to consider the place and significance of these images within the cycle. The gallery screen produced a succession of fleeting images: a series of constantly dissolving and, eventually, reappearing visual mnemonics/premonitions, which constituted a sort of technological haunting, and which supported the operations of spectrality that took place on stage.

The stage, where the embodied ghosts moved, remained ‘centripetal’ (McAuley, *Space* 74), but the spatial negotiations discussed so far were crucial in making the Roundhouse a familiar ‘landscape’ around which spectators roamed, and in which the contact they made with each other contributed to the generation and sustaining of memories. According to Kevin Lynch, ‘[t]he landscape plays a social role’ and ‘[t]he named environment, familiar to all, furnishes material for common memories and symbols which bind the group together and allow them to communicate with one another’ (126). Further, Lynch maintains that ‘[t]he landscape serves as a vast mnemonic system for the retention of group history and ideals’ (Lynch 126). Lynch’s ideas are related to how people orient themselves within, and ascribe meaning to, the natural or urban environment, but they can be effectively mobilized here in relation to how spectators experience and conceptualize the environment produced by serial theatrical events like *The Histories*. The spaces provided for eating, drinking, and talking, the merchandizing area, the displays, the exhibition, and, of course, the performance space activated by the plays, all contributed to making the Roundhouse ‘a vast mnemonic system’ that offered the material for the creation of common memories and the symbols that would enable communication between a variety of groups. Taking up residence in the Roundhouse as a performer or a spectator meant inhabiting a landscape constitutive of, and constituted by, several overlapping communities: the conflicted communities of the fictions, the spectators, the RSC, and the Roundhouse staff.

The production and maintenance of memories in and of performance is complicated firstly, by the highly personal nature of these memories and secondly, by the fact that ‘spectators [. . .] operate both as individuals and groups’ and what we know about ‘spectator psychology’ tends to be based on what we know about ourselves (Kennedy, ‘Memory’ 345). However, the consciousness of memory creation was always at the forefront of the ensemble’s approach and the generation of echoes was

fundamental to the ‘theatrical language’ that the company built up (O’Brian, PIntv). The dramatic strategies that the RSC employed were complemented by the mnemonic system into which *The Histories* transformed the Roundhouse, and all these factors worked together to optimize the possibility of coincidence between spectators’ memories as a group and as individuals.

The creation of the ensemble ensured that an actor played the same characters in all the plays in which these dramatic figures featured, but also allowed for the reappearance of actors as characters that echoed or foreshadowed their previous or later roles. This continuity was reinforced by Tom Piper’s single set, which facilitated the creation of ‘hotspots’. Certain painful or violent events, such as the murders of Richard II and Henry VI, occurred in the same place. Occupying the platform on the tower, a temporarily powerful position, came to bode the fall of the character (Iwuj, PIntv); a site of painful consciousness of human failing was created for Jonathan Slinger when he realized that, as Richard II, he was standing in the same place being berated by York (Richard Cordery), as he had stood as Richard III when receiving his mother’s words of rejection (Slinger, PIntv). The hotspots produced through the location of certain events and exchanges within the playing area had resonances for actors, and potentially for spectators, and represented a further development in the overlaying of spaces that was evident in Daniels (1990) and further developed in Pimlott (2000).

The potential of the design and articulation of the performance space to produce and reinforce memories was further intensified by Boyd’s exploitation of spectral figures. The introduction of these ghosts was related, in part, to Boyd’s belief that Shakespeare’s early history plays present a view of history more akin to the medieval concept of a cyclic or concentric history than to our own linear idea of history (K. Wright 4). Boyd saw in these plays characters who figure and prefigure types, in the same way that in the medieval mystery cycles Isaac prefigures Christ and ‘Herod reminds us of the Pharaoh, who in turn reminds us of Satan’ (K. Wright 5). O’Brian stressed that the idea of cycles worked all the way through the project and observed that one of the consequences of this directorial approach—which perceived the history plays as ‘a series of concentric circles where things keep repeating and coming back’—was that ‘the dead keep on re-emerging either as the dead, or as new people’ (PIntv). One such re-emergence occurred at the end of *Henry VI Part 1*, when Katy Stephens as Joan of Arc was ‘lowered to her death in the flames, only to emerge resplendent later as Margaret, She Wolf of France’ (Crompton, *DT* 19/03/2008). Other notable re-emergences, which tapped into the pre- and re-figuring of types that featured in Boyd’s

thinking, included: Clive Wood as Bolingbroke in *Richard II*, as Henry IV in the plays of the same name, and as Richard Plantagenet in all three *Henry VI* plays; Jonathan Slinger as both Richard II and Richard III; and Keith Bartlett and Lex Shrapnel as interpreters of some of the father-son relationships throughout the cycle: Northumberland and Hotspur in *Richard II* and *Henry IV Part 1*; Lord Talbot and John Talbot in *Henry VI Part 1*; and a father who has killed his son, and a son who has killed his father in *Henry VI Part 3*.

The casting across the cycle worked on various levels. Encounters with new characters embodied by actors who had played dramatic figures now dead or departed, reinforced the audience's sense of felt familiarity; underscored Boyd's conception of the cyclical nature of history; and nurtured an apprehension of this concept on the part of the audience. Further, the dead also 're-emerged' in a more literal sense, as Boyd introduced ghosts into the action, even where none were indicated in the texts; the addition of these spectral figures worked, in conjunction with Boyd's 'through-line' casting (Iwuji, PIntv), to produce a phenomenon which I term *multi-ghosting* to suggest the different levels of haunting that operated across the cycle. This multi-ghosting engendered a highly nuanced set of actor/character associations and brought the history plays, and particularly *Richard II*, into dialogue with contemporary critical thinking on the ghost as a social and political figure. In *The Haunted Stage* Marvin Carlson discusses the recycling of ideas, materials, and personnel in theatrical production and argues that, for particular communities of theatregoers, reception is influenced by the ways in which a play or a role is 'ghosted' by other interpretations of it they have seen, by performances of other plays, and/or by the biographical knowledge they have about the actors. Such ghosting was, undoubtedly, in evidence throughout *The Histories*. However, whilst Carlson's theory addresses the sort of recognition and reminiscence that are welcome and valid pleasures of theatrical spectatorship, the sort of multi-ghosting that I am positing was produced by *The Histories* is distinct, as it draws on discourses of memory and spectrality to suggest the cultural and political work in which Boyd's *Histories*, and particularly his production of *Richard II*, engaged. The multi-ghosting that operated throughout *The Histories* was generated by the company's strategies for the production and maintenance of memories and worked to interrogate the concept of cyclical processes.

There were many instances of multi-ghosting across *The Histories*, but *Richard II* was Boyd's most fully developed use of spectral presences, and exemplifies perfectly the complex negotiations between haunting and memory at work throughout the cycle,



and which contributed to the creation of a haunted space that, in turn, figured the Roundhouse as a place of memory. Although *Richard II* entered the rehearsal schedule as the fifth play in the project, in the ‘Glorious Moments’ (when the plays were performed in the chronological order of the kings, rather than the order of their composition), it became the first play in the sequence. This *Richard II* therefore constituted a concentrated site of the echoes and foreshadowings: a distinct centre point for the bidirectional workings of memory (Casey, ‘Public’ 31) that were activated in performance through the hauntings.

Although no ghosts feature in the list of *dramatis personae* in *Richard II*, the idea of haunting is fleetingly evoked in one of Richard’s moments of despair, when he tells his followers that, in the ‘sad stories’ that could be told about ‘the death of kings’, some have been ‘haunted by the ghosts they have deposed’ (III.2.156, 158). Ghosts and ideas of haunting have also been attached to the Gloucester narrative by several directors, who have tried to make modern audiences more conscious of the duke’s murder. In his 1954 production, John Barton attempted to acquaint spectators with the part of the story that Elizabethan playgoers are generally thought to have been familiar with through *Woodstock*, by adding a prologue comprising an adapted version of a scene from this anonymous play; the scene involved Edward III (Clifford Rose) and the Ghost of the Black Prince (David Hart) (PP n. pag.), who both appear in V.1 of *Woodstock*, exhorting the ill-fated Gloucester to wake from sleep and flee from his murderers. Val May’s 1959 production hinted at a ghostly presence as Richard (John Justin) appeared from the beginning to be ‘already haunted’ by the fear that his part in Gloucester’s death would be discovered (*Tat* 06/12/1959). John David’s 1985 production opened with the presentation of ‘the senior members of Edward III’s family’ in which ‘[t]he Duke of Gloucester appear[ed] with his head struck off’ (Young, *FT* 15/02/1985). Adrián Daumas (Spain 1998) alerted audiences to the significance of Gloucester’s murder by creating ‘a striking dumbshow prologue in which the audience was presented with the assassination of Gloucester, his head plunged into a bowl by mysterious assassins’ (Gregor 220). And Claus Peymann (Germany 2000, revived Stratford-upon-Avon 2006) made a similarly striking reference to Gloucester’s murder at the beginning of his production by having the corpse of Gloucester on stage when the audience entered. Once the house doors were closed, the sound of flies buzzing was heard, a sound which increased to a high volume before there was a blackout and the lights came up on Gaunt and the Duchess of Gloucester: a reordering of I.2 and I.1

clearly designed to reinforce the connection between the corpse and the Duchess's plea for justice.

When the RSC *Histories* ensemble came to tackle *Richard II*, they were equally aware that the unavenged death which drives the opening dispute could remain 'subtly buried unless you're looking for it', with the consequence that an audience may be left struggling with the gaps that are left in the play if this narrative is obscured or forgotten (Slinger, PIntv). Whereas the above-mentioned directors attempted to forge a link in the spectators' minds between Gloucester's killing and the murder alluded to by Bolingbroke in I.1 by giving Gloucester a brief physical presence as a corpse or a man struggling against his murderers, Boyd foregrounded the 'simple but profound narrative of revenge that underpins the play' (O'Briain, PIntv) through the use of spectral characters played by Chuk Iwuji (Dead Gloucester), Katy Stephens (Duchess of Gloucester), and Roger Watkins (John of Gaunt), who appeared throughout the production. This use of spectral characters took the idea of haunting in *Richard II* into a new dimension, and since the materialization of these ghosts arose out of the theatrical language that the company had already developed in their work on the first tetralogy, this dramatic strategy went much further in its effects, than just familiarizing audiences with the back story. The spectres impacted on the performance space, unsettling the identities of specific places in the play's geographies and contributing to the construction of the Roundhouse as a monument and place of public memory. The following analysis of key scenes in which these characters appeared demonstrates how these spectres not only maintained the narratives of Gloucester, Gaunt, and the Duchess of Gloucester, but also contributed to the creation of haunted spaces in which memories of the past circulated with future forebodings and imaginings.

### (iii) Spectres in the Garden

Before the dialogue began, the upstage-centre doors opened and the entire cast, except for the King, entered in formal formation and progressed downstage in a stately procession of slow dance steps, interspersed with bows directed downstage. Simultaneously, Richard entered from the opposite direction through the central block of the stalls and 'emerge[d] ceremonially from the audience' (Hemming, *FT* 19/04//2008). As Richard arrived on stage, the deferential courtly group parted, making space for the king to approach his throne—a set of steps which had been wheeled on behind the courtiers—suggesting immediately his command of space and control of

movement within it. As the courtiers parted and formed equal groups left and right of the throne, the bloody corpse of the Duke of Gloucester was discovered lying centre stage, and as Richard ascended the throne his cloak swept over the body of Gloucester. For audiences who had already seen the ensemble's *Henry VI Part 3*, this would have been an instance of multi-ghosting, and signalled a hotspot, as Slinger, in the role of Richard Duke of Gloucester, had murdered Henry, played by Iwuji (V.6), leaving the dead body in exactly the same place as Gloucester lay at the beginning of *Richard II*, making the space itself a re-minder of wrongs past and future.

During the first exchanges in the scene, Gloucester remained motionless on stage, but when Bolingbroke enunciated his accusation concerning Mowbray's part in Gloucester's death, Gloucester rose, looked at Richard and began to observe the proceedings. Although the Ghost of Gloucester was 'unseen' by the other characters, Gloucester's presence affected Slinger's work on this scene, informing his sense of Richard's discomfort and raising his awareness of the 'psychological reality that Richard has constantly got the ghost of Gloucester in his mind' (Slinger, PIntv). Furthermore, this stage business established a strong association in the minds of the spectators between Iwuji and the dead Gloucester, preparing them for the occasions on which Iwuji 'revive[d] and resurface[d] like a subliminal threat in other roles' (Taylor, *I* 23/08/2007), becoming a series of 'minor' characters and engendering fresh, and almost shocking, nuances in certain lines and sections of the action.

Boyd made the unusual decision to include the Duchess of Gloucester in the opening scene, although it would have been easy for the audience not to register the presence of this character dressed in black and standing in an extreme upstage left position, not directly lit and failing to join in any of the applause that accompanied certain of Richard's pronouncements. Indeed, many spectators may not have noticed her and, when, once the court party had exited, she emerged from the very margins of the playing area to appeal to Gaunt to avenge her husband's death, her sudden apparition in the space may have seemed 'almost like a magical revelation' (O'Briain, PIntv). In this sense, although a live character, her revealed presence had the same spectral and unexpected quality as the first appearance of her husband's ghost, since only the most observant of spectators would have noticed the stagecraft by which Iwuji was able to take up his initial position in order for the dead duke to be similarly revealed as Richard approached the throne. From the beginning, then, these two characters combined a distinct corporeality with an ethereality established through their seeming ability to appear out of nowhere. O'Briain spoke of the Duchess of Gloucester in this first scene

as being ‘there and not there’ (PIntv), thus articulating the disturbing ambiguity which attached to her character and to that of Dead Gloucester (as he was referred to in the prompt book), and which extended to Gaunt in his appearances after his death.

The ghost of Gloucester remained onstage throughout scene one and during the first part of the dialogue between the Duchess of Gloucester and Gaunt, and his being there and not there intensified the Duchess’s grief as he could be seen by the audience and yet remained imperceptible to his distraught widow. This gave added force to the conflict between Gaunt’s prioritization of political and religious duties and the Duchess’s emphasis on family loyalty. Although it is possible to identify the setting for this scene as Gaunt’s London residence or Ely House in Holborn, the sharing of the stage space by these three characters—two living and one dead—was an example of the qualitative, situational space that Boyd sought to create (O’Brian, PIntv), and opened up new ways of perceiving the place of this encounter. Gloucester’s witnessing of Gaunt’s assignation of the responsibility for vengeance to God and his widow’s appeal to love and the sanctity of blood ties worked to momentarily bind these three characters together in a space of mourning, loss, and disappointment, which would be reprised later when these characters met again in the garden of III.4.

This quality of space was reinforced by the overlaps created at the end of I.1 by the continued presence of Iwuji/Gloucester to I.2.16, and at the beginning of I.3 by the continued presence of Stephens/Duchess of Gloucester, who remained centre stage as a group of masked figures filled the space and engaged in an exuberant and disturbing sword-clashing dance. Through the use of the masks and choreography, the company aimed to achieve a ‘kind of beautiful pageantry’ which was simultaneously ‘quite frightening and very masculine’ (O’Brian PIntv). The stillness and intensity with which Stephens imbued the Duchess of Gloucester as she stood before this menacing spectacle, which suddenly animated the space, accentuated her enforced inaction. As the Duchess of Gloucester exited through the gap in the central seating block, Dead Gloucester was seen entering through the Hell Mouth (the upstage-centre doors) dragging on the set of steps that had formed Richard’s throne, but this time reversed to form a platform from which Richard and the Queen, standing on a lower step behind him, could watch the combat.

For Iwuji, this action of bringing on the steps was underpinned by ‘the idea of leading [. . . Richard] to his doom’ (PIntv) and, from this point on, Dead Gloucester haunted the geographies of Richard’s demise, ‘a permanently reproachful presence’ (Billington, *G* 16/04/2008) into whose character were amalgamated all the bearers of

bad news that discourage the king. In the role of a servant in II.2, he brought in a letter which announced Bolingbroke's return. As Scroop, he delivered the intelligence that young and old, and men and women alike had joined with Bolingbroke, and gave a chilling new resonance to the lines that precede the final blow of York's defection: 'I play the torturer by small and small / To lengthen out the worst that must be spoken' (III.2. 198-199). He moved unseen among the other characters in IV.1 when the debate about his murder was reopened, and played the attendant who brought Richard the mirror later in the same scene. In the role of the man in the York household, he eagerly brought York his boots when the latter demands them in order to ride post-haste to betray Aumerle's plot to Henry. He took on the words of the anonymous man who confirms Exton's conviction that he is the agent appointed to rid Henry of his living fear (V.4). As the Groom, Iwuji's rendering of the story of Bolingbroke riding roan Barbary became an agonizing taunt and, when the murderers entered, the Groom/Dead Gloucester watched as Richard (Slinger) was killed in exactly the same place as he (Iwuji) had lain in the opening scene: the place where, as Henry VI, he had been/would be murdered by Richard of Gloucester (Slinger). Although this account of Iwuji's trajectory through the production might suggest a simple case of multiple roling, 'ghosts take on many guises' (Pile 216), and Iwuji consciously and consistently played Dead Gloucester, and this was the ensemble's conception of his character: 'In the script they put me down as Gloucester, and in my head I was always him' (Iwuji, PIntv). What Iwuji was playing in all these characters, then, was indeed a ghost.

Dead Gloucester haunted all manner of spaces within the fictive world and, although at times unseen by the other characters, his embodied presence urged the remembrance of his particular story. But ghosts also disrupt normal perceptions of space and time, and Dead Gloucester's final appearance to witness Richard's murder was a striking illustration of the temporal and spatial disturbance that spectres engender as his presence unsettled the linearity of time, and created an emplaced distillation of the past, the present, and the future: a fusion of memory and imagination.<sup>7</sup> Such distillations produce transient sites of crisis, as exemplified in the brief union of Dead Gloucester, Gaunt, and the Duchess of Gloucester in I.2. Another more intense example of this disruption of place, and the production of a concentrated site of crisis, occurred in III.4,

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<sup>7</sup> Ideas of how the ghost disrupts normal perceptions of space and time are articulated by Pinder (10-11); Degan and Hetherington (3-4); Edensor (42); and Gordon (63). Their development of these ideas draws on Derrida's analysis of *Hamlet* and in particular his examination of the phrase 'the time is out of joint'.

when Iwuji/Dead Gloucester, Watkins/John of Gaunt, and Stephens/Duchess of Gloucester were reunited as spectres in the garden.

In the garden of Boyd's *Richard II* time was 'out of joint' or, in a translation favoured by Derrida, 'off its hinges' (18-20). Derrida's attraction to this phrase is understandable as he conceives of ghosts, whether of those dead or those yet to come, as victims of violence or of some form of oppressive totalitarianism (xix); this rendering captures that sense of violence by conjuring a vision of barriers broken, doors and windows flailing in the wind and storm of brutal rupture, no longer able to act as guard against the great tide of spectres clamouring for attention, and which/who flood into the world, in the wake of acts of aggression. In *Richard II*, as in each of the history plays, the world is thrown into disequilibrium by acts of violence which blast time off its hinges, and cause a concomitant dislocation of space. It is through the 'fissures' created by violent events that ghosts 'join the living world' and haunt the sites 'where [. . . places] are out of joint' (Pile 217). Recounting narratives in which the dead mingle with the living facilitates glimpses of 'a fractured emotional geography cut across by the shards of pain, loss, injustice and failure: an emotional world in which the ghost is an emblematic presence' (217). The garden in Boyd's production was certainly an 'other' Eden, and a highly ambiguous space pervaded by tensions between the unity of love and the separation of the fall: a purgatorial place of remembrance, where the audience were again urged not to forget the traumas of the past. In no other production I have researched or seen has the garden taken on such a radical significance. This scene is at the structural centre of the play, and Boyd fully exploited this centrality by constructing for the garden a new identity which was produced through the ghosts that inhabited it. The spectres in the garden confirmed the non-existence of Gaunt's eulogized England and revealed that 'this England' was a land of fractured emotional geographies.

The Duchess of Gloucester is dead by this point in the play and, in this production, her decease was reported by Iwuji in the role of a servant, which added to the poignancy of the message. However, when Stephens entered the garden as the Queen's Second Lady, she was costumed in the same black dress she had worn in I.2, encouraging the audience to identify her as the black-clad figure of the Duchess of Gloucester they had seen mourning her husband's untimely death. As the Queen's Second Lady, Stephens spoke only the line 'I could weep, madam, would it do you good' (III.4.22), giving it a new and poignant resonance through the evocation of the Duchess of Gloucester's own grief, which is easily forgotten once she has left the stage in I.2. Ghosts imbue places with meaning through 'their social relations . . . [and] their

web of social connections across space and time' and their presence can engender spatial and temporal connections in the perceivers (Bell 824-25). Stephens' spectral presence in the garden reasserted the web of kinship that the Duchess of Gloucester had expressed so powerfully when she was last onstage with Gaunt and the ghost of her dead husband (I.2).

As part of the haunted space which Boyd's *Richard II* produced, the garden also operated as a materialization of the Queen's own psychological landscape, since '[t]he ghosts of place are [. . .] fabrications, products of imagination, [and] social constructions' and '[t]he ghosts we find in places are [. . .] ghosts of our own imaginations' (Bell 831). From this perspective, the presence of the ghosts in the garden facilitated a focused reflection on the Queen's own position in relation to the events of the play. In Boyd's production, the Queen was a silent presence in I.1, I.3, and I.4, as well as in II.1 (where, in contrast to the other scenes cited, her virtually silent presence is indicated in the text), offering audiences scope to ponder her responses to the political manoeuvrings she witnessed. As an embodiment of the Queen's Second Lady, the dead Duchess of Gloucester was required to assist the wife of the man who had commanded her husband's murder. This made the conversation about finding a suitably entertaining pastime to assuage the Queen's suffering particularly ironic, and created a space in which the Queen might have paused to reassess her own knowledge of, and attitude towards, Richard's actions. This challenge was further intensified when the Queen confronted the Gardeners, played by Iwji/Gloucester and Watkins/Gaunt, whom she might have perceived as disturbingly familiar and disquietingly strange.

As with Stephens, there was no costume change for Watkins as the Gardener and he was dressed in the nightshirt and dressing gown in which he had left the stage as the dying Gaunt (II.1). Although the doubling of the Gardener with Gaunt is not unusual, the absence of any signifier to indicate that the actor has taken on another role is; therefore, when, as the Gardener, Watkins waxed lyrical about the garden as kingdom, the echoes of Gaunt's earlier elegy for England were both intensified and made strange. Spoken by Watkins/Gaunt and Iwji/Dead Gloucester, the state-of-the-nation dialogue, in which two workmen interrogate the nature of governance, was simultaneously a 'conversation between two dead brothers' (O'Briain, PIntv): one who had been murdered at the king's command and one who had died bereft of his banished son.

The effect of this partnership between Gaunt and Gloucester, the former ‘spray[ing] the audience with weedkiller’ (Nightingale, *T* 17/04/2008)<sup>8</sup> and the latter ominously wielding his shears, was to infuse the scene with a black humour that defined the garden as a macabre playground for ghosts. The Gardeners’ actions and tools, which, for Nightingale, exemplified the ‘odd, anachronistic thing’ in the production (*T* 17/04/2008), jarred in relation to the general aesthetic of the world of the play, signalling the ‘otherness’ of the space of this scene, and contributing to the construction of the garden as simultaneously playful and disturbing. Haunting is realized through the possession of places (Pile 277) and the ghost ‘imports a charged strangeness into the place or sphere of its haunting, thus unsettling the propriety and property lines that delimit a zone of activity or knowledge’ (Gordon 63). Boyd’s indecorous Gardeners and taciturn lady in black brought just such ‘a charged strangeness’ to the garden and troubled the zones and boundaries in the fictive world and the performance space.

The ghosts of Gaunt and Gloucester took possession of the garden, appropriating it in a way that deeply unsettled its identity as a safe place of courtly entertainment and toying with the lines that constituted the borders of its fictive functions, and its boundaries as a theatrical construct within the performance space. When ruminating upon the discrepancies between the care with which he and his companion tended the garden and the negligence demonstrated by those responsible for the welfare of the ‘seawalled garden, the whole land’ (III.4.43), Iwuji positioned himself at the very edge of a significant propriety line; he menacingly approached the central block of audience with his shears and crouched down at the very edge of the stage surveying those in close proximity. Gloucester appeared to be wryly remonstrating with the spectators for being silent and inactive witnesses to the injustice of his death and the ensuing events and, in making this improper gesture, he almost crossed the vexed ‘divide’ between actor and audience. The gesture also extended the ‘property line’ of the fictive world, since, at this moment, the spectators were ‘England, the garden’ (Iwuji, PIntv); whether or not audiences were conscious of being co-opted into the narrative, those spectators nearest to Iwuji momentarily hovered uncomfortably close to the world of the spectres, on the verge, or just within, the garden of the dead and the already- and soon-to-be-bereaved.

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<sup>8</sup> Nightingale also noted that the two gardeners ‘trundle[d] a lawnmower round a bare stage’ (*T* 17/04/2008). Iwuji explained that initially Gaunt entered on a motorized lawnmower and Gloucester carried an electric chainsaw, but that both these props were eventually dropped from the production, since starting and stopping the lawnmower was ultimately too cumbersome and noisy, though the sprayer was maintained, and the chainsaw replaced by a pair of shears (PIntv).



The uncanny partnership established between Gaunt and Gloucester—who then passed together through subsequent scenes—was extended to include the Duchess of Gloucester, who, after the Queen’s exit, paused before closing the upper doors of the tower and exchanged a smile with Dead Gloucester. Iwuji and Stephens featured among the pairs of actors playing different matrimonial couples throughout the cycle, and had played the roles of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou in the *Henry VI* trilogy.<sup>9</sup> As a result of the order in which Boyd chose to work on the plays, the troubled relationship between Henry and Margaret reached the stage before their conjugal connection as Duke and Duchess of Gloucester in *Richard II*. Spectators who had seen the *Henry VI* trilogy may well have registered this gesture as an echo/foreshadowing of Henry and Margaret’s ‘corrupted love’ (O’Briain, PIntv). This arresting interaction at the end of the garden scene in *Richard II* suggests the complexity and temporal bi-directionality of the multi-ghosting that operated in performance across the whole cycle. While accepting my interpretation of the smile as conspiratorial, since in this scene Richard’s downfall is confirmed and becomes a cause of distress and indignation for the Queen, O’Briain also saw it as a gesture that was ‘peaceful and playful’, and as a moment of ‘fun’ within ‘a relationship between these two actors[/characters], which is so fraught with tragedy and hatred’ (PIntv). As ghosts, Iwuji and Stephens were ‘spirits of temporal transcendence, of connection between past and future’ (Bell 816), and therefore able both to haunt particular places of the fiction, and to occupy a position in between the connected stories of *Richard II* and *Henry VI*. Their smile, then, could be read in the context of the present revenge narrative and in the context of the potential for change in a future narrative.

The para-linguistic exchange between these spectres, then, crystallized the fusing of past, present, and future that were collapsed into this memorial garden, which figured as a central site in Boyd’s *Richard II*. In ‘possessing’ the garden these ghosts ‘call[ed] forth ideas and feelings’ (Pile 217), and (re)minded the audience of marginalized or suppressed histories, repressed presents, and unrealized futures, since through ghosts, ‘[t]he indignity and injustice of death returns (once again) to haunt the living. And the living are (once again) caught up in the traumas and losses of the past’ (Pile 217). This reconfiguration of the garden as a place where the narratives and sufferings of the Duke of Gloucester, Gaunt, and the Duchess of Gloucester could be

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<sup>9</sup> Stephens, as Margaret, had passed from *Henry VI* into *Richard III*, where, although not literally a ghost, she appeared to be a spectre haunted by death itself, as she carried around a bundle containing the bones of her murdered son, whose skeleton she assembled on stage while pronouncing her curses upon Richard and those others who were the objects of her hatred (1.3).

remembered added new levels of pathos to the Gardener's intention to plant rue in remembrance of the 'weeping Queen'. What the rue may have come to commemorate in this garden possessed by spectres was both the Queen's sorrow and the sadness of her missed opportunity to reckon with these ghosts.

Richard was also presented with an opportunity to reckon with the ghost that was haunting him. When Gloucester's murder was again debated in IV.1, Iwuji circled the stage as an unseen presence, knowing that Richard had ordered his death but curious as to whom his killer had been (Iwuji, PIntv). But he then became visible as the attendant who brought Richard the mirror he had requested, and the fleeting exchange of glances between Richard and Dead Gloucester/attendant created a striking theatrical moment in which it was uncertain as to whether, in the proffered looking glass, Richard had seen the face of his murdered uncle, a servant that evoked the memory of his dead relative, or the reflection of his own face. This brief, ambiguous moment constituted a potential encounter between Richard and the ghost. In his pervasive presence, at times as silent watcher, at others as the bearers of bad news, Iwuji embodied the most urgent cries of Shakespeare's textual ghosts: 'Remember me' (*Hamlet* I.5.91); 'Think on me' (*Richard III* V.3.127,135,163); and his intervention at this moment articulated another petition of the ghost: to be 'reckon[ed] with' (Derrida xx).

In accordance with the multi-ghosting that operated throughout *The Histories*, Iwuji was, in this instant, both Dead Gloucester and Henry VI: the ghost of one already dead and the ghost of one not yet born.<sup>10</sup> Iwuji's spectral presence opened up a space which I will term the 'space of grace': a microsite of renegotiation, where the tensions between justice and mercy give way to a mutual exchange of repentance and forgiveness which operates through a radically new spiritual politics.<sup>11</sup> This new

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<sup>10</sup> Derrida thinks of spectres as 'those others who are no longer or [. . .] those others who are not yet *there*, presently living, whether they are already dead or not yet born' (xix).

<sup>11</sup> I have chosen the word 'grace' to describe this space, as it is the term which most closely encapsulates the combined and radical effects of mutual repentance and forgiveness, as they are understood within the context of Western Christianity: the belief system which would have contributed to Shakespeare's spiritual formation and with which, in the context of my own space-time, I am familiar. In the process of arriving at the space of grace I examined the connotations of the words used for 'repentance' and 'forgiveness' in the Old Testament (Hebrew) and New Testament (Greek) scriptures, and I outline these meanings below to give some insight into the radical potential of this space of grace, as a site that supersedes the competing demands of justice and mercy. I am grateful to Jack Merrall for providing these translations and discussing them with me.

REPENT/REPENTANCE Hebrew (i) 'nacham': to repent, to comfort, to be comforted, to grieve over, to feel regret (which produces a change of conduct or purpose or both); (ii) 'shubh': to turn, to return, to turn back, to be restored (used for something restored to its original possessor), to renew, to refresh, and to be converted.

spiritual politics is engendered by a sense of recognition, which simultaneously apprehends the face of the ghost and one's own true image, and recognizes the need for the geographies of revolution to begin with the self, and in these microsites of turning, renewal, refreshment, and restoration. This encounter, I would argue, constituted a thirdspace—a briefly glimpsed place of radical openness—and demonstrated the exciting potential of theatre to open up such spaces.

The space of grace glimpsed in this production made Boyd's *Richard II* not just an interrogation of divine right, but an interrogation of what it means to be divine, and gave weight to the spiritual, which is intertwined with the political in the text. As Ewan Fernie argues:

Recent Shakespeare studies have tended to miss spirituality's investment in otherness and have, therefore, typically dismissed it as a form of essentialism that operates, at best, as a distraction from history, and at worst, as justification for pernicious hierarchies of race, gender and class. But [. . .] such skepticism has resulted in serious neglect not only of important metaphysical dimensions of Shakespeare's text, but also of ideas of emancipation and an alternative world that have real political potential (8).

The use of spectrality in Boyd's *Histories* made space for rethinking relations between history, the spiritual, and the political, and suggested the role of haunting in creating the 'long[ing] for the insight of that moment in which we recognize [. . .] that it could have been and can be otherwise' (Gordon 57-58). Derrida urges the necessity of 'think[ing] the possibility of a step beyond repression' and towards an economy of the gift (22-23), and the operations of spectrality in this *Richard II* produced the space of grace: a transient site, but one which afforded the possibility of conceiving of the alternative narratives which haunting can play a role in engendering.

Avery Gordon argues that '[b]eing haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against our will and always a bit magically into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge but as transformative recognition' (8). The appearances of Dead Gloucester drew Richard towards this possibility of 'transformative recognition', but it is possible to refuse the ghost and, in turning so quickly to muse upon his own mysteriously unaltered face, Richard missed the

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Greek (i) 'metanoia': to have another mind, and hence 'to change one's mind, a change of judgment, or a change of heart'.

FORGIVE/FORGIVENESS Hebrew (i) 'salach': to lift up, carry away, send away; (ii) 'kaphar': to cover, cover over, to expiate, and to atone (an adapted form of this is 'kapporeth' which means mercy seat).

Greek (i) 'apoluo': to send away', derived from to loose from a tie or burden; (ii) 'charizomai': to be gracious to, to grant deliverance to (usually entailing the meaning as a favour to someone), equivalent to our freely forgive; 'aphiemi': to send away, to let off, to release, acquit, pardon.

opportunity to encounter the spectre and foreclosed all the possibilities opened up by the space of grace. Richard's turning away and heading into his own death is in the script, and so the potential of the space of grace—this thirdspace of a new spiritual politics—is for the audience to remember and consider.

#### (iv) Placing the Memory: Remembering the Place

The remembrance and consideration of key sites and/or events is often facilitated through the construction of monuments or memorials, and 'making places that commemorate, question, remember, mourn and forget' entails 'the intentional or unexpected evocation of ghosts' (Till, *New Berlin* 9, 6). In the case of *The Histories*, however, this was reversed, as the ghosts and processes of haunting analysed in this chapter were instrumental in configuring the Roundhouse as a multilayered memorial that worked on several levels to commemorate different aspects of the theatrical event. As this memorial space was constructed through performance, it transcended some of the problematic issues associated with monuments.

Places of memory are particularly complex and contested sites and can express 'conflicting social desires to remember and to forget violent national pasts that still linger in the present' (Till, *New Berlin* 7-8). Public monuments often serve as 'deliberate physical manifestations of ideology, [and as] inscription[s] of triumphal and laudatory statements upon the landscape' (Shurmer-Smith, and Hannan 203). Criticism of these commemorative structures has focused on their tendency to communicate 'a grand romantic version of history' (Shurmer-Smith and Hannan 203), and 'evoke [. . .] myths of a timeless nation' (Till, 'Places' 292). They have also become problematic as they have traditionally articulated versions of the past written by men, and have naturalized gendered images of war by presenting men as heroic and suffering male bodies and depicting women as grieving mothers (Till 'Places' 292-293), or as abstractions of values such as Justice (Shurmer-Smith, and Hannan 201). Contemporary processes of monument construction are also complicated by questions of aesthetic form and location, and by anxieties that their popularity as places within tourist geographies leads to a simplification and general acceptance of the narratives they embody, and the impression of a uniform experience of the sites and/or experiences they commemorate (Till, 'Places' 297). Over the last few decades, the impetus towards memorialization through the construction, or assignation, of particular places of memory has grown; but this drive towards locating memory in structural form has also generated a sense of

unease regarding the potential of monuments to externalize, or replace, memory and, thus, to ‘sanction forgetting’ (Malikn 11).

Lefebvre recognizes the potential of monuments to erase the ‘traces of violence and death, negativity and aggression in social practice’ (222), but also recognizes their potential to provide a space which permits ‘a continual back-and-forth between the private speech of ordinary conversations and the public speech of discourses, lectures, sermons, rallying cries, and all theatrical forms of utterance’ (224). Lefebvre compares the experience of monumental space to ‘entering and sojourning in the poetic world’ (224), and maintains that this space is ‘more easily understood [. . .] when compared with texts written for the theatre, which are composed of dialogues, rather than poetry or other literary texts, which are monologues’ (224). This dialogic potential was exemplified in the transformation of the Roundhouse into memorial space through the performance of *The Histories*, and the dialogues engendered pertained to the real and imagined histories that converged there.

At one level the Roundhouse became a place of commemoration as the venue for this set of Shakespeare plays and a memorial to the achievement of Boyd’s *Histories* Ensemble. The performances of the plays were the primary means by which the Roundhouse was configured as a monument to the RSC’s work, but the publicity materials played a complementary role. A poster of giant proportions, displayed on the exterior of the Roundhouse, bore the following slogan (Fig. 24):

EIGHT PLAYS  
CHARTING 100 YEARS OF ENGLISH HISTORY  
DRAMATIZED BY THE WORLD’S  
GREATEST  
PLAYWRIGHT

The proclamation of authorial excellence, combined with the summary of the dramatic content offered, and the placement of the RSC and Roundhouse logos in the top left and bottom right corners respectively, drew together Stratford and London (two key places in Shakespeare’s personal geographies), and emplaced this celebration of theatre, dramatist, national history, and the RSC within the walls of a building which boasts its own dramatic journey from steam engine repair shed to ‘legendary, cutting edge performing arts venue’ (Roundhouse Website). By foregrounding the narrative content of the plays as national history and underpinning their authority with a reference to Shakespeare’s international reputation, the words and images conferred on the Roundhouse a memorial status. This element of the monumentalization process was connected with marketing strategies, but the announcement also heralded a deeper form



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Fig. 24 *The Histories* publicity Image

of memorial construction connected with the operations of multi-ghosting that animated the performance space, the place of performance, and its environs. In constructing the Roundhouse, not merely as a place of theatrical memories, but a place of public memory, I draw on Casey's concept of bidirectional memory: a phenomenon that occurred in *The Histories* through the operations of multi-ghosting.

Casey argues that one of the most important aspects of public memory is its 'inherent bidirectionality with regard to past and future' which 'allows for and encourages recursion to [. . . the past] as remaining the same over time—hence as a fount of inspiration, or at least reliability—while in its revisability it shows itself open to a future in which it may mutate' (Casey, 'Public' 31). To create a place of public memory, in Casey's terms, then, means to create a place where debate can occur, and where it is accepted that memory may be revised, either because of 'a discovery of a glaringly false part of its content' or through 'a reassessment of its primary significance as a wider, or simply different, ethical or historical context arises' (31). The spectres that Derrida urges us to address and respect are 'those others who are no longer [. . . and] those others who are not yet *there*, presently living' (xix), and spectrality therefore shares the bidirectionality of public memory. The performance of spectrality is a creative response to the demands of revisioning and to this plea for respect, and I therefore position Boyd's *Richard II* and *The Histories* at the intersection of discourses of memory and hauntology. The location of this theatrical event at such a conceptual juncture was instrumental in determining the intervention that this set of plays made into the identity of the theatre space.

The performance of these narratives—which are part of England's theatrical past, and which articulate a dramatic vision of the national past—facilitated a remembering together that was also constantly urged by the posters, paintings, and screened images from the productions displayed throughout the Roundhouse. The public nature of this remembering together was reinforced by the configuration of the performance space, which assigned spectators both a familial and civic role. Sarah Hemming commented that the audience was 'clustered round the thrust stage like children around a grandfather's knee' (*FT* 19/04/2008), and Ian Shuttleworth noted that the space gave 'a sense of the audience bearing witness as citizens to the narrative of the state' (*FT* 09/05/2008). The repeated encounters with dramatic figures and with friends and acquaintances old and newly-made further strengthened this act of remembering together.

Throughout the cycle, then, memories were generated and reactivated in the auditorium and in other places within and around the building. Moreover, memorable spaces were produced by the interventions of the spectres, and these were sites which particularly encouraged the audience to engage in the practice of bidirectional memory. A primary example of such a space was the intensely multi-ghosted site of Dead Gloucester's final appearance. Here, as the Groom, Iwuji witnessed the revenge he had watched and waited for throughout the play; and yet, foreseeing his own death there as Henry VI, he experienced the 'totally bittersweet' realization that 'it wasn't over, but just beginning' (PIntv). Other such sites were the ghostly garden of stories past, present and future, and the briefly-glimpsed space of grace. Memories of these discrete spaces in the fictive world mingled with memories of spaces in and around the place of performance and became part of the vast mnemonic system. The Roundhouse, then, became a memorial to these several narratives and histories: those of the performers, the playwright, the Stratford-London connection, the spectators, and the plays.

The intervention into the identity of the Roundhouse made by Boyd's spectral *Richard II* and *The Histories* was, in one sense temporary, and operated within the lived experience of the communities who inhabited its real and imagined spaces. But, in another sense, as memories are rooted in place(s), and place(s) pervade memory, its identity as a place of memory can be continually reconstructed in the minds of the spectators. Places 'have the ability to carry memories of events that occurred there' (McAuley, 'Remembering' 151) and these memories can be triggered by some kind of 'performative act', which could be 'as minimal as returning after a considerable absence' since it is, McAuley argues, 'being in place that starts the memory process' (151). Returning to place does have the power to elicit memories, and those with opportunity to return to the Roundhouse may find themselves reimagining *The Histories*; but there is a complex interaction in the brain between event cells and place cells. Scientific research suggests that memory of place can also be activated by non-spatial aspects of an event and, conversely, aspects of place can activate memories of an event (Burgess et al. 1497). Further, the concept of the mental maps offers a means of interrogating how memories can be placed and places remembered; and considering how the Roundhouse may have been located in the mental maps of *Histories* spectators sets up another productive exchange between theatre and geography.

R. G. Golledge conceives of the mental map as a hierarchically organized matrix of primary nodes—which comprise key life places such as work and home—and secondary and tertiary nodes, comprising (respectively) frequently visited places and



major junctions; and occasionally visited places and minor junctions. Primary nodes, or landmarks, are crucial to learning the environment; they ‘become anchors to which spatial information’ is linked and ‘act as mnemonics’ which aid recognition of associated landmarks and paths. However, as I have pointed out, places do not only encode spatial information; they are centres of meaning and affect, and as I have demonstrated through this thesis and particularly in this chapter, theatres are complex sites where multiple real and imagined spaces interact with each other and produce a range of emotions and ideas. Although few studies have endeavoured to connect the spatial knowledge organized in cognitive maps ‘to the attitudes, beliefs, and feelings that people have about an environment’ (Kitchen and Blades 37-38), recent work in the area of emotional geographies suggests that affective responses to place are highly significant in the formation of cognitive maps.<sup>12</sup> I would argue therefore that as a result of the lived and affective experience of ‘dwelling’ at the Roundhouse, and witnessing *The Histories*, the place of performance became for some spectators a primary node in their mental maps, and that this suggests the potential of theatres to provide new criteria by which anchor points can be defined.

The position of salience that the Roundhouse acquired on the mental maps of theatregoers during the cycle and in its immediate wake, will, of course, have varied, and will have by now changed as these cognitive schema are only ever ‘a cross section representing the world at one instant of time’ (Downs and Stea 6). However, the activation of memory through spatial and non-spatial aspects of the event, which can motivate the retrieval of information encoded in their mental maps, affords spectators of *The Histories* the possibility of reconstituting the Roundhouse as both a place of theatrical memories and a place of public memory: thus, offering ongoing opportunities to address the ghosts and interrogate the spaces they opened up.

*The Histories* presented both male and female bodies as heroic and suffering (as well as depicting weak men and grieving widows), and used spectrality to encourage an interrogation, rather than a simple acceptance, of the past. Furthermore, the radical potential of the monumental identity conferred on the Roundhouse by *The Histories* was also connected with the dichotomies of ephemeracy and durability, and the externalization and internalization of memory that monuments bring into play. *The Histories* made no permanent inscription on the London cityscape; the installed ‘Courtyard’ was deconstructed at the end of the run and the temporary modifications to the Roundhouse interior and exterior were erased, leaving no physical trace. Since the

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<sup>12</sup> See Joyce Davidson, Liz Bondi and Mick eds. *Emotional Geographies* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

Roundhouse became a memorial through the performance of *The Histories* within a temporary structure that always contained the imminence of its own disappearance, it qualifies it as a sort of ‘counter-monument’ (Harvie, *Staging* 65), which Jeanette R. Malkin defines as ‘an interactive, mobile, mutable and self-effacing monument that act[s] as a provocation rather than a sanctified representation of the past’ (12; see also Harvie, *Staging* 65). The passage of the Courtyard/Roundhouse into the mental maps of spectators facilitated the internalization of memories of place and performance, creating a dispersed community of intermittent rememberers.

The quotidian hauntings of actors and spectators that made the Roundhouse a dwelling throughout *The Histories*, and the rich multi-ghosting, which operated in performance and through the displays and exhibits, worked together to create a multilayered place of memories. The space of grace engendered by the performance of spectrality revealed a *terra incognita*—such as that I have suggested was mapped in Barton, implied in Warner, and echoed in Pimlott—and demonstrated the potential of theatre to perform an active, three-dimensional cartography that not only represents places in the playworld, but—through the production of spaces of radical openness—illuminates Soja’s concept of Thirdspace. The invented ghosts in Boyd’s *Richard II* produced a haunted space of bi-directional memory and brought this history play into dialogue with contemporary critical thinking on the ghost as a social and political figure. The staging of spectrality in this *Richard II* made the play an exciting new context in which to rethink Shakespeare’s ghosts, and to consider the impact of the dramatic spectre on both the playworld and theatre identities.

## Conclusion

In this thesis I have mapped the paradoxical geographies of *Richard II* and examined the staging of these geographies in a range of spaces which the play has inhabited throughout its travels. I have explored the multiple spatialities engendered by the theatrical event and demonstrated how various modes of geographical thinking can be informatively applied to the analysis of Shakespeare in production. I have shown how the procedures that comprise theatrical geographies—an analysis of the places in the text and their evocative force; an intertheatrical mapping of the playworld in performance; and a close reading of the real and imagined geographies of a selection of specific productions—work together to provide a nuanced appreciation of how space contributes to the play's potential meanings in production, and have suggested the value of this approach in stimulating thought about future stagings.

I have not attempted to formulate a model that may be uniformly applied to all plays and productions, but rather to provide a set of critical tools forged from the combination of traditional approaches to theatre history, elements of performance studies, and aspects of geographical thought. Such tools allow for different emphases and can facilitate the analysis of a range of spaces of different scales, opening up the possibility of focusing on the negotiations between the theatre space, its environs and the spaces of the fictive world, as they operate in serial performances such as Boyd's *Histories*, or on the tiniest microsite produced in performance, such as the Queen's tribute to Richard in Pimlott.

The application of these tools has shown how the geographies of *Richard II* moved from the spectacular visions of the actor-mangers, who aimed to orientate the audience by providing a three-dimensional mapping of places in the text; through the darker visions which materialized more bleak representations of the geographies of power; through Barton's mythical, religious, and psychological dreamscape, and stagescapes which suggested the precariousness and reversals of power through levels and steps; to the unsettling relocations that deconstructed existing perceptions of 'this England'. In response to these developments in staging the geographies of *Richard II*, I have introduced the concept of associative geographies as a means of articulating and interrogating the spatial connections and have analysed the metanarratives triggered by particular stage environments.

My analysis of the successive contexts in the play's trajectory has also revealed how knowledge about the play's earlier life produced in performance has travelled with

it. The associations with the Essex rebellion engendered by the 1601 performance at the Globe meant that the play was able to cast the Theatre Royal Drury Lane (1681), and later Covent Garden (1738), as places of debate and potential subversion or dissent. Although this knowledge continues to travel with the play, there has been a shift in the play's casting operations as more recently, through the spaces it has generated, *Richard II* has cast the audience in roles that enable them to view the action from different perspectives, as in Warner; or encourage them to assume certain responsibilities, as in Pimlott.

This thesis has forged new ground at the interface of theatre and geography by demonstrating the ways in which *Richard II* has generated spaces which can be analysed in relation to theories of extensibility; time-space compression; non-places; placeless and authentic geographies; places to play and tourist mobilities; and haunted space. Considering Warner's 'corridor' and my case studies from the perspective of these spatial theories has revealed a major shift away from the idea of the play's geographies as an itinerary and towards a concern with permeability, traces and superimpositions, and spaces in between, and has shown how *Richard II* in production has illuminated and critiqued these geographical concepts.

Adopting Soja's concept of Thirdspace empowers the reader/spectator of/at Shakespeare's plays to position her/himself within a zone of critical mobility and to look for those spaces of radical openness which make room for hitherto unacceptable alliances, and which afford a consideration of 'other' possibilities which can be conceptualized and realized outside of the constraints of established binaries. I have demonstrated theatre's ability to elucidate the idea of Thirdspace and to perform the production and mapping of such space, which Soja himself acknowledges evades 'conventional cartographies' ('Expanding' 276). Theatre's potential to generate thirdspaces is exemplified in the non-textual spaces of recognition and opportunity that I have identified as occurring through Barton's Groom intervention and its subsequent echoes in Warner and Pimlott; the presence of the Queen in the final scene in Pimlott; and in the space of grace opened up by Boyd's use of spectrality.

The microsites instanced above prove that thinking about theatrical spaces and places from current geographical perspectives—as not merely bounded areas or scenographic structures but constituted by relations and flows and always in process—allows the identification of new and/or previously unrecognized spaces. These spaces—which correspond to the sort of *terrae incognitae* that Wright maintained existed even in well-charted regions—are only discovered in performance and therefore

exceed any semiotic framework perceived as operating in the text. I have also indicated that particular spatializations of the play merit ongoing interrogation. Just as there is a recognition in geography that ‘the information that can be apprehended by an individual in an instant or lifetime is tiny compared to the sheer amount of information presented by the single milieu’ (Lowenthal, ‘Geography’ 243); so, by means of theatrical geographies, I have suggested that individual spatializations of *Richard II* are so rich that they continue to yield productive ideas as new knowledge and experience are brought to the interpretive task, thus indicating the value of applying this approach to other Shakespeare plays.

The application of a geographical consciousness also facilitates an analysis which confronts the anomalies and/or resistances that can occur when a Shakespeare play is relocated. Seen through the lens of theatrical geographies, these clashes produced by resistances in the text—such as the communication failures in Nunn’s high-tech world of space-time compression—are not obstacles, but become in themselves critical tools for enhancing our understanding of the play and apprehending new meanings created by Shakespeare in contemporary performance.

Geographical thinking on the production and modification of space(s) and the conceptualization of place as process suggests the need to investigate the particular ways in which individual productions may intervene in or complicate theatre identities to give them new functions that arise out of their collaborations with the play. This aspect of theatrical geographies has been demonstrated by my discussion of the space of festive work-play opened up by Carroll’s *Richard II* at the Globe, and by my consideration of the transformation of the Roundhouse into a multilayered memorial through Boyd’s spectral *Histories*.

In spite of the ostensible simplicity of England as the named place comprising its core geography, the playworld of *Richard II* has proved to be a particularly exciting and ambiguous site made up of a range of real and imagined spaces, which have been further complicated in performance. Theatrical geographies offers a framework for reassessing the apparent fixity of other named places in the plays, uncovering their paradoxical qualities, and exploring the geographies of their staging. This thesis, then, opens up the way for a continued exploration of space and place in Shakespeare which could be taken forward in several directions. One way would be to focus on an analytical comparison of generic geographies through an examination of the spaces generated by Shakespeare’s tragedies, comedies, and romances and an exploration of the various spatial issues and theories contemporary productions of these plays engage

with. Another would be to frame questions which take specific plays or productions as a starting point. What aspects of postmodern geographical thought might be illuminated through an analysis of spatializations of the nameless island in *The Tempest*? What new meanings of Illyria might be apprehended by bringing a geographical consciousness to the analysis of its constituent images? What sort of geographic concerns might be revealed by an analysis of Edward Hall's *Merchant of Venice* set in a prison (2008), when compared to Rupert Goold's relocation of the paradoxical city of Venice to Las Vegas and his projection of Portia into the realms of reality TV (2011)? How do these spatializations open up new nuances in traditionally conceived relations between Venice and Belmont? What trends in perceptions of places of escape and exile might be discovered through an analysis of different realizations of the forest in *As You Like It*? How might the intense, spare black box of Declan Donnellan's *Macbeth* (2010) be brought into conversation with Pimlott's white box?

As spaces and places are never finished but always becoming, then examining both the constructions of the spaces of Shakespeare's fictive worlds and considering their relations with places of performance is an ongoing task. By documenting and imaginatively reading the spaces discussed in this thesis, I facilitate the possibilities of future readings which may establish new dialogues between these spatializations of *Richard II* and the geographical pleasures and anxieties of the reader's/spectator's cultural moment. By opening up some of the potential meanings and conversations produced by the play in postmodern performance, I have aimed to encourage a broader engagement with the multiple spatialities of theatre and to promote further investigations into the staging of geographies and the geographies of staging in Shakespeare.

Appendix A *Richard II* II.1.40-66

This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,  
This earth of majesty this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress built by nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea  
Which serves it in the office of a wall  
Or as a moat defensive to a house  
Against the envy of less happier lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,  
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
Feared by their breed and famous by their birth,  
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,  
For Christian service and true chivalry,  
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry  
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's son,  
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,  
Dear for her reputation through the world,  
Is now leased out – I die pronouncing it –  
Like to a tenement or pelting farm.  
England bound in with the triumphant sea,  
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege  
Of wat'ry Neptune, is now bound in with shame  
With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds.  
This England that was wont to conquer others  
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.

Appendix B  
 Programme for *Richard II*  
 dir. Joan Littlewood 1955  
 (Archive Theatre Royal Stratford East)

RELEVANT DATA :

RICHARD II ... .. Crowned 1377. Abdicated 1399.

PLAGUE OF THE BLACK DEATH ... .. 1348-49  
 (killed off nearly half the farmworkers in the country)

100 YEARS WAR WITH FRANCE ... .. 1338-1453

WAT TYLER'S PEASANTS REBELLION ... .. 1381  
 (Wat Tyler was killed by the Barons at Mile End whilst he was parleying  
 with Richard II.)

The poet Langland described a farmworker in 1394 :—

*His coat was of a clout. that cary (coarse cloth) was called  
 His hood was full of holes. as he the plough followed  
 Two mittens so scanty. made all of patches,  
 The fingers were worn. and full of mud hung  
 Four heifers before him. that weak had become  
 You could count all their ribs. so wretched they were.  
 His wife walked by him. with a long goad.  
 Barefoot on the bare ice. that the blood followed.  
 And at the field end lay. a little bowl  
 And on it lay a little child. wrapped in rags.*

54 different wines, beers and spirits can be had from Mrs. Parham in the  
 Long Bar. Tea, coffee, chocolates and snacks from Mr. Gardner in the  
 Snack Bar.

In accordance with modern theatre practice, National Anthems will only  
 be played in the presence of Royalty

The setting designed by John Bury and made in the Workrooms by John  
 Bury and Harry Smith. The costumes designed and made in the Theatre  
 Workshop wardrobe by Josephine Wilkinson and Shirley Jones.

Lighting and Stage Direction	... ..	JOHN BURY
Bars	... ..	RUTH PARHAM
Cleaning	... ..	Mrs. BANKS, Mrs. CHAMBERS
		Mrs. BARDELL, Mrs. WOOLMER
Attendants	... ..	TOM WHITEMAN
Fireman	... ..	BERT POOL
Poster Design	... ..	GEOFF. MILLER
Photography	... ..	JOHN SPINNER
Script Librarian	... ..	PEGGY SOUNDY
Production	... ..	JOAN LITTLEWOOD
General Manager. (for Theatre Workshop Ltd.)		GERALD C. RAFFLES

Virginia Cigarettes by Abdulla.

" In the interest of Public Health this Theatre is disinfected  
 throughout with Jeyes' Fluid "



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- Tracy, Susan. Duchess of York, *Richard II*, dir. Trevor Nunn 2005. 29 September 2008

## List of Productions

Director / Actor- manager	Designer	Theatre and / or Theatre Company	Date
		Venue unconfirmed possibly Theatre Shoreditch or the Cross Keys Inn Chamberlain's Men	1595
		House of Sir Robert Cecil, Channon Row Globe Chamberlain's Men Globe King's Men	8 December 1595 7 February 1601 1631
Nahum Tate		Drury Lane	11-13 December 1680
Nahum Tate		Drury Lane	18-19 January 1681
John Rich		Covent Garden	6 March 1738
William Charles Macready		Touring: Glasgow, Bath, Dublin, Bristol	1812-1815
Edmund Kean		Drury Lane	9 March 1815
Charles Kean		Princess's	12 March 1857
Frank Benson		SMT	23 April 1896
William Poel		Lecture Theatre, University of London	11 November 1899
Herbert Beerbohm Tree		His Majesty's	10 September 1903
Harcourt Williams		Old Vic	10 November 1929
Tyrone Guthrie		SMT	21 April 1933
John Gielgud	Motley	Queen's	22 September 1937
Iden Payne	Peggy Neale	SMT	12 April 1941
Robert Atkins	Herbert Norris	SMT	22 May 1944
Walter Hudd	Hal Burton	SMT	13 June 1947
Ralph Richardson	Michael Ware	Old Vic at the New Theatre	23 April 1947
John Gielgud	Louden Sainthill	Lyric Hammersmith	30 December 1952
John Barton	Disley Jones	Cambridge Arts Theatre	4 October 1954
Joan Littlewood		Theatre Royal Stratford East	19 January 1954
Michael Benthall	Leslie Hurry	Old Vic	19 January 1955
Joan Littlewood	John Bury	Theatre Royal Stratford East	19 January 1955



Val May	Richard Nogri	Old Vic	18 November 1959
John Barton, Peter Hall, Clifford Williams	John Bury	RST	15 April 1964
Richard Cotterell	Tim Goodchild	Prospect	2 December 1968
John Barton	Timothy O'Brien and Tazeena Firth	RST, RSC	10 April 1973
Robin Lefevre	Grant Hicks	Young Vic	18 February 1981
John David	Clive Lavagna	Bristol Old Vic	15 February 1985
Barry Kyle	William Dudley	RST, RSC	10 September 1986
Ariane Mnouchkine	Guy-Claude François	Théâtre du Soleil Cartoucherie, Vincennes	10 December 1986
Clifford Williams	Carl Toms	Triumph	15 November 1988
Ron Daniels	Anthony McDonald	RST, RSC	7 November 1990
James Macdonald	Kandis Cook	Manchester Royal Exchange	9 September 1993
Steven Berkoff		Anapacher, Joseph Papp Public Theatre, New York	1 April 1994
		Ludlow Castle	25 June 2005
		Corral de Comedias Almagro, Spain	11 July 2005
Deborah Warner	Hildegard Bechtler	Cottesloe, National Theatre	31 May 1995
Adrián Daumas	Pedro Moreno	Cáceres, Spain	19 June 1998
Steven Pimlott	David Fielding	TOP, RSC	29 March 2000
Jonathan Kent	Paul Brown	Gainsborough Studios (Almeida)	12 April 2000
Claus Peyman	Achim Freyer	Berliner Ensemble	30 June 2000 (revival Courtyard Stratford-upon-Avon 16 November 2006)
Tim Carroll		Shakespeare's Globe	8 May 2003
Trevor Nunn	Hildegard Bechtler	Old Vic	14 September 2005
Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Courtyard, Stratford- upon-Avon 2007; transfer to Roundhouse, London	16 August 2007 15 April 2008