

King Lear Without: *The Heath*

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Mais enfin le drame? S'il a, chez l'auteur, sa fulgurante origine, c'est à lui de capter cette foudre et d'organiser, à partir de l'illumination qui montre le vide, une architecture verbale—c'est-à-dire grammaticale et cérémoniale—indiquant sournoisement que de ce vide s'arrache une apparence qui montre le vide.

But the drama? If it has its dazzling origin in the author, it is up to him to capture this thunder and to organize, out of the illumination that shows the void, a verbal architecture—one that is grammatical and ceremonial—indicating, craftily, that from this void is torn an appearance that shows the void.

—Jean Genet, "L'Etrange mot de . . ."

IMAGINE KING LEAR without the Heath.

Perhaps the imperative with which I begin my essay will prove impossible for a critical tradition that has become accustomed to the conventions of the modern printed text, accustomed both to the presence of a particular location "in" the world of that text and to the presence of a particular character "in" that particular location—a character, moreover, who has become emblematic of subjectivity in its most acute, most essential form. This is a critical tradition for whom concepts of "space" and discrete location function as inseparable dialectical poles, and for whom the most basic analytic categories and gestures have become imbued with a spatial imaginary that has become inseparable from the idea of subjectivity itself.

Writing in 1904, A. C. Bradley already articulated in another vocabulary and sensibility the problem that I will be discussing here, saying of *King Lear* that the "very vagueness in the sense of locality . . . give[s] the feeling of vastness, the feeling not of a scene or particular place, but of a world; or, to speak more accurately, of a particular place which is also a world" (261). If Bradley prefers this immediate re-formulation of his own statement, it is because the phrase not only describes with greater precision a sense of space that he perceives almost intuitively in the play, a space that seems to exceed the stage, filling it with a looming and unrepresentable significance, but because it does so by fixing the "overwhelming" (244) space of the stage into a convenient and predictable dialectical relation. I will quote

Bradley at some length below, both because his comments formulate a long-standing set of critical objections to the play and because the categories and oppositions he introduces are central to the analysis that I will be proposing:

The stage is the test of strictly dramatic quality, and *King Lear* is too huge for the stage. Of course I am not denying that it is a great stage-play. It has scenes immensely effective in the theater. . . . But . . . that which makes the *peculiar* greatness of *King Lear*—the immense scope of the work; the mass and variety of intense experience which it contains; the interpenetration of sublime imagination, piercing pathos; the vastness of the convulsion both of nature and of human passion; the vagueness of the scene where the action takes place, and of the movements of the figures which cross this scene; the strange atmosphere, cold and dark, which strikes on us as we enter this scene, enfolding these figures and magnifying their dim outlines like a winter mist; the half-realized suggestions of vast universal working in the world of individual fates and passions—all this interferes with dramatic clearness even when the play is read, and in the theater not only refuses to reveal itself fully through the senses but seems to be almost in contradiction with their reports. . . . *King Lear*, as a whole, is imperfectly dramatic, and there is something in its very essence which is at war with the senses, and demands a purely imaginative realisation. (247-48)

"A purely imaginative realisation": these are Bradley's terms for a *reader* who already seems to participate in the cruel world of the play and to "enter this scene." If we are to recover the true magnitude of the play, Bradley argues, it is only as readers that we will be able to do so. The power of poetry, even of language itself, is at stake:

The influence of all this on imagination as we read *King Lear* is very great; and it combines with other influences to convey to us, not in the form of distinct ideas but in the manner proper to poetry, the wider or universal significance of the spectacle presented to the inward eye. But the effect of theatrical representation is precisely the reverse. There the poetic atmosphere is dissipated; the meaning of the very words which create it passes half-realized; in obedience to the tyranny of the eye we conceive the characters as mere particular men and women; and all that mass of vague suggestion, if it enters the mind at all, appears in the shape of an allegory which we immediately reject. (269)

The two passages suggest, somewhat paradoxically, that *King Lear*'s "peculiar greatness" derives from its pre-eminent spatial qualities—its "immense scope," "huge" action, and "vagueness of scene" (all 261)—but that the open stage, arguably the most fully spatialized mode of representation,

can finally only obscure the play's total achievement. The stage "overpowers" (261) the viewer, disrupting the operation of linguistic meaning and even the effect essential to tragedy: that which strikes us as "revolting or shocking" in performance "is otherwise in reading," where "imagination . . . can do its duty as a stimulus to pity" (251) and make possible a recognition of the characters' terror and grief. The stage's insufficiency derives from its particularity, its rootedness in a precise time and place. The "tyranny" (269) of the sensory eye, riveted in the particular and the mundane, must give way to the "spectacle of the inward eye" (269) possessed by the reader who contemplates the "vastness" (256) of the drama from a "wider point of view" (253). Elements that appear inconsistent, implausible, superfluous, or excessively graphic on the stage are resolved on the page into the majesty of "one of the world's greatest poems" (277). Bradley's analysis transforms the lived space of the stage and body into the idealized and metaphorical space of perspective, "intellect," and "speculation" (264); this space is in turn aligned with aesthetic judgment, and, through "imagination," with consciousness itself.

By adopting a critical attitude that imagines "a particular place which is also a world" (261), Bradley thus gives spatial form to the larger allegorizing movement from individual to universal—and from stage to page—that allows him to secure the play's ultimate moral and aesthetic relevance. But it is striking that even as Bradley turns to the page as a tool of hermeneutic authority, he finds that the conventions of the open stage are too persistent to be overlooked and finally intrude to disrupt his gesture. *King Lear*, he observes, presents unusual difficulties by virtue of its very *placelessness*, a placelessness that is typical of the Elizabethan theater. Although in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Othello* "the imagination is . . . untroubled" by lack of precise locations, in *Lear* "the indications are so scanty that the reader's mind is left not seldom both vague and bewildered."¹ This is the problem of the entire play, and he singles out several scenes in particular as exemplary instances of the confusing effects of early modern stage practice and the necessity of overcoming them with the printed text:

A similar conflict between imagination and sense will be found if we consider the dramatic centre of the whole tragedy, the Storm scenes. . . . The Storm-scenes in *King Lear* gain nothing and their very essence is destroyed. . . . [It is] such poetry as cannot be transferred to the space behind the foot-lights, but has its being only in imagination. (269-70)

Bradley's reluctance to locate these scenes is notable: even in imagination, they unfold in a "place" that remains as undesignated as the scenes that unfold on the open stage. His hesitation is perhaps all the more surprising in that for nearly two hundred years Shakespeare's editors had proposed a location for these scenes that had come to seem self-evident: this place is the "heath."²

But the moment is also a testament to Bradley's critical perceptiveness: the so-called "heath," in fact, appears nowhere in either the 1608 Quarto or the 1623 Folio editions of Shakespeare's play. No single line in any of the early texts records any such place; only Lear's tirade and a brief direction—"storm still"—that appears silently but insistently six times in the Folio, and *not* in the Quarto, provide any indication of a specific placement for the scene.³ Not until Rowe's 1709 edition of Shakespeare's works does a stage direction appear specifying "A Heath." No doubt the entire weight of a later tradition intrudes on this moment—that of the Restoration stage with its perspective scenery and careful attention to the unities of time, place, and action—filling with a simple, single word a textual moment that Rowe's retrospective eyes could perceive only as absence or error.⁴

In spite of warnings by recent editors and scholars as to the anachronism of using location directions in modern editions of Renaissance plays, I suspect that like Rowe and his successors many of us find it difficult *not* to map the action of a play onto an imaginary topography.⁵ The habit says a great deal about our own understanding of space and illuminates, somewhat surprisingly perhaps, how dependent it is on the printed book. But the tendency is not always as illegitimate as it might seem. Some genres positively require spatial precision: domestic tragedy and city comedy, for instance, tend to specify locations in much more detail than comedies or tragedies attributed to Shakespeare. Moreover, as Bradley himself observed, in any single play the places of the action may emerge more or less distinctly at different points, and in some respects his characterization of *Lear* is perhaps too categorical: we do, after all, glimpse the "casement" of Edmund's "closet" (1.2.58); the action seems at one point to be outside a "hovel"; we overhear occasional references to France; and some characters travel to "Dover," where the imaginative detail of a particular place is magnificently realized.

Nevertheless, to presume location at *all* points in the case of *Lear*, as Rowe does, is to take as self-evident a set of logical and imaginative relationships that the play itself seeks to examine in all their complexity

and to hold in tension, rather than to resolve. I have examined Bradley's reading in such detail because, at bottom, his analysis is centrally concerned with this aspect of the play, even if his appeal to universal categories finally prevents a full elaboration of the representational problems involved and forecloses some of their more radical implications. Stated simply, these are the relationships between the categories of "place" and "space" during dramatic performance, "place" being understood, provisionally, as any discrete, bounded location with finite dimensions, and "space" as the larger, seemingly limitless dimension that would contain it.⁶ An extended consideration of *King Lear*'s treatment of these categories leads directly to one of the most difficult aspects of the play and to the topic of this special issue: before we can open a discussion of "the space of the stage" we must ask first how we understand the phrase, what the characteristics of this "space" might prove to be, and how this "space"—the very medium that makes all dramatic representation possible—could ever "itself" appear as an object of representation, and thus as an object of analysis. These questions raise a set of concerns that are simultaneously formal (they concern a particular mode of representation), philosophical (and have been treated as such both in the early modern period and in our own), historical (how we think about them has changed over time), and ideological (they are not discursively neutral).

I will argue that no play more than *King Lear* so self-consciously engages the power of the early modern open stage to take up and transform, in the process of its fiction and for the duration of that fiction only, the spatial medium in which a dramatic action took place. Explicit verbal reference to the stage's mimetic capacity is largely absent from the play—with one important exception, as we shall see—and yet the sheer scope of its action, with its wanderings, displacements, and geopolitical subplot, ensures that the stage's spatial potential remains fully felt throughout. In some scenes, moreover, the space of the stage would appear to move beyond tacit convention to become the subject of direct theoretical and formal inquiry, and this not always in an overtly "poetic" or rhetorical manner. Indeed, one of the central questions the play forces us to confront is finally this: how might the open stage allow the exploration of a series of spatial concepts in a way that is *beyond* print or words, even beyond the language of poetry?

The analytic categories that Bradley favored—stage and page, viewer and reader—remain fundamental to critical discussion of early modern drama, but their relationship must be further elaborated and their separate

spatial sensibilities specified in more detail. To this end I have divided my argument into two sections. The first reads several key scenes from the play in the context of early modern performance practice and argues that they can be fully understood only when the specific epistemological protocols of the open stage are taken into account. The second section then examines how the categories of "place" and "space" are modified when the play is translated into print and become essential components of an emerging notion of dramatic "form." When printed according to certain techniques and in certain formats, the play on the page has a conceptual integrity that differs from the play in performance. Contained within the physical confines of a bound page that may be held, contemplated, analyzed, and moved through at varying rates, the printed text prepares the way for our more modern spatial conception. Each section thus delineates several modes of understanding and representing space and then situates them within a larger argument about how ideas of space changed in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Each section also depends on a heuristic distinction between *fictional* and *historical* space: the space of the story, or "diegetic" space, as opposed to the space of the theater, page, or society that supports it.⁷

I. Stage

I will approach *King Lear* first as if it were a technical exercise in spatial representation, a demonstration piece that deliberately sets out to explore the mimetic possibilities and limitations of the open stage. Like all such demonstration pieces, the play exhibits virtuosity by adopting techniques that expose the limits of its representational medium and that, as a consequence, are calculated to impress; it also incorporates a level of self-awareness into its *praxis* by comparing stage technology to other possible modes of representation over which it asserts itself. This approach to the play is not itself unusual; others have approached it as a self-reflexive project.⁸ However, the play's specific concern with *spatial* representation has not received the attention it might. In a sense, the idea that *Lear* is a "demonstration piece" is itself misleading, since it suggests a deliberate and authorial display of skill, but by beginning with this claim I mean to shift the focus from the putative "hand behind the work" to the "work" itself, so that the play is understood as making explicit its own participation in a set of representational problems which are larger than any particular author

and which are, quite simply, part of the enabling conditions of the drama itself.

Surely the most obvious example in the play of the virtuosity and mimetic self-awareness I am describing is the scene at Dover Cliff, and several scholars have commented both on its obvious references to perspective painting and on the cleverness of its stage business.⁹ The journey toward Dover, by both Gloucester and Edgar and by Lear and his party *simultaneously* (and I will return to the importance of this simultaneity below), already foregrounds the flexibility of the open stage to represent distant locations, but the trip itself would in fact be unremarkable in spatial terms—simply one more instance of that freedom that first Sidney and later Jonson derided—without the vertiginous scene at Dover Cliff "itself." The striking thing about the scene, however, is less its self-conscious *debt* to perspective painting than the way it strives to trump a two-dimensional technique. The sheer knowingness of the scene is so blatant that it nearly becomes a cruel joke, as witnessed by the way in which Edgar's sudden aside to the audience—"Why I do trifle thus with his despair / Is done to cure it" (4.5.33-34)—registers a niggling need to justify the entire conceit. As Edgar stands at the supposed edge of the cliff, his lines invoke the structure of monocular point-of-view only to undermine it, first by substituting a *verbal* description for the geometrical forms and mathematically-derived proportions typical of perspective painting, and then, additionally, by turning this illusion into a second-party narration for a blind man who, after all, *cannot see anything*:

Come on sir, here's the place. Stand still. How fearful
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles. Halfway down
Hangs one that gathers samphire, the dreadful trade!
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.
The fishermen that walk upon the beach
Appear like mice, and yon tall anchoring barque
Diminished to her cock, her cock a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge
That on th'unnumbered idle pebble chafes
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

(4.5.11-24)

At the very moment that the ocular illusion should be at its most breathtaking and convincing, the audience is caught up short by the grotesque reality of Gloucester's gaping eye-sockets; it is as though Edgar finds himself carried away by his own verbal skill and is unable to resist luxuriating in the ecstasy of vision, even as he stands next to a man who will never see again.

In the second place, the scene departs from the usual horizontal view of two-dimensional perspectival exercises by unfolding along a precipitous *vertical* axis. Imogen's imagining of Posthumus's departure in *Cymbeline* or Aspatia's mournful stare in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Maid's Tragedy* are more conventional in this respect; the clear association between looking, perspectival space, and subjectivity in these scenes is also striking.¹⁰ In *Lear*, however, the scene's elaborate technique draws our attention *as much to the devices used to represent the space as to the final effect of that space itself*—so much so that Samuel Johnson is said by Boswell to have complained about Shakespeare's execution of the scene, remarking that “the crows impede your fall” (cited in Levin, 97). This is an important point, since it serves as a corrective to some readings of the scene which rely on Albertian perspective theory. As James Elkins has convincingly argued (esp. 45–80), the conventional notion that Renaissance painters, artisans, engineers, architects, natural scientists, and mathematicians deployed a single perspective “theory” is a modern misconception, as the sheer variety of practitioners just listed might well indicate. So-called “perspective” (Albertian or otherwise) in fact consisted more of a loosely related series of *practices* and methods than a formal, codified, and unified theory; as a consequence, Elkins argues, multiple perspectives were used to represent particular *objects* in paintings and *not* to achieve a homogenized, rationalized, or mathematically derived “picture space,” a space of extension that preceded those objects.¹¹

Edgar's lines thus establish a direct relationship between the technique of perspective in this scene and techniques as practiced in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century paintings, and they even make evident a paradox in how “space” itself is conceived. The focus of Edgar's lines is not space but *smallness*: his use of multiple and shifting metaphors creates an illusion of diminution—crows mutate into beetles, the body of a beachcomber shrinks (or expands) to the size of his head, fishermen scramble like mice—of which “space” could only be an aftereffect. The persistent details of crows and samphire gatherers make evident the fact that the eye can never

fully apprehend pure, expansive “space” but only individual places and objects. As William Ivens has argued, the simplest experiment is enough to demonstrate that our view can perceive only objects in a spatial field and not the spatial field itself, unless that field is understood as the *effect* of particular objects grouped in a particular way and especially if those objects are grouped according to principles that emphasize interrelatedness—and proportion, in whatever guise, is first and foremost such a principle.¹² The closest analogy I can think of to a visual perception of pure “space” might be the experience of looking out an airplane window during flight, as the plane enters a cloud: in this moment we see “nothing.” In the history of spatial concepts (which is not, after all, the same as artistic technique), single-point perspective is significant less because it offers a method for *representing* space to the eye than because it marks the emergence of an analytical, abstract space of *mathematical* principles that is strictly “invisible” (it is impossible to “see” the space described by an equation) and which is itself conceptually distinct from the idea of the visual geometry of the picture plane or the “window” illusion.

But Edgar's narration of space in this scene is, after all, much more than a reference to perspective technique: as Stephen Orgel has noted, it is paradigmatic for all dramatic treatment of space on the open stage. In a theater that used no perspective backdrops, a minimum of stage properties, and rudimentary sound and lighting effects, the primary illusionistic tool for designating location *was* spoken dialogue, and the final power of the scene depends on this awareness of stage convention.¹³ When Edgar and Gloucester re-enter the stage space after the exchange between Regan and Oswald, and Gloucester asks, “When shall we come to th' top of that same hill?” (4.5.1), the audience is prepared to believe that they *are* in fact climbing a hill—after all, the characters' disappearance into the off-stage space has readily been accommodated into the fictional space of the “journey.” It is only when Gloucester begins to question the topography (“Methinks the ground is even” [4.5.3]) that the illusion opens or bifurcates, such that the originary fictional space of the play is supplemented by the additional spatial conceit of the approach to Dover Cliff, and the audience is now faced with the tension of either identifying with Gloucester and entering this secondary layer of illusion or identifying with Edgar and recognizing the illusion as such—which immediately forces an awareness of the larger enabling illusion taking place on the stage before them. To recognize the well-intentioned nature of Edgar's deception, therefore, is to

recognize the limitations of performative language and thus to question the very possibility of stage representation itself; and just when the audience has been led, like Gloucester, to this point of dizzying mimetic complexity, Gloucester jumps—and flops down onto the bare playing space before them. The resounding impact caps the scene by asserting, once more, the representational potential of the open stage, as Gloucester crawls about on the “beach” and believes he has survived the fall.

The final irony, however, is that even as Gloucester’s blindness makes it impossible for him to perceive the specific location of the “cliff” (requiring Edgar’s designation: “here’s the place” [4.5.11]), this same blindness is precisely what will allow him to perceive “space” while Edgar cannot. A comment by Ivens makes clear that Gloucester’s difficulty is simultaneously perceptual, representational, and logical:

Tactically, things exist in a series of *heres* in space, but where there are no things, space, even though “empty,” continues to exist, because the exploring hand knows that it is in space even when it is in contact with nothing. The eye, contrariwise, can only see *things*, and where there are no things there is nothing, not even empty space, for that cannot be seen. There is no sense of contact in vision, but tactile awareness exists only as conscious contact. The hand, moving among the things it feels, is always literally “here,” and while it has three dimensional coördinates it has no point of view and in consequence no vanishing point; the eye, having two dimensional coördinates, has a point of view and a vanishing point, and it sees “there,” where it is not. The result is that visually things are not located in an independently existing space, but that space, rather, is a quality or relationship of things and has no existence without them. (5)

Just as later the blind Gloucester will reply to the mad Lear, “I see it feelingly” (4.5.141), at Dover Cliff Gloucester can only be said to “see nothing,” and in his tentative, groping progress toward the audience and the subsequent silence of his leap the stage offers a momentary apprehension of what perspective could never represent: a fissure in the fictional location through which we “grasp” a larger “spatial” dimension. It is a moment for which there is no easy conventional language, given the pervasiveness of the perspective metaphor that is already beginning to take hold in these scenes—is it a “representation” of space? An “image”? A “view”? It is both a scene enacted *in* space and a scene *of* space.

Consider now another scene, equally obvious in its citation of a specific early modern mode of spatial representation: the infamous “division” scene. In contrast to the mimetic ambiguities of the scene at Dover Cliff,

Lear’s peremptory “Give me the map there” (F 1.1.35) at the opening of the play would seem to promise a precise and measured spatial sensibility for the action that follows. Even more, the appearance of the map confirms the royal power to administrate and allocate space, not least because the map itself seems to function, initially, less as a *necessary* instrument of power than simply as a convenience, a way for Lear to illustrate and reenact for those gathered before him the content of a royal act which has already been completed and which did not require the map to do so (“Know that we *have divided* / In three our kingdom” [1.2.35–36; emphasis added]). Of course the map is more than a simple prop, since it demonstrates in an unspoken (but for that no less blatant) way Lear’s power not simply to distribute space but to control its very representation, and then to treat this representation as a casual attribute of power. In this way the map becomes a metonym, in spatial form, for the burden of power itself (“rule / Interest of territory, cares of state” [1.1.47–48]), and the ease with which Lear wields both device and the property it encompasses would seem, at first glance, to be beyond question.

Already, however, the Quarto’s shorter and more ambivalent “The map there” (Q sc. 1.35) casts the relationship between authority and spatial representation in another light. Does Lear *command* the map? Or simply gesture weakly in its direction? And where is “there,” except already at a *distance* from the king and his authority? Lear’s demonstrative pronoun hovers indistinctly over a referential point that refuses to materialize, and seems suddenly not to capture a location but to resist any correspondence; as readers we are, like the Quarto Lear, suddenly confronted by a representational surface that promises some kind of spatial order but also insists resolutely on its distance and inscrutability. The Quarto’s “shake all cares and business from our *state*” (sc. 1.37; emphasis added) would seem to underscore the link between political authority and spatial representation, but in this context “shake” suggests not the infirmity and “age” of the Folio (1.1.37) but a trembling fear of cartography and its ability to make Lear’s decision irrevocable by permanently inscribing it. Does Lear shrink from the map, an instrument whose power he recognizes but which he does not fully understand? These are precisely the questions that the printed text, in its two distinct versions, forces upon us.

In the terms of Henri Lefebvre, the map is, moreover, both a “representational space” and a “representation of space,” which we might rephrase by saying that it is both a “place” and a “space.”¹⁴

On the one hand the map represents the "territory," presumably "Britain," and more specifically a land "With shadowy forests and with champaigns riched, / With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads" (F 1.1.62-63). Even more specifically, however, this is the *Folio's* gift of place to Goneril; the Quarto gives her less. But on the other hand the map also represents what we might call a "modern" idea of space as a quantifiable and measurable geometric abstraction—"all these bounds even from this line to this" (1.1.61)—and this initial abstraction becomes more and more salient in the subsequent exchanges between Regan and Lear and finally between Lear and Cordelia, as the "spatial" qualities of the map assert themselves over the form of the bequest. Regan gets "this ample third of our fair kingdom, / No less in space, validity and pleasure" (1.1.79): hers is exactly a space and not a place, a gift of equivalence more than content, and what content it does have ("validity and pleasure") is also abstract. The latent unfairness of Lear's division now emerges precisely in the precision with which he uses the quantitative language of space to describe the gifts, since they are equal *only* in the abstract; each daughter gets "a third," but Cordelia's is already "a third more opulent" (1.1.84). In preferring one daughter over the others, Lear has already opted for the particularity of place and property over the equalizing commensurability of geometrical and mathematical space that makes cartographic representation itself possible.

As one may begin to suspect, Lear's strategic use of spatial rhetoric is, in short, duplicitous, and it is not surprising to find the same language of insincerity in the mouths of Goneril and Regan. The first avows her love in the language of spatial abstraction ("Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty" [1.1.54]); the second in arithmetic figure, commercial value, and geometric form ("prize me at her worth . . . which the most precious square of sense possesses" [1.1.68-72]). This association between the language of space, geometry, and betrayal is in keeping not only with other plays attributed to Shakespeare but with a more pervasive mistrust of specialized figures and symbols in early modern Europe, a knowledge associated with magic and the supernatural as well as with a lack of formal education, "craft," and the lower-class *ingenium* typical of the mason, the carpenter, and the engineer.¹⁵ When the archbishop of York, Mowbray, Bardolph, and Hastings, for example, plot to overthrow the king in *2 Henry IV*, they invoke surveying and building metaphors for their treacherous action. More obviously, Lear's language is in keeping with that other Shakespearean "division scene" between Hotspur, Glendower,

Mortimer, and Worcester in *1 Henry IV* as they anticipate dominion and seek to redirect the natural course of rivers through dams and waterworks.

Lear's mistake is to uncouple the power of kingship from the instruments and attributes which made that power appear self-legitimating. Since Goneril and Regan understand the power of the map to convert space into property—so well that they glibly speak in the cartographic register—they understand also that Lear's use of the map has rendered him powerless by assisting him in his distribution of his kingdom, and it is no wonder that they follow his action to its logical conclusion by forcing him to renounce his knights in the later scenes. Cordelia, however, uses a different language: her "nothing" obviously speaks volumes—or, to be more precise, it *enacts* its meaning. The elaborate rhetoric of both Goneril and Regan can only belie their gestures toward the inadequacy of speech; Cordelia, recognizing here the duplicity of language, actualizes her meaning by saying "nothing" and thus reduces the conceptual and emotional content of her response to the absolute minimum of verbal expression. Lear's enraged retort—"Nothing will come of nothing. Speak again" (1.1.88)—focuses her response into a paradox: as Rosalie Colie, Paul Jorgensen, and Edward Grant have discussed, in very different contexts, the crucial epistemological dilemma turns on whether or not the concept of "nothing" is in fact "something."¹⁶ What would it mean for Cordelia—or Lear, for that matter—to "possess nothing"?

The frequent recurrence of the term "nothing" throughout the play has sponsored no small amount of critical commentary, but its connection to the notions of attribute, property (in both the material and the philosophical or scientific senses), and space requires further elaboration. The problem is formulated most concisely by France, when he reassures Cordelia that "thou lovest here, a better where to find" (1.1.259): is "here" the location in which Cordelia suffers the act of losing (property)? Or is "here" exactly what she loses, her proper portion of her father's realm (as the syntax of "where" would suggest)? Both readings seem possible; as queen of France, after all, Cordelia could be said simply to lose one place only immediately to gain another. But Lear is in a more difficult position, since he now moves uneasily through the space that he once ruled; indeed, given the close association between "space," property, and authority in the division scene, the term "space" would seem inappropriate to describe the medium of his dispossessed state.

Which brings us to the "storm scenes." For when Lear wanders out into the storm he is wandering out into a place over which he once exercised dominion, but does no longer; indeed, that place and his dominion over it were recognizable to him only on the map and in the spatial terms it made available, in which this location was simply a smaller part within the larger whole that contained it—"a particular place which is also a world," to use Bradley's phrase. Once this representation of space has been removed, once "space" itself, as a property of kingship, is no longer something Lear can in any way lay claim to, this "containing" relationship is also removed, and Lear begins to move in a dimension that is probably best described in the terms that the play uses: "nothing." Certainly the play explores these problems at the linguistic level, especially in the repeated use of the term "nothing" and the variations of the *ex nihilo* phrasing that recur in both plot and subplot and the many associations among "place," property, and power scattered throughout the early scenes. But these resonances are simply the verbal expression of a theoretical problem that is *enacted* non-verbally during the storm. To understand this we must consider the space of the stage during performance in more detail.

A comment by Sir Walter Greg illustrates some of its paradoxical qualities. Greg has made a brief excursus into the use of stage directions in manuscript copy, and to illustrate the documents' "bewildering . . . diversity" adduces the example of the term "within":

The use of "within" for off the stage is sometimes cited as belonging to the theatre. Logically this is doubtless so, though in fact the use is common to nearly all writers. But there is no consistency even in the playhouse. A character leaving the stage goes "within" from the point of view of the actors, and goes "out" from that of the spectators. . . . Any writer, whether actually writing for the stage or not, will use "within"—it is the only word available.¹⁷

The passage leaves us with many points to consider, not the least of which is the phrase "point of view," which Greg introduces as casually as Bradley does but to a somewhat different effect. When perspective, ostensibly the most rational mode of spatial representation, becomes Greg's paradigm for thinking about the space of the stage, it marks the *limits* of bibliographic and literary analysis and only multiplies the potential confusion of theatrical performance.

I would like to focus on another aspect, however: the initial dualism that animates the term "within" conceals an additional set of interrelated

meanings that are central to understanding stage space. First, regardless of point of view, the terms designate some kind of *location*, a place that the actor goes "to," even if this place remains elusive: perhaps it is "offstage," and thus in the theater; perhaps it is "elsewhere," and thus in the fiction. The terms are difficult to situate outside of a purely reciprocal relation to one another; Greg attempts to resolve the potential ambiguity by invoking a larger conceptual abstraction (the "theatre," the "fiction") to surround and thus to provide a measure of precision and definition to the places that the terms would seem to designate.

The Prologue's evocation of the "Wooden 'O'" in *Henry V* neatly captures this sense of space: the phrase describes a static, transparent medium contained by the theater building, the "air" through which the actor moves and "in" which a series of scenes will be represented. We soon realize, however, that the Prologue's lines, as well as those of the Chorus in subsequent scenes, do not reveal space but rather conceal it. At the very moment that the empty space of the stage would seem to appear most clearly, the audience is urged to fill this space with a dazzling sequence of fictional *places*: "the vasty fields of France" (Pro.13), "the perilous narrow ocean" (Pro. 22), from London to Southampton to France and then back again to "Dover pier" (3.0.4). Wardrobes, pastures, ship-boys climbing in the tackle—the stage is not a blank platform but a tableau of almost cinematic proportions, in which "space" is obscured by all the bustling detail. If space "itself" is to emerge onto the stage, it must be in a different mode, and more indirectly.

It is evident from Greg's comment that the terms "within" and "out" also have another meaning: they are words that signify a *direction*, or a vector of movement. The stage "platts" studied by Greg in such detail indicate that during performance the space of the stage was parcelized into a series of entrances and exits from *offstage* to *on*, and *vice versa*.¹⁸ The documents describe a space of practice, flux, and process constituted out of a performative movement across an invisible threshold: it is an act that creates, in its movement, the very fictional location that will give that act coherence and significance. Here too, however, the true *spatial* capacity of the open stage would be apprehensible only momentarily—at the instant the performance begins or ends, or in the slight break between scenes, if at all—since these fleeting appearances are simultaneously moments of dissolution and disappearance, as the "space" of the stage is instantaneously converted into the specific "places" of the fiction that

the performance brings to life. This is a space of *potential* more than transparent substance.

But if an actor were to enter the stage as a character recognizable from the play and fail to designate a new location; as a character, moreover, who has been excluded first from one fictional place and then another; if this actor were to occupy the stage and gesticulate wildly, ~~gratuitously~~, even to run about the playing area, as other characters entered to him from the world of the play and urged him to depart with them to other places in that world; and if, despite their entreaties, this actor were to remain stubbornly on stage and refuse to recognize the presence of these characters or the locations they spoke of: "where" exactly would this actor be? And how would a superstitious world describe such a character, except as mad? In such a moment the places of the theater and of the fiction would coincide with equal vividness—and if this "moment" was one of any duration, it might even qualify as a "scene." The resolute *negation* of place by one character, surrounded by the equally persistent affirmations of place by others, would result in a glimpse of the stage's *potential* to produce these places, and thus of its *space*.

The storm marks such a moment. All the peculiar qualities of the open stage, usually subordinate to the fiction unfolding upon it, begin to crowd in through a rift in this fiction and suddenly become visible with unusual vividness. The text records only attributes or qualities, but no location: the "storm and tempest" marked by the Folio at 2.2.449.1, "the night," "high winds" (2.2.464), the "wild night" (2.2.472), and a deranged old man, whose hair "the impetuous blasts make nothing of" (Q sc. 8.8). Like Gloucester at Dover Cliff, Lear has been "blinded" by his madness, floundering in the "eyeless rage" of the storm (Q sc. 8.7); like the madman Poor Tom, Lear will "embrace" the "unsubstantial air" (4.1.7), allow the storm to "Invade us to the skin" (3.4.7), and, if he is to speak at all, will adopt the language of the storm: "I will say nothing" (3.2.37).

Intriguingly, this is Lear's response to Kent, who enters in disguise as Caius (and like an actor) and who struggles repeatedly, in the face of Lear's "madness," to *re-localize* the scene and to draw it back firmly into either the world of the fiction or onto the space of the stage: "Alas, sir, are you here?" (3.2.41); "hard by here is a hovel" (3.2.60); "Here is the place, my lord. Good my lord, enter. / The tyranny of the open night's too rough" (3.4.1-2); "Good my lord, enter here" (3.4.4); "Good my lord, enter" (3.4.5); "Good my lord, enter here" (3.4.22). The phrase becomes incantatory, frustrated

and desperate in its attempts to manage the spatial disorder that surrounds the feeble party, but the technical language of the actor goes unrecognized and the cue ignored. When Lear suddenly decides to enter ("but I'll go in" [3.4.25]), the scene would presumably snap into focus, except that he never actually *does* enter and the inconsistent exit markings in both Quarto and Folio make it unclear whether the scene takes place inside or outside the hovel (which seems to be *offstage*). The silent stage direction, "storm still," offers no indication of location but only of turbulence and dim outlines.

Greg has maintained that "within" is the "only word available" to describe the relation between *onstage* and *offstage* space, but he has already provided another: I will combine them to form a third term that describes this spatial "crux." This term is "without." Lear refuses to leave the stage, declines to move either "within" or "out" and instead wanders "without" into a breach in fictional space to flail in the *potentia* that surrounds him, a point somewhere *between* a coherent location and the open stage: he is not in one, nor is he entirely in the other. He has, in these moments, become the full impersonation of the Fool's earlier witticism, "Now thou art an O without a figure" (1.4.158). The phrase concisely articulates, in numerical terms, the paradox of "nothing" that is also "something," designating the "placeholder" that carves out a space for an imagined content (the figure) even as it simultaneously negates that content by occupying the space reserved for it. It is a sudden emblem not only for the spatial capacity of the empty open stage but for Lear's own displaced position during the storm, in which his mere presence on stage simultaneously invites the audience to imagine a fictional location and then prevents that location from becoming fully realized.

An analogy from another discursive field may help make this "space" more readily comprehensible: if the Dover Cliff scene, through its invocation of perspective, gestures toward the mathematical and spatial concept of infinity, the "nothing" of the storm could be said to perform the quasi-scientific space of the "vacuum" or "void," concepts debated in both natural philosophy and in the newer Stoicism and neo-Platonism of Campanella, Bruno, Francesco Patrizi, and many others. The "nothing" of the open stage would thus seem to frame in a different discursive context—and above all in a different *praxis*—a moment of transition in spatial thinking that we can also see operating at the most rarified levels of Renaissance academic argument, between a neo-Aristotelian scholastic philosophy that

could conceive *only* of container or "place" and the emergence of a distinct notion of "space" understood as a homogeneous, extended medium that precedes and receives all bodies and their movements.¹⁹ This distinction is, of course, only a heuristic one, since the conceptual history is more complicated than my schematic comments can do justice to here. But Lear's peculiar epithet for Poor Tom as he insists on remaining "without"—"let me talk with this philosopher" (3.4.137, 155, 158); "this same learned Theban" (3.4.140); this "good Athenian" (3.4.162)—suggests, however ironically, a philosophical context for the scene. As Edward Grant has demonstrated, scholastic arguments over vacuum and void space during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were in fact regularly posed as problems of "nothing" (*nullam, nihil*); even more significantly, these debates took place through recourse to a concept of "imaginary space" (*spatium imaginarium*): that quality of space which the mind is able to conceive of and project beyond itself, whether as fiction or even as "nothing" at all.²⁰

II. Page

To reimagine "nothing" as the expanse of space itself, and to contain the power of the storm in a familiar location: if this is a task well suited to the philosophers of the seventeenth century, it will be accomplished in another register by the readers of the centuries that follow. In his preference for the printed page, Bradley is in many ways elaborating a judgment made nearly a century earlier by Charles Lamb, who objected even more strongly to the pretensions of performance and declared Lear "essentially impossible to be represented on a stage," because "on the stage we see nothing but corporal infirmities and weakness, the impotence of rage: while we read it, we see not Lear, but we are Lear" (1: 107). In order to chart the differences between the "nothing" of the open stage and the mental space of the modern reader, it will be useful to consider briefly how the relationship between "place" and "space" is reconfigured by the translation of a play into print and how a location direction comes to be regarded as indispensable to the editorial and critical apparatus.

Both the Quarto and the Folio *Lears* have been variously linked to the conditions of the early modern playhouse and to performance.²¹ The predominant interest in bibliographical discussion of performance has been, understandably, to establish the status of *copy* and by extension

the authority of the text on which it is based. In what follows, however, I would like to direct critical attention away from debates over copy and to focus instead on the effects of performance practice on print *format*, or the space of the page, and through this on the reader. In this respect, also, the Folio and Quarto *Lears* differ remarkably from one another, and two aspects in particular contribute significantly to the sense of "space" that each offers: the markings of act and scene divisions and the use of stage directions.

The question of act and scene division in early modern drama is a difficult one, and if the evidence for actual practice were not already confusing and elusive enough, discussion is often made even more complicated by a failure to distinguish four separate aspects of the problem: acts and scenes in composition, in literary theory, in performance, and in the printing house. The first two aspects are often treated as being virtually identical to one another, but they are not necessarily so; acts in performance are properly speaking *act-intervals* and not units of action. Aside from a few entries in Henslowe's diary, most of which concern a single author, there is scant evidence to suggest that early modern plays intended for performance in the so-called public theaters were composed according to a five-act structure before the second decade of the seventeenth century. With the exception of Jonson and a few other university-educated and classically conscious playwrights, English writers almost certainly composed plays in a series of scenes that were meant to be played continuously in the theater, and not in five acts.²² Henry Snuggs makes the remarkable observation (49–50) that even Thomas Heywood, whose *Apology for Actors* clearly shows familiarity with the major statements of dramatic theory as early as 1607 (and perhaps before), does not seem *in practice* to have composed his plays according to these principles until after 1610.

Even here, however, the evidence concerns primarily the *printed* text, which immediately introduces conventions and habits which should be kept distinct from the use of divisions in composition, literary theory, or performance, even if finally all four categories tend to converge. We might assume that act and scene divisions in a printed text often indicate copy that has been modified in some way for use in the theater; Greg, Snuggs, and Chambers all agree that divisions in manuscript documents prior to c. 1610 are very likely to be the product of a later hand and that authors seem to have added divisions to their playscripts gradually in deference to stage practice.²³ But these later divisions, as well as those in printed play

texts, may equally be the classicizing gestures of a professional scribe and thus similar to other scribal conventions (such as the massed entrances attributed to Ralph Crane) that sought to emulate the printing—or page—conventions of Roman comedy; in both cases, furthermore, the divisions are often arbitrary, and it is hard to say how much “literary” or “structural” role they actually play.

To argue in this way is again, however, to resort to the categories of author and copy, but it is important to remember that “structural” theories of act and scene divisions are in some respects possible only from the position of the *reader*, who has the capacity to arrest the flow of the action temporarily, to pause over scenes, flip through pages, carefully weigh one moment with another, and gradually distinguish the architecture of the composition.²⁴ On the page, act and scene divisions do not simply reproduce a break in performance: they contribute a conceptual unity to the play by subdividing its action into discrete parts, and these parts are then presumed by the reader to fit together into a coherent structural whole. Redistributed across the page in deliberately segmented units of action, the newly unified “work” makes possible a completely different sense of space from that which predominates on the stage: it allows the reader to project across the play *in its entirety* a homogeneous, unbroken, “containing” space that is imagined to link or underlie the various “places” of the fiction, whether these be onstage or off, “within” or “without.” The Folio *Lear*, with its full use of act and scene divisions, obscures the specific performative tension between “space” and “place”—the dynamic whereby space, as potential, “solidifies,” as it were, into a specific location, which in turn redissolves into “emptiness” and another potential location—and moves gradually toward a notion more similar to “setting” which inserts the action into a preexisting spatial dimension. A stage direction such as “Storm still” (in F but *not* in Q) is significant not least because it implies a concern for spatial continuity in the fiction best characterized as a space of *simultaneity*, in which separate subjects and their actions are understood as taking place *at the same time* and are thus linked to one another within a homogeneous, extended space: the imagined “world” of the play that contains both Gloucester’s castle and Dover, both Britain and France.²⁵

But for the critics of the eighteenth century the act and scene divisions did more than provide a sense of structural unity: the divisions sutured this “literary” structure to a concept of “place,” which rendered the play’s action comprehensible and made possible a final aesthetic judgment. We

can see this subsequent development quite vividly as early as Pope’s edition of the plays. In keeping with the Continental critics, Pope correlates scene division with the “removal of place” in the name of consistency and clarity:

The Scenes are mark’d so distinctly that every removal of place is specified; which is more necessary in this Author than in any other, since he shifts them more frequently: and sometimes without attending to this particular, the reader would have met with obscurities. (xxii)

Moreover, the entire work is conceptualized in a striking architectural metaphor such that all the action is given a continuous spatial structure and coherence:

I will conclude by saying of *Shakespear*; that with all his faults, and with all the irregularity of his *Drama*, one may look upon his works, in comparison of those that are more finish’d and regular, as upon an ancient majestick piece of *Gotick* Architecture, compar’d with a neat Modern building: The latter is more elegant and glaring, but the former is more strong and more solemn. It must be allow’d that in one of these there are materials enough to make many of the other. It has much the greater variety, and much the nobler apartments; tho’ we are often conducted to them by dark, odd, and uncouth passages. (xxiii-xxiv)

Fifteen years later, Lewis Theobald picks up the image but dilates it to encapsulate the architectural within the perspectival, and both within a much more expansive world or city:

The attempt to write upon SHAKESPEARE is like going into a large, a spacious, and a splendid Dome thro’ the Conveyance of a narrow and obscure Entry. A Glare of Light suddenly breaks upon you, beyond what the Avenue at first promis’d: and a thousand Beauties of Genius and Character, like so many gaudy Apartments pouring at once upon the Eye, diffuse and throw themselves out to the Mind. The Prospect is too wide to come within the Compass of a single View: ‘tis a gay Confusion of pleasing Objects, too various to be enjoyed but in a general Admiration; and they must be separated, and ey’d distinctly, in order to give the proper Entertainment.²⁶

The passage marks the emergence of a “metaphorics” of perspective as pluralism and cultured selection, a refinement that depends on distance and separation. By the time of Edward Capell’s 1767 edition, the space of the Shakespearean text has been thoroughly redistributed: noting that he has derived a principle of scene division (the removal of location) from those plays in the Folio which have already been divided “as of the Author’s

own settling," Capell proceeds to locate the action with stage directions that further subdivide an *interior* space: virtually all the scenes are assigned to "A State-room in King Lear's Palace"; "A Hall in the Earl of Gloster's Castle"; "A Room in the Duke of Albany's Palace"; "An outer Hall in the same," such that Pope's metaphor of linked apartments has been literalized into a world of intimacy and domestic realism.²⁷

If we now return to compare the format of the Folio *Lear* to that of the first Quarto, we notice that the earlier text lacks all act and scene divisions and unfolds in a space that we might characterize as *linear* or *sequential*. Here the Quarto format preserves, to some degree, a sense of stage and performance space that is "Elizabethan," typical of public theaters, and disappearing from historical view: stage directions are few, exits and entrances are omitted, and the organizational "unit" (to import spatial and structural terms that are better suited to the page) is more closely linked to character groupings and their movements—but these movements are *not* correlated with any sense of "place," and the relation between onstage and offstage space remains as elusive as ever. Here any dramatic pause between scenes would lack by *definition* the conceptual substance of a break between acts: true neoclassical "Acts" and "Scenes" are meaningful only in the context of the conceptual integrity that the larger "work" provides, and *vice versa*; this dependency derives from the more general dialectic between any part and its whole. In any case, distinctions of this sort inevitably beg the textual question, since the action of *Lear* as it is printed in the Quarto advances with no clear division whatsoever and consequently does not offer the same spatial or structural skeleton to the reader.

It has often been remarked that the Folio was a text printed specifically for a reading market and for readers of some affluence. Many aspects of the collection suggest this, among them the size and quality of the book and its elaborate prefatory materials, not the least of which are the dedicatory poem "To the Reader" by "B. I." and Heminge and Condell's own direct address "To the great Variety of Readers." I have thus aligned the format of each version of *Lear* with one of the distinct spatial sensibilities I have been discussing: the Folio with what I will call a "readerly" space of quantifiable, measured extension and the Quarto with a "performative" space of movement that produces more of itself.²⁸ But early modern printing-house practice offers a technical distinction that also serves as a convenient metaphor for the spatial modes materialized on their pages. This is the difference between composing and printing by casting-off,

and composing and printing *seriatim*. The former technique, whereby a compositor estimated the total number of printed pages required for a given portion of the control text at hand (whether print or manuscript), and only then set his type into formes accordingly, necessitated a *spatial grasp* of an *entire segment of text*—either a page, a forme, a sheet, or the complete work—that was subsequently "translated" by the compositor into the blank expanse of the page. Composing *seriatim*, in contrast, meant that the compositor set his type sequentially, in a linear spatial fashion and with no necessary same regard for the total dimensions of the text before him, and worked from the beginning of the copy through to the end. As historical coincidence would have it, Nicholas Okes set the Quarto *Lear* *seriatim*, while the compositors in Isaac Jaggard's print shop set the Folio according to the more conventional process of casting-off.²⁹

III

Perhaps it will be impossible for us to imagine *King Lear* "without the heath," especially when, as readers, the idea of imagination itself so quickly assumes a spatial dimension and when the very conventions of literary analysis—citation by act and scene, for instance—make it difficult to separate a modern idea of space and location from the idea of dramatic structure. The title of my essay is meant, of course, to describe the state of the early play-texts. But it is intended also to evoke a fanciful early modern stage direction, in which the flexibility of the colon suggests a syntax of elaboration or further specification. Read in this way, the "Heath," which is properly Rowe's term and the familiar signifier for these crucial "scenes," appears reinscribed as the phrase "King Lear Without." By this substitution I mean first to recall Lear's liminal dramatic situation "in the world of the play": he is a king and father, excluded from the castles of his daughters, who has been deprived of all authority, property, and "position" in the social sense. But he also lacks a proper "position" in the locational and dramatic sense: he is "outside" or "without" a fictional place that is itself barely visible and defined only negatively or by attributes. This moment, peculiar to the open stage, appears in the early texts only through a silent absence; by designating it with a term that is meant to recall stage *practice* rather than readerly imagination or editorial convention, I mean to mark the moment when *King Lear* turns on itself and begins to explore its own conditions of possibility as a dramatic performance.

It will now be useful to consider by way of a conclusion several points that have emerged in the preceding discussion and which are pertinent to any study of "the space of the stage" or to the history of spatial concepts more generally. We may begin by stating a now-familiar lesson: that to speak of the "drama" it is necessary to consider both stage and page simultaneously and to admit all the potential difficulties, both theoretical and practical, that this implies for the scholar and editor.³⁰ As much as my argument is committed to recognizing the enduring qualities of the play *text*, in other words—its language and the interpretive potential of its "materiality," as Margreta de Grazia and Peter Stallybrass have described it in a seminal essay—I am equally concerned with the limitations of this text, with what it can only gesture at but never reveal. If the transfer from stage to print ultimately makes possible a more familiar and more modern spatial sensibility, moments in the early modern play-text such as that of the storm also produce spatial confusion, rupture, tensions, faultlines: seams in the spatial fabric which are accentuated because the conventional stage solutions are no longer present. Editorial attempts to defuse the undecidability of these moments—whether through the use of location directions (which hypostatize the space of fiction) or a reconstructed *refusal* to use them (which hypostatize the space of the stage)—inevitably foreclose the capacity of these scenes to make available to us a moment in which concepts of "space" and "place" were becoming dialectically inseparable from one another but still retained a measure of independence. They offer a space of process and linear movement more than property or reified and measurable entity, of potential more than extension and boundary.

Considering the play from the axis of both page and stage thus forces us to make finer conceptual distinctions in our discussions about space and to recognize a more precise and varied range of spaces operating in the drama's different modes of existence. Here the question of "form" emerges as one that is indispensable to a literary, theoretical, or historical analysis of space but one that is nevertheless in desperate need of redefinition. This is because the principle of "form" is always both a principle of specificity and a mode of historical appearance. In a literal way the "form" of a play is not the ideal object of New Criticism but the physical shape of the play when printed and extended across the page, with its title bars, rules, margins, and binding. The "form" of a performance is more difficult: it is a series of forces and movements that coalesce into a recognizable thing; in this

it is a *dialectical* "form" more like Marx's use of the term in *Capital*, for instance, or for that matter Aristotle's. How do the particular exigencies and material conditions of a theater performance differ from a play-book, and what different understandings of space do these contingencies—these "forms"—make possible? How are we to describe or explain a historical change in any single spatial domain if we do not observe some principle of form—indeed, inasmuch as "form" itself is a spatial concept, if we do not confront it directly?

Finally, *King Lear* suggests the importance of distinguishing between our use of "space" as an abstract category for analysis—a usage that tends to bracket, temporarily, the question of historical development—and the historically specific meanings that such words and their concepts might have had in other periods and cultures. The former usage allows us to move beyond the largely formal concerns I have been exploring in this essay and directly to a broader cultural investigation; the latter ensures that the object of this investigation will remain specific to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³¹ It would be intriguing to consider, for instance, how the spatial distinctions operating on the early modern open stage could themselves be aligned with a variety of current theoretical paradigms: in this view onstage and offstage space might be correlated with (for example) conscious and unconscious, or discursive and non- or extra-discursive, and thus might begin to operate as a conceptual model for thinking through how some strands of early modern culture become explicit while others remain occluded or structurally "invisible." It is surely significant, for instance, that the heterogeneous, unfamiliar "space" that appears in the storm scenes is also the point of articulation for a radical critique of power, justice, kingship, normative sexual systems, and other early modern conventions.³² Assimilating the "nothing" of these scenes to a later, post-Newtonian "absolute space" or Kantian *a priori* is at the very least anachronistic; perhaps the term "space" itself even becomes insufficient in these cases, in that it inevitably implies these subsequent ideas. But to reimagine the scenes according to these later notions is also to foreclose the radical potential of their "nothing" and to appropriate it for more conventional ideological uses, reconceiving it as "emptiness" that can be owned or bequeathed (space as property), invaded (the space of the nation and the threat of France), or filled with subjective content (the space of humanism and literary history as it has traditionally been understood). To imagine *King Lear* "without the heath" is to begin to displace, in a

small way, this subsequent conceptual history and to delineate the analytic potential of the stage that lies beneath it.

Notes

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1. Bradley, 259. "In Shakespeare's dramas, owing to the absence of scenery from the Elizabethan stage, the question, so vexatious to editors, of the exact locality of a particular scene is usually unimportant and often unanswerable; but, as a rule, we know, broadly speaking, where the persons live and what their journeys are. The text makes this plain, for example, almost throughout *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Macbeth*; and the imagination is therefore untroubled. But in *King Lear* the indications are so scanty that the reader's mind is left not seldom both vague and bewildered."

2. Compare L. C. Knights's discussion of the scene: "*Lear* . . . is a universal allegory. . . . In the scenes on the heath, for example, we do not merely listen to exchanges between persons whom, in the course of the play, we have got to know; we are caught up in a great and almost impersonal poem in which we hear certain voices which echo and counterpoint each other; all that they say is part of the tormented consciousness of Lear; and the consciousness of Lear is part of the consciousness of human kind" (92).

3. For all citations to Shakespeare I have decided to follow the *Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*, for several reasons. To my mind the Norton's primary advantage is that it makes facing-page Folio and Quarto versions of the play easily accessible and thus facilitates comparison between them; it also reprints the ground-breaking Oxford text. I have thus chosen the Norton for ease of reference, since the other parallel text editions of *King Lear* edited by René Weis and Michael Warren, while indispensable, are not widely available. I have followed the Norton Folio (F) version as my copy-text, but provide separate citations for the Quarto (Q) where relevant. Citation from facsimile seems to me to promise more authenticity than it actually delivers: even Warren's meticulous facsimile, or Charlton Hinman's facsimile of the First Folio for Norton are ideal texts assembled from separate copies and thus seem to undercut the very gesture that would appeal to them. In cases where the difference between the Oxford text and Q or F seems particularly significant I have consulted Helge Kökeritz's facsimile edition of the Folio, since it reproduces a single copy, and the 1608 Quarto in the Huntington Library that Michael Allen and Kenneth Muir reproduce in their facsimile edition. The direction in question appears first at 3.1.0.1, then at 3.2.0.1, 3.4.3.1, 3.4.55.4, 3.4.90.1, and 3.4.145.1. The direction "Storm and tempest" has already appeared at 2.2.449.1. I will return to the significance of this recurrence in more detail in the argument that follows.

4. Frederick Flahiff has also noted the absence of any place designations in the play, including the "heath," and points out that Rowe's direction derives from Nahum Tate's seventeenth-century adaptation, where the location appears as "A Desert Heath." Flahiff goes on to read the play in terms of biblical flood imagery, comparing Lear's division of the kingdom to Noah's three-part division of the world in the *Apocrypha*. I have chosen to focus on Rowe's stage direction here because I think that it carries more significance than Tate's, not least because of the former's foundational role in the formation of an editorial apparatus for the Shakespeare canon.

5. Cf. Alan Dessen, who notes that "editors have imposed upon many, most, or all Elizabethan scenes a later sense of 'place' or locale Thanks to generations of editing and typography, modern readers have thereby been conditioned to expect placement of a given scene ('where' does it occur?), regardless of the fluidity or placelessness of the original context or the potential distortion in the question 'where?'" (84). See also G. E. Bentley's concise discussion of the "placeless" stage and eighteenth-century editorial convention (53-63).

6. These terms are already modern, but *some* categories must be used to open the discussion. Theoretical and critical work on the concepts of "place" and "space" is growing by the day, and I have limited myself here to those works which have been of immediate influence on my own argument. The disciplinary specificity of each should by no means be overlooked, since often a series of seemingly analogous statements are in fact speaking to a particular set of questions, terms, assumptions, and problems. Perhaps the most influential statement has been that of Michel de Certeau, from a poststructural anthropological standpoint (esp. 117); Yi-Fu Tuan also approaches the terms from within anthropology, with a particular emphasis on cognitive psychology and phenomenology. David Harvey organizes an entire section around the distinction; see 207-326, esp. 291-326. Although he does not formulate the opposition in these precise terms, James Elkins's discussion of the relation between object (or body) and space is relevant and includes a discussion of concepts of "space," which is admirable for its subtlety, breadth, and clarity; see esp. 22-29. The problem is one of the central concerns of Hubert Damisch, particularly in the way that he conceives of the relation between perspective and architectural forms; it is also crucial to William Ivens's distinction between the "eye" and the "hand," which I consider in more detail later in my essay. I draw also on Henri Lefebvre's seminal analysis of space, which I discuss further in note 14 below.

7. I draw this distinction for the purposes of argument and am setting aside the fact that our own historical accounts of the "early modern stage" must themselves always be in some sense fictions: they are a different type of fiction, and while the point is an important one it leads away from the specific analysis I am pursuing here. See Mullaney for an account of how the "historical" early modern theater was itself subject to complex discursive determinations; for the theater's "place" in our narratives of periodization see de Grazia, "World Pictures," esp. 13-21.

8. Most famously Granville-Barker; see also the studies cited in note 13 below.

9. My discussion of the scene is indebted to the articles by Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg, although the emphasis of their arguments is on the specific problem of *linguistic* representation and not on the representation of space per se; see also the two articles by Philip Armstrong. Sensitive readings of the scenes "stagey" qualities are provided by Janet Adelman, esp. 1-2, and Harry Levin, esp. 96-99. I draw also on Guillén.

10. "I would have broke mine eye-strings, cracked them, but / To look upon him till the diminution / Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle; / Nay, followed him till he had melted from / The smallness of a gnat to air, and then / Have turned mine eye and wept" (*Cymbeline* 13.17-22); "Sit down, and let us / Upon that point fix all our eyes, that point there. / Make a dumb silence till you fell a sudden sadness / Give us new souls" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maid's Tragedy* 2.2.79-82).

11. "[T]he phrase 'perspective space' is a Janus figure, half Renaissance and half modern. The Renaissance artists had no conceptual equivalent for our term *space*, and when they juxtaposed *prospettiva* and *spazio* (or *perspectiva* and *spatium*), they usually had something decidedly scholastic or humanistic in mind. The Renaissance painters made perspective pictures without the benefit of a concept of space artists and writers thought first of objects and second of what we call perspective space or fictive space" (Elkins 14-15).

12. Ivens 5; see also Wittkower, "Brunelleschi" 127: "Now the term *proporzionale* used by Alberti in connection with similar triangles is the adjective of *proporzionalità* ('proportionality') which, in Renaissance usage, is the most comprehensive notion expressing relations. Ratio involves the comparison of one magnitude with another, proportion that of one ratio with another and *proporzionalità* that of one proportion with another."

13. Orgel 556-57; Goldberg, *passim*. On the conventions of the open stage, see Dessen; Bentley; Styan; Beckerman; and Gurr 172-211.

14. Lefebvre's distinctions admit of a certain co-implication and even confusion, and they are best approached, I think, as suggestive general outlines rather than exact analytic categories. A "representation of space" may be understood as a graphic form, of which maps and plans are examples, that takes "space" in all its abstraction as the object of representation. "Representational spaces" are those specific spaces that are encountered in imaginative forms such as drama, narrative, or painting but also those spaces that take on symbolic or ideological qualities in discourses of all types (the stocks, the "heath," the "hollow of a tree" [2.2.159], the hovel, might be examples from *King Lear*); these may be thought of as equivalent to "place." Lefebvre uses "spatial practice" (the third category in this particular triad) to describe the material, historical set of behaviors and patterns by which space is used, created, and destroyed in daily life. Of more immediate relevance are his comments on the space of the theater: "To the question of whether such a space is a representation of space or a representational space, the answer must be neither—and both. Theatrical space certainly implies a *representation of space*—scenic space—corresponding to a particular *conception of space* (that of the classical drama, say—or the Elizabethan, or the Italian.) The *representational space*, mediated yet directly experienced, which infuses the work and the moment, is established as such through the dramatic action itself" (188).

15. Cf. Vérin, esp. 19-42; also Parker, esp. 43-48.

16. See Colie 220-72, who discusses the paradox of "nothing" and "something" in relation to debates over Creation and the existence of a vacuum; Colie deals specifically with *Lear* on 461-81 (esp. 470-75). Her focus on Traherne and Milton gives her discussion a firm theological and seventeenth-century emphasis and thus operates with a conception of space later than that which emerges in *King Lear*. Grant's "Place and Space" provides an accessible discussion of the larger philosophical context; this article includes information that is more fully developed in his 1981 book. Max Jammer also offers a detailed

philosophical and scientific overview of spatial thinking. On Shakespeare's use of "nothing" in particular see Taylor, whose interest lies in the significance of the verbal patterns which are organized around the term and in the relationship between negation and epistemology in a quasi-psychoanalytic framework; he does not consider the term's associations with early modern physics or scientific theory. Jorgensen cites a wide range of references to the term; readers may also wish to consult Kastan 117-119, and the essays by Burckhardt and Wilburn.

17. Greg, *Dramatic Documents* 1: 208; cf. Stone 111: "It is well known that in Elizabethan theatrical parlance the stage was 'out' or 'without' and the tiring-house 'in' or 'within,' though a spectator would most naturally take the opposite view."

18. Greg, *Dramatic Documents* 1: 1-11, 70-171; the seven surviving platts are reproduced in facsimile in vol 2.

19. Aristotle, in contrast to the Greek atomists, rejected any notion of a "void" and offered no concept of "space" in the familiar, modern sense as a homogeneous, extended medium unoccupied by a body: such a concept was inconceivable for him, since he maintained that the dimensions of a body and the "place" that contained that body were identical. For Aristotle, who could conceptualize only a series of ever-larger, containing "places," the notion of an extended, empty "space" of pure dimension would be absurd, since this space would itself by definition be a body and collide or "interpenetrate" with the other bodies that putatively occupied it. See Grant, *Much Ado* 5-8 and *passim*; Jammer, *passim*.

20. Grant, *Much Ado*, *passim*, esp. 11-13, 117-21, 182-255.

21. Q2, printed in the shop of William Jaggard in 1619 (one of the so-called "Pavier Quartos" and perhaps part of an early attempt at a volume of collected works) essentially reproduces Q1 and for this reason I have omitted it from my discussion. For the text of Q1 scholars have proposed memorial reconstruction, either by two actors (typically those playing Goneril and Regan) or by the entire group on provincial tour; shorthand transmissions by a member of the audience; surreptitious glances at a prompt-book; and, more recently, autograph foul papers. I traced through copies of either Q1 or, as is now thought, Q2 annotated with any number of prompt-books or other manuscript copies, departs from Q1 in ways that have been taken to suggest either deliberate theatrical or authorial revision or a combination of both. Jay L. Halio provides a concise discussion of the major points in his introduction to his edition of the play, esp. 58-81 and 265-89; see also the essays surveying the debates on this subject, along with a bibliography of its major statements, collected in Taylor and Warren.

22. See the discussions of the problem in Greg, *Shakespeare First Folio* 143-45, and Greg, *Dramatic Documents* 1: 79-81, 206-07, 210-13; Chambers 1: 118, 123-24, 199-201; Snuggs, esp. 35-51; and Jewkes. The work of T. W. Baldwin, while indispensable, should be used carefully.

23. Inter-act music was a convention of the hall theaters as early as 1604 (as evidenced by Marston's *Malcontent*), and after the occupancy of the Blackfriars theater by the King's Men in 1609 the practice seems to have spread to the Globe and the other amphitheaters. See Chambers 1: 200; Snuggs 37-45.

24. This is true even of skillful dramatic analyses such as that by Mark Rose, which includes an exposition of *King Lear*'s "scenic" or emblematic staging but argues finally that an awareness of theatrical convention alone is insufficient to account for Shakespeare's approach

to dramatic structure. Rose describes a space of symmetry and stasis somewhat different from the unfolding, performative space I am concerned with here.

25. Cf. Anderson.

26. Theobald, "Preface," in Smith 59.

27. Capell 1: 25; stage directions from 9: 3, 14, 19, 20.

28. I should perhaps emphasize again that I am making this distinction on the basis of the formatting characteristics contributed by act and scene divisions (the space of the page) and not on the basis of copy, since recent discussion of F's copy has emphasized its proximity to performance, and some have even preferred it on that account as a later, revised version of the play. See Jewkes 185-86, and Stone 100-112.

29. See Blayney, esp. 89-150, and Hinman, *Printing and Proofreading* 1, 47-51 and *passim*. Both of the spatial sensibilities I am describing obviously operated simultaneously during the period of 1608 to 1623, even if the overall historical movement during the seventeenth century and beyond is toward the "readerly" space of the Folio. Several features of both texts suggest that the period was in fact one of *transition* in spatial thinking. We see this first in the Folio's very inconsistency in dividing plays into acts and scenes (nineteen plays fully divided, including *Lear* [three imperfectly]; eleven into acts alone [two imperfectly]; and six not at all [they indicate *Actus primus Scena* (or *Scena prima* only)]. Even more intriguingly, while Oakes actually *printed* the Quarto using *seriatim* methods, an analysis of type and watermarks by Peter Blayney (96-100) indicates that Oakes knew in advance exactly how much paper the entire job would require. Considered from the bibliographic unit of the sheet or page, therefore, Q reflects a *seriatim* spatial practice, but when considered as a *total book* it reflects a spatial understanding more typical of casting-off.

30. Dessen (22-27) has pointed out that the needs of theatrical historians and conventional editors are the inverse of one another: for the study of performance, texts that bear evidence of staging—the more revisions the better—are of primary importance, while texts with no direct connection to the stage are of no particular interest. When the critical goal is not composition but the conditions of play production, the entire range of texts produced in this process—so-called "foul papers," scribal copy, plot summaries, prompt-books, and all printed Quartos, "bad" or otherwise, in addition to the Folio—serve as potentially authoritative sources.

31. See, for instance, the recent works by Orlin, Ziegler, and Wilson.

32. Cf. Halpern's recent reading of the play in terms of property and an economics of *dépense*, and de Grazia, "Ideology of Superfluous Things."

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