*Editing Archipelagic Shakespeare* Video Transcript

Rory Loughnane (RL) and Willy Maley (WM)

WM: Editing Archipelagic Shakespeare combines historical and textual scholarship in order to break with an established Anglocentric tradition of editing Shakespeare’s texts that downplays the interaction of England with its neighbour nations, and the ways in which those interactions shaped the drama of the period.

RL: Willy and I had both worked separately and together on projects that aimed to bring Irish, Scottish and Welsh contexts and concerns to the fore.

WM: Specifically we co-edited a collection of essays entitled *Celtic Shakespeare* which gave prominence to the non-English nations of the Atlantic archipelago. In his prologue to that collection, John Kerrigan asked: ‘Is it not better described as archipelagic Shakespeare?’ We agree, and *Editing Archipelagic Shakespeare* is our attempt to extend the work we have been doing for over a decade around names and nations with the goal of prompting a serious rethink of editorial practice in Shakespeare studies.

RL: Too often textual and contextual work is conducted in ways that shortchange both approaches. By digging deeper into the extent to which archipelagic dynamics impacted upon early modern drama we set out to close the gap between formal and historicist criticism and to lay bare the Anglocentric tradition that worked to limit our understanding of the complexity of Shakespeare’s archipelagic engagements.

WM: You can tell by our accents that we hail from the Irish and Scottish countries of the Atlantic archipelago. We have tried to be attentive to all the nations that formed Shakespeare’s problematic polity and shaped his work. The four captains scene in *Henry V* affords an ideal opportunity to engage equally and intensely with editing archipelagic Shakespeare. But our interest stretches beyond the histories, since archipelagic history is at play throughout Shakespeare’s work.

RL: We are especially interested in how Shakespeare named his non-English archipelagic characters, in how these names were spelled, and in why Shakespeare might have decided upon forms of these names. But we also wish to use the example of the archipelago to think more globally – historically, geographically, and linguistically – about how, when, and why certain names and spellings became adopted in Shakespeare’s texts, in his day and throughout the historical editorial tradition, and the editorial and critical concomitants that arise from naming practices. In this way, we can interrogate the manner in which conventional editorial practice can conceal political subtleties and complexities unearthed by deeper historical excavation.

WM: Shakespearean editorial practice has been outstripped by historical scholarship. *Editing Archipelagic Shakespeare* is, at its core, unediting Anglocentric Shakespeare. We see our Element as an invitation to early modern scholars to attend to the multiple nature of naming and nation in the period and its effects on the drama.

RL: Our analysis of the Four Captains in *Henry V*, their names, their naming, and the perpetuation of their names in the critical and editorial traditions, will, we hope, direct new attention, to the extraordinary but unexamined implications of practices of anglicization, regularization, and modernization in editing Shakespeare.