

Paris Conference Report

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I had the pleasure of co-organizing a conference on Canadian-American writer Elizabeth Bishop that ran from June 6 to 8, 2018 in Paris. My co-organizers were Juliette Utard from Paris-Sorbonne University in France (the conference's hosting institution) and Jonathan Ellis from the University of Sheffield in England. Over the three days of the "Elizabeth Bishop in Paris: Spaces of Translation and Translations of Space" conference, we scheduled panel discussions (30 minutes in duration) that each focused on three papers followed by half an hour of discussion. We had no overlapping panels so all could be enjoyed.

Several months before the conference, Jonathan and I were asked by Cambridge University Press to co-edit a book called *Elizabeth Bishop in Context*; it features 36 essays, and so many of the scholars were able to practice their chapters in public. The "Elizabeth Bishop in Paris: Spaces of Translation and Translations of Space" conference also focused on the writer's years of living in France influenced by its art, architecture, language, and history.

My paper focused on Bishop's use of Parisian architecture – such as the Place de l'Étoile with the Arc de Triomphe as the meeting point of twelve avenues extending outwards like the points of a star – to reveal the effects of militaristic monumental power in contrast to welcoming courtyards and public greenspaces. We designed conference maps for walking tours, and had a poetry reading at the old Sorbonne.

We were fortunate to be sponsored by Seneca College (thanks to VP Academic Laurel Schollen and SELS Chair Claire Moane), Sorbonne University, Sheffield and Exeter Universities, New York University, the American Embassy, and five other funding agencies, which enabled us to cover some conference meals and travel costs of four graduate



students from the U.K. and two retired American professors.

The idea of the conference was initiated in 2015 when I was at another conference co-hosted by Juliette Utard at the Sorbonne. French institutions prioritize the hospitality of international gatherings to bolster scholarship as a coordinated global enterprise. The current book I'm co-editing features scholars from Canada, USA, Brazil, England, France, Poland, and the Czech Republic.

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