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Theatre in London

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Theatre in Shakespeare's Time

The rise of the London industry

For a thousand years after the departure of the Romans in the fifth-century CE no theatres were built in Britain, and Shakespeare's works are key texts in the rebirth of professional playing in the late sixteenth century. There were travelling troupes of players in the late medieval period, comprising on average 4-6 men, and they might even receive royal patronage, but they lacked the element that characterizes professionalism: accumulated capital. Theatrical capital takes three forms--costumes, scripts, and venues--and the pressures placed upon informal troupes of players around the middle of the sixteenth century gave a strong competitive advantage to those troupes which acquired such capital. Travelling players necessarily use whatever venues they can find in the towns they visit, and might also rent costumes at need. The officers of the royal household who controlled costumes used in state pageants appear to have hired them to players as early as the 1520s. In 1550 the aldermen of the city of London prevented 'common' players (those without an aristocratic patron) from playing in the city, and in 1559 Elizabeth 1 issued a proclamation reminding patrons of their obligation to ensure that their players did not perform anything "wherein either matters of religion or of the governaunce of the estate of the commonwealth shall be handled or treated". It was clear that civic and royal authorities wanted players and their patrons to be held accountable, and casual troupes without a patron found life increasing difficult.

An early and active theatrical patron was Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, and between 1582 and 1585 his hitherto well-recorded company disappears from provincial touring records. Just then a new company, perhaps Leicester's men under a new name, was formed by two senior government officials, Sir Francis Walsingham and Edmund Tilney. This new troupe of Queen's men under Elizabeth's direct patronage had the star performers of Leicester's men (most famously the clown Richard Tarlton) and it soon overshadowed its rivals. The crown's policy was to take control of the playing companies and make them professional, profitable, and controllable. The Queen's men were a touring troupe, but unlike their predecessors who stayed close to their patron's home they toured the entire country in the summer and settled in London for the winter. Over Christmas the players were invited to perform for the monarch at court, and reaching a state of preparedness for these festivities was, officially at least, the sole reason for the profession's existence; playing to the public was supposed to be mere practice. In London permanent open-air, virtually circular amphitheatre playhouses were built in the suburbs; to the north were the Theatre in Shoreditch (1576) and the Curtain in Holywell (1577), and to the south on Bankside were the Rose (1587) and the Swan (1595). Playing companies visiting London moved between these venues, as though touring the city's outskirts. The players preferred to perform indoors and especially in the city inns close to the centres of population, but these were strictly controlled by the city authorities. In 1594 it was agreed by the privy council and the lord mayor of London that inns could no longer be used and just two companies, the Chamberlain's men and the Admiral's men, would be licensed to play at two designated suburban playhouses, the Theatre in Shoreditch and the Rose on Bankside respectively.

A touring company needs costumes and a variety of places to play, but it does not need many scripts since each new town can be shown the same fare as the last. In London, however, the enforced settlement of two companies at two playhouses brought a new capital requirement into the equation, since there was now a great need for new playscripts to satisfy the ever-returning audiences. The state-enforced duopoly of the Admiral's men and the Chamberlain's men gave these two troupes pre-eminence in London, but to exploit this market required enormous expenditure on new playscripts, and one of the beneficiaries of this was the Chamberlain's men's actor William Shakespeare who, in the 1590s, became his fellows' main and most successful playwright. Being settled at a single suburban venue each, the star actors Richard Burbage (for the Chamberlain's men) and Edward Alleyn (for the Admiral's men) were able to build legions of dedicated fans who would come to see each new production.

The venues

The open-air amphitheatres of Shakespeare's time dominate our thinking about the actors' venues, but men used to the vagaries of touring would easily adapt to any performance space which might be available. A large inn at which coaches unloaded would have an enclosed yard within which a temporary stage might easily be mounted, and the elevated galleries which provided access to the rooms around the yard would have provided further accommodation for spectators with the additional benefit of protection from the elements. Less capacious, but more comfortable and dependable, would be a room inside the inn, and the final deciding factor might well have been the weather. The placing of a temporary stage within an innyard has been claimed as the origin of the open-air amphitheatre design, but the virtually circular structures of the Theatre, Curtain, Rose, Swan, and later the Globe were too unusual to be merely alterations of the innyard layout. Foreign visitors in London who saw the wooden amphitheatres commented on their likeness to the stone amphitheatres of Roman times, and indeed in naming his 1576 playhouse the Theatre James Burbage (father of star actor Richard) appears to have been deliberately invoking this antecedent. A possible additional inspiration was the animal baiting arenas which had developed from simple circular wooden fences (animals within, spectators without) to become multi-storey structures containing many hundreds of spectators on staggered degrees, such as the one in Paris Garden which fatally collapsed upon its patrons in January 1583. Superficially, a temporary stage erected within an animal ring might seem much like an open-air amphitheatre, but the heavy fencing needed to keep the agonized animals from attacking the spectators would have made it difficult to see the stage. The first multi-use venue, suitable for animal shows and plays, was the Hope, built in 1613, which was specially designed to reconcile the differing needs of the two kinds of entertainment.

The players always preferred to act indoors, but until 1608 most of the opportunities to do so were in temporarily adapted halls rather than permanent structures. An indoor theatre was built in St Paul's church around 1575 and a room in the former Dominican monastery at Blackfriars was converted into a theatre in 1576. Both of these were used just once a week by boy actors who, the official excuse had it, were merely undergoing tuition. Occasionally these indoor theatres are referred to as private theatres and the open-air amphitheatres are called public theatres, but this distinction is unhelpful since the public could attend either. High admission charges, not explicit exclusion, ensured that the indoor theatres attracted only the well off. Indoor hall playhouses were considerably smaller than the open-air theatres (the St Paul's hall was probably about 40 feet by 23 feet) which meant that they were more suitable for intimate domestic scenes than battles, and for the gentle music of oboes rather than the stern alarms of trumpets and drums. Lit by candles which needed periodic trimming, indoor theatres punctuated their performances with four act intervals (on the classical model) during which music played.

James Burbage's 21-year lease on the site of the open-air Theatre was due to expire on 13 April 1597. As a replacement venue for his son's troupe Burbage acquired the Blackfriars building which boy actors had used from 1576 to 1584 with a view to making it a permanent indoor venue in the heart of the city, playing to the select clientele there. However, the locals raised a petition which prevented the Chamberlain's men from using the Blackfriars and it was again leased to a boys company from 1600 to 1608. With eviction from the Shoreditch Theatre looming, the Burbage family secretly dismantled the building over the Christmas holiday of 1598-99 and moved it to a new plot on Bankside, adjacent to the rival Admiral's men's Rose playhouse. The expedient of recycling the Theatre's timbers was necessary because Burbage had financially over-extended himself on the aborted Blackfriars project, and to fund the reassembly and furnishing of the new playhouse, the Globe, the Burbages brought the leading players of the Chamberlain's men including Shakespeare into a syndicate of cost- and profit-sharing 'housekeepers'. Although it was not immediately apparent, this arrangement made the Chamberlain's men a more tightly-bound and economically stable organization than their rivals the Admiral's men. So successful was this syndicate that when the Blackfriars became available again in 1608 the company (now under royal patronage as the King's men) repeated the arrangement to manage the indoor theatre as a winter home while continuing to use the Globe in the summer. For at least a decade the King's men performed the same plays in both venues, preferring a unified repertory and the luxury of keeping one venue empty at all times rather than staking their future on one kind of playhouse and audience over the other.

The family relationship whereby James Burbage, builder of the first playhouse (the Theatre), provided venues for the acting company led by his son Richard was somewhat mirrored in their chief rivals. The Admiral's men's star was the physically and vocally imposing Edward Alleyn whose father-in-law, Philip Henslowe, built the Rose theatre in 1587 and extensively rebuilt it in 1592, adding a stage cover and a machine to lower an actor from its underside (the 'heavens') to the stage. Henslowe also acted as financier for the playing companies which used his theatre and his 'Diary' provides detailed information about the finances of the theatre industry. In 1600, shortly after the Chamberlain's moved into the nearby Globe, Henslowe built a new theatre called the Fortune in the northern parish of St Giles without Cripplegate, and moved the Admiral's men there, headed by Alleyn back from a brief retirement. Possibly Henslowe planned all along to build another playhouse, but it seems likely that the arrival of the Chamberlain's men on his doorstep accelerated his departure. We should not assume that the Globe was much more attractive than the Rose, although to judge from the foundations uncovered in 1989-90 it was larger: 99 feet in diameter to the Rose's 74 feet. The Fortune construction contract, which survives, required the builder to model it on the new Globe with the exception that instead of being virtually round, the Fortune was to have a square of galleries surrounding its yard. The Rose continued in use until its demolition in 1606. Henslowe and Alleyn had for a long time sought to monopolize the animal baiting shows as well as the theatre industry and in 1613 Henslowe had the Paris Garden bearbaiting ring torn down and the Hope theatre put in its place. The Hope had the innovations of a demountable stage and a cover cantilevered into the walls, leaving a clear circular space for animal shows.

The companies

The recorded history of playing companies in Shakespeare's time is dominated by professional troupes patronized by senior aristocrats or monarchs and existing to fulfil the entertainment needs of the monarch during the holidays. Can we call this an industry in the modern sense? The forces of aristocratic patronage on one hand and capitalist economics on the other combined to create a sudden explosion of dramatic activity at the end of the sixteenth century, and the sharers in the leading playing companies became rich men. Thirty years

earlier such men were thought little better than vagabonds. Theatre historians used to model London's theatre industry as an east-west divide: the Westminster-based monarchy and aristocracy, the defenders of cultural excellence, supported it, and the businessmen of the city of London to the east were puritan anti-theatricalists. This is too simple, as M. J. Kidnie shows in chapter 000 of this book. Political power was indeed polarized, but the players were alternately defended and attacked by each side as the need arose in the larger struggle which culminated in the English civil war. The city authorities frequently objected that large gatherings at playhouses were a threat to public order, but seldom complained that the plays contained dangerous ideas. The court and church authorities who licensed performance and publishing, on the other hand, were concerned with subversive ideas and not the places of performance. If the court thought that plays might help promote official monarchical ideology, modern critics almost unanimously hold that they were mistaken: the best dramatic literature's meanings exceed simple propaganda. The closing of the theatres in 1642 represents not the final victory of anti-theatrical republican businessmen, but the rebels' nervous acknowledgement that either side (or indeed the extremely republican movement of Levellers) might wrest the power of this medium to its own ends.

The city authorities regulated business activity via the guild system which required that to practice a particular trade a man had to be apprenticed to a master who was a member of that trade's organization or 'company'. The rules of companies determined the rates of pay and conditions of service, the arrangements by which products were made or exchanged, and regulated output to ensure that supply did not exceed demand. The Stationers' Company, for example, limited a standard print run to 1250 copies of any one book. When the touring playing companies were encouraged to settle in London in the late sixteenth century there was no guild to regulate their industry; senior players usually had an official profession besides acting which made them citizens of London. The internal structure of a playing company was essentially the same as the newly-formed joint-stock companies which operated outside the guild structure and which allowed anyone with sufficient capital to buy a share. Playing company sharers held in common the physical capital of their company (costumes, properties, and books) and shared running expenses such as rent payments to the owner of their venue, fees to licensing authorities, and the hiring of casual labour. Sharers were almost always actors and they took the major roles in each play, the lesser roles being given to hired men. After the payment of expenses, whatever surplus remained from the takings was divided amongst the sharers. Unlike the regulated trades of the guild system, players had no protection against their losses but equally there was no brake upon profits in the event of success, and when the Admiral's men and the Chamberlain's men were granted a state-imposed duopoly in London in 1594 the suppression of competition gave them the potential to make huge gains. Both companies made the most of this opportunity, although other London competitors operating semi-legally sprung up in the interstices between governmental and civic authority.

From 1594 the London market was divided north-side between two companies. The Chamberlain's men had the advantage of sole access to the dramatic output of one of their sharers, William Shakespeare, who produced on average two plays a year which met with increasing success and fame. The Admiral's men began their rise with the works of Christopher Marlowe and after his death in 1593 they turned to freelance dramatists. In 1595 another playhouse, the Swan, was built on Bankside near the Rose and in 1596 it was depicted in a sketch by Dutch tourist Johannes de Witt; this sketch provides our only view of the inside of an open-air playhouse of the period. The Swan was closed in 1597 when Pembroke's men played *The Isle of Dogs* (now lost) by Thomas Nashe and Ben Jonson which was highly critical of the government and which landed the dramatists in jail. In the aftermath of this incident the city authorities attempted to close the Rose and the Theatre too, but the privy council engineered a mere suspension of playing and protected the Admiral's and Chamberlain's men. These two companies

were clearly more favoured than their competitors, and this became even more apparent when James I succeeded Elizabeth I in 1603.

In the first decades of the seventeenth century a blurred distinction arose between the northern amphitheatres (the Fortune was followed by the Red Bull in 1605) and the southern ones (the Rose, the Globe, and the Swan), and its basis was class. The northern playhouses developed clienteles of citizens and apprentices, and repertories deriving from Alleyn's physically aggressive 'roaring and stalking' style of performance, while the southern ones were associated with the court and with Burbage's restrained and naturalistic acting. This dichotomy can easily be overstated and is less clear than the difference in decorum which obtained between the open-air theatres which could exploit large sounds and light effects and the indoor hall theatres where sound effects had to be restrained, musical instruments had to be less powerful, and scenes of intimacy were easier to create than scenes of battle. Until 1608 only boy companies regularly performed indoors, but when the King's men got the Blackfriars back they chose to perform there in the winter and at the Globe in the summer. Possibly the chaotic beginning of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* was a deliberate shock tactic, throwing an amphitheatre-style spectacle of noisy chaos at a Blackfriars audience that had just been lulled by the soft harmonies of music and song from the Blackfriars' renowned consort of musicians who stayed at the playhouse when the boy company left. However, Shakespeare and his company did not suddenly change their style to suit the indoor conditions. For at least 10 or 15 years there was no discernible division in the repertory and plays had to be performable at both locations. To help with this, the King's men regularized practices which had hitherto been different at the different venues. Prior to 1608 only indoor theatres observed act intervals with music, and the musicians of the Blackfriars were visible in a gallery set in the back wall of the stage. The Globe music room, however, was located out of sight within the tiring house. The King's men moved the Globe music room to the back-wall gallery (also used when characters had to enter 'above', as at a window or balcony) and began to observe act intervals with music at both venues. The Blackfriars had a machine for the descent of supernatural figures from the 'heavens' (as the Rose had from 1595), but no play written for the Globe uses such a machine until Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* of 1610, so perhaps part of the bringing their two playhouses into alignment was the retro-fitting of a descent machine at the Globe.

Regular processes

The raw material of a playing company is its scripts, and when performing in one location to an audience made mostly of spectators who attend frequently a great demand for new plays is generated. Apart from the amateurs, the dramatists can be divided into two types: the attached men who worked exclusively for one company for a length of time and received a salary, and the freelancers who sold each play for a fixed fee of around £6-£10. An attached dramatist such as Shakespeare would know the resources of his company (especially the kinds of roles in which each man excelled) and would write his material accordingly. A freelancer, on the other hand, might be asked to pitch his idea and possibly to read parts of the work-in-progress to the sharers, with payment being made by instalments if the writing proceeded satisfactorily. In addition to these fees, an incentive system operated whereby the dramatist received the profits from one of the performances, usually the second. Apart from writing plays, an attached dramatist probably had additional chores such as the alteration of old plays for revival and the writing of prologues, epilogues, and other framing devices. It appears that unless integrated with the action (as is the Induction to Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*), such devices were considered to be separate from the play they framed and might even be recycled for use with several plays. It is possible that prologues and epilogues, which frequently ask for the audience's indulgence, were spoken only at the first performance or first revival, and not on subsequent occasions.

When the dramatist had finished his play he passed a copy to the company. It is not clear whether this had to be a specially-made 'fair' copy, free of authorial crossings-out and changes of mind, or whether the 'foul' authorial papers with all these untidy marks had also to be handed over. Certainly, as intellectual property the play was no longer the dramatist's once he had handed it over to the company, and our modern notions of author's copyright were invented much later. No company had enough actors to assign one to each part, so a certain amount of doubling was needed. The most senior actors took one major role each, while the hired men were given two or more roles of smaller size. Most companies had no more than two or three boys amongst whom the women's parts would be divided. The copying of manuscripts was expensive in labour and materials, so rather than providing each actor with a complete text, the play was divided in 'parts', each of which was a scroll containing the speeches of one character. Each speech was preceded by its 'cue': the few words which ended the previous speaker's speech, upon hearing which the next actor spoke. The mechanicals in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are given their parts by Peter Quince and implored to "con [learn] them by tomorrow night" (1.2.93). Most preparation was indeed solitary, and there was little time for collective rehearsals before the first performance; probably these took place in the mornings, since live performance occupied the afternoons.

Before a play could be performed, its script had to be inspected by the state censor, the Master of the Revels, who worked within the office of the Lord Chamberlain and received from the players a fee for his work. The censor's remit was never precisely defined, but successive postholders took their responsibility to be the excision of material offensive to the church and state, broadly interpreted to include not only sedition and personal satire but also foul language and excessive sexuality. If the Master of the Revels allowed the play he would attach his license (a signed statement of his approval) at the end of the manuscript. Often the license would state conditions such as "may with the reformation [i.e. changes] be acted" or "[with] all the oaths left out". On 27 May 1606 an "Acte to restraine Abuses of Players" was passed which made it an offence to "jestingly or prophanely speake or use the holy Name of God or of Christ Jesus, or of the Holy Ghoste or of the Trinitie" in a stage play, on penalty of a £10 fine. As well as effectively censoring new works, this act also required old plays to be expurgated if they were to be revived for the stage. The act did not cover printing, however, and the 1623 Folio of Shakespeare contains a mixture of expurgated and unexpurgated plays according to provenance of the manuscript underlying each of them. It might seem that the censor was inherently the enemy of dramatists and players, but what records we have suggest that both parties knew that they would benefit from mutual co-operation rather than antagonism. The Master, after all, received considerable fees from the playing companies, and the players received the seal of state approval that their works were harmless entertainment; each had good reason not to push the other too far. No doubt this symbiotic relationship promoted a form of self-censorship on the part of the dramatists, but we should not see this as simple artistic emasculation. The dramatists' necessary artful encoding of pressing political and social themes such as the organization of governance and the status of women in forms which were not overtly dangerous might well be one of the reasons plays from this period have remained fascinating to scholars of textual and performative art.

Staging

Most of the world's theatres are now of the proscenium arch style which became popular in the centuries since the Restoration. The essential element of this arrangement is the placing of the actors in one room and the audience in an adjacent one, the separating wall between the rooms being replaced by a rising curtain. The open-air playhouses of Shakespeare's time, by contrast, had stages which projected into the mass of the audience who thus surrounded the actors on at least three sides. Moreover, performance by daylight meant that the audience

were as visible to the actors and to themselves as were the actors, and in such conditions it is impossible for actors to ignore the audience in the way they commonly do in the darkened auditoria of proscenium arch theatres. Whereas modern theatres generally charge the greatest admission fee for seats near the stage, the open-air theatres allowed those in the yard (who had paid least) to stand almost directly underneath the actor near the edge of the stage. The indoor hall theatres provided something like the modern conditions--seats nearest the stage were the most expensive, and lighting could be controlled--but throughout Shakespeare's working lifetime there was no possibility of writing exclusively for such conditions. The plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries were written for daylight performance by actors standing on a platform 'island' within a 'sea' of upturned spectatorial faces. The word 'soliloquy' had no theatrical meaning to actors working in these conditions: if there were no other characters on the stage, the speech would be consciously directed towards the highly-visible audience.

Apart from their playbooks, a company's greatest accumulation of capital was in their clothing stock, which might easily be worth more than the theatre in which they were performing. A typical theatrical doublet cost about £3, most women's gowns were between £4 and £7, and skirts were about £2. To put these figures in perspective, the master of the Stratford Grammar School was at this time paid £20 per year. The high cost of costumes presumably reflected their importance within the theatrical event. The representation of characters of high social rank, especially monarchs, seems to have achieved a degree of naturalism by the use of appropriately luxurious clothing. When attempting to represent other times and other cultures, the players did not seek complete historical authenticity. Rather, they adapted Elizabethan dress with gestures towards the past or towards the foreign, so that a turban might indicate the countries of the east and a sash might suggest the Roman toga. Stage properties were minimal, usually confined to hand-held items (swords, crowns, torches) and small pieces of furniture such as tables and chairs. Bedroom scenes often began with a bed being 'thrust out' from one of the stage doors, usually with its occupant already in it.

The analogic thinking evidenced in naming the Globe theatre appears to have operated at all the playhouses: the main stage represented everyday earthly reality, the area under the stage, the 'hell', was the domain of devils and ghosts, and the underside of the cover over the stage was the 'heavens'. A trap door in the stage would provide a route for devils to enter the earthly realm, as with the rising of Asnath in Shakespeare's 2 Henry 6 1.4, and another in the heavens would allow the descent by rope of supernatural beings such as Jupiter in Shakespeare's Cymbeline 5.5. These visual effects and the lavish costuming which allowed the poorest spectator a close-up view of clothing hardly less sumptuous than that worn at the real court indicate that visual pleasure was an important part of playgoing. The remarkable poetry of the best writers, including Shakespeare, shows that playgoers could enjoy aural gratification too, and there really is no way to rank the two sensual pleasures. We can be sure, however, that playgoers came as much to see a play as to hear it, and indeed the phrases such as "see a play" occurs ten times as often as phrases such as Hamlet's "hear a play" (2.2.538) in the literature of the period.

Conclusion

Upon his succession James 1 took over as patron of Shakespeare's company, changing them from the Chamberlain's men to the King's men and his son Henry took over the Admiral's men, transforming them into the Prince's men. This declension marks the pre-eminence of Shakespeare's troupe: the King's men performed at court more times than any other company (indeed, more often than Elizabeth had ever requested) and they toured more extensively than ever before, which might indicate that the new king saw his playing company as a travelling advertisement for the new reign. The power of royal patronage lies behind the

King's men's successful occupancy of the Blackfriars theatre in 1608, having been defeated by local opposition in 1596 when James Burbage bought the building. The company also learned from the success of the financial arrangements regarding the Globe--the leading players being also owners of the building--and formed a similar syndicate to bind common interests in the Blackfriars. Using the Globe in the summer and the Blackfriars in the winter was, however, a wasteful practice (one property being empty at all times) and is hard to explain. Perhaps nostalgia for their early 1590s habit of playing at an amphitheatre in the summer and an indoor venue (then, the city inns) in the winter got the better of them. Having been their second-best option in 1599, the company might well have been surprised by the success of the Globe in the first decade of the seventeenth century and by retaining an outdoor theatre alongside their indoor one they continued to address the widest possible social spectrum of early modern Londoners. When the Globe burnt down in 1613 the King's men immediately rebuilt it in the same style and on the same groundplan as before, which must indicate its continued profitability.

Shakespeare's output slowed down towards the end of the first decade of the seventeenth century and he began to collaborate with other dramatists. His first collaboration was with George Wilkins on *Pericles* in 1607, but Wilkins's petty criminality and habitual plagiarism (he published an unauthorized novella based on the play in 1608) probably did little to encourage Shakespeare in this direction. It was not until 1613 that Shakespeare again collaborated, this time choosing the rising star John Fletcher with whom he wrote *All is True* (printed as *Henry 8*), *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and probably the lost play *Cardenio*. Fletcher already had a permanent collaborator in Francis Beaumont with whom he worked from 1608 or 1609 until 1613 or 1614 when the partnership was dissolved by Beaumont's marriage to a rich heiress and subsequent retirement. Fletcher was not quite a direct replacement for Shakespeare as the company's primary dramatist since he seldom worked alone, Philip Massinger taking Beaumont's place for a number of hits throughout the 1610s and 1620s. Massinger himself was the attached dramatist of the King's men from 1626 to 1639, almost the end of the period. In its lineaments, Shakespeare would have recognized the theatre industry as it was when the theatres were closed almost 30 years after his retirement. Shakespeare lived through a period of extraordinarily rapid development of an entertainment industry which then changed little until the Civil War and was to re-emerge in the 1660 restoration wholly unlike anything seen before.

Further Reading

Astington, John H. *English Court Theatre 1558-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Astington records everything known about the court performances which were the official *raison d'être* of playing companies. This book has detailed descriptions of the court venues (such as the Whitehall Banqueting Hall) used for plays and masques, and a comprehensive calendar of all known performances.

Bentley, Gerald Eades *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, 1590-1642* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971). This is the best single-volume introduction to the daily work of a playwright, just as the next item is the best single-volume introduction to the daily work of an actor.

Bentley, Gerald Eades *The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's Time, 1590-1642* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984)

Dutton, Richard *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (London: Macmillan, 1991). Dutton takes the view that the censor was not simply the enemy of the dramatists and convincingly demonstrates how the Master of the Revels and the players worked together to promote their mutual interests.

Gurr, Andrew *The Shakespearian Playing Companies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,

1996). As well as outlining the relationship between playing companies and the forces of court and city authority, this scrupulously detailed scholarly work has a chapter describing the origins and career of each acting company.

Gurr, Andrew and Mariko Ichikawa *Staging in Shakespeare's Theatres* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). This book explores what we know about the actual performance practices of companies in Shakespeare's time, including discoveries from the reconstructed Globe currently standing in south London.

Heinemann, Margot *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama Under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

Heinemann's nuanced model of the relationship between early modern Christian fundamentalism and the theatres overturned a number of assumptions and gave the subject a modern historical grounding.

Ingram, William *The Business of Playing: The Beginnings of the Adult Professional Theater in Elizabethan England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992). This describes the forces which turned the late medieval casual troupes into professional playing companies, and traces the development of the industry within early capitalism.

Kastan, David Scott *Shakespeare After Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1999) Chapter 11 "'Publike Sports' and 'Publike Calamities': Plays, Playing, and Politics". Following Heinemann's lead, Kastan examines the closing of the theatres in 1642 and concludes that it was not simply the victory of anti-theatricalism.

Knutson, Roslyn Lander *The Repertory of Shakespeare's Company 1594-1613* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991). Knutson uses a combination of historical data and informed guesswork to reconstruct the likely repertory of the Chamberlain's/King's men and argues that competition between the leading companies caused them to copy one other's successful productions and genres.

McMillin, Scott and Sally-Beth MacLean *The Queen's Men and Their Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). A company-centered study of a troupe whose early plays are of special interest for the origins for the history play genre in which Shakespeare first distinguished himself.

Stern, Tiffany *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000). This contains everything known about the essential process of rehearsal in early modern theatre, and shows that examination of the actors' parts (the individual scrolls, each of which contained one character's speeches) can reveal theatrical effects not immediately visible in the complete text.