

Maritime Performance Culture and the Possible Staging of *Hamlet* in Sierra Leone

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Résumé

This article advances the argument that the East India Company performed Shakespeare aboard the Red Dragon flagship in Sierra Leone in September 1607 during the Company's third voyage on route to Surat, Aden, and Bantam. I propose that these performances were political gestures of diplomacy during a crucial point in England's economic expansion. I will consider the claims in the journal of General William Keeling (1577-1620) as evidence for shipboard performance of Shakespeare. Though the Keeling journal is notoriously problematic in its authorship, I will draw on a range of sources, including journals by other EIC officers and crew members, *The Merchants Avizo* (1607), and Shakespeare plays, which reveal important intersections between theatrical and maritime cultures. The EIC performances of *Hamlet* and *Richard II* in Sierra Leone helped strengthen the bond between the EIC and foreign diplomats like African dignitary Lucas Fernandez, who may have been part of the first non-European audience of Shakespeare. My argument expands on the work of Graham Holderness, Gary Taylor, Ania Loomba, and Richmond Barbour, and positions itself against critics like Bernice Kliman, whose interest in this subject is predicated mainly on the authorship of the Keeling journal, rather than the political implications of these performances. The EIC's staging of *Hamlet* in September 1607 is often considered by scholars to be an unusual or improbable footnote in performance history, but historical evidence reveals that this event was a major example of mercantile strategy in Africa. The EIC continued to stage elaborate performances of hospitality in later voyages as they established factories in Asia and tightened the trade networks on both continents. As the EIC literally and figuratively carried England's economic future, shipboard performance engendered diplomatic relations, contributed directly to the English Commonwealth, and positioned the EIC members as major players in a maritime political theatre.

Mots-Clés

Shakespeare, East India Company, William Keeling, Red Dragon, Hamlet, Maritime theatre.

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Texte intégral

In his journal of the East India Company's third voyage, the commander General William Keeling (1577-1620) records the following on 5 September 1607, when his ship, the *Red Dragon*, and its sister ship, the *Hector*, arrived at the coast of Sierra Leone:

I sent the Portuguese interpreter, according to his desire, aboard the Hector, where he broke fast, and after came aboard me, where we had the TRAGEDY OF HAMLET; and in the afternoon we went altogether ashore, to see if we could shoot an elephant. [1]

What a busy day it was for the Company—meeting with the African dignitary Lucas Fernandez (brother-in-law to King Buré), performing a Shakespeare play, and hunting an elephant in the afternoon. This exciting account is published by one Ambrose Gunthio in *European Magazine* (1825), added to the newly rediscovered *Hamlet Q1* (1603) as a freestanding postscript. This exciting account may also be written by John Payne Collier (1789-1883), a literary editor who also began forging documents in the 1820s. [2] Though the document may be forged, the Keeling journal extracts present the only evidence for what may be the earliest Shakespeare performances staged outside of Europe, potentially making Fernandez and his train the first non-European audience of Shakespeare. Keeling served as captain of the *Red Dragon* flagship, which, along with the *Consent* and the *Hector*, was sent to establish trading relations with Surat, India and Aden in present-day Yemen, as well as to continue relations with Bantam (Banten) in Java, which had supplied the EIC with pepper on previous voyages. [3] As Graham Holderness explains, the third voyage was meant to establish a “triangular trade” in which the English would sell broadcloth to merchants in port cities along the Arabian sea, buy cotton cloth in Surat and the Indian coast, and finally exchange the cotton for spices at an EIC factory in Bantam. [4] In his journal from the third voyage, Keeling reveals that his men staged three Shakespeare performances during the outbound journey: *Hamlet* on 5 September 1607 and 31 March 1608, and *Richard II* on 29 September 1607; these dates, however, are not consistent across all versions of the Keeling journal. In fact, we do not even have Keeling's physical journal, and the document has survived solely in published excerpts from as early as 1822. [5] Despite the authorship question in the Keeling journal, or perhaps because of it, the idea of Shakespeare being performed at sea during England's economic expansion has been a contentious topic for scholars.

One of the first questions elicited from the Keeling-Collier text is: Did early modern merchants or seafaring explorers perform plays aboard ship? As far as we know, the other surviving journals from the EIC third voyage—journals by Anthony Marlowe, John Hearne, William Finch, and an anonymous member of the *Hector*—do not explicitly mention play-acting in their entries. [6] Bernice Kliman notes that Andrew Thrush, historian of early English voyages, does not find any instance of a shipboard performance by English sailors, based on a communication with early modern scholar Sabrina Baron in 1995. [7] Yet, it is important to consider that records of any recreational activity from the existing (and currently uncontested) third voyage journals are scarce. Entries by Marlowe (chief merchant aboard the *Hector*), Finch and Hearne (EIC factors aboard the *Red Dragon*) and the anonymous writer from the *Hector* are mainly concerned with procedural activities with practical utility for navigation and survival. Every entry generally begins with the ship's location, the wind direction and velocity, and may include tasks such as gathering water and fishing. Only during religious holidays and the greeting of dignitaries are communal recreation documented at any length during this voyage.

Does this mean that the EIC did not make any other time for recreation? Certainly not. It is more likely that Keeling and Captains William Hawkins and David Middleton, of the *Hector* and *Consent*, respectively, encouraged recreation (and possibly play-acting) to instill discipline. [8] But staging a production of *Hamlet* may have also served a political function for the EIC, particularly for higher-ranking officers and agents, whose roles as ambassadors depended on their ability to tactfully establish business relations with foreign powers. Barbour has made a serviceable case for why plays may have been approved aboard ship based on Keeling's “linguistic sophistication” and “expansive hospitality with foreigners,” but he also argues that copies of *Hamlet* on the EIC ships could have been easily accessible, identifying a connection to stationer Nicholas Ling, a charter member and victual supplier for the EIC who also published the first two *Hamlet* quartos. [9] This connection to Ling presents the possibility that copies of *Hamlet* could have been stored in the EIC library for entertaining purposes.

Some critics contest the EIC Shakespeare performances based on the potential inauthenticity of the Keeling journal extracts. However, this argument is often advanced with the problematic judgment that EIC crew members would not be capable or trained to give an elaborate performance aboard ship. Kliman argues that these men (a group that Sydney Race collectively deems “rude sailors”) could not even have performed these plays “poorly and ‘on book,’ with one copy passed around to a group of men sitting still,” offhandedly deeming it “the first instance of readers’ theater!” [10] Although we do not know whether sailors on the *Dragon*, let alone higher-ranking merchants, staged Shakespeare, ships like the *Dragon* developed a rich culture of performance. Music and

dance have been documented in ship records since the early days of English voyaging, and records of shipboard performance dates to the golden age of piracy in the eighteenth-century.

It is virtually impossible at this point to determine the authenticity of Keeling's report without new evidence that proves the EIC performed Shakespeare, as the existing evidence is inextricably connected to Collier and the forgery question. However, my goal is not to prove definitively whether the Company did or did not stage *Hamlet*, but to redirect the argument in favor of the performances and shift the focus from textual inauthenticity to historical probability. One way to engage this difficult question is to assess what was actually performed aboard English ships during long voyages. This essay will not only revisit the excerpts allegedly from Keeling's journal but also present a composite of maritime performances from the later sixteenth-century to the eighteenth-century. At the very least, this will clarify the kinds of recreation merchants and sailors participated in. It will also allow scholars to conceive a shipboard theatre performance considering the materials aboard, the demands of the sailors and merchants, and the culture in which they lived. Admittedly, records of entertainment and diplomatic engagement with dignitaries and foreign guests will strengthen the argument for the possible 1607 Sierra Leone Shakespeare performances but not offer final evidence. A composite of shipboard entertainment will, however, present reasonable evidence as to why this mystery deserves greater credibility as a subject of scholarly inquiry, rather than an incredible fiction to be footnoted.

The Collier Question

The date that Keeling's journal first disappeared is still unknown, presenting a considerable hurdle for scholars. [11] The first documented mention of the journal is printed in a "Catalogue of Letters Patent from the Crown kept in a Truck" dated 25 April 1822, housed in the India Office Collections. [12] The first known extract of Keeling's journal that mentions the Shakespeare performances appears in Gunthio's article from 1825 in *European Magazine*. Dated 5 Sept 1607, the extract offers a brief mention of the play and the elephant hunt the same afternoon. Critics have linked Gunthio's article to Collier due to similarities in language and their shared opinion on the *Hamlet* Q1. [13] The printing of Gunthio's Keeling extract by Thomas Rundall, who worked as a clerk for the EIC and was a member of the Hakluyt Society, has also added complexity to the Keeling mystery. Rundall was in charge of the Company's disorganized archives, and he seems to have hastily inserted the Keeling extract into the appendix to *Narratives of Voyages towards the North-West* (1849) under the heading "Discipline." Rundall and Gunthio mention not one but two Shakespeare plays: *Hamlet* on 5 Sept 1607 and *Richard II* on 30 September. The discovery of Rundall's version began an interrogative study of both the Rundall and Gunthio texts as possible forgeries given the discrepancies in dates and entries.

Among the scholars who have weighed in on the Keeling journal extracts and the *Red Dragon* Shakespeare performances are Sir William Foster, Frederick S. Boas, Sir Sidney Lee, Sydney Race, Ania Loomba, Gary Taylor, Bernice Kliman, and most recently, Graham Holderness. Foster is one of the first scholars to interrogate the Rundall version of the Keeling extracts, and he concludes that "forgery, on the evidence available, is at least not proven." [14] Boas is similarly unconvinced of forgery, arguing that "the log of a sea-captain [is not] the kind of document likely to have been tampered with by any earlier Shakespearean forger." [15] Sydney Race identifies Collier as a possible culprit, and his study attempts to expose Collier's forgeries by locating his imprint, which Kliman calls the "Collier method." [16]

Kliman takes up Race's skeptical reading of the Keeling Shakespeare entries and argues that Collier is most likely at the center of the document. She reasons that Collier, penning the name "Ambrose Gunthio," may have published a version of the Keeling journal in the *European Magazine*, later republished in Rundall's *Narratives of Voyages towards the North-West*. [17] Kliman has given us an invaluable understanding of Collier's process by studying his work from the Perkins Folio (F2 [1632]) and the *Hamlet* Q1. Kliman argues that Gunthio's language, his "misquotations," and his "half-modernizations of the [*Hamlet* Q1] are reminiscent of Collier's missteps and inconsistencies," comparing several passages from each author. [18] But a handful of similarities still cannot firmly link the two authors, and even after years of research, she admits that it is not completely certain that Collier was behind the Gunthio extract:

Identifying Collier would be desirable, but I can only extrapolate from the evidence and at times make guesses. Collier so muddled early modern documents with his insertions and fabrications that it is almost impossible, even today, to be absolutely certain of his handiwork. [19]

As “desirable” as it would be to claim Collier’s work with certainty, the Collier conclusion is, at best, guesswork. Yet, contradictorily, Kliman states that the “1825-26 record solves the mystery” since it “provides the pseudonym of the forger,” though the link between Collier and Gunthio is not completely certain. Even the possible motivation for Collier’s alleged forgery is not clear; Kliman speculates that he may have “wanted to fool Shakespeare scholars” as an act of revenge for not “giv[ing] him the respect he expected,” but she neglects to develop this argument based on textual evidence. [20]

Contemporary critics have engaged with the Keeling extracts without attempting to make any definite conclusions on their authenticity. Loomba, for example, does not attempt to confirm or deny the truth behind Keeling’s alleged claims, but instead pursues these “records of a traveling Shakespeare” to “indicate how archival differences are submerged in a common understanding that lowly sailors cannot perform the real Shakespeare.” [21] Loomba identifies a “common understanding” by earlier critics of sailors’ inability to perform, which has become the most problematic argument within the discussion of the Keeling extracts’ authenticity. For scholars like Race, the idea of seamen performing aboard ship is almost comical, and for others, it presents an idealistic vision to be “set aside.” [22] In his argument against the Shakespeare performances, Race refutes the idea that a “crew of rude sailors” could also be “amateur players capable of producing *Richard the Second* one night and *Hamlet* the next, a task which no professional company would attempt nowadays.” [23] His sense of disbelief is based both on the authenticity of Rundall’s published extract and the historical plausibility of the performance. Race suggests Collier as the source of the Keeling document, but he also argues that the Company members would be too incompetent to perform such a feat:

In 1849 when Rundall made the story public for the first time there was only one person manufacturing references to Shakespeare—John Payne Collier. There are difficulties in accepting the theory of the performance of abbreviated versions of the two plays. ‘*Richard II*’ does not lend itself to the treatment suggested by Sir William Foster, either of separate scenes or of a free version performed with a minimum of dialogue by illiterate sailors . . . ‘*Hamlet*’ would have been easier, but only if the sailors had been long enough ashore to pay frequent visits to the Globe [24]

Race assumes that there would not be enough literate men aboard ship to perform a Shakespeare play, and that these men would had to have seen *Hamlet* at the Globe in order to perform it. Rather than writing a critique of the Rundall document as a possible reprinting of a forged extract, Race points to cultural and educational differences between sailors and well-read, cultured Londoners. The class distinction he makes is not entirely correct, as there were seamen aboard the *Dragon* who read and wrote daily, and there were also men who were also very new to maritime life, and possibly more familiar with London culture. [25] Race dismisses the reported plays by determining the practicality of the event by contemporary standards. At worst, he makes sweeping claims that conflate the seafaring performance culture of 1607 with theatre culture and reception in the twentieth-century. [26]

Like Race, Kliman attempts to end the discussion on what she describes as “what may very well be a concocted account of no value whatsoever for performance history.” [27] She presents a convincing argument for Collier’s textual imprint on Keeling’s journal, but there is a fundamental problem with her conclusion that the Keeling journal is likely “of no value whatsoever for performance history.” The Keeling extracts present a way to analyze the culture of performance aboard ship during England’s economic rise at the beginning of the seventeenth-century. Merchant ships in the Atlantic trading vortex have been historically documented as performance spaces, carrying musicians and performers for shipboard entertainment. The Keeling journal extracts elicit important questions that consider the purpose and extent of seafaring recreation, not to mention cross-cultural relations and alternative staging practices.

As a result, scholars continue to hold the door open for the Shakespeare-at-sea discussion. Richmond Barbour released a compilation of EIC journals from the Third Voyage (2009), and he remains optimistic in the prospect of these performances, arguing that “Music and spectacle held crew-specific and cross-cultural utility.” [28] Graham Holderness is also hopeful in the possibilities presented by the Keeling extracts. In his most recent work, *Tales from Shakespeare: Creative Collisions*, he uses the concept of “collision” in contemporary particle physics (“the impact of a number of forces and objects upon one another”) to understand how Shakespeare emerges in different historical moments. [29] Within this project, he retells Keeling’s narrative by engaging in creative criticism. What this project reminds us is that the Keeling extracts should not necessarily be taken for face value but understood for the historical possibilities (or “collisions”) they force scholars to confront. As Holderness emphasizes,

If the ‘truth’ claims of the record cannot finally be adjudicated, what difference does it make? It is manifest that the historical narratives into which these shipboard performances of Shakespeare have been incorporated do not in any way depend upon its authenticity for their validity and power. [30]

My goal in this project is to ensure that the conversations surrounding the Keeling texts and the possible Shakespeare performances in Sierra Leone do not get set aside, but are opened up further, especially since there is no final evidence that confirms a forgery. Though the reprinted documents by Gunthio and Rundall are questionable, they nonetheless invite us to probe their claims, however cautiously.

I am more confident that if the EIC had performed Shakespeare, it would have been the *Hamlet* performance listed on 4 or 5 September, considering the entries in other EIC journals. However, without substantial evidence from the third voyage, I cannot affirm this with absolute certainty. It is possible, however, to argue that giving large-scale performances would have been feasible and even appropriate while traveling abroad by analyzing journals and related documents from the third EIC voyage and similar voyages. We cannot set aside the possibility of forgery, by Collier or anyone else, but we should also continue to observe that the forgery argument is speculative and contains no more concrete evidence than the performances mentioned in the Keeling extracts. I do not agree with the notion shared by Race and Kliman that conditions aboard ship would have prevented the Shakespeare performances. When looking at the performance history recorded in merchant journals from voyages shortly before and after 1607, this simply seems unfounded. It is convenient for both critics to portray the EIC crew as too inept to perform since there are only several mentions of plays performed by the Company during their early years of international trading. However, journals by other EIC members tell us that performance—a word that encompasses a range of activities—was not only a common occurrence, but something inherent in the Company's goals of expanding trade routes and gaining the respect of foreign merchants and diplomats.

Maritime Performance Culture

In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1597/1602), Falstaff describes Mistress Page as “a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty” (I.3.59). He devises to be “cheaters” to her and Mistress Ford, declaring, “They shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade them both” (I.3.60-61). In this scene, Falstaff ineptly plays the Atlantic tradesman, bragging that he will seduce and exploit the women through his wooing letters. His plan is ill-conceived, of course, as the Ford and Page household economies are closed off and self-contained. But perhaps Falstaff's greatest fault is that he is a bad actor, as his performances of a “true knight” (II.1.13), a fat, old woman, and Hearne the hunter become increasingly absurd. Rather than playing his prey, he inadvertently becomes their entertainment. *Merry Wives* is a play of its own historical moment, published just two years after Queen Elizabeth granted the charter for the East India Company, along with a capital of 50,000 pounds. As Falstaff's fate suggests, wooing the East and West Indies demanded skilled actors who were conscious of their audience; for the EIC, this audience included royal dignitaries of countries along Asian and African coasts.

EIC merchants on the *Dragon* literally and figuratively carried England's economic future, and their “scripts” consisted not only of merchant guidebooks but also the Molyneux Globe, the first English printed globe. Jonathan Bate and Dora Thornton explain that the globe was one piece of “the mental furniture of educated men,” and later became the physical furniture of courts, libraries, grammar schools, and colleges by 1600. [31] The terrestrial globe, Bate and Thornton note, was “based on Edward Wright's world map in Mercator's projection” and is referenced in *Twelfth Night* (1601) as the “new map with the augmentation of the Indies” (III.2.52-53). [32] While the Chamberlain's Men had their “allowed book,” merchants and international travelers had, among other things, John Browne's *The Merchants Avizo* (1607). The *Avizo* was an influential document for early English traders and, as its full title explains, was “verie necessarie for their Sons and Seruants, when they first send them beyond the Seas.” [33] Written in the 1580s for new merchants exploring Spain and Portugal, the *Avizo* instructed readers on trading and record-keeping, as well as other cultural practices and customs in foreign cities. [34] The *Avizo* also encouraged travellers to be “courteous” and “serviceable to every person.” [35] Browne's emphasis on courtesy and service reflects a broader set of values that the EIC also adopted; as the EIC navigated areas ruled by the united Spanish-Portuguese crown, interactions with foreign dignitaries would have likely been focused on courtesy and service.

In speculating why *Hamlet* and *Richard II* were chosen to be performed aboard the *Red Dragon*, there are two probable reasons that may have overlapped: discipline and diplomacy. Some critics have argued that these plays were chosen not solely for their subject matter but their utility in controlling the Company's conduct. John Pitcher notes: “Both plays dealt with dangerous subjects – regicide, usurpation, and the volatility of the mob” and he argues that “Keeling used them to maintain the crew's discipline.” [36] It is possible that much of the time spent aboard ship between March and September 1607 involved diversion from boredom, in addition to watering, wooding, and fishing. As Barbour explains, Nicholas Ling (printer and EIC shareholder) may have allowed copies of the

Hamlet Q1 to be carried aboard the ship as part of the victual supply, giving the men an opportunity for shipboard recreation. [37] These copies could have been stored in the ship's library.

Rundall's version of the Keeling extract reports the following on 31 September 1607: "I envited Captain Hawkins to a ffishe dinner, and had *Hamlet* acted abord me: u(ch) I p'mitt to keepe my people from idlenes and unlawfull games, or sleepe." [38] That same month, on 4 September, Keeling allegedly writes that the "kings interpreter came, and brought [Keeling] a letter from the Portingall, wher in (like the faction) he offered me all kindly services." [39] The "interpreter" is Fernandez, the African dignitary commanded by King Buré to come aboard the *Dragon* while the ship was anchored at Sierra Leone. [40] Rundall's version explains that the purpose of the play was to keep the crew alert and vigilant. However, if the plays were performed, Keeling may have also had political reasons for putting them on, especially when inviting Hawkins to meet an important member of Buré's court aboard the *Dragon*.

Giving formal banquets and entertainment for international guests was not unusual for English voyagers. The claims in Rundall's version are not certain, but it is more likely that there were plays and other kinds of performances given on EIC voyages. Barbour presents the "more decisive" evidence of Captain Nicholas Downton's "notice of a play on the Sixth Voyage, 18 June 1610, outbound off West Africa," which reads: "My general invited me to dinner and to [a] play and had Thomas Love one of my Masters mates out of the Peppercorn onto the Trades Encrease." [41] Love also writes, "We had a great feast and a play playd," matching Downton's passage. [42] This play may have been staged on the *Peppercorn*, which Downton commanded. This passage adds to a list of instances where performances, both dramatic and musical, became integrated into English voyaging culture. [43] Thomas Cavendish journeyed to the South Sea in 1586 and was reported to have banquets and performances, as well. Sanctioned by Queen Elizabeth, Cavendish attempted to develop the contacts Francis Drake had made during his circumnavigation. [44] According to the journal of Francis Pretty, the *Desire*, *Content*, and *Hugh Gallant* landed in Java in 1588. Cavendish immediately embraced the Portuguese residents, as he "had not seen any Christian, that was our friend, of a year and an half before." [45] Pretty goes on to say that "our General used and entreated them singularly well, with banquets and music." [46] If foreign guests identified as Christian (which Fernandez did), they were more likely to be treated to an elaborate show of hospitality, with or without Shakespeare.

It is reasonable to imagine the EIC Shakespeare performances (if they occurred) as conciliatory gestures to foreign diplomats like Lucas Fernandez, who provided a crucial link between European and African cultures and economies. If *Hamlet* was staged, it may have been a way for the EIC to further win over King Buré, who the Company had tried to woo long before they reached the shore. In his creative reconstruction of the Keeling journal, Holderness suggests that the performance of *Richard II* on 29 September 1607 was, along with the *Hamlet* performances, an elaborate gesture to Fernandez, the other dignitaries, and Buré, who the EIC expected to arrive. [47] According to the journal of Anthony Marlowe, the EIC was first informed of King Buré on 17 August 1607. Keeling sent John Rogers, who spoke Portuguese, up the river to the King's home to deliver a bottle of wine, calico, and "an end of Iron." [48] Three days later, Rogers returned with news that the King had gratefully accepted the present, and "promysed much kindnesse" and permitted the trading of commodities, specifically gold and elephants' teeth. [49] Having established good will to the king, the Company may have intended to further charm his representatives, who came aboard the *Dragon* in September.

Fernandez and his train were likely treated to an elaborate show of courtesy by Keeling and the *Dragon* crew, based on corresponding events in other EIC journals. The journal of *Dragon* factors John Hearne and William Finch records the following passage on 4 September 1607:

Beeing very ffayer wether, and towards eveninge *Lucas Fernandez* came aboarde wth 3 negros with him. Hee brought wth him a letter ffrom *Bart. Andrea* unto our gennerall. He wth the rest hadd very kynde interteynment aborde. This night ffell much rayne. [50]

This entry in the Hearne-Finch journal suggests that men aboard the *Dragon* were given orders to engage in entertainment, which may have been an act of diplomacy. It is not certain if the "kynde interteynment" was a Shakespeare play, or even if the EIC were the entertainers. However, the entry presents the possibility that the "interteynment" aboard the *Dragon* may have been one of the performances mentioned in the Keeling journal excerpts, specifically *Hamlet* on 5 September in the Gunthio version. Finch and Hearne's phrase "very kynde interteynment" is an ambiguous phrase that could very well indicate a musical performance any more than it indicates a theatrical one. Though the phrase is vague, it presents many possible scenarios and invites speculation on the kinds of entertainment that would have served a diplomatic introduction.

The performance (or play) on 4 September may have served a political purpose for the EIC. Fernandez, a dignitary with connections to powerful leaders like Buré, also had connections to Portugal and Spain. Naturally, this would have been a source of anxiety for Keeling. As Finch and Hearne's entry explain, Keeling carefully inspected Fernandez' letters from his Spanish and Portuguese

contacts. After boarding the *Dragon*, Fernandez delivered a letter from Bartholomeu André, the captain of a small Portuguese ship who, Barbour explains, “refused to allow an English party aboard and referred all inquiries to Father Baltasar Barrera.” [51] André’s ship entered the port but kept a distance from the *Dragon* and *Hector*, and thus the English needed to perform an elaborate show to win Fernandez’ favor. [52] It is thus probable that the EIC treated Fernandez and other accompanying dignitaries to a dinner and a performance of *Hamlet* to ease the tension of their presence at a port occupied by the Portuguese. As Chaudhuri explains, “English merchants were well aware that to voyage to the East Indies was not only to enter into competition with the powerful financial interests in the Netherlands but was also to court a trial of strength with the still formidable military and naval power of the united Spanish-Portuguese Crown.” [53] With precaution, Keeling remained diligent in establishing trade networks by performing acts of hospitality to properly greet his guests.

Falstaff fails to secure the “East and West Indies” because he over-acts and puffs himself up, causing Mistress Page to exclaim, “What a Herod of Jewry is this!” after reading his love letter (II.1.19). When Shakespeare alludes to Herod (from the Wakefield mystery play *Herod the Great*), he indicates the overly expressive actor, as Hamlet famously cautions to his players not to exaggerate their mannerisms, for it “out-Herods Herod” (III.2.14). Similarly, merchants courting royalty in foreign port cities had to restrain their performance, acquiring, as Hamlet describes, “a temperance that may give it smoothness” (III.2.8). Rather than being aggressive in their pursuit, the Company needed to smoothly sail along the African coast so that they could obtain spices in Java and India, minimizing any damage to their ship or crew. As Barbour observes, “The Third Voyage writers did not fantasize themselves incipient conquerors. They were the bonded servants of London’s mercantile elite: belated contenders for access to the rich, polyethnic, bewilderingly complex markets of the Indian Ocean and beyond.” [54] If we are to believe the Keeling extracts, we are confronted with what may have been a major example of international diplomacy through a multicultural exchange: the banquet and possible *Hamlet* performance.

The Finch-Hearne journal reveals that the EIC were fascinated with Fernandez (called the “Interpreter”), someone who could “argue well of his ffaith” (despite certain “delusions” of his Catholic beliefs). [55] Fernandez received a distinctly European education, having been taught Portuguese and converted to Catholicism. Though the EIC did not agree with all of Fernandez’ views, they listened to him with great interest and participated in a peaceful exchange of ideas on religion and politics. Fernandez came aboard the *Dragon* again on 12 September, bringing a letter from Padre Bartolmeo Barrera, who was stationed at Sierra Leone to “say masse” and “procure some of the black people to become Christians, they havinge drawne some ffewe already to bee Christianed, as Capt Boree and others.” [56] Among the “Christianed” in Sierra Leone was, most obviously, Fernandez, whose intelligence and charisma belied Hearne and Finch’s preconceptions of African peoples. [57]

English trading expeditions beyond the EIC third voyage journals reveal the lengths merchants ventured to charm their international patrons. In *The Web of Empire* (2008), Alison Games argues that this era in maritime commerce was “a period of experimentation,” a time of continuous trial and error that shaped England’s global enterprise. [58] In such a period of uncertainty and risk, English merchants developed a cosmopolitan sensibility, as well as sensitivity to the customs of their foreign contacts. These men, as Games explains, “played the roles of gracious host and guest constantly,” which “required a social competence—measured in their enthusiasm for new pursuits.” [59] The EIC’s third voyage was a crucial moment of trial and error, and their success in Sierra Leone hinged on their ability to be hospitable to people in a place considered to be a “black heathen nation.” [60]

In his reconstruction of the Keeling journal, Holderness suggests that the EIC performance of *Richard II* (listed on 29 September in the Keeling journal) could have been altered to appeal to Fernandez, who, Holderness infers, desired to succeed Buré for the throne. [61] Holderness describes the audience as “unable to distinguish between truth and pretence,” and in such a blurring, these actors may even have held the crown out to Fernandez as a gift, “as if the play in some way concerned him.” [62] Before the EIC left their port at Sierra Leone on 13 September, they had “traded ffor above 100 U [thousand] lemonds, a small quantity of henns and plantins, and 2 large eliphants teeth,” as well as a “greate store of oranges” and a “good store of lemond water.” [63] Leaving Sierra Leone with victuals, commodities, and no injury to the ship or crew, the experience proved that “kynde interteynment,” in whatever capacity, was a profitable venture.

Kliman doubts that East India Company sailors aboard the *Dragon* could be skilled enough to participate in the earliest “reader’s theatre” based on their supposed lack of performance skills. She also claims that “the *Dragon* would not have afforded space for a full enactment of plays” but does not give any specific evidence to confirm this. [64] While the *Dragon* may or may not have afforded space for plays, let alone *Hamlet*, it would have likely afforded space for musicians, and at the very least, would have afforded space for “kynde intertainment.” Kliman conveniently disregards a glaring fact about shipboard entertainment: musicians were often hired

on early English voyages to entertain, and they were frequently included on ship rosters since the late sixteenth-century. During Sir Francis Drake's famous circumnavigation from 1577 to 1580, the *Pelican* (later renamed *Golden Hind*) consisted of "musicians who could play on different instruments," John Barrow explains. [65] Other voyages in the 1580s also hired musicians. The *Sunshine*, under the leadership of Captain John Davis, departed from Dartmouth on 7 June 1585 to the North-West Passage with its sister ship, the *Moonshine*. The ship's record includes the following: "In the Sunshine we had twenty-three persons, whose names are these following . . . James Cole, Francis Ridley, John Russel, Robert Cornish, musicians." [66] Certainly, musicians and actors are two different groups of performers, and the existence of either group aboard the *Dragon* does not guarantee that *Hamlet* was staged. However, the fact remains that English ships frequently employed people specifically for the task of entertaining.

There are very few records of dramatic overseas performances during Shakespeare's lifetime, but there were considerably more records of musical performance, and other records of recreation that served various purposes. At the very least, I intend to discourage the argument that ships were not spaces for performance, which has been posited inaccurately to discourage the claims in the Keeling extracts. As journals from various voyages indicate, crews would engage in performance (especially musical) for recreation, diplomacy, and even survival. The record of the *Sunshine's* voyage, written by John James Marchant, includes an entry describing the skills of musicians in alluring a group of "howling" native peoples approaching the men on a stretch of land [64 degrees 15 minutes of latitude, bearing north-east]:

Master Bruton and the master of his ship, with others of their company, made great haste towards us, and brought our musicians with them from our ship, purposing either by force to rescue us, if needs should so require, or with courtesy to allure the people. When they came unto us we cause our musicians to play, ourselves dancing and making many signs of friendship. [67]

On the one hand, this scenario is quite unusual, as the musicians were tasked to lure the natives towards the crew by playing. Yet, the crew's "courtesy to allure" their foreign guests resembles the interaction between the EIC and Fernandez. In both cases, survival is the utmost priority, and the crew was ready to engage with their neighbors "by force." The word "courtesy" stands out in the passage, as it is listed as a motivation for using performers during an introduction to foreign peoples. Like the "kynde intertainment" aboard the *Dragon*, music was used to smooth the waters between the two cultures:

Then John Ellis, the master of the *Moonshine*, was appointed to use his best policy to gain their friendship . . . one of the them came on shore, to whom we threw our caps, stockings, and gloves, and such other things as then we had about us, playing with our music, and making signs of joy, and dancing. So the night coming we bade them farewell, and went aboard our barques. [68]

This lively passage seems to go against much of the characterizations of EIC company members depicted by Kliman and Race. Race concludes that "The *Dragon* had indeed an unusually docile crew" if they consented (i.e., were not forced) to be part of the audience for *Hamlet*. [69] Kliman concurs with Race, arguing that "the aptness of the sailors for the task [of performing] cannot be the issue." [70] And yet, there are many instances where performers were an integral part of traversing unknown territory, as the *Sunshine* musicians demonstrate. Kliman and Race dismiss the claims in the Keeling extracts on the basis of forgery, but the unfortunate result of this argument is the tendency to also dismiss company performances and audience engagement. While the forgery claims should be interrogated, this should not come at the risk of minimizing, or potentially erasing, the culture of performance that was a major part of English companies' international relations.

There was certainly more than "reader's theatre" happening in the EIC factory in Japan. On 12 June 1613, Saris reveals that they were welcomed with Japanese entertainers who "sang diuers songs and played upon certain Instruments (whereof one did much resemble our Lute) being bellyed like it, but longer in the neck, and fretted like ours, but had only foure gut-strings." [71] Saris's journal describes much more entertainment given by the aging shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (then 71 years-old) during the EIC's arrival. On 21 June 1613, Saris writes:

The 21st theould King came aboard and brought with him his women to be frolyke. [These women were Actors of Comedies, which passe there from Iland to Iland to play, as our Players doe here from Towne to Towne, hauing seuerall shifts of apparel for the better grace of the matter acted; which for the most part are of Warre, Loue, and such like. [72]

Saris shares valuable insights on the Japanese play-going culture, revealing that there were travelling women actors who performed in different regions much like England's travelling players. Saris uses the word "Comedies" to describe what is likely a troupe of kabuki performers, specifically onna-kabuki, which was composed only of women and was eventually banned in 1629 for being too erotic. The phrase "kind entertainment" also appears throughout the EIC's first Japanese expedition, recalling the phrase in Hearne

and Finch's journal. The journal records on 17 October that "The old King gaue us all kind entertainment, and asked the strangers many questions about the warres betwixt the Spaniards and Flemmings in the Moluccas." [73] During their international voyages, the EIC engaged in a complex culture of performance, playing the roles of both audience and performers for international dignitaries and guests. While some critics believe that sailors would be ill-suited for such endeavors, communal entertainment was not only necessary but mandatory, implemented by Keeling and many other English commanders. Whether they made music, or possibly performed a play, one thing becomes clearer after gathering records of their performances: all the world was a stage on which the Company performed.

Performing a Voyage

What does it mean to "perform" a voyage? Is this term solely indicative of the technical and navigational aspects of voyaging, or does "performance" include a wider set of actions that were required of the captain and crew? I venture to say the latter. Dan Brayton, while analyzing the frontispiece of *The Mariners Mirror*, a "compendium of essential technical information for navigators assembled by the Dutch mariner Lukas van Waghenaer," argues that the "composition of the this image suggests the metaphor of the sea as a stage, which mariners as actors in a naumachia, or nautical drama, and a group of cartographers assembled around a black globe as playwrights of a sort." [74] If cartographers were the "playwrights" in the pursuit of new territories and trade routes, then the men aboard ship were the actors navigating the stage. The concept of the world-as-stage is most famously explained by Jacques in *As You Like It* (1599): "All the world's a stage,/ And all the men and women merely players" (II.7.142-143). Jacques' line may refer to the newly-built Globe theatre, but it specifically refers to the seven ages of man. Many of these ages are civic roles—student, soldier, justice—that each individual must take on to establish a community and benefit the commonweal. Similarly, merchants were contracted "players" who expanded English trade through a complex performance aboard ship and in port cities.

The alleged EIC *Hamlet* performance in September 1607 presents a way to speculate how theatre culture intersected with maritime culture. The Keeling extracts also propose that the sea was both muse and stage for Shakespearean drama. As scholars observe, the real-life drama of John Rolfe, who was shipwrecked on Bermuda while travelling to Virginia in 1609, inspired the plot of *The Tempest* (1610). Having lost his wife and island-born daughter, Bermuda, Rolfe built a ship and sailed to the American mainland, where he later met and married Pocahontas. [75] Rolfe's daughter, Bermuda, born out of the sea, seems to have inspired both Pericles' daughter, Marina, and Prospero's daughter, Miranda. Even before Elizabeth granted the charter for the EIC in 1600, Shakespeare's plays dealt explicitly with sea-trade and venturing, delving into the psyche of merchants. In *The Merchant of Venice* (1596), the anxieties of the EIC are realized through Antonio, whose sadness in Act I comes not from his merchandise (I.1.45), but in the role he is forced to play:

GRATIANO

Believe me, you are marvelously changed.

ANTONIO

I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano,

A stage where every man must play a part,

And mine a sad one

GRATIANO

Let me play the fool. (I.1.80-84)

Like Jacques, Antonio imagines himself as an actor playing a sad role on a vast stage. Antonio's melancholic disposition has long been discussed in relation to Galenic humoral theory, but critics like J. F. Bernard argue that the play "eschews both the Galenic understanding of humoral theory . . . as well as the Jonsonian style of humour plays" through the character of Antonio. [76] Critical to my study, it is noteworthy that Shakespeare's "world as stage" theme begins in this play as a merchant looks out at an unfathomable ocean. The idea that people must play roles to navigate the world relates directly to oceanic commerce, and I would argue that Antonio's idea is a nod to the real-life activities of merchants and may be related to the way English society understood mercantile life in popular culture.

The language of performance is a common feature of EIC journals, reiterating the fact that these merchants, like Antonio, thought of themselves as actors on an international stage. In their *Red Dragon* journal, William Finch and John Hearne use this language when

discussing the hardships of their journey. When the *Red Dragon* ventured to Saldinia to supply the crew with much-needed victuals, Finch and Hearne recorded on 16 Dec 1607 that “wthout [the crew] [Keeling] could not *performe* his voyadge.” [77] The word “performe” is a common verb in the EIC journals connoting duty, and it is also a powerful verb in emphasizing the fact that a number of spectators were watching Keeling and the EIC while they pursued the course to Bantam and Surat. This audience included Keeling’s men, the English court, the Dutch East India Company, and international contacts made in previous voyages by James Lancaster and Henry Middleton. According to Barbour, “The General’s performance is both personal and communal” and “Performances at sea, moreover, involved the term’s full range of meanings, from the practical to the ludic—from navigation to showmanship.” [78] EIC members felt the anxieties of performing on the global stage, as the anonymous *Hector* journal states on 4 March 1607 (its first dated entry): “may this my paynes performe som parte of the like off[ice to] suckcedinge ages or at the least sat[i]sfie the expectacion [of]such as requier this taske both by me and others of my sorte [to be] performed.” [79] In his journal, the *Hector* author portrays himself as both amateur actor and adventurer, admitting that he is “a stranger to sea affayres,” and is thus unfamiliar with his script. [80]

It is appropriate, then, that the EIC may have performed *Hamlet*, a play intimately concerned with the process of turning bad actors into good ones. Hamlet tells the players to speak “trippingly on the tongue” (III.2.2) and to minimize excessive hand gestures, smoothing out the “torrent” and “tempest” of their passion (III.2.6). When teaching the players how to perform, Hamlet uses imagery of the wild sea to equate bad actors with a negative force that overwhelms with movement and noise. One might ask: Could a copy of *Hamlet* serve as an instructional guide for these non-actors aboard the *Red Dragon*? It seems like a difficult claim to make, and yet, the characters in *Hamlet* often use oceanic metaphors specific to the EIC’s seafaring life.

As the third voyage journals demonstrate, the EIC needed to learn how to effectively deliver their lines to a receptive audience in Sierra Leone, which would smooth the waters between England and their international contacts.

Shakespeare’s plays reiterate what maritime travel journals tell us: the sea (or “globe”) was understood as a limitless space of performance. Perhaps one of the most notable examples of play-acting at sea appears in *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates* (1724), which may be written by Daniel Defoe. The *General History* describes a disastrous performance of a play called *The Royal Pyrate*, allegedly staged on the Whidaw under the command of Captain Samuel Bellamy (1689-1717). During the performance, an actor playing Alexander the Great examined a pirate brought to him, telling him, “Know’st thou that Death attends thy mighty Crimes, And thou shall’st hang to Morrow Morn betimes.” [81] However, “The Gunner, who was drunk, took this to be in earnest,” and after swearing that he would avenge the pirate-actor Jack Spinckes, took “a Grenado with a lighted Match, followed by his Comrades with their Cutlash,” and “set Fire to the Fuze and threw it among the Actors.” [82] This act led to an eruption of violence, resulting in the loss of limbs and other bodily damage on the Whidaw stage. When the mayhem calmed, the gunner was commended for his zeal. [83]

This account of a pirate-produced play, sensational and likely fictionalized, survived as an entertaining seafaring story, indicating that seaboard performance was in the minds of 18th-century writers like Defoe, who may have penned the account. The Bellamy narrative depicts the potential blurring of performance and reality on stage; in this case, the actors could influence an audience aboard ship just as well as they could at a theatre. The Whidaw actors performing *The Royal Pirate* were, perhaps, too convincing. More importantly, the passage also offers a window into maritime recreation. If we accept Andrew Thrush’s belief that no recorded play by an English crew (aside from Keeling’s) exists, assuming that the absence of evidence is the basis of fact, we are then faced with the absurd possibility that a group of raucous pirates staged a play, while a skilled, literate, and intelligent group of merchants could not. Thrush’s claim may also be incorrect if Nicholas Downton’s notice of a play on 18 June 1610 during the EIC’s sixth voyage was, in fact, true. Regardless, the Bellamy narrative shows how performance was part of the daily lives of voyagers.

Sea travelers gave many kinds of performances: giving music and plays for merriment, entertaining royalty and guests for courtesy, and engaging with traders at port cities for profit. With this knowledge, we can conceptualize the global and multinational nature of the sea in early modern travel writing while also situating Shakespeare as a key writer in a maritime literary tradition. Steve Mentz is one of a key group of scholars who have found Shakespeare at sea. Mentz argues that while scholars “don’t ordinarily place the ocean at the heart of Shakespeare’s plays,” rereading the bard’s works “from a maritime perspective connects Shakespeare to our literary culture’s ongoing efforts to come to grips with the sea.” [84] Mentz’ project is one of “new thalassology” (from the Greek *thalassos*, the sea) which consists of scientific and historical research aiming to map “the physical and cultural shapes of the oceans in world history.” [85] Brayton’s ecocritical study expands Mentz’s work on Shakespeare and “blue cultural studies” by reading the plays from a thalassalogical perspective, pursuing the various relationships between Shakespeare and the global ocean.

In order to understand the Sierra Leone *Hamlet* performance as a historical possibility, Shakespeare scholars have to reassess how to engage with Shakespeare's works in light of mercantile history. As a mode of critical inquiry that addresses the historical and cultural changes of the ocean, New Thalassology will help bring Shakespeare's works out of the Globe theatre and situate them on a mobile, animate stage. Mentz analyzes Shakespeare through maritime activities: swimming, fishing, beachcombing, keeping watch. His study emphasizes that maritime life is predicated on action and work specific to its environment. When Shakespeare's characters swim and search, they engage with the symbolism of the fathomless sea, a body that "represents our alien globe." [86] Shakespeare's oceans, Mentz argues, "epitomize the many ways our culture understands salt water," or water that makes us thirstier; in Shakespeare's age, this sea is the Atlantic, a place where the EIC hungrily quested for new worlds, cultures, and commodities. [87] The Keeling extracts encourage scholars to confront and reassess maritime performance history and the kind of work demanded of EIC members. As the third voyage journals suggest, EIC members conceived of the world as a type of complex theatre on which to navigate and perform, and they understood their part as a necessary one in England's global expansion.

There are still many unanswered questions concerning the EIC's alleged performances of Shakespeare. How would a performance have physically taken place on the *Dragon*? Where would the audience sit, and how would a space filled with cables, sails, and other equipment be cleared for such performances? Such questions would be answered more directly with unquestionable surviving records. However, while the Keeling journal extracts may always be problematic, these documents open up a valuable conversation on the occasions of maritime life that would make it proper—and even expected—for the EIC to engage in diplomatic entertainment overseas. Kliman believes that "the aptness of the sailors for the task cannot be the issue," yet the argument for Collier's mishandling of these texts is neither definite, nor infallible. Kliman and Race are correct to question the authorship of these documents, but their line of argumentation makes the conditions aboard the *Dragon* a non-issue, even when a reference to "kynde intertainment" allows for the possibility that Shakespeare was staged aboard ship. To further the argument that the claims are part of an elaborate hoax, both critics underestimate the abilities of merchants to successfully engage in elaborate acts of courtesy. In doing so, they erase the many documented instances of shipboard entertainment, both musical and dramatic. Many of these maritime performers were contracted Company members, many of whom were hired specifically to entertain the crew.

Engaging in courteous entertainment for royalty and foreign guests was a common enterprise for English voyagers. Denying that these performances would have taken place undermines Keeling's intention to establish diplomatic relations with well-connected dignitaries like Fernandez. Race assumes that the ships' players would be "rude sailors," but it is evident from the EIC journals that these men had a range of experiences and skills, and they were positioned to be influential performers on a global stage. Giving "kynde interteynment" to Fernandez and his train, the EIC assumed the role as ambassador of English culture and national identity, and they may have brought with them England's most popular playwright in their multicultural exchange on route to Surat, Aden, and Bantam. For the EIC, "performing a voyage" was not limited to the procedural tasks of gathering water, fishing, and navigating the ship to its ports, but creating an impact on merchants, dignitaries, and diplomats along Asian and African coastal cities. The EIC made a late entrance to the Atlantic trade and fell into competition with the formidable Dutch East India Company, but during this era of exploration, they rose to the occasion and quickly became major players in a maritime political theatre.

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Notes

- [1] Ambrose Gunthio, "A Running Commentary on the Hamlet of 1603," *European Magazine*, Dec 1825, p. 347. See also Gary Taylor's reprinting of the Keeling journal in *Travel Knowledge: European "Discoveries" in the Early Modern Period*, eds. Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna Singh, New York, Palgrave, 2001, p. 220. Samuel Purchas also published a much-condensed version of the Keeling journal in *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes* (London, 1625). The edits to Keeling's text were made to, as Purchas explains, "expresse only the most necessary Observations for Sea or Land Affaires." (2.502)
- [2] As Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman explain, one of Collier's first possible "literary impostures" occurred in *Critical Review* in 1819 and were often "interspersed in an otherwise meticulous and original scholarly work" (*ODNB Online*).
- [3] Kirti Narayan Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: The Study of an Early Joint-Stock Company 1600-1640*, London, Frank Cass & Co Ltd., 1965, p. 40.
- [4] Graham Holderness, *Tales from Shakespeare: Creative Collisions*, Cambridge, CUP, 2014, p. 23.
- [5] Keeling's journal was mentioned in a document from 1822, but the extract from that source is only mentioned, and is said to be "Much decayed and mutilated," as Richmond Barbour explains in *The Third Voyage Journals: Writing and Performance in the London East India Company, 1607-10*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 243.
- [6] Though the other EIC third voyage journals do not explicitly mention the Shakespeare performances, Barbour argues that these documents "deserve publication, for they disclose in peculiar detail the social and cultural logistics of a pivotal moment in the emergence of multinational corporatism and global British initiative" (p. 2).
- [7] Bernice Kliman, "At Sea about *Hamlet* at Sea: A Detective Story," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62.2 (Summer 2011), p. 184.
- [8] Barbour, Holderness, and other scholars have offered reasons for shipboard entertainment, including discipline and diplomacy, which I address specifically in the section on maritime performance culture.
- [9] Richmond Barbour, op. cit., p. 6, 27.
- [10] Bernice Kliman, op. cit., p. 189.
- [11] Barbour offers the "strong possibility" that the Keeling journal was lost between 1858 and 1867, though this is still speculation (op. cit., p. 244-245).
- [12] The earliest mention of the source appears in the "Catalog of Damaged Papers in Three Lists: Copied in part from the Old Catalogue" in the India Office Collections. The third list contains the entry: "108, First leaf of Capt Keeling's Journal (Much decayed and mutilated)." This source is reprinted in Frederick Samuel Boas's *Shakespeare and the Universities* (New York, D. Appleton, 1923).
- [13] In her essay on the Keeling extracts, Bernice Kliman points out similarities between Gunthio and Collier's critical opinion of the Hamlet Q1, particularly for "going against the grain of scholarly opinion that declared that Q1 was a rough draft or first version of Hamlet and establishing it as a botched transcript" (p. 193).
- [14] William Foster, "Forged Shakespeariana," *Notes and Queries* 134 (1900), p. 41-42.
- [15] Frederick Samuel Boas, op. cit., p. 26.
- [16] Bernice Kliman, op. cit., p. 189.
- [17] Kliman posits this claim against those made by Foster, Boas, and G. Blakemore Evans, who published "The Authenticity of Keeling's Journal Entries on *Hamlet* and *Richard III*" in *Notes and Queries* 196 (21 July 1951), p. 313-315.
- [18] Ibid, p. 195.
- [19] Ibid, f2, p. 180.

[20] Ibid, p. 185.

[21] Ania Loomba, "Shakespearian Transformations," in *Shakespeare and National Culture*, ed. John J. Joughin, Manchester, MUP, 1997, p. 111, 113.

[22] Bernice Kliman, op. cit., p. 203.

[23] Sydney Race, "J. P. Collier's Fabrications," *Notes and Queries* 195 (5 August 1950), p. 480.

[24] Ibid., p. 480.

[25] An anonymous member on the *Hector* during the third voyage calls himself a "stranger to sea affayres, and a sojourner only in my [owne] native soyle" in an entry dated 4 March 1607 (the departure date). This writer and others like him aboard the *Hector* and *Dragon* were unfamiliar with maritime life and may have been aware of London's cultural scene. It is at least known that this writer is aware of epics like the *Aeneid*, which is quoted in an entry dated 25 June 1607 (Bernice Barbour, op. cit., p. 56).

[26] For example, Race says that *Richard II* "is a play which professionals do not often perform, and amateurs still more rarely" (p. 480). Race does not specify that *Richard* was unpopular in 1607. Instead, he makes a broad statement of its unpopularity that infers it was always unpopular (as it was in the first half of the twentieth-century) neglecting early performances at the Globe and adaptations by Nahum Tate and Lewis Theobald.

[27] Bernice Kliman, op. cit., p. 204.

[28] Richmond Barbour, op. cit., p. 25.

[29] Graham Holderness, *Tales from Shakespeare: Creative Collisions*, Cambridge, CUP, 2014, p. x-xi.

[30] Ibid., p. 34.

[31] Jonathan Bate and Dora Thornton, *Shakespeare: Staging the World*, London, The British Museum Press, 2012, p. 52.

[32] Id.

[33] John Browne, *The Merchants Avizo. Verie necessarie for their sons and servants, when they first send them beyond the seas, as to Spaine and Portingale, or other Countries*, London, 1607, p. 1.

[34] The *Avizo* gives a series of instructions and observations for travelers; for example, it states that "the customes and dueties vpon wares in Portingall and Spaine, doth oftentimes change: therefore you must every voyage, make diligent inquirie of it, and so accordingly charge the account" (ibid., p. 32). It also notes that "the custome and duties v on wares in Spaine & Portingale do oftentime change," advising merchants to "make diliget inquiry" (ibid., p. 42). There is also a page consisting of "certaine points necessarie for young beginners," entailing the locations for spices and other goods (ibid., p. 49).

[35] Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion 1560-1660*, Oxford, OUP, 2008, p. 87.

[36] John Pitcher, "Literature, the playhouse and the public," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume 4, 1557-1695*, Eds. John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie, Cambridge, CUP, 2002 p. 358.

[37] Richmond Barbour, op. cit., p. 27.

[38] Qtd in ibid., p. 244. Rundall's version of events, admittedly, contains a distorted chronology of events. The same journal, for example, alleges that the company performed *Richard II* the previous day after a different dinner with Captain Hawkins (Richmond Barbour, op. cit., p. 244).

[39] Ibid., p. 244.

[40] This event, recorded on 4 September, is consistent with entries from that date in the journal of John Hearne and William Finch (Richmond Barbour, op. cit., p. 176).

[41] Ibid., p. 27.

[42] Id.

[43] Giving a performance after supper became a seafaring tradition in the seventeenth-century, particularly for the well-to-do. In his personal diary, Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), who traveled at sea while serving as secretary for Edward Montagu, writes on 23 April 1660: "W. Howe and I went to play two trebles in the great cabin belowe; which my Lord hearing, after supper he called for our instruments and played a set of Lock's, two trebles and a bass. And that being done, he fell to singing of a song made upon the Rump [Parliament] . . . to the tune of 'The Blacksmith'" (p. 20). Pepys, who eventually became an administrator for the Navy Board, famously attended London theatre throughout his life and recorded it in his diary, which he wrote from 1660 to 1669. His experience with Montagu reveals that his time aboard ship would have included diversion, specifically songs, and also that the storage and maintenance of instruments on ship vessels was common.

[44] Information on Cavendish's motivation comes from Susan M. Maxwell's entry, "Cavendish, Thomas (bap. 1560, d. 1592)" in the Online edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, Oxford UP, 2009).

[45] Francis Pretty, "Cavendish—First Voyage," in *Voyages of the Elizabethan Seamen: Select Narratives from the 'Principal Navigations' of Hakluyt*, ed. Edward John Payne, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1907, p. 395.

[46] Ibid., p. 395.

[47] Graham Holderness, op. cit., p. 51.

[48] Anthony Marlowe, "The *Hector* Journal of Anthony Marlowe," in *The Third Voyage Journals: Writing and Performance in the London East India Company, 1607-10* by Richmond Barbour, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 81.

[49] Id.

[50] John Hearne and William Finch, "The *Red Dragon* Journal of John Hearne and William Finch," in *The Third Voyage Journals: Writing and Performance in the London East India Company, 1607-10* by Richmond Barbour, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 176.

[51] Richmond Barbour, op. cit., p. 14-15.

[52] Ibid., p. 14.

[53] Kirti Narayn Chaudhuri, op. cit., p. 3-4.

[54] Richmond Barbour, op. cit., p. 3.

[55] John Finch and William Hearne, op. cit., p. 176.

[56] Ibid., p. 179.

[57] From Finch and Hearne, 12 September 1607: "This people are verry lusty men, stronge and well limmed, and a good people and true. They will not steall as others of their collour will doe in other places, ffor many of our menn lost many things ashoare, and they that ffound them brought them and restored them to the right owner. And in all that tyme of our beeing heer, wee hadd no Injury offered to any of our people, but all the kyndnes that might bee expected at the hands of such a black heathen nation" (ibid., p. 179).

[58] Alison Games, op. cit., p. 14.

[59] Ibid., p. 88.

[60] John Finch and William Hearne, op. cit., p. 179.

[61] Graham Holderness, op. cit., p. 52.

[62] Ibid., p. 53.

- [63] John Finch and William Hearne, op. cit., p. 179.
- [64] Bernice Kliman, op. cit., p. 197.
- [65] John Barrow, *The Life, Voyages, and Exploits of Admiral Sir Francis Drake*, London, John Murray, 1843, p. 80.
- [66] John James Marchant, *The First Voyage of Master John Davis, Undertaken in June, 1585, for the discovery of the North-West Passage, written by John James Marchant, servant to the Worshipful Master William Sanderson, in Voyages in Search of the North-west Passage: From the Collection of Richard Hakluyt*, London, Cassell and Company, 1886, p. 138.
- [67] Ibid., p. 143-144.
- [68] Ibid., p. 145.
- [69] Sydney Race, "J. P. Collier's Fabrications," *Notes and Queries* 195 (5 August 1950), p. 345-346.
- [70] Bernice Kliman, op. cit., p. 189.
- [71] John Saris, *The Voyage of Captain John Saris to Japan, 1613*, Ed. Ernest M. Satow, London, Hakluyt Society, 1900 p. 84.
- [72] Ibid., p. 90.
- [73] John Hearne and William Finch, op. cit., p. 163.
- [74] Dan Brayton, *Shakespeare's Ocean*, Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 2012, p. 2.
- [75] Alison Games, op. cit., p. 133.
- [76] Jean-François Bernard, "The Merchant of Venice and Shakespeare's Sense of Humour(s)," *Renaissance Studies* 28.5 (2013), p. 643.
- [77] John Finch and William Hearne, op. cit., p. 188.
- [78] Richmond Barbour, op. cit., p. 23-24.
- [79] "The Anonymous Hector Journal," in *The Third Voyage Journals: Writing and Performance in the London East India Company, 1607-10* by Richmond Barbour, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 34.
- [80] Ibid., p. 34.
- [81] Daniel Defoe, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*, New York, Carroll and Graf, 1999, p. 588.
- [82] Ibid., p. 589.
- [83] Id.
- [84] Steve Mentz, *At the Bottom of Shakespeare's Ocean*, London, Continuum, 2009 p. x.
- [85] Ibid., p. xi.
- [86] Ibid., p. xiii.
- [87] Id.

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