

Dossiê Shakespeare

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Abstract: The Globe theatre, built in London in 1599, is the prime example of the Renaissance stage and its associated conventions, and this article points to the variety of ways in which William Shakespeare’s immediate physical environment is inscribed in his work. The article discusses the structural features and theatrical resources of the Globe with reference to Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*. The structure of the playhouse, the expectations of its audiences, and the resources at the disposal of the playing company all helped to shape Shakespeare’s dramaturgy. Key moments from the play text are employed in order to illustrate the significance of working conditions in Shakespeare’s writing for the new playhouse, with three scenes from *Julius Caesar* discussed in detail. The scenic economy of the Renaissance stage is considered in terms of theatre historian J. L. Styan’s principle of “imaginative neutrality,” and the importance of three-dimensional staging and a collaborative audience is highlighted. The concept of metatheatre, which applies to moments of theatrical self-consciousness that draw attention to the status of a given play as a fiction, is discussed with reference to the local significance of performances at the Globe, and to Shakespeare’s use of anachronisms in a Roman setting. The article also discusses the rapid progress of time and transposition of scenes which characterise *Julius Caesar* in terms of dramatic intensity, and suggests that these are resultant from the conditions of performance at the playhouse.

Keywords: Shakespeare; Globe theatre; *Julius Caesar*; Metatheatre.

Resumo: O Teatro Globe, construído em Londres em 1599, é o exemplo cardinal do palco Renascentista e suas convenções associadas, e este artigo aponta as várias maneiras em que o ambiente físico imediato de William Shakespeare está inscrito em sua obra. O artigo aborda os elementos estruturais e recursos teatrais do Globe no que se refere à *Tragédia de Júlio César* de Shakespeare. A estrutura do teatro, as expectativas da audiência e os recursos à disposição da companhia de teatro colaboraram para dar forma à dramaturgia de Shakespeare. Momentos-chave do texto da peça são empregados de modo a ilustrar a significância das condições de trabalho na escrita de Shakespeare para o novo teatro, com

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três cenas de *Júlio César* discutidas em detalhes. A economia cenográfica do palco Renascentista é considerada a partir do princípio da "neutralidade imaginativa", do historiador do teatro J. L. Styan, e a importância da encenação tridimensional e de uma audiência colaborativa é ressaltada. O conceito de metateatro, aplicado a momentos de autoconsciência que chamam atenção para a condição de uma determinada peça como ficção, é discutido no tocante à significância local das representações no Globe, e ao uso de anacronismos em ambiente romano por parte de Shakespeare. O artigo discute também a rápida progressão do tempo e transposição de cenas que caracterizam *Júlio César* em termos de intensidade dramática, e sugere que estas são resultantes das condições de encenação no Teatro Globe.

Palavras-chave: Shakespeare; Teatro Globe; *Júlio César*; Metateatro.

The Globe playhouse, built in London in 1599, is the prime example of the Renaissance theatre stage and its associated conventions, and this article points to the variety of ways in which William Shakespeare's immediate creative environment is inscribed in his work. The structure of the playhouse, the expectations of its audiences, and the resources at the disposal of the playing company all helped to shape Shakespeare's dramaturgy. These factors are considered here with reference to Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, with three scenes from the play discussed in detail. The Globe was the solution to a precarious business situation for the playwright and his company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, during 1597-99. During the following nine years that the Chamberlain-King's Men spent with the Globe as their principal focus of dramatic production, London audiences were entertained by new plays that included *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, an extraordinary period of prolific success even in the context of a stellar career.² James Shapiro has called the year 1599 "perhaps the decisive one, in Shakespeare's development as a writer" (2005: x), while Bernard Beckerman succinctly states the case for studying this exceptional period of theatre history:

[F]or us the [Globe] signifies more than a physical structure for the presentation of plays. It has become the symbol of an entire art. Its construction initiated a glorious decade during which the company achieved a level of stability and a quality of productivity rarely matched in the history of the theater. (1962: ix)

Relocation to the southern liberties in 1599 afforded the Chamberlain's Men increased freedoms.³ It was a significant move by an already famous playwright and his

2 The company came under the patronage of King James I in 1603, and was named "The King's Men" thereafter. The King's Men acquired the Blackfriars indoor theatre in July 1608, and this limits the period in which the Globe was their principal focus of dramatic production to 1599-1608 (GROSS 2016: 27ff.).

3 The liberties were areas outside the jurisdiction of the City of London authorities. A *liberty* in this sense is defined as "an area of local administration distinct from neighbouring territory and pos-

colleagues, heralded by the grandiose name of the new theatre, the Globe. This appellation implied from the very outset that something all-encompassing was at hand, and *Julius Caesar* immediately lived up to that expectation with its compelling topical insights into the classical past. The play is dated to 1599 since it does not appear in Francis Meres's *Palladis Tamia* (1598), and contemporary allusions in *Henry V* and *Hamlet*—as well as moments in *Julius Caesar* itself—are commonly cited to support the notion that it was one of Shakespeare's earliest offerings at the Globe, if not the first (DANIELL 1998: 12ff.). The play was first published in the First Folio of 1623, and all associations drawn between Shakespeare's environment in 1599 and the play text are necessarily qualified by this important warning from theatre historian Andrew Gurr: "Any attempt to examine the conditions and the traditions of Shakespearean staging is inhibited by the distance between the event as fixed in print and the flexible actualities of the local conditions of performance" (2009: 209). Considering the complicated processes involved in the editing and printing of Shakespeare's works in preparation for the First Folio, there can be no certainty that the lines printed in the text were indeed spoken on any given day at the Globe. Analysing the extant play text, published in 1623, in terms of the environment of its conception in 1599 is thus a necessarily transhistorical exercise.

While the emphasis is on the specific theatre space that first saw the play performed, the scarcity of evidence related to the Globe itself means that a more general examination of London playhouses and their staging practices is called for. The Globe is here considered as the prime example of the Shakespearean stage, in particular the amphitheatre playhouses between 1599 and 1608. In assessing how its characteristics helped to shape the composition and enactment of *Julius Caesar*, an appropriate starting point is theatre historian J. L. Styan's principle of the four "basic and irreducible ingredients of the Elizabethan theatre which the playwright took into account," at least in terms of structural features:

1. A tight, enclosing auditorium.
2. A projecting platform almost as deep as it was wide.
3. Two upstage entrances on to the platform.
4. At least one balcony. (STYAN 2001: 12)

The unique ownership structure of the Globe, in which Shakespeare and four of his fellow players owned one half of the interest, enabled the actors to build a playhouse more or less to their own specifications. Many inferences about the Globe's structure and basic features are derived from a famous drawing of the interior of the Swan theatre, discovered in 1888.⁴ It is a copy by Arend van Buchell of a sketch sent to him by De Witt in 1596, and it is the only extant visual record of an amphitheatre playhouse of that time

sessing a degree of independence" ("liberty, n.1. 6.c." OED).

4 The Swan was built on London's Bankside in 1595.

(fig. 1). The sketch is of dubious authenticity, and probably depicts features from various contemporary London playhouses. However, the most significant features that De Witt includes reflect Styan's principle: the expansive, square platform that is clearly raised from the ground, the tiring-house façade with two pairs of doors and a balcony above, and two large pillars that support the canopy or *heavens*, as well as three gallery levels that surround the stage. Already from this modest sketch, the three-dimensional nature of Shakespearean staging is identifiable. From other evidence such as the archaeological discoveries at the site of the Rose in 1989, or the building contract for the Fortune playhouse, further details have been discovered.⁵ A large trapdoor was built in to the platform of most playhouses, and the underside of the heavens was decorated with images of the sun, moon, and stars, and probably the signs of the zodiac, pointing to the metaphorical potential of the structure as a whole.

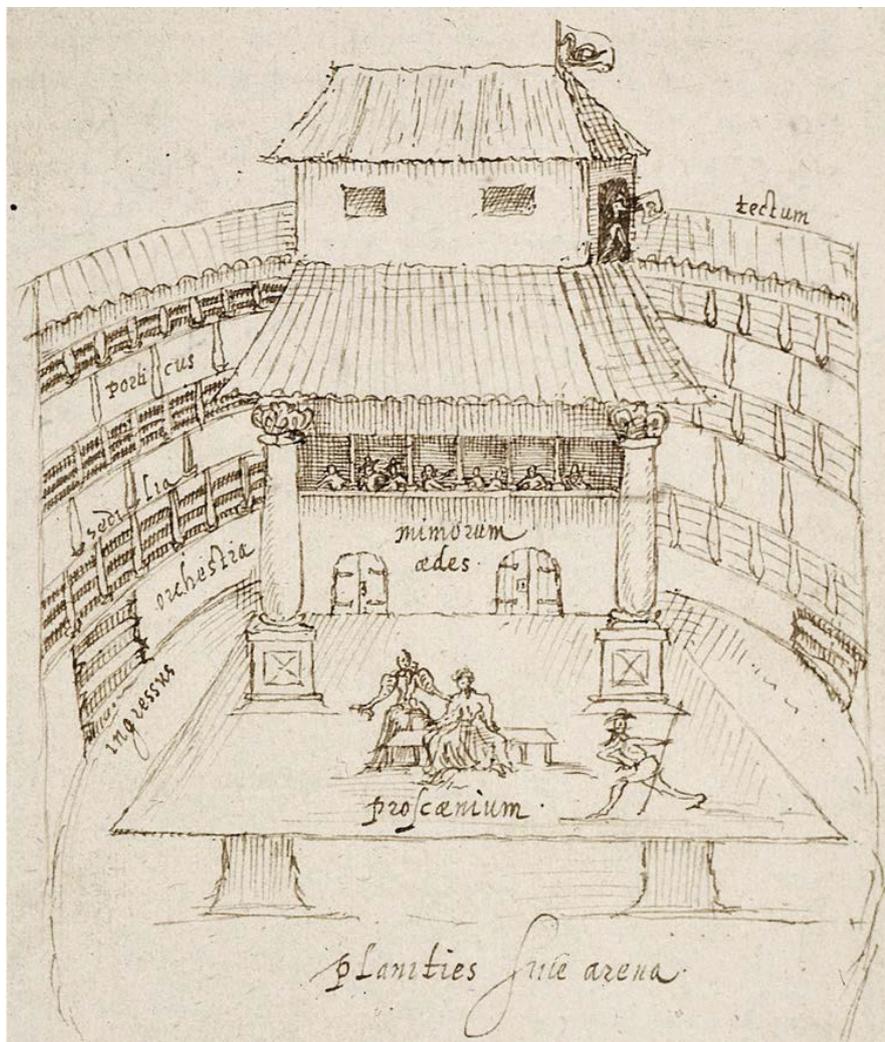


Fig. 1: Arend van Buchell's copy of the drawing of the Swan playhouse (1596) by Johannes De Witt. From Foakes, *Illustrations of the English Stage 1580-1642*.

5 The Rose, built in 1587, was the first of the public playhouses on Bankside; the Fortune was built in Cripplegate, north of the City of London, in 1600.

In order to apprehend the dramaturgical impact that the various characteristics of the playhouse may have had, this article examines three relevant scenes from *Julius Caesar* in turn: act 1 scene 3, act 2 scene 1, and act 4 scene 3. In advance, a consideration of some of the less material conditions that constituted the playhouse environment is needed. Gurr has for many years been at pains to point out the crucial differences between the Elizabethan audience and the modern spectator, the former conditioned to hear the language, the latter to see the spectacle. He states that “[a] good playhouse audience will listen to the poetry and be properly rewarded in the mind” (2004: 3). While most modern theatres—and of course cinemas—situate the viewer directly in front of the action for the prime vantage point, the Globe was exemplary of playhouse design that emphasised hearing over seeing, and accommodated as many people as possible as close as possible to the platform. Closest of all were those wittily referred to as *understanders*, punning on their position beneath the raised stage. Significantly, plays were heard and seen from areas beside and even behind the stage, allowing for a three-dimensional experience that was truly shared by all in attendance. Gurr comments on the importance of this facet of Shakespeare’s theatre:

Today we have almost totally lost the feeling of experiencing a play as a member of a crowd. Crowds packed together develop a strength of collective emotion that energises everyone and conditions their reception of the theatre event. (GURR 2009: 210)

Meanwhile, in his influential treatise on the flexibility of the Shakespearean stage, Styan highlights the intimacy that the playhouse retained despite crowds of several thousands as a key factor in its success:⁶

Above all, the shape into which the spectators were mustered and their physical relationship with the players determined the emotional range of the play, the intimacy or remoteness of the playing and the immediacy or alienation of the response. (STYAN 2001:14)

The active role of the crowd, encouraged by their proximity, was necessary not least because of the scenic economy of the stage. The lack of elaborate scenery and stage resources such as props and mechanisms meant that the audience shared not only the experience, but also the responsibility to make the performance a success, as the entreaty from the prologue of *Henry V* indicates: “Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts” (1.0.23). Gurr underscores the significant role played by the audience: “Staging then had an essential economy, and at least half the vigour of the event came from the audience sharing it” (GURR 2009: 211). There was of course always the possibility of a negative reaction, and in the same way that audience involvement is seen to have been conducive

6 Estimates of the first Globe’s capacity range between 1,500 and over 3,000.

to richer performances, criticism may be imagined to have been more direct and potent than in the theatre today. The moment in *Julius Caesar* when Casca tries to reassure Brutus and Cassius of the veracity of his account of Caesar's refusal may be indicative of a discerning playhouse audience that was all too ready to voice its opinions:

If the tag-rag people did not
clap him and hiss him, according as he pleas'd and dis-
pleas'd them, as they use to do the players in the
theatre, I am no true man. (1.3.257-61)⁷

The key to apprehending the extent to which Shakespeare wrote specifically for his audience at the Globe is to examine the various contemporary sociopolitical expectations and preoccupations, but also the conventions of playing—and playgoing—that conditioned performances. On a summer's afternoon, a play like *Julius Caesar* with its frequent shifts in time and place demanded considerable suspension of disbelief, and the readiness of the playgoers to accept illusions enabled Shakespeare to broaden the scope of his work and transpose the action from day to night, from Rome to Sardis, or even between the realms of imaginary and real. It is an actor-audience relationship that Styan has called "creative collaboration" (2001: 17). Styan's "principle of imaginative neutrality," meanwhile, is employed at this point to explain how the structure of the Globe—more precisely, its lack of theatrical resources—combined with the creative collaboration of the audience to afford Shakespeare the greatest possible freedom in composition. Styan perceives the Shakespearean stage as a neutral space that has to be engaged by playwright, actor, and audience alike, commenting that "there are rarely any constant reminders of Shakespeare's time and place, and this stage is primarily and properly the target area for imaginative thought and emotion" (1989: 196). Instead of "constant reminders" in the form of decorations, props, and scene changes, it is Shakespeare's language that is almost without exception the indicator of time and place in *Julius Caesar*. Styan insists that the absence of such "clutter" as visible indications of time and place is a key factor in promoting the sense of audience involvement that was integral to the success of the Shakespearean theatre. It also allowed for the rapid movement between scenes that was required, as one of the most considerable exigencies affecting Shakespeare was the need—in the case of *Julius Caesar*—to condense the historical events of several years into the "two hours' traffic" of his stage. Gurr cites a letter from the Lord Chamberlain to the Lord Mayor in 1594 that implies a time limit to which Shakespeare had to adhere in staging his plays, as the company's patron informs "that where heretofore they began not their Plaies til towards Fower a clock, they will now begin at two and have done betwene fower and five" (qtd. in GURR 2009: 219).

Act 1 scene 3 of *Julius Caesar* is notable for the contextual significance of its "fearful

7 Quotations from the play are taken from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (1974).

night” and its prodigies. To the sound of “thunder and lightning,” the entrance of Casca and Cicero marks the play’s first shift to a night-time setting, which is immediately indicated by Cicero: “Good even, Casca” (1.3.1). Gurr explains that in playhouses of the period, “[t]hunder came from what [Ben] Jonson called the ‘roul’d bullet’ trundled down a sheet of metal, or a ‘tempestuous drum’” (2009: 228). In any case, it was a fairly uncomplicated method of drawing the audience at an afternoon performance into a dark, frightening illusion; the onus remained predominantly on Shakespeare’s language—and its delivery—to not only reiterate the night setting but also convey the ferocity and abnormality of the conditions in the following lines from Casca:

Are not you mov’d, when all the sway of earth
Shakes like a thing unfirm? O Cicero,
I have seen tempests when the scolding winds
Have riv’d the knotty oaks, and I have seen
Th’ambitious ocean swell, and rage, and foam,
To be exalted with the threat’ning clouds;
But never till to-night, never till now,
Did I go through a tempest dropping fire. (1.3.3-10)

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There follows another lengthy exposition from Casca, exemplary of numerous moments in the play when events are verbally portrayed, rather than shown on stage. Already by this point, an enraptured audience has been reminded of Pompey’s triumph, heard Cassius’s embellished story of swimming the Tiber with Caesar, and been informed by Casca of Caesar’s refusal of the crown. All of these events are fashioned with the use of language alone, although the latter is brought to attention a little earlier by noises off that signal its occurrence in close proximity to the action onstage.⁸ The end of the scene provides a further example of the verbalisation of events to hurry the action along, as Cassius instructs Cinna to plant the conspiratorial letter at Brutus’s house, while the words “take this paper” demonstrate how the language can implicitly direct onstage actions and the use of props (1.3.142).

The transition between acts 1 and 2 serves as an apposite example of Shakespeare’s dexterity in transposing scenes and advancing the passage of time, without recourse to the visual “clutter” that Styan mentions. Scene and act breaks were an innovation brought about by the move to indoor playhouses, in the case of Shakespeare’s company—by then named the King’s Men—to the Blackfriars theatre hall in 1608. Performances at the early public amphitheatres were continuous, without intervals, and the appearance of *Julius Caesar* in the First Folio in five acts is attributable to a later convention of dramaturgy which impressed upon the editing and printing of the play text in 1623. What is now

8 *Noises off* are sounds made offstage to be heard by the audience.

known as act 1 ends with Cassius signalling the time and referencing the group's intention to wake and prevail upon Brutus that night: "Let us go, / For it is after midnight, and ere day / We will awake him and be sure of him" (1.3.162-64). Shortly afterwards, Brutus enters alone on stage with the words "I cannot by the progress of the stars / Give guess how near to day" (2.1.2-3). He asks Lucius for a taper in his study, which consolidates the illusion of darkness. The audience at this point is complicit with the conspirators, fully aware of their impending arrival and the purpose of the letter that Lucius will shortly hand to Brutus. It is an imbalance that undermines the soliloquy—which sees Brutus vacillate between notions of loyalty and honour—with a sense of inevitability. With the emphasis on the darkness that precedes a morning of great tumult, Shakespeare perhaps apologetically offers a justification for Brutus reading the contents of the letter aloud onstage when an outdoor setting has already been established: "The exhalations whizzing in the air / Give so much light that I may read by them" (2.1.44-45).

The date is signalled in act 2 scene 1 with an allusion to the curiosity of discordant calendars. Protestant Elizabethan England observed a different calendar to Catholic Europe after Pope Gregory XIII introduced the Gregorian calendar in 1582, modifying the Julian calendar that had been introduced in 46 BC under the authority of Julius Caesar. Tellingly, Elizabethans continued to live in "Caesar's time," and Shapiro proposes that Brutus's line "Is not tomorrow, boy, the first of March?"—which is commonly emended to "Is not tomorrow, boy, the [ides] of March?" (2.1.40)—is in fact a possible allusion to this calendrical rupture, suggesting that Elizabethans "would have smiled knowingly at Brutus' confusion in being off by a couple of weeks" (2005: 170). David Daniell also identifies this discrepancy, commenting that Brutus's question "would have been familiar to all Elizabethans: he needs to know what calendar he is working under" (1998: 21). It serves as an example that the Roman world of the play was never far from the world around the Elizabethan playhouse in which the play was first performed. Ultimately the audience is informed by Lucius that "March is wasted fifteen days" (2.1.59). The soothsayer's earlier interjections of "Beware the ides of March" (1.2.18, 23) ensure that not only those acquainted with Plutarch's *Lives*, Shakespeare's principal source for *Julius Caesar*, were alerted to the portentous significance of this date. The implication is of course that Brutus resolved only on the very same morning to participate in Caesar's murder, and this reflects Shakespeare's narrative compression of time. Particularly in the run up to act 3 scene 1, where Caesar's assassination represents the dramatic peak of the play, the language stresses rapid temporal progress, heightening dramatic intensity.

Amidst otherwise pulsating action that courses throughout the play, act 2 scene 1 serves as a form of respite that Styan calls "remarkable for its gentle prelude and its sensitive close" (2001: 209). As well as Brutus's assuaging conversations with Lucius and Portia, there is an amusing interval involving Decius, Casca, and Cinna, as Brutus and Cassius whisper privately onstage. In just eleven lines, the conspirators try to ascertain their locality, reiterate the date by implication, and illustrate that dawn is encroaching. Arthur

Humphreys comments that the “brief intermission relieves the tension, creates the local atmosphere, marks the significant progress of the hours, and fixes attention on the Capitol” (2008: 135). It is also conceivable that the passage elicited metatheatrical stage business, momentarily conveying the audience again from Rome to London.⁹

DECIUS

Here lies the east; doth not the day break here?

CASCA

No.

CINNA

O, pardon, sir, it doth; and yon grey lines
That fret the clouds are messengers of day.

CASCA

You shall confess that you are both deceiv'd.
Here, as I point my sword, the sun arises,
Which is a great way growing on the south,
Weighing the youthful season of the year.
Some two months hence, up higher toward the north
He first presents his fire, and the high east
Stands, as the Capitol, directly here. (2.1.101-11)

Drawing on the famous Elizabethan association of the Roman Capitol with the Tower of London, it is possible to infer an allusion to London from these lines, as the Tower indeed stood in a “high east” direction from the Globe.¹⁰ A cursory wave of Casca’s sword in that direction would allow Shakespeare’s words to resonate more directly in the ears of the “groundlings,” and perhaps provoke a reaction that contributes to the relief of tension.

Even within this comparatively measured scene, the “drive of time” to which Humphreys calls attention continues to be clearly evident, as Shakespeare underwrites the events of the first two acts with palpable temporal pressure that is verbally indicated. This dramatic stratagem, which serves to intensify the climactic scene of Caesar’s death in act 3 scene 1, perhaps explains the anachronistic inclusion of clocks on several occasions in the play. The morning of the assassination in act 2 scene 1 includes one such occurrence, as a stage direction—“clock strikes”—prompts the following exchange:

BRUTUS

Peace, count the clock.

9 *Metatheatre* is defined as “any moment of self-consciousness by which a play draws attention to its own fictional status as a theatrical pretence” (BALDICK 2004:151).

10 The Tower of London was thought by many Elizabethans to have been built by Julius Caesar.

CASSIUS

The clock hath stricken three.

TREBONIUS

'Tis time to part. (2.1.192)

This dramatisation of time is quickly followed by the establishment of a location and deadline for the meeting with Caesar:

DECIUS

I will bring him to the Capitol.

CASSIUS

Nay, we will all of us be there to fetch him.

BRUTUS

By the eight hour; is that the uttermost?

CINNA

Be that the uttermost, and fail not then. (2.1.212-14)

In a play that has already progressed one month by this point, an imagined interval of a few hours is tantalisingly brief, especially with Casca's subsequent announcement: "The morning comes upon's" (2.1.221). Indeed, just over 200 lines later at the Captiol, Caesar asks Brutus "What is't a'clock?" and the response is "Caesar, 'tis stricken eight" (2.2.114). It is worth noting that Daniell advances another possible reason for the anachronism of the clock in this instance, emphasising Caesar's well-known "concern for timekeeping," and proposing that "just as Brutus is taking the lead to kill Caesar, Shakespeare makes the setting itself [. . .] demonstrate the triumph of Caesar's time down the ages" (1998: 21-22). While this is a valid interpretation, other anachronisms such as the "chimney-tops" of Murellus' speech (1.1.39) or the book with pages that Brutus begins to read—"Let me see, let me see; is not the leaf turn'd down / Where I left reading? Here it is, I think" (4.3.273-74)—suggest that the use of a clock may be more simply attributable to the need for the efficient dramatisation of time. The various anachronisms are also indicative of the underlying theme of transposition between the historical and the contemporary, linking the Roman world of the play with the London environment of the playhouse.

The third part of *Julius Caesar* that is of particular interest in terms of inferring staging conditions from the extant text comes after the quarrel and subsequent reconciliation between Brutus and Cassius in act 4 scene 3. The time and locality of the play have been radically shifted in the aftermath of Caesar's death and the famous orations from Brutus and Antony in act 3. Lucilius informs Brutus of Cassius and his men: "They mean this night in Sardis to be quartered" (4.2.27), and this signals not only a departure from Rome, but also Shakespeare's compression of over two and a half years of history into a negligible

interval.¹¹ The events presented in *Julius Caesar* could conceivably have formed a two-part play in the mould of Shakespeare's histories, the first part ending on the catastrophe of Caesar's death, and the second with the demise of Brutus and Cassius. As it was, Shakespeare was here faced with the unenviable task of restoring dramatic tension to a play that had just witnessed one of the most intense moments that an audience was likely to see across London's playhouses, an assassination acted out with over a dozen characters onstage and which touched a cultural nerve.

The imaginative neutrality of the stage is fully invoked as Brutus discerns the Ghost of Caesar in his tent near Sardis. Given the stage direction that prompts the entrance of the Ghost, it may be assumed that it was a physical presence onstage. Nonetheless, it is still Brutus's language and its enactment that consolidate the fearsome sight which confronts him, recalling Styan's observation that "the neutrality of the platform's space implies the strongest commitment by author, actor, and audience to the particular relationships of the play" (1989: 196). The effect of the illusion of Caesar's Ghost is particularly dependent on the ability of the actor to match Shakespeare's words with concordant emotion, and on the willingness of the audience to accept that the character before them is a supernatural entity:

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How ill this taper burns! Ha! who comes here?
 I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
 That shapes this monstrous apparition.
 It comes upon me. Art thou any thing?
 Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,
 That mak'st my blood cold, and my hair to stare?
 Speak to me what thou art. (4.3.275-81)

One structural feature of the Globe that may have facilitated Shakespeare's dramaturgy at this point is the inbuilt trapdoor in the platform, for if this was employed for the entrance of the Ghost, its symbolic quality of "cellarage as hell" would have allowed for an immediate relation of the "monstrous apparition" to the underworld.¹² The subsequent brief exchange references "Philippi" three times over five lines before the disappearance of the Ghost. With a similar effect to the foreboding repetition of "the Ides of March," the audience is left in no doubt as to the locality of the impending dramatic climax. The tension is augmented a mere thirty lines later as, with the Ghost's warning of "thou shalt see

11 Caesar was assassinated on 15 March 44 BC; the two battles of Philippi (which Shakespeare also compresses into one event in act 5) followed in 42 BC.

12 Gurr discusses the playhouse conventions associated with the trapdoor which would be exercised in the staging of *Hamlet* at the Globe shortly after 1599, explaining that it provided "a hell [...] for the ghost of Hamlet's father to descend into before he speaks from his purgatorial grave under the ostensible earth of the stage floor" (2009: 223).

me at Phillipii" (4.3.283) still reverberating in the auditorium, Octavius signals the play's final major transposition of place: "They mean to warn us at Philippi here" (5.1.5). Again the momentum builds inexorably towards the climax.

A moment in *Julius Caesar* that has been the focus of some critical debate concerning staging occurs in act 3 scene 2, known as the Forum scene. It is notable for the public orations given by Brutus and Antony, and includes textual indications of character positioning that are open to interpretation. Brutus speaks of a pulpit from which he will address the plebeians and appeal for their acceptance, before informing Antony: "And you shall speak / In the same pulpit whereto I am going, / After my speech is ended" (3.1.249-51). When the time comes for Brutus to speak, at the beginning of act 3 scene 2, the "third plebeian" interjects with the words "The noble Brutus is ascended; silence!" (3.2.11). The opening stage direction for the scene in the First Folio reads "Enter Brutus and goes into the Pulpit, and Cassius, with the Plebeians," but many modern editors of the play have interpolated a stage direction—commonly "Brutus goes up into the pulpit"—at 3.2.8, to coincide more logically with the third plebeian's remark. The upward motion is the principal matter of contention. It is possible that Brutus and Antony both delivered the speeches from the gallery level of the tiring-house, on the balcony. This idea is supported by the words "Brutus is ascended" (3.2.11) and also "Descend" directed at Antony following the conclusion of his speech (3.2.162). The incidental lines of the plebeians are thought to allow time for Brutus and Antony to assume their positions. C. Walter Hodges provided a sketch of this possible staging, depicting Antony aloft on the balcony (fig. 2).

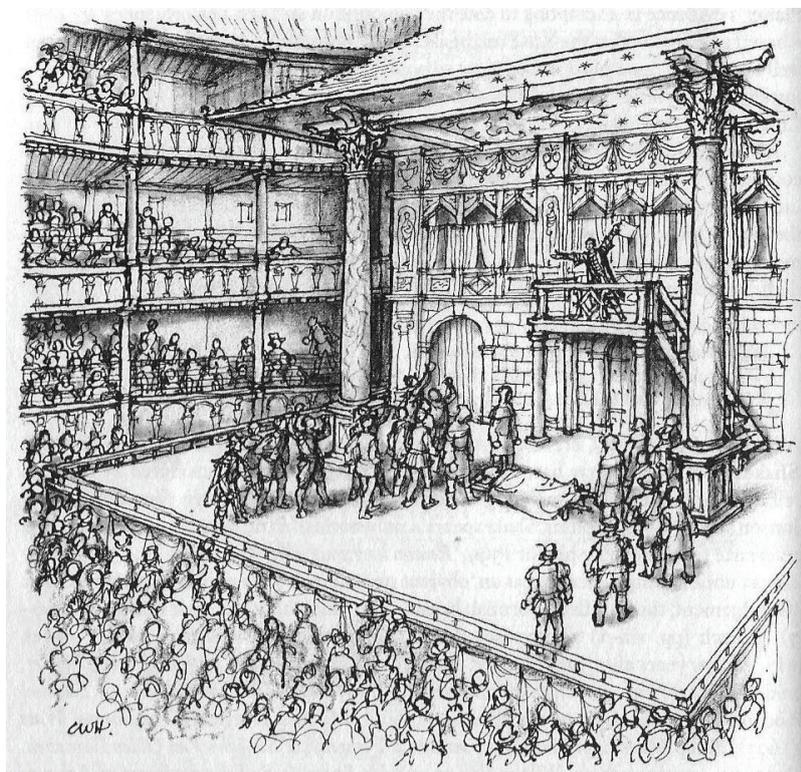


Fig. 2: Drawing by C. Walter Hodges of a possible Elizabethan staging of Antony's funeral oration in act 3 scene 2 of *Julius Caesar*. From Spevack, ed. *Julius Caesar*.

There are, however, two significant problems with the interpretation that the Forum speeches were given from gallery level. The balcony was only accessible via the tiring-house itself, and Humphreys points out that there are no further stage directions to mark the necessary entrances and exits of the speakers, while Daniell comments that the actors' "command of a stage audience would be poorer" from gallery level. Both appear to broadly concur that intimacy with the other actors and the audience was a priority, and that the "pulpit" was most likely a temporary prop upstage on the platform (HUMPHREYS 2008: 174; DANIELL 1998: 253). This is an interpretation that is corroborated to some degree by the mention of a chair as Antony is urged to speak:

1. PLEB. Stay ho, and let us hear Mark Antony.
3. PLEB. Let him go up into the public chair,
We'll hear him. Noble Antony, go up. (3.2.63-64)

These words allow for the interpretation that the scene is an example of the use of stage props at the Globe, with a chair or rostrum perhaps brought into view at the end of the previous scene. Gurr explains that a "dais or scaffold was certainly carried on for the relevant scene by stage hands" during the contemporary play *The Dumb Knight*, and that "the wealthier and longer-lived companies"—such as the Chamberlain's Men with its commodious Globe—"could accumulate a good many such standard properties" (2009: 237).

The present article has discussed the structure of the Globe, the expectations of its audiences, and the theatrical resources thought to have been at the disposal of Shakespeare's playing company. The study has foregrounded the fact that the Globe was the first London playhouse to be built to specifications set by professional players who were also its part-owners, before identifying the basic features that Shakespeare could consider in composition. In light of key scenes and moments from *Julius Caesar*, the significance of these factors as part of the playwright's working conditions has been highlighted. The article has also addressed Shakespeare's use of anachronisms in a Roman setting, as well as a notable moment of controversy regarding the inference of staging from the play text. The rapid dramatic progress of time and the transpositions of scenes that characterise *Julius Caesar* in terms of dramatic intensity have also been associated with the requirements and conditions of the theatre space. The dramaturgy of *Julius Caesar* is shown to be significantly shaped by the conditions of composition and enactment that appertained to Shakespeare and the Lord Chamberlain's Men at the Globe in 1599.

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