Wakeman's sermon at Paul's on Jonah; in Sorlien's text he remains merely "one of Baliol collodge in Oxeford" (p. 71), and although Wakeman eventually published the text of his sermon (to which the *Diary* devotes two pages of summary and quotation), mentioning the cloudburst that interrupted his preaching and sent Manningham scurrying, Sorlien does not recognize the fact, or pursue the possibility of comparing Manningham's sermon-notes and published texts of the same sermons, by Wakeman and others. Such comparisons can, I think, enhance our understanding of how preachers performed and how Elizabethans listened — important issues in an age so centered on what can be called "the auditory imagination" — and it is too bad, given his general scholarly investment, that Sorlien does not undertake such study. (For a discussion of Wakeman's text and Manningham's synopsis, see my article on Manningham, already referred to above.⁵)

But if these are limitations and shortcomings in the edition, it is a happy fact of the scholarly enterprise that they are of the kind that can and will be corrected by other scholars; what is important is that, through Sorlien's labors, we now have a complete, faithful, and accountable text of John Manningham's *Diary* to work with. Whimsy might ask what John Manningham, A.B., Utter Barrister, Attorney of the Court of Wards, would think about his unlikely immortality, now so handsomely consolidated — what is beyond whimsy is that all of us who traffic in Shakespeare's age have cause to be grateful for this definitive edition of his obscure contemporary's invaluable journal.

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Michael Shapiro. *Children of the Revels: The Boy Companies of Shakespeare's Time and Their Plays*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1977. Pp. xviii, 313. \$15.00

After Michael Shapiro's series of very interesting articles on aspects of the Boys Companies, this full-length study is a little disappointing, possibly because it is trying to do two distinct things. On the one hand, it works well as a general survey, a background against which individual plays can be more properly understood and evaluated (p. 231); on the other, it is less successful in explicating Shapiro's theories about the "social context" (p. vii) of the companies; and there is insufficient continuity between the first four background chapters and the last two which categorize the plays.

The virtues of the study can be shown by beginning with the last two chapters, which offer a very useful recategorization of the kinds of play to be found in the Private Theatres' repertoires. Chapter 5 divides plays from the first period of the children's activity into four main types: (1) plays influenced by the quasidramatic forms of debate and pageant, (2) plays derived from Roman comedy, (3) plays about pathetic heroines, and (4) Lyly's unique form of love comedy. The debates, pageants, and Latin comedy fall mostly into the early Tudor period, the pathetic-heroine plays into the 1570's, and the love comedy into the 1580's, though Shapiro emphasizes that this is not a simple developmental process and that the categories overlap. The divisions are workmanlike and useful, but one may question Shapiro's emphases in two places. He seems to put too much weight on the "pathetic heroine" tradition, considering the sparse and mainly putative evidence for such plays in the

repertory; and, perhaps because they do not fit in with his main emphasis on the court's concern with aristocratic status, he under-estimates the boys' involvement with classical and morally didactic plays. Certainly, his conclusion that, because the choristers do not seem to have adopted the prodigal-son plays of the Christian-Terence tradition, they must therefore have been a bulwark against humanist pressures for classicism and didacticism, sits oddly with their actual repertoire and their admitted concern with debate. Similarly, chapter 6 classifies plays from the second period of the children's theatre into (1) a revival of plays by Lyly or in his manner, (2) an attempt to adapt the romantic comedy developed in the public theatres by Greene and Shakespeare, (3) experiments with "comical satire" alone or in various combinations, and (4) the development of "city comedy." This time the pattern is more clearly developmental, and Shapiro notes that no sooner had each movement begun than it was accompanied by selfconscious imitation and parody that quickly limited its viability. Again this is a useful division but there are reservations to be made. Curiously, though he discusses boy-company tragedy in chapter 3, he neglects any mention of it in this categorization of the repertory (nor does he mention Chapman's pioneering experiments in tragicomedy); and while he is more aware of the interchange between public and private theatres than Harbage was, he still argues for an *intrinsic* difference of approach (by examining the public and private theatre plays of Dekker and Middleton), though any such assumption must surely be undermined by Shakespeare's problem comedies.

Similar virtues of up-to-date scholarship and lucid presentation can be found in Appendix A, on the boys' use of music, and in chapters 1 and 4, on the development of the children's troupes and their acting style respectively. As Shapiro remarks, chapter 1 is based mainly on Chambers and Hildebrand, but it presents the complicated process of development with exceptional clarity and incorporates passages of new evidence, such as the fact that Paul's probably reopened as early as 1596 and may well have involved an abortive come-back by John Lyly. It also makes the interesting suggestion that too much critical emphasis has been placed on the commercialization of the later boys' theatre to the neglect of its continuing social esteem as court entertainment, though this is more asserted than proved. Chapter 4 is an equally successful discussion of the boys' acting style — or rather styles, because Shapiro sensibly evades recent controversy by suggesting that there were at least three recognizable modes — naturalistic, declamatory, and parodic — and that playwrights such as Marston deliberately juxtaposed these styles for special effects. This is one of the most useful sections of the book.

The most controversial sections come in chapters 2 and 3, on the social context of the Private Theatres. Chapter 2 concerns itself with "Occasion," the attempt of the Private Theatres to market the prestige of court performance, at which the audience could "act out," and have confirmed, its sense of social superiority. After a largely unexceptionable discussion of the probable likeness of Private Theatre auditoria to court great halls (which ignores, however, the frequent complaints about the smallness of Paul's stage), Shapiro suggests that the peculiar nature of court entertainment was its mingling of extremes of epideictic praise and blame — the "commoning" concept which Muriel Bradbrook has developed brilliantly in essays apparently unknown to Shapiro. There is certainly truth in this, but Shapiro handles

the concept too mechanically, particularly in his explanation of the audience's reaction to provocative insult, which he sees as either selfcongratulation on being too secure to be touched by it or diversion of it away from oneself unto criticism of others. This is surely too simple. In *John Marston of the Middle Temple* Finkelpearl comes much closer to understanding the stimulus of selfmockery and exaggerated insult within an élite because he assumes that the social basis of the Private Theatres was the Inns of Court, not the court itself as Shapiro argues. In fact, the latter seems uncertain of the nature of the Private Theatre audience. He recognizes that it differed from the court audience proper but cannot explain its apparent difference of taste between the early and later periods of the boys' activity. He fudges the question of why, if the Boy Bishop strain of mockery of authority was as central to the chorister tradition as he argues, it had comparatively so little effect on plays in the early period; and his only answer for the swing in taste from predominantly praise to predominantly blame is to state that the nature of the Private Theatre audience changed at the turn of the century (p. 51) — but he merely asserts this crucial point without any substantiation.

The discussion of "Occasion" is complemented by Chapter 3 on the "Audience." This largely concerns itself with the familiar problem of the hyper-critical assertiveness of the Private Theatre clientele and the techniques of flattery, self-deprecation, satiric diversion, and counter-attack adopted by the playwrights in defense. Again this concept is used rather clumsily by Shapiro, whose phrasing sometimes seems to suggest that dramatists wrote satire *mainly* to divert their patrons' belligerency (pp. 75, 100). He is better at demonstrating the emergence of new types of hero with whom the Private Theatre audience could identify (cf. Judd Arnold's recent study of Jonson, *A Grace Peculiar*), though again there is some over-simplification. Following Eugene Waith, Shapiro realizes the ambivalence towards heroes in the children's tragedies, but does not recognize that the same ambivalence also operates in their presentation of comic heroes. *Epicoene* is a case in point. Reacting against Barish's emphasis on the contradictory aspects of Dorimant, Truewit, and Clerimont, Shapiro argues that, although each may have inadequacies, together they constitute a new social norm. Jonson's irony is deeper than this, however, as a comparison of the gallants' competitive attitudes to each other with those of Wellbred and Quarlous can illustrate; and Truewit's speech on time is surely phrased to leave resonances beyond its surface purpose of jolting Clerimont out of withdrawal from society. In fact, as usual, classifications and discussions of context tend to illuminate such minor or neglected works as *The Phoenix*, *The Wisdom of Cyrus*, *Love's Metamorphosis*, or *The Isle of Gulls*, but to oversimplify real masterpieces, and Shapiro is guilty in several instances of paying attention only to his patternings with too little attention to the texture of the writing (his discussion of Penitent Brothel in *A Trick to Catch the Old One* is another example).

In sum, then: *Children of the Revels* is a welcome presentation and updating of such background aspects as the development of the children's troupes, their acting styles, their use of music, and most of the major categories and trends within their repertoires; its discussion of "social context" is less reliable, however; certain key issues, such as the change in Private Theatre taste or its relation to the public theatres, are largely evaded; and conclusions about "social context" are not well integrated

into the later classifications of repertory. A worthwhile and useful study, then, but critically uneven and not as thorough or unified a reappraisal as Professor Shapiro's articles had given us reason to hope for.

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Footnotes

- 1 See Sydney Race's summary of the problem in "Manningham's Diary: The Case for Re-examination," *N&Q*, 199 (1954), 380-383.
- 2 John Bruce, "preface" to *The Diary of John Manningham*, Camden Society First Series, No. 99 (Westminster, 1868), p. xvii.
- 3 Jarold Ramsey, "The Importance of Manningham's *Diary*," *Shakespeare Studies*, 7 (1974), 331. Sorlien's edition does not incorporate the findings of this study.
- 4 *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F.N. Robinson (Boston, 1957), p. 311.
- 5 Ramsey, "The Importance of Manningham's *Diary*," pp. 334-6.