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6

Title- and Scene-Boards

The Largest, Shortest Documents

Matthew Steggle

This piece argues that early modern theatre made routine use of both title-boards and scene-boards: painted signs bearing, respectively, the title of the play being acted and the location of the action. In particular, it draws on examples from the stage directions of the amateur dramatist William Percy, who seems to envisage almost a hierarchy of different information contained within written signs around the playing area. It also looks to visual evidence. These signs, I will argue, made a considerable difference to the experience of early modern theatre. What is more, their status as written texts, generated by playwriting, means they are members of the family of ‘documents of performance’ that constitute the text of a play. Explicitly setting out an interpretive frame for the play’s theatre audiences, these title- and scene-boards must be considered afresh, because they are part of the problem of the play *qua* textual object.

Physical objects

It has long been recognized that early modern theatre seems sometimes to have made use of boards on which was written the title of the play. The principal evidence for this takes the form of metadramatic allusions within plays, as can be illustrated by a few representative examples. In the Induction of Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, the title appears to be visible to the audience, presumably on a signboard, since one of the characters comments: 'the title of his play is *Cynthia's Revels*, as any man that hath hope to be saved by his book can witness'.¹ The comedy *Wily Beguiled* begins with a 'title' on stage saying 'Spectrum', which is changed during the Induction to the correct title: '*Spectrum* is conueied away: and *Wily beguiled*, stands in the place of it'.² Another title-board seems to be described in the opening of Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, where the Citizen refers to it while complaining to the actor: 'you call your play, *The London Marchant*. Downe with your Title boy, downe with your Title'.³ Richard Brome's Caroline comedy *The City Wit* seems to have a title-board carried in by a Prologue-character, who describes himself as 'I, that bear its Title'.⁴ Conversely, there are also several references to the use of signs to indicate location. One might mention Sidney's *Defence of Poetry*, alluding to the practice as normal even as early as 1579: 'What childe is there, that coming to a Play, and seeing Thebes written in great Letters vpon an olde doore, doth beleue that it is Thebes?'⁵ Examples could be multiplied, many times over, but the basic principle seems clear.⁶

And yet theatre historians of the later twentieth century were reluctant to embrace the idea that these conventions were at all usual, seeing them as 'cumbersome' and unsophisticated, a value judgement that may have clouded their assessment of the evidence. They preferred instead to see them as exceptions which were commented upon when used: early features which 'occasionally' persisted in some drama, perhaps particularly in the private theatres.⁷ This orthodoxy was comprehensively demolished in 2007 by Tiffany Stern, who offered many hitherto

unnoticed primary citations from across early modern drama, and in particular through the Caroline period, which appear to allude to the practice. Stern argued instead that both title-boards, and their near-relatives 'scene' (or 'location')-boards, were widespread across time and across theatrical context, and that seeing them was one of the expectations that people would have brought to drama of all sorts in the period. In the decade since it was published no-one, as far as I am aware, has come up with a riposte to Stern's heavily documented argument. My further thinking here about what title- and scene-boards are, and what effect they have, is only made possible by Stern's pre-existing demonstration of just how much evidence there is for their widespread use. So, starting from this new position, what can one say about title- and scene-boards?

First, such boards are documents, of a sort. They can in fact be thought of as fringe members of the extended family of the 'documents of performance' of the early modern theatre, a category whose more normal members include scripts, letters, songs, prologues, and arguments, as well as the manuscripts and printed texts discussed in other chapters of this book. Tiffany Stern (again) writes about how one might conceptualize this flotilla of textual fragments:

Together, the fragments that the playhouse made, in conjunction with the fragments that play-writing had produced, and the additional fragments brought about for advertising and explaining the play, were the documents that amounted to 'the play' in its first performance. . . . Thus, each separate document that made up a play has its own story, its own attachment to the other documents, its own rate of loss and survival. And, as any fragment could be separately written aside from the playscript, so it could easily and at any subsequent time be updated or freshly composed or added to by someone else.⁸

Title- and scene-boards fit well with this definition. They are texts generated in the playwriting process; linked to the other

documents within the set they belong to; and yet capable of being swapped, at various points in a play's life-cycle, by various agents. There are several early modern plays whose titles seem negotiable, and at least some early modern plays whose intradiegetic locations were changed when the play was revised: such plays will have required, as well as their other textual changes, a fresh set of scene-boards.⁹

And yet title- and scene-boards are particularly paradoxical members of the larger family to which they belong. They will have been by far the biggest and heaviest physical objects in that category, and yet in terms of text, they were by far the briefest, only a word or two long. They also had a larger direct readership than any of their cousins except the playbill. For sure, all the other types of document underpinned the performance as delivered, and some were read out on stage. But *qua* documents, these other forms were only directly read by a handful of people, unless and until they appeared in print. Everyone literate who attended the play, though, would have had to engage with the title-board. And they are exceptional in one more respect, in being the most elusive members of their family. Not a single material example is extant, although hundreds must have been made. The status of these boards as lost texts, of a kind, makes them the province not just of theatre historians but also of textual editors.

Second, both title- and scene-boards matter because, if they were indeed routinely used, their use would have had significant effects upon their plays. A scene-board, like a location caption in a modern film, changes the nature of the exposition by spelling out the intradiegetic location omnisciently, unambiguously, and immediately, and in a way that remains legible and prominent throughout the action. And title-boards put on stage the play's title, or to be strictly accurate one of its titles. Titles have been described as 'the briefest, the most primitive, and often the most densely meaningful member of the loose family of textual forms that together make up an early modern play'.¹⁰ Title-boards, instantiating those densely meaningful titles in particularly terse form and putting them before the audience's eyes throughout the

performance, are putting on stage a headline by which continually to judge the action of the play.

Third, and cautiously, one can start to collate references to these boards' physical form and location. One type of evidence is provided by the remarkably problematic playtexts of William Percy (1570–1648), aristocrat and amateur dramatist, who seems to have written his six surviving plays around 1601–05, and then recopied those plays much later in his life into the various manuscripts through which they survive. Percy frequently refers in his manuscripts to the possibility of performance of these plays by a children's company at Pauls or elsewhere, although there is, as Matthew Dimmock warns, 'no evidence that any of the plays were performed on the professional stage'.¹¹

Percy's particular taste is for very detailed descriptions of the costuming and of the initial stage setting, of a kind without exact parallel in any other extant dramatic texts of the period. The nearest analogy, perhaps, lies in early modern descriptions of civic entries and the like, where, interestingly, written signs are also frequently mentioned as part of the tableaux.¹² Debate continues as to whether Percy's texts may be taken as witnesses of actual practice in early modern theatre, or whether the staging conventions they use are entirely products of an impractical and book-learned imagination.¹³ Nonetheless, and with that caveat, Percy consistently wants his plays to use both title-boards and scene-boards. *The Faery Pastorall* has a particularly detailed opening instruction:

Highest, aloft, and on the Top of the Musick Tree the Title
The Faery Pastorall, Beneath him pind on Post of the Tree
The Scene Eluida Forrest. Lowest off all ouer the Canopie
 [ΝΑΠΑΙΤΒΟΔΑΙΟΝ] or *Faery Chappell*.¹⁴

That is, Percy imagines a title-board at the top of the stage, on the music tree or music-house; below it, and offset to one side of the midline since it is on one of the supporting posts, a scene-board; and further down still and centred on the canopy, a scene-board which represents a subset of that second

FIGURE 6.1 Signs imagined by William Percy, superimposed onto an image of the Blackfriars Playhouse, Staunton, Virginia. By permission of the American Shakespeare Center's Blackfriars Playhouse

location, since in the play the Fairy Chapel is within the forest. The relationship between these signs is made clear by their spatial arrangement.

Another Percy play uses its space slightly differently: *The Cuckqueans and Cuckolds Errants* is to display that title – all thirty characters of it – ‘highest and aloft’. Further down the stage are a series of locations that are not subsets of one another: ‘Harwich’; ‘Colchester’; ‘The Raungers Lodge’; and ‘Maldon’. As P. C. Kincaid has discussed, the way that Percy lays these words out in the manuscript, in noticeably larger handwriting than the rest of the text, seems to imply that they are to be written on signboards above the respective doors.¹⁵ This obviously recalls a Terentian convention where different doors depict different locations; while it has sometimes been argued that Percy’s practice is therefore Terentian rather than belonging to contemporary English drama, we do not in fact know that that convention was *not* used on the English stage as

well. (A particularly relevant comparison here is *The Comedy of Errors*, which appears to use signboards of the Centaur and Porcupine to follow a similar ‘Terentian’ convention.)¹⁶

A third Percy play combines title-and scene-board into one, while also considering an alternative scheme as well: ‘The Title aloft and about being both Title and Scene A COUNTRY TRAGOEDYE IN VACUNIUM or CUPIDS SACRIFICE one of the two, The first in regard of propertie of Scene . . .’.¹⁷ That very vagueness is of course a sign of Percy’s amateurism, but it is interesting that Percy thinks that a sign-board can do duty for both title and scene at once. Perhaps the most complex example lies in the three manuscripts of *Mahomet and His Heaven*, which between them offer a bewildering array of options for signs made meaningful in their relationship to one another. Percy starts by specifying ‘The Scene and Title aloft MAHOMET AND HIS HEAVEN’, but in another manuscript Percy imagines the title-board to read ARABIA SITIENS, again combining title and location in one board. Furthermore, Percy seems to imagine other scene-boards on the stage, including ‘MEDINA TALNABI next MELCHIT’, ‘AMPHIPOLIS OF THE DESERTS’, and ‘THE PORTERS LODGE’. It is not entirely specified that these names are written on signs, but Percy’s use of capitals suggests it, particularly since he does also specify a written sign to identify one of the props: ‘an old and homely Tankard of gold on a shelf, with Cock or Tap at foote, written under THE TANKARD OF TRYALL’. Again, this may be Percy’s amateurism, an overly literal approach to representation that recalls the mechanicals of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: but nonetheless, it is what he specifies.¹⁸ *The Faery Pastorall* has a related but different use of onstage signs associated with props: Percy requests several large onstage properties including ‘A Kiln of Brick’, but adds that if the stage is too crowded, they may be omitted and replaced only with signs ‘with their Nuncupations onely in Text Letters’. Thus, an audience member in Percy’s hypothetical theatre would be faced with multiple different signs to read, at different heights, some on the midline of the stage and others offset, with their

relative location giving information as to how to interrelate them. In particular, for Percy, 'aloft' is where the main title of the play is put.

The stumbling-block, of course, remains that Percy's dramas are not necessarily guides to the practice of the theatres in which he seems to have hoped they might be performed. But what can be seen in Percy, around 1601–5, is consistent with a quite different, and equally problematic, type of material: visual representations of the English stage.

Pictures, of course, are of dubious value in theatre history, for three main reasons. First, evidence of any kind is very thinly spread, leading one to argue about (as it may be) the Globe in 1605 based on pictures that are not of the Globe, and are mostly not from 1605. Second, any occasion being recorded is untypical, by virtue of the very fact that it is being recorded. Third, any image that has been made is not a casual smartphone photo, indexical and unguarded, but rather a labour-intensive object enmeshed in many cultural codes. So the visual evidence must be treated with a healthy sense of danger: it is more an idealization of what a theatre *might* look like than a snapshot of what actually happened in a particular theatre on a particular day. Nonetheless, and with these caveats, some images of early modern English theatres seem to contain further evidence for written boards on stage.

What is generally regarded as the most important and relevant picture of the interior of an English theatre, the copy of De Witt's sketch of the Swan playhouse, depicts a stage covered with words thanks to its captions, but no explicitly depicted signboard. But in 1619, the polymath Robert Fludd published a picture of a theatre including a stage containing, part way up its rear wall, a projecting structure with a tiled roof and two windows. That building bears a rectangular framed signboard which is of considerable size, being almost the same width as the pair of double doors directly beneath it on the midline of the stage. On the board is written 'THEATR / VM · ORBI ·', the theatre of the world.¹⁹ Debate continues about whether the picture is based on Fludd's memories of the

Globe, as Frances Yates argued; or of the Blackfriars, I. A. Shapiro's interpretation; or on neither, as Herbert Berry has argued, being instead a fanciful idealization of a theatre. But whichever interpretation one chooses, that large framed sign, high up on the midline, describing – in effect – the location of the action, is a valid point of reference in considering the horizon of expectations around signboards in early modern theatres.²⁰

A little later still, Inigo Jones's drawings contain evidence for title-boards. Jones's sketch for the main stage of Montagu's *The Shepherd's Paradise* (1633) includes a frontispiece running along the top, with what appears to be a large swag of fabric at its centre, in which are written the words 'The Shep< >', and while the rest of the inscription is illegible, it is clearly intended to read 'The Shepherd's Paradise'. Given that the gap between the pilasters is around thirty feet, the swag appears to be about five feet across.²¹ Similarly, Jones's sketch for the standing scene of another court entertainment, 'Florimène' (1635), includes a frontispiece which runs over the top of the stage. At its midpoint, two cherubs carry a shield on which is written the single word 'Florimen', and this feature again is large, as large as the gap between the two sets of stairs at the front of the stage.²² A third Jones sketch, dated 1639 and entitled, rather ambiguously, 'for ye cockpit', pictures a blank cartouche in the centre of the arch across the top of the stage, which also accords with a reference in William Davenant's admittedly later *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656), which had 'RHODES' written upon the frieze that encompassed the scene. Similarly, the set for Davenant's *Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (perf. 1658) includes 'An Arch. . . rais'd upon stone of Rustick work; upon the top of which is written, in an Antique Shield, PERU. . .'.²³

Suggestive, too, in this connection, are the two frontispieces from early modern English drama, which are often analysed for their sketchy representations of an early modern stage: William Alabaster's *Roxana* (1635) and Nathaniel Richards' *Messalina* (1640).²⁴ In both cases, the bottom centre panel of the title page contains a small and truncated sketch of an early modern stage,

seen slightly from above, extending from the front rails to the junction with the back of the stage, and including about the first storey of the back of the stage before being cut off by the panel above it. What we are interested in here is not the detail on the drawing itself, but the way it is spatially related to the main title, which in both cases appears in the panel above it, centred over the stage like a giant title-board.

All of this evidence, of course, can individually be written off as atypical: the printed images are too fantastic, Jones is an importer of new foreign fashions into England, the Davenant references are too late. But that they all tell a story that is in common with William Percy's earlier expectations suggests that title-boards, large, central, and aloft, were indeed a feature of the English stage.

And with this as a frame, one can turn to a commercial-theatre play from this date which seems to trade on the problems of interpretation presented by a hierarchy of written signs, meaningful in their spatial relationship to one another. This is Jonson's *Poetaster*, as it is generally known, a play which, as we shall see, seems to have been performed under the title *The Arraignment*.²⁵ In the Induction to this play, a comically myopic Envy 'arises' from below, to inspect the stage before the play starts. First, she reads the title – from, as we might now suppose, a title-board visible centrally and high up on the stage:

Whats here? *Th'arraignment*? I: This, this is it,
That our sunke eyes haue wak't for, all this while:
Here will be subiect for my Snakes and me.

Turning to the audience, she is dazzled by 'the shine / Of this assembly', and it is some time before she resumes reading, moving down to the scene-board (or boards, since she seems to see three separate ones):

Marke, how I will begin: The Scene is, ha?
Rome? Rome? and Rome? Cracke eystings, and your balls
Drop into earth; let me be euer blind.²⁶

Envy expects that the scene-boards will read 'London', and that the play can therefore be badged as topical and scandalous: she is disappointed by the boards, which modify her expectations gained from the title-board, and all three of which say the same thing. This passage, which has always seemed puzzling on the page, seems to match what we see in Percy's plays in terms of a hierarchical set of information displayed on boards.

Indeed, it is fascinating to think how Jonson's play would work in performance with the word 'Rome' visible on stage and the words *The Arraignment* looming above the stage throughout. 'Rome', perhaps, speaks for itself: Jonson's play is obviously interrogating different ideas of Romanness, and the place-name and its cognates already run like a motif through the speeches of the play, so that the word's presence on stage reinforces what we can see already from the dialogue. The title, though, is more interesting. For most of the action, Jonson's drama appears to be working up to the arraignment of Horace by his enemies. It pivots on the moment in the courtroom when the tables are turned and the accusers find they are the ones on trial, so that the title above the stage reveals its second, true, meaning. Lurking behind these two literal arraignments are the more indirect ones: of Ovid for his sexual indiscretion, handled by Augustus somewhat extra-judicially; of Augustus himself for his autocracy and neglect; of Jonson by his enemies and of those enemies by Jonson. If *Poetaster*, as a title for a play, invites consideration of individuals and of poetic taste, *The Arraignment* foregrounds legal and judicial processes in action. Displayed on stage throughout, it would make the play we think of as *Poetaster* into a much more obviously political theatre experience, for all that the scene-boards insist that the location is Rome.

We are moving towards a vision of the early modern stage space as containing multiple written signs, at different heights, meaningful in their spatial relationship to one another. A crude analogy might be with contemporary news television, as seen – as it may be – with the sound off in an airport. To anyone who has never seen the conventions before, the welter

of text on screen is confusing: a station identification in one corner; captions on screen that supply the name of this particular news programme, or the location that the reporter is reporting from, or the news headline, or an expansion of that news headline. This is to say nothing of news streams, subtitles, and other features. We are so used to the spatial conventions that underlie these devices that we rarely notice the work we are doing in distinguishing them and discerning their relationship, nor the way that they set the frame within which we interpret the story being told. The early modern stage is less dynamically changing in its use of onstage writing, but the point about information literacy stands.

There are some practical implications that can only be gestured at. Henslowe, for instance, refers several times to employing a painter, and several times to the purchase of boards. Most of those are, almost certainly, for building projects rather than signboard-making, and yet the preparation of title-boards, like the preparation of playbills, would need to be considered among the now largely invisible backroom labour and expenses of the playhouse. Certainly, the Revels accounts include some expenses for painting signboards. And was there in the theatre a standing stock of title-boards and scene-boards, requiring storage space somewhere? No such stock is obviously visible in the most detailed records we have, Henslowe's inventories.²⁷

Furthermore, not all forms of theatre environment are equal. Jones's designs, with a seemingly permanent place for a title at the front of the stage, point the way to a proscenium arch theatre, with the title shield forming, in effect, part of the embryonic fourth wall between stage and audience. By contrast, a title-board high up at the back of the playing area, so that the actors play to the audience in front of it and not on the other side of it, changes the dynamic of the stage space.

This chapter has developed its idea mainly through references in William Percy and early Jonson – neither of them the most canonical of authors – and yet the implications are far wider. These now largely invisible title- and scene-boards should be of great concern to literary critics.²⁸

More or less any early modern play gains an interesting twist if its title is visible on stage, throughout, in a prominent position of authority. One thinks of *Measure for Measure*, the scriptural title of which would start off as a comment on the plotting and counter-plotting, while beneath it both the Duke and Angelo try to take upon themselves the role of the voice of the recorded law. As the play goes on, though, the words above the stage would modulate into a reminder of the inevitability of a moral reckoning, anticipating their appearance in the dialogue in the last scenes. Another example, one where the title is interestingly at odds with the action, is John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. In Ford's tragic masterpiece, Annabella is generally regarded as a sympathetic character whose desire to be good is sincere, and whose epitaph in the last line of the play – 'Who could not say, *'Tis pitty shee's a Whoore?*' – is a catachresis, a deliberately crass effect by the dramatist.²⁹ If, in the scenes where Annabella looks up to heaven and attempts to pray, that epitaph is already written in the heavens above her, it adds to an audience's sense that there is something unfair about the state of the universe. Other early modern plays will gain yet different effects from their title being written on top of the performance.

Mutatis mutandis, the same is true of scene-boards. In *Troilus and Cressida*, for instance, there is an obvious connection between the doomed hero Troilus and his doomed city Troy, but matching boards would make that more obvious. Another interesting example would be *Coriolanus*, in which the main title again has a relationship of a sort with a scene-board. What other effects can be created by boards which make the geographical location literally legible?

A particularly interesting subset within this problem is the group of plays whose title takes the form, 'The [person(s)] of [place]', since this form of title contains an intrinsic location. When watching *The Jew of Malta*, for instance, would an audience see a title-board reading simply 'The Jew', and a scene-board reading 'Malta'? Certainly, Henslowe sometimes refers to the play merely as *The Jew*.³⁰ Similarly, as Gerald Baker has shown, early references to the play we call *Othello* tend to refer

to it as *The Moor of Venice*, its subtitle in print, while references to Othello the character tend to call him 'The Moor'.³¹ Again, we might speculate that an early audience could see a title-board reading simply 'The Moor', and, to begin with at least, a scene-board indicating 'Venice', a paradoxical state of affairs that encapsulates, in the tension between those two signs, Othello's impossible position. And every invocation of 'Moor' in the play resonates with the word already written above the stage as if a divine judgement on him. Again, readers may explore for themselves extensions of this argument to different plays, but the idea that title and location may be in dialogue with each other can be widely extended.

To pursue this idea further, one could do with more information about these putative boards showing title and location; the usual forms of wording that might appear upon them; and the exceptions. It would be good to have more systematic data on the lengths of text on known examples, and any information that could bear on the question of how double titles might be handled (since one reference to the practice, in Shirley's *Rosania*, seems to imply that both titles are visible at once).³² One might look for evidence from other more theatrical traditions from the continent and the later English stage, and invoke the tools of what has been called the 'spatial turn' in early modern drama studies. What I aim to have shown here is that such research expeditions are warranted, because there is evidence of the practice from the early modern English stage narrowly defined, and because it makes a considerable difference to the play as performed. In having the status of 'document of performance', these title- and scene- boards are part of the problem of the play *qua* textual object.

Notes

- 1 Ben Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels*, ed. Eric Rasmussen and Matthew Steggle, in *The Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson*, 7 vols, eds. Martin Butler, David Bevington and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1.432, Prologue 33. In the 1616 Folio, it is called '*Cynthia's Revels, or the Fountain of Self-Love*'.

- 2 *A Pleasant Comedie, Called Wily Beguilde* (1606), 3.
- 3 Francis Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1613), B1r.
- 4 Richard Brome, *The City Wit*, Prologue, cited from the edition of Elizabeth Schafer, *Richard Brome Online*, <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/brome/>
- 5 Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie* (1595), H1r.
- 6 For copious further examples see G. F. Reynolds, 'Some Principles of Elizabethan Staging', *Modern Philology*, 2.4 (1905), 581–614; W. J. Lawrence, 'Title and Locality Boards on the Pre-Restoration Stage' in *Elizabethan Stage Studies* (Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott, 1912), 41–72; and Tiffany Stern, 'Watching as Reading: The Audience and Written Text in Shakespeare's Playhouse,' in Laurie Maguire, ed., *How to Do Things with Shakespeare: New Approaches, New Essays* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 136–159.
- 7 Quotations from Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574–1642*, 3rd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 172, 180, 193; also M. C. Bradbrook, *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 11.
- 8 Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 4.
- 9 For the detachability and mutability of titles, see Gerald Baker, 'The Name of Othello Is Not the Name of *Othello*', *Review of English Studies*, 67 (2016), 62–78; relocated plays include Massinger's *Believe as You List*, moved from Western Europe to the Near East; Jonson's *Every Man In His Humour*, relocated on revision from Florence to London; and, indeed, allegedly, Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*.
- 10 Matthew Steggle, *Digital Humanities and the Lost Drama of Early Modern England: Ten Case Studies* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015), 19.
- 11 Matthew Dimmock, 'Introduction' to William Percy, *William Percy's Mahomet and His Heaven: A Critical Edition* (Aldershot:

- Ashgate, 2006), quotation from 56; Reavley Gair, 'Percy, William (1574–1648)', *Oxford DNB*.
- 12 A representative example is Dekker's *The Magnificent Entertainment* (1604); see also the vivid illustrations in *La ioyeuse [et] magnifique entrée de monseigneur Francoys . . . en sa tres-renommée ville d'Anvers* (Antwerp, 1582), in colour online reproduction at the British Library *Renaissance Festival Books* website [accessed 1 August 2018].
 - 13 See Dimmock, 'Introduction', 52.
 - 14 Percy, quotation from Robert Denzel Fenn, 'William Percy's *Faery Pastorall: An Old Spelling Edition*', PhD thesis, University of British Columbia, 1997.
 - 15 P. C. Kincaid, 'A critical edition of William Percy's *The Cuckqueans and Cuckolds Errants*' (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2000), Introduction 62. The play is cited from this edition.
 - 16 See Arthur F. Kinney, 'Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* and the Nature of Kinds', in Robert Miola, ed., *The Comedy of Errors: Critical Essays* (London: Routledge, 1997), 155–182.
 - 17 Percy, cited in Stern, 'Watching as Reading', 152.
 - 18 All quotations from Percy, *Mahomet and His Heaven*, ed. Dimmock, 61–62, and apparatus.
 - 19 Robert Fludd, 'Theatrum orbi[s] terrarum', in *De anime memorativae Scientia, quae vulgo ars memoriae vocatur. Ars Memoriae*, in *Opera*, 17 vols in 7 ([Oppenheim: J.T. de Bry], 1617–1638), ii. 55, cited from the online reproduction at the University of Cambridge, <https://exhibitions.lib.cam.ac.uk/reformation/artifacts/a-memory-theatre/> [accessed 1 August 2018].
 - 20 The debate, with earlier references, is summarized by Ernest L. Rhodes, *Henslowe's Rose: The Stage and Staging* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1976).
 - 21 Reproduced in John Orrell, 'The Paved Court Theatre at Somerset House', *British Library Journal*, 3 (1977), 13–19.
 - 22 See Karen Britland, '"Florimène": The Author and the Occasion', *Review of English Studies*, 53 (2002), 475–483.
 - 23 Cited from John Orrell, *The Theatres of Inigo Jones and John Webb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Orrell

also discusses the 1639 sketch and casts doubt on whether it is for the Cockpit-at-Court, or actually the Cockpit. For Rhodes, see Stern, 'Watching as Reading'.

- 24 Discussed by John H. Astington, 'The Origins of the *Roxana* and *Messalina* Illustrations', *Shakespeare Survey*, 43 (1991), 149–169; Stern, 'Watching as Reading', has leads towards other possibly relevant visual representations.
- 25 See the textual essay on *Poetaster* in the *Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson*, online at https://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/k/essays/Poetaster_textual_essay/ – the play is called, on its first printing, *Poetaster, or The Arraignment* [accessed 1 August 2018].
- 26 Ben Jonson, *Poetaster or The arraignment* (1602), all quotations from A2r. The word "Poetaster" is not mentioned by Envy at all, although it does appear five times in the dialogue. It is not clear that the play in its original performance used that word as any form of title. Compare *Cynthia's Revels*, whose licensing record calls it *Narcissus, The Fountain of Self-Love* – reflecting perhaps a bookseller's sense of the vendibility of the mythological elements rather than the play's title in performance, which clearly read *Cynthia's Revels*.
- 27 R. A. Foakes, ed., *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 6, 7, 11, 13, 93, 218; see Reynolds, 'Some Principles of Elizabethan Staging', 581–614, for the Revels Accounts.
- 28 Indeed, Stern, 'Watching as Reading', already suggests this, with different examples; my work builds here upon hers.
- 29 John Ford, *'Tis pittie shew's a whore* (1633), K4r.
- 30 For references to the play as *The Jew*, see Foakes, ed., *Henslowe's Diary*, 19, 22, 321.
- 31 Baker, 'The Name of Othello Is Not the Name of *Othello*'.
- 32 The *Rosania* reference is discussed by Stern, 'Watching as Reading'.