

T H E
C H A N G E L I N G :

400 años de *The Changeling*
(Thomas Middleton y William Rowley, 1622)

John D. Sanderson (ed.)

As it was Acted (with great Applause)
at the Privat house in DRURY LANE,
and Salisbury Court.

Written by { THOMAS MIDDLETON, }
and { Gent' }
{ WILLIAM ROWLEY. }

Never Printed before.

John D. Sanderson (ed.)

400 AÑOS DE *THE CHANGELING*
(Thomas Middleton y William Rowley, 1622)

UNIVERSITAT D'ALACANT

ÍNDICE

INTRODUCCIÓN/ INTRODUCTION.....	9
<i>John D. Sanderson</i>	
<i>THE CHANGELING: MIDDLETON, ROWLEY, ELIOT, AND THE SIN OF SYNECDOCHE</i>	23
<i>Gary Taylor</i>	
<i>THE CHANGELING BY DESIGN</i>	37
<i>Mark Hutchings</i>	
MURDER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: THE CRIME SCENES BEHIND <i>THE CHANGELING</i>	57
<i>Berta Cano Echevarría</i>	
ENTRE ESPAÑA E INGLATERRA: MÁSCARAS DE CORTE Y TEATRO DURANTE LOS AÑOS DE LA PAZ ANGLOESPAÑOLA (1603-1625)	71
<i>Óscar Alfredo Ruiz Fernández</i>	
DE CERVANTES A MIDDLETON: ESPACIOS, FIGURAS, TRAZAS Y TRAMAS DE UN TRASVASE LITERARIO	91
<i>Miguel Ángel Auladell Pérez</i>	
ALICANTE IN THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROFILE OF A MEDITERRANEAN CITY AND BACKDROP OF AN ENGLISH <i>REVENGE TRAGEDY</i>	113
<i>Armando Alberola Romá</i>	

RELIGIOSIDAD POPULAR Y DEVOCIONES EN ALICANTE DURANTE EL SIGLO XVII	131
<i>José Iborra Torregrosa</i>	
ANÁLISIS CONTRASTIVO DE LAS TRADUCCIONES AL ALEMÁN Y AL ESPAÑOL DE <i>THE CHANGELING</i>	147
<i>Elena Serrano Bertos</i>	
FICHAS DE AUTORES/AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES	165

THE CHANGELING BY DESIGN¹

Mark Hutchings

Middleton and Rowley wrote the best known and undoubtedly most successful of their collaborations to fit the indoor theatre.² Our understanding of both the compositional process and the play in performance – insofar as any kind of putative ‘reconstruction’ is possible – depends on an appreciation of this fact.³ This essay explores the play in terms of its makers’ strategy and the role of the audience in the making of meaning, which requires a reassessment of what the printed play may be shown to represent.

All plays from the period depended not only on what was *scripted* (which might or might not correlate with the surviving witness[es]) but on the relationship between ‘the play’, as we customarily regard it, and the *offstage* play-world behind the *frons scenae* that was always present in the audience’s consciousness. In other words, the narrative links that underpinned the play’s shifts between scenes and plots, through the entrances, exits, and re-entrances of its characters. This may be termed a play’s ‘continuity text’. Needless to say, as far as we know this element may never have existed in tangible form, and thus is irretrievable; and yet it must be conjured if we are to attempt to bridge the gap between text and performance/reading event – of this or any other early modern play.

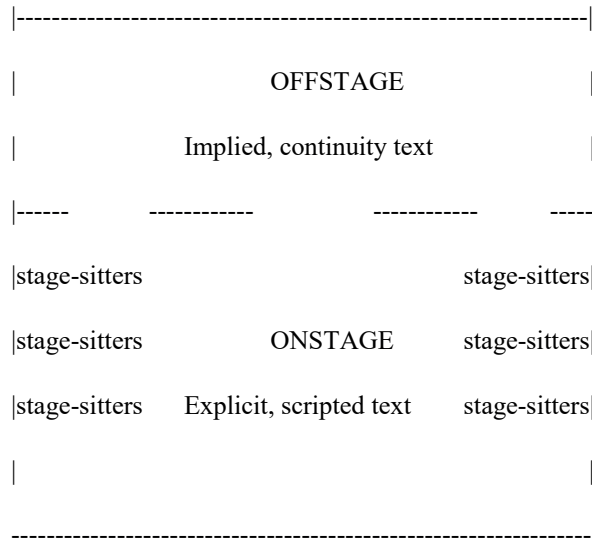
1. This research is part of the I+D project “Misiones y transmisiones: intercambios entre la Península Ibérica y las Islas Británicas en la época moderna”, Grant PID2020-113516GB-I00, funded by Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación and Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI).

2. They had previously written *Wit at Several Weapons* (c.1613-15), *A Fair Quarrel* (1616), *The Inner Temple Masque* (1619), and *The World Tossed at Tennis* (1620) – all for Prince Charles’s Men; they also worked together (possibly with Thomas Heywood) on what was probably another Prince Charles’s Men play, *The Old Law* (1619), and in 1623 would write with Thomas Dekker and John Ford *The Spanish Gypsy*, like *The Changeling* staged by Lady Elizabeth’s Men. For the dates of these plays and the most thorough examination of the playwrights’ collaborations, see Nicol (a); on the play’s reception in the seventeenth century, see Steen.

3. Subsequently, according to the title-page of Q1653, it was revived at the Salisbury Court (which opened some years later, in 1629). For a conjectural reconstruction of the stage architecture of this theatre see Astington; on indoor performance characteristics see Hutchings (b).

Q1653 represents the only printed text of the play first staged thirty years earlier, and is the basis for all modern editions.⁴ Printed for Humphrey Mosley (the most important publisher of drama in the Interregnum) and divided into acts, *The Changeling* today is further subdivided into scenes, and modern editions typically provide a full editorial apparatus together with introductory matter covering its critical and stage history, and so on. While no edition of any play can include the continuity text, as a provisional starting point we can represent the whole schematically as follows:

Figure 1



If we accept the premise that *all* plays depend in their imaginative fiction on an onstage-offstage symbiosis, as Tim Fitzpatrick and Peter Womack have recently reminded us (Fitzpatrick [a]; Womack [a] and [b]), and that in the indoor theatre the four breaks in the action drew particular attention to this (intervals forming a kind of ‘portal’ between these seen and unseen spaces; see Hutchings [b]), then we have the basis for an analysis of *The Changeling* from conception to reception.

To this five-act, fourteen-scene play should be added the four act breaks required for candle-tending purposes in the indoor theatre, which produces the

4. The play was reprinted (Q2) in 1668, when it was staged at court, following the revival of *The Changeling* by the Duke of York’s Company in 1661 (and it had previously been revived at the end of the Interregnum, in 1659); but in deriving entirely from Q1 it has no authority. All references are to Bruster.

following outline (with, for convenience, * denoting the subplot and ** where the two plots converge):⁵

Figure 2

1.1
 1.2 *
 Interval
 2.1
 2.2
 Interval
 3.1
 3.2
 3.3 *
 3.4
 Interval
 4.1 **
 4.2
 4.3 *
 Interval
 5.1
 5.2 **
 5.3 **

Taking these units together we have a total of eighteen sections, each of which is bookended by a cleared stage. We could frame *The Changeling* as: main plot and subplot (as authorship- and collaboration-focused approaches alike tend to do); the dramatized play punctuated by four act-breaks; or, as I propose in what follows, the onstage action – ‘the play’, as we conventionally understand it – combined with the continuity text offstage, creatively imagined behind the scenes, together with the ‘bleed-through’, as it were, between these two spheres across the interval at the 1/2, 2/3, 3/4, and 4/5 act breaks (and at moments of unseen but *heard* action, signalled by the stage direction ‘*within*’). That is, we would map the second schema onto the first.

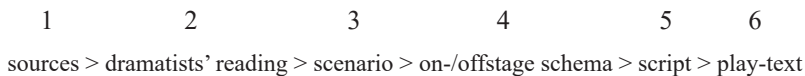
This requires a degree of ‘reverse engineering’. Scholars have demonstrated how the playwrights drew on two principal sources, ‘A Spanish History’, in John Reynolds’ much-reprinted compendium *The Triumphs of God’s Revenge*, first published in 1621, and John Digges’s translation of Gonzalo de Céspedes’ *Poema Trágico del Español Gerardo* (*Gerardo the Unfortunate Spaniard*,

5. Neill is exceptional in not introducing a new scene ten lines into act 3, for which he provides a rationale (3.1.0sdn); the standard recognised division is as given above.

1622).⁶ In terms of how the two dramatists divided the labour, an earlier collaboration, *A Fair Quarrel*, provided a model (Mooney). But while we are familiar with the *result*, there is more to be said about the *process*. Specifically, we might speculate about the midpoint stage between source material and play-script. The dramatists began with what I will call a ‘scenario’: not, yet, a story, let alone a plot, but a rough working, a thinking through of an outline – perhaps before a word of dialogue was written.

What did this ‘prescript’ process look like? Let us try to imagine how Middleton and Rowley constructed their play. It is not simply that they chose what was to be shown, onstage; it is also that, in making this calculation, they decided what would happen, off – *included*, but ‘unstaged’, as it were. They began, then, with an overall scenario – *not*, as we commonly assume, with a version of the play that would emerge subsequently and (in the case of *The Changeling*) find its way into print. We might represent this sequence as follows, where the fourth category in this schema is preferred to the conventional term ‘plot’ because it more accurately captures how stage 3 is ‘converted’ into a text that straddles the *frons*, as it were, which then in turn is resolved into stage 5 (the text presented to the company), that the actors then prepare as the performance text (6):

Figure 3



Conventional accounts of playmaking typically run 1 > 2 > 5 > 6: understandably so, since usually there is an evidentiary basis for this narrative. The intermediate steps are what we are concerned with here: the process 3 > 4. The *play* (5, 6), that is, at this point does not exist; much later it will become the text as we know it, Q1653 – which from our viewpoint at this earlier stage of its gestation is a subset of, and emerges from, the scenario (3) and on-/offstage schema (4). The crucial point in the sequence is where the scenario (which for convenience we might think of, provisionally, as ‘literary’) is transformed into something ‘theatrical’ – which I call (in preference to ‘plot’, to distinguish it from how we tend to use the term, to describe the narrative of the visible, printed play) the on-/offstage schema. In devising the scenario, which consists

6. Perhaps, as editors speculate, one or both playwrights read this text in the original Spanish; on Middleton’s likely familiarity with the language see Taylor, ‘Works Included in this Edition’, 437. However, the Spanish in Middleton’s *The Triumphs of Honours and Industry* (1617) is so sophisticated that it seems likely he did not work unaided: see Cano-Echevarria, and also her essay in this volume.

principally of the storyline, the dramatists had next to decide on content and (crucially) structure. Once finalised, the scenario splits, as it were, two ways: onstage and offstage. Only now, reaching this point in the composition process, do we approach familiar territory (5 and 6).

Comparing *The Changeling* with its principal sources establishes (3), and this need not be repeated here. In the remainder of this essay I will focus on analysing (4). We know that Rowley wrote the opening and closing scenes and was responsible for the subplot (thus 1.1 and 5.3, plus 1.2, 3.3, and 4.3, as well as the first sixteen lines of 4.1); Middleton's role was exclusively confined to the main plot – all of act 2, and the first two scenes of acts 3-5 (save Rowley's portion of 4.1), plus 3.4. The third component of this labour was the continuity text, which although determined (today) entirely by inference rather than solid evidence, offers a narrative thread connecting composition, performance, and reception.

First was the story, and then the structure. Although commentators of a century and more ago felt uneasy about the madhouse scenes in what was otherwise considered to be an orthodox tragedy, a view frequently shared by modern directors who often cut down and sometimes omit 1.2, 3.3, and 4.3 entirely, the subplot was fundamental to the design of the play. William Empson established what might be described as the 'literary' case for the subplot, concluding that 'the madhouse dominates *every* scene; every irony refers back to it' (Empson, 49), and Christopher Ricks demonstrated the thematic and linguistic interplay between the two plots (Ricks; see also Levin, 34-48). But what tends to be missed in such 'thematic' approaches is its structural significance (which ironically is most obvious in productions where the madhouse scenes are left out). A simple observation is key here: the subplot scenes substantially made the main plot possible, and vice versa. Multiple plots had a 'literary' purpose, in the play-world, of course, but they were also essential in a curtain-less theatre where the stage is always visible. To employ another cinematic term, the early modern theatre depended on 'cross-cutting' between scenes, and this required *every* play to run along more than one plotline. Not only that, but each plotline continued, offstage, behind the scene(s). The continuity text is the continuation of plotlines by other means.

But this takes us to a point where we must finesse the main plot/subplot distinction, for as we have already seen, while the subplot scenes are discrete, bounded by main plot scenes, with the castle plot there are consecutive scenes, *viz.*: 2.1-2.2; 3.1-3.2; 4.1-4.2; and 5.1-5.3. This might be taken to reflect the relative importance of the two plots, but it also demonstrates how a single plotline establishes a logic of *place* demarcated by the *frons* and the entry/exit points. Thus we have two types of switching: between the two plots, and within the main plot; to which must be added the four act breaks, which in the case

of 2/3 and 3/4 allow the castle plot to continue, as the new act begins (both are examples of intervals performing the same function as an interposing scene from another plotline). Collectively this narrative structure constructs the constituent parts of the performance, as (presumably) envisaged by the playwrights when they adapted the scenario to work in the theatre.

The interplay between the two plots suggests that this was a close collaboration. Precisely how Middleton and Rowley worked out the conversion of their scenario to an on-/offstage schema – 3 > 4 – is unknown, but we do of course have the result, and this is our starting point. From the extant text we can then ‘recompose’ the continuity text from the play, which gives us stage 4. The obvious objection to such a proposition is that, since no such text exists, any attempt to ‘reconstruct’ it is both fruitless and misguided; moreover, any such ‘findings’ can have no authority or, therefore, usefulness. True, it is insufficient to state or claim that in performance (especially) and reading this drama relies on spectators and readers to make these artefacts work, despite the fact that we have come to recognise that audiences played a significant role in the making of meaning through their acceptance of a range of conventions on which this theatre depended. Above all, any such supposition would have no more legitimacy or claim to our attention than a freewheeling hypothesis about, say, the nature of the costumes or props used in seventeenth-century productions of the play. But in fact the play-text on which all scholarship on *The Changeling* depends is far from silent on the matter of the continuity text. That is to say, Q1653 supplies the cues the audience/reader required to create a ‘mental map’ of the offstage elements of the play-narrative. The dramatists may not have *written* the continuity text but it was central to their conception of the play, and to its performance and reception. Thinking about the continuity text brings into focus the audience’s active role in making meaning, navigating its way through the play with the aid of visual and aural coordinates in the form of onstage dialogue and the entrances and exits of characters crossing and recrossing the threshold between play-world locations.

‘Location’ is the keyword for the continuity text. For playwrights and playgoers the plot is anchored in place. At the scenario stage the playwrights established that the entire play would be set in Alicante, a rationalising of their source material that also enabled them to emphasise the claustrophobia the indoor playhouse invited. The opening scene aside, *The Changeling* is confined to the castle and madhouse interiors, each scene consisting of interlinked rooms and passages, every one illustrating what Peter Womack terms ‘fictional adjacency’, namely the locational inter-dependency of stage and offstage locales (Womack [a], 73-76). On a bare stage without the scenery that would come later in the century the performance of plays depended principally on dialogue to communicate the sense of place and movement integral to the plot, but also

on enter/exit conventions specific to this theatre; as we shall see, this aural/visual combination was key to the construction of the continuity text. For play readers, disadvantaged inasmuch as they had to imaginatively recreate the visual elements of performance, descriptive stage directions went some way to remedying the deficiency. From the scholar's point of view it is necessary to think of Q1653 as (however problematically) both 'representing' performance and the chief source of evidence for the continuity text.

If the text is at pains to establish place as a key element of plot, nevertheless the question of location is more complicated than is commonly understood. From the eighteenth century on editors were accustomed to signalling the location of the action, often in the body of the text, at the beginning of each scene, while in later practice such information has tended to be given in the notes (Dessen, 84). But as Alan C. Dessen has shown, even within a scene the location is often fluid rather than stable (Dessen, 84-104). Paradoxically, we are on firmer ground with offstage locations. Although invisible to the audience, it is often explicit (and otherwise implicit) where characters entering the stage come *from*, or exit *to*, even if only in general terms. Strange as it may seem, then, what is of the utmost significance in this theatre is the wider, unseen world, rather than what the stage signifies 'itself' (a signifier without meaning); firmly established (in composition and performance), the comparative solidity of place(s), offstage, facilitates representational fluidity onstage. Indeed, as Dessen points out, fixity of place offstage, in the course of a scene, is what makes possible shifts in location within a scene onstage: the (invisible, imagined) 'places' offstage enable the bare stage to function with the economy of representation that characterized the early modern theatre, such as in the examples he cites (Dessen, 86ff.). In his discussion of the term's etymology, Bruce R. Smith finds a 'solid grounding in *scene* as stage structure' (Smith, 105; italics added). Undoubtedly so, but it is the underlying infrastructure and the *surrounding* theatre architecture, which encompasses the other side of the *frons*, that makes the scene – and, crucially, the one after that – possible.

The *frons* physically divides stage from tiring-house, and was no doubt of robust construction; but in the play-world it is porous, and signifies principally as a temporary, ever-changing line between the two (by no means equal) halves of the play. *Textually* the play is of course almost exclusively what is visually available to the audience; in terms of the audience's cognition of the play-world, however, the onstage is never more (and is frequently considerably less) than the tip of the iceberg, unseen off. Commenting on a recent production of *The Changeling* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, Peter Womack observes that

[t]his configuration [where almost the entire *frons* is taken up by the three entrance/exit doors] tends to tie the visible action to whatever is supposed to be behind the screen. We are constantly aware of a set of closed doors which

may open at any time; and this compromises the autonomy of what we actually see. (Womack [b], 94)

What relation this modern space bears to an early modern indoor playhouse is open to question (see Syme), while our knowledge of the architecture and dimensions of the Cockpit/Phoenix and Salisbury Court theatres, where the play is known to have been staged, are similarly conjectural (see Teague and Astington respectively). But Womack's point surely holds. In Middleton and Rowley's play, he observes,

the scene itself is located quite vaguely: in conformity with the logic of a bare stage, the writing takes little interest in the question of where the action is supposed to be taking place. But the *offstage* location – the church [1.1], the confined lunatics [1.2, 3.2, 4.3], the closet [4.1, 4.2, 5.3], the marriage bed [5.1] – is specific and charged with meaning. The stage stands for a place which matters not because of where it is but because of where it is *near*. ... In short, *The Changeling* is typically set somewhere just outside a closed and significant room. (Womack [b], 95; italics original)

This of course upends conventional wisdom – where we consciously or otherwise take the 'autonomy' of the stage representation for granted. Paradoxically, what cannot be seen not only influences but determines what can be; the space in front of the *frons* draws attention to what is behind it. Conventional wisdom privileges the *literary* text – the most tangible trace of an early modern play – even when scholars concern themselves with its iteration in the theatre, but it is clear that we also need to follow the paths offstage these texts direct us towards.

Scholars pay surprisingly little attention to one of the fundamentals of theatre-making – how entry/exit points are used, and therefore the relationship between theatre architecture and play-world fiction.⁷ Yet for modern directors and the drama's earliest readers alike the printed witnesses contain clues to the 'map' of the play either side of the *frons*. In their invaluable dictionary Alan C. Dessen and Leslie Thomson identify the significance of a series of 'as –' directions, notably 'as from':

a large sub-category of *as [if]* signals used to denote recently completed off-stage actions or events that (1) pose significant staging problems or (2) have been sidestepped in order to speed up the narrative; the result can be a sense of actions, places, or a 'world' just offstage to be imagined by the playgoer[.] (Dessen and Thomson, 13; emphasis original)

The reader is to imagine 'as from', or simply take in the information, while playgoers may have received a visual cue, and/or reinforcement through dialogue. Indeed, the opening of *The Changeling*, "'Twas in the temple where I

7. Exceptions include Gurr and Ichikawa, and Ichikawa [a] and [b].

first beheld her' (1.1.1) subsumes 'as from' in Alsemero's soliloquy: he has come from the church, as these first lines underscore.

In such instances we may detect traces of the $3 > 4$ process, pointing as they do to the playwrights' decision-making. We can state with certainty how the playwrights arrived at one particular decision, which is not quite covered by the two categories Dessen and Thomson give above. In reworking their source material Middleton and Rowley place De Flores's desire for Beatrice and the rape that ensues at the heart of the play: the plot leads inexorably towards it, and then draws out its ramifications. But they could not stage the attack. This pivotal event was always going to take place offstage, the dramatists constrained for reasons of decorum in ways modern directors are not. But depicting the rape on stage, as modern productions often do, erases the strategy adopted in the original. Unable to stage the rape, Middleton and Rowley exploited the interval instead. De Flores declares his intention at the end of 3.4, and leads Beatrice offstage. Following the 3/4 act break the 4.1 dumb show concludes with Alsemero acclaimed as the match for Beatrice, and she enters with her train, before the stage is cleared; then she re-enters, alone: 'This fellow has undone me endlessly' (4.1.1). What has happened? Nothing onstage; everything offstage. Or rather: in the interval, *in the audience*. During the break between the acts, the play continues (as it does at 2/3), and at 4.1.1 confirmation comes. (Compare the rape of Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, which outdoors takes place offstage while the play continues onstage.) This is the interval as a spatial/temporal in-between, neither onstage nor offstage. The rape takes place temporally, not spatially; but in that mental space (as we might call it today) the audience participatively experiences the scene that is not staged.

The interval deconstructs the onstage/offstage opposition at another point in the play, at the previous act break. At 2/3 there is an uncanny moment where the demarcation between onstage and offstage is curiously undermined. This exploitation of the interval has been discussed elsewhere (see Hutchings [a]), but it is worth mentioning here because it shows how, in this play, the playwrights show a particular alertness to the onstage-offstage dynamic, though it must be emphasized that such exceptions prove the rule. Striking though the scripting of the interval at 2/3 and 3/4 is, we ought not to allow parts to overshadow the whole. Womack demonstrates how *The Changeling* gestures at certain points to 'closed and significant room[s]' behind the *frons*, but in the spectator's consciousness this is not an intermittent, 'stop-start' phenomenon but a constant whose existence is illuminated (and sometimes highlighted, such as the instances he identifies, as well as others) throughout the play. Middleton and Rowley also use 1/2 and 4/5 to script the offstage at the beginning and ending of acts 2 and 4 respectively. Examination of play-texts shows that regardless of the number of characters involved scenes begin and end by using a single entry/exit

point, because the other door is needed for the preceding/following scene; the exceptions are at the opening and closing of plays, and at act breaks. Take the beginning of act 2: ‘*Enter Beatrice and Jasperino severally*’ (2.1.0sd) signals that the two characters enter at different doors (*severally* means ‘separately’), which the dialogue confirms (Dessen and Thomson, 192-93). This is possible because 1/2 makes both doors available. This meeting onstage constructs *two* places offstage, within the castle, designating the visible space (in Womack’s formulation) a ‘threshold’ onto the wider world (Womack [a], 79-81). This is our first ‘experience’ of the castle; although the rendezvous sets Beatrice and Alsemero’s liaison in train, the scene is the first hint that the significant action occurs offstage, in the recesses and passages to which De Flores has (despite his relatively low social status) apparently unrestricted access. From the end of 1.1 it is established that he is the enemy within, and for all his stage presence (at 422 lines his role is second only to Beatrice’s 541: see Bruster, 1678) his proper domain is offstage, undermining the edifice. The 2/3 interval business, leading up to Alonzo’s murder, not only underscores his villainy but serves as a connector between the visible and invisible parts of the play-world.

As with the 1/2 interval, at 4/5 the play shifts from the madhouse to the castle. Here it is likely that the climactic end to the subplot makes use of the interval (even to the point of displacing the customary music that accompanied candle-mending). The rehearsal of the masque with which the act ends, ‘*The Madmen and the Fools dance [to music]*’ (4.3.224sd), is the culmination of the subplot’s evocation of the offstage, that here (as it had threatened to in 3.3.9-10sd) spills over into the ‘play proper’. There, the Madmen enter ‘*above*’: not quite *onstage*, but no longer off. Previously the Madmen have been heard but not seen, ‘*within*’ (1.2.203sd, 3.3.122sd, 181sd), ‘just off stage, intimated by cries and by the repeated exits and re-entrances of the keeper Lollo’ (Womack [b], 94). In these three scenes there is a progressive encroaching from this offstage world that erupts finally at the end of 4.3.⁸ The sd ‘*within*’ signals an in-between status, neither off nor on, until this moment – which sets up the denouement of act 5. Thus all four intervals contribute overtly and covertly to the functioning of the offstage world.

Reading for or to the continuity text requires an unconventional approach to early modern drama. Instead of focusing on the scripted play as the object of interest we have to enquire of it what it can tell us about the text underpinning it behind the scenes. A further move is then to return to the ‘whole’, but for the purposes of this essay my focus necessarily is on establishing the continuity text. There are various ways this might be done. Careful examination of

8. Scholars have long pondered whether the actual masque (as well as other material) was originally part of the play but omitted from Q1653: see Nicol [b].

explicit sds (entrances and exits) in the light of staging conventions, together with implied sds in the dialogue, allows for a putative ‘reconstruction’ of this component. This might also be expressed in tabular form, as follows. The aim is to concentrate on two features: onstage-offstage movement, and the designation of offstage locations. (The legend below explains the shorthand symbols.) Every entrance and exit in *The Changeling* is listed, providing an at-a-glance synopsis of the play. Comparing the tabular information with an edition of the play facilitates a more nuanced sense of location, but this is to be determined by the reader: clearly the repeated term ‘(interior)’ does not designate a single, identical space but is to be further broken down, into, for example, Alsemero’s chamber, Diaphanta’s chamber, and so on.

Figure 4

	Onstage: scripted text	Offstage: continuity text	On-/Offstage choreographed movement
1.1	Alicante, outside the castle.	Locations: church; harbour; castle.	Alsemero < church; Jasperino < harbour; Servants << harbour; Servants >> harbour; Beatrice, Diaphanta & Servants << church; De Flores < castle; Vermandero, & Servants << castle. Vermandero, Beatrice, Diaphanta, Alsemero, Jasperino & Servants >> castle; De Flores > castle.
1.2*	Location: Madhouse	Locations: Madhouse (Castle)	Alibius & Lollo << madhouse (interior); Pedro & Antonio << madhouse (interior); [Pedro > madhouse (interior)]; *Madmen within; Alibius > madhouse (interior); Lollo & Antonio >> madhouse (interior).
Interval			
2.1	Location: Castle	Locations: Castle (Madhouse)	Beatrice < castle (interior) (S); Jasperino < castle (interior) (S); Jasperino > castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior); Vermandero, Alonzo, Tomazo << castle (interior); Vermandero & Beatrice >> castle (interior); Alonzo > castle (interior); Tomazo > castle (interior).

	Onstage: scripted text	Offstage: continuity text	On-/Offstage choreographed movement
2.2	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	Diaphanta & Alsemero << castle (interior); Diaphanta > castle (interior); Beatrice < castle (interior); Diaphanta < castle (interior); Diaphanta & Alsemero >> castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); Beatrice > castle (interior); Alonzo < castle (interior); Alonzo & De Flores >>? castle (interior).
Interval	Castle*	Castle (Madhouse)	De Flores < castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior).
3.1	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	Alonzo & De Flores << castle (interior); De Flores & Alonzo >> castle (interior).
3.2	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	De Flores & Alonzo << castle (interior); De Flores & Alonzo >> castle (interior).
3.3*	Location: Madhouse	Location: Madhouse (Castle)	Isabel & Lollo << madhouse (interior); Lollo > madhouse (interior); Lollo < madhouse (interior); Franciscus < madhouse (interior); Franciscus > madhouse (interior); Antonio < madhouse (interior); Lollo > madhouse (interior); Lollo < madhouse (interior); *Madmen within; Lollo > madhouse (interior); Lollo < madhouse (<i>above</i>); Lollo > madhouse (interior); Madmen << madhouse (<i>above</i>); Lollo < madhouse (interior); Lollo & Antonio >> madhouse (interior); Lollo < madhouse (interior); Alibius < madhouse (interior); Alibius, Isabela, & Lollo >> madhouse (interior).
3.4	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	Vermadero, Alsemero, Jasperino, & Beatrice << castle (interior); Vermadero, Alsemero, & Jasperino >> castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); De Flores & Beatrice >> castle (interior).
Interval			

	Onstage: scripted text	Offstage: continuity text	On-/Offstage choreographed movement
4.1**	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	Gentlemen << castle (interior) (S); Vermandero < castle (interior) (S); Alsemero, Jasperino & Gallants << castle (interior); Beatrice, Diaphanta, Isabella, Gentlewomen << castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); Alonzo's Ghost < castle (interior); Gentlemen, Vermandero, Alsemero, Jasperino, Gallants, Beatrice, Diaphanta, Isabella, Gentlewomen, De Flores, Alonzo's Ghost >> castle (interior); Beatrice < castle (interior); Diaphanta < castle (interior); Beatrice & Diaphanta >> castle (interior).
4.2	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	Vermandero & Servant << castle (interior); Servant > castle (interior); Tomazo < castle (interior); Vermandero > castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior); Alsemero < castle (interior); Tomazo > castle (interior); Jasperino < castle (interior); Jasperino > castle (interior); Beatrice < castle (interior); Jasperino < castle (interior); Alsemero, Jasperino & Beatrice >> castle (interior).
4.3*	Location: Madhouse	Location: Madhouse (Castle)	Isabella & Lollo << madhouse (interior); Isabella > madhouse (interior); Alibius < madhouse (interior); Alibius > madhouse (interior); Antonio < madhouse (interior); Lollo > madhouse (interior); Isabella < madhouse (interior); Isabella > madhouse (interior); Lollo < madhouse (interior); [Antonio > madhouse (interior)]; Franciscus < madhouse (interior); [Franciscus > madhouse (interior)]; Alibius < madhouse (interior); [Lollo > madhouse (interior)]; Madmen & Fools << madhouse (interior); Madmen & Fools >> madhouse (interior); Alibius >/>> madhouse (interior).
Interval			

	Onstage: scripted text	Offstage: continuity text	On-/Offstage choreographed movement
5.1	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	Beatrice < castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); Alonzo's Ghost < castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior); [Alonzo's Ghost > castle (interior)]; De Flores & Servants << castle (interior); Servants >> castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior); Diaphanta < castle (interior); Diaphanta > castle (interior); Alsemero < castle (interior); Vermandero & Jasperino <</< castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); Servant < castle (interior); Vermandero, Beatrice, Alsemero, Jasperino, Servant >> castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior).
5.2**	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	Tomazo < castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior); De Flores < castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior); Vermandero, Alibius & Isabella << castle (interior); Vermandero, Alibius, Isabella & Tomazo >> castle (interior).
5.3**	Location: Castle	Location: Castle (Madhouse)	Alsemero & Jasperino << castle (interior); Jasperino > castle (interior); Beatrice < castle (interior); Beatrice > castle (interior – closet); De Flores < castle (interior); De Flores > castle (interior – closet); Vermandero, Alibius, Isabella, Tomazo, Franciscus & Antonio << castle (interior); De Flores & Beatrice << castle (interior – closet); Alsemero, Vermandero, Alibius, Isabella, Tomazo, Franciscus & Antonio >> castle (interior).

< means entering *from*, > exiting *to*; << and >> indicate group movement, through the *same* door; <> signals that although they are heard, offstage, the madmen remain within; (S), 'severally' in the original stage direction, or where this is implied, indicates that characters enter simultaneously but separately, i.e. from different entry/exit points; square brackets indicate where stage directions are editorial. For each unit the play's on-/offstage choreography is shown in sequence.

The table provides a distillation of the locale markers and onstage/offstage movement, which provides the basis for an intra-scene and inter-scene construction of the continuity text. Readers with a reasonable knowledge of *The Changeling* should be able to follow this ‘version’ of the play. (In the third column a bracketed location is used to indicate that the plotline not on the stage for that scene nevertheless continues, offstage.) Thus for example we learn in 5.2 from Alibius that Isabella has revealed to him that Antonio and Franciscus were in disguise in the madhouse at the time of Alonzo’s murder in 3.2, and so become Vermandero’s chief suspects; it is true, as David Nicol points out, that ‘important developments are left offstage and an expected scene does not happen’ (Nicol [b], 267), but as this essay proposes, offstage action is not absent from the play as such, if we are to understand plays ‘in the round’. In this instance Alibius is not only reporting information to Vermandero but doing what characters do in any early modern play: bringing to light onstage what in the interim has happened in the offstage world (here, between 4.3 and 5.2).

This table facilitates an interactive approach to the play. However it was that the 3 > 4 conversion was conceptualised in the early modern theatre – for example, important considerations such as the doubling of roles must have been part of the process fairly early on – we do know from the few surviving playhouse plots that onstage-offstage choreography was depicted visually, diagrammatically (see Greg, Stern). On a single sheet, posted in the tiring-house, the plot was laid out as boxes (sometimes lacking the lefthand vertical line), each designating a scene. The key information these documents contained was the identity of characters (or actors) required onstage for each scene. Like MS and printed plays, in these documents the offstage is implicit but, in the theatre building, also unnecessary: the plot was in the tiring-house itself. What this essay proposes is that apart from our habitual reading between the lines we need also to read behind the scenes, behind ‘the play’, if we are to grasp how this drama worked in performance.

Inevitably, questions remain. To conclude, let us examine how dialogue helps to establish the continuity text (and does so in a more detailed fashion than directions for entrances or exits). In every play from the period characters either indicate where they are going or (in the case of servants or subordinates) they are instructed to go somewhere, or to someone: in both situations this gives their exit meaning, in two respects. Firstly, it explains the purpose of their exit. Secondly, it connects the exit point chosen with that purpose. In other words, the movement from the stage effectively designates an offstage location – not that that location is *fixed*, except (at that moment) within the scene. Although there is little direct evidence for the precise use of doors, for the

onstage and offstage to signify in combination there must have been (at least within the individual scene) a logic at work. For example, when Diaphanta enters from Alsemero's bed and is instructed by Beatrice, 'Hie quickly to your chamber' (5.1.79), she must enter from one door and exit through another – the same door, logically, from which De Flores emerges some lines later with her dead body. For this sequence, one door leads to Alsemero's chamber, the other to Diaphanta's; not *only* to these two places, for the scene features entrances from and exits to other locations in the castle, but symbolically it is so in this short sequence. Beatrice's soliloquy at the beginning of the scene tells us where Diaphanta is, and therefore where she is coming from, when she enters; and her instruction tells us where she goes. (And very probably, certainly it would be logical, De Flores – 'Your reward follows you' [5.1.80] – uses the same door.) These are a form of implicit stage direction embedded in the dialogue; so commonplace as they are, their principal function is to provide the coordinates of the continuity text. They are part of the apparatus of the play both at an early stage of its gestation, i.e. at 3 > 4, and for its successful production in the theatre.

But if we wish to take the exploration a step further we could think in more detail about how the doors themselves in the *frons* signified – in other words, not to a generic offstage but to specific types of offstage area. Constructing a 'mental map' of the offstage world was central to understanding how the onstage action signified for audiences. A very interesting approach in this respect is Tim Fitzpatrick's conceptualising of the stage as being the apex of a triangle that is completed via the two flanking doors. Importantly, the way the fiction works here is that the doors into the tiring-house give off to *different* locations. Fitzpatrick's aim is to show that plays in this period could be staged using only two doors (obviating the need for a central opening or discovery space). One way of thinking about the continuity text would be to adapt his theory so that offstage locations of *The Changeling* as set out above are part of a logic of choreography whereby, although both onstage and offstage locations change from scene to scene, there is a consistency in the movement of particular characters that underscores a spectator's mapping of the relationship between what is being staged and what is being constructed through that staging, by paying attention to the choreographing of entrances and exits. For example, Fitzpatrick posits a binary model whereby one door (stage right in his formulation) represents one or more of three characteristics, opposed by their contraries symbolised by entrances and exits through the stage left door, as follows (Fitzpatrick [b]; labels slightly modified):

stage was a part, scene by scene. Such endeavours, based on textual exploration and experiment through trial and error, may yet reveal further ‘secrets’ (one of the play’s recurring themes), or at any rate shed some more light on how the continuity text operated in *The Changeling*.

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