



The Text Known as Henslowe's Diary Document, Book, Work

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Abstract

Philip Henslowe's account and memorandum book has been known to scholars since 1845, when J.P. Collier published its transcript with introduction and notes. F.G. Fleay later called it 'the most valuable relic of all that we possess concerning the Elizabethan stage', and all subsequent scholars have agreed. Over the years the text has been thoroughly researched, duly edited, reproduced in a facsimile edition and, more recently, digitised on the website of the Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project. Why, then, dedicate yet more attention to a text so amply and authoritatively discussed? The aim of the present essay is to propose a view of the Diary in the first place as a mobile text, one which has migrated and been re-manipulated in various ways from edition to edition, in each case 'secured' in accordance with different critical principles; and secondly as a text incorporating a number of discursive genres and as raising a number of authorship attribution problems. In other words, I suggest that, rather than simply seeing the Diary – as it has generally and understandably been seen so far – as a text witnessing to events and actions and useful for filling lacunae in our knowledge of a particular historical context, we view it as a linguistic site in which distortions, restorations and interpretations have been generated, and a range of different meanings constructed.

Keywords: *Diary, Multiple Authorship, Philip Henslowe, Text Manipulation, Text Migration*

1. *The Document and the Book*¹

The book containing the manuscript document of Philip Henslowe's accounts and miscellaneous notes is kept in the library

¹ By 'document' I mean the manuscript of the Diary as a documentary object in itself – what Paul Eggert calls 'ink on paper' (1994, 76, n. 16); but I also mean the text in its 'documentary' value as a witness and a source of information on theatre history. In referring to it as a 'book', I intend the artefact in its materiality, the bound (and rebound) volume which contains two documents: John Henslowe's Accounts and Philip Henslowe's Diary. Greg shows interest in the material aspects of the book when he says: 'It would be interesting to have a minute description of the volume before it was rebound, but such unfortunately does not appear to exist' (1904, xvii). The volume was apparently rebound when G.F. Warner undertook the preparation of his *Catalogue* (1881). I will discuss the rather problematic idea of 'work' as applied to the Diary in section 6.1 of the present article. As ever, and more than ever, Jeanne Clegg was a friendly but inflexible adviser.

of Dulwich College in South London. It was allegedly deposited there by Edward Alleyn, the founder of the College, together with a mass of other manuscripts belonging to him or to his father-in-law and partner Philip Henslowe after Henslowe's death in 1616. Until about 1790, the book reposed in a chest, undisturbed and unnoticed, together with the mass of other papers which Alleyn, for some reason, thought worth conserving.

Henslowe's text has rightly been thought of and exploited as an invaluable witness to events, actions and people connected with the entertainment business that developed in England during the last decade of the sixteenth century, and more generally, as throwing light on the practices of which the cultural experience we call 'Elizabethan theatre' was made up. Conversely, the Diary has been little studied as a mobile text subject to such migrations as transcription, reconstruction, revision, editorial securing and also distortion; and even less as a linguistic site with characteristics of its own firstly in terms of genre, but also as a sociological document springing from a (new) non-elite social class, that is, as a specimen of what Roger Chartier calls *écritures ordinaires*; or as an example of an 'egodocument' composed for the purpose of 'leaving a trace'. Finally, its meaning and structure in terms of co-authorship and collaboration appear to have been barely noticed at all.

I will first deal with the story of the transmission of the Diary from Henslowe to Alleyn and finally to the library of Dulwich College. I then outline the actions taken by its readers and editors from mid-nineteenth up to mid-twentieth century, exploring the aims which dictated the various ways of transcribing, commenting on, annotating, cataloguing and, more generally, securing but also sometimes corrupting the text. I then move on to reflect on the genre or genres to which the Diary may be ascribed, discussing the reasons why it may be inappropriate to describe it as a 'diary', exploring its 'egodocumentary' characteristics and, finally, its authorial peculiarity as a text collaboratively composed.²

2. *Into Alleyn's Hands*

The story of the Diary's transmission can only be a matter of inference. That the book passed into Alleyn's hands at Henslowe's death in 1616 cannot be ascertained for sure; even less is it certain that this happened at the explicit wish of Henslowe. Editors are cautious on this point. Collier maintained that 'Alleyn seems to have deposited in the [Dulwich] library, or in the archives, all the books and documents of which he was possessed, many of which had devolved into his hands from Philip Henslowe' (1845, viii). Greg stated that 'Into [Alleyn's] hands Henslowe's papers, the Diary among them, passed, presumably on the latter's death in 1616' (1904, xiii). According to Foakes and Rickert, after 1609, when the last of Henslowe's jottings was inscribed in the book, 'no doubt at [Henslowe's] death in 1616, the volume passed to Edward Alleyn ... and so eventually became part of the library of the College of God's Gift' (1961, xi).

The point is that Henslowe's will does not mention either the book or other papers among his legacies (see Honigmann and Brock 1993, 101-104). Indeed, at his death, it was not clear to whom his property as a whole was to be devolved, and the Diary and the thousands of other papers were obviously the least of the concerns of the competing heirs, heirs who, in the last hours of his life, acted to secure for themselves his substantial patrimony, and who, after his death, entered into a long and tiring litigation to secure for themselves part of the deceased's

² More or less detailed descriptions of the Diary are to be found in Greg 1904, xv-xviii, Foakes and Rickert 1961, xii-xiv. Collier merely states that 'The manuscript is mainly in the handwriting of Henslowe', and that 'it is a folio volume of considerable bulk, bound in parchment' (1845, viii-ix).

material patrimony.³ The theatrical papers must have been the least important of the things Philip left: proof of ownership of his more substantial properties resided elsewhere: in the muniments, contracts and other legal or semi-legal documents.

A few facts and dates need recalling in order to establish the function and significance of the book for its original users. The book had first been in the hands of Philip's brother John, who used it as an account book for his mining, wood-cutting and extracting operations in the Ashdown forest. 'The bulk of the dated accounts', Foakes and Rickert state, 'relate to 1577 and 1578' (1961, xv). After John discontinued his note-taking, the book was 'laid by for some time, for we next find it in use by Philip Henslowe in London early in 1592' (Greg 1904, xiii), when Philip started using it for his theatrical accounts, his pawnbroking activity, and other miscellaneous matters. Philip's latest entry bears the date 1609, but after 1604 its use was discontinuous and limited, and also between 1603 and 1604 entries are few, scattered and interspersed with blank spaces. We do not know whether the task of recording the accounts relating to Henslowe's and Alleyn's enterprises was entrusted to Alleyn at this time for, unfortunately, we have no sequel in Alleyn's hand, and we are forced to leave the book to subsequent stages in its transformation by editors, critics and readers.

That those papers were kept is a fact, however, for they became a (silent) part of Alleyn's bequest to his cherished College of God's Gift; and it is a fact that, for years, at least from 1609 to 1616, the Diary survived, either in Henslowe's or in Alleyn's dwelling, and was later donated to (or simply 'deposited in') the College, along with other papers and more substantial material items. Many papers may have disappeared, either lost or thrown away, but many remained, in spite of the fact that they – and the Diary, in particular – contained information that was valuable only for the time during which it had been recorded. But, if they survived, they must have been deemed by someone (Alleyn, probably) matters of some importance. Did Alleyn perceive the Diary's value for future generations of scholars? Or was the book transferred fortuitously to its resting place? In other words, was Edward Alleyn, of all the hundreds of people who took part in the unique experience that was the Elizabethan-Jacobean theatre, the only person involved in that adventure who performed the invaluable cultural gesture of preserving some witnesses to that memorable age? Or was 'the most valuable relic of all that we possess concerning the Elizabethan stage' (Fleay 1890, 95) preserved by mere chance?⁴

³ We know the story of the case, which lasted about ten years, from records of subsequent suits in the Chancery Court and in the Star Chamber. The parties were, on the one hand, Alleyn, Henslowe's wife Agnes (who died a few months after her husband), and a certain Roger Cole, a friend of Henslowe's; and, on the other, John Henslowe, son of Philip's brother John, and Philip's younger brother William. The story somehow tarnishes Alleyn's reputation as a pious and generous philanthropist, for it appears that, with the help of Cole, in the hour of Philip's death, he made Philip sign an altered will. Henslowe, it appears, was too weak to make a proper signature, and Alleyn guided his hand; the result was a simple mark which, given the condition of the dying man when the mark was made, was deemed a proper signature. Critics who have told the story usually abstain from expressing moral evaluations. See, among others, Greg 1908, 18-21; Sisson 1929; Foakes and Rickert 1961, xi; Carson 1988, 4. The most explicit detractor of Alleyn's demeanour is John Briley, who accuses Alleyn of 'shrewder maneuvering' (1958, 330), though he does not acquit the 'opportunistic and mendacious' contenders (329). In 1929, Charles Sisson published information contained in Star Chamber Proceedings that had not hitherto been examined. According to Sisson, the Bill, dated 17 May 1617, reveals that not the whole of Henslowe's properties passed into Alleyn's hands, but that much of it went to his brother William and to other relatives. Sisson concludes that 'Henslowe provided handsomely for his own family as well as for the wife ... and for her family' (1929, 310).

⁴ Grace Ioppolo states that 'In insisting in his will that his statutes and other papers remain in perpetuity at Dulwich College, Alleyn not only ensured their survival for four centuries, but recognized that his theatrical manuscripts constituted the first theatre history archive in England' (2011, 38). This may have been what the founder

3. *The Diary's Early Readers*

The first scholars to examine Philip Henslowe's account book read the manuscript, or inspected the book with diverse purposes in mind, and therefore attributed to it diverse meanings and functions.

Edmond Malone, who 'first discovered' the manuscript (Collier 1845, viii) while completing his edition of Shakespeare's plays (1790), thought of publishing some pages in the 'Emendations and Additions' to his 'Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the English Stage':⁵

Just as this work was issuing from the press, some curious Manuscripts relative to the stage, were found at Dulwich College, and obligingly transmitted to me from thence. One of these is a large folio volume of accounts kept by Mr. Philip Henslowe ...

Though it is not now in my power to arrange these very curious materials in their proper places, I am unwilling that the publick should be deprived of the information and entertainment which they may afford; and therefore shall extract from them all such notices as appear to me worthy of preservation. (1821, 295-296)

The nature of Malone's interest in the Diary was therefore mainly determined by the direct or indirect support it could give to his critique and to his historical account.

John Payne Collier was a regular visitor to Dulwich. In 1841, he published, for his newly founded Shakespeare Society, an edition and transcript of Alleyn's Diary (Collier 1841), thereby ingratiating himself with the College authorities. Collier was an avid reader, a prolific writer, and a scholar who, although controversial, 'stood possessed' of a 'vast knowledge' (Greg 1904, xxxvii). At the time, he was actively engaged in promoting the Society's publishing activity with original material and, as a scholar, he thought that the extracts from Henslowe's Diary published by Malone over fifty years before required editorial revision. Accordingly, he stressed the fact that, when the text came into his hands, it was not 'in the state in which it existed when in the hands of Malone' (1845, xii). He also mentions the 'circumstance, that Malone made long and curious quotations from parts of it not now found in the manuscript' (xii-xiii), adding that 'these evidently formed a portion of it, when it was for so many years in his hands' (xiii), thereby suggesting that Malone had been responsible for their disappearance:

There is good reason to suppose that, when Henslowe first availed himself of the parchment-covered book ... leaves and parts of leaves had been cut out; but there can be no doubt that, within perhaps the last fifty years, it has been still farther mutilated ... by inconsiderate lovers of the autographs of our old poets and actors. (*Ibid.*)

Collier's are the earliest allusions to Henslowe's text having suffered mutilations. As the Diary's first editor, he had an interest in censuring the use Malone had made of it; but he also had a meaner purpose: that of authenticating his own forgeries. By accusing Malone of having made cuts, or of having left some passages behind (xv), he could justify his insertions.

G.F. Warner, curator of manuscripts at the British Museum, was commissioned by the Board of Governors of the College to produce a catalogue of Alleyn's papers. He therefore had a bibliographic interest in Henslowe's Diary, as well as in the thousands of other manuscripts

intended, but in fact the only 'papers' mentioned in Alleyn's will, together with 'all the wainscotts, hangings, pictures, Carpetts', and other material items, are 'my bookes and instruments' (Honigmann and Brock 1993, 151).

⁵ My reference text is Malone 1821, the text edited by James Boswell after Malone's death (vol. III). The excerpts Malone reproduced from the Diary with notes and comments occupy pp. 297-335 of this edition. In his 1821 edition, Boswell added a few passages from the Diary and other texts to those published by Malone in his 1790 edition.

kept at Dulwich and which it was his intent to classify, number, describe and repair. Warner also stated that, while the official papers belonging to Alleyn's legacy were kept in the Treasure Chamber of the College, 'there is no reason to believe that [the private papers'] preservation was directly due either to a deliberate intention on the Founder's own part or to reverence entertained for his memory by others' (1881, vii); it was possible, therefore, that they simply 'remained, at Alleyn's death, in that part of the College buildings which he occupied' (*ibid.*).⁶ As to the Diary, he noted that 'The volume has been mutilated in various places by the cutting or tearing out of leaves in whole or in part' (162); and states that 'All the leaves have now been repaired, and the excisions filled in with blank paper'; and that 'The original vellum covers ... are now bound up at the beginning as fly-leaves' (163). Another of Warner's interventions consisted of numbering the pages of the Diary, that he drew in pencil in the upper right corner of each folio; this numbering has since been used as a standard means of reference; in addition, as he did with all the manuscripts and groups of manuscripts he catalogued, he gave the Diary a reference number (MS VII) which is still universally used by scholars.

As regards the 'modern fabrications', Warner believed that they were motivated by 'a desire on the part of the forger to palm off upon the world suppositious facts in connexion with Shakespeare and the other early dramatists' (xxxvi); he did his best, however, not to impute forgeries explicitly to Collier, speaking rather of 'some unscrupulous forger' who had introduced some 'spurious matter' into the manuscript (xii), and apparently acquitting Malone: 'there is nothing in all Malone's published writings to justify the least suspicion that he was capable of forgery' (xli).

The scholar to whom the book next passed was F.G. Fleay, who admitted to being daunted by 'the immense difficulty of using it for purposes of reference' (1890, 94). He published several extracts from 'the entries of play performances and [Henslowe's] payments to authors' (95),⁷ entries which appeared to him to 'make the document, as a whole, the most valuable relic of all that we possess concerning the Elizabethan stage' (*ibid.*). Fleay was one of a group of late-nineteenth-century scholars who were trying to remodel Shakespeare scholarship and whose idea was to establish authorship and dating on the basis of numerical or metrical criteria by what they believed was a more 'scientific' method than had been attempted before. He was therefore highly suspicious of Collier's empirical textual demeanour, and wished to show his many flaws as an editor. Considering his forgeries, he maintained that Collier's 1845 edition of the Diary was 'a disgrace to English literature' and added that 'the Dulwich authorities would do well to have it re-edited by a competent hand, with careful elision of his numerous forgeries, and with the matter arranged in a serviceable consecution, of course without infringing on the accuracy of the text' (94-95). Fleay's advice was to result in W.W. Greg's edition of 1904.

4. *The Diary Manipulated*

4.1 *Excisions and Dispersion*

Collier seems to have been right when he stated that, after being in Malone's hands for years (apparently from at least 1790 until Malone's death in 1812), the book had been returned to Dulwich College with seriously damaging excisions. Lacking final proof thereof, however, later

⁶ The alternative clearly suggests different ways in which those papers may have been considered by their proprietor; in particular, whether they were meant as noteworthy evidence of his personal and professional activities or simply as his private archive.

⁷ The extracts, often interrupted by comments, occupy the pages from 95 to 116 of Fleay's book.

scholars seem unwilling to impute the disappearance of those fragments, or whole pages, to Malone, and express more nuanced opinions.

Warner notes that ‘The volume has been mutilated in various places by the cutting or tearing out of leaves in whole or in part. In some cases the mutilation dates apparently from Henslowe’s own time, but much of it is probably of a later period’ (1881, 162-163). That one of the leaves which had been cut was dispersed and later recovered is also mentioned: ‘A narrow slip, evidently cut from this volume, was bought for the British Museum at a public sale in 1878’ (163). The two sides of the slip contain two autographs dated ‘this xviith of July Anno 1599’ and ‘I. August. 1599’ respectively, and concern money received from Henslowe by George Chapman and Thomas Dekker (see Foakes and Rickert 1961, 266, 267). They were obviously cut out for the sake of the two signatures.

When Greg edited the Diary, another fragment had been found and bought by the British Museum. This was a note dated 8 December 1597, and signed by Edward Alleyn. It concerns the hiring, by Henslowe, of a player, William Kendall, ‘for y^e space of ... ij years To be redye att all Tymes to play in y^e howse of the sayd philyp & in no other during the said Terme’ (Greg 1904, xlix). Greg indirectly endorses the idea that this fragment may have been cut out and kept by Malone when he says that it was quoted by Malone ‘as from Henslowe’s Diary’ (xlviij).⁸

In his edition, Greg gave the position (top, middle, or foot) of all the mutilations using Warner’s foliation system (xvii-xviii). He lists 26, between excisions of whole pages and of fragments. ‘Those on 12 and 229’, he says, ‘are unquestionably old, while that on 231 was made for the sake of Alleyn’s autograph ... Some at least of the strips cut out of the middle of the leaves are due to unsuccessful attempts at forgery’ (xviii).⁹

Foakes and Rickert confirm the Diary’s page numbers listed by Greg as those where mutilations had taken place, hinting at the possibility that it may have been either Malone or Boswell who were responsible for the mutilations: ‘A number of mutilations are comparatively recent, and have probably occurred since Malone had possessed the book. Several scholars have worked with it, and doubtless many people have had access to it’. They also point out that ‘eleven fragments of the account-book have been traced. Perhaps more are in existence’ (1961, xiii-xiv).

By 1961, other fragments had been found, dispersed in various libraries. Foakes and Rickert published a transcription of all those fragments (265-269), ‘in the order of their probable placing in the *Diary*’ (265): one is kept in the Bodleian Library, two (including the one reported by Warner) in the British Library, one in the collection of the Duke of Rutland, one in the Folger Shakespeare Library. In addition, ‘six signatures on scraps of paper probably cut from the *Diary* have been noted in books in the Bodleian Library’ (*ibid.*). These all belong to famous playwrights: Chapman, Dekker, Munday, and Wilson.

These fragments seem therefore to have been cut out in order to possess certain autograph signatures (five by Thomas Dekker, three by Thomas Downton and George Chapman, two by Henry Porter, one each by Henry Hathway, Robert Wilson, Anthony Munday, Robert Shaa, and Edward Juby). Four of the notes bear the titles of (or allusions to) texts paid for in part by

⁸ Greg further commented on this fragment in his 1956 essay. He mentions the fact that the fragment had been published by Collier in his 1831 *History of Dramatic Poetry*, ‘explaining that it had lain loose in a volume of old plays he had lately bought at an auction, and identifying it as having once formed part of Henslowe’s Diary’ (28). On this fragment, see also Foakes and Rickert 1961, 268-269.

⁹ After Malone’s death in 1812, James Boswell jr., the editor of Malone’s 1821 variorum edition of Shakespeare’s plays, had the book in his hands for several years. Some of the excisions which Collier imputes to Malone, therefore, may have been perpetrated by Boswell. Freeman and Freeman speak of ‘the period of Malone’s unscrupulous guardianship’ (2004, 353).

Henslowe and to be delivered to him. George Chapman received money for 'a Pastorall ending in a Tragedye' (266); Hathway, Wilson and Munday part payment for 'a playe called Owen Tewder' (267); Thomas Dekker for 'a play Called Truethes supplication to Candle-light' (*ibid.*); Dekker and Downton for 'a Comedy Called The World ronnes vpon Wheelles' (268). These fragments have been excised not in the interest of scholarship but of collecting: the excisions are, in other words, the work of antiquarians using the Diary as a sort of 'inventory of person-ages'. Thus, the acts of removing fragments and even whole pages reshaped the meaning of the text as a whole, transforming it from a practical memorandum book into a totemic reserve of literary memorabilia to be stolen and conserved.

4.2 Forgeries

While composing his *Catalogue*, Warner discovered eight spurious entries in the manuscript (1881, 157-163), and Greg recorded a few more (1904, xxxvi-xlv). Warner had no doubts as to Collier's paternity of these impostures, but commented that 'it is no part of my duty either to arraign or defend him ... if Mr Collier's name has been specially prominent, the blame rests with himself' (1881, xlv). Greg put the matter more clearly: 'I accept Collier's authorship of the strange tangle of dishonest fabrication', he states, without pleading any 'extenuating circumstances' (1904, xxxvii).¹⁰

In the Introduction to his edition of the Diary, Greg reproduces all the forged items, explaining the rationale for each, and also lists two erasures that had not been noted before (1904, xxxviii-xlv).¹¹ Some of the forgeries do not seem attributable to any particular intention. Others are meant to strengthen the force of an already assessed attribution: for instance that of *Doctor Faustus* and *Tamburlaine* to Marlowe (19v)¹². Yet others were meant to establish connections invented by the forger such as Webster's connection with Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris* and the hint that Webster may have made a new version of, or made additions to the play (94). Other invented events include a loan to Thomas Nashe 'for the Jylle of dogges w^{ch} he is wrytinge for the company' (29v), another loan to Nashe, 'nowe at this tyme in the flete, (33) for the same play; Marston is imagined to have appeared as a new poet to whom a loan is made on account of a 'Boocke' (64v). Yet other forgeries include insertions, either in interlining or into blanks left in the original manuscript, of authors' names and of play titles as, for instance, in the allusion to the fact that Chettle had written a play on the legend of Sir Placidus (61 and 61v); or that money was lent to the same for a play called *Robin hoodfellowe* or *Robingoodfellowe* (116). The insertion of invented titles of plays in places left blank give the forger the opportunity to further embroider with his comments. This is the case of an imaginary play entitled *Like quits Like* (109), whose attribution to Heywood is endorsed in Collier's comment in his edition of the Diary: 'It is just possible that this may have been a play on the same story as Measure for Measure, near the end of which this line occurs: "*Like doth quit like, And Measure still for Measure*". The success of Measure for Measure at this date might have produced the rival play' (1845, 230, n. 2).¹³

¹⁰ In his edition of the Diary, Collier inserted his forgeries, and often justified the fact that they did not appear in Malone's transcripts claiming that those passages had escaped his predecessor's attention.

¹¹ Freeman and Freeman speak of sixteen or seventeen interpolations in the Diary that have been attributed to Collier (2004, 366).

¹² Page numbers refer to the Diary's pagination as drawn by Warren.

¹³ Those in the Diary were by no means Collier's only forgeries. His boldest enterprise was perhaps the so called 'Perkins Folio', a copy of the second folio of Shakespeare's works bearing the name of a certain Thomas Perkins that,

‘Forgery of books, pamphlets, broadsides and manuscripts’, Paul Eggert says, ‘differs from the forgery of banknotes and the like in that the former kind has the insidious capacity to mislead us in our attempts to understand the past’ (2009, 75). Eggert also states that the forgery of whole texts, like those of the paintings he examines, ‘can ... be seen as a translation of the original paintings into the cultural vocabulary of the forger’s period’ (78). Collier intended his ‘interlinear’ and ‘interspace’ additions in a different way: he wanted them to become *confused* with the original. Rather than *translate to a different context* the cultural vocabulary of the document’s original, by introducing elements of his own invention he intended to *falsify the historical context*: to validate and impose, as if it were authentic, *his* version of the Elizabethan theatrical scene.

Scholars who approached the Diary after the publication of Warner’s *Catalogue*, and, even less, after the publication of Greg’s edition should not have been misled by Collier’s appropriation of Henslowe’s text; not only because his impostures had been discovered and revealed, but also because the faked passages were badly feigned, and therefore easy to discern. However, very early in the history of its post-Collier reception, owing to Collier’s forgeries, the Diary became a field of controversy and contention. Doubts arose about whether all those denounced by editors were the only forgeries present in the manuscript; or whether all those revealed to be later additions were to be considered forgeries, or even whether Collier was the only person responsible. And yet, in spite of the poor palaeographic quality of Collier’s forgeries, such was the postulated authority of the document that even knowledgeable scholars chose to draw definite conclusions from some of the faked inscriptions. Thus, the Diary became an issue of dispute, as well as the site of possible errors and misunderstandings. A case in point is that of A.H. Bullen, a renowned literary publisher and editor, who, in the biography of Chettle he wrote for the 1887 edition of the *DNB*, ‘trustingly reproduce[d]’ Collier’s false news that Chettle had been paid by Henslowe for a play on ‘sir Placidus’ (see Freeman and Freeman 2004, 368).

4.3 *The Diary ‘Secured’*

Collier had a genuine interest in all the documents concerning the early English theatre, but he also had an interest in promoting ‘the spirit of inquiry and research generated by the formation and labours of the Shakespeare Society’ (1845, xiv). As an editor, he also wished to mark what he thought was a deep difference between his and Malone’s editorial practice. Not only, as we have seen, did he blame his predecessor for the disappearance of whole pages, but he also accused him of inaccuracy: ‘he was by no means accurate’, he says, ‘in the information he gleaned from [the manuscript], while ... he left behind him many particulars which we have carefully collected and deposited in the present volume’ (xv). Concerning the Diary’s contents, his main interest

in 1852, Collier announced he had found and in which, he said, were inscribed hundreds of marginal emendations made in a seventeenth-century hand; he subsequently published transcripts of these forged emendations in a new edition of Shakespeare’s works. For a full account of the ‘Perkins Folio’ affair, see Freeman and Freeman 2004, 563-639 and 718-824; with reference to the Dulwich papers and the Diary, see *ibid.*, 340-376. As to other Dulwich documents, Warner also discovered six forgeries in the manuscript of Edward Alleyn’s Diary (see Collier 1841), where certain interpolations allude to the fact that Alleyn attended, at the Fortune, performances of ‘as you like itt’ and of ‘Romeo’ (Freeman and Freeman 2004, 370). The wish to establish a connection between Alleyn and Shakespeare also determined a couple of forged passages where it is affirmed that Alleyn’s purchase of a property in Blackfriars was connected with the building of the Blackfriars theatre (370-371). The aim of a number of the impostures inflicted by Collier to Alleyn’s diary was ‘in aid of Collier’s contention that Alleyn knew Shakespeare well, and took over his share in the Blackfriars playhouse in 1613, a theory for which there is not a scintilla of genuine evidence’ (347).

seems to have been in what could be gleaned from it about Shakespeare. Though he was bound to acknowledge the fact that Shakespeare's name 'nowhere occurs in the text' (vii), he says that 'the manuscript, directly or incidentally, illustrates the life and works of Shakespeare' (viii).¹⁴

When he started working on the manuscript of Henslowe's Diary, Greg's motivation was not simply to redeem the text from Collier's manipulations.¹⁵ A new edition of any work is always inspired by dissatisfaction with previous ones, and in this case, Greg's 'great aim' was 'accuracy' (1904, xlvi). Collier had sensed that an exact reproduction of each page and its layout would have been ideal, but his aim was impeded by technical problems: 'we could not contrive our printed page exactly to correspond with the page of the manuscript' (1845, xvii). Probably thanks to a more sophisticated reproduction technique, Greg 'succeeded in making the rectos and versos of the reprint correspond in general with those of the original', thus producing a print 'as far as possible of the nature of a facsimile' (1904, xlvi). Greg described his wish to reproduce the original layout of the pages and their numbering as a 'piece of conservatism' (*ibid.*). He was conservative also as regards the other hands appearing in the Diary.¹⁶ More importantly, he was scrupulously conservative as regards the forgeries. In his Introduction, he considered and discussed each of those that had been discovered up to the time when his edition was published. These all appear in the text, reproduced in bold to enable easy distinction. Otherwise, however, Greg's decisions were regrettably not conservative. Especially regrettable was his decision to exclude from his text Henslowe's pawning accounts which, though not (or not always) directly connected with his theatrical enterprises, indisputably contribute to draw a sociological portrait of Philip Henslowe as a capitalist entrepreneur.

By mid-twentieth century, a new edition of the Diary, R.A. Foakes and R.T. Rickert say, was needed for Greg's edition had 'long been out of print and unobtainable' (1961, ix), but it was necessary also 'to reconsider the meaning of Henslowe's entries and Greg's detailed interpretation of them', and to 'encourage further scrutiny of the evidence' (*ibid.*), for 'the material in the account book is ... open to fresh interpretation' (xxxiii). In general, the two editors seem to have been less exclusively concerned than Greg with the theatrical accounts. For instance, although the mining accounts recorded by John are not given in full, they are, for the first time, described in comparative detail (xv-xx) 'because of their intrinsic interest as a detailed record of operations of iron-smelting at an early period, and also because they provide further knowledge of the Henslowe family, and of Philip's background' (xiv). Furthermore, a significant addition to Greg's edition is the transcript of the whole of Philip's pawn accounts, which the editors considered as not only having 'an interest in their own right' (*ibid.*), but also as having 'a relation to the theatre' (xv), for most of these loans were 'made on behalf of the company, for which Henslowe was acting as banker and moneylender' (xxiv). Foakes and Rickert, on the contrary, simply allude to the forgeries, excluding them from their text: 'The forged entries observed by Warner and Greg are omitted from the text of the *Diary* in this edition, but are given, for the sake of references, in footnotes' (lii).

¹⁴ A peculiar trait of Collier's edition is his idea, not shared by later editors, that, in writing his notes, Henslowe was 'assisted here and there by some clerk or scribe whom he employed' (1845, viii). Greg comments as follows: 'Whether Collier deliberately invented the scribe in order to confuse his readers, and so render the detection of his own forgeries less easy, or whether he was himself misled by the considerable variations in Henslowe's hand, I do not presume to determine' (1904, xxiv).

¹⁵ For the mode and timing of the discovery of Collier's forgeries, from Warner's *Catalogue* to the 1961 critical edition by Foakes and Rickert, see Freeman and Freeman 2004, 364-372.

¹⁶ These are listed, and many commented on, on pp. xxx-xxxvi of the Introduction and further annotated as they appear in the text.

The two twentieth-century editions of the Diary present not only two different texts: Greg's edition with the forgeries incorporated, though not fully integrated, but with excision of the pawn accounts, Foakes and Rickert's which totally omits the forgeries, gives an ample report of John's mining accounts and includes Philip's pawning accounts in full. The two editions, therefore, express two contrasting points of view: Greg's concern seems to be mainly the reconstruction both of the text as originally drafted (including its physical reproduction 'as far as possible of the nature of a facsimile') and of its manipulations and that of its exact documentary import as concerns the history of early modern English theatre; the later editors appear also interested in reconstructing a contextual setting, both familiar and professional. By reading both, the reader is invited to formulate two different versions of the events recorded.

A further migration of the Diary is represented by the photographic facsimile edition prepared by R.A. Foakes, published in 1977. This edition may be seen as marking a stage in the transition between the early printed editions and the latest and most ambitious securing enterprise – that of the Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project,¹⁷ which has already digitised over 2,200 pages of manuscripts from among the Dulwich papers, Henslowe's Diary being probably the most important.

On its homepage, the Project is described as follows:

The Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project has two aims and objectives: first, to protect and conserve these increasingly fragile manuscripts, and, second, to make their contents much more widely available in a free electronic archive and website, not only to specialist scholars but to all those interested in early modern English drama and theatre history, as well as social, economic, regional, architectural, and legal history, and palaeography and manuscript studies.¹⁸

The Project, which provides freely and easily accessible images of most of the Dulwich manuscripts, was begun in 2002 and its electronic website launched in 2009. As Grace Ioppolo, director of the Project, says, a number of new technologies were used to photograph each manuscript page and archive them electronically (2011, 41). Ioppolo explains the techniques employed to photograph and archive each page and, at the same time, to protect the originals being photographed (41-42). The Diary probably called for the most laborious process for, after being photographed, the book was 'disbound ... in the process of repairing the spine', and then re-photographed, 'as its tight binding had caused some minute loss of text in the gutters during the original photography' (42). All the pages of Henslowe's Diary are reproduced as photographic images, and a complete transcription of each page is provided.¹⁹

Thanks to the Digitisation Project, the Diary is now for the first time readable as part of a vast archive of contemporary (more or less strictly related) documents, a rich reservoir of knowledge of the cultural, social and political context for Henslowe's activities in the world of entertainment as well as other areas of business. Side by side with Philip's Diary, we have photographically reproduced and nearly entirely transcribed the Diary and Account Book of Edward Alleyn,²⁰ a document extremely rich in detail not only of a personal, biographical nature, but also relating to historical events and figures.

As Ioppolo says, 'Henslowe's "famous" "Diary" is one part of a very large archive that has not been fully investigated or studied. Greater access to all these theatrical papers through

¹⁷ <<https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/>>.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ MSS 7: <<https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-7/>>.

²⁰ MSS 9: <<https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-9/>>.

online digitization enlarges our knowledge of the greatest age of English theatre while helping to conserve the manuscripts themselves for future generations' (45).

Adapting a statement by Paul Eggert to the acts performed in the 'securing' of Henslowe's Diary, one may say that 'Preservation turns out to have an aesthetic', and also a cultural and social ethic 'of its own. The policy is not simply an act of historical piety' (2009, 43).

5. *Issues of Genre*

5.1 *Diary*

We normally use the term 'diary' to designate those texts in which intimate feelings, reflections and facts are recorded; therefore, used to describe Henslowe's text, whose main object is accounting, the word would seem to be an inappropriate imposition. However, Philippe Lejeune uses precisely the word 'diary' to describe certain early forms of written records used for reckoning: 'The diary', he says, 'like writing itself, was born of the needs of commerce and administration'; and indeed, Lejeune's description of the 'diary' genre in the original sense of 'making a record and dating it' suits perfectly (part of) the text composed by Philip Henslowe:

Accounting serves two purposes: an internal purpose (business management based on full and accurate information) and an external purpose (to stand as evidence in the event of a dispute). This function remains unchanged through history, from the earliest known accounting systems in Chaldea or ancient Egypt right up until today ... To keep an account means that you can write and that you own something: it is a way of exercising a modicum of power, however limited. (2009a, 51)

Although the kind of diary generally discussed by Philippe Lejeune is the *journal intime*, some of the features he lists may be discerned in Henslowe's Diary. A diary, he says, is a 'Non-narrative', for 'it is not constructed like a story with a beginning, a middle and an end', and '*it is written without knowledge of the ending ...*' (2009b, 170, italics in the original). But other formal features too allow us to claim the status of diary for Henslowe's text. Like any diary, its inscriptions have a (more or less regular) forward-moving time-development;²¹ like any diary, it has no physical *avant-texte* that can be examined in order to detect its compositional process; like any diary it records items which are of interest primarily for its composer; like many diaries it was not meant by its author for publication.

But, in many ways, it is also different from what we normally think of as a 'diary'. Though personal, it is not private and, even less, is it secret. Its authorship is contaminated, and therefore made uncertain, by the presence of at least fifty-six hands different from that of its main drafter (Greg 1904, xxx-xxxvi). The *persona* constructed out of the items recorded is not a self-portrayal by the author, but a reader's construction. Most importantly, it does not record the drafter's feelings or states of mind: if there seem to be any, these, too, are constructions by readers, out of certain linguistic, rhetorical, or other kinds of personal and stylistic clues.²² Unlike most

²¹ The chronological development of Henslowe's Diary is not a regular sequence, for many annotations have been inserted wherever a blank space was found (see Greg 1908, 49).

²² Evaluations of Henslowe's character and personality differ, diverge even. The first, and most severe judgement was that of J.P. Collier, for whom he was 'an ignorant man, even for the time in which he lived, and for the station he occupied' (1845, xv); F.G. Fleay maintained that 'Henslow was an illiterate moneyed man ... who regarded art as a subject for exploitation, and was alike ignorant of stage management and dramatic literature' (1890, 117). Fleay

diaries, it is not a text its author would go back to, re-reading items which might remind him of particular circumstances, feelings, or states of mind, unless to check dates, figures, etc. Nor is it a sequential narration or reflection: date order is occasionally random, going forward or backward in time as free space in the book allowed. Most importantly, Henslowe's Diary is not – or is only in part, and in most cases indirectly – a first-person account. 'If, for the sake of convenience we continue to use the word "diary" to refer to Henslowe's account book', Neil Carson says, 'we must do so with the understanding that it is a misnomer' (1988, 5); Carson considers it more properly as 'a sort of "commonplace book" in which [Henslowe] recorded interesting and miscellaneous bits of information', such as aphorisms, medications and various memoranda, as well as 'legal and semi-legal records' (*ibid.*).

The question as to whether Henslowe's text is a diary in the sense of a chronologically-ordered private narrative is a comparatively idle one, as is probably also the search for the correct label to attribute to it as an 'egodocument'.²³ But the question does open up the issue of genre, that is, one of the many points of view from which the text may be examined; indeed, in terms of genre and of authorship attribution, and, even more, as a bibliographical object, Henslowe's text is an extremely complex specimen of word-combination and page-combination. As S.P. Cerasano says,

the manuscript that we identify as "Henslowe's" *Diary* was, throughout its existence, a kind of work in progress, the product (ultimately) of many individuals rather than a static, carefully circumscribed entity. Tracing the movement of Henslowe's book ... reminds scholars of the changing purposes to which various owners have put it. (2005b, 332)

Elsewhere Cerasano comments that 'it has been virtually impossible for scholars to make sense of Henslowe's book as a whole, mostly because the diversity of contents and the complexity of its organization are daunting' (2005a, 73). She therefore suggests that we take a 'holistic' approach' to the book, 'examining it as an artifact made up of all its many parts, that stands within a well-established tradition of memorandum books or, perhaps more properly, manuscript notebooks of its time' (*ibid.*). She orientates her analysis accordingly, demonstrating that, 'Henslowe's book was utterly typical of manuscript notebooks written during the early modern period, including those created by educated authors of rank and station' (74).

also discusses his integrity as a businessman: 'he managed ... to keep his actors in subservience and his poets in constant need ... by lending them money and never allowing their debts to be fully paid off' (117-118). Greg was more neutral: 'Of Henslowe's knowledge or ignorance of stagecraft we have absolutely no means of judging' (1908, 112, n. 1); Chambers thought that the argument about Henslowe's morality was an idle one: 'Whether Henslowe was a good or a bad man seems to me a matter of indifference. He was a capitalist' (1923, vol. I, 368). Carol Rutter compares Henslowe's business style with the little we know of the much more professional James Burbage: 'Much more is known of Philip Henslowe, more that has served to condemn him. His detractors have ten years of the Diary's crammed sequence to watch him entering his receipts, reckoning his accounts, and noting his debts, and to suspect his motives, his capitalism, his money contaminating "art" and compromising "artists"' (1984, 8); Neil Carson stresses the man's fair dealings with poor relatives, and concludes that 'While there is no reason to suppose that he treated his business associates with the same tolerance he showed to members of his family, neither is there any irrefutable evidence that he did not' (1988, 4-5).

²³The term 'egodocument' was first introduced by the Amsterdam historian Jacob (Jacques) Presser in the 1950s. More or less inclusively interpreted, the category of 'egodocument' has been employed as a tool for the examination of self-narratives; but not without provoking criticism, the most important one being that certain all-inclusive uses of the term '[make] the concept unworkable' (Dekker 2002a, 9). In the 1980s, the concept of 'egodocument' encountered such perspectives as microhistory, the history of mentalities and social history, and these 'raised the value of egodocuments considerably' (10), so that it entered into the lexicon of historians. On the connection between self-narratives and microhistory, see Renders and de Haan, 2014.

5.2 *The Diary as écriture ordinaire*

In a different perspective, the Diary seems to belong to the mixed forms that Roger Chartier calls *écritures ordinaires*: 'In all Europe, though called in various ways, the *écritures ordinaires* are the same: signed private contracts, receipts and acknowledgement of debts, collections of trade secrets, commonplace books, account books or property deeds, family books, life sketches' (2001, 786)²⁴. Authors of these types of egodocuments are described by Chartier as *illettrés savants* (learned illiterates). Their writing activities, he says, express

the new exigencies of an artisanal and shopkeeper economy, which requests more and more the written report of technical processes, or of commercial transactions, of the wish of individuals desirous to have a better hold on time by drafting a script of their present produced day-by-day, by committing to writing the memory of a more or less distant past. (787)

These forms of writing are *ordinaires* in a double sense, Chartier argues: on the one hand, they were produced by ordinary people, and, on the other, they have no aesthetic finality, and are directed only towards the person that produced them or towards those who are closely linked to the author (*ibid.*). Daniel Fabre, in turn, defines *écritures ordinaires* as writings 'which are definitely distinct from the prestigious universe of the writings characterised by a volition to compose works, the authenticating signature of the author, the consecration of print' (1993, 11); and says that these written forms, though extremely varied, appear to be connected by a similar function: that of '*laisser trace*' (leaving a trace) (*ibid.*).²⁵ These ordinary writings, he says, are not easily 'classified into categories, and their fashioning does not immediately reveal a social identity' (12). Discussing the same kind of *écritures ordinaires* – from account books and family books to life narratives – in the Spanish *Siglo de Oro*, Antonio Castillo Gómez examines the extremely varied and heterogeneous corpus of those textual forms which, he suggests, can be classed under the umbrella term of 'memory objects' in that, in spite of the great variety of their textual manifestations, they all instance a sort of 'memory function' which is embodied in various forms and styles, and enacts various functions and intentions (2001, 821-822).

Introducing his volume on artisan autobiography, James Amelang argues for a more flexible definition of the genre 'diary' than the strict one suggested by Philippe Lejeune as a 'chronologically ordered, retrospective prose narrative whose central theme is the development of the author's personality' (1998, 13), for that definition has contributed to the a priori exclusion of all other forms of 'egodocuments' and to confusing 'all autobiography with its modern incarnations with a more strictly historical approach' (14). Amelang stresses that, when analysing and categorising the different forms of first-person writing, or egodocuments (a term, however, he in part rejects), we must bear in mind issues of authorship and motivation. He also introduces, as a pre-condition to any analysis, the issue of the individuals' social classification, a perspective that is relevant to Henslowe's position and to any examination of his Diary. In the case of artisan autobiography, the difficulty, Amelang says, 'derives from the resistance to classification of many hybrid [social] types of preindustrial Europe – those who, with one foot in one social category and the other in another, simultaneously inhabited different social universes' (24) – moving, for instance, between the worlds of guilders, lesser merchants, or of practitioners of

²⁴ Unless otherwise stated, translations are mine.

²⁵ 'Traces', 'Tracks', 'Signs', 'Clues', 'Scraps' are terms discussed by Carlo Ginzburg as integral parts of an evidential paradigm, and as 'involuntary' textual elements which allow the historian to reach certain zones of reality (see Ginzburg 1986). Ginzburg has had more to say on the same paradigm in a more recent collection of essays (2006).

such arts as those of the notary or the dentist, the student or the soldier.²⁶ In none of the social categories listed by Amelang, however (those he goes on to deal with as well as those he goes on to dismiss), do we find anything that approximates to the hybridity of Philip Henslowe as a member of the social world he inhabited; indeed, his social status was that of somebody exercising a new trade, which had only one explicit previous example in England, that of James Burbage. His text is, therefore, a reflection of that new trade's collaborative ways of operating.²⁷

5.3 *The Diary as 'Erasable' Text*

A further genre feature of the Diary may be evoked: that of 'erasability'. Examining 'the manifold relationship between inscription and erasure, between the durable record and the ephemeral text' (2007, vii), Roger Chartier points out that 'Not all written texts are destined to last. From the Middle Ages to the eighteenth century, a variety of objects were used to record writing temporarily until, having outlived its usefulness, it could be erased'. Chartier devotes attention to the wax tablets and 'another kind of "table", a small notebook whose pages were coated with a substance that made it possible to erase what had been written and to take quick notes, not with pen and ink but with a metal stylus with which one could record a thought, a speech, a verse, or a letter' (2007, xi). One of the examples examined by Chartier is Cardenio's *librillo de memoria*, which Sancho and his master find in an abandoned valise while wandering in the Sierra Morena, and of which we are told in chapter 23 of Part One of *Don Quixote*. The *librillo* turns out to be a writing object on which to draft 'erasable' texts which are only of temporary value, and make sense, for their drafter, only for the time when they are written down. 'At this point', Chartier notices, 'one of the key themes of the Sierra Morena chapters begins to emerge: the contrast between memory as a durable trace of the past ... and memory as vulnerable, ephemeral, and erasable, like that which is written as a "rough draft" on the *librillos de memoria*' (14).

The issue of erasable texts is also dealt with by Antonio Castillo Gómez in his examination of the different characteristics of various kinds of egodocuments. It is the 'conciseness and the purely enumerative function of account books' that distinguishes them from narrative genres such as 'historical memories, confessions, *livres de raison*, and autobiographical diaries'. These two types of text may be distinguished also on the basis of the kind of memory they embody: account books seem to be the outcome of a 'short' memory, while larger descriptive narrations

²⁶ For a story of the initial stages in the development of the term 'egodocument' since the expression was coined by Jacob (Jacques) Presser in the 1950s, see Castillo Gómez 2015, 48; von Greyerz 2010, 277, 278 and Dekker 2002b. N. Zemon Davis discusses various types of egodocument, without actually employing the term, in various kinds of sixteenth-century French texts (mainly *mémoires* and, in a few cases, letters), examining 'how a patriarchal family unit could stimulate people within its borders toward self-discovery and self-presentation' (1986, 59). In his account of self-representations from Petrarch to Descartes, Peter Burke discusses self-portraits and even 'the busts and coins of Roman emperors' as egodocuments (1997, 24). Castillo stresses the heterogeneous character of the texts discussed under the umbrella term 'egodocument', and sketches a typology of different forms: 'some of them, like spiritual autobiographies and the *discursos de vida* are near to the strictly speaking biographical model; others exclude introspection and opt for the telling of facts, either personally witnessed, or related by others; a third modality is characterised by a mixture of elements like the account book and other personal, familiar, or general notes' (2019, 57-58); a description which seems to be the most apt for Henslowe's Diary.

²⁷ The collaborative composition of the Diary also presents the egostatements of other, comparatively new, categories of wage-earners whose social status was uncertain: players and playwrights. Gary Taylor describes the last as artisans, 'wrighters' instead of 'writers', and the inherent features of their work as 'artiginality', for it 'has the originality proper to artisans' (2017, 25).

are the product of 'long' memory. Texts embodying a short memory are also erasable; indeed, the short memory which characterises account books is also evidenced by the frequent erasures found in them, for the 'out' items are cancelled 'once the debt has been paid' (2015, 59).²⁸ Long and short memory, Castillo says, have also been characterized by the anthropologist Valérie Feschet as 'hot' and 'cold' respectively; the first is that which 'verbalizes affections and emotions', while the second is that contained in official documents and legal acts (61). From the point of view of the kind of memory it embodies, Henslowe's Diary seems to belong to the families of 'short-memory', 'cold', 'erasable' texts.

6. *Authorship*

6.1 *'Author' and 'Work'*

As already noticed, the notebook in which Henslowe's text is inscribed was originally used by Philip's brother John who, 'from January 1576 to 10 December 1580 or 1581' (Foakes and Rickert 1961, xv) used it to make notes about his mining, coal-extracting and trading activities. After 1581, the book seems to have been abandoned for about ten years until, in 1592, Philip started writing on the pages which John had left blank. Moreover, 'Philip occasionally used blank pages, or spaces between old entries, to add items concerning his business, and also entered various theatrical reckonings on the first few versos (rectos for him) at this [John's] end of the book' (*ibid.*).

The two parts of the document, however, have never been treated jointly, or in comparable detail, for the text inscribed in Philip's part of the book has obviously considerably greater significance and cultural import than his brother's. In fact, it was Philip himself that distinguished his text from John's, establishing a new incipit by reversing the book and starting to write on the pages John had left blank. Since it was first discovered by Malone, the Diary has been treated as an autonomous text; but Philip's text does not exhibit a completely independent development of its own, for many of its inscriptions intrude into John's text, more or less deeply disfiguring it or, at least, partly de-authorizing it and, at the same time, disintegrating the continuity and cohesion of the Diary itself. Nor has the issue of authorship been raised in connection with the Diary, for the identity of its (main) drafter is amply witnessed to by both external and internal evidence.

As for external evidence, Philip's identity as 'author' is proven, in the first place, by the fact that the book was found by its earliest readers in the chest where his and Allyn's papers had been kept since they were consigned to Dulwich College. Similarly, witnesses to what we know of Henslowe's life and undertakings are everywhere in the text, as are traces of the context within which he lived and developed his enterprises, of the dating of almost every item or group of items; of the names of his business collaborators, or of those of members of his family, of the titles of the plays produced as well as the names of the playwrights writing for him, and of such family and business events as the wedding of his step-daughter, the sums paid for the building or the refurbishment of his playhouses or for his bearbaiting activity. All these point indisputably to one and the same historical person. Furthermore, not only is the Diary attributable to its main drafter; owing to its authority as a document, it also permits attribution of other works mentioned in the manuscript to other authors.

²⁸ In many of the Diary's pages, transactions which were concluded are cancelled by a cross. In their edition, Foakes and Rickert mark each deletion by 'a heavy bracket at the beginning and end of a cancelled passage' (1961, lvi).

As for internal evidence, one of the main elements is the shape of Philip's handwriting as compared with the same in that of other papers (signed contracts and other documents) preserved in the same chest or elsewhere. However, although no responsibility for the text's authorship is explicitly attributed in the opening page(s) of the Diary, the inside of the original vellum wrapper, 'like the first and last pages', is 'covered with scribble, chiefly in Henslowe's hand' (Greg 1904, xv), in which the name 'Philippe Henslow' appears several times.²⁹

As Harold Love comments in discussing the attribution of authorship to cases of self-allusion, 'Works which include extensive descriptions of the writer's own experiences should be unproblematic – exceptions are when the author is a person of exceptional obscurity ...' (2002, 88). Philip Henslowe was certainly not an obscure individual; he was a person who, as well as carrying out his own activities, was assigned a number of public duties.³⁰ The identification of the main drafter of the Diary, therefore, should be unproblematic.

Problems, however, arise when we attribute the name of 'author' to Philip Henslowe as the Diary's originator, and call his text a 'work'. In what sense is it possible to say that Philip Henslowe is the 'author' of his Diary? And that the Diary (and John's accounts) are 'works' produced by their drafters? In other words, how should we distinguish, not only as regards the use of certain critical terms, the creators of those 'erasable', short-memory texts from the creators of those texts which we recognize, at first sight, to be 'literature', that we call 'authors'? Why should we say that the writer of a business letter does not have an author function,³¹ while we read as 'authorial' Michelangelo's letters to members of his family, even though their contents are often less significant than that of a businessman's letter? Another man of the theatre, Carlo Goldoni, wrote a diary of his life and activities. The title of his work is *Mémoires de M. Goldoni*, and the subtitle is *Pour servir à l'histoire de sa vie et à celle de son théâtre*. And is it not to gain information about the history of Henslowe's activity and of the theatre of his time that we read his Diary? How *differently*, then, do we read Goldoni's diary as compared to Henslowe's? Does the intent to publish make a difference, or does it make *the* difference?³² Paul Eggert suggests that 'we distinguish between authorship, understood as a cult, and personal agency in a work, taken as a basis for further analysis' (2009, 63). But to suggest that we employ an attenuated term ('agency' in place of 'authorship') in referring to works to which we subjectively assign the brand of a lower 'literary' quality, or no literary quality at all, is simply to evade the problem; unless we substantiate this kind of mitigated designation with suggestions about the role and function each agent performs in each particular text.

6.2 Agency and the Diary's Drafter(s)

An issue related to the decision to use a diminished notion of authorship such as 'agency' is that of how to manage the category of 'style' as a criterion for attributing an 'erasable'

²⁹ John was more explicit when he wrote: 'This is John Henslowe Booke 1577' (238v; Foakes and Rickert 1961, 5), repeating several times the formula with slight variations (Greg 1904, xviii). Unless otherwise stated, quotations from the Diary are from Foakes and Rickert 1961; the first number in the quote corresponds to that inscribed by Warner on each folio, and thenceforth universally credited; the second is the page number in Foakes and Rickert's edition.

³⁰ 'In 1592 or 1593', Warner says, 'he became a Groom of the Chamber to Queen Elizabeth, and in 1603 a Sewer of the Chamber to James I' (1881, xix).

³¹ On discourses which are not endowed with the 'author function' like letters, or contracts, see Foucault in Rabinow 1984, 107-108.

³² In private conversation, Donatella Pallotti suggested another relevant category to be examined when distinguishing between authorship and simple agency: that of the author's/agent's *name*, and its cultural-historical *meaning*.

text to an originator. Indeed, among the internal evidence categories listed by Love for the attribution of texts (2002, 51), that of 'style' appears, in this case, to be the most problematic, for it is evident that little can be said about 'style' in the Diary as 'the necessary uniqueness of the idiolect' (8) we discern in literary works. But Love comes to our rescue by quoting the words of Edward Sapir: 'There is always an individual *method*, however *poorly developed*, of *arranging* words into groups and of working these up into larger units' (*ibid.*; italics mine).

In Sapir's sentence, relevant are the term 'method', the expression 'poorly developed' and the activity of 'arranging'. 'Method' is an apt word for describing the unpretentious version of the more distinctive term 'style'; and 'method', not 'style', is indeed what is required in the configuration of an account book. What Henslowe aimed at was repetition of formulae rather than distinctive linguistic and rhetorical features, irregular assembling and accumulation rather than considered selection, predictability rather than variety, 'poorly developed' linguistic and grammatical configurations rather than the sought for *mot juste*, or the accomplished, or even impressive, construction, rudimentary sentence structure rather than innovative arrangement, bare figures and data rather than deep reflection. There certainly is a method in many of the pages Henslowe composed, for instance in the layout of long lists of payments received from performances, entries he distributes into five columns (e.g., 62v, 120-121), or in the formulae used regarding either money lent or spent (e.g., 66 r-v, 127-129).³³

This said, we cannot ignore the presence, in the Diary, of hands other than Philip's.³⁴ Greg identified 63 different hands (1904, xxx-xxxiii), some of which appear in several instances (Alleyn's is the most frequent, but many of his signatures are imitations by Henslowe). Their contribution ranges from simple signatures to notes drafted by Henslowe (most frequently for debts contracted by the signatory), to signed notes about money received by Henslowe in extinction of some debt, to sums due from some player for borrowing costumes, fabric, or other theatrical chattels, to payments to the Master of the Revels, received and signed by the Master of the Revel's man, to random notes about remedies for ague or other sicknesses, to recipes, pieces of verse and maxims of various kinds.³⁵ The kind of author-figure we construct when reading the Diary is therefore, ultimately, that of an organizing principle that has the power of life and death over the bits of information and records he is 'arranging'. The Diary's agency consists of the controlling and sanctioning principle that dictated the kinds of speech act (promise, obligation, commitment, liability, bondage) which the various drafters were obliged to perform. In many instances, other hands draft their own notes in the first person and in their own hands, thereby 'authorially' declaring their personal engagement. The following fragments are typical of the text's arranging of such items:

³³ Grace Ioppolo uses the word 'formula' to describe such reiterative, poorly developed clauses in which payments are annotated; they, she says, 'follow a simple formula, giving the name of the payee(s), whether the payment is "in earnest" (as an advance) or in full, the date, the play purchased and the amount paid' (2006, 15). Ioppolo discusses many of these formulaic notes as having the binding force of contracts (13-24 and *passim*).

³⁴ Foakes and Rickert say that 'Many of these identifications should be regarded as probable rather than certain, particularly where, as in a number of instances, only one entry or signature of a person is found in the *Diary*. Even in the case of men who figure prominently in the accounts, like Downton, Shaa, Houghton or Alleyn, uncertainties still arise' (1961, 1).

³⁵ On the vellum wrapper, we find a maxim which seems to summarise one of the essential experiences of Henslowe as a capitalist: 'for when I lent I wasse A frend & when I asked I wasse vnkind'. The sentence is repeated several times, in most cases in an incomplete form (Foakes and Rickert 1961, 3).

'Receaved . By me. James Borne the 2 of March. 1591. of M^r . Phillipe. Hinchlie for. the vse. of. henerie Addames: the: some. of. three pound. and. is in [parte] fulle. of paiment. of. a reconieng Receaved in parte'. I. saye. Receaved in payte (5^v, 13).³⁶

In other instances, the same kind of acknowledgement, again in the first person, is vested in more solemnly formulated terms, followed by the debtor's signature:

Be it knowne vnto all men that I henry Porter do owe vnto phillip Henschlowe the some of xs of lawfull money of England w^{ch} I did borrowe of hym the 26 of maye a^o dom 1599. Henry Porter (30, 63).

Between pp. 16v and 18v (38-42), theatrical and other accounts and receipts are interrupted by a number of curious items: number games, medical recipes, ways of spotting stolen items, a way 'to make a fowle ffalle downe', 'A Rewle to knowe vnder what planet a chillde is borne in', a card game 'to tell a man at what ower he thinketh to Risse', and so on. Many of these are in unidentified hands (see, for instance, Foakes and Rickert 1961, 39, n. 2 and 40, n. 1); others may have been copied into the book by Henslowe from notes made elsewhere, probably by somebody else. In these five pages, items are undated and, at least in part, unauthored. They therefore produce both temporal and thematic discontinuity in the flow of theatrical notes, and also present a special mixed authorial status, configuring a sort of collaboratively-created interim text that one can read independently from the main text, its concerns and its compositional organization.

What should we do, in terms of agency, with these and the many other fragments drafted in hands different from Henslowe's? What is the authoriality/agency of the begetters of these fragments? Can the idea of collaborative writing and authorship be evoked?

The basic issue to be considered is that those contributions were all *dictated*, if not *imposed*, by the text's arranger; if other subjects contributed to the text's composition, the overall design and configuration, as are also the time sequence and the dating, are dictated and composed by the main drafter. Also the physical layout of each page was planned and governed by Philip: the long lists which crowd certain pages (see e.g., 98v-99r, 191-193), or, on the other hand, the shattered notes, the blank spaces, some of which may have been left to be filled later, the filling of previous blanks with notes compiled at subsequent times, and even the imposing of a different hand (mainly Philip's), intruding on certain of John's sheets, are all the outcome of the arranger's decisions.

There is, however, a mutual authenticating relationship between main drafter and the co-compilers. If, on the one hand, the verified 'author' (agent, arranger) authenticates the identity and speech act contents of the co-contributors, these contents, precisely because they appear in an authorially-validated text, strengthen the verifiability and reliability of the text's meanings. By declaring their mutual relationship, they authenticate both the main agent as source of the whole structure and the context which was the setting for the activities the Diary reports, thereby also authenticating their own status. In other words, the identification of the main agent of what we read is strengthened (also) by the contents of what the other participants write. The text's contents and meanings are thus confirmed and authored by the external evidence which is, in turn, witnessed to by the verifiability of the identity of its co-compilers.

³⁶ I rely on Foakes and Rickert's edition for the attribution of handwriting. In their edition, all variants from Greg are annotated.

7. *On the Absence of Books*

During the whole 2020 and part of 2021, libraries in all parts of Europe were closed, or only intermittently opened, and even the confines of many European countries were at various times shut. My initial plan had been to spend time in the British Library, and also – indeed mainly – in the Library of Dulwich College. My plans quickly disintegrated, but left a large amount of time to spend at home, reading and thinking. All I had to start my enquiry into Henslowe's Diary was a copy of the 1961 Foakes and Rickert critical edition. A number of other works were to be found on the web, but they were difficult to read, others were nowhere available. Of course, as regarded Henslowe's text, I could also examine the page-by page images published as part of the Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project, but this allows the examination of particular pages and fragments mainly to check the wording of particular sentences. When it was clear that I would not be able to reach the physical books, I started to search the web to see what I could get as substitutes. I thus learned that a facsimile of the text (Foakes 1977), had been published, but was by no means to be found; and, even if it had been available, a facsimile would not have been the thing itself.

Searching the web, however, I discovered that many of the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century books I needed were to be found in facsimile reproductions at trifling prices. The ways in which the publishers present these editions make the things they sell rather attractive. Vol. I of Greg's edition of the Diary is presented as follows: 'This book ... represents a reproduction of an important historical work, maintaining the same format as the original work'. The publisher then apologises for possible 'imperfections', and concludes saying that 'We appreciate your understanding of these occasional imperfections, and sincerely hope you enjoy seeing the book in a format as close as possible to that intended by the original publisher'. If it is true, I thought, as Peter Shillingsburg says, that 'All accurate copies, whether facsimiles, transcriptions, or encodings, *are the same single linguistic text*' (1997, 72; my emphasis), then this was an opportunity to get exactly the text I needed. When the book arrived I was satisfied: when compared with the online Archive publication of the original in the internet, it seemed to keep its promise of an 'exact reproduction' of 'the same single linguistic text'.³⁷

But this was only Part I of Greg's work, the volume which contains the edited text of the Diary, and I also needed Part II, the Commentary. Once again I started searching the web for Part II and found one specimen at a very reasonable price. The cover design seemed to be different from that of Part I, but no Part II with the same aspect as Part I was to be found. However, the description seemed as attractive as that of Part I: 'This book', it stated, 'has been considered by academicians and scholars of great significance and value to literature ... So that the book is never forgotten we have represented this book in a print format as the same as it was originally first published'. Convinced by such expressions as 'as it was originally first published' and the added promise that the edition had been devised as 'to preserve its true nature', I bought the book; but when it arrived, I was bitterly disappointed. Although the book faithfully reproduced the pages of Greg's 1908 Part II of the work, the volume I now had in my hands differed markedly from my Part I. The print was larger, and therefore easier to read; but this made for an entirely different size of page, almost double that of Part I. Furthermore, the

³⁷ Both volumes of Greg's edition are reproduced in the Internet Archive: Vol. I: <<https://archive.org/details/henslowesdiary01hensuoft/page/n9/mode/2up>>; Vol. II: <<https://archive.org/details/henslowesdiary02hensuoft>>.

Apart from the small print size, the on-line facsimiles are not ideal for any reading involving checking back and forth to compare although they do, in this case, allow one to search the text for particular words or sentences.

printer had also framed the pages with an enormous blank space, one which reminded me of the purposely large blank space of the first edition of Joyce's *Ulysses*, a bulky book which, like my Greg Part II, was of a rather unusual size: a rectangle tending towards a square, presenting an abnormal relationship between the area occupied by the text and that occupied by the margins.³⁸ In the case of Joyce, this was a feature dictated by the author for reasons not only aesthetic, a feature which, together with the exact colour of the cover and the elzevier typeface, was meant to *mean*. As D.F. McKenzie said, 'Joyce [was] working to make textual meaning from book forms' (2004, 58); in other words, through its materiality *as a book*, *Ulysses* must speak of its incomparable exceptionality *as a text*.

But Part II of Greg's work (1908), in the cheap but bulky edition I now had in my hands, a humble print venture attired so as to figure as a precious and durable edition, appeared to me incongruous in its physical pretentiousness. On the other hand, I thought, why should I care about the size and the general aspect of that facsimile, if the document was an accurate reproduction? But I sensed I did care, because that material object confirmed, in a rather glaring way, that books always mediate texts for 'literature exists ... only and always in its materializations, and ... these are the conditions of its meaning rather than merely the containers of it' (Kastan 2001, 4). That unforeseen experience with the materiality of texts, in other words, suggested that an added task, dictated by the absence of the 'originals' (their first printed instantiations), was appearing on the horizon of my reflections: that of considering how, in this context, 'forms effect[ed] meaning' (McKenzie 2004, 13). I refrained from undertaking this task because this kind of reflection would have brought me away from my present concerns. But the unease, and the doubts about the acceptability of a cultural practice that devalues the *hic et nunc* of particular cultural objects and disperses their 'aura' (Walter Benjamin), remained. Was I being the victim of a sort of first-edition cult, or was I simply feeling that I was in the presence of a curious form of veiled imposture which called for further reflection?

Other books I bought in order to proceed with my inquiry into Henslowe's Diary presented similarly incongruous material features (in the case of Collier's edition of the Diary, for instance, the print was too small, the margins were too narrow for a book published in 1845); so incongruous, that, at certain moments, I thought of giving up writing and reschedule my research until I could get access to the libraries I needed; and I even thought of irrevocably consigning the matter to oblivion. If I went on trying to complete my article, it was because the exceptionality of the moment had produced certain reflections (some textual, some historical) that I thought were worth recording, and *using*. Although I had several times gone back to McKenzie's essay on Congreve's 1710 *Works* and its luminous demonstration that 'The book itself is an expressive means' (2002, 200), I had never experienced in a tangible way what this can mean, as limitation and even impediment, but also as opportunity.

As a physical object, John and Philip's book remained for me a chimera; the more I tried to get a mental and visual image of it, the more that image appeared to me fallacious. My only possible approximation was a paper model I cut out of the book according to the measurements given by editors: 'approximately 13¼ x 8 inches' (Foakes and Rickert 1961, xii). That paper model remained on my lectern to remind me that all descriptions of its size ('a large folio' according to Malone, 'a bulky folio' according to Collier, 'a folio' according to Foakes and Rickert, and 'a small folio' according to both Warner and Greg) were unreliable. It is to be

³⁸ See, about the size of Joyce's 1922 *Ulysses*, Van Mierlo 2013, 142-145; see also Pugliatti 2016 for a comparative discussion of the material aspect of Shakespeare's 1623 Folio and the first edition of *Ulysses*.

hoped that, in the future, we will not have to invent expedients or to cut out paper models in order to mentally visualize and conceptualize the presence of absent books.

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