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Marlowe Studies:

A n A n n u a l



Volume 2

2012

Marlowe Studies: An Annual is a journal devoted to studying Christopher Marlowe and his role in the literary culture of his time, including but not limited to studies of his plays and poetry; their sources; relations to genre; lines of influence; classical, medieval, and continental contexts; performance and theater history; textual studies; the author's professional milieu and place in early modern English poetry, drama, and culture.

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Marlowe Studies is published one time per year. Annual subscription or backorder rates for individuals in the United States are \$45; for US libraries and institutions, \$90 per annual issue. International subscriptions and backorder rates are \$55 for individuals and \$110 for institutions. All payments must be made in US dollars.

Please send subscription and back order requests to mstudies@ipfw.edu or Managing Editor, *Marlowe Studies*; Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne; 2101 East Coliseum Blvd.; Fort Wayne, IN, 46805.

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ISSN 2159-8231 (Print)
2159-824X (Online)

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Abbreviations for Christopher Marlowe's Works

AOE	<i>All Ovid's Elegies</i>
COE	<i>Certain of Ovid's Elegies</i>
Dido	<i>Dido, Queen of Carthage</i>
DFa	<i>Doctor Faustus</i> , A-text
DFb	<i>Doctor Faustus</i> , B-text
E2	<i>Edward II</i>
HL	<i>Hero and Leander</i>
JM	<i>The Jew of Malta</i>
Luc	<i>Lucan's First Book</i>
Man	Manwood Elegy / Epitaph
MP	<i>The Massacre at Paris</i>
PS	"The Passionate Shepherd to His Love"
1Tam	<i>Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1</i>
2Tam	<i>Tamburlaine the Great, Part 2</i>

M. L. STAPLETON AND SARAH K. SCOTT
Fore-words

We are pleased to publish the second issue of the first serial academic publication devoted exclusively to the works of Christopher Marlowe. We solicit essays on scholarly topics directly related to the author and his role in the literary culture of his time. Especially welcome are studies of the plays and poetry; their sources; relations to genre; lines of influence; classical, medieval, and continental contexts; performance and theatre history; textual studies; and Marlowe's professional milieu and place in early modern English poetry, drama, and culture.

For a second year, we offer essays intended to represent the newest and best in Marlowe studies. Their diversity of subject, approach, and technique attest, we think, to the richness of this field: overriding themes in several works, analyses of single plays, theater history, and cultural and religious issues. We were honored to draw our contributors from three continents, which provides this 2012 issue with an international cast.

Ann Christensen's "Men (Don't) Leave: Aeneas as Departing Husband in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*" explores the concepts of domesticity and marriage in the play, familial discourses current in late sixteenth-century England. Sophie Gray's "Embodied Texts and Textual Bodies in *Doctor Faustus*" deconstructs the protagonist's language in the context of speech-act theory and the idea of the performative. Andrew McCarthy's "Marlowe's *Ars Moriendi*" analyzes the use of this artistic and cultural tradition in the plays, one that would have certainly been familiar to him as it was to his fellow playwrights. David McInnis's "Marlowe's Influence and 'The True History of George Scanderbeg'" traces the fascinating subject of "lost" Elizabethan plays,

in this case a text that was part of the dramatic genre devoted to conquerors that was popular in various repertories and one that may well have been influenced by the two parts of *Tamburlaine*. Meghan Davis Mercer's "'Poore Schollers': Education and Frustration in *Hero and Leander*" proposes that the linguistic richness of Marlowe's celebrated epyllion slyly comments on the penury that his own humanist education failed to prevent, especially in the aphorism that plenty makes one poor. Meg F. Pearson's "'Raving, Impatient, Desperate, and Mad': *Tamburlaine's* Spectacular Collapse" is devoted to the rare subject of the sequel to the much admired first part, and suggests that the "falling off" that some have perceived in part 2 may have been Marlowe's intent. Chloe Kathleen Preedy's "'False and Fraudulent Meanes'? Representing the Miraculous in the Works of Christopher Marlowe" investigates the concept of Marlowe's literary atheism, especially his polemical opposition to the notion of the miraculous, in accordance with the competing early modern concepts of philosophical skepticism, Catholicism, and Protestant providentialism. Allyna E. Ward's "The 'Hyperbolic Blasphemies' of Nashe and Marlowe in Late Tudor England" begins with the proposition that Thomas Nashe may have copied into one of his own books Faustus's "Che sera, sera" conclusion from that opening soliloquy, and it then reflects on the many appearances of Marlowe's play in works such as *Pierce Pennilesse: His Supplication to the Divill* (1592) and *The Unfortunate Traveller; or, The Life of Jack Wilton* (1593).

We wish to thank the members of our editorial board who evaluated manuscripts for publication. We are immensely grateful to our contributors, who wrote the essays, submitted them in a timely fashion, endured our editorial commentary, and then revised accordingly. We also offer special thanks to three people at our sponsoring institution, Indiana University–Purdue University, Fort Wayne: Carl Drummond, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, who has continued his financial support; Kendra Morris, who assisted in copyediting the manuscripts and who helped create, produce, and distribute advertising and other types of publicity for *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* (MS:A); and our managing editor, Cathleen M. Carosella, whose knowledge of publication, scholarship, copyediting, journals, libraries, printers, and finance is essential to our enterprise.

Finally, we offer a special note of appreciation to the Marlowe Society of America, which generously helped underwrite the cost of the first issue and is providing the same largesse for *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2, as well as thanks to the outgoing society president, Roslyn L. Knutson, and to her successor, Paul Menzer. Marlovians are in their debt.

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ANN CHRISTENSEN

Men (Don't) Leave: Aeneas as Departing Husband in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*

The retelling of book 4 of Virgil's epic, sometimes attributed to Thomas Nashe as well as Christopher Marlowe, shows Dido and Carthage making legitimate claims on Aeneas and him willing to answer them, somewhat begrudgingly: "I fain would go, yet beauty calls me back"; "Her silver arms will coll me round about, / And teares of pearle, crye stay, *Aeneas*, stay"; "I may not dure this female drudgery" (*Dido*, 4.3.46, 51–52, 55).¹ This Elizabethan adaptation differs from the teleological narrative in the *Aeneid* (c. 30–19 BCE), foregrounding Aeneas's manifest destiny and depicting the Dido idyll as necessarily bounded, and contrasts with medieval versions that vilified the hero. Modern commentary on the play typically focuses on the hero's unheroic vacillations, noting a deflation of Virgil's patriarchal, colonialist enterprise.² But Aeneas's ambivalence about leaving his "family" is an experience common to early modern travelers, from local merchants to global explorers, as well as agricultural workers, haulers, shipwrights, apprentices, and sailors.³ He stays, marries the widow, agrees to

1. Christopher Marlowe, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, in *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Roma Gill, 5 vol. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 1:113–74. All subsequent references to *Dido* are from this edition. Though Thomas Nashe's name appears on the title page of the 1594 quarto and the attribution question about the play is vexed, I refer to Christopher Marlowe exclusively as the author from this point forward.

2. See, for example, Clare R. Kinney, "Epic Transgression and the Framing of Agency in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*," *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 40.2 (2000): 261–76; Donald Stump, "Marlowe's Travesty of Virgil: Dido and Elizabethan Dreams of Empire," *Comparative Drama* 34.1 (2000): 79–107; Sid Ray, "Marlow(e)'s Africa: Postcolonial Queenship in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*," *Conradiana* 38.2 (2006): 143–61.

3. See Patricia Fumerton, *Unsettled: The Culture of Mobility and the Working Poor in Early Modern England* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2006), 11; A. L. Beier, *Masterless Men: The*

defend Carthage's borders, and plans to build his town there. In short, as David Riggs notes, the call to be a husband and householder is as compelling as, and more concretely depicted than, "*Hermes* this night descending in a dreame" summoning him "to fruitfull *Italy*" (4.3.4).⁴ Aeneas's call to an active, if settled, life establishes a valid identity not exclusive to heroic journeys but also akin to those of sixteenth-century husbands. With its prominent and dual imagery of travel and domesticity, the play is not about a voyage, but about settlement thwarted yet very forcefully desired.⁵ In my reading, this would-be nation-founder is the precursor to later absent householders common in domestic tragedy, merchants and factors like Arden of Faversham and Thomas Middleton's Leantio, whose duties are divided between work and home, travel and house holding, occupation and domestication. This central dilemma—should I stay or should I go?—informs the plot, characterization, setting, and metaphor in the domestic tragedy subgenre. Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage* domesticates the global story of Virgil.

"Pity a Falling House"

The playwright isolates the Carthage episode, thereby focusing on Aeneas's time with Dido and reducing the emphasis on his divine call to duty in the epic.⁶ Virgil's account of their separation

Vagrancy Problem in England, 1560–1640 (New York: Methuen, 1985), 31; Peter Clark, "The Migrant in Kentish Towns 1580–1640," in *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500–1700: Essays in Urban History*, ed. Peter Clark and Paul Slack (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1972), 117–163. Clark concludes his authoritative study of early modern migration patterns with the observation that "the family immobile over more than one generation is in this period exceptional" (154).

4. See David Riggs, *The World of Christopher Marlowe* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005), 119.

5. See Mary Beth Rose, "A Voyage on a Dangerous Sea: Marriage as Heroism in Early Modern English Prose," in *Teaching Early Modern English Prose*, ed. Susannah Brietz Monta and Margaret W. Ferguson (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2010), 143–53. Rose observes the not uncommon metaphor of marriage as a voyage in early modern English domestic advice literature.

6. For discussions of composition, authorship, publication, and early performances, see H. J. Oliver, introduction to *Dido, Queen of Carthage, and The Massacre at Paris*, ed. H. J. Oliver (London: Methuen, 1968), xx–xxv; Stump, "Marlowe's Travesty," 95–98; Kinney, "Epic Transgression," 271–73; Mary Elizabeth Smith, *Love Kindling Fire: A Study of Christopher Marlowe's "The Tragedy of Dido Queen of Carthage"* (Salzburg: U of Salzburg, 1977); Mary Kay Gamel, "The Triumph of Cupid: Marlowe's *Dido Queen of Carthage*," *Journal of American Philology* 126.4 (2005): 613–22.

in *Aeneid*, book 4 appears in countless literary and visual contexts and at least two major English translations in the early modern period.⁷ It also had a distinct medieval instantiation, such as the *Troy Booke* (1412–20) that implicates Aeneas in the fall of Troy and that renders Dido more sympathetically. The play marginalizes both the heroic and tragic Trojan past and the promised Roman future, along with the associated narratives of adventure and discovery. By placing the Carthaginian present at center stage, *Dido* works as a kind of domestic drama. By orchestrating all the action around an ever-threatened, seemingly inevitable, preordained separation scene, Marlowe makes Aeneas an absent husband and the queen a bereft wife, thereby accentuating the negative impact of vocational travel on domestic life. The “frame” in which gods squabble about their own domestic arrangements (1.1), along with additional vexed love plots (Anna and Iarbus, Jupiter and Ganymede, Jupiter and Juno, the nurse and Ascanius-Cupid), also demonstrates potential domesticity under stress. Among other modifications, the playwright also enhances the role of Iarbus as both the abettor of the Trojans and the uninterested suitor of her sister Anna, and he adds two suicides to Dido’s pyre to boot. These innovations emphasize the domestic elements of Aeneas’s decision to depart from Carthage contrary to her wishes. When asked why she wants him to stay, Dido answers, “To war against my bordering enemies” (3.1.135), which reflects her desire that he perform the main duties of an early modern husband, to settle and to protect.

Criticism is not unified concerning this request for protection. Sid Ray sees an “instinct for political survival” that complements Dido’s wish to fulfill her desires, and Theodora Jankowski observes that the queen subverts her own duty and power.⁸ A majority of commentators identify her primarily as an obsessive lover and allege that Aeneas’s Virgilian “passions for power, glory,

7. For discussions of medieval and early modern English translations, see John Watkins, *The Specter of Dido: Spenser and Virgilian Epic* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1995); David Scott Wilson-Okamura, *Virgil in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010); Tanya M. Caldwell, *Virgil Made English: The Decline of Classical Authority* (London: Routledge, 2008); Michael C. J. Putnam, *A Companion to Virgil’s “Aeneid”: Interpretation and Influence* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1995); Joseph Farrell and Michael C. J. Putnam, eds., *Virgil’s “Aeneid” and Its Tradition* (New York: Wiley, 2010). For more on some aspects of the Ovidian tradition, see Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe’s Counterfeit Profession: Ovid, Spenser, Counter-Nationhood* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1997).

8. Ray, “Marlow(e)’s Africa,” 148; Theodora A. Jankowski, *Women in Power in the Early Modern Drama* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1992), 140.

and revenge” and “dreams of glory” primarily motivate him.⁹ I agree with Ray’s view that Marlowe’s version of this heroine is not “driven by lust or even love,” but by the partnership and protection that many Elizabethan widows might have needed. Dido presents a potent call to life not primarily courtly or sexual, but pragmatic and domestic. The female power that seems to threaten some hero-centric critics as well as Aeneas was simply a facet of early modern existence. It resides in the very “female drudgerie” that Aeneas impugns before one of his attempts to flee (4.3.55). Like “the irksome labours” (3.3.56) of feeding friends, answering the call to settle leaves one open to the potency-cum-drudgery of domestic life. This call was a threshold over which countless Englishmen passed (or paused) every day.¹⁰

By identifying Marlowe’s revisions of Virgil and noting how those changes emphasize the tense interplay between travel and home, we see the ambivalence inherent in domestic life in the age of commercial expansion.¹¹ In this context, I argue that by identifying Aeneas and Dido as an early modern married couple, we follow the playwright’s lead in focusing on the dissolution of a family rather than an independent hero’s quest in which Virgil distinguishes a normative masculine purposeful motion and action from a kind of irrational feminine behavior. Marlowe’s gendering of these modalities is much more complex. As I demonstrate later, he uses the language of travel and movement (ships, rigging, running) and home and stillness (walls, staying, chains) to reflect on the family dissolution increasingly common within the growing commercial economy.¹² For this hero there is no monolithic certainty of mission. When we read *Dido* in the context of the unsettled circumstances of economic life for many London playgoers, we may apprehend the play’s enduring “tensions” as life’s quotidian conflicting demands more than the timeless theme of love versus duty. Similarly, we may read Aeneas’s “indecision” less as a flaw than a fact, compelled by marriage and domestic

9. W. Craig Turner, “Love and the Queen of Carthage: A Look at Marlowe’s *Dido*,” *Essays in Literature* 11 (1984): 7.

10. Ray notes that in these texts, “female potency of any kind is a fearful thing” (“Marlow(e)’s Africa,” 156). See also Smith, *Love Kindling Fire*, 45; Jankowski, *Women in Power*, 3–9, especially 7. As Riggs observes, “However fleetingly, the union of Dido and Aeneas becomes a palpable, even preferable, alternative to the founding of Rome” (*World*, 124).

11. Clark and Slack, introduction to *Crisis and Order*, 36–37.

12. See Kinney, “Epic Transgression,” 263.

commitments as much as by an abstract sense of duty. Finally, we may interpret the various violations of traditional gender binaries, such as a powerful regnant widow, a needy male traveler, a besotted god, violent goddesses, and a cheeky Cupid as evidence of fluidity among roles in a period of social and economic flux rather than as perversions or inversions of some norm.¹³ The desire to stay compels as much as the call to go. Surely, countless families of sailing men shared this sentiment, a demographic that Patricia Fumerton numbers between three thousand and five thousand in the middle of the sixteenth century, one that increases to over sixty thousand by 1750.¹⁴

One may view the many instances in which Hermes-Mercury summons Aeneas as divine and mythological versions of the more mundane separations of life in an economy becoming increasingly global. Domestic obligations and pleasures did indeed compete with commercial ventures and occupational duties for early modern people. Increased travel manifested itself at all levels of society: poor families divided by the vagrancy laws or the later Act of Settlement (1701); factors, soldiers, and sailors sent abroad for work, trade, or defense; alleged spies like Marlowe; ambassadors such as Anne Bradstreet's husband, Simon; and explorers. Men indeed left their homes and families, and much more frequently than previously, which Marlowe's *Dido* clearly reflects.

Despite its allure, domesticity does not draw Aeneas easily in the play, which may reflect Marlowe's reading of his Virgilian source. Just as the playwright eschews the linear trajectory of departure, he also avoids promulgating the simple centripetal narrative of staying home, so that his hero is faced with a peculiarly early modern dilemma that results in what Sara Munson Deats describes as a transfer of "initiative from Aeneas to Dido." However, the sixteenth-century stage rendition of Virgil's protagonist is not Stump's "feckless, self-serving opportunist," Ray's "unassertive" and "irresolute" wanderer, or Harraway's "archetypal deserter of women."¹⁵ His wavering instead shows that, for

13. See Mary Beth Rose, *The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988), 110–12.

14. Beier wrote in *Masterless Men* that "no occupational groups increased as much as sailors and soldiers among vagrants from 1560 to 1640" (93). See also Fumerton, *Unsettled*, 58, 89.

15. Respectively, Sara Munson Deats, *Sex, Gender, and Desire in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1997), 92; Stump, "Marlowe's Travesty," 145; Ray, "Marlow(e)'s Africa," 145; Clare Harraway, *Re-citing Marlowe: Approaches to the Drama* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2000), 122.

him, settling, making a home, and then staying there are enterprises as valid as leaving, discovering, and founding a nation on a distant shore.

Marlowe's Aeneas, then, is enticed not to an idyll of lotus flowers or a winter of carnal adventures in a cave, but to the fulfillment of somewhat more prosaic responsibilities, providing protection and building a home, which Mary Beth Rose outlines as a heroics of marriage.¹⁶ In the language of domestic conduct literature, he will cohabit with Dido and "maintain well his lyvlihood"¹⁷ in Carthage, which the play emphasizes in its repeated reference to homely comforts such as food, sport, and architectural features such as windows and turrets. Mary Smith suggests that we first glimpse this prospect in their initial meeting when Dido attires her guest in her late husband's cloak and commands, "Sit in this chair and banquet with a Queene." To which the man quips, "This is no seate for one that's comfortless" (2.1.83, 86).¹⁸ But he accepts the clothing and other domestic succor that his hostess offers throughout the play, and he complies with the invitation to tell the story of Troy at table, therefore almost compelled to accept a form of settlement in the very seat that such a wanderer surely welcomes. Aeneas the husband may abandon his wider "pilgrimage" but not his potential for heroism, since married men in the sixteenth century were often called away from the very households that their professions supported—and stayed married.

Marlowe uses a type of scene in *Dido* that I have elsewhere called a "threshold moment," one that embodies the new requirements for domesticity and that places each of his main characters at a type of crossroads place in which stage business and language combine to signal cultural ambivalence.¹⁹ This condition would seem to challenge or even invalidate the more common

16. Rose, "Voyage," 143–53. For alternative views, see Emily C. Bartels, *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1993), 29; and J. B. Steane, *Marlowe: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1964), 38.

17. Edmund Tilney, "The Flower of Friendship": *A Renaissance Dialogue Contesting Marriage*, ed. Valerie Wayne (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1992), 120–21.

18. Mary E. Smith notes that "Aeneas abandons his heroic pilgrimage almost as soon as he puts on Sichaeus' cloak," and will therefore "assume Sichaeus' position as husband and become what the garment already ironically shows him to be." Smith, "Staging Marlowe's *Dido, Queene of Carthage*," *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 17.2 (1977): 177–90, 185.

19. Ann Christensen, "'The Doors Are Made against You': Domestic Thresholds in Ben Jonson's Plays," *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 18 (1997): 153–78. See also Smith, "Staging," 178, 179.

indictments of Aeneas as indecisive and wavering. In my view, a term such as ambivalence more neutrally and more aptly characterized most domestic departures, when men felt these imperatives to leave, and families at home resisted, regrouped, then endured the separation. Such experiences were more common in the lives of early modern families than a mythic inner conflict between a hero divided between love and country. Therefore, I argue that the oppositions, tensions, and contradictions concerning domestic life in *Dido* are integrated and inform each other, not opposed in the way that some critics such as Roma Gill have identified them. The play's ambivalence is purposeful.²⁰

Two scenes in the play's second half especially concentrate audience attention on the terrible choice between domesticity and departure and their ironic dependence on each other in complementary threshold moments for the principal couple. In the first example, in act 4, scene 4, Dido occupies an interior space but apostrophizes to outside elements such as the ship rigging, then opens her window to invite the wind and to take her—hook, line, and pillow—to Italy (4.4.126–65). In the second, in act 5, scene 1, Aeneas speaks from that matrix of departures and arrivals, the shore, not embarking, as expected, but wielding “blueprints” for a local new Troy and declaring to his sailors: “our travels are at end” (5.1.1). At these points, the audience witnesses the confrontation, if not the integration, of these two spheres of experience, since travel became increasingly integral to the economy of early modern settlement. I argue that these moments, in their staging of surprisingly gendered responses to leaving and staying home, reflect cultural anxieties about commercial travel in the face of domestic obligations. Though Catherine Richardson observes that physical absence was “an occasional necessary evil for which the household manuals discuss contingency plans,” such contingencies were everyday occurrences. Domestic conduct writers treated the absence of householders as occasional only for reasons of war or special service. An absent husband was not the anomaly that some of the prescriptive literature implied, or perhaps hoped. “Needful” travel was more common than contingent.²¹

The plot of Marlowe's play, then, concerns itself less with founding a *patria* in Italy than the ordinary process of settling and

20. For Gill, see her introduction to *Dido* in *Complete Works*, 1:120.

21. Catherine Richardson, *Domestic Life and Domestic Tragedy in Early Modern England: The Material Life of the Household* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2006), 115, 127n20.

then leaving another home, Carthage. While the *Aeneid* furnishes what Gill terms the larger “context and consequence of his hero’s desertion of Dido,” his epic destiny, by foregrounding Aeneas’s movements from Troy to Italy, *Dido* attends to decisions of the more prosaic sort familiar to audience members and featured in later plays such as Middleton’s *Women Beware Women* (1657), in which the husband’s departure for business disrupts his new household.²² Critics have explored a variety of reductions of scale by Marlowe of his source, especially his tonal shifts. I argue that his rejection of Virgil’s structure explores choices and chances, and that Dido expands rather than diminishes.²³ Aeneas’s struggle may have helped audiences recognize their own domestic life that surely involved a merger of spheres: passion and home dwelling, duty and departing.

The Widow Dido and the Widower Aeneas

Aeneas’s desire to settle helps create the play’s notorious ambivalence. In dramatizing his eventual departure, Marlowe depicts a renegade husband about to abdicate his responsibility. Smith noticed that the apparent indifference of the Olympians about the founding of Rome appears to be part of a pattern. As the action begins, Ganymede distracts Jupiter and even the father of the gods must be reminded of his duty, just as Aeneas will later be called and recalled to fulfill his destiny. Neither Juno, the patroness of marriage as well as Carthage, nor Venus, the mother of the hero and goddess of love, seems particularly insistent about his departure. For example, Juno regrets having caused Aeneas “mickle woe on sea and land” (3.2.41) and hypothesizes: “Why should not they then joyne in marriage, / And bring forth mightie Kings to *Carthage* towne, / Whom casuallie of sea hath made such friends?” (3.2.74–76). Venus, though tempted by this conciliatory move, yet observes that Aeneas may not consent, “Whose armed

22. Gill, introduction to *Dido*, 1:119.

23. Gill sees a transition from “high seriousness” to “deflationary satire” (introduction to *Dido*, 1:119). Clifford Leech categorizes the play as “ironic comedy” in *Christopher Marlowe: Poet for the Stage*, ed. Anne B. Lancashire (New York: AMS, 1986), 37. Stump thinks Marlowe deflates the idea of epic with travesty (“Marlowe’s Travesty,” especially 86, 87); Ray and Bartels detect ideological differences between Augustan empire-building and Marlowe’s critique of colonialism (“Marlow(e)’s Africa,” 143–61; *Spectacles of Strangeness*, 47–48). Finally, Jonathan Goldberg argues that the play enacts a change from straight (patriarchal) gender ideology to “gender transgressions” in *Sodometries: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities* (Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 1992), 126–37.

soule already on the sea, / Darts forth her light to *Lavinias* shoare” (3.2.83–84). This image of his sea-directed soul may more reflect his mother’s wishful thinking than the character we are to meet. In any case, she equivocates in her hope that her son may “at last depart to Italy, / Or else in Carthage make his kingly throne” (2.1.330–31), implying, as Smith observes, that these places are less important than the principle of ruling itself.²⁴

Even before the encounter in the cave, and certainly after, Marlowe portrays the pair as a couple, albeit with the woman as wooer, and their separation as the dissolution of a household. Indeed, the Latin that Dido quotes in her final plea (5.1.137) includes the line “miserere domus labentis” (have pity on a falling house) (*Aeneid*, 4.318), in which “domus” can mean both family dwelling and familial line.²⁵ When the two first meet, their relationship follows the host-guest dynamic. Yet a form of domestic life overlays this structure, in part because their mutually bereft condition hovers above the encounter. Aeneas is primed to meet a friend in Dido by both his mother and his men who have landed before him. Venus, disguised as a local huntress, urges her son to “hast thee to the Court,” assuring him that he has landed on a “curteous Coast” and that “Dido will receive ye with her smiles” (*Dido*, 1.1.233, 232, 234). And receive him she does. By the end of the scene she has fed and clothed him, agreed to mother his son, exhorted his story, and planned his entertainment. Like Venus, Aeneas’s men also foretell his welcome:

Lovely *Aeneas*, these are *Carthage* walles,
And here Queene *Dido* weares th’imperiall Crowne,
Who for *Troyes* sake hath entertaind us all,

.....

And now she sees thee how will she rejoyce? (2.1.62–64, 69)

When Aeneas appears fully present, not clouded in a mist as in the first book of Virgil’s epic, Dido acts as a hostess as well as a wife.²⁶

24. Smith, *Love Kindling Fire*, 67–68. Also, “Marlowe’s Jupiter is not interested in Rome, nor is his Aeneas, nor, presumably, is Marlowe himself” (64). Goldberg identifies Venus as chief promoter of her son’s career (*Sodomietries*, 130). See also Peter Hulme’s analysis of the courtiers’ quibble about “the widow Dido” and the “widower Aeneas” in *The Tempest* (1611). Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492–1797* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 110–12.

25. I am grateful to Joe Messina for his help glossing this line. For the Latin text in *Aeneid*, see *Virgil*, trans. H. R. Fairclough, rev. G. P. Goold, Loeb Classical Library 63, 2 vol. (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999), 1:442.

26. See Harraway’s fruitful interpretation of this episode in *Re-Citing Marlowe*, 118.

Though critical studies have interpreted her hospitality in various ways, from political manipulation to self-abnegation, none has analyzed it as a widow wooing a widower and the creation of a family unit. Her gestures are, at one level, simply practical domestic duties that a wife performs for her husband, including her promotion of his status and moral support. The presence of Aeneas's son Ascanius furthers the scene's familial feel and explicitly expands Dido's role to mother: "And if this be thy sonne as I suppose, / here let him sit, be merrie lovely child" (2.1.92–93). At the welcoming banquet, she plays the caring wife as she replies sympathetically to the hero's story and finally urges him to "think upon some pleasing sport," later arranging the hunting outing to drive away their mutual melancholy (2.1.302). Thus, even before the exchange of vows in the cave, and certainly before Cupid pierces her with his arrow, Dido willingly accepts the widower and his orphaned son into her domicile. And Aeneas does not demur.

The hunt scene extends this domestic image. Just before the fateful storm, Marlowe inserts a playful domestic scene (3.3), the comedy of which has yet to be fully appreciated, though Rick Bowers has explored the amusing camp sensibility inherent in other ways in *Dido*.²⁷ Here, the queen plays overlapping familial roles: host, wife, mother, sister, yet also monarch. She orchestrates the hunt and the hunters like a stage manager. She calls attention to her sexy Venus-as-Diana costume (3.3.3–4); she and Anna joke with and about Ascanius-Cupid, whose boyish bravura is out of place (3.3.32–41); she urges the huntsmen to occupy themselves (3.3.30–31); and she finally directs each person to another part of the forest: "*Aeneas*, . . . let's away, / Some to the mountaines, some to the soyle, / You to the vallies, thou unto the house" (3.3.60–62). Only jealous Iarbus, with whom Dido exchanges barbs and whom she sends "unto the house" (3.3.13–14, 19–29), and deadpan Aeneas undercut the light tone of the scene. Finally, the hunt draws attention to a previous episode in the forest, another quasi-family reunion, when Aeneas unknowingly reunites with his mother. Achates reminds him, "As I remember, here you shot the Deere, / That sav'd your famisht souldiers lives from death" (3.3.51–52). In recalling his rusticated housekeeping, which he calls "irksome labours" (3.3.56), Aeneas prefigures both his vow to become a householder in building a new city in Carthage (5.1) and

27. See Rick Bowers, "Hysterics, High Camp, and *Dido Queene of Carthage*," in *Marlowe's Empery: Expanding His Critical Contexts*, ed. Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan (Newark: Delaware UP, 2002), 95–106.

his attempt to repudiate that promise: “my friendly host, adue” (4.3.1). Thus, the hunt scene functions as a family outing.

Then the storm strikes and divides the company, in many ways a “providential tempest.”²⁸ In the cave, Aeneas and Dido promise to make a life together, and therefore Marlowe fortifies the twinned concepts of domesticity and settlement, though his source emphasizes that Aeneas’s destined home is the Italian peninsula and that his hostess distracts him from that goal. In the play, however, the lovers speak primarily in terms of home, location, and settlement, each of which counters and complements the emphasis on travel and movement. And the cave is a natural enclosure rather than a fabricated environment, a wild unhomey home. As Dido proclaims later, “O blessed tempests that did drive him in” (4.4.94).

Their exchange extends this threshold moment at the level of language, again stressing the necessary connections between travel and settlement. First, Dido puns on being “loose” yet “not free” when she responds to Aeneas’s reference to Venus and Mars, who were caught “in a net” (3.4.5, 6). The play deploys nautical images and props, including nets, chains, anchors, and harbor, all of which serve this dual duty as images of seafaring travel and settlement. To be anchored is to be still, while also at sea, for example. Next, the man whose “wandring fate is firm” vows “by all the Gods of Hospitalitie,” thereby associating his promise with housekeeping (1.1.83; 3.4.44). He had just reflected upon his performance of the labor of feeding his men, and now he identifies with this task. That a fellow Trojan had specifically mentioned the sanctity of local *lares* when they first landed (3.4.44) draws an association between the gods of hospitality and household gods, the Roman “Penates.” Though Aeneas makes other oaths in the scene (3.4.45–48), that initial vow to hospitality bespeaks settlement. Furthermore, Marlowe makes this a significant change from Virgil’s tale in which Aeneas specifically rescues his own household gods from their fate in a burning Troy.²⁹ In Marlowe’s set speech, the Trojan Penates are not mentioned. Adding to the domestic emphasis, Aeneas then invokes “these newe upreared walles” of “*Junos towne*” (3.4.49–50) that he promises to rebuild at a later date.

28. For the concept, see Coppélia Kahn, “The Providential Tempest and the Shakespearean Family,” in *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays*, ed. Murray M. Schwartz and Coppélia Kahn (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1980), 217–43.

29. For a different conclusion about Marlowe’s omission of this detail, see Smith, *Love Kindling Fire*, 112–13.

Dido's response reinforces the tensions between departure and settlement, both literally in her Carthaginian home and figuratively in her arms. Marlowe's imagery opposes and yet collapses such seeming binaries as motion and stasis, union and separation, staying and going. For example, the queen describes her own soul in motion, linking her to Aeneas, resembling Venus's assumption that her son's soul was at sea (3.4.52–54). Her speech also celebrates the tempest that brought them together, whereas Marlowe had previously used storms to divide and destroy in the narrative: for example, to reinforce the Greeks' attack on Troy (2.1.139–41); in Juno's confession, "I mustred all the windes unto his wracke" (3.2.45); and the "over violent" motion of the current storm to which the other characters react negatively (4.1.1–13). Now "kind cloudes" bring "a curteous storme" (3.4.54) that unites. Next, Dido appropriates the foundational project for herself: "Stoute love in mine armes make thy Italy" (3.4.57). Finally, she bestows her jewels and wedding ring on Aeneas the caveman, renaming him, as the scene closes, royal husband, "by my gift" (3.4.64). An attempt at almost surgically reinventing his identity, as Mark Thornton Burnett argues, or a move to obliterate herself, as Jankowski believes, this set of vows and actions certainly keeps the focus on "place-ment."³⁰ That is, the scene literally "places" Aeneas and Dido in a domestic life with various elements: setting, the cave as cover and safety from bad weather; speech, the invocation of *lares* and walls; the replacement of national boundaries (Italy) with personal body parts (arms); props and images that contain or encircle, such as walls, bracelets, and rings; and by individuating objects, "these Jewels," "this wedding ring" (3.4.61–2). Given these linguistic and symbolic emphases, then, the marriage is founded in an essential ambivalence between ideas of travel and settling, a dichotomy further emphasized by exchange of vows in a radically liminal place, the inside-outside of the cave. Therefore, one can only conclude that Marlowe's pair is married and Aeneas becomes an absent householder when he leaves.

The play's engagement with routine domestic divisions and relocations also seems evident in Dido's status as a widow who has herself resettled, having been forced to leave her native Tyre when her husband Sichaeus is killed. Feminist scholars have explored the economic hardships and advantages of widows and single women

30. Mark Thornton Burnett, ed., introduction to *The Complete Plays*, by Christopher Marlowe (London: Everyman, 1999), xxiv; Jankowski, *Women in Power*, 136.

in the period, much of which could readily apply to Dido.³¹ Her gallery of “urgent suiters” in act 3, scene 1, another Marlovian innovation, hints at the potential sexual vulnerability of unmarried women. Though she has the power of refusal and symbolically contains the wooers’ desire by the portraiture she possesses, other unpartnered women, including cast-out servants and port wives, were not as lucky and comprised the majority of plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses in slander cases in the period.³² Even Dido, wearer of “th’ imperiall crowne,” shares the common feminine concern with reputation. Several times she mentions its fragility: “And all the world calles me a second Helen” (5.1.145–48).

In some ways, Dido resembles the widows of London tradesmen who could bestow household, goods, and businesses to second husbands along with their own love and duty. In her home, Aeneas could easily garner resources to found a nation. Jennifer Panek’s savvy reassessment of stereotypes concerning the remarrying widow may explain Dido’s appeal for Aeneas and allow us to view their relationship in the context of ordinary domesticity.³³

Though of course not a London apprentice, Aeneas arrives on Dido’s shore at a similarly vulnerable transitional stage in his life. He feels lost and low, continually underestimating his own status, especially when he first meets her and again in the cave (3.4.41–42). It is she who reminds him of his nobility, she who calls, and indeed crowns, him king: “Aeneas is Aeneas, were he clad / In weedes as bad as ever *Irus* ware” (2.1.84–85). By invoking *Irus*, one of Penelope’s suitors, she equates her own situation with that of another quasi-widow of a compulsively absent hero-husband. As a wealthy and powerful widow, she ennobles her new spouse by placing him on a horse and presenting him with his predecessor’s

31. See Linda Woodbridge, *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renaissance Literature* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2001); Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Amy M. Froide, *Never Married: Singlewomen in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).

32. See Gowing, *Domestic Dangers*, 36.

33. “Marrying a widow—the only woman with both the means and the freedom to disregard a suitor’s social and economic status if she so pleased—allowed a man to wed earlier [than upon the completion of his apprenticeship]; stepping into the vacant place in an already established household, often complete with servants, apprentices and a functioning business, instantly conferred upon him a level of status that could otherwise take years to attain.” Jennifer Panek, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 49.

robe, crown, and jewel. Sichaeas's possessions parallel the coverture rights of widows' second husbands. Women in this position were free to bestow and to keep their property and could be economically empowered. According to Panek, this privilege helped create the common stereotype of the lusty widow, a way that men displaced their fears and anxieties about this type of female power.³⁴ The unique prerogative of such a person and the home life she provides appears in Marlowe's play when the queen stages a procession of her consort through town (4.4.86). Here, she both bestows herself, promising submission, and yet also retains power: "*Dido* is thine, henceforth Ile call thee Lord: / Doe as I bid thee, sister leade the way" (4.4.84–85). Such ambivalence is more pronounced perhaps in the case of a reigning monarch. Whether perceived as a "double bind" for a husband, as Burnett describes, or as a core complication for a wife, a remarried widow commanding her lord was not uncommon. As Emily Bartels explains, when Dido claims to be able to make "blest" the miserable Aeneas, she "underscores not only his worth, but also her ability to enrich it."³⁵ The considerable blessings that a dowry, labor, and emotional support could provide were essential to wives' contributions to family economies.

Setting in the play calls into question where Aeneas's home really is, essentially asking, "What is Carthage? What is Troy?" Neither seems a fixed place or idea. So, though Dido is Queen of Carthage, Iarbus draws attention to the impermanence of her place there when he complains that Dido, "straying in our borders up and downe," exploited his hospitality, having begged "a hide of ground to build a towne" (4.2.12, 13). While her native Phoenicia is occasionally invoked, she rules Carthage possessively, even extending her majesty to her new husband despite her people's opinions: "*Aeneas* may command as many *Moores*, / As in the sea are little water drops" (4.4.62–63).³⁶ This comparison that pairs sea imagery with settlement "re-places" Aeneas's command at sea to home, making him even more geographically unsettled than the transplanted refugee queen. A man without a country, he confuses his former and current place: "Where am I now? These should be *Carthage* walles. . . . Me thinkes that towne, there should be *Troy*,

34. See Panek, *Widows*, 16, 48, respectively.

35. Burnett, ed., introduction to *Complete Plays*, xxiii; Bartels, *Spectacles of Strangeness*, 46.

36. For a discussion of Dido's Phoenician identity, see Margo Hendricks, "Managing the Barbarian: *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage*," *Renaissance Drama*, n.s. 23 (1992): 165–88, 173–74.

Yon *Idas* hill” (2.1.1, 7). Until Dido locates him in her seat at her banquet, Aeneas wonders: “Sometime I was a *Trojan*, mighty queen, / But *Troy* is not: what shall I say I am?” (2.1.75–76). Iarbus grouses that this wanderer, “a *Phrigian* far fet on the sea” (3.3.64), has stolen his rightful place next to Dido.

Marlowe has envisioned many moving cartographic parts that compete to call Aeneas. Carthage is frequently conflated with Troy and Italy, so that home, at least for Aeneas, is never clear. Initially, to the shipwrecked Trojans, the African locale appears as a promising place for permanent settlement. Achates evaluates its underused natural resources: “The ayre is pleasant, and the soyle most fit / For Cities, and societies supports” (1.1.178–79). Yet this Trojan later joins the chorus of leave-takers who denigrate their Carthaginian interlude (4.3.15–55) and blames his host for his own rude departure: “I feard your grace would keepe me here” (4.4.20). Troy is razed, but reappears to Aeneas on the walls of Carthage in the form of Priam’s statue (2.1.1–38). Italy is readily refigured as Dido’s arms, in the same way that Shakespeare’s Venus makes her limbs an “‘ivory pale’ in which Adonis could graze.”³⁷ Similarly, it seems that Troy can be rebuilt in Carthage as well as in Italy, and renamed as well (5.1.18–23). Place is a marker of identity, but the fluidity of possible places to settle suggests an unsettledness familiar to English people in the age of expansion and exploration. Therefore, Marlowe deemphasizes the inevitability of Italy, which is only a projected future, just as Troy is only an absent past, and uses Carthage as the sole representation of a home. Present tense, embodied, and occupied by a wife, Carthage appears as what Aeneas elsewhere only remembers or imagines: domesticity in the form of marriage, meals, gifts, obligations, and family.

Aeneas’s Trojan narrative likewise accentuates the specifically familial and domestic cast to the tragedy of Troy, and similar points flesh out the frame and play proper. For example, the grisly image of infants “swimming in their parents blood” reasserts the familial nature of the tragedy (2.1.193). Marlowe adds mothers and mother figures in the induction and the play proper: over-protective Venus, the child-abusing Juno, Dido’s “adoption” of Cupid-Ascanius, the nurse. In addition, such symbolic gestures as the provision of food and clothing occupy a domestic, if also a specifically marital / maternal, register. While banqueting and gift-giving are the prerogatives of native hosts and ruling monarchs, I

37. See William Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis*, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), 229–40.

believe likewise that what Peter Hulme has identified as “the socially symbolic meaning” enacted through “the great colonial theme of hospitality” are also enacted as part of the remarrying widow narrative. Hospitality was the housewife’s duty in early modern England.³⁸

Building: Aeneas’s Threshold Moment

Aeneas, in addition to reconfiguring his military identity as border patrol agent at Carthage, may also be the founder of a new Troy in that locus, fulfilling at once a version of the gods’ plans for him and the role of husband. Again, he appears on shore decisively wielding the equivalent of blueprints and promising, like any aspiring Elizabethan landed gentleman, to make improvements to his property: “Here will Aeneas build a statelier Troy, . . . Carthage shall vaunt her pettie walles no more, / For I will grace them with a fairer frame” (5.1.2, 4–5). In this, Marlowe amplifies two lines of Virgil into a moment of stunning theatricality. He may have known Thomas Phaer’s 1558 translation of the *Aeneid*, and in this rendering of book 4, Mercury discovers Aeneas “advauncing up the towres, and houses hie was altring new” (4.279), and chastising the man for having “of thine own affaires or kingdoms . . . no care” (4.288).³⁹ For Marlowe’s hero, his “owne affaires” cannot be distinguished from those of his wife, because, as W. Craig Turner puts it: “The love which he has shared with Dido has been beneficial to both his health and his wealth, and his forsaking her apparently destroys his chances for almost certain marital happiness.”⁴⁰ In Virgil’s epic, Aeneas is able to form a plan and convene his comrades soon after the messenger god vanishes. In the play, Hermes makes two distinct visits (4.3, 5.1), two

38. Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, 249. See also Loreen L. Giese, *Courtships, Marriage Customs, and Shakespeare’s Comedies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 131; Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Ann C. Christensen, “Of Household Stuff and Homes: The Stage and Social Practice in *The Taming of the Shrew*,” *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 22 (1996): 127–45; Christensen, “‘Because Their Business Still Lies Out of Doors’: Resisting the Separation of the Spheres in *The Comedy of Errors*,” *Literature and History* 5.1 (1996): 19–37; and Christensen, “Playing the Cook: Nurturing Men in *Titus Andronicus*,” *Shakespeare Yearbook* 6 (1996): 327–54.

39. For the text of this translation and line numbers, see Thomas Phaer, “The Seven First Books of the ‘Aeneidos’ of Virgil: Translated by Thomas Phaer (1558),” in *Christopher Marlowe: The Plays and Their Sources*, ed. Vivien Thomas and William Tydeman (London: Routledge, 1994), 25–52, 43, 44.

40. Turner, “Love and the Queen of Carthage,” 7.

subsequent departures transpire, and only the last finally succeeds, however anticlimactic it may be.⁴¹

Marlowe constructs Aeneas as a leader and a man of action at home as well as at sea, a vision that culminates in his galvanizing speech opening act 5. Surrounded by the Trojan men with his architectural plans in his hands, he appears more clearly in a leadership mode than anywhere else in the play, “the practical man,” as Gill observes, with “the zeal of a do-it-yourself builder.”⁴² Indeed, though settling is the subject of his oratory, he sounds like contemporary European explorers such as Richard Hakluyt who characterized themselves as “men full of activity, stirrers abroad, and searchers of the most remote parts of the world.”⁴³ Here I also argue that Aeneas’s language sounds most domestic as he hopes to “lay a platforme for these walles” (5.1.94) while he fantasizes about furnishing the new state. Marlowe’s home-oriented metaphor accentuates the theme:

The Sunne from *Egypt* shall rich odors bring,
Wherewith his burning beames like labouring Bees,
That loade their thighs with *Hyblas* honeys spoyles,
Shall here unburden their exhaled sweetes,
And plant our pleasant suburbs with her fumes. (5.1.11–15)

Marlowe uses such “honeys spoyles” and “exhaled sweetes” as maternal seductions elsewhere in *Dido*. Venus abducts Ascanius with sticky promises of “sugar-almonds, sweet conserves, / A silver girdle and a golden purse” (2.1.305–6), and the Nurse lures Cupid home, disguised as Aeneas’s son, Ascanius, with a similar promise: “plums / Browne Almonds, Servises, ripe Figs and Dates, / Dewberries, Apples, yellow Orenge” (4.5.4–6).⁴⁴ The hero’s settlement rhetoric also echoes in Dido’s similarly enraptured invocation of the “wealth of *India*” (5.1.8–11; 3.1.92–93). The image of the “labouring Bees” also seems to revise Virgil’s metaphor of the industrious Trojans as a line of ants preparing for departure later in book 4. Marlowe situates his

41. Bartels reads Aeneas’s willingness to stay as “a colonialist dream-come-true.” Carthage “will be a site of acquisition, where the ‘exhaled sweets’ from Egypt and India can be gathered up, contained, and consumed” (*Spectacles of Strangeness*, 44).

42. Roma Gill, “Marlowe’s Virgil: *Dido Queene of Carthage*,” *Review of English Studies*, n.s. 28.110 (1977): 141–55, 151.

43. Qtd. in Hendricks, “Managing the Barbarian,” 165.

44. See Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey, eds., introduction to *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays* (New York: Penguin, 2003), xiv.

wandering hero on the shore near his ships with his building plans to enhance this dramatic moment of decision, whether to stay in Carthage or to depart for the Italian peninsula.

Rigging: Dido's Threshold Moment

Dido responds to her husband's departure by confiscating the ship rigging, gifts, and props that figure into the play's core ambivalence, as Bartels observes.⁴⁵ The trajectory of the rigging follows Aeneas's shipwreck, Dido's restoration and later reclamation of the equipment, Iarbus's restocking the Trojans' naval supplies, and finally Dido's inability to pursue them because her own fleet has departed. Her appropriation of this nautical prop into her domicile symbolizes both movement and stasis, and the moment demonstrates how difficult it can be to distinguish between settlement and departure.

Marlowe's queen of Carthage differs in many ways from her Virgilian predecessor, whom Phaer describes as "frantike" (4.323).⁴⁶ The stage Dido seems firmer and more commanding as well as more domestic. She sends Anna "running" to recall Aeneas (*Dido*, 4.4.1, 109) rather than performing this task herself. Yet in the *Aeneid*, Dido staggers through Carthage in panic that her beloved is leaving and "railes with ramping rage, & through the streates & townes about / With noise she wanders wide, most like gide of Bacchus route" (4.324–25). Virgil's vision of her initial response to falling in love portrays her as equally peripatetic in his simile comparing her to a wounded doe who "through the towne with raging chere / Astray she wanders wide" (4.76–77). This Dido pleads with Aeneas to stay, who only responds "with fixid eyes" (4.360). Ultimately, while preparing to leave, Aeneas stands still, steady, and unmoved, "as an auncient Oke of timber stout is tost and torne / With northern boystrous blasts, . . . Yet still on rockes it standes." (4.482–83, 486). To all entreaties, "standes he fixed still, and teares of eyes do trill for nought" (4.490). Such oaken "fixedness" serves as contrast with the wandering, love-struck queen.

These redacted characterizations of Virgil's changeable Dido and stalwart Aeneas emphasize the play's dichotomy between

45. Bartels, *Spectacles of Strangeness*, 47–48.

46. Thomas Phaer and Thomas Twyne, trans., *The 'Fourth Booke of the Aeneidos' of Virgil*, rpt. eds. Vivien Thomas and William Tydeman (1558; Routledge: New York, 1994), 72–93. Hereafter cited as *Aeneid*.

home and travel. As I have argued, Marlowe's traveler is less firm, poised for settlement in Carthage as well as seeking adventure in terra incognita. His queen is more stable than her Virgilian predecessor. Instead of raging about Carthage when she suspects Aeneas's flight, Dido retreats, reconfiguring her chamber in a distinctly nautical style, hanging "sailes . . . in the chamber where I lye," inviting the winds to "Drive if you can my house to *Italy*" (*Dido*, 4.4.126, 128, 129). In this way, she promises domesticity, impugning the "base tackling" (4.4.151), the ocean, and vowing to "breake his oares" that were "the instruments that launcht him forth" (4.4.149–50). After vowing to abuse the sails and ropes, she imagines another set of rigging:

Now let him hang my favours on his masts,
And see if those will serve instead of sailes:
For tackling, let him take the chaines of gold,
Which I bestowd upon his followers:
In steed of oares, let him use his hands,
And swim to *Italy*, Ile keepe these sure (4.4.159–64)

Clutching the ship's tackle that she had given the Trojans, she recalls her many other gifts and their uselessness in preventing Aeneas's flight. This language also echoes the fanciful promises of "rivelled gold" and ivory oars (3.1.115), and Marlowe once again conflates the opposites in his queen's language of domesticity of staying and going, now also, loving and punishing, beauty and use, giving and taking.

Finally, Dido surrenders to the anticlimactic, obvious fact: "Nothing can beare me to him but a ship, / And he hath all my fleete" (5.1.266–67). In this speech of final farewell, she uses a telling insult for Aeneas: "runnagate" (5.1.265), a term that signals clearly his status as one who becomes a fugitive, vagabond, even a runaway, by abandoning his home.⁴⁷ He certainly has reneged on his promise to Dido, and his Marlovian incarnation as runagate hero-husband differs markedly from the pious Aeneas of the *Aeneid*, who merely flirts with the idea of rebellion against his destiny by staying in Carthage. But in the play, the queen's city is his true home from whence he flees. Here, Burnett's characterization of the Marlovian hero as vagabond might be modified for my purposes. A Tamburlaine or Faustus "exploits possibilities of

⁴⁷ The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines the term as "a vagabond, a wanderer; a restless roving person." See OED online, s.v. "runagate," 2, accessed February 29, 2012, <http://oed.com>.

social mobility at a time when authorities were stressing the need for obedience and hierarchical stability.”⁴⁸ In the case of Aeneas, in contrast, we could say that Marlowe dramatizes possibilities of settlement in the face of requisite mobility.⁴⁹

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48. See Mark Thornton Burnett, “Tamburlaine: An Elizabethan Vagabond,” *Studies in Philology* 84.3 (1987): 308–23, 321.

49. I extend my warm thanks to readers and auditors of earlier drafts: the anonymous readers at *Marlowe Studies: An Annual*, along with Joe Messina, Paula McQuade, Barbara Sebek, Lars Engel, Lee Hillyer, Bill Kerwin, Marc Geisler, Niamh J. O’Leary, and Tom Cartelli. I presented a portion of this essay as “Domestic Devotions: The Changing Nature of Love and Marriage in Early Modern Drama” at the Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies convention in Philadelphia in November 2008.

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“Poore Schollers”: Education and
Frustration in *Hero and Leander*

Inopem me copia fecit.
(My plentie makes me poore.)

The tragic phrase of Ovid’s Narcissus, translated by Arthur Golding in 1567, is commonly understood as a reflection on the trials of excessive beauty teamed with excessive self-love.¹ But for a frustrated Elizabethan poet, the line offered an unusual consolation. “*Copia*” could refer to an abundance of physical beauty but also to rhetorical abundance in an Erasmian sense, such that the “plentie” of one’s intellectual and imaginative gifts might serve as the reason for one’s poverty.² If this particular incarnation of Narcissus’s lament echoes throughout the works of Edmund Spenser as a sort of mantra, then it is the beating heart of Christopher Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander*, which at its core digresses into an extended mythic explanation of why scholars are fated to be poor. The meandering, apocryphal myth is just one of the formal anomalies of the poem; readers have long noted the tonal inconsistencies, fatuous apothegms, and frequent digressions that, taken with the extravagant yet inconsistent beauty of the lyric line, leave many puzzled. This essay argues that the misshapen quality of the poem is not accidental. Marlowe expresses the paradox of scholarly abundance through both the radical accumulation and

1. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 3.466, trans. Frank Justus Miller, rev. G. P. Goold, 2 vol., 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1916), 1:156. For Arthur Golding’s 1567 translation, see *Shakespeare’s Ovid: Being Arthur Golding’s Translation of the “Metamorphoses,”* ed. W. H. D. Rouse (1567; rept., London: De La More, 1904), 74.

2. Terence Cave discusses the evolution of “*copia*” and its many facets. See *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979), 3–34.

the burlesquing of specifically scholarly forms. In this sense, the poem functions as a calculated expression of the tension between *copia*, rhetorical plenty, and poverty, analogous to the lack of compensation and recognition that the poet feels is due him.

Without the specific perspective of Marlowe as a suffering scholar, it is difficult to interpret him as a force behind *Hero and Leander*. Much of the critical discourse surrounding the poem tends to portray the writer as a proto-Romantic, glorying in subversion for the sake of itself, or it reacts to such portrayals by reviving a more orthodox thinker and by seeking to retrieve some sort of moral or lesson from the poem, however awkwardly.³ Yet the didactic aims of literature are exactly what Marlowe pits his work against, not because he delights in nihilism but because to use his work for other ends would be to further exploit a poet who already feels impoverished. There is a scandal in this resistance, but not the sort more frequently discussed. By focusing on the young lovers' premarital tryst or the racy and homoerotic digressions that often seem more convincingly passionate than those between Leander and Hero, scholars are quick to treat *Hero and Leander* as a poem chiefly about sexual desire.⁴ The problem with such an approach is that it fails to fully explain the oddities of the epyllion. If this is a poem, after all, about the enticing beauty of Hero and that beauty's aftermath, then why does the description of Hero deplete the environment around her, taking "more from [nature] than she left"?⁵ If it is instead a poem about the seductive powers of Leander, then why does Marlowe give him a silly schoolboy speech that takes up nearly one hundred lines? If we read this poem as a commentary on the perceived failings of humanist pedagogy, then the poet's digressive and dilatory style is not necessarily rooted in a resistance to patriarchal, end-driven sexuality, as argued by Judith Haber, nor can it be fully explained within the 1590s trend toward literary "shamelessness" outlined by

3. For a discussion of how Romantic influences have shaped the current understanding of Marlowe, see Thomas Dabbs, *Reforming Marlowe: The Nineteenth-Century Canonization of a Renaissance Dramatist* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1991), 13–23.

4. This is not to disregard the connection between sexual desire and humanist pedagogy as explored, for instance, by Alan Stewart in *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1997), 84–121.

5. *Hero and Leander*, in *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Roma Gill, 5 vol. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 1:47. All subsequent references to *Hero and Leander* are cited by line number from this edition as *Hero*.

Georgia E. Brown.⁶ Rather, his manipulation of particularly scholarly forms (declamation, description, and sententiae) and his resistance to the use of his poetry for ends outside of the poem itself directly issues from Marlowe's frustration as a scholar-poet.

The requirements for "true learning," according to Marlowe's poem, leave the scholar in a somewhat untenable position. According to the myth at the center of *Hero and Leander*, scholars, implicated by their relationship to Mercury, are cursed with an inequity which dictates that "few great lords in vertuous deeds shall joy" but instead will choose to "inrich the loftie servile clowne / Who with incroching guile, keepes learning downe" (479–82). Marlowe sets up this lofty, servile clown as the opposite of the scholar, meaning that what he considers true learning, and by the implication of the passage, true "virtue," must be the opposite of all that is lofty, servile, and clownish. In other words, the bearers of true learning locate themselves at the bottom of the social order, suffering neglect but taking defiant pleasure in that neglect. The teaming of loftiness and servility, attributes that in many contexts could be considered opposites, suggests that the "clowne" is a toady: one who puts on airs and who advances in social standing by saying or writing what a "great lord" wants to hear. By comparison, bearers of true learning must avoid writing that is unnaturally elevated, obsequious, or compromised for the sake of entertainment.

Marlowe's resistance to subservient scholarly forms suggests a particular wariness of the sententia, the moral maxim. George Chapman, who supplied the most famous completion of Marlowe's poem and who strove to amend the indecencies of Marlowe's original represents the more traditional use of sententiae that Marlowe plays against, for instance in Chapman's "Third Sestiad," in which the narrator compares Leander to the prodigal son and his dalliance with Hero to the son's wasteful and premature accessing of his inheritance. He

like a greedy vulgar prodigal
Would on the stock dispend, and rudely fall
Before his time, to that unblest blessing,
Which for lust's plague doth perish with possessing.

6. See Judith Haber, *Desire and Dramatic Form in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), 43; and Georgia Brown, *Redefining Elizabethan Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 102–16.

*Joy graven in sense, like snow in water, wastes;
Without preserve of virtue nothing lasts.*⁷

Here, the verses discussing Leander's moral ineptitude lead naturally to a conclusion on the value of virtue over sensual delight. The adage arises organically from the text, yet it retains an importance above the text and carries with that importance a sense of moral consequence. The *sententia* is portable, a take-home truth. Italic type, one form of gnomic pointing, sets it aside from the rest of the poem, encouraging readers to pause and reflect on the thought and to copy it in their personal collection of commonplaces. As a form, it serves an agenda broader than the poem itself. In this example, the gnomic statement pays obeisance to what Chapman deifies as the goddess Ceremony, the upholding of the social, moral, and political order that, according to Marlowe's myth, neglects learning in order to enrich fools.⁸

Marlowe's particular mistrust of the servile aspects of *sententiae* is evident in a scene of misreading which occurs between Neptune and Leander. When Neptune retracts his mace, he injures his hand, and what follows is a moment of vulnerability between Leander and the ocean god:

When this fresh bleeding wound *Leander* viewd,
His colour went and came, as if he rew'd
The greefe which *Neptune* felt. In gentle breasts,
Relenting thoughts, remorse and pittie rests.
And who have hard hearts, and obdurate minds,
But vicious, harebrained, and illit'rat hinds? (697–703)

Seeing that Neptune's hand has been wounded by the mace that was intended for him, a hurried Leander pauses at the sight of a bleeding god, turning pale for just a moment. The narrator is careful to note that "His colour went and came, as if he rew'd / The greefe which *Neptune* felt," which is not the same as stating that Leander paled because he rued such grief. The two maxims that immediately follow reinforce Neptune's reading of the scene:

7. "George Chapman's Continuation of *Hero and Leander*," in *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Poems and Translations*, ed. Stephen Orgel (New York: Penguin, 2007), 3.31–36. Hereafter cited by sestiad and line number.

8. On gnomic pointing, see G. K. Hunter, "The Marking of *Sententiae* in Elizabethan Printed Plays, Poems, and Romances," *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 5th ser., 6.3/4 (1951): 171–88. For a discussion of *sententiae* and their relationship to the didactic aims of literature, see Jeff Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007), 99–133. The goddess Ceremony and her ties to church and state can be found in "Chapman's Continuation," 3.109–54.

He thinks that Leander has paled because of “pittie” for him. The two sententiae precipitate an explanation for Leander’s sympathy, seemingly engendered by his knowledge of letters. The formula offered is that “illit’rat hinds” (uneducated servants) are hard-hearted towards the suffering of others, while pity rests in the softened, educated hearts of men like Leander. In their eagerness to export a moral from the scene, these maxims generate a message that corroborates the despotic Neptune’s reading of the situation, thus revealing the sententia as a subservient form. Though inextricable from the pedagogy of young Elizabethan scholars in training, then, such “wise sayings” reinforce the institutions that impoverish true learning.

What is a poet to do with a subservient form? After all, the sententia is vital to *copia*, the rhetorical “plentie” that the poet both flaunts and scorns. Within the poem, Marlowe does not outright reject the use of moral maxims. He simply severs them from the instructive qualities that would debase or shackle them. For instance, there is the line that Shakespeare’s shepherdess Phoebe in *As You Like It* (1599) famously recalls as Marlowe’s “saw of might,” that is, “who ever loved that loved not at first sight?”⁹ This does not teach anything in particular, but rather conjures the ravishment of the entirety of the poem, a mode somewhat distinct from the more conventional use of sententiae. Meanwhile, Leander subverts maxims in two senses. His moral lessons stray outside the bounds of propriety in Elizabethan England, and when Leander uses his rhetorical skill to woo Hero, he overdoes it with maxims, unconsciously depriving them of their conventional decorous function by piling them on. Marlowe likely culled this technique from his translation of Ovid’s *Amores*, *All Ovids Elegies*. In one instance, the old woman, Dipsas, uses a series of playful apothegms about female promiscuity:

Brasse shines with use; good garments would be worne,
Houses not dwelt in, are with filth forlorne.
Beauty not exercise with age is spent,
Nor one or two men are sufficient. (1.8.51–54)¹⁰

Issued in the form of the commonplace, these statements imitate and subvert the maxim as a cultural unit of moral knowledge.

9. William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, 3.5.82–83, in *The Norton Shakespeare: Comedies*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katherine Eisaman Maus (New York: Norton, 2008), 668.

10. *All Ovids Elegies*, in *Complete Works*, ed. Gill, 1:13–84.

Likewise, in Marlowe's epyllion, Leander uses a similar rhetorical strategy to seduce Hero:

Like untun'd golden strings all women are,
Which long time lie untoucht, will harshly jarre.
Vessels of Brasse oft handled, brightly shine,
.....
Rich robes themselves and others do adorne;
Neither themselves nor others, if not worne. (229–31, 237–38)

In both examples, the joke is the same. These lists seem to function as collections of time-honored proverbs, yet their moral program is deliberately scandalous. However, Marlowe does not entirely dismiss the maxim as a form. Every so often, a *sententia* quietly “happens” to align with the text it modifies. This is evident, for instance, at the end of the scene between Neptune and Leander: “(Love is too full of faith, too credulous, / With follie and false hope deluding us)” (706–7). Here is a sincere maxim that, located in parentheses, treads lightly with its instructive message.

If Marlowe perpetually resists the funneling of his lyric line towards the portable truths of *sententiae*, then he also mocks the sentence as judgment or verdict, as seen in the description of Hero's outlandish power: “Poore soldiers stand with fear of death dead strooken, / So at her presence all surpris'd and token, / Await the sentence of her scornefull eies” (121–23). Though half oblivious to her power, the outrageously overdressed Hero functions as a despot, determining the fortunes of her admirers on the whims of her favor. It is Hero's eyes that dole out sentences of life or death, and in response to the arbitrary nature of her tyranny, some are even inspired to compose “sharpe satyrs” (127). In this context, the “sentence” of Hero's eyes is both comical and absurd, her authority verging on the ridiculous; this is echoed in the seemingly authoritative yet ultimately meaningless adage that Marlowe parrots: “Faithful love will never turn to hate” (128). Hero's ironic “sentencing power” and the meaningless proverbs she leaves in her wake, then, make fun of the sentence as sentence, thus hinting at the poem's categorical resistance to judgments, verdicts, and warnings about catastrophic consequences for violating sexual mores.

Marlowe's suspension of such conventional moralistic entities is also observable within the details of the plot. After Leander rejects the advances of an amorous Neptune, the god unexpectedly dismisses his violent rage:

Neptune was angrie that he gave no care,
 And in his heart revenging malice bare:
 He flung at him his mace, but as it went,
 He cald it in, for love made him repent. (691–94)

Previous to these lines, the sea god had just begun a long-winded and pederastic tale of a shepherd and a boy when Leander, eager to see Hero, infuriates him by comically interrupting the story. Neptune flings his mace at the youth but then, feeling remorse, retracts it in repentance. Such a withholding of the expected divine punishment suggests that the animating force in the world of *Hero and Leander* subverts the concept of repercussions for spurning the gods. It seems to follow, then, that Marlowe purposely upended the ultimate mythic consequence, the gods' revenge on the young lovers, as recorded in Musaeus's version of the story. This is not to make light of the serious ongoing debate over the intentionality of the poem's ending, but merely to suggest that, considering Marlowe's continual avoidance of consequences and repercussions within the poem, the story may end just as he wants it to. The two lovers indulge their sensual passions, but no harm befalls them in the end, which is, really, no end at all.¹¹

This tendency to suspend ends and endings as well as the consequences for his characters' actions is part of the poet's broader resistance to the didactic aims of literature.¹² And if moral lessons invite misuse, then so does beauty, as seen in Marlowe's play on the trope of the bee, which long served as a symbol for the scholar who accrues knowledge and rhetorical skill by collecting quotations, *flores poetarum*, from a variety of classical sources. In his poem, the old favorite appears early on in the description of Hero's elegant clothes:

Her vaile was artificiall flowers and leaves,
 Whose workmanship both man and beast deceaves.
 Many would praise the sweet smell as she past,
 When t'was the odour which her breath foorth cast.

11. Roma Gill writes: "The poem ends in glorious and harmonious fulfillment—the apotheosis of comedy," since the couple ends up "on the floor of Hero's bedroom in a triumphant, happy, consummated tangle." "Marlowe and the Art of Translation," in *A Poet and a Filthy Play-maker: New Essays on Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Kenneth Friedenreich, Roma Gill, and Constance Kuriyama (New York: AMS, 1988), 327–42, 340.

12. Georgia Brown suggests that the poem "is far more interested in processes and beginnings than in endings." "Gender and Voice in *Hero and Leander*," in *Constructing Christopher Marlowe*, ed. J. A. Downie and J. T. Parnell (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 148–63, 153.

And there for honie, bees have sought in vaine,
And beat from thence, have lighted there againe. (19–24)

The craftsmanship of Hero's veil is so well executed, the flowers and leaves so realistic, and her breath so sweet that bees buzz over to partake of honey. But why does the gentle Hero repeatedly swat these honeybees away? We might initially read this as a joke about Marlowe the poet as bee who cozies up to richly dressed luminaries and is promptly dismissed. However, it is more likely that he alludes to the schoolroom custom of collecting commonplaces as part of the rhetorical exercise of *copia*. As she beats away the honeybees, so Marlowe mocks the lesser minds who hover around his flowered verse, looking for something beautiful to collect.¹³

When Hero asks Leander, "Who taught thee Rhethoricke to deceive a maid?" (338), her question resounds throughout the entire poem, with its continual interest in the acquisition of rhetorical skill. The poet is suspicious of certain forms of persuasive speech, and their use suggests that he is investigating types of scholarly collection and is testing their susceptibility to exploitation. As William Weaver has recently shown, Marlowe's source material likely came from a volume that included the Greek text of Musaeus's *Hero and Leander* as well as Aesop's fables, the Hippocratic oath, two mock epics, and a grouping of maxims. With their varying styles, these possible source texts may seem to have nothing to do with one another, but as the critic explains, they were collected for use in grammar schools so that schoolboys could learn the art of persuasion by paraphrasing and then expanding these different tales through declamation and description. He argues that these "rudiments of eloquence" play a significant role in *Hero and Leander*, and that the poet actually began his poem as a schoolboy's exercise, writing heroic couplets in order to expand Musaeus's myth. Weaver's research emphasizes Marlowe's deep interest in such "pedestrian" material rather than his expansion of it in his poem.¹⁴ Yet clearly and intentionally, *Hero and Leander* misuses or burlesques the practices of declamation and description.

13. On the more established uses of commonplaces and their vital role in Elizabethan culture, see Mary Thomas Crane, *Framing Authority: Sayings, Self, and Society in Sixteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993), 39–52.

14. "The mechanics of rhetorical amplification in the sixteenth century, presumably all too pedestrian for such an ambitious and influential poet as Marlowe, have been ignored." William P. Weaver, "Marlowe's Fable: *Hero and Leander* and the Rudiments of Eloquence," *Studies in Philology* 105.3 (2008): 388–408, 390.

The poet's use of declamation, for instance, shows mastery as well as revelry in beautiful yet empty language, pleasure severed from utility, so that the instances of speechifying become highly unpredictable and often comedic events that punctuate the poem. Leander begins his first addresses to Hero by approaching her like "a bold sharpe Sophister," the latter term a reference to a sophomore at Cambridge or a person given to misleading arguments, or both.¹⁵ Timing makes his speeches comic instead of sinister. His prolixity interrupts a scene of passionate yet wordless interaction between the lovers, graced with the narrator's insight that "true love is mute, and oft amazed stands" (186). Yet just twelve lines later, Leander's "true love" inspires a speech that with its sheer breadth takes up nearly one hundred of the epyllion's first three hundred lines and therefore threatens to consume the poem that frames it. The youth displays a panoply of arguments, proofs, and maxims, seemingly with the purpose of seduction. And while he promises that "my words shall be as spotlesse as my youth, / Full of simplicitie and naked truth," his arguments are considerably complicated, utilizing *kolakeia*, *diallage*, repeated appeals to the *sensus communis*, and a logical game about the nonexistence of virginity: "Things that are not at all, are never lost" (276). The narrator hints at Leander's speech, yet Hero never needed convincing, as the narrator admits: "These arguments he us'de, and many more, / Wherewith she yielded, that was wooon before" (329–30). The pursued herself agrees that her pursuer's speeches are not only unnecessary, but also unpleasant: "Aye me, such words as these should I abhor, / And yet I like them for the Orator" (339–40). Marlowe's insertion of lengthy speeches into a context where they are not needed seems to broadcast their sheer meaninglessness.¹⁶

Similarly, Marlowe amplifies his use of description to the point of absurdity. The narrative begins with a lengthy depiction of "Hero the faire, Whom young *Apollo* courted for her haire" (5–6),

15. See *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online, s.v. "sophister," 3a, accessed March 7, 2012, <http://oed.com>.

16. Leander counterbalances his tedium with an obstinate refusal to provide a speech when the occasion would seem to demand it. As Warren Boutcher observes, Marlowe's character jumps in the ocean exactly when oratory is expected of him, subverting generic expectations: "What of the occasions for declamatory heroism as Leander contemplates the Hellespont? . . . This is comic relief for the reader expecting a declamation in the style of Ovid or Boscán." "'Who Taught Thee Rhetoricke to Deceive a Maid?': Christopher Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, Juan Boscán's *Leandro*, and Renaissance Vernacular Humanism," *Comparative Literature* 52.1 (2000): 11–52, 40.

alluding to a myth of the narrator's own invention that draws attention to the excessiveness of its claims. This is just one in a series of such apocryphal classical references: The sun and wind so delight in Hero's hands that they refuse to burn or parch them, half the world is black because her beauty has exhausted it and even blinds Cupid himself. Marlowe ensures that her dress is heavily allusive as well, featuring an ironically naked Venus on one so fully attired. And Hero's clothing is not just figuratively but literally heavy, draped with rich fabric and a necklace not of diamonds, but "chaines of peble stone" (25–26). Her shoes, with their motorized chirrups, are complicated enough to limit mobility and to lead the reader to wonder, idly, if she sits on Apollo's throne as an object "for men to gaze upon" (8) by choice or by constraint. Throughout this opening passage, Marlowe has his narrator push the description to the point at which it threatens to collapse under its own weight, while his heroine's surrounding environment also strains under the pressure of these overloaded surfaces:

So lovely faire was *Hero*, *Venus* nun
 As nature wept, thinking she was undone;
 Because she tooke more from her than she left,
 And of such wondrous beautie her bereft. (45–48)

The object of the joke is not Hero, but the narrator's excessive description, a blazon so packed with myth and adornment that it exhausts nature. The poet may also have been satirizing the officious schoolmaster who impressed on him the necessity of the decorous use of embellishment in rhetoric, as Gordon Braden and Warren Boutcher suggest in opposite ways.¹⁷ Marlowe prefigures and embraces the baroque by heightening the exaggerated, absurd qualities of Musaeus's original and thereby further misshaping the standards of decorum in Elizabethan poetry.

In Marlowe's hands, even acts of rhetorical reticence work to problematize decorum: The poet seems to believe in the excess of verbal flourishes and, simultaneously, the withholding of poetic elements at the moment they are expected. The description of the swimming, naked Leander, for instance, blissfully free of constraints, is one of unexpected reticence:

17. See Gordon Braden "The Divine Poem of Musaeus," in *The Classics and English Renaissance Poetry: Three Case Studies* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1978), 55–153; and as a productive counterpoint, Boutcher's "'Who Taught Thee Rhetoricke to Deceive a Maid?'"

I could tell ye,
 How smooth his brest was, & how white his bellie,
 And whose immortall fingars did imprint,
 That heavenly path, with many a curious dint,
 That runs along his backe, but my rude pen,
 Can hardly blazon forth the loves of men. (65–70)

Here the narrator hesitates, self-consciously drawing attention to the places where words cannot go. This seductive diffidence is both comical and peculiar, for he had no difficulty conjuring a massive blazon just ten lines before. Yet the two tendencies—radical poetic accumulation and playful reticence—both shirk convention by interrupting the flow of the narrative line and by drawing attention to the scaffolding of lyric expression.

The polyvocal cacophony that accompanies Marlowe's tools of rhetoric complicates them further. His description of Hero is laden with other people's voices, not simply through mythic allusions but also by the weight of her admirers' opinions: "Many would praise the sweet smell as she past" and "Some say, for her the fairest *Cupid* pyn'd" (21, 37). Similarly, Marlowe presents declamation as a mode by which Leander can parrot the arguments of others, thinking through arguments without necessarily thinking about them. In both cases Marlowe parodies the *sensus communis*, the "multitude of counselors" (Proverbs 15:22), to which rhetoric often appealed. The shared wisdom of classical and vernacular texts was central to Marlowe's humanist education, yet he seems unable or unwilling to find the common place where these units of cultural wisdom transact their business. Leander jokes that "One is no number, mayds are nothing then, / Without the sweet societie of men" (255–56), but for Marlowe, one is the crucial number. *Hero and Leander* eschews the shared perspective in favor of the individual subject, which seems central to the poem's suggestion that education may frustrate social advancement because it is both subversive of and threatening to the ruling class. Therefore, those who pursue learning because they may themselves be too gifted not to recognize it risk leading lives that isolate them.

Marlowe suggests an analogy for the scholar's intellectual world, a counterpart to the myth of Mercury, in the scene in Neptune's palace, a hidden yet casually opulent place in which the sea god

puld him to the bottome, where the ground
 Was strewd with pearle, and in low corall groves
 Sweet singing Meremaids, sported with their loves

On heapes of heavie gold, and tooke greate pleasure,
To spurne in carelesse sort, the shipwracke treasure. (644–48)

This vision of pure enjoyment free of constraints suggests a direct contrast to the life of the “loftie, servile clowne.” The mermaids indulge in their love sport at the nadir of the known world, the seeming opposite of all that is literally lofty. Instead of being servile, they take great pleasure in spurning the wealth of shipwrecked treasure, and instead of being clownish, their pleasure is private, not for show, their “carelesse” manner matching the “carelesse haire” of the country maid who inadvertently sets off the episode that results in the curse of Mercury (389). This scene also alludes to the concept of Marlowe as scholar because he, along with Mercury, “locates himself in sleeping ‘in hell with Ignorance’” (468). Because of his fate as a poor academic, he must endure life at the bottom of society, denied the wealth, recognition, and honor that his brilliance merits. Yet paradoxically, the life of the scholar affords him all sorts of riches that the “loftie, servile clowne” can never access—the true eloquence acquired through long hours of serious classical education. Hence the poet-scholar’s revenge, his retribution, is to glory in the wealth of his own learning, the heaping up of his opulent verse, and then to scorn it. In this way, Marlowe creates a sort of lyric economy within the bounds of his own poem but impedes anyone who might want to “use” the riches of his verses for any end other than the pleasure of simply reading them.

Considering Marlowe’s self-identification as a poor scholar, the heaping up of *copia* in his poetry reads as a kind of poetic stockpiling, a mode of complaint about the abundance of resources or recognition withheld from the poet-scholar, a way of addressing a perceived lack, and a form of artistic resistance to the practical and moral ends that poetry was supposed to serve. That is, if the poet thought of himself as “poore,” he could still amass “plentie” in the rhetorical exercise of *copia*, even though this wealth existed and could only be enjoyed in the realm of language. One might say that Marlowe demonstrates the truth of this concept to an extreme because his entire poem is beautifully “useless.” That is to say, it categorically opposes the enrichment of the “loftie servile clowne” whom it seeks to mock. But this is not to say that Marlowe is an elitist distanced from political and economic awareness. Instead,

Hero and Leander is in part a commentary on class and a complaint about his perceived lack of compensation.¹⁸

Yet to say that this poem heaps up poetic riches and resists moral consequence in order to create a world of dilated literary pleasure is not to ignore the distressing undercurrents present throughout the work. The description of Hero succumbing to passion at the end of the poem troubles the reader with its latent violence:

Even as a bird, which in our hands we wring,
Foorth she plungeth, and oft flutters with her wing,
She trembling strove; this strife of hers (like that
Which made the world) another world begat
Of unknowne joy. (773–77)

Is Hero birthing a new world free of tyranny and dogma or falling victim to banal yet life-ending violence? Similarly, the scene of careless bliss at Neptune's palace is complicated by the presence of a drowning, violated Leander. To extend the analogy: the scholar might identify himself as both mermaid and drowning beautiful boy. He is both rich and poor, dragged to the bottom against his will, while paradoxically spurning the riches that his learning affords him. What this suggests is that in response to his urgent and seemingly inexorable frustration, Marlowe projects a façade of nonchalance, a fiction of carelessness. According to Marlowe's myth, Mercury was cursed to hell for his negligence to the gods and for his misuse of rhetoric for the purposes of seduction. Hence Marlowe—through his narrator—preemptively acts out the carelessness for which he is doomed.

Throughout the poem, the poet depicts wealth as problematic. Riches, both material and lyric, as well as their lack are located on an ever-shifting register that is given to violently metamorphic shifts. This essay has sought to suggest how the richness of the poem is related to the perceived failings of Marlowe's education and his continued resistance to the didactic aspects of poetry. In closing, I would suggest that the "liquid pearle" (297) that Hero

18. My work on this idea of lyric reciprocity began with a paper by Heather James, in which she demonstrated how the lists of flowers with which Spenser strews his poetry serve an encomiastic purpose but actually function as "beautifully useless" exercises of lyric virtuosity. "Aromatherapy: Political Discontent in Spenser's Flowerbeds" (paper presented at Renaissance Society of America, Getty Center, Los Angeles, CA, March 20, 2009). James integrates this presentation into a chapter on Spenser in her forthcoming book with the working title, "Taking Liberties: Ovid in Renaissance Poetry and Political Thought."

cries is Marlowe's poetic element. It is lavish and valuable, yet borne out of the irritation of a poor scholar. Also, like the liquidity of Ovidian forms, it is endlessly metamorphic by design, ever eluding the collector, the toady, the pedant. In creating a poetic world that subversively takes its time and that is forever suspended in time, Marlowe leaves us as readers to savor the fruits of his frustration.

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Embodied Texts and Textual Bodies in
Doctor Faustus

Doctor Faustus is fascinated by the interplay of words and the world. This is evident in the books that surround Faustus as he speaks his first lines and his last, and in the plot of magic utterances, a fatal promise and the impossible words of repentance. Perhaps Faustus's unique manner of speaking of himself in the third person is also symptomatic of this, in the way that the eponymous hero self-consciously constructs himself through language. From its earliest appearances on the Elizabethan stage, critics and audiences have been concerned about the effect of words upon reality in the play, from accounts of an additional devil joining in the action to more general debate about the moral, sexual, and social implications of watching pretense for pleasure. As Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan have observed, Christopher Marlowe criticism of the twenty-first century is once again turning towards "inductive engagement with the texts of the plays and an increased concern with the pragmatic aspects of dramaturgy and production offered by theater historians."¹ Significantly, this modern take on the question of what it is that words do in *Faustus* frequently draws upon the metatheatrical parallels between the magician and the playwright or the actor, blurring the boundaries between the physical reality of performance and the world constructed by the words spoken onstage.

Modern speech act theory provides a framework in which to discuss how language is intertwined with reality. In the 1950s, J. L. Austin identified a category of statements that act in the world

1. Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan, eds., introduction to *Placing the Plays of Christopher Marlowe: Fresh Cultural Contexts* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 2.

rather than simply describing it, such as “I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow” or “I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth.”² Most statements we make are constative, that is, they tell a fact or opinion: “this ship is called the Queen Elizabeth,” for example. Speaking the words of such a statement does not directly change anything about the situation in which it is said since the ship remains the same. However, uttering a performative statement forms part of an action that modifies the situation. When I say “I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth,” I am doing something with my words. The ship changes from being nameless to being the Queen Elizabeth. This is exciting as it suggests that words really do have agency in the world, although context is clearly an important factor. I can go to the harbor and performatively name as many ships as I like, but neither the ships nor the captains are likely to notice. Similarly, actors who say “I pronounce you man and wife” do not marry anyone. Austin concludes that the conditions must be “happy” for a speech act to be successful, thus dismissing drama, poetry, jokes, and lies as cases in which the performative is used “not seriously, but in ways *parasitic* upon its normal use.” The emotive word “parasitic” implies that creative use of speech acts is insincere and damaging, creating a linguistic parallel to the moral revulsion described by Elizabethan antitheatricalists. Having discarded all curiosities, Austin goes on to outline a method of “speech-situation” analysis that will demonstrate that ultimately all statements are actions. But can the powerful words of *Faustus* really be dismissed in such emotive language as “parasitic” or “hollow and void”?³

Austin’s performative has been fruitfully modified by post-modern thinkers to describe a far more flexible theory that is directly concerned with performances, both onstage and in society. This begins with Jacques Derrida, who argues that those dismissed infelicities tell us something important about the possibility of failure that even Austin admits is present in the structure of all performatives. Working from Austin’s description of conventional acts as “ritual,” Derrida suggests that iteration and citation are fundamental to not only successful speech acts but also communication itself. “I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth” or “I pronounce you man and wife” can act in certain contexts because they cite a recognizable formula. The reliance upon iteration

2. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, ed. J. O. Urmson and Maria Sbisa, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980), 6.

3. Austin, *Things with Words*, 22.

breaks Austin's model of the speech act as a unique occurrence sealed within its own context, producing instead a chain of same-but-different iterations across time and space. Failure and error are embraced as inherent and necessary in this deconstructive reading, since once uttered, words break free from the context of our intention so that we can never truly say what we mean. Thus, Derrida's reinterpretation of Austin puts performative language into a state of flux and multiplicity, opening up the potential for performative readings of previously "parasitic" literature and performance. In applying speech act theory to these grey areas, thinkers such as Judith Butler and J. Hillis Miller have extended the theory in varied directions. Butler uses the iterative quality of deconstructive performative to describe how gender identity is fluid, subject to reception and constantly being performed or restated, while Miller has produced valuable work on how literary texts act at times almost independently upon the reader.⁴

In the past twenty years, critics have begun to use speech act theory to read *Faustus*. Richard Hillman's Lacanian account of subjectivity on the medieval and early modern stage describes the unconscious as a space between the constative and the performative and suggests that Faustus is trapped between discourses in the subjectivity of this gap by Mephistopheles, unable to see himself as wholly doomed or wholly saved.⁵ Similarly, Graham Hammill defines Faustus's tragedy as a "literary" one, where he is enclosed by a performative language "based on neither a one-to-one correspondence between words and things . . . nor a one-to-one correspondence between words and concepts."⁶ In both Hammill and Hillman's work we see a strong deconstructive interest in subjectivity and the way that the performative prevents Faustus from arriving at a fixed identity. Rick Bowers analyzes this sense of existence as becoming rather than being, especially the constant need for reiteration in Faustus's identity of "academic

4. For an introduction to Judith Butler's performative theory, see her "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40.4 (1988): 519–31; or *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990). For J. Hillis Miller, see his *Tropes, Parables, Performatives: Essays on Twentieth-Century Literature* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991); and *Speech Acts in Literature* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2001).

5. Richard Hillman, *Self Speaking in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama: Subjectivity, Discourse and the Stage* (London: Macmillan, 1997), 164–99.

6. Graham Hammill, "Faustus's Fortunes: Commodification, Exchange, and the Form of Literary Subjectivity," *English Literary History* 63.2 (1996): 309–36, 309.

performativity.”⁷ Others have focused more directly on speech acts in the play through study of Faustus’s magic words. Andrew Sofer lucidly relates the blurring of mimesis and kinesis in onstage conjuring to the ambiguity of theater itself, using Derrida’s sense of iteration to explore the very real Elizabethan fear that words could take on a “devilish” life of their own.⁸ In contrast, Daniel Gates argues that rather than demonstrating the inherent power of words, the play mocks the theatricality of both magical and religious orthodoxy, extending Butler’s ideas about the role of reception in speech acts to suggest that the force of magical words lies in their reception.⁹

It is clear from this range of perspectives that theory of the performative can offer fruitful and varied interpretations of the play, but there are also some underlying patterns to be observed here. It seems to me that behind all these critical texts, and indeed behind the Elizabethan theatrical debate, is the matter of language and materiality. Each questions the role that words have in the world and to what degree they have a physical presence that can alter reality. This is evident in Hammill’s and Hillman’s subjectivity, and the importance of reception discussed by Gates, which all suggest that whilst words are potent, their effects are multiplicitous and uncertain. Similarly, Faustus’s compulsive reiteration of identity and the Elizabethan fear of words with a mind of their own, identified by Bowers and Sofer respectively, are both anxieties about loss of control and lack of understanding of the relationship between words and reality. The material agency of words is actually integral to the language that we use to describe theater, as Mary Thomas Crane has demonstrated in her account of the early modern word “performance.” She reveals that at this time to “perform” meant to construct, finish, or perfect an object, which affirms that words spoken onstage had a very physical presence and a direct effect upon the world much like that of a speech act.¹⁰

7. Rick Bowers, “Almost Famous, Always Iterable: *Doctor Faustus* as Meme of Academic Performativity,” in Deats and Logan, *Placing the Plays*, 113–24.

8. Andrew Sofer, “How to Do Things with Demons: Conjuring Performatives in *Doctor Faustus*,” *Theatre Journal* 61.1 (2009): 1–21.

9. Daniel Gates, “Unpardonable Sins: The Hazards of Performative Language in the Tragic Cases of Francesco Spiera and *Doctor Faustus*,” *Comparative Drama* 38.1 (2004): 59–81.

10. Mary Thomas Crane, “What Was Performance?” *Criticism* 43.2 (2001): 169–87, 172–74.

The written word is perhaps the simplest place to establish a clearer understanding of the embodiment of language in *Faustus*. Speech act theory has its beginnings in the spoken word, but its deconstructed form is equally applicable to text, as is evident in Hammill's and Miller's interest in the literary performative. Hammill even argues that the literary language in the play responds to "*a media-shift from oral performance to written performative*," which is itself "grounded first of all in the body and its relations to text."¹¹ Similarly, Derrida's own language of citation and quotation is also most familiar to us in terms of writing, and he repeatedly turns to examples of shopping lists and signatures to aid his explanation. It follows that exploring the pact scene (1.3),¹² where Faustus writes an apparently binding supernatural text literally with his own body, should shed light on the materiality of words in other performative interpretations of the play. As Georgia E. Brown puts it, this scene is unique and important because "here text generates performance and performance generates text, so that textual and performative communication are superimposed."¹³

Faustus's first meeting with Mephistopheles in act 1 scene 3 initially appears to be a demonstration of the magical performative described by Sofer, and Faustus's faith in the efficacy of his conjuring language leads him to gloat, "I see there's virtue in these heavenly words" (1.3.27). Enacting the suspension of disbelief described by Hammill, Faustus crows: "How pliant is this Mephistopheles, / Full of obedience and humility!" (1.3.29–30).¹⁴ We know that Faustus wishes to conjure to "resolve me of all ambiguities" (1.1.80). It follows that, when he crowns himself "conjurer laureate" (1.3.32), he is constructing an identity of certainty that is reliant upon the success of his speech acts. The moniker implies a control and uniqueness that can perhaps be equated with Austin's model of each performative utterance as a unique occurrence impervious to outside effects. In the beginning

11. Hammill, "Faustus's Fortunes," 311, emphasis in original.

12. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A Two-Text Edition*, ed. David Scott Kastan (London: Norton, 2005), 5–53. All subsequent references to *Doctor Faustus* are to the A-text from this edition.

13. Georgia Brown, "The Other Black Arts: *Doctor Faustus* and the Inky Worlds of Printing and Writing," in *Doctor Faustus: A Critical Guide*, ed. Sara Munson Deats (London: Continuum, 2010), 140–58, 146. Brown's discussion of texts and bodies focuses on print history and its relation to the human body, but this observation is a valuable access point to the written performative in the play.

14. Hammill, "Faustus' Fortunes," 310–12.

of this conjuring scene, language, intention, and the bodies on stage miraculously and momentarily coincide, creating the appearance of a flawless, unambiguous performative.

However, the moment that Mephistopheles begins to speak, Faustus's magical agency is undermined. He explains that he must have permission from Lucifer to serve the scholar, who incredulously asks, "Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee?" (1.3.45). The devil's response shatters the illusion of Faustus's necromantic power:

That was the cause, but yet *per accidens*;
For, when we hear one rack the name of God,
Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,
We fly in hope to get his glorious soul;
Nor will we come unless he use such means
Whereby he is in danger to be damned.
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell. (1.3.46–54)

The conjuring provides a context for Mephistopheles's appearance but is not its direct cause. The invocation of academic Latin creates a mocking sense of scholastic triviality, sending Faustus back to the world of fusty scholars and dusty books that he so forcibly rejects in the play's opening scene. This immediately introduces intertextuality to his magic, dispersing the image of the "conjurer laureate" and his cloak of singularity. Furthermore, the dividing of phenomena into their substance and accident is mirrored in medieval philosophy of language, which divides words into their primary and secondary significations and opens up the possibility of a statement to say one thing *per se* and another *per accidens*.¹⁵ Mephistopheles's dismissal of Faustus's magic thus subtly puts us in mind of alternative meanings and potential misreadings, further breaking down the moment of conjuring.

Evidently there is a seismic shift in the representation of magic, and therefore speech acts, in this scene, and it is entwined with Faustus's singular identity as the "conjurer laureate." This is perhaps evident in the slipperiness of the word "conjure." When Mephistopheles describes the "shortest cut to conjuring," he replaces "conjure" with the deceptively similar sounding "abjure." "Abjure," meaning to renounce an oath, or recant an opinion, has

15. Stein Ebbesen, "Language, medieval theories of," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed April 2, 2011, <http://www.rep.routledge.com>.

a similar performative quality to “conjure” in its magical sense “to invoke by supernatural power,” but it also undermines the potency of speech acts by demonstrating how easily they are undone.¹⁶ It perhaps also forecasts the violent seesawing that prevents Faustus from ever achieving the certainty he yearns for. Furthermore, “abjure” alongside the suggestion of alternative meanings in “*per accidens*” may bring to mind of other senses of “conjure.” Along with magical connotations both serious and frivolous, “conjure” at this time was also associated with pacts, meaning “to swear together; to make a privy compact by an oath; to form a conspiracy; to conspire,” or in a more controlling sense “to constrain by oath, to charge or appeal to solemnly.” Indeed, the word is actually a merging of two distinct Middle English words, “conjure” and “con-jure,” meaning to summon and to exhort or make a pact respectively.¹⁷ The additional contractual layer of meaning to conjuring in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries changes Faustus’s “conjurer laureate” role by transforming it from an individual act of power to a mutual agreement. Most importantly though, the undertones of an oath or pact in the word “conjure” are highly suggestive of the contract that will be drawn up at the beginning of act 2, affirming Hammill’s suggestion that the play is shaped by the lure of the written performative. Thus conjuring in the play already has undertones of writing, of repetition, and of subjective reception.

However, a deconstructive reading of the magic in Faustus’s conjuring scene does not have to render language hopelessly convoluted and powerless. The efficacy of Faustus’s conjuring is undermined, but the words uttered have nevertheless done something. What is perhaps revealed in the turn away from magic is a shift in dynamic to a richer, more complex form of linguistic causality, one whose magic we experience every day. The intriguing original stage direction at the beginning of act 1 scene 3, “*enter Faustus to conjure*,” may cause problems for a performative reading of magical speech acts, since Mephistopheles clearly tells us that Faustus’s words have not directly summoned him. Blasphemy, not magic, has brought him to the stage. However if we are attuned to speech act theory’s textual backdrop, and to Faustus’s burgeoning written contract with Lucifer, he does not necessarily fail in his conjuring. In a departure from his source, the

16. *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online, s.v. “abjure,” 1a, s.v. “conjure,” accessed February 3, 2012, <http://oed.com/>.

17. OED, s.v. “conjure” 1a, II.

The Historie of the Damnable Life, and Deserved Death of Doctor Iohn Faustus (1592), or the *English Faust Book*, Marlowe has his Faustus suggest the deal with Lucifer himself, "Seeing Faustus hath incurred eternal death / By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity" (1.3.88–89). In his bold but perhaps insane offer of his soul in exchange for twenty-four years with Mephistopheles, he is looking for an alternative source of power. In light of the failed summoning, he subliminally turns towards a more contractual form of conjuring, a different performative that is associated with writing.

The ambiguity of the conjuring scene raises questions about the physical efficacy of words, and these are vividly brought to life in the writing of the contract with Lucifer. Mephistopheles arrives from hell with the news "that I shall wait on Faustus whilst I live, / So he will buy my service with his soul" (2.1.31–32). Faustus argues that he has already "hazarded" (2.1.33) his soul with the blasphemy that summoned the devil in the first place, but it seems that this is not enough: "But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly / And write a deed of gift in thine own blood, / For that security craves great Lucifer" (2.1.34–37). A spoken performative such as "I swear" or "I name" has immense power, but even in the sixteenth century when general literacy was only just beginning to spread, it seems that the most binding way to change the world with words was to write them down.¹⁸ As Mephistopheles's instructions imply, writing the promise will give Lucifer "security" and will guarantee the solemnity of the words.

The apparent potency of the written word is associated with its tangible material presence. The performance of writing produces an object, creating the illusion that its meaning is stable and durable. This is magnified by the use of blood as ink, for writing in blood literally and metaphorically embodies the words of the deed, producing both a text and a physical thing made of a corporeal substance. In this respect, the gesture of writing in blood is perhaps the paradigm embodiment of words, outperforming the spoken performative. As Andrew Stott neatly puts it, blood writing is a "fairy-tale solution to the hermeneutic difficulty represented by reading," and this desire to signify the absolute sincerity of the text is evident in the way that drawing blood enables Faustus to write

18. For a clear overview of critical opinions on the increase in literacy in the Elizabethan period, see Frederick Kiefer, *Writing on the Renaissance Stage: Written Words, Printed Pages, Metaphoric Books* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1996), 264–67.

literally and metaphorically “with” his body.¹⁹ It is as if writing with a bodily fluid, the fluid that sustains life no less, is expected to somehow transfer something of the human body’s corporeality to the text.

However, like speech, written words have a strange independence that links their materiality with the efficacy of speech acts. Text is a tangible thing, but nevertheless it breaks free from its context as soon as it is written, just like a speech act. This similarity demonstrates how Austin’s term “speech act” is perhaps too narrow to describe the full potential of performative language, for text can be equally potent. The primary assumption of deconstructive speech act theory, the independence of meaning from its original context, can be seen most clearly in writing, which can be taken away and read by anyone in any time or place. Faustus hopes that the contract will bring him the identity of performative power and certainty that he failed to find in his conjuring speech acts, to “make an end immediately” (2.1.72) to his self-fashioning. However, in reality the writing introduces an instability that Derrida associates with the relationship between iteration and alterity in his discussion of the performative. The surprising connection is evident when we consider the potential for punning in the term “will.” As Faustus formulates the contract, he is articulating his desire, describing what he wills to happen, but he is also producing a last will and testament to describe who shall have his soul when he dies. He composes the words of the document, but in this context their specific function is to survive beyond their author’s death and to speak for him when he is gone. This alarming independence perhaps explains the fear of language with a mind of its own expressed by Sofer, Gates, and to some extent Butler with regard to the performative. Mephistopheles has shown that Faustus’s words are not magic, but a deconstructive performative reading charges them with another, equally compelling supernatural power.

If Faustus’s aspirational “conjurer laureate” identity is associated with successful speech acts, then the subjectivity introduced by the written contract can be seen as a fragmentation of his sense of self. As is tragically evident in the final scene, what Faustus wills as he writes the contract is very different from what he wills in his last speech, when he is desperate to be saved from hell. The text is reiterated to a completely different, not to say tragic, effect, and as

19. Andrew Stott, “Faustus’ Signature and the Signatures of *Dr. Faustus*,” *Cahiers Élisabéthains* 54 (1998): 27–43, 34.

both author and victim, Faustus himself becomes disjointed and doubled. His constant oscillation between blasphemy and repentance perhaps also articulates this lack of stability. The objectifying quality of a “deed of gift,” usually reserved for bestowing material possessions such as furniture and money, provides further disintegration, for Faustus is not only the author of the text but also its subject and (when he reads it aloud to Mephistopheles) its reader. Particularly when we watch Faustus’s onstage writing of the document, it is unclear whether we are witnessing him as author or subject. The initiation of the contract writing thus invokes an uncanny dividing and doubling that is shared by audience and protagonist, demonstrating that the tripartite relationship between words, text, and theater is fraught with magic and, therefore, danger.

The conceptual division between Faustus as author and subject of his text is amplified in the way that the contract scene also represents him as separated from his own body. For example, Mephistopheles’s instruction to Faustus is a contradictory mix of physical expulsion and retention that both unites and divides:

Then stab thine arm courageously
And bind thy soul, that at some certain day
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own,
And then be thou as great as Lucifer. (2.1.49–52)

The image of wounding followed by binding is a medical one, as in surgery or therapeutic bloodletting. However, in this situation the metaphysical mismatch of “arm” and “soul” suggests a botched procedure. A physical wound is made and then carelessly left open, as the “binding” force which would make the body whole again instead mistakenly or maliciously encloses the soul, isolating it from the figure that began the gesture. The ceremonial stabbing is a communication, indeed a “conventional” act in Austin’s definition of convention as ritual, but this speech reveals that even the straightforward “conventional” performance of a body completing an action is complex and divisive, implying a disenfranchisement that extends to all levels of communication. When followed up by the promise, “at some certain day / Great Lucifer may claim it as his own, / And then be thou as great as Lucifer,” the image of healing or unity gone wrong becomes an inversion of the divine unity promised to Christians in the kingdom of heaven. Mephistopheles’s language superficially promises the unity, certainty, and glory that Faustus associates with the performative, but its subtext is of fragmentation and the erosion of the self. It suggests that to

hang identity upon the apparent stability of words is destructive and dangerous, for to be “as great as Lucifer” is to be fallen, damned, “tormented with ten thousand hells / In being deprived of everlasting bliss” (1.3.79–80). Mephistopheles says one thing, and Faustus fatally interprets another.

Faustus’s distinctive use of the third person to refer to himself suggests that from his opening line, “settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin” (1.1.1), he is prone to illeism, which sets him at a vainglorious distance from himself. However, something stranger than grammatical arrogance is at work when Faustus finally cuts his arm:

Lo Mephistopheles, for love of thee
 I cut mine arm, and with my proper blood
 Assure my soul to be great Lucifer’s,
 Chief lord and regent of perpetual night.
 View here the blood that trickles from mine arm,
 And let it be propitious for my wish. (2.1.53–58)

Faustus begins with “my proper blood” and ends as “the blood that trickles from mine arm.” “Proper” is a highly significant adjective; its initial function here is to stress that the ink that Faustus is about to write the contract with is from his own body. Presumably he is trying to demonstrate the sincerity of his devotion to Lucifer, in the manner described by Stott as a “fairy-tale solution” to the subjectivity of reading. His words also highlight that the wounding is a self-sacrifice, for the blood spilled is his own. However the attempt to unify body and text with the mind’s intention in the form of a corporeal speech act actually causes further division, for the word “proper” divides the sacrificing knife-hand from the sacrificial body. Faustus tries to keep up the pretense of unity by flamboyantly urging us to “view” the apparently obedient performance of his blood as it “trickles from mine arm.” However, his own language preempts the body’s rebellious text by asserting his ownership of “mine arm” while loosing “the blood” from the constraints of any possessive determiner. We can perhaps even go as far as to imagine that this unconscious liberation at the level of language is what enables it to act independently and resist Faustus’s intentions. Blood spilled in symbolic gesture takes on the autonomy of an iterable text, breaking away and becoming other to the body; Faustus’s slip demonstrates this division of the self that spreads throughout the play’s physical and linguistic reality.

As with “conjure,” the significant word “proper” articulates a performative while simultaneously undermining its stability. The mention of “proper” blood is an attempt to assert ownership over a powerful meaning, but again this is undermined by the fruitful instability inherent in language. Hammill quotes William Empson’s comment that in his plays Marlowe makes the improper the proper thing to do and argues that *Faustus* is doubly subversive because it also demonstrates impropriety’s reliance upon the maintenance of that which is proper.²⁰ This contrary inversion of an inversion restores convention, but it is a process of recasting that leaves behind marks of otherness and unfamiliarity, as can be seen in the way that Faustus’s assertion of ownership divorces him from his blood. For “proper” blood is fastidious, correct, and whole, and provides a context that marks the wounding gesture as precisely the opposite. Furthermore, “proper” in this sense demands accurate, even literal, use of language and forces the highest of expectations upon anything to which it is ascribed. An additional tension is evident in the definition that the *Oxford English Dictionary* reports as current in Marlowe’s time and as early as the fourteenth century: “Such as a person or thing of the kind specified should be; admirable, excellent, fine; of high quality; of consequence, serious, worthy of consideration. Also used ironically,” in short, an almost perfect embodiment of its signifier.²¹ Thus, anything written in this medium instantly takes on a new weight and significance as a flawless marriage of words and reality that the author himself can never achieve. It is the perfect material performative, and it effaces Faustus’s language even as it embodies it.

When Faustus begins to write, the blood’s inherent speech act is brought to fruition. As an iterable text the bloody contract is a prosthetic body that stands for its author’s presence long after his absence, speaking for him once his own lips are silent. In other words, a whole new body that represents both self and other is born. The uncanny quality of written speech act as textual prosthesis brings us to the particular difficulties of citing oneself in a signature. As Derrida observes, our day-to-day understanding of the signature is highly contradictory; we trust it to signify both absence and presence, to repeat a singular event. Perhaps more than any other form of writing, the signature is perceived to “tether” a text to its source against the interpretive drift of time

20. Hammill, “Faustus’s Fortunes,” 315-6.

21. *OED*, s.v. “proper,” 7a.

and iteration. However, this understanding of its authority cannot help but destroy itself, for it relies upon the mark being legible (that is, iterable) and is meaningful only in the context of all other signatures, of the tradition of signing one's name.

Derrida's metaphor for this is a divided seal, which is especially interesting with regard to Faustus's prosthesis.²² We can imagine the body's flesh and blood as various kinds of seal: The skin seals the structures and systems of the body from the outside world, and when it is breached, the blood wells and clots to seal the wound. At the same time though, flesh and particularly blood can also be used as signatures or wax seals to guarantee authenticity. In modern science, the DNA carried in the blood is considered an unequivocal mark of identity, but as disputes settled by duel, love letters written in blood, and the much disputed pound of flesh as guarantor in *The Merchant of Venice* (1596) all suggest, the material of the body has always been charged with an authenticating power.²³

Lowell Gallagher describes the significance of seals in the contract scene through comparison with the archiving potency of red wax seals, which effectively stop the passage of time between writing and reading.²⁴ However, there is perhaps more to be said about the connection between sealed texts and the series of divisions in the play. Faustus divides his body's seal by producing a prosthesis, which undermines the authenticity and agency of his physical presence. To authenticate the contract as prosthesis, he writes it in his own blood, which involves breaking the skin's seal. Similarly, the blood's natural mark is broken in the act of writing, which prevents it from clotting to close the body and forces it to dry as a textual closure, a signature, instead. Each division of the seal corrupts its identity and its singularity, and since it is the mark of Faustus himself, we can perhaps also suggest that the divided seals corrupt Faustus's identity and singularity too. As Derrida says of his own reproduced signature at the end of "Signature Event Context" (1972), a "counterfeit" is produced.²⁵ In an extension of the division instigated by Faustus's "proper blood," the signature is a textual speech act that wrests all power from its author. In

22. Jacques Derrida, "Signature Event Context," in *Limited Inc.* (1988; rpt., Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1993), 1–23, 20.

23. For more on bloody love letters, see Stott, "Faustus' Signatures," 33–35.

24. Lowell Gallagher, "Faustus's Blood and the (Messianic) Question of Ethics," *English Literary History* 73.1 (2006): 1–29, 12.

25. Derrida, "Signature Event Context," 21.

performance the contract scene cannot fail to induce an uncanny shiver, and perhaps this is testament to the remarkable hidden power of the textual speech act. We intuitively respond to its machinations, even when we are unconscious of its presence. In this we see that the Elizabethan fear of words with a mind of their own is not so archaic or superstitious after all.

Bearing in mind the uncanny performative autonomy unleashed by the contract, it is unsurprising that it is at this point that the blood begins to physically rebel, obstinately congealing so that Faustus “can write no more” (2.1.62). By dividing his seals and constructing a counterfeit, he sacrifices his authenticity and, with this, also loses agency over the various duplicated signifiers. Literally, metaphorically, and even semantically freed from the body, the blood seems to take on a moral or spiritual intelligence that Faustus himself lacks and is capable of a far more potent communication. When liberated from his context, it returns to a more conventional symbol of life, be it as a biological life support, marker of heritage, or a Christian symbol of Christ’s love. It seems that a contract with the devil is simply not “proper” for this most fastidious and meaningful of mediums. The blood is already encoded with life, which it embodies in proper fashion as it flows warm through living veins. This flow of life through the body is perhaps the text that Gallagher imagines when he suggests that “the very matter used to produce the document is already text, of a sort”: a natural prologue to the *homo fuge*, a text inherent in all living things.²⁶ Furthermore, its coagulating unwillingness to write implies that this life text comes with its own seal: the lifesaving clot.

In light of this, Mephistopheles’s move to “fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight” (2.1.63) becomes an immensely sinister attack on the performative. Rather than simply melting an inanimate substance, the fire is burning away the agency encoded in the blood’s life-text, killing it so that it finally becomes lifeless ink. This perhaps reminds us of the processes in the production of ink itself, where organic, once-living materials such as wood, ivory, or lamp oil are charred to produce various forms of carbon black pigment. There is certainly a feeling of scientific manipulation here, as if Mephistopheles is a chemist or apothecary at work with his substances. This objectifying of the blood irrevocably breaks its connection with Faustus; it is no longer a part of him or a symbol

26. Gallagher, “Faustus’s Blood,” 10.

of life, but a lethal ink created by an infernal chemist. It is forced to transition from doing to saying. Thus, something vital, a spark of life, natural performativity, or final connection with either Christ or simply himself has been lost.

As Faustus says in yet another christological parody as he signs the deed, "*consummatum est*" (2.1.73): not "it is being done" but "it is done." However, it is not done, and Faustus's tortured becoming must continue. If we read this moment as the dissolving of life's one "proper" text, we can begin to make more sense of Mephistopheles's ominous words to cynical Faustus, who even as he signs a contract with Lucifer refuses to be afraid of hell: "But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary, / For I am damned and now in hell" (2.1.132–33). On the contract's completion the relationship between author and medium is dramatically inverted. This results in the strangest moment in the scene, perhaps in the entire play:

Consummatum est; this bill is ended,
 And Faustus hath bequeathed his soul to Lucifer.
 But what is this inscription on mine arm?
 "*Homo, fuge!*" Wither should I fly?
 If unto God, he'll throw me down to hell.
 My senses are deceived; here's nothing writ.
 I see it plain; here in this place is writ
 "*Homo, fuge!*" Yet shall not Faustus fly. (2.1.73–80)

Faustus may have performed the ultimate violence against the natural text of his blood, but here his body fights back with its own inscription, refusing to let anything end. In this respect, the *homo fuge* confounds the contract by beating Faustus's attempt at the embodiment of language, doing it better, more literally. Indeed, this malfunctioning notion of writing something "more literally" encapsulates the impossibility of literal text, depicting it as a chimera, a grossly aborted metamorphosis. This paradigm of embodied text is so perfectly integrated with the body that any attempt to sincerely embody meaning on a page in blood appears a belated and feeble parody. Furthermore, the *homo fuge* inverts the dynamic of writing so that Faustus's body momentarily becomes a parchment, a palimpsest. Faustus is the medium of these words, and in this respect they become a part of him, changing him in the way his own words could never change the world. As passive palimpsest, he does not have the power to unwrite the alien strokes, and they mingle with the layers below, changing the very fabric of his identity. We do not see these words again, they sink

beneath the surface of the skin, but even when painted over by Mephistopheles's glittering images of infernal magic they remain there, hidden within the layers of meaning that signify broken Faustus.

The layering of involuntary text over the supposedly agent body demonstrates how divided Faustus has become, brutally enacting how performative language can turn on its author. However, it also acts as a contradictory point of no return. Faustus eagerly writes to "make an end immediately" (2.1.72), but arguably the full stop is inscribed in the *homo fuge*, and an eternity of flux is held in that black point. The fiendish simplicity of Mephistopheles's definition "for where we are is hell, / And where hell is, there must we ever be" (2.1.118-19) is embodied in those alien words inscribed on Faustus's arm. Hidden beneath the surface, Faustus carries them with him throughout the play, and they refuse to let him have an end. Wherever he goes, whatever he does, Faustus's flesh urges him to flee; but the terrifying truth is that no matter where he runs those fearful syllables will be with him. He cannot obey, and so time and time again they reiterate their command, reasserting the improper propriety that has cast him into unending subjectivity. Hell is with Faustus now, located in the fact that he *cannot* flee and is trapped in a body—and perhaps even a soul—that is no longer his own. The words *homo fuge* are originally from the Vulgate, but transposed into a new context, "grafted"—to use Derrida's apt term—onto Faustus's godless body, they become not only words of damnation but a performative articulation of hell. They are a scar that tells of what Faustus has done, of the hell that is to come, and of a personal world of suffering right here on earth. In further subversion, the warning to flee hell essentially becomes hell itself.

It is evident that consideration of written performative theory in *Faustus* brings to light a different kind of magic that is rooted in language. This magic is associated not with the certainty of the necromancer's spell but with the ambiguity of limitless interpretation. *Faustus* is a fiercely contradictory play, with its high poetry, low comedy, A-text, B-text, hero and antihero; and a deconstructionist perspective allows us to accept, even celebrate this multiplicity. A logical progression can then be made from the play of language to the play of identity, linking up the work of critics who discuss Faustus's selfhood in terms of the performative with those who discuss Faustus's conjuring and writing from a similar theoretical perspective. Hillman suggests that in early theater character is constative and action is performative, but arguably

the written performative pins together who the eponymous hero is and what he does, since everything that comes alive onstage traces back to a play text.²⁷ In this respect Faustus's existence is indeed a state of unending becoming, for every time *Faustus* is read or staged, every time our attention graces the text, it acts, and a spectacular embodiment of words is performed. Postmodern subjectivity can offer an explanation of Faustus's downfall, but it is also a gift to audiences of Marlowe's work everywhere. For the play is intensely, passionately performative, and each time we encounter it, a unique and special thing happens, but only because it is also still the same. *Faustus*'s remarkable richness comes from its contradictory nature, from the way that, like its hero, it is constantly becoming, constantly in dialogue with itself, and constantly different.

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27. Hillman, *Self Speaking*, 164.

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Marlowe's *Ars Moriendi*

The late medieval *ars moriendi* (art of dying) fascinated early modern English playwrights. It was related to the *danse macabre* tradition in Western art represented in painting, statuary, and even dramatic spectacles, as John Carpenter's civic mural *Dance of Poulys* (c. 1420) and John Lydgate's "Dance of Death" poetry (c. 1425) both imply.¹ It is not surprising, then, that the tragedies of Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare are replete with memorable lines that echo the lessons espoused in popular tracts devoted to the *ars moriendi*. Near the end of both *Hamlet* (1600) and *King Lear* (1605), characters contemplate the destruction that surrounds them as Denmark's prince proclaims, "The readiness is all" (5.2.160), while Edgar similarly instructs his blind and broken father, "Men must endure / Their going hence, even as their coming hither; / Ripeness is all." (5.2.9–11).² Death is inevitable, yet Hamlet and Edgar find solace in meeting the end with careful preparation. Along these lines, Malcolm describes the traitorous Thane of Cawdor's final earthly moments in *Macbeth* (1606): "Nothing in his life / Became him like the leaving it. He died / As one that had been studied in his death" (1.4.7–9). Despite having betrayed king and country, Cawdor's "studied" passing is admirable, a moment of careful, thoughtful control in an otherwise tempestuous sequence of events.

1. For a useful summary of the *danse macabre* tradition and its larger relationship to fifteenth-century culture, see Lacey Baldwin Smith, *The Elizabethan World* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), 15–35. For an analysis of John Carpenter and John Lydgate, see Amy Appleford, "The Dance of Death in London: John Carpenter, John Lydgate, and the *Dauunce of Poulys*," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38.2 (2008): 285–314.

2. William Shakespeare, *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 2008). All subsequent references from *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth* are taken from this edition.

Similarly, Marlowe recognized the theatrical potential in the craft of dying and returned to it often and with great dramatic effect throughout the course of his career. In both parts of *Tamburlaine the Great*, for instance, a whole cast of characters meet a variety of creative ends, some embracing death stoically, like Olympia who fools the love-struck Theridamas into slitting her throat, while others such as Bajazeth and Zabina despair and “brain” themselves on their cages. In *Doctor Faustus*, often noted for its relationship with the medieval world, Marlowe makes substantial use of the *ars moriendi*. While it has been suggested that the play is structured around this material, it is likely the playwright’s familiarity with the tradition infiltrates the work in a more organic manner.³ Indeed, *Faustus*’s awareness of the art of dying, especially in the fifth act, is undeniable. When Marlowe turns his attention to *The Jew of Malta*, however, he makes a significant change in the depiction of the artful death. The matter is no longer devoted to dying well but to the pleasure of revenge instead, the joy derived from cleverly crafting the deaths of others.

This essay seeks to situate Marlowe’s work within the *ars moriendi* tradition, revealing his playfully subversive understanding of the art and craft of dying. He interrogates the idea of the comfort provided by these “how-to” manuals, repeatedly situating characters so that they are forced to contemplate their impending deaths. Yet tellingly, few, if any, find comfort in their final moments. Barabas especially reveals the playwright’s complexity of thought on the subject since the Jew of Malta is virtually obsessed with the artful death, orchestrating and executing a number of intricately plotted murders until he falls victim to his own machinations. In this way, Marlowe’s plays reveal a medieval sensibility, specifically that old comforts must give way to new understandings of one’s place, albeit a lonely and often tragic one, at the end of life.

In the later Middle Ages, death comes into focus through the *ars moriendi* tracts, works that emphasized the Christian’s preparation for the judgment of the afterlife, regardless of the fear or terror it might evoke.⁴ Appearing in the early fifteenth century as the

3. See David M. Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1962), 245–62; Douglas Cole, *Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1962), 231–43; and Susan Snyder, “Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* as an Inverted Saint’s Life,” *Studies in Philology* 63.4 (1966): 565–77. See also Beach Langston, “Marlowe’s *Faustus* and the *Ars Moriendi* Tradition,” in *A Tribute to George Coffin Taylor: Studies and Essays, Chiefly Elizabethan, by His Students and Friends*, ed. Arnold Williams (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1952), 148–67.

4. See Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–*

lengthy and anonymous *Tractatus artis bene moriendi* (c. 1415), the work was translated into every European language, with English copies appearing as early as 1450. A shorter version, popularly titled *Ars Moriendi*, was redacted from the larger tract, though both works served to synthesize wide-ranging medieval views on death, emphasizing the promise of Christ's death and resurrection. The earliest English version, *Crafte and Knowledge for to Dye Well*, appeared in manuscript, which William Caxton printed as *The Arte and Crafte to Know Well to Dye* (1490).

These works blurred the distinction between dying and mourning and approximated a type of drama that provided the living with the equivalent of scripts and stage directions for how to prepare for death appropriately.⁵ The bulk of the *ars moriendi* tracts include question and answer sections to be rehearsed with the dying and prayers that should be read at specific, clearly defined moments. For instance, in the third chapter of the *Crafte*, the living are provided with a series of questions to which the sick should answer "yee."⁶ Later, in discussing the prayers provided at the end of the tract, the author notes, "and they mowen often be peryshyd ayene to excyte deuocion of the seke man yeff he haue reason and vnderstandyng *with hym*" (*Crafte*, 16). The phrase suggests a degree of performance and that by repeating these prayers in a ritual practice, the dying may be brought to a point of complete commitment. Even without these added dramatic elements, the very appearance of the works in the mid-to-late fifteenth century and their mission statement to teach men "to lerne to haue the crafte and knowledge for to dye well" serves a script-like purpose

1580 (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005), 313–15. Most studies on death and dying in the Middle Ages provide developed analysis on the tracts themselves. For more on the *ars moriendi* tradition, see Margaret Aston, "Death," in *Fifteenth-Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England*, ed. Rosemary Horrox (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 202–28; Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (London: British Museum, 1996), 33–47; and Phoebe S. Spinrad, *The Summons of Death on the Medieval and Renaissance English Stage* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1987), 27–49.

5. For example, the tract "The Lamentation of the Dying Creature" can best be described as a prose version of a morality play, in which the title character interacts with a whole cast of characters, many of whom are identical to those in the plays themselves. The Dying Creature laments to a variety of virtuous characters including a Good Angel, Faith and Hope, Conscience, and the Five Wits. See "The Lamentation of the Dying Creature," in *The Book of the Craft of Dying and Other Early English Tracts Concerning Death*, ed. Frances M. M. Comper (1917; repr., New York: Arno, 1977), 137–69, 168.

6. *Crafte and Knowledge For to Dye Well*, in *The English Ars Moriendi*, ed. David William Atkinson (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), 1–20, 9. Hereafter cited as *Crafte*.

(*Crafte*, 1; see also 9, 16). As Robert N. Watson argues, these treatises were “designed to block our view of nothingness” by shifting the focus of one’s final moment away from death’s finality and towards artful preparation instead. The importance of their emphasis on technique or art echoes the late medieval and early modern conception of dying as a continual process rather than a single, final moment.⁷ In other words, the drama of death occupied, and in some ways determined, one’s thoughts and actions over the course of a lifetime. By constructing an ending with clear stage directions, an individual could potentially prepare for the final exit, along with any conflicts that might arise in the final scene.

This tradition must have appealed to Marlowe as he learned about it, perhaps from reading material similar to the *Crafte*, which features six chapters designed to help guide the dying to a happy death. The first expands and expounds the general purpose, encouraging readers to learn how to die well: “Therefore we owghten to take oure deth when God wyll wylfully and gladly, withoute any grochyng or contdyccion, thorow the myght and boldenesse off the wyll of oure sowle, vertuosly desposyd and gouerned by reason and verray discrecion” (3). The good Christian should die in the knowledge that God has determined it to be the appropriate time. In departing the earthly world in an orderly manner, governed both by the promise of God’s salvation and with “reason and verray discrecion,” the dying man reveals the virtuous “might and boldenesse off the wyll of oure sowle.” According to the author, the process of dying is not an emotional affair, but should be completely logical and scripted, as the final clause of this statement attests: “though he leved sensuallyte and freelte off oure fflesh, naturally groche or strife ther ayens” (3). The *Crafte* clearly recognizes that man’s natural inclination at the prospect of death is to grieve and lament or to “groche,” which may explain its insistence on making death into a drama whose happy ending is clear from the beginning.

The second chapter is concerned with the various temptations man faces as he readies himself for death, a subject Marlowe treats at length in *Faustus*. While many of the threats are the familiar foes of the devil’s arsenal including the loss of faith, despair, spiritual pride, and an unhealthy focus on temporal things, the third

7. Robert N. Watson, *The Rest Is Silence: Death as Annihilation in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1994), 43; David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997), 379.

temptation is defined as impatience. In her study of the *ars moriendi* tradition, Nancy Beaty has noted that this part of the tract lacks development, especially when compared with the earlier sections.⁸ If one were expecting a detailed analysis of the sin of impatience, one would be sorely disappointed, and understandably so. Read as a cautioning against excessive grief and mourning, however, the discussion takes on a new, provocative dimension. Beginning with a brief definition of the temptation, “the iiide temptacion ys in-pacyence, the whych ys ageuyn charyte by the whych we be boundyn to loue God aboute all thyng,” the author explains that many men are not ready for death and so the unprepared “maketh so in-pacyent & grugyng, that otherwhyle thorow woo and in-pacyence they becomyn wode and wyttles, as hit hath been seen in many men” (*Crafte*, 6). By refusing to pass quietly, the dying can become enraged and mad, losing focus at the most pivotal of times. The author then builds upon this description of the temptation by deploying wisdom from a variety of church fathers. First Saint Jerome: “who so taketh seeknes or deth with sorowe or displeasance of herte, hit ys an opyn and a *certeyne* synge that he loueth nat God sufficiently” (6). And then from Saint Gregory, “there shall no man haue the kyngdam off heuen that grugis and ys impacient” (6). Fear over excessive grief is evident here, and the author therefore increasingly condemns prolonged sorrow. While Saint Jerome claims that those who grieve their death are guilty of not loving God sufficiently, Saint Gregory goes even further, claiming that mourning one’s death is an act that ultimately excludes the griever from heaven.

Though the *ars moriendi* appeared in the late Middle Ages, David Cressy has shown that it continued to occupy an important place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, experiencing a revival in Marlowe’s time. In discussing the continuing value of the tracts devoted to the tradition, David Atkinson has noted that they reveal new conceptions of death and function as a “valuable barometer” of the religious and philosophical changes in late fifteenth and sixteenth-century England. Ralph Houlbrooke has argued that Protestants and Catholics were similarly preoccupied with the craft of dying and Austra Reinis has recently revealed the relationship between the *ars moriendi* and the German Reformation.⁹ In

8. See Nancy Lee Beaty, *The Craft of Dying: A Study in the Literary Tradition of the Ars Moriendi in England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1970), 14.

9. See, respectively, Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death*, 389; Atkinson, introduction to *Crafte*, xi; Ralph Houlbrooke, “Death, Church, and Family in England between the Late

England, the art of dying infiltrated not only the drama of the period, but also the writings of those who stood in direct opposition to the theater. Philip Stubbes's *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) infamously condemns the institution of the stage and those "flocking and running to theaters and curtains, daily and hourly, night and day, time and tide, to see plays and interludes" so that "every mate sorts to his mate, every one brings another homeward of their way very friendly, and in secret conclaves (covertly) they play *the sodomites*, or worse."¹⁰

While much has been made of condemnations of this sort, particularly Stubbes's concern over the relationship between the body and the theater, another treatise by Stubbes, *A Christal Glasse for Christian Women* (1591), provides "an excellent example of Protestant *ars moriendi*."¹¹ It allows us to see the extent to which the late medieval tradition of dying well remained widespread in the late sixteenth century, especially in the last years of Marlowe's own life and first publications of his plays. The lengthy title of this extraordinarily popular biography of Stubbes's nineteen-year-old wife advertises the "most wonderfull and rare example, of a right virtuous life and Christian death" from complications following the birth of their son. He draws heavily on the *ars moriendi* tradition:

In all her sicknes, which was both long and grievous, shee never shewed any signe of discontentment, or of impatiencie: neither was there ever heard one worde comes forth of her mouth, sounding either of desperation, or infidelitie: of mistrust, or distrust, or of any doubting or wavering, but always remained faithfull and resolute in her God.¹²

Fifteenth and the Early Eighteenth Centuries," in *Death, Ritual, and Bereavement*, ed. Ralph Anthony Houlbrooke (London: Routledge, 1989), 25–42, 41; and Austra Reinis, *Reforming the Art of Dying: The Ars Moriendi in the German Reformation (1519–1528)* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

10. Phillip Stubbes, *Anatomy of Abuses*, in *Shakespeare's Theatre: A Sourcebook*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 115–23, 121.

11. See Alexandra Walsham, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Philip Stubbes," accessed February 24, 2012, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>. For more on the link between the theater, the body, and the antitheatricalists, see Joseph Lenz, "Base Trade: Theater as Prostitution," *English Literary History* 60.4 (1993): 833–55.

12. Philip Stubbes, *A Christal Glasse for Christian Women Containing, a Most Excellent Discourse, of the Godly Life and Christian Death of Mistresse Katherine Stubbs* (London: T. Orwin for Richard Jones, 1592), A3v. Hereafter cited as Stubbes. The treatise was reprinted twenty-eight times before 1664.

Stubbes prominently features the sin of impatience and is clearly expressing an anxiety concerning grief and mourning for one's own end. He notes that no deathbed sin appeared in his wife's final days, and he is especially quick to focus on Katherine's voice, "neither was there ever heard one worde comes forth of her mouth." This is a particularly important detail, one that becomes even more so in light of the pamphlet's title which repeatedly highlights speech: "*Set downe word for word, as she spake it, as neere as could be gathered*" (A4v). Instead of simply relating what he saw, Stubbes insists on inserting dialogue as if he were a dramatist, repeatedly noting his wife's lines in this, her final act.

This is indeed a curious decision for an antitheatrical pamphleteer polemically opposed to plays such as Marlowe's. The manner in which Stubbes constructs Katherine as a master actor in the drama of death becomes increasingly obvious: "And so desirous was she to be with the Lord, that these golden sentences were never out of her mouth" (A3v–A4). These include a range of observations, prayers, and directions that define her death as a model for others to follow. When those gathered around the bed suggest she pray for health, Katherine responds: "I beseech you pray not that I should live, for I thinke it long to be with my God. Christ is to me life, and death is to me advantage. I cannot enter into life but by death, and therefore is death the doore or entrance into everlasting life to me" (A4). The *ars moriendi* is here a success for both the dying and the living as she derives comfort in her final earthly moments and uses the performance to instruct her audience. Though she never wavers, she does ask for others to pray "to God to give me strength and patience, to persever to the end, and to close up mine eies in a justifying faith in the blood of my Christ" (A4). Katherine Stubbes, very much the conquering Christian heroine, defeats death even before he arrives.

Yet this quasi-Marlovian drama is far from over. After a profession of faith wherein she vehemently argues against a variety of Catholic tenets, ranging from purgatory to the issue of transubstantiation, she engages in and resoundingly wins a verbal battle with Satan. As Cressy has shown, dying was not an isolated activity but conducted with members of the community as well as family, and the sickroom operated as an "arena of action" and "centre of a moral theatre" where "people watched and waited for a mortal life to expire."¹³ In essence, Stubbes's tract is a prose morality play,

13. Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death*, 390, 392.

one in which the Everyman character's virtue is never in doubt and the conflict, though present, is ultimately one-sided. After promptly defeating Satan and repelling his temptations, Katherine turns to her husband and "desired him that hee would not mourne for her, alledging the Apostle Paul, where he saith: Brethren I would not have you to mourn, as men without hope, for them that die in the Lord: affirming that she was not in case to be mourned for, but rather to be rejoiced of" (C3v). Even in her final moments, she shapes the action that will follow her death, furthering a Protestant agenda regarding mourning. And once she recognizes that her time on earth is over, she smiles, reaches out her arms, and says, "Oh sweete death thou are welcome, welcome sweet death, never was there any guest so welcome to me as thou art. Welcome, the messenger of everlasting life: welcome the doore and entrance into everlasting glorie" (C4). This has been an artful performance worthy of Marlowe and his theatrical colleagues, not a tragedy with disintegration and disaster but a comedy with the promise of renewal and everlasting life. The importance of her speeches, which occupy a prominent place in the pamphlet, signal once again that dying was very much a performance with careful attention paid to the lines of the actor.¹⁴ Katherine moves toward her end like one studied in her death, an object lesson on the art of dying in everything she says.

Marlowe repeatedly demonstrates his knowledge of such conventions in his plays. He applies the discussion of deathbed sorrow and the sin of impatience according to the *ars moriendi* tradition in 2 *Tamburlaine*, as Zenocrate nears death and the play's titular hero cries out, "Live still, my love, and so conserve my life, / Or, dying, be the author of my death" (2.4.55–56).¹⁵ Tamburlaine refuses to accept that his beloved wife is dying and so cries out in grief. Marlowe's scripting his hero's behavior as impatience is made obvious in Zenocrate's response as she comforts her husband, "But let me die, my love, yet let me die, / With love and patience let your true love die: / Your grief and fury hurts my second life" (2.4.66–68). In this

14. See Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death*, 390. Lucinda McCray Beier has remarked on the importance of death-bed speeches in the *ars moriendi*, arguing that they often emphasized the heroic qualities of the dying, thus serving as a lesson for those who witnessed the final moments. See Beier, "The Good Death in Seventeenth-Century England," in Houlbrooke, *Death, Ritual, and Bereavement*, 43–61, 51. Duffy notes that the popular block-book depicted the bedroom as "a crowded battlefield centred on the last agonies of the man or woman in the bed" (*Stripping of the Altars*, 317).

15. Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*, ed. J. S. Cunningham (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1981). All subsequent references to 2 *Tamburlaine* are from this edition.

exchange, the roles are reversed—while Tamburlaine should comfort his wife, encouraging her to embrace death quietly and with patience, it is the dying Zenocrate who must encourage Tamburlaine to be patient, even suggesting his wild emotional threats may taint her artful and successful performance. Just as Katherine avoids the sin of impatience, using her remaining time on earth to carefully instruct those who surrounded her bed, Zenocrate similarly reflects patience and resolve while attempting to rein in her husband's emotional display.

After calmly bidding farewell to her husband and their three sons, Zenocrate quietly dies, a model of the artful death as described in the tracts. Tamburlaine, ignoring his wife's call for patience, throws himself into a fury. He exclaims to his dead wife, "Behold me here, divine Zenocrate, / Raving, impatient, desperate, and mad" (2.4.111–12). Tamburlaine clearly understands his response as the sin of impatience and documents all of the emotions the *ars moriendi* tracts suggest accompany this response: He becomes "wode and wyttles." Even Theridamas tries to correct his friend's behavior, remarking, "Ah, my good lord, be patient, she is dead, / And all this raging cannot make her live" (2.4.119–20). By echoing Zenocrate's plea to her husband, Theridamas recognizes the problem inherent in this display. He sees such emotional outpouring as impotent, just as she was concerned that such raging impatience would negatively affect her afterlife. Such behavior cannot resurrect the dead. Refusing to listen, Tamburlaine does what Tamburlaine does best: He burns down a city. Yet unlike his other military conquests, this one is an extension of his grief:

The houses, burnt, will look as if they mourned,
And here will I set up her statua
And march about it with my mourning camp,
Drooping and pining for Zenocrate. (2.4.139–42)

In the moment of his wife's death, Marlowe inverts the lesson of the *ars moriendi* without excising its message, because here he emphasizes not the dying but the living. Zenocrate, just like Katherine, is an exemplum of the *ars moriendi*. Her death is so perfect it is easy to forget it has happened at all with the bombastic rhetoric and chilling threats of her husband swirling around her final lines.

In act 5, an entirely different picture of Tamburlaine emerges in Marlowe's exercise in the *ars moriendi*. Having burnt the Qur'an and declared himself greater than God, he is struck with a sudden illness. Ever defiant, he calls out,

What daring god torments my body thus
 And seeks to conquer mighty Tamburlaine?

 Come, carry me to war against the gods,
 That thus envy the health of Tamburlaine. (5.3.42–43, 52–53)

Once again, Theridamas encourages Tamburlaine to heed his wife's lesson and, by extension, the *ars moriendi*, remarking, "Ah, good my lord, leave these impatient words, / Which add much danger to your malady" (5.3.54–55). Tamburlaine's words are doubly dangerous because they betray the deathbed sin of impatience as well as threaten the gods and so place his soul in further peril, the very thing Zenocrate was concerned about as he raved at her passing. Yet by the conclusion of the play, the hero reconciles himself to the end and carefully constructs his final moments as he ventures victoriously into battle one last time. He then reflects on his life's achievements by calmly, and with some nostalgia, looking over a map of the world he has conquered. He encourages his remaining sons to finish what he started and crowns the eldest, readies the hearse of Zenocrate for his imminent arrival, and bids farewell to those gathered around, ending even as he began, with a sense of purpose: "For Tamburlaine, the scourge of God, must die" (5.3.248). These lines with their suggestion that death is his idea affirm his heroism, especially at his life's end, just as Katherine Stubbes defeats the devil and explains the errors of Catholicism, submitting to her fate only after she has instructed those around her by words and behavior. Both *Tamburlaine* and *A Christal Glasse* reveal the extent to which the *ars moriendi* infiltrated multiple literary forms in the sixteenth century. In crafting the deaths of Zenocrate and Tamburlaine, Marlowe essentially maintains the moral message of these tracts, since husband and wife ultimately appear to die well, both ostensibly in control during their final moments.

The Jew of Malta also reflects the *ars moriendi* tradition and its discussion of impatience. Early in the play, when Barabas has his wealth confiscated by the Maltese government, one of his fellows encourages him, "O yet be patient, gentle Barabas" (1.2.170).¹⁶ In response, he mourns the loss of money as if it were an actual death, crying out to his peers, "Why stand you thus unmoved with my laments? / Why weep you not to think upon my wrongs? /

16. Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. N.W. Bawcutt (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1997). All subsequent references to *The Jew of Malta* are from this edition.

Why pine not I, and die in this distress?" (1.2.172–74). Another urges him to remember Job, and when this comfort fails to gain traction, he is once again admonished, "Good Barabas, be patient" (1.2.200). These lines resemble the call for patience to accept mortality as part of the implied master plan of the universe. Just as Tamburlaine fails to remain calm in the wake of his wife's death, Barabas is similarly unable to achieve or maintain patience after the confiscation of his wealth, a kind of death for him.

In the lines that follow these repeated invocations, Barabas responds to their suggestions, "Ay, ay; / Pray leave me in my patience. You that / Were ne'er possessed of wealth are pleased with want" (1.2.200–201). He elaborates on his snide remark, at once recognizing patience as the appropriate response in this situation and dismissing it as wholly inadequate:

But give him liberty at least to mourn
That in a field amidst his enemies
Doth see his soldiers slain, himself disarmed,
And knows no means of his recovery.
Ay let me sorrow for this sudden chance. (1.2.203–7)

Using words such as "mourn," "slain," and "sorrow," Barabas views his loss of money through a lens of death and dying. He compares his current situation to one of significant bereavement, the battlefield where a soldier, surrounded by enemies and without means of defense, surveys the carnage and, it is implied, prepares for death. Tellingly, this metaphor does not end with any sort of comfort, but rather implies that such a situation would be the source of great emotional distress. Therefore, he insists, he will continue in the behavior his peers have termed, in essence, impatience. Barabas, realizing they cannot bring him any comfort, attempts to comprehend this "death," and calls out to the "partial heavens" demanding, "And knowing me impatient in my distress, / Think me so mad as I will hang myself?" (1.2.259, 262–63). By bringing impatience and all of its implications to the fore, he illustrates what he will not do. He will not act like those in *Crafte* who "thorow woo and inpacience they becomyn wode and wytles." Barabas's behavior is unlike Tamburlaine's violation of the deathbed sin of the tradition. However, by alluding to this art of dying, Barabas (and by extension Marlowe) encourages us to see what follows in a similar way.

The Jew of Malta seems to satirize some conventions of the artful death. Moving from impatience to revenge, Barabas gleefully completes a series of intricately plotted murders and revels in the

theatricality of these acts. By shifting the focus from the dying person to the individual who fashions and manipulates the destruction of others, Marlowe undertakes a subversive reworking of the craft of dying. When Barabas confesses to a host of murders, even calling himself “an engineer” of mortality (2.3.188), he reveals an acute awareness of how he presents his material, in both intensity and complexity. His course in death’s art, he confesses, begins with midnight strolls wherein he murders the mortally sick “groaning under walls” (2.3.177). But he also poisons wells and carefully plots deaths through framing thieves, practicing medicine so to kill patients, and learning the art of war simply to increase the range of his slaughter. Here, the craft or method of dying appears to subsume everything else.¹⁷ Just as Stubbes’s treatise appealed to an early modern English readership undoubtedly anxious about dying well, Barabas’s own performance functions in a similar way. An audience’s fascination with death’s director may implicate it in this perversion of the *ars moriendi* reflected in the great pleasure both Barabas and Ithamore take in their art. For instance, after playing a part in one of his master’s carefully scripted murders, Ithamore crows: “Why, was there ever seen such villainy, / So neatly plotted and so well performed: / Both held in hand, and flatly beguiled?” (3.3.1–3). Barabas does not create art for himself alone, but wishes for his audience to appreciate what he, as “death-wright,” fashions.¹⁸ Not unlike the *ars moriendi* tracts with their dramatic scaffolding, such as lines to be rehearsed, roles to be played, a repeated emphasis on the dying person as hero, and the sickroom as “centre of a moral theatre,” *The Jew of Malta* dwells on its own theatricality of death.

In the play’s final moments, Marlowe provides a stunning depiction of the performance of the art of dying. The stage direction that begins the scene reads “*enter [Barabas] with a hammer above, very busy, [and Carpenters]*” (5.5 s.d.), and the artist at work is literally presented, creating his *pièce de résistance*. “How stand the cords?” he asks the carpenters, “How hang these hinges, fast? / Are all the

17. As Karen Cunningham argues, “Whether secretly plotting or publicly designing death, Marlowe’s characters continually discuss not merely whether or why someone is to die but how; evaluating their options, they push existential fact towards aesthetics.” “Renaissance Execution and Marlovian Elocution: The Drama of Death,” *PMLA* 105.2 (1990): 209–22, 215.

18. My reading of the play’s theatricality and Barabas as playwright is indebted to Sara Munson Deats and Lisa S. Starks’s article, “‘So Neatly Plotted, and So Well Perform’d’: Villain as Playwright in Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*,” *Theatre Journal* 44.3 (1992): 375–89.

cranes and pulleys sure?” (5.5.1–2). When they answer in the affirmative, Barabas instructs them, “Leave nothing loose, all leveled to my mind. / Why, now I see that you have art indeed” (5.5.4–5). The artist ensures that the work he has constructed, measured, and defined matches his vision. Once this is confirmed, he pays the carpenters and sends them off to his cellar to drink the wine he has poisoned for their benefit. When Ferneze appears, the architect delightedly unfolds his extensive project, explaining that while Calymath dines at Barabas’s house, the Turk’s soldiers have been sent to a nearby monastery to eat, the cellar of which he has filled with gunpowder he will ignite, killing the entire army. As for Calymath, Barabas explains that he has constructed an elaborate platform, “The floor whereof, this cable being cut, / Doth fall asunder, so that it doth sink / Into a deep pit past recovery” (5.5.33–36), sending all who stand on it into a boiling cauldron. Ever the director of this mortality play, Barabas hands Ferneze a knife and instructs him to cut the rope when he hears gunfire. However, death’s conductor becomes subject to his own machinations by falling into his trap as Ferneze warns the Turkish leader and cuts the rope.

In his final speech of the play, the art of dying applies in both senses. Barabas resolves himself to the end and lashes out in a flurry of curses, yet striving for an artful death similar to those depicted in the Stubbes tract and 2 *Tamburlaine*. As he directs himself, “breathe forth thy latest fate, / And in the fury of thy torments strive / To end thy life with resolution” (5.5.77–79), he echoes the conventional language of the *ars moriendi* tracts, similar to the description of Katherine Stubbes who died “faithfull and resolute in her God.” Yet the resolution of which Barabas speaks also alludes to another sense of the *ars moriendi* in this play, the joy of crafting the deaths of others. Though he knows he is doomed, he nevertheless takes significant pleasure in taunting Ferneze, confessing, “Know, governor, ’twas I that slew thy son; / I framed the challenge that did make them meet” (5.5.80–81), though he artfully crafted this death rather than committing the murder himself. Similarly, he turns to Calymath and explains what he had hoped to accomplish if he had “escaped this stratagem” (5.5.83). This is certainly not the quiet, controlled end espoused in the *ars moriendi* tracts that the deaths of Zenocrate, Tamburlaine, or Katherine Stubbes each resemble. Instead, Barabas dies the model of impatience, reveling in the artful death in his final words, “Die, life: fly soul; tongue, curse thy fill and die!” (5.5.88), which echo in the remainder of the play. Rather than repent so that his final

statement might educate and comfort the witnesses according to convention, it instead defines him as the antihero of his own drama who visits confusion and terror on those who remain. And though he dies, his artwork lives on. Ferneze, ever the opportunist, promptly informs the Turkish leader that he is now a prisoner in Malta. When Calymath insists that he is in control, with a large army at his back, Ferneze gets to enjoy the artifice that so clearly amused Barabas, revealing that his army has been destroyed, blown up in the convent where they gathered to eat.

Marlowe's conversance in the *ars moriendi* was more than just a passing awareness. Though it is unlikely he used these tracts to form the overarching structure of his plays, it is obvious that he utilized elements from this immensely popular tradition. As the example of Katherine Stubbes indicates, the art of dying occupied early modern English consciousness and the tract's popularity testifies to a sustained appeal, especially its features informed by drama. Marlowe's repeated and deliberate use of two key terms from the tradition, "patience" and "impatience," in portraying death attests to his awareness of its conventions. Most striking is the playful inversion of the craft of dying to crafting the deaths of others. Indeed, Barabas's art outlives him so that he lingers like a purgatorial ghost, his deathly handiwork prompting the impatience of others. For Marlowe and, so it seems, for Barabas, art, when formed with care and attention to detail, endures long after a knife through the eye or being boiled alive.

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Marlowe's Influence and "The True History of George Scanderbeg"

Christopher Marlowe's influence on the spate of conqueror plays of the 1590s that mimicked the language, sense of spectacle, or antihero of *Tamburlaine the Great* has been well documented.¹ Strangely, the story of Scanderbeg, the man whose name is most often evoked by early modern commentators in the context of *Tamburlaine*, was apparently not dramatized until the early seventeenth century, despite its suitability for expanding a repertory. The "True History of George Scanderbeg" occupies a unique position in this series of conqueror plays in that it has been misguidedly attributed to Marlowe himself and its medieval Albanian protagonist has strong affinities with the historical *Tamburlaine*. For reasons such as these, it is important to address the implications of this lost play having been staged in the repertorial context of 1600–1601 and to assess Marlowe's continuing influence into the seventeenth century across company lines.

The historical Scanderbeg was born Giorgio Castriota in 1403, the year after the historical *Tamburlaine* defeated Bajazeth I. In *The Crescent and the Rose* (1937), a seminal study of the East and Islam during the English Renaissance, Samuel C. Chew relates that when the Turks invaded Scanderbeg's homeland of Epirus in

1. See, for example, Peter Berek, "Tamburlaine's Weak Sons: Imitation as Interpretation Before 1593," *Renaissance Drama*, n.s., 13 (1982): 55–82; Richard Levin, "The Contemporary Perception of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 1 (1984): 51–70; Daniel J. Vitkus, ed., *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England: Selimus, A Christian Turned Turk, "The Renegado"* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000); Mark Hutchings, "The 'Turk Phenomenon' and the Repertory of the Late Elizabethan Playhouse," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 13.2 / Special Issue 16 (2007): ¶1–16, accessed January 19, 2012, <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/si-16/hutcturk.htm>; Paul Menzer, "Shades of Marlowe," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 1 (2011): 181–92.

1423, Scanderbeg was taken hostage by Murad II and served in the Ottoman military for twenty years despite resenting the Turks' treatment of their subjects. In recognition of his competence in battle, they dubbed him "Iskander-Bey," or Lord Alexander (a reference to Alexander the Great), by which name, in the corrupted form "Scanderbeg," he was known throughout Europe. In 1443, after two decades of fighting for the Turks, Scanderbeg escaped his masters, proclaimed himself Christian, raised an Albanian resistance force, and deployed guerrilla warfare techniques to frustrate his captors for the following twenty-four years. Eventually, Sultan Mahomet I, conqueror of Constantinople, recognized him as Lord of Albania and Epirus in 1461. After Scanderbeg's death in 1467, his son sold Albania to Venice, who in turn returned it to the Ottomans. Although the Turks despised Scanderbeg in life, they cherished his physical remains (buried at Alessio) like saints' relics, the Janissaries seeking to "procure pieces of his bones to wear as amulets so as to get for themselves something of his resourcefulness and valour in battle."²

The historical evidence pertaining to the lost "Scanderbeg" play is the July 1601 entry in the Stationers' Register:³

iii^o Julij

Edward Alde[e]

Entred for his Coppye vnder the hand of master whyte warden

'the true historye of GEORGE SCANDERBARGE' as yt was lately

playd by the right honorable the Earle of OXFENFORD his seruantes.

Vj^d

The record clearly shows that on July 3, 1601, "Scanderbeg" was registered at Stationers' Hall for the usual sixpence fee and identifies the Earl of Oxford's players as the owners and performers of the text. The wording of the entry, describing the drama as having been "*lately playd*," supports the theory that the performances were

2. Samuel C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (New York: Octagon, 1937), 474–75. Hereafter cited as Chew. On the Janissaries' fetishistic worship of their enemy Scanderbeg's bones, see, for example, the following allusions: John Dryden, "Epistle to the Whigs," in *The Medall. A Satyre against Sedition* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1682), A2–A5, A2v; Richard Lovelace, "To the genius of Mr. John Hall," in *Hierocles upon the Golden Verses of Pythagoras*, trans. John Hall (London: John Streater for Francis Eaglesfield, 1656), A4v; and Anon. [Elizabeth Isham?], "On Dr. Donnes Anatomy" [1635–45?], cited in Karl Josef Hölzgen, "Unpublished Early Verses 'On Dr. Donnes Anatomy,'" *Review of English Studies*, n.s., 22.87 (1971): 302–6, 303.

3. Stationers' Company, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554–1640 A. D.*, ed. Edward Arber, 5 vol. (London: privately printed, 1876), 3:187.

indeed recent. Oxford's Men were certainly active in 1600, when *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall* was entered in the Stationers' Register on October 23, hence there is no compelling reason to doubt the company attribution.⁴

Establishing the probable venue is problematic. Although records of some thirty-six regional performance payments to Oxford's players are known from the period of 1580 to 1595, the quarto of *Weakest* and the Stationers' Register entries for this and the "Scanderbeg" play are the only evidence of the company's activity at the turn of the century, and neither offers any information about venues.⁵ Herbert Berry records that by the summer or early autumn of 1601, Oxford's Men had amalgamated with Worcester's and were probably playing works by Thomas Heywood and others at the Boar's Head Theater in Whitechapel. Although it may have been written with another playhouse in mind, as was probably the case with *Weakest*, performances would therefore probably have occurred at the Boar's Head if "Scanderbeg" was continued into the 1601 season.⁶ At that venue, the amalgamated company's members included Heywood, Christopher Beeston, John Duke, Will Kempe, John Lowin, Robert Pallant, and Richard Perkins. Beeston, Heywood, and Lowin would display great staying power and enjoy lengthy careers in the theater. Perkins, Pallant, Duke, and Kempe brought significant experience through companies such as the Admiral's, Pembroke's, Strange's, and Chamberlain's Men, and thus familiarity with a complementary or rival repertoire of Marlovian conqueror plays.⁷

4. Oxford had patronized a boy company in the early 1580s and had taken over patronage of the Earl of Warwick's Men by April 1580, but this initial period of activity was followed by a period of touring, an apparent hiatus during the mid-late 1590s, and an eventual reincarnation as an adult company at the end of the sixteenth century, which coincides with the registration of *Weakest* and the "Scanderbeg" play. See Alan H. Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2003), 247, 391.

5. On touring payments, see the troupe entries for Oxford's Players in the *Records of Early English Drama: Patrons and Performers* website, accessed January 26, 2012, <http://link.library.utoronto.ca/reed/troupehits.cfm>.

6. Herbert Berry, *The Boar's Head Playhouse* (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1986), 51. The retrospective license announcing the merged company's right to play at this venue is dated March 31, 1602, but implies that they were already playing at the Boar's Head. See also Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary*, 391–92; C. J. Sisson, *The Boar's Head Theatre: An Inn-Yard Theatre of the Elizabethan Age* (London: Routledge, 1972), 73.

7. Richard Perkins had previously played with the Admiral's and Pembroke's Men; Robert Pallant and John Duke had played with Strange's company; Duke would transfer to Chamberlain's, where Will Kempe had been a player for some time already. Kempe

Authorship of the lost play is unlikely to be resolved in the absence of new information. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century critics like Frederick Gard Fleay and John Bakeless seemed convinced that Marlowe wrote “Scanderbeg,” but suggestions of the playwright’s direct involvement in the composition are unconvincing.⁸ Marlowe had been dead for over seven years by 1601, the date of the Stationers’ entry, and besides which, he had no known connection to any of Oxford’s companies.⁹ Fleay thought a line in Gabriel Harvey’s sonnet “The Writer’s Postscript; or, a Friendly *Caveat* to the *Second Shakerley* of Powles” (1593) might indicate “an affected surprise that Marlow had not published *Scanderbeg* as well as *Tamberlane*, and surely attributes its authorship to Marlow”—but while Marlowe may be a point of reference, he is not the subject of Harvey’s satire.¹⁰ Charles Nicholl has convincingly refuted this argument by identifying the true subject of Harvey’s allusion as Peter Shakerley, “one of those self-publicising Elizabethan oddballs who found their way into the popular imagination.”¹¹ Nicholl’s discovery effectively discredits the ostensible evidence for Marlovian authorship, and casts doubt on Fleay’s suggestion that Harvey was referring to a play at all, given that he was writing in 1593 and the record of the lost play is from 1601.

was morris dancing his way to Norwich in early 1600 and touring Germany and Italy in 1601, facts which restrict his possible involvement in the “Scanderbeg” play to a revival or continuation, if such existed. Kempe had a keen interest in the East, however, as his friendship and possible familial connection to the adventurer Sir Anthony Sherley attests (see Chew, 275). It was this familiarity with the Sherley brothers which presumably led John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins to include Kempe (posthumously) as a character in their *Travels of the Three English Brothers*, which was performed by the continuation of the amalgamated Oxford-Worcester group, Queen Anne’s, in 1607. See John H. Astington, “Appendix: Principal Actors, 1558–1660,” in *Actors and Acting in Shakespeare’s Time: The Art of Stage Playing* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010), 188–224, for a recent survey of players’ biographies and company affiliations.

8. Frederick Gard Fleay, *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559–1642*, 2 vol. (London: Reeves and Turner, 1891), 2:65; John Bakeless, *The Tragical History of Christopher Marlowe*, 2 vol. (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1942), 1:218.

9. E. K. Chambers, Lisa Hopkins, and Justin Kolb amongst others have all dismissed as implausible the attribution to Marlowe. See E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vol. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1923), 4:400; Lisa Hopkins, *Christopher Marlowe, Renaissance Dramatist* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008), 45; and Justin Kolb, “‘In Th’Armor of a Pagan Knight’: Romance and Anachronism East of England in Book V of *The Faerie Queene* and *Tamburlaine*,” *Early Theatre* 12 (2009): 194–207, 205n14.

10. Fleay, *Biographical Chronicle*, 2:65. For Gabriel Harvey’s sonnet, see *New Letter of Notable Contents* (London: John Wolfe, 1593), D3v.

11. Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992), 63.

Marlovian authorship might be dubious, but the issue of Marlovian influence is not in doubt and is truly significant. Roslyn L. Knutson argues that Marlowe's own company recognized that the value of Marlowe's plays "would be enhanced by a complementary repertory that duplicated, exploited, or exaggerated certain of their features," and that "companies at other playhouses also recognized the commercial power of Marlowe's drama and acquired specific kinds of plays in response"; plays that possessed "similar, exploitative, or parodic features."¹² Numerous sixteenth- and seventeenth-century allusions to Scanderbeg, especially by those acquainted with theatrical and literary circles, suggest subjects for viable repertorial partners or competition. Prior to the lost play's conjectured performance date of 1600–01, Thomas Nashe claimed in his *Lenten Stufte* (1599) that a man subsisting on a diet of red herrings would beget a child who will prove "an *Alexander*, a *Julius Caesar*, a *Scanderbega Barbarossa*."¹³ Other writers compare Scanderbeg to Charles V, Tamburlaine, Sampson, and Hannibal.¹⁴ The use of the description "stout Scanderbeg" in one of these comparisons reinforces that these references associate this figure with the brave, overreaching conquerors and military leaders based on Marlowe's Tamburlaine.¹⁵

12. Roslyn L. Knutson, "Marlowe Reruns: Repertorial Commerce and Marlowe's Plays in Revival," in *Marlowe's Empery: Expanding His Critical Contexts*, ed. Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2002), 25–42, 25, 27.

13. Thomas Nashe, *Nashes Lenten Stufte* (London: Printed for N. L. and C. B., 1599), 38/F3v, emphasis in original.

14. R. C., "Satire 2: Against Shams," in *The Times' Whistle; or, A Neve Daunce of Seven Satires, and Other Poems: Compiled by R. C., Gent.*, ed. J. M. Cowper (c. 1614–16; London: N. Trübner, 1871), 683–88; Margaret Cavendish, *The Lady Contemplation, Part I*, in *Plays Written by the Thrice Noble, Illustrious and Excellent Princess, the Lady Marchioness of Newcastle* (London: Printed by A. Warren for John Martyn, James Allestry, and Tho. Dicas, 1662), 5.27. "R. C." was evidently well-read: There are references to William Shakespeare, William Marston, Thomas Coryate, Marlowe's *Faustus*, and numerous allusions to Ben Jonson. Bishop Richard Corbett has sometimes been proposed as the identity of "R. C.," but as Ian Donaldson points out in the context of earlier verses in the manuscript, about Jonson's epigrams, the "style here isn't at all like Corbett's, and it's scarcely imaginable that he would have written such doggerel disparagements of someone who remained one of his closest friends, and wrote such an affectionate elegy on the death of Corbett's father" (Donaldson, email to author, March 10, 2011).

15. "Stout" is used in *The Times' Whistle*, in which it pertains to courageousness rather than the nineteenth-century connotation of being "thick in the body." See *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online, s.v. "stout," 12a, accessed January 26, 2012, <http://oed.com/>. Unlike Everard Guilpin's epigrammatic reference to "Allens Cutlacks gate" (which mocks a playgoer, but may offer a glimpse of Edward Alleyn's distinctive stride in the process), the "stout Scanderbeg" reference unfortunately cannot be used to ascertain any

An English dramatist adapting the Scanderbeg legend for the stage at the turn of the seventeenth century most likely knew *The Historie of George Castriot, Surnamed Scanderbeg, King of Albanie*, the 1596 translation of Jacques de Lavardin's *Historie de Georges Castriot, surnommé Scanderbeg, roy d'Albanie*.¹⁶ This 512-page tome is preceded by sonnets by Edmund Spenser and two others, and as Chew notes, "affords ample material for a stately drama," including details of Scanderbeg's formative years, his captivity, reports of his valor, his increasing desire for revenge on his captors, his eventual escape, his coup against the Turks on behalf of Christians and Albanians, and his posthumous fame (447). Although its tremendous length might deter modern readers, the English version of Lavardin's text was certainly known to Elizabethan dramatists, as Richard Hillman and W. L. Rushton have demonstrated through examination of its numerous parallels (some striking, some strained) with Shakespeare's work.¹⁷ The text is also notable for being the origin of an apocryphal tale of "Scanderbeg's sending Mahomet II a sword that no one at the sultan's court could handle"; as B. B. Ashcom explains, "When accused of bad faith, Scanderbeg replied that he had sent only the sword, not the hand and arm needed to wield it."¹⁸ This incident was apparently the origin of a popular saying, "Scanderbeg's sword must have Scanderbeg's arm."¹⁹ Later in the seventeenth century, in Thomas D'Urfey's *The Campaigners* (1698), a description of Angellica's Aunt having armed herself with "a huge Sword, with a Basket-hilt, after the fashion of *Scanderbeg*" suggests that a stage-Scanderbeg might be expected to come equipped with a blade of significant proportions.²⁰

information of the Scanderbeg actor's embodiment of the role. See Guilpin, "Of *Clodius*, 43," *Skialetheia*; or, *A Shadowe of Truth, in Certaine Epigrams and Satyres* (London: Printed by I. R. for Nicholas Ling, 1598), B2v.

16. The text in question is Jacques de Lavardin, *The Historie of George Castriot, Surnamed Scanderbeg, King of Albanie*, trans. Z. J. (London: Imprinted for William Ponsonby, 1596).

17. See Richard Hillman, "Not Amurath an Amurath Succeeds': Playing Doubles in Shakespeare's *Henriad*," *English Literary Renaissance* 21.3 (1991): 161–89. Hereafter cited as Hillman. See also W. L. Rushton's series of notes on "Shakespeare's Books" in *Notes & Queries*, 9th ser., 6.146 (October 13, 1900): 283–84.

18. B. B. Ashcom, "Notes on the Development of the Scanderbeg Theme," *Comparative Literature* 5.1 (1953): 16–29, 23n39; see especially 16–23.

19. See the note by R. C. Warde, "Sermons by Parliamentary Chaplains," *Notes & Queries*, 1st ser., 7.167 (January 8, 1853): 34–35; and see the reply note on "Scanderbeg's Sword" by a writer publishing as "Zeus," in *Notes & Queries*, 1st ser., 7.186 (May 21, 1853): 511–12.

20. Thomas D'Urfey, *The Campaigners*; or, *The Pleasant Adventures at Brussels* (London:

On account of their military prowess and valor in battle against the Turks, the names Scanderbeg and Tamburlaine are frequently associated in the early modern mind, making Scanderbeg an obvious choice of subject matter for a company hoping to capitalize on the success of Marlowe's plays and the wave of similarly themed dramas of the 1590s. In his preface to *The Mahumetane or Turkish Historie* (1600), Ralph Carr claims credit for introducing Turkish narratives to the English, with the notable exceptions of "the Historie of Scanderbegg of the late Persian warres, & that of Tamberlain," both of which were already famous.²¹ Gabriel Harvey, as noted above, used the names almost interchangeably as forms of the braggart-type in his sonnet about Peter Shakerley, and Thomas Gainsford writes in his *The Glory of England* (1618) of how relations of "the Tartarian Tamberlaine, and valiant Scanderbegg of EUROPE, or if you will *George Castriot of Epirus* with some others, have spread abroad."²² Albania's hero is also linked with the subject of Marlowe's plays in perhaps the best known reference to Scanderbeg in drama, Thomas Randolph's line in *A Pleasant Comedie, Entituled Hey for Honesty* (c. 1627; printed 1651): "J will be the *Scanderbeg* of the Company, / The very Tamberlane of this rugged rout."²³

Scanderbeg was born a year after Tamburlaine's defeat of Bajazeth I, making for convenient dramatic continuity in terms of a new play's offering. His rise from involuntary foot soldier for the Turks to mighty leader of the Albanian resistance may have triggered recollections of Tamburlaine's rise from Scythian shepherd to mighty conqueror. The two leaders' opposition to the Turks united them further in the popular imagination, and as at least one critic has suggested, the Tamburlaine/Bajazeth dynamic may conceivably have been replicated in the form of the Scanderbeg/Mahomet II relationship.²⁴

Although the conjectured 1600 performance date of "Scanderbeg" is over a decade after the 1587 debut of *1 Tamburlaine*,

Printed for A. Baldwin, 1698), 29/[E3].

21. Ralph Carr, *The Mahumetane or Turkish Historie* (London: Thomas Este, 1600), Biiv.

22. Thomas Gainsford, *The Glory of England; or, A True Description of Many Excellent Prerogatives and Remarkable Blessings* (London: Printed by Edward Griffin for Thomas Norton, 1618), 21/C3.

23. Thomas Randolph, *A Pleasant Comedie, Entituled Hey for Honesty, Down with Knavery*. (London: F. J., 1651), 21/D3, emphasis in original. For the conjectured 1627 date, see Alfred Harbage, *Annals of English Drama, 975–1700*, ed. S. Schoenbaum (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1964), 124.

24. See Chew, 478.

Marlowe's plays had been revived by the Admiral's Men in 1594–95, and properties for their stage performance were still in Philip Henslowe's inventory in 1598, as if in anticipation of a further revival.²⁵ That both parts of *Tamburlaine* were still in vogue late in the sixteenth century is apparent from the lost two-part "Tamar Cham," which almost certainly complemented Marlowe's texts. Initially staged by Strange's Men in 1592, later acquired by the Admiral's (1596), the "Tamar Cham" plays also seem to have been revived in 1602, when the company bought the book of the play from Edward Alleyn.²⁶ The Admiral's company had moved to their new Fortune Theater by late 1600, where rather than presenting a completely new repertory, their offerings were characterized by what critics regard as "a surprising spate of revivals of what we might consider old plays by dead playwrights in 'outmoded' genres."²⁷ Paul Menzer has attempted to reverse this critical disdain toward the Admiral's players' falling back on older, crowd-pleasing plays. One consequence of his reassessment of their strategy is that instead of regarding the "Scanderbeg" play as a belated attempt to build on Marlowe's success, it can instead be situated quite prudently between revivals of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays and their anonymous repertorial partners, the "Tamar Cham" plays.²⁸ "Scanderbeg" offered an Oxford's Men alternative in the "exotic conqueror" subgenre which Marlowe's own company, the Admiral's Men, was nostalgically reviving.

By engaging with the Turk motif, the Oxford's Men's "Scanderbeg" must have implicitly engaged with Marlowe's legacy and explicitly related itself to a number of other "Turk plays" performed by rival companies in the period. Beyond *1 and 2 Tamburlaine* and "1 and 2 Tamar Cham," "Scanderbeg" may have responded to performances of Queens's, Strange's, and Admiral's

25. See R. A. Foakes, ed., *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 23–33, 320–22.

26. See Knutson, "Marlowe Reruns," 33. The plot for part 1 is also extant and is thought to pertain to this 1602 revival on the basis of the cast list, which is too late for the 1596 performances. Following Knutson's general practice, I use italics to denote extant titles and quotation marks to denote lost titles.

27. Menzer, "Shades," 183.

28. As Menzer notes, the revivalist repertory of the Admiral's Men may be the result of Alleyn's return to the stage and his reluctance to embrace new parts or merely the product of significant stakeholders in the company experiencing collective nostalgia. Whilst these factors were not obviously of concern to Oxford's Men, their decision to mount a *Tamburlaine*-esque "Scanderbeg" play might be seen as a direct response to the Admiral's strategy.

plays from the late 1580s through to the late 1590s, including Robert Greene's *The Comical History of Alphonsus, King of Aragon* and *The Historie of Orlando Furioso*; George Peele's "Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek"; Thomas Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda*; and the anonymous "Mahomet" and *Selimus*.²⁹ In featuring a Christian hero negotiating his fate in relation to Eastern rulers, the play may also have echoes of Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar* and the anonymous *Famous Historye of the Life and Death of Captain Thomas Stukeley* (both Admiral's plays), and Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West*, which was probably written before 1604 and played by Worcester's Men.³⁰ This latter play may have been particularly relevant if it were composed early enough before 1604 to be contemporary with "Scanderbeg," given that Oxford's and Worcester's Men united in 1601, with Heywood as the amalgamated company's principal playwright.³¹ If Heywood's play were written in time, and the "Scanderbeg" play continued in the repertory of the new company at the Boar's Head, these two tales of Turkish resistance by Christian heroes could have been presented as complementary offerings within the repertory of one company.

Oxford's production of "Scanderbeg" in 1600–1601 should not be seen as a belated aberration, but as a calculated response to (or stimulus for) offerings by rival companies, especially the Chamberlain's Men. As Knutson notes of the anonymous "The Tartarian Cripple" (1600), perhaps staged by the Chamberlain's Men, the title appears to refer to Timur the Lame, better known as Tamburlaine. Recognizing the obvious problem of Tamburlaine's never having been emperor of Constantinople, Knutson finds enough suggestions in Richard Knolles's *The Generall Historie of the Turks* (1603) to tentatively propose that this lost play dealt with

29. Beyond the commercial theater, the vogue was followed by a number of Latin and closet plays, for example, George Salterne, *Tomumbeius sive Sultanici in Aegypto Inperii Eversio*, Rawlinson Poetry MS 75, Bodleian Library; Anon., *Solymanndae Tragoedia*, Lansdowne MS 723, British Library, ff. 43–63; and the anonymous *A Stately Tragedy Containing the Ambitious Life and Death of the Great Cham*, MS X.d.259, Folger Shakespeare Library.

30. On the Elizabethan dating, see Robert K. Turner Jr., introduction to *The Fair Maid of the West, Parts I and II*, by Thomas Heywood (London: Edward Arnold, 1968), xi–xiii. On the possibility that *The Battle of Alcazar* was revived in the late 1590s, see Roslyn L. Knutson, "Tartarian Cripple, The (Emperor of Constantinople)," *Lost Plays Database*, accessed January 26, 2012, [http://www.lostplays.org/index.php/Tartarian_Cripple,The_\(Emperor_of_Constantinople\)](http://www.lostplays.org/index.php/Tartarian_Cripple,The_(Emperor_of_Constantinople)).

31. Berry, *Boar's Head*, 51. On the popularity of the "Turk motif" in 1590s drama in particular, see Hutchings, "The 'Turk Phenomenon.'"

"recreations rather than combat," focusing on an interlude in which Tamburlaine was shown the sights of Constantinople by the Greek emperor.³² This lost play would have been particularly significant as a commercial competitor, not only in terms of proximity of date to the "Scanderbeg" play, but in terms of featuring a protagonist who safeguarded Constantinople from the Turks.

As a Christian leader, Scanderbeg may also have been perceived as an alternative to Shakespeare's 1599–1600 dramatization of Henry V in the London theaters. Hillman, noting a striking parallel between Shakespeare's Agincourt and the battle fought by Scanderbeg's men at Lower Dibra, suggests that the two leaders differed importantly in their exercising of virtue, with the latter seeming more savage Turk than noble Christian by turning his troops loose "to ravage the enemy's country with fire and sword, plundering indiscriminately and sparing only women and children" (175). Because Shakespeare's play was drawn in part from shared historical source material, it may be tempting to view *Henry V* as an instructive comparison by which to imagine the contents of the lost "Scanderbeg" play. However, the image of Scanderbeg described by Hillman does not sit comfortably with any of the positive allusions in subsequent drama and poetry of the seventeenth century. Even writers who use Scanderbeg's name as shorthand for "someone daring and roguish" or "a rascal" fail to make any mention of immorality and ruthlessness.³³ It is tempting, however, to imagine that if the lost play featured the offer of an unwieldable sword given to Mahomet, Scanderbeg's "gift" might have evoked the tennis balls of *Henry V*.

The possible legacy of the "Scanderbeg" play in terms of its influence on subsequent drama might be discernible in another lost title, "The Capture of Stuhlweissenburg" (1602; probably Worcester's),³⁴ and even in Shakespeare's *Othello*. The diary of Frederic Gerschow, secretary to the Duke Philip Julius of Stettin-Pomerania, records that on September 13, 1602, Gerschow saw a performance of a comedy which featured the "taking of Stuhl-Weissenberg, firstly by the Turks, and thereafter back again

32. Knutson, "Tartarian Cripple."

33. *OED*, s.v. "Scanderbeg."

34. Matthew Steggle makes a convincing case for the identification of "Stuhlweissenburg" with the lost Admiral's play "Albere Galles" in his forthcoming monograph, *Digital Humanities and the Lost Drama of Early Modern England: Ten Case Studies* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, forthcoming).

by the Christians.”³⁵ Unlike the medieval Scanderbeg, this was exceptionally recent history, dramatizing events of September 20, 1601, but would nevertheless complement the “Scanderbeg” theme of “heroic opposition” to the Turkish threat.³⁶ E. A. J. Honigmann suggests that Shakespeare may have dramatized Othello’s story in 1601–2 as a deliberate response to the Oxford’s Men play, noting that “Scanderbeg, a renegade Christian, led Turkish armies against Christians, and *Othello* could have been written as a counter-attraction, with a Moor starring as a Christian general against the Turks.”³⁷ The analogy is imperfect, though, since Scanderbeg’s *defection* from the Turkish armies and his coup on *behalf* of the Christians is the more usual point of remembrance.

Some pejorative Scanderbeg allusions that characterize him as a braggart or a rogue occur prior to the lost play date of 1601. Stephano, in Ben Jonson’s *Every Man in His Humour* (1598), learns he has missed the serving man who delivered a letter to his uncle and curses: “Whoreson scanderbag rogue!”³⁸ An allusion in Thomas Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* (performed January 1, 1600) reinforces this popular reputation. Firk tells Margery “we have been bargaining with Skellum-Skanderbag-can-you-Dutch-spreken for a ship of silk cypress, laden with sugar candy.”³⁹

35. Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, 2:367.

36. See *The English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare: Translated from “Geschichte des neueren Dramas” of Wilhelm Creizenach*, trans. Cécile Hugon (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1916), 193.

37. E. A. J. Honigmann, “The First Quarto of *Hamlet* and the Date of *Othello*,” *Review of English Studies*, n.s., 44.174 (1993): 211–19, 217.

38. Ben Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour* (*Q*), ed. David Bevington, in vol. 1 of *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), 1.2.20; the equivalent line in the 1616 folio is 1.2.180. Bevington’s gloss on this line suggests that Scanderbeg “had taken on a popular reputation for bluster and rascally dealings” (*Q*, 1.2.20n). The 1601 quarto of *Every Man in His Humour* is widely regarded as the authority for the original performed version of Jonson’s play, dated 1598, that is, before the Oxford Men’s play.

39. Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, ed. R. L. Smallwood and Stanley Wells (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1979), 7.105–7. Smallwood and Wells gloss the name as “simply derisory,” noting that “*Skellum* was a word for a rogue” (123). The roguish connotations of the Scanderbeg name persisted throughout the seventeenth century; in Dryden’s *Sir Martin Mar-All* (1668), Mr. Moody, the swashbuckler, thrice uses it as a pejorative epithet: “what a damn’d Scander-bag-Rogue art thou to talk at this rate!”; “Hold your tongue you Scanderbag Rogue you”; and “O Scanderbag Villains!” See John Dryden, *Sr Martin Mar-all; or, The Feign’d Innocence: A Comedy* (London: Printed for H. Herringman, 1668), 35/F2, 62/[I3v], 68/K2v. William Cavendish made similar use of Scanderbeg’s name in *The Triumphant Widow; or, The Medley of Humours* (London: Printed by J. M. for H. Herringman, 1677), when James says to Margery, “Oh you

Such disparaging references did not completely overwrite the more respectful invocations of Scanderbeg's valor. For example, Lewis Machin and Gervase Markham's *The Dumble Knight* (1608) includes a Duke of Epire who "sprung from the line, of famous *Scanderbag*," and in a passage of Edmund Prestwich's *The Hectors* (1656), which includes metatheatrical allusions to the "Germane Clockwork at *Bartholomew Fair*" and "Fryer *Bacons* head," Mrs. Lovewitt declares that the gentleman La-gull "hath got more honour and repute then e're *Montross*, the *Sweden King* or *Scanderbag*."⁴⁰ Oaths are sworn on Scanderbeg's name in D'Urfey's *A Fond Husband* (1677) and Thomas Shadwell's *The Woman Captain* (1680),⁴¹ and several references in the 1670s and 1680s retain an emphasis on Scanderbeg's bravery in battle.⁴²

Finally, there is one plausible allusion to the lost "Scanderbeg" play, preserved in Dekker's *Satiromastix* (1601), a highly meta-theatrical satire written in hasty response to Jonson's *Poetaster* (1601). Tucca says to Sir Adam Prickshaft, "Nay, whir, nimble *Prickshaft*; whir, away, I goe vpon life and death, away, flie *Scanderbag* flie," which seems to allude to his defection from the

Lolpot, you *Scanderbag*, you *Slolop*" (64/[I4v]). The allusions function similarly in Thomas Otway's references to "the *Scanderbeg-Monkey*" (2/B1v) and "*Scanderbeg Varlet*" (41/G1) in *The Atheist* (London: Printed for R. Bentley and J. Tonson, 1684).

40. Lewis Machin and Gervase Markham, *The Dumble Knight: A Historicall Comedy* (London: Printed by Nicholas Okes for Iohn Bache, 1608), B1; Edmund Prestwich, *The Hectors; or, The False Challenge* (London: Printed for G. Bedel and T. Collins, 1656), 11/C2–12/C2v.

41. Thomas D'Urfey, *A Fond Husband; or, The Plotting Sisters* (London: Printed by T. N. for James Magnes and Rich. Bentley, 1677), 54/[H3v]; Thomas Shadwell, *The Woman-Captain* (London: Printed for Samuel Carr, 1680), 24/[D4v].

42. In Thomas St. Serfe's *Tarugo's Wiles; or, The Coffee-House* (London: Printed for Henry Herringman, 1668), the braggart function is attributed to the speaker (Alberto) rather than to Scanderbeg (whose leadership is used as the benchmark for best practice):

1. Serv[ant]. What think you of Scanderberg?

Alb[erto]. Well enough for sudden Stratagems, and leading of small Party's; but nothing like me for the conduct of such a mighty bus'ness as this which *Don Patricio* has intrusted me with. (13/[C3])

Thomas Duffet's Beantossor refers to people fighting "as if they were all *Scanderbegs*" (*The Mock-Tempest; or, The Enchanted Castle* [London: Printed for William Cademan, 1675], 9/C1), and D'Urfey's Cocklebrain tells Grub, "Bravely fought, i'faith, why, Uncle, you beat the Madman too, you fought like *Scanderbeg*, you are not hurt, I hope—" (*A Fool's Preferment; or, The Three Dukes of Dunstable* [London: Printed for Jos. Knight and Fra. Saunders, 1688], 19/D2). Belfond Senior in Shadwell's *The Squire of Alsatia* describes his captain as "a very *Scanderberg* incarnate" on account of his valiant nature ([London: Printed for James Knapton, 1688], 4/B2v).

Turks.⁴³ Not only is Tucca particularly prone to making allusions to other plays, but *Satiromastix* is also of an appropriate date to have plausibly incorporated allusions to the stage “Scanderbeg.”⁴⁴ It would hardly be surprising if religious apostasy and escape from the Turks and Islam were prominent features of the lost play.

An awareness of the rich history behind “Scanderbeg” improves our picture of Marlowe’s continuing influence into the seventeenth century. The only historical record by which to evaluate the success of the lost play is the Stationers’ Register entry, which at least confirms the desire of Oxford’s company to retain ownership of the text in 1601. Yet the evidence demonstrates that the Scanderbeg figure captured the imaginations of the early moderns and continued to be evoked in the drama, poetry, and prose of the entire seventeenth century, often in a way that implies assumed knowledge of him. For this reason, the playwright(s) who produced the “Scanderbeg” drama towards the end of Elizabeth’s reign displayed considerable business acumen in choosing a popular subject matter which would appeal to their audiences.⁴⁵ At a time when Marlowe’s own company, the Admiral’s, were turning once again to Marlovian-influenced offerings, so too, it seems, were their competition: in this case, Oxford’s Players.⁴⁶

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43. Thomas Dekker, *Satiromastix; or, The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet*, in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers (1953; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970), 1:4.2.23–24.

44. In her *Lost Plays Database* entry for “The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek,” Knutson suggests that one of Tucca’s allusions might be to Hiren from that lost play. See Knutson, “Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek, The,” *Lost Plays Database*, accessed January 26, 2012, http://lostplays.org/index.php/Turkish_Mahomet_and_Hiren_the_Fair_Greek_The. On the dating of *Satiromastix* and its relationship to Jonson’s *Poetaster*, see Ian Donaldson, *Ben Jonson: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011), 17–18.

45. In 1599, Philip Henslowe may have held similar expectations of public success when he paid Dekker £6 for *The Pleasant Comedie of Old Fortunatus* (Admiral’s, 1599), which included a Cypriot taking advantage of an Egyptian Sultan; however, that play was immediately altered and amended for Court, and its subsequent stage history (like that of “Scanderbeg”) is uncertain.

46. A version of this paper was presented at the “Marlowe and Medievalism” panel at the 2012 Modern Language Association convention in Seattle. The author thanks Roslyn L. Knutson, M. L. Stapleton, and the anonymous readers from *MS:A* for their generous advice on earlier drafts of this essay, and members of the Marlowe Society of America (especially Kirk Melnikoff, Paul Menzer, and Lucy Munro) for their continuing support.

Appendix: Chronological List of English Scanderbeg Accounts Available before 1600

Geuffroy, Antoine. *The Order of the Greate Turckes Courte*. Translated by Richard Grafton. 1542. Geuffroy’s text is one of the earliest redactions of the Scanderbeg legend, but is very brief (see sigs. g.5–[g.7].vii).

Giovio, Paolo. *Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles*. Translated by Peter Ashton. 1546. The account of Scanderbeg in Ashton’s translation is more substantial than Geuffroy’s.

Anon. [Norton, Thomas?]. *Orations, of Arsanes agaynst Philip the trecherous kyng of Macedone*. London, 1560. In a thoughtful consideration of Shakespeare’s use of Scanderbeg material in the *Henriad*, Hillman identifies this slim volume not noticed by Chew in his otherwise comprehensive study, noting that a prominent theme is “the depravity of Scanderbeg’s infamous antagonist, Mehmed II, whose crimes notably included the murder of his brother upon succeeding his father, Murad II” (166). The *Orations* also records, *inter alia*, that Alphonsus, King of Aragon (the subject of Greene’s drama of around 1588) was an “old friend” of Scanderbeg (L3v).

[Cambini, Andrea]. *Two Very Notable Commentaries; The One of the Originall of the Turcks and Empire of the House of Ottomanno, written by Andrewe Cambine and thother of the warres of the Turcke against George Scanderbeg*. Translated by John Shute. London, 1562. Hillman notes that aside from the usual details explaining the etymology of Scanderbeg’s name and his virtues as a warrior in the *Two Very Notable Commentaries*, “Scanderbeg’s mercy to prisoners is stressed” and “he is credited with striking fear into the Turks much as Henry [V of England] terrifies the French” (Hillman, 171). Unlike the atheist Tamburlaine, Scanderbeg’s unlikely victories are attributed to his (prudently concealed) Christianity. This work was proposed by John Bakeless as a possible source for the siege of Damascus incident in *Tamburlaine*.⁴⁷

47. Bakeless, *Tragicall History*, 1:218.

Curione, Celio Augustino. *A Notable Historie of the Saracens. Briefly and Faithfully Describing the Originall Beginning, Continuance and Successes Aswell of the Saracens, as Also of Turkes, Souldans, Mamalukes, Assassines, Tartarians and Sophians*. . . . London, 1575. This text contains a brief account of Scanderbeg's valiant nature and military prowess, observing that "being prouoked, he neuer denied to fight," and adding the further details of Scanderbeg having been wounded but once, with an arrow, and his having slain over two thousand Turks with such force "that many of them he clefte a sunder from the head to the middle" (132–33/sigs. Nn2r–v).

Lavardin, Jacques de. *The Historie of George Castriot, Surnamed Scanderbeg, King of Albanie*. Translated by Z. I. Gentleman. London, 1596. The Lavardin text has been proposed as the likeliest source for the "Scanderbeg" play by critics including Chew and Franklin B. Williams Jr.⁴⁸ It appears to be the source of the legendary story of Scanderbeg's sword needing Scanderbeg's arm to wield it. This work is identified by W. L. Rushton and Hillman as a probable source used by Shakespeare.

48. See Chew, 478; Franklin B. Williams Jr. "Spenser, Shakespeare, and Zachary Jones," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 19.3 (1968): 205–12, 209.

MEG F. PEARSON

“Raving, Impatient, Desperate, and Mad”:
Tamburlaine’s Spectacular Collapse

The second part of *Tamburlaine the Great*, often read as the inferior sequel, continues Christopher Marlowe’s visual meditation on how meaningful shows can be used to build an empire while illustrating dramatically how those same shows can destabilize the same. The play offers a sobering conclusion regarding the sustainability of spectacularity, a vital component of the theater and the Tudor world outside. Spectacle cannot be routinized. Unlike the shows in part 1, which were reflections of Tamburlaine’s own glory, effective even without his presence, part 2 reveals a need for a heightened level of spectacle in order to persuade or even retain audience interest. Yet the greater and grander his performances become, the more the play’s onstage audiences rebel. Roy Battenhouse famously described the excess of part 2 as both “excessively violent” and “patent insanity,”¹ but he also might have noted the diminishing returns for the Scythian’s efforts. The number of scenes requiring substantial scenery and properties in part 2—the play’s directions for nine trains is telling—reveal that now Tamburlaine requires all sorts of peripheral material in order to communicate.² Far from an example of Marlowe’s incompetence, part 2 illustrates the degeneration of a masterful showman. What was once a spectacular seduction is now a ham-fisted onslaught.

The play’s suggestion that persuasive shows not only can but shall fail has particular relevance both within the theater and

1. Roy W. Battenhouse, *Marlowe’s “Tamburlaine”: A Study in Renaissance Moral Philosophy* (Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 1941), 4.

2. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995). All subsequent references to *Tamburlaine the Great*, *Parts 1 and 2* are from this edition.

without. Obviously a theater company relies for its existence upon the sustainable effects of words and shows. Mephistopheles must frighten each appearance, Edward II must die horrifically every time, and Tamburlaine must have working words and pathetic visual persuasions to conquer all comers. Marlowe the professional playwright indicates his awareness of this dynamic with meta-theatrical comments throughout his plays about audiences and watching.³ More exigent, however, are the stakes for the shows outside the theater. Didactic displays in Marlowe's England ranged from portraits to progresses to executions to advertisements, each of which worked vigorously to persuade viewers of a particular argument or position.⁴ Shifting audiences and changing aesthetics could spell disaster for Edward Alleyn or Elizabeth I. Tamburlaine's problems may be England's. Unwilling audiences undermine imperial agendas.

Part 2 offers up a different world and new concerns. Tamburlaine's enemies are more concerned with politics, treaties, and religion than with bodies or class. Conquest and coronation have settled down into governance and politics. The Turkish kings seek a treaty with the Europeans, there is a discussion of contractual obligations, and characters debate which prophet, Christ or Mahomet, deserves greater respect (*2Tam*, 1.1). This swerve toward political abstractions notifies the reader and audience that the rules for domination and display now move in a more subtle fashion. Scenes devoted to politicking and alliances announce how much Tamburlaine's world has altered—he is no longer the bold shepherd strutting before his golden treasury, but a busy monarch attempting to retain his position and territories. The play depicts the staging of war not as a glorious victory but as “a series of

3. See my own argument about “overwatching” in “Audience as Witness in *Edward II*,” in *Imagining the Audience in Early Modern Drama, 1558–1642*, ed. Jennifer A. Low and Nova Myhill (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 93–112, 102–3.

4. For several recent interdisciplinary approaches to early modern visual culture, readers may consult Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2009); Peter Burke, *EyeWitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion, 2001); Adam Max Cohen, *Shakespeare and Technology: Dramatizing Early Modern Technological Revolutions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Robert S. Nelson, ed., *Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000); Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse, eds., *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2000); and Caroline van Eck and Edward Winters, eds., *Dealing with the Visual: Art History, Aesthetics and Visual Culture* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005).

particular technical and labor-intensive tasks.”⁵ He can no longer maintain his kingdom with color-coded indicators of his mood, and as a result Tamburlaine’s spectacles begin to look like a series of increasingly frantic attempts to secure and sustain his supremacy.

For example, Tamburlaine’s grief by Zenocrate’s deathbed lacks the emotional and visual clarity of his shows in Part 1. In an early battle, he has only to lay out his treasures before his foes to dazzle the Persians and win new followers. (*1Tam*, 1.2.138–40). In contrast, Tamburlaine overnarrates his last moments with his wife, seemingly fearing that neither Zenocrate nor his followers will understand his grief. While Tamburlaine certainly is not known for his brevity, his speeches here sound desperate and wordy rather than working. Anguish turns to melodrama as he reaches back into his oeuvre of high astounding terms to assert his dominance, to remind all of his red armor, and to restate his need to be seen. “Behold me here, divine Zenocrate,” he begs, “Raving, impatient, desperate, and mad” (*2Tam*, 2.4.111–12). He wishes to march with the pacifist Zenocrate “under this bloody flag,” yet he pleads for her agreement with a pathetic request for pity: “if thou pitiest Tamburlaine the Great” (*2Tam*, 2.4.116, 117). Great men rarely ask for such sympathy to persuade, and yet our hero seems compelled to deploy both the grieving husband and the conquering hero in order to be heard.

Although Tamburlaine could previously rely on his words and his own appearance to convince his intimates, the lines he speaks to Zenocrate seem to demand physical contact. The urgency of his speech and his followers’ saddened attempts to calm him suggest that he takes up her head and directs its sightless gaze towards him once again. As Tamburlaine begs Zenocrate’s corpse to look at him, Theridamas gently says, “Ah, good my lord, be patient. She is dead, / And all this raging cannot make her live. / . . . Nothing prevails, for she is dead, my lord” (2.4.119–20, 124). Such pleas were unnecessary and unheard in part 1, when Tamburlaine’s ambition allowed him unsurpassed energy and conquering strength. Yet here his frenzy dominates, indicated by Theridamas’s description of “this raging.” In order to convert this failure and to silence his skeptical companions, the widower attempts to return to his showmanship.

5. Patricia A. Cahill, *Unto the Breach: Martial Formations, Historical Trauma, and the Early Modern Stage* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 52.

Tamburlaine manages Zenocrate's funeral in a manner that suggests not only that Death no longer "keep[s] his circuit by the slicing edge" of his sword, but that the conqueror now requires assistance in managing his audiences (*1Tam*, 5.1.112). Act 3 shows how laborious visual persuasion has become as the stage directions calls for a piling on of things. The elaborate entrance for Zenocrate's funeral runs: "[Enter] *Tamburlaine [bearing a picture of Zenocrate] with Usumcasane, and his three sons [Calyphas, Amyras, Celebinus, bearing a memorial pillar, a funerary pennon, and a tablet]; four [Soldiers] bearing the hearse of Zenocrate, and the drums sounding a doleful march, the town burning*" (*2Tam*, 3.2 s.d.). The stage must surely stagger under the burden of this insistent representation, which also includes a memorial pillar written in Arabic, Hebrew, and Greek forbidding the rebuilding of the burned town; a streamer bearing Persian and Egyptian crests to signify Zenocrate's royal birth; a tablet covered with lists of her great qualities; the golden hearse itself; and finally, a picture of the dead queen. Although Zenocrate's affection for her consort was never in doubt, she at times remained unconvinced by his spectacular agenda throughout both plays, as when she bemoans "another bloody spectacle" when confronted with Bajazeth and Zabina's suicides (*1Tam*, 5.1.340). Now in death she is made into a silent supporter. Kent Cartwright describes Zenocrate's new role: "She is his resisting and idealized audience figure now made spectacle . . . finally and completely inside the illusion."⁶ While Zenocrate finally fits seamlessly within Tamburlaine's revisionist history, her children demand more complex persuasions.

Faced with his wife's death, Tamburlaine seeks to ensure his own fame in a manner that can outlast his physical body. The demands of empire and inheritance require a means of spectacular persuasion that do not necessitate his actual presence. Fame followed his white, red, and black trains throughout part 1, but now the conqueror must consider how to channel his persuasive shows' energy not only into a dramatic sequel but into a new generation. Part 2 demonstrates a visual form of succession anxiety as Tamburlaine struggles with how to perpetuate his potency both in spectacle and in flesh.⁷ After Zenocrate's death, Tamburlaine

6. Kent Cartwright, "Bearing Witness to *Tamburlaine*, Part I," in *Theater and Humanism: English Drama in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1999), 194–221, 220.

7. See Lisa Hopkins, "Christopher Marlowe and the Succession to the English Crown," *Yearbook of English Studies* 38.1/2 (2008): 183–98, 197.

rechristens his children as his heirs. His potency can live on forever through his three sons Calyphas, Amyras, and Celebinus, for they are both his creations and, Tamburlaine assures himself, little Tamburlaines themselves.

In order for the sons to follow their father, they must become their father. The charismatic showmanship that brings sultans to their knees cannot be crammed into a feeble body. To facilitate this cloning, Tamburlaine attempts to render his heirs legible as warlike leaders to their subjects. He argues that his children, to be “worthy sons of Tamburlaine the Great,” must have hair “like the quills of porcupines, / As black as jet, and hard as iron or steel,” and bodies which serve only to contain Tamburlaine’s own “flesh, divided in your precious shapes” (*2Tam*, 3.2.90, 1.3.20, 5.3.170). Like the spectacles which keep slipping out of his grasp, however, the sons cannot all be directed so easily. He regales them with tales from his military life, summoning their allegiance with stories of marching with armor, sleeping outside, besieging a town, constructing base camps, and slaughtering enemies (3.2.53–92). Ironically, Tamburlaine himself has likely not been besieging much in recent years, so his persuasions for a bold future are heavily infused with his own nostalgia. He assumes that his stories will leave his sons awestruck and eager to enlist like those who were won with his working words. It falls to Calyphas, who cannot or will not see his father as an awesome hero, to expose his father’s fallibility. This filial skepticism, like his wife’s unwilling blindness, goads Tamburlaine to new feats of spectacularity.

Anything but dazzled by descriptions of military might and conquest or moved by his father’s pathos-laden language of homo-social adventure, Tamburlaine’s son sees through the promises of glory to the real hardships and sacrifices required for his father’s plan. After listening to Tamburlaine’s recitation of what manly feats the family will undertake, Calyphas responds aloud while his brothers remain appropriately dumbstruck: “My lord, but this is dangerous to be done. / We may be slain or wounded ere we learn” (3.2.93–94). Calyphas does not find the rewards of women and wealth alluring, nor is he captivated by the romance of struggle and victory. His sense of self-preservation overpowers the promise of glory and conquest. Such antitheatricalism must be stamped out, lest it threaten Tamburlaine’s agenda. Calyphas tries to reason with his father, but his independent contrarianism subverts the Tamburlainean spectacular imperative.

Calyphas offers the first of several negative responses to Tamburlaine’s ideology of spectacles in a critical commentary

which encourages skepticism onstage and sows doubt in the larger audience below. As the bold prologue to part 1 instructed, the audience may applaud his fortunes as it pleases, and Calyphas would prefer not to (*1Tam*, prologue.8). Hardly an attractive alternative to Tamburlaine, Calyphas nonetheless represents a believable spectator. Although he is more of an epicure than a conscientious objector as he lolls in his tent and plays cards during battle, Calyphas consistently articulates reasonable responses to his father's shows.⁸ He is unmoved by both Tamburlaine's working words and his splendid appearance, and he replies accordingly. Most importantly, this critical audience compels Tamburlaine to create a show even more persuasive and stunning than those before. This audience must be brought to heel.

Having failed to motivate his son with his mother's funeral or with his nostalgic description of the military life, Tamburlaine turns to his own astonishing body to persuade his sons of their place in his dynasty. To unify his audience, he offers his flesh and blood to his sons through a self-wounding. As Rick Bowers notes, this self-laceration "suggests immediate visceral representation" rather than contrived political spectacle.⁹ However, punished bodies do not always sustain their meaning. The result here mimics the Passion but lacks either spiritual or physical sustenance. Turning toward religious ritual is in keeping with the attention in part 2 to both Islam and Christianity, but this Eucharist is purely secular: He desires the continuation of his own life and appropriates a proven ceremony. As Matthew Greenfield has argued, Tamburlaine now begins to recognize the theatrical power of wounds.¹⁰ However, this particular deployment of wounds, within the symbolic register of a communion, an offering of sustenance, is revealed to be as inedible as Tamburlaine's bloody banquet of

8. Calyphas's "later, fuller statements have validity as a critical response." C. L. Barber, *Creating Elizabethan Tragedy: The Theater of Marlowe and Kyd*, ed. Richard P. Wheeler (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988), 74. Battenhouse likewise gives Calyphas great credit when he claims that he is like Alexander's philosopher Callisthenes, a voice of reason and moderation to a vainglorious conqueror who is killed for his effrontery (*Marlowe's "Tamburlaine,"* 165). Alan Shepard demurs, "Calyphas is not a particularly high-minded dissident." *Marlowe's Soldiers: Rhetorics of Masculinity in the Age of the Armada* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2002), 43.

9. Rick Bowers, "Marlowe's Knifework: Threat, Caution, and Reaction in the Theatre," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 27.1 (2009): 19–26, 23.

10. Matthew Greenfield, "Christopher Marlowe's Wound Knowledge," *PMLA* 119.2 (2004): 233–46, 239.

crowns in part 1. That earlier display, a “*second course of crowns*” (1*Tam*, 4.4.112), was also rejected at first. Theridamas withdrew from the banquet, asserting that “none save kings must feed with these,” while the loyal Techelles assured his lord that “’tis enough for us to see them” (4.4.115–16). Then, Tamburlaine was still able to convert the indigestible symbol into an endowment, one which could nourish his men from the “fount whence honour springs” (4.4.132–35). Now his ceremony produces skeptics and converts.

This sacrifice, which would mar the previously untouched surface of the warrior’s flesh, is as overnarrated as Zenocrate’s death scene, persuading its audiences of nothing so much as Tamburlaine’s conviction about the sacredness of his own body. Twenty lines of prologue attempt to set up the miracle of transubstantiation to come, as when the audience is reminded of how his bloodied horsemen “carouse within my tent” after a battle, “filling their empty veins with airy wine / That, being concocted, turns to crimson blood” (2*Tam*, 3.2.106–7). The wounded soldiers are replenished in body and spirit by their leader. We are led to understand that Tamburlaine is the concocter, heating his men and transforming the wine with the choleric fire that drives him throughout these plays. Again, however, this spectacular leader must order his audiences to look—“View me, thy father, that hath conquered kings”—and see him properly in order to conduct the ceremony (3.2.110). The consistent cries for attention suggest that his onstage audiences are not as rapt as he might prefer, and what is a miracle without witnesses?

In part 1, Tamburlaine *was* a lord: “I am a lord, for so my deeds shall prove” (1*Tam*, 1.2.34). Yet now the play suggests he only resembles his previous self. The lord has become the reflection rather than the thing itself. At stake in this decline are his persuasive ability and his capacity to inspire and lead through display. What worked before no longer functions as persuasion, only as theater. Tamburlaine can put on a good show, but the audience is left behind. Here, Calyphas is concerned about being hurt in battle, so his father wounds himself. He slices open his arm on stage—“*He cuts his arm*” (2*Tam*, 3.2.114 s.d.)—and urges his sons to probe the wound. “Now look I like a soldier,” he asserts, “and this wound / As great a grace and majesty to me / As if a chair of gold enamellèd” (3.2.115–17). The conqueror now only looks like a soldier, and his wound is couched in similarly theatrical language. Tamburlaine unwittingly asserts that he is playing a role rather than inhabiting his destiny, and his wounds serve only as

props, like the gilded throne that serves onstage to indicate majesty.

The dilution of this spectacular effectiveness is exacerbated by his mishandling of the religious ceremony he has deployed. The spectacular wound Tamburlaine presents, when seen in the context of the ceremony he evokes, does not register as warlike. He wants to look like a soldier, like a military man, but his ceremony casts him as the sacrificial victim instead. These wounds should appear persuasively masculine, like those of William Shakespeare's Coriolanus, but the spectacle that Marlowe's hero chooses defeats this association. The emotional and spiritual registers of the Passion undercut the rhetorical agenda. He seeks enthusiastic applause and increased enlistment, but the spectacle he produces encourages instead a confused blend of distaste and doubt. He urges a new baptism for his children—no longer their mother's sons, but his, washed in the blood from his self-induced stigmata—but his symbolism is muddled and unconvincing. The warrior Tamburlaine sits maternal, pelican-style, as though nursing his brood with his blood.

Because of his ambiguous spectacle and its elusive narration, Tamburlaine's bloody show succeeds only in summoning doubt. This father requires faith and unquestioning belief from the children and his audiences, but Calyphas will not or cannot be persuaded. In what Stephen Greenblatt has termed a parody of doubting Thomas, Tamburlaine must call on his children not just to look upon the wound but to feel it, too.¹¹ "Come, boys, and with your fingers search my wound" (3.2.126). Even though Amyras and Celebinus ecstatically convert during the performance and demand wounds of their own, doubting Calyphas responds to the proffered flesh and the question "what think you of a wound?" with "I know not what I should think of it. Methinks 'tis a pitiful sight" (3.2.129–31). Not only does the audience not understand the intended message, he proceeds to misinterpret the show entirely. The play's audience understands that Tamburlaine's attempt to evoke a worthy son has failed, no matter how vehemently the other sons beg for wounds of their own. Calyphas similarly appreciates that he is not interpreting the spectacle as his father would like. In simple monosyllables, he declares that he knows not what he "*should* think of it" (3.2.130, emphasis mine). He then distinguishes between what Tamburlaine wants him to

11. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983), 210.

think and what he actually feels: “*Methinks*” (3.2.130, emphasis mine). Like a clever critic, Calyphas recognizes the spectacular agenda, but then he cannot or will not submit to the show’s persuasions. He does not get Tamburlaine’s message. Calyphas is more saddened than delighted or disgusted by his father’s wounds.¹²

Faced with this recalcitrant spectator, the star reacts by attempting to eject the heckler from the theater. However, Calyphas’s words have damaged the display and its message. From this moment on, the son stands in opposition to his father’s martial life, to his father himself, as when he chooses to abstain from warfare in favor of drinking and playing cards. Tamburlaine’s murderous response to Calyphas’s disobedience is an attempt to prune away this diseased branch of his family and silence the hostile audience, but he seriously misjudges the rest of his onlookers and nearly alienates his entire train. Like a public punishment that dismays the audience and inspires pity rather than appropriate satisfaction—one might think of the crowd standing “mute” at the removal of John Stubbes’s hand in 1579¹³—Tamburlaine’s didactic display backfires.

Tamburlaine would make a visible example of his son, but his followers and viewers are left feeling more like Calyphas, not knowing what to think. The spectacular punishments that were so legible in part 1 can no longer persuade effortlessly. The times and the audiences have changed. When Tamburlaine’s soldiers return to camp after their next conflict, the more martial sons leading the Turkish kings prisoner, he lauds their bravery before dragging Calyphas from his tent. In a simple rhetorical exercise of definition by contrast, Tamburlaine describes the black sheep as a picture, a poor likeness of himself.

Image of sloth and picture of a slave,
The obloquy and scorn of my renown,

12. Carolyn Williams argues that this scene reveals Calyphas as an effeminate, for “he fails to appreciate [the wound’s] symbolic value as an index of masculine courage.” This is true, but Calyphas’s almost apologetic rereading of the wound complicates his role considerably. “‘This Effeminate Brat’: Tamburlaine’s Unmanly Son,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 9 (1997): 56–80, 59.

13. The full quotation reads, “The people round about him stood mute, whether stricken with feare at the first sight of this strange kinde of punishment, or for commiseration of the man whom they reputed honest, or out of a secret inward repining they had at this marriage, which they suspected would be dangerous for Religion.” William Camden, *Annales: The True and Royall History of the Famous Empresse Elizabeth Queene of England France and Ireland* (London: Printed for Benjamin Fisher, 1625), 3:16.

How may my heart, thus firèd with mine eyes,
 Wounded with shame and killed with discontent,
 Shroud any thought may hold my striving hands
 From martial justice on thy wretched soul? (*2Tam*, 4.1.90–95)

Tamburlaine blazons Calyphas in the same manner that Menaphon described him so many years ago. However, he sees in his son an emblem of laziness and servitude, a spot on his fame. His son tarnishes his brilliant reflection; he fails to reproduce his father's greatness. However, even as he constructs this damning blazon, Tamburlaine fails to recognize just how much the heart may be "firèd" by the eyes. He has not recognized from his failed communion that shows' meanings can often elude their creator's grasp.

That Calyphas must be punished is evident, but the audience of the execution does not interpret the penalty as Tamburlaine would like. His incessant narration again returns to the discourse of images, describing Calyphas as "A form not meet to give that subject essence / Whose matter is the flesh of 'Tamburlaine'" (4.1.110–11). The father's frustration with his son's inability to become him, to reproduce the Tamburlainean flesh properly, may be the root of the anxiety over failing spectacles that permeates part 2. Regardless, the repetition of failed spectacle and visuality-laden discourse forms a pattern. Audiences onstage and off are being taught by example that shows cannot function forever, even for the master of visual persuasion, and that audience response dictates the success of any pageant.¹⁴ Calyphas's death takes place on a stage full of witnesses because it is both a capital punishment and a public scapegoating. The black sheep must be culled from the herd as a lesson to the other brothers, and the soldiers must learn the consequences of disobedience. But the witnesses will not stand still and observe. Instead, Tamburlaine's trusted lieutenants kneel and sue for mercy for the boy: "Yet pardon him, I pray your majesty," "Let all of us entreat your highness' pardon" (4.1.97–98). Tamburlaine forces Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane to stand by, reminding them of the "argument of arms." Immediately the other two sons fall to their knees, assuring their father that

14. Richard A. Martin asserts the failure of these repetitions: "Callapine's success works against Tamburlaine; Olympia's suicide thwarts the will of Theridamas; and, most important, Tamburlaine's elegy for Zenocrate sounds a poignant note of failure in the romantic world." "Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* and the Language of Romance," *PMLA* 93.2 (1978): 248–64, 258.

Calyphas will be forced to the field hereafter if he will “let him be forgiven for once” (4.1.96–100). But compulsive spectacularity drives the show into slaughter. Effeminate Calyphas occupies the place of the Damascene virgins from the end of part 1; he is shown death on Tamburlaine’s sword.

Unlike the inner circle of advisors and family who protest the slaughter, the prisoners from camp are silent onlookers before and after the killing, struck dumb with horror and fear for themselves. When they do find their voices, the Asian kings do not accept the righteousness of Tamburlaine’s actions.¹⁵ The filicide turns from his son’s body and attempts to incorporate the murder into his terrifying reputation, saying,

And now, ye cankered curs of Asia,
That will not see the strength of Tamburlaine
Although it shine as brightly as the sun,
Now you shall feel the strength of Tamburlaine. (4.1.131–34)

He attempts to couch the execution as a display of strength, one which can be seen and felt, but the death still reads as a murder to the conquered kings.¹⁶ Although the killing and its explanation explicitly threaten both him and his companions, Orcanes labels the filicide tyrannical and cruel (4.1.137–38). Even his own prisoners reject his justice and speak openly against his spectacles. To punish their stubborn criticisms, he attempts to dehumanize the imprisoned kings by making them, too, into a property in his play. Bajazeth became Tamburlaine’s footstool, and the kings of Asia are transformed into his vehicle.

Tamburlaine’s show chariot—designed to silence and humiliate—is so fraught with negative associations of tyranny and cruelty that it actually speaks *for* the imprisoned kings. Tamburlaine may not have foreseen the kings’ furious reaction to Calyphas’s death; his idea for the chariot reads as a spontaneous reaction: “Well, bark, ye dogs. I’ll bridle all your tongues / And bind them close with bits of burnished steel / Down to the channels of your hateful throats” (4.1.177–83). Faced with another obnoxious

15. Several critics argue that Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences would have agreed with Tamburlaine’s impulse to slay his son in this scene based on contemporary parenting treatises and the rules of military behavior. See Williams, ““This Effeminate Brat,”” 56; and Nina Taunton, *1590s Drama and Militarism: Portrayals of War in Marlowe, Chapman, and Shakespeare’s “Henry V”* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001), 59.

16. Cahill argues that the play insists not only upon Tamburlaine’s brutality, but his appropriate use of violence, in accord with the early modern studies of warfare (*Unto the Breach*, 53).

audience, Tamburlaine seeks for newer and stronger displays. The visual no longer supports his needs, and so he incorporates the physical so that his audiences can “feel” his strength no matter their visual acuity. Now he enters, “drawn in his chariot by [*the kings of*] Trebizond and Soria with bits in their mouths, reins in his left hand, in his right hand a whip, with which he scourgeth them” (4.3 s.d.). The chariot draws on several competing visual traditions. First, the direction summons up the commonplace of the tyrant as a ruler whose people must be kept in chains. The emblem was legible on the stage—the Lord Admiral’s Men reused Marlowe’s prop in their production of Thomas Lodge’s *The Wounds of Ciuill War* (1594). In that play, the tyrant Sulla is drawn by Moors in a golden chariot, offering a compelling association between the conqueror and what Orcanes called his “barbarous damned tyranny” (4.1.139).¹⁷ The detailed directions for Tamburlaine’s scourging also recall his identity as the Scourge of God (*flagellum dei*) coming to punish the world. The play offers up this association several times. The frontispiece of the 1590 edition refers to Tamburlaine as such “for his tyranny, and terrour in warre,” and the play ends with the man himself declaring “For Tamburlaine, the scourge of God, must die” (5.3.248). But there is a third damning association summoned by this spectacle: the bridling of scolds by husbands who cannot control their wives.

The kings’ noisy disbelieving voices must be silenced, and so their tongues must be caged, like those of the wives who spoke too shrewishly in early modern England.¹⁸ The “scold’s bridle” in England punished wives who scolded or cursed too much, shattering the women’s teeth and ripping their tongues with a spiked bit as they were paraded through their towns as a lesson for others. Tamburlaine, it would seem, requires similar assistance in extracting obedience from his prisoners. He has found a way to bridle men, but the image suggests just as clearly that he is a weak man for needing to do so at all. Indeed, neither the chariot nor the bits work well. Tamburlaine complains that the kings “draw but

17. The lavish direction for “Scilla’s” chariot: “Enter Scilla in triumph in his chare triumphant of gold, drawn by foure Moores, before the chariot: his colours, his crest, his captaines, his prisoners: Arcathius Mithridates son, Aristion, Archelaus, bearing crownes of gold, and manacled. After the chariot, his souldiers bands, Basillus, Lucretius, Lucullus: besides prisoners of diuers Nations, and sundry disguises.” Thomas Lodge, *The Wounds of Ciuill War. Liuely set forth in the true tragedies of Marius and Scilla* (London, 1594), E1v s.d.

18. See Lynda E. Boose, “Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman’s Unruly Member,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 42.2 (1991): 179–213.

twenty miles a day" (4.3.2), while the other kings' unbridled tongues "break through the hedges of their hateful mouths / And pass their fixèd bounds exceedingly" (4.3.46–47). Even the good son Amyras tellingly warns his father, "They will talk still, my lord, if you do not bridle them" (5.1.146). The chariot works beautifully for Marlowe's play as an allusive piece of theatrical spectacle, but it fails to take Tamburlaine where he needs to go. Dehumanize or destroy them as he will, he cannot keep his audiences from becoming enemies. His spectacles no longer compel or inspire.

The rapid decline in Tamburlaine's spectacular control reaches its nadir in Babylon, the last city that refuses to yield to his white, red, and black armor. The general is no longer sad or pensive, simply perplexed. He wonders why the Governor could not be affrighted by "the view of our vermillion tents . . . no, nor I myself" (5.1.86–91). The Babylonian responds clearly, "'Tis not thy bloody tents can make me yield, / Nor yet thyself" (5.1.103–4). To this point, we have observed the failure of Tamburlaine's spectacles to move his children, his men, and his prisoners. We have not yet seen a potential military failure. Patricia Cahill has argued recently that Tamburlaine's confrontation at Babylon is best understood as "part of the play's larger preoccupation with a world governed solely by martial rationalities—that is, by rules that are as inflexible as the lines that mark the geometric forms of the hypervisual tents and walls."¹⁹ As we have seen, the play is indeed preoccupied with the rules of spectacular engagement, but Cahill does not confront the failure that results from inflexibility. When Babylon's Governor assures Tamburlaine that "my heart never did quake, or courage faint" (5.1.106), he subverts Tamburlaine's system of spectacular conquest and joins the ranks of disappointed spectators that crowd this play. Tamburlaine recognizes that he "could not persuade [Babylon] to submission" (5.1.94), but he has nothing new to offer. All that is left is for him to reach into his visual arsenal and find the most hideous display he can manage.

Having had several scenes to practice dealing with disruptive and unappreciative spectators, Tamburlaine believes he knows how to punish Babylon and its bold Governor: "Go draw him up. / Hang him in chains upon the city walls, / And let my soldiers shoot the slave to death" (5.1.106–8). The Damascene virgins were lanced and left to bleed offstage; Babylon is strung up and shot in plain view like a Saint Sebastian as Tamburlaine

19. Cahill, *Unto the Breach*, 62.

extends the range of his exhibition. The audience sees the Governor hung up in chains and watches Theridamas shoot him with arrows. We hear, too, about the excessive violence that follows: The men, women, and children are to be bound hand and foot and drowned in the lake, and all copies of the Qur'an are to be burnt. Like the town that burned for Zenocrate's rebellious death, Babylon must fall completely to compensate for Tamburlaine's failure to persuade.

The Babylon scene brings on stage all of Tamburlaine's spectacles at once, but they are shown to be meaningless, even to him. The chariot and its enraged "steeds," his soldiers and remaining sons, his armor and tents, bloodied victims, and a pyre for books all appear. Yet the effect of all this material is decidedly underwhelming. As though sensing its inadequacy, Tamburlaine begins to taunt the gods for a miracle. As his soldiers fling the "Turkish Alcoran" into a fire onstage, the general calls to Mahomet and asks him to "come down thyself and work a miracle" (5.1.186). He demands a "furious whirlwind" or divine retribution (5.1.190), but the request seems like a plea for a *real* spectacle that can truly move him and the others. When nothing appears, disappointment echoes in his quiet statement: "Well, soldiers, Mahomet remains in hell" (5.1.196). No god has been watching him: "He cannot hear the voice of Tamburlaine" (5.1.198).

Tamburlaine's body, previously a compelling vision in its own right, begins to deteriorate after show upon show fails to persuade its audience. His sudden physical decline and death follow hard on the heels of his failures to convert Calyphas, to bridle the kings, and to subdue Babylon. The play links his ailment—a dried-up heart—directly to his burnt out spectacularity. Soria curses Tamburlaine before being bridled:

May never spirit, vein, or artier feed
The cursèd substance of that cruel heart,
But, wanting moisture and remorseful blood,
Dry up with anger and consume with heat! (4.1.177–80)

The depleted spectacular body seems to be roasting itself with its striving. The physician warns Tamburlaine that "a substance more divine and pure, / Is almost clean extinguishèd and spent, / Which, being the cause of life, imports your death" (5.3.88–90). This diagnosis is appropriately humoral, given the trope of choler that has been associated with the Scythian's potency throughout the play. Tamburlaine's veins are full of dangerous and unnatural

heat, the overheating of a choleric man.²⁰ Although the masculine body naturally would be filled with heat and dryness, the physician argues for a surplus of manliness, a killing dose. Simultaneously, the fuel for Tamburlaine's spectacles, his charisma, the "substance more divine and pure," has been spent. As William Shakespeare's Henry IV warns his son regarding the people's seemingly insatiable desire to see their ruler, "being daily swallowed by men's eyes, / They surfeited with honey and began / To loathe the taste of sweetness."²¹ Tamburlaine has stuffed his audiences to bursting, not with honey, but with the glutinous taste of violence and patriotic show. With this feeding, the play argues, he has allowed himself to be consumed. There are limits even to personal charisma.

The end of *Tamburlaine* insists upon the inevitable failure of spectacle. The protagonist's collapse serves as an ironic warning against the very excesses that have powered him.²² In a recent collection of essays, Mathew R. Martin and James Robert Allard suggest that excessive stage business represents a kind of failure in that "spectacle must grow increasingly spectacular to the point of an almost cartoonish ridiculousness."²³ While Tamburlaine will become a "byword for bombast" in the early modern period, his Marlovian self does not veer into cartoonishness.²⁴ His violence and alluringly allusive symbolism preclude ridicule. Peter Hall, writing in his diary about his 1976 production of the play, recalled "the feeling of absolute evil that was unleashed in the auditorium" when this character was on stage.²⁵ *Tamburlaine* the play does not

20. Battenhouse argues that this final fever is "associated by Renaissance writers with the most dangerous form of choler—namely, choler adust. According to the accepted theory, all four of the humours are liable to adustation, which is caused when a humour becomes burnt through excessive heat" (*Marlowe's "Tamburlaine,"* 220).

21. William Shakespeare, *The First Part of King Henry the Fourth*, ed. Claire McEachern (New York: Penguin, 2000), 3.2.702.

22. See Clayton G. MacKenzie, "Marlowe's Grisly Monster: Death in *Tamburlaine, Parts One & Two*," *Dalhousie Review* 87.1 (2007): 9–24, 24.

23. Mathew R. Martin and James Robert Allard, eds., introduction to *Staging Pain, 1580–1800: Violence and Trauma in British Theater* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 1–12, 10. Their failed spectacles occur in Restoration and eighteenth-century drama.

24. Paul Budra and Betty A. Schellenberg, *Part Two: Reflections on the Sequel* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1998), 54.

25. Qtd. in George L. Geckle, ed., *Tamburlaine and Edward II: Text and Performance* (Atlantic Heights, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1988), 32.

miscarry. However, even successful spectacles may indicate cultural failures.

The disappointment of persuasive spectacle, Tamburlaine's only losing battle, suggests that Marlowe created a metatheatrical cautionary tale in his sequel. The second play offers one futile display after another, piling on demonstrations of how dangerous a skeptical audience can be. Such an accumulation of negative examples warns the powerful architects of political shows and playwrights alike about their reliance on stagecraft. Tudor showmanship could be seen in public performances that sought to unify their audiences as citizens, as Englishmen and women, or as Protestants, such as the guild-funded parades on Lord Mayor's Day, the allegorical extravaganzas of the Accession Day tilts, or the symbolically-fraught public executions of alleged traitors such as Roderigo Lopez. If shows such as these fail to persuade their spectators, and Marlowe suggests they can, the future ambitions of Elizabethan England may be short-lived indeed.

Dependent on replicable effects and multiple performances, both Tamburlaine and his play have to reckon with the instability of spectacle and the perilously shifting tastes of audiences and subjects alike. As Theridamas notes as they distribute their imprisoned kings' concubines to the soldiers, "It seems they meant to conquer us, my lord, / And make us jesting pageants for their trulls." Tamburlaine muses, "and now themselves shall make our pageant," but fails to recognize that the show remains the same (4.3.88–90). Dangerously for a sequel, the play seems to conclude that the most difficult audience member to please is a repeat customer, someone who has seen it all before and requires something new: an Elizabethan, in other words. Outside of the Rose Theater, these jaded consumers of visual culture, able interpreters themselves, could turn a blind eye or a cold shoulder not just to plays but to the daily shows that sustained in no small part the notion of English identity.

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“False and Fraudulent Meanes”?
Representing the Miraculous in the Works
of Christopher Marlowe

That Moyses made the Jewes to travell xl yeares in the wildernes (which
jo[*u*]rney might have bin done in lesse than one yeare) ere they came to
the promised land to th[e] intent that those who were privy to most of
his subtilties might perish and so an everlasting superstition remain in
the hartes of the people.

That Christ was a bastard and his mother dishonest.¹

The statements above are just two of the blasphemous sayings attributed to Christopher Marlowe by the government informer Richard Baines in 1593. Marlowe’s former roommate and fellow playwright Thomas Kyd added that Marlowe had claimed “that things esteemed to be don[n] by devine power might aswell been don by observation of men.”² Kyd and Baines are not the most reliable of witnesses, with Kyd writing under the threat of torture and Baines, as a paid informer, for financial profit. However, taken together these statements do form a coherent picture of a distinctive type of disbelief. What they share is skepticism about traditional biblical episodes, from the discovery of the Promised Land to the virgin birth. Behind the expressed doubts lies the implication that such so-called miracles may be the result of

1. Richard Baines, note to the Privy Council (“Baines Note”), British Library, Harley MS.6848, ff.185-6, qtd. in Park Honan, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005), 374.

2. Thomas Kyd, letter to Sir John Puckering, BL Harley MS.6849, f.218r,v, qtd. in Honan, *Christopher Marlowe*, 381.

human rather than divine machinations: that these instances of supposed heavenly intervention are nothing more than frauds perpetrated by a “Jugler” such as Moses.³

It is of course difficult to know how seriously to take such reported remarks as evidence of Marlowe’s thoughts on religion, particularly since (as Roy Kendall has demonstrated) many of Baines’s accusations bear a striking resemblance to the crimes he himself confessed to in 1583.⁴ Whether or not the statements noted by Kyd and Baines can be genuinely attributed to Marlowe, however, the concept of the false miracle is certainly important in the latter’s writing. There, it must surely owe something to the uncertainty about religious phenomena generated by decades of Reformation polemic. Indeed, the terms that Baines places in Marlowe’s mouth implicitly chart this connection, since contemporary Calvinist denunciations of false (Catholic) miracles were saturated with references to “juggling.”⁵ Through these writings, many of them endorsed by the Church of England, Marlowe and his fellow Elizabethans would have had access to a range of arguments which questioned the reliability of apparent heavenly signs. The Henrician and Edwardian proponents of religious reform had reported instances in which miracles had been feigned or fabricated by the Catholic clergy, and the later English Reformation process continued to provide the impetus for numerous stories about religious fraud.⁶ Accusations of superstition and gullibility were especially central to the later sixteenth-century polemical debates between rival confessions. Protestant writers accused Catholics of everything from perpetrating demonically-inspired frauds to being naive and foolish dupes, and Catholic polemicists responded in comparable terms.⁷ While neither

3. “Baines Note,” qtd. in Honan, *Christopher Marlowe*, 374.

4. Roy Kendall, “Richard Baines and Christopher Marlowe’s Milieu,” *English Literary Renaissance* 24.3 (1994): 507–52, especially 511–20.

5. See Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001), 4.

6. Helen L. Parish, *Monks, Miracles and Magic: Reformation Representations of the Medieval Church* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 3–4.

7. John Foxe, for instance, reported that Catholics “altogether delight in untruths, and have replenished the whole Church of Christ with fained fables, lying miracles, [and] false visions.” *Actes and Monuments* (London: John Daye, 1583), 1:6v, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:33. See also Helen Parish and William G. Naphy, introduction to *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe*, ed. Helen Parish and William G. Naphy (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002), 1–22, 19.

Protestants nor Catholics rejected the possibility that genuine miracles could occur, such propaganda may have encouraged skepticism by relentlessly drawing attention to past episodes which had been fabricated for financial or political gain.⁸ Undoubtedly, the strong emphasis both confessions placed on the vital importance and formidable difficulty of distinguishing true divine intervention from the false wonders created by the devil must inevitably have drawn the attention of some readers to the seeming prevalence of miracle-based fraud.

A skeptical alertness to false miracles was not only found in early modern religious polemic. Similar doubts had been expressed by classical authors such as Lucian of Samosata and Lucretius, who derided mankind's tendency to interpret natural phenomena as divine portents: "ignorance of the causes constrains them to submit things to the empire of the gods."⁹ Echoing Lucretius, some early modern writers emphasized the possibility that such episodes might be exploited for political ends. Niccolò Machiavelli, for instance, argued in his *Discourses* (1531) that "wise men" have used their knowledge of natural laws to forge miracles, and that "to whatever they owed their origin, sensible men made much of them."¹⁰ Machiavelli's *Discourses* were widely read in Marlowe's Cambridge, and the Elizabethan playwright may have been influenced by the Florentine theorist's skeptical view of miracles. Marlowe's contemporaries, who described Marlowe as a "Lucian" and as Machiavelli's "disciple," certainly testify to a perceived connection between his literary atheism and the Lucretian-Machiavellian model which identified religious fraud with political gain.¹¹ While this model was an important influence on Marlowe's

8. It is sometimes argued that English Protestants believed that the age of new miracles was over. However, the pervasive emphasis on divine signs and omens in a providentialist Protestant England ensured that miracle narratives still held a central place in post-Reformation English theology, as documented by Alexandra Walsham in *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999). See also Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Belief in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), 90–91, 173–78.

9. Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins, trans. H. A. J. Munro (Chicago: William Benton, 1952), 80–81.

10. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livy*, ed. Bernard Crick, trans. Leslie J. Walker (London: Penguin, 2003), 143. Marlowe's contemporary Gabriel Harvey reported in 1579 that Machiavelli was widely read at Cambridge, supplanting all other authors. *Letter-book of Gabriel Harvey, A.D. 1573–1580*, ed. Edward John Long Scott (London: Camden Society, 1884), 174.

11. Gabriel Harvey, *A New Letter of Notable Contents*. . . (London: John Wolfe, 1593),

concept of the miraculous, however, the impact of these writers can be overstated. Whereas past studies of Marlowe's skepticism have often focused on the influence of classical disbelief and Machiavelli's writings, Marlowe's literary representation of false miracles suggests that he owes an equal or greater debt to the denunciations voiced in contemporary interconfessional polemic.¹²

Current religious debates were of far more immediate and urgent importance to Elizabethan readers, writers, actors, and audiences than theoretical atheism or even Machiavelli's brand of political pragmatism. When Machiavelli, Lucretius, and Lucian mattered within most early modern printed tracts, it was as representatives of the "atheist" religious fraud practiced by the author's rivals. For instance, the Protestant theologian Richard Hooker cites Machiavelli's advice to "wrest . . . all occasions of rare events" and miracles to political ends—and even "to use, if neede be, plaine forgeries"—to condemn the "atheist" Catholic and Puritan propagandists who attacked the Elizabethan church as a "politique" institution "forged" to serve the needs of the state.¹³ Marlowe's own writings likewise associate Machiavelli with false faith within a context of interconfessional antagonism. In *The Jew of Malta*, the character Machevil remarks that "Though some speak openly against my books, / Yet will they read me, and thereby attain / To Peter's chair" (prologue.10–12).¹⁴

Marlowe's literary representation of religion, and his skepticism about miracles in particular, was extensively and significantly shaped by the virulent accusations found in early modern religious polemic. While the relationship between Marlowe's dramatization of the "miraculous" and pre-Reformation religious drama has been perceptively explored by various critics including John Parker and

accessed April 20, 2011, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99841861; D. Robert Greene, *Greenes, Groats-worth of Witte*. . . (London: Printed by J. Wolfe and J. Danter for William Wright, 1592), E4v–F1, accessed April 20, 2011, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99852791.

12. See for instance David Riggs, "Marlowe's Quarrel with God," in *Marlowe, History, and Sexuality: New Critical Essays on Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Paul Whitfield White (New York: AMS, 1998), 15–38; William M. Hamlin, *Tragedy and Scepticism in Shakespeare's England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 148–54.

13. Richard Hooker, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie*, ed. Georges Edelen, in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. W. Speed Hill, 7 vol. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1977), 2:1–500, 2:26–27, 2:16.

14. Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. N. W. Bawcutt (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1978). All subsequent references to the play are from this edition.

Ruth Lunney, the influence of post-Reformation polemic in shaping Marlowe's work has attracted less attention.¹⁵ I will bring such neglected associations to the foreground, exploring the various ways that Marlowe's fictional protagonists construct and exploit false miracles in order to advance their own secular (and often selfish) agendas, in a manner that corresponds with Elizabethan denunciations of the episodes supposedly fabricated by rival confessions. Nor was Marlowe's interest limited to the criticisms of Catholic belief which can be discerned in (for instance) *Doctor Faustus*; his representation of false portents also draws upon Protestant providentialist discourse. Marlowe's willingness to couch fraudulent miracles in Protestant as well as Catholic terms surely stems from his exposure to confessional polemic in which Catholics denounced false Protestant portents, Protestants forged Catholic signs, and accusations of "miraculous" fraud were regularly turned back upon their authors.

Marlowe's interest in false miracles is evident throughout his writing career and perhaps helped to inspire what may be one of his earliest works, *Lucans First Booke*, a partial translation of the Roman epic *De Bello Civili* (The Civil War) (61–65 C.E.).¹⁶ In choosing to translate a poem whose narrator expresses doubts about divine intervention, Marlowe gave the first hints of the skepticism which pervades his later plays. Nor did he merely reiterate Lucan's own themes in the English vernacular. Instead, Marlowe's version actually augments the challenging implications of the original epic with regard to divine omens and portents in a way that also evokes the Elizabethan context of false miracles.

Lucan's Caesar is a man who manipulates religious portents to his own advantage, and Marlowe's translation aptly conveys this quality. Yet while Caesar's ability to wrest omens such as his vision of the goddess Patria (or Rome) to his political purposes is suspect, so too are the portents themselves. Soon after the crossing of the Rubicon, a heavenly sign is noted:

15. John Parker, *The Aesthetics of Antichrist: From Christian Drama to Christopher Marlowe* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007), 1–41; Ruth Lunney, *Marlowe and the Popular Tradition: Innovation in the English Drama before 1595* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002), 1–13.

16. Although Patrick Cheney in particular had recently argued that this translation was written toward the end of Marlowe's life, its thematic and linguistic affinities with the *Tamburlaine the Great* plays support the idea that this poem was written in the mid to late 1580s, possibly being revised around 1588. See Cheney, *Marlowe's Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 7; Christopher Marlowe, *The Poems*, ed. Millar Maclure (London: Methuen, 1968), xx, xxxii, xxxiv.

Iamque dies primos belli visura tumultus
 Exoritur; seu sponte deum, seu turbidus auster
 Inpulerat, maestam tenuerunt nubila lucem.

(So the day dawned that was to witness the first turmoil of the war; but clouds veiled the mournful light, either because the gods so willed or because the stormy South wind had driven them up.)¹⁷

In this passage Lucan, describing the clouds that veiled the light as battle began, offers two possible explanations: first, that this phenomenon was willed by the gods; second, that the clouds were driven there by the stormy wind. Marlowe's interest in Lucan may have been sparked by passages such as this, in which Lucan's first suggestion indicates a form of Lucretian materialism.¹⁸ Marlowe accurately captures Lucan's skepticism about both the portent itself and divine intervention in general, rendering the statement as "whether the gods, or blustering south were cause / I know not, but the cloudy ayre did frown" (*Luc*, 236–37).¹⁹ The dismissive note of ignorance in Marlowe's version, "I know not," hints more explicitly than Lucan's balanced "either . . . or" ("*seu . . . seu*") at mockery of those who attempt to interpret natural occurrences as celestial omens.

Inspired by the religious polemic of the period, Marlowe's Elizabethan readers might even have interpreted the conflicting interpretations generated by this omen through the lens of a closely contemporary (and extremely charged) dispute over the providential significance of a "blustering" wind. After the 1588 defeat of the invading Spanish Armada, largely as a result of the bad weather that destroyed the fleet, English Protestants celebrated a storm that they interpreted as a sign of divine favor. Catholic authors argued, conversely, that "those whom god loveth . . . shall have their stormes" while the wicked "shall sayle with a calme tyde."²⁰ For Marlowe's readers, the question of

17. Lucan, *The Civil War*, trans. and ed. J. D. Duff (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1928), 20–21.

18. Lucretius, *Nature of Things*, 80.

19. *Lucans First Booke*, in *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Roma Gill (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 1:85–111. All subsequent references to *Lucan* are from this edition.

20. See Robert Southwell, *An Epistle of Comfort* (London: John Charlewood, 1587), B6v, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99846489. Commemorative medals struck to celebrate the English victory emphasized God's participation, bearing mottos

whether the “cloudy ayre” and gales of 1588 had been sent by God or whether they were a natural phenomenon was central to the Catholic-Protestant contest for interpretative authority, and it is intriguing to find a miraculous episode with such potential contemporary relevance within the poem Marlowe chose to translate around this period. Indeed, Marlowe’s version even seems to advertise a possible connection between the suspect portents of *Lucans First Booke* and early modern confessional debate, since he translates Lucan’s “exiguum dominos commisit asylum” with the inaccurate and anachronistic statement that “one poore church set them at oddes” (*Luc*, 97).²¹ In a context of religious civil war only too reminiscent of England’s post-Reformation experience, Lucan’s skeptical exposé of the way Caesar and his enemies seek to appropriate suspect “miracles” might become distinctly provocative—particularly as translated by Marlowe into the English vernacular.

With Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine the Great* plays, the manipulation of portents and providentialist discourse in pursuit of political power becomes a more overt and sustained element of the narrative. Also written around the time of the 1588 Spanish Armada, Marlowe’s two plays reflect Lucan’s poetic representation of invasion and military conquest. Tamburlaine’s pursuit of monarchical power is complemented by the comparison he draws between his army and “Julius Caesar’s host.” He adds that “nor in Pharsalia was there such hot war / As these my followers willingly would have” (*1Tam*, 3.3.152–55).²² Marlowe’s superhuman, endlessly restless Tamburlaine surely owes much to Lucan’s “restles,” unstoppable Caesar. While the latter’s energy is emphasized by his metaphorical alignment with the thunderstorm (*Luc*, 152–58), Marlowe’s Tamburlaine fires “bullets like Jove’s dreadful thunderbolts” (*1Tam*, 2.3.19). And, where Caesar seeks to cast himself as the heaven-sent savior of Patria-Rome, Tamburlaine claims to act as the “scourge” of his God (also referred to as Jove), an identity he establishes by appropriating and occasionally fabricating “miraculous” signs of divine favor.

such as the popular “Flevit Deus et inimici dissiparunt.” See Wallace T. MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I* (London: Edward Arnold, 1993), 241.

21. Compare Marlowe’s with Duff’s translation of this line: “The narrow bounds of the Asylum pitted its owners one against the other.” Lucan, *Civil War*, ed. Duff, 96–97.

22. Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great*, ed. J. S. Cunningham (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1981). All subsequent references to *1* and *2 Tamburlaine* are from this edition.

Tamburlaine's assumption that miracles might be used to advance the standing of the ruler or the regime could be readily related to sixteenth-century English politics. Under Elizabeth I the verbal and visual images of Catholic saints "were not expunged from the religious lexicon, but appropriated" and redeployed in the service of the English Reformation, and the Virgin Queen augmented her royal iconography with imagery previously associated with the cult of the Virgin Mary.²³ The inherited language of Catholic ritual here merged with an emerging discourse of Protestant providentialism, which characterized Elizabeth as a ruler appointed by God's grace to protect England against the encroachments of a papal Antichrist. This attitude is epitomized by John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (1563), the founding text of English Protestant providentialism that recounts the Princess Elizabeth's "myraculous" deliverance during Mary I's reign to argue that England's new queen has the "favour" of a Protestant God who "stretched out his mighty protection, and preserved her highnesse, and placed her in this Princely seate of rest and quietnesse."²⁴

Foxe's account of Elizabeth's "myraculous" preservation is particularly intriguing in relation to Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays, in which the title protagonist makes a comparable boast that "Jove himself will stretch his hand from heaven / To ward the blow and shield me safe from harm" (*1Tam*, 1.2.179–88). The possible linguistic echo is especially suggestive since Foxe's *Actes* was apparently one of Marlowe's main sources in writing *Tamburlaine*, with Foxe's account of the siege of Constantinople and Bajazeth's defeat closely anticipating Marlowe's dramatic version.²⁵ The potential comparison is provocative, however, because in Marlowe's plays *Tamburlaine* uses such miraculous evidence of divine favor to vindicate his seditious military assaults against hereditary rulers such as Mycetes.

23. See Parish, *Monks, Miracles and Magic*, 160; Helen Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), 3–10; Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry*, 2nd ed. (London: Pimlico, 1999), 16.

24. John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (London: John Daye, 1583), 2:5A3v, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:35.

25. See William J. Brown, "Marlowe's Debasement of Bajazet: Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* and *Tamburlaine, Part I*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 24.1 (1971): 38–48. However, Brown's assumption that Marlowe thereby endorses Foxe's providential agenda is more problematic, given *Tamburlaine*'s own skeptical fabrication of heavenly signs.

Astrological portents and divine omens are central to Tamburlaine's self-presentation as Mycetes's rival. At the beginning of *1 Tamburlaine*, the Scythian conqueror is introduced as a "thief" who "robs . . . merchants" and "with his lawless train / Daily commits incivil outrages" (1.1.36–40). While Meander's term "train" presumably indicates a military entourage, the term also suggests celestial phenomena and royal ambition. In early modern England, a "train" might denote the tail of a comet or the ceremonial retinue of a royal personage.²⁶ These two meanings are potentially complementary in Marlowe's play, given Meander's earlier discussion of the astrological implications of kingship (1.1.12–15) and the providential significance of comets as precursors of great events. Subsequently, Tamburlaine claims that his victories in Africa were foreshadowed by "a meteor that might terrify the earth" (5.1.462). In the play's opening scene, however, Meander mocks such portents as he claims that Tamburlaine has been "misled by dreaming prophecies" to think he will become "the monarch of the East" (1.1.41, 43). Although the accuracy of these predictions will ultimately be vindicated, Tamburlaine achieves his position as Turkish emperor in a way that simultaneously challenges providential truth. For as Tamburlaine rises to power, the audience witnesses him consciously refashioning miracle narratives with a skill at odds with Meander's image of a naive, "dreaming" rebel. Indeed, after *Tamburlaine's* subsequent performances of feigned religious conviction, Marlowe's audiences may even be left wondering whether the Scythian rebel had consciously promoted the prophecies to justify his "lawless" and "incivil" behavior.

Tamburlaine's appropriation of celestial portents proceeds apace in part 1. By the second scene Marlowe's protagonist has recast himself as a semidivine hero, with the previously-mocked predictions cited by Tamburlaine to glorify the victories which "gracious stars have promised at my birth" (1.2.92). Tamburlaine's astrological references complement his manipulation of divine imagery. In the first scene, Mycetes's inadequacy as a ruler is expressed through reference to his horoscope: When Mycetes was born, his brother Cosroe reports, "Cynthia with Saturn joined, / And Jove, the Sun, and Mercury denied / To shed their influence

26. *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online, s.v. "train," *n.* 1, II.5.c, III.9.a, 9.b, 9.c, accessed January 18, 2012, <http://oed.com>. Although the OED dates the first usage of the word to signify the tail of a comet to 1602, it is plausible that such a meaning was available a few years earlier.

in his fickle brain!" (1.1.13–15). Potentially, as Lisa Hopkins has noted, the astrological allusion aligns Elizabeth's iconographical persona Cynthia with the deposed ruler Saturn and the soon-to-be-deposed Mycetes.²⁷ Tamburlaine, however, adapts the same classical motif as a means of asserting his superiority over these hereditary kings. Disdaining "to borrow light of Cynthia," Tamburlaine claims to supersede her as the "chiefest lamp" (4.2.35–36) and to rival Mercury in eloquence (1.2.210).

Tamburlaine's grandiloquent remastering of his opponents' divine-right rhetoric—he seeks to surpass not only his human enemies but the very gods they draw authority from—draws its strength from his claim to act in Jove's name. The advantages which Jove's partiality confer upon Tamburlaine's campaigns are specifically explored in the language of the miraculous, as Tamburlaine engages in an almost compulsive reconstruction of Jove's "miracles." Firstly, there is the seduction of Zenocrate, "lovelier than the love of Jove" (1.2.87). Zenocrate later likens herself to Juno, "sister [and wife] to the highest god" (3.2.54). This seduction is linked to Tamburlaine's pseudo-miraculous transformation from lowly thief to mighty warrior, as he casts aside the shepherd's "weeds that I disdain to wear" (1.2.41). The transformation in the second scene of the play aligns him with Jove, who "sometimes maskèd in a shepherd's weed" (1.2.198), and also recalls Jove's metamorphoses in the course of his amorous adventures. "And by those steps that he hath scaled the heavens," Tamburlaine continues, "may we become immortal like the gods" (1.2.199–200). Here miraculous events and secular ambitions collide, as the model of Jove's divine conquest is used to support Tamburlaine's claim that "we will reign as consuls of the earth" (1.2.196). Indeed, references to Jove's support for Tamburlaine's enterprise, and for Tamburlaine personally, are scattered throughout the scene. Tamburlaine even claims that Jove himself will intervene in the battle with the Persians (1.2.177–80), pointing to the "golden wedges" (1.2.139) won by his army as proof of divine favor: "See how he [Jove] rains down heaps of gold in showers / As if he meant to give my soldiers pay" (1.2.181–82).

Tamburlaine's pseudo-miraculous show here recalls the shower of gold with which Jove seduced Danae, mother of the classical hero Perseus. Analogically, Tamburlaine could be identified with either Jove's beloved or Jove's son—or even (since he is in reality

27. See Lisa Hopkins, *Christopher Marlowe: A Literary Life* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 108–9.

the one showering gold to “seduce” Theridamas) with Jove himself.²⁸ The play-text itself skeptically qualifies the providential interpretation, however; the “heaps of gold” invoked by Tamburlaine are the literal “golden wedges” won by his army, which have been laid out “that their reflections may amaze the Persians” (1.2.140). Tamburlaine, in fact, is shown deliberately crafting the supposed “miracle” as a rhetorical trick which will convince Theridamas to “prove a traitor” to his king (1.2.225). Tamburlaine’s “miracle” also reconfigures Meander’s condemnation of his “lawless” and “incivil” (1.1.39–40) behavior, since it is the spoils of previous robberies that constitute Tamburlaine’s “heavenly” spectacle. It is by refashioning those actions which the Persian lords have attacked into evidence of divine favor that Tamburlaine is able to present himself as Jove’s favorite, a worthy rival to King Mycetes. Marlowe’s protagonist exploits supposedly divine episodes and religious rhetoric to further his secular ambitions at a time when Elizabeth I’s enemies similarly accused her of manipulating false spiritual discourse for her own ends.

Marlowe’s skepticism about divine intervention, especially in the form of miracles and portents, is equally apparent in *2 Tamburlaine*. In this play, as in *Lucans First Booke*, the audience witnesses a sustained struggle for interpretative authority between Tamburlaine and his enemies. Yet the truth of the miracles that they compete to claim is itself suspect, undercut by a strand of Lucretian materialism which simultaneously calls into question the providentialist tendencies of Elizabethan religious polemic. Skepticism about the appropriation of miraculous discourse is a particularly strong presence toward the end of the play, as Callapine attacks, the Koran burns, and Tamburlaine, at last, must die.

Tamburlaine’s main rival for control of the play’s providential discourse is the Turkish prince Callapine. If Tamburlaine’s earlier claims to be a scourge of God are accepted, the conventional expectation is that he should be scourged in his turn. As Thomas Fortescue remarks, in a text that may have been one of Marlowe’s sources, “*for the moste parte, cruel Kings and bloody tirants are the*

28. In the 1993 Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) production of *Tamburlaine*, this episode became a genuinely miraculous moment. While Antony Sher’s Tamburlaine described the “heaps of gold” sent by Jove, drapes covered with golden coins were lowered from above to the accompaniment of solemn monastic chanting, in an awe-inspiring demonstration of divine favor. RSC, *Tamburlaine*, directed by Terry Hands, performed September 1, 1992, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, VHS, RSC Archives, TAB199209, Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Ministers of God, and . . . not withstanding they continually end in state moste wretched."²⁹ At first glance, Callapine seems likely to fulfill these expectations. Fighting to avenge his father Bajazeth's death, he actively seeks to reappropriate the scourge rhetoric claimed by Tamburlaine. Characterizing his escape from the latter as evidence of heaven's benevolent interest, he promises his fellow kings "That Jove, surcharged with pity of our wrongs, / Will pour it down in showers on our heads, / Scourging the pride of cursèd Tamburlaine" (2*Tam*, 3.1.36–38). Through its terminology of scourging and Jove's showers, this promise rewrites 1 *Tamburlaine*'s spectacle of the gold showered by Jove upon his favorite and represents a direct challenge to the Scythian's earlier miraculous claims.

Callapine's boasting proves premature, as his first army is defeated by Tamburlaine and his allies are famously forced to draw the Scythian's victory chariot. Yet he persists and returns to challenge Tamburlaine with a second force, appealing to "God or Mahomet" to "send any aid" (5.2.11). His prayers seem granted when his general Amasia answers his fears with a vision:

Fear not, my lord, I see great Mahomet
Clothèd in purple clouds, and on his head
A chaplet brighter than Apollo's crown,
Marching about the air with armèd men
To join with you against this Tamburlaine. (5.2.31–35)

Their ambition to go one better, one brighter, than the golden charioteer Tamburlaine leads to a battle in which Callapine's victory has seemingly been foretold by heaven. Such expectations of Callapine's success are strengthened by an awareness that Tamburlaine has recently ordered the burning of the "Turkish Alcaron" (5.1.172) in a dramatic challenge to the interventionary power of "Mahomet," in a scene that culminates in a denial of divine power which borders on atheism: "Seek out another godhead to adore, / The God that sits in heaven, if any god" (5.1.199–200). Moreover, Tamburlaine specifically challenged "Mahomet" to respond in the fashion that Amasia's divine vision seems to advertise, charging him to "come down thyself and work a miracle" (5.1.187). Marlowe's audiences were primed to anticipate Callapine's miraculous victory, particularly since he was

29. Pedro Mexía, *The Forest or Collection of Histories*, trans. Thomas Fortescue (London: Printed by John Kingston for John Day, 1576), I2v, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99847904.

remembered historically as the man who had defeated Tamburlaine's sons.

The end result, however, is much more ambiguous, and invites skepticism about Mahomet's intervention. Tamburlaine is seen to exit briefly and returns boasting that "the villains, cowards, [are] fled for fear, / Like summer's vapours vanished by the sun" (5.3.115–16). His victory is unconfirmed and incomplete—he admits that Callapine remains alive—but it is also a far cry from the anticipated providential triumph of Callapine. Similarly, Tamburlaine's death complicates any assumption that it might be a miraculous punishment for his presumption. On the one hand, the burning up of Tamburlaine's body is an appropriate retribution for his burning of the "Alcaron"; on the other hand, his actual death is peaceful. Indeed, David Riggs has suggested that when his physician offers a medical diagnosis based on Lucretian precepts, identifying natural causes for his symptoms, Tamburlaine is able to surmount his anxieties about death.³⁰ His demise is not self-evidently the "miracle" he challenged Mahomet to perform—and, even if it is, the credit belongs in any case to the false "god" of Islam, Mahomet (5.1.1775). Such ambivalence about divine vengeance and about the confessional identity of the play's "revenging" God (5.1.182) corresponds to the competing attempts of early modern Catholics and Protestants to claim their own victories as evidence of divine favor and their opponents' successes as trials imposed by Satan.³¹ Indeed, this disputed "miraculous" discourse may even directly inform Marlowe's representation of Tamburlaine's death. The scene in which "heat" dries the "moisture" of the dying conqueror's blood (5.3.84–85) echoes Foxe's providentialist account of the Catholic bishop Stephen Gardiner's death: "his body being miserably inflamed within (who had inflamed so many good Martyrs before) was brought to a wretched end."³² Catholic authors, of course,

30. David Riggs, *The World of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Faber and Faber, 2004), 219.

31. For instance, the Jesuit William Allen claims that God gives "the victorie, lightly in al battailes, and encounters, to the Catholikes. And that oftentimes very miraculously, defeating . . . great numbers, with à very fewe, & for one Catholike, à thousand Hæretikes slaine: and many glorious victories obtained without any bloudshed." *The Copie of a Letter Written by M. Doctor Allen: Concerning the Yeelding Up of the Citie of Darentrie* (Antwerp: Joachim Trognæsius, 1587), B4v, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99848009. See also Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 133.

32. Foxe, *Actes*, 2:4V2.

disputed Foxe's version of events. Nor is Tamburlaine's own fate obviously an act of retribution. The play closes, not with moralistic condemnation, but with a mourning eulogy: "Let earth and heaven his timeless death deplore, / For both their worths will equal him no more" (5.3.252–53).

One of the most skilful elements of Tamburlaine's image making is the extent to which his "miracles" exploit and reconfigure roles shaped by his opponents. In *The Jew of Malta*, Marlowe's protagonist Barabas demonstrates the same ability to adapt enemy rhetoric to his own ends. As Mycetes sought to make Tamburlaine a scapegoat for the ills that beset Persia, the Maltese governor Ferneze imposes a similar role upon Barabas. Faced with Turkish demands for ten years' tribute, he transfers responsibility for this debt by announcing that "the tribute-money of the Turks shall all be levied amongst the Jews" (*JM*, 1.2.68–69). Far more subtle than Mycetes, Ferneze then cites religious precedent to defend his actions, arguing that it is because of Malta's "sufferance" of the Jews, "who stand accursèd in the sight of heaven," that "these taxes and afflictions are befallen" (1.2.63–65). When Barabas objects to these tactics, exclaiming, "Is theft the ground of your religion?" (1.2.96), Ferneze elaborates on this scriptural context more fully:

No, Jew, we take particularly thine
To save the ruin of a multitude:
And better one want for a common good
Than many perish for a private man. (1.2.97–100)

The governor's words potentially align Barabas with Christ, the Jew whose sacrifice redeemed a multitude of sinners. As a number of critics and editors have remarked, his statement echoes the Jewish high-priest Caiaphas's judgment upon Jesus (John 11:50).³³ The connection is emphasized by Barabas's scriptural name, which is inherited from the Barabbas whom the Jews chose to save above Christ (John 18:39–40; Matthew 27:15–26). It is this negative association between the Jews (specifically the robber Barabbas) and Christ's execution that Ferneze's ally the First Knight exploits, vilifying the Maltese Barabas through his ancestral connection with this death: "If your first curse fall heavy on thy head, / And make thee poor and scorned of all the world, / 'Tis not our fault, but thy inherent sin" (1.2.108–110). Faced with a hypocritical barrage of

33. *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition*, ed. Lloyd E. Berry (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1969). All future biblical references are taken from this edition.

religious precedent, it is hardly surprising that Barabas, outraged, exclaims “What! Bring you scripture to confirm your wrongs?” (1.2.111). His words expose Ferneze’s strategy to the play’s spectators but are impotent within the play.

Despite having denounced Ferneze’s tactics, Barabas soon adopts them himself to develop an oppositional rhetoric of the miraculous. In particular, he responds to Ferneze’s imposition of the Christ role by realizing its rhetorical and theatrical possibilities. Although from Ferneze’s perspective the part entails nothing but sacrifice, Barabas is able to exploit the potential for a “miraculous” resurrection. As G. K. Hunter has perceptively argued, Barabas’s retrieval of the gold he has hidden from Ferneze’s tax collectors can be interpreted as the material equivalent of Christ’s rebirth.³⁴ The treasure which Barabas seeks to reclaim supports this parallel, as it includes “great pearls” (1.2.246) which suggestively echo the scriptural metaphor whereby heavenly grace (the miracle of Christ’s sacrifice) is likened to “a perle of great price” (Matt. 13:46). As Barabas tells Abigail, this wealth is hidden “close underneath the plank / That runs along the upper chamber floor” (1.2.295–96) and, in performance, is therefore physically close to the painted “heavens” of the Elizabethan stage. The plank itself is marked with a cross (1.2.348), and the 1633 printed edition emphasized the religious significance of this cross by using a croschist symbol to represent the sign he sketches to Abigail: “*The boord is marked thus † that couers it.*”³⁵ Through the cruciform symbol of the Christian cross, the sacrifice of Barabas’s wealth is redeemed in a literal resurrection—within a few scenes he has “become as wealthy as I was” (2.3.11)—which is in keeping with Barabas’s own celebration of his financial success as a “miracle” (1.1.13).

Barabas also experiences a more physical pseudo-miraculous resurrection later in this play—again, in defensive response to Ferneze’s enmity. At the start of act 5 Barabas is betrayed by his servant Ithamore and imprisoned by the governor until “the law has passed on him” (5.1.49). Yet, just two lines later, an officer enters to report that Barabas is already dead. Del Bosco is surprised and somewhat suspicious, remarking that “this sudden

34. G. K. Hunter, “The Theology of Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 27 (1964): 211–40, 226–28.

35. Christopher Marlowe, *The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta* (London: Printed by J[ohn] B[ea]le for Nicholas Vavasour, 1633), D1, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&crft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99845496.

death of his is very strange" (5.1.54), but Ferneze eagerly interprets the event as another instance of miraculous divine intervention (on his behalf) and advises Del Bosco to "wonder not at it, sir, the heavens are just" (5.1.55). In this instance, however, we quickly learn that Ferneze's providential rhetoric has been undercut by Barabas's fraudulent actions. As soon as his body has been thrown over the walls, Barabas rises, exclaiming "What, all alone?" (5.1.61). A few lines later, he explains to Calymath that he "drank of poppy and cold mandrake juice, / And being asleep, belike they thought me dead" (5.1.80–81). There is a strong element of farce in all this. During the 1987 Royal Shakespeare Company performance of *The Jew of Malta*, the audience burst into loud laughter at the moment of Barabas's "resurrection," as indeed they did at Ferneze's comment that "the heavens are just."³⁶ Yet the episode also demonstrates that Barabas has dramatically reshaped his initial role as Christlike sacrificial victim, enabling not one but two resurrections. Less successful than Tamburlaine in taking lasting advantage of these "miracles," Barabas still knows how to twist the religious rhetoric of his opponents to advance his own goals.

Barabas's "miraculous" performances form part of the wider contest for scriptural and scriptorial authority that rages in Marlowe's fictional Malta as each character competes for the right to direct and interpret events in light of his own agenda and ambitions. Barabas consistently refers to biblical episodes in the course of his own struggle in the same way that early modern polemicists used miraculous discourse to justify campaigns against those of an opposed faith. For instance, Barabas frames the murder of Ferneze's son Lodowick with the vow that "as heaven rained manna for the Jews, / So sure shall he and Don Mathias die" (2.3.250–51)—although Barabas's unapt choice of precedent may implicitly mock those who attempt to wrest such portents to their own purposes.

Barabas's miraculous rhetoric is directly opposed to that of his enemy Ferneze, who consistently aligns his own ambitions with God's divine agenda. Ferneze's providential language resembles that of Elizabethan propagandists such as Foxe, who depicted Elizabeth's accession and the rise of the English Protestant nation as the culmination of a heavenly master plan. However, Ferneze's use of providential theory potentially devalues such rhetoric, since

36. RSC, *The Jew of Malta*, directed by Barry Kyle, performed July 14, 1987, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, VHS, RSC Archives, JEW198707, Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon.

he exploits the language of divine justice hypocritically in order to sanction his own suspect actions. For instance, he blames his failure to pay the Turks tribute for ten years on God's will and uses the same argument to justify his seizure of Jewish goods. Later, Ferneze disguises his own treacherous role in tricking Barabas to his death by attributing the outcome to heavenly judgment; in reality, of course, the plan that brings Ferneze victory was designed by the "unhallowed" Jew Barabas (5.5.91). Ferneze's rhetorical posturing may even invite a more sustained critique of providence, as hinted at by the derisive tone of Machevil's prologue: "Birds of the air will tell of murders past? / I am ashamed to hear such fooleries!" (prologue.16–17). Ferneze is cast as a deceitful Catholic, but at a time when providentialist theories buttressed Elizabeth I's monarchical authority, Marlowe's portrait of a governor who interprets events that strengthen his position as the miraculous interventions of a benevolent deity (even when he has manufactured them with his own hands) may also recall Catholic charges against Elizabeth and her councilors. The Jesuit Robert Parsons, for instance, claimed that Lord Burghley "by his ghospel . . . can not seeme to meane any other thing but his owne fancie, and designements for the tyme present to serve his turne."³⁷

If Barabas is not as skilled as Tamburlaine at manufacturing "miracles"—he reacts to, rather than creating, the resurrection motif—he is still considerably more accomplished than Marlowe's protagonist Faustus. Unusually for one of Marlowe's characters, Faustus's world is not primarily secular. Instead, he resides in a spiritually-orientated universe peopled by angels and devils in which supernatural episodes abound. Yet despite (or perhaps because of) this, Faustus is unable to take advantage of the apparently heavenly signs that feature in Marlowe's play. Although he begins by announcing that he will "be a divine in show" (*DFa*, 1.1.3) and is eager to learn of "the miracles that magic will perform" (1.1.138), with the terms "show" and "perform" hinting at their performative nature, Faustus soon abandons hypocritical piety for an overtly skeptical stance.³⁸ Thus, faced with a devil who

37. Robert Parsons, *An Advertisement Written to a Secretarie of My L. Treasurers* ([Antwerp], 1592), D7, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99856866.

38. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616): Christopher Marlowe and His Collaborator and Revisers*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993). All subsequent references to *Doctor Faustus* are from

graphically describes the torments of hell (2.1.122–29), Faustus can limply respond, “Come, I think hell’s a fable” (2.1.130). Other supernatural occurrences are likewise trivialized, misinterpreted, or even ignored by the magician who ironically seeks to be “as Jove is in the sky” (1.1.78).

In this play, Faustus’s apparently willful blindness toward the play’s heavenly miracles is especially striking. Skepticism about Satan’s feigned wonders may be theologically sound, but Faustus is equally indifferent or even oblivious to the seemingly genuine divine phenomena he encounters. When his blood congeals as he signs his soul away, for instance, Faustus evaluates the potentially natural phenomenon in supernatural terms—“Is it unwilling I should write this bill?” (2.1.65)—but never takes his insight further. Once Mephistopheles dissolves his blood with fire, he willingly continues on the same course. The miracle that might have convinced Faustus occurs too late, when the bill “is ended, / And Faustus hath bequeathed his soul to Lucifer” (2.1.74–75). Then, an inscription appears on Faustus’s arm, reading “*Homo, fuge!*” (2.1.77). The scriptural phrase, echoing 1 Timothy 6:11, implies that Faustus has been granted a divine sign. After an initial reluctance to accept the evidence of his senses Faustus concedes that “I see it plain” (2.1.80). Yet he fails to respond, refusing to flee on the grounds that if he flies to God he will be thrown down to hell (2.1.78). Almost instantly, he is distracted by a dance of devils, a show put on by Mephistopheles to “delight his mind” (2.1.82). In Faustus’s eyes, fraudulent demonic wonders triumph over the “plain” words of scripture.³⁹ Faustus’s inability to respond in the face of a miraculous sign will later seal his fate. When in the play’s final scene he sees Christ’s blood streaming in the firmament (5.2.78–79), he cannot reach it, and the sign of salvation vanishes within the space of four lines. Having earlier ignored his own blood by refusing to fly from Mephistopheles, Faustus now proves incapable of leaping up to heaven and must remain damned. Miracles may happen around him, but they are ineffectual before a protagonist who either ignores them or fails to react appropriately.

this edition.

39. Protestants and Puritans were particularly concerned with the importance of distinguishing between the “plain” words of scripture and false, misleading visual signs. See John Morgan, *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes towards Reason, Learning, and Education, 1560–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986), 48–51.

Unlike Tamburlaine, Caesar, and to an extent Barabas, Faustus is not the cunning protagonist of his own drama. That honor belongs instead to the devil Mephistopheles, who uses feigned wonders to deceive and manipulate in typically demonic (and typically Marlovian) fashion. When performed by a devil dressed as a Catholic friar, such frauds echo early modern denunciations of Catholicism as a religion which, unlike Protestantism, sought to seduce the senses rather than appeal to the rational mind. The Protestant writer William Perkins, who Marlowe may have encountered during his time at Cambridge, identified Satan as a magician who manifests himself by “workes of wonder,” while Samuel Harsnett reported that “the Pope, and his spirits he sendeth in here amongst you, do play Almighty God, his sonne, & Saints upon a stage.”⁴⁰ According to Harsnett, the purpose of such Catholic spectacle was “to gull, terrifie and amaze the simple ignorant people, and by bringing them into an admiration of the power of their priest-hood . . . and the divine potencie of theyr Romish Cath: church . . . to enchaunt, & bewitch their innocent simple soules.”⁴¹ Harsnett’s assumptions are significant for Marlowe’s slightly earlier play in which a demonic spirit conjures up a variety of pseudo-miracles to tempt Faustus away from his God. As in *The Jew of Malta*, the theme of false resurrection is prominent, with Mephistopheles demonstrating his power to bring back men from the dead (and by implication preserve Faustus’s life) when he summons the spirits of Alexander the Great and Helen of Troy. The former’s appearance in particular acquires potential anti-Catholic connotations, during a scene at the court of the Catholic emperor Charles V in which Faustus contemplates grace only in its secular and material sense (4.1.13, 43, 47). Subsequently, Mephistopheles brings Helen of Troy in direct response to Faustus’s request

That I might have unto my paramour
 That heavenly Helen which I saw of late,
 Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
 These thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow. (5.1.84–87)

40. William Perkins, *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (Cambridge: Cantrel Legge, 1608), B3v–B4; Hopkins, *Literary Life*, 18–19; Samuel Harsnett, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (London: James Roberts, 1603), A2v, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99856115.

41. Harsnett, *Popish Impostures*, M4v.

The power of demonic and possibly Catholic show is demonstrated by Marlowe in *Faustus* as Mephistopheles, belying his position as Faustus's servant, manipulates spectacle in order to "gull" and "bewitch" his supposed master. Yet these supposedly "miraculous" resurrections are as fraudulent as the episode in the 1616 B-text of *Faustus* in which Faustus feigns death by allowing his (false) head to be cut off (*DFb*, 4.2.36–70). Alexander's body is counterfeited by an insubstantial spirit, although the Emperor is soon dazzled into concluding otherwise (4.1.103–107), and even Helen's corporeal reality remains ambiguous in Marlowe's play. Unlike the Christian God who can resurrect his son's body physically (John 20:24–30), Marlowe's Mephistopheles can only manage a false, illusory miracle. It is nonetheless enough to damn Faustus, who glories in Mephistopheles's fraudulent spectacles but remains largely blind to the apparently genuine Christian signs of resurrection and salvation that appear in the play. Yet even these heavenly signs may seem unconfirmed. The small inscription on Faustus's arm would be hard to see in performance (if literally represented at all), while the image of Christ's blood appears late and vanishes quickly. In Marlowe's drama, it seems that the true Christian miracle may not be as effective in manipulating spectators as the false shows manufactured by pagans and "misbelievers" such as Tamburlaine, Caesar, and Barabas.

The failure of miracles in *Faustus* is of course largely a failure of Faustus's own reason or conscience. However, the comparative plainness of the genuine Christian miracle in comparison with Mephistopheles's dazzling demonic shows is intriguing also in that it reflects a wider trend in Marlowe's work whereby false miracles are themselves rhetorically compelling and persuasive. While a plain divine sign was not necessarily a negative at a time when Protestants, and particularly Puritans, regularly condemned the "carnall intisements" of Catholic show, it is possible that Marlowe felt differently. In 1593, Richard Baines claimed that Marlowe preferred the religion of the "papistes" because "the service of god is performed with more ceremonies."⁴²

When Baines and Kyd elaborated on Marlowe's "atheist" attitude toward religion in their 1593 notes to Sir John Puckering, they specifically claimed that he had described biblical miracles as

42. William Charke, *An Answer to a Seditious Pamphlet* (London: Christopher Barker, 1581), C2, accessed April 20, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99846445; "Baines Note," qtd. in Honan, *Christopher Marlowe*, 374.

fraudulent fabrications. Such overlapping polemical and ideological associations among skepticism, Catholic faith, and Protestant providentialism were of urgent and immediate importance during the period in which Marlowe was writing, and as his false and fraudulent miracles were staged and read. However problematic the accusations made by Baines and Kyd are in relation to Marlowe himself, there are certainly tantalizing echoes of his dramatic protagonists in their reports: echoes of Tamburlaine, who consciously crafts a fictionalized narrative of divine favor; of Barabas, who appropriates the plot structures of a religion he deems fruitless to perform a “miraculous” resurrection; and even of Faustus, whose susceptibility to Mephistopheles’s satanic spectacle and blindness to the possibilities of the miraculous lead to his downfall. Thus, within Marlowe’s writing, the practice of fashioning fraudulent miracles provocatively becomes a source of secular empowerment, with the successful Marlovian protagonist advancing “by false and fraudulent meanes.”⁴³ Here, perhaps, we find a glimpse of Marlowe’s literary atheism, inspired and shaped by the virulent post-Reformation confessional polemic that taught readers to mistrust the truth of any apparent miracle or divine sign.

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43. Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, 2:27.

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The “Hyperbolic Blasphemies” of Nashe and Marlowe in Late Tudor England

On the final two leaves of his copy of John Leland’s *Principum, ac illustrium aliquot & eruditorum in Anglia virorum Encomia* (1589), Thomas Nashe wrote, “Faustus: Che sara sara devinytie adieu.” His name is penned inside the front cover, and some markings and notes on several pages have been identified as matching his handwriting.¹ It may have been simply doodling, but there is a case for the import of the particular words quoted. In addition to supporting the theory of an earlier date for *Doctor Faustus*, the annotations are also evidence of his interest in Christopher Marlowe, his former fellow at Cambridge. That Nashe recalled this famous line of the play suggests the importance of his engagement with the subversive tendency of Marlowe’s ideas.²

We cannot precisely know when Nashe acquired his copy of Leland’s *Encomia* nor can we say for certain when he made the annotations. What we can say is that by 1592, when he published *Pierce Penilesse, His Supplication to the Devil*, he had been exposed to *Faustus* either in manuscript or on stage. Even if the lines he

1. John Leland, *Principum, ac illustrium aliquot & eruditorum in Anglia virorum, Encomia* (London: Thomas Orwinum, 1589), Folger Shakespeare Library, shelfmark HH132/23. Hereafter cited as *Encomia*. On the verso side of the title page there is an inscription that reads: “Thomas Nashe.” The signature and the marginalia match the only other two known examples of Thomas Nashe’s writing. See Paul H. Kocher, “Some Nashe Marginalia Concerning Marlowe,” *Modern Language Notes* 57.1 (1942): 45–49. The words Nashe wrote in the book do not contain any obvious connection to the Leland work or the poems by Thomas Newton in its second part and, for the purposes of this article, will be treated in isolation from those works.

2. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-Texts (1604, 1616): Christopher Marlowe and His Collaborator and Revisers*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993), 1.1.48. All subsequent references to *Doctor Faustus* are from the A-text of this edition.

copied are simply offhand notations, this recollection signifies a broad philosophical interest in the dogmatic principles behind *Faustus* rather than a straightforward textual parallel.³ This raises the important question of what relation these two men had to each other. Was this a friendship that extended into their professional writing careers, and did they collaborate on works such as *Faustus* or *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1594)? While Charles Nicholl links Nashe to Marlowe and others via the speculative assessment of Nashe as a possible government operative, *Pierce Penilesse* suggests that it was Marlowe’s interest in the powers that the devil, or the infernal, can be said to exercise in this world that made an impression on Nashe in this period.⁴ The lines he quotes from *Faustus* certainly inform *Pierce Penilesse* and other works from 1590 onward, as part of an intertextual dialogue that continues in *Tamburlaine* and *The Unfortunate Traveller; or, The Life of Jack Wilton* (1593). Nashe also seems to have been familiar with *Lucan’s First Book*, Marlowe’s translation of *The Civil War*, about which I include a brief discussion near the end of this essay. That Nashe wrote “devinyte adieu” twice in his copy of *Encomia* implies that he

3. While some scholarship on the relationship between Nashe and Marlowe exists, there is very little that explores the nature of the relationship aside from Charles Nicholl’s *A Cup of News: The Life of Thomas Nashe* (New York: Routledge, 1984). Nicholl is the only other scholar to engage with the import of the lines in the Leland, saying that the annotations themselves are “unintelligible . . . but somehow part of this sense of collusion between Marlowe and Nashe in 1592” (97). Nicholl places the patronage of Lord Strange at the center of their connection, using his purported interest in the occult to tie *Doctor Faustus* and *Pierce Penilesse* together. In a more recent book on Marlowe, Nicholl mentions their friendship as part of his examination of Nashe’s engagement with Marlowe after his death. See *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992), 51–91. Earlier scholars who comment on this relationship include Paul H. Kocher in “Nashe’s Authorship of the Prose Scenes in *Faustus*,” *Modern Language Quarterly* 3.1 (1942): 17–40. Critical studies of their relationship beyond the texts of *Faustus* and *Pierce Penilesse* include scholarship on Nashe’s allusions to Marlowe in *The Unfortunate Traveller* in Lynette Feasey and Eveline Feasey, “Nashe’s *The Unfortunate Traveller*: Some Marlovian Echoes,” *English* 7:39 (1948): 125–29; Constance Brown Kuriyama’s discussion of Nashe’s treatment of Marlowe in the print war concerning religious matters in *Christopher Marlowe: A Renaissance Life* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2002), especially 142–62; Roy Kendall’s article on both authors’ ties to Richard Baines in *Christopher Marlowe and Richard Baines: Journeys through the Elizabethan Underground* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2004), 203–5; and Per Sivefors’s study of the connection between Nashe’s work and Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* and *Edward II*, as well as the homage *Lenten Stuff* (1599) pays to Marlowe via imitation of his *Hero and Leander*. See “Underplayed Rivalry: Patronage and the Marlovian Subtext of *Summer’s Last Will and Testament*,” *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 4.2 (2005): 65–87.

4. For Nicholl’s discussion of Nashe’s links to an Elizabethan spy network, see *Cup of News*, 99–121.

internalized Marlowe's attitude toward existing hegemonic views about God and religion.

There is clear evidence that Nashe was attracted to Marlowe's work throughout his career, even if he did not necessarily empathize with his contemporary's views, and was interested in the type of religious skepticism that is evident in some of his works. Their names appeared together on the title page of *Dido*. This does not necessarily indicate that they collaborated on it, but more likely signals editorial work prior to publication.⁵ The year before *Dido* was published, Thomas Kyd and Marlowe were both arrested for heresy and atheism, concepts that inform *Pierce Penilesse* as well as *Faustus*. Marlowe's life and work were very much on his mind. Nashe incorporates ideas from *Faustus* into *Pierce Penilesse*'s exploration of the role of the infernal in earthly success.

The annotations in Nashe's copy of *Encomia* probably date from before the earliest recorded performance of *Faustus* on September 30, 1594, the year after Marlowe's death, perhaps as early as 1588 or 1589. It is in the second part of the book, among the collection of poems by Thomas Newton, that we find Nashe copied Faustus's famous daring rejection of divinity: "Faustus: Che sera sera deivinyte adieu," and "devinynt, adieu" and what looks like the words "Faustus: Studie in Indian Silke."⁶ This was perhaps a vague recollection of Faustus's desire for goods from around the world, "I'll have them fly to India for gold" (1.1.84), and his rejection of the Cambridge dress code: "I'll have them fill the public schools with silk, / Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad" (1.1.92–93).⁷ It is not difficult to imagine the possibility that Nashe remembered the line incorrectly from either an early performance or from his reading of the text—or that Marlowe and

5. Some scholars argue that Marlowe began this work while at Cambridge and that Nashe may have collaborated on it then (see Kuriyama, *Renaissance Life*, 58). While agreeing on the early composition of the play, Lisa Hopkins argues against this view when she states that the play "bears no obvious traces of another hand, and it is possible that Nashe did no more for the play than prepare it for publication after Marlowe's death" See *Christopher Marlowe: Renaissance Dramatist* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008), 38.

6. These markings appear on pages 130 and 132 of *Encomia*. The notation is blurred, so I cannot be certain about the word "Studie." However, Kocher does note a potential relevance to a single poem on page 130 by Newton on Alexander Nowell, the dean of Saint Paul's and a Puritan. Nashe, Kocher suggests, may have been thinking of the contrast between Nowell and Faustus ("Marginalia," 48).

7. In their note to 1.1.92, Bevington and Rasmussen quote the Decree of 1578: "no man, unless he were a doctor, should wear any hood lined with silk upon his gown" (116n92).

Nashe collaborated on the play together, and as Nashe recalled lines from what Marlowe wrote, he penned some key ideas on his copy of the Leland text.

That Nashe troubled over theological questions is evident in a majority of his works, not to mention his links to the Martin Marprelate controversy of 1588–89, including his authorship of *An Almond for a Parrat* (1589). This early date in his career coincides with his possible exposure to Faustus’s daring rejection of divinity, either on stage or page. Indeed, Cuthbert Curry-Knave’s complaint could equally apply to the lines, potentially the “hyperbolic blasphemies” referred to in *An Almond for a Parrat*, that Nashe copied into his *Encomia*: “old Martin . . . when whole reames of paper are blotted with thy h[y]perbolical blasphemies, and religious matters of controversy more then massacred by thy profane scurrility, I can but suppose thy hart that house swept and garnished, into the which the foule spirit returned with other 7 spirits worse then himself.”⁸ Nashe’s diatribe against “old Martin” and his wastefulness, inscribing profanity and heresy against religious concerns, made him a potential target for infernal spirits. This is not unlike Mephistopheles’s claim in *Faustus*,

For when we hear one rack the name of God:
 Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,
 We fly in hope to get his glorious soul,
 Nor will we come unless he use such means
 Whereby he is in danger to be damned. (1.3.48–52)

In offering Martin a warning about his libelous writings, Nashe here articulates a concern about religious questioning that will further express itself in his later works.

Pierce Penilesse and *The Unfortunate Traveller*, printed in 1592 and 1593, offer criticism of religious orthodoxy and establish a direct dialogue with Marlowe’s works. Nashe evidently perceived this type of intertextual conversation as a realistic, even safe place to express questions on the nature of religious skepticism. For instance, Pierce, who sounds like Nashe’s surrogate, seems to respond to Marlowe’s *Faustus* in the epistle to the printer explaining the text and the occasion of *Pierce Penilesse*. In this text, written in response to Gabriel and Richard Harvey, who had

8. *An Almond for a Parrat*, in *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. R. B. McKerrow, rev. F. P. Wilson, 5 vol., 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), 3:339–76, 3:345. All subsequent references to Nashe’s works will be from this edition, cited by title of work, volume, and page number. I have modernized i/j and u/v throughout.

insulted his dead friend Robert Greene and accused Nashe of authoring *Greenes Groatsworth of Wit* (1592), he tells the reader that he spent many years studying and in pecuniary disadvantage: “I accused my fortune, railed on my patrons, bit my pen, rent my papers, and raged in all points like a madman” (*Pierce Penilesse*, 1.157). In response to his poor condition, which he sees as relentless, he writes some stanzas of verse on despair, damnation, and his unhappy state. Feeling like Faustus and dismayed at the lack of advantages his learning and degrees have brought him, Pierce claims to seek a “higher” art when he calls upon the Devil. His poem begins with questions on doctrine:

Why ist damnation to dispaire and die,
When life is my true happinesse disease?
My soule, my soule, thy safetie make me flie
Thy faultie meanes, that might my paine appease.
Divines and dying men may talke of hell,
But in my heart her several tormentes dwell. (1:157)

In these lines we may read an echo of Faustus’s struggle with his decision to devote his soul to the devil and his wavering toward total despair, which Nashe’s protagonist never approaches. Toward the end of his narrative, Pierce is explicitly told how to defend himself against infernal spirits, “the onelie assured way to resist their attempts is prayer and faith, gainst which all the divils in hell cannot prevaile” (1:239). This is a reminder that the Old Man and the Good Angel offer Faustus at various points, but which he fails to accept. Even in the final act of *Faustus*, just before his twenty-four years of pleasure are to expire, the Old Man exclaims:

I see an angel hovers o’er thy head,
And with a vial full of precious grace
Offers to pour the same into thy soul.
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair. (*DFa*, 5.1.54–57)

But for dramatic reasons, Marlowe allows the Old Man to exit this scene, leaving Faustus at the mercy of Mephistopheles.

The reasons Pierce states for summoning the devil in the first place suggest a reference to the shared pecuniary position that Nashe and Marlowe both endured in London after completing their degrees at Cambridge, and that their protagonists both articulate. When the Good and Bad Angels enter Faustus’s study and offer their brief opinions on his momentous decision, they refer to the enticing issue of money. The Bad Angel comments, “think of honor and of wealth,” at which an excited Faustus exclaims,

“Wealth? . . . Cast no more doubts. . . . Come, Mephistopheles!” (2.1.21, 28). Similarly, Pierce’s poverty will not allow him to find solace in his own wit, and he too resolves to turn to “deceitful arts” to increase his means:

Ah, worthlesse Wit, to traine me to this woe,
Deceitfull Artes, that nourish Discontent:
Ill thrive the Follie that bewicht me so;
Vaine thoughts, adieu, for now I will repent.
And yet my wantes perswade me to proceede,
Since none takes pitie of a Scollers neede. (*Pierce Penilesse*, 1:157)

Pierce is motivated by material comforts, Faustus by boredom. Pierce’s poem reverts to a position of contrition in the penultimate verse, similar to Faustus’s lapse into despair in act 2 of *Faustus*. Here, as Pierce verges on repentance, he expresses a fear of the consequences of his actions:

Forgive me, God, although I curse my birth,
And ban the air, wherein I breath a Wretch;
Since Miserie hath daunted all my mirth,
And I am quite undone through promise-breach.
Oh friends, no friends, that then ungently frowne,
When changing Fortune casts us headlong downe. (1:158)

In the concluding stanza, he reasons that because intellectual acumen is not highly regarded in England, he must invoke the devil’s aid if he is to escape poverty. We learn a few pages later that the infernal deity is ironically represented as a “blind Retayler” who lends money in return for souls: “he was noted for a privy Benefactor to Traitors and Parasites” (1:161).

The reason England cannot sustain a figure like Pierce, he claims, is because there is no value placed on intellectual acumen, or on wit (the complaints also found in the 1593 *Christ’s Teares Over Jerusalem*):

Without redresse complaines my carelesse verse,
And Mydas-cares relent not at my moane;
In some far Land will I my griefes reherse,
Mongst them that will be mov’d when I shall groane.
England (adieu) the Soyle that brought me foorth;
Adieu, unkinde, where skill is nothing woorth. (1:158)

Pierce’s soliloquy in verse, oddly placed in this piece of early modern prose writing, rehearses in miniature the struggle Faustus is faced with throughout Marlowe’s play. Nashe’s prose fiction asks the theoretical questions about whether intellectual training

and learning are in vain and contemplates the reward in calling on the dark arts. Pierce concludes his poem by imitating Faustus's rejection of divinity by rejecting England for what he sees as a higher pursuit.

When Nashe finally begins the supplication element of his text, he diverges into an account of devilry and how he happened upon the devil. Purely by chance Pierce finds himself accompanied by a figure described as "a neat pedantical fellow, in the forme of a Citizen" (1:163). What seems obvious to the reader is a shocking surprise to Pierce when he discovers this pedant is the same devil he has been searching for—*per accidens*, just as Mephistopheles comes to Faustus—the conjuring was the immediate reason in that it provides an occasion for the devil to appear (raising the troubling issue of predestinarian questions of external agency).

At Pierce's request for further information about devils and hell, the narrative then offers a lengthy discussion on the role of the infernal spirits in human affairs and diverges into an account of devilry. A little taken aback at the response he gets to his letter, he beckons, "acquaint mee with the state of your infernall regiment; and what that hel is, where your Lord holdes his throne" (1:217). Following Faustus's example he then asks, "what the Divell is whome you serve? As also howe he began, and howe farre his power and authoritie extends" (1:219). He learns that the original spirit of hell was Lucifer, "(before his fall) an Archangel" who lost his place in heaven after a revolt: "Neither did he onlie fall, when he strove with *Michael*, but drew a number of Aungels to his faction; who joint partakers of his proud revolt, were likewise partakers of his punishment, and all thrust out of heaven together by one judgement" (1:229). In *Faustus* this line of questioning by Faustus gives Marlowe an opportunity to divulge in similar infernal demonology. Mephistopheles explains to Faustus that Lucifer is the "arch-regent and commander of all the spirits"; that he was once "most dearly loved of God"; and that by aspiring pride and insolence he and his minions were thrown out of heaven by God: "Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer, / Conspired against our God with Lucifer, / And are for ever damned with Lucifer. . . . In hell" (1.3.71–73, 75). Here the infernal spirit reveals that hell is very simply anywhere without God, and thus the devils are always in hell, and, for the only time in their relationship, Mephistopheles warns Faustus about his fate: "O Faustus, leave these frivolous demands, / Which strike a terror to my fainting soul" (1.3.83–84). Both Marlowe and Nashe use the same premise to explain the

fallen angels—that they were guilty of pride and fell alongside Lucifer.

The next question is about the nature of devils and their relation to mortals; specifically, he wants to know about the possibility of physical harm on earth: “whether have they power to hurt granted from God, or from themselves; can they hurt as much as they wil?” (*Pierce Penilesse*, 1:236). In reply to these questions about the location of hell, the reader learns that it is where ungodly people stay and that it is also the farthest point away from heaven. The response these questions elicit comes in the form of an elaborate description of the types of evil spirits in hell and how they influence human actions. As his dialogic narrative concludes, Pierce simply repeats his request that the spirit bring his supplication to the devil. Despite his claims to seek economic advantages from conjuring, he carries out no such deed. Instead, he concludes with an address to the reader that acknowledges the peculiar nature of his text and explains why this narrative is ultimately an enquiry into the nature of spirits, rather than a request for assistance from the devil for respite from poverty. He returns to the topic of his earlier poem and appeals to literary patrons to share their wealth more readily: “for what reason have I to bestow any of my wit upon him, that wil bestow none of his wealth upon me?” (1:241). This return to the pecuniary rewards of writing and the idea of literature as a commodity is a topic that appears in many of Nashe’s writings and is tied to his search for long-term patronage.

Nashe does not consistently write to Marlowe throughout. His chosen medium, prose fiction, was his occupation, and he goes to lengths to stress this economic point for the reader in the final pages of *Pierce Penilesse*. Here, Nashe’s voice enters and replaces Pierce as the narrator, giving him an opportunity to comment on the particular market value of his text.⁹ He admits that the title,

9. See Georgia Brown, *Redefining Elizabethan Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 53–101. She analyzes Nashe’s participation in the “reordering of literature,” and she comments on his incorporation of his contemporaries’ texts into his own work: “While Nashe is excited by the redefinition of literature as a special activity in its own right, which offers access to different kinds of knowledge through anagnorisis and paradox (indeed his livelihood depends on it), he also registers the ontological threat posed to anyone who bases their identity in language” (47). Brown discusses the production of authorship in his works and demonstrates how his consciousness of the relative economic value of his writing leads him to exploit literary forms. Brown claims that Nashe was acutely aware of the social, political, and economic relation of literature and that he uses this as a literary tactic.

Pierce Penilesse, His Supplication to the Devil, does not accurately indicate what the narrative is about. He also uses this opportunity to distance himself from Pierce: "I bring *Pierce Penilesse* to question with the divil . . . who, carrieng an Englishmans appetite to enquire of news, will be sure to make what use of him he maie, and not leave anie thing unaskt" (1:240). He furthers this diegesis when he remarks on the odd character of an address to the reader at the end of a text: "what, an Epistle to the Readers at the end of thy booke?" (1:240–41). He then turns his appeal simply to the inherent value of literature. The self-referential quality of the final pages seeks to bank on a marketability of invoking the devil, possibly also on the recent success of Marlowe's play on a similar topic, and Nashe merely uses this as the framing device for his treatise.

In referring to Marlowe's play in *Pierce Penilesse*, Nashe expresses at least an economic interest in Marlowe's works. Indeed, this habit of invoking the reputation of other writers and other styles of writing works to place his own texts within a specific literary economy. As Katherine Duncan-Jones comments on this complex aspect of his literary persona, his additions to Greene's posthumous *Groatsworth of Wit* are a primary example.¹⁰ Indeed, in *Christ's Teares over Jerusalem*, Nashe offers critical opinions about the current state of religion in England and the men involved in religious affairs. He locates the work domestically, "I am at my wits end, when I view how coldly, in comparison of other Countrymen, our *Englishmen* write," and he continues to state that university educated clergy must arm themselves against the arguments of the humanist educated atheists (*Christ's Teares*, 2:122). Those who enter religious orders dismiss the importance of reading texts other than the Bible, and this makes them ignorant in the face of better-versed atheists: "Atheists, if ever they be confuted, with their own profane authors they must be confuted" (2:122). He critiques English writers, who in his estimation lack wit, in comparison to more widely read continental writers: "Let not the Italians call you dul-headed *Tramontani*" (2:122). In some of his other works Nashe can be seen to criticize the general attitude toward the type of men who seek to lead in matters of religion; indeed his reference to the "dull-headed" Reformers above is a key example of his scorn. He further comments that those who preach at Cambridge and Oxford are not as esteemed as they should be, but rather that there

10. See Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Ungentle Shakespeare: Scenes from His Life* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2001), 44.

are “so many dunces . . . entertained as chiefe members into societies, under pretence, though the have no great learning, yet there is in them zeale and Religion” that a student of divinity might cast off his interests in divinity (2:122). He continues to chastise the students of divinity for their lack of commitment: “if at the first peeping out of the shell a young Student sets not a grave face on it, or seemes not mortifiedly religious . . . he is cast of[f] and discouraged” (2:122–23).

What is of particular relevance here is Nashe’s interest in the religious skepticism that he found expressed in Marlowe’s writings (“divinity adieu”) and the type that had been associated, rightly or too hastily, with Marlowe’s personal life in the years surrounding his death. Nashe’s attack on atheists in England might seem over-zealous on its own, but we can understand his fervor more clearly in light of such accusations of atheism in 1592–94 that may have prompted some of the elements of his treatise. In Kyd’s letter to Sir John Puckering on questions of certain “atheistic” documents in his possession, he claimed that they had belonged to “Kit Marlowe” and were simply shuffled together with his own papers. Whatever the relationship between Nashe and Kyd was, we have only conjecture, but as early as 1589 Nashe referred to Kyd as a “shifting companion” in his preface to Greene’s *Menaphon* (1589). His accusation against Marlowe, probably made under duress, may not have surprised Nashe.

In the years that Nashe was writing *Christ’s Teares*, and possibly even *The Unfortunate Traveller*, certain anxieties about atheism were looming. In 1592, after Faustus had abandoned God for the devil on stage and Pierce’s “supplication” had been disseminated into English popular literary culture, Robert Parsons publicly accused Sir Walter Raleigh of atheism because he opposed Elizabeth’s plan to appoint Raleigh as a privy counselor. An English translation of the argument of Parsons’s text appeared in August 1592, simply called “An Advertisement,” prior to the publication of the full document in Latin first called *Responsio* and later *Philopater*, after the pseudonym under which it appeared, Andreas Philopater. The text responds to Elizabeth’s edict of October 1591 addressed to English priests and Jesuits, and the attack includes an accusation concerning Raleigh’s “school of atheism”: “Of Sir Walter Rawleys schoole of Atheisme by the way, and of the Conjurer that is M[aster] thereof, and of the diligence used to get young gentlemen to this schoole, where in both Moyses, and our Saviour; the olde,

and newe Testamente are jested at, and the schollers taught amonge other things to spell God backwarde.”¹¹

Although atheism did not have the same strictly etymological meaning in the sixteenth century as it should (from *atheos*, “without God”) and referred more loosely to not following an accepted theological perspective, the attacks on Raleigh’s spiritual character had troubling potential.¹² Marlowe was not the only literary figure to be thrust into the authorities’ spotlight. The intense atmosphere of suspicion that the atheism accusations aroused in London is clear in Nashe’s arrest following the publication of *Christ’s Teares*; he was sent to Newgate for almost a month for his insulting remarks against the London civic authorities. Nashe’s probable involvement with the recent Marprelate controversy and his authorship of *An Almond for a Parrat* in 1589, his public quarrel with Gabriel Harvey, and the content of *Christ’s Teares* identified Nashe with polemical writings in the 1590s and potentially put his personal security in jeopardy. In 1593, at the height of this fervor, a note, written in Marlovian style and posted on a Dutch churchyard gate was signed “Tamberlaine,” bringing further suspicion to Marlowe regarding seditious behavior. Of course Nashe made it through this period alive, and his “shifting” acquaintance Kyd survived until the summer of 1594, but Marlowe, as we know, died in May 1593 following the issue of a warrant for his arrest.

In 1594, when Nashe published *The Unfortunate Traveller*, he was more careful to avoid the censor and a return journey to Newgate. Marlowe’s arrest and murder affected him—perhaps he was thinking of “Tamberlaine’s” libel—indeed, Park Honan notes the careful homage paid to Marlowe in the pages of Nashe’s later texts. He “had to be indirect in his praise, as it was risky—especially in 1593—to argue in favour of an ‘atheist.’”¹³ Wanting to avoid Marlowe’s fate, still fresh in his mind, yet also insisting on the importance of his distinct authorial voice, *The Unfortunate Traveller* at once offers English readers a repentant Nashe while simultaneously critiquing and undermining certain continental and English religious practices. His criticisms are not as bold as an

11. Robert Parsons, “An Advertisement” (1592), qtd. in Ernest A. Strathmann, “Raleigh and the Catholic Polemicists,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 8.4 (1945): 337–58, 337.

12. For a fuller discussion of the atheism accusations during the period, see, for example, Susanne S. Webb, “Raleigh, Harriot, and Atheism in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England,” *Albion* 1.1 (1969): 10–18; and Ernest A. Strathmann, *Sir Walter Raleigh: A Study in Elizabethan Skepticism* (New York: Columbia UP, 1951), 61–97.

13. Park Honan, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005), 362.

abject rejection of divinity, nor are they as daring as Greene had said of the *Tamburlaine* plays: “Daring God out of heaven with that atheist Tamburlaine.”¹⁴ And yet, what Nashe has to offer about reforming Germany, Catholic Italy and Spain, or even Protestant England is cast in a mold of cynicism that severely undermines his narrator’s claim to be repentant at the end of his tale.¹⁵ This later work of prose fiction applies a similarly brazen attitude toward matters of religion found in *Pierce Penilesse* and *Christ’s Teares*. His criticism of contemporary approaches to religion and reform are removed from an English context by locating them extraculturally, in Germany for example, and situating his text in a fictional past. So, for instance, although the dedicatory letter and introductory material consciously locate *The Unfortunate Traveller* in the frame of history writing and situate it during the reign of Henry VIII, Nashe openly acknowledges its flippancy and the inherent lack of historical truth in the text. In fact, the narrative time frame for events is convoluted and distinctly ahistorical.

As Nashe’s narrator in *The Unfortunate Traveller* Jack Wilton surveys the reforming practices around continental Europe, also comparing them to his own English experiences, he is seemingly struck by the paradox that Marlowe’s “divinity adieu” recognizes: that the success or failure of an ideology or practice is an earthly, human matter. Wilton physically abandons England in the beginning of the narrative, unlike Pierce’s airy threat, “England . . . adieu,” and he joins the English court in France during wartime (*Pierce Pennilesse*, 1:158). Nashe’s protagonist, the reader quickly learns, is a gamester, one known at home for playing tricks but whose commentary is framed in a moral didactic mode. In the camp at Turwin he admits that he was the “king” of card and dice games before defending his self-confessed debauchery by suggesting that “these are signes of good education, I must confesse, and arguments of in *grace* and *vertue* to proceed” (2:209, emphasis mine). For two-thirds of his narrative Wilton relates his experiences with a laissez-faire attitude to serious events and situations in France and Germany. The final third of his narrative

14. Robert Greene, *Perimedes, The Blacksmith* (London, 1588), A3, accessed May 8, 2012, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99841538.

15. Brown discusses Nashe’s attention to waste as paradoxical to a productive literary culture. She shows how he consciously fashions himself as a prodigal son type of character in contrast to his wasteful youth and contemporaries (*Redefining Elizabethan Literature*, 70–75).

dramatically shifts to a more serious tone as the episodes in Italy are horrifying enough that he prepares to head back to England. The sum of the final spectacle of violence in Italy is evidently to teach us to distrust everything Italian, but also, by way of association, comments on the nature of Catholics in general (perhaps to balance out the criticism of the German reformers earlier in the narrative). It is, however, not just the Catholic Spanish and Italian characters of *The Unfortunate Traveller* that are presented as barbaric; the violence of most of Nashe's continental neighbors is always present in the text, from the bloody battlefield in France to the torturing and execution of Cutwolfe that ends the account.

Nashe brings the narrative around toward a Marlovian rejection of divinity by way of the experiences of Wilton and diverse strains of Christianity in Europe. The sense that Europe has metaphorically said farewell to religion, that the continental reformers miss the point like dunces at Cambridge and Oxford who have religion and zeal and are yet rather lacking in learning, is brought out in the endless stream of torture and violence that serves to show the reader that cruelty and barbarism are symptomatic of the national characters of France, Germany, and Italy. At last Wilton heads back toward England, seemingly grateful for the opportunity. Of course Nashe's Wilton does not make it to English shores. He stops just short of his final destination: "within fortie daies I arrived at the king of *Englands* campe twixt *Ardes* and *Guines* in *France*, where he with great triumphs met and entertained the Emperour and the French king, and feasted many daies" (2:327–28). The ending is left open for the reader to decide whether or not Wilton benefited from his European tour, ending almost exactly where he began to partake in "many daies" of feasting (that is, drinking). The promise of "grace and vertue" offered earlier fails to deliver, and the reader is only left with a sense of the paradox of religiously inspired violence in continental Europe.

Again, we cannot possibly know exactly when Nashe first encountered Faustus's famous line that he wrote down in his copy of *Encomia*, "Che sara sara, devinitytie adieu." However, it is evident that, from 1589, he explored the social concerns of orthodox religion in his printed works, at variance from the perception of him as trivial writer. He did not express any outwardly atheistic attitudes but used the printed space to present a skeptical attitude to the way Christian doctrine could be hijacked for violent, and seemingly unchristian, logic.

Nashe's mastery of combining influences and creating original fiction is here evident—especially so in his treatment of the

justifications for violence against nonconforming Christians in different places in Europe. The links stem primarily from the attitude toward orthodox religion voiced in “devinytie adieu” and gain impetus through other literary and cultural references. Wilton’s experiences, for example, raise questions of religious justification for violent ends, and Nashe’s technique here imitates the ironic tone Marlowe applied in *Tamburlaine*, which was first performed in 1587. Here, Marlowe cleverly applies material from his reading of Lucan’s *Pharsalia* (*Civil War*) to the history of the infamous Tamburlaine and embellishes the story with allusions to Elizabethan theories of Divine Providence.¹⁶ Marlowe’s known source materials had stressed the role of Tamburlaine as a mirror for bad kings. For instance, one source, Sir Thomas Fortescue’s *The Forest; or, Collection of Histories* (1571) mentions the idea of cruel kings as ministers of God and their consequent damnable fates, a qualification that Marlowe excludes from his dramatic purposes and instead allows the audience free interpretation: “View but his picture in this tragic glass / And then applaud his fortunes as you please.”¹⁷ In *The Unfortunate Traveller* Nashe’s treatment of bloodshed is tellingly Marlovian in its emphasis on this paradoxical nature of divine providence in human events.

A key example of Nashe’s cynicism on matters of religion in *The Unfortunate Traveller* is to be found in Wilton’s narrative episode about the Anabaptists in Germany and the attitude to murder and violence found in various parts of Europe. After some entertaining anecdotes about the jests he plays with his fellow soldiers in the first part of the narrative, Wilton comments on the horrible events he witnesses on a European battlefield where Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and England are all represented:

I saw a wonderfull spectacle of blood-shed on both sides: here unweeldie *Switzers* wallowing in their gore, like an Oxe in his dung, there the sprightly *French* sprawling and turning . . . all the

16. In an earlier article I argued that Marlowe employed the heavily ironic tone of Lucan’s discussion of Julius Caesar’s apparently “divine” barbarism in his characterization of tyranny, obedience, and rebellion in *Tamburlaine*. By applying Lucanic irony to the paradoxical discussions of tyranny and obedience that permeated late Tudor culture, Marlowe’s tragedy subverts the *de casibus* form and raises questions about divine providence. See “Lucanic Irony in Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*,” *Modern Language Review* 103.2 (2008): 311–29.

17. Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1*, ed. J. S. Cunningham (1981; rpt., Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999), prologue.7–8.

ground was strewed as thicke with Battle-axes as the Carpenters yard with chips; the Plaine appeared like a quagmyre, overspred as it was with trampled dead bodies. In one place might you behold a heape of dead murdered men overwhelmed with a falling Steede instead of a toomb stone, in another place a bundell of bodies fettered together in their owne bowels; and as the tyrant Romane Emperours used to tye condemned living caytives face to face to dead cor[p]ses, so were the half living here mixt with squeezed carcasses long putrefied . . . the French King himselfe in this Conflict was much distressed, the braines of his owne men sprinkled in his face. (*Unfortunate Traveller*, 2:231)

Wilton's description of the battlefield sharply contrasts with the earlier lighthearted tone of his narrative. This is the first time in his experience that Wilton is confronted with the horrors of warfare, and he questions the justice of such horrors in the name of religion. His travels bring him through reforming England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy where he witnesses Protestant, Catholic, and reforming practices, all imbued with excessive violence. But Wilton is Nashe's comic creation, not one of Marlowe's tragic figures, so when his European tour concludes with the most violent episode of his journey and he is the most skeptical of continental custom, he meets an English earl who encourages him to return to the relative safety of England. In the same way Pierce is reminded that prayer and faith can save him from any devils, Wilton is here offered salvation by abandoning his continental travels, not by abandoning God.

Just as Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* comments on the cruelties of the barbaric practices of a tyrant who claims divine sanction, Nashe uses the contrast between violence and godly pretences to comment critically on the Puritan character of the Anabaptists in Germany. During Wilton's time in Munster he comments on the religious tenor of their reform: "What was the foundation or ground-worke of this dismall declining of Munster, but the banishing of their Bishop, their confiscating and casting lots for Church livinges, as the souldiers cast lottes for Christes garments, and, in short tearmes, their making the house of God a den of theeves? The house of God a number of hungrie Church robbers in these days have made a den of theeves" (*Unfortunate Traveller*, 2:238). He then comments, cynically, that the Anabaptists fell prostate praying to God to help them vanquish their enemies. Wilton is skeptical that this is a worthy topic for prayer and later chides the Anabaptists at Munster for their ignorant approach to

faith; they were simply waiting for God to show them “some manifest miracle of successe” (2:239) rather than be active. John Leiden and his cohorts in the rebellion, Bernhard Knipperdolling and Thomas Müntzer, had preached that Christians must cry to God for his assistance. But the Anabaptists begged God to help them enact punishment on their enemies: “Heare what it is to be Anabaptists, to be Puritans, to be villaines. You may be counted illuminate botchers [Enlightened reformers] for a while, but your end will bee, ‘Good people, pray for us’” (2:241). Nashe’s diatribe against the Anabaptists in Germany also provides a commentary on, or comparison to, the Puritans in England and reveals his explicit stance against Puritanism. In the case of *Tamburlaine*, Marlowe is obliquely commenting on the divine rights of kings and the idea that a monarch’s actions must be divinely sanctioned; Nashe’s *The Unfortunate Traveller* critiques the pretence of civility in Europe through the same Lucanic frame intended to highlight the sheer irony of the violence of wars and deeds done in the name of religion (for example, the French wars of religion). But Nashe is doing so by carefully navigating the degree of satire he applies to topical events and situations.

Nashe’s prose fiction adopts a similar attitude to historical events and situations that can be found in Marlowe’s alteration of history in *Tamburlaine*. By molding history in this way, Marlowe placed the example of blatant rejection of divinity in an ironic context, in turn commenting on the claims of some particularly violent forms of religious reform. The sources interpret his sons’ inability to rule as going some way to fulfill divine justice for Tamburlaine’s crimes in an attempt to justify the paradox that despite being a cruel and terrible tyrant, he died a natural death and did not outwardly suffer a fall. The swift end of Tamburlaine’s line after his death was further interpreted by the early historians as evidence for the transitory duration of the scourge in human history. But Marlowe excludes this strain of Christian moralizing from his drama, and instead the tragedy closes with the East still at war. In the endless cycle of tragedy that Tamburlaine participates in, and even initiates in the East, his justification is always that he is ordained to this role as the scourge of God. Nashe does not go as far as Marlowe in this line of infernal agency. Wilton is a mere observer of the violent events in Europe, but he fails to return home in the end, preferring instead to remain in France as a spectator to the demonstrations of divinely inspired violence. His interpretation of history is presented as farce, with little to no regard for the facts. What does come through is the brazen

attitude to reformist principles and Christian moralizing that Marlowe's play also confronts.

Nashe's mastery of the art of creating a literary commodity by way of imitating or writing back to more popular contemporary works is one example of his complex technique. The philosophical and theological echoes from Marlowe's oeuvre in *Pierce Penilesse* and *The Unfortunate Traveller* that might be read as Nashe speaking to Marlowe's religious skepticism are particularly noticeable in Pierce's concern with the origins of the devil and the infernal geography of hell discussed earlier. Some of Nashe's satirical comments on religion voiced by Wilton replicate the questioning of the nature of divine providence found in Marlowe.

Nashe imitates the "daring rejection of God" that Marlowe's Faustus and Tamburlaine both exhibit. Wilton's commentary on the cruelties in his world in *The Unfortunate Traveller* is Lucanesque. It comments more broadly on the crimes perpetrated in the name of religion. Nashe may have been thinking of Kyd's torture when Marlowe was arrested, Marlowe's murder, or Kyd's death in 1594. In choosing to imitate Marlowe's ironic treatment of religion and human events, Nashe's texts contribute to a corpus of literary texts signaling the inherent dissatisfaction and instability in England. The relation between Marlowe, his works, and the charges against him particularly interested Nashe in 1593 when his former classmate was being questioned on charges of atheism. Nashe's probable involvement with the Marprelate controversy, and the controversy around *Christ's Teares*, certainly aligned him with a type of precarious polemic that could have brought further difficulties for Nashe. Nonetheless, when Marlowe was charged with atheism, Nashe was further tempted to explore the difficulties of navigating the terms of orthodox Christianity in England and the nature of such religious discourse in print.

By 1594, when Nashe had published *The Unfortunate Traveller* and *The Terrors of the Night; or, A Discourse of Apparitions*, both of which had been completed just after Marlowe's arrest and murder, he had experience navigating how to write about demonic, religious, and even atheistic ideas. Some of his attempts had landed him in trouble with the authorities, but these later works show a Nashe who developed a technique for expressing such ideas in both oblique and blatant ways. Thus these later works represent a more mature, possibly even a weathered Nashe, but still a Nashe who clearly had thought about the controversial lines he copied in the margins of his Leland text. *The Terrors of the Night* continues in the vein of *Pierce Penilesse* and details various superstitions, devils,

and evil spirits; it begins with a comment that reflects on his recent imprisonment: “The Night is the Divells Blacke booke, wherein hee recordeth all our transgressions. Even as when a condemned man is put into a darke dungeon, secluded from all comfort of light or companie, he doth nothing but despairfully call to minde his gracelesse [former] life, and the brutish outrages and misdeemeanours that have throwne him into that desolate horror” (*Terrors of the Night*, 1:345). Weary of the censors after his own imprisonment in a dark dungeon and keeping up the image of a reformed writer, Nashe cautions that his text will detail angels and demons, but he will not name the Devil’s minions: “The names importing [the devil’s] mallice, which the scripture is plentiful of, I wil here omit; lest some men shuld think I went about to conjure” (1:346). The typical satirical Nashe is still present: This ironic comment within a text inquiring into the nature of devils is rather daring considering the climate of suspicion in England but with restrictive caution that *An Almond for a Parrat*, for instance, distinctly lacks. That Marlowe’s *Faustus* may have prompted Nashe to publicly inquire into the nature of devils and spirits is suggested by the fact that he penned the words, “devinytie adieu” twice in his *Encomia* edition; that he continued to think about the implication of such a phrase is evident in the allusions in Nashe’s works to the infernal and to devils. In the prose works that we have access to now we can chart Nashe’s development as a writer, cautiously involved in polemical writings toward a more direct employment of such ideas into his own rhetoric, as in the example of *Pierre Penilesse* and later in *The Terrors of the Night*.¹⁸

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18. I wish to express my gratitude to the following people for reading earlier drafts of this paper and for helping me shape and develop my discussion: Roslyn L. Knutson and Georgia E. Brown read early versions, Dympna Callaghan commented on a revision, and a *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* reader offered helpful comments on the final drafts before submission.

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