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Volume 3 2013 ●



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INDIANA UNIVERSITY–PURDUE UNIVERSITY FORT WAYNE

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: AN ANNUAL 3 (2013)

Table of Contents

- 1 “Fore-words”
M. L. Stapleton and Sarah K. Scott
- 3 “Leander’s Index: Reading Desire in Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander*”
Sarah E. Wall-Randell, Wellesley College
- 23 “Marlowe’s Counterfeit Cyrus”
John Blakely, University College Plymouth, St. Mark & St. John
- 49 “Marlowe, *Hoffman*, and the Admiral’s Men”
Tom Rutter, University of Sheffield
- 63 “The Uses of Unity: Individual and Multitude in *The Jew of Malta*”
Andrew Duxfield, Sheffield Hallam University
- 83 “‘And Yet It Might Be Done That Way’: *The Jew of Malta* on Film”
Ann McCauley Basso, University of South Florida
- 97 “‘I’ll Burn My Books’: Doctor Faustus as a Renaissance Magus”
Rinku Chatterjee, Syracuse University
- 111 “‘Truest of the Twain’: History and Poetry in *Edward II*”
Lisa Hopkins, Sheffield Hallam University
- 129 “Perform to Power: Isabella’s Performative Self-Creation in *Edward II*”
Jennifer L. Sheckter, University of Alberta

- 151 “Costumes, Bodies, and Gender in The Queen’s
Company’s 2004 Production of *Edward II*”
Katherine Allocco, Western Connecticut State
University
- 175 “The Year’s Work in Marlowe Studies: 2012”
David McInnis, University of Melbourne
- 195 Notes on Contributors

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>

THE EDITORS

Fore-words

We are pleased to publish the third issue of *Marlowe Studies: An Annual*. We solicit contributions 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 theater history; textual studies; and Marlowe's professional milieu and place in early modern English poetry, drama, and culture.

For a third year, we offer essays that represent the newest and best in Marlowe studies on diverse topics, ordered in a way that links one paper to another. We begin with an essay by Sarah E. Wall-Randell on *Hero and Leander* that explores its related ideas about reading, desire, and the conception of the material book. The next piece, by John Blakeley, argues that Marlowe published the *Tamburlaine* plays in response to the appearance of the 1590 *Faerie Queene* and that Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* informed their conception. Tom Rutter's "Marlowe, *Hoffman*, and the Admiral's Men" investigates an issue related to Marlowe's acting company. One of its properties, Henry Chettle's *The Tragedy of Hoffman*, long associated with *Hamlet* in theater history circles, also echoes *The Massacre at Paris* and *The Jew of Malta*, which suggests that Marlowe's dramatic influence enjoyed a considerable afterlife in the early seventeenth century. The next two essays, by Andrew Duxfield and Ann McCauley Basso, are devoted to *The Jew of Malta*, the former reinvestigating the theme of Machiavellianism and reinvigorating the topic for our time, the latter serving as witness to history in its analysis of Douglas Morse's film version of the play, the first ever attempted. In the next essay, Rinku Chatterjee analyzes the common early modern relationship

between magic, humanism, and religion as it relates to *Doctor Faustus*. The three ensuing contributions by Lisa Hopkins, Jennifer Sheckter, and Katherine Allocco concern *Edward II* from three distinct perspectives, respectively: the idea of doubles and doubling; Marlowe's subtlety in his conception of the role of Isabella and her performative nature; and an account of an all-female performance of the play in samurai costume. For the second straight year, the annual concludes with an exhaustive bibliographical essay by David McNinnis about the year's work in studies devoted to Marlowe. We thank our contributors and we salute them.

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, and endured our editorial commentary, 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 moral and financial support; Kendra Morris, who helped copy edit the manuscripts and who helped create, produce, and distribute advertising and other types of publicity for *MS:A*; and our managing editor, Cathleen M. Carosella, whose knowledge of publication, scholarship, copy-editing, journals, libraries, printers, and finance helps make our enterprise successful. We once again express our appreciation to the Marlowe Society of America for its past financial assistance and its continuing moral support for the annual. We were honored to be allowed to participate in its Seventh International Marlowe Conference in Staunton, Virginia, in June 2013.

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SARAH WALL-RANDELL

Leander's Index: Reading Desire in
Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*

As Leander drifts homeward on a cloudy morning after his first night with Hero in Christopher Marlowe's epyllion, he sports, rather showily, many souvenirs of the evening, which are also markers of his new status as victorious lover. A garland of "*Cupid's* myrtle" now adorns his hat (*HL*, 589).¹ He has captured Hero's purple hair ribbon and wears it "About his armes . . . wound" (590), while the "sacred ring" that symbolized her vow of chastity is now on his finger (593). His aspect is absent, preoccupied: "he seem'd not to be there" (601). Summing up all these significance-bearing details, the poem says, "Therefore, even as an Index to a booke, / So to his mind was yoong *Leanders* looke" (613–14). The "Therefore," a rhetorically weighty and ostentatiously logical transition word, implies that what follows is proven by what came before; the poem's account of Leander's morning-after appearance, his "looke," concludes with the image of the index, as if this simile were the culmination of the whole description.² What is outside him, the poem proposes, what we

1. Quotations from the text of Marlowe's poem are from *Hero and Leander*, by Christopher Marlowe (London: Printed by Adam Islip for Edward Blunt, 1598). For ease of reference, the line numbers provided parenthetically are from the text of the poem in *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Roma Gill (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 1:175–209.

2. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) lists two meanings current in the late sixteenth century for the noun form of "look": "The action or an act of looking"—one might more concisely say "gaze"—and "Appearance, aspect." "With reference to persons," according to the *OED*, this second meaning appears "often with a mixture of [the previous] sense," to signify the "appearance of the countenance (sometimes, of the whole person); visual or facial expression; personal aspect." *OED* online, s.v. "look," 1a, 2a, I, accessed April 14, 2013, <http://oed.com>. It is easy to see how, when describing

can see, serves as an index or guide to what is inside; the ornaments and behaviors of a lover that he displays disclose the love that occupies his mind.

But the simile does not exactly work. An index is part of a book, whereas “mind” and “look” are both parts of Leander, so this neat, chiastic analogy (*A1* is to *B1* as *A2* is to *B2* becomes flipped syntactically: *index* is to *book* as to *mind* is *look*) upsets its own balance. The book ought to represent not just Leander’s mind but Leander’s whole self, made up of inside and outside together, mind and look; the index should correspond not to his outward show but to a *précis* or microcosm of that self. The neatness of the couplet, both formal and rhetorical, belies the slightly off-centered, slightly less than logical simile. As with so much of the storytelling of Marlowe’s ironical and unreliable narrator, when we approach this passage, it seems authoritative, engaging, but after we have read it, we are left with doubts and questions, with unsatisfied desire.³ Perhaps, in part, our reaction serves as evidence for a human longing for readability, ontology, indication itself, a longing that is born in, but not wholly fulfilled by, print culture. In this image of Leander as an indexed book, I will argue, Marlowe plays with ideas of the eminently, or at least purportedly, logical readability of books, as opposed to the complex, messy unreadability of desiring selves. By setting up a “bookish” model for what it is like to be a lover, Marlowe proposes a way of thinking about desire that can remain, as real desire never does, within inscribed bounds, that can be

someone’s facial expression, a speaker could construe his or her “look” as both an action and an appearance. In *Hero and Leander*, Marlowe uses the noun “looke” or “lookes” seven times. Twice it is certainly the “gaze” meaning that is intended (166, 810); once it is certainly “appearance” (84); and three times it is primarily “gaze” with a more or less ambiguous blend of the *OED*’s sense 2 (201, 331, 791). In my reading, Leander’s “looke” at line 614 should mostly be understood in the “appearance” sense, given the visual description that has gone before, putting the reader in the position of an observer of Leander’s clothes and accessories more than of his face and eyes (no object, present or absent, for a Leanderian gaze is proposed). But line 616 does note that “Affection by the count’nance is descride,” so our attention is called to the idea of Leander’s face, at least, and perhaps there is some admixture in Leander’s “looke” (614) of *OED* sense 1. So although a clear or nuanced version of sense 1, “gaze,” is the more common meaning of “look” in the poem, in this couplet, I believe, the primary meaning is sense 2, “appearance.”

3. Judith Haber discusses the narrator’s game of repeatedly leading on and then frustrating the reader in “‘True-Loves Blood’: Narrative and Desire in *Hero and Leander*,” *English Literary Renaissance* 28.3 (1998): 372–86.

understood, as real desire never fully can, with the rational mind.

This essay will focus, then, on a single couplet in Marlowe's 818-line poem, one that has not previously received sustained critical attention.⁴ As Stephen Booth has recently said, *Hero and Leander* rewards just such micro-readings, such analysis of narrow-but-deep samples: The poem is "an aesthetic goldmine" filled with "glory holes," in which "any passage anywhere . . . is full of substantively irrelevant, altogether extra explosions of mental event" that offer delight to the reader.⁵ In an earlier, influential reading of the poem, Marion Campbell also acknowledged the importance of the couplet as the fundamental unit of meaning in *Hero and Leander*, fundamental in the way that couplets insist formally on their own neat self-contained manner and call attention to the "local effects" they frame.⁶ It will be my argument that the image of Leander's index, rich enough on its own to merit readerly lingering, is "substantively relevant" (*pace* Booth) to the poem as a whole, both because of the poem's (and its 1598 edition's) own investment in bookishness and the rhetoric of reading and because of the couplet's implications for how we understand embodied desire and rational agency in *Hero and Leander* and in the early modern imagination.

Bodies are, in a way, the real actors in *Hero and Leander*; it is not insignificant that when the word "index" first became a piece of English vocabulary, it did so as a part of the body. In Latin, "index" means "an informer, sign, inscription," leading to its application to the forefinger, the digit that points.⁷ In medieval neo-Latin scholarship, including that produced in England, "index" became applied to lists of included topics and various other kinds of paratextual apparatuses that served as a guide to

4. Of the chief modern critical editors of the poem, only Roma Gill singles out this couplet for even the briefest notice. See, for example, Gill, *Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 304; *The Collected Poems of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Brian J. Striar and Patrick Cheney (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006); and *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981).

5. Stephen Booth, "On the Eventfulness of *Hero and Leander*," in *Christopher Marlowe the Craftsman: Lives, Stage, and Page*, ed. Sarah K. Scott and M. L. Stapleton (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 125–36, 129.

6. Marion Campbell, "'Desunt Nonnulla': The Construction of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* as an Unfinished Poem," *ELH* 51.2 (1984): 241–68, 265.

7. *OED*, s.v. "index," 1.

the reader in navigating a book. According to the *OED*, the word first entered vernacular English in the fourteenth century with reference to the finger, rather than to the paratext; the native English term for indexes in books was the Anglo-Norman “table.” In the late sixteenth century, however, “index” in the bookish sense began to come into use in English, interchangeably with “table.”⁸ The adoption in English books of the word “index” in the 1570s, and its expanding use thereafter, coincides with what Ann Blair has noted as important scholarly developments in the standardization and rationalization of bookish apparatuses such as indexes and tables. Alphabetization, for example, while not universal in medieval indexes, came to be expected in the sixteenth-century index. At the same time, says Blair, indexes begin to be advertised as selling-points on the title-pages of books, and the book trade sees a general and marked increase in the provision of indexes and tables.⁹ At the same time as the word “index” became increasingly used in English alongside “table,” that is to say, indexes themselves were becoming more important both to those who made books and to those who bought them. So the pattern of use of the word itself is a kind of index, in the sense of indicator, of a growing awareness of the value of these tools attached to books.

In witnessing a broad trend toward the consolidation of understanding about what an index was, however, it is important not to overlook the continued diversity, even eclecticism, of the early modern index. A sixteenth-century English table or index could be an alphabetical list of the book’s topics, as in a modern index, but it could also be a list of contents in order of their appearance or any of various other kinds of lists that distill the book’s information into a smaller, quick-reference form. Furthermore, it was not only scholarly books that used indexes, but other works in which a need for quick reference might be somewhat less obvious to the modern reader, such as volumes of lyric poetry and romances. Clearly indexes, of various kinds, were a highly desirable feature of many kinds of printed books.

8. *OED*, s.v. “index,” 5a, b; “table,” 2, 14a, b.

9. Ann Blair, “Annotating and Indexing Natural Philosophy,” in *Books and the Sciences in History*, ed. Marina Frasca-Spada and Nick Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 69–89, 75–85.

Richard Tottel's *Songes and Sonettes* (1557), for example, the first English poetry anthology, featuring lyrics by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt, has an index of the first lines of its poems, called "The Table," and is arranged alphabetically.¹⁰ John Stow's *Summarye of the Chronicles of Englande* (1570) offers two "tables" (each also styled "The Table" in its own running head): an index of English kings and queens, listed chronologically, followed by a topical index ("Ages of the world, 414" and "Bishopriks in Eng., 2"), with detailed subheadings, listed alphabetically.¹¹ In John Baret's *An Alverie or Quadruple Dictionarie* (1573), a dictionary of English, Latin, Greek, and French, words in the four languages are arranged in the main body of the text by subject rather than alphabetically; the book then includes an "Index" of all the Latin words, followed by a list of the English proverbial phrases used to define the words, also called "Index," both arranged in an alphabetization style held over from medieval texts: The first heading for words that begin with *ab*-, the second for words that begin with *ac*-, and so on. *Englands Parnassus* (1600), an anthology of quotations compiled by Robert Allott, has a table that is alphabetical by topic to assist the reader in choosing quotations for particular occasions (figure 1). This index is especially helpful since the book itself, organized by topic, is only alphabetical for the first 160 of its over 260 pages, after which the order of the topics becomes apparently random, the project of compiling the material having apparently been completed after printing had begun.¹² (*Hero and Leander* is, of course, represented in *Englands Parnassus* by over thirty quotations, on affection, beauty, love, night, and so forth.) John Northbrooke's *The Poore Mans Garden* (1571), an anthology of biblical quotations, includes a paratext, titled "An Index," that is really what we would call a table of contents: a list of the chapters of the anthology, each organized by a topic such as "Of Predestination" or "Of mans free will," in the order in which they appear (figure 2).¹³ Interestingly, in this index, the titles of the

10. *Songes and Sonettes, Written by the Right Honorable Lorde Henry Haward Late Earle of Surrey, and Other* (London, 1557), sig. Gg2r-3v.

11. John Stow, *A Summarye of the Chronicles of Englande, from the First Comminge of Brute into This Lande, unto This Present Yeare of Christ 1570*. . . (London, 1570), sig. Ff8r.

12. Robert Allott, *Englands Parnassus: or The Choysest Flowers of our Moderne Poets*. . . (London, 1600), sig. A6r.

13. John Northbrooke, *Spiritus est vicarius Christi in terra. The Poore Mans Garden*

chapters appear first, followed by the chapter numbers, implying that the subject of each chapter is more important than its order. Finally, in Sir John Harington's 1591 translation of Lodovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, we find a wonderfully detailed alphabetical index of characters and the pages on which the reader will find the varied events of the narrative happening to them:

Angelica called also the Indian Queene, daughter of *Galafon*, came from India with *Orlando* & is taken from him by the Emperour *Charles*, pag. 2, given to the Duke of *Bavier* to keep, & leapeth out of his tent, ibi, meets with *Renaldo* and runnes from him, ibidem, she meets *Sacrapant* and goes with him, pag. 5, helps him to take *Baiardo*, pag. 6, meets *Renaldo* againe, pag. 7, leaves *Renaldo* and *Sacrapant*, and meets with an Hermit, pag. 10, flies from him and is pursued by him, pag. 59.¹⁴

Here, the index, in its thorough following of each character's wandering, ends up being a kind of dissection and reassembly of the plot that totally subverts the interlace structure typical of romance and makes it linear (figure 3). With its aid, we can find out immediately that Angelica will fly from the Hermit that she meets on page 10, whereas if we were reading the romance itself, we would have to wait until page 59 for Angelica and her narrative to resurface. Reading the index becomes an alternative, anti-romance way of reading *Orlando Furioso*, in which the time-pressed reader can discover a narrative almost as detailed as the original (with more than one plot twist from each page of the text sometimes included, hence the need for *ibid* and *ibidem*) but cured of romance's characteristic digression and errancy.

wherein are Flowers of the Scriptures. . . . (London, 1571), sig. Kk2r.

14. Lodovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse by John Harington* (London, 1591), sig. Nn5v.

A Table of all the speciall matters contained in this Booke.

A	C		
Albion	348	Are	24
Angels	Pag. 12	Charitie	25
Amor	3	Chastitie	26
Appetite	7. vid. penurie.	Children	28
Art	9	Christ	28
Audacitie	8	Cyprius	353
Auerice	10	Cynthia	355
Augur	369	Cupid	357
Autumnus	368	Ceremonie	379
Apollo	372	Ceston	407
Acheron	504	Confusion of languages	384
Assaut	375	Clamoure	457
Adam	372	Care of children	462
Afflictions	402. 446	Change	29
Astridye	345	Chauce	39
Astrumeticke	345	Crancale	31
B		Combat	347
Bacchus	13. 385. 465	Concord	32
Banishment	21	Confidence	33
Bastardise	21	Craft	36
Bisse	21	Country. Commonwealth	37
Bountie	23	Content	38
Battaille	345	Court	41
Beasts	498. 486	Courier effeminate	352
Byrds	487	Courage	39. 448
		Courtesie	45. 439
		Cruelty	

A 6

Figure 1. Robert Allott, *Englands Parnassus: or The Choysest Flowers of our Moderne Poets. . .* (London, 1600), sig. A6r. Image courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

An Index of the common places that are spoken of in the Scriptures.

1. Of the Scriptures.	1.
2. Of the Scriptures.	2.
3. Of the Scriptures.	3.
4. Of the Scriptures.	4.
5. Of the Scriptures.	5.
6. Of the Scriptures.	6.
7. Of the Scriptures.	7.
8. Of the Scriptures.	8.
9. Of the Scriptures.	9.
10. Of the Scriptures.	10.
11. Of the Scriptures.	11.
12. Of the Scriptures.	12.
13. Of the Scriptures.	13.
14. Of the Scriptures.	14.
15. Of the Scriptures.	15.
16. Of the Scriptures.	16.
17. Of the Scriptures.	17.
18. Of the Scriptures.	18.
19. Of the Scriptures.	19.
20. Of the Scriptures.	20.
21. Of the Scriptures.	21.
22. Of the Scriptures.	22.
23. Of the Scriptures.	23.
24. Of the Scriptures.	24.
25. Of the Scriptures.	25.
26. Of the Scriptures.	26.
27. Of the Scriptures.	27.
28. Of the Scriptures.	28.
29. Of the Scriptures.	29.
30. Of the Scriptures.	30.
31. Of the Scriptures.	31.
32. Of the Scriptures.	32.
33. Of the Scriptures.	33.
34. Of the Scriptures.	34.
35. Of the Scriptures.	35.
36. Of the Scriptures.	36.
37. Of the Scriptures.	37.
38. Of the Scriptures.	38.
39. Of the Scriptures.	39.
40. Of the Scriptures.	40.
41. Of the Scriptures.	41.
42. Of the Scriptures.	42.
43. Of the Scriptures.	43.
44. Of the Scriptures.	44.
45. Of the Scriptures.	45.
46. Of the Scriptures.	46.
47. Of the Scriptures.	47.
48. Of the Scriptures.	48.
49. Of the Scriptures.	49.
50. Of the Scriptures.	50.

Figure 2. John Northbrooke, *Spiritus est vicarius Christi in terra. The poore mans garden wherein are Flowers of the Scriptures. . .* (London, 1571), sig. Kk2r. Image courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library.



Figure 3. Lodovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso* in *English Heroical Verse*, by John Harington (London, 1591), sig. Nn5v. Image courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Indexes, then, can help a reader use a book more quickly by mapping a path through it that is perpendicular to the primary one: topically versus chronologically, alphabetically versus topically, character-wise versus interlaced. Given all this—indexes' ability to supplement, double, or even unmake a book's order—what does it mean that Leander's mind is represented as well-indexed? Robert F. Darcy, one of the only critics of the poem to focus on this couplet, glosses it by saying “One need not thumb the pages of Leander’s mind because his body writes the summary index of his desire.”¹⁵ But as we have begun to see, the function of an early modern index could be less straightforwardly accountable to a book’s contents than Darcy’s “summary” implies; when the idea of indexing is applied to human subjects, the picture is both less and more complex.

The idea that a person could be “indexed” by a description was current in Marlowe’s time, via Henry Peacham, one of the great poetic theorists of the sixteenth century. For Peacham, in

15. Robert F. Darcy, “‘Under My Hands . . . A Double Duty’: Printing and Pressing Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander*,” *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 2.2 (2002): 26–56, 42.

The Garden of Eloquence (1577), “When that as well the person of a very man as of a fayned, is by his forme, stature, manners, studyes, dooings, affections, and such other circumstances, serving the purpose, so described . . . it may appeare a playne picture painted in Tables.”¹⁶ In this interesting analogy, a discursive verbal picture is compared to a paratextual apparatus, while the clarity of both the description and the index are compared to a visual, figural “picture.” Furthermore, Marlowe is not alone in using the image of an index to characterize a person in an early modern literary text. In William Shakespeare’s *Othello* (1603), Iago describes with disgust the affection he claims to have seen between Desdemona and Cassio, slandering their behavior as “Lechery, by this hand; an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts” (2.1.248–49).¹⁷ Meanwhile, in *Cymbeline* (1609), Iachimo says dismissively of the hero Posthumus, “I could then have looked on him without the help of admiration, though the catalogue of his endowments had been tabled by his side and I to peruse him by items” (1.4.3–6). In both these cases, a villainous speaker wields the idea of an index or table as a way of condemning his enemy through a charge of too-easy readability. Iago wants to convince Roderigo that Cassio and Desdemona’s behavior too obviously indicates lust; the index, he says, makes the contents all too clear even if the “prologue” is “obscure.” For Iachimo, Posthumus’s true shortcomings can be all too easily understood, outweighing his virtues even were they helpfully displayed in an index. These speakers diminish their targets by saying, in essence, “I can read you like a book.” Of course, these texts are somewhat later than *Hero and Leander*, and Shakespeare’s index speakers are villains—indeed, almost cousin villains in being two of the most essentially virulent figures in his catalogue. The narrative voice of Marlowe’s poem, while a distinctive, very present, sometimes unreliable “character,” as many scholars have noted, has a profoundly different relationship with the reader than do Shakespeare’s villains, and it treats Leander with a mix of

16. Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence*. . . (1577), qtd. in Gill, *Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 1:179.

17. William Shakespeare, *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997). All subsequent references from Shakespeare’s works are taken from this edition.

amusement and satire, not derisively or destructively, but it acknowledges that this over legibility is precisely his condition: “O none but gods have power their love to hide, / Affection by the count’nance is descride” (615–16), the poem sighs in the lines immediately following the index image, and when Leander arrives at home, “His secret flame apparently was seene, / *Leander’s* Father knew where he had beene” (619–20).

But signaling transparency is not the only representational work that indexes can do. A slightly different, but related, example of a literary image of an index is found in book 12 of *Orlando Furioso*, when the knight Astolfo prepares to use a procedure detailed in a magic book to cause a castle, which is actually a spell-built illusion, to disappear. In Harington’s 1591 translation, the book offers the reader “many a precept wise and grave . . . / And that to find them out he may be able, / The book had in the end a perfite table.”¹⁸ At the appropriate moment, Astolfo “took his book and searcheth in the table / How to dissolve the place he might be able, / And straight in th’index for it he doth look.”¹⁹ By giving this magic book a handy index, Ariosto, perhaps the most ironic of Renaissance romance poets, takes the opportunity of Astolfo’s dissolution of a magic spell to effect a concomitant comic deflation of the supernatural mystery of the romance mode itself. Down with the castle, down (for a meta-literary moment) with the fantastical world of romance, and up with a piece of humanist, material textual apparatus. So, in a bright comic flourish in Ariosto, or in the malign snarls of Shakespeare’s villains, the index serves as a marker, indeed as an index, of limitation, of being earthbound, whether sorry or salutary: The person or thing in question is not glorious, not admirable, not magic, but just a book, just an object. We can see the same deflationary action of bookishness at work elsewhere in Shakespeare. When Juliet says wonderingly of Romeo, “You kiss by th’book” (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1.5.107), the inexperience of both lovers—Juliet who only knows love from reading about it, and Romeo whose kisses are more impressive for their technical skill than for the pleasure they give—is being gently parodied. The cool precision of the

18. Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, trans. Sir John Harington, ed. Robert McNulty (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 15.9.

19. Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, 12.14.

index, the methodical detachment of the index user, makes the heat of desire, like the grandeur of magic, look excessive and foolish.

Marlowe's narrator is, of course, much occupied in *Hero and Leander* with making fun, both fondly and wickedly, of the ardent innocence of both his lovers, an even more autodidact Romeo and Juliet who literally stumble their way into consummation, but perhaps especially of the "novice" (497), "rude in love, and raw" (545), "yoong *Leander*" (614), who does not quite understand on the first night that he has not yet achieved complete bliss, and cannot imagine (while the narrator, and we, certainly can) what Neptune wants with him, a boy. His knowledge is all theoretical, scholastic: His initial appeal to Hero, with its *copia* of similes and its logical argumentative structures, could serve as a primer on rhetoric in a sixteenth-century schoolroom. Leander, too, comically lacks worldly experience, and he also, with his overeager display of Hero's love-tokens on his walk home, makes himself excessively readable. Marlowe is perhaps also making fun of himself and his own method, of the elaborate literariness of *Hero and Leander*, with its highly decorated style, its classical source ("divine *Musaens*," cited by name at line 52, in the manner of a conscientious scholar) and many mythological allusions, its inset digressions, the chiming precision of its rhyme scheme. Yet, as with Ariosto's romance, the lightness and play of the satiric self-reflection is part of the poem's brilliance; a moment later the satire can evaporate. If Marlowe's Leander is too book-like, the poem is, after all, highly bookish, and to read it is to relish its finely-turned, connoisseur-like pleasures. Thus, in a way that connects to the chiasmic image of Leander's indexical look, the poem reflexively points to itself, indicating its own texture, even as it consistently performs its distinctive style.

The way in which the printer of the 1593 text, Edward Blunt, has presented the poem echoes and reinforces the "bookishness" of Marlowe's text. Darcy notes the way in which Blunt's "Epistle Dedicatorie" (1598) to Sir Francis Walsingham calls attention to his "packaging" of the poem as a book, both materially and generically, when it announces that "this unfinished Tragedy happens under my hands to be imprinted."²⁰ Even

20. Darcy, "'Under My Hands . . . A Double Duty,'" 27. See also *Hero*, A3v; Gill,

beyond the preface, however, Blunt has made some gestures that prepare the text for a typical Renaissance reader, anticipating the reader's presence in the text in a way that calls attention to the book's materiality and to the deliberate practices of reading. Two of Marlowe's lines that make especially apt *sententiae* are highlighted and rendered easily pluckable for the reader looking for additions to his or her commonplace book, by being set in italics: when the intensity of Leander's adoring gaze softens Hero's "gentle heart," the next line appears as "*Such force and vertue bath an amorous looke*" (165–66), and on the other side of the same leaf, as the "inflam'd" Leander takes Hero's "trembl[ing]" hand, the narrator comments "*Love deeply ground, hardly is dissembled*" (182–84). A few lines later appears a printed marginal comment, the only one in the text, pointing out "*A periphrasis of night*" (alongside lines 189–90), again helpfully directing the reader to one of Marlowe's flowers of rhetoric, perhaps setting an example for further such annotations to be made by the reader her- or himself. These accoutrements of book use reminded the quarto's original readers, as they remind us, of the poem's existence as a book, and its place in a rhetorical culture in which beautiful sentences and images (such as the index analogy itself) circulated between print and manuscript, between book and book.

The image of the index, then, can be seen as a characterization of Leander that wittily glances at the mode of the whole poem. I would like, however, to suggest another reading of Leander's index, in which Marlowe's invocation of this technological apparatus of print culture is not only an extension of its play with bookishness. Perhaps the index is less a comic diminishment of Leander and more an enlargement, the opening up of a fresh way of understanding the affective phenomenon of love. We might again return to the original chiasmic phrase: "Therefore, even as an Index to a booke, / So to his mind was yoong *Leanders* looke" (613–14). I have suggested that the analogy is not quite symmetrical, because an index is part of the whole of a book, whereas a person's "look" or physical appearance is not part of his mind; the whole here should be Leander. If nothing else, the unbalanced analogy calls attention to the question of being embodied, of where love and

desire are imagined to reside. Setting “mind” *beside* “body” rather than inside it, and linking that idea to the idea of the index, the poem proposes a bookish model of extrabodily thought and agency. Perhaps to envision a mind or self as a book can be a way of imagining it, experimentally, other than as part of a body. To escape the body, according to some scholars of the early modern physiological arts, is to escape a terrifying lack of agency.

Critics such as Gail Kern Paster have drawn our attention to the ways in which emotion was understood and experienced by early moderns as profoundly embodied. Passions and affections, in the early modern worldview proposed by Paster, are not just *accompanied* by bodily phenomena such as the surging and ebbing of cold and hot humors, but are in fact *constituted* by those phenomena, and the body is situated as part of a larger, fluctuating, liquid “ecology,” interpenetrating with and influenced by its environment. Paster describes the “humoral body” as “characterized not only by its physical openness but also by its emotional instability and volatility, by an internal microclimate knowable, like climates in the outer world, more for changeability than for stasis.”²¹ Certainly we can find the impress of this idea of the embodied passions in *Hero and Leander*. Marlowe’s lovers are often represented as subject to bodily storms, blushing, flushing, sighing, and weeping, and their experience of love is found in the grips of those physical tumults. The inhabitants of Sestos pine and literally die of “savage heat” (115) and unrequited “violent passions” (126) for Hero. Leander experiences “fire that from his count’nance blazed” (164) when he first sees Hero. Her blushes further inflame him until “The aire with sparkes of living fire was spangled” (188). Hero’s face contains “tralucent cesternes” which pump “A streame of liquid pearle” (296, 297) that both contains and discharges her grief at breaking her vows of chastity. Hero and Leander are drawn blindly into consummation of their love by seeking the source of a mysteriously building “pleasing heat” (552). Perhaps the passage that immediately precedes the “index” simile most fully details the “ecology” of a

21. Gail Kern Paster, *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2004), 19.

desiring body in the world, physically warmed and burned by the proximity of another body:

Like as the sunne in a Dyameter
 Fires and inflames objects remooved far
 And heateth kindly, shining lat'rally;
 So beautie, sweetly quickens when 'tis ny,
 But being separated and remooved,
 Burnes where it cherisht, murdrs where it loved.
 Therefore even as an Index to a booke,
 So to his mind was young *Leanders* looke. (607–13)

I have read the “Therefore” as reaching back farther in this passage to the list of love tokens that Leander wears, but its immediate antecedent is, instead, this description of the physically burning pain of love. For Leander, trapped in his passionate body, distance from his beloved is literally burning him alive. The poem’s “Therefore” and its turn to the simile of the index, then, does not exactly follow naturally. Perhaps, however, it is the discontinuity, the contrast that is the point: the contrast between Leander as a helpless body, enthralled to another, distant body, pierced by heat, subject to chaotic forces of gravity, desire, and pain, and Leander as a book, disembodied knowledge, a container for information, with firm and defined boundaries, complete with a helpful index. The self-model of an indexed book, then, could be imagined as an escape from the somatic vulnerability of passion, the cureless tumult of the flesh, into a logical and orderly print world in which distinctions hold—the distinction between the main body of the book and the index, for example—and the reader is the master of his experience, using convenient paratexts to acquire and process knowledge.²²

The model of the humoral body makes us in a sense destined to be swayed and wracked by passions. A sense of the powerlessness of humans, of their subservience to larger designs, is conveyed with a deadpan straightforwardness by *Hero and Leander*’s narrator: “It lies not in our power to love, or hate, / For will in us is over-rulde by fate” (167–68). Meanwhile, Marlowe’s choice of a self-consciously literary source story for

22. For a theoretical and material analysis of the textual apparatus attached to early modern books, see Helen Smith and Louise Wilson, eds., *Renaissance Paratexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011).

his epyllion—in addition to making his poem more bookish by endowing it with actual (“divine *Musaeus*” [52]) and virtual “footnotes” to other books and literary traditions—locks his characters into another kind of destiny: the destiny of the prewritten ending. Yet in the poem as left by Marlowe, whether intentionally or accidentally, that ending is absent. By cutting off his narrative before its expected close, perhaps Marlowe offers Hero and Leander an escape, even if a temporary one, from the tragic fate to which they are consigned by literary tradition. (For me, indeed, the idea of a Marlovian escape from the preinscribed story adds weight to the now long-established argument, made by Campbell and others, that the 818-line version is “finished.”) Perhaps, in a parallel way, by closing a vivid account of the burning pains of embodied desire with an image of the self as a book, Marlowe is offering Leander a momentary escape from the sorrows of embodiedness, the prison of the corporeal self.

In this way we can simultaneously read Leander’s index as a comic critique of the legibility of his desire and as a praise of legibility itself, an homage to how ordered the book is, in contrast to the treacherous or impossible decoding that the material and social world demands of those who would read it. As many critics have noted, the poem contains a veritable cursed library of misreadings, beginning with onlookers who take Leander’s body for a woman’s—“Some swore he was a maid in man’s attire” (83)—and continuing through the poem’s final moments, when Apollo, misled by the “false morne” (805) of Hero’s shining, dawn-like countenance, begins to drive the car of day in the face of “ougly night” (816).²³ In the poem, Hero even wears legible clothing, her “Venus and Adonis” narrative sleeves, yet the lovers are comically illegible to each other: Leander cannot read the meaning of Hero’s “painted fanne” (495) when she coquettishly drops it; later, when Hero sees Leander’s naked body at her door, she reads it not as an object of desire but one of fear and runs away (721). While it is important not to let the definition of “reading” become too diffuse when talking about the early modern book, it is impossible not to notice the emphatic way in which “reading” inside the poem—reading

23. Darcy gives an account of many of the instances of metaphorical “misreading” in the poem in “‘Under My Hands . . . A Double Duty.’”

without helpful guides such as indexes—can be an experience of terror, of inundation, like succumbing to the heedless tides of the humoral body. The index is the antidote to textual inundation, the tool that makes the sea of text manageable. A moment of bookish organization, then, of perfectly ordered limits, and in the headline from Harington's index, "exact and necessary" legibility, forms a wistful counterpoint, a yearning for escape from the physical confusions of the frighteningly limitless body into the different pleasures of the book.

It is crucial to point out, of course, even as we register its power and vividness, that this idea of the book as a perfectly organized and legible object, a tool designed to beat back informational chaos, is a kind of fantasy of print culture, an ideal, not the reality in which the printing process was highly susceptible to error and loss. This ideal imagines the paratext as a taxonomizing, schematizing force that contains and rationalizes the sea of pure, infinite information, in which one might drown as surely as in the Hellespont. It is a fantasy shared by early modern readers and modern readers alike, but it is transparently a dream; for all the claims that indexes make to be "exact," "parfit," and "convenient," authors and readers knew all too well that they organized the texts they attended in approximate, partial, and flawed ways, just as books transmitted errors and omissions along with the information they contained. Another ubiquitous paratext in early modern books, indeed more common than indexes, is the errata page, through which books reinscribe, even while correcting, their own mistakes.²⁴ Early modern indexes—like modern ones—are far from infallibly compiled; moreover, the multiplicity of their conceptions and designs, as seen in the examples I have gathered, necessarily implies that indexical "best practices" were in a state of evolution in the early modern book.

Furthermore, perhaps even more importantly, indexes were not used only as their compilers and printers had foreseen; readers too had a part in creating, specializing, and augmenting indexes. Crucially, early modern books were sold unbound, as stacks of pages, loose or only temporarily gathered, and the

24. Or rather a subset of their own mistakes; among the uncountable early modern errata that escaped even the errata sheet is the first quotation of *Hero and Leander* in *Englands Parnassus*, credited to "*Th. Marlowe*." See Allott, *Englands Parnassus*, fol. 7.

buyer's own participation in the process of "making" the book, by binding together one or more texts, was significant.²⁵ Indexes and tables of all kinds were usually printed as separate gatherings and could thus be bound at the end or the beginning of the book, or even not included at all, according to the buyer's preference. And, of course, like books generally in the early modern period, indexes were, in an after-the-fact sense, collaborative—readers evidently felt free to supplement indexes and fill in perceived gaps with their own ink marks, just as they added manuscript annotations to all other parts of printed books. (Indeed, the "manicule," the often-seen icon of a hand with a pointing index finger, drawn by early modern readers in the margins of their books, neatly links the printed index, at least conceptually, to readers' manuscript marking on printed books as another way of guiding themselves and other readers through the text.) Peter Stallybrass has claimed that "the history of the hand in relation to the book is above all the history of the index (in the multiple senses of that word)"²⁶ and has noted that one of the major functions of printed text in the early modern period was to elicit the creation of manuscript text, as readers wrote on and in printed documents and books.²⁷ So both before and after being bound into books, indexes were flexible and mutable—not perfected, closed, and infallibly authoritative. Indeed, in considering books themselves in the period, it is important to understand them not as monolithic objects, but rather as collaborative processes, in which author, compiler, patron, printer, compositor, seller, buyer, readers, and others all play parts.²⁸

25. William P. Weaver has recently reminded us (to give a relevant example) that Marlowe's main source, the Greek text of Musaeus's *Hero and Leander*, was most often bound in the sixteenth century with other apparently unrelated Greek and Latin texts such as Aesop's fables that, Weaver argues, left their own traces on Marlowe's poem. See "Marlowe's Fable: *Hero and Leander* and the Rudiments of Eloquence," *Studies in Philology* 105.3 (2008), 388–408.

26. Peter Stallybrass, "Navigating the Book" (unpublished paper, 1998), qtd. in James Kearney, *The Incarnate Text: Imagining the Book in the Reformation* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2009), 267n33. On the "manicule," see William H. Sherman, "Toward a History of the Manicule," in *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2008), 25–52.

27. Peter Stallybrass, "What Is a Book?" (seminar, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA, December 4, 2012).

28. I am grateful to Jeffrey Todd Knight for helping me think about this point.

In one way, acknowledging the unfixed, evolving, flexible nature of the book might be seen as undermining the stability of the comparison between a book and Leander's mind. If the index can signify flux rather than clarity, then perhaps the crispness of Marlowe's analogy becomes not just unbalanced but blurred, the logical lines connecting the halves of the chiasmus unmoored, indicativeness itself vacated. But if we acknowledge the many agencies at work in creating and customizing the organization of the book, including the reader's, then we can glimpse a third interpretive possibility. As we have seen, the image of the index parodies Leander's and the poem's own bookishness; at the same time, it offers an alternative model of desire as redemptively bookish, the experience of desire as something that can be assisted by the use of a good index, rather than as a fatal flooding of the body. But since the early modern reader not only employs indexes, but can in fact participate in the making of indexes, the index's rescue of the reader can be a self-rescue that the reader effects. Leander, after all, indexes himself by decorating himself with Hero's tokens, and although the poem laments that desire cannot be concealed, nothing suggests that it was not Leander's intent to be "readable." Leander *performs* his own bookishness, working between his own "contents" and his outward display to align meaning with show, like a reader who shapes the book he buys to align more closely with his own needs—and thus to resemble more closely the way his own mind works—by choosing, placing, and annotating an index. Perhaps this elective, "owning" function is also signaled by the off-center chiasmus of lines 129–30: Just as the index is contained by the higher-order structure of the book, so does Leander's mind contain, by controlling and deploying, his "look."

By carefully exfoliating this image of Leander's mind as a book, then, we can see the ways in which Marlowe is exploring the possibilities of the index as a mechanism for organizing and framing information, mediating between book and reader. Does the index make the book ideally readable, or too readable, or does it threaten to disrupt or replace reading the book at all, as with the index to Harington's *Orlando*—and, in a certain way, as

See *Bound to Read: Compilations, Collections, and the Making of Renaissance Literature* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2013).

with the indexed quotation-anthology *Englands Parnassus*, via which one could read what *Hero and Leander* has to say about affection, beauty, and other topoi, without actually reading *Hero and Leander*? In this unexpectedly complex negotiation among book, index, and reader, and within the compact space of a couplet, Marlowe finds ways to explore both the comic limitations and the performative freedoms of the desiring, reading, read subject. Ultimately, by imagining the self as an indexed book, participating necessarily in a kind of intellectual fantasy about the ability of indexes to indicate and the authority of books, the very bookish *Hero and Leander* offers its swooning, struggling, erotically yearning and yearned-for protagonist a moment of respite from the tempests of the body, and perhaps an eternal deferral of the hungry embraces of the Hellespont.²⁹

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JOHN BLAKELEY
Marlowe's Counterfeit Cyrus

A counterfeit profession is better
Than unseen hypocrisy.¹

Patrick Cheney's masterful exposition of Christopher Marlowe's Ovidian contestation of Edmund Spenser's Virgilian career trajectory, *Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession: Ovid, Spenser, Counter-Nationhood* (1997), takes its title from these lines spoken by Barabas in *The Jew of Malta*. While Barabas claims the deceit he openly practices is preferable to the hidden hypocrisy of his Christian enemies, Cheney suggests that the phrase further offers "a programmatic statement for Marlovian art."² Beyond the theatrical resonances of "counterfeit," particularly apt to Marlowe's chosen métier, its meanings of false, deceptive, and concealed are supplemented by "'made to a pattern: fashioned, wrought' (*OED*, Def. A.2), with reference to 'a picture or image' (Def. A.4) and to 'writings' (Def. B.1.b)."³ Moreover, if we consider the etymology of the word, for which the *Oxford English Dictionary* cites the Latin *contrafacere* and the French *contrefaire*, we can readily appreciate its literal meaning: that which is made, or fashioned, *against*, or counter to, an original. Cheney does not press this suggestion of opposition, but he argues that Marlowe

1. Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, in *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays*, ed. Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey (London: Penguin, 2003), 1.2.291–92. Except where otherwise noted, all quotations from Marlowe's plays are taken from the Romany and Lindsey edition.

2. Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession: Ovid, Spenser, Counter-Nationhood* (London: U of Toronto P, 1997), 151.

3. Cheney, *Counterfeit Profession*, 15. See also *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (Complete Text Reproduced Micrographically)*, s.v. "counterfeit."

rejected Spenser's patriotic and Virgilian "laureate" model for a literary career, in favor of an Ovidian model that identifies itself with scholarly *libertas* in place of nation, a model affirming the immortality of the individual writer's verse.⁴

Importantly, this book allows us to envisage Marlowe in a way that has not always been granted: as self-conscious author of his works. As Cheney has observed more recently, "typically, Marlowe gets erased from our main critical narrative about the advent of modern English Authorship."⁵ The surviving dramatic texts ascribed to Marlowe lack straightforward, demonstrable signs of transmission from a single authorial agent. And yet, we clearly share a powerful sense of the Marlovian. Namely, writing that is distinctively hyperbolic, heterodox, and overreaching. He was not a "literary dramatist" in the manner of Ben Jonson or, *pace* Lukas Erne, William Shakespeare.⁶ Cheney posits a plausible Marlovian-authorial program, but it was not one that required promulgation through print; all of his writings, with the exception of the *Tamburlaine the Great* plays, were printed posthumously. Why was this one work excepted? The answer, I will shortly suggest, takes us back to Spenser.

Given the extraordinary popularity of the *Tamburlaine* plays in performance, one might simply explain the motivation of their publisher and printer, Richard Jones, as merely an attempt to capitalize upon their commercial cachet. However, as Erne explains, "the publication of commercial plays performed by adult companies in public playhouses had been an extremely rare phenomenon before 1590, suggesting that there had been little demand."⁷ Not only then was this publication exceptional in Marlowe's career but it comes at a time when the printing of

4. For Edmund Spenser as "laureate," see Richard Helgerson, *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton, and the Literary System* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1983), 55–100. For *libertas*, see Cheney, *Counterfeit Profession*, 21–25.

5. Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe's Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 1.

6. Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

7. Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*, 51. For further discussion of the commercial aspects of printing plays see Peter W. M. Blayney, "The Publication of Playbooks," in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia UP, 1997), 383–422; and Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser, "The Popularity of Playbooks Revisited," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 56.1 (2005): 1–32.

stage plays per se was unusual. In fact, the publication of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays was one of the key moments for the coming into existence of play-texts for readers, both registering awareness of the difference and pointing the way forward to more clearly literary and authorial productions.⁸ The texts themselves evince conscious revision. As J. S. Cunningham summarizes, it has been "established beyond reasonable doubt that the manuscript from which it was printed was not of theatre origin. It may, indeed, have been a manuscript in Marlowe's own hand."⁹ Cunningham details inconsistencies in marking scene divisions, the omission of many required entry and exit directions and other stage directions, concluding with the suggestion that the printer may have "had Marlowe's original manuscript, or a transcript by Marlowe or another hand, or the manuscript of Marlowe's possible revision of the plays for publication."¹⁰ By the standards of the day, *Tamburlaine* is a carefully produced text, largely free of obvious textual errors. An intriguing preface written by Jones clearly signals to the reader that the plays as they appear in their published form diverge significantly from the text as it had been performed.

I have purposely omitted and left out some fond and frivolous jestures, digressing and, in my poor opinion, far unmeet for the matter, which I thought might seem more tedious unto the wise than any way else to be regarded—though, haply, they have been of some vain conceited fondlings greatly gaped at, what times they were showed upon the stage in their graced deformities. Nevertheless, now to be mixtured in print with such matter of worth, it would prove a great disgrace to so honourable and stately a history.¹¹

Jones tells his "gentlemen readers" both something of the nature of the material cut and also the reason for excising it in a way that is quite unusual for the period.¹² Indeed, given the possibly

8. Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*, 31–55.

9. J. S. Cunningham, ed., introduction to *Tamburlaine the Great* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1981), 86.

10. Cunningham, ed., *Tamburlaine*, 89.

11. Qtd. in Romany and Lindsey, ed., *The Complete Plays*, 73.

12. For Richard Jones's distinctive and unorthodox approach to publishing see Kirk Melnikoff, "Richard Jones (fl. 1564–1613): Elizabethan Printer, Bookseller and Publisher," *Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography* 12.3–4 (2001): 153–84; and Kirk Melnikoff, "Jones's Pen and Marlowe's Socks: Richard Jones, Print Culture, and the

authorial nature of the manuscript—and notwithstanding Jones's claim to be the agent of the alterations—it is quite possible to envisage Marlowe himself preparing the manuscript for publication.¹³

We know, then, that the text of the printed plays differed significantly from the text of the performed plays, without knowing very much about the precise nature of the alterations beyond the fact that the printed text was more neoclassical, both in its Latinate act and scene divisions and in its excision of indecorous comic matter. However, it is another more tangible feature of the printed texts which may suggest why, exceptionally among Marlowe's works, these two plays were published while Marlowe was still alive: Namely, that they are sprinkled with borrowings from and apparent allusions to Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (1590–96). The *Tamburlaine* plays almost certainly appeared in print only a few months after William Ponsonby published the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*. *The Faerie Queene* was entered in the Stationers' Register to Ponsonby on December 1, 1589, which, allowing for the fact that its size would have entailed a lengthier than normal printing process, suggests a likely publication date around the summer of 1590. The two *Tamburlaine* plays were entered to Jones on August 15, 1590, and appeared in print before the end of the year. Though the Marlovian borrowings have been much discussed, it is rather surprising to find that little attention has been paid to this coincidence.¹⁴ Of course, at issue is the fact that the first

Beginnings of English Dramatic Literature," *Studies in Philology* 102.2 (2005): 184–209. Unlike most of his contemporaries, Jones was not afraid to proclaim his contribution to the texts he published. Melnikoff, "Jones, Elizabethan Printer," 161–62. Sonia Massai discusses evidence of editorial interventions by Jones, particularly in the second and third editions of the *Tamburlaine* plays. See *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 84–87.

13. Though in the course of a long career, there were instances of Jones apparently publishing texts against the will of their writers, one piece of evidence in this case that can be adduced in favor of an amicable relationship between Jones and Marlowe can be inferred from Jones's publishing of Thomas Nashe's *Pierce Penilesse, His Supplication to the Devil* (1592) two years later. Given that Jones's publishing specialisms were poetic miscellanies and works about chivalry, his publishing of Nashe's satirical pamphlet seems a little atypical; the supposition that Marlowe recommended his friend to Jones is plausible. For Jones's publishing preferences, see Melnikoff, "Jones's Pen and Marlowe's Socks," 194–206.

14. That Marlowe and not Spenser was the "plagiarist" was definitively established by W. B. C. Watkins some time ago in "The Plagiarist: Spenser or Marlowe?" *English*

Tamburlaine play, almost certainly, and the second play, quite possibly, had appeared on stage by the end of 1587. For this reason, discussion has tended to center upon how—and when—Marlowe gained access to Spenser's poem in manuscript. While I think the case that Marlowe saw at least part of the poem in manuscript is indisputable, the fact that the plays were subjected to what was probably quite substantial revision before their publication has to be taken into account.¹⁵ Hence, the supposition that the *Tamburlaine* plays may have been consciously revised for publication in the light of *The Faerie Queene*'s publication—which, after all, would undoubtedly have been the literary sensation of the year—provides an interesting line of enquiry. The first stage of my argument is to explore the possibility that Marlowe worked from both manuscript and printed texts of *The Faerie Queene*.

A recent article by Steven May, which proposes that Abraham Fraunce was the most likely intermediary for Marlowe's access to Spenser's manuscript, helpfully identifies ten parallel passages in the plays that "confirm beyond reasonable doubt Marlowe's access to Spenser's poem".¹⁶

- 1) *1Tam*, 1.2.199; *FQ*, proem, 1.1.1–2
- 2) *1Tam*, 2.3.20; *FQ*, 1.8.9.4
- 3) *1Tam*, 5.1.123; *FQ*, 1.7.43.9
- 4) *1Tam*, 5.1.259, 262; *FQ*, 1.7.22.1, 3
- 5) *1Tam*, 5.1.290, 292–93; *FQ*, 1.7.23.1, 4–5
- 6) *1Tam*, 5.1.294–98; *FQ*, 1.5.20.1, 3, 6, 8–9

Literary History 11.4 (1944): 249–65. In a cursory reference to the revision of the *Tamburlaine* plays for publication, Richard Wilson notes that this occurred in the light of the publication of *The Faerie Queene*. See "Tragedy, Patronage and Power," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Patrick Cheney (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 207–30, 216.

15. Though at first sight the supposition that Marlowe incorporated Spenserian lines only after the publication of *The Faerie Queene* could be a possibility, Marlowe's apparent correction of the misprinted "Her" to "Whose" in the course of the most famous of his borrowings, which anticipates the correction that appears in the 1596 edition, is difficult to explain if he was only working from the printed version. For the corrections and misprints, see *2Tam*, 4.3.112; and Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. Thomas P. Roache Jr. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), 1.7.32, 1.8. *The Faerie Queene* hereafter cited as *FQ*. See also T. W. Baldwin, "The Genesis of Some Passages which Spenser Borrowed From Marlowe," *English Literary History* 9.3 (1942): 157–87, 158.

16. Steven W. May, "Marlowe, Spenser, Sidney and—Abraham Fraunce?" *Review of English Studies*, n.s., 62.253 (2010): 30–63, 41–42.

- 7) *1Tam*, 5.1.302–4; *FQ*, 1.7.22.7–9
- 8) *2Tam*, 4.1.188–91; *FQ*, 1.8.11.5–8
- 9) *2Tam*, 4.3.119–24; *FQ*, 1.7.32.5–9
- 10) *2Tam*, 5.2.26; *FQ*, 2.7.13.8.

Number 9 is the most obvious and most discussed of the borrowings, and it occurs toward the end of the second play when Tamburlaine, preparing to return in triumph to his native Samarcand, envisages his appearance there in verse that strikingly evokes Spenser's description of Prince Arthur on his first appearance in *The Faerie Queene*.¹⁷ The passages numbered 4, 5, 7, and 8 are so similar to their equivalents that it is hard to argue that they are anything other than close lifts from Spenser.¹⁸ However, there is room for some doubt about the others; to my mind the passages numbered 2 and 3 are only probably indebted to Marlowe's reading of Spenser's poem, and the similarities of phrasing in the passages numbered 1, 6, and 10 are not sufficiently unusual to suggest anything more than a possible debt. Sifting May's list in this way leaves us with five incontrovertible borrowings, all of which come from the seventh and eighth canto of the first book; of the other five, the two I describe as probable also come from these two cantos, whereas the other three come respectively from the proem to book 1, the fifth canto of the first book, and the seventh canto of the second book. In summary, granting that Marlowe did read *The Faerie Queene* in manuscript, it may well only have been two cantos that he read and copied. Though critics have tended to assume that, having had access to the poem in manuscript, Marlowe's borrowings from it were incorporated into the performance texts of 1587, we should also acknowledge that it is not in fact possible to say for certain whether all, some, or none of these borrowings appeared in the performed text or whether they were incorporated later into the published text only.

17. For commentary, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980), 222–24; Cheney, *Counterfeit Profession*, 16–17, 131–32; and David Riggs, *The World of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Faber and Faber, 2004), 213–15.

18. These are also the five passages specifically identified by J. S. Cunningham as “possible echoes” of *The Faerie Queene*, as opposed to the “sometimes tenuous” parallels that others have identified; see Cunningham, ed., *Tamburlaine*, 19, 97n52, and textual glosses. I think in the cases of these passages Cunningham's use of the qualifying “possible” and “probable” is unduly cautious.

However, it is not just these borrowings that suggest the plays' links back to Spenser. Marlowe's particular engagement with Spenserian poetics in the *Tamburlaine* plays can be perceived beyond its mere echoes of words, phrases, and lines from *The Faerie Queene*. It is possible to argue that the plays engage Spenser's programmatic outlined in the proem to book 1 and the letter to Sir Walter Raleigh "EXPOUNDING HIS WHOLE INTENTION IN THE COURSE OF THIS WORKE" (*FQ*, 15). In the latter case, Spenser's dating the letter January 23, 1589, regardless of whether the date is given in the new style or not, indicates that it is much less likely that Marlowe would have been working from manuscript. *Tamburlaine*, like *The Faerie Queene*, introduces itself as a conscious departure from what has gone before. Where Spenser exchanges his "lowly Shepheardes weeds . . . For trumpets sterne" (Proem, 1.1.2–4), Marlowe's prologue rejects the "jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits" in favor of *Tamburlaine's* "high astounding terms"; significantly, Marlowe does not make claims to "moralize" as Spenser does (*1Tam*, prologue.1.9). Though Marlowe clearly does not ground his new literary work in the approved Spenserian ascent through the Virgilian *cursus*, his prologue is reminiscent of key lines from Spenser's "October" eclogue in *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579), in which the poet's "Virgilian turn from pastoral to epic" is anticipated.¹⁹ There are also two further pivotal moments in *1 Tamburlaine*, in which the Spenserian program might be discerned. Firstly, Cheney suggests *Tamburlaine's* dramatic casting away of his shepherd's weeds for armor in act 1 scene 2 could be viewed as a theatricalization of Spenser's authorial pose.²⁰ Secondly, when toward the end of the first play *Tamburlaine* declares "That virtue solely is the sum of glory / And fashions men with true nobility" (*1Tam*, 5.1.188–89), one might hear an echo of Spenser's declared "generall end" of *The Faerie Queene*, which he describes as being "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in

19. Cheney, *Counterfeit Profession*, 119. The lines of particular relevance are "Abandon then the base and viler clowne, / Lyft up thy selfe out of the lowly dust: / And sing of bloody Mars, of wars, of giusts." Edmund Spenser, "October," in *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, ed. William A. Oram et al. (London: Yale UP, 1989), lines 37–39. As Cheney notes in delineating an ascent from "clownage" to "war," Marlowe seemingly imitates Spenser.

20. Cheney, *Counterfeit Profession*, 123–24.

vertuous and gentle discipline" (*FQ*, 15). These two lines, which conclude Tamburlaine's long soliloquy on beauty, deploy Spenser's key words, "virtue," "fashion," and "noble" in a way that provocatively challenges the very notion of gentility and nobility grounded in birth.²¹

My argument, however, concerning the relationship between Marlowe's plays and Spenser's poem is intended to move beyond the borrowings and possible allusions. I want to consider form and meaning and the way that they impinge upon essential questions about the ethics of literature. In particular, I wish to consider the place of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (c. 4th century BCE) in sixteenth-century literary culture and how Marlowe can be seen to have responded to the prevalent notion that this work, and exemplary fiction more generally, was the most legitimate model for literary creation.

As we have seen, if Marlowe indeed had Spenser's "generall end" in mind when he wrote the lines concluding Tamburlaine's fifth-act soliloquy, he would have read Spenser's prefatory letter to Raleigh. And it is also in this letter that another key aspect of his literary program is aired. Spenser answers a putative objection that he should elucidate the twelve private moral virtues that he intends his poem to illustrate "plainly in way of precepts" with reference to the notion of exemplary fiction:

For this cause is Xenophon preferred before Plato, for that the one in the exquisite depth of his iudgement, formed a Commune welth such as it should be, but the other in the person of Cyrus and the Persians fashioned a gouernment such as might best be: So much more profitable and gracious is doctrine by ensample, then by rule. So haue I laboured to doe in the person of Arthure. (*FQ*, 16)

That Arthur, the hero of Spenser's epic, has been fashioned after the Cyrus of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* is a striking measure of the esteem once granted to this now rather obscure and largely unread text. Spenser's view was certainly not an idiosyncratic one; his citation of the *Cyropaedia* as paradigm of exemplary fiction in fact recalls a key passage of *An Apology for Poetry* (c. 1580), written by his mentor Sir Philip Sidney. In a memorably elegant exposition, Sidney claims that the poetic artificer is capable of creating fictive figures superior to those created by

21. Cheney, *Counterfeit Profession*, 129.

nature and that such perfected figures, of which he cites a number of examples, instill virtue in their readers:

Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done; neither with pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too much loved earth more lovely. Her world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden.

But let those things alone, and go to man—for whom as the other things are, so it seemeth in him her uttermost cunning is employed—and know whether she have brought forth so true a lover as Theagenes, so constant a friend as Pylades, so valiant a man as Orlando, so right a prince as Xenophon's Cyrus, so excellent a man every way as Virgil's Aeneas. . . . So far substantially it worketh, not only to make a Cyrus, which had been but a particular excellency as Nature might have done, but to bestow a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyruses, if they will learn aright why and how that maker made him.²²

Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, it is argued, has such fructifying power that it can "make many Cyruses"; it is a text at least equal in ethical worth to the *Aeneid* (c. 30–19 BCE) itself.²³ As, unlike the *Aeneid*, it is now neither particularly well-known nor especially well-regarded, I will need to pause in order to note some of its most important features and to elucidate the reasons it was so esteemed.

Though the *Cyropaedia* is probably best classified as fiction rather than as history, its subject was a real emperor.²⁴ Cyrus was the founder of the Persian Empire who had, during the course of his reign in the sixth century BCE, liberated his people from the control of the neighboring Medes, before launching a series of campaigns which brought much of Asia under Persian rule. In the fifth century BCE, his exploits were recorded in the pioneering *Histories* (c. 440 BCE) of Herodotus; different versions of his life emerge later in the *Persica* (c. 398 BCE) of Ctesias and in writing by Antisthenes, which survives only in

22. Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry; or, The Defence of Poesy*, ed. by Geoffrey Shepherd, rev. by R. W. Maslen, 3rd ed. (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002), 85.

23. The two texts are often coupled in the *Apology*; see 91, 92, 95, 99, 103. They appear to be the two texts that come most readily to Sidney's mind when he wants to illustrate a point about the moral efficacy of literature.

24. Given that in the *Apology* Sidney argues the ethical superiority of poetry over history, the assumption that the *Cyropaedia* is fictive is clearly an important aspect of his argument and one that is taken up by Spenser. At other points in the *Apology* Sidney refers to Xenophon's "feigned Cyrus" (91, 92).

fragments. Cyrus is also mentioned in the Bible as the instigator of the temple of Jerusalem's reconstruction.²⁵ But it was through the idealized representation of him in the *Cyropaedia*, written by Xenophon—a pupil of Socrates—around two hundred years after Cyrus came to power, that he was best known to Renaissance readers.²⁶ It was first translated into English by William Barker and was published in 1567.

The *Cyropaedia* takes as its subject the *paedia* of Cyrus in the wider sense of "education as something which goes on all through life, something which only death brings to an end."²⁷ The first of the eight books that comprise it encompasses the formal education of the young Cyrus, while most of its subsequent length is devoted to his military campaigns; in the course of these campaigns Cyrus acquires a vast empire, and the final section of the work concerns itself with his methods of government. In essence the *Cyropaedia* propounds a model for ethical and effective governance by citing Cyrus as an exemplar, a man who was able to make "so many sortes of men, so many sundry Citees, and so many dyuers nations obedient unto hym."²⁸ The motive for writing it seemingly arose from Xenophon's insistent preoccupation with the particular personal qualities that make an effective leader of men.²⁹ The *Cyropaedia*, then, is more ethical treatise than authentic record of the life. In writing it, Xenophon appears to have altered known history

25. 2 Chronicles 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–2; Isaiah 44:28, 45:1.

26. For possible sources of the *Cyropaedia*, both Greek and Persian, see Deborah Levine Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia: Style, Genre, and Literary Technique* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 3–22. For the very different approaches to the history of Cyrus in Greek literature see Alexandru Cizek, "From the Historical Truth to the Literary Convention: The Life of Cyrus the Great Viewed by Herodotus, Ctesias and Xenophon," *L'Antiquité Classique* 44 (1975): 531–52.

27. Bodil Due, *The Cyropaedia: Xenophon's Aims and Methods* (Aarhus: Aarhus UP, 1989), 15.

28. *The VIII. Bookes of Xenophon, Containing the Institution, Schole, and Education of Cyrus*, trans. William Barker (n.p., 1567), B1v. Hereafter cited as *Bookes. Xenophon: Cyropaedia*, trans. Walter Miller (London: Harvard UP, 1914), 1:1.1.3. Hereafter cited as *Cyropaedia* by volume, book, chapter, and paragraph.

29. See Due, *The Cyropaedia: Xenophon's Aims and Methods*, especially 147–206; and James Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction: On the Education of Cyrus* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1989), 36–66. For a rather different view of Xenophon's intentions, and one which I will touch upon later, see Christopher Nadon, *Xenophon's Prince: Republic and Empire in the "Cyropaedia"* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2001), 161–80.

where it suits his purpose; so, for example, the conquest of Egypt, which other sources ascribe to his son Cambyses, is credited to Cyrus, and where Herodotus's Cyrus was slain in battle, in Xenophon's work he dies peacefully at home in Persia.³⁰ It also incorporates romance elements, most notably in the Panthea episodes, a woman whose sad story appears to have had a particular hold upon the imagination of writers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³¹

While its apparent historical inaccuracies—along with its rather monotonous narrative—have tended to alienate modern readers, the *Cyropaedia* was, conversely, viewed as a superior work by many earlier generations of readers precisely because it palpably did not enslave itself to a quest for historical accuracy.³² Cicero was an enthusiastic advocate on the grounds that it depicted a great man, who secured universal, willing consent to his rule, “not according to historical truth but as the pattern of a just ruler; in him the philosopher created a matchless blend of firmness and courtesy.”³³ And here, as in so many other ways,

30. As we have seen, Sidney claims the work to be fiction. However, the difficulty of distinguishing between what is authentic and what is fictive, given the variations between surviving accounts and likely oral traditions, should be acknowledged. Steven W. Hirsch, while claiming “that the *Cyropaedia* has more historical validity than is usually allowed,” suggests that “Xenophon’s reliance upon a Persian oral tradition when he credits Cyrus with the conquest of Egypt.” *The Friendship of the Barbarians: Xenophon and the Persian Empire* (London: UP of New England, 1985), 76, 80. And Herodotus concludes his account of the death with a caveat: “There are many accounts of Cyrus’ death; I have given the one which I think most plausible.” *The Histories*, trans. Aubrey de Séincourt (1972; rev., London: Penguin, 1996), 1.214.

31. For example, the Panthea episode is, despite the play’s name, at the heart of *The Wars of Cyrus* (c. 1576–80), a play attributed to Richard Farrant that has occasionally been connected with Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* plays. See Irving Ribner, “*Tamburlaine* and *The Wars of Cyrus*,” *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 53.4 (1954): 569–73; G. K. Hunter, “*The Wars of Cyrus* and *Tamburlaine*,” *Notes & Queries*, n.s., 8 (1961): 395–96. Though a proven connection would support the argument I am going to make about *Tamburlaine*’s relation to the *Cyropaedia*, the evidence does not convince me. The thematic similarities identified by Ribner and the verbal echoes identified by Hunter are slight, and most importantly, the character of the plays is wholly different. Therefore, I do not see *The Wars of Cyrus* as having relevance beyond the fact that, like Thomas Preston’s *Cambyzes* (c. 1561), it demonstrates contemporary familiarity with Cyrus, Persian history, and the *Cyropaedia*.

32. For the hostile nature of many modern responses, see Due, *The Cyropaedia: Xenophon’s Aims and Methods*, 9–13. Christopher Nadon reflects more generally upon the striking disparity between modern and pre-nineteenth-century views of Xenophon’s merit in *Xenophon’s Prince*, 1–4.

33. *Letters to Quintus*, in *Cicero: Letters to Quintus and Brutus; To Octavian; Invectives*;

Cicero can be seen to have influenced many of the most notable humanist writers and educationalists in the sixteenth century. As James Tatum demonstrates in his survey of the work's reception, the *Cyropaedia's* reputation was at its zenith during the period.³⁴ Sir Thomas Elyot includes it among the books to be read by would-be rulers. In the section of *The Book Named the Governor* (1531) detailing "the most commodious and necessary studies succeeding ordinally the lesson of poets," he explains that "Xenophon, being both a philosopher and an excellent captain, so invented and ordered his work . . . that he leaveth to the readers thereof an incomparable sweetness and example of living, specially for the conducting and well ordering of hosts or armies."³⁵ The *Cyropaedia* is a clear influence upon Roger Ascham's educational program, as is evident in the number of approving references made to it throughout his *Schoolmaster* (1570).³⁶ And when Sir Thomas Hoby presented the English *Book of the Courtier* to Lord Henry Hastings in 1561, it is notable that he claimed importance for his translation by means of comparing it to the *Cyropaedia*, asserting that "the one" is "as necessarie and proper for a Gentilman of the Court, as the other for a king."³⁷ The *Cyropaedia*, then, was a work whose didactic value had been long approved by leading literary authorities and educationalists. Sidney and Spenser thus had clear precedents for their far-reaching claims about its exemplarity.

Sidney was writing his defense of literature at a time when it certainly needed defending, when the writing and reading of literature was often viewed as being frivolous or, even worse, morally corrupting.³⁸ The more or less universal approval of the

Handbook of Electioneering, trans. and ed. D. R. Shackleton Bailey (1972; rept. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2002), 1.1.22–23. The politics of the *Cyropaedia* appear to have informed Cicero's own beliefs and practice. See Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction*, 9–11.

34. Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction*, 12–35.

35. Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Book Named the Governor*, ed. S. E. Lehmberg (London: J. M. Dent, 1962), 34, 37.

36. See Lawrence Ryan's introduction to *The Schoolmaster (1570)*, by Roger Ascham, ed. Lawrence V. Ryan (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1974), xxv.

37. Count Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, ed. Virginia Cox, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (London: J. M. Dent, 1994), 9.

38. For example, though he clearly approves of the *Cyropaedia*, Roger Ascham is extremely hostile to books of chivalry and Italian novellas translated into English,

Cyropaedia enables Sidney to make it the foundation stone upon which he builds his defense of literature as a whole. Following Cicero, he describes it as “an absolute heroical poem” and cites his valorization of writing “not according to historical truth.”³⁹ It enables Sidney to assert the ethical superiority of literature over history and philosophy. Cited repeatedly in the opening pages of the *Apology*, its recognized status as edifying literary text further allows a few of the often more dubiously regarded romances—Lodovico Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* (1516) and Heliodorus’s *Æthiopica* (English translation, c. 1569), for example—to be dexterously conveyed in its slipstream. Sidney’s importance in legitimating literary endeavor was not just derived from the persuasive arguments of the *Apology*; the way he conducted his life and the subsequent heroic manner of his death inspired many writers of the late Elizabethan period, among whom Spenser was the doyen. As Raphael Falco has shown, the plethora of elegists and eulogists, whose works appeared in the years following his death in 1586, were able to legitimize their own writing by effectively making Sidney the genealogical source of English letters, the writer who provides the missing link between the emerging vernacular literature and the writings of antiquity.⁴⁰ Hence the particular importance that Sidney’s defense of literature had for valorizing the endeavors of the ensuing generation of writers. It would perhaps overstate the case to suggest that Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* helped legitimize literary pursuit itself and consequently enable the great English literary renaissance, but its importance and centrality in pre-Marlovian literary culture is beyond dispute.

The responses of sixteenth-century readers to the *Cyropaedia* allow us to define what I will term the Cyric exemplar: a

which he sees as “enticing men to ill-living.” Ascham, *Schoolmaster*, 67. The classic treatment of the prevalent hostility to literature is Richard Helgerson, *The Elizabethan Prodigals* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976). See also R. W. Maslen, introduction to *An Apology for Poetry; or, The Defence of Poesy*, by Sir Philip Sidney (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002), 14–31.

39. Sidney, *Apology*, 87.

40. Raphael Falco, *Conceived Presences: Literary Genealogy in Renaissance England* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1994). See also Jan van Dorsten, Dominic Baker-Smith, and Arthur F. Kinney, eds., *Sir Philip Sidney: 1586 and the Creation of a Legend* (Leiden: Leiden UP, 1986).

legendary (especially in its original sense, to be read) figure taken from history and embellished into a virtuous exemplar encompassing imperial mission, inspirational leadership, and personal temperance. Spenser avowedly sets out to create his Arthur in this mold—and then, shortly afterwards, a history of Tamburlaine the Great, in which the protagonist exemplifies, but also problematizes, these key traits appears in print. Notoriously, critics have been at odds over how audiences and readers positioned themselves in relation to Marlowe's extraordinary protagonist: Is he a figure to be admired or reviled? He cannot simply be read as a usurping tyrant because he also exudes so many ethically-sanctioned traits. His actions combine the utmost brutality and cruelty with constancy of purpose, generosity towards his followers, and fidelity to his wife—to say nothing of the lyrical flights of his “mighty line.” In this it is worth noting some divergence between the surviving allusions to the stage Tamburlaine and what Jones terms the “honourable and stately” nature of his printed history. The impression we receive from the former is of a noisy, riotous strutting figure atheistically defying the almighty, whether that be in the approving memory of the author of the “Dutch Church Libel” of 1593 or the denigrating reference to verses “filling the mouth like the faburden of Bo-Bell, daring God out of heaven with that Atheist *Tamburlan*” alluded to in Robert Greene's preface to *Perimedes the Blacke-Smith* (1588).⁴¹ It is impossible to say for sure, and one would not want to make too much of this, but again I would want to countenance the possibility that this divergence is not simply a matter of the “ambidextrous responses” Marlowe's creation evokes but perhaps an indicator of significant, even far-reaching, prepublication revision.⁴²

41. A facsimile of the “Dutch Church Libel” is reproduced as an appendix to Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. James R. Siemon (London: A & C Black, 1994), 115–18. For Robert Greene's preface to *Perimedes the Blacke-Smith* (1588), see *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene, M.A.*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1881–86; repr., New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), 7:8–9. See also Ben Jonson's reference in *Timber; or, Discoveries* (1641) to “the scenical strutting and furious vociferation” of “the Tamerlanes and Tamerchams of the late age.” *Timber; or, Discoveries*, in *The Oxford Authors: Ben Jonson*, ed. Ian Donaldson (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985), 521–94, 542. For contemporary dramatic responses to the plays see Peter Berek, “*Tamburlaine's* Weak Sons: Imitation as Interpretation Before 1593,” *Renaissance Drama*, n.s., 13 (1982): 55–82.

42. This felicitous phrase is from Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning: The Murder of*

The *Tamburlaine* plays fundamentally problematize the exemplary figure, which lies at the heart of the prevalent Sidneian/Spenserian literary program. Contemporaries conditioned to reading the exemplary would perhaps have been able to register suggestive resemblances between the *Cyropaedia* and the *Tamburlaine* plays more easily than we can; it would not have been especially difficult for the “gentlemen readers” to perceive similarities between the respective character traits and *modus operandi* of Tamburlaine and Cyrus, so that Tamburlaine himself could be read through the lens of the Cyric exemplar. Stephen Greenblatt has famously referred to the way that Marlowe’s most prominent borrowing from *The Faerie Queene* suggests “the vertiginous possibility of an underlying sameness” between Tamburlaine and Spenser’s Arthur.⁴³ Both *Tamburlaine* and the *Cyropaedia* have recognizable shared generic features. In the plays, Marlowe clearly conjures up *speculum principis* literature, of which the *Cyropaedia* was about the most prominent example.⁴⁴ He directly and provocatively engages the tradition when, at the close of the first play, the corpses of Arabia, Bajazeth, and Zabina are termed “sights of power” (*1Tam*, 5.1.474), wherein Tamburlaine’s honor “as in a mirror may be seen” (5.1.476). It is a moment that might well remind us of the prologue’s invitation to consider the protagonist as if in a “tragic glass.” To quote Greenblatt again, “*Tamburlaine* repeatedly teases its audience with the *form* of the cautionary tale, only to violate the convention.”⁴⁵

However, what is particularly interesting about the published version of the plays is that there are also opportunities for readers to gain specific purchase upon the *Cyropaedia* beyond mere generic similarities. In order to consider how a contemporary, familiar with Xenophon’s work, might be led to read the plays in this way, let us consider the way in which the action evolves over the first two acts. The prologue to Marlowe’s *1 Tamburlaine* promises “the Scythian Tamburlaine / Threat’ning

Christopher Marlowe, rev. ed. (London: Vintage, 2002), 201.

43. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 224.

44. Nadon describes it as “the founding document of a genre that came to be known as ‘mirrors of princes.’” *Xenophon’s Prince*, 152. See also Tatum, *Xenophon’s Imperial Fiction*, 6–9.

45. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 202.

the world with high astounding terms / And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword" (prologue.4–6), but the first scene of the ensuing play is distinctly bathetic. Instead of "high astounding terms" and "conquering sword," we encounter a Persian king, Mycetes, whose opening speech acknowledges and laments his own lack of rhetorical capability.⁴⁶ In response to such ineptitude, rather than protestations of loyal, respectful obeisance, his immediate followers and countrymen express exasperation and contempt; very soon it becomes clear that the inevitable concomitant will be rebellion. Any authority he ever had in respect of his regal position, if not his person, is seen ebbing away, and in the opening act of the play, his descent is counterpoised dramatically with the ascent of Tamburlaine. The two are, moreover, polarized not just in terms of charisma and command of rhetoric, but also by rank and race: They are, respectively, high-born Persian and low-born Scythian.

Opening the play in the court of the first, and utterly ineffectual, opponent of the soon-to-appear protagonist, Marlowe emphasizes its locale. In the 188 lines of the first scene the words "Persia" or "Persian" occur nine times, and there are a further two references to its capital, Persepolis, so that insistent iteration of place serves to foreground the country and its empire. And as we have seen, Persia and its history would almost certainly have been known primarily to contemporaries—certainly the educated "gentleman readers" before whom the text of the plays was presented—as the country of Cyrus the Great, legendary founder of the Persian Empire.⁴⁷ In the course of this opening scene, in addition to the insistent references to Persia and its empire, there are two allusions to Cyrus, one implicit and

46. There is no record of a king of Persia called Mycetes, though as Cunningham notes Marlowe may have encountered the name "Mesithes" in Petrus Bizarus's *Persicarum Rerum Historia* (1583); see Cunningham, ed., *Tamburlaine*, 109.

47. Emily C. Bartels claims that Persians were "known more for wealth and fineries than for imperious leaders." *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1993), 56. As should be obvious from what I have already indicated about contemporary reverence for the *Cyropaedia*, I believe this to be a mistaken view. While it is reasonable to assume that ideas of the country's fabulous wealth were in circulation following the celebrated visit of Sir Anthony Shirley to the apparently munificent Sophy of Persia, famously alluded to in *Twelfth Night* (1600), the published account of his visit postdates the *Tamburlaine* plays by roughly ten years. William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, ed. Keir Elam, The Arden Shakespeare (London: Cengage, 2008), 2.5.175, 3.4.272.

the other explicit. Responding to Mycetes's request that Cosroe, his brother, articulate the anger he is incapable of expressing, Cosroe invokes Persia's glorious past:

Unhappy Persia, that in former age
 Hast been the seat of mighty conquerors
 That in their prowess and their policies
 Have triumphed over Afric, and the bounds
 Of Europe where the sun dares scarce appear
 For freezing meteors and congealed cold. (*1Tam*, 1.1.6–11)

The country's proud history, associated with the "mighty conquerors," among whom Cyrus the Great was preeminent, is contrasted with its lamentable present state. These lines not only invoke the memory of Cyrus in a generalized manner, they also echo rhetorically the way the final boundaries of Cyrus's empire are described in the *Cyropaedia* at the culmination of his military campaigns, where the vast extent of the empire is similarly figured in terms of its climatic extremities. After the final conquests, the reader is told that Cyrus "confined hys empire from the east, by the Red sea, from the northe, with the Euxine sea, from the west, with Cypres and Egypte, from the south, with Ethopia. Of the which confines some for heate, some for colde, some for water, and some for drought, be [un]inhabitable" (*Bookes*, Ee3r–v; *Cyropaedia*, 2:8.6.21). An important dramatic purpose is served by this nostalgic recall of Persia's greatness, in that it helps instigate action; the Persian courtiers are stirred to act by the prospect of their country and its empire once again dominating the known world, and for them the first step is unseating their current ineffectual leader. As the plans for insurrection unfold, Cosroe's chief adviser, Menaphon, urges him to take the opportunity provided by rebellions within their "maimèd empery" (*1Tam*, 1.1.126) to seize his chance, claiming "How easily may you with a mighty host / Pass into Graecia, as did Cyrus once, / And cause them to withdraw their forces home" (1.1.129–32). This explicit invocation of the great predecessor proves persuasive; it provides the cue for his other followers to offer him a crown, which Cosroe accepts. Fired by the vision of imperial resurgence, Cosroe resolves to lead his followers in armed confrontation with Mycetes so that he can reign as sole king of Persia. The dramatic trajectory of the opening scene has thus prepared the reader for the arrival of a new Cyrus; however, Cosroe is not to be the man. In the

following act, Tamburlaine, having provided the military muscle that enables him to usurp Mycetes, is unwilling to settle for the position of mere regent. He subsequently marshals his forces against Cosroe and effortlessly overthrows him, so that by the conclusion of the second act, Tamburlaine himself is crowned king of Persia, the preceding action having established that he has the charisma, leadership skills, military might, and ruthless ambition required. Tamburlaine's followers in unison declare him king, and as he takes the crown Tamburlaine closes the act with this declaration: "So, now it is more surer on my head / Than if the gods had held a parliament / And all pronounced me King of Persia" (2.6.105–7). By now the reader knows that whatever Tamburlaine declares to be so, will be so. And indeed, from this point onwards, despite on occasion being pejoratively referred to as the Scythian, his enemies and friends alike frequently refer to him as king of Persia, though enemies may preface the title with the word "usurping."⁴⁸ The source accounts that Marlowe most likely used—Whetstone's adaptation of Mexia and Perondinus—do not attach national or ethnic identity to Tamerlane in anything like as insistent a way as Marlowe does.⁴⁹ Admittedly, Perondinus often refers to his followers as the Scythians and frequently ascribes the epithet *Tartarus* (the Tartar) to Tamerlane.⁵⁰ However, Marlowe has made Tamburlaine much more Persian. In both Whetstone and Perondinus, even after his early usurpation of the Persian throne, he is never referred to as king of Persia, though he is described by Whetstone as having "made himself king of Persia" in the immediate aftermath of his seizure of the

48. Cheney counts seventy-one references to Persia across the two plays, concluding that Marlowe "identifies Tamburlaine and Zenocrate as the King and Queen of Persia" (*Counterfeit Profession*, 127–28). For Tamburlaine or his followers described as Persian see *1Tam*, 3.1.43, 3.1.45, 3.2.59, 3.3.95, 3.3.132, 3.3.165, 3.3.189–90, 4.2.56–57, 4.3.13, 4.3.68, 5.1.489, 5.1.494, 5.1.507–9; *2Tam*, 1.3.74, 3.1.16, 3.2.20–22, 3.5.4, 3.5.19, 3.5.54, 5.1.166. For the designation of Scythian or Tartarian, see *1Tam*, 3.3.68, 3.3.171, 3.3.197, 3.3.271, 4.3.68; *2Tam*, 2.2.16, 3.1.15, 3.1.56, 3.1.68, 3.5.90.

49. For Marlowe's sources I am guided by Cunningham's edition of the play, *Tamburlaine*, 9–20; and *Christopher Marlowe: The Plays and Their Sources*, ed. Vivien Thomas and William Tydeman (London: Routledge, 1994), 69–168.

50. In Perondinus's Latin, the term, as well as connoting one originating from the region of Central Asia, also allows an indication of a being come from the infernal regions of the underworld.

throne.⁵¹ Rather than simply depicting him as Scythian, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* oscillates between the twin identities of Persian and Scythian which, in classical and Renaissance literature, offers us a polarity of an established civilization and a nomadic, barbaric race. Disconcertingly, *Tamburlaine* unites both distinctive and opposed identities: He is both the imperial Persian and the barbarous Scythian.⁵²

As should by now be apparent, the *Cyropaedia* does not, in the Homeric manner, describe epic military conflicts in which the superhuman attributes of heroic warriors are conveyed simultaneously with a tragic awareness of their mortality. Rather it simply aims to convey the wholly exemplary nature of its heroic leader. Like *Tamburlaine*, Cyrus is seemingly immune from the random stroke of death on the battlefield, but that does not mean he is immortal. The mortality of the hero is treated in a rather different way; he dies peacefully surrounded by his family once his allotted span of natural life has passed. Both *2 Tamburlaine* and the *Cyropaedia* conclude with a deathbed scene in which the protagonist has the opportunity to dispense advice to the sons who are about to succeed him. The parallel is attested to by

51. Thomas and Tydeman, ed., *The Plays and Their Sources*, 93.

52. The Scythians had long been associated with roguery and brigandage, associations that predate Xenophon. They were viewed as a wild and uncultivated people opposed to the rule of law and fixed, settled societies being developed by peoples such as the Assyrians, Medes, and Persians. Herodotus, writing of a period predating the establishment of the Persian empire under Cyrus, tells us that "during the twenty-eight years of Scythian supremacy in Asia, violence and neglect of law led to absolute chaos. Apart from tribute arbitrarily imposed and forcibly exacted, they behaved like mere robbers, riding up and down the country and seizing people's property." Herodotus, *Histories*, 1.106. Herodotus's fourth book describes the origins, geography, and many of the bloodthirsty customs of the Scythians. Peroninus ascribes cannibalism to them, and in Herodotus they drink the blood of their enemies. Thomas and Tydeman, ed., *The Plays and Their Sources*, 109; Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.64. However, I am also conscious that the notion of what Scythian meant to contemporaries has more recently been complicated by Mary Floyd-Wilson who shows how sixteenth-century English writers, uncomfortably aware of associations of the Scythians with their ancient ancestors in classical schema, were finding ways of imbuing the race with more positive qualities of strength and courage. See *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), 23–29, 89–110. But notwithstanding the examples she cites, the designation was clearly still available for pejorative use. See, for example, Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Jonathan Bate, *The Arden Shakespeare* (London: Routledge, 1995), 1.1.134; and *King Lear*, ed. R. A. Foakes, *The Arden Shakespeare* (Walton-on-Thames: Thomson, 1997), 1.1.117.

the very close resemblance between the respective contemporary summary-descriptions of the two works. On the title page of Barker's translation the reader is told that it contains Cyrus's "expedition into Babylon, Syria and Aegypt, and his exhortation before his death, to his children" (*Bookes*, sig. A1r), where the header description of *2 Tamburlaine* in the first published edition of the plays proclaims that it contains Tamburlaine's "fourme of exhortation and discipline to his three sons, and the maner of his own death."⁵³ Implicitly, both of these remarkably similar descriptions draw the reader's attention to the problematic question of imperial succession. Indeed the exemplary efficacy of the *Cyropaedia* can be seen to have faltered in this respect, and the last chapter of the *Cyropaedia* has in modern times proved to be the most contentious part of the whole work. In it the reader is told that the decline of the Persian Empire and of the values and practices that had underpinned it started in the immediate aftermath of Cyrus's death. So, the revelation that "But so sone as he was dead, his children fel out, citties and nations rebelled, & euery thinge went to ruine" (*Bookes*, sig. Ee7v; *Cyropaedia*, 2:8.8.2) is a striking reversal of the effortlessly expansionist tenor of the narrative up to this point.⁵⁴ However, once the unique leader, whose personality and prowess has been able to hold an empire together, succumbs to death, the decline is inevitable. Indeed, the tone of the last chapter is so bleak and so at odds with all that has preceded it that it has even been argued that that it is a non-Xenophontic accretion.⁵⁵ The immediate decline that ensues

53. Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great* (STC 17425) (London: Richard Jones, 1590), sig. F3r, accessed December 8, 2009, <http://www.ecbo.chadwyck.com> (STC 17425).

54. Plato, in the *Laws*, seemingly criticizes Xenophon's Cyrus for failing to ensure that his sons were properly educated for the succession. See Hirsch, *Friendship of the Barbarians*, 97–100; Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction*, 225–34. Deborah Gera, however, reads Xenophon as carefully exculpating Cyrus in the deathbed scene for the blame that he would otherwise attract on this score; see *Xenophon's Cyropaedia*, 124–25.

55. In his translation of the *Cyropaedia*, Walter Miller prefaces the last chapter with a note: "Chapter VIII can be considered only as a later addition to Xenophon's work—a bit of historical criticism in a review accompanying the book reviewed. It spoils the perfect unity of the work up to this chapter. . . . The chapter is included here in accord with all manuscripts and editions. But the reader is recommended to close the book at this point and read no further." *Xenophon: Cyropaedia*, trans. Walter Miller (London: Harvard UP, 1914), 2:438–39. Hirsch is a more recent skeptic; see *Friendship of the Barbarians*, 91–97. However, stylistic analysis of the chapter clearly

in the *Cyropaedia* points to the inherent danger of an imperial leader being survived by two sons, rather than one. And, of course, this is precisely the situation we are left with at the end of 2 *Tamburlaine*. The reader of the *Tamburlaine* plays is quite likely to conjecture subsequent imperial disintegration, following the death of the founder, especially if it is understood in the light of the *Cyropaedia*. Indeed the potential for trouble should be more than evident to a careful reader, who recalls the preceding scenes involving Tamburlaine's two surviving sons.

When we first encounter Celebinus, the youngest son, his mother reports his impressive and precocious jousting achievements. In response Tamburlaine tells him that

If thou exceed thy elder brothers' worth
And shine in complete virtue more than they,
Thou shalt be kin before them, and thy seed
Shall issue crownèd from their mother's womb. (2*Tam*, 1.3.50–54)

This explicit promise—that in the matter of succession merit rather than primogeniture will be the determinant—appears implicitly to have been realized when Tamburlaine, speaking of Celebinus, later tells Jerusalem that

this same boy is he
That must, advanced in higher pomp than this,
Rifle the kingdoms I shall leave unsacked
If Jove, esteeming me too good for earth,
Raise me to match the fair Aldebaran
Above the threefold astracism of heaven
Before I conquer the triple world. (2*Tam*, 4.3.57–63)

However, when his dying moments eventually do arrive, Tamburlaine bequeaths his crown to his eldest surviving son, Amyras. And at this point in the scene, as he observes his brother being crowned, instead of congratulating him or offering oaths of loyalty and service, Celebinus maintains an eloquent—and ominous—silence. There is in this an interesting circularity; we may be reminded that the plays opened with fraternal conflict over the possession of the Persian throne, and arguably, they can be seen to conclude with it too. In summary, both the *Tamburlaine* plays and the *Cyropaedia* leave us with the sense of the all-powerful leaders' ultimate and inescapable

suggests that it is in fact Xenophon's. See Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction*, 220–25.

powerlessness in the face of the temporal imperative, despite their prior battlefield immunity and with the consequent inevitable specter of their achievements being undone by conflict between the two surviving sons.

The context for these similarities in form is, in general terms, the esteem within which the *Cyropaedia* was held by the most authoritative literary arbiters and, quite possibly, Spenser's specific citation of its importance to the design of *The Faerie Queene*. However, not all of Marlowe's contemporaries were quite as inclined to read the *Cyropaedia* as the straightforward exemplary text that Sidney and Spenser saw it to be. In order to understand the possibilities for divergent readings I want to consider a crux that has exercised some modern readers of the *Cyropaedia*. This occurs at the moment signaling the transition from the work's military episodes to its imperial episodes; having conquered Babylon and established his empire, Cyrus appears impressively in triumph before his people:

After the buls, were brought horses to be sacrificed to the Sunne. After this, came forthe a chariot of gold to be offred to Jupiter, and an other to the Sunne: than the third cart with purple couers, whom men folowid with fyre in their handes. Than cam out Cyrus with a Persian hat on his head, & a coate payned with white & read (which none may weare but kyngs) and a payre of Median briches down to the knees, & a warlikt cloke of purple. And he had a croun upon his hat, and so had al his kinsemen: and so haue at this day. His hands were bare, his charer man folowed him, not so high as he, eyther because it was so in dede, or because it was made soo. Cyrus semed the most goodliest & as he passed they honored him, eyther being so commanded, or because they wondred at his goodly and riche aray. Before this day, no Persian did kneele to Cyrus. (*Bookes*, Cc7r; *Cyropaedia*, 2:8.3.12–15)

The potentially troubling aspects of Xenophon's description lie particularly in the very un-Greek prostration of the crowd at Cyrus's sight and the clear suggestion that the whole event has been stage-managed in such a way as to suggest the leader's godlike qualities; there is both the possibility that Cyrus has been made to appear bigger than he in fact is and the suggestion that the onlookers may have been commanded to bow down before his presence. Deborah Gera is certainly troubled by these hints and other postconquest episodes, which though minor in themselves taken cumulatively, seem to show that Cyrus has turned his back upon the commendable austerity and simplicity

that has marked his leadership up to this point, in favor of despotism. He has, it seems, come to transform himself into a ruler like his Median grandfather Astyages, whose luxurious lifestyle was contrasted unfavorably with the austere practices of the Persians, advocated by the precocious Cyrus in the first book of the *Cyropaedia*. Having scrupulously considered the disquieting elements of books 7 and 8, Gera's eventual conclusion is rather tentative: "Xenophon wishes to show us that both—benevolence and despotism—are needed to run a large empire successfully."⁵⁶ Christopher Nadon, however, argues much more emphatically that Xenophon in the *Cyropaedia* consciously depicts the transition—or decline, rather—from democratic and egalitarian ideals to imperial despotism. Apropos of the prostration of the people at this moment, in what he terms a "carefully orchestrated procession," he reminds us that in the *Anabasis*, Xenophon had written, "To no human being as a despot but to the gods alone do you prostrate yourselves."⁵⁷

Nadon's interpretation of the *Cyropaedia* runs counter to the way it has been presented up to this point and is certainly "out of synch" with the prevalent renaissance humanist interpretation. However, while he is not the first commentator upon the text to distance creation from author, what is most interesting about his reading of the *Cyropaedia* is that he grounds it in a careful consideration of the way that Niccolò Machiavelli read it.⁵⁸ The commonplace exemplary ideal of Cyrus finds expression in Machiavelli's *Prince*, chapter 14, in which much of Scipio's "chastity, courtesy, humanity, and generosity" are ascribed to the inspiration he derived from Xenophon's Cyrus.⁵⁹ However, that is not the end of the matter; in the *Prince*, Machiavelli goes on to note the disastrous consequences of Scipio's adherence to the example set by Xenophon's Cyrus.⁶⁰ In fact, Machiavelli is a deeper reader of the *Cyropaedia* than his thoughts about Scipio alone would suggest; he does more than

56. Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia*, 296–97.

57. Nadon, *Xenophon's Prince*, 134.

58. Nadon, *Xenophon's Prince*, 13–25.

59. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. George Bull, rev. ed. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), 90.

60. See Nadon, *Xenophon's Prince*, 15–17, citing from Machiavelli's *Prince*, chapters 15 and 17.

simply imply that the use of such an exemplary text ill-prepares its reader for the amoral necessities of governance. Machiavelli discerns some of these amoral necessities in the text itself, as for example, when he cites Cyrus, along with Alexander and Caesar, as demonstrating the advisability of being generous with other people's possessions, rather than one's own.⁶¹ In so doing he points to another characteristic that Cyrus and Tamburlaine share; the *Cyropaedia* is concerned throughout to demonstrate the ways that Cyrus's power is grounded in displays of generosity that secure selfless obedience from his followers. In fact, the invincibility of both Tamburlaine and Cyrus owes a great deal to the few intimate, trusted, and enduringly loyal companions who accompany the leader for the whole of their careers, bonds that are reinforced by the leader's generous rewarding of them. Machiavelli, then, helps us identify an aspect of Cyrus's generosity that is both underhanded and calculating, by pointing out that such generosity is enabled by his seizing of what had belonged to those he and his men have conquered.⁶² This is not the only dissonant note Machiavelli perceives in the *Cyropaedia*. In the *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* (1513), Machiavelli, citing the deceptions Xenophon's Cyrus practiced against the king of Armenia and his own uncle Cyaxeres, sees the text as demonstrating the need for leaders to behave fraudulently as need arises:

Xenophon, in his Life of Cyrus, calls attention to the necessity for deceit. For in view of the amount of fraud used in the first expedition Cyrus made against the King of Armenia, and of the fact that it was by means of deceit, not by means of force, that he acquired his kingdom, one cannot but conclude from such actions that a prince who wishes to do great things must learn to practise deceit. Besides this, Xenophon also makes him deceive Cyaxeres, king of the Medes, his maternal uncle, in various ways, and shows that without such frauds Cyrus could not have attained the greatness he did attain.⁶³

61. Machiavelli, *Prince*, 94.

62. See also Nadon's discussion of an early episode in which the young Cyrus acquires followers by handing out delicacies that his grandfather has served at table; Nadon observes that it "establishes an important precedent for his later career; he is most generous with what belongs to others." *Xenophon's Prince*, 45.

63. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, ed. Bernard Crick, trans. Leslie J. Walker, rev. ed. (London: Penguin, 1998), 310.

Here, Machiavelli appears to have been alive to the more underhand practices by which Xenophon's Cyrus achieved and maintained power. However, ultimately—according to Nadon—Machiavelli is ambivalent about the *Cyropaedia* because though “Xenophon instructs his more acute readers as to the true foundation of political greatness,” he expends “enormous effort . . . to disguise the real causes of Cyrus's success, revealing them only to those who read with care and astuteness.”⁶⁴ Importantly, what Nadon has shown is that the *Cyropaedia* was, and could, in the sixteenth century be read by some in what we might term a dissident way.⁶⁵ It is not difficult to imagine that Marlowe would temperamentally be inclined to approach the work from a Machiavellian perspective, rather than from a Sidneian/Spenserian one, and in particular, that he would relish the self-interested maneuvers, which are skillfully concealed by an outward appearance of piety, magnanimity, and selflessness: “unseen hypocrisy,” indeed.⁶⁶

The *Tamburlaine* plays, then, can be seen to engage exemplary fiction—of which the *Cyropaedia* was the most authoritative example—by exposing and exploiting its fissures. I want to conclude with a brief return to the question of Marlowe's authorial program and a summary of the key points of my argument. The first publication of *The Faerie Queene* was clearly a landmark in literary history. For contemporaries it launched the English epic of a stature that could be seen to at least equal, if not surpass, the most esteemed writing in the European vernaculars and even the works of the ancients themselves. Its size and ambition, the impressive collection of commendatory verses and dedicatory sonnets that preface it, and the self-conscious emulation of Virgilian epic signaled by the opening proem clearly mark it out as a prestige publication. Any young *littérateur* could

64. Nadon, *Xenophon's Prince*, 23.

65. Nadon also mentions Montaigne as one of the more “acute” readers of the *Cyropaedia*. See *Xenophon's Prince*, 19n85. Indeed, Sidney himself implicitly acknowledges the possibility of “wrong” reading in that conditional “if they [its readers] will learn aright” that follows his eulogy to Xenophon's Cyrus. *Apology*, 85.

66. One might add that the republican, anti-imperial nature of this dissident reading of the *Cyropaedia* accords also with the notion of Marlowe's republicanism, informed, among other ways, by his reading of Machiavelli. See Cheney's recent monograph on the subject, *Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime* (2009).

not fail to be stirred by its appearance. My claim is that the desire to publish *Tamburlaine* in print was prompted by the appearance of *The Faerie Queene* and that it quite possibly underwent substantial revision in order to make it more obviously counter-Spenserian. The nature of this argument is such that positive proof is unattainable. Rather, I offer a hypothesis built upon four main points, which taken cumulatively point in this direction. Firstly, the evidence that the plays had been revised for publication; secondly, that they are the only work by Marlowe to have been printed during his lifetime; thirdly, the distinct textual traces of *The Faerie Queene*; and finally, the plays' apparent engagement with the form and ethics of the Cyric exemplar, which has particular significance because of the prominent way in which Spenser had cited the *Cyropaedia's* authority. *The Faerie Queene's* emphatic and impressive delineation of a literary agenda far removed from Marlowe's own may well in this case have been enough to prompt him to similarly promulgate a text that could effectively contest and counter it. His unorthodox creation, modified with some rewriting, could fruitfully play against Spenser's work, allowing a deconstruction of its exemplary Christian hero. I conclude, then, by suggesting that Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* should be understood as a counterfeit Cyrus.

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65. I wish to acknowledge the encouragement and suggestions of Mike Pincombe, who read an earlier draft of this article. Responsibility for its shortcomings is mine alone.

TOM RUTTER

Marlowe, *Hoffman*, and the Admiral's Men

It can hardly be wrong to identify Marlowe with the Admiral's long career as much as we do Shakespeare with their opposites.¹

The data suggest that, while the Admiral's Men started out, unsurprisingly, with Marlowe as a strong presence in their repertory, they quickly cycled his work out of rotation, as they would have done with any play—old or new. . . . I had been skeptical about the “defining feature” claim, but I did not expect to find that Marlowe had become irrelevant by late 1596.²

The two statements above represent diametrically opposing views about the significance of Christopher Marlowe's plays in the repertory of the Admiral's Men. For Andrew Gurr, they were of central importance to the company from 1594, when someone or other “chose to give one of the duopoly companies [the Lord Chamberlain's Men and the Lord Admiral's Men] all of Shakespeare and the other all of Marlowe,” until 1642, when “*Tamburlaine* and *Faustus* continued to appear at the Fortune.” In the intervening period, the plays (along with Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* [1582–92]) remained “the beating heart of the company's repertory.”³ Holger Schott Syme, however, takes issue with these assertions. Like Roslyn Knutson in the same issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, he highlights the lack of evidence for a shadowy figure (Gurr elsewhere suggests the Master of the

1. Andrew Gurr, *Shakespeare's Opposites: The Admiral's Company, 1594–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), 199.

2. Holger Schott Syme, “The Meaning of Success: Stories of 1594 and Its Aftermath,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 61.4 (2010): 490–525, 504–5.

3. Gurr, *Shakespeare's Opposites*, 171, 197.

Revels, Edmund Tilney) allocating William Shakespeare's and Marlowe's plays to the Lord Chamberlain's and Lord Admiral's Men in 1594, when events were set in train that would give those two companies a dominant position in the 1590s theater.⁴ Furthermore, he points out that whatever the literary prestige of Marlowe then or since, "the idea that Marlowe's plays formed the backbone of the Admiral's Men's economic fortunes" is highly questionable: Even in the company's first season at the Rose Theater, when "the Admiral's Men relied on Marlowe's plays almost 19 percent of the time," "those performances were less lucrative than the company's non-Marlovian offerings," and they declined both in frequency and in their takings thereafter. Finally, he views the hypothesis that new plays written for the Admiral's Men imitated the style of Marlowe's successes as ultimately unverifiable, given that most of them have been lost to posterity.⁵

While Syme's arguments about the declining profitability of Marlowe's plays are hard to dispute, derived as they are from Philip Henslowe's theatrical records, they do not preclude further comment. In the inaugural number of *Marlowe Studies: An Annual*, Paul Menzer notes that the continued willingness of the Admiral's Men to perform those plays in spite of relatively low takings may itself be significant: "Perhaps motives other than the pecuniary influenced some of their decisions: sentiment, envy, status anxiety, and nostalgia." Menzer notes the spate of revivals and augmentations of old plays in 1601–2 in which the company engaged—*The Jew of Malta*, *The Spanish Tragedy*, *The Massacre at Paris*, and others—and links this policy to Edward Alleyn's temporary return to the stage. He also suggests, however, that it may have represented a concerted attempt by the Admiral's Men at "promulgating the canonization of writers in their own repertory and promoting their plays as 'classics,' rewriting English theatre history to portray themselves as

4. Syme, "The Meaning of Success," 491–92; Andrew Gurr, "Venues on the Verges: London's Theater Government between 1594 and 1614," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 61.4 (2010): 468–89, 484; Roslyn Knutson, "What's So Special about 1594?" *Shakespeare Quarterly* 61.4 (2010): 449–67. Knutson writes, "I cringe at the idea that the Lord Admiral and the Lord Chamberlain divvied up players, playhouses, and repertory as though they were so much chattel to be disposed according to political whim." "What's So Special about 1594?" 467.

5. Syme, "The Meaning of Success," 500, also 504n37.

conservators of English dramatic heritage.”⁶ This essay takes Menzer’s argument a stage further: I will argue that a sense of corporate identity of a kind similar to that which he suggests, and based in particular on the plays of Marlowe (as well as *The Spanish Tragedy*), informed not only the revival of old plays, but also the production of new ones. My case in point is Henry Chettle’s *The Tragedy of Hoffman; or, Revenge for a Father* (1603), a play whose profound but problematic relationship with *Hamlet* (1600) has frequently been remarked upon. I shall argue that one way of making sense of this relationship is by seeing *Hoffman* as a rewriting of *Hamlet* in a manner in keeping with the existing repertory of the Admiral’s Men’s.

Hoffman was not printed until 1631, but it apparently dates from about 1603, since Philip Henslowe lent Thomas Downton of the Admiral’s Men five shillings “to geue vnto harey chettell in p[ar]te of paymente for A tragedie called Hawghman” on December 29, 1602.⁷ Although Henslowe records no further payments for the play, his accounts continue only until March 1603, so Chettle presumably completed it shortly thereafter.⁸ While it is to be hoped that Emma Smith’s recent Penguin edition of the play as one of “five revenge tragedies” will give it a greater prominence on academic curricula, *Hoffman* is still rather less familiar than, say, *The Spanish Tragedy* or *The Revenger’s Tragedy* (1606), so a brief synopsis is offered below.⁹

6. Paul Menzer, “Shades of Marlowe,” *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 1 (2011): 181–92, 190, 187.

7. Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe’s Diary*, ed. R. A. Foakes, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 207.

8. The title page refers to performances “at the *Phenix* in *Druery-lane*,” indicating that the play was revived after the opening of that theater in 1617. Harold Jenkins points out that the Phoenix was occupied by Queen Henrietta’s Men, not by the Palsgrave’s Men (who evolved out of the Admiral’s Men); this raises the (currently insoluble) question of whether the Admiral’s Men ever actually performed *Hoffman*. However, since Henslowe’s records indicate that Henry Chettle wrote it for the Admiral’s Men, this problem does not invalidate my overall argument that he did so with a view to its appropriateness for that company’s repertory. See Henry Chettle, *The Tragedy of Hoffman*, ed. Harold Jenkins (Oxford: Malone Society, 1951), v. Subsequent references cited as *Hoffman* by line number.

9. Emma Smith, ed., *Five Revenge Tragedies* (London: Penguin, 2012). The volume also includes Thomas Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy*, the first quarto of *Hamlet*, John Marston’s *Antonio’s Revenge* (1602), and Thomas Middleton’s *The Revenger’s Tragedy*.

The play centers on Clois Hoffman and his attempts to take revenge upon the Duke of Luningberg (modern Lüneburg in Lower Saxony) and his family for the killing of Hoffman's father. These begin when the Duke's son Otho and his servant Lorrique are shipwrecked near the cave where Hoffman lives: Hoffman makes Lorrique swear to aid him in his project of revenge, and the two kill Otho with the same burning crown that was used to execute Hoffman senior.

Hoffman spends much of the rest of the play passing himself off as Otho at the court of Otho's uncle the Duke of Prussia, who has never met his nephew. The Duke of Prussia makes Hoffman his heir in place of his foolish son Jerome, and Hoffman with the help of Lorrique masterminds the killing of Lodowick, son of the Duke of Saxony; the Duke of Austria; the Duke of Prussia; and Jerome, who is tricked into poisoning the Duke of Prussia and himself while attempting to poison Hoffman. Upon succeeding to the dukedom of Prussia, Hoffman is told of the death of Otho's father—unusually in this play, by natural causes—which obliges him to travel to Luningberg, where Otho's mother, Martha, is bound to see through his disguise. He is diverted from his intention to kill her in her sleep by admiration of her beauty, and therefore he has to explain to her that he has been passing himself off as her son in order to spare her grief.

It is Hoffman's failure to kill the Duchess that precipitates his downfall. The Duke of Austria's daughter Lucibella, who was betrothed to Lodowick and has gone mad after his death, inadvertently leads Mathias, the Duke of Saxony, and Saxony's brother Rodorick to Hoffman's cave, where they overhear Lorrique showing Martha the grave of her son. Lorrique is forced to confess and agrees to betray Hoffman by leading him to the others under the pretext of an assignation with Martha; Hoffman suspects Lorrique's infidelity and kills him, but nonetheless goes to meet the Duchess at the cave, where he is killed by means of the burning crown. Unfortunately, the play appears to break off during his final speech, presumably because the last page of the manuscript from which it was derived was lost or illegible.

In his study of revenge tragedy, John Kerrigan describes *Hoffman* along with *The Revenger's Tragedy* as "the two plays most immediately imbued with the spirit of Elsinore," and the considerable similarities between Chettle's tragedy and *Hamlet*

have been frequently noted by critics (two recent examples are G. K. Hunter and Janet Clare),¹⁰ some of which are apparent from the plot summary above. *Hoffman* is a revenge tragedy, set in northern Europe, about a son avenging his father's death. It includes a female character, Lucibella, who goes mad after the death of a loved one and who is clearly modeled on Ophelia: She sings popular songs and talks of "going to the riuers side / To fetch white lillies, and blew daffadils" (1433–34), although instead of committing suicide she is restored to sanity by the prospect of punishing Hoffman. As in *Hamlet*, wine is used as a murder weapon, and also as in *Hamlet*, the hero has complicated feelings about his mother—in this instance, his adopted mother the Duchess of Luningberg, who he initially wants to murder but subsequently wishes to rape. Hoffman explicitly presents his desire as incestuous: "new made mother, ther's another fire / Burnes in this liuer lust, and hot desire" (1909–10).

In its political subtext, too, *Hoffman* shares a considerable amount with Shakespeare's play, displaying a nagging and very topical anxiety (in 1602) about the problem of succession. Ferdinand, the Duke of Prussia, explains that he wears mourning dress not for his wife or nephew, but on account of his son: "A witlesse foole must needs be *Prussias* heire" (290). It is for this reason that he responds with such relief to the news that Otho (really Hoffman) has survived the shipwreck: "*Otho* liuing, wee'l disinherit our fond sonne: / And blesse all Dantzike, by our sonne elect" (376–77). Jerome himself, the disinherited heir who boasts that he has "bin at *Wittenberg*" (276) and acts like a fool, serves as a kind of parody of Hamlet (although here the folly is no act). At the same time, the comically-treated insurrection Jerome raises in support of his claim to the throne recalls the "rabble" of Laertes's supporters, whose "Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds, / 'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king'"¹¹; we are told, "*All on Ieroms side cast vp their caps and cry a Ierom*" (*Hoffman*, 1187–88 [s.d.]).

10. John Kerrigan, *Revenge Tragedy: Aeschylus to Armageddon* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996), 9; see also G. K. Hunter, *English Drama, 1586–1642: The Age of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 6:435; and Janet Clare, *Revenge Tragedy of the Renaissance* (Tavistock, England: Northcote/British Council, 2006), 49.

11. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. G. R. Hibbard (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 4.5.104–5. Hereafter cited as *Hamlet*.

Chettle's play, like Shakespeare's, suggests the possibility of succession being determined by popular violence.

This concern with succession is not limited to the court of Prussia. After the death of the Duke of Austria and the apparent death of his daughter Lucibella, Rodorick is relieved to find that the latter shows signs of life, observing that "if I could but yet recouer her, / 'Twould satisfie the State of *Austria*, / That else would be disturb'd for want of heires" (1074–76). And throughout the play, the graphic stage image of the skeleton adorned with "the iron Crowne that burnt his braines out" (105–6) embodies the notions of kingship and mortality that entwine in the concept of succession.

Notwithstanding these similarities, however, commentators have insisted on the contrasts between the two plays. Percy Simpson writes emphatically of Chettle, "It is as if, conscious that he was not alone in the field, he made up his mind to produce something distinctive, so that no playgoer could confuse the two dramas and ask, if he was recalling an episode, 'Was it Chettle or Shakespeare?'"¹² As Clarence Valentine Boyer pointed out nearly a century ago, in Clois Hoffman "the avenger has become a villain," an innovation that Fredson Bowers lauds as a dramatic "master stroke."¹³ Bowers also notes that Hoffman's vengeance is politically questionable, given that his father was "legally executed as a pirate," and says that Hoffman's own "moral sense is atrophied."¹⁴ His lack of scruple and of "psychological insight," in Clare's words, makes him a very different sort of protagonist to Hamlet. As Hunter argues, "Hoffman's melancholy does not puzzle his will with moral conundrums, but rather allows him to 'plume up his will' by devising a string of ingenious deceptions and deletions, not simply of his father's enemies but of whole pages out of the *Almanach de Gotha*."¹⁵

This simultaneous likeness and unlikeness of *Hoffman* to *Hamlet* is one that critics have interpreted in several ways. For Simpson, it is an attempt to capitalize on the "current demand"

12. Percy Simpson, *Studies in Elizabethan Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 167–68.

13. Clarence Valentine Boyer, *The Villain as Hero in Elizabethan Tragedy* (London: Routledge; New York: Dutton, 1914), 141; and Fredson Thayer Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, 1587–1642* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1959), 127.

14. Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy*, 127, 129.

15. Clare, *Revenge Tragedy*, 50; Hunter, *English Drama, 1586–1642*, 435.

for revenge tragedy circa 1602 while offering a distinctive “counter-attraction.”¹⁶ For Bowers it is a crucial development in the evolution of revenge tragedy as a form, a “bold step” of “taking the Kydian hero revenger and carrying him to his logical conclusion as villain.”¹⁷ For Eleanor Prosser it marks a stage in a different historical process, whereby “the condemnation of revenge becomes progressively explicit in the theatre.”¹⁸ Another way of approaching the question, however, is to see *Hoffman* as an attempt to assimilate Shakespeare’s groundbreaking and influential drama to the theatrical heritage of the Admiral’s Men.

Even before its action has begun, *Hoffman* has advertised its kinship to *Hamlet* through the alternative title, “A Revenge for a Father.” In Hoffman’s opening speech, this relationship is underlined by specific verbal echoes. His assurance that “with a hart as aire, swift as thought” he will “execute iustly in such a cause” (9–10) calls to mind Hamlet’s expressed desire “that I with wings as swift / As meditation or the thoughts of love, / May sweep to my revenge” (1.5.29–31). Hoffman’s interpretation of thunder and lightning as an expression of heavenly discontent, “That I thus tardy am to doe an act / which iustice and a fathers death exites” (16–17), recalls Hamlet’s words to the Ghost in Gertrude’s closet, “Do you not come your tardy son to chide, / That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by / Th’important acting of your dread command?” (3.4.99–101). Yet while both of those speeches of Hamlet are uttered in the presence of the Ghost, Hoffman’s are spoken before the more tangible “remembrance” (8) of his father’s actual decayed corpse, which we are later told he “stole down . . . from the gallows at *Leningberge*” (104–5). Rather than requiring supernatural agents to prod him into action, Hoffman has evidently taken matters into his own hands, and later in the first act, he carries out his vengeance upon Otho of Luningberg both in front of his father’s remains and using the same technique of killing by means of a burning crown that was used on Hoffman senior. While the notion of vengeance as a repetition of the original

16. Simpson, *Studies in Elizabethan Drama*, 165, 167.

17. Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy*, 126.

18. Eleanor Prosser, *Hamlet and Revenge* (Stanford: Stanford UP; London: Oxford UP, 1967), 63.

crime and the use of fetishized objects are ubiquitous features of revenge tragedy, the specific motif of the suspended corpse, as has been repeatedly pointed out, is shared with *The Spanish Tragedy*, and in both plays the revelation of the gruesome object is made into a theatrical coup: Hoffman “*strikes ope a curtaine where appeares a body*” (8–10 [s.d.]).¹⁹ Verbal allusions to *Hamlet* are thus accompanied by a striking visual allusion to Kyd’s older play, a staple in the repertory of the Admiral’s Men and of course recently augmented with “adicyons” in 1602, presumably for another revival.²⁰

This is only the first of a number of allusions to *The Spanish Tragedy* in the course of *Hoffman*. As Lukas Erne has pointed out, the name Chettle gives to the Duke of Prussia’s foolish heir Jerome echoes that of Hieronimo.²¹ Jerome speaks in prose, violates courtly niceties in his rudeness to the Princes of Saxony and Austria, and loudly complains that “my mothers death comes somewhat neere my heart” (271–72) (all this in his first speech), as well as having been at Wittenberg, and thus clearly fancies himself as a Hamlet, which makes it rather ironic that he takes his name from Kyd’s protagonist. Although Lucibella resembles Ophelia in her madness, as a female revenger she is the counterpart of Kyd’s Bel-imperia, whose name she partially shares, and the circumstances in which Lodowick is murdered and she herself wounded appear to allude to Kyd’s play. The lovers are sleeping on a bank of flowers where “Nature, or art hath taught [the] boughs to spred, / In manner of an arbour” (848–49); Kyd’s Horatio is murdered in a bower where he is embracing Bel-imperia, after which his killers “*hang him in the arbour*.”²²

19. See Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy*, 125; Lukas Erne, *Beyond “The Spanish Tragedy”: A Study of the Works of Thomas Kyd* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2001), 39; and Clare, *Revenge Tragedy*, 53.

20. Henslowe, *Diary*, 203. Henslowe’s records indicate that after being performed by Lord Strange’s Men between March 1592 and January 1593 (17–19), *The Spanish Tragedy* was revived by the Admiral’s Men in 1597 for performances on January 7, January 11, January 17, January 22, April 21, May 4, May 25, July 19, and October 11 (51–60), after which time his records of performances of this and other plays largely cease.

21. Erne, *Beyond “The Spanish Tragedy,”* 39.

22. Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. J. R. Mulryne, 2nd ed. (London: A & C Black; New York: W. W. Norton, 1989), 2.5.53 s.d.

Another moment in the play that seems calculated to recall *The Spanish Tragedy* comes at the end, when Hoffman is at the mercy of his antagonists and the Duke of Saxony suggests that they “Cut out the murtherers tongue” (2567). The threat, fortunately, is not carried out, permitting the villain some lengthy dying speeches, but it irresistibly calls to mind Hieronimo’s biting out of his own tongue in the climactic scene of Kyd’s play. Admittedly, we get something similar at the end of *Antonio’s Revenge*, when the conspirators pluck out Piero’s tongue, but John Marston himself is surely pastiching Kyd here. By 1602, other dramatists writing for the Admiral’s Men had alluded to this gesture: In *A Knack to Know an Honest Man* (1594), for example, the servant Gnatto says of his master “He spake as though hee would spit his stomp in my mouth,” and in *Lust’s Dominion; or, The Lascivious Queen* (c. 1600) Eleazar promises the Queen “I’le tear out my tongue / From this black temple for blaspheming thee.”²³ Viewed alongside these two plays, *Hoffman* seems to be participating in a conscious attempt to construct a repertorial identity through repetition of a notorious trope.

Despite these apparent references to Kyd, however, there are other respects in which *Hoffman* violates the expectations that its opening allusions both to *The Spanish Tragedy* and to *Hamlet* create. For one thing, the protagonist’s reference to his tardiness proves entirely misleading. Delay is crucial to Kyd’s and to Shakespeare’s revenge tragedies, even though it stems from different causes (Lorenzo’s control of access to court in the former, Hamlet’s much-discussed scruples in the latter). In both instances, it means that the hero achieves his vengeance at the climax of the play, offering a belated resolution for him and for the audience once internal and external obstacles have been overcome. In *Hoffman*, by contrast, the play is barely two hundred lines in before the protagonist has established himself on his vengeful career with Otho’s death; as Boyer notes, “By this one act . . . the avenger’s real task is done.”²⁴ Structurally, this is much more akin to *The Massacre at Paris*, in which the violence is underway by about line 170 with the killing of the

23. H. De Vocht, ed., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man* (Oxford: Malone Society, 1910), 1163–64; Thomas Dekker, *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1953–61), 4:1.1.114–15.

24. Boyer, *The Villain as Hero*, 142.

Old Queen, or to the sequence of conquests we get in *Tamburlaine the Great*, than to the deferral of gratification in Shakespeare or Kyd.

Indeed, it is arguably the Marlowe plays in the Admiral's repertory, more than *The Spanish Tragedy*, that offer the pattern for *Hoffman* to follow, not least in Chettle's treatment of the protagonist. At the outset, his play seems calculated to elicit a degree of sympathy for Hoffman. Its allusions to *Hamlet* and *The Spanish Tragedy* might lead one to assume a morally upright avenger in the tradition of Hamlet or Hieronimo, while Hoffman's promise to "execute iustly" (10), and his insistence that "myne's a cause that's right" (12), bespeak a confidence in the legitimacy of his revenge. Yet Otho's servant Lorrique, after being made to swear to aid Hoffman in his revenge, immediately recognizes that his master is "A true villaine" (102), and Hoffman's recapitulation to the doomed Otho of how his father was executed for piracy makes his revenge problematic. Even if Hoffman senior was treated ungratefully by the Dukes of Luninberg and Prussia and "Compeld to . . . liue a pirate" (163–64), and even if, as his son complains, "wretches sentenc'd neuer finde defence, / How euer guiltlesse bee their innocence" (222–23), it remains the case that he was outlawed for debt and tried and punished for a crime he did commit. As such, Hoffman junior is avenging not a private wrong but the public execution of justice, and later on Lorrique offers a choric commentary on his claim of legitimacy: "this Clois is an honest villaine, ha's conscience in his killing of men: he kilis none but his fathers enemies, and there issue, 'tis admirable, 'tis excellent, 'tis well 'tis meritorious, where? in heauen? no, hell" (661–64). Coming from an entirely amoral character, who to save his life will "turne any thing . . . rather then nothing" (213), these lines close down the possibility that revenge might be acceptable. Instead, Chettle recalls the self-justification of the regicidal Friar in *The Massacre at Paris*, "I have been a great sinner in my days, and the deed is meritorious," implying that Hoffman has fallen prey to a comparable sanctimonious delusion.²⁵

Not only is Hoffman's course of vengeance morally illegitimate: It is notably asymmetrical, taking in not only Otho

25. Christopher Marlowe, *The Massacre at Paris*, "Dido Queen of Carthage" and "The Massacre at Paris," ed. H. J. Oliver (London: Methuen, 1968), 23.27–28.

but the Duke of Prussia, the Duke's heir, the Duke of Austria, and Lodowick, not to speak of the near death of Austria's daughter Lucibella and the fatal silencing of Lorrique. His murder of Otho's mother Martha is prevented only by a sudden access of lust, and he embroils himself in German politics by having himself made heir to the dukedom of Prussia. As such, Bowers's insistence that "Chettle's protagonist is strictly a combination of the characteristics of the Kydian hero and villain, with no outside influence operating from Marlowe" seems overstated, and his comment on *The Jew of Malta* is surely applicable to *Hoffman*: "in Kyd's plays the revenge, once conceived, runs through the whole and reaches its culmination in the catastrophe, whereas Barabas's revenge ends to all practical purposes in the second scene of the third act. The rest of the play is given over to his attempts to save himself from the consequences of his revenge and to become master of Malta."²⁶ While Hoffman dies with his revenge technically incomplete, since Saxony, Lucibella and Martha are still alive and Luningberg died of natural causes, he does boast that he has "prosper'd in the downfall of some fiue" (2590), while lust and ambition have made him, like Barabas, go some way beyond his original intention.

Within the Marlovian œuvre, *The Jew of Malta* is an especially appropriate play to read *Hoffman* against, not least because "the brothers Mathias and Lodowick are clearly meant to recall the paired characters of the same names in *The Jew of Malta*,"²⁷ and in both plays Lodowick dies at Mathias's hand due to the protagonist's machinations (although Chettle's Mathias is still alive at the end). Barabas, like Hoffman, has an understandable cause for animosity in the form of state-sanctioned mistreatment, and in combination with the legitimate accusations of hypocrisy he levels at his enemies, his affection for his daughter, and his own energy and inventiveness, this helps to create a degree of audience sympathy for him. In both plays, however, the initial sympathy largely evaporates as the villains become increasingly bloodthirsty and cartoonish. This feature of *The Jew of Malta* has sometimes been seen as a defect, or even as evidence of revision, but it seems to have appealed to Chettle, who modulates Hoffman's character from a dutifully avenging son to a gleefully

26. Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy*, 275, 105.

27. Erne, *Beyond "The Spanish Tragedy"*, 39.

sadistic intriguer who promises a tragedy that "Shall passe those of Thyestes, Tereus, / Iocasta, or Duke Iasons iealous wife" (409–10).²⁸ He offers the audience a sequence of entertainingly inventive killings, such as encouraging Lodowick to escape in disguise in order to evade the supposed malice of Ferdinand only for Lodowick to be wrongly identified as a fictitious Greek who has eloped with Lucibella and murdered by Mathias.

Another core element of *The Jew of Malta* that Chettle incorporates in *Hoffman* is the relationship between the central character and his henchman. Like Ithamore, who sees in Barabas "the bravest, gravest, secret, subtle, bottle-nosed knave to my master that ever gentleman had" (*JM*, 3.3.9–11), Lorrique applauds his master as "an excellent fellow / A true villaine fitter for me then better company" (*Hoffman*, 101–2). This admiration does not preclude betrayal on both sides. In a characteristic gesture, Barabas promises to make Ithamore his heir only to drop the mask and observe to the audience, "Thus every villain ambles after wealth, / Although he ne'er be richer than in hope" (*JM*, 3.4.52–53). That he has other plans for his servant is suggested by the menacing promise, "I'll pay thee with a vengeance, Ithamore" (3.4.116). Similarly, Hoffman promises Lorrique that when his revenge is complete he will "seat thee by my throne of state, / And make thee riual in those gouernments, / That by thy secrecy thou lift'st me to" (*Hoffman*, 734–36), but then explains, "I will preferre him: he shall be prefer'd / To hanging peraduenture; why not?" (750–51). Both servants turn against their masters, Ithamore led into blackmail by Bellamira and Pilia-Borza and Lorrique siding with Hoffman's enemies once he has been forced to confess his crimes. And both are killed by them, Lorrique at the climax of a scene of nicely worked-out tension. Both, finally, survive long enough to denounce their employers, Ithamore causing Barabas to regret having been so sparing with his poison (*JM*, 5.1.22–23). The similarity between the two characters' roles in their plays, and between their respective career trajectories, is strong, though it is worth noting that Ben Jonson was to do something similar with Mosca in the Lord Chamberlain's–King's Men play *Volpone*.

28. On the question of revision, see Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. N. W. Bawcutt (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1978), 39–47. All subsequent references to *The Jew of Malta* are from this edition.

(1606)—a salutary reminder that influence takes place between, as well as within, repertorial boundaries.

The other obvious parallel between Chettle's play and *The Jew of Malta* is in the treatment of the two protagonists' eventual demise. Both instances illustrate the biblical precept that "He that diggeth a pit, shall fall into it,"²⁹ a verse recalled by Lorrique's lines, "Fox you'l be taken, hunter you are falne / Into the pit you dig'd (*Hoffman*, 2292–93). Barabas, of course, plans for Calymath and his entourage to fall "Into a deep pit past recovery" (*JM*, 5.5.36) only to end up in it himself when Fernese double-crosses him, while Hoffman is inevitably dispatched with the same burning crown used on his father and on Otho. The fiery torments of both suggest the pains of hell that presumably lie in store, and they also permit lengthy and unrepentant final speeches that include helpful running commentaries: "But now begins the extremity of heat / To pinch me with intolerable pangs" (*JM*, 5.5.86–87); "boyle on thou foolish idle braine, / For giuing entertainment to loues thoughts" (*Hoffman*, 2597–98). It is noticeable that the downfall of both villains is attributable to a sudden and unexpected need to be loved: Hoffman in his desire for Martha, and Barabas in the very un-Machiavellian concern that "Malta hates me" (*JM*, 5.2.30), which leads him to side with Ferneze.

As the parallel with *Volpone* indicates, we do not have to invoke repertorial identity to explain the similarities between *Hoffman* and *The Jew of Malta*. In this instance, though, it seems appropriate. By 1602 the Admiral's Men had a decade-long tradition of performing and reviving Marlowe plays, and as I have argued, dramas like *Captain Thomas Stukeley* (1605) and *Patient Grissil* (1603), to varying extents and in varying ways, interact with that heritage.³⁰ Gurr has also shown in *Shakespeare's*

29. Ecclesiastes 10:8 (Geneva).

30. Henslowe records performances by the Admiral's Men of *The Jew of Malta* on May 14, June 4, June 13, June 23, June 30, July 10, July 22, August 5, August 7, September 2, October 20, and December 9, 1594 (21–26), January 9, January 18, January 29, February 2, February 17, April 20, May 14, and June 21, 1596 (34, 36–37, 47); of *The Massacre at Paris* on June 19, June 25, July 3, July 8, July 16, July 27, August 8, August 17, September 7, and September 25, 1594 (22–24); of *1 Tamburlaine* on August 28, September 12, September 28, October 15, October 17, November 4, November 27, December 17, and December 30, 1594, and January 27, February 17, March 11, May 21, September 15, and November 12, 1595 (23–29, 31, 33); of *2 Tamburlaine* on December 19, 1594, and January 1, January 29, February 18,

Opposites how, for example, George Chapman's play *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (1596) burlesques several Marlovian roles.³¹ After the turn of the century, and its move to the Fortune Theater, the company seems to have made the decision to keep that heritage relevant and new: It commissioned additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* in 1601 and *Doctor Faustus* in 1602, and purchased "divers thing[es] for the Jewe of malta" and costume materials for *The Massacre at Paris* in 1601.³² The temporary return of Edward Alleyn from retirement in 1600 must have served as a potent reminder of the company's past, while it has been argued that the revival of the children's companies after 1599, by diversifying the theatrical marketplace, made the Admiral's Men more aware of their core theatrical values.³³ In this environment, I would suggest, it is understandable that Chettle should have produced a revenge tragedy that rewrote *Hamlet* in a way strikingly indebted to the dramatic structures and techniques of the Admiral's Men's most celebrated playwright.

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March 12, May 22, and November 13, 1595 (26–29, 33); and of *Doctor Faustus* on September 30, October 9, October 21, November 5, November 20, December 8, December 20, and December 27, 1594, January 9, January 24, February 8, April 31 (*sic*), June 5, September 11, and September 26, 1595, February 13, April 19, May 5, June 12, July 3, October 28, November 4, and December 17, 1596, and January 5 and (approximately) October 13, 1597 (24–28, 30–31, 34, 36, 47, 54–55, 60). On *Captain Thomas Stukeley* and *Patient Grissil*, see Tom Rutter, "Marlovian Echoes in the Admiral's Men Repertory: *Alcazar*, *Stukeley*, *Patient Grissil*," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 27.1 (2009): 27–38.

31. Gurr, *Shakespeare's Opposites*, 22–24.

32. Henslowe, *Diary*, 182, 206, 170, 183–85.

33. See S. P. Cerasano, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Alleyn, Edward (1566–1626)," accessed December 13, 2012, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>; and Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 154–58.

ANDREW DUXFIELD

The Uses of Unity: Individual and
Multitude in *The Jew of Malta*

When the governor of Malta, Ferneze, seizes the wealth of the rich Jew, Barabas, and justifies it as an act calculated to “save the ruin of a multitude,”¹ he evokes a concept—that of a unified people and a common good—that *The Jew of Malta* interrogates in a number of ways. The word “multitude” is ambiguous in the extent to which it denotes a collective group or a large number of individuals; the *Oxford English Dictionary*’s definitions include both “the populace; the public” and “the character, quality, or condition of being many; numerousness.”² The play, I aim to show, exhibits a similar duality. It repeatedly evokes the possibility of community; despite the apparent social and political isolation of its central figure, it undermines assumptions about cultural and moral difference. It presents Christianity, Judaism, and Islam as ostensibly clear, distinguishing categories but ultimately insists upon the common ground between the three faiths to the extent that the distinctions between them begin to appear arbitrary. Ultimately, however, it evokes the idea of a unified multitude only to undermine it, depicting a Malta whose inhabitants are united only by their unstinting individualism and portraying categories such as nationality or religion as fantasies evoked either to conceal rampant self-interest or to create an illusory impression of unity. Crucially, the play does all of these

1. Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. James R. Siemon, New Mermaids Series (London: A & C Black, 1994), 1.2.98. All subsequent references to the play are from this edition.

2. *Oxford English Dictionary* online, s.v. “multitude,” 3b, 1, accessed January 10, 2013, <http://oed.com/>.

things at a time in which English pamphlets and sermons were betraying increasing levels of anxiety at a perceived atmosphere of discord in English society and were issuing pleas for the populace to become united once more. From the midst of this anxiety and idealist rhetoric, Christopher Marlowe offers a brutally Machiavellian depiction of society as a constantly evolving struggle for power between self-seeking individuals that is barely kept below boiling point by arbitrary unifying concepts such as religion or nationhood—unifying concepts that are put in place and maintained by individuals whose interests they serve.

In approaching the play's treatment of unity and the relationship between the individual and the multitude, this essay will touch upon some issues which have attracted considerable critical attention. Much recent criticism on the play has focused on the liminal position of Barabas as an early modern Jew; Richard Wilson and Daniel Vitkus have astutely read the play in terms of the intermediary position often assumed by prominent European Jews in trade and diplomacy in the Mediterranean, while Andrew Hiscock and Julia Reinhart Lupton have paid attention to the opportunities, as well as the limitations, that Barabas's position as a resident outsider present him.³ A common feature of all of these readings is a sense of Barabas occupying a paradoxical state of simultaneous belonging and not belonging. This notion is important to this essay, but will be considered more broadly in terms of the play's interrogation of the possibility of belonging to any unified people or creed. In discussing the measures taken by characters in the play in order to establish unity, the essay will discuss its well established association with Machiavellian *realpolitik*. Of the numerous studies on this topic, three stand out. Irving Ribner argues that Marlowe had direct access to Machiavelli's work and that he

3. See Richard Wilson, "Another Country: Marlowe and the Go-Between," in *Renaissance Go-Betweens: Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Andreas Höfele and Werner von Koppenfels (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2005), 177–99; Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 163–98; Andrew Hiscock, *The Uses of This World: Thinking Space in the Drama of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Cary and Jonson* (Cardiff: U of Wales P, 2004), 52–82; Julia Reinhard Lupton, *Citizen-Saints: Shakespeare and Political Theology* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2005), 49–72; and Lupton, "The Jew of Malta," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Patrick Cheney (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 144–57. Hereafter cited as Lupton.

“uses Machiavelli’s political precepts . . . because they are his precepts as well.”⁴ N. W. Bawcutt suggests that, while we cannot be sure whether or not Marlowe had read Niccolò Machiavelli, his work subtly demonstrates sympathy with the “orthodox position” that the unbridled application of “Machiavellian” ideas, as popularly understood, would exert a corrosive influence on society.⁵ Catherine Minshull builds upon an observation made by Bawcutt in order to argue that the play’s prologue, which associates Barabas with Machiavelli, is a red herring, and that it is in fact Ferneze and his established regime on Malta that exhibit most clearly an alignment with Machiavellian thinking.⁶ My intention here is not to establish the extent of Marlowe’s acquaintance with or endorsement of Machiavelli’s writing, but rather to highlight that the play’s interest in Machiavellianism is symptomatic of a broader interest in the notion of the multitude as a unified collective, a notion to which both *The Discourses* (1531) and *The Prince* (1532) devote much discussion.

Why might a playwright of the late 1580s and early 1590s be particularly interested in questions of unity and in the place of the individual amongst the multitude? In considering these issues, I argue, *The Jew of Malta* engages in a discourse that was particularly prevalent in the cultural consciousness during Marlowe’s short writing career. In a sense, much of Elizabeth I’s reign had been devoted to establishing and maintaining a degree of unity amongst her subjects, a task that she and her privy council approached through pragmatic means, offering a religiously bifurcated populace a *via media* and refusing to open windows into men’s souls. In the latter part of her reign, from the time at which Marlowe was probably writing *Dido, Queen of Carthage* at Cambridge, that unity becomes a particularly urgent topic. John Guy has argued persuasively for the consideration of Elizabeth’s reign as consisting of two distinct phases, the second of which, beginning in 1585 with the deployment of English troops to the Low Countries, was characterized by the reversal

4. Irving Ribner, “Marlowe and Machiavelli,” *Comparative Literature* 6.4 (1954): 348–56, 353.

5. N. W. Bawcutt, “Machiavelli and Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*,” *Renaissance Drama*, n.s., 3 (1970): 3–49, 48.

6. Catherine Minshull, “Marlowe’s ‘Sound Machevill,’” *Renaissance Drama*, n.s., 13 (1982): 35–53.

of a previously noninterventionist foreign policy and subsequently by the threat of both invasion from foreign Catholic enemies and usurpation by recusant plotters at home. The “physical and emotional strains” of these aspects of Elizabeth’s “second reign,” Guy suggests, were exacerbated by an unstable economic climate, bad harvests, and outbreaks of disease and manifested themselves in greater factionalism at court and insubordination in the country.⁷ In the years from the first performances of *Tamburlaine the Great* in 1587 to those of *The Jew of Malta*, probably in 1590, the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, the Spanish Armada, the papal bull renewing the excommunication of Elizabeth, and the Marprelate controversy (1588–89) all contributed to this acute sense of dissolution.

In this atmosphere of political and societal discord, England’s cultural output exhibits an intensified interest in the idea of political and civil unity, as a number of clergymen, polemicists and cultural commentators exhorted their readers and auditors to understand the dangers of discord and the virtue of a unified society. Robert Hitchcock, in a pamphlet published in 1590, argued that “Euen as discord in a cittie doth discouer and giues occasion to those that lye in waite to betray, to perform their practises well: so vnitie doth knit together the diuersities of opinions, and of many making one body alone keepe governments and States vncorrupted.”⁸ Hitchcock’s point, that unity makes a commonwealth strong while discord presents opportunities to its enemies, is made in a variety of ways by a range of writers in the latter half of the 1580s. William Averell argues in 1588 that “if wee liue together in unitie . . . wee shall bee more sure and safe than if wee were enclosed about with the strongest bulwarkes, or enuironed rounde with inuincible rampiers.”⁹ Contemporary calls for unity often made use of theological reasoning. Unity had previously tended to be a barb thrown by Catholic polemicists who were keen to demonstrate that Reformation theology was illegitimate by virtue of its separation

7. John Guy, “The 1590s: The Second Reign of Elizabeth I?,” *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 1.

8. Robert Hitchcock, *The Quintessence of Wit, Being a Corrant Comfort of Conceites, Maximies, and Poleticke Denises*. . . , 2nd ed. (London, 1590), sig. D4v–E (STC 21744).

9. William Averell, *A Mervailous Combat of Contrarieties*. . . , 2nd ed. (London, 1588), sig. D3 (STC 981).

from the true unified church, but the increasingly vocal presence of nonconformist Protestantism in England, manifested most famously in the Marprelate controversy, meant that unity began to become a watchword of Anglican sympathizers, too. A commonly occurring trope is that put forward by the clergyman George Wither in 1585, who argued that “the *body* compacted of many members, setteth before vs the vnity that ought to be amongst all true Christians, who are the misticall *body* of Iesus Christ.”¹⁰ The notion of the body politic, or of its oneness with Christ, is not a new one in the 1580s, but the period does see it begin to be invoked as an urgent plea to potentially schismatic members of the commonweal to remember the importance of unity; as William James preaches in a sermon of 1589:

If therfore one spirit haue fashioned vs all, and haue made vs all one body, and fed vs with one & the same heauenly table, haue watred vs all with one heauenly deaw from aboue, which all are to haue drunke of the same spirit: If it haue vnited vs who were before so farre different one from another: If the members then make one body, when they all as it were do grow and knit themselues together: why dreame we of any the least dissention, the least difference?¹¹

These concerns over discord which appeared in the public domain were reflective of what Guy terms an “obsessional” emphasis on addressing social revolt and religious nonconformity increasingly adopted by privy councilors and magistrates from 1585 onwards.¹² This atmosphere of concern over the discordance of society and accordant desire for a move toward unity makes *The Jew of Malta*’s exploration of the relationship between the individual and the multitude particularly interesting, and looking at the play in these terms offers a fresh perspective on its relationship to the cultural moment from which it emerged.

From close to its very beginning, *The Jew of Malta* prompts its audience to consider the relationship between the individual and the multitude, and more particularly the value of unity. When he

10. George Wither, *An A. B. C. for Layemen . . .* (London, 1585), sig. B3v (STC 25888).

11. William James, *A Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse the IX. of Nouember, 1589* (London, 1590), sig. C (STC 14464).

12. Guy, “The 1590s,” 1.

first appears on stage, Barabas, surrounded by his mountains of gold, laments the necessity of “wearying his fingers’ ends” counting the coins with which his “steel barred coffers are crammed full” (1.1.16, 14). The better thing to do, to avoid all of this toil, would be to trade with merchants whose traffic is “metal of the purest mould” (1.1.20), or in

seld-seen costly stones of so great price
As one of them indifferently rated,
And of a caract of this quantity,
May serve in peril of calamity
To ransom great kings from captivity. (1.1.28–32)

This ideal of untold wealth compressed into the smallest of sizes is encapsulated in the memorable lines in which Barabas imagines the enclosure of “infinite riches in a little room” (1.1.37). Barabas’s riches, in their multiform manifestations, are not only tiresome to count but are also unruly; they threaten to grow beyond his control and burst the walls of his “crammed full” counting house. In contrast, equivalent holdings, enclosed in the space of a single gem or diamond is entirely manageable—a unified entity that can be carried, stored, or watched with ease. While this scene serves primarily to demonstrate the enormity of Barabas’s wealth, it also foreshadows the play’s concern with political notions of unity. Ferneze, and heads of state in general, have a similar problem to Barabas. A state with a multivalent populace is like a counting house bursting with small change; the boundaries which define it are stretched to breaking point. Conversely, a state with a people that are of one mind—that act together as a multitude—will have a Prince that is fully in control of his territory.

The focus on the complex relationship between the individual and the multitude becomes explicit in the following scene, in which Barabas, having been summoned to the Maltese senate house, argues with Ferneze over the absorption of his fortune. Barabas’s initial response to Ferneze’s demand is to accentuate his status as an outsider, asking pointedly, “Are strangers with your tribute to be taxed?” (1.2.59). Barabas’s logic is turned against him by the Second Knight, who reminds him of the freedom he has been given to earn his wealth: “Have strangers leave with us to get their wealth? / Then let them with us contribute” (1.2.60–61). Barabas, neither welcome enough on

Malta to be considered anything other than a stranger to it nor sufficiently outcast to act independently of its customs, is caught in an impossible situation. Ferneze is ultimately able to justify the seizure by adopting a characteristically pious tone:

BARABAS. Will you then steal my goods?
Is theft the ground of your religion?
FERNEZE. 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. (1.2.95–100)

Barabas's attempt to attribute Ferneze's individual act of theft to all of Christianity backfires; Ferneze follows Barabas's lead by shifting attention away from the level of the individual to that of the multitude, justifying the seizure on the basis of its benefit to the society at large. As Troni Grande has noted, Ferneze's argument calls to mind the account in John 18:14 of Caiaphas's condemnation of Jesus, on the basis that "it was expedient that one man should die for the people," in turn ironically situating Barabas in the position of Christ.¹³ This scene suggests not just a distinction between the individual and the multitude, but a more open conflict of interests between them. Where the concept of the common good is evoked, it is simultaneously undermined by the insistence upon an individual to whom that commonality does not apply.

The casting of a Jewish protagonist is ideal for a play that explores contemporary tensions regarding discord and the place of the individual within a larger collective body. For an Elizabethan audience, Jews were, officially speaking, quite literally external to the community, with their expulsion from England still in effect, and a large number of Jews across Europe, North Africa, and the Eastern Mediterranean had relocated after being cast out of the Iberian Peninsula by the inquisition. Stereotypical Elizabethan conceptions of Jews were complex and deep-seated, often focusing on a covetous preoccupation with material wealth, sometimes on a tendency to commit acts of unspeakable barbarity, and generally highlighting their role as obstructors of the advancement of the Christian faith. In the words of Wilbur Sanders, Elizabethans had "a semantic complex of infidelity,

13. Qtd. in Troni Y. Grande, *Marlovian Tragedy: The Play of Dilation* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 1999), 147.

treachery, inhumanity and rapacity informing the very use of the word ‘Jew.’”¹⁴ Barabas’s Jewishness carries with it a poisonous set of associations which would have marked him as distinct from the characters with whom he shares the stage and distanced him from the viewing audience before he has uttered a word. As Stephen Greenblatt puts it, Barabas takes the stage “already trailing clouds of ignominy, already a ‘marked case.’”¹⁵ Even in regions where Jews were tolerated, they were rarely seen as full members of society, often living in walled ghettos that marked their separation from the gentile populace. This liminal state of residence is highlighted by the comments of theologian Andrew Willet, who in 1590 stated that “a Jew . . . whether he journeys into Spain, or France, or into whatever other place he goes to, declares himself not a Spaniard or a Frenchman, but a Jew.”¹⁶ Willet’s comment highlights the independence of Jews, yet also implies a community of sorts; in eschewing the identity of their host nation, Jews retain membership of another, less geographically defined group. Similarly, by marking out a recognizable group as distinct from the community, one makes a smaller community with autonomy of its own; the walls around a ghetto like the one in Venice keep the Jews out of the larger community, but also mark the boundaries of what is effectively a state within a state. Julia Reinhard Lupton suggests that this was the case in early modern Malta, where Jews “functioned as a semi-autonomous, self-regulating body within the larger political order” (145). When Barabas calls his fellow Jews his countrymen, he doubtless means countrymen of Israel rather than of Malta (1.1.142). As such, while ostensibly positioning Barabas as marked out from the multitude, the play offers at least the potential of belonging to a unified micro-community.

The idea of a Jewish community with a collective mindset is soon put under strain, however. Later in his conversation with his fellow Jews, Barabas’s gestures of communality are flatly

14. Wilbur Sanders, *The Dramatist and the Received Idea: Studies in the Plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1968), 41. See also Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 165; and Harold Levin, *Christopher Marlowe: The Overreacher* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), 84.

15. Stephen Greenblatt, “Marlowe, Marx, and Anti-Semitism,” in *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Richard Wilson (London: Longman, 1999), 140–58, 144.

16. Qtd. in Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 165.

contradicted in his sardonic asides to the audience; promising to attend the meeting with Ferneze, he assures his countrymen that “If any thing shall there concern our state / Assure yourselves I’ll look—(unto myself).” (1.1.170–71). After the meeting, in which he declares himself a stranger to the general Maltese society, Barabas also openly marks himself as separate from the Jewish community, complaining to the other Jews that “You were a multitude, and I but one, / And of me only have they taken all” (1.2.179–80). After these early exchanges, the play’s other Jews (with the exception of Abigail) make no more appearances, and Barabas does little to suggest any kind of affinity to a religious community, reminding the audience of his Jewishness only when it serves to further his plots or to satirize anti-Semitic stereotypes.

Barabas does not act entirely alone, however. While his Jewishness, and the attendant prejudices it evokes, would initially have served to isolate him from the audience, the comfortable distance between protagonist and onlooker is gradually eroded to the extent that the latter becomes complicit in the acts of the former. Paradoxically, this coming together of Jewish protagonist and Christian audience is facilitated by Barabas’s marked awareness of the reductive category that is used to set him apart from his peers. The most coherent enunciations of contemporary anti-Semitic stereotypes in the play are delivered not by its Christian characters, but by Barabas himself, as can be seen when he draws on the tradition of Jewish covetousness during an elaborate confession to the Friars Bernadine and Giacomo: “I have been zealous in the Jewish faith, / Hard-hearted to the poor, a covetous wretch, / That would for lucre’s sake have sold my soul” (4.1.51–54). Barabas is not speaking sincerely here, but rather deceiving the Christian friars into thinking he is preparing for a conversion to Christianity. By delivering an account of a soul corrupted by avarice, the Jew tells the friars exactly what they want, and expect, to hear. The friars are fooled, but the audience is in on the joke. This exchange is echoed in Barabas’s verbal tussle with Ithamore at the slave markets. Here each of the two combatants consciously appropriates the characteristics stereotypically applied to his religious denomination in an attempt to prove himself the more execrable villain. Barabas’s contribution is again comically absurd in its adherence to anti-Semitic

prejudices, painting a self-portrait that luxuriates in poisoning and usury (2.3.176–200). Barabas is not, as the prologue implies he will be, simply a personification of anti-Semitic stereotypes. Rather, his histrionic performance of those stereotypes serves to highlight their fictive status, and positions him externally to them. He is fully aware of, and in dialogue with, the social forces that place him on the periphery of society. As Vitkus puts it, “the stereotype of the Jewish moneylender and poisoner is a role that Barabas irreverently appropriates but then exceeds.”¹⁷ In a sense, Barabas asserts his independence by distancing himself from his fellow Jews and detaching himself from reductive notions of Jewishness. Yet in another sense, since Jewishness was so readily associated with isolation and liminality, Barabas’s separation from it facilitates a degree of unity with the audience that would otherwise be unavailable to him.

The irreverence described by Vitkus is important in this respect; underlying the reprehensible deeds which he commits is a disarmingly charismatic disregard for any kind of moral code. He dispatches his enemies with such elaborate verve and humor that the depravity of the situation is mitigated. J. B. Steane has noted the significance of humor in establishing a rapport between Barabas and the audience, stating that “Laughter will bypass that countering reason and carry our inner allegiances into places where we have no sober intention of their going.”¹⁸ Furthermore, as Ruth Lunney has recently shown, his unusually frequent asides directly invite the audience to share in the elaboration of his plots.¹⁹ That complicity serves to implicate the audience in his actions to the degree that to condemn Barabas is also, to an extent, to condemn oneself. In achieving this effect, the play capitalizes on the potential for theater to enact a form of unification on which Protestant polemic was not so keen. In a passage that strikingly anticipates Barabas’s counting house

17. Daniel Vitkus, “Turks and Jews in *The Jew of Malta*,” in *Early Modern English Drama: A Critical Companion*, ed. Garrett A. Sullivan Jr., Patrick Cheney, and Andrew Hadfield (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006), 61–72, 61.

18. J. B. Steane, *Marlowe: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1965), 172. See also Greenblatt, “Marlowe, Marx and Anti-Semitism,” 145.

19. Ruth Lunney, “Speaking to the Audience: Direct Address in the Plays of Marlowe and His Contemporaries,” in *Christopher Marlowe the Craftsman: Lives, Stage, and Page*, ed. Sarah K. Scott and M. L. Stapleton (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 109–22.

soliloquy, the anti-theatrical writer Stephen Gosson reminds his readers that “the Carpenter rayseth not his frame without tooles, nor the Deuill his woork without instrumentes: were not the Players the meane, to make these assemblies, such multitudes wold hardly be drawn in so narrow roome.”²⁰ The theater creates a multitude of its own, and in this case it is a multitude of which Barabas is at the center.

As well as fostering an uncomfortable proximity between Barabas and the audience, the play also gradually erodes the sense of the Jew’s difference from the characters that share the stage with him. His difference is asserted rhetorically, but is not necessarily borne out by the play’s action. The Islamic characters are hardly a moral counterpoint to Barabas; Ithamore shows himself to be equally crooked, if less ingenious, while Calymath and Callapine, who effectively hold the island of Malta to ransom, are suggestive of an Islamic empire that is at best opportunistic and at worst corrupt. Prejudice comes into play here also; as odious as the Elizabethan conception of the Jew may be, that of the “Turk,” in a period in which the Ottoman Empire was spreading its territories into Western Europe, was no better. More disquieting for the contemporary audience is the presentation of the play’s Christians. The historical Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, entrusted with the safe keeping of Malta after having lost Rhodes to the Ottoman Empire, were notoriously licentious. When Jean de La Cassière, the Order of Malta’s leader, instigated a clampdown on immoral practices such as prostitution in the 1580s, his measures proved sufficiently unpopular to see him usurped and imprisoned by his followers.²¹ Worse than this, they were Catholics and ran the island with the blessing of the Spanish Emperor Charles V. Equally problematic is the company the knights keep in the play. The knights receive help in instigating a campaign against the Ottoman Empire from a Spanish sea captain, a dubious association in immediately post-Armada England. Furthermore, Ferneze, the island’s governor, has a name rather uncomfortably resembling that of the Duke of Parma, Alessandro Farnese, who

20. Stephen Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse* (London: 1579), sig. C3v–C4 (STC 12097).

21. See David L. Farley-Hills, “Was Marlowe’s ‘Malta’ Malta?” *Journal of the Faculty of Arts, Royal University of Malta* 3.1 (1965): 22–28.

was the commander of the invasion force that the Armada was meant to deliver from Flanders to England. Indeed, as Emily Bartels has shown, by inventing a situation in which no successful repulsion of the great siege of Malta (1565) ever occurred, Marlowe downplays the one achievement of the knights that might have encouraged an English audience to identify with them.²²

Beyond these considerations, the actions of the knights speak for themselves. The play's plot is set into motion by their seizure of Barabas's wealth, on pain of an enforced conversion to Christianity, in order to pay overdue tributes to the Ottoman prince Calymath. The theft is justified by the knights in religious terms, but Barabas's frank appeal and Ferneze's affected response reveal both the injustice and the hypocrisy of the whole procedure. Barabas questions the viability of punishing an individual for the sins of the collective creed to which he belongs (again stressing the tension between the individual and the multitude), when he remarks, "But say the tribe that I descended of / Were all in general cast away for sin, / Shall I be tried by their transgression?" (1.2.114–16). Barabas rightly perceives that the seizure of his wealth is justifiable, in the eyes of the knights, purely on the basis of his profession or faith. Ferneze's response attempts to establish that the seizure of Barabas's goods will be spiritually edifying for him: "Excess of wealth is cause of covetousness, / And covetousness, O, 'tis a monstrous sin" (1.2.124–25). Ferneze's argument, already risible in its insincerity, becomes especially so when at the first possible opportunity he decides to fight the Turks and keep the money. It is one of the play's great ironies that Barabas, identified so explicitly with Machiavellian policy in the prologue, is beaten, along with the Turks, at his own game by the Christian knights. In *The Jew of Malta*, deception and hypocrisy are the norm of behavior; as Greenblatt puts it, Barabas's talents for villainy "do not signal his exclusion from the world of Malta but rather his central place within it."²³

22. Emily Bartels, "Malta: *The Jew of Malta*, and the Fictions of Difference," in *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Richard Wilson (London: Longman, 1999), 159–73, 165. On the great siege of 1565, see Lisa Hopkins, *Christopher Marlowe: A Literary Life* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 84–101.

23. Greenblatt, "Marlowe, Marx, and Anti-Semitism," 146.

The diminishing of clear moral distinctions between the play's characters removes an obstacle to the notion of unity on Marlowe's Malta; the play manages to depict something akin to a community of like minds, however unsavory the basis of their commonality may be. Central to the creation of this effect is the complex dramatization of the three religious faiths present on the island of Malta. Religion has the capacity to act simultaneously as a unifying and distinguishing category. Appeals for unity in contemporary pamphlets did not so much call for an all-encompassing unity, but for an alliance of co-religionists against the threat of a perceived enemy such as the Catholic Church or the Ottoman Empire. As such, the notion of unity relies on difference for its meaning. Marlowe's play, however, serves to undermine as much as accentuate differences between faiths. While the play invests each of the denominations with stereotypical traits unique to themselves—Jews obsess about money, Catholics are duplicitous, Turks are either slaves or empire builders—it also draws attention to points at which they overlap, subtly prompting consideration of their common Abrahamic origins. Lupton has noted the fellowship that exists across cultures in the play, particularly in socially marginalized characters (144–53). After being left for dead outside the city walls by Ferneze and the Christian knights, Barabas finds little difficulty in establishing a mutually beneficial relationship with Calymath. Similarly, upon losing his daughter to the convent, he strikes up a quasi-familial bond with his purchased slave Ithamore, referring to him as “My trusty servant, nay, my second self!” (3.4.15).²⁴ Shortly afterwards he makes their attachment official, promoting his charge from the position of servant to that of companion and heir:

O trusty Ithamore; no servant, but my friend;
 I here adopt thee for mine only heir,
 All that I have is thine when I am dead,
 And, whilst I live, use half; spend as myself. (3.4.42–5)

The unity between Barabas and the play's Islamic characters is solidified by a common opposition to Christianity; by the time he joins forces with Calymath both groups share an open enmity with Ferneze. In the case of his relationship with Ithamore, their

24. Siemon's *New Mermaids* edition here prints the Q reading, “my second life,” but the emendation to “my second self” is commonplace amongst other editions.

common experience seems to be social marginalization at the hands of Christians. Furthermore, a practice shared by Jews and Muslims is highlighted by Barabas as a unifying characteristic between the two faiths, and a marker of difference from their oppressors, when he reminds Ithamore that “Both circumcised, we hate Christians both” (2.3.217). Marlowe’s penchant for suggestive naming comes into play here also, with “Ithamore” being a portmanteau of “Ithamar,” son of Moses’s high priest Aaron, and the common term for North African Muslims, “moor.”²⁵

The play suggests a similar commonality between Judaism and Christianity. The ease of Abigail’s multiple conversions bespeaks a remarkable openness of exchange between the two faiths, and their common ground is accentuated again by Marlowe’s use of names and by the play’s setting; Barabas shares his name with the condemned thief of the New Testament whom the Jewish populace spare instead of Jesus.²⁶ This proximity between Barabas and Jesus is further suggested by the mock resurrection that Marlowe’s protagonist undergoes in the latter stages of the play. The Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem are named after a Jew who converted to Christianity, and the religious significance of the setting of Malta is outlined by Lisa Hopkins: “Malta owes much of its fame, some of its place-names, its distinguished Christian ancestry and, legend avers, its freedom from snakes, all to one very famous Jew: St Paul.”²⁷ *The Jew of Malta*, then, portrays a level of exchange and association between the three faiths, and a similarity of behavior between their adherents, that make the differences between them seem nominal.

One of the results of the disintegration of religious distinctions is that, on certain levels, Barabas is able to operate within something like a community. He is, after all, the Jew of *Malta*, and he interacts with characters from the very top to the very bottom of the social spectrum who, although indulging in varying degrees of religious and racial prejudice, do not deny

25. See Lupton, 151.

26. On the Marlovian Barabas and the biblical Barabbas, see John Parker, *The Aesthetics of Antichrist: From Christian Drama to Christopher Marlowe* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007), 193–209.

27. Hopkins, *Christopher Marlowe: A Literary Life*, 89.

him his place on the island. He may be disenfranchised, classed as a stranger by the powers running the island, but then so are the majority of the individuals in Malta, the play implies. This ambiguous state of belonging is noted by Lupton, who distinguishes between civic and civil contributions to society and argues that Barabas, denied access to the former, flourishes in the latter (146). Barabas is allowed to participate in civil society because his individualistic pursuits in international capitalist trade make him a financial asset to Malta, an asset whose potential is realized early in the play when his wealth is called upon to bail the state out of its debt to the Turks. The Jews are considered external and potentially even corrosive to the unity of society, but the same perceived self-interest for which Christian society condemns the Jews is what makes them valuable and renders their presence acceptable.

Ultimately, though, the potential for a unified intercultural civil community on Malta proves to be illusory. The play's undermining of religious distinctions and stereotypes may facilitate a degree of exchange and fellowship, but it also reveals the entirely individualistic motivations of characters unencumbered by any monolithic group identity. Ironically, the thing that most unites the inhabitants of Marlowe's Malta is their resolute individualism. Barabas, for all of his apparent engagement in civil life, is introduced as an entity operating independently from and, it might be suggested, in competition with the society of Malta. His self-sufficiency is spelled out in the opening scene both by lengthy accounts of the reach of his argosies and by his quotation of Terence in response to the news of Turkish threat to the Maltese state: "*Ego mihi met sum semper proximus*" (no man is nearer friend to myself than I am) (1.1.188). Similarly, his initial indifference to the identity of the island's governors turns to opposition when he has sufficiently recovered his wealth to once again buy property: "I have bought a house / As great and fair as is the Governor's; / And there in spite of Malta will I dwell" (2.3.13–15). Like Barabas, Bellamira is concerned with matters of state significance only insofar as they impact upon her own individual financial well-being:

Since this town was besieged, my gain grows cold:
The time has been, that but for one bare night
A hundred ducats have freely been given:
But now against my will I must be chaste. (3.1.1–4)

The courtesan describes the fallout of the Turkish siege in entirely personal terms; Malta's plight affects her only indirectly. A preoccupation with wealth, far from being the unique reserve of an avaricious Jew, filters from the top to the bottom of the Maltese social scale and is exhibited by almost every character in the play (Abigail is a possible exception, although she is instrumental in her father's plans to steal back his gold). Bellamira complains of her lack of wealth since the Turkish siege began and, together with Ithamore and Pilia-Borza, plans to extort it from Barabas; the avarice of the friars Bernardine and Jacomo allows them to be played off against one another with laughable ease; and when Calymath arrives at Malta for a second time to collect on his bargain with Ferneze, Ferneze quite openly states that he has been hurried forth by "The wind that bloweth all the world besides, / Desire of gold" (3.5.3–4). Far from exhibiting an investment in the "common good" alluded to by Ferneze early in the play, the inhabitants of Malta are driven by entirely individualistic and acquisitive motivations, a point which is implied when, at Del Bosco's slave market, the Second Officer chillingly states that "Every one's price is written on his back" (2.3.3). The fragmented society of Marlowe's Malta reflects the contemporary anxieties regarding the discordant state of England that appeared in the years leading up to the play's composition. It is a world in which the kind of exhortations to unity published by writers like Averell, Hitchcock, and Wither would be patently futile, and one much like that bemoaned in the anonymous verse piece *Mar-Martine*, a response, sometimes dubiously attributed to Marlowe's associate Thomas Nashe, to the Marprelate tracts:

*Our England, that for unitie hath beene,
A glasse for Europe, hath such monsters bread,
That raile at Prelats, and oppugne their Queene,
Whole common wealthes, each beareth in his head.*²⁸

In Marlowe's Malta the allegiance of individuals extends only to the commonwealth they bear in their heads. Indeed, exactly

28. *Mar-Martine* (London, 1589), A4 (STC 17461). Also see another anonymous text misattributed to Nashe, *A Myrror for Martinists*. . . . (London, 1590), particularly 29/C–30/Cv (STC 23628). On the authorship of these tracts see *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. R. B. McKerrow (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1910), 5:34–65.

what commonwealth they might be expected to show allegiance to is unclear; the majority of the inhabitants of Malta are aliens of some kind, whether religious or ethnic outcasts or commodified human traffic. Even the governing knights, as Emily Bartels has noted, represent a recently imported regime. Our attention is directed toward the concept of a collective community with a common interest, only to be then exposed to activities on an individual level that render it impossible.

The Jew of Malta does not dispense with the idea of unity altogether, however. Rather, it demonstrates the deployment of the idea of unity, and in particular religious unity, as an expedient fiction. Marlowe's Machevill misrepresents Machiavelli when he states in the play's prologue that he 'counts religion but a childish toy'; in fact, Machiavelli, particularly in his *Discourses on Livy*, places emphasis on its use as an instrument of state control. In a discussion of the rule of Numa Pompilius, the successor to Romulus, Machiavelli reflects on the effectiveness of religion in reducing a multitude to order, stating that "whoever runs through the vast number of exploits performed by the people of Rome as a whole, or by the many of the Romans individually, will see that its citizens were more afraid of breaking an oath than of breaking the law, since they held in higher esteem the power of God than the power of man."²⁹ Machiavelli's coolly utilitarian account of the unifying power of religion is of a piece with its representation in *The Jew of Malta*. When Ferneze, whom Catherine Minshull has shown to be the play's most authentic Machiavellian, finally quashes all resistance to his rule, he brings proceedings to a close with the politically astute couplet "So march away, and let due praise be given / Neither to fate nor fortune, but to heaven" (5.5.122–23).³⁰ The accreditation of his victory to God represents a move by Ferneze to reestablish an image of social unity; the triumph is not Ferneze's but heaven's, a statement that not only implies the divine sponsorship of his rule, but also demands the complicity of all of the island's religious citizens.

Ferneze's proclamation obscures the reality of his realpolitik behind the carapace of religious unity. It is a piece of stagecraft,

29. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, ed. and trans. Bernard Crick (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), 139.

30. See Minshull, "Marlowe's 'Sound Machevill.'"

designed to elicit precisely the unifying effect that Stephen Gosson feared the theater was capable of producing and at which Barabas has also shown himself to be highly adept.³¹ It is only an image, but the fact that the play ends with it is significant. Indeed, the final couplet is just the last of a number of instances in the play in which religion is associated with that which is unseen, and references to it are persistently marked with a language of concealment. Religion, Barabas says to Abigail, “Hides many mischiefs from suspicion” (1.2.281–82), and we are given plenty of evidence to support his claim. Ferneze calls upon theological rhetoric in order to justify his hijacking of Barabas’s wealth, and in return Barabas has his daughter imitate religious conversion in order to steal some of it back (from its hiding place under a floorboard marked, fittingly enough, with a cross). The poisoning of the broth at the nunnery is made possible by the fact that Maltese ceremony demands that on Saint Jacques’ Eve alms must be delivered anonymously to the dark entry of the building (3.4.75–81), the Abbess tells Abigail upon her first “conversion” that the nuns “love not to be seen” (1.2.305), and when shortly after Abigail appears at the convent’s window with her father’s treasure, she proudly urges us to “behold, unseen, where I have found / The gold, the pearls, and jewels which he hid” (2.1.22). Religion in Marlowe’s Malta, then, has a predominantly political function; it generally serves to cloak the ambitious motivations of individuals, particularly when those motivations might be seen to run contrary to those of the wider society.

The individuals of Malta are engaged in incessant competition, and their relationships with each other and with the state, which itself changes hands three times in the play, are in a constant process of renegotiation. Thus, the state must, in its own interests and in competition with the interests of many of the individuals over whom it rules, conduct an ongoing campaign of suppression of competing ideals in order to keep alive the impression of a common interest—to contain infinite riches in a little room. It is far from a coincidence that Marlowe’s depiction of a fractured world emerges at a time when cultural commentators were vocalizing their anxieties about an

31. Roger Sales reads Barabas and Ferneze’s enmity as a struggle between rival playwrights. See his *Christopher Marlowe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), 53–55.

increasingly discordant English society and making urgent pleas for unity. Nor is it a coincidence that at the same time the state was hardening its stance on nonconformism and insubordination. These are the conditions which produced a play that is utterly cynical about the possibility of unity and deeply suspicious of those who would declare the need to attain it.

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“And Yet It Might Be Done That Way”:
The Jew of Malta on Film

Late in 2009, film director Douglas Morse sat in the audience of a Manhattan theater, watching the York Shakespeare Company’s production of *The Jew of Malta*. Mesmerized by the play, which ran in repertory with *The Merchant of Venice* (1596), he was shocked to discover that the Christopher Marlowe work had never been adapted for the screen. Morse, a professor in the Department of Media Studies and Film at The New School in New York City, had experience adapting literary works into cinematic versions. In 2007 he released *The Summoning of Everyman*, a well-received full-text rendering of the medieval work, and in 2009, his *Merchant*, a production filmed on a Cambridge stage, became available on DVD. On that evening in December, Morse started on a journey to make the first motion picture based on Marlowe’s controversial tragedy, a mission that has finally come to fruition.

The Jew of Malta is not, by any measure, the most often performed of early modern plays, and theater companies looking to stage a Marlowe work tend to choose *Doctor Faustus* or perhaps *Edward II* instead. While both of these works have been adapted for the cinema—the former by Richard Burton and Nevill Coghill in 1967 and the latter by Derek Jarman in 1991—*The Jew of Malta* had not been made into a film until now. On the stage, sometimes it is chosen to coincide with a production of *The Merchant of Venice*. The Royal Shakespeare Company took this route twice, first in 1965 with Eric Porter doubling the roles of Barabas and Shylock, and again in 1987. In the second production, Anthony Sher headlined *Merchant*, while Alun Armstrong interpreted the title role of Marlowe’s

protagonist. Theatre for a New Audience also produced the two together in 2007, with F. Murray Abraham enacting the roles of both Barabas and Shylock. Unfortunately, none of these three tandem productions seem to have offered a successful pairing. However, in 2009, the York Shakespeare Company brought both *Merchant* and *The Jew of Malta* to the Manhattan stage. Presented at New York's Jewish Community Center by director Seth Duerr and timed to coincide with Hanukkah, the 2009 productions of Marlowe's and William Shakespeare's thematically-similar works seemed ripe for controversy from the start. In the company's announcement, Duerr made clear his goal of recuperating both texts from charges of anti-Semitism: "Both plays have been wrongly accused of being anti-Semitic, as a persecuted Jew at each of their centers resorts to revenge."¹ He asserted that the characters, not the authors, display prejudice, and told his audience that "we are exploring these plays at the JCC to get at the heart of why they are so misunderstood, to reveal the intolerance of the other characters for what it is and to grasp why these stories of bigotry are still, unfortunately, relevant."² However, despite his conviction that *The Jew of Malta* is not anti-Semitic, Duerr is clearly aware of Barabas's villainy: "He's pretty terrible and the only thing he's done right is to raise his daughter, Abigail, the only symbol of purity in the play. It could be read as anti-Semitic, but only insofar as it's anti-Christian, anti-Muslim, anti-theism-of-all-sorts. The Jews are pretty bad in the play, but the Christians are far worse."³

Duerr's undistorted view of both works seems to have afforded a unified vision. His cast did not double as many parts as had other repertory productions, and by using two different actors for Barabas and Shylock, Duerr emphasized that the roles are not as parallel as some directors and actors might like to believe. He correctly identifies Portia as the center of Shakespeare's comedy, and he offered uncut versions without any tricks, seeking to prove that neither work is anti-Semitic. Thus Duerr, who would later act Barabas in the film, brought a

1. Seth Duerr, "York Shakespeare Company," accessed February 1, 2010, <http://merchantofvenicejewofmalta.weebly.com/index.html> (site discontinued).

2. Duerr, "York Shakespeare Company."

3. Seth Duerr, telephone interview, February 26, 2010.

director's sensibility and knowledge of *The Jew of Malta* as a whole to his interpretation of the protagonist.

Morse began filming *The Jew of Malta* in May 2011 on Governor's Island in New York and cast Duerr in the title role. This choice reflected the most important of the casting decisions, since Barabas speaks more than half the lines of the play—about 1,150—many of which directly address the audience. In comparison, Hamlet recites 1,500 lines, about forty percent of the total, while Shylock speaks only 353 lines, about fourteen percent of *Merchant*.⁴ Moreover, Barabas, although a thoroughly evil character, is a crowd-pleaser, resembling the medieval Vice. Bernard Spivack, writing in *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil* (1958), maintains that Barabas alternates between the early modern Machiavel and its medieval emblematic counterpart, and when the Renaissance villain does not serve his purpose, “Marlowe resorts to the popular effectiveness of the older dramaturgy and Barabas becomes the Vice.”⁵ I asked Morse about his view of Barabas's comic qualities: “He is extremely funny, and I don't think we laugh *at* him at any point. I think that all the time the audience is with him on the joke and on the journey, and I think that's the point.”⁶ However, Morse does not mitigate Barabas's malevolence. When I asked him if he sees the character as a Vice or a Machiavel, his vision became clear: “I like to see him as Hannibal Lecter. That helps me understand him. Some people argue that he is exaggerated, but if you look at what he accomplishes in just one month, you see that he is a force of nature. He is a psychopath and a serial killer. There's no question about that.”⁷ Some critics would agree with this psychological assessment. Mathew R. Martin asserts that “Barabas is psychotic and therefore (as many literary critics have

4. I used the following editions of the plays to arrive at this count. Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, in *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*, ed. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric Rasmussen (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), 293–349. All subsequent references to *The Jew of Malta* are from this edition. For *Hamlet* and *The Merchant of Venice*, see *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. David Bevington, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 1997), 1060–116 and 178–215. All subsequent references to Shakespeare's works are from this edition.

5. Bernard Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil: The History of a Metaphor in Relation to His Major Villains* (New York: Columbia UP, 1958), 348.

6. Douglas Morse, telephone interview, March 11, 2011.

7. Morse, interview.

discovered) resists analysis” and labels him an “obviously theatrical yet terrifying boogeyman.”⁸ Is Barabas as bad as he claims to be?

Morse believes that the title character is evil, pointing out that within the time frame of the action he poisons the nuns, his own daughter, Bellamira, Pilia-Borza, and Ithamore. He also murders one friar, a crime for which he frames another friar.⁹ Lest we forget, he also brings about the deaths of Mathias and Lodovick, taking revenge on the former for wooing his daughter and the latter for being the son of his enemy Ferneze. Morse’s Hannibal comment is provocative, but even though Thomas Harris’s character retains a certain amount of charm—at least in the book—the author presents him as a terrifying serial killer. Marlowe, instead, gives his audience an amusing entertainer who is no worse than his persecutors, and Duerr’s interpretation is closer to Reynard the fox than Hannibal the cannibal.

The Jew of Malta premiered at the International Film Festival Manhattan on November 12, 2012. The movie has much to recommend it, and its flaws result primarily from the small budget on which it was produced. Although a wider theatrical release is possible, the most likely outlet for the finished product is Films for the Humanities and Sciences, which also released Morse’s *The Summoning of Everyman* (2007) as well as his *Merchant of Venice* (2009). Those two cinematic adaptations are firmly devoted to a full-text interpretation, providing academic integrity that aids in marketing the movie for teaching purposes. However, while an early rough cut of *The Jew of Malta* ran two hours and fifteen minutes, the director later trimmed it to a more manageable and well-paced 105 minutes. Morse believes this shorter version may find a broader audience, although he concedes that without a big star and “massive cuts and alterations,”¹⁰ it remains improbable that the film will appeal to a mass audience, even a marquee cast does not guarantee wide viewership. Michael Radford’s 2004 *The Merchant of Venice* was shown in limited release and did not enjoy substantial box office returns, although it boasted a \$30 million budget, a stellar cast

8. Mathew R. Martin, “Maltese Psycho: Tragedy and Psychopathology in *The Jew of Malta*,” *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory* 19.4 (2008): 367–87, 367, and 385.

9. Morse, interview.

10. Morse, interview.

that included Al Pacino, Jeremy Irons, and Joseph Fiennes, and the stunning visuals that filming on location in Venice can afford. Of course, art films rarely attain financial success, although they can achieve considerable acclaim at venues such as the Sundance Film Festival.

Morse's statement about the audience being "in on the joke" with Barabas seems to have heavily influenced both the director and the lead actor, and the camera in this adaptation becomes almost another character to which the performers direct their lines. Duerr as Barabas and Ben Steinfield as Ithamore are particularly adept at this technique. Barabas has many moments when he speaks directly to the camera, and Duerr executes this difficult practice flawlessly. Act 2, scene 3—the slave market episode—is especially well interpreted, and in his discussion with Lodowick, Barabas goes back and forth between speaking to the Governor's son and letting us—the audience, or, in this instance, the camera—in on his plans. Later in the same scene, when Barabas plots to provoke a duel between his daughter's two suitors, he sends Ithamore, his servant and sidekick in chicanery, to deliver a letter: "Take this and bear it to Mathias straight, / And tell him that it comes from Lodowick." Ithamore asks, "'Tis poisoned, is it not?," to which Barabas replies: "No, no, and yet it might be done that way. / It is a challenge feigned from Lodowick" (2.3.273–78). Here Barabas reminds us that we are always in his thoughts, his internal audience. He tells Ithamore, "No, no," and then looks directly at the camera, musing in a comic but pensive manner, "And yet it might be done that way," as if to say, "That's not a bad idea!" Duerr explained his approach to the asides during a talkback with the premiere's audience: "The only time I turn to the audience is if I need something from them or if I'm working something through with them, whatever it might be, but you [the audience] are characters in this and therefore complicit in all of my murders."¹¹ This invitation to participate, of course, mirrors the Vice's main characteristic and the most engaging aspect of his charm.

Steinfield as Ithamore also displays complete effortlessness when speaking directly to the camera and even goes outside the text to elicit audience sympathy in act 4, scene 2. When

11. Seth Duerr, talkback with the director and cast, world premiere of *The Jew of Malta*, November 12, 2012, Quad Cinema, New York, NY.

Bellamira tells him to lie in her lap, as he reclines into his soft pillow, Steinfield takes a brief moment to glance at the camera, giving us a look that undeniably says, “Can you believe this is happening to me?” Thus he gives depth to the poor slave’s character, inviting the audience’s empathy.

Soliloquies and asides often present a problem when a theatrical piece is adapted for the screen. For example, when Hamlet performs the “To be or not to be” soliloquy, does the actor look around or out into blank space, giving the impression that he is talking to himself, or does he evoke the theatricality of direct address, looking right at the camera as he might look directly at the audience while on stage? Derek Jacobi took the former approach in the BBC version (1980), while Mel Gibson took the latter in Franco Zeffirelli’s version (1990). Laurence Olivier’s camera closed in on his Hamlet’s scalp, taking the audience inside his head to hear his thoughts, and Kenneth Branagh sought to reinvent the speech by intoning the words as he stared at his own reflection. However, Marlowe’s text as we have it seems to demand the more theatrical approach, and the ease with soliloquies and asides that the actors display represents the film’s greatest strength. Moreover, because the audience members become so intimate with Barabas and Ithamore, even though they are despicable characters, we begin to sympathize with and even like them. Ferneze, however, never speaks directly to the camera, and therefore he remains removed from the audience’s consciousness. We see him objectively as a viewer and not as an entertaining conspirator, even though Derek Smith—an accomplished actor with an impressive résumé—is one of the most effective performers in the piece, and this distancing helps to dispel charges of anti-Semitism. Ferneze is not at all likable in the film, and some of his scenes are cut, while Calymath enacts a cartoonish villain.¹² Thus the “triangulation” between Christians, Turks, and Jews that Emily Bartels finds in the play’s fictive world is deemphasized. According to Bartels, Barabas “is not an imperialist but a capitalizing victim of imperialism, caught within a struggle between two contending

12. However, as Sara Munson Deats has pointed out, Calymath is the only character in *The Jew of Malta* to keep his word. “The Performance History,” in *The Jew of Malta: A Critical Guide*, ed. Robert A. Logan (London: Continuum, forthcoming 2013), 67–106, 81–82. Hereafter cited as Deats. I am grateful to her for providing me with a copy of the forthcoming chapter.

powers. Although the Jew is not exonerated for his manipulative acts, others' exploitation of him shows that in the game of empire, nothing finally is sacred."¹³ Because the Maltese and the Turks are lesser presences in Morse's film than they are in Marlowe's text, the protagonist becomes more a charming rogue than an "other" caught between two dominant groups. Furthermore, the director presents the Jews that appear with Barabas in act 1 scene 1 favorably. They meekly accept the governor's cruel dictates, and Barabas, although he initially seems to be part of the group, quickly distances himself from them.

The Jew of Malta begins with Machevill's speech, a framing device that sets the tone for what is to ensue. Originally, Morse had cast an Italian actor in the role, who would deliver the speech in Italian with English subtitles. The director thought that this approach would lend more interest to the film, although ultimately the plan was discarded. It is fascinating to speculate what an early modern audience would have thought of the prologue being spoken in Italian. They may not have understood the words, but they would certainly have recognized the language and equated it with malevolence. As Bartels points out, "it is no coincidence that Italy, a locus allegedly crawling with corruption, became a favored setting for Shakespeare and others who subsequently brought the Jew to center stage."¹⁴ Meanwhile, a modern scholarly audience would then equate the speech with Niccolò Macchiavelli's *The Prince* (1532), whose distortion created the stage Machiavel, "the scheming, hypocritical, atheistic, power-hungry villain who shows a distinct preference for poison and assassination over more direct forms of confrontation."¹⁵

Although this innovative approach seemed potentially compelling, Morse was unsatisfied with the resulting scene, and he reshot the prologue. American Shakespeare Company mainstay Ben Kerns delivers the speech in English from the Blackfriars' Playhouse in Staunton, Virginia, and the striking setting aids in priming the audience for the theatricality of the piece as well as

13. Emily C. Bartels, "Capitalizing on the Jew: The Third Term in *The Jew of Malta*," in *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1992), 82–108, 83.

14. Bartels, "Capitalizing on the Jew," 99.

15. Mathew R. Martin, ed., introduction to *The Jew of Malta* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2012), 36.

for Barabas's antics. Interestingly, Kerns speaks primarily from the seats, implying that Machevill enjoys the spectacle of the performance as much as we do and inviting us to revel in Barabas's actions just as he does. Moreover, Morse believes that the prologue helps to tune the audience's ears for the rhythm of the language, so that when Barabas performs his opening speech in act 1 scene 1, a nonacademic audience can receive and understand the language more readily. However, this highly theatrical device may be confusing to those unfamiliar with the text. My companion at the premiere was left totally confused by the opening and had no idea of the time or place in which the film was set.

One of the most striking sequences in *The Jew of Malta* is act 2 scene 1, in which Abigail, impersonating a nun in Barabas's now converted house, throws money bags down to her waiting father. The parallels between this passage and the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet* (1595) are self-evident. Romeo enters, and a light appears above:

But soft, what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief
That though her maid art far more fair than she. (2.2.2–6)

Barabas enters with a light: "No sleep can fasten on my watchful eyes / Nor quiet enter my distempered thoughts / Till I have answer of my Abigail" (*JM*, 2.1.17–19) as his daughter enters "above." Morse emphasizes the similarities both in staging and language with his camera angles and lighting, closing in on Abigail as she lovingly gazes down from the balcony, the picture of daughterly devotion. The presentation of this interchange recalls Zeffirelli's 1968 film *Romeo and Juliet*. The camera looks up at Abigail, mimicking Barabas's point of view, and his daughter is bathed in a silvery blue light, perhaps intended to suggest the "envious" moon. Barabas, upon seeing her, intones "What star shines yonder in the east / The lodestar of my life, if Abigail!" (2.1.41–42) and focusing on Barabas's exaggerated rapture at receiving his "gold," his "fortune," and his "felicity" from his darling girl (2.1.47).

The first cinematic version of *The Jew of Malta* holds an important place in its performance history. One of the earliest

productions, the 1818 production at Drury Lane starring Edmund Kean, eschewed the red wig and rubber nose of earlier productions and presented Barabas in splendid and luxurious garments,¹⁶ and Duerr wears similar costumes throughout. Intriguingly, while the early acts feature Barabas in a succession of magnificent robes, after his “resurrection” he appears in an ornate outfit with trousers. Calymath opens act 5 scene 2 by instructing Ferneze and his Knights: “Now vail your pride, you captive Christians, / And kneel for mercy to your conquering foe” (5.2.1–2). The stage directions here indicate that Barabas should enter with Calymath and the Turks. However, Morse makes the dramatic choice to have him come in a few minutes later, smugly arriving as Calymath tells the defeated Maltese, “And Barabas, as erst we promised thee, For thy desert we make thee governor” (5.2.9–10). Ferneze is visibly shocked at this reappearance, and Barabas has now changed his look. Visually, he is now aligned more with Ferneze, as befitting his role as the governor of Malta.

Scholars have long disagreed about the veracity of the litany of evils that Barabas recounts to Ithamore in act 2 scene 3: “As for myself, I walk abroad a-nights / And kill sick people groaning under walls. / Sometimes I go about and poison wells” (2.3.178–80). Lars Engle and David Bevington posit two possibilities: Barabas may be fabricating or exaggerating his history in order to “seduce Ithamore into becoming his accomplice” or perhaps Barabas is simply a “theatrical phenomenon” who becomes the “dramatic embodiment of gleeful, malicious revenge.”¹⁷

Not all productions have retained the entire passage. Sara Munson Deats points out that Kean excised much of the litany and the remaining speech was delivered “as an aside intended as a kind of audition of Ithamore for the role of assistant villain.”¹⁸ Conversely, Howard S. Babb maintains that “it is precisely the Jew’s self-awareness, his lack of moral ambiguity in comparison with the Christians, that ensures his stature for a time at least

16. See Deats, 70.

17. Lars Engle and David Bevington, introduction to *The Jew of Malta*, by Christopher Marlowe, in *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*, ed. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric Rasmussen (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), 291.

18. Deats, 71.

and prevents his revenge from seeming immediately absurd.”¹⁹ Although the speech may appear to be an exaggeration, William Meyers remains sure that “Marlowe has such a good time with Barabas’s homicidal enthusiasms that not until near the end of the play does he remember that such evil must be punished, and devise an appropriate end for his villain.”²⁰ In the film production, however, Morse makes it clear that Barabas and Ithamore are kindred spirits, and act 2, scene 3, in which the two enumerate their dastardly deeds, depicts an intimacy between the two characters. Framed in an archway far from prying eyes and ears, they stand close to one another, their posture indicating a dropping of any façade, and share confidences. Ithamore seems delighted to have found someone who can appreciate his efforts:

One time I was an ostler in an inn,
And in the nighttime, secretly would I steal
To travelers’ chambers and there cut their throats.
Once at Jerusalem, where the pilgrims kneeled,
I strewed powder on the marble stones,
And therewithal their knees would rankle so
That I have laughed a-good to see the cripples
Go limping home to Christendom on stilts. (*JM*, 2.3.209–16)

The two miscreants find common ground for future villainy, and Ithamore clearly believes that he has met his match. Of course, he does not yet realize that Barabas is a much slier fox than he.

Kean’s production also ameliorated Barabas’s death, having him shot by Maltese soldiers,²¹ while Morse makes no attempt to temper the title character’s gruesome demise. The scene recalls the Holocaust, with Ferneze watching Barabas’s suffering and death through peepholes into the oven-like chamber that contains the unseen cauldron. The 1999 production directed by Michael Grandage employed a similar sensibility.²² When Duerr directed his production of *The Jew of Malta* in 2009, his original

19. Howard S. Babb, “Policy in Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*,” *ELH* 24.2 (1957): 85–94, 89.

20. William Meyers, “Shakespeare, Shylock, and the Jews,” *Commentary* 101.4 (1996): 32–37, 33.

21. Deats, 71.

22. Deats, 86.

plan was to have a cauldron of “gold” coins overturn onto Barabas, thus burying him in and killing him with his greatest vice, money. Unfortunately, this plan proved unworkable, as it would have been beyond the company’s budget and would certainly have damaged the stage. Furthermore, at least one more similarity exists between Morse’s movie and the 1818 version. Kean had just enjoyed a successful turn as Shylock and, as actor-manager, was completely familiar with *Merchant* and its nuances. Morse, too, had directed a film version of *Merchant*. Moreover, Duerr has directed both works as recently as 2009 and thus can appreciate similarities and—more importantly—the differences between them.

The 1922 production by the Phoenix Society emphasized physical comedy, “flattening” many of the characters. Morse’s vision retains the roundness of Barabas’s role as well as Ithamore’s, but Ferneze, seen by many commentators as the chief Machiavel of the tragedy, is somewhat two-dimensional, primarily due to the cutting of some of his footage. Furthermore, the friars, while often wildly funny, become simple clowns, with little depth of character, although Jacomo is distinctly buffoonish, while Bernardine veers towards the creepy. Act 4, scene 1, in which Friars Jacomo and Bernardine attempt to convince Barabas to join their respective orders plays particularly well, and all four actors, including Ithamore, exhibit flawless comic timing and a flair for the ridiculous. The post-murder scene exemplifies black comedy, as David Thurn has pointed out: “Virtually identical characters, the two friars, one alive, one dead, present an image as uproarious as it is compelling in its odd mirroring effect.”²³

In 1964 in Canterbury, the Marlowe Theatre’s offering featured Michael Baxter in the title role. Critics agreed that Baxter projected a villainous yet likable Barabas. The London *Times*’s special correspondent enthused that “he introduced into his reading a deliberate element of harm, but blended it with enough subtlety, enough isolation and love, to make him nearly always sympathetic.”²⁴ Duerr’s Barabas seems to recall the reception that Baxter’s interpretation received. Barabas is

23. David H. Thurn, “Economic and Ideological Exchange in Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta*,” *Theatre Journal* 46.2 (1994): 157–70, 168.

24. “Poet on the Fringe of Melodrama,” *Times*, February 19, 1964, 13.

particularly sympathetic because he is so entertaining, and the audience roots for him and enjoys their relationship with him.

Sexual manipulation has been a recurring motif in productions of *The Jew of Malta*. The 1985 American Shakespeare Repertory featured one friar's "gross necrophilic abuse" of Abigail's body, while the 2007 production by Theatre for a New Audience had *both* friars desecrating her remains in this distasteful way. The film version also features posthumous impropriety on the part of Friar Bernardine, who bestows a kiss on Abigail that seems more romantic than lustful just moments after she dies in his arms. This unusual choice seems somewhat at odds with the comical nature of the lascivious clergyman's pointedly sexual remarks. He mentions a "moving spirit" (*JM*, 1.2.327) when he first spies the young and beautiful Abigail and bemoans her sexual inexperience at her death. To Abigail's dying words, "witness that I die a Christian," Bernardine replies, "Ay, and a virgin, too. That grieves me most" (3.6.40–41). Thus the tender kiss he bestows on Abigail's corpse undercuts the comic nature of his salacious remarks. Theatre for a New Audience dropped its taste level exceedingly low, choosing to portray "Pilia Borza's gratuitous masturbation of Ithamore."²⁵ Morse does something similar, albeit more plausible and thus not so offensive, with Bellamira manipulating Ithamore while he reclines in her lap, lyrically exclaiming that he will be her Jason, she his "golden fleece" (4.2.99). Thus Bellamira's obvious ulterior motive renders Ithamore's beautiful poetry—echoing Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love"—dramatically ironic.

The language, the asides, and the soliloquies combine to make *The Jew of Malta* an especially theatrical film. Samuel Crowl, in *Shakespeare and Film* (2008), delineates four categories for a Shakespearean screen adaptation, and although he does not include Marlowe in his analysis, the same theories can be applied appropriately here. Crowl begins with the three categories that Jack Jorgens defines in his 1977 *Shakespeare on Film*: the theatrical (Olivier's films exemplify this category); the realistic, as we see in Zeffirelli's works; and the filmic (Orson Welles). Crowl adds one category of his own, the hybrid. This latter category "consists of films that find their inspiration as much

25. Deats, 93.

from other, conventional Hollywood films and film genres as they do from their Shakespearean source material,” much as we see in Branagh’s *Much Ado about Nothing* (1993) and its visual quoting of *The Magnificent Seven* (1960).²⁶ Morse’s movie clearly fits into the theatrical category, not only because of its awareness of the audience but also because of its cinematography and *mise en scène*.

The framing and lighting in the film are all classically based, and there is a formal element to every composition that gives a sense of theatricality to the picture. For example, there is no attempt to use light and shadow to create a mood or influence the audience’s interpretation of character. Nor does the cinematographer use unusual camera angles to manipulate emotions. For example, in Branagh’s 1989 film *Henry V*, during the title character’s horrific speech at the gates of Harfleur in act 3 scene 3, the camera looks up at Branagh’s face, elevating him just as it does in the “Saint Crispin’s Day” speech in act 4. The framing in *The Jew of Malta*, according to Morse, “sets up an almost artificial world.” Moreover, New York’s Governor’s Island provided the setting for the film. This small isle off the southern tip of Manhattan features Castle Williams and Fort Jay, both of which were recently designated national monuments.²⁷ Named in 1611, it was reserved for the use of New York’s royal governors in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Thus the historical appeal of the island provided an apt setting for the piece. Because Grandfather Films produced the movie on a minimal budget, transporting the entire cast and crew to Malta was out of the question. However, the New York-based Morse took his group on a short ferry ride to a place that provided a different ambiance from the streets of Manhattan or even Central Park. Striving for a timeless quality, he used available materials to create what he calls the “striking visual palette.”²⁸ Governor’s Island represents Malta, but it also tends to create a universal physical setting. Once in a while, a power line or other anachronistic item appears in the background, but suspension of

26. Samuel Crowl, *Shakespeare and Film: A Norton Guide* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), xx.

27. “History of Governor’s Island,” *The Trust for Governor’s Island*, accessed April 27, 2013, <http://www.govisland.com/html/history/history.shtml>.

28. Morse, interview.

disbelief easily supersedes these discrepancies when the riveting performances in the center of the frame dominate. However, during a talkback with the director and cast at the premiere, Morse explained that the expensive permit to film on the island consumed much of the film's budget, which unfortunately resulted in a smaller piece of the pie for costumes and set design.

Since audiences and scholars tend to consider early modern drama as it relates to Shakespeare, I queried Morse as to how he thinks Marlowe compares to his celebrated contemporary in the theater. The director asserts that speaking the lines of the former is easier for the actors: "I think the language is much less difficult. The plain way to put it is that it's extremely accessible. There's not the kind of barrier that there would be for some people with Shakespeare."²⁹ Of course, when Marlowe wrote the tragedy—probably in 1588 or 1589—and when it was first produced in 1592,³⁰ *Merchant* had not yet been written or performed. The earliest possible date for Shakespeare's comedy, according to David Bevington, is 1594.³¹ Therefore, if an Elizabethan audience could take this work as it was, without comparing Barabas to Shylock, why can't we? I believe that the movie stands on its own and owes as much to the medieval tradition that preceded it as it does to the great period of early modern drama that ensued.

Morse's *The Jew of Malta* will soon be available on DVD, making it accessible for classroom use or individual purchase. This excellent adaptation of Marlowe's work gives Marlovians cause to rejoice. At long last, this provocative and entertaining play, "so neatly plotted and so well performed" comes to the screen.

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29. Morse, interview.

30. Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta with Related Texts*, ed. Stephen J. Lynch (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009), xiv.

31. William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. David M. Bevington, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 1997), appendix 1, A4.

RINKU CHATTERJEE

“I’ll Burn My Books”: Doctor Faustus as a
Renaissance Magus

In 1398, the faculty of the University of Paris issued and approved twenty-eight articles condemning ritual magic as blasphemous, heretical, idolatrous, and superstitious, and emphasized the conjurer’s entente with demons as a violation of God’s will.¹ This event is both representative and symptomatic of a pan-European crisis about the relation between magic and institutional, ethical, and epistemic orthodoxy. Yet the intellectuals at the university were not concerned about its faculty practicing conjuration. Instead, they sought to protect themselves against charges of heresy and witchcraft in their study of natural philosophy, astronomy, and mathematics, given an elision between satanic and quasi-secular knowledge during this time. Scholars were vulnerable to such charges, since there was no well-defined boundary between legitimate and illicit branches of study well into the early modern period. Both church and state sought to control Protestant intellectual institutions in England as well as Catholic organizations in Italy. Experimental scientific data could be associated with the Antichrist. Humanists like Pico della Mirandola, a strong proponent of the pursuit of limitless knowledge, were accused of holding heretical opinions. Giordano Bruno, who had lived in Oxford in the early 1580s and counted the courtier-poet Sir Philip Sidney among his English admirers, was burned at the stake for heresy in Rome in 1600.

It could be said, then, that this overt condemnation of magic by the University of Paris illustrates a tendency by authoritarian

1. “The University of Paris: A Condemnation of Magic, 1398,” in *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*, ed. Brian P. Levack (New York: Routledge, 2004), 47–50.

institutions to persecute a marginal discipline of learning such as necromancy as early as the fourteenth century. These Paris articles represent the tension between the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and practical, instrumental knowledge, which could be rationalized within institutional parameters. As a result, humanists sought to allay concern about the perceived dangers of the former by defining their mode of inquiry in terms of the latter. Since they themselves defined humanism primarily as “useful” knowledge, it would be anachronistic to categorize it as inherently transgressive. By extension, the readings of *Doctor Faustus* that are informed by the idea oversimplify the characteristics of humanism.

Early moderns sought to practice humanism within the constraints of social, intellectual, and religious orthodoxy, as Antony Grafton and Lisa Jardine have argued. Humanists were committed to maintaining the integrity of political and religious institutions. Also, as Quentin Skinner illustrates, they were invested in practical matters and applied the study of rhetoric and logic to instilling the arts of clerkship to their students.² So it was not just new scientific knowledge that was felt to be dangerous and ungodly, but also older, unorthodox approaches to natural philosophy. Either could be categorized in the proscribed sphere of magical and demonic knowledge.

Many earlier readings of *Doctor Faustus* do not take this possibility into account—that humanism was fundamentally practical and invested in ensuring hierarchies. Scholars as diverse as Roma Gill and Jonathan Dollimore have argued that Faustus is damned because he exemplifies an exacerbated instance of transgression.³ A traditionalist such as Irving Ribner wrote that Faustus’s tragedy resulted from Promethean aspirations as one “who will not surrender in return for the promise of salvation those heroic attributes—the craving for knowledge, wealth, power, and delight.” Similarly, Harry Levin, Paul Kocher, Leo Kirschbaum, and Douglas Cole claim that the

2. See Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1986), xiv; and Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 1, *The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978), 28–41.

3. See Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, ed. Roma Gill (London: Ernest Benn, 1965), xix–xxvii; and Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology, and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Durham: Duke UP, 1984), 109–19.

hero's intellectual aspirations are untenable within a Christian framework.⁴ However, as Grafton and Jardine pointed out, humanism compelled a submission to authority that enabled it to supplant scholasticism, that relatively arcane and obsolete medieval blend of theology and philosophy. In contrast, the basis of humanist scholarship was to educate a bureaucratic class in the service of statecraft.⁵ Indeed, it was to this end that the study of the paradigmatically humanist arts of rhetoric and logic were aimed.

Faustus's behavior would have offended virtually everyone. He neither conforms to the kind of restrictions that the University of Paris sought to impose, nor do his actions uphold the institutional hierarchies that intellectuals were expected to endorse.⁶ Even before he makes his pact with the devil, he renounces the instrumental uses of humanism by declaring that the professions of "Both law and physic are for petty wits."⁷ Though his necromancy might seem to be the most obvious cause for his damnation, he contravenes the fundamental premise of humanist scholarship when he violates one of its

4. *The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Irving Ribner (New York: Odyssey, 1963), xxxvii; Harry Levin, *The Overreacher: A Study of Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1952); Paul Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe: A Study of His Thought, Learning, and Character* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1946); *The Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Leo Kirschbaum (New York: World, 1962); and Douglas Cole, *Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1962).

5. Grafton and Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities*, xiv. They also claim, "It stamped the more prominent members of the new élite with an indelible cultural seal of superiority, it equipped the lesser members with fluency and the learned habit of attention to textual detail and it offered everyone a model of true culture as something given, absolute, to be mastered, not questioned." They understand humanism as an ideal that led to the study of humanities as "a curriculum training a social élite to fulfill its predetermined social role." *From Humanism to the Humanities*, xiv, xvi.

6. Skinner argues that both John Calvin and Martin Luther were models of humanist learning in that their ideas regarding the ideal polity suggested that the human condition could be reformed within a well-instituted Protestant state, their ideas representing the humanist investment in streamlined social institutions. See Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol 2., *The Age of Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978). According to Grafton and Jardine, "The education of the humanists was made to order for the Europe of the Counter-Reformation and of the late Protestant orthodoxy." *From Humanism to the Humanities*, xiv.

7. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, ed. David Scott Kastan (New York: Norton, 2005), 1.1.107. All subsequent references to the A-text of *Doctor Faustus* are from this edition.

regulatory injunctions, scholarly inquiry in the service of state authority. He becomes irredeemable because he abjures the requisite intellectual professions and thereby challenges the institutional hierarchies that humanism sought to establish and strengthen. This seems most apparent in his declaration, "Divinity is basest of the three: / Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile" (*DFa*, 1.1.108–9). Though Faustus demonstrates unusual proficiency in logic, medicine, law, and theology, he is a bad humanist because he defies the basic tenet of humanism, deference to religious and legal institutional hierarchies and therefore conforming to one's social role. The play presents continuous tension between the investment in limitless learning for its own sake and commitment to serving authority.

The rhetoric of humanism endorsed the sort of relentless pursuit of knowledge that Faustus adopts, but it never discounted the scholar's social responsibilities as he does. Richard Hardin has observed how Cornelius Agrippa's best known treatises, *De Occulta Philosophia* (1533) and *De Vanitate Scientiarum* (1526), illustrate these problematic issues. While the former is a comprehensive catalogue of Renaissance magic and occult beliefs, the latter undermines human learning and knowledge, which illustrates the "conflict between the practical and spiritual ends of education" that became "a crisis in Marlowe's time."⁸ Accordingly, Faustus wants to "live and die in Aristotle's works" (*DFa*, 1.1.35), yet humanists viewed the traditional contemplative life (*otium*) as inferior to their preferred program of political involvement and prudent action (*negotium*). To them, the *studia humanitatis* should be grounded in its socioeconomic context.

Christopher Marlowe clearly understood, as his hero does not, that such a curriculum helped develop individual *virtus* (virtue and masculinity) that inculcated social as well as intellectual skills. Even the study of classical authors and rhetoric, the basis of humanist scholarship, was intended to educate the students of *ars dictaminis* (the art of epistolary prose), who pursued careers in public administration. This education

8. Richard F. Hardin, "Marlowe and the Fruits of Scholarism," *Philological Quarterly* 63.3 (1984): 387–400, 389. See also Gareth Roberts, "Necromantic Books: Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus* and Agrippa of Nettesheim," in *Christopher Marlowe and English Renaissance Culture*, ed. Darryll Grantley and Peter Roberts (Aldershot, UK: Scolar, 1996). Much of the foregoing background material is based on the ideas in these two essays.

enabled scholars to draft well-crafted, rhetorically persuasive official letters for their masters. This practical element of humanist *virtus* appears constantly in early modern literary texts. For example, each book of *The Faerie Queene* (1590–96) embodies a virtue that is civic as well as personal, from holiness to courtesy. Leonardo Bruni's *Life of Dante* (c. 1425) emphasized that the conscientious poet does not neglect his social responsibilities: To "estrangle and absent oneself from society is peculiar to those whose poor minds unfit them for knowledge of any kind."⁹ Scholarship, according to Baldassare Castiglione, ought to be employed in political life. His *Il cortegiano* argues that a courtier should be able to provide good advice in matters of state as well as displaying oratorical and artistic skills. In an ideal courtier,

lucidity can go hand in hand with elegance. . . . He should always, of course speak out fully and frankly, and avoid talking nonsense. . . . And when he comes to discuss obscure or difficult matters, I want both his ideas and words to be so precisely formulated that he makes his meaning absolutely plain, taking pains to clarify every ambiguity, without being pedantic. Similarly, when the circumstances are opportune, he should be capable of speaking with dignity and emphasis. . . . And at other times he should know how to speak with such simple candour that it seems like nature herself softening and, as it were, drugging our emotions with sweetness.¹⁰

Machiavelli's fusion of practical wisdom and scholarship also appears on virtually every page of *Il principe*, as it does in the life and works of other important sixteenth-century humanists. The Spanish nobleman and tutor to Mary Tudor, Juan Luis Vives (1492–1540) became a professor of the humanities at the University of Louvain. Roger Ascham (1515–68) served as a tutor to the future Queen Elizabeth in the 1540s. And John Calvin's emphasis on social good and responsibility largely informs his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536), which Leah Marcus suggests is useful for understanding the context of the two versions of Marlowe's play.¹¹

9. Qtd. in Skinner, *The Renaissance*, 1:108.

10. Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. George Bull (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), 77–78.

11. The A-text, says Leah Marcus, places Faustus in "Wertenberg" (the context of "militant Protestantism"), while the context for the B-text is Wittenberg, "a less committedly Calvinist, more theologically conservative and ceremonial milieu." "Textual Indeterminacy and Ideological Difference: The Case of *Doctor Faustus*," *Renaissance*

Marlowe's immediate milieu stressed the idea of a humanism informed by social responsibility, and men in public life also pursued their intellectual inclinations, such as Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, Sir Christopher Hatton, and Robert Devereaux, earl of Essex.¹² To pursue knowledge without any material or social enhancement would have been deemed ridiculous by many, since the learned were expected to take up specific professions after an expensive and time-intensive educational experience. Not everyone approved of this development. Robert Burton lamented, "Our ordinary students, might well perceiving in our *Vniversities*, how unprofitable these Poeticall, Mathematicall, and Philosophicall studies are, how little respected, how few patrons, apply themselves in all haste to those three commodious professions, of Law, Physick, and Divinity, reiecting the Arts in the mean time, or lightly passing them over, as pleasant toyes, fitting only table-talk, and to furnish them with discourse."¹³ In spite of his practical expertise in medicine, law, and theology, Faustus rejects these professions that university-educated men tended to pursue. He wants instead to devote his intellect and energy to philosophical study and necromancy, his role model, a certain renowned magus. He "Will be as cunning as Agrippa was, / Whose shadows made all Europe honor him" (*DFa*, 1.1.117–18). In this way, Faustus hopes to eschew the intellectual limitations of institutionalized vocations. He also desires to avoid the servility inherent in the practice of any trade, since all professions subscribe to worldly hierarchies.

Though the epilogue of the play attributes Faustus's "hellish fall" to his Icarian intellectual aspirations that led him "to wonder at unlawful things" and made him "practice more than heavenly power permits" (epilogue.4, 6, 8), the dictates of religious,

Drama, n.s., 20 (1989): 1–29.

12. For a fuller account of university educated men who held important public offices, see J. W. Binns, *Intellectual Culture in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: The Latin Writings of the Age* (Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1990), 8–9.

13. Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford: John Lichfield, 1621), 175, accessed March 7, 2013, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99857427. "It is not surprising," says Ian McAdam, "that two of the three most significant dramas concerning the failed 'magus' figure in Early Modern literature are written by university wits, Marlowe and Greene, struggling to turn their education into artistic profit through the theatrical but deeply ironized celebration of 'magic.'" *Magic and Masculinity in Early Modern English Drama* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 2009), 51.

political, and legal institutions determined what was permissible. James I's writings provide a notable example. While still king of Scotland, he crafted the treatise *Demonologie* (1597), which stressed the limitations of even legitimate knowledge. The very urge to acquire more than God granted to man can only result in his spiritual degradation.

This word *Magie* in the *Persian* toung, importes as muche as to be ane contemplator or Interpretour of Divine and heavenlie sciences: which being first vsed amongst the *Chaldees*, through their ignorance of the true divinitie, was esteemed and reputed amongst them, as a principall vertue: And therefore, was named vnjustlie with an honorable stile, which names the *Greekes* imitated, generally importing all these kinds of vnlawfull artes . . . For divers men having attained to a great perfection in learning, & yet remaining over bare (alas) of the spirit of regeneration and frutes thereof . . . they are so allured thereby, that finding their practize to prooue true in sundry things, they studie to know the cause thereof: and so mounting from degree to degree, vpon the slipperie and vncertaine scale of curiositie; they are at last entised, that where lawfull artes and sciences failes, to satisfie their restless mindes, even to seeke to that black and vnlawfull artes and science of *Magie*.¹⁴

Faustus's fascination with necromancy was precisely the type of learning that James abhorred. He traced the etymology of "magic" to "Magie," the word itself epitomizing pagan cultures hopelessly subject to their own ungodly rituals, the "vnlawfull artes." Therefore, any overreaching scholar embarking on a program such as the "artes and science of *Magie*" was doomed to recreate the spiritual vacuum of pre-Christianity. The desire itself to transcend the limitations of divinely apportioned wisdom possessed the potential to replicate the fatal fall. *Faustus* constantly mentions this undesirable alienation from God and his grace. Even as Mephistopheles defines the quintessence of beauty as "Lucifer before his fall" (2.1.154) in a way that evokes his own lost spiritual innocence, Faustus persists in his pursuit of knowledge, the Original Sin itself.

In *Daemonologie*, James I denounces precisely the types of knowledge and the proficiency in the languages required to pursue them that the author of *The Historie of the Damnable Life*,

14. James I, *Daemonologie, in Forme of a Dialogue, Divided into Three Bookes* (Edinburgh: Robert Waldegrave, 1597), 8, 10, accessed March 13, 2013, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:7990.

and *Deserved Death of Doctor Iohn Faustus* (1592), or *The English Faust Book*, condemned. Such an enterprise could only lead to spiritual degradation:

So, who can hold Faustus from the devil, that seeks after him with all his endeavour? For he accompanied himself with diverse that were seen in those devilish arts and that had the Chaldean, Persian, Hebrew, Arabian and Greek tongues, using figures, characters, conjurations, incantations, with many other ceremonies belonging to these infernal arts, as necromancy, charms, soothsaying, witchcraft, enchantment, being delighted with their books, words and names so well, that he studies day and night therein: insomuch that he could not abide to be called doctor of divinity but waxed a worldly man and named himself an astrologian, and a mathematician.¹⁵

It should also be noted that the “figures” and “characters” that both the Faustus of the *The English Faust Book* and of Marlowe’s play used to help gain forbidden knowledge were naturally suspect according to Protestant iconoclasts. Reformed thinkers believed that such trappings gave undue advantage to pre-Christian languages and cultures, themselves devoid of true spiritual knowledge. Both the *English Faust Book* and *Daemonology* discount the potential for the wisdom that humanists found in pre-Christian learning and denigrate it as witchcraft and charlatanism. Faustus intellectually aligns himself with scholars such as Agrippa, whose scholarly necromancy violated the dictates of his institutions. The scholars’ choric condemnation of him at the end of the play is analogous to the punishment of Roger Bacon in the thirteenth century, in the indictments issued by the University of Paris in the fourteenth, and in James’s *Daemonology* in the sixteenth.

Magic was not entirely forbidden to one such as Faustus, as long as it did not violate the parameters of humanist or spiritual institutions. The magus, or spiritual magician, considered the perception of godhead as his true purpose. This concept informs the tradition of the wise men—Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar—who visited the infant Jesus and paid him tribute with gifts. Even the conjuration of spirits was not considered to

15. *The English Faust Book: A Critical Edition Based On the Text of 1592*, ed. John Henry Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 92–93. John Parker places Faustus in the tradition of Simon Magus in *The Aesthetics of Antichrist: From Christian Drama to Christopher Marlowe* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007), 228–45.

be completely outside the scope of Christian orthodoxy, and the belief in their existence was an important theological tenet. The *The Book of Magic, with Instructions for Invoking Spirits* (c. 1577–83), one of the generic textbooks known as grimoires, combines the two. The author asserts that only God himself possesses agency over demonic spirits, and therefore, the prospective conjurer should implore God's assistance in controlling the beings that he calls up: "From the throne of the majesty & most mighty Jehova look down here below upon thy unworthy servant . . . extend thy favor & pity toward me as thou did on David, Peter, Marie Magdalene; divers other sinners & offenders . . . Christ Jesus say unto me o lord 'lo I give thee power over all clean & unclean spirit' for I know o lord that thou hast power to do it."¹⁶ There was an intrinsic connection between being a devout Christian and acknowledging the deviousness of the devil. The seventeenth-century preacher John Gaule even argued that not believing in witches and witchcraft was tantamount to denying the existence of the devil, which in turn indicates a disbelief in God.¹⁷ As Stuart Clark has argued, for the early religious reformers witchcraft was inextricably linked to doctrinal truth.¹⁸ Faustus's conjuration of Mephistopheles, then, is actually less unorthodox than one would think. He actually invokes divine power in the grimoire tradition by invoking "Figures of every adjunct to the heavens" (*DFa*, 1.3.11) and by inscribing "Jehovah's name / Forward and backward anagrammatized" and "The 'breviated names of holy saints" in a circle to make the spirits rise (1.3.8–10).

Keith Thomas's landmark *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971) demonstrated that many humanists regarded magic as a

16. *The Book of Magic, with Instructions for Invoking Spirits*, MS V.b.26, Folger Shakespeare Library, n.p. All transcriptions from the manuscript are mine with spellings and punctuations modernized. This is possibly the kind of grimoire, Barbara Mowat argues, that William Shakespeare's Prospero might have used in *The Tempest* (1611). "Prospero's Book," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 52.1 (2001): 1–33.

17. John Gaule, *Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcrafts* (London: Printed by W. Wilson for Richard Clutterbuck, n.d.), 12–22.

18. "These men were not 'demonologists'; what they were, of course, was religious reformers . . . what witchcraft meant to them was inseparable from their notions of doctrinal truth and their experience, personal or vicarious, of evangelical fieldwork." Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005), 440.

means to pursue philosophy, an intense intellectual exercise.¹⁹ Agrippa, whom Faustus proposes to emulate, describes the field of study in this way: “a faculty of wonderful virtue, full of most high mysteries, containing the most profound contemplation of most high things, together with the nature, power, quality, substance, and virtues thereof, as also the knowledge of whole nature, and it doth instruct us concerning the differing, and agreement of things amongst themselves.”²⁰ Such a definition also implies a deep spiritual knowledge and virtue, the perception of the divine. The true practitioner used magic to appreciate nature’s order and coherence through the various branches of acquired information about the material world.

Yet Faustus’s aims are not so lofty. He merely aspires to extend his intellectual dominions. In the magus tradition, the intellect in itself was of no purpose except to contemplate the divine, and its cultivation ought to be solely for this purpose, a central tenet of Neoplatonism. For example, Marsilio Ficino’s fifteenth-century *Commentary on Plato’s Symposium* (1484) ranked this ideally cultivated “Angelic Mind,” or intelligence higher than the human soul, just below God himself.²¹ And although he and Roger Bacon emphasized that acquiring the knowledge of the creator is the true reason for scholarship, practical humanism emphasized the social impact of scholarship. Calvin, influenced by his humanist education, emphasized that knowing God is “conspicuous in the formation and continual government of the world,” thus relating the knowledge of godhead, the goal of scholarship, to the stability of institutions in everyday life.²² In *The Praise of Folly* (1509), Desiderius Erasmus critiques

19. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971), 224.

20. Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, ed. Donald Tyson, trans. James Freake (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn, 1992), 5.

21. The title of chapter 15 of Marsilio Ficino’s commentary is “The Soul is Higher than the Body, Angelic Mind than the Soul, and God than Angelic Mind.” The soul, according to Ficino, is something that animates a being. It does not, however, possess cognitive ability. Intelligence of the angelic mind is then higher than the soul in divine hierarchy because it has the ability to perceive and guide the latter as well as conceptualize the presence of the divine. Diotima guides Plato “from body to soul, from soul to Angelic Mind, and from Angelic Mind to God” in a precise hierarchical order. “Commentary on Plato’s Symposium (1484),” in *Renaissance Views of Man*, ed. Stevie Davies (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1978), 43.

22. John Calvin, “The Knowledge of God Conspicuous in the Formation and

Socrates because he “held the opinion that a wise man ought not to meddle in affairs of state—perhaps he should have admonished us further and said that he who wants to be counted among men should abstain from wisdom itself. . . . For while he philosophized about clouds and ideas, while he measured the feet of a flea and wondered at the voice of a gnat, he did not learn the common, ordinary things of life.”²³

For such reasons, Ficino, Calvin, and Erasmus would have regarded Faustus as a bad humanist indeed, socially, spiritually, and politically. In the play, the anonymous Knight in the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V criticizes the hero’s acumen for precisely such reasons. Though Faustus conjures the spirits of Alexander and his paramour and greatly impresses even the emperor himself, the Knight, perhaps speaking for Marlowe himself, dismisses Faustus’s “art and power” in an aside, “I’faith, that’s just nothing at all” (*DFa*, 4.1.42–44), as if he were a mere street performer. This is the only occasion when Faustus has a politically influential audience, but he wastes his intellectual prowess for entertainment alone. As Sara Munson Deats argues, these antics reduce him “from eminent academician to politician to court entertainer to jester to greengrocer.”²⁴

Continual Government of the World,” in *Institutes of Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1911), 57–71, 57.

23. Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, in *The Essential Erasmus*, ed. John P. Dolan (New York: Meridian, 1964), 94–173, 115.

24. Sara Munson Deats argues that by “magnifying the hero’s aspirations (making them more grand although not necessarily more elevated) and sharply curtailing his realization, the play highlights the vacuity of Faustus’s bargain. The exclusion of extraneous elements from the source [*The English Faust Book*] further clarifies Faustus’s progressive demotion from eminent academician to politician to court entertainer to jester to greengrocer.” “Marlowe’s Interrogative Drama: *Dido*, *Tamburlaine*, *Faustus*, and *Edward II*,” in *Marlowe’s Empery: Expanding His Critical Contexts*, ed. Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2002), 107–32, 118. Also, a late seventeenth-century collection of anecdotes about magicians lists Faustus among trickster magicians and relates a tale about him when he had fooled his friends into thinking that their noses were bunches of grapes: “*Iohn Faustus* among a sort of his companions, who when they were half drunk, importuned him to play some of his pranks; and the feat must be a Vine full of Grapes, as the greater novelty now in the winter season. *Faustus* consented to satisfy their curiosity, upon this condition, that they should keep silence, and not stirre out of their places, nor offer to pluck a Grape till he bad, otherwise they might pluck their own perill. The praestegious sight is presented, and everyone had his knife drawn and hold of a branch, but not to cut till he spake the word. But having held them a while in

Faustus's essential solitude, his alienation from the ordinary things of life, indicates that he is a social misfit as well, as some scholars are. Burton's well known passage on the alienation of scholars applies to Marlowe's hero. They were derided because they were deemed incapable of performing basic tasks that are uninformed by the lofty rhetoric of humanism and therefore do not require an advanced intellect:

they liue a sedentary, solitary life . . . free from bodily exercise, and those ordinary disports which other men vse . . . how many poore schollars haue lost their wits, or become dizards, neglecting all worldly affaires, and their owne health, wealth, *esse*, and *bené esse* to gain knowledge? For which after all their paines, in the worlds esteeme they are accompted ridiculous, and silly fooles, Idiot, Asses and (as oft they are) reiected, contemned, and derided, doting, mad.²⁵

It is ironic, Burton implies, that scholars live by their wits like the lowest classes in society but are denied esteem because they are unable to earn their livelihood as ordinary working people are. This is the penalty for an intellectual who lives in a society that measures a man's worth by his worldly possessions. In fact, the scholar's legendary poverty was blamed on his committed intellectual ambition, as stated in *Hero and Leander*: "And to this day is every scholar poor; / Gross gold from them runs headlong to the boor."²⁶ Marlowe's hero literally embodies this archetype who neglects his physical, material, and spiritual well being. At the end of the B-text of *Doctor Faustus*, the Third Scholar notes Faustus's paleness and remarks: "He is not well with being over-solitary" (*DFa*, 5.2.33). The comment implies that Faustus's intellectual prowess and moral fiber are equally wanting. As Burton states elsewhere, neglect of *esse* (being) and *bene esse* (well-being) causes individual bodily degeneration that is ultimately detrimental to the body politic.

suspense, all suddenly vanished, and every man appeared to have hold onely of his own nose, and ready to have cut it off, if the word had been once given." John Gaule, *A Collection Out of the Best Approved Authors, Containing Histories of Visions, Apparitions, Prophecies, Spirits, Divinations, and Other Wonderful Illusions of the Devil Wrought by Magick or Otherwise*. . . (London: Joshua Kirton, 1657), n.p.

25. Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 168–69.

26. Christopher Marlowe, *Hero and Leander*, in *The Complete Poems*, ed. Mark Thornton Burnett (London: J. M. Dent, 2000), 471–72.

Ficino's *Commentary on Plato's Symposium* holds that the purpose of reason for the humanist intellectual is so that he may appreciate the hierarchical orderliness of the divine scheme, so Faustus's haphazard scholarly references in his opening soliloquy emphasize his lack of reason. His learning has effectively degenerated into little more than a collection of clever ideas in a commonplace book. It can be argued that such disorderliness also alienates the individual from divine grace. Accordingly, in Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Melancholia I* (1514), a darkly brooding woman is surrounded by objects that signify the many emergent areas of empirical knowledge and experimental science of the Renaissance. Yet these trappings—scales, compass, globe—actually cause Melancholia's unhappiness itself, since they appear incoherently placed and apprehended, symbolic of her lack of divine munificence. Similarly, Faustus's soliloquy presents a disjointed account of the traditional curriculum of the Seven Liberal Arts, so that this knowledge seems neither schematically coherent nor grounded in Christian orthodoxy.²⁷ Again, intellectual speculation divorced from spiritual knowledge or the social good was considered to be useless in itself, as Calvin argues in the third book of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

Faustus's scholarship seems merely performative, hinted at by his Latin quotations and the possible profusion of books that could be used as stage props. This condition appears to be at odds with the intellectual and theological richness of his rhetoric.²⁸ Yet as the hour of his doom grows closer, his poetry becomes less ornate as he frantically calls up all the knowledge he has in short, fearful gasps of pedantry. "I'll burn my books" (*DFa*, 5.2.122), his final exclamation, epitomizes his condition. It is as if Faustus at the moment of his actual damnation realizes that his misapprehensions about the scholarly life have effectively barred him from the joys of social existence and therefore the possibility of salvation within the humanist

27. See Philip Ball, *The Devil's Doctor: Paracelsus and the World of Renaissance Magic and Science* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), 42.

28. "In Faustus's final monologue," argues Patrick Cheney, "Marlowe manages an unprecedented feat: through theatrical poetry, the author makes the sublime consciousness of damnation appear, and the reality of the Christian godhead disappear." *Marlowe's Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 187.

context. In an effort to forestall his eternal doom, therefore, he renounces not just magic, but scholarship itself, mastery of the very books over which he professes command in his initial soliloquy. So Faustus, in the ultimate moment of desperation, finally renounces the indispensable accoutrements of the scholar, though in vain.

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“Truest of the Twain”: History and Poetry
in *Edward II*

Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II* is a play haunted by doubleness. There are two Edwards, Edward II and Edward III, of whom one has a lover, Gaveston, whose role is doubly echoed and riddled, first by Edward's wife Isabella and secondly by his later favorite Spencer,¹ and both Edwards, as Gregory Bredbeck observes, are susceptible of being read in terms of the idea of the king's two bodies.² (There is also an Edmund, the brother of Edward II.) There are two Mortimers, uncle and nephew; two Spencers, father and son; and uniquely in Marlowe, two heroes, Edward II and Mortimer Junior, both of whom are central to the narrative and one of whom rises in exact proportion to the other's fall. There are two kings, one of England and one of Man. There is a letter with a double meaning, equally susceptible of two interpretations that are the exact opposite of each other and can in turn be read as emblematic of what critics such as Marcie Bianco have seen as two separate discourses of sodomy and of the nation state, competing and converging in the course of the play.³ There is a complex web of allusions to mythical and

1. On Gaveston as also echoed by Edward III, see Marie Rutkoski, "Breeching the Boy in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 46.2 (2006): 281–304, 282.

2. Gregory W. Bredbeck, *Sodomy and Interpretation: Marlowe to Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991), 56–63.

3. Marcie Bianco, "To Sodomize a Nation: *Edward II*, Ireland, and the Threat of Penetration," *Early Modern Literary Studies*, Special Issue, 16 (2007): ¶1–21, accessed October 11, 2012, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/si-16/bianedi.htm>. For a reading centered on Ireland, see also Stephen O'Neill, *Staging Ireland: Representations in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2007), 90–103.

historical personages from classical literature, often offered as doubles or analogues for characters in the play and also doubling effects at the level of language in the shape of a number of rhetorical constructions relying on doubling and twinning effects. There is also a doubling that is extradiegetic rather than intradiegetic between the “then” in which the story took place and the “now” in which it is being received, a “now” that, of course, can potentially proliferate indefinitely but that my own historical positioning induces me to confine to two specific historical moments which are themselves regnally doubled, the later years of the reigns of the first and second Elizabeths. Finally, Marlowe is a dramatist unusually given to self-reference and self-quotation, and in this play, which seems to have been his last, there are a number of points at which he suggests possible comparisons with his own earlier work.

It is a further source of duality that these points of comparison are in themselves doubled, for while they sometimes point to parallels, at other times they work principally by force of contrast because *Edward II* is in many respects a completely new departure for Marlowe.⁴ It is in this, I think, that the key to its duality exists: In this play we can see Marlowe’s art developing into something more complex, more ambiguous, and richer than it had previously been, something that is carving out for itself a liminal territory on the cusp of the poetry to which Marlowe had been previously wholly committed and a wider sense of the pragmatic and the practical to which he is showing a newly discovered allegiance and to which Sir Philip Sidney, as I shall discuss, might have given the name history. This is a shift that may have arisen partly from Marlowe himself maturing as an artist and partly because of external circumstances bringing him repeatedly into contact with the family and connections of Sidney’s sister, the Countess of Pembroke. Whether or not Marlowe already knew this while he was writing the play,⁵ by the

4. For the play as a new departure for Marlowe, see also Tom Rutter, *The Cambridge Introduction to Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), 93–98.

5. Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, in *The Complete Plays*, ed. Mark Thornton Burnett (London: Everyman, 1999), 2.6.6–7. All subsequent references to *Edward II* are from this edition. For the argument that he did know, see Constance Brown Kuriyama, *Christopher Marlowe: A Renaissance Life* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2002), 117; for the counter-argument that he did not, see Roslyn L. Knutson, “Marlowe, Company Ownership, and the Role of Edward II,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 18

time it came to be performed, he had parted company with Lord Strange's Men and the play was instead acted by Pembroke's Men, giving, as Dennis Kay observes, extradiegetic as well as diegetic force to the lines "My Lord of Pembroke's men, / Strive you no longer" (*E2*, 2.6.6–7).⁶ During the course of the year Marlowe also wrote a dedication to the Countess of Pembroke for the publication of his dead friend Thomas Watson's *Amintæ Gaudia* (1592) and met (albeit under less than happy circumstances) the Countess's brother Sir Robert Sidney, before whom he was taken when he was arrested for coining in Flushing; if one could eavesdrop on any conversation in history, one might well wish it could be theirs. As can be seen from their own closet dramas, whether original or in translation, the Countess and her circle were strongly influenced by the Stoic philosophy of calm and resigned acceptance of suffering, tinged when it came to historical writing with the Tacitean cast favored by the Earl of Essex, who had married Philip Sidney's widow, Frances Walsingham. For the first time in Marlowe's work, a similar sensibility can be seen in the resignation and dignity with which Gaveston, Kent, Edward, and Mortimer all in turn accept their deaths, but this is a stoicism that contains its own opposite, for it is inflected by emotion, to an extent that is also novel in Marlowe's dramaturgy. *Edward II* is a play with a heart, standing at the opposite end of the dramatic spectrum from the gung-ho sound and fury of *Tamburlaine* and the gleeful grand-guignol of *Massacre at Paris* and *The Jew of Malta*, in which the victims are puppets and the heroes are firecrackers who were always doomed to go out. The final duality I wish to explore is, then, the tension between the cues for eliciting an emotional response and the theoretically driven tracing of the contours of a divide between generic, philosophical, and tonal affiliations, a tracing that I think can itself be traced back to the work of Sir Philip Sidney, to which Marlowe's response is inherently dual and fissured.

The relationship between Marlowe and Sir Philip Sidney is under-explored but deserves attention. In *An Apology for Poetry* (c. 1580) in particular, Marlowe would have found much to

(2006): 37–46.

6. Dennis Kay, "Marlowe, *Edward II*, and the Cult of Elizabeth," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 3.2 (1997): ¶1–30, accessed October 11, 2012, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/03-2/kaymarl.html>.

catch his eye but also, I think, much to disagree with. I suspect his attention would have been caught by the very first sentence, with its mention of horsemanship,⁷ for I have argued elsewhere that Marlowe evinces a sustained fascination with riding⁸ (and Alan Dessen suggests that a further, riding-related doubling is at work in *Edward II*, since he sees the otherwise mysterious “Horse-boy” mentioned in an isolated speech prefix as offering a double for the play’s other boy, young Edward, in a way informed by the tradition of imaging rule as riding).⁹ Musaeus, whom Marlowe used as a source for *Hero and Leander*, is mentioned on the next page (*Apology*, 82), and hot on the heels of this come references first to the beliefs and customs of Indians (83), in which, according to the admittedly not wholly reliable evidence of the Baines note, Marlowe was interested (Indians are also mentioned again on 114), and then to Lucan, the first book of whose *Pharsalia* (c. 65 AD) Marlowe translated (86). Perhaps he noted the later statements that “poetry is the companion of the camps . . . even Turks and Tartars are delighted with poets” (105), for Tamburlaine’s sudden excursus into poetic musings on beauty certainly chimes with Sidney’s ideas here, while a turn of phrase that follows very shortly after this—“if Cato misliked it, the noble Fulvius liked it” (105–6)—has a close echo in Marlowe’s translation of Lucan—“Caesar’s cause / The gods abetted, Cato liked the other.”¹⁰ Marlowe would surely also have concurred with the general spirit of Sidney’s praise of poetry, and the exuberant lyricism of his account of the poet’s power: “with a tale forsooth he cometh unto you, with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney corner” (95). I think however that Marlowe would have disagreed both with the ends to which

7. Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd, rev. R. W. Maslen, 3rd ed. (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002), 81. Hereafter cited as *Apology*.

8. Lisa Hopkins, “‘And Ride in Triumph through Persepolis’: Moving on the Marlovian Stage” (lecture, Marlowe Society Annual General Meeting, Covent Garden, London, February 26, 2011), accessed October 11, 2012, http://www.marlowe-society.org/pubs/lectures/20110226_HopkinsLisa_MeansOfTransport.pdf.

9. See Alan C. Dessen, “*Edward II* and Residual Allegory,” in *Christopher Marlowe the Craftsman: Lives, Stage, and Page*, ed. Sarah K. Scott and M. L. Stapleton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 63–77, 74–75.

10. Christopher Marlowe, *Lucan’s First Book*, in *The Collected Poems of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Patrick Cheney and Brian J. Striar (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006), ll.128–29.

Sidney proposed that poetry be put and also with his views on some at least of the potential subjects that he suggested as suitable for poets to take.

In the case of the ends, Sidney's evocation of the poet's magnetic hold over the attention is followed immediately by his assertion that the reason the poet tells the tale is that he, "pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue" (95); the central plank of the *Apology's* exaltation of poetry over history is that "the historian, wanting the precept, is so tied, not to what should be but to what is, to the particular truth of things and not to the general reason of things, that his example draweth no necessary consequence, and therefore a less fruitful doctrine" (90). It is very hard to see Marlowe as a dramatist concerned with the fruitfulness of doctrine; when he does apparently offer a moral, as in the Chorus' injunction at the end of *Doctor Faustus*—"Only to wonder at unlawful things"¹¹—its lame and dreary patness is cruelly exposed by the far richer texture and imagination of the play itself. In the case of the subjects, it might almost look as if Marlowe is in this respect writing in deliberate opposition to Sidney. A recurrent figure in *Apology* is the Aeneas of the *Aeneid* (c. 30–19 BCE), whom Sidney hails as "so excellent a man every way" (85), finding "the feigned Aeneas in Virgil rather than the right Aeneas in Dares Phrygius" (92), and concluding that "I think, in a mind not prejudiced with a prejudicating humour, he will be found in excellency fruitful" (100). Marlowe's Aeneas though is not strikingly fruitful in excellency; rather he is an unimpressive figure whose initial appearance usually prompts people to wonder whether he really is Aeneas, shows himself little better than a clodpole when he laughably fails to understand the transparently obvious tenor of Dido's invitation to come into the cave, and never quite convinces the audience that he is in fact the Aeneas of the *Aeneid* rather than that of the alternative tradition in which he was himself the betrayer of Troy. Moreover, the play in which he features also bears a marked resemblance to Plato's castigation, cited by Sidney, "that the poets of his time filled the world with wrong opinions of the gods, making light tales of that unspotted essence" (107). There

11. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus (1604 Text)*, in *The Complete Plays*, ed. Mark Thornton Burnett (London: Everyman, 1999), epilogue.6.

is certainly no great sense of unspotted essence about Marlowe's gods and goddesses in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, whose behavior is without exception petulant, vengeful, and wholly self-centered and who are indeed fit only to be the subject of "light tales," as demonstrated so memorably in Tim Carroll's ultimately unsuccessful but not wholly wrongheaded setting of it in a playground at the Globe Theater in 2003.

Sidney also praises *Gorboduc* (*Apology*, 110), a play that could perhaps be seen as offering a virtual prophecy of Tamburlaine when Eubulus foretells a world in which "rising minds / Do feed their thoughts with hopes to reach a realm,"¹² leading to rule by might rather than right and to the slaughter of innocents, and in which the dumb-show before act 5¹³ refers to "Dunwallo Molmutius, who reduced the land to monarchy" just as Tamburlaine proposes to take whole countries and "with this pen reduce them to a map."¹⁴ Sidney regrets, though, that even *Gorboduc* does not obey the unities of place and time, while other plays are even worse in this respect: "where you shall have Asia of the one side, and Afric of the other, and so many other under-kingdoms, that the player, when he cometh in, must ever begin with telling where he is" (*Apology*, 110–11). If we did not know that the respective dates of the two works make it impossible, we would surely take this for a description of *Tamburlaine the Great*, which in its original form may also have been guilty of "mingling kings and clowns" in a way specifically castigated by Sidney (112), since the printer of *Tamburlaine* noted in his preface to the play that he had excised "some fond and frivolous jestures, digressing and (in my poor opinion) unmeet for the matter." Conversely, *Doctor Faustus* completely fails to offer any sense of the presence or goodness of God in the way that Sidney regards as the best possible aim of poetry (113). In these respects at least, what seem likely to have been Marlowe's earliest plays all look like a conscious refusal of the Sidneian prescription.

Edward II, however, has much less of the air of a deliberate cocking of a snook to Sidney's aesthetic preferences and criteria

12. Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *Gorboduc*, in *Five Elizabethan Tragedies*, ed. A. K. McIlwraith (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1938), 5.2.193–94.

13. Norton and Sackville, *Gorboduc*, 5.0.13–14

14. Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great, Part One*, in Burnett, *The Complete Plays*, 4.4.84.

for dramatic merit, except that its allegiances are to history rather than poetry. In marked contrast to *Tamburlaine*, *Edward II* is a history characterized by both a Sidneian sobriety and by the lack of glamour which Sidney identifies as the principal weakness of history, as well as a stern willingness to paint the lows as well as the highs of its hero's career. It is, though, history of a particular sort, for its bleak and godless world and its taste for moments of chance, accident, and the unexpected speaks more to the spiky, eccentric narrative contours of what we would now call realism than to the shapely pattern of the providential chronicle of England's manifest destiny; any similarities between Edward's passing anti-papalism and the Queen's Men's brand of patriotic tubthumping are merely superficial, a thin camouflage for the play's essentially subversive energies (and, indeed, Roslyn L. Knutson suggests that Marlowe's decision not to offer *Tamburlaine* to the Queen's Men should be seen as a deliberate aesthetic choice, representing a conscious eschewing of their mode of dramaturgy).¹⁵ A clear manifestation of this allegiance to history is the play's relative lack of interest in poetry. Again, unlike *Tamburlaine*, who muses on the pens of poets (1*Tam*, 5.1.161), Edward finds poetry used against rather than for him in the shape of the rhyme "Maids of England, sore may you mourn, / For your lemans you have lost at Bannocksbourn" (E2, 2.2.189–90). But if Marlowe is pledging allegiance to (an implicitly Tacitean) history rather than poetry, it is not because he has lost interest in poetry but because he finds history, which in Elizabethan times was always likely to tell a tale of now as well as then, the fitter vehicle for his darker purposes precisely because it is, in Sidney's terms, not susceptible to easy moralizing or pattern-finding.¹⁶ Edward himself is neither wholly strong nor wholly weak, and no one character in the play is either wholly bad or wholly good; for the first time in his career, Marlowe has come close to the idea of tragedy as the clashing of two rights, and a prime manifestation of this is the play's inherent interest in doubles.

Edward himself is well aware of his own doubleness, his own separability from any unitary idea of himself. Indeed the knowledge is forced on him: not only is he the second king of the

15. Knutson, "Marlowe, Company Ownership, and the Role of *Edward II*," 39–40.

16. On the pointedly unprovidential nature of *Edward II*, see Rutter, *Cambridge Introduction*, 84–85.

name of Edward (the play opens just after the first has died), but an early exchange with his barons makes clear the extent to which he is constituted not as a wholly independent entity but as part of a dyad locked in opposition.

WARWICK. . . . Saint George for England and the barons' right!

EDWARD. Saint George for England and King Edward's right!
(3.2.35–36)

In addition, he has a doubled identity as both king and man, a status made explicit in the contemporary political theory of the king's two bodies and expressed here in the riddled, doubled fashion characteristic of this play when Edward creates Gaveston "Earl of Cornwall, King and Lord of Man" (1.1.155). That "Man" is used literally here in the sense of a separate place, the Isle of Man, underlines the extent to which two fundamentally separate states of being are involved. In act 5, scene 1, which offers in effect a sustained metaphysical speculation on doubleness and unity, he first asks plaintively, "what are kings, when regiment is gone. / But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?" (5.1.26–28), before concluding that "Two kings in England cannot reign at once" (5.1.58). He catches at two different aspects of doubleness here, first evoking the idea of the shadow that is both like and unlike the person by whom it is cast (this is, as we shall see, not the play's only venture into the terrain of the gothic) and then identifying an impossibility that is, for the moment, a fact. At one point he even subscribes to the practice of a form of sympathetic magic.

Well may I rend his name that rends my heart!

[*He seizes and tears the letter.*]

This poor revenge hath something eased my mind.

So may his limbs be torn, as is this paper. (5.1.140–2)

The only possible logic here would be that the paper stands in for and in effect doubles Mortimer, so that damage inflicted in it might be mirrored in damage inflicted on him. Finally there is only one way that Edward, always already the second, can escape duality: "death ends all, and I can die but once" (5.1.153).

As well as being inherently double himself, Edward also experiences a doubling of potential partners: Isabella is his queen but Gaveston is his soulmate, his second self. This is one of the instances in which a comparison with Marlowe's own earlier work reveals a telling contrast. We have already seen a

similar conflict modeled in *Dido*, in which Jupiter has an official consort, Juno, and an unofficial love, Ganymede, and in both plays a major battleground for the rivals is clothes and jewelry. In this fashion-conscious world in which size of buttons can become a serious employment issue (*E2*, 2.1.47–48), Gaveston plans to delight the king with the sight of “a lovely boy” with “Crownets of pearl about his naked arms” (1.1.60, 62) and himself wears “a short Italian hooded cloak, / Larded with pearl, and in his Tuscan cap / A jewel of more value than the crown” (1.4.412–14), whereas the only gem Isabella is offered is a rather ambiguous golden tongue to wear around her neck (1.4.327), which might easily be seen as a marker of shrewishness rather than a reward for eloquence. In *Dido*, we see Jupiter giving Ganymede jewels (1.1.42–44) and hear Dido herself promising to dress Aeneas in the robes of her dead husband Sychaeus (2.1.80). There is however a significant difference in *Edward II* in that both Isabella and Gaveston are genuinely interested not only in what Edward can give them but also, and more importantly, in what he feels for them, as illustrated by their neatly doubled exchange.

ISABELLA [TO GAVESTON]. Villain, 'tis thou that robb'st me of my lord.

GAVESTON. Madam, 'tis you that rob me of my lord. (1.4.160–161)

What Isabella is robbed of is not lands, or title, or material possessions, but her husband's love, and she seems to crave this for far longer than might have been expected by an audience already familiar with the broad-brush outlines of her reputation as an adulterous and murderous wife. Similarly when Gaveston says “'Tis something to be pitied of a king” (1.4.130), we should note a disjunction between what we hear and what we might expect because actually it is *not* anything, in concrete or material terms, to be pitied of a king: What Gaveston is effectively doing is reifying emotion.

There is also a further doubling between Gaveston and Spencer, both of whom are favorites of Edward, both of whom are created Lord Chamberlain by him (1.1.153, 3.1.146), and both of whom are loathed by the barons. David Bevington remarks of *Tamburlaine* that, in accordance with the tradition of writing for small casts, “with each new incident in the life of his hero Marlowe suppresses one group of supporting roles in order to

introduce another.”¹⁷ Gaveston and Spencer cannot double in this sense because they appear on stage together, on the occasion when Gaveston first introduces Spencer to Edward; rather the obvious doubling for the Gaveston actor, as seen in 2011 at the Rose on Bankside, is with Lightborn, which may well inflect the kindness which Lightborn initially affects and the almost tenderness with which he is sometimes played. The doubling between Gaveston and Spencer is psychological and emotional rather than literal and centers on the place of each in Edward’s heart, another indication of the crucial role of the emotions in this ostensibly political tragedy. It is particularly notable that Spencer frames his relationship with Edward primarily in terms of the past when he appeals to the memory of his parents (3.1.11–12); in effect Spencer sells himself to the king as the ghost of a past that Edward knows he can never recapture and that ultimately forces the repetition of patterns and processes that are wholly self-destructive but do at least keep alive the memory of Gaveston (and, in so doing, fulfill one of the functions of history).

One of the most carefully delineated relationships in the play is that between Edward and his son, and this again is emotionally rather than politically configured. Here too there is a potential paradigm available from *Dido*, but this time it is one that is entirely unhelpful. Part of the joke about *Dido* is the way it exploits and troubles the fact that it was originally acted by children. In it, children are repeatedly required to carry or hold one another, to presumably either comic or ludicrous effect or both. One (male) child has to play the goddess of love and beauty; another has to be a legendary hero, leading, unsurprisingly, to initial incredulity that this can be he even from his own followers, who believe that “none of these can be our general” (*Dido*, 2.1.46). Most of all, *Dido* is a play in which boys are hurt, threatened, or abused. Ascanius, who has already survived the fall of Troy, is lucky to escape first being killed by Juno and second being abandoned by the father who seems temporarily to have forgotten his existence; Ganymede, having been previously beaten by Juno, is first seen sitting on Jupiter’s lap in what may look like an image of happy family life but is in

17. David Bevington, *From “Mankind” to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1962), 203.

fact a far more troubling one of pedophilia. The view that same-sex-oriented men are not to be trusted with children is one that modern audience members have probably heard or seen expressed, even if the fact that they have chosen to attend a performance of *Edward II* presumably means that they are not very likely to share it; moreover, if they are British, or if they are familiar with English Renaissance drama, they may also be aware of the well-established tradition of a prevailing climate of hostility between English kings and their eldest sons, as repeatedly demonstrated by the family history of the Hanoverians, and as recorded by Shakespeare in *1* and *2 Henry IV* (1596–97). However, any such expectations are not fulfilled in *Edward II*. Despite the evident difficulty of his own relationship with Edward I, of which we are repeatedly reminded, Edward II is a devoted and ultimately self-sacrificing father. The argument that eventually persuades him to resign the crown even though he knows that doing so will mean his death is that otherwise “the prince shall lose his right” (5.1.92). In turn, Edward III reciprocates this affection, repeatedly urging Isabella not to oppose her husband and ultimately placing loyalty to his dead father over the liberty and perhaps the life of the mother to whom he is clearly attached.

The relationship between Edward II and Mortimer is also more nuanced than might have been expected given that it is clearly designed as a strong, central contrast round the contours of whose oppositions and binaries much of the play is structured, whether or not because Marlowe already knew while writing the play that he would no longer have Edward Alleyn available to him to carry off a single, dominant hero in the mold of Tamburlaine or Faustus. The initial warning sign of the doubled relationship between Edward and Mortimer is certainly a subtle and low-key one, taking the form of a speech by Mortimer that precisely echoes one made shortly before by Edward. Mortimer’s question “Madam, whither walks your majesty so fast?” (1.2.46) is a straight reprise of Edward’s “Whither goes my Lord of Coventry so fast?” (1.1.174). The two clearly do share an obvious up-down relationship that echoes the rhythms of Baldock’s chiasmic assurance that “To die, sweet Spencer, therefore live we all; / Spencer, all live to die, and rise to fall” (4.7.111–12). However, there is clearly more than a hint of the platitude about Baldock’s glibness, and this,

coupled with the suspicious meekness of the apparent adoption of an essentially *de casibus* structure which would lend itself to simple moralizing, should alert us to the fact that the simple drawing of a moral is unlikely to be all Marlowe is up to. Though Derek Jarman's 1991 film makes its Mortimer a brutal military strongman, this tells us more about the damage to Jarman's psyche from his own soldier father than about the play, for although the Mortimer of the play certainly does fight, so too does Edward, and not wholly unsuccessfully: At one point he scores a significant victory and has the rebels on the run, if only briefly (4.3.1–3). Nor is it simply the case that one succeeds while the other fails, for Mortimer's own fall follows too closely on Edward's for this to be a securely established pattern, and indeed when Edward orders the severed head of Mortimer to be placed on his father's hearse (5.6.92–93), the two become in some sense effectively a two-headed monster. The real contrast between them is in fact quite different. Edward dies for love—first for the love that he has borne to Gaveston, and second for the love that leads him to renounce the crown to secure his son's position. Mortimer's soliloquy musing that “The Prince I rule; the Queen do I command” (5.4.46), however, suggests that he uses Isabella rather than loving her, and he certainly loves no one else. Sterile in every sense, he ultimately fades without trace from the political landscape of England, while “Edward's name survives though Edward dies” (5.1.48).

Also intriguing is the added inflection provided by the presence of Mortimer Senior. He and his nephew take their shared name from a source which is in itself riddlingly doubled: Mortimer Junior refers to “the desert shore of that Dead Sea / Whereof we got the name of Mortimer” (2.3.22–23), which seems an unequivocal etymology, but William Biddulph in *The Trauels of Certaine Englishmen into Africa, Asia, Troy, Bithynia, Thracia, and to the Blacke Sea . . .* (1609) thinks that the Dead Sea itself has a second identity in that he believes it to be the same place as the Lake of Sodom.¹⁸ This would certainly be a very suggestive association for Mortimer Junior to have, but it might also alert us to the fact that it is actually the elder Mortimer who

18. William Biddulph, *The Trauels of Certaine Englishmen into Africa, Asia, Troy, Bithynia, Thracia, and to the Blacke Sea . . .* (London: T. Haveland for W. Aspley, 1609), 142.

comes closest to giving a name to the love which cannot speak its own: "The mightiest kings have had their minions: / . . . And not kings only, but the wisest men" (1.4.390–94). It is not "All they that love not tobacco and boys are fools," but it would not take much for an actor to play this as a plea for tolerance and as giving a possible insight into the otherwise rather underexplored character of a man who has, we might realize, no visible family other than his nephew and gives no sign of any heterosexual attachments. The presence of a second character with the name of Mortimer thus shadows and complicates any attempt to form a simple, unitary image of the first, offering instead a covert connection between him and his ostensible antagonist.

Another suggestive family connection is the relationship between Edward and his brother Edmund, the Earl of Kent. The only real precedent for this in Marlowe's works is the relationship between Cosroe and Mycetes in *1 Tamburlaine*, but that is configured entirely by the fact that one brother is visibly better fitted to rule than the other and that both are motivated mainly or wholly by the lust for power. The relationship between Edward and Kent is very different. Mycetes shows himself hopelessly weak when challenged by Cosroe, but Edward is much readier to stand up to Kent, dismissing him with "So, sir, you have spoke. Away, avoid our presence" (E2, 3.2.48). Kent himself is perhaps the only royally-born character in Marlowe who never even thinks of claiming power for himself. Rather he seems to be motivated by a mixture of genuine if hurt affection for his brother and a sense of what is right: "Nature, yield to my country's cause in this. / A brother, no, a butcher of thy friends, / Proud Edward, dost thou banish me thy presence?" (4.1.3–5). He oscillates between condemnation of Edward as a tyrant and condemnation of him as lacking in fraternal feeling in ways that suggest that both of these behaviors are of moment to him. He cares what happens to his country, and he also cares about Edward as a brother in a way of which it is hard to think of a precedent among the royal siblings in previous drama. His is the examined life, subject to the kind of constant self-scrutiny that at times produces bitter self-reproach, as when he excoriates himself, "Vile wretch, and why hast thou, of all unkind, / Borne arms against thy brother and thy King?" (4.6.5–6). He is also the one who cuts to the heart of the play's duality when he says, "Either my brother or

his son is King, / And none of both them thirst for Edmund's blood" (5.4.103–4). Even though there are two conflicting possibilities of which one only can be true, there is an underlying unity to be found between the two, in ways that may invite us to perceive something of how the play's own underlying tensions serve to enrich its range of potential resonance rather than to pull it apart. It is Kent's misfortune that his proto-deconstructionism comes too late to do him any good, but his death for a cause that he knows is already lost nevertheless smacks of a stoic sensibility that would have resonated well with the aesthetic agenda of the Countess of Pembroke as well as with the neo-Tacitean one of Essex and his circle.

This hint of a classical sensibility is underlined by the fact that as well as other characters in the play, personages from classical history and mythology also provide possible doubles. Almost all the play's characters inhabit a mental world populated by the shades of mythological beings, who act sometimes as doubles for the characters themselves and sometimes as doubles for things and concepts in the world around them. Gaveston imagines himself as having "like Leander, gasped upon the sand" (1.1.8) and plans a masque featuring "one like Actaeon" (1.1.66); Edward assures him that "Not Hylas was more mourned of Hercules" (1.1.143), while for Warwick he recalls Phaethon (1.4.16). Isabella compares herself to Circe (1.4.172) and mentions Hymen (1.4.174), Juno (1.4.178), and Jove and Ganymede (1.4.180); Edward experiences sorrow as "the Cyclops' hammers" (1.4.312) and bids his messenger to "fly / As fast as Iris or Jove's Mercury" (1.4.370), while Mortimer Senior assures his nephew that Edward's love for Gaveston has precedents in Alexander, Achilles, Socrates, and Cicero as well as the Hercules already invoked by Edward himself (1.4.391–96), to which Mortimer Junior ripostes with comparisons to Midas and Proteus (1.4.407, 410). In later scenes Edward invokes Danaë (2.2.53), Phoebus (4.3.45), Pluto and Charon (4.7.89–90), and Tisiphone (5.1.44); Lancaster, Helen of Troy (2.5.15); Prince Edward, Atlas (3.1.77); Spencer Junior, Jove and Danaë again (3.2.83–84); and Rice ap Howell, Catiline (4.6.51). This wealth of allusions does not serve merely to showcase Marlowe's education and the extent to which he is possessed of cultural capital; it also adds another dimension to the play's exploration of dyadic relationships because whereas the relationships between Edward

and Mortimer, Edward and Kent, and Edward and Gaveston are dynamic and mutually constitutive, the identity-partners provided by the classical past are static and fixed. This is sharply ironic in that many of these characters are in their own right figures of change: Proteus emblemizes it, while others, for example Danaë and Actaeon, are associated with stories of metamorphosis. Now, though, they can change no more. Locked in time, frozen forever into one fixed position as on Keats's Grecian urn or like the statuary that formed so prominent a part of the legacy of classical civilization, they invite us to understand the play's characters as similarly configured by their doubled temporal situation, still at the stage of experiencing their own identities as lived, developing, and in flux, but for us overdetermined by the image we already held of them before ever the play began.

This ironic change-in-stasis is also, of course, part of a final, extradiegetic doubling, the extent to which the "then" of the play is doubled by the "now" in which it is received. Dennis Kay argues that "in Marlowe's play the image of the king may be construed as a negative exemplum, being defined negatively in terms of the well established cult of Queen Elizabeth" and that "Marlowe constantly nudges the spectator to find contemporary parallels."¹⁹ Equally Laurence Normand has suggested that *Edward II* insistently invites its audience to see parallels with James VI and I,²⁰ and indeed the reference to "My Lord of Pembroke's men" more or less forces us to be aware to the circumstances of the sixteenth-century performance as well as the fourteenth-century story, not least because Gaveston's title of King of Man was also that of Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, the former patron with whom Marlowe apparently had recently fallen out; Marlowe might perhaps have taken a savage satisfaction in writing or at least seeing a scene in which someone bearing that title is given over to the power of "my Lord of Pembroke's men," obvious stand-ins for his own new

19. Kay, "Marlowe, *Edward II*, and the Cult of Elizabeth," ¶6.

20. Lawrence Normand, "What Passions Call You These?: *Edward II* and James VI," in *Christopher Marlowe and English Renaissance Culture*, ed. Darryll Grantley and Peter Roberts (Aldershot: Scholar, 1996), 172–97. See also Jeffrey Rufo, "Marlowe's Minions: Sodomitical Politics in *Edward II* and *The Massacre at Paris*," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 1 (2011): 5–23, 6; and Rutkoski, "Breeching the Boy," 292. Bianco also argues for echoes of contemporary Ireland in "To Sodomize a Nation."

company. In the darkening atmosphere of the 1590s, when there was increasingly less scope afforded for dissidence of any kind and when there were more mowers in meadows ready to look askance and to inform, there must in any case have been a readily available awareness that the persecution, imprisonment, torture and ultimate execution of Edward were experiences with very close parallels in Elizabethan England.

The doubleness of the play has been repeatedly recognized in its afterlife. Roslyn L. Knutson suggests that the “nexus of Pembroke’s Men, *Edward II*, and Richard Burbage had an influence on William Shakespeare,”²¹ and although Knutson sees this manifested specifically in *Richard III* (1593), I would suggest that it can also be traced in *Hamlet* (1600), which George T. Wright long ago identified as a play shaped and configured by the doubling figure of hendiadys²² and in which Lightborn’s knowledge of how “whilst one is asleep, to take a quill / And blow a little powder in his ears” (*E2*, 5.4.33–34) is shared by Claudius, the young Edward III’s defiant declaration to his mother that “with you I will, but not with Mortimer” (5.2.108) is echoed in Hamlet’s more subtly pointed “I shall in all my best obey you, madam,”²³ and finally Mortimer’s readiness to go to his death “as a traveller / Goes to discover countries yet unknown” (5.6.64–65) seems to be remembered in Hamlet’s most famous soliloquy. More recently, the vampiric Isabella of the Jarman film, who in a hideous literalization of Kent’s speech about thirsting for his blood actually bites him to death, evokes a classic figure of the gothic, a genre predicated on the inescapability of duality, and the play was itself doubled when it appeared in two separate productions at the Rose Theater, Bankside in 2011, first as itself and then as *Weak Edward*, a modern retelling by Constanza Hola Chamy.

To help catch the sense of how all these proliferating doubles may be working, I would like briefly at this point to propose a final double for Marlowe’s play by glancing forward to a much more modern play with what seems to me to be a very similar sensibility, Tennessee Williams’s *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947).

21. Knutson, “Marlowe, Company Ownership, and the Role of Edward II,” 37.

22. George T. Wright, “Hendiadys and *Hamlet*,” *PMLA* 96.2 (1981): 168–93.

23. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins (London: Methuen, 1980), 1.2.120.

There, too, one of the many incidental notes in the overall bouquet is of the gothic and specifically of the vampiric, as a pale aristocrat with homoerotic associations who fears the light comes from a remote place of death to prey on the young and vulnerable of the city; there too it is easy for a modern audience to interpret what they hear as the voice of a playwright almost if not quite ready to step out of the closet, and a terrible irony of history means that over both plays lies the shadow of a blade piercing the skull, in the shape of the lobotomy to which Williams's sister Rose had been subjected and the dagger above the eye in *Deptford*. Most importantly, though, in *Streetcar* as well a skeletal framework of the unemotional and the philosophic, this time in the shape of the obvious influence of Brecht, is richly interwoven with an insistent call for an essentially emotional response, for there is no point going to see *Streetcar* if you are not prepared to care.

Edward II, I suggest, is governed by a similar doubled logic. There is, to an extent previously unseen in Marlowe, reason, pattern, and shape; there is an interest in stoic philosophy, in modes of historiography, and in the contours and category markers of different genres, especially as defined by Sidney. But there is also, and again to an extent previously unseen in Marlowe, a need to acknowledge the power of love and signs of growing interest in the nature and power of audiences' response to drama and how that may best be negotiated, and these twin drives give the play its profound and energizing duality.²⁴

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24. With thanks to my colleague Tom Rutter and to M. L. Stapleton.

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Perform to Power: Isabella's Performative
Self-Creation in *Edward II*

She-Wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled Mate¹

With this voracious image, the poet Thomas Grey cemented the infamy of Edward II's Queen Isabella in the popular imagination. Known to posterity as the vindictive wife who plotted treason against her husband and lived in open adultery, such a view of the medieval queen is conspicuously at odds with contemporary sources, which present continuous sympathy for a remarkable woman whose deft political maneuvering accomplished a bloodless invasion and the deposition of an anointed king while still managing to represent popular justice. These same sources studiously ignore the salacious details of the queen's life as ephemeral to their focus on the grand narrative of history, so Isabella's renown as scheming adulteress finds its spark in her powerful, dramatic representation in Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*.² Long-standing critical assessments have

1. Thomas Grey, "The Bard," *Thomas Grey Archive Online*, accessed September 27, 2012, <http://www.thomasgray.org/cgi-bin/display.cgi?text=bapo#57>, 2.1.57–58.

2. See W. Mark Ormrod, *Edward III* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2011), 25; and Sophia Menache, "Isabella of France, Queen of England—A Reconsideration," *Journal of Medieval History* 10.2 (1984): 107–24, 107–10, 119. T. F. Tout notes the discrepancy between popular opinion and historical record, describing Marlowe's *Edward II* as a "powerful but unhistorical tragedy." *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1914), 14. For more recent historical scholarship on the reign of Edward II, see Roy Martin Haines, *King Edward II: Edward of Caernarfon, His Life, His Reign, and Its Aftermath, 1284–1330* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2003). For Marlowe's use of historical sources, see Carla Coleman Prichard, "Learn Then to Rule Us Better and the Realm': Restoration of Order and the Boy King in Marlowe's

dismissed characterization of the queen as crude, simplistic, and unsubtle, and even recent criticism sees Isabella as a mere ratification for the more important relationship of Edward and Gaveston.³ While these views have been challenged by scholars such as Tom Rutter, who observe Isabella's skill in using "the roles others create for her—French strumpet, injured saint—as a means of leveraging herself into a position of influence," most critics ultimately echo Sara Munson Deats's conclusion that despite her complex, credible personality, the queen's function is merely that of a "rhetorical construct."⁴ While I do not propose retitling the play "Isabella," I do offer a corrective to extant critical discourse through a sustained consideration of the queen as a formidable, powerful, even heroic figure in her own right. I concur that Isabella's successive self-casting is a potent dramatic means within which to ensure her political survival. But I particularize this observation along lines suggested by Judith Butler, asserting that Isabella's powerful self-presentation represents "dramatic and contingent construction of meaning . . .

Edward II," in *Renaissance Papers*, 1998, ed. T. H. Howard-Hill and Philip Rollinson (Rochester, NY: Camden House for The Southeastern Renaissance Conference: 1998), 29–38, 36.

3. Michel Poirier asserts, "As to the Queen, she is a mere puppet . . . [her] sudden volte-face has nothing in common with the usual working of a human heart" in *Christopher Marlowe's Edward II: Text and Major Criticism*, ed. Irving Ribner (1951; rpt., New York: Odyssey P, 1968), 77–92. See also Irving Ribner, "Marlowe's *Edward II* and the Tudor History Play," *ELH* 22.4 (1955): 243–53, 246, 184–85; and Harry Levin, *The Overreacher: A Study of Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1952), 98. Jeffrey Rufo states "relationships between men and women in the play are subservient in explicit ways to Edward's homosexuality, which Isabella ratifies in tragic fashion" in "Marlowe's Minions: Sodomitical Politics in *Edward II* and *The Massacre at Paris*," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 1 (2011): 5–23, 13.

4. Tom Rutter, *The Cambridge Introduction to Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), 95; Sara Munson Deats, *Sex, Gender, and Desire in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Associated UP, 1999), 164. For a summary of critical reappraisals of Isabella, see Deats, "Myth and Metamorphosis in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 22.3 (1980), 304–21; and Deats, "Edward II: A Study in Androgyny," *Ball State University Forum* 22.1 (1981): 30–41. See also Katherine Anderson's "'Stab, as Occasion Serves': The Real Isabella in Marlowe's *Edward II*," in *Renaissance Papers*, 1992, ed. George Walton Williams and Barbara J. Baines (Rochester, NY: Camden House for The Southeastern Renaissance Conference 1992), 29–39; and Joanna Gibbs, "Marlowe's Politic Women," in *Constructing Christopher Marlowe*, ed. James A. Downie and J. T. Parnell (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 164–76, 164–170.

through a stylized repetition of acts.”⁵ I demonstrate that Isabella’s self-assertions, particularly as a rejected, loyal wife and the mother to the future king of England, connect her with Marlowe’s famous machiavels in their shared dedication to the pursuit of power. With respect to Isabella’s presenting of herself as a humble semidivine warrior fighting for the common good, I link scholarship on the theatricality of war in contemporary soldiering with intersections between gendered behavior and performative self-construction. From the patient Griselda figure she adopts in the opening scenes through the stylized images as warrior queen and mother to the future of the nation, Isabella’s pursuit of power is facilitated by the underlying mechanism of her performatively crafted agency. Yes, her performance is ruthless, but not as a rapacious she-wolf, rather as a performative Renaissance prince.

Isabella’s first appearance on stage clearly signals the deliberate self-consciousness that will become the hallmark of her performance throughout the action. While her self-casting changes dramatically over the course of the play, the volte-face from loyal wife to vengeful adulteress critics often decry as implausible actually serves to heighten the dramatic peripeteia as the queen’s performative agency is revealed incrementally.⁶ Upon meeting with the nobles apparently by accident, she replies directly to Mortimer’s concern by claiming she is headed to the forest, “To live in grief and baleful discontent.”⁷ This

5. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 190.

6. In this regard, H. B. Charlton and R. D. Waller note “critics have often complained with some reason of Marlowe’s handling of the character” in the introduction to *The Works and Life of Christopher Marlowe: Edward II*, ed. H. B. Charlton and R. D. Waller (London, Methuen, 1966), 1:47. Velma Bourgeois Richmond disparages Isabella’s characterization as a simple “presentation of woman as angel /devil” in “Renaissance Sexuality and Marlowe’s Women,” *Ball State University Forum* 16.4 (1975): 36–44, 37. Opposing these views, Claude J. Summers, argues “Marlowe early prepares us for Isabella’s ultimate Machiavellianism” in “Isabella’s Plea for Gaveston in Marlowe’s *Edward II*,” *Philological Quarterly* 52.2 (1973): 308–10, 310; and Deats suggests that “Marlowe intentionally mutes the hints for Isabella’s future corruption” in “Myth and Metamorphosis,” 314. More recently, Ian McAdam describes Isabella as a “consummate role-player” in “*Edward II* and the Illusion of Integrity,” *Studies in Philology* 92.2 (1995): 203–29, 217.

7. Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, in *The Complete Plays*, ed. Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey (London: Penguin, 2003), 2.48. All subsequent references to *Edward II* are from this edition.

thoroughly melodramatic statement is prompted, she claims, by Edward's forsaking her for his lover, Gaveston. However, Mortimer's expressed question, "Madam, whither walks your majesty *so fast?*" (E2, 2.46, emphasis mine) suggests that her purpose is quite opposite to her purported claim. Isabella's speedy and determined locomotion across the stage, perhaps with a wrist pressed to her forehead in a gesture of hyperbolic distress, suggests a very clear intention: to intercept the nobles so that they might witness her discontent in medias res. She intends, even encourages, interruption. Her equally histrionic and stylized declaration reinforces her romantic posturing.

rather than my lord
 Shall be oppressed by civil mutinies,
 I will endure a melancholy life,
 And let him frolic with his minion (2.64–67)

Such sentiments serve a twofold purpose: They allow Isabella to cast herself as the noble victim of Edward's ill-fated dalliance, while they also inflame the already aggravated sensibilities of the nobles, prompting them to take action against a king whom they are sworn to defend. Isabella's final words in this scene, "Farewell, sweet Mortimer, and for my sake / Forbear to levy arms against the king" (2.81–82), underscore the deft psychology at work in her performance, emphasizing queenly virtues of fidelity and self-sacrifice through her apparent allegiance to the king. By prompting Mortimer to avow his treasonous inclinations (2.83)—in apparent contradiction of Isabella's direct instruction—she reaffirms her real intention. From the very first moment on stage, therefore, Isabella's words and behaviors should be understood as carefully constructed performances designed specifically to attract the nobles' allegiance away from Edward for the queen's own purposes.

Marlowe's rendering of Isabella combines clichéd attributes of selflessness and romanticized helplessness, but it is far more than an elaborate pastiche poking fun at the melodrama of female affectation and royal spectacle. Through her powerful manipulation of gendered stereotypes, Isabella "exploits the ideology of femininity to construct herself in an acceptable model of early modern womanhood."⁸ By emphasizing these

8. Deats, *Sex, Gender and Desire*, 171.

socially significant behaviors, Isabella's self-creation anticipates Judith Butler's descriptions of the performative, which may be succinctly defined as the notion we "perform ourselves, under external discipline, into what we become."⁹ Characterized by "repetition [that] is at once a reenactment and re-experience of a set of meanings already socially established,"¹⁰ Isabella's powerful identity as queen is more than just a typological performance. Through iterations of socially coded behaviors, her performative power to rule is a kind of self-fulfilling construction, designed to reclaim the political influence usurped by Gaveston. Isabella's socially prescribed behaviors, words, and actions thus provide a means of political agency through which she performs herself into power.

As demonstrated when Edward's callous mistreatment prompts her to cry out to her husband, "Witness the tears that Isabella sheds / Witness this heart that, sighing for thee, breaks" (*E2*, 4.164–65), Isabella's performative self-styling is also political spectacle. While she may ostensibly be addressing Edward, Isabella's very public declaration makes it clear that her intended audience is the entire court. Edward's sneering dismissal, "Speak not unto her, let her droop and pine" (4.162), emphasizes the stereotypical, even histrionic quality of her very deliberate performance. Further, it reveals that he recognizes his wife's actions as contrived, yet absorbed utterly with Gaveston, even to the exclusion of matters of state, the king dismisses his wife's actions as mere affectation. While it might be suggested that Edward's failure to fully comprehend Isabella's worth or power is a function of his sexual preferences, Dymphna Callaghan notes that the central concern of the play is not sexuality but patriarchy as "sexuality is always overtly bound up with dominant institutions and practices of power."¹¹ The crux of the barons' concern with Gaveston is not the king's infatuation per

9. J. Hillis Miller, "Performativity as Performance/Performativity as Speech Act: Derrida's Special Theory of Performativity," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 106.2 (2007): 219–35, 226.

10. Judith Butler, "Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions," in *Feminisms REDUX: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, ed. Robyn Warhol-Down and Diane Price Herndl (New Brunswick, NJ: Routledge, 2009), 465–76, 474.

11. Dymphna Callaghan, "The Terms of Gender: 'Gay' and 'Feminist' *Edward II*," in *Marlowe*, ed. Avraham Oz, Contemporary Critical Essays (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 182–99, 183.

se but the contravention of established social order and noble privilege. Mortimer encapsulates the nobles' grievance, clarifying that Edward's "wanton humour grieves not me, / But this I scorn, that one so basely born / Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert" (*E2*, 4.401–3). It is Edward's blatant privileging of Gaveston without regard for social hierarchy that is the source of strife, with the results of the favorite's avarice causing common hardship so that "soldiers mutiny for want of pay" (4.404). Isabella's self-casting as "miserable and distressed queen" (4.170) not only demonstrates her personal loss, it evidences the global social damage of Gaveston's usurpation and Edward's misgovernance. Pembroke's witnessing remark, "Hard is the heart that injures such a saint" (4.190), both affirms the polarities that Isabella employs in her dramatic performance and assures her of the attention and sympathy of the powerful and influential noblemen. In the absence of political affirmation by her husband, Isabella engineers what Miller defines as a function of the performative: "legitimation by an exercise of power, whether by denotative or prescriptive utterances."¹²

Having secured the nobles' sympathy with her performance as tragic, abandoned queen, Isabella parlays her sway over Mortimer, ostensibly to petition for Gaveston's repeal, charming the influential baron as she invites him to, "sit down by me a while / And I will tell thee reasons of such weight / As thou wilt soon subscribe to his repeal" (4.225–27). Isabella ensures that this time, the particulars of her performance go unheard, insisting "none shall hear it but ourselves" (4.229), an emphasis through absence Mathew Martin recently described as designed to evoke "voyeuristic curiosity"¹³ in the audience tantalized by its pregnant implications. By way of further emphasizing Isabella's persuasive power, the watching noblemen provide a running commentary on the private repartee:

PEMBROKE: Fear not, the queen's words cannot alter him.

WARWICK: No? Do but mark how earnestly she pleads.

LANCASTER: And see how coldly his looks make denial.

WARWICK: She smiles. Now, for my life, his mind is changed.
(4.233–36)

12. Miller, "Performativity as Performance/Performativity as Speech Act," 224.

13. Mathew R. Martin, introduction to *Edward the Second*, by Christopher Marlowe (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2010), 18.

Warwick's detailed account of her behaviors—her earnestness, her smile—further suggests her politic employ of gendered stereotypes. The gesture of the queen pleading also evokes the well-established political role of queen as intercessor and her customary prerogative to beseech the king. Indeed, the historical Isabella performed exactly such a politically scripted action in 1321, going “on her knees to intercede with her furious husband on behalf of baronial opposition.”¹⁴ While referencing the queen's traditional access to power in the political hierarchy, the potent image of the queen pleading before Mortimer, signals the adaptive redirection of Isabella's political performance from the ears of the king, who is deaf to all but Gaveston, to the receptive ascendant lord. As Warwick rightly interprets, the effect of the private conference between the queen and the nobleman is profound: Mortimer returns to the group convinced of the necessity of Gaveston's repeal. Issuing a bluff, “Well, of necessity it must be so” (4.238), by way of explaining his complete volte-face from declaring such action “impossible” (4.228) only a moment earlier. The celerity of Mortimer's complete reversal signals that the nobleman has unwittingly become the conduit for Isabella's own words. As Mortimer relates what the audience should understand as the content of Isabella's whispered counsel: “This which I urge is of a burning zeal, / To mend the king and do our country good” (4.256–57), he affirms the power of her performative persuasion. Ironically, Mortimer little realizes at this point what the queen already knows and what the scene proves: Isabella owns him and will use him to ensure that the country's good remains synonymous with her own political good.

Isabella's sway over Mortimer is further revealed by his gloating announcement, “Know you not Gaveston hath store of gold / Which may in Ireland purchase him such friends / As he will front the mightiest of us all?” (4.258–60). While Gaveston's enjoyment of the wealth bestowed upon him by his lover is the prime source of political tension, a readily-accessible personal fortune sufficient to fund an army is an advantage left conspicuously unmentioned, even by Gaveston himself. Mortimer's sudden introduction of this incendiary information, coupled

14. Derek Wilson, “Queen Isabella: A Gothic Tale,” *History Today* 62.5 (2012): 26–32, 31.

with his abrupt change of political tack, lead shrewd observers of the scene to suspect such information was invented by Isabella and dropped into Mortimer's consciousness to serve her purpose. With the nobles newly apprised of the possibility of personal retribution from the prodigal favorite, Isabella introduces through her operative Mortimer the idea that, were Gaveston to return to England, he could be "accidentally" killed.¹⁵ "How easily might some base slave be suborned / To greet his lordship with a poniard / And none so much as blame the murderer" (4.265–67), Mortimer scoffs. To Lancaster's incredulous query, "Ay, but how chance this was not done before?" (4.272), Mortimer responds, "Because, my lords, it was not thought upon" (4.274), indirectly acknowledging that he was not the plan's original source. Though the inference is subtle, the context of Mortimer's revelation makes clear that, during their private exchange, it was Isabella who schooled Mortimer in how best to arrange a permanent solution to the ongoing problem of Gaveston's unwelcome presence near and influence over the king.

Isabella's performance in her role of ill-treated, tragic queen allows her to conduct a many-sided coup: While seeming to make good on her promise to rescue Gaveston for the king, she cements her influence over Mortimer and steers the nobles toward her cause without appearing to interfere or usurp their leadership. Recognizing Isabella's energy and agency, Kathleen Anderson notes, "Isabella works through men, [who are] the tools of her political craft."¹⁶ By performing the role that a male-dominated society would credit as simply appropriate to women, Isabella manipulates the cultural and historical preconceptions ascribed to her. Lancaster's reflection, "Look where the sister of the King of France / Sits wringing of her hands and beats her breast" (4.187–88), and later his admonition to the king, "Thy gentle queen, sole sister of Valois / Complains that thou hast left her all forlorn" (6.171–72) highlight her use of conventionally gendered behaviors to manifest her distress. Such distress signals international implications. Through Lancaster's

15. Several critics convincingly demonstrate Isabella is the source of the plot to murder Gaveston. See Summers, "Isabella's Plea for Gaveston," 309; and Deats, "A Study in Androgyny," 33–34.

16. Anderson, "Stab, as Occasion Serves," 34.

descriptions of the queen's performances, the audience is prompted to see the gravity of Edward's fatal underestimation of Isabella's aptitude, agency, and sharp political ambition. Deprived of traditional access to diplomatic power by Gaveston's presumption, Isabella's stereotypically gendered performances translate her abandonment by Edward into a socially acceptable form of agency.

Isabella's brief soliloquies provide further affirmation that the queen adapts her behavior in order to achieve the power of her rightful position, even going so far as to countenance replacing her husband with a potential lover. Her initial statement addressing the recently departed Edward—"Heavens can witness I love none but you" (8.15)—is less a simple assertion of devotion than a response to the king's charge of infidelity. While Isabella's early favor towards Mortimer has been popularly misconceived as evidence of preexisting adultery, the suggestion of Edward's cuckoldry is introduced by the vengeful Gaveston in order to make her "complicity more sexual and conspiratorial than it is."¹⁷ Her subsequent expressions of affection fit the standard conventions of feminine love:

O that mine arms could close this isle about,
That I might pull him to me where I would,
Or that these tears that drizzle from mine eyes
Had the power to mollify his stony heart. (8.17–20)

Studiedly informative and instructive, these formulaic lines signal that even when the audience alone is her witness, Isabella is always engaged in performative self-presentation. While they cannot be assumed to be unguarded revelations, her expressions provide a metaphorical window onto the true nature of her desires. Her primary concern is not romantic inclination towards Mortimer, but the possession of the entirety of the kingdom and absolute control over the inclinations of the king, whosoever he may be. Her final sentiments at the end of the scene function not as emotional exposition, but as a stated plan of action. Her reflection—"so well has thou deserved sweet Mortimer, / As Isabel could live with thee forever" (8.59–60)—demonstrates a measured consideration of Mortimer's political utility and his potential as co-regent. Though she is willing to make a final

17. Purvis E. Boyette, "Wanton Humour and Wanton Poets: Homosexuality in Marowe's *Edward II*," *Tulane Studies in English* 22 (1977): 33–50, 45.

attempt to coax Edward away from his dangerous obsession with Gaveston, Isabella reasons, "If he be strange and not regard my words, / My son and I will over into France, / And to the king my brother there complain" (8.64–66). Her reasoned solution places a premium on the performances she intends to deliver at the French court where she also holds power and reveals her acute appreciation of the pressures of international politics. She is politically astute enough to recognize that civil war "threatens her as well as the king and Gaveston,"¹⁸ so like any accomplished strategist, Isabella crafts procedures that indicate she has thought beyond her present challenges and impending loss of status, to anticipate outcomes far in advance of her immediate actions. Thus Isabella's soliloquy should rightly be regarded as a comprehensive battle plan. Her sentiments reveal to the audience a fearless individual, determined to resist being the pawn of fate or the plaything of powerful men.

The political utility of Isabella's highly theatrical self-representation is highlighted when Mortimer's initial rash attempt to kill Gaveston results merely in injury to the favorite and renewed animosity between the king and the nobles. The queen's reaction offers an example of the political power behind the artifice of her performance as she asks, "furious Mortimer, what hast thou done?" (6.85), no doubt accompanied by a mock faint or similar grand gesture of emotion. Isabella's outburst provides a timely intervention that halts Mortimer's impetuosity and prevents the scene from escalating away from her pre-determined plans. Conveniently dismissed by the court as lady-like horror at unexpected bloodshed, her remark can also be interpreted by the watching peers as feminine hysteria, evidence of her frustration with Mortimer's foolhardy deviation from the agreed-upon plot. In both cases, Isabella's dramatic and studiedly feminine performance remains dedicated to the pursuit of her political power. Joanna Gibbs notes that by "affecting a posture at once self-abnegating and deferential, [Isabella] assumes the position which a male-dominated society deems appropriate to women. By so doing, the queen is able to do what the men least expect—subversively to reinscribe herself within the dominant group."¹⁹ And once within any group, Isabella's

18. Boyette, "Wanton Humour and Wanton Poets," 45.

19. Gibbs, "Marlowe's Politic Women," 168.

performative agency allows her to dominate. Her reiterated performances as distressed, forsaken, yet loyal queen are designed to consolidate personal sway over key individuals and reestablish her social position. Isabella's emphatic self-presentation as queen is, therefore, an extended exercise in self-realization intended to retrieve the power and privilege of both her birth right and marriage rites. In this regard, the constitutive power of performance is akin to Derrida's sense of the performative, which ascribes a certain self-realizing, constitutive power to performance so that, by stating the intention to *be* or acting as though one *is*, one is able to become precisely what one aims at performing. Just as Jacques Derrida's performatives are possessed of the unique "force of *rupture* [that] produces the institution or constitution . . . that appears to have to guarantee it[self] in return," Isabella's performative self-creation is powerful enough to ultimately afford her a position even greater than the one bestowed by her marriage to Edward as she promotes herself from queen consort to queen regnant.²⁰

Isabella's single-minded pursuit of power echoes the form of unscrupulous popular Machiavellianism often exhibited by Marlowe's male heroes and villains. Though generalizations crediting the playwright with "as close an approximation of Machiavelli's central premises and conclusions as anywhere in Elizabethan writings"²¹ continue to be revised by critics examining the extent of the controversial text's influence on Marlowe's work, the scholarly consensus is that "Marlowe is familiar with Machiavellian political philosophy."²² Moreover, as Bawcutt long ago noted, what most intrigued Machiavelli's sixteenth-century admirers was his "gift for interpreting history, not merely recording it, and for drawing lessons from the past which would be useful for the future."²³ Such an interest complements Marlowe's own idiosyncratic approach to retelling

20. Jacques Derrida, qtd. in Miller, "Performativity as Performance / Performativity as Speech Act," 232, emphasis in original.

21. Irving Ribner, "Marlowe and Machiavelli," *Comparative Literature* 6.4 (1954): 348–56, 351.

22. Joseph Khoury, "Marlowe's Tamburlaine: Idealized Machiavellian Prince," in *Seeking Real Truths: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Machiavelli*, ed. Patricia Vilches and Gerald Seaman (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2001), 329–65, 332.

23. N. W. Bawcutt, "Machiavelli and Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*," *Renaissance Drama*, n.s., 3 (1970): 2–49, 10.

history. The play's famous sly nod to Machiavellian realpolitik, "You must be proud, bold, pleasant, resolute / And now and then stab, as occasion serves" (5.42–43), is offered by Spencer but faithfully articulated in Isabella's signature performative approach which conceals adamant determination beneath an impeccably regal façade. Her noted adaptive self-presentation traces Machiavelli's command that a ruler "must be prepared to vary his conduct as the winds of fortune."²⁴ Thus, Alan Shepard's assumption that "Isabella is little more than Mortimer's vehicle as he climbs towards the throne"²⁵ overlooks the specific nuances in the text that make clear it is the queen, and not the rebellious peer, who has the intelligence and ambition to achieve true power. The nobleman's boast, "Feared am I more than loved. Let me be feared, / And when I frown, make all the court look pale" (24.50–52), clearly echoes Machiavelli's famous prescription that "it is much safer to be feared than loved," but misses the tempering knowledge that "it is perfectly possible to be feared without incurring hatred" (59). Likewise, his hubristic boast that he is too great for fortune to harm him—"Maiores sum quam cui possit fortuna nocere" (24.68)—anticipates his downfall with near-comic swiftness, so that he must be understood to be merely aping the prescriptions of the text without true understanding of the subtleties of rule. In contrast, it is Isabella who consistently displays the skillful cunning espoused for rulers. When political survival is at issue, Isabella insists on Edward's death, reasoning "as long as he survives, / What safety rests for us or for my son?" (22.42–43), overruling Mortimer's less extreme suggestion of a prison sentence. Her coolly reasoned approach to the momentous and treasonous act of murdering her husband, the king, suggests a considered appropriation of Machiavelli's justification of the need "to act treacherously, ruthlessly or inhumanely, and disregard the precepts of religion," and perform deeds that "are necessary for establishing one's power" (62). Isabella's commitment to securing her power evokes Machiavelli's prescription that successful rulers must

24. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988), 62. Hereafter cited as Machiavelli.

25. See Alan Shepard, *Marlowe's Soldiers: Rhetorics of Masculinity in the Age of the Armada* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2002), 100. Hereafter cited as Shepard.

know “how to assess the dangers, and to choose the least bad course of action as being the right one to follow” (79).

The queen’s circumspect justification for the tactical invasion of England, “care of my country called me to this war,” (*E2*, 19.65) together with her accusation that “misgoverned kings are the cause of all this wrack” (17.9) in order to defend her deposition of her husband, the rightful if unpopular monarch, cogently interpret Machiavelli’s warning that “victories are never so decisive that the victor does not need to be careful, and especially about acting justly” (78). Isabella is careful to frame herself as a righteous and humble soldier who acts in service of her country and, most importantly, of her people. She places a Machiavellian premium on popular support when she credits and consolidates her supporters, who she refers to as “loving friends and countrymen” (*E2*, 17.1), then denounces Edward as bad example of rule: “Of thine own people patron shouldst thou be” (17.13). Mortimer’s conventional objection, “Nay, madam, if you be a warrior, / Ye must not grow so passionate in speeches” (17.15–16), is immediately undercut by the contents of his own speech, which is every bit as emotional and impassioned. Isabella’s apparent willingness to have Mortimer steal her spotlight prompts Shepard’s suggestion that she “subsumes herself in Mortimer’s identity” as a way to recover “the very ‘dignities and honours’ Mortimer claims to be able and ready to restore to her” (100). Isabella merely tolerates the attempt at usurpation, however, as the following scenes reveal that Mortimer lacks the political aptitude that so abounds in the queen. Isabella employs Mortimer as a metaphorical “lion to frighten away wolves,” reserving for herself the position of the wily fox (Machiavelli, 61). Embodying Machiavelli’s caution that the “actions of a new ruler are much more closely observed than those of a hereditary ruler” (83), Isabella remains cognizant of the need to appear just and merciful, claiming, “I rue my lord’s ill fortune” (*E2*, 19.74) even when arranging her husband’s arrest. In contrast, Mortimer is far less guarded, brashly instructing the queen to “have done with care and sad complaint” (19.76). Isabella permits Mortimer the fantasy of authority in order to accomplish the unpleasant business of consolidating power in the wake of Edward’s deposition. Once the “proud corrupters of the light-brained king / Have done their homage to the lofty gallows, / And he himself lies in

captivity" (22.2–4), Mortimer assumes that Isabella will "Be ruled by me, and we will rule the realm" (22.5). But Isabella makes no such commitment, offering only the hollow assurances of a politician, "Sweet Mortimer, the life of Isabel, / Be thou persuaded that I love thee well" (22.15–16), before directing her charms to serious political ends:

And therefore, so the prince my son be safe,
Whom I esteem as dear as these mine eyes,
Conclude against his father what thou wilt
And I myself will willingly subscribe. (22.17–20)

Isabella employs Mortimer as her unwitting henchman, subtly prompting him to draw conclusions that he foolishly mistakes for his own, while distancing herself from the act of regicide. Through her adept interpretation of Machiavellian philosophy, Isabella is uniquely possessed of the energy and verve to take decisive emergency measures, recalibrating power after years of Edward's incompetence and, with a visionary sense of future authority, working to bequeath it to her son. Clearly, the nearest embodiment of Machiavellian philosophy in *Edward II* is neither the stage-villain Mortimer, nor even the cunning Gaveston, but Isabella herself. As arguably the "first female Elizabethan stage Machiavel,"²⁶ Isabella's enacting of the rules for prosperity and sound governance necessarily differs from her male counterparts: Her unique adaptation of conventional ideals incorporates such rules seamlessly into her queenly persona.

As unsentimental Machiavellian leader, Isabella's modulation of ruthlessness with regard is suggestive of the masterful real-politik of Elizabeth I whose lifelong policy was always to err on the side of personal and political circumspection. The parallel between the two queens is implied in response to Mortimer's request for directive on the fate of Edward: "Speak, shall he presently be dispatched and die?" (22.44). Isabella commands by a form of indirection: "I would he were [dispatched], so it were not by my means" (22.45), an equivocation reminiscent of Elizabeth's oblique requests to "ease her burden"²⁷ with respect to the analogous execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. Similarly, the dramatized figure of Isabella on the field of war, perhaps in full

26. Deats, "A Study in Androgyny," 35–36.

27. Judith M. Richards, *Elizabeth I* (London: Routledge, 2012), 132.

battle dress, is a clear, conscious echo of the armour-clad appearance of Elizabeth I at Tilbury prior to the defeat of the Spanish Armada. In the process of recasting herself as warrior queen, Isabella fashions herself a divinely inspired agent of political and moral action. Publicly proclaiming, “Successful battles gives the God of Kings / To them that fight in right and fear his wrath” (19.19-20), Isabella’s words resemble Elizabeth’s claim “we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my Kingdoms, and of my people.”²⁸ So too does Isabella’s noted courting of the soldiers and common people of England appear to have precepts in Elizabeth’s populist appeal, “I have placed my chiefest strength, and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good will of my subjects.”²⁹ While still subtle enough to circumvent the scrutiny of state censorship, the associations between the self-styling of both Isabella and Elizabeth invite consideration of the contemporary monarch as performatively empowered.

Marlowe’s framing of Isabella, the consummate performer, as a soldier at arms implies wry criticism both of the theatricality of war, as well as the emergent function of military mores in contemporary society. In the same way as her performance has defined her throughout, Isabella’s power rests critically on her rhetorical prowess as military leader both to inspire soldiers and frame popular perception. The staging of an inspiring war speech not only invites rhetorical appreciation, it “acknowledges that, at some level, war *is* theatrical” (Shepard, 98). This acknowledged performativity is both subversive and culturally salient. In *Unto the Breach*, Patricia Cahill highlights the increasing awareness contemporary audiences would have of military pursuits, explaining that the “emergence of the Elizabethan war machine dramatically altered the domestic economy: citizens were assessed for military taxes; merchants made loans to the government and contracted to supply soldiers with food.”³⁰ Coupled with immediate, real-world experience, “printed texts

28. Elizabeth I, “Speech to the Troops at Tilbury,” in *Women’s Writing of the Early Modern Period, 1588–1688: An Anthology*, ed. Stephanie Hodgson-Wright (New York: Columbia UP, 2002), 17.

29. Elizabeth I, “Speech to the Troops at Tilbury,” 17.

30. Patricia A. Cahill, *Unto the Breach: Martial Formations, Historical Trauma, and the Early Modern Stage* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 15. Hereafter cited as Cahill.

increasingly made warfare visible to Elizabethans" and through its underscoring of the performance aspect of war, the theater emphasized the constructed nature of martial pursuits in general and of the individual soldier in particular (Cahill, 16). Through her assault on English politics, Isabella plays the soldier too.

Since Marlowe's soldiers are renowned for their "strong grasp of the utility of oratory" the placement of the infamously "golden tongue[d]" (E2, 4.327) Isabella in a military role is a logical if unusually gendered parallel (Shepard, 98). Isabella's power is everywhere predicated on her rhetorical ability: from her determination with Edward, "I must entreat him, I must speak him fair" (4.183), and his use of her to "reconcile the lords" (4.156) for Gaveston's return, to her power over Mortimer which stems from his suggestive invitation to "speak your mind" (4.228), and even in her attempt to retain control over Prince Edward with "Sweet son, come hither. I must talk with thee" (22.86). Further, the military manuals "celebrate the virtues of chastity, silence, and obedience, which books of female instruction routinely prescribe" (Cahill, 32). The same conventionally feminine qualities Isabella emphasized to bolster her faltering claims to regal authority are doubly justified as applied in her continued pursuit of power as warrior-queen. Cahill refers to Marlowe's infamous warrior-hero Tamburlaine as a touchstone for a new understanding of the soldier, suggesting "earlier modes of subjectivity having to do with aristocratic codes of honour were being reconstituted through the modern practices of quantification and abstraction . . . [and] mathematically rationalized violence" (19). Marlowe's Scythian shepherd reflected a contemporary awareness of the performed nature of warfare as a spectacle, but Tamburlaine also emphasizes the possibility for the creation of a low-born warrior knight "whose 'nobility' depends, paradoxically enough, on its machine-like 'continual actions'" (33). This notion of the identity of the soldier as constructed through mechanically-repeated, prescribed actions is strikingly similar to the concept of performative self-creation discussed earlier, in relation to Isabella. While Elizabethan audiences could appreciate the critique of the constructed soldier in *Tamburlaine*, such principles can plausibly be extended to an even more nontraditional soldier-figure in the form of Isabella. Ironically, the same performative techniques, and even the same gendered attributes that contributed to her

self-construction as queen, also apply to her reconstitution as soldier. Thus, Isabella's performative construction of herself as soldier is more than just a means of political self-assurance; her self-representation operates as a reflection on the emergent preoccupations and status of military science in relation to a passé military honor code gendered traditionally and exclusively as male.

Isabella's self-creation once again adapts performatively, when the prince is established as minority ruler. Through cogent (re)presentation of herself as a devoted mother to England's future king, Isabella intends that her son regard her as his whole world, his only source of protection, truth, and comfort. Yet even this lovingly altruistic persona emits signals of political significance. As Prince Edward is the heir to the throne, access to his person and his mind is an invaluable political asset. However, like the historical king, Marlowe's Edward II commits the "irredeemable error"³¹ in allowing his wife to remove his son and heir from his control and to travel to her birthplace and familial home. Just as the Isabella of the chronicles knew her "trump card was her custody of the young Prince Edward,"³² so too does the dramatic Isabella keep her son at her side when she flees Edward's abuse for the relative safety of France. Despite the command from Edmund, the royal protector, "Sister, Edward is my charge. Redeem him" (*E2*, 22.115), Isabella bluntly refuses to release her son the prince with straightforward defiance: "Edward is my son, and I will keep him" (22.116). She thus parlays her maternal prerogative into enduring possession of both prince and power. Isabella's indoctrination of her son is made explicit when she warns him against trusting even his own uncle, "Fear not, sweet boy, I'll guard thee from thy foes. / Had Edmund lived, he would have sought thy death." (24.110–11). Combining traditional maternal care with elements from her role as warrior queen, Isabella again performs herself to power in the form of a fierce maternal guardian. Her words do more than accuse a single enemy, they transmit a powerful message that no one but she should be trusted, either now during the prince's minority or into the future. Hereby, she attempts to isolate the young king from anyone who may dilute the power

31. Haines, *King Edward II*, 168.

32. Haines, *King Edward II*, 172.

of her influence, actions that emphasize the behavioral and incremental mechanism behind her sustained political control. The method through which she exerts control over the young king is evident in her seemingly innocuous request, "Sweet son, come hither. I must talk with thee." Though framed with dulcet politesse, her words bear the force of a direct threat on the life of the royal protector, the Duke of Kent. Just as her conspiratorial kisses with Mortimer prefigured the downfall of Edward II, Isabella's whispered wishes presage the imminent arrest of the duke and confirm her control over the political policy of England.

Under his mother's direct and forceful influence, the young prince seems to be thoroughly devoted to his mother. When offered the support of Hainault, the prince dutifully responds, "So pleaseth the queen my mother, me it likes" (15.21). He accepts without complaint his mother's statement, "boy, thou art deceived" (15.8), to his claim that his father "loves me better than a thousand Spencers" (15.7) and assures her of his loyalty stating, "The King of England nor the court of France / Shall have me from my gracious mother's side" (15.22–23). Yet Marlowe's text offers suggestion that the prince is more his mother's son than even she realizes and not nearly so gullible as he might appear. In the early scenes, the prince's plain shock at Mortimer's suggestion to replace the king with his son (15.43–44) as well as his impetuous "I think King Edward will outrun us all" (15.68), prompt his mother to insist he choose his words more carefully. Later, the prince's more mature refusal to blindly acquiesce to his mother's requests, "Mother, persuade me not to wear the crown" (22.91), his resistance to have Mortimer privy to his conferences (22.109), and his circumspect request to speak with his father himself to ascertain the truth of his mother's claim that abdication is truly "his highness' pleasure" (22.93–94) suggest he has learned both from his mother's signature circumspection as well as his father's bad example of giving too much credit to any single source. In the final scene, the prince wrests power from his mother's hands by using her own tactic of political conciliation, petitioning for "the aid and succor of his peers" (26.21). His call for an impartial trial to determine his mother's guilt suggests he has learned from his mother's error in making a martyr of her husband. His emotional command, "Away with her! Her words enforce these tears, /

And I shall pity her if she speak again" (26.85–86), echoes the weeping performances before the court that guaranteed Isabella's popular support, while his refusal to let her speak implies his keen awareness of the power of her rhetoric. Thus, the denouement reinforces the efficacy of Isabella's political tutelage through felicitous replication in her son, her protégé.

Marlowe's metatheatrical use of early modern female stereotypes to render Isabella in discrete roles, each attended by a specific set of gender signifiers, evokes feminist discourses that view gender as a masquerade.³³ With reference to Derek Jarman's 1991 film adaptation of *Edward II*, Niall Richardson suggests Isabella's performative self-creation presents "an image of excessive, theatricalized femininity" and, in so doing, exposes "the artifice and imitative quality of femininity and unmasks gender roles exactly as being roles."³⁴ By combining overstated theatrical performance with gender performativity, Isabella achieves political agency through seemingly contradictory means. While Richardson assumes "the printed script . . . subordinated the Marlowe text,"³⁵ my reading facilitates the opposite conclusion—that the film merely foregrounds the interrogation of gendered power dynamics the original long possessed. Where the film employs "camp" to reveal gender as constantly constructed in a relatively simple critique of Hollywood female glamor, Marlowe's play implies a multifaceted critique of rigid, socially-ascribed subjectivities and sexualities. David Stymeist follows a familiar critical refrain, arguing that in "validating an alternative sexuality" Edward and Gaveston's love "deconstructs the assumption that gender normativity is static and god-ordained rather than cultural and changeable."³⁶ Thus, if the behavior and actions of the king and his favorite challenge cultural codes pertaining to masculinity and patriarchy, Isabella's

33. Gibbs, "Marlowe's Politic Women," 168; Deats, 166.

34. Niall Richardson, "The Queer Performance of Tilda Swinton in Derek Jarman's *Edward II*: Gay Male Misogyny Reconsidered," *Sexualities* 6.3/4 (2003): 427–42, 429.

35. Richardson, "The Queer Performance of Tilda Swinton," 439.

36. David Stymeist, "Status, Sodomy, and the Theater in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 44.2 (2004): 233–253, 237. See also Thomas Cartelli, "Queer Edward II: Postmodern Sexualities and the Early Modern Subject," in *Marlowe, History, and Sexuality: New Critical Essays on Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Paul Whitfield White (New York: AMS, 1998), 213–23.

characterization reveals the obverse, that femininity and female subjection are socially constructed, too. More than just resistance to what Jonathan Goldberg terms the social "regularization of gender,"³⁷ Isabella's performative behavior exploits established mores for personal and political gain. Thus Thomas Cartelli's assumption that Isabella "remains firmly committed to the normative"³⁸ because she substitutes one heterosexual alliance for another overlooks the essential radicalism of her self-creation. Through calculating redeployment of arbitrary constructions of gender and power, Isabella is shown as subversively harnessing them for her own purpose in every possible, performative way.

Through her conscious, performative manipulation of political image and her strategic adoption and emphasis of stereotypically gendered qualities, Marlowe's characterization of Isabella presents a fascinating depiction of a woman who not only manipulated stereotypes of regal feminine conduct, but also understood power through performance. A consummate practitioner of the complexities of Machiavellian realpolitik, Isabella's characterization interrogates contemporary interest in political and military performances of power, often in surprisingly gendered ways. Isabella literalizes Edward's empty fantasy in relation to her "golden tongue" (4.327). Typically innocent of political implications, Edward fails to recognize that she employs this hypothetical gift strictly in her own realistic favor. Indeed, Isabella's eloquence and rhetorical prowess presents dramatic reference to the real-world abilities and accomplishments of Marlowe's English sovereign. Like Isabella, Elizabeth I was also regarded as a highly skilled orator and rhetorician. However, true to her always-dissembling form, even when directly complimented by the French ambassador, Elizabeth famously quipped, "It is no marvel to teach a woman to talk . . . far harder to teach her to hold her tongue"³⁹ In this brief but revealing witticism, Elizabeth appropriates the stereotypical tropes of femininity for her own ends, by at once acknowledging and making light of

37. Jonathan Goldberg, *Sodomities: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford UP, 1992), 129.

38. Cartelli, "Queer Edward II," 221.

39. Hibbert, Christopher, *The Virgin Queen: Elizabeth I, Genius of the Golden Age*, (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1992), 61.

women's reputations for excessive prattling. Through feminized performances of power, Isabella demonstrated a similar ability to speak, act, imply, and ultimately create herself in her own image as queen.

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Costumes, Bodies, and Gender in 'The Queen's Company's 2004 Production of *Edward II*

From October 9 to October 24, 2004, The Queen's Company staged Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II* in New York City. This particular production featured only women as actors, which demonstrated how necessary it is to include women in the performance of Marlowe's tragedy because they can problematize the clear lines between male and female that many of the characters so desperately try to maintain and defend in a way that other companies cannot. Moreover, the director's bold decision to costume the cast as samurai from feudal Japan (1185–1898) successfully evoked a sense of the medieval, reminding the audience that all the characters on stage had been real people whose personal and political disputes had shaped the cultural landscape in which Marlowe wrote two centuries later. Although the director has stated that this production harbored no agenda or politics in its performances, it was clear from the costume choices and displays of women's bodies on stage that the company's sympathies lay with Edward II, Gaveston, and Isabella, who were portrayed as tragic figures trapped in their assigned social roles and hemmed in by narrow expectations of masculinity that prevented them from finding love.¹ The audience was

1. As many scholars have argued, Christopher Marlowe himself has defended the right for individuals to love as they desired regardless of their social position or expectations. As Jeffrey Rufo explains, "Even though Gaveston and Henry's cadre of handsome male followers, *les mignons*, contribute to the downfall of the monarchs they serve, Marlowe consistently defends homosexual desire, despite its problematic status in Western European Renaissance politics." "Marlowe's Minions: Sodomitical Politics in *Edward II* and *Massacre at Paris*," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 1 (2011): 5–23, 5–6.

provided with an opportunity to reexamine the fourteenth-century cultural imperatives that defined inflexible gender roles, imposed compulsory heterosexuality while outlawing sodomy, and limited an individual's access to personal sovereignty.²

In 2000, Rebecca Patterson founded The Queen's Company, a non-profit theater group composed entirely of women, which is located in New York City and dedicated to performing the works of the Elizabethan Age. *Edward II*, its ninth production, opened the fifth season and marked the first time that this company performed a work by Marlowe.³ Because of its emphasis on male power politics, *Edward II* initially seemed like an odd choice for this company. Of Marlowe's approximately forty characters, Queen Isabella is the only woman, although Margaret of Clare, Gaveston's wife, does make brief appearances as Isabella's lady. Nevertheless, the director and the actors confronted the problem of gender raised by the actual historical conflicts that plagued Edward II's reign and by the playwright's theatrical depiction of those events. A play based on the life of a medieval English king who had lost his power and been deposed in 1327 in part because his scandalous relationships with his male favorites caused him to be perceived as "too feminine" by his fourteenth-century peers presented this company with an opportunity to explore the subtle tensions of medieval heteronormative culture by casting a woman to play that king and other women to play the angry nobility who rebelled against him.⁴ This casting created an underlying uncertainty and insecurity in the characters' masculinity which

2. In the late fourteenth-century chronicle, author Abbot Adam of Skyrne condemns Edward II's sexual relationships with other men in a passage entitled "De rege Edwardo secundo et gestis ejus" in "Ipse quidem Edwardus rex in vitio sodomitico nimium delectabat; dictum Petrum de Gavestona et duos Hugones Dispensatores, qui praescriptorum malorum fuereant incentores, nimis peramabat," *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa Auctore Thoma de Burton, Abbate*, ed. Edward A. Bond (1867; repr., Wiesbaden: Kraus Reprint, 1964), 2:389–94, 391. See also Viviana Comensoli, "Homophobia and the Regulation of Desire: A Psychoanalytic Reading of Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 4.2 (1993): 175–200, 180.

3. *Time Out New York* advertised the play with this description: "Christopher Marlowe's scandalous 1593 tragedy about a king and his male lover is given yet another twist of the wrist by the all-female Queen's Company, performing in Samurai style." *Time Out New York*, October 7–14, 2004, 175.

4. David Stymeist, "Status, Sodomy, and Theater in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 44.2 (2004): 233–53, 238.

Patterson then accentuated with her decision to clothe the characters as samurai. The actors spent most of the performance being men, specifically armed noblemen, but they allowed small and subtle glimpses of the women's bodies beneath the costumes that caused the audience to wonder just how stable the gender identities of these historical figures actually were. This company offered viewers something that others could not: the opportunity to question the supposed masculinity and potential femininity of each character and to then reassess the importance of gender identity in politics.

I had an opportunity to interview Patterson, who is now the artistic director of the company.⁵ She explained that when she arrived in New York City, she felt that there were too few theatrical companies that focused on performing the plays of the Elizabethan age and that this fact inspired her to found her own. In a September 2004 interview with Sonya Sobieski of *The Brooklyn Rail*, Patterson explains why she chose this particular name for her company.

One reason is a nod to what I consider the pioneers, the drag queen performers. . . . And also as a nod to the queens of history, the powerful women who actually weren't queens because they couldn't be trumped; they were kings. The reality, in our contemporary world, is that we have women acting as though they're men, and we pretend that they're not, and so we talk about the absolute oxymoron of "feminine power," when ultimately there's just power. Women are judges, women are police officers, women are soldiers, and yet in classical performance, we're only letting them perform as Ophelia or as Juliet, when to truly reflect our society you need to let women play Richard III. Most of the female actors I'm working with have turned to me and said, actually, I identify more with Edmund, or I identify more with MacDuff than I do with a lot of the female characters.⁶

Clearly, Patterson has broken with the Elizabethan theatrical tradition that excluded women from the stage and with a current tendency to gender the roles that modern women wish to play. Her artistic mission includes challenging what she believes are

5. Rebecca Patterson, telephone interview, August 25, 2006.

6. Sonya Sobieski, "Diane Torr with Sonya Sobieski," by Sonya Sobieski, *The Brooklyn Rail: Critical Perspectives on Arts, Politics, and Culture*, September 9, 2004, accessed on February, 20, 2013, <http://www.brooklynrail.org/2004/09/theater/diane-torr-with-sonya-sobieski>.

both the authors' and audiences' assumptions about the empowered male and disempowered female bodies on and off the stage. To this end, she uses costumes and performance to transcend and magnify the actor's individual body in order to persuade the audience of the authenticity of the character. In this particular staging of *Edward II*, Patterson demonstrated that actors and costumes could evoke the emotion of the past by focusing the audience's attention on the clothing and the people rather than on sets or props.

Because Patterson wanted the audience to focus on the power and the splendor of the colors and movements and bodies on the stage, the sets at the Connelly Theater were minimal.⁷ For much of the play, the stage was bare with a single low table in the center that served as a throne, bed, pulpit, rock, execution site, or battleground. On the backdrop was a large golden disk that resembled the sun.⁸ Also, a few lighted globes hung from above. Patterson filled the stage primarily with the bright colors and brilliant fabric of the designer Sarah Iams' costumes. Her actors, therefore, were luminous as they fought and yelled and pushed each other through each scene. Her use of the kimono of feudal Japan clearly criticized the social hierarchy of medieval English society and also drew the viewers' attention to the important ways that one's physical appearance and clothing communicated social power and political allegiance. To this end, almost all of the characters were dressed like nineteenth-century samurai, with the exception of Gaveston, Edward II, who only sometimes wore his formal uniform, and Isabella, who wore a gold dress throughout the entire performance. The costumes and movements of the samurai, therefore, helped the viewer imagine a medieval feudal world. This was accomplished more easily because of the absence of any sets or props that would have rooted this production definitively in Japan rather than within any society that relied on hereditary social privilege and military prowess.

7. Jeremy Woodward was the set designer for this staging. David Bevington and James Shapiro, "'What Are Kings, When Regiment Is Gone?' The Decay of Ceremony in *Edward II*," 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), 263–78, 265.

8. Sara Munson Deats, "Marlowe's Fearful Symmetry in *Edward II*," in *"A Poet and a Filthy Play-maker"*, 241–62, 257.

Patterson, who carefully chose the best culture and time period that would reveal the themes of the play and the social structures of the fourteenth century, believed that dressing her nobles as samurai would achieve that goal for many reasons. She believed that a Western audience would understand them as the best symbol of an outdated tradition and the social rigidity that defined them. Visually, she felt that these costumes would be the most striking way to exhibit the turbulence and disquietude of Edward II's reign. As the characters crossed the stage in vibrant kimonos with *kataginu* on top, these long flowing robes created a sense of movement, chaos, and confusion.⁹ Patterson used the sumptuous kimono, the dress robes of the samurai, and captured both their haughty separation from the lower rungs of a feudal hierarchy and their anxiety as they saw their world changing forever around them. Her samurai were equipped with remarkably large swords, constantly tucked into their *obi* (sash) or else slung in pairs over the shoulders and in constant view of the audience and other characters on stage. The visual world of the nobility, therefore, was commanding and underscored with the constant threat of potential violence, a quality that was present during Edward II's reign and introduced in Marlowe's dialogue from the first scene in which Edward, Gaveston, Mortimer, and Lancaster threaten each other:

MORTIMER SR. If you love us, my lord, hate Gaveston.

GAVESTON. (*Aside*) That villain Mortimer! I'll be his death!

.....

EDWARD. I will have Gaveston, and you shall know

What danger 'tis to stand against your king.

.....

LANCASTER. My lord, why do you incense your peers?¹⁰

In this particular scene, each man's words reveal their loathing and venom and hint at their desire to injure each other.¹¹ When

9. The *kataginu* was a sleeveless vest worn over the kimono that became popular during the Edo period (1603–1868). *Kataginu* were often layered with a *haori*, a sleeveless coat. The two pieces combined were referred to as the *kamishimo* which had replaced the *hitatare* of the earlier periods.

10. Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, in *The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Irving Ribner (Indianapolis: Odyssey, 1963), 1.1.80–1,96–97, 99. All subsequent references are from this edition.

11. Thomas Cartelli, "Edward II," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Patrick Cheney (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 158–73, 160–61.

these lines were uttered by actors clothed in the uniforms of the armed samurai, their threatening tone became amplified because of the formal, martial appearance of the men delivering them. One could clearly see that the political disorder of the fourteenth century and the frustrations of this dysfunctional hierarchy could easily cause the violence that characterized this reign and this text.

Patterson also decided on the samurai because their political age resembled Edward II's. The historical time period from which these costumes appears to be drawn is the late nineteenth-century Japanese Edo Shogunate, just before its collapse after the Meiji Restoration (1868). Throughout the 1850s and 1860s, Japan was feeling a great deal of pressure from the West to open its shores to trade, Christian missionaries, and cultural exchange. The conflict over the old order and the new led to the Boshin War in 1868, a civil war between the Meiji emperors and the Edo Shogunate that pitted the samurai of the shogun against the samurai of the emperor. When Emperor Mutsuhito won, he took many steps toward modernizing Japan. The samurai class was suddenly forced to adapt to new and often foreign ideas such as industrialization, modern warfare and weaponry, and deliberative assemblies open to citizens of all classes, and social mobility. The rapid and radical changes of this period in Japan's history challenged all that the samurai had known. Patterson was drawn to this age of class conflict and uncertainty in social roles because she felt that it mirrored the political tension of Edward II's reign, which was also beset by civil war and the nobility's resistance to accepting Edward II, who was much less powerful, aggressive, and militarily successful than his father, Edward I.

Therefore, it was not simply the uniforms that drew Patterson to the samurai culture of feudal Japan. She wanted to reinforce Marlowe's presentation of the peers as traditional and as clinging stubbornly to their rigid social structures and (un)comfortable hierarchies.¹² Given how frequently both Lancaster and the Mortimers refer to Gaveston as "base" and

12. William B. Kelly, "Mapping Subjects in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *South Atlantic Review* 63.1 (1998): 1–19, 4; and Claude J. Summers, introduction to *Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment England: Literary Representations in Historical Context*, ed. Claude J. Summers (New York: Hayworth, 1992), 3.

“basely born,” she saw the main conflict between the favorite and the nobility who resented that a man from outside of their social “class” should have unlimited and intimate access to the king.¹³ Patterson’s interpretation of the script and of the historical events focused on the emotional state of the nobles who resented Edward II and Gaveston for disrupting and threatening their way of life. Edward II’s perceived misuse of his patronage which was so bountifully showered on a man outside of the nobility incited rebellion and propelled much of the action for the first part of the play.¹⁴ Patterson saw the fourteenth century as one in which everyone knew his place, and the nobles did not want to see their social positions and privileges challenged.

Patterson’s concern for choosing appropriate costumes not only reflects her interest in the historical sensibility of her production but also her interpretation of the script’s references to clothing. In his dialogue, Marlowe draws attention to clothing and to the ways that characters respond to each other’s physical appearance. Characters can be debased and disempowered by having their noble clothing taken from them as their costumes

13. Lancaster refers to him as “base and obscure” (*E2*, 1.1.101) and as a “base minion” (1.1.133). Mortimer Junior declares, “My lords, that I abhor base Gaveston” (1.4.241) and “But this I scorn, that one so basely born” (1.4.406). Mortimer also reminds Lancaster and the king that his family ranks greatly above the favorite’s and that that rank provides him with power and privilege:

My lord, the family of the Mortimers,
Are not so poor, but, would they sell their land
‘Twould levy men enough to anger you.
We never beg but use such prayers as these. (2.2.147–150)

Furthermore, in the opening scene, Gaveston is approached by “three poor men” who try to tempt him into working with them. (1.1.25–49). Although Gaveston asserts that “these men are not for me,” his association with such questionable characters during his character’s introduction casts a shadow over his social ambitions.

14. Curtis Perry argues that peers of the realm, jealous of the intimacy and patronage that royal favorites were thought to enjoy, often accused them of sodomy. Because the favorite’s position often conflated the private sphere with the public, his overlapping responsibilities were often at odds with each other and almost always scrutinized and suspect. See “The Politics of Access and Representations of the Sodomite King in Early Modern England,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 53.4 (2000): 1054–83. He observes that Elizabeth I’s favorites were often maligned and subject to rumor and gossip about their sexual relationship with the queen as they accrued favors and posts. The most infamous of these was an anonymously published libel entitled *Leicester’s Commonwealth* (1584). “The Politics of Access and Representations,” 1058.

provide an indication of the power of the physical body beneath. Near the end of the play, for example, Marlowe demonstrates Edward II's loss of power by taking away his regal clothing and outward appearance of royalty. Prior to his execution, the king had been stripped of all his royal raiment. In his cell, Edward II moans that in his tattered robes, he can no longer be sure of his identity.

My body's distempered, and my body's numbed,
 And whether I have limbs or no I know not.
 O, would my blood dropped out of every vein,
 As doth this water from my tattered robes.
 Tell Isabel, the queen, I looked not thus,
 When for her sake I ran at tilt in France
 And there unhorsed the Duke of Clermont. (5.5.63–69)

Edward II acknowledges his own humiliation and appeals to his wife to safeguard his sense of masculinity by remembering him in a more regal capacity dressed as the hero upon his horse fighting for her honor during a tournament. Edward II recognizes the importance that his clothing plays in securing his authority and masculinity. In Patterson's production, Edward II (played by Virginia Baeta) spoke these lines while wearing a translucent white nightshirt rather than royal dress robes as the lines might imply. This choice drew great pity for the king by treating him as an individual person with a mortal body that must sleep and be cared for rather than as the political body or simply as a symbolic stand in for the state.¹⁵ As Baeta stood

15. Ernst Kantorowicz's articulation of the well established medieval political theory of the king's two bodies argues that

the King has in him two Bodies, *videlicet*, a Body natural and a Body politic. His Body natural (if it be considered in itself) is a Body mortal, subject to all Infancy or old Age, and to the like Defects that happen to the natural Bodies of other People. But his Body politic is a Body that cannot be seen or handled, consisting of Policy and Government, and constituted for the direction of the People, and the Management of the public weal, and this Body is utterly void of Infancy, and old Age, and other natural Defects and Imbecilities, which the Body natural is subject to, and for this Cause, what this King does in his Body politic, cannot be invalidated or frustrated by any Disability in his natural Body.

Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957), 7. Kathleen A. Sirluck has argued that in *Edward II*, "the 'inside' of a man is somehow separated from his social and political identity." "Marlowe's *Edward II* and the Pleasure of Outrage," *Modern Language Studies* 22.2 (1992): 15–24, 19.

exposed in her sleepwear, the viewer could not help but focus on the injury being done to the man, to Edward II, who would tragically suffer and die in the basement of Berkeley Castle. The childish white nightgown reinforced his vulnerability and emasculation as the outfit confirmed Edward II's loss of regal bearing and also revealed the woman's body beneath.

Furthermore, the rebels' means of inflicting the final humiliation on the King at the time of his execution is to have Maltrevis and Gurney shave his beard as noted in Marlowe's stage directions (at 5.3.36). This act represents the ultimate feminization of the king by both medieval and early modern standards.¹⁶ Will Fisher has noted that in early modern England the "beard made the man" and that theater companies regularly used prosthetic beards so that their young male actors could be effectively perceived as men on stage.¹⁷ The Queen's Company, however, challenged the association of beards and masculinity and again prompted viewers to question the peers' objections to Edward's rule. Because these actors are women, they had to employ theatrical methods to mimic facial hair. Rather than use prosthetics, their beards were drawn on with thick, black make-up. During the execution scene, Lightborn (played by Lauren Jill Arnold) simply wiped away Edward II's beard with a cloth and then dismissively threw it to the ground, believing that he had discarded the king's masculinity and virility thus weakening him prior to the moment of impalement. Given how quickly Edward II made the transition from male to female with that abrupt and cruelly delivered swipe, one could see how the masculine and feminine both resided within the same body and that the nobility's insistence on the king's conformity to a narrow definition of a masculinity grounded in a uniformly

16. In his study of early modern English portraits and theater, Will Fisher has argued that beards were just as important as the genitals in constructing Renaissance masculinity, writing that "early modern commentators thus suggest that shaving might make a man 'womanish.'" "The Renaissance Beard: Masculinity in Early Modern England," *Renaissance Quarterly* 54.1 (2001): 155–87, 158, 168. Jeff Westover has also noted the importance of the coat made of the beards of defeated knights in a medieval Middle English poem about King Arthur: "Whereas Arthur succeeds in defeating his fierce and potent opponent, winning the latter's ostentatious coat of beards as the trophy of his victory (and thereby enhancing his masculinity through the accrual of an aggrandizing honor)." "Arthur's End: The King's Emasculation in the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*," *The Chaucer Review* 32.3 (1998): 310–24, 315.

17. Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard," 163.

bearded, militaristic, and aggressive ideal left no room for compassion, empathy, or any of the seemingly feminine qualities that the audience had been made to appreciate about Edward II.¹⁸ Lightborn's erasure of Edward II's beard stresses the fragility of gender identity truly and demonstrates how quickly and easily a single cloth could remove a standard marker of masculinity. Beards and clothing can indicate a man's status and could be applied or removed in order to express his authority.

Gaveston's character functions somewhat differently as he seems to be more interested in clothing as a source of beauty and pleasure rather than as power or political privilege. In the opening scene, when Gaveston so famously delivers a monologue shimmering with his excited anticipation about his reunion with Edward II, he describes the beautiful young boys in provocative clothing who will attend their banquets and feasts:

Like sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad,
My men like satyrs grazing on the lawns
Shall with their goat-feet dance an antic hay;
Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape,
With hair that gilds the water as it glides,
Crownets of pearl about his naked arms,
And in his sportful hands an olive tree
To hide those parts which men delight to see. (1.1.57–64)

Here he indulges himself, imagining the happiness that these mythologically clad pages promise him. Gaveston's appreciation of beautiful clothing and physical attraction sets him apart from the humorless samurai who seemed to be less delighted by beauty and less attuned to the details of fashionable clothing, which in this passage also imply an erotic and sensual fantasy.¹⁹ Scholars have noted that in some Elizabethan stagings, this sensibility could be reinforced by costuming the character in lavish, colorful clothing of Italian origin, which imbued him with the appearance of a dandy.²⁰ Italian clothing was associated

18. David Riggs has suggested that Marlowe "sympathizes with the victim" in this scene. *The World of Christopher Marlowe* (New York: Henry Holt, 2004), 292.

19. Charles R. Forker, "Sexuality and Eroticism on the Renaissance Stage," *South Central Review* 7.4 (1990): 1–22, 4.

20. Albert Rouzie, "The Dangers of (D)alliance: Power, Homosexual Desire, and Homophobia in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Genders* 21 (1995): 114–40, 127.

with a flamboyant Mediterranean culture, which had, in sixteenth-century English discourse, the reputation for criminal and violent behavior, a more indulgent lifestyle, and greater concern for personal beauty.²¹ In other words, Gaveston's association with things Italian allied him with a sensual, hedonistic lifestyle, so disapproved of by the medieval English nobility who were uncomfortable with Gaveston's physical body.²² Mortimer expresses his disgust over the favorite's outfits by drawing attention to their Italian features.

I have not seen a dapper jack so brisk.
 He wears a short Italian hooded cloak,
 Larded with pearl, and in his Tuscan cap
 A jewel of more value than the crown.
 While others walk below, the King and he,
 From out a window, laugh at such as we,
 And flout our train, and jest at our attire.
 Uncle, 'tis this that makes me impatient. (1.4.415–22)

Mortimer's dismissal of the wardrobe of "dapper jack" serves as a means through which he attempts to separate himself from Gaveston. Mortimer, whose political ambitions had led him to manipulate Isabella by insinuating himself into her arms, is not entirely unlike Gaveston, whose love for Edward II also had positioned him to reap tremendous rewards.²³ Mortimer needs to identify his differences from Gaveston in order to convince himself that he is still superior to the young Gascon knight and that his actions with the Queen (and later Prince Edward) served nobler ends.²⁴

Patterson, however, rejected any shades of hedonism and beauty and costumed Gaveston to appear mistreated, poor, and

21. James Saslow, "Homosexuality in the Renaissance: Behavior, Identity and Artistic Expression," in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, eds. Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey (New York: New American, 1989), 97. In their introduction to the play, Martin Wiggins and Robert Lindsey suggest that "anti-Italian feelings" in England colored Marlowe's age. *Edward the Second* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), xv.

22. Stymeist, "Status, Sodomy, and Theater," 235.

23. Rick Bowers beautifully describes Mortimer as "indulging in a fantasy of inverted hierarchy and shame." "Edward II, 'Actaconesque History,' Espionage and Performance," *Connotations* 9.3 (1999/2000): 241–47, 242.

24. See Joan Parks, "History, Tragedy, and Truth in Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 39.2 (Spring, 1999): 275–90, 288.

isolated from the uniformed and armed peers at court. Gaveston (played by Lauren Jill Ahrold) first entered from the back of the theater pushing a mop and bucket; he was dressed in an old suit and thin tie. His clothing looked old, dated, and used and reminded the audience vaguely of the Great Depression. Patterson would later use similar costumes for Edward II's three executioners who were dressed like 1930s era street urchins or perhaps pickpockets from a Charles Dickens novel. Throughout the production, Gaveston wore ill-fitting hand-me-downs that set him apart from the other characters both in time and class. There was nothing in this performance to suggest an Italianate hedonistic body. He was clothed to appear poor and outcast and deliberately unlike the nobility. Furthermore, he changed his outfits frequently—perhaps symbolizing his desire to fit into the court or to be perceived as worthy by those who thwarted his ambition and desire—but his attire is never as fine as the nobility's. Gaveston was the only male character never clothed in the traditional samurai kimono nor was he even fully bearded; rather his chin was colored in with a small goatee. His shabby suits signaled his exclusion from the nobility and were designed to produce sympathy for him and impatience with the obdurate samurai whose actions have become so destructive to this court. These particular costumes lent Gaveston a pitiful air as his humble appearance makes him seem less menacing and Machiavellian than the formally attired nobility.

Edward II's costumes also had the ability to reflect his declining fortunes at court because he changed clothes quite often during this production, although not always of his own volition. Edward II appeared on the stage dressed in several different outfits: a royal blue samurai robe with his crown, a military uniform, a monk's cowl, and a nightgown. In some ways, Edward II's very body and clothing moved more fluidly than his nobles' as his wardrobe changes demonstrate an adaptability that the peerage did not possess. In others, his clothing also communicated his anxiety over his loss of power over his peers and ultimately, over himself. Edward II is often forced to wear the clothing in which he appeared on stage: He did not enjoy his beautiful royal blue robes and crown; he appeared uneasy as a military leader and moved awkwardly in his uniform before his troops; he hid in the monk's cowl as a disguise hoping to

wrench free of the rebellious earls. Edward II certainly did not wish to be paraded publicly in his pajamas. His clothing and costume changed as his political and social positions transformed, and he was forced to adapt to his new roles. Edward II's inability to control the way that he was dressed parallels his inability to control his own body and emotions that those around him struggle to manipulate and lay claim to. The magnates fight for control of the king's body, which they view as the body of the state, as England itself, and thus more subject to their desires than to Gaveston's or anyone else's. Therefore, they force Edward II in and out of a variety of clothes desperately trying to make him act like the suitable general or shogun or even the deposed former king that they pretend that they want him to be. Both Gaveston's and Edward II's costumes heighten the audience's sympathy for these tragic men who had become tangled in a world that restricted their innate desires and feelings and caused them so much grief.

Queen Isabella (played by Zainab Jah) also wore a jarringly incongruous costume that, unlike Edward, she did not change. She remained trapped in a stiff, bright, oversized gold dress just as she was trapped so unhappily in her marriage and reginal duties. She passed over the stage as this gleaming figure whose outer appearance projects royalty, even though the queen's position at court teeters precariously throughout the play. The gold dress was neither medieval nor Japanese and marked her as an outsider at court, just as Gaveston's clothing did. At first, her physical discomfort in this long, stiff dress seemed to reflect her emotional discomfort as she fails to win Edward II's love and find happiness in her marriage (1.4.145, 159–166). Isabella's golden gown also gave her a glowing beatific aura that heightened the audience's perception of her innocence and purity—at least initially. Throughout the twenty years over which the events of this play take place, Isabella changes, searching for a way to escape the heterosexual norms that do not work in the context of her own relationship and are, in fact, making her miserable. During the first two acts, Isabella strives to fulfill her role as the loving wife in spite of Edward II's constant rebuffs. Isabella responds to her husband's indifference with an attempt to discover love between them:

Heavens can witness I love none but you.
From my embracements thus he breaks away.

O that mine arms could close this isle about,
 That I might pull him to me where I would,
 Or that these tears that drizzle from mine eyes
 Had power to mollify his stony heart,
 That when I had him we might never part. (2.4.14–20)

By the end of this scene, she realizes that Edward II would never be able to provide her with the emotional support she craves and she can probably only find love and affection outside of her marriage. Mortimer Junior appears to provide the love that she needs, and she eventually allies herself with him.²⁵ In this company's production, however, the audience could see that Isabella struggled with this decision to begin an affair with Mortimer. The gold dress that Isabella wore ceased to give her an angelic appearance once she aligns herself with Mortimer. The audience now could see this dress that is so unlike all the other characters' as the physical evidence of her isolation and of her great discomfort. As she tugged at its sleeves and tried to adjust its length, it appeared that she wished to reject the traditional expectations of reginal femininity and to also assert control over her own body and wardrobe rather than to be constantly subjected to any man's authority. Her anachronistic dress made her appear to be a living statue and an ideal of queenship rather than an individual directly affected by the events around her. Although she, in fact, is affected by the conflicts and policies of the regnal court and becomes increasingly political throughout her lifetime, she is also lonely, and this loneliness leads her to Mortimer who pretends to become her champion, although he admits to being politically ambitious and controlling: "The prince I rule, the queen I do command," and he is certainly not constructed as a noble or sympathetic character (5.4.48).

Roger Mortimer Junior (played by Kittson O'Neil) also never changed his costume significantly and performed fully armed in his full *kamishimo* and kimono throughout the production. His soldier's uniform symbolized order, patriotism, and traditional masculinity and showed that he is constantly prepared for battle.²⁶ He never presented himself as anything other than a

25. Barbara Wooding, "She-Wolves of France," *The Marlowe Society Research Journal* 8 (2011): 1–12, accessed January 18, 2013, <http://www.marlowe-society.org/pubs/journal/journal08.html>.

26. Derek Jarman's 1992 film version of *Edward II* takes Mortimer's costuming to

formal, serious, and aggressive warrior nor did he deviate from his proper appearance or role, a decision that influenced the other nobles at court. The nobles, who seemed to follow Mortimer, also always wore some version of the samurai kimono and were rarely unarmed, signifying their inability to adapt to new situations or to act with free will. Their homogeneity contrasted with the others' costumes and again reinforced Gaveston's and Edward II's exclusion while simultaneously underscoring Isabella's presumed political and personal impotence. As far as the nobles' faction was concerned, the queen, who could never wear a soldier's kimono, could only achieve any political agency through her unfortunate relationship with Mortimer, who had few reservations about exploiting Isabella or dragging her into an adulterous relationship. The audience cannot share his moral certainty, however, as his inflexible, martial presentation seemed sadly inappropriate for the complex political and emotional needs of the characters of this court and jarred with the reality of his adultery, which was yet another form of sodomy.²⁷

Thus The Queen's Company's costumes accentuated the characters' confusion over their ideas about gender and sexuality. The director and actors provided examples of brutal behavior as the samurai nobles eliminate first Gaveston and then Edward II in their need to preserve their own social and sexual order, even if that meant deposing a legitimate king and ignoring their own hypocrisies. They were able to achieve this by imposing a strict gender binary of male and female and ascribing certain powers and privileges to each without exception. If the fourteenth-century noblemen truly objected to the king because he failed to fulfill the demands of heterosexual masculinity as the script implies, then one can conclude that they then saw him as feminized and inferior, and thus unfit to rule.²⁸ If medieval society only recognized two categories of gender, male and female, and Edward II failed to be viewed as male, then he must have been perceived as female. Simply put, Edward II had become a woman

an extreme by dressing him in fascist military uniforms.

27. Cartelli, "Edward II," 164.

28. Vern L. Bullough, "On Being Male in the Middle Ages," in *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages*, ed. Clare A. Lees (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1994), 31–45, 31.

in the eyes of the nobility. According to the great magnates, a woman in fourteenth-century England could not be an effective monarch, which would lead them to believe that they could depose and replace him. The Queen's Company provided audiences with an opportunity to see that assumption physically reified on the stage. Here Edward II literally was a woman.

The moments during which Edward II's costumes failed to hide the actor's gender were deliberately chosen by Patterson to serve as a reminder that the king's body is viewed as unstable and problematic by his peers and that this perception affects his political position at court. Edward II is the only character that revealed any flesh, unlike the nobles who were fully hidden beneath the kimonos that covered the actors from neck to heel, and unlike Isabella whose long gold dress featured full sleeves and a high neck. Edward II, however, often wore more revealing garments that remind the audience of how vulnerable and weak his flesh could be. For example, when Edward II reunites with Gaveston in the first scene of act 1, he did not wear his full kimono, but rather wrapped his bare arms around Gaveston's neck in a delicate and loving embrace. Also, there were several scenes that feature Edward addressing the peerage in which he did not wear the full kimono that the men assembled before him do, but instead he appeared in a thin, spaghetti-strapped tank top paired with the *hakama* (wide, voluminous pants) and an *obi*. Edward II's informal clothing, which had previously so delighted his favorite, offends the nobles who feel that he has adopted standards and aesthetics more appropriate for Gaveston's company than for their own. These frequent glimpses of Edward II's bare shoulders, back, arms, and feet serve to highlight his physical weakness and foreshadow his imminent death. Viewers are reminded that Edward II will be sacrificed at the end of the play, that his uncovered body will be pierced and impaled and destroyed in order to fulfill the heteronormative agenda of the nobility. Patterson's use of bare feet and bare skin then also morbidly underscore the mortality of the body and the ease with which one man could kill another when he felt that the careful social order is being threatened.

All the actors performed barefoot throughout the play which allowed the audience brief, privileged glimpses of women's bodies, although these are rare because the nobles' *hakama* were

especially long and fully covered their feet. In an interview Patterson explains that The Queen's Company always performs barefooted because she believes that there is a power and vulnerability of the naked foot that promotes a strong performance.²⁹ It is this point of vulnerability that is especially fitting for *Edward II*. In the medieval period, going barefoot in public was often a sign of penance, as sinners could be required to walk through public streets or through the church without shoes as a sign of their humility and penitence.³⁰ Thus the naked foot reminds modern viewers of the humiliation and diminution of power that the king endured while on the throne. In Marlowe's version of the story, Edward II lived in constant danger of attack from his rebellious nobility who fought for the right to regulate the king's physical body, which often appeared to be helpless and defenseless in this production. This barefoot Edward II evokes tremendous sympathy and reminds the audience of just how naked the king was in terms of being able to defend his political power. Furthermore, this Edward II can neither run nor escape and remains trapped on the small stage awaiting the verdict of the haughty nobles who the audience knew are also barefoot. This shared barefootedness is particularly important for this production. The audience recognized that the nobles are the same as the king and that they could not pretend to be any better than he. Yet, they hid their own bare feet away under their long robes as they tried to bear themselves regally throughout the performance. This commonality that the king and nobles shared by both being barefoot and the shame and discomfort that the nobles must have felt about it expose

29. In an interview with Yolanda Shoshana, Patterson made it clear that being barefoot is an integral part of the company's performances by defining The Queen's Company as "an all-female ethnically diverse barefoot company." Yolanda Shoshana, *New York Cool*, November 2005, accessed January 18, 2013, http://newyorkcool.com/archives/2005/November/theater_4.html.

30. For example, Elizabeth Petroff, "Medieval Visionaries: Seven Stages to Power," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 33.1 (1978): 34–45, 34. The most famous example of a king's being made to walk barefoot as an act of penance was the "Walk to Canossa" in January 1077 during which the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV was forced to walk barefoot through the snow after he had been excommunicated by Pope Gregory VII during the Investiture Controversy. For a study of the political context of this conflict, which in some ways resembles Edward II's, see I. S. Robinson, "Pope Gregory VII, the Princes and the *Pactum* 1077–1080," *English Historical Review* 94.373 (1979): 721–756.

their hypocrisy and undermine the legitimacy of their rebellion against their king. Eventually, the nobles' inability to reconcile their rigid and bellicose definition of masculinity with their own personal indiscretions and anomalies lead the nobility to strip the barefoot king of all his fine raiment and send him to his death in his nightgown, thus unleashing numerous problems of political succession and of social order.

Baeta's Edward II was often overshadowed by the stern bodies of the armed samurai who appeared larger and stronger than the king because of their long swords and formal dress, which also gave them an air of authority and cohesion from which Edward II was excluded. Their movements were also more martial and clipped, making their bodies seem more threatening than Edward II's. The actors playing the samurai used their bodies and costumes to intimidate the king. In fact, throughout the performance, the nobles attempt to disempower Edward II by asserting control over his clothing, hoping that this will help them obtain control over the king's body. By forcing the king to skulk across the stage in his monk's disguise, the nobility drive him to discard his regalia and adopt the clothing of the most emasculated medieval figure of all: the celibate monk.³¹ In this scene, the magnates succeed in forcing the king to appear as the sexually unconventional person that they imagined him to be. This triumph over his wardrobe permits them to inch closer to their ultimate goal of overpowering him completely and deposing him. Finally, at the time of Edward II's execution, the king is dragged to the block in his nightshirt, which looks much like a young girl's translucent, virginal white nightgown. Again, the audience was confronted with the reality of the actor's body and saw a young woman shivering in her pajamas being bullied by the barons and being forced onto the bed by her executioner. The gang of samurai so formally clad in its uniforms contrasts with the frightened king who was barely clothed at all and creates an

31. Although the medieval church championed celibacy as the ideal sexual state, the nobility in Marlowe's play do not seem to share that sentiment as evidenced by Mortimer's willingness to exploit his relationship with the queen for political gain and by Lancaster's revulsion to Gaveston. See Charles A. Frazee, "The Origins of Clerical Celibacy in the Western Church," *Church History* 41 (1972): 149–67, 149.

aversion to the use of such brute force against this innocent body.³²

Furthermore, having Edward II played by a woman forces the audience to reevaluate the nobility's objections to Edward II's sexuality. One of the central conflicts in the play is over the king's relationship with Gaveston. The nobles focus their objections to the king's reign almost entirely on his sexual preferences and activities. If, in fact, their objection rested on the idea that Edward II had exposed his political body to the threat of penetration by a foreign low-born interloper, then one could argue that the ideal king's physical body should be perceived as impenetrable.³³ When the actor portraying the king is a woman, it is harder to be persuaded by the nobility's argument that Edward II and Gaveston's relationship is unnatural. Because of the prescribed heteronormativity of the reigning court, one could see the penetration of a woman's body with much less anxiety.³⁴ The audience then has to reexamine its assumptions about bodies and about the "dangers" of penetration. It is easier for the audience to accept the idea of Baeta's Edward II as the penetrated body, which therefore leads the viewer to lose any sympathy for the nobility, who could not see how natural the relationship between Edward II and Gaveston truly was. Therefore, after each performance, the audience walked out of the theater with their eyes opened to a whole new spectrum of "normal."

Finally, this production confronted assumptions about the connection between gender and power by providing examples of political women. Recent scholarship has drawn attention to the political power that Isabella possessed in the play, power that the cast of The Queen's Company could reinforce.³⁵ The

32. Audience reaction to The Queen Company's performance of *Edward II* was generally very strong. Patterson reported that many people approached her after the performance and told her that they felt "disturbed," "enthusiastic," "exhausted," or "amazed."

33. Alan Bray has argued the presence of a "familiar Elizabethan stereotype that the man guilty of 'unnatural filthiness' would be also very likely a traitor." "Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England," in *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. Jonathan Goldberg (Durham: Duke UP, 1994), 40–61, 48.

34. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 6–7.

35. Joanna Gibbs, "Marlowe's Politic Women," in *Constructing Christopher Marlowe*, ed. J. A. Downie and J. T. Parnell (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 164–76, 165, 166.

historical Isabella was a politically active queen who used her household, acts of intercession, and patronage to pursue her own political interests in her lands and in the court.³⁶ The conflation of the household with the king's administrative offices, in fact, does create a blurred line between the public and the private spheres that allow characters who may appear to have been consigned to the margins to actually find opportunities to become politically relevant. Marlowe's Isabella often asserts herself politically. For example, she opens the fourth scene of act 4 by delivering an address to her assembled allies:

Now, lords, our loving friends and countrymen,
Welcome to England all, with prosperous winds.
Our kindest friends in Belgia have we left,
To cope with friends at home; a heavy case
When force to force is knit, and sword and glaive
In civil broils makes kin and countrymen
Slaughter themselves in others. (4.4.1–7)

She is cut off by Mortimer who condescendingly suggests that she should not become too accustomed to speech making. Nonetheless, here is a clear example of the textual Isabella imagining herself as a leader and even a warrior who could heal England's muddled politics and prepare for a new and more successful reign. The text conveys the reality of politically active women and makes room for an interpretation of the script that portrays Isabella as invested in the great events around her as she also tries to correct her husband's perceived errors and to protect her son, the future king. Audiences can be made to understand that women could wield political power and authority and should not be dismissed as simply lovelorn or emotionally needy. This particular speech demonstrates that Isabella, the only major female character in the play, is perfectly capable of seeing herself as an effective, strong leader and that she expects the nobles assembled before her to see her as one, as well. Therefore, this play defends Isabella's claim to a greater participation in politics and desire for public power in spite of

36. See F. D. Blackley and G. Hermansen, eds., *The Household Book of Queen Isabella of England, for the Fifth Regnal Year of Edward II 8th July 1311 to 7th July 1312* (Edmonton: U of Alberta P, 1971); Anne Crawford, ed., *Letters of the Queens of England, 1100–1547* (Stroud, UK: Alan Sutton, 1994); and Anne Rudloff Stanton, *The Queen Mary Psalter: A Study of Affect and Audience* (Philadelphia: Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, 2001).

Mortimer's assertions that power belongs only to the great magnates and to kings who conform to masculine conventions, a belief that he kills for.³⁷ On a stage populated entirely with women, however, Mortimer's argument is doomed to fail.

This particular performance of *Edward II* demonstrates how closely gender is related to performativity. If gender identities are determined by one's successful ability to perform the culturally appropriate and expected acts associated with a particular gender, then one must reevaluate the identities of the characters and performers on this stage.³⁸ In The Queen's Company performance, the actors consistently portrayed acts and postures that would have been considered exclusively male in the medieval period. For example, the nobles are warriors. In the medieval period, women were almost entirely excluded from the military and not expected to participate in any act of war.³⁹ Yet, one reviewer writes that "we agree that all the women make fantastic and brutal warriors."⁴⁰ Assuming that an audience attending a play set in fourteenth-century England would enter the theater with the understanding that women were excluded from war during that time, it would require an enormous leap for the audience to agree that the women on the stage were fantastic and brutal warriors. Nonetheless, The Queen's Company was successful. The actors not only adopted the clothing of the masculine warrior, but also the expected performative characteristics of movement, gesture, and voice. These women were required to rehearse being a man and convincing an audience that they were men, brutal warrior men at that. This particular company of actors drew from several centuries and cultures as they persuaded the audience to see traits and physicalities that were historically exclusively male as belonging also to women who were pretending to be men.⁴¹

37. Kathleen Anderson, "'Stab as Occasion Serves': The Real Isabella in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Renaissance Papers* (1992): 29–39, 38–39.

38. Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40.4 (1988): 519–31, 519.

39. Peggy McCracken, "The Amenorrhea of War," *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture in Society* 28.2 (2003): 625–43, 625–26.

40. Lindsey Wilson, review of *Edward II*, directed by Rebecca Patterson, *The Queen's Company*, n.d., accessed on February 20, 2013, http://www.talkinbroadway.com/ob/10_14a_04.html.

41. In her study of a Santa Barbara-based company of drag kings, for example,

One of the ways that they did so with such success was that they reproduced hierarchies of oppression and of rigid heteronormativity. By adopting an inflexible but neither exaggerated nor campy version of traditional masculinity, the actors portraying the samurai nobles position themselves as oppressors of the characters who fell outside of that model, namely, Edward II and Gaveston and even Isabella. They perform a version of masculinity so strictly connected to political power that they left no room for any other form of leadership. They use violence and torture and physical restraint in their attempts to bend the king to their will. They intimidate and swagger and menace with their weapons, hoping that Edward II is impressed by these martial displays of physical prowess and “returns” to proper heterosexual masculine norms. When this fails, they resort to regicide believing that their action is justified rather than treasonous. This type of character comes directly from Marlowe’s script, but takes on new meaning in this performance. The relentlessly masculine nobles are, in fact, women in men’s clothing. The anxiety that the historical figures feel about their own masculinity becomes all the more poignant when the audience remember that these champions of conventional medieval military masculinity are in fact women who would have never been allowed to serve in a medieval army. Their ability to portray the male characters convincingly again overturns their own characters’ objections to the leadership of a “feminized” king. However, once the actors are no longer in costume and leave the enclosed space of the theater, they become women again and lose the gender privilege that protected them on stage when they walk out onto the crowded streets of New York City, a space that can offer many challenges for young women.⁴² On the sidewalks, on the subways, they are reminded of the degree to which so many places and simple experiences can be gendered. Fluctuating between such dramatically different experiences of gender identity enriches this performance. Having experienced being both women and men on and off the

Eve Shapiro argues that the performance of gender affects the actors directly. Their participation in the performance of a gender other than the one with which they were born alters their identity and relationship to their own body. “Drag Kinging and the Transformation of Gender Identities,” *Gender and Society* 21.2 (2007): 250–71.

42. Shapiro, “Drag Kinging,” 267.

stage, the actors themselves possess empathy for the characters they portrayed.

The Queen's Company reminds its viewers that gender can be indeterminate, that bodies can be fluid, and that clothes don't always make the man. In this particular production, it became visibly clear that gender, rather than being a stable identity, can be reified and then revealed in any way that the director wishes and that it can vary from scene to scene.⁴³ The clothing that the director chose to drape over the body of the actor can create the illusion of masculinity that the actor herself can then accentuate or undermine in the details of the performance. Costume changes, especially for Edward II, established the ambivalence that the king's character felt in performing the necessary chores of conventional medieval masculinity. Although Edward II's character was not necessarily happier when relieved of his samurai kimono, his body certainly seemed freer. In this case, the samurai costumes were designed to trick the other characters into believing that the stage was populated with men, even if their behavior and sexuality were not always as convincing. The audience, however, is not so easily fooled.

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43. Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution," 519.

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The Year's Work in Marlowe Studies: 2012

In his excellent annotated bibliography of Christopher Marlowe studies from 2000 to 2009 that appeared in the first issue of this annual, Bruce E. Brandt was able to analyze trends in current Marlowe scholarship not only over the ten-year period that article surveyed, but also in the context of an earlier decade that he had previously considered, the 1980s.¹ In my survey of the year's work in the field for 2012, I have resisted the temptation to extrapolate patterns from the limited data on hand. In brief, questions of religious skepticism and racial identity continued to interest Marlovians (especially in the context of *Doctor Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Tamburlaine the Great*) but biographical studies were not prominent this year, and scholarship moved further away from queer readings of *Edward II*. *Faustus* and *Tamburlaine* continue to dominate, though a few authors conducted multitext studies that included the poems and translations, and Marlowe's plays were typically read insularly or, predictably, alongside William Shakespeare's plays.

It is worth noting that the publication in which this article appears, *Marlowe Studies: An Annual*—now in its third volume—has stimulated almost half the scholarly output in Marlowe studies. A case in point is Chloe Kathleen Preedy's essay on skepticism and false miracles, a relatively uncommon example of an article that examines multiple Marlowe texts.² With attention

1. See Bruce E. Brandt, "Christopher Marlowe Studies: Bibliography, 2000–2009," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 1 (2011): 193–277; and Brandt, *Christopher Marlowe in the Eighties: An Annotated Bibliography of Marlowe Criticism from 1978 through 1989* (West Cornwall, CT: Locust Hill, 1992).

2. Chloe Kathleen Preedy, "False and Fraudulent Meanes? Representing the Miraculous in the Works of Christopher Marlowe," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2

to *Lucan's First Book*, 1 and 2 *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Doctor Faustus*, Preedy examines the concept of "false miracles" and feigned or fabricated heavenly signs in Marlowe's writing, arguing that "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."³ Despite occasional "subject" rather than "text"-based articles like Preedy's, though, *The Massacre at Paris*, *Edward II*, and *Lucan's First Book* were underrepresented last year, and very little was published on *Hero and Leander*: Catherine Belsey made passing references to *Hero and Leander* and to Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage* in the context of a broader argument about the refashioning of the myth of Venus, and Meghan Davis-Mercer contributed an essay on the poem to the second volume of *Marlowe Studies*.⁴ Davis-Mercer argues that "the misshapen quality of the poem is not accidental," but that "Marlowe expresses the paradox of scholarly abundance through both the radical accumulation and the burlesquing of specifically scholarly forms" and that *Hero and Leander* thus "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."⁵

In addition to the present article, two annotated bibliographies of Marlowe's works were available in 2012. M. L. Stapleton provided a lengthy contribution to the subscription-based electronic resource *Oxford Bibliographies Online: British and Irish Literature*, covering areas such as biographical studies, editions of the complete works and of individual works, and critical studies (monographs, edited collections, and individual essays), most of which postdate 1980 (a separate section deals

(2012): 103–23.

3. Preedy, "False and Fraudulent Meanes?" 106.

4. Catherine Belsey, "The Myth of Venus in Early Modern Culture," *English Literary Renaissance* 42.2 (2012): 179–202; Meghan Davis-Mercer, "'Poore Schollers': Education and Frustration in *Hero and Leander*," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2 (2012): 25–38.

5. Davis-Mercer, "'Poore Schollers,'" 25–26.

with earlier texts and studies from the twentieth century).⁶ Theater history, reception studies, textual studies, a section on “Journals, Concordances, Supplementary Resources,” and of course bibliographies themselves are also covered by Stapleton’s survey. In keeping with the aims of the *Oxford Bibliographies* project, Stapleton’s work is selective rather than exhaustive and blends the bibliographical with the encyclopedic by including useful brief summaries to introduce each section. The second bibliographical resource is the open-access and ongoing *Marlowe Bibliography Online* (MBO) project, a joint initiative of the Marlowe Society of America and the University of Melbourne.⁷ This bibliography aims to be exhaustive in its citations, but at present not all entries are accompanied by annotations. Although the editors aim to update the database themselves twice a year, MBO users are also encouraged to suggest items (including their own publications) for inclusion via an online form.

Monographs with a prominent emphasis on the study of Marlowe’s work are typically produced at a rate of one or two per year, and 2012 was no exception. Sean Lawrence’s *Forgiving the Gift: The Philosophy of Generosity in Shakespeare and Marlowe* draws on these two playwrights’ work to examine their (and our) “fascination with exchange.”⁸ In an opening “prologue” or preface, which sets up the paradigms explored throughout the monograph, Lawrence offers the example of *Faustus*: Marlowe “dramatizes in Faustus’s career an extreme alternative to the gift of salvation by faith alone. . . . Faustus does not merely reject gratuitous grace but substitutes its opposite: reciprocal exchange” (xii–xiii). In his absolute refusal to entertain the possibility of generosity and unreciprocated gift-giving, Faustus proves eerily prescient of modern sensibilities, anticipating our inherent “suspicion of the gift,” but as Lawrence warns, indulging this suspicion, “denying or merely ignoring generous acts and gestures, renders the plays truly mysterious to us” (32).

6. M. L. Stapleton, “Christopher Marlowe,” *Oxford Bibliographies Online: British and Irish Literature*, accessed May 5, 2013, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com>.

7. *Marlowe Bibliography Online*, accessed January 30, 2013, <http://marlowebibliography.org>.

8. Sean Lawrence, *Forgiving the Gift: The Philosophy of Generosity in Shakespeare and Marlowe* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 2012), xii. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

Through a close reading of five Renaissance plays (*The Merchant of Venice* [1596], *Edward II*, *King Lear* [1605], *Titus Andronicus* [1594] and *The Tempest* [1611]), Lawrence identifies a critical fallacy introduced by New Historicism, arguing that “dogmatic belief in the ubiquity of exchange blinds us to the belief in the gift that was central to early modern drama and to the culture in which it arose” (3). He notes that “the notion that every gift anticipates recompense achieves theoretical expression in the ethnology of Marcel Mauss,” who in turn influenced the work of Stephen Greenblatt and others, and has come to distort our view of early modern drama (3).

To counteract this bias, Lawrence turns to Emmanuel Levinas’s philosophy, in which the “emphasis upon the radically nonreciprocal opposes Mauss’s axiom that there is no free gift and therefore allows new readings of early drama” (6). He further tempers this mix by adopting a Derridean definition of gift-giving, whereby “to repay or even owe a gift annuls it. Mere recognition, Derrida argues, provides a symbolic equivalent to the gift as payment in exchange and therefore has the same effect” (19). Paul Ricoeur and Christian Arnsperger’s syncretic views of the gift form a further supplement: These philosophers combine the Maussian and Levinasian positions by substituting an ethical framework for their economic outlook (21). These philosophical issues are thematized in *Faustus*. Lawrence seeks to undo our reflexive understanding of gifts as exchange and promotes the Levinasian alternative that “radical generosity” is possible, and that such a view informs the plays he examines.

In his fifth chapter, “The ‘Dearest Friend’ in *Edward II*,” Lawrence argues that “*Edward II* depicts friendships and even love affairs as alliances and offers Edward’s love for Gaveston as a courageously generous and permanently fixed contrast,” suggesting that “same-sex desire is the only generous love” in Marlowe’s play (135). He thereby responds to Alan Bray’s conclusions about the generosity of friendship and the self-seeking nature of sodomy in the Renaissance, claiming the very opposite to be true in *Edward II*, in which “Edward’s love of Gaveston expresses itself in excess and generosity” (127).⁹ In

9. Lawrence cites Alan Bray’s *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London: Gay Men’s Press, 1982) and “Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England,” *History Workshop* 29 (1990): 1–19.

stark contrast to the anthropologically derived observations about reciprocal exchange and circulation that Lawrence had earlier identified as exerting undue influence over New Historicist readings, “Edward’s generosity violates the circulations that, according to anthropologists and the critics they inspire, are foundational to societies”—indeed, Lawrence notes, “were Edward to treat his actual consort, Isabella, as he does Gaveston, he would be labeled insanely uxorious by critics and other characters” (136). Edward’s love for Gaveston is an instance of the radical generosity that Lawrence identifies as an essential and overlooked facet of early modern drama: It is not contingent upon recognition or exchange. Lawrence concludes that “Edward violates not only the heteronormativity of the Elizabethan period and the power structures of feudalism but also the assumptions of exchange that govern politics, social order, and criticism” (142).

Tom Rutter made an excellent contribution to the Cambridge Introductions to Literature series with a volume devoted to Marlowe’s life and work.¹⁰ Designed for teaching purposes, this series both synthesizes available scholarship and offers personal insights from the contributing author. Rutter respects the intelligence of his readers by accounting for the large amount of critical material without being reductive or partial. One of his study’s great strengths is the open acknowledgment of assumptions and guesswork, as for example when chronology or biography is at stake. Hence in the context of the fatal meal at Deptford, and the details of Marlowe’s companions, Rutter cautiously observes: “These circumstances lend plausibility—but no more than that—to the suggestion that Marlowe’s death had something to do with his earlier ‘good service’ in a similar line of business to Poley” (20–21). Rutter writes well for his target audience by choosing salient examples of illuminating contexts and referring back to them consistently throughout the book: for example, the Queen’s Men’s distinctive use of history plays; the Dutch Church libel; the Elizabethan book of homilies; and Marlowe’s personal acquaintances like Thomas Harriot and Walter Raleigh. His style is eminently readable, as well.

10. Tom Rutter, *The Cambridge Introduction to Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012). Hereafter cited parenthetically.

This Cambridge Introduction volume has the added advantage of having a coherence that edited collections like the Cambridge Companion volumes do not always possess. The book is designed to be read sequentially or consulted for individual chapters, depending on the student's interests, but Rutter makes a concerted effort to cross-reference chapters within the book and to summarize discussion at the end of each section. An opening chapter on biography is followed by one on the *Tamburlaine* plays, prioritized for having given Marlowe "an immediate and lasting notoriety" rather than for any claim to being his earliest (22). Concerning *Tamburlaine*, Rutter reflects on "what it was about this play that proved so exciting and so influential," such as its ending, its investment in pleasure rather than morality, and its language (22). He also sets it in its 1580s context by demonstrating its similarity to plays like Robert Wilson's *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* (c. 1588–89). Rutter's *Faustus* chapter aims to contextualize this "best known" of Marlowe's plays so as to "dissipate the atmosphere of familiarity that surrounds the myth" (41). It examines magic and science, especially in the context of John Dee, Giordano Bruno, and Thomas Harriot, but also introduces students to Martin Luther and the Reformation as an alternative entry point to understanding the dynamics of Marlowe's play, so that we have contradictory interpretations of Faustus as "a scientist-magician motivated by the desire for knowledge and power; as a despairing fool who deliberately or unintentionally misreads the scriptures; and as a would-be rebel who consciously seeks damnation as a means of exerting control over his spiritual destiny" (50). The protagonist's psychology is then examined via a close reading of the scene in the A-text in which the Good and Evil Angels enact the psychomachia for Faustus's soul. A brief summary of the salient features of the two texts of the play follows.

In chapter 4, Rutter pairs *The Jew of Malta* with *The Massacre at Paris* as "plays that raise difficult questions about the treatment of religious minorities and about the cynical use of religion for political ends," such as the stage Machiavel, race, and religion (75). Chapter 6 treats *Dido, Hero and Leander*, the *Amores*, "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love," and *Lucan's First Book*. Sympathy for the female characters is offered as a unifying thread between *Dido* and *Hero*, and the other writings in this

chapter provide “a broader, more complex Marlowe than is suggested by the masculine worlds of war, scholarship and politics” in *Tamburlaine*, *Faustus* and the subject of chapter 5, *Edward II* (117).

Edward II is presented as “a play about politics and public life as much as it is about private sexuality” (79). Therefore, Rutter focuses on the historical context of early modern English culture, and the forms of historical writing current at the time Marlowe was depicting the life of an English king on stage. He considers chronology, compression, distortion, and moral edification as varying approaches that complicate any attempt to comprehend the characters and action of Marlowe’s play, especially Edward’s relationship with Gaveston. The historicization of sexuality and gender (86–93) leads to questions of the limits of aristocratic power, and of the intersections between the personal and the public. A final section considers the difficult issue of the chronology of Marlowe’s literary creations by treating *Edward II* as an example of dramatic writing that differs importantly from his early work in its development of rhetorical style and the prominence of Isabella in what is otherwise a masculine landscape. A concluding chapter on “Marlowe’s afterlives” briefly covers early modern allusions, adaptations, and continuations of Marlowe’s work, stage histories of *The Jew of Malta*, *Faustus*, *Tamburlaine*, and *Dido*, and novel and film adaptations of *Edward II*.

Rutter’s prefatory material includes a list of “key dates” (xi–xiv), amongst which is the note, “15 September 1592: Marlowe arrested following street fight in Canterbury with William Corkine, who eventually drops his legal case against him” (xiii). In a contribution to *Notes & Queries*, Cynthia Morgan reconsiders Corkyn’s 1592 lawsuit against Marlowe in light of further exploration of the Canterbury Archives which reveal that Corkyn was in court some fifteen times in the space of eight years.¹¹ This new view of this minor figure helps Morgan redress what she considers to be a spurious emendation made by William Urry.¹²

11. Cynthia Morgan, “Reconsidering Corkyn v. Marlowe,” *Notes and Queries* 59.4 (2012): 511–13.

12. William Urry, *Christopher Marlowe and Canterbury*, ed. Andrew Butcher (London: Faber and Faber, 1988), 66–67.

The essays on *Dido* that appeared in 2012 continued a longstanding critical concern with Marlowe's use of classical sources, especially Virgil. In "Men (Don't) Leave: Aeneas as Departing Husband in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*," Ann Christensen begins with the premise that, unlike its source and analogue texts, *Dido* "marginalizes both the heroic and tragic Trojan past and the promised Roman future" and "isolates the Carthage episode," with the effect that "*Dido* works as a kind of domestic drama" which anticipates the concerns of (for example) *Arden of Feversham* (1591) with "absent householders."¹³ Christensen proceeds to examine the ideas of domesticity and marriage in *Dido*, arguing that its imagery of travel and domesticity ensure that "the play is not about a voyage, but about settlement thwarted yet very forcefully desired," and that Aeneas's central dilemma leads to the dramatization of the "possibilities of settlement in the face of requisite mobility."¹⁴

Mathew Martin positions Marlowe's perception of Aeneas alongside Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser's impressions of Virgil. Therefore, "Marlowe's Aeneas is at once pious and false, and through this paradoxical figure Marlowe's play explores the structure of faith as Derrida describes it in *The Gift of Death*."¹⁵ Though the *Aeneid* "proceeds from the perspective of empire and ethics," Marlowe's play "proceeds from the perspective of the moment of faith, with all its risks and uncertainties, and thus explores an experience analogous to the experience Calvin and others claimed to be at the heart of Christian faith: responding to God's call without mediation in order to work out one's salvation in fear and trembling" (§1). The result is that "Marlowe's Aeneas is unable to let the past go, unable to work through his trauma and mourn," and although Dido and Carthage "provide some respite from the trauma," Aeneas's destructive tendencies are "driven in part by his desire to die, as he should have when Troy fell" (§12, 13). For Martin,

13. Ann Christensen, "Men (Don't) Leave: Aeneas as Departing Husband in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2 (2012): 5–24, 6–7.

14. Christensen, "Men (Don't) Leave," 6, 24.

15. Mathew Martin, "Pious Aeneas, False Aeneas: Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage* and the Gift of Death," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 16.1 (2012): ¶1–18, ¶1, accessed February 5, 2013, <http://purl.org/emls/16-1/dido.htm>. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

translatio imperii in Marlowe's Carthage is "the transmission of trauma" (§18).

In another publication, "*Translatio* and Trauma: *Oedipus*, *Hamlet*, and Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*," Martin reads *Dido* as a "resistive intertext" to *Hamlet* in order to reconfigure the "psychoanalytic interpretation of Shakespeare's play around a *desire* for the threat of castration that responds to an ultimately unlocatable trauma beyond the pleasure and reality principles that govern the classical psychoanalytic account."¹⁶ Martin examines the intersection of psychoanalysis and early modern historiography in his argument that a key element of modernity is its recognition of the fictiveness of aetiological myths like that of Troy. He claims that *Hamlet* is "thoroughly modern" because "its revival of the trauma of Troy through the intertext of Marlowe's older play occurs in the mode of performance and disbelief" (306). He avoids reading *Hamlet* through the oedipal narrative favored by psychoanalytic approaches and attempts to "disrupt this reading, this translation of hermeneutic power from Sophocles through Shakespeare to Freud, with Marlowe's play" by focusing on Cathy Caruth's notion of the "history of trauma" (307). He posits *Dido* as "another, radically destabilizing, psychoanalytic intertext" to *Hamlet*. Martin's argument relies on *Dido*'s status as an oblique intertext, a "possible source" for the First Player's speech in *Hamlet* (311). The identity crisis of Marlowe's Aeneas, coupled with the failure of his narrative to contain the trauma he has experienced, sees trauma repeated as he abandons Dido (318–19). The effect, Martin believes, is that *Hamlet*, *Dido*, and *Oedipus* "translate the desire for the threat of castration into a quest for hermeneutic closure whose failure is as dramatic, even melodramatic, as it is traumatic" (323).

Lucy Potter's "Casting a Shadow of One's Own: Marlowe's *Dido* and the Virgilian Intertext" discusses a different form of translation, creative adaptation or composition.¹⁷ She builds on her recent work on *Dido*, Virgil, and Ovid to argue that

16. Mathew Martin, "*Translatio* and Trauma: *Oedipus*, *Hamlet*, and Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*," *LIT: Literature, Interpretation, Theory* 23.4 (2012): 305–25, 305. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

17. Lucy Potter, "Casting a Shadow of One's Own: Marlowe's *Dido* and the Virgilian Intertext," in *The Shadow of the Precursor*, ed. Diana Glenn, Md Rezaul Haque, Ben Kooyman, and Nena Bierbaum (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2012), 154–69. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

Marlowe's *Dido* "translates" the *Aeneid* "against the backdrop of the epic's overt intertextuality" (154).¹⁸ Potter notes Virgil's appeal to Elizabethans on account of his moral weight and his importance for the *translatio imperii* myth, and offers a third possibility for the popularity of the Virgilian Dido and Aeneas story: "those features of the *Aeneid* that openly, consciously invited Marlowe and his fellow playwrights to 'translate' it and to 'add' to it, improving the epic in the sense of giving it a new, contemporary significance" (155). Virgil's poem "activates antecedent texts within itself, and it renews aspects of its first half in its second half." Reading Virgil's text requires knowledge of its literary antecedents. Its unfinished state offers an opportunity for subsequent writers to reinvent and continue the project. These strategies of renewal, according to Potter, invite Marlowe to "add to and improve his source text" in a consciously Virgilian fashion (158). Potter suggests that Marlowe's most significant addition was "a representation of Dido as a second Helen responsible for the Trojan War, and a second Eve" (156). She discusses *Dido* in a broader context of Virgilian-Marlovian legacies, specifically Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad: The Myth of Penelope and Odysseus* (2005), David Malouf's *Ransom: A Novel* (2009), and Ursula K. Le Guin's *Lavinia* (2008).

Unsurprisingly, *Faustus* and *Tamburlaine* received the most attention in 2012. In a welcome move, Matthew Dunster's Globe production of *Faustus* (2011) was released on DVD by Globe Theatre On Screen.¹⁹ In her study of Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1624) and literary utopian fiction more generally, Sarah Hogan considers fantasies of "massive land transformation," including the "violent land separation" or island-making reported by Hythlodæus in Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), and

18. See Lucy Potter, "Marlowe's *Dido* and the Staging of Catharsis," *AUMLA: Journal of the Australasian Universities Modern Language Association* 107 (2007): 1–23; Potter, "Marlowe's *Dido*: Virgilian or Ovidian?" *Notes & Queries* 56.4 (2009): 540–44; "Shakespeare, Marlowe and the Fortunes of Catharsis" in "Rapt in Secret Studies": *Emerging Shakespeares*, ed. Darryl Chalk and Laurie Johnson (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2010), 287–303; and "Informing Audiences: Marlowe's Early Tragedies," in "This Earthly Stage": *World and Stage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*, ed. Brett D. Hirsch and Christopher Wortham (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2010), 235–56.

19. See Alan Dessen, "A 2011 Gallimaufry of Plays: Shakespeare, Heywood, Marlowe, and Massinger," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 30.1 (2012): 37–47, 38–39.

Faustus's desire for a land bridge across the Strait of Gibraltar.²⁰ The magician's thirst for cosmographical knowledge, his request to survey the extremities of the world from a privileged vantage point, and his expressed wish to plunder the world of exotic resources are all symptomatic of an overriding desire to change the landscape. To Hogan, this is especially apparent in the speech beginning "I'll be great emperor of the world."²¹ Read in this context, *Faustus* is "another symbolic representation of space that works to promote a material, historical empire, offering a counterpart spatial form of imperial ambition."²² The "paradoxical desires" of magic and imperialism include "unrestrained mobility, limitless expansion, the networking of the globe *and* possession, exclusion, and containment." Bridges, like islands, evoke both isolation and inclusion, of being "both of and apart from the world."²³

Sophie Gray's "Embodied Texts and Textual Bodies in *Doctor Faustus*" uses J. L. Austin's theory of performative speech acts to examine the potency of words in the world and magic of Doctor Faustus.²⁴ She argues that although "a performative reading of magical speech acts" is problematic because "Mephistopheles clearly tells us that Faustus's words have not directly summoned him," Marlowe creates an alternative when Faustus offers his soul and "subliminally turns towards a more contractual form of conjuring, a different performative that is associated with writing."²⁵ Accordingly, "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."²⁶

20. Sarah Hogan, "Of Islands and Bridges: Figures of Uneven Development in Bacon's *New Atlantis*," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 12.3 (2012): 28–59, 30, 31.

21. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus, A- and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993), 1.3.106–11. All subsequent references to *Doctor Faustus* are from the A-text of this edition.

22. Hogan, "Of Islands and Bridges," 34.

23. Hogan, "Of Islands and Bridges," 36.

24. Sophie Gray, "Embodied Texts and Textual Bodies in *Doctor Faustus*," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2 (2012): 38–55.

25. Gray, "Embodied Texts and Textual Bodies in *Doctor Faustus*," 45, 46.

26. Gray, "Embodied Texts and Textual Bodies in *Doctor Faustus*," 54.

Genevieve Guenther is similarly preoccupied with the demonic power of speech acts in asking why devils came when Faustus called them, and reconsidering the anecdotally reported appearance of extra devils during early modern productions of the play.²⁷ Her focus differs in that she attends to what she calls “instrumental aesthetics,” or the way literature and drama’s “aesthetic pleasure seemed instrumentally to produce the spiritual consequences of magic itself” by inspiring or compelling the reader–playgoer to experience a psychosomatic response analogous to that which would be produced by genuine magic (15). To this end, she revisits Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* (1790), claims that his aesthetics are instrumental rather than disinterested, and applies this theory to Marlowe’s play. Guenther traces the parallels between rhetorical mastery and proficiency in the occult and argues that in terms of influence and art, “the Elizabethan magician was the twin, or rather the evil twin, of Sidney’s efficacious poet” (13). For reformers, the theatrical spectacles presented by devils were understood to have “inspired participants and spectators to think thoughts and feel emotions that would anger God and cause him to withdraw his salvic grace” (15). Guenther argues that this is precisely what Marlowe captured when he represented Faustus’s magic on stage. She also uses popular devotional writers like William Perkins and George Gifford to demonstrate that Marlowe “used belief in the devil and in God himself as his dramatic instrument to wrench the psychic and social force of religious experience away from its dominant institutional contexts and to place it in the peripheral space of the theatre” (84). The trivial shows that divert Faustus distracted Marlowe’s audience also, making them involuntarily complicit in the effects of this conflation of theater and magic.

Allyna E. Ward discusses a much earlier interest in the identity and ontology of devils when she notes that Thomas Nashe’s scribbling of “Faustus: Che sara sara devinytie adieu” on the final leaves of his copy of John Leland’s *Principum, ac illustrium aliquot & eruditorum in Anglia virorum Encomia* (1589) might signify “a broad philosophical interest in the dogmatic

27. Genevieve Guenther, “Why Devils Came When Faustus Called Them,” in *Magical Imaginations: Instrumental Aesthetics in the English Renaissance* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2012), 62–85. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

principles behind Faustus rather than a straightforward textual parallel” and an “interest in the religious skepticism that he found expressed in Marlowe’s writings.”²⁸ This interest is evident in Nashe’s *Pierce Penilesse, His Supplication to the Devil* (1592) and his *The Unfortunate Traveller; or, The Life of Jack Wilton* (1593). Ward admits that both the date of the marginalia and whether it is Nashe’s are indeterminable yet argues that *Faustus* “may have prompted Nashe to publicly inquire into the nature of devils and spirits.”²⁹

Bryan Rivers turns to the Bible to reinterpret the word “roaring” in Robin’s line, “Keep out, keep out, or else you are blown up, you are dismembered Rafe! Keep out, for I am about a roaring piece of work” (*DFa*, 2.2.12–14). He claims that it refers not to boisterousness but constitutes an ironic echo of 1 Peter 5:8, “Be sober, and watch, for your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (Geneva Bible).”³⁰ To him, Marlowe alludes to the scriptural passage because he “clearly depicts the Devil as an opportunistic spiritual predator, who ‘walketh about’ the entire globe ‘seeking whom he may devour.’”³¹ His gloss of “roaring” complements Gunther’s observations discussed previously in this article.

David K. Anderson is also interested in Marlowe’s use of “a specifically religious register” in analyzing the possible responses of his audience.³² For the most part, “it is not simply that Marlowe’s villain-heroes appall the spectators with their ‘overreaching’ audacity, their insatiable appetites, or their strangeness,” but that “the response that these exotic malefactors provoke is ultimately and unexpectedly self-critical, forcing us to question our presumed superiority to them” (79). Through attention to René Girard’s claim that the Gospels imaginatively capture the church’s capacity for persecution, and

28. Allyna E. Ward, “The ‘Hyperbolic Blasphemies’ of Nashe and Marlowe in Late Tudor England,” *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2 (2012): 126–42, 126, 134.

29. Ward, “The ‘Hyperbolic Blasphemies’ of Nashe and Marlowe in Late Tudor England,” 142.

30. Bryan Rivers, “‘A Roaring Piece of Work’: A Neglected Biblical Echo in Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*,” *Notes & Queries* 59.4 (2012): 518–20, 519.

31. Rivers, “‘A Roaring Piece of Work,’” 520.

32. David K. Anderson, “The Theater of the Damned: Religion and the Audience in the Tragedy of Christopher Marlowe,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 54.1 (2012): 79–109, 79. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

William Tyndale's view of "persecution as a force that necessarily exists within the church as well as without it" (86), Anderson argues that "Peter himself is identified as the very worst, a persecutor of Christ," but that he is "also condemned for his urge to persecute on behalf of Christ, and the two failings are, in an important sense, equivalent" (88). Therefore,

This sense of complicity, latent within the audience, is what Marlowe's tragedy antagonizes. Marlowe's protagonists define themselves as enemies and flout what the culture perceives as most sacred. But condemnation, while demanded by the governing logic of the culture and invited by the plays themselves, is nevertheless inhibited. In undercutting the moralism so often built into the conclusions of his own plays, Marlowe quietly reminds the playgoer that he is caught up in the violence and not outside it. (88)

Both Faustus and Barabas are seen in opposition to "mainstream Elizabethan religious culture," yet "much more deeply entrenched in the society he opposes than he or his enemies might care to think" and disarmingly close to the playgoing public (80, 104).

Kimberly Reigle focuses on Abigail when she pairs *The Jew of Malta* with Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (1604) "to consider how Renaissance dramatists exposed the societal ramifications of convent closures in a culture that increasingly assigned fiscal worth to virginal bodies that had once held spiritual capital."³³ Although Shakespeare's Isabella leaves a convent to save her brother, and Marlowe's Abigail leaves her father and escapes to a convent, the comparison between them yields some underlying constancies. The convents in these plays offer their virginal protagonists respite from the corruption of Vienna and Malta, and sanctuary from the oppression of male authorities. In both instances, the nunnery is "a locus of resistance, a place where women can retain autonomy over their bodies and find authority in their words, a sharp contrast to the mores of city life" (500). Abigail's virginity is commodified in the sense that it "enables her to enter the convent and rescue Barabas's treasures" (500), with the result that "the spiritual worth associated with virginity in the Catholic Church collides with the

33. Kimberly Reigle, "Staging the Convent as Resistance in *The Jew of Malta* and *Measure for Measure*," *Comparative Drama* 46.4 (2012): 497–516, 497. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

materiality exhibited by Barabas's exploitation of his daughter's maidenhood" (501). Both plays portray women's bodies as commodities to be exchanged. Since "it is only behind the convent walls that Abigail and Isabella are not thought of as gemstones or traded as commodities. Therefore, virginity becomes a site of powerful contention, and the convent emerges as a space of resistance and agency, a place where female characters are able to elude male ascendancy" (505).

Jennifer C. Vaught's monograph, *Carnival and Literature in Early Modern England* (2012), devotes a chapter to "Grotesque Imperialists, Alien Scapegoats, and Feasting in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*."³⁴ This study includes the "rich abundance of elite and popular, festive materials related to carnival" in the early modern period and considers puppet show renditions of these plays in later centuries (23). Vaught argues that whereas these puppet shows occurred "in elite theater locales and served to amass wealth for the upper and middle ranks," Marlowe and Shakespeare "intermingle elite and popular entertainments throughout their carnivalesque works for largely republican and egalitarian purposes" (23). *Faustus* is accordingly read as akin to "a Lord of Misrule elected to lead the holiday festivities" until swallowed by the gaping hell mouth in an appropriately carnivalesque act of cannibalistic consumption (25). His elevation is as temporary as a festive inversion, his "greed" analogous to the "trickster's voracious lust for relatively empty pleasures" (25). She also argues that *The Jew of Malta* contains motifs such as "laughing at death as if it were a farcical occurrence, a parodic rebirth and resurrection, and the threat of cannibalism," "oral, gastronomic features," and "anti-alien sentiments" (34). The very name "Barabas" links the play to a "festival context" because of Pilate's feast day liberation of a prisoner (35), and the "topsy-turvy inversion of rank during a holiday" appears throughout Marlowe's tragedy (36).

Andrew McCarthy's "*Marlowe's Ars Moriendi*" considers the influence of the late medieval "art of dying" tracts on Marlowe

34. Jennifer C. Vaught, "Grotesque Imperialists, Alien Scapegoats, and Feasting in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*," in *Carnival and Literature in Early Modern England* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 23–56. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

and his contemporary dramatists, focusing on *Tamburlaine* and *The Jew of Malta*.³⁵ The conventions for dying well, and the “artful preparations” this entails (60), provides an alternative to focusing on the finality of passing away, and can structure an individual’s behaviors and thoughts throughout their entire lifetime, as well as offer consolation to the griever left behind, who are similarly prepared for death through this process. Zenocrate’s death and Tamburlaine’s response to it in the second Act of 2 *Tamburlaine* exemplifies Marlowe’s interest in the *ars moriendi*, but 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” (65). Tamburlaine’s own preparations for death are initially marred by his seeming impatience until he reconciles himself to his fate in the final climactic scenes with his sons: “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” (66). By contrast, in *The Jew of Malta*, “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” (58). Marlowe interrogates the “comfort” provided by these manuals as his characters “are forced to contemplate their impending deaths” (58).

Jane Grogan’s essay “‘A Warre . . . Commodious’” complements recent scholarship on the figure of the Turk on the English stage and Ottoman-Persian conflict in the 1580s and 1590s. She focuses on what she calls Tamburlaine’s “aspirational” or “adopted” Persian identity and asks “what might a Muslim Tamburlaine understand himself to be doing in burning the Koran?”³⁶ She explores the play’s engagement with “a more complex and varied idea of Islam” than the stereotype of the Turk that Marlowe scholarship usually offers, especially “the

35. Andrew McCarthy, “Marlowe’s *Ars Moriendi*,” *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2 (2012): 57–70. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

36. Jane Grogan, “‘A Warre . . . Commodious’: Dramatizing Islamic Schism in and after *Tamburlaine*,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 54.1 (Spring 2012): 45–78, 45–46. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

domestic subtexts of this exploration of intra-Islamic conflict and schism" (46). She uses a text probably known to Marlowe, Whetstone's *The English Myrror* (1586), which implies the existence of an alternative Koran, to contextualize the Koran-burning episode. Since the play emphasizes Tamburlaine's Persian identity as a cause of hostility with the Ottoman Turks, his act of desecration "becomes a powerful if hyperbolic statement of the schism between Shi'a Persians and Sunni Ottomans that Marlowe preserves throughout both parts" (47). Grogan applies this to a wider Reformation context, arguing that the "interlocked issues of religious schism and imperial sovereignty" in *Tamburlaine* resonate with Elizabethan political concerns in a manner previously overlooked by critics (48). In the final part of her essay, Grogan notes the curious suppression of this schism in the plays that followed *Tamburlaine* until John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins' *Travels of the Three English Brothers* (1607), which she characterizes as "a knowing response to Marlowe's provocative entwining of religious schism and imperial ambition" (67).

Leila Watkins argues that the "opposing interpretive possibilities" offered by the "unstable representation" of various religions in the *Tamburlaine* plays reduce non-Christian religions to "dubious signifiers," thereby generating "a skeptical atmosphere."³⁷ She returns to the perceived problem of the protagonist's bathetic death and the plays' lack of a clear moral message, arguing that "instead of offering models of virtuous or immoral behavior," they "invite spectators to critique the efficacy of institutions that seek to enforce such moral codes" (163-64). As a result, "Rather than show how Christianity is superior to Islam and polytheism, the plays produce skeptical interpretations of every religious order—and thus of religious justice as a concept" (164). More boldly, she proposes that *Tamburlaine* "offered early modern spectators the opportunity to consider irreligion or unbelief as a viable worldview" (166).

Two critics, Per Sivefors and Meg F. Pearson, concentrate exclusively on the second part of *Tamburlaine*. Sivefors's essay is predicated on the conflation of Babel with Babylon in the play, a

37. Leila Watkins, "Justice Is a Mirage: Failures of Religious Order in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* Plays," *Comparative Drama* 46.2 (2012): 163–85, 167. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

widespread error in early modern culture, including the Geneva Bible.³⁸ He argues that Marlowe used *The Faerie Queene* (1590–96) as an important intertext that makes the same conflation, an example of “Protestant mythologizing” that includes “nationalistic sentiment and political propaganda.”³⁹ In “Raving, Impatient, Desperate, and Mad’: *Tamburlaine’s* Spectacular Collapse,” Meg F. Pearson argues that the play self-consciously “insists upon the inevitable failure of spectacle” so that Marlowe could create “a metatheatrical cautionary tale in his sequel.”⁴⁰ Tamburlaine’s burning of the Koran on stage is thus the extreme culmination of a series of escalating but failed spectacles: the chariot of kings, the color-coded armor and banners, the pyre. He taunts the heavens out of a desire to counteract the underwhelming effect of his other recently redeployed sights of power. Yet as Pearson argues, such failure “warns the powerful architects of political shows and playwrights alike about their reliance on stagecraft.”⁴¹

David McInnis moves beyond Marlowe’s own sequel to the first *Tamburlaine* play by addressing the repertorial implications of the lost “Scanderbeg” play in the Oxford’s Men repertory of 1600–1601, possibly at the Boar’s Head Theatre, at a time when Marlowe’s own company (the Admiral’s Men) were nostalgically reviving his plays.⁴² Noting the now debunked theory that Gabriel Harvey’s poetry implies Marlowe authored this play, this essay asserts that “the issue of Marlovian influence is not in doubt and is truly significant.”⁴³ It argues, “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

38. Per Sivefors, “Conflating Babel and Babylon in *Tamburlaine 2*,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 52.2 (2012): 293–323.

39. Sivefors, “Conflating Babel and Babylon in *Tamburlaine 2*,” 296.

40. Meg F. Pearson, “Raving, Impatient, Desperate, and Mad’: *Tamburlaine’s* Spectacular Collapse,” *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2 (2012): 87–102, 101, 102.

41. Pearson, “Raving, Impatient, Desperate, and Mad,’” 102.

42. David McInnis, “Marlowe’s Influence and ‘The True History of George Scanderbeg,’” *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 2 (2012): 71–85.

43. McInnis, “Marlowe’s Influence and ‘The True History of George Scanderbeg,’” 75.

of Marlowe's plays and the wave of similarly themed dramas of the 1590s."⁴⁴

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44. McInnis, "Marlowe's Influence and 'The True History of George Scanderbeg,'" 77.

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