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Disintegrating Marlowe

by Lukas Erne

Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) is often assumed to have an oeuvre that is authorially and textually well-defined and neatly delimited, an oeuvre, that is, in keeping with his distinctive, well-defined biographical persona. This essay argues that this sense of a well-defined oeuvre is a convenient myth, and that if we are interested in a more accurate assessment of the extent and preservation of his writings, we first need to disintegrate Marlowe. Where we may wish to find either plain Marlowe or not Marlowe, we may instead have collaborative Marlowe, revised Marlowe, doubtful Marlowe, and mutilated Marlowe. The early editions of Doctor Faustus *end with the words, "*terminat auctor opus*," and each of these words turns out to be characteristic of the myth this essay investigates and may have played a role in constructing it. Marlowe did not single-handedly complete all his writings, several of them are not sole-authored, and his collaborative and partly fragmented writings may not amount to what we usually consider an opus. Instead, they turn out to be fully embedded in the exigencies of the messy, collaborative world of the early modern theatre and book trade.*

According to a widely shared consensus, the works of Christopher Marlowe are characterized by considerable thematic, stylistic, and authorial unity. Marlowe is the author of seven plays dramatizing, as the back cover of the Penguin edition announces, "the fatal lure of potent forces, whether, religious, occult, or erotic."[1] Stylistically, his plays are characterized by "Marlowes *mighty line*," as Ben Jonson memorably put it, blank verse of unprecedented

[1] Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey, eds., *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2003).

power and flexibility.[2] In addition to the drama, Marlowe is the author of a small poetic oeuvre, a remarkable narrative poem, *Hero and Leander*, a much loved lyric poem "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love," and two translations from the classics, Ovid's *Amores* and Book 1 of Lucan's *Pharsalia*. Summarized like this, Marlowe's works have a remarkable integrity, in the sense of wholeness and completeness. In keeping with an oeuvre that is well circumscribed in terms of style, size, authorship, and ideas whose challenging and heterodox nature are in keeping with Marlowe's flamboyant biographical persona, we have other signs of a free-standing author who has definitely made it as far as his claim to academic attention is concerned. Marlowe has a journal, *Marlowe Studies*;[3] he has two academic societies, the Marlowe Society and the Marlowe Society of America; [4] he has a *Cambridge Companion*, edited by Patrick Cheney;[5] he has a supposed portrait, the Corpus Christi Portrait, adorning the cover of many Marlowe publications;[6] and he has an adjective, "Marlovian," which the

[2] Ben Jonson, "To the memory of my beloued, The AVTHOR MR. VVILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: AND what he hath left vs," in William Shakespeare, *Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* (London, 1623), πA4r.

[3] *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* started appearing in 2011. It has been succeeded by the online open-access *Journal of Marlowe Studies*, first published in 2020.

[4] See http://www.marlowe-society.org/ and http://www.marlowesocietyofamerica.org/.

[5] See Patrick Cheney, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[6] For the question of the authenticity of the supposed "Marlowe portrait," see J. A. Downie, "Marlowe: Facts and Fictions," in *Constructing Christopher Marlowe*, ed. J. A. Downie and J. T. Parnell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 13-29 (esp. 16).

OED traces back to the late nineteenth century, when English was establishing itself as an academic discipline.[7]

This firm sense of Marlowe contrasts with what we actually know about Marlowe's dramatic and poetic writings. Once we face the evidence, we realize that the number of Marlowe works that are unadulterated in terms of authorship and textual integrity is very small. Marlowe mythography has produced a Marlowe with extraordinary authorial presence and a unique voice, an author who is a dominating presence in his own works and thereby creates their integrity. This Marlowe, I wish to argue, deserves to be disintegrated. While disintegration of the kind I argue for is now the dominant scholarly view of other early modern English dramatists such as Shakespeare and Middleton, the force of mythography still prevents the establishment of a similarly complex view of Marlowe.[8]

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[7] The *OED*'s earliest recorded usage of "Marlovian" dates from 1887. "Marlowish," used by Charles Lamb in 1798 according to the *OED*, is quite a bit older but did not stick. The *OED* also has the adjectives "Websterian" (earliest recorded usage 1809), "Fletcherian" (1850), "Jonsonian" (1886), and "Lylian" (1923). The names of other early modern dramatists such as Thomas Kyd, Thomas Middleton, Francis Beaumont, and John Ford currently have no adjectival form recorded in the *OED*.

[8] The term "disintegration" is now usually associated with E. K. Chambers's 1924 British Academy lecture "The Disintegration of Shakespeare" (published in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 11 [1924-25]: 89-108), in which he tried to discredit the attempts of earlier scholars, notably F. G. Fleay and J. M. Robertson, to attribute parts of Shakespeare's plays to other playwrights. Given that Chambers's argument was generally accepted for much of the twentieth century, the term "disintegration" often carried negative connotations. Since modern

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Doctor Faustus is a good place to start. Probably written in 1588-89 or, less likely, 1592, it reached print in 1604, with the so-called A-text, which was reprinted in 1609 and 1611.[9] In 1616 appeared the so-called B-text, with 676 additional lines not present in the earlier version, in which the play went through seven more editions up to 1663. Theories about the relationship between the A-text and the B-text have undergone considerable change in the last two centuries, but the majority view since the 1970s has been that the A-text is the earlier version and the one that takes us closer to how the play came into being in Marlowe's own time.[10] According to most scholars, the B-text integrates later revisions by, perhaps among others, Samuel Rowley and William Bird whom Philip Henslowe paid four pounds on

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scholars are more willing than Chambers was to accept that Shakespeare contributed to many collaboratively-produced plays, a rehabilitation of the term seems in order.

[9] For the play's date, see David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, eds., *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus, A- and B-Texts (1604, 1616),* The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 1-3; R. J. Fehrenbach, "A Pre-1592 English Faust Book and the Date of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*," *The Library* s7-2 (2001): 327-35; and Sara Munson Deats, "*Doctor Faustus*," in *Christopher Marlowe at 450*, ed. Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), 71-72.

[10] For the history of scholarly thinking about the relationship between the A- and the B-texts, see Michael H. Keefer, "The A and B Text of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* Revisited," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 100 (2006): 227-57 (esp. 227-31).

November 22, 1602 "for ther adicyones in docter fostes."[11] Eric Rasmussen has devoted a monograph to the texts of *Faustus*, and he and David Bevington have edited the play for the Revels Plays series.[12] According to them, the B-text bears traces of several stages of revision and represents "a compilation of various kinds of copy produced on at least three occasions: at the time of original composition, in 1602, and at some other time."[13] So much for textual and authorial integrity.

In search for *Marlowe's Doctor Faustus*, we may be tempted to turn to the A-text. Yet with regards to that version, too, as Sara Munson Deats has pointed out, scholars "concur that *Doctor Faustus* represents a collaborative effort."[14] As Bevington and Rasmussen put it, "Scholars have long suspected that Marlowe wrote the serious and tragic portions of *Doctor Faustus*, by and large, and that a collaborator took responsibility for the comic horseplay. We support that view."[15] Their painstaking analysis leads them to suggest that apart from the Prologue and the Epilogue, which they think are likely to be by Marlowe, he wrote 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 5.1, and 5.2, "with a collaborator taking on the rest."[16] In other words, of the A-text's

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[11] R. A. Foakes, ed., *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 206.

[12] For the former, see Eric Rasmussen, *A Textual Companion to "Doctor Faustus"*, The Revels Plays Companion Library (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

[13] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Doctor Faustus*, 76.

[14] Deats, "*Doctor Faustus*," 73.

[15] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Doctor Faustus*, 70.

[16] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Doctor Faustus*, 70. See also Laurie E. Maguire, "Marlovian Texts and Authorship," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Patrick Cheney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 49-50. Bevington and

thirteen scene, they assign six to Marlowe and seven to his collaborator.[17] Bevington and Rasmussen show that one of the effects of the A-text's collaborative nature is that there are inconsistencies such as Mephistopheles's various responses to conjuring. When called by Faustus, he claims to have come of his "own accord" (1.3.45), but when Robin conjures him up, he complains that "From Constantinople am I hither come / Only for pleasure of these damnèd slaves" (3.2.32-34).[18] The nature of the collaboration thus seems to have been such that it did some harm to the play's integrity.

Marlowe's collaborator has not been identified with any confidence, but a number of candidates have been proposed. F. S. Boas, W. W. Greg and Leslie Oliver all suggested Samuel Rowley, given that he was later asked to supply additions to the play.[19] Paul H.

Rasmussen build on this the theory that the A-text is based on the manuscripts of two dramatists.

[17] Michael Keefer has challenged Rasmussen's argument that the A-text was set up from authorial foul papers but agrees that the play was written by Marlowe and a collaborator ("The A and B Text," 257). For the argument that Edward Alleyn's part of Faustus played a role in the printing of the A-text of *Doctor Faustus*, see Paul Menzer, "Fractional *Faustus*: Edward Alleyn's Part in the Printing of the A-Text," in *Christopher Marlowe the Craftsman: Lives, Stage, and Page*, eds. Sarah K. Scott and M. L. Stapleton (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 215-24.

[18] See Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Doctor Faustus*, 71.

[19] F. S. Boas, ed., *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* (London: Methuen, 1932), 27-31; W. W. Greg, ed., *Marlowe's "Doctor Faustus," 1604, 1616: Parallel Texts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 133-39; Leslie M. Oliver, "Rowley, Foxe, and the *Faustus* Additions," *Modern Language Notes* 60 (1945): 391-94.

Kocher argued that Marlowe's co-author was Thomas Nashe, a name that was also put forward by Roma Gill, although her theory was that Marlowe left the play unfinished and that Nashe completed it after Marlowe's death.[20] Bevington and Rasmussen considered Henry Porter, although they acknowledged that Porter's co-authorship was no more than "a very speculative possibility."[21] Despite the uncertainty regarding the identity of Marlowe's collaborator, there is general agreement among editors and scholars that he existed.

Yet remarkably, this agreement fails to keep many of us from thinking of *Doctor Faustus* as solely Marlowe's. The phrases "Marlowe's *Faustus*" or "Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*" are standard in the critical conversation about the play, and critics use it, it seems, without giving much thought to the fact that only six of its thirteen scenes, according to the best scholarship on the question, are actually by Marlowe. In the recent collection, *Christopher Marlowe at 450*, a scholar refers on the first page of her chapter to "Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*" only to write two pages later, when turning to the issue of authorship, that "almost all critics concur that *Doctor Faustus* represents a collaborative effort."[22] The Revels Plays edition has found an elegant way of acknowledging while not acknowledging the play's authorial conundrum: "Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*," the

[20] Paul H. Kocher, "Nashe's Authorship of the Prose Scenes in *Faustus*," *Modern Language Quarterly* 3 (1942): 17-40; Roma Gill, ed., *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe: Volume II: Doctor Faustus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), xviii. Chiaki Hanabusa also considers Nashe "a likely candidate" for the authorship of the comic scenes (Hanabusa, ed., *Doctor Faustus 1604*, Malone Society Reprints [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018], xxix).

[21] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Doctor Faustus*, 72.

[22] Deats, "*Doctor Faustus*," 71, 73.

cover proclaims; yet after turning the page twice, we get to a second title page which now ascribes *Doctor Faustus* to "Christopher Marlowe and his collaborator and revisers."[23] It is precisely in the difference between these two title pages that I am interested. In the introduction to their Revels Plays edition of *Doctor Faustus*, Bevington and Rasmussen write that "we often speak of 'Marlowe' as the dramatist as a matter of convenience … but the collaborative nature of the playwrights' task should be understood to be implicit in the discussion throughout."[24]

This rhetorical maneuver may be symptomatic of what often happens in Marlowe studies more generally: we say "Marlowe," although we know that it is not simply Marlowe we are referring to; but given that we keep saying "Marlowe" nonetheless, we end up giving Marlowe an authorial integrity which in fact he does not have. This mechanism leads to wide-spread ignorance of *Doctor Faustus*'s collaborative nature, including in quarters where authorship chiefly matters. In *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, for instance, Hugh Craig includes *Faustus* among what he calls the "well-attributed Marlowe plays," and so includes in the corpus from which he derives Marlowe's linguistic profile a play that is agreed to be only partly by Marlowe.[25]

One way of dealing with the non-Marlovian presence in *Doctor Faustus* is to claim that it is poorly written, an inept comic add-on to a play Marlowe conceived as a grand tragedy. The play may not be entirely Marlowe's, but the parts that matter are, and so, surely,

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[23] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Doctor Faustus*, iii.

[24] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Doctor Faustus*, 78-79.

[25] Hugh Craig, "The Three Parts of *Henry VI*," in *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, ed. Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 62.

must have been the play's overall design. What informs such reasoning is the belief that we do the play a favor by absolving it of its non-Marlovian parts. Yet Richard Waswo, in his masterful essay "Damnation Protestant Style: Macbeth, Faustus, and Christian Tragedy," lucidly commented on the play's non-Marlovian part: "the comic conception which underlies it was not only … a part of the medieval dramatic tradition but is also … implied in the very nature and expression of Faustus' aims. If we fail to acknowledge the design of the comedy, we shall probably fail to understand the outcome of the tragedy."[26] The non-Marlovian portion, in other words, is an integral part of *Doctor Faustus* without which the play makes little sense.

Our failure to acknowledge the play's co-author in the critical discourse on *Doctor Faustus* was anticipated by the editions published in the seventeenth century. The editions of 1604, 1609, and 1611, with the A-text, all assign the play to "Chr. Marl.," while the seven editions published between 1616 and 1663, with the B-text, attribute it to "Chr. Mar.," an eloquent testimony to the fragility of Marlowe's name in the early modern book trade, a topic to which I will return. The stubborn refusal to expand the contracted name across ten editions and a period of sixty years may seem surprising, all the more so as the title of the play did subtly change, from the "tragicall history of" (Q1) to the "tragicall history of the horrible life and death of" (Q2 and Q3) to the "tragicall history of the life and death of" *Doctor Faustus* (Q4 and following). This demonstrates that the title pages were not simply reprinted from one edition to the next but at least occasionally received careful attention. Yet no desire seems to

[26] Richard Waswo, "Damnation Protestant Style: Macbeth, Faustus, and Christian Tragedy," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 4 (1974): 86, 63-99. See also Johann Wolfgang Goethe's comment on Marlowe's *Faustus*: "How greatly is it all planned!" (quoted in Millar Maclure, ed., *Christopher Marlowe*, The Critical Heritage [London: Routledge, 1979], 11).

have been felt to expand Marlowe's name. The truncated name in fact aptly reflects the play's authorial make-up in that it is but also is not quite by Marlowe, with the anonymous collaborator discreetly hiding behind what is missing of "Marlowe."

To return to the twenty-first century, I would argue that Shakespeare studies have come to terms with collaborative dramatic practice in a way in which Marlowe studies have not. It is now perfectly common to refer to Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII* or Shakespeare and Middleton's *Timon of Athens*, and "Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*" or "Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*" are no longer labels that are perceived to be accurate.[27] The RSC Shakespeare *Complete Works* assign *Pericles* to Shakespeare and George Wilkins and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to Shakespeare and John Fletcher in the Table of Contents.[28] And in *The New Oxford Shakespeare*'s Table of Contents, *Titus Andronicus* is said to be by "Shakespeare and Peele" and *Edward III* by "Anonymous and Shakespeare," to give only two examples.[29] In the case of *Faustus*, however, the label "Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*" has not begun to be superseded by a more accurate description, and this despite all the evidence to the contrary.

If "Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*" is thus problematic, what then of "Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*"? That attribution, at least, we might assume to be straightforwardly accurate. Perhaps more than any other play, the two-part play of *Tamburlaine the Great* seems to many

[27] See, for instance, Pamela Bickley and Jenny Stevens, *Shakespeare and Early Modern Drama: Text and Performance* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 76.

[28] Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, eds., *William Shakespeare, Complete Works,* The RSC Shakespeare (New York: Modern Library, 2007), v.

[29] Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan, gen. eds., *William Shakespeare, The Complete Works: Modern Critical Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), vii.

of us quintessentially Marlovian in subject matter and style.[30] But the play's link to Marlowe was for a long time rather tenuous. *Tamburlaine* is the only one of Marlowe's works to be published during his lifetime, in 1590, and was reprinted in 1593, 1597, and, separately, in 1605 (Part 1) and 1606 (Part 2). None of these early editions assign the play to Marlowe, nor does the Stationers' Register have anything to say on the question of the play's authorship.[31] The play and its protagonist were frequently alluded to and quoted from, but their fame seems to have been largely independent of their author.[32] It is true that Robert Greene mentioned the "atheist Tamburlaine" alongside "Merlin" and "blank verse," which some have taken as an indication of Marlowe's authorship, but the passage is inconclusive, as inconclusive, in fact, as the passage in Thomas Middleton's pamphlet *The Black Booke*, which might be taken to associate *Tamburlaine* with Thomas Nashe and led Edmond Malone to attribute it to him.[33]

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[30] It seems significant that Alvin Kernan's assessment of the "chief characteristics of the Marlovian heroic style" results from a reading of *Tamburlaine*. See Leeds Barroll, Alexander Leggatt, Richard Hosley, and Alvin Kernan, eds., *The Revels History of Drama in English*, vol. III, 1576-1613 (London: Methuen, 1975), 255-56; and J. S. Cunningham, ed., *Tamburlaine the Great*, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), 9.

[31] The play was entered to Richard Jones on 14 August 1590 (see Edward Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640 A.D.*, 5 vols. (London: Privately Printed, 1875-94), 2.558).

[32] See Charles Whitney, *Early Responses to Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 17-69.

[33] See the address "To the Gentlemen readers, *Health*" in Robert Greene's *Perimedes the blacke-smith* (London, 1588), A3r. For Nashe, see G. B. Shand, ed., *The Black Book*, lines

It was not until 1632, almost half a century after its creation, that a marginal gloss in a theological treatise by Robert Henderson called *The Arraignment of the Whole Creature at the Bar of Religion, Reason, and Experience* assigned *Tamburlaine* to Marlowe.[34] Is this bibliographically reliable information of the kind on which an authorship attribution can be based, or, given that almost half a century had elapsed since the play's creation, is it to be treated with skepticism? A year later, Thomas Heywood mentioned *Tamburlaine* in his Prologue to *The Jew of Malta*, but the passage may imply nothing more than that Edward Alleyn, who performed the protagonist in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, also played in *Tamburlaine*.[35] In the early nineteenth century, when editors started collecting Marlowe's

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415-25, in Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino, gen. eds., *Thomas Middleton, The Collected Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 213; Ronald B. McKerrow, ed., *The Works of Thomas* Nashe, 5 vols. (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1904-10), 5.140; Malone also considered Nicolas Breton's authorship of *Tamburlaine* – see András Kiséry, "An Author and a Bookshop: Publishing Marlowe's Remains at the Black Bear," *Philological Quarterly* 91 (2012): 364.

[34] The marginal gloss, appearing next to a passage dealing with the Tamburlaine story, reads: "*Marlow* in his Poem" (2H4v).

[35] The relevant passage in the Prologue reads: "We know not how our Play may passe this Stage, / But by the best of Poets in that age [marginal note: "*Marlo*."] The *Malta Jew* had being, and was made; / And He, then by the best of Actors play'd: [marginal note: "*Allin*."] / In *Hero* and *Leander*, one did gaine / A lasting memorie: in *Tamburlaine*, / This *Jew*, with others many, th'other wan / The attribute of peerelesse, being a man / Whom we may ranke with (doing no one wrong) / *Proteus* for shapes, and *Roscius* for a tongue, / So could he speake, so vary" (A4v). As Cunningham has commented, "If, with Bawcutt and others, we

plays, the problem of the authorship of *Tamburlaine* had still not been resolved. For his 1818 edition of Marlowe's plays, James Broughton apparently had *Tamburlaine* printed but then refused to publish it due to his doubts about Marlowe's authorship.[36] William Oxberry's stand-alone edition of *Tamburlaine* of 1820 assigned the play to Marlowe,[37] but George Robinson, in 1826, was less sure. He did include *Tamburlaine* in his three-volume *Works of Christopher Marlowe*, but, as Adam Hooks has noted, "the editor insisted that the 'matter and style' of the plays 'differ materially from Marlowe's other compositions and doubts have more than once been suggested as to whether the play was properly assigned to him', and so concluded that 'Marlowe did not write it.'"[38]

Ironically, what clinched the case for *Tamburlaine*'s inclusion in the Marlowe canon was a forgery by John Payne Collier, a supposed entry in Henslowe's diary recording a

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read the seventh line here with only a comma break after 'many,' it is Alleyn's acting of Tamburlaine, not Marlowe's writing of the play, that Heywood is referring to" (Cunningham, ed., *Tamburlaine*, 7).

[36] See Adam Hooks, "Making Marlowe," in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Kirk Melnikoff and Roslyn L. Knutson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 109-10; and Dorothy U. Seyler, "James Broughton, Editor of Marlowe's Plays," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 69 (1975): 311-22.

[37] William Oxberry, ed., *Tamburlaine the Great a Tragedy; Part the First* (London, 1820).

[38] Hooks, "Making Marlowe," in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Melnikoff and Knutson, 110, quoting George Robinson, ed., *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 3 vols. (London: Pickering, 1826), 1.xii.

payment to Thomas Dekker of 1597 for five shillings "for *a prolog* to Marloes Tamburlan."[39] Collier quoted his own forgery in 1831, calling it the "most conclusive" piece of evidence in favor of Marlowe's authorship.[40] In 1850, Alexander Dyce's edition, which fixed the modern canon of Marlowe's works, referred to Collier's argument in favor of Marlowe's authorship of *Tamburlaine*, quoted his forged Henslowe entry, and included the two-part play in his edition.[41] When he published a revised edition in 1858, Dyce was still unaware of the Collier forgery, which was not exposed as such until 1876.[42] Today, those who still consider the "possibility that Marlowe did not write the *Tamburlaine* plays" are rare,[43] and I do not wish to

[39] See Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman, *John Payne Collier: Scholarship and Forgery in the Nineteenth Century*, 2 vols. (New Have: Yale University Press, 2004), 1.207; and Hooks, "Making Marlowe," in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Melnikoff and Knutson, 111.

[40] John Payne Collier, *The History of English Dramatic Poetry to the Time of Shakespeare*, 10 vols. (London: John Murray, 1831), 3.113.

[41] See Alexander Dyce, ed., *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 3 vols. (London: Pickering, 1850), 1.vii.

[42] See Hooks, "Making Marlowe," in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Melnikoff and Knutson, 111; Freeman and Freeman, *John Payne Collier*, 526; and Clement Mansfield Ingleby, "Spurious Ballads, &., Affecting Shakspere and Marlowe," *The Academy* 9 (1876): 313.

[43] The exception I am quoting is Kristen Abbott Bennett ("Negotiating Authority through Conversation: Thomas Nashe and Richard Jones," in *Conversational Exchanges in Early Modern England: 1549 - 1640*, ed. Kristen Abbott Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 102-31 [107]).

argue that there is sufficient evidence to remove *Tamburlaine* from the Marlowe canon. Nonetheless, although Marlowe's authorship of the two-part play seems to us almost self-evident today, it may be useful to remember that the early modern documentary evidence is inconclusive, that as fine a scholar as Malone argued against Marlowe's authorship, and that the play did not firmly enter the Marlowe canon until the mid-nineteenth century, and this partly due to a Collier forgery.

Even if we accept Marlowe's authorship of *Tamburlaine*, it is clear that the extant text does not give us access to the full two-part play as it was originally written and performed. We know this because of the prefatory address by the publisher Richard Jones, "To the Gentlemen Readers: and others that take pleasure in reading Histories," which was included in the octavo of 1590. It reads in part:

> I haue (purposely) omitted and left out some fond and friuolous Iestures, digressing (and in my poore opinion) far vnmeet for the matter, which I thought, might seeme more tedious vnto the wise, than any way els to be regarded, though (happly) they haue bene of some vaine cõceited fondlings greatly gaped at, what times they were shewed vpon the stage in their graced deformities: neuertheles now, to be mixtured in print with such matter of worth, it wuld prooue a great disgrace to so honorable & stately a historie (A2r-v)

Jones distinguishes between two kinds of writing in the original playtext as it reached him: "matter of worth" and "fond and friuolous Iestures." The former properly belongs to the "honorable & stately a historie" published by Jones; the latter may have been appreciated by the groundlings in the playhouse but would be "tedious vnto the wise" and so has been "omitted" by Jones. What the 1590 octavo thus gives us access to is an abridgement of the

original two-part play. It has recently been shown that the text of *Tamburlaine* was in fact considerably mutilated by Jones, who omitted not only comic passages, as acknowledged in his prefatory address, but also part of a serious plot strand, the plot strand involving Almeda.[44] As a result, Jones did considerable harm to the play's integrity.

I have examined so far three plays at the heart of what is usually considered the solid dramatic corpus of "Marlowe's seven plays". *Doctor Faustus*, although often regarded the quintessential Marlowe play, appears to have been written not by Marlowe alone but collaboratively (the A-text) and was later revised and expanded by other writers (the B-text). The claim for Marlowe's authorship of the *Tamburlaine* plays hangs upon a thinner thread than is usually acknowledged today, and the text that has come down to us was damaged by its publisher. Instead of solid Marlowe, what the plays touched upon so far thus give us access to is collaborative Marlowe, revised Marlowe, doubtful Marlowe, and mutilated Marlowe.

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We fare no better with *The Jew of Malta*. Its earliest extant edition dates from 1633, forty years after Marlowe's death, although the play had been entered in the Stationers' Register in 1594. It seems unlikely that the play was printed in the late sixteenth century, and if it was, no copy has survived.[45] In 1633, the play was revived for performance at the Cockpit and at

[44] See Lukas Erne, "The Almeda Plot Strand and the Text of *Tamburlaine the Great, Part Two*," forthcoming.

[45] As N. W. Bawcutt has pointed out, "Heywood's dedication to the 1633 quarto reads as though the play was reaching print for the first time" (Bawcutt, ed., *The Jew of Malta*, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), 38). See also Kirk Melnikoff,

Court, for which Thomas Heywood wrote new prologues and epilogues (one each for either venue), as Heywood explains in "The Epistle Dedicatory" which he contributed to the 1633 quarto. The title page attributes the play to "CHRISTOPHER MARLO," and Heywood's epistle declares that the play was "composed by so worthy an Authour as Mr *Marlo*" (A3r). Most critics have followed the 1633 quarto in attributing the play entirely to Marlowe.

Those scholars who have studied the evidence closely are less sure, however. Having referred to Heywood's prologues and epilogues, Laurie E. Maguire states that "The fear is that Heywood may have written more. Tucker Brooke felt that the 1633 quarto was 'sadly corrupted and altered from that in which it left the hands of Marlowe.'"[46] Bevington and Rasmussen have diagnosed "salient corruption" in the quarto and argued "that someone other than Marlowe reworked the second half of the play." They conclude that the 1633 text "had clearly been subjected to some sort of intentional revision or accidental alteration in the more than four decades that had elapsed since Marlowe wrote his play."[47] James R. Siemon, the play's editor in the New Mermaids series, draws on earlier scholars to advance the view, "largely on the basis of perceived disunity of style and tone," that "the quarto reflects an extensive revision, probably by Thomas Heywood."[48] Fredson Bowers, in his *Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, considered it "most improbable" that "Heywood, or whoever

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"New Directions: *The Jew of Malta* as Print Commodity in 1594," in *"The Jew of Malta": A Critical Reader*, Arden Early Modern Drama Guides (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 129-48.

[46] Maguire, "Marlovian Texts and Authorship," 51.

[47] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), xxix.

[48] James R. Siemon, ed., *The Jew of Malta*, 2nd ed., New Mermaids (London: A & C Black, 1994), xxxviii.

was the actual entrepreneur for the revival, would not touch up an old play for a new audience."[49] Many of the *The Jew of Malta*'s editors thus seem to doubt that the 1633 quarto gives us access to the play as Marlowe conceived it.[50]

Not only editors and textual scholar but also attribution scholars have cast doubts on Marlowe's sole authorship of *The Jew of Malta*. In "Possible Light on a Kyd Canon," Thomas Merriam reports that his principal component analysis "has shown a consistent alienation of *The Jew of Malta* from the other six Marlowe plays, combined with a consistent association

[49] Fredson Bowers, ed., *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1.256.

[50] For an exception to this rule, see Bawcutt, ed., *The Jew of Malta*, 37-49. Scholars in the first half of the twentieth century likewise believed that *The Jew of Malta* has come down to us in a much-altered version. E. K. Chambers argued that "perhaps the most plausible explanation" for *The Jew of Malta*'s textual makeup is that it is "one of the comparatively rare cases, in which a play has only come down to us in a form rehandled to suit an audience of inferior mentality to that aimed at by the original author," without specifying what he meant by "inferior mentality" (review of *The Jew of Malta* and the *Massacre at Paris* by Christopher Marlowe and H. S. Bennett, *Modern Language Review* 27 [1932]: 77-79). Ethal Seaton held that "It seems now probable that if a manuscript, or a copy of the hypothetical edition of 1594, were to turn up, Marlowe's version might prove to be as different in spirit and execution from the existing form of the play as, say, Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* is from Durfey's *The Fatal Wager*" (review of *The Works and Life of Christopher Marlowe*, gen. ed., R. H. Case, Vol. III, *The Jew of Malta* and *The Massacre at Paris*, ed. H. S. Bennett, *The Review of English Studies* 9 [1933]: 328-33 [328]).

with *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Soliman and Perseda*."[51] Maguire has found "Merriam's reattribution … tempting" and commented that "Critics have long recognized the resemblances between *The Jew* and the *Spanish Tragedy*. Merriam supports this impression with evidence."[52] In the *New Oxford Shakespeare Authorship Companion*, John Burrows and Hugh Craig have similarly found evidence that calls Marlowe's sole authorship of *The Jew of Malta* into question: "We ran a Zeta test," they report, "first treating each of the seven Marlowe plays in turn as if anonymous, and dividing it into rolling segments of 2,000 words advancing by 200 words each time. … The test of *The Jew of Malta* was a spectacular failure, with only 29 out of the 81 segments attributed to Marlowe."[53] David J. Lake claims to have found "overwhelming" evidence "for late revision" in *The Jew of Malta*. He writes that "there is strong disagreement between *The Jew* and the three reliable Marlowe texts, *1* and *2*

[51] Thomas Merriam, "Possible Light on a Kyd Canon," *Notes and Queries* 240 (1995): 340-41 (340).

[52] Maguire, "Marlovian Texts and Authorship," 53.

[53] John Burrows and Hugh Craig, "The Joker in the Pack? Marlowe, Kyd and the Co-authorship of *Henry VI, Part 3*," in *The New Oxford Shakespeare Authorship Companion*, ed. Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 194-217 (210). A Zeta test "is based on finding words commoner in one set of texts as opposed to another" ("Glossary," in Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney, eds., *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 226). For other ambiguous findings in *The New Oxford Shakespeare Authorship Companion* regarding the authorship of *The Jew of Malta*, see 164, 177. For other authorship attribution work that casts doubt on Marlowe's sole authorship of *The Jew of Malta*, see Thomas Merriam, "Tamburlaine Stalks in *Henry VI*," *Computers and the Humanities* 30 (1996): 267-80.

Tamburlaine and *Edward II*, in at least ten features," in particular "colloquialisms present in *The Jew* and absent in the reliable Marlowe plays."[54] Lake, who has also made important contributions to authorship studies in the context of Thomas Middleton's plays, concludes that "it would seem certain that the play has been revised … at some time in the period 1600-32."[55] That the extant text of *The Jew of Malta* gives us access to a sole-authored Marlowe play in anywhere near its original form has thus been frequently called into question.

This examination of the authorial and textual integrity of the traditional Marlowe canon may proceed more swiftly over the next two plays: *Dido, Queen of Carthage* and *The Massacre at Paris*. *Dido* appeared in 1594 without prior entrance in the Stationers' Register. The title page points out that the play was "Written by Christopher Marlowe, and *Thomas Nash. Gent*." The statement is clear enough, but Marlovians, in a mechanism with which we are by now familiar, have done their best to discount Nashe's authorship and argue that Marlowe wrote the play alone. One of Marlowe's editors tried to explain the presence of Nashe's name on the title page with the hypothesis that Nashe may have "prepared the play for performance by the Children of Her Majesty's Chapel, and perhaps for subsequent publication."[56] "[I]t seems to me very possible," another has written, "that Nashe could have

[54] David J. Lake, "Three Seventeenth-Century Revisions: *Thomas of Woodstock, The Jew of Malta*, and *Faustus B*," *Notes and Queries* 228 (1983): 133-43 (138).

[55] Lake, "Three Seventeenth-Century Revisions," 142. See also David J. Lake, *The Canon of Thomas Middleton's Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

[56] J. B. Steane, ed., *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), 585.

acted as scribe, copying [the manuscript] diligently."[57] These statements illustrate Martin Wiggins's point that "literary historians have done their best to set aside the ascription to Nashe and reduce his contribution to what his biographer, Charles Nicholl, describes as 'mere editorial work.'"[58]

As Wiggins has pointed out, "If we are to discount a direct title-page statement of authorship, we ought to demand a very good reason for doing so."[59] Wiggins has effectually countered the myth that Nashe's contribution to *Dido* was only editorial, not authorial. As he points out, "literary executors are not normally named as co-authors on the title pages of their dead friends' work."[60] It may be added that the formulation on the title page, "Written by

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[57] Roma Gill, ed., *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe: Volume I: All Ovids Elegies, Lucans First Booke, Dido Queene of Carthage, Hero and Leander* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 122. Most recently, Ruth Lunney and Hugh Craig have argued that Marlowe wrote *Dido* alone, but they acknowledge that the Marlowe attributions of the plays on which their "Marlowe signature" relies – "*Doctor Faustus* is likely to be collaborative, *The Jew of Malta* may well be revised by another writer, and the surviving *The Massacre at Paris* seems to be a corrupt version" – are themselves "uncomfortably uncertain" ("Who Wrote *Dido, Queen of Carthage*?," *Journal of Marlowe Studies* 1 [2020]: 20).

[58] Martin Wiggins, "When Did Marlowe Write *Dido, Queen of Carthage*?," *The Review of English Studies* 59 (2008): 521-41 (522), quoting Charles Nicholl, *A Cup of News: The Life of Thomas Nashe* (London: Routledge, 1984), 170.

[59] Wiggins, "When Did Marlowe Write *Dido*," 525.

[60] Wiggins, "When Did Marlowe Write *Dido*," 525.

Christopher Marlowe, and *Thomas Nash*. *Gent*.," could hardly be less clear.[61] The play is not just vaguely "by" Marlowe and Nashe, a preposition that might imply different kinds of agency, but "Written by." Nor does internal evidence relying on the play's supposedly Marlovian language carry much weight. "If *Dido* sounds more like Marlowe than like Nashe," Wiggins points out, "perhaps that is because Nashe adopted a Marlovian 'house style' when writing in collaboration with Marlowe."[62] Also, H. J. Oliver has found in *Dido* "more than a dozen words that are found elsewhere in Nashe but not in Marlowe."[63] If the case is faced squarely, "based on evidence, rather than convenience," as Richard Proudfoot has put it, then the case for Marlowe's sole authorship of *Dido* is weak.[64] As Wiggins has concluded, "it is

[61] Wiggins usefully points out that "neither the printer, Joan Orwin, nor the bookseller, Thomas Woodcock, had any connection with Nashe before or after their work on *Dido*. Indeed, there is no firm evidence that the copy for the book came from Nashe at all" (525). For the inconclusive evidence regarding an elegy by Nashe which some copies of *Dido* may have included, see Wiggins, "When Did Marlowe Write *Dido*," 524-25, and Gill, ed., *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe: Volume I*, 121.

[62] Wiggins, "When Did Marlowe Write *Dido*," 526.

[63] H. J. Oliver, ed., *"Dido, Queen of Carthage" and "The Massacre at Paris"*, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968), xxii.

[64] Proudfoot, "Marlowe and the Editors," in *Constructing Christopher Marlowe*, ed. J. A. Downie and J. T. Parnell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 52.

clear that, on the available evidence, the question editors should now be posing is not whether, but what, Nashe contributed to *Dido*."[65]

The Massacre at Paris appeared in an undated octavo that is now thought to have appeared in 1596, with an attribution to Marlowe on the title page.[66] Nonetheless, it is well known that this play provides no straightforward access to Marlowe either, since the surviving text bears obvious signs of corruption. Maguire calls it a "curious cartoon-strip history," and Paul Menzer has added that it "reads like it was written on the back of a cocktail napkin."[67] The text is extremely short, at 1,241 lines, less than half the average length of professional plays of the 1590s.[68] Most of its twenty-four scenes amount to fewer than fifty lines. The survival of a manuscript leaf with one scene of *Massacre* (Folger Shakespeare Library MS J.b.8) makes it possible to compare the short, truncated printed text with a substantially longer version that "hints tantalizingly at the original verbal texture of the play."[69] Maguire has

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[65] Wiggins, "When Did Marlowe Write *Dido*," 526. For an attempt to identify the respective contributions, see Thomas Merriam, "Marlowe and Nashe in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*," *Notes and Queries* 245 (2000): 425-28.

[66] See R. Carter Hailey, "The Publication Date of Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*, with a Note on the Collier Leaf," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 1 (2011): 25-40.

[67] Maguire, "Marlovian Texts and Authorship," 44, and Paul Menzer, "Marlowe Now," in *Christopher Marlowe in Context*, ed. Emily C. Bartels and Emma Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 357-65 (363).

[68] This line count is based on Romany and Lindsey, eds., *Christopher Marlowe*. For the length of plays, see Alfred Hart, *Shakespeare and the Homilies and Other Pieces of Research into the Elizabethan Drama* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1934), 77-153.

[69] Romany and Lindsey, eds., *Christopher Marlowe*, 664.

argued that "in comparison with the manuscript, the octavo text gives evidence of two processes: abridgement and memorial reconstruction."[70] In a study in which she demonstrates that the explanation "memorial reconstruction" has been often groundlessly attached to texts, she maintains that it probably does account for the genesis of the octavo text of *Massacre at Paris*.[71] Edward J. Esche, who has edited the play for the Oxford *Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, has identified among its signs of textual corruption "a high proportion of repeated catchphrases such as 'My Lord', 'My good Lord', 'your majesty', and 'I will,'" "a significant number of borrowings from other plays of the period," "a high proportion of metrical irregularities," as well as "confusions of meaning."[72]

It is possible, of course, to try to argue away some of the strong evidence for the text's many deficiencies. But what may inform such argumentation is precisely the desire I have anatomized for a solid, pure, and integral corpus of Marlowe plays. As one critic has written, "In his short career Marlowe wrote only seven plays, so it seems particularly unfortunate to give short shrift to *The Massacre at Paris*. Instead of wringing our hands over the sad state of its text, we may as well get out of it what we can."[73] Predictably, what this critic gets out of the text is that it is "considerably better and more complex" than others have suggested.[74] If the desire to "rehabilitate" the text of *The Massacre at Paris* is founded on regrets over the

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[70] Maguire, "Marlovian Texts and Authorship," 46.

[71] Laurie E. Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The "Bad" Quartos and Their Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[72] *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 5.299.

[73] Leah S. Marcus, "*The Massacre at Paris*," in *Marlowe at 450*, ed. Deats and Logan, 146.

[74] Marcus, "*The Massacre at Paris*," 146.

smallness of Marlowe's extant dramatic oeuvre, then the risk is that the conclusion of the undertaking is dictated by its starting point.[75]

I have been arguing that belief in a solid corpus of seven plays by Marlowe is the product of scholarly desire rather than evidence. Of the six plays examined so far, not a single one, I claim, gives us access to a sole-authored Marlowe play that survives in anything near the form in which he conceived it. That leaves *Edward II*, published in quarto in 1594 with a well-founded ascription to Marlowe on the title page. It is true that editors have identified some "anomalies, inconsistencies, and missing stage directions in the 1594 text."[76] But on the whole, the play is exceptional in that it does seem to give us access to that object of Marlovians' desire, a sole-authored dramatic text, preserved essentially in its entirety, probably based on "Marlowe's fair copy."[77]

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While the lack of textual and authorial integrity of most of the plays usually ascribed to Marlowe thus renders problematic the idea of a solid corpus of seven plays, the belief that "Marlowe wrote only seven plays" is also flawed for another reason, which is that he may well have contributed to several more.[78] *The Jew of Malta* remained unpublished for forty

[75] Marcus, "*The Massacre at Paris*," 159.

[76] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*, xxx.

[77] Fredson Bowers, ed., *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 2.9.

[78] Marcus, "*The Massacre at Paris*," 146.

years after Marlowe's death, and it is possible that other plays did not have the good fortune of belated publication. "A comedie called *The Maidens Holiday*" was entered in the Stationers' Register by Humphrey Moseley on 8 April 1654, where it is said to be "by Christopher Marlow & John Day."[79] The play was not published, and it is impossible to know whether it was indeed partly by Marlowe. The entry makes clear that the play was a comedy, which may explain why, as Matthew Steggle has pointed out, "Marlowe scholars have responded to it with what can be best described as embarrassment": "the thought of Marlowe writing comedy seems … incongruous to us."[80] Yet to consider Marlowe's involvement in the play unlikely on generic grounds would tell us more about our preconceptions about Marlowe than about the play's authorship. Independently of the question of genre, it is worthwhile pointing out that the Stationers' Register entry again suggests a collaborative Marlowe, a configuration the early modern book trade seems to have less reluctance to envisage than the modern Marlowe reception.

The early modern book trade witnessed another Marlowe attribution with which modern scholarship disagrees: *Lust's Dominion, or The Lascivious Queen* was published in duodecimo in 1657. The title page of the first issue contains no authorship information, but a reissue with a new title page later in the same year affirms that the play was "Written by *Christofer Marloe*, Gent." Two further issues, in 1658 and 1661, reiterate the attribution to Marlowe. John Payne Collier pointed out in 1825 that the play contains references to events that took place after Marlowe's death, and he suggested that the play corresponds to "th*e*

[79] G. E. B. Eyre, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, from 1640-1708 A.D.*, 3 vols. (London, 1913-14), 1.445.

[80] Steggle, "Marlowe's Lost Play: "The Maiden's Holiday,'" in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Melnikoff and Knutson, 243-57.

spaneshe mores tragedie" for which Thomas Dekker, William Haughton, and John Day received a payment of three pounds from Philip Henslowe on 13 February "1599" (i.e. 1600).[81] As a consequence, *Lust's Dominion* soon after left the Marlowe canon, in which the title-page attribution of the duodecimo had placed it for more than a century and a half.[82]

In the twentieth century, *Lust's Dominion* was included in Fredson Bowers's edition of *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*.[83] In his four-volume *Introductions, Notes, and Commentaries to texts in "The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker"*, Cyrus Hoy agreed with Collier's identification of *Lust's Dominion* with "the spaneshe mores tragedie," and argued that John Marston "began a revision of this play for Henslowe in the fall of 1599, and that the work of revision was carried forward by Dekker, Haughton, and Day early in 1600."[84] But Hoy claimed that "behind [*Lust's Dominion*] lies an older play, dating presumably from the early 1590s, when the plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* were the rage," and he commented on how "the plot of *Lust's Dominion* imitates Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*" and compared Eleazar to Barabas.[85] Cyrus Hoy was building on earlier "distinguished critics" who, as Tucker Brooke reported, had "been unwilling to renounce wholly the idea of

[81] R. A. Foakes, ed., *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 131.

[82] *Lust's Dominion* was still included in George Robinson's *Works of Christopher Marlowe* in 1826 (vol. 3).

[83] Fredson Bowers, ed., *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953-1961), vol. 4.

[84] Cyrus Hoy, *Introductions, Notes, and Commentaries to texts in "The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker"*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 4.65.

[85] Hoy, *Introductions*, 4.62, 4.65-66.

Marlowe's connection with the play."[86] More recent scholars have similarly linked the play to Marlowe. Virginia Mason Vaughan calls Eleazar "a Marlovian overreacher, a Barabas figure" and has compared the play's "culmination" to "Marlowe's spectacular closure of *The Jew of Malta*."[87] Emily C. Bartels has commented on parallels between *Lust's Dominion* and *Edward II* and pointed to "instances of verbal echoes."[88] Annette Drew-Bear has recently subjected "the Marlovian elements in *Lust's Dominion*" to "thorough study."[89] If we allow for revision and collaboration – in other words for smoother edges to Marlowe's dramatic canon than the seven-play canon suggests – a Marlovian presence in *Lust's Dominion* should perhaps not be excluded.

Independently of *Lust's Dominion*, a much-publicized expansion of Marlowe's dramatic canon has recently been advocated, not, perhaps tellingly, by Marlowe scholars but by Shakespeareans. In *The New Oxford Shakespeare*, published in 2016, general editors Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan attribute *Henry VI, Parts 2 and 3* to "Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Anonymous; revised by Shakespeare," and *Henry VI, Part 1* to "Marlowe, Nashe, and Anonymous, adapted by Shakespeare."[90] According to Gary Taylor

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[86] Tucker Brooke, "The Marlowe Canon," *PMLA* 37 (1922): 367-417 (411).

[87] Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 53, 54.

[88] Emily C. Bartels, *Speaking of the Moor: From Alcazar to Othello* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 122-24, 127, 217n11.

[89] Annette Drew-Bear, "Marlovian Influences in *Lust's Dominion: Or, the Lascivious Queen*," *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* 4 (2014): 63-87 (65).

[90] Taylor, Jowett, Bourus, and Egan, gen. eds., *William Shakespeare, The Complete Works*, vii. For some of the scholarship on which *The New Oxford Shakespeare*'s authorship

and Rory Loughnane, in *Henry VI, Part 2*, "Marlowe is most clearly present at the beginning of the play and in scenes of Cade's rebellion," and in *Henry VI, Part 3*, "Marlowe is most likely the primary author of … thirteen scenes": 1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 3.3, 4.2-4.9, and 5.2, with Shakespeare the likely author of the remaining sixteen scenes. As for *Henry VI, Part 1* (but probably written after the other two parts), Marlowe can be found "most often in all or most of our 3.2-8 … and in all or most of the beginning of the traditional Act 5 (particularly our 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5)."[91] It is too early to know whether these attributions will be accepted by the scholarly community. Attribution scholars continue to disagree with each other, and some are known to have changed their minds.[92] If some of the arguments advanced in *The New Oxford*

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reattributions are based, see Hugh Craig, "The three parts of *Henry VI*," in *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship*, ed. Craig and Kinney, 40-77; Gary Taylor and John V. Nance, "Imitation or Collaboration? Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare Canon," *Shakespeare Survey* 68 (2015): 32-47; Burrows and Craig, "The Joker in the Pack?," 194-217; and Gary Taylor and Rory Loughnane, "The Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare's Works," in *The New Oxford Shakespeare Authorship Companion*, ed. Taylor and Egan, 417-602, 493-99, 513-17.

[91] Taylor and Loughnane, "The Canon and Chronology," 496, 497, 515. For an essay exploring connections between Marlowe and *The First Part of the Contention* (which the later version in the First Folio retitles *Henry VI, Part II*), see Peter Kirwan, "Marlowe's Early Books: The Contention and a 'Marlowe Effect,'" in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Melnikoff and Knutson, 134-48.

[92] For instance, in a long article on the authorship *of Henry VI, Part 1*, Gary Taylor in 1995 attributed 'all of Acts 3 to 5 to a single author', an argument with which he now disagrees (Taylor and Loughnane, "The Canon and Chronology," 515; and see Taylor, "Shakespeare

Shakespeare stand the test of time, however, then the Marlowe who emerges is one who is more collaborative and whose dramatic works have much rougher edges than Marlowe studies have liked to believe.[93] A Marlowe who contributed to one or several of the *Henry VI* plays adds to my argument, in other words, that the idea of a solid dramatic corpus of "Marlowe's seven plays" is largely a myth.

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The present study of the lack of textual and authorial integrity of Marlowe's plays may be extended to his poetry. What is usually thought of as "Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*" today, an erotic narrative poem, or epyllion, from the early 1590s, like Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, was considered in the early modern book trade as no more than a fragment, an incomplete poem whose completion by George Chapman tripled its length. Marlowe is

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and Others: The Authorship of *Henry the Sixth, Part One*," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 7 (1995): 145-205). For other views of the authorship of *Henry VI, Part 1*, see Brian Vickers, "Incomplete Shakespeare: Or, Denying Coauthorship in *1 Henry VI*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58 (2007): 311-52, and Paul Vincent, *When "Harey" Met Shakespeare: The Genesis of "The First Part of Henry the Sixth"* (Saarbrücken: Verlag Dr Müller, 2008).

[93] Note that John V. Nance, an associate editor of the forthcoming *New Oxford Shakespeare : Complete Alternative Versions*, has recently argued that Marlowe also had a hand in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* ("Early Shakespeare and the Authorship of *The Taming of the Shrew*," in *Early Shakespeare, 1588-1594*, ed. Rory Loughnane and Andrew J. Power [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020], 261-83).

generally considered to have worked on the poem at the end of his career, and it was entered in the Stationers' Register by John Wolfe on 28 September 1593, less than four months after Marlowe's death. The poem was immensely successful in the early modern book trade, with no fewer than ten editions appearing between 1598 and 1637.[94] Starting with the second edition which, like the first, appeared in 1598, the title page points out that the poem was "begunne by Christopher Marloe, and finished by George Chapman," Marlowe having written two sestiads, Chapman four. Even the first edition points out at the end of the poem, "*Desunt nonnulla*" (E3v), i.e. something is lacking. And in the dedicatory epistle, the poem's publisher Edward Blount refers to the poem as "this vnfinished Tragedy" (A3v). Also in 1598 appeared in a separate publication *The second part of Hero and Leander Conteyning their further fortunes*, by Henry Petowe. A prefatory epistle explains that "This Historie of *Hero* and *Leander* [was] penned by that admired Poet *Marloe*: but not finished (being preuented by sodaine death)" (A3v).[95] When Richard Carey referred to *Hero and Leander* a few years later, he simply called it "Marlowe's fragment."[96] Marlowe's contemporaries agreed that Marlowe had left *Hero and Leander* incomplete on his death.

[94] See Lukas Erne and Tamsin Badcoe, "Shakespeare and the Popularity of Poetry Books in Print, 1583-1622," *The Review of English Studies* 65 (2014): 33-57.

[95] In the seventeenth century, the incompletion of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* seems to have been taken for granted. For instance, Edward Phillips, in *Theatrum Poetarum* (1675), devotes only a single paragraph to Marlowe but refers in it to "his begun Poem of *Hero* and *Leander*" and adds that "this Poem being left unfinished by *Marlow* … was thought worthy of the finishing Hand of *Chapman*" (Aa2v-Bb1r).

[96] Richard Carey, "The Excellency of the English tongue," Cotton Julius F XI, folio 267 recto, accessed via the "Shakespeare Documented" website

Predictably, there have again been modern scholars who, in spite of the evidence, would like their Marlowe to be more complete and more undivided than he is. Louis L. Martz, for instance, argued that Marlowe's two sestiads form "a finished comedy" and asked "all admirers" to "avoid speaking of Marlowe's 'fragment.'"[97] Similarly, Roma Gill, in her edition of the poem for the Oxford *Complete Works of Marlowe*, could "see no justification for including Chapman's work" and argued that "*Desunt nonnulla* … is probably the conclusion of the publisher, trying to explain the absence of the expected ending to the story." Whereas "the pedestrian Blount and the opportunist Chapman" may have considered the poem incomplete, Marlowe did not; for "Marlowe was never a conformist."[98] This is Marlowe mythography with a vengeance, constructing a non-conformist genius towering above his contemporary dunces. It may be useful to recall that despite the protagonists' non-conformity, Tamburlaine dies in the end, Faustus is fetched by the devils, and Barabas boils in the cauldron.

Marlowe's second sestiad ends as morning dawns after Hero and Leander have consummated their love; Leander, in other words, does not drown, nor does Hero commit suicide. C. S. Lewis argued that "the picture of headlong love presented by Marlowe demands some nemesis poetically no less than morally. … A story cannot properly end with the two chief characters dancing on the edge of a cliff: it must go on to tell us either how, by some

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(https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/). I am grateful to Margaret Tudeau-Clayton for drawing my attention to this reference to Marlowe's poem.

[97] Louis L. Martz, ed., *"Hero and Leander" by Christopher Marlowe: A Facsimile of the First Edition, London 1598* (New York: Johnson, 1972), 13, 1.

[98] Gill, ed., *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe: Volume I*, 185, 186.

miracle, they were preserved, or how, far more probably, they fell over."[99] Yet despite his argument for the incompletion of Marlowe's poem, Lewis was well aware of the strong temptation for modern critics to consider it complete: "The whole temper of modern criticism, which loves to treat a work of art as the expression of an artist's personality and perhaps values that personality chiefly for its difference from others, is unfavorable to a poem by two authors."[100] When that artist is Marlowe, whose critical and biographical receptions seem so inextricably tied up with one another, the resistance to consider *Hero and Leander* incomplete is particularly strong.

András Kiséry has recently connected the incompletion of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*'s with that of Marlowe's Lucan: of the epic ten-book *Pharsalia* Marlowe translated only Book I. "That the two poems were incomplete – both promised to be renderings of classical stories, but both broke off after a few hundred lines – may have been the reason why it wasn't until the very last years of the century that they actually got published."[101] That the early modern book trade considered Marlowe's Lucan translation as a fragment of the *Pharsalia* is also suggested by the fact that when the complete *Pharsalia* was published in

[99] C. S. Lewis, "*Hero and Leander*," in *Elizabethan Poetry: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. Paul J. Alpers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 235-50 (240). Another critic who takes for granted that Marlowe's poem is incomplete and examines "to what extent" Chapman's part is "suitable as a sequel to what precedes it," is Veselin Kostič ("Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and Chapman's Continuation," *Renaissance and Modern Essays Presented to Vivian de Sola Pinto in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. G. R. Hibbard [London: Routledge, 1966], 25-34 [26]).

[100] Lewis, "*Hero and Leander*," 235.

[101] Kiséry, "An Author and a Bookshop," 365.

1614 in Arthur Gorges's new translation, Walter Burre, who had entered it in the Stationers' Register, co-published the edition with Blount and Thomas Thorpe, who had both been involved in the publication of Marlowe's translation, "presumably," as Kiséry has pointed out, "because [Blount and Thorpe] are recognized as owners of a part of Lucan."[102] For the purposes of the book trade, Marlowe's fragmentary Lucan was assimilated into the full translation by Gorges, and Marlowe's Lucan was not reprinted until the nineteenth century.

Even in the publication of Marlowe's translation of Ovid's elegies, the issue of completion or incompletion seems to have played a major role: the earliest edition (undated, ca. 1599), with ten of Ovid's elegies translated by Marlowe, was said to contain "Certaine of Ouide elegies"; this was superseded by an edition (also undated, but dating from after 1602) that contained and proudly advertised "ALL OVIDS ELEGIES."[103] When a publication by Marlowe, the poet, was no longer fragmentary but whole, that deserved special emphasis.

Like Marlowe's translation of Ovid's elegies, the much loved lyric poem "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love" was printed in two different contexts in the early modern book trade. It first appeared in 1599 in a poetic miscellany called *The Passionate Pilgrim* that was attributed to Shakespeare on the title page. The following year, when a different version of the poem was included in the literary anthology *England's Helicon*, it was assigned to Marlowe. Apart from its appearances in print, the poem circulated widely in manuscript,

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[102] See Kiséry, 'An Author and a Bookshop', 380. For the publication of Marlowe's Lucan, see also Gill, ed., *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe: Volume I*, 90-92.

[103] See Roma Gill and Robert Krueger, "The Early Editions of Marlowe's *Elegies* and Davies's *Epigrams*: Sequence and Authority," *The Library* s5-26 (1971): 243-49, and Fredson Bowers, "The Early Editions of Marlowe's *Ovid's Elegies*," *Studies in Bibliography* 25 (1972): 149-72.

where it was copied, imitated and adapted, but never assigned to Marlowe.[104] The earliest unambiguous ascription of the poem to Marlowe other than *England's Helicon*'s is in Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler* in 1653, but given that Walton quotes the poem from *England's Helicon*, his ascription seems to have no independent authority.

Given these facts, Kiséry has called into doubt Marlowe's authorship of the poem. "[T]he attribution of the poem to Marlowe," he has written, "is an uncertain, because overdetermined affair, with the only independent witness, *Englands Helicon,* coming from the shop whose owner, John Flasket, had an obvious investment in the scarce commodity that is Marlovian writing."[105] Flasket was a bookseller, and Kiséry argues that "Marlowe the poet was a phenomenon emerging from one particular shop," namely Flasket's, "at the sign of the Black Bear, where by 1600 you could get *Hero and Leander*, Marlowe's translation of Lucan, "The Passionate Shepherd," as well as *Dido Queen of Carthage*'.[106] Adam Hooks has added to Kiséry's argument that John Benson, in his 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems*, "did not reprint the version of the poem found in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, but instead copied it … from *England's Helicon*." Hooks argues that "This decision implies a strong claim for Shakespeare's authorship, since Benson actively chose to reprint the version of the poem explicitly attributed to Marlowe."[107] The authorship of "The Passionate Shepherd," like that

[104] "[W]hen manuscript versions ascribed it to anyone, it was to Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, and – apparently – to Thomas Blundeville" (Kisèry, "An Author and a Bookshop," 368).

[105] Kiséry, "An Author and a Bookshop," 368.

[106] Kiséry, "An Author and a Bookshop," 365.

[107] Hooks, "Making Marlowe," in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Kirk Melnikoff and Roslyn L. Knutson, 105.

of *Tamburlaine*, suddenly looks less safely anchored than is usually assumed.[108] If we add up questions of authorship with concerns about the fragmentary or incomplete nature of some of his poems, Marlowe's poetic corpus, like his dramatic, looks less solid than we have been led to believe.

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A problem in Marlowe studies is that the scholarly reception of the works has long been preceded and shaped by the biographical persona. This is as true in modern times as it was shortly after Marlowe's death. As has been rightly pointed out, it was not just *after* his death, but *as a result of* his death, the notorious stabbing in Deptford, that "Marlowe the 'atheist' playmaker became a man in print."[109] From early on, the notion of a singular biographical

[108] *England's Helicon* is unique not only in attributing the poem to Marlowe but also in considering the poem and its reply poem, attributed to Walter Raleigh in the anthology, as separate, the result of two different poets. "For the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century," Kiséry writes, "the two poems are a single unit, two parts of a whole." He adds that he is "not aware of any surviving copy of one appearing without the other until the late seventeenth century" and that, "with the exception of *England's Helicon*, they always come together, as parts of a dialogic whole. And with the exception of *England's Helicon*, when this two-part piece is attributed to an author at all, it is attributed as a single item to a single author, although never to Kit Marlowe" (Kiséry, "An Author and a Bookshop," 374).

[109] Kiséry, "An Author and a Bookshop," 364-65. Compare Hooks's point that Marlowe's "debut in the world of print was … directly indebted to his untimely end: the death of

persona favoured single-authored works attached to and associated with him, and the distinctiveness of the biographical persona required a clearly defined oeuvre in which the reflection of the biographical persona could be found. In 1593 and 1594, the years of and after his death, the two parts of *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta*, *Edward II*, *Dido Queen of Carthage*, *Hero and Leander*, and the translation of Lucan were all entered in the Stationers' Register or published (or both).[110] Despite this moment of intense interest in Marlowe, occasioned and sustained by the violent end of an unorthodox biographical persona, the early modern book trade also bears signs suggesting that the impression of a well-defined and well-delimited Marlowe corpus may be an illusion. Shakespeare (1623), Ben Jonson (1616), and Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher (1647) all received the honor of folio collections with their works, and John Lyly's and John Marston's plays appeared in smaller collections in 1632 and 1633. Marlowe's plays, by contrast, did not appear in an early modern collection. Nor did his plays appear in a default format in which they could have been easily collected and bound. Almost all of Shakespeare's separately published playbooks appeared in quarto format, but of the plays associated with Marlowe, only *Faustus*, *Dido*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Edward the Second* were published in quarto, whereas *1 Tamburlaine*, *2 Tamburlaine*, and

Marlowe was the birth of the author" (Hooks, "Making Marlowe," in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Kirk Melnikoff and Roslyn L. Knutson, 112).

[110] See Kiséry, "An Author and a Bookshop." Another moment when interest in Marlowe crystallized is 1600, when *Dido Queen of Carthage, Hero and Leander*, "The Passionate Shepherd," and Marlowe's Lucan could all be obtained from the shop at the sign of the Black Bear.

The Massacre at Paris appeared in octavo and *Lust's Dominion* in duodecimo.[111] This failure of the various components of Marlowe's traditional dramatic canon to cohere may be telling, an indication that a firm sense of Marlowe and his works may be largely an illusion.

Today, the desire to credit Marlowe with a solid, well-defined, sole-authored canon lives on. Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan's Introduction to their Marlowe collection (2016) refers to "Marlowe's seven plays," and so does Patrick Cheney's fine monograph on *Marlowe's Republican Authorship* (2009).[112] Lisa Hopkins, in *Christopher Marlowe, Renaissance Dramatist* (2008), writes that "Marlowe wrote seven major plays and two great poems, and also translated works by the Roman writers Lucan and Ovid," and M. L. Stapleton, in *Marlowe's Ovid* (2014), mentions his dramatic "opus of seven plays."[113] Examples could be multiplied. It is tempting to believe that Marlowe created his dramatic oeuvre in seven plays, and it was good, a well-made, fully-formed expression of its maker. A close look at the evidence suggests that the truth is more complex, and that Marlowe appears to have written both less (*Faustus*, *Dido*) and perhaps more (*Henry VI, Parts 1* to *3*? *Lust's Dominion*?, 'The Maiden's Holiday'?) than is often believed.

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[111] The only separately published Shakespeare playbook that appeared not in quarto but in octavo is the 1595 edition of *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (of which a later version was retitled *Henry VI, Part 3* in the First Folio).

[112] Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan, "Introduction," in *Christopher Marlowe at 450*, 4, and Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe's Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), 194.

[113] Lisa Hopkins, *Christopher Marlowe, Renaissance Dramatist* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 23, and M. L. Stapleton, *Marlowe's Ovid: The Elegies in the Marlowe Canon* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 25.

Marlowe's artistic environment was intensely collaborative, in keeping with early modern theatrical and textual culture, and our expectation of finding sole-authored Marlowe may thus be misguided. Where we may wish to find either plain Marlowe or not Marlowe, we may instead have Marlowe and Thomas Nashe, Marlowe and Thomas Heywood, Marlowe and George Chapman, Marlowe and John Day, Marlowe and anonymous, Marlowe and Samuel Rowley and William Bird, Marlowe and Thomas Dekker, William Haughton, and John Day, Marlowe, Shakespeare and anonymous; revised by Shakespeare, or Marlowe, Nashe, and anonymous, adapted by Shakespeare. To recall how Bevington and Rasmussen both acknowledge and side-step the problem of Marlovian authorship in their edition of *Doctor Faustus*, "we often speak of 'Marlowe' as the dramatist as a matter of convenience … but the collaborative nature of the playwrights' task should be understood to be implicit in the discussion throughout."[114] Yet unless we spell out the full extent of Marlowe's collaborative practice, we contribute to the illusion that it did not exist. In other words, unless we want to convey on Marlowe's writings an authorial integrity they do not possess, we need to make a case for their disintegration.

In an essay published in 2005, I investigated how the "vicious hermeneutic circle within which the play's protagonists are read into Marlowe's biography and the mythographic

[114] Bevington and Rasmussen, eds., *Doctor Faustus*, 78-79. Compare Oliver's comment in his introduction to the Revels Plays edition of *Dido Queen of Carthage*: "again and again in the notes on *Dido* and sometimes in the remainder of this Introduction, I have referred to 'Marlowe,' as have earlier editors, where 'Marlowe' is only a kind of shorthand for 'the author or authors of the play, whoever he or they may have been at this point'" (Oliver, ed., *"Dido, Queen of Carthage" and "The Massacre at Paris"*, xxv). Oliver considers it likely that *Dido*'s title-page ascription to Marlowe and Nashe is correct (see xx-xxv).

creature thus constructed informs the criticism of his plays."[115] The present essay examines a different but related aspect of the Marlowe reception: Marlowe is often assumed to have an oeuvre that is authorially and textually well-defined and neatly delimited, an oeuvre, that is, in keeping with his distinctive, well-defined biographical persona. This well-defined oeuvre, I have argued, is a convenient myth, and if we are interested in a more accurate assessment of the extent and preservation of his writings, we first need to disintegrate Marlowe. The early editions of *Doctor Faustus* end with the words, "*terminat auctor opus*," and each of these words turns out to be characteristic of the myth I have investigated and may have played a role in constructing it. Marlowe did not single-handedly complete all his writings, several of them are not sole-authored, and his collaborative and partly fragmented writings may not amount to what we usually consider an *opus*. Instead, they turn out to be fully embedded in the exigencies of the messy, collaborative world of the early modern theatre and book trade.[116]

[115] "Biography, Mythography, and Criticism: The Life and Works of Christopher Marlowe", *Modern Philology* 103 (2005): 28.

[116] An earlier version of "Disintegrating Marlowe" was awarded The Calvin and Rose G. Hoffman Prize, administered by The King's School, Canterbury, in 2018. I wish to thank Neil Forsyth for his incisive feedback on a draft of my article.