SECOND INTERNATIONAL MARLOWE CONFERENCE:
LATEST UPDATED INFORMATION

Arrangements for the Second International Marlowe Conference, to be held in Oxford, England, from August 15-19, 1988, are now well along. The seminars and workshops have been scheduled and the session leaders chosen.

SEMINARS:

Marlowe and Shakespeare
Session Leader: Robert A. Logan

Character, Psychology, and Value in Marlowe
Session Leader: Matthew M. Proser

Marlowe and Performance
Session Leader: Bruce E. Brandt

Marlowe and Critical Theory
Session Leader: Sara M. Deats

Specialized Approaches to Marlowe and His Contemporaries
Session Leader: Robert F. Fleissner

WORKSHOPS:

Doctor Faustus: A and B Texts
Session Leader: Roma Gill

Poetics and Text
Session Leader: John T. Shawcross

PLENARY SESSION

SPEAKERS:

Julia Briggs, Oxford University
James Shapiro, Columbia University
Andrew Butcher, University of Kent
Constance B. Kuriyama, Texas Tech University
Thomas Cartelli, Muhlenberg College

Participants have been assigned to particular sessions, but participants and other registered persons are of course invited to attend any and all of the sessions. Seminars and workshops are to be held during the mornings and the plenary sessions after lunch. There will be time before dinner and the evening activities to relax, shop, enjoy the environs, and do research at Oxford’s facilities. Evening activities and entertainment have been planned: cocktail parties, a banquet, the Medieval Players, and musical or theatrical presentations. The directors have tried to provide a flexible and varied schedule of events that proceeds at a humane pace. It is hoped that such an arrangement will stimulate a relaxed and agreeable atmosphere for scholarly and social exchanges.

Participants, attendees, and guests will be housed in Morrell Hall. It consists of student residences which are, in fact, modern, self-contained flats. The individual flats are comprised of either one twin bedroom, plus four single bedrooms, or six single bedrooms. Each unit has a lounge area, patio, and bathroom facilities, and bedding and linen are provided. Arrangements for room and board have been made with Oxford Polytechnic at a flat rate of £20.00 per person per day (exclusive of VAT).

In order to facilitate arrangements, it will be necessary for participants, attendees, and guests to fill out the attached form. Please read the form carefully and check off the choices as appropriate. Payment for room and board will be handled in England, but the registration fee of $55.00, plus the annual membership fee for 1988 if it has not already been paid, is due with the return of this form.

So that we can provide you with specific details about the mechanics of the arrangements for room and board, FORMS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN JUNE 15, 1988.
1987 ROMA GILL AWARD

The Marlowe Society of America is pleased to announce that Dr. Faustus: The A-text, edited by David Ormerod and Christopher Wortham, and published by the Western Australia Press, 1985, has won the 1987 Roma Gill Award for a significant contribution to Marlowe studies. The biennial award covers publications for the previous two years and carries with it a $100 honorarium.

The selection of this edition of Dr. Faustus for the Roma Gill Award is based on the belief that the book not only fills a demonstrable need for a new reading edition of Faustus founded on the A-text, but that it fills that need with distinction. Particularly impressive are the breadth and depth of its command of recent research, its lucid summation of current thinking on the play for the benefit of the non-specialist, and its alert and often original examination of the play's relation to its intellectual context. Also commendable are the detailed and informative notes, the thorough bibliography, and the attractive, functional design of the book. By providing an updated, scholarly, and highly readable alternative to recent editions of Faustus based on the B-text, it performs a valuable service for students and teachers alike.

BUSINESS MEETING

The 1987 business meeting of the Marlowe Society of America was held during the MLA Convention in San Francisco on December 29, at 6:00, in the Lessen Room of the San Francisco Hilton and Towers Hotel, with Matthew Proser presiding.

The Treasurer's report indicated that as of December 21, the Society had a balance of $1120.91. The projected expenses for 1988, including $1000 budgeted for the Second International Marlowe Conference, are $1700. The Membership Report indicated that MSA currently has 134 members who have paid their dues within the past two years. All members are urged to pay their dues promptly to meet the expenses of the Society.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the following issues: The Committee recognized Dr. Faustus: The A-text, ed. by David Ormerod and Christopher Wortham (University of Western Australia Press, 1985), as the recipient of the Roma Gill Award for 1987; John Shawcross introduced the possibility of an annual publication by the Society, a suggestion strongly endorsed by the Committee; the Committee decided to reduce the dues for student members; and Robert Logan reported on preparations for the Second International Conference.

MARLOWE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Matthew N. Proser, President
Constance B. Kuriyama, Vice President
Sara M. Deats, Secretary
Robert A. Logan, Treasurer
Bruce E. Brandt, Membership Chairman and
MSA Newsletter Editor
Edward L. Rocklin, MSA Book Reviews Editor

All business and organizational correspondence except for memberships should be addressed to the President:

Professor Matthew N. Proser, President
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New memberships and renewals should be sent to the Membership Chairman:

Professor Bruce E. Brandt
Membership Chairman
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MSA Newsletter publishes reviews of Renaissance, and especially Marlovian, drama; notices of recent and forthcoming publications; announcements; and brief articles or notes of interest to Marlovian scholars. The opinions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect that of the MSA. The editor reserves the right to refuse items, to ask for revisions, and to make stylistic changes that he deems appropriate. MSAAN reviews are usually around 800 words long, but may occasionally be longer. The beginning of a review should identify the company, the dates of performance, and the director. MSA members are encouraged to announce publications and other items or meetings of interest to the membership. Materials for the next issue of MSAAN should be received by October 1, 1988. Send inquiries, announcements, and submissions to Professor Bruce E. Brandt, Editor, MSAAN, at the above address.

MSA Book Reviews publishes reviews of books on Marlowe and his period. Reviews, suggestions for reviews, and inquiries should be sent to the Reviews Editor:

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MARLOWE'S COPIOUSNESS AND
JONSON'S "INFINITE RICHES":
THE JEW OF MALTA AND
BARTHOLOMEW FAIR

An abstract of the paper presented at the MSA Annual

This paper explores certain claims by T. S.
Eliot about the relationship of Jonson and Marlowe,
especially Eliot's claim that "Jonson is the legiti-
mate heir of Marlowe." Eliot sees them both as writ-
ing "humours" plays: Jonson as a comedy of humours and
Marlowe as a tragedy of humours. By "humours" Eliot
seems to mean "farce" in its old sense.

The Jew of Malta and Bartholomew Fair don't
have any literal points of relation, like the opening
of The Jew of Malta and Volpone, yet they have many
things in common. In both plays, the world is
projected as a place of material things, wealth,
opulence, display, and solidiity. There is a lot of
eating and drinking in both plays. Stylistically,
Marlowe and Jonson are frankly and openly rhetorical;
their speakers delight in acting for their own sake.
The characters are given to orations and exuberant
self-expression.

Jonson is the legitimate heir of Marlowe in the
way that he conceives a play as a self-conscious,
rhetorical artifact rather than a vividly imagined
projection of reality that depends forcefully on nar-
ратive progression. Marlowe's and Jonson's plays are
demonstrations and exhibitions rather than dramatic
stories. They are intensely episodic and seem
organized around a central theme or concept rather
than being a unified fable. Curiously enough, The Jew
of Malta is the most Jonsonian of Marlowe's plays.
Eliot called it a "tragic farce," and it is allied
with Bartholomew Fair in its savagely satirical view
of the world. In this respect, both Jonson and Mar-
lowe are radically different from Shakespeare.

METADRAMA IN MARLOWE'S
THE JEW OF MALTA

An abstract of the paper presented at the MSA Annual

This essay examines the metadramatic elements
in Marlowe's The Jew of Malta, demonstrating that
although Barabas is often interpreted as the embodi-
ment of greed, as the archetypal Machiavel, or as the
prototypic revenger, he is also an obsessive
dramaturge, scripting scenarios and manipulating his
cast of victims for his own pleasure and profit.
Ultimately, my essay argues, the delight in improvisa-
tion and impersonation proves paramount, and Barabas's
monomania for "playing" (not the Machiavel's desire
for power nor the Usurer's greed) prompts his final,
fatal intrigue against Calymath.

This essay further traces Barabas's parallel
descents into both grotesquerie and theatricality, as
the Jew assumes less and less dignified public roles
even as he moves from playwright/director to stage
manager to actor, becoming more and more the active
participant in his own interior drama. Therefore,
although from one perspective the play captures
through Barabas's ebullient gusto the sheer joy of
playmaking, it also provides a wry and skeptical com-
ment on the moral efficacy of dramatic art--its
pleasure, its potency, and its potential peril.
MARLOWE AND THE POLITICS OF CANONIZATION


In the first half of the nineteenth century, Marlowe was the only Elizabethan or Jacobean playwright who rose from virtual obscurity to being considered one of the finest Renaissance poets. Because of Marlowe's reputation (one which was gathered from secondhand reports and creative biographers) and the outlandish nature of his drama, men of letters in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century seemed reluctant to address Marlowe's works in print. While his plays were provided by Dodsley (1744), Reed (1780), and Scott (1810), nothing is said of his place among old English playwrights. In fact, in the prefaces to these series, the editors pay credence to the likes of Shirley and Brome without mentioning Marlowe at all. Dilke (1814) does discuss Marlowe in the preface to his series (which is begun by Faustus), but only in the footnotes. From this evidence it is certain that for many years Marlowe's work was thought of highly by scholars and critics, though, because of his reputation, they may have had been reluctant to assess the playwright in print.

However, two significant changes took place in the first half of the nineteenth century which directly affected Marlowe's status. First, the market for old English drama boomed, primarily because of the general popularity of drama among the working classes. While historians of drama in our time see this period as one of artistic decline in drama, it nevertheless was a time of great innovation, both in staging and dramatic adaptation. In this atmosphere, the only stage produ-

ction of Marlowe's work in over two hundred years was possible.

Play editions based on prompt books for play productions were also printed and circulated as popular collector's items for the theatregoer. This made the revived plays of some of the old dramatists more affordable, as the plays were released in separate editions and not in expensive volumes. Penley's version of The Jew of Malta was published in this spirit and, from 1818-1820, Marlowe's plays were printed separately from earlier quartos.

This new market for plays grew simultaneously with the rise of the literary periodical. Not only did The Edinburgh Review and Blackwood's Magazine provide a forum for theatre reviews, they in a sense created the professional theatre critic. It was in the periodical, then, that play productions were given serious credence by literary figures such as Hazlitt and Collier. The theatre critic was unobliged to affirm traditional assessments of old drama; he was in fact attracted to the strange and extraordinary because it enhanced interest in the periodical. Finally, the 1818 production of The Jew of Malta, while it obviously failed to bring Marlowe's plays back to the stage, renewed an interest in his contribution as a dramatic poet.

A second change in literary perspective which influenced Marlowe's status was brought about by a new form of critical inquiry. On one hand, critics began to decontextualize passages of old drama and assess their poetic merit. On the other hand, biographers and literary historians began to establish developmental paradigms of literary history which reaffirmed their own cultural biases. The appearance of Lamb's Specimens (1808) was significant in that it was the first work to downplay Marlowe's biography in light of his poetic achievements. This view is consistent with the Romantic belief that an excessive lifestyle often produces remarkable poetic ability. The method one sees in Lamb's Specimens marks a novel approach to literary evaluation which allows the critic to assess an author's work on certain absolute standards. The evaluation of Marlowe in terms of his poetic ability is repeated by Hazlitt (1820). Both evaluations of Marlowe's poetry are inspired, though, by conflicts within the individual critic's own life. Finally, Marlowe becomes generally accepted when his works are published in 1826 by Pickering.

MEDIATING MYTH: THE ART OF MARLOWE'S HERO AND LEANDER

An abstract of the paper presented at the MSA Marlowe Workshop, San Francisco, 1987, by Theresia de Vroom,
Occidental College.

From Edward Blunt's editorial comment, "Desunt nonulla," in 1958 to the present day, readers of Marlowe's Hero and Leander seem to agree that the tragedy of the poem is not the death of its lovers but the fact that the poem does not let these lovers die: it was Marlowe's death which interrupted Hero and Leander's, thereby leaving their story unfinished. Marlowe's friend, George Chapman, soon "achieved the work he was born to do," according to C. S. Lewis, and "finished" the poem, while Henry Petoe, "inriched by a Gentleman a freind of mine, with the true Italian discours, of those Lovers further fortunes," wrote The Second Part of Hero and Leander to be published in the same year as Marlowe's "fragment" and Chapman's "continuation."

Led perhaps by Muriel Bradbrook's insistence that Hero and Leander is "complete" as a celebration of love and therefore to end it in tragedy would be a mistake, Louis Martz published an introduction (1972) to the Folger facsimile of the poem, then the only edition of the poem without Chapman's editorializing "Sestias." Martz's argument concluded that the poem was structurally complete because it could be divided into a symmetrical, triptych structure: two large mirror wings of equal length, the story of the two lovers, which surround a short mythical digression on Mercury and the Fates. Beginning where Martz left off, this paper shows that a triadic structure is everywhere in and around Marlowe's poem. The three-part structure is reflected in the geography of the Dardanelles: the kingdoms of Abydos and Sestos which are divided by the narrow Hellespont imitate or initiate the structure. A three-part structure is also the organizing principle of Marlowe's direct source, the sixth-century Hero and Leander by Musaeus. And finally, the most popular and plentiful edition of Musaeus's poem, which was printed by Aldus in the fifteenth-century and which is likely to have been known by Marlowe, is illustrated with woodcuts which are triptychs.

After having shown that Marlowe is drawing on a long line of three-part structures, the second part of the paper will try to account for the specific use of the triptych structure in Marlowe's poem. The paper will argue that the structure is a metaphor for the problem Marlowe faces when he tries to turn the story of Hero and Leander into a comedy. Like Leander, who has to swim the Hellespont in order to have Hero, the narrative of the lovers' triumph must "survive" the hundred-line digression of myth at the center of the poem. Which is to say that in order for Marlowe to reverse the outcome of the most popular story of the Renaissance, the tragic history of Hero and Leander, his poem must overcome the myth which seals their fate. Leander's swimming is analogous to the workings of the poem. He must cross the Hellespont and avert tragedy, like the narrative of the lovers must survive the hundred-line digression, in the same way that Marlowe's poetic art must overcome the popular, tragic story of Hero and Leander.

**FORCES OF OVERRULE: FATE, SYSTEM, AND INSTINCT IN MARLOWE**


One of the major ways in which Marlowe creates tension in his works is by setting in conflict forces
that vie for control of humankind. Chief among them is the opposition between systems of order and instinct. In a spectrum that ranges from psychological states to political states, this binary opposition provides the writer with a means for delimiting the human and non-human forces which prevent humankind from exerting control. Man-made systems dictate codes of behavior in morality, religion, politics, society, communication, and knowledge (e.g., warrior ethics, courtship practices, magic). Set against these systems is instinct--irrepressible, spontaneous, and anarchical. Always disruptive, instinct is sanctioned by Marlowe, as well as by Shakespeare, as an expression of creative independence (e.g., Tamburlaine and Cleopatra) but not as an expression of bourgeois individualism (e.g., Barabas and Iago). In this preference, neither Marlowe nor Shakespeare supports the increasingly dominant concern of their society with economic prosperity, even though both benefited from it professionally. Although the paper examined this conflict only as it appeared in the works of Marlowe and, most particularly, in Dido Queen of Carthage, it was with the understanding that, in the face of it, the two writers indicated a similar irresolution and dismay. Only Shakespeare lived long enough to sense, whether consciously or not, that he might best deal with the conflict by not dealing with it, by masking it from himself. Marlowe, unfortunately, died still struggling with it.

Differing from man-made systems, in origin if not always in operation, is Fate, what Shakespeare, less ominously than Marlowe, understands as the order of nature, a combination of "law and process" (The Winter's Tale 2.2.59). Marlowe portrays Fate as ultimate reality for human beings: it is inexorable and, justly or unjustly, human beings are struck down by it.

Marlowe's works, taken as a whole and apart from chronology, express a wholly fatalistic view of Fate, an almost systematic distrust of system, and a nearly instinctive fear of instinct. To verify this view, the paper drew upon Marlowe's entire body of work. It then narrowed its focus to Dido Queen of Carthage where tension is created by conflicts between system and instinct and fate and will, both human and divine. Yet these conflicts lack the tension that a clear moral perspective or even a Virgilian moral perspective might have given them. In Dido, Marlowe conveys a cheerless, if at times ironic, resignation--a fear--toward all the forces of overrule, but especially toward the instinct to love.

The paper concluded with an evaluation of the importance of the interplay of the three forces in Marlowe's own ethical and aesthetic thinking. Although they restrict a person, they can provide the stimulus for independent, creative expression and resourcefulness. For Marlowe himself not only do the forces of overrule provide an organizing idea for his writing, but they enable him to devise, in his own resourcefulness, a means for escaping psychological victimization by them, both for himself and for his audience.

THE JEW OF MALTA AND THE DISCOURSES OF COLONIALISM


In presenting as its protagonist Barabas "the Jew," Marlowe's The Jew of Malta provokes readings which center on the Semitism or anti-Semitism of the play or of its author. These readings, however, confront the first term of the title ("the Jew") without consideration of the second term ("of Malta"), and overlook the preoccupation with colonialism which the representation of Malta enforces--a preoccupation as important to the text as to its extra-theatrical context. The play is structured around a crucial link between the representation of place and of person which exposes the stereotype of the Jew as a product of a colonizing discourse like that imposed on Malta. In situating the Jew amidst a context of colonialism, the play explores and ultimately undermines the assertions of absolute difference (which enable the stereotype) as strategic fictions, imposed by a dominating power to enforce domination.

The play established Malta as an object of imperialist domination as its Governor adopts the dictates first of Turkey, then of Spain. Although the
Spanish Del Bosco is notably silent throughout, his continued presence with Ferneze keeps Spain's imperialist interests in the foreground and his discourse at the center of the text, as the representative colonialist voice. The play creates a tension between his definition of Malta and its own, for although Del Bosco sets up a binary opposition between Malta as a Christian, European "ours" and an alien Turkish "theirs," the play subverts the simple referentiality which this dichotomy implies--between Malta and Establishment and between Turkey and Outsider--and exposes as the central opposition the imperialist conflict between Turkey and Spain, two outside Establishments vying for control over the island. Del Bosco's designation of difference emerges not as "truth" but as a convenient fiction, which allows him to escape direct confrontation with the Turks by displacing his own opposition onto Malta. And instead of being a competing term within the ruling dichotomy (an "ours" to a threatening "theirs"), Malta emerges as a third term outside it, as a blank slate without a fixed meaning of its own and defined by imperializing voices.

Ferneze (whose knights recall the historical and markedly colonialistic Knights of St. John) emerges as a colonialist doing to Malta--particularly, to the Jews of Malta and to Barabas as their representative--from an internal position what Del Bosco does from an external one. And his discourse, like the Spaniard's, is marked by strategic designations of difference (in his case, between a Christian "ours" and a Jewish "theirs") which the play subverts. The play reveals the Governor's assertion of a Christian/Jew opposition as a revision of a more threatening conflict between Christian and Turk, in which the Jew is not a contender, but a third term outside the contention. Like Malta, which shares a similar schematic position, Barabas is presented as a blank slate whose definition is dictated from without and not inscribed from within in terms reflecting more about the subject than the object of domination.

Barabas empowers himself by exploiting the fictions of the dominating voice, by portraying himself to answer the stereotype of the Jew and playing to his society's desire to fix his identity in stereotyped terms. As he constructs and enacts a network of fictions, however, making it impossible to know the player from the play, he undermines that fixity and remains ultimately unknowable and unknown. He fails, finally, into "a deep pit past recovery" with Ferneze standing above, into a physical position which mirrors his symbolic one--a position of absence beneath the discourses of a dominating authority. This final tableau enforces the parallel between his representation and Malta's, for Del Bosco stands with Ferneze--the colonizing voice behind the colonizing voice--demanding that we recognize how much that voice has to do with the Jew of Malta, the figure and the play.

**OTHELLO**

Bard Productions, Ltd. (1984). William Marshall (Othello), Rod Moody (Iago), Jenny Agutter (Desdemona), DeVeren Bookwalter (Cassio), Peter MacLean (Brabantio), Jay Robinson (Duke), Leslie Paxton (Emilia), Joel Asher (Roderigo), Eugina Wright (Bianca), Phil Persons (Ludovico). Directed by Frank Melton.

Of the three Bard Productions I have seen, this one is easily the best. In fact, it is at least the equal of the two other available versions. The Olivier, although a film produced at Shepperton, scales down to the shallow depth-field of TV and is a dull production, as exciting as it was on stage. The BBC-TV version employs static camera angles that negate what a well-edited production can do for Shakespeare. The Bard version employs a stage setting, but is neither silly in its staginess as the Macbeth nor cramped by its set as the Richard II. Othello, a domestic tragedy, clenches in, as Bradley says, to "a close-shut murderous room." The one-on-one confrontations are suited to the dimensions of the tube, as one noticed by contrast in the somewhat awkward scenes from Cyprus Harbor and in the scene following the discovery of Desdemona's death--often difficult as everyone crowds into the chamber. Here, it was not only tedious but anti-climactic after the very moving scene in which Desdemona dies had pulled most of the emotion out of us. It was not that William Marshall threw Othello's finale away, as had James Earl Jones in the Winter Garden production, but that we felt that Othello deserved what he was going to give himself and wished he would be a bit more laconic in his leavetaking. On the whole, however, and with a few exceptions to be further noted, this production worked superbly within its various spaces, evoking the nocturnal scenes convincingly via the flicker of torch and candle, and creating vivid visual moments with its rich costumes--blues, reds, and golds, pinks and purples. A lot can be said for an opulent foreground in a medium that can provide little or no background. The production was free of the self-conscious "old master" techniques that can work well in a film (like Romeo and Juliet) but that can trap a TV production under old paint (as in Miller's Antony and Cleopatra).

Marshall gave us the basso Othello to which Robeson conditioned us in the Margaret Webster production of the 1940s. But Marshall was more in control of verse rhythms than Robeson and brought anguish to the role as Jones had not. Marshall's was an understated performance, appropriate for TV, but, at times, seemed too "laid-back," as in his unemphatic "Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm?" He "peaked" in his "when we shall meet at court" speech, which is about as late as an actor can choose to peak (Jones chose not to do so at all), but what we got was a restrained
and quietly moving performance. Marshall's "her father lov'd me" was said, in some sorrow, right to Brabantio. On "a friend that lov'd her," Marshall put his arm around Cassio, a nice foreshadowing of what Othello will come to believe.

Jonny Augutter's Desdemona was a bit beyond the first bloom of youth, but not yet the sophisticated woman, a few years from spinsterhood, of Maggie Smith. Augutter really did seem to be the daughter of the gentle, merely saddened Barbantio of Peter MacLean. Human and humane, he had given Desdemona the qualities that allow her to endure convincingly the terrors Othello is to inflict upon her. Augutter was convincingly womanly and innocent. One could share Othello's sadness in having to kill her and understand why this script has such a record of audience intervention. The murder scene was powerful, so much so that it pretty well erased what was to follow. What was to come was almost superfluous, and the production should have ended with alacrity.

Moody's Iago was not a non-com up from the ranks, but a fallen aristocrat to whom lack of promotion was motivation enough. Moody's social status made sense of his "relationship" with Joel Asher's Roderigo, who was Brabantio's best example of a "wealthy, curl'd darling" of Venice, and an embarrassing example who allowed Brabantio almost to understand Desdemona's choice of the Moor. Moody's bald head was a space to be drummed as he asked "How? How?" A superb moment came when Moody turned with a half smile to the camera on "t'ill us'd." Since the "talking head" approach was used sparingly in this production, its brief employment was potent here. Iago with Roderigo was splendid, but he was even more convincing with Othello. The hinge on which Iago swung Othello here was the latter's sense that he was a winner over Brabantio, in a sense, a "rival" for Desdemona. Othello's arrogance, though mildly expressed, allowed Iago to give more weight to Desdemona's deceiving of Brabantio than, obviously, it should have, and helped Iago push Othello into the Brabantio "position," which included a declamation into the vale of years. Thus this production showed Othello carrying out Brabantio's revenge upon Desdemona, unconsciously, of course, but brilliantly, as the initial gravamen is reiterated by Iago as Othello's mission.

A few sour grapes: one seldom realizes the importance of a small role until it is badly done, as was Leslie Paxton's Emilia, hardly an effective foil for her gentle mistress. When the Duke told Othello that he must away tonight," Desdemona's dismay showed that she had had other plans. That instant nicely touched upon the matter of the consummation of the marriage. But, later at Cyprus, Iago was robbed of his description of "bride and groom / Devesting them for bed"—that "innocent" simile which thrysts at Othello's possible sexual insecurity and describes what he and Desdemona have presumably just been doing. So—the earlier suggestion was, inexplicably, allowed to drop, as were Othello's lines about his "gentle love" being "raised up." Gone also was Iago's "Ha—I like not that!" Yet Othello alluded to the line a moment later.

While the editing left a lot to be desired, the brief scene in which Othello visits the fortifications of Cyprus (II.i.i) was left in. It gets Othello out of the way while Cassio visits Desdemona and shows us Shakespeare at work on thematics even while engaging in essential dramaturgy. External fortifications are rapidly becoming irrelevant as Iago's pestilence penetrates Othello's soul.

This is one of the best productions of Othello I have seen. It is available from Kultur, 1340 Ocean Avenue, Sea Bright, New Jersey 07760.

H. R. Coursen Bowdoin College

DOCTOR FAUSTUS


Behind the approach of the Actors Touring Company to Doctor Faustus seems to have been a belief in the critical commonplace that the play is a "flawed masterpiece." Most of the middle section, except for the Papal scene, was left out, there was no underplot with Wagner and his rustic disciple, while the German Emperor episode was almost completely rewritten. The adapted version also added an enactment of Faustus's visit to the underworld, where he was taken on a guided tour by Charon. With these changes the relation between the comic and serious material, as present in the A and B versions, was altered in favor of an overwhelming sobriety.

This note of sobriety was well served by the production's visual aspect. For the Lyric Studio's rectangular stage, surrounded by a tiered auditorium on three sides, Lez Brotherston designed an entirely monochrome set which for most of the performance remained dimly lit. It comprised a black and white speckled floor whose glossy surface suggested a marble-like texture. A sixteen-pointed black and white star, around three meters in diameter, was inlaid in the centre of the rectangular floor. Off the centre was a desk, made from the same marble-like material, three chairs and a stereo on a stand. Simple, mobile and functional—the desk could be easily shifted and covered by a different coloured cloth to double as a white altar for the Pope, a red table for the German Emperor or a platform for the Seven Deadly
The performance started with the lights in the studio going out. There was a sound of drums off stage and dimmed lights came on, revealing Faustus tensely bending over a book on the desk. Mephistopheles was sitting on a chair by the stereo stand; his manner seemed to be casual, one leg lifted over the other's knee. The Chorus entered from behind a black curtain, hung on the fourth side of the acting area. Standing centre stage and lit by a spotlight, he delivered the opening speech. By directly addressing the audience, singling out individual words, as if to rub in the moral of the story, and pointing towards Faustus, he quickly introduced a didactic tone which remained present all through the performance, despite the absence of such traditional Manichean devices as the Good and Bad Angels.

The opening scene established a marked contrast between Faustus and Mephistopheles. Peter Lindford's scholar, shorter in stature, dressed in a brownish-grey three piece suit and with shortly cropped hair, chubby face and round spectacles, was more of a provincial schoolboy than a scientific overreacher. A tense face and jittery manner suggested a person unsure of himself. His opening speech lacked enthusiasm for the pleasures lying at hand for a sound magician, while the conjuring scene showed a little schoolboy meddling in magic: he stood in the centre of the star, slightly stooped, knees bent, hesitated in delivering the conjuring verse and appeared terrified when interrupted by thunder. Amazed and overjoyed by the devil's pliancy and apparent obedience, he laughed like a child. "Consummatum est" was said with a great sense of pleasure and achievement--at this stage no thought was spared for damnation. When Mephistopheles fetched him "somewhat to delight his mind," Faustus almost drooled with excitement at the sight of a long golden gown.

Mephistopheles was tall, and in an elegant one-piece black suit, fashionably cut blond hair and delicate make up, he looked rather like an haute couture male model. His cool, sinister beauty, emphatically androgynous, was matched with his confident and composed delivery of lines. As played by George Anton, he had an air of intellectual superiority over Faustus: he was clearly bored and annoyed with the scholar's naivety at failing to grasp the point that hell is where we are. There was anger and impatience in Mephistopheles' voice, and he looked away scornfully while saying "what if this be hell." However, the production chose not to put a strong emphasis on the devil's sense of pain: his speech on hell (Scene 5,120-127) was cut.

The Papal scene was the peak of Faustus' power and enjoyment and the highest comic point of the production. The stage was brightly lit and the action was accompanied by loud sounds of church music. Faustus appeared dressed in a modern dress overcoat and a wide brimmed hat. The Pope--played by the actor doubling as Wagner and Chorus--was a grotesque-looking hunchback, constantly mumbling and quickly pacing around. Played very fast, with a great deal of violence and slapstick--the Papal cap flew over the stage, his hands were twisted and he was battered and thrown on the floor--the episode met with loud applause from the predominantly A-level student audience.

In terms of theatrical effects, perhaps the most interesting was the scene with the Seven Deadly Sins. The entrance of Wagner, dressed like a waiter in a white jacket and carrying a tray with glasses of beer, was preceded by fast moving strobe lights speckling the auditorium, and accompanied by loud jazz rhythms. Faustus drank beer and smoked a cigar while Mephistopheles impersonated each of the Seven Sins, standing on the desk which doubled as a platform stage. George Anton's excellent acting amusingly showed quick transformations from one sin to another and entirely carried off the scene.

The presentation of Helen is invariably a test for and an indication of a production's reading of the play. The ATC's Helen, which was a meter-high hand puppet ghost covered with a white gauze cloth, was in keeping with the presentation of Doctor Faustus as a story with a strong moral, rather than a celebration of a search and adventure. After the German Emperor scene, Faustus shed the schoolboy image and appeared wearing a long black dressing gown. His hair was dishevelled and he looked tired and dejected, as if the actor had taken the cue from the words of one of the Scholars: "methinks your locks are changed." He held the Helen puppet and spoke the line "was this the face" straight, with genuine passion, as if still not aware of the Devil's deceit or the irony of the situation. After the kiss, a mask fell off the puppet's face, revealing a skull. From now on even Faustus could not ignore the signs of his imminent end: curled up fetus-like on the floor centre stage and lifting his hands in desperation, he spoke the final lines while the bells struck. Mephistopheles came on and gently led him out, Faustus screamed in fear and was unceremoniously sucked off the stage by a strong wind. The Chorus stressed the moral once again.

My overall impression is that the ATC has read a great deal of traditional criticism of the play, and rather than choosing to argue with their claims, set out and succeeded in proving them. To do this, the company had to reduce the main character in size, play down his ambition and ignore the relationship he develops with Mephistopheles. However, my main caveat remains their strong moralistic message based on clear-cut polarities of innocence and temptation, good
and bad, salvation and damnation. At the time when the rationale behind such binary oppositions is highly questionable and when the majority of people within our cultural tradition cannot believe in absolutes, whether they are religious or moral ones, a production aiming to offer a clear moral message unfortunately may end up creating, as in this case, not much more than the pleasure of seeing one of the most popular and best known Elizabethan plays on stage.

Dr. Vesna Pistotnik

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

MSAN solicits announcements, notes, and brief articles relating to Marlowe. We also solicit reviews of Renaissance, and especially Marlovian, drama. The beginning of a review should identify the company, the dates of performance, and the director. Materials for the Fall issue should be received by October 1, 1988.

STUDIES IN MARLOWE


Seecamp, Carsten E. "Faust in Literature and Music."


Uffelman, Larry K. "Faust and Freshman Humanities"