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1993 sessions at the MLA Convention in Toronto. Send abstracts or papers of fifteen-minute length by March 1 to Professor Constance B. Kuriyama, President, Marlowe Society of America, Department of English, Box 4530, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

THIRD INTERNATIONAL MARLOWE CONFERENCE CAMBRIDGE, 1993

The Third International Marlowe Conference will be held at Corpus Christi College (Cambridge University, Cambridge, England) from June 28 to July 2, 1993. Our anticipated performance of Dido by the drama department of The King's School (Canterbury) now appears very likely. A number of paper proposals have been received by President Kuriyama, and one of the featured speakers will be Charles Nicholl, the author of Marlowe's Reckoning.

The Society continues to welcome proposals for papers of fifteen-minute length. In addition, we are organizing seminar-style sessions on the topics of Marlowe and history, Marlowe and his contemporaries, and teaching Marlowe, and we would like to hear from prospective participants in these seminar sessions. Other seminar-style sessions are still possible. Please send suggestions for papers, sessions, and types of sessions to President Kuriyama. We would appreciate hearing from anyone interested in participating or attending as soon as possible. The final deadline for paper submissions is March 1, 1993.

The preregistration fee for the conference, when received by April 15, will be $65 (US). After April 15, registration will be $75. The basic fee for lodging at Corpus Christi will be £44 per person per day. This will include bed and breakfast, morning coffee, a cafeteria lunch, afternoon tea, and a full-service dinner. Address all correspondence to Professor Constance B. Kuriyama, President, Marlowe Society of America, Department of English, Box 4530, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409.
HISTORY AND FANTASY
IN MARLOWE'S EDWARD II


The dominant conflict in Edward II is between subversive desire and the political structures of authority. In addition to the widely observed modifications of official history in the play, I locate one other, namely the dramatization of Edward's homoeroticism as a practice with serious political consequences. The chief exponent of political and moral order is the baron Mortimer Junior, the a-historical leader of the rebels. Mortimer's self-professed role as the voice of order is unquestioned not only by his supporters in the play but also by modern critics. As Debra Belt has recently noted, "Mortimer's self-representation as plain-speaker and moral man of affairs has been accepted despite contrary evidence" in the play. Mortimer is not the voice of ahtorial consent to the judgments brought against Edward and Gaveston. Like Edward, Mortimer is highly individuated. Whereas Edward gratifies a forbidden pleasure, Mortimer upholds the heterosexual privilege that is predicated on the law of the father. Edward's defiance of the father's authority is juxtaposed by Mortimer's allegiance to the late King and by his relationship with Edward's Queen. The Edward-Mortimer rivalry configures a set of contradictory attitudes toward the father, anticipating what Freud refers to as the "simple Oedipus complex" in which the male child's feelings for the father range from the desire of killing or substituting him to acquiescing to his authority. Edward's love for Gaveston (the object of the
father's hatred) and his neglect of political duty subvert the power of the father. Mortimer Junior's relentless opposition to Gaveston suggests the son's defense against subversive feelings for the father. Mortimer is the ideal subject whom the father would have favored as the defender of patriarchal hierarchy. In his undivided loyalty to, and in his consummate identification with the father, Mortimer vicariously fulfills the role of castrating father-figure, the parent eager to destroy the son for daring to disobey.

Marlowe's reconstruction of official history in Edward II is thus mediated by the play's fantasy structures, which revolve around the Oedipal drama. But while on the Oedipal level Mortimer identifies with that aspect of the father that is terrifying and threatening to the son, in the text's deeper fantasy structures Mortimer also projects a dangerous identification with Edward. Mortimer, at least ostensibly, is heterosexual like the father, yet his love relationship with Queen Isabella takes second place to his obsessive need to overthrow Gaveston, suggesting an unconscious fear of his own homoerotic desire. Mortimer's latent homosexuality is suggested by two important a-historical developments: 1) his preoccupation with Gaveston's deviant masculinity, which the barons equate with baseness; and 2) his apparent collusion with Isabella in plotting Gaveston's death.

Marlowe's reconstruction of historical material in the demotion of Gaveston from gentleman to "groom" clarifies the political insurrection as rooted in the threat to heterosexual privilege. In the play "baseless" is a signifier of the unstated target of abuse, namely homoeroticism. For Mortimer especially the epithet refers to the minion's pathologized body. Mortimer's real anxiety, however, is Gaveston's abrogation of authority by means of his ability to transgress fixed boundaries, which contrasts sharply with Mortimer's self-appointed role as the defender of social and sexual orthodoxy. Politically, Mortimer's anxiety upholds the culturally inscribed fear of the negation of compulsory heterosexuality; psychologically, Mortimer's hatred of Gaveston's "baseness" springs from fear of being engulfed by something dirty, a common anal fantasy. The fear provokes aggression, guilt, and the desire to destroy the "hated" object.

The collusion between Mortimer and Isabella in plotting Gaveston's death inscribes two related Oedipal fantasies: 1) the child's desire for both the father and the mother, and 2) the son's rage against the father, which stems from the latter's ambiguous position with regard to the son's sexuality. Through Mortimer's plan to murder Gaveston at the behest of Isabella, Marlowe casts the Queen as a symbolic mother/mistress on whom the male child, in this case Mortimer Junior, projects his sexual ambivalence. Judith Butler has noted that although Freud, in The Ego and the Id, "introduces the Oedipal complex to explain why the boy must repudiate the mother and adopt an ambivalent attitude toward the father, he remarks shortly afterward that, 'It may even be that the ambivalence displayed in the relations to the parent should be attributed entirely to bisexuality and that it is not . . . developed out of identification in consequence of rivalry . . . .'" The ambivalence is conditioned by the boy's having to "choose not only between the two object choices, but the two sexual dispositions, masculine and feminine." The male child's more typical choice of "the heterosexual," reasons Butler, "would, then, be the result, not of the fear of castration by the father, but of the fear of castration—that is, the fear of 'feminization' associated within heterosexual cultures with male homosexuality." According to this important clarification of the Oedipal situation, it is not first and foremost the heterosexual desire for the mother that must be punished and repressed, but the homosexual cathexis that must be subordinated to a culturally sanctioned heterosexuality" (Butler, p. 59). The fact that Mortimer Junior intensifies his illicit involvement with Isabella only after she pleads with him for Gaveston's reinstatement and, presumably, his death, is a coherent extension of Mortimer's fear of his own "feminization." Flouting his heterosexual union with Edward's Queen while simultaneously abhorring her feminine discourse, Mortimer forfeits his desire for the father, thereby consolidating his masculinity. Edward's gruesome punishment thus becomes the symbolic fulfillment of Mortimer's anal-erotic impulses, which he has expressed and evaded all along.

In Marlowe's sources the overt cause of the political unrest is not Gaveston's reinstatement but Edward's disregard of the barons' counsel and his wasting of the treasury. Edward's dissolution is described in terms of its effects on Edward's personal morality; the chronicles never refer explicitly to the political repercussions of homoerotic desire. Yet the covert assumption is that Edward's unholy body, and not just his political ineptness, incurs the wrath of heaven. Whereas in the chronicles Edward's and Gaveston's punishments amount to a providential "cleansing" of the state, in Edward II they are fanatical and hypocritical acts sanctioned by official history. Marlowe's departures from chronicle history inscribe a forceful critique of Renaissance historiography, whose aim is to impose on human action a providentialist naturalism which is out of step with the world of realpolitik and repressed desire in Edward II.

"I, MEPHASTOPHILIS": SELF, OTHER, AND DEMONIC PARODY IN MARLOWE’S DOCTOR FAUSTUS


Revising the norm of self-fashioning where the self imitates Christ, Faustus achieves his selfhood in a subversive alliance with Mephistophilis, a version of Satan, the great demonic "other" of Marlowe's age. The 1604 A Text highlights Faustus’s choice to ally himself with the "other," and the onus for his choice (and thus its consequences) lies solely with him. The infernal agency is more powerful in the EFB and the B-Text. Aligning himself with the non-Christ (his "other"), Faustus emulates Satan. Thus, parody plays a crucial role in the text. There are two distinct modes of parody in the play. The first is an ironic subtext of scriptural inversions and inverted rites, pointing to the distance between the divine and the Satanic. A related form of parody is seen in the alliance between Faustus and Mephistophilis, which apes the relationship between Jesus and his disciples. The demon is far from the horrifying "other": he is entrenched within so that his hell becomes an inner darkness that Faustus shares. His initial choice hardens into inevitability, and the meaning of damnation becomes to live with his own choices forever. He approaches his appalling internal "other," adopting the demonic vocabulary, its intractability, and its perverse logic. The second kind of parody is seen in Faustus's quest for self-knowledge, a parody of the Christian's journey toward God. Though the goal of Faustus's journey is antithetical to the end of a Christian's career, there are remarkable similarities. Faustus's self-knowledge marks the final inversion of his life. The Christian's fulfillment in God is an expansion outward to God. Yet Faustus' dark fulfillment involves an inward retreat--a diminishing, not an amplification. Finally, unable to ascend to God, Faustus returns to himself and to the infernal darkness. He achieves self-knowledge when he acknowledges his demonic "other" and hails that thing of darkness as his own.

FAUSTUS AS SATIRE; OR, THE DOCTOR "DAMB'D" IN THE ENGLAND OF DONNE'S "GODFATHERS"


In late May of 1593, while the plague raged in London and Topcliffe's surveillance and arrests of Catholics reached unprecedented levels, two deaths occurred under the purvue of high ministers of Elizabeth's regime. One was Marlowe's notorious death on May 30, and the other occurred more quietly in disease-ridden Newgate Prison, after authorities transferred Henry Donne there from the Clink, where he had been awaiting trial with William Harrington, the Catholic father.
accused of “shriving” the younger brother of John Donne in rooms at Thavies Inn in early May.

The conjunction of the deaths of Marlowe and the younger Donne in that deadly May of 1593 may help focus our attention on the hellish conditions under which London was then writhing, and to which Donne would daringly allude in his satires—poems which would begin to circulate about the time that Marlowe’s last play would mysteriously emerge and begin its posthumous life on the London boards, about eighteen months after Marlowe and Henry Donne had died. In this paper, I suggest that Faustus too is a satire which savagely indicts the abuses of temporal and spiritual power Donne characterized as a power play by England’s “godfathers” (“Satyre III”). Faustus, like Donne’s satires, chronicles the usurpation of the stage of human action by a corrupt system of coercive power, so that both the “amiable” doctor of Wittenburg and England’s hapless “wards” are seduced, exploited, and cruelly deprived of access to mercy or truth. (Henry Donne broke under torture and informed against his priest, then died of the fever raging at Newgate Prison).

I draw attention to the manipulative forces against which Faustus struggles as he is drawn into the service of the dark lords of the Kingdom of Hell. I note the way victims in the play are ensnared by hunger and fear, coupled with threats of torment, as when Robin is forced into Wagner’s social-sexual service, and how these forces drive Robin’s revenge in cuckoldding his abuser. Just as Lucifer seduced Mephistopheles and deprived him of the “taste” of “heavens joye,” so Wagner seduces Robin and so Faustus is lured and prodded into his spectacular antics through his bargain with Hell. In this nightmare world, Faustus’s poignant attempts to repent and to reclaim his forfeited humanity are relentlessly barred with threats of torture and death (the “swords and kniues, Poyon, gunnes, halteres . . . Layde before” Faustus recall Topcliffe’s notorious holding up of these same instruments of death during his scandalous interrogation of recusants). When terrified Faustus recants, it is with promises to burn God’s churches and slay his ministers, and later, when Faustus turns against the “old man” who attempts to succor him and offer him the sacrament of penance, Faustus directs a gang of demons to hunt down and tear the pitiful anachronism to pieces.

Mephistopheles, I argue, even functions, with supreme irony, as a kind of Erasmian Praise of Folly, gesturing to the folly of his own usurpatative Kingdom in his bitter consolatio or dreamvision about that lost time and place where he used to “see God’s face” and “taste heavens joys,” or again when he informs Faustus that there is no “miracle” greater than to be “a living man.” Faustus’s desires for professional fruition and intercourse with a woman, far from being attained through the dark arts he is taught, are denied him by his parodic confessor, who for 24 years witholds from him any like the sacramental experiences of penance, Eucharist, marriage, or priesthood.

Thus Marlowe’s own brilliant diabolism turns a Protestant morality play (the Faustbook) into an excoriating Lucianic jest at the expense of the ruling powers of Elizabethan England. In a deeper way, the play may constitute a kind of desperate cry of conscience from a scholar-turned-informer, a man who in the last months of his life may have determined that the “image” held up to him by the Kingdom of Hell of “that peerless dame reknowned throughout the world for majesty” was a farcical substitute for the kinds of human plentitude forbidden “England’s sons.” Marlowe used the machinery of the discredited “old religion,” I contend, as a wickedly clever foil to lay bare the spiritual emptiness of the Elizabethan regime, all the while seeming to play to the anti-Papist bigotry of London audiences, in a kind of satirical doubling endemic to the tradition of the English Catholic Reform since the days of More and Erasmus, a tradition still defiantly alive in the dissident intellectual circles in which John Donne and Christopher Marlowe moved.

Bridges "Through the Moving Air": Some Theatrical Spaces in Marlowe’s Plays

Even when a stage is "full," it contains unoccupied spaces. One aspect of this kind of theatrical space that merits more consideration is the "space between": the space that lies between the actors, especially at important moments in the play. Many of these "spaces between" are registered by the spectator simply as part of the visual configuration of the action; at times, however, words and movement draw attention to the area of the stage between the actors, and the space itself becomes significant.

The effect of "space between" is often complementary, reinforcing other theatrical signs. Thus the distances between characters signal their differences and the nature of their relationships, personal, social, and political. "Space between" adds emphasis to the positioning of the actors on the stage, whether this is organized horizontally (across the stage platform) or vertically (with degrees of physical elevation). At the same time, "space between" creates expectations and suspense. Space on stage is always potentially where something may happen next. Characters may encroach upon or approach across the space; they may move suddenly, or delay; they may keep their distance or move apart. In these ways and others, "space between" plays a role in influencing audience response.

The paper looks at some of the implications of "space between" in Marlowe's plays. It does this in the context of staging conventions and possibilities in the Elizabethan playhouse. Two aspects are considered. Each of Marlowe's plays employs distinctive kinds of "space between": that of Tamburlaine could be characterized as "ritual" space; that of The Jew of Malta as "deceiving"; of Edward II as "separating"; of Doctor Faustus as "connecting." The paper extends from these definitions to note how the nature of the space contributes to the shaping of audience expectations.

A second concern is with stage positioning and how this may implicate the audience in the action of the play. Each of Marlowe's plays organizes "space between" differently within the stage space, linking it in various ways with platform and facade. In Edward II, such relationships are mostly conventional. The play uses a series of commentators, positioned away from the facade towards the outer edge of the platform, to direct the focus of audience attention. At such times the audience shares the perspective of the marginal observer, viewing the action at stage center across the separating "space between." In contrast to this, the paper suggests that some of the "space between" in Doctor Faustus may have effects which challenge the association of platform position sharing, especially if the play's shows were staged using a central dais for the privileged on-stage spectator. If so, the audience shared in the perspective of the centrally-located spectator, viewing the show across the connecting "space between."

**TROILUS AND CRESSIDA**


"Lechery, lechery, still wars and lechery; nothing else holds fashion."

These words, snarled by the malcontent Thersites, reverberate throughout *Troilus and Cressida*. Shakespeare's bitter drama of martial and amorous betrayal - Achilles' violation of the chivalric ideal in his brutal gang-slaying of the unarmed hero Hector and Cressida's more forgivable perfidy to the courtly love ideal in the breaking of her vows to the love-smitten Troilus. The play thus reveals honor and love to be subject to the practical exigencies of survival and reduces military glory and amorous passion to nothing but treachery and lechery.

*Troilus and Cressida*, set in Troy around 1200 b.c., resonates with contemporary nuances. Camping on the margins of Troy, the Greek army, like the United States forces in the 1960's, flounders in the morass of a foreign war that seemingly cannot be won. The formidable Trojan hero Hector dominates the battlefield, and Achilles, the only Greek champion capable of challenging the Trojan titan, has pledged his love to Priam's daughter Polyxena and thus will not fight her countrymen. Refusing to arm for battle in keeping with his vow, he tarries in his tent, diverting himself by amorous dalliance with his male companion and lover Patroclus. The martial plot thus focuses on the machinations of the Greek generals—a trio of Machiavels named Agamemnon, Ulysses, and Nestor—in their efforts to engage Achilles in the battle and through his prowess to vanquish their Trojan nemesis. They finally achieve their goal, but only after Hector slays Patroclus, friend of Achilles, inciting the famed warrior to ambush the unarmed Trojan and order his Myrmidon thugs to slaughter him.

The love plot dramatizes a parallel betrayal in the liaison between Troilus, the youngest prince of Troy, and the lady Cressida. When her father, the Trojan traitor Calchas, deserts to the Greeks, Cressida remains behind in Troy with her uncle Pandarus, who, hoping for preferment, engineers her sexual surrender to Troilus, thereby earning immortal notoriety as the archetypal bawd. After the unfortunate Cressida is traded to the Greeks in return for Antenor (who ironically will later sell out Troy to the invaders), she shifts her affections to her new "guardian," the Greek seducer Diomedes. The play thus concludes with the bitter gall of military treachery
and sexual betrayal.

Shakespeare updates the conflicts of prehistoric Anatolia to those of seventeenth-century England and the cynical deflation of both arms and amour further invites a contemporary staging. Accepting this challenge, The Shakespeare Theatre employs anachronistic costumes, sets, and props to stress the parallels between the campaign to storm Troy in 1200 B.C., and the Desert Storm campaign of 1991 A.D. The pragmatic Greeks, who juxtapose elevated rhetoric about order and degree with Machiavellian policy, in this production clearly parallel the American forces, with Menelaus, the cuckolded King of Sparta, presented as a strutting British field marshal. The American uniforms worn by the actors and the barrels of oil decorating the stage, remind the audience that the cloaking of commercial drives in high-sounding phrases has not been confined to the politicians of prehistoric Greece or Renaissance England.

If this production transforms its cadre of Greek generals into Allied officers, it costumizes the legendary laggard Achilles, dramatically played by Timothy Stickney, as an African-American Rambo gone native, with corn-plaited mane and bloousy Arabian trousers, and expands its multicultural cast to include two other African-American actors, Bernard Addison and Craig Wallace, who effectively create the warrior roles of Ajax and Patroclus.

The Trojans, antagonists of the Desert Storm generals, wear a motley conglomeration of Arab and contemporary costumes, with Firdous Bamji as Paris and Mark Conklin as Troilus presented as hybrids, part middle-eastern desert bedouins, part New York street hoods. Only Hector—depicted by Daniel Southerin as a magnificent giant, strong of sinew and gentle of speech—attains the dignity of a middle-eastern sheik. Bizarrely appropriate to this hodge-podge of styles, Pandarus is splendidly portrayed by Floyd King as a jaded, somewhat shabby expatriate from the boulevards of Paris. This mixture of modes and milieus produces a sleaziness that transcends nationality or political position and becomes the signature of this production.

Not surprisingly, all this sleaze achieves mixed results, some effective, some disappointing. As I interpret the drama, the double plot plays variations on the theme of deflated illusions and smashed ideals, and on the disparity between elevated rhetoric and debased actions. On one hand, the heroic albeit very human Hector, who speaks for reason but acts for glory, adheres foolishly to the rubrics of honor and pays his life for his illusions. On the other hand, his younger brother and analogue, the equally heroic and human Troilus, slavishly obeys the code of courtly love and sacrifices his heart for his ideals. But whereas Southern invests Hector with both simplicity and dignity, thereby achieving a stunning poignancy in his death, Conklin limns Troilus as an ardent but awkward, gangling adolescent and thus his broken heart fails to arouse the wrenching pain evoked by Hector's broken body. Similarly, Gayle Finer's Cressida resembles nothing so much as a slightly tawdry camp follower, and the humorous depiction of both title characters diminishes their significance, reducing the love plot to a comic mimicry of the more central military action.

This tonal imbalance proves particularly disappointing since the play stages some disturbing moments rich with potentially searing social comment. The production accentuates the commodification of women implicit in Shakespeare's text. Cressida is physically shoved into Troilus' outstretched arms; she is literally handed from Trojan to Greek; finally, she is callously manhandled in her "welcome" to the Greek camp, recalling the recent Skyhook Convention in a Las Vegas Hotel where several harassed women ran a similar gauntlet of grasping, groping military hands. However, despite her often touching vulnerability, Cressida's comic depiction earlier in the play impedes audience empathy with her predicament, a predicament so topical as to plead a more sympathetic development.

The day after viewing Troilus and Cressida I returned to Tampa from Washington by plane. An anonymous fellow passenger on the flight shared with me her response, not only to this particular production of Troilus and Cressida but to film and stage presentations of Shakespeare in general. "They often make me discouraged about the human race," she lamented. "One would think that after 400 years, people would have changed more." Recalling the headlines I had read that morning in the Washington Post--accounts of the violence in Bosnia and South Africa and of the sexual peccadillos of Park Avenue actors--I nodded, murmuring with Thebites, "Yes, lechery, lechery, still wars and lechery; nothing else holds fashion."

Sara Deats University of South Florida

**RECENT STUDIES IN MARLOWE**


Geckle, George L. "Edward II." *Shakespeare Bulletin*


ALSO OF INTEREST

MSA member Roslyn Knutson's The Repertory of Shakespeare's Company: 1594-1613 (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991) explores the Elizabethan repertory system and seeks to establish the repertory of the Chamberlain's men and the King's men. Her concern is not with authorship, but with ownership, and a lengthy appendix summarizes the evidence for every attribution of ownership to Shakespeare's company.

Marlowe lies outside the scope of this study. However, one interesting albeit purely speculative idea raised in the notes may interest Marlovians. Since we do not know the whereabouts of the script for Edward II between the dissolution of Pembroke's men and the play's acquisition by the Queen's men around 1686, Knutson notes the possibility that Edward II could have been performed by the Chamberlain's men either when Shakespeare was writing Richard II or when it was first coming into production (230).

NOTICE

Materials for the next issue of MSAN should be received by April 1, 1993. Film or drama reviews, announcements, and brief articles or notes on Marlowe are welcome. See MSAN address on page 2.