FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
MARLOWE CONFERENCE

The Fourth International Conference of the Marlowe Society of America will be held at St. Catharine's College and Corpus Christi College in Cambridge, England, from Monday, June 29 to Friday, July 3, 1998. Abstracts, proposals, or papers on any topic relating to Christopher Marlowe should be sent to MSA President Sara Munson Deats, 9049 Quail Creek Drive, Tampa, Florida, 33647 (e-mail: sdeats@chuma.cas.usf.edu). The proposals and papers presently received explore such diverse topics as the reception of Marlowe's plays in the early modern period, Marlowe on stage and screen, Marlowe and Renaissance skepticism, Marlowe's experiments with genre, and the history and repertory of the Admiral's Men. Additional papers in these areas are welcome as are papers and panels on other areas of Marlowe studies and pedagogy. Topics suggested to Professor Deats before September will be included in an updated list of proposed topics in the Fall Newsletter. The final deadline for all submissions is November 15, 1997.

MSA WEB SITE

The Marlowe Society now has its own home page which will provide information about the Marlowe Society, its meetings and conventions, and its publications. It includes back issues of our Book Reviews and will include back issues of the Newsletter. Check it out at http://www.sla.purdue.edu/academic/engl/msar.

ROMA GILL PRIZE

The Marlowe Society's 1993-94 Roman Gill Prize has been awarded to Emily Bartels's Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993). Emily Bartels is Associate Professor of English at Rutgers University. Spectacles of Strangeness is a ground-breaking study of alterity and subversion in the drama of Christopher Marlowe. Carefully unraveling Marlowe's preoccupation with "familiariz[ing] unfamiliar worlds and defamiliariz[ing] ... familiar ones;" (14), the book demonstrates how the plays resist imperialist strategies of exploitation through the exposure of "the demonization of an other as a strategy for self-authorization and self-empowerment" (xv). The blurring of differences between familiar and unfamiliar characters and geographical spaces is, argues Bartels, crystallized in Tamburlaine, in which unstable conquered spaces reveal the similarities underlying all concepts of empire. The subversive structures of Tamburlaine and other plays ultimately create a sustained critique of the English imperialist strategy of constructing the other as alien. Carefully researched, annotated and edited, the book is a valuable addition to Marlowe criticism in the 1990s.

Honorable Mention was awarded to Roy Kendall for his article "Richard Baines and Christopher Marlowe's Milieu," English Literary Renaissance 24 (1994): 507-522. Of particular significance to students of Marlowe's biography, Kendall's article examines "previously neglected and untranslated documents" (508) to show that the Baines Note of 1593 "was remarkably similar to the dark self-portrait(s) which Baines had painted ten years before when in prison in Rheims" (508). Kendall's careful analyses of the documents he presents, whether one agrees with all of his conclusions, suggest that there is more to consider in the Baines Note and that there is greater complexity surrounding it than has hitherto been known. Thus, what gives importance to Kendall's study is not only his updating of Paul Kocher's 1962 book, Christopher Marlowe, through a detailed examination of the evidence but the freshness of the documentary evidence itself. He has, in effect, provided evidence crucial to the continuation of the dialogue among critics on the uncertainties of Marlowe's biography.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Materials for the Fall Newsletter are due by Sept. 1.
MARLOWE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Sara M. Deats, President
Robert A. Logan, Vice President
Viviana Comensoli, Secretary
Roslyn L. Knutson, Treasurer
Bruce E. Brandt, Membership Chairman and
MSA Newsletter Editor
Paul Whitfield White, MSA Book Reviews Editor

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

Professor Sara M. Deats, President
Marlowe Society of America
9049 Quail Creek Drive
Tampa, Florida, 33647
(e-mail: sdeats@chuma.cas.usf.edu)

New memberships and renewals should be sent to the Membership Chairman:

Professor Bruce E. Brandt
Membership Chair, MSA
English Department, Box 504
South Dakota State University
Brookings, SD 57007
(e-mail: brandtb@ams.sdstate.edu)

ALL MEMBERSHIP FEES SHOULD BE PAID IN U.S. DOLLARS

U.S. and Canada: 1 year = $20, 3 years = $50
Overseas members: 1 year = $25, 3 years = $65
Graduate students: U.S./Canada = $10; Overseas = $15

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. Send inquiries, announcements, and submissions to Professor Brandt at the above address. The deadline for the next issue is Sept. 1, 1997.

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:

Professor Paul Whitfield White, Editor
MSA Book Reviews
Department of English
1358 Heavilon Hall
Purdue University
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1358
(e-mail: paulwhit@omni.cc.purdue.edu)

C MSA: All rights reserved to authors.

HOFFMAN PRIZE

Longtime MSA member Dr. Ruth Lunney has been awarded the eighth Calvin and Rose G. Hoffman Prize for Distinguished Publication on Christopher Marlowe. The award was given for a lengthy essay entitled "Not 'Shakespearean' but 'Debatable': Rewriting the Narrative of Dramatic Character." It explores the relationship between Marlowe and Shakespeare in the context of changes in the rhetoric of dramatic character late in the sixteenth century. The term "debatable" points not so much to a change in the "kind" of character as to a significant shift in audience response. Audiences were enabled to observe the action differently and to ask different questions about some of the figures on stage. The key question altered from "Should?" ("Should or should not this character take revenge?") to "Why?" ("Why is he reluctant to take revenge?"). She finds that the first of the new "debatable" characters was Marlowe's Faustus.

The scope of Dr. Lunney's essay is extensive, referring to more than twenty plays between c.1560 and 1600. In rewriting the narrative of dramatic character, she provides a fresh appraisal of "morality" characters as well as those of Marlowe and Shakespeare. Dr. Lunney's essay is not yet published and will ultimately be chapter six of a book-length study of Marlowe.

THE PASSION AND APOCALYPSE: CHRISTIAN ICONOGRAPHY IN MARLOWE'S EDWARD II

An abstract of the paper presented at the 1996 MSA Meeting by Patrick Ryan, University of Iowa

When he attended a Marlowe Society production of Edward II, Clifford Leech recognized the "effective but unobtrusive symbolism" in Marlowe's stage imagery. Leech cites a specific example: when rebellious lords come to arrest King Edward, they follow a "gloomy fellow" on-stage, a mower who, with his scythe, seems to personify death. Subsequent scholarship continues to examine Marlowe's stage imagery as a powerful component of his drama. In "What are kings, when regiment is gone?" The Decay of Ceremony in Edward II," David Bevington and James Shapiro focus on Marlowe's "visual vocabulary." They show how the playwright choreographs action, stages emblematic tableaux, and deploys iconic stage properties that enrich Edward II as a theatrical production. Bevington and Shapiro find that Marlowe takes images directly from Alciati's and Whitney's emblem books, thereby encouraging the Elizabethan audience to interpret his dramatic spectacle in relation to conventional Renaissance iconography. In my paper, I examine Marlowe's appropriation of Christian iconography in Edward II.
Marlowe invites interpretation of the king’s tragedy by framing his arrest, torture, and assassination within a panoply of images derived from the iconography of Christ’s passion and the apocalypse.

During my presentation, to identify and illustrate Christian images used by Marlowe in Edward II, I cite Elizabethan religious texts and show photographic slides of relevant art works—paintings, church windows, illuminations, and woodcuts. First, I show that, when he stages the secret murder of Edward, Marlowe shapes elements of the historical record into an emblematic tableau that mimics the "pressing of Christ," a metaphor of Jesus’ passion disseminated in Tudor ritual and prayer. Similarly, I interpret as symbolic Edward’s imprisonment in a castle cesspool before his assassination. Historical sources do not mention this torment, so some critics interpret it as mere bodily symbolism while others read psychological aberration into this stark visual image. But, as I show, Marlowe adapts this degradation from traditional iconography of Christ’s "secret passion." Other scenes in Edward II also recast symbolic actions that derive meaning from passion lore: King Edward’s tormentors choke him with puddle water, they beat a drum as they mock him, and the king gives his last jewel to the assassin Lightborn, all non-historical details that Marlowe adapts, as I show, from passion iconography.

Throughout this historical tragedy, Marlowe uses Christian apocalyptic imagery alongside passion iconography. For example, as they follow a mower onto the stage, soldiers coming to arrest Edward carry Welsh hooks—pruning hooks or weapons like pruning hooks. The Welsh hook symbolizes Christ’s passion to an Elizabethan audience. But these stage properties, when displayed alongside the mower’s scythe, also constitute traditional apocalyptic icons symbolizing the harvest of the wrath of God prophesied in the Biblical book of Revelations and reproduced in a wide variety of Elizabethan texts. Edward’s arrest under pruning hook and scythe foreshadows his secret murder staged in an emblematic tableau resembling iconographic depictions of the pressing of Christ. According to Anglican exegetical tradition, Christ’s pressing symbolizes his sacrificial death and his ultimate revenge upon human kind at his second coming. When Marlowe appropriates images from passion and apocalyptic iconography, he enlists a set of culturally shared symbols along with their cosmic and historical meanings.

This iconographic reading of the stage imagery in Edward II has important implications for Marlowe studies. Critics have viewed this historical drama, quite rightly, as an adumbration of modern historical thought, but in our modern retrospectives on the tragedy, we have overlooked the playwright’s artful use of Christian iconography and Reformation apocalyptic historicism to provide his audience with a frame of reference for responding to the play. Examining Marlowe’s translation of Renaissance and Reformation iconography into stage images can help us appreciate his depth as a cultural critic and a dramatist.
"PARASITES AND SODOMITES: THE BODY POLITICS OF EDWARD II"

An abstract of the paper presented at the 1996 MSA Meeting by Mario DiGangi, Indiana University

In Edward II, Marlowe's staging of a destructive conflict over the legitimacy of a king's homoerotic desires may induce us to regard those desires as sodomitical. Despite the social upheaval that ensues from Edward's patronage of Gaveston, however, the king's actions are not as unequivocally sodomitical as the peers, and certain critics of the play, would claim. To understand Marlowe's contribution to a cultural preoccupation with favoritism, we need to acknowledge that male homoerotic relations can be socially orderly as well as disorderly, and that "sodomy" names not a form of homoerotic desire but a political transgression often associated with inappropriate forms of intimacy between men.

From the start, Edward II challenges us to distinguish orderly from disorderly forms of male homoeroticism—Edward's request that Gaveston "share the kingdom" with him establishes the familiar and authorized classical model of favoritism as a species of friendship. If the legitimate favorite is expected to serve as a companion and counselor, then at what point, and according to whose authority, does the favorite's intimacy with the king become perceptible as something other than friendship as sodomy? In order to delegitimize the king's minions, the peers perform the ideological work of representing them as parasites on the royal body. Yet the discourses of parasitism and sodomy are not equivalent; and this discrepancy suggests that we might locate sodomy elsewhere than in the homoerotic intimacy between monarch and minion.

To find a specification of sodomitical discourse and sodomitical transgression in the play, we have to turn to Mortimer. Despite being described as mobile and malignant parasites, Gaveston and Spencer do not in fact violate Edward's body; Mortimer and his agents do. Their tortures of Edward are scatological: they take place in, and allude to, the grotesque lower regions of the castle and the body. Mortimer's manipulation of Edward's body evokes the anal imagery common to Renaissance discourses of sodomy. Most significantly, by authorizing Lightborn to murder Edward, Mortimer commits a regicidal and sodomitical act. From the perspective of royal authority, the sodomite is not Gaveston but Mortimer.

Marlowe reveals that sodomy is a matter of degree, in both senses of the term. Bodily access to the king is secured, for Gaveston, by his privilege as favorite, and for Mortimer, by his leverage as peer. As if playing Gaveston in a sadistic register, Mortimer aspires to rule by achieving exclusive access to Edward's body, which he will manipulate as he pleases. At the end of the play, Edward III's ritual display of the regicide's head reveals the lesson he has already learned from the symbolic and material practices of court favorites, parasites, and sodomites: power is established through access to and manipulation of the bodies of the powerful.

 Favoritism is just one of the political issues pertinent to the Elizabethan regime under which Marlowe's play was originally performed and produced. Although Edward II was also published and performed during the reign of James, a Jacobean reader or playgoer might not have interpreted it as a transparent critique of the homoerotic intimacies of James's court. Such an application was certainly possible, but by no means inevitable. For while the play may represent the homoerotic relations between the king and his favorites as disorderly, scandalous, improvident, or parasitical, it locates the political crime of sodomy in a rebellious peer's transgressive access to the royal body.

THE DARKENED PROSERPINA IN MARLOWE'S HERO AND LEANDER

An abstract of the paper presented at the 1996 MSA Meeting by Pamela Royston Macfie, The University of the South.

Critics have traditionally emphasized that Marlowe's Hero and Leander is libertine, erotic, and playfully excessive. Such tendencies do characterize the poem, described by one of Marlowe's contemporaries as "a luscious marrow-bone pie for a young married wife" (A Mad World, My Masters 1.1.44-5). But for all its playful eroticism, Hero and Leander is also a haunting and haunted text. If, as David Lee Miller has argued, Hero and Leander tells the story of a place, that place is a watery grave, a place of bodies and psyches in dissolution. From his opening description of the Hellespont, "guilty of true love's blood" (1.1), through his description of Venus's temple and its scenes of "heady riots, incest, rapes" (1.144), to his final description of Hero's bedchamber as the realm of Dis (11.323-26), Marlowe persistently suggests two things: (1) that his poem surrenders itself to the space of death, and (2) that the poem imagines this space in terms of female sacrifice, violation, and shame.

A number of violated women haunt Marlowe's final presentation of Hero. The presentation of Hero, trembling in love's strife, as a bird, "which in our hands we wring, / Forth plungeth, and oft flutters with her wing" (11.289-90) explicitly invokes Ovid's presentation of Philomela, after her violation by Tereus, as a trembling dove, which smears its blood over its own
plumage ("utque colombe suo madefactis sanguine plumis / horret adhuc avidosoque timet, quibus haeserat, uungues" [Metamorphoses VI.529-301). The comparison of Hero, as she slips from Leander's grasp and gaze, to a mermaid (11.314-15) recalls her earlier presentation as Diana before Actaeon (11.260-66). The personification of Night, "mock'd" by the "flaring beams of day" until, "o'ercome with anguish, shame, and rage, / [she] Danged down to hell her loathsome carriage" (11.332-34) mirrors Hero's shamed exposure in the dawn cast by her own blush.

OFF BOOK:
FAUSTUS ON PAGE, ON STAGE

In a presentation accompanied by slides and a video, Robert Kimbrough discussed his 1996 production of Doctor Faustus (Madison, Wisconsin) at the 1996 MSA Meeting. The following is an abstract of his presentation.

My paper traced the evolution of John Faustus from a theoretical character on page to an actualized character on stage. José Rios, (our Faustus) and I discovered in the 1604 text an academically accomplished, young, post-doctoral fellow of Wittenburg University who was equally schooled in the new theology of Luther and in the new renaissance humanism embraced by Hamlet-Faustus's fellow travellers through Wittenburg.

Faustus seems caught in a struggle between theology and philosophy and cannot/does not make a firm commitment to either the one or the other. Figuratively speaking, he gets lost within a fundamental paradigm shift.

I emphasize figuratively speaking because my major interpretive choice was to stage a conclusion which suggests that the action has taken place in a dream-within-a-dream in Faustus's head. Presented as a "dream-play", Doctor Faustus forces the audience to decide what happens next: does Faustus resolve his dilemma one way or the other, does he seek a different area of inquiry, or does he continue on in his mixed and muddled mode.

Although I presented handouts on the staging and text, showed slides of the theater and the company, used slides of the performance to trace the development of the action, and ended with a video of the final moments of the production, I came away from the Marlowe Society/MLA session even more firmly convinced that effective "performance analysis" cannot be realized without the precedent of a full performance followed by a talk-back with actors, director, and audience.

How, then, can an "abstract" of an impossibility be more than a memorial of a memorial?
THE PLACE OF MARLOWE

One of the seminars at the 1997 Shakespeare Association of America meeting in Washington (March 26 to March 29) was devoted to the study of Marlowe. Titled "The Place of Marlowe," the seminar was organized and moderated by Emily Bartels. Thomas Cartelli served as the respondent. Following is a list of the participants and their papers:

Carin Bigrigg, "Locating Justice: Punishment in The Jew of Malta and Volpone."
Maurice Charney, "Shakespeare and Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus."
Peter Cummings, "Shepherd Firebrand: Marlowe’s Voice in Shakespeare’s Poetry."
Sara M. Deats, "Marlowe’s Anamorphic Portraits: Dido, Aeneas, Edward, Faustus."
Patricia Kelly, "High Culture and Canonical Scurrilitie."
Robert Lerner, "Marlowe and The Marketplace of Slavery."
Stephanie Moss, "The Usury of Language: Linguistic Value and the Commercialization of the Marketplace in The Jew of Malta."
Avraham Oz, "Prophecy as a Cultural Model: The Politics of Marlowe’s Tamburlaine."
Nicholas Radel, "Our Havelock Ellis: The Mermaid Texts, Canon Formation, and the Heterosexualization of Shakespeare."
Adriane L. Stewart, "Charmed Skin and Imperial Designs: Embodying Race in Marlowe’s Tamburlaine."
David Thurn, "Phantasmatic Faustus: Cultural Historiography and the Place of Marlowe."
Paul J. Voss, "The Place of The Massacre at Paris in Marlowe’s Canon."
Deborah Willis, "Marlowe Our Contemporary: Edward II in the Twentieth Century."


Brown, Georgia E. "Breaking the Canon: Marlowe’s Challenge to the Literary Status Quo in Hero and Leander."

Burnett, Mark Thornton. "Edward II and Elizabethan Politics."

Cartelli, Thomas. "Queer Edward II: Postmodern Sexualities and the Early Modern Subject."

Cheney, Patrick. "'Thondring Words of Threate': Marlowe, Spenser, and Renaissance Ideas of a Literary Career."

Deats, Sara Munson. "Errant Eros: Transgressions of Sex, Gender, and Desire in Dido, Queen of Carthage."

Moulton, Ian Frederick. "'Printed Abroad and Uncastrated': Marlowe’s Elegies with Davies’s Epigrams."

Nicholl, Charles. "'Faithful Dealing': Christopher Marlowe and the Elizabethan Intelligence Service."


Riggs, David. "Marlowe’s Quarrel with God."

Shepard, Alan. "'Thou art no soldier; Thou art a merchant'—The Mentalité of War in Malta."

Starks, Lisa S. "'Won with thy words and conquered with thy looks': Sadism, Masochism, and the Masochistic Gaze in Tamburlaine."

Weil, Judith. "'Full Possession': Service and Slavery in Doctor Faustus."

RECENT STUDIES IN MARLOWE

MARLOWE, HISTORY, AND SEXUALITY

Marlowe, History, and Sexuality: New Essays on the Life and Writings of Christopher Marlowe, ed. Paul Whitfield White (AMS Studies in the Renaissance, No. 35, New York: AMS Press, 1997), is presently in production. The book explores three topics: Marlowe’s intellectual life and career, the relationship of his writing to the conditions of contemporary England, and the way in which gender and sexuality are represented in his works. The essays collected here were first presented at Marlowe Society meetings, most of them at our Third International Conference. The contents are as follows:

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND ENGLISH RENAISSANCE CULTURE

Christopher Marlowe and English Renaissance Culture, ed. Darryll Grantley and Peter Roberts (Hants, England: Scolar Press, 1996) is a collection of papers which were first presented at a conference held in Canterbury in 1993. The contents are as follows.

Butcher, Andrew. "'One eye a boye called Christopher Mowle.'" 1-16.
Davidson, Nicholas. "Christopher Marlowe and


Normand, Lawrence. "What passions call you these?: Edward II and James VI." 172-97.


**OTHER STUDIES**


Orgel, Stephen. Impersonations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. [Only a few pages on Marlowe, but Orgel's skepticism about the staging of Edward's death will interest Marlovians.]


Weir, Anne. Marlowe: Being in the Life of the Mind. The Marlowe Book, PO Box 10364, Portland, ME 04104, 1996. [Marlowe is Shakespeare. There are also supplements and an accompanying newsletter.]