

Introduction: Christopher Marlowe: Identities, traditions, afterlives

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EARLY MODERN LITERARY STUDIES



Christopher Marlowe: Identities, Traditions, Afterlives

Introduction

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A Marlovian Anniversary

2014 has been a year of note for those with an interest in early modern literature. The 450th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth has prompted an intensifying of media interest in the work of the period's most famous author, culminating — coincidentally — with the discovery in Saint-Omer of a hitherto unknown copy of the first folio, complete with performance notes on *Henry IV*. In addition to the usual abundance of scholarly publications, the year has been marked by major events hosted by The Globe, The Royal Shakespeare Company and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, all widely reported in the UK national press.¹

On the periphery of this public glare, rather fittingly, a number of less prominent but nonetheless significant publications and events have marked the same anniversary of Shakespeare's altogether more shadowy contemporary, Christopher Marlowe. Throughout the year, venues associated with the playwright's life have seen a variety of revivals from the dramatic corpus. The Marlowe Society of Cambridge University

¹ See, for example, Jonathan Bate, 'Shakespeare's 450th Birthday: Now All the World Is His Stage', *The Telegraph*, 20 April 2014 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/william-shakespeare/10777409/Shakespeares-450th-birthday-Now-all-the-world-is-his-stage.html>> [accessed 10 December 2014]; Will Coldwell, 'The Best of Shakespeare's 450th Birthday Celebrations', *The Guardian*, 17 April 2014 <<http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2014/apr/17/the-best-of-shakespeares-450th-birthday-celebrations>> [accessed 10 December 2014]; and Catherine Eade, 'The Best of the Bard: From Plays to Street Performances, How the UK is Celebrating the 450th Anniversary of Shakespeare's Birth', *MailOnline*, 21 April 2014, updated 23 April 2014 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-2596181/From-plays-street-performances-UK-celebrating-450th-anniversary-Shakespeares-birth.html>> [accessed 10 December 2014].

— Marlowe’s alma mater — has run a ‘Marlowe Festival’, incorporating productions of all of the plays and a reading of the poems staged at various locations around Cambridge and London.² The Rose Theatre on Bankside, the scene of many of Marlowe’s theatrical triumphs and now an archaeological site, has staged productions of *Doctor Faustus* and *The Massacre at Paris*, while Canterbury has seen a ‘Marlowe450’ season comprising productions by the Fourth Monkey theatre company of *Doctor Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta* at the Marlowe Theatre and *The Massacre at Paris* in the Canterbury Cathedral Crypt. With forthcoming productions of Marlowe plays at both the RSC and The Globe, the momentum set by this anniversary looks likely to continue.

Marlowe scholarship has also had a particularly active year. King’s College, London recently hosted a symposium on ‘Local and Global Marlowes’, which will doubtless feed profitably into the ‘International Christopher Marlowe’ conference scheduled to take place in Exeter in September 2015.³ A number of significant publications have appeared, too. A particularly healthy crop of journal articles and book chapters has been bolstered by the publication of *Marlowe’s Ovid*, a monograph by one of the contributors to this collection, M. L. Stapleton, and the anniversary is to be marked by a collection of essays edited by Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan, *Marlowe at 450*.⁴

The current collection of essays, then, arrives at a particularly vibrant moment in the history of Marlovian criticism and performance. But an anniversary brings with it a certain quality as well as quantity of attention. As a marking of the passage of time, it invites a retrospective examination, not just of the period of the subject’s life and work but of the course that work has taken in the intervening years; it begs the question, ‘what has happened to Marlowe’s work, and our sense of it, over the last four centuries?’ As the differing level of coverage of the Shakespearean and Marlovian aspects of this anniversary year demonstrate, it also represents an opportunity to consider the place that subject occupies in the popular imagination today. With this in mind, the present collection aims to contribute to the anniversary year’s Marlowe scholarship by examining his work and his influence diachronically; that is, it seeks to examine Marlowe’s work in the context of the material conditions of its production, but also seeks to illuminate the ways in which that work both

² See ‘The Complete Works’, *The Marlowe Society*,

³ The event at King’s took place on 6th December 2014. The ‘International Christopher Marlowe’ conference, organised by Edward Paleit and Nora Williams, is scheduled to take place on 7–8 September 2015, at Exeter University.

⁴ See Michael Stapleton, *Marlowe’s Ovid: The ‘Elegies’ in the Marlowe Canon* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014) and Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan, eds, *Marlowe at 450* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).

responds to pre-existing literary traditions and contributes to the creations of new traditions long after the author's death. Alongside consideration of what his work reveals about the ontology of the early modern soul, the understanding of the British Isles as a geographical space and the material proximity of open sewage to the public theatre, then, essays in this collection apply focus to Marlowe's manipulation of his source material and to the ways in which subsequent writers — from the late sixteenth century to the early twenty-first — have appropriated and reconstructed Marlowe's authorial and biographical identity. In so doing, the contributions to the collection cover a range of Marlowe's texts including *Tamburlaine the Great*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Edward II*, *Hero and Leander* and the translations of the *Amores*, as well as considering the Marlovian implications of work by other authors, such as Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, Anthony Burgess's *A Dead Man in Deptford*, Iain Sinclair and Dave McKean's *Slow Chocolate Autopsy* and a selection of recent novels focusing on the apocryphal 'School of Night'. At the end of the anniversary year, then, this collection considers Marlowe not just *at*, but *across* four-hundred-and-fifty years, from his upbringing and classical education to his continued resonance in contemporary fiction.

Identities, Traditions, Afterlives

Identities

The subtitle of this collection — *Identities, Traditions, Afterlives* — aims to encapsulate, without being prescriptive, three main strands of interest exhibited by its essays. The first of these strands, 'Identities', relates broadly to questions regarding Renaissance selfhood that have exercised critics and historians of the period — and particularly commentators on Marlowe — since the nineteenth century.⁵ Since the rise to prominence of critical theory in the second half of the twentieth century, and with it the emergence of the notion of the discursively-constructed subject, this focus on selfhood has intensified, particularly in the wake of seminal readings of Marlowe by Stephen Greenblatt, Jonathan Dollimore and Catherine Belsey.⁶ These readings have tended to concentrate particularly on *Tamburlaine the Great*, with its protagonist who discards the shepherd's weeds which have hitherto defined him in order to assert a

⁵ For an overview of the concept of selfhood in Marlowe's work, see Lars Engle, 'Marlowe and the Self', in *Christopher Marlowe in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 202–11.

⁶ See, in particular, Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*, 3rd edn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), and Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Methuen, 1985).

new identity as an unstoppable warlord and challenger to the gods, and on *Doctor Faustus*, which appears to dramatise a conflict between co-existing medieval and early modern notions of selfhood. In this issue, Karol Cooper contributes to the latter discussion by considering the representation of the soul in *Doctor Faustus* against its representation in medieval morality dramas, arguing that the play marks a transition from the notion of the soul as a unified entity, knowable in its entirety by God, to a more poetically realised, indeterminate concept.

While readings that have considered selfhood in *Doctor Faustus* have tended to do so in terms of a transition from one theological system of thought to another, discussions of identity in *Tamburlaine* have often focused on its relation to the emergence of new scientifically-based cartography, which by the end of the sixteenth century had supplanted the typological maps of the medieval tradition. For Greenblatt, this new cartography is crucial to Tamburlaine's project of self-fashioning, since by regularising space into a value-neutral abstraction (which, he argues, the Elizabethan stage also does) it makes it all the more apt for consumption by the play's eponymous 'appetitive machine'.⁷ The exotic geography of the plays has also prompted consideration of their construction of Ottoman, and, more generally, Asian, identity, as well as reflection on how emergent English identity was formed in opposition to such constructions.⁸ In their essay for this collection, which considers *Tamburlaine* and *Edward II*, Willy Maley and Patrick Murray draw on work by critics such as John Kerrigan by arguing for a revision of this focus in Marlovian criticism, contending that commentary on Marlowe's work would benefit from shifting its attention towards the geography of the British Isles.⁹

⁷ Greenblatt, p. 195. On cartography and Marlowe, see Ethel Seaton, 'Marlowe's Map', *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, 10 (1924), 13–35; Bernhard Klein, *Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001); Garrett A. Sullivan Jr, 'Geography and Identity in Marlowe', in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by Patrick Cheney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 231–44.

⁸ See Lisa Hopkins, "'And shall I die, and this unconquered?': Marlowe's Inverted Colonialism", *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 2.2 (1996), 1.1–23 <<http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/02-2/hopkmarl.html>> [Accessed 20 December 2014] and 'Marlowe's Asia and the Feminisation of Conquest', in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, ed. by Deborah Johanyak and Walter S. Lim (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 115–230; Javad Ghatta, "'By Mortus Ali and our Persian gods": Multiple Persian Identities in *Tamburlaine* and *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*', *Early Theatre*, 12.2 (2009), 235–49; Bindu Malieckal, 'As Good as Gold: India, Akbar the Great, and Marlowe's *Tamburlaine Plays*', in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, ed. by Johanyak and Lim, pp. 131–59; Ralf Hertel, 'Turkish Brags and Winning Words: Solo Performances in Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great*', in *Solo Performances: Staging the Early Modern Self in England*, ed. by Ute Burns (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), pp. 249–66; and Jane Grogan, "'A warre ... commodious": Dramatizing Islamic Schism in and after *Tamburlaine*', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 54.1 (2012), 45–78.

⁹ See John Kerrigan, *Archipelagic English: Literature, History, and Politics 1603–1707* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

More than any other Marlowe play, *Edward II* has been the subject of a substantial body of criticism that reads the play in terms of homoeroticism, sodomy and homosexual subjectivity.¹⁰ Indeed, its remarkably complex depiction of a homoerotic male-male relationship has seen the play figure extensively in seminal publications on Renaissance queer theory by critics such as Alan Bray, Bruce Smith, Gregory Bredbeck and Mario DiGangi.¹¹ An aspect of the play that is often noted in such readings is an apparent preoccupation with sewage. This preoccupation, manifested by the shaving of the king in channel water and his imprisonment in the sewer of Berkeley Castle, tends to be seen as part of an ironic punishment for sodomitical acts with Gaveston, a punishment that culminates in his murder with a hot spit. In the present issue, however, Christopher Foley reads the play's staging of sewage as relating to civic identity as well as homosexual or sodomitical subjectivity, making the case that the regulation of human waste, which ran in channels around the theatre in which the play was performed, was closely aligned with the maintenance of public order.

Traditions

Despite being renowned as one of early modern literature's great innovators, Marlowe operated in an environment in which engagement with — and imitation of — literary forebears was an integral part of the creative process. The humanist education Marlowe received at The King's School, Canterbury, and at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, introduced him to a range of major classical authors such as Ovid, Virgil and Lucan, and, by being delivered through a painstaking process of translating classical works out of and back into Latin, produced a writer well versed in *imitatio*, the process through which an early modern author aligned himself with a canonical classical author through imitation, while still retaining a sense of independent authorial identity.¹² This aspect of Marlowe's writing has been the focus of some interesting commentary, most notably by Patrick Cheney, who argues that Marlowe

¹⁰ For example, see Purvis E. Boyette, 'Wanton Humour and Wanton Poets: Homosexuality in Marlowe's *Edward II*', *Tulane Studies in English*, 22 (1977), 33–50; Vivania Comensoli, 'Homophobia and the Regulation of Desire: A Psychoanalytic Reading of Marlowe's *Edward II*', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 4.2 (1993), 175–200; David Stymeist, 'Status, Sodomy, and Persecution in Marlowe's *Edward II*', *Studies in English Literature* 44.2 (2004), 1–22; and Jonathan V. Crewe, 'Disorderly Love: Sodomy Revisited in Marlowe's *Edward II*', *Criticism*, 51.3 (2010), 385–399.

¹¹ See Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London: Gay Men's Press, 1982); Bruce R. Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England: A Cultural Poetics* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991); Gregory W. Bredbeck, *Sodomy and Interpretation: Marlowe to Milton* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1991); and Mario DiGangi, *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

¹² For an overview of Marlowe's relationship to his classical sources, see Svirthe Pugh, 'Marlowe and Classical Literature', in *Christopher Marlowe in Context*, ed. by Bartels and Smith, pp. 80–89. On Marlowe's education, see David Riggs, *The World of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Faber and Faber, 2004), pp. 24–96, and Elizabeth Hanson, 'Education, the University, and Marlowe', in *Christopher Marlowe in Context*, ed. by Bartels and Smith, pp. 181–92.

establishes himself as a literary descendant of the subversive Ovid in opposition to Edmund Spenser, the court poet who modelled himself on Ovid's more officially-endorsed contemporary, Virgil.¹³ Three of the articles in this collection consider the engagement of Marlowe's work with existing literary traditions, both during and in the immediate aftermath of his life. Bruce Brandt's essay considers the relationship between Marlowe's most popular work in the early modern period, the epyllion *Hero and Leander*, with its source, the poem of the same name by Musaeus. Brandt demonstrates how imitation can also be innovation, focusing on the aspects of Musaeus's text which Marlowe amplifies, and considering the artistic effect created thereby. Laetitia Sansonetti examines the publication of *Hero and Leander* in 1598 as part of a struggle, between literary admirers on the one hand and declamatory moralists on the other, to fix the author's posthumous reputation in the immediate aftermath of his death; Chapman's continuation of Marlowe's work in the early editions, Sansonetti suggests, is an act of approval through imitation in the same vein as Marlowe's artistic relationship to Ovid. M. L. Stapleton's contribution to the issue also considers Marlowe's immediately posthumous reputation in terms of literary tradition by reading the representation of Ovid in Ben Jonson's *Poetaster* — often taken to be a dismissal of Marlowe by an author associated with Horatian satire — as a tacit acknowledgement of Jonson's debt to Marlowe as a literary influence.

Afterlives

As well as the two essays which consider the fortunes of Marlowe's literary identity in the years immediately following his death, this collection contains two further essays which consider the lasting influence, reception and appropriation of his work in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. As in Shakespeare studies, a considerable level of critical interest has recently developed in the ways in which Marlowe's early modern work is adapted and appropriated in subsequent ages, from the Caroline stage to twentieth-century cinema.¹⁴ Modern Marlovian appropriation occurs in one sense because his texts lend themselves to adaptation to contemporary political concerns — Derek Jarman's 1991 film version of *Edward II*, produced in the wake of the introduction in 1988 of section 28, a clause in local government regulations forbidding the promotion of homosexuality as acceptable in any local authority context, being a case in point — but also in another sense because of the

¹³ See Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession: Ovid, Spenser, Counter-Nationhood* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

¹⁴ See, for example, Lucy Munro, 'Marlowe on the Caroline Stage', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 27.1 (2009), 39–50, and 'Marlowe in Caroline Theatre', in *Christopher Marlowe in Context*, ed. by Bartels and Smith, pp. 296–305; Lois Potter, 'Marlowe in Theatre and Film', in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by Cheney, pp. 262–81; and Pascale Aebischer, 'Marlowe at the Movies', in *Christopher Marlowe in Context*, ed. by Bartels and Smith, pp. 316–24.

intriguingly ambiguous nature of Marlowe's biography. The available evidence relating to Marlowe's life suggests, without ever confirming beyond doubt, close connections with a seedy London underworld, extensive activity as an espionage agent, a sexual preference for boys and young men, and a tendency to espouse dangerously radical and esoteric theological views.¹⁵ Marlowe's mysteriousness has made him a magnet both for counter-Shakespearean authorship theories and for more self-aware fictionalisations.¹⁶ Two instances of the latter form the subject of Christopher Orchard's essay, which examines the relationship between Anthony Burgess's biographical novel, *A Dead Man in Deptford*, and Iain Sinclair and Dave McKean's multimedia novel *Slow Chocolate Autopsy*, which offers an alternative reimagining of Marlowe's death. As with Marlowe's relationship to Ovid, and as with Jonson and Chapman's to Marlowe, Sinclair and McKean are here presented as responding to Burgess, simultaneously engaging with and criticising his account of Marlowe's life and death. Finally, Lindsey Ann Reid examines the afterlife of a twentieth-century critical hypothesis, now out of favour, which proposed the existence of an esoteric society named the School of Night, of which Marlowe was a member. By looking at three novels that depict both the School of Night and attempts by fictional modern scholars to uncover its secrets, Reid provides an example of how a speculative fiction can solidify into an authoritative academic theory, before dissolving back into fiction again.

The Essays in the Present Issue

The essays in this special issue, then, explore the various contexts and traditions with which Christopher Marlowe's works were engaging, as well as the ways in which the posthumous reputation of his life and career has influenced, and been interrogated in, subsequent works and traditions. In the first essay in this issue, Willy Maley and Patrick Murray consider the ways in which Marlowe's dramatic works, particularly *Edward II* and the two parts of *Tamburlaine*, respond to the contemporary interests in

¹⁵ For biographical works which engage with all of these possibilities and probabilities, see Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe*, 2nd edn (London: Vintage, 2002) and Park Honan, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet and Spy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). For more sceptical evaluations of evidence pertaining to Marlowe's life, and the conclusions that tend to be drawn from them, see Lukas Erne, 'Mythography, Biography, and Criticism: The Life and Works of Christopher Marlowe', *Modern Philology*, 103.1 (2005), 28–50, and J. A. Downie, 'Reviewing What We Think We Know About Christopher Marlowe, Again', in *Christopher Marlowe the Craftsman*, ed. by Sarah Scott and M. L. Stapleton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 33–46.

¹⁶ On Marlowe as a candidate for authorship of the Shakespeare canon, and on the problems with such an idea, see Charles Nicholl, 'The Case for Marlowe', in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt: Evidence, Argument, Controversy*, ed. by Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 29–38.

geography and cartography. The essay begins by considering the influences of such elements as Marlowe's early life in Canterbury, his scholarly background, and the study of cosmography upon the formation of his geographical imagination. The authors go on to address a gap in scholarship on Marlowe and geography by reading the three plays against the context of the 'Atlantic Archipelago'. Readings of Marlowe's plays had generally focused upon Marlowe's interests in the geographies of Asia and the Mediterranean, meaning that the 'Archipelagic turn', at the forefront of which is an interest in early modern authors' engagements with the geography of Britain and Ireland, represents a current of scholarship in which Marlowe's work has been curiously under-represented. By emphasising such features as Tamburlaine's announcement of his ambition to expand his empire to the west, subduing Britain along the way, as well as exploring the importance of Ireland in the geopolitical contexts of both *Tamburlaine* plays and *Edward II*, the essay highlights the ways in which Marlowe's plays register decidedly archipelagic anxieties. By doing so, the authors offer fresh insights into Marlowe's complex dramatic representations of space and place.

Doctor Faustus is the main focus for Karol Cooper's essay, which considers the ways in which Marlowe's play departs from the precedent for representing the soul established by the morality tradition. Whereas such productions emblematised the soul as a demonstrable object, *Doctor Faustus* develops an alternative model which modernises the morality tradition, as well as responding to reformed theology, by representing the soul through 'the indeterminacy of poetry'. Marlowe's play appears in the context of a culture in which the soul played a key role in the construction of personal identity, and in which the reformed theological conceptions of reward and punishment were predicated upon the individual's adoption of such an apperceptive, soulful identity. Cooper argues that *Doctor Faustus* represents a radical response to such ideas in its portrayal of a protagonist who makes use of his imagination to envisage his body and soul retreating into nature as a means of escaping eternal soulful consciousness. By doing so, the play departs from the morality tradition, and contemporary theology, by imagining a materialistic soul, rather than an ethereal or abstract one. This highlights the importance of Marlowe's play as an innovative theological drama and an interrogation of the implications of the cultural understanding of subjectivity predicated upon theological conceptions of the soul.

Christopher Foley's essay, which focuses upon *Edward II*, considers the significance of the play's representation of sewers, particularly in relation to contemporary concerns about waste management and pollution in early modern London, as well as the potentially hazardous effects these factors may have upon the health of a growing

urban population. In addition to considering the representation of the disposal of Edward's body in the sewers, Foley's essay also highlights the significance of the play's references to channels and their implied associations with civil unrest and disorder. The essay considers the significance of the play's allusions to sewers and urban waste in relation to the likely site of its first performance at Burbage's Theatre in Shoreditch, an area which was surrounded by sewage channels and thus blighted by the abject attendant sanitary conditions. According to Foley, this abundance of references to channels and allusions to waste management provides an explicit link between the action on stage and the playgoers' exposure to the hazardous environmental conditions surrounding the performance space of the play. By highlighting such contexts, the essay shows how Marlowe's play resonates with recent interests in ecocriticism and urban space in scholarship on early modern literature and culture.

Bruce Brandt's essay is the first in this special issue to consider Marlowe's poetry. In particular, the essay focuses upon Marlowe's strategies of adaptation and appropriation of Musaeus as his source for *Hero and Leander*. These strategies, according to Brandt, are predicated upon a process of amplification which sees Marlowe as an adaptor of his source material, rather than performing a straightforward translation or imitation of Musaeus. This involves emphasising or developing some of the elements that remain latent in Marlowe's source. Brandt shows how this strategy of amplification is apparent in such elements as Marlowe's characterisation of his protagonists, the emphases upon their beauty and immaturity, and the role of the narrator in the poem, who is developed as a character in his own right. In spite of this, there are also a number of elements, including the representation of marriage, that are either repressed or undercut in Marlowe's version. For Brandt, Marlowe's version becomes a richer and funnier text that achieves more psychological depth than its source, thanks to Marlowe's strategy of amplification and the levels of selectiveness he exercises when adapting his source. Brandt's essay therefore shows that considering *Hero and Leander* in relation to Musaeus, and focusing upon the elements that Marlowe amplifies and adapts, provides vital insights into Marlowe's strategies of authorship, as well as having bearings upon whether or not the poem should be viewed as an unfinished work.

Hero and Leander is also the focus of Laetitia Sansonetti's essay, which argues that this poetic work had become a crucial element in the construction of Marlowe's posthumous reputation, particularly in 1598 when two editions of the previously unpublished poem appeared in print. The first of these editions, published by Edward Blount, had the words '*Desunt nonnulla*' ('something is lacking') appended to its

conclusion, and the other edition, published by Paul Linley, is supplemented with a continuation of the apparently incomplete work written by George Chapman. The essay proposes that these editorial ventures represent a sustained effort to counter the various negative portrayals of Marlowe's life that were circulating in print in such texts as Francis Meres's *Palladis Tamia* and Thomas Beard's translation of Jean de Chassanion's *The Theatre of God's Judgements*; both of these texts emphasise various unsavoury elements of Marlowe's biography, including his apparent immorality, atheism, and epicureanism. The essay considers Marlowe's strategies of appropriation in his adaptation of his source material and the elements of parody he incorporates in his engagement with the work of Musaeus and, in particular, his efforts at emulating the Ovidian precedent. These points are complemented and developed in Chapman's continuation of *Hero and Leander* which, Sansonetti argues, adopts a similar strategy of reverent parody in its appropriation of Marlowe's work. In this way, Chapman's continuation is inspired by a knowledge of Marlowe and his proximity to a community of poets who were authorities on Marlowe's life and works, as well as an understanding and appreciation of his strategies of authorship and appropriation. The 1598 publications of *Hero and Leander*, in their various forms, therefore represent crucial interventions in the construction of the Marlovian afterlife which aimed to preserve his literary legacy.

Marlowe's engagement with Ovidian poetics, and its importance in constructing Marlowe's posthumous literary reputation is also considered in M. L. Stapleton's essay. Here, Stapleton considers Ben Jonson's play, *Poetaster*, focusing in particular upon the Marlovian resonances in its characterisation of Ovid. By doing so, Stapleton argues against recent critical discussions that have viewed the character of Ovid as representing an outmoded poetics, represented by Marlowe's Ovidianism, that will give way to the influence of Horace, usually regarded as an embodiment of Jonson and his poetics, by proposing an alternative reading of the aesthetic relationship between Marlowe and Jonson as it is characterised in *Poetaster*. According to Stapleton, Jonson and Marlowe show a number of striking affinities through their efforts at fashioning themselves as poet-playwrights and engaging with their literary cultures in subversive, even antagonistic ways, as well as similarities in areas like allusion and diction. The appearance of Ovid also represents a means of interrogating a number of ambiguities and potential problems associated with the idea of *aemulatio* in the construction of an authorial identity; this is a premise that has considerable bearings when it comes to the literary careers of Ovid, Marlowe, and Jonson himself. Rather than deploying the character of Ovid as a means of dismissing Marlowe's poetics, Stapleton argues that the play in fact acknowledges Jonson's debt to Marlowe and acts as a kind of homage instead of a critique. The essay therefore highlights key

elements of Marlowe's influence upon his immediate literary successors and explores some of the resonances of Marlowe's authorial identity following his death.

The construction of Marlowe's afterlife is also considered in Chris Orchard's contribution, the first of two essays to explore how contemporary novels have responded to certain aspects of Marlowe's biography. This essay focuses upon Iain Sinclair and Dave McKean's multi-media novel, *Slow Chocolate Autopsy* (1997), in which a time-traveller named Norton becomes trapped in London across the centuries and witnesses, or becomes involved in, various violent incidents that have taken place across the city's history. One of these is the murder of Christopher Marlowe, in which Norton becomes an active participant. Orchard takes as his starting point Norton's stated intention to 'muzzle Anthony Burgess' and explores how Sinclair's staging of Marlowe's murder relates to other late-twentieth century and twenty-first century biographical accounts of Marlowe's death. According to Orchard, the allusion to Anthony Burgess's fictional account of Marlowe's death, *A Dead Man in Deptford* (1993), underlines the tendencies for modern biographies to supplement the gaps in the historical evidence they are presenting by incorporating speculative details and adopting techniques more frequently practiced by writers of historical fiction. As well as considering the relationship between the accounts of Marlowe's death in the novels by Burgess and Sinclair, Orchard highlights the ways in which Sinclair departs from other accounts by completely restaging the incident. This is achieved through the intervention of Norton, who is re-cast as Marlowe's murderer, thus undermining the influences of figures like Robert Poley, Ingram Frizer, and Nicholas Skeres, whose roles are emphasised in fictional and biographical accounts of the murder. Orchard also argues that Sinclair's depiction of Marlowe's death is represented from a psychogeographical point of view; in this way, the violence that results in Marlowe's death is provoked by the effects of the location upon the individual, rather than any cultural or moral tensions between the participants. This essay therefore underlines the significance of Sinclair's fictional account of Marlowe's death, which had hitherto been under-represented in scholarship on Marlowe.

In the final essay in this issue, Lindsay Ann Reid focuses upon three novels — Alan Wall's *School of Night* (2001), Louis Bayard's *The School of Night* (2011), and Deborah Harkness's *Shadow of Night* (2012) — all of which have at their centre the hypothesis of the School of Night, which posited the existence of a secret coterie of wits, whose members included Sir Walter Raleigh, George Chapman, and Christopher Marlowe. This hypothesis enjoyed widespread acceptance as a critical commonplace during the early twentieth century before being challenged and widely dismissed by a range of influential scholars in the later part of the twentieth century. In spite of this

fall from favour, the School of Night hypothesis went on to become an important element in the works of such anti-Stratfordian authorship theorists as Calvin Hoffman, A. D. Wraight, and Virginia F. Stern, whose arguments emphasised Marlowe's involvement in this group. However, according to Reid, the continual dismissal of the School of Night in mainstream scholarship has served to provide it with a continued resonance, meaning that it still haunts scholarship on the early modern era. These kinds of premises, and their apparent erasure from conventional narratives of Marlowe's life and career, have also proved themselves to be fruitful sources of inspiration for contemporary novels that feature modern-day researchers uncovering hidden details about this secret coterie. Considering the School of Night in fiction reveals how a discounted academic theory finds new life in fiction and considers how these fictional researches into the past provide the stimulus for re-examining the relationship between Shakespeare and Marlowe and their apparent associations and rivalries. Exploring this relationship through the lens of both academic and fictional writings responding to the School of Night hypothesis therefore provides insights into the ways in which Shakespeare and Marlowe haunt and counter-haunt the reputations and resonances of each other in both fictional and scholarly writing.

The essays in this special issue, then, provide fruitful new ways of analysing Christopher Marlowe's life and work, and its continued resonance into the twenty-first century. The authors take advantage of this important moment for Marlowe scholars, as his 450th anniversary year draws to a close, as an appropriate vantage point from which to offer fresh insights into how Marlowe's social and authorial identities were shaped by the historical and cultural contexts of Elizabethan England, as well as how these identities have been continually re-appropriated and refashioned from the years immediately following his death up to the twenty-first century.