

Christopher Marlowe and the Golden Age of England

Poet, spy and playwright, Christopher Marlowe was the embodiment of the Elizabethan Golden Age. Marlowe's work was the product of his 'Erasmian,' or Christian humanist, education, the state of affairs in England and his own ability and readiness to satirize the world around him. Marlowe and his fellow contemporaries were a testament to the development of English drama, its pinnacle at the end of the English Renaissance and its eventual decline and suppression at the outbreak of the English Civil War. Their work is historically important because it illustrates, in addition to the development of English theatre, the dramatic political and social events of the time through the public medium of the playhouse. Specifically, the development of the theatre helps explain key features of the English Renaissance such as the creation of English self-identity, adoption of humanistic ideal, the advancement of English over Latin, the role of religion, the intellectual development of a people and parliament and their gradual alienation from the monarchy, the ultimate assertion of parliamentary power, and Civil War. Furthermore, the development of commercial playwriting, acting, stage management and private investment in theatres, an aspect of life today taken for granted, began during this Golden Age in English drama.

The history of English playwriting and performance stretches back to at least the ninth century trope 'Alle Luia' sung at Easter masses. However, post-classical Christian ritual performance itself probably developed from the ritualistic repetitions of the Empirical Roman Senate.¹ This tradition, established in the Church at some point during the early formation of Roman successor states, likely spread to England from Spain, via Ireland, through missionaries. Regardless of how they got there, 'plays' were being performed in England by the tenth century, as part of Catholic mass, and so at no point, right through to 1642, were they ever disconnected with religion or politics.

By the twelfth century, monastic clergy were performing plays in their court-yards at times other than during masses. The performances they gave grew out of the earlier stories of Christ to include other biblical themes as well. So, over the course of two hundred years there was, considering the pace of Church evolution, significant development of 'theatrical' performance in space, time, and content. Another couple of centuries later, by the mid-fourteenth, performances contained both English and Latin, a significant innovation indeed. The move to English inclusion was a precursor to the ideals of the Reformation, the publication of the Bible in English and the establishment of non-clerical performances. By this time there are records of public Banns, which were announcements of performances by local Crafts (from which the modern Freemasons developed). Despite the non-clerical affiliations of the

¹ See Pharr, C (ed. and trans.) *The Theodosian Code & Novels and The Sirmondian Constitutions* (Princeton, 1952) for our only copy of minutes from a Roman Senate.

actors, the plays were performed still in churchyards until the fifteenth century when they were performed in marketplaces as well. Moreover, the content of these and the 'Pater Noster' plays was still focussed on the Bible but increasingly moved towards the so-called morality plays of the fifteenth century.

The next major development in English playacting was at the end of the fifteenth century with the invention of the folk and pastoral plays, like Robin Hood, in which merry memories are portrayed and the good win. Pastoral motif, taken from the classics, was common in the early English Renaissance and was considered the process of turning complexities of life into simple stories.² Regardless of these developments, plays even into the early reign of Henry VIII (1509-47), were proclaiming the glory of the Catholic Church; e.g. the end of *The Play Called the Four PP*:

*And so we humbly beseech you take it;
Beseeching our Lord to prosper you all
In the faith of his Church Universal.*³

The end of the Wars of the Roses and the succession of Henry VII in 1485 were important developments for later English national identity and significant for theatre because of the creation of the Chapel Royal, a group of performers, men and boys, in permanent service to the Sovereign. The Chapel Royal, being under the King and not the Church, was privileged to wider use of actual human dialogue and real events. Its existence and experience was fully exploited by the next Tudor King, Henry VIII.

The reign of Henry VIII and the full onset of the English Renaissance ushered in an entirely new era in English playacting and led directly to the development of the first English theatre in 1577. The break with the Catholic Church, the closing of the monasteries, the acceptance of neo-classicism of the Italian Renaissance and the teachings of Colet, Linacre, and Erasmus, and the natural 'love for pageant, drama, and music'⁴ of Henry VIII combined to create an atmosphere ripe for progressive playacting through the emancipation of spirit and mind. Simultaneously with the drama at Court, a classics-based humanism was developing in the schools and universities; in fact, from 1525 classic drama was performed at schools for their annual Christmas plays.

The teachings of Erasmus (1469-1536), who was in England in eleven of the years between 1505-1517 (his largest stay between summer 1509 and July 1514), was fundamental in fostering the intellectual evolution begun under Henry VIII. The humanist translator of Lucan, Plutarch, Seneca and Cato, pacifist, theological utopian and social reformer, preached the need for a

² See S K Heninger Jr. *The Renaissance Perversion of Pastoral*, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol 22 No 2 (Apr 1961), pp 254-61

³ JQ Adams, *Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas* (Cambridge, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), p 384

⁴ C W Wallace, *The Evolution of the English Drama up to Shakespeare* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press Inc. 1968) p 35

committed but educated Christian congregation. Erasmus' teachings fit well with Henry's perpetual issues of religio-political obedience and his desire to centralize both political and religious power in England.⁵ Though criticized for never attaching himself to any sect, he certainly expressed his feelings on the current state of the Catholic Church when he said that theologians *produce nothing that can make us better men or better scholars, and they are a perfect universal nuisance*.⁶ At one point he also joked that he was purposely trying to write Latin poorly and inelegantly so that he could become a good theologian. Erasmus denounced the ignorance of the clergy and stressed the 'God given duties' of a Commonwealth and its 'responsibilities of governance within the social and economic aspects of life.'⁷

Erasmus' 'effort to unite all Europe behind the *humanitatis literas*⁸, desire to educate all young men in defence of 'man's free will against Lutheran predeterminism,⁹ was adhered to by the English Erasmians and was a fundamental reason why the classics were perpetuated in England. Loyalty to Erasmus reached such a level that in 1547 Henry passed a Royal Injunction demanding the placement of his Paraphrases next to the Gospels in Church. In fact it became 'a commonplace that there was abroad in the England of the 16th century a general enthusiasm for the classics.'¹⁰

The classical revival¹¹ was so important because it introduced to the youth of the nation pagan stories, classical satire and tyrannical kings. Fittingly, as Christianity had destroyed classical drama, the Reformation restored it.¹² Moreover, it taught young playwrights, and their teachers alike, the use of blank verse, prose, dialogue, scene division, careful entrances and exits, unities of time and space and most importantly allowed them to criticize contemporary politics and religious dispute through the safety of history. Later, as the London theatre industry matured, the playwrights, although all under the patronage of nobles or the Royal family, were able to disassociate their ideas from their classical framework and evolve into interactive conversation and direct criticism using English characters, English plots and English settings.¹³

Henry VIII's successor, son Edward VI (1547-1553), the first real Protestant king, more or less continued his father's patronage, despite steps to curb

⁵ The issue of centralization became a constant one, especially from the latter half of Elizabeth's reign (particularly post-1570 when the Pope excommunicated her) to 1642, and can be traced through the theatre.

⁶ Erika Rummel, ed. *The Erasmus Reader* (Buffalo: Univ. of Toronto Press 1990), p8

⁷ A G Dickens & Whitney, R.D Jones, *Erasmus the Reformer* (London: Methuen, 1994) p 210

⁸ Richard L. DeMolen, *Erasmus* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973) p2

⁹ *ibid.* p135

¹⁰ John Peter, *Complaint & Satire in Early English Literature* (New York: Oxford Press, 1956) p109

¹¹ As it overlapped both Royal Court and schools.

¹² I would say that the great English Renaissance dramatists, spearheaded especially by Marlowe and Shakespeare, returned the psychological unconscious of the Greek Golden Age (Sophoclean) drama but with more of Socratic format. This must have been a reason for Nietzsche's return to Hellenistic glory in *Birth of Tragedy* where he laments the Socratic desire to reason everything in life.

¹³ There were however Latin plays performed right up to *Thibaldus sive Vindicatae Ingenium* in 1640.

some performances. His successor, Mary Tudor,¹⁴ the (in)famous Catholic Queen from 1553-8 suppressed the use of English in plays unless specially authorized by her; in 1556 the Star Chamber even suppressed all 'dramatic performances.' The latter proclamation proved somewhat empty as performances in the country were inhibited but not stopped (at least eight companies were performing) and plays at Court continued as before. A monarch concerned with religio-political power or hypocrite, Mary's first act of Parliament was for the Chapel Royal boys to perform at her coronation; in contrast to the centuries of performance evolution, this was a morality play.

After the regression of dramatic developments caused by the Catholic Mary Tudor, Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603), in sharing her father, Henry VIII's, love for the theatre, restored drama to its point of progression in 1547. Elizabeth's reign saw the greatest flourishing of theatrical talent of any period in the history of England; it was the great English Sophoclean Age. There were two distinct flourishing periods during Elizabeth's reign: 1558-1586 & 1587-1603. During the former period, sometimes labelled the infancy of English drama, the first permanent English 'theatre,' named The Theatre, was opened in 1577 by James Burbage; up to this point public performances were held in inn-yards (there were eventually seven inn-yards converted during this time). Most of the plays performed were classical reinterpretations or even translations. Furthermore, between 1558 and 1578 there were 90-plus patronized companies, which, by James I's reign had been forcibly reduced to a handful. Importantly, by 1586 (a plague year) the suppression of religious criticism became more prevalent and there was a general *feeding frenzy over the rewards of exposing atheism after the eighth parliament (1584-1585)*.¹⁵ This drama would be played out on stage.

In spite of (or because of) the growing restrictions, the latter period of Elizabeth's reign (1587-1603) saw the performance of at least 1,320 plays, with some historians estimating the number as high as 20,000. Furthermore, the number of playhouses tripled and plays were now in English. Thousands of people from various socio-economic classes attended theatre together and to their astonishment witnessed men and boys of poor families successfully imitating and wearing the clothes of kings and clerics. Englishmen began to celebrate being English and developed a great pride in their new English religion (Anglicanism), opposition to the Pope, their victories over foreign militaries and a new popular perception that English Law was fully 'native.'¹⁶ Drama now directly and significantly aided in the creation of English identity, whether in comparison with the monarch or foreigners past or present and established a medium whereby the public's ideas could be expressed

¹⁴ Lady Jane Grey was in power less than a fortnight.

¹⁵ Park Honan, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy* (New York: Oxford 2005) p338

¹⁶ Thanks to first printing of Henry Bracton's, *De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliae*, the ideas of which were not challenged until the twentieth century by Goebel.

(commerce was the 'engine of creativity'¹⁷ as theatres were commercial enterprises responsive to public influence).

The history of drama and the stage in Elizabethan England is so important because it illustrates the 'dependence of dramatic art upon not merely social and political conditions and ancient traditions' but also the less romantic physical environment summed up in a place of acting, a company, and an audience. These physical merging into psychological conditions set up a state that finds its reflex in dramatic production. The wish, the hope, the yearning for mimic representation of life is impotent in the national thought until these outward forces are summoned to body it forth in physical form and make it live and move and speak before us. Today these conditions exist - half a thousand years ago, England had not bespoken them. So today we are annually writing several hundred plays based on life; then, they wrote none. Not because we live more; life was just as full for them as it is for us. The simple human element that makes up drama is not so new. But the social, political, religious, educational conditions and ideals had not yet set these physical environments together¹⁸ until the reign of Elizabeth. The convergence of the exceptional conditions of Elizabeth's reign, along with her remarkable ability to increase England's power and resources and the opening of the public theatres were a perfect recipe for a Golden Age.

Once the theatre reopened in 1587, after the plague had closed it the year prior, there was a wholesale introduction of 'university wits' (men all with university degrees and trained in the tradition of Erasmian humanism) on to the London scene. Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Nashe, Thomas Kyd, John Lyly, Thomas Lodge, William Shakespeare, George Peele, Thomas Dekker, William Kempe and Robert Greene, all trained in the classics (though not all, most notably Shakespeare, university graduates), were simultaneously writing, often collaborating, for the stage, between 1587 and Marlowe's death in 1593. Prior to 1587, there were no educated men professionally dedicated to the public theatre.

Now however, though their work allusively satirized their social 'betters' (though technically illegal), theatre was a commercial business and these men were the greatest writers and social commentators in English history up to this point, so the Queen and nobles eagerly patronized them to produce materials full-time for their theatre 'companies.' Like all early capitalist enterprises, the less successful soon collapsed and so it was that during Elizabeth's reign the number of companies fell from 90 to four.¹⁹ This drop in number was not because of lack of public interest but the arrival of the great writers and their convergence into small circles operated by several extremely wealthy patrons. The Queen's Men even collapsed and with it much Royal patronage and court

¹⁷ Some historians have claimed the opposite but I side with McLuskie. See Kathleen McLuskie's, *Dekker's Public and Private Theatre Collaborations*, in *The Elizabethan Theatre XV* (Toronto: P D Meany, 2002)

¹⁸ Wallace, *The Evolution of the English Drama - the Wars of Religion, the Anglo-Spanish War* (and the rapid increase in number of English secret agents that followed) and Tyrone's *Rebellion in Ireland*.

¹⁹ This decline was different from the forced suppression of James I noted above.

influence. In economic trouble the remaining companies raised theatre prices. To keep people coming to their shows companies increased production of what the public wanted: political satire (which must have been particularly risky considering the Spanish Armada in 1588 and the ongoing Anglo-Spanish War and Wars of Religion).

As a response to the increased satirical social commentary, on 12 November 1589 the Privy Council (representing the Royal Court) ordered that all plays in the future be approved by a body of three officials, in the hope of curtailing dramatic representation of matters regarding religion and state. This effort failed and probably increased interest in the theatres, as did the City's prior ban on acting, which actually led to the creation of the first Royally patronized company and increased City traffic.²⁰

City traffic aside, religious unrest was a major reason for the City ban on acting, and Marlowe, in addition to atheist and homosexual [?], was the leading innovator in religious satire, and as such one of the largest thorns in the Privy and Common Councils' (City) sides. Though aspects of the playwright and spy's life are dodgy at best, that Marlowe was an atheist²¹ is not. There exists ample evidence of his being referred to as such and even of his writing the so-called 'atheist lecture,' which he apparently read to his dear friend Sir Walter Raleigh. In responding to charges of atheism by Richard Baines, Richard Cholmley, in 1593 stated in his testimony *that one Marlowe is able to show more sound reasons for Atheisme, than any divine in England is able to give to prove divinitie, and that Marlowe told him he hath read the Atheist lecture to Sir Walter Raleigh and others.*²² Baines also said *that one Ric Cholmley hath confesst that he was perswaded by Marloes reasons to become an atheist.*²³ To the City's frustration, Marlowe and his plays scoffed at the status quo and attacked the hypocrisy of religion; indeed, he said that *all Protestants²⁴ are hypocritical asses²⁵ and I count religion but a childish toy / And (true to his humanist education) hold there is no sin but ignorance.*²⁶

Furthering the claim of atheism, Marlowe's Faustus said:

*Within this circle is Jehovah's name
Forward and backward anagrammatized
The (ab)breviated names of holy saints
Figures of every adjunct to the heavens
And characters of signs and erring stars
By which the spirits are enforced and to rise*

²⁰ City traffic was one of the claims the City used to ban acting in its limits.

²¹ Atheist in the period simply meant someone who did not adhere to prevailing beliefs, although Marlowe may actually have been an atheist in the twenty-first century sense.

²² M C Bradbrook, *The School of Night: A Study in the Literary Relationships of Sir Walter Raleigh* (New York: Russell & Russell 1965) p12

²³ Honan, *Marlowe*, p339

²⁴ That this means he was a catholic, knowing all of his writings, is nonsense.

²⁵ Richard Baines' note on Marlowe, reprinted in full in Honan, p375

²⁶ Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, prologue in *The Complete Plays* (London: Everyman 1999) p461 ls 14-5

*Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute
And try the uttermost magic can perform.*²⁷

This displayed not just the psychiatric (not psychological) self treatment of Faustus justifying social separation, but also alluded to the God/dog anagram which Marlowe and colleagues were said to have joked about.²⁸ Robert Parsons, a contemporary Jesuit said that *Sir Walter Rawley's school of Atheism by the way, and of the Conjuror that is M(aster) thereof (Marlowe?), and of the diligence used to get young gentlemen of this school, wherein both Moses and our Saviour, the old and new testaments are jested at, and the scholars taught, among other things, to spell God backwards.*²⁹ That God's name was in the 'circle' was also important because the 'circle' was an image of hell. In a sonnet in praise of Elizabeth, the last line tells people they can go to hell if they do not believe the virtues of her majesty: *With Circles let them dwell that not think so.*³⁰

Marlowe's atheism critically analysed society and the human psyche and in Erasmian style sought to find 'God' without recourse to 'bugbears and hobgoblins'³¹ and move art and religion *towards a more complicated view of human society.*³² Pre-cursor to later philosophers and intellectuals alike was Marlowe's *apparent self-consciousness,*³³ and his search for the unconscious. Marlowe *displayed a tough minded, objective attitude to society. His morality as a playwright exists in his clarity, and in his trust in our ability to think for ourselves. He is enormously refreshing, and lightens our lives because he tests any "truth" that belittles us. No dramatist ever affirmed human strengths more thoughtfully . . . He finds the human psyche too complex for the requirements of a neat plot, in which the protagonist suddenly awakes in Act V to luminous wisdom, so that a play can end tidily. Our lives do not fit into the conventional genres of the stage, as he knew . . . He was not a romantic, but a questing realist.*³⁴

Furthermore, Marlowe moved tragedy in a whole new direction, the psychological thriller. Albert Camus said that in Marlowe, *We move from ritual tragedy and from almost religious festivals, to psychological tragedy.*³⁵ In fact, his *tragedies began to teach Shakespeare major new psychological techniques. Marlowe, after all, suggested how to isolate, analyse, and broadcast the feelings of a Faustus, Barabas, or Guise, how to let that hero 'speak past' interlocutors, how to dramatize an intriguing, aberrant psyche and*

²⁷ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, Act I Sc 3 p350

²⁸ Use of the word 'God' was later banned in plays by James I (of England).

²⁹ Bradbrook, *The School of Night*, p12

³⁰ Raleigh, *The Shepherd's Praise of His Sacred Diana*, in *The Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh* (London, G Bell 1892) p78

³¹ See Note 25

³² Honan, *Marlowe*, p302

³³ *ibid* p359

³⁴ *idem* p359

³⁵ *ibid* p218

get a mind to lend its tone to drama.³⁶ At the end of *Dr. Faustus* for example, Faustus, as did Raleigh in his *Soul*, pondered the unconscious, when he asked himself:

*This soul should fly from me, and I be changed
Into some brutish beast! all beasts are happy,
For, when they die,
Their souls are soon dissolved in elements,
But mine must live still to be plagued in hell:
Curst be the parents that engendered me.*³⁷

Moreover, this seizure of guilt at the end of the play captures this (Faustus') derailed time and allocates a place for it in cinematic (or drama[ti]c) reality.³⁸

In response to the great success of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*,³⁹ in which he glorified temporal concerns and animistic reasoning, Shakespeare, with the electrifying effect of *Tamburlaine* upon him,⁴⁰ wrote *Henry VI*,⁴¹ which came to shudder at the horrors of popular uprising and civil war.⁴² Since Shakespeare's view of society is less ambiguous and questioning than Marlowe's,⁴³ it should be no surprise that the two main characters in *Henry VI* and *Tamburlaine* were meant to relay separate messages: the former the detriments of civil discontent, the latter the fruits of temporal happiness over all else. Intellectually both men demonstrated the awful effects of the ruthless, singular desire for the Crown.

Though *Tamburlaine* mocked the material pretentiousness of people, To wear a crown enchased with pearl and gold . . . when looks breed love, with looks to gain the prize,⁴⁴ the fundamental message in *Tamburlaine* was Marlowe's attack on religion. *Tamburlaine*, the scourge of God⁴⁵ and friends repeatedly mocked and tempted God, lived for temporal wealth and power, and generally disregarded religious warnings. For instance when Usumcasane, one of *Tamburlaine*'s followers, said to him, To be a king is half to be a god, *Tamburlaine* responded,

³⁶ *ibid* p193

³⁷ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus* [1616] Act V Sc 2, 181-186 (1462/1467)

³⁸ Alenka Zupani A *Perfect Place to Die: Theatre in Hitchcock's Films. Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Lacan (But Were Afraid to Ask Hitchcock)*, (New York: Verso, 2000), p87

³⁹ Certainly what Marlowe's humanist education taught him about Scythia, 'the Euxin Sea' and 'wild Armenia' was helpful, or essential, in the writing of *Tamburlaine*, the 'Scythian' shepherd.

⁴⁰ Stephen Greenblatt, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare* (New York: W W Norton Co. 2005), p207

⁴¹ The dates of origin are contentious. See Hanspeter Born, *The Date of 2, 3 Henry*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol 25, No 3 (Summer 1974) and Irving Ribner, *Marlowe and Shakespeare*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol 15, No 2 (Spring 1964).

⁴² Greenblatt, *Will in the World*, p197

⁴³ Honan, *Marlowe*, p259

⁴⁴ 1 *Tamb.*, Act II, sc 5, ls. 60-4

⁴⁵ 2 *Tamb.*, Act V, sc. 5, l. 249

*A god is not so glorious as a king
I think the pleasure they enjoy in heaven
Cannot compare with the kingly joys in [sic] earth.⁴⁶*

Marlowe scoffed at the powers of the major religions and, true to his phrase, *I count religion but a childish toy*, also mocked the intellect of its followers, such as when Cosroe said, *My witless brother to the Christians lost*.⁴⁷ Sending this message through a Persian was a convenient way for Marlowe to conceal yet portray his sentiment. In his taunting of religions, Tamburlaine said:

*In vain I see men worship Mahomet
My sword hath sent millions of Turks to hell
Slew all his priests, his kinsmen and his friends
And yet I live untouched by Mahomet . . .
Now, Mahomet, if thou have any power
Come down thyself and work a miracle
Thou art not worthy to be worshipped . . .
Well, soldiers, Mahomet remains in hell
He cannot hear the voice of Tamburlaine
Seek out another godhead to adore.⁴⁸*

Tamburlaine also sought to establish himself as a replacement to the lost godheads of Islam and Christianity:

*I'll ride in golden armour like the sun
And in my helm a triple plume shall spring
Spangled with diamonds dancing in the air
To note me emperor of the threefold world.⁴⁹*

Finally, at the end of *2 Tamburlaine*, Tamburlaine and friends beat God since they received no repercussions for their actions and Tamburlaine himself died peacefully. Even when Tamburlaine was dying he never appealed to any god for help or lamented his actions. Indeed, right to the end of his life Tamburlaine cared only for the temporal, and never felt inferior to any 'being':

*What daring god torments my body thus
And seeks to conquer mighty Tamburlaine?
Shall sickness now prove me to be a man . . .
Techelles and the rest, come, take your swords . . .
let us march against the powers of heaven.⁵⁰*

⁴⁶ 1 *Tamb*, Act II, sc 5, ls. 56-59

⁴⁷ 1 *Tamb.*, Act II, sc 5, l. 42

⁴⁸ 2 *Tamb*, Act V, sc 1, ls. 176-198

⁴⁹ 2 *Tamb*, Act IV, sc 3, ls. 114-117

⁵⁰ 2 *Tamb*, Act V, sc 3, ls. 43-48

Despite their uniqueness in opinion representation, *the fingerprints of Tamburlaine* are all over the plays that are among Shakespeare's earliest known ventures as a playwright, the three parts of *Henry VI* - so much so that earlier textual scholars thought that the *Henry VI* plays must have been collaborative enterprises undertaken with Marlowe himself.⁵¹ Marlowe's protagonist established that a man, in 'Nietzschean' fashion, could achieve any earthly power he chose, but in the *Henry VI* plays, Shakespeare created a bunch of minor or petty Tamburlaines who, echoing him, declared *how sweet a thing it is to wear a crown*,⁵² but their constant rivalries never allowed them to achieve any great, lasting feat.

Though the quote in Shakespeare's *3 Henry VI* about the sweetness of wearing a crown has often been noted, scholars have ignored the beginning of that piece where Richard said,

*An oath is of no moment, being not took
Before a true and lawful magistrate
That hath authority over him that swears.*⁵³

Shakespeare could have been pandering to the Queen, submitting, as the men in his play do, to the power of women and rejoicing in a powerful centre, in which, as Marlowe's Tamburlaine showed, much could be accomplished. On the other hand Shakespeare could have been supporting the rights of the parliament. This was the genius of Shakespeare.

Marlowe's 'response' to *Henry VI* was *Edward II*, based on Raphael Holinshed's Chronicle,⁵⁴ in which Edward, similar to Henry, was portrayed as feminine and politically destroyed because of *a genuine, natural, but blinding infatuation with a male lover*⁵⁵ and *his consuming love for his handsome favourite*⁵⁶ Marlowe probably would have admitted to writing Edward as a homosexual since the gay lord was one of his favourite motifs. In fact, Marlowe illustrated Jove's incest and homosexuality in *Hero & Leander*:

*Jove slily stealing from his sister's bed
To dally with Idalian⁵⁷ Ganymede.*⁵⁸

Richard Baines also noted Marlowe as saying, *That all they that love not Tobacco and Boies were fooles*.⁵⁹ Furthermore, in response to the world of

⁵¹ Greenblatt, *Will in the World*, p192

⁵² *3 Henry VI*, Act I, sc 2, l. 29

⁵³ *3 Henry VI*, Act I, sc 2, ls. 22-4

⁵⁴ There is convincing debate that this was not Marlowe's sole source for *Edward II* or even his main source. The two other key sources are works by Robert Fabyan and John Stowe. For further information see, Joan Parks, *History, Tragedy, & Truth in Christopher Marlowe's Edward II*, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol 39, No 2, *Tudor & Stuart Drama* (Spring 1999), pp 275-290

⁵⁵ Honan, *Marlowe*, p 295

⁵⁶ Greenblatt, *Will in the World*, p207

⁵⁷ Mountain city in Cyprus, sacred to Venus.

⁵⁸ Marlowe, *Hero & Leander* (London: printed by A.M. 1629), p6, ls. 23-4

⁵⁹ Richard Baines on Marlowe, reprinted in full in Honan, p373

Elizabethan intrigue surrounding him, Marlowe placed Edward *in a milieu of opportunism, egotism, greed and willfulness in which politics is nastier, grubbier, and more treacherous than Shakespeare had so far shown it. In using his sources, he eliminates time gaps, unhistorically (sic) heightens Mortimer as the king's antithesis and leader of a baronial clique, and develops Edward's relations with two male lovers, the barons, and his wife. The king's infatuation was treated as a human fact, not as a whim*⁶⁰ or phase. Marlowe's open view of homosexuality as natural, not a psychosis needing a cure, was truly unique in his society.

Illustrative of their burgeoning yet increasingly restrictive society, both Marlowe and Shakespeare chose to write about kings who would facilitate the expression of their views on sexuality, politics and literary style. These kings in particular offered the writers a chance to explore the power of the feminine and manly love and parliamentary politics. Edward's reign was especially reminiscent of *Tamburlaine* in that it saw the suppression of the Knights Templar, forcing of the Turks from Rhodes and the attempted usurpation of a working man's son. Henry VI's reign too was dramatically full of civil war and the king's repeated capture, recapture, loss of power and re-enthronement and imprisonment in the Tower twice until his final execution.

In 1562 *the parlement of Toulouse had legalized the slaughter of all Protestant heretics*.⁶¹ A decade later, *The infamous Paris massacre of Huguenots on St. Bartholomew's day in 1572*⁶² killed thousands and was certainly on the mind of Marlowe as he wrote *The Massacre at Paris*, a polemic against Christianity and its evil repercussions displayed in Wars of Religion. Having to represent *20,000 murders on stage*,⁶³ Marlowe, in an image reminiscent (to us) of the opening of Foucault's *Crime & Punish* and echoing Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, illustrated religious futility. The play presented horrific scenes such as six which opened with a mob chasing Protestants and Duke Guise screaming, *Tué, tué, tué! Let none escape. Murder the Huguenots* and the future king Anjou, *Kill them, kill them!* The next two scenes elicited the vainness of Christian hatred when Guise and Anjou killed a Protestant preacher and when Mountsorrel, a follower of Guise, called on a Protestant, Seroune, at his home and killed him in front of his wife:

W-[within] Husband, come down; here's one would speak with you from the Duke of Guise. Enter Seroune. S-To speak with me, from such a man as he? M-Ay, ay, for this, Seroune; and thou shalt ha't. Showing his dagger. S-O let me pray before I take my death. M-Dispatch then, quickly. S-O Christ, my Saviour! M-Christ, villain? Why dar'st thou to presume to call on Christ, without the intercession of some saint? Santus Jacobus, he was my saint; pray to him. S-O, let me pray unto my God. M-Then take this with you. Stabs him.

⁶⁰ Honan, *Marlowe*, p302

⁶¹ *ibid.* p273

⁶² Frank Ardolino, *In Paris?mass, and Well Remembered!: Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy & the English Reaction to the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre*, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, XXI, No. 3 (1990), p401

⁶³ Honan, *Marlowe*, p272

The scenes went on as such, bloody, gruesome, horrible, and full of crime perpetrated by Christians:

*They that shall be the actors in this massacre
Shall wear white crosses on their burgonets.*⁶⁴

Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*, *Faustus*, and *Tamburlaine* presented the Christological obsessions of people, the symptoms of which 'justify' even the vicious murder of fellow human beings. In contrast, Marlowe recognized that the Jews, despite living under such horrid conditions, never felt a psychological need for dominance and were content with their own righteousness. In sc. iv Anjou (King Henry III of France) said,

*Though gentle minds should pity other's pains
Yet will the wisest note their proper griefs
And rather seek to scourge their enemy
Than be themselves base subjects to the whip.*⁶⁵

Marlowe here had picked up on a growingly popular belief. In fact Raleigh had similarly said that we are all in effect become comedians in religion; and while we act and gesture in voice, divine virtues, in all the course of our lives we renounce our persons and the parts we play⁶⁶ In *As You Like It* (II, 7) Shakespeare too repeated the same message: all the world's a stage and we but mere actors

Collaboration of the playwrights was common during the period. In fact, all the men working in these companies knew each other and probably at some point worked together and shared ideas (or stole them). Initially, once the theatres reopened in 1587, Robert Greene was a member of the Queen's Men, which, during Marlowe's lifetime performed 17 times at Court, far more than any other company. Despite their Royal patronage, intellectually the Queen's Men were outshone by the Lord Admiral (Lodge, Marlowe, Peele), Lord Pembroke (Kyd & Dekker) and Lord Strange's Men (Shakespeare). Like modern sports teams however, these men frequently moved from company to company in search of the best deal possible. The most important transference of allegiance, historically and in its time, was when Marlowe joined Shakespeare Lord Strange's Men (though there had formerly been dispute between the two men) in 1592.

Together, Marlowe and Shakespeare (along with Peele and Kempe) worked at the new Rose theatre, the first on the Bankside of London (south side of Thames). The arrival of this theatre on the 'other' side of the Thames, with its two great geniuses, created a whole new dimension not just in theatre but to the urban landscape of the City. For the first time people had to cross the river to see a play and thus cross-Thames traffic took a revolutionary step. At this

⁶⁴ Marlowe, *Massacre at Paris*, sc 4, ls. 29-30.

⁶⁵ idem, ls. 13-16

⁶⁶ A.L. Rowse, *Raleigh & the Throckmortons* (London: MacMillan & Co Ltd 1962), pp268

point the theatrically younger Shakespeare rapidly learned the business of playwriting (from Marlowe, Peele and Kempe) and acting (from Edward Alleyn and Richard Burbage), and the two collaborated on the Henry VI plays. With these two collaborating, the entire system of playwriting advanced drastically. Finally English drama saw the full use of prose, increased blank verse, rhyming heroics and the freedom, not just from religion (which had already been accomplished) but from the drama of the classics. For the first time English drama developed an English character of its own. The two men even created a whole new genre in post-classical drama: the Chronicle History, which sought to establish drama as a more 'true' history.⁶⁷ Their ideas reached beyond London especially when they had to travel in 1592 when playing within the strict City limits was banned and the plague temporarily closed theatres in 'greater' London.⁶⁸ Ultimately these two men⁶⁹ had by 1594 induced the requirement of such a mass of dramatic publications as had never before [been] issued from the press.⁷⁰

The intellectual link between Marlowe and Shakespeare, particularly because of the latter's present reputation, is important because it pinpoints a major intellectual source of the Theatrical Revolution. Direct contemporaries, born February and April 1564 respectively, their relationship was a basis of the greatest flourishing of the English theatre - (indeed) the boldest innovations in dramaturgy were those of Shakespeare and Marlowe.⁷¹ Shakespeare arrived in London after Marlowe and as such, was early influenced by established contemporaries, especially Marlowe, whom he likely encountered soon after his arrival. Indeed, Shakespeare was probably introduced to their raucous social circle⁷² hypothetically, at some moment in the late 1580s, (when) Shakespeare walked into a room - most likely, in an inn in Shoreditch, Southwark, or the Bankside - and quite possibly found many of the leading writers drinking and eating together: Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Watson, Thomas Lodge, George Peele, Thomas Nashe, and Robert Greene. Other playwrights might have been there as well - Thomas Kyd, for example, or John Lyly.⁷³ Though a Stratford boy, Shakespeare soon fell in with their circle and its Canterbury men of which Honan said, Historically, the powers of Westminster and London had imposed upon Canterbury; but in this decade, two Canterbury writers were to impose on the capital and change its theatre decisively . . . Lyly and Marlowe.⁷⁴

The circle of playwrights and intellectuals that Shakespeare stepped into was fierce, competitive, 'anti-social' and 'plagiarized' as a norm. For instance, Nashe, a versatile writer of controversial pamphlets, satires, plays, a novel

⁶⁷ Joan Parks, *History, Tragedy, & Truth in Christopher Marlowe's Edward II* p276

⁶⁸ As it did the following year, 1593, when it killed 11,503

⁶⁹ Marlowe being the better poet and playwright of the two at the time of his death.

⁷⁰ Frederick Gard Fleay, *A Chronicle History of the London Stage: 1559-1642* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1964) p75

⁷¹ Honan, *Marlowe*, p193

⁷² Greenblatt, *Will in the World*, p209

⁷³ *ibid*, p200

⁷⁴ Honan, *Marlowe*, p98

and lyric verse,⁷⁵ wrote a satire attacking R. Harvey in *Have With You to Saffron Walden*. The theatres being closed because of the plague, brother Gabriel responded in a 1593 sonnet: *Nashes S. Fame hath somewhat more of the launcelet: the Reply of the excellent Gentlewoman is the fine rasour,*⁷⁶ that must shaue-away euery ranke haire of his great courage, and little wit.⁷⁶

In *Pierce Penniless*, Nashe also belittled Greene in a note to the printer which read, *Other news I am advertised of, that a scald trivial lying pamphlet, cald Greens groats-worth of wit is given out to be of my doing. God never have care of my soule, but utterly renounce me, if the least word or sillable in it proceeded from my pen, or if I were any way priuie to the writing or printing of it.*⁷⁷ In that same work, Nashe chided at certain status quo and in 1597, along with Ben Jonson, was imprisoned for sedition. However, despite all the drama between the revolutionizing contemporaries, they continued to elicit contemporary ills and create an environment of intellectual growth presented for public extrapolation in the public performance of plays and poems. These public theatrical performances were important too in laying the groundwork especially for the public displays of protest and ritual that would occur in the following centuries.⁷⁸

In contrast to his contemporaries, Shakespeare avoided prison and intrigue, retired peacefully and was the best adept at tempering 'extreme' opinions and thus distributing them. His intellectual connection with and appreciation of Marlowe's views and ability was central to theatrical development. Even though more intellectually economical, when Shakespeare went to London in the 1580s and fell into the group of playwrights, all in their twenties or very early thirties (he) would have had no difficulty recognizing that Marlowe was the great talent.⁷⁹ Their striking parallel intellect⁸⁰ and literary pursuits combined with Marlowe's ambivalence to authority and Shakespeare's ability to transcend the thoughts of the status quo while remaining within its framework, allowed their ideas to so dominate in the public sphere. While Marlowe was alive however, Shakespeare's achievements could not begin to match the astonishing succession of plays and poems written by Marlowe.⁸¹ Furthermore, had Marlowe not existed, Shakespeare would no doubt have written plays, but those plays would have been decisively different.⁸²

⁷⁵ M H Abrams, ed. *Norton Anthology of English Literature: Seventh Edition*, Volume 1 (New York: Norton, 2000), p1200

⁷⁶ Gabriel Harvey, *A new letter of notable contents With a strange sonnet, entitled Gorgon, or the wonderfull yeare* (London: John Wolfe, 1593)

⁷⁷ Thomas Nashe, ed. Stanley Wells, *Pierce Penniless his supposition to the Devil* (London: E Arnold 1964)

⁷⁸ The role of the English Renaissance public theatre in the performance of public ritual is a whole other paper topic, indeed dissertation. Furthermore my current knowledge of the topic is limited to the oeuvre of public reactions in colonial America and Northern Ireland. Two of the best books on these topics I think are St George's, *Conversing by Signs & Jarman's, Material Conflicts*.

⁷⁹ Greenblatt, *Will in the World*, p206

⁸⁰ Some equivalent works are Marlowe's *Hero & Leander*, *The Jew of Malta*, *Tamburlaine* and *Edward II* in comparison to Shakespeare's *Venus & Adonis*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Henry VI*.

⁸¹ Greenblatt, *Will in the World*, p269

⁸² *ibid*, p192

Sometimes the two men even alluded to one another in their works, such as Shakespeare's talk of the School of Night⁸³ in *Love's Labour's Lost*, which was performed at the Earl of Essex's house (interesting in itself because there had been tension between Essex and Raleigh⁸⁴), and his allusion to others poets and the 'dark lady' (Marlowe) in his sonnets. Despite the initial master/teacher relationship and struggle between the two, late in 1591 and in 1592, Marlowe and Shakespeare were not quite competitors, but, instead, were in a kind of business alliance to ensure the Burbages' financial success against Henslowe's strong drawing power at the Rose. Though it is hard to compare Shakespeare's later works with Marlowe⁸⁵ their contemporary pieces were strikingly similar and both men sought to inject scepticism and intelligence into the theatre, and even ennoble their fellow citizens to self-development.

Marlowe's plays were so powerful that even after his death they were performed in their original form at least until 1597. In fact, at the Rose Dr. Faustus was performed twenty-three times, *Tamburlaine* (1&2) twenty-two, *The Jew of Malta* nineteen, *The Massacre at Paris* eleven and *Titus Andronicus* five. This was so remarkable because new plays were being produced to a rate of bi-weekly just to keep pace with the changing public demand. More importantly, Marlowe had been accused of atheism and other offenses to religion and the authorities, and his room-mate, Kyd, had to plead to his patron Lord Strange to avoid arrest.

After his death, Marlowe's contemporaries honoured him intellectually. In addition to the work of Raleigh, Gabriel Harvey wrote,

*The graunde Disease [atheism] disdained his to ade Conceit
And smiling at his Tamberlaine contempt
Sternely struck home the peremptory stroke
He that nor fear God, nor dreaded devil
Nor aught admired, but his wondrous self
Like Junos gawdy bird, the proudly stares
On glittering san of his triumphant tale
Or like the ugly bug, that scorned to dy
And mounts of glory reared in towering wit
Alas: But Babell pride must kiss the pit.⁸⁶*

Harvey wrote: 'Weep Powles, thy Tamberlaine vouchsafes to die.'⁸⁷ George Peele also honoured Marlowe, in *The Honour of the Garter*, as did Chapman, Petowe and Michael Drayton in *Henry Reynolds*.

⁸³ The group of men around Sir Walter Raleigh and the 'wizard' Earl of Northumberland.

⁸⁴ Honan, *Marlowe*, p341

⁸⁵ Because of Marlowe's death and the rapid evolution of politics and theatre in the age, especially under James I.

⁸⁶ Gabriel Harvey, *Glosse, a sonnet in his, A new letter of notable contents with a strange sonnet, entitled Gorgon, or the wonderful year* (London: John Wolfe, 1593)

⁸⁷ Gabriel Harvey, (sonnet) *Gorgon, or the wonderful year*, printed in the same book as *Glosse*.

One of the most remarkable intellectual connections of Marlowe's though was not a playwright at all but Sir Walter Raleigh, who had been seriously concerned about this association. Because Raleigh may have had a part in Marlowe's politically motivated murder, represented the other end of Marlowe's 'audience' and was a knight, it is important to examine their intellectual relationship.

In addition to the Atheist lecture that Marlowe read to Raleigh, Kyd, under inquiry, linked them by associating Marlowe as certainly of 'Raleigh's men': *For more assurance that I was not of that vile opinion (atheism), let it but please your lordship to enquire of such as he (Marlowe) conversed withal, that is (as I am given to understand) with Harriot, Warner, Royden, and some stationers in Paul's churchyard, who I in no sort can accuse nor will excuse by reason of company, of whose consent if I had been, no question but I also should have been of their consort, for ex minimo vestigo artifex agnoscit artificem [an artist recognizes an artist by the slightest trace].*⁸⁸

Furthermore, Marlowe was connected to Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, in addition to Harriot, who in turn was introduced to the Earl by Raleigh and *in 1597 granted him a pension along with Walter Warner and Robert Hughes.*⁸⁹ That Raleigh, Percy and Harriot were connected too is well attested by their work but also by outside sources such as their Elizabethan contemporary Lord Henry Howard. The latter labeled Raleigh and Percy as part of 'the infamous *triplicity* that denies the trinity;' this 'libelous phrase was attached to the so-called *atheists*.'⁹⁰ In a curious letter, Sydney too tied Marlowe to Northumberland (connected already to Raleigh and Harriot): *the scholar [Marly] says himself to be very well known both to the Earl of Northumberland and my Lord Strange (see above).*⁹¹ The Jesuit Robert Parsons similarly accused Raleigh, and Lord Burghley, of 'atheism' in his *Responsio*, warning, *if the school of atheism of Sir Walter Raleigh flourishes a little longer.*⁹²

The works of Marlowe and Raleigh alone contain ample evidence connecting them personally and intellectually; the two most famous pieces are Marlowe's, *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*, and Raleigh's, *The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*. There seems to be standard consensus today that the latter poem was a rebuttal to the first and the former directed to Raleigh. In fact, the English Poetry Database (online) refers to Raleigh's reply as Marlowe's Poem. The Norton Anthology of English Literature (2000) in similar fashion noted that Raleigh's *best-known shorter poems include the reply to Marlowe's, The Passionate Shepherd.*⁹³ Most recently, Honan (2006) related that *Marlowe conversed with him (mathematician Walter Warner), and met*

⁸⁸ Kyd's Letter to Puckering Concerning Marlowe, c. June 1593, in Honan p378

⁸⁹ Bradbrook, *School of Night*, p10

⁹⁰ Eleanor Grace Clark, *Raleigh & Marlowe: A Study in Elizabethan Fustian* (New York: Fordham, 1941), p242

⁹¹ Honan, *Marlowe*, p280

⁹² Robert Parsons, *Responsio*, quoted in Trevelyan, *Sir Walter Raleigh*, p191

⁹³ *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, (New York: W W Norton & Co. 2000), p878

*others in a loosely knit Raleigh-(Earl of) Northumberland set. At first, he must have hovered at its edges but at some point its star patron Sir Walter Raleigh wrote a reply to Marlowe's lyric, The Passionate Shepherd to His Love.*⁹⁴

The common view today on Marlowe and Raleigh's aforementioned correspondence is its seeming homoeroticism but Marlowe's Erasmian training is also present in his use of mythological figures and *submerged allusions which obliquely point to the classical world.*⁹⁵ Marlowe of course was well trained in classical myth and Raleigh was at the very least a patron, if not an intellectual partner and friend of Marlowe. Therefore, that *Raleigh wrote a half facetious response*⁹⁶ with a poem was *typical of Raleigh as the other ... (was) of Marlowe*⁹⁷ and illustrative of a platonic, intellectual admiration.

Upon analysis of the poetic interchange between Marlowe and Raleigh their connection becomes obvious. Marlowe began his poem:

*Come live with me and be my love
And we will all the pleasure prove
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.*

To which Raleigh replied,

*If all the world and love were young
And truth in every shepherd's tongue
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.*

At the end, Marlowe made a final psychological plea:

*The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning
If these delights thy mind may move
Then live with me and be my love.*

Finally, Raleigh, ten years Marlowe's elder, responded,

*But could youth last and love still breed
Had joys no date nor age no need
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy love.*

Though Raleigh's *Farewell False Love* has sometimes been dated prior to Marlowe's death, the date should not be set in stone. Raleigh's work in

⁹⁴ Honan, *Marlowe*, p232

⁹⁵ Louis H. Leiter, *Deification Through Love: Marlowe's The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*, *College English*, Vol 27 No 6 (Mar. 1966), p444

⁹⁶ Raleigh Trevelyan, *Sir Walter Raleigh* (New York: Penguin, 2002), p120

⁹⁷ *ibid.* p121

particular is difficult to date; in fact *his active resistance to printing his poems makes it very difficult to put the copies that circulated in manuscript in any reliable chronological order.*⁹⁸ Considering the ambiguity of dating Raleigh's works, it is likely that *Farewell False Love* was an ode to Marlowe written after his untimely demise. Despite the lack of scholarship on the matter, the poem, when read with knowledge of recent scholarship on Marlowe's and Raleigh's lives, provides ample clues to its being an ode to Marlowe.

Raleigh began *Farewell False Love*, the ode/confession to Marlowe,

*Farewell false love, the oracle of lies
A mortal foes and enemy to rest
An envious boy, from whom all cares arise
A bastard vile, a beast with rage possessed
A way of error, a temple full of treason
In all effects contrary unto reason.*

The first three lines could have alluded to the early theory that Raleigh ordered the murder of Marlowe because he was scared Marlowe would reveal his, Raleigh's, atheism to the authorities. Regardless, the remaining three lines of the poem described the ambitious young man from Canterbury quite well. Indeed, he was often violent, accused of separatism and contrary to the official reasons of the day. To the latter point, Baines told us that *he saith likewise that he hath quoted a number of contraieties oute of the scripture which he hath given to some men who in convenient time shall be named.*⁹⁹ Raleigh repeated this description of Marlowe towards the end of the poem, when he said that Marlowe held,

*A deep distrust of that which certain seems
A hope of that which reason doubtful deems.*

Raleigh provided additional evidence of his tie to Marlowe in the middle lines of *Farewell False Love* when he said:

*A school of guile, a net of deep deceit
A gilded hook that holds a poisoned bait
A fortress foiled which reason did defend.*

Indeed Marlowe, with only reason to defend him (i.e. not God), was baited into a small, private room with his killers, with no way to escape and was stabbed through the eye with 'a gilded hook.' The allusion to 'school of guile' is loaded too, since Raleigh and his Circle were sometimes called the 'school of night.' Later in the year Marlowe was murdered (1593), Shakespeare famously alluded to the school in *Love's Labour's Lost*,

⁹⁸ Norton Anthology, p878

⁹⁹ Baines, in Honan, p375

*O paradox! Black is the badge of hell
The hue of dungeons and the School¹⁰⁰ of Night.¹⁰¹*

Also, early in 1593 Chapman wrote *The Shadow of Night*¹⁰² and Nashe, at the end of the year, wrote *The Terrors of the Night*; both men were supposed members of this school.

In another poem Raleigh spoke of Marlowe in a loving fashion: *As you come from the holy land / Of Walsingham / Met you not with my true love / By the way as you came?*¹⁰³

In this short dialogue of four stanzas it was possible that Raleigh spoke of Elizabeth, but it seems too ironic that he would say his love is coming from Walsingham, one of Marlowe's major patrons in the 1590s, who *was ready to aid the Canterbury poet however he could.*¹⁰⁴

As noted, challenging authority and questioning social norms was a fundamental basis of Marlowe and his contemporaries' work partly because of social demands for it in the public theatre and partly because it was their true intent. Raleigh however, as a knight and member of the landed gentry, walked a tighter rope than Marlowe, parleying to the Queen, mingling in high society and generally protecting social order; his poem, *The Lie*, is evidence of what lay behind the external facade. In *The Lie* can be seen Raleigh's (and possibly many nobles') true sentiments (especially as the monarchy became increasingly tyrannical), the outpouring of a disenchanted noble, like a rejected magician ready to reveal his secrets, and the further intellectual relationship with Marlowe and the playwrights of the Golden Age.

Raleigh challenged just about every social norm in *The Lie*. The attack on the Church however was one of the most enlightening: *Say to the church, it shows / What's good, and doth no good.*¹⁰⁵ In the context of the poem, Raleigh was saying that the Church does no good, especially if there is no God or heaven. Marlowe said the same thing through Barabas, the protagonist of *The Jew of Malta*, in an aside: *Ay, but my lord, the harvest is far off: And yet I know the prayers of those nuns and holy friars, having money for their pains, are wondrous, (Aside) and indeed do no man good.*¹⁰⁶ Marlowe wrote Barabas, the Jew, as decidedly anti-Christian, not because of anti-Semitism, but to illustrate to his audience, the hypocrisy of Christianity (there was in fact a new popular esteem for Jews who were now being seen

¹⁰⁰ Some versions use the categorically similar 'suit'.

¹⁰¹ William Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act IV sc 3, ls. 254-5, in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Bath, UK: Dempsey Parr, 2000) p149

¹⁰² Bradbrook, *School of Night*, p24

¹⁰³ Sir Walter Raleigh, *As You Come from the Holy Land*, in *The Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh collected and authenticate with those of Sir Henry Wotton and other courtly poets from 1540-1650*, ed Hannah, John (New York: George Bell and Sons, 1892), p80 Online at English Poetry Database.

¹⁰⁴ Honan, *Marlowe*, p342

¹⁰⁵ All quotes from Raleigh's, *The Lie* are from *The Norton Anthology* (2000) unless otherwise noted.

¹⁰⁶ Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, Act II sc.3 ls. 80-84

as chosen by God and of the same Mosaic spirit). So, in the first act Marlowe alluded to Christian hypocrisy when Barabas celebrated being a hated Jew as opposed to fitting in with society's norms:

*Rather had I, a Jew, be hated thus
Than pitied in a Christian poverty*

and

*Haply some hapless man hath conscience
And for his conscience lives in beggary.¹⁰⁷*

In the next scene when Barabas was trying to get his daughter Abigail to pretend to be a nun, Marlowe, in Reformation style, attacked the benefit of monastic life in noting it better to pretend to be a nun than be one:

*A counterfeit possession is better
than unseen hypocrisy.*

Raleigh's *To the Translator of Lucan* 1592 is yet another work that connects him to Marlowe by reason of, amongst other writings, the latter's *Lucan's First Book Translated Line for Line*. Despite the fact that every contemporary was exposed to Lucan and Ovid, Marlowe was, at the time, the best-known translator of them both. For in addition to the aforesaid of Lucan's, he also translated Lucan's *Pharsalia*, and both Ovid's *Elegies* and the erotically charged *Amores*.

Marlowe's translations of Ovid are interesting for their explicit sexual descriptions, which stretched the Latin meanings. For instance, in elegy six of the third book of *Amores*, he translated Ovid as erotically as could be:

*Either she was foul, or her attire was bad
Or shew as not the wench I wisht t'have had*

and

*Though both of us performed our true intent
Yet could I not cast anchor where I meant*

and

My force is spent and done.

Ovid's *Amores* was even more explicit as a poem about a young man cuckolding an older gentleman. Marlowe translated the scenes as explicit as the Latin would allow:

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.* Act I, sc 1, ls. 113-119

*What sweet thought is there but I had the same
And one gave place still as another came
Yet not withstanding like one dead it lay
Drooping more than a rose pulled yesterday
Now when he should not jet, he bolts upright
And craves his task, and craves to be at fight
Lie down with shame and see thou stir no more
Seeing now thou wouldst deceive me as before*

and:

*Nay more the wench did not disdain a whit
To take it in her hand and play with it¹⁰⁸*

Raleigh's *To the Translator of Lucan* then was a dedication to Marlowe and consistent with their other intellectual interplay and Marlowe's character. Raleigh's third and fourth lines,

*Who never sought nor ever cared to climb
By flattery, or seeking worthless men*

is consistent with Raleigh's thoughts against false flatterers in *The Lie*, and in *Walter Rawley of the Middle Temple in Commendation of the Steel Glass*, in which Raleigh said,

*Though sundry minds in sundry sort do deem
Yet worthiest wights yield praise for every pain
But envious brains do nought, or light, esteem
Such stately steps as they cannot attain
For whoso reaps renown above the rest
With heaps of hate, shall surely be oppressed.¹⁰⁹*

Marlowe also demeaned those who sought to falsely attain through Envy in Doctor Faustus, who said: I cannot read and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. O, that there would come a famine through all the world, that all might die and I live alone. Then thou shouldst see how fat I would be.¹¹⁰

Turning to the period after Marlowe, the end of the century saw a 'theatrical war' of Ben Jonson versus a group of playwrights including Daniel, Dekker and Marston.¹¹¹ The outcome is less important for the historian than the fact that the drama between these men was all over the stages of London, as people flocked to see the next instalment of stage drama based entirely on

¹⁰⁸ Christopher Marlowe, *Ovid's Elegies*, (Middleborough: 1600?), III, 6.

¹⁰⁹ Sir Walter Raleigh, *Walter Rawley of the Middle Temple in Commendation of the Steel Glass*, in *The Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh*, ed Hannah, pp3-4

¹¹⁰ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus* [1616] Act II, sc 3, ls. 129-133

¹¹¹ The period between 1587 and Marlowe's death actually saw the introduction of the first dispute between stages, sparked by the Puritan debate and the 'pamphlet war' between the Harvey brothers and Martin Marprelate on one side, Nashe and Greene on the other.

contemporary London and real Londoners. This development, dangerous for political leaders, was important because the more stringent was the watch upon free discussion of current issues and outstanding political personalities, the more ingenious the poets had to be in order to protect themselves.¹¹²

Facilitating dissemination of increasingly volatile and illegal issues, it was at precisely this period too that the most famous theatres were built: the Blackfriars (the only one to last to 1642) in the City of London, the Singing School (St. Paul's), the Swan, the Globe, and the Fortune. Therefore, in the year of Elizabeth's death, 1603, there were in total two private and six public theatres in London; just twenty years later there was only one of each. The succession of James I facilitated this decline in theatrical performances and development. The theatre was closed repeatedly during his reign (1603-25) due to plague (once plague deaths reached forty in a week the theatres were closed), religious conformity (playing on Sabbath or during Lent [the latter from 1601 actually] was banned and use of the word 'God' in plays illegal from 1606) and the desire to check public opinion. For various reasons then, the period from 1603-1642 was the twilight and steady diminution of English drama and with it any former public connection with the monarch through humanitarian ideals.¹¹³ The theatre became stagnant, a singular tool of royal entertainment and lost the connection with the people of England, which had made it so strong under Elizabeth.

One of James' first acts after his somewhat illegal accession (against Henry VIII's will) was to suppress all private ownership of theatre companies and place the few remaining directly under royal tutelage. Throughout his reign there were technically twelve companies performing but all were under Royal Patronage, assigned either to James, Queen Anne, Princess Elizabeth, Prince Henry, or Prince Charles. The private¹¹⁴ Paul's still operated for a while after James' accession but was suppressed in 1607, leaving Blackfriars as the only private theatre until the building of the Cockpit (Phoenix) and short lived Whitefriars (1610-13). By the end of James' reign five theatres had been torn down and/or used solely for bear-baiting, fencing, or even gladiators. The suppression of nobles' theatre companies and centralization under the Royal family (the limiting of the open marketplace really),¹¹⁵ was possibly the clearest sign of the growing estrangement between people and monarch

As royal tyranny and centralization left intellectuals and the public isolated and ignored, and free thought and speech severely suppressed, the reign of James was fateful for the English stage; the years 1603-1614 were the major transition years. By 1611 Marlowe, Kyd, Greene, John Greenwood (hung for tracts against the Anglican Church), Lyly, Nashe, and Peele were all dead and Shakespeare, Chapman, Daniel, even Francis Beaumont, and John Webster,

¹¹² Grace Clark, *Raleigh & Marlowe*, p49

¹¹³ A product just of the prior century.

¹¹⁴ The word is troublesome to say the least though and has always contained a plethora of meanings so suffice is to say the public could attend 'private' theatre.

¹¹⁵ Combined with the repeated plague closings of the theatre (continuous plague deaths from 1603-1642) and the constant summoning of playwrights from the end of Elizabeth's reign to 1642.

had stopped writing. No new talent equivalent to Marlowe or Shakespeare arrived in London after 1603 and those remaining were of the Golden generation.¹¹⁶

In addition to the restrictive measures and other factors destroying open dialogue and theatrical production already noted, in 1604 Samuel Daniel (writing 1594-1613) was summoned before the Privy Council, Jonson's *Volpone* offended the king, and in 1605 Chapman, Jonson and Marston (writing 1599-1605) were all briefly imprisoned for further royal offences. In response, the plays of 1605-6 were highly apologetic to James (especially one titled *Abuses*) and consequently dramatically inferior. The fatal blows kept coming for the stage: in 1607 the Paul's boys were suppressed, Shakespeare's production fell to one play a year, the theatres were closed due to the plague for thirty-seven months between 1606-1610 and by 1613 both Queen's Revels groups, who performed Chapman, Jonson and Marston, were permanently suppressed. Furthermore the depression of theatre was enhanced by Henslowe's (the famous theatre owner and manager) massive extortions, the closing of the Swan and the burning of the Globe.

The stage saw a bit of a revival from 1616 as Henslowe died and the King's men replaced their great, late actor Burbage with the young Fletcher. In 1617 a new theatre, the Cockpit, was built and by 1623 the King's men had landed Rowley and Middleton. The restoration of drama was too little too late though, as years of suppression prevented the creation of a new generation, and religious intolerance and fear of plague were at intense levels. Even though a new playhouse was built in 1617, in that same year a mob had destroyed the Lady Sanders theatre in mid-construction, the Privy Council banned certain interludes and Marlowe's plays were altered to such a degree that they were in essence new plays.¹¹⁷ In 1618 James banned all sport (thus acting too) on Sundays and the next year the Mayor of London ordered the suppression of Blackfriars (though the king received Privy Council approval to supersede the Mayor). Also in 1618 James executed statesmen, poet and former patron of Golden Age drama, Sir Walter Raleigh. Finally, in 1624, in response to the realistic stage representations that evolved out of the Golden Age, James, only a year after hiring him, summoned Middleton for Royal offence and for illegally representing a modern monarch on stage. This was unfortunate for the stage since many times even the most blatant criticisms and satires would go unchecked because the period was so overly concerned with show, as opposed to content.¹¹⁸

Charles I ascended the throne in 1625 and in reflection of the stage's abandonment of Latin, the coronation was in English (as was James'). Despite this carry-over, the Carolean period saw the closing of all theatrical

¹¹⁶ Francis Beaumont and William Rowley began writing in 1607 but were not on a par with Marlowe and Shakespeare. Moreover, those greats still writing, Dekker, Middleton, and Jonson, began writing in 1587, 96 and 97 respectively, thus placing them in the Golden generation.

¹¹⁷ Just one example of the massive editing was the change of 'God' to 'heaven,' which completely altered the message especially of *Doctor Faustus*.

¹¹⁸ It was like what Shostakovich was able to do in front of Stalin.

production and the end of the, at that point, Silver or Bronze Age of English drama. Middleton and Rowley stopped writing by 1628 and Jonson had a paralyzing stroke. There was little new on the stage, with much being copied or adapted from earlier works.¹¹⁹ The writers of the period had no real methods or meter, poor prose, and were highly inconsistent, and in 1626 a grant to build a new play-house was rejected by the Privy Council.

Furthermore, Queen Henrietta performed in plays¹²⁰ and like her husband fully participated in editing and developing plots; as such they completely alienated the theatre and the monarchy from the people. The public was further incensed because the Queen patronized French and Spanish companies who performed at the English Court. Throughout the period Charles fought for tyrannical control, and affirmed the divine right of kings. He even closed the parliament for eleven years (1629-1640) only briefly restoring it in hopes of increasing tax revenue. In 1641, seeing his power collapsing, he tried to acquiesce to the parliament and abolished the Star Chamber, but by then the Triennial Act declared that parliament must be called at least once every three years and if not it could assemble on its own. On 4 January 1642 Charles entered parliament with militia and shortly thereafter the Civil War between the parliamentary forces and the monarchy began. Consequently the theatres were closed, not to reopen until 1656.

Looking back at the centuries that followed, the ideas of Marlowe and the Golden Age playwrights, often as representatives of public opinion, about religion and self-empowerment can be found easily in subsequent thinkers, illustrating the lasting intellectual affects of what Marlowe and the Golden Age accomplished. Indeed, Nietzsche articulated Marlowe quite well in *Ecce Homo* when he said, Saying Yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems; the will to life rejoicing over its own inexhaustibility even in the very sacrifice of its highest types - that is what I call Dionysian, that is what I understood (in *Twilight of the Idols*) as the bridge to the psychology of the tragic poet. Not in order to get rid of terror and pity, not in order to purge oneself of a dangerous affect by its vehement discharge but in order to be oneself the eternal joy of becoming, beyond all terror and pity - that joy which includes even joy in destroying.¹²¹ Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, three centuries prior, did exactly what Nietzsche suggested.

In, *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche attempted to re-evaluate all values. In the preface he related European culture to a river that was simply looking for an end and not interested in, indeed afraid to, reflect upon itself.¹²² Similarly, Marlowe was opening up English history to realistic and sceptically intelligent

¹¹⁹ This was the norm, as opposed to the several years after Marlowe's death in which the original versions of plays were performed, which was abnormal and thus remarkable.

¹²⁰ The first monarch to do so.

¹²¹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy in Ecce Homo*, ch 3, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, p729

¹²² Nietzsche, *The Will to Power: Attempt at a Revaluation of all Values*, trans. Kaufmann, W & Hollingdale, R J (Random House, 1967), preface. Available online at www.publicappeal.org/library/nietzsche/Nietzsche_the_will_to_power/index.htm

treatment.¹²³ Indeed, he saw the hypocrisy in Christianity and the 'morals' of the day. His room-mate and friend, Thomas Kyd, said that he continued it at table or otherwise to jest at the divine scriptures, gibe at prayers and strive in argument to frustrate and confute what hath been spoke or written by prophets and such holy men.¹²⁴ A psychoanalysis of Marlowe would in fact show the connections between his narcissism and attack on 'morals': From the point of view of instinctual control, of morality, it may be said of this id that it is totally non-moral, of the ego that it strives to be moral, and of the super-ego that it can be super-moral and then become as cruel as only the id can be. It is remarkable that the more a man checks his aggressiveness towards the exterior the more severe - that is aggressive - he becomes in his ego ideal.¹²⁵

Nietzsche further stressed Marlowe's empowerment and suggestion that all our common beliefs are based on a lie:

That a psychologist without equal speaks from my writings, is perhaps the first insight reached by a good reader ... Those propositions on which all the world is really agreed - not to speak of the world's common run of philosophers, the moralists and other hollow pots - appear in my books as naïve blunders ... The Circ of humanity, morality, has falsified all psychologica through and through - moralizing them - down to that gruesome nonsense that love is supposed to be something "unegoistic." ... One has to sit firmly upon oneself, one must stand bravely on one's own two legs, otherwise one is simply incapable of loving.¹²⁶

In addition to Marlowe's intellectual connection with Nietzsche, the psychology of the tragic poet Marlowe aligns him with Freud. Repeatedly Marlowe alluded to the ego and the id, to reason and passion, Apollonian and Dionysian, but unlike other authors previously, saw them in a Freudian, anti-religious way (though he was stuck using existing vocabulary, like 'soul', to explain it). Marlowe's opinions are consistent with Freud's view (the id being the internal, the ego external) that through the super-ego, formed after successful mastery over ego during the Oedipal complex, and containing part of the id, can instantly connect an external object-cathexis (or love object) to the libidinal drive of the id. Indeed, what interests Marlowe is that passion frees the mind from literalness.¹²⁷ Where the moralists said love was a virtue, Marlowe related the 'action' of love more scientifically to the unconscious, when he asked, who ever loved, that loved not at first sight?¹²⁸

Furthermore, Freud said that It is impossible to escape the impression that people commonly use false standards of measurement - that they seek power, success and wealth for themselves and admire them in others, and

¹²³ Honan, *Marlowe*, p294

¹²⁴ Thomas Kyd's unsigned letter to Puckering, c. June 1593 reproduced in full, in Honan, p381

¹²⁵ Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id* (Standard Edition), p56.

¹²⁶ Nietzsche, *Why I Write Such Good Books*, in *Ecce Homo*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, p722

¹²⁷ Honan, *Marlowe*, p104

¹²⁸ Marlowe, *Hero & Leander*, p7, l. 25

that they underestimate what is of true value in life. And yet, in making any general judgment of this sort, we are in danger of forgetting how variegated the human world and its mental life are. There are a few men from whom their contemporaries do not withhold admiration, although their greatness rests on attributes and achievements which are completely foreign to the aims and ideals of the multitude. One might easily be inclined to suppose that it is after all only a minority which appreciates these great men, while the large majority cares nothing for them. But things are not as simple as that, thanks to the discrepancies between people's thoughts and their actions, and to the diversity of their wishful impulses.¹²⁹ Marlowe already similarly said in *The Jew of Malta*:

*And weigh not men, and therefore not men's words
Admired I am of those that hate me most
Though some speak openly against my books
Yet they will read me, and thereby attain
To Peter's chair.*¹³⁰

Marlowe and his contemporaries' proposition that the Church was detrimental to mankind, in line with their Erasmian teachings, established a public precedent for this 'dangerous' thought that can be traced forward to many later thinkers, among them another Englishman, Jeremy Bentham. He too challenged the value of the Church to mankind:

*On the truth of religion much has been urged; on its usefulness and beneficial tendency, comparatively little - little, at least, which can be termed argumentative or convincing.*¹³¹

In a treatise where he called prayer the lazy person's answer to the difficulties of life, he continued the call of Marlowe when he challenged the assumptions about social norms and religion:

*But assumption is shorter than proof, and the advocates of religion, though scarcely deigning to bestow any inquiry or analysis upon the subject, have not failed to ascribe to [prayer], results of supreme excellence and happiness. It has been affirmed to be the leading bond of union between the different members of society ... to be the most powerful curb on the immoral and unsocial passions of individuals ... to form the consolation and support of misfortunes and declining life ... in short it has been described as the most efficient prop both of inward happiness and of virtuous practice in this world.*¹³²

Bentham examined the origins for religious belief and duly noted the psychological use of it to satisfy the ego. The more a person represses the rage the more the ego ideal is turned inside in an attempt to satisfy the id by

¹²⁹ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Standard Edition), p10

¹³⁰ Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, prologue in *The Complete Plays*, p461, ls. 7-12

¹³¹ Jeremy Bentham, *The Influence of Natural Religion on the Temporal Happiness of Mankind* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus books, 2003), p29.

¹³² idem.

recognition of rationale in the ego. To accomplish this, the religious person allows an omnipotent god to be the judge, thus taking all responsibility away from the person's (super)ego, which 'rationally' allows someone to kill and still feel that their passion and reason are righteously satisfied; this was Marlowe's thesis in *The Massacre at Paris*.

One of the finest examples of the evolution from allusive to blatant public criticism of the Crown, and an eerie prediction, Marlowe's *Pharsalia*, otherwise known as *De Bello Civili*, a story about the 'civil war' between Pompey and Julius Caesar, was relative to the many various power struggles in Elizabethan England. In fact *Pharsalia*'s classic author Lucan himself was involved in intrigue, *taking part in a conspiracy against his jealous friend, the young emperor Nero. The conspiracy was betrayed, and Lucan quite simply was ordered to die.*¹³³ In retrospect the allusion to the growing public discontent and eventual Civil War is obvious but could Marlowe have been working with actual knowledge and foreshadowing his own fate with Raleigh?

What exactly was being said with the phrase, *Ut Nectar, Ingenium*, on the cover of *Hero and Leander*?¹³⁴ Was it a clue to the phrase attributed to Marlowe, *Quod me nutrit, me destruit* (that which nourishes me, destroys me)? Or do these short three words suggest that Marlowe felt that his talent as a writer, knowledge, and innate ability sustained him, but in the end, would kill him? The phrase is puzzling. Superficially it seems obvious, considering the mythical nature of the poem, that the use of nectar here is the actual Latin word nectar, which means nectar of the gods, and ingenium, which means nature or character, *Nature is the nectar of the gods*. However, there are other known English translations for the Latin words nectar and ingenium. Specifically, ingenium can mean "gifted writer" and nectar could be the first person, future, passive voice of the third conjugation verb necto, nectere. When these equally legitimate translations are used, an eerie message emerges: *How I the gifted writer will be imprisoned*.

Whatever was being said above, Marlowe certainly represented the intrigue of his day. Indeed, *in moving from group to group, he sought out those of audacity, independent views, or creative enterprise: John Greenwood, the Christian who was hanged; or Watson and Roydon, who wrote poetry and served as secret couriers; or Kyd, who innovated in tragedy; or Nashe, who criticized society as a pamphleteer. Marlowe had a committed habit of studying politics and power.*¹³⁵

¹³³ Honan, *Marlowe*, p96

¹³⁴ Marlowe, *Hero & Leander*.

¹³⁵ Honan, *Marlowe*, p358

Marlowe and the Golden Age playwrights represent the full range of public and political opinion because the stage was a commercial enterprise willingly attended by the public. It was their outstanding business and writing skill coupled with their ready wit and Erasmian education though that allowed these men to be successful and create a permanent impression on the English-speaking world and beyond. It was precisely the converse, the inhibition of free capitalism and open dialogue at the end of the English Renaissance, spearheaded by religion and politics, that paralyzed the great liberal, Erasmian education, humanist ideals, and intellectual flowering that the Golden Age generation had enjoyed. Regardless of the decline of the stage that ensued, Marlowe and the Golden Age generation were successful in opening writers and Londoners up to satire and the willingness, against all suppression, to speak publicly against their leaders. As Camus said *tragedy is one of the rarest of flowers. . . Each time, in the history of ideas, the individual frees himself little by little from a corpus of sacred concepts and stands face to face with the ancient world of terror and devotion.*¹³⁶

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Dramatis Personae

- **Christopher Marlowe** (Feb 1564-1593 Canterbury, Corpus Christi Cambridge)
- **Sir Walter Raleigh** (1554-1618 Hayes, Devon, Oriel College Oxford, Middle Temple 27 February 1575)
- **William Shakespeare** (Apr 1564-Apr 1616 Stratford Deptford, no college, performed at Middle Temple)
- **Lancelot Andrewes** (1555-1626 London, Bishop of Winchester, Pembroke College, Cambridge)
- **Richard Baines** - Spy (Roger-1546-1623? Paul 1573-1617? - Christ's College Cambridge)
- **Anthony Bacon** - Spy (1558-1601 Gorhambury, Hertfordshire, Trinity College, Cambridge, brother of Francis, Earl of Essex's director of intelligence)
- **Francis Bacon** - 'natural philosopher' (1561-1626, London, Trinity College, Cambridge)
- **Henry Barrow** (1550-1593 separatist, Norfolk, Clare/Corpus Christi, Cambridge, BA 1569-70, related to Sir Nicholas Bacon, distant relation to William Cecil, Lord Burghley)
- **Richard Barnfield** (1574-1620 Norbury, Shropshire, Brasenose College, Oxford)
- **Edward Blount** (1562-1632 London, bookseller & translator, went to school with Daniel, Sidney, Jonson, Spenser, & Andrewes)
- **Robert Browne** (1550-1633 separatist, Tolethorpe Hall, Rutland, Corpus Christi, Cambridge, related to Lord Burghley)
- **Robert Cecil**, First Earl of Salisbury (1563-1612 Cecil House, Strand, Westminster, no college, cousin to Anthony and Francis Bacon)
- **William Cecil**, Baron (Lord) Burghley-father of Robert (1520/1-1598 Bourne, Lincolnshire, St. John's, Cambridge, Queen's chief councillor)

¹³⁶ *ibid.* p218

- **George Chapman** (1559/60-1634 Hitchin, Hertfordshire, no college)
- **Geoffrey Chaucer** (1340-1400)
- **Richard Chomeley** (same as Hugh? 1574-1641)
- **Samuel Daniel** (1562/3-1619 Somerset (?), Magdalen Hall, Oxford)
- **Thomas Dekker** (1572-1632 London, no college)
- **Robert Devereux**, Second Earl of Essex (1565-1601 Essex, no college, 25 Feb. 1593 became Privy Councillor, led English army into France in 1591, battle of Rouen)
- **Michael Drayton** (1563-1631 North Warwickshire, no college)
- **Sir Robert Drury** (1575-1615 Corpus Christi, Cambridge [didn't graduate], married Anne Bacon 1592, daughter Sir Nicholas Bacon, Thomas Drury worked for Anthony Bacon as a spy)
- **Desiderius Erasmus** of Rotterdam (1467-1536)
- **John Foxe** (1516/7-1587 Boston, Lincolnshire, Brasenose, Oxford)
- **Stephen Gosson** (1554-1625 Canterbury, Kent, Corpus Christi, Oxford as Parker scholar, anti-theatre and C of E clergyman)
- **Robert Greene** (1558-1592 Tombland, Norwich, St. John's, Cambridge, friend at Cambridge with Marlowe)
- **Thomas Greene** - Actor (1573-1612 Romford, Essex, Sh.'s cousin?)
- **John Greenwood** (1560-1593, hung because of tracts against Anglican church; friend of Marlowe's at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, BA 1581)
- **Thomas Harriot** (1560-1621 Oxford, St. Mary's, Oxford, mathematician)
- **Richard Harvey** (1560-1630 Saffron Walden, Essex, Pembroke College, Cambridge, astrologer and parson, brother of Gabriel; Marlowe called him an ass)
- **Gabriel Harvey** (1552/3-1631 Saffron Walden, Essex, Pembroke College, Cambridge brother of Richard, at Cambridge with Marlowe)
- **Richard Howland** (1540-1600 Saffron Walden, Essex, Christ Church, Cambridge)
- **Robert Hues** (1553-1632 Herefordshire, Brasenose College, Oxford)
- **Ben Jonson** (1572-1637 London, possibly went to St. John's, Cambridge)
- **Francis Kett** (1547-1589 Wymondham, Norfolk, Clare College, Cambridge)
- **Lawrence Keymis** (1564/5-1618 Wiltshire, Balliol College, Oxford)
- **William Kempe** (c. 1560-1601, Devon or Cornwall, Christ's College, Cambridge and Trinity Hall)
- **Thomas Kyd** (1558-1594 London, no college)
- **John Lyly** (1554-1606 Canterbury, Parker scholar, Magdalen College, Oxford)
- **Richard Mulcaster** (1531/2-1611 Carlisle, King's College, Cambridge)
- **Thomas Nashe** (bap.1567-1601 Lowestoft, Suffolk, St. John's College, Cambridge, friend at Cambridge with Marlowe)
- **George Peele** (bap.1556-1596 London, Christ's Church, Oxford, colleagues with Thomas Watson)
- **Henry Percy** Ninth Earl of Northumberland (1564-1632 Northumberland, no college)
- **Henry Petowe** (1575/6-1636 no college)

- **Matthew Roydon** (1560?-1622 MA at Oxford 1580 poet, mathematician, tricked into loan scheme by Nicholas Skeres, present at Marlowe's killing & possible murderer)
- **Sir Robert Sidney** - Poet (1563-1626 Penshurst, Kent Christ Church Oxford, bro. to Philip)
- **Sir Philip Sidney** - Poet (1554-1586 Penshurst, Kent, Poley, M's killer, once served Sidney; S's wife was Frances Walsingham)
- **Edmund Spenser** (1552?-1599 London, Pembroke College, Cambridge)
- **Lord Ferdinando (Stanley) Strange** (1559?-1594 St. John's, Oxford)
- **Sir Francis Verney** (1584-1615 called Marlowe "the splendour of our worthless time"¹³⁷)
- **Sir Francis Walsingham** (1532-1590 London or Kent, King's College, Cambridge)
- **Thomas Watson** (1555/6-1592 London, Winchester College, Oxford)
- **Walter Warner** (1558-1643 Leicestershire, Oxford, mathematician, scientist, 1590 entered service of Wizard Earl)

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¹³⁷ *ibid.* p318