

# The Marlowe Society of America

## Marlowe Society of America Newsletter

Vol. 31, No. 2, Spring 2012



MSA Session at MLA: Adam Hooks, Sarah Wall-Randall, Kirk Melnikoff

### A Message from the President

I'm delighted to introduce myself to the readers of this newsletter as the incoming President of the Marlowe Society of America. My first act—other than going mad with power, obviously—is to express our organization's immense gratitude to outgoing president Roslyn Knutson (who will continue to work with the MSA as a kind of benign *eminence grise*). The list of Roz's contribution to the MSA is nearly as long as the

list of publications through which she's reshaped our profession, in particular the way we think about early modern playing companies. I can report that her genius for thinking about organization, personnel, and programming is not restricted to the early modern era, however. Anyone who attended the MSA-sponsored panels at the MLA during her term, or who attended the 2006 International Marlowe

Conference in Canterbury benefited from her astonishing ability to negotiate the problems that time, space, and available resources sometimes present. I'd say that she's a hard act to follow, except that her incredible efficiency actually makes her an easy act to follow since she left the MSA in such robust health.

This *Newsletter* will testify to that health. You'll find it in accounts of MSA activities past and upcoming. I would draw your particular attention to the Call for Papers for the 2013 International Marlowe Conference, June 24-28, 2013. It will be held at the American Shakespeare Center's Blackfriars Playhouse in Staunton, VA and therefore offers attendees a

full repertory of evening plays to attend. I'm delighted to announce here our four esteemed keynoters:

- Susan Cerasano, Colgate University
- Leah Marcus, Vanderbilt University
- Garrett Sullivan, Pennsylvania State University
- Laurie Maguire, Magdalen College, University of Oxford

There will be other panels, workshops, and entertainments over the four days, and we hope you will all consider making summer plans for Staunton in 2013.

Paul Menzer, President

## Call For Papers: Seventh International Marlowe Conference

The Marlowe Society of America solicits papers for its Seventh International Conference, to be held on June 24-28th, 2013, at the Blackfriars Playhouse in Staunton, VA. Hosted by MSA President Paul Menzer, the conference will feature keynote presentations by Susan P. Cerasano (Colgate University) Laurie Maguire (Magdalen College, University of

Papers should be no more than fifteen minutes in length and present original research on any topic concerning the works of Christopher Marlowe. Please send an abstract (500 words

Oxford), Leah Marcus (Vanderbilt University), and Garrett Sullivan (Pennsylvania State University). The professional productions by the American Shakespeare Center will complement special events, workshops, screenings, and productions designed especially for conference attendees.

max.) by email to the conference Program Chair, Professor Jeremy Lopez, University of Toronto:

[jeremy.lopez@utoronto.ca](mailto:jeremy.lopez@utoronto.ca). **The deadline for submission of abstracts is Friday, August 31, 2012.**

## A Message from the Editor

Our issue includes three book reviews and a performance review, courtesy of the contributors and our Book Reviews editor, David McInnis of the University of Melbourne, and our Performances Editor, Ann McCauley Basso of the

University of South Florida. Both have done a magnificent job finding good books and theater as well as people to write for us. We commend them for their efforts. Please help them out by suggesting books and performances related to Marlowe that should be perused as well as colleagues to write reviews.

## Roma Gill Prize

The winner of the 2011 prize is Patrick Cheney's *Marlowe's Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime*. The MSA offers its congratulations for a job well done.

## Marlowe Studies: An Annual—Special Offer for MSA Members

The editors of *MS:A* and the Executive Committee of the Marlowe Society extend their thanks to current members who requested their free copies of the 2012 edition of the annual.

For subscribers who are already Marlowe Society members in good standing, the individual rate has been reduced from \$45 to \$30. If you are interested in subscribing, please see

the [MS:A webpage](#). Backorders of the 2011 issue are at the regular rate.

*MS:A* is sponsored and supported by the College of Arts and Sciences at Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne. We are happy to accept essays for consideration for 2013. If you are interested in submitting your work, visit the [website](#), and query the editorial staff by [email](#).

## MARLOWE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Roslyn Knutson, President; Paul Menzer, Vice President; Lucy Munro, Secretary; Kirk Melnikoff, Treasurer; Sarah K. Scott, Membership Chair; David McInnis, Editor, MSA Book Reviews; Ann Basso, Performance Editor; M. L. Stapleton, Editor, *MSA Newsletter* and webmaster; Pierre Hecker, At-Large Member and Consultant.

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

Professor Roslyn Knutson (emerita) email: [rlknutson@ualr.edu](mailto:rlknutson@ualr.edu)  
Department of English, University of Arkansas at Little Rock  
823 N. Midland St.  
Little Rock, AR 72205

New memberships and renewals: 1) Use the PayPal option on the [Membership web page](#), or

2) send your check, payable to The Marlowe Society of America, to:

Professor Sarah K. Scott email: [sscott@msmary.edu](mailto:sscott@msmary.edu)

Department of English  
Mount St. Mary's University  
16300 Old Emmitsburg Road  
Emmitsburg, MD 21727 USA

**Membership Fees:** We can accept checks for U.S. dollars drawn on U.S. banks or checks in other currencies drawn on a bank in that country.

1 year = \$30 · 3 years = \$75 · Students = \$15 · Lifetime = \$100 (with 20 years of MSA membership)

*MSA Newsletter* publishes reviews of Renaissance drama, especially related to Marlowe; notices of recent and forthcoming publications; notices of recent and forthcoming performances related to Marlowe; announcements; and brief articles or notes of interest to those who study Marlowe. The opinions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the MSA. The editor reserves the right to refuse items, to ask for revisions, and to make stylistic changes that he deems appropriate.

Any and all inquiries, announcements, or submissions regarding the website or *Newsletter* should be sent to:

Dr. M. L. Stapleton email: [stapletm@ipfw.edu](mailto:stapletm@ipfw.edu)  
Department of English and Linguistics phone: 260.481.6772  
Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne  
2101 E. Coliseum Blvd.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

MSA Book Reviews publishes reviews of books on Marlowe and his times. Send suggestions for reviews and other inquiries to the Reviews Editor:

David McInnis email: [mcinnisd@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:mcinnisd@unimelb.edu.au)  
MSA Book Reviews Editor  
University of Melbourne  
Victoria, Australia

MSA Performance Reviews publishes reviews of performances of Marlowe's plays. Send suggestions for reviews and other inquiries to the Performances Editor:

Ann McCauley Basso email: [ann.basso@gmail.com](mailto:ann.basso@gmail.com)  
MSA Performances Editor  
New College of Florida  
University of South Florida  
Tampa, FL 33620-9951  
Performances website: [marloweinperformance.weebly.com](http://marloweinperformance.weebly.com)

MSA web site: [www.marlowesmightyline.org](http://www.marlowesmightyline.org)

© 2012 Marlowe Society of America. All rights reserved.

## Minutes of the MSA Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee of the Marlowe Society of America met @ 10:30 am in the Cyan A room of the Hyatt Olive 8 on 6 January 2012. Members attending were Roslyn L. Knutson, Paul Menzer, Bob Logan, Kirk Melnikoff, M. L. Stapleton, David McInnis, and Bruce Brandt.

Knutson called the meeting to order by announcing the returns of the recent election. Those results are the election of Paul Menzer as president, Bob Logan as Vice-President, and Lucy Munro as secretary. Twenty-eight ballots were tabulated, and every ballot voted "yea" for each candidate.

Knutson further announced the winner of the Roma Gill Award: Patrick Cheney, for *Marlowe's Republican Authorship* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2009). The announcement was made to the public in the MSA session held on the afternoon of 6 January 2012 @ 3:30 pm in the Washington State Convention Center. In addition to the accustomed award of \$250, the committee members agreed to give Cheney a copy of *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Robert A. Logan (University Wits series, Ashgate). Melnikoff volunteered to contact Ashgate for a copy; he has since reported the acquisition of said copy for \$166.88 (plus shipping; Ashgate will ship to Cheney). Knutson agreed to write the congratulatory letter to Cheney. The next award will be based on publications in 2011 and 2012 and presented in January 2014.

### Reports:

1. Stapleton, reporting as editor of the *MSAN* and Webmaster, submits that all is going well; as always he commends the book review editor and performance editor for their solicited submissions; he adds that he relies on the membership, specifically the Executive Committee members, to supply him with information of interest to the membership at large.

2. Melnikoff, reporting for the Treasury, reports that we have sufficient funds to take us into the international conference without too many concerns. His accounting for the past year is appended to these minutes.

3. Brandt raised the question of an archives, an issue that has lain fallow for more than a year. Discussion ensued about the value of a hard-copy repository for *MSAN* copies and other materials and memorabilia of the organization. The suggestion was made that Brandt's university provide such an archive with Brandt's papers as the core holdings.

4. Scott, reporting as Membership Chair, submits the following: "Scott reports 101 members for 2011, with 5 new lifetime members (those who have been MSA members for 20 years or longer and have paid the one-time fee of \$100). Membership coordinated the request of the inaugural issue of *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* to 52 members." To view the present membership list, please feel free to visit [this link](#).

5. Basso, reporting as Performance Editor, submits the following: In the last newsletter, we had three excellent reviews from Ruth Lunney, Brett Foster, and Ruth Lunney. My thanks especially to Brett who pitched in when the scheduled reviewer had a change of plans. I have one review lined up for the next newsletter and will soon seek one or two

more. There are some performances of *Edward II* coming up this year, including a ballet in Birmingham (wish I could go to that one)! I will be working on updating the web site this month to include the upcoming performances for 2012 and will send out an e-mail to all members when it is ready." (There was discussion at the meeting about the Lunney/Lunney duplication in Basso's report but no one could remember who the third person really was.)

6. McInnis, reporting as Book Review Editor, submits that seven reviews are underway. Discussion ensued about the possibility of having more volumes of the "University Wits" collection reviewed, and Knutson spoke for the Greene volume if Ashgate will provide a reviewer copy. McInnis then called the members attention to the new *Marlowe Bibliography Online*, and there were hurrahs expressed for such a fine resource (for which there is already a link on the MSA Website). Knutson agreed to write a letter of thanks to Gayle Allan and Tony Allan for their work on designing the site (Tony) and providing content along with McInnis (Gayle).

7. Menzer took over the meeting at this point in order to report on developments in the planning for the International Marlowe Conference, which will take place in Staunton, VA, June 24-28, 2013, at the American Shakespeare Center's Blackfriars Playhouse. Jeremy Lopez has agreed to be Program Chair. Menzer and Lopez report the following plans:

a. Keynote speakers: in consultation with Menzer, Lopez has contacted four scholars with an invitation to present keynote addresses. Susan P. Cerasano, Colgate University, has accepted the invitation. Michael Dobson, Shakespeare Institute, has expressed great interest but has some calendar issues to work out. Alan Stewart, Columbia University, and Emily Bartels, Rutgers University, have not yet replied.

b. Session space: the Blackfriars playhouse will be available for sessions in the mornings

c. Lodging: one hotel and one motel are within walking distance of the playhouse. The Andrew Jackson is literally adjacent to the playhouse; rooms are likely to be slightly less than \$100 a night. Howard Johnson's (some rooms of which have microwaves and refrigerators) is about six blocks away; its rooms let for about \$60. Unlike at previous international conferences, the reservation of rooms will not be done through the registration process; delegates will make their own arrangements (hurrah!).

d. A call for papers will be issued to the membership in the spring of 2012, with deadlines for abstracts in early fall. Registration for the conference will take place in the winter, 2012-13. The cost of registration has not yet been determined.

e. Melnikoff will serve as treasurer for the conference; he will check out options for delegates to register by way of PayPal (our friend).

f. There was considerable discussion of possible session topics, with Menzer citing a few the program committee was considering: an example is "Marlowe in the Institutions," possibly with Ralph Cohen speaking for Blackfriars, Lena Orlin for the SAA, and Michael Widmore for the Folger. Committee members were invited to submit ideas and to

encourage members to craft their own sessions to submit as a package deal.

g. Entertainment:

i. A showing of *The Massacre at Paris* performed by students in the graduate program at Mary Baldwin College

ii. Showings of archival films at nearby movie houses of past performances at the Blackfriars including *Tamburlaine*, *Dido*, *Doctor Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, and *Look About You*.

iii. A showing of the new film, *The Jew of Malta*, perhaps hosted by the director (Douglas Morse)

h. There was discussion but no action on the question of whether the MSA should seek partnership with another Allied Organization for MLA 2013.

8. The general feeling of the committee was that a Facebook page would be a useful way to disseminate information about conference developments. Knutson volunteered to set the page up and keep it current. Brandt expressed unease that the page would attract controversial comments on issues of authorship,

but several members said that whoever supervised the page would have the ability to delete unsatisfactory comments.

9. Stapleton asked the help of committee members in crafting a response to administrators at IPFW on subscriptions to the *MS:A*. A lively discussion of ways for the MSA to support the annual, yet get some *quid pro quo* for that support, is being conducted by email among members of the executive committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Roslyn L. Knutson, Secretary *pro tempore*  
13 January 2012



## MSA Theater Reviews • Ann Basso, University of South Florida • Performances Editor

### *Tamburlaine the Great at the Blackfriars*

The American Shakespeare Center's production of *Tamburlaine the Great* for their Fall 2011 season brought to their Blackfriars theatre, for the first time, Marlowe's play of world domination. The Blackfriars, in Staunton, VA, proudly announces that they "do it with the lights on," so the actors can see the audience and the audience can all see each other. These actors look for every opportunity to engage the audience. They study their lines for opportunities to ally with the audience and persuade them into agreement, to address them as a crowd or an army, and to question them (the end result being that there are no rhetorical questions at the Blackfriars). In the case of *Tamburlaine*, he did all these, and as a result, he colonized his audience.

Director Jim Warren resisted the trendy urge to pack Parts One and Two together and then edit them down to a performable length. Part One stands alone, he insists in his notes on the play, and is best enjoyed with its narrative arc intact. Without Part Two to show *Tamburlaine's* power diminish, we have a play in which his mastery of words becomes a mastery of his world, unchecked at an ending which celebrates his reign, in all its "gory glory." For Warren, accusations that Marlowe's verse is bombastic and that some of his characters lack dimension simply do not apply to this play. Warren declares in his director's notes that this play "is full of nuance in the midst of its bombast." ASC actors are particularly well-trained to discover and exploit that nuance. Although Warren has a clear vision, his light touch allows the actors' own relationships with the words room to move the production forward.

Marlowe's remarkable blank verse shines through in every moment, and language is of utmost importance in this play. The paradox of *Tamburlaine* as both a mere man and also one who "tropes himself in cosmic terms" is the animating force of the production.<sup>1</sup> What sets *Tamburlaine* apart from other warriors, and from the other characters in his own play, is his mastery of language. He wins battles through his followers, but he wins his followers with words, and the master of words in a scene of this play is the master of the whole scene. This is always *Tamburlaine*. *Tamburlaine* stands accused throughout of being violent, but he moves through words as much as through action. We see a man who sways with force of personality. His enemies demonstrate themselves to be his inferiors by failing at language as much as failing at war. Next to him, Meander seems merely bloodthirsty. Zenocrate is asked how she could "fancy one who looks so fierce" (3.2.40), but James Keegan's *Tamburlaine*, while undoubtedly commanding, has a sort of innocent enthusiasm for his pursuit of glory.<sup>2</sup> Keegan played many of his lines to the upper gallery, giving him a chin-up posture and an open countenance, and so his *Tamburlaine* came across as persistently enthusiastic. To a degree, the other characters' reactions to *Tamburlaine* feel stretched. Keegan has the larger-than-life charisma on stage which makes *Tamburlaine* plausible, but he persuades more than he enchants, and yet the other character seemed enchanted.

There are others who would wield words as *Tamburlaine* does, but they do not succeed. Bajazeth and Zabina, played by Rene Thornton Jr. and Allison Glanzer, stand as examples of people who use words, lots of words, without force to back those words up. Their subsequent fall creates for them a sad opportunity to refine their expression, confined to a cage and unable to articulate their experience with anything but the words that are all that remain to them. Glanzer is more often

found in comic roles, and she brings to Zabina her ability to seethe with disdain while also being funny. However, Zabina and Bajazeth accumulate a different grandeur, as well as audience sympathy, as they languish in their cage, and their deaths in 5.1, which—if played with anything but total commitment to the moment would risk becoming ridiculous--were heartbreaking in the hands of these two actors. All who spoke in the podcasts seem aware that the values of the play are askew – or are at least strikingly dissimilar to the values found in other Elizabethan tragedies. In the Backstage Pass podcast, Blythe Coons (Zenocrate) discusses how Tamburlaine crosses every line and yet never gets punished. In another podcast, Ralph Cohen (ASC co-founder) says with great joy that we wait nervously for Tamburlaine to be struck down with lightning that never comes.<sup>3</sup> The outcomes for the characters underscore the general sense of unfairness in which Marlowe’s play revels, offering a departure from the moral vision of so many plays of its period by refusing to distribute rewards and punishments according to the expectations of the audience.

The Blackfriars never misses an opportunity for fun, and the rowdy amorality of Marlowe’s play found fitting accompaniment in the music selected for the interludes. Where the original Blackfriars would have used music to keep the audience entertained while candle wicks were trimmed in short interludes between scenes, the ASC Blackfriars (enjoying the benefits of electrical lighting) brings the audience music in the same places but is able to use it to briefly set or change tone. There is no period music here – the purpose of this theatre is not to reconstruct an original production, but rather to recreate the original relationship between actors and audience. The music is contemporary, wittily selected to touch on themes in the play, and often a bit boisterous in performance. Selections from this production include Nirvana’s “As I Want You To Be,” Tears4Fears’s “Everybody Wants to Rule the World,” George Strait’s “Bad to the Bone,” Aha’s “Take on Me,” and the Nickolas Ashford song “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough,” made popular by Diana Ross. Many of the Blackfriars actors are also impressive musicians, and the music is an element of the performance to be enjoyed in its own right.

The costumes were generally Eastern-ish, mostly tunics in bold jewel and earth tones, with the exception of Zenocrate, whose white goddess dress set her apart visually in every scene except 4.2, when Tamburlaine’s white cloak mirrored her own costume. Tamburlaine’s costume grew increasingly grand, and he began appearing with a mask painted on his face. The production followed to the letter the text’s directions on changes in color (the messenger in 4.1.46-63 gives explicit

<sup>1</sup> The quotation is from James Keegan’s description of his character in a podcast discussion of the play. The discussion also included Rene Thornton Jr. (Bajazet), Allison Glanzer (Zabina), Blythe Coons (Zenocrate), and stage manager Jeremy West. Podcast: Tuesday, November 8, 2011. Blackfriars Backstage Pass: Tamburlaine the Great. <http://americanshakespearecenter.blogspot.com/2011/11/blackfriars-backstage-pass-tamburlaine.html>

instructions for how Zenocrate’s father is to understand the color changes of Tamburlaine’s “furniture”). Act four, scene two begins with Tamburlaine “all in white,” with white banners hanging from the balcony and flanking the stage. Beginning in 4.4, Tamburlaine enters “all in scarlet,” mirrored in the banners. His painted mask is scarlet to match. In 5.5, the colors are changed to black. Tamburlaine’s paint mask in black is quite elaborate, a multi-winged mask with edges painted out towards his temples and ears. In fact, the black costume is by far the most elaborate, and is the first time his clothes have appeared grand in make as well as color: flocked taffeta with gold embellishments on the cuffs. After the victory over Egypt, the creepy mask disappears. The production adhered to these original directions in part, according to stage manager West, because it allows a connection to the original time period for the drama, when visual clues help create a sense of time and place. The wash of color in the banners, echoed in Tamburlaine’s clothing and huge cloak, is visually arresting. It creates a monochromatic effect which somewhat flattens the visual structure of the stage. It also makes it difficult to look anywhere but at Tamburlaine, which may be the point. The emotional impact is considerable, regardless, and the huge wash of scarlet as a backdrop to the tormenting of Bajazet and Zabina makes the scene more disturbing.

Blackfriars directors and actors do very little shaping of a playwright’s lines to suit their own production – they may occasionally tinker with wording to be more sensitive to casting (height, coloring, etc.) but they do not cut or alter in order to force a play to conform to a director’s vision. There is a reason scholars love this theatre: the vision of the production begins, and ends, in the words. Actors enter into their lines with no preconceived notions, so if a line reveals itself to be funny, or awkward, or inconveniently sad, they play it straight and allow the line to be itself. This allows characters who might otherwise seem distant and majestic to be very human, despite the grand scale on which they are drawn. Zenocrate’s resigned love, and Bajazeth’s and Zabina’s empty haughtiness and sad self-destruction are rendered immensely plausible in being played simply and without ornament. Tamburlaine’s unshakable certainty, which would seem to border on the insane, instead becomes the natural result of a man whose confidence and boldness have simply never encountered boundaries.

Robin Bates  
Lynchburg College

<sup>2</sup> References to the play in this review are to the Oxford English Drama edition of the play: *Tamburlaine the Great Part I*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, *Doctor Faustus ad Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford U P, 1995), 1-68.

<sup>3</sup> Podcast: Tuesday, November 15, 2011. Dr. Ralph Presents: Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1. <http://americanshakespearecenter.blogspot.com/2011/11/dr-ralph-presents-tamburlaine-great.html>



MSA Book Reviews • David McInnis, University of Melbourne •

## Book Reviews Editor

**Kristen Poole. *Supernatural Environments in Shakespeare's England: Spaces of Demonism, Divinity, and Drama*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. ISBN: 9781107008359. Price £55 (US\$90.00).**

Tracking down the devil is a tricky business. In *Supernatural Environments in Shakespeare's England: Spaces of Demonism, Divinity, and Drama* Kristen Poole finds him residing “betwixt, akin, within, and adjacent to metaphor and reality, metaphysics and empiricism, literature and history” (57), a supernatural space that resists firm definition. Published last year by Cambridge University Press, Poole’s book negotiates the ground between physical and metaphorical spaces of the supernatural on the early modern English stage. Outlining that the sixteenth century was a time of both religious and spatial upheaval, Poole reconciles developments in cartography with theological concerns. In doing so she contextualizes the changes in topography of the natural and supernatural spheres, considering the impact of the globe’s re-imagined landscape on the cosmic landscape of the afterlife and how such changes are manifested in the early modern theatre.

*Supernatural Environments* purports to offer an “eschatological destabilization” (4), demonstrating how early modern conceptions of the supernatural were radically altered by shifting geographical perspectives. More broadly, the book addresses the problems scholars face when trying to fathom the supernatural complexities of early modern England and Poole suggests a refreshingly new approach. As the title indicates, the book focuses chiefly on Shakespeare’s supernatural spaces: on the liminality of the deathbed in terms of physical space in *Othello*; theories on the physical location of purgatory in relation to *Hamlet*; the contrasting cosmic views of Calvin and Hooker coexisting in *Macbeth*; and the theological associations of the geometry and surveying in *The Tempest*.

While the book is ostensibly about supernatural spaces in Shakespeare, the first chapter (previously published in *Renaissance Drama* in 2006) concerns Marlovian supernatural. Entitled “The Devil’s in the Archive: Ovidian Physics and *Doctor Faustus*,” the focus is on a character surprisingly absent from Shakespeare’s plays: the Devil. Poole

begins by establishing why the Devil needs to be taken seriously, demonstrating the importance of scrutinizing not just what was believed, but how it was believed. Using Stuart Clark’s *Thinking with Demons* and John D. Cox’s *The Devil and the Sacred* as reinforcements, Poole dissects the theories of the decline of magic and religion constructed by Weber, Burckhardt, Chambers and, of course, Keith Thomas, traversing some very well-trodden ground to emphasize the need to discard such whiggish meta-narratives once and for all.

To highlight the importance of taking the Devil seriously, Poole finds an unlikely ally in Sigmund Freud and his much over-looked article on a case of demonic possession, “A Seventeenth-Century Demonological Neurosis” (1923). For both Faustus and Freud, the demonic contract is what is of primary importance because, geographically speaking, it exists in both a physical human reality and in hell, a tangible link between two spaces that exist in close proximity to each other. As Mephistopheles famously suggests: “Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it,” implying that hell exists within the physical human world and not just below. This mutable, unstable world of Pre-Newtonian science Poole labels “Ovidian Physics,” a universe in which metamorphosis is a physical reality, a demonic faculty that defies an absolute sense of space. The many incidents of transformation in *Doctor Faustus* illustrate these realities, inadvertently proving how such things are possible. Yet Ovidian physics are also challenged in the play, as Poole points out that “ultimately, the universe is not, as Faustus would have it, pliant to his will, but absolute and unwavering” (48).

It’s a bold approach, and Poole navigates herself deftly through the minefield of ambiguities of literal and metaphorical language of the early modern supernatural. As she demonstrates, the early modern theatre offers a physical, absolute structure of earth, heaven, and hell and at the same time defies this rigid cosmography by playing out scenes in a malleable cosmos where these domains overlap and traffic moves freely between them in various shapes and forms. *Faustus* is the obvious choice for a discussion of Renaissance hell drama, and the chapter on Marlowe’s play serves as an appropriate launch pad for the more detailed discourse on Shakespeare’s supernatural environments. However, it would

perhaps have been useful—and more relevant—to lend greater weight to the obscurer dramas that exhibit the crossover between earth and hell far more explicitly than *Faustus*. *The Devil is an Ass*, *Grim the Collier of Croydon*, and *If This Be Not A Good Play the Devil is in It* all present the intriguing conundrum of hell and earth occupying the same stage space with characters moving between the spheres horizontally as well as vertically. A focus on the implications of these spatial ambiguities would really strengthen Poole's analysis.

For a chapter about *Faustus* there is surprisingly little about the play itself and the incidents of metamorphosis perhaps warrant a lengthier discussion. The coinage "Ovidian Physics" is apt, but these transformative sciences also had boundaries and limitations and it is these restrictions that make this pseudo-science believable. That the metamorphoses in *Faustus* are usually specified as merely the appearance of transformation rather than transformation itself isn't always made clear in the chapter.

Poole's book also does not account for variety in attitudes towards the supernatural. She is right to point out that skeptics such as Reginald Scot do not accurately reflect early modern supernatural belief, but it's important not to dismiss the skeptics entirely as demonological convictions were far from uniform in early modern England and the theatre encompasses these contradictory beliefs often within a single work. In plays such as *Macbeth* or *Faustus*, certainty of any supernatural space or agent is anything but stable and demonological debate contributed to the uncertainty Poole describes.

*Supernatural Environments* certainly succeeds in bringing to attention the important role of cartographic and mathematical developments in changing concepts of supernatural spaces and how these conflicting ideas are addressed in the theatre. While much of the book's introductory material on the need to reevaluate "the decline of magic" sounds all too familiar, the arguments that Poole follows with are significant as the implications of Clark's monumental study have yet to be fully addressed in a theatrical context. Poole writes engagingly and the argument is fascinating. *Supernatural Environments* is an ambitious project and Poole quite rightly reveals the possibility of more research in the area. It will be interesting to see what follows.

Bronwyn Johnston,  
Keble College, Oxford

**Darryl Chalk and Laurie Johnson, eds. "Rapt in Secret Studies": *Emerging Shakespeares*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010. 387 + xii. ISBN: 1-4438-2328-7.**

Michael Neill's succinct preface, all too brief, provides the reader with a generous voice for reading the diverse essays that comprise this collection, which took root from Shakespearean conferences in Australia and New Zealand. Neill's characterization of the volume as "eclectic" is perhaps an understatement, for the essays included in the Shakespearean-inspired text, "Rapt in Secret Studies," are

diverse and disparate in focus and methodology. The editors, Darryl Chalk and Laurie Johnson, wisely construct a tripartite structure to suggest cohesion for the collection, demarcating with OED entries each significant word in Prospero's lines to Miranda: "rapt," "secret," and "studies." The nuanced definitions provided for each word promote a logical structure that fails to materialize in a subsequent appraisal of the volume. Despite that cavil over the arrangement, there are individual essays that enhance the "emerging Shakespeares" articulated by the volume's dedicated scholars.

Part I ("Rapt") begins with David McInnis, who eschews a typical Marxist/Post-Colonial reading of *The Tempest* and contrasts Prospero's "secret study" with the wisdom he acquires on the island. McInnis stresses that the solipsistic studies that had deprived Prospero of his public place in Milan are powerfully reframed through his experiences of another culture, the contributions both Ariel and Caliban make to his development providing him with a dramatic, therapeutic peripeteia that allows him to return to Milan a wiser, more benevolent figure. Gayle Allan's study of jealousy in *Othello* has thematic linkage with McInnis's; both are engaged in the examination of the confluence of distinct epistemologies. For Allan, Shakespeare subjects jealousy to an incisive analysis that reflects an emerging hybridity of provenance: for the Renaissance, jealousy took hold from both traditional humoral and emerging psychological sources, the bodily site of imbalanced fluids and the emotional sphere of nocturnal fears giving Iago a broad swath of opportunity for manipulating all the characters around him, including himself. Daniel Timbrell applies the "rapt" adjective to the sexual conquest blunted in *Love's Labour Lost*, a frustration of love's end promulgated by the gaming trick of "Fast-and-Loose," a gaming strategy of gaining the upper hand in sport. *Love's Labour Lost* displays "rapt" men deprived of their conquest, and women's superiority in embracing typically masculine powers of control and rationality that deprive the play of a masculine, romantic aggressiveness.

The political dimensions of power and public speech are given voice in Fiona Martin's essay on Buckingham's "last dying speech" in *Henry 8* and Huw Griffith's essay on sovereign uses of violence to embody its authority in *3 Henry 6* and *King Lear*. Martin suggestively establishes both the historical and dramatic versions of Buckingham's last speech, in which he takes advantage of the "stage" to cast himself as a political martyr in a display of Renaissance self-fashioning. Applying the political theories of Giorgio Agamben and Jacques Derrida, Huw Griffith firmly grounds sovereign authenticity in sovereign violence: "sovereign power always operates on the brink of disaster, and . . . it always reserves the possibility of future violence."

Ben Kooyman's treatment of the cinematic Shakespeare, the only treatment of Shakespeare in film in the volume, deserves special mention. The notion of self-fashioning provides the ostensible subject of this essay. Kooyman suggests that the directors discussed (Olivier, Welles, Zeffirelli, Branagh, and Kaufman) "insert themselves into the culturally constructed legacy of Shakespeare" in order to fashion a legitimacy for their own careers and identities. More trenchantly, Kooyman

provides an organic metaphor for the spectatorial engagement of audiences with the actors cast in the film, especially Zeffirelli's choice of Mel Gibson for Hamlet, Gibson's overdetermined presence "rhizomatically" opening up a panoply of readings and cultural "paratexts" for Hamlet (Hamlet as action hero, Hamlet as bigot, Hamlet as religious fanatic) that either reinforce or explode directorial agendas. The suggestiveness of Kooyman's concluding thesis is significant for a Shakespearean industry attuned to box-office appeal.

Two essays from Part II ("Secret") emerge as standouts, despite disparate critical lenses and agendas. One can hear the voice of L.C. Knights in Christine Couche's intriguing essay, "The Macbeths' Secret," which proposes that the national tragedy played out in the drama's action resides in the "rooted sorrow" shared by both characters, the loss of a child. Though Couche admits the thesis undergirding her essays is based on "scattered lines," the essay is probative and cogently presented. She makes her reading profoundly effective in accounting for the buried grief that propels the action leading to the precipitous demises of both Macbeths. Daryl Chalk's essay traces another kind of interred subtext in his reading of *Twelfth Night*: redolent within the play are allusions to the pathologies of contemporary plague outbreaks and the antitheatrical critics who viewed theatres and cross-dressed actors as figurative contagions corrupting the audience's spiritual health. Chalk argues that the allusions to infectious love in *Twelfth Night* should not be divorced from the hostility of anti-theatrical critics whom Shakespeare addressed in the melancholy of this great romance comedy. The remainder of Part II consists of essays on *Cymbeline*'s arboreal metaphor (Jupiter's prophecy of the lofty cedar Cymbeline) by Victoria Bladen, and Alison V. Scott's consideration of Imogen as representative of an inviolate faith emblematic of the romance genre that reconfigures Britain as a kingdom restored by its Roman forbearer. Danijela Kambasković-Sawers posits Ovid as an absent presence whose subtle voice compounds and conflates with the sonneteer's in order to provide a "novelistic

**Brett D. Hirsch and Christopher Wortham, eds. 'This Earthly Stage': World and Stage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2010. Pp. xi + 297. Cursor Mundi series. ISBN: 978-2-503-53226-4.**

One of the true delights of book-reviewing is to encounter a volume in which the contributions entice the reader to set off in all kinds of interesting directions. Such is *This Earthly Stage*, a collection of thirteen essays originating from the 2006 Symposium of the Perth (Australia) Medieval and Renaissance Group.(1) So diverse is the collection that the editors have resorted to sequencing the material alphabetically by author rather than imposing any thematic scheme. Christopher Wortham's introduction assists the reader by providing lucid observations on each essay.

Two essays are of especial interest to Marlovians. Clayton G. MacKenzie, in "*Edward II* and the Rhetoricians of Myth," considers the play as addressing the medieval and early modern mythology of England as an earthly paradise, most

impulse" for thematic connectedness, and Emily Ross devotes an essay to the role of spies/messengers/gossips in conveying plot and surreptitious messages with a useful section on the historical role subsidiary private messengers and bureaucratic diplomats played in early Elizabethan and Jacobean court diplomacy to extract and implant information for domestic and international use.

Part III is ostensibly about "study" and its permutations, but this category seems tangential to the subsequent essays, which range from canine images in *Henry V* (Susan Penberthy) and revenge as rhetorical practice in *Titus Andronicus* (Jay Zisk), to editorial practice in *New Bibliographers* (Edmund King), an examination of Heliodorus' *Aethiopian History* as penumbral source for *Twelfth Night* (Mark Houlahan), and Renaissance self-fashioning as a vehicle for critical definition (Laurie Johnson).

This final section also includes the chapter of most immediate interest to Marlovians: Lucy Potter's perceptive analysis of Christopher Marlowe's failed tragedy, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, and its dramatic effect on Shakespeare's Hamlet. Potter finds traces of Marlowe's tragic Dido in Hamlet's request to the Player King to recite Aeneas's account to Dido of Priam's tragic slaughter in the *Aeneid*. Potter sees Aeneas's retelling of Priam's death at Pyrrhus's hand and the fall of Troy as achieving a homeopathic effect in Aeneas and in compelling his epic quest for Rome. For Potter, the staging of Aeneas's catharsis is demonstrably the Aristotelian notion of catharsis made manifest, and its effect on the Player King fails to be duplicated for Marlowe's audience or Hamlet himself. All are unable to attain a level of catharsis commensurate with a tragic effect. Her thesis is thoughtfully argued. This is a collection whose parts are perhaps greater than its whole, but the "emerging Shakespeares" emanating from an emerging generation of young critics promise a rich future of Shakespearean criticism.

Hardin L. Aasand  
IndianaUniversity-Purdue University, Fort Wayne

familiar perhaps in John of Gaunt's encomium in *Richard II* on "this other Eden, demi-paradise." MacKenzie argues that "in sixteenth-century English thinking, the idea of the English paradise was underpinned by three clear principles: regenerating monarchical greatness; the rejection of war on English soil; and the imperative of glorious military conquest abroad."

The characters in *Edward II* do employ the rhetoric of this English mythology but they fall short of its spirit and substance. Gaveston invokes a paradise/Elysium which is "Arcadian" and "indulgent" rather than English. Isabella promises to sacrifice her own happiness to avoid civil war but becomes its apologist. Mortimer appeals to lineage and heroics but takes on the role of bloody avenger—as does Edward. MacKenzie notes the mythological claim that Mars was the protective god of England, but this was a Mars tempered by Pallas, goddess of feminine wisdom, rather than the Mars Ultor, god of revenge and civil destruction, suggested by the play. The "passing parade of bogus mythologizers" is then set

against the “emergence of the true English mythologizer, Edward III,” who demonstrates “the true qualities of kingship—strength, justice, and decisiveness.” For MacKenzie, the lessons to be learnt from the play concern politics and mythology rather than eroticism and psychology. Ultimately, he contends, *Edward II* “reminds its audience that England’s natural seat of majesty is both glorious and vulnerable”; and that ambition, revenge, and human weakness could again bring about the disintegration of the kingdom. His essay is a useful reminder of the commonplaces of sixteenth-century thought, especially as applied to plays of English history. It is perhaps in his discussion of the play’s ending that his argument is less convincing. Although English mythology lauded Edward III as the architect of an English paradise, and the narrative movement of the play seems to endorse his role as restorer of peace and justice, yet uncertainties and ambiguities affect the final scene. In particular, the young king’s language lacks a mythological dimension, and the final stage image of hearse and severed head is a disturbing reminder of the play’s rhetoric of bloody vengeance.

Lucy Potter, in “Informing Audiences: Marlowe’s Early Tragedies,” posits a different relationship between a play’s rhetoric (she discusses *Dido, Queen of Carthage* and *I Tamburlaine*) and the audience. For MacKenzie, *Edward’s* mythological rhetoric augments the action and calls upon the audience to recognise commonplace sentiments; for Potter, the rhetoric in a sense *becomes* the action and offers a model or models for audience response. She argues that in *Dido* Marlowe turns Virgil’s epic story into tragedy rather than parody, with Aeneas’s account of the fall of Troy staging Aristotle’s theory of catharsis, purging his pity and fear and restoring his vitality and commitment. *Dido*, in contrast, is “destabilized,” retreating into fantasies and emotional confusion. Potter suggests that the catharsis of Aeneas “coaches” the audience to respond similarly—and uniformly—to the play’s tragic ending.

Marlowe’s *Dido* experiment failed in performance; *I Tamburlaine*, however, achieved popularity and success by dismantling “*Dido’s* aesthetic framework” and empowering the audience to respond variously. Zenocrate’s lament in the final scene might enact catharsis (this time as defined by Sir Philip Sidney, with its “admiration,” “commiseration,” and learning “the uncertainty of this world”), but the *de casibus* lesson is challenged by others and “demolished” by *Tamburlaine’s* “sights of power.” *2 Tamburlaine* reinforces the irrelevance of Sidneian ideas to *Tamburlaine’s* career, with the death of Zenocrate lamented, but with grief and rage and a golden coffin. Potter concludes that the *Tamburlaine* plays were “built on the ruins of the aesthetics of tragedy staged in *Dido*,” but it was, nevertheless, the *Dido* experiment which led to a liberation of “both tragedy and audience responses . . . from the restrictions that theory places upon them.”

Potter’s essay contributes to studies of genre and reception and underscores the distinctiveness of each Marlowe play, though she tends not to differentiate between elite and playhouse audiences and their expectations. She presents a thoughtful challenge to the view of Martin Wiggins that *Dido* is later

than, and a response to, the success of *Tamburlaine*.<sup>(2)</sup> Their approaches are, of course, very different, with Wiggins looking to theatrical records (or the lack of them) and thematic continuities, including those with *Doctor Faustus*, and Potter concerned with rhetorical strategies and their implications for audience response.

Of the other essays in ‘*This Earthly Stage*,’ one of the most fascinating is Brett D. Hirsch’s “From Jew to Puritan: The Emblematic Owl in Early English Culture.” This explores “the transmission of medieval antisemitic textual and visual narratives into early modern England.” The negative traits associated with the owl—spiritual blindness, folly, and perversity—were “readily available for the stigmatization of minorities and unorthodox groups.” Applied in medieval times to the Jews, the antisemitic owl was appropriated after the “various Reformations” for sectarian opponents, who were also accused of “judaizing” tendencies. In England the targets were Jesuit priests and Puritans and, in the civil war period, the Roundheads that Puritans had become. Hirsch accompanies his essay with a number of persuasive illustrations, ranging from images in medieval bestiaries to caricatures of the two Cromwells.

Like many such collections, most of the essays in ‘*This Earthly Stage*’ focus upon Shakespeare, though their approaches are unquestionably varied. The opening essay by Michael Best, “‘Bi-fold Authority’: The Electronic Recreation of Shakespeare,” explains the theoretical and practical issues encountered in creating the Internet Shakespeare Editions (ISE). He comments on the capacity of “the electronic medium . . . to forge links between two approaches to Shakespeare that are often seen at odds: textual scholarship and performance. More generally, “the technology of the web makes it possible to look to both the past and the present, and to claim that Shakespeare both is and is not our contemporary.

Heather Dubrow, in “‘I take pleasure in singing, sir’: Towards an Interpretation of Shakespearean Song,” suggests that songs in Shakespeare often belong to lesser or marginalized characters (Fools, Ophelia, Desdemona) but they are “typically associated not only with social acts [as distinct from expressing personal emotions] but with ones involving the assertion and achievement of power.” Victoria Bladen in “Pruning the Tree of Virtue in Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus*” traces how the image of Lavinia as a lopped tree drew upon biblical, classical, and contemporary arboreal iconography “that held deep resonances in the collective imagination of his audience.” Darryl Chalk, in “Contagious Emulation: Antitheatricity and Theatre as Plague in *Troilus and Cressida*,” explores the appropriation of antitheatrical discourse that linked the theatre and plague as causes of social chaos; Ulysses’ speech on degree apparently embodies antitheatrical sentiment but this is “deliberately offset by his awareness of his own theatricality.”

Shakespeare in performance is represented by Alan Brissenden’s “Twentieth-Century Australian Dreams,” which surveys Australian productions of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, tracing the development of an “Australian style”

characterized by “an ease with Shakespeare among players and audience . . . and a style so simple that the play is released with a minimum of impediments.” Steve Chinna, in “The Elemental Gertrude: Howard Barker’s Refashioning of Hamlet’s Mother,” discusses his production of *Gertrude (the Cry)*, a play which presents Gertrude as the protagonist who inhabits “a liminal world of amoral freedom.” Ultimately, Hamlet, King and “moralist,” drinks poison while Gertrude survives—to honeymoon with yet another lover.

Shakespeare’s historical sources are explored by Mary-Rose McLaren in “Making Men out of Kings: Shakespeare’s Sources and Kingship.” She demonstrates that in *Henry V* and the *Henry VI* plays Shakespeare made use of details only recorded in the “London Chronicles,” histories written by literate guild members in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, many only available in manuscript. Shakespeare’s view of kingship, however, is quite different from that of the chronicles. London funerals are the subject of John Tillotson, in “Private Drama, Public Spectacle: Death and the Pre-Reformation London Elite,” who analyses five funerals between 1510 and 1521, commenting that their “grandiose displays of wealth and status” were also “embedded in religious beliefs about the soul’s experience after death.”

Non-Shakespearean plays (apart from Marlowe’s) are only thinly represented in *This Earthly Stage*. Heather Kerr, in “‘Romancing the Handbook’: Scenes of Detection in *Arden of Faversham*,” discusses the play as illustrating the “techniques

for evidence gathering and evaluation” found in contemporary handbooks for local keepers of the “common peace”; the Franklin, as “*ideal detective*,” must “navigate the troubled intersections between private and public, rhetoric and law.” Laurence Wright, in the collection’s final essay, “Irony and Transcendence on the Renaissance Stage,” includes *The Spanish Tragedy* in a wide-ranging discussion of irony, transcendence (“going beyond’ the human to share the perspective of the gods or the afterlife”), and the theatrical metaphor.

*This Earthly Stage* is a collection well worth exploring for its diversity as well as for its two valuable contributions on Marlowe.

Ruth Lunney  
University of Newcastle, Australia

#### NOTES

1. The University of Western Australia has been the home since 1995 of *Parergon*, the journal of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern Studies and has recently become the administrative centre in Australia for the international research project on the History of the Emotions.
2. Martin Wiggins, “When did Marlowe Write *Dido, Queen of Carthage*?” *Review of English Studies* 59 (2008): 521-41.

**Editor’s Note:** MSA Book Reviews provide descriptions and evaluations of recent publications on Marlowe and his period. It gives both new and established Marlowe scholars a forum for expressing their views from a variety of critical approaches. Although reviews of books are the norm, appraisals of recent articles on Marlowe are also welcome. The reviews should be no more than 1000 words in length and should cover the book’s purpose, contribution, scholarship, format, and success and achieving its purpose. The editor reserves the right to ask for revision and to make appropriate stylistic changes. A review naturally reflects the opinion of the author rather than the MSA. Reviewers should be members of the organization.



MSA-MRDS Session at MLA: Robert Logan, Andrew McCarthy, Lee Manion, David McInnis

*Signature*