

## *Introduction*

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The documentary record for the works of Christopher Marlowe is substantial. During his lifetime, the two-part *Tamburlaine the Great* was published with a title-page advertisement of company and venue. This edition also provided information on the circumstances of its printing by Richard Jones and commercial availability in London at the sign of the Rose and Crown near Holborn Bridge. In the years after Marlowe's death in 1593, an additional five plays, two poetic translations, and one epyllion were brought to press. Collectively the title pages of these works advertised co-authors; bookings at court and in London on both public and private stages; acting companies including the Children of the Chapel Royal and the adult players of the Lord Admiral's Men, Earl of Pembroke's Men, and Queen Anna's Men; stationers including Edward Blount, Thomas Bushell, William Jones, Felix Kingston, Paul Linley, Joan Orwin, Valentine Simmes, Nicholas Vavasour, Edward White, and Thomas Woodcock; and printing houses and bookshops across London from Holborn to St. Paul's Churchyard, Christ's Church Gate, Chancery Lane, Newgate, the Inner Temple, and Smithfield.

From 1592 to 1603, between publication of the 1590 octavo of *Tamburlaine the Great* and the 1604 quarto of *Doctor Faustus*, Philip Henslowe recorded the titles of five Marlovian plays in a book of accounts, or diary, where he listed performances and payments for new scripts and revivals at the Rose and Fortune playhouses. This confluence of data from print culture and theatre history is rare for the early modern English period. The editors of *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade* see here an opportunity to examine Marlowe's dramatic and nondramatic works in the contemporaneous marketplaces of the playhouse and book trade. Marlowe is an apt subject. The seven-year period of his life as a poet and professional playwright (1587–93) added to the subsequent seven-year period of concentrated interest in his work by members of the book trade (1594–1600) mark a period of time when many

of the same men and businesses were involved in Marlovian transactions. Further, Marlowe's works lend themselves to study by their reputation for being commercially successful and literarily influential. Scholars have long argued that Marlowe's plays not only were blockbusters but also spawned copycat drama in such numbers that theatrical categories such as the Mediterranean conquest play and the magician play were created. These imitations in their own right became marketable products for stationers. Marlowe's books of nondramatic poetry, though acquired belatedly by stationers, were solidly profitable. *Hero and Leander*, for example, went through nine editions from 1598 to 1640. Marlowe's reworkings of the classical genres of epyllion (*Hero and Leander*), elegy (*All Ovid's Elegies*), and history (*The First Book of Lucan*) were also influential, spawning imitations and expanding interest in erotic poetry and political thought. (For charts of Marlowe's works in performance and print, see Appendices C and D in the online resources for this volume.)

In recent years, the scholarly perspectives separating early modern theatre and print culture into discrete fields of study have shifted. New Bibliographers such as A. W. Pollard and W. W. Greg, who perpetuated the mistaken belief of nineteenth-century scholars that the routine behavior of various stationers was suspicious, possibly criminal, reinforced that demarcation. Theatre historians also reinforced a division between the marketplaces of theatre and print by asserting that playing companies protected their aesthetically superior and popular plays from rival companies and piratical bookmen. E. K. Chambers, expressing the position of scholars in his time, reviewed entries of plays marked 'staied' in the Stationers' Register as evidence that theatre companies attempted 'to control the transmission of plays to the press' (1930, 1.145). Declaring himself 'skeptical' that they 'feared . . . the appropriation of their plays for acting by other companies' (1930, 1.147), he nonetheless characterized the Chamberlain's/King's as 'safe-guarding' Shakespeare's plays during the reign of James (1930, 1.146). A corollary of Chambers's position was that sales of plays by companies were signs of financial distress. The uptick in registrations at Stationers' Hall from 1593 into 1595 was explained as the transactions of failing companies recouping their losses from extended touring. As recently as 1996, Andrew Gurr argued that the sale of 'the first of the Oldcastle/Falstaff plays and its most popular other titles to the printers' in 1598 indicates that a 'cash-straitened' Chamberlain's company was going through 'financially a hard time' (1996, 284).

Now, however, scholars of the book trade and theatrical commerce are reexamining these venerable opinions and finding them inaccurate

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appraisals of the legitimate practices of stationers and playing companies. In particular, scholars of print culture and the sociology of the book are rehabilitating the professional reputations of individual stationers. Not satisfied with removing the taint of theft, they have revisited the practices of book-trade members, identifying complicated motivations – market driven and otherwise – behind the acquisition and publication of texts. In the 1970s, Peter W. M. Blayney began to rewrite the history of the Stationers' Company by ascertaining the business practices of bookmen in the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. In the 1980s, Gerald Johnson produced new case studies that together reconsidered the habits and ventures of early modern publishers. Subsequently, others including David Scott Kastan, Helen Smith, Zachary Lesser, and Adam G. Hooks have mapped networks of collaboration between printing houses, between printers and writers, between publishers and theatrical companies, and between publishers and patrons. Formerly considered guaranteed money-spinners, play texts are now understood as complicated commodities for a book trade navigating an ever-changing cultural landscape and print market. Furthermore, as Sonia Massai argues in *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* (2007), stationers are bona fide subjects of study as editors of the theatrical manuscripts they acquired.

Theatre historians, in light of current scholarship on the book trade, are also reconsidering the relationships between playing companies and stationers. As discussions of theatrical commerce have focused on the playing company and its repertory, they see marketing strategies in the move of plays from the stage to the printing house. Pertinent specifically to Marlowe studies, Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean argue that the Queen's Men 'retaliated in print' to the stage success and publication of the *Tamburlaine* plays, even imitating Richard Jones's 'two-part format . . . and . . . preface' (1998, 156). Two moments when playhouse fare appeared on booksellers' shelves illustrate a combination of research in theatre history and print culture. One is that uptick in play registrations in 1593–5. Many theatre historians no longer argue that the sales to stationers represent a liquidation of company repertories; to the contrary, they share an opinion expressed by Blayney that the registrations signal the willingness of theatrical entrepreneurs to work with members of the book trade in advertisements of their quickening post-plague market (1997, 386). Other such moments occur in 1599–1601. They too coincide with positive changes in player-company business: for the Chamberlain's Men, the move from Shoreditch to the Globe in Southwark; for the Admiral's Men, the move from the Rose in Southwark to the Fortune in Middlesex; and, for all

the companies, a challenge to recent orders from the Privy Council meant to restrict and control the growth of the theatrical industry from companies at the Boar's Head playhouse beyond Aldgate as well the resumption of playing by boys' companies at St. Paul's and Blackfriars. Also recently, scholars have argued that a given playing company might have sold various plays to promote one or another of its dramatists as a commercial product. James J. Marino, for example, describes the 'aggressive business strategies' used by the Chamberlain's/King's company in the years leading up to the publication of the First Folio to protect the name of Shakespeare as their intellectual property (108).

Marlowe scholarship has also shifted. For more than a century, Marlowe has been perceived as Shakespeare's foil, the literary and theatrical maverick to Shakespeare's company-man genius. The plays and poems were studied for evidence of Marlowe's counter-professional, sexual, political, and religious apostasy. The performance records in the book of accounts kept by Philip Henslowe at the Rose and Fortune playhouses, 1592–1603, showed the commercial value of Marlowe's plays, but too many of the scholars who assessed the influence of Marlowe noticed instead the copycat offerings, necessarily weak in competition with a triumphant *Tamburlaine* and villainous *Jew*. Plays such as *Edward II* and *Dido, Queen of Carthage* – marginalized from London companies known by the major theatrical families of Alleyns and Burbages – were further distanced by having belonged to repertories of corrupt texts (Pembroke's Men) and lost plays (the Children of the Chapel Royal). In print scholarship as well, Marlowe's texts were interesting because of their flaws: the incomplete love story of Hero and Leander, the butchered text of *The Massacre at Paris*, the truncated 1604 *Doctor Faustus*. At the same time, bibliographic scholarship dedicated to Marlowe's texts has largely been devoted to a conjuration of authorial copy. The octavo of *The Massacre at Paris* has been flatly discredited; pieces of *Dido* and *Doctor Faustus* have been variously ascribed; and *Doctor Faustus*'s 1604 and 1616 quartos have taken turns as favored horses on a merry-go-round of legitimation.

*Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade* redirects the scholarly conversation. It casts Marlowe as a professional in the overlapping commercial spheres of the playhouse and the print trade, where his texts were made into performances and books by a variety of agents and he was himself fashioned posthumously into the Marlowe familiar to current readers and playgoers. In Part I, contributors consider aspects of Marlowe at work, translating Lucan's *Civil War*; constructing repertory bookings for companies that played to audiences in London, in the provinces, and at

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court; and replicating on stage the violence and cacophony of state-supported massacre and internecine war. In Part II, contributors discuss the engagement of printers, publishers, editors, authors, and playwrights with texts from Marlowe's intersecting worlds of nondramatic and dramatic poetry. In Part III, contributors address Marlowe's theatrical, textual, and cultural afterlife. Collectively, the chapters offer insight into the question of Marlowe's place in literature and in print. Denied a lengthy productive career by fate, Marlowe in some sense left historians mere juvenilia as evidence of his gifts. Yet it is enough. His oeuvre calls attention to complementary networks of professionals in early modern England. And those networks in turn prove Marlowe to have been a creature of the theatrical-literary marketplace and book trade.