



## **Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade**

Yi Zhu

---

Volume 42, Number 2, Spring 2019

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1065150ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1065150ar>

[See table of contents](#)

---

Publisher(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (print)

2293-7374 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

---

Cite this review

Zhu, Y. (2019). Review of [Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade]. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 42 (2), 233–236. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1065150ar>

compare l'expérience des convertis lyonnais avec celle de Rousseau, telle qu'il la relate dans ses *Confessions* au siècle suivant.

Dans l'ensemble, ce livre dépeint de manière fascinante la vie des bourgeois lyonnais au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle et devrait retenir l'attention de toute personne s'intéressant à la condition du tiers état pendant cette période. Les arbres généalogiques et tableaux présentant des données telles que l'âge lors de la conversion, le sexe, la nationalité, et la profession des convertis sont des outils indispensables qui aident considérablement à faire sens des données. Le recours aux récits biographiques est plus susceptible de partager les lecteurs, mais le degré d'interprétation et de spéculation nécessaire à leur constitution semble toujours rester dans les bornes du raisonnable et du judicieux, et une grande majorité de lecteurs trouvera sans doute ces récits utiles. De même, la démarche analytique du livre qui emprunte aux méthodologies de l'histoire et de la sociologie pourrait offusquer les émules les plus férus de l'une ou l'autre discipline, mais il faut reconnaître que l'auteure affiche ouvertement et d'emblée sa prédilection pour « le récit des humbles et des anonymes » (11) et pour l'histoire sociale. Cette passion pour la théorie des sciences sociales donne parfois lieu à des digressions, notamment au chapitre neuf, dont le lien avec le reste de l'étude ne saute pas aux yeux. Mais cela n'enlève rien au fait que ce livre, à partir de données éparées et arides, façonne un tableau vivant et passionnant de son sujet grâce à une analyse à la fois rigoureuse et accessible.

LUKE ARNASON  
York University

**Melnikoff, Kirk, and Roslyn L. Knutson, eds.**

***Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade.***

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. xxi, 313 + 7 ill. ISBN 978-1-107-12620-6 (hardcover) \$114.95.

This voluminous collection of seventeen essays represents some of the latest and most authoritative voices in Marlowe studies. For the first time, Marlovian scholars collectively put Marlowe in the context of both early modern print culture and theatre history, initiating a new conversation that departs from traditional focuses on textual flaws, authorship, and Marlowe's role

as a Shakespearean foil. With the aid of archival, historical, and intertextual evidence, contributors re-examine the aesthetic and commercial values of Marlowe's works, together with their transmission and reception, aiming to restore Marlowe as "a professional" fashioning and fashioned "in the overlapping commercial spheres of the playhouse and the print trade" (4).

Part 1, consisting of six chapters, concentrates on demonstrating Marlowe's underestimated commercial values, making brilliant use of paratexts, repertories, and textual comparison. Both Roslyn L. Knutson and Eoin Price utilize Philip Henslowe's diary and other records, but their findings differ. Knutson invites us to see how frequently the plays changed hands as commodities, while Price suggests that *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, a play owned by a children's company, might have influenced adult companies with its commercially successful approach to "female tragic experience" (54). Drawing on cues in the prefatory epistle of *Lucan's First Book*, Sarah Wall-Randell makes a very impressive investigation in the tradition of papermaking, burial practice, and literary appropriation of Sibylline prophecies, from which she reads out a concept of fragility against immortality in texts. This section's three other contributors turn their eyes to the strangeness of the play texts. Genevieve Love believes that different descriptions of Faustus's torn leg in Texts A and B should not be deemed textual flaws but deliberate passages with specific functions for staging; Evelyn Tribble argues that the long condemned textual incompleteness of *The Massacre at Paris* is Marlowe's dramaturgical strategy for recalling traumatic events "remembered only in fragments" (58); and Lucy Munro believes the use of sound in *Edward II* exemplifies traditions for staging history.

As its editors indicate, part 2 demonstrates that Marlowe's early popularity in print was not inevitable but resulted from the contributions of specific historical agents. Chapters 8, 9, and 10 focus on the publication of *Tamburlaine*. Richard Jones's scene division and deletion, according to Claire M. L. Bourne, is a way to capture "the rhythmic, iterative qualities of their dramaturgy" on stage (93), and such a model was also adopted, in Peter Kirwan's view, in the publication of *The First Part of the Contention*, a play arguably attributed to Marlowe. Further investigating the first and third editions of *Tamburlaine*, Tara L. Lyons holds that producing a collection "unified by genre and moral purpose" or "one coherent work" is Jones's marketing strategy (164). Apart from packaging work, a convention for the publishers to add "framing paratexts" is also found in András Kiséry's research on *Hero and Leander* (94). Similarly,

Richard Dutton points out that Thomas Heywood's dedications to *The Jew of Malta* and other non-Marlovian works were designed to gain cultural capital comparable to Jonson and Chapman. These chapters reveal that the motivations of Marlowe's publishers were complicated; they also complicate our understanding of Marlowe. That's partially why Adam G. Hooks claims Marlowe might be "the exemplary case study for the death of the author" (100). But Hooks's doubts, in particular regarding the authorship of "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love", are challenged by Matthew Steggle, in his "Marlowe's Lost Play: 'The Maiden's Holiday'" in part 3. Steggle argues that there are "plenty of implicit ascriptions," and the pastoral and lyric style of the poem demonstrates a Marlowe of "innocence, mildness, and sweetness" (250).

The final four chapters in the third part, though focusing on Marlowe's reception, also inform us of Marlowe's values discussed in part 1. After a careful examination of Marlovian plays and their imitations in 1594, Tom Rutter verifies that Marlovian imitators didn't confine their interest to "visual and rhetorical" aspects but also creatively imitated Marlowe's "intellectual content"; this argument modifies an influential claim by Peter Berek (200). Associating the "anecdote of one-devil-too-many" with the soldiers' raid of the theatres in 1647 and Lincoln's assassination in 1865, Paul Menzer demonstrates that the staging of *Doctor Faustus*, inconsistent with its reputation, is intertwined with the suppression history of theatre (196). Such "an unexpected reception history" is also embodied in the "booked" history of Marlowe's plays, in which David McInnis discovers that "most of the lines" quoted in commonplace books are from *Edward II*, but not from the more influential *Tamburlaine*, *Doctor Faustus*, and *The Jew of Malta* (196). As for the unsolved (even in this collection) question of Marlowe's long neglect, J. A. Downie builds on David Bevington's essay in *Christopher Marlowe at 450* (2015, 261) to tentatively suggest that such neglect, related to "the change in taste," may also have been caused by the lack of a Marlovian print compilation, since such a project seemed less profitable than the compilation of works by Shakespeare, Jonson, and Fletcher (269).

In large measure, the chapters as a whole convince us that Marlowe is not just the figure recreated by publishers, editors, and literati in the nineteenth century, as Thomas Dabbs claims in *Reforming Marlowe: The Nineteenth-Century Canonization of a Renaissance Dramatist* (1991), but also a creature already made by his own era, in the early modern period. Extending conversations and debates between contributors that started early in 2013,

at the Seventh International Marlowe Society of America Conference, this collection demonstrates the editors' care and industry: readers are invited to follow agreements and disagreements between contributors through significant cross-referencing across chapters, for example. Such a heteroglossia proves compelling and inviting, attracting us in to further conversations regarding Marlowe and the histories of early modern theatre and print.

YI ZHU

McMaster University

**Micallef, Fabrice.**

*Le Bâtard royal. Henri d'Angoulême dans l'ombre des Valois (1551–1586).*

Cahiers d'Humanisme et Renaissance 149. Genève : Droz, 2018. 424 p. ISBN 978-2-600-05808-7 (broché) 62 CHF.

L'ouvrage que Fabrice Micallef consacre à Henri d'Angoulême, fils naturel du roi Henri II et de Jane Stuart (dite Lady Fleming), gouvernante de la suite de Marie Stuart, est la première monographie sur le sujet. Exploitant les fonds d'archives manuscrites (en France et à Malte), l'auteur rappelle la destinée de ce bâtard de France qui reçut une éducation princière, joua un rôle non négligeable dans les affaires de son temps et « s'efforça d'appriivoiser sa marginalité » (17). L'auteur retrace l'éducation reçue par ce prince auprès de Jean de Morel qui était destiné à entrer dans l'Église. Il devint ainsi protonotaire d'Angoulême et abbé de la Chaise-Dieu mais ne put accéder au cardinalat. Les guerres de religion lui offrirent l'occasion de se distinguer par son hostilité au parti protestant, nourrie à la fois par des convictions catholiques profondes et par des ambitions politiques. Le « bâtard soldat, assassin et pillard » (91) devint ensuite l'ambassadeur officieux de l'Ordre de Malte, grand prieur de France, et œuvra à son enrichissement personnel tout en s'attachant le service de fidèles serviteurs. Sous le règne de son demi-frère, Henri III, lui fut confié le commandement de la Provence, marque de la confiance que lui montrait le pouvoir royal en des temps troublés (1579). Pendant la Ligue, il sut à la fois contenir les insurgés et réprimer les protestants.

Le livre de Fabrice Micallef explore toutes les facettes de ce personnage, homme d'église et ambassadeur, soldat et gouverneur, dont la destinée traverse