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PATRICK CHENEY

Introduction: Marlowe in the twenty-first century

... that pure elemental wit Chr. Marlowe, whose ghost or genius is
 to be seen walk the Churchyard in (at the least) three or four sheets.¹

Christopher Marlowe (1564–93) enters the twenty-first century arguably the most enigmatic genius of the English literary Renaissance. While the enigma of Marlowe's genius remains difficult to circumscribe, it conjures up that special relation his literary works have long been held to have with his life. In 1588, fellow writer Robert Greene inaugurates printed commentary by accusing Marlowe of 'daring god out of heaven with that Atheist Tamburlan' (MacLure, p. 29), an imitation of Marlowe's description of his own protagonist, whose 'looks do menace heaven and dare the gods' (*1 Tamb.* 1.2.157), and indicating that the Marlovian 'ghost or genius' rather slyly haunts his own historical making. Perhaps the enigma continues to fascinate today because the brilliant creator of such masterpieces in lyric and tragedy as 'The Passionate Shepherd to His Love' and *Doctor Faustus* was ignominiously arrested no fewer than four times – three for street-fighting and a fourth for counterfeiting – and was under house arrest for (potentially) dissident behaviour when he received a fatal knife-wound to the right temple in what proved his darkest hour. If his life was dissident, his works were iconoclastic, and both are difficult to capture. Reflecting variously on the enigma of Marlovian genius, the present *Companion* includes sixteen subsequent chapters by distinguished women and men from the United Kingdom and the United States spread over as many topics as such a volume can contain.

The volume design follows a tripartite format. After the present Introduction, the first part divides into five chapters offering orientation to essential features of Marlowe and his works. The first three of these chapters concentrate on topics that underlie the others, and address the genuine difficulty we have in gauging and interpreting Marlowe: his life and career; his texts and authorship; and his style. The next two chapters explore Marlowe in his cultural contexts, probing the interrelation between religion and politics and examining the English literary scene in the late 1580s and early 1590s.

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The second part of the *Companion*, which forms the bulk and centre, consists of six chapters on Marlowe's works, divided according to the two broad literary forms he produced. One chapter examines his poems by emphasizing what they have in common: a vigorous response to classicism. The following five chapters range over his extant plays, with one chapter each on those plays taught more frequently (*Tamburlaine, Parts One and Two*; *The Jew of Malta*; *Edward II*; and *Doctor Faustus*) and a single chapter combining those plays that are taught less often (*Dido, Queen of Carthage* and *The Massacre at Paris*).

Finally, the third part of the companion consists of five chapters. The first bridges the second and third parts by focusing on Marlowe's foundational dramatic genre, tragedy, filtered through important themes of representation, patronage, and power. The next two chapters also deal with themes of Marlovian representation that commentators have found especially important and original: geography and identity; and gender and sexuality. The final two chapters concern Marlowe's afterlife, from his day to ours: Marlowe in theatre and film; and his reception and influence. The present *Companion* also features an initial chronology of Marlowe's life and works, emphasizing dates and events important to the various chapters; a reading list at the close of each chapter, recommending selected works of commentary; and, at the end of the volume, a brief note on reference works available on Marlowe (biographies, editions, bibliographies, concordances, periodicals, other research tools, collections of essays, 'Marlowe on the Internet'). Underlying many of the chapters is an attempt to unravel the enigma of Marlowe's life and works; precisely because of this enigma, we can expect varying, even contradictory assessments and interpretations. In this introductory chapter, we will consider issues not covered in detail elsewhere in order to approach the haunting genius we inherit today.²

Marlowe's own contemporaries discover a deep furrow marking the genius of the young author's brow. For instance, the sublime author whom the poet Michael Drayton imagined 'bath[ing] . . . in the Thespian springs' and who 'Had in him those brave translunary things, / That the first Poets had', was evidently the same 'barking dog' whom the Puritan polemicist Thomas Beard damningly found 'the Lord' *hooking* by 'the nostrils': 'a playmaker, and a Poet of scurrilitie' whose 'manner of . . . death' was 'terrible (for hee even cursed and blasphemed to his last gaspe, and together with his breath an oath flew out of his mouth)' (MacLure, pp. 47, 41–2). If Drayton could rhapsodically discover in Marlowe the 'fine madness' of high Platonic fury 'which rightly should possess a Poets braine', another Puritan, William Vaughan, referred more gruesomely to the fatal point of entry at the poet's unsacred

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temple: Marlowe died with ‘his braines comming out at the daggers point’ (MacLure, p. 47).

How could ‘the best of Poets in that age’, as the dramatist Thomas Heywood called Marlowe in 1633, be ‘intemperate & of a cruel hart’, as his former room-mate and the author of *The Spanish Tragedy*, Thomas Kyd, claimed back in 1593 (MacLure, pp. 49, 33)? How are we to reconcile fellow poet George Peele’s fond testimony about ‘Marley, the Muses darling for thy verse’ with Kyd’s accusation against a dangerous atheist with ‘monstruous opinions’ who would ‘attempt . . . soden pryvie injuries to men’ (MacLure, pp. 39, 35–6)? Evidently, the same sexually charged youth who deftly versified the loss of female virginity more powerfully than perhaps any English male poet before or since – ‘Jewels being lost are found again, this never; / ’Tis lost but once, and once lost, lost for ever’ (*HL* 1.85–6) – relied on ‘table talk’ to ‘report St John to be our saviour Christes Alexis . . . that is[,] that Christ did love him with an extraordinary love’ (Kyd, in MacLure, p. 35). At one point, a deep religious sensibility bequeaths one of our most haunting testimonies to the loss of Christian faith: ‘Think’st thou’, Mephistopheles says to Faustus, ‘that I, who saw the face of God / And tasted the eternal joys of heaven / Am not tormented with ten thousand hells / In being deprived of everlasting bliss? (*DF* ‘A’ text 1.3.77–80). Yet, at another point, that same sensibility opprobriously ‘jest[s] at the devine scriptures[,] gybe[s] . . . at praieres’, as Kyd claimed, or, as fellow-spy Richard Baines put it in his infamous deposition, callously joke that ‘the sacrament’ ‘instituted’ by Christ ‘would have bin much better being administred in a Tobacco pipe’ (MacLure, pp. 35, 37). While Kyd and Baines both portray a Marlowe who considers Moses and Jesus to be dishonest mountebanks, they also show a young man with a deep religious imagination, complexly cut, as Paul Whitfield White shows in his chapter here, along sectarian lines. As Baines reports, Marlowe claimed that ‘if there be any god or any good Religion, then it is in the papistes because the service of god is performed with more Cerimones . . . That all protestantes are Hypocriticall asses’ (MacLure, p. 37).

In the political sphere, we can further discover troubling contradiction. If Marlowe could nobly use his art in the grand republican manner to ‘defend . . . freedom ’gainst a monarchy’ (1 *Tamb.* 2.1.56), he could, Kyd writes, ‘perswade with men of quallitie to goe unto the k[ing] of Scotts’ (MacLure, p. 36) – a treasonous offence before the 1603 accession of James VI of Scotland to the English throne. Indeed, the archive leaves us with little but murky political ink, ranging from Kyd’s accusation of ‘mutinous sedition towrd the state’ (MacLure, p. 35) to the Privy Council’s exonerating letter to the authorities at Cambridge University, who tried to stop the young scholar from receiving his MA degree because he was rumoured to have gone to

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the Catholic seminary in Rheims, France: 'in all his actions he had behaved him selfe orderlie and discretelie whereby he had done her Majestie good service, and deserved to be rewarded for his faithful dealing'.³ What are we to believe? Shall Marlowe be rewarded for his faithful dealing? Or should the barking dog be hooked by the nose for his cruel and intemperate heart?

While the biographical record makes it difficult to gain purchase on this baffling figure (as David Riggs ably shows in the volume's second chapter), we can seek surer footing by gauging Marlowe's standing in English literary history. Yet even here (as the subsequent chapter by Laurie Maguire makes clear) we enter difficult terrain, in part because the texts of Marlowe's works make assessments about his authorship precarious; in part because our understanding of those texts continues to evolve imperfectly. The Marlowe canon (perhaps like its inventor's personality) has never been stable. In his 1753 *Lives of the Poets*, for instance, Theophilus Cibber believed Marlowe the author of *Lust's Dominion* (MacLure, p. 56), a play no longer ascribed to him, while Thomas Warton in his 1781 *History of English Poetry* believed Marlowe had 'translated Coluthus' 'Rape of Helen' into English rhyme, in the year 1587, even though Warton confessed he had 'never seen it' (MacLure, p. 58); nor have we. In 1850, a short entry appeared in *Notes and Queries* signed by one 'm', who mentions a manuscript transcribing an eclogue and sixteen sonnets written by 'Ch.M.'. This manuscript remained lost, but by 1942 the biographer John Bakeless could speculate hopefully that 'Marlowe's lost sonnets may have been genuine.' Bakeless believed the probability increased because of the technical mastery that he and C. F. Tucker Brooke thought Marlowe displayed in the ottava rima stanza in some verses printed in *England's Helicon* (1600), titled 'Description of Seas, Waters, Rivers &c'.⁴ In 1988, however, Sukanta Chaudhuri was able to print the 'lost' manuscript of eclogue and sonnets, but concluded that Marlowe had no hand in it – as, alas, seems likely.⁵ Today, unlike at the beginning of the past century, neither those poems nor the priceless hydrologic verses in *England's Helicon* make their way into a Marlowe edition.

The works that do make their way constitute a startlingly brief yet brilliant canon created within a short span of six or perhaps eight years (1585–93) – brief indeed, for an author with such canonical status today. Marlowe is now generally believed to be the author of seven extant plays: *Dido*; *Tamburlaine*, *Parts One and Two*; *The Jew*; *Edward II*; *The Massacre*; and *Faustus*. Recent scholarship encourages us to view that last play as two, since we have two different texts, each with its own historical authority, yet both published well after Marlowe's death: the so-called 'A' text of 1604 and the 'B' text of 1616. As these dates alone indicate, the question of the chronology of Marlowe's plays is a thorny one, and it has long spawned contentious debate.

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As Riggs and Maguire reveal, however, most textual scholars now believe that Marlowe wrote *Dido* first, the two *Tamburlaine* plays next, followed by *The Jew*; and that he wrote *Edward II* and *The Massacre* late in his career, although not necessarily in this order. During the last century, scholars were divided over whether Marlowe wrote *Doctor Faustus* ‘early’ (1588–9) or ‘late’ (1592–3), with some believing that he might have written two versions at different times, and today most seem willing to entertain an early date. In his chapter on this play, Thomas Healy emphasizes how the two texts, rather than being of interest only to textual scholars, can profitably direct interpretation itself. The larger chronology of Marlowe’s plays has been important because it has been thought to hold the key to the locked secret absorbing scholars since the Victorian era: the obsession with ‘Marlowe’s development’ as an autonomous author.

The fascination holds, but it has not impeded Marlowe’s latest editor from choosing a quite different method for organizing the plays: a chronology not of composition but of publication, in keeping with recent textual scholarship privileging the ‘materiality of the text’. Thus, Mark Thornton Burnett in his 1999 Everyman edition of *The Complete Plays* begins with the two *Tamburlaine* plays, which were the only works of Marlowe’s published during his lifetime (1590). Burnett follows with two works published the year after Marlowe’s death, *Edward II* and *Dido* (1594), continues with *The Massacre*, published after 1594 but of uncertain date during the Elizabethan era, and next he prints the two Jacobean versions of *Faustus* (1604 and 1616). Burnett concludes with *The Jew*, not published by Heywood until the Caroline period (1633). Thus, even though the canon of plays has not changed during the last century, the printing of it today has changed dramatically. If earlier editions arrange the plays according to the author’s dates of composition (and performance), Burnett’s edition prints them according to the reception the author received in print. Commentary derived from the one method may differ from commentary derived from the other, but one can imagine that Marlowe would have been cheered by the mystery of this difference. He is so mysterious that some prefer to replace ‘Marlowe’ with a ‘Marlowe effect’.⁶

In addition to the plays, Marlowe wrote five extant poems, none of which was published during his lifetime. As with the plays, here we do not know the order in which Marlowe composed, but the situation is even less certain about when most of these works were published. *Ovid’s Elegies*, a line-for-line translation of Ovid’s *Amores*, is usually placed as Marlowe’s first poetic composition (while he was a student at Cambridge University, around 1584–5); its date of publication is also uncertain, but it is generally believed to have been printed between the latter half of the 1590s and the early years of the

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seventeenth century. *Ovid's Elegies* appears in three different editions, the first two printing only ten poems and the third the complete sequence of three books or 48 poems. 'The Passionate Shepherd to His Love', Marlowe's famous pastoral lyric, is also of uncertain compositional date, but it is generally assigned to the mid to late 1580s, since it was widely imitated during the period, including by Marlowe himself in *Dido*, the *Tamburlaine* plays, *The Jew*, and *Edward II*; it appears in various printed forms, from four to seven stanzas, with a four-stanza version printed in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599) and a six-stanza version in *England's Helicon*. *Lucan's First Book*, a translation of Book 1 of Lucan's epic poem, *The Pharsalia*, is the only poem whose publication we can date with certainty, even though it was not published until 1600. Scholars are divided over whether to place its composition early or late in Marlowe's career, but its superior merit in versification suggests a late date, as does its presence in the Stationers' Register on 28 September 1593, back to back with *Hero and Leander*, which scholars tend to place in the last year of Marlowe's life. This famous epyllion or Ovidian narrative poem appeared in two different versions published in 1598, the first an 818-line poem that ends with an editor's insertion, '*desunt nonnulla*' (something missing). The second version divides the poem into two 'sestiaids', which were continued by George Chapman, who contributed four more sestiaids and turned Marlowe's work into the only epyllion in the period printed as a minor epic in the grand tradition of Homer and Virgil, each sestiad prefaced with a verse argument. Marlowe's fifth poem, a short Latin epitaph on Sir Roger Manwood, a Canterbury jurist, is preserved only in manuscript, but it must have been written between December 1592, the time of Manwood's death, and May 1593, when Marlowe died. Additionally, Marlowe is now credited as the author of a Latin prose *Dedicatory Epistle* addressed to Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke (sister to Sir Philip Sidney), which prefaces Thomas Watson's 1592 poem, *Amintae gaudia*, and which sheds intriguing light on Marlowe's career as a poet and thus is now conventionally printed alongside his poems.

In short, the Marlowe canon is not merely in motion; it is paradoxically truncated. The image recalls Henry Petowe, in his *Dedicatory Epistle to The Second Part of 'Hero and Leander', Containing their Future Fortunes* (1598): 'This history, of *Hero and Leander*, penned by that admired poet Marlowe, but not finished (being prevented by sudden death) and the same . . . resting like a head separated from the body'.⁷ Unlike Ben Jonson or Samuel Daniel, Marlowe did not live to bring out an edition of his own poems and plays; nor did he benefit, as Edmund Spenser and William Shakespeare did, from a folio edition published by colleagues soon after his death, preserving his canon for posterity.

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The truncated state of Marlowe's works confounds attempts at holistic commentary, rendering our efforts tenuous and controversial. Students of Marlowe might view this predicament as less a warning than a challenge. The question is: how can we view clearly what is inherently opaque? Perhaps the occasion affords a genuine opportunity, and we may wonder whether the spy who was suspected of going 'beyond the seas to Reames' knew it (qtd in Kuriyama, p. 202). In viewing his life and works, we might experience the excitement an archaeologist presumably feels when first discovering the bright shard of a broken vase – or perhaps more appropriate here, scabbard.

While the present *Companion* affords a frame for viewing such a shard, we need to register the singular feature of Marlowe's standing in English literary history: his absolute inaugural power. Nearly four hundred years ago, Drayton first located in Marlowe's brain the brave translunary things 'that the first Poets had' – what Drayton himself considered the mysterious rapture of air and fire that makes Marlowe's verses clear. The word 'first' is applied to Marlowe so often during the next centuries that we might wonder whether Spenser or Shakespeare could outstrip him in the race of literary originality (like the word *genius*, the word *first* occasionally slips into a second meaning: *best*). The achievement is all the more remarkable because the Muses' darling is dead at twenty-nine. No wonder the energy circulating around his corpus continues to be electrifying. As William Hazlitt expressed it in the nineteenth century, somewhat ambivalently, 'There is a lust of power in his writings, a hunger and thirst after unrighteousness, a glow of the imagination, unhallowed by any thing but its own energies' (MacLure, p. 78).

Like Hazlitt during the Romantic era, both Petowe and Heywood in the early modern era place Marlowe at the forefront of English literary history. Petowe says of 'th' admired Marlowe' that his 'honey-flowing vein / No English writer can as yet attain' (58–60), while Heywood calls him 'the best of Poets in that age' – a phrase quoted throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the first years of the nineteenth century (1808), Charles Lamb singled out 'the death-scene' of *Edward II* as moving 'pity and terror beyond any scene, ancient or modern, with which I am acquainted' (MacLure, p. 69). In an unsigned review from 1818, a commentator considered *The Jew of Malta* 'the first regular and consistent English drama; . . . Marlowe was the first poet before Shakespeare who possessed any thing like real dramatic genius' (MacLure, pp. 70–1; reviewer's emphasis). By 1820, Hazlitt is a bit more guarded, but not much: 'Marlowe is a name that stands high, and almost first in this list of dramatic worthies' (MacLure, p. 78). In 1830, James Broughton went further by specifying that Dr Faustus's 'last impassioned soliloquy of agony and despair' is 'surpassed by nothing in

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the whole circle of the English Drama', even though it is *Edward II*, 'by far the best of Marlowe's plays', that 'place[s] Marlowe in the first class of dramatic writers' (MacLure, p. 87). Perhaps echoing Drayton, Leigh Hunt marvelled in 1844, 'If ever there was a born poet, Marlowe was one... He... prepared the way for the versification, the dignity, and the pathos of his successors... and his imagination, like Spenser's, haunted those purely poetic regions of ancient fabling and modern rapture... Marlowe and Spenser are the first of our poets who perceived the beauty of words' (MacLure, pp. 89–91).

In 1879, when modern scholarship on Marlowe is first being consolidated,⁸ Edward Dowden finds that Marlowe, 'of all the Elizabethan dramatists, stands next to Shakspeare in poetical stature' (MacLure, p. 100). In 1875, A. W. Ward, writing *A History of English Dramatic Literature*, can summarize Marlowe's originality in a judgement that basically holds true today: 'His services to our dramatic literature are two-fold. As the author who first introduced blank verse to the popular stage he rendered to our drama a service which it would be difficult to overestimate... His second service to the progress of our dramatic literature' is that he 'first inspired with true poetic passion the form of literature to which his chief efforts were consecrated...; and it is this gift of passion which, together with his services to the outward form of the English drama, makes Marlowe worthy to be called not a predecessor, but the earliest in the immortal company, of our great dramatists' (MacLure, pp. 120–1).⁹

For these reasons, John Addington Symonds in 1884 can style Marlowe 'the father and founder of English dramatic poetry' (MacLure, p. 133); and A. H. Bullen in 1885, 'the father of the English drama' (MacLure, p. 136). In 1887, James Russell Lowell can poignantly say, 'Yes, Drayton was right', for Marlowe 'was indeed... that most indefinable thing, an original man... He was the herald that dropped dead' (MacLure, pp. 159–62). In 1887 as well, George Saintsbury could state that the 'riot of passion and of delight in the beauty of colour and form which characterises his version of "Hero and Leander" has never been approached by any writer' (MacLure, p. 163). That same year, Havelock Ellis agreed: 'It is the brightest flower of the English Renaissance' (MacLure, p. 167). No one, however, rhapsodized more than Algernon Charles Swinburne, who termed Marlowe 'alone... the true Apollo of our dawn, the bright and morning star of the full midsummer day of English poetry at its highest... The first great English poet was the father of English tragedy and the creator of English blank verse... the first English poet whose powers can be called sublime... He is the greatest discoverer, the most daring and inspired pioneer, in all our poetic literature' (MacLure, pp. 175–84).

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Pioneer, discoverer, morning star, herald, original man, first dramatic genius, first poet: this is an astonishing set of representational claims for the enigma of Marlovian genius. While the twentieth century sharpened its view of Marlowe's role in English literary history, it did not substantively change these earlier assessments about his original contribution to English drama. Opening a groundbreaking 1964 *Twentieth Century Views Marlowe*, for instance, Clifford Leech writes, 'There is wide enough agreement that Marlowe is one of the major figures in English dramatic writing. That he was the most important of Shakespeare's predecessors . . . is not disputed, nor is the poetic excellence of . . . Marlowe's "mighty line".'¹⁰

Leech's essay conveniently serves as an intermediary between earlier and later commentary, reminding us that the leaders of Renaissance studies throughout the twentieth century felt drawn to the genius of the Marlowe enigma: from A. C. Bradley, T. S. Eliot, G. Wilson Knight, Muriel C. Bradbrook, Cleanth Brooks, C. S. Lewis, William Empson, Harry Levin, and C. L. Barber, to Harold Bloom, Stephen Orgel, David Bevington, A. Bartlett Giamatti, Stephen Greenblatt, Jonathan Dollimore, Catherine Belsey, Jonathan Goldberg, and Marjorie Garber.¹¹ Yet Leech does alter the earlier view of Marlowe as a madcap dreamer absorbed in the exultant power of his imagination, demarcating 'three ways in which Marlowe criticism has taken new directions' up to the early 1960s (p. 3), even as he acknowledges that 'the nature of Marlowe's drama remains a thing that most readers are still groping after' (p. 9). First, Marlowe now enjoys the 'intellectual stature' of 'learning', through which he 'conscious[ly]' moulds and extends 'tradition' (p. 4), represented in the work of Paul Koehler.¹² Second, Marlowe's writing thus acquires new 'complexity', including 'the comic element', wherein Marlowe recognizes 'the puniness of human ambition', which leads to 'a wider range of interpretations . . . extending from Christian to agnostic views' (pp. 5–6), represented in work by Roy Battenhouse and Una Ellis-Fermor.¹³ And third, Marlowe's plays, after long absence from the theatre, begin to demonstrate their stage-worthiness, the dramatist exhibiting an 'eye' for specifically theatrical effect (p. 9), represented by Leech himself.¹⁴ For Leech, Marlowe had 'large-mindedness', a 'double view of the aspiring mind', a 'notion of the irresponsibility with which the universe functions', and 'a profound sense of the Christian scheme: no one has written better in English of the beatific vision and the wrath of God' (pp. 9–10).

After Leech declared that 'the beginnings of Marlowe criticism are with us' (p. 11), a virtual industry emerged, as Marlowe in the later 1960s, the 70s, 80s, and 90s became subject to large-scale investigation on diverse fronts. We may conveniently identify five broad, interwoven categories: (1) *subjectivity* (matters of the mind: inwardness, interiority, psychology); (2) *sexuality*

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(matters of the body: desire, gender, homoeroticism/heterosexuality); (3) *politics* (matters of the state: culture, ideology, sociology, family); (4) *religion* (matters of the Church: theology, belief, the Reformation); and (5) *poetics* (matters of art, or literariness: authorship, language/rhetoric, genre, influence/intertextuality, theatricality/film/performance).¹⁵

Among works produced in the second half of the twentieth century, Levin's groundbreaking 1954 study of Marlowe as 'the overreacher' continues to resound today, while Greenblatt's 'new historicist' Marlowe remains the most influential formulation in the last quarter century: 'a fathomless and eerily playful self-estrangement' that Greenblatt calls the 'will to play' – 'play on the brink of an abyss, *absolute* play'.¹⁶ As Mark Burnett writes in his 1999 'Marlowe and the Critic', 'With one or two exceptions, the construction of Marlowe as a political subversive has gained a wide currency over the last twenty years' (ed., p. 617) – though we could extend Marlovian subversion to the categories of subjectivity, sexuality, religion, and poetics.¹⁷

The investment that Greenblatt shares with Leech in a theatrical Marlowe has a characteristic twentieth-century liability: a neglect of Marlowe's poems. While commentators from the late-seventeenth century to the nineteenth praise Marlowe exuberantly for his achievements in drama, they have surprisingly little to say about his poems as a body of work in its own right, and even less praise.¹⁸ Commentators in this period do recognize *Hero and Leander*, as we have seen, but it takes until 1781 for Warton to recognize fully Marlowe's 'PURE POETRY': *Ovid's Elegies*, *Lucan's First Book*, and even 'The Passionate Shepherd' (MacLure, pp. 59–60; see MacLure's comment, p. 24). Between Warton and Swinburne, commentators refer to various of the poems only intermittently, as if, under the pressure of the Shakespeare factor, no one is quite sure what to do with a playwright who, like Shakespeare, wrote some of the most gifted poems in the language.¹⁹ The General Catalogue to the British Library sets the official classification that prevails today: 'Marlowe (Christopher) the Dramatist'.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, however, counter forces were assembling.²⁰ Levin himself led the rearguard action, in a series of brilliant observations spliced into his dramatic view of the overreacher. He was followed more emphatically by J. B. Steane in his 1964 *Marlowe: A Critical Study*, which devotes chapters to *Lucan*, *Ovid*, and *Hero* (curiously ignoring 'The Passionate Shepherd').²¹ Even Leech's posthumously published *Poet for the Stage* (1986) includes two chapters on the poems (pp. 26–42, 175–98). While most studies throughout the century focused exclusively on 'Marlovian drama', some included chapters on *Hero and Leander*, while simultaneously this Ovidian poem was attracting an impressive string of fine analyses, from C. S. Lewis to David Lee Miller and beyond.²²