

SOME ENGLISH RENAISSANCE IDEAS IN THE
WORKS OF CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

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I hereby recommend that the thesis prepared
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PREFACE

Christopher Marlowe, more than any other author of so short a life, reflects the advanced ideas and deep concerns of his age, the Renaissance. The Renaissance, the transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age, was a movement of the intellect and will toward reassertion of the natural rights of reason and the senses, toward the conquest of this planet as a place of human occupation, and toward the formation of regulative theories both for the state and for the individual different from those of mediaeval times. This movement might be said to have begun in Italy in the fourteenth century with Dante and Petrarch. It reached England in the reign of Henry VII. Each nation responded in its own peculiar way to the age.

Four major concerns of the English Renaissance were England's desire for power, her desire for wealth, her desire for knowledge, and her desire for beauty. Marlowe most vividly portrays these characteristics of the age in three of his dramas, Tamburlaine, The Jew of Malta, and The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, and in his non-dramatic work, Hero and Leander. Edward II is of slighter interest in the development of these ideas. These four dramas and the non-dramatic work furnished material for a first-hand

investigation of the English Renaissance ideas that they contained. No use was made of Dido, Queene of Carthage or of The Massacre at Paris. Dido, Queene of Carthage is only a portrayal on the stage in dramatic form of a semi-mythical story. The Massacre at Paris, a drama filled with religious and political propaganda, contains no material relevant to the topic.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Ivan L. Schulze, who so capably directed this thesis.

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CHAPTER I

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND HIS AGE

For thirty years preceding the coming to the throne of Henry VII in 1485, England had been torn by the Wars of the Roses; the crown had been a plaything of the Yorkists and the Lancastrians, the two opposing factions. With Henry entered more than one hundred years of Tudor reign, during which time England probably experienced her greatest growth. Henry VII was not a splendid king nor a beloved one, but he was a successful one. He had three objectives when he was crowned; and when he died in 1509, he had successfully realized them. He had established his dynasty, he had made England strong within and without under a strong monarch, and he had set up a financial reserve against possible contingencies.¹

Henry VII had given England prosperity, but it was of a dismal, hum-drum sort; what the people wanted was a "merrie" England, and Henry VIII--a handsome young man of eighteen, a scholar, an athlete, a musician of note--bade fair to give it to them. No one saluted his accession to

¹Conyers Read, The Tudors (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1936), pp. 41-42.

to the throne with more enthusiasm than a group of scholars and men of letters who had gathered together in England at the close of the fifteenth century; they were harbingers of the Renaissance, one aspect of which concerned itself with the gaining of more power for England. Henry VIII, under the direction of Wolsey, drew England very definitely into the circle of European affairs, putting her in a position of equality with the great powers which overshadowed the rest. This was accomplished without a single achievement memorable in the annals of war.¹ All through the Tudor period the nation was realizing its maritime capacity; the century witnessed the rise of the English naval power from comparative insignificance to actual pre-eminence. The only thing that happened during the reign of Edward VI that increased England's prestige was Chancellor and Willoughby's expedition in search of a North-East passage, thus opening relations between England and Russia.² Mary's reign was practically barren in all respects.

When Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558, she had no army and practically a wasted navy; nevertheless, she was mistress of the situation. At her death, England was the

¹Read, op. cit., pp. 113-114.

²Ibid., p. 214.

greatest maritime power in the world. With the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, the empire of the ocean passed from Spain to England.¹ England had been kept united at home and at peace within her borders through a long period of crises. The national spirit and the national resources had been so fostered that England had proved herself a match for the mightiest powers in Europe. She had defeated every attempt to entice or force her back to Roman obedience.² When Antwerp fell in 1585, London became the economic capital of Europe, a banking center, the seat of merchant princes, a distributing point for foreign and domestic goods.³ To understand her people was Elizabeth's first aim; to make them great was her ultimate ambition. And she achieved both.⁴

While critics were wrangling over quantitative verse, poets culling classics for learned allusions, and dramatists picturing the Faust-soul in search of the infinite, traders were obeying the Iago injunction to put money into

¹Read, op. cit., p. 386.

²Ibid., p. 370.

³Louis B. Wright, "The Renaissance Middle-Class Concern over Learning," Philological Quarterly, IX (1930), 273.

⁴Read, op. cit., p. 428.

their pockets.¹ This greed for wealth was felt alike by nobles, men of the middle class, and even people of the lower classes. One of the objectives of Henry VII was to replenish the depleted royal treasury; this he did with a grasping hand. Upon his death England's treasury was the richest in Christendom.² Thomas Cromwell promised to make his master, Henry VIII, as rich as his father; he fulfilled this promise in spite of Henry's having debased the currency and almost exhausted his father's financial reserves. Customary payments to the Pope were diverted to the royal treasury. In 1536 monasteries with an income of less than 200 pounds were dissolved and their property turned over to the king. An act of Parliament in 1539 approved the doing away with larger monasteries.³ The two years of the reign of Edward VI were without distinction, given over to plunder of the churches and unchecked rapacity of the landlords. Mary's reign was a barren interlude.

With the coming of Elizabeth, matters took a different turn; England was about to enter upon perhaps the most glorious period in her history. While France and Spain were

¹Wright, "The Renaissance Middle-Class Concern over Learning," p. 273.

²Read, op. cit., p. 40.

³Ibid., p. 76.

exhausting their resources and draining their exchequers with costly wars, England was free from any similar strife and was growing in wealth.

At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, she restored the debased coinage and re-established English credit abroad. Three years later she passed in parliament her famous Act of Apprentices which placed the whole industrial system on a national basis and under national oversight. She had given much thought to her merchants, had extended to them preferential custom rates as against their competitors, had encouraged them to seek out new ways of trade and had definitely recognized that their interests were of vital importance in her international relations. It is from her rather than the ephemeral experiments of her predecessors that we must trace the steady development of what came to be known as the navigation policy, or at least that part of it which meant the definite favoring of English carriers in all English sea-borne commerce. She even went so far as to re-establish Catholic fish day so that English fisheries should not suffer any evil consequences from the break with Rome. She chartered companies for trade in the Baltic, in Spain, in Venice, in Turkey, on the African coast, and even in Far India. And she averted her eyes while John Hawkins and the likes of him stole slaves from Guinea coast of Portugal and sold them in defiance of Spanish embargo in Spanish-West Indies. Indeed she is known to have invested some of her money in these piratical enterprises. She encouraged Martin Frobisher and John Davis in their search for the Northwest passage, Humphrey Gilbert and his half-brother, Sir Walter Raleigh, in their attempts to colonize North America, and when Francis Drake came home in 1581 from his voyage around the world with his cargo of Spanish silver, she knighted him on his own quarter-deck and resisted all efforts of the Spanish king to recover any part of the enormous booty. We may perceive in all these enterprises the expansive energies of the English at work, we may perceive capital, seeking lucrative investment. England was growing rich.¹

¹Read, op. cit., pp. 190-191.

The last ten years of Elizabeth's reign marked the real advance to her maritime supremacy, not only in sea fighting but in sea trading. English ships, financed by English companies, plowed in increasing numbers the waters of every European sea, and English trading enterprises reached as far eastward as the Caspian Sea and as far westward as the coast of Virginia and Newfoundland. At the very end of the century the queen granted a charter to the great East India Company.¹ New industries developed within the kingdom, but while the rich were growing richer, the poor were growing poorer. This problem of poverty proved to be most serious. Nevertheless, the dominant note in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign was not poverty but prosperity. England was then, if ever, looking forward, confident, sure of herself, and sure of her great destiny.

The desire for knowledge and the spread of education deserve to be ranked as marked features of the age. Learning up to the fifteenth century had centered at the universities and had been a handmaid to theology. This was not so during the latter part of the century and the centuries to follow. Long wars with France and internal strife had greatly affected scholarly pursuits, but with the coming

¹Read, op. cit., pp. 238-239.

of Henry VII new learning was encouraged and it prospered and developed. All Englishmen became interested in the revival of learning that had swept Italy, and in keeping with this interest, learning spread first from the universities to the court and from the court to the upper middle class. Duke Humphrey of Gloucester was the first conspicuous example of the English patron and lover of Italian learning. He encouraged learning by leaving to Oxford money and books and the writings of Boccaccio, texts and commentaries on Dante, and writings of antiquity.¹ John Colet, founder of the famous St. Paul's School, held out a promise of intellectual and moral progress. Elizabethans became proficient in the "four faculties"--medicine, theology, law, and liberal arts.²

At the middle of the fifteenth century the first group of scholars went to Florence and Rome to study; the second group went at the end of the century. This second group included Linacre, Latimer, and Grocyn, with whom modern scholarship in England is said to have begun. They found it their task to lay the foundation for English

¹Lewis Einstein, The Italian Renaissance in England (New York: Columbia University Press, 1902), pp. 3-4.

²John Bakeless, Christopher Marlowe (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1937), p. 29.

scholarship and to begin in their own country the study of the humanities. Erasmus, a Dutch scholar, was their associate in England. Two monks introduced Greek and other culture; one of them, William Selling of All Souls, was the first English example of the all-around man of broad culture.¹ Greek, science, law, medicine, and Biblical criticism which the Italian Renaissance had opened to the world were taught at the English universities.

By the end of the fifteenth century the dominant political influence of the Renaissance, that of concentrating the supreme power of the state in the person of one sovereign prince, was felt in England. With this move court life assumed great importance. Courtiers' manners became the outward reflection of the new life of the Renaissance. Books and men were imported from Italy to teach manners; especially used was Castiglione's Cortegiano. The courtier, to be able to advise his prince, had to possess "readiness of wit, pleasantness of wisdom, and knowledge of letters."² This desire for knowledge made the courtier wish to excel in branches he formerly despised. Henry VIII set an example by learning Italian himself. Raleigh and Sidney were good examples of courtiers that were both soldiers and scholars.

¹Einstein, op. cit., p. 30.

²Ibid., p. 113.

Many of the courtiers were of middle-class origin. They realized that to keep their positions, they must become educated. The whole middle class believed in education as a social panacea; tradesmen regarded learning as a step toward social advancement. All ranks and classes bore witness to this new zeal for learning.

The influence of the Renaissance on poetry was twofold. On the one hand it taught value and beauty of artistic form in poetry and introduced poetic models; on the other it gave raw material from which Elizabethans drew subject matter.¹ Chaucer was the first writer to show Italian influence; he was the first to read the Tuscan poets, and his writings, like Petrarch's, were the first to be freed from theological purpose. Wyatt and Surrey were the first reformers of English metre and style; their task was equal to that of Linacre and Grocyn in scholarship. The novel and technical perfection of his art, along with Platonic ideas and supposed depths of passion, made Petrarch the model for court poets of western Europe. Wyatt and Surrey followed him, but not slavishly. Wyatt was the first to introduce into England the sonnet form; Surrey followed him with blank verse and with the introduction of terza rima and numerous rhymed metres. More's Utopia stands out as a

¹ Einstein, op. cit., p. 372.

classic on its own merits. Tottel's Miscellaney, brought out in 1557, printed many new forms of lyric poetry for the first time. Literary forms of antiquity had come into use again; pastorals, madrigals, satire, hymns, narrative poetry, were all revived classical forms. However, the influence of Italy on English literature was one of foundation rather than development. A feeling of native excellence which was springing up in England made scholars feel that a nation should develop its own language and ideas and ideals rather than copy from the continent. Spenser and Shakespeare, as well as many others, may have followed Italian forms and used Italian sources, but the spirit of their work was fundamentally English.

Drama gave full and complete expression to the spirit of the age. The plays embodied the current knowledge and information of the age and its yearnings for still more knowledge. Love, lust, ambition, the passion for mortal life were there--in English, Italian, or antique guise.¹ The age was not deeply religious; rather it was a time when the energies, passions, ambitions of eager men threatened to submerge the mystic anticipation of a life to come. No joyful anticipation of a future world is expressed in

¹Henry Osborn Taylor, Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1920), II, 239.

Shakespeare or the other dramatists. Plays move and breathe, grieve and rejoice, and even consider and reflect in the medium of love of this life and all its joys and glories. Until the time of Ben Jonson, many plays were not even claimed by their authors; they merely expressed a message that needed to be expressed. This drama was the final result of the earlier mysteries, miracles, moralities, and interludes. Udall's Ralph Roister Doister, written between 1534 and 1541 and made up of doggerel couplets, was the first regular English comedy; Norton and Sackville's Gorboduc, the first English tragedy, was presented in 1562 and used for the first time blank verse as the poetic form for drama. Peele and Greene are the first important popular dramatists of the Elizabethan age; Marlowe, Ben Jonson, and Shakespeare are outstanding.

This revival of learning and the spread of education was felt in the field of science as well as in the field of literature. In the mediaeval world the church claimed absolute authority for truth by the light of grace, in comparison with which the light of reason had no place. From 1163 on for several centuries ecclesiastics were not allowed to study physics; chemistry came to be known as one

of the seven devilish arts of the fourteenth century.¹ As late as the sixteenth century theologians believed that gases in mines were the breath of evil spirits. The first person to follow a truly scientific path was Roger Bacon in the thirteenth century. How deeply his imprisonment and his struggle against criticism from the church affected him may be seen when he said, "Would that I had not given myself so much trouble for the love of science!"² He was persecuted because he explained natural phenomena by scientific principles that the Middle Ages referred to simply as supernatural causes, and because he argued that much ascribed to demons resulted from natural causes. Scholars had to be cautious in the face of the all-powerful church; Leonardo da Vinci, Bruno, Servetus, and many others were persecuted and not allowed to express themselves. However, stubborn facts of nature cannot be denied, and the attention which these facts received at the beginning of the modern era, the stress laid upon experience and experiment prompted by the spirit of naturalism and encouraged by recovered pagan literature, all

¹Andrew D. White, A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1910), II, 389.

²Ibid.

led to the discovery of modern scientific data.¹

Despite the advances made in physics, chemistry, and biology in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, medicine was not yet modern. People were still searching for an elixir that would prolong life indefinitely or for a panacea which would serve as a cure for all diseases. Reluctant to give up their old ideas, they did not take kindly to the new-fangled ideas of science. All sorts of remedies were found in the London Pharmacopoeis of 1618. Astrology and magic were intimate associates of medicine. Many believed that one's destiny was controlled by the stars, one's diseases cured by white magic, and one's punishment administered by black magic. Progress in physics and astronomy gradually dissolved these fears and feelings. Extension in navigation and the discovery of the new world were preparing men's minds for the new scientific matter. Men began to reason that the earth moved and that it was not the center of the universe. Copernicus made the first great addition to scientific knowledge since ancient times with the publication of his heliocentric theory of the universe in 1543. His works owed their final acceptance in scientific circles chiefly to the authority of Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, and,

¹A. Wolf, A History of Science, Technology, and Philosophy in the 16th and 17th Centuries (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1935), pp. 2-3.

later, Newton. Galileo presented the law of the pendulum, the use of the telescope, and the uniformity of the speed of falling bodies; Newton presented his theory of gravitation. Astronomy led the way in scientific advance.

The quest for truth cannot be separated from the quest for beauty. While Elizabethans were studying the revived classics, they were becoming familiar with Platonism. The literature of the Renaissance was inspired by the neo-Platonic philosophy of beauty popularized by Petrarch. His sonnets to Laura were translated and imitated by poets throughout western Europe. The essence of neo-Platonism is the denial of the reality of matter and the affirmation of the reality of the spirit.¹ Platonism seeks truth through imagination rather than intellect, through intuition rather than logic. Elizabethans were searching the stars, the heavens, the moon, the sun, the planets for ideal beauty. They were seeking beauty not only in thought but also in form. Rime, meter, and enriched language were employed to gain beauty of sound. Few poets, and no dramatist, before Marlowe had realized the value of the element of resonance.

Both the life and the works of Christopher Marlowe are true pictures of this age, the Renaissance. Born a

¹Claud L. Finney, "Keats' Philosophy of Beauty," Philological Quarterly, V (1926), 3-4.

cobbler's son he was interested in all phases of learning. He revolted at becoming a cleric and found his pleasures among people of the capital where wealth and rank--neither of which he possessed by birth--were passports to everything he held dear.

Delighting in the brilliant and aristocratic circles in which he moved, yet conscious of his humble origin, it was natural for Marlowe to write about the shepherd who became a mighty conqueror, a quiet scholar who drew the devil himself to his command, the outcast Jew who by virtue of his wealth and cunning became ruler of a Christian island. . . . and natural also that he should invest all this with the splendour and strangeness which the mighty line and his own genius made possible.¹

Marlowe loved beauty and he loved learning, and he was wise enough to know there was no conflict between them. His gorgeously ornamented language, his quenchless yearning for the unattainable, the purely physical beauty of his verse, and his love of splendor reveal a sensuous nature, in love with all external beauty.

In all his works Marlowe gives imaginative expression to the consuming desires and ideas of his day. His heroes, with one exception, are supermen vainly trying to attain the unattainable, and like many Elizabethans, even Marlowe himself, failing because of some obstacle too great for them to overcome. Even Tamburlaine had to yield in

¹Bakeless, op. cit., p. 7.

face of death. Marlowe's plays deal with the upper levels of society, the wealthy, the influential, the intellectual. Marlowe had no interest in the common folk from whom he and his Canterbury forebears sprang. His plots concern themselves with the consuming passions of his day--quests for power in all its forms, for wealth, for knowledge. All his works are filled with passages of rare beauty, a quality keenly appreciated by Elizabethans.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND HIS ASSOCIATES

"Cut is the branch that might have
grown full straight,"
Doctor Faustus

Christopher Marlowe was born to John and Katherine Marlowe February 26, 1564, in Canterbury. He was one of nine children and grew up in the average Elizabethan tradesman's household. His home, not far from the Church of St. George the Martyr, overlooked St. George's Street and St. George's Lane. While Christopher was going up and down these streets to the Cathedral and perhaps to the grammar school, lasting impressions were being made upon his mind. Canterbury, the church center of England, was on the high-road from London to Dover and the English Channel, and through this city poured all Elizabethan humanity--soldiers, sailors, clergy, gilded youth from the Court of the Queen--from whom the child heard, directly or indirectly, stirring tales. Along this road players came too; it is known that players were in Canterbury six times during Marlowe's life. The most wonderful sight of all, however, was the Queen's visit in 1573. Christopher was equally impressed with the horrible incidents that occurred from time to time. Numerous executions were committed during his childhood, and he may have

witnessed some of the "hangings, drawings, and quarterings" that took place on the walls of Canterbury. Even though Marlowe never so much as mentions his home, his family, or his birthplace after he leaves Canterbury in 1580, happenings and impressions of his early life are easily traced in his works.

Christopher Marlowe, though of humble origin, grew up in a prosperous home. His father was able to have at least four apprentices and at his death, he owned two businesses--one in shoes, hides, and leathers, and the other as a bondsman. No one knows at what place young Marlowe received his earliest education--his father might have taught him--but it is known that at the age of fourteen he was admitted to King's School, a school open "to fifty poor boys, both destitute of the help of friends and endowed with minds apt for learning, who shall be called scholars of the grammar school, and shall be sustained out of the funds of our church conformable with the limitations of our statutes."¹ This sounds as if John Marlowe's family was poor indeed, but the designation of "poor boy" was given a very elastic interpretation. Although Marlowe spent only two years in King's School, they must have had a highly important influence upon him. The curriculum of the school was fashioned according

¹Bakeless, op. cit., p. 41.

to Renaissance pedagogic ideas, and its chief aim was to train the scholars to speak and write Latin fluently. The foundation of Marlowe's familiarity with Latin literature and with the mythology of Greece and Rome must have been laid at this school in 1579 and 1580.¹ A famous Renaissance method of teaching boys to speak Latin intelligently was to train them to act in classical or neo-classical plays. There is no record to show that Marlowe's head master conducted performances of such plays, but it must count for something in his development that his school had a tradition of theatrical productions which was favored by the authorities of the Cathedral.

At King's School begins Marlowe's life-long association with the great names of England. Among the names that appear on the ancient records of the school are Shelley, Lyly, Sidney, John Boyle, and Richard Boyle. Stephen Gosson, another student, like Marlowe, was to write for the theater; but unlike Marlowe, he was to leave off the evil ways and write The School of Abuse, a most savage attack upon the influences of the stage and all its doings.²

Marlowe must have very well satisfied the requirements

¹Frederick S. Boas, Christopher Marlowe (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 8.

²Bakeless, op. cit., p. 44.

of King's School, for he was given one of Archbishop Parker's scholarships to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, in 1580. This scholarship carried with it certain specifications, two of which were that the student was to be paid one shilling a week and that he was not to be absent from school for more than one month each year unless he was ill or unless he was sent away on college business. Marlowe greatly exceeded the permitted absence, and he spent much more than a shilling a week. However, he remained in Cambridge for six years, the last three of which were open only to students preparing for the priesthood of the Church of England. Life, studies, even the minute details of dress of the whole university were strictly regulated, and fiery-spirited young Marlowe was already in rebellion against restriction of any kind. He, like all the other young Elizabethans, wanted the fine array displayed by the courtiers of Elizabeth; especially did he want a hat. Some concessions in dress were made while Marlowe was in Cambridge, but the Lord Treasurer said emphatically, "No hats!"¹ Students' clothes were of woolen cloth, of some "sad" color; Marlowe was probably thinking of these clothes when he had Doctor Faustus say,

¹Bakeless, op. cit., p. 53.

I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,
Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad[.]¹

His studies included rhetoric the first year, dialectics the second and third, and philosophy the fourth. Candidates for the Master's degree were to be auditors at lectures on philosophy, astronomy, perspective, and Greek; they were to make up by their own industry gaps in their earlier work and were to attend bareheaded the learned disputations of those who were already masters of Arts.² Marlowe as a six-year scholar, destined to take holy orders, must have been supposed to give divinity first place in his studies, but he probably gave his intellectual bent free reign outside the prescribed course of study after he received his first degree. The classics and the astronomical studies of the later years seem to have especially interested him, for the images which appear in his poetry are drawn almost entirely from classical mythology or from the stars and the planets. Books filled with such lore were easily obtainable by Marlowe for he had access to two of the finest libraries in England, the University Library and the Archbishop Parker's Library at Corpus

¹Christopher Marlowe, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, ed. Frederick S. Boas (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1932), I, i, 91-92. (All references to Marlowe's works are to the R. H. Case Editions.)

²Bakeless, op. cit., p. 58.

Christi. Too, the neighboring town of Sturbridge held an annual fair famous for its book stalls. Books that Marlowe read are easily traceable in his works. The geography of Tamburlaine, mistakes and all, was taken from the geography of the German, Ortelius. He took parts of the story from Paulus Jovius; other sources of Tamburlaine may be traced to books in the Cambridge Library. Most of Edward II came from Holinshed, and the works of Holinshed were almost certainly in the Corpus Christi Library while Marlowe was there. He was probably sufficiently inspired by his readings to pen some of his verse before leaving school.

Marlowe was a satisfactory, though hardly brilliant student. He ranked eighth among twelve from Corpus Christi and one hundred and ninety-ninth among two hundred thirty-one University bachelors for the year.¹ However, his scholarship was extended for the next two years. This grant is harder to understand in the light of his attitude than in the light of his grades; his religious views were soon to become very different from those of Robert Norgate, a master with strong Puritan leanings who controlled Corpus Christi. Marlowe's religious views might have become tainted while he was still in school. Francis Kett, who was burned for heresy, withdrew from the University a few

¹Bakeless, op. cit., p. 76.

months before Marlowe's arrival, but the Buttery Book shows he continued in residence the first of the next year.¹ Marlowe was accused of converting to atheism Thomas Fineux, another Kentishman who enrolled in the University shortly before Marlowe left. Before the end of 1587 Marlowe had declared that all Protestants "are hipocriticall asses" and that "if there be any god or any true religion then it is in the papists."² Nevertheless, at the end of the prescribed time he applied for the Master of Arts degree and was granted it in July, 1587--even though the Privy Council had to intervene to explain his absences by saying he was in the Queen's employ and to allay rumors that he was at Rheims, probably in the interest of Catholicism. By all evidences that have come down to us it appears that Marlowe's life at the University was happy beyond the usual lot of poets. The only blemish upon it is his failure to become a clergyman, as required by the scholarship which he held. Yet he maintained his scholarship, took his degree, and left with a certainly unusual certificate of character from the Queen's Privy Council.³

¹Bakeless, op. cit., p. 49.

²Ibid., p. 77.

³C. F. Tucker Brooke (ed.), The Life of Marlowe and the Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1930), p. 37.

Some of the noted literary men of Marlowe's time were former students at Cambridge. Spenser, Greene, and Nashe had been there and in a less favored class than that of Marlowe; they were sizars.¹ Nashe, who collaborated with Marlowe in writing Dido, Queen of Carthage, received his B. A. degree at the same time Marlowe did. Robert Greene, later Marlowe's bitterest enemy, had just left the University; Marlowe himself left only a short while before John Fletcher, famous for his collaboration with Francis Beaumont, entered Corpus Christi. John Heywood, play-hack of Elizabethan London, is said to have been a student at Cambridge.²

Upon leaving Cambridge, Marlowe entered upon a short but brilliant literary career in the capital city. He could have been in London not more than six years--from the time of his arrival in 1587 to that of his tragic death in 1593. Although his works influenced greatly the men of his time, it is not known how well Marlowe knew some of the great figures of Elizabethan literature. Even though he and Shakespeare must have arrived in London at nearly the same time, there is no proof that they ever met; Shakespeare was to him a raw young beginner. Marlowe must have known Spenser's works well, since he quoted from them numerous

¹Brooke, The Life of Marlowe, p. 23.

²Bakeless, op. cit., p. 76.

times; he probably knew the poet himself, for Spenser came from Ireland with Sir Walter Raleigh in 1589. If he knew Sir Philip Sidney, he met him while he was still in Cambridge, for Sidney died in 1586. Francis Bacon was to him a rising young lawyer, Francis Beaumont, a child of less than ten, John Fletcher, a boy still in Corpus Christi, and Ben Jonson was a bricklayer's son in his early 'teens. Among the Elizabethans whom Marlowe did know were "envious Robert Greene, malignant Gabriel Harvey, satiric Thomas Nashe, learned Thomas Watson, grave George Chapman, dissolute George Peele, and Sir Walter Raleigh, whose romantic life has never been forgotten and whose books are never read."¹ Even though Marlowe was not privileged to know some of the great literary men of the age, he did know some powerful political figures even at the time of his arrival in London. Sir Thomas Walsingham, kinsman and friend to the powerful Secretary to the Queen, was his patron; the brilliant Raleigh and the learned Harriot were his friends.

Marlowe associated himself with the "University Wits"--Nashe, Greene, Peele, and Dr. Thomas Lodge--and sometime during 1587 he had won such instant triumph with his play, Tamburlaine, that he was obliged to follow it with a second part. This play was acted by the Lord Admiral's Men,

¹Bakeless, op. cit., p. 90.

with Edward Alleyn taking the leading rôle. In 1589 Marlowe was probably busy upon Doctor Faustus, with which he was to have another immediate success.¹ His "mighty line" at once gained attention; Tamburlaine marked the first step toward a drama which is at once literate and popular.

While Marlowe had been moving from triumph to triumph, he, like most successful men, had been making enemies. Gabriel Harvey, the Cambridge rhetorician, hated Marlowe bitterly and made no secret of his exultation when the dramatist was murdered; his brother, Richard Harvey, probably disliked Marlowe as much because of his opinion of Protestants. Robert Green was venomous against the man who could write better and more successful plays than he and who could associate with people among whom he did not even have acquaintances. William Bradley, the son of a London innkeeper, disliked him even more--a dislike that might have been formed while Bradley was a pensioner at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1580.

Bradley also disliked Thomas Watson, Marlowe's poet friend, Watson's brother-in-law, Hugh Swift, and John Alleyn, brother to the actor, Edward Alleyn. He had appealed to the Court of the Queen's Bench in the summer of

¹Beacuse of bibliographical material, Boas contends that Doctor Faustus was written about 1592.

1589 for protection against these men; but in spite of his appeal, he was engaged in a struggle in Hog Lane first with Marlowe, and then with the intervener, Thomas Watson, who took his life. For the murder Watson had to serve five months in Newgate, but Marlowe came off lightly with only a fortnight's stay in prison. However, he was later accused of learning to make counterfeit money during this short stay. This is the first positive proof that Marlowe had stepped beyond the bounds prescribed by Church and State.¹ One important bit of evidence of the trial was that the address of Marlowe was given as Norton-Folgate. Robert Poley, who in 1593 was present in the room where Marlowe was murdered, lived there.²

Yet rumors were beginning to circulate concerning him. He had already incurred in Cambridge quarters the suspicion of intending to join Roman Catholic recusants abroad. A still more serious charge--that of atheism--had been brought against him, first by jealous Robert Greene and later by Thomas Kyd. "The first known use of the term 'Atheist' in connection with Marlowe is the phrase from Perimedes, the Blacksmith in 1588, 'daring God out of heaven with the atheist Tamburlan,' followed by the sneer at 'mad

¹Boas, op. cit., p. 108.

²Bakeless, op. cit., p. 166.

and scoffing poets, that have prophetically spirits as bred of Merlin's race."¹ A more illuminating charge of atheism was brought against Marlowe when Kyd, arrested in 1593, claimed that papers denying the deity of Christ found in his possession were Marlowe's and that these papers became mixed with his own while the two were living together.² To support his assertions, Kyd asked that Marlowe's associates--Harriot, Warner, Roydon, and some stationers in Paul's Churchyard--be questioned. William Warner, who gave an unorthodox definition of the nature of the deity, might have been the poet. Harriot was the mathematician and scientist who was accused of keeping the School of Atheism in the home of Sir Walter Raleigh.³ Roydon was accused of being a spy against Queen Elizabeth and of being in the employ of the Scots.⁴ This is important only in that Marlowe's associates are named. Still another charge of atheism was brought against him when a certain Richard Baines was moved to hand to the Privy Council a note, published a short time after Marlowe's death, charging him with blasphemy. Richard Chomley had

¹Boas, op. cit., p. 111.

²Bakeless, op. cit., p. 169.

³Boas, op. cit., p. 113.

⁴Ibid., p. 244.

confessed that Marlowe's reasoning had made him an atheist.

Whatever may have been Marlowe's degree of intimacy with suspected persons and whatever rumors may have circulated about his own atheism, his career as a playwright, with the exception of his arrest and short imprisonment in 1589, seems to have moved steadily onward from the time of the success of Tamburlaine until 1592. The Jew of Malta and Edward II, two of his greatest dramas, belong to this period. The Jew of Malta was especially popular after the hanging of the Jewish physician of Queen Elizabeth in 1594. Tamburlaine and Doctor Faustus had started a fashion in heroes; The Jew of Malta started a fashion in villains. Barabas was the first Machiavellian villain to step upon the English stage; he, like all villains of this type, was vain and full of extreme wickedness. Edward II was the last of Marlowe's plays, with the exception of the rather insignificant Massacre at Paris; it was also his best. Marlowe's lines were almost perfect, his plot was well-knit, and his minor characters, especially his women, were well-developed. Edward II was kept in production for some years.

Marlowe's non-dramatic poetry includes Hero and Leander, an unfinished poem generally assigned to his early period; translations from Lucan's Pharsalia and Ovid's Amores, assigned to an early period; and a lyric, "The

Passionate Shepherd to his Love," which Raleigh paid a left-handed compliment when he answered it with "The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd." He also wrote a fragment of a poem beginning, "I walked along a stream for pureness rare[.] " There is no way of telling just what Marlowe had in mind when he wrote this fragment. He wrote a number of prose dedications.

It seems that about this time, 1592, Marlowe was again in trouble with the authorities. On May 9, 1592, he was summoned "under a penalty of twenty pounds to appear at the next General Session of Peace, and meanwhile to keep the peace towards Allen Nicholls, Constable of Holywell Street, and Nicholas Hellliott, subconstable."¹ There is no record of his appearing, but to say the least, the charge was less serious than the suspicion of his having murdered Bradley in Hog Lane. This Hog Lane affray must have come close home to Marlowe again with the death of Thomas Watson in 1592. Watson's death was followed closely by that of Roger Manwood, one of the leading figures on the Bench at Gaol Delivery of December 3, 1589. Robert Greene had died on September 3, 1592. Shortly before his death he wrote a pamphlet, warning five gentlemen to repent. He singled out Marlowe from among the five and reproved him for atheism. Greene's last lines

¹Boas, op. cit., p. 236.

were almost prophetic; "Defer not (with me) till this last point of extremitie; for little knowest thou how in the end thou shall be visited."¹

Marlowe, no doubt, was associating with questionable characters, atheists as well as spies, murderers, and the like. Sir Walter Raleigh, his brother Carew, Harriot, Marlowe, Chapman, the Earls of Northumberland and Derby, Roydon, Warner, and Sir George Carey in their School of Atheism were under constant watch. They studied theology, philosophy, astronomy, geography, and chemistry under the instruction of Harriot. While all the members were suspected of atheism, Harriot, Marlowe, and Raleigh were the only ones whose atheism was public scandal. They exposed contradictions in the scriptures, produced natural explanations of miracles, and chafed against the current attitude that forbade any questioning into religion. To restrict intelligent inquiry was to Marlowe and Raleigh the unforgiveable sin. Charges were brought against them of jesting at Moses, the Savior, and the Old and New Testaments, and the spelling of the name of God backwards. Richard Baines, bringing charges of atheism against Richard Chomley in 1593, said:

He sayeth and verily believeth that one Marlowe is able to show more sound reason for atheism than any divine in England is able to give

¹Boas, op. cit., p. 239.

proof of divinitie, and that Marlowe hath told him that he hath read the Atheist lecture to Sir Walter Raleigh and others.¹

The Reverend Ralph Ironsides reported an after-dinner conversation in which Raleigh stated that he had never been able to have explained to him the soul nor even God. Many such charges were brought against this group. The conclusion to be drawn is that the school did not disclose its opinions to the generality, that it enjoyed scandalizing the godly and confounding the dogmatic, and that it was provocative and irreverent, out of deliberate policy or natural devilment, or both.² Some of the conversations and some of the questionings of this group probably increased the difficulties that closed around Marlowe toward the end.

Robert Poley, Ingram Frizer, and Nicholas Skeres, the three men present at Marlowe's death, were far worse company than the School of Atheism. Poley was a government agent, acting in shady capacity at times. Frizer was an agent for Sir Thomas Walsingham and his daughter, Lady Audrey.³ Nicholas Skeres, like the other two, seemed to have been a secret agent and a robber as well.⁴ He was the

¹Quoted from M. C. Bradbrook, The School of Night (Cambridge: University Press, 1936), p. 12.

²Ibid.

³Bakeless, op. cit., p. 215.

⁴Ibid., p. 220.

least important of the three.

Thus Marlowe's associates range up and down the scale of social, moral, and intellectual life: the brilliant Raleigh, favourite of the Queen; Harriot, devoted man of science; virtuous old George Chapman; the Walsinghams, respectable country gentry, influential in government; Frizer, the swindler; Poley, the spy; Skeves, the cut-purse and gaol bird. Strange company in which to write the mighty line.¹

In the spring of 1593 the impetuous poet was again in trouble. In May the Privy Council demanded Marlowe's presence before it; no one knows why. It might have been for one of two reasons: Marlowe was growing in disfavor because of the suspicion of atheism which was gradually increasing against the whole Marlowe-Raleigh circle, sometimes called the "School of Night"; the other was that he was probably suspected of libel that concerned the state.²

Marlowe, who was at the home of Thomas Walsingham, appeared before the court May 20, and since nothing more is heard of the charge, the whole affair may have been trivial.

Marlowe probably did not return to the home of Walsingham, for ten days later at ten o'clock in the morning he was at a tavern at Deptford Strand, kept by Dame Eleanor Bull. With him were the three extremely doubtful characters, Poley, Frizer, and Skeres. The four called for a room, took

¹Bakeless, op. cit., p. 220.

²Ibid., p. 222.

two meals in private, and seem in every way to have kept much to themselves. They had enough business to keep them busy from ten in the morning until six in the evening. After supper Frizer, Skeres, and Poley sat down to a table for a game of some sort, and Marlowe lay down on a bed behind them. During the game Marlowe and Frizer became engaged in a quarrel over the tavern bill. Poley and Skeres were sitting so close to Frizer that he could not take flight when Marlowe attacked him with his own dagger. He struggled to get back the dagger and in doing so he caught Marlowe just above the right eye with it and it crashed back into the frontal lobe of the brain. The witnesses claimed that death followed instantly.¹

This is the story that the Coroner's jury of sixteen men accepted when the inquest was held June 1--they did not question the well-known fact that such a wound could not cause instant death--and on June 28 a pardon was issued Frizer on the grounds that he slew Marlowe in self-defense.² It has been argued that the story told to the coroner and the jury was faked and that Marlowe, instead of being the aggressor in the plot, was the victim of a deliberately

¹Boas, op. cit., p. 271.

²Ibid.

planned political murder.¹ Francis Meres in The Wit's Treasury in 1598 was the first to suggest a love affair in connection with the murder. As the centuries have passed the story has grown and grown and the woman has become more and more wicked. This story has no foundation, for it was not mentioned by Frizer nor by the Puritans. The murder created a sensation even in plague-stricken London; and the Puritan divines saw in it evidence of heaven's judgment against all "play-makers and poets of scurillitie."²

It is one of the many paradoxes confronting one in relation to Marlowe's career that the popularity of his plays with the theater-goers, so rapidly achieved, seems to have as rapidly ended. It is possible that the dramatist's tragic end, with the legendary embellishments, may have helped to affect the fortunes of his plays in the theater, but there was a more general cause. In the Jacobean period the popularity of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher out-moded the stage-fashions of the era typified by Marlowe and Kyd. Jonson himself could see nothing but "scenical strutting and furious vociferation in Tamburlaine."³

¹Boas, op. cit., p. 275.

²Bakeless, op. cit., p. 232.

³Boas, op. cit., p. 295.

Although Marlowe's dramas have never regained a great popularity in the theater, they still live for their pure poetry. His best lyric and narrative verse belongs to the top flight of English poetry. "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love" is an example of his exquisite love lyrics; echoes of this poem are found in all Marlowe's works, in hints, phrases, or even entire lines. An unfinished poem, beginning "I walked along a stream for pureness rare," is equally fine. The lines in these poems, as in all Marlowe's works, owe much to their form; the verse fits the action it describes and the sound mysteriously echoes the sense. This was the "mighty line" used with equal effect in both dramatic and non-dramatic poetry. Marlowe had an exceptionally sensitive ear, a gift for beauty, a feeling for language; he could tell whether or not a verse pleased his own ear, his actor's, and his audience's.

With his first great play, Tamburlaine, Marlowe not only found his meter, the "mighty line," but he also found himself. He did very little borrowing from that time on; he is almost the only Elizabethan who escaped the influence of the ten tragedies of Seneca. Though Marlowe had so few models to follow himself, it is doubtful whether any other Elizabethan writer except Shakespeare has ever served as a model for so many of his fellows and his successors;

and no one owed more to Marlowe than Shakespeare. Scornful Ben Jonson, who averred that Marlowe's "mighty line" was fitter for admiration than for parallel, envious Robert Greene, Dr. Thomas Lodge, Thomas Dekker, Philip Massinger, John Ford, John Marston, Beaumont and Fletcher, not to mention a host of others, show by their occasional allusions or adaptations how well they knew the plays of their great predecessor.¹ The writers of narrative verse-- Michael Drayton, Thomas Edwards, William Barksted, William Bosworth, and others--copied as freely from Hero and Leander and "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love."² The works that have most influenced other writers are Tamburlaine, Doctor Faustus, The Jew of Malta, Hero and Leander, and "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love."³

Shakespeare's debt is chiefest and clearest. In seven of his plays he is clearly copying from Marlowe, and in eleven others there are faint traces and suggestions of Marlowe's influence. Shakespeare went farther than mere echoes; he modeled many of his characters and several of his plots after Marlowe. His blank verse, especially that of

¹Bakeless, op. cit., p. 290.

²Ibid., p. 291.

³Ibid., p. 297.

his earlier plays, follows very closely in style that of Marlowe. Thus a cobbler's son, who had at most six years of literary maturity, lives forever in his own works and in the works he inspired in others.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND THE RENAISSANCE

DESIRE FOR POWER

"Is it not passing brave to be a king,"
I Tamburlaine

Christopher Marlowe lived during the latter years of the great Tudor rule, extending from 1485 to 1603. These more than one hundred years co-incide with England's early territorial expansion, an unparalleled religious revolution, and intellectual activity hardly equalled before or since that time. The social revolution was only a little less marked. It was an heroic age in which the nation saw great opportunities for expansion and achievement opening up before it. By the end of Elizabeth's reign it was plain to see that by virtue of England's colonizing ventures and by her triumphant naval skill, she had become one of the leading powers of Europe.

In 1485 coasts known to Europeans were those of Europe, the Levant, and North Africa. Only such adventurers as Marco Polo had penetrated Asia outside the ancient limits of the Roman Empire. By 1603 the globe had twice been circumnavigated by Englishmen. Portuguese fleets dominated the Indian waters; there were Portuguese stations both on the

west coast of India and in the Bay of Bengal. Portugal and Spain were established in the Spice Islands from which there was an annual trade around the Cape with the Spanish Peninsula. The English East India Company was already incorporated and its fast fleet commanded by Captain Lancaster had opened up the East Indian waters for English trade. Mexico, Peru, and the West Indies were Spanish possessions. The Spanish Main was fringed with Spanish forts and raided by English and French adventurers. Ships were sailing to and from the River Plate. Davis and Frobisher had explored the Arctic and semi-arctic seas, the Newfoundland banks were frequented by European fishing boats, and the first colony had been planted in Virginia and had perished. Columbus, the Cabots, Vasco de Gama, Magellan, Albuquerque, Cortes, Pizarro, Francis Drake, Davis, Frobisher, and Walter Raleigh had given Europeans new routes to the Old World and a New World in which to expand.¹

That the rivalries of colonization were to be settled by sea power was soon evident. It was also evident that English seamen had proved the supremacy of English seamanship. Alike for war and for commerce they had shown that the sailing ship in their hands was better than the

¹Arthur D. Innes, England under the Tudors (New York: G. C. Putnam's Sons, 1932), pp. 4-5.

galley could possibly be; they had mastered, as their rivals had not, the naval tactics by which the naval contests of the future were to be decided. The fight with the Armada in 1588 marked the beginning of the new Era. With this victory, Englishmen gained faith in themselves and pride in their country. It was a new and forward looking England, eager for new conquests, new discoveries, great enterprises. England had become a first class power.

The Tudor reign was a time of the rise of the gentry and the merchant class to positions of dominance in national life. Two factors aided the rise of the landed gentry: the value of land was increasing, and those whose wealth was in land were on the upgrade of power; the second factor was the passing of the land from the church to country squires, each greedy for power, having to make his way in the world, energetic, hard, pushing.¹ The merchant class became important during the reign of Henry VII. Men of this class were professional merchants, trading as individuals with their own capital and at their own risk, but subject to certain regulations established by royal charter and imposed by the group as a whole upon its members. With Henry VIII's granting them a charter, they virtually controlled the

¹A. L. Rowse, Sir Richard Grenville of the Revenge (New York: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1937), p. 6.

English cloth trade with the Low Countries and western Germany. The Merchant Adventurers were the most important commercial organization in England during the reign of Elizabeth and occupied a position in the Elizabethan world of business and finance equal to that which the East India Company was to occupy two centuries later.¹

The old nobility had been largely wiped out or dismissed from positions of power; the new nobility was a creation of the Tudors. Few of the prominent statesmen of the period belonged to the old, prominent families. For more than forty years at the beginning of the Tudor reign the chief ministers were ecclesiastics, but after Wolsey's fall, the Cromwells, Seymours, Dudleys, Cecils, Walsinghams, Bacons, Sidneys, Raleghs, and Careys were of stock that had hardly been heard of in Plantagenet times. It was the Tudor policy to foster these classes of subjects, and from the Tudor times to the present, these classes have provided the country with statesmen, captains, and leaders of all types. In the main they have swayed England's fortunes.

The shift from the old nobility to this new nobility had to be guided by strong personalities, and the Tudors were strong enough to guide the change. The Tudors' principle was to secure their own way by giving it the appearance of

¹Read, op. cit., pp. 239-240.

being the people's will. They made themselves practically absolute, tactfully disarming opposition by occasional concessions, managing their Parliaments diplomatically, so getting the funds they required and enabling themselves to do without Parliament altogether when the occasion demanded, without producing a sense of grievance. It was Henry VII who imposed upon England this new conception of leadership. These powerful Tudor personalities were admired and idealized in literature as were other great leaders, both of the Elizabethan age and the ages past. This admiration of strong personalities, along with a growing spirit of nationalism and boundless confidence, arising from England's growth at sea and in the new world, gave rise to a renewed popularity of the chronicle plays. These plays were based on more or less authentic history, rewritten and adapted for the stage.

In such a play Christopher Marlowe expressed the spirit of this age--the lust for discovery and power, the geographic excitement, and the admiration for strong personality. The real subject of this play, Tamburlaine, is the lust for dominion and power which the new discoveries and knowledge of the world were arousing in contemporary minds. Tamburlaine, just before his death, expressed this lust when he said to his sons:

Look here, my boys; see what a world of ground
 Lies westward from the midst of Cancer's line
 Until the rising of this earthly globe,
 Whereas the sun, declining from our sight,
 Begins the day with our Antipodes!
 And shall I die and this unconquered?
 Lo, here, my sons, are all the golden mines
 Inestimable drugs and precious stones,
 More worth than Asia and the world beside;
 And from th' Antarctic Pole eastward behold
 As much more land, which never was descried,
 Wherein are rocks of pearl that shine as bright
 As all the lamps that beautify the sky!
 And shall I die and this unconquered?
 Here, lovely boys, what death forbids my life,
 That let your lives command in spite of death.¹

Was Tamburlaine not expressing a desire for power when he said:

Is it not passing brave to be a king,
 And ride in triumph through Persepolis?²

The Tamburlaine of history was Timur Lenk (Timur the Lame), the Asiatic conqueror of obscure birth, whose armies conquered Southwestern Asia and the Turkish Empire, ruled by Bajazeth. He died in 1404. He really did most of the things that Marlowe had his Tamburlaine do on the stage.³ Marlowe's Tamburlaine was a ranting, thundering, bragging, blood-thirsty Scythian shepherd of Samarcand, "scourging

¹Christopher Marlowe, The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, ed. U. M. Ellis-Fermor (London: Methuen and Co., 1930), V, iii, 145-60.

²The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, v, 53-54.

³Bakeless, op. cit., p. 110.

kingdoms with his conquering sword[.] "¹ He rose to earthly omnipotence and he was resigned to death only when he realized:

In vain I strive and rail against those powers
That mean t'invest me in a higher throne,
As much too high for this disdainful earth.²

Tamburlaine's gaining supremacy over his enemies and bringing under his control the greater part of the known world, and his urging his sons to continue his conquests into the Western Hemisphere and into Australia after his death is nothing more than an imaginative expression of England's gaining supremacy in colonization and on the sea, and of her becoming one of the great powers of the world. Early in his career Tamburlaine beheld himself master not only of the land but of the sea:

Even from Persepolis to Mexico,
And thence unto the Straits of Jubalter,
Where they shall meet and join their forces in one,
Keeping in awe the Bay of Portingale,
And all the ocean by the British shore;
And by this means I'll win the world at last.³

His first conquest made him King of Persia. Before he

1. 6. ¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, Prologue,

120-22. ²The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, V, iii,

255-60. ³The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, III, iii,

attempted this conquest, he persuaded his leaders to support him, picturing to them the four potentates whose submission would virtually make him ruler of the world:

I'll first assay
To get the Persian kingdom to myself;
Then thou for Parthia; they for Scythia and Media;
And if I prosper, all shall be as sure
As if the Turk, the Pope, Afric and Greece
Came creeping to us with their crowns apiece.¹

Next he conquered the Barbary states of North Africa, ruled by Bajazeth. Tamburlaine made of Bajazeth a footstool as did Doctor Faustus of Bruno, the German Lollard, in The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus. After the conquest of North Africa, Tamburlaine predicted still more power for himself:

When holy Fates
Shall establish me in strong Egyptia,
We mean to travel to th' antarctic pole,
Conquering the people underneath our feet,
And be renowned as never emperors were.²

He gained this stronghold in Egypt with the defeat of the Soldon, who came to rescue his daughter, Zenocrate, held captive by Tamburlaine. He defeated the King of Arabia and the Governor of Damascus, he gained control of Babylon, and even after he felt himself "distempered suddenly," he forced to submit to him Callapine, son of Bajazeth and new leader

¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, vi, 81-86.

²Ibid., IV, iv, 137-41.

of the Turks against him. Just before his death, he traced his conquests upon the map for his sons. He lamented the fact that he should die and leave unconquered the dwellers of the Western Hemisphere and the "undescribed" Australia. His contemplated enterprises seem to have included a prophetic anticipation of the cutting of the Suez Canal. Has not England done what Marlowe's hero did not live to do? She has control of both Australia and a large part of the Western Hemisphere as well as the Suez Canal.

There is no doubt of the sort of men Marlowe admired--the fighting men, men of action, restless, forever spurred on by possession and desire. Tamburlaine, Barabas, Faustus, Mortimer--even Marlowe and many of his friends--were such men. Tamburlaine said of himself and others of his kind.

Nature. . . .

.
 Wills us to wear ourselves and never rest,
 Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
 The perfect bliss and sole felicity,
 The sweet fruition of an earthly crown.¹

Tamburlaine himself was physically powerful. Physical as well as intellectual perfection was one of the goals of the Humanists of the sixteenth century.

¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, vii, 18, 26-29.

Of stature tall and straightly fashioned,
 Like his desire, lifts upward and divine,
 So large of limbs, his joints so strongly knit,
 Such breadth of shoulders as might mainly bear
 Old Atlas' burthen;

.
 Pale of complexion, wrought in him with passion,
 Thirsting with sovereignty and love of arms,
 His lofty brows in folds do figure death,
 And in their smoothness amity and life:
 About them hangs a knot of hair,
 Wrapped in curls,

.
 His arms and fingers long and sinewy,
 Betokening valor and excess of strength:
 In every part porportioned like a man
 Should make the world subdued to Tamburlaine.¹

His words were full of wisdom:

I speak and my words are oracles.²

He was

. . . . the scourge and wrath of God,
 The only fear and terror of the world.³

His bragging would have been unendurable had he not been able
 generally to make his boasts good.

Nor are Appollo's oracles more true
 Than thou shalt find my vaunts substantial.⁴

Whether or not Marlowe admired insolence in men, he made his
 heroes the most insolent of men. Tamburlaine's contempt was

¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, i,
 7-11, 19-24, 26-29.

²Ibid., III, iii, 102.

³Ibid., III, iii, 44-45.

⁴Ibid., I, ii, 211-212.

fathomless when he pointed to a group of his adversaries before his last battle and said:

How now, Casane! see, a knot of kings,
Sitting as if they were a-telling riddles.¹

He could not have been more overbearing than when he had the kings of Asia draw his chariot. He scorned them with:

Holla, ye pampered jades of Asia!
What, can ye draw but twenty miles a day,
And have so proud a chariot at your heels,
And such a coachman as great Tamburlaine,
But from Asphaltis, where I conquered you,
To Byron here, where thus I honour you?²

Marlowe himself was often described as being arrogant.

The political note of the Tudor Period was absolutism tempered by judicious recognition of forms and precedents and made possible by an extremely skillful attention to and consideration for popular sentiment. The Tudor monarchs claimed that in the last resort they could command obedience, but they took the utmost care to produce the impression that, though the initiative might lie with them, they attributed the highest importance to the approbation of Parliament. Thus they gained their own way, giving it the appearance of its being the people's will.³ Especially did Elizabeth

¹The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, III, v, 58-59.

²Ibid., IV, iii, 1-6.

³Innes, op. cit., p. 6.

manage to establish sympathetic contact with the rank and file of her subjects and to create the impression that she was the unique source of all their blessings. She had a flair for popularity and she cultivated it carefully. It was her great achievement and perhaps the source of her strength.¹ Did not Tamburlaine use the same tactics? He would not attack the Persians until he had gained the support of his leaders, making them think that they themselves were the ones who really wanted to make the attack.² When he had gained the Persian crown and had placed it upon his head, he boasted that even should Mars attempt to dispossess him of it, yet would he wear it,

If you but say that Tamburlaine shall reign.

All: Long live Tamburlaine and reign in Asia!
 Tamb.: So; now it is more surer on my head
 Than if the gods had held a parliament,
 And all pronounc'd me king of Persia.³

Tamburlaine was absolute authority. As long as his subjects were in complete subservience to him, he showed them favors; he was ruthless in his treatment of those who dared oppose him. Did not Agydas, the Median lord who dared

¹Read, op. cit., p. 192.

²The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, v,
 72-104.

³Ibid., II, vii, 63-67.

to criticize Tamburlaine to Zenocrate, take his own life rather than face the consequences of Tamburlaine's "killing frown of jealousy and love"?¹ Did not Tamburlaine kill his own son because he defied his command to join in battle?² He forced the kings of Asia, with bits in their mouths, to pull his chariot. When the King of Trebizon and the King of Soria were "broken winded and half tir'd," Tamburlaine had them hanged on the walls of Babylon and replaced by the King of Natolia and the King of Jerusalem.³ He had no sympathy for the virgins who begged for mercy on Damascus nor for the women and children of Babylon. It is surprising on first thought that a sixteenth century audience could tolerate such inhuman action. However, one must remember some of the things that took place during that century. Were not two of Henry VIII's wives beheaded, to say nothing of the subjects who lost their lives at the hands of all the Tudors? Were not heads of persons executed for treason placed on spikes on London Bridge to serve as warnings to the people of the city? Marlowe must have had direct

91. ¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, III, iii,

120. ²The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, IV, vii,

³Ibid., V, i, 131.

reference to this practice twice in Edward II:

Brother, revenge it, and let these heads
Preach upon poles, for trespass of their tongues[.]¹

and

Strike off their heads and let them preach on poles.²

Marlowe's reference to the hanging of the kings on the walls of Babylon might have been based on hangings that took place in Canterbury while he was there as a child. At least six hangings took place there before he left for Cambridge.

Friar Stone of Canterbury was boiled to death in a cauldron exactly as Barabas was in The Jew of Malta.³ Favorites of Elizabeth were thrown into the Tower if they refused to be completely dependent upon her, and some were even executed. She could not tolerate popularity nor strength in any of her subjects. She had the Earl of Essex executed because he had become too powerful for her. The hem of Elizabeth's garments was on the level with her subjects' lips.

But both Tamburlaine and Elizabeth were quite human. In spite of all his blood and thunder, Tamburlaine could stir an Elizabethan audience to sympathy with the highly

¹Christopher Marlowe, Edward II, eds. H. B. Charlton and R. D. Waller (London: Methuen and Co., 1933), I, i, 117-118.

²Ibid., III, ii, 19.

³Bakeless, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

ornamental verse with which he won the love of Zenocrate. He struck a note of pure tenderness in the scene where she died; with a new note of complete self-surrender, he pleaded:

Live still, my love, and so conserve my life,
Or dying, be the author of my death[.]¹

One cannot help sympathizing with Tamburlaine when he heard for the first time from the lips of one of his subjects that there were limits to his power:

Ah, good my lord, be patient! She is dead
And all this raging cannot make her live.²

Doctor Faustus was as eager for power as was Tamburlaine. He, like Tamburlaine, was the one great character in the play, consumed with hunger for empire and at war with world elements. It was worth his soul to know:

I'll be the great Emperor of the World,
And make a bridge through the moving air,
To pass the ocean with a band of men;
I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,
And make that country continent to Spain,
And both contributory to my crown:
The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,
Nor any potentate of Germany.³

He enjoyed hearing Mephistophilis, an agent of the devil

¹The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, iv, 55-56.

²Ibid., II, iv, 119-20.

³The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, I, iii, 106-13.

entirely at his command, describe the regions of the earth over which they passed and over which he had control. It was a satisfaction to know that:

All things that move between the quiet poles
 Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
 Are but obeyed in their several provinces,
 Nor can they raise a wind, or rend the clouds;
 But his dominion that exceeds in this,
 Stretched as far as doth the mind of man;
 A sound magician is a demi-god:
 Here, tire my brains to get a deity!¹

When Faustus was trying to decide whether or not he should go through with the bargain to sell his soul to the devil for twenty-four years of complete power and knowledge, Mephistophilis had devils appear before him, giving him crowns and rich apparel. Could these crowns have helped Faustus decide to hand over the deed to his soul? Tamburlaine and The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus are alike in that the great character in each was filled with ambition; however they are different in that Tamburlaine stressed the success of ambition, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, its failure. Moreover, Faustus' consumming passion was for intellectual supremacy rather than for mere physical power.

The Jew of Malta did not care for world power as did Tamburlaine and Doctor Faustus. He said:

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, I, i,
 57-64.

I must confess we come not to be kings:
 That's not our fault: alas, our number's few,
 And crowns come either by succession,
 Or urged by force; and nothing violent,
 Oft have I heard tell, can be permanent.
 Give us a peaceful rule; make Christians kings,
 That thirst so much for principality.¹

He cared only for

O my girl,
 My gold, my fortune, my felicity [.] ²

However, the Jew did become governor of Malta, not because he wanted to rule but because he saw a chance to recover his fortune and to avenge the wrongs that had been done him. He expressed his feeling about being the ruler in these lines:

I am now governor of Malta; true,
 But Malta hates me, and in hating me,
 My life's in danger; and what boots it thee,
 Poor Barabas, to be the governor,
 When as thy life shall be at their command?
 No, Barabas, this must be look'd into;
 And, since by wrong thou gott'st authority,
 Maintain it bravely by firm policy;
 At least, unprofitably lose it not:
 For he that liveth in authority,
 And neither gets him friends, nor fills his bags,
 Lives like the ass that Aesop speaketh of,
 That labours with a load of bread and wine,
 And leaves it off to snap on thistle tops:
 But Barabas will be more circumspect.³

His rule was short, for by means of his own trickery he lost

¹Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. H. S. Bennett (London: Methuen and Co., 1931), I, i, 127-33.

²*Ibid.*, II, ii, 47-48.

³*Ibid.*, V, ii, 29-43.

both his position and his life. The governorship returned to the former governor, Ferneze. The last words of this Maltese governor to Calymath, the Turk, might have been England's challenge to her enemies following the defeat of the Spanish Armada:

for come all the world
To rescue thee, so will we guard us now,
As sooner shall they drink the ocean dry,
Then conquer Malta, or endanger us.¹

As Marlowe admired Tamburlaine because he was a great conqueror, Faustus because he was a great scholar, he admired the Jew of Malta because he was a great villain. Barabas showed with these other heroes complete egoism. He was the first of many Machiavellian villains to step upon the English stage. The Florentine had applied his policies to state affairs; Barabas applied his to personal. He was ruthless, selfish, unscrupulous in the execution of his schemes. In the first two acts of the play, he was an entirely human figure, with a natural desire of revenge for the wrong done him when the Malta government made him give up all his wealth to pay the city's tax to the Turks. After the second act he degenerated into an inhuman character, indulging in unbelievable crimes. He bragged about the innocent victims that he killed. He stopped at nothing

¹The Jew of Malta, V, v, 119-22

when his heart was set on revenge. To punish the governor who had robbed him of all his gold, he had the two Christians that were in love with Abigail--one of them was the governor's son--kill each other; he poisoned all the nuns to be rid of his daughter who had deserted him and joined the nunnery; his scheming brought about the deaths of the two Friars, of the courtesan, Bellamira, her servant, and his own servant, Ithamore. He managed to have killed in an explosion the whole Turkish army; and he had planned to be rid of both the Turkish leader and the former governor of Malta, but he became the victim of his own plot. He was scalded to death in the heated cauldron that he had prepared for his enemies. The reader feels sympathetic toward Tamburlaine and Doctor Faustus, but not toward the Jew of Malta. There have been Machiavellians in English politics. Had not Cromwell, for one, under Henry VIII felt that the end justified the means? Henry VIII himself has been described as Machiavelli's prince in action. Walsingham, Queen Elizabeth's right-hand man, was denounced by King James of Scotland as a "very Machiavel."

Edward II differed from Tamburlaine, Doctor Faustus, and Barabas in that he had no desire for power, for wealth, or for knowledge. He was interested only in his minion, Gaveston. Edward gave up both his kingdom and his life for him:

O Gaveston, it is for thee that I am wrong'd,
 For me, both thou and both the Spencers died!
 And for your sakes a thousand wrongs I'll take.¹

Marlowe did develop within the play, Edward II, a character that almost equalled Tamburlaine in arrogance and in the desire for power. Mortimer, at the beginning of the play, was only one of the lords who objected to the King's allowing the exiled Gaveston to return to England. It was he who formulated the plots to be rid of him and the Spencers, two other favorites of the King, and even to be rid of the King himself. He had won the affections of the Queen, and by having done so, he was named Protector when the child Edward III became king. He echoed Tamburlaine when he said:

As for myself, I stand as Jove's huge tree,
 And others are but shrubs compared to me.
 All tremble at my name, and I fear none[.]²

However, Mortimer, like Marlowe's other heroes, met disaster because he came in contact with forces outside himself, forces too great for him. "For Marlowe, warlike conquest, vast wealth, metaphysical skill, political power all end in death because the heroes reach for things that must elude the grasp even of extraordinary mortals."³ Mortimer

¹Edward II, V, iv, 41-43.

²Ibid., V, vi, 11-13.

³Bakeless, op. cit., p. 6.

expressed this philosophy of Marlowe when he said:

Base Fortune, now I see, that in thy wheel
There is a point, to which when men aspire,
They tumble headlong down[.]¹

Marlowe was so obsessed with this desire for power that it was evidenced in almost everything he wrote. It was natural that he should be, for his personal background and the age in which he lived fostered this feeling. Marlowe's desire for power was the desire of the gentry and the merchant class to rise above the stations that they had occupied before the time of the Tudors. England's growth as a nation was similar to the growth of these classes within the country. It was natural, then, for her as a country to desire political, military, and naval power. By the end of Elizabeth's reign both the middle class and England herself had realized much of the power they desired. Men of the middle class were the men of importance within the country, and England was definitely recognized as one of the world powers.

¹Edward II, V, vi, 59-61.

CHAPTER IV
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND THE RENAISSANCE
DESIRE FOR WEALTH

"Midas' brood shall sit in
Honour's chair,"
Hero and Leander

The greed for wealth that was felt by Barabas, the Jew of Malta, was as characteristic of the Renaissance as was the desire for power on the part of Tamburlaine. One of Henry VII's objectives upon coming to the throne of England was to replenish the depleted treasury. This he did, and at his death England had the richest treasury in Christendom. The same was true of the treasury during part of the reign of Henry VIII. Cromwell saw to it that the treasury was well supplied, but Henry was such a superlative spendthrift that only a small residue was left at his death. Elizabeth found the finances in not so good condition, for the reigns of Edward VI and Mary had not added anything to Henry's already weak treasury; however, under Elizabeth's guidance England was soon growing in wealth.

The financial problem was the most difficult as well as the most important one that Henry VII had to face. His big problem, as it was the major problem of all the

Tudors, was to increase his revenue on the one hand without alienating the middle class on the other. This he managed to do in numerous ways. He saw that what was due him was collected. He reaped a rich harvest by wholesale confiscation of property that belonged to political offenders. He got money from the church by allowing ecclesiastical offices in his appointment to remain vacant and pocketing their revenue in the interim. His profits from the administration of justice were perhaps the shadiest of all. Two lawyers, Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley, were hired by him to search out all sorts of breaches of forgotten laws and to impose fines accordingly. This amounted to mere extortion. It was directed in main against the old nobility and served two purposes: it increased Henry's treasury and at the same time depleted the resources of his opponents. He took a keen interest in the development of trade. His steady emphasis upon the development of his resources led him, if for no other reason, to promote the interests of the moneyed classes in his kingdom. The merchants made up a large part of these classes, and the King saw that their interests were protected. The custom duties, especially on the export of wool and the import of wine, supplied at least a quarter of his total revenues. The revenue raised for wars more than paid for the wars and yielded a comfortable profit. Henry resorted at times to direct extortion from

his richer subjects. He left behind him considerable fortune, though more of it was in jewels, plate, and accounts receivable than in actual ready money.¹

Henry VIII gained most of his wealth from his break with the Roman Catholic church. Before 1536 he had the customary payment to the Pope diverted to the royal treasury. In 1536 monasteries--some 376--with an annual income of less than 200 pounds were dissolved, and their property, real and personal, was turned over to the King. Shortly, one by one the larger monasteries were done away with. These monastic confiscations brought to the King one-sixth of all the land of England, yielding an annual rental of 100,000 pounds. The business of liquidating this enormous property stretched out over the rest of his reign. Something like one thousand separate grantees paid the King approximately 800,000 pounds for their concessions. These concessions accounted for about two-thirds of the land; the other one-third was let out on lease. Henry spent all that he received from sales before the end of his reign, and it was this one-third let out on lease that was left to the crown when he died.² The passing of the ecclesiastical lands into the hands of the new owners brought about the important development of the

¹Read, op. cit., pp. 14-20.

²Ibid., pp. 74-78.

gentry.

When Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558, she was not long in restoring financial order. She restored the debased coinage of Henry VIII and reestablished English credit abroad. She saw that business enterprises within the nation as well as trade with countries abroad made progress. She especially encouraged exploration and trade with foreign countries. She chartered trading companies, invested some of her own money in exploring expeditions; and she, along with others, felt that past certain limits in the Western Hemisphere one was not bound by European trade ethics. On this basis she felt free to accept riches gained in any manner.

It was primarily in the interest of treasure rather than exploration or colonization that most Elizabethan voyages were made. It is astonishing that so proud and warlike nation as Spain delayed until 1588 to undertake an official reprisal for some of the acts of men like John Hawkins and Francis Drake who were out in search of treasure and who got it in any manner. Hawkins, at sword's point, obliged Spaniards of South America to trade with him on his own terms. On one occasion he bragged about not attacking a Spanish treasure ship, but he seized an island in Spanish

¹Read, op. cit., pp. 190-92.

territory and acted in such an arbitrary way that the Spaniards attacked him. In this manner he gained the treasure that he was after. When Queen Elizabeth, on pretense that it was contraband of war, had seized a large sum of money destined for the Duke of Alva, it became generally believed that, in revenge, Alva and the King of Spain were endeavoring to raise a rebellion in England. English cruisers put to sea in such numbers to prey upon Spanish commerce and did so much damage that the Queen, fearing to be involved in open war, issued a proclamation in which she forbade not so much the depredations of these cruisers as the purchase by her subjects of the proceeds of them.¹ Such informal warfare raged for years between Spain and England, especially in the waters of the New World. Most of England's naval power, judged by modern standards, must be regarded as illegal and won by piratical methods, nearly always at the expense of Spain.

The most famous of the Elizabethan voyages was that of the Golden Hind, one of five ships led by Francis Drake, in a trip around the world between 1577 and 1580. Drake is supposed to have explored the Northern Pacific and the California coast beyond the farthest explorations

¹D. T. Traill and J. S. Mann, Social England (New York: Cassell and Co., Ltd., 1903), III, 650.

of any other nation. This first English encirclement of the globe brought home more treasure than any other single venture of the time. Drake seized Spanish and Portuguese ships, sacked towns, robbed private individuals, and despoiled churches. He made himself master of more gold and silver than sufficed to ballast his ships. When he returned home, Queen Elizabeth knighted him and showed him much favor. When Drake's enormities were formally brought to the Queen's notice, she was forced to make some kind of reparation. The moral effect of Drake's voyage was second only to the victory over the Spanish Armada. Drake had claimed world-wide expansion for his people and he had asserted the empire of the sea for England, or at least her right to struggle for such an empire. His voyage was followed by new schemes for definite colonization.¹

Other explorations were no less piratical than those of Hawkins and Drake. Edward Denton headed a voyage essentially piratical in 1582. The Duke of Cumberland and Sir Walter Raleigh, in 1586, were as frank pirates at heart as had ever set sail from English harbors. For many men who sailed on English voyages personal gain and love of excitement provided stronger promptings than patriotism and sense

¹Traill and Mann, op. cit., III, 651-52.

of right.¹

Exploration, along with trade, did not confine itself to the Western Hemisphere; it extended in all directions. England's knowledge of the North came through her trying to find a route to Cathay; Spain had a monopoly on the southern route. Frobisher, on one of his voyages to the North, brought home what he thought was a great deal of gold. It proved to be worthless ore of some sort. England's primary interest in the South was not so much the getting into Africa as the getting around it. She did carry on an extensive trade with Alexandria and other Egyptian cities as well as with other cities that bordered the Mediterranean. England's great wealth came from the East and from the West, sections of the world about which stories of fabulous wealth were told and from which fabulous wealth came.

Marlowe portrays in The Jew of Malta the desire for and the gaining of this wealth by means equally as just and equally as unjust as those means used during the Renaissance. Barabas, the Jew of Malta, probably had his prototype in one of two Jews who lived during the time of Marlowe. Some authorities say that Marlowe based his play on the life of a Portuguese Jew, Juan Michesius, who endangered most of

¹Traill and Mann, op. cit., III, 652-53.

Europe before he settled down in Constantinople in 1555 and became a friend and ally of Sultan Selim II. He plotted constantly against Christians. He was led to believe that he might become King of Cypress, and he hoped to establish a new Jewish state in Palestine. He was a man of tremendous power, surrounded by enemies.¹ Professor C. F. Tucker Brooke believes that a later Jew of Constantinople, David Passi, whose career reached its culmination in 1591, some months before the earliest extant references to The Jew of Malta, was Marlowe's source. Brooke outlines the career of this Jew and shows that it closely parallels that of Barabas.² Marlowe, no doubt, was familiar with the lives of both these men.

The Jew's desire for wealth was another of Marlowe's and his associates' desires for the infinite, though it was only for "infinite riches in a little room."³ As the play opened, Barabas appeared on the inner stage with heaps of gold before him. He was "a Merchant and a moneyed man." As he looked over his wealth, he followed in fancy his ships laden with Spanish oils, wines of Greece, Arabian wedges of gold, metal of purest mould from Indian mines, and he

¹The Jew of Malta, Introduction, pp. 9-10.

²Ibid., p. 11.

³Ibid., I, i, 37.

thought:

Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,
 Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds,
 Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds,
 And seld-seen costly stones of so great price,
 As one of them, indifferently rated,
 And of a caract of this quantity,
 May serve, in peril of calamity,
 To ransom great kings from captivity.
 This is the ware wherein consists my wealth.¹

As Henry VII had become obsessed toward the end of his reign with the mere business of accumulating wealth, so was Barabas obsessed. He thought of nothing save the getting of more and more wealth. Half his substance was a city's wealth. When he was told that a fleet of Turkish galleys were in the roads of Malta, his reply was:

Nay, let'em combat, conquer, and kill all,
 So they spare me, my daughter, and my wealth.²

When Barabas recovered part of his treasures that had been hidden in his house, he exclaimed:

O girl! O gold! O beauty! O my bliss!³

This desire for wealth, along with a feeling of strong family ties, was a jewish characteristic of Marlowe's day; in fact, it is still a characteristic of the Jew to-day.

Barabas' wealth was brought to him from some of the

¹The Jew of Malta, I, i, 25-33.

²Ibid., I, i, 150-51.

³Ibid., II, i, 54.

same ports as those touched by Elizabethan traders.

Give me the merchants of the Indian mines,

The wealthy Moor. . . .

I hope my ships
 I sent for Egypt and the bordering isles
 Are gotten up by Nilus' winding banks,
 Mine argosy from Alexandria,

.
 Are smoothly gliding down by Candy-shore,
 To Malta, through our Mediterranean sea.¹

Slave trading in the days of Queen Elizabeth was a lucrative business. Men, such as Hawkins and Drake, would capture natives of Africa, take them to South America, and force the Spaniards there to take them in exchange for their silver and gold.

Barabas himself was connected with slave trading as well as with other types of trade. When Del Basco, Vice-admiral to the King of Spain, arrived in Malta with slaves--Greeks, Turks, Afric Moors--Barabas bought Ithamore, a Turk, for one hundred crowns. One question that he asked the slave was whether he could steal. In Elizabethan times stealing was considered an art and an owner did not object to a servant's stealing so long as he was not caught. A Mr. Fleetwood in a letter to Lord Burghley in 1585 described an academy of thieves:

There were hung up two devices--the one was a pocket and the other a purse. The pocket had in it certain counters, and was hung about with hawk's

¹The Jew of Malta, I, ii, 19, 21, 41-44, 46-47.

bells, and over the top did hang a little scaring bell; . . . and he that could take a piece of silver out of the purse without the noise of any of the bells, he was adjudged a judicial nipper, i. e. a pickpurse or cutpurse.¹

When the officer explained that the worth of the slaves accounted for their high prices, Barabas asked if they had the philosopher's stone. Even in the sixteenth century people still believed that there was some formula, called the philosopher's stone, that could change base metals into gold and silver. Naturally such a stone interested Barabas. Queen Elizabeth herself encouraged men to experiment in the attempt at finding such a formula. The Pope gave a dispensation to anyone who wished to search for it.

After Act II in the play, Barabas was concerned chiefly with revenge, but his desire for revenge resulted from his having had his money taken from him by the governor of Malta. To get revenge, he brought about the death of the governor's son. He later killed his own daughter because she had deserted him in his plans. One murder led to another until finally he had his plans made for the killing of both the former governor of Malta, Ferneze, and the Turkish leader who had captured the city of Malta under Barabas' directions. When he was playing one ruler against the other, he admitted:

¹The Jew of Malta, Footnote, p. 84.

Thus, loving neither, will I live with both,
Making a profit of my policy.¹

Before he was to kill them, he planned one last means of regaining his wealth. He promised to make Ferneze governor again if he would collect from among his subjects money to repay his loss. This Ferneze did; he collected 100,000 pounds. But he knew the Jew's plans and took advantage of them. He cut the rope that let Barabas fall into the heated cauldron into which Barabas had planned that he and the Turk were to fall. One lacks sympathy for Barabas in spite of his last agonized cries: "Die, life! fly, soul! tongue, curse thy fill and die!"²

Unlike the Jew of Malta, characters in Tamburlaine were not obsessed with the desire for wealth; they were interested in wealth only in that through it they might gain the person or thing they desired. Tamburlaine himself seemed to think that his having great wealth might help win the affections of Zenocrate:

To gratify thee, sweet Zenocrate,
Egyptians, Moors, and men of Asia,
From Baraby unto the western Indie,
Shall pay a tribute to thy sire.³

¹The Jew of Malta, V, iii, 111-12.

²Ibid., V, v, 89.

³The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, V, ii, 454-57.

He promised his followers before the siege of Damascus:

Then let us freely banquet and carouse
Full bowls of wine unto the god of war,
That means to fill your helmets full of gold,
And make Damascus spoils as rich to you
As was to Jason Colchos' golden fleece.¹

Callapine, captive son of the Turkish ruler whom Tamburlaine
had used as a footstool, promised his keeper great wealth if
he would but let him escape from Tamburlaine:

We quickly may in Turkish seas arrive.
Then shalt thou see a hundred kings and more,
Upon their knees, all bid me welcome home.
Amongst so many crowns of burnished gold,
Choose which thou wilt, all are at thy command:
A thousand galleys, mann'd with Christian slaves,
I freely give thee, which shall cut the Straits,
And bring armadoes, from the coast of Spain,
Froughted with the gold of rich America:
The Grecian virgins shall attend thee,
Skilful in music and in amorous lays,
As fair as Pygmalion's ivory girl
Or lovely Io metamorphosed:
With naked negroes shall thy coach be drawn,
And, as thou rid'st in triumph through the streets,
The pavement underneath thy chariot wheels
With Turkey carpets shall be covered,
And cloth of arras hung about the walls,
Fit objects for thy princely eye to pierce;
A hundred bassoes, cloth'd in crimson silk,
Shall ride before thee on Barbarian steeds;
And, when thou goest, a golden canopy
Enchas'd with precious stones, which shine as bright
As that fair veil that covers all the world,
When Phoebus, leaping from his hemisphere,
Descendeth downward to th' Antipodes--
And more than this, for all I cannot tell.²

¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, IV, iv,
5-9.

²The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, I, iii,
27-53.

The splendor pictured in these lines outshines that displayed by Elizabeth in her annual tours to different parts of her kingdom. When she visited Canterbury in 1573, Marlowe was nine years old, and he was, no doubt, impressed by the occasion.

In 1573 Marlowe saw the Mayor and alderman go forth in their furred and scarlet gowns to meet their Sovereign, carrying a gift of thirty pounds in a scented bag. Heralds, sergeants-at-arms, trumpeters, footmen, messengers, porters, the Black Guard, musicians, bedizened courtiers, and "Walter the Jester" accompanied the Queen; and to them all the munificent city gave presents.

She attended service in the cathedral and celebrated her birthday in the episcopal palace. To the music of flute and drum all of this pageantry poured down St. George's Street, where the shoemaker's dwelling still stands--lords and soldiers, ecclesiastics, the guard, the ladies of the Court, the great Queen herself.

When at length her royal but somewhat expensive majesty departed, the city gave her another twenty pounds. The Archbishop gave her an agate salt-cellar with a diamond inset, within which were six Portuguese gold pieces, worth some two hundred pounds.¹

Elizabeth, too, used some of the same tactics as Tamburlaine and Callapine in winning some of her subjects. She allowed Sir Walter Raleigh to hold the wine monopoly of England. This monopoly brought in an income of from 800 to 2,000 pounds each year.²

¹Bakeless, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

²Ibid., p. 197.

Doctor Faustus, in The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, dreamed of the great wealth that he was to gain by his magical powers. Valdes, a magician of note in Germany, promised him that

From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,
And from America the Golden Fleece
That yearly stuffs old Philip's treasury;
If learned Faustus will be resolute.¹

Cornelius, another German magician, promised him still more wealth:

The spirits tell me they can dry the sea,
And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks,
Yea, all the wealth that our forefathers hid
Within the massy entrails of the earth[.]²

Marlowe then turned to a concrete example of wealth that could appeal to the audience, had the magicians' promises not done so. Embden, chief city of East Friesland, had considerable trade relations with England during Elizabethan times. Faustus used it as a symbol of limitless wealth.

Wealth! why, the signiory of Embden shall be mine.³
The rich apparel that the devils presented Faustus when he was wavering in his decision no doubt helped him to decide to abide by his contract with Lucifer. The apparel of Sir Walter

34. ¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, I, 1, 131-

²Ibid., I, 1, 145-48.

³Ibid., II, 1, 23.

Raleigh might have been just as appealing to men of his day. Raleigh was typical of the Elizabethan extravagance in dress. One of his costumes was of pure white satin, embroidered in pearls, with a necklace as a final touch. He is credited with one suit in which every button was made of forty pearls. He was so fond of finery that even as a prisoner in the Tower he wore "a velvet cap laced, and a rich gowne, and trunkehose."¹

This interest in fine apparel was universal in England and Marlowe showed no exception when he was irked by the dress that he was forced to wear while he was a student in Cambridge. The Italianate Englishman--the Englishman of the sixteenth century who travelled abroad, especially in Italy, and who brought home with him foreign affectations, vices, a smattering of learning, and a pretence of worldly wisdom--was especially interested in his dress. He was irritating to sober Englishmen; however, their feeling toward him was probably jealous irritation. The Italianate Englishman was exemplified in Mortimer's description of the King's minion, Gaveston, in Edward II:

While soldiers mutiny for want of pay,
He wears a lord's revenue on his back,
And Midas-like, he jets it in the court,
With base, outlandish cullions at his heels,
Whose proud fantastic liveries make such show,
As if that Proteus, god of shapes, appear'd.

¹Quoted by Bakeless, op. cit., p. 197.

I have not seen a dapper Jack so brisk:
 He wears a short Italian hooded cloak,
 Larded with pearl, and, in his Tuscan cap,
 A jewel of more value than the crown.¹

Some of Tamburlaine's and Doctor Faustus' references to explorations in search of treasures can be traced directly to enterprises of Raleigh and his friends. Marlowe was thinking of Raleigh's South American ventures when Tamburlaine lamented South America's being unconquered at his death:

Lo, here my sons, are all the golden mines,
 Inestimable drugs and precious stones,²

and

Wherein are rocks of pearl that shine as bright
 As all the lamps that beautify the sky.³

Though Raleigh had not undertaken his Guiana expedition when Marlowe wrote The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, this expedition probably had been discussed by Raleigh and his circle of friends. It must have been of Guiana Marlowe was thinking when he had Doctor Faustus say:

As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords,
 So shall the spirits of every element
 Be always serviceable to us three [.]⁴

¹Edward II, I, iv, 405-14.

²The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, V, iii,

³Ibid., V, iii, 156-57.

⁴The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, I, i,
 122-24.

Edward II pictured vividly the abuses the churches suffered during the Tudor reign in order that the treasury might benefit when Edward said of the Bishop of Coventry to Gaveston:

No, spare his life, but seize upon his goods:
Be thou lord bishop and receive his rents [.]¹

The bishop had been the cause of Gaveston's exile and for that reason Edward had him deprived of his position and all his possessions. Henry VIII used excuses even of less import than this to dissolve some of the monasteries during his reign.

¹Edward II, I, 1, 193-94.

CHAPTER V
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND THE RENAISSANCE
DESIRE FOR KNOWLEDGE

"I count religion but a childish toy,
And hold there is no sin but ignorance."
The Jew of Malta

The Renaissance thirst for power and wealth was equalled, if not excelled, by the desire for knowledge. The church, the court, and the great middle class all became interested in literature, science, theology, and, in fact, all branches of learning. Toward the end of the fifteenth century English scholars were in Italy taking advantage of the revival of learning that had begun there with Dante and Petrarch. From the close of the fifteenth century to the middle of the sixteenth numerous scholars were in Florence and Rome, and still others had returned to English universities and were teaching Greek, science, law, medicine, and Biblical criticism that the Italian Renaissance had opened up to the world. Greek and Latin masterpieces were being copied as to both style and content. Because of the new scientific developments of the sixteenth century, theology could no longer satisfactorily explain certain scientific facts. Astronomy was especially studied; it led the way in

the advance of science. People were still deeply religious, but they differed from the people of the Middle Ages in that this world as well as the world to come interested them.

Members of the great middle class, along with the courtiers, became interested in learning for the first time. The courtier had to have a "readiness of wit, pleasantness of wisdom, and a knowledge of letters" to be able to advise his prince.¹ The importance that the courtiers assumed with the centralization of power in the ruler, a marked political note of the Renaissance, made them wish to excel in branches of learning that they had formerly despised. The court became now, as the church had been, the center of learning. For the middle class learning and literature were means of advancement and improvement for themselves.² As middle-class men became wealthy, they established grammar schools, libraries, and scholarships. Some even founded colleges. St. John's College at Oxford was founded by a merchant-tailor, Sir Thomas White, in 1555. Some went so far, as did Nicholas Ferrar in his will of 1620, as to hope to found a college in "wild America to educate the wilder Indians in godliness and

¹Einstein, op. cit., p. 113.

²Wright, "The Renaissance Middle-Class Concern over Learning," p. 296.

honest trade."¹ The benefactors often prescribed courses for the endowed schools to follow. They suggested courses that were practical as well as cultural.

Men of the Renaissance were interested in the revival of ancient culture, but they were equally interested in their present, every-day problems. They turned to ancient models, not so much out of reverence for Greek and Latin, as because they found in the classics the most satisfactory expression of what they themselves were trying to express. They were not willing to accept the dogma and formalism of theology and of the scholastic philosophy of the Middle Ages. The bolder spirits, in spite of criticism and punishment, began to question the explaining of natural phenomena by merely referring to them as effects of supernatural causes and the ascribing to the devil much that resulted from natural means. This questioning and inquiring led to the establishment of important scientific facts; it also led to religious upheaval.

The Renaissance saw in England the break with the Roman Catholic church, the establishment of the Church of England, and the growth of Puritanism. Men were beginning to refuse to accept unquestioned religious teachings and to

¹Wright, "The Renaissance Middle-Class Concern Over Learning," p. 281.

try to reason out for themselves their own religious problems. They were free-thinkers, and for free-thinking they were accused of atheism. They did not deny the deity, but they did not accept the orthodox belief concerning the deity. Sir Walter Raleigh, a free-thinker accused of atheism, horrified a group of listeners by stating emphatically that he had never been able to have satisfactorily explained to him the soul, nor even God. Yet this free-thinker ended the conversation by calling for prayer.¹

This yearning for knowledge is fully portrayed by Marlowe. As Tamburlaine and The Jew of Malta show the quest for power and the quest for wealth, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus shows the desire for knowledge. In fact, Doctor Faustus showed a longing for power and wealth as well as knowledge when he demanded of his servant, Mephistophilis, that he be able

To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
To tell me whatsoever I demand,
To slay mine enemies, and to aid my friends [.]²

The Faust story is as old as the story of Simon Magus, the wicked magician who attempted to purchase divine power from

¹Bakeless, op. cit., pp. 206-7.

²The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, I, iii, 96-98.

St. Paul in the Books of the Acts.¹ Down the centuries this story has come. In the early fifteenth century it gathered around a divinity student, Johannes Faust, of the University of Heidelberg. He is described as "philosophus" and as dealing in "chiromancy, nigromancy, and the art of visions, visions in the crystal, and other acts of the sort."² His dying a wretched death served to start the story that the devil whom he had served undid him at last. The German version of this story, The German Faust Book, appeared in 1587. The English Faust Book appeared in 1592. Marlowe's Tragical History of Doctor Faustus follows the English book. He probably saw it in manuscript, for his play, most authorities agree, was first presented in 1589. Marlowe was accustomed to following his sources closely, and then the English Faust Book appeared, he found material that he could transform imaginatively and still keep the story.

Doctor Faustus must have interested Marlowe because he recognized in Faustus a nature similar to his own. Faustus had turned from a clerical to a worldly life; he was filled with those qualities of intellectual curiosity, passion for beauty and classical antiquity which were dominant in Marlowe himself. Intellectual curiosity which characterized Doctor

¹Acts xix: xix.

²Bakeless, op. cit., pp. 139-40.

Faustus is apparent throughout the play. The first scene opened with Faustus sitting in his study bemoaning the uncertainty and the miserable results which the learned professions yield at best:

Philosophy is odious and obscure;
Both law and physics are for petty wits;
Divinity is the basest of the three,
Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, vile.¹

He, like Marlowe and his associates, was yearning for the unattainable, for learning that could offer more than the learning of his, or Marlowe's, day. He was a superman as far as knowledge was concerned; he was versed in all the traditional "four faculties" of the university--theology, medicine, law, liberal arts--any one of which was a lifework for anybody except a hero of a Marlowe play. But human knowledge seemed hollow and ordinary, and nothing ordinary satisfied Faustus, or Marlowe. To gain supreme power and knowledge, Faustus bargained with the devil; he sold his soul for twenty-four years of complete power. For his soul, Mephistophilis, the devil's agent at Faustus' constant command, promised him:

Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience
Shall make all nations to canonize us.
As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords,

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, I, i,
107-10.

So shall the spirits of every element
Be always serviceable to us three.¹

Immediately upon signing away his soul to the devil, Faustus began to ask Mephistophilis questions concerning things that were probably uppermost in the Elizabethans' minds. His first question concerned hell.

Tell me, where is this place men call hell?²
Mephistophilis' answer was hardly orthodox.

Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd
In one self place; but where we are is hell,
And where hell is, there must we ever be.³

The bad angel's description of hell later in the play was probably nearer the Elizabethans' conception.

Now, Faustus, let thine eyes with horror stare
Into that vast perpetual torture-house.
There are the Furies tossing damned souls
On burning forks; their bodies boil in lead:
There are living quarters broiling on the coals,
That ne'er can die: this ever-burning chair
Is for o'er-tortured souls to rest them in;
These that are fed with sops of flaming fire,
Were gluttons and lov'd only delicates,
And laugh'd to see the poor starve at their gates:
But yet these are nothing; thou shalt see
Ten thousand tortues that more horrid be.⁴

120-24. ¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, I, i,

²Ibid., II, i, 117.

³Ibid., II, i, 122-24.

⁴Ibid., V, ii, 120-31.

His next question concerned astronomy, the science that engaged the study of a great number of men in the sixteenth century. Astronomical studies, along with the classics, seemed to have especially interested Marlowe himself during his last years in Cambridge, for the images which appear in his poetry are drawn almost entirely from classical mythology or from the stars and planets. He probably was familiar with a book in Archbishop Parker's library on astronomy by the same German Frisius whom he discussed with the astronomer Harriot in later life. Faustus asked of his servant:

Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again,
And reason of divine astrology.
Speak, are there many spheres about the moon?
Are all the celestial bodies but one globe,
And is the substance of this centric earth?¹

Mephistophilis answered by giving a professional lecture on divine astrology, expressing current beliefs of Marlowe's day.² Faustus then wanted to know if every sphere had a dominion or intelligentia, how many heavens or spheres there were, and who made the world. Mephistophilis answered all these questions except the last. When Faustus reminded him that he was bound to tell him everything, Mephistophilis replied:

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, II, ii, 33-37.

²Ibid., II, ii, 90-91.

Ay, that is not against our kingdom.
This: thou art damn'd; think thou of hell.¹

To draw his attention to hell and to keep him from thinking on God, Lucifer immediately had the seven deadly sins appear before him--pride, covetousness, envy, wrath, gluttony, sloth, and lechery. This show was followed by Faustus' request to see hell for himself. In eight days he viewed the face of heaven, of earth, and of hell. After Faustus had with pleasure viewed "the rarest things, and royal courts of kings,"² he was returned to Germany. There he answered questions about his journey and about astrology; he raised Alexander the great and his paramour before King Carolus the Fifth, and had Helen of Troy, with whom he himself fell in love, appear. It might seem to the reader that Faustus' speeches nor the uses to which he put his knowledge have marked intellectual qualities, and that even though he sold his soul, he never really gained satisfactory knowledge. Two things might explain this. Marlowe was following a source, and had he made Faustus different, he would not have been true to the original. In the second place, Marlowe was handicapped by stage limitations; it was

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, II, ii, 78-79.

²Ibid., IV, Prologue, l. 2.

impossible for Faustus to exhibit any deeply intellectual qualities on the Elizabethan stage.

Faustus did put to very foolish use some of his knowledge, such as the conjuring tricks that he played upon the Pope, the placing of horns upon the head of Benvolio, and the producing of fruit out of season to please the Duchess of Anholt, but these feats of magic, as well as some of the acts of Mephistophilis and Lucifer, charmed the Elizabethans. They still believed that the devil and magic were closely connected. To them the devil was a very real person. Some spectators even went so far as to see an extra actor on the stage during the staging of Doctor Faustus and to them this person could have been no one other than the devil himself.

The sixteenth century brought about a marked revival of those beliefs and reasonings concerning the influence of the stars upon human affairs. Scholars, scientists, and statesmen were engaged in the constant study of astrology; its guidance was sought in all important affairs of life. The study of astronomy was required of advanced students at Cambridge while Marlowe was there. He must have been an apt pupil in this science for his plays are filled with astronomical references. Edward II cried out:

O day! the last of all my bliss on earth,
Centre of all my misfortune! O my stars!¹

Tamburlaine used a surprising number of references concerning the stars that controlled his destiny; Doctor Faustus did the same thing. However, the stars smiled on Tamburlaine, but not on Faustus. Faustus realized the helplessness of his state when it was time for the devil to claim his soul, for he said:

You stars that reigned at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell [.]²

Not only the phase of astronomy concerning the control of the stars over one's destiny was mentioned in The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, but the beauty of the heavens and the eagerness to know more about astrology were brought out in the play. It was the view of the heavens as much as anything else that made Faustus almost turn from his pact with the devil. He complained to Mephistophilis:

When I behold the heavens, then I repent,
And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,
Because thou has depriv'd me of those joys.³

When Faustus returned home to Germany after he had seen the face of heaven, of earth, and of hell, his friends and nearest

¹Edward II, IV, vi, 61-62.

²The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, V, ii, 161-62.

³Ibid., II, ii, 1-3.

companions congratulated him,

And in their conference of what befell,
Touching his journey through the world and air,
They put forth questions of astrology,
Which Faustus answer'd with such learned skill
As they admir'd and wonder'd at his wit.¹

The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus was one of Marlowe's most popular plays with the theater-going public, but it was the play to which the Puritans most seriously objected. They objected to all plays but to this one in particular. Its ascribing all power to the devil was naturally odious to them. Its making light of the Pope and his powers and the critical passages concerning religion were objected to by Catholic and Protestant as well, and helped confirm the rumors that Marlowe was an atheist. He was only expressing a dissatisfaction with some of the orthodox religious practices and beliefs of his day. He and his circle of friends in their School of Atheism were accused of ridiculing Moses and the Savior, and of spelling the name of God backwards. Marlowe must have had reference to this when he had Faustus mention that one of the things within the magic circle that could force the spirits to rise

. . . . is Jehovah's name,
Forward and backwards anagrammatized [.]²

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, IV, Prologue, ll. 7-11.

²Ibid., I, iii, 8-9.

Some of the remarks of this circle were made just to antagonize their listeners and critics. For the same reason Marlowe probably included some of his critical passages. For what other reason could he have bade Mephistophilis, when he appeared in the shape of a devil,

. . . . return and change thy shape;
 Thou art too ugly to attend me:
 Go and return an old Franciscan friar;
 That holy shape becomes a devil best[?]¹

Marlowe's contempt for the idolatry of the Pope is evident in this play. All of the first scene of Act III was taken up with ridiculing the Pope. By Faustus and Mephistophilis' appearing as cardinals, the Pope was confused when the real cardinals did appear later. Because they denied knowledge of the sentence that Faustus and Mephistophilis had placed upon Bruno, a "loathed Lollard" from Germany, they were imprisoned and were to be killed if they did not bring the prisoner forth at the appointed time. That was impossible, for Faustus had sent Bruno to Germany on the back of a fury. When the Pope had dismissed the cardinals, he and the Friars sat down to a solemn festival. Faustus, who was invisible, commanded: "Fall to, the devil choke you and spare you."² He snatched away the Pope's meat and wine and then

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, I, iii, 8-9.

²Ibid., I, iii, 25-28.

slapped him. When he had finished teasing the Pope, he and Mephistophilis beat the Friars over the head and flung fireworks among them. The insolence of Faustus toward the Pope was insulting to people of all religions.

In spite of all his insolence and his contempt for orthodox religious doctrines, one cannot help seeing Marlowe through Doctor Faustus in the closing scenes. Even to the very end of the play, Faustus' conscience, in the form of the Good Angel, worked to save him. The angel continued to tell him that it was not too late to repent and to give up the "damned art" of magic. Faustus confessed his weakness, he was hesitant and beset by scruples, but he remained unreconciled. Toward the end of the play there was a strong biographical note. When Faustus said,

Ah, my sweet Chamber-fellow, had I lived
with thee, then had I lived still! but now must die
eternally,¹

Marlowe was probably thinking of his fellow students at Corpus Christi and of what his life might have been had he followed the course his scholarship entitled him to. The closing scenes of the play were filled with Biblical references, probably another Cambridge note. Faustus repented and called upon God, but it was too late. As the clock

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, V, ii,
28-29.

struck twelve on the close of twenty-four years, the devil claimed the soul that had been deeded to him. The fact that Faustus was in his essential nature a thinker and a scholar made the closing lines most poignant:

My God, My god, look not so fierce on me!
 Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!
 Ugly hell, gape not! come not, Lucifer!
 I'll burn my books! --Ah, Mephistophilis!¹

Tamburlaine, though concerned primarily with the desire for power, exhibits also the strong desire for knowledge that is found in Doctor Faustus. Tamburlaine himself was a thinker. He had a wide knowledge of geography and astronomy. He had very definite views on religion. He embodied that side of Marlowe's nature that showed a yearning for infinite knowledge as well as infinite power. He believed that Nature taught one to have an aspiring mind:

Nature, that framed us of four elements
 Warring within our breasts for regiment,
 Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds:
 Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
 The wonderous architecture of the world,
 And measure every wandering planet's course,
 Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
 And always moving as the restless spheres,
 Wills us to wear ourselves and never rest . 2

Perhaps Tamburlaine himself was versed in languages. He had

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, V, ii,
 191-94.

²The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, vii,
 18-26.

the inscription on Zenocrate's tomb written in three languages, Arabian, Hebrew, and Greek. It is known that Marlowe was well versed in Latin, and he probably knew some Greek. His plays are filled with Latin quotations, a few Greek quotations, and at least one Spanish quotation.¹ Tamburlaine's geography corresponded with the geographical conceptions of Marlowe's day of Asia, Europe, Africa, and of the New World; he was familiar with rumors concerning places, such as Australia, that were not then discovered.

An unusual number of astrological statements are found in Tamburlaine. Tamburlaine shared with people of the Renaissance the belief that the stars controlled one's destiny. In trying to win the love of Zenocrate, he assured her that she was worth more to him than the Persian crown that the stars had promised him at his birth:

Thy person is worth more to Tamburlaine
Than the possession of the Persian crown,
Which gracious stars have promis'd at my birth.²

When Orcanes, King of Natolia, threatened to kill him, Tamburlaine warned him of the fruitlessness of his attempt:

Villain, the shepherd's issue, at whose birth
Heaven did afford a gracious aspect,
And join'd the stars that shall be opposite

¹The Jew of Malta, II, i, 39.

²The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, I, ii,
90-92.

Even till the dissolution of the world,
And never meant to make a conqueror
So famous as is mighty Tamburlaine[.]¹

Many similar statements may be found, all to the effect that the stars smiled on his birth.

Tamburlaine referred to the moon, the sun, and the other planets and spheres. Especially are there many references to the moon by the term Cynthia. After the Spanish Armada, numerous references appeared in literature referring to Queen Elizabeth as Cynthia, Goddess of the Sea. This concept satisfied the feeling of English patriotism. Marlowe did not refer to the Queen directly, but some of his uses of the word Cynthia might have been indirect compliments. He used the term especially in Tamburlaine and in Hero and Leander. He might have meant to compliment Elizabeth indirectly in the following lines:

Apollo, Cynthia, and the ceaseless lamps
That gently look'd upon this loathsome earth,²

and

which here appears as full
As rays of Cynthia to the clearest sight[.]³

Marlowe's scientific knowledge extended into the

¹The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, III, v, 79-84.

²Ibid., II, iv, 18-19.

³Ibid., II, iii, 29-30.

field of physiology, but his knowledge of physiology was not so extensive as his knowledge of the more abstract sciences. One finds in his works only academic knowledge derived ultimately from Aristotle and showing no recognition of the advanced discoveries of his age. More physiological descriptions appear in Tamburlaine than in any other of his plays. When one of the characters in Tamburlaine said,

I cannot live.
I feel my liver pierc'd and all my veins,
That there begin and nourish every part,¹

he showed that Marlowe, like most other men of his day, was not familiar with the circulatory system of the blood established by Servetus in the sixteenth century.

Passages from Tamburlaine brought the first charges of atheism against Marlowe. He criticized both the Christian and Mohammedan religions. When Sigismund, King of Hungary, felt that the breaking of the treaty with the Mohammedan, Orcanes, would benefit him, he broke it upon the grounds that

. . . . with such infidels
In whom no faith nor true religion rests,
We are not bound to these accomplishments
The holy laws of Christendom enjoin [.]²

With this act, Marlowe had an opportunity to express probably his opinion of the Christians:

¹The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, III, iv, 5-7.

²Ibid., II, i, 33-36.

Can there be such deceit in Christians,
 Or treason in the fleshly heart of man,
 Whose shape is figure of the highest God?
 Then, if there be a Christ, as Christians say,
 But in their deeds deny him for their Christ,
 If he be son to everlasting Jove,
 And hath the power of his outstretched arm,
 If he be jealous of his name and honour
 As is our holy prophet Mohamet,
 Take here these papers as our sacrifice
 And witness of thy servant's perjury!¹

Marlowe put to scorn the Mohammedan religion when the Prophet failed to avenge the death of millions of his subjects at the hands of Tamburlaine. After Tamburlaine had captured the city of Babylon, killed all the citizens, and burned the Turkish Alcaron, he said:

In vain, I see, men worship Mohamet:
 My sword has sent millions of Turks to hell,
 Slew all his priests, his kinsmen and his friends
 And yet I live untouched by Mohamet.²

Tamburlaine then addressed Mohamet himself:

Now, Mohamet, if thou have any power,
 Come down thyself and work a miracle.
 Thou art not worthy to be worshipped
 That suffers flames of fire to burn the writ
 Wherein the sum of thy religion rests.
 Why send'st thou not a furious whirlwind down,
 To blow thy Alcaron up to thy throne,
 Where men report thou sitt'st by God himself,
 Or vengeance on the head of Tamburlaine
 That shakes his sword against thy majesty,
 And spurns the abstracts of thy foolish law?
 Well soldiers, Mohamet remains in hell;

36-46. ¹The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, ii,

²Ibid., V, i, 178-81.

He cannot hear the voice of Tamburlaine:
 Seek out another godhead to adore;
 The God that sits in heaven, if any god,
 For he is God alone, and none but he.¹

Tamburlaine considered God a compelling force and almost a rival, not a source and object of love. Regardless of all Tamburlaine's irreverence, there appears in this play the most positive statement of the nature of God that Marlowe made in any of his writings:

Open, thou shining veil of Cynthia,
 And make a passage from th' imperial heaven,
 That he that sits on high and never sleeps,
 Nor in one place is circumscribable,
 But everywhere fills every continent
 With strange infusion of his sacred vigour,
 May, in his endless power and purity,
 Behold and venge this traitor's perjury!²

Not even the Puritans could have but liked this statement. There sounded faintly throughout the play a note of submission, seen especially in Tamburlaine's recognition of the necessity of death. This showed that Marlowe and his associates saw the face of universal human destiny and were filled with a sense of their impotence.³

The Jew of Malta, consciously or unconsciously, summarized the spirit of Doctor Faustus:

¹The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, V, i, 186-201.

²Ibid., II, ii, 47-54.

³Wright, "The Renaissance Middle-Class Concern over Learning," pp. 332-33.

I count religion but a childish toy,
And hold there is no sin but ignorance.¹

Although we have no proof from the play that the Jew was a scholar, we realize that he had the native intelligence characteristic of the Hebrew race. He concentrated his abilities on gaining wealth, not knowledge. Nevertheless, he was versed in geography and in science. Marlowe reviewed again the geography of Tamburlaine when Barabas followed in fancy the track of his argosies--through Persia, the land of the Samnites, Uz, Arabia, India, and Egypt.

Barabas, like Tamburlaine and Faustus, let fall numerous astrological statements. When he had lost all his wealth, he mourned:

My gold, my gold, and all my wealth is gone!
You partial heavens, have I deserv'd this plague?
What, will you oppose me, luckless stars,
To make me desperate in my poverty?²

In describing Bellamira, the courtesan, Ithamore, the slave, said: "What an eye she casts on me! It twinkles like a star."³ When Barabas was waiting for his daughter, Abigail, to appear on the balcony with his money, he saw a light and exclaimed:

¹The Jew of Malta, Prologue, ll. 14-15.

²Ibid., I, ii, 258-61.

³Ibid., IV, iv, 138.

But stay: what star shines yonder in the east?
The loadstar of my life, if Abigail.¹

Other references were made to the heavenly bodies.

In The Jew of Malta Marlowe touched upon a science not unmentioned in Tamburlaine or Doctor Faustus, that of ornithology. Marlowe was not the only writer of his day to know this science. Robert Greene was fascinated by rhetorical possibilities provided for literature by natural science.² Marlowe not only revealed superstitions concerning birds, but he showed a knowledge of their characteristics. The Jew, while poring over his gold, mused: "Into what corner peers my halcyon's bill?"³ The ordinary opinion was that the dead body of this bird, if hung up, would vary with the wind, and by that means show from what point it blew. "Birds of the air will tell of murders past:"⁴ had reference to the crane. In the following lines Marlowe combined two common superstitions concerning the raven:

Thus like the sad presaging raven, that tolls
The sick man's passport in her hollow beak,
And in the shadow of the silent night

¹The Jew of Malta, II, 1, 41-42.

²Don Cameron Allen, "Science and Invention in Greene's Prose," P. M. L. A., LIII (1938), 1012.

³The Jew of Malta, I, 1, 39.

⁴Ibid., Prologue, 1. 16.

Doth shake contagion from her sable wings,
 Vex'd and tormented runs poor Barabas
 With fatal curses toward these Christians.¹

When Barabas recovered his gold, he wanted to be rid of the raven and have in its place the lark:

And for the raven, wake the morning lark
 That I may hover with her in the air:
 Singing o'er these, as she does o'er her young.²

In plotting against Lodowick and Mathias, Barabas confessed: "Now I will show myself to have more of the serpent than the dove; that is, more knave than fool."³ Ithamore could not steal Barabas' gold because "he hides and buries it, as partridges do their eggs, under the earth."⁴ The harpy, the raven, the owl, and the nightingale were mentioned in Edward II.

It was easy enough for Marlowe to pass from the feuds of the Scythians, Turks, and Christians to those of Jews, Turks, and Christians. The third religion known to Marlowe was to suffer at his hands as the other two had. The Jew and his religion were sneered at throughout the play. Such phrases as the following characterized him and his belief:

¹The Jew of Malta, II, i, 1-6.

²Ibid., II, ii, 61-63.

³Ibid., II, iii, 36-37.

⁴Ibid., IV, iv, 65-66.

Who stand accursed in the light of heaven [.]¹

If your first curse fall heavy on thy head,
And make thee poor and scorn'd of all the world,
'Tis not our fault, but thy inherent sin.²

O fatal day, to fall into the hands
Of such a traitor and unhallow'd Jew!³

Accursed Barabas, base Jew, relent?⁴

Marlowe, too, returned to his criticism of the Christian and Mohammedan religions. Barabas excused himself for breaking a treaty on the same grounds that Sigismund had used when he broke the treaty with the Turk in Tamburlaine:

It's no sin to deceive a Christian:
For they themselves hold it a principle,
Faith is not to be had with heretics [.]⁵

Other remarks of Barabas showed his feeling toward all Christians:

Will you, then, steal my goods?
Is theft the ground of thy religion?⁶

Some Jews are wicked, as all Christians are [.]⁷

¹The Jew of Malta, I, ii, 65.

²Ibid., I, ii, 108-10.

³Ibid., V, ii, 13-14.

⁴Ibid., V, v, 73.

⁵Ibid., II, iii, 310-12.

⁶Ibid., I, ii, 96-97.

⁷Ibid., I, ii, 113.

Barabas, or perhaps it was Marlowe, let forth all his rage in this line: "Damn'd Christians, dogs, and Turkish infidels!"¹ The favorite byword of both Barabas and Doctor Faustus was "zounds," a combination of the sounds in the words, God's wounds. The numerous Biblical references in the play might have been a carry over from Marlowe's Cambridge days as well as a typical characteristic of a Jew.

Marlowe showed in Hero and Leander his mastery of mythology, but he did not express any desire for knowledge as he did in Tamburlaine, The Jew of Malta, and The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus. However, he did explain in this poem the reason for the poverty of scholars:

And but that Learning, in despite of Fate,
Will mount aloft, and enter heaven's gate,
And to the seat of Jove itself advance,
Hermes had slept in hell with Ignorance.
Yet as a punishment they added this
That he and Poverty should always kiss.
And to this day is every scholar poor .²

This intense yearning for knowledge, the venturesome curiosity of the age might be summarized in Mortimer's last words in Edward II:

¹The Jew of Malta, V, v, 96.

²Christopher Marlowe, Hero and Leander, Sest. I, ll. 465-71, The Poems, ed. L. C. Martin (London: Methuen and Co., 1931), pp. 50-51.

Farewell, fair queen; weep not for Mortimer,
That scorn the world, and, as a traveller,
Goes to discover countries yet unknown.¹

¹Edward II, v, vi, 64-66.

CHAPTER VI
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND THE RENAISSANCE
DESIRE FOR BEAUTY

"But you are fair (aye me) so
wondrous fair,"
Hero and Leander

The age in which Christopher Marlowe lived is known both as the Renaissance and the Elizabethan Age. No adjective describes it so simply as does Elizabethan. Elizabeth liked to think of herself as wedded to her people, and the union was so close that she and her subjects grew very much like each other. Her insatiable love of pleasure, her unflagging good spirits, and her zest in the enjoyment of life made gaiety and light-heartedness prevail. Her Court was gay and her Court was everywhere for she moved up and down the country, to be known and seen by her subjects. She and her people made gain and pleasure definite objects in life and sought them in earnest. They sought beauty in extravagance--in dress, in architecture, in food and drink, in the fine arts. The poetry of the age gave imaginative expression to this extravagant beauty. The themes, the descriptions, the form had the sensuous appeal that so much attracted the Elizabethans.

Marlowe satisfied, in an imaginative way, the age's

desire for beauty in his dramatic and non-dramatic works. Especially is this true of his unfinished poem, Hero and Leander. Marlowe used a stock theme--the tragic story of romantic love--and dressed it up in delightful verse, description, and dialogue. The theme itself was beautiful to Elizabethans; they never tired of hearing about love. Marlowe's poem shows evidence of classical borrowing, but the borrowing is almost lost sight of in the adaptation of what was borrowed. Hero and Leander tells the story of young Leander, dwelling in Abydos, and his love for Hero, a maiden of Sestos, of how he swam the Hellespont for her sake, and how he won her. This much of the story was borrowed but much enlarged; the rest was Marlowe's own--the long descriptions of Hero and Leander, and of the temple; the episode of Mercury, the country maid, and cupid; the first meeting of the lovers in the tower; the account of Leander's behavior in Abydos and his swimming feat. Marlowe seemed resolved to gather together all the pictorial conventions that tradition supplied and to excel all predecessors in handling them. Much of the material is irrelevant to the story, but it furnished occasion for more sensuousness.

Marlowe gave expression to the Elizabethan's conception of beauty in dress in the long description of Hero.

The outside of her garments were of lawn,
The lining purple silk, with gilt stars drawn;

Her wide sleeves green, and bordered with a grove,
 Where Venus in her naked glory strove
 To please the careless and disdainful eyes
 Of proud Adonis that before her lies.
 Her Kirtle blue, whereon was many a stain,
 Made with the blood of wretched lovers slain.
 Upon her head she wore a myrtle wreath,
 From whence her veil reach'd to the ground beneath.
 Her veil was artificial flowers and leaves,
 Whose workmanship both man and beast deceives.
 Many would praise the sweet smell as she past,
 When 'twas the odour which her breath forth cast;
 And there for honey, bees have sought in vain,
 And beat from thence, have lighted there again.
 About her neck hung chains of pebble-stone,
 Which lighten'd by her neck, like diamonds shone.
 She wore no gloves, for neither sun nor wind
 Would burn or parch her hands, but to her mind
 Or warm or cool them, for they took delight
 To play upon those hands, they were so white.
 Buskins of shells all silvered used she,
 And branched with blushing coral to the knee;
 Where sparrows perch'd, of hollow pearl and gold
 Such as the world would wonder to behold[.]¹

Hero's dress, her veil, her boots might have been the Queen's,
 for Elizabeth gave free scope to her vanity in dress. Queen
 Elizabeth was especially proud of her light red hair, and
 when it faded she wore a wig. This set the fashion for wigs,
 and all the women of the kingdom wore them. Ruffs and hoops
 were equally popular. Every inch of the fashionable dress
 was covered with slashings, quilting, and embroidery, and the
 whole affair sprinkled with a bushel of pearls and other
 precious stones. Shoes were clogged with silk of all colors,
 with birds, fowls, beasts, and antiques portrayed all over

¹Hero and Leander, Sest. I, ll. 9-34.

them. High-heeled shoes came into fashion during Elizabeth's reign, and both men and women wore them. Elizabeth liked shoes that would show off her feet to advantage, for her feet, being her most beautiful features, she made a conscious effort at displaying them.¹

Elizabeth's subjects were aware of her vain nature, and each year, especially at New Year's time, they showered her with gifts. In 1600 the bishops of the kingdom gave her 348 pounds of gold. One lord gave her "part of a rounde kyrtell of white clothe of silver, bound about with a lace of Venice gold, and 7 buttons lyke the birds of Arabia." Gifts of other lords were equally ornate.² A representative gift from one of the baronesses was "one loose gowne blacke of networke, florished all over with Venyce gold and silver lyke feathers."³ Sir Thomas Walsingham gave her "parte of a pettycote of cley-color fatten, embro' all ov' with branches of silv'."⁴ Gentlemen gave her fifteen pairs of perfumed

¹Traill and Mann, op. cit., pp. 526-28.

²John Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth (London: John Nichols and Sons, 1805), III, 133.

³Ibid., p. 134.

⁴Ibid., p. 138.

gloves, and numerous bottles of "sweet and pretious water."¹ These gifts are representative of the things she received from all her lords, bishops, earls, marquesses, countesses, baronesses, ladies, knights, and gentlewomen. The Queen returned these favors with gifts of plate.

Men's dress underwent changes as well as did the women's. Their clothes were made of bright instead of tawny colors; their sleeves, doublets, and cloaks were as ornamented as the dresses of the women. Their stockings were curiously knit, with open seams down the legs and quirks and clocks about the ankles. But it was in the hat that the Elizabethan gentleman found the place for a display of his taste. Hats were of all sizes, some with massive gold bands and others with bright colored feathers. Perhaps this explains Marlowe's intense desire for a hat while he was a student in Cambridge. Gallants covered themselves with perfume, especially civet and musk, and wore bracelets and earrings. This love of dress affected not only the upper class, but all classes of society as well.²

Architecture of the Renaissance was no less extravagant than was the dress. Houses were being made of stone and bricks, with glass windows and fantastic chimneys.

¹Nichols, op. cit., III, 141.

²Traill and Mann, op. cit., pp. 528-33.

They had complex roofs with many gables. The inner walls were of wood paneling, enriched by ornate tapestries that often pictured classical myths. These tapestries were of wainscot or painted cloth, garnished with gold, pearls, and other precious stones. At Hampton Court the tapestries were of pure gold and fine silk, exceedingly beautiful and royally ornamented. The furnishings of great houses were comfortable. Even some of the artisans and many of the farmers possessed comfortable beds and pillows. They had their cupboards filled with plate; they had spoons and platters of pewter rather than wood. The aristocrats preferred Venetian glass to gold and silver because those metals became so common after the conquests of Peru and Mexico. Even the poorer people could afford an inferior home-made glass of fern and burned stone. Sudden wealth had come to a whole country, and the whole country was tempted, like a merchant not born to riches, to use it all in an outward show.¹ Marlowe's description of the Temple in Sestos is reminiscent of a Renaissance painting. Musaeus had bestowed one adjective upon it; Marlowe gave a profuse series of mythological pictures:

So fair a church as this, had Venus none:
The walls were of discolored jasper stone,
Wherein was Proteus carved, and o'erhead

¹Traill and Mann, op. cit., pp. 542-544.

A lively vine of green sea-agate spread;
 Where by one hand, light-headed Baccus hung,
 And with the other, wine from grapes outwrung.
 Of crystal shining fair the pavement was;
 The town of Sestos call'd it Venus' glass.
 There might you see the gods in sundry shapes,
 Committing heady riots, incest, and rapes:
 For know, that underneath this radiant floor
 Was Danae's statue in a brazen tower
 Jove slyly stealing from his sister's bed,
 To dally with Idalian Ganymed:
 And for his love, Europa, bellowing loud,
 And tumbling with the Rainbow in a cloud:
 Blood-quaffing Mars heaving the iron net
 Which limping Vulcan and his Cyclops set:
 Love kindling fire, to burn such towns as Troy,
 Sylvanus weeping for the lovely boy
 That now is turn'd into a cypress tree,
 Under whose shade the wood-gods love to be.
 And in the midst a silver altar stood [.]¹

The Elizabethans were as interested in food and drink as they were in extravagant dress and architecture. They were great meat eaters and were fond of sweets. Queen Elizabeth's teeth were black, a defect the English seem subject to because of their great use of sugar. Quantities of currants, raisins, sugar, and spices were imported along with French, German, and Spanish wines. For dinner on November 19, 1576, the Queen had, for the first course, "cheat and mancheat, bere and ale, wine, mutton, chicken, larks, partridges, beafe, signett, veale, chines of beafe, cocks, plovers, veal pies, custard; for the second course, larks, syntes, partridges, feasants, connyes, pullets,

¹Hero and Leander, Sest. I, ll. 135-57.

chicken pies, tarts, fritters, butter and eggs."¹ One may think that only a queen could afford such a meal, but Gervase Markham in English Housewife described a "humble feast" that included "sixteen dishes of meat that are of substance, and not empty, or for show."²

Marlowe's chief appeal to the sensuous appetite was made in The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus. The Duchess of Anholt could think of no use to which she had rather have Faustus put his knowledge than to bring her a dish of ripe grapes out of season, even though Faustus had told her that be it the world she desired, she should have it. She requested:

I will make it known unto you what my heart desires to have; and were it now summer, as it is January, a dead time of winter, I would request no better meat than a dish of ripe grapes.³

Immediately Mephistophilis appeared with the sweetest grapes the Duchess had ever tasted. The Pope's feast evidenced sensuous appeal to the appetite. He said of one dish:

¹Nichols, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 1-2 of "Expenses of Queen Elizabeth's Tables."

²Quoted in Traill and Mann, op. cit., p. 734.

³The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, IV, vii, 14-18.

I am beholden
To the bishop of Milan for this so rare a present.¹

Again he said:

My good Lord Archbishop, here's a most dainty dish,
Was sent me from a Cardinal in France.²

After Faustus had snatched both these dainty dishes, the Pope ordered his wine brought in; Faustus snatched that too.

One ideal toward which the Renaissance Humanist was striving was physical as well as intellectual perfection. He was influenced by the Greek love of physical beauty as well as by the Greek myths. Too, there was a cult of physical beauty related to the praise of Elizabeth's beauty. Elizabeth really was not beautiful, but all good Englishmen, from her day to this, have conspired together to glorify her, even to the point of making her beautiful. Marlowe himself delighted in physical beauty. The indescribable beauty of some of his characters compelled him to use mythological parallels. The people of his day could appreciate these passages as much if not more than modern readers because most of them were familiar with Greek mythology. It was taught in the universities and more use was made of it in literature then than now. Marlowe described Leander in the

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, III, ii, 62-63.

²Ibid., III, ii, 67-68.

following lines:

Amarous Leander, beautiful and young,
 (Whose tragedy divine Musaeus sung)
 Dwelt at Abydos; since him dwelt there none
 For whom succeeding times make greater moan.
 His dangling tresses that were never shorn,
 Had they been cut, and unto Colchos borne,
 Would have allur'd the vent'rous youth of Greece
 To hazard more than for the golden Fleece.
 Fair Cynthia wished his arms might be her sphere;
 Grief makes her pale, because she moves not there.
 His body was as straight as Circe's wand;
 Jove might have sipt out nectar from his hand.
 Even as delicious meat is to the taste,
 So was his neck in touching, and surpast
 The white of Pelops' shoulder: I could tell ye,
 How smooth his breast was, and how white his belly,
 And whose immortal fingers did imprint
 The heavenly path with many a curious dent,
 That runs along his back; but my rude pen
 Can hardly blazon forth the loves of men
 Much less of powerful gods; let it suffice
 That my slack muse sings of Leander's eyes,
 Those orient cheeks and lips, exceeding his
 That leapt into the water for a kiss
 Of his own shadow, and despising many,
 Died ere he could enjoy the love of any.¹

The country maid was no less beautifully described, even
 though classical allusions were not used to the same extent:

Enchanted Argus, spied a country maid,
 Whose careless hair, instead of pearl t' adorn it,
 Glister'd with dew, as one that seem'd to scorn it:
 Her breath as fragrant as the morning rose,
 Her mind pure, and her tongue untaught to glose,
 Yet proud she was (for lofty Pride that dwells
 In tow'red courts, is oft in shepherds' cells),
 And too too well the fair vermilion knew
 And silver tincture of her cheeks, that drew
 The love of every swain.²

¹Hero and Leander, Sest. I, ll. 135-57.

²Ibid., ll. 388-97.

Marlowe described Abigail, the daughter of the Jew of Malta, as,

A fair young maid, scarce fourteen years of age,
The sweetest flower in Cytherea's field[.]¹

Tamburlaine thought of Zenocrate's beauty, not her grief, when he saw her in tears over her father's capture:

Ah, fair Zenocrate, divine Zenocrate,
Fair is too foul an epithet for thee
That in thy passion for thy country's love,
And fear to see thy kingly father's harm,
With hair dishevelled wip'st thy watery cheeks;
And like to Flora in her morning's pride,
Shaking her silver tresses in the air,
Rain'st on the earth resolved pearl in showers,
And sprinklest sapphires on thy shining face,
Where Beauty, mother to the Muses, sits,
And comments volumes with her ivory pen,
Taking instructions from thy flowing eyes,
Eyes, when that Ebena steps to heaven,
In silence of thy solemn evening's walk,
Making the mantle of the richest night,
The moon, the planets, and the meteors, light.²

Most of the images that Marlowe did not draw from classical mythology, he drew from the stars and planets. He used astrological parallels to describe some of his people. The city of Sestos was so decorated for the feast of Adonis that

. . . . every street like to a ferment
Glistened with breathing stars[.]³

¹The Jew of Malta, II, ii, 378-79.

²The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, V, ii, 72-87.

³Hero and Leander, Sest. I, ll. 97-98.

Hero's sway over the hearts of her lovers was more than the moon's over the tides:

Nor the night-wandering, pale, and watery star
 (When yawning dragons draw her thirling car
 From Latmus' mount up to the gloomy sky,
 Where crown'd with the blazing light and majesty,
 She proudly sits) more over-rules the flood
 Than she the hearts of those that near her stood.¹

Hero became so disturbed in her love that she was

. . . . like a planet moving several ways
 At one self instant [.]²

Faustus said of Helen:

O, thou art fairer than the evening's air
 Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars [.]³

Marlowe did not use mythological or scientific parallels in some of his passages. Marlowe worshipped beauty, and he felt in its presence a certain exaltation. Some of his most beautiful lines are merely expressions of his own intense emotions. His apostrophe to Beauty in Tamburlaine has never been surpassed. It did not advance the plot one bit, but it was the sort of thing that the Elizabethans loved. Tamburlaine addressed Zenocrate with:

What is beauty, saith my sufferings, then?
 If all the pens that ever poets held

¹Hero and Leander, Sest. I, ll. 107-12.

²Ibid., ll. 361-62.

³The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, V, ll, 120-21.

Had fed the feeling of their master's thoughts
 And every sweetness that inspir'd their hearts,
 Their minds and muses on admired themes;
 If all the heavenly quintessence they still
 From their immortal flowers of poesy,
 Wherein as in a mirror we perceive
 The highest reaches of a human wit--
 If these had made one poem's period,
 And all combin'd in beauty's worthiness,
 Yet should these hover in their restless heads
 One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least,
 Which into words no virtue can digest.¹

Two of the most splendid lines in English poetry were uttered by Faustus when he beheld Helen, whom he had appear before him. Overcome by her beauty, he questioned:

Is this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
 And burnt the topless towers of Illium?²

Marlowe recognized the fact that the mechanics of verse contributed to its beauty. He was one of the first writers to realize the value of sound in poetry; he was the first to realize this in drama. He put forth a conscious effort to make his poetry appealing to his audience's ear, and as a result, the very sound of his verse, if nothing else, gave it unrivalled beauty of melody. To create the effects that he wanted, he chose his words carefully, he used alliteration, repetition, and line echoes, he used

¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, V, ii,
 97-110.

²The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, V, I,
 107-108.

false rhyme rather than pure rhyme, and he varied his iambic pentameter line. Marlowe himself realized that his verse was superior, for twice he mentioned it, once in the prologue to Tamburlaine and once in the prologue to The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus. In Tamburlaine he promised:

From jiggling veins of riming mother wits,
And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
We'll lead you to the stately tents of war,
Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
Threatening the world with high astounding terms
And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.¹

In The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus he

Intends our Muse to vaunt his heavenly verse [.]²

Marlowe loved words, loved the sound and color and tone of them, and for this reason many of his place and personal names were chosen with more regard to their sound than to anything else. That was the reason why Theridamas

. . . . made a voyage into Europe,
Where, by the river Tyros, I (Theridamas) subdu'd
Stoka, Padolia, and Codemia;
Then crossed the sea and came to Oblia,
And Nigra Silva [.]³

One has only to look at a partial list of Marlowe's characters

11. 1-6. ¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, Prologue,

1. 6. ²The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, Prologue,

81-85. ³The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, I, vi,

in some of his plays to realize that he was making an effort to use extravagant, high-sounding names--Mycetes, Theridamas, Ortygius, Usumcasane, Bajazeth, Zenocrate in Tamburlaine; Faustus, Mortina, Benvolio, Mephistophilis in The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus; Ferneze, Lodowick, Jacomo, Barabas, Ithamore, Pilia-Borza, Abigail, Bellamira in The Jew of Malta. He made much use of compound words. The following compound words appear in the first act of Edward II: Over-come, dinner-time, olive-tree, brain-sick, over-peer'd, princely-born, love-sick, taper-lights, too-piercing, marriage-day, top-flag, night-gown, light-headed, Midas-like. Such words appear with almost equal frequency in his other dramatic and non-dramatic works.

The alliterative quality of Marlowe's verse may be seen in the following quotations:

Stone still she stood, and evermore he gazed,¹

At his fair feathered feet the engines laid,²

and

Love is too full of faith, too credulous,
With folly and false hope alluding us.³

Marlowe created verbal music by the recurrence of

¹Hero and Leander, Sest. I, l. 163.

²Ibid., Sest. I, l. 449.

³Ibid., Sest. II, ll. 221-22.

certain words or clauses. It is the repetition of the name Zenocrate that created the dramatic effect in the first love scene of Tamburlaine:

My martial prizes, with five hundred men,
Won on the fifty-headed Volga's waves,
Shall all we offer to Zenocrate,
And then myself to fair Zenocrate.¹

How now, my lords of Egypt and Zenocrate?²

Soft ye, my lords, and sweet Zenocrate.³

Tamburlaine, expressing his grief over the approaching death of Zenocrate, repeated the haunting line,

To entertain divine Zenocrate [,]⁴

five times at regular intervals within seventeen lines. The same use was made of the clause,

And shall I die and this unconquered [,]⁵

in Tamburlaine's last speech to his sons.

Marlowe used very few end rhymes in his works. Most of the rhymes that he did use are false rather than pure. In

¹The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great, I, ii, 102-105.

²Ibid., I, ii, 113.

³Ibid., I, ii, 119.

⁴The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, II, iv, 17, 21, 25, 29, 33.

⁵Ibid., V, iii, 150, 157.

Hero and Leander he showed his preference for such rhymes as throne--upon, go--do, both--doth, avarice--nice, alas--was. Such rhymes may be found in all his other works.

The plasticity of Marlowe's line, its most remarkable characteristic, is the direct expression of varying moods. Marlowe grouped his verses according to sense, obeying an internal law of melody and allowing the thoughts contained in his words to dominate their form. He did not force his meter to preserve a fixed and unalterable type, but he suffered it to assume the most variable modulation, the whole beauty of which depended upon its perfect adaptation to the current of his idea. This was Marlowe's "mighty line" that met with instant success. His listeners did not realize what it was that made his works different, but they realized that there was a difference; and whatever it was, it made for beautiful verse to them just as to the modern reader. One cannot mistake the happy, carefree mood of Neptune in his infatuation with Leander as he swam the Hellespont:

He watch'd his arms, and as they open'd wide,
At every stroke, betwixt them would he slide,
And steal a kiss, and then run out and dance,
And as he turn'd, cast many a lustful glance,
And throw him gaudy toys to please his eye,
And dive into the water, and there pry
Upon his breast, his thighs, and every limb,

And up again, and close beside him swim,
And talk of love.¹

In one short speech the mood of Edward II changed from anger to misery when he heard of Mortimer's gaining strength:

Mortimer, who talks of Mortimer?
Who wounds me with the name of Mortimer,
That bloody man? Good father, on thy lap
Lay I this head, laden with mickle care.
O might I never open these eyes again,
Never lift up this drooping head,
O never more lift up this drooping heart!²

The following lines fit perfectly the rant and bombast of Tamburlaine. He was addressing Callapine who had escaped from him and who had taken up arms against him:

Villain, traitor, damned fugitive,
I'll make thee wish the earth had swallowed thee!
Seest thou not death within my wrathful looks?
Go, villain, cast thee headlong from a rock,
Or rip thy bowels, and rend out thy heart,
T' appease my wrath: or else I'll torture thee,
Searing thy hateful flesh with burning irons
And drops of scalding lead, while all thy joints
Be wracked and beat asunder with the wheel;
For, if thou livest, not any element
Shall shroud thee from the wrath of Tamburlaine.³

For sheer dramatic effect, intense agony of feeling, and metrical skill, the closing scene of The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus is one of the highest points not only in

¹Hero and Leander, Sest. II, ll. 183-91.

²Edward II, IV, iv, 37-43.

³The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great, III, v, 117-27.

Marlowe's art but in the whole Elizabethan drama. Though Marlowe built his passage on the conventional iambic, he varied it so that his meter is a perfect mirror of the agony of the damned magician's last hours. "Ah Faustus," "no, no," and "O God" have so much gasping horror in them that one can understand why Elizabethan theater-goers swore that they saw a real devil on the stage. No more emotion could be put into words than is found in Faustus' last ones:

Ah, half the hour is past! 'twill all be passed anon.
 O God,
 If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,
 Yet for Christ's sake, whose blood hath ransom'd me,
 Impose some end to my incessant pain;
 Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
 A hundred thousand, and at last be sav'd!

 O, it strikes, it strikes! Now, body, turn to air,
 Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!
 O soul, be changed into little water-drops,
 And fall into the ocean, ne'er to be found!
 My God, my God, look not so fierce on me!
 Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!
 Ugly hell, gape not! come not, Lucifer!
 I'll burn my books!--Ah, Mephistophilis!¹

Thus did Marlowe satisfy the Elizabethans' desire for beauty. They found portrayed in his works their conception of beautiful dress, beautiful architecture, beautiful people; they found their sensuous appetites appealed to. They found expressed their own emotions. The sound of his verse was no less pleasing to them than it has been to succeeding generations.

¹The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, V, ii, 168-74, 187-94.

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