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Article (Accepted Version)

Hadfield, Andrew (2021) Marlowe and Nashe. *English Literary Renaissance*, 51 (2). pp. 190-216. ISSN 0013-8312

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Marlowe and Nashe

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There is surely more to be written about the connections between Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nashe. Although there is no specific article or book-length study dedicated to the connections between the two writers, it is possible that they were close collaborators, and however we understand their productive relationship, it did much to establish the nature of literary writing in the latter years of Elizabeth's reign. A number of links are well established and generally accepted but because so little is known of their personal and literary relationship these have not been properly developed or analysed. Critics have often done no more than suggest that the two writers knew and liked each other and shared work.

A significant stumbling block has been the nature of Nashe's literary reputation. After his death many writers acknowledged the range of Nashe's achievement.¹ However, for too long Nashe has been thought of as principally a writer of prose, as Michael Drayton described him, a label which neglects the vital role he played in establishing the range and possibilities of the commercial theatre, just as Marlowe had done a few years earlier. Indeed if Drayton's description of Nashe is placed in context it becomes clear that Drayton is attempting to

¹ For a neat summary of the range of contemporary responses to Nashe see Jason Scott Warren, 'Nashe's Stuff', in Andrew Hadfield, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of English Prose, 1500-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp.204-18, at p.206. I am grateful to Rory Loughnane, and the three anonymous readers at *ELR*, whose comments improved the essay significantly, and to the audiences at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and The University of Kent at Canterbury, where versions of the paper were first delivered, for asking particularly insightful questions to the same effect.

overturn a generally accepted view of Nashe and establish him as a poet of great satirical power:

And surely *Nashe*, though he a Proser were
A branch of Lawrell yet deserues to beare,
Sharply *Satirick* was he, and that way
He went, since that his being, to this day
Few haue attempted, and I surely thinke
Those wordes shall hardly be set downe with inke;
Shall scorch and blast, so as his could, where he,
Would inflict vengeance[.]²

Nashe appears immediately after Marlowe, who is described as a poet of Neo-Platonic furor:

Neat *Marlow* bathed in the *Thespian* springs
Had in him those brave translunary things,
That the first Poets had, his raptures were,
All ayre, and fire, which made his verses cleere,
For that fine madnes still he did retaine,
Which rightly should possesse a Poets braine (105-10).

Drayton's main point is that there is more to be written about Marlowe and Nashe than most readers assume and that both have far more wide-ranging literary significance than has been acknowledged. Marlowe was not just a dramatist and Nashe was not just a 'proser.'

We know, of course, that Marlowe transformed the nature of English theatre but it needs to be recognised that Nashe was also a theatrical pioneer, who not only wrote one play, *Summer's Last Will and Testament* early in his career (1592; published 1600), but also played a role in the careers of Marlowe, Jonson and Shakespeare, collaborating with all three in one capacity or another.³ With Marlowe he wrote – or, if not wrote, then played some significant

² Michael Drayton, 'To my most dearely-loved friend Henry Reynolds Esquire, of *Poets & Poesie*', 111-8, in *The Battaile of Agincourt* (London, 1617), Sig. 2Dv.

³ The case has been made that Nashe wrote *Summer's Last Will* with Robert Greene: see Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Shakespeare: Upstart Crow to Sweet Swan: 1592-1623* (London: A. C. Black, 2014), pp.46-9.

role in recovering and publishing – *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1594); there is now almost a consensus, unusual in attribution studies, that he wrote the first Act of *Henry VI, Part One*; and with Jonson he played perhaps an even more pivotal role soon before his death, co-authoring the lost play, *The Isle of Dogs*, which was staged at the Swan Theatre, Bankside, in July-August 1597.⁴ As theatre historians remind us many plays were co-authored in this period, even if they were published with the name of one author later on.⁵ Nashe's role as a co-author indicates that we still need to think more widely about the nature of collaboration in the theatre and look not just at playwrights working together but think too about writers of prose as well as poetry helping to write and produce plays.⁶ With this injunction in mind, it is possible that Nashe was involved in other collaborations. He could have worked with Jonson on *The Case is Altered* (c.1598), Jonson's first recorded single-authored play, a work that does not fit easily into the Jonson canon, and may even have been the second author for Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (c.1592): the second of these cases will be explored below.⁷

⁴ See Andrew Hadfield, 'How Lamentable: Thomas Nashe's Dog Days', *TLS* 26 Sept. 2014, pp.14-5; Gary Taylor and Rory Loughnane, 'The Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare's Works', in Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan, eds., *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp.417-602, at pp.513-6. On the evidence for the performance of *The Isle of Dogs* see William Ingram, *A London Life in the Brazen Age: Francis Langley, 1548-1602* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp.168-90; Misha Teramura, 'Richard Topcliffe's Informant: New Light on *The Isle of Dogs*', *Review of English Studies* 68 (2017), 44-59.

⁵ See, for example, Janet Clare, 'Shakespeare and Paradigms of Early Modern Authorship', *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 1 (2012), 137-53. Of the surviving plays from the period about 18% are co-authored. The real percentage of co-authored works, given the number of lost plays, was surely significantly higher (personal communication from Rory Loughnane, based on the statistics of the Folger Shakespeare Library resource, *A Digital Anthology of Early Modern Drama* (<https://emed.folger.edu/research-resources/data#datasets>)). See also Gary Taylor and Rory Loughnane, 'The Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare's works', in Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan, eds., *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp.417-602, at pp.422-6.

⁶ For one example of the complicated interaction between writers of poetry and prose see Andrew Hadfield, 'Shakespeare, Nashe, and *The Famous Victories of Henry V*', *Notes and Queries* 65 (March 2018), 67-9.

⁷ Frances Meres, writing in 1598, lists Jonson as one of the authors who is 'best for Tragedie' (*Palladis Tamia*, Sig. OO3r), so it is unlikely that *The Case Is Altered* was his first play (I am grateful to Rory Loughnane for this point). It is my suggestion that Nashe may have been

Certainly we need to think carefully about what the relationship between Marlowe and Nashe might tell us about the nature of literary collaboration in the 1590s and how we should read the surviving evidence. It is, of course, possible that Marlowe and Nashe only seem to have been close and that there is less substance to their friendship than has been assumed. In particular, some scholars of authorship attribution are sceptical of Nashe's contribution to *Dido, Queen of Carthage*.⁸ Even so, there are many other connections between the two writers, not least Nashe's lengthy tribute to the dead writer as a friend and inspiration in his last work, *Nashe's Lenten Stuff* (1599), which indicate that the relationship is one that should be further explored.

I

What do we actually know about the relationship between Marlowe and Nashe? Park Honan in his biography of Marlowe refers to Nashe as Marlowe's 'great friend', but admits that we know little beyond making this assumption as 'there is no certain proof that Marlowe's friendship with Nashe began at Cambridge'.⁹ They were at different colleges, Marlowe at Corpus Christi (1580-87) and Nashe at St. John's (1581-86), which means they

Jonson's co-author, or played some part in its production because he often praises works with which he was associated, an argument I hope to develop in the near future. As its most recent editor, Robert Miola, has acknowledged, 'the anomalous mixture of styles and plots in *The Case Is Altered* raises the possibility of multiple authors': Ben Jonson, *The Case Is Altered* in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, 7 Vols., ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), I, p.6. For Nashe's praise of the play see Helen Moore, 'Jonson, Dekker and the Discourse of Chivalry', in *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 12 (1998), 121-65, pp.149-51.

⁸ See, for example, Ruth Lunney, '*Dido, Queen of Carthage*', in Sara Munson Deats and Robert A. Logan, eds., *Christopher Marlowe at 450* (Farnham: Ashgate), pp.13-50.

⁹ Park Honan, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp.78, 105.

could well have met as undergraduates, but beyond their proximity in the same relatively small town and shared literary interests, we have no hard evidence of a connection. David Riggs adds to Honan's comments, pointing out that Marlowe was hostile to the Harvey brothers, and, like Nashe, mocked the ridiculous prophecies of Richard Harvey who, in his *Astrological Discourse upon the great and notable conjunction of the two Superior Planets Saturn & Jupiter, which shall happen the 28 day of April 1583* had predicted that something very important would happen on that day. Unfortunately nothing did and poor Harvey became a laughing stock, as both Marlowe and Nashe noted.¹⁰ It is hardly a smoking gun, but given how significant the Nashe-Harvey quarrel was to be in defining the aggressive literary culture of the 1590s it suggests that the two men thought alike and probably had enemies as well as friends in common.¹¹

Gabriel Harvey, Richard's protective older brother, was incensed and linked Nashe and Marlowe as hostile critics of his sibling, as Virginia Stern has pointed out.¹² In the obscure, complicated and allusive sonnets which appear at the end of Harvey's *A New Letter of Notable Contents With a Straunge Sonet, Intituled Gorgon, or the Wonderfull Yeare* (1593), the author appears to be taking aim at both Nashe and Marlowe in the wake of Marlowe's death. Harvey is certainly not misrepresenting his sonnet in describing it as strange:

St Fame dispos'd to cunnycatch the world,
 Uproar'd a wonderment of Eighty Eight:
 The Earth addreading to be overwhurld,
 What now avails, quoth She, my ballance weight?

¹⁰ David Riggs, *The World of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Faber, 2004), p.174.

¹¹ On the Nashe-Harvey Quarrel and its relationship to later literary culture see Jennifer Richards, *Rhetoric and Courtliness in Early Modern Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.114-8; Georgia Brown, *Redefining Elizabethan Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.75-6, *passim*.

¹² Virginia Stern, *Gabriel Harvey: his Life, Marginalia, and Library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), pp.117-9.

The Circle smyl'd to see the Center feare:
 The wonder was, no wonder fell that yeare.
 Wonders enhaunse their powre in numbers odd:
 The fat all yeare of yeares is Ninety Three:
 Parma hath kist; De-maine entreates the rodd:
 Warre wondreth, Peace and Spaine in Fraunce to se
 Braue Fickenberg, the dowty Bassa shames:
 The Christian Neptune, Turkish Vulcane tames.
 Navarre wooes Roome: Charlmaine gives Guise the Phy:
 Weepe Powles, thy Tamberlaine voutsafes to dye.¹³

The poem looks as though it were written in the wake of Marlowe's death. The verse imitates his bombastic early style; the references to Tamburlaine and Guise namecheck his plays; and the reference to '93 as the year in which Tamburlaine promises to die surely removes any doubts.¹⁴ Harvey's point seems to be that Marlowe should be seen as a swaggering braggart, the sort of bully who does not take his mortality seriously and is constantly challenging death which eventually tracks him down and answers his boasts. This reading is confirmed when the sonnet is read alongside the poems which surround it in Harvey's volume. The next sonnet, 'Slumbring I lay in melancholy bed', contains the lines, 'Magnifique Mindes, bred of Gargantuas race, / In grisely weedes His Obsequies waiment, / Whose corps on Powles, whose mind triumph'd on Kent'.¹⁵ Again, the exact sense is hard to decode, but the Gargantua and Kent references surely suggest that Marlowe is one of a race of fools who think themselves above everyone else, imagining themselves to be fantastic giants from literature when they are really tiny, provincial fools. Marlowe, for Harvey, is more Don Quixote or Walter Mitty than the serious threat to intellectual culture he appears to imagine himself to be. The envoy to the Gorgon sonnet and the subsequent lines claim that the 'hugest

¹³ Gabriel Harvey, *A New Letter of Notable Contents With a Straunge Sonet, Intituled Gorgon, or the Wonderfull Yeare* (London, 1593), Sig. D3r.

¹⁴ It is also possible that Harvey has in mind some of Sir Philip Sidney's sonnets which list political events, such as *Astrophil and Stella* sonnet 30. Nashe had written the preface for Thomas Newton's pirated edition which was published in 1591.

¹⁵ Harvey, *New Letter*, Sig. D3v.

miracle is left behind, / The second Shakerley Rash-Swash to binde' and 'is that Gargantua minde, / Conquerd, and left no Scanderbeg behinde? / Vowed he not to Powles a Second bile?'¹⁶ Scanderbeg might well be seen as a figure like Tamburlaine, a heroic all-conquering warrior from the East.¹⁷ In contrast, Peter Shakerley was a noted 'bragging half-wit... the joke of London for his vainglory', so that Harvey's lines indicate that 'Marlowe's bravados have succumbed to death; the second braggadocio, Nashe, is yet to be stifled'.¹⁸

There is some rather sketchy and problematic corroborating evidence to support the connection that Harvey indicates in his poetry. It is possible that Nashe actually wrote an epitaph for Marlowe, one that was attached to editions of *Dido*, but which has now been unfortunately lost. It was apparently extant in the eighteenth century when it was seen by Bishop Thomas Tanner, the scholar and antiquary, who writes of 'Carminc Elegiaco tragediae Didomis praefixio in obitum Christoph. Marlowovii' ('an elegiac song on the death of Christopher Marlowe, prefixed to the tragedy of Dido'), as well as Thomas Warton who told Edmund Malone that it was 'inserted immediately after the title page', which suggests that the poem was printed on a single leaf and inserted in some copies but not others.¹⁹ In writing of 'Magnifique Mindes, bred of Gargantuas race, / In grisely weedes His Obsequies waiment', is Harvey demonstrating that he also saw Nashe's poem or, at least, knew of its existence? Or was it a later forgery?

However we read Harvey's obscure and opaque testimony his sonnet indicates that Marlowe and Nashe were already connected by other writers, and perhaps in the public mind,

¹⁶ Harvey, *New Letter*, Sig. D3r-v.

¹⁷ George Casriot, known as Scanderbeg (1405-68), was an Albanian military commander who fought for both the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic.

¹⁸ Stern, *Harvey*, p.117.

¹⁹ Tucker Brooke, 'The Marlowe Canon', *PMLA* 37 (1922), 367-417, at p.369; Charles Nicholl, *A Cup of News the Life of Thomas Nashe* (London: Routledge, 1984), p.167. H. J. Oliver is skeptical of the elegy's existence: Christopher Marlowe, *Dido Queen of Carthage and The Massacre at Paris*, ed. H. J. Oliver (London: Methuen, 1968), introduction, p.xxi.

at the time of Marlowe's death, something that Nashe was keen to support and develop in his own writings, through the elegy (assuming that it did exist) and his words about Marlowe in *Nashe's Lenten Stuff* where he retells the story of Hero and Leander 'of whome divine Musaeus sung, and a diuiner Muse than him, Kit Marlow?'²⁰ Not only does he praise Marlowe as greater than the legendary Greek polymath, Musaeus of Athens, renowned as a poet, philosopher, historian, musician, and prophet, but uses the familiar diminutive of his name to register their friendship. Nashe is the first to refer to Marlowe as 'Kit' rather than 'Christopher' in print, an indication of the close relationship between the two which he wanted to highlight in his writing.²¹

Furthermore, it is likely, as many have argued, that Nashe also pays tribute to his dead friend in a number of places, notably in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, a work which appeared in the wake of Marlowe's murder. On his travels Nashe's protagonist, the anti-hero, Jack Wilton, provides a long account of the merits of Pietro Aretino soon after he enters Italy. Jack writes that

It was one of the wittiest knaves that ever God made. If out of so base a thing as inke there may be extracted a spirite, he writ with nought but the spirite of inke, and his stile was the spiritualtie of artes, and nothing else, where as all others of his age were but the lay temporalitie of inkhorne tearmes. For in deede they were meere temporizers, & no better. His penne was sharpe pointed like ponyard. No leafe he wrote on, but was like a burning glasse to sette on fire all his readers. With more than musket shot did he charge his quill, where he meant to inveigh. No one houre but he sent a whole legion of devils into some heard of swine or other. ... He was no timerous servile flatterer of the commonwealth wherein he lived. His tongue and his invention were foreborne, what they thought they would confidently vtter. Princes hee sparde not, that in the least point transgrest. His life he contemned in comparison of the libertie of speech. ... Singularly hath hee commented of the humanity of Christ. ... If lascivious he were, he may answere with Ovid ... My lyfe is chast though wanton be my verse.²²

²⁰ Thomas Nashe, *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, 5 Vols., ed. R. B. McKerrow, rev. F. P. Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), III, p.195.

²¹ John Taylor, the water poet, refers to 'Kit Marlowe' in his *A Brown Dozen of Drunkards* (London, 1648), Sig. C2r, in a list which also includes 'Tom Nash', followed by Isaac Walton in *The Compleat Angler* (1653), Sig. E8v, referring to 'The Passionate Shepherd to his Love'.

²² Nashe, *Works*, II, pp.264-6.

Nashe praises Aretino (1492-1556), the famous free thinker, writer/artist and victim of Papal persecution, for his stout defence of liberty; his erotically-charged verse; his fearlessness; and his bold challenge to the shibboleths of received religion.²³ As many critics have noted, Nashe's representation of Aretino sounds suspiciously like Marlowe, in terms of his character, reputation, what he had done and was known for, and how his legacy was understood immediately after his death.²⁴ Charles Nicholl points out that this is a 'sidelong epitaph' for Marlowe and built on the links between Nashe and Harvey which had already been made in Harvey's writings.²⁵ However, the description might also be thought to sound like Nashe too as he also confronted and challenged authority (as well as working for it, when he was employed by the Bishops to counteract the Marprelate tracts); wrote the erotic epyllion 'A Choice of Valentines', popularly known as 'Nashe's Dildo' (which his editor, R. B. McKerrow felt obliged to label a doubtfully attributed work because it was thought to be so scandalous even though he admitted that Nashe did actually write the poem); did not flatter the rich and powerful as a rule; had a rather pointed pen and challenged his readers (as Drayton noted); and seems to have cared particularly about individual liberty and his right to write what he liked.²⁶ Furthermore, Nashe's representation of Aretino in his prose fiction,

²³ On the reputation of Aretino in Europe, as well as for Nashe, see Katharine De Rycker, 'Recycling Pietro Aretino: the posthumous reputation of Europe's first professional writer', Unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Kent, 2014; 'Commodifying the author: The mediation of Aretino's fame in the Harvey-Nashe pamphlet war', *ELR*, Spring 2019 (49.2) (forthcoming).

²⁴ See, for example, Lisa Hopkins, 'Marlowe's Reception and Influence', in Patrick Cheney, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.282-96, at p.282; Honan, *Marlowe*, pp.362-3.

²⁵ Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Faber, 2002), p.63. Nicholl argues that Nashe's response to Marlowe was complicated and he distances himself from Marlowe's atheism in *Christ's Tears Over Jerusalem* (1593) (pp.57-8).

²⁶ On the background to McKerrow's editorial decision see Andrew Hadfield, 'R. B. McKerrow, Horace Hart and Nashe's "The Choice of Valentines"', *Notes and Queries* 64

clearly serves to link him to Marlowe. Thomas Lodge referred to Nashe as the 'true English Aretine' in 1596, demonstrating that Nashe and Marlowe were seen as similar and related writers, adapting Aretino and striking Aretine poses for an English audience.²⁷

Nashe is surely conscious of fashioning himself as a writer closely linked to Marlowe, and, in deliberate and interesting ways, in carrying on his work. This was certainly a risky business, given the grim fate of Thomas Kyd, who was tortured for his links to Marlowe, suggesting that it was an important literary connection that Nashe was prepared to stick his neck out to make.²⁸ Nashe makes a significant public point of representing himself as a writer closely linked to Marlowe, exhibiting many of the same characteristics and endorsing the same values as the dead poet, a bold move given that many authors were publicly condemning Marlowe in the late 1590s.²⁹ Accordingly, the evidence is conspicuously one sided. Marlowe has left us with nothing of his feelings for or relationship with Nashe, while Nashe has carefully placed thoughts, ideas and hints about Marlowe in his published works. The passage from *The Unfortunate Traveller* could well be evidence of a recollected close relationship; or it may be an invented, exaggerated, or falsified reference which Nashe used to his advantage, knowing that he could assume the mantle of Aretino and Marlowe without fear of challenge, as well as assuming that hostile opponents like Gabriel Harvey would be all too pleased to continue to make the connections. Print was still a relatively new medium at

(March 2017), 154-5. On the other links between Nashe and Aretino see Neil Rhodes, *Elizabethan Grotesque* (London: Routledge, 1980), pp.26-36.

²⁷ Thomas Lodge, *Wits Miserie, and the Worlds Madnesse Discovering the Devils Incarnat of this Age* (London, 1596), Sig. Ilr. It is possible that Lodge has *The Unfortunate Traveller* in mind, asserting that it was Nashe (not Marlowe) who was the true English Aretine, but this is, again, speculation.

²⁸ Nicholl, *Reckoning*, p.42, *passim*.

²⁹ Authors who condemned Marlowe include Thomas Beard, *The Theatre of Gods Judgement* (1597), pp.146-7; William Rankin, *Seauen Satyres* (1598), p.17; Meres, *Palladis Tamia*, pp.286-7; William Vaughan, *The Golden Grove* (1600), Sigs. C4v-C5r (I owe these references to Rory Loughnane). See also Honan, *Marlowe*, pp.364-5; Russell A. Fraser, *The War Against Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp.23-4.

this point, especially if we are thinking about its ability to reach a wider readership than manuscript works. Authors realised that they could reach more readers with which they had no contact than had been possible before the advent of the mass printed book, so it was not easy to check whether what they stated was actually true and whether they did know the people they claimed to know, or were recording events accurately, as appears to have been the case when Stephen Gosson dedicated *The Schoole of Abuse* to Sir Philip Sidney in 1579 and John Haywood dedicated his *Life and Raigne of King Henrie III* to Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex, twenty years later.³⁰ Nashe represents himself as eager to take on the mantle of Marlowe, even though he is not known as a tragedian as Marlowe was, a generic shift which further highlights the significance of Nashe's manoeuvre.³¹ Whether there was genuine substance to their relationship is impossible to verify, a frustrating problem when we are trying to establish friendship and patronage networks based on printed sources.³²

II

Probably nowhere is the medium of print more problematic than when we are considering published drama. As Peter Blayney has pointed out in a justly celebrated essay, plays were printed in far greater numbers in the 1590s than they had been in the previous decade when theatre companies realised that there might be a market for them, especially

³⁰ Arthur F. Kinney, 'Stephen Gosson's Art of Argumentation in *The Schoole of Abuse*', *SEL*, 1500-1900 7 (1967), 41-54; John Haywood, *The Life and Raigne of King Henrie III*, ed. John J. Manning (Camden Society, fourth series, 42, 1991), introduction, pp.17-34. This was a strategy which appears to have been employed by Edmund Spenser on occasions. Nicholas Breton, a poet he knew, recycled a poem first addressed to Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, for Mary Houghton, the wife of a sheriff of London, which appears to have caused offence: Andrew Hadfield, *Edmund Spenser: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.316.

³¹ Meres, *Paladis Tamia*, Sig. OO3r.

³² See Richard A. McCabe, *'Ungainefull Arte': Poetry, Patronage, and Print in the Early Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp.57-72.

works which dealt with historical themes.³³ In the early 1590s very few playbooks were published and even fewer were associated with particular authors, but as the decade continued, more plays were connected to specific authors. Shakespeare's career is a particularly appropriate example as his name, absent from most of his early published plays, appears on title pages with greater frequency the closer we get to 1600, as Lucas Erne has demonstrated.³⁴ It is equally noteworthy that Marlowe's name does not appear on the title page of *Tamburlaine* published in 1590; nor was the author's name included on the title page when it was reprinted in 1593.³⁵ However, when *Edward II* was published in 1594, after his death, Marlowe is credited on the title page as the author.³⁶

³³ Peter W. M. Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', in John Cox and David Scott Kastan, eds., *A New History of Early English Drama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 383-422.

³⁴ Lucas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

³⁵ Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great* (London, 1590), STC 17425; *Tamburlaine the Great ... now newly published* (London, 1593), STC 17426.

³⁶ Christopher Marlowe, *The Troublesome Reign and Lamentable Death of Edward the Second* (London, 1594).

Figure 1: Christopher Marlowe, *The Troublesome Raigne and Lamentable Death of Edward the Second* (1594), title page.

This title page makes an instructive comparison with that of *Dido, Queen of Carthage*.³⁷

³⁷ Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nashe, *The Tragedie of Dido Queene of Carthage* (London, 1594).

Figure 2, Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nashe, *The Tragedie of Dido, Queene of Carthage* (1594), title page.

As with *Edward II* Marlowe's name is prominently displayed, an indication of his popularity in the immediate aftermath of his death. Shakespeare, by way of comparison, is named on the title page of *Venus and Adonis* in 1593, and on volumes of his poetry regularly thereafter and he was probably best known in print as the author of this poem rather than as a dramatist.³⁸

The first plays which name him, *Richard II*, *Richard III* and *Love's Labour's Lost* all

³⁸ Patrick Cheney, *Shakespeare, National Poet-Playwright* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.4, 143.

appeared in 1598 (coincidentally, when Marlowe's first named poem, *Hero and Leander*, was published). Marlowe seems to have been one of the first star dramatists whose name was blazoned on playtexts in apparent anticipation of higher sales.³⁹

The inclusion of Thomas Nashe's name on the titlepage of *Dido* has frequently troubled critics. Attribution is a difficult, fraught and complicated process, especially when dealing with an unusual author such as Nashe. Some have suggested that it is significant that Nashe is named in smaller script and below Marlowe, but this has not really won widespread acceptance and looks more like a convention to most critics.⁴⁰ Trying to establish whether Nashe was a co-author is complicated because he only wrote one extant single-authored play, *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, a work with an unusual history of performance and publication. It was first performed in 1592 at The Archbishop of Canterbury's Summer Palace in Croydon, not a normal playhouse, and then not published until 1600, perhaps after Nashe's death.⁴¹ The play was published by a canny entrepreneur, Walter Burre, who had a reputation for trying to make money out of plays which had no obvious owner and which had a potentially popular appeal. Burre was surely looking to cash in on Nashe's reputation in ways that others, including Nashe himself, may have cashed in on Marlowe's.⁴² This means

³⁹ Of playwrights for the public stage, Robert Greene, Thomas Lodge, George Peele and Robert Wilson had appeared on title pages before 1594, but not John Lyly: Database of Early English Playbooks (DEEP (<http://deep.sas.upenn.edu/>), accessed 28.3.18). I am grateful to David Scott Kastan for advice on this resource.

⁴⁰ Laurie E. Maguire, 'Marlovian Texts and Authorship', in Cheney, ed., *Companion to Marlowe*, pp.41-54, at p.44; Honan, *Marlowe*, p.99. The title-page of *Dido* alternates Roman and Italic font and has the normal inverted triangle design (with descending size of font), which indicates that the typesetting of the page dictates the printing of the names. It is worth noting that there is a similar issue in Q2 of *Romeo and Juliet*, where Juliet's name is set in italics and below Romeo's in Roman (in Q1 where they share equal billing). I owe this point to Rory Loughnane.

⁴¹ See Duncan-Jones, *Upstart Crow*, pp.45-6.

⁴² Hadfield, 'How Lamentable'. On Walter Burre see Zachary Lesser, 'Walter Burre's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*,' *English Literary Renaissance* 29 (1999), 22-43; Zachary Lesser, *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication: Readings in the English Book Trade* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.52-80.

that the sample used to determine Nashe's dramatic co-authorship is extremely small as well as atypical, preventing systematic analysis and comparison with other dramatists. The lack of any prefatory material, a marked contrast to Nashe's other works which contain long and complicated prefaces to direct the reader, suggests that the author was not involved in the production process, perhaps because Nashe was either mortally ill or already dead by 1600.⁴³

Some readers, notably the play's editor, H. J. Oliver, writing in 1968, have found a number of stylistic echoes of Nashe in particular scenes.⁴⁴ Stylometric analysis, carried out most recently by Darren Freebury-Jones and Marcus Dahl, is more sceptical of Nashe's involvement on the basis of stylistic attribution. In an important essay they suggest that there is no obvious trace of Nashe in the style of the work having carried out a number of tests including vocabulary clusters, pauses indicated in the text, and stage directions.⁴⁵ Other critics have concluded that Nashe must have played some part in the production of the text and they suggest that he may have acted as a plotter, a role we know existed, playhouses employing a writer to sketch an outline of a play that was then written by others.⁴⁶

Might Nashe have acted as a plotter for Marlowe? The case against is that *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, does not look like the work of a writer able to chart the intricacies of a polyphonic narrative on the stage. Nashe's play is more like a pageant, telling the story of the death of Summer who summons a series of summery figures, including Orion, Sol,

⁴³ Hadfield, 'How Lamentable'. In his prefatory letter to his readers in *Lenten Stuff* Nashe jokes that he cannot write any more as he is 'cald away to correct the faults of the presse, that escaped in my absence from the Printing-House' (Nashe, *Works*, III, p.152), a sign that he either was – or wanted his readers to think that he was – closely involved in the production of his books.

⁴⁴ Marlowe, *Dido Queen of Carthage and The Massacre at Paris*, introduction, pp.xxii-v.

⁴⁵ Darren Freebury-Jones and Marcus Dahl, 'Searching for Thomas Nashe in Dido, Queen of Carthage' (unpublished essay) (I am grateful to the authors for allowing me to see this essay in advance of publication).

⁴⁶ Darren Freebury-Jones, 'Kyd and Shakespeare: Authorship, Influence, and Collaboration', Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Cardiff University, 2016, p.129; John Ford, *The Collected Works of John Ford*, II, ed. Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), introduction, p.10.

Bacchus and Harvest, to cheer him up as he approaches his inevitable end, the action also punctuated by comments from the ghost of the jester, Will Somers (d.1560), most famous as Henry VIII's Fool.⁴⁷ The drama is episodic with one encounter following another and is not obviously produced by a 'plotter. However, given Nashe's reputation as a writer who often contributed the opening act of a play, which is what he tells us he did for *The Isle of Dogs* in a marginal note at the start of *Lenten Stuffe*, and, assuming the attribution is correct, *Henry VI, Part One*, we should perhaps be cautious about dismissing the hypothesis entirely out of hand, as it would appear that Nashe was involved in establishing the nature of a plays in which he was involved.⁴⁸ However, we might also note that Nashe's prose works are stylistically sophisticated but not really dependent on intricate polyphonic plots unlike Sidney's *Arcadia*, as is obvious from the equally episodic picaresque novel *The Unfortunate Traveller*, published in the same year as *Dido*. Nashe himself represented Robert Greene in *Have With You To Saffron Walden* (1596) as inferior to him as a writer 'in any thing but plotting Plaies, wherein he was his crafts master', suggesting that Nashe, never a writer given to undue modesty, had a good sense of his limitations.⁴⁹

Yet if Nashe played no role in writing *Dido*, neither contributing scenes nor plot, why is his name on the title page? There were misattributions of plays, with *The London Prodigal* (1605) and *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1609) both attributed to Shakespeare by contemporary publishers, perhaps, like Burre, eager to connect their wares to an increasingly famous name,

⁴⁷ For commentary see Elizabeth Cook, "'Death Proves Them All But Toyes: Nashe's Unidealising Show', in David Lindley, ed., *The Court Masque* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp.17-32; Sherri Geller, 'Commentary as Cover-Up: Criticizing Illiberal Patronage in Thomas Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament*', 25 (1995) *ELR*, 148-78.

⁴⁸ Nashe, *Works*, III, pp.153-4. See Darren Freebury-Jones, 'Losing the Plot: Reflections on the Thomas Nashe Symposium' (Cardiff Shakespeare, 26 May 2017) (<https://cardiffshakespeare.wordpress.com/2017/05/26/losing-the-plot-reflections-on-the-thomas-nashe-symposium/>), accessed 28.3.18).

⁴⁹ Nashe, *Works*, p.132; Duncan-Jones, *Upstart Crow*, p.48.

perhaps misled or ignorant of the truth.⁵⁰ *The London Prodigal* has not been attributed to an author with any certainty and the latter is now thought to be the work of Thomas Middleton.⁵¹ While these two cases are easily understood as examples of deliberate or mistaken attribution it is hard to believe that the same might have been the case for *Dido*. The attribution to two authors in 1594 is not just exceptional but unique, coming at a time when few plays were attributed to one author. It is therefore very unlikely to be a simple error, suggesting that, at the very least, Nashe was eager to be closely connected to Marlowe and if anyone was playing a sly game it was surely Nashe himself; and if he was able to do this he undoubtedly played some role in writing, staging or publishing the play.

The case of Marlowe and Nashe's joint authorship of *Dido* remains tantalising: hard to prove, or to disprove.⁵² What is clear is that Nashe was very keen to be associated with Marlowe, which, given Marlowe's reputation as an atheist and transgressive figure, and that Nashe had begun his working for the bishops writing pamphlets against the puritan Marprelate tracts in defence of episcopacy, should alert us to the complicated nature of alliances and belief in the early modern period. Perhaps literary alliances and judgements, or even considerations of commercial success, over-rode questions of faith and belief, especially where the theatre was concerned.

⁵⁰ Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare and the Book Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp.73-7.

⁵¹ Erne, *Shakespeare and the Book Trade*, p.73; Thomas Middleton, *The Collected Works*, ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.452-5.

⁵² Function word analysis by Brett Greatley-Hirsch and Rachel White for 'The Thomas Nashe Project', proved inconclusive.

III

There is more evidence of theatrical links between Marlowe and Nashe, equally if not more problematic, but possibly just as significant. As the noted Marlowe scholar Paul Kocher pointed out during the Second World War, there is a copy of John Leland's *Principium Ac Illustrium Aliquot Et Eruditorum In Anglia Virorum Encomia* (1589), now in the Folger Shakespeare Library, which has Nashe's signature as well as quotations from *Doctor Faustus* copied out in the same hand.⁵³

Figure 3, Nashe's signature in John Leland's *Principium Ac Illustrium Aliquot Et Eruditorum In Anglia Virorum Encomia* (1589) (Folger Shakespeare Library). Photograph by Kate De Rycker.

Leland's work was edited by the prolific author and translator, Thomas Newton, best known for his translations of Seneca, whom Nashe appears to have admired.⁵⁴ Nashe has written 'Faustus: che sara devinyntie adieu', which refers to the key lines near the end of Faustus's

⁵³ Paul H. Kocher, 'Some Nashe Marginalia Concerning Marlowe,' *Modern Language Notes*, 57 (1942), 45-9; Paul H. Kocher, 'Nashe's Authorship of the Prose Scenes in *Faustus*', *Modern Language Quarterly* 3 (1942), 17-40; Kate De Rycker, 'Thomas Nashe and the Print Shop: Looking for Clues in the Archive', *The Collation*, 20 Dec. 2016 (<https://collation.folger.edu/2016/12/thomas-nashe-print-shop/>), accessed 28.3.18).

⁵⁴ On Newton see Gordon Braden, 'Newton, Thomas (1544/5-1607)', *ODNB* (accessed 28.3.18).

opening soliloquy, ‘What doctrine call you this? *Che sara, sara*: / What will be, shall be! Divinity, adieu!’.⁵⁵

Figure 4, Nashe’s annotation in Leland’s *Principium Ac Illustrium Aliquot Et Eruditorum In Anglia Virorum Encomia* (1589) (Folger Shakespeare Library). Photograph by Kate De Rycker.

The second marginal annotation, which is rather smudged, reads ‘Faustus: studie in indian silk’.

⁵⁵ Christopher Marlowe, *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe, Vol. 2: Doctor Faustus*, ed. Roma Gill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), scene 1, lines 47-8.

Figure 5, Nashe's annotation in Leland's *Principium Ac Illustrium Aliquot Et Eruditorum In Anglia Virorum Encomia* (1589) (Folger Shakespeare Library). Photograph by Kate De Rycker.

The reference, as Kocher points out, is to Faustus's second soliloquy, which follows swiftly on from the first after the brief visit of the good and bad angels.⁵⁶ Faustus, turning to necromancy, announced how 'glutted' he is with the prospect of luxury, wealth and power, of being able to control the world as he has always wished he could, having spirits fetch him what he pleases, including gold from India, and, some lines later, being able to 'fill the public schools with silk / Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad'. The marginal comment is not an exact quotation but it definitely refers to the lines in Marlowe's play.⁵⁷

What are we to make of these annotations? Could they be forgeries? This is a relevant question as there were forgeries relating to Nashe, especially during the second half of the

⁵⁶ Kocher, 'Some Nashe Marginalia', pp.46, 48.

⁵⁷ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, scene 1, lines 90-1.

nineteenth century when he was rediscovered as a prominent Elizabethan writer and therefore a contemporary, perhaps friend of, Shakespeare.⁵⁸ One example is a signature and comment on the cover sheet of the translation of Tomaso Garzoni's *The Hospital of Incurable Fools* (1600), in a copy now held in the Special Collections at University College, London.⁵⁹

Figure 6, Inscription on the cover sheet of the English translation of Tomaso Garzoni's *The Hospital of Incurable Fools* (1600). Photograph by the author.

The inscription reads 'Thomas Nashe had some hand in this translation and it was the last he did as I hear' and is signed 'P. W.' Of course, such evidence could be of great value in establishing the Nashe canon, which is why it was produced by the famous forger John Payne Collier (1789-1883), a scholar of some considerable distinction who had the unfortunate habit of making up evidence when he had a hunch and adding bogus annotations to many early

⁵⁸ Marshall McLuhan, *The Classical Trivium: The Place of Thomas Nashe in the Learning of his Time*, ed. W. Terence Gordon (Corte Madera: Ginko Press, 2006), pp.3-4; H. V. Routh, 'London and the Development of Popular Literature, Character Writing, Satire, The Essay', in Sir. A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller, eds., *The Cambridge History of English Literature: Volume 4, Prose and Poetry, Sir Thomas North to Michael Drayton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970, rpt. Of 1909), pp.316-63, at pp.324-8.

⁵⁹ Tomaso Garzoni, *The Hospitall of Incurable Fooles* (1600) STC 11634, Ogden A585.

books. The annotation was given credence by many Nashe scholars, including R. B. McKerrow, but the extensive analysis of Collier's numerous forgeries by Arthur and Janet Ing Freeman has exposed this annotation as another attempt to provide evidence when none exists.⁶⁰ Even so, it has to be acknowledged that Collier often had insights which he built on and this particular forgery, which, does not really sound like early Jacobean English, was undoubtedly carried out because Collier suspected that Nashe may have been the author of the preface to the translation, which was signed 'Il Pazzissimo', which could be a Nashe pseudonym adopted after his work was prohibited by the Bishops' Ban of 1 June 1599.⁶¹

In contrast, the annotations in the Folger are far more likely to be genuine than the Collier forgery and have been confirmed by experts.⁶² The signature looks much more authentic than the Collier forgery of the unknown 'P. W.' and is identical to Nashe's signature elsewhere.⁶³

⁶⁰ Arthur and Janet Ing Freeman, *John Payne Collier: Book Scholarship and Forgery in the Nineteenth Century*, 2 Vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), pp.251, 1033, note 30. I am also indebted to correspondence with Janet Ing Freeman and an unpublished essay delivered at Yale in 2004 which she kindly sent me.

⁶¹ Nicholl, *Cup of News*, p.265.

⁶² See Peter Beal, 'Thomas Nashe: Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450-1700' (<http://www.celm-ms.org.uk/introductions/NasheThomas.html>, accessed 12.11.18). I am also grateful to Heather Wolfe at the Folger Shakespeare Library for checking the signature and annotations.

⁶³ See Kocher, 'Some Nashe Marginalia', p.47.

Figure 7, Nashe's signature appended to Latin verses upon Ecclesiasticus 41: 1, written as a school exercise at Cambridge, National Archives, Kew, SP 15/29, f. 130r (item 82).

Moreover, the style of compressed and imprecise annotation is more obviously in line with Renaissance practice, which, with a few exceptions, tended to work as an aide memoire rather than exposition or information for another reader.⁶⁴ Collier's forgery imagines a comment left for posterity and a declaration of a bibliographical fact ideal for a later bibliographer to find; the *Faustus* comments are designed to make a connection for the

⁶⁴ William H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), pp.3-24.

benefit of the owner of the book when he returns to it. There is supporting evidence that Nashe was interested in the Leland volume and may even have acquired it soon after it was published. He refers to Leland's book in his preface to Robert Greene's *Menaphon* (1589), the same year as *Principium Ac Illustrium* was published, indicating that it caught his attention when it first appeared. In the preface Nashe complains that few authors could write good Latin verse except for 'Thomas Newton with his *Leiland*, and Gabriell Harvey, with two or three other, is almost all the store that is left us at this houre'.⁶⁵

The comments provide more evidence of a link between Marlowe and Nashe, perhaps even, as some have suggested, that Nashe was Marlowe's co-author for *Faustus*. The case has been made most recently by Roma Gill, based on parallels between Wagner and Nashe's satirical flights of fancy. Wagner is asked where his master is by the scholars and replies

Yes, sir, I will tell you; yet, if you were not dunces, you would never ask me such a question, for is not he corpus naturale? and is not that mobile? then wherefore should you ask me such a question? But that I am by nature phlegmatic, slow to wrath, arid prone to lechery (to love, I would say), it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged the next sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a precisian, and begin to speak thus:--Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak, would inform your worships: and so, the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren!⁶⁶

It is hard to read this, I think, to use such evidence to suggest that Nashe, along with the clown actor, John Adams, 'may have directed most of the comedy scenes, but they were probably not unwilling to accept offerings from other members of the cast', as Gill claims.⁶⁷ That would seem to be pushing the evidence too hard. However, as Paul Kocher has pointed out, 'come within fortie foot' is a phrase used by Nashe in *Strange News, Have With You to*

⁶⁵ Nashe, *Works*, III, p.320.

⁶⁶ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, scene 2, lines 18-31.

⁶⁷ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, introduction, p.xxi.

Saffron Walden and *Christ's Tears Over Jerusalem*, phrases not used by other writers in the period.⁶⁸ Kocher also points out a number of other parallels, some of which are more persuasive than others, one of the more striking being the use of the pun on the devil 'Belial' as 'Baliol' when Wagner taunts Robin the clown that he 'will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away, Baliol and Belcher', the devils promptly appearing.⁶⁹ The joke has an exact parallel in *Pierce Penilesse* where Nashe writes of 'fleshly minded *Belials*', with a note in the margin glossing this as '*Or rather Belly-als, because their minde is on their belly.*'⁷⁰

Not everyone will be persuaded and the weakness of Kocher's case, as David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen have pointed out, is that there are too many single parallels which could be explained as direct echoes.⁷¹ Modern authorship analysts are much happier working with patterns of language which cannot be easily explained as citation, but are habitual, part of the particular idiom of the language user.⁷² However, we need to bear in mind that if these are simply echoes then at least one of the following suppositions must be true. Nashe must have had access to the manuscript of the play as *Pierce Pennilesse* appeared in 1592, twelve years before the first quarto of *Faustus*; knew Marlowe personally and discussed the play with him; had an exceptional memory and was able to remember specific performances of plays in impressive detail; took careful notes when he attended the theatre especially when he was watching a Marlowe play; or, they are all merely coincidences.

⁶⁸ Kocher, 'Nashe's Authorship', p.43.

⁶⁹ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, scene 4, lines 68-9; Kocher, 'Nashe's Authorship', p.19.

⁷⁰ Nashe, *Works*, I, p.201.

⁷¹ Christopher Marlowe and his Collaborator and Revisers, *Doctor Faustus: A and B Texts (1604 and 1616)*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), introduction, p.72. See also Jacqueline Stanhope Hoefer, 'A Refutation of Paul H. Kocher's Claim that Thomas Nashe Wrote the Prose Scenes in Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*', unpublished M. A. thesis, Washington University, 1955.

⁷² See, for example, Hugh Craig, 'Style, Statistics, and New Models of Authorship', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 15.1 (2009-10) (<https://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/15-1/craistyl.htm>, accessed 28.3.18); Taylor and Loughnane, 'Canon and Chronology of Shakespeare's works'.

IV

Therefore, even if Nashe is not the author of the comic scenes in *Faustus*, the evidence of verbal parallels would seem to indicate a close relationship between the two writers, and the praise of Aretino in *The Unfortunate Traveller* suggests that Nashe was eager to mark himself out as Marlowe's literary heir. The connection between the two is even more clearly laid out in *Nashe's Lenten Stuff*, a work which, as the title suggests, promotes Nashe as an author, a literary star rather like Marlowe, whose name was bound up with his work.

Nashe's great, fantastic encomium to the red herring contains two long jokey homages to Marlowe. Three red herrings are offered for sale in Rome, food which has never been available in the holy city (surely a joke about the lack of English travellers to the real Rome, something Nashe cunningly explores in *The Unfortunate Traveller*).⁷³ The Pope, eager to consume the king of fishes, is furious when his caterer neglects to purchase them and 'cursed him with bell, book, & candle'. Eventually a decaying herring is carried in with dirge and processions under the Pope's canopy, but the cardinals are repelled by the pungent odour of the smelly fish and think they are in the presence of an evil heretical spirit, a joke about the Protestant country which has brought the herring to the centre of the Catholic world. Their curses do not work and they have to agree that what they have witnessed may be the distressed soul of a drowned king in purgatory so they give the king of the fishes proper Christian burial and sing masses to help his dead soul enter heaven. The parallels to scene

⁷³ Andrew Hadfield, 'Renaissance England's Views of Rome', *Bulletin of the Society For Renaissance Studies* Vol. xxxii, 2 (Oct. 2015), pp.9-12.

seven in *Faustus* are obvious enough, especially when we note that, as Paul Kocher suggests, Nashe's Friar Pendela and Marlowe's Friar Sandalo are both names for the Pope.⁷⁴

But the main evidence for Nashe's homage is in his imaginative and bizarre re-telling of the story of Hero and Leander, a year after Marlowe's poem was published. In Nashe's version Hero becomes the red herring and Leander a ling, the deeper water fish found in the North Sea and Atlantic between Scotland, Scandinavia and Iceland. Hake was usually thought the most desirable catch but deeper sea fishing boats also caught cod, conger and ling.⁷⁵ Both herring and ling were popular fish which were often interchangeable in recipes, served with mustard, as Nashe points out at the end of his tale. It was easy to find common recipes for both to be eaten on the important fish days which William Cecil promoted to protect and encourage the industry, such Thomas Dawson's *The Good Housewife's Jewel* (1587).⁷⁶

Nashe introduces this story as one that replaces the proper history of the red herring, a tale which he asserts would require a volume as long as Holinshed's *Chronicles*, framing the story in terms of his readers in Great Yarmouth, who may not have heard of Musaeus or Christopher Marlowe. This enables him to shuttle backwards and forwards between the local and the global, but Nashe reminds his readers that what is offered them exists primarily in

⁷⁴ Nashe, *Works*, III, p.207; Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, scene 7; Kocher, 'Nashe's Authorship', pp.31-2.

⁷⁵ Maryanne Kowalski, 'The Seasonality of Fishing in Medieval Britain', in Scott G. Bruce, ed., *Ecologies and Economies in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Studies in Environmental History for Richard C. Hoffmann* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp.117-48, at p.128. See also R. C. L. Sgori, 'Piscatorial Politics Revisited: The Language of Economic Debate and the Evolution of Fishing Policy in Elizabethan England', *Albion* 35 (2003), 1-24; A. R. Michell, 'The European Fisheries in Early Modern History', in E. E. Rich and C. H. Wilson, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe: Volume 5, The Economic Organization of Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp.133-84.

⁷⁶ 'Arguments in Favour of Establishing Wednesday as an Additional Fish Day, February, 1563', in R. H. Tawney and Eileen Powers, eds., *Tudor Economic Documents*, 3 Vols. (London, 1924), II, pp.104-10; Thomas Dawson, *The Good Housewife's Jewel* (London, 1587), Sigs. A2v-A3r.

print: 'Two faithful lovers they were, as everie apprentice in Paules churchyard will tell you for your love, and sel you for your mony', the balance of the last two clauses expressing familiar cynicism.⁷⁷ Nashe lets knowing readers understand that he has Marlowe's poem to hand, mentioning that Leander lives in Adibos and Hero in Sestos, and that she was a 'Venus priest', all of which is taken from the opening three pages of Marlowe's poem, reading 'Venus priest' as 'Venus nun.'⁷⁸ Nashe then adds his own local narrative imagining their parents at loggerheads 'and their townes that like Yarmouth and Leystoffe were stil at wrig wrag, & suckt from their mothers teates serpentine hatred one against each other', referring to the fishing wars between the two towns, and making his own experience central as he was born in Lowestoft but had taken refuge in Great Yarmouth after fleeing London when *The Isle of Dogs* was banned.⁷⁹ Marlowe is celebrated but it is Marlowe conspicuously moulded into a form that Nashe controls. He picks up the lurid and knowing erotic tone of Marlowe's original, with the description of Leander's white skin which would tempt barbarous Thracian soldiers and gods who prefer hunting to love.⁸⁰ But he removes Marlowe's humorous references to same-sex desire, concentrating instead on the sublimated sexual desire of the young woman (which is also in Marlowe's poem, but by no means as prominent):

Of Leander you may write upon, and it is written upon, she likte well, and for all he was a naked man, and cleane dispoyled to the skinne, when hee sprawled through the brackish suddes to scale her tower, all the strength of it could not hold him out. O ware a naked man, Cithereaes Nunnes have no power to resiste him: and some such qualitie is ascribed to the lion. Were hee never so naked when he came to her, bicause he shuld not skare her, she found a meanes to couer him in her bed, & for he might not take cold after his swimming, she lay close by him, to keepe him warme.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Nashe, *Works*, III, p.195.

⁷⁸ Christopher Marlowe, *Hero and Leander* in *The Poems*, ed. Millar McLure (London: Methuen, 1968), sestiad 1, line 45 (p.7).

⁷⁹ Nashe, *Works*, III, p.195; David M. Dean, 'Parliament, Privy Council, and Local Politics in Elizabethan England: The Yarmouth-Lowestoft Fishing Dispute', *Albion* 22 (1990), 39-64.

⁸⁰ Marlowe, *Hero and Leander*, sestiad 1, lines 63-5 (pp.8-9).

⁸¹ Nashe, *Works*, III, p.196.

The sly voyeurism in Marlowe's poem has become conspicuously heterosexual in Nashe's version. Male readers can enjoy the sexual awakening of young women, a common theme of pornography in this period, which, of course, Nashe also exploited in 'The Choise of Valentines.'⁸²

But there is a tenderer side to Nashe's fantasy with the lovers actually wanting to change into sea creatures and being rewarded by becoming fish, something which is not obviously there in Marlowe's poem. When Leander swims off Hero is troubled that he may drown but when she does catch a little slumber towards cock-crowing 'shee dreamed that Leander and shee were playing checkstone with pearles in the bottom of the sea'.⁸³ In Marlowe's poem Leander is nearly dragged to the seabed by Neptune, a homoerotic marine encounter which mingles sex and death.⁸⁴ In Nashe's retelling the fear of a watery grave is replaced with playful pleasure, the magnetic attraction of the land where the fish live because, as he puts it in his perverse reflection on the significance of dreams, 'Hero hoped, and therefore shee dreamed... her hope was where her heart was'.⁸⁵ Hero drowns herself as she rushes into the sea when she sees Leander's corpse being washed up on the shore and is dragged under. In a parodic Ovidian-Marlovian moment Hero and Leander are transformed into red herring and ling, so that on Fridays and Saturdays they can meet at the table. Hero's nurse expires with grief and her reward is to be transformed into mustard seed, a fitting reward because 'shee was a shrewish snappish bawd, that would bite off a mans nose with an answere and had rumatique sore eyes that ran alwaies'. After death she can accompany the

⁸² Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'City Limits: Nashe's 'Choise of Valentines' and Jonson's 'Famous Voyage', *Review of English Studies* 56 (April 2005), 247-62, pp.253-8. Duncan-Jones suggests that Jonson claimed a literary kinship with Nashe similar to the one I am arguing Nashe claimed with Marlowe.

⁸³ Nashe, *Works*, III, p.197.

⁸⁴ Marlowe, *Hero and Leander*, lines 155-226 (pp.33-6).

⁸⁵ Nashe, *Works*, III, p.197.

lovers, as she did in life, linking them as an everyday condiment, so ‘that *Hero & Leander*, the Red Herring and Ling, never come to the boord without mustard, their waiting maid’.⁸⁶

Figure 10, A. W., *A Book of Cookrye Very necessary for all such as delight therein* (London, 1591), Sigs. A3v-A4r.

In recipe books, such as A. W.’s *A Book of Cookrye Very necessary for all such as delight therein*, published in 1587 and reprinted in 1591, we can see (white) herring and ling together, next to mustard, which is surely what Nashe had in mind as a fitting conclusion to his retelling of Marlowe’s story of *Hero and Leander*.

Nashe demonstrates that he was eager to take on the mantle of Marlowe, showing how he could honour the dead writer as well as promote his own – very different - literary identity. Marlowe’s transgressive retelling of Musaeus, which emphasises the pleasures of liberty and licence that could be discovered in the classics, is then retold as an absurd fable, a central feature in a work which, like so much in Nashe, is unsettling because it is hard to

⁸⁶ Nashe, *Works*, III, p.200.

gauge its register and understand how it should be read. But, of course, the very act of producing such powerful, disturbing writing was designed to remind readers what literature could do, what Marlowe had done, and what Nashe was doing through his re-reading of Marlowe. Even if we think that there is no surviving trace of evidence which definitely links Nashe to Marlowe in life, we surely need to acknowledge the younger writer's efforts to claim literary kinship with the dead poet.