

The representation of religion and politics in Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris, The Jew of Malta, and Edward II*

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Abstract

This thesis examines Marlowe's interest in the representation of European religion and politics in three selected plays. *The Jew of Malta* (c. 1590), *The Massacre at Paris* (c. 1592) and *Edward II* (c. 1592) consider various aspects of Protestant/Catholic clashes, anti-Catholic sentiment, and elaborate on Machiavellian policies during the late Elizabethan period.

The relationship between England and France is governed by many factors. Responses towards Mary, Queen of Scots and to Elizabeth's proposed marriage to Anjou can be considered part of this relationship, whereas the representation of France and the French can be assessed by exploring Marlowe's texts, Holinshed's *Chronicles* and Foxe's *Books of Martyrs*. The reaction of the Elizabethan state to Catholics is governed by mutual interest and shared benefits, and not necessarily hatred.

Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris* contains similarities and differences with two French plays written by Pierre Mathieu (*La Guisarde* 1589) and Chantelouve (*Coligny* 1575). The plays will be analyzed with reference to characters, interests, and themes. Minions will be investigated in terms of their influence on the political order. Anti-catholic sentiment is clearly demonstrated.

The Jew of Malta presents a variety of Machiavelli's thoughts, whether stated in Machiavelli's books or understood by Marlowe's contemporaries. Religious conflict between the two most prominent characters of Marlowe's play is manifested. Barabas' resistance to Ferneze is used to show the Catholic tyranny of Ferneze. Ferneze's tyranny is strongly associated with Machiavellianism, encouraging the investigation of themes such as policy, dominance, power and villainy.

Political theories in *Edward II* could be seen to have parallels in the Elizabethan court. Marlowe's interest in Elizabethan politics is apparent in the topics of opposition to the ruler and of despotism. Minions, again, are presented as causing disorder and instability, whereas Mortimer appears to adopt Machiavellian statecraft. Religious antagonism is a relatively minor theme in this play, but remains a factor in Marlowe's political thought.

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Introduction

Throughout his literary life, Christopher Marlowe wrote a number of plays which were considered his best-known works. This thesis is concerned with three of his seven plays: *The Jew of Malta*, written around 1590, *The Massacre at Paris* (c. 1592),¹ and *Edward II* (c. 1592). These will be discussed through critical and comparative analysis, conducted by exploring the political and religious circumstances of the late sixteenth century as seen through the plays. Thus, Marlowe's three plays lie at the centre of the project and each will form the subject matter of its own chapter. There are separate reasons for excluding Marlowe's other two plays, *Doctor Faustus* and *Tamburlaine*, although the former is concerned with religion and the latter with politics. First, my argument concerns Marlowe's interest in European religion and politics, while *Tamburlaine* is set in Asia and has no geographical connection with Europe, although the play does not need to be literally set in Europe in order to reflect European politics. Despite the fact that literature has no boundaries, the obstacle is that *Tamburlaine*'s religious side includes discussions of paganism and Islam, taking it beyond the European dimension of the present discussion. The reason for excluding *Doctor Faustus* is that although it is concerned with European religion, the major concern is with plays that explicitly foreground political relationships, while what distinguishes the selected plays is that they are relevant to

¹ The massacre in Paris, known as the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, took place on the 24th and 25th August 1572, when thousands of Protestants were massacred by Catholics. See Barbara Diefendorf, 'Prologue to a massacre: popular unrest in Paris, 1557-1572', *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 5 (December, 1985), pp. 1067-1091 JSTOR
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-8762%28198512%2990%3A5%3C1067%3APTAMPU%3E2.0.CO%3B2-R> [accessed 12 February 2008], p. 1067.

arguments concerning the representation of both religion and politics on the European continent.

Before the first of these chapters which discuss individual plays, starting with *The Massacre at Paris*, a preliminary chapter will examine the socio-political circumstances of the time at which Marlowe was writing. Among the many factors to be considered here will be the representation of French themes which included their injustice and hatred within the socio-political context of Marlowe's work. Such representation was problematised further by the complexity and ambivalence of the relationship between Protestantism and Catholicism and its impact on both the relationship between England and France and their perception of each other. This chapter will seek to enumerate some of the many factors governing that relationship between the two countries before a deeper textual analysis of its nature is undertaken. The preliminary chapter addresses three main issues. First, it presents Holinshed's *Chronicles* (first published in 1577) as part of an effort to define and explore the relationship between the two countries, focusing on France in relation to England, a subject which seems to have appealed to Marlowe because it touched on themes which were interesting to Elizabethans, such as patriotism and Protestant propaganda. These phenomena were of particular importance when England went to war with other countries, when it was felt that a patriotic approach was called for. Another feature of the approach taken in the *Chronicles* to Anglo-French differences is the claimed superiority and masculinity of the English.

Some of the concerns that emerge from discussions of France and Catholicism are reflected in the situation in England, and it is essential to deal briefly with the topics of treason, printing and censorship in the Elizabethan period. This will anchor the discussion

to a variety of aspects of the Elizabethan government's treatment of political affairs. The Elizabethan age witnessed military, political and religious problems such as the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572) and the Spanish Armada (1588). These problems are reflected in the literary activities of the time because state officials had to monitor anything written which could be seen as instigative, treasonous or threatening to the good of the state. The state's attempt to control what was written is related to the subject of this thesis—the discussion of Catholics—in that those writing the materials being monitored would include some Catholics, who were seen as enemies. It is obvious that the state sought to oppose what was considered offensive, so factors like censorship played a role in shaping the state's reaction to its enemies.

The third issue is the treatment by contemporary writers and polemicists of Elizabeth's possible marriage with François, Duke of Anjou, which reveals the major role played by politics and religion in the relationship between the two countries. The writings of three men are investigated in this section; these are John Stubbs (c. 1543-1591), Philip Sidney (1554-1586) and Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon (1510-1579). The discussion of the marriage proposal will provide an understanding of how such sensitive subjects were dealt with by the government, how politics were run and how censorship worked. These writers are particularly relevant to this study because the subject of their discussion (the marriage proposal) serves as one example of how sensitive cases were treated by the government. In addition, parts of Marlowe's play seem to have been influenced by John Foxe's account of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in his *Acts and Monuments of Martyrs* (1563). Marlowe may have used Foxe's text, a possible Protestant source, during the writing of his play. This is relevant in helping to show what responses to France and

the French were like. Foxe can be seen as relevant to a study of Marlowe because some of his accounts treat the same issues as Marlowe does in his play. The first chapter compares Foxe's and Marlowe's accounts of the massacre by considering how each author characterizes the key players in the event. This will give some idea of the religious and political circumstances of Marlowe's time and how some Protestants viewed Catholics. Finally, the chapter investigates another issue related to the reaction towards Catholics. Despite the trouble caused by certain Catholic enemies, some Catholics were not considered enemies of the state. An attempt is made to stress the importance of the political subtleties of that age by presenting examples from the *Calendar of State Papers* regarding contemporary attitudes towards Catholics.

The Massacre at Paris is significant in that Marlowe reflects, through his representation of contemporary France, on Protestant propaganda and on the problems between Catholics and Protestants. The play depicts the Protestant cause and reflects the religious and political implications of the late sixteenth century. This chapter of the thesis explores Marlowe's play after examining the socio-political circumstances of the age. It then compares it with two French plays that also represent the massacre and focus on religious conflict and ambition: François de Chantelouve's *Gaspard de Coligny* (1575) and Pierre Mathieu's *La Guisiade* (1589). This comparison aims to show the purpose of each playwright in writing his play.

Before moving to a discussion of characterization, we shall shed light on how Marlowe's play could be read as Protestant propaganda in comparison to the two French plays. One of the main concerns of the chapter is the character of Henry, Duke of Guise; Guise is particularly significant for his political conduct and his key role in the massacre;

in fact, he could be seen as the mastermind behind the atrocity. The question of political thinking is observed through investigating characterization. There is constant evaluation of the characters in order to reveal how they implement their political programmes. The chapter investigates how Marlowe depicts Guise differently to Mathieu. Heather Ingman has observed that ‘in a pamphlet attributed to Mathieu, *Advis aux Catholiques François* (1589), Henry (King of France) is depicted as an irreligious tyrant whilst Guise is praised as a defender of the Catholic Church’.² Ingman’s point about this early modern source illustrates how Guise is viewed differently, depending on who is writing about him. This chapter also analyzes important characters such as King Charles IX, his brother Anjou (Henry III), their mother Catherine, Navarre and Coligny. As a result, there is an investigation of how each writer employs his drama to attack the opposing religion. As for the political aspects of the play, the chapter aims to demonstrate how rulers govern their states and how their political thinking is implemented. Machiavelli’s teachings are explored, as one of the main sources of political theory within the context of the plays. By exploring these works, features such as cunning, hypocrisy and dissembling are related to Machiavellianism as part of the political thought of that age. It is worth mentioning here that Marlowe seeks to establish links between Machiavelli and Guise. Marlowe’s depiction of Machiavellianism in his drama reflects the importance of Machiavelli in the Elizabethan period.

Marlowe, Mathieu and Chantelouve all draw attention to certain weaknesses shown by characters in their plays. Such weakness is explored in the second chapter in contrast with the Machiavellian brutality that these authors believe must be implemented

² Heather Ingman, ‘A Study in Ambivalence: Pierre Mathieu’s Reading of Machiavel’, *French Studies* xxxix, no. 2 (April, 1985), p. 132.

by their characters in order to survive. The necessity of a strong ruler is stressed in the plays. The chapter identifies the features of a successful politician and considers how they are used to overcome the weak ruler; this leads to recognition of what is required in order for a successful ruler to triumph over his rivals. The example of Henry III is important in that he can be compared to Guise as someone who implements Machiavellianism. Another aspect related to Henry is the discussion of minions, which begins in the second chapter in relation to politics and is taken up again in the fourth chapter on *Edward II*, where their influence on kings is considered. In chapter two there is an attempt to establish how this influence affects political decisions and the stability of kingship. The main theme of the chapter is, however, the conflict between Catholics and Protestants, as reflected in Marlowe's play. It is important to treat characters according to their religious affiliation in order to differentiate between them, particularly in terms of how politics governs their relationships with each other. In this regard, this chapter also considers the influence of the French Protestant Gentillet and his important work *Contre-Machiavel* (1576). Although critical debate continues over the question of Machiavelli's reputation among Elizabethans and whether Gentillet had any influence on their understanding of Machiavelli, we shall consider some recent perspectives which might help us to envisage Marlowe's depiction of his villainous figures in different forms.

The third chapter examines *The Jew of Malta*, investigating in particular the two most prominent characters: the Jew Barabas and Ferneze, the Maltese governor. By discussing these characters the chapter aims to explore the political dimensions of Marlowe's representation of Catholics, who are being questioned over their treatment of others. It is argued that the Jews serve purely to represent a minority under Catholic rule

who suffer injustice as a consequence. This chapter again mentions Machiavelli, who is represented by both Ferneze and Barabas, and explores the different approaches to Machiavelli which were familiar in the Elizabethan era; in addition, there is a discussion of the idea of resistance in political terms, exemplified in the person of Barabas. Marlowe's awareness of the Jewish stereotype is interesting in that he develops the aspect of resistance in a person who himself admits that his antecedents were not military men (*JM*, I, ii, 52). Thus, Barabas' resistance signifies a challenge to the stereotype and is also a reaction to Catholic tyranny.

Another major theme of this chapter, as in the last, is Marlowe's treatment of Catholic evil, which can be seen, for instance, in many of Barabas' speeches. This treatment of Catholicism can be compared to when Protestants (Huguenots) talk about the dangers of Catholics, particularly their attempts to eradicate Protestantism in *The Massacre at Paris*. This chapter seeks to make comparisons between scenes in this play and in *The Massacre at Paris* in order to show how Marlowe develops his ideas about Catholics and their actions. Its final section concentrates specifically on Catholic religious men and their dealings with Barabas, through which a perspective is offered on some features of Marlowe's Catholics. The treatment of Barabas and Ferneze in regard to Machiavelli offers a great opportunity to understand the personality of each character. Just as Marlowe attempts to relate Guise to Machiavelli in *The Massacre at Paris*, here he uses Ferneze in a similar way. At the same time, Barabas seems to represent a different side of Machiavelli, concerned not with politics but rather with villainy. This comparative analysis of the two characters is particularly valuable because it questions Marlowe's possible reading of Machiavelli in which he represents him in both characters.

The fourth chapter elaborates in depth on the history play of Edward II. The events depicted in *Edward II* have strong political and religious implications for Marlowe, whose representation of this passage of English history has some possible parallels with the Elizabethan court. Thus, Elizabeth's favourites can be seen to be compared with Edward's favourite, Gaveston. Such a comparison gives an idea of the similarities and differences in the political roles of favourites in the two periods. Edward attempts to rule the kingdom single-handedly. He is a would-be absolute ruler whose characterization is a possible sign of Marlowe's endeavour to reflect the idea of the despotic ruler as one element of the political thought of his age. On the other hand, his failure to rule alone signals the decline of his kingdom because of his inability and weakness.

On the other hand, minions are presented as the reason for Edward's decline and downfall. The discussion of their role can be seen as a device to explore the disturbance of political stability. Brodwin states that 'Gaveston is objected to not because of his sex but because he is an irresponsible influence upon the King'.³ From that perspective, minions are important for their influence on events, not for their homosexual behaviour. Brodwin is right in his claim that Gaveston's irresponsibility leads the country to destruction because it is void of commitment and obligation. The discussion of minions, which focuses on Gaveston, is also related to that of Gaveston's social status: the peers object to him because of his rank and origins.

Furthermore, investigating Edward's personality is helpful in that his weakness allows others to implement Machiavellian schemes against him. A comparative approach

³ Leonora Lee, 'Edward II: Marlowe's Culminating Treatment of Love', *ELH*, 31, no. 2 (1964, June), p. 140.

shows parallels between him and Charles IX of France, whose weakness is similar to that of Edward. The character of Mortimer also offers a context for a consideration of Machiavellianism and opposition to a ruling monarch. The discussion of Machiavelli, then, constitutes another political dimension of Marlowe's plays. It should be noted that between Edward and Mortimer there appears Isabella, who can be seen both as a victim and as an evil influence at different stages of the play. Marlowe makes the shift in attitude between his characters obvious in *Edward II*. The play represents Machiavellianism through the character of Mortimer, whose limitless ambition is clearly manifest. Marlowe stresses this point to demonstrate political conflicts and scheming as major themes in his plays.

There is also a comparison of Marlowe's original work with a cinematic adaptation by Derek Jarman in which sexuality can be seen to take a much more central part. The justification for using this film adaptation is that the film is a good example to explore the differences or similarities with Marlowe's text. The adaptation will offer an approach made by a modern artist in which this can be compared with Marlowe. Finally, Marlowe presents anti-Catholic feeling in a limited way in this play. However, this treatment can be seen as a continuation and extension of the broad anti-Catholic tenor of his other plays.

Chapter One

Socio-political circumstances under which Marlowe was writing

1.1 Introduction

The socio-political and religious circumstances in England at the end of the sixteenth century can be examined by exploring the subject of France and its relations with England. Christopher Marlowe's portrayal of French themes, addressing religion and politics in the Elizabethan era, can be seen as an attempt to describe the relationship between England and France during this period. Many sources which appeared in Marlowe's time discuss France and its relationship with England. Some were large tomes, such as Holinshed's *Chronicles*, first published in 1577; some were literary texts. Among these writers, aside from Marlowe, was Shakespeare, who dealt with Anglo-French relations in some of his historical plays, including *Henry VI, Part One* (1590), *King John* (1596) and *Henry V* (1599). Marlowe's depiction of French themes is evident in *The Massacre at Paris* (written c. 1592) and *Edward II* (c. 1592).

In these texts, the French are portrayed in both flattering and injurious ways, but it should be noted that many of these portrayals were negative, as was the case in the writings of many English writers dealing with France. Some pessimistic portrayals may be seen more often in contemporary sources such as Holinshed's *Chronicles* than in the works of writers like Marlowe, and this reflects the variety of responses to this subject during the Elizabethan era. It is possible that Holinshed's volume may have been an influence on Marlowe's text since the treatment of the French in the *Chronicles* is also present in Marlowe's text. Marlowe may have found the content of this volume helpful in

shaping and supporting his representation of Catholicism. This may suggest how influential the Chronicles could be on Marlowe since it denounces practices by some of the French, something which fits well in Marlowe's play. Such concordance between Marlowe's play and Holinshed's Chronicles could not be overlooked considering the themes related to the French.

Religious and political differences were the main causes of conflict between these two major European states. Such conflicts included the Hundred Years War, which lasted from 1337 to 1443 and was predicated on differing claims to the thrones of the two countries.¹ Among the Kings who ruled during that time was Edward III, who is mentioned in Marlowe's *Edward II* as revenging his father's murder near the end of the play. Let us examine more specifically the period from the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, when there were religious reasons for rivalry between England and France; among the issues which created problems between the two countries was one which would undoubtedly cause religious tensions: that of Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-1587) and her influence on the Catholics of England and France. Mary, Queen of Scots was the daughter of Mary of Guise,² whose family was involved in the massacre at Paris. Mary of Scots was thus cousin to Henry, Duke of Guise, who was responsible for the massacre at Paris and the killing of the Huguenots.

The importance of Mary, Queen of Scots arises in part from her strong relations with the Guise family. However, her relationship with the Guise family—which could have had an impact on Marlowe's representation of the Guise family in his play, in which their danger is related to Protestants as well as the Queen—was not the only factor that

¹ Anne Curry, *The Hundred Years War* (London: The Macmillan Press Limited, 1993), p. 1.

² R. J. Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion 1559-1598* (London: Longman Group, 1989), p. 21.

worried England. Queen Elizabeth could not have felt safe with Spain ready to support the claims of Mary to the English throne.³ Mary was then considered the true heir to the English throne in the eyes of many Catholics, who saw Elizabeth as illegitimate and also as a usurper. As a result, Mary was then a Catholic figurehead in the fight against the Protestants. Mary's relations with the Guise family may be a reflection of her danger to Protestants. Another point to make is that the connection between Mary and the Guise family sheds light on the danger both form on Protestants. In this light, Guise's danger in the play should be seen as wider than such a conflict with the Huguenots. This is because of his relations with his cousin, Mary. In the eyes of Catholics, Mary was a victim to the Protestants in England, and it is axiomatic that Guise is aware of his cousin being victimised in the hands of the Protestants. As a result of that, Guise is a danger to England as much as the Catholics because all of these Catholics would seek to revenge what Protestants did to Mary. The danger of Mary being related to the Guise family is a conclusive threat. This relation indeed expands Guise's danger as far as the Protestants are concerned, and not just for Huguenots in France.

Marlowe's representation of French themes and characters could have been influenced by Mary. His representation of Catherine, in his play, may also be seen as similar to the role of Mary. In one place, Catherine, from the very outset, and as demonstrated in one of her asides, expresses her desire to dissolve the marriage with blood and cruelty (*MP*, I, 26). Catherine's power is noticed here. Marlowe implies this schematic nature when she plans the massacre similarly to how Mary implements her power and schemes against the Protestants. Both Mary and Catherine are able to influence Catholics in their fights against Protestants/Huguenots.

³ Elizabeth O'Neill, *Mary Queen of Scots* (London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1969), p. 28.

On a different level, it is not accurate to describe the relationships between England and France as wholly awkward. There were several occasions where the two countries had agreed on signing treaties. For instance, there is the treaty made in 1583 between the Queen's Majesty and the King of France, Charles IX, and between other Kings of England and France, their predecessors.⁴ Such treaties covered different aspects of social, economic and political affairs. Perhaps one of the best known treaties between England and France is the Treaty of Blois, which was signed on April 19, 1572 to form 'a defensive league between Queen Elizabeth and Charles IX stipulating the amount of succour by sea or land to be rendered by either party in case of need'.⁵ Having said that, it seems clear that the relationship between the two countries was ambivalent and dependent on their shared interests; it was certainly not comprehensively based on hatred.

The relationship between England and France was solid in some parts and weak in others. For instance, the treaties covered many aspects regarding cooperation, commercial exchange, and other things. However, aspects related to religion were sensitive and were influenced by conflicts between the two religions at that time. So, ambivalence was present and changes in the relationships were governed by the circumstances of that time. Apart from these treaties, which deal with the relation and cooperation between the two countries, we shall investigate French themes of religion and politics in the works of Marlowe to observe how discussions about France are presented in a variety of English texts. The focus is thus directed at the representation of

⁴ *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series*, vol. 18 (July 1583-1584), credited by Sophie Crawford Lomas (originally published for HMSO, 1914) (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1969), p. 357.

⁵ *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series*, vol. 10 (1572-74), credited by Allan James Crosby (originally published for HMSO, 1876) (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1966), p. 87.

that relationship between the two countries with regard to the text (*The Massacre at Paris*).

In this chapter, we are concerned with exploring the socio-political and religious circumstances under which Marlowe was writing in England. His play *The Massacre at Paris* is the major case study in this thesis. This chapter will first introduce the work of Holinshed and his depiction of France and the French. From time to time we shall consider Marlowe's play in the light of Holinshed's work. The *Chronicles*, which is one of the most influential works of that age, seems in many places to promote a celebration of English Protestant identity in comparison to that of others, including the French. Following a discussion of the *Chronicles*, we shall consider Marlowe's development of themes relating to France and how political circumstances might have helped him to express his ideas on France. Thus, we will endeavour to illuminate the nature of the attitudes among Elizabethans towards relations with the French, and how Elizabeth's Privy Council reacted to particular issues regarding France. Finally, we shall consider an example which also demonstrates how the circumstances of that period were dominated by the complexities of political as much as religious factors. The example of Elizabeth's possible marriage with the French Duc d'Alençon/Anjou during the late 1570s and early 1580s shows the inseparability of politics and religion. Contemporary discussions of the marriage offer insight into the religious and political circumstances of the age. The punishments received by some writers following contemporary comments on the marriage also demonstrate that there were certain limits which could not be crossed at that time. We shall also allude to the response of the state to some Catholics in an example which concludes the chapter.

Before moving to the discussion of the contact between France and England, we shall attempt to describe the massacre within the chronology of the French wars of religion. The massacre falls between the religious wars of Catholics against Protestants. In fact, Marlowe's opening scene of the marriage is set after the third war, which was fought from 1568 to 1570,⁶ and the action of the play continues until the eighth war (1585-1598). Among the events which conclude the play are the assassination of Guise and then of Henry III, whereupon the accession of Henry of Navarre as King Henry IV takes place. In Marlowe's play, the chronological placement of the massacre in the middle of the French wars of religion might be designed to represent that event as marking the peak of the conflict.

1.2 The relationship between England and France

The *Chronicles*, written by Raphael Holinshed in collaboration with others, is perhaps one of the most important works surviving from the Elizabethan age. It draws attention to the social, political, domestic and other aspects of English life, including England's relations with other countries, from the days of the Normans until the Elizabethan era. The *Chronicles* is important because it offered a huge resource for writers, including Shakespeare who drew on it to provide material for some of his plays. It is significant that Holinshed's *Chronicles* not only describes detailed aspects of life in England but also provides an interpretation of events. For example, it relates the history of Kings, describes punishments, tells various stories and mirrors many of the social, political and

⁶ Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion*, p. 40.

intellectual currents of its period.⁷ The *Chronicles* also covers a range of subjects concerning France from the time of the Normans onwards.

A brief examination of the representation of France in the *Chronicles* provides an indication of the prevailing attitude to France and its people in the late sixteenth century. One of the first examples which describes dissatisfaction with the Norman invasion, or rather with an event which occurred during the invasion, can be found in the first book, chapter four where it is reported that, 'one Robert, a Norman, became Archbishop of Canterbury, whose preferment so much enhanced the minds of the French, on the one side, as their lordly and outrageous demeanour kindled the stomachs of the English nobility against them on the other'.⁸ The *Chronicles* goes on to recount how difficult it was for the English to live under Norman rule, tending to give a pejorative picture of the Normans and their unjust acts towards the English. The *Chronicles* reports, for example, on tensions arising from personal problems or from conflicts between religious men. For example, 'the English Peers began to show, at the time of the Normans, their disliking in manifest manner'⁹ and 'every French page was superior to the greatest Peer'.¹⁰ This is meant to describe how the peers were belittled in comparison to pages, giving an indication of how badly the English were treated under Norman rule. This is significant in that the English peers, despite their rank in comparison to those who were lower than

⁷ Elizabeth Story Donno, 'Holinshed's Chronicles: England, Scotland and Ireland', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 30, no. 3 (Autumn, 1977), pp. 390-394 JSTOR
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0034-4338%28197723%2930%3A3%3C390%3AHCESAI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-S> [accessed 15 February 2008] p. 390.

⁸ Raphael Holinshed, William Harrison, & others, *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles* (London: Henry Denham, 1587) EEBO
http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:3 [accessed 7 August, 2008] p. 7.

⁹ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 7

them, were not respected as they deserved. Later the *Chronicles* describes ‘how miserable was the estate of our country under the French and Normans’¹¹ and then exclaims: ‘oh what numbers of all degrees of English and British were made slaves and bondmen, and bought and sold as oxen in open market! In so much that at the first coming, the French bond was set free’.¹² A reading of these passages reveals how Englishmen, on the other hand, sought to assert their presence by opposing such French attitudes, and the *Chronicles* is a work which fights the French system and its injustice against Englishmen.

The noticeable thing about the *Chronicles*’ accounts of Norman rule is the privilege that Norman peers enjoyed but which was soon to be diminished by the English. The *Chronicles* implies that there was a kind of open challenge to the French by the English, that French superiority over the English was more imagined by the Normans than actual, and that the English far surpassed their French peers when it came to manliness. By depicting the French as having an erroneous belief that they were above the English, the *Chronicles* comes to diminish the importance of the French. As we will see, the theme of superiority is echoed in Marlowe’s plays but in less negative ways than are depicted in the *Chronicles*. Another example from the Norman period cited in the *Chronicles*, this time related to religious tension, is that:

It was not only the French politicians, in charge of government, who were a source of trouble, but also the clergymen who looked down on the English: these Norman clerks, and their friends, being thus exalted, it was not long before they began to mock, abuse, and despise the English.¹³

¹¹ Ibid., p. 7

¹² Ibid., p. 7.

¹³ Ibid., p. 132.

The *Chronicles* seeks to demonstrate that Normans of all types, whether religious or laymen, adopted an anti-English attitude. From such accounts, it is not possible to generalize that all the Normans looked down on and ill-treated the English, but the themes presented by the *Chronicles* are likely to echo a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the French on the part of the English in the early Middle Ages and Elizabethan period. In summary, the *Chronicles* seems to revel in depicting a negative image of the French people and their rulers. This depiction is similar to how Marlowe treats the French in his plays, for instance, in regard to religious conflict.

Perhaps the last point to emphasize about Holinshed's *Chronicles* is that when the French and the English are compared, consistent attempts are made to elevate the English over the French. The *Chronicles* contributes to making the English seem better than the French by stating that no one is equal to the English: 'we think it a great piece of manhood to stand to our tackling, until the last drop, as men that may spare much because we have much: whereas they having less are afraid to lose that little which they have'.¹⁴ These words express great confidence in Englishmen and their charismatic nature. There is another comment concerning how the French discuss their own manliness in their histories. The *Chronicles* makes little account of it: 'for I am of the opinion, that as an Italian writing of his credit; A papist entreating of religion, a Spaniard of his meekness, or a Scot of his manhood, is not to be built on; no more is a Frenchman to be trusted in the report of his own affaires'.¹⁵ These accounts give the impression that the French are as unworthy of trust as are the others mentioned. According to the *Chronicles*, this makes the French unremarkable by any means in a possible attempt to

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 132.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 115.

show that their own belief that they are special is not realistic. The idea of ‘manliness’ seems to be related to everything good that an Englishman represents. For example, the English are known for this ‘manliness’ because they stand as men with good features. Contrary to the French in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, the English are depicted as having ‘solidarity’ and ‘courage’. This is clearly seen in Henry’s disguised visit to his soldiers when saying ‘we few, we happy few, we band of brothers’.¹⁶ Although the situation is based in a war atmosphere, Henry is someone who is able to bear such pressure because of his strength and high spirit. The example of Henry V fits well with the concept or the representation of the English as people who have the qualities of ‘manliness’. As Meron puts it, ‘Shakespeare relives past glories’,¹⁷ in an indication that Henry V was one English King who glorified the history of England with his actions and made manly actions.

Aside from this depiction of the English and the French, the style of discourse in the *Chronicles* is widely shared among other writers of the period, such as Marlowe’s representation of the evil of Catholics in his play. Some themes such as the sense of nationalism and pride were evident characteristics in such writings. One can see how references to pride and nationalism enable writers to invoke their country’s strengths and so boost the self-confidence of their readers. The *Chronicles* refers often to the necessity for Englishmen to be proud, and that works well as a tool to produce a sense of nationalism and pride in the English. In Marlowe’s *Massacre at Paris*, this sense of pride and nationalism is manifested not only by the Protestants but also by the Catholics. An

¹⁶ William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, ed. By A.R. Humphreys (London: Penguin, 1968), IV, iii, 63.

¹⁷ Theodor Meron, ‘Shakespeare’s Henry The Fifth and the Law of War’, *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 86 (1992), pp. 1-45 JSTOR < <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2203137> > [accessed 12-December-2009] p. 1.

example that illustrates a similar approach to that employed in the *Chronicles* is Guise's soliloquy in Marlowe's play:¹⁸

For this, from Spain the stately Catholics
Sends Indian gold to coin me French *écues*
For this have I a largess from the Pope,
A pension and a dispensation too:
And by that privilege to work upon...
Paris hath full five hundred Colleges,
As monasteries, priories, Abbeys and halls,
Wherein are thirty thousand able men,
Besides a thousand sturdy student Catholics,
And more: of my knowledge in one cloister keep,
Five hundred fat Franciscan friars and priests.
All this and more, if more may be comprised,
To bring the will of our desires to end.
(*MP*, II, 60-64, 80-87)

Guise's soliloquy can be seen as ironic in some ways. One example is when Marlowe talks about 'dispensation' given to Guise to show Guise as if he is religiously highly ranked to gain that privilege. Marlowe's description of the 'Franciscan friars and priests' as 'fat' is a demonstration of his skilful undercutting of Guise's boastfulness. Marlowe's Guise shows pride in France and its ability to defend the Catholic state from Protestants' attempts to control it. His mention of Spain gives credit to Catholic allies; a feeling of strength is revealed because he and his friends, as Guise says, have supporters everywhere who are ready to provide aid of different kinds. Although Guise's nationalism is a French one, it is possible to say that Marlowe could be describing how nationalism works; thus, it is an example that Protestants could follow in their defence of their country. The sense of nationalism which the *Chronicles* stresses has a strong echo in Marlowe's text with the difference between Guise, as a Frenchman, and the Englishmen.

¹⁸ Marlowe's plays discussed in this thesis are taken from the penguins edition where some plays only have scenes, whereas the others have acts and scenes, see *Christopher Marlowe: the Complete Plays*, ed. by Frank Romany & Robert Lindsey (London: Penguin Books, 2003).

Guise reveals some factual points about the ‘sturdy student Catholics’ and the necessity of their presence to face the Protestants. Guise’s words show the power and capability of the Catholics in their wars against the Protestants. Just as the discourse of the *Chronicles* is designed to belittle French manliness and give little credence to their standing, so Guise’s discourse uses the same technique by which he shows his countrymen’s ability to face the Protestant enemy. Marlowe aims to depict how the Catholics think in order to demonstrate, possibly, their evil schemes against the Protestants. Furthermore, he reveals how Catholics plot so that his Protestant audience may prepare itself for other such Catholic schemes.

1.3 Representation of France

The particular concern of this chapter is with history plays. We have already mentioned Marlowe and Shakespeare and how their writings placed in the foreground the representation of France. Commenting on Marlowe’s *Edward II*, John Bakeless mentions that ‘the frequency with which Marlowe uses the word minion in *Edward II* suggests that the French court is more or less in his mind’.¹⁹ This suggestion reminds the reader of the question of manhood raised earlier by the *Chronicles*. Marlowe seems to be talking about minions, but the French court could also be in his mind while he is based in England. It is possible to see that the *Chronicles* considers the French lack of manliness as caused by their disrespect of Englishmen and because they do not keep their word with the English in terms of treating them equally. In that respect, the question of minions opposite to manliness fits well with the difference between the French and Englishmen. The English

¹⁹ John Bakeless, *The Tragical History of Christopher Marlowe*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942), p. 88.

are men because of their qualities and what they stand for, whereas the French are not. We shall expand on the subject of minions in another of Marlowe's plays, *Edward II*.

It is helpful to discuss historical plays in order to place events in historical context. The time in which Marlowe was writing was dominated by English concerns regarding the threat from Spain, the break with papal Rome and relations with France marked by tension and ambivalence. Towards the end of the first decade of her rule, there was the Queen's possible marriage to the Duke of Anjou; another concern was the attachment of the Huguenots in France to the Protestants in England. Critics, including Hillman, have emphasized Marlowe's interest in French representations of religion and politics;²⁰ Hillman notes that the interest of Englishmen in French themes 'lies in history, current politics, and religion which are all generally inseparable from each other in the period and are certainly inextricable from English-French literary relations'.²¹ This sounds reasonable in the context of that period. Hillman also argues that 'the meaningful dramatic encounters between France and England are not restricted to allusion, plot, and setting but occupy the sectors of discourse, culture, and imagination'.²² Drama is a tool for describing and containing the relationship between the two countries, translated into plays performed in theatres where they could be watched. According to Hillman, the representation of French religion and politics appears to be the result of hundreds of years of contact between the two countries rather than of any one particular event. As a result, any writing on France must have been influenced by contact with and experience of the affairs of France on the part of the writer. For instance, the *Chronicles*' tendency to express negative views of France can be seen as resulting from the circumstances to

²⁰ Richard Hillman, *Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Politics of France* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 3.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

which Hillman refers, whereby the *Chronicles* is pejorative towards the French because of the injustice Englishmen sustained under (Norman) French rule. So these opinions expressed in the *Chronicles* and by Marlowe—although Marlowe is offering a representation rather than expressing a view—allowed the treatments of French themes to take different directions, especially in the Elizabethan period and specifically in the literary domain.

Kirk argues that ‘Marlowe imposed this English perception of French history as an expression of how Englishmen viewed the French to be prone to disorder, unlike their own very ordered aristocracy’.²³ This may be true in Marlowe’s depiction of English order against French order. Kirk also argues that ‘eventually, a semblance of English order is established at the French court when the French King Henry of Navarre announces his alliance with Elizabeth and welcomes the presence of Elizabeth’s agent in his court’.²⁴ Kirk clearly states that in Marlowe’s play, when Navarre is about to be crowned as the new King following Charles IX and Henry III, England is in an ordered state and France is disordered, which mirrors the idea that England is superior to its rivals. Marlowe’s treatment of that superiority implies that the English order provides a better model for France. Kirk’s argument is relevant to Marlowe’s play in that Kirk says that Marlowe attempts to impose the English order on France. We do not see the *Chronicles* discuss the issue of replacing French order with English order; the only thing the *Chronicles* is concerned with is to differentiate the English from the French without

²³ Andrew M. Kirk, ‘Marlowe and the Disordered Face of French History. Playwright Christopher Marlowe’, *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 35, no. 2 (Spring, 1995), pp. 193(21) ASAP
<http://find.galegroup.com/itx/infomark.do?&contentSet=IAC-Documents&type=retrieve&tabID=T002&prodId=EAIM&docId=A17311168&source=gale&srcprod=EAIM&userGroupName=leicester&version=1.0> [accessed 12 December 2006]

²⁴ Ibid., p. 21.

going into details concerning the replacement of French disorder by English order. Navarre becomes the new King of France, and this denotes the possible transformation of the French order into the English order. Thus, Navarre says:

Come, lords, take up the body of the King,
That we may see it honourably interred
And then I vow for to revenge his death
As Rome and all those popish prelates there
Shall curse the time that e'er Navarre was King,
And ruled in France by Henry's fatal death
(*MP*, XXIX, 106-111)

The influence of the English order is being felt as Navarre adopts a policy of hostility towards Rome and the Pope similar to that many Protestants felt should be adopted. Navarre does not mention England, but Henry does. Prior to his death, he asks Navarre to salute her, and he dies 'her faithful friend' (*MP*, XXIV, 104-105). Here it is possible to consider Henry's agreeing to be England's friend as a sign of his relinquishing French court and accepting English order because he would fight the Pope similarly to England which looks at the Pope as an enemy. Navarre undertakes to inflict his wrath on Catholicism in a sign of his joint purpose with Queen Elizabeth; indeed, an impression is created that Navarre and Elizabeth are united in facing a common enemy when Navarre swears that 'Rome and all those popish prelates there/ shall curse the time that e'er Navarre was King' (*MP*, XXIV, 109-110). This reflects his determination to fight the Roman Church, and he would certainly join the Queen, his ally, in this war.

Marlowe's treatment of the representation of French religion and politics is wide-ranging and covers more than a simple mention of a single event. Marlowe's literary interest in French themes can also be compared to that of other figures who were involved in the literary domain and who were also diplomats. Among these were Philip

Sidney (1554-1586) and Walter Raleigh (1552-1618) who served their country politically, were involved in many diplomatic affairs and were also in Marlowe's circle of friends.²⁵ Sidney was an important writer who visited France and was actually there at the time of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre; there were some suggestions that he may have visited the wounded admiral to congratulate him on his survival as he was in Paris during that time.²⁶ The examples of Sidney and Raleigh reveal the varied degrees of attachment with France among Elizabethan Englishmen. The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre was perhaps one of the most famous tragedies which occurred in the 1570s, and Marlowe's work, *The Massacre at Paris*, as Briggs argues, 'is one of the earliest to present recent historical and contemporary political events on the English stage'.²⁷ This shows Marlowe's interest in politics. Marlowe's depiction of French politics may have been inspired by his own experience since he seems to have been engaged in the political sphere; the Flushing Letter, for example, makes a number of plausible accusations. According to the letter, Marlowe's relationship with a certain Baines is being questioned. The letter, which was discovered and transcribed by R. B. Wernham, was written on 26 January 1591.²⁸ Baines was an informer who was considered an enemy of Marlowe and who wrote the famous Baines' Note in which he makes a number of accusations against

²⁵ Marlowe was associated with Raleigh and he was connected to that free-thinking, philosophical clique, centred on Raleigh, which some historians call the 'Durham House Set' and some the 'School of Night': see Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning* (London: Vintage Random House, 1992), p. 60.

²⁶ James M. Osborn, *Young Philip Sidney* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 65.

²⁷ Julia Briggs, 'Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*: a Reconsideration', *The Review of English Studies*, 34, no. 135 (August, 1983), pp. 257-278 JSTOR
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0034-6551%28198308%292%3A34%3A135%3C257%3AMMAPAR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-T>
 [accessed 16 February 2007] p. 257.

²⁸ R. B. Wernham, 'Christopher Marlowe at Flushing in 1592', *The English Historical Review*, 91, no. 359 (April, 1976), pp. 344-345 JSTOR
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0013-8266%28197604%2991%3A359%3C344%3ACMAFI1%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9> [accessed 17 February 2007] p. 344.

Marlowe. As for the Flushing Letter, it contains an allegation that Marlowe wanted to go to Rome. All of these documents suggest Marlowe's possible involvement with government missions. While there seems to be no direct link between these incidents and Marlowe's writings on France, his interest in depicting French themes may be considered to reflect his familiarity with and experience of foreign affairs; in particular, his involvement in the political domain may have been reflected in his political discussions on France. Parmelee develops this point by suggesting that many English writers, including Marlowe, brought 'works into England from the Continent and helped see them into print',²⁹ and that the government established a network of diplomatic correspondents and spies who helped to develop such themes and impress them on the minds of English readers.³⁰ Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris* fits well with Parmelee's thesis in that it represents issues related to France which form part of the influence to which she refers.

1.4 Writing and censorship

The discussion of France is also relevant to censorship in Elizabethan England. The most important event which can be related to the contemporary situation in France—and more specifically to the events of the massacre—is the discussion of a possible marriage between the Duke of Anjou and the Queen, which provoked many comments. This example can be used to explore the nature of censorship at the time and to see how religious and political implications affected the way the marriage proposal was viewed.

²⁹ Lisa Ferraro Parmelee, 'Printers, Patrons, Readers, and Spies: Importation of French Propaganda in Late Elizabethan England', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25, no. 4 (Winter, 1994), pp. 853-872 JSTOR <<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0361-0160%28199424%2925%3A4%3C853%3APPRA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-J>> [accessed 28 January 2008] p. 853-854.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 854.

The Elizabethan government was ready to impose severe penalties on any writer suspected of adverse criticism of its foreign policy.³¹ The role of censorship in framing or influencing the written material of the time is remarkable. Parmelee argues that ‘the concerns of the English crown regarding printing and publishing stemmed in part from a rising awareness that the press could be regarded as both a threat to and an instrument of royal government’.³² The press—as a source of ‘news’—was also coming into its own as a result of the availability of cheap print and an increase in literacy. On the other hand, Parmelee states that ‘energy was devoted to finding and destroying both the presses and publications of seditious and religious dissents’.³³ She adds that ‘after the papal excommunication of Elizabeth and the first Catholic missions for the reconversion of England, the 1560s brought a growth in the clandestine printing of Catholic books; particularly worrisome among these were treatises written on behalf of Mary Queen of Scots’.³⁴ What Parmelee says speaks for itself; the increased legislation from the second half of the sixteenth century onwards must have had an impact on the written materials produced. Thus, during the 1580s and 1590s, events like the massacre or the marriage proposal made people eager to read the latest news, and what was produced at that time was more of a challenge that would oblige the government to monitor published writing. The difference between the mid-sixteenth century and two decades later can be seen in the progress of censorship and monitoring due to the increase of political and religious implications towards the end of the century. It is true that this period witnessed the spread

³¹ Robert P. Adams, ‘Despotism, Censorship, and Mirrors of Power Politics in Late Elizabethan Times’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 10, no. 3, Renaissance Studies (Autumn, 1979), pp 5-16 JSTOR
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0361-0160%28197923%2910%3A3%3C5%3ADCAMOP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-H>> [accessed 28 January 2008] p. 7.

³² Parmelee, ‘Printers, Patrons, Readers’, pp. 853-854.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 854.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 854.

of seditious books, which were considered dangerous to the stability of the state, and a concomitant increase in the number of people accused of treachery. Thus, the state's attempt to impose restrictions can be seen as a necessary response to the potential danger to the state posed by such writings represented in instigative materials from within or outside the state.

The Anjou marriage proposal, which can be dated from the late 1570s to the early 1580s, was a widespread subject of discussion. The discussion of the marriage proposal was considered by The Privy Council as an unacceptable interference in the policy of the state and the Queen. Such discussions led to punishment too. Before going further into the details of the marriage proposal, we shall first give some accounts of the punishments meted out to the traitors who were seen to pose the greatest danger to the state in light of the sensitive political circumstances of the time. The link between traitors and seditious works can easily be established for the period witnessed a significant increase in the number of traitors who attempted to spread opinions opposing the Queen and the state; such people and books were targeted by the state because they potentially threatened its existence. This raises questions regarding the extent to which the parameters of the written discourses of the time were set by the state. An example which illustrates the reaction of the state to suspicious works is that of William Carter who, in January 1584, was indicted, arraigned and found guilty of high treason for printing a seditious and treacherous book in English entitled *A Treatise of Schism*. His punishment was to be 'drawn from Newgate to Tiborne, and there hanged, bowelled, and quartered'.³⁵ The account given in the *Chronicles* clearly stresses the tendency to encourage patriotism

³⁵ Raphael Holinshed, *The Third Volume of Chronicles* (London: Henry Denham, 1586) EBOO <http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:5> [accessed 20 December 2006] p. 1372.

among Englishmen in response to the actions of such traitors, stating that in reply to slanderous reports ‘spread abroad in seditious books, letters and libels, thereby to inflame the hearts of our countrymen, and her majesty’s subjects: a book was published, entitled, *A Declaration of the Favourable Dealing of Her Majesty Commissioners, &c*’.³⁶ A reading of the *Chronicles* manifests the English celebration of patriotism in response to the appearance of seditious materials produced against the state. Thus, the *Chronicles* acts as the voice of the state in some places when opposing seditious books. This account shows the role of the state in limiting and preventing the spread of such seditious books. Carter’s example is one of many alleged attempts to interfere in affairs of state by promoting instigative materials. The mention made in the *Chronicles* of the inflaming of the hearts of countrymen indicates awareness of the potential effects of such writings. Such statements as that mentioned above about inspiring Englishmen is significant for the state because it works to support the state’s efforts to fight seditious books, while the punishment (whether capital or corporal) in the Elizabethan period denotes the seriousness with which the state viewed such materials and how dangerous an accusation of high treason could be.

In addition to such punishments, other means were used by the government to reduce the number of seditious texts produced, including the inspection of printing to help control what was written. At the level of government, as Bevington states, Queen Elizabeth, reacting to complaints from Spain, issued stern proclamations in April and May of 1559 warning magistrates not to license works ‘wherein either matters of religion or of the governance of the state of the common weal shall be handled or treated’.³⁷ At

³⁶ Ibid., p. 1372.

³⁷ David Bevington, *Tudor Drama and Politics* (Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 127.

the time of the Queen's first acceding to the crown, it was still too early to judge how the government would take steps to control printing, but it is considered the beginning of what occurred in the following two decades when legislations were enacted. The government controlled and organised the production of printing. For example, a specific company was allocated one licence to produce certain works or more, while another printer was given another work and so on. This was conducted in order to, as mentioned before, control textual production and divide profits.

1.5 Marlowe's play in perspective

In the light of this discussion on censorship and its function in containing certain subjects to restrict the scope of written material, Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris* has been widely discussed by many critics, such as Bowers, whose article shows how successful Marlowe's play was, not only suggesting that Marlowe wrote a propagandistic drama but also pointing out that English-French relations were notoriously unstable at the time and that 'hard-line Protestant propaganda on the topic—whether promulgated by a zealot like John Stubbs or a courtier such as Sir Philip Sidney—was punished with some severity in the Elizabethan regime'.³⁸ Stubbs' pamphlet "The Discovery of the Gaping Gulf" led to 'his punishment as he and his publisher were dismembered at Westminster; whereas Sidney was rusticated to Wilton'.³⁹ 'Marlowe's play, by contrast, was popular, well-attended, and approved for performance by the State censor'.⁴⁰ Bowers claims that even though Marlowe's play can be related to the issue of the marriage, 'Marlowe intentionally

³⁸ Rick Bowers, 'The Massacre at Paris: Marlowe's Messy Consensus Narrative', in *Marlowe, History, and Sexuality*, ed. by Paul Whitfield White (New York: AMS Press Incorporation, 1998), p.133.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 133.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 133.

omits discussion of anything to do with Henry's III's brother François, Duke of Alençon and his lengthy marriage negotiations with Queen Elizabeth. For Protestant propaganda, such a theme would be irresistible'.⁴¹ Bowers' argument sounds reasonable when we consider how much the play differs from the works of Stubbs and Sidney, where Bowers' comment is that Marlowe is self-censoring while he is writing a play that deals with French political disorder. Marlowe concentrates on the aspects of French politics of interest to him without presenting provocative discussions like those which Stubbs mentions. Bowers' discussion of Marlowe's selective treatment of contemporary subjects and themes—such as Marlowe's handling of the massacre—certainly gives strength to his argument. Marlowe's play delivers entertainment without interfering with matters of state. His interest is not in influencing state policy, as Stubbs and Sidney tried to do when they expressed their opinions without regard for the rules of censorship, despite their apparent good intentions in trying to dissuade the Queen from going ahead with the proposed marriage to François of Alençon. The works of Stubbs and Sidney differ from Marlowe's play; they are examples which angered the government because of the sensitive issues they discussed. While Stubbs and Sidney were among the many people who expressed their opinions regarding that proposal, Marlowe neither mentions the name nor alludes to the character of François in his play, which is striking, since the Duke was brother to two of Marlowe's main characters in *The Massacre at Paris*, Charles IX, King of France, and the Duke of Anjou, later to be Henry III of France. Whether or not his failure to mention François is because of what happened to Stubbs, Marlowe's interest is certainly focused on Guise who greatly interested him.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 133.

1.6 The Anjou-Elizabeth marriage proposal

1.6.1 Stubbs' work

Many critics⁴² have elaborated in depth on the subject of Stubbs' pamphlet. Among these, Bell who calls it 'a carefully planned political act, calculated to blow wide open the "secret" of monsieur's visit'.⁴³ The pamphlet appeared on the day following the secret visit of the suitor and contained sharp opinions rejecting the marriage.⁴⁴ In his 'Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf' (1579), Stubbs describes in detail the marriage between the French Duke and the Queen and considers the consequences of such a tie with what he viewed as the enemy. Stubbs' description of France and the French is highly critical. He lists a number of arguments which he believes to be obstacles to the marriage taking place. At the outset of his discussion, he reveals that the French 'have sent us hither not Satan in body of a serpent, but the old serpent in shape of a man, whose sting is in his mouth, and who doth his Endeavour to seduce our Eve.'⁴⁵ Stubbs uses the image of Satan and serpent to demonstrate that Anjou is a representation of evil. The use of such religious allusion probably reflects Stubbs' religious background: accounts given by Mears reveal that Stubbs, being a religious writer, was moving among prominent Puritans at that time. He and a number of friends formed a close-knit group of Protestants who demanded further reform of the religious settlement of 1559. In 1585, Stubbs became

⁴² Among the many critics who talked about Stubbs are Ilona Bell and Rick Bowers who are both mentioned in the thesis.

⁴³ Ilona Bell, 'Soueraigne Lord of Lordly Lady of His Land: Elizabeth, Stubbs, and the Gaping Gulf', in *Dissing Elizabeth*, ed. by Julia M. Walker (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 1998), p. 99

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁴⁵ John Stubbs, 'The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf Vvhereinto England is Like to be Swallowved by Another French Marriage' (London: H. Singleton, 1579) EEBO
http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99853130 [accessed 10 May 2006] p. 2.

MP for Great Yarmouth where he drew up a petition in favour of Puritan ministers.⁴⁶ These pursuits reflect how active Stubbs was in matters of reformation and in attacking Catholics, which he also does in his pamphlet. Stubbs' description of the image of Satan is used as a symbol to relate Catholics to evil. Afterwards, but before commenting again on 'Monsieur' himself, Stubbs describes the marriage by saying that 'this procreation of marriage, is a breach of God's law, and not only for the sin thereof is against the church because it hastened vengeance, but we show by demonstrative reasons that it goes to the very gorge of the Church'.⁴⁷ It is very noticeable that Stubbs' scope is purely religious: in his view, the marriage is against the will of the church because its teachings oblige Protestants not to mix with Catholics, who Stubbs thinks are associated with Satan. The depiction of Satan is essential to challenge the idea of marriage because proceeding with it may bring God's wrath. Stubbs describes the marriage as a great sin for England to 'give one of Israel's daughters to any of Hemors' sons: to match a daughter of God with one of the sons of men: to couple a Christian Lady, a member of Christ, to a Prince & good son of Rome that Antichristian mother city'.⁴⁸ Stubbs is careful to isolate the Catholics from the Protestants. He has to assert that François is a son of Rome to confirm doubts about his honesty. While the Queen is of God, the Duke is descended from Satan. Stubbs thus relates the Queen to purity to signify her nature as being superior to that of the French suitor. He equates Catholicism with danger and wickedness by linking it to Rome, the fount of evil.

⁴⁶ Natalie Mears, 'Stubbs, John (c. 1541-1590)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, September 2004), Online edn, January 2008
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26736>> [accessed 24 May 2008]

⁴⁷ Stubbs, 'Discouerie of a Gaping Gulf', p. 4.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 4.

This difference between Catholicism and Protestantism is also highlighted in Marlowe's play, for example, in the representation of their distinct religious rituals; when the Catholics start to kill the Huguenots, the victims beg them to wait until they have prayed before their lives are taken. In Marlowe's play, because Catholics think that the Protestant way of praying is wrong, the act of killing Protestants before they begin to pray could reflect a desire to punish them for their heresy. The importance of prayer in both religions is great; Marlowe demonstrates that there are clear differences between the ways in which Protestants and Catholics pray. Another example is when Navarre asks his brothers in religion to 'go to the Church and pray' (*MP*, I, i, 55). Marlowe provides another example elsewhere when Catholics have already started the massacre. Seroune, one of the Protestants, begs M'sorrell to give him time to pray before his life is taken. When Seroune says, 'O, Christ, my Saviour' (*MP*, IX, 7-9), M'sorrell becomes angry and asks, 'why darest thou to presume to call on Christ without the intercession of some saint?' (*MP*, IX, 10). Marlowe comments on saintly intercession to reveal it as a corrupt feature of Catholicism. He says that this has to do with the idolizing of saints in which the Protestants object to the Catholics' emphasis on intercession by the saints.

To similar effect, Stubbs makes this comparison in his pamphlet: 'England, a region purged from Idolatry; a kingdom of light, confessing Christ and serving the living God: Contrariwise, France a den of idolatry, a kingdom of darkness'.⁴⁹ This contrasts Catholics with Protestants by depicting them as outlandish and sinister. Aside from the differences in the form of prayer, Stubbs suggests another in that an Englishman would not give his sister to the uncircumcised.⁵⁰ Stubbs first indicates this difference when he

⁴⁹ Stubbs, 'Discoerie of a Gaping Gulf', p. 4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

calls the French suitor ‘uncircumcised’; then, based on that difference, Stubbs establishes his reason for not being in favour of giving England’s ‘sister’ to the French suitor. Stubbs declares the marriage proposal disallowed because, religiously, Anjou is dissimilar to the Queen. Furthermore, it is possible to suggest that Stubbs disapproves of Anjou because he is uncircumcised, hence impure. Stubbs’ opposition to the French Duke is partly due to his attitude and partly to his being French and Catholic. At one stage, Stubbs says that ‘Monsieur [...] uses no Protestant in the matter of marriage, although for some other colour he hath seemed to make some reckoning of some in some respect’.⁵¹ Stubbs wants the French suitor not to underestimate Englishmen and to appreciate them. Stubbs makes his opposition to Catholicism clear by declaring: ‘yet shall papists be too light and too drossy to marry with us’.⁵² Stubbs’ words ‘light’ and ‘drossy’ signify the difference between Protestants and Catholics. Stubbs suggests that Catholics are ‘drossy’, that is, ‘garbage’, which is very offensive. He also describes them as ‘light’, reflecting how weightless Catholics are. In terms of the language he uses, Stubbs is likening Catholics with impurity. Stubbs’ statement is seen as an elevation of Protestants over Catholics, thus is evidence of the incompatibility of the marriage.

One point to make is about the depiction of Catholics as untrustworthy. In Marlowe’s play when Coligny is shot in his shoulder he says: ‘o, fatal was this marriage to us all’ (*MP*, III, 38). This comment follows Catholic attempts to poison the Queen of Navarre. These two incidents imply a lack of morality as well as cowardice on the part of Catholics. Taking advantage of the marriage has some roots in Stubbs’ writing. Regarding the French, Stubbs’ opinion is that they are aware that this marriage ‘can

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵² Ibid., p. 7.

enlarge their policy and mince the word of God as they list',⁵³ which echoes his warning elsewhere that in France politics and religion are combined; for France, according to Stubbs, is 'a house of cruelty especially against Christians'.⁵⁴ As much as Stubbs fears the marriage because it would increase Catholic power in Europe, Marlowe—who for his part concentrates on the marriage in his play, not the marriage proposal—represents Catholics as desiring to have the Protestants trapped (*MP*, III, 38).

Stubbs repeatedly reminds his readers of the significant differences between the two religions and clearly elevates Protestantism over Catholicism. He talks about Catherine, the Duke's mother, when bringing to mind the marriage of Navarre and Margaret: 'in joining this latter sister with the King of Navarre, she [Catherine] had better luck, because our sins joined with hers, in that we joined one of our Oxen to one of her she asses'. Stubbs goes on to say of Margaret that she 'was the stale to lure',⁵⁵ making it clear that she is neither honourable nor virtuous. Stubbs actually says that Margaret is simply a cheap person and disrespectful. Both Margaret and Catherine are seen as responsible for trapping Protestants. Stubbs shares with Marlowe the representation that Catherine is a source of danger. The marriage is seen as a tool which Catherine uses to achieve her goals in France. Marlowe also makes this point early in the play when Catherine comments on the marriage 'which I'll dissolve with blood and cruelty' (*MP*, I, 25). Catholics are not serious about showing good intentions regarding the marriage. It is obvious that Stubbs' opposition to François is also partly related to his mother's evil deeds as Stubbs warns against her strong authority in France, which could extend to England if the marriage were to take place. This threat is also present in Marlowe's play

⁵³ Stubbs, 'Discouerie of a Gaping Gulf', p. 8.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

when, for instance, Catherine states that they ‘got the straggling deer/ within the compass of a deadly toil’ (*MP*, IV, 2-3). Marlowe realizes the danger posed by Catherine and presents it to the audience by showing her as an active Catholic and as a member of the powerful Italian Medici dynasty.

Another point which Stubbs makes concerns the marriage of Navarre to Margaret and the implications of such a marriage as he expresses his resentment of a marriage in which innocent Protestants were victims: ‘and that cruelty raged not only on the poor..., but it took the noble men and great Princes by the throat’.⁵⁶ This description is intended to suggest the cruelty of Catholics in the same way that Marlowe depicts them as massacring Protestants. Stubbs adds that ‘the King of Navarre himself who was the spouse in that infamous marriage to the end of the world, had the deadly sword hanging over his head by a twin thread and had felt the point thereof if he had not to his dishonour (the lord be honoured in his repentance) reined his God’.⁵⁷ Stubbs’ image of ‘the throat’ reflects the massacre of Protestants while the ‘deadly sword’ clearly represents the purpose for which Catholics pushed the marriage forward in order to advance their schemes. The overall meaning of Stubbs’ words is a description of Protestant piety in which they show their trust in God, again distinguishing them from Catholics who aim only at exploiting others without any interest in serving God.

The last part of Stubbs’ pamphlet deals with its major concern, the objection to the marriage, and he lists a number of obstacles to it; for example, he argues that ‘if this Monsieur should have by our Queen, two sons or more: it must need breed foreign wars

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 13.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 13.

and civil partaking thorough disagreement of the brethren'.⁵⁸ Stubbs' concern goes beyond the marriage by suggesting that the problem will still be there even if the Queen has children. Stubbs thinks that many sons will not unite states but rather cause difficulties; and this reflects his fear that the longer this marriage lasts, if indeed it ever takes place, the more problems will appear. Furthermore, having two sons who would rule two countries could also mean that they would be separated by religion instead of united by blood. Stubbs' notion is that a marriage with a foreigner would definitely bring trouble to the state, rather than stability. Some arguments in Stubbs' piece appear to be exaggerated, however. He offers no justification for some objections; for instance, he does not consider other possibilities, such as what would happen if the Queen gave birth to only one son. As we have seen, Stubbs's arguments certainly did not please the Privy Council and State officials; above all, his argument provides more than enough reasons for Elizabeth's anger.⁵⁹ The punishment he received was a sign of the limits set by the State regarding what was allowed to be written during this politically turbulent time.

1.6.2 Nicholas Bacon

The study of two other documents can be said to shed light on the marriage proposal and its implications for the socio-political circumstances under which Marlowe was writing: Philip Sidney's letter to Queen Elizabeth (1580) and a discourse by the Lord Keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon (1570).⁶⁰ Although there are parallels in the way both Sidney and Bacon

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

⁵⁹ Bell, 'Souereaigne Lord of Lordly Lady of His Land', p. 101.

⁶⁰ Sir Nicholas Bacon was Elizabeth's first Lord Keeper. He was acknowledged as a worthy student of the law and as a wise and witty privy councilor. He wrote about Elizabeth's proposal in 1570. See Robert Tittler, 'Nicholas Bacon and the Reformation of the Tudor Chancery', *The University of Toronto Law Journal*, 23, no. 4 (Autumn, 1937), pp. 383-396. JSTOR

served their country, the way they discussed the marriage proposal differed a great deal, as did how they were treated for their writing; Sidney, in particular, was punished for his argument. Bacon's treatment of the issue is remarkable in the way it is written and expressed, as well as in its content, for he approves the marriage procedures by adopting the regulations of social and political circumstances of that period. Indeed, the political and religious norms of the time are considered coherently in his letter, which reflects the prevailing conditions and shows how necessary it was to proceed so as not to alienate the Queen as head of state. The letter is divided into three parts: Bacon first outlines the advantages of such a marriage then discusses the disadvantages, followed by the solutions to each of the difficulties in the third part. He concludes the letter with an argument showing how beneficial the marriage would be to France and to the King of Spain.

Bacon first introduces the advantages of the marriage and suggests that the Queen 'should marry without delay, for causes relating to the person and to the realm'.⁶¹ He lists a number of reasons which he believes are sufficient for the Queen to go ahead with the marriage, arguing, for example, that 'if she remains single and past the age of hope to have children, she will be in danger of such as may be tempted to desire her end, to bring some other to her state'.⁶² Furthermore, 'she would lose the love of a multitude of her subjects, for the natural care in those that have possessions and families is to see the preservation of themselves and posterity, and that must be her care, otherwise it will be

<<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0042-0220%28197323%2923%3A4%3C383%3ASNBATR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Z>> [accessed 3 March 2008] p. 383.

⁶¹ *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*, vol. 7 (1566-1579), ed. by Mary Anne Everett Green (originally published for HMSO, 1871) (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1967), p. 328.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 328.

left to others to determine the succession' (328-9).⁶³ Bacon brings to mind the issues related to the people's posterity in a possible reminder that the Queen has the right, too, to have her own life and to establish a family, just as her subjects do. Bacon attempts to consider what is best for the Queen. To underline how profitable this marriage would be to the Queen and to the realm, Bacon states that 'a great number of her subjects already infected with factions towards others mislike her prosperous continuance, and will be ready to assist in any invasion or rebellion, and thus for the lack of children she will have a perpetual torment of her life',⁶⁴ stressing the importance of heirs as a means of achieving stability. Extending his discussion of the benefits to the Queen of having children, Bacon sees children as an outcome of marriage and assesses their importance in strengthening good relations between the two nations, as represented by the Queen and the Duke. Regarding the realm, Bacon attempts to convey the importance of the marriage by relating it to the historical context: 'her marriage will much profit it, for upon the hope of issue, all honest subjects will continue constant, and hope that the crown will remain in the right line of Henry III, and so the curious questions of succession, now the ground of all mischief, will be buried'.⁶⁵ The optimistic tone is obvious in Bacon's words. He believes that the Queen's subjects will be loyal to her. Such loyalty would be the outcome of the Queen's decision to pursue the marriage because it would be the cause of her felicity and would ensure her continued status within the realm as Queen. Bacon's words remain within the bounds of the rules set by the state in that they favour the Queen and attempt to credit the marriage with the potential to enhance her chances of continuing to rule wisely and well.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 328-9.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 329.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 329.

Following this discussion of the marriage and its importance, Bacon goes on to concentrate on the person to whom the Queen would be joined in marriage and how she would cope with such changes in her life: ‘the marriage is so necessary, but to allow of the person that may bring content to her with most or the best of them’.⁶⁶ Bacon also appeals to the Queen’s independence in making decisions, since

No man can conceive what shall be best, but herself. [...] all that is framed within the necessity of integrating a stranger who will eventually be one of the Queen’s subjects, and it would take place according to what she desires, not others. [...] She may also, with more facility, direct such a person in all his actions, for although by matrimony he be her head [...], yet by the laws of this realm, and by policy, he will be in the nature of her subject, and she will thereby avoid the mislike that this nation commonly has of a stranger.⁶⁷

Bacon thus gives importance to the power balance within the marriage by making the Queen the one who will take the lead, not the man who will be her husband. It seems that Bacon is aware that the French suitor is a ‘stranger’ who will be integrated into the English monarchy so he prepares his readers for that position of François by stressing the importance of the Queen’s role in making the marriage work. It is interesting to note how Bacon appears preoccupied with the question of power and control, even in the case of marriage, by reminding his readers that the Queen should be ruling Anjou, not the opposite. Thus his words that ‘Anjou will be in the nature of her subjects’ might imply a possible dominance by Elizabeth as a sign that it is she who would decide how such a marriage would be conducted. Bacon assures us that even though marriages, in general, require the man to stand alone as responsible for the woman, here, the Queen will be the one who controls Anjou, imposing her strong character.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 329.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 329-330.

After discussing the benefits of the marriage, Bacon moves on to a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of marriage with a foreigner and a relative of the French sovereign, and in particular Henry Duke of Anjou, the French King's second brother. Bacon begins this section by acknowledging that the Duke's age may be 'inferior to hers, his conditions not known, his estate and constitution of body not well understood, his disposition in religion contrary to hers and to the order of her realm, whereof without reformation there cannot but follow notable perils'.⁶⁸ His answer to such problems is that although it might be wished that he were older, yet his physique and person are 'manly and comely'. Here, Bacon presents manliness as a desired feature by suggesting that François is manly enough to be qualified as suitor to the Queen. Thus Bacon might be wishing François to be like the English, a person who was perceived to have manly characteristics. Both Bacon and Holinshed seem to consider the question of manliness as one allowing a distinction to be drawn between the English and the French. While the *Chronicles* deride the French lack of manliness, Bacon here accepts François as having such a quality. The Queen and her suitor have many things in common, which would mean that the proposed marriage would be advantageous to both. Therefore, this marriage, according to Bacon, would be likely to be successful because its advantages would be based on political calculation rather than mere personal opinion. There is, however, a feature in Stubbs that may be said to distinguish him from others in his consideration of the qualities possessed by François. Hadfield says that Elizabeth was angry at the accusation that 'she wished to restore the Catholic faith and would let the

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 330.

English succumb to French rule'.⁶⁹ He adds that Stubbs' argument depends on the need for the Queen to listen to good advice, and since that did not happen, Stubbs himself takes the burden of writing this letter to oppose the marriage because he is afraid that England might suffer if it is betrayed.

Another disadvantage which Bacon mentions is that 'if he [François] should not have children by the Queen, he might, with help of his brother, the King of France, encroach the crown to himself, by colour of gift from the Pope'.⁷⁰ The answer to this concern is that 'the necessity and the long desire of her subjects to have her married will stop the misliking of this prince, taking into consideration also that he is to come hither but as a King's youngest brother, and not a monarch'; thus, 'he must procure the good will, first of Her Majesty, and next of all her estates, and being a stranger, shall be constrained to use himself favourably towards all sorts without difference'.⁷¹ The expectations which Bacon has of this prospective husband are high. The political aspect, in which children are the target and focus of Bacon's concern is not left unaddressed. The Duke would be liked because the Queen's people would want her to be married. Bacon appears to consider all possible threats to the marriage and its implications for the balance of political power on the continent. He does not make religion an obstacle but instead integrates it with politics. His interest is in the realm and in the advantages of such a marriage. What distinguishes Bacon's argument from those of Stubbs and Sidney is that he discusses every single possibility by describing and reviewing the religious and political aspects of the marriage and their influence on the Queen, the state and the

⁶⁹ Andrew Hadfield, 'The Spanish Tragedy, The Alençon Marriage Plans, and John Stubbs's Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf', *Notes and Queries*, 47 (2000), p. 43.

⁷⁰ Green, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*, vol. 7, p. 330.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

people. The letter acknowledges the political circumstances of the period. Bacon's contention that the marriage is necessary seems to be based on the assumption that it would actually achieve success for the state, rather than on a desire to please the Queen. The content of his letter seems to be based on an analysis of the circumstances and on convincing evidence that the marriage would help to protect rather than harm the state.

Bacon concludes by discussing the advantages that would ensue from the marriage with the Duke of Anjou. He argues that the marriage would be honourable, because 'being a son and brother to the King of France, the children would be Princely, and comfortable by amity with the crown of France, with which the wars of England have been most brutal and hurtful'.⁷² The achievement of peace can be approached through the marriage because it will bring together the Princes of the two countries. Bacon adds that 'by this marriage she [Elizabeth] will be delivered of the continual fear of the practices with the Queen of Scots, on whom depends almost the only prosperity of her whole life and reign'.⁷³ The subject of the Queen of Scots is of considerable interest to Bacon who wishes to isolate Elizabeth from Mary's influence and who thinks that the marriage offers a way to reduce the danger that this influence poses. Bacon's writing offers more balanced and less prejudiced discussion of the marriage proposal in comparison to that of Stubbs and Sidney.

1.6.3 Philip Sidney's letter to the Queen

Another example of a document which discusses the marriage issue is Philip Sidney's letter to the Queen in 1580 in which he attempts to dissuade Elizabeth from marrying the

⁷² Ibid., p. 331.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 331.

Duke of Anjou, as does Stubbs in his pamphlet. Indeed, Sidney and Stubbs express the same fear of such a marriage and both neglect its potentially beneficial consequences. A comparison between the letters of Sidney and Bacon is interesting as they were contemporary Elizabethan statesmen. Sidney, despite his political inclinations—such as when ‘he accompanied Edward Fiennes de Clinton to sign the treaty of Blois’⁷⁴ and other missions—does not address political considerations in his letter, which he limits to religious matters. He begins by showing his deep respect for the Queen, writing that he is ‘laying himself at her Majesty’s feet’.⁷⁵ He assures the Queen that his words come ‘from the deep well-spring of most loyal affection’.⁷⁶ He then begins his commentary on the proposed marriage by suggesting that ‘it will be unprofitable to the Queen, and that people will see her take a husband, a Frenchman and a Papist’.⁷⁷ Mears mentions that ‘Sidney shares Stubbs’ political and religious outlook, in that he identifies England as a godly realm under attack from Catholicism at home and abroad, and argues that the marriage would only worsen the situation by weakening the loyalty of Elizabeth’s Protestant subjects and drawing Catholics further into disobedience’.⁷⁸ This is true, since both writers list a number of obstacles arising from the depiction of Catholics as untruthful. Sidney and Stubbs respond similarly in regard to Catholicism and the danger to England, but unlike Stubbs, whose religious zeal was the cause of his punishment,

⁷⁴ H. R. Woudhuysen, ‘Sidney, Sir Philip (1554-1586)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) Online edn, May 2005

<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25522>> [accessed 5 Aug 2008]

⁷⁵ Philip Sidney, *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, eds. by Katherine Duncan-Jones & Jan Van Dorsten (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 46.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁷⁸ Natalie Mears, ‘Council, Public Debate, and Queenship: John Stubbs’ the Discoverie of Gaping Gulf’, *The Historical Journal*, 44, no. 3 (September, 2001), pp. 629-650 JSTOR

<<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0018-246X%28200109%2944%3A3%3C629%3ACPDAQI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-S>> [accessed 3 March 2008], p. 646.

Sidney did not receive severe punishment, probably because of his contribution to important political missions. However, both cases reflect how punishment was likely to follow an expression of opinions which angered state officials.

As mentioned above, one of the main differences between Sidney and Bacon was the former's use of words where he made his opinions anger the state officials. For example, Sidney does not consider that his objection is to a possible husband for the Queen. He chooses to disapprove of the marriage and does not attempt to offer solutions to any of the objections which he raises. Sidney concentrates on the religious difference between the Queen and her suitor and, as noted above, makes it clear that she would be marrying a Frenchman and a Catholic. He clearly believes that such a marriage would achieve no useful purpose, whether political or religious. Sidney then raises the subject of the French massacres, alluding to them as one of the reasons why the marriage would not be suitable. He says of the Duke of Anjou that 'his brother made oblation of his own sister's marriage, the easier to make massacres of our brethren in belief: that he himself, contrary to his promise, and all gratefulness, having his liberty and principal estate by the Huguenots' means, did sack Lacharists, and utterly spoil them with fire and sword'.⁷⁹ Mentioning 'oblation' could reflect how Protestants were treated like victims who had to be eradicated, while 'fire and sword' reflect how dangerous Anjou's brother is. Sidney considers that he cannot be trusted and that his actions against the Huguenots are evidence of his cruel heart; for him, the massacres of Protestants are a reason not to trust the French.

Sidney's other concern about the Catholics is to do with their leader the Pope whom he sees as unworthy of trust and a source of trouble: 'the other faction, most

⁷⁹ Sidney, *Miscellaneous Prose*, pp. 291-292.

rightly, indeed, to be called a faction, is the Papist'.⁸⁰ The remainder of his letter concentrates on Anjou's negative personal characteristics. He attempts to persuade the Queen that Anjou cannot be 'a man in person' and that he is disqualified because of his religion. Therefore, Sidney differs from Bacon in not giving consideration to the fact that the Duke is of a royal family. Bacon tries to approve the marriage by listing the possible disadvantages followed by a solution to each issue, appearing to suggest that the marriage would probably be a success, while Sidney only lists the disadvantages without exploring their resolution. He first denies Anjou the characteristics of conventional manliness, which are similar to those represented by the image of manhood which the *Chronicles* and Marlowe assert in their construction of what manhood means to them and how it distinguishes the English from others, such as the French. Sidney argues that Anjou is not consistent since he alternately seeks the hand of the King of Spain's daughter and that of Elizabeth; these ideas seem to provide evidence that Anjou is prone to being carried along on every wind of hope and that he is distracted.⁸¹ Sidney also reminds the Queen that being of royal blood would not help Anjou to be recognized in England: 'if Anjou does come hither, he must live here in far less reputation than his mind well brook'.⁸² Sidney concentrates on the question of manhood to show dissatisfaction with such a person, mentioning repeatedly the origins of the French Duke and his religion. Unlike Sidney, Bacon develops his argument by looking in turn at the areas and individuals that the marriage could influence. He starts with the Queen and then moves to the Duke before considering Spain, the Pope and Mary. Bacon's development of the marriage issue step by step grows to include all elements involved in the marriage.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 291.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 294.

⁸² Ibid., p. 296.

It can be said that Sidney's definition of manhood is strongly stressed in his letter. Sidney frequently talks about the Duke's manhood, probably in order to indicate that Anjou is unsuitable as a potential husband for the Queen. Sidney appears to be saying that Anjou is not man enough to keep an oath because only a true man can be trusted. He demeans Anjou by defining manhood in terms of trust and reliance, which Anjou does not have. Sidney also insinuates that Anjou, being a Catholic, cannot be trusted. An echo of such a representation of Catholics can be seen in Marlowe's play where Navarre expresses how difficult it is to trust Catholics by referring to: 'the proud disturbers of the faith, I mean the Guise, the Pope, and King of Spain' (*MP*, XVII, 3-4). Sidney elaborates this point by comparing Catholics with Protestants: 'fear hath as little show of outward appearance, as reason, to match you together; for in this estate he is in, whom should he fear, his brother? Alas! His brother is afraid, since the King of Navarre is to step into his place'.⁸³ Sidney distinguishes Protestants from Catholics in that French royalty lacks the courage to face Protestant figures, as he explains when saying that Navarre is more courageous than the frightened King and thus falls short of true manhood, which disqualifies the Duke from marrying the Queen. It is clear from Sidney's account that manliness also means trustworthiness and religiosity. Neither quality exists in Anjou, in Sidney's opinion. After considering all the implications of the marriage, Sidney sums up by saying, 'as for this man, as long he is but Monsieur in might, and a Papist in profession, he neither can, nor will, greatly shield you'.⁸⁴ If this has any meaning, it must reflect the twin relationship between Anjou and the Pope as enemies to the Queen, according to Sidney.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 298.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 303.

1.6.4 Stubbs, Bacon, and Sidney

Each of these three works by Stubbs, Bacon and Sidney is a useful example of how responses differed to one of the central issues of the late sixteenth century, Elizabeth's marriage with Alençon/Anjou. Each writer approaches the subject of marriage differently. Sidney expressed his opinion in a way which enraged the authorities. Although religion and politics during the late sixteenth century in England or France were inseparable, Stubbs concentrates on religion at the expense of politics; thus it is not surprising to find such opinions opposed to that of Bacon since Stubbs was a Puritan whose writing focused on religious features only. It seems that the punishment for both Sidney and Stubbs, with the difference in the degree of punishment between the two, illustrates the impossibility of separating religion from politics in that period and shows how cautious a discussion is required of such sensitive issues. It also indicates how interference in state business appears to have been unacceptable to the Elizabethan regime. For Sidney, despite the punishment, there were suggestions that the Queen may have resented his absence after his retreat from the Court during the first half of 1580.⁸⁵ Furthermore, Sidney 'kept access to her Majesty as before'⁸⁶ which does indicate a friendship between Sidney and the Queen.

The example of the proposed marriage between the Queen and the Duke of Anjou is significant for several reasons, not least because it asserts the contemporary importance of the combination of politics and religion. In addition, these three authors relate their arguments directly to the French wars between Catholics and Huguenots, so that through

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 34.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 34.

a consideration of how Marlowe's contemporaries discussed the Elizabeth/Anjou marriage, we can explore some of the factors that governed the relationship between France and England. Stubbs demonstrates his concern that the acceptance of the French suitor would be followed by the destruction of the Church of England and his fear that the English Protestant identity would be changed as it was replaced by French Catholicism, while for Bacon this would not have been the case.

1.7 Marlowe and Foxe

If we return to Marlowe's play, in which contemporary political and religious circumstances play a major role, we can compare Marlowe's account of the massacre with another work that foregrounds the political and religious elements. John Foxe wrote one of the most famous works of the Elizabethan period, and his book of martyrs, entitled *Acts and Monuments* (1563), contains some accounts of the massacre at Paris. It is worth considering how Foxe represents the events of the massacre in order to compare his representation with Marlowe's play as this comparison will show the reactions of the characters to the killing and hatred. Foxe's work was influential on contemporary writers, probably including Marlowe. Foxe describes how tragic and abhorrent the incident was, and this is all related to the evilness of 'the bloody butchery of the Romish Catholics in Orynge, against the Protestants'.⁸⁷ Foxe focuses on religious differences, particularly anti-Catholic sentiment, as he represents the characteristics of the Catholics in their brutality against the Protestants. He discusses the period before the massacre when he alludes to the viciousness of the Catholics who 'break into the Protestants houses, and

⁸⁷ John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (London: John Day, 1563) EEBO
 <http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:34> [accessed 7 August 2008] p. 2152.

there without mercy kill man, woman and children: of whom some being spoiled and naked they threw them out of their lofts into the streets [...], some they smothered in their houses with smoke, with sword and weapon, sparing none, the carcasses of some were threw to doges which was in 1570 in the reign of Charles IX'.⁸⁸ A similar depiction is given in Marlowe's play when the Protestants are massacred in a violent way: for instance, Anjou (Henry III), during the massacre, orders the slaughter of Coligny's servants (*MP*, V, 25). This demonstrates the writers' desire to promote Protestant propaganda to the point of showing the wickedness of Catholics. By that we mean that Marlowe and Foxe both present brutal descriptions of Protestants being killed to support the Protestant cause that Catholics perpetrated massacres in the name of their religion.

Foxe's account of the massacre follows his short account of the malevolence of the Catholics in which he prepares the reader for what is to come; he then discusses the massacre at Paris, stating that, 'after long troubles in France, the Catholic side foreseeing no good to be done against the Protestants by open force, began to devise how by crafty means to entrap them' (2153).⁸⁹ He argues that these 'crafty means' take two forms: the first is the planned massacre, and the second is to arrange a marriage between Navarre and the King's sister. These accounts given by Foxe resemble those of Marlowe who also portrays the marriage as the first trap which would aim at eradicating Protestants and reveal how deceitful Catholics are. Through his relation of the marriage to the events that occur afterwards, we learn that Foxe claims that the marriage is a lie and a pretence. This seems to be a Protestant point of view as it seeks to link the marriage with the eradication of the Huguenots and to show the danger of the Guises; Marlowe also makes the link

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 2152.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 2153.

clear in his play when his Coligny curses the Guises, who seek the Huguenots' death, and suggests how fatal the marriage had become to all of them (*MP*, III, 37-38).

There is a difference between the work of Foxe and that of Marlowe. While Foxe concentrates on the events and the cruelty of the Catholics without stressing the people involved, Marlowe is more concerned with depicting the individuals involved in these dramatic events because of the need to construct a drama rather than describe events like Foxe does. Regarding the death of the Queen of Navarre, Foxe begins his account by reporting that 'to this pretended marriage, it was devised that all the chiefest Protestants of France should be invited, and meet in Paris. Among whom first they began with the Queen of Navarre'.⁹⁰ Foxe shows how the King and the Catholic figures insisted that the Queen of Navarre should attend the marriage ceremony as she was 'allured by many fare words to repair unto the King, consented at length to come, and was received at Paris, where she after much ado, at length being won to the Kings mind, and providing for the marriage, shortly upon the same fell sick, & within five days departed'.⁹¹ Foxe's idea is that if she had not attended, she would not have been killed. Foxe maybe uses the verb 'allure' as a symbol for showing Catholics as desiring to entrap Protestants when they attempt to persuade the Queen. Foxe discusses the nature of her death, saying that it was 'not without suspicion, as some said, of poison. But her body being opened, no sign of poison could there be found, save only that a certain Poticary made his brag that he had killed the Queen, by certain venomous odours and smells by him confected'.⁹² Foxe, then, does not allude to any killing by any Catholic royalist although he may imply it. He only says that the Queen fell sick and died a few days later. Furthermore, Foxe also does

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 2153.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 2153.

⁹² Ibid., p. 2153.

not relate the apothecary to any specific person. Foxe's account strongly suggests that the death occurred following the marriage, while Marlowe's suggestion about the poisoning scene may serve his dramatic purpose in that he stresses Guise's instrumental role. Other than Marlowe's own choice of depicting the poisoning scene, for example, there are rumours, as Foxe himself states, that the Queen was poisoned, but Foxe does not name the person responsible. Roelker also reports that such rumours about the poisoning are unsupported by evidence.⁹³

It remains, then, a matter of Protestant propaganda to choose to ascribe the poisoning to Catholics in order to support the Protestant cause; Marlowe uses this claim to present a possible link within the French wars of religion. Marlowe makes a strong link between the Queen's death and the marriage, having the admiral admit that 'these are the cursed Guisians/ That do seek our death/ O, fatal was this marriage to us all' (*MP*, III, 37-38). Thus, the admiral directly implicates the Catholics and reveals the killer as a person sent from the Guises. Marlowe makes this link in order to involve the Catholics in the evil schemes as part of the Protestant propaganda. These accounts help us to see how Marlowe depicts the marriage as the cause of the Protestants' loss of the Queen of Navarre and Coligny's injury.

1.8 Catholics

Anti-Catholic sentiment in Marlowe's play is evident from the beginning and increases as the Guises are presented as an extremist Catholic family. But before the end of the play, there is an offer of reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants when Henry III

⁹³ Nancy L. Roelker, *Queen of Navarre: Jeanne d'Albret 1528-1572* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 374.

becomes a friend of Navarre and Queen Elizabeth, asking the former to send greetings to Elizabeth by expressing his 'eternal love to thee/ and to the Queen of England specially' (*MP*, XXIV, 67-68). This moment in which peace is offered between Catholics and Protestants could reflect some kind of wish for reconciliation which suggests that the main obstacles were rather Guise and, behind him, the Pope and Spain. Marlowe may have wished to indicate that peaceful co-existence was desirable between Catholics and Protestants. Furthermore, the collaboration between Henry IV and Navarre seems broader in that it involves both France and England against Spain and Rome: 'tell her, for all this, that I hope to live/ which if I do, the papal monarch goes/ to wrack and antichristian kingdoms falls' (*MP*, XXIV, 57-59). The words reflect the necessity of facing the common enemy of Henry III and England. The peace which Marlowe mentions at the end of his play brings us to a consideration of the question of peaceful Catholics.

In the political life of England, there was an understanding that the Queen herself would not tolerate any attempt to shake the basic concept of the Protestant state, but if the Catholics were peaceful and did not attempt to oppose the state or the Queen, then she would tolerate them. There is evidence that at least one Catholic was considered by the Queen to be a good Christian. In a letter dated 11 June 1575, John Baptista Castagna, late Archbishop of Rossano, Nuncio at Venice to Ptolemy Galli, Cardinal of Como,⁹⁴ refers to the Prior of England, Sir Richard Shelley, who was loyal to the Roman Church but was also a respectful person. Despite his allegiance to the Pope, the Queen does not consider him an enemy as quoted from *CSP*:

⁹⁴ The letter is relating to English affairs. See *Calendar of State Papers, Relating to English Affairs, Preserved Principally at Rome, in the Vatican Archives and Library*, vol. 2 (1572-1578), ed. by James McMullen Rigg (London: HMSO, 1926), p. 206.

Although the Queen knows that he will not live in England because he is altogether minded to live under the obedience of the Roman Church, and to that extent not to recognize her, nevertheless she believes that in no other respect is he her enemy, and that he has never made any attempts or machination against her; and while she counts not on him as for her and her side, as she would wish, yet he is not so odious to her as the other exiles that are her professed enemies. (Vat. Arch. Nunt. di Venet. Vol. xvi. ff. 308-9)

It appears that Sir Richard did not have a rebellious attitude towards the Queen. Despite his loyalty to his church and to the Pope, he was not an enemy, nor did the Queen consider him so, which suggests that as long as Catholics did not oppose the Queen, there would be no unnecessary oppression since the differences in religion could be controlled by a wise policy. The opposite occurs in the case of Stubbs, whose words were troubling to the state.

The real enemy was probably not the Catholics but actually any individual or faction that opposed the state. This would depend on the situation as it might be Catholics or others who acted in a threatening way. In the following example, the same John Baptista writes another letter to the Cardinal of Como.⁹⁵ These accounts discuss the Queen and how she treats others. This treatment demonstrates that her enemies are those who oppose her, not necessarily Catholics because some Catholics did not oppose her. Furthermore, the letter demonstrates the Queen's attitude towards the Puritans, who seem to have been troublesome:

I am sorry that the Prior of England, of who I wrote at length [11 June] had no sooner arrived at Rome than, by what I hear, he fell seriously ill, and has not been able to speak to the Pope; for it would have been much to the purpose that he should have spoken; because it is understood that in England, besides that sect called Puritans, which was born some time ago and gave trouble, there recently arose another of the worst description, to the disgust, it seems, of that Queen, who has intelligence and letters; and that she has begun to liberate some of the imprisoned Catholics on the sole condition that they acknowledge her as Queen, putting no constraint upon them

⁹⁵ This letter, quoted from *CSP*, is dated 6-13 August, 1575 in Venice. See *ibid.*, pp. 212-213.

in the matter of religion; so that perchance God is about to turn His eyes towards that realm- 6-13 August, 1575.

(Vat. Arch. nunt. di Venet. Vol. Xvi. f. 328)

In the letter cited above, Castagna suggests that the Puritans have caused difficulties to the state with their opinions; and in such accounts, he clearly indicates that the Queen is concerned about the rise of Puritanism and the potential trouble it could cause to the state. Not all the Puritan values were problematic: for example, they deeply disapproved of Catholicism, as did their own Protestant government. However, the problem was in their persistence and the sharpness of expression of their opinions. In contrast to this attitude to the Puritans, Castagna's letter indicates the tolerance of the Queen for those Catholics who recognized her as their sovereign and did not oppose her.

The contrasting examples of the Puritans and the Catholics reveal different approaches to religious differences in the Elizabethan period. Marlowe's play is also a discussion of how such circumstances can be employed in order to achieve stability and profit the state. There were many circumstances, religious and political, which governed the way the government dealt with matters of state. As noted above, there is at the end of Marlowe's play an offer of peace between Catholics and Protestants. Navarre becomes King Henry III's friend. This could depict a strong desire to overcome enmity and also represents a possible desire on the part of Marlowe to use the play to improve understanding between Protestants and at least some Catholics. Such a claim can only be supported by looking at the reason why the conflict between Protestants and Catholics takes place in the first place. Marlowe clearly demonstrates that the bigoted Guises are the reason for the conflict since Henry III's Catholicism is less injurious than Guise's who is the mastermind behind the massacre committed against the Protestants. Although

Marlowe represents Catholics as villains, the end of the play seems to suggest a possible reconciliation between Navarre and Henry III because Guise is not there. Marlowe seems to bring diverse representations of such a relationship into his drama which makes it difficult to state a clear idea he conveys.

Some examples from the play demonstrate a kind of Catholic tolerance and regret for what they did to Protestants. This is seen in King Henry's speech with Navarre. Henry expresses his regret and offers his friendship to Navarre and Protestants by asking him to 'salute the Queen of England'.⁹⁶ This represents the possible reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants in which Henry, who used to be an extremist when he was killing the Protestants during the massacre, is no longer a strict Catholic and thus can initiate some kind of friendship with Protestants. Marlowe represents Guise as the extremist who is the opposite of King Henry. King Henry is the type of Catholic who can put aside his differences and exchange a possible friendship with Protestants which Marlowe represents at the end of his play as a positive step towards understanding between the two religions.

⁹⁶ *MP*, xxiv, 104.

Chapter Two

The Massacre at Paris

2.1 Introduction: the impact of the massacre in England and France

The previous chapter elaborated in depth the socio-political circumstances under which Marlowe was writing. Central to its arguments were discussions of French themes and of the Queen's possible marriage which demonstrated some of the socio-political and religious issues and reactions of the Elizabethan age. We also discussed Marlowe's play as part of the English response to themes concerning France when commenting, for instance, on the massacre or the early days of the Norman conquest of England, as detailed in Holinshed's *Chronicles*. A particular perspective on how the French were treated was achieved by considering Holinshed's *Chronicles* and the relevant section of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* in order to explore attitudes towards France and the massacre.

Many books and pamphlets were published in Europe discussing the events of the French wars of religion and their perceived cruelty. The massacre was described in terms of the utmost brutality. Versions of the event differed in the telling because of the diverse perspectives of the authors and the diverse forms in which its details were communicated to the people. In England, the sources of information on the massacre were various. Englishmen read about it in documents which reached them from Europe, including France. These were generally written by either Catholics or Protestant Huguenots. Some Protestants witnessed the massacre in France and escaped to other countries to tell the

story of what had happened.¹ English translations of French and Latin accounts of the massacre were also a source of news. Many sources in England depicted the massacre in a way which expressed sympathy for the Protestants who, according to many of the English, were victims. There is great diversity among the sources as to their support or condemnation of the massacre. Protestant sources include, for instance, Francois Hotman's *A True and Plaine Report of the Furious Outrages of Fraunce* (1573) and Jean de Serres' *The Three Partes of Commentaries Containing the Whole and Perfect Discourse of the Ciuill Warres of Fraunce* (1574). Reading parts of Serres' work show the Guises as a threat to Protestants and even the King of France himself. In one place Serres says that because of their reputation the Guises blamed the 'Lutheranes' who are actually planning to 'conspire to destroy him'.² Elsewhere, Serres also says that 'the Guises [...] arrogate to themselves the government of the kingdom.'³ It is not surprising to suggest that Marlowe followed this work when writing his play. Poole mentions that de Serres' work has been the target for scholars who have consistently sought to identify the source of Marlowe's play.⁴ Kocher, on the other hand, states that the first six scenes are known to have had a contemporary pamphlet source in François Hotman's work mentioned above,⁵ whereas there is no mention of any influence of De Serres. Furthermore, Kocher also counts Catholic pamphlets as among Marlowe's sources. It is clear that many accounts appeared, which reflects the significance of the massacre at that

¹ Kirsten Poole, 'Garbled Martyrdom in Christopher Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris*', *Comparative Drama*, 32, no. 1 (Spring, 1998), p. 1.

² Jeane de Serres, *The Three Partes of Commentaries* (London: Frances Coldocke, 1574)) EEBO < Unknown EEBO domain!/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:24042794> [accessed 10 November 2008] p. 52.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁴ Poole, 'Garbled Martyrdom', p. 23.

⁵ Paul Kocher, 'Contemporary Pamphlet Background for Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris*', I, *Modern Language Quarterly*, 8 (1947), p. 151.

time. Marlowe's sources, according to critics, are varied: he could have taken information on the play from different sources, whether Protestant or Catholic.

The main concern in this chapter is to cast light on Marlowe's play in comparison to the work of two French playwrights. In this respect, this study will explore three plays and the characters involved in the events of the massacre, concentrating on the most prominent character, Henry, Duke of Guise. The two plays to be compared with *The Massacre at Paris* are *La Tragédie De Feu Gaspard De Coligny* by Francois De Chantelouve⁶ and *La Guisiade* by Pierre Mathieu (1563-1621). These playwrights were Catholics whose works reflect their religious attitudes towards Protestants and their sympathy for Catholic France. Henry, third Duke of Guise was a very important figure who, along with his Catholic League, played a major role in the events of the massacre.⁷ Pierre Mathieu, poet, playwright and supporter of the Catholic League,⁸ wrote the *Guisiade* in 1589. Richard Hillman writes of Mathieu that 'in 1589, when he wrote *The Guisiade*, he was secretary to the Duke of Nemours, the half-brother of the Duke of Guise and governor of Lyons'.⁹ Mathieu was, then, at that time, involved in political service in France. As for Chantelouve, Hillman's accounts show that his work is known for its anti-Protestant ferocity.¹⁰ Chantelouve wrote *Coligny* in 1575 and was also a

⁶ The reference to both Chantelouve and Mathieu is taken from Hillman in which he states the lack of information on Chantelouve. His date of birth is not mentioned. See François de Chantelouve, *The Tragedy of the Late Gaspard de Coligny*, and Pierre Mathieu, *The Guisiade*, in *Carlton Renaissance Plays in Translation*, 40, trans. by Richard Hillman (Canada: Dovehouse Editions Incorporation, 2005), p. 23.

⁷ Henry, Duke of Guise (1550-1588), the son of François de Guise and Anne d'Este. He had full share in St. Bartholomew. His uncle the Cardinal's death in 1574, left him the most prominent member of his house. The Guises never took their eyes off the crown, and Guise's ambition was high. His murder was on the hand of King Henry III at Blois in 1588. See E. Armstrong, *The French Wars of Religion* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1892), pp. 54-55.

⁸ Ibid., p. 58.

⁹ Ibid., p. 58.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 23.

militant in the Catholic cause.¹¹ Both Chantelouve and Mathieu were Catholics who were supporters of their country, but they differ in the way they portray their heroes; in contrast, Marlowe's play describes the massacre led by Guise and his Catholic group against the Protestants in a series of dramatic and bloody events and the ultimate political victory of the Protestants.

2.2 The three plays as propaganda

It is possible to say that the aim of Marlowe's play differs from that of the other two. This is determined partly by the period in which the play starts and ends. Bakeless states that 'the material with which *The Massacre* deals covers a period of seventeen years'.¹² The action of the play begins on 18 August 1572 with the marriage of the Protestant future King Henry IV, now Duke of Navarre, with Marguerite de Valois, sister of Charles IX. It ends with the murder of Henry III in August 1589, the assassination of the Duke of Guise and Navarre's approach to the throne of France following Anjou's fatal poisoning. In comparison to the concerns of Mathieu and Chantelouve, this relatively long time period means that Marlowe can depict many events, including Guise and Protestant propaganda, while the aims of Mathieu and Chantelouve seem to be focused on more specific events, which it is their sole purpose to elucidate. The events of *The Guisiade* were set long after the accession of Henry III to the throne in 1574 until after the assassination of Guise on 23 December 1588. However, the actual date of the play's setting is indefinite. Hillman illustrates, in his translation of it, that the time and setting of the first act onwards are imprecise, but the action is obviously conceived as occurring between the Paris revolt

¹¹ Ibid., p. 25.

¹² Bakeless, *Tragical History of Marlowe*, p. 78

(the so-called barricades) of mid-May 1588 and the meeting of the national 'Estate' in Blois during the autumn and winter of that year.¹³ The play then seems to cover the period of a few years between the meetings which occurred in Blois and the assassination of Guise. As Hillman writes, the setting of *The Tragedy of the late Gaspard de Coligny* seems to range from 'the period immediately preceding the peace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (signed 8 August 1570), which is resolved upon by the King with his Council, to the day of the massacre in 1572'.¹⁴ The significance of that time-span lies in that Marlowe is concerned with presenting Guise at the expense of his propaganda. Unlike the two French playwrights, he depends on many events when writing his play, and his concentration seems to focus largely on Guise. The incidents in *The Massacre at Paris* present the power of Guise from the time of his marriage scheme until after his death when Navarre is to become the King. The short time-span for both Mathieu and Chantelouve is made to allow them to concentrate on one event for the purpose of propaganda, while the case of Marlowe, as a supposed Protestant writer, is not as strong as that of Mathieu and Chantelouve as Catholics because Marlowe is juxtaposing a piece of supposed Protestant propaganda with sympathy for Guise; whereas the French playwrights are able to present their propaganda clearly without confusion like that seen in Marlowe's play. The French playwrights focus on their heroes and represent them clearly in that each character is consistently represented. For example, Guise is religious throughout Mathieu's play and is not ambitious under any circumstances. The same thing goes for Chantelouve's character King Charles who, even when he discovers Coligny's treacherous actions, still shows his good intentions when he, reluctantly, decides to kill Coligny.

¹³ Hillman, *Carlton Renaissance Plays*, p. 183.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

This notion of short and long time-spans is developed from Esche's argument about Marlowe. In the introduction to his 1998 edition of Marlowe's works, Esche refers to the confusion over the treatment of the Catholics that Marlowe shows in his play, a confusion which is seen in the ambivalence manifested when the Duke of Guise is killed. Esche mentions that the play's events take place over more than a decade, 'but Marlowe's design seems to suggest equivalence between the massacre of the Protestants, which occupies the first part of the play, and the murder of the Guise brothers in the second'.¹⁵ Esche adds that 'more unsettling is the play's apparent sympathy for the murdered Guise brothers'.¹⁶ Esche thus suggests that Marlowe's treatment of Guise is sometimes similar to his treatment of the Protestants. It is even possible to add that Guise has actually dominated the first part of the play because he is responsible for the massacre and the practice of villainy is conducted by him. On the other hand, the feeling of sadness and sympathy that Esche identifies can be seen after Guise is killed, in the dialogue between Catherine and her son King Henry:

Catherine: I cannot speak for grief- when thou wast born,
I would that I had murder'd thee, my son!
My son! Thou art a changeling, not my son.
I curse thee, and exclaim thee miscreant,
Traitor to God and to the realm of France! (*MP*, XXI, 142-146)

Catherine states that Henry is a 'changeling son' to demonstrate that he is no longer her son because he let her down and that his mistakes are unforgivable. Catherine is extremely angry to the point of cursing her son to show that she thinks that he committed a great mistake by killing Guise. Because Catherine associates Guise with France, she considers her son as a traitor to the realm of France since Henry murdered Guise who is

¹⁵ Edward J Esche, *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 310.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

viewed as a metaphorical representation of the whole state of France. So by killing Guise, King Henry also kills France and the hope of a flourishing Catholicism. When her son disregards what she says, she expresses remorse in a way that reminds the reader of the fear of the Protestants' dominance, which Guise himself expressed before his death:

[...] Leave me alone to meditate.
 Sweet Guise, would he had died, so thou wert here...
 [...] who will help to build religion?
 The Protestants will glory and insult;
 Wicked Navarre will get the crown of France;
 The Popedom cannot stand, all goes to wrack...
 [...] sorrow seize upon my toiling soul!
 For, since the Guise is dead, I will not live (*MP*, XXI, 151-152, 154-157, 159-160)

Catherine demonstrates the danger posed by the Protestants: they will become strong because Guise is not there to stop them and, by Guise's death, there will be no equal power to face the Protestant tide. Not even the Pope can do anything about it because Guise is the only one who knew how to deal with Protestants. After Guise's death, she expresses the fear that there is no life for her, reflecting the great influence of Guise upon her. Marlowe's protestant propaganda is poorly constructed, according to Esche's argument, since there is room for sympathy for Guise in such supposed Protestant propaganda. Some critics like Briggs argue that calling the play Protestant propaganda 'ought to arouse suspicion, for in Marlowe's dramaturgy things are so seldom exactly what they seem'.¹⁷ Marlowe is far from unequivocal in his support for the Protestants as there is the sympathetic feeling for Guise he evokes towards the end of the play. Esche hits the target when he suggests that the section of the play which generates sympathy for Guise puts the audience in a dilemma. This is why Marlowe's work seems to carry a double meaning, as opposed to that of Mathieu and Chantelouve. Commenting on the

¹⁷ Briggs, 'Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*', pp. 258-259.

role of Navarre given by Marlowe, Kocher suggests that 'if Marlowe intended only to reassure and flatter a Protestant audience, he would surely have made Navarre a stronger figure'.¹⁸ By this, Marlowe belittles the importance of the Protestants by not, for example, giving more importance to Coligny or Navarre, and making Guise the dominant figure.

Chantelouve, on the other hand, is concerned with King Charles and Coligny, and therefore concentrates on them, whereas Mathieu's concern is Guise and Henry III, whom he therefore makes the focus of his play. For Marlowe, his desire to include many events may reflect his concern for depicting various events and situations in comparison to the French playwrights. Marlowe's propaganda should not allow sympathy for Catholic subjects. Like Mathieu, Chantelouve concentrates on a short, specific period of time in which he addresses his theme which concerns King Charles IX and Coligny. Mathieu also concentrates on Guise and manages to give details of the Duke's personality either through Guise's own speeches or by others who talk of him.

Guise, as a main character in Marlowe's play, represents a major concern for the Huguenots' stability. Marlowe's concern with his character is noticeable. Both Marlowe and Mathieu, through their critical or benign treatment of Guise, stress his importance as a figure who has influence over others. As a sign of Guise's importance, Weil states that 'all the soliloquies in the play are either related to or spoken by the Guise'.¹⁹ Furthermore, the importance of Guise can also be seen in the number of times his name is mentioned and by the fact that he has 307 lines to speak (24.82% of the play) and is on

¹⁸ Paul Kocher, 'Contemporary Pamphlet Background for Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris*', II, *Modern Language Quarterly*, 8 (1947), p. 101.

¹⁹ Judith Weil, *Christopher Marlowe: Merlin's prophet* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 86.

stage for 578 lines (44.83%).²⁰ In *The Massacre*, Guise actually speaks about sixty-five times throughout the play, on different occasions, while the other characters in the play mention his name around fifty-eight times, making him by far the most important character in these terms. These statistics reflect Marlowe's interest in presenting Guise as an essential figure in the play. The dominance of the discussions about Guise, whether by his allies or his enemies, echoes Guise's place as a dominant figure for Marlowe. His presence even exceeds that of Navarre who would have been the dominant character based on the notion that he represents the Protestants in a work which is supposed to be Protestant propaganda. Guise's name in the title of the play confirms his importance as the main character, and the number of times he is mentioned asserts his position as the main character who takes part in almost all the schemes against the Protestants.

2.3 Henry, Duke of Guise and Machiavellian villainy

Guise's presence in both the Marlowe and Mathieu plays about the St Bartholomew's Day massacre is eminent, but the differences in his treatment are also remarkable. The association of Guise with Machiavelli is an important aspect of Marlowe's play. Marlowe and Mathieu, regardless of their intentions, refer to Guise as a great protector of France. There are similarities as well as differences in Guise's character in the two plays. In *The Massacre*, some of the most controversial statements are uttered by Guise. On many issues he is represented as being related to Machiavelli and his schemes. Kocher declares that Marlowe is depicting the features of Machiavellianism in Guise: 'although a contemptuous atheist at heart (*MP*, II, 66-69), he feigns a burning Catholic zeal and a

²⁰David Potter, 'The Massacre at Paris and the Reputation of Henri III of France', *Christopher Marlowe and English Renaissance Culture*, ed. by Darryll Grantley & Peter Roberts (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), p. 74.

consequent desire to root out the Protestant heresy by force of arms'.²¹ Guise is thus a schemer and a Machiavellian. He is a typical, powerful Machiavellian who tempted Marlowe to write about his schemes and villainies. If there is a character similar to Guise in Marlowe's play, it is Catherine, the King's mother, who plans for evil in collaboration with Guise. She is the only one who does not give up fighting the Protestants.

The true villainy of Guise appears in Marlowe's play. His political power is strong. He is the only one who depends on Spain, and he repeatedly mentions Spain throughout the play: 'From Spain the stately Catholic/ Sends Indian gold to coin me French écuës' (*MP*, II, 61-61). It is possible to suggest that Marlowe makes use of the Spanish threat to shed light on possible combined Catholic schemes against Protestants and England as well. Marlowe may be implying that Spain presents a danger as much as Guise does. Marlowe allows the association of Spain, the Pope and Guise altogether to represent a triple Catholic threat to the Protestants. Kocher, on the other hand, suggests that Marlowe 'uses Spain as a hateful name to provoke easy hisses in an English theatre'.²² This is clear from Guise's language where Spain is seen as a source of danger. It is important for Marlowe to demonstrate Guise's nature as void of virtue in many places in the play, presenting a nature that depends on cunning and irreligiousness. Guise is seen as a character driven by ambition rather than religion, and his ambition is rooted in the political influence of Spain and the Pope. Virtue can neither be seen nor envisaged in Guise's actions, at least as Marlowe depicts his character. Guise is interested in what Skinner, in his discussion of Machiavellianism, calls 'the employment of effective

²¹Kocher, 'Pamphlet Background II', p. 309.

²²Ibid., p. 312.

military force'²³ and is ready to face the Protestants by defeating them in war. Guise, therefore, actually functions as a Machiavellian when expressing his fears that the Protestants might control the kingdom. Skinner mentions that Machiavelli 'emphasizes the role of sheer force in the conduct of government'.²⁴ Machiavelli clearly states in *The Prince* that 'anyone who sets out to play the part of a virtuous man on all occasions is bound to come to grief among so many others who are not virtuous',²⁵ so 'a Prince who wants to stay in power must necessarily learn to be other than virtuous, and must make use of his knowledge or not according to circumstances'.²⁶ Machiavelli asks Princes to be aware that, if they are virtuous, they will meet others who are not; thus they will have to act in certain ways in order not to lose what they have. Machiavelli seeks to establish strong Princes who will not be deceived and so will survive. Likewise, Guise's main concern in his political thought is to use violence and adopt vice rather than virtue in order to eradicate the Protestants and eliminate their danger. The necessity to implement anything other than virtue is important in order to overcome obstacles because then there would be a place for avoiding the wickedness of others who are not virtuous.

Marlowe's interest in presenting an image of Machiavelli is revealed in the play. For him, Machiavelli is truly represented in Guise; this is seen in the prologue of *The Jew of Malta*, a later play:

Albeit the world think Machevil is dead,
Yet was his soul but flown beyond the Alps,
And now the Guise is dead, is come from France...
(*The Jew of Malta*, prologue, 1-3)

²³ Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. 130.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 131.

²⁵ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. & trans. by Angelo M Codevilla (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), chap. XIV, p. 62.

²⁶ Ibid., XIV, p. 62.

Machiavelli never dies in Marlowe's plays; thus, when he writes that the world thinks Machiavelli is dead, it is an act of deceiving or misleading others because, rather than dying, he is transformed into other characters. Marlowe undoubtedly relates Guise to Machiavelli, but in Mathieu's play the mention of Machiavelli is made in reference to Henry III, near the end of the play, when Catherine tells her son Henry III that not even Machiavel would welcome him.²⁷ This is an indication that Henry is abhorrent, but most importantly, it is Guise's honesty and purity to which Mathieu draws attention. This imputation of a Machiavellian attitude either to Guise, in Marlowe's play, or to Henry III, in Mathieu's play, must reflect each writer's attempt to relate his character to evil, with the difference that Marlowe seems content to reveal his Machiavellian figure as powerful and most hated among Protestants, whereas Mathieu despises such a link with Machiavelli when he relates Henry to Machiavelli. Marlowe makes his Guise ready to pronounce evil against the Protestants. His role in the play is to exploit the marriage and he expresses his plans to kill the Protestants through the marriage:

If ever Hymen lowr'd at marriage rites,
 And had his alters decks with duskie lightes:
 If ever sun stain'd heaven with bloody clouds,
 And made it look with terror on the world;
 If ever day were turn'd to ugly night,
 And night made semblance of the hue of hell;
 This day, this hour, this fatal night,
 Shall fully show the fury of them all.
 (MP, II, 1-8)

The words Guise uses are gloomy and brutal. The repetition of words such as 'night' implies the clandestine nature of the plans to be enacted later. Furthermore, Marlowe hints at Guise's preparation for the massacre by using the expression 'hue of hell' which

²⁷ Pierre Mathieu, *The Guisiade*, in *Carlton Renaissance Plays in Translation*, 40 trans. by Richard Hillman (Canada: Dovehouse Editions Inc., 2005), II, i, 379.

may suggest what is to come in later events. The anticipation of something horrible is inevitable because the marriage and the massacre are closely related to Guise's scheming, by which he would make the marriage a starting point for his massacre. That intensity of language is followed by his first plan during the marriage when he decides to kill the Queen Mother by the use of poisoned gloves. It is also indicated in his attempts to eliminate the Protestants. The words he uses represent the unsteady relationship between the rivals, the Protestants and the house of Guise. Not surprisingly, his second step is the attempt to murder Coligny. Marlowe cleverly relates Guise to Machiavelli by means of scheming. Kocher, discussing the death of the Queen of Navarre, mentions that the historical fact is that 'the death of Joan (Jeanne) occurred on June 9, 1572 and the wedding on August 18 of the same year. Marlowe, on the contrary, chooses to begin his play with the wedding and follow it with the poisoning'.²⁸ Marlowe uses the poisoning scene as one event which is closely related to the massacre, whereas in history the poisoning scene occurs months before the wedding. Kocher comments that 'placing the poisoning scene after the marriage adds horror of perfidy and knits it more closely to the general holocaust of St. Bartholomew'.²⁹ It is obvious that such a dramatic amendment to historical fact may also help to depict Guise as the great schemer who is described as being behind the poisoning and then Coligny's murder. Marlowe cleverly implies that all the villainies are suggested by Guise in order to construct his villainous character.

One of Marlowe's principal considerations seems to be Guise's greed for the crown. Kocher mentions that Guise's interest in the crown was a fundamental tenet in all

²⁸ Paul Kocher, 'François Hotman and Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 56 (1941), p. 364.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

Protestant interpretations of his character,³⁰ as in Marlowe's play where Protestant characters also picture Guise as interested in the crown. Guise talks about the diadem of France that he 'will rend with his nails/ or mount the top with his aspiring wings' (*MP*, II, 45-46). Marlowe also places emphasis on the importance of disguise in committing evil deeds, as when Guise mentions that he is awake when others think he sleeps (*MP*, II, 48), and this idea of disguise or dissimulation has a larger significance within the play. This might be seen as a form of disguise in that he misleads others into making them believe that he is asleep because he plans at night when no one would suspect him. He produces one of the most controversial statements uttered by any of Marlowe's characters when he speaks the following lines, which suggest a Machiavellian attempt to exploit religion:

My policy hath fram'd religion.
Religion: *O Diabole!* (*MP*, II, 65-66)

This expression is an indication that Guise is an exploiter of religion. 'Diabole' refers to the devil; in other words, Marlowe is equating Guise with devilish behaviour. Marlowe's depiction of Guise fits well with his personality as a true Machiavellian whose actions are undertaken in pursuit of his hidden goals. It is important for Guise to adopt religion in order to avoid suspicions which may affect his reputation among his cousins. Thus, pretending to protect France against the Protestants, under the pretext of protecting religion, is a means which Guise adopts to eliminate the threat of the Protestants and is also a reminder of how he implements Machiavellian policy. When Guise gets rid of the Protestants, he is left with no threat to his position of strength which is based on support from Spain and the Pope in his bid to win the crown.

³⁰ Kocher, 'Contemporary Pamphlet II', p. 309.

Aside from ambition, Kocher also discerns in Guise, Machiavellian features like ‘his atheism, his religion and political hypocrisy, his murders, ambushments, and poisonings’.³¹ The ambition of Marlowe’s Guise is greater than that of Mathieu’s Guise. For Mathieu, Guise’s ambition is lawful since it is directed at protecting France. Ambition is related to Machiavellianism; thus, Marlowe attributes ambition to Guise to make him the most abhorrent character to the Protestants, since he seeks their destruction. Kocher also demonstrates that ‘Marlowe’s treatment of the relations between Guise and the Pope is not quite so shadowy’; it is clear that ‘Guise is expected to eradicate Protestantism and bind France “wholly to the see of Rome” ’.³² Marlowe, then, describes ‘Catholics as worshippers of show and appearance’, in Weil’s words,³³ and depicts the collaboration between Guise and leaders of other Catholic states as a sign of the conspiracy against Protestants. Marlowe’s depiction of Guise as being interested in the crown reflects the status of the play as Protestant propaganda, although in some places this status is somewhat ambiguous.

The contrast in the depictions of Guise by Marlowe and Mathieu is remarkable and obvious in many respects. In *The Massacre*, Guise’s desire for the throne is illustrated in his own words, and he himself declares that he wants to eliminate his cousins. Marlowe makes Guise untrustworthy in order to open the possibility of accusations being made against him by either Protestants or Catholics. His personality is strong, leaving him with no equivalent in the play in terms of ambition and scheming except for the Queen Mother, who is equally villainous. By contrast, Mathieu presents, in the personality of Guise, a uniquely religious man. This Guise, unlike Marlowe’s, does

³¹ Ibid., p. 314.

³² Ibid., p. 313.

³³ Weil, *Merlin’s Prophet*, p. 100.

not exploit religion but is actually religious. Mathieu is very careful to show his Guise as caring for his religion and reputation in order to eliminate any kind of suspicion concerning his character. An in-depth look at Guise's opening lines in Mathieu's *Guisiade* reveals exactly what type of man he is:

A lofty and a Christian heart never gives way
 To worldly vanities that would lead it astray
 It never listens to the siren-song advice
 Of those who, seeking for honours at any price,
 Ambition-driven, with doses of lethal brew,
 By crooked ways their fortunes purchase and pursue,
 Open the door to vice, and without fear or shame,
 Cloak what they do beneath religion's holy name (*The Guisiade*, I, i, 1-8)

The difference between the two Guises is clear and noteworthy. Whereas Guise's opening speech in Marlowe's play is dark and threatening, it is his religious belief which Mathieu stresses here. Guise honours the true 'Christian heart', and despises those who seek ambition by any means. Thus, Mathieu may well have been aware of the accusations against Guise and so attempts to show that such accusations are devoid of truth: his religious inclination is governed by love for his country. The striking difference between the two Guises is obvious when Mathieu's Guise despises those who are 'ambitious' and those who cloak themselves 'beneath religion's holy name'.

On the other hand, Guise in Marlowe's play is selfish and murderous, his only purpose being to satisfy his own desires. He clearly asserts the things he does and the blame which falls on others, talking, for instance, about implementing missions while the King is the one who takes the blame (*MP*, II, 75), whereas in Mathieu's play, he is shown as virtuous and honourable. Mathieu gives his Guise the qualities of a virtuous person who is not what others think him. Marlowe's Guise cares only about himself and exploits others in order to reach the top at their expense. His irreligious tone and exploitation of

religion reveal his Machiavellian soul, fed on cheating and pretence. It is important for Marlowe to stress Guise's irreligious tone because that identifies him with Machiavelli. By contrast, the Guise depicted in Mathieu's play is truly religious. Mathieu does his best to demonstrate that his Guise does not seek the crown. If Guise does show any hatred, it is targeted towards the Protestants. This is perceived as normal by the author, since the Protestants are the natural enemies of Catholics and such hatred does not tarnish Guise's reputation because it is an expression of his love for his country. Mathieu treats Guise as a person who loves his country and sacrifices his life for it:

It is not against my King, nor that royal flower
The lily of France, to challenge – or to devour...
But for the faith, for my King, to defend my land(*The Guisiade*, I, 27-28, 33)

In contrast to Marlowe's Guise, who speaks and acts in ways which identify him with wickedness, Mathieu's Guise is truthful and not Machiavellian in any way. The significance of that contradiction is obvious in the way Mathieu shows the background of Guise's character. Marlowe attempts to make his Guise unstoppable by constructing a political force devoid of religion, whereas Mathieu's Guise is surrounded by an aura of religiousness. Hillman also demonstrates that Guise, in Mathieu's play, 'must be established as the essence of purity of faith and selflessness'.³⁴ Mathieu defends his Guise by adding these features to his character to assert his true intentions.

Mathieu's treatment of Guise differs from Marlowe's in having Guise falsely accused of wanting the crown and stating that his interest is not directed towards it. Guise is, in fact, the scapegoat for Henry III's hatred and wickedness. Guise also confirms the fact that whenever his hand wielded sword or lance, it would be done for his Lord's sake and that of France (*The Guisiade*, I, 49-50). One point that Mathieu stresses in his

³⁴ Hillman, *Carlton Renaissance Plays*, p. 67.

defence of Guise is when Guise confirms and emphasizes his reputation, his name was damaged following the controversial claims that he had raised an army against the King. Here, Guise addresses these accusations to clear his name. In Marlowe's *Massacre*, Guise does not pay so much attention to his reputation. In *The Guisade*, however, he is more concerned with his reputation because Mathieu is interested in depicting a respectful image to his favourite character:

Before this evil disturbs us more seriously,
 And this sad fear acquires new intensity,
 I am resolved to make a stand against their game
 And will suffer ten thousand deaths to save my name(*The Guisade*, I, i, 117-120)

There is no doubt that Guise's moral status differs in many ways. One remarkable point is seen in his opening speech in *The Guisade*, when he refers to the desire of minions to kill him. He clearly states his own attitude and refers to the minions' hatred of the house of Lorraine, in his discussion of the King:

The King nurtures in his heart the wish inhumane,
 To slake his minions' thirst with the blood of Lorraine
 (*The Guisade*, I, 103-104)

This early mention of minions supports the idea that they are Guise's greatest enemies at the end of his life. In the plays of Marlowe and Mathieu, the minions instigate the King's removal of Guise. Mathieu shows the accusation of Henry III against Guise to be a lie uttered by a King who is not worthy of trust, who has neglected his kingdom and amused himself with minions, having no regard for his position or his country. While Mathieu elevates his Guise, he also says that Henry's personality is related to weakness and effeminacy, because he depicts Guise as holy while Henry allows minions to influence him to kill the holy man. All of this reflects Henry's behaviour, which is seen as corrupt, especially when Henry listens to minions rather than to his mother's wise advice. The

same narrative occurs in Marlowe's play, where minions turn the King against Guise and advise his murder. The types of accusation levelled against Guise by minions or the King seem to be the same in both plays. For example, in *The Guisade*, the conversation between the King and his mother reveals that such accusations are various. For instance, the King seems to be sure that Guise wants to 'occupy the royal throne' (*The Guisade*, II, i, 424) and that he is 'sure of their royal feeling' (*The Guisade*, II, I, 429). Mathieu presents Guise as a victim betrayed by his King.

Marlowe's Guise likes to impose himself, even on the King, telling him that he means to muster all the power he can to overthrow the Protestants and that the King need not fear his army's force because it is there for his safety. It is not surprising that we see in the King's ironic response a sign of concern about Guise's true motives:

Guise, wear our crown, and be thou King of France,
And as dictator make or war or peace
Whilst I cry *placet* like a senator!
I cannot brook thy haughty insolence:
Dismiss thy camp, or else by our edict
Be thou proclaim'd a traitor throughout France
(*MP*, XIX, 54-59)

King Henry is worried by Guise's attempt at dominance, acting as if he were King except that he does not wear a crown; this is why the King ironically invites Guise to wear the crown because he is making decisions without Henry's consent or knowledge. Guise's response reveals his cheating manner; in an aside following the King's serious accusations, he informs the audience that he 'must dissemble' (*MP*, XIX, 60). Thus, his ambition leads him to lie in order to hide his real intentions. While Marlowe depicts Guise as fitting the Machiavellian mould, Mathieu manages to elevate his Guise in a way that makes him stand alone as the greatest shield of France, manifesting scarcely any type

of ambition. Here Mathieu is interested in presenting a stable character who neither trespasses on others' property nor pronounces any desire to do more than restore his religion.

It is clear that Guise's soliloquies differ between the plays in depicting how he reacts to the circumstances that surround him. Perhaps the necessity for such soliloquies in Mathieu's play is greater than in Marlowe's because of the need to stress Guise's innocence in the face of the King's accusations, which suggests that Mathieu is aware of these accusations and attempts to defend him against them. When the King continues to condemn Guise and to accuse him of being a traitor who seeks the crown, the method used by Mathieu to counter such accusations is to have Guise speak a soliloquy. In Marlowe's play, Guise is exposed from the beginning; any soliloquy he utters adds nothing to his evil character since he is already a villain with or without the assertions of the soliloquy. 'The grand aim of the Duke's policy is defined early in the drama as the diadem of France'.³⁵ Marlowe is able to link Guise with Machiavelli through this issue. Guise seeks power represented by the crown, so Marlowe relates Guise to Machiavelli in order to stress their shared taste for control. The Protestants show no interest in the crown but aim only at being on good terms with the royal family. This marks a great difference between Guise and the Protestants, who are presented unlike the Catholics as not targeting the crown, which Marlowe uses as a sign of their pure intentions.

Mathieu concentrates on Guise's holiness almost as if to make him seem like a monk and so to put aside any notion of his being interested in the crown. Mathieu makes sure that Guise is tainted with no Machiavellian traits. Although Marlowe's position is ideologically ambivalent, here, he represents the Protestant view that Guise seeks power

³⁵ Kocher, 'Pamphlet Background II', p. 309.

and the crown, so that he is associated with Machiavelli. It is worth presenting a comparison between Marlowe and Mathieu regarding how each one of them approaches the aftermath of Guise's death scene. In Mathieu's play, the lines in the mourning scene are uttered by Guise's mother:

You leave France to languish without your watchful eye.
 You have left everywhere your name's memorial;
 But always in my heart I'll keep your funeral.
 (*The Guisade*, V, 2122-2124)

Guise's mother says that life has ended for her: 'have you then murdered him? Then also murder me' (*The Guisade*, V, 2103). Mathieu makes it obvious that France without Guise is dead; saying that France 'languishes' is to link Guise's destiny with that of France. This could also be seen as a declaration that France will remain Catholic even after Guise's death: his name is important as it will be remembered all over France. Mathieu may have been aware of what Protestants might do following Guise's death; thus he asserts that France will remain Catholic through a sense of sympathy for Guise that has to be remembered forever. The similarity between this speech in Mathieu's final act and Marlowe's scene is remarkable, since Marlowe allows mourning for Guise. This occurs when Catherine, the King's mother, expresses deep sorrow for Guise's death. First she tells her son that he is not her son. Marlowe makes Guise closer to Catherine than her son simply because her son is a traitor to God and to the realm of France (*MP*, XXI, 146), an indication that her care for France is stronger than her son's. Marlowe also affirms that Catherine's attitude indicates her love for her country, similar to Guise's. Marlowe implies that it is Catherine and Guise who truly love France. The feeling of sorrow that Marlowe creates highlights the potential threat which has ended with Guise's death. Mathieu also stresses the fact that Catherine's love for Guise is related to Guise's love for

the kingdom. Mathieu and Marlowe alike could be suggesting that Catherine's love for Guise is an indication of their shared love of France, which binds them together. It is important for both playwrights to stress Guise's determination, so they consider Catherine's love for Guise as equivalent to love of France. But such suggestions by critics can imply a different kind of love. For Marlowe and Mathieu, it seems that they depict this love as a measure of patriotism, because Guise's mother and Catherine both frequently evoke France when talking about Guise, who, throughout Mathieu's play, is depicted as if he were France itself. Such an image might reflect Mathieu's desire to inspire his audience to love Guise as much as France by equating him with France.

Marlowe's Catherine de Medici, mother of the French King, parallels Mathieu's Madame de Nemours, as both pass comment on Guise after he dies. Such a similarity suggests that Marlowe may have read Mathieu's play. A comparison of the texts reveals many similarities, most notably when in their representations of sorrow for Guise. In Mathieu's play, the messenger who sends the news of her son's murder is parallel to Catherine's voice in Marlowe's play. When comparing Guise's mother with the messenger, who is closer to Catherine in his role of reporting the death and the sorrow felt for Guise, the resemblance is seen by considering the way this sorrow is expressed. The messenger's role in *The Guisiade* reveals how Guise was wickedly cheated by the King, a similar function to Catherine in Marlowe's play when she calls the King a traitor:

The King, who long disguised his vengeful purposes
 With shows of love and kindness, faithful promises,
 Ordered that great Duke summoned to the Council meeting
 (*The Guisiade*, V, i, 2035-2037)

The messenger explains to Guise's mother the whole story and that the meeting with Guise was nothing more than a ploy to facilitate his murder, he shows how the

courageous Guise ‘died by the hand of a traitor, a perjurer’ (*The Guisiade*, V, i, 2091). Guise’s mother expresses a similar attitude to Catherine as she exclaims in front of the messenger: ‘have you, then, murdered him? Then also murder me’ (*The Guisiade*, V, i, 2103), while Catherine says that ‘since the Guise is dead, I will not live’ (*MP*, XXI, 160). Both feelings for Guise’s death echo a fear of Protestant advancement. Both Marlowe and Mathieu represent a number of characters expressing sorrow for Guise’s murder in order to allow it to be seen as tragic. Elsewhere, Guise’s mother articulates grief similar to Catherine’s when addressing Guise, saying ‘you leave France to languish without your watchful eye’ (*The Guisiade*, V, i, 2122). The importance of Guise as being watchful is stressed as he is the one who recognizes Protestants as enemies, unlike the King and before him his brother Charles. King Charles and King Henry both seem to have repented what they did against the Protestants; for instance, Charles admits his wrongdoings when he tells Navarre: ‘I have deserved a scourge, I must confess/ yet is there patience of another sort/ than to misdo the welfare of their King’ (*MP*, XIII, 9-11), whereas Guise ‘is entirely unrepentant’.³⁶

Perhaps the level of remorse for Guise reveals his political weight and its importance in the play. In Mathieu’s *Guisiade*, Madame de Nemours says:

For my God, dispenser of justice, will not fail
 Your fury, your livid tyranny, to assail:
 Like a second Cain, you shall be dogged at your heels
 By the ghost of my child, as you sit at your meals
 The blood of that noble Duke shall swell up your veins
 (*The Guisiade*, V, i, 2143-2147)

³⁶Clayton G. Mackenzie, ‘The Massacre at Paris and the Danse Macabre’, *Papers on Language & Literature*, 43.3 (Summer, 2007) Expanded Academic ASAP
<http://find.galegroup.com/itx/infomark.do?&contentSet=IAC-Documents&type=retrieve&tabID=T002&prodId=EAIM&docId=A168857754&source=gale&srcprod=EAIM&userGroupName=leicester&version=1.0> [accessed 8 August 2008] p. 311.

These strong words, depicting the King as a second Cain, reveal Guise's murder to be as heinous as that committed by Cain. It also denotes that he did not kill an enemy but a brother, just as Cain slew Abel. This is somewhat similar to Catherine's statement when expressing her extreme anger. Guise's mother's statements remain stronger because of her wish for the King's death for his actions against her son. The expectation that God will avenge such a hateful action is clearly manifested. She is confident that her son's blood will not have been spilt in vain. Mathieu adds to Guise's character an attraction of a different kind. Guise's intensity is directed only at the Protestants and the enemies of France, but this intensity is met with disrespect and hatred by the King, which Mathieu enlarges upon as a disaster.

Guise does not mirror the King's ungrateful attitude but meets it with respect and good intentions. Mathieu shows Guise's purity to be more powerful than the King's ungrateful suspicions. This purity is reflected in his intentions to bear no grudge against the King, no matter what the King intends:

[...] It is told me that the favour of the King,
His faith and oath, are aimed at me, part of his plotting-
That they wish to root out the whole race of Lorraine,
Intend my own murder; that a death inhumane
Awaits me in the private study of the King, where
He summons me this morning to close some affairs
All that is mere wind, a frivolous misconception
I am not daunted, for I suspect no deception
The other day he balked at doubts he was sincere,
Saying, "Good Cousin, for God's sake, who is more dear
To me than you [...]"
(*The Guisiade*, IV, ii, 1821-1831)

Mathieu gives great credit to Guise: he makes him trust a King who happens to be a traitor. Guise here is aware of the King's intentions, which he has heard from others, but

still trusts him. It is not even a usual murder but one which Guise describes from what he has heard as ‘inhuman’, yet he trusts what the King says to him when he greets him. Guise hears the rumours but pays no attention to them; although everybody knows about the scheme, he himself refuses to suspect his King. Guise declares that the King will not hurt him because he assures him of his love and calls him ‘good cousin’. That emotional moment shows the King to be honest in his treatment of Guise until the sudden breaking of his oath makes him abhorrent. Marlowe makes Guise a scapegoat who was betrayed by the House of Valois, which represents the family of the King. Guise’s high principles and values, noble kindness and good intentions, in the eyes of Mathieu, make him a true martyr and cost him his life.

The conflict in Marlowe’s play is primarily one between Protestants and Catholics, which later becomes a clash among the Catholics. Meanwhile, Mathieu’s play concerns essentially a conflict between Catholics themselves and an elevation of one character over another. The significance of this can be seen in Mathieu’s endeavours to show the evil of Henry III and how he abuses his authority as King by targeting another Catholic figure, whom Mathieu depicts as a martyr. His concentration is on the person who murders Guise, Henry III, and that is why he makes it a purely Catholic conflict to allow his reader to see the difference between a true Catholic (Guise) and a false one (Henry III). Marlowe’s play depicts the decline of the Catholic League in two ways: the death of Guise and the submission of the Catholic royalists, represented by Henry, to the Protestants. Marlowe makes the Protestants victorious by showing that the Catholics themselves fight each other, and this is an emphasis on the unity of the former in comparison to the latter. This is why the conflict in his play occurs between Catholics and

Protestants, then becomes a confrontation between Catholics. For Marlowe, Guise seems more important than the Protestants because their leader becomes King only after Guise is murdered, not during his lifetime, which suggests that Guise is more powerful than the Protestants.

2.4 Coligny and King Charles

Each of the three plays celebrates its own protagonist. In *The Guisiade*, Mathieu takes as his main character and protagonist Henry Duke of Guise, while Chantelouve has Charles IX as his main character. Chantelouve presents the King as a meek person who is being exploited by the villainous Coligny. His depiction is that of a King for whom people feel sorry, while Coligny is shown to be a treacherous person who seeks to kill the King. Coligny was a very important figure in the history of the Protestants. His family came from La Bresse and was one of the oldest in the French nobility.³⁷ Partisan attitudes towards Coligny can be summarized from accounts given by certain Catholics. White recounts how a certain Le Laboureur, a Catholic priest, says of Coligny that ‘he was one of the greatest men in France ever produced, and I venture to say further, one of the most attached to his country’.³⁸ The papal legate Santa Croce describes Coligny as ‘remarkable for his prudence and coolness. His manners were severe; he always appeared serious and absorbed in his meditations’.³⁹ These are examples of Catholics expressing opinions of the Protestant Coligny free of hatred, but the attitudes represented by Mathieu and

³⁷ Eugène Bersier, *Coligny: The Earlier Life of the Great Huguenot*, trans. by A.H. Holden (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1884), p. 1.

³⁸ Henry White, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew* (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1868), p. 420.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 420.

Chantelouve are different: they did not favour him, and Chantelouve, in *Coligny*, expresses extreme hatred for him to underline Protestant troubles to King Charles.

In this comparison, we shall analyze the character of Coligny and determine his position in the plays, particularly in relation to how Guise is represented in both Marlowe's and Mathieu's plays. Mathieu neither mentions Coligny nor presents him as a character in his play, but his attitude towards the Protestants may be considered as representing his attitude towards Coligny since he does not favour any Protestant figure and despises them all. For example, he describes the Protestants as 'conspiring traitors' (*The Guisiade*, I, i, 100). Elsewhere he repeats the word 'conspirators' (*The Guisiade*, I, 248) and adds that King Henry, as his mother says, 'should open his eyes and observe the heretic furor, the reason why they suffer from this civil horror' (*The Guisiade*, I, i, 283-84). Although Coligny is not among the characters in Mathieu's play, the descriptions of the Protestants must reflect on him. Whenever Protestants are referred to, Coligny is considered as responsible for the treacherous actions which are described.

In Marlowe's play, however, Coligny is involved in the play from the beginning. If we consider how the massacre began with his murder, then an understanding of his significance for Marlowe can be seen. Although Marlowe does not give Coligny a significant role in the play as he is killed early, he still demonstrates Coligny's political speculations about the danger of the Guises. Marlowe attributes political cleverness to Coligny when he anticipates Guise's responsibility for the problems which follow the marriage ceremony. Regarding Marlowe's depiction of Coligny, Kocher states that 'Marlowe has stripped him of all force, and left him querulous and naïve'.⁴⁰ This is not fully true because, despite his short role, Coligny still gives political advice. For

⁴⁰ Kocher, 'Hotman and the Massacre', p. 367.

Marlowe, as for the Protestants, Coligny represents one pillar of the Protestant forces. Coligny represents inspiration for the Protestants in the play, apart from Navarre, but Marlowe also makes him a religious man to stress his Protestantism. In *The Massacre*, Coligny's role begins with a conversation with Navarre; they discuss Guise, following the controversial marriage between Navarre and the King's sister, Marguerite. Coligny tells Navarre: 'I marvel that th'aspiring Guise/ dares once adventure, without the King's consent/ to meddle or attempt such dangerous things' (*MP*, I, 35-37). Coligny is aware of Guise's schemes which indicates his political alertness. Although the discussion is about the marriage because the ceremonies have just ended, Coligny reveals his political consciousness by concentrating on the Guises and their danger. Coligny knows the Guise family is able to act according to what they desire without referring to the King. This shows their capability and that the King may not be the one who controls them.

Guise's political power is emphasized in Coligny's speech. Marlowe makes Coligny a political force—albeit a temporary one—in order to suggest that the conflict with the Catholics is inevitable, especially when they concentrate on talking about the danger of Guise instead of the marriage. This signals Coligny's important warnings that Guise may do anything, even without the King's consent (*MP*, I, 35-36), suggesting cleverness and precaution on the part of the expert Protestant. Marlowe depicts Coligny as a person who is aware of what Guise might do. When Guise implements the massacre, Marlowe's Coligny, even after his death, is remembered for his earlier warnings. Thus, Marlowe makes Coligny a significant Protestant character. Considering such claims about Coligny's cleverness, it is possible to suggest that Kocher's assertion that Marlowe did not give him the importance he deserved is not completely factual since Marlowe

followed history by placing Coligny's death prior to the massacre. If Marlowe had chosen to prolong the characterization of Coligny in order to give him a more effective role, he might have had to reconsider Guise's role too. Marlowe may have made Coligny's death quick to make the massacre more of an advantage to Guise since Coligny's death marks a victory for Guise in ridding France of one of her most prominent Protestant characters. In another political situation, Coligny also suggests to Navarre the reasons why the Guises would be more threatening:

My Lord, but did you mark the Cardinal,
The Guise's brother, and the Duke of Dumaine,
How they did storm at these your nuptial rites,
Because the house of Bourbon now comes in
And joins your lineage to the crown of France?
(*MP*, I, 46-50)

Marlowe cleverly illustrates the power of Guise and his greed for the throne. The Guise family is worried now that the house of Bourbon is related to the royal family and thus a fear is expressed of losing the crown to them.

The Guises do not speak but are introduced before they appear in the play, forewarning the audience of the nature of the Duke's character. Marlowe likes to manipulate his audience's sense of Guise's family, which is similar to his approach in *Edward II* when he also keeps the audience waiting before he reveals the villainy of Edward's wife and Mortimer. This technique is common in Marlowe's treatment of his characters where he either suggests his characters' power before they are introduced or reveals their villainy less quickly than he might have done. Marlowe also demonstrates Coligny's piety and martyrdom through the last moments of his life before he is killed. Coligny asks his killer to give him time to pray before he dies and asks God for forgiveness (*MP*, I, 28, 30.). Marlowe, by doing this, presents a picture of a pious

Protestant in comparison to the wicked, merciless Catholics who are shown as heartless and, above all, as having no respect for religion. The emphasis on Coligny's martyrdom and piety endorses Marlowe's picture of Protestants as godly and exemplary.

The difference between the depictions of Coligny by Marlowe and by Chantelouve is huge. In both plays Coligny fits well with the role given to him, whether in Marlowe's supposed Protestant propaganda or the Catholic propaganda. Marlowe's Coligny is careful in his dealings with his enemies as Marlowe depicts him as aware of the circumstances and the likely schemes of the Guises; in Chantelouve's play, Coligny is a villain whose character is similar to Guise in Marlowe's *Massacre*. Hillman demonstrates the resemblance of Marlowe's Guise with Chantelouve's Coligny: 'Coligny there strangely resembles Marlowe's version of his arch-enemy – a power-mad Machiavel aiming at the throne, an invoker of demons who cloaks his atheism in religion and an incorrigible schemer against the noble Charles IX and the heroic Duke of Guise'.⁴¹ Hillman's argument accurately analyses Coligny's characterization, and reflects how Chantelouve imputes scheming to Coligny in order to show the evil of the Protestants and their role in exploiting the King. Besides, the attempt to relate the villain to an interest in the crown is a feature of wickedness because it also means ambition and cunning.

Many aspects of Marlowe's Guise are similar to Chantelouve's Coligny. First, Coligny, in Chantelouve's play, argues about the existence of God:

And if there is any God upon whom to call
(For in my foul heart I believe in none at all),
Let him show his power, and pour upon my pate
(*Coligny*, I, i, 15-17)

⁴¹ Hillman, *Shakespeare and Marlowe*, p. 84.

Coligny clearly states that if there were a God, He would have helped him to overcome the King, after which he [Coligny] would relinquish all religion. This reminds us of how Guise talks about religion in Marlowe's play. Guise states that his policy 'framed religion', and Coligny here affirms his belief in none of the religions as a sign of his wickedness which cannot be suppressed. The atheistic sense in both Chantelouve's Coligny and Marlowe's Guise is indicative of the writers' desire to represent the enemy of his own religion as devoid of all religious belief and/or an exploiter of religion. Chantelouve's Coligny is similar to Marlowe's Guise in his persistence in being a villain. Chantelouve aims to denounce the Protestants and blame them for what they did to the King. Chantelouve depicts both Coligny and his religion as dishonest:

For if He were capable of doing anything,
 He would have caused me to triumph over the King;
 And seeing I had that precious Christ in my pocket,
 I should have had my will, with no Henri to block it.
 Henceforth all religion by me shall be renounced
 (*Coligny*, I, i, 27-31)

Chantelouve successfully creates the picture of a wicked Protestant who considers religion as a tool which he can exploit. Chantelouve might have in mind that Protestants are associated with Machiavellianism, of which the exploitation of religion is one feature.

Here is what Coligny says first:

Except that I must use the shadow of piety
 To mask my machinations aimed against royalty
 And since I well know it's a filthy enterprise,
 I've picked up in Geneva a vile pack of lies,
 Which, because on the outside it shows itself white,
 Though black as black within, fools the most erudite
 (*Coligny*, I, i, 33-38)

Chantelouve and Marlowe use the same technique. Coligny shows his evil characteristics by pretending to believe something but acting differently, by using 'piety' as a cover to secure his 'machinations' against royalty. He also tells lies which cannot even be recognized by 'the erudite' in an indication that his plans are well organized. It is possible to say that Geneva is used as a representation of a Protestant location that Chantelouve denounces. As well as the pretence of religion in Marlowe's *Guise*, which can be compared to the disguise of Chantelouve's Coligny, Henry III also reminds us of Coligny in the way he adopts a similar attitude when killing the Protestants: 'I am disguis'd and none knows who I am/ And therefore mean to murder all I meet' (*MP*, V, 5-6). Marlowe and Chantelouve, and even Mathieu, all suggest that pretence and disguise are tools used by evil characters to accomplish religious and political success. Marlowe presents different types of villainy in terms of Machiavellian behaviour, and so does Chantelouve. In *Coligny*, the only abhorrent character who appears on stage, and who also represents the Protestants, is Coligny himself. It is necessary for Chantelouve to stress the idea that Coligny believes in no religion so that he fits well with the villainous character who targets his King. Coligny says that he cherishes 'nothing but the hope of ruining the faith of both Calvin and the Pope' (*Coligny*, I, i, 41-42). Coligny's anti-Calvinism could be an indication that he has no religion and is an atheist, so Chantelouve reveals a threat that Coligny is a danger to Catholics, Protestants and Kings. Coligny reveals his interest in the kingdom but gives no significant consideration to any religious concern. He openly states that he 'would be King' (*Coligny*, I, i, 44) and that he is 'apt for treason' (*Coligny*, I, i, 47). This desire to obtain power reminds us of Machiavelli and the schemes by which he

seeks power and manipulation. Chantelouve shows a desire to reveal Coligny's evilness, and that of Protestants in general, in order to associate their danger with their hypocrisy.

Chantelouve builds up Coligny's villainous character by three means. First, the words Coligny utters indicate his wicked plans to take the kingdom step by step, killing the King in order to usurp the throne. Second, the King's kindness, in contrast to Coligny's behaviour, helps to reveal the wickedness of the latter. Having stated that Coligny himself has ambitions for the throne, it is likely that he or his Protestant partners will seek to implement these schemes. Chantelouve makes King Charles' attitude to Coligny's position one of respect and good intention. Although the King knows Coligny to be a traitor, his goodwill gives him hope that he might convince Coligny to aim for peace. Chantelouve accentuates Coligny's evil in comparison with the King's kindness to inspire hatred among his audience towards the Protestants for their exploitation of the King's kindness. Before Coligny is shot in the arm, the King had hopes of making peace and knew he was being kind to Coligny despite Coligny's attitude:

O treasonous Admiral, O you mutinous band,
 Would God that you could read my heart and understand
 That you were might expect just harshness and cruelty,
 You would encounter nothing but mildness and mercy
 (*Coligny*, II, i, 75-87)

Weak as he is, the King stresses his role as a person who meets hatred with love and aggression with peace. This role serves also to express Coligny's character. The more the King talks about Coligny and his behaviour, the more his audience is aware of the dangers posed by Coligny. Chantelouve wants to emphasize Coligny's mean role to his audience repeatedly. King Charles knows that Coligny is 'treasonous' but still offers peace. Even after the Council meets with the King, he is ready to sit with Coligny to

‘exhort and come and meet him at court’ (*Coligny*, II, ii, 479-480) instead of declaring war against him and the Protestants. The third element used by Chantelouve to present a wicked Coligny is when Coligny’s Protestant friends talk about exploiting the King. These lines are spoken by Briquemault, a Protestant, following the King’s decision to make peace:

I can hardly, O Cavagnes, my great joy restrain
 That the King allows such free and liberal rein
 To our preaching, which is essential to our life-
 That is, to our schemes and plans for stirring up strife...
 Now that here in Paris we and the Admiral
 Are honourably entertained, we need some plot
 In due time to surprise this Princely idiot
 But a pretext or colour, too, we must embrace
 To put upon our project a plausible face.
 (*Coligny*, II, iii, 481-484, 486-490)

These observations concern the wicked schemes of the Protestants to exploit the King and his proposition of peace. To call him a ‘Princely idiot’ while he actually offers them help is something abhorrent since Protestants simply exploit the King’s kind words. They act under the pretext of being loyal to the King, but their intentions are different. Their attempt to disguise their deeds is essential if they are to proceed with their schemes. This gives the audience a chance to feel remorse for the King and his efforts to make peace. The importance of this is to make the audience aware of who Protestants were and to alert the audience to their schemes; on the other hand, it also increases the hatred for the untrustworthy Protestants. Chantelouve demonstrates to his audience how disloyal Coligny is and governs the audience’s response by allowing them to hate Coligny by showing Protestant hypocrisy practiced against their own King. Furthermore, his attitude reflects Chantelouve’s purpose to suggest that Protestants cannot be trusted and deserve firm action, not kindness. The King allows the Protestants to act as freely as they wish,

but they take advantage of this to act against their King. Thus they act as mutineers, but in the dark, which is clearly more dangerous.

The Council is not easily able to dissuade the King from seeking peace. It is only when they reveal to him Coligny's real intentions that he begins to recognize that firm action is required. Previously, we have been reminded by the chorus that Coligny is undeserving of the King's kindness. The dramatic function of the chorus, to advance Chantelouve's political arguments, is remarkable in this play and Mathieu's, where what it says is to be taken as truth. After Coligny is wounded in the arm, Chantelouve, through the chorus, talks of the qualities of Charles in his handling of the matter, despite the hidden intentions of the Protestants:

Charles, our good Prince and tender,
 [...]
 Honours the Admiral, bestows his company,
 When a damaging blow gives him fresh misery;
 He plagues himself with doubt,
 Desperate to find out,
 Consumed with boiling fury,
 Who did this injury
 [...]
 O royal gentleness, O what a clement hand...
 He loves his enemy (*Coligny*, III, ii, 805, 809-814, 827, 828)

The chorus emphasizes the role of the King, whose agony overcomes his happiness, when describing his action as 'royal gentleness', even though the cause of that agony is his enemy, whom he respects and honours. When Coligny is shot, the King hurries to find out who was responsible and to inquire about his condition, which reflects his unbiased political role. In Marlowe's play, the King only visits Coligny when motivated by the forthcoming attack on the Protestants, whereas in Chantelouve's play, he is performing

his political duty. He cares about the undeserving Coligny; thus, Chantelouve seeks to show the King's qualities in contrast to Protestant duplicity.

By contrast, in Marlowe's play, Coligny recognizes the importance of the King and appreciates his support for the Protestants. Meanwhile, he warns his friends of Guise's role. In *The Massacre* there is no hatred between Coligny and the King because the Protestants believe that the King is on their side following the marriage between his sister and Navarre. Coligny is not the enemy of the King in Marlowe's version; thus, Marlowe presents Catholics as liars since the King is not on their side but is actually only pretending to be. Coligny's major concern, which he shares with the rest of the Protestants, is here directed towards Guise. There is thus a remarkable contrast between the plays in their choice of villain. Marlowe may not be interested in creating enmity between Coligny and Charles since both are secondary in importance to Guise, who is Marlowe's concern; whereas Chantelouve is concerned with Coligny and his King because he despises the Protestants, as exemplified by Coligny. That means Chantelouve develops the King and Coligny in more detail than Marlowe because these two characters are Chantelouve's protagonist and antagonist whereas neither of them is of primary importance to Marlowe.

It is clear that Marlowe and Chantelouve adopt contrasting perspectives in the description of their characters. Marlowe treats his Coligny as being deceived by the King, while for Chantelouve it is the reverse. In either case, the one who deceives is the true villain and it is remarkable how the two evildoers follow the same pattern, whereby religious hatred seems to be dominant in their treatment of each other. The representation of a double attitude is important in directing and implementing Machiavellian duplicity in

both plays, as each writer seeks to reveal the evil of his enemy based on his religion. It is worth mentioning that in Marlowe's plays and apparently in the French plays policy has many meanings. Babb provides one definition, 'in its alternate sense, policy designates the servicing of one's private ends by cunning or deceit: the normal Elizabethan version of Machiavellianism'.⁴² But if policy implies cunning, it also means political acumen. Babb shows how Machiavellianism became associated with policy and argues for Gentillet's major influence on the Elizabethans' understanding of Machiavelli. Gentillet was important in that his *Contre-Machiavel*⁴³ (1576) seems to be 'the first document to tie Machiavelli's doctrine to an actual political event, the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre'.⁴⁴ Furthermore, some critics, such as Meyer, assert that 'Elizabethans acquired their understanding of Machiavelli as spread and distorted by Gentillet'.⁴⁵ Others reject Meyer's argument.⁴⁶ Kahn says that Gentillet condemns Machiavellians as atheists, tyrants and dissemblers and that Gentillet read Machiavelli simply as a teacher of tyranny.⁴⁷ Gentillet's understanding of Machiavelli suggests that he either misread him or, as Ribner says, attacked him for his actions because Gentillet held Machiavelli's

⁴² Howard Babb, 'Policy in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*', *English Literary History*, 24, no. 2 (1957), p. 86.

⁴³ It is entitled *Discovrs, Svr Les Moyens De Bien Govverner Et Mmaintenir En Bonne Paix Vn Royaume . . . Contre Nicolas Machiauel Florentin* (1576). Better known as the *Contre-Machiavel* in Simon Patericke's 1577 English translation, this work circulated widely in manuscript before reaching print in 1602. See Randall Martin, 'Anne Dowriche's "The French History", Christopher Marlowe, and Machiavellian agency', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 39, no. 1 (Winter, 1999), pp. 69(1). Expanded Academic ASAP.

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⁴⁴ Irving Ribner, 'The significance of *Gentillet's Contre-Machiavel*', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 10 (1949), p. 156.

⁴⁵ Edward Meyer, *Machiavelli and the Elizabethan Drama* (New York: B. Franklin, 1969), pp. 7-9.

⁴⁶ Antonio D'Andrea, 'The Last Years of Innocent Gentillet: "Princeps Adversariorum Machiavelli"', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 20, no. 1 (Spring, 1967), pp. 12-16 <<http://www.jstor.org/sici?sici=0034-4338%28196721%2920%3A1%3C12%3ATLYOIG%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Q>> [accessed 12 August 2008] p. 12.

⁴⁷ Victoria Kahn, 'Reading Machiavelli: Innocent Gentillet's Discourse on Method', *Political Theory*, 22, no. 4 (November, 1994), pp. 539-560 < <http://www.jstor.org/stable/192039> > [accessed 10 August 2008] pp. 242, 252.

teachings responsible for the massacre.⁴⁸ What matters in the context of this chapter is that Machiavelli is depicted in many forms related to policy, scheming, pretence and other features. Gentillet's comments on Machiavelli also shaped that picture of Machiavelli in England, as we see in *The Jew of Malta* when Barabas and Ferneze seem to present two faces of Machiavellianism: one political, one related to villainy. Marlowe's representation of Machiavellianism is certainly a chance for him to explore the different ways in which Machiavellianism was interpreted.

2.5 Chantelouve's depiction of Protestants

In act four, scene two of Chantelouve's play, Coligny meets with Andelot, his dead brother, in the form of a spirit. They talk about the King and the plans to kill him. The point to make here is that Coligny does not seem as earnest as he previously was about the killing. This hesitation is unusual in Chantelouve's villain, but as soon as Andelot talks to his brother about the King's desire to destroy him, Coligny becomes, once again, determined to kill the King:

You can't feel how far the French King has come
In ruining you- if your eye is now blind
To how Guise with him to kill you combined

And:

Kill the King, then with a furious army
Strike down all his party, as with a fist,
Overthrow the Guisard, likewise the Papist
(*Coligny*, IV, ii, 934-936, 950-952)

In this moment Chantelouve makes Coligny a weak character who is not a constantly evil Machiavellian. The appearance of Coligny's brother to remind him to keep fighting

⁴⁸ Ribner, 'Significance of Gentillet's Contre-Machiavel', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 10 (1949), p. 156.

Catholics gives the impression that Coligny has been weakened by the injury he sustained when he was shot. The brother comes to reinforce and remind Coligny to persist in the scheme. The brother's intervention is needed to push him towards being merciless. It appears as if the brother's visit has been placed after Coligny was shot and his capacity for evil reduced to remind him of his evil purpose. Chantelouve uses the image of the brother to enhance Coligny's evil spirit, which seems to have been reduced and influenced by the wound he received in his arm. On the other hand, it is also possible to see Coligny's brother's visit as a definition of who this soul is. Chantelouve, by bringing Coligny's brother from hell, signifies that Protestants' souls are condemned to hell. This insinuates that Protestants are wrong in their religion while the Catholics are not. Whether in life or the afterlife, Chantelouve decides that the place for the Protestants is hell. He implies that evil exists in their souls at all times. Chantelouve brings the damned soul as a representation of the devil, who will never be purified, even in hell. Coligny's brother comes from hell but is still doomed with wickedness.

Chantelouve introduces the brother to assert the evil role of the Protestants, maintaining their function as villainous. Unlike Coligny, King Charles is always hesitant in taking decisions regarding his enemies; he is, in fact, the one who needs the constant reminder to kill his enemy and overcome his unjustified kindness towards Coligny. But the significant issue of the King's hesitant attitude reflects Chantelouve's desire to throw the blame onto the Protestants. After Coligny was shot, the King was aware of Coligny's bad reputation, yet the King did not wish that he should be injured:

Who ever would have dreamed of such a heinous case
Of treason among my subjects? O Saturn's race,
Who on all living things impose your regiment,
Of the Admiral's wound you see me innocent;

You know that although, with his rebellious right hand,
 He would have rekindled cruel wars in this land,
 At that he has attempted my death countless times,
 I have notwithstanding pardoned him all those crimes
 (*Coligny*, V, i, 1037-1044)

Despite the King's knowledge of Coligny's intentions, it was not easy to direct his attention away from the injured Coligny. He calls it a 'heinous case' despite the fact that Coligny deserves it. It is amazing how forgiving the King is towards his subjects when he knows that Coligny has attempted to kill him 'countless times'. His concern for Coligny and those who were responsible for the accident preoccupies him and confounds the Council's plans to convince him of what he should do. Despite all Coligny's deeds, Charles shows a remarkable attitude in Chantelouve's play. Chantelouve may be bringing in Coligny's brother as a parallel with the King and the Council. The point is that Chantelouve reveals how eager the Protestants are to do evil against their King, while he, despite the Council's insistence that he should take action against Coligny, is not easily moved to destroy them, despite what they have done. Chantelouve makes his King politically weak, allowing Coligny to emerge as a villainous figure who adopts exploitation and conspiracy against his sovereign.

Chantelouve underlines Coligny's actions as immoral and hideous. He also makes the King's weakness a starting point for attacking Coligny. Had it not been for the informer who revealed to the King the true danger of the Protestants and their plans to kill him, he would not have followed their advice. The informer tells of these vicious plans and how he was himself recruited to kill his own King:

Not only did I see myself how they conferred
 I swore and promised (but my countenance was feigned)
 To help them in that enterprise; I was constrained:
 A man will promise a great deal to save his skin

And thereupon I instantly did determine
 To seek his majesty, nor could my heart convince
 To let them by such crime take the life of my Prince,
 And yet, O Sire, have pity on me, I pray,
 If I engaged my faith to them, you to betray. (*Coligny*, V, i, 1060-1068)

The villainous schemes are revealed. Chantelouve depicts the informer's act of admitting the scheme as an indication of the love the King receives from his subjects. The informer admits that he can allow Protestants to commit 'such crime' against his 'Prince' in an indication that only Protestants are being ungrateful. The King afterwards frees the informer because of his loyalty. Even the revelation of this Protestant plot has no noticeable influence on the King. He is not easily moved by such reactions. His kindness, or rather weakness, not to mention that Chantelouve makes that weakness a virtue for the King, is far from being shaken by anger at the Protestants. It is only after discussing the issue with the Council, which imposes the reality that the Protestants will rebel against him and destroy him, that he realizes that there is no escape from that difficult choice. He reacts for the first time, albeit reluctantly, to the issue regarding the Protestants:

Then since clearly I can follow no other choice
 But to destroy with armed strength this murderous force,
 Let it be done, and let you yourselves make haste,
 That the evil-doers their punishment may taste (*Coligny*, V, i, 1109-1112)

So the King's decision to declare war does not occur until the last act. This characterizes the King's gentleness, which Chantelouve stresses throughout the play. Chantelouve reveals how reluctant his King is to punish Protestants even though they seek his murder.

2.6 Ambivalence in King Charles' personality

The portrayal of King Charles in Marlowe's play is ambivalent. To demonstrate this claim, his speech at the beginning of the play will be compared with the last words that he utters before his death:

Prince of Navarre, my honourable brother,
 Prince Condé, and my good Lord Admiral,
 I wish this union and religious
 Knit in these hands, thus join'd in nuptial rites,
 May not dissolve till death dissolve our lives,
 And that the native sparks of Princely love
 That kindled first this motion in our hearts
 May still be fuel'd in our progeny
 (*MP*, I, 1-8)

King Charles' use of words such as 'honourable brother' and 'good Lord Admiral' reflect his happiness towards the marriage, but he does not mean what he says because it is all done to trap Protestants. In this passage, Marlowe is telling us that the King is a conspirator in a scheme to eradicate the Protestants. Marlowe highlights the danger posed by the royal family, suggesting that it is corrupt and selfish. Furthermore, he confirms that Charles is playing two roles, using 'policy' to achieve political progress at the expense of the Protestants. Marlowe is saying that it is hard to trust Catholics as their actions are not what they appear. The King plans for the massacre, but we are not told that he is part of the wicked game played by the Catholics at that moment. His character is not yet revealed as weak; on the contrary, he is a schemer whose approval is needed to undertake the massacre. Although he is a weak King, the conspirators seek his approval because he is King. Thus, Marlowe links the royal family with crimes against Protestants.

The King affirms his readiness to ratify whatever the faction decides. It is clear for Marlowe that the league is actually representing Guise and is led by him:

Well, madam, I refer it to Your Majesty,
And to my nephew here, the Duke of Guise:
What you determine, I will ratify.
(*MP*, IV, 23-25)

The pretence which the King shows in Marlowe's play contrasts with Chantelouve's version in which he is weak and naïve. In *The Massacre*, the King is portrayed differently in his reaction to the incident. Following what he said after the marriage ceremony, we understand that his wicked intentions are hidden under the pretext that the marriage will bring peace. However, his plan is not apparent to the public because he hides his evil actions in the preparations for the killing of the Protestants. Marlowe presents him as an evil Catholic who is able to be similar to Guise in his pretence, but this pretence is limited and does not last long. Marlowe's King presents a trait in common with Chantelouve's: weakness. This can be seen in Marlowe's play in the King's discussion with his mother in which she directs him towards what he should do, something which is not appropriate for a King:

King Charles: Messenger, tell him I will see him straight.
What shall we do now with the Admiral?

Queen Catherine: Your Majesty were best go visit him
And make a show as if all were well

King Charles: Content; I will go visit the Admiral. (*MP*, IV, 45-49)

Despite this weakness, which will become more obvious later, Marlowe is telling us that whatever the type of Catholic, they are all dangerous. If the King, given his weak personality, could have such an influence on the Protestants, then more dangerous deeds

can be achieved by other more powerful Catholics. This is an example of Marlowe's view that the King is part of the scheme, even if he is led by his mother and Guise; the King, as a Catholic, constitutes a great danger to the Protestants in that he exploits the good picture the Protestants have formed of him, as they trust him at his word. Marlowe suggests that it is dangerous to trust Catholics because the good among them work in the dark, and it is hard to identify them because almost all of them are disguised. This disguise is a feature of Catholicism, as Marlowe shows.

There is a parallel between the above passage from Marlowe and Chantelouve's scene where the King expresses his extreme anger for what happened to Coligny, asking, 'who ever would have dreamed of such a heinous case of treason among my subjects' (*Coligny*, V, i, 1037-1038). This is a very different situation from that which Marlowe suggests. Regardless of the historical facts, Marlowe and Chantelouve both manipulate historical facts and employ them in their own setting. In *The Massacre*, the evilness of Charles seems secondary to that of his mother or of Guise. The King brings to mind what he said at the beginning of the play and presents different accounts in his final words, moments before his death:

O no, my loving brother of Navarre!
 I have deserved a scourge I must confess,
 Yet is there patience of another sort,
 Than to misdo the welfare of their King
 (*MP*, XIII, 8-11)

The difference between this speech and that at the beginning of the play implies many things. Let us first review the King's words at the start of the play:

Prince of Navarre, my honourable brother,
 [...]

I wish this union and religious league,
 [...]
 May not dissolve till death dissolve our love
 (*MP*, I, 1, 3, 5)

First, this similarity in words, such as calling Navarre ‘brother’, conceals double meanings. Because the first speech in the play is a planned trap, the King’s intentions are the opposite from being true, whereas the speech uttered before his death is factual. Marlowe manipulates the character of the King for the purpose of serving the Protestants. He first makes the King a schemer who lies in using the word ‘brother’, that is, when he plots against Protestants. But he is then changed as he calls Navarre ‘brother’ which indicates how a Catholic admits his mistakes, in a sign of victory for the Protestants, who have the King on their side. Thus, the changes in Charles’ attitude help to promote the Protestant cause and elevate Protestants. Marlowe’s audience is aware of the King’s purpose when he visits Coligny and vows that he will find those responsible for his attempted murder. A clearer picture of the King is then revealed: that he is a deceiver who repents before his death and becomes Navarre’s friend.

The differences between Marlowe’s treatment of the King and that of Chantelouve may not be great since the power of the enemy, whether the Protestants in the case of Chantelouve’s play or the Catholics in Marlowe’s, is seen in their strong will and merciless attitude. In both plays, the King is short of enthusiasm and power. He makes late decisions at a time when his enemies are faster than him in targeting him. He does not act in a proper way when he is supposed to, which contributes to his positioning as an ineffectual King. Marlowe and Chantelouve both present a King whose character is weak. Chantelouve uses that weakness as an advantage to attack the Protestants. Marlowe depicts a King who is at first wicked, but who before his death seems to repent for what

he has done. For Marlowe, therefore, the King's death and repentance can be considered an advantage for the Protestants in that both events imply that the Catholics would submit to the Protestants in the end. The repentance of Charles is a sign of success and victory for the Protestants. Marlowe aims at making the Protestants' leader, Navarre, approach the throne by having Charles on their side before his death.

The success which accompanies Princes in their ruling depends on how they rule and what they represent. Skinner offers some examples of how Princes should react when in authority, and his discussion relates to the spread of advice-books, which began to appear in Italy in the Renaissance period and which had a great impact on European political thought. He presents Machiavelli as among the important figures, especially for *The Prince* (1513). The important way in which these early advice-books 'helped to set a pattern for the later "mirror-for-Princes" literature was in the emphasis they placed on the question of what virtues a good ruler should possess'.⁴⁹ As we have seen, Machiavelli's name is mentioned in Marlowe's play and also in Mathieu's. King Charles resembles Machiavelli in limited ways in Marlowe's version, such as when he is represented as duplicitous, such as when he assures his mother that he will visit Coligny to make as if all is well (*MP*, IV, 49-50). On the other hand, this weakness is interpreted differently by Chantelouve who does not allude to his King as weak; although he describes him as such, he seems to be saying that he is known for his virtue, not his weakness. This characteristic feature of the King as a weak ruler is seen in his actions and decisions. In such circumstances as during the massacre, it is difficult for him to act and make decisions while being virtuous. The survivor must pretend in order to survive in the Protestant-Catholic clash. Chantelouve is defending a King in whom virtue is clearly seen

⁴⁹Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 34.

in his treatment of the villainous Coligny, but this never means that he was a successful King whose reign was going in the right direction. Chantelouve's King Charles can be linked with Skinner's discussion of the advice-book tradition and its relation to Princely virtue. Chantelouve suggests that Charles is an example of such a King, renowned for his virtue and kindness. This representation, similar to Skinner's definition of the virtuous King, is never seen among the Catholics in Marlowe's play or King Henry in Mathieu's play.

2.7 Representation of Anjou and Navarre

2.7.1 The Protestant Navarre

Navarre and Anjou were two powerful men who had influence in the massacre. Navarre married Marguerite, sister of King Charles. His role in Marlowe's play is balanced; Marlowe depicts him as a sober-minded person who is calm and religious. It is possible to say that part of Marlowe's representation of Protestant propaganda evolves from his representation of Navarre according to Protestant ideology. Navarre's major concern in the play is the Guises and their political control over France and the King. Navarre, like Coligny and all of the Protestants, will not believe that Charles was responsible for the massacre, either before or after his death. The prominent role of Navarre may be observed on two occasions: when he marries Marguerite and when he becomes King of France following Henry's murder. This political success, in which the marriage and subsequent accession to the throne operate as the only political achievement that Navarre attempts to accomplish, does not give Navarre any significance in terms of dominating the play. For that reason, many scholars argue that Marlowe does not give him a

significant role. Kocher is one of those who claim that, 'Navarre is Marlowe's worst failure in the entire play. Properly speaking, he has no character. He is the merest patchwork of Protestant commonplaces'.⁵⁰ A close reading of the play suggests that Kocher's argument may be sound in that Navarre has no strong contribution to make, unlike Guise. Marlowe neglects Protestants such as Navarre and Coligny in terms of his definition of the powerful character, but as the play seems to focus on Guise in the first place, Marlowe manages to make Navarre victorious at the end of the play. Furthermore, Marlowe could be saying that Protestants are earnest, so their contribution to the play need not be stressed. Navarre is not like Guise, who is villainous, but he survives to mark the Protestant victory as higher than anything else.

Navarre's religious identity is placed at the forefront of his speech. His emphasis on religion and dependence on God reflect his Protestant piety. The importance of that religious tone may serve his role as a representative of the true and pure religion. On many occasions, Navarre utters statements which denote his religious identity. Some are uttered in response to the evil of Guise and his crimes:

But He that sits and rules above the clouds
 Doth hear and see the prayers of the just
 And will revenge the blood of innocents
 That Guise hath slain by treason of his heart
 (*MP*, I, 42-45)

This passage must reflect Navarre's religious tone and his focused mind which aims at serving Protestants without the need to prove himself as a dominant character. Marlowe elevates Navarre and makes him equal to Coligny to balance the political power between Protestants (Navarre and Coligny) and Catholics (the Guises and the royal family). Marlowe, as we saw in the speech cited above, allows Navarre to show piety as a quality

⁵⁰ Kocher, 'Contemporary Pamphlet II', p. 316.

for the Protestants. The Protestants depend on God in their war against the Guises. Having introduced Navarre as dependent on God, Marlowe asserts Navarre's Protestant religious identity. Aside from Navarre's religious attitude, Marlowe reveals Catholic danger through Navarre's naivety because Navarre, when speaking about the danger of Guise following his marriage, neglects the fact that the King is part of the scheme against the Protestants. After Navarre's mother dies in front of him, he expresses his remorse and says that they are betrayed, asking his friends to go to the King and report what has happened (*MP*, III, 33). Marlowe first uses adversity (the death scene) to express the difficulty of the war against Catholics but then shows that Protestants will be rewarded at the end when victory becomes their destiny. Like Coligny, Navarre fails to identify the true villains other than Guise. He asks his friends to go to the King, unaware that he is part of the scheme. Protestants' patience under Catholic hatred is necessary and is a positive step because their patience leads them to the crown at the end.

2.7.2 Anjou (King Henry III)

The representation of the Duke of Anjou, later Henry III, in Mathieu's *Guisiade* and Marlowe's *Massacre* is very different. Henry differs from both his brother, King Charles and Navarre in the significance of his role. Mathieu stresses the implications of the danger Henry represents, defending his Guise by casting blame on Henry, who is responsible for murdering Guise. Henry III is equal to his brother in his degree of wickedness and his hatred for Protestants. Mathieu is concerned with the enmity between Henry and Guise; thus, he does not concentrate on the Protestants, simply because Henry is responsible for Guise's murder. King Charles turns against his Catholic colleagues by

adopting Navarre as his brother shortly before his death, as does Henry III when he renounces his intention to join the League against the Protestants in *The Massacre* and in *The Guisiade*. From Mathieu's perspective, this signifies his betrayal of France. Mathieu, by concentrating more on Henry than the Protestants, follows the propaganda which proclaims Henry as a traitor to the whole of the Catholic faith because, for him, Guise represents faith.

Henry III's role is ambivalent in the plays by Marlowe and Mathieu. In *The Massacre*, it is as one of the schemers who plan the massacre. The first line he pronounces indicates his merciless tone. He reminds us of the severity of his mother and Guise. Marlowe first marks him as a dangerous Catholic:

Though gentle minds should pity others' pains,
Yet will the wisest note their proper griefs,
And rather seek to scourge their enemies
Than be themselves base subjects to the whip
(*MP*, IV, 13-16)

The use of 'scourge' and 'whip' suggests a punishment that has to be implemented against Protestants, and in Marlowe's play, Henry III, in co-operation with Guise, this is implemented through the massacre. Henry's words are strongly expressed, and his use of language reflects a desire to visit violence and death on his enemies. He is on the same level of villainy as Guise; they both act mercilessly throughout the massacre. Furthermore, Henry III also acts as a deceiver, like his Catholic friends. This occurs when he meets with Navarre during the massacre:

Anjou: How now my Lords, how fare you?

Navarre: My Lord, they say that all the Protestants are massacred.

Anjou: Ay, so they are; but yet what remedy?
I have done what I could to stay this broil.

Navarre: But yet, my Lord, the report doth run
That you were one that made this massacre.

Anjou: Who, I? You are deceived; I rose but now.
(*MP*, IV, 69-75)

The deceitful stance here indicates Henry's clever mind. His function in the massacre has been crucial, yet in cold blood he expresses an ignorance of what has happened. Henry pretends ignorance of the massacre, saying that he has just left his bed while he actually never slept because he was busy murdering the Protestants. The following scene witnesses Henry's nomination for the throne of Poland and, in a quick shift between scenes, Anjou reappears as Henry III. There is a great similarity between Marlowe's representation of Henry and that of Mathieu in that Henry seeks to destroy Guise in both plays. A parallel approach can be established between them regarding their descriptions of Henry whose political growth exceeds that of Navarre and Coligny in terms of action. Although he is similar to Guise in the intensity of his cruelty against the Protestants at the time of the massacre, Henry's political speculations decline when he first becomes King.

In the three plays, Machiavelli seems to emerge as the sole representative of the political theories expressed by the characters. Hillman asserts that Mathieu's play demonstrates the King's conception and accomplishment of his treacherous design.⁵¹ Mathieu, whom Hillman describes in the same book as 'the most militant of Catholic partisans',⁵² is greatly concerned with 'the murder of France's selfless hero, its terrestrial and spiritual savior', Guise.⁵³ As a result, this is precisely where the tragedy lies for

⁵¹ Hillman, Shakespeare and Marlowe, p. 85.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Mathieu,⁵⁴ whose main concern is to develop a play which presents Guise's death as tragic, as if the whole of France had died. He struggles to clear Guise's name from any bad reputation in order to depict him as being as honest as possible. Indeed, Hillman's argument is possible to accept since Mathieu makes sure to represent the King as an abhorrent character who destroyed the protector of France. Mathieu's sympathetic tone is seen in his defence for Guise and also in his presentation of the King as a traitor. In this way the loss of Guise is great and full of sorrow since his killer is not a Protestant but rather his own King who first offered him peace but betrayed him afterwards.

2.7.3 Minions and their influence on Henry III

When Henry becomes the King of France, Henry III, he is no longer that character known for his cruelty against the Protestants. After he becomes King, we can suggest that he adopts the same personality as that presented in *The Guisade*. Henry III is someone who has minions surrounding him and who does not seem to be interested in the policy of eradicating the Protestants that is adopted by his mother and Guise. His priorities have been aimed at amusing himself with minions and targeting Guise. Passages taken from the plays of Marlowe and Mathieu include discussion of Henry's minions, showing the part of his character which has lost the sense of hatred for his enemies. In Marlowe's play, Henry's mother, Catherine, wondering at her son's pleasures, talks to the cardinal:

My lord Cardinal of Lorraine, tell me,
How likes Your Grace my son's pleasantness?
His mind, you see, runs on his minions,
And all his Heaven is to delight himself
(*MP*, XIV, 43-46)

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 86.

Marlowe emphasizes Henry's involvement with the minions—'my son's pleasantness'—in a similar way to Mathieu in *The Guisade* when Catherine talks to her son Henry about his life which he has spent only in the pursuit of pleasure:

What serves it to have let your mind become depraved-
To wayward minions, to Cyprian joys enslaved?
(*The Guisade*, II, i, 191-192)

Elsewhere she also tries to dissuade him from his plans to kill Guise by telling him of his life which he spends with minions instead of acting as a King:

You wallow in your pleasure's voluptuous toils
With those minions, greedy harpies insatiable
(*The Guisade*, II, i, 338-339)

The stress is on Henry as being distracted. Catherine clearly states her opinion that her son has changed into a careless personality. Marlowe and Mathieu refer to the same person, but Mathieu's depiction of Henry indicates that he is no longer a true Catholic whose focus is on his realm. The declaration from Catherine that her son has indulged himself with the minions could reflect her satisfaction, in Marlowe's play, that she can act with the Guises against the Protestants while her son is distracted; as for Mathieu, he expresses anxiety over the existence of the minions because they negatively influence Guise's position, and Mathieu is concerned with the threats made against his hero. Minions in both plays play a major role in destabilizing the order imposed by their society. Their influence affects not only their associates, such as the King who befriends them, but also the decisions the King makes because he listens to them. Sirluck argues that Gaveston is the embodiment of vice who undermines good government.⁵⁵ The influence of minions, then, is strong and is doubled in effect by influencing the King

⁵⁵ Katherine A. Sirluck, 'Marlowe's "Edward II" and the Pleasure of Outrage', *Modern Language Studies*, 22, no. 2 (Spring, 1992), pp. 15-24 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3195014>> [accessed 10 August 2008] p. 18.

himself and the decisions he makes. Henry has now turned his attention from the administration of the country to other subjects. As a result, Mathieu attempts to reveal the mistakes that Henry makes in order to elevate Guise as a pure, focused Catholic. The significant link between Henry and the minions, in Marlowe's play, should not affect Marlowe's alleged Protestant propaganda since the minions affect the King positively in favour of Protestants. Henry, at the time when he is indulging himself with the minions, directs his wrath towards Guise, not the Protestants. So, Marlowe's play, which witnesses Henry's involvement with the minions, is not problematic to the Protestants since minions are Guise's enemies, not Protestants. Thus, the influence of minions is on Guise; but, significantly enough, Marlowe and Mathieu might be said to share the opinion that Guise might be a better ruler than Henry III. The ineffectiveness of Henry's rule could imply that Guise would be better although he never becomes a ruler. Both Marlowe and Mathieu place emphasis on Guise's personality in contrast to Henry's. History reveals Henry's need of help from Navarre after he broke with the League.⁵⁶ For Marlowe, Henry III's collaboration with Navarre could reflect his lack of confidence in his own personality, unlike Guise, who is independent. The difference between Guise and Henry III becomes greater towards the end of the play. For Marlowe, Henry is not equal to Guise but is rather similar to his brother King Charles who surrenders to the Protestants close to his death. The only moment Henry is shown as powerful is before he becomes King; Marlowe makes his character decline after that, making it obvious that this is due to the corrupting effect of power, as Henry engages himself in pleasure and loses control. Mackenzie, in a recent essay, states that Marlowe presents Henry as poorly equipped to resolve certain political issues and to take decisions: 'Henry orders that the Guise's son

⁵⁶ Kocher, 'Contemporary Pamphlet I', p. 160.

should be brought forth to view the spectacle of his father's corpse—a notably ill-advised command since, within seconds, the boy has attempted to kill him'.⁵⁷ This is true of Henry and can be considered one of the mistakes he makes after he becomes involved with minions from the second half of the play onwards.

In *The Guisade*, Henry's deception is directed towards his cousin Guise, not the Protestants. Here lies another link between Marlowe and Mathieu in that Henry's minions encourage him to hate Guise. Mathieu wants to show that the corrupt King has actually betrayed his country by not attacking the Protestants and by targeting Guise instead. Henry does not use the cunning which he used to have in attacking the Protestants but rather uses it to murder Guise. This deception is seen for the first time when Henry makes a promise not to make a hasty decision in getting rid of Guise. He announces his decision to his mother and reveals to her what he intends to do:

King: Madam, you know that never did I go to bed
Angry, harbouring thoughts of vengeance in my head:
I vow to be reconciled, assure him from me,
To my cousin of Guise—in all sincerity

Queen: Having your royal oath the faith you will maintain,
He is coming to the Estate.
(*The Guisade*, II, i, 441-446)

The King's reply, which his mother does not hear, is 'and not in vain' (*The Guisade*, II, i, 447), indicating that Guise's visit might incur his own death. Mathieu illustrates how Henry's actions have led to the destruction of the whole of France indicating that he is a corrupt King. A second occasion where Henry is seen as a deceiver who pretends innocence is in the following scene, where he meets Guise. After a long discussion, which involves the revival of the Catholic League and the killing of the Protestants,

⁵⁷ Mackenzie, 'M. P. and the Danse', p. 311.

Henry is determined to be rid of Guise. Mathieu successfully manages to construct the negative image of a King who breaks oaths and deceives his own family members. Mathieu tends to make Henry commit political miscalculations which bring destruction to France, one of which, as the playwright represents, is the death of Guise. When Guise demands that the King should relieve France from the ‘pestilence’, by which he means the Protestants, the King reassures his cousin that he will ‘purge his realm of this pestilence’ (*The Guisiade*, II, ii, 72). The irony of his words may not raise Guise’s suspicions because Guise himself is being deceived. The King’s intentions actually suggest that Guise is the pestilence, not the Protestants; but Mathieu must present an image of Guise as a person who does not suspect his King. Mathieu thus manipulates the meaning of language to show the importance of Guise: Henry has to lie in order to succeed in trapping Guise as he would otherwise be unable to overcome him.

In the same scene, Henry repeatedly reassures his cousin about the Protestants and suggests that his words should be taken without suspicion:

Do not doubt, Cousin, that I’ll keep my royal word:
I am a Prince of faith; a King is never perjured
(*The Guisiade*, II, ii, 709-710)

The assurance that Henry will not deceive his cousin is based on his protestation of faith, since Henry tells his cousin that he is a ‘Prince of faith’, but his later betrayal marks him as faithless. Elsewhere, Henry manages to deceive and mislead his own Council; following many meetings, Henry seems to have agreed to their scheme which favours the union and its re-establishment. He promises them that his purpose will be to bring back the union of the Catholics and eradicate the Protestants:

Gentlemen, doubt no further that my utmost wish
Is that the holy unity you show may flourish:

I embrace the Union [...]
 [...]
 Sole vanquisher of Huguenots you shall me call
 [...]
 No longer my royal favour shall they receive
 (*The Guisade*, III, ii, 1461-1462, 1468, 1474, 1483)

The League is reunited, representing a revival of the Catholic faith and another setback for Protestantism, but Mathieu's wish for the destruction of the Protestants is not realised in the play. In an echo of his deception of Guise, Henry also deceives the Council, saying 'I embrace the Union'. Henry, in Mathieu's play, can be considered the most dominant villain who seeks the destruction of Guise and whom Mathieu despises to the point of making him a hideous character. Mathieu indicates how unwise and how inappropriate it is to involve minions as assistants in the political domain because by their influence the realm is also affected. Marlowe addresses the same issue in both *The Massacre* and in *Edward II* where minions play a major role in the King's self-destruction and the disorder of the political system.

Henry's interest in minions reflects his political corruption, which Marlowe stresses, perhaps to a lesser degree than Mathieu. Mathieu's point may be that because of the King's carelessness and his interest in his minions, his actions are a disaster for the kingdom and cause France to lose one of her best men. Marlowe differs from Mathieu in the way he presents the relationship between Guise and the minions, who hate him and wish him dead. In *The Massacre*, Guise's first contact with the minion Epernoun occurs when Epernoun makes accusations against him:

Thou able to maintain a host in pay,
 That livest by foreign exhibition!
 That and King of Spain are thy good friends
 Else all France knows how poor a Duke thou art.
 (*MP*, XIX, 36-39)

Marlowe makes the minions aware of the political game in which Spain aids Guise. In fact, we could interpret their partial awareness of some political events as due to their being in the court with the King and to their observations of what is happening around them. In addition, minions cannot be underestimated, since a King may well trust them more than anybody else; thus having, for instance, Guise in opposition to minions would certainly affect his influence because minions would seek his destruction. Potter argues that 'minions served a serious political purpose'.⁵⁸ They cause problems by their remarks in that their influence is strong and obvious. Marlowe clearly suggests that the support Guise gains from Spain is unquestioned. Epernoun warns the King against Guise:

But trust him not, my Lord, for he had Your Highness
 Seen with what a pomp he enter'd Paris,
 And how the citizens with gifts and shows
 Did entertain him
 And promised to be at his command-
 Nay they fear'd not to speak in the streets
 That the Guise durst stand in arms against the King,
 For not effecting of His Holiness' will
 (*MP*, XIX, 66-73)

It is remarkable that Epernoun sounds like a Protestant in the way he hates Guise. For Mathieu, this probably means that minions and Protestants are alike in hatred for Guise, but for Marlowe, in the above passage, Epernoun's response to Guise could be referred to Guise's previous trouble with the minions since Mugeroun is his wife's lover. Marlowe, then, makes this personal issue a reason for that hatred between Guise and minions. Epernoun warns the King of Guise's dangers. Marlowe achieves his goal by presenting Guise as a potential threat not only to the Protestants but also to Henry himself. In another situation, Mathieu also makes Epernoun voice the Protestants' hatred for Guise.

⁵⁸ Potter, '*M. P. and Reputation of Henry III*', p. 87.

Epernoun clearly shows his dislike of Guise and his wish to have him murdered. Furthermore, he even prefers Navarre to Guise because he hates Guise and detests his presence:

O daughters of the night, whirled in pain as you are,
 Revolted spirits of the faction of Navarre,
 I offer my soul, my life, all I possess,
 If only you will grant my longed-for happiness;
 If, with the full fire of your fierce agonies,
 On the life of the chief of the Leaguers you seize:
 Snatch that wretched Guise away from his stubborn band,
 (*The Guisiade*, III, i, 807-813)

Epernoun's desire to sacrifice his life and his readiness to join Navarre's side just to have Guise killed are significant. Epernoun's use of language reflects his determination to kill Guise even if it requires the help of a Protestant. His words seem to be uttered at night since he says 'daughter of the night'; if that is the case, then the timing is suitable for planning evil deeds against Guise. Unlike Marlowe, Mathieu aims at making the minions and the Protestants equal by making them conspirators against Guise. The importance of Epernoun in *The Guisiade* lies in his position as a minion opposed to Guise. Epernoun wishes the King to 'annihilate, kill, and shed the blood of Lorraine,/ and make these Guisiards' massacre live in memories' (*The Guisiade*, III, i, 880-881). Epernoun also shows his nature to be similar to the King's when he says that 'to assist his betrayal of the valiant race, he has to make use of the Estate to hide his cruel face' (*The Guisiade*, III, i, 883-884). Both Marlowe and Mathieu seem to present Henry as weak. Henry uses his power to destroy Guise, not Protestants. This is how Mathieu represents Henry as being weak in recognizing the true political enemy. Marlowe makes Henry's attitude towards Guise ideal for the Protestants because Henry directs his hatred to the most prominent enemy of the Protestants; Mathieu makes that move the beginning of the downfall of

France. Mathieu could be saying that the King's failure to implement the right policy makes him fail in his service of France against the true villains. Furthermore, he may be implying that the Protestants and the minions are parallel: they are worthless when it comes to judging Guise.

The King's last opportunity to practise deceit occurs immediately before Guise's murder. He meets Guise with joyful words, saying, for instance, 'good morrow to my loving cousin of Guise./ How fares it this morning with Your Excellence?' (*MP*, XXI, 35-36). The King, however, does not love his cousin or wish him well, but wants instead to witness his demise. Previously, in his soliloquy, he has said, 'come Guise and see thy traitorous guile outreach'd,/ and perish in the pit thou madest for me' (*MP*, XXI, 30-31). When Guise suggests that he has heard that the King is dissatisfied with him, the King once again tells wicked lies to reassure Guise:

They were to blame that said I was displeased
 And you, good cousin, to imagine it.
 'Twere hard with me if I should doubt my kin
 Or be suspicious of my dearest friends.
 Cousin, assure you I am resolute-
 Whatsoever any whisper in mine ears-
 Not to suspect disloyalty in thee:
 And so, sweet coz, farewell
 (*MP*, XXI, 37-44)

By repeating words like 'dearest friend' and 'sweet coz', he plays the schemer who wants to outsmart his own cousin. Marlowe does not seem to credit Henry with taking such a step that will lead Guise to death. Henry's role in both plays is as a great deceiver who manipulates events and participates in the massacre, except that, in Marlowe's play, Henry is transformed from a supporter of Guise and the Catholic Union into an enemy of his own cousin. The attention that was focused on Navarre is no longer present after

Henry hears of Guise's attempt to raise an army. The contempt that Mathieu has for Henry reflects the strength of his propaganda, which entirely supports Guise because he is the supporter of France. But for Marlowe, Henry's collaboration with the minions guarantees the survival of the Protestants in that Henry focuses his attention on Guise instead of on them.

2.8 Catherine and Guise

Queen Catherine is probably the only character equivalent to Guise in Marlowe's and Mathieu's plays. In *The Guisade*, her speech with her son, King Henry III, in the first scene of the second act, is in fact the only dialogue she has in the play. Her appearance at this point reinforces the role and attitude of Guise, as she defends him and attempts to convince her son that Guise is vital in preserving the crown in their favour. Whereas Marlowe introduces her as an enforcer of evil against the Protestants, Mathieu treats her as an advisor who tries to dissuade the King from making mistakes. Marlowe's description of Catherine can also be seen as a representation of a second Guise. Catherine's capacity for evil throughout the play is the reason for her coming close to Guise in terms of wickedness, as Marlowe depicts her; she is the most dominant female character, imposing herself as second to Guise. Marlowe may be saying that Guise and Catherine are parallel to the Pope and Spain in terms of being evil. Mathieu also presents Catherine as a supporter of Guise. Her conversation with Henry is effective because it favours Guise. She reveals the principles that Guise stands for; that her son is their King and that they do not mean to make him their enemy. In *The Guisade*, when the King

appears to not be listening to his mother, who keeps urging him not to consider Guise as an enemy, she changes her approach:

What bloodthirsty spirit, what demon loving pain,
 What torturer's fantasy rages in your brain?
 What thunderbolt consumes you, or what lightning-flashes
 Make the fire in your heart again burst from ashes?
 Against innocent men you apply the decrees
 Of your precious minion
 (*The Guisade*, II, i, 409-410)

The attempt to stress Guise's loyalty to the King is obvious in Catherine's speech, indicating her collaboration with and support for Guise. She indicates that her son has lost his mind by using the word 'bloodthirsty', which relates to the killing of Guise. She is enraged at her son because he favours his minions and equates such thinking to a thunderbolt because it acts against innocent men. This is similar to Marlowe's play, in which Catherine also works as a supportive tool for Guise. When she says 'make fire in your heart again burst from ashes', this may reflect Henry in Marlowe's play, when he was with Guise fighting Protestants and then turned to fighting Guise himself. Catherine suggests that her son's actions against Guise would be declined by these people:

Neither Turk nor Alcoran, nor Epicurean
 [...]
 Nor the Machiavel, that worshipper of fortune,
 Would meet with a welcome in you so opportune
 (*The Guisade*, II, i, 377, 379-380)

The Turks, Alcoran, Epicurean, and Machiavelli are all evil in the eyes of Catherine, despite that, Henry's actions against Guise is incomparable with all these groups altogether. This passage serves Mathieu's overall argument in that Henry's actions are seen as repulsive and that even people like Machiavelli or the rest would not welcome such a step by Henry when he decides to eliminate Guise. 'Worshipper of fortune' may

indicate Machiavelli's features, since 'fortune' would not come but through means of deception, pretence and villainy. It is interesting to see how Catherine is grouping all of these evil doers as she puts them together to reveal that Henry's actions against Guise are devastating. Mathieu's representation of Henry is that Henry's action is harsh and inappropriate. He also mentions, through Catherine, that Henry is not worthy of a most Christian King (Guisiade, II, i, 374). Mathieu is clearly saying that Henry's dysfunctional role as a ruler is due to his determination to remove Guise, not to mention the influence of minions. Thus a true ruler, from Mathieu's perspective, is one who abides by the decisions of the Catholic League, which Henry does not. Mathieu credits Catherine's role in supporting his most prominent character.

The sharp contrast between Marlowe and Mathieu can be seen in how Marlowe depicts Catherine, who represents the cruel voice of Catholicism at the very beginning of the play. The first evil words uttered in Marlowe's play are pronounced by Catherine, when she comments on the marriage by saying that she would 'dissolve [it] with blood and cruelty' (*MP*, I, 25). Catherine is determined to exploit that marriage. Then, following the scene where the Queen of Navarre is poisoned, Catherine is the first person who speaks in the fourth scene, gathering with important figures like King Charles and her second son Henry III, in addition to Guise. This reflects her sense of leadership, with which she directs the conversation. Marlowe makes her a prominent figure, with Guise, to stress her role as a Catholic active against Protestants. As a result, Catherine can be considered a powerful figure, second only to Guise. Although she appears in only one scene in Mathieu's play, it strongly establishes Guise's innocence of the accusations against him. She functions as an advocate for Guise as much as for Catholicism.

2.9 Conclusion

Both Marlowe and Mathieu emphasize Guise's importance to reinforce their political arguments in these plays. It becomes obvious that in terms of developing their individual themes, the emphasis on Guise's importance in the plays of Marlowe and Mathieu serves their political approach in these works. In *The Massacre*, Marlowe's Guise advances his own ends by means of political scheming throughout the play; he implements his plans by exploiting religion and acts villainously against the Protestants in a highly Machiavellian manner. The other characters in the play cannot keep pace with Guise; no one else, except for Catherine, can reach the levels of his villainy and Machiavellianism. The development of Guise's Machiavellianism progresses when others fail to prove a match for him. Guise in *The Guisade* has a very different role: Mathieu makes him a zealot who is religious to the utmost but in a more positive way. As Kocher suggests, 'Marlowe kept close to the facts of French history as the Protestants understood them in many parts of his play'.⁵⁹ Kocher is right in his description of Marlowe's depiction of Guise in that Marlowe follows the Protestant understanding of the man and his deeds. Marlowe depicts Guise as a powerful villain, regardless of the sorrow following his death, while for Mathieu, Guise represents honesty and purity. Throughout the chapter, we noticed the common use of attributes such as 'deceiving', 'duplicity', and 'hypocrisy', all of which are used to construct a villainous character that suits each writer's propaganda. The representation of Machiavelli is also evident in the other characters who act villainously and show some kind of political awareness. Each writer depicts his character according to the purposes of his propaganda, although Marlowe's propaganda

⁵⁹ Kocher, 'Contemporary Background I', p. 151.

has been shown to be both more violent and more complex than that of the two French writers. In addition, Marlowe's play does not seem to glorify Protestants the same way the other two French plays glorify their heroes. Many lines can reveal Marlowe's possible reading of the French texts, especially Mathieu's. Further comparison between Marlowe's play and the two other plays reveals that the representation of Machiavelli in Marlowe's text seems to be, inevitably, a step to explore Machiavellian policies whereas the French playwrights seem to have written their plays for the sake of supporting their heroes. Marlowe found Guise an environment for exploring Machiavellian policies in which he, Guise, became even more important than the Protestant element in the play.

Chapter Three

The Jew of Malta

3.1 Introduction

Although *The Jew of Malta* (c.1590) is set in the Mediterranean region, Marlowe's play may be seen as an extension of the discussion of European religion and politics, important themes in the Elizabethan period generally and in Marlowe's plays in particular. The conflict between Catholics and Protestants which is a feature of *The Massacre at Paris* is alluded to in *The Jew of Malta*, but in a different form, since the explicitly Protestant element is absent from *The Jew of Malta*. Thus, Marlowe expresses criticism of the Catholic Church through its other enemies, who this time are the Jews, dramatically represented by Barabas, the eponymous Jew of Malta. Marlowe offers to the Protestant audience an opportunity to view a non-Protestant figure (Barabas) having to expose and confront a Catholic figure (Ferneze), both of whom are evil to a certain degree. Barabas is not a Protestant and can never be associated with them. He is rather a Jew, who shares one thing with Protestants, that is, his attack on Catholics and hatred of Catholicism. The second aspect of *The Jew of Malta* which can be said to reflect the themes of *The Massacre at Paris* is its treatment of the political representation of Machiavellianism in Malta. Marlowe may be said to depict Machiavellian elements through the characters of both Ferneze and Barabas who lead the play to a conflict which focuses on religious and political challenges. We shall investigate the representation of Machiavellianism and the light it sheds on Marlowe by examining the way in which

Marlowe characterizes Machiavellianism according to how he and others of his period viewed Machiavelli.

More broadly, this chapter will consider the ways in which *The Jew of Malta* reflects some important political and religious dimensions of the Elizabethan period. There are many occasions in this play when Marlowe alludes to individual Catholics as evil. This villainy is, of course, seen at the beginning of the play when Ferneze practices his tyranny against the Jews, an important aspect of his political influence as a Catholic; as Paul Kocher states, 'Ferneze is the official voice of Christianity in the drama, defending the confiscation of the Jew's wealth and denouncing him at the end for his many crimes'.¹ Ferneze exemplifies his religion, and his practices against the Jews can be seen as springing from his religion. Menpes, among other critics, speaks of the evil characters in the play, and the way he refers to Barabas shows how, 'if Barabas was not there, there can still be evil in the play'.² This should be seen as asserting Ferneze's role as a source of evil apart from Barabas. Each of these two characters represents a form of wickedness that reflects his own background. Marlowe exposes Ferneze and Barabas to each other in order to represent the different forms of evil that each character practices.

As a whole, the discussion of the play is divided here into two parts: the first considers Barabas in comparison to Ferneze in the light of how they become involved in political domination. The discussion in this part elaborates on the prologue, Malta, Barabas and his resistance, and Machiavellian topics such as dominance, power and policy. The second part, in section 3.7, concerns Marlowe's representation of the Catholic

¹ Paul Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe: a Study of His Thought, Learning, and Character* (New York, University of North Carolina Press, 1974), p. 120.

² R. B. Menpes, 'The Bondage of Barabas: Thwarted Desire in *The Jew of Malta*', *Parergon: Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 20, no. 1 (January, 2003), p. 2.

religious men in a way that reveals the religious tensions of the time and his adoption of an ironic tone to depict the gulf between Catholics and Protestants. The negative depiction of the Catholic regime in Malta reflects the popular English Protestant perception of the Roman church and its adherents. For example, in *The Jew of Malta*, Marlowe illustrates through Barabas some of the characteristics frequently associated with Catholics. Barabas says that he ‘can see no fruits in all their faith/ but malice, falsehood, and excessive pride’ (*JM*, I, i, 114-115). These features are presented later in the play in the characterization of Ferneze, so Barabas depicts the actions of Catholics in a way that exposes Catholic injustice when it is practiced against him. Although Barabas is talking about Christians in general, the setting of the play is a Catholic island. Having said this, it is possible to consider Christians as Catholics in Barabas’ meaning and, as Pineas argues, ‘it is quite clear that it is specifically Catholicism and not Christianity in general which is being satirised in this play’.³ As I argue in the second part of this chapter in relation to the friars, it is noticeable that Marlowe’s focus is on the circle of individuals in holy orders who represent Catholicism. Although there are similarities between the way Catholics are critically represented in *The Massacre at Paris* and in *The Jew of Malta*, it is significant that the events in the latter are less violent than those in the former, which deals, as we have seen, with the bloody and deadly war between Protestants and Catholics. While there is some bloodshed in *The Jew of Malta*, Marlowe deals with religion through a shift from violence to some kind of humour—for example, when Barabas and Ithamore ridicule religious men—to express the difference between the two creeds, and between themselves and the others. The way Marlowe introduces his

³ Rainer Pineas, *Tudor and Early Stuart Anti-Catholic Drama* (New York: De Graaf Nieuwkoop, 1972), p. 9.

representation of the religious topic in *The Jew of Malta* is similar to how he does so in another play. In *Doctor Faustus*, where criticism of the Pope is subsidiary to the main themes of the play, such themes like the doctrine of free will and predestination, Marlowe manages to represent such criticism by ridiculing Catholics in one part of the play without adopting that approach as a main theme. In the comical first scene of the third act, Faustus, having made himself invisible, distresses the Pope by eating his food.⁴ Faustus also criticizes the pontiff, calling him ‘the proud Pope’ (*Faustus*, I, iii, 77). Despite this similarity, it should be noted that, in *The Jew of Malta*, Marlowe presents more extensive criticism of Catholicism, and the discussion of Catholics is varied, covering topics from Ferneze to the friars.

3.1.1 The prologue and the historical Machiavelli

The prologue demonstrates the importance of Machiavelli on the Elizabethan stage as a politician and a character known for his villainy and scheming. Indeed, Marlowe portrays Machiavelli in a way that personifies wickedness and political cleverness, so the prologue is the first link between *The Jew of Malta* and *The Massacre at Paris* in terms of themes and ideas:

Albeit the world think Machiavel is dead,
Yet was his soul but flown beyond the Alps;
And, now the Guise is dead, is come from France,
To view this land, and frolic with his friends.
(*JM*, The Prologue, 1-4)

Machiavelli, represented in both Barabas and Ferneze, thus brings his power and his policy to Malta. Marlowe effectively revives Machiavelli, who, after Guise’s death,

⁴ Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, ed. By Sylvan Barnet (USA: Penguin Group Inc. , 2001), I, iii, 63-75.

travels to Malta; this allows the playwright to stress the religious and political implications for the island. By mentioning that Machiavelli has travelled from one place to another ('his soul but flown beyond the Alps'), Marlowe implies that the Italian is present everywhere in the world and elsewhere in his own plays: from France, Machiavelli moves to Malta, and so on. Minshull argues that, 'the image of Machiavellianism which emerges from the main body of the prologue is one of power politics in which conventional religious and moral scruples play little part'.⁵ Minshull's argument is accurate since power decides the destiny of characters and their control. The importance of the prologue for the play's religious representations is evident in the way Machiavelli speaks, while the emphasis given to Machiavellianism in the prologue hints both that the body of the play will feature Machiavellianism as an important theme and that it will contain a discussion of its religious and political implications. The speech of Machiavel also indicates the importance of political influence, as represented by the interaction between Ferneze and Barabas.

Since Guise is Machiavellian, Marlowe may be using his name to highlight the transformation of Machiavelli into Ferneze and Barabas, who either have Machiavellian thoughts or only have the villainy that Machiavelli is known for.⁶ The relevance of both Machiavelli and Guise is widely established by critics. For example, Ellis-Fermor mentions that 'the prologue represents fairly the Guise'.⁷ This seems clear in Marlowe's representation of Guise as a political power, as we have seen. Marlowe equates Guise with Machiavelli according to his speech, which could indicate Marlowe's attempt to

⁵ Catherine Minshull, 'Marlowe's Sound Machiavell', *Renaissance Drama*, 13 (1982), p. 41.

⁶ This idea is indebted to Minshull's work in which Barabas represents the 'villain' Machiavelli and Ferneze represents the 'political' Machiavelli. See *ibid.*, pp. 38, 52.

⁷ Una Mary Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1967), p. 88.

relate Catholicism to Machiavellianism. Another strong link between the two plays can be seen in the statement that Machiavelli ‘count[s] religion but a childish toy,/ And holds there is no sin but ignorance’ (*MP*, I, 65-66). There is a striking similarity with the words of Machiavel in the mouth of Guise who states that his policy ‘fram’d religion’. Guise had to overcome ignorance by learning to seek knowledge that helped him to become strong; this knowledge enabled him to abandon religion in practice and to exploit it to deceive. Machiavelli’s implied presence in *Malta* strongly demonstrates the direction in which the discussion of political thought is being taken in the play. Marlowe’s prologue can thus be considered a starting point for the political problems which increase the tension between Barabas and Ferneze and which also bring these two characters into a fierce political debate. Marlowe’s prologue as a whole may merely reflect popular perceptions of Machiavelli, which were not always accurate, while Machiavelli’s writings were not precisely represented by these perceptions. Marlowe’s drama indeed opens the door for broad depictions of different aspects of Machiavellianism according to how the playwright may have viewed him.

3.1.2 Marlowe’s representation of Jews in the Elizabethan period

At the beginning of the play, Marlowe has Barabas count his fortune and reflect on how trade has brought him such wealth. He is shown to be a Jew who is blessed for what he has and who, as such, is elevated in financial terms above his Jewish brothers. Marlowe makes sure his Barabas is no exception to the stereotyped picture of the Jews. Thus Barabas starts by wondering:

... who is honoured now but for his wealth?
Rather had I, a Jew, been hated thus

Than pitied in a Christian poverty;
 For I can see no fruits in all their faith,
 But malice, falsehood, and excessive pride,
 Which methinks fits not their profession.
 (*JM*, I, i, 111-116)

Barabas is proud of what he is and is content to be a Jew as long as he is rich, while he despises the notion of being a Christian because he identifies Christianity with features such as poverty. Marlowe prepares Barabas to become a victim of the Catholics because of many factors, one of which is his wealth. Marlowe therefore develops his representation of the Jews by involving Catholics in desiring to attain what the Jews excel at. Goldberg suggests that the scapegoat in Malta is Barabas, who has been chosen not for his innocence, 'but for his wealth, and for one other quality: his alienness, for it is the fact that Barabas is an outsider that enables Ferneze to use him as he does and get away with it'.⁸ Goldberg's argument illustrates Barabas' position as an alien, while Ferneze is shown as an exploiter and attacker. Marlowe certainly demonstrates that the Catholics are keen to exploit the Jews. They are presented as opportunists who exploit others by any means necessary. Marlowe suggests Barabas' alienness to allow Ferneze to reveal his wickedness.

Although Marlowe presents a stereotypical Jew, he manages to confuse his reader by also making the Jew a unique character who does not appear true to type in some ways. This is seen in Barabas' resistance to Ferneze, which is a distinguishing feature of the Jew as he relinquishes his stereotyped nature and becomes active in his opposition to the Catholic attacks. This change—or rather confusion—in the way in which Marlowe depicts Barabas' character, sometimes stereotyped and sometimes not, is similar to his

⁸ Dena Goldberg, 'Sacrifice in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 2, no. 2 (1992), p. 239.

depiction of Guise in *The Massacre at Paris*, as noted above. Marlowe makes it a habit to change the attitude of his characters from one thing to another. In this earlier play, Marlowe also invokes a feeling of sympathy for Guise despite his Catholicism and his enmity towards the Protestants. Marlowe seems to be interested in bringing together a mixture of features in his protagonists in order to allow a space for them in which to enact their roles.

So far, , as Barabas speaks of his nature and his wealth, it can be suggested that Marlowe is still at the stage of introducing his character more intimately to his audience. Marlowe does not seem to concentrate at this stage on Barabas' villainy, for although his greed is revealed during this soliloquy, there is no indication that he has practised any kind of villainy so far; his soliloquy simply serves as an introduction to his personality. Barabas shows only a stereotype of Jewishness by saying:

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.
(*JM*, I, i, 127-130)

Barabas clearly states that his background does not belong to the line of Kings—'we come not to be Kings'—demonstrating how inexperienced he is in that role. He asserts his identity, instead, by means of wealth. Marlowe's depiction of the Jews sets the scene for a later confrontation between them and Ferneze, when Barabas' words are compared with the way in which Ferneze treats the Jews. This passage also offers a political account of his attitude as a Jew, since Barabas clearly states that he is not suitable for the role of King. Ferneze, on the other hand, demonstrates his evil by exercising his authority over the Jews, who are few in number. The introduction of Ferneze, when he initiates his

enmity with the Jews, appears a few lines later. This despot raises many questions related to political rule and control. His governing of the country brings many issues to the surface and Barabas is used as a device for raising such issues. At the outset, it is important to stress the idea that Barabas serves to delight Protestants by attacking Catholicism and that he stands in opposition to it in some ways, although he is not himself a Protestant. Greenblatt mentions that ‘the figure of the Jew is useful as a powerful rhetorical device’,⁹ which suggests that Marlowe uses Barabas as a tool to reveal Catholic hypocrisy. Barabas lives under despotic Catholic rule in Malta; thus, discussing his resistance within the play will demonstrate how Marlowe manipulates his characters by adding the feature of resistance to a stereotypical character who is not, as he himself admits, born to resist. Barabas’ resistance will demonstrate that it is somehow desirable and necessary. Furthermore, Barabas’ resistance can be seen as springing from Marlowe’s desire to echo anti-Catholic sentiment. Thus, the representation of Barabas has more significance than that of a mere stock character because Barabas carries a number of additional characteristics which are important for Marlowe’s purpose.

3.1.3 Malta in a historical context

As the play opens, Ferneze, the Catholic ruler in question, faces a predicament regarding his island: he must pay the Turks a levy in order to avoid war. After Calymath, the Turkish Emperor’s son, has left Malta following their meeting, Ferneze summons the Jews, including Barabas, to explain to them the situation that faces Malta. It is also possible to consider Ferneze’s first meeting with the Jews as the first sign of political

⁹ Stephen J. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (USA: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 203.

awareness which he shows in the play, because this crisis is purely political, and he responds accordingly. Thus, Ferneze opens his exchange with Barabas by saying:

[...] Hebrews, now come near.
 From the Emperor of Turkey is arrived
 Great Selim Calymath, his highness' son,
 To levy of us ten years' tribute past.
 Now, then, here know that it concerneth us.
 (*JM*, I, ii, 38-42)

It is noticeable that Ferneze does not start the conversation with direct demands for money from the Jews; he rather explains to them the situation of the Turkish emperor and then addresses the main issue. This highlights his awareness as a clever and villainous ruler in that he awaits the Jews' response before imposing his decision, having faced some kind of rejection from Barabas. Ferneze is accurate in using words similar to those of Guise, who starts his soliloquy by using violent words that presage what he intends to do. Here, Ferneze clearly says that 'it concerneth us', marking his desire to involve the Jews in the problem and to prepare them for his demand that they should pay. Barabas replies simply that Ferneze will have to pay the tribute, but Ferneze responds that he needs the help of the Jews, upon which Barabas states that the Jews were not born soldiers, which seems a kind of refusal to pay money. Ferneze then reveals what precisely he wants from the Jews in a more direct way:

[...] Jew, we know thou art no soldier,
 Thou art a merchant and a moneyed man;
 And 'tis thy money, Barabas, we seek.
 (*JM*, I, ii, 52-54)

Thus Marlowe begins to distinguish the religious identity of the Jew from that of the Catholic, the start of a gradual process of establishing the differences which are to cause problems between Catholics and others. By making the Jews scapegoats, Marlowe is able

to depict Catholics as greedy for their money, since the Jews are traders and possess fortunes that others may want to exploit. Worse, Catholics are shown through the actions of Ferneze to be unjust and tyrannical.

Furthermore, a line of similarity can be drawn between this play and *The Massacre at Paris* in the way historical events are depicted. In *The Massacre* we learn from Marlowe's representation of Catholics that the motivation behind a historical event such as the marriage was not 'love' but rather 'hatred' and that their aim was to ensnare the Huguenots. The same thing occurs in Malta. Ferneze claims to Barabas that he wants to save Malta before frankly admitting the purpose of his actions. Ferneze uses his decision to misguide Barabas because he hates him for his religion, just as the Catholics in *The Massacre* are motivated by their hatred of the Huguenots. The parallels between the two plays in this respect are remarkable, reinforcing the notion that such historical decisions were based on cunning practised by Catholics against the minorities in Malta and in France. Indeed, in the case of Malta, any attempt by Marlowe to justify Barabas' actions or elicit any kind of sympathy for him might be seen as indirectly buttressing support for the Huguenots when they were targeted in France. The events in Malta can be seen as an extension of the circumstances in France as a whole for many reasons, such as hatred, power, dominance and injustice.

The theatre in Marlowe's time witnessed many attempts to negatively describe Catholics and how tyrannical they were. The message conveyed by Marlowe's representation of Ferneze is that the tyrant was single-mindedly determined to practise injustice and dominance by robbing and oppressing the Jews. There are some interesting points that may be worth investigating regarding Ferneze and his attitude towards the

Jews. In the light of Healey's comments concerning the stereotypes of Jewish culture rooted in ideas such as that of 'God's chosen people'¹⁰, Barabas' actions against Catholics and against Ferneze in particular can be said to derive some justification from Marlowe's viewpoint. Marlowe's dramatic representation of Barabas shows that Barabas justifies his actions against Catholics because he is one of 'the chosen people' and, hence, has a divine right to do so. For Marlowe, it seems that Barabas' actions are justified simply because Catholic tyranny was conducted against Barabas. Marlowe may care less for Barabas, but he cares more about representing a picture of evil Catholics mainly for the sake of his Elizabethan audience, who was at the time more concerned with such issues. Barabas elevates himself above the Catholics and even above his own brothers in religion when he says that he is 'born to better chance/ and framed of finer mould than common men'¹¹, all of which reflects his desire to be superior to others. The Catholics' attempt to break down Barabas goes against his perception of himself as superior, and it is this which generates his resistance. It is indeed possible to say that Marlowe legitimises Barabas' pride in his own better nature because it does not transgress against others but merely protects him and his rights.

3.1.4 Ferneze and the Resistance of Barabas

The idea of resistance Marlowe depicts in Barabas may have been a reflection of contemporary events in England. Marlowe's elaboration of Barabas' resistance could be seen as a reference to events which took place in the last two decades of the sixteenth

¹⁰ Robert M. Healey, *The Jew in Seventeenth-Century Protestant Thought*, in *Church History*, vol. 46, no. 1 (March, 1977), pp. 63-79, p. 66 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3165159>> [accessed 20 May 2009]

¹¹ *JM*, I, ii, 219-220.

century. Anti-Catholic feeling was widespread and often invoked by writers such as Marlowe, whose depiction of Barabas and his resistance could be seen as an extension of that feeling. For example, Anne McLaren, in her search for the genesis of English anti-Catholicism, argues that ‘anti-Catholicism became central to English national and political life in the late sixteenth century in response to a particular problem’,¹² which was the threat of the Catholic Mary becoming Queen.¹³ Elsewhere, McLaren quotes Carol Weiner as arguing that ‘hatred of Catholics changes from being the private obsession of religious extremists... into part of national ideology’.¹⁴ These arguments address a particular wave of anti-Catholic sentiment in the Elizabethan period. Such hatred did exist before that time, as McLaren herself states, but the point is that Marlowe was able to use the historical circumstance of this anti-Catholic sentiment to depict the hatred which Barabas shows for the Catholics of Malta. Barabas’ resistance could thus be used to highlight Protestant perceptions of the dangerous ambitions of the Catholics.

The factor which seems to exacerbate the tension between Barabas and Ferneze is the way in which the Jew insists on resisting the ruler. Barabas persists in opposing Ferneze’s unjust actions until the latter succeeds in escalating their disagreement to the point where opposition can be taken as defiance of legal authority. Ferneze decides to demand more than he had originally planned to take from Barabas, because he knows that Barabas will reject his demands for money, giving him the excuse of insubordination to confiscate his property legally. The threat to Barabas lies not in jailing him or punishing him in other ways but in stripping him of what is most dear to him, his money.

¹² Anne McLaren, Gender, Religion, and Early Modern Nationalism: Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots, and the Genesis of English Anti-Catholicism, *The American Historical Review*, vol. 107, no. 3 (June, 2002), pp. 739-767 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3091084>> [accessed 19/05/2009] p. 740.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 740.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 741.

Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* is similar to Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice* (written c. 1596)¹⁵ in that it reflects one aspect of the Christian stereotype of the Jewish character: the placing of the highest value on money. Furthermore, the Jews in both plays are rich because they are traders and perhaps also because of their practice of usury. Thus, they are more deeply despised for their violation of a prohibition which Christians hold dear. The Jews' wealth is thus seen as a sin because their money has not been acquired lawfully. The meaningful point here is that Marlowe develops the personality of the Jew in the way he resists and defends himself, while Shakespeare's Jew and the way he is presented does not imply any kind of resistance. In that sense, Marlowe's character is, here, a truly Marlovian character whose resistance, challenges and defiance are features that fit well with how such Marlovian characters act.

By allowing Ferneze to treat Barabas unjustly, Marlowe manages to show Ferneze as an oppressor; Ferneze is also shown to possess the intellect of a political ruler who treats Barabas in a way which he sees will destroy him and his wealth. As for Barabas, his appeal to Marlowe may lie in the fact that he becomes even more villainous than Ferneze himself. For Marlowe, the idea of Barabas resisting his ruler is attractive, other than for its representation of the conflict with Catholics, because it allows a character to become interesting by being revolutionary and defiant. It is thus possible to view his treatment of the idea of resistance as a representation of defiance against Catholic order under Ferneze's rule. In that light, Barabas' resistance can be seen as opposition to a tyrant who happens to be an enemy to Protestants and to others too. According to

¹⁵ The earliest Quarto edition was published in 1600, but there is a definite reference to the play in Francis Meres' *Palladis Tamia* of 1598 and possible allusions to current events may indicate a date some two years before this. See Derek Traversi, 'The Merchant of Venice', in *Shakespeare the Writer and His Work* (London: Longmans, 1964), p. 194.

Barabas, Catholics represent evil, as Barabas describes the features of their faith as ‘malice, falsehood, and excessive pride’ (*JM*, I, i, 48.). If Marlowe’s depiction of Catholics is as incarnating the devil, then Barabas is justified in his resistance to Ferneze, since it is a revolt against the devil. Marlowe shows Barabas’ resistance to highlight his own criticism of the papacy as the basis for Catholicism.

Harbage claims that ‘Barabas is essentially innocent-minded’.¹⁶ If Barabas is innocent in any way in Marlowe’s drama, as Harbage claims, then Ferneze is probably the character who most closely embodies the true villain. Luc Borot presents the same idea when he argues that ‘Barabas is somehow not the only villain in the play, and [...] he too was misused’.¹⁷ Again, such claims assign the role of villain to both Ferneze and Barabas, except that their situation presents Ferneze as the instigator. Furthermore, Barabas’ decision to take revenge in Malta is not related to his past, when he committed many crimes. Barabas clearly demonstrates his wickedness to Ithamore:

As for myself, I walk abroad a-nights
And kill sick people groaning under walls;
Sometimes I go about and poison wells
(*JM*, II, iii, 177-179)

Although this may be a comic stereotype, Barabas is showing some kind of villainy here. Having admitted to evil actions such as killing sick people, Barabas shows great intensity and cruelty. The audience must be eager to see how he and Ferneze will manifest their villainy towards each other, which grants Marlowe the freedom to include in both characters elements of Machiavellianism, or at least of what many Elizabethans understood as Machiavellianism. Perhaps the significance of Marlowe showing Barabas

¹⁶ Alfred Harbage, ‘Innocent Barabas’, *Drama Review*, 8, no. 4 (New York, 1964), p. 56.

¹⁷ Luc Borot, ‘Machiavellian Diplomacy and Dramatic Development in Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta*’, *Cahiers Elisabethains: Late Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 33 (1988), p. 1.

admitting to such villainies is to present him as Machiavellian in the aspects related to murder, but not when it comes to political government. Marlowe makes Ferneze outdo Barabas in the political field, as will be seen later.

Barabas does not wait for others to solve his problem with Ferneze; he himself resists Ferneze's demands, but as a result he loses even more than he would have lost by conceding to Ferneze and his accomplices. This may be seen to demonstrate Marlowe's perspective on Catholics, that their influence over others is harmful and abusive. The injustice which Ferneze inflicts on the Jews cannot be justified simply by considering his Catholicism and his deliberate action, so it is important to give an account of all the circumstances which have made Ferneze decide to take advantage of the Jews in the interests of his country. Although Ferneze does all this to protect his country, his actions still do not reflect any kind of justice. For example, when Barabas wonders why the Jews, as strangers, should be taxed inequitably, Ferneze replies:

No, Jew, like infidels;
 For through our sufferance of your hateful lives,
 Who stand accursed in the sight of heaven,
 These taxes and afflictions are befall'n,
 And thus we are determined.
 (*JM*, I, ii, 63-67)

Judging by Ferneze's words—particularly his phrase 'like infidels'—it seems that injustice is less directly to do with money and more to do with Judaism as a religion; Ferneze's prejudice is clear in the above lines. He relates Judaism with infidelity because he thinks his religion is truthful while other religions and infidelity are the same. The religious and political beliefs on which Ferneze depends when executing his orders are essentially related to his Catholic faith. It may be a general Christian (Catholic or Protestant) view that the Jews are sinful, but Marlowe may be using Catholics to stand for

all who exploit the sinful deeds of others for their own interests. Ferneze articulates moments of hatred because he believes that the Jews are to blame for their sinful lives, but he also expresses detestation to denote his superiority and what he stands for.

Marlowe's analysis of Barabas' resistance is clearly presented in the play. Greaves states that 'primarily because of the Reformation, political obedience became an increasingly significant issue in Tudor England'.¹⁸ Although in Marlowe's time English Protestantism was not subject to such oppression, his depiction of despotism in this play could be taken as a reminder of how Catholics were seen as acting against others, especially when the setting of the play involves the Jews as a minority in Catholic, Mediterranean Malta. Marlowe's depiction of an unjust ruler oppressing the Jews, who also happen to be in the minority in Malta, can be viewed as a representation of the faults of the faith that Ferneze professes. There are clear parallels with the treatment of the Protestant minority in Paris in Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*, where the Huguenots are tyrannised and seen as strangers in France, in just the same way that the Jews of Malta are victims because they are outsiders whose numbers are small. The resistance of Huguenots like Coligny and Navarre gains the sympathy of the audience, while Barabas' defiance of Ferneze's tyranny might be intended to paint Ferneze as a potential threat who has to be stopped rather than to depict Barabas as a character who deserves sympathy. Consequently, Marlowe achieves his goal by showing the Catholics as occupiers who dominate others by force. Speaking of the audience and sympathy, Elizabethan audiences must have been sympathetic to Huguenots for obvious reasons,

¹⁸ Richard L. Greaves, 'Concepts of Political Obedience in Late Tudor England: Conflicting Perspectives', *The Journal of British Studies*, 22, no. 1 (Autumn, 1982), pp. 23-34
< <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0021-9371%28198223%2922%3A1%3C23%3ACOPOL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-X> > [accessed 20 February 2008] p. 23.

such as hatred of the common enemy and solidarity with their brothers. It is no wonder that a feeling of enthusiasm arose when Protestants were seen to oppose Catholics in a play such as *The Massacre at Paris*. In the case of Barabas, the Elizabethan audience would respond differently to him as a non-Protestant but they would be expected to show approval for what he does to Ferneze.

There is no doubt that Ferneze perpetrates injustice against Barabas. Marlowe depicts Catholics as people who interfere in others' affairs and impose their opinions, even in personal matters. Harbage argues that the offer to convert Barabas to Christianity 'would have seemed (to Barabas) not only just but generous.'¹⁹ In fact, Ferneze is not being just in his offer, simply because when Barabas decides to convert in order to avoid losing his money, the Catholics rapidly announce that it is too late and that they intend to confiscate half his wealth. The Catholics are not serious in their offer, but it might be an indication of their deceit that they want to humiliate Barabas so that he surrenders to their demands. Furthermore, when Barabas is asked to pay half his wealth, Marlowe stresses that Catholicism is a worthless religion:

Ferneze: Why, Barabas, wilt thou be christenèd

Barabas: No, governor, I will be no convertite.

Ferneze: Then pay thy half.

Barabas: Why, know you what you did by this device?

Half of my substance is a city's wealth.

Governor, it was not got so easily;

Nor will I part so slightly therewithal.

(*JM*, I, ii, 82-88)

Marlowe not only shows Barabas being treated unjustly here, but also reveals the Catholic faith as not worth losing money for. Barabas declares total rejection of the

¹⁹ Harbage, 'Innocent Barabas', p. 52.

Governor's offer of conversion to Christianity: 'No, governor, I will be no convertite' (*JM*, I, ii, 83). Elsewhere, he states, as mentioned in the above passage, his refusal to submit to Ferneze's orders.

Marlowe depicts Barabas' resistance, illustrating how it could be of interest to him because it promotes courage and confidence, consistent characteristics of Marlowe's protagonists throughout his plays. It seems impossible to disregard Marlowe's linking of Barabas with resistance. Earlier we mentioned Barabas' transformation from a mere stereotyped Jew who is not a fighter into someone who resists. Greenblatt argues that Barabas never relinquishes the anti-Semitic stereotype and adds that 'Marlowe quickly suggests that the Jew is not the exception to but rather the true representative of his society'.²⁰ No attention is paid in Greenblatt's argument to the resistance shown by Barabas. It should be noted that because the play portrays Ferneze's actions against others, Barabas' resistance should be assessed in the light of these because it is considered a reaction to Catholic tyranny. Barabas never yields to the Catholics; indeed, he criticises his brothers by asking: 'Why did you yield to their extortion?'²¹ He clearly describes his ability to resist courageously: 'You were a multitude, and I but one/ and of me only have they taken all'.²² Barabas' ability to face the Catholics alone emphasises his fearlessness. Elizabethan audiences may have been more than willing to see an unorthodox character who would challenge Ferneze, whom they would have despised for his religion. In this context, Greenblatt notes that Marlowe's protagonists 'rebel against

²⁰ Stephen J Greenblatt, 'Marlowe and the Will to Absolute Play', in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (USA: University of Chicago Press, 1980) p. 203.

²¹ *JM*, I, ii, 178.

²² *JM*, I, ii, 179-180.

orthodoxy'.²³ The difference between a rebel and a resister is huge since Barabas' resistance was a result of injustice practised against him. If Elizabethans attending the play recalled the events of the Spanish Armada several years before it was written, they would then be able to recognize Barabas' righteous actions in defending his money and would see Ferneze as representing an authentic Catholic danger, a member of a religion responsible for attacks against their own country.

3.2 The Politics of Barabas and Ferneze

3.2.1 The dominance of the strong

Not all of Marlowe's characters are aware of how to make correct political decisions. For instance, while Guise, in *The Massacre*, represents the true schemer who practises politics in pursuit of personal achievement, exemplified by his success in starting the massacre, Barabas, who is similar to Guise in his degree of importance as a protagonist for Marlowe, fails to use his power to triumph when he becomes governor. The fact that he does not succeed in controlling Malta politically when the Turks appoint him as governor shows that Marlowe does not necessarily attribute political power to his most compelling characters. Furthermore, people like Navarre and Coligny in *The Massacre* do not have any apparent political influence or dominance, although they represent Protestantism. Marlowe seems to be very interested in depicting how the strong can take over, and if a recent military event like the Spanish Armada was in his mind when he wrote the play, it must have given him an enthusiastic interest in how the strong dominate, because his protagonists seek victory in the same way that England defeated

²³ P. Greenblatt, Marlowe and the Will to Absolute Play, p. 210.

Spain, and it may have given Marlowe an interest in seeing such power and strength being implemented by his characters. The operation of politics in *The Jew of Malta* is presented in a contrast between Barabas and Ferneze. Marlowe seems always to show Catholic characters as possessing some degree of knowledge of how to manage matters of state. Thus Ferneze, like Guise, directs the affairs of his country smoothly, managing to achieve stability by being successful in solving problems, one of which is, of course, the issue of Barabas and his money.

The similarities between Ferneze and Guise show that Marlowe is presenting these Catholics as true enemies of Protestants and others because they seek to dominate others. It is hard to see them enter into friendships with Protestants – or others, in the case of the Jews. In *The Massacre at Paris*, the Guises have long been the principal enemy of the Protestants, while Ferneze follows the other Catholics in his policy of avoiding any type of friendship with Barabas. It is possible to say that Barabas' attempt to befriend Ferneze, although it is done to serve his own ends, gives an indication that others, including Jews, can be humane in comparison to Catholics. Unlike those of Marlowe's protagonists who exhibit Machiavellian villainy, Barabas shows his naivety in breaking the 'rules' of Machiavellianism when, for instance, he trusts Ferneze;²⁴ Machiavelli, in the *Discourses on Livy*, clearly states that one 'must carefully consider whether or not to place anyone in any important administrative post who has been offended in some noteworthy way by others'.²⁵ Machiavelli's advice is clearly not taken by Barabas when he attempts to befriend Ferneze, forgetting that he has injured him by killing his son (in

²⁴ The point concerning Barabas' un-Machiavellian trust in Ferneze is derived from Ribner's argument about this issue. See, Irving Ribner, 'Marlowe and Machiavelli', *Comparative Literature*, 6, no. 4 (Fall 1954), pp. 350-360

²⁵ Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, eds. & trans. by Julia Bondanella & Peter Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), III, xvii, p. 300.

act three, scene two). Because Machiavelli is seen among Elizabethans as the embodiment of wickedness, or, as Bradbrook puts it, ‘he poses as the personification of evil’,²⁶ Marlowe defines villainy by using well-known ‘Machiavellian’ features. Marlowe relates Machiavelli to the character of Ferneze as a representative of Catholicism. Kahn argues that ‘sixteenth-century Englishmen from Pole to Marlowe saw Machiavelli as the convenient symbol of a range of cultural anxieties about threats to the social, political, religious and linguistic status quo’.²⁷ Marlowe uses Machiavelli to demonstrate his characters’ villainy and depends on Machiavellian theory to create complex problems which vary from mere villainies to planned policies. All of these are an indication of how Machiavelli was known and received among Elizabethans.

3.2.2 Reception of Machiavelli in Elizabethan England

Machiavelli was widely read among many Elizabethan scholars, and an understanding of his ideas developed over time. Although *The Prince* was not translated into English until 1640, his other works appeared in English much earlier; for example, *The Art of War* was translated in 1560. The suggestion is that whether in English or in other languages, or whether they heard about him from others, Elizabethans were aware of Machiavelli’s works; whether or not they had an accurate understanding of these, they knew Machiavelli. The educated among them would have had access to his books in Latin or Italian. Roger Ascham, for instance, in *The Schoolmaster* (1570), refers to ‘Pygius and

²⁶ M. C. Bradbrook, ‘*The Jew of Malta*’, in *Marlowe: a Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. By Clifford Leech (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 148.

²⁷ Victoria Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric. From the Counter-Reformation to Milton* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 89.

Machiavel, two indifferent Patriarches of these two Religions'.²⁸ Ryan comments that 'Ascham is [...] accusing Machiavelli of holding Catholic views'.²⁹ The two religions referred to are Catholicism and atheism, since Ascham refers to the choice Italians had between adopting the Catholic religion or none. This kind of opinion reflects how others viewed Machiavelli, and it also shows that he was a controversial figure whose importance increased among Elizabethans in the late sixteenth century. Another example is seen in Gabriel Harvey's letter to a student by the name of Remington, illustrating his interest in the powerful policy of Machiavelli and reflecting a widespread appetite to know who Machiavelli was and what his politics were.³⁰ Harvey's desire to read Machiavelli indicates his importance.

The depiction of Machiavelli in drama served the characterisation of Catholicism and of villainy. The interest that sixteenth-century writers showed in him and his political ideas, whether related to Catholicism, as in the case of Ascham, or not, also found its place in Marlowe's works. Cartelli states that 'Machiavellism, as it was popularly understood and as Marlowe chose to understand it in his plays and offstage pronouncements, seems to have functioned as a particularly enabling source of theatrical energy for Marlowe'.³¹ This is what we observe in Marlowe's plays: those characters who are Machiavellians are energetic in action because of their representation of Machiavellian policy, which imposes on them an active political role or villainy. It even

²⁸ Roger Ascham, *The Schoolmaster* (London: John Daye, 1570)

<http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99840125> [accessed 18 April 2008] p. 29.

²⁹ Roger Ascham, *The Schoolmaster*, ed. by Lawrence Ryan (New York: Cornell University Press), 1967, p. 72.

³⁰ Edward John Long Scott, ed., *Letter-Book of Gabriel Harvey A.D. 1573-1580* (Westminster: Nicholas and Sons, 1884), 174.

³¹ Thomas Cartelli, *Marlowe, Shakespeare, and the economy of the theatrical experience* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), p. 121.

became more commonplace to cite passages from Marlowe's plays with possible relevance to Machiavellian ideas, such as Barabas' failure to identify a potential enemy when trusting Ferneze whom he has injured, as will be seen later. On the other hand, it is easy to observe Marlowe's interest in Machiavelli and what he represents in the aspects related to power and dominance.

An example of the condemnation of Machiavelli is that of Reginald Pole who, in addressing the Emperor Charles V, referred to Machiavelli's books as a poison which had spread through the courts of princes.³² Although Pole's career predated Marlowe by some decades, and that the mid-sixteenth century is very different from the late Elizabethan period, the discussion on Machiavelli seems to be similar. The historical accounts of Machiavelli which were developed over the years may be seen as parallel to the way in which the Catholics are introduced as evil in Marlowe's plays. Marlowe follows his contemporaries in the way they represent Machiavelli and relate him to Catholicism—it would seem an accepted link between Machiavelli and Catholics—because Machiavelli seems to represent political strength, in addition to his irreligiousness. Elizabethans may have considered Machiavelli as irreligious, but they also integrated him with the Catholic identity, so that any representation of a Catholic figure is related to Machiavellianism because of the political and military positions adopted by Machiavelli. Elizabethans like Marlowe represented Machiavelli with political power, dominance, and villainies. These features are also attributed to Catholics and Catholicism because Protestants saw them as evil, and Machiavelli seemed to fit well with Catholics since he was also seen as a threat to political order as were the Catholics, whom Protestants considered as a threat to the

³² Cited by Sidney Anglo, *Machiavelli- The First Century. Studies in Enthusiasm, Hostility, and Irrelevance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 17.

Protestant state. Machiavelli is the example of the features which writers, like Marlowe, attribute to Catholics. Ferneze is obviously a political force as Marlowe writes about him. He also has similarities to the historical Machiavelli: he has a brain with which to think and people to subordinate, making him a dominant force, which was how Machiavelli was seen. It is noticeable that Marlowe is careful to make Ferneze a historical character. By that we mean that Marlowe never separates Ferneze from being the leader of a Catholic state whose actions are a reflection of his religion. In that sense, Marlowe asserts Ferneze's Catholicism and thus makes it clear that he is interested in relating Ferneze's character to Machiavelli's ideas, because he makes Ferneze a character dangerous to others because of his dominance.

3.2.3 Barabas' link to politics

Menpes argues that it would have been impossible for the Elizabethan audience to hold Barabas innocent if they had considered his past, when he killed many people, including his own daughter, and committed many other crimes. The audience may care little for Barabas and his position, but they would also presumably care little for Ferneze, whom they would see as a representative of Catholicism. Menpes asserts that 'Barabas is the quintessential victim of this corrupt and alien dramatic world, where his status as a victim is substantiated by his inability to act in a voluntary way upon what he desires'.³³ Barabas is indeed a victim, but he turns this to his advantage by making other people his victims in turn. Menpes' argument seems to depend on stressing Barabas' inability to act freely in

³³ Menpes, 'Bondage of Barabas', p. 69.

the way he would like. However, it is important to assert Barabas' strong capability when he says:

Think me to be a senseless lump of clay
That will with every water wash to dirt.
No, Barabas is born to better chance
And framed of finer mould than common men
That measure nought but by the present time.
A reaching thought will search his deepest wits
And cast with cunning for the time to come,
For evils are apt to happen every day.
(*JM*, I, ii, 217-224)

Barabas here proves that he thinks he is of a better nature than anybody else. He gives a new definition of his new personality as 'of finer mould than common men'.³⁴ He is proud of himself to the point of distinguishing himself from others, including his brothers in religion. His words imply that evil is an option for him, that he will not surrender easily to the circumstances and that he will certainly take revenge. Barabas is of a different nature from that which he calls 'simplicity' (*JM*, I, ii, 15). 'Simplicity' is the complete opposite of the subtle deceits of the devil; for Barabas, it also carries the negative connotation of a lack of cleverness and power.³⁵ All these indications reflect Barabas' mind and his ability to act in a Machiavellian way to outsmart Ferneze. Menpes' argument does not give Barabas that weight in terms of his ability to take revenge. Marlowe makes Barabas' capacity for reaction strong and obvious.

3.2.4 Religion as a means of policy

The discussion between Barabas and Ferneze offers more than just a conflict between two different people. This is seen in Ferneze's decision not to banish Barabas:

³⁴ Arata Ide, 'The Jew of Malta and the Diabolic Power of Theatrics in the 1580s', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 46, no. 2 (Spring, 2006), p. 258.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

[...] We take particularly thine,
 To save the ruin of a multitude
 And better one want for a common good,
 Than many perish for a private man:
 Yet, Barabas, we will not banish thee,
 But here in Malta, where thou gott'st thy wealth,
 Live still; and, if thou canst, get more.
 (*JM*, I, ii, 97-103)

Ferneze is saying that the Jews must work to help Malta. If their money is taken from them, they can start from zero and earn money once again because the Catholics 'will not banish [them]'. It would seem that this is a type of slavery that Ferneze is imposing on the Jews, a symbol of his unjust and exploitative rule. Asking the Jews to work and generate money suggests that he considers himself to be dealing not with human beings but with mere commodities. He treats Barabas as a tool to collect money, whereas his position as a politician can be seen in controlling the resources of Malta and the Jews.

Marlowe clearly demonstrates the attitude of Ferneze, whose reliance on his religion to exploit the Jews could also be said to echo Machiavelli's prologue. Although the prologue explicitly refers to Barabas by name, it could also be seen to apply to Ferneze and his actions. It seems that Marlowe's only reason to link Machiavelli to Barabas and not to Ferneze is not that one is more Machiavellian than the other but that the way Marlowe understands Machiavelli's reputation in matters related to murder, cunning and deceit gives him licence to depict Machiavelli freely regarding many features which he attributes to Barabas or Ferneze.

3.2.5 Machiavelli's works and the representation of power

Since a large part of this play is related to different aspects of Machiavelli's thoughts as expressed in his various books, we shall examine these in relation to the play in order to

identify similarities or differences in how Marlowe introduces situations based on Machiavelli's writings. *The Prince*, as one of Machiavelli's most important works, will be studied in relation to the implementation of villainy by both leading characters in the play. Barabas may resemble Ferneze in his policy of adopting Machiavellianism in terms of villainy, but not in terms of handling political matters; Ribner offers this example: '[T]he one political action [Barabas] does undertake [...] during his brief rule as Governor of Malta is in direct contradiction to some of Machiavelli's most often stated maxims'.³⁶ This occurs when 'Barabas enters into conspiracy with Ferneze, his bitter enemy, in order to overthrow Calymath, the Turkish conqueror of Malta. Barabas here disregards at least two of Machiavelli's precepts', for 'not only does Machiavelli warn against alliance with Princes who have no power of their own,³⁷ but one of his most constant precepts is that a former enemy, or one who has been injured in any way, must never again be trusted'.³⁸ Ribner makes it clear that 'in trusting Ferneze, Barabas, in very un-Machiavellian fashion, invites his own disaster'. It is interesting for Marlowe to demonstrate that Barabas' failure to follow some Machiavellian scheming is the reason for his fall. It may be suggested that Marlowe uses his protagonists to show that villains will fall if they fail to show proper villainy; in other words, a suitably Machiavellian approach. It is possible to view Marlowe's representation of Machiavellianism as divided into different categories. He identifies Machiavelli with both Ferneze and Barabas, but such a representation is ambivalent; for instance, as Menpes argues, 'Barabas is not as good at

³⁶ Ribner, 'Marlowe and Machiavelli', p.352.

³⁷ Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, II, xi.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, III, xvii.

revenge as he is at making profit',³⁹ whereas Ferneze is more gifted than Barabas in matters of state.

The differences between Barabas and Ferneze in their representation of Machiavellian qualities may have certain historical roots. The concept of the 'two sides of Machiavelli' runs parallel to Marlowe's discussion of the 'two religions'. Whether it is Catholicism versus Protestantism or Catholicism versus Judaism, Marlowe's interest in developing his drama by investigating two sides is clear. In this play, whether on purpose or not, he divides Machiavellian features into two groups, one belonging to Ferneze and the other to Barabas. Marlowe makes such accounts of Machiavelli similar to how Machiavelli himself was viewed during his life and after his death in that people and the way they reacted to him was also divided onto two sides. For example, those who read Machiavelli in the Renaissance era were divided into those who approved of him and those who did not.⁴⁰ Was Marlowe aware of such trends when he wrote his play and divided Machiavellian features between Barabas and Ferneze? This is a possibility, although the problem goes beyond that as there is, in the first place, the question of where Marlowe would find sources of information on Machiavelli. It is, indeed, interesting to see Marlowe depict two sides of Machiavelli in these two characters because it gives more scope to how Marlowe received readings of Machiavelli.

One of the most important strands of Machiavelli's political thought can be seen in the way in which a ruler should keep faith. This is something which can easily be observed in Marlowe's drama:

³⁹ Menpes, 'Bondage of Barabas', p. 80.

⁴⁰ Anglo reports interest by thinkers and politicians who praise and excuse or accuse Machiavelli. He lists some of those who approved of Machiavelli as Doni and Ruscelli, while those who saw him as a danger included Reginald Pole and Gentillet. See Anglo, *Machiavelli*, pp. 18-23, 230-260, 420-430.

How laudable it is for a Prince to keep faith, and to live with integrity and not with guile, everyone perceives: nonetheless, in our times one sees by experience that the Princes who have done great things are the ones who have taken little account of faith, and who have known to turn men's brains with guile: and in the end have surpassed those who grounded them. (Machiavelli, *The Prince*, XVIII, p. 65)

Machiavelli encourages his prince to abandon honesty in his treatment of others because success comes only to those who care little for keeping their word. This can be seen in the way in which Barabas relies on Ferneze's word that he will help him to rid Malta of the Turks. These teachings reflect the action Ferneze takes when he considers faith a worthless thing in his treatment of Barabas. In fact, Ferneze manages to adapt his pretence according to the situation he is in. In act five, scene two, 84-89, Ferneze is in the weak position of being Barabas' prisoner, so he acts accordingly, following Machiavellian policy that 'one needs to be a fox to recognize traps, and a lion to dismay the wolves'.⁴¹ In that situation, Ferneze recognises that he must act as a weak person because he is a prisoner, whereas Barabas does not exploit the power he is given and thus fails to implement Machiavellian policy. Barabas does not even resist, as he did earlier in the play. Machiavelli is content that any prince should be virtuous or keep faith; the problem is that others will not, so Machiavelli urges princes to overcome their enemies by adopting a villainous attitude rather than persisting in their honesty and losing everything. If this has any impact on Barabas, it is seen in his transformation into someone who seeks revenge for what Malta has inflicted on him. With the exception that his past was full of violence, Barabas succeeds in revenging himself on Ferneze by becoming as cruel as him, killing his son and retrieving money from his house; but he then loses his authority after gaining power.

⁴¹ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, XVIII, p. 65.

Ferneze's orders in Malta show defiance towards Barabas, which motivates Barabas to become a merciless villain who acts in revenge for what Malta, as personified by Ferneze, has done to him. Barabas' resemblance to Guise is significant if we exclude the political experience of Guise, which Barabas lacks. It is possible to say that the characters in *The Massacre at Paris* and in *The Jew of Malta* manifest similarities, since political awareness is an obvious trait of some of the characters in both plays. The contempt that Ferneze shows for Barabas, which also leads him to exploit the Jews' wealth and property, is similar to the hatred which the Catholics have of the Protestants in *The Massacre at Paris*. For instance, Ferneze and one of his knights tell Barabas:

[...] If your first curse fall heavy on thy head,
And make thee poor and scorned of all the world,
'Tis not our fault, buy thy inherent sin
(*JM*, I, ii, 108-110)

and:

For through our sufferance of your hateful lives,
Who stand accursed in the sight of heaven,
These taxes and afflictions are befall'n.
(*JM*, I, ii, 64-66)

It is clear that Ferneze's policy in targeting the Jews springs from two major factors: one is their religion, which he hates, as Marlowe clearly illustrates; the other is their wealth, which tempts him to exploit them and take their money. Ferneze here and Guise in *The Massacre at Paris* seem to share the goal of eradicating an opposing group – the Jews and the Protestants respectively. They both direct their efforts to destroying the enemy, but this destruction takes different forms. Ferneze aims to take the Jews' money because it is their dearest possession, while Guise conducts a massacre because it is the only way to eliminate the Protestants. Both actions are taken because of hatred despite the fact that

political expediency is also a reason of such action. Hatred seems to come first since both characters clearly express it in both plays. Ferneze is aware that Barabas and his coreligionists would not agree to become Christians, so he offers them the chance to convert to Christianity as an alternative to paying his unjust tax (*JM*, I, ii, 73-74) and thus manages to take their money out of hatred. On the other hand, Guise deals with Protestants by raging against them when they make heretical pronouncements.

The offer of conversion is based on Ferneze's belief that his religion is better than other religions, whereas Guise's rage arises because he witnesses an offence against Catholicism. Both Ferneze and Guise attempt to elevate their religion by different forms. In this example, Guise expresses irony towards what Loreine, a Protestant preacher, does because Guise hates Loreine, just as Ferneze hates Barabas:

Guise: [...] Loreine! [...] are you a preacher of these heresies?

Loreine: I am a preacher of the word of God;
And thou a traitor to thy soul and him.

Guise: 'Dearly beloved brother' – thus 'tis written.
[stabs Loreine, who dies]
(*MP*, VII, 2-5)

Guise ironically calls Loreine 'brother', which carries the wholly opposite meaning in an expression of extreme loathing. Guise's action represents the rejection by Catholics of Protestants because, for Guise, Loreine is not the preacher of the word of God as he claims. Because the Protestant preacher calls Guise a traitor to his soul, Guise is enraged and stabs Loreine in an expression of his loathing of Protestants. As mentioned before, the policy adopted by Guise is also followed by Ferneze who makes sure that all matters are kept under control. Ferneze hates Barabas in the same way that Guise hates Loreine, because both hate for religious reasons. Ferneze knows how to turn his hatred for the

Jews to his political advantage in his administration of the country, whereas Barabas is unable to do so when given the opportunity of wielding political power, with the help of the Turks, later in the play. Beecher argues that Marlowe may wish that 'a reader might extend his sympathies to a character apparently the victim of Christian prejudices, more sinned against than sinning'.⁴² This point is interesting since it calls into question the feeling of sympathy for Barabas. In this situation, Barabas is truly being unjustly treated and if Marlowe tries to create any kind of sympathy for Barabas, it might be a step towards making the Catholics seem abhorrent in their treatment of others.

Barabas fails to keep his word when swearing to destroy Malta, despite the fact that Ferneze attempts to murder him. Shortly before Calymath finds Barabas, the Jew has woken from unconsciousness caused by drinking a potion which has made the Catholics think that he is dead. Barabas then expresses his desire for revenge on them:

[Rising] what, all alone! Well fare, sleepy drink!
 I'll be reveng'd on this accursed town;
 For by my means Calymath shall enter in:
 I'll help to slay their children and their wives,
 To fire churches, pull their houses down,
 Take my goods too, and seize upon my lands,
 I hope to see the governor a slave
 And, rowing in a gallery, whipt to death.
 (JM, V, i, 61-68)

Barabas' 'sleepy drink' may also represent the disguise and pretence which occur throughout the play since he drinks it to fake his death. The oath of revenge which Barabas makes in these lines is not realised. Marlowe probably intends to mark Barabas' inability to maintain his political position, in contrast to Ferneze. When Barabas talks about what he intends to do, the audience calls to mind Barabas' previous actions, when

⁴² Don Beecher, 'The Jew of Malta and the Ritual of the Inverted Moral Order', *Cahiers Elisabethains: Etudes sur la Pre-Renaissance et la Renaissance Anglaises*, 12 (1977), p. 47.

he killed innocent people. Here he threatens to burn churches and other buildings, so this warning is perceived as serious. In the end, however, he does not put these threats into practice. Marlowe demonstrates that Barabas is somewhat villainous but not so much as to implement Machiavellianism in the political sense. This is because Ferneze has outwitted him by predicting the situation if Barabas stays in control, which has made Barabas think instantly of reconsidering his position as the new governor.

When Barabas becomes governor, he is quickly tested in his political role. Marlowe then gives him one of the most important speeches in the play, a soliloquy in which he expresses his concerns about governorship, fearing that Malta will hate him. This clearly indicates Barabas' unjustifiable ignorance of the fact that being governor means power; he sees power only in money, not in political office. He also forgets that he was hated long before coming to power. Comparing the lines quoted above, where he swears to take revenge and destroy Malta, with the following passage from his later soliloquy reveals the great shift in the way he thinks and the way he analyzes his position after obtaining political power:

Thus hast thou gotten, by the policy,
 No simple place, no simple authority:
 I now am governor of Malta; true –
 But Malta hates me, and, in hating me,
 My life's in danger; and what boots it thee.
 (*JM*, V, ii, 27-31)

Barabas is simply unable to act as a politician and it is there where the shift is seen. When Barabas is tested and given a political role, he is seen to be incompetent at wielding power. Despite all this, it is clear that Marlowe presents to his audience a stereotyped picture of the Jew. Barabas grieves for himself: 'Poor Barabas, to be the governor/ whenas thy life shall be at their command?' After that, he searches for quick solutions,

saying: ‘No, Barabas, this must be looked into/ and, since by wrong thou gott’st authority/ Maintain it bravely by firm policy/ at least, unprofitably lose it not’ (*JM*, V, ii, 34-37). Once again, Barabas returns to the question of money: ‘for he that liveth in authority/ and neither gets him friends nor fills his bags/ lives like the ass that Aesop speaketh of’ (*JM*, V, ii, 27-40). Barabas is confused when thinking about his next step. His language implies hesitancy and it is apparent that all his concerns are still present, despite the fact that he is in power. He is preoccupied with those who will hate him because he angered them, forgetting that he is above everyone, in supreme authority. Barabas thinks more about money than he thinks about being in authority. Power for him is money, not the performance of political missions. He fears angering the people of Malta because they might strip him of his money, just as Ferneze once did. Marlowe, through Barabas, defines power as requiring ambition. In that sense, those who manage to obtain and make use of power are people like Guise and Ferneze. The importance of power is strongly related to ambition and broad thinking. Barabas’ narrow interest in money makes him limited in thinking about how to exploit power, whereas Ferneze’s ability to represent power in the play is clearly manifested. As soon as he has taken matters in hand following Barabas’ death, Ferneze orders that Calymath shall ‘live in Malta prisoner’ (*JM*, V, iv, 118), which is an indication of how Marlowe is interested in representing power in the play.

The confusion Barabas shows when he reveals some degree of political inexperience, or rather lack of political sense, may actually predict his destiny in that it leads to his failure to survive the events of the play. Marlowe’s representation of power has some components which are seen in Machiavelli’s warnings:

The Prince has enemies among all those whom he has injured in seizing that principality, and he is not able to keep those friends who put him there because of his not being able to satisfy them in the way they expected, and he cannot take strong measures against them, feeling bound to them. For, although one may be very strong in armed forces, yet in entering a province one has always need of the goodwill of the natives.

(Machiavelli, *The Prince*, III, 7)

If Barabas is not aware of Machiavellian politics, he is also ignorant of how to rule the state in a proper way. This also tells how Marlowe brings Machiavellian ideas into the play by introducing Barabas, the ignorant, against Ferneze, the expert. Marlowe's purpose behind such representation of Machiavellian thought seems to be that he is interested in representing the power of Machiavellian tactics which Barabas fails to implement. Barabas' reliance on Ferneze to help him find a resolution to his difficulties is a step which confirms his failure to recognize what sort of person Ferneze is, and how Machiavellian Ferneze is in his approach to politics and to the inhabitants of Malta. Barabas becomes figuratively blind when he deals with Ferneze. He seeks his help because Ferneze is more aware than he is of the situation in Malta, but Barabas does not recognize that his actions will destroy him. Machiavelli, as we have seen, advises rulers that they need the goodwill of the indigenous people, but Barabas' choice of Ferneze is totally wrong and he seeks the help of the one person who most hates him. Barabas' misuse of power and his inability to exploit it makes his fall rapid. It would have been better for Barabas if he had never undertaken the role of ruler, because he was a more successful villain before he rose to power. For example, although he was not a ruler, he was able to give warnings to Ferneze such as:

[...] But theft is worse: tush! Take not from me, then,
For that is theft, and, if you rob me thus,
I must be forc'd to steal, and compass more.

(*JM*, I, ii, 126-128)

Barabas seems to be saying that Ferneze's actions will lead him to steal and commit other illegal acts. He is warning Ferneze and when Ferneze does not take Barabas' words seriously, Barabas is able to implement villainy, in contrast to the situation when he is seeking help and advice as ruler.

There is another aspect of Barabas' downfall related to his failure to identify that Ferneze is not a good friend. Let us consider how Machiavelli depicts a strong prince who ensures that he cannot be beaten by exercising extreme caution in his choice of the people surrounding him. Machiavelli recommends that a careful prince:

Must have a third mode, choosing wise men in his state, and only to those must he give license to speak the truth to him, and of those things alone that he asks about and of nothing else; but he must ask them about everything and hear their opinions; therefore to deliberate alone, in his own way' (*The Prince*, XXIII, p. 87).

It is clear that Machiavelli intends the choice of the individuals surrounding the ruler to eliminate any undesirable follower who might be a threat to him. The ones he chooses are there to follow him, to offer advice, to help him to complete his mission and fulfil his desires. In the context of the play, Barabas' ignorance of how to choose his intimates leads him to fail to bring in people who can support him. It appears that the detailed description of rulers and those surrounding them is carefully chosen by Machiavelli, who is concerned with presenting a strong prince with independent thinking. Ferneze appears in act one, scene two with the officer who can be considered his right-hand man. Later, the first knight of Malta wisely asks Del Bosco, the Spanish vice-admiral, to help his country against the Turks:

Del Bosco, as thou lov'st and honour'st us,
Persuade our governor against the Turks.
This truce we have is but hope of gold,

And with that sum he craves might we wage war.
(*JM*, II, ii, 24-27)

This speech is uttered after Ferneze has expressed his inability to do anything because of the tributary league with the Turks; thus, the knight comments sensibly on his lord's speech, in that he asks for advice and states that all he does is for the good of Malta and Ferneze, whereas Barabas chooses the wrong people when he depends on Ferneze to give him advice while he is governor. An example given by Machiavelli of the cities of Germany shows how they 'are most free, have little countryside and obey the emperor when they want to'.⁴³ This reflects how the prince seeks his own interest according to how he views matters, deciding when to follow an emperor and when not to. Machiavelli's aim is to create a strong ruler with no regard for any other matters such as religion. Machiavelli's prince seeks domination, not allowing any kind of rebellion against him; he will always seek to stabilize the political situation, even if he is required to declare war in order to avoid being a victim. Machiavelli says that 'it will always be more useful to you to come out openly and make a good war; because in the first case, if you do not come out, you will always be the prey of whoever wins'.⁴⁴ In the play, Ferneze is ready to wage war against Barabas and the Turks through his secret alliance with the Spanish fleet; thus he prepares himself to overcome the outside forces which stand in his way. The relevance of Machiavelli's example to those in Marlowe's play is notable because the representation of power is clearly seen in the prince whom Machiavelli is trying to construct. On the other hand, Marlowe's text offers great interest in its representation of power and in how his two main characters deal with that feature. Marlowe makes sure that the Spanish fleet is the threat and danger that plays a major role

⁴³ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, X, p. 40.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, XXI, p. 82.

in the stability in that area to possibly remind his reader of the role of Catholic Spain and what it represents.

Breaking an oath is a subject that Marlowe uses in his drama to show how people can free themselves from commitment and become powerful through their ability to defeat their enemies; it could be taken as a reference to Machiavelli and his teachings. This is perhaps one of the most important perspectives that Marlowe offers in both *The Massacre at Paris* and *The Jew of Malta*, where he depicts Catholics as people who cannot be trusted to keep a promise. This point is made in *The Massacre* with reference to the marriage, when the Catholics break their word by adopting the marriage scheme, while in *The Jew of Malta*, the breach of an oath occurs after Ferneze has been assured by Del Bosco of his protection against the Turks on condition that he co-operates with Del Bosco. Ferneze is satisfied with this pact with his brother in religion, declaring war ‘against these barbarous misbelieving Turks,’ and accepting that ‘honour is bought with blood and not with gold’ (*JM*, II, ii, 56). The play’s ‘major premise is the notorious Catholic doctrine that promises made to heretics need not be kept’.⁴⁵ Marlowe exploits this point to demonstrate how Catholics, represented by Ferneze, dominate Barabas, despite his villainy. The ideas Marlowe uses in his play could be said to highlight some aspects of Machiavelli’s tactics which Marlowe attempts to symbolize.

The setting of the play and the involvement of Catholics, Jews and Turks gives Marlowe the means to examine indirectly his own society and its parallel conflict between Catholics and Protestants. The topics of Machiavellianism and power must have shaped the way Marlowe wrote his plays. The history of Malta sheds light on the scheming and betrayals which were present in Marlowe’s society. Malta is indeed a

⁴⁵ Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe*, p. 123.

suitable setting for Marlowe to discuss issues related to Machiavellianism because circumstances such as the presence of more than one religion made conflicts more likely to take place. It may be that England was not far from Marlowe's thinking when he wrote the play because of the similarity of the conditions in the two countries. This is really an interesting point which seems central to the play as a whole. One particular idea that can be taken as a reflection of the contemporary historical perception of England is Marlowe's apparent attempt to use the political events of the play to shed light on what happened in England in 1588. The defeat of the Spanish Armada at the hands of the English about two years before the play was written may also have been one of Marlowe's interests in depicting such historical implications. A further similarity between Malta and England is that both are surrounded by sea, giving Marlowe the chance to depict treacheries and conflicts between different forces using the sea as a source of danger; for example, when Del Bosco arrives by ship to support the Catholics. In many ways, Malta was thus not very different from England, allowing Marlowe to use it to symbolise his own country.

In the play, the policy which Ferneze adopts is considered successful. There is a marked contrast between Ferneze and Barabas, as already mentioned. Ferneze says that his government takes Barabas' money 'to save the ruin of a multitude' and that 'better one want for a common good,/ than many perish for a private man' (*JM*, I, ii, 97-100). This sounds intelligent, because it achieves his purpose, which is to take the Jews' money, whereas Barabas' simple comment on the burden of authority he bears when becoming governor, in addition to the fear that people will hate him, suggests that he thinks differently and unwisely. He would prefer to have wealth for himself, even though

being governor might bring more wealth. He sees the threat from the people as a reason not to be happy with being governor, perhaps because Ferneze has shown him how hated and unwelcome he is in Malta. He decides to be more careful about the situation in order to recover his money, simply because he is given a political role that he is not able to handle:

But Barabas will be more circumspect.
 Begin betimes, occasion's bald behind:
 Slip not thine opportunity, for fear too late
 Thou seek'st for much, but canst not compass it
 (*JM*, V, ii, 43-46)

Marlowe reveals Barabas as a relative simpleton in relation to politics. The final betrayal of Barabas by Ferneze may reflect Marlowe's point that Ferneze makes no mistakes. Barabas falls short of the attributes of a successful politician. In addition to what has been said before about his failure in his conversation with Ferneze, Ferneze gives Barabas an answer full of perspicacity in regard to politics. For example, he answers Barabas thus:

[...] Since things are thy power
 I see no reason but of Malta wreck,
 Nor hope of thee but extreme cruelty:
 Nor fear I death, nor will I flatter thee.
 (*JM*, V, ii, 57-60)

Ferneze repeats words which denote Malta's destruction, such as 'wreck' and 'extreme cruelty'. This makes Barabas fear the loss of his commercial prosperity in exchange for exercising power in Malta and Ferneze is aware of this. When Barabas asks for Ferneze's opinion, it is clever of Ferneze to keep pace with him. First, he alludes to the wreckage of Malta under Barabas. This political cleverness and his balanced, coherent decisions make Ferneze a survivor of the political conflict in Malta. Because he has been cruel to Barabas in the past, he now tells him that he assumes that he will suffer the same cruelty that he

once practised against Barabas. Having gained power, Barabas now feels that there is no opponent for him and thus decides to offer peace to Ferneze. Ferneze is successful in making Barabas shift his position from revenge to mutual assistance because he knows that the Jew only wants money.

Barabas' weakness is clearly seen in his dealings with Ferneze. When Ferneze suggests that he will bring destruction to the whole of Malta, Barabas becomes afraid, since the destruction of Malta means that he will lose his opportunity to trade and make profits; thus he feels that it would be better to relinquish the political role to Ferneze so that he can return to his business, while Ferneze will secure Malta politically. Thus, Barabas sees the prosperity of Malta as dependent upon Ferneze's political leadership, preferring to limit himself to trade. Ferneze knows that Barabas' behaviour is that of a person who does not flatter, having dealt with him before, so he feigns the same attitude with him in order to show that neither he nor Barabas is a flatterer. Ferneze attempts to make Barabas trust him and his words while in fact being his enemy. Knowing that Barabas is aware of the Christians' hypocrisy, he therefore strives to convince him otherwise and gain his trust.

Marlowe presents Ferneze as successful even when he does not hold power and as one whose ability to take advantage of every minor opportunity helps him to succeed in his pursuit of power. Ferneze simply controls and enslaves Barabas either way, while for Barabas, as Menpes argues, the case is different. Menpes describes how Marlowe presents an image of a ruler who cannot govern politically: 'It is at this moment that Barabas' bondage is revealed most clearly. Even though the Jew is now the pre-eminent

political power of his dramatic world, he does not recognize his new status'.⁴⁶ Menpes' argument can be seen in Barabas' desire to relinquish his political role to Ferneze in exchange for being allowed to live and make money. Barabas does not recognize his position as living in bondage, even when he is in authority: 'Where Ferneze, after some obvious disappointment, refers to Barabas as "my lord", Barabas still refers to Ferneze as "governor"'.⁴⁷ Ferneze is able to adapt to the change in political power, while Barabas is able to adapt himself to anything except in the field of political power.

Another deceit is practised by Ferneze when he pretends that he is powerless before Barabas. When Ferneze mentions that power is in Barabas' hands (*JM*, V, ii, 57), for instance, this encourages Barabas to see his position as that of a strong ruler, so he decides to make some kind of reconciliation with Ferneze, suggesting a truce and co-operation to defeat the Turks; Ferneze's statement gives Barabas the comfort of believing that his opponent can be his friend, but Ferneze misleads Barabas, who does not realize that he is leading him to his own downfall, despite his original desire to seek revenge. Marlowe makes this flattery an indication of Machiavellian policy. Ferneze flatters Barabas by hiding behind friendship to gain authority in Malta through Barabas. Machiavelli warns that 'whoever imagines that new services will extinguish the memory of former injuries amongst great men deceives himself',⁴⁸ stating that it is wrong to trust someone who has previously been injured. Barabas is wrong in his belief that he can trust Ferneze because Barabas killed Ferneze's son. Minshull suggests that 'Marlowe could not have been unaware of the gulf between Machiavelli's creed personified by Barabas, and Machiavelli's actual teaching, because he makes Ferneze and the Christians ruling

⁴⁶ Menpes, 'Bondage of Barabas', p. 82.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 82.

⁴⁸ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, VII, 70.

Malta astutely put into practice Machiavelli's major political axioms'.⁴⁹ Minshull's argument is possibly based on the consideration that Marlowe's treatment of the Catholics is related to Machiavelli because Machiavelli represents the image of villainy, while the opposite can be suggested of Barabas whose lack of Machiavellian policy might make him less abhorrent and might also create sympathy because of his ignorance of such political considerations. Barabas' downfall, resulting from his trust in Ferneze, according to Minshull, comes because he has not followed a proper Machiavellian policy. Minshull's argument further demonstrates Marlowe's awareness of Machiavelli, the employment of whose creed offers a range of political implications. Marlowe presents a variety of examples of how to capture power, and Machiavelli's teachings seem to be similar to many events in the play.

The following example from *The Prince* can be applied to Ferneze and his ability to disguise: 'It is necessary to know well how to disguise the characteristic, and to be a great pretender and dissembler; and men are so simple, and so subject to present necessities, that he who seeks to deceive will always find someone who will allow himself to be deceived'.⁵⁰ Machiavelli's ideas find their way into Ferneze's behaviour, when he dissembles and pretends. Machiavelli uses the example of Alexander VI⁵¹ in his demonstration of pretence and dissembling:

Alexander VI never did anything, never thought of anything other than to deceive men, and always found subjects to whom he could do it. And never was there a man who had greater success in asserting, and with greater oaths in affirming a thing, who

⁴⁹ Minshull, 'Marlowe's Sound Machiavell', p. 45.

⁵⁰ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, VII, 62.

⁵¹ Alexander VI (1431-1503) was elected Pope on August 11th, 1492. His pontificate is uniquely notorious in the history of the papacy and the name of Borgia is symbolic of all that is reckoned corrupt and criminal in the church of the fifteenth century. See Johann Burchard, *At the Court of the Borgias*, ed. and trans. by Geoffrey Parker (London: The Folio Society, 1963), pp. 59, 7.

observed it less; nonetheless, the deceptions always succeeded for him [...] because he knew well this part of the world.
(Machiavelli, *The Prince*, XVIII, 66)

Marlowe's depiction of Ferneze is similar to Machiavelli's example: in both, rulers lead others through deceit. It is necessary, according to Machiavelli, for the prince to have 'a spirit disposed to turn as the winds and the variations of fortune command him'.⁵² Marlowe is staging Machiavellian situations to present a ruler who can defeat others even if he is not in a powerful position, as is the case with Ferneze, the prisoner. Marlowe's ability to present Ferneze as being able to adapt himself suitably must reflect Marlowe's desire to depict Machiavellianism.

Potter argues that Marlowe links Machiavellian policy with Catholicism in the character of Ferneze, writing that '*The Jew of Malta* emphasised the evil of Christians – for instance, by doubling Machiavel with Ferneze'.⁵³ This suggestion also implies the validity of the idea which Minshull articulates, that 'if anyone in the play conforms to the Machiavellian code set out in the Prologue to the play, it is not Barabas, but Ferneze, who in true Machiavellian fashion is primarily interested in power politics and military matters'.⁵⁴ Earlier in the chapter, Pineas stresses that it is Catholicism, not Christianity, which is being satirised,⁵⁵ whereas Potter refers to the wickedness of all Christians. Each writer ascribes the play's satire to either Christianity and/or Catholicism; but considering Marlowe's representation of Catholicism, specifically in the other two plays, it is possible to claim that it is indeed Catholicism on which the play focuses rather than Christianity in general. For Marlowe's audiences, at least, any sign of Machiavellianism as they

⁵² Ibid., XVIII, P. 67.

⁵³ Lois Potter, 'Marlowe Onstage: the Death of the Author', in *Constructing Christopher Marlowe*, eds. by J. Downie & J. Parnell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 98.

⁵⁴ Minshull, 'Marlowe's Sound Machiavell', p. 41.

⁵⁵ Pineas, *Tudor and Early Stuart Anti-Catholic Drama*, p. 9.

understood it would automatically be associated with Catholicism, and this is also how recent critics, such as Pineas, have read the play. This indicates that the implementation of politics, whether Machiavellian or not, can in reality be attributed to Ferneze, more than to Barabas, because of his ability to manage the state and to make wise decisions. Ferneze's policy indicates a knowledge of political machinations which is clearly seen in his treatment of the situation in Malta. Ellis-Fermor discusses policy in relation to Barabas rather than Ferneze, noting how Barabas reacts to that issue in comparison to the Catholics. Ellis-Fermor states that Barabas adopts 'policie', which is the Catholics' profession, defined by its association with 'cunningness', 'wickedness' and 'cruelty'. Such features are seen in the Catholics in the play. Ellis-Fermor adds that Barabas takes up their 'own weapon against them, as it is the only one remaining to him', 'but he never deceives himself; he becomes perforce a Machiavellian in his tactics, not a blind hypocrite as are his opponents':⁵⁶

As good dissemble that thou never mean'st
 As first meane truth, and then dissemble it,
 A counterfeit profession is better
 Than unseen hypocrisie.
 (*JM*, I, ii, 289-292)

Ellis-Fermor's suggestion that Barabas is implementing Machiavellianism is correct. However, it is not obvious what type of tactics she refers to since the downfall of Barabas comes largely from his tactical mistake in trusting an old enemy. If there is any implementation of Machiavellianism by Barabas, it is certainly not political but rather that which is related to villainy. In the light of what Ellis-Fermor suggests, it is vital to define what 'policy' means, because Barabas' ability to maintain any kind of policy is related, in the first place, only to villainy. On the other hand, Marlowe might be revealing

⁵⁶ Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe*, p. 99.

Barabas as incapable of implementing Machiavellian policy, which is related to governing the state. Having identified Barabas' incapability to follow Machiavellian policy, Marlowe demonstrates that the true danger lies in the Catholics because of their ability to apply Machiavellian policy, unlike Barabas, who ostensibly has no background of statecraft despite his Machiavellian bent. Ellis-Fermor's argument seems to go in one direction, that Barabas' Machiavellianism is related to every aspect of evil Machiavelli was known for, except handling matters of state. In addition, Barabas implements what Catholics implemented, that is, Machiavellian villainies. The Machiavellian tactics Fermor refers to are simply those which are associated with Machiavellian villainies, not politics. Discussing the treacheries of Machiavellianism, Iwasaki argues that 'Barabas fails to follow Machiavellianism, and so fails as a result of his miscalculation of how to act in the right place'.⁵⁷ Barabas fails when he believes Ferneze and fails again when he betrays the Turks. Marlowe does not depict any obvious hostility between Barabas and the Turks, who do not seem to be his enemies; it is his inaccurate calculations that reveal his political inexperience in betraying the Turks unnecessarily.

Ferneze's behaviour is accurately assessed by Holmes, who describes loyalty as a form of deceit, hiding which side he truly favours. We have noted above how clever Ferneze is in his dealings with Barabas when he pretends to warn him that Malta will be destroyed under his rule. Of clear relevance here is the opinion of Holmes, in reference to two contemporary Catholic writers whose example is similar to what we shall see in Ferneze:

It was all very well for Allen (1546-1610) and Parsons (1532-1594), who were contemporaries of Marlowe and who were related to responses to the Spanish Armada and the circumstances under which Marlowe was writing, to cover the

⁵⁷ Soji Iwasaki, 'The Fall of Barabas', *Shakespeare Studies*, 15 (1976-1977), p. 12.

difficulties of their ideological position with rhetorical professions of loyalty to the Queen. But if asked directly to choose between the Pope and the Queen they had to resort to sophistry or silence.⁵⁸

The way Ferneze acts in his attempt to hide his evil from Barabas reminds the reader of the situation to which Holmes refers, where Catholic writers attempted to hide their true beliefs. Marlowe could also be recalling this example in which he brings Ferneze forward to deceive Barabas and act as if he is giving advice to Barabas. Ferneze uses such pretence in order to mislead Barabas. He knows that to recapture power he has to make Barabas reluctant to carry the responsibility of the governorship. Ferneze does manage to eliminate Barabas politically while he is still governor, causing him to hate the role and so to relinquish it and to offer a truce to Ferneze. He returns to the political domain by cleverly engineering a reconciliation with Barabas, which begins the shift of political power back towards him.

The success of Ferneze in handling the political affairs of Malta seems to reflect Marlowe's ascription to him of Machiavellian attributes. Ferneze is capable of this political success because he remains powerful even when immediate power is taken from him. Marlowe, by representing Machiavellian theory in his plays, stands among his contemporaries who also discussed and represented Machiavelli for an Elizabethan audience. Machiavellianism, as described by Marlowe, offers insight into many thematic representations regarding policy, power and control. The discussion of both characters implies similarity with many of Machiavelli's works in different ways.

⁵⁸ Peter Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise: the Political Thought of the Elizabethan Catholics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 46.

3.3 Religion in *The Jew of Malta*

It is not known whether Marlowe had read chapter twelve of the first book of *The Discourses* where Machiavelli avers that ‘those people who are nearer to the Church of Rome, the head of our Religion, have less Religion’;⁵⁹ if so, he can be said to be echoing this judgement in his depiction of religious men as devoid of religion. This section of the chapter considers this depiction in *The Jew of Malta* and its relevance. Marlowe’s discussion of the representation of Catholics in this play is similar to that in the earlier *Massacre at Paris*. His main representation of Catholicism in *The Jew of Malta* concerns the two friars and their corruption. Differences between the two plays have been noted above, including the violent nature of the events in *The Massacre* in comparison to those in *The Jew of Malta*, which is less violent except when Barabas is describing or committing crimes, and seems to concentrate more on a form of irony, as will be seen in this section. Furthermore, in this play Marlowe’s concentration is directed towards how degraded and corrupted Catholic religious men are. Barabas and Ithamore publicly expose the dishonest friars as two evil characters who disguise their wickedness as religious zeal. Worse, their religion itself is shown to be corrupt. The first contact between Barabas and the friars occurs in the first act, scene two, but Marlowe establishes their dramatic relevance before this: early in the play, Ferneze decides to confiscate Barabas’ property, including his house, which is converted for use as a nunnery. This generates a kind of hatred in Barabas towards Catholicism in general because his house has been stolen from him to be used for Catholic purposes. The order imposed on Barabas preventing him from visiting his former home gives him the motivation to

⁵⁹ Niccolo Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, translated by Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) p. 184.

contact the friars who are then tested for their honesty. The treatment of the Catholics is deeply explored in Marlowe's play, going much further than merely exposing the friars as corrupt; Marlowe is concerned with how Barabas exposes them and distrusts the capacity of religious men to lead people to God and away from the wickedness of material life. Barabas practises villainy in opposition to religious men because of Ferneze, who has taken his property and forced him to act accordingly. Furthermore, the idea on which Barabas depends in his treatment of religious men can be found in Machiavelli's prologue which states that, 'I count religion but a childish toy/ and hold there is no sin but ignorance' (*JM*, Prologue, 14-15). Barabas considers friars as objects whom he controls and cheats because, in his view, they feign religiousness; he enjoys manipulating them because he accomplishes Machiavelli's prologue when facing religious men and practising villainy against them.

It is possible to see the stripping of Barabas of his property as an excuse for him to practise villainy and plan evil deeds; this villainy may also be an attempt by the playwright to suggest that Catholics are covert villains and not what they seem to be. If Barabas were not given a chance to avenge himself on the religious men, he would not be able to expose them and their villainy. Thus, Marlowe has Barabas' house confiscated in order to place him in confrontation with the friars. However, the friars are not Barabas' major concern. Considering the play within the context of religious hatred, Marlowe, as mentioned before, makes Ferneze an enemy of Barabas; the enmity between them then develops to involve religious sites. Barabas' home is, as it were, his kingdom because his money is kept there (*JM*, I, ii, 246-250). Ferneze has stolen many things from Barabas: his money, his property and his house, which he has turned into a nunnery. It is this

above all which motivates Barabas' desire to fight back. Marlowe makes Barabas become aware of the Catholic threat to his wealth and to begin to direct his villainy, which may be justified, against the two friars involved, Jacomo and Barnadine. Both resemble Ferneze in their attitude, which is wicked and devoid of holiness, while they succeed in making others continue to believe that the reverse is true. As much as Ferneze attempts to hide his attitude towards Barabas, the two friars, as Marlowe depicts them, seem to excel at deceiving honest people simply because of their position of importance in the religious hierarchy. If Marlowe's purpose in degrading these religious men is to suggest that their shortcomings may be applied to all Catholics, whether religious or not, then his depiction of that attitude in Ferneze must be complementary to the wickedness inherent in the role of the friars. Ferneze and the friars may be seen as similar to the Catholic group of Guise, Catherine and her sons, King Charles and Henry III in *The Massacre at Paris*: Guise and the King's family work as enemies of the Protestants, playing complementary roles in achieving complete control of the situation. Ferneze and the friars do not get involved in any dialogue with each other; however, their role in controlling others is obvious. Thus, Marlowe's dramatic representation of Catholics demonstrates their tendency to conspire together in order to abuse others.

Following the moment at which Barabas loses his property to the Catholics, we see him receive condolences from his Jewish brothers and his only daughter, Abigail. Marlowe depicts Abigail as being loyal and obedient to her father but also as being in love with Mathias. Marlowe makes her torn between her father's strict orders, which she has to obey, and her life, which she wants to live without problems. Thus, she is the victim of her father and his schemes. He exploits her to the full in order to achieve his

goals. Before Abigail comes to her father, following the order confiscating his house, Marlowe introduces the audience to a new Barabas who swears to take revenge and act in an evil way:

Think me to be a senseless lump of clay
 [...]
 No, Barabas is born to better chance,
 And framed of finer mould than common men,
 [...]
 Evils are apt to happen every day.
 (*JM*, I, ii, 217, 219-220, 224)

‘Senseless lump of clay’ expresses uselessness and passivity, which Barabas rejects. He confirms that ‘evils are apt to happen every day’, indicating that the time for change is due and that his character will revert to its true form. This threat may be targeted at Ferneze and Malta because of the harm Barabas has sustained under Ferneze’s rule, but there is no denying that his scheme to seek revenge would also include the friars, simply because they are in charge of his confiscated house.

It is possible to see an irony in Ferneze’s decision to turn Barabas’ house into a nunnery. Marlowe could be saying that Ferneze appears to show the goodness of his religion while he is, in fact, only making a show of it, and so Ferneze decides to make Barabas’ house a place of religion because this will expiate the sin of Barabas in a step that denotes holiness and religiousness. But the irony is manifest when that step actually leads the Catholics themselves to commit sins. Marlowe’s use of irony is seen when the friars are expected to act according to their values but are seen to contradict themselves and those values. In that same house, the Catholics easily fall prey to temptation. Barabas learns a lesson from the way in which Ferneze has robbed him of everything he had. In his interaction with the friars, it is Barabas who initiates the attack, because he would not

be able to sustain another Catholic onslaught after what Ferneze has done to him. The first step Barabas takes in order to avenge himself on the Catholics and recover his stolen money is to ask his daughter to become a nun:

Barabas: [...] Abigail, there must my girl
Entreat the abbess to be entertain'd.

Abigail: How! As a nun?

Barabas: Ay, daughter: for religion
Hides many mischiefs from suspicion.
(*JM*, I, ii, 280-284)

Barabas is aware that religion is only a means by which Catholics claim to have holiness. Because a religious person would be the last person upon whom suspicion would fall, Barabas asks his daughter to adopt the guise of a nun to dispel any suspicion that might hinder his attempts to recover his money. Marlowe seems to be observing, through the eyes of Barabas, certain aspects of Catholicism where its adherents do not act as purely as they suggest. Barabas must be recalling what Ferneze once did to him when he urges his daughter to act deceitfully, telling her that:

As good dissemble that thou never mean'st,
As first truth and then dissemble it:
A counterfeit profession is better
Than unseen hypocrisy.
(*JM*, I, ii, 291-294)

Barabas learns from this situation that 'a counterfeit profession is better than unseen hypocrisy', so he decides to exploit the situation and to put the friars to the test for what they are. Hypocrisy, for Marlowe, is the duplicity of pretending honesty while acting differently. It is closely associated with Catholicism and becomes one of the main characteristics ascribed by Marlowe to Catholics throughout his plays.

In order for Marlowe to show how corrupt Catholics are, he must first place them in a situation which allows them to profess their good intentions, then show that they are lying. Friars are supposed to convert sinful people and guide them to the good. In Barabas' situation, the case is different, because Marlowe reveals Catholic hypocrisy through the friars. Barabas comes to the two friars offering to repent the sins he has committed. Two earlier incidents have contributed to making Barabas decide to repent, while his real intention is to seek revenge. Barabas killed the governor's son in a plot and he was also enraged at his daughter's decision when she honestly decided that she wished to become a nun after her father had killed her lover. These two incidents push Barabas to devise the scheme which helps to reveal the Catholic greed for his money.

In order to examine closely the situation in which Barabas leads the two friars to yield to earthly delights and forget their heavenly obligations and duties, we shall first investigate how Barabas transforms them into people more interested in money than in holiness. The two friars thus begin to resemble Barabas himself in his love of money. Hence, when Barabas comes to them, he first says: 'O holy friars, the burden of my sins/ lies heavy on my soul! Then, pray you, tell me/ is't not too late now to turn Christian?' (*JM*, IV, i, 52-54). He expresses apparent honesty by talking of the 'burden of my sins' and in seeking their advice and conversion. He then talks about his religion with the purpose of misleading them:

I have been zealous in the Jewish faith
 Hard-hearted to the poor, a covetous wretch
 That would for lucre's sake have sold my soul
 A hundred for a hundred I have ta'en
 And now for store of wealth may I compare
 With all the Jews in Malta: but what is wealth?
 I am a Jew, and therefore am I lost.
 (*JM*, IV, i, 55-61)

Barabas must speak of the worse features of his religion in order to encourage the friars to believe in his atonement. He was 'hard-hearted' and a 'covetous wretch'. He also pretends that being a Jew has nothing to do with wealth and that he is lost although he is a Jew (*JM*, IV, i, 47-56). Barabas cleverly follows the Catholic dissembling by pretending that he is lost because of his religion; then, by asking them in a desperate tone if it is possible to repent, he falsifies a state of misery. He tries to convince the friars that his religion has led to his downfall and so attempts to obtain salvation at their hands, knowing that they will suggest conversion to Christianity. By claiming to despise his religion, he leads them to believe that he is truly regretful for the past because he has said previously that being a hated Jew is better than being a Christian in poverty (*JM*, I, i, 112-113), whereas now he tells the friars that the causes of his misery are his money and his Jewishness. His behaviour, which has turned to deceiving the Catholics, could be seen as a sign of a Machiavellianism which has also been practised by the Catholics. Thus, Barabas' speech demonstrates the importance of cheating the Catholics in order to resist their evil and to overcome their slyness. Marlowe makes Barabas follow the Catholic method to illustrate that the only means to survive in such a conflict is to adopt the villainy which Catholics themselves practise and to survive accordingly.

Knowing that one of the friars is aware of his murder of Lodowick and Mathias, the governor's son and his friend, in a scheme to win Abigail, Barabas cleverly and smoothly relates his wealth to his conversion. The significance of his words is seen in his mockery of the Catholic friars, who believe his lies. Barabas is known for his great hatred of Catholics because he 'can see no fruits in all their faith/ but malice, falsehood, and excessive pride' (*JM*, I, i, 114-115), yet the friars easily believe him when he claims to

have decided to convert to Christianity. Thus, he succeeds in making the friars turn their thoughts towards winning his conversion in addition to acquiring his wealth. This policy is successful for Barabas and signifies his ability to survive in this situation. It is important for Marlowe to emphasise the wealth Barabas owns because it is the means by which the playwright exposes the covetous Catholics. After Barabas expresses a wish to atone to the friars, he counts the wealth he possesses in a way that leaves no chance for them to resist the conversion of such a wealthy man. Barabas declares:

I know not how much weight in pearl
 Orient and round, have I within my house
 At Alexandria merchandise untold
 But yesterday two ships went from this town
 Their voyage will be worth ten thousand crowns
 (*JM*, IV, i, 74-78)

Barabas chooses the exact words to attract the attention of the friars to how much wealth he has. 'Orient and round' pearls are a tempting prize for the friars. This detailed description of his wealth serves to entrap them, especially when Barabas suggests where it may go: 'All this I'll give to some religious house!/ So I may be baptized, and live therein' (*JM*, IV, i, 79-80). There is no necessary connection between Barabas' conversion and the mention of his wealth in such detail, but Marlowe wants to make the friars' attempts to convert him seem insincere in that they are motivated, at least partly, by the expectation of acquiring money. The friars thus shift their attention from spirituality to materialism, making that negative picture a characteristic of the religion which they represent. Marlowe makes the Catholic faith devoid of spirituality as he makes it clear that the friars' interest in money gives a shocking impression of their message as religious men. There is no doubt that Marlowe's description of the friars, who

claim to be pure and honest by isolating themselves from ordinary people, makes the heathen Barabas appear no more villainous than them.

After Barabas has enumerated his possessions to the friars, they become greedy and want Barabas to join them. Each insists that Barabas should join his house for conversion and not the other's; these religious men are supposed to represent brotherhood, but Marlowe demolishes that contention and makes the audience distrust them. If there is any kind of rivalry, it should be seen in worship and drawing near to God, because the religious can work hard to attract sinful people, but not for the purpose of gaining money. In the play, the friars seem to seek only Barabas' money. The competition between them is seen as concerning who will acquire the wealth, not who will convert a sinful person. Let us review how each of the friars challenges his own brother in an ironic way, by which the friars illustrate a desire to invite Barabas for the purpose of helping him while the truth is that they are interested in his money:

Friar Jacomo: O good Barabas, come to our house!

Friar Barnadine: O, no, good Barabas, come to our house
[...]

Barabas: I know that I have highly sinned:
You shall convert me, you shall have all my wealth.

Friar J: O Barabas, their laws are strict!

Barabas: I know they are; and I will be with you.

Friar B: They wear no shirts, and they go barefoot too.

Barabas: Then 'tis not for me; and I'm resolved
You shall confess me, and have all my goods.

Friar J: Good Barabas, come to me.

Barabas: You see I answer him, and yet he stays;

Bid him away, and go you home with me.

Friar J: I'll be with you tonight.

Barabas: Come to my house at one o'clock this night.

Friar J: You hear your answer, and you may be gone.

Friar B: Why, go, get you away

Friar J: I will not go for thee.

Friar B: Not! Then I'll make thee go.

Friar J: How! Dost call me rogue? [They fight].

(*JM*, IV, i, 81-82, 84-100)

The treatment of this situation brings to mind Marlowe's determination to depict the importance of money to Catholics with no regard to the identity or position of the individual concerned. The sudden shift from a pious attitude to a dispute between religious houses evokes doubt and suspicion among the audience concerning the Catholic faith; Marlowe thus strips the two friars of their holiness. We can see that they are fighting in a comic way. The mockery Marlowe uses against them is severe because it denotes how they react in forgetting that they represent their religion and in implementing an aspect of their religious obligation (to convert the heathen), not for high motives but from greed. Each of them suggests that the other's house is unattractively strict and that Barabas should, therefore, choose the more comfortable option. Marlowe here not only depicts Catholic friars as hypocritical but reminds the audience of the differences in obligations and duties among the various monastic houses. The conclusion of the dispute between the friars is that Barabas decides to go with Barnadine, because he is the one who knows about the murder in which Barabas participated; so Barabas' choice confirms his desire to avenge these Catholics. Another irony Marlowe may have wanted

to show is when each of the friars calls Barabas 'good', demonstrating their happiness that Barabas has finally found his way to conversion, while the irony is that they use sweet words with him only to gain his wealth, not because of his conversion. Marlowe is cleverly manipulating the friars' words to make them sound untruthful.

One of Marlowe's strengths lies in his presentation of an argument from two sides rather than just one. To illustrate this point, let us consider the confiscation of Barabas' house: Barabas considers himself to have been robbed, but the authorities do not consider it stealing, indicating that Catholics interpret such actions differently from others. Ferneze decides to take the house because Barabas has refused to surrender half of his wealth. While Ferneze considers this action as legal, Barabas sees it as stealing. Later in the play, Lodowick, Ferneze's son, mentions that the house was 'seized' (*JM*, I, ii, 383), and Abigail uses the same word in conversation with her father (*JM*, I, ii, 253). This choice of words may reflect an idea that Marlowe wants to stress through Barabas, who complains that the Christians oppose him (*JM*, I, ii, 273). Perhaps the concept is that the Catholics do not see the evil of their actions and succeed in making others believe in their probity. If the Catholics in this play do others wrong, they claim to act according to law and in the interests of order. Others are also convinced by their actions that all is done for the sake of Malta. Even Abigail, who is not a Catholic, follows the Catholic line that the house was seized, not stolen, when she says that 'they have seized upon thy house and wares' (*JM*, I, ii, 250).

We have already argued that Ferneze seems much more politically aware than Barabas. However, it seems that Barabas' attempt to deal with the Catholics has to go through a political analysis that allows and justifies his actions. The mechanism of his

revenge depends on the threat by the Catholics in that he can justify his attack on them on the basis of what they have done to him. He acts only after having endured abuse from the Catholics. For example, having asked Ferneze, 'will you then steal my goods/ is theft the ground of your religion?' (*JM*, I, ii, 95-96), Barabas goes on to take action against the Catholics in reaction to their hateful misdeeds. Elsewhere, Barabas argues with Ferneze, saying:

What? Bring you scriptures to confirm your wrongs?
 Preach me not out of my possessions.
 Some Jews are wicked, as all Christians are.
 (*JM*, I, ii, 111-113)

Barabas refers to religion in order to remind Ferneze of the evil of his religion. Barabas then justifies his actions. He cannot imagine that Catholics can be good. They are all wicked, so cheating is allowed:

It's not sin to deceive a Christian
 For they themselves hold it a principle
 Faith is not to be held with heretics
 But all are heretics that are not Jews.
 (*JM*, II, iii, 309- 312)

It seems that, for Marlowe, Barabas may be a villain, but he cannot be worse than Ferneze. After seeing Catholics commit sins, Barabas is happy to say that it is acceptable to deceive a Christian. If he speaks with honesty when defending his rights, the Catholics, on the other hand, are represented by the meanest kind of exploitation by Ferneze and his co-conspirators. Barabas here takes action in retribution for injuries suffered at the hands of Catholics. He does not initiate enmity but, being attacked first, seeks justifiable revenge. He realizes that he must dissemble because he is not obliged to follow them, just as he resists Ferneze on the basis that being a ruler means nothing to Barabas, since Ferneze is an infidel. What Barabas says in the passage above could be said to echo

Marlowe's depiction of Catholics as deceitful. Thus Barabas, before making any further hostile moves, thoughtfully analyzes the situation.

As his plot to silence both friars for good draws to its culmination, Barabas kills Friar Barnadine and attempts to make Friar Jacomo believe that he is responsible for the murder. At that time, Jacomo's confession reveals that his true interest lies in Barabas' money:

This is the hour wherein I shall proceed;
O happy hour wherein I shall convert
An infidel, and bring his gold into our treasury!
(*JM*, IV, i, 160-162.)

It is easy to identify the lies uttered by the friar. He states that he is essentially attempting to convert an infidel, only incidentally raising funds for his house, whereas he is actually interested primarily in the money. This is evident because otherwise he would not have fought with Barnadine, his brother in religion, and would not have attempted to convince Barabas to join him by telling him about the strict rule in Barnadine's house, given that both friars represent Catholicism. If we consider the exchange between Barabas and Ithamore at the end of the scene, after they have accused Jacomo of killing his brother, it is apparent that they are expressing certain points that Marlowe wishes to make. Indeed, their discussion of Catholics is seen as criticism of the Catholic faith. Barabas and Ithamore are right in giving reasons for not becoming Catholics because, based on what they say, these Catholics, who are supposed to be the elite and most moral among men, are in fact corrupt and murderous:

Ithamore: Fie upon 'em! Master, will you turn Christian, when
Holy friars turn devils and murder one another?

Barabas: No; for this example I'll remain a Jew:
Heaven bless me! What, a friar a murderer!

When shall you see a Jew commit the like?

Ithamore: Why, a Turk could ha' done no more.
(*JM*, IV, i, 191-196.)

When Barabas states that he will 'remain a Jew' because 'holy friars turn devils', he is careful to preface the word 'friars' with 'holy' to sanctify them ironically. Although the claim that one friar is a murderer is made mainly to serve Barabas' plan, it also indicates that both friars, representing Catholicism, are hypocrites. Barabas and Ithamore declare themselves so shocked to find such villainy in Christians that they can no longer see their way to conversion. It is a state of mind wherein Barabas and Ithamore are convinced of the wickedness of the Catholics, because if friars act in a way opposed to the beliefs they profess, then this indicates that their religion is false and can be exploited to achieve wicked aims. Barabas' depiction of Catholicism reflects Marlowe's apparent view; indeed, the play as a whole serves to demonstrate the corruption of which he holds Catholics guilty and illustrates much of Marlowe's argument that Catholics are without ethical standards.

3.4 Conclusion

The Jew of Malta offers rich illustrations of the religious and political implications of the struggle between Barabas and Ferneze. Barabas' resistance can be seen as a manifestation of the circumstances in which Marlowe was writing in that such resistance is needed against untrustworthy Catholics. Machiavellianism is evident in Ferneze yet ambivalent in Barabas. Marlowe's representation of Machiavelli may be seen as reflecting his own awareness of how Machiavelli was represented. On the other hand, Marlowe exposes Catholics and how they misuse authority to hurt Barabas and others. The play's criticism

of Catholicism is clear in the treatment of Ferneze and the friars. Pineas argues that 'Marlowe's play exhibits the usual picture of corrupt Catholic friars; it introduces the new element of an outside spectator and commentator on that corruption, in the person of the Jew, Barabas'.⁶⁰ Barabas exposes the friars and reveals how unholy they are in a way which denotes Marlowe's interest in depicting the dissembling and scheming of devout Catholics. The play, which offers insight into many Machiavellian features regarding policy, power, and dominance, is an indication of Marlowe's interest in the subject of the interplay of politics and religion.

⁶⁰ Pineas, *Tudor and Early Stuart Anti-Catholic Drama*, p. 9.

Chapter Four

Edward II

4.1 Introduction

Edward II (c. 1592) is Christopher Marlowe's only play dealing with English history. It is filled with political conflict and tension between two parties: on one side the King, with his minions and followers, and on the other Mortimer, leading the peers who are discontented with the King and his way of running the kingdom. Simkin notes that Marlowe's works are filled with the traces of religious and political conflicts and that this play is all about politics and religion in Elizabethan England.¹ Simkin's comments are reflected in the play through Marlowe's representation of different aspects of religion and politics. Earlier chapters of this study have established the relevance of *The Massacre at Paris* and *The Jew of Malta* to Elizabethan religion and politics. In *Edward II*, Marlowe represents the political challenges posed by Mortimer's actions in a way which can be linked to these other plays. *Edward II* deals with the relationship of King Edward with his favourite, Gaveston. This homosocial relationship will be examined within the context of the politics of the Elizabethan age. One of the political themes in the play, in addition to Marlowe's treatment of Machiavellianism, is Edward's method of ruling, which is also apparent in the other two plays. Cartelli considers Machiavellian themes within Marlowe's texts by stating that

Marlowe's indebtedness to Machiavelli can be detected both in the style and content of his plays, each of which presents political and religious contention in terms of the

¹ Stevie Simkin, *A Preface to Marlowe* (England: Pearson Education, 2000), p. 45.

self-interested pursuit of power, and treats the exercise of power as the most desirable of activities for the aspiring mind.²

Such Machiavellian features are seen in this play and the previous ones in the way in which Marlowe's characters embody aspects of Machiavellianism through the features of power and betrayal, and in other features which Marlowe demonstrates throughout the play. Because Edward fails to rule his country strongly, the rise of the Machiavellian Mortimer seems to be the result of Edward's weakness and negligence. Thus Edward's way of ruling creates a space for Mortimer to appear as a Machiavellian villain.

In this chapter, I will explore the political dimensions of *Edward II* and refer to the other plays to link these plays to the discussion of Elizabethan politics. We shall investigate Edward, Mortimer, Gaveston, Isabella, the peers and various religious aspects of the play. In *Edward II*, Marlowe represents religious criticism when Edward and Gaveston comment on the Roman church. The play opens with the dispute that proves to be the main cause of the conflict to come when Edward openly states that he 'will have Gaveston' (*Edward II*, I, 95)³: this moment increases the tension between Edward and the rest, who hate Gaveston. Edward adds that 'they shall know' (*Edward II*, I, 95), making the challenge that he cares little about what the peers do and that he will do what he wishes without regard to their views. To understand the play, it is necessary to present the problem which has led to these political complications. First, there is the King with Gaveston and their followers; on the other side, there are the peers led by Mortimer who gradually grows to be a powerful figure. On his return to England, Gaveston tells of his plans: he aims to amuse the King, and his major concern is to spend time entertaining

² Thomas Cartelli, 'King Edward's Body', in *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. & trans. by Richard Wilson (London: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999), p. 175.

³ The Penguin Classics' edition of *Edward II* used in this thesis contains only scenes without acts.

him, which will come at the expense of the King's responsibility towards his country. Gaveston clearly states that he will 'have Italian masks by night' (*Edward II*, I, i, 54) because 'music and poetry is his [Edward's] delight' (*Edward II*, I, i, 53). Gaveston's discussion of his plans to live with the King suggests that Edward will put aside his duties towards his country, his people, his wife and the peers. Thus, Marlowe establishes the nature of the problem at the very outset when Edward transgresses the fundamental political rules of his kingdom by adopting the policy of doing what he likes without taking the advice of his council.

This chapter begins by investigating the case of Edward, which will lead the discussion to a parallel side of Elizabethan government, where the Queen too had favourites, and a consideration of how this coincidence helps Marlowe to depict such conduct in his play. The point is not to seek a comparison between Edward and Elizabeth, but rather to depict favourites and their roles in the state. We shall pay attention to Gaveston's status and analyse the effect of that on the peers. There is an investigation to relate this play to Marlowe's earlier work, exploring the way in which he depicts Edward here in comparison to King Charles in *The Massacre at Paris*. This comparison brings the two plays together in relation to the administration of the state and how politics are run, in addition to how Kings perform their duties. Another main theme is raised in a discussion of an adaptation of *Edward II* by Derek Jarman which considers the extent to which this diverges from Marlowe's original work. This adaptation offers an opportunity to see how Jarman represents English history and what themes he focuses on in comparison to Marlowe's representation of his characters. Finally, Mortimer and Isabella

are discussed in order to review how their actions harm the order of the state. The last section pursues the subject of anti-Catholicism in Marlowe's treatment of religion.

4.2 King Edward II of England

4.2.1 Political theories in *Edward II*

Marlowe is interested in depicting the English court through his representation of Edward II and how Edward runs the state. The conflicts that take place between Edward and the peers form a major issue in the play. First it has to be recognised that Edward is portrayed as a weak ruler who indulges himself with his minions. The way Marlowe depicts these events must bring the picture of contemporary Elizabethan politics to mind because Marlowe's interest in the subject of politics and religion is obvious and clear. Before elaborating on these parallels, Edward II's favourites and Elizabeth's favourites, let us first review the play's political standpoints. Many critics have explored Marlowe's representations of absolute rulers in his plays. For instance, Ribner says that Marlowe is 'more absolute than the most orthodox of the Tudor theorists'.⁴ It is possible to consider Edward's political stance as part of how Marlowe is viewed, according to Ribner and others. Edward's political stance is demonstrated early in the play where it is clear that he wants to be the sole ruler without any help or council from the peers who surround him. Edward chooses to rule alone and solely without any consideration for political consequences. He, for instance, disrespects the bishop when he asks Gaveston to 'rend his stole' (*Edward II*, III, 187). Edward's attempts to disregard orders from Rome that he should banish Gaveston again are signs of his unawareness of how to rule wisely. Although this action towards Rome marks his inability to act politically, it could also be

⁴ Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (London: Methuen, 1965), pp. 62-63.

seen as an act of arbitrary ruling because Edward considers himself able and entitled to control everything without referring to any other party. The subject of Edward's arbitrariness is limited and minor to the other political implications in the play due to his weak and indecisive nature. Arbitrary ruling seems to be applied to those powerful rulers, while Edward is weak. Edward still thinks he can rule solely by not considering the peers or the bishop, and that, in a way, is how he can be considered a despotic ruler. Edward's aim behind such an act of despotic rule is to secure Gaveston with him.

While Edward insists that he will have Gaveston, the peers oppose his demands and reject them, showing sharper political awareness than the King, who desperately tries to control them. Critics have continually discussed Edward's political identity to relate this to his behaviour and its consequences when he loses control of himself and the kingdom; their arguments tend to suggest that Edward is not a potential political ruler who possesses power and knows how to use it. He rather misuses power in his attempts to govern the state on his own. Ellis-Fermor, for instance, argues that 'Edward knows nothing of the nature of that power that makes Kings feared, and is alternately infuriated and dismayed to find that he does not produce the effect he should'.⁵ Ellis-Fermor's argument is based on how Edward acts: he apparently never takes advantage of his position as King. As for his engagement with Gaveston, Boyette suggests that Edward 'scorns his political opponents because they deny him the privilege to favour those he chooses, to be at once King of the realm and a man of flesh and blood free to give large presents'.⁶ Considering how Marlowe dramatizes his characters, Boyette's point can be used as a justification for Marlowe's strong characters. Marlowe seems to be implying

⁵ Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe*, p. 111.

⁶ Purvis E. Boyette, 'Wanton Humour and Wanton Poets: Homosexuality in Marlowe's *Edward II*', *TSE: Tulane Studies in English*, 22 (1977), p. 37.

that if Edward were to place more importance on his position as ruler and secondary importance on his nature as a 'man of flesh and blood', then he would be able to survive, but Edward chooses his minions as his main concern and that is where he fails. Ellis-Fermor's account suggests that Edward's personality is difficult and that, if he were stronger, he might be able to suppress the peers and their opinions, but he neither wants to abandon his worldly desires for the good of the country nor is he ready to face his opponents when they challenge him over his attitude. Edward seems to be a King serving his minions rather than his people, which allows his peers to oppose him to the point of desiring his death. It is obvious that Edward's political position is shaken by his desire to decide what he wants without referring to the peers. Marlowe seems to express the concerns that the fatal mistakes Edward makes will lead to political disorder.

The importance of exploring Edward's character is that it helps us to see why he fails and how his peers turn into his enemies, both because of his attitude towards them and because he has Gaveston as his friend or minion. Ellis-Fermor is concerned with the way Edward behaves: she notes that his 'position as King must encroach upon or limit that private life, his fury is loosed, and with confusing irrelevance he urges his kingly right of freedom. It is an irresponsible, undeveloped mind, incapable of grasping the seriousness of any issue'.⁷ Ellis-Fermor says that the ultimate destiny for Edward is unlikely to be promising. Such a step leads Edward towards inconsistency and self-destruction. Edward fails to recognize the need for cooperation with councillors who could make him strong.

Marlowe stresses the characteristics of a strong ruler who controls his state firmly and who knows what is best for the kingdom; but Edward shows himself unworthy of

⁷ Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe*, p. 112.

such a description when, for example, he makes promises to Gaveston such as: ‘I’ll give thee more, for but to honour thee/ is Edward pleased with kingly regiment’ (*Edward II*, I, 163-164). Edward is underestimating his position by attempting to honour Gaveston as a reaction to the peers’ comments that Gaveston is of a low status; thus Edward seeks to elevate him as if this matter were one of state. He uses ‘honour’ in such a way as to debase its meaning, because he wants to honour a minion. It is obvious from the passage above that Edward is opposing his peers and this action of honouring Gaveston is a defiance of them and their demands. Edward repeats the mistake: he wants to rule without any help, while seeking the help of his favourite, Gaveston. It is also noticeable that honour for Edward is something that can be arbitrary, not earned. His careless actions allow the peers, Mortimer in particular, to attempt to end this disgrace. As a result of Edward’s actions, Mortimer comes forward as the sole Machiavellian, later to be joined by Isabella, who is responsible for Edward’s death.

4.2.2 Edward and the feeling of pity

The role of minions is important in disrupting not only the political stability of the realm but also the public and inner lives of significant characters. Since Edward is so greatly influenced by his minions, questions have arisen as to whether he deserves pity. Indeed, many scholars see Edward as a weak and unfortunate man deserving of our pity. For instance, Hilton suggests that Edward is worthy of sympathy,⁸ but how far can he be pitied? Although he achieves no success, nor does he gain the audience’s admiration—only its sympathy for the cruelties which the peers inflict on him at the end of his life—it is worth exploring the question of sympathy for Edward because it helps to show how

⁸ Hilton, *Who Was Kit Marlowe*, p. 108.

Marlowe treats him in comparison to his other protagonists. Edward is not like Guise or Ferneze in terms of power and strength. Marlowe portrays him as pitiable in the sense that he is too weak to retain his throne, which contrasts starkly with his depiction of strong characters. In depicting Edward as not deserving to be King, he presents him as a figure worthy of pity because he is not strong enough to face others. When Edward is deposed, he meets the destiny which arises from his own actions. Marlowe ensures later in the play that the political function will be carried out by another ruler, in this case Edward's son, and manifests his sympathy for Edward by punishing those responsible for his death. Marlowe makes Mortimer and Isabella save the political order of the kingdom momentarily before being punished by young Edward because of their ambition in wanting more than what they had initially planned. Young Edward's action against his mother and Mortimer denotes the sympathy he has for his father. We can see this sympathy, which would likely be shared by the Elizabethan audience, in his words when he says, 'Sweet father, here unto thy murdered ghost/ I offer up the wicked traitor's head/ and let these tears, distilling from mine eyes/ by witness my grief and innocence'.⁹ Elsewhere, young Edward comments on the abhorrent action by Mortimer, 'could I have ruled thee then, as I do now/ thou hadst not hatched this monstrous treachery'.¹⁰ These words display disgust for what Mortimer did to his King. Young Edward's 'grief' is increased by two factors. First, by his father's death. Second, by the action itself which was conducted by his own mother and Mortimer. Although King Edward made many mistakes during his ruling, the mistakes made by the traitors seem to be larger than Edward's. The end of the play, with the direction of events, imply the sympathetic tone,

⁹ *Edward II*, XXIX, 34.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, XXIX, 20.

which can be attributed to young Edward and was probably shared by the Elizabethan audience, who would be happy to see young Edward react rapidly to the treachery against his father. If this pity for Edward were not important, Marlowe would not have young Edward avenge the death of his father. In other words, Marlowe is obliged to introduce the son to carry out the mission of stopping his mother and Mortimer. For Marlowe, pity is something which requires immediate action because, when he presents Edward II as an object of pity, he does not let his murder pass without reaction, which is what we see in his son's taking revenge.

Commenting on Edward, Hilton also suggests that 'if any character deserves sympathy in this tragedy it is "pliant" Edward, who is no match for the strong forces ranged around him'.¹¹ Edward truly deserves sympathy despite his follies. Indeed, he is unable to overcome the peers, who are united while he is alone and isolated because he has chosen to be so. Despite Edward's mistakes, Marlowe seems to be saying that he deserves some sympathy after all. Ribner comments that Edward is 'a good man [who] comes to destruction because of inherent weakness which make him incapable of coping with a crisis which he himself has helped to create. And in his downfall he carries with him the sympathies of the audience'.¹² This sympathy could always be a sign of Marlowe's desire for his characters to receive applause, because sympathy for them may be the only consolation they receive before their end.

To talk about the pity of the Elizabethan audience, and in particular for Edward, we need to consider what the word 'sodomy' would have meant for them. The way in which homosexuality was understood at that time certainly differs from how it is seen in

¹¹ Della Hilton, *Who Was Kit Marlowe? The Story of the Poet and Playwright* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), p. 108.

¹² Ribner, *English History Play*, pp. 123-124.

many cultures in the present. In one argument, Bray refers to a feature which contemporary audiences may interpret as an act of homosexuality, but it was not actually so among Elizabethan audience: 'the embraces we see between these two men have ready parallels in Elizabethan England in the daily conventions of friendship without being a sign of a sodomitical relationship'.¹³ This suggests that the ways in which Edward expresses his feelings for Gaveston are not necessarily acts for which an Elizabethan audience would despise Edward. Bray adds that 'when we look for signs of overt sexuality, what we see are rather Edward as a father and his determination to marry Gaveston to his niece'.¹⁴ Bray's argument is based on the notion that Edward and Gaveston do not engage in the kind of homosexual behaviour known today but instead have a kind of friendship which was common in that period. Summers takes a parallel position to that of Bray, arguing that 'to talk of an individual in this period as being or not being "a homosexual" is an anachronism and ruinously misleading'.¹⁵ This seems reasonable because the conception of homosexuality in Renaissance England was indeed vague and inexact.¹⁶ From such accounts, what becomes obvious and relevant to our discussion is that an Elizabethan audience could have felt pity for Edward because he was naïve, in the way he abandoned his state for the love of one person, rather than being a sinner who committed acts which they would not tolerate. Edward's relationship with Gaveston does not seem to be an abhorrent thing that Marlowe's contemporaries would

¹³ Alan Bray, 'Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England', *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. By Jonathan Goldberg (Durham: Duke UP, 1994), p. 49.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹⁵ Claude J. Summers, 'Marlowe and Constructions of Renaissance Homosexuality', in, *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature/Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée*, 21, no. 1-2 (1994 Mar-June): p. 27-44 (p. 27).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

not forgive, despite what might be suggested by the prejudiced way relationships between men are perceived.

4.2.3 Marlowe and the Elizabethan court

Marlowe's *Edward II* has political implications related to his times and specifically to the Elizabethan court. This is something worth exploring since themes, such as that of the despotic ruler, are also linked with Marlowe and his writings. The realities of the Elizabethan age, as the period in which Marlowe was writing, must have provided him with ideas, fired his imagination or affected his perceptions and so influenced the writing of his plays. In that sense, a discussion of the King's favourites in *Edward II* could shed light on the way Marlowe perceived the favourites of Queen Elizabeth I. The role of these favourites may have been a challenge for Marlowe when he represented his character Gaveston as Edward's main favourite, because of the differences and similarities between Edward's favourite and Elizabeth's.

During her reign, Queen Elizabeth had two important favourites, Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex (1565-1601) and Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester (1532-1588). The lives of these two famous favourites may well have influenced Marlowe and his treatment of Gaveston. The controversial *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1584) may even have had more impact on Marlowe's representation of Gaveston, for many reasons. This pamphlet,¹⁷ which elaborated on Leicester's personality and actions, contained severe criticism, as its content illustrates. For instance, there is a statement

¹⁷ *Leicester's Commonwealth*, was a devastating Catholic attack on Leicester's career and character. The pamphlet was printed overseas and banned in England, but enjoyed a wide currency in manuscript form. See Paul E. J. Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585-1597* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 36.

before the start of the pamphlet which goes like this: ‘the heavens shall revile the wicked man’s iniquity, and the earth shall stand up to bear witness against him’.¹⁸ The detailed description of Leicester is varied and wide-ranging. The pamphlet may have been of interest to Marlowe in that his depiction of Gaveston was as a controversial personality, hated by the peers, which is similar to how Leicester is described in the pamphlet. Another example where Leicester is shown as being hated is when the writer illustrates in one part of the pamphlet how ‘extremely hated’¹⁹ Leicester was in Wales.

There are some important differences and similarities between the favourites of Edward and Elizabeth. Similarities can be seen in the enemies of these favourites: This is not to say that Leicester and Gaveston had common enemies, but rather that these enemies could share many things such as envy for the favourites or that these enemies are mostly the nearest to the ruler (Lord, Barons, etc...). Leicester’s enemies were many and the pamphlet demonstrated such hatred. The same thing is seen for Gaveston who was hated by the peers who were considered his greatest enemy. This hatred is derived from the success these favourites achieve and/or simply from envy by other political opponents. The idea of royal favourites being controversial is also witnessed in Essex’s case, where he is described as having the highest values, as when Hammer reports. Hammer suggests that ‘the writers make it clear that Essex was more than interested in the virtuous actions and he sought virtue as one feature in his life’;²⁰ yet his end was not typical of a virtuous man, as he was executed in 1588 for treason. Hammer described Essex and his interest in virtuousness but the way Essex’s end happens is contrary to how

¹⁸ Leicester Commonwealth, (London, 1584) Modern Spelling Edition Copyright Nina Green 2002 <http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/Leicester/Leicesters_Commonwealth_1584.pdf> [accessed 28 November 2009], p. 1

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 42.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 20.

he sought that virtuousness. This is because he ended up in a shameful status in comparison to what he claimed, according to Hammer. The attitude towards any particular favourite seems to change from time to time throughout the favourite's lifetime, which speaks of the importance of such men in the political affairs of their time. Marlowe's Gaveston was a dangerous man who was able to manipulate the King, thus affecting the stability of the state.

One noticeable difference between Marlowe's representation of Gaveston and Elizabeth's favourites is that Gaveston is French. This is seen whenever a comment is given by the peers to Gaveston. For instance, when Gaveston is described as 'peevish Frenchman',²¹ this tells us how the focus is on a French character rather than an ordinary person. The reflection of Elizabeth's favourites in Gaveston is indeed similar in some points and different others. We see Essex being praised while his end is that of a traitor. Marlowe makes his character, Gaveston, fluctuate between Edward's love and the peers' hatred. So, Gaveston is hated and loved at the same time, which reminds us of how controversial such favourites are. In the next section, we shall explore Gaveston as opposed to Mortimer and the peers, in addition to Gaveston's status in the discussion of Edward's minions.

4.2.4 Edward's minions

Marlowe depicts Edward's Gaveston as causing perplexity in the kingdom. Of particular importance is the enmity between Mortimer and Gaveston, which has great repercussions for the kingdom. Gaveston functions here as an influential element, similar to the way in which Queen Elizabeth's favourites did. Gaveston has enemies and friends, makes

²¹ *Edward II*, II, 7.

influential decisions and directs political power. The main difference between Gaveston and Mortimer in terms of statesmanship is that Mortimer cares for the state, while Gaveston does not. It may be seen as essential to discuss Mortimer in this section because he is the opposite of Gaveston from the start of the play until he turns traitor. Mortimer's disagreement with Edward is sometimes attributed to Edward's love for Gaveston being greater than his love for the peers and Mortimer. On two occasions, Mortimer questions Edward's love for Gaveston: 'if you love us, my lord, hate Gaveston' (*Edward II*, I, 79); and: 'why should you love him whom the world hates so?' (*Edward II*, IV, 76). Edward replies: 'because he loves me more than all the world' (*Edward II*, IV, 77). Callaghan's analysis is particularly concerned with Mortimer's jealousy and the fact that he is shocked at how Gaveston manages to obtain Edward's attention, while he cannot. Callaghan argues that 'it is neither sodomy nor class status that bother Mortimer, but Gaveston's mastery of the techniques of self display that ordinarily constitute authority'.²² This suggestion seems plausible, since Mortimer, having failed in his attempt to win the King's love and attention, finds an opportunity to remove first the source of the problem (Gaveston) and then Edward himself. Mortimer sees Gaveston, in front of his eyes, gain titles and high positions. Thus, Lancaster observes: 'that villain Gaveston is made an earl' (*Edward II*, II, 11); by saying 'villain', Lancaster indicates that like Mortimer, he believes that Gaveston, as Callaghan argues, has mastered the technique of displaying himself well, by which Gaveston manipulates the King and manages to act in a way that enables him to control his king. Marlowe marks the talents

²² Dympna Callaghan, 'The Terms of Gender: "Gay" and "Feminist" *Edward II*', in *Feminist Reading of Early Modern Culture: Emerging Subjects*, ed. by Lindsay Kaplan, Valerie Traub & Dympna Callaghan (CUP, 1996), p. 285.

of Gaveston which keep him close to the King, and this is how he manages to stand alone as the King's sole favourite.

Another feature of Gaveston is his ability to deprive the state of its resources. There is nothing wrong in Mortimer's endeavour to gain Edward's attention because it will have the effect of curtailing Gaveston's pernicious influence on Edward; for Mortimer, in addition to Gaveston's ability to interfere with the workings of Edward's mind, is concerned with Gaveston's role in depriving the Kingdom of its treasure, which he evokes in these words:

[...] I scorn, that one so basely-born
Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert,
And riot it with the treasure of the realm,
While soldiers mutiny for want of pay.
He wears a lord's revenue on his back.
(*Edward II*, IV, 402-406)

Mortimer foreshadows here what later happens when Edward refuses to help him financially to set his uncle free. Marlowe manipulates historical facts in that he creates the situation where Edward refuses to ransom old Mortimer. Mortimer contrasts 'treasure of the realm' and 'want of pay' to explain that the country has wealth but that Gaveston has ransacked it. Mortimer 'scorns' the act of wasting the country's money by what he calls the 'pert' Gaveston, who is insolent in his treatment of the peers. This passage may be seen as Marlowe's declaration that allowing one's thinking to be dominated by personal concerns leads to one's downfall, and that this is what Edward is doing when he allows the desires of Gaveston to supersede the needs of his peers and his people, including his wife, to the point where he becomes Edward's only interest, to the exclusion of all others. Normand argues that, 'Gaveston in turn attempts to secure his place in the King's "bosom" in order that he may forgo having to "stoop" and "bow"

(*Edward II*, I, 14-20) to those more mighty than him'.²³ Such a suggestion implies that Gaveston is interested in overcoming the peers because he knows his position will be safe with the King's love and he will not have to worry about the peers. Gaveston's position as the King's favourite makes him superior to the peers. Mortimer observes with disdain that:

[...] 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, appeared!
 (*Edward II*, I, 407-410)

In a reflection of Gaveston's desire to secure his place, Mortimer articulates disdain and dissatisfaction that Gaveston has persisted in his unacceptable actions. Gaveston is called 'Proteus' and is a reflection of his talent, which Mortimer despises, as Gaveston is able to change his attitudes in a similar way to the shape-changing god of Greek mythology. The reference to King Midas also uses Greek myth, alluding to Midas's power to turn all to gold, which reflects how Gaveston is able to get what he wants while others cannot. Mortimer likens Gaveston to mythological figures in order to warn of the threat he poses to the wellbeing of the peers and to national stability. Marlowe thus clearly demonstrates the major role of minions and their influence on rulers. The anxiety Mortimer expresses addresses not merely the problem of Edward and Gaveston, but also their transgression, which includes their subversion of the court into a place for play rather than the locus of political activity. The court has become a place for 'sweet speech, comedies, and pleasing shows' (*Edward II*, I, i, 55). Gaveston's actions have degraded the political mission of the

²³ Lawrence Normand, 'What Passions Call You These?: *Edward II* and *James VI*', in *Christopher Marlowe and English Renaissance Culture England*, ed. by Darryll Grantley and Peter Roberts (Scholar Press, 1996), p. 165.

court because he does not realize the importance of respect for such places, and he displays his offensive attitude in a way which angers the peers.

There is a similarity between Gaveston in this play and the minions in *The Massacre at Paris*. Marlowe's depiction of minions in both plays shows them as an obstacle and distraction to the ruler in fulfilling his political role. In *The Massacre*, Catherine, mother of King Henry III, tells the Cardinal of Lorraine, Guise's brother, how Anjou—who is now Henry III—is distracted:

How likes your grace my son's pleasantness?
His mind [...] runs on his minions,
And all his heaven is to delight himself;
And, while he sleeps securely thus in ease,
Thy brother Guise and we now provide
To plant ourselves with such authority.
(*MP*, XIV, 44-49)

Catherine is happy that the King's mind 'runs on his minions', denoting his absence from political life, whereas 'his heaven' is not meant to make him responsible for his country and people but actually 'to delight himself', something which reflects his selfishness and irresponsibility. Just as Henry III's dysfunctional behaviour, which was once useful in exterminating the Protestants, no longer fits the role expected of him by Guise's brother and Henry's mother, so that of the King in *Edward II* is inappropriate and damaging to the state because his involvement with minions diverts him from his duty to England.

We shall now examine the attempts of critics to explore the conflict between minions and peers to show how Edward's failure to achieve a better understanding of the peer's power leads to serious conflict. This should also help to illuminate the cause of the peers' hatred of the minions. Summers discusses this conflict and its significance by noting that 'the political instability centred in the competition of the King and peers is

itself part and parcel of a larger social instability that mirrors a fundamental identity crisis', adding that '“the barons” objection to Gaveston (and, later, to Spenser) has nothing to do with morality and everything to do with class. Most simply, they are determined not to be “overpeered”'.²⁴ This point is relevant because it is based on the frequent lexical characterization of minions as 'base' (*Edward II*, I, 100) and 'peevish Frenchman' (*Edward II*, II, 7). This suggests that the peers would never accept a reversal where Edward might promote minions to positions of equality with them. Normand makes a related point:

What the barons see in Edward's relationship with Gaveston is [...] a distorted political relationship: it is the displacement of patronage from the nobility which traditionally received it to the upstart newcomer that enrages the barons, with the additional sting that it is a foreigner on whom the wealth is being heaped.²⁵

This is another indication that the peers object to Edward's attitude, which is opposed to their interests, and they see his actions as a threat to their position, which is made worse by the fact that it is Gaveston—who has no title—who is the King's favourite. The barons, as Deats states, 'view the anti-ceremonial signals which Edward implements as an offence against the hierarchical structure upon which they depend no less than the King'.²⁶ The political order is sensitive to any potential threat, so that any violation of it will provoke a reaction. Marlowe's political treatment of Gaveston seems challenging because his presence in—or rather his insertion into—the English political system raises the risk that the peers will revolt against such a farce, for which Edward alone is responsible. Brodwin declares that 'Gaveston is objected to because of his irresponsible

²⁴ Claude J. Summers, 'Sex, Politics, and Self-Realization in *Edward II*', in *A Poet and Filthy Play-maker*, ed. by Roma Gill, Kenneth Friedenreich & Constance B. Kuriyama (New York, AMS Press, 1988), p. 225.

²⁵ Normand, 'What Passions Call You These?', p. 190.

²⁶ Deats, 'Marlowe's Fearful Symmetry', p. 268.

influence upon the King'.²⁷ This is true, since Edward's mind is on his minions and he disregards his responsibilities towards his country.

The risk is seen, then, in Gaveston's difficulty in coexisting with the English peers without clashing with them, based on the differences between them of birth and origin. The political role of the peers reflects their family origins, in that each title represents a pedigree; a King is the offspring of Kings and so on. It is in this context that the barons see Gaveston as unworthy of the role given to him by Edward. It is unsurprising that Mortimer should respond angrily to Gaveston's choice of words in the following exchange:

Gaveston: [...] were I a King!

Mortimer: Thou, villain! Wherefore talk thou of a King,
Thou hardly art a gentleman by birth?
(*Edward II*, IV, 27-29)

Mortimer strongly objects to hearing Gaveston talk of being a King because, in Mortimer's opinion, Gaveston is hardly a gentleman by birth, which explicitly shows how different he is from the peers in terms of birth. Marlowe makes it clear that the question of Gaveston seeking a title is disturbing for the peers and creates a political crisis.

A very important issue regarding Gaveston is his position, which the peers raise repeatedly when talking about his rank or class. It was mentioned above that the difference between Elizabeth's favourites and Gaveston is that Gaveston is French. Marlowe's treatment of Gaveston could thus be seen as an echo of earlier insinuations in Holinshed's *Chronicles* concerning the superiority of the English over the French,

²⁷ Leonora Leet Brodwin, 'Edward II: Marlowe's Culminating Treatment of Love', *ELS*, 31, no. 2 (June, 1964), p. 140.

discussed in the first chapter of this thesis. Hamilton reports historical accounts, which could have been available to Marlowe, of Gaveston and of his attitude. These are considered repulsive: 'his ostentatious dress and behaviour at the banquet [...] are] said to have disgusted and insulted the King's new brothers-in-law [...]. Such ostentation and arrogance, rather than any political ambition or agenda, was ultimately to be his undoing'.²⁸ Hamilton's accounts show Gaveston's action as unworthy of a person appointed by a King in such position; but his behaviour may have been seen as unsurprising in a Frenchman.

Indeed, Marlowe's representation of Gaveston brings to mind Holinshed's accounts. Aside from the consistent description of Edward II there and in other chronicles as, what Joan Parks has described as, 'a source of disorder, a force negative to the reasonable operations of the state and a man whose lack of self government parallels his ability to govern the realms',²⁹ the chronicle's representation of the French is of a despised and hated race. For instance, there is one example mentioning one reason why the Normans were hated: 'these Norman clerkes, and their freends, being [60] thus exalted, it was not long yer they began to mocke, abuse, and despise the English'.³⁰ In the play, such features are evoked by the peers when expressing hatred for Gaveston; they take every opportunity to impute negative features to him. For instance, they call him 'base' (I, i, 99), 'accursed Gaveston' and 'peevish French' (I, ii, 4, 7). All these terms seem to echo contempt for the French because Gaveston is an intruder in the English

²⁸ J. S. Hamilton, 'Gaveston, Piers, Earl of Cornwall (d. 1312)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, Sept 2004), online edn, Jan 2008
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10463>> [accessed 7 Aug 2008]

²⁹ Joan Parks, 'History, Tragedy, and Truth in Christopher Marlowe's "*Edward II*"', in *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 39, no. 2 (Spring, 1999), pp. 275-290 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1556166>> [accessed 30-7-2009] p. 281.

³⁰ Holinshed, *The First and Second Volumes*, p. 132.

court. In the first chapter we referred to the response to the French (Normans) who opposed and unjustly treated Englishmen. There was a need for reaction and that is what we see in the chronicles, where the English are elevated in the same way that Gaveston, here, is belittled.

The question of class and rank seems interesting for Marlowe because it allows him to depict the situation of the peers expressing hatred and disdain for a French character in the same way that the chronicles did. Such contempt is closely related to Gaveston being treated as equal to them while they know that they are of a better nature than him. The question of rank and class helps to establish a conflict which cannot easily be suppressed because Gaveston establishes himself in their place. Furthermore, by allowing Gaveston to usurp high class and lordly rank, Edward has broken the political convention and disregarded the principle that each person should have a position that suits his class and rank. Edward capriciously grants high positions to certain peers in order to placate them and to gain their approval so that they will tolerate his having Gaveston by his side. The effect of this arbitrary honour-granting is seen in the increased hatred of the peers and the danger that they may mutiny: 'the King shall lose his crown, for we have power/ and courage too, to be revenged at full' (*Edward II*, II, 59-60).

Edward elevates Gaveston and that, by itself, is a threat to his own position as King. Marlowe exposes Edward's lack of political wisdom in clinging to Gaveston and bestowing upon him titles he never dreamed of:

King: I here create thee Lord High Chamberlain,
Chief Secretary to the state and me,
Earl of Cornwall, King and Lord of Man.

Gaveston: My lord, these titles far exceed my worth.
(*Edward II*, I, 153-155)

Thus, in a few words Edward bestows on Gaveston a number of high titles, and Gaveston's response denotes surprise and astonishment at their number and importance. He probably alludes to his origins and morality when he says that the titles exceed his worth, indicating that he is of low birth, which seems to confirm the peers' view of him. It is surprising how easily Edward distributes titles. All that Edward does contradicts the peers' view that Gaveston is not worthy of such preferment.

Whatever the parallels, for Marlowe, between Gaveston and Elizabeth's favourites, there also seems to be a sharp contrast as far as origin and rank are concerned. Gaveston is despised by the peers as a low-born Frenchman with no nobility whatsoever, while Essex 'may ... have felt the need constantly to emphasise his virtue in order to reinforce the claims about the high nobility of his blood'.³¹ Generally speaking, the politics of Elizabeth's court reflect discipline and concern for the good of the state as her favourites worked to assist her in the political field, whereas Gaveston's role is to dismantle and abuse the authority he is given by the King.

Sara Deats considers Gaveston's role in the rupture between Edward and the peers, noting that 'members of parliament jar with one another and refuse the forms of obeisance due their King'.³² The knees of 'aspiring Lancaster', the King notes, 'now are grown so stiff' (*Edward II*, I, 92, 94) that he will not kneel. Instead, he and his fellow peers 'brave the King unto his face' and threaten to 'parley with their naked swords'. Deats' argument is important in that she concentrates on Gaveston as the main cause of this unacceptable behaviour. Gaveston's presence is negative in that the King cannot

³¹ Hammer, *Polarization of Elizabethan Politics*, p. 20.

³² Sara Munson Deats, 'Marlowe's Fearful Symmetry in *Edward II*', in *A Poet and Filthy Play-Maker*, eds. by Roma Gill, Kenneth Friedenreich, & Constance Kuriyama (New York: AMS Press, 1988), p. 267.

control the peers because they themselves see the King unable to control himself in his relationship with Gaveston.

4.2.5 *The Massacre at Paris and Edward II*

The similarity between protagonists and antagonists is present in Marlowe's plays. In *Edward II*, weak Edward is almost the same as King Charles in *The Massacre at Paris*. Both characters perform noticeable acts of weakness throughout the play. However, this weakness does not necessarily mean that these characters do not act wisely in some situations. King Charles starts the play with speeches denoting strength and threat. For example, he clearly cooperates with his mother and Guise to kill Huguenots and plan their murder. This should assert his role as a schemer who attempts to exercise power and control over others. Despite this suggestion of control in Charles' attitude to his position as King, Marlowe's interest in depicting a strong ruler finds no expression in the character of Charles. This is because Charles is heavily dependent on his mother and Guise as, for instance, when he seeks their opinion and assures them: 'what you determine, I will ratify' (*MP*, I, iv, 25). The weakness which Marlowe is possibly suggesting in Charles is thus that he has no opinion of his own. Furthermore, it is important to note that Marlowe relates the strength of Kings to their downfall. Strong characters fall, paradoxically, as a result of their powerful abilities. But Charles never falls; he dies as a result of his own actions when he becomes sick. Edward is also killed because he did not have enough power in the first place. It is significant that only strong characters like Guise and Mortimer are shown to fall as a result of their ambition. If that

tells us anything of Marlowe, it could be that Marlowe is greatly interested in the ambitious characters who persist in their actions until they are killed.

The case of Edward is not very different from that of Charles. Marlowe's interest in depicting Edward as weak indicates that Edward cares about nothing but himself. Thus Marlowe establishes the link between Edward's being weak and his uncaring tone. For Marlowe, a strong ruler must be able to face others resiliently, while Edward does not act as strongly as he should. In that sense, Marlowe is also relating personal weakness to political failure since Edward's weakness is the reason for his downfall. Edward attempts to stand as an arbitrary monarch but does not realize what makes him a strong ruler. It is not surprising to hear him demanding angrily: 'Am I a king, and must be over-rul'd!' (*Edward II*, I, i, 133). Edward, here, cannot understand why the peers would oppose him, forgetting that he has to think wisely to make himself strong and able to rule. The similarities between Charles and Edward may imply Marlowe's depiction of the need for rulers to implement more power in order to become successful. This may be said to reflect the notion of 'Tudor absolutism, the doctrine with which a new dynasty sought to establish its power to destroy opposition'.³³ This is something which Marlowe was probably interested in exploring because it considers despotic rulers and their ability to rule solely.

We shall consider how Edward acts in comparison to Marlowe's other characters. For example, one can see that Navarre in *The Massacre at Paris* is victorious at the end of the play. Navarre's role is relatively minor in comparison to that of Guise, as we have seen: he may not be like Guise in assuming an active role, but being a Protestant believer suits his sober personality, because he gives the impression that he is focused and

³³ Ribner, *English History Play*, p. 305.

altruistic when it comes to supporting his friends. In contrast with Navarre, Edward seems to be a dysfunctional King. Simkin attributes weakness to Edward, observing that:

His neglect of the realm, his refusal to accept the responsibility of government and his corresponding impulse to pursue his personal, sexual and emotional desires, all work to open a gap between the role of kingship and the man who inhabits that role.³⁴

According to Simkin's depiction of Edward's situation, it is possible to say that Edward isolates himself from the position he is given. Simkin is right in his argument because Edward chose to make Gaveston his priority. Edward persists in indulging himself and does not realize that the country needs his administration; all he does is to selfishly consider his minions as his priority, bestowing wealth upon them randomly. Simkin also notes that Edward is weak and 'un-Marlovian'.³⁵ Simkin could mean, as we suggested before, that Edward is far from being a favourite character, like Guise or Barabas who have more influence in the plays. Edward is far from a political King. Marlowe makes him begin the discussion by disputing with the peers over Gaveston rather than discussing the affairs of the kingdom. He tells them that he 'will have Gaveston and they shall know' (*Edward II*, I, 95). The significance of the dialogue to which Simkin draws attention is that the peers object to their King for a reason, rather than from a desire to revolt. However, this objection might also have political implications during that period. Ribner states that one of the most common political doctrines proclaimed in the history plays was that of the sinfulness of any rebellion against the King no matter what the provocation.³⁶ Although on the other hand there was also a strong (Reform) tradition of arguing that opposition to an unjust monarch or tyrant is justified, the point Ribner mentions may have appealed to Marlowe in that, if it had any impact on Marlowe's

³⁴ Simkin, *A Preface to Marlowe*, p. 189.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 190.

³⁶ Ribner, *English History Play*, p. 305.

representation of the characters in the play, it could be seen in the decline of the peers led by Mortimer at the end of the play. The fall of Mortimer also signals the concept that opposing the King is not righteous, since Mortimer also commits more sins, such as having a relationship with the King's wife, than just opposing Edward. On the other hand, the above-mentioned political doctrine could be an example which also tells how an Elizabethan audience would feel pity for Edward because they would abhor Mortimer for being a rebel against his own King.

4.2.6 The representation of Machiavellianism in the character of Edward II

Perhaps one of the factors that distinguishes Edward from Mortimer is that his friends do not have sufficient strength to protect him, unlike Mortimer's. Lisa Hopkins illustrates a point which arises in a wide range of Marlowe's texts:

To be aware of this apparent political dimension of *Edward II* may alert us to the manner in which it presents personal relationships not as the product of free affective choice, but as structured and configured by social groupings, in ways that develop to its most nuanced and sustained point the interest in the family group inherent throughout Marlowe's career.³⁷

Hopkins affirms that such personal relationships are controlled by social configurations beyond the free choice of individuals. A King like Edward should not be infatuated by a person of low birth. Examples in the play can be seen in the comparison between Mortimer and Edward. Those close to Mortimer are powerful peers and reliable friends, whereas Edward's circle consists mainly of minions, while he neglects the peers. Edward is not aware that his position as King obliges him to recognize the weight of all of his relationships and what they represent. He does not attempt to keep the peers on his side and does not appreciate the need to make them his friends, but instead chooses minions

³⁷ Lisa Hopkins, *Christopher Marlowe: a Literary Life* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), p. 118.

who are neither of equal status to him nor strong enough to protect him; nor, indeed, are they wise enough to give him proper advice. In *Edward II*, we see the importance of having a group of strong people close to the King, who can strengthen and guide him. But this is not achieved in Edward's case. Mortimer, for instance, is in a politically strong position because he has all the powerful peers on his side. They are on his side because he knows their needs, unlike Edward who ignores them. Unlike him, Edward underestimates the importance of the peers and continually indulges himself with minions, forgetting that this will earn him no political success or progress in terms of protection or dominance. In that sense, Marlowe seems to itemize the components for a successful Machiavellian policy through which Edward achieves nothing. Whereas Mortimer seems like a strong leader and makes himself part of a circle of powerful men, Edward is the opposite; and relating him to Machiavellian ideals helps us to see his failure to obtain power and keep it in his hands. Marlowe suggests that a successful ruler must have strong friends in order to exercise dominance and control.

Marlowe's message can be seen in the fate which befalls Edward as a result of his failure to concoct and pursue suitable political schemes to make him strong. Machiavelli clearly states that a prince should always take counsel from trusted friends and that he should hold a third course by selecting the wise men in his state. He offers the example of Maximilian, the Holy Roman Emperor, who, like Edward, makes decisions without referring to those around him: because Maximilian is secretive, he reveals his plans only when he is determined to carry them out, but then these decisions are obstructed by the men whom he has around him. As Machiavelli notes, the emperor, 'being pliant, is diverted from them (his followers). Hence it follows that those things he does one day he

undoes the next, and no one ever understands what he wishes or intends to do, and no one can rely on his resolutions'.³⁸ Pliant Edward, as mentioned before, is similar to pliant Maximilian, to whom Machiavelli refers as weak. Thus Edward, being pliant, is seen as weak and unable to act as a strong King. Machiavelli's example of the emperor seems to have parallels in Marlowe's depiction of Edward's character flaws, which also lead to his downfall. Marlowe presents his Edward as indecisive. The term 'pliant' is damaging to Edward, since such a feature only means he is being exploited and directed by others. The term is derogatory when applied to Kings, since it takes from them the will to act on their own, and it could also indicate the changeable or fickle status. Thus, Machiavelli uses it to depict the emperor as incapable of being in control. Marlowe seems to imply that Edward belittles the peers by treating them improperly. Moreover, Ribner suggests that a King should be careful when selecting councillors. He adds that he 'must further be strong, able to control his nobles, cut off those who oppose him, which Edward manifestly cannot do. But a successful King does not alienate his nobles in the first place, for they are an important bulk'.³⁹ The point Ribner makes is valid because Edward does not care about the peers as an important group who could protect him. Edward's choice to alienate them is a political mistake which leads him to lose their trust and support.

Marlowe seems to be saying that Edward is in great need of support but he does not take the trouble to develop relationships that makes him strong. Machiavelli, in discussing the concept of making use of friends and what they represent, presents another example parallel to the case of Edward when he recounts the story of King Louis:

³⁸ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, XXIII, p. 89.

³⁹ Irving Ribner, 'Edward II as a Historical Tragedy' (1957), in *Tamburlaine the Great, Edward the Second, and the Jew of Malta*, ed. by John Russell Brown (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 140.

Let any one now consider with what little difficulty the King could have maintained his position in Italy had he [...] kept all his friends secure and protected; for although they were numerous they were both weak and timid, some afraid of the Church, some of the Venetians, and thus they would always have been forced to stand in with him, and by their means he could easily have made himself secure against those who remained powerful. But he was no sooner in Milan than he did the contrary by assisting Pope Alexander to occupy the Romagna. It never occurred to him that by this action he was weakening himself, depriving himself of friends and those who had thrown themselves into his lap.

(Machiavelli, *The Prince*, III, p. 32)

Machiavelli's example shows the confusion of King Louis' politics. Louis paid no attention to cultivating the strong among his friends, despite their great number. This shows how unwise his decisions were. On the contrary, he failed to keep those who were stronger than him on his side, thus losing his strength and power. This example clearly illustrates the lack of political opinions in such rulers. Machiavelli's teachings are important in that those who do not follow them would be in danger of losing their position. Although the King Machiavelli is talking about relies on friends who are timid and above all powerless, Marlowe's Edward and his minions, despite their threatening attitude, which does not imply that weakness seen in Louis and his friends, are acting without realizing how to gain the diplomatic and political support of the peers because of the latter's strength. Thus, Edward's behaviour is immature; for example, instead of solving the problem of Gaveston with the peers, he argues about other trifling matters, saying: 'What? Are you moved that Gaveston sits here?/ It is our pleasure, we will have it so' (*Edward II*, IV, 8-9). Elsewhere, Edward defies his peers illogically, in order only to prove a very obvious love for Gaveston: 'Were he a peasant, being my minion/ I'll make the proudest of you stoop to him' (*Edward II*, IV, 30-31). Edward acts in an irresponsible way which, in the end, resembles those of Machiavelli's King Louis in that his actions do

not advance him politically, but actually increase the number of men who hate him. Machiavelli stresses the importance for a prince of gathering around him strong and supportive friends and of acting logically and politically. Some of the errors committed by King Louis are that ‘he destroyed the minor powers, he increased the strength of one of the greater powers in Italy, and he brought in a foreign power’.⁴⁰ Similarly, Marlowe’s Edward brings destruction on himself when he chooses weak friends and alienates the powerful peers. Machiavelli’s example echoes Edward’s failure to maintain the balance of power; for example, he could have paid attention to the peers and their needs at the same time as taking an interest in his minions. If he had deceived the peers by showing interest in them just to silence them, he would have had the opportunity to control them, but he did not. Marlowe thus depicts Edward as having no chance of survival. Marlowe is greatly interested in presenting an image of Edward as completely opposed to Mortimer in many ways, one of which, of course, is Edward’s inability to implement Machiavellian deceit against others.

4.2.7 Derek Jarman’s adaptation of *Edward II*

Aside from the Machiavellianism which Marlowe depicts in Mortimer, Edward is depicted differently in the cinematic adaptation by Derek Jarman (1942-1994) of *Edward II*. Jarman’s film is a modern adaptation of history performance. The discussion of this adaptation will vary from how Jarman views his characters to how themes are presented. Considering the performance of this adaptation with Marlowe’s text, one can view similarities and/or differences in how each one, Marlowe and Jarman, approach the events of the story.

⁴⁰ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, XXIII, p. 32.

The adaptation which was first produced in 1991 can offer comparisons with Edward, Mortimer, the political frame and how Jarman depicts them in his film. As a start, the adaptation seems to approach many aspects of the story differently from Marlowe. In one respect, Jarman seems to focus on the issue of homosexual relationships, while at the same time touching upon the political complexity of that age which Marlowe brings into his text and the issue of Machiavellianism. There are many scenes where Edward and Gaveston exchange kisses as a sign of the nature of their relationship. As Talvacchia says, 'Jarman's strategy is to represent the fact of homoerotic passion by the love of Edward II for Gaveston, while symbolizing gay oppression through the characters who work to tear the two apart'.⁴¹ It seems that the discussion of politics in Jarman's film comes second to his primary and detailed discussion of a homosexual relationship and its complexity. This may reflect Jarman's desire to elaborate on that theme (homosexual relationship) and so to reflect his contemporary anxiety over that issue, while for Marlowe, it was an issue of lesser importance than the broad political theories with which his writings were greatly concerned, such as opposing the King and/or Machiavellianism.

Jarman's representation of Edward II and Gaveston is not divorced from the way Marlowe represents them, in that Edward is weak, while both are careless to the point of thinking of nothing but their own pleasure. Jarman makes that careless tone a sign of the rejection of the heterosexual relationship between Edward and the Queen because, in accepting Gaveston, Edward rejects his wife, thus rejecting the lawful relationship. Thus, Talvacchia suggests that 'in Jarman's *Edward II*, it is strictly the institution of

⁴¹ Bette Talvacchia, 'Historical Phallacy: Derek Jarman's *Edward II*', *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 16, no. 1 (1993), pp. 112-128 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1360540>> [accessed 30-7-2009] (p. 113).

heterosexuality against the instinct of homosexuality'.⁴² That is why we see Edward reject Isabella; and even when Jarman constructs a scene where the King entreats her, it is only because she has agreed to help him win Gaveston back.

The contradictions between Marlowe's original play and Jarman's adaptation find expression when the riot against the nobles takes place. While the adaptation is clearly concerned with the rights of homosexual people in the riot, in Marlowe's version, the riot is attributed to the political imperatives of that age. On many occasions, Jarman shows an interest in keeping the homosexuality of his characters in the forefront. For instance, Mortimer is depicted with women surrounding him, and after he leaves them, we see two women engaging in lesbian acts in a sign of Jarman's interest in displaying that side of his adaptation. Cartelli disapproves of this aspect of Jarman's interpretation:

Gravitation to power, not to sexual orientation, is the play's prevailing medium of receptive engagement. Jarman, however, appears to assume that the homosexual subject – even in the guise of a king – is always the victimized object of an established heterosexist power structure.⁴³

This is how Jarman constructs his adaptation, by presenting the conflict between two sides as mostly related to gender. Indeed, he deals with questions related to gender in great detail. While Jarman

emphasizes the trait of a "base birth" by casting his Gaveston with a working-class accent and a rough trade attitude, he throws out the fact of foreign nationality to concentrate on homosexuality as the signifier for Gaveston's alienation within the English court'.⁴⁴

This seems to tell us that Jarman's sole concern is the homosexuality in the play, despite some attempts to explore other issues related to Gaveston and his origins.

⁴² Ibid., p. 114.

⁴³ Thomas Cartelli, 'Queer Edward II: Postmodern Sexuality and the Early Modern Subject', in *Marlowe, History, and Sexuality: New Critical Essays on Christopher Marlowe*, ed and introd. by Paul Whitfield White, (New York: AMS Press, 1998), pp. 213-23 (p. 215).

⁴⁴ Talvacchia, 'Historical Phallacy', p. 113.

The political insinuations in Jarman's adaptation are limited to a few scenes where, for instance, Mortimer, who is the antagonist to Edward, is almost always dressed in military uniform, which is an indication of his interest in the position he is currently holding. On the other hand, Jarman, as Talvacchia argues, presents a positive image of Gaveston and how 'honours were earned by way of the bedroom in reference to the new earl who is dressed in pyjamas'.⁴⁵ Mortimer's strength is being stressed when Jarman has Edward expressing to Gaveston his reluctance to send Mortimer to the Tower because the people love him.

Generally speaking, Jarman's film gives little account of the discussion of political affairs. His interest, as mentioned before, lies principally in gender issues. He depicts Edward's way of ruling but does not seem to suggest any deficiency in the way he rules. There is no stress on the positive role of the peers in attempting to guide the King to improve the status of his country and people. Instead, all that Jarman focuses on is the opposition Edward faces from those who oppose his homosexual relations with Gaveston. Jarman's adaptation of *Edward II* is an attempt to represent homosexual relations without reference to the political implications of the play for contemporary sixteenth-century court affairs.

4.3 Mortimer and Machiavelli

4.3.1 The power of Mortimer (political theories)

As stated in a previous section, Ribner refers to the political doctrine of history plays, one of which is the sinfulness of any rebellion against the King no matter what the

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

provocation.⁴⁶ It is possible to consider the treatment of Mortimer as based on that doctrine because his downfall is a result of his rebellion against his King. On the other hand, Marlowe truly depicts Mortimer and his power as fluctuating between the right and the wrong. Mortimer is the person who appears to know most about political affairs. As Edward's antagonist and rival, he has received critical attention because of his powerful position as a successful politician. Mortimer's power is shown in the way he implements his decisions. At the beginning of the play, Mortimer shows contempt for Edward's attitude towards the peers and his preference for Gaveston over Mortimer himself. He also expresses his anger at Edward's negligence of the affairs of state while insisting that he intends to keep Gaveston:

Warwick: Bridle thy anger, gentle Mortimer.

Mortimer: I cannot, nor I will not; I must speak
[...]
Come, uncle, let us leave the brainsick King.
(*Edward II*, I, 120-121, 124)

Using the word 'brainsick' might reflect the difficult situation where Edward has made up his mind about Gaveston with no intention of reconsidering his decision. 'Brainsick' is similar to the previous description of Edward being 'pliant', and both words are related to Edward being unable to rule. At this stage of the play, it is possible to see Mortimer's anger at Edward as a sign of his love and care for the King. Perhaps he simply and genuinely wants Edward to act logically and to keep an appropriate distance from his minions; this is made clear when Mortimer attributes this opinion to Edward's father, as will be seen later. During the conversation between Mortimer and his uncle, we can see that Mortimer seems to care for the state; thus his love has some honesty in comparison

⁴⁶ Ribner, *English History Plays*, p. 305.

to Gaveston's, which is rather suspicious, because it is meant to exploit the King. When Mortimer's uncle asks his nephew to allow Edward to have minions as did previous rulers, Mortimer responds thus:

[...] his wanton humour grieves not me,
 But this I scorn, that one so basely born
 Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert
 And riot it with the treasure of the realm
 While soldiers mutiny for want of pay
 He wears a lord's revenue on his back
 [...] Uncle, 'tis this that makes me impatient
 (*Edward II*, IV, 401-406, 418)

From these accounts, we can see how Mortimer is concerned for the state and how Gaveston manages to control the treasury, spending money carelessly while soldiers are in need of it. Marlowe's use of 'riot' is echoed in the following scenes, when Edward refuses to ransom old Mortimer, preferring to waste the country's money on minions. By referring to Edward's 'wanton humour', Mortimer indicates how miserable the state has become because of his juvenile attitude. Considering what Mortimer says, Gaveston's love for Edward is being questioned because Gaveston is spending the money which is supposed to be used to strengthen the country, whereas Mortimer cares for the welfare of the state. There is validity in Simkin's argument that 'although the depth of Edward's love for Gaveston seems beyond question, there may be some doubt over the purity of Gaveston's love for Edward',⁴⁷ since Gaveston states on his way to England that he may 'draw the pliant King whichever way he pleases' (*Edward II*, I, 52). It is obvious that he 'plans to define Edward as an object for manipulation'.⁴⁸ The word 'pliant' signals the possibility that Gaveston is exploiting the King. Thus, Mortimer is not to blame when he

⁴⁷ Simkin, *A Preface to Marlowe*, p. 186.

⁴⁸ William B. Kelly, 'Mapping Subjects in Marlowe's "*Edward II*"', in *South Atlantic Review*, vol. 63, no. 1 (Winter, 1998), pp. 1-19 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3201388> [accessed 30-7-2009] p. 9

rages at Gaveston, especially when Edward himself 'implies that Gaveston is politically equal to him'.⁴⁹ We can establish the reason for Mortimer to be pitied and loved in a way at the beginning of the play when he expresses his anger at Gaveston. Early in the play, Marlowe makes Mortimer a person of reason and logic because he is interested in helping the state prosper. Furthermore, it is hard to question Mortimer's intentions at this point as his sole concern seems to be to address the troubles which afflict the kingdom. In addition, Mortimer seems to be better placed than Gaveston in terms of the general interest of the state and people. Marlowe makes Mortimer, at the beginning of the play, a person who cares more for the state than either Edward or Gaveston, both of whom are motivated by mere self-interest rather than concern for the welfare of others.

As the events unfold, Mortimer's actions may even exceed, in terms of morality, those of Guise in the context of the play, for many reasons. First, Mortimer may be said to commit more odious deeds against his King, in that he not only opposes him but betrays him when he becomes the Queen's favourite. Indeed, this can be seen as a double betrayal, in that embarking on a relationship with Isabella is a transgression both of the King's property rights and of Mortimer's duty to the kingdom. Mortimer is first seen as a man whose focused mind brings political success. When he first speaks, it is to announce his determination not to allow Gaveston to return, which he claims to be based on an oath which he and his fellow peers made to Edward's father long ago:

Mine uncle here, this earl, and I myself
 Were sworn to your father at his death.
 That he should ne'er return into the realm:
 And now, my lord, ere I will break my oath,
 This sword of mine, that should offend your foes
 Shall sleep within the scabbard at thy need.
 (*Edward II*, I, 81-86)

⁴⁹ Simkin, *A Preface to Marlowe*, p. 179.

Mortimer is saying that it will be either he or Gaveston who will survive. He refers to the oath which should be respected. An understanding of politics can be perceived in Mortimer's words: he speaks from a political point of view when he refers to the King's father, indicating how important it was at that time to prevent the return of Gaveston. He attributes the action not to a personal grudge but rather to an old oath, which actually signifies commitment and loyalty to Edward's father, in a sign of respect and awareness of political obligations.

Aside from Mortimer's political cleverness, shown in his dialogue with Edward, he is seen to have unlimited ambition for the crown and the King's wife. The development of Marlowe's characterization of Mortimer takes his political views much further, to the point that critics have imputed 'Machiavellianism' to Mortimer. Ellis-Fermor suggests a link between Mortimer and Machiavelli,⁵⁰ while another critic, Weil, shares the opinion that Mortimer is Machiavellian and that his plans are wicked.⁵¹ These claims sound acceptable if we consider Mortimer's ambition and villainy, although these are not immediately apparent. Let us therefore examine what is probably the moment at which the change in his attitude becomes evident: in scene VI, Mortimer's uncle is taken prisoner and Mortimer clearly states that if the King 'will not ransom him/ I'll thunder such a peal into his ears/ as never subject did unto his King' (*Edward II*, VI, 127-129). This threat marks the beginning of Mortimer's transformation into a Machiavellian figure. He persists in his actions, although Marlowe's description of him can be seen as a political attempt to repair the defects of a King who cannot restore the system by paying attention to his people and kingdom. The problem is that Mortimer persists in his actions

⁵⁰ Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe*, pp. 120-121.

⁵¹ Judith Weil, *Christopher Marlowe: Merlin's Prophet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 143.

to the point of seeking the throne itself. Like Guise, then, Mortimer seeks more than simply to restore the authority of the monarchy. First, he opposes Gaveston in a sign of political awareness, but his political thinking later becomes dangerous as he sets his sights on the Queen and the throne. If there is a justification for Mortimer's coveting of Isabella, it is Edward's failure to treat her like a wife: instead, he treats her like a servant and subjects her to humiliation.

If critics attempt to link Mortimer with Marlowe's other Machiavellians, such as Guise and Barabas, Mortimer differs from these in one important respect: his relationship with Isabella. This is what distinguishes him from the Machiavellians in *The Massacre at Paris* and *The Jew of Malta*, who do not form any such relationships. A plausible explanation for Marlowe's decision to engage Mortimer in this immoral relationship is that he may have done so in order to make him appear more abhorrent than he would otherwise be to the audience. Mortimer can be said to fail to implement his Machiavellian aims at the end of the play only because he is distracted by Isabella. Marlowe uses this device to demonstrate that when Mortimer is focused on political affairs, even as they relate to the King's sexuality, he is strong, but when he becomes distracted by his own sexual appetite he is thereby weakened. The link is established between Mortimer's desire for Isabella and Edward's desire for Gaveston. In much the same way that Edward has a marked incapacity to rule due to his desire for Gaveston, Mortimer's relationship with Isabella seems to distract him because of the emergence of other enemies. These include the younger Edward, who takes revenge on Mortimer and causes him to lose power because he has involved himself in a relationship instead of focusing on the

primary issue, which is Gaveston's influence on the King. Early at the beginning, the peers expressed some concern that Mortimer might get closer to the Queen:

Lancaster: My lords, albeit the queen win Mortimer,
Will you be resolute and hold with me?

Mortimer Senior: Not I against my nephew.

Pembroke: Fear not, the queen's words cannot alter him.

Warwick: No? Do but mark how earnestly she pleads.

Lancaster: And see how coldly his looks make denial.

Warwick: She smiles. Now, for my life, his mind is changed.
(*Edward II*, V, 230-236)

The peers' anxiety that Mortimer might be in relation with the Queen means that Mortimer's decisions could be influenced by the Queen, and that is why they argue about the issue. Aside from Mortimer's focused mind, he remains the tool which Marlowe uses when pronouncing the doctrine of the sinfulness of any rebellion against the ruler; the adulterous relationship with Isabella is just a way to describe how sinful his actions are against the King. It is indeed a transgression against the kingdom and the King himself, something for which Mortimer is punished.

Other than his attempt to make Edward rule more effectively, it is Mortimer's political thinking that leads him to overthrow Edward because what he does—or so he claims—is done for the kingdom. Mortimer's political astuteness can be noticed in many places. On one occasion, he ensures that there is no chance for Kent, Edward's brother, to disrupt the plans set earlier against the King:

Mortimer: Here comes the young Prince with the Earl of Kent.

Isabella: Something he whispers in his childish ears.

Mortimer: If he have such access unto the Prince,
Our plots and stratagems will soon be dashed.

Isabella: Use Edmund friendly, as if all were well.
(*Edward II*, XXII, 74-78)

Marlowe here reveals how cautious Mortimer and Isabella are. By being watchful, Isabella shows how different she is from her husband, who does not weigh up the dangers around him, whereas his wife has the insightfulness to see that Kent is a threat. Isabella's phrase 'childish ears' indicates the possibility that young Edward might turn against Mortimer and Isabella because, as a young boy, he is ready to hear anything and follow anybody. Young Edward's impressionability is seen as a threat to the Queen and Mortimer. Mortimer's apprehension that his schemes would be 'dashed' also reflects fears that Kent might control the Prince. This marks Mortimer and Isabella as two observant and powerful characters. Kent is shown to be aware of their evil schemes, however, when he remarks that 'they do dissemble' (*Edward II*, XXII, 85). Marlowe shows Isabella, like Mortimer, becoming even more Machiavellian and evil; as Watson says, 'it is the inhuman evil of Mortimer and the Queen that strikes us the more forcibly because of the change in the presentation of their characters'.⁵² Watson is right in showing how the portrayal of their characters reflects a great shift in their attitudes if compared to the way in which they are portrayed at the beginning of the play.

In scene XXIII, it is obvious that Mortimer is in control of the state. He is the one who issues orders and makes decisions on the basis that he is the protector of the newly crowned King. Others rely on him as the source of power. When Kent goes to see his brother, he is stopped by Mortimer's men who are determined to bring him before the court for his attempt to commit an illegal act:

⁵² R. Watson, 'Edward II: a Study in Evil', *Durham University Journal*, 37 (1976), p. 162.

Matrevis: The court is where Lord Mortimer remains:
Thither shall your honour go; and so, farewell.

Kent: O, miserable is that common-weal,
Where lords keep courts, and Kings are locked in prison.
(*Edward II*, XXIII, 61-64)

This situation speaks for itself. The power of Mortimer has made him the true uncrowned ruler. Matrevis plainly asserts Mortimer's powerful status: he is in charge of the court. Marlowe makes Mortimer a successful politician in contrast to Edward, who no longer has a political role. Marlowe thus equates Mortimer with Machiavelli in his successful deployment of tactics which serve to isolate the King. Elsewhere, Mortimer is shown clearly to resemble Guise when boasting about what he has achieved:

The Prince I rule, the Queen do I command,
And with a lowly congé to the ground
The proudest lords salute me as I pass;
I seal, I cancel, I do what I will.
Feared am I more than loved – let me be feared,
And, when I frown, make all the court look pale.
(*Edward II*, XXIV, 47-52)

The similarity can be perceived in Mortimer's pride in his accomplishments. Guise expresses such pride when, for example, he declares that he would 'mount the top with [his] aspiring wings', following this with a discussion of how he gets what he wants from the large Catholic kingdom.⁵³ For Mortimer, Marlowe makes this a moment of victory, marking a peak from which we are to witness a gradual decline in his power. 'Frown' as an expression of anger denotes how controlling Mortimer is, and how feared he is by others. Mortimer's accomplishments signal his political ability in that he has now taken control of the state. The main similarity between Mortimer and Guise is in their implementation of Machiavellianism. Mortimer here reiterates Guise's speech about

⁵³ *MP*, II, 46, 60-86.

religion and dissembling. The similarity is clear if we compare what Guise says—‘the mother Queen works wonders for my sake’ (*MP*, II, 76)—with Mortimer’s claim to command the Queen. Mortimer is also clearly displaying Machiavellian characteristics by stating: ‘feared am I more than loved – let me be feared’. Machiavelli states that ‘a Prince must not care about the infamy of cruelty in order to keep his subjects united and faithful.’⁵⁴ What Machiavelli seems to be saying is that a prince ought to show his cruelty in order to make others fear him and avoid his wrath. Machiavelli’s statement reflects Mortimer’s action which aims to ensure that Edward stays under control. Marlowe seems to make clear comparisons between Mortimer and Guise as two Machiavellians who implement villainy. Marlowe’s ability to employ Machiavellianism in both characters is clear; he emphasizes Machiavellian tactics as one way to dominate and control others. Guise refers proudly to his abilities, especially when he likens himself to a King. For instance, Guise says:

Since thou hast all the cards within thy hands,
To shuffle or cut, take this as surest thing,
That, right or wrong, thou deal thyself a King.
(*MP*, I, 88-90)

Marlowe makes each of these two Machiavellians the dominant character in the respective plays. Mortimer is dominant because he acts cruelly when he is in control. Machiavelli, in *The Prince*, talks about control and dominion in his discussion of the nature of the ruler and his actions, indicating that ‘a Prince must not have any objective nor any thought, nor take up any art, other than the art of war and its ordering and discipline’.⁵⁵ In this respect, the idea of control and domination fits well with the obligations of the prince, whose priority is to make sure that everything is under his

⁵⁴ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, XVII, p. 61.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, XIV, 54.

control. Both Mortimer and Guise manifest their Machiavellian nature through cruelty, which is designed to dominate others.

4.3.2 Examples from *The Prince*

Mortimer's depiction as an opportunist and ambitious villain strikes an obvious similarity with Machiavelli's writing about the Prince. By portraying Mortimer as Machiavellian, Marlowe seems to be drawing a parallel in which Mortimer's actions reflect Machiavelli's ideas of limitless ambition, as expounded in chapter eight of *The Prince*. Here, an orphan named Oliverotto de Fermo is brought up by his princely uncle Giovanni Fogliani and sent for military service: Oliverotto, having achieved renown and success in the army and no longer desiring to work under other people, decides to go with his friends and supporters to visit his uncle, whom he has not seen for a long time. During this visit he executes a plot to slaughter the uncle and his followers, after which he declares himself the new Prince of Fermo and is accepted by the people out of fear. None of his neighbours dares to face him down. This tale illustrates certain of Machiavelli's political arguments. Oliverotto's betrayal mirrors Mortimer's betrayal of his King. The way Oliverotto acts towards his own uncle resembles Mortimer's in that Oliverotto had to kill the people nearest to him just to be crowned Prince. The same applies to Mortimer, who acts savagely towards his own King and plans his murder. One of Oliverotto's actions was to eradicate all who hated him: 'all those being dead who could have harmed him, because they were unhappy with him'.⁵⁶ An analogy can be seen in Mortimer's desire to rid himself of Kent, whom he sees as a potential threat. Machiavelli tells how Oliverotto proved to be a very powerful Prince, as 'he not only was secure in the city of

⁵⁶ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, VIII, p. 34.

Fermo but had become fearsome to all his neighbours'. The story of Oliverotto ends, however, with his own execution, which would not have happened if he had not been duped by Cesare Borgia. Mortimer makes sure that Kent is kept away from his brother, as is young Edward, whom Mortimer controls by using the young Prince's mother to convince him to stay away from Kent. Machiavelli draws from this story the moral that 'it is to be noted that, in taking a state, its occupier must consider all those offences which it is necessary for him to do, and do them all at one stroke'.⁵⁷ Indeed, 'whoever does otherwise, either out of timidity or because of bad counsel, is always constrained to keep the knife in hand; nor can he ever base himself upon his subjects, these not being able to be sure of him because of the fresh and continuous injuries'.⁵⁸ Mortimer follows this advice when he makes sure that Kent will not approach his brother. If Marlowe ever read such examples from Machiavelli's book, then we can put together the actions of Mortimer in which he betrays a person near to him (King Edward) in the same way that Oliverotto killed the nearest to him. Marlowe's presentation of strict Machiavellian policy in his drama seems to be a way of representing limitless ambition and desire for power.

Marlowe's depiction of a Machiavellian Mortimer can be perceived in how Mortimer attempts to secure his place by counting the dangers which could derail his plans to rule. While his focus is on Edward, he is also aware of the potential threat of Kent. Among the many parallels that can be drawn between Machiavelli's account of the life of Oliverotto and Marlowe's depiction of Mortimer is the observation that Mortimer, despite the careful preparation of his villainy and his confident attempts at controlling the

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 34-35.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 35-36.

situation, does not expect his end to come at the hands of the young Prince. By leaving young Edward out of his calculations, Mortimer fails to heed Machiavelli's advice that princes should 'keep knife in hand'.⁵⁹ Marlowe therefore has Mortimer's downfall brought about by the younger Edward. Despite the blunder that he makes in not considering the danger from his eventual nemesis, Mortimer remains the sole Machiavellian of the piece, who does all he can to ensure that his plans will not be disrupted by any external cause. Marlowe makes Mortimer's decision to eliminate Kent, once Kent has offended him, an indication of his ambition, which Marlowe seems to associate with Machiavellian tactics. Kent is also seen as a threat because of his obvious support for his imprisoned brother, whom he wants to free. The appearance of opponents should encourage Marlowe to go further in adopting a strong Machiavellian ambition for his characters. Mortimer's enemies, like Kent and Edward, make him persist in his desire to cling to ambition and power, which can be obtained only by adopting Machiavellian thinking.

4.3.3 A female villain

Another important figure, who can be considered a second antagonist with Mortimer, is Isabella. As much as Mortimer can be compared to Guise in his intensity and ambition, Isabella can also be compared to Catherine, the mother of the two French Kings, Charles IX and Henry III. This comparison may well reflect Marlowe's interest in depicting a powerful female character who can be as wicked as male figures. Furthermore, this could be a reminder of the image of Mary, Queen of Scots and her strength and influence. Marlowe's depiction of the female character could be seen as deriving from Marlowe's

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 36.

possible imagination of Mary with her danger posed on others as a schemer. Isabella's wickedness is marked by both Machiavellianism and unfaithfulness. It is worth mentioning that the unfaithfulness of Isabella is not related to Mary; it is rather Catholicism and Machiavellianism which could be related to Mary from Isabella. These components, Catholicism and Machiavellianism, are a mixture which sheds light on Marlowe's possible representation of the image of Mary, Queen of Scots, in that she had strong influence on Catholics in the same way Isabella, the schemer, had managed to demonstrate her influence. Wilson states that:

Isabella plays she-Machiavel to Mortimer's Machiavel. Cruel as well as unfaithful, she has nothing to learn in the art of turning and dissembling. In public she is full of concern for the state of the country and the King's misfortunes... in private, there is no villainy of Mortimer's which she does not aid and abet.⁶⁰

Wilson thus identifies two salient features in Isabella: cruelty and unfaithfulness. The thing which seems to concern Wilson is not that she exhibits either of these but that she has the two features combined; this is what makes her abhorrent. Despite its strengths, Wilson's argument may not be completely clear in that it depicts her as totally villainous and loyal to Mortimer. This is not entirely true, since even in private during the first scenes she expresses despair at how Edward treats her: 'O, miserable and distressed Queen/ [...] I must entreat him, I must speak him fair/ and be a means to call home Gaveston' (*Edward II*, IV, 170, 183-184). Isabella seems honest, temporarily, because she is ready to sacrifice Gaveston's return for the sake of her husband. Her words express determination to please her husband. The development of her character begins in scene eight when she begins to make a comparison between him and Mortimer:

So well hast thou deserved, sweet Mortimer,

⁶⁰ F.P. Wilson, 'Edward II: Ironies of Kingship', in *Critics on Marlowe. Readings in Literary Criticism*, ed. by Judith O'Neill (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 65.

As Isabel could live with thee for ever.
 In vain I look for love at Edward's hand,
 Whose eyes are fixed on none but Gaveston.
 Yet once more I'll importune him with prayers.
 If he be strange and not regard my words,
 My son and I will into France,
 And to the King my brother there complain
 How Gaveston hath robbed me of his love;
 But yet I hope my sorrows will have end,
 And Gaveston this blessed day be slain.
 (*Edward II*, VIII, 59-69)

Isabella is desperate because Edward prefers Gaveston to her. While he neglects her and no longer looks at her, she describes Gaveston as having 'robbed her of his love', suggesting his responsibility for Edward's actions. By wishing Gaveston to be slain, Isabella is not to blame since she seeks the stability of the kingdom. But, despite her grief, she cooperates with Mortimer to kill her own husband after she returns from France. It may be the betrayal as much as the attempt to murder her husband that make her behaviour seem more abhorrent. This is seen when she gives Matrevis a ring to hand to Edward: 'and bear him this as witness of my love' (*Edward II*, XXII, 71); it actually means death for Edward, not love. Mortimer comments by saying: 'finely dissembled' (*Edward II*, XXII, 73), in a sign of their wicked cooperation against Edward. The significance of this may be seen in Marlowe's attempt to describe the unforgiving action against their King as abhorrent and unlawful.

Poirier argues that 'Edward's behaviour towards his wife is odious',⁶¹ but her persistence in continuing her cooperation with Mortimer and deceiving her husband reflects Marlowe's desire to present her as a strong character who will not be silent about what her husband does to her. Marlowe also portrays Isabella as exceeding Edward in her intellect; evidence for this can be found early in the play, where she expresses more

⁶¹ Michel Poirier, *Christopher Marlowe* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1951), p. 178

awareness of political realities than her husband: '[...] let him stay, for, rather than my lord/ shall be oppressed by civil mutinies/ I will endure a melancholy life' (*Edward II*, II, 64-66). Isabella is talking about Gaveston, saying that she prefers to suffer in sorrow than have her husband undergo 'civil mutinies'. This is an example of her superior awareness of potential threats to the kingdom. Politically, she cares for the kingdom, unlike her husband; she also chooses the right friends, while Edward squanders his affections on minions.

Consistent with these characteristics, Isabella must look for a partner who can help her overcome the husband who has neglected her. This is why Marlowe develops her relationship with Mortimer, with whom she can be considered a minor Machiavellian figure because it is Mortimer who solely shares Machiavellian inclinations. Critics have seen her Machiavellian tendencies as a sign of Marlowe's desire to vary his incarnation of wickedness, presenting Machiavellianism in a variety of forms, including manifestations in both male and female form. Simkin suggests that Isabella 'has been transformed into a scheming and cold-hearted woman, and it seems to be she who suggests the assassination of her husband'.⁶² This appears reasonable since Isabella becomes villainous because Edward has neglected her and also because Mortimer cares more for her than he does. She develops a dangerous comparison between the uncaring Edward and the caring Mortimer.

In the context of the politics practised by Marlowe's male characters, we can establish a connection regarding the female characters in his plays. Catherine, in *The Massacre at Paris*, is a true Machiavellian who remains constant in her evil. While Isabella in *Edward II* ultimately acts wickedly, Marlowe depicts her as changing her

⁶² Stevie Simkin, *Marlowe: the Plays* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 124.

attitude progressively so that she begins innocently but in the end becomes a character devoid of love and loyalty, turning against her husband. If there is any significance in Isabella's inconsistent attitude, it might be in Marlowe's desire to assert her villainous nature because, while she may be Edward's victim as a result of his abandoning her, her actions will soon seem so abhorrent that we might overlook what Edward has done to her. Many of Isabella's actions are indicative of her evil intent, where she is particularly concerned with helping Mortimer to implement his political schemes. As Simkin argues, 'by the time we reach scene XXII, Mortimer and Isabella are clearly acting as partners in crime, the Queen happy to let Mortimer determine Edward's fate when she asks Mortimer to "conclude against his father what thou wilt"'.⁶³ Isabella, as Poirier states, 'is a mere puppet, at the beginning, her fawning love for Edward turns her into his slave: she is ready to do anything to remain in favour with him'.⁶⁴ Poirier is right in his description of Isabella. The journey she makes from a seeker of Edward's love to a schemer jointly responsible for his killing indicates Marlowe's development of her character in such a way that she acts more violently than her husband.

Marlowe hints at the relationship between Mortimer and Isabella early in the play but reveals nothing definite about their liaison until later when both become morally corrupt because of Edward, who has proved to be an incapable King deserving to be isolated. Edward calls his wife 'French strumpet' (*Edward II*, IV, 145), recalling Marlowe's view of the French, which is considered in relation to Holinshed's *Chronicles* in the first chapter above. This frequent use of such insulting words, taking into consideration that Isabella is French, may suggest that Marlowe is depicting the French as

⁶³Ibid., p. 194.

⁶⁴Poirier, *Christopher Marlowe*, p. 184.

morally unstable since Isabella is no better than Edward; for while it is a fact that Edward causes her to abandon him, she is also responsible in that she could have chosen to remain loyal despite her husband's actions. It is interesting to note how Marlowe depicts his characters of French origin, Gaveston and Isabella: both are disparaged—by Edward or the peers—for being French. When Isabella wonders 'on whom but on my husband should I fawn' (*Edward II*, IV, 146), Gaveston interrupts with 'on Mortimer [...] ungentle Queen' (*Edward II*, IV, 147). Edward then adds that his wife is 'too familiar with that Mortimer' (*Edward II*, IV, 154). Aside from these obvious insinuations that Isabella is immoral, there is irony in Gaveston's calling her 'ungentle Queen', given that Mortimer has previously called him 'hardly a gentleman' (*Edward II*, IV, 29). The irony lies in his daring to call the royal Isabella ungentle while he is ungentle himself. It seems that Marlowe's representation of both Isabella and Gaveston is that they are ungentle because they are French. His representation of both French characters in the play evokes the contemporary treatment of the French by Holinshed as base as and lower than the English. Indeed, Marlowe's representation of the female characters in both plays implies and suggests a link with Mary, Queen of Scots because of her active role, which might have interested Marlowe in writing about the power of the female character.

4.4 Marlowe's representation of religion in *Edward II*

Marlowe's treatment of religion is similar to that in his other plays. While *Edward II* is set in a period long before the Reformation, there are references to Rome and the Pope. In the following lines, Marlowe invokes the moments when Barabas and Ithamore make fun

of the friars and express their opinion regarding Catholicism; this may reflect general anti-Catholic views:

Kent: Ah, brother, lay not violent hands on him!
For he'll complain unto the see of Rome.

Gaveston: Let him complain unto the see of hell:
I'll be revenged on him for my exile.

King: No, spare his life, but seize upon his goods:
Be thou lord bishop, and receive his rent,
And make him serve thee as thy chaplain:
I give him thee; here, use him as thou wilt.
(*Edward II*, I, 188-195)

Gaveston's utterance 'let him complain unto the see of hell' (*Edward II*, I, 190) perhaps mirrors Marlowe's representation of Catholicism, but most importantly it refers to the dominance of the Roman church. Although the play is about English history, Marlowe still finds space to air his anti-Catholic sentiments. Edward and Gaveston 'lay hands' on the Bishop of Coventry, whom the King sends to prison before granting his see and revenues to Gaveston. Here we must recognize ambivalence in Marlowe's attitude. The conduct of Edward and Gaveston is arbitrary and cruel, as Leech suggests, yet the references to the see of Rome and to the Bishop's wealth are in tune with the anti-Romish feeling which we find in *The Massacre at Paris* and which would probably have awakened sympathetic responses in many spectators of the time.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Marlowe has Edward and Gaveston take the bishop's property in an echo of the earlier treatment of Catholics who have supposedly stolen from others or treated them unjustly. In a similar occasion in *the Jew of Malta*, Ferneze confiscates Barabas' house to signal the Catholics' abusive role. Edward's decision to take the bishop's property seems to be an expression

⁶⁵ Clifford Leech, 'Power and Suffering' in *Marlowe: Tamburlaine the Great, Edward the Second, and the Jew of Malta a Casebook*, ed. by John Russell Brown (London: the Macmillan Press Limited, 1982), p. 157.

of anti-Catholic sentiment, so it is opposite to how Ferneze acts because, here, Edward is acting against a Catholic who represents the Roman church. Marlowe seems to be attempting to show Catholics as objects of contempt by the way in which both Edward and Gaveston denigrate Coventry and diminish his importance. On the other hand, Marlowe also reveals that Edward's actions are rooted in his personality, which makes him more inclined to play than to behave seriously. Leech's suggestion also highlights Edward's poor judgement in his treatment of Coventry, which will trouble him later as more peers begin to oppose him, including his brother, Kent. Edward was supposed to esteem the position of religious men in order to gain their satisfaction instead of opposing them in this way.

Watson introduces a similar argument, which suggests that Edward's action against Coventry belittles him as King. Watson's view is that Edward fails to act with political awareness in the case of the bishop, as with others, when he could have seen this as an opportunity to win friends and support. Watson argues that there is

No respect by King for church, although this treatment of the Bishop of Coventry may have appealed to the antipapal feelings of Marlowe's audience. The manner of the attack on an established authority for personal spite is unworthy of a King, and the misuse of power here belittles the man.⁶⁶

While Marlowe may appear to be targeting Catholics in this passage, Watson is also drawing our attention to Edward's attitude in his dealings with others and how he alienates potentially important friends, represented by Rome and its followers. Marlowe, on the other hand, also depicts Rome as being proud and controlling, something which Edward rejects because he is not used to committing himself to obedience to the Church;

⁶⁶ Watson, '*Edward II: a Study in Evil*', p. 163.

Marlowe's intention could be to make a criticism of Catholicism, more than of Edward's responsibilities, in this passage:

Why should a King be subject to a priest?
 Proud Rome, that hatchest such imperial grooms,
 With these thy superstitious taper-lights,
 Wherewith thy antichristian churches blaze,
 I'll fire thy crazed buildings, and enforce
 The papal towers to kiss the lowly ground!
 With slaughtered priests make Tiber's channel swell,
 And banks raised higher with their sepulchres.
 (*Edward II*, IV, 96-103)

Edward's words express rejection of Rome and he seems to be attempting to question Rome's domination. The words reflect an inevitable conflict with Rome when Edward talks about the threats and how he will face them. Burnett states that 'Edward responds in a violently Protestant, anti-clerical vein. These lines chime with contemporary anti-Catholic popular feeling'.⁶⁷ This argument seems acceptable, since it is clear how Marlowe represents anti-Catholic feeling by refusing to obey Rome. Despite the fact that Marlowe's play is concerned with national politics and deals with religion only in a limited way, this passage has provoked a variety of arguments by critics. In it, Marlowe links Edward's carelessness with Catholic disapproval thus managing to relate the central issue of Edward's lack of political awareness to that of a Catholic desire for dominance. Ribner, commenting on the importance of this same passage, describes it as 'one to gladden the hearts of patriotic Elizabethan Protestants'.⁶⁸ Ribner has a point when first talking about Edward's threats, then adding that it is necessary to overcome Catholic dominion.

⁶⁷ Mark Thornton, 'Edward II and Elizabethan Politics', in *Marlowe, History, and Sexuality: New Critical Essays on Christopher Marlowe*, ed. and introd. by Paul White (New York, AMS Press Inco, 1998), p. 103

⁶⁸ Irving Ribner, 'Marlowe's *Edward II* and the Tudor History Play', *ELH*, 22, no. 4 (December, 1955), p. 252.

There is significance in the fact that Edward's treatment of religious men differs a great deal from that of Marlowe's other characters when addressing the subject of Catholicism. Barabas, for example, takes a different approach, as his disregard of Catholicism and opposition to it spring from his desire to promote his own scheming ends, while Edward, here, makes his decision out of inexperience and irresponsibility. As a result, his opposition to Rome, notwithstanding the applause it may have provoked among anticlerical members of the Elizabethan audience, reveals his mistakes more than it shows evidence of any heroic role. Furthermore, Edward's action seems to demonstrate some of Marlowe's representations that violating the hierarchical system is not a choice that guarantees survival; nor is it a wise choice, especially in Edward's case. Deats suggests that Edward's rash assault upon authority and his sacrilegious distortion of ritual not only anticipate but to some degree precipitate the later, more horrendous violation of established hierarchy.⁶⁹ This is the virtual picture of Edward's actions in which his deeds are an image of an outer rupture which he implements when he disregards his kingdom and his subjects in addition to defying the orders of Rome. Marlowe's depiction of Edward strongly reflects the complexity of the religious and social circumstances of his own time.

4.5 Conclusion

In *Edward II*, Marlowe casts significant light on political and religious features of the Elizabethan age. The relationship between Edward and Gaveston leads to the instability of the state, to conflict with the peers, to separation from his wife and eventually to his death. The play's connection with political theory arises from Edward's attempts to rule in an arbitrary way which fails because of his inability to rule in the first place. We have

⁶⁹ Deats, 'Marlowe's Fearful Symmetry', p. 248.

established parallels between Edward's life and that of the Elizabethan court, exploring similarities and differences in how favourites functioned effectively as the rulers' assistants. Gaveston does not help to improve the lot of the state, in contrast to the mission of Elizabeth's two favourites. On the other hand, there are similarities in how others viewed favourites in terms of their ends or actions, which seem to show how controversial favourites were in both periods. The discussion of minions, in the person of Gaveston, clearly manifests attempts by the peers to isolate him because of his origins and rank, especially his being French, as Marlowe seems to suggest. Jarman's cinematic adaptation contributes to the understanding of this history play, but from the writer's perspective, the subject of gender seems Jarman's main concern and interest. It has been shown that Mortimer may be seen as a classic Machiavellian villain, while Isabella represents a female villain. Religious discussions, although not as sustained as in the other plays we have examined, still suggest that Marlowe is interested in conveying anti-Catholic feeling through the play, showing also Edward's treatment of religious men as problematic and part of his improper treatment of those whom he should have befriended to gain political targets.

Conclusion

Marlowe's plays offer an understanding of some of the political and religious circumstances of the Elizabethan age, reflecting his interest in European religion and politics. Marlowe clearly represents the spirit of the age in his plays by exploring the related elements of Machiavellianism, Protestant-Catholic conflict and other political themes. He places great stress throughout these plays on the strong ruler and/or the character who exercises power by adopting Machiavellian strategies. The first chapter reveals that in order to understand Marlowe, close attention should be paid to the socio-political circumstances under which he was writing. The relationship between England and France is governed by many varied factors, political, religious, economic and other. The discussion of the relationship between the two countries is a brief but essential introduction to the discussion of the first play, whose text contains criticism of France and the French. Investigating Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Marlowe's play and some parts of Foxe's work reveals anti-Catholic feeling, but most importantly these works also elevate the English and foreground features which distinguish them from the French. In addition to that, Marlowe's representation of French themes occasionally appears to run parallel to that in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, which address some similar themes, including the superior quality of Englishmen. The similarities between Holinshed's source and Marlowe's play in their discussion of the French are interesting and noticeable.

The subject of England versus France is interesting and generates various responses and reactions. In the example of Elizabeth's marriage proposal, there are clear political and religious implications. The state must oppose writings which challenge its interests, which is why short references to censorship and punishment are introduced, to

reflect on how the state reacted to political opposition. It is worth mentioning that the subject of the marriage proposal can be related to Marlowe's play, which witnesses the marriage between a Protestant and a Catholic. Based on that, Marlowe's representation of the marriage could be seen as an echo of the way Stubbs and Sidney comment on the marriage.

Generally speaking, in the discussion of *The Massacre at Paris*, more attention needs to be paid to the political dimensions of the age. As explained in the first chapter, many issues already included reflect Mary, Queen of Scots' danger due to her powerfulness. Marlowe could have used the image of Mary, Queen of Scots in his play to represent the evil of Catholics. The conclusion drawn in the first chapter is that politics is what governs England's decisions in any matter. There is no regard for whether a person is a Protestant or a Catholic as long as they abide by the rules set by England. Furthermore, Marlowe's representation of French themes in *The Massacre at Paris*, especially at the end when King Henry becomes a friend with Navarre, echoes the discussion in the first chapter about the Queen's example in which she did not oppose the Catholics who were not against her. Some Catholics are not enemies to the state in comparison to other Catholics, and that is how Marlowe depicts the difference between Guise, the extremist, and King Henry, the moderate, who admitted his mistakes.

As discussed in the first chapter, Marlowe makes it clear that Anglo-French relations had been influenced by Catholic hatred of Protestants. Marlowe's focus is on the Guises as the true enemies, while other Catholics are vilified to a lesser degree. It becomes clear that Marlowe is more concerned with developing his character, Guise, than making crude propaganda in that he focuses on the villainies of Guise to make him the

main focus of the play, enabling him to depict how the political thought of Machiavelli was implemented. This political thought of Machiavelli touches upon the dominance Guise was seeking and the ambition seen in the crown he sought to obtain. Furthermore, the implementation of political thought was seen in the integration between religion and politics. This is seen in King Henry's decision to dismantle the Popedom if he lived longer.¹ This decision to disobey the Pope is realized after knowing that the Pope is his enemy although both are Catholics. King Henry is able to see the good intentions of Navarre and Queen Elizabeth, so he disregards religious differences and offers his hand to them. This is how political thought was implemented in which attention is paid to religion and politics.

The importance of presenting a comparison of Marlowe's text with that of the two French playwrights is that it enables us to see how Marlowe treats his characters, whether Protestant or Catholic, in comparison to Catholic interpretations of the events of the massacre. Mathieu is sympathetic towards Guise whom he sees as the saviour of Catholicism, whereas Chantelouve's concern is King Charles whom he sees as the victim of the Huguenots. The discussion in the chapter on the massacre demonstrates that weak characters will be dominated, regardless of their survival. In Chantelouve's play, Charles is weak and easily deceived by Coligny. Each playwright chooses his method of presenting his characters: Marlowe seems to be concerned with Guise so presents him as strong and cruel, whereas Chantelouve and Mathieu present their favourite characters as being deceived to elicit sympathy for them and present the opponent—Henry III in Mathieu's play and Coligny in Chantelouve's—as the evil character. Since this part of the thesis presents a new research approach in comparing these French works with

¹ *MP*, XXI, 15.

Marlowe's play, promising areas of further study remain open regarding the French plays. In the chapter on *The Massacre at Paris*, there is a discussion of Gentillet who is said to have influenced Elizabethan understanding of Machiavelli. If Marlowe derived his own understanding of Machiavelli from Gentillet, it must have helped him vary his depiction of Machiavellianism in his characters through a range of features from mere villainy to political thinking. The value of Marlowe's representation of Machiavelli is that it suggests how he may have approached and read him.

In both *The Massacre at Paris* and *Edward II*, Marlowe makes it clear that the female character can be as cruel as the male one. Guise and Catherine, Mortimer and his Isabella: both are pairs of villains whom Marlowe relates to Machiavellian villainy and politics. The significance of this can be seen in how Catholics are related to Machiavelli in the case of *The Massacre*. In *Edward II*, on the other hand, Marlowe presents both characters as evil in order to make them stand against the weak King, whom he depicts as unable to resist strong individuals. In all this, Marlowe employs Machiavelli's contemporary reputation to relate it either to Catholicism and Catholics or to villainy and political thinking. As noted above in relation to the representation of Mary, Queen of Scots and its echoes in Marlowe's representation of female characters in his plays, it is possible to relate his depiction of these characters to Mary's powerful personality.

In the *Jew of Malta*, Marlowe again stresses the importance of Machiavellianism by linking this play with *The Massacre at Paris* through the device of transporting Machiavelli from France to Malta, something clearly stated in the prologue of the play. Marlowe is able to present Machiavelli in both forms, political and villainous, by bringing Ferneze and Barabas into the play as enemies. He also shows how Barabas falls

as a result of being unable to implement political cunning, in a possible indication of his interest in depicting strong characters who can survive by being cruel and Machiavellian. That Marlowe attributes such traits to both characters is an argument for his having read original texts of Machiavelli, rather than relying on a generic understanding of his work. This is because Marlowe deals with ideas in his plays which bear close similarities to those mentioned in *The Prince*. Such an example is seen in Barabas' failure to recognize his enemies after he already killed Ferneze's son, yet trusted Ferneze himself. That marks Barabas' failure to follow a proper Machiavellian policy of befriending a person whom he (Barabas) injured before.

The Jew of Malta may also present an aspect of Barabas' resistance to Ferneze as being lawful. Marlowe is able to depict Barabas' resistance to a ruler, Ferneze, who treats his subject unjustly and thus may justifiably be resisted. Here there is a symbolic representation of a thorny issue: challenge to power that is religiously justified, and power's counteraction which is politically necessary. This enables Marlowe to represent Catholic hypocrisy, which he does throughout his plays. This resistance is similar to how Protestants resist Catholic tyranny. Marlowe manages to relate Machiavellianism to Catholicism in order to make a strong link between them but also demonstrates the evil of Catholics through Barabas and Ithamore, who comment unfavourably on the friars in a sign of anti-catholic feeling. From all these accounts, Marlowe uses the Jew to reflect Catholic tyranny in a manner that demonstrates their exploitation of minorities. The same idea is repeated in *The Massacre at Paris* in which the Protestants are being targeted because they are outnumbered. By that, both plays are related to each other in terms of themes and their representation of Catholics. Comparisons between *The Massacre at*

Paris and *The Jew of Malta* demonstrate that certain Catholics could never coexist with others such as with the cases of Ferneze and Guise, both of whom refuse any type of friendship with others except for their own benefit, something which reflects Marlowe's representation of the extremist Catholics as being dangerous.

The engagement of Minshull's argument about *The Jew of Malta* being full of Machiavellianism emphasizes Marlowe's interest in representing Machiavelli in two ways, one of which is how Elizabethans understood him; the other being the political implementations of Machiavellianism practised by Ferneze. Critics such as Ribner agree that Barabas' implementation of Machiavellianism is related to wickedness only; whereas Minshull's argument is broader as she relates Marlowe's representation of Barabas and Ferneze to Marlowe's understanding of Machiavelli and what he stood for. Considering Minshull's argument, the passages that talk about Machiavellian policy in the play do reflect Marlowe's understanding of Machiavelli through representing his ideas and what was written in his books such as *The Prince*. It is even possible to add, based on Minshull's argument, that the prologue, after all, is more related to Ferneze even though it mentions Barabas by name. In that respect, this thesis has demonstrated that Marlowe's representation of politics and religion was more complex and nuanced and that Machiavelli is also related to Catholics in some way, unlike Minshull who confines her interpretation to the discussion of how Machiavelli was related to Ferneze and Barabas.

The final play under discussion, *Edward II*, emerges as the only one where Marlowe's protagonist is weak and unable to make decisions. The play is concerned with political issues related to Edward's poor governance. He fails to exercise power because he lacks any Machiavellian strategy. He attempts to rule alone and to be strong, but in

vain, whereas Mortimer has the talent and ambition to overthrow the King. Furthermore, Mortimer persists in pursuing his limitless ambition, eventually losing his life as a consequence. Marlowe draws a close similarity between Mortimer and Isabella on one hand and Guise and Catherine on the other, in order to support his description of Machiavellianism and his representation of the male and female characters, all of which helps his elaboration of the political theories of Machiavelli.

A comparison of Edward II with Charles IX is an attempt to relate the two plays together. The feeling of pity for Edward is invoked to make Edward appear innocent in the sense that he was not villainous because there are more abhorrent things (the actions of Isabella and Mortimer) than his irresponsible attitude to kingship. Perhaps Marlowe is underlining the political doctrine of the sinfulness of any rebellion against the King, no matter what the provocation. This doctrine rejects any action against King Edward, who thus deserves our pity as an abused party and a victim. Furthermore, Mortimer's downfall as a result of his betrayal of his King could be an indication of Marlowe's representation of the doctrine in which Mortimer is being punished for his actions against his King; his punishment is a deserved result of his actions. Another reflex of that doctrine is the emergence of young Edward to avenge his father by bringing down Mortimer. On the other hand, the role of minions is stressed. Minions control Kings and affect the stability of the state. It is obvious in *Edward II* that Marlowe presents minions as a distraction from the political process. The parallels with the Elizabethan court mark the importance of minions as a political phenomenon. On the other hand, Jarman's adaptation does not address Marlowe's political concerns because of its narrow interest in the subject of the homosexuality of the characters. The final argument in *Edward II* concerns Marlowe's

discussion of anti-Catholic feeling. Although the play is set before Protestantism came to England, Marlowe depicts the Roman church as controlling and abusive in a way which is typical of the portrayal of Catholic hypocrisy throughout his plays.

This thesis has explored Marlowe's interest in contemporary European religion and politics. Through a selected number of Marlowe's plays, the thesis offers an insight into Marlowe's society and the politics of that age. These plays have marshalled various discussions of the representation of political theories of that age as one of the main concerns for Marlowe, while not neglecting but integrating his religious interests, particularly the anti-Catholic sentiments to be found throughout the selected plays. The politics of that age in which Marlowe stresses are those related to Machiavellian policy and how political rulers manage to govern their country. Indeed, politics and religion are integrated in Marlowe's period, and in his plays too, in a manner that sheds light on the inner dynamics of his age in general, and his society in particular.

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