THEOLOGY'S TRAGIC GLASS

THEOLOGY'S TRAGIC GLASS:

THE CHRISTIAN BACKGROUND TO MARLOWE'S DOCTOR FAUSTUS

By

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to present the results of an investigation of some of the typical theological and Biblical sources to which Marlowe had access at the time of writing Doctor Faustus. These selected materials are classed under three principal headings in order to illustrate clearly the varieties of dramatic use to which Marlowe put them. The evidence of deep familiarity with these materials presented here leads to a consideration of the ways in which Marlowe used Christian doctrine as a central element in his play. A final chapter synthesizes the influence of the religious background on the play's meaning and significance.

FOR MY MOTHER

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: DOCTRINE AND ART

Doctor Faustus is a play about religion. This is a truism so obvious it does not need labouring. The question which criticism has been unable to settle is precisely what use Marlowe makes of religion in the play. Is it, as Una Ellis-Fermor and Harry Levin, among others, maintain, a play of protest against the confinement of the human spirit by religious orthodoxy, or, as other writers such as Leo Kirschbaum and Douglas Cole have insisted, an orthodox Christian statement of the wages of sin? The question, if it can be determined at all, cannot be rightly settled without two preliminary studies. One of these would centre in the ironical nature of Marlowe's dramaturgy: perhaps, of all the great Elizabethan tragedians, he is the most ironical and elusive. Without a thorough comparative analysis of this issue, it is difficult to know how seriously it is possible to take the statements made by any of the characters in the play. The other study necessary is a careful examination of the theological basis of the play, the ways in which Marlowe uses his source materials, modifies them, and departs from them. This thesis is designed to explore some aspects of this issue.

In the late twentieth century, both the reader and the theatre-goer have to a large extent lost the theological and liturgical base on which Marlowe built, and which he might fairly have assumed to be familiar to most members of his audience. This base consists primarily of the

Bible (in the Genevan or Bishops' translations), the Book of Common Prayer (hereafter BCP), and the volume of Homilies. These, at least, we know were part of the ideological environment not only of intellectuals but also of the common people at the time. The Lessons read during church services were, of course, extracts from the Bible; the BCP was the standard liturgy for all except surreptitious, sectarian churches; the Homilies were regularly read out in place of the sermon. Whatever other theological knowledge Marlowe possessed (and there are reasons for thinking it extensive), these at least are certain.

The importance of the Geneva Bible can scarcely be exaggerated as an intellectual and theological influence in the period. It ran through no fewer than sixty editions before being replaced by the King James ("Authorized") version; more, the glosses that crowd the margins help to interpret the direction of Renaissance religious thinking in its interpretation of Scripture. Even for those who did not read, or did not read the Bible, its influence was pervasive. Church attendance was obligatory, and there is little to suggest that apart from those who favoured other forms and styles of worship many objected to the requirement. Indeed, it is fair to say that religion was very much a way of life for people in Elizabethan times. The Settlement was new, it was a masterly compromise, it was even patriotic. Those who could read, read theology: Wright estimates that in the period some 43% of all published books "were in some way religious in theme".[1] It was an age saturated

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[1]Wright, p. 63.

in religion. No doubt, not all were orthodox; indeed, there were many celebrated freethinkers at the time, who owed their very notoriety in part to the importance of religion in the life of the people.

Questions of Marlowe's own orthodoxy are hardly relevant. The question is not what he believed (which we shall probably never know) but what he knew of the subject, and what use he made of his knowledge. And here we may be more confident. Just as Shakespeare, writing a history play, drew upon the available sources (principally the most readily accessible--Hall and Holinshed), so Marlowe, writing a religious play, drew upon his most immediate sources.

> The relations between doctrine and art, like the contested claims of history and criticism, are complex and controversial. If only because they have been so long debated, with Elizabethan tragedy as a primary focus, it should nowadays be impossible to assume either the artist's a priori transcendence of his cultural milieu or his a priori confinement to it. The issue is rather how the artist uses the materials he inherits. To investigate it requires both an historical discovery of what the relevant materials are and a continuing critical awareness of the impressions made by the unfolding drama which embodies them.[1]

Christopher Marlowe received his intellectual training at Cambridge University in the 1580s. He was an Archbishop Parker Scholar, and, as a six-year student, was apparently destined to take Holy Orders. This being the case, divinity would inevitably have taken first place in his academic curriculum. Theology was, of course, the most important of the graduate studies at Cambridge at the time. Marlowe's College, Corpus Christi, had the finest theological collection in the University,

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[1]Waswo, p. 63.

thanks to its association with Archbishop Parker, who deposited his private collection in the College library. Unfortunately, it cannot be shown what Marlowe read while up at Cambridge. However, everyone attended the long and systematic Sunday sermons, and the divinity disputations were regarded as the most significant and prestigious of the school exercises. Although Marlowe's academic career was scarcely regular, and his later life marked by obscurities which led to the final extraordinary affair of the trial for atheism, and his curiously convenient murder before he came before the judges, there is nothing in all this to disprove the reasonable conclusion that at least while he was at Cambridge Marlowe was extensively exposed to, and learned from, the study of divinity.

Certainly, even if the romancing of some of the more gullible biographers and critics is discounted, it seems that much of his theological learning proved dramatically viable in the composition of Doctor Faustus, a tragedy about a scholar of divinity whose faith is not equal to the challenges made upon it by other desires and ideals. Faustus was not the only learned man to find divinity inadequate, and turn to the doubtful rewards of magic instead. Astrologers such as John Dee, William Lilly and Simon Forman are among the best-known of those who found conventional learning and religion insufficient for their ambitions: their careers, and those of many others, have much in common with that of Doctor Faustus.[1] Not everyone associated with magical enquiry or demonology was necessarily thought to be a mountebank: "for

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[1]See Thomas, passim, but especially pp.268-9.

much of the period . . . magical enquiry possessed some intellectual respectability".[1] The names of Hermes Trismegistus and Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim, among others, were regarded with something like intellectual reverence, and there are many references to students at the universities experimenting in magical theory and practice.[2] It seems that in Protestant countries at least, the abolition of Roman Catholic rituals led to their being regarded subsequently by some as potentially incantatory; there was, in any event, a large popular area of intellectual confusion between magic and religion, as Thomas demonstrates at length. None of the foregoing is advanced with a view to suggesting that Marlowe was a divinity scholar-turned necromancer. On the contrary, the point is that both the theology on which the play is based, and the magical hocus-pocus Faustus prefers to theology, were in the common domain: Marlowe is drawing not upon the esoteric, but upon the commonplace for the dramatic materials of his play.

The primary source for the narrative basis of Doctor Faustus was the so-called English Faust Book (hereafter E.F.B.), an adapted version of the German original. From this, Marlowe took many (though by no means all) of the incidents for the plot of the play. Theologically, however, the E.F.B. is confused and inconsistent: there is nothing in it to suggest that a coherent use of theology was one of its author's criteria. To make the play's theology comprehensible, Marlowe reshaped

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[1] Thomas, p. 226.

[2] Ibid., p. 223 ff.

its doctrine into something that would be entirely familiar and readily understood and accepted by an ordinary Elizabethan Anglican. We must therefore turn to this central Tudor Anglican tradition, exemplified chiefly in the Bible, the BCP, and the Homilies, in order to retrieve from the play more of what Marlowe could have assumed his audience would automatically notice and respond to.

The chapters that follow are devoted to a categorisation of the uses that Marlowe made of these theological sources. Three principal uses may be distinguished, each of which is surveyed in a chapter of its own. First, and most obvious, are the many places in the play where Marlowe borrows recognizable scriptural and liturgical language -- including verbal resonances short of direct borrowing, structural similarities and tone -- using it conventionally. Secondly, there are the Biblical and liturgical similarities in imagery, situation, moral exhortation, doctrine, and action which do not involve actual verbal "echoes". These reveal Marlowe's ubiquitous use of theological doctrine, and comprise much of the very stuff of which the play is made. Thirdly, and of even greater interest, there are those passages where Marlowe uses his theological borrowings in contexts contrary to, or at least significantly different from what his audience might expect. The most obvious example of this third category is Faustus' blasphemous cry, "Consummatum est" upon signing the bond. However, this is only one of hundreds of such usages, both subtle and obvious, in which the audience is provoked by a distortion of a theological commonplace into a re-interpretation or revaluation of the play's meaning and significance. Marlowe uses his

allusions as intellectual and moral probes to stimulate a complex response in his audience. The technique resembles the Brechtian "alienation device", and certainly it reinforces the critic's belief that this is a play of ideas, and a profoundly self-conscious "endeavor of art".

My study is necessarily a partial one: it was not possible, in the time available for research for this thesis, to undertake a complete examination of the Bible, let alone of the many theological works, such as those by Luther and Calvin, to which Marlowe might have had access. It consists of a careful reading of the New Testament, and some of the more familiar and obviously applicable books of the Old Testament, such as Job, Isaiah, Ecclesiastes etc. I have also looked at some of the Apocrypha, notably Ecclesiasticus, a book which seems to have been quite well-known in the period. I used the readily-available facsimile of the 1560 Geneva Bible, not necessarily because Marlowe would have used that edition, but chiefly for its accessibility, and for its extensive series of glosses. I also examined the BCP in detail. The Library does not possess an Elizabethan prayer-book; I used the earliest edition which we have. Similarly, I used the earliest available edition of the Homilies, and also examined a Jacobean treatise on the Catechism, as a typical example of a divinity text designed to explore the implications of Anglican doctrine. Altogether, I found approximately five hundred theological references which seemed to me relevant to the play, even in this limited survey. Of these, I selected 105 which seemed the most significant and conclusive for presentation in this thesis. I do not,

of course, wish to imply that I have proved that Marlowe was deliberately alluding to each and every one of these. Some, I think, are beyond any reasonable question; others seem almost certain; some are more general than specific in their application. All the examples presented here, however, seem to me quite plausible as theological referents for matter in the play. I am not attempting to be dogmatic, but rather to suggest by the range and number of the correspondences between theology and the play that Marlowe was highly aware of, and alert to the dramatic possibilities of, the theological context.

In presenting this material in the thesis, I have been influenced by Richmond Noble's Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge, which established a helpful paradigm for the handling of a large number of smallish references. I cite the line or lines from the play first, followed by the Biblical or liturgical quotation which I believe to be relevant, and then add my own commentary on each item, in which I try to explain the relevance of the reference to the particular quotation from the play, and to the play as a whole. This formalized presentation makes for greater clarity, and affords an immediate grasp of the connection I am seeking to make, and the explication of its significance. It also eliminates much tedious expository prose full of phrases such as "and here we see", "and another similarity", and so on.

The text of Doctor Faustus is a special problem on its own. I have added an Appendix setting out what I believe to be the facts about it. For the purposes of reference in this thesis I have used Greg's parallel-text edition. Normally, reference is made to, and quotations are

taken from, the B-text of 1616, as the text of higher authority. Where I believe it is at fault, or (especially in Act V), where it is likely that the A-text of 1604 preserves Marlowe's revisions, I have quoted from it. In the references, following each quotation, the line-numbers refer to those in Greg; thus [200] means line 200 in Greg's edition of the B-text; [A, 200] would mean that the A-text is being quoted, also from Greg.

It would be a poor-spirited critic or scholar who, having worked in detail on Doctor Faustus' sources and background, did not evolve some strong feelings about the play as a whole. My interpretation of the work inevitably colours my commentary; to set the record straight, I have tried to collect my impressions of my work together in a synthesis, which has become the final chapter of the thesis. I am aware of how incomplete this study is, and how much I will probably wish to modify it after further research. But I do think that the basic conclusion is sound: that Marlowe used his theological background deliberately, and in a complex way, in this great play.

CHAPTER TWO

REFLECTIONS OF SCRIPTURE: THE VERBAL ECHOES

There is no question that Marlowe, as a former student of theology, knew his Bible and Prayer-Book well. A careful examination of the play reveals an abundant richness in the use of direct source material. Structural similarities, tonal and verbal resonances (besides direct quotation from biblical sources) might at first escape the modern reader, but would undoubtedly have been perceived by an Elizabethan audience, even the illiterate members.

1 Chorus: Till swolne with cunning, of a selfe conceit, [20]

Romans 12.16: Be not wise in your own conceits.

Faustus believes he can no longer benefit from the traditional disciplines, among which Divinity seems now to offer him least. A proclamation of mastery in all fields is itself an absurd self-delusion, and is ironic, coming precisely from the individual about to be revealed as most lacking in self-knowledge.

2 Chorus: His waxen wings did mount aboue his reach, [21]

Ecclesiasticus 34.1: The hope of a foolish man is vaine & false, & dreames make fooles to have wings.

The obvious allusion the Prologue makes is to the myth of Icarus and his waxen wings. Less apparent, however, is the connection between the

dreams and effusions of Faustus' ambition with the frivolous and selfish nature of which they are composed. Once he is given over to magic and is assured by the Bad Angel that he can, like "Ioue is in the skye [be] Lord and Commander" [103-4], Faustus becomes intoxicated with the idea of power, and drowns his conscience in exotic fantasies.

3 Faustus: Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man. [50]
Faustus: Here tire my braines to get a Deity. [89]

Psalm 9.20: Put them in feare, O Lord: that the Heathen may know themselues to be but men.

One of Faustus' most blasphemous statements defines his aspiration to a state beyond his own humanity, namely godhead. Marlowe makes ironic use of this aspiration throughout the play, but especially at the end, when the would-be god for fear of God's punishment wishes to be less than a man, desiring to reduce his humanity to the level of beasts.

4 Faustus: The reward of sin is death? that's hard: [67]

John 6.60-66: Manie therefore of his disciples (when thei heard this) said, This is an hard saying: who can heare it? . . . From that time, manie of his disciples went backe, and walked no more with him.

The New Testament story tells of those who turned away from discipleship when they decided that the doctrine of Christ was too hard for them to accept. Faustus rationalizes abandoning divinity by a misconception of the harshness of the doctrine of sin. By omitting the redemptive second part of the Biblical passage (Romans 6.23), Faustus turns Paul's words into a fatalistic doctrine of behaviour and rejects them. [cf. Ch. 4,

Nos. 4 and 5]

5 Faustus: So he will spare him foure and twenty years,
Letting him liue in all voluptuousnesse,
Hauing thee euer to attend on me,
To giue me whatsoeuer I shall aske; [316-19]

Ecclesiasticus 18.32: Take not thy pleasure in great volupteousness, and tangle not thyself with suche companie.

Faustus sets the terms of the bond himself, and is ironically trapped in a predicament of his own making. To exist in "all voluptuousnesse" is an expression of his desire to live by the truth of his own sensations. His sensual desires seek satisfaction through his personal bond with Mephostophilis. The ultimate irony that Faustus discovers, regretfully, and too late, is that the truth of his sensations is illusory and unsubstantial. His partnership with the demonic, however, becomes the only inescapable reality left to him at the end of the play.

6 Faustus: Now go not backeward: no Faustus, be resolute,
why wauerest thou? O something soundeth in mine eares:
Abiure this Magicke, turn to God againe.
I and Faustus wil turne to God againe,
To God? he loues thee not, [A, 443-7]

James 1.6-8: But let him aske in faith, and wauer not: for he that wauereth is like a waue of the sea, tost of the winde, and caryed away. Nether let that man thinke that he shal receiue any thing of the Lord. A wauering minded man is vnstable in all his wayes.

Homilies: A Sermon How Dangerous a thing it is to fall from God, p.53: And to be short, all they that may not abide the Word of GOD, but following the perswasions, and stubbornesse of their owne hearts, goe backward, and not forward . . . They goe, and turne away from GOD.

After his commitment to the bond, Faustus' spiritual struggles vacillate between exhilaration and despondency, stoic resolution and

despair. Though he has excelled in Divinity, he has never allowed the reality of it to impinge on his life. It is only after the bond that he is able to conceive of the living God in Christian terms, as his realization of what he has done bears in upon him. It is a tragic paradox inherent in the play that even as his grand illusions fade and his intellectual powers dissipate in petty shows and sensuality, his moral awareness grows. His previous strategies for keeping God at a distance avail him no longer, and the sense of the immediate presence of God forces itself upon his attention. But here the moral awareness stops, and the impasse which Faustus finds himself unable to transcend dissolves in habitual despair. [cf. Ch. 4, No. 10]

7 Faustus: The God thou seru'st is thine owne appetite
Wherein is fixt the loue of Belzebub, [398-99]

Ecclesiasticus 18.30: Followe not thy lustes, but turne thee from thine owne appetites.

The significance of the Biblical passage goes beyond mere verbal parallel. Faustus is not only guilty of the sins of the flesh, but also is an idolater, who claims servitude to sin. Faustus' love for material gain is nurtured by his relationship with the devil; he turns away in a moment of conscience from a God whom, he believes, does not love him. Constantly living by the truth of his own sensations, his attempts towards reconciliation are invariably self-undermined. [cf. Ch. 3, No.10]

8 Faustus: When Mephostophilis shall stand by me,
What God can hurt thee Faustus? thou art safe,
Cast no more doubts, [A, 464-6]

Psalm 10.6: For he hath sayd in his hearte, Tush, I shall neuer be cast downe: there shall no harme happen vnto mee.

Assured by the confidence he maintains in his relationship with Mephostophilis, Faustus remains "resolute" in his defiance of God. His professed invincibility is derived from a false premise: that Mephostophilis can protect him from God's justice. Instead of seeing the devil as an adversary, and a means by which his faith can be tried, Faustus hopes he can minimize God's powers, and make himself immune from them.

9 Meph.: And giue thee more then thou hast wit to aske. [435]

Ephesians 3.20-1: Vnto him therefore that is able to do exceeding abundantly aboue all that we aske or thinke . . . Be praise.

Mephostophilis promises Faustus service and the fulfillment of all his desires in exchange for his soul. The devil takes advantage of Faustus' confusion of values to indulge in an elegant piece of blasphemy: arrogating to himself the unimaginable powers and gifts of God, of which Paul writes. [cf. Ch. 3, No.15; Ch. 4, No.12]

10 Faustus: Homo fuge, whither should I flie?
If vnto God heel'e throwe thee downe to hell, [A, 518-19]

Psalm 139.6-11: Wither shall I go then from thy spirit: or whither shall I goe then from thy presence? If I climb vp into heauen, thou art there: if I goe downe to hell, thou art there also. If I take the wings

of the morning: and remain in the uttermost part of the Sea. Euen there also shall thy hand lead mee: and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Peraduenture the darknesse shall couer me: then shall my night be turned to day. Yea, the darknes is no darknes with thee, but the night is as cleare as the day: the darknes & light to thee are both alike.

Faustus impugns the willingness of God to receive those who come to him. He seems to need to see himself damned: hence his belief that wherever he might flee, condemnation is sure. His capacity for fear and doubt always proves stronger than his capacity for trust. The psalmist's question implies the answer that there is no place where the love and direction of God will be denied: God will be with him even in hell. Faustus believes God will reject him even from heaven. But the futility of this escapism ironically reinforces itself in the final scene of the play. Faustus fears hell, but for all the wrong reasons. For, even in hell, God will be with him in a perpetual consciousness that he is cut off from the Divine presence.

11 Meph.: Here, take this booke, and peruse it well: [548]

Lucifer: . . . peruse this booke, and view it throughly, . . .
Faustus: Thankes, mighty Lucifer:
This will I keepe as chary as my life. [736-9]

BCP: Service for the Consecration of Bishops: Geue hede vnto reading, exhortation, and doctrine. Thinke vpon the thinges conteyned in this booke [i.e. the Bible]; be diligent in them, that the increasing comming thereby, may be manifest vnto all men.

To dissuade Faustus from contemplating heavenly matters, the devil tempts him with worldly success and riches, to be derived from the necromantic formulae found in conjuring books. The knowledge Faustus so willingly agrees to peruse and cherish is of a dangerously frivolous kind.

It is in direct opposition to the knowledge needed for salvation. The one book that Faustus may have used to obtain all that was necessary for successful human existence is discarded in the first scene of the play: for Jerome's Bible Faustus substitutes the "negromantick bookes" that he affects to find "heauenly" [77].

12 Faustus: When I behold the heauens then I repent [570]

Psalm 8.3: For I wil consider thy heauens, euen the works of thy fingers: the moone and the starres which thou hast ordeined.

Psalm 19.1: The heauens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Though Faustus has committed himself to Lucifer, his conscience refuses to reject all knowledge of Christ's divinity. Here, as elsewhere in this play, God's resplendence is magnified in the universal creation, and especially in the works of His heavens, made for man. Faustus recognizes the eternal joys he has forfeited (as symbolized in terms of divine creation) but it is not enough to make his movement towards repentance successful. He is conscious of the potentiality of loss only.

13 Faustus: My hearts so hardned, I cannot repent, [A, 647]

Romans 2.5: But thou, after thine hardnes of heart that can not repent, heapest vnto thy self wrath against the day of wrath and of the declaration of the iuste iudgement of God. [cf. Proverbs 28.14]

Faustus refuses the emotions which would either deter him from committing sin, or stimulate his repentance. "For hardnes of heart, and

despaire of mercie are sinnes, and punishment for sinne too . . . and therefore Paul calleth the heart of the reprobate, A heart which cannot repent."[1] Marlowe, with characteristic doctrinal directness, makes Faustus' torment of conscience the experience of hell already begun--a psychological self-imprisonment inherent in his inability to repent. [cf. Ch. 3, No.35]

14 Faustus: Haue I not made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexanders loue, and Oenons death?
And hath not he that built the walles of Thebes,
With rauishing sound of his melodious Harpe,
Made musicke with my Mephostophilis?
Why should I die then, or basely despaire? [595-600]

Ecclesiastes 2.4-10: I haue made my great workes: I haue buylt me houses: I haue planted me vineyards. I haue made me gardens and orchardes, and planted in them trees of all frute. I haue made me cisternes of water, to watter therewith the woods that growe with trees. I haue gotten servaunts & maids, and had children borne in the house: also I had great possessions of beues and shepe aboue all that were before me in Ierusalem. I haue gathered vnto me also siluer and golde, and the chief treasures of Kings & prouinces: I haue prouided me men singers and women singers, and the delites of the sonnes of men, as a woman taken captiue, and women taken captiues. And I was great, and encreased aboue all that were before me in Ierusalem: also my wisdome remained with me. And what soeuer mine eyes desired, I withhelde it not from them: I withdrew not mine heart from anie ioye: for mine heart reioyced in all my labour: and this was my porcyon of all my trauail. Then I loked on all my workes that mine hands had wroght, and on the trauail that I had labored to do and beholde, all is vanitie and vexacion of the spirit: and there is no profit vnder the sunne.

There is a tonal similarity here between Solomon's account of his past achievements and Faustus' vaunting. His endeavours through magic are inflected by classical fancy, and though they lack the practicality of travail and profit that Solomon sought, Faustus' feats are regarded by him

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[1]Henry Smith, Sermons (London, 1607; 1st ed. 1592), sig. 2B4, as cited in Waswo, p. 77.

as pleasures that have "conquered deep despair". Like Solomon, Faustus eventually recognizes that his works have brought him nothing but an awareness of great loss: "and what wonders I haue done, al Germany can witnes, yea all the world, for which Faustus hath lost both Germany, and the world." [A, 1407-10]

15 Faustus: Thinke Faustus vpon God, that made the world. [643]

Psalm 124.7: Our helpe standeth in the Name of the Lord: which hath made heauen and earth. [Also part of the confirmation service]

BCP: Creed: I belieeue in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heauen and earth. [cf. Acts 17.24]

The intellectual crux of the play is Faustus' disputation with Mephostophilis concerning, ironically enough, "divine" astrology. All knowledge and all learning ultimately derive from the First Cause, and thereby involve the definition of God. It does not much matter that Mephostophilis refuses Faustus' question, "who made the world?" Faustus knows the answer, and offers it to himself (no doubt along with the audience). But as a consequence of this little session of question and answer, Faustus moves towards repentance and calls upon the Name of his Saviour to help him. Resorting to the advice given in the psalm, he invokes the Name of Christ [652-3], an action theologically powerful enough to require a strong attempt, on the demons' part, to circumvent it. Hell's three big guns, Lucifer, Belzebub, and Mephostophilis, together with the pageant of the Seven Deadly Sins, are needed to detach Faustus from his gesture towards repentance.

16 Faustus: Ist not too late?
Bad Angel: Too late.
Good Angel: Neuer too late, if Faustus will repent. [647-9]

Homilies: An Homily of Repentance, p.257: . . . if yee will speedily returne unto him, he will most gently, and moste mercifully receive you into favour againe. Whereby we are admonished, that repentance is never too late . . .

Marlowe repeatedly reminds us that God's mercy is present and accessible to his protagonist; again and again Faustus reminds himself--and is reminded by others--of the judgement and mercy of God. We are never allowed to forget that even though the everlasting destiny of Faustus' soul is at stake, he can at any moment repent and cast himself upon the mercy of God.[1] [cf. Ch. 3, No.29]

17 1 Frier: Cursed be he that stole his holinesse meate from the Table.
Maledicat Dominus.
Cursed be he that stroke his holinesse a blow [on] the face.
Maledicat Dominus.
Cursed be he that strucke fryer Sandelo a blow on the pate.
Maledicat Dom.
Cursed be he that disturbeth our holy Dirge.
Maledicat Dom.
Cursed be he that tooke away his holinesse wine.
Maledicat Dom. [1115-24]

BCP: A Commination against Sinners
Cursed is the man that maketh carued or molten image . . . to worship it.
Cursed is he that curseth his father and mother.
Cursed is he that remoueth away the marke of his neighbours land.
Cursed is he that maketh the blind to goe out of his way.
Cursed is hee that letteth in iudgement the right of the stranger, of them that be fatherlesse, and of widowes.
Cursed is he that smiteth his neighbour secretly.

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[1]The point is made in Frye, "Theological . . . Structures", p. 137.

Cursed is he that lyeth with his neighbours wife.
Cursed is he that taketh reward to slay the soule of innocent blood.
Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, and taketh man for his defence, and in his heart goeth from the Lord.
Cursed are the vnmercifull, the fornicatours, and adulterers, couetous persons, the worshippers of images, slanderers, drunkards, and extortioners.

Marlowe maintains the verbal resonances of the Commination in the apparently purely comic scene between Faustus and the unsuspecting papal friars. The ceremony of Bell, Book and Candle serves as an exorcism as well as an excommunication of the troublesome spirit. A savage irony underlies the buffoonery, as the scene becomes a ritualistic dramatization of Faustus' condition. Faustus laughingly declares that he will be cursed by Bell Book and Candle "foreward and backward to hell"[110]; symbolically, the ceremony indeed anticipates his final outcome.

18 Old Man: I see an Angell houers ore thy head,
And with a viol full of precious grace,
Offers to powre the same into thy soule, [A, 1320-2]

BCP: Collect for the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary: We beseech thee, Lord, powre thy grace into our hearts, that as wee haue knowen Christ thy Sonne's incarnation by the message of an Angel: so by his Crosse and passion we may be brought vnto the glory of his Resurrection. [cf. Collects for Quinquagesima, Twelfth Sunday after Trinity]

There is no mention of this angel in the E.F.B. Its inclusion in the play, especially at this point, suggests Marlowe's recourse to an orthodox religious maxim that could, potentially, relieve the theological struggle as well as the dramatic tension. The Old Man tells Faustus that even now in his desperate state, God's grace is still available and ready to be administered to him if he can just ask for it.

19 Meph.: Faustus, this, or what else thou shalt desire,
Shalbe performde in twinckling of an eie. [A, 1355-56]

Luke 4.5: Then the deuil toke him vp to an high mountaine, and shewed him all the kingdomes of the worlde, in the twinkeling of an eye.

The "twinkling of an eye" is a common enough phrase, which might not be recognized as a verbal parallel at first glance. But Mephostophilis echoes the gospel account word for word, in a closely similar moment of temptation, which ought surely to call to mind Christ's own trial with the devil in the wilderness. [cf. Ch. 3, No.12]

20 Old Man: Sathan begins to sift me with his pride,
As in this furnace God shal try my faith,
My faith, vile hel, shal triumph ouer thee,
Ambitious fiends, see how the heauens smiles
At your repulse, and laughs your state to scorne,
Hence hel, for hence I flie vnto my God. [A, 1381-6]

Luke 22.31-2: And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.

Psalm 143.9: Deliuer me, O Lord from mine enemies: for I flee vnto thee to hide me.

Psalm 18.4-5: The paines of hell came about me: the snares of death ouertooke me. In my trouble I will call vpon the Lord: and complaine vnto my God.

The Old Man represents the faithful Christian, and provides Faustus with an illustration by word and by example of the path to salvation. By resisting Satan's buffets with faith in God's protective powers, the Old Man is made a foil for Faustus. The comparison of Faustus' cowardice and lack of faith with the Old Man's courage in face of pain or even death is immediately evident. Unlike the Old Man, Faustus is unable to see the devil's torments as a sign of God's favour by which

he can prove his fidelity. The Old Man's struggle further proves the devil's impotence to harm a soul when true faith protects it from the attempt. [cf. Ch. 3, No.40]

21 Lucifer: . . . Faustus we come to thee,
Bringing with vs lasting damnation,
To wait vpon thy soule; [1898-1900]
Belzebub: And here wee'l stay,
To marke him how he doth demeane himselfe. [1904-5]

Psalm 56.6: They hold all together, and keep themselues close: and marke my steps, when they lay wait for my soule. [cf. Psalm 71.9]

Though this speech is not in the A-text of Act V, it is interesting to note the close similarity to the psalm. As the last scene of the play opens, in the foul-paper version, the demonic trinity is assembled in confident assurance that the final hour, now arrived, will end with Faustus' forfeit of his soul. But the general attitude expressed in Psalm 56 is less pessimistic than verse 6. The psalmist knows that even though he is in the bad company of those who are ready to do him harm, God is nonetheless on his side, and ready to help him because he has faith.

22 1 Scholar: O my deere Faustus what imports this feare?
2 Scholar: Is all our pleasure turn'd to melancholy? [1927-8]

Isaiah 21.4: Mine heart failed: fearfulnes troubled me: the night of my pleasures hath turned into feare for me.

The last two scenes of the play undergo a dramatic shift as the farewell feast dissolves into Faustus' final solitary hour. In the words

that recall the Bible the scholars mark Faustus' changed manner and engender a sense of finality; they cue the end of prevarication and of foolishness.

23 Faustus: . . . O my God, I would weepe, but the Diuell drawes in my teares. Gush forth bloud in stead of teares, yea life and soule: oh he stayes my tongue: I would lift vp my hands, but see they hold 'em, they hold 'em. [1951-4]

BCP: Collect for Visitation of the Sicke: Renew in him, most loving Father, whatsoeuer hath beene decayed by the fraud and malice of the deuill, or by his owne carnall will and frailenesse; preserue and continue this sicke member in the vnitie of the Church, consider his contrition, accept his teares, asswage his paine, as shall bee seene to thee most expedient for him.

Psalm 77.3-4: When I am in heauinesse I will thinke vpon God: when my heart is vexed I will complaine. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so feeble that I cannot speake.

Psalm 143.6: I stretch forth my hands vnto thee: my soule gaspeth vnto thee, as a thirstie land.

Faustus finds himself confounded by a torment which disables him from showing any outward signs of repentance. In such a state, devoid of all capacities except that for feeling pain, Faustus believes he cannot endure the devil's trial of his spiritual strength. An outward sign of repentance is at least a start towards spiritual ascent, but he laments that no such sign is afforded him. The devil, he thinks, prevents his show of sorrow by drawing in his tears, staying his tongue from uttering any word of repentance, and holding his hands to prevent a demonstrative quest for aid. Again, Faustus' conviction of demonic power (seen here as primarily hallucinatory) takes precedence over a trust in God's saving grace.

24 Faustus: O gentlemen, I gaue them my soule for my cunning. . . . for the vaine pleasure of foure and twenty years hath Faustus lost eternall ioy and felicitie. [1957, 1959-61]

Ecclesiastes 1.17: And I gaue mine heart to know wisdome & knowledge(1) madness and foolishness: I knew also that this is a vexacion of the spirit.
note (1): That is, vaine things, which served vnto pleasure, wherein was no commoditie, but grief & trouble of conscience.

Because he is determined to see himself as already lost to eternal joys, Faustus' conscience, whenever it is revealed, exists in a state of grief-stricken emotion. Consumed by this condition, he is unable to achieve spiritual reconciliation with God, even though he has already recognized his wasteful life of sin. The Argument prefixed to Ecclesiastes begins "Salomon . . . describeth the deceivable vanities of this worlde, that man shulde not be addicted to anie thing vnder the sunne, but rather inflamed with the desire of the heauenly life: therefore he confuteth their opinions, which set their felicitie, either in knowledge, or in pleasures, or in dignitie and riches, shewing that mans true felicitie consisteth in that that he is vnited with God and shal inioye his presence."

25 Faustus: for the vaine pleasure of foure and twenty yeares hath Faustus lost eternall ioy and felicitie . . . the date is expired: this is the time, and he will fetch mee. [1959-62]

Luke 12.19-20: And I wil say to my soule, Soule thou hast much goods laid vp for many years: liue at ease, eat, drinke, and take thy pastime. But God said vnto him, O foole, this night wil they fetch away thy soule from thee: then whose shal those things be which thou hast prouided?

Though Faustus attempts repentance several times during the play, "sweete plasure conquer'd deepe despaire" [594], thus inhibiting a true turning back to God. For most of his twenty-four years his conscience is

set at ease by his belief that a last-minute reprieve will be possible; and so he continues to be "resolute". It is ironically disconcerting that at the end of the play Faustus recognizes the frivolous life that has turned him away from repentance, but does not now equally recognize that there is a way into redemption. He diagnoses his symptoms, but by re-asserting that there is no hope of an immediate cure, that no way lies open to him, he determines for himself a fatalistic, just punishment.

26 Good Angel: O what will all thy riches, pleasures, pompes,
Auaile thee now? [2001-2]

Psalm 49.7: For he shall cary nothing away with him when he dieth: neither shall his pompe follow him. [cf. Romans 6.21]

Faustus clings to those things which are the least substantial in terms of eternal existence, even though in the first scene of the play immortality was one of his initial aims. The Good Angel's admonition reminds him of the illusory nature of the life, fraught with sensual pleasures, that must now dissolve into the grim reality of the worse kind of nothingness that damnation brings. [cf. Ch. 3, No.3]

27 Faustus: Stand stil you euer moouing spheres of heauen,
That time may cease, and midnight neuer come:
Faire Natures eie, rise, rise againe, and make
Perpetuall day, [A, 1453-6]

Joshua 10.12-13: Then spake Iosuah to the Lord, in the day, when the Lord gaue the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sunne, staie thou in Gibeón, and the moone, in the valley of Aialón. And the sunne abode, & the moone stode stil, vntil the people auenged them selues vpon their enemies: . . . so the sunne abode in

the middes of the heauen, and hasted not to go downe for a whole day.

In this scene (which has no parallel in the E.F.B.) Marlowe is deliberately counterbalancing mechanistic time with the realm of moral time. The play's clock slows to focus on Faustus' final dread-ridden hour, just as his own sense of the passing of time accelerates to whirlwind speed, and his moral struggle becomes in a sense a battle against time. The intolerable irony which Faustus fails to realize is that, given the necessary faith, he could at any moment escape his bondage to mechanistic time and enter the eternal timelessness of redemption. Faustus' astronomical awareness becomes painfully acute: "The starres mooue stil, time runs, the clocke wil strike, / The diuel wil come, and Faustus must be damnd." [A, 1460-1] Instead of seeing time as a liberating reality, Faustus can only think of it as another kind of bond.

28 Faustus: Mountaines and hilles, come come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heauy wrath of God. [A, 1470-1]

Luke 23.30: Then shall they beginne to say to the mountaines Fall on vs: and to the hilles, couer vs.

Revelation 6.15-17: And the Kings of the earth, & the great men, and the riche men, and the chief captaines, and the mightie men, and euerie bondman, and euerie fre man, hid them selues in dennes, and among the rockes of the mountains, And said to the mountains and rockes(u) Fall on vs, and hide vs from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, & from the wrath of the Lambe. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand?

note (u): Suche men afterwarde, of what estate soeuer, there be, shalbe desperate, and not able to suffer the weight of God's wrath, but shal continually feare his iudgement.

One of Faustus' last magical endeavours is his fearful plea for

self-annihilation. Still attempting to conjure, even at this late stage, he is, without the aid of Mephostophilis' legerdemain, unsuccessful: the elements of nature remain obstinately unmoved. What Faustus hopes to gain is a sanctuary where he will be immune from God's punishment. Only a mind bemused by fear would hope to evade the Omniscient by hiding under a rock. [cf. Ch. 4, No.29]

29 Faustus: Impose some end to my incessant paine,
Let Faustus liue in hel a thousand yeeres,
A hundred thousand, and at last be sau'd. [A, 1485-7]

Job 14.13: Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the graue, and keepe me secret, vntil thy wrath were past, and wouldest giue me terme, and(f) remember me.
note (f): That is, release my peines and take me to mercie.

Although Faustus at first makes light of Mephostophilis' own suffering in hell, he realizes at the end what it means to exist without hope, without the expectation of future change. Any finite period of suffering would be preferable to the eternal torment of the damned. But his emotions are still being governed by a temporal obsession--it is from pain only that Faustus wishes eventual liberation. He is pre-occupied with being in hell forever, rather than with the idea of being permanently excluded from the company of the saved in heaven.

30 Faustus: Curst be the parents that ingendred me:
No Faustus, curse thy selfe, curse Lucifer,
That hath depriued thee of the ioyes of heauen: [A, 1496-8]

Job 3.1-3: Afterwarde Iob opened his mouthe, and cursed his day. And

Iob cryed out, and said, Let the day(c) perish, wherein I was borne, and the night when it was said, There is a manchilde conceiued.

note (c): Men ought not to be weary of their life & curse it, because of the infirmities that it is subiect vnto, but because they are giuen to sinne and rebellion against God.

[cf. Jeremiah 20.14-15 & note (h); Ecclesiasticus 23.14; Matthew 26.24]

Ecclesiasticus 21.27: When the vngodlie curseth Satan, he curseth his owne soule.

Faustus' cursing at the end of the play continues to illustrate his evasion of responsibility for his own actions. What Faustus feels most, as note (c) from Job above indicates, is the punishment of the sin rather than the godly sorrow for it. His awareness is consumed solely in the pain of losing what might have been. All that remains of the humanity he wishes to renounce to the point of cursing it is a profoundly human suffering. Faustus believes that it is better not to be, than to endure the privations of the damned. [cf. Ch. 3, Nos.23 & 41]

31 Faustus: My God, my God looke not so fierce on me: [A, 1505]

Psalm 22.1: My God, my God, looke vpon me, why hast thou forsaken mee: and art so farre from my health, and from the words of my complaint?

Matthew 27.46: And about the ninth houre Iesus cryed with a loude voyce, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani? that is,(t) My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

note (t): Not withstanding that he feeleth him self as it were wounded with Gods wrath and forsaken for our sinnes, yet he ceaseth not to put his confidence in God and call vpon him: which is written to teach vs in all afflictions to trust stil in God, be the assauts neuer so grieuous to the flesh

[cf. Mark 15.34]

Throughout the play Faustus continues to conceive of God as inaccessible and stern. The God whom Faustus at last confronts is a God in a Calvinist mould, whose wrath he now fears and whose harshness

he so flippantly dismissed at the beginning of the play. It is the God who was already inherent in his conception of divinity when he made use of the meretricious syllogism to reject the subject as "vnpleasant, harsh, contemptible and vile" [A, 142]. What Faustus wills shall be, and because he cannot conceive of the redemptive and merciful Christ, he is fatally bound to his fear of a judicial punisher. The rhythm of the line and the repeated phrase "My God, my God" is unquestionably an echo of the psalmist's phrase, with undoubted awareness of its use in the gospels, for complex ironic effect.

32 Chorus: Cut is the branch that might haue growne ful straight,
And burned is Apolloes Laurel bough,
That sometime grew within this learned man:
Faustus is gone, regard his hellish fall, [A, 1510-13]

John 15.4-7: Abide in me, and I in you: as the branche can not beare frute of it self, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, excepte ye abide in me. I am the vine: ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, & I in him, the same bringeth forth much frute: so without me can ye do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forthe as a branche, and withereth: and men gather them, and cast them into the fyre, and they burne. If ye abide in me and my wordes abide in you, aske(c) what ye wil, and it shalbe done to you.

note (c): So that ye folowe Gods worde, which is comprehended by faith.

Psalm 80.15-16: And the place of the vineyard that thy right hand hath planted: and the branch that thou madest so strong for thy selfe. It is burnt with fire, and cut downe: and they shall perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

Romans 11.16-22: For if the frutes be holie, so is the whole lompe: and if the roote be holie, so are the branches. And thogh some of the branches be broken of & thou being a wilde oliue tre, wast grafte in for them, and made partaker of the roote, and fatness of the oliue tre, Boast not thyself against the branches: and if thou boast thyself, thou bearest not the roote, but the roote thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches are broken of, that I might be grafte in. Wel: through vnbelefe they are broken of, and thou standest by faith: be not hie minded, but feare.

For if God spared not the natural branches, take hede, lest he also spare not thee. Beholde therefore the bountifulnes, & seueritie of God: towarde them which haue fallen, seueritie: but towarde thee, bountifulnes, if thou continue in his bountifulnes: or els thou shalt also be cut of.

Matthew 7.19-21: Euerie tre that bringeth not forthe good frute, is hewen downe, and cast into the fyre. Therefore by their frutes ye shal knowe them. Not euerie one that saieth vnto me, Lord, Lord, shal enter into the kingdome of heauen, but he that doeth my Fathers wil which is in heauen. [cf. Matthew 12.33; 3.10; BCP: Articles of Religion: Art. 12]

Jeremiah 23.5: Beholde, the daies come, saith the Lord, that I wil raise vnto Dauid a righteous(e) branche, & a King shal reigne, and prosper, and shal execute iudgement, and iustice in the earth.
note (e): This prophecie is of the restitution of the Church in the time of Jesus Christ, who is the true branche.

Isaiah 53.2: But he shal grow vp before him as a branche, & as a roote of drye grounde: he hathe nether forme nor beautie: when we shal se him, there shalbe no forme that we shulde desire him.

Luke 13.19: [The Kingdom of God] is like a graine of mustarde seed, which a man toke and sowed in his garden, and it grewe, and waxed a great tre, and the foules of the heauen made nestes in the branches thereof.

Job 14.7: For there is hope of a tre, if it be cut downe, that it wil yet sproute, and the branches therof wil not cease.

Job 15.6: His rootes shalbe dryed vp beneath, and aboue shal his branches be cut downe.

Job 19.10: He hathe destroied me on euerie side & I am gone: & he hathe remoued mine hope like(f) a tre.
note (f): Which is pluckt vp, and hathe no more hope to grow.

Ecclesiasticus 40.15: The children of the vngodlie shal not obteine manie branches: for the vncleane rootes are as vpon the high rockes.

Ecclesiasticus 24.18: As the terebinth, haue I stretched out my branches, and my branches are the branches of honour and grace.

Ecclesiasticus 6.2: Be not proude in the deuice of thine own minde, lest thy soule rent thee as a bull, And eat vp thy leaues, and destroie thy frute, and so thou be lefte as a drye tree [in the wilderness].

Job 29.19-20: For my roote is spred out by the water, and the dewe shal lye vpon my branche. My glorie shal renue toward me, and my bowe shal be restored in mine hand.

Job 24.20: (u)The pitiful man shal forget him: the worme shal fele

his swetenes: he shalbe no more remembered, & the wicked shalbe broken like a tre.

note (u): Thogh God suffer the wicked for a time, yet their end shal be most vile destruction.

BCP: Commination: For now is the axe put vnto the roote of the trees, so that euery tree, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewen downe, and cast into the fire. It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God: he shall powre downe raine vpon the sinners, snares, fire and brimstone, storme and tempest, this shall be their portion to drinke.

[cf. The Mirror for Magistrates (ed. Lily B. Campbell, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), "Shore's Wife", ll. 139-40:

> They brake the boowes and shakte the tree by sleyght,
> And bent the wand that might have growen ful streight.

The first line of the Epilogue strongly suggests a direct borrowing from the Mirror, but the ultimate source for both images is self-evidently Biblical.]

The Epilogue blends tones and allusions in a complicated way. The principal Biblical allusion is in the first line--crooked branches, misshapen trees, false growth are common images in the Biblical passages cited. In contrast, the second line draws on the classical area of reference, the two together forming an epic epitaph full of high seriousness and genuine regret. The tone changes abruptly in the fourth line into a morality play sententia seemingly at variance with the tone of the first lines: narrow, prescriptive, unimaginative. Yet in this blend of high seriousness gone astray, and dull dogma that must be taken seriously, the intellectual core of the play is to be found.

The Epilogue is at once a warning and an invitation to the audience in that one must not believe that Faustus' view of Christianity is the only one made explicit in the play. What is imaged in the first line is the Christian doctrine of the Mystical Body, suggested by Christ to be the

true vine, and from which every branch must take its sustenance. The Christian God of love is present throughout the play as the one Faustus refuses to grow in, and accept. [cf. Ch. 5]

CHAPTER THREE

MIRRORED PERSPECTIVES: LITURGICAL PARALLELS

From a mind richly stored with the thoughts and words of Holy Scripture, as has been illustrated in Chapter Two, Marlowe further assimilates religious doctrine into the very fabric of Doctor Faustus. Roland Mushat Frye has maintained that "knowledge of certain Christian doctrines is necessary to a literary and dramatic appreciation of the play".[1] By the use of perhaps as little as a single word, or the implication of a particular incident, Marlowe works to articulate Christian doctrine in evoking the necessary response from his audience. Frye further holds that in Doctor Faustus all of the major incidents of the drama, as well as its language and the internal struggles of the character, are related to the overriding theological framework.[2] What follows, in this chapter, is an illustration of how Marlowe implements certain conceptions from this theological matrix. Not all of these theological citations can be related to a specific line or phrase from the play. Rather, their application is often more general, and in such cases no quotation from the play is given. Instead, a discussion of the relevance of the theological reference to the play becomes the substance of the commentary.

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[1]Frye, "Theological . . . Structures", p. 132.

[2]Ibid., p. 133.

1 Faustus: Affoords this Art no greater miracle?
Then read no more, thou hast attain'd that end;
A greater subiect fitteth Faustus wit: [38-40]

Faustus: . . . though my heart pants and quiuers to remember that I haue beene a student here these thirty yeeres, O would I had neuer seen Wittenberg, neuer read booke: [A, 1405-7]

Ecclesiastes 1.18: For in the multitude of wisdome is muche(m) grief: & he that encreaseth knowledge, encreaseth sorrowe.
note (m): Wisdome & knowledge can not be come by without great peine of bodie and minde: for when a man hathe atteined to the hiest, yet is his minde neuer fully content: therefore in this worlde is no true felicitie.

Marlowe's treatment of knowledge presents two dramatic extremes in the play. Faustus, "glutted now with learnings golden gifts" [24], condemns the traditional forms of learning because they no longer serve his ends. Turning away from the "chiefest blisse" [27], the knowledge of what it means to be a Christian, freely bound to the love of God, Faustus embraces a form of knowledge which is insubstantial: magic is an art which of necessity excludes an investigation of its causes; it is self-professedly irrational. It has been pointed out that his obdurate denial of the highest wisdom damns Faustus not only as a man, but as a scholar.[1] In the final catastrophe Faustus laments having attained any knowledge at all, believing that it was the cause of his ruin. From the height of intellectual pomposity, Faustus collapses into consequent folly, and concludes in the ironical reversal of intellectual self-debasement.

2 Romans 1.21-2: Because that when they knewe God, they glorified him not as God, nether were thankeful, but became vaine in their imaginations,

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[1]Hattaway, p. 54.

and their foolish heart was ful of darkenes. When they professed them selues to be wise, they became fooles. [cf. Isaiah 47.10; 1 Corinthians 1.25, 27]

Faustus' contrived adieu to divinity in the first scene displays not only a travesty of Christian doctrine, but also a horrifying image of the self-centred individual. His denial of God is a mendacious excuse to seek a life centred in his own volition, through recourse to magic. Rapt in the exhilaration for what this new and "higher" knowledge will bring him, Faustus however never succeeds in attaining its rewards. Nor does he ever regain the capacity to aspire, after his first speech. Once his decision to turn from God has been made, there is nowhere to go but down. In his blindness to the precarious nature of his choice lies the potential tragedy of self-ignorance.

3 Good Angel: Oh Faustus, if thou hadst giuen eare to me,
Innumerable ioyes had followed thee.
But thou didst loue the world. [1997-9]

1 Corinthians 1.19-20: For it is written, I wil destroye the wisdome of the wise, and wil cast away the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the Scribe? where is the disputer of this worlde? hathe not God made the wisdome of this worlde foolishness?

1 Corinthians 3.18-19: Let no man deceiue him self. If anie man among you seme to be wise in this worlde, let him be a foole, that he may be wise. For the wisdome of this worlde is foolishnes with God:

1 John 2.16: For all that is in the worlde (as the luste of the(k) flesh, the(l) luste of the eyes, & the(m) pride of life) is not of the Father, but of this worlde.
note (k): To liue in pleasure.
note (l): Wantonnes.
note (m): Ambition & pride.

The passages from the Bible accurately define Faustus' preoccupation with a wisdom which is worldly folly. The large and ironic discrepancies

between Faustus' aspirations and his accomplishments have been stressed by many critics. Faustus' original dreams of wealth, honour and omnipotence are belied by every dramatic action that ensues after the contract has been made.[1] The comic scenes of the play provide in terms of action the ironic contrast with Faustus' original aspirations. His magic brings him nowhere near the stature of demigod, or even commander of the world. Faustus, the once-famed scholar, becomes the court magician and practical joker. In choosing to turn away from God to accomplish his desires, Faustus has provided not only for his own destruction, but also for his own degradation. Marlowe emphasizes the ludicrous aspects of his hero's fall, and thereby reinforces the tragic awareness of how much is being lost for how little.

4 Chorus: Whose fiendfull fortune may exhort the wise,
Onely to wonder at vnlawful things,
Whose deepenesse doth entise such forward wits,
To practise more than heauenly power permits. [A, 1514-17]

Ecclesiasticus 3.22-7: Seke not out the things that are to hard for thee, nether searche the things rashly which are to mightie for thee. [But] what [God] hathe commanded thee, thinke vpon that with reuerance [and be not curious in many of his workes:] for it is not nedeful for thee to se with thine eyes the things that are secret. Be not curious in superfluous things: for many things are shewed vnto thee aboue the capacitie of men. The medling with suche hathe beguiled many, and an euil opinion haue deceiued their iudgement. Thou canst not se without eyes: professe not the knowledge therefore that thou hast not. A stubberne heart shal fare euil at the last: and he that loueth danger, shal perish therein.

Both the Epilogue and the Biblical admonition describe the hazards of the aspiring mind's attempt to know beyond the capacity of human limit-

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[1]Cole, p. 217.

ations. The opinion that this is an admirable, Promethean endeavour, is questionable. Faustus, unlike his prototype in the E.F.B., seeks knowledge as the key to limitless power. The grandeur of his aspiration, however, does not reside in the cogency of its speculations, but simply in the dimensions of its desire, the magnitude of its fancy. The desire to acquire omnipotence through infernal knowledge and the fantasy of absolute control over all things dissolve in a ludicrous and absurd process of human degeneration. Except for the suffering of the damned, Faustus learns nothing that he did not know before. In fact, the comic collapse of his initial ambitions implies that he seeks nothing actually worth knowing.

5 Ecclesiasticus 10.7: Pride is hateful before God, and man & by bothe doth one commit iniquitie.

Ecclesiasticus 10.13-14: The beginning of mans pride, is to fall away from God, & turn away his heart from his maker. For pride is the original of sinne, and he that hathe it, shal powre out abominacion til at last he be ouerthrowen: therefore the Lord bringeth the persuasions [of the wicked] to dishonour, and destroieth them in the end.

Homilies: A Sermon How Dangerous a thing it is to fall from God, p.52: Of our going from GOD, the wise man sayth, that pride was the first beginning: for by it mans heart was turned from GOD his maker. For pride (sayth he) is the fountaine of all sinne: he that hath it shall be full of cursings, and at the end it, shall overthrow him. And as pride and sinne we goe from GOD, so shall GOD, and all goodnesse with him goe from us.

Homilies: An Homily Against Disobedience, and wilfull Rebellion, p.275: The first author of which rebellion, the roote of all vices, and mother of all mischiefes, was Lucifer, first GODS most excellent creature, and most bounden subiect, who by rebelling against the maiesty of GOD, of the brightest, and most Angell, is become the blackest, and most foulest fiend, and devill: and from the height of Heaven, is fallen into the pit, and bottome of hell.

One does not have to search very hard in the play to determine that Faustus' pride and wilfullness are profoundly a part of his moral make-up. Outwardly and directly manifest in everything he says and does is his egotistical ambition to become his own god. Proud, curious, and self-indulgent, Faustus is caught up in a life which is directly opposed to a higher good. Dissatisfied with his own mortality he rebells against the limitations which define human existence: "Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man" [50]. The entire first scene, in fact, resounds with the intellectual pride of a man going too far. Because he has rejected God and thereby made himself the centre of his universe, Faustus wilfully blinds himself to the severity of his action. What escapes his notice is the similarity between his sin of pride and that sin which caused Lucifer's fall. Even when Mephostophilis tells Faustus that as a result of "aspiring pride and insolence" [293] Lucifer was thrown from the face of heaven, Faustus fails to recognize it as a reflection of his own mistake and the penalty it must inevitably bear.

6 Faustus: This word Damnation, terrifies not me,
For I confound hell in Elizium: [284-5]

Psalm 36.1-2: My heart sheweth me the wickednes of the vngoldly: that there is no feare of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himselfe in his owne sight: vntil his abominable sinne be found out.

It is a strange jumble of inconsistencies that Faustus willingly damns his soul but refuses to understand the gravity of such an enterprise. He accepts the fact that he has "incur'd eternall death" [313] by blaspheming God, yet he will disregard "damnation". The truth becomes whatever

Faustus wishes to believe; "damnation" becomes just a word, without its spiritual significance, and "hell" , a fable: a denial of the concept of an unpleasant eternity. Though he realizes he has "hazarded" his soul, he refuses the obviously conjoint realization of the logical consequences. His arrogant jauntiness distorts his judgement, and it is only with increased experience that the horrifying significance of his rejection of God becomes clear.

7 Good Angel: O Faustus, lay that damned book aside,
And gaze not on it least it tempt thy soul . . .
Reade, reade the Scriptures: that is blasphemy. [97-100]

Faustus: 'Tis magick, magick, that hath rauisht me. [132]

Ecclesiasticus 34.5-6: Sothsayings, witchcraft, and dreaming is but vanitie, and a minde that is occupied with fantasies, is as a woman that travaileth. Where as suche visions come not of the moste High to trye thee, set not thine heart vpon them.

Faustus' decisions for magic and for witchcraft would be, if truly self-aware, decisions of the utmost daring, long sustained, at infinite cost. Drawn by the lure of magical toys, Faustus progresses in a pattern that the devil was thought to employ to trap souls. Magic, as the Elizabethans theologically defined and understood it, was the witch's characteristic turning from the whole service of God.[1] But magical rites were not of themselves a final apostasy from which the magician could never recover. Plainly, at any time during the play, Faustus could have dismissed Mephostophilis and his lures if he had cared to. Indeed, Faustus'

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[1]West, p. 228

conscience is occasionally that way inclined: "Abiure this Magicke, turne to God againe" [A, 445]. Magic is blasphemy, as the Good Angel warns, and as Faustus, in his wavering, admits. But Faustus, in the words of the Biblical passage, sets his heart upon the illusions of magic's rewards.

8 Faustus: I'le haue them wall all Germany with Brasse,
And make swift Rhine, circle faire Wittenberge:
I'le haue them fill the publique Schooles with silk,
Wherewith the Students shall be brauely clad. [115-18]

Ecclesiasticus 16.23: He that is humble of heart, wil consider these things: but an vnwise and erronious man casteth his minde vpon foolish things.

Besides ambition and wealth, Faustus affects all sorts of undisciplined and ill-assorted whims of fancy early in the play. The desire to wall Germany with brass, make the Rhine flow around Wittenberg, and clothe the students with silk, present the triviality and irresponsibility of a will that has thrown off the restraints of belief and tradition. The egotism of these visions is cast by the whole tone of his speech into a wild exuberance of self-conceit.

9 Bad Angel: No Faustus thinke of honour and of wealth.
Faustus: Wealth?
Why the Signory of Embden shall be mine: [410-11]

Ecclesiasticus 10.9: There is nothing worse then a couetous man: [why art thou so proude, of earth and ashes? there is not a more wicked thing, then to loue money:] for suche one wolde euen sel his soule, & for his life euerie one is compelled to pul out his owne bowels. [cf. Matthew 19.20-4]

Fantasizing in response to the Bad Angel's injunction to think of

wealth, Faustus sidesteps an attack of conscience. The mere prospect of unprecedented wealth is sufficient to sway him from thinking of "heauen and heauenly things" [409]. His will, grounded as it is in worldly concerns, is unable successfully to attain spiritual recovery.

10 Faustus: The God thou seru'st is thine owne appetite. [398]

Faustus: Whilst I am here on earth: Let me be cloyd
With all things that delight the heart of man. [860-1]

Philippians 3.18-19: For manie walke, of whome I haue tolde you often & now tell you weping, that they are the enemies of the Crosse of Christ, whose end is damnacion, whose God is their belie, and whose (o)glorie is to their shame, which minde earthlie things.
note (o): The vaine glorie which thei seke after in this worlde, shal turne to their confusion, and shame.
[cf. Romans 16.18]

BCP: Morning Prayer, General Confession: We haue followed too much the deuises and desires of our owne hearts.

Faustus has found what he thinks is support for his new creed in the New Testament. Paul describes those who have reversed Christian values: for the spirit, the belly; for heaven, damnation; for God, their own appetites; for glory, shame. Most of the play shows Faustus struggling to adopt this credo as his own. But he never entirely succeeds in substituting his appetite for his belief in "God that made the world" [643].

11 Faustus: A surfet of deadly sin, that hath damn'd both body and soule. [1933-4]

Galatians 5.16-21: Then I say, walke in the Spirit, and ye shal not fulfil the lustes of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrarie one to the

other, so that ye can not do the same things that ye wolde. And if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not vnder the Law. Moreouer the workes of the flesh are manifest, which are adulterie, fornicacion, vnclennes, wantonnes, Idolatrie, witchcraft, hatred, debate, emulacions, wrath, contentions, sedicions, heresies, Enuie, murthers, dronkennes, glottonie, and suche like, whereof I tell you before, as I also haue tolde you before, that they which do suche things, shal not inherite the kingdome of God. [cf. BCP: Articles of Religion, Art. 9]

On the last night, the scholars are worried about the state of Faustus' physical health. In reply to a suggestion that physicians can cure Faustus, the Third Scholar offers the carrion comfort, "'Tis but a surfeit sir, fear nothing" [1931]. But the word "surfeit" evokes a response from Faustus which is more to the point. He accurately diagnoses both his physical and his spiritual illness: a surfeit of deadly sin has indeed damned him in the sense that it has brought him to despair. Faustus commits most if not all of the sins of the flesh of which Paul writes, but his realization of this comes too late. Throughout his life Faustus has enjoyed evil for his own gratification, delighting in it by and for itself. We recall how the pageant of the Seven Deadly Sins "feedes [his] soule" [A, 797], in circumstances which present evil as a reward for his obedience to the devil.

12 Matthew 4.1-11: Then was Iesus led aside of the Spirit into the wildernes, to be (b)tempted of the deuil. And when he had fasted fortie dayes and fortie nights, he was hungrie. Then came to him the tempter, and said, If thou be the Sonne of God, (c)commande that these stones be made bread. But he answering, said, It is written, man shal not liue by bread onely, but euerie worde that proceadeth out of the mouth of God. Then the deuil toke him vp into the holie Citie, & set him on a pinacle of the temple, And said vnto him, If thou be the Sonne of God, cast thy self downe: for it is written that he wil giue his Angels charge ouer thee, and with their hands they shal lifte thee vp, lest at anie time thou shuldest dash thy fote against a stone. Iesus said vnto him, It is written againe, Thou shalt

not (g)tempt the Lord thy God. Againe the deuil toke him vp into an exceeding hie mountaine, and (h)shewed him all the kingdomes of the worlde, and the glorie of them, And said to him, All those wil I giue thee, if thou wilt fall downe, and worship me. Then said Iesus vnto him, Auoide Satan for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serue. Then the deuil (i)left him: and beholde, the Angels came, and ministred vnto him.

note (b): To the end that he ouercoming temptations might get the victorie for vs.

note (c): Satan wolde haue Christ to distrust God, and his worde and followe other strange and vnlawful meanes.

note (g): We must not leaue suche lawful meanes as God hathe appointed, to seke others after our own fantasie.

note (h): In a vision.

note (i): The worde of God is the sworde of the spirit, wherwith Satan is ouercome.

Christ's temptation in the wilderness provides a crucial parallel to the forms of temptation Mephostophilis employs on Faustus. The Biblical scene serves not only as a familiar reminder to the audience of the means man has to overcome temptation, but also of the theological importance of Christ's own trial of faith for mankind's benefit. Faustus' faith, which should lead him to trust in God and thereby battle temptation, is beguiled by the lust of his "owne appetite" [398]; he would rather "despaire in God, and trust in Belsabub" [A, 442]. The devils, and especially Mephostophilis, try to keep Faustus in this ungracious state of mind. He is told "not [to] thinke on God" [662], but "on the deuill and his dam" [663-4]; to talk not of "Paradice or Creation" [675], but of the "diuel, and nothing else" [A, 736]. Cheerfully, and with no strain of conscience, Faustus complies, resolved to dedicate himself to the devil for the promised rewards. But the "rewards" turn out to be only a further series of temptations of sumptuous visions in which Faustus readily believes and willingly accepts. By these means Mephostophilis is able to occupy his victim's attention, and thwart any movement towards

repentance. Whenever Faustus attempts to repent, or to think of God, he is circumvented by his own awe at magical illusion--demonic dumb-shows, the pageant of the Sins, promises of wealth and power. Faustus, like Christ, is taken up to view the heavens and the "kingdomes of the world" [875]; Christ scornfully rejects the temptation; Faustus delights in the heady visions offered by the devil.

13 Meph.: What will not I do to obtaine his soule? [461]

Meph.: I'le fetch him somewhat to delight his minde. [470]

Ecclesiasticus 12.17-18: An enemie is swete in his lippes: he can make manie good things: yea, he can weepe with his eyes, but in his heart he imagineth how to throwe thee into the pit: and if he may finde opportunitie, he wil not be satisfied with blood. If aduersitie come vpon thee, thou shalt find him there first, and thogh he pretend to helpe thee, yet shal he vndermine thee: he wil . . . make manie wordes, and disguise his countenance.

Mephostophilis is given only these two asides in the play; both reveal the undisguised intentions and means of temptation he adopts towards his victim. They also provide a key to understanding how his relationship with Faustus operates. The devil assumes the role of "slave", but he is in fact in control, and affects a pleasing manner only to beguile his dupe. But Faustus mistakes Mephostophilis' behaviour as true compliance, and addresses him throughout the play as "sweet", "gentle", and "good".

14 Meph.: Now Faustus what wouldst thou haue me do? [261]

Meph.: So, now Faustus aske me what thou wilt. [506]

Meph.: But think'st thou heauen is such a glorious thing?
I tell thee Faustus it is not halfe so faire
As thou, or any man that breathes on earth. [574-6]

Ecclesiasticus 13.6: If he haue nede of thee, he wil defraude thee, and wil laugh at thee, and put thee in hope, and giue thee all good wordes, & say, What wantest thou?

Mephostophilis evades the difficulty of having to admit heaven's superiority by philosophizing in a humanistic vein. Naturally this is appropriate, as Faustus likes to cast himself in the role of humanist thinker ("My Ghost be with the old Phylosophers" [286]). In the process, Mephostophilis' self-contradiction is obscured and evaded, and the discussion brought round again to the temptation Mephostophilis is best at: what he can do for Faustus.

15 Meph.: But tell me Faustus, shall I haue thy soule?
And I will be thy slaue and waite on thee,
And giue thee more than thou hast wit to aske. [433-5]

Luke 4.6-7: And the deuil said vnto him, Al this power wil I(c) giue thee, and the glorie of those kingdomes: for that is deliuered to me: & to whomesoeuer I will, I giue it, If thou therefore wilt worship me, they shalbe all thine.
note (c): Satan promiseth that which he can not giue thinking thereby that he might deceiue the more craftely: for he is but prince of the worlde by permission & hathe his power limited.

It is characteristic of the devil to promise his victim anything he desires in exchange for his soul. But the devil's abilities are limited by the licence God allows him; the notion that the devil can fulfil any promise of himself is directly contrary to doctrine. Faustus, as usual, fails to perceive the incongruity.

16 Meph.: Why this is hell: nor I am out of it.
Think'st thou that I that saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternall Ioyes of heauen,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hels,
In being depriu'd of euerlasting blisse? [301-5]

Meph.: . . . but where we are is hell,
And where hell is there must we euer be.
And to be short, when all the world dissolues,
And euery creature shall be purifi'd.
All places shall be hell that is not heauen. [514-18]

Faustus: . . . now tell me who made the world?
Meph.: I will not. [636-7]

Homilies: Third Part of the Sermon of Salvation, p. 19: For euen the divels know, and believe that Christ was borne of a Virgin, that he fasted forty dayes, and forty nights, without meate, and drinke, that hee wrought all kind of miracles, declaring himselfe very GOD: They believe also, that Christ for our sakes suffered most painefull death, to redeeme vs from everlasting death, and that he rose againe from death the third day: They believe that hee ascended into Heaven, and that he sitteth on the right hand of the father, and at the last end of this world shall come againe, and iudge both the quicke, and the dead. These Articles of our fayth the divels believe, and so they believe all things that be written in the new, and old Testament to be true: and yet for all this fayth, they be but divels, remayning still in their damnable estate, lacking the very true Christian faith.

Mephostophilis is in all too good a position to know the truth of the Christian faith, but to know it and to have it are two very different things. His knowledge is barren because he cannot employ it for his salvation. Faustus puts himself in the same position: he knows perfectly well "who made the world", and indeed everything that Mephostophilis tells him. But like his diabolical mentor, he never finds the trick of translating this knowledge into healing, and saving faith.

17 Meph.: O Faustus leaue these friuolous demaunds,
Which strike a terror to my fainting soule. [A, 326-7]

2 Corinthians 11.13-15: For suche false apostles are deceitful workers, and transforme them selues into the Apostles of Christ. And no maruèile: for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of light, Therefore it is no great thing, thogh his ministers transforme them selues, as thogh they were the ministers of righteousness.

Luke 4.13 note (f): It is not ynough twise or thrise to resist Satan: for he never ceaseth to tempt: or if he relent a litle it is to the end that he maye renewe his force & assaile vs more sharply.

Mephostophilis, at this point, seems to be urging on Faustus a view of the universe directly contrary to his own interests. How, we wonder, can Faustus hear this, and persist in his misguided course? Besides, Mephostophilis' evident distress excites sympathy for his fallen estate. However, as the quotations make clear, Mephostophilis is merely using one of the subtlest forms of temptation. Paul's description matches Mephostophilis' methods: everything Mephostophilis does is a form of temptation: here he recognizes he can achieve the best results by a show of weakness which will provoke Faustus' pride into a corresponding show of stoic, but un-Christian, fortitude.

18 Meph.: And to be short, when all the world dissolues,
And euery creature shall be purifi'd,
All places shall be hell that is not heauen. [516-18]

BCP: Burial of the Dead, Lesson (1 Corinthians 15.51-3): Beholde I shewe you a secret thing, We shal not all slepe, but we shal all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shal blowe, and the dead shal be raised vp incorruptible, and we shalbe changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption: and this mortal must put on immortalitie. [cf. 1 Peter 3.10-14]

In an extremely doctrinally astute moment, Marlowe has Mephostophilis expound Paul's famous inspiration. That all creatures will be changed or purified to enter eternal existence is theologically correct,

but surely ironic on the devil's lips. Yet once again, even the truth when Mephostophilis speaks it, is another form of temptation, because Faustus is so contemptuous of it. There is an afterlife, and Mephostophilis is the ocular proof of its existence. In his subsequent pose of detachment, Faustus thinks hell is a fable, and shows no more concern for its existence than he does for the spiritual consequences of his actions.

19 Lucifer: Christ cannot saue thy soule, for he is iust,
There's none but I haue interest in the same. [655-6]

Mayer's Catechism, No. 108: Q. Is it not iniustice to appoint so great a punishment for every sinne, yea euen for the least?
A. It is very iust and meet for the Lord to adiudge the least sinne to hell fire, because his mark, which is perfect holinesse, set vpon man in his creation, is hereby remooued, and a marke with the Deuils brand is made vpon the soule of the sinner, for which it is iust that the Deuil, and not God should now haue such a soule.

Homilies: Second part of the Sermon of Falling from God, p. 57: . . . they shall be given into the power of the divell, which beareth the rule in all them that be cast away from GOD . . . and generally in all such as worke after their owne willes, the children of mistrust, and unbeliefe.

Lucifer appears in an appropriate response to Faustus' "prayer". Like Claudius' prayer in Hamlet, it is a prayer of words without thoughts. The devil speaks the literal truth, to remind Faustus that "Christ cannot saue thy soule, for he is iust". This is the counsel of despair, but ironically enough Faustus has given it whatever truth it has--"the reward of sin is death" [67]. Lucifer consequently speaks in words like those of the catechist: because he has sinned, Faustus' soul belongs to the devil. Despair becomes both temptation and punishment, masked by the words of the literal and judicial aspect of theology.

20 Meph.: His faith is great, I cannot touch his soūle,
But what I may afflict his body with,
I wil attempt, which is but little worth. [A, 1345-7]

Matthew 8.31 note (n): The deuil desireth euer to do harme, but he can do no more, then God doeth appoint

Job 1.11-12: But stretche out now thine hand and (r)touche all that he hathe, to se if he wil not blaspheme thee to(s) thy face. Then the Lord said vnto Satan, Lo all that he hathe is in(t) thine hand, onely vpon him selfe shalt thou not stretch out thine hand. So Satan departed from the(u) presence of the Lord.

note (r): This signifieth that Satan is not able to touche vs, but it is God that must do it.

note (s): Satan noteth the vice, whereunto men are commonly subiected: that is, to hide their rebellion, and to be content with God in the time of prosperitie, which vice is disclosed in the time of their adversitie.

note (t): God giueth not Satan power ouer man to gratifie him, but to declare that he hathe no power ouer man, but that which God giueth him.

note (u): That is, went to execute that which God had permitted him to do: for els he can neuer go out of Gods presence.

Homilies: Third part of the Sermon Against the Feare of Death, p. 65: The Booke of Wisdome sayth, that the righteous mens soules be in the Hand of GOD, and no torment shall touch them.

In one of the most brilliantly handled ironies of the play, Mephostophilis is here obliged to confess his own impotence, and thereby provide Faustus with an illustration of how a soul may, in fact, be saved. Of necessity, the devil speaks in sound theological terms: he "may" only "attempt" to torment the Old Man, if God so permits. The Old Man's soul, however, is immune to any real danger because his faith protects him. But Faustus cannot learn anything, and evidently refuses to heed the import of Mephistophilis' shamefaced declaration.

21 Meph.: Reuolt, or I'le in peece-meale teare thy flesh.
Faustus: I do repent I ere offended him,
Sweet Mephostophilis: intreat thy Lord
To pardon my vniust presumption. [1849-52]

Job 2.4: And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, & all that euer a man hathe wil he giue for his life.

Mephostophilis bullies Faustus into submission one last time near the end of the play. In fear of physical pain, Faustus forgets the Good Angel's encouraging words: "repent and they shall neuer raise thy skin" [651]. Faustus' fear again gets the better of him; ironically, he responds by employing the formulae of contrition. But his entreaty is of course addressed to the Devil, not to God. [cf. Ch. 4, No.25]

22 Faustus: . . . the diuell threatned to teare mee in peeces, if I namde God, to fetch both body and soule, if I once gaue eare to diuinitie: and now tis too late: [A, 1431-4]

Matthew 10.28: And feare ye not them which kil the bodie, but are not able to kil the soule: but rather feare him, which is able to destroye bothe soule and bodie in hel.

Mephostophilis keeps Faustus in continual subjection by imposing threats on his life. Lacking in faith to resist these threats, Faustus allows them to succeed by recanting each attempt at repentance. His will to fear proves much stronger than his capacity for hope; indeed he allows Mephostophilis' methods to work by fearing the mere threat of pain. Unlike the Faustus of the E.F.B., who is continually tortured into submission, Marlowe's Faustus is subjected to no physical coercion. His bondage thus appears the more degrading, and his responsibility for his own damnation the more prominent. As the passage from Matthew suggests, Faustus has been his own worst enemy.

23 Faustus: . . . curse thee wicked Mephostophilis,
Because thou hast depriu'd me of those Ioyes.
Meph.: 'Twas thine owne seeking Faustus, thanke thy selfe. [571-3]

Ecclesiastes 10.8: He that diggeth a pit, shal fall into it.

Ecclesiasticus 4.22: Accept no persone against thine owne conscience, that thou be not confounded to thine owne decay.

Mephostophilis enjoys the transient luxury of being able to tell Faustus that his troubles were caused by himself. Needless to say, Faustus never really accepts this interpretation of events, and right through to the end of the play persists in attempting to blame others for his predicament. [cf. No.41]

24 Meph.: I doe confesse it Faustus, and reioyce;
'Twas I, that when thou wer't i'the way to heauen
Damb'd vp thy passage, when thou took'st the booke,
To view the Scriptures, then I turn'd the leaues
And led thine eye.
What weep'st thou? 'tis too late, despaire, farewell,
Fooles that will laugh on earth, must weepe in hell. [1988-94]

Luke 8.11-14: The sede is the worde of God. And thei that are beside the way, are thei that heare: afterwarde commeth the deuil, and taketh away the worde out of their hearts, lest they shulde beleue, & be saued. But they that are on the stones, are they which when they haue heard, receiue the worde with ioye: but they haue no rootes, which for a while beleue, but in the time of tentation go away. And that which fel among thornes, are they which haue heard, and after their departure are choked with cares and with riches, and voluptuous liuing, and bring forthe no frute.

Homilies: Sixt part of the Homily Against Disobedience, and Willfull Rebellion, p. 318: . . . ignorance of Gods Word commeth of the devill, is the cause of all errour, and misiudging and universally it is the cause of all evill, and finally of eternall damnation, GODS iudgement being severe towards those, who when the light of Christs Gospell is come to in the world, doe delight more in darkenesse of ignorance, then in the light of knowledge in GODS word.

Faustus still evades the responsibility for his own actions and

persists in blaming Mephostophilis for having robbed him of eternal happiness. Faustus believes he has been tricked, and Mephostophilis gleefully admits to it, but only because his victim has his heart set on it: whatever Faustus desires, he shall have. But Faustus' renunciation of divinity was the result of an exercise of free will and moral choice. Mephostophilis lies, of course, when he himself accepts the blame; the powers of darkness cannot compel a human will, but only influence it. Thus the devil enjoys one last temptation to thrust Faustus further into despair. As the parable from Luke shows, those who have succumbed to the devil's influence do so as a result of a superficial belief in God's word, and of spiritual weakness. Like them, Faustus falls by the wayside, misinterpreting scripture, turning from God, in order to follow the lure of voluptuous living. In his attempt to refuse the responsibility for these actions, and his wish to shift the blame for them to Mephostophilis, Faustus is effectively denying the consequences of his own free will.

25 Faustus: Ah rend not my heart for naming of my Christ,
Yet wil I call on him, oh spare me Lucifer! [A, 1465-6]

Romans 10.13-14: For whosoeuer shal call vpon the Name of the Lord, shalbe saued. But how shal thei call on him, in whome they haue not beleued?

The uncertainty as to whom Faustus is addressing in these lines is another expression of his total confusion of values: "Christ or Lucifer may be rending his heart; he may be asking the former to spare him or the latter to spare him pain. The point is that to Faustus there is no distinction between them: to think of either is only a source of pain, and

his prayer to either is only for the relief of that pain."[1] Faustus calls on Christ, but for all the wrong reasons; no outcry born of fear can supply the lack of faith--that, Paul has made clear in the passage from Romans. Faustus's persistent belief in the devil's powers is one of the most horrifying effects of his continual impenitence.

26 Faustus: Tush Christ did call the Theefe vpon the Crosse,
Then rest thee Faustus quiet in conceit. [1550-1]

Romans 6.1-2: What shal we say then? Shal we continue stil in sinne, that grace may abunde? God forbid. How shal we, that are dead to sinne, liue yet therein?

Homilies: Second part of the Sermon of Falling from God, pp. 57-8: . . . lest that we reiecting or casting away GODS Word . . . be not at length cast off so farre, that we become as the children of unbeliefe, which be of two sorts . . . . [One "child of unbelief",] hearing the loving, and large promises of GODS mercy, and so not conceiving a right fayth thereof, make those promises larger then GOD did, trusting, that although they continue in their sinfull, and detestable living never so long, yet that God at the end of their life, will shew his mercy upon them, and that then they will returne . . . . And the sinners that continue in their wicked living, ought to thinke, that the promises of GODS mercy, and the Gospell, pertaine not unto them being in that state, but only the Law, and those Scriptures which containe the wrath, and indignation of GOD, and his threatenings, which should certifie them, that as they doe overboldly presume of Gods mercy, and live dissolutely . . .
[cf. Third part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 273]

The ever-optimistic Faustus presumes that salvation can be attained by a last-minute reprieve. Doctrinally, his presumption is both fallacious and confused, but is very characteristic of the way Faustus chooses to believe matters to be other than they are. Salvation is a conditional promise, not an absolute one; it will, or will not, be fulfilled

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[1] Waswo, pp. 95-6.

if the sinner changes, or refuses to change, his ways. Faustus should know better; indeed, the most illiterate Protestant would, one expects, have been astonished at Faustus' arrogant stupidity. Faustus sees himself as a criminal--he admits as much by comparing himself to the thief at Calvary--but continues on his deluded career. [cf. Ch. 4, Nos. 21 & 22]

27 Second Scholar: Were he a stranger, not allyed to me,
The danger of his soule would make me mourne:
But come, let vs go, and informe the Rector:
It may be his graue counsell may reclaime him. [219-22]

First Scholar: Why did not Faustus tel vs of this before, that Diuines might haue prayed for thee? [A, 1429-30]

BCP: Communion, Exhortation: . . . therefore if there be any of you, which by this meanes aforesaid cannot quiet his owne conscience, but requireth further comfort of counsell, let him come to me, or to some other discreete and learned Minister of Gods Word, and open his griefe, that hee may receiue such ghostly counsell, anduice, and comfort, as his conscience may bee relieued, and that by the Ministers of Gods word he may receiue comfort, and the benefit of absolution . . .

The Scholars show not only a touching concern for Faustus, but also describe the proper course a sinner should take to receive spiritual aid. This notion is recurrent in Elizabethan sermonizing, and would have been familiar to Marlowe's audience. Not once throughout the play does Faustus seek help in his troubles. He either quiets his conscience by continuing to be "resolute", or he allows himself to be cajoled or bullied out of repentance. Faustus has been "ouer solitary" [A, 1394] indeed; and in that solitude of a sinful life he not only cuts himself off from the love of God, but also from His righteous ministers. [cf. Ch. 5]

28 BCP: Communion, Exhortation: If any man say, I am a greuious sinner, and therefore am afraid to come: wherefore then doe ye not repent and amend?

The simple advice of the Communion service seems to be of the kind that Faustus finds so hard to take. Repentance and amendment--the two necessary actions to receive God's infinite mercies--are beyond Faustus' capacity to understand.

29 Good Angel: Faustus repent, yet God will pitty thee. [582]

Faustus: Yea, God will pitty me if I repent. [586]

Second Scholar: Yet Faustus looke vp to heauen, and remember mercy is infinite. [1935-6]

Second Scholar: Yet Faustus call on God. [1949]

BCP: Communion, Absolution: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiuenesse of sinnes to all them which with hearty repentance and true faith turne vnto him . . .

Homilies: of Repentance, and of True Reconciliation unto God, p. 256: There is nothing that the holy Ghost doth so much labour in all the Scriptures to beate in mens heads, as Repentance, amendment of life, and speedy returning unto the Lord God of Hosts. And no marvell why: for we doe daily, and hourely by our wickednesse, and stubborne disobedience, horribly fall away from GOD, thereby purchasing unto our selues (if he should deale with us according to his iustice) eternall damnation. So that no doctrine is so necessary in the Church of GOD, as the doctrine of repentance, and amendment of life.

Ibid., p. 260: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous his owne imaginations, and returne unto the Lord, and he will have pity on him, and to our GOD, for he is very ready to forgive. [cf. Third Part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 272]

[cf. Ecclesiasticus 2.11-12]

Both the Good Angel and the Scholar offer the remedy that Faustus so earnestly needs but so desperately rejects. It is advice he has refused continually throughout the play, though it forms one of the most

familiar doctrines in Elizabethan sermonizing. The churchgoer was told in lecture after sermon after homily that God forgives repentant sinners:

> if they would constantly or stedfastly believe, that Gods mercy is the remedy appointed against such despaire, and distrust, not only for them, but generally for all that be sorry, and truly repentant, and will therewithall sticke to Gods mercy, they may be sure they shall obtaine mercy, and enter into the Port or Haven of safegard, into the which whosoever doth come, be they beforetime never so wicked, they shall be out of danger of everlasting damnation.[1]

Faustus is not totally blind to doctrine; he recognizes that God will pity him "if" he repents [586]. Of course, the "if" is crucial; Faustus' attitude proves it an impossibility.

30 BCP: Catechism: Q: What is the inward and Spiritual Grace [of Baptism]?

A: A death vnto sinne, and a new birth vnto righteousnesse, for being by nature borne in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

Q: What is required of persons to be baptized?

A: Repentance, whereby they forsake sinne: and Faith, whereby they stedfastly beleeue the promises of God, made to them in that Sacrament.

John 3.3-5: Verely, verely I say vnto thee, except a man be borne againe, he can not se the kingdome of God. Nicodemus said vnto him, How can a man be borne which is olde? can he enter into his mothers wombe againe, and be borne? Iesus answered, Verely, verely I say vnto thee, except that a man be borne of (c)water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdome of God.

note (c): Which is the spiritual water where the holie Gost doeth washe vs into newnes of life.

[cf. BCP: Articles of Religion, Art. 26]

Homilies: Second Part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 268: The fourth [part of repentance] is, an amendment of life, or a new life, in bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance. For they that doe truely repent, must

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[1]Homilies: Second Part of the Sermon of Falling from God, p. 58.

be cleane altred, and changed, they must become new creatures, they must be no more the same that they were before.

Inherent in the doctrine of repentance is the renewal of the baptismal rite, in which man is born again to God's grace. The two doctrines are so interconnectedly understood that to think of one necessarily implies the other. Without true repentance and a willingness to be born again into God's grace, the promises made to man at his baptism become ineffectual. "For Baptisme," as Mayer writes, "is God's cognizance, and without repentance there are no couenants made . . . wherefore repentance is necessary in all such as would haue their baptisme effectuall to confirme Gods mercy vnto them."[1] Faustus refuses to feel godly sorrow for his sins, and thus refuses to take on the newness of life which righteous living entails and which is needful if Christ's mercies are to be bestowed. For Faustus, sin by custom has nearly grown into nature: "I do repent, and yet I do despaire"[A1330]. Faustus can repent, or he can persevere in his sins: he chooses the latter. His bondage to the devil and to sin aborts any unfeigned utterance of repentance. Again, in the words of the catechist, the idea is made clear:

> For he that committeth sinne is the seruant of sinne. He is in bondage to the diuell all his life long. The promise then which is made in our Baptisme, is that we shall come out of this estate of nature corrupt, into the estate of grace, which is, when we follow not the swinge of our owne dispositions, neither suffer the God of this world to rule in vs, but the law and word of God.[2]

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[1] Mayer's Catechism, p. 505.

[2] Ibid., p. 8.

31 Mayer's Catechism, No. 5: Q: How knowest thou that there is a God?
A: Many wayes: but chiefly, by mine owne conscience, accusing me for secret sins, which cannot be but vnto an infinite wisedome, that knowes the most secret thoughts of the heart, such as is neither man, deuill, nor Angel, but God alone.

After the decision to reject God has been made, Faustus finds himself unable to make his rejection absolute: his conscience will not allow it. The reality of God and the prospect of damnation persist in forcing themselves upon his attention. For a man who is not "terrified" of damnation [284], Faustus protests too much. His misgivings, whenever they are revealed, betray the deliberate achievement of the will with which he launched his blasphemous enterprise. More importantly, however, they reveal Faustus continually haunted by, and falling back on, his earlier knowledge--the knowledge he attempted so strenuously to reject: "Abiure this Magicke, turne to God againe" [A, 445]; "When I behold the heauens then I repent" [570]; "If Heauen was made for man, 'twas made for me" [579]; "God will pitty me if I repent" [586]; "Thinke, Faustus vpon God, that made the world" [643]; and so on. There is an apparent conflict of belief: on the one hand he dismisses thoughts of "God or Heauen" as "vaine fancies" [A, 440-1]; and on the other he is unable to forget God, or Heaven. He sins against his conscience, against the truth of his own awareness--the human faculty through which God operates. The genuine horror of his situation is suggested by the words of a seventeenth-century Anglican bishop:

> There cannot be imagined a higher contempt of God, then for a man to despise the power of his own conscience: which is the highest soveraignty under heaven, as being Gods most immediate deputy for the ordering of his life and waies . . . wofull is the estate of those men . . . There is no proner

way to hell, then to sinne against conscience.[1]

32 Faustus: Now Faustus must thou needes be damnd,
And canst thou not be saued?
What bootes it then to thinke of God or heauen?
Away with such vaine fancies and despaire,
Despaire in God, and trust in Belsabub: [A, 438-42]

Faustus: What are thou Faustus but a man condemn'd to die?
Thy fatall time drawes to a finall end;
Despaire doth driue distrust into my thoughts. [1546-8]

Homilies: Homily of Repentance, and of True Reconciliation unto God, p. 257: All which things ought to serue for our comfort against the temptations of our consciences, whereby the devill goeth about to shake, or rather to overthrow our fayth.

BCP: Articles of Religion, Art. 17: So, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.

The Article contains a warning remarkably applicable to Faustus. That he is a man condemned to die is a fallacious self-deprecation, characteristic of one who has "continually before his eyes the sentence of God's Predestination". As long as he remains in this frame of mind, despair is naturally the condition he feels himself to be in. When, however, he is not in the grips of despair, he thinks not of salvation, but of diversion, the "wretchlessness of most unclean living", for he consoles himself with the pastimes of worldly pleasures.

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[1]Robert Sanderson, Two Sermons (London, 1635), quoted in Waswo, p.70.

33 Faustus: Accursed Faustus, where is mercie now?
I do repent, and yet I do despaire: [A, 1329-30]

Faustus: But Faustus offence can nere be pardoned,
The serpent that tempted Eue may be sau'd,
But not Faustus: [A, 1402-4]

Matthew 12.31-2: Wherefore I say vnto you, euerie sinne and blasphemie shalbe forgiuen vnto men: but the blasphemie against the holie Gost shal not be forgiuen vnto men. And whosoeuer shal speake a worde against the Sonne of man, it shalbe forgiuen him: but whosoeuer shal speake against the (k)holie Gost, it shal not be forgiuen him, nether in this world nor in the worlde to come.

note (k): That is, he that striueth against the trueth which he knoweth, and against his owne conscience, can not returne to repentance: for he sinneth against the holie Gost.

[cf. BCP: Articles of Religion, Art. 16; John 14.16; Romans 5.5; 15.13; 1 Corinthians 12.3 note (d)]

Although Augustine admitted that no problem in the Bible was more difficult than the meaning of the sin against the Holy Ghost, the Scholastic philosophers agreed that man sins against the Holy Ghost (whose work is remission of sins) by deliberately choosing evil over good. Aquinas identifies six varieties of sin against the Holy Ghost on the basis that they all remove the means whereby a man can be prevented from sinning through choice. (The six are despair, presumption, impenitence, obstinacy, resisting known truth, and envy of others' spiritual good.) "What the English Protestants did with this doctrine was to conflate its several parts, to stress the motive involved in sinning through choice, to identify this motive when the choice opposes knowledge or conscience as 'malice', and to eliminate utterly the escape hatch."[1] Thus the Queen's homily declares that the sin is unforgivable "because that they doe utterly forsake the knowne truth, doe hate Christ, and his

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[1]Waswo, p. 75.

Word, they doe crucifie, and mocke him (but to their destruction) and therefore fall into desperation, and cannot repent."[1] When Faustus chooses and acts against knowledge and conscience he becomes psychologically incapable of repentance--not because God is unwilling to forgive, and not because any specific sin is too offensive to be forgiven, but because he has rejected the means by which he could be made psychologically capable. The gift of repentance proceeds from the Holy Ghost, and his spirit remains in man through Christ apprehended by faith. That Faustus has neither inward spiritual grace or faith is confirmed by his incapacity to apprehend the mercy of Christ. He despairs because he believes his sins are unpardonable, and in that despair he refuses repentance. "Any one of the sins against the Holy Ghost was held sufficient for damnation, and Faustus commits not one but all six, and most of them not once but repeatedly."[2] Out of the six, however, despair proves the dramatic outcome of his theologically perverse actions.

34 Second Scholar: Yet Faustus call on God.
Faustus: On God, whom Faustus hath abiur'd? on God, whom Faustus hath blasphem'd? [1949-51]

Homilies: Second part of the Sermon of Falling from God, p.57: Let us beware therefore lest that we reiecting or casting away GODS Word be not at length cast off so farre, that we become as the children of unbeliefe,

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[1]Homilies: Homily of Repentance, and of True Reconciliation unto God, p. 261.

[2]Cox, p. 137.

- which be of two sorts . . . both be very farre from returning to GOD: the one sort, only weighing their sinfull, and detestable living, with the right iudgement, and straightnes of GODS righteousnesse, be so without counsaile, and be so comfortlesse (as they all must needs be, from whom the Spirit of counsell, and comfort is gone) that they will not be persuaded in their hearts, but that eyther God cannot, or else that he will not take them againe to his favour, and mercy.

Romans 10.9-11: For with the heart man beleueth vnto righteousnes, and with (e) the mouth man confesseth to salvation. For the Scripture saith, whosoeur beleueth in him, shal not be ashamed.
note (e): That is, the way to be saued is to beleue with heart that we are saued onely by Christ, and to confesse the same before the worlde.

Faustus' inevitable despair partakes of the same egotism as his initial aspiration; in fact, it is an appropriate consequence of his intellectual pride. Even though his consciousness of guilt forces him to proclaim his sin, Faustus cannot submit to the humiliation of asking forgiveness. He finds it impossible to take the Scholar's advice, because he believes his sin to be too great: "But Faustus offence can nere be pardoned,/ The serpent that tempted Eue may be sau'd,/ But not Faustus" [A, 1402-4]. It is another aspect of the insidious sin of pride that leads Faustus to blaspheme against the doctrine of repentance of which Paul writes in Romans.

35 Faustus: My hearts so hardned I cannot repent,
Scarce can I name saluation, faith, or heauen,
But feareful ecchoes thunders in mine eares,
Faustus, thou art damn'd, [A, 647-50]

Job 11.20: But the eyes (k) of the wicked shal faile, and their refuge shal perish, and their hope shalbe sorowe of minde.
note (k): He sheweth that contrarie things shal come vnto them that do not repent.

Homilies: Homily of Repentance, and of True Reconciliation unto

God, p. 257: For every one of us ought to apply the same unto himselfe, and say, Yet now returne unto the Lord: neyther let the remembrance of thy former life discourage thee, yea the more wicked that it hath beene, the more fervent, and earnest let thy repentance or returning be . . .

Homilies: Second part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 269: Let us hearken to the voyce of Almighty God, when he calleth us to repentance, let us not harden our hearts, as such Infidels doe, who abuse the time given them of God to repent, and turne it to continue their pride, and contempt against GOD, and man, which know not how much they heape Gods wrath upon themselues, for the hardnesse of their hearts, which cannot repent . . . [cf. Third part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 274]

As the passage from Job suggests, Faustus' despair is both the crime of, and the punishment for, impenitence. His will is corrupt, and his conscience, confined in that corruption, prevents him from seeing beyond what he thinks is his inevitable end. Faustus is determined to see himself as damned, just as he is resolute not to repent, and thus is exactly in the case the homilist describes.

36 Faustus: Damnd art thou Faustus, damnd, despaire and die,
Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voyce
Sayes, Faustus come, thine houre is come, Mepha. giues
And Faustus now will come to do thee right. him a dagger.
[A, 1315-18]

Ecclesiasticus 41.2: O death, how acceptable is thy iudgement vnto . . . him whose strength faileth, and that is now in the last age & is vexed with all things, and to him that dispaireth, and hathe loste pacience.

Having extinguished all hope by his insistence upon seeing himself as damned anyway, Faustus all too willingly rushes towards perdition. Suicide was thought to be the natural reaction to being in a state of theological despair; Mephostophilis is ready with a convenient dagger to second the action to the thought: for while the sinner may recover from

a moment of despair, suicide is admirably irrevocable, from the devil's point of view. Those who maintain that God's presence is sadly wanting in the play have not sufficiently considered the importance of the sudden appearance of the Old Man to prevent the one action which Faustus could take which would, indeed, unquestionably damn him. Faustus is indeed sufficiently impressed by the Old Man to desist from action, but he then, with his fatal impulse towards self-destruction, sends him away, thus clearing the way for Mephostophilis to reclaim his possession of Faustus' spiritual attention. "Marlowe has deftly provided yet another index of the quality of Faustus' career and of his incorrigible habit of resolving his spiritual struggles by choosing the damnable alternative."[1]

37 Wagner: I think my Maister means to die shortly,
he hath made his will, and giuen me his wealth, [1777-8]

Psalm 49.10: For he seeth that wise men also die, and perish together: as well as the ignorant and foolish, and leaue their riches for other. [cf. Psalm 39.7]

Wagner's counterpart in the E.F.B. also inherits Faustus' fortune, but fittingly so; he was dearly loved by his master, and groomed as a protégé: the magician left him his cunning as well as his wealth. No development of such a relationship occurs in the play to account plausibly for the will. Wagner is a house servant, and belongs to the play's comic world. That one who has been portrayed as little more than a clown should inherit his master's possessions makes a suitable implicit

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[1]Cole, p. 219.

comment on the final irrelevance of Faustus' legacy.

38 Old Man: Yet, yet, thou hast an amiable soule
If sin by custome grow not into nature:
Then Faustus, will repentance come too late,
Then thou art banisht from the sight of heauen;
No mortal can expresse the paines of hell. [1818-22]

Faustus: O no end is limited to damned soules, [A, 1488]

Mayer's Catechism, No. 107: Q: What is the breach of the law, and the punishment of it?

A: It is sinne, which if it be but once committed only, and that but in thought, it makes a man subiect to God's eternal curse, which is euerlasting death in hell fire, the torments whereof are vnspeakable without end or ease.

Homilies: Second part of the Sermon of Falling from God, p. 57: The which lamentable prayers of his, as they doe certifie us what horrible danger they be in, from whom GOD turneth his face (for the time, and as long as he doth:) so should they moove, and stirre us to cry upon GOD with all our heart, that we may not be brought into that state, which doubtless is so sorrowfull, so miserable, and so dreadfull, as no tongue can sufficiently expresse, nor any hearte can thinke.

Ecclesiasticus 14.16: Giue and take and sanctifie thy soule: [worke thou righteousness before thy death.] for in the hell there is no meat to finde.

John 3.36: He that beleveth in the Sonne, hathe euerlasting life, & he that obeith not the Sonne, shal not se life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

The Old Man points out the consequences of a sinful and impenitent life in a vein reminiscent not only of the Biblical passages, but also of the homilist and catechist. Indeed, Marlowe seems to have thought this fairly gentle exhortation insufficiently alarming, for the A-text equivalent of this speech (almost certainly a prompt-book revision by the author: see Appendix) is more violently emotional, if less like the examples from the theological works. Either way, the eternal torments of

hell are being brought vividly to Faustus' attention. However, he is so much occupied with his fear of suffering that he resists the hope also offered by the Old Man's message. Faustus' acute conviction of his sinfulness only increases his consciousness of the horrors of damnation.

39 Old Man: Sathan begins to sift me with his pride,
As in this furnace God shal try my faith, [A, 1381-2]

Job 23.10: But he knoweth my (f)way, and tryeth me, and I shal come forthe like the golde.
note (f): God hathe this preeminence aboue me that he knoweth my waye: to wit, that I am innocent, and I am not able to iudge of his workes: he sheweth also his confidence, that God doeth visite him for his profite.

1 Peter 1.7: That the trial of your faith, being muche more precious then golde that perisheth (thogh it be tryed with fyre) might be sound vnto your praise, & honour and glorie at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 12.8-9: For this thing I besoght the Lord thrise, that it might departe from me. And he said vnto me, my grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfite through weaknes. Verie gladly therefore wil I reioyce rather in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Homilies: Second part of the Sermon Against the Feare of Death, p. 63:
If we believe stedfastly the Word of God, we shall perceive that such bodily sickenes, pangs of death, or whatsoever dolorous pangs we suffer, eyther befoe or with death, be nothing else in Christian men, but the rod of our Heavenly, and loving Father, wherewith he mercifully correcteth us, eyther to try, and declare the fayth of his patient Children, that they may be found laudable, glorious, and honourable in his sight.
[cf. Revelation 2.10]

Marlowe's image, like that in Job and 1 Peter, is explicitly alchemical (or metallurgical: the two things being more or less the same in the sixteenth century). The purification of gold by fire, the recovery of the pure metal from the contamination of the ore, was a favourite image for the distillation of that which is most pure and

noble in the human spirit. That process of purification, however, entails suffering as the dross and slag is purged away. The distinction between the fire that refines and the fire than punishes and destroys is implicit in this symbol, and in much Christian writing about the ways in which pain can be thought of as a trial of the spirit. As the Biblical authors and the homilist expound the concept, so the Old Man sees it: his trial is, rightly considered, a sign of God's favour, the means by which his fidelity can be demonstrated, not only to himself, but as a sign to the world. If faith endures, grace will abound.

40 Old Man: My faith, vile hel, shal triumph ouer thee,
Ambitious fiends, see how the heauens smiles
At your repulse, and laughs your state to scorn,
Hence hel, for hence I flie vnto my God. [A, 1383-6]

Psalm 119.114-15: Thou art my defence and shield: and my trust is in thy word. Away from me ye wicked: I will keep the commandements of my God.

1 Peter 3.12-15: For the eyes of the Lord are ouer the righteous, and his eares are open vnto their praiers: and the face of the Lord is vpon them that do euil. And who is it that wil harme you, if ye folowe that which is good? Notwithstanding blessed are ye, if ye suffre for righteousnes sake. Yea (h)feare not their feare, nether be troubled. But(i) sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts.
note (h): That is when thei think to make you afraid by their threatnings.
note (i): Giue him praise & depende on him.
[cf. Matthew 5.10; Psalm 56.9; Psalm 119.75-8]

The Old Man displays victory over Satan's torments, and thereby vindicates the powers of true faith, the omnipresence of God, and heaven's rejoicing at a soul's salvation in the face of diabolic pressure. Physical pain may afflict his body, but his soul is protected by his assurance of God's love, and thus cannot be harmed. The short speech

for the Old Man which is the subject of this and the preceding note is perhaps the most significant addition Marlowe made to the play after the foul papers. It exhibits, in directly doctrinal fashion, the means whereby a soul can be saved by steadfast turning to God. No such illustration of faith is to be found in the B-text, and it is arguable that Marlowe became aware of the lack. At any event the parallelism is striking: the Old Man, alone with the tormenting devils, proves his faith and is assured of salvation. Very soon, we shall see Faustus alone with the devils in his final hour, and his failure to achieve any significant kind of repentance is cast into sharper light by the reflection of the Old Man's passion. It is worth noting that both suffer their final agonies alone: Faustus and Helen have left the stage just before the Old Man's speech begins. Thus the contrast is one that is directed primarily at the audience, rather than involving reactions from other characters in the play.

41 Faustus: God forbade it indeed, but Faustus hath done it: [1959]

Psalm 9.16: The Lord is knowen to execute his iudgement: the vngodly is trapped in the worke of his owne hands.

Homilies: Second Part of the Sermon of the Misery of Man, p. 12: In the meane season, yea, and at all times let us learne to knowe our selues, our frailty, and weaknesse . . Let us also acknowledge the exceeding mercy of God towards us, and confesse, that as of our selues commeth all evil, and damnation: so likewise of him commeth all goodnesse, and saluation, as God himselfe sayth by the Prophet Ose [i.e. Hosea], O Israel, thy destruction commeth of thy selfe.

It is a rare occasion when Faustus admits he is responsible for the results of his own iniquity. Such recognition occurs only twice in

the play, both times in the final scene. (The second occurs when Faustus curses himself, A 1497.) But opportunities for self-recognition escape him: he fails to notice the implications of the truths he has stated, and self-blame leads only to the exclamations of fear and reproach.

42 Psalm 107.10-11: Such as sit in darknesse and in the shadow of death: being fast bound in misery and yron. Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord: & lightly regarded the counsel of the most High.

Faustus' initial display of arrogance and detachment concerning matters of Christian doctrine dissolve into the emotions of despair which culminate in the final scene. Damnation, which did not "terrify" [283] him before, is now the only reality he is able to perceive. Hell is no longer confounded in Elysium [285], but gapes ready before him. Men's souls which were once to him "vaine trifles" [287] are now vividly imagined suffering the pains of hell in eternal damnation; his own soul, which he "hazarded" [421] so unthinkingly, will not cease to exist. And, most ironic of all, the harsh god that Faustus so flippantly dismissed earlier, is now imagined as poised to execute vengeful justice upon him.

43 BCP: Commination: Then shall appeare the wrath of God in the day of vengeance, which obstinate sinners through the stubburnesse of their heart haue heaped vnto themselues, which despised the goodness, patience, and long sufferance of God, when hee called them continually to repentance. Then shall they call vpon mee, saith the Lord, but I will not heare, they shall seeke me early, but they shall not finde mee, and that because they hated knowledge, and receiued not the feare of the Lord, but abhorred my counsell, and despised my correction. Then shall it be too late to knocke, when the doore shall be shut, and too late to cry for mercy, when it is the time of Iustice. O terrible voyce of most iust iudgement, which shall

be pronounced vpon them, when it shall be said vnto them, Goe ye cursed into the fire euerlasting, which is prepared for the deuil and his angels . . . Let vs not abuse the goodnesse of God, which calleth vs mercifully to amendment, and of his endless pity promiseth vs forgiuenesse of that which is past, if with a whole minde and true heart wee returne vnto him. For though our sinnes be red as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: and though they be like purple, yet shall they be as white as wooll. Turne you cleane, sayth the Lord, from all your wickednesse, and your sinne shall not be your destruction.

Cast away from you all your vngodlinesse that yee haue done, make you new hearts, and a new spirit . . . Turn you then, and ye shall liue.

Although wee haue sinned, yet haue wee an aduocate with the Father, Iesus Christ the righteous, and he it is that obtaineth grace for our sinnes.

For hee was wounded for our offences, and smitten for our wickednesse. Let vs therefore returne vnto him, who is the mercifull receiuer of all true penitent sinners, assuring our selues that hee is ready to receiue vs, and most willing to pardon vs, if we come to him with faithfull repentance, if we submit our selues vnto him, and from henceforth walke in his wayes . . . This if we doe, Christ will deliuer vs from the curse of the Law, and from the extreme malediction which shall light vpon them that shall be set on the left hand, and hee will set vs on his right hand, and giue vs the blessed benediction of his Father, commanding vs to take possession of his glorious kingdome, vnto the which hee vouchsafeth to bring vs all, for his infinite mercy.

The Commination as it were sermonizes--almost word for word--the last scene, if not indeed the entire play. Faustus' experiences have changed his mind, as Mephostophilis said they would: Hell proves not to be a fable, but stands gaping, ready to receive both body and soul. The time for mercy has passed and now the time for justice begins. The first part of the Commination focusses on the dire consequences that the impenitent man must face. God's wrath is shown to those who have been obstinate sinners, who with stubborn hearts have despised His counsel and direction. Faustus is guilty on all counts, and in his final moments of confusion and agony he perceives God's wrath, which dissolves the terrors of conscience into the torments of hell. But this need not have been, as the second part of the Commination reminds us. If man can but turn to

God and repent, he is promised mercy and everlasting life, be he ever so wicked. That Faustus has despaired of such advice has been both his sin and his destruction. What is felt at the end of the play is a great sense of needless loss, the loss of the ultimate glories which the Commination finally describes.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISTORTED IMAGES: WORDS TOO OFTEN PROFANED

For now we see through
a glass darkly
(1 Corinthians 13.12)

Many critics today believe that Marlowe, in Doctor Faustus at least, wrote "ideally for an audience able to see intellectual ambiguities in his language, and able to bring an informed critical response to the images and half-quotations that are used in a self-consciously ironic way throughout".[1] That this is indeed true of Doctor Faustus is central to an understanding of the items that comprise this third category of scriptural and theological source-materials which make up the present chapter. The irony which attends Marlowe's use of religious doctrine, as presented in Scripture and Tradition, is an attempt to refocus the Christian values which underlie them in order that the audience may truly judge "the form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad". Orthodox theology becomes the tragic glass in which Faustus' actions can be viewed and measured. Whenever Faustus distorts or reverses Christian perceptions by transgressing the Order which they represent, Marlowe jolts the audience into recognition and re-valuation of the values the protagonist is violating, through the use of this complex

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[1]Hunter, p. 211.

kind of allusion. Thereby, the significance of individual actions and expressions to the entire play can be weighed. This use of theology resembles in many ways a Brechtian alienation device: it allows the audience to bring its own religious experience and knowledge to bear on the implications both of individual actions as they occur, and on the entire play.

Though there are only three direct quotations from the Bible in the play, the use Marlowe makes of them enables us to posit a working premise for his methodology which is applicable to the play as a whole. Two of these Biblical quotations occur in the first scene, and in both instances Marlowe surely expected his audience to recognize that Faustus misapplies and misrepresents the texts he reads. By this means the audience is given early notice that in this play theological views and beliefs are out of joint, and are therefore to be watched for alertly and critically. If this assumption is valid, namely that the dramatic handling of Biblical quotations in the first scene is deliberately designed to alert the audience to scriptural allusion as part of the play's technique and meaning, it is surely reasonable to apply the concept in cases which are equally important, but in which Marlowe's use of his materials is not so immediately obvious to a modern reader. In this way, the opinion that Marlowe's play is constructed in part on complex strata of orthodox theological attitudes can be demonstrated. Hence, distortions and reversals, contradictions and misconstructions of religious commonplaces comprise the subject of the present chapter.

1 Faustus: Settle thy studies Faustus, and begin
To sound the depth of that thou wilt professe,
Hauing commenc'd, be a Diuine in shew,
Yet leuell at the end of euery Art, [30-33]

Ecclesiasticus 1.1,5,24: All wisdome cometh of the Lord [and hathe bene euer with him] and is with him for euer.
[The worde of God moste high is the fountaine of wisdome, and euerlasting commandements are the entrance vnto her.]
The feare of the Lord is the roote of wisdome, and her branches are long life.
[cf. Ecclesiasticus 1.31-5; Psalm 111.10]

BCP: Service for the Ordering of Priests: Consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning Scriptures . . . ye ought to forsake and set aside (as much as you may) all worldly cares and studies . . . you have clearly determined, by God's grace, to give yourselves wholly to this Office, whereunto it hath pleased God to call you: so that, as much as lieth in you, you will apply yourselves wholly to this one thing, and draw all your cares and studies this way . . .
[cf. Psalm 119.48]

Faustus' intention to be merely a "Diuine in shew" is an announced transgression of vocational duty; his studies, rather than Scripture, overwhelm his imagination. His true aim now becomes a desire to determine and to perfect the ultimate state (or "end") of every form of knowledge, to serve his own purposes. Because of the continued insistence upon the Biblical view that the fear and knowledge of God is the beginning and perfection of all wisdom, the Elizabethans by and large saw the pursuit of knowledge as inseparable from theology. Faustus, however, makes the two seem at odds by seeking knowledge which is not for God's glorification, but for his own. The play has progressed only four lines, and already Faustus has contradicted not only the responsibility of his office, but also the ethical objective of knowledge.

2 Faustus: When all is done, Diuinitie is best:
Ieromes Bible Faustus, view it well: [64-5]

Ecclesiasticus 39.1: He onlie that applieth his minde to the law of the moste High, and is occupied in the meditation thereof, seketh out the wisdome of all the ancient, & exerciseth him self in the prophecies.

After his grossly superficial "examination" of the traditional disciplines, and consequent rejection of them, Faustus correctly asserts that "when all is done, Diuinitie is best". This affirmation is theologically accurate, as the passage from Ecclesiasticus testifies, for divinity is the means by which one can "level at the end of euery art". In the next few lines, however, Faustus rejects this means to knowledge, and casts away Jerome's Bible. In his pursuit of power, he treats the Bible merely as an obstacle in his path; he gets blithely around it, to arrive at what he calls the "heauenly" books of necromancy [77]. By these actions, Faustus denies both true knowledge and true divinity, and welcomes instead his blasphemous attempt to achieve self-deification through knowledge that only the entirely self-deluded could call "heauenly".

3 2 Corinthians 3.4-6: Such trust have we through Christ to God: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God. Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. [cf. BCP: Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent]

The more Faustus inveighs against traditional studies, the more he betrays the limitation of his understanding. He appears to be suffering from a sort of intellectual dyspepsia induced by the ill-

digested surfeit of his reading: he can draw no guidance or spiritual consolation from all his store of information, and resents it in consequence. Nowhere is this more evident than when he takes the Scriptures in his hand, and culls from them half-truths as if they were the very flower and sum of wisdom. He derives a harsh, glaringly false conclusion from a literalistic reading of incomplete quotations. Faustus mistakes letter for spirit with a vengeance, in an act of entirely culpable ignorance, choosing to believe what he wants to believe by simply eliminating anything that does not fit in with his opinions.

4 Faustus: Stipendium peccati, mors est: ha, stipendium, etc.
The reward of sin is death? that's hard: [66-7]

Romans 6.23: For the wages of sin is death: but the gifte of God is eternal life through Iesus Christ our Lord.

5 Faustus: Si pecasse, negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas:
If we say that we haue no sinne
We deceiue our selues, and there is no truth in vs.
Why then belike we must sinne,
And so consequently die,
I, we must die, an euerlasting death.
What doctrine call you this? Che sera, sera:
What will be, shall be; Divinitie adeiw. [68-75]

1 John 1.8-9: If we say we have no sinne, we deceive our selues, and trueth is not in us. If we acknowledge our sinnes, he is faithful and iust, to forgiue us our sinnes, & cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Homilies: Second Part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 265: These are also the words of Iohn the Evangelist: If we confesse our sinnes, GOD is faythfull, and righteous, to forgive us our sinnes, and to make us cleane from all our wickednes . . . This is then the chiefest, and most principall confession that in the Scriptures, and Word of God we are bidden to make, and without which we shall never obtaine pardon, and forgiveness of our sinnes.

Homilies: Sermon how Dangerous a Thing it is to Fall from God, p. 53:

Whosoever is occupied with fables, and Tales, when the Word of GOD is rehearsed, he is turned from GOD. Whosoever in time of reading GODS Word, is carefull in his mind of worldly businesse, of money, or of lucre, he is turned from GOD: Whosoever is entangled with the cares of possessions, filled with covetousnesse of riches, whosoever studieth for the glory, and honour of this world, he is turned from GOD. So that after his minde, whosoever hath not a speciall mind to that thing that is commanded or taught of GOD, he that doth not listen unto it, imbrace, and print it in his heart, to the intent that he may duely fashion his life thereafter, he is plainely turned from GOD.

Homilies: Second Part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 265: They therefore that have no mind at all neyther to read, nor yet to heare GODS word, there is but small hope of them that they will as much as once set their feete, or take hold upon the first staffe or step of this ladder: but rather will sinke deeper, and deeper into the bottomlesse pit of perdition. For if at any time through the remorse of their conscience, which accuseth them, they feele any inwarde griefe, sorrow, or heavinesse for their sinnes, for as much as they want the salue, and comfort of GODS Word, which they doe despise, it will be unto them rather a meane to bring them to utter desperation, then otherwise.

As has been remarked already, Faustus' two awesome misrepresentations of central issues in Christian doctrine ambush the audience in the very first scene. As a Doctor of Divinity (and one would like to know who was on Faustus' examining committee!) Faustus must be aware that he is disembowelling these two famous teachings. And yet, in a sense, Faustus is right, because his psychology evidently allows him to think of Christianity solely as a religion of sin, punishment, and damnation. Were it not so he would hardly have embarked upon his desperate voyage of self-destruction. The redemptive core of Christian doctrine is, it is clear, simply not accessible to his psyche; the wounds he inflicts on himself are the more terrible and tragic therefore. But why should Faustus, the intelligent, learned man, limit himself or be limited in this spiritually crippling, scornful, dismissive, flippant way? Partly, perhaps, it is his view of scholarship, rather than any lack in the doctrine,

that is to blame.

> Faustus is being delineated as the half-scholar, the impatient, secular 'humanist', . . . this Doctor of Divinity is shown exhibiting a vice popularly attributed to 'scholastic' education: a skimping of Bible truth by a retreat into the syllogism instead of an advance into paradox. Poor Faustus: he is reaching for infinity with a finite Aristotelian logic; and his boundless imagination is too limited to grasp paradox.[1]

Both references Faustus selects are "grounded in the recognition of man's mortality and his fallibility".[2] Mortality and fallibility were both anathema to the Renaissance humanist such as Faustus aspires to be. Faustus sees it as an act of intellectual self-betrayal to admit these qualities, to admit the need for redemption, if redemption must come from an agency other than his own will. What Faustus wills shall be: and by this act of will he makes himself a victim to the doctrine he despises. He imposes spiritual blindness upon himself, shuts out the light of proffered salvation, and thus in the long run condemns himself to the dark.

6 Faustus: . . . Diuinitie adeiw.
These Metaphisicks of Magitians,
And Negromantick bookes are heauenly,
Lines, Circles, Letters, Characters.
I these are those that Faustus most desires. [75-9]

Colossians 3.1-2: If ye then be risen with Christ, seke those things which are aboue, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things which are aboue, and not on things which are on the earth.

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[1]Battenhouse, "Marlowe Reconsidered", p. 538.

[2]Helen Gardner, "The Damnation of Faustus", quoted in Cole, p. 197.

"Diuinitie" is most insulted when Faustus rejects the Bible in favour of necromantic books, an action that dramatizes a travesty of Christian values. That is, his preference for magical conjuration over the "chiefest blisse" is, ironically, described in religious terms--the blasphemous books are anything except "heauenly", and only a total inversion and confusion of values could apply such a term to them. Faustus' quest for infernal knowledge becomes elevated in his upset mind to a pseudo-religion, which makes perversity itself an object of worship. And so the devil he thinks he has raised plainly tells him:

> Faustus: Did not my coniuring raise thee? speake.
> Meph.: That was the cause, but yet per accident:
> For when we heare one racke the name of God,
> Abiure the Scriptures, and his Sauior Christ:
> We flye in hope to get his glorious soule;
> Nor will we come vnlesse he vse such meanes,
> Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd. [271-7]

Faustus has given himself to a religion which promises only pain and woe to its adherents. In direct opposition to the doctrine expressed by Paul, Faustus not only grounds his affections in earthly desires, but elevates the action in his mind to an heroic level; by his actions he attempts to make a mockery of Christian tradition, but the audience cannot overlook either Mephostophilis' grim reminders of the likely outcome, or the thoroughly familiar doctrine which Faustus is inverting.

7 Faustus: Know that your words haue won me at the last,
To practise Magicke and concealed arts:
Yet not your words onely, but mine owne fantasie,
That will receiue no obiect for my head,

But ruminates on Negromantique skill, [A, 134-8]

2 Corinthians 10.5: Casting downe the imaginations, and euerie high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captiuitie euerie thoght to the obedience of Christ.

The essential quality of Faustus' motivation is re-emphasized here by his total commitment to abandoning God for what he believes to be a greater good. At this point in the play, "resolution"--that is, Faustus' resolve to order his universe according to his own will--appears at its strongest. As yet, he allows himself no opportunity for second thoughts or the wavering of an unquiet conscience. The object of Faustus' will and intellect rules his entire imagination with the kind of zeal Paul reserves only for Christian devotion and obedience.

8 Faustus: How pliant is this Mephostophilis?
Full of obedience and humilitie,
Such is the force of Magicke and my spels,
Now Faustus, thou art Coniurer laureate
That canst commaund great Mephostophilis, [A, 273-7]

Faustus: What is great Mephostophilis so passionate
For being depriued of the Ioyes of heauen?
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude, [308-10]

Ephesians 6.11-13: Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the aasauts of the deuil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, and the worldlie gouernours, the princes of the darkness of this worlde, against spiritual wickednes which are in the high places. For this cause take vnto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to resist the euil daye . . . [cf. 1 Peter 5.8]

It is a sign of Faustus' arrogance and pride that he allows himself to underestimate and misunderstand his relationship with the devil. Faustus' "coniuring speeches", though the "cause" of Mephosto-

philis' first appearance, bring him but per accidens. "Certainly no human compulsion, mechanical or other, works on devils."[1] Mephostophilis comes, he says, of his "owne accord" (in actual fact, of course, he comes because God permits it), to use the opportunity that Faustus' blasphemy provides him with. All the magic paraphernalia with which Faustus is so entranced ("Lines, Circles, Letters, Characters" [78]--he is like a boy with a new set of Leggo toys) are, Mephostophilis avers, irrelevant: all that is necessary to raise the devil is "stoutly to abiure all godlinesse" [279]; magic can be dispensed with. Faustus is seemingly unmoved by this information, yet if the magic upon which he sets such store is ineffectual, he is without any kind of protection from the devil, and is indeed "in danger to be damn'd" [277]. This massive indifference to his situation, and thereby to Paul's exhortation in Ephesians, shows Faustus failing to recognize precisely "whom" he is dealing with, and the purpose of the devil's interest in him.

9 I Corinthians 10.12-13: Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take hede lest he fall. There hathe no tentation taken you, but such as apperteineth to man: and God is faithful, which wil not suffer you to be tempted aboue that you be able, but wil euen giue the yssue with the tentation, that ye may be able to beare it.

Faustus, for all his follies, is the protagonist of the play, and as such he needs an opponent worthy of him, both theologically and dramatically. Mephostophilis is allowed to tempt Faustus, as doctrine

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[1]West, p. 224.

has it, by divine permission, at a level where Faustus must be able to resist him. Faustus is prepared by his training to battle such temptation precisely as Paul has specified. Throughout the play, Mephostophilis adjusts his temptations according to Faustus' mental and moral condition, in elegant parallel with Paul's prescription. One of the impressions the audience surely ought to receive is that all the temptations to which Faustus is exposed could have been resisted. The fact that he resists precious few of them, but on the contrary rushes headlong into almost all the intellectual and moral traps Mephostophilis sets for him, has at least two consequences. First is the straightforward dramatic irony that ensues, where the audience perceives what the dramatic character is blind to. More important, as part of the play's heritage from the morality drama, there is the sense that Faustus, for all his vaunted intellectual superiority, is no more temptation-proof than the rest of us: he falls into sin in very much the same way as do the various representatives of mankind in the morality plays. In this way, his link with common humanity, and thereby with the audience, is carefully sustained.

10 Faustus: I and Faustus wil turne to God againe.
To God? he loues thee not, [A, 446-7]

BCP: Collect for Good Friday: Mercifull God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be conuerted and live . . .

Once again, Faustus reveals himself as psychologically incapable of admitting to himself the loving and redemptive truth of Christianity. This fatal flaw is central to the tragedy. [cf. Chapter 5]

11 Faustus: When Mephstophilis shall stand-by me,
What God can hurt thee Faustus? thou art safe, [A, 464-5]

Romans 8.31: If God be on our side, who can be against vs?

This is perhaps the most clear and direct example of an inverted allusion in the play. Paul's sentence is so well-known that it is inconceivable that the audience should have failed to recognize Faustus' travesty of it. Hence it would have been patent that the reassurance which Faustus derives is both spurious and blasphemous. He gets the terms right, but the order wrong, and his conclusion "thou art safe" is typically erroneous.

12 Meph.: But tell me Faustus, shall I haue thy soule?
And I will be thy slaue and waite on thee,
And giue thee more then thou hast wit to aske.
Faustus: I Mephostophilis, I'le giue it him. [433-6]

Matthew 16.26: For what shal it profite a man thogh he shulde winne the worlde, if he lose his owne soule? or what shal a man giue for recompense of his soule? [cf. Ecclesiasticus 10.30, 30.23]

Sir Thomas More is reputed to have said, "It profits a man nothing to sell his soul for the world . . . but for Wales?" Once again, the scriptural allusion is to a commonplace so well-known it was already proverbial in the sixteenth century. Faustus bargains his soul for what his training must have told him was not worth having. Yet he shows no awareness of his oversetting of the evangelist's words: the awareness of the inversion must therefore come from the audience. Had Faustus ever been clear-minded enough to say that he simply did not believe in Jesus' values, the moral structure of the play would be changed. A man who

rebels against a moral system he finds unacceptable is a more rational, perhaps more sympathetic, but less tragic figure than Faustus, who in pursuit of the will-o-the-wisp of his demonic powers, seems to forget the significance of all he knows. Nor does he gain the world: only a miserably unsatisfying corner of it. But his soul he nonetheless forfeits, and no matter what the gains, the loss of the soul must be to the Christian the greatest of all tragedies.

13 Faustus: Then theres inough for a thousand soules,
Here Mephostophilis receiue this scrowle,
A deede of gift of body and of soule: [A, 532-4]

Ecclesiasticus 6.35: Whatsoeuer thou takest in hand, remember the end, & thou shalt neuer do amisse.

It is one of the play's most crucial ironies that Faustus knowingly chooses to commit a damnable action without acknowledging that the outcome will therefore be his own damnation. His decision excludes the logic of the situation, and confirms the ludicrous aspect of his wilful ignorance.

14 Faustus: But leauing this, let me haue a wife, the fairest Maid in Germany, for I am wanton and lasciuious, and cannot liue without a wife. [532-4]

Meph.: How, a wife? I prithee Faustus talke not of a wife. [A, 590]

Meph.: Marriage is but a ceremoniall toy,
If thou louest me thinke no more of it,
I'le cull thee out the fairest Curtezans,
And bring them euery morning to thy bed:
She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall haue, [540-44]

BCP: Form of Solemnization of Matrimony: [Matrimony] is an honourable estate, instituted of God in Paradise, in the time of mans innocencie, signifying vnto vs the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church . . . and therefore is not to be enterprised, nor taken in hand vnaduisedly, lightly, or wantonly, to satisfie mens carnall lusts and appetites, like bruite beastes that haue no vnderstanding, but reuerently, discreetly, aduisedly, soberly, and in fear of God, duely considering the causes for which Matrimonie was ordayned.

First, It was ordayned for the procreation of children, to be brought vp in the feare and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy name.

Secondly, It was ordayned for a remedie against sinne, and to auoid fornication; that suche persons as haue not the gifte of continencie might marry, and keepe themselues vndefiled members of Christs bodie.

Thirdlie, It was ordayned for the mutual societie, help, and comforte, that the one ought to haue of the other, bothe in prosperitie and aduersitie. Into the which holy estate these two persons present come now to be ioyned . . . For be ye well assured, that so many as be coupled together otherwise then Gods word doth allow, are not ioyned together by God . . .

It was long ago established that the reason why Mephostophilis cannot fulfil Faustus' request for a wife is, of course, that marriage is a sacrament. Characteristically, Faustus cannot refrain from thinking in liturgical terms, however inappropriate they may be, and however much he has lost sight of their true meaning. He does not want a wife: he wants a sex-object to satisy his "wanton and lasciuious" nature; Mephostophilis correctly gauges his mood in offering to "cull [him] out the fairest Curtezans" [542]. For the loveless Faustus [see Chapter 5], the first and third causes for the ordaining of marriage are meaningless, and Mephostophilis, by his offer of courtesans, demolishes the second: it encourages Faustus' lust while at the same time it precludes the virtue attached to the sacrament of marriage.

Besides this doctrinal point, another is made, in a more overtly theatrical way, by this passage. As his first response to Faustus' demand for a wife, Mephostophilis brings in, as the A-text direction has

it, "a diuell drest like a woman, with fier workes". Faustus scornfully rejects this "hot whore", and the episode would, no doubt, have been most comical on stage. However, at least some members of the audience would have remembered Paul's famous diatribe against fornication (1 Corinthians 6.13-20, 7.2-9) with its stress on the horror of being "one flesh" with a harlot throughout eternity. Here we see Faustus being offered, not a harlot, but a devil got up as one. He rejects it. But much later in the play he begs Mephostophilis to procure him Helen as his paramour, and this time is satisfied with what the devil brings. It cannot be Helen's spirit (over whose disposition no devil has any control, either in hell or heaven), nor can it be one of Mephostophilis' diabolic holograms of Famous Persons of the Past, such as he displayed at Faustus' request to the Emperor, for they were insubstantial. Helen is not: Faustus kisses her, and, as his speech makes clear, goes off with her to make her his "paramour", or in Pauline language, to commit fornication with her. She must, then, be another devil dressed as a woman, and it is a measure of the collapse of Faustus' judgement that he accepts enthusiastically in Act V what he had scornfully dismissed in Act II.

15 Faustus: Say he surrenders vp to him his soule,
So he will spare him foure and twenty yeares, [315-16]

Faustus: . . . and furthermore grant vnto them that foure and twentie yeares being expired, and these Articles aboue written being inviolate, full power to fetch or carry the said Iohn Faustus, body and soule, flesh, bloud . . . [499-502]

Homilies: Second Part of the Sermon of Falling from God, p.58: But for that purpose hath he made every mans death uncertaine, that he should not put his hope in the end, and in the meane season (to GODS high displeasure) live ungodly.

Homilies: Third Part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 273: But as we are most certain that we shall die, so are we most uncertaine when we shall die. For our life doth lie in the hand of God, who will take it away when it pleaseth him.

Ecclesiasticus 18.8: If the nomber of a mans daies be an hundreth yere, it is muche: and no man hathe certaine knowledge of his death.

Psalm 90.12: O teach vs to number our dayes: that we may apply our hearts vnto wisedome.

Psalm 39.5: Lord, let me know mine end, and the number of my dayes: that I may be certified how long I have to liue.

Although the Psalmist begs for foreknowledge in order to structure his life to religious ends, the Homilies, and Ecclesiasticus, remind us of the doctrinal commonplace that such foreknowledge is not granted. Faustus' attempt to secure himself from the death he owes God, for a specific period, is in itself both foolish and blasphemous. It is another of his attempts to evade that readiness that the gospels enjoin, and of whose need Hamlet becomes aware. The obvious irony is that Faustus will live his twenty-four years only if God permits and so wills it. Time is not at the command of either man or devil.

16 Faustus: My foure and twenty yeares of liberty
I'le spend in pleasure and in daliance,
That Faustus name, whilst this bright frame doth stand,
May be admired through the furthest Land. [862-5]

Ecclesiasticus 38.24: The wisdome of a learned man cometh by vsing wel his vacant time: and he that ceaseth from his own matters and labour, may come by wisdome.

Homilies: Third Part of the Sermon of Salvation, p.20: These great, and mercifull benefits of GOD (if they be well considered) doe neither minister unto us occasion to be idle, and to live without doing any good workes . . . they move us to render our selues unto God wholy with all our will, hearts, might, and power, to serue him in all good deeds,

obeying his Commandements during our lives, to seeke in all things his glory, and honour, not our sensuall pleasures, and vaine glorie . . .

It is a far cry from his original desire for omnipotence that Faustus now articulates such a degenerate objective. His liberty, he realizes, is now confined by the twenty-four year span he believes he has been guaranteed, yet he uses time only to indulge in "friuolous demandes" [306]. Stated in these terms, his life now becomes a testimony to his reversal of the religious significance of man's alotted time on earth.

17 Faustus: What might the staing of my bloud portend?
Is it vnwilling I should write this byll?
Why streames it not, that I may write afresh?
Faustus giues to thee his soule: O there it staid.
Why shouldst thou not? is not thy soule thine owne?
Then write again: Faustus giues to thee his soule. [451-6]

Romans 13.1-2: Let every soule be subiect vnto the higher powers: for there is no power but of God: & the powers that be are ordeined of God. Whosoeuer therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receiue to them selues iudgement.

Psalm 69.33: The humble shall consider this, and bee glad: seeke ye after God, and your soule shall liue. [cf. Psalm 121.7]

Faustus' sensitive soul quite rightly rebels against the monstrous and unnatural action that his rational soul intends.[1] The resistance of the body to destructive acts of the will is a commonplace of Renaissance tragic dramaturgy (Macbeth's sleeplessness is an obvious example). Paul reminds us that while the will is free, willful action against God is inevitably self-destructive. Faustus' question, "is not thy soule thine

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[1]For these terms, see Lewis, The Discarded Image, Chapter VII C.

owne" invites the response "yes, but . . . " As all things were made by God, they are to that extent God's: we are His creatures, and not our own in the simplistic, absolute sense Faustus implies by his question. The soul does not exist _in vacuo_, and if Faustus rejects its natural link with God, he will inevitably find another link is formed, but one which will leave him less free than he was before.

18 Faustus: Loe _Mephostophilis_: for loue of thee,
I cut mine arme, and with my proper blood
Assure my soule to be great _Lucifers_,
Chiefe Lord and regent of perpetual night,
View heere the blood that trickles from mine arme,
And let it be propitious for my wish. [A, 493-8]

Romans 3.24-5: And are iustified frely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Whom God hathe set forthe to be a reconciliation [Bishop's Bible: propitiation] through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness, by the forgiveness of the sinnes that are passed through the pacience of God.

Faustus here plays the role of the anti-Christ, offering his blood as an anti-sacramental propitiation for his diabolical bargain. Near the end of the play, Faustus will have an epiphany of Christ's blood streaming in the firmament, a visible sign of the true meaning of sacrifice, which must set in ironic contrast the futility, the ungraciousness, of Faustus' abominable blood-offering.

19 Faustus: _Consummatum est_: this byll is ended,
And Faustus hath bequeath'd his soule to _Lucifer_. [462-3]

John 19.30: Now when Iesus had receiued of the vinegre, he said, (m)It is finished, and bowed his head, and gaue vp the gost.

note (m): Mans saluation is perfected by the onelie sacrifice of Christ: & all the ceremonies of the Law are ended.

BCP: Communion service, Prayer of Consecration: Almighty God, our heauenly Father, who of thy mercie didst giue thine onelie Son Iesus Christ to suffer death vpon the Crosse for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himselfe once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sinnes of the whole worlde . . .

BCP: Articles of Religion, Art. 31: Of the One Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross: The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sinnes of the whole world, bothe originall and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sinne, but that alone.

This scarcely needs comment. Christ's cry of victory over anguish and despair is converted to a particularly grubby and despicable use by Faustus. It is a hideous parody of the expiatory suffering of Christ, which Faustus is rejecting. It is also one of the moments in the play with which no member of the audience could be expected to have any sympathy.

20 BCP: Morning Prayer: Second Collect, for Peace: O God which art Author of peace, and louer of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternall life, whose seruice is perfect freedome . . .

The debasement inherent in any compact with the devil, and the ironic distance between Faustus' anticipated supremacy, and his actual servility, dramatize the emptiness of the bargain. Here, one of the most famous Collects illustrates the confusion of values by which Faustus determines his actions. In exchange for the perfect love and freedom that is inherent in the service of God, Faustus seeks independence from any such service, believing it to be submission and baseness, "harsh, con-

temptible, and vile" [A, 142]. Trust in God is rejected in favour of trust in the devil; spiritual freedom is sacrificed for demonic bondage. The ironies which cloak the repeated exercise of Faustus' moral choice and his relationship with the devil are the ironies of sin and abuse of freedom in a revolt against the divine, and hence the natural, Order.

21 Faustus: Tush Christ did call the Theefe vpon the Crosse,
Then rest thee Faustus quiet in conceit. [1550-1]

Luke 23.39-43: And one of the euil doers, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, saue thy self and vs. But the other answered, and rebuked him, saying, Fearest thou not God, seeing thou art in the same condemnacion? We are indeed righteously here: for we receiue things worthie of that we haue done, but this man hathe done nothing amisse. And he said vnto Iesus, Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdome. Then Iesus said vnto him, Verily I say vnto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

Homilies: Second Part of the Sermon against the Feare of Death, p. 63: . . . and doubt not, but we shall find him as mercifull unto us, as he was eyther to Lazarus, or to the thiefe, whose examples are written in holy Scripture for the comfort of them that be sinners, and subiect to sorrowes, miseries, and calamities in this world, that they should not despaire in GODS mercy, but ever trust thereby to have forgivenesse of their sinnes, and life everlasting, as Lazarus, and the thiefe had.

The thief Christ called upon acknowledged his sins and called upon Jesus for help by an act of faith. Faustus forgets the other thief, who in all points resembles him more closely. Once again, as in the classic misrepresentation of Scripture in the first scene, Faustus misappropriates and misapplies the words of the gospel.

22 Faustus: Thy fatall time drawes to finall end;
Despaire doth driue distrust into my thoughts.

Confound these passions with a quiet sleepe:
Tush Christ did call the Theefe vpon the Crosse,
Then rest thee Faustus quiet in conceit.
[He sits to sleepe.] [1546-51]

1 Thessalonians 5.6: Therefore let vs not (c)slepe as do other, but let vs watch and be sober.

note (c): Here slepe is taken for contempt of saluation, when men continewe in sinnes and wil not awake to godlines.

Mark 13.35-7: Watch therefore, (for ye knowe not when the Master of the house wil come, at euen, or at midnight, at the cocke crowing, or in the dauning) Lest if he come suddenly, he shulde find you sleping. And those things that I say vnto you, I say vnto all men, Watch.

[cf. Ecclesiasticus 13.14, 50.5]

Sleep, it was a commonplace, was an emblem of death: "To die, to sleep". What dreams may come is the rub for Faustus also, as we see him carelessly and contemptuously choosing, by sleeping, to evade once more the crisis that impends. Sleep is a gift from heaven, that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care, but wakefulness and readiness is enjoined upon the man who is concerned for his salvation. Faustus' presumption, retreating into idle sleep at such a moment, is another characteristic evasion.

23 Wagner: And yet methinkes, if that death were neere,
He would not banquet, and carowse, and swill
Amongst the Students, as euen now he doth,
Who are at supper with such belly-cheere,
As Wagner nere beheld in all his life. [A, 1269-73]

Isaiah 22.13: And beholde, ioye and gladnes, slaying oxen and killing shepe, eating flesh, and drinking wine(p) eating and drinking: for tomorowe we shal dye.

note (p): In stead of repentance ye wer ioyful & made great chere, contemning the admonitions of the Prophets, saying, Let us eat and drinke: for our Prophets say, that we shal dye tomorowe.

[cf. 1 Corinthians 15.32-3 (also included in the BCP service for the burial of the dead)]

Even Wagner recognizes that, if Faustus' death were so close as the making of his will suggested, such partying would be highly inappropriate. Faustus' state of mind, however, is not tuned to his imminent dissolution, but is rather characterized by its habitual prevarication. All he is doing is still perversely and morbidly wasting the time that had once seemed so important that he would bargain his soul for it. Appropriately, the stage-directions which open the scene describe a demonic catering service, with Mephostophilis leading a group of "deuils with couer'd dishes" [1776] into Faustus' study.

24 Faustus: What shal I do to shun the snares of death? [A, 1332]

Luke 17.33: Whosoeuer wil seke to saue his soule shal lose it: & whosoeuer shal lose it, shal get it life.

Homilies: Exhortation against the Feare of Death, p. 59: . . . there is another cause much greater then any of these afore-rehearsed, for which indeed he hath iust cause to feare death, and that is the state, and condition whereunto at the last end death bringeth all them that have their hearts fixed upon this world, without repentance, and amendment . . . And this is that death, which indeed ought to be dread, and feared: for it is an everlasting losse without remedy of the grace, and favour of GOD, and of everlasting ioy, pleasure, and felicity.

p. 61: And we ought to beleve that death being slaine by Christ, cannot keepe any man that stedfastly trusteth in Christ, under his perpetuall tyranny, and subiection.

Second part of the Sermon against the Feare of Death, p.66: . . . I trust, every Christian man perceiveth by the infallible or undeceiueable Word of GOD, that bodily death cannot harme nor hinder them that truly believe in Christ . . .

Third part of the Sermon against the Feare of Death, p. 66: And doth our Saviour say plainly in S. Iohns Gospell, Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and commeth not into iudgement, but shall passe from death to life. Shall we not then thinke that death to be precious, by which we passe unto life?

Faustus' question reveals his inability to think of life and death in other than worldly, temporal terms. He bargained for a specific span of time with the devil, and thereby set a clock going in his head whose ticking drives out the voices of Christian thinking, which express a different view of life and death--of life as a preparation for the spiritual life to come, of death as an entrance to that life, as an opportunity, rather than merely as a punishment. His fear of suffering blurs and finally obliterates the paradox that Luke states and that the homilist elaborates upon. Faustus' twenty-four years have become for him not a time of freedom, but an intellectual prison-sentence, from which he will not be liberated, but condemned again, into another, more absolute form of punishment.

25 Faustus: I do repent I ere offended him,
Sweet Mephostophilis: intreat thy Lord
To pardon my vniust presumption,
And with my bloud againe I will confirme
The former vow I made to Lucifer.
Meph.: Do it then Faustus, with vnfained heart, [1850-5]

Mayer's Catechism, No. 132: Q: Wherein stands true repentance?
A: In three things. First, in knowledge and acknowledgment of our sinnes past. Secondly, in godly sorrow and griefe of the heart for them. Thirdly, in a godly purpose to forsake all sin, and to lead a new life for all time to come.

BCP: Communion: Confession: . . . We acknowledge and bewaile our manifold sinnes and wickednesse . . . against thy diuine Magestie, prouoking most iustly thy wrath and indignation against vs. Wee doe earnestly repent, and bee heartily sory for these our misdoings . . . forgiue vs all that is past, and grant that we may euer hereafter serue and please thee in newnes of life . . .

Homilies: Homily of Repentance, and of True Reconciliation unto God, p. 258: Therefore they be here condemned, which will seeme to be

repentant sinners, and yet will not forsake their Idolatry, and superstition.

Once again, Faustus automatically uses sacramental language: like Stephen Dedalus, his mind is "supersaturated with religion", so that even at his most irreligious he turns to forms of words and thoughts that are as familiar to him as to the audience. Here, he makes his "confession" in almost exactly the language prescribed by the BCP--but, alas, to the wrong person. A further irony that would, no doubt, be appreciated by the more strenuously anti-Catholic in the audience is that Mephostophilis is garbed (at Faustus' request) as a friar. He thus calls to mind the figure of the Father Confessor, who reminds Faustus that confession must be made with an unfeigned heart. Plenty of Elizabethans saw Catholic priests and monks as representatives of Satan, so that the role Mephostophilis adopts here has a kind of grim aptness.

26 Faustus: To glut the longing of my hearts desire,
That I might haue vnto my paramour,
That heauenly Helen which I saw of late,
Whose sweete embracings may extinguish cleane
Those thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,
And keepe mine oath I made to Lucifer. [A, 1349-54]

Ecclesiasticus 9.2,8: Giue not thy life vnto a woman, lest she ouercome thy strength, [and so thou be confounded.]
Turne away thine eye from a beautiful woman, and loke not vpon others beautie: for manie haue perished by the beautie of women: for thorow it loue is kindled as a fyre. [cf. 1 Corinthians 6.16]

Paul and the author of Ecclesiasticus share the common prophetic hostility towards female sexuality. Characteristically, Faustus inverts their advice. Not satisfied with the kind of companionship Mephostophilis

had made available to him earlier in the play, he now seeks a supreme sensual experience as the moment of his supreme spiritual suffering draws near. Faustus has routinely drowned his conscience in sensual delight; now the icon of sensuality is needed to deter him from a last-minute repentance. And it is Faustus himself who insists upon being so deterred. "Helen" provides Faustus with the occasion for his greatest poetic and imaginative moment, but it is also his last great moment, for Helen is the icon of destruction, the baneful power of female beauty, as well as of its glory. We have already noted (No. 14, above) that whatever Faustus imagines he sees, or is persuaded by Mephostophilis to see, it is not Helen of Troy, but a devil in disguise to whom Faustus addresses his rapturous speech. If this was made clear to the audience (a reasonable supposition), then the folly Faustus exhibits in disregarding the Biblical point of view about women would be plain. That a man should lose his head over a lovely woman is, perhaps, deplorable (though scarcely as dreadful as Paul would have us believe), but that he should lose his head over a diabolical facsimile argues very poor judgement indeed.

27 Psalm 23.4: Yea, though I walke through the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare no euill: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staffe comfort me.

Psalm 119.62: At midnight I will rise to giue thankes vnto thee: because of thy righteous iudgements.

Poor Faustus: his last hour is spent in the Valley of the Shadow, but for him, bereft of God, it is a place of terror and truly pitiable

agony of spirit. And at midnight, hell mouth opens for him.

28 Faustus: See see where Christs blood streames in the firmament,
One drop would saue my soule, halfe a drop, ah my Christ,
[A, 1463-4]

Mayer's Catechism, No. 110: Q: How may we be saued from our sinnes?
A: Onely by the bloud of Jesus Christ laid hold vpon by a true and liuely faith.

Homilies: Second part of the Homily of Repentance, p. 267: The third part of repentance, is fayth, whereby we doe apprehend, and take hold upon the promises of GOD, touching the free pardon, and forgivenesse of our sinnes. Which promises are sealed up unto us, with the death, and blood-shedding of his Sonne Jesu Christ. For what should it availe, and profit us . . . to lament, and bewaile . . . unlesse we doe stedfastly believe, and be fully perswaded, that GOD for his Sonne Jesus Christs sake will forgive us all our sinnes . . . [cf. Third part of the Homily of Repentance, p.272]

The catechist neatly expresses Faustus' problem. The blood is there; it is always there, but an act of divine grace makes it visible to Faustus at this last moment. He, however, conceives it as streaming in the firmament out of his reach, because he lacks the true and lively faith that would enable him to lay hold on it. Christ's blood was shed "for many" for the remission of their sins, as the Consecration Prayer reminds us at every Communion: not for all.

> It is a vaine thing therefore for any man to persuade himself of deliverance from sinne and death, by Christ his bloud, vnlesse his conscience bee heereby purged from dead workes of sin, in newnesse of life to serue God . . . No more can that man be any better then a slaue of the Deuill, though Christs precious bloud hath been paid for ransome, if hee will still liue the seruant of sinne, and of the Deuill . . . Nor lastly can any be cleansed from the leprosie of sin, vnlesse his precepts bee obeyed, who onely can, and doth direct rightly to vse the streams of his bloud for this end and purpose. Oh mad men then . . . How is it that yee looke for deliuerance from death by Christs bloud, when no power of his death is

> seene to mortifie and kill sinne in you? . . . as Christ his bloud alone purgeth from sinne, so it must be applied by the sinner vnto his own soule by the hand of faith. All the water of all riuers will not make a man cleane, vnlesse with hands he bee washed with the water: no more will Christ his bloud make cleane the soule, vnless with the hand of faith it be applied vnto it. For this cause, as the bloud of Christ is said to cleanse from all sinne, so faith is said to purge the heart from sinne, and to justifie a sinner. That precious bloud purgeth, and justifieth, as the cause materiall; Faith, as the cause instrumentall.[1]

29 Faustus: Mountaines and hilles, come come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heauy wrath of God. [A, 1470-1]

Matthew 17.20: And Iesus said vnto them, Because of your vnbeliefe: for verely I say vnto you, if ye haue faith as muche as is in a graine of mustard sede, ye shal say vnto this mountaine, Remoue hence to yonder place, & it shal remoue: and nothing shalbe vnpossible vnto you

Faith can move mountains; but, alas, conjuring can not. This most famous statement of the power that inheres in belief cannot fail to be called to mind by Faustus' impotent and desperate attempt to do the same thing by the wrong methods for the wrong reasons.

30 Psalm 30.5: For his wrath endureth but the twinkling of an eye, and in his pleasure is life: heauiness may endure for a night, but ioy commeth in the morning.

Misery has for Faustus indeed endured for the night, and not joy, but death and damnation follow in the morning. It is an appropriate end for a man who believed of God that His wrath was everlasting, and His

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[1]Mayer's Catechism, pp. 409-10.

pleasure lay in inflicting punishment.

CHAPTER FIVE

FAUSTUS THE LOVELESS: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

Though I have all faith, so that
I could move mountains, and
have not charity, I am nothing.
(1 Corinthians 13.2)

> For he that followeth not his owne appetite, and will, but giveth himselfe earnestly to GOD, to doe all his will, and Commandements, he may be sure that hee loveth GOD above all things, and else surely he loveth him not, whatsoever he pretend: as Christ sayd, If yee love me, keepe my Commandements. For he that knoweth my Commandements, and keepeth them, he it is (sayth Christ) that loveth me. And againe he sayth, he that loveth me, will keepe my Word. And likewise he that beareth a good heart, and mind, and useth well his tongue, and deeds unto every man, friend, and foe, he may know thereby that he hath charity. And when he is sure that Almighty God taketh him for his deare beloved Sonne, as S. Iohn sayth, hereby manifestly are knowne the children of GOD, from the children of the divell for whosoever doth not love his brother, belongeth not unto GOD.[1]

The concept of Christian love is founded upon the plurality of human devotion in which men, and not one man alone, commune with God. It is this community of Christian fellowship which allows the profession of faith to flourish and indeed truly to exist: "For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18.20). When man stands alone, there can be no love; and if he chooses isolation over the harmony of the Christian society he becomes the extreme individualist who can have no God but himself, no love but

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[1]Homilies: Sermon of Christian Love, and Charity, p. 42.

self-love. This centrality, if translated into the language of a dramatic metaphor, becomes the tragedy performed by a one-man show, in which all the scenes revolve around one actor, and the language and action reflect only his thoughts or situation. The human relationships which dramatic art celebrates, whether their outcome be good or ill, do not appear in such a play, despite the audience's moral impulse to look for them.

In Doctor Faustus Marlowe has created precisely this sense of isolation, defined not only by the play's dramatic structure and language, but also by its Christian ethic. Doctor Faustus is the one-man tragedy: though the play is inhabited occasionally by the worlds of clowns and imperial courts, demonic and angelic spirits, there is but a single dramatic focus and only one burden of human responsibility for moral choice. Douglas Cole's sensitive interpretation of the play is directed to making such a point:

> There are fewer human figures of importance in Doctor Faustus than in any other play by Marlowe: men are not caught in a web of mutual betrayal or torment; rather the dramatic light focuses glaringly on one man and one man alone, a man who neither works his violent will upon others to cause them pain, nor meets his own suffering at the hands of other men. Doctor Faustus is a man who of his own conscious willfulness brings tragedy and torment crashing down upon his head, the pitiful and fearful victim of his own ambitions and desires.[1]

When the Third Scholar attempts to diagnose Faustus' discomfiture in the final scene, he says, "He is not well with being ouer solitarie" [1929]. The line cuts deep because of its religious signifi-

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[1]Cole, p. 191.

cance, calling to mind that the Christian lives not in himself, but in Christ and in his neighbour. Faustus' world revolves entirely around himself, from the beginning of the play where he is discovered sitting in his study alone; it is the place where the end of the play appropriately returns to its beginning, as Faustus returns to Wittenberg and to his study, and dies alone. The concept of Christian fellowship is given its true expression by the Second Scholar early in the play, when, upon hearing the news that Faustus has "falne into that damned Art" [217], he reveals a genuine sense of regret: "Were he a stranger, not allyed to me,/ The danger of his soule would make me mourne" [219-20]. It is a rather inconspicuous line, uttered by a character of no real consequence in the play, but it contains the weightiest of theological implications.

The Scholar evokes an attitude which binds him, as a Christian, to the society of all men in mutual affection; and as a member of that community he must be concerned for the spiritual welfare of his brothers. His statement gives him the credentials of the true Christian, and marks his faith as one confirmed by love: "A new commandement giue I vnto you, that ye loue one another: as I haue loued you, that ye also loue one another. By this shal all men knowe that ye are my disciples, if ye haue loue one to another" [John 13.34-5]. The Biblical message underpins the dramatic outcome of Faustus' perverse actions, as he proves himself to be the loveless man, the creature of a self-imposed alienation from society and from the love of God. His fall is thus placed within a universal Christian framework, by which his sin can be recognized and defined, and his condition described.

Faustus is anti-social on principle, refusing to accept the limitations that define the human condition--limitations which, to the Christian, are opportunities: "Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man" [50]. Unable to perceive the opportunities of his humanity, he desires to be more than what he can be, and thus stands outside himself and what he is in order to "tire [his] braines to get a Deity" [89]. His exaggerated sense of individuality leads him to repudiate his humanity, and to erect impenetrable barriers against self-perception. Faustus stands revealed in his tragic isolation--an isolation not only from other individuals, but also one which separates self from true self. C.L. Barber observes, in this respect, that the "hero constantly talks about himself as though from the outside, using his own name so as to develop a self-consciousness which aggrandizes his identity, or cherishes it, or grieves for it".[1] This is the language of alienation: it is incantation, a willful, self-made sort of liturgy. In the opening speech, Faustus uses his name seven times in trying on the selves provided by the various arts. Here, the repeated use of his own name, like a dominant theme in a musical overture, establishes the singular dramatic focus which is to reinforce itself as the play goes on. The hero's name is used 157 times in the play, and as many as half of these are by Faustus himself. He is "swolne with cunning, of a selfe conceit" [20], but much more than this, Faustus is the dramatization of total self-obsession. His world is governed by the dictates of his own will, and

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[1]Barber, p. 117.

accentuated by the selfishness of an "I" and "me" individual.

In his second soliloquy, the exuberant flight of the rhetoric illustrates Faustus' obsession with the ecstasies of omnipotence in his self-centred universe.

> With unrestricted enthusiasm he envisages his heroic exercise of power-knowledge; he will have gold, pearls, delicacies, military and political distinction . . . his spirits will "fly" to India, carry out any "desperate enterprise", "ransack" the ocean and "all corners" of America. Marlowe is presenting dramatically the autonomous will and its functioning.[1]

Faustus has freed his will from belief and tradition by stressing egotism and the exhilaration of self-dramatization, as the language of the second soliloquy clearly reveals: in twenty-two lines he uses "me" four times, "I" ten times, seven of which are in conjunction with "will". The vaunt and the egocentricity of his statements qualify, for the moment, the fantastic and the irrational glory of his aspiration. And in time, even his own suffering will become another expression of self-indulgent will:

> But Faustus offence can nere be pardoned,
> The Serpent that tempted Eue may be sau'd,
> But not Faustus: [A, 1402-4]

His despair is as selfish and as egotistical as his initial desires. Faustus cannot see himself as an ordinary sinner; he must be the greatest of all sinners, unpardonable, isolated, and necessarily damned. Our sympathies at first go out to him in his final conversation with the Scholars, when he apparently shows touching concern for their

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[1]Heilman, p. 319.

welfare, and warns them to save themselves from the dangers that await him; perhaps his humanity has not become totally depraved. However:

> Second Scholar: O what may we do to saue Faustus?
> Faustus: Talke not of me, but saue your selues and depart.
> Third Scholar: God will strengthen me, I will stay with Faustus.
> First Scholar: Tempt not God sweet friend, but let vs into the next roome, and pray for him.
> Faustus: I, pray for me, pray for me: and what noyse soeuer you heare, come not vnto me, for nothing can rescue me. [1971-7]

The pronouns are the key to the passage, illustrating how "Faustus" is forever on Faustus' mind. He rejects the scholars' offer of comfort and company, for the "me" in him aggrandizes his sense of individuality even in his despair; he will have his isolation and his suffering for himself.

Faustus' anguish is also expressed in terms of a self-centred nature. He weeps because he has "lost eternall ioy and felicitie" [1961], but he has not progressed to the point where he feels grief at having offended God's love. He "[leaps] up to [his] God" [A, 1462], not to ask for mercy or forgiveness in genuine repentance, but to "impose some end to [his] incessant paine" [A, 1485]. The "naming" of his Christ [A, 1465] is used in an appeal for succour; "the name is, for [Faustus], a kind of magical formula by means of which he hopes to escape from his hell, but, like his other formulas, it is individualistic in intent, and, like them, merely plunges him deeper into hell."[1] In the throes of the consummate fear which grips him, he realizes that "no end is limited to damned soules" [A, 1488], and he searches for ways by which he can avoid an eternity of pain. But Faustus' hell has already begun: he is confined in his state of infinite loneliness, desperate deprivation, and utter frus-

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[1]Greene, p. 281.

tration. Mephostophilis' words have proved true:

> Why this is hell: nor am I out of it.
> Think'st thou that I that saw the face of God,
> And tasted the eternall Ioyes of heauen,
> Am not tormented with ten thousand hels,
> In being depriu'd of euerlasting blisse? [301-5]
>
> . . . but where we are is hell,
> And where hell is there must we euer be. [514-15]

Unlike Mephostophilis, Faustus' anguish is grounded in the fear of perpetual pain rather than in an awareness of eternal separation from God, and his end is all the more tragic because he remains unaware. Shrieking the final, futile promise to burn his books, Faustus is dragged off stage without the slightest understanding of his condition, or the reasons for it, or any repentance for it. Instead he offers, childishly, to destroy the mere material means of his sin.[1] He has eaten his cake, his four-and-twenty years of "all voluptuousness", and hell now provides the crowning glory of his "cupidity", and the just reward for his lack of "charity". These two terms, in St. Augustine's definition, are theologically appropriate, and fully applicable to the play:

> Scripture teaches nothing but charity, nor condemns anything except cupidity, and in this way shapes the minds of men. I call "charity" the motion of the soul toward the enjoyment of God for His own sake, and the enjoyment of one's self and one's neighbour for the sake of God; but "cupidity" is a motion of the soul toward the enjoyment of one's self, one's neighbour, or any corporal thing for the sake of something other than God.[2]

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[1]Waswo, p. 96

[2]St. Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, III. 10. 15-16, as cited in O'Brien, p. 3. The article traces the theological concepts defined by Augustine and Aquinas as a background to an understanding of the play.

Faustus' extreme commitment to cupidity infects all his developed human gifts in a process of degeneration and self-corruption. His will continually directs itself towards his own gratification, even at a time when his conscience is troubled:

> Abiure this Magicke, turn to God againe,
> I, and Faustus wil turne to God againe.
> To God? he loues thee not,
> The God thou seruest is thine owne appetite,
> wherein is fixt the loue of Belsabub. [A, 445-9]

Ironically, hell can in a sense reward the efforts of the individualistic soul by giving it what it believes it most desires; the isolated soul becomes at last the centre of the universe for itself, the goal of all its striving. It is, however, an unbalanced centre, where the soul is buried in its own isolation. In a reconsideration of the nature of hell, Nicolas Berdyaev has reaffirmed the traditional idea that hell must be viewed as the state of "absolute self-centredness and so of total isolation. Hell creates and organizes the separation of God, from God's world and from other men . . . the soul is separated from everyone and from everything."[1]

In precisely these terms, Faustus has created his own hell and damned himself to its perpetual isolation. But the process began in the world as he knew it; the consequences of his damnation are apparent well before the clock strikes twelve. His rejection of God alienates him from a spiritual life which seeks a Divine-human communion. Divinity is abandoned in a moral act of wilfull choice in which Faustus refuses the word and love of God. Having failed to understand the nature and conse-

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[1]N. Berdyaev, The Destiny of Man, as cited in Patrides, p. 232.

quences of God's love--"I, we must die, an euerlasting death" [73], he reveals his own incapacity to love in return: "We loue him, because he loued vs first" [1 John 4.19]. Because he is loveless, Faustus cannot grasp the implications of unqualified freedom. The "motion" of his soul is inward, dedicated to fulfilling his desires and ambitions with "resolute" determination. For freedom he has exchanged bondage to the devil and to sin--the consequences of a temporal damnation. Faustus is however at first unaware of the spiritual death he has chosen for himself. "Nay, and this be hell, I'le willingly be damn'd" [530]. His jaunty detachment allows him to continue unaware, until experience changes his mind, just as Mephostophilis foretold. Marlowe dramatizes that experience in the form of Faustus' despair, the sin which punishes sin, the anguish of conscience which follows apostasy: "My hearts so hardned I cannot repent" [A, 647]; "What art thou Faustus but a man condemn'd to die?" [1546]. In a sermon, "The Betraying of Christ", Henry Smith describes the despair which is both crime and punishment: "There is a shame of sinne, and guilt of conscience, and feare of judgement, even in the reprobate, which is a foretast of hell which the wicked feele."[1]

His despair and anguished conscience is Faustus' condemnation begun, the "foretast of hell" felt by those who have self-willed their exclusion from God. This temporal damnation is the condition of the loveless state, and has its basis outlined in the Gospel of St. John:

> He that beleueth in him, shal not be condemned: but he that beleueth not, is condemned already, because he

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[1]Henry Smith, Sermons (London 1592, 1607) as cited in Waswo, p. 77.

> beleueth not in the Name of the onely begotten Sonne of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the worlde, & men loued darknes rather then light, because there dedes were euil. For euerie man that euil doeth, hateth the light, nether commeth to light, lest his dedes shulde be reproued. [3.18-20]

Protestant theologians enthusiastically developed the gospel hints that man, by sinning, is separated from God, and therefore is in a state of condemnation. "These chaines of sinnes," wrote Richard Sibbes, "reserve [man] to further chaines: Even as the Devill is reserved in chaines, that is, in terrours of his conscience, which as chaines bind him till he be in Hell, the place he is destinated to; so we being in the chaines, and bondage, vexed with our sinnes, we are at the same time in the chaines of terrours of conscience, the beginnings of Hell, and reserved to chaines of damnation, and death, world without end."[1]

For Faustus, damnation comes entirely from within. He is damned because he believes he has always been so:

> Scarce can I name saluation, faith, or heauen,
> But feareful ecchoes thunders in mine eares,
> Faustus, thou art damn'd, [A, 648-50]

and in that belief lies the experience of damnation. Tragic isolation is the condition in which the loveless person exists through denial of God's love and of Christian fellowship.

The structure of the play can be examined to cast light on this assertion. In Doctor Faustus, the plot structure is less a sequence of cause and effect than a progressive commentary on Faustus' fortunes. It

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[1]Richard Sibbes, Beames of Divine Light, Part II (London, 1639), as cited in Waswo, p. 72.

is at this point that interpretation can advert to the comic elements in the play as being an intrinsic part of the whole. Most critics believe that the comic portions in some way symbolize Faustus' repudiation of "creation in favor of chaos",[1] that they are the dark background against which the "overplot becomes luminously adumbrated".[2] For the greater part of the time that Faustus is not on stage, the play's world becomes inhabited by the farcical behaviour of the low-life characters. The comic scenes point, by parallelism, to the pettiness of Faustus' accomplishments, the absurdity of desires achieved through infernal knowledge. And more can be said about the manner in which each individual scene capitalizes in some way upon, or parodies, Faustus' own behaviour and thought: "Indeed, in Faustus there is no plot apart from character, no plot apart from what Faustus himself says, thinks, feels and does."[3]

However, for the purpose of this study, instead of re-analyzing what critics have already stressed, a rather obvious but overlooked issue will be considered. The existence of the clowns and comic servants is a rather shadowy business: by comparison with Faustus, their dramatic reality is at best marginal. Relationships are not presented, let alone developed, and these characters frequently speak in language more appropriate to the play's protagonist than to their apparent roles and status. Thus the function of the comic scenes is essentially centripetal

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[1]Roland Mushat Frye, "Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: the Repudiation of Humanity", in Farnham, ed., Twentieth Century Interpretations, p. 57.

[2]Levin, p. 146.

[3]Frye, op. cit., p. 54.

as it were, both in presentation and intent, in that they serve chiefly to refocus the audience's attention continually upon the central character. There are no true human "characters" in Doctor Faustus other than Faustus himself. Marlowe presents his character not only in theological isolation, but in effective dramatic solitude as well. Faustus is the "ouer solitarie" protagonist in a play that is concerned solely with one character and his spiritual destiny. Other characters appear either to symbolize various facets of the hero's personal conflict, or, by the very evanescence of their presentation, to suggest something of the way Faustus perceives the world about him: scarcely real, insubstantial, mere supporting actors in the great role Faustus thinks he is writing for himself.

> And so, inevitably, we are returned to Faustus himself.
>
> Of all things that be good to be taught unto Christian people, there is nothing more necessary to be spoken of, and dayly called upon, then charity: as well for that all manner of works of righteousnes be contained in it, as also that the decay thereof is the ruine or fall of the world, the banishment of vertue, & the cause of all vice.[1]

Charity, as it was always translated; agape; love. Faustus simply does not know in the slightest what the term means and implies.

> What ultimately dooms Faustus, body and soul, is that, stung by his conscience and fretting over the fact that he has denied God, he yields to the sin of despair and so is led to reject the proferred mercy of God made manifest in Christ. It was not obeying or disobeying the ten commandments that determined the salvation or the damnation of Faustus but his failure to obey what Christ called the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God

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[1] Homilies: Sermon of Christian Love, and Charity, p. 40

> with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."[1]

Marlowe has directed his dramatic exploration of this central truth to the world of one man, whose ultimate transactions are between himself and God, rather than between men. "Marlowe repeatedly directs our attention to God's judgement and the life to come . . . . And even though the deity never appears on stage, every significant action of the human protagonist is considered in terms of the divine reaction."[2] It is certainly no accident that as Faustus' situation becomes more and more desperate towards the end of the play, the manifestations of divine presence and succour cluster ever more thickly about him, though to no avail.

Marlowe's use of theological doctrine in building the structure of this tragic drama has shed considerable light on the "form of Faustus' fortunes good or bad". His end is "such as euery Christian heart laments to thinke on" [2106-7]. And because he has refused to accept and to grow in the belief that "there's a divinity which shapes our ends / Rough-hew them how we will", Faustus' damnation is a statement of moral reality. The tragedy of the play is that he has finally to accept his immortality, not that he was confined, or restricted, by the conditions of his human mortal nature. Had he not violated and desecrated his Christian beliefs, he would have come to that immortality to which he had originally aspired; had he held fast and accepted in all its implications that he

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[1]Campbell, p. 223.

[2]Frye, "Theological Structures", pp. 137, 141.

was "but a man", he would have received all the glories of that unique condition, more indeed than he had wit to ask. Instead, self-tormented, and self-destroyed, Faustus the loveless stands as the paradigm in dramatic terms for the ultimate of Christian tragedies, the individual who loses his own soul.

APPENDIX

No critic who values his intellectual reputation would dare write in detail on Doctor Faustus without acknowledging the complex textual problems of the play. The crucial work on its text was done by Sir Walter Greg and reported in his parallel-text edition.[1] Since then, although argument has persisted over the date of the play, it has been generally accepted that the textual problem is largely solved.

Basically, the facts appear to be these: that the A-text of 1604 is based on a memorial reconstruction of an abridged version of the play. The B-text of 1616 depends fundamentally upon foul papers, and to that extent is of higher authority, but is contaminated from the 1611 reprint of the A-text, which was used as printer's copy. Some 670 lines in the B-text derive directly from MS., another thousand are set from the 1611, but collated against the MS., while some five hundred are reprinted from 1611 without benefit of MS. correction. A fair assumption is that by 1616 the foul papers were defective, thus limiting the possibility for collation.

Most of the material which occurs only in the B-text, or is present there in superior form (i.e. purged of most memorial errors) is connected with the more comical parts of the play in the middle acts. The only place where the more serious scenes diverge significantly is in Act V, where the A-text gives us a different version of the Old Man's

appeal to Faustus, and a short speech in which he defies the infernal powers. However, it also excludes the scene in which Lucifer and the other devils ascend from Hell and gloat over Faustus' impending fall, the final scene for the Good and Bad Angels, and the scene for the scholars after Faustus' death. Elsewhere in the play such scenes are closely parallel in the A- and B-texts. Greg's reasonable inference was that in this scene Marlowe made some changes after writing the foul papers, which were incorporated into the (lost) prompt-book, and thus appear in the A-text.

The other questions which remain disputed are whether the play is integrally Marlovian, or the result of a collaboration; and whether the additions for which Henslowe paid Birde (or Borne) and Rowley £4 in 1602 survive in the B-text. As to the first, it can be said that the disintegrators have won their case by default: there has never been any reason advanced other than personal critical taste for imagining that Marlowe was not solely responsible for Doctor Faustus. It has therefore been assumed, for the purposes of writing this thesis, that he was the sole author.

Since Greg's edition, only Fredson Bowers, in his,[2] has sought to overset Greg's view that the Birde-Rowley additions have not survived. In a way this is a more crucial question than that of the hypothetical original collaboration. A work produced in genuine collaboration is still a single artefact; a work which has been subsequently altered by someone who was not involved in its original conception cannot be discussed as a homogeneous structure. Fortunately, Bowers's arguments

are not strong. He can only identify some 300 lines which he thinks date from 1602, a very small quantity to justify the large fee of £4 (almost half the cost of a new play: the usual reviser's fee was 10/- or £1).[3] Bowers's arguments from the date of various allusions are threadbare, and in conclusion it seems more likely that Greg was right, and that the 1602 additions are lost.

Hence, for this thesis, it is assumed that Faustus is an integral artefact, that even if the changes in Act V were made deliberately by Marlowe, at least he had written what is preserved in the B-text, and that therefore the ideas found in these scenes can be included in any examination of the matrix of ideas and materials in the dramatist's mind at the time of composition. The effect on the play of their elimination belongs to a different kind of study. Finally, it is assumed that the 1602 additions are not present to confuse the issue, in the B-text.

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[1]Greg, Marlowe's Doctor Faustus 1604 - 1616: Parallel Texts (Oxford: Clarendon, 1950).

[2]Bowers (ed.); Works of Christopher Marlowe, II, 133-9.

[3]Bentley, Profession of Dramatist, p. 248.

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