

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE'S

DOCTOR

FAUSTUS

James H. Lake & Irving Ribner



FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE

Christopher Marlowe's

DOCTOR FAUSTUS

With Introduction, Essays, and Notes

Edited by
IRVING RIBNER

Revised with a new Introduction by
JAMES H. LAKE

Series Editors: Herbert R. Coursen and James H. Lake

Copyright © 2004 James H. Lake

Cover photo: Ian McKellen as Dr. Faustus, 1974. Photo © Donald Cooper.
Used with permission.

Production Manager: Linda Robertson

ISBN 1-58510-089-7

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

This book is published by Focus Publishing, R. Pullins & Company, Inc., PO Box 369, Newburyport MA 01950. All rights are reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, by photocopying, recording, or by any other means, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

For Angela, Christina & Hammond.

Contents

Preface.....	vi
List of Illustrations.....	viii
Introduction.....	1
Timeline.....	20
Relevant English Monarchs.....	22
<i>The Tragical History of The Life And Death of Doctor Faustus</i>	23
On Directing Marlowe’s <i>Dr. Faustus</i> : An Interview with Ralph Alan Cohen.....	85
On Playing Mephistopheles: An Interview with Andreas Teuber.....	89
Textual Notes.....	101
Topics For Discussion And Further Study.....	108
Bibliography.....	111

Preface

Each volume in the Focus On Performance series is designed to make dramas of the past more accessible to contemporary readers. It is a premise of the series that the cultural icons to which we all naturally respond and which are encoded in great drama are best realized through performance, especially through cinema. Each volume in the series provides an established text, with annotations; a substantial introduction, containing historical background, dramatic context, time-line, up-to-date bibliography, and commentary from leading actors, directors, or critics. The present volume includes exclusive interviews with Ralph Alan Cohen, Director of the Shenandoah Shakespeare 2000 production of *Doctor Faustus* and Executive Director of the Company, based in Staunton, Virginia; and Andreas Teuber, Mephistophilis in the Coghill-Burton 1966-67 stage and film productions of the play, and now Artistic Director of the Cambridge Theatre Company in residence at the Hasty Pudding Theatre in Harvard Square, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The play text comes from *The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Irving Ribner, as reprinted in *Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Text and Major Criticism*. The format of the book has been revised to comply with the standards of the new series but the original play text and Ribner's textual notes are unchanged. Some of the footnotes, however, have been augmented, some new ones added, and act and scene designations have been changed from Roman to Arabic numerals. Readers should be aware that there are two versions of *Doctor Faustus*, neither of which was written entirely by Marlowe. One was printed in 1604, the other in 1616. The earlier version is relatively short and straightforward. The later is much longer and contains more comedy; it is also more cynical and deterministic. Yet today's audiences find the skepticism and mingling of comedy and tragedy just as appealing as audiences did in the seventeenth century. Ribner felt that the 1616 version was actually closer to the original play, as many others have also thought, and he therefore used it as his "copy text." Many other editors, however, prefer the 1604 version, believing that it is more authentic. Readers who wish to pursue the matter will find further discussion preceding the textual notes at the end of the play.

When Irving Ribner died in 1972, at the age of 51, he was internationally recognized as one of America's most distinguished Renaissance scholars. He was editor of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, as well as *The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, and was author of numerous scholarly articles and books, including *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare*, *Patterns in Shakespearean Tragedy*, *Jacobean Tragedy: The Quest for Moral Order*, and *Shakespeare: An Introduction to His Life, Times, and Theater*. Those who knew Irving Ribner will recall that he was not only a prodigious scholar and meticulous editor but was also an exemplary mentor and friend: wise and generous with his time, entertaining in his classes, respected and loved by colleagues and students alike. It is a privilege to make his text of *Doctor Faustus* once more available, in a revised edition. A companion volume of interpretive essays is planned for the future.

There are many whom I wish to acknowledge. I am indebted to Jonathan and Clifford Ribner for their alliance in this project; to Ron Pullins and his excellent staff at Focus Publishing, especially Cynthia Zawalich and Linda Robertson, for their patience and continuous support throughout the preparation of this edition; and to Ralph Alan Cohen and Andreas Teuber, for their considerable contributions to this book. I owe a debt of gratitude to a number of other people as well. I am especially grateful to Herbert R. Coursen, Samuel Crowl, and Kenneth S. Rothwell for their friendship and encouragement over the years. I am grateful also to those others, in the Shakespeare Association of America and in the Ohio Shakespeare Conference, who have shared their ideas with me in the past: Tom Bishop, Anthony Davies, David Evett, José Ramón Díaz-Fernández, Peter Donaldson, Gayle Gaskill, David Hale, Kirt Henderschott-Kraetzer, Kathy Howlett, Patricia Lennox, the late James Luscardi, Eva B. McManus, Thomas Pendleton, June Schlueter, Lisa S. Starks, Robert Willson, Jr., and many others. I am grateful also to Susan Hawthorne and Jim Warren, of the Shenandoah Shakespeare Express, and to Patty Roberts and Steve Shelburne, of Centenary College, for many favors, especially regarding the SSE 2000 production of *Doctor Faustus*. I owe thanks to Hammond for artwork. And I appreciate the efforts of Robert C. Leitz, III, Gayle Gaskill, and Wilfred Guerin, who read and corrected an earlier version of this book. I am grateful also to a number of colleagues at LSUS: Vincent S. Marsala (Chancellor), Stuart E. Mills (Provost), Merrill Knighten (Dean of Liberal Arts), and Larry Anderson (English Chair): for their assistance and support, especially during my sabbatical leave; Stephen Brennan, Diane Elizabeth Boyd, Thomas DuBose, Wilfred Guerin, Cleatta Morris, Kathleen Smith, and Helen Taylor: for their continuous help in various ways. Deloris Wright has been most helpful. Many colleagues in our library also went out of their way to provide assistance: Alan D. Gabehart (Dean); Robert C. Leitz, III (Curator of the Noel Collection) and Martha Lawler (Assistant to the Curator), who showed me many kindnesses. I am grateful also to research-reference and inter-library loan librarians: Julienne Wood (Head, Research Services); William W. Peters, Jr., Rachel Green, Brian Sherman, Kay Stebbens, Shubh Laxmi Jain and Ferman M. Garlington, Jr. My greatest debt is to my family.

Introduction

Background

What's your secret desire? Wealth? Power? Knowledge? Or perhaps something more modest but still crucial to happiness? And what would you give to attain it? These are questions that grip the imagination now as much as they did more than four hundred years ago, when a mysterious John Faustus, an itinerant magician wandering through Germany, reputedly sold his soul to the Devil. Christopher Marlowe was the first to recount the tale for audiences in Elizabethan England and William Shakespeare, Marlowe's successor, gave it his own spin in *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*. We are not so far removed from Marlowe and Shakespeare as we might think, and our own fascination for the Faust story is often evidenced in the novels, movies, and music with which we connect today. The introduction you are now reading traces the ancient legend from its inception up to the present, considers some dominant themes in Marlowe's tragedy, and summarizes the play's numerous expressions on stage and film. But let's begin first by recalling a bit of history from Marlowe's time.

It was a fast-paced, exciting, and dangerous time of adventure and discovery. England's Queen was Elizabeth I, and her reign (1558-1603) became famous for having fostered the drama of Marlowe and Shakespeare and those other playwrights whose plays were performed regularly in public theaters and at court, until the Puritans closed the theaters in 1642. Her reign experienced a rise in literacy; it furthered the New Learning that early in the century had begun filtering into English universities from Europe; and by the time of the Stuarts, it was being recalled with nostalgia. But the reign of Elizabeth also realized religious, fiscal, and social turmoil. Roman Catholicism, abolished by Elizabeth's father Henry VIII, and further suppressed by her brother Edward VI, had been revived by her sister Mary, at the expense of those who had embraced the new Protestantism. Thus when Elizabeth succeeded Mary as Queen, and long thereafter, England was deeply divided in its religious allegiance. And the "settlement" Elizabeth foisted upon her people was an unpopular compromise that riled conservatives and radicals alike.

England's religious problems were accompanied, moreover, by tremendous monetary inflation that inexplicably occurred toward the middle of the sixteenth century and lasted well into the next, causing the rising generations, especially those among the gentry and courtier classes, to become much more ambitious and competitive than their parents had been. Anthony Elster writes that, beginning around 1585, there was a "change in the quality and tempo of Elizabethan life," resulting from "the quality of high aspiration, revealed most commonly in intense personal ambition" (xviii). Among the most ambitious of the new generation of Elizabethans were the university graduates, young liberal arts scholars striving for preferment at court.

This state of affairs was only compounded by an explosion in the population, which roughly doubled, from about 2.5 million in the 1520s to about 5 million by 1680—an increase that occurred despite high mortality from diseases such as plague

and anthrax, and from frequent infant deaths (Canter 14-16). The most dramatic population increase was in London, the chief site of the Elizabethan stage. There the population leapt from 100,000 in 1580 to 200,000 by 1600 (Finlay 6-7), an increase accompanied by a rise in crime and vagrancy, not only in London but also upon the highways leading there. The world of Marlowe and Shakespeare was thus a tumultuous world, filled with anxieties, which they reflected in plays that remain as meaningful today as when they were first performed.

Marlowe and Shakespeare

Because their lives are so representative of their time and place in history, it is tempting to make comparisons between Marlowe and Shakespeare: Both had inauspicious beginnings and both rose well above them; both were actors and poets, born in the same year, 1564, and both became exceedingly popular playwrights, who drew from and surpassed the theatrical practice of their time. It is apparent, moreover, that the early Shakespeare was influenced by Marlowe, whose specter lingers on even in Shakespeare's later work. Yet beyond these connections, their lives are scarcely comparable. Shakespeare was self-educated and probably never left England, was married and had children, was not only an actor, playwright, and shareholder in his theater, but was a property owner and real estate investor; he wrote over thirty-six plays plus poems and sonnets, and died in his bed at the age of fifty-two. In contrast, Marlowe held two Cambridge degrees, traveled widely, probably as a secret agent, was unmarried and perhaps homosexual; he was nonconforming and quarrelsome, imprisoned for brawling, and arrested on charges ranging from counterfeiting to atheism. He wrote just seven plays and some poems and translations, and then died—violently, at the age of twenty-nine.

Marlowe's Life

There are numerous biographies of Christopher Marlowe, but what is actually known of his life and character may be sketched briefly. The son of a Canterbury shoemaker, John Marlowe and his wife Katherine, the playwright was born on or about February 6, 1564; he was baptized on February 26, in the Church of St. George the Martyr in Canterbury. Young Marlowe had four sisters who lived to adulthood and three brothers who died in childhood. He attended the King's School in Canterbury and, in 1580, won a scholarship to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where all supposed that he would prepare for holy orders, as the scholarship stipulated. But there is no record—or likelihood—that he was ever ordained. The liberal arts curriculum at Cambridge, as at Oxford, stressed rhetoric—the art of persuasion—as an important vehicle for social promotion, its efficacy touted by those who aspired to preferment in Elizabeth's increasingly competitive society. Marlowe took naturally to this curriculum, performed well, and received his B. A. in 1584. He sustained a record of absences, however, and two years later was denied his M. A. The Queen's Government then intervened on his behalf, on the grounds that Marlowe had been employed in her Majesty's service, and the degree was awarded in 1587.

The Tragical History Of The Life And Death Of Doctor Faustus

THE PLAYERS

The Chorus	Robin, the clown, an hostler
Doctor Faustus	Dick
Wagner, his student and servant	A Vintner
	A Horse-Courser
Valdes	A Carter
Cornelius	Hostess
Three Scholars	
An Old Man	Good Angel
	Bad Angel
Pope Adrian	Lucifer
Raymond, King of Hungary	Mephistophilis
	The Seven Deadly Sins
Bruno, the rival Pope	Pride
Two Cardinals	Covetousness
The Archbishop of Rheims	Envy
Charles V, Emperor of Germany	Wrath
Gentlemen of the Emperor's Court	Gluttony
Martino	Sloth
Frederick	Lechery
Benvolio	Alexander, the Great
Beëlzebub	His Paramour
Duke of Saxony	Darius, King of Persia
Duke of Anholt	Helen of Troy
Duchess of Anholt	Two Cupids, Devils, Bishops, Monks, Friars, Soldiers

THE SCENE

Wittenberg, Rome, The Emperor's court at Innsbruck, court
of the Duke of Anholt, and the neighboring countryside.

Enter Chorus.

Prologue.

Chorus. Not marching in the fields of Trasimene
Where Mars did mate the warlike Carthagens,
Nor sporting in the dalliance of love

Prologue

1-2 *Trasimene...Carthagens* (modern spelling—
Carthaginians) This may be an allusion to a
lost play on the subject of the Carthaginian,

Hannibal, who achieved one of his greatest
victories at Lake Trasimene in 217 B.C.
Mars Roman god of war.
mate join or ally with.

In courts of kings where state is overturned, 5
 Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds
 Intends our muse to vaunt his heavenly verse.
 Only this, gentles: we must now perform
 The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad.
 And now to patient judgments we appeal, 10
 And speak for Faustus in his infancy.
 Now is he born, of parents base of stock,
 In Germany, within a town called Rhode.
 At riper years to Wittenberg he went,
 Whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him up. 15
 So much he profits in divinity,
 The fruitful plot of scholarism graced,
 That shortly he was graced with doctor's name,
 Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes
 In th'heavenly matters of theology, 20
 Till swoll'n with cunning of a self-conceit,
 His waxen wings did mount above his reach,
 And melting, heavens conspired his overthrow;
 For, falling to a devilish exercise
 And gluttèd now with learning's golden gifts,
 He surfeits upon cursèd necromancy. 25
 Nothing so sweet as magic is to him,
 Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss;
 And this the man that in his study sits.



Faustus in his study.

I.1.

Faustus. Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin
 To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess.

4 *state* government.

12 *Rhode* or Roda, a town in the Duchy of Saxe-Altenburg, Germany.

13 *Wittenberg* the university of Martin Luther and of Hamlet.

14 *Whereas* where.

15 *divinity* theology

16 *fruitful plot...graced* i.e., he adorned the university.

17 *doctor's name* Doctor of Divinity.

18 *whose...disputes* whose sweet delight it was to dispute.

20 *cunning of a self-conceit* prideful in his knowledge

21 *waxen wings* allusion to Icarus, whose father

Daedalus made wings of wax and feathers, with which he and Icarus were to escape from Crete; when Icarus flew too high, despite his father's warnings, the sun melted his wings and he fell to his death in the sea. The myth was a popular illustration of pride. See Figure 11.

25 *necromancy* black magic.

28 See Figures 5 and 9.

1.1.

SD *Faustus...study* The chorus-speaker probably draws the curtains of the inner stage to reveal Faustus in his study at Wittenberg.

1 *settle* resolve

2 *profess* declare

FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE

SERIES EDITORS

Herbert R. Coursen
James H. Lake

Each volume in the Focus on Performance series provides an authoritative text with notes and a substantial introduction giving historical background, dramatic context, and performance history, including cinematic history. There are also illustrations, a useful timeline, a list of topics designed to promote discussion, and an up-to-date bibliography. This text is based on the authoritative text by Irving Ribner, updated, with much additional material on performance, by James H. Lake. A companion volume of readings is forthcoming.

James H. Lake is Professor of English at Louisiana State University-Shreveport. Lake received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Tulane University and his Ph.D. from the University of Delaware. He has published widely on Shakespeare and cinema. He is the general editor of the Focus on Performance Series.

“Professor James Lake has done all Marlowe scholars and teachers of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama a great service in once again making available Irving Ribner’s magnificent edition of Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*. Ribner’s edition was the finest of its era...and will find an eager audience in professors who prefer to use individual paperback editions of the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries rather than huge, unwieldy anthologies. Lake’s new introduction traces the history of the Faust legend, places Marlowe’s play in its Renaissance context, and provides a brilliant survey of the fate of Marlowe’s *Faustus* in production on stage, film, and opera. His range of reference is astounding and extends from Simon Magus to St. Theophilis to Goethe to Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau to Orson Welles to Charlie Daniels (“The Devil Went Down to Georgia”) and even to a Calvin and Hobbes cartoon. His introduction instructs even as it delights.”

Samuel Crowl, Professor of English
Ohio University

Focus Publishing
R. Pullins Company
PO Box 369
Newburyport, MA 01950

