

PSYCHOLOGY IN CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE'S DR. FAUSTUS

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'Dr. Faustus' is Marlowe's second play. It is a heroic play, as it is cast on larger lines. It is a dramatized story of the life and death of a medieval scholar who sells his soul to the devil in sovereign knowledge by binding himself to the devil and thus be able to satisfy his appetite for twenty four years. This power and knowledge are used by twenty four year. This power and Knowledge are used by Faustus in playing practical jokes on the great people of his day including the Pope and the Cardinals.

The twenty four periods comes to an end. Faustus has to keep his bargain with Lucifer. He now awaits death and hell. Till now he never called upon God, in spite of Good counsel by the Good Angel. In his last days Faustus remembers God and cries in vain. It is too late now and Faustus' soul is taken away by the devils to hell.

Doctor Faustus embodies the same aspiration after the unattainable which 'Tamburlaine' had typified. The Will to power is still mighty, but it operates in the sphere of intellect rather than of action. As a result of his contact with Mephistopheles, Faustus becomes mightier Marlowe has struck a new note in this play. In it he passes beyond the limits of Machiavellian and sounds the depths of the human heart in exhibition of the conflict between Will and Conscience.

The hero should essentially be a superior person and he must have some tragic flaw, which ultimately brings about his ruin and disaster. His destiny is to go down fighting rather than submit to the insurmountable odds and thus to pluck a moral victory from a physical defeat. So in 'Dr. Faustus' we find Marlowe concentrating all his powers of delineation of character on Faustus.

In the beginning of the play the chorus informs all the details about Faustus. He got his higher education at Wittenberg and got degree of doctor of divinity from there. He became a puffed up with pride for his vast knowledge and scholarship and starts indulging in black art of magic to attain super human powers. In spite of his master of all subjects he sells his soul with ambition.

"What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemned to die? [Faustus, IV, iv, 39]. He perfectly knows that in order to achieve his end. He will have to abjure God and the Trinity. He was not void of conscience. The Good Angel and the Bad Angel, the symbols of virtue and vice, keep influencing Faustus till he takes the final decision. The Good Angel, the voices of his conscience urges him to shun that damned book and to read the scriptures. The Evil Angel, the voice of his passion, scores a victory by luring away Faustus with the assurance that by mastering the black art of magic, Faustus will be "Lord and commander of the elements". At the end of the third scene of act I We find Faustus telling Mephistopheles that he has already abjured the Trinity of his own Will and has made up his mind to sell his soul to the Devil. He wants to gain limitless powers and live in all voluptuousness for twenty four years. In the first scene of II Act Faustus surrenders the soul to the Devil and writes the bond with his own blood. The two angels appear again to externalize the spiritual conflict in his soul between vice and virtue. The entire action of the play fluctuates between these two forces and the Warring of loyalties of Faustus to this effect.

Generally the inner conflict takes place when a man is faced with two alternatives, one of which he must have to choose but finds himself pulled in different directions. Nicoll observes thus. In Doctor Faustus Marlowe attempted something new, the delineation within the mind of the chief figure. This

struggle is certainly somewhat primitive invites expression, but it is a foretaste of those inward characteristics towards which draw inevitably tends. Faustus is unquestionably the greatest tragic figure in sixteenth century literature outside Shakespeare". To gain limitless power, Faustus may discard godly order, may demouse the doctrines of Christianity and may take to necromancy. But Faustus is definitely attached to God even finally. A guilty conscience dogs him from beginning to the end. The heart of Faustus turns to be the field where the forces of good and evil are trying to overwhelm each other. In the closing scene of the drama the spiritual conflict of a doomed and dejected soul reaches its climax and then culminates in an over whelming catastrophe. Faustus realizes to his utter dismay that he is doomed to eternal damnation with the least hope for redemption. The soliloquy of Dr. Faustus showing just before an hour of his final doom reveals forceful manner the deep agony of a horror stuck soul facing its impending doom. His last minute frantic appeal to 'ever moving spheres of heaven' to stand still or to the 'Fair Nature's eye' to rise again to make perpetual day- "that Faustus may repent end save his soul" is of no avail. "The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike, The Devil will come and Faustus must be damm'd". [Faustus, V, iii, 117-118].

When the final hour arrives, there is thunder and lightning and the Devil's disciples come and snatch him away. The trouble -torn soul of Faustus is taken to hell to suffer eternal damnation. The critic, E.A. Barker quotes thus as,

This great symbolic tragedy deals with a theme which was part, not only of author's finer experience but of the very stuff of which nourished the Renaissance spirit. The pride of intellect by which both Faustus of Marlowe and Lucifer of Milton fell, was the most subtle and dangerous temptation of the age. After wandering for centuries, through the mists of ignorance, man found himself once more before the tree of knowledge. There within his reach, turned like a thousand lamps the coveted fruits of his desire; but there too, coiled about the notes, lay the old serpent, still unconquered, still thirsting for his soul' blood.

Dr. Faustus realizes:

"Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd; despair and die." Even in the throes of mortal agony, the conflict refers in his mind: "Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ. Yet will I call on him: O, spare Ine, Lucifer" [Faustus, V, iii, 115-116]

Throughout the play, Faustus struggles with himself while Lucifer and Mephistopheles struggle with him. Though these huge conflicts take place in the text they are not the greatest of situation when one tries to apply the psychoanalytical approach. The most obvious situation arrives with the introduction of the seven deadly sins. They represent the constant struggle between the id and superego. They add to the seduction of Dr. Faustus and the constant struggle in a chaotic Hell. The id possesses most of the sins: Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, and Lechery. All six of these sins show characteristics that are strong and powerful. Though these sound as if they were good characteristics, they are actually extremely over bearing. When the sins explain who they are, they do not leave any room for argument. They just say who they are, and they take what they want. For example, Pride explains what he can do with a woman: "I can creep into every corner of wench: sometimes periwig I sit upon her brow; next, like a necklace I hang about her neck; then, like a fan of feathers I kiss her ..." [Marlowe, I.ii.120] Obviously, Pride feels powerful enough to take any woman he wants and perform with any way he wants. With a sly and mischievous voice Pride states what he can do and no one can change it. Another great representation of the id is Lechery or Lust. Lechery just walks out struts her stuff in front of Faustus. The reader realizes that her power is not in her words but in her presence. Even Lucifer notices her strength because he sends her away almost as fast as she comes in. "Away, to hell, away! On piper!" [Marlowe, II.ii.177]

Works cited

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