

TAPPING INTO THE TRADITION: TRACING THE GRECO ROMAN ALLUSIONS AND MEDIEVAL MILIEU IN ‘THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF DR. FAUSTUS’

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ABSTRACT

*This study examines the classical and medieval allusions profusely used by Christopher Marlowe, a Renaissance dramatist in *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Dr. Faustus*. *Dr. Faustus*, an Elizabethan drama contains a unique blend of classical mythology that seems distinct, from that in the other plays by Marlowe since it has a dramatic role and does not just serve purpose of metaphoric and aesthetic beautification typical of Renaissance. The medieval tradition is well represented by the pen of Marlowe who not only is able to cater to the Middle English everyman but makes modern day man aware of what the medieval tradition of mystery and morality plays was all about. Marlowe was true to his age but also contributed largely to set a different kind of drama taste for his audience. *Dr. Faustus* is a historical document not because it is set in historical times or it talks about history like Shakespeare’s history plays but because it picks up from Greco Roman allusions, geography, references and illustrations for its narrative- the story of a modern Renaissance man.*

Keywords: *Classical, Medieval, Renaissance, Classical Mythology, English Medieval tradition, Renaissance, Drama*

INTRODUCTION

English Renaissance marks a period of revival of interest in the past and in the long forgotten art and literary forms as evident in the works of English writers of this time. Renaissance of the English sees its shape, form and color in the dramatic and non-dramatic works, great masterpieces of art and literature in all their forms, with a mimesis of cultural transmission from the classical to the early modern world. The writers of this age, including Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare were greatly inspired by Greek and Roman mythologies and medieval and classical learning. Marlowe especially keeps referring immensely to these sources of learning in his plays (Baker, 1985). In the play under study, Marlowe uses classical and medieval allusions with great ease and frequency. This study attempts to decipher the rationale behind Marlowe’s preoccupation with the classical art and conception of Marlowe as apt and fitting Renaissance dramatist of Britain through close examination of classical and medieval references used in play. Renaissance features the famous movement of Humanism and hence human being in all

his manifestations and what man made become the core subject of a writer surviving in Renaissance (Cochrane, 1976).

An unsurpassed Humanist, Marlowe lived the true essence of his age and *Dr. Faustus* can be read as a document having the flavor of his age and the crisp of classical allusions and preoccupation with medieval references and mythological insinuations. Jump points out that the strong influence of the new way of learning that marked the Renaissance gave Englishmen the ideal of the “cultivated Renaissance man” with a harmonious balance of all the faculties fully developed. Jump asserts that *Doctor Faustus* is Marlowe’s greatest play in spite of its uneven execution, and it embodies the tension typical of Renaissance very successfully because “it is cast in largely mediaeval mould”. Medieval and morality plays’ tradition is very prominent in the play. Faustus’ course of action is impious and self-defeating according to Marlowe and he judges it in the morality form to present a moral. The subject is “central morality subject, the struggle between the forces of good and evil for the soul of man in this case, of the Renaissance man”.

This study highlights the interplay of classical and renaissance elements by Marlowe which has not only made the play honest to the age but also increased its beauty as a piece of drama, for example, the reference to Punic Wars between the Greeks and the Romans from Greek mythology not only beautifies the drama but also adds a tinge of antiquity to it which was what the Renaissance was known for. Modern scholars object to it saying that the Renaissance drama was alien to the Renaissance man. The playwrights achieved in writing English a vernacular that is ‘strange, exotic, excessive, extravagant, and affected’ (Kegl, 2015). Marlowe enacts “bold experiments in vernacular styles” (Nicholson, 2013). There is certain correctness to this view, but in Marlowe’s case, the Greek and Roman history and allusions come naturally. Greek mythical poets and philosophers permeate the play. Not only this, Marlowe avails fully the opportunity of bringing to light the ancient city of Rome, thematically, stylistically and also geographically. Marlowe does not write a difficult version of English. Instead, he introduces an ancient and exotic life to the English world making use of classical diction and dialogues.

In addition, the play is an epic in its characteristics that makes it more an embodiment of the classical Greek literary tradition. What was Renaissance to England? And how it reshaped the previously being written poetry, prose and drama? These are questions that are of interest when tracing the age’s influence upon the works that it produces. A known fact is that Renaissance flourished during the Medieval or Middle Ages of Europe. English literature in particular saw the reemergence of miracle, mystery and morality plays. The elements of medieval plays that were staged in streets are prevalent in *Dr.*

Faustus as well i.e. the fall of a man due to misusing knowledge bestowed upon him and his devastating hubris. In Marlowe's hands, a typical morality play undergoes a transformation. The common man is not as common but a doctor extremely well versed in magic and mythology and nothing else is of value to him. Mc Alindon states that the use of mythology by Marlowe is with a "difference", that is, his mythology "invites moral and theological criticism". He is both powerful and powerless at the same time. However, Marlowe has done justice to the morality tradition by echoing the tradition in *Dr. Faustus*.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Renaissance- The Revival Movement

The Renaissance is a scholarly and literary movement extracted from the literature of classical antiquity. Renaissance was the age of splendid literature with an interest in classical learning brought about by the late medieval cultural movement in Europe. It began in Italy during the late 13th Century and spread towards the entire Europe in the 15th century finally reaching its end in the 16th and 17th centuries with its spirit flowing north across Europe and entering England 'New Learning'. New life was imparted to the teachings and thoughts of the Greeks not only out of interest but in attempts to make use of the theme and content extracted from Greco Roman art and literature forms. English drama could come up only by observing more rigorously the Aristotelian principles and there was in the beginning for some time at least, a craze for Seneca's tragical devices and style alongside following the traits of the Greek tragedy and comedy overall called Greek drama. Not only the literature of the Renaissance England was influenced by the antiquity but the 12th century architecture in Europe also reflected the rebirth of classical culture replacing the medieval. The English Renaissance was a symbol with manifold meanings and implications, encompassing many areas of experience, belief, and emotion, and the modern reader might do well to look more closely, particularly at the meaning of the Renaissance poetry (Baker, 1959).

European Renaissance and its Consequences

Classicism canonized compositional devices of antiquity. As obvious in the Renaissance prose and poetry writers' works, the style was marked by heavy ornament, complex articulation, spatial relationships, heavy decorousness, emotional elevation, exultation and contrasting forms. The Renaissance literatures of all types can only be understood accurately in light of the Greek and Roman writings that inspired them. This tradition reached England over two sources through classical writings and through commentaries and original treatises of Italian scholars (Clark, 1922). Clark further explains that English

critics who propounded theories of poetry in Renaissance took most of their terminology through various channels from classical theories and rhetoric.

Medieval English Allegorical Drama

The morality play is one of the three main types (others being the mystery and miracle plays) of vernacular drama produced during the middle Ages. It included elements the medieval allegory and the religiosity of the Miracle plays. It was a popular allegorical drama in Europe during the 15th and 16th centuries and was didactic in nature with personified characters like vice or virtues or abstractions, as youth or death. Moralities were theological in form and content and the powers of good and evil struggling for capturing man's soul and life's journey and its choice of eternal fates were their major themes. Very often, personified characters like the Seven Deadly Sins are found fighting physically and verbally with the chief virtues portraying the inner struggle between good and evil. The frolics of these characters added an element of buffoonery to the plays. Performed by quasi-professional actors depend on public support, plays were generally short, with farcical elements tempering their serious themes.

The action revolves round a hero, such as Mankind, whose innate weaknesses are attacked by personified diabolic forces as the Seven Deadly Sins but who has the choice to opt redemption and enlist support of figures like the Four Daughters of God (Justice, Mercy, Truth and Temperance). Morality plays were a transitional step from liturgical to professional secular drama, and blended the elements of both. Morality plays, written and enacted during Renaissance showed disobedience, idleness or dissipation as liable to bring a character to suffering. This shows the religious turmoil of the Renaissance man as Christianity was torn between the Catholics and the Protestants. Similarly, Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* (1604), in spite of its tragic ending, is belated morality vindicating faith, humility, and obedience to God's law.

Renaissance Drama and Marlowe

Many late twentieth-century critics find the subject of Morality as one of the underlying themes of Shakespeare's dramas. This is particularly true of the tragedies and histories such as *Richard III* (1591), *Macbeth* (1606), *Othello* (1603), *King Lear* (1606), *Henry IV* (1597) and *Timon of Athens* (1623). Marlowe, in this respect, follows the Shakespearean tradition by including personified characters like the Seven Deadly Sins, Good Angel, Bad Angel, etc. Additionally, the majority of Marlowe's and Shakespeare's plays are at least indirectly relate to some abiding moral question influencing its progress and outcome. The works portray a major moral choice, inversion or disturbance of the moral order that results in tragedy or must be set right (Williams). Shakespeare and Marlowe being contemporaries (both born in 1564) influence each other in different respects.

Moreover, Marlowe moved tragedy in a whole new direction, the psychological thriller” moving from “ritual tragedy and from almost religious festivals to psychological tragedy (Kelly, 2008).

Biographical literature of the Renaissance points out that at Corpus Christi, Marlowe also translated Latin Lucan’s *De Bello Civili* into English blank verse and Ovid’s *Amores*, (whose line he quotes in *Dr. Faustus*), too, into rhyming couplets, as he later exploited in ‘*Hero and Leander*’. This shows that he not only had interest in antiquity and wanted to follow it as his literary move but he was also seen honing this poetic skill to be known as England’s greatest poet-dramatist. Schelling contends that Marlowe efficiently deals with dark morality play, play tells the world story of man who, seeking for all knowledge, pledged his soul to devil, only to find the misery of a hopeless repentance in this world and damnation in the world to come”. The correspondence between Marlowe and Raleigh also bent Marlowe’s mind towards Latin and Greek mythology. Literature asserts that Marlowe’s preoccupation with the classical and mythological references is not for a simple and known purpose but added a specialty into his plays.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Marlowe- The product of Renaissance Tradition

A preoccupation with religion and mythology as evident in the tragedies of Renaissance period encapsulated Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus* and later Shakespeare’s tragic works as well. With *Dr. Faustus*, mythology and magic are related to pseudo-divinity. Marlowe being labeled an atheist and his act of shifting to mythology, classical references and also magic becomes the main reason why Faustus rejects all divinity and turns to mythology.

Dr. Faustus as a Classical Document

Not marching now in the fields of Thrasimene, Where Mars did mate the Carthaginians;
Not sporting in the dalliance of love; In courts of kings where state is overturned
(Marlowe 49)

The 1916 Quatro of *Dr. Faustus* opens with these lines of chorus speaking the prologue whose main purpose is to help the development of the drama by making appropriate comments on character and action. The chorus is device introduced by Greek dramatists, and the Elizabethans used it with variations, just to suit their purpose (Bieber 278). The plays of this period usually deal with the heroes and heroic deeds of Great War, great love affairs or court intrigues. To portray that the poet has no intention to describe great military achievements, he gives a classical reference to the Second Punic War between the Romans and the Greeks. Next, with the help of an allusion to Icarus, who flew too

high with waxen wings that melted away due to the heat of the sun bringing him down into the sea according to the Greek mythology, Marlowe hints at the ultimate doom of Dr. Faustus. He colors this classical myth by medieval heroes and incidents. As the play progresses, Marlowe gives references to the Greek and Roman History. In Act I, Scene I, Faustus reads some of principles laid down in book "Institute" by Justinian, the Roman emperor who caused the drawing up of codes of Roman law.

The references to different gods and goddesses are also drawn from the Roman and Greek mythologies e.g. 'Jove', chief god in Roman mythology (Act I, Scene 1), 'Mars', the Roman god of war, Venus, goddess of love,(Act II, Scene II), the 'Delphian oracle', i.e., the great temple of Apollo-the god of poetry (an oracle of ancient fame) (Act I, Scene I) and 'Diana', the Greek goddess of hunt who turned Actacon into a stag for intruding on her retirement (Act IV, Scene II). While talking to Valdes and Cornelius, in Act I, Scene I, Faustus says that he has made the most learned scholars throng round him, through his logical arguments, as the spirits of hell clustered round the renowned singer Musaeus-the son of Orpheus-when he came down to the underworld. Musaeus was a semi-mythical poet who wrote on magic rites in ancient Greece. In the lines: From Venice shall they drag huge argosies, /and from America the golden fleece, Marlowe brings to the readers' minds the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece. In the beginning of Act III enters the chorus again and tells that now Faustus "will first arrive at Rome, /to see the Pope and his court/and take some part of holy Peter's feast" (Marlowe, 1965).

In Act III, Scene I, when Faustus reaches Rome with Mephistopheles, we learn many things about the geography of Rome from Mephistopheles e.g. the city was built on seven hills, the River Tiber flows through the city of Rome and divides it into two parts with its curved banks. There were four majestic bridges in the 15th century Rome, a strongly built castle of St. Angelo called Ponte Angelo, famous for many historic scenes, stands on one of the bridges in which in addition to plenty of arms and ammunition, there are pieces of gates and parts of Egyptian Pyramids brought by Julius Caesar from Africa. The depiction of this grandeur on his way to the Pope's place not only portrays a renewed interest in the architecture of classical time but also helps exalt the position of the central figure in the audience's minds to heighten the effect of his terminal fall and the resultant catharsis caused by a tragedy in Aristotelian sense. In Act I, Scene III, after performing his first great magical feat, i.e. calling up Mephistopheles, Faustus orders him to do whatever he wants: Be it to make moon drop from her sphere/Or the ocean to overwhelm the world (Marlowe 58), feats believed from the classical times to be one of the magicians' specialties.

In Act I, Scene III, when Mephistopheles tells Faustus that the easiest way to acquire proficiency in necromancy is to renounce one's faith in Trinity, Faustus says that he has already done so, his only faith now being there is no chief surpassing Beelzebub. He makes no distinction between hell and Elysium-the heaven of Greek mythology. The word 'damnation' has no importance to him. His spirit is rather one with ancient Greek philosophers, who did not believe in eternal reward or punishment after death. Similarly, when in Act III, Scene II, Faustus, accompanied by Mephistopheles, is in Pope's privy-chamber, becoming invisible during the banquet, he snatches the dishes three times and Mephistopheles recites a solemn Roman excommunication, "you'll be cursed with bell, book, and candle"(Marlowe 83). When the ceremony culminates, bells toll, books are closed and candles are extinguished. Then we see the friars singing a dirge, 'maledical Dominus' (May the Lord curse him), 'Et omnes Sancti' (May all the saints curse him), a classical ritual.

In Act III, Scene VI, Faustus, speaking of his magical feats, alludes to Homer, greatest of Greek poets who wrote 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey', Alexander- another name of Paris, the lover of Helen, Greek beauty over whom War of Troy was fought in which the Greeks came flocking in thousand ships and besieged Troy for ten years to recover Helen, Oenon- the wife of Paris whom he abandoned when he fell in love with Helen, Amphion- a harper of such skill that the stones charmed by his music moved of their own accord and constructed a wall round Thebes in these lines: Have not I made blind Homer sing to me, /Of Alexander's love and Oenon's death?/ And hath not he , that built the walls of Thebes, with ravishing sound of his melodious harp music with my Mephistopheles? (Marlowe). Similarly, in Act IV, Scene II, in the court of King Charles V of Spain, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Faustus calls up the spirit of Alexander the Great (the Greek Napoleon) along with his beloved Queen. In Act III, Scene IX, we see Faustus meeting a horse courser. As a horse-dealer meeting a magician is a case of Greek meeting Greek, they both cheat.

Marlowe also touches upon some literary allusions pertaining to Greece and Rome, i.e., Menelaus, Helen's husband and Achilles-a Greek hero whose weak spot was in his heel (Act V, Scene I); Olympus- the abode of the Greek gods (Act II, Scene III); Maro- Roman poet(Act III, Scene I); Pythagoras-the Greek philosopher who propounded the doctrine of transmigration of souls; Penelope-the wife of Ulysses, symbol of wifely faithfulness (Act II, Scene I);and Semele-beloved of Zeus, who perished because she could not stand his flaming sight (Act V, Scene I). In the last scene (Act V, Scene III), during his last hour, Faustus aptly quotes from the Latin Ovid (Amores): "O lente, lentecurrite, noctisequi!" (Marlowe 110) meaning "slowly slowly run ye horses of the midnight" (Marlowe 134). In ancient mythology, Night was represented as a goddess passing over the firmament in

a chariot drawn by horses (Helios, the sun-god being similarly imagined as passing over it during the day). Faustus, in his agony, calls upon the steeds of night to advance as slowly as possible so as to delay the approach of midnight-his hour of fate. Following the epic tradition of the classical literature, Marlowe is more of a poet than a dramatist in this play. His tragic heroes are undoubtedly poets but of all of them, Faustus is a poet par excellence just like Marlowe himself. The superb, often quoted apostrophe to Helen (after Faustus calls up her spirit) beginning with the lines: "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships, and burnt toposless towers of Ilium" (Act III, Scene VIII) is a masterpiece in itself and an example of hyperbole. Helen of Troy represents the supreme aesthetic beauty and charm of the ancient classical art. A preoccupation with classics becomes Marlowe's feat and his gusto is well able to do justice with it.

Dr. Faustus and the Mystery and Morality Plays Tradition

Embedded in the ethics and doctrines of Christianity and farcical elements interspersed, Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* may be called a belated morality despite its tragic ending. The play works out in a tone of medieval theology. Marlowe's protagonist, Faustus, abjures the scriptures, the Trinity and Christ and sells his soul to the Devil for his inordinate ambition to gain super human power by mastering the unholy art of magic. He lives a profane life in pursuit of physical pleasures. When at Rome, he does not abstain from humiliating the Pope by attacking him and the Holy Fathers. His conscience and his ambition, personified by the Good Angel the Evil Angels are at war all this while. Surrendering to the temptations of the Evil Angel, Faustus paves his way to eternal damnation. According to the Christian theology, the greatest sin of a man can be his aspiring pride to become a god himself by renouncing God and Christianity.

Dr. Faustus may be treated as a connecting link between the Miracle and Morality plays and the illustrious drama of Elizabethan period since Marlowe borrowed some elements from Miracle plays and some elements from Morality plays. From miracle plays, he took Good Angel, Evil Angel, saints, etc. From morality, he took personification. In Act I, Scene IV, we find two devils, Baliol and Belcher, entering just to frighten the clown. Devils also appear in Act II, Scene I and II and also in Act V, Scene I and III. The tradition of chorus is also preserved from forecasting the plot before the first scene and then serving as filler in the gaps in the story and pronouncing a very solemn moral at the end of the play. The sloppiness of structure which is again a medieval characteristic is quite evident, and as in the miracle plays, the story centers round a single towering figure. The title of the play like the titles of these plays, makes obvious that the main figure must have performed some outstanding miracles or feats viz., amazing feats of magic and miracle.

Other than the main moral underpinnings of the age reflected in literature of that time, various morality play traditions are observed by Christopher Marlowe. In *Dr. Faustus* (1604) the basic beliefs of Christianity are inherited and doctrine of damnation pervades. The protagonist abjures the scriptures, the Trinity and Christ. As the play opens, Faustus's study of scriptures does not point him towards salvation but assures him of his own damnation: "The reward of sin is death? That's hard/if we say that we have no sin, /we deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us. / Why then be like we must sin, / and so consequently die. /Ay, we must die an everlasting death. / What doctrines call you this?" (Marlowe, 1965). In this initial soliloquy, Faustus is torn between the possibilities of redemption that is why resultantly, he enters into a deal with the Devil in order to achieve earthly learning, power and satisfaction and falls to horrible perdition. He wilfully refuses all aid and goes to damnation. The moral values of this play are established through the chorus, Faustus's own recognition during his soliloquies, the Good Angel, the Old Man, the action itself, and even Mephistopheles, the agent of Lucifer, the Devil. Wanting to live for twenty-four years 'in all voluptuousness', Faustus represents the Everyman of Renaissance in his inordinate curiosity and desire for satisfying the senses.

But too much of these are sinful in Christian scheme. In Act II, Scene IV, Faustus blames Mephistopheles for his misery and says that he will "renounce this magic and repent" recognising that repentance is still possible. The Good Angel asserts his feelings by saying: "Faustus repent; yet God will pity thee." (Marlowe, 1965) But continuous practice of sin steadily erodes Faustus's will-power, and he says: My heart is harden'd, I cannot repent (Marlowe, 1965). The Good Angel tells the distressed Faustus to repent but the Evil Angel threatens that he would be torn into pieces. Faustus calls upon Christ to save his soul, whereupon Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistopheles appear to remind him of his promise. Once more, Faustus promises Never to name God or to pray to him (Marlowe, 1965). Faustus is then regaled with the parade of the Seven Deadly Sins, staple ingredients of the Morality play. Since Faustus gives up higher values for the lower ones, he must endure the horrible tortures of hell. The thought of hell, that is, everlasting punishment from God, causes immense spiritual unrest to him. Marlowe, in keeping with the didactic traditions of Moralities, depicts the destiny of a man denying God and finally meeting eternal damnation, guiding to Christian living and dying.

The age in which Marlowe was writing marked an unsatisfied striving after knowledge. In Renaissance, knowledge was ultimate knowledge, not of the world and the self but of God and to know God was to apprehend a meaning which was also truth. *Dr. Faustus* thus is an artistic expression of Christian theology. It is knowledge which Faustus craves for and eventually sells his soul for knowledge of the forbidden "dark secrets," of magic acquired through the books given to him by Mephistopheles and Lucifer. Marlowe uses

the machinery of the Morality play, but the passionate words, the excruciating mental struggle, the sheer poetry and the soaring ambition to master all spheres of knowledge and pleasure, make Faustus a tragic figure much more vivid and gripping than the Everyman of Morality plays. Like all other central figures of Marlowe's ,Faustus is not only a typical bad character motivated by sin, he is also supercharged with energy, full of a restless spirit to challenge the stale conventionality of the world around them. Giving full rein to his great intellectual passion, he too has to embrace grief because of aiming too high. This new type of tragic hero is like a warning to the audience to refrain from his greatest sin, pride in wanting to surpass the ordinary limits of a human by becoming godlike in might. Through the bargain made with Lucifer, Faustus becomes invincible and all-powerful in a sense (except for his inability to repent and return to God), through Mephistopheles, who can bring likenesses of the dead to life, transfer Faustus wherever in the world he wills, satisfy all his queries, make him invisible, and do whatever Faustus orders.

The price is everlasting damnation and Marlowe's portrayal of Faustus's agony when confronting his end is intensely dramatic. Subsidiary morals to the plot include: power intoxicates and corrupts and humanity's awareness of nature has its limitations. In Marlowe's hand, Morality's cultivation of virtue in preparation for the next life is rerouted. He emphasizes that the secular aspirations of men seeking only worldly advancement flaunt the Christian norms and morality. Almost all the plays of Marlowe center on some serious Renaissance moral debates. Tamburlaine fluctuates between egoism and altruism, culpability and glory. In its 2nd part, his death is not a divine vengeance but human morality. Interestingly, *Dr. Faustus* is unique in that he suffers from almost all the conflicts faced by Marlowe's other protagonists and these conflicts are moral to the root. Like Tamburlaine, he has an aspiring mind that he is obsessed with. Like Barabbas, he has to struggle to channelize his values to suit his purpose. Like Edward, he becomes a victim of himself due to a spiritual conflict within his soul. The play echoes the main aim of the Morality plays- guiding people to Christian life and Christian death with the moral that discarding the path of virtue and abjuring faith in God and Christ brings in anguish and eternal damnation. And it finds the most poignant expression in the sorrowful chorus in the closing lines of the play.

This is the most fearsome exposure of the punishment man brings upon himself by giving way to the enticement of his grosser appetites. Like in Morality plays, in *Dr. Faustus*, we find the allegorical-personified representations viz. Good Angels representing virtuous path and Evil Angels, standing for sin and resultant damnation. Moreover, the Old Man appearing in Act V, Scene I, "to guide thy steps unto the way of life"-symbolizes the forces of morality and righteousness. He may also be considered as a personified figure

of Faustus's conscience. The Seven Deadly Sins namely Pride, Covet, Wrath, Envy, Glut, Sloth and Lechery of old Mystery and Morality plays are also portrayed in a magnificent display to please the distressed soul of the protagonist. And the old and familiar figure of the Devil is also very prominently present. Mephistopheles, Lucifer's assistant, appears as a servile slave and attendant of Faustus in many scenes in the guise of a Franciscan Friar symbolizing power without conscience. But Marlowe's Devil is a devil with a difference having been endowed with original traits. Allegoric elements of the Morality plays can be seen very frequently moving through the play. This drama is not a mere story of the rise and downfall of Faustus. It has an underlying sublime theme based upon the typical Christian beliefs prevailing in Europe during the Middle Ages. *Dr. Faustus* is an artistic expression of Christian Theology, a whole body of ideas and ritual.

Inspired by the custom of Miracle and Morality plays, the almost all the comic scenes of *Dr. Faustus* with their buffoonery are not integral parts of the play, but are introduced to entertain. Especially Act III, Scene I, where Faustus is portrayed playing base tricks on the Pope and Act IV, Scene IV, where the horse courser is befooled and outwitted by Faustus are quite farcical.

CONCLUSION

We may conclude that the classical and the Medieval come together in the Renaissance. The Renaissance has its positive aspects such as new philosophy, new sciences, discoveries in sciences and geography, conquest and colonization. Even though Faustus' fall is the logical conclusion of the incidents in the play, the positive aspects of the Renaissance have a forward looking function. The play suggests implicitly the positive aspects of Faustus' ambition. With the case of Christopher Marlowe, Greek and Roman allusions find ample space in the text of *Dr. Faustus*. They are embedded in the text and are implicit symbolically at times as well. The medieval tradition has reached close to perfection in *Dr. Faustus*.

Marlowe was the voice of a Renaissance. Be it Renaissance humanism or re birth of art and literature of antiquity for aesthetic purpose, Marlowe achieved the zenith of perfection in his plays particularly *Dr. Faustus*. Faustus is very much human, too. His hubris is something that a common man can relate to. The extensive Greco Roman references in the play do not tantamount in distancing the reader from the text but make him enjoy the depth created by Marlowe. The dramatist has transplanted his characters from one world to another. Marlowe was truly honest to the Renaissance England but he was an innovator in his treatment of the renaissance elements in his plays. His expression is very much Marlowean in its nature and same is the locale, space, time and action of the play. *Dr. Faustus* becomes a treat to read and can be considered a representative

document of the Renaissance England colored with Marlowean wit and craft in its utmost perfection.

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