

CHICAGO REVIEW

Faust's Damnation: The Morality of Knowledge

Author(s): Erich Heller

Source: *Chicago Review*, Summer - Autumn, 1962, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Summer - Autumn, 1962), pp. 1-26

Published by: Chicago Review

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25293689>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Chicago Review is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Chicago Review*

JSTOR

FAUST'S DAMNATION: THE MORALITY OF KNOWLEDGE

I

A few years ago one of the Cambridge colleges had a very conservative Master. He regarded the new-fangled Cambridge Ph.D. degree as a vulgar concession to transatlantic academic pilgrims, and the publishing of papers as one of the more degrading forms of self-advertisement. "In my time," he used to say, "it was of the essence of a gentleman that his name should never appear in print." It so happened that the College had just elected into a Fellowship a young man who not only had a few papers to his name but also the temerity to propose, at the first Fellows' meeting in which he took part, a number of measures concerning College policy. The Master listened frowningly, and when the novice had finished, said: "Interesting, interesting"—and "interesting" meant that he was both alarmed and bored, two states of mind that he was expert at blending—"interesting; but would it not seem to you that your suggestions are a little contradictory to the tradition of the College?" "Not at all, Master," replied the aspiring reformer, "I have studied the history of the College and I can assure you that my proposals are perfectly in keeping with the ways of the College over the last three-hundred years." "This may well be," said the Master, "but wouldn't you

agree that the last three-hundred years have been, to say the least of them, rather exceptional?"

Of course, he was right; and speaking about Dr. Faustus means to speak about the exceptionalness, in at least one respect, of the last three-hundred, or even four-hundred years. For the modern extravagance is shown, in the most timely manner imaginable, by the transformations of meaning which the story of Dr. Faustus has undergone since this "insatiable speculator" and experimenter made his first appearance in literature—in the year 1587, in Germany, when the country was religiously dominated by Martin Luther. It was then that a certain Johann Spies printed and published in Frankfurt-am-Main the catastrophic record of the learned man Faustus who was, as we read, "fain to love forbidden things after which he hankered day and night, taking unto himself the wings of an eagle in order to search out the uttermost parts of heaven and earth," until he decided to "try out and put into action certain magic words, figures, characters and conjurations, in order to summon up the Devil before him,"¹ and whose "apostasy was nothing more nor less than his pride and arrogance, despair, audacity and insolence, like unto those giants of whom the poets sing . . . that they made war on God, yea, like unto that evil angel who opposed God, and was cast off by God on account of his arrogance and presumption."² With his magic words, figures, characters and conjurations, Faustus gathered sufficient intelligence of the Devil to know how to bargain with him. He must have owned a particularly precious soul for he sold it at an exquisite price: before going to Hell, he was to enjoy twenty-four years of researcher's bliss, a period of time during which Hell was to profit him greatly if he but renounced "all living creatures, and the whole heavenly host, and all human beings, for so it must be."³

The text of the covenant, signed by Dr. Faustus with his blood, was as follows:

"I, John Faustus, Doctor, do openly acknowledge with my own hand . . . that since I began to study and speculate the elements, and since I have not found through the gifts that have been graciously bestowed upon me from above, any such skills; and for that I find that I cannot learn them from human beings, now have I surrendered unto this spirit Mephistopheles, ambassador of the hellish Prince of Orient, upon such condition that he shall teach me, and fulfil my desire in all things, as he has promised and vowed unto me. . . ."⁴

This grimly didactic and ruthlessly pious tale captured the popular

imagination as no other piece of German writing had done—with the exception of Luther's Bible; and like Luther's German Bible it played, as it were, upon the instrument of the age with that sureness of touch attainable only through the collaboration between a player of some genius and a score inspired by the *Zeitgeist*. Indeed, the story of Dr. Faustus was a great invention, and was to be treated again and again on many a level of seriousness and macabre jocularity: two students in Tübingen cast it into verse, the pictorial arts seized hold of it, and soon it set out upon its career as the puppet-players' enduring success. It was translated into other languages and made its way into England in a version which even claimed to be an improvement on the original. The translator introduced himself as P. F., *Gent.* on the title-page of *The Historie of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus, newly imprinted and in convenient places imperfect matter amended: according to the true Copie printed an Franckfort.* Its chronology is uncertain; but the translation must have followed the "true Copie" with remarkable speed. For it was this English text which was read by Marlowe: and instantly the provincial German tale was received into the poetic order of the Elizabethan stage: in the nick of time—for in 1593 Marlowe was killed in a tavern brawl.

Clearly, that Johann Spies in Frankfurt-am-Main was either a very lucky or a very brilliant publisher: he had put into circulation a modest little volume by a modestly anonymous author and it proved to be the book of the epoch—and of many epochs. If ever a work made literary history, this one did. Marlowe, Lessing, Goethe, Heine, Grabbe, Lenau, Valéry, Thomas Mann—this is a register of only its more notorious debtors. But its fascination was, and has remained, not only literary. Spies's publication was a tract for the times, bidding farewell to its readers with the admonition of Peter: "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour;"⁵ and leaving them in no doubt where, at that hour, the lion roared most greedily: in the minds of men curiously suspicious of the instructions their Church had given them about their world and their place in it, and who were now all of a sudden restlessly determined to probe forbidden depths.—That time has passed, the mind has won its freedom, and the beast has not yet devoured us. Yet after centuries of free thought, free science, free testing, and free dare-deviling, there stood a doctor of nuclear physics in an American desert, watching the first experimental explosion of the atomic

bomb, and saying that for the first time in his life he knew what sin was. The story published by Johann Spies of Frankfurt-am-Main in 1587 has indeed proved its power to stay. . . .

Which were the passages in the original German text that were found wanting by the English translator P. F., *Gent.*? What was the “imperfect matter” that he chose to amend in “convenient places”? Was he, the Elizabethan, a man of such literary sophistication that he could not abide any native Lutheran crudities? No. It surely was not upon the prompting of sheer aesthetic refinement that he replaced the original’s very condemnatory diagnosis of Faust’s motives: “. . . for his frowardness, lawlessness, and wantonness goaded him on” by the simple and certainly less condemnatory statement: “. . . for his Speculation was so wonderful”;⁶ or why the remorseful exclamation of the German Faustus “. . . had I but had godly thoughts” was changed in English to the far less contrite “. . . had not I desired to know so much.”⁷ From such comparisons it would emerge that the amendments were not at all a matter of literary elegance. True, they were a matter of style: but of a comprehensive style of thought, feeling, and belief. A revolution of sensibility was astir between the wanton, lewd, disreputable and godless enterprises of the German magician and the “wonderful speculation” of P. F.’s audacious scholar. The textual changes he made may have been slight, but their specific gravity was considerable: P. F. *Gent.* was driven—more by historical compulsion than literary design—to raise the moral stature of Doctor Faustus. For such were the calendar and geography of the times that yesterday’s wicked wizard would cross the frontier as tomorrow’s candidate for historic grandeur. It was in the Englishman’s, not the German’s, text that the villainous scholar registered at the University of Padua as “Dr. Faustus, the insatiable Speculator.”⁸

No textual exegesis would be required to show the dramatic metamorphosis that took place in the estimate of Faust’s soul when Marlowe seized hold of the story; for at this point it would be enough to set the title of the original Faustbook “The Historie of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor Faustus” against the title of Marlowe’s drama: *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*. Exit—and exit for good—the despicable, damnable blackguard, and enter *the tragic hero*. To be sure, there still is damnation. But it is the downfall of a Prometheus and not the home-coming to Hell of a depraved creature. At least this is so in the fulness of Marlowe’s poetic conception, notwithstanding the frequent vacuities of dra-

matic execution; and even if no rumours had reached us of Marlowe's doubtful orthodoxy; even if we did not know that the man who taught him at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, was burned for heresy, we yet would be struck by the running battle fought in his *Dr. Faustus* between poetry and story: the sensibility of the writer is in a state of flagrant insurrection against the opinions of his fable. The truth of the poetic imagination gives the lie to the religious assertiveness of the plot, and moments of exquisite poetry punish Hell for its insistence upon the theologically proper outcome. Let the groundlings be righteously entertained by the farcical paraphernalia of Faustus's "frowardness, lawlessness, and wantonness"; in the upper ranks it is known that his "Speculation" is "so wonderful"—or in Marlowe's words: "Here, Faustus, tire thy brain, to gain a deity!"⁹ And this could not be otherwise with a poet who shortly before, in *Tambourlaine*, had wished his birthday blessings on the new aeon—the Faustian Age, as it was called by a much later historian—and wished them in the name of Nature that teaches us "to have aspiring minds" and in

Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world,
And measure every wand'ring planet's course,
Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
And always moving as the restless spheres,
Wills us to wear ourselves, and never rest . . .¹⁰

Such a soul, created by a God who is not "in one place circumscribable,"

But everywhere fills every continent
With strange infusion of his sacred vigour—¹¹

such a soul, created by such a godhead—what abominable offence, one wonders, would it have to commit in order truly to deserve the divine wrath that, against the very testimony of the poetry, settles even with Marlowe the ultimate fate of the profound Dr. Faustus. Spiritual perdition for having wrestled with the problem of a world

Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
To practice more than heavenly power permits—¹²

Yes—damned against the very testimony of the poetry: for these last lines, upholding the belief in a deity who is outraged by the depths with which He himself has equipped world and man alike, are flat and stale; flatter surely than those that sense the "strange

infusion of his sacred vigour," and with all their verse and rhyme much more prosaic than the words in prose with which even Mephistopheles condemns the Faustus of the first German Faust-book: "Thou hast abused the glorious gift of thine understanding!"¹³

That the condemned hero emerges from Marlowe's drama, by the verdict of its poetry, as incomparably more divine than the avenging divinity who, far from filling every continent with strange infusion of his sacred vigour, appears to spread everywhere theological pedantry and petty demons peddling silly provocations—and so they fly, inglorious *agents provocateur*, "in hope to get his glorious soul,"¹⁴ as Mephistopheles announces to Faustus—: in this incongruity between the mind of its language and the mind of its action lies, as literary criticism would have to insist, the dramatic failure of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*. But literary criticism—the contemporary poor substitute for indisposed theology—would thus rightly imply that Marlowe's sensibility was unable to do poetic justice to the doctrine of the Fall. For Marlowe would have had to do precisely this in order to make a perfect dramatic success of *Dr. Faustus*; and in his incompetence to do so, he was fortified by the sensibility of his age. The author of *Hamlet*, whose genius not only registered but opposed the current of the times, might have succeeded with the subject of Dr. Faustus; but not Marlowe. His intellectual mood was more like Francis Bacon's; and Bacon even believed that mankind would regain Paradise by climbing with empirical resolution to the top of the Tree of Knowledge, of the very tree which the author of the German Faustbook had planted in the center of his story, with Faustus as a second Adam, Mephisto in his old serpentine role, and Helen of Troy as a somewhat shadowy Eve. With Marlowe's poetry spring has come to the tree which once, in its mythological robustness, would have seemed immune from the seasonal changes. Suddenly it stands in full blossom, and in the absence of ripe apples Eve launches a thousand ships manned with explorers to explore the enticingly uncharted seas. Who speaks of Faust's sin? The plot, but not the poetry.

"Would you not agree that the last three- or four-hundred years have been rather exceptional?" Yes; for in the course of those centuries the poetic truth of *Dr. Faustus* was rendered into the prose of science; and in the process it shed all theological inhibitions fostered by the morality of the old Faustian plot—the morality of the Tree of Knowledge. The serpent was chased off its branches, and the tree, bearing sinful fruit no more, received, on the con-

trary, its glorification at the hands of the new age. The searching mind and the restless imagination were declared sacrosanct. It was a stupendous revolution, glorious and absurd. Its glories need no recalling. They still lie in state in our universities, our theatres, and our museums of art and science. But its absurd consequences pursue us, alas, with keener vivacity. For we make a living, and shall make a dying, on the once triumphant Faustian spirit, now at the stage of its degeneracy. Piccolo Faustus has taken over the world of the mind. Wherever he sees an avenue, he will explore it—regardless of the triviality or the disaster to which it leads; wherever he sees the chance of a new departure, he will take it—regardless of the desolation left behind. He is so unsure of what *ought* to be known that he has come to embrace a preposterous superstition: everything that *can* be known is also *worth* knowing—including the manifestly worthless. Already we are unable to see the wood for the trees of knowledge; or the jungle either. Galley-slaves of the free mind's aimless voyaging, we mistake our unrestrainable curiosity, the alarming symptom of spiritual tedium, for scientific passion. Most of that which flourishes in these days as "science," said Kierkegaard, is not science but indiscretion; and he and Nietzsche said that the natural sciences will engineer our destruction.

Yet even at its splendid beginning, there was something absurdly reckless in the Faustian worship of the human mind and in its absolute emancipation from the vigilance of moral judgment: something hysterically abandoned in thus hallowing among all human faculties just the one which Adam had been taught to fear above all others. The very child of sin was now brought up in the belief that he could do no wrong, and before long Faust's soul was to be kidnapped from Hell and taken to Heaven by the poets in reward for his mind's insatiability.

Dr. Faustus—is he damned or is he saved? Who would not suspect that the question has been emptied of meaning? Can we, from within our secular sensibilities, make sense of these words at all? Are they more than sonorous echoes from outlived theological solemnities, vibrating with a vague promise or a not so vague intimidation?—Where there is now talk of hell-fire, what comes to mind with banal inevitability—for the gods strike those whom they wish to destroy with the sense of the occasion's banality—is, of course, not an eternity of the soul's torment but that thing to end all things, the stale, murderous, unthinkable, unspeakable, banal thing, the Bomb, which, whether or not it will do its work, has

done its work already: its very existence frustrates the spirit, its very contemplation corrupts the mind. Indeed, the Bomb does readily come to mind—yet, alas, not quite so readily that which has made it possible: the wings of the eagle that Dr. Faustus took upon himself in order to search out the uttermost parts of heaven and earth, and the innermost parts of life and matter, and to bring them within the reach of man's ever blundering power, untutored helplessness, and mortal folly. A creature that, upon the irrefutable evidence of his history, cannot control himself, in control of all life on earth—the Faustian Leonardo da Vinci had an inkling of this scientific Hell when he feared to make known his discovery of how to stay under water for long stretches of time: because men would only use it for making machines with which to carry their wicked designs into the seas.¹⁵

Yet such timely reflections are still no answer to our question. For the atomic Armageddon would not bring home—home?—the ancient meaning of damnation. It would be, on the contrary, the consummation of meaninglessness—a meaninglessness which may have acquired demonic properties on its journey from the laboratories of science to the arsenals of power; but if so, then certainly without detriment to the proud theological meaninglessness of those scientific “truths” in whose pursuit the demon was begotten. For Dr. Faustus, once bitten, soon discovered means with which to overcome any theological shyness: in the war between Heaven and Hell he declared himself a neutral and claimed that the works of his mind were supremely irrelevant to the theological status and destiny of man's soul. He became the “objective observer” of creation and finally of himself. But the genius of invention that possessed him played him a trick. In the long run he willy-nilly became the inventor of a new kind of Hell: of the dull inferno of a world without meaning for the soul, a world ruthlessly examined by the detached mind and confusedly suffered by the useless passions. If once Dr. Faustus had sold his soul to the Devil for the promise of success in his search for Truth, he now tried to annul the bargain by turning scientist and insisting that in his role as a searcher for Truth he had no soul. Yet the Devil was not to be cheated. When the hour came, he proved that this search, conducted behind the back of the soul, had led to a Truth that was Hell.

Let our Fausts of science, thought and letters loudly protest against the Bomb! He need not be the Devil who asks: Are all their works testimony to the surpassing worth and sanctity of life, and

a refutation and denunciation of anyone who might think life base and senseless enough to render its destruction a matter of irrelevance? Or are not most of their works demonstrations rather of life's ultimate senselessness? And he need not be the Devil who says: There is a connection between the threat of atomic annihilation and that spiritual nothingness with which the mind of the age has been fascinated for so long, between universal suicide and Dr. Faustus's newly discovered damnation: a universe which, as a philosopher who knew his science put it, is "a dull affair," "merely the hurrying of material, endlessly, meaninglessly." "However you disguise it," Whitehead wrote, "this is the practical outcome of the characteristic scientific philosophy which closed the seventeenth century"¹⁵—and which may close the twentieth, as we, alas, are bound to add, with a still more practical outcome of Dr. Faustus's witty enterprise to outwit the Devil by creating a Hell of his own.

Damnation or salvation—is there, then, any meaning left in the Faustian theological alternative? It would seem so; and it would not be perverse but only shocking to say that salvation and damnation have entered once again, albeit in unmythological guise, into the major philosophic speculations of the epoch, not to mention its exuberantly depressed and flamboyantly desperate art and literature, and not to give in to the temptation to see the profound and ingenious absurdities of our most recent physical sciences through the eyes of a Dr. Faustus, metaphysically embarrassed again at the end of his journey. Be this as it may, there can be little doubt that it was a quasi-theological apprehension that made Einstein in his old age look askance upon the post-Einsteinian theories in physics which his own discoveries had sent running amuck amid all traditional tenets of logic and all sensuous models by which man may form a concrete idea of the physical world he inhabits. But confining ourselves to the philosophic thought of the times, to Heidegger's philosophy of Being, Jaspers's or Heidegger's or Sartre's philosophy of Existence, or Wittgenstein's philosophy of Language, we shall not miss the urgency with which, explicitly or implicitly, they are concerned with man's relatedness or, as the case may be, unrelatedness to what truly *is*. Is man, their questioning goes, through any of his innate powers, whether of logical reasoning, feeling, intuition, will, or language, *at one* with the nature of Being, or absurdly estranged from it? Or is he altogether misled by his desire to "be" in a meaningful universe, and deluded by his language which, throughout the centuries, has persuaded him that he "is" in

a world that makes sense in the manner logic, grammar and syntax do? Was Nietzsche right when he suspected that he who spoke of “meaning” was the dupe of linguistic convention? “I fear,” he said, “we cannot get rid of God because we still believe in grammar.”¹⁷

Is it so far a cry from such extremities of the human mind to the question of salvation and damnation? Not farther, perhaps, than from a shock to an insight. Those questions of the philosophers are instinct with the sense of an ultimate fate of souls. For what else is salvation if not the fulfillment of a destiny in the integrity of Being, what else damnation if not the agony of a creature without destiny, forever unreachable, in monstrous singularity, by any intimations of a surpassingly sensible coherence, and forever debarred, in his short, uncertain, anxious, and perishable life, from any contact with something lasting, sure, serene, and incorruptible? And if he lives, in this sense, upon his chances of salvation, upon which of his varied and conflicting faculties is this hope founded? Where and when and how *is* he?

In the Christian centuries preceding the appearance of the first Faustbook, there could hardly be any doubt concerning the answer. Man's hope rested upon obedience to the revealed will of the Creator, upon faith in Him, and upon the love of Him. And Reason? Yes, upon Reason too; and some of the Doctors of the Church even believed, not quite unlike Socrates, in the natural propensity of Reason to prove, through the unfolding of its inherent logic, the existence of a supreme guarantor of meaning: God. But this was, for them as much as for Socrates, a Reason which, like the gift of Love, had to be guarded jealously against the ever-present menace of betrayal, corruption, and sin; for Reason, just like Love, could become a harlot, entering into complicity with evil, as, for instance, Nicolas of Cusa, the German theologian, warned:¹⁸ two centuries before the scientist Pascal, at the climax of the “scientific revolution,” accused the scientific, the “fair Reason,” of having corrupted everything with its own corruption;¹⁹ and more than a century before the German Faustus said to the Devil: “But I will know or I will not live, you must tell me.”²⁰

II

Ever since the villainous Dr. Faustus had been elevated by Marlowe to the rank of a tragic hero, the notion of a possible sin of the mind gradually disappeared. In this, above everything, was the New

Age new. What hitherto had been regarded as a satanic temptation, was now felt to be the bait of God; for it was through his mind, his whole mind, that man was blessed. His reason was the guarantee that he existed in a state of pre-established harmony with the divine Intelligence which had created the world: the more man knew, the better he knew God. This was the revolutionary theology of the great scientific explorers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. If there was, perhaps, a measure of protective diplomacy in the theological pronouncements of the astronomers, they were yet abundantly sincere and if they tried to catch the conscience of the Church, they yet expressed the consciousness of the age. "Thanks be unto you, my Lord, our Creator, for granting me insight into the beauty of your creation. I rejoice at the works of your hands. Look down upon my work, the work which I have felt called to do: I have merely put to good use the talent you have given me. To those men who will read my demonstrations, I have revealed the glory of your creation . . ." Thus Kepler, concluding his *Harmonices Mundi*. For the Cartesian age of the *Cogito ergo sum* is now upon us: it is by virtue of thought, by the power of Reason and all its gifts, that I truly exist, truly *am*, integrated into *Esse*, into the Reality of Being.

The greatness of a philosopher does not rest upon the beauty and cogency of his reasoning alone. Unless his grain of truth falls upon ground made ready to receive it by the season of history, it may grow, if grow it will, in pale obscurity. But Descartes reasoned upon the instruction of an approaching summer; and therefore he reasoned so greatly, so vehemently, and so effectively, uninhibited by the flaws easily detectable in all great, vehement, and effective reasoning once the reapers have done with it. He proclaimed that God was no deceiver: God gave us our reason and the instinct that makes us look upon our reason as the instrument of Truth. Can it have been His will to lead us astray through our rationality? Can we credit Him with such scandalous deception? It was History, it was the disposition and rational credulity of the age, and not pure Reason, that lent persuasiveness to the Cartesian argument. For Reason would suggest that, if this God of the philosophers had dealt so honestly with us in giving us Reason and Descartes, he deceived us grievously with the confounding gift of our passions or indeed with the heart's desire for a peace that passes understanding. Such blasphemies against the rational philosophy were even uttered at the time: by Pascal. For the honest Creator of Descartes had

capriciously created also the man who would not believe in the God of the rational philosophers, insisting upon the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But Pascal's protests remained all but inaudible to the *Zeitgeist*, bent as it was upon its rational enlightenment. "*Cette belle raison corrompue a tout corrompu*,"²¹ wrote Pascal; but who would believe that fair reason, the Cartesian anchor of Being, was corrupt, infecting everything with its corruption? *Dr. Faustus* was done for: the fable, that is; the man was saved. For with his desire to know he was rooted in the ground of everything that was: in the mind of God. *Cogito ergo sum*: it might be translated "But I will know or I will not live"—the first *Dr. Faustus's* injunction to the Devil.

The history of literature was in a mischievous and jesting mood when, in the heyday of the Cartesian empire of the mind, in the middle of the enlightened eighteenth century, it allowed Lessing to try his hand at writing a *Faust*. We do not know how far he advanced the enterprise. The story goes that he entrusted the finished manuscript to a coachman who never delivered it at the address Lessing gave him. Very likely, he was in the service of Satan. For this was, we are told by friends of Lessing's, the first *Faust* that, of course, ended with the Devil's defeat and Faust's salvation. One of its scenes is preserved. In it Faust holds a speed competition among seven spirits of Hell. It is won by the little demon who boasts that he is as quick as is the transition from good to evil.²² Clearly, this scene would be more to the point if the speedy change were from evil to good. For, according to the report, Lessing had turned the wicked Faust of the legend into a mere phantom with which the Lord teased the Devil. The real Faust was immune from human weakness and knew no passion save one: an unquenchable thirst for science and knowledge; and so it came as no surprise to the age of the Enlightenment that at the moment when the hellish hosts were about to dispatch the phantom Faust to Hell, a voice from Heaven enlightened the poor devils about the divine deception: "No, you have *not* triumphed; you have not prevailed over humanity and scholarship: God has not planted the noblest of instincts in man merely in order to make him wretched for ever. He whom you have made your victim is nothing but a phantom."²³

Perhaps the absconding coachman was a benevolent man, after all. He may have helped Lessing's reputation as a dramatist by the miscarriage of his *Faust*. It was hard enough for Marlowe to come to grips with the subject of Faust; but to recast it in the mould

of the Enlightenment was about as promising as it would have been for the French Revolution to adapt *Macbeth* to the belief that the murder of monarchs was supremely desirable. Lessing himself seems to have recognized this later in his life when, on the occasion of Maler Müller's literary excursion into Faustian territory, he spoke of the impossibility of being in earnest about the story. "Anyone," he said, "who today should attempt to represent such a subject in order to awaken serious belief in it, . . . would be courting failure."²⁴

This was in 1777; but more than half-a-century later, in 1831, Goethe, at the age of eighty-two, brought such precarious courting to one of the most celebrated consummations in the history of literature: he sealed a parcel that contained the manuscript of the at last concluded Part II of his *Faust*. The "*Hauptgeschäft*," the main business of his life, as he was in the habit of referring to it during his last years, was done; or rather, Goethe willed that it should be done: the seal was to protect it above all from his own persistent scruples and dissatisfactions. As death approached, he was determined not to meddle any more with the child of his never-ending anxieties. Also, the parcel was not to be opened for the time being because, as Goethe wrote five days before his death, the hour was "really so absurd and confused" that he was convinced his "long and honest labour in building this strange edifice" would be ill-rewarded. "It would drift, fragments of a shipwreck, towards barren shores and lie buried in the sandy dunes of time."²⁵ Yet once, during the last two months of his life, he broke the seal again to read from the manuscript to his beloved daughter-in-law, and afterwards promptly confided to his diary that this reading had made him worry once more: should he not have dealt at greater length with "the principal themes"? He had "treated them, in order to finish it all, far too laconically."²⁶ Touching words! Goethe felt he had been too much in a hurry in doing his "main business"—over which he had spent more than sixty years. It would almost seem that Lessing was right in suggesting that the age itself did not allow anyone to succeed in writing *Faust*; and Goethe's fears were, of course, justified. Neither did the "absurd and confused" epoch know what to make of his *Faust II*, nor was this altogether the fault of the readers: Goethe's rendering of the "principal themes" was certainly not innocent of confusion.

In many a letter, written during his last months, he warned his friends not to expect too much of the withheld manuscript, above all not to look forward to "any solutions." He referred to his

Faust II as “these very serious jests,” and said that as soon as one problem appeared “to have been solved in it, it revealed, after the manner of the history of world and man, a new one demanding to be puzzled out.”²⁷ Indeed, we are left with no end of puzzles when the curtain comes down upon Faust’s entelechy, his immortal self, saved, not without the intervention of the inscrutable grace of God, through having kept his promise to strive eternally and never to content himself with any achievement on earth. But has he really fulfilled the famous condition of his salvation? Not quite, if we consult the plot; for there it would seem that Faust has been smuggled into Heaven, like precious contraband, by angelic choir boys who have snatched his soul from the Devil, the legal winner, while distracting his attention with their seductive beauty. But if we allow the surpassing poetry of the final scene to make us forget the letter of the wager, then again it would appear as if Faust had merely struggled in vain throughout his life to be rid of what was, regardless of his activities, his inalienable birthright in Paradise. Even by uttering the fatal words of ultimate contentment which, according to the Mephistophelian bet, were to commit his soul to eternal damnation; even by declaring himself satisfied with the last gift of the Devil: the magic transformation of pestiferous swamps into fertile land upon which he would found a republic of free men, he could not prevail upon the Upper Spheres to let him go to Hell. The damning utterance, with which in the end he renounces his eternal striving, is gleefully registered by Mephistopheles, tasting the fruit of victory; but it must have fallen upon deaf ears in Heaven; up there it is held that he has striven eternally all the same, and is therefore, with a little helping of divine grace, worth saving.

This, of course, is callous and blasphemous talk. It is not the way of speaking about Goethe’s *Faust*, which justly has survived the blatant inconsistencies of its plot as one of the greatest poetic creations of the world. But it is a legitimate way of speaking about the *dramatic* and *theological* pretensions of the work. Part II is no drama whatever; and for Goethe to persist—and against what inhibitions!—in bringing it to a kind of dramatic and theological conclusion was a decision of quixotic heroism. In one sense Lessing stood a better dramatic chance with his abortive *Faust* than Goethe. Lessing’s hero was single-mindedly dedicated, against all phantom appearances, to the pursuit of Knowledge and thus was an obedient servant to the God of the philosophers.

But Goethe’s Faust? The complexities of his moral character are

unresolvable. He is an ungovernable theological problem-child, presenting no simple alternative of good or evil to the Goethean God who, far from being the God of the philosophers, seems not even to know his own mind. At one point the Devil, who ought to be familiar with His ways, speaks of this divinity as if indeed the divinity were Lessing:

*Verachte nur Vernunft und Wissenschaft,
Des Menschen allerhöchste Kraft,*

So hab ich dich schon unbedingt—²⁸

meaning that Faust will be his, the Devil's, easy prey through the very contempt in which he holds man's supreme faculties: reason and scholarship. Yet is it true to say that Faust despises knowledge? Have we not learned from his first monologue that, despairing of all merely human knowledge, he has called upon black magic, to help his ignorance and initiate his mind into the innermost secret of the world:

*Dass ich erkenne, was die Welt
Im innersten zusammenhält—²⁹*

However, at many another point it certainly would seem that not only has he done with the pursuit of knowledge, but, contrary to the Devil's enlightened judgment, pleases God by nothing more than his unwillingness ever to be weaned from his "*Urquell*," the very source of his unreasoning and restless spirit—that spirit which prompts him, in translating the Bible, to reject *logos* as the principle of all things, nurtures in his soul the desire to be cured of all "*Wissensdrang*," the urge to know, and drives him from his quiet study into the turbulent world to suffer in his own self, unimpaired by knowledge, all the sorrows allotted to mankind, and to rejoice in all its joys. True, as he enters Heaven, the chant of the cherubic boys welcomes him as their teacher: for he has learned much—

*Doch dieser hat gelernt,
Er wird uns lehren—³⁰*

but it is with some concern for the celestial peace of the blessed children that one contemplates the possible substance and manner of his instruction.

Despite all these perplexities and confusions, Goethe's *Faust* is incomparably closer to the original Faustbook than would have been Lessing's. Despite the perplexities? Because of them! For Lessing's

Faust would have been the generous and nobly simple-minded reversal of the Lutheran writer's morality of knowledge: the sixteenth century's damnation was salvation to the eighteenth. The Devil? Black magic? Bizarre souvenirs, picked in some unclean exotic place by Reason on its grand tour through History. Goethe was incapable of such enlightenment. His morality of knowledge was infinitely complex, tangled up as it was, inextricably, with his moral intuition that man was free to commit sins of the mind: he could be lured towards the kind of "truth" that was deeply and destructively at odds both with his true nature and the true nature of the world—a moral offence against the order of creation. And this, surely, is a belief which Goethe shared with the author of the ancient legend of Dr. Faustus. Goethe had the historical impertinence to oppose Newton; and said, and tried to prove, that Newton was wrong. What he truly meant was that Newtonian physics was false to human nature; and this is what he did say when he was not proudly determined to beat the physicists at their own game. Truth, for him, was what befits man to know, what man is *meant* to know; and he was convinced that the dominant methods of scientific inquiry were "unbecoming" to man, a danger to his spiritual health and integrity because they reduced the phenomena of nature to a system of abstractions within which their true being vanished, yielding nothing to man except empty intellectual power over a spiritually vacuous world: a power that was bound to corrupt his soul. And therefore Goethe said, outrageously: "As in the moral sphere, so we need a categorical imperative in the natural sciences."³¹ Provocatively and significantly, he even had the courage to play the crank by expressing uneasiness about microscopes and telescopes: "They merely disturb man's natural vision;"³² and when his Wilhelm Meister for the first time gazes at the stars through a telescope, he warns the astronomers around him of "the morally bad effect" these instruments must have upon man: "For what he perceives with their help . . . is out of keeping with his inner faculty of discernment." It would need a superhuman culture "to harmonize the inner truth of man with this inappropriate vision from without."³³

III

The perplexities of Goethe's *Faust*: they are due, firstly, to Goethe's inability—which he had in common with the sixteenth-

century writer of the first Faustbook—to divorce the problem of knowledge from the totality of man's nature, to separate the aspirations of his mind from the destiny of his soul; and they are due, secondly, to Goethe's inability—which he had in common with his own age—unambiguously to demonstrate this totality and this destiny, that is to say, to *define Human Being*. This is why his Faust, so confusingly, is now a man who has embarked upon a desperate quest for knowledge, now a man who curses knowledge as a futile distraction from the passions' crying out for the fulness of life, and now again a man who reaches his "*böchster Augenblick*," his highest moment, in the renunciation of his search for both knowledge and passionate self-fulfilment, in the resigned acceptance of his social duty to further the commonwealth of man. Because Goethe was the profoundest mind of an epoch dispossessed of any faithful vocabulary for the definition of Human Being, he was possessed by two overpowering and paradoxical intuitions: that man's being was definable only through his incessant striving to *become* what he was not yet and was yet *meant* to be; and that in thus striving he was in extreme danger of losing himself through his impatient and impetuous ignorance of what he was. Therefore, Faust's soul was an unfit object for any clearly stated transaction, and the definitive bargain of the first Faustbook had to be replaced by a wager with the outcome left in abeyance. If Faust ceased to strive, he would be damned; but he would also be damned if, in his ceaseless quest for himself and his world, he overstepped the elusive measure of his humanity. Yet in the drama itself Faust could only be damned *or* saved. Thus Goethe had to reconcile himself to the dramatic absurdity of a salvation merited both by the endlessly uncertain voyage and the contented arrival at an uncertain destination. An uncertain destination: for the Faust who believes he has arrived, is a blind and deluded man, taking for the builders of a great human future the diggers of his grave. It is as if the honesty of Goethe's precise imagination had forced him in the end to disavow, with terrible poetic irony, the imprecision of the dramatic plot. And indeed, had it not been for the grace of God, or for the Promethean youth who designed the plot of *Faust*, Goethe, in his old age, might well have damned his black magician. For it was the man of eighty-two who wrote the scenes (as if at the last moment to obstruct the workings of salvation) where Faust's involvement in the satanic art is truly black and satanic: the scenes in which his mad lust for power and aggrandizement kills the very goodness and innocence of life, this time without a trace of that sav-

ing love which, long ago, had left him with a chance of ultimate forgiveness even in his betrayal of Gretchen.

When, after all the paraphernalia and phantasmagoria of imperial politics and high finance, of science laboratories, classical incantations and mystical initiations, of which most of *Faust II* is composed, the last act begins, we seem to be back, unexpectedly, in the world of Gretchen: in the shadow of linden trees, at the little house and chapel of a faithful old couple, Philemon and Baucis, contentedly living near the sea on what is now Faust's estate. Just then they are visited by a mysterious wanderer whom many years ago they had hospitably put up and helped after the shipwreck he suffered in the nearby shoals. Now he has come to thank them once again and to bless them. Through this scene we enter the realm of inexhaustible ambiguity in which Faust's end and transfiguration are to be enacted. The neighborhood of the two old people's cottage has been much improved by Faust's colonization. Where once the stranger had been cast ashore, there stretch now green fields far into what used to be shallow sea. This certainly seems to be to the good, and Philemon, the husband, praises the change lyrically and admiringly; but his wife views it with misgivings. Surely, it was a miracle, but one that was performed in godlessness. Floods of fire were poured into the ocean and human lives recklessly sacrificed in order to construct a canal. Moreover, Faust, the owner of the new land, seems to be, for no good reason, intent upon driving them from their house and garden; and so they all enter the chapel, ring its bell, and kneel down to pray. And as Faust, in the park of his palace, hears the bell—the very same “silvery sound” which had once announced to the lost traveller on the beach the closeness of his rescuers (and it was, we should remember, “the celestial tone” of church bells that on a certain Easter morning had called Faust back from desperation and made him withdraw from his lips the suicidal cup of poison)—as Faust now hears the sound of simple piety ring out from the hill, he curses it as a reminder of the petty limits imposed upon his power, and in senseless rage orders Mephistopheles to remove the couple to another place. They and their guest perish in the action, and house and chapel go up in flames.

Yet while Faust's most damnable crime is committed, the scene changes to the tower of his palace where the watchman Lynceus intones the song that is one of Goethe's most beautiful lyrical creations:

Zum Sehen geboren,

Zum Schauen bestellt, . . .

ecstatically affirming the beauty of everything his eyes have ever seen—"whatever it be":

*Ihr glücklichen Augen,
Was je ihr gesehn,
Es sei, wie es wolle,
Es war doch so schön!*

It is hard to imagine profounder depths for poetic irony to reach than it does at this moment of change from that show of absolute evil to this absolute affirmation. And what vast expanses of irony are compressed into the brackets which Goethe inserted after the exultant celebration of the world's beauty—a beauty which no evil can diminish. "Pause" is written between those brackets. Pause, indeed! For the watchman's recital continues with the observation that his duties on the tower are not only aesthetic in nature; and instantly he registers "the abominable horror" threatening him from out of "the darkness of the world":

*Nicht allein mich zu ergetzen,
Bin ich hier so hoch gestellt;
Welch ein greuliches Entsetzen
Droht mir aus der finstern Welt!—*

from out of that dark world where Faust's servant, Mephistopheles, in the course of executing his master's megalomaniac orders, unthinks, as it were, the very thoughts of charity, compassion, and peace, shattering the luminous sphere whence, by Goethe's symbolic design, had once emerged the shipwrecked stranger. It is as if the "whatever it be" of that absolute affirmation had not been meant to include the evil of a world ravished by the black magic of godless power. And as in the whirls of smoke that drift from the burning house the demons of human failure form—like avenging Erinyes appointed by the slain wanderer—and as one of them, the spirit of Anxiety, approaches Faust to strike with blindness him who had "run through life blindly," he at last comes to see, uttering a wish that is not a magic conjuration but almost a prayer:

*Könnst' ich Magie von meinem Pfad entfernen,
Die Zaubersprüche ganz und gar verlernen . . .*

If only he could rid rid himself of magic and utterly forget how to invoke it! There is more consistent drama and tragic irony in the brief sequence of these scenes than emerge from the bewildering totality of the poem, more dramatic occasion for either damning

Faust because of his evil-doing as a magician, or for saving him because of his desire to abandon the evil practice.³⁴

It is the theme of black magic through which Goethe's *Faust* is linked, in almost a sixteenth-century fashion, with Goethe's morality of knowledge. What, we may well ask, can black magic mean to Goethe's sophisticated mind? The black magic of *Faust* is the poetically fantastic rendering of Goethe's belief that evil arises from any knowing and doing of man that is in excess of his "being." Man aspiring to a freedom of the mind fatally beyond the grasp of his "concrete imagination," seeking power over life through actions that overreach the reaches of his soul, acquiring a virtuosity inappropriately superior to his "virtue"—this was Goethe's idea of hubris, his divination of the meaning of black magic. Absolute activity, activity unrestrained by the condition of humanity, he once said, leads to bankruptcy;³⁵ and "everything that sets our minds free without giving us mastery over ourselves is pernicious."³⁶ He saw something spiritually mischievous, something akin to black magic, in every form of knowledge or technique that "unnaturally" raises man's power above the substance of his being. In his *Faust* black magic almost always works the perverse miracle of such "de-substantiation." Whether Faust conjures up the very spirit of Nature and Life, the *Erdegeist*, only to realize in distracted impotence that he cannot endure him; whether the body politic is being corrupted by insubstantial paper assuming the credit that would only be due to substantial gold; whether Faust descends into the region of the mystical Mothers, to seek in the "eternal void" his "everything"; whether Homunculus, a synthetic midget of great intellectual alacrity, is produced in the laboratory's test-tube, a brain more splendidly equipped for thinking than the brains that have thought it out: the creature capable of enslaving his creators; or whether Faust begets with Henena, magically called back from her mythological past, the ethereal child Euphorion who, not mad for the stuff of existence, is undone by his yearning for sublimity—throughout the adventures of his Faust, Goethe's imagination is fascinated, enthralled, and terrified by the spectacle of man's mind rising above the reality of his being and destroying it in such dark transcendence. This, then, is black magic for Goethe: the awful art that cultivates the disparity between knowledge and being, power and substance, virtuosity and character; the abysmal craft bringing forth the machinery of fabrication and destruction that passes understanding.

In the last two *Fausts* of literary history, Valéry's and Thomas

Mann's, the gulf, most dreaded by Goethe, between knowledge and the integrity of being, between virtuosity and the sanity of substance, has become so wide that even the Devil seems to be lost in it: for the human soul, in the hunt for which the Devil has always sought his livelihood, is in an extreme state of malnutrition. But the mind lives in formidable prosperity and has no need to raise loans from Hell for indulging even its most extravagant ambitions.

Valéry has called his sequence of variations on the ancient theme *Mon Faust*; and indeed his Faust is more *his*, more the possession of the author who has created the frigid paragon of aesthetic intellectuality, Monsieur Teste, than he is the Devil's. Yet this is by no means to the advantage of his spiritual prospects: these are as gloomy as can be. For if he does not lose his soul, this is only because he has none to lose. In the affluence of his intellectual riches, he *is* the lost soul, just as Mephistopheles is a lost devil in the face of a human world overflowing with self-supplied goods of the kind that was once the monopoly of Hell. The hell-supplied wings of the eagle are in demand no more. As Ivan Karamazov before him, so Valéry's Faust shows, the Devil that he is an anachronism: his existence was based solely on the unenlightened belief that "people weren't clever enough to damn themselves by their own devices."³⁷ But those days have gone. "The whole system," Faust says to Mephistopheles, "of which you were the linchpin, is falling to pieces. Confess that even you feel lost among this new crowd of human beings who do evil without knowing or caring, who have no notion of Eternity, who risk their lives ten times a day in playing with their new machines, who have created countless marvels your magic never dreamt of, and have put them in the reach of any fool. . . ."³⁸ And even if Mephistopheles were not on the point of being starved out of the universe for want of human souls, this Faust would still have nothing to gain from a bargain with him. His intellection is as strong as he could wish, and he knows what he does in dismissing his hellish visitor as, after all, "nothing but a mind";³⁹ and therefore: "We could exchange functions."⁴⁰ It is as if he said: "*Cogito ergo sum in profundis*"—"I think and thus I am in Hell already"; or "I know and therefore I will not live"—the uncanniest cancellation of the first Faustbook as well as of the Cartesian ontology. Moreover, the passion with which Goethe's Faust assails the innermost secret of the world is dissolved by Valéry in *ennui*, the unknown expectation of an emptily precise answer to be given by some Homunculus or electronic bore.

If Valéry's Mephisto, the "pure mind," has become unemployable as a seducer in a society of satiated intellects and emasculate souls, Thomas Mann has found a role for him which brings the literary history of Dr. Faustus to a conclusion definitive in its perversity: the Devil is now the giver of a soul. It is he who supplies feeling and passionate intensity to a Faustian genius whose soul and being had been frozen into rigidity by the *cogitare*, the chill of intellectual abstraction, and whose art was, therefore, the art of purely speculative virtuosity. The musician Leverkühn, Thomas Mann's Dr. Faustus, has, like the epoch whose music he composes, despaired of any pre-established harmonies between the human mind and the truth of the world; and having lost any such faith, he exists in a state of total despair. Not for him the music of "subjective harmony," the music of souls supported by the metaphysical assurance that in their depths they mirror the eternal and sublime verities of Creation. For Leverkühn, life, to its very core, that is, to its innermost void, is absurd and chaotic; and if the human mind goes on, absurdly and yet stubbornly, to insist upon some semblance of order, this order has to be constructed from nothing by the sheer obstinacy of the abstractly logical imagination. Therefore, this imagination reflects only itself and not some dreamt-of consonance between the self and cosmic harmonies. Beethoven was mistaken; and so Leverkühn announces his desperate plan to compose a piece of music that would take back, "unwrite," the greatest of all musical celebrations of the "subjective harmony," the Ninth Symphony: the Ninth Symphony is not true, or true no more. But if it is not true, then neither is Goethe's *Faust*, the poetic equivalent in subjective harmony to that choral dithyramb; and just as Thomas Mann makes his composer revoke the Ninth Symphony, so he himself revokes Goethe's *Faust* by writing the book of Faust's damnation. For Goethe's work, despite its unresolvable doubts and ambiguities, and despite its holding back, confusing, and obstructing redemption until it can only be had in a riot of poetic contradictions—Goethe's *Faust* does yet assert the faith that Faust is safe: he aspires to that self-realization through which, by metaphysical necessity, he loyally realizes the will, order, and ultimate purpose of the cosmos itself. It is by virtue of the "subjective harmony" that Faust's infinite enthusiasm, time and again confounded, must yet triumph in the end over Mephisto's ironical, cold, and logical mind—the supremely detached mind that on one notorious occasion had won its detachment, once and for all, by denying the design of creation.

Precisely such a mind is owned by Leverkühn; and therefore the music he writes is detached, ironical, cold, and logical, composed within a mathematically austere system which has been ingeniously calculated to conceal, or transcend, or hold at bay, the chaos within and without, the subjective dissonance that has taken the place of the subjective harmony. Indeed it is a soul-less music; and the most scandalous idea in Thomas Mann's scandalously profound book is this: a soul is finally bestowed upon this music by the Devil. When Mephistopheles calls on the composer to ratify the pact long since concluded in Leverkühn's embrace of the prostitute who gave him the "disease of genius," the visitor from Hell remarks: "They tell me that the Devil passes for a man of criticism." It is, of course, Goethe who told him this by portraying him as cynicism incarnate, out to distract Faust's enthusiastic inspiration. But now the Devil emphatically disclaims this reputation: "Calumny, sheer calumny! . . . What the Devil wants and gives is the triumph over and above criticism, is the uninhibited creative rapture!"⁴¹ And he does fulfil his promise: Leverkühn's last and greatest work, "The Lamentation of Dr. Faustus," the choral work he composes on the verge of madness and in protest against the Ninth Symphony, using as his text the first German Faustbook, is even stricter in form and more ingenious in calculation than his preceding compositions; and yet it is, for the first time, abandoned self-expression, an ecstasy of desperation, a panegyric of the inner abyss. "Subjective harmony," the lost soul of music, is recovered; and is a soul without hope. For the re-established harmony is now fixed between the subject and that dispensation by which he is unredeemable. "Being" has returned to "doing," and substance to virtuosity: but the being is the being damned, and the substance the stuff of Hell. This music is the mystical consummation of distraught godlessness, the emergence of a soul from the alchemy of its negation. "After all," says Thomas Mann's Devil, "I am by now the sole custodian of the theological side of existence."⁴²

Thus ends the eventful story that has led from the damnation of Dr. Faustus through his liberation to his damnation. It was Goethe's desire to arrest it in the middle of its journey by teaching the "insatiable Speculators" his morality of knowledge. His failure deserves the most thoughtful attention.

Goethe would have found much to love in the story, written 2,500 years ago, of a Chinese sage who once met a simple man, his better in wisdom. The sage, seeing how the man watered his field in

a very primitive manner, asked him: "Don't you know that there is a contraption called a draw-well, a kind of machine that would enable you to water a hundred such little fields in one day!" And received this reply: "I have heard my teacher say: He who uses machines, conducts his business like a machine. He who conducts his business like a machine, will soon have the heart of a machine. He who has the heart of a machine, has lost all certainties of the spirit. He who has lost the certainties of the spirit, must needs sin against the meaning of life. Yes, I do know such machines as you speak of, but I also know why I shall not use them."

Undoubtedly, Goethe would have applauded the wisdom of this story. Yet the "modern man" in him would also have known that he could not live by its lesson. After all, he was moved to enthusiasm by the plans for the Panama Canal and found no more fitting symbol for Faust's renunciation of magic than his assuming the position of a welfare engineer. The ambiguities of his *Faust* provide the measure of his lasting dilemma, a dilemma that is bound to stay with us. But the refusal to contemplate it on a level beyond the expediencies of science, technology, and statesmanship, would deny the essential freedom in which we may still—no, not resolve the tension but sustain it without despairing. Where nothing can be done, the deed is in the enhancement of being. If, as even Goethe's *Faust* might teach us, grace cannot be merited by man, he may yet try to earn his hope. Goethe's intuition of the "categorical imperative" that is needful in the pursuit of knowledge can be articulated by vaguely. Yet this is no reason for preferring the exact prospect opened by that scientific earnestness and moral frivolity which would hear nothing of the inexact morality of knowledge. For that exact prospect is monstrous in its exactitude: a race of magician's apprentices who, as the one in Goethe's poem "*Der Zauberlehrling*," are about to perish in the floods they themselves have released by the magic formula; a horde of cave-dwellers, their souls impoverished by machines and panic helplessness, sheltering from the products of their titanically superior brains.

It is a vision from the first German Faustbook. Dr. Faustus was taken to the place he had bargained for and, so we read, "thereafter it became so sinister in his house that no one could live in it."⁴³

FOOTNOTES

¹ J. Scheible, *Das Kloster*, Stuttgart, 1846, II, p. 943. The translations are partly E. M. Butler's (from her book *The Fortunes of Faust*, Cambridge, 1952, to which I am indebted for many a suggestion), partly the first English translator's (P. F., *Gent.*, in the modernized version rendered by William Rse in his edition of *The History of the Dammable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus*, London, 1925) and partly my own.

² *Ibid.*, p. 950.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 951.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 950 f.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1069.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 943, and *The History of the Dammable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus*, both modernized and edited by William Rose, London, 1925, p. 68.

⁷ Scheible, II, p. 964, and Rose, p. 92.

⁸ Rose, p. 125.

⁹ Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, Scene I, line 64.

¹⁰ *The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great*, Act II, Scene 7.

¹¹ *The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great*, Act II, Scene 2.

¹² *Doctor Faustus*, Scene XX, line 27.

¹³ Scheible, II, p. 973.

¹⁴ *Doctor Faustus*, Scene III, line 52.

¹⁵ *Leonardo's Manuscripts*, Codex of the Earl of Leicester, at Holkham Hall, Northfolk, published by Gerolamo Calvi, Milan, 1909, 22v.

¹⁶ A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, Cambridge, 1946, p. 69.

¹⁷ Musarion-Ausgabe of *Nietzsche's Works*, twenty-three volumes, Munich, 1922, XVII, p. 73.

¹⁸ Nicolas de Cusa, *Of Learned Ignorance*, translated by Fr. Germain Heron, London, 1954, p. 145.

¹⁹ Pascal, *Pensées*, No. 294 (in the numbering of Léon Brunschvicg's edition, Paris, 1897.)

²⁰ Scheible, II, p. 966.

²¹ Pascal, *Pensée*, No. 294 (see above.)

²² Included in the seventeenth of Lessing's *Briefe, die neueste Literatur betreffend*, 16 February 1759.

²³ Letter of von Blankenburg, 14 May 1784 (printed in Lessing's *Gesammelte Werke*, Leipzig, 1858, I, p. 367 f.

²⁴ R. Petsch, *Lessings Faustdichtung*, Heidelberg, 1911, p. 45.

²⁵ Letter to Wilhelm von Humboldt, 17 March 1832.

²⁶ *Tagebuch*, 24 January 1832.

²⁷ Letter to Count Karl Friedrich v. Reinhard, 7 September 1831.

²⁸ *Faust I*, lines 1851–2 and 1855.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, lines 382–3.

³⁰ *Faust II*, lines 12082–3 (in the numbering including both parts.)

³¹ Jubiläums-Ausgabe of *Goethe's Works*, forty volumes, Stuttgart and Berlin (abbreviated J.A.), XXXIX, p. 72.

³² J.A., IV, p. 229.

³³ J.A., XIX, 138 f.

³⁴ *Faust II*, Act V, Scenes "Offene Gegend," "Palast," "Tiefe Nacht," and "Mitternacht."

³⁵ J.A., IV, p. 225.

³⁶ J.A., IV, p. 229

³⁷ Paul Valéry, *Plays*, translated by David Paul and Robert Fitzgerald (volume III of the *Collected Works* in the Bolligen Series—Pantheon Books), New York, 1960, p. 41.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴¹ Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, London, 1949, p. 237.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁴³ Scheible, II, p. 1068.