

David Bevington: Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, Nathaniel Woodes's *The Conflict of Conscience*, and the English Morality Play

Nathaniel Woodes's *The Conflict of Conscience*, published in 1581, gave a remarkable twist to the English Morality Play by offering two endings: one in which the beleaguered protagonist, Philologus, is described as having hanged himself in desperation, the other in which he is reported by the Nuntius to have converted to God with many penitential tears. The play is otherwise identical throughout except for the title page and opening Prologue. Christopher Marlowe may well have known this play when he wrote *Doctor Faustus*, probably in about 1588-9. In any event, the potential of the Morality Play to end tragically was now viable. This essay will examine the consequences for Marlowe's play of a story of soul struggle that could go either way down to the very last minute. Calvinist theology offers an important perspective. The implications for dramatic form are no less interesting. What kind of dramatic excitement arises in a play in which the Good and Evil Angels can say, simultaneously and repeatedly, "Too late" and "Never too late"?

David Bevington, University of Chicago, one of the world's foremost Shakespeare scholars. Has written or edited more than 30 volumes on Shakespeare and his contemporaries. His scholarship has engaged all aspects of medieval and Renaissance drama, from the fundamental philological work of making the texts available for theoretical discussions to personal connections with their meanings.

Nicholas Boyle: Wagering on Modernity: Goethe's Eighteenth-Century Faust

If we compare the scenes in which Goethe's Faust contracts with the Devil with the equivalent scenes in earlier Faust stories we shall see that Goethe's Faust is explicitly a modern, that is, a post-Christian figure. His agreement is a wager, not a pact, and it raises the question what the value of life might be in independence of a Christian morality. Goethe's answer to this question is different from Faust's, and the difference reflects his skeptical attitude towards some aspects of the modernity that he otherwise knows he shares with his tragic hero (and that we know his tragic hero shares with Nietzsche).

Nicholas Boyle, Cambridge University, is Professor of German Literary and Intellectual History, and was recently elected to the Schröder Professorship of German. He has a particular interest in German literature and thought of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and especially in Goethe, and in the relationships between religion and literature.

Inez Hedges: Into the Labyrinth: Faust and Film Magic

From the beginning, the Faust legend has benefited from spectacular visual representation. The earliest chapbooks illustrated Faust's magic tricks as well as the topology of hell where the hero met his doom. It was perhaps inevitable that the emerging art of cinema would choose the Faust

story as one of its major subjects. Méliès and countless followers exploited the magical aspects of the tale with cinematic trickery, even as the well-known parameters of the story made it easy for viewers to follow the narrative.

The labyrinth first appears in Méliès's *The Damnation of Faust* (1903), where he uses an ingenious series of backdrops to convey the journey of Faust and Mephistopheles into the caverns of hell. In Murnau's *Faust* (1926), the labyrinth becomes metaphorical, as the claustrophobic space becomes a prison of the mind—in the conjuration scene, Faust flees the devil only to find him again at every turn of the path. Film magic is at work again in Jan Svankmajer's *Lekce Faust* ("Faust Lessons," 1993), with its use of surrealist spatial transitions as the hero wanders through a labyrinthine cultural landscape of Faust quotations from opera, theatre, and other literary sources. Is there a way out? The philosopher Ernst Bloch thinks so, as does Manoel de Oliveira in *O Convento* (1995). Here Helen (Catherine Deneuve) gets the devil lost in his own labyrinth and comes out the winner.

Inez Hedges, Northeastern University, is Professor of French, German, and Cinema Studies and the founder of the Program in Cinema Studies at Northeastern. Her graduate film courses have explored such topics as Film as Historical Memory and Film Noir. Her most recent book, "Framing Faust: 20th Century Cultural Struggles," traces the role of the Faust myth in some of the most important historical events and traumas of the past century:

David Kastan: "This Faustian Passion": From Marlowe to Modernity

Since the 16th-century, the Faust story has served to focus a set of cultural concerns about human ambition and possibility. Where the magus could serve the Florentine Platonist Pico della Mirandola as an inspiring image of mankind's God-like potential, the Faust story functions largely as a counter-version of the Renaissance dream of perfectibility. The various tellings of the story of the minor German magician and alchemist, Johann Faustus, which first appeared almost simultaneously with the rise of Lutheranism, treat magic not as the form of human activity that comes closest to God's creativity but as perverse and ultimately empty commitment to false gods. And yet, even as it offers a tragic account of human aspiration, it recognizes aspiration itself as a dignified and dignifying human quality. Not so much in the Faust story but in what might be called the Faust predicament lies the power of the tale and that which has enabled it to provide the modern world with a way of conceiving and evaluating the nature and costs of its modernity.

David Scott Kastan, Columbia University, is the author of *Shakespeare and the Shapes of Time* (1982); *Shakespeare After Theory* (1999); *Shakespeare and the Book* (2001); co-editor of *Staging the Renaissance: Essays on Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama* (1991) and of *The New History of Early English Drama* (1997). More relevant in current context is his recent edition of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, published by Norton in 2005.

Robert Norton: Herder as Faust

Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) has played a crucial role in modern German cultural and intellectual history. For one, he was an extraordinarily prolific polymath who he wrote important and influential works on theology, history, aesthetics, linguistics, literature and epistemology. Too, his encounter with Johann Wolfgang Goethe, who was five years his junior, while they were both in Strasbourg in 1770 was a decisive moment in the younger poet's development. It has even been argued that Herder served as the first living model for the scholarly figure of Faust in the drama Goethe began to write a few years after their meeting.

However, in my talk I will consider not so much the connection between Herder and Goethe's play, but rather the way in which later German thinkers interpreted Herder's significance in the evolution of a distinctly German culture, a culture that Oswald Spengler, for instance, famously called "Faustian" in his epoch-making book *The Decline of the West*. For it was this interpretation--positing Herder as the origin of a style of thinking that was fundamentally at odds with, or at least substantially different from, that in the rest of Europe--which came to have a profound and deleterious effect on German self-understanding during the first half of the twentieth century.

Robert Norton, University of Notre Dame, specializes in 18th-20th Century German Literature and Philosophy, Aesthetics and Ethics, German Intellectual History. His books include *Stefan George and His Circle* (Cornell, 2002), *The Beautiful Soul: Aesthetic Morality in the Eighteenth Century* (Cornell, 1995), *Herder's Aesthetics and the European Enlightenment* (Cornell, 1991); He has written articles on postmodernism, language philosophy, the myth of the Counter-Enlightenment, and was recently awarded the Jacques Barzun Prize for Cultural History.

Gino Segre: Faust in Copenhagen---The Story behind a 1932 Physics Conference

During the third week of April in 1932 a group of about 40 men and women gathered at Niels Bohr's Copengagen Institute to discuss in an informal setting the time's most pressing issues of atomic and nuclear physics. In attendance were some of the great scientific minds of the time including Paul Dirac, Werner Heisenberg, Lise Meitner and of course Niels Bohr. The meeting concluded with a skit presented by the youngest physicists in which they made fun of their elders. In 1932, the subject of the skit was a parody of Goethe's *Faust*, adapted to the world of physics. With the benefit of hindsight this skit acquires an eerie quality, foreshadowing events that came to pass.

Gino Segre, University of Pennsylvania, is a physicist with special interest in high-energy theoretical physics. In addition to his research in theoretical physics, he has developed an interest in presenting important matters of science to a general public with his books *A Matter of Degrees - What Temperature Reveals about the Past and Future of our Species, Planet and Universe*, and *Faust in Copenhagen*.